

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

DENNY DALMASSO

Denny Dalmasso “lived and breathed” Spoon River College. He graduated from Canton Community College in 1974, he taught at Spoon River College, and he was a founding member of the Alumni Association, serving as its President at the time of his death. He established the Foundation’s Alumni Association Scholarship making a contribution at this event each year.

After graduating from Canton High School in 1971, Denny began his studies at SRC when it was still in a building downtown. By the time he received his degree in 1974, the college had moved to its current site—with the help of Denny and other students. While at SRC, he participated in the yearbook and the newspaper.

He later attended Bradley University and received his BS in Education. It was SRC’s Marian Guyton who inspired him to become a teacher. Denny returned to Bradley for his Master’s degree, which he achieved in 1984.

Denny taught and coached athletics at all levels of education. He also wrote for the Canton Daily Ledger and the Fulton County Democrat, covering sports. He penned humorous and well-informed opinion columns for many years.

Denny’s passion was most evident in the students he touched. Those students, and his love for education, are his legacy.

Denny passed away on August 4th. He is survived by his children, Julie and Erik, and his grandchildren, Madison and Drew.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

STEPHANIE HERINK

Stephanie Herink graduated from SRC in 1988 with an Associate in Science degree. Transferring to WIU, she then earned a Bachelor of Science degree, graduating with honors in 1990, focusing in psychology and sociology. She later earned a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Illinois in 1995 and became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in 1999.

Stephanie has dedicated her life to helping children, families, and those experiencing conflict or difficulties in their lives. Her work includes in-home therapy, out-patient therapy for mental health problems, individual and group therapies, domestic violence training to police, conflict resolution, and much more. Although Stephanie has performed her work throughout the country, she is now back in central Illinois and is currently employed at the Children’s Home Association of Illinois as clinical director in the Youth Farm Residential Treatment Program.

Stephanie has been actively involved with the United Methodist Church throughout her life, first attending Shields Chapel as a young child. She is also a member of the Altrusa Club in Canton and participates in the Fulton County Relay for Life.

According to Stephanie, “My time at Spoon River College was an opportunity for me to grow in confidence in myself and to learn that I was capable of more than I ever thought.” She advises high school seniors not to overlook the value of what SRC has to offer them. “Spoon River College provides an amazing start to the college experience. Small classrooms allow for individual attention and support; financially, it can’t be beat...”

FRED MIMS

Fred Mims has been a staff member of the Iowa Athletics Department for the past 38 years, having served as assistant baseball coach, athletic counselor, assistant athletic director, and associate athletic director. His responsibilities have included NCAA, Big Ten Conference and institutional rules compliance, and student athlete support services. He also supervised the Iowa wrestling and baseball programs as well as the department’s mental health program. Fred was also asked to serve as Interim Director of the University’s Center of Diversity and Enrichment for the 2014-2015 academic year.

After attending Spoon River College, where he earned an Associate of Arts degree, Fred received his BA in English from the University of Iowa, as well as his Master’s in Higher Education.

As a student, Fred was a multi-sport athlete and was a two time All Big Ten first team selection in baseball, having led his team to the College World Series. He also played for his country in the 1972 Pan American Games and won a silver medal. Fred also played professional baseball for the Houston Astros organization in the 1970s until he experienced a career-ending injury.

About SRC, Fred states, “SRC was an important beginning to my college education. I was able to develop my reading and writing skills and an appreciation for modern literature.” He further states that he will always remember the close relationships he developed with peers and the faculty and staff while he attended Spoon River College.

Fred and his wife Susan have four children—Jeremy, Monica, Corey, and Kelsey—all outstanding students and athletes in their own right. Although he officially retired this year, Fred continues to remain active in his community and at the University of Iowa.

JASON PARKINSON

Jason Parkinson produced his first theatrical production in the fifth grade. That, and his entrepreneurial spirit, enabled him to open his first business—DJ4U, a mobile DJ service—while in high school. That company still thrives today.

Jason graduated from Spoon River College in 2003 with an Associate of Arts Degree and a certificate in Web Design. He transferred to Illinois State University and earned a Bachelor’s degree in Mass Communications. Then Jason became a popular on-air talent with Regent Broadcasting and a Brand Manager/ Digital Program Director with Townsquare Media.

