



Defined by excellence. Supported by tradition.

SUMMER 2019

# AROUND THESE HILLS

A publication for alumni and friends of **Ottawa Hills Local Schools**



## Lift, Pull, **GIVE!**

Join the **POWER OF GIVING** &  
Support an OH Student TODAY

*Inside* **THE KADENS FAMILY HEALTH  
& WELLNESS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN:**

- The Case For Giving
- New Construction, Renovations
- Focus: Mind, Body, Spirit

» Full story on page 4

## SALUTING the Class of **2019**

» Full story on page 6

## *Building on the Past,* Funding the **FUTURE**

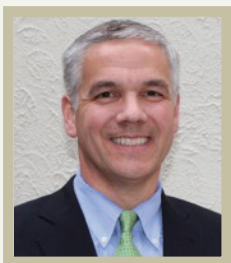
### Ottawa Hills has never been stronger.

We live in a community that values education and supports students during every step of their educational journey. Over the generations, we have established traditions of excellence that define our district and the Village we call home.

The deep and abundant presence of these traditions is the reason we are excited to embark on the Foundation's first-ever capital campaign. The \$1.5 million Kadens Family Health & Wellness Capital Campaign is a new adventure that will enrich opportunities for students and our community.

The campaign's goals, established through the leadership of the Campaign Committee and Board of Education, are to create spaces for students to engage in healthy living with outlets to relieve social stresses. The project includes the construction of a 4,000-square-foot fitness center and extensive renovations to the Multipurpose Room and varsity locker rooms. Construction on the fitness center begins in June, with a ribbon-cutting planned for December.

It is with excitement and gratitude that we invite our alumni, residents, and community supporters to support excellence and tradition by making a gift to the campaign. More information about the campaign can be found on the Foundation's website: [www.ohschoolsfoundation.org](http://www.ohschoolsfoundation.org).



**George Lathrop**  
President  
Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation



**Erica (Gatchel) Silk ('89)**  
Director of Development  
and Alumni Relations



#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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The mission of the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation is to permanently enhance and extend the unique experience of excellence that defines Ottawa Hills Local Schools.

**SUPPORTING THE OHS  
FOUNDATION IS EASY!**

Visit the Foundation's website at  
[ohschoolsfoundation.org](http://ohschoolsfoundation.org)  
to contribute online or use  
the attached giving envelope.





## High School Retains TOP-FIVE Distinction

For the second consecutive year, Ottawa Hills High School has been ranked a top-five high school in Ohio by *U.S. News & World Report*. As important, the building moved up significantly in the national rankings. It is now ranked as the 136th best high school in the United States, up from 258 last year.

"We are delighted to be recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of America's best high schools," said Principal Ben McMurray. "Our faculty and staff work incredibly hard to ensure our students feel valued, challenged, and supported. We are extremely grateful for the strong partnership with our parents and community." The high school has 316 students in grades 9 through 12.

*U.S. News* collects data on more than 23,000 public U.S. high schools; it then uses that data to rank 17,245 schools in five categories, including performance on state-required tests, graduation rate, and college preparation. This year, 736 Ohio high schools were ranked. Among all schools ranked, our high school finished in a tie for first place nationally in the "Math and Reading Proficiency" category, which uses aggregated scores on state assessments that students may be required to pass for graduation.

"We are excited about Ottawa Hills' continued success in the *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking of the top high schools in America," said Superintendent Kevin S. Miller. "For the past decade, we have always been ranked in the top 2 percent of high schools in the nation, and our rise in the rankings is very pleasing."

Dr. Miller said the recognition and continued success of the high school – and entire district – depends on four factors: a supportive community; engaged parents who are partners in the education of their children; amazing educators committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning; and incredibly hard-working students who take challenging classes and rise to the challenge in those classes. "This is a high-school honor, but it reflects a rigorous curriculum from kindergarten through 12th grade," Dr. Miller added.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### BOARD HIRES DR. FINESKE AS SUPERINTENDENT



The Ottawa Hills Board of Education has hired Adam Fineske as its new superintendent effective Aug. 1, 2019. "I am extremely honored by the board's selection and very excited to join one of the great school districts in Ohio," said Dr. Fineske, the current superintendent of Sylvania

Schools. The five-member board made its decision at a special meeting in May; the unanimous vote culminates a search that lasted more than two months and was conducted in partnership with Finding Leaders, a national executive search company.

