

YWCA Honors 11 for Civic Leadership

By Theresa D. McClellan

The fourth annual YWCA salute to women elicited some proud and sad moments Tuesday night when 11 present and former Grand Rapids women were honored.

The tribute is a community-wide event with nominations accepted for achievement in the fields of performing and creative arts; business and industry; community services; education; public affairs; communications, and human rights.

Though she is not a native, former Grand Rapids School Board President Linda Johnson said it was "good to be home" as she addressed the crowd at St. Cecilia Auditorium upon receipt of an award for distinguished service.

She was described as the woman "who served during the controversy which threatened to polarize and demoralize the community and the schools." Johnson, who now lives in Minnesota where she

■ Dr. Grace Eldering, 84, one of the award winners, made her mark in medical history. See Flair, page B1.

moved in August after being appointed by that state's governor to an affirmative action post, described her actions while board president as merely doing her job.

"When you work for an institution you serve its clients. The schools are not for the administrators, board members, teachers or parents who pay the bills. It's for the young children and the young at heart and that's our first responsibility."

The applause was long and loud as she entered the stage and members of the audience murmured "isn't she great" as she exited.

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The audience again was moved as Ginny Broersma's daughter Pam approached the stage to receive the "distinguished life recipient" award bestowed posthumously upon her mother.

Before her daughter accepted the award, the audience heard how Broersma began her hunger walk on March 7, 1983 from Grand Rapids to San Francisco. And how, when she returned here, she felt her cause was not complete so she gave lectures and challenged teens to take up the cause.

Broersma was found dead in her car Oct. 31, a victim of suicide.

Broersma's daughter, Pam, walked to the podium with teary eyes and trembling lips, to accept the award recognizing her mother's contributions.

Others honored Tuesday were:

● Rachel L. Bowman, for criminal justice. She has worked 20 years with the Kent County Sheriff's Department and currently serves the juvenile bureau. She was selected by her fellow officers as Deputy of the Year.

● Sarah Brooks, 701 Prince St. SE, community service. Though employed full-time she visits the sick, cooks for shut-ins, sells poppies on Poppy Day and chaperones a Drum and Bugle Corps.

● Elizabeth Crouch, 346 Briarwood Ave. SE, arts. Since her arrival here in 1977 Crouch has held two positions with the Grand Rapids Art Museum — interim director twice and coordinator for the Federal Building Project.

● Beverly Drake, 328 Morris Ave. SE, community relations. She is operations manager of the Eight Cap/Kent County, founding member of the Grand Rapids Community Relations Commission, charter member of the Urban League Guild and life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

● Karin Orr, 1841 Buttrick Ave. SE, community service/arts. Food columnist for The Press, former college instructor of English and drama and long-time volunteer. She co-chaired Festival '75, has been active with Channel 35, and co-chaired the Ford Museum Dedication.

● Dr. Janet Stafford, D.O., 5023 Creekview Drive SE, medicine. Graduate of Occidental College, Los Angeles. Stafford interned at Grand Rapids Osteopathic Hospital. In 1960 she opened an office here and "has since been noted for her exceptional practice of holistic medicine."

● Grace Eldering, 3424 Bayberry Drive NW, Sc.D, medical research. Pioneering bacteriologist who helped produce the field study which set the standard for preparing an effective vaccine against

whooping cough.

● Marlene Kapugia, youth involvement. A Grand Rapids Public Schools speech therapist and a Keewano Council of Camp Fire volunteer. Key person in development of the council's program for mentally, physically and emotionally impaired youth. Childhood polio left her a quadriplegic. She died June 6.

● Dorothy Rothfuss, 181 Bon Vista Drive NW, business. First female CPA in western Michigan served 29 years at the Mutual Home Federal Savings and Loan Association as financial vice-president.

● Helen Claytor, 2032 Coit Ave. NE, human rights. She has for years championed human dignity by devoting her time to organizations which exemplified the concern. She has served on the National Women's Committee of Civil Rights and the National Women's Advisory Committee for the Office of Economic Opportunity.