

News Release

Outstanding Alumni and Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees Honored during Homecoming at the U of M Crookston

By Itolfe on Wednesday, October 9, 2013 The University of Minnesota Crookston honored six remarkable individuals during

homecoming. Recognition for four Outstanding Alumni and three Athletic Hall of Fame inductees was held on Friday evening, October 4, 2013, in Bede Ballroom in the Sargeant Student Center. Hosting the evening were Corby Kemmer, director of development and alumni relations and Stephanie Helgeson, director of athletics and Chancellor Fred Wood brought greetings from the campus. The choir, under the direction of George French, sang several numbers including Hail! Minnesota and the Minnesota Rouser.



Outstanding Alumni award was presented to Tyler Grove '94, Timothy Rhonemus '84, Susan Jacobson '86 & '96 and Gene Dufault '68 and inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame were Michele (Johnson) Allen ex.'88, and Craig Talberg ex. '91.

A few highlights of these seven accomplished alumni include the following:

Gene Dufault '68 graduated with a degree in business and has been involved in a number of professions since his graduation. His work experience includes working in food and beverage sales, both stand-alone restaurants and hotels, and operating his own business.

During the past 19 years Dufault has dedicated his time and talent to working closely with township government. He serves as the district director for the association, which covers 5 counties. He also assists in lobbying efforts for the state legislature, sits on numerous boards, and helps train township officers for their elected positions.

He graduated from the Northwest School of Agriculture (NWSA) in 1963. He regards his time on campus as something very dear to him. Dufault remembers personally helping initiate both the Young Democrats and the Young Republicans along with participating in a number of other clubs and organizations.

Timothy Rhonemus '84 graduated with a degree in dietetics. He first came to the university as a transfer student seeking to obtain his bachelor of science degree in restaurant management but all that changed when he found that the health care profession was just as rewarding.

After graduating from U of M Crookston, he attended St. Cloud State University and received his bachelor of science degree in political science. In 1994 Rhonemus received his third degree this time in nursing. He currently works as a healthcare surveyor for the Minnesota Department of Health and Human Services. He assists in surveying nursing homes, out-patient surgical centers, dialysis units, rehab centers, out-patient physical therapy rehab clinics, and care facilities for the intellectually disabled.

Rhonemus is grateful for his educational experiences at the U of M Crookston and knows that those experiences prepared him for his career in healthcare.

Susan Jacobson '87 & '96 first graduated with her associate degree in floriculture/greenhouse management and later received her bachelor of science degree in plant industries management from the University of Minnesota Crookston.

After relocating and being forced to change her career Jacobson found the perfect fit for her interests at the U of M Crookston.

Jacobson is proud of the education that opened her eyes to the endless possibilities in the field of horticulture. Jacobson went on to work in the industry for a couple of years and also owned her own flower shop.

She has worked at the U of M Crookston for the past twenty years and is excited to be teaching the very classes that stimulated her own interests in the beginning. Jacobson is heavily involved in the community she lives in and is part of many professional affiliations including the Minnesota Nursery Landscaping Association. She and her husband, David, make their home in Fertile, Minn.

Michele (Johnson) Allen ex. '88 was a multi-sport athlete at the University of Minnesota Crookston between 1986 and 1988. During that time she played Trojan volleyball, basketball, and softball.

Allen's athletic skills helped the U of M Crookston place fifth in the 1986 State Junior College Tournament. She was the top passer in 1986 and 1987 and top server in 1988. Allen was named to the All-State Tournament Team, All-Region Tournament Team, and All-Northwest Division Honorable Mention Team in 1986. In 1987 she was named to the All-State Tournament Team and 1st Team All-Northwest Division.

Allen currently works as the laboratory director at Kittson Memorial Hospital where she's in charge of laboratory operations for critical access and oversees two rural health clinic laboratories. She is also the director of ancillary services for the United States Army Reserve for laboratory, pharmacy, and radiology operations for a 146 bed combat support hospital. Allen received her master's degree from the University of North Dakota and currently resides in Kennedy, Minn., with her three children.

Craig Talberg ex. '91 had twelve interceptions in eight games in one season to lead the nation for the Trojan football team when the campus was part of the National Junior College Athletic Association. He was a First Team All-American in 1990 as well as section player of the year. Talberg was named All-Conference, All-Region, and Defensive Player of the Year in 1990. He went on to Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) where he holds the interception record with six and was named Second Team All-American.

He has a bachelor of science degree from MSUM in teaching and coaching and went on for his developmental and adapted physical education (DAPE) licensure at St. Cloud State University. He also holds a master's degree from Bethel University.

Talberg teaches physical education at Milaca Public Schools in Milaca, Minn., where he is the head coach for baseball and the eighth grade football coach. He and his wife, Lana, are the parents of three.

Tyler Grove '94 was one of the first to earn a four-year degree from the University of Minnesota Crookston. His major was in plant industries management with an agronomy emphasis.

While at the U of M Crookston, he participated in the Crops Team and in NACTA (North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture) competition. In 2007 he earned his master's degree in agronomy from Iowa State University.

In 1995, he was employed with American Crystal Sugar Company as an agriculturist for the East Grand Forks district, and in February, 2013, he accepted a position as the ag strategy development manager at the corporate office in Moorhead, Minn.

In 2008, he was selected to attend MARL (Minnesota Ag and Rural Leadership) Program. He and his wife, Rhea, have two children, Ryan and Madison. Grove looks back on his years at the University of Minnesota Crookston and is thankful for the support and encouragement he received from faculty.

For more information on homecoming at the U of M Crookston website.

Today the University of Minnesota Crookston delivers 28 bachelor's degree programs, 20 minors, and 39 concentrations on campus--as well as 11 degrees online--in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from 25 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

In the photo: Back row, left to right: Chancellor Wood, Craig Talberg, Tyler Grove, Stephanie Helgeson, and Corby Kemmer. Front row: Gene Dufault, Sue Jacobson, Michele Allen and Timothy Rhonemus.

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