Jason left radio in 2012 and, with his business partner, Jake Hamann, launched OneFire, a Peoria-based development and design team. Serving as vice president and COO, Jason oversees the strategic

operations of the firm, including marketing and communication strategies across multiple delivery channels.

Jason says, “Spoon River College means a quality education that equips you for the real world without the headache of student debt. I received a great education at SRC and got my general education requirements out of the way. The small class size and one-on-one instruction gave me the foundation I needed to go to a four-year institution and concentrate on my major.”

The keynote speaker at the 2015 SRC Commencement Exercises, Jason now lives in Peoria with his wife Amber and their son, Takeo. He is a member of Rotary International, serves as a Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University Coordinator, and is a graduate of the Disney Institute’s “Disney’s Approach to Creativity & Innovation.”

SCOTT SNOWMAN

As a Canton native, Scott Snowman knows the value of hometown pride in small communities. He says, “SRC is one of the most resilient places I have known in my life. It is full of persistent, hard-working, creative, passionate people who don’t give up. To me, SRC is part of the very fabric of this community.”

Scott is an educator, an artist, and a business-owner and succeeds at all three. He has received the Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year Award, an Excellence in Teaching Award, and a Teacher of the Year Award during his 30 years in education.

Scott states, “At SRC, we WANT our students. We want ALL of them because we know that a diverse classroom is good for everyone. SRC is outstanding in what it provides the students and the community. The programs we offer are top notch.”

As a professional artist, Scott’s artwork has been displayed at a wide variety of locations, including Dickson Mounds State Museum, Western Illinois University Gallery, Lakeview Museum, and the Springfield Art Association Gallery. He has collaborated with wife, Tracy, on many projects such as large scale murals, photography, digital design, drawing, ceramics, painting and publishing. They jointly own and operate Snowman Studios.

Scott, Tracy, and their two children—Taylor and Jake—all live, work, and educate in the central Illinois.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

DENNIS CRAWFORD

Dennis Crawford attended Canton Community College for one course as an undergraduate student at Bradley University and received his Bachelor’s degree in Marketing in 1971. At Bradley, Dennis was a very successful tennis player, earning a place in Bradley’s Athletic Hall of Fame. Now, in his retirement, Dennis has come full circle as a founder of the new Canton Area Tennis Organization—a group which teaches local youth the strategies and lessons of playing tennis.

After graduating from college, Dennis and his wife, Paula, came to own the family business, Crawford's Home Furnishings. Although the business faced many challenges along the way, Crawford's still stands as one of Canton's most cherished businesses.

Dennis has been involved in the Canton community his entire life, including the Canton Area Chamber of Commerce, the Canton Family YMCA, and the Canton Main Street program. He was named the Chamber's Business Person of the Year in 2007. Through the years, the Crawford family has supported or sponsored many community events.

Dennis continues to support Spoon River College as well. He has been involved in SRC's literacy program and helped establish a permanent, named endowed scholarship with the SRC Foundation to honor his parents.

Dennis states, "I was fortunate to have been touched and helped by so many people in Canton. It all started here and continues here."

DISTINGUISHED SRC RETIREE AWARD

BOB OWEN

Bob Owen grew up on a farm near Maquon, Illinois. His parents, Merrill and Alice, instilled in him a solid work ethic that kept him busy on the farm and in school.

After graduating from Knoxville High School, Bob attended Canton Community College from 1967 to 1969. He was naturally attracted to the Farm Machine Technology program offered at that time.

After graduating, Bob served three years in the Navy and worked in mechanics jobs at Widmer Farm Store, Sampson Implement, and Westbay Equipment.

It was in 1983 that Bob decided to apply for an instructor's position at Spoon River College. The beginning of his 25 years at SRC began with his daughter, Ashley, being born on the first day on the job. Bob taught in the Farm Machine Technology and the Diesel Tractor Technology programs at SRC from 1983 to 2008. In 2008, he retired from what he describes as "the best job I ever had" and "the only job I ever wanted."

Bob and his wife, Cindy, now live near Gilson and spend their time with family. In addition to their two daughters, Emily and Ashley, they are grandparents to Ashlyn, Kyla and Patton.