

# Missouri ACTE 2004 Teacher of the Year

## Charles (Chuck) A. Berendzen



**Charles A. Berendzen**

A rousing "Congratulations" to Chuck Berendzen, who was selected as Missouri ACTE's Teacher of the Year 2004. Drafting and Design Instructor for the Rolla Technical Institute (RTI), Rolla, Missouri since 1988, Chuck keeps up with a rapidly evolving field in order to provide his students with the latest and best equipment. But he doesn't stop there. The success of his students is his overwhelming goal.

Students at RTI receive training in Mechanical, Architectural and Civil/Survey drafting, using the latest Windows-based computers and drafting software, as well as instruction in the use of Geographic Information Systems ... all in a two-year course. No wonder it takes a masterful teacher.

Chuck incorporates state-of-the-art technology into his program's curriculum. He has been involved in several projects with the University of Missouri, Rolla (UMR), including the solar home projects and the composite house project. During the summer, Chuck works in UMR's engineering labs to further his knowledge of the latest materials and technologies. He puts this hands-on experience to good use, writing and upgrading drafting curriculum at the state and regional levels. Several software companies have sought his help in previewing and evaluating new, innovative commercial and educational drafting software.

As a teacher, you must develop a fine balance between challenge and compassion. Chuck sets goals for his students which are just out of their reach and then he invests his time, energy and deep interest on their behalf, providing practical help, inspiration and opportunity to succeed. In his 23-year teaching career, Chuck has taken a leadership role in SkillsUSA-VICA, strongly encouraging his students to participate, often successfully. He has involved students in several projects with UMR, including the solar home projects and the composite house project. Chuck is very willing to share his expertise, serving as a Master Teacher at the New Teacher Institute which is sponsored by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Chuck Berendzen understands the importance of unified effort. For 16 years, he has been an active member of the National Association of Career and Technical Education, serving as Cluster Chair, Minority Committee member and Drafting Division Chair. He has been a presenter at the National ACTE Conferences in 1998, 2000 and 2002. The Missouri ACTE has also benefitted from his membership and involvement. He shows up! During his 16 years of membership, he has never missed a state conference. Chuck has also been a member of the Missouri Trade and Technical Association for 16 years, serving on its Public Relations Committee. SkillsUSA-VICA has captured Chuck's enthusiasm and energy for 22 years. He has served as the National Educational Team's Architectural Drafting Chair for seven years.

It is hard to separate Chuck's professional contributions from his awards. Maybe they are one and the same. The list of his contributions seems endless. In the summer of 2002, as RTI lead Advisor, he volunteered 370 hours of time setting up and then dismantling the UMR-RTI Solar Home at the Decathlon in Washington, DC. During the 2003-2004 year he served as RTI Lead Advisor in development of next year's solar home. With his guidance, students have been involved in a Problem Based Learning Project with students in Rolla High School to develop a lake project and shopping mall for Rolla. In recognition of all Chuck contributes to his students and to his field, he was named Most Influential Teacher at Rolla High School in 2000-2001. In 2001-2002 he was included in Who's Who Among America's Teachers.

For 25 years Chuck Berendzen has been involved with his chosen profession. From Draftsman, Spec Writer and Inspector in the Office of Adjutant General, Jefferson City; through numerous assignments at Rolla Technical Institute; to Civil Engineering Senior Design Instructor at the University of Missouri-Rolla, he has contributed to his field and to the students he instructs.

Chuck values education for his students and for himself. Currently, he is working on an Associate Degree in Drafting at East Central College, Union, Missouri. He has completed 30 hours in Vocational Education at the University of Missouri, Columbia and Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg.

The community of Rolla has benefitted from Chuck Berendzen's involvement. He is currently a member of the Bray Sports Complex Committee drawing new baseball, soccer and football fields and park area. Last year he donated two weeks of his time to the improvement of Newman Center in Rolla. He teaches drafting skills to Boy Scouts; has helped develop a new soccer field and assisted with blood drives at St. Patrick's Church and serves as chair of the Youth Committee of the Knights of Columbus.

It is no accident that Chuck Berendzen has been named Missouri ACTE Teacher of the Year 2004. He has earned the honor.

## Remember!

September 1, 2004 is the deadline for submitting articles for the Fall issue of the Missouri ACTE Reporter. Please send your articles to Debbie at [DickensCo@aol.com](mailto:DickensCo@aol.com).

