

Harrison County Community Foundation

Abby Sutherland Memorial Scholarship Fund

The Abby Sutherland Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in March 2016. The Abby Sutherland Memorial Scholarship is awarded to each winner of the Crawford County 4-H Fair Queen contest. The scholarship may be used to attend a two or four year private or public institution of higher learning, or an institution providing vocational training or leading to certifications.

Abby had recently been crowned the Miss Crawford County 4-H Fair Queen when she passed away in a car accident in August 2015. Abby's sister, Alisa Lieber, said Abby felt honored to be crowned, and she was looking forward to representing Crawford County in the Indiana State Fair Queen Pageant.

Alisa said Abby enjoyed participating in the Crawford County 4-H Fair Queen contest and bonding with the other contestants. She also loved mud, animals, riding horses, walking her dog, traveling, dressing up and spending time outdoors.

"She was always going nonstop," Alisa said. "She lived each day to its fullest. She lived probably more in her 20 years than some people do in their entire lifetime."

Abby was employed at Heritage Ford in Corydon and the Overlook Restaurant in Leavenworth. When she wasn't working, she loved helping others and making friends, Alisa said.

"She was always wanting to help someone and bring a smile to their face," Alisa said. "She didn't care what background or where you came from. She would talk to you and hang out with you if you were willing to give her the time of day. She had a very wide variety of friends."

Abby had been homeschooled, and she was working toward her GED while trying to figure out what type of career she wanted and how to pay for higher education. Knowing Abby's concerns about paying for school helped her family decide to establish the scholarship fund, Alisa said.

"By starting the scholarship, we're hopefully being able to help some other girl not have to stress as much about her school," Alisa said.

Family members also want the scholarship fund to result in increased participation in the Crawford County 4-H Fair Queen contest, Alisa said. When Abby became Miss Crawford County, she told Alisa she wished more girls would participate in the contest and she wanted to find a way to get more girls involved.

"We felt this was a good way to continue Abby's legacy and honor her memory," Alisa said.

In 2016, Abby's family and friends began holding an annual fundraising event. Proceeds are directed to the scholarship fund.

Alisa said establishing and focusing on the Abby Sutherland Memorial Scholarship Fund has brought her family together.

"It's given us a goal, a purpose," Alisa said. "It's given us something to focus on instead of just her not being there, that blank space."

