

## Bellevue Public Schools



## Alumni Spotlight



# Rebecca Zurcher (Kumor)

## Bellevue East, 1994

Bellevue East graduate Rebecca Zurcher (Kumor) is the owner-operator of Erwin's Jewelers Co. in Olde Towne Bellevue - one of the longest running businesses in Bellevue and all of Sarpy County. Read about Rebecca's journey from Bellevue East student to owner of the most well-respected jewelry store in the Omaha-Metro. She also shares her thoughts on the best lesson her dad ever taught her.

## What high school did you attend, and when did you graduate?

I attended Bellevue East and graduated in 1994.

## Who was your favorite teacher?

My favorite teachers were Deanna Freier who taught Spanish and Rosemary Lucky who taught AP English. Mrs. Freier made learning fun and interactive. She is the reason I completed out of 19 hours of Spanish in college. Mrs. Lucky was tough but thorough. She taught me how to properly form my thoughts and put them on paper.

I also want to mention Maureen McNamara. She was my 4th grade teacher and first “favorite”. She was my first example of true class. She started my creative juices flowing with all the books we made, which I still have - and now Maureen is one of my employees on Erwin’s Dream Team!



**Rebecca Zurcher (right) with her ‘First Favorite’  
Teacher Maureen McNamara**

### Were you involved in any sports or clubs?

I was devoted to marching band during high school. I played the alto saxophone.

### Did you have a favorite place to hang out?

My favorite place to hang out was at home. Because I worked two jobs and was in marching band, I was happy to just chill.

### Did you have siblings that graduated from Bellevue schools?

My siblings all graduated from Bellevue schools - 5 brothers and 1 sister.

### Where did you attend college, what was your major, and when did you graduate?

I graduated from MidAmerica Nazarene University in Olathe, KS in 1997 with a bachelor in Business Administration and a bachelor in Spanish. Afterwards, I earned my Jewelers of America certification from the Texas Institute of Jewelry Technology in Paris, TX in 1998.

### What did you do after college?

After all my schooling, I returned home to work for my father at Erwin's Jewelers as a bench jeweler. Erwin's Jewelers opened in Olde Towne Bellevue in 1958. My father, Frank Kumor, bought the business in 1989 and I bought it in 2021.

### Tell us a little about Erwin's Jewelers.

Throughout the years, we have added different types of technology to provide different styles/abilities of repairs. A few years ago we bought a laser welder and most recently a laser engraving/cutting machine. We have welded gun parts, eyeglasses, and stainless steel. The engraving machine allows us to engrave pictures, logos, and fingerprints, and we can cut almost anything out of any metal. As far as merchandise, we are continually adding new trends whether it is Sterling silver or gold, diamond, or gemstone jewelry. We are always happy to customize anything. If we don't have what you want in the store, we can get it for you.



You undoubtedly have hundreds of stories you could share from over the years of amazing interactions with your customers. What is one story you'd like to share regarding a customer interaction that stands out to you?

Jewelry is one of those tangible objects that tell a story, it holds memories and signifies monumental accomplishments. I have many projects where I repurpose jewelry that has been inherited. Seeing a customer tear up and hug me because I have helped to breathe life back into a family treasure is the best feeling in the world.

Erwin's Jewelers is known as one of the more generous businesses in Bellevue when it comes to giving back to the community. Could you talk about this a little bit? What is the thinking behind giving back as much as you do?

One of the best parts of owning a business is being able to be generous. A person can't expect to take from the community without giving back. The two go hand in hand. We want everyone to succeed and being able to be a small part of the success of others is fulfilling.



### What is the most challenging thing about owning a business?

Merging work and my personal life without getting burnt out is the most challenging. It's all about prioritizing, delegating responsibilities, and not being too hard on myself when plans don't go well and I have to make adjustments. I have a great crew at Erwin's and my family is pretty great as well, so I have survived so far!

### Could you share a little bit about your family?

I am married to a fellow 1994 graduate, Don Zurcher. We have 4 kids, all products of BPS.

### Is there anything else you'd like to add?

One of my favorite quotes from my dad was, "You've always gotta be thinking." As a kid, we all thought he was just joking around. As we all got older, we realized how true this quote is. So many problems would be prevented if people would only think.

### What advice do you have for current students in Bellevue Public Schools?

You will never regret giving 100% of your effort.

## Links

Erwin's Jewelers Website

<http://erwinsjewelersco.com/>

Erwin's Jewelers Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/ErwinsJewelersCo>

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## About Us

The Alumni Spotlight is a recurring feature on the Alumni Association Facebook Page. If you know of a Bellevue graduate that we should shine the spotlight on, please reach out to us at [bps.alumni@bpsne.net](mailto:bps.alumni@bpsne.net) and they will be considered for a future column.

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