



# Karen and Paul Menzel

## SBCC Foundation *Legacy Circle Members*

**Karen and Paul Menzel** both grew up in Santa Barbara and they also proudly say that SBCC launched their careers. Karen was among the first graduates in the radiologic technician program in 1972, and went on to practice at the local hospitals and with many doctors in the area. Paul transferred to UC Berkeley, eventually earning an MBA before returning to live in Santa Barbara.

“I’m grateful for SBCC,” Paul said. “It gave me the opportunity to explore and mature before heading off to university. And my perspective changed – I realized I didn’t want to be a lawyer and switched to economics and business – and I really enjoyed playing basketball!” As it turned out, Paul’s team made it to the state finals. (They were also the first to play in the newly built sports pavilion on campus, which is scheduled for renovation thanks to approval of local bond funding in 2024, over 50 years later.) Paul also excelled in track and field, coming in second in a state decathlon, which led to his being recruited by UC Berkeley and other future endeavors.

“You never know where life will lead,” Paul explained. “After returning to Santa Barbara I really wanted to give back to SBCC, and spearheaded an effort to obtain grant funding to refurbish the track at La Playa stadium, which was basically made of dirt. We worked with the college leadership and emphasized how the track would be used by both the college and community members. I think this joint usage was the ingredient that made the proposal a success.”

Fast forward to today, and giving back is still top of mind for the Menzels. After long and successful careers, Karen and Paul are retired and enjoying life in Santa Barbara. Thinking back to their own experiences, they know how important it is to have outstanding local technical education programs available, such as radiological technology, and inspiring professors who bring their passion to the classroom to teach and nurture students’ aspirations.

“My goal in retirement is to give back to the community that lifted me and my family in life,” Paul says. “Karen and I support the SBCC Foundation to ensure that our local students have the best chance to succeed. SBCC deserves our support because it contributes so much to the vitality of this community.”

Paul serves on the Board of Directors for the SBCC Foundation, and the Menzels are members of the [President’s Circle](#), a committed group of community members that make the Foundation’s work possible. President’s Circle members provide the core support that enables the Foundation to raise funds and provide approximately \$5 million annually for the SBCC Promise, scholarships, student support programs, emergency grants, and more.

The Menzels are also [Legacy Circle](#) members, as they’ve included the Foundation in their estate plans. “We are happy to support SBCC now and in the future,” Paul said. “Especially considering the increased cost of education today, we want more students to have the opportunities we had to pursue whatever career they choose.”