

2009 Distinguished Service Award Recipient

The Distinguished Service Award was created in 1981 by the Barton Community College Foundation to recognize individuals who have shown genuine regard for, and have performed outstanding service to Barton Community College. The Barton Foundation Board of Directors selects the recipient from nominations received. The Foundation is pleased to announce **Jean Cavanaugh** as the 2009 Distinguished Service Award recipient.

From the very beginning as a school girl growing up in Lohrville, Iowa, education has been both a passion and an avocation of Jean Cavanaugh. Jean was an avid speller and would spend hours reading the dictionary to hone her spelling skills. As a 7th & 8th grader she won the area county spelling bee and her eighth grade year she finished second in the state. In high school she expanded her interest beyond academics and pursued her love of music, playing the clarinet in the band, orchestra and German band. She loved writing and was the editorial writer for the school newspaper as well as writing weekly news articles for a community newspaper. Jean just could not learn enough fast enough, and was rewarded by being named salutatorian of her high school graduating class.

Upon graduation from high school, Jean worked for the FBI in Washington D.C. for two years during WWII. She then attended the University of Minnesota at Grinnell College in Iowa and it was during this time that she married Clair J. Cavanaugh M.D. They lived in Hawaii, Oklahoma City and Mexico before settling in Great Bend in 1952. Clair and Jean raised 5 children, all whom inherited their mother's ferocious appetite for education. Tom and Kathleen (Bitsy) both hold MBA's, James is a tax attorney and Michael and Terrence followed in their fathers' footsteps and became doctors. Clair was a radiologist serving western Kansas until his death in 1994.

In her mid-forties Jean once again pursued her educational goals and entered Fort Hays State University earning a B.S. in Business education and administration and a Masters in special education. She served as a substitute teacher at both Roosevelt and Harrison Jr. High Schools for 16 years. She is currently still involved in the education of young people and feels strongly that all children should have the opportunity to succeed. She is an avid soccer fan and strong advocate of the Mexican community; she encourages them to seek an education and often offers her financial support to their endeavors.

In Great Bend and surrounding communities Jean Cavanaugh is known not only for her financial generosity but also for her dedication to volunteerism in service to her community. She is currently a member of the following boards: USD #428 School Board, Golden Belt Community Concert, Bunker Hill KOOD TV station, Clara Barton Hospital, FHSU Alumni Association, as well as serving on the Senior Center and RSVP Advisory Councils. She is a member of the Commission on Aging, Cosmopolitan and Athenian Study Club, Silver Cougar Club, Cosmopolitan, and the Prince of Peace Parish – St. Rose Church. Jean supports the Great Bend Recreation programs, funding the Jean Cavanaugh Wellness Center, as well as supporting both the fall soccer league and the summer Mexican soccer league.

Barton Community College is grateful that, in her lifelong support of education, Jean has chosen to become a loyal donor and supporter of numerous college initiatives. She generously donated the Plaza de Cavanaugh Community Room to the library renovation project, funded architectural fees for the evaluation of the current sports complex at Barton and most recently established the Clair and Jean Cavanaugh Endowment. We are proud to honor Jean with the Distinguished Service

Award in acknowledging our gratitude for her profound impact on the college and the students we serve.