



YORK DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI PROGRAM

DUKES OF
DISTINCTION
2019



NOVEMBER 7, 2019 • ELMHURST, IL



YORK DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI PROGRAM

6:30 Reception / 7:00 p.m. Program
York Community High School Commons

WELCOME

Erin DeLuga

*York Community High School Principal
Master of Ceremonies*

Jay Webb

*York Community High School
Alumni Association President*

Dr. David Moyer

Elmhurst District 205 Superintendent of Schools

Kara Caforio

Elmhurst District 205 Board of Education President

INTRODUCTION OF DUKES OF DISTINCTION

*Presentation of awards by Kara Caforio and
Dr. Margaret Harrell, Elmhurst District 205 Board
Vice President*

Thomas Ballent, Class of 1974

Alice (Jahnke) Ballent, Class of 1974

Kathleen Harger, Class of 1972

Susan (Grohne) Harry, Class of 1990

Joel Herter, Class of 1955

Dr. Laura Orvidas, Class of 1978

CLOSING

Erin DeLuga

YORK COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL DUKES OF DISTINCTION



In the fall of 2012, District 205 launched the York Distinguished Alumni Program (YDAP) in collaboration with York Community High School and the District 205 Foundation for Educational Excellence. This program is designed to recognize and honor those alumni who have distinguished themselves through significant and extraordinary accomplishments, service and outstanding contributions to society. These honorees exemplify the honored York traditions of teamwork and selflessness.

We are pleased to introduce and recognize our sixth “Dukes of Distinction” class. We are grateful for their overwhelming response and appreciate their efforts to join us here tonight from various locations across the country. Please read about them in the following pages of this booklet.

We know you will be inspired by their stories, by their passion and by their love of York High School and our community. Their enthusiasm will certainly be felt by and serve as a positive influence on the many York students who will, undoubtedly, be touched by their legacy. Such role models raise the self-expectation of the current generation through the realization that these Dukes of Distinction once walked the halls of York and the streets of this community.

The next Dukes of Distinction class will be honored in the fall of 2020. Nominations will be accepted starting November 25, 2019. You may also make a charitable donation earmarked for the YDAP program through the District 205 Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization. Visit elmhurst205.org/alumni/ydap or contact the Office of Alumni Relations and Communications at 630-941-4719 for further information.

YDAP JUDGING COMMITTEE

Mark Dyer
Debbie Hollstein
Sharon O'Brien
Ben Sharko

Barb Szczepaniak
Brian Thomas
Ashley Tucker
Kathy Wilson

YDAP COMMITTEE

Linda Aldis
Lisa Fanelli
Shirley Demeris
Holly Kost

Debbie Linhart
Sharon O'Brien
Kathy Wilson
Les Zunkel

YDAP ADVISORY MEMBERS

Erin DeLuga
Jenna Ernst
Debbie Hollstein
Drew McGuire

Bev Redmond
Kate Sampson
Melea Smith
Val Stewart



THOMAS BALLENT & ALICE JAHNKE BALLENT CLASS OF 1974

Thomas Ballent and Alice Jahnke Ballent are members of the same York High School class of 1974 but did not meet until their college years. They both graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1978, Alice with a degree in Marketing and Thomas with a degree in Finance. Thomas continued on to earn a Master's Degree in Finance from NIU.



Alice began a successful career in Sales and Marketing. She created and managed several national accounts for American National Can Co. After 12 years in business, she transitioned to focus on raising her family. Meanwhile, Thomas was building his career in the financial services industry. His focus was on investment management in the Private Banking sector. Thomas served individual clients, as well as Charitable Foundations and Endowments and retirement accounts.

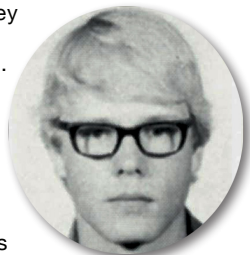
In 1992, they learned that their second child, Adam, had a profound hearing loss. This spurred them down a path to seek the best possible help for their son. They wanted their son to function as fully as possible in a hearing world. This led to a Cochlear Implant in order to give Adam the sensation of sound. Specialized education was required to maximize the benefits of the Cochlear Implant and make up for the delay in hearing and language development.



