

KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# currents

Fall 2018

## A Recipe for Culinary Success

Hard work, responsibility, and passion are the driving forces behind one student's achievements.



A PUBLICATION OF THE

**Kirkwood**  
FOUNDATION



Dear friends,

The first few months serving as President of Kirkwood Community College have been very exciting. As a Midwest native and longtime educator, I have always been familiar with the great things happening at this college. For more than 50 years, Kirkwood has had a stellar reputation in the world of higher education. Now that I'm here, I'm pleased to say that this institution has exceeded even my highest expectations.

It was quickly evident that Kirkwood is an amazing place. Incredible things are happening on our campuses every single day. No matter what program our students are studying, the experience of getting a Kirkwood education is literally changing lives one student at a time.

However, affordability is still a major barrier for many people to get an education. Even though Kirkwood has made great efforts to keep tuition one of the lowest in the state, the overall cost of an education continues to rise — and with it so does the number of people who struggle to pay for college. That's why your continued support of Kirkwood is so important.

Our data show that students who receive scholarships are significantly more likely to graduate with a degree and less debt. As the majority of our graduates stay in our seven-county region, when they succeed — we all succeed. Your support is crucial not only to their success, but also to the success of the employers that hire them when they leave Kirkwood. That's one of the keys to a healthy regional economy, which is good for everyone.

As you read this magazine, you'll find stories that inspire you. They are small snapshots of the Kirkwood community, but they demonstrate the great impact of this wonderful college. You'll see that this institution is more than just a place where people get a college degree. It's also a place where people pursue their passions and lives are transformed. It's where academia and business and industry collide to build our workforce. Most importantly, it's where the community comes together to create a brighter future — for all of us.

Sincerely,



Dr. Lori Sundberg  
President



## NOVEMBER

- 1 – 3 Fall Musical: Big Fish  
Ballantyne Auditorium  
7:30 p.m.
  
- 4 Fall Musical: Big Fish  
Ballantyne Auditorium  
2 p.m.
  
- 5 Art Exhibit: Laura Saylor Smith  
Poured, Painted and Hammered  
Iowa Hall Gallery  
Monday – Friday (through Dec. 7)  
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
  
- 7 World Culinary Tour Dinner featuring Polynesia  
The Class Act Restaurant  
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center  
5 – 9 p.m.
  
- 17 Women's Basketball  
vs. Triton College  
Johnson Hall  
3 p.m.
  
- 29 Kirkwood Steel Band Recital  
Ballantyne Auditorium  
11:15 a.m.
  
- 30 Cookie Staycation  
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center

## DECEMBER

- 5 – 6 World Culinary Tour Dinner featuring Germany  
The Class Act Restaurant  
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center  
5 – 9 p.m.
  
- 8 Kirkwood Concert Band  
Ballantyne Auditorium  
7:30 p.m.
  
- 12 Men's Basketball  
vs. Southeastern Community College  
Johnson Hall  
7 p.m.

## JANUARY

- 9 Women's Basketball  
vs. DMACC  
Johnson Hall  
5:30 p.m.
  
- 19 Men's Basketball  
vs. NIACC  
Johnson Hall  
3 p.m.





Kirkwood was always  
a part of my family.

We grew up seeing how important  
the college was to [my parents], such  
an important part of their lives.



—Kent Statler



# STATLER FAMILY

## *giving continues to keep Kirkwood growing*

The Statler family has embodied the best of what Kirkwood has offered for decades, literally helping the Kirkwood Agricultural Sciences Department grow from the ground up.

Larry Statler started the program in 1968 and led it until his retirement in 1990. His wife, Jan, was his assistant for nine years. Together they shaped and built a foundation of excellence that ultimately led to Kirkwood's current recognition as the largest two-year agriculture department in the country. The phrase "labor of love" describes Larry and Jan.

In honor of their years of service and commitment to the college, Kirkwood this year dedicated the Statler Agricultural Sciences Center at Washington Hall. In addition, their son Kent and his wife Julie gave \$1 million to the Kirkwood Foundation to fund scholarships for agricultural sciences students. Kent Statler, a Kirkwood Foundation board member and Rockwell Collins executive, wanted to honor his parents.

"Kirkwood was always a part of my family," he says. "We grew up seeing how important the college was to them, such an important part of their lives."

He recalls the department partnering with College Community schools to bring grade school students to see the livestock. And, growing up, "often we'd get a call on Sunday morning, before we went to church, from a nearby farmer that the Kirkwood cows were out and we needed to get them back in," Kent recalls with a smile. "We were close enough to get there pretty quick."

Back then, the department was housed in an old farmhouse renovated for offices and classroom space, Kent remembers.

