To move through the halls of the William J. Raggio Building with Ann Carlson ‘59 (business administration), ’74M.Ed (education administration) is to walk with someone who is a friend and mentor to all. Ann stops to chat with students she’s never met—asking about their majors, their coursework and their future plans.

Mentoring students has been her life’s work. After graduating from Nevada, Ann joined Roger Corbett Elementary School in Reno as a second-grade teacher. In 1961, she married engineering professor Jim Carlson ’55 (mechanical engineering), and they had one daughter, Lisa. Jim died in a snowmobile accident in 1974. Ann taught second grade at Roger Corbett Elementary for 34 years before retiring in 1994. She taught in-service classes, served on various district committees and received several professional honors, including the Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Month Award and the 1994 Nevada Women’s Fund Achievement Award.

Ann was inspired by the philanthropic efforts of her parents, Clarence ’31 (electrical engineering) and Martha Jones, respected community supporters who helped fund the renovation of the former journalism building (now the Clarence and Martha Jones Visitor Center) and provided major support for the College of Education, the School of Medicine, the College of Engineering and the College of Liberal Arts. Ann followed suit by serving on the College of Education advisory board and becoming a founding member of the Friends of the College of Education. She is still active in several educational and charitable endeavors.

She was a trustee for the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation from 1996-2002 and 2003-2009, and continues to serve as chair of the scholarship ad-hoc committee. She received the University Service Award from the Nevada Alumni Association in 1999.

Together with her companion of 20 years, Ron Turek, Ann has traveled to all seven continents, with Antarctica being her favorite. A close second was a visit to India, with a full moon rising above the Taj Mahal.

What is your fondest memory from your days at Nevada?

A group of friends and I spent many winter days driving to the Reno Ski Bowl (part of the Mount Rose ski area today), since it was only 30 minutes from campus. At the time, that was the only ski area close to Reno. I was an instructor for the junior ski program, and later, a trainer for instructors for nearly 50 years. As a result of working with these students, I was inspired to become a teacher.

Attending football in the Mackay Stadium bowl and basketball games in the old gym sparked a lasting interest in Wolf Pack sports, which we still follow today.

The University also gave me the opportunity to make many close, longtime friendships. I participated in many campus activities associated with my sorority, Delta Delta Delta. These friendships continue today.

What have you done that you are most proud of?

It is important to keep a good balance in one’s life. Participation on several University boards and committees has been both informational and gratifying. It has given me insight and kept me involved.

I am immensely proud of my daughter, Lisa, and her career as a pediatric dentist in Colorado. The growth and balance she and her husband have given to my grandsons, Cooper and Easton, are special to me.

I have been able to work on many educational projects and committees to help enhance the field of education. To see the growth and maturity of the many students is terrific.

I have committed to both social and philanthropic organizations and activities where I can give of my time and talent. To give of one’s self to help others is very rewarding. However, I also feel that to grow and prosper, one has to take time to fulfill one’s own dreams. My companion, Ron, and I have been able to see the lifestyles of various cultures, and these travels have helped us see the world through a different perspective.

What advice would you give someone just starting out from college?

Once you have chosen a career, don’t feel that choice is final. A college education is just the beginning. With so many new and uncharted areas and fields of interest, it is important to think outside the box and to reach for the stars. Be willing to move in directions that will make you happy and fulfilled. Move forward with pride and accomplishment and remember to help others by giving as much as you are able.

—Roseann Keegan

What I’ve Done With My Life

Trustee Emerita Ann Carlson ’59, ’74M.Ed. served for 12 years as a trustee for the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation. She continues to serve as chair of the board’s scholarship ad-hoc committee.