### 'NEWSIES' STEALS THE HEADLINES

The district and surrounding area were treated to another spectacular spring musical from the Theatre Arts Department. "Newsies" was packed with brilliant choreography, solid acting, and beautiful singing. "We have never had this level of dancing in an Ottawa Hills production. We worked incredibly hard over the last few months. I am so proud of everyone," said junior Priya Bhatt, the production's associate director.



### QUIZ BOWL TEAM FINISHES AS NATIONAL RUNNER UP

Answering the call for the ninth year in a row, the Ottawa Hills High School Quiz Bowl Team competed in the National Academic Quiz Tournaments (NAQT), held this year in Chicago. Ottawa Hills competed in two divisions: Very Small School and Small School. The team finished third in the nation in the NAQT Small School division and runner-up in the Very Small School division. Senior Mazin Omer received individual recognition for most points scored by placing fifth in the Traditional Public School Division.

### HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY, MRS. RYAN

School staff and students helped Mrs. Virginia (Ginger) Ryan celebrate her 100th birthday May 2. Mrs. Ryan taught fourth grade at Ottawa Hills Elementary from 1956 to 1986. Though retired from teaching, Mrs. Ryan is still an Ottawa Hills resident, living close to the elementary school where she taught for so many years. To mark the occasion, Superintendent Kevin S. Miller delivered flowers on behalf of the district; the Choraliers sang "Happy Birthday." Mrs. Ryan received cards sent by former students from across the country.





## We Need Your Help!

Help us complete the campaign by June 30, 2019. Make a donation today by using the attached envelope or online at [www.ohschoolsfoundation.org/givetoday](http://www.ohschoolsfoundation.org/givetoday).



## KADENS Health & Wellness CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

With the turn of a few shovels of dirt, Ottawa Hills Local Schools has started building a healthier future for its junior and senior high school students.

The May 23 groundbreaking for the Kadens Family Fitness Center marked another milestone in the project. When completed, the Kadens Family Health & Wellness Capital Campaign will deliver to the district not only the new fitness center, but also upgraded varsity locker rooms and a remodeled and more versatile Multipurpose Room.

The groundbreaking ceremony signaled the start of the public phase of the \$1.5 million fundraising campaign. The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation, through the work of volunteer committee members, already has raised \$1.34 million.

"Ottawa Hills Local Schools and the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation are excited to undertake their first-ever capital campaign," said George Lathrop, Foundation president. "Together as parents, community members, and alumni, we can make a difference and create spaces for all students to engage in healthy living."

### THE FOUNDING DONORS

In October 2018, alumni Pete ('96) and Amy (Robbins) ('99) Kadens announced plans to donate to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

Their leadership gift helped propel the Foundation forward and commence the Health & Wellness Capital Campaign.



"We are incredibly indebted to the teachers, coaches and community members in Ottawa Hills for helping us become who we are today," said Pete and Amy. "We are making this gift to show our gratitude for their support and to continue the Ottawa Hills tradition of developing the whole student – mind, body, and spirit."

The Kadens family firmly believes in philanthropy and they have donated generously to organizations that aid the homeless and underserved over the last decade in their current hometown of Chicago. Pete is the longtime Chairman of the Board of Streetwise, one of the largest homeless aid agencies in the Midwest. In 2011, Amy founded Share Our Spare, an organization dedicated to fulfilling the needs of low-income families in Chicago by collecting and distributing new and gently-used baby and toddler items.

### CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

**May 23, 2019:** Kadens Family Fitness Center groundbreaking ceremony

**May-Dec. 2019:** Construction is under way for the Kadens Family Fitness Center

**Dec. 2019\*:** Fitness Center ribbon-cutting; opens for students

**Aug. 2020\*:** Upgrades completed on Multipurpose Room, men's and women's varsity locker rooms

*\*tentative*







## NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

- » Health and Wellness Sponsor (general interior with prominent signage): **Reserved**
- » Multipurpose Room Sponsor: **\$250,000**
- » Strength and Conditioning Sponsor: **\$100,000**
- » Mind, Body, and Spirit Sponsor: **Reserved**
- » Women's Locker Room Sponsor: **Reserved**
- » Men's Locker Room Sponsor: **Reserved**
- » Athletic Training Room Sponsor: **\$50,000**
- » Fitness Office Sponsor: **\$25,000**

Campaign pledges can be made over three years. Donor naming will be in place for a 20-year period. All donors of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged on a donor recognition wall.

## CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Campaign Honorary Chairs: Pete ('96) and Amy ('99) Kadens

Campaign Chairs: Jackie (Hylant) ('93) and Bubba Berenzweig

Campaign Committee: Julie Anderson, Rob Gnepper ('91), Chris Hardman, George Lathrop, Mike McCullough ('93), Ben McMurray, Kevin S. Miller, John Roemer ('99), Phillip Rotman, Erica Silk ('89), Judd Silverman ('74), Katie Talbott ('89), Tammy Talmage ('82), Summer Hardman Vanni ('95)

## GROUPS ENDORSING THE CAMPAIGN

Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation

Ottawa Hills Board of Education

Ottawa Hills Athletic Boosters

## ABOUT THE KADENS FAMILY FITNESS CENTER

The 4,000-square-foot center was developed with input from a 13-person committee, including faculty, residents, coaches, and school board members. The facility replaces the existing 400-square-foot weight room and adds much-needed space for cardio and weight-training equipment; an open area for classes and floor exercises; an athletic training room; an office for the center supervisor; and handicap-accessible restrooms. Half of the floor space will be used for activities such as yoga, dance team practice, and STEM-related projects (open spaces are needed for robotics and other large-scale displays).

The facility will support the district's curricular and extracurricular priorities. Those include a robust physical education and health curriculum; a highly competitive and successful athletics program; health and wellness programs; and community programs through the Office of Village Life.

## ABOUT THE LOCKER ROOMS AND MULTIPURPOSE ROOM PROJECTS

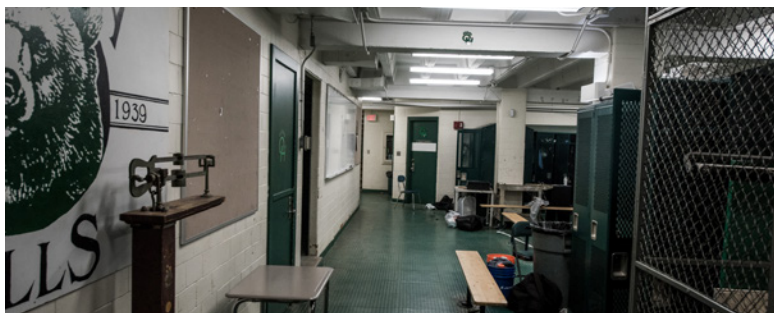
During the early months of the campaign, committee members were asked about other spaces that also serve students' health and wellness needs; specifically, the varsity locker rooms and Multipurpose Room. The locker rooms are in a space original to the 1939 construction of the high school; the Multipurpose Room was added in 1955. Other than paint and basic maintenance, neither has received the attention needed because other projects have taken priority.



Both spaces are used by athletes throughout the year. The current weight room is accessed primarily through the Multipurpose Room. In addition to serving as winter practice space for spring sports and basketball leagues and practices, the Multipurpose Room also serves as the junior/senior dining area and is the most public space in the district outside of our sports facilities. The room serves as the lobby for our theatrical productions, a gallery for the annual smART show, and event space for events such as the annual Rummage Sale (benefitting the International Student Exchange Association and high school band program) and the Pancake Breakfast (benefitting After Prom).

Renovating those spaces always made the annual list of permanent improvement projects, which are funded by a special tax on village property. But always rising to the top of the funding list were items focused on safety and classrooms, such as replacing sidewalks, funding the OH Global one-to-one computer program, and purchasing new radios to enhance safety.

Committee members agreed to add both spaces as fundraising priorities with the fitness center. Together, the new construction and renovations will give the district health and wellness spaces that are more functional and aesthetically pleasing. Through the campaign, the Multipurpose Room windows and floors will be replaced and the varsity locker rooms will receive electrical and plumbing upgrades, including new showers for both the boys and girls.



## Saluting the Class of 2019

### PAYING IT FORWARD

Every year, our high school students receive scholarships and awards named in honor of Ottawa Hills alumni, teachers, and residents. **THANK YOU DONORS** for making these awards possible. This year's recipients are:

**STEVE GORDON AWARD:** Presented to the senior who has exhibited oral and written literary acuity, stylish sophistication, and intellectual curiosity. **Recipient: MAZIN OMER**

**KATHRYN H. SAXBY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:** Based on the criteria of academic excellence, a demonstrated interest in music, an involvement in school activities, and a commitment to community service (selected by the Music Department).

