

VCS

SPRING 2021

E-Alumni News



www.victorschools.org

Visual and Performing Arts Hall of Fame Inductees to be honored Virtually

Three VCS Visual and Performing Arts Hall of Fame recipients will be honored at a special virtual celebration on Monday, May 17, 2021 at 7 pm. The group was scheduled to be inducted into the Arts Hall of Fame in-person last year, but due to COVID-19, that event was put on hold.

Bill Kelliher, a 2019 recipient, Shelley Roden and Fred Fouquet, 2020 recipients, will be honored at this year's

virtual ceremony. *To attend this livestreamed event on May 17th, go to: <https://youtu.be/B6UttMLokLA>*

More information about our inductees can be found in the Spring 2019 and 2020 E-Alumni Issues: <https://www.victorschools.org/community/alumni/previous-newsletters>

Visual & Performing Arts HALL OF FAME



Fred Fouquet
Class of 1988



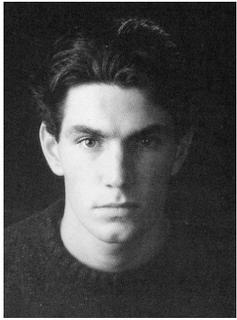
Bill Kelliher
Class of 1989



Shelley (Smith) Roden
Class of 1992

The Art and Soul of Poet, Aaron Fagan

(Class of 1992)



In October, 2020, alumnus Aaron Fagan published his third poetry collection, *A Better Place Is Hard to Find*, by The Song

Cave. (<https://the-song-cave.com/search?q=fagan>) We caught up with Fagan to find out a little bit more about his poetic journey, one that began right here at VCS.

What did you do after you graduated from VCS in 1992?

After I graduated, I took a gap year and drove around the country with my older brother. That time helped me figure out whether or not college was right for me. The answer was, “If I find the right school.” And I did, Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts, where I concentrated in poetry and philosophy. I started there in the spring 1994 semester and graduated in May 1997.

After a brief stint as a machinist in Rochester, I sold what little I owned and took an Amtrak to Chicago. This was before ubiquitous internet availability, so I was thumbing through the physical Yellow Pages phone book and discovered a listing for *Poetry* magazine. I cold called and then sent in my very modest resume. To my astonishment, they invited me for an interview. At the time, I didn’t realize it was the

oldest poetry publication in the country, which probably helped me stay calm during the interview. They took me on, and that launched my career in publishing.

After five years in Chicago, my poetry began to appear in magazines, and Sterling Lord Literistic – the literary agency that most notably represented Jack Kerouac for *On the Road* – began to send my first book around to publishers. I was offered a University Fellowship to attend Syracuse University in 2003, and I graduated with an M.F.A. in creative writing in 2006. I moved to New York City, and in the following few years, my first two books, *Garage* (2007) and *Echo Train* (2010), were published by Salt Publishing in London. To support myself, I have written and edited for a variety of publications over the years, including: *Scientific American*, *Nature*, *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, and *Fine Homebuilding*. Before the pandemic, I served as a Communications & Marketing Manager for the Experimental Music and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York.

Currently, I work curating an interview series devoted to leaders in the art and science of construction for *Fine Homebuilding* magazine. My third book of poems, *A Better Place Is Hard to Find*, came out in 2020 with The Song Cave.

What led you to becoming a poet?

What led me to poetry was playing around with words in study hall one day during my freshman year in high school – I loved skateboarding, and the feeling of making a poem

had the same magic of landing a trick for the first time. It is a strange kind of clarity that washes over you when you find the thing you know you will do no matter what anyone says. As you can imagine, there were plenty of people along the way who attempted to disabuse me of writing poetry along the way for a host of reasons, but namely, because there’s no money in it. But, then, that’s one reason why I love the art so much: Poetry is essentially divested from the material world.

What VCS teachers and activities inspired you?

Douglas Hamlin (Principal), Megan Meyer (art), and English teachers Jim Strauss, Deborah Kritz, Robert Brunson, and Timothy Smith were all major influences; each in their own way. I took a creative writing class with Wendy Heffer, and the student literary magazine, *Youth Conglomerate*, was edited by Christine Antalek, where all of my first efforts at poetry appeared.

How did your VCS education prepare you for what you’re doing today?

I majored in English, and I think literature was taught in such a way that it brought the power of language to life for me. I always felt like my inner experience exceeded my capacity to give it external form, and poetry gave me a toolkit for processing the sense I was trying to make of the world around me.

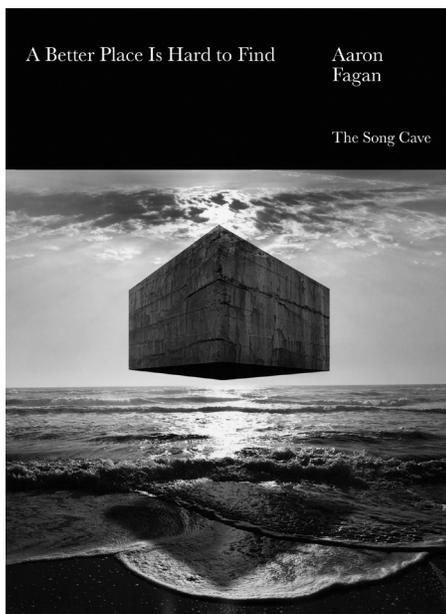
What advice would you give to VCS graduates interested in poetry?

