

KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

currents

Summer 2020

HEEDING THE CALL

With support from Kirkwood,
Elizabeth Gonzalez is
one step closer to working
in her dream career.



A PUBLICATION OF THE **Kirkwood**
FOUNDATION



Dear friends,

What a spring it has been! While the Foundation had great events planned for this spring, COVID-19 turned everything upside down, causing all of our best-laid plans to be upended. However, both the college and the Foundation responded to the crisis true to the Kirkwood spirit by meeting the challenges we face head-on. As we learned early on about our students struggling to make ends meet after many of them lost their jobs during the health crisis, we launched a small emergency fund campaign to raise

money to help as quickly as we could. I'm proud to report in just a few weeks, we raised more than a \$100,000 due to the generosity of all of the Kirkwood donors. If you were one of those donors who responded to our calls for assistance with a donation, please accept our most heartfelt gratitude.

While COVID-19 has captured most of our attention, we actually accomplished many important initiatives this year. At the end of 2019, Kirkwood was reaccredited by the Higher Learning Commission for another 10 years. It's this type of institutional accomplishment that is one of the crucial elements of our strategic plan. Through the use of key performance indicators, we determine which of our efforts are successful and which ones fall short of expectations. These data help us decide where best to allocate our finite resources to have the greatest impact.

A big part of Kirkwood's future is directly tied to the Kirkwood Foundation. The organization works tirelessly to help make a college education more affordable for our students. I'm pleased to say that in the coming months the Foundation will be releasing its own strategic plan outlining how it will go even further to support Kirkwood's mission and vision.

As you can see from above, as well as in the pages of this magazine, COVID-19 has had, and will continue to have, an impact on the college and our students, but through it all, we continue to accomplish our mission. Big or small, our goals are all made possible by the outstanding support we have from the Kirkwood community and across our seven-county region.

Thank you for all that you do for Kirkwood and our students, and I hope you and your family are healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lori Sundberg
President

currents SUMMER 2020

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CREATING A BETTER FUTURE IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

Do you want to make a significant gift that will help educate Kirkwood students for generations to come? You can do it today with a legacy gift through your will. Your gift:

- Costs you nothing during your lifetime.
- Preserves your savings and cash flow.
- Can be changed as needed.
- Allows you to be far more generous than you ever thought possible.
- Is easy to arrange. A simple paragraph added to your will is all it takes.

Interested? Contact Jody Pellerin, Vice President of Advancement (319) 398-5409 or email her at Jody.Pellerin@kirkwood.edu

MAKE AN IMPACT

You're only a Kirkwood student for a couple years, but you're a Kirkwood alumna or alumnus forever.

5
DECADES

3
GENERATIONS

200,000+
ALUMNI

Visit www.kirkwood.edu/foundation/givenow to make a positive impact on the next generation of Kirkwood alumni.

Gifts at every level have a direct impact on Kirkwood students and enable us the opportunity to provide an exceptional learning experience.

Cover photo, Elizabeth Gonzalez.

KIRKWOOD IS OPEN THIS FALL

LEARNING OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS TO INCLUDE **IN-PERSON, ONLINE, AND HYBRID FORMATS**

Kirkwood has announced that it will be open this fall and will resume in-person classes and activities as well as offer online and hybrid learning formats. In most cases, students will have the flexibility to choose options that best suit their learning needs.

For the past few months, the college has been actively developing plans and procedures to safely offer in-person classes on Kirkwood's campuses in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This fall, a variety of learning format options will be available to students in liberal arts/transfer and career and technical programs. Depending on specific program requirements, students will attend classes on campus in smaller class sizes, online with no fixed meeting time, online at a scheduled time, or have the flexibility to choose to learn either in person or online.

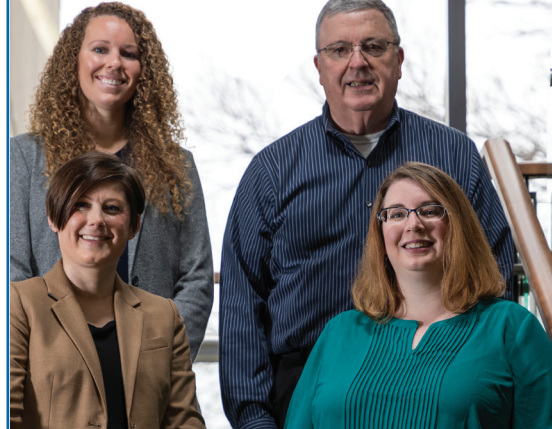
According to Kirkwood Vice President of Academic Affairs Bill Lamb, while being on campus will look different this fall, the college is doing everything it can to cater to the ever-changing needs of students.

