

HALL OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2021 INDUCTION CEREMONY

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Jim Abbott

Jim Abbott has lived his entire life in service to his faith, family and community.

Mr. Abbott has been a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church for 74 years serving on the Church Council and finance committee for several decades. As a member of the Knights of Columbus for 60 years, he has worked to show his Love for his neighbor by participating with his fellow Knights in a wide variety of projects including food drives to support local soup kitchens and food pantries, coats for kids projects and by volunteering to support other efforts to support families in need.

Mr. Abbott has been very active in civic organizations impacting his local community and in projects with a world-wide reach. As a member of the Canton South Rotary since 1985, Jim raises funds and volunteers on a wide variety of projects impacting the Canton Local community including Thanksgiving baskets, honoring veterans through the flag project, maintaining the Rotary track and a wide variety of projects over the years. As a "Paul Harris Fellow", Jim and fellow Rotarians are committed to a worldwide project with the goal to end polio in our lifetime.

Jim has served on the Stark Area YMCA Board for 47 years, and the Canton South YMCA Board for over 30. When the Canton South YMCA sadly closed, he negotiated for the Canton Local School District to purchase the building and land for a very reasonable price. (I think it was \$1) In honor of his community commitment, Jim has been recognized with numerous awards, some include:

- Canton South YMCA Adult Volunteer of the Year (2006)
- Distinguished Service Award- in recognition of exceptional leadership and devoted service to the Canton South Community (1988)
- Stark Area YMCA Volunteer of the Year

Jim has been a faithful WILDCAT fan! He has been a member of the Canton South Athletic Booster club for decades. When the district was struggling to pass a school levy, Jim co-founded with Ralph Martinelli the WILDCAT

FUND and raised \$100,000 to pay for extra-curricular activities and sports for youth to have access.

Jim's love of baseball was seen in the ways he poured his skills and resources into opportunities. In the 1970's Jim helped organize the Prairie College Baseball Association and has sponsored a Canton Class A Baseball team for over 20 years. At Canton South High School, Jim built and installed the high fence at Tim Miller Baseball Field. To honor his baseball achievements, Jim was an inductee into the Stark County Amateur Baseball Hall of Fame.

Jim wanted to ensure that 'his neighbors' had the support they needed, so he helped form and became the first president of Springvale Allotment (Steiner Allotment) Homeowners Association. The association worked together to create a sense of belonging, culture of activity and pride in their Wildcat neighborhood.

Jim's commitment to Canton Local has been seen not only in sports but also in other aspects of the district. Jim served on several Canton Local new facility research teams, visiting school/community facilities across Ohio investigating possible partnerships to benefit the school and community. He also traveled to Columbus with the funding team to meet with groups to weigh pros and cons of school funding. Jim's expertise as a journeyman electrician and experience in working on other Ohio School Facility Commission projects, was invaluable for the Canton Local Facility Committee as they designed their building plan and funding approach.

Jim's contributions can be seen all across the Canton Local community and he and his wife continue to be faithful supporters of Canton Local events like Arts shows, theatre performances and athletic events. Jim and his wife, Nancy, have lived in the Canton South area for over 50 years. They are the proud parents of 4 Canton South High School graduates. Their children and spouses include: Stefanie and Brent Fatzinger, Steve and Kara, Mike and Barb and Tony Abbott. The Abbotts have 10 grandchildren-Gabrielle, Hayley, Jacqueline, Bryce, Blake, Brock, Brynn, Dominic, Tyson and Noelle. And one great grandson- Carter.