

## News Release

# Northwest School of Agriculture Alumni Honored Top Aggies on Saturday, June 30, 2007, at U of M Crookston

By Corby Kemmer, Elizabeth Tollefson, Kathryn Webster on Monday, July 2, 2007



Standing (l to r): Director of Development Corby Kemmer, Dr. Patrick McKeever, Lloyd Petri, UMC Chancellor Charles H. Casey. Seated: Ray Dusek and Arlene Knutson Grage.

CROOKSTON, Minn. (July 2, 2007) – Some 200 alumni and friends of the former Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) returned June 29 - 30, 2007, for the annual reunion at the University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC) campus. The gathering was a time for alumni to celebrate Top Aggie Award honors, learn more about what's happening on campus, share memories, catch up with old friends and support efforts at UMC to serve the northwest region of Minnesota.

Four alumni were named Top Aggies for 2007 and recognized for their exemplary commitment and service to community, church, education and family as well as their profession. This year's honors go to Arlene Knutson Grage '42, Fergus Falls, Minn.; Ray Dusek '57, Crookston, Minn.; Patrick McKeever '62, St. Paul, Minn.; and Lloyd Petri '67, Minneapolis, Minn. The Top Aggie award is the highest tribute an NWSA alumnus can receive.

Top Aggie Arlene Knutson Grage '42 spent her life loving and caring for children as a daycare provider. During a four year break from child care, Grage opened and operated a children's clothing shop. Grage has dedicated her life to her children, as well as the children she cared for out of her home. She is the recipient of the Outstanding Family Child Care Provider of the Year for her work with children. Along with her husband, Don, Grage was chosen to represent the Northwest Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and go to Papua New Guinea, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Lutheran faith. She has served on the board of the Lutheran Church Women and on many committees.

Top Aggie Ray Dusek '57 has focused his career on educating children over the past 45 years. For 40 years, he has been an elementary school principal in the Crookston public schools and recently retired from Cathedral School in Crookston. Dusek has been active in both church and community activities, such as president of the NWSA Alumni Association Board, past director of the Crookston Chamber of Commerce and past president of Western Division Elementary School Principals Association. He has received awards from the National Elementary School Principals Association and the Distinguished Minnesota Elementary School Principals Award.

Top Aggie Patrick McKeever '62 knew he wanted to be a veterinarian by the fourth grade. His career in dermatology led to the founding of the area of veterinary dermatology at the University of Minnesota college of Veterinary Medicine where he worked until 1998. In 1991, McKeever founded the McKeever Dermatology Clinics, long-range planning referral dermatology clinics serving veterinarians and their clients in Minnesota, Wisconsin and North Dakota. McKeever has served in a variety of roles as a member of the American Academy of Veterinary Dermatology, including president. His accomplishments include the development of four graduate level courses, author or coauthor of 40 funded research projects and McKeever has been invited to present nationally and internationally. Community service activities include serving on the church council at St. Michaels Lutheran Church and merit badge instructor for the boy Scouts of America.

Top Aggie Lloyd Petri '67 has dedicated his life to the educational system and providing help to others. He taught in Devils Lake Publics School System in Devils Lake, N.D., was supervisor of special needs and district special education coordinator in East Grand Forks, Minn. Petri moved in 1979 to St. Paul to become supervisor of vocational education programs for the Minnesota Department of Education. Since 1996, Petri has been the program director for Perkins Federal Grants for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). He is responsible for providing program assistance to the MnSCU system director for educational grant programs. Petri is also the recipient of a recognition award by the Minnesota Research and Development Review Committee, and he served as president of the National Association of Special Needs State Administrators.

The NWSA, a residential high school established by the University of Minnesota in 1906, held its first reunion the last weekend in June in summer 1925. The Top Aggie award was first given in 1970 to recognize alumni and faculty who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and achievement in their careers and personal lives. For information, contact Rose Ulseth at 218-281-8439 ([rulseth@umn.edu](mailto:rulseth@umn.edu)).

The University of Minnesota, Crookston (UMC) delivers more than 25 applied-science undergraduate degree programs and 50 concentrations, including online degrees, in agriculture; arts, humanities and social sciences; business; math, science and technology; and natural resources. UMC is dedicated to helping students and the region aim higher, reach further and dream bigger dreams. To learn more, visit [www.UMCrookston.edu](http://www.UMCrookston.edu).

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