Poet T.S. Eliot wrote in his 1929 essay “Dante” that,

“Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood.” Read widely, don’t be afraid to be confused, and, as the poet Frank O’Hara advised, “live as variously as possible.” Understand what you read and experience as a relationship that will evolve over a lifetime.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Help people recover from drug and alcohol addiction. Creatively, I maintain a steady diet of reading and writing. Lately, I have been inspired by familiarizing myself with all the music published by the label Ghost Box. My greatest joy is walking and talking with my wife Camilla and our two dogs, Zeus and Bob Fosse.



A Better Place is Hard to Find

By Aaron Fagan

Revealing the profusion of life “Where silence / And all possible / Outcomes bathe // In simultaneity,” the poems in Aaron Fagan’s astonishing third collection, *A Better Place Is Hard to Find*, carefully tune their lines, breaks, and turns of phrase to the acoustics of the author’s lived experience. A master of giving shape to thought, Fagan’s absorbing poems about love, relationships, philosophy, and his personal history reveal the intimate function poetry can hold in the course of examining one’s life.

“Aaron Fagan’s *A Better Place Is Hard to Find* contains some of the finest poems I’ve read in years. At once fluid, blistering, and visionary, Fagan’s poems are marvels that I admire for their beauty, their craft, and their fearlessness in the search for truth. What a poet!”

— Rowan Ricardo Phillips

“Witty, inventive, surprising, uplifting, but also drawn to probe the darker recesses of the human psyche, the poems collected here reveal Aaron Fagan at his most compelling. This volume will surely enhance his status as one of the brightest stars in the American poetic firmament.”

— Mark Ford



Aaron Fagan was born in Rochester, New York, in 1973 and educated at Hampshire College and Syracuse University. He has published two previous collections of poetry, *Garage* (Salt, 2007) and *Echo Train* (Salt, 2010), and is a poetry editor for *Music & Literature*.

More Info Here:
www.the-song-cave.com

A Journey of Justice



**Gerald Pickering
(Class of 1975)
Reflects on His Life
in Law**

Enforcement and How VCS Helped Get Him There.

What did you do after graduating from VCS in 1975?

It all started with my A.A.S. in Criminal Justice from Finger Lakes Community. From there, I earned a Bachelor of Science from SUNY Empire State College. I have continued graduate work at the University of Virginia. In 2004 I graduated from the prestigious FBI National Academy Class 219, a professional course of study for U.S. and international law enforcement senior leaders.

Tell us about your work in law enforcement through the years.

My humble career began as a County Police Officer with the Ontario County Sheriff's Office 1978 to 1984. From 1984 to 2001 I served in all Webster Police ranks 1984-2001. In 2001 I was appointed to Webster Police Chief where I remained until 2015. The Webster Police Department lost one of our own on Christmas Eve, 2012, known as the Webster Tragedy. Lt. Michael Chiapperini and Tomasz

Kaczowka were shot and killed responding to a fire in West Webster. The outpouring of support from around the world and most notably from our immediate area in Western New York sustained us as we investigated the horrendous tragedy.

After retiring from WPD in 2015, I became Deputy Director of Public Safety at the University of Rochester where I serve second in command of a 200+ member department.

What classes/activities and/or teachers at VCS most inspired you?

As a proud member of the Class of 1975, I have very fond memories of my VCS education and can remember many of my teachers from K-12. I made lifelong friends at VCS – many members of the class of 1975 have remained in touch and remain close.

I really enjoyed wrestling, football and club skiing outside of the academics. Coaches Ed Ahonen and George Miller made sports memorable. We learned many important life lessons from them including teamwork, perseverance and the importance of planning.

On the academic side of the house, Dr. Swanson's classes in physics and chemistry were fascinating to me. His classes were a challenge for me, but he was able to teach difficult studies while making learning fun.

School Administrators Carl Palumbo and Dave Hurlbutt, Business and English teacher, both made sure we were prepared for future endeavors as well as being tremendous resources for me as I entered the work force.

How did your VCS education prepare you for what you're doing today?

Work hard, be kind to all and be a lifelong learner were instilled values at VCS. I continue to strive for those goals every day.



What advice would you give to VCS graduates interested in working in law enforcement?

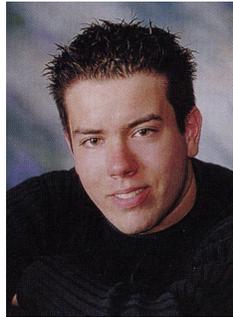
I recommend pursuing advanced education in fields such as Police Science or Criminal Justice, but also degrees in a wide range of disciplines. Law enforcement needs people of all backgrounds to successfully meet the challenges of providing progressive police services in the future. Many federal law enforcement jobs exist and they often prefer education with a business background, such as a degree in accounting, finance, business administration or economics. Science degrees in subjects like chemistry, physics and biology are also sought-after as well as political science or international studies. I also encourage students interested in service jobs to

participate in explorers groups – and / or volunteering with Police, Fire or Emergency Medical Services as well as inquiring about the ability to do “ride-a-longs” with different emergency service organizations.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I enjoy domestic and international travel with my wife, Charlene, and sons, USAF Captain Luke Pickering, (VCS 2009, USAFA 2013) and Cole (VCS 2013, RIT 2018). I also enjoy motorcycling and outdoor winter sports, and occasionally socializing with my classmates from 1975.

VCS Art Classes Provided Alumnus Foundation for Success



Introducing Jason Larche (Class of 2003), Owner of SixAbove Studios sixabovestudios.com

What did you do after you graduated from VCS in 2003?

I studied at Monroe Community College and then Syracuse University. I received an AAS in Graphic Arts and a BFA in Communication Design. After college, I moved to Connecticut



and worked at several marketing agencies in the New York City area before founding my own business.

Tell us about your current job, owner of SixAbove Studios?

