

# Goulding Family Endowment

The Goulding family-name first appeared in the Lake Region in 1902 when eight-year-old Thomas E. Goulding, and his mother arrived as immigrants. They boarded a ship in England and continued the difficult trek until reaching Edmore, North Dakota, and the support of distant relatives who had come before them. Shortly after arriving, Thomas's mother died. Orphaned, he was taken in by sympathetic families and earned his keep doing odd jobs in their homes and businesses. Persistent and observant, young Thomas learned business skills by watching those around him. In 1917, he launched his own business buying and selling grain in Edmore. That same year, his

wife, Irene (Cunningham), gave birth to a son, Thomas C. Goulding (*Two younger siblings died of illness, leaving Tom their only child*).

Thomas C. (Tom) Goulding was encouraged by his parents to complete high school and enroll in business courses at UND. However, his formal education was interrupted by the call to enlist for the WWII effort. Tom and Joyce (Gessner) were married during the war (1941). After completing his service with the 104<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Tom returned to Edmore to reunite with his wife and joined the family business. As Tom's family began to grow, the father-son partnership looked for new opportunities. They expanded into petroleum distribution and purchased a gas/bulk service

station in Devils Lake. Petroleum sales and distribution became the primary focus of their business. Both generations re-located to Devils Lake, and Tom and Joyce's family grew to include three children—Susan, Paul, and Doug.

The family quickly became immersed in their new "hometown." Tom, worked on many civic projects and was especially proud of his service on the Devils Lake Public School Board. He was board president when Lake Region State College's campus was being planned and constructed. At that time, the college was funded and managed by the Devils Lake Public School District. Tom, along with other community leaders, invested

countless hours in the planning and resource development work required to build and operate the new campus. When it opened for classes in the fall of 1966, Tom's son, Paul, was enrolled. After a year at the new campus, Paul transferred to UND to complete his baccalaureate degree concurrently with preparation for his military service commitment.

Laurel Jones' family was similarly committed to building a stronger community college. Her mother, Lois Jones, a Webster, North Dakota, area farmer, served on the board of directors for the college's foundation and in its classrooms as an adjunct instructor. Laurel missed the opportunity to attend the local college but developed an appreciation for the power of



The Goulding family l-r—Arley, Jill, Laurel, and Paul

community colleges during graduate studies at North Carolina State University.

Paul and Laurel married in 1970 and lived in several states during his military service and while exploring careers. In 1982, they returned to the Lake Region to raise their family and operate the family business, Goulding's Oil.

Life experiences in other parts of the country helped them appreciate the benefits of a rural community with vibrant educational resources. Like his father, Paul enjoyed working on projects to benefit the community and was especially committed to projects that strengthened educational services. Paul served fourteen years on the Devils Lake Public School Board. He was board president when part of the old high school burned and the community was asked to support a bond issue to build a new high school. The bond issue was controversial but passed on the third try, thanks to thoughtful planning and effective outreach. Paul also has a lengthy record of service (25 years) on the board of directors for Ramsey National Bank, a Devils Lake-based financial institution that has been very supportive of Lake Region State College. Presently, he is the board's president.

In 2007, Paul accepted an offer to sell Goulding's Oil, which brought the three-generation business to a close. But this decision opened the door for Paul to try something new. He enrolled in the Auto Technology program at LRSC just for the fun of learning. During

this two-year project, Paul increased his mechanical skills and became an advocate for the high-quality learning experiences the program provides.

Laurel has been committed to LRSC's mission and vision since answering its call for a part-time grant writer in 1987. For thirty years (retiring in 2017) Laurel served the college in numerous capacities—vice president responsible for enrollment and student services, and later, institutional advancement—all the while serving as the executive director for the Community College Foundation. Laurel remains passionate about the important role community colleges play in the communities they serve—opening doors to education and changing lives in positive ways

Through the years, Laurel and Paul have enjoyed watching family and friends benefit from LRSC learning opportunities. Their son, Thomas Arley, completed an Associate in Science degree at LRSC, the first step on his path to becoming a dentist (DDS). Daughter, Jill, used dual credit coursework to speed her journey to a Bachelor's in Music.

From College for Kids, to dual-credit, to degree completion, to the joy of taking classes just for fun, LRSC enriches the community and its citizens by opening doors to learning. Laurel and Paul established the Goulding Family Endowment as a commitment to quality education and a strategy for giving back to a community they love. Earnings from the endowment will support the Automotive Technology program. ✦



Thomas C. and Joyce (Gessner) Goulding



Thomas E. and Irene (Cunningham) Goulding