**Recipient: LAUREN ROWND**

**NANCY AND TOM KABAT SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:** Presented to a senior who is known to be an uplifting person, who makes a positive contribution to his or her class, and is well respected by fellow classmates. The honored senior demonstrates leadership, a good work ethic, high academic achievement, and community and school volunteer service.

**Recipient: KATHERINE WILMORE**

**CHAD LAYNE FOREIGN LANGUAGE AWARD:** Presented to the senior who has consistently demonstrated curiosity, enthusiasm, and excellence in a world language class. This student possesses a unique drive to communicate in other languages and is fascinated with other cultures. **Recipient: KATHERINE WILMORE**

**DION RAFTOPOULOS AWARD:** Presented annually to a college-bound senior who most represents the lofty ideals of musical accomplishment, scholarly attainment, and moral integrity. **Recipient: KATHERINE WILMORE**

**ROSS TREUHAFT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:** Honors a senior who welcomes diversity, shows compassion toward students with special needs, has an interest in special education, demonstrates a desire to include others different from themselves, and possesses kindness and joy. **Recipient: JOSEPH BOESEL**

**KAREN KLEIN MUSIC AWARD:** Presented to a senior who shows leadership, character, and musicianship. **Recipient: NORA AYAD**

**JON S. DAVIS STRIVING TO ACHIEVE AWARD:** Recognizes a senior who nurtures and encourages hard work, perseverance, sound judgment, and a strong moral compass in others so they can improve their own lives and serve to improve the lives of others.

**Recipient: GABRIELLE MCCLUSKEY**

**PEGGY THOMAS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD:** Presented to the senior who best exemplifies the characteristics of affability, happiness, and enthusiasm for life, and who puts forth a determined effort toward his/her school work. **Recipient: MADELINE CUMMINS**

**PHILLIP W. LONGNECKER SCIENCE AWARD:** Awarded by members of the Science Department to a senior excelling in the field of science. **Recipient: DANIEL LIU**

**LINDY REDMANN SPORTS AWARD:** Presented to a junior female field hockey player who exemplifies a love for all sports, enjoyment of team competition, quiet and persuasive leadership, modesty, strong feelings for fair play, loyalty to family and friends, independent thinking, determination, and a keen sense of humor. **Recipient: KAIJA WALLIN**

**KRISTJAN GISLASON AWARD:** Presented to the senior who has given unselfishly of his/her time and talents and who possesses a positive attitude for the benefit of Ottawa Hills High School. It is given in honor of 1973-74 exchange student Kristjan Gislason by his father, "in appreciation for the school friendship shown to his son." **Recipient: KARL KASCH**

### CONGRATULATIONS, NATIONAL MERIT STUDENTS!

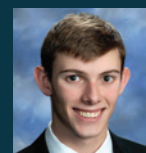
**National Merit Finalists:** Neha Kazmi, Daniel Liu, Mazin Omer, Gabrielle Thurston, and Katherine Wilmore **National Merit Commended Student:** Amaris Sun

### New in 2019:



THE BRIAN NICHOLAS HOEFLINGER  
MEMORIAL AWARD

Brian Hoeflinger was a member of the Class of 2013 who died during his senior year shortly before graduation. Brian was known as much for his hard work and academic excellence as he was for his positivity, kindness to others, and his quirky



sense of humor. This new award is presented to a graduating senior. Inaugural Recipient: HUNTER HESSE

### Class of 2019 By The Numbers

100%	82 graduating seniors with 100% graduation rate
156	Scholarships valued at more than \$10.8 million
1	National Merit Commended Scholar
5	National Merit Finalists
20	Students receiving <b>summa cum laude</b> recognition
7	Students receiving <b>magna cum laude</b> recognition
11	Students receiving <b>cum laude</b> recognition
50	Recipients of an Ohio Honors Diploma
53	Recipients of The President's Award
29	Members of the National Honor Society
4	Perfect ACT scores