I am the founder and creative director of SixAbove, a brand design and creative studio in Norwalk, Connecticut. We work with a variety of companies, many in the food/beverage industry, to develop meaningful brands and create original artwork for products, advertising and retail spaces. Our work incorporates our passion for lettering, illustration and bold graphics.

What classes at VCS inspired you the most?

I enjoyed all my art classes. They provided the foundation and encouragement needed to pursue opportunities in the creative industry.

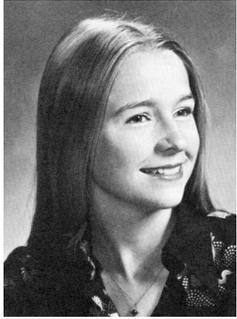
What advice would you give to a VCS graduate interested in working as a graphic artist or in marketing communications?

The best way to learn more about working as a graphic artist, or in marketing communications, would be speak to (or even better, intern with) someone immersed in the industry. I am happy to be a resource to any student interested in learning more.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I enjoy traveling and building models with my son.

Author Sherrie (Smith) Miranda (Class of 1975) Publishes Second Novel



This past January, Sherrie Miranda, VCS Class of 1975 announced the release of *Crimes and*

Impunity in New Orleans: Shelly's Journey Begins-the fiction prequel to her 2015 debut page-turning thriller *Secrets & Lies in El Salvador*.

VCS School and Community Relations reached out to Miranda to ask her more about *her* story, the one before becoming an author.



What did you do after you graduated from VCS in 1975?

First, I got married right away. A mistake. I worked in retail & started waitressing. After my divorce, I went to Rochester Institute of Technology, first studying art, and then photography. I learned a lot, but didn't finish my degree. Though the photography is a big part of my protagonist's story.

Tell me about your current book? What inspired you to write it?

Crimes & Impunity in New Orleans is about 80% true. After dropping out of RIT, my Icelandic boyfriend convinced me to take two Icelanders and a Norwegian couple in a Drive-Away to New Orleans. The rest is now history (at least the part that is in my novel).

My debut novel *Secrets & Lies in El Salvador* is about an American girl who goes to El Salvador during the civil war there. Although fictional, many of the stories told to Shelly are based on stories I heard while in New Orleans. *Crimes and Impunity in New Orleans* is the prequel to this story.

What classes/activities and/or teachers at VCS most inspired you?

I remember a young teacher who had traveled around Europe. I can't remember his name, but I believe he gave me the travel bug or helped me get the wanderlust that I've had for most of my life.

The Home Economics teacher (Ms. Grealy?) was really cool because she influenced us to share our stories. Her classes were one of the few places that I actually dared to speak up at that time in my life.

How did your VCS education prepare you for what you're doing today?

Despite my poor grades, I did learn a lot at VCS. I think there were some great teachers (and some not so great), but I am a firm believer in learning from your mistakes. When I became a teacher myself, my own

experiences had a huge impact on how I taught my classes, especially the English As A Second Language (ESL) classes. I thought I was shy than the shyest English Learner I ever met.

What advice would you give to a VCS graduate interested in becoming an author?

First of all, don't let anyone make you feel you're not good enough. You are! Secondly, don't worry if you don't fit in; that will be a good thing in the future. Thirdly, even though you feel like some teachers don't understand you or don't care, do NOT let that stop you from learning as much as you can.

Finally, high school is the hardest time of your life. No matter how bad you feel right now, things WILL get better!

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Besides reading and writing and always learning, I also love to garden, collect old furniture for our historical home (which would not be historical anywhere else - Chula Vista, California is only 100 years old!) as well as listening to my husband's band while dancing to the music.



More about Crimes and Impunity in New Orleans: Shelly's Journey Begins, the fiction prequel to her 2015 debut page-turning thriller Secrets & Lies in El Salvador.

Shelly Dalton Smith is a naïve, twenty-three-year-old from Upstate New York who moves to New Orleans in 1980 to prepare for a photo project in war-torn El Salvador.

Shelly arrives in New Orleans, broken and traumatized and therefore unable to trust her own instincts. New Orleans represents the fresh start Shelly needs, but she soon finds that almost everyone in New Orleans harbors a secret.

She's unprepared for life in "The Big Easy," and her world is turned upside down as she navigates "the city that care forgot." With fast-paced chapters and beautifully detailed conversations and descriptions, we see New Orleans through Shelly's innocent eyes as she realizes the sheltered life she had lived was a lie. She experiences sexism and witnesses racism, police brutality, FBI visits, death threats, and two people's captivity by her former boss.

Through her misadventures and exciting plot twists, Shelly focuses on fighting injustice, ultimately finding her authentic voice as an empowered adult. When she finally leaves New Orleans, she is forever changed. The novel is a wild ride through the underbelly of 1980s New Orleans and is filled with quirky characters, sinister abusers, and thrilling secrets and revelations.

Trailer Link:

https://youtu.be/7_NL-V9KEi4

Available on Amazon:

Paperback: ISBN-10 : ISBN-13 : 979-8694670319 <https://www.amzn.com/dp/B08KMHNNDK> Kindle eBook: ASIN : B08K8MMCMJ <https://www.amzn.com/dp/B08K8MMCMJ>

Available on Barnes and Noble.com

B&N ID#: 2940162963127 (Nook)

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/crimes-and-impunity-in-new-orleans-sherrie-miranda/1137768556?ean=2940162963127>

To learn more, please visit:

WEBSITE/BLOG: <https://sherriemiranda1.wordpress.com/>

Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sherriemirandaauthorpage>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sherriemiranda56>

Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/sherpeace>

Sherrie Miranda is available for in-person (social distancing) and online media appearances and interviews - including print, online, television, radio, podcast

Media Contact:

Sherrie Miranda:

619-694-0746

Sherriemiranda1@aol.com

Helping the Homeless

How Three VCS Alumni Are Making a Difference

They may have graduated from VCS in different decades, but Laurie Jones-Prizel ('79), Kevin Driscoll ('97) and John Henry Greenwood ('04) all have something powerful in common; they are all leaders in the plight against homelessness.