Larry Statler was a 29-year-old teacher when he was named to head the agriculture department at

Area Ten, now known as Kirkwood Community College. Coming from Waverly-Shell Rock Community Schools, his job was to develop the first courses — including farm machinery mechanics — to train farm operators, elevator managers, livestock buyers and other specialists in the field. The goal was to train students to keep pace with the advancing technology of modern agriculture and agriculture-related businesses.

The first students in the production agriculture program started the first livestock enterprise in the spring of 1969 — 12 sows and a beef cow herd of 40 purebred Angus.

Today, the program features a 600-acre working farm with a 300-head beef complex, a swine complex, a 1.5-acre vineyard and a full production winery. It also includes the 32,000-square foot horticulture building with a greenhouse.

During the 1980's farm crisis, Kent remembers his parents embracing rural diversification as a way to develop alternate ways for farmers to better profit from farms and livestock. His parents started Safari Iowa, a pheasant hunting preserve that became their second career, Kent notes. They welcomed hunters in the fall on the 500 acres; his mother fed all who came.

"They both have a passion for agriculture and my dad has a passion for education," Kent says.

In his work with Rockwell, Kent is continually impressed with the efforts Kirkwood makes to work with the business community to address their needs.

"It's very refreshing to see a college of education centered on the community's needs and the students' needs," Kent points out.

The naming of the building and the Statlers' gift were perfectly timed: this is the 50th anniversary of the department's start.



# TIM RUTH

## *building buildings — and Kirkwood students' futures*



“  
I'll take every kid  
from Kirkwood  
I can possibly get.  
”

—Tim Ruth

After 25+ years in construction, Tim Ruth is an experienced builder — but he's not only constructing buildings. He's also helping build careers by continuously mentoring and hiring many students in Kirkwood's Building Construction Technology Program.

Ruth, partner and founder of McCreedy-Ruth Construction in Riverside, has been a steady advocate for Kirkwood since he graduated from Kirkwood in 1993.

Growing up near Iowa City, Ruth attended Kirkwood after high school graduation in 1975.

"I really had no clue what I wanted to do," he admits. He took general education classes for one year before quitting to work for area contractors. In 1990, he started

night classes at Kirkwood while working full-time in construction.

"I was kind of a hybrid-type student," he says. "I paid for it as I went."

At Merit Construction in Cedar Rapids, Ruth hired his first Kirkwood construction student as an intern.

"I wanted to be a connection, a place for young people to go for experience," Ruth explains. "Kirkwood was great to me, so I wanted to be good to them."

Since then, Ruth has hired as many as five interns at a time — "as many as we can get" — and worked with them, teaching them everything about building and remodeling.

That sort of support has continued to be an integral element of everything Ruth does. He partners with Kirkwood, advocating for merging hands-on training and relevant classroom instruction to better train students to succeed.

"The flexibility that allowed me to succeed and not interfere with my job — that was the best thing about Kirkwood," he says.

As the head of Kirkwood's industry advisory committee, Ruth successfully argued to adapt physics classes to better apply to the trades. Good students were failing the class, one Ruth says he also struggled to pass.

"We cannot set kids up to fail," he explains. "We need to train them the best way possible so they can do well wherever they go."

For example, this summer, 14 Kirkwood construction students built a house designed for special-needs adults. Ruth paid the tuition for three students who work for him so they'd gain that experience. Ruth is also working with Kirkwood to establish a residential building apprenticeship program,

partnering with contractors to hire students. Partnerships like that are a win-win for everyone.

Ruth also works at state and national levels to better prepare students interested in the trades. He is past president of the Iowa Homebuilders Association and the Greater Iowa City Area Home Builders Association. The National Association of Home Builders honored him as member of the year in 2017, and he is on a task force looking at the shortage of skilled trade workers.

Ruth wants to see industry classes and departments merge into a larger format, working more closely with Kirkwood's regional centers. It would tie in nicely with the Eastern Iowa Chapter of Architecture, Construction and Engineering (ACE) Mentoring Program led by Kirkwood, which pairs students in Kirkwood's seven-county area with industry mentors like Ruth to design and build a variety of facilities.

Ruth envisions Kirkwood as a purveyor for a technical high school with diverse trade programs. Junior and senior high school students interested in the trades could take free classes.

"Builders need to get involved, work with Kirkwood and mentor kids. It helps get them working and helps lower student debt," he explains. "Our future is our young people."

Every participant gains from these partnerships. Ruth is proving that — every project he hires Kirkwood construction students for gives them a taste of their future.

"I'll take every kid from Kirkwood I can possibly get," Ruth says. "We're very fortunate to have Kirkwood. And the more we give back to the institution, the better they become. Somebody gave for us, so we need to give back."





