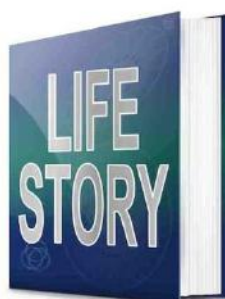
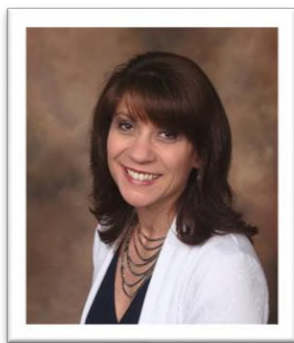




“Meet A Member” – Stories from AAUW – Saint Cloud Area Branch

We like to feature one of our accomplished members each month by asking them to tell us their stories.

Our January, 2022 Member of the Month is: Jacqueline (Provo) Ampe



Une Femme au Coeur Française

I was born and raised in Central Minnesota ever so many years ago. I grew up in a modest family full of love and care. My twin sister and I are the youngest of five children. We were the only ones to pursue university degrees because no one told us we couldn't. Neither of our parents went to college but both shared valuable life lessons with their children. Our father served in World War II. That is where he met, fell in love with and married our mother who was a Parisian War Bride. It was love at first sight. Only months later our mother was on a ship to the United States where my parents settled back in Annandale, MN. Although our mother never worked outside the home, she worked hard taking care of our house and making it a safe place, a place where we had everything we needed. She would eventually take on students in our home, teaching them French because our high school only offered Spanish.

Initially, I elected to attend St. Cloud Area Vocational Technical College and study accounting. However, after visiting my twin sister at St. Catherine's University in St. Paul, I was enlightened and motivated to do something more. After one year at AVTI I transferred to SCSU where I began my studies in the new International Business program, inspired by my mother of course.

One of the requirements was to take so many credits in a foreign language. Our mother never raised us bi-lingual. That just wasn't done back in those days; but we did take lessons like so many other high school students who came to our home. That was simply an introduction. I fell in love with the possibilities that speaking another language offered. The windows and doors it had opened for me to new cultures, traditions and "la vie quotidienne" --Daily life outside of ones own. Complimented with my business studies, I decided to major in both International Business with an emphasis in Marketing and French. It would take me 5 more years of courses at Saint Cloud State before I would complete all the requirements but I cried when I had finished. My dream was to someday do the opposite of what my mother did. Take a job with a big international company in France and move overseas. Well, that didn't exactly happen. My inspiration for this dream was also my best friend. I couldn't leave my mother who so courageously left her homeland at only 19 years old. My study of the French language did afford me the ability to communicate easily with my French relatives and to travel and communicate quite well abroad. My French has even allowed me to communicate with other Europeans because they speak French and we have that in common.

My business degree was broad enough that I would soon discover my passion for the financial industry and now, as a Financial Advisor, I have been working with clients for over 20 years helping them plan and achieve short-term and long-term goals, particularly retirement. Although I graduated from SCSU over 30 years ago, my studies, my desire to learn and my love to read has continued. I have more grey hairs than I care to admit, but with age comes experience. With this wisdom I have learned that if I'm not learning I am no longer growing and working on a better me. A better wife, a better mother, a better friend and a better co-worker.

My mother used to say:

"You only get out of life what you put into it." I remind myself often of this quote and live my life by it. My best friend has been gone for more than 15 years now but her legacy lives on in me. Hopefully, I will inspire my children in the same way she inspired me.