Laurie A. Jones-Prizel

Executive Director
Dimitri House, Inc.
Rochester, NY

www.dimitri-house.org

What did you do after you graduated from VCS in 1979?

I joined the Army, then went to MCC for my associates, SUNY Brockport for my BS in Criminal Justice and then Roberts



Wesleyan for my Masters in Public Administration. I spent twenty years working in the field of disabilities prior to the homelessness community.

Tell me about your current job working as the Executive Director at the Dimitri House? What inspired you to work for the homelessness cause?

I started at Dimitri House 5 years ago after completing my Master's degree (it's never too late to go back to school). I basically fell into the job but very quickly discovered serving people experiencing housing and food insecurities wasn't that much different than what I had done for twenty years. Living in poverty is not a choice it is the result of failed systems supporting people lacking mental and physical health care, education and work skills. No one wants to be homeless! I also manage a food cupboard, drop in lunch program, adopt a family programs for thanksgiving and Christmas, assistance programs for security deposits, tons of fundraising and grant writing and

was recently able to secure the NYS funding for a project to create 6 one bedroom apartments for chronically homeless folks. I will caution you though, as an executive director in a small not for profit organization you might also catch me cooking the meals, washing dishes or plunging a toilet!

I have learned that real happiness doesn't come from getting but from giving!

What classes, activities and/or teachers at VCS most inspired you?

You're asking me to remember back 42+ years ago? I had a great interest in art during high school, thought that might have been my career path yet it clearly changed. Was involved in a number of extra circular type groups after school but was never outstanding in any one thing. I am so not the athletic type but have always been interested in equity among people.

How did your VCS education prepare you for what you're doing today?

Back so many years ago a Regents

diploma was an option to your education. I have always loved learning so teachers and staff were extremely supportive of my desire to learn. Also growing up in a small town, you pretty much know everyone throughout your school years. It teaches you to appreciate diversity and the value of roots in your community.

What advice would you give to VCS graduates interested in working for a non-profit, or specifically for the homeless?

Well in all honesty within our current climate human service workers of any kind will never be monetarily rich. Yet you humility and gratitude grows daily. Not a day passes that I am not to be thankful. If you're interested in non-profit work you have to have integrity, respect for EVERYONE and simply care about human kind.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Spare time hmmm . . . that is in short commodity. I have two handsome sons I am raising (ages 10 & 11) so I rarely have spare time unless it's fun kids' stuff like playing in snow, jumping on a trampoline or racing go karts.



Kevin Driscoll

Program Director
The Jericho Project
New York City

<https://jerichoproject.org/>

What did you do after you graduated from VCS in 1997?

I attended the University of Delaware and graduated in 2001 with an Honors degree as a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies. I started a Ph.D. program at Rutgers University in the fall of 2001 and studied issues of Child Development and Doctor-Patient interactions. After several years in the program, however, I determined that a change in career direction was necessary. I enjoyed learning and teaching, but academia was not the best fit for me. I earned a Masters in Cognitive Psychology and left my program to seek employment in the non-profit sector.

I found a position with an organization that handled Welfare-to-Work programs in the Bronx. I have spent the last decade-and-a-half working a variety of positions with social services agencies in NYC - assisting disadvantaged populations with employment, homelessness prevention, and other services.



Tell me about your current job working as the Program Director at the Jericho Project? What inspired you to work for the homelessness cause?

I currently supervise a program that works to prevent family homelessness in the Bronx. Jericho works as part of the HomeBase network - a system of social service agencies across New York City that strive to keep residents from becoming homeless.

Family homelessness is a major problem in NYC:

In November 2020, there were 57,016 homeless people, including 18,368 homeless children, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system.*

These are not families on the street; these are families that are living in shelters. The average household in a family shelter spends more than one year there before securing long term housing. The disruptions of life in a shelter (e.g. overcrowded conditions and numerous administrative appointments) mean that health



and educational outcomes are significantly worse for children in shelter. Systems like this build and sustain generational poverty. And, even worse, the system is extremely expensive - costing over \$70,000/yr. for a family (as of 2018). Even at NYC's exorbitant housing prices, that is a ton of money.

I was part of the team that set up Jericho Project's HomeBase program in the fall of 2018 and became the Program Director this past fall. Since that time, we have served over 1100 families and kept over 94% from entering NYC municipal shelters.

I was inspired to work to assist others by numerous teachers (particularly the ones mentioned below). They pushed me to see that I could have a role in changing the world. I was also inspired by my father. In his career, he worked to improve the lives of others - particularly those overlooked by much of society. After I left graduate school, I wanted to find a way to work in a field where I could do that. Working in the Bronx, in some of the poorest urban neighborhoods in the US does not feel like changing the world in the same way that one envisions at eighteen, but I am happy to play even a small part.



What classes/activities and/or teachers at VCS most inspired you?

Glenn Simpson (AP Biology Marine Biology Club) for his love of science

Robert S. Thompson – (Phys Ed and varsity soccer) demonstrated real leadership and vision - I loved that he managed to bring more “outdoor activities” - like rock-climbing and kayaking into the physical education classes

Mr. Olsen (AP US History) for his love of history and academic contests like quiz bowl

Dr. Baive (AP Physics) for his cosmopolitan view of the world.

How did your VCS education prepare you for what you're doing today?