In 1995, they became involved with a small group of other parents of hearing-impaired children and the Director of Deaf Education at Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis. In early

1996, with seed funding from a foundation, they were able to open the first Oral School for Hearing Impaired Children in the Chicago area.

Each year, thanks to Thomas and Alice's work, approximately 60 hearing-impaired students attend Child's Voice each year, where they have an opportunity to develop listening and speaking skills. The Ballents continuously share the gift of their experiences with other families as they raise and educate children with hearing loss.



Nominated by Cynthia Smith

KATHLEEN HARGER CLASS OF 1971

Kathleen has spent nearly 40 years associated with the Department of Defense and is now a private consultant for government industry and academic institutions. She graduated from the University of Illinois in 1976 where she pioneered women's participation in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps and was commissioned as an Ensign. She then served 25 years in the Navy, retiring in 2002 as a Captain.



During her professional career, she served in assignments associated with the technology and operations of antisubmarine warfare, space operations, and special access programs. After active duty, Kathleen served as a political appointee where she led a team of experts to identify new ways to bring innovation into the Department of Defense. That assignment was followed by one in the premier defense research agency to deliver effective, adaptable solutions to our warfighters. Additionally, she founded a private company to provide creative technology solutions to our warfighters' battlefield challenges.

Kathleen is now a private consultant for government, industry and academic institutions in the areas of national security and innovative business practices, including establishing and strengthening relationships with the military community through STEM-related activities and various strategic initiatives. Kathleen currently consults with the U.S. Navy, focusing on innovative contracting, private financing and managed risk-taking. Kathleen also works with Georgia Tech Research Institute, having co-managed a novel program that targets the



the ideas of young researchers as they innovate new solutions to national security issues.

In short, she is a trailblazer, who hails from a family of proud York graduates. Whether working her way through the University of Illinois or protecting our country or preparing the next generation, Kathleen Harger always has been and continues to be extraordinary!

Nominated by Veronica Wing



SUSAN (GROHNE) HARRY CLASS OF 1990

Susan earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing, French, and International Studies from Indiana University. Her career in sales has included living and working in Philadelphia, where she pursued her passion for wildlife conservation as Director of Sales for the Philadelphia Zoo.



While working for the zoo, Susan became aware of the escalating crisis facing rhinos and their habitat and began volunteering her time to promote rhino conservation. Her success in reinvigorating the American Association of Zoo Keepers' annual Bowling for Rhinos Program resulted in increased awareness and a record number of conservation dollars raised. In recognition of her achievement, Susan was hosted by Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya, a world-class nature sanctuary and resource for the critically endangered black rhino population. There she received an honorary award from the world's foremost rhino conservationist Anna Merz.

Susan currently lives in Chicago and enjoys spending time with her two golden retrievers. She continues to positively engage with her community, volunteering on projects that enrich the lives of animals in the Lincoln Park Zoo.



Her adventurous spirit and love for travel have taken her to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, the ruins of Machu Picchu and the Galapagos Islands. Her husband has often said that he needs a vacation from the vacation. This summarizes Susan's never-ending zest for nature and or preserving it for future generations to enjoy.

Susan's work and passions are what fuels her, including her donation of a piano to the International Music Foundation, taking part in Pianos in the Parks this summer, and the donation of her mother's collection of art books to Elmhurst College. She instinctively looks out for others and exemplifies what it means to be a Duke of Distinction. She is always finding ways to impact society positively and instill joy. Her life honors the York tradition of teamwork and selflessness.

Nominated by Gail Sopron

JOEL HERTER CLASS OF 1955



Joel firmly believes his four years at York High School prepared him to succeed in college and to be life ready. After college and his military service, he passed the CPA examination and began an accounting career. In 1978, Joel acquired a small CPA firm in Elmhurst.

