

entertainment

Alumni spotlight

Ashland will always be home for Barbie Lange

ZACH READ
Managing Editor

Growing up and living in a small town is not meant for everyone, but for some it can mean a lifetime full of investment towards the same community. If the ladder is achieved, then that person can look back on life and say that they have given back to the community and helped it to grow.

Ashland College alumnus Barbie Lange is one of those people who can say that she has been so blessed to grow up in the town of Ashland and live here her entire life.

Lange, a 1978 graduate of then Ashland College, has lived a life devoted to public service and the betterment of the city of Ashland.

“This is home, this is where I love and this is the community that I want to see prosper and give back to so that means really digging in and being involved and participating on boards, committees and counsels for the betterment of the people and the community,” Lange said.

Lange’s most recent occupation is serving as the President/CEO for the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce for nearly 10 years before resigning just recently on Sept. 18.

Lange said there were some hard days through her time as president, but also said it was very rewarding to learn something new about Ashland everyday.

“It never got old, it was always something new; I would learn something new about a local organization, the people or the community every single day,” Lange said.

Lange now says that she will be entering into the business of selling real estate in the Ashland area and says she has felt like she has had a background in business her whole life through her previous work experiences.

Upon graduation from AC in 1978, Lange decided to stay local and started working for The Timken Company where she was a clerk typist. She continued to work her way up into human resources and then HR and finance later on.

“Once I got into HR I really enjoyed that aspect of it and helping the employees in doing the benefits, compensation and managing the supervisors doing performance evaluations,” Lange said.

In 2002, Lange became one of the co-owners when Timken sold the company. Lange, along with a few other individuals on the business team and some outside investors purchased the company which is when it became known as Ashland Precision Tooling.

Lange helped to run Ashland Precision Tooling until December of 2009 when she moved on to the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce.

During her time at Ashland College, Lange received an associates degree in secretarial sciences and was involved with plays and musicals. She later returned to take classes at Ashland in the 80s and then finished up her Bachelor’s degree in management from Malone College in 2003.

When asked if she had any advice for current college students at Ash-



ASHLAND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Barbie Lange, 1978 graduate of Ashland College.

land, Lange said, “Once they get into the profession and the work God has for them to do, they need to think about how they can give back to the community in which they live and help to see it prosper and grow. And by doing that you need to get involved.”

Personally for Lange, involvement in organizations and committees within the community is not a characteristic that she is lacking in. Lange is involved with the Ashland City Strategic Planning Committee, Ashland Main Street Board, Co-Chair of the AU Community Involvement group, AU Business Advisory Committee and countless chambers of commerce to name a few.

Not only has Lange lived in Ashland her entire life, but her ancestors were some of the first settlers in

Ashland in the mid to early 1800s. She also said that her cousins live on the same farm that their ancestors built and lived on during that time.

Needless to say, Lange has deep roots and ties within the Ashland community that she never wanted to leave. Ashland was home.

“It’s been a real joy to see how Ashland has blossomed in that regard over the years, and to have had some small role being one of the many hands, feet and voices of people that have poured themselves into the community; and that’s a real honor,” Lange said.



ASHLAND AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Lange is pictured fifth from the left.

Department chair spotlight

Dr. Christopher Swanson: Chair of Mathematics and Computer Science

CHRISTINE JENKINSON
News Editor

The mathematics and computer science department has award-winning math instructors, while offering activities outside of the classroom.

Dr. Christopher Swanson is the chair of mathematics and computer science and is in his first year as chair. He said that this department’s mission is to educate students in the areas of mathematics and computer science.

“The department is committed to providing students with a broad overview of the central concepts of mathematics, computer science and logic,” Swanson said. “The mathematics and computer science curricula are supported by the foundation of liberal arts education.”

There are six majors within this department: mathematics, integrated mathematics, actuarial science, computer science, cyber security and software design and development, with the last two new to this year. Their minors include mathematics, computer science, cyber security and web technology.

This department and the philosophy department offer the courses that meet the Math/Logic core curriculum requirement. As many may guess, Math 208: Elementary Statistics is the most popular course taken to fulfill the requirement.

While internships are not required, they are encouraged. Recent computer science majors

have interned at First Energy, J.M. Smucker and Bird Technologies. Actuarial science majors have interned at Western Reserve Group, Westfield Insurance and Findley-Davies.

According to the department’s website, the history of the mathematics department starts in the fall of 1879, when Ashland University was called Ashland College. The total faculty of the college consisted of eight members and 75 students. David Bailey, M.A., was the first instructor in mathematics.

“The first college catalogue lists two, four-year degree programs, the classical and the philosophical,” Swanson said.

The mathematics courses offered during the initial years of the college were: geometry (one quarter), higher algebra (two quarters), trigonometry and surveying (one quarter), spherical trigonometry and navigation (one quarter), general geometry (one quarter), calculus (two quarters), mechanics (one quarter) and astronomy (one quarter). All of these courses, except mechanics and astronomy, were required for students in both four-year programs.

When liberal arts first started at AU, there were seven liberal arts programs: grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. The latter four known as the quadrivium, were all mathematical in nature and logic is also important for the study of mathematics, Swanson said.

Swanson grew up in the Massil-

lon/Canton area and graduated from Massillon Perry high school in 1990. He received his Bachelor of Science from Denison University in 1994 with a major in mathematics and a minor in physics, his Masters of Science in mathematics from the University of Michigan in 1996 and his Doctor of Philosophy in mathematics from the University of Michigan in 1999.

“Having had both the small, private, liberal arts college and large research university experience, I knew that I wanted to return to a small, private liberal arts college when I completed my PhD,” Swanson said. “Furthermore, with my wife being from Indiana and with me being from Ohio, I was hoping to end up at a college in the mid-west.”

Students in this major also have opportunities to get together outside of classes.

Computer science related majors participate in the Association of Computing Machinery, Upsilon Pi Epsilon and regional programming competitions. Mathematics related majors participate in the student math club, Pi Mu Epsilon, the Problem Solving Group, mathematics competitions and give presentations at professional conferences.

The award-winning professors in the mathematics and computer science start with “Dr. Gordon Swain winning the Ashland University Taylor Excellence in Teaching Award in 2001 and the Ohio Section of the Mathematical Asso-

ciation of America Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics in 2019,” Swanson said.

Swanson won the national Mathematical Association of America’s Henry L. Alder Award in 2006 and the Ohio Section of the Mathematical Association of America Award for Distinguished College or University Teaching of Mathematics in 2014.

“From a more practical perspective, mathematics and computer science majors lead to top jobs,” Swanson said. “CareerCast.com publishes an annual jobs rated re-

port. In the 2019 report (<https://www.careercast.com/jobs-rated/2019-jobs-rated-report>), seven of the top eleven jobs are related to mathematics or computer science - #1 Data Scientist; #2 Statistician; #7 Information Security Analyst; #8 Mathematician; #9 Operations Research Analyst; #10 Actuary; #11 Software Developer. (University professor is ranked #3, another option for mathematics and computer science majors to consider.)”

Students who have questions can email Swanson at cswanson@ashland.edu.



ASHLAND.EDU
Dr. Christopher Swanson, chair of the mathematics and computer science department at AU.

If you have a story idea or want event coverage, you can email Zach Read at zread@ashland.edu