



Photo by Jim Lee

MORNINGSIDE HELPS STUDENT FIND OPPORTUNITIES IN HER HOMETOWN By Jenny Welp

Mandie Norby 2005 never guessed how many opportunities awaited her in Sioux City after her graduation from West High School.

Looking back, she remembers being young and wondering about big-city life. But Norby was recruited to Morningside College, and today the 25-year-old is an important member of the Sioux City community.

Besides being marketing coordinator for St. Luke's Health System, Norby is president of the Sioux City Growth Organization, a group of young professionals working to encourage their peers to become more active in the community. She is also a board member for a couple of other nonprofit organizations.

"Mandie is an asset to this community," said Christie Finnegan, director of marketing and public relations at St. Luke's Health System. "She's going to accomplish a lot before she's even middle-aged. She does a lot for St. Luke's but also for Siouxland."

As a senior in high school, Norby was applying mostly to large universities that were hundreds of miles from home. She also applied to Morningside College, and the small school ended up winning out.

She said Morningside offered her "a great scholarship package and classes that would create the right progression for the career I wanted. It came down to the classes available at Morningside and the one-on-one attention that was available."

Norby turned out to be a mover and shaker at Morningside. Besides the academic success, which led to her continual presence on the honor roll, she also got involved in about a dozen co-curricular activities.

An advertising major, Norby was one of 10 students nationally to be awarded the Vance L. Stickell Memorial Internship in 2004 from the American Advertising Federation. As a result, she spent the summer between her junior and senior year doing a paid internship for Southwest Airlines in Dallas, Texas.

Her senior year at Morningside, Norby started looking for a job with an advertising agency in Chicago or Minneapolis. She didn't consider working in Sioux City until she was nominated for an award open to Morningside advertising students, and one of the judges offered her a job.

Norby accepted, and she worked for the Sioux City advertising agency for almost two years. She said the agency landed around 100 new local clients and its first national client during that time, which gave her the opportunity to travel all over the country and network with professionals at major advertising agencies.

Even so, when Norby felt she'd grown all she could in her first job, she decided to look for another position in Sioux City.

"I believe in a lot of the nonprofit organizations and causes in Sioux City," Norby said. "Because I have a strong desire to make a difference, I have

become actively involved in many of these organizations. The more I get involved, the more ingrained in this community I become."

Finnegan said she was pleased to have Norby come work at St. Luke's Health System, for one thing, because her resume showed her broad experience. Norby had already interned for a large for-profit business and managed a national account for a local advertising agency.

"Mandie had a very strong background for being a recent graduate," Finnegan said. "She understood how to market for many departments within a larger organization and, therefore, understood the need to focus on the big picture, too."

But Finnegan said she was also happy to hire Norby because she'd interacted with her before and knew what kind of person she was.

"Sioux City is small enough that you can network with people in your field," Finnegan said. "I knew Mandie was talented and a go-getter."

Norby said Morningside helped her remain in her hometown because attending the college opened a lot of doors in the area. And Sioux City is lucky she stayed, according to Dr. Pam Mickelson, professor of business administration at Morningside.

"Mandie had a great set of parents who taught her some key things in life: 'do it right the first time' and 'always do your best,'" Mickelson said. "It was a killer combination. Sioux City is very fortunate!"