

OFHS



WALL OF FAME

Inducted May 29, 2016



MARY (TISCH) HARDTKE

Mary (Tisch) Hardtke graduated from Oconto Falls High School with the Class of 1966. After high school, she attended Northeast Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay and earned her Medical Assistant degree. In December, 1968, Mary married Ken Hardtke and together raised two successful children, Rellen and Daniel. Mary returned to college in 1982, earning her bachelor's degree in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay in 1987. She passionately began her new career, first with Oconto County Protective Services for the elderly and then, from 1989 - 2002, serving as Director of Oconto County New View Industries. An avid grant writer, she worked with the Economic Support Division of Oconto County to establish the first Job Center in Oconto County and the first thrift store, New Beginnings, operated by clients with disabilities. In addition, she implemented the first Family Support Program in Oconto County and operated the Work Program for the Food Stamp and Training Program.

In 2002, Mary was recruited by Catholic Charities Bureau in Rhinelander and became the director of Headwaters, Inc., a rehabilitation center for people with disabilities. As director, she operated a Tri-County transportation system and a Birth to 3 program for people with disabilities in Oneida, Vilas, and Forest counties. One of her greatest accomplishments was working with the President of Nicolet College and the Tri-county school systems to implement a college program at Nicolet College for students with intellectual disabilities.

Mary has been extremely active in a variety of organizations throughout her career, including the National Association of Social Workers - Wisconsin Board of Directors; Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Northeast Branch of NASW; Chair of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Social Work Alumni; Oconto County Family Living Advisory Committee; Board member of the Oconto County Respite Program; Secretary of the Grow North Regional Economic Development Corporation; President and Secretary of Midwest Industries; and a member of the Governing Council for Charter Schools, Northwoods Disabilities Coalition, Northwoods Partnership, Nomination and Leadership Committee for NASW, and the Gifted and Talented Program for Oconto County.

Her awards include The Chancellor's International Education Scholarship, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Social Work Alumni Association Award, and an Award of Appreciation for Outstanding Contribution as a Field Supervisor.

Mary and her husband currently reside in Roberts, Wisconsin, where she continues to be an inspirational volunteer and advocate, assisting in moving the intellectual disability program forward in Wisconsin.