

My marketing education experience began at Madison Area Technical College as an active DECA member participating successfully in competitive events. One day I had an encounter with Doc Cameron while walking down a hallway at MATC that forever changed my life; he encouraged me to attend UW-Stout to become a teacher. It's interesting how decisions and opportunities cast one's fate for the future. I graduated from UW-Stout in mid-year 1974 and gained employment in Antigo, a small town community ideal for DECA. I immersed myself, the students, business people and the entire community in a whirlwind of activities. The students achieved success in the classroom, on-the-job and in DECA. They earned many awards, the most significant being Chapter of the Year in both Competition and Project/Manual, an achievement seldom earned. The tradition of success became contagious!

I was encouraged to apply for an opening at DPI coordinating Wisconsin DECA activities by both Richard Regner and Wayne Harrison. I was ready for new challenges and gained employment in 1980 only to be laid-off several months later and then rehired the following year. Persistence and perseverance have served me well throughout my time at DPI! I had the privilege to work beside Wayne Harrison until his retirement in the mid-80, after which I became the Marketing Education Consultant and State DECA Advisor.

There were several guiding principles that formed my work ethic at DPI. "People support what they help create", "Leadership is best served when helping others become leaders" and "Leadership is service". Questions I asked myself almost daily were "Am I leaving the profession better than I found it?" and "How and what am doing to help the local teacher better serve their students?" I was very aware of the excellent leaders that preceded me; what could I do to continue that tradition?

Learning communities, advisory committees, and task forces were used to create new standards and policies. Teachers, state officers, business people and teacher educators helped develop new directions. Two super colleagues joined DPI and immensely helped deliver new and improved service, Connie Colussy and Ann Westrich. Some of our initiatives included: (in no particular order of time or importance)

- New Code of Conduct for both students and advisors while participating in Wisconsin DECA activities, increasing the importance of professionalism.
- New Chapter and State Officer Handbooks
- New Wisconsin curriculum standards based on national industry research
- New work-based standard certificate program in several career areas
- Model Program Development
- New teacher education standards
- Expect Excellence Initiative to better prepare students and advisors for success in competitive events
- Moving the Career Development Conference to the Grand Geneva in Lake Geneva
- New Teacher Workshops for first through fifth year teachers
- Revised state officer training that involved parents and chapter advisors
- The emphasis on professionalism in all activities
- State officer reorganization (twice) and election procedures
- New Leadership Lab format and facilitators
- Saving CTSO's when new federal legislation was introduced (Carl Perkins)
- Gaining a second position in marketing education and DECA through state level legislation along with state level funding
- Joining with all CTSO's to purchase a new fire truck for New York City after 9/11
- Adding new competitive events
- Sponsorship of national conferences, MarkEd's Conclave (twice) and the Central Region Leadership Conference (twice)
- Increased DECA membership to nearly 13,000, earning Wisconsin 7 competitors in each competitive series and project
- Electing five National DECA Officers

I was elected to several national and regional organizations that continued the tradition of leadership by Wisconsin. My involvement prompted bringing new knowledge and improved activities to the local level.

The national organizations gained from Wisconsin's example and leadership. Service on the National DECA Board of Directors, MarkED Board of Directors, and the Central Region Board of Governors expanded my vision for the future.

So many memories, so many teachers and teacher educators, so many colleagues, so many state officers and so many DECA members through the years to thank. There have been numerous challenges and struggles but they are forgotten when I remember the pure joy I have experienced from my involvement in marketing education and DECA. Thank you all!