

# September 2019 Alumni Newsletter

## York Distinguished Alumni Program Announces 2019 Dukes of Distinction

The York Distinguished Alumni Program (YDAP) serves to recognize and honor alumni who have distinguished themselves through significant and/or extraordinary accomplishments, service and an outstanding contribution to society. Launched in the fall of 2013, YDAP honored 8 members of the inaugural class. In 2014, 7 Dukes of Distinction were honored; 8 in were inducted in 2015; and 7 more in 2016. Read about past Dukes of Distinction, [here](#).

This year, 6 Dukes of Distinction have been chosen by a panel of York alumni judges and will be honored on the evening of Thursday, November 7, beginning with a reception at 6:30 PM in the York High School Commons. The event is free and open to the public.

*Honorees for 2019 are:*

### **Tom Ballent and Alice Jahnke Ballent** - Class of 1974.

The alumni couple first met at Northern Illinois University, both graduating in 1978. Alice went on to a successful career in sales and marketing. Meanwhile, Tom pursued his master's degree and a career in finance. In 1992, they learned that their son, Adam, had a profound hearing loss. In 1995, they became 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.

### **Kathleen Harger** - Class of 1972.

Kathleen graduated from the University of Illinois in 1976 where she was commissioned as an Ensign from the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps. She then served 25 years in the Navy, retiring in 2002 as a Captain. Kathleen 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, bringing innovation into the Department of Defense. That assignment was followed by one with a premier defense research agency to deliver effective, adaptable solutions to our country's military.

### **Joel Herter** - Class of 1955.

Joel firmly believes that York High School prepared him to be life ready! After graduating from Elmhurst College and the military, Joel began an accounting career. His firm blossomed into the largest independent CPA firm in DuPage County. Retiring in 2014, his community service also made a mark countywide. 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.

### **Susan Grohne Harry** - Class of 1990.

Susan earned multiple degrees 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, volunteering her time to promote conservation. Her success led to a trip hosted by the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya, where she received an honorary award from the world's foremost rhino conservationist Anna Merz.

**Laura Orvidas** - Class of 1978.

Since beginning her career as a doctor of Pediatric Otolaryngology, Laura has distinguished herself as someone of great knowledge and dedication to her profession. Although she did not attend a prestigious undergraduate college or medical school, she worked to land an internship and residency program at the world-renowned Mayo Clinic. Now, a nationally-recognized expert, Laura has made a continuous effort to mentor physicians. Mayo Clinic is where people go to find answers, and Laura is the kind of caring and committed doctor, who also is a life-changing representative of the Mayo Clinic mission.

*We hope you can join us on November 7th, 2019 in the York Commons to honor the 2019 Dukes of Distinction!*

**Questions?** Contact the Alumni Office at 630-941-4719 or [alumni@elmhurst205.org](mailto:alumni@elmhurst205.org)

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**CLASS OF 1965 (55TH)**

*August 1, 2020*  
Angelo's Elmhurst  
Friday night TBD

**CLASS OF 1959 (60TH)**

*September 27-29th*  
Hilton Oak Brook  
[Facebook Page](#)

**CLASS OF 1964 (55TH)**

*Sept 14, 2019*  
Mack's Golden Pheasant  
6:30 to 10:00 pm  
For more information, contact Joel Goldblatt  
[york64reunion@aol.com](mailto:york64reunion@aol.com)

**CLASS OF 1969 (50TH)**

*September 13-14, 2019*  
Details to come  
Online at: [www.york196950th.com/](http://www.york196950th.com/)

**CLASS OF 1979 (40TH)**

*Oct 11 & 12, 2019*  
Scheduled events:  
*Friday, October 11*

Casual night at Cottage Hill Station  
122 S. York Street, Elmhurst - 8 p.m.

*Saturday, October 12*  
Tour of York - 10 a.m. FREE

*Saturday, October 12*  
Reunion Party at Angelo's  
247 N York Street, Elmhurst  
7 p.m. - 11 p.m.  
\$30 until October 1st, \$40 after that and at the door.  
Visit [yorkclassof79.com](http://yorkclassof79.com) for more information

### **CLASS OF 2009 (10TH)**

*October 19, 2019*

7 PM – 10 PM

Moe's Cantina

155 W Kinzie St, Chicago, IL

[Tickets Available here](#)

[Facebook Page](#)

[Click here](#) for more information about planning your reunion!

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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

Stay in touch with your fellow York graduates and your alma mater.  
Join the York Community High School Alumni Association today!

#### **YCHSAA Executive Board**

Jay Webb '75

*President*

Kathy Wilson '65  
*President-Elect*

Debbie Leaton-Linhart '67  
*Vice President*

Linda Boeske-Aldis '74  
*Treasurer*

Kristen Samuelson '05  
*Membership*

**Questions?**

[Visit the Alumni Association online!](#)