

Wisdom.

Passion.

Grace.

Faith.

No more apt or powerful descriptions of followers of Jesus Christ can be found. These are the words used by colleagues and friends to describe Dr. Stephen and Karen Greer Lynip, from the Class of 1965.

Steve and Karen have Houghton roots that date back to the 1950s. They spent their formative years in Houghton; Karen's father, Norris Greer, was a voice and piano instructor at the College. Steve's father, Dr. Arthur Lynip, was Dean of the College and his mother, Lora Lynip, was the Director of Placement. Their three children, Keith, Bryan and Kathryn, all attended Houghton as well, classes of '92, '94 and '98 respectively. This year, Keith's daughter Catherine joined the Houghton College Class of 2025. (If you want to know more about the Lynips' Houghton legacy, you can listen to Wednesday's chapel service on the College's YouTube channel.)

During their time at Houghton, Steve and Karen immersed themselves in their studies. Steve pursued a dual major in Zoology and History, along with a minor in English. Karen completed a dual major in English and Elementary Education, along with a minor in Psychology. Steve was an avid intramural athlete, playing basketball, baseball, soccer and track, and a member of Foreign Missions Fellowship. Karen was also an active athlete, playing field hockey and basketball, and running track and field; she also sang in Chapel Choir. According to a March 1965 article in the Houghton Star, both Steve and Karen were ping pong enthusiasts – playing together in the doubles final.

After graduation, Stephen attended medical school at the State University of New York's Upstate Medical Center, graduating in 1969. He later completed a Master's Degree in Public Health from Loma Linda University. Karen took graduate courses in education at both the State University of New York and the University of Oklahoma, eventually completing a Master of Arts in Social Science with Leadership Emphasis from Azusa Pacific University.

While Steve completed medical school, Karen taught elementary students. In 1971, the Lynips moved to Talakag, Bukidnon, Philippines, where Karen taught high school at Bethany Christian School and Steve served as a missionary doctor at the Bethany Christian Home for Children. The Lynips spent the next 40 years in the Philippines, serving with a partner organization of Wycliffe Bible Translator – Summer Institute of Linguistics (now known as SIL) from 1978 until 2011. Throughout their time on the mission field, Karen served as a program coordinator and instructed teachers. Steve worked as a medical doctor and community health educator, and then as a program coordinator. In the late 2000s, they moved into administrative roles, both serving as Associate Directors of Language Programs at SIL Philippines.

Since returning to the United States in 2011, they've continued ministry. From 2014 – 2019, they served as Ministry Representatives for International Students, Inc., and coached young aspiring leaders with the Growing Leaders program. Karen served on the board of Wycliffe Bible Translators, and today both Karen and Steve continue their work with SIL's Intercultural Communications team as presenters.

Steve and Karen have given back sacrificially to their alma mater. They are regular supporters of Houghton's Student Scholarship Fund and the S.W. Paine Global Studies Scholarship endowment fund,

supporting students with financial need in the Global Studies department who are interested in cross-cultural ministry. Through their estate, the Lynips will grow the endowment of the S.W. Paine Global Studies Scholarship fund, ensuring their legacy of generosity continues to support future generations of Houghton students.

The Lynips have dedicated their lives to sharing the Gospel of Jesus. They have done it with bravery, kindness, grace, passion, and diligence.

Of their work, SIL Philippines colleague Hartmut Wiens shared “I valued and benefitted greatly from the Lynips’ deep wisdom in dealing with a variety of administrative, personnel-related and security issues I encountered as Director. Steve and Karen faced our common challenges with humor, wisdom, and a deep, abiding faith in our Lord.”

John Chesnut, of Wycliffe Bible Translators, describes why he deeply values his relationship with Steve and Karen: “They excel in cross-cultural relationships, in developing partnerships, and in caring for and counseling colleagues from multiple cultures. People are readily attracted to them due to their warmth and passion for the Lord. They were, and are, often sought out by leaders across various organizations for their ability to listen and to bring healing to strained or fractured relationships.”

Throughout more than 50 years of ministry together, Stephen and Karen Lynip have held firmly to the ideals of the Christian faith, they have made a significant impact for the Lord through self-sacrifice and service to the people of the Philippines and the global church, and they have ministered to the needs of Houghton College students. For their inspiring work and significant Kingdom impact, it is our privilege to award Stephen and Karen Greer Lynip the 2020 Christian Service Award.