



## Donor Profile

# Susan Bohonos Memorial Award

A group of Silver Heights alumni join forces to honour the life and character of a well-admired former classmate, Susan Bohonos.

Susan Bohonos attended Silver Heights Collegiate and graduated in the class of '86. On April 20, 2015, she passed away from pancreatic cancer after battling the disease for three years. While she will always be remembered by her two boys, husband and immediate family, her spirit also lives on in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division with the Susan Bohonos Memorial Fund.

Elaine Stobbe and Tish Jonsson went to high school with Susan and graduated in her class. Although they were not extremely close with Susan during those years, her attitude towards life left an impression on both of them. "She was one of those people who was always smiling, always happy and always giving back," said Tish. "We just thought we wanted to do something to acknowledge that."

Elaine mentioned how on Facebook, she could see Susan had been through quite the struggle, especially with two young boys to care for but was amazed by how strong, positive and upbeat she remained the entire time.

"We just thought this (the memorial fund), would be a good way of giving back to someone with similar qualities as Susan — good-spirited, kind and giving to the community," said Elaine.

Shortly after her passing, these two former classmates began a fundraising campaign to create a scholarship in her name.

Both Elaine and Tish helped organize the 50th Anniversary of Silver Heights Collegiate in 2007, which took place just before the school closed and merged with Sturgeon Creek Collegiate. Elaine worked on tracking down the alumni contact information for the event, which on the day of saw a turnout of more than 1,000 former staff and students. In 2015, Elaine still had access to this contact information and knew many of her former classmates and peers still resided in the St. James area. After reaching out to Susan's family, as well as St. James Scholarship Foundation President, Bruce Alexander, Elaine and Tish teamed up with former classmate and close friend of Susan's, Sandrina Esposito, to plan a local fundraising event.

On July 12, 2015, more than 100 Silver Heights Alumni, family, friends and neighbours headed down to Woodhaven Community Club to support the Susan Bohonos Memorial Fund. The event included a pasta dinner (prepared by Sandrina's family), drinks, desserts and a silent auction. Many sizeable donations from the community helped make this event possible and in turn, a great success. The fundraising event was also well supported by former classmates near and far who, although unable to attend, still provided generous gifts. This heartfelt and memorable evening laid the foundation for funding the award.

After being voted on and passed by the Board of Trustees at the St. James-Assiniboia School Board meeting on April 12, 2016, the Susan Bohonos Memorial Award came to life as a 12-year scholarship in the amount \$500 to be presented annually at the College Sturgeon Heights Collegiate graduation ceremony. The first presentation of the Susan Bohonos Memorial Award marked the 30th anniversary of the Silver Heights class of '86 as it was awarded on June 29, 2016 to College Sturgeon Heights Collegiate graduate, Ronald Gamblin. The criteria for the award is centred on Susan's unforgettable qualities and incredible outlook on life recognizing a candidate each year who is kind, generous, determined, positive, involved in the community, has potential for leadership, the ability to overcome challenges and maintains a minimum of 65% average. Congratulations to Ronald Gamblin on receiving the award, and to everyone in the community who helped establish the Susan Bohonos Memorial Award. May her legacy live on in the students of St. James-Assiniboia School Division.



From the left: Elaine Stobbe and Tish Jonsson