

PATTY KUGLITSCH

COMMUNITY SERVICE



Patty Kuglitsch was born in Elkhorn, Wisconsin on September 28, 1952. She attended the Wisconsin School for the Deaf at age 5 and graduated there. Ms. Kuglitsch is a graduate of Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, where she earned her Bachelor's degree and Master's degree..

Growing up in a deaf family, Ms. Kuglitsch has always had a heart for serving deaf individuals. Ms. Kuglitsch began her career at the SD School for the Deaf in 1978 as an elementary teacher, a position she held for eleven years. In 1989, she accepted a position at CSD where she worked for 25 years. She assumed many roles and responsibilities in her career at CSD, including the establishment of the youth program, the renovation of three historical buildings, and the construction of a relay call center on the western portion of the SD School for the Deaf campus. She retired in 2014 as the Corporate Secretary/Special Assistant to the CEO.

In addition to her professional career, Ms. Kuglitsch has volunteered in a variety of capacities in service of the deaf community. She has chaired various committees for SDAD and NAD, coordinated events for Deaf Bikers of America, and volunteered at Jr. NAD/Youth Program, Family Signing Classes, Deaf Teens in Action at the SD School for the Deaf, and chaired the South Dakota Board of Vocational Rehabilitation after being appointed to the Board by Governor Dennis Daugaard. In 2011, Ms. Kuglitsch was elected as SDAD President and served for three 2-year terms with the belief that every deaf individual has the right to freely participate in all aspects of society and life to the fullest extent possible – without barriers or limitations.

With that animating belief, Ms. Kuglitsch has played an active role in state legislative affairs contacting state legislators, giving testimony, and helping other deaf and hard of hearing people make their voice heard on key bills affecting the deaf community. Ms. Kuglitsch helped revise the telecommunications services program to cover developing technology such as iPhones and tablets for the deaf and hard of hearing and audiological services such as hearing aids for deaf children. She helped prevent cuts to fees that cover hardware and services for the deaf and hard of hearing and stopped the state from repealing interpreter certification. Lastly, she has supported the Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K) program, and successfully helped change official state language from "hearing impaired" to "deaf and hard of hearing". Through countless letters and meetings, she also has strongly advocated for communication accessibility.

Ms. Kuglitsch's other accomplishments as SDAD President included creating highlights of SDAD board meetings that she shared with SDAD members. She also helped to establish a new and separate SDAD Foundation, develop SDAD policies and procedures/guidelines, and establish the SDAD Board manual for clarification and quick reference.

Ms. Kuglitsch now lives in Sioux Falls, SD, and during her free time she enjoys promoting Mobile Communication Access (MCA) and spending time with her two children, Zach and Zarah Crago and sister, Deb Kuglitsch.

