

# Meet Kathleen Fondren

*Introduction by Connie Miller*

I would like to introduce you to our new member, Kathleen Fondren, who was proposed by Daron Vchulek. Her classification is Health Care.

Kathleen's childhood began in a tight-knit community in Troy, New York where 3 generations of her family had lived since her ancestors arrived from Italy and Ireland.

When she was 15, economic conditions were difficult in Upstate NY. When her dad drove her brother to college in Idaho, he fell in love with the West, the romance of the cowboy culture, and Casper, Wyoming was a boom town. So they moved their children to Casper. Kathleen remembers the move as a traumatic shift to an extremely different culture - so few people, comparatively, and yet she became enthralled with the natural beauty of her surroundings. She met her husband, Jim, in high school and went on to the University of Wyoming, receiving her BS in Medical Technology.



In 1985, Jim received a job offer from Boeing. They moved to Seattle and she worked at Northwest Hospital for two years, then migrated to the Highline Medical Center. Over the next 27 years Kathleen made her way from doing bench work in the lab to lab leadership and then to the executive team. She raised their daughter, Kelly. After Kelly went off to college Kathleen went back to school to get her MBA in 2008.

In 2014, a program she created was launched at Highline Medical Center. *Health Connections* is a highly successful 90-day program to support under or uninsured people who have health and socioeconomic conditions that put them in the hospital and emergency room often. Kathleen remains involved with the program today.

After the *Health Connections* program was launched, Kathleen took a COO position at Cellnetix, a lab offering Pathology services to the medical community. And then when the CEO left, Kathleen scored the CEO position in January of this year.

Kathleen wants to be an inspirational leader, to have an impact, not just managing the organization well, but mentoring the people who work there and preparing the next leaders of the organization. She wants to make a difference in their lives.

We are lucky to have Kathleen join us. Welcome to Rotary, Kathleen Fondren!