*On Sept. 12, over 150 alums enjoyed complimentary spirits and hors d'oeuvres provided by Kirkwood's very own culinary alumni.*

*Alumni got an authentic look at today's advanced manufacturing world, including a virtual reality demonstration and a tour of the Kirkwood wind turbine hub.*

## Save the Date

### Kirkwood Alumni & Friends Celebration of Success

Join us for an evening of celebration, eclectic food, wonderful company and more! Celebration of Success recognizes three distinguished Kirkwood Community College alumni, an outstanding leader in higher education and an invaluable partner to the college.

Thursday, April 25, 2019  
The Hotel at  
Kirkwood Center



Tell us about a successful grad!

*Nominate a Kirkwood alumna or alumnus who is making a difference, improving the community or accomplishing great achievements by visiting*

**[www.kirkwood.edu/nomination](http://www.kirkwood.edu/nomination)**

## alumni and friends

### Alumni Leadership Council

Melanie Abu-Nameh '01  
Kirkwood Community College

Chad Bosch '96  
Bosch Financial Inc.

Cassandra Brower '16  
Iowa State University student

Lorlei Christner '90  
Van Meter Inc.

Teri Copler '80  
TrueNorth Companies

Jeff Driscoll '86, '92  
Primus Construction

Shawn Gallagher (Chair-Elect) '86  
Gdinger Corporation/LADCO, Inc.

Deborah Gertsen (Chair) '83  
Cedar Rapids Bank and Trust

Stephen Hanisch '10  
Kirkwood Community College

Nicole Hasenbank '93  
U.S. Bank

Michael Ivester '88  
ITC Midwest

Dawn Jones '93

Dennis Jordan '89  
Mortenson Construction Company

Denise Kassis '17  
University of Northern Iowa student

Mary Klinger (Past Chair) '88, '14  
St. Luke's Health Care Foundation

Brad Marcus '90  
U.S. Bank

Kristin McVay '05  
UnityPoint Health

Brenda Moore '72  
Retired, University of Iowa Health Care

Jason Pasker '01  
Farmers State Bank

Andy Petersen '03  
iHeartMedia

Robyn Rieckhoff '92  
Cedar Rapids Freedom Festival

Mary Schneckloth '82  
Kirkwood Community College

Rick Seger '80  
Cedar Rapids Bank and Trust

Geret Smith '16  
University of Iowa student

Chris Wheeler '86  
Point Builders LLC

Virginia Wilts '84  
Cedar Rapids Bank and Trust





## Basil Hadjis Memorial Scholarship

If the Basil Hadjis Memorial Culinary Arts Scholarship seems tailor-made for Allie Lanham, there's good reason: the family designed it with her in mind.

Allie worked for Basil and Lynn Hadjis' daughter Katie at White Star Ale House in Cedar Rapids, where they became friends. She did not know Katie's father was a renowned Cedar Rapids chef until he died, last December, at age 62.

The Hadjis family established the scholarship to honor Basil's passion for culinary arts and to inspire the next generation to fulfill their dreams. The family's goal is to raise \$50,000 to provide one tuition-free semester (\$2,500) each year in perpetuity to the scholarship winner.

Allie's chef teacher and competition coach encouraged her to apply for the scholarship. Katie told her to go for it "because you're the best fit."

The scholarship will cover Allie's tuition for her second year in the program, plus work uniforms and books. Now she won't have to work three jobs while finishing her degree. Most importantly, she says, she will graduate debt-free — a goal that once seemed impossible.

"This scholarship means I can focus on class and doing well," Allie says. "It makes it so I can choose school first over work, and takes the stress off my parents and myself."

Allie says she looks forward to "the opportunity to honor Basil Hadjis and carry on his legacy of being a good chef. I'll be representing that."

Chef Basil Hadjis' Scholarship Celebration was held on Oct. 11, at The Hotel at Kirkwood Center.

For more information on this special fundraising dinner, or to make a donation to Chef Basil's Culinary Scholarship, visit [www.chefbasils.com](http://www.chefbasils.com).

# ALLIE LANHAM

## *scholarship winner has the recipe for success*

At 22, Allie Lanham has already mastered the perfect ingredients for culinary success: attitude, skill and training.

This Kirkwood culinary program student shines through her salt-of-the-earth wisdom about being responsible, working hard and giving her heart to forge a meaningful path.

In August, Allie's talent helped her receive the first Basil Hadjis Memorial Culinary Arts Scholarship. [See related story]

Allie grew up in a healthy, Cedar Rapids family grounded in simple but strong values. By example, her parents showed her the value of a good work ethic. Her mother's homemade dinners and cooking skills fed Allie's own interest in cooking. But Allie struggled with her weight.

"Since I was little, weight was always an issue," she recalls. "Eventually, I was sick of being bullied. I wanted to show everybody they were wrong."

