

# Michelle SUTTON

*Class of 1989*

Lois “Michelle” Sutton is a glowing example of the endless possibilities available for those who never give in or give up.

This year’s Great Graduate from the Class of 1989 grew up in what at that time was one of the community’s lowest income and least desirable areas. Despite watching friends and neighbors fall prey to self-destructive temptations, she applied herself at school, earned a degree in political science from Oklahoma State University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Oklahoma.

Then, just as things were becoming positive in her life, the dark cloud she thought she had left behind reappeared.

Following graduation from OU, she was attacked when unlocking the door of her apartment. A short time later, her vehicle was stolen and her arm broken during a carjacking.



Tragedy struck again when her mother committed suicide and her business partner died tragically in a single engine plane crash. In 2013, two days after her 42nd birthday, she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Long-time friend Teresa Burkett says she doubts anybody would have blamed Sutton if she wanted to go into hiding and become the “invisible woman.” But that simply was not going to happen. Instead, even while battling cancer, Sutton served as president of the Margaret Hudson Program Board, leading a charge that literally kept that organization afloat. She became an active volunteer for the Mental Health Association of Oklahoma. As an attorney and contract lobbyist, she offers her services at well below market rates to a variety of non-profits and litigation she handled for the American Heart Association is credited for saving two lives.

When the Second Chance Pet Rescue of Grand Lake needed help, Sutton rallied friends and family to donate needed funds and became “mom” to a special needs dog of her own.

Today, she runs a successful lobbying business, teaches American Government and Administrative Law as an adjunct professor, helps raise two nieces and cares for her chronically ill father – all while being a role model for every kid growing up in “the wrong part of town.”