

Mother, daughter share graduation

By Debbie Schwanke

Colby Community College

Janet Phelps of Colby, and her daughter Gwen Miller of Johnson, shared a special occasion during the Colby Community College commencement exercises last weekend at the Colby Community Building.

Phelps, who will be 72 years old in June, received her associate degree in business at the college's 41st commencement. Miller, who also is a non-traditional student, was awarded her associate degree after completing the physical therapist assistant program. What made the day more special is that they were able to give each other their diplomas.

"I am ecstatic about graduating," said Phelps. "I plan to start working on my bachelor's degree in business management right away. I'll take four hours next semester from Fort Hays State University. The course work is delivered via ITV to the CCC campus."

Colby College business department chair Bob Selby had Phelps in several classes.

"I am in awe of people like Janet who return to school and complete their degrees," said Selby. "I remember Janet telling me that she would get her degree but it might take a few years. She always added a different perspective to class and I think the traditional-age students appreciated her input."

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Bob Selby,

Colby Community College business instructor

Phelps decided to attend college after her first husband died in 1991.

"I did not have the opportunity to attend college when I was young," said Phelps. "I needed something to do and enrolled in EMT classes. I really enjoyed going to college and decided to work on my degree in business."

Janet is married to Maurice Phelps. The couple owns and manages U PAC Storage in Colby.

"I even have Maurice involved now," said Phelps. "He and I are

leaving next week on the New York trip which is sponsored by the college."

Miller and her husband Curtis own a farm west of Johnson. She graduated from high school in Walsh, Colo., and then continued her education at an interior design school. She has owned and operated her own business and is also an emergency medical technician. Miller will complete two clinical rotations this summer prior to taking the PTA licensure exam.



DEBBIE SCHWANKE/Colby Free Press

Janet Phelps of Colby, right, and her daughter Gwen Miller of Johnson both graduated last weekend during the Colby Community College commencement exercises.

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