



# THE ST. OLAF ALUMNI AWARDS 2007



**Greg Carlson '82**  
Distinguished Service Award

The Board of Regents of St. Olaf College and the St. Olaf College Alumni Association, in recognition of outstanding achievements, bestow the **St. Olaf Alumni Awards** on those alumni whose accomplishments have brought honor to self and to the College; whose service and leadership have exemplified its ideals; and whose concern for St. Olaf has supported and strengthened its program.

The **Distinguished Service Award (DSA)** is given to alumni who have contributed their “heart and soul” — an exceptional amount of time, talent and/or resources — to St. Olaf and have set outstanding examples for their community and peers.

*Nominator remarks:*

“He had and has a special talent for creating a vision, and then for enlisting, inspiring, cajoling, humoring and motivating those around him to achieve success.”  
-Paul Huebner

“The thing that strikes me the most is that all of his decisions and his drive for excellence are driven by a passion to do what is best for others even it comes at a sacrifice to himself.”  
-Jerry Foster

“As always with Greg, he is more concerned about the other person’s needs than his own.”  
-Jeffrey S. Brown

“It is Greg’s ability to consider all options and speak with clarity and wisdom that makes him not only a great leader, but also the friend who we turn to whenever we have important decisions to consider.”  
-Rick & Kris Estenson

**The dossier of Greg Carlson '82 reads like St. Olaf’s mission statement:** He is well-rounded, ethically centered and wholly dedicated to living a life of worth and service.

When he graduated from St. Olaf with a major in economics in 1982, Greg joined IDS/American Express (now Ameriprise) as a financial planner. Just four years later, he carved his own path, first as an independent adviser, then as co-founder of what is now Carlson Capital Management. His company has become one of the top wealth management firms in Minnesota. It employs 18 people in three offices and manages more than \$750 million in assets.

But Greg’s contributions go well beyond his portfolio. He has a venerable record of service — to charity, the Northfield community and St. Olaf College. Greg works closely with friends and clients to develop and encourage a strong sense of stewardship to both St. Olaf College and other philanthropic endeavors. In addition to taking leadership roles with numerous charitable organizations, he is a co-founding member of the American Center for Philanthropy, 5th Bridge and the Northfield Area Foundation.

Throughout his career, Greg has hired St. Olaf alumni and interns at his firm, and has worked with St. Olaf seniors to apply the concepts they learned in class to the real world. Twenty-five years after graduating, he still returns to Associate Professor of Economics Mary Emery’s classroom — now to talk to students about the importance of planning for retirement.

“Each one of us has an innate calling to act beyond ourselves,” Greg says. “There isn’t a problem we can’t solve by making opportunities for others.”