

Debbie Stromme

Memorial Endowment

A tiny woman with a big heart, Debbie Stromme made a huge impact during her too-brief life in the Lake Region.

For thirty-two years, Debbie was a fixture in the Devils Lake Public School System. For the first few years she taught in the Special Education program, but Debbie found her passion in Prairie View School's kindergarten room. More than 1,100 students had the privilege of becoming "kinderbunnies," building skills to confidently move into first grade. In 1989-90, her exceptional skill was recognized as she was named Devils Lake *Teacher of the Year*.

Perhaps Debbie was such an effective teacher because she herself was always eager to learn. She believed that learning begins at birth, and she was instrumental in developing *Books for Babies*, which presents a book to every newborn baby at Mercy Hospital in Devils Lake.

When summer arrived, Debbie headed to the swimming pool where she would teach some more. Partnering with her mother, Janice

Onerheim, Debbie taught countless numbers of children and adults how to swim. Beginners and advanced swimmers alike appreciated the supportive instruction they received from these master teachers.

Undoubtedly Debbie's contagious smile and bright eyes left their mark on the hearts of those whose lives she touched. As word spread about the vibrant teacher's illness, grief filtered across the community. Determined and courageous, Debbie continued to teach kinderbunnies and swimmers until the ALS illness sapped her strength.

To honor Debbie's love of learning, her devoted husband, Craig, her three sons—Justin, Ryan, and Kale—and their families, her extended family, and her many, many friends established an endowed scholarship to honor her memory. ♥