# CONGRATULATIONS *Class of 2019!*

## WHERE GRADUATES WILL BE ATTENDING COLLEGE IN 2019

Sarah Abdouni	University of Toledo	Daniel Liu	University of Michigan
Zara Ahmed	University of Michigan	Andrew Lyon	Ohio Northern University
Corinne Aubry	Miami University, Oxford	George Mancy	Miami University, Oxford
Nora Ayad	The Ohio State University	Shelley McClure	The University of Toledo
James Becker	University of Toledo	Gabrielle McCluskey	The University of Toledo
Zoe Behnfeldt	Oberlin College	Michael McGee	University of Cincinnati
Abigail Berk	The Ohio State University	Kyle Mensior	Bowling Green State University
Joseph Boesel	Kenyon College	Shawn Michels	Undecided
Anna Brandstatter	The Ohio State University	Matthew Mintun	The Ohio State University
Spencer Brookman	University of South Carolina	Connor Muse	Miami University, Oxford
Catherine Buehrer	The New School -Parsons School of Design	Najwa Nassif	The University of Toledo
Kaleigh Carson	Bowling Green State University	Michael Nichols	The University of Findlay
MayaChandar-Kouba	Bowdoin College	Mazin Omer	Harvard University
Tysen Chappell	The University of Toledo	Nolan Paterwich	Wright State University
Austen Charles	Wittenberg University	Connor Pellegrini	Miami University, Oxford
Thomas Coil	Saint Michael's College	Elizabeth Ponder	The Ohio State University
Peyton Contreras	The University of Toledo	Elise Porter	University of Cincinnati
Eliot Cummings	Trine University	Benjamin Roller	The Ohio State University
Madeline Cummins	University of Cincinnati	Lauren Rownd	The Ohio State University
Catherine Dangler	California Polytechnic State University	Dylan Schreder	University of Cincinnati
Caroline Dayton	Loyola University Chicago	James Schwann	Columbia University
Grace Dunbar	Cleveland Institute of Art	Robert Seifried	University of Cincinnati
Nicholas Durfee	Elon University	Mary Shawaker	Kenyon College
Samantha Fischer	University of Michigan	Edward Shimborske	University of Michigan
Josephine Harders	The Ohio State University	William Sigler	University of Cincinnati
Elise Harmon	The University of Toledo	James Silk	Elon University
Christian Heidenreich	The Ohio State University	Nicholas Sliter	Middlebury College
Hunter Hesse	Northeastern University	Ashleigh Smirnov	University of Pennsylvania
David Heuring	The University of Toledo	Preston Smith	Miami University, Oxford
Kevin Hileman	The United States Naval Academy	Emma Stout	College of Charleston
Christie Hoeflinger	The Ohio State University	Sophia Summers	North Central College
Jillian Hupp	The University of Toledo	Amaris Sun	The Ohio State University
Isabella Iorio	Miami University, Oxford	Samuel Szyperksi	The Ohio State University
Karina Jindal	Case Western Reserve University	Gabrielle Thurston	Fordham University
Sari Judis	The Ohio State University - Newark	Hunter Weaver	University of South Carolina
Carl Kasch	Holy Cross College	Culver Whitehead	University of Toledo
Jana Kassem	The University of Toledo	Katherine Wilmore	Middlebury College
Neha Kazmi	The Ohio State University	Darion Wimmers	The University of Toledo
Caroline Koury	University of South Carolina	Maxwell Wray	University of Kentucky
Ethan Krupp	Adrian College	Jike Zhong	The Ohio State University
Bradley Lay	Owens Community College	Eli Zinck	The Ohio State University



# Ottawa Hills Local Schools

Ottawa Hills Local School District  
3600 Indian Road  
Ottawa Hills, OH 43066

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Don't forget to  
share the OH News!

To join the mailing list, OH friends  
and alumni should contact Erica  
(Gatchel) Silk ('89).

esilk@ohschools.org | 419-214-4838

ALUMNI CAN ALSO REGISTER ONLINE AT:  
[ottawahillsschools.org/content2/ohalumni](http://ottawahillsschools.org/content2/ohalumni)



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Alumni Association

## Class of 2025 *Gives Back*

**FOR NEARLY 15 YEARS, SIXTH GRADERS HAVE SAID GOODBYE TO THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BY PURCHASING A FAREWELL GIFT.**

This year, the 86 members of the class of 2025 raised \$3,158 after expenses from ice cream sales during the lunch hour. With the money, they are purchasing 12 chairs and four half-round adjustable-height activity tables for the sixth-grade hallway to enable students to work together in groups outside their classrooms. Past purchases by classes include a Gaga Ball Pit, lab tables and stools for the sixth-grade science lab, and benches both inside and outside the school. Thank you to parent coordinators of the sale Paula Sweeney and Tina Brandstatter and our sixth-grade teachers Jennifer Griffin, Cheri Palko, Jonathon Siebenaler, and Andrea Williamson. Good luck students as you make the transition to the Junior/Senior High School.

Open for MORE NEWS from  
**AROUND THESE HILLS!**

