

Two GB Couples Receive DSA's

Melvin O. and Ruth Nuss and Virgil and Eloise Belford, all of Great Bend, were honored as the 1994 Barton County Community College Foundation Distinguished Service Award recipients during commencement ceremonies Thursday, May 19.

The Distinguished Service Award was created in 1981 to recognize individuals who have shown genuine regard for BCCC through their service or acts of philanthropy. Recipients are selected by a committee of College and Foundation officials.

Melvin and Ruth have shared a keen interest in the College since it opened in 1969. Their appreciation of the arts and desire to help students achieve a college education led to the establishment of the Melvin O. Nuss Endowed Scholarship Fund in 1984 to assist western Kansas students. The scholarship has been awarded annually since 1986. In 1987, Melvin and Ruth began contributing to the Foundation's Academic Enrichment Fund Campaign and have made annual gifts through 1993.

To date, the Nuss Endowment has more than doubled in size from the original investment.

Melvin Nuss has practiced law in Barton County for more than 50 years and is a member of the Kansas and Barton County Bar Associations.

Virgil Belford has served more terms on the Foundation Board of Trustees than any other previous or current member, establishing an eight-year service record since 1985. Belford chaired the Board during the 1989-90 school year and the BCCC Cougar Booster Club during 1979-80. For nearly 15 years, he has logged countless hours of volunteer time for both organizations.

Several of the Belford's children attended BCCC. In 1986, the Virgil and Eloise Belford Scholarship Fund was created. The Belfords also helped establish an endowment to honor Eloise's parents, Gus and Ethel Gagelman.

Virgil is a member of the Kansas Society of Certified Public Accountants, the American Institute of CPA's, and is a former chairman of the State Board of Accountancy.

Foundation President Phil Grossardt said he always admired the Belfords for their long-term commitment to BCCC and Virgil's dedication to both academics and athletics. The Melvin and Ruth Nuss endowment fund, he said, is a perfect example of commitment to students.

"I've come to know them all very well," he said. "Student contact means a lot to them and you just have to admire people like that who take initiative."

As the 1994 DSA Award honorees, the two couples join Paul Conrad and J.A. Mermis, Jr., 1981; Cecil and Virgie Burton and Neva and L.E. Brocher, 1990; Cedric and Faerie Denman and Marian Isern, 1991; Jack Goodman, 1992; and Robert P. Keenan, 1993.