Over the years, the firm blossomed, and he grew the business into the largest independent CPA firm in DuPage County. In 2014, Joel sold his firm to a large, national CPA conglomerate and retired.

His community service also made a mark county-wide. During his career, Joel was privileged to sit on three local boards, including his alma mater, Elmhurst College. As Board Chairman of Elmhurst Memorial Hospital, the new hospital was built for \$450M and while leading the DuPage Water Commission, the DuPage System, a \$500M project, was built bringing Lake Michigan water to DuPage County, the largest public water project of its kind at the time. With each of these defining projects, Joel is most proud of his fiscal responsibility as a steward of the community's trust. Both endeavors were completed on time and under budget.



He also served as a trustee at Elmhurst College for 41 years (1977-2018) and as Chairman of the Board from 1997-2002. In his honor, the nursing scholarship was renamed the "Joel Herter Elmhurst Memorial Healthcare Nursing Scholarship" (2001). On January 8, 2019, he was elected Trustee Emeritus.

He also received the college's prestigious Alumni Merit Award in 1978, Founders Medal in 2002, and was inducted into the Bluejay Backer Hall of Fame in 1980. Mr. Herter was a member of the basketball team at York High School and went on to become the Captain of the basketball team at Elmhurst College. He is still an avid Bluejay athletics fan.

Joel holds fond memories of York and proudly notes that his family upholds the legacy of being Duke graduates. Moreover, his commitment, work and actions have shaped and changed the Elmhurst community.

Nominated by Lee Daniels



DR. LAURA ORVIDAS CLASS OF 1978

Dr. Laura Orvidas is a nationally recognized expert in Pediatric Otolaryngology and has been a leader in her field for many years at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. However, her story began with hard work and making the most of her opportunities. While she did not attend a prestigious undergraduate college or medical school, she persevered to land an internship and residency program at the world-renowned hospital, where she continues to blaze trails today.



Throughout her career, Laura has distinguished herself as someone of great knowledge and dedication to her profession. She has been sought out across the globe for her expertise and even traveled to the Middle East to treat a member of the Royal Family of Abu Dhabi. She has been interviewed in numerous publications, including the New York Times and National Public Radio. Laura has authored or co-authored close to 50 peer-reviewed articles, three abstracts, and three letters. She has either done oral presentations or submitted papers at close to 100 medical conferences across the globe.



Laura is also the type of leader and expert who gives back and shares her knowledge. She has been a mentor for Mayo's ENT Residency Program at Mayo for over 20 years, shepherding dozens of ENT residents through the process of becoming a fully functioning doctor. Not only did she help teach the interns the depth of knowledge that was necessary to become an ENT doctor, but she demonstrated how to treat patients in a kind and caring manner in order to give them the best treatment possible and get to the bottom of what was causing their medical issues.

Mayo Clinic is where people go to find answers, and Dr. Laura Orvidas is the kind of caring, committed and professional individual, who also is a life-changing representative of the Mayo Clinic mission.

Nominated by Sharon Brosnan

PREVIOUS HONOREES

YDAP CLASS OF 2013

Dr. John Baumrucker ('62)
Ron Guenther ('63)
John Hagstrom ('83)
Dr. Peter Holbrook ('62)

Dr. Claudia Lucchinetti ('82)
Kenneth Paulson ('72)
Dr. Charles Tilly ('46)
Sidney Carne Wolff ('58)

YDAP CLASS OF 2014

Dr. Robert Chen ('73)
John Coughlan ('60)
Beth Finke ('76)
Gary Rydstrom ('77)

Kathleen Sherman, CSJ ('73)
Dr. Martin Stoker ('39)
Sgt. Joseph Vanek ('03)

YDAP CLASS OF 2015

Lee Daniels ('60)
Mark Dyer ('80)
Susan Grosser Groenwald ('67)
Tom Marcucci ('70)

