

## HALL OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2022

### INDUCTION CEREMONY

Thursday, October 6, 2022

#### Dr. Martha Cook

Dr. Martha Jane (Barber) Cook- educator, leader, trendsetter, author, award winner, barrier-breaker, Olympic Champion, woman extraordinaire graduated from Canton Township High School in 1943.

She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from The Ohio State University where she was active in the National Honor society, Zeta Tau Alpha, the OSU concert Band, and the Ohio State Dance Band.

Upon graduation from OSU, Dr. Cook began her teaching career at Fairhope Elementary School in Louisville. She then accepted a position in Sandy Valley School District and began teaching high school English, Latin, band directing and guidance counseling. While at Sandy Valley, Dr. Cook was honored as teacher of the year and completed her Masters degree in counseling at Kent State. Her next educational journey took her to Canton South High School where she became the head of the guidance department and served there from 1962-1980 positively impacting thousands of students. During that time she was selected by the state as Outstanding Counselor of the Year and earned the Ohio School Counselor's Research Award.

Dr. Cook was focused on continuing to impact future leaders, so after retiring from public education, she went back to school to earn her doctorate in education from the University of Akron and began her next career as a professor at Malone University. She had a profound impact on many of us in this room tonight. She set high standards and worked tirelessly to ensure that we reached those expectations. During her 30 year tenure at Malone, she was inducted into the YWCA's Woman's Hall of Fame and currently is professor emeriti for Malone.

When Dr. Cook saw the need for a concise, easy-to-follow guide to effective speaking, writing and presenting, she took on that task and authored a book called Grammar Toward Professionalism, that is used by leaders in education and business to improve their speaking and writing skills. The book has been sold across the nation and around the globe.

John Bankert, the retired executive director of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, had Dr. Cook as an English teacher at Sandy Valley. Bankert was asked about influential people in his life and he mentioned Cook.

"She taught me there are no short cuts in life," Bankert said. "I wanted to get out of an English assignment and she stared into my face and said, do the assignment or flunk, she meant it. I did the assignment out of sheer fear. That taught me that short cuts do not work, a principle I carried into my career at the Pro Football Hall of Fame."

Dr. Cook, a teacher for seven decades, spent a lifetime devoted to educating the students of Stark County. By reasonable estimates, she taught approximately 10,000 students in her career. Her belief always has been that a person that was well prepared in grammar was better prepared to achieve greater success in life.

If we had more time, there is so much more we could share with you about Dr. Cook's amazing contributions to our school and community like: did you know that she played clarinet and saxophone for the USO during WWII? Did you know that she was a 20-year Senior Olympic champion in table tennis and tennis? Did you know that taught English as a second language to students online, and so much more.

Dr. Cook has been a very active member of East Sparta Christian Church serving in many leadership roles and has served on numerous boards including: Board of Directors for Canton Christian Home and Pike Township Zoning Commission.

Dr. Cook and her late husband Marvin have one son, the late Mark Cook, daughter-in-law, Terri, four grandchildren- Rachel, Morgan, Ryan and his wife Andrea, and Tyler as well as and one great grandchild, Celine Charlotte.

I had the privilege of talking with Dr. Cook in the spring to share the great news about her selection into Canton South's Hall of Distinction. She was her usual energetic, thankful, humble self, expressing her deep appreciation for the honor.