



The Cathy (Lewis) Sollom Fund for Academic Excellence for All

Since I, Robert Sollom, did not know Cathy Lewis Sollom in high school I enlisted the help of others to introduce Cathy to the Foundation. This article was composed by Cathy's friend Claire Hoyum with input from several others. Cathy told me many times that Claire was one of her best friends in Cloquet. Claire gave a memorable talk at Cathy's memorial service in October of 2024, and our daughter Claire Farrell was named after Claire Hoyum.

Cathy Lewis Sollom was an outstanding member of the Cloquet High School Class of 1968, who remained connected with and supportive of Cloquet schools throughout her life.

Cathy's passion for learning was evident from a young age, as she eagerly participated in school activities and sought out opportunities to challenge herself academically. Her dedication to education was matched only by her enthusiasm for helping others, often volunteering her time to tutor classmates and supporting school initiatives.

She spent her early years in Cloquet, where she attended Leach School. Her family moved away for several years, then returned when Cathy was in high school. Cathy threw herself into school life during her junior and senior years, as a cheerleader and as a member of the debate team, the National Forensics League, and numerous clubs and committees. She served on the yearbook staff and as editor of the school newspaper, the *Pine Needle*—a role she infused with attention to detail and a sense of whimsy.

Education defined Cathy's life. After high school she attended Bemidji State University, from which she graduated with a degree in English education. There she met and married her husband Bob, and together they raised three children: Hugh, Claire, and Phil, two of whom also attended Bemidji State.

Cathy's educational path at Bemidji State and beyond reflected her roots in Cloquet. She became a Bemidji State hockey cheerleader; she served as a reporter for the college newspaper, *The Northern Student*, and she coached the debate team at Bagley High School as a student teacher her senior year.

Cathy's role as a member of high school and college cheerleading squads served as a metaphor for the rest of her life. She held herself to high standards in everything she did and, by her example and expectations, encouraged others to rise into their best selves. In her long career as a civilian employee and trainer for the U.S. Marine Corps, she traveled the world, extending her influence to both U.S. Marines and their partners in other countries.

Though she lived far from Cloquet through most of her adulthood, Cathy kept informed about life in Cloquet and remained closely connected with her childhood and high school friends. She frequently contributed to the Cloquet Educational Foundation because she

valued the grounding she received in the Cloquet schools and was committed to supporting educational excellence for generations to come.

Heartfully submitted by Bob Sollum, Cathy's husband. She met Bob while finishing her degree at Bemidji State University. In 1971, she and Bob married and embarked on a lifelong journey of love and adventure, raising 3 children.