# Missouri ACTE 2004 Outstanding Career and Technical Educator - Nancy D. Zelif, Ph.D.



**Nancy D. Zelif, Ph.D.**

Teaching teachers to teach is a challenge but one which Nancy Zelif accommodates with grace. She teaches undergraduate and graduate business education and information systems classes at Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Missouri. She advises approximately 30 undergraduate OIS and BE students and 30 graduate students who are pursuing business education teacher certification, as well as candidates in the Teaching Instructional Technology master's degree program.

Under Zelif's direction, in 2000, the business education program at Northwest was one of two university programs recognized nationally as "Programs of Excellence" by the Business Education Division of ACTE. In 2001, the same program was named a "Program of Excellence" by the Business Education Division of Missouri ACTE. Northwest undergraduates have been recognized in student leadership positions at the state, regional and national levels.

Zelif invests her competence in her profession. She serves as sponsor to the national business teacher education honor society, Pi Omega Pi Chapter. Beta Chapter at Northwest is a nationally recognized chapter, placing in the Top Ten Chapters for 14 consecutive years. Zelif has served eight years on the National Council of Pi Omega Pi, in leadership capacities, including president. Recently, she was named a co-advisor of the Missouri Academy of Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and served as a Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) sponsor of the Northwest chapter for three years.

Since 1990, Zelif has led a team responsible for receiving vocational grants of over \$200,000 for the two-year Office Systems program at Northwest. Obviously, funding is the life-blood of education, but investment of those funds in a successful program is critical. From 1994-97 Zelif supervised internship programs for OIS students who interned for firms in Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri.

Zelif's early use of the Internet in classes led many nationwide and has given her international status. Since the summer of 1999, she has taught classes online and helped form a consortium of online graduate business education offerings among four Missouri universities. In March, 2003, Zelif served as a visiting professor on an international teaching exchange to Satakunta Polytechnic in Pori, Finland. While there, she shared her knowledge on speech recognition and online teaching.

"The more things change, the more they stay the same," does not seem to apply to business systems. Software, hardware, and Internet applications are far from static. Zelif stays current with a constantly changing landscape. She serves on a team at Northwest to evaluate and update office systems and business education curricula, involving active learning and technology.

Statewide, she has served on curriculum committees in her field, drafting competency profiles for international business, writing business education core competencies and creating a course on alternative input technologies. A far cry from a stenographer's notebook!

The bottom line for teachers is defined by how well students relate to them and how much students learn. Nancy Zelif's students consistently remark, "She gets to know her students... is an energetic teacher... relates her knowledge and expertise well to students ... keeps students involved in active learning." Her colleagues agree. She has been recognized by the business education associations at the national, regional, and state levels as "Outstanding Collegiate/University Teacher" in 2001, 1999, and 1997, respectively.

Nancy Zelif has supported the organizations which enhance her profession. A member of Missouri ACTE since 1984 and ACTE since 1988, Zelif has attended all Missouri ACTE Conventions since 1984 and 11 ACTE conventions since 1991. She has served in leadership positions in NATEBE, the affiliate for business teacher educators, receiving the "Outstanding Service Award" in 1998 from the BE Division.

Missouri ACTE has also benefitted from Zelif's involvement. In addition to having other Missouri ACTE responsibilities, she has served on the Board of Directors since 2001. She has been particularly active in organizations involved in business education and business teacher education, including NBEA, as well as MBEA and Northwest District MBEA. A Charter member of Delta Pi Epsilon, Gamma Chi Chapter, UMC, she was co-sponsor of reorganized Gamma Chi Chapter relocated at Northwest, 2004. The national president of Pi Omega Pi, Zelif has been sponsor of Beta Chapter since 1988.

Nancy Zelif earned her Ph.D. in Business Education with additional areas in Management and Adult Education at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She has earned certification in a number of related skills. Included in Nancy Zelif's professional contributions are 30 publications since 1993, including one in press, Pedagogical and Technological Challenges of the Internet, as well as numerous articles dealing with international business education. Since 1993, Zelif has made 71 presentations to NBEA, MBEA, ACTE and NCBEA conferences across the nation, having such titles as, "Digitools," "Rubic Roundup," "Online Teaching," "Online Testing - It Works!," and "Internationalize YOUR Business Curriculum."