"We're putting the finishing touches on the plan to reopen our campuses in a safe and smart way," said Bill. "Kirkwood has always adjusted to the needs of students, but what this virus has forced us to do is take an even deeper look at how we can help our students reach their goals on their terms. While we're going to have to respect social distancing guidelines, I think students are going to be very pleased by the flexible options they will have at Kirkwood to get an affordable education."

In addition to traditional degrees, the college offers in-person and online programs designed for all educational levels, from learning basic job skills and finishing a high school diploma to courses designed to help college graduates advance their careers. For those that are unemployed or underemployed, Kirkwood provides many opportunities for people looking to get retrained, acquire new skills, or even change career paths. Students can also choose from 29 tuition-free degrees with the Last-Dollar Scholarship, a state program aimed at helping Iowans get in-demand, high-paying jobs.

For more information about taking classes this fall, go to www.kirkwood.edu/findyourfuture.

i
95% of Kirkwood
alumni **REMAIN
IN IOWA TO LIVE
AND WORK.**



CAREER SERVICES: A LIFELONG RESOURCE FOR OUR ALUMNI

Did you know that the Career Services office at Kirkwood is a resource not just for current students but for alumni as well? Kirkwood's Career Services office was developed in 2006 because of an evident need to help students, alumni, and community members with job-seeking skills and the career/program decision-making process. Since then, they have grown to a team of four to help ensure they are able to continue to provide the necessary help and resources to our Kirkwood community. If you are looking for guidance in job search and/or career exploration, please know that this is, and will continue to be, a lifelong and FREE resource!

To learn more about the resources available and how the Career Services staff can help, please visit www.kirkwood.edu/careerservices.

To schedule a meeting with the first available coach, please visit calendly.com/careerserviceskcc.



STUDENT FEATURE

KIRKWOOD SUPPORT INSPIRES PTA STUDENT TO SUCCEED

Health care has always called to Elizabeth Gonzalez. Heeding that call has led her to a career that inspires her. She credits that passion to Kirkwood's exceptional Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program.

Physical therapy helps patients overcome or better manage physical disabilities, guiding recovery from injury, pain, surgery, or limitations from disease or other health conditions. In May, Elizabeth graduated from Kirkwood with her A.A.S. degree. After two more classes, she'll have her bachelor's degree in health studies from the University of Iowa.

She is well-prepared, the Cedar Rapids native says. Kirkwood's program offers a solid curriculum, great teaching and hands-on experience through clinical studies with area PT care providers.

Elizabeth attended Prairie High School, which offered dual

**ELIZABETH
GONZALEZ**

enrollment with Kirkwood during her senior year. That allowed her to hone her interest in health care. As she saw family members go through PT, she could see that those who persevered did well.

Flash forward to her Kirkwood experience last summer in two different two-week clinical trainings where Elizabeth worked in in-patient and out-patient care. One of the trainings was at PT Ted Kepros' clinics in Cedar Rapids. There, Elizabeth worked with a PTA, learning how to build relationships with patients and apply different skills to each case.

"It was amazing," Elizabeth recalls. "You don't realize then how much you've learned with that gain in actual experience, but it teaches you way more than just textbooks can."

In her second short-term clinical immersion, she worked in a skilled nursing setting at Meth-Wick, a Cedar Rapids senior living community for those age 55 and older, from retirees to those needing assisted living or nursing care.

Two long-term clinical settings required full-time work: one with in-patient care at University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics over eight weeks; the second with Team Iowa Physical Therapy, an outpatient PT clinic treating a variety of patients/issues over seven weeks.

Elizabeth's biggest problem? Choosing one area to focus on; she enjoyed every scenario Kirkwood's program took her through. She loves getting to know patients, working to find an approach that helps them the most.

"There's been no bad experience," she says. "I just love all of it! I've had good experiences all the way around. It's a tough program but it's worth it."

