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University Relations, "Comparing Morris campus experiences" (2006). *Campus News Archive*. 1839.
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Comparing Morris campus experiences

Summary: Delores Diekman Giroux (WCSA) and granddaughters Anne '04 and Christy Meyer '06 compare experiences studying on the University of Minnesota, Morris campus.

(June 15, 2006)-When Anne '04 and Christy Meyer '06 visited the University of Minnesota, Morris (UMM) as prospective students, they didn't imagine their grandmother, Delores Diekman Giroux, living and studying on the same campus. But she did, 50 years earlier as a University of Minnesota West Central School of Agriculture (WCSA) student.

Delores' favorite classes at the boarding high school were sewing and crafts, including decorative painting. One wonders if the desire to create is genetic. Both granddaughters are studio art majors. Christy's area of emphasis is painting. After teaching a painting course at the 2006 Henjum Creative Institute at UMM, Christy will complete a Minneapolis Institute of Arts internship this summer. Anne's area of emphasis is ceramics. She is an apprentice at St. John's Pottery in Colledgeville under the direction of world-renowned potter and teacher Richard Bresnahan.

Camden Hall, with the beautiful staircases that Anne loves, was Delores' home her first year at WCSA. She also lived in Behmler Hall, above dining services where she worked. Delores remembers the proctor checking the students each night to make sure they were in bed, lights out by 10 o'clock. Activities beyond the classroom kept her life interesting: ice skating on the pond the tumbling team that performed at basketball games Girls Athletic Association and the roller rink a few blocks off campus.

Delores enjoyed dances, too, a memory that coincides with one of Christy's passions. Christy was an active member of the Swing Club. Like Delores, her granddaughters enjoyed sports. Anne played on intramural teams, and Christy was a member of the cross-country and track and field teams. Of course, both were Art Club members and enjoyed being KUMM disc jockeys, too.

Christy and Anne have learned about the WCSA through stories their grandmother shares, and have noted differences and similarities. States Christy: "The emphasis at UMM is no longer agriculture, and college students are allowed more freedom than I'm sure high school students were who lived here. But all in all, I feel that the people who Morris attracts are still friendly, down-to-earth, and good-hearted."

A Beardsley native, Delores moved to St. Joseph, Anne and Christy's hometown, after she married. She has six children, 25 grandchildren, and two great grandchildren and just retired after almost 25 years as a custodian at the College of St. Benedict. She credits the WCSA for providing a solid foundation for life, from mathematics to history, from nutrition to music.

Anne and Christy, too, look back on their years on the Morris campus with fondness: "I appreciated the academic challenge of UMM while attending," Anne, a 2004 graduate, shares, "but realize more and more what an outstanding school it is since I have left. The high caliber of students, set in a close-knit, smaller community, made for a lot of

personal growth and four years of wonderful times. My time at UMM solidified my ideas of what is truly valuable.”

Christy, a recent 2006 graduate, concurs: “I love the small town feel. I love the one-on-one connection students are able to get with professors. I certainly am glad I chose to come here.”

Photo: Anne Meyer '04, Delores Diekman Giroux (WCSA), and Christy Meyer '06

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