

Why I give

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by Lynnette Harris



Each year, colleges at Utah State University honor donors at events that celebrate the difference their support makes in the lives of students. Because the merger of two colleges happened midway through the year, there were recognition banquets this fall for both the former College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences and the Quinney College of Natural Resources.

Scott and Mindy Pratt



Representing donors at the Quinney College of Natural Resources event were Scott and Mindy Pratt, both proud USU alumni, business owners, and long-time champions of conservation and stewardship. Through their *Leadership in Working Land Working Landscapes Scholarship* and the *Pratt Land and Leadership Award*, they are helping the next generations of USU students gain hands-on experiences and lead with purpose.

As Mindy told guests at the banquet, both of the Pratts graduated in 1997, Scott in animal science and Mindy in range science, and later from the Master of Natural Resources program. But both came close to earning degrees in the other's college.

"Scott was the Ag major who couldn't stay out of NR courses, and I was the NR students who almost got a degree in Ag," she said.

"That mix of perspectives shaped how we see the world and taught us something important: That is, that farmers, ranchers, and natural resource professionals are all working toward the same goals#clean water, clean air, healthy soils, and thriving ecosystems," Mindy said.

The Pratts see immense potential in the merged college's ability to craft strong research programs and interdisciplinary courses that encourage building bridges and more expansive perspectives that will help researchers and students collaboratively work to create real-world solutions.

Joe and Judy Crum



Joe Crum was a high school athlete in Rawlins, Wyoming, who took his father's advice to view sports as "a means to an end," and Joe had many offers to play college football. He decided to go after the education he wanted. At Utah State University in the late 70s and early 80s, Joe built a reputation for being a hard worker in the gym, on the football field, and in tutoring sessions and classes. He went from being a leader on the field to a career in agribusiness.

Judy is a Texas native who saw her first USU Homecoming football game in 2018. As she tells it, at some point in the trip, Joe sat her on the Block A, kissed her, and she's been a true-blooded Aggie ever since. Judy also fell in love with Logan on that visit and told Joe it's where she wanted to retire. Three years ago, she got her wish.

Joe knows what it's like to be a kid from a small town who might not see many possibilities for their future. He has also seen the pervasive poverty and lack of opportunities for indigenous people living on the Wind River Reservation. Joe and Judy endowed a scholarship in the college that will be available to graduates of Rawlins High School or the two schools that serve the Wind River Reservation.

Joe knows exactly why he gives back to the college: "Utah State took a chance on an underweight kid from Wyoming. If they hadn't, I would not have the kind of life I've had. I want to give young people from Wyoming who may be disadvantaged or just don't see what's possible the same kind of opportunities I had."