

## **Distinguished Alumni**

### **Jodi Helgeson (1977)**

The nomination for Distinguished Alumni Jody Helgeson describes her as the type of individual that the Adams-Friendship School District strives to shape, mold, inspire, and graduate to be a positive and productive member of the community. She sets a stellar example of quality, reliability, and character with an inner fire to serve others. She has soundly applied the lessons of her core education and embraced the principles that life is a journey of learning and service that brings fulfillment and joy while elevating the quality of life for everyone she encounters each and every day. Jodi shared her story as part of the A-F Academic Hall of Fame induction process.

I graduated from Adams-Friendship High School with honors in 1977. I worked part time during my senior year at the Adams County Abstract and Title Company which gave me an opportunity to learn about business in Adams County. Fundamental classes throughout my years in the Adams-Friendship School District helped me to prepare for a career. These fundamentals included Algebra (for computer programming and coding issues), Bookkeeping (for business and accounting), Typing (for data entry) Speech (for both oral and written presentations). Working for various departments such as the library and school store developed my work ethic. Home Economics taught me how to be financially responsible. I had a checking and savings account at age 16 as well as a car. I learned to cook and sew which I still love today.

In 1995, I was appointed by Governor Thompson as Adams County Register of Deeds. I was elected for this position in 1996 serving until my retirement in January of 2023. I served as president of the Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association and the Wisconsin Land Information Association, a statewide organization for geographic information system professionals. I also served as the Adams County Land Information Officer which means I prepared and coordinated grants and various geographic information system activities within the county. In emergencies such as wildfires, tornadoes, and floods, I served as the Public Information Officer for Adams County Emergency Management. Prior to becoming the Register of Deeds, I was a licensed title agent for Dane County Title which has an office in Friendship. I obtained a paralegal certificate online through McGraw Hill Education and graduated as a Certified Public Manager through the University of Wisconsin-Government Outreach Program. I am an active member of the community participating in the 4H program, the Adams County Historical Society, Trinity Lutheran Church of Arkdale, the Adams County Fair and as a volunteer at various activities throughout the county including the After School Library which helped me remain connected to students.

While I did not pursue post-secondary studies, with the exception of certification classes, I feel that my A-F teachers and classes prepared me well for my future. I was able to stay in Adams County, raise a family, and remain gainfully employed. My children also attended and graduated from the Adam-Friendship School District. They each pursued a post-secondary education and are both in management positions with their respective companies.

Many of the teachers in our community, past and present, volunteer their time and talents to community activities such as local theater and youth leadership. Whether we stay in the Adams-Friendship School District community or live elsewhere, we learn from their example and are fortunate to have a great school district.

During her career, Jodi received the President's Award for Outstanding Service from the Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association, two Distinguished Service Awards, and the Allen H. Miller Sustained Service Award from the Wisconsin Land Information Association. The Adams-Friendship Academic Hall of Fame is proud to add to these honors with her induction as a Distinguished Alumni.