

## **Dolores M. Mertz Public Service Biography**

The Kossuth County Democratic Party has established the Dolores M. Mertz Scholarship in honor of Dolores for her dedication and hard work for Kossuth County. She served five years as a Kossuth County Supervisor and for 22 years was the Iowa State Representative for our Seventh District, 1989 through 2010. Her bipartisan legislative leadership is particularly lauded for extending Iowa's mandate for gambling fund support for county endowments and local non-profit and charitable projects, to the 84 counties that did not then have casinos. This has resulted, for example, in the Kossuth County endowment fund having current assets of more than \$7,000,000. Its interest alone provided \$169,000 in 2021 for Kossuth County local non-profit and charitable projects. Dolores was also the National Chairman of the American Legislative Exchange Council, a position normally held by a Republican.

A Bancroft native, Dolores and her husband, H.P. Mertz raised seven children on a farm near Ottosen. With her farm background, Dolores championed rural and agricultural issues that affected our area. She also supported legislation that made Iowa a leader in education.

Dolores valued being a good citizen of our great state and country. In addition to serving as a county supervisor and a state representative, Dolores gave more than she received, serving as a precinct leader for 25 years; 13 years as the Secretary of the Kossuth County Democratic Party, State Regent of the Catholic Daughters of America (Iowa Court), President of the Council of Catholic Women for the Sioux City Diocese, Vice President of District II Elected Officials, and Secretary of Iowa Lakes Coordinating Council, Area 3. Dolores was also a proud member of Soroptimist International and the Red Society, both organizations that support issues most important to women. She raised her children in Iowa 4-H Clubs, and as a lifelong supporter of 4-H was inducted into the Iowa 4-H Clubs Hall of Fame.

While she was a proud Democrat, Dolores was known to go toe-to-toe with party leaders and was willing to reach across the aisle to work with Republican legislators to get laws passed that were not only good for Kossuth County but also good for Iowa.

Dolores was also proud of her Irish heritage, and was known to dance an Irish jig on the House floor on St. Patrick's Day.

Dolores Mertz is the definition of what makes a great citizen. Proud, yet humble. Loyal to family and friends. Standing firm in her beliefs. Willing to put her hand out to help another reach another rung in the ladder of success. A stalwart for Kossuth County, Iowa, and the United States of America, serving 35 years as a public servant.

Details on applications for the Dolores M. Mertz Scholarship will be available through area high schools this school year with our first awards made in the spring of 2023.