Elizabeth completed her general education classes at Kirkwood,

then attended the University of Iowa full-time from spring 2016 through spring 2018. She was at Kirkwood full-time since fall 2018. Later this summer, she will take her licensure exam to become an accredited PTA.

Kirkwood has been a solid base of support for her, she stresses. It's affordable, and smaller classes enabled her to ask more questions, know her teachers better, and, ultimately, learn more.

Working since age 17, Elizabeth has balanced work with full-time school. Her parents have been supportive but neither had college experience. Balancing work needs to pay bills and devoting enough time to her studies was growing more difficult. That's when she applied for a Kirkwood Foundation scholarship. She qualified for a Bert and Suzanne Katz Endowed Scholarship for Nursing and Allied Health.

"Kirkwood makes that application process so easy," she says. "You don't have to go through a lot of paperwork. My stress level dropped; I couldn't have done my studies justice without this scholarship."

She's excited for the future and the variety of situations she will encounter as a PTA.

"My love for rehabilitation and the positive effects of physical therapy has only grown with time," Elizabeth explains. "You have to adapt to every situation. There's a lot of innovative thinking behind it. I like that."

COMING FALL 2020!

Digital Arts A.A.S.

This new program will prepare students for careers in commercial photography and videography.



CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AWARDED \$100,000

Congratulations to Joe Greathouse and the Construction Management program for receiving a \$100,000 award at the International Builders' Show in Las Vegas. This award will be used for curriculum development, outreach activities, and faculty training.

Congratulations!



ALUMNA FEATURE

AMY MESCH

DENTAL HYGIENIST CREDITS KIRKWOOD TRAINING FOR SUCCESS



After 20 years in her career, Amy Mesch can still cite key elements of her training through Kirkwood's Dental Hygiene program that have served her well.

Growing up in Ryan, Iowa, she discovered a fascination with all things medical. Her mother was a registered nurse. Her sister-in-law and her best friend were both dental hygienists, which influenced Amy to go into the dental field. As she narrowed her focus after finishing high school, Amy worked toward her associate degree at Kirkwood, which helped her get into the St. Luke's Hospital histologic technician program (histology is the study of the microscopic structure of tissues). She worked in the St. Luke's pathology lab for eight years, preparing tissue samples on slides, which a pathologist reviewed to diagnose any malignancy. She also worked with radiologists and sometimes helped with autopsies.

"I learned so much from that job," Amy says. "But I knew I didn't want

to be in a lab my entire career; I needed to be in the medical field, but I wanted to work directly with patients."

Meeting with Kirkwood counselors helped her choose the Dental Hygiene program. Program coordinator Shaunda Manes (now Shaunda Clark, program director) put her on the right track.

"Meeting with Shaunda helped guide me in the right direction," Amy recalls. "It was a new program to Kirkwood at the time, and very well-organized. The instructors were very helpful. The program only graduated 25 students each year and the smaller class sizes were ideal for me. We got a lot of one-on-one time."

Amy especially enjoyed the clinical experience the program provided. Three days a week students went to the University of Iowa Dental College, and all their clinic floor practice was held there.

"Some of our classes were at the Dental College," she says. "We rotated through many different departments, like geriatrics, pediatrics, and oral surgery. The program touched on so many different levels of dental hygiene."

Her teachers were professionals in the field who could provide real-life examples. She can still recall cleaning the teeth of an inmate at Oakdale Prison, teaching elementary school classes about dental hygiene, and doing oral exams and dental checks at nursing homes.

Hearing loss from working close to high-frequency drills and neck and back strain from hunching over patients are common concerns in dental hygiene work, Amy points out. She wears hearing protection and uses loupes (magnifying lenses that enhance

focus and minimize the need to bend forward to clean patients' teeth). Her employer is very accommodating in making her workplace ergonomically comfortable, she says. Kirkwood's dental program now incorporates education on precautions available.

Today, Amy continues to hone her skills on the hygiene team at the Dental Center, where she started 20 years ago: part-time for two years, then full-time the past 18 years. The variety and challenges she's found with patients keep her work fulfilling.

"We provide a wide range of services to meet each person's dental needs," she explains. "I can honestly say that everything I learned in school I use in my career. And I'm lucky to work at an office with state-of-the-art technology to enhance patient comfort."



