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### **Kathleen Helz Kueht : Distinguished Achievement Award - Humanities**

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# 2007 Distinguished Achievement Award - Humanities

## Kathleen Helz Kueht '68

December will mark the latest momentous event in Kathie Kueht's life, a life so outstanding because of her successful career and because of all she has done to help others. Thirty-nine years after graduating from St. Norbert College, she will defend her doctoral dissertation pursuant to receiving her Ed.D. in Executive Leadership, Human & Organizational Learning from The George Washington University.

When Kathie graduated from SNC, she initially planned to enter the Peace Corps. Instead, she pursued an M.S. in Counseling at U.W.-Madison. A "transformative" experience, it introduced her to a "more diverse community that was involved in civil rights, questioned the country's role in Vietnam, and had different points of view and experiences." Using this new expertise, Kathie spent the years 1970-1977, working as a counselor at Marquette University, and academic advisor at U.W. Green Bay, and as Director of Counseling & Health Services at Waukesha's Carroll College.

In 1977, while she was in Waukesha, Kathie made a very special contribution: with four other women, she helped found The Women's Center, a non-profit agency that, for over 30 years now, has provided crisis intervention services to victims of domestic and sexual assault, employment assistance and on-site childcare. These services include emergency housing, counseling, support groups for women and children, child abuse prevention programming and legal advocacy.

Beyond helping found this Center, Kathie has continued to help develop the Center and expand its services. For example, by her helping raise funds for the Center, all services are free of charge so that no one is denied help because of a lack of financial resources. She continues to serve as an unofficial "ambassador" for the Center in the community, telling others – especially in her professional circle – about The Women's Center's work, and encouraging others to be involved as donors and volunteers. Since its founding, The Women's Center has served thousands of women, men and children in life-changing (and sometimes life-saving) ways – thanks to over 125 volunteers and over 20 groups of volunteers who currently help the Center.

Years as a personnel manager, psychotherapist, and as a management development trainer and facilitator led to Kathie's founding, in 1988, Proact, Inc., the Proact Global Associated LLC an organization for which she is President, CEO and owner. Proact specializes in designing learning and performance improvement programs, coaching executive leadership and facilitating and

improving performance and talent development at all levels. From 1992-2005, under Kathie’s leadership, Proact sponsored the Vision Network for outplaced executives and employees.

Kathie’s service has not gone unrecognized, as she received commendations for her work for Milwaukee Public Schools, for her leadership in founding The Women’s Center and for her special service to Sexual Assault Counseling Services in Waukesha County. In addition, she received the YWCA’s Woman of Distinction Award, and the YWCA’s Peacemaker Award for preventing family violence and for promoting family peace.

As a recognized consultant on strategic change, organizational effectiveness and development, with expertise in assessment, interventions, designing learning solutions and measurement that drive business goals, Kathie now hopes to write and publish more research, with a focus on change, transformation and resilience in the growing boomer population, as well as a “focus on building relationships, improving race relations in my community, and developing future leaders.”

In her philosophy of life, Kathie emphasizes: “be a good friend, neighbor, and citizen of the world; be a starter, not a follower; have a purpose beyond yourself.”

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