

HALL OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2021

INDUCTION CEREMONY

Thursday, September 30, 2021

William Hayden

Mr. Hayden graduated from Canton Township High School in 1946 where he was a stellar multi-sport athlete. He continued his academic and athletic career at Ohio Northern University where he earned his bachelor's degree and ultimately, he master's degree from Kent State University. Mr. Hayden's athletic achievements were recognized by his induction into the Canton South Athletic Hall of Fame, the Ohio Northern Sports Hall of Fame, the Stark County Baseball and Basketball Halls of Fame and being selected to play minor league baseball for the Cleveland Indians.

Mr. Hayden was a Korean War veteran serving as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army then started his teaching career in Canton Local in 1955. Just 4 years later, he was appointed principal at North Industry Elementary School, and in 1961 he became principal at H.R. Walker Jr. High School. In 1964, Mr. Hayden became superintendent of Canton Local Schools, a position he held for 23 years, the longest serving superintendent in Wildcat history.

During Mr. Hayden's tenure as Superintendent at Canton Local, the district flourished. He established a tradition of excellence in all aspects of the district and held people to the highest standards. He worked with key leaders in the school, community and state to design exemplary vocational programming opportunities establishing Canton South as a comprehensive high school intended to equip students with skills, habits and attitudes needed in college, career, the military and life. In 1978, in recognition of his successful years as Superintendent in Canton Local, Mr. Hayden was selected as "Ohio Superintendent of the Year." Then, in 2014 the Canton Local Board of Education honored Mr. Hayden by dedicating and naming the Canton South Vocational Annex the Hayden Career Technical Annex in his honor.

Mr. Hayden was always very active in his community, church and profession. Following retirement from the district, Mr. Hayden continued having an impact on the education profession by teaching for nine years at Walsh College. He actively served and led the Kiwanis then the Men's Club whose mission is to serve the community with particular focus on support for children. Each fall the Canton South community looked forward to the annual spaghetti dinner, prepared and served by the members of Mr. Hayden's community service organization. It was a valued, community event where Wildcats gathered to contribute to the fundraiser and see Mr. Hayden and the MEN modeling service to all in attendance. The funds raised at that dinner helped support their service projects including purchasing books for kindergarten children to build their home libraries.

Mr. Hayden was a natural athlete, whether it was high school and college sports or on local community baseball, bowling, and golf teams. After retirement he continued playing his favorite sports and worked at Glenmoor Country Club as a starter and ranger.

All throughout his life, Mr. Hayden's heart of service was evident. He served in numerous leadership positions at his home church, Waco Epworth United Methodist Church, and with many civic and professional organizations. He stepped up wherever there was a need including volunteering many hours with Stark County Hospice Program and Meals On Wheels. And he never forgot his friends...especially if they were sick and needed a word of encouragement. He showed up with that big smile and usually a funny memory to lift their spirits and show that their friend would always be there for them.

Mr. Hayden and his beloved wife Virginia had 3 sons - Steve, John and Bill and 5 Hayden grandchildren - Jeff, Jenna, Scott, Sara, and Trent.