Dr. Clifford McDonald ('80)
David Swartz ('59)
Kenneth von Heidecke ('70)
Samuel Williams ('03)

YDAP CLASS OF 2016

Dan Konopka ('93)
Jack Lavin ('80)
Judd Lofchie ('76)
Tekki Lomnicki ('74)

Dr. Barbara Lunde ('55)
O. Robert Nettelmann ('65)
Dr. Alan Tereba ('74)

YDAP CLASS OF 2017

Lieutenant David Bosse ('80)
Blake Byrne ('53)
Brigadier General Thomas Fisher ('86)

Linda French ('82)
Dr. Judith Bond Johnson ('55)
Mary McEnerney Woolley ('64)





YORK COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the York Community High School Alumni Association (YCHSAA) is to serve and support the school and its alumni by fostering and enhancing communication and camaraderie among alumni; maintaining a strong relationship between the school and its alumni; preserving, promoting, and celebrating the history, traditions, and memories of York; and contributing to the growth and welfare of York and its students.

MEMBERSHIP

Regular: A Regular member is a person who attended York as a student for at least one day and whose class has graduated. Regular members include graduates and non graduates.

Associate: An Associate member is a person who did not attend York. This may include teachers, administrators, employees of York, spouses and parents of Regular members, and supporters of York. Associate members do not have voting privileges and may not hold elected or appointed office, but may attend Association meetings and events and serve on committees.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership is free! There are no fees or dues. Funds to support the Association and its initiatives will be raised through donations and fundraising events.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- 📖 Participate in all Alumni Association meetings and other activities
- 📖 Propose and discuss matters of interest to and for the welfare of the Association
- 📖 Have access to the Association by-laws and events schedule
- 📖 Regular members may run for elected office and be eligible to serve as voting members
- 📖 Receive issues of the electronic newsletter

YCHSAA EXECUTIVE BOARD

Jay Webb ('75), President
Kathy Wilson ('65), Vice President
Linda Aldis ('74), Treasurer
Debbie Linhart ('67), Secretary

Stay in touch...
update your
contact information!

[www.elmhurst205.org/
alumni/alumni-association](http://www.elmhurst205.org/alumni/alumni-association)

A LETTER FROM YCHSAA PRESIDENT JAY WEBB



On behalf of the York Community High School Alumni Association, I would like to welcome all the York alumni, guests and most of all, our 2019 Distinguished Alumni Honorees, their families and friends to this special evening and the Sixth Annual York High School Distinguished Alumni Program.

This program has come to epitomize the long tradition of excellence in York High School's 100-year history, exemplifying that with a solid educational foundation, anything in life is possible. This year, like years past, our honorees are an exceptional group, with graduation years spanning five decades and representing a vast array of outstanding accomplishments. Congratulations to all!

The York Community High School Alumni Association (YCHSAA) derived from the early planning of this program and is building its own tradition. From the celebration of York's Centennial and trade school scholarships to archive restorations and alumni socials, we are carrying the pride of our York tradition in the community throughout the year. If you went to York for one day, you are an automatic member. We are always looking for fresh faces and new ideas. For more information about YCHSAA, visit us online at www.elmhurst205.org/alumni/alumni-association

Sincerely,

Jay Webb, President

York Community High School Alumni Association



HAIL TO YORK HIGH



HAIL TO YORK HIGH!
DEAR BELOVED NAME
WE WILL EVER SING IN JOYFUL PRAISE.
STRIVING IN ALL WE DO TO BRING THEE MORE FAME.
VOICING OUR LOVE FOR THEE IN LOYAL ACCLAIM, YEA!
DEAR OLD YORK HIGH, WE WILL FIGHT FOR THEE
STRONG IN BATTLE, TRUE IN LOVE
BOTH OUR HEART AND OUR HAND
WE DO PLEDGE AS WE STAND.
DEAR OLD YORK HIGH. HAIL TO THEE!

WRITTEN BY YORK'S FIRST BAND DIRECTOR,
MR. GEORGE STRICKLING, 1928