Glancing at the list of Nancy's community activities provides a glimpse into her priorities: Project Prom/Graduation Parent Volunteer; Volleyball Concession Stand Chair; Boys Basketball Concession Stand Chair; Marching Band Parent Volunteer Chaperone ... to name a few. Then there is the 4-H list, not to mention the Altar Guild at St. Oswald's In-the-Fields church where she was also chair of the Annual Harvest Festival Celebration. Add to these the SAIL Parent Volunteer and Chaperone from 2000-present at First Methodist Church. No wonder she was named, "Good Neighbor to Know" by the Washington Middle School, Maryville, Missouri.

What a lady! What a teacher!

# Missouri ACTE 2004 Outstanding New Career and Technical Teacher of the Year - Carol J. Bolin



**Carol J. Bolin**

In her brief four years as a teacher, Carol Bolin has moved mountains and created a tremendously successful new approach to career and technical training for students. All of this has been accomplished without setting off an avalanche. According to one of her supporters, her skills are both basic and essential and include her "overall ability to handle situations as they arise, her quick smile, cheerful and positive attitude." The challenge was to create an innovative, hands-on Entrepreneurial Studies Program

which involved the participation and support of five school districts and seven high schools. The Fort Osage Career and Technical Center administers the program and Simon Youth Foundation provides support and houses the program, not in a traditional school building but in the Independence Center Mall.

Carol started from scratch. As a new instructor in 2000, her charge was to develop the curriculum and coordinate the dual college credit component of this new program she envisioned, working with the Blue River Community College. Then the fun began. Carol selected, ordered and set up all of the furniture and equipment for this brand new effort. An advisory committee, including a school administrator, counselor, student and community business people, assisted her in defining and resolving the issues related to the overall instructional program.

The Entrepreneurial Studies Program gives new meaning to the term, "back to basics." Before students plunge into the meat of the program, they begin with a six-week internship starting in April of each year. This experience helps them gain the essential work experience and skills necessary for success. Students intern with a local business in the career field of their choice, learning to understand the components of business ownership. This is a two-way street. Students see what makes a business successful and the community gains prospective employees who have developed work values and ethics and have experienced an introduction to the business world.

Carol uses an action-oriented curriculum which begins with teaching students how to write a business plan and then actually implement it successfully by opening and operating businesses in the mall. These student-operated businesses now include "The Rabbit Hole," "The Cookie Jar," and "All Wrapped Up." Each of the businesses has been successful with positive net incomes. The 2003 earnings from the gift wrapping business, "All Wrapped Up," provided a net profit of \$9,000.00. Students donated \$2,900.00 to the Simon Youth Foundation Charity and used the remainder to fund DECA Chapter activities.

As a significant component of the future of the program, students participate in the "Student Recruitment Project," working with counselors and principals of their respective schools to recruit students for next year's program.

Each year, the recruited students from the seven different high schools visit the class to learn more about the program through student presentations and discussions.

Since the program is supported by the Simon Youth Foundation Scholarship, students are eligible for scholarships to be used at a school of their choice. As part of the curriculum, students complete the appropriate forms. The scholarship awards have grown from three students who received scholarships of \$10,000 in the first year to eight students who received \$24,000 in 2003.

In addition to designing and implementing a new and innovative program during her four years, Carol has, as a volunteer, created a new DECA Chapter, the Fort Osage Independence Center DECA Chapter which has been recognized by the District and State with the Rookie Chapter Gold Award. The success of the chapter is demonstrated by having 41 state qualifiers and 11 national qualifiers.

Recognizing the essential connection she and her program must maintain with the larger community, Carol welcomed the opportunity to participate in the Marketing Education Mentoring-Protegee Program as a protegee. What she learned she passed on to her students. She has taken advantage of opportunities to engage the Kansas City media. Each of the student-operated businesses has been featured on TV. During the school year she aids the community by providing space for local business meetings. Her strong commitment to her church is reflected in her service on the parish council for three years, as well as her teaching Sunday School to third and fourth grader youngsters.

The investment Carol made in Missouri ACTE has been immediate and intense. She attends the summer conference regularly. In 2002 and 2003 she presented material on recruiting and sales projects. In 2003 she was elected president-elect of the MCEA division, an honor which has kept her jumping. She is currently planning the 2005 MCEA Professional Development Conference. She is an active member of DECA and an advisor for West Central DECA District IV.

