

October Spotlight on Support Staff: Paula Boomgaarden, Business Manager



Paula Boomgaarden is in her 17th year with the District. She started as the high school secretary in August 2000. Paula and her husband Brad have been married for 31 years. They have a daughter, Amanda, who is a Junior at UND studying Elementary Education and a son, Jacob, who is currently serving in the US Marine Corps.

Paula was raised in Michigan and served in the US Air Force as a Russian Linguist from 1984 - 1988. She met Brad at that time and they were married in 1985. Brad was a small town guy and Paula was a girl from the Detroit Metropolitan area. While visiting the area, she fell in love with Bemidji, and they moved there in the spring of 1988. Paula finished her accounting degree at BSU. They decided they needed more country in about 1998. They found our land south of Clearbrook and built their home. They officially moved into the home in the summer of 2001, right before Amanda & Jacob started kindergarten.

Why did you choose to be School Business/Finance? I'm not sure if I chose the job or if it chose me. For several years I did both the high school secretary and accounting jobs. In 2008, I was moved back to the accounting office full time. The job is challenging, but I truly love it. It is ever evolving and changing.

What did you do before coming to Clearbrook-Gonvick? After we moved to Bemidji, I got a job with Lueken's Village Foods. I was the Accounting Director there for 10 years before coming to Clearbrook-Gonvick.

What is the best part of your job at Clearbrook-Gonvick? The people. I love this community. We have some of the best kids you could imagine.

What is the biggest challenge of your job? Making certain that the District is able to provide what the students and teachers need to create a good learning environment. Financially, that isn't always easy. Many other mandates dictate how the District can spend money.

If you could have any job in the world - what would it be? Why? Actually, this one. I have the best of all worlds....my job is challenging and ever-changing so it's never dull. We have great students and a terrific staff. If the job gets overwhelming I know I can always take a walk down our halls and find someone or something that will brighten my day.

What do you do when you are not at school? I love spending time with my family. I love cooking, although I could live without the cleanup! I enjoy singing in the church choir & playing in the church handbell choir.

What are your favorite aspects of the Clearbrook-Gonvick community? I love the community. It seems as if there is something always going on. The people are warm and caring. The kids are pretty terrific. One of my favorite things is to watch our older kids working with the younger children at events like Meet the Bears.

Any other favorites you would like to share? I know that when I first started with the District, I was pretty nervous. For a girl from the suburbs of Detroit, Michigan, living in a small community was frightening. Everyone knew everyone else, and I felt like a fish out of water. My first principal left the District 4 days after I started the job. I was worried that since she hired me, I might be fired after the new principal arrived. I remember telling Charlotte TeHennepe, who was the District Secretary at that time, "Well, maybe I can get my old job back." Charlotte looked at me and said, "Oh no, Paula, you are one of our people. New principal or not, you'll be here as long as you want to be." I don't think I could have felt more grateful or welcome in my life. I was a member of the Clearbrook-Gonvick District. Thanks to that moment and Charlotte, I still am!