

# NINE PROFESSORS WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

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Alumni pay tribute to the Hamline educators who mentored,  
guided, and inspired them in life-changing ways

*Edited by* JULIE KENDRICK



## OUR ENDURING STRENGTH

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Time and again, alumni tell  
us their professors made  
a difference in their lives.

Share your stories at  
[hamline.edu/hamlinestories](https://hamline.edu/hamlinestories).

## Professor Emeritus Skip Messenger

"I traveled to Peru with Professor Messenger for a J-term class that was just amazing. He took us to sites that were well off the beaten path. He inspired me to focus more on indigenous interpretation, which is the role I had right after graduation. I was able to start on a path of helping to represent the underrepresented because of our time together."

—**Kristy Van Hoven '06**, director of development and  
interim museum director, National EMS Museum

## Professor Emeritus Martin Markowitz

"Professor Markowitz was a sociologist because the human experience fascinated him. It showed in his passion for improving people's understanding of one another. As busy as he was, Professor Markowitz always made time to sincerely listen to my personal trials and tribulations, even expressing interest in my Hamline-based thrash metal band. He was a professor who epitomized 'approachable.'"

—**Ian Butler Severson '98**, federal and military facility master planner, Pond and Company



## Professor Colleen Bell

"Dr. Colleen Bell and her Herstory of Education class opened up a whole new realm of study for me. [For an assignment,] I interviewed one of my aunts about her educational experience in a two-room schoolhouse in northern Minnesota during the Great Depression. My work

later became a book, and I went on to publish more books. Professor Bell nurtured and challenged me to reach high and dig deep into myself, and for that I am truly grateful."

—**Diane Hohl Dettmann MAED '93**, award-winning author

## Professor Norman Albrecht '43

"When I fell behind in mathematics, [Professor Emeritus Norman Albrecht] never lost faith in me, and he took it upon himself to tutor me in mathematics several nights a week. In addition to being an excellent tutor, he was also an outstanding teacher and mentor. He brought realism, practicality, and excitement into all the courses he taught. The success I've had in technology and product development are owed to his leadership, guidance, and friendship."

—**Roger Appeldorn '57**, retired physicist, 3M

## Professor Emeritus Quay Grigg

"[The late] Professor Quay Grigg used to have dinner parties at his house, which were always attended by interesting people from all spectrums of life. We'd sit around until 2 or 3 in the morning discussing life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and everything else! Even today, I miss our conversations, and I still think about his gentle prodding to make me a better student and a better human being."

—**Thomas Williams MALS '97**, president, Williams Advertising & Communications, Inc



## Professor David Davies '91

"One of my best memories about Professor Davies was the annual field trip to the Spam Museum in Austin. It included a stop at his grandmother's house for her homemade pie and stories about his childhood. It was probably the best Saturday I ever spent with Hamline classmates. Professor

Davies and I remain close, and when he comes to Toronto, we go out to have coffee, tour museums, and talk about Hamline times."

—**Kristy Van Hoven '06**, director of development and interim museum director, National EMS Museum

## Professor Emeritus Wesley St. John

"[The late Professor Wesley St. John] helped me understand that you had to bring value to the world around you and help make the world a stronger, better, and more loving place. His students knew he cared. I would like to believe that I paid back my teacher's investment in me through my work in the community during my career."

—**John Sherman '70**, retired analyst and program manager, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development



## Professor Bonnie Ploger

"One summer, Professor Ploger invited me to do field work with her near Ashby for a behavioral study on great egrets. Afterward, we published two papers together. I learned the value of having a hands-on mentor who was so generous with her time. Professor Ploger is a big part of why I became

a science teacher. She showed me it could be fun and passion-filled and didn't have to be dry and boring."

—**Matthew Medeiros '00**, evolutionary biologist and teacher, Urban School of San Francisco

## Professor Emeritus Walter Benjamin '50

"[Professor Emeritus Walter Benjamin] opened me up to taking religion classes to satisfy a social science requirement, and my life was changed. He was the first person to mention going into ministry to me. He encouraged me, but at first I couldn't see it because I knew no young or female ministers."

—**The Rev. Dr. Cathy Miller Northrup '82**, senior pastor, Community Church of the Verdes