

**FEATURED NATIONAL SCHOLAR****Erica Danielle Milam**

Girls Incorporated of West Contra Costa County, CA

Age: 17 Grade: 12

"I would spend hours sprawled on the floor - drawing, mixing colors, and twirling the brush to experiment with the shades. I developed a passion for art that has become part of my life plus. Those early days of drawing at Girls Incorporated taught me that the road to success is paved with respect for individuality, finding a voice of my own, and utilizing the gifts we have been given to their fullest measure."

Erica Milam maintains one thought as she strives to overcome a chronic illness and achieve her academic and career goals: "Things can only stop you if let them stand in way." She describes her eleven years of involvement with Girls Incorporated as a collage of learning and giving back. Rejoicing in her individuality, spirituality and educational opportunities, Erica aspires to use her artistic skills to share with others - particularly children - that any thought, wish or beautiful image can be brought to life through art.