Kirkwood has the only **DENTAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM** in the state of Iowa.





During these unprecedented times, we continue to think of each of you and hope you are well and in good health. When the pandemic was officially announced, we were in the midst of planning one of our favorite annual events – Celebration of Success! This year marks our ninth year of shining a spotlight on a few of our finest alums, an outstanding business partner, and a dynamic leader in higher education. The evening is truly a grand celebration! There was great thought to hosting the event in the fall; however, our college leadership and the Alumni Leadership Council have determined the best option is to postpone our ninth annual Celebration of Success to

April 29, 2021. Although we were hopeful that we could hold the celebration, we feel this is the right decision for the safety of all. We are excited to have a new date and we hope you will join us on **Thursday, April 29, 2021, at 6 p.m.** It will be a GREAT night!

Celebrations and socials are a fun way to reconnect, and we are thankful for these opportunities to bring alumni back to campus. There are several other positive ways for alumni to engage with the students, faculty, and staff. Through our Career Services program we can connect alumni to assist with job inquiries, job shadows, internships, and job postings. Our college departments, such as Industrial Technologies, Business and Information Technologies, Agricultural Sciences, Nursing and Allied Health, Global Learning, and Continuing Education, all have advisory boards where alumni can serve as a valuable source of information on current and future industry needs. Alumni are always welcome to enjoy a Visual and Performing Arts performance, a Kirkwood Eagles athletic event, dinner at The Hotel at Kirkwood Center's Class Act Restaurant, and much more!

We also encourage Kirkwood alumni to consider a gift to the college through the Kirkwood Foundation. Gifts presented to the college predominantly support our students through scholarships and the Student Emergency Fund. Scholarships make a significant impact on a student's ability to obtain a higher education, focus on their studies, and be successful in the classroom. The Student Emergency Fund helps students overcome barriers that can negatively interrupt their pathway to success. We are grateful for all the all past, current, and considered gifts to the college. The need continues to be present, and we anticipate those needs to expand as life challenges continually develop.

As you reflect on your college experience, we hope you are filled with joy and gratitude. It is a pleasure for us to continue our relationship with each of you. Once an Eagle, always an Eagle!

Warm regards,

Jody Donaldson
Scholarship & Alumni Officer

Alumni Leadership Council

- Cassandra Brower '16
Iowa State University, Student
- Elizabeth Buch '18
Collins Aerospace
- Steven Crane '96
Farmers & Merchants Savings Bank
- Jackie Delaney '09
Kirkwood Community College
- Jackie Dennis '95
U.S. Probation Northern District of Iowa
- Jeff Driscoll '86, '92
Primus Construction
- Holly Feldmann '11
Kirkwood Community College
- Shawn Gallagher (Chair) '86
The Waldinger Corporation/LADCO, Inc.
- Deborah Gertsen (Past Chair) '83
Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust
- Teri Gibson '79
TrueNorth Companies
- Stephen Hanisch '10
Kirkwood Community College
- Nicole Hasenbank '93
U.S. Bank
- Lisa Huggins '92
Neighbor Insurance
- Carissa Johnson (Chair Elect) '10
Cedar Rapids Freedom Festival
- Nathan Johnson '12
Spotix
- Dawn Jones '06, '14
Wylde1 Marketing & Communication
Strategic Solutions
- Denise Kassis '17
University of Northern Iowa, Graduate Student
- Tina Kubovec '16
UnityPoint Health
- Pete Larson '69
Retired
- Kristin McVay '05
UnityPoint Health
- Jason Pasker '01
Farmers State Bank
- Raphael Robertson '04
Robertson Marketing & Branding
- Tim Ruth '77, '93
McCreedy-Ruth Construction LLC
- Rick Seger '80
Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust
- Brian Stoll '18
Illuminate Digital
- Kasi Tenborg '06
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center
- Don Tyne '76
Linn County Veterans Affairs
- Kyle Wise '19
University of Northern Iowa, Student

EMERGENCY FUND FEATURE



WITH NURSING AS HER GOAL, KIRKWOOD NONTRADITIONAL STUDENT NEVER GIVES UP

A powerful foundation of faith and determination has kept Melanie Matiyabo on a steady path toward becoming a nurse.