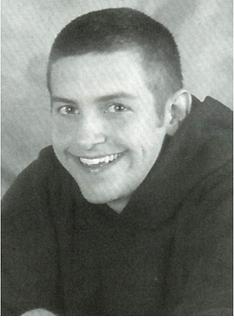
In my experience, the classroom learning was valuable, but those teachers that inspired students to go further and to love learning were the most important. In my experience, Victor Central Schools

had some teachers that were worldly and passionate about what they did. They were inspirational in encouraging me to explore different paths and opportunities - to resist the urge to pigeon-hole yourself into a single career path at age eighteen. Their perspective and advice was integral to who I am today.

What advice would you give to VCS graduate interested in working for a non-profit, or specifically for the homeless?

I would suggest finding a way to get involved to try it out. Not everyone that seeks to work in the non-profit world finds it to their liking. It is often complicated and messy work - helping people is often frustrating work. Related to that, I would suggest learning skills to bring people together and to build teams. The non-profit world tends to function on group consensus more so than the for-profit sector. I would also suggest to anyone interested in learning more about homelessness to read Matthew Desmond's book “Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City” and check out his webproject [The Eviction Lab](http://TheEvictionLab.com).

* <https://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city/>



John Henry Greenwood

*Executive Director
Homes for the Homeless
New York City
<https://www.hfhny.org/>*

What did you do after graduating from VCS in 2004?

After college I attended Syracuse University and had various internships focusing on education policy, poverty issues and community development. A week after I graduated college I moved to New York City.

Tell me about your current job working as the Executive Director at Homes for the Homeless. What inspired you to work for the homelessness cause?

I started working for the organization right out of college and progressively learned more about the issue and the organization. As the Executive Director I oversee the vision and leadership of agency. We have four locations, over 360 staff, and care for over 730 families every night.

I spent my first four years out of college working directly with homeless families who are living in shelters. I'm inspired to help families and children and improve my community.

What classes/activities and/or teachers at VCS most inspired you?

Both Mr. Strauss and Mr. Brunson were inspiring and great teachers. Mr. Brunson, through literature, helped me grow my critical thinking skills. I can type faster than most of my colleagues due to Ms. Nothnagel - it's a real skill. Sports and clubs helped me learn how to work with others and accomplish goals as a team.

How did your VCS education prepare you for what you're doing today?

I think it's the large amount of clubs that helped prepare me to be a leader in my community. Learning to be a leader and work as a team will help you be successful in any career.

What advice would you give to VCS graduates interested in working for a non-profit, or specifically for the homeless?

Get involved in your community or lead an event. Learning how to organize and pull off a complex event or operation will teach you a lot! At most non-profits you are

forced to wear a lot of different hats in a rapidly changing environment. Learning how to quickly adapt and keep a sense of humor goes a long way.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Pre-COVID my husband and I loved to walk around the City, go to museums and shows, eat out at restaurants, and travel. For now, we do a lot of rearranging our apartment to figure out how much stuff we can fit into a small amount of space.

Victor Proud!

Class of 2000

Congratulations to Ian Summerville. This past November he competed in the Steve Karr Classic 2020 and earned first place in Novice Bodybuilding and second place in the Men's Open Class B Bodybuilding. By placing second in Open Class B, he qualifies for national competition!



Class of 2008

Congratulations to VCS Class of 2008 Valedictorian, Barbara Burke! This past fall she was named AIA Rochester's Emerging Architect of the Year. For full story, go to:

<https://www.labelapc.com/post/barbara-burke-named-aia-s-emerging-architect-of-the-year>



Class of 2001

Congratulations to Nikkie (Hessney) Kent. This past December she was nominated in the category: WomenTech Speaker of the Year at the 2020 WomenTech Network Global Awards. Kent is the Chief Revenue Officer at Mamava, the leading expert in lactation space design. According to the company's LinkedIn page, Mamava, based in Burlington, Vermont, "celebrates and supports the 21st-century breastfeeding mama on-the-go with freestanding lactation pods, a mobile locator app, and an engaged digital community."



Class of 2016

Congratulations to Makayla Sargent. This summer she was named to the 2021 United States Women's National Team. Makayla had the 11th fastest time in the world in the 400 IM this past year.



Images taken from VCS Educational Foundation Facebook page

VCS Educational Foundation Helping to Make Music

VIS Music teacher Amy Oldfield is excited to announce that she applied for and received a VCS Education Foundation Art of Teaching Grant for 2021! This grant was used to purchase a class set of ukuleles as well as a storage stand. Thanks to the VCS Education Foundation, beginning in fall 2021, Intermediate music



students will receive ukulele instruction in general music classes. Mrs. Oldfield, Miss Atwater and Mr. Marini are thrilled to be able to offer this awesome experience to their students starting next year!

Local Veteran Becomes First Graduate of “Class of 2021”

On Wednesday, February 10, 2021, Superintendent Tim Terranova, Senior High School Principal, Brian Siesto, Board of Education President, Kristin Elliott,



and SH counselor Mary Banaszak held a special graduation ceremony for Victor resident, Carver Johnson. The special event began with the singing of the National Anthem

by select members of the Senior High Varsity Choir under the direction of music teacher, Kristin Mellema. Johnson, an Army veteran, would have been eligible to graduate in 1978 but instead he chose to enlist in the military at the age of 16. A native of Providence, Rhode Island, father and grandfather of two, Johnson said he intends to further his education and would like to become a drug and alcohol counselor. “I wish I knew back then what I know today. Education is so valuable for our children and our society,” he said. According to the New York State Education Department, even if they didn’t get their schooling in New York State, a veteran can receive a high school diploma as long as they are a resident and complete the necessary testing.

