

A Notable Woman – Susan Elizabeth Colman



Hold a gathering for UWSP alumni of the Depression and World War II eras and you're certain to hear the name of Susan Elizabeth Colman and references to favorite professors in the same breath.

"Miss Coleman" served on the faculty from 1931 to 1952, holding the title of primary education program director during most of that time.

She was regarded in state circles as being responsible for preparing some of the state's finest kindergarten and first and second grade teachers.

In addition, she was active in professional circles and was involved in the development of a standard form of testing used for elementary children across the United States. Colman served as president of the Wisconsin Childhood Education Association, president of the Lake Superior Teachers Association and president of the Central Wisconsin Teachers' Association.

A native of Spokane, Wash., and a childhood resident of Superior and Fond du Lac, she earned a master's degree from UW-Madison and joined the UW-Whitewater faculty in 1929. Recognizing her talents, Frank Hyer asked her to join him when he was transferred from the presidency of Whitewater to Stevens Point in 1931.

She became one of UWSP's most enthusiastic athletic boosters, and remained so until her death. She was equally interested in the music offerings.

She made major financial contributions to both programs and was thanked when the university dedicated the running track in her name in 1971 and later established the Susan E. Coleman Medallion as recognition to the each year's outstanding music graduate.

She was 87 at the time of her death on Oct. 30, 1980.