

YAVAPAI COLLEGE FOUNDATION BOARD MEMBERS ADVOCATE FOR EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY



Cindy Nyman is a former high school principal and superintendent. Judy Dahlbeck spent 25 years working in education. Both came to Prescott to retire ... and both felt a bit restless.

"One of the things that impresses me about Prescott is that, if you want to get involved, there are lots of ways to do it." Nyman says. It didn't take either woman long to discover that higher education was still close to their hearts. So they came to Yavapai College.

"To see the kids who never really pictured themselves as college students get to college ..." Dahlbeck says, "this was something I could really get behind."

Now, as co-chairs of the Yavapai College Foundation Fundraising Committee, Nyman and Dahlbeck represent a new breed of advocates who aren't afraid to stand up, speak out, walk-the-walk – or even run-the-run – on behalf of education.

"For me," Dahlbeck says, "it started with *Education Now!*"

Both women helped revive *Education Now!*, the scholarship fund for Yavapai County high school graduates. In 2016, twenty six students received a \$2,500 scholarship to apply to any YC program, from higher education to trade class certificates. "Very often, these students are the first in their families to be college-bound," Dahlbeck says. "They know someone believes in them because they have a scholarship ... and they just take off."

Education Now's numbers reflect that success. Recipients often maintain a higher GPA than in high school. Return and completion rates near 100%, and the number of scholarships continues to rise: 30 scholarships last year; 42 this year. "It's a wonderful program," Dahlbeck says. "Everybody should know about it."

But not everybody does. So last year Nyman and Dahlbeck hit the local speaking circuit. Their 15-minute presentation, which includes video, is available to any social or civic organization that would like to hear more.

"It's also a YC awareness presentation," Nyman explains, "because people don't know the magnitude of what's here at the college."

"That's true," Dahlbeck agrees. "Take a tour of the Career and Technical Education Center's automotive programs, and you'll see jaws drop." While most people know about CTEC "they have no idea about the other tech-ed areas such as the drone program, the robotics, the electronics, the gunsmithing..."

Their efforts to spread the word will literally pick up speed this summer. The College's first annual *Dollars for Scholars Fun Run* will allow participants to raise scholarship funds for students in need.

Organized by two YC student groups - YC College Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa - *The Dollars for Scholars Fun Run* is a 1.7 mile run/walk around the Prescott campus that will kick off YC's 50th Anniversary Celebration on August 25.

Event sponsorships are still needed and can be obtained for as little as \$250, with the proceeds going to scholarships. Each scholarship, Nyman says, is another dream realized. "That," she says, "is the really rewarding part of what we do."

For more information on the Dollars for Scholars Fun Run sponsorships or registrations, go to www.yc.edu/funrun.

To learn more about sponsorships, scholarships, or to book a presentation on Education Now!, call the Yavapai College Foundation at 928.776.2025.