With her mom's encouragement and her own determination, Allie learned to cook differently, reading chefs' blogs and other resources. In her high school junior year, she lost 70 pounds. In her senior year, she became a vegetarian and chose Kirkwood to get an associate degree in dietetics, the study of diet and its effect on nutrition. Allie also worked at Granite City Food and Brewery, where a co-worker raved about Kirkwood's culinary program. Blending dietetics with culinary skills seemed like a natural mix for a great career.

"I decided I didn't want a desk job. I

wanted to be more hands-on and creative," Allie explains. "I love being creative. Being a chef is the perfect combination of the two for me."

Joining Kirkwood's culinary program last year, Allie's Kirkwood instructors advised her to "do your talent justice" by cooking and serving in top-notch Cedar Rapids restaurants: White Star Ale House and Caucho.

Soon, Allie tapped into the critical network of culinary connections. Her boss at Local Pour and Street Food connected her with Cobble Hill's owner, who also owns Caucho.

"In this field, it's all about who you know," she notes. "Reputation is everything."

Kirkwood's culinary program is an integral part of The Hotel at Kirkwood Center, a four-diamond hotel. With its Class Act restaurant as a training base, culinary students work, learn and shine. The Kirkwood program's distinction ranks it at the top nationally, Allie says.

"The teachers here are the best I've had in all my schooling," Allie notes. "Their excitement in what they're doing has really inspired me. I respect them so much. They are so supportive. I never miss a day of class; I want to be a part of everything they want me to do."

Classes have about 12 students, maximum, she says. Cooking classes are even smaller, teachers are





The teachers here are the best I've had in all my schools. Their excitement in what they are doing has really inspired me. I really love it so much. I never miss a day.



—Allie Lanham

always available and student camaraderie is strong.

Allie was also chosen for the Kirkwood Culinary Competition team, in which first-year culinary students shadow second-year students. They develop dishes and compete statewide. Out of eight teams statewide in the Iowa Pork Association competition, hers took third place. In the Riverside competition, they took second out of six.

“Every opportunity makes me more excited and passionate about this,” Allie says. “Every day I learn something new. It’s helped me see this is really what I want to do.”

After graduation, Allie plans to continue cooking at Caucho and serving at White Star and see where that takes her. She feels sure of herself and her future.

“This program has already surpassed my expectations,” she says. “My ultimate goal is to teach cooking classes in a culinary school. Things will fall into place.”





# KIRKWOOD WELCOMES DR. LORI SUNDBERG

## Kirkwood's Fifth President



In August, Kirkwood Community College welcomed a new president to the family, Dr. Lori Sundberg. Sundberg became the fifth president in Kirkwood history and the first female to hold that position at the college.

"I can't tell you how excited I am to be here," Sundberg said. "This institution is a globally recognized leader in higher education where student success has always been a focus, and I am thrilled to be a part of our next chapter."

Sundberg is a recognized higher education professional with 22 years of experience as an educator and administrator, the last 12 years of which have been at the senior administrative level. Originally involved in institutional research, her professional background also includes experience in marketing,

grant writing, human resources, negotiations and academic affairs. She has several published works covering an extensive range of topics including college partnerships with business, enrollment, marketing research, distance education and leadership, and has been a presenter at various conferences on many of these same topics.

Sundberg holds a Doctorate in Business Administration with a concentration in Management from St. Ambrose University, a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing from Western Illinois University, a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in Economics and History from Knox College, and is also an alumna of Carl Sandburg College.

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## NEW FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GREG NEUMEYER

Kirkwood also welcomes Greg Neumeyer as the new executive director of the Kirkwood Foundation. As Vice President, Advancement of Kirkwood Community College, Greg leads the Foundation and its initiatives to provide private-sector resources and support for the college. He works closely with the Foundation board and college leadership to carry out the vision, mission and strategies of the Foundation.

Before joining Kirkwood in 2018, Greg worked in legal and financial services professions in the Cedar Rapids area for nearly 30 years. He holds his B.S.B.A. and J.D. from Creighton University.

Greg is familiar with the Kirkwood Foundation, having served on its board of directors for nearly 10 years, as well as chairman of the investment committee and member of the executive committee. In the community, he is past board chair of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation and United Way of East Central Iowa. Currently, he is on the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance Business Support Innovation Council and is a member of the Rotary Club of Cedar Rapids, the Cedar Rapids Area Estate Planning Council and the Linn County Bar Association.





# SAVE THE DATE!

Alumni & Friends

## Appreciation Sale



Thursday – Friday

**Nov 8 – 9**

8 a.m. – 5 p.m.



**\$20 to \$150 off • Tax Free! • Save BIG on Apple and Windows!**

Preorder now to guarantee your device.

Trade in your old device to save even more!

Alumni get 30% off apparel at the Bookstore.

**EagleTech**  
Authorized Campus Store

# Kirkwood FOUNDATION

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