

Reflections of Carolyn Campbell Guidry

Growing up, I attended 13 different schools in 5 states, which I considered difficult. As an adult, I realized how much I learned from this – not only the broader subject matter, but also how to deal with new situations and how to be the “different” kid. I was fortunate that I was able to remain in the same school for the last three years of high school and that my family accepted and gave approval to my interest in math and science. I chose LSU because it had the best technical program of any school available to me. This was an excellent choice.

As a female Electrical Engineering student in the mid ‘50s, I was once again a “different kid.” The EE faculty was supportive, even helping me get a part-time job working for Mr. Patin, the technician for the Department. Mr. Patin put me to work filing catalogs, sorting resistors, assembling battery eliminator kits and many other jobs. From him, I learned the practical aspects of engineering: the color code, soldering, assembly, how to use tools and much more. My classmates accepted me and many gave me help, studying with me,

explaining terms I did not understand and treating me as an equal. This acceptance and support has helped me stay true to my beliefs, even through the Feminist Revolution when I chose to be a “housewife” (different kid, again) because I believed my children would benefit from having a full-time mom. I also had strong support from Mark on this matter as we shared this belief.

Joining Hewlett Packard, I once again became a “different kid,” this time not through gender but through age. My peers were 20 years younger than I. Once again, I was accepted and believe the “difference” was beneficial to all- we had much we could teach each other. Mark had kept me abreast of the latest in technology through the years, and at HP, I was privileged to be part of the design team for HP’s newest computers. A “newest” computer always has a “newer” one to follow, thank goodness!

Mark has always accepted me as an equal. When he had an idea for his own company, he included me as an important

member. We shared the fun, frustrations, challenges, successes and joys of owning and building our own company and providing jobs for employees that became our extended family. The success of that company has allowed me a new fun career, that of running our Foundation, through which we can say thank you by supporting education in its many forms.

I have had a happy, wonderful, lucky life! I have much to thank LSU for, a good education, acceptance and support, finding my life's partner, and now, this great honor I share with that partner, Mark.