

Art and Mary Heers, Distinguished Service Award

Art and Mary Heers are active, passionate, well-educated Aggies that discovered Utah State later in life. After completing degrees from Stanford, the couple relocated to Logan so that Art could pursue an engineering career with Campbell Scientific. It was then, at age 38, that Mary decided to deviate from her psychology degree and complete a bachelor's in theatre arts as well as a teaching certificate at Utah State University.

Mary's experience is so varied that you would think she were living multiple people's lives—and succeeding in them all. She is a teacher, a thespian, a producer volunteering at Utah Public Radio, a dairy herdsman and even played a cameo role in *Napoleon Dynamite*.

With all of this, however, Mary is best known in the local community for her work at Preston High School. As a high school English teacher and director for the school musicals and plays, she has coached hundreds of budding actors and musicians. Nothing brings her more joy than to see young people bowing to the cheers of a standing ovation. Her love and support for the arts has extended to USU, where she has served on the advancement board for the Caine College of the Arts.

Among Mary's many accomplishments are coaching her high school's decathlon team to two state championships, receiving a key to the City of Preston and serving as a Fulbright teacher on exchange in Warsaw, Poland.

Art is a self- and spouse-proclaimed workaholic. As one of the first employees and current principal engineers at Campbell Scientific, he has helped the company grow to the world industry leader it is today. He loves his work and has been with Campbell Scientific for 40 years. While eligible for retirement, he shows no sign of slowing down. This extends to his extracurricular activities where he is an active runner, cyclist, and skier. Art has qualified for the Boston Marathon twice and has been on the LOTOJA podium (the Logan to Jackson Cycling Race) for his age group.

Through Art and Mary's generous support to the Caine College of the Arts, the theatre department has a top-class scene, paints and props shop – The Art and Mary Heers Scene Shop. The larger space allows for all students to work safely with multiple projects possible at one time. Theatre students, under an experienced watchful eye, are encouraged to experiment, to grow, and to conquer fears in the scene shop. Many students enter the shop having never used a power tool before, and leave feeling safe and comfortable with all manner of tools; from routers, to band saws, to table saws, to a Dremel tool and more. The Scene Shop is often considered students' safe place, as they feel welcomed, heard, and appreciated while working.

Art and Mary have two children and are parents to a large black rescue dog and two water buffalos. They recently celebrated their 53rd wedding anniversary and reside in Mendon, Utah.

For their dedication and personal giving to the students and programs in the college, we are proud to recognize Mary and Art Heers as the Caine College of the Arts Distinguished Service Award recipients for 2021.