

## **Roses & Thistles: We pay them for this waste of time?**

*Written by the Register's editorial staff*

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A thistle to five Republicans in the Iowa House of Representatives who confuse temper tantrums with serious lawmaking. The five (Dwayne Alons of Hull, Tom Shaw of Laurens, Larry Sheets of Moulton, Tedd Gassman of Scarville and Greg Heartsill of Melcher-Dallas) introduced an amendment to a budget bill that would slash the pay of four members of the Iowa Supreme Court to punish them for joining the 2009 ruling on same-sex marriage. Would these five set lower salaries for any justices who vote to uphold equal rights for all Iowans? In any case, the amendment would cut the pay of the four offending justices to what members of the Legislature earn. They should be careful what they wish for, however: If this concept were applied to elected officials, someone might get the idea of cutting the pay of state legislators who waste time by introducing amendments that have no hope of becoming law.

A rose to DuPont Pioneer for a contribution to a program that puts youngsters on track toward a science education at Iowa State University. The Johnston-based agribusiness donated \$400,000 to Science Bound, a program ISU established more than 20 years ago to identify and nurture future scientists when they are in middle school. Students selected from schools in Des Moines, Denison and Marshalltown who show promise in math and science must commit to after-school and summer enrichment programs and maintain a 3.0 grade-point average. Science Bound has provided four-year scholarships to about 250 students at Iowa State. Though DuPont Pioneer's gift is the largest corporate donation, about 10 other companies and foundations help support the program. This is a great example of Iowa growing its own future science scholars.

A rose to AMOS, a central Iowa church group, for another approach to getting people on the right track to meaningful careers (see above). Project Iowa helps direct unemployed or underemployed participants into careers that happen to be in demand, such as welding or health care. The project was initiated last year by AMOS (A Mid-Iowa Organizing Strategy), a non-profit group formed by religious leaders and church groups. The program helps participants get training and certification for jobs with local employers looking for workers with specific skills. Project Iowa has assisted 57 participants, and more than 80 percent of those who have completed job training are employed.