Carol earned her B.S degree at Eastern Illinois University, majoring in Health Education and Business Education. She earned a five-year certificate in Vocational Education at Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg and Missouri University, Columbia.

What does it take to become a successful educator? If Carol Bolin's experience is any guide, it takes commitment, boundless energy, willingness to innovate and the blessing of enthusiastic people with whom to work.

Wouldn't it be nice if whenever we messed up our life we could simply press 'Ctrl Alt Delete' and start all over?

# Missouri ACTE 2004 Outstanding Teacher in Community Service - Sharon G. Kosek



**Sharon G. Kosek**

Sharon Kosek lives by Albert Schweitzer's creed. "Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing." What's more, she sets an inspiring example as a community service volunteer. The facets of her zeal for community service are endless because the need for the services she offers and inspires others to offer are also endless.

Each of the last five years, as advisor, Sharon has led business students in the Administrative Office Systems class to fight local hunger. Officers of

Phi Beta Lambda (PBL), a business student organization, together with officers of SkillsUSA-VICA and FFA officers formed a Presidents' Council dedicated to encouraging students and teachers throughout their school to assist the local America's Second Harvest Food Bank. Students have learned what it takes to activate a community, even for a good cause. With Sharon's encouragement, they plunged in to accomplish the drudgery needed to raise money ... lots of it. In addition to this effort, Sharon has served on the board of Second Harvest for six years, including a year as president.

With Sharon's leadership, the Phi Beta Lambda group also sponsors an annual school-wide Community Blood Center blood drive. The students go class-by-class to recruit donors, using posters and short speeches. Realizing that a number of students skip breakfast, they buy doughnuts and juice to fortify the blood donors.

Still focused on the needs of those less fortunate, Sharon introduces her students to the help they can offer their local hospital. Some participate in the Office Internship. Others help in the Hospice and Spiritual Health departments.

Career and Technical Education Week offers still another opportunity to serve. PBL students are ambassadors, greeting visitors and serving as tour guides. But the efforts of these students are not limited to one week. They honor Hillyard Technical Center staff members in their own school, as well as in other schools. They promote student-community relations by maintaining a display case at school and in the local mall. The annual Northwest District Business Contest is another opportunity for students to serve as hosts, greeting the 300 students who attend and serving as graders, runners and tour guides.

The Cotillion for Achievement has furnished an opportunity for Sharon to serve an even broader range of students from a two-county area. These students participate in an Adventures in Achievement program which helps prepare them to meet the world as professionals. At the completion of their course, students are given an elaborate Ball in celebration. During the past five years of

Sharon's involvement, she has been a Board member, Advisory Committee member, Fundraising Committee member, Newsletter Editor, Ball Master of Ceremonies. Past-President, President-elect, and Adventures Chair.

Sharon recognizes the need to deal with challenges in the community, in the state and in the nation. As Legislative Chairperson of the St. Joseph PTA Council for many years, she has worked to build positive rapport. Sharon is gifted at rounding up volunteers to do whatever is needed.

The community appreciates and has acknowledged Sharon's contributions time and again. In 2003 she was named YWCA Woman of Excellence, Woman in Community Service/Volunteerism in recognition of her personal volunteer service, as well as her encouragement of others to volunteer.

Sharon received the ACTE Region III Award of Merit in 2003 in appreciation for her invaluable service as Missouri ACTE Legislative Chair. In 2002, Sharon was named "Humanitarian of the Year" by America's Second Harvest Food Bank, MO-KAN Region. In 2001, she received the Missouri PTA Legislative Advocacy Award. The St. Joseph PTA Council gave her one of their first Legislative Advocacy Awards in 2000. The Missouri Western State College Distinguished Alumni Award was presented to Sharon in 1999. The Eight State Region North Central Business Education Association named her Outstanding Business Educator of the Year in 1999. Also in that year Sharon was honored as nominee for the JC Penny Golden Rule Award.