Then and Now

THEN

Before Title IX* was established in 1972 the only sports girls had were intramural.

The 1949 yearbook described it this way:

Girls Intramurals:

In intramurals, the high-school girls have an opportunity to use and enjoy the skills which they have learned in the regular gym classes.

Tournaments are planned for the following sports: soccer, baseball, volleyball, basketball and floatball. The winning team in each intramural tournament has the opportunity of attending or being the hostess at a play day with other schools.

Other intramural activities planned for the year included swim trips in November, December, April and May, and archery, tennis, badminton, and ping-pong in season.

NOW:

After Title IX was established in 1972, girls' sports took off at VCS!

Before Title IX, one in 27 girls played sports. Today that number is two in five. Victor's first official girls' sports teams were basketball and "baseball" in '71-'72. Both teams were led by Coach Sitzman. Today, VCS girls engage in 16 different organized sports teams across three seasons - fall, winter and spring.

** Title IX was established in 1972 to provide everyone with equal access to any program or activity that receives Federal financial assistance, including sports. This means that federally funded institutions, such as public schools, are legally required to provide girls and boys with equitable sports opportunities.*

GIRLS INTRAMURALS



First Row: F. Broderick, S. Helm, N. Pratt, M. Putnam, A. Mincer, D. Antonio, M. Rouse, J. Carpenter, E. Fritz, J. Brainan.
 Second Row: J. Smith, S. Helm, N. Tuttle, A. O'Dea, R. Blazey, D. Gysel, M. Anderson, L. Blazey, F. Garra, A. Schmidt, M. Turner.
 Third Row: Mrs. Popenmuse, E. Beard, B. Clover, D. Brewer, D. Rybke, A. Sunderlin, E. Draper, A. Herendeen, B. Collins, B. Conannon, R. Moore.
 Fourth Row: D. Swartzberg, R. Berndt, M. Herendeen, J. Crane, N. Stemp, S. Quackenbush, G. Fhippen, N. Valley, B. Lortscher, M. Herendeen, J. Boughton.
 Fifth Row: N. Dunn, J. Lovejoy, E. Payne, R. Newman, M. Guinan, P. English, J. Lortscher, S. Hunt, S. Clover, A. Rothwell, D. Young, M. Ryan.

In intramurals, the high-school girls have an opportunity to use and enjoy the skills which they have learned in the regular gym classes.

Tournaments are planned for the following sports: soccer, baseball, volleyball, basketball and floatball. The winning team in each intramural tournament has the opportunity of attending or being the hostess at a play day with other schools.

Other intramural activities planned for the year included swim trips in November, December, April and May, and archery, tennis, badminton, and ping-pong in season.



A Message from the VCS Alumni Association!

It is unfortunate that it was necessary to cancel the Alumni Banquet in 2020 and again in 2021. The Association is a non-profit organization lead by four officers. The Association gives a Scholarship to a graduating Senior. The funds are raised by donations to the Association DURING the Alumni Banquet. Due to the generosity of those attending the Banquet, we have been able to increase the scholarship from \$100 to \$250 and give two \$500 scholarships in 2020 and again in 2021. The interest and attendance has increased in last couple of years. Baskets are put on each dinner table and have been filled with enough to provide scholarships for the next year!!

Needless to say, we hope to see MANY of you at the Banquet on June 12, 2022 so we can continue these scholarships!

The Banquet will be held at Ravenwood Golf Club on Lynaugh Road in Victor. The purpose of the Banquet is socializing . . . and raising money for our scholarship. For our last Banquet in 2019, businesses in the Victor-Farmington area were generous and provided door prizes. Ravenwood will open a cash bar for an hour before dinner and will remain open after dinner for continued socializing! Dinner is a selection of delicious foods served buffet-style.

Please consider joining us for fun and connection with friends!

– Kay Cotton
Alumni Association President

Senior Citizen's Ball

The Senior Citizen's Ball for May 8, 2021 has been cancelled this year.

Staying Connected to Alumni

- The VCS Alumni Association started a Facebook page on March 16th and already has over 1,600 members. Check it out. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/812853279306280>
- The Victor Educational Foundation has a Facebook page. Check it out. <https://www.facebook.com/VCSEFoundation>
They also have a LinkedIn page for Victor Alumni and Staff: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8828159/>

WANTED! Your Reunion Information

Click on the link below to look for fellow alumni and to view any reunions.

*If you have reunion information please send that to us at
laskysh@victorschools.org and/or welche@victorschools.org*

[Victor Central Schools Alumni](#)

Do you know what this photo is of?



*The Class of 1960
(photo from 1959
yearbook)*

Send Us Your News

If you are an alumnus of Victor Central Schools, we encourage you to e-mail us at alumni@victorschools.org.

Feel free to tell us about accomplishments or events in your life such as a wedding, birth of a child or grandchild.

Whether or not you have visited campus lately, participated in a recent alumni event, or browsed our directory, you are sure to find information instrumental in helping you maintain a connection to your alma matter and other Victor graduates.

Academic, Artistic and Athletic Distinctions

- In June 2020, 98% of our students graduated with a Regents diploma, 66% earned a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation.
- This past October, the Victor Central School District was ranked 17th in academics out of 431 upstate New York school districts in 48 counties by *Buffalo Business First* magazine.
- *Niche.com* 2021 rankings named VCS a top District in a variety of categories. (*Niche* ranks nearly 100,000 schools and districts based on statistics and millions of opinions from students and parents.)

