



HOLDREGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Giving Back to Education

HHS Alumni Recognition Feature!

Dear HHS Alumni and HPS Foundation Supporters,

Holdrege High School is fortunate to have many very successful graduates. We are excited to continue sharing the stories of some of those HHS Alums thanks to the journalistic talents of Kristine (Long) Jacobson, Class of 1990.

A new school year has begun, and we look forward to another opportunity to participate in the Phelps County Community Foundation's Give2Grow event. Watch for additional information coming soon.

We also welcome your suggestions and comments and encourage you to join the Duster Alumni Association (*see form below*).

Sincerely,

*Teresa Kroll, Chairman
HPS Foundation Committee*

Vickie (Streff) Klein - Class of 1972

Graduate cultivates a culture of philanthropy in Phelps County.

By Kristine Jacobson

After high school, Vickie (Streff) Klein couldn't wait to leave her small hometown and travel the world. She backpacked across Europe with her older brother, Rod, and then settled in Southern California to study interior design.

But, her life circumstances eventually pulled her back to Holdrege, where she raised her four children and now couldn't be happier living among family and friends while still enjoying all the activities to satisfy her hunger for adventure. "I love it here," Vickie said of Holdrege. "You can just do anything you want. We're not missing out on anything, from education to culture to recreation. There's so many fun things here."

And, Phelps County is lucky to have this energetic 1972 HHS graduate among its residents.

From owning a children's clothing store to now serving as the executive director of the Phelps County Community Foundation, Vickie has made an impact through her career and through her volunteer work on countless boards and committees, including a term as president of the Holdrege Board of Education and

mentoring youth in the Teammates program.

Vickie said she enjoys volunteering and participating in challenges. "There's not one thing that one person does that does it all," she said. "It's a group of people who do it. You just have to be willing to be part of that group that makes it happen."

Vickie has served as the executive director of the Phelps County Community Foundation for the past 11 years, raising the foundation's assets from \$5 million in 2003 to \$17.5 million in 2015.

When she started, the PCCF awarded \$60,000 annually to students from 30 scholarship funds. In 2014, PCCF awarded 112 scholarships totaling \$250,000. Two of the scholarship funds were set up as gifts from HHS classes. The class of 1965 and the class of 1966 both offer scholarships to graduating seniors. Both scholarships emerged from

discussions at class reunions with alumni wanting to give back to students in Holdrege.

Under Vickie's leadership, PCCF community grants have grown from \$30,000 annually to \$225,000 annually. She encouraged the PCCF board to start the Phelps County Give 2 Grow Day, which is a one-day giving event designed to boost giving to area non-profit organizations and community projects. In its third year in 2014, Give 2 Grow donors gave a generous \$730,000 to area non-profits.

"It just makes my cry," Vickie said of the success of the event. "I just think people here understand how important it is to support what's right here. You can see that through everything we have here - our hospital, our YMCA, the museum, the library.

"You can just see that people care about what's right here. Just the culture of philanthropy in Phelps County is incredible. It's humbling. It's extremely humbling." Non-profits have told her that this event has expanded their capacity to serve and do good in the community. The 2015 Give 2 Grow event is scheduled for November 19.

Vickie also started the PCCF Future Fund, which is designed to encourage philanthropy and social opportunities among a new generation of givers. She also has launched a new women's giving circle and random acts of kindness grants.

"There's no typical day," Vickie said of her job at PCCF. "One phone call can change your whole day. That's what I like about it because it's diverse. There's a lot of challenges, and that keeps it exciting."

She is thankful to work for a board that allows her and the foundation to grow. "It's a joy to be able to be happy to go to work all day," she said. "That's a gift when you have a career that you love every single day."

Prior to her role at the foundation, Vickie enjoyed a career as a community development manager and development officer at Bethphage Mission, which is now Mosaic, an organization that serves people with intellectual disabilities.



Vickie (Streff) Klein

Before that, she owned the Kids' Kloset clothing store in downtown Holdrege for 8 years.

Vickie said she has always loved working and started at the young age of 13 when she accepted a job at the A & W drive inn. In high school, she worked part-time for Dr. Means, a local dentist, and then at the hospital.

Her senior year, Vickie had enough credits to graduate with only taking two more classes. So, she enrolled in economics and speech and then worked full-time at the hospital as a nurse's aide until she graduated.

During high school, the subject she most enjoyed was Dorothy Larson's English class. "She was so calm and so encouraging," Vickie said of Mrs. Larson. "When you wrote, she made you feel like you were doing something that had value. She had an amazing way about her helping you learn to love the written word. I became an avid reader because of her. And, I still am."

Her math classes with John Teter and economics with Jim Van Marter come in handy today in her career. "He (Mr. Van Marter) really made economics real to me and always made me interested in investments and the markets," she said.

Vickie's list of community volunteer activities is a long one and includes serving on the Holdrege Public School District's Board of Education.

"The school board was a true education," she said. "Being on a school board was totally different than I thought it was." The work involved policies, managing the resources of the school, and hiring and overseeing the superintendent.

She is also a member and past president of Chapter HM PEO Sisterhood, a founding member of the Holdrege Teammates board and a current Teammates mentor, a member of the Holdrege Housing Authority, Holdrege Area Chamber of Commerce past board member, Holdrege Rotary club, Tassel Coordination Council, and former Holdrege Public Schools Foundation committee member.

Vickie's parents, Marcie and Leonard, still live in Holdrege as do most of her 16 grandchildren. Her husband, Dave, died of cancer in 2008. In 2009, she married Mike Klein, whose wife also died in 2008. Together, they enjoy walking, reading and watching the various activities of their blended family and always seeking out the positive side of life.

"I can't think of anything that I could have done that I would enjoy more," Vickie said of her career in Holdrege. "Everything I've done has been fun and challenging, each better than the last."

About Us

The mission of the HPS Foundation is to support and enhance the educational efforts of students and teachers of Holdrege Public Schools by providing funding for innovative and challenging programs, learning experiences, and activities.

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