In addition to the other community organizations already mentioned, Sharon has expanded her volunteer efforts to include the Friends of the Missouri Theatre, St. Joseph Performing Arts Association, and the Allied Arts Fund Drive. On a practical note, Sharon has seen other needs in the community and has responded by supporting Mount Mora Cemetery Restoration, St. Joseph City Franchisee Trash Committee, St. Joseph Preservation, Inc., and Clarence Carpenter Memorial Fund in addition to others. She has been a "bell ringer" for the Salvation Army for 15 years.

Sharon has been an active member of both ACTE and the Missouri ACTE since 1983. Her memberships cover her commitment to career education and include the International Society of Business Educators, National Business Education Association, North Central Education Association, Missouri Business Education Association, Northwest Missouri Business Education Association, Missouri State Teachers' Association and Classroom Teachers' Association, St. Joseph Area Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement, Phi Delta Kappa, Delta Kappa Gamma, and Delta Pi Epsilon. She has served in leadership roles in many of these groups.

Sharon Kosek has earned the deep appreciation of her community. It is appropriate that the Missouri ACTE add its recognition and gratitude to the long, enthusiastic list.



# Missouri ACTE 2004 Award of Merit University of Missouri-Rolla

"Many hands make less work" or "It takes two to tango." Take your pick. Both sayings imply that a helping hand is invaluable. The University of Missouri-Rolla (UMR) has put this axiom to the test, investing its resources and skills in the Rolla Technical Institute (RTI). For that service, UMR is given the Missouri ACTE Award of Merit for 2004.

During the past five years, several engineering departments at UMR have partnered with RTI on a variety of projects, expanding the opportunities of RTI faculty members and providing RTI students with unique educational opportunities. Students have had hands-on access to state-of-the-art techniques and materials to which they would not otherwise be exposed. The list is long and impressive. UMR has enabled a number of RTI instructors to develop professionally by sending them to a variety of conferences and by providing hands-on opportunities for them and their students to participate in demonstrations of emerging technologies.

Benefits go in both directions. In 2002, RTI students helped with the design, working drawings, renderings and virtual walk-through and fly-around of the UMR solar house for that year's Solar Decathlon held in Washington, D.C. A number of RTI building trade students assisted with the construction of the solar house, helping to set it up, monitor it during the contest, dismantle it and move it back to Rolla. They are already planning the 2005 solar house.

As early as 1999, RTI students were employed by UMR, in conjunction with the Missouri Department of Transportation to test three bridges to which strengthening material had been applied. The UMR Civil Engineering Department will partner with the RTI Agricultural Machine program to construct a prototype tracked vehicle to be suspended under bridges for repair work. Such experiences are invaluable to both students and instructors, not to mention the general public.

RTI Masonry students, in collaboration with Center for Engineering Studies students, have constructed masonry walls using emerging technologies. With RTI students as interested observers, the walls have subsequently been tested by UMR students to validate the technology and to conduct research.

Financially, UMR has been extremely generous. RTI instructors and, occasionally students, have been sent to related national conferences ... all at UMR expense. At times, RTI instructors are employed during the summer to work with state-of-the-art equipment at UMR, or to train UMR graduate students to use Computer Aided Drafting. UMR has paid shop fees to the Machine Technology program for joint projects. They have supplied approximately \$5000 in materials each school year to the RTI Masonry program.


This cooperative spirit is as worthy as it is rare. Fortunately, neither UMR or RTI tries to "hide its light under a bushel." There has been a steady stream of information flowing to media about the joint ventures.

Among those media which have passed along the good news are the Rolla Daily News, Missouri Miner-News, Technical Times, and Masonry Construction, not to mention DOE This Month, published by the U.S. Department of Energy.

Publications are only the beginning. Conference presentations have been made to groups from San Francisco to Cambridge, Tampa and back to San Francisco ... several times.

Both UMR and RTI know a good thing when they are immersed in one. RTI Machine Technology fabricated a nozzle for a UMR laser deposition machine and while they were at it, manufactured a device to repair UMR's supermagnet, saving the University about \$60,000. And just to keep the pot boiling, the design and construction of the 2005 competition solar home is waiting in the wings.

It is not only rare but wonderful to see cooperative efforts which benefit everyone. Rolla High School students who attend RTI are privileged to experience an enriched learning experience. RTI faculty members have support and opportunities for their own enrichment that many high school faculty do not have. And UMR has worked hard to nurture the relationship that expands their own sphere of influence and accomplishment. Hip! Hip! Hooray! All around!



