

2020 ISD 88 Hall of Fame Bios

Marni Gislason Obernauer – Class of 1963

A 1963 graduate of New Ulm High School, Marni was active in the arts, including the High School's first musical, and she was an early voice for women's equality and leadership. After graduation, Marni attended Smith College in MA, where she majored in English. Marni wanted to "see the world," so she spent a year as a flight attendant for Pan Am airlines. She spent another year with Pan Am, this time coordinating a program she designed to pair flight attendants with non-profit volunteer opportunities. Marni returned to academics, and she earned her MBA from Harvard Business School in 1974, where she was one of only 49 women in a class of 800. She began work at Morgan Guarantee Trust on Wall Street, where she stayed for 20 years. A working mother at a time when this was not common, Marni was on the cover of Working Woman in 1977. The Marion Gislason Award was established in her honor at Boston University School of Business – Executive Development Roundtable for excellence in the field of leadership development. Marni tragically passed away in 1996 at the too-young age of 50 years, but her memory lives on with the family, friends, and colleagues that knew her.