

Member Spotlight Questionnaire: Barb Gordon

Why are you a member of IWCF?

A good friend introduced me to IWCF. I was so impressed with the impact of this group and the empowerment that women can infuse into communities. I joined to be a part of that benevolent force.

What are your top 5 strengths (from StrengthsFinder)?

I have never done Strengths Finder; however, here's a self-generated list: Activator, Developer, Learner, Responsibility, Strategic

What does true leadership mean to you?

True leadership means mentoring every team member to be an engaged contributor in the achievement of the vision and mission. To achieve true leadership, I believe that leaders must also be able to follow. For example, to facilitate team member optimizes their contribution, a leader may need to let team members take the reigns of their functions. The leader then steps back to follow that team member on that function, being engaged as a follower but also actively mentoring the team member to ensure their success.

Is what you're doing right now what you always wanted to do growing up?

No, but I love what I am doing right now. I am semi-retired. I have a part-time, grant-based position at Idaho State University. Some of the grants focus on nutrition research but most of the grants focus on training the next generation of health professionals. I also mentor the dietitian who manages the ISU-Meridian Nutrition Clinic, which provides both in-person and tele-nutrition counseling to all Idahoans. Plus, group programs such as Prenatal Nutrition Education and Menopause Matters (addressing the normal myriad of changes that occur in a woman's body during this transitional period).

What is something that makes you feel accomplished?

I love projects with tangible outcomes. For example, writing research grants or journal articles. Or, on the flip side, tinkering in the garden.

What was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?

I am currently a volunteer tester for American's Test Kitchen. This involves making recipes that are still in development and providing feedback on both the accuracy of the recipe directions and the deliciousness of the item.



Another interesting job was working as the Health Promotion Manager for a US Air Force base in Germany. This required appreciation of different cultures; in addition to learning about the German culture and different approaches to health, the US military has a distinct culture.

What is one of your favorite books or authors?

My favorite book is Anne Morrow Lindbergh's Gift from the Sea. It's a book about stopping to enjoy the simple pleasures of life and it's a quick read. I go back to it when life gets overwhelming and it brings me great solace. I highly recommend the book.

Tell us something about yourself that might surprise us.

I am a superhero! After I married and changed my last name, I discovered that Barbara Gordon is Bat Girl. About once a month, some stranger meets me and says, "Hey, you're Bat Girl."

Favorite quote(s)?

"Where troubles melt like lemon drops. Away above the chimney tops. That's where you'll find me."

What is the craziest thing you've ever done and would you do it again?

I went skydiving. And, yes I would do it again. I selected the static line option which means my parachute was connected to the aircraft. That way, after I jumped out of the plane (yes jumped!), the parachute deployed automatically. And, I was flying at 4,000 feet in the sky! I had a one-way radio on my vest and the instructor guided me as I used steering toggles to fly around and land somewhat smoothly. In truth, I hit the ground and fell flat on my face.