With each step, Melanie discovered she could go further. Family support and scholarship help from Kirkwood kept her moving forward. Then, COVID-19 arrived this March, forcing her to readjust. After so much accomplishment, the harsh limitations the pandemic forced on students, health care workers, and life in general left Melanie readapting her plans. Her husband's work hours were cut. She was on the verge of going full-time at Kirkwood. Bills and loan payments loomed.

"I just thought, I'm done," she says.

Federal stimulus checks helped Melanie and her family stay afloat. Then, she read on Kirkwood's website about the Kirkwood Foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Fund and applied. That \$2,000 helped cover bills, insurance, gas, food, and school costs.

"Because of the Emergency Fund, we were able to stay on track with our budgeting because we had a plan," she explains. "I can take a deep breath now. I just had to take the first step and a lot of doors were unlocked afterwards."

Then she finished her Kirkwood spring 2020 honors project on quality healthcare for the elderly in long-term care facilities. Despite the fears of the novel coronavirus, personally and professionally, Melanie never doubted her calling.

"I thought, Either I'm going to be afraid or I'm going to learn enough not to be," she recalls. "I was choosing not to be ignorant and not to be afraid."

Since 2007, when Melanie and her family moved to Iowa from Maine, she has worked in health caregiving, primarily in Iowa City, with Systems Unlimited, a nonprofit providing supported, home-based community living services.

Her sister's suggestion to consider nursing prompted Melanie to sign up for Kirkwood's CNA program in 2018. Melanie discovered the Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) program; in August 2018 IWD provided Melanie a grant covering tuition, books, and a uniform for her work in skilled care. That fall she was certified as a CNA and started work at Pleasantview Retirement Home in Kalona, helping with a variety of care services. There, she found her calling.

"That funding supported me to become independent, educated in skilled care, and to apply it all right here, in my local community, simultaneously," Melanie says. "I wanted to give and to help people, but I couldn't do that without the Iowa Workforce and then Kirkwood."

In January 2019, Melanie began Kirkwood's Nursing program for her associate degree, taking prerequisite classes at Kirkwood's Iowa City Campus while working full-time at Pleasantview.

Through the Kirkwood Foundation, for 2019 – '20, Melanie received a US Bank Scholarship and a Kirkwood Opportunity Scholarship. Next year she will receive the Henry and Sara Katz Nursing Endowed Scholarship.

"Their scholarships were a critical part of me being able to go from CNA to RN," she says.

With the winning balance of financial support, community focus, and academic achievement, Melanie plans to graduate in May 2022 with her A.A.S., then obtain her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), possibly from Mount Mercy University or the University of Iowa.

"I'm working, continuing on as if COVID never happened," she says, looking to the future. "I'm enjoying the possibility of impossibilities."

In the 2018 – '19
academic year,
**FAMILIES SAVED
\$6.4 MILLION IN
COLLEGE TUITION**
by taking advantage
of college credit in
high school (**CCHS**)
opportunities at
Kirkwood.



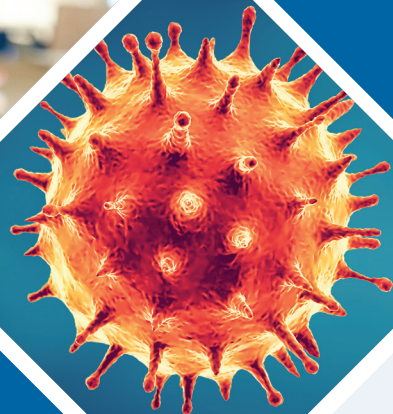
KIRKWOOD HAS BEEN WORKING HARD TO MEET THE URGENT NEEDS OF STUDENTS IMPACTED BY COVID-19

To date, \$1,864,040 in federal grants has been awarded to 1,247 students experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic. These funds have been a lifeline to students who are experiencing job loss and financial distress which may keep them from completing their education. Kirkwood will have additional federal funds available later this summer, but it will not be enough, as we anticipate student needs exceeding the funds available.

The Kirkwood Foundation established a COVID-19 Emergency Fund to help students who don't qualify for federal funding and to supplement student needs over and above the amount of funding the college will receive. Thanks to the generous support of donors and alumni, \$135,000 has been raised for the Emergency Fund and \$8,500 for our food pantry.

