



Alumni Spotlight

Kelli Wyatt '97



Kelli Wyatt '97 is all about giving back to her community. She graduated from Millersville University with a degree in Elementary Education, ready to take on her role in the classroom. "I always wanted to be a teacher," she says, "and I had an awesome experience at Millersville. It was safe and a second home for me. I had a tremendous experience and was able to learn a lot from the program I was a part of." After graduating from the 'Ville in the late 90s, she went on to do just that, teaching at the School District of Philadelphia, serving as a School Based Teacher Leader, Literacy Coach and support teacher for the last 21 years.

As an educator with a passion for empowering kids, seeing the way the COVID-19 pandemic affected high school seniors tugged on her heartstrings. So, she decided to do something about it. Wyatt created a private Facebook group called "Adopt A High School Senior 2020 – Let's Celebrate Them," where parents posted photos of their high school seniors and people in the group reached out to "adopt" them, purchasing gifts, sending them cards, money, well-wishes and more. The group took off almost immediately, racking up approximately 3,000 members within the first week alone.

Wyatt herself adopted two students who are incoming freshmen at MU.

"The students know that their immediate family will support them," says Wyatt. "However, that feeling when a complete stranger offers a congratulatory token during such uncertain times have proved to be priceless. The seniors, families, and even the well-wishers have all been beyond appreciative."

Today, the group has more than 7,000 members. Taking advantage of the influx of members, Wyatt rallied the group together to collect money for scholarships. "The initial goal was \$25,000, and we were more than halfway there in just four days!" says Wyatt. By the end of the week, they'd surpassed their goal. The scholarship fund is still going strong. To date, it has raised more than \$35,000.

As an educator herself, Wyatt knows just how critical scholarships can be to a student's success, both inside the classroom and out. "If I can be a vehicle to provide additional support and resources for these students and families when access to school counselors have been affected, why not do it?" she says. So, what's next for Wyatt? "Right now, I'm working on turning this into a non-profit," she explains. "I'd like to keep the momentum going and help as many kids as possible."

To keep up with Wyatt's work, [visit her Facebook group by clicking here.](#)