

FRIENDS OF THE CENTER FOR WESTERN STUDIES AWARD  
**DARWIN AND JANE SLETTEN**

CITATION  
April 26, 2019

The FRIENDS OF THE CENTER FOR WESTERN STUDIES AWARD is presented on rare occasions to those who have performed extraordinary service on behalf of the Center through their financial support, administrative leadership, or in an equally substantive way. Some of the previous recipients of the FRIENDS OF THE CENTER AWARD, first given in 1982, are the following: Anne King and her parents Lyndon and Shirley King, the Ada May Yeager Family, Arlen Viste, Gerry and Robert Law, Bob and Rita Elmen, Jerry and Gail Simmons, and V.R. and Joyce Nelson.

Many of us first had the privilege of knowing **Darwin and Jane Sletten** as the owners of JD's House of Trophies, which they purchased in 1973. In 1989, Darwin changed direction and moved into the wholesale side of the recognition, personalization, and sign industries.

With their son Scott, Darwin and Jane built JDS Industries, based in Sioux Falls, into the world's largest wholesaler of awards and personalization products. Today, JDS Industries operates 14 fulfillment centers, from Seattle to Los Angeles and Atlanta to Detroit, with one million square feet of warehouse space nationwide and customers in 70 countries.

Darwin and Jane embody the entrepreneurial spirit that Robert Wright extolls in his book, "Little Business on the Prairie." JDS Industries is still family owned and is known for its exceptional customer service. Scott Sletten is president and CEO.

Darwin and Jane are patrons of the arts, having assembled an enviable collection of bronzes and other works of art. They are also generous philanthropists, supporting many worthy organizations. Their support of CWS, for example, makes this conference possible.

For their magnanimous support of the Center for Western Studies as contributors to the Endowment Campaign and NEH Challenge Match in 2007-13, the Exhibit Expansion Initiative in 2013-15, which funded the "Voices of the Northern Plains" exhibit, and, most recently, the Founders Campaign for Endowment, for which

Darwin serves as Honorary Campaign Chair, the Board of Directors of the Center for Western Studies is honored to recognize Darwin and Jane Sletten as Friends of the Center for Western Studies.