Beyond COVID, the needs of today's students are complex — housing uncertainty, food insecurity, poverty, balancing work and school, mental health issues — just to name a few. State and federal funding of higher education has decreased, resulting in higher tuition and increased student loan debt. With all these factors impacting our students, we are committed to growing the Emergency Fund to ensure student success.

If you would like to assist Kirkwood students by making a contribution to the Emergency Fund, please visit <https://www.kirkwood.edu/foundation/givenow>. Checks can be made payable to the Kirkwood Foundation with Emergency Fund written in the subject line and mailed to Kirkwood Foundation, 6301 Kirkwood Blvd. SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. Your generosity will make a huge difference during this unprecedented time.



WASHINGTON HALL AND STUDENT CENTER RENOVATION UPDATES

Kirkwood Ag students will soon be using impressive, brand-new learning spaces. The renovation of Washington Hall is set to be completed in December 2020.

Students, faculty, and staff will be able to take advantage of a brand-new geospatial program area, along with additional classrooms, simulator rooms, and office suites. For students in the Diesel Truck and Diesel Ag programs, an additional 23,000 square feet of shop space have been added to the northeast side of the building. A new student hub on the south side of the building will open, featuring student common space for individual and group use. Also included in the final phase of the renovation will be the addition of simulator rooms to accommodate current and future simulators for combine and sprayer operation, an updated auditorium, and specialized classrooms to be used as flexible learning spaces.

The Student Center renovation project is underway and set for completion in fall 2022. During this time, classroom and office locations have moved. If you are visiting campus during the renovation period, visit www.kirkwood.edu/renovations for updated relocation maps.

The Student Center project includes a complete renovation of all three floors of Iowa Hall and Mansfield Center and additions to the north and south sides of the building. The new Student Center will include features such as:

- Study and leisure areas
- Centralized welcome desk and information station
- New campus store
- Centralized student services
- Larger, state-of-the-art meeting space
- Flexible and collaborative meeting space
- New multicultural and LGBTQ centers
- Enhanced café and new coffee bar
- New International Programs and ELA offices
- New and expanded Veterans Lounge
- Improved Art Gallery and new Fine Arts District

KIRKWOOD'S MUSIC PROGRAM

has been awarded accreditation with the National Association of Schools of Music, **1 OF 3 COMMUNITY COLLEGES NATIONWIDE**. One of the first in Iowa to receive this award, joining an elite group of community colleges that hold music curriculum and delivery to the highest standards.

For more renovation updates, visit www.kirkwood.edu/renovations.



KIRKWOOD NAMES PELLERIN VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT

Kirkwood Community College has named Jody Pellerin the next vice president of advancement and executive director of the Kirkwood Foundation. Previously, she worked as the director of planned and endowed giving for the college.

Pellerin will now lead the Kirkwood Foundation, which has one of the largest community college scholarship programs in the country. The college has more than \$3.2 million in scholarships available to students annually.

To Pellerin, stepping into a senior leadership role at Kirkwood is an exciting opportunity.

"It has been a privilege to work as part of the development team for the Kirkwood Foundation for the past three years," said Pellerin. "Kirkwood is an outstanding community college and an incredible asset to the communities it serves. I am truly honored to be given the opportunity to serve in a leadership role with this outstanding institution, and to help donors invest in its diverse population of students as they train to become our future workforce."

Prior to Kirkwood, Pellerin served as the executive director of the Xavier High School Foundation, director of public support for the American Red Cross Grant Wood Area Chapter, and assistant executive director for the former Regis-LaSalle Foundation.

A member of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), Pellerin is also part of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), the Cedar Rapids Estate Planning Council, the Eastern Iowa Planned Giving Council, the Willis Dady Homeless Shelter Development Committee, and the Cedar Rapids Downtown Rotary. Her past community involvement includes president of the Eastern Iowa Planned Giving Council as well as serving as a board member of the Old Creamery Theatre, Eastern Iowa Chapter of AFP, and Cedar Rapids Daybreak Rotary. She is a 2009 graduate of Leadership for Five Seasons and was named one of the Corridor Business Journal's Forty under 40 in 2006.

Pellerin earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Iowa and received her Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) certification in 2001.



Kirkwood FOUNDATION

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