The University of Louisville Women’s Center announces the 3rd annual Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau Essay Contest for students interested in cultural norms and the influences of society on women. The contest is for the 2019 fall semester. The purpose of this contest is to raise awareness of the historical sociological attitudes toward women of the 20th Century and their impact on individuals and society as a whole. The essay should draw upon the experiences of Dr. Tachau and relate those experiences to other individuals and situations (which can include the writer’s own growth or achievements). A reflection on the impact of the societal assumptions and attitudes toward women should be included. Topics covered may include these examples: “What Societal and Political Obstacles did Dr. Tachau or Other Women of her Times Face or Perceive in their Lives and Careers?” or “How Were the Challenges that Dr. Tachau Faced Similar to and Different from Those Faced by Other Women of her Times?” or “What Can I do to Preserve and Build on the Achievements of Dr. Tachau and Other Women of Her Generation?” (Please cite research sources about Dr. Tachau in your work.)

Dr. Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau was a women’s rights activist, nationally recognized constitutional historian and member of the UofL history department who became the first female chair of the UofL History Department, and the first female president of the UofL Faculty Senate. She was born in Cleveland, Ohio and grew up during the Depression, attended Oberlin College, moved to Louisville after she married a college classmate who had served in World War II, started a family, and returned to academia as a young mother. She began a 30-year career teaching at UofL in 1958, and was involved in a number of civic and community organizations concerned with civil rights and civil liberties issues. Dr. Tachau received the Distinguished Teaching Award in 1988. Dr. Tachau’s papers are housed in the Women's History Collection at the University Archives (http://library.louisville.edu/uarc/tachau.html) as part of the Women’s Manuscripts Collection Project. Additional articles about Dr. Tachau are available at the Women Center in Strickler Hall.

Essays may cover an examination of attitudes toward women including inferences, point-of-view, perspective, and assumptions held by the author or reader that imply and reinforce erroneous beliefs. Also acceptable is an examination of the implications of these attitudes, comparative analysis and strategies for the future.

The winners will be invited to attend the Women’s Center Empowerment Luncheon on November 12, 2019 to receive recognition. Award amount is $500 for the undergraduate essay and $500 for the graduate essay. The award funding will be distributed via the Financial Aid Office. All undergraduate and graduate students (except U of L employees) who are currently enrolled at U of L are eligible to apply. Awards are made possible through a grant in the honor of the Women’s Center.