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West Central School of Agriculture Alumni Association places bronze name plaques on Morris campus historic district buildings

Summary: WCSA alumni will dedicate the plaques and celebrate the 100th anniversary of the WCSA during the 2010 All-School Reunion in July.

(June 14, 2010)-The West Central School of Agriculture (WCSA) Alumni Association played a key role in placing the University of Minnesota, Morris campus on the National Register of Historic Places as the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station Historic District in 2003. Now, in 2010, WCSA alumni have organized another historic project for the campus. Bronze plaques have been placed on [13 historic district buildings](#) denoting their WCSA era names: Engineering, Music Hall, Infirmary, Girls' Dormitory, Boys' Dormitory, Edson Hall, Dining Hall, Agriculture Hall, Spooner Hall, Junior Hall, Cattle Barn, Senior Hall, and Seed House.

Cold Spring Granite Company of Cold Spring produced the bronze building plaques. Carol Pederson Meyer '60, WCSA Alumni Association president, and John Peternell '60, board member, assisted in selecting the size and style. University of Minnesota, Morris alumnus and historian Dennis Gimmetstad '72 provided valuable assistance with identifying accurate names and dates.

Purchased with funds raised by the WCSA Alumni Association for the project, the plaques have been installed and will be formally dedicated during the special 2010 WCSA All-School Reunion on Saturday and Sunday, July 17-18, 2010. This year, WCSA alumni will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the WCSA during their annual summer reunion on the Morris campus.

"I am so impressed and touched by this project initiated by WCSA alumni," says Carla Riley, director of alumni relations and annual giving. "They funded this project from their hearts. They cherish their years studying on the Morris campus and value the WCSA education they received. The plaques serve as a lasting reminder of the impact the WCSA and its alumni have had on west central Minnesota and beyond."

The WCSA opened on the Morris campus as a University of Minnesota agricultural boarding high school in 1910. Its mission was to educate west central Minnesota youth on contemporary agriculture and homemaking methods and provide core academic instruction. The three-year course of study ran from early October after the fall harvest until late March before spring planting. Typical classes included animal husbandry, cooking, sewing, carpentry, as well as English, math, and music. More than 7,000 students graduated from the WCSA, but by the late 1950s, enrollment was falling. After sharing the campus with the University of Minnesota, Morris for three years, the WCSA closed in 1963.

Photo: Merald Thorstad '50, Reuben Luthi '49, Andy Brevig '46 Carol Meyer '60 Harriet Payne '60 Tom Payne '60

Photo credit: Courtney Driessen '12, Blooming Prairie

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.