New York State

Best School Districts for Athletes in New York - 1 of 676

Best School Districts in New York - 72 of 674

Districts with the Best Teachers in New York - 82 of 688

National

Best School Districts for Athletes in America - 9 of 10,817

Best School Districts in America - 452 of 10,760

Districts with the Best Teachers in America - 493 of 11,645

Best Places to Teach in America - 882 of 11,294

- Sixty-three VSH students attended DECA's virtual State Career Conference in March 2021. Twelve students qualified for the International Career Conference.
- VCS was one of 686 school districts nationwide to receive the NAMM Foundation's Best Communities for Music Education (BCME) Award.
- This April, the Victor Indoor Percussion Ensemble (VIPE) was named New York State Champion with a score of 94.6, the highest score seen in the NYSPC in 4 years. They were also named a WGI (national) finalist, one of only 15 groups in their division. This is VIPE's eighth New York State Championship, and third time being named a WGI finalist (2010's Reflection, and 2017's The Muse).
- Senior cellist Summer Braithwaite was selected for this spring's NYSSMA Conference All State orchestra concert. Senior, Chloe Haller was also selected as an alternate for Conference All-State voice.

- This past fall, our Senior High Drama Club performed "It's A Wonderful Life" as a live-streamed "radio" production. This spring, they live-streamed the musical "John & Jen."
- This past winter, the Junior High School live-streamed their production of "School House Rock Live Jr."
- Senior, Emily Edwards was named a Scholastic Art and Writing Winner in the Northeast Region at large for two submissions this year: an Honorable Mention: for her painting "Dying Flower" and a Gold Key: for her sculpture "Broken Geode."
- This past September, Victor Senior High School was one of nine New York high schools named a National Banner Unified Champion School in recognition of their leadership in creating an inclusive school community where all students are accepted, celebrated and included.
- Last July, the Victor Senior High School earned the New York State Public High School Athletic Association's School of Distinction Award. VSH was one of only 56 high schools in the State to have 100% of its varsity teams qualify and receive the Scholar-Athlete team award!

- 2020-2021 Team Awards and Accolades (to date)

Boys Basketball

- Monroe County League Champions

Girls Bowling

- Monroe County League Champions

Ice Hockey

- Monroe County League Champions

Girls Indoor Track

- Section V Champions
- Melody Harloff, Sectional Winner - 55M and 300M

Boys Indoor Track

- Adam Barbato, Sectional Winner - 1600M

Boys Swimming:

- Alex Crossing, Section V Class A Champion, 200 Freestyle and 500 Freestyle

Wrestling:

- Dom Attardi, Codey Jensen, Section V Champions

Victor Central School 2020-2021 Retirees

Victor Primary School

Douglas Schmidt, 1995-2020, Elementary Teacher

Michele Driscoll, 1996-2021, Teacher Aide

Diane Osterling, 1999-2020, Teacher Aide

Victor Intermediate School

Tracy Briggs, 1987-2020, Art Teacher

Julie O'Neill, 1992-2021, Special Education Teacher

Dawn Landes, 1994-2021, Reading Teacher

Joy Boyd, 1998-2021, Elementary Teacher

Thomas Ryan, 2002-2021, Elementary Teacher

Sallieann Orlando-Cataldi, 2018-2021, Teacher Aide

Junior High School

Colleen Dix, 1987-2021, Foreign Language Teacher

Senior High School

Mark Cain, 1989-2021, Social Studies Teacher

Eric Everhart, 1989-2021, Music Teacher

Deborah Dunn, 2002-2020, Teacher Aide

Transportation

Earl Pringle, 2018-2020, Bus Driver

Food Services

Anne Whalen, 1992-2020, Food Service Supervisor

Mary Merlo, 2003-2020, Food Service Helper

District

Lynne Lubaszewski, 1995-2021, District Treasurer

Retirees as of April

VCS REMEMBERS

Do you know of a VCS Alum that recently passed away? If so, and you would like to share their story and/or obituary in our next publication, please contact Sherri Lasky and Liz Welch at laskysh@victorschools.org and welche@victorschools.org

IN MEMORY OF . . .

Class of 1942

Lois W. Corey

Corey worked as a school nurse in the Intermediate building from 1970 – 1985.

For Corey's complete obituary go to the following link:

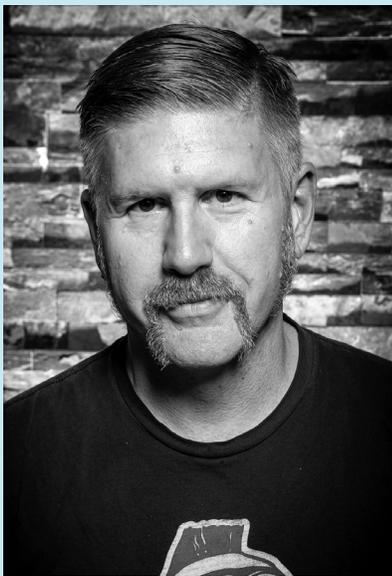
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8828159/>

Visual & Performing Arts

HALL OF FAME

Induction Ceremony

*Come See Victor Graduates Who Have Made
a Difference in the Arts*



Bill Kelliher
Performers/Music

Shelley Roden
Creators/Theater



Fred Fouquet
Creators/Theater

Join us Monday, May 17th
at 7pm on Victor Central Schools
Youtube Live Stream

<https://youtu.be/B6UttMLokLA>

VCS Seeks Names of Distinguished Graduates



Do you know a Victor Central School alumnus or alumna who has made a significant contribution to society? The Graduates of Distinction program honors such individuals. Applications are currently available in the Office of School and Community Relations or on-line at www.victorschools.org. Alumni selected for this honor will be recognized at a special Graduate of Distinction Day next fall.

