

# **A Requirement that Changed My Life**

By Sarah January

Since the beginning of my journey here at Midland College I have been given so much, wonderful instructors, excellent classes, and encouraging friends. However, I was never expecting the fantastic opportunity MC has given me this past year. I spent my forty volunteer hours at the Recording Library of West Texas and I will be spending many more there in the years to come. I never would have thought I'd have so much fun. I am very grateful to the Recording Library for the chance they've given me, not only to further my education, but to be able to help those around me.

The Recording Library of West Texas has an amazing cause that helps hundreds of people. It's project is close to my heart because I have a sister with dyslexia. Reading doesn't come easy to her and the Recording Library has been an answer to prayer. Their program of reading by listening has given her a love for reading, she's never known before. My sister's reading disability is how I became aware of the library. When I went to see who they were and what they did, I immediately became excited! I dove right in, reading the newspaper, textbooks, even addressing envelopes. I also got to meet some great friends at the library, who have encouraged me along the way. I'll never regret the decision to volunteer at the Recording Library of West Texas.

I have a great love for reading. I've been called a book-worm many times in my life. Once I started volunteering at the library I realized I had been taking something very precious for granted. I can't imagine the pain I would feel if I was ever told I would never be able read again. Even something as mundane as recording myself reading the daily newspaper, has become a true joy. I know there's someone out there who used to get up every morning, get his coffee, and read his newspaper, and for some reason, now

he can't, and I get to read to him. It brings me so much happiness to share the gift of reading, learning, and education to those who need my help.

This all started as just a requirement for a scholarship, but it has become more than just volunteer hours. I love watching the other volunteers working together to solve problems. It makes me smile to read all the testimonies of people who are grateful for places like the Recording Library of West Texas. I know through this place, I've made a difference. I know I'm needed. I'm truly grateful to have been given the privilege of entertaining those who thought they would never enjoy the simple things in life again. Once I had finished with my forty hours at the library, Michael, the Administrator, asked me a question. He said, "Will you be leaving us soon, now that you have your hours?" I looked at him for a moment and just smiled and then said, "I'm not going anywhere!" This is more than just a cause to me, it's a part of who I am.