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# Legislators Making A Difference



## Rep. Yvonne S. Wilson

Rep. Yvonne S. Wilson, a Democrat, represents part of Jackson County (District 42) in the Missouri House of Representatives and has been a steadfast supporter for career education. She has served education well in her time spent on the budget committee and with policy issues. This year marks her final term in the Missouri House of Representatives, but we look forward to her anticipated tenure in the Senate as she seeks that elective office this fall.

Rep. Wilson was elected to the House in August 1999 to fulfill an un-expired term. She is a member of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus, and member of the Board of Directors of the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. She is a member of the advisory council to the president of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL); a member of the Education Committee of NBCSL; and member of NOBEL, a national organization of Black Elected Legislative Women; a member of Missouri's Children's Justice Commission; the Children's Services Commission; and a member of the Commission On The Future Of Higher Education.

Prior to her legislative duties, Rep. Wilson spent 35 years with The School District of Kansas City as a teacher, consultant, principal and ultimately director of elementary education. She also served as a consultant with the Division of Continuing Education at Penn Valley Community College and as interim director of TALENT (Taking a Lead in Educating New Teachers) at the Metropolitan Community Colleges of Kansas City. She was the executive director of the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center and Museum and during her six years on the Board of Curators of Lincoln University of Missouri, she served two terms as president of the board.

Other community involvement for Rep. Wilson includes: membership on the Kansas City, City of Fountains Foundation Board of Directors; Kansas City Sister City Commission; life member of NAACP; life member of National Alumni Association of Lincoln University of Missouri; Sheraton Estates Neighborhood Association; Freedom Incorporated board of directors; and member of Delta Sigma Theta, sorority. In addition, she has been the Jackson County Democratic Committeewoman for Ward 16 since 1994 and is the recipient of many awards and recognitions, including the 1996 Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Gwen B. Giles Public Services award, 2001 Greater Kansas City NAACP Leadership Award, the 2001 Missouri Community Colleges Association Distinguished Legislative Award and the 2002 Lincoln University National Alumni Presidential Award.

A native of Kansas City, Rep. Wilson has traveled extensively including trips to Russia, Egypt, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, South Africa, England, France, Tanzania and China.

Rep. Wilson currently resides in Kansas City with her husband of 51 years, Jim. They have three children: Berishia Wilson Chamberlain, Alycia Rodriguez Nichols and James E. (Jay) Wilson (deceased), five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



## Rep. Brian L. Baker

Rep. Brian Baker, a Republican, represents part of Cass County (District 123) in the Missouri House of Representatives and has repeatedly met the challenge of navigating his way through a multitude of education issues facing the legislature. He was elected to the House in November, 2002. Rep. Baker recently assisted Missouri ACTE in correcting language in a conference committee substitute critical to professional development requirements. We asked for his help in this matter and

he eagerly pursued our desired outcome.

In addition to his legislative duties, Rep. Baker is the assistant pastor and ministry director for the First Baptist Church in Belton: Heartland Family Ministries. He is the former missions coordinator for the Heritage Southern Baptist Association. He was elected to the Belton Board of Alderman in April 2001, where he served on the Transportation Review Committee and as the Park Board liaison.

Rep. Baker is a member of the following organizations: Student Ministries of First Baptist Church; Belton Corporation for Economic Development; Belton Chamber of Commerce; Raymore Chamber of Commerce; Cass Coalition of Chambers; Belton CARES (anti-drug team); Bel-Ray Sunrise Lions Club; Cass County Republican Club; Cass County Republican Committee; Concerned Women of America; Missouri Right to Life; Cass County Sister City Organization; and the Belton School District Budget Oversight Committee. He is a former member of the Cass County CHART (Community Health Assessment Resource Team).

A recipient of the 1999 Scottish Highland Service Shield, which has not been awarded to an American since Dwight D. Eisenhower, Rep. Baker has also received the Five Year Service Award from the First Baptist Church of Belton; the 1992 Belton Youth of the Year award and was a 1998 inductee in the Heartland High School Hall of Fame.

A 1992 graduate of Heartland High School, Rep. Baker earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature, with a minor in psychology from Central Missouri State University in 1998. He completed a master's degree in religious studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2002.

Rep. Baker lives in Belton with his wife, Kristen and their two children: Kaylinn and Grant.



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