Nominees to the Victor Central School District Graduates of Distinction program shall be selected based upon the following criteria:

A. Nominees must have graduated from Victor Senior High (or have attended Victor Schools BEFORE there was a high school in the case of Honorable Recognition) at least 15 years before they are eligible for selection. The committee may waive the graduation time limit requirements in certain circumstances, as it deems necessary;

B. Significant achievement after attending Victor Schools which include:

- 1: Educational achievements;
- 2: Professional achievements;
- 3: Job-related achievements;
- 4: Honors, awards, professional affiliations, publications;
- 5: Civic or community involvement;
- 6: Other appropriate qualifications which the committee believes merit consideration; Nominations must be submitted by Monday, January 24, 2022 to:

Graduates of Distinction Committee
c/o The Office of School and Community Relations
Victor Central Schools 953 High Street, Victor, New York 14564

Visual & Performing Arts HALL OF FAME

***Do you know a Victor Central School
alumnus or alumna who has made a significant contribution to the arts?***

The Visual and Performing Arts Hall of Fame honors such individuals.

Nominees shall be selected based upon the following criteria:

A. Graduated from Victor Senior High School at least (10) years ago. Nominee may have or may not have been affiliated with a VCS arts program.

B. Staff member, parent or community member who made significant contributions to the VCS arts program a minimum of (5) years.

Suggested "types" of artists that could qualify would be
Creators ~ Performers ~ Practitioners ~ Contributors

Go to www.victorschools.org for more information.

Nominations must be submitted by Tuesday, January 25, 2022 to:

Visual & Performing Arts Hall of Fame committee c/o The Office of School and Community Relations
Victor Central Schools, 953 High Street, Victor, New York 14564
or by emailing laskysh@victorschools.org

Send Us Your News

If you are an alumnus of Victor Central Schools, we encourage you to e-mail us at **alumni@victorschools.org**.

Feel free to tell us about accomplishments or events in your life such as a wedding, birth of a child or grandchild. Whether or not you have visited campus lately, participated in a recent alumni event, or browsed our directory, you are sure to find information instrumental in helping you maintain a connection to your alma mater and other Victor graduates.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kristin Elliott, *President*
Christopher Parks, *Vice President*
Karen Ballard
Timothy DeLucia
Chris Eckhardt
Trisha Turner
Michael Vetter

Maureen Goodberlet,
District Clerk

Timothy Terranova, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Liz Welch & Sherri Lasky
Office of School and Community Relations

www.victorschools.org/community/alumni

VCS

Substitutes Needed

Apply at victorschools.org

Full-Time, Part-Time, with Flexible Schedule

Free Yearbooks

VCS has a variety of old yearbooks from various years available at no cost. For more information contact, Chuck Callari at 924-3252, ext 2130.
(updated 11/12/2020)

1948	1950	1951	1952	1953
2	2	4	2	2

1954	1957	1959	1960	1985
2	2	2	2	3

TEN WAYS TO MAKE IT A

Blue Devil Day!

1 Be a Cheerleader! Attend any one of our hundreds of yearly sporting events.

2 Support the Arts! Take the family to a school musical, play or art show.

3 Get in Tune With One of Our Music Programs. Go to a band, orchestra or choral presentation.

4 Play! Take some time with your children after school or on the weekend and play on one of our great playgrounds.

5 Get Involved. Volunteer in your child's classroom or for a special event or organization.

6 Jump In! Take a dip in our swimming pool during open or family swim times.

7 Make a Difference. Take part in one of the District's food drives or community service efforts.

8 Take a Walk. Our new campus fitness trail makes for great exercise.

9 Show Your School Pride. If you are a VCS alumni, get involved in the VCS Alumni Association or attend your class reunion.

10 Stay Connected. Check out our website on a regular basis for the latest news and information at www.victorschools.org



Victor Central Schools Seeks Archives

“Students can benefit in several ways from researching their school’s history... This is history that is near at hand and that has a direct connection to their lives.”

~ Larry J. Hackman, Director, Truman Presidential Museum and Library; former New York State Archivist

Do you have photographs of the victory garden that students in our school planted and tended during World War II?

Does an old box or filing cabinet hold copies of letters that students wrote concerning our country’s involvement in Vietnam?

Did the science curriculum at Victor Central School change during the formative years of the personal computer revolution?

Schools produce rich historical records. Yearbooks, school lunch menus, flyers promoting dances, student elections, musicals, plays, photographs, letters, issues of the school newspaper, and other items document not only the history of the school, but often reflect the history of our community, state, and nation.

We have developed a school archives in our records center, housed in room 130 of the Primary School Building. Hopefully, this archive, or historical collection can serve two primary purposes:

1. Be a repository for the collection and preservation of historically valuable documents relating to the history of our school, which would otherwise be lost.
2. Constitute an important element of programs for teaching research-related skills to students.

As a key element in establishing this archive, we are urging the public to help support our endeavors by donating artifacts to the archives that they may have in and around their homes, which may otherwise be lost to future generations. We are particularly interested in:

Student handbooks

Student newspapers

Photographs

School lunch menus

Course catalogs

Student term papers about the school or Community

Artifacts (trophies, flags, uniforms, memorabilia)

Older Newspaper articles from the local newspapers

Special awards received

Records of special school programs

Audiotaped or videotaped oral histories

Scrapbooks

Videotapes of school performances and athletic events.

Perhaps you don’t wish to part with your piece of history. You can still help our efforts by loaning us the article to copy, scan, or photograph. We look forward to your response. We also plan on having the artifacts exhibited from time to time. By the way, does anyone have a school bell from one of Victor’s many one-room school houses? We’d love to hear from you.....

**Contact Chuck at callaric@victorschools.org or 585-924-3252, ext. 3130*