

Central Community College Honorary Degree Nomination for J. Thomas and Sue Pirnie

Tom and Sue Pirnie exemplify the mission of Central Community College through their service to students and communities. Their exemplary service and support of CCC over multiple decades have often been without notice or attention, yet well-earned recognition often finds them, most recently provided by the Nebraska Trucking Association where they awarded Tom the 2024 James E. Ryan Golden Deeds Award (for a second time) and Sue the Woman of Distinction (also for the second time).

Tom earned a certificate in Electronics Technology for the CCC-Hastings campus in 1974. He was elected to the CCC Board of Governors to begin service in 1994, and in 2024, served as Board Chairman for the fourth time, which each involves three prior years of officer service as Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. His term is not ending then, with another successful re-election in 2024 for four more years. Tom's support of conservative but impactful career and technical programs, modern facilities and exceptional student services have led CCC to be one of the top credential-awarding institutions in Nebraska and a leader in many national rankings including Best for Vets and Military Spouses by *Military Times*. Sue attended Grand Island School of Business. She has been by his side through growth and expansion of their family-owned Grand Island Express and GIX Logistics businesses. She has been involved in most every community project of Grand Island, including the recent Grand Island EPIC Children's Museum, Central Catholic Elementary School, and presented along with the Nebraska Trucking Association to the students at Academy of Technical Science about trucking, diesel mechanic, and office careers. Tom and Sue recently led the Heartland United Way Campaign. Sue and Tom have participated in Wreaths Across America delivering and laying wreaths from Washington DC to Grand Island at US veteran cemeteries.

In 2023, Sue and Tom provided the lead gift for the Grand Island Inclusive Playground, a project created through an assignment of CCC's Occupational Therapy Assistant students. The largest inclusive playground in the state, their gift provided a much-needed local catalyst for other local donors and contributions from across the state. All directly impacting youth and adults in central Nebraska. Tom and Sue have also made a multi-year, \$1 million pledge toward future student housing on the Grand Island campus that is part of Central's five-year master facilities plan. These gifts, in addition to the countless hours of volunteer service to the Board, students and communities, make them worthy recipients of Central Community College honorary degrees.

Tom and Sue have two adult children, Tracy and Jim, and ten grandchildren.

Central Community College Board of Governors has final approval of all honorary degree which may be awarded. The Honorary Associate Degree will be awarded to an individual who has provided exemplary service and support throughout many years to CCC, and who has documented evidence of significant contributions to the development of the college and/or programs.

Honorary associate degrees are not counted for purposes of state or federal reimbursements or audits.

Due to outstanding support of CCC and individual programs and services, the College President recommends awarding of a Central Community College Honorary Associate Degree to J. Thomas Pirnie and Sue Pirnie to be awarded during the CCC-Grand Island commencement ceremony this May, 2025.