

A publication of Ottawa Hills Local Schools for alumni, families, and Villagers

# AROUND these HILLS

WINTER/SPRING 2024



## Part of Your World

Community goes  
'under the sea' with  
*Little Mermaid, Jr.*

### Inside this issue:

How the March 19 Operating  
Levy Vote Will Shape the  
Financial Future of the District

A History Making Fall in Green  
Bear Athletics







**Ottawa Hills**  
Local Schools

*Defined by excellence. Supported by tradition.*

**BOARD OF EDUCATION:** Maara Fink (president), Kathy Lathrop (vice president), Rob Gnepper, Jennifer Kielczewski, Katie Timmers

**MISSION:** In partnership with our community, Ottawa Hills Local Schools will inspire, challenge, and support each student to realize their unique and full potential; to embrace the joy of learning as a lifelong process; and to become an empathetic, responsible citizen.

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Ben McMurray



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**MISSION:** 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.

**CONTACT:** Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation  
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Preserving Success, again, with top STEM educators. The Ohio Academy of Science again awarded 15 teachers in Ottawa Hills Junior/Senior High School the Governor's Thomas Edison Award for Excellence in STEM Education and Student Research.

## DISTRICT LETTER

# Embracing Growth; Preserving Success...

At this time of year we take a moment to pause and reflect on many aspects of our school district. This reflection centers around recent achievements and current challenges, along with the knowledge that I and everyone on our team can always improve and be better. As communication remains a top priority for our district, we are so pleased to be able to reach out to every resident through our *Around These Hills* Magazine, which we find to be a powerful way of keeping you informed.

This year we are continuing to experience growth in a variety of ways, and are embracing it with open arms as we work to preserve the success of Ottawa Hills Local Schools. Our students continue to excel in student achievement, and these results are highlighted by once again being named a 5-Star District (the highest rating possible) this school year on the State Report Card. Achievements like these continue to rank us in the Top 10 school districts statewide, and in the Top 1% of all public school districts in the nation (*U.S. News & World Report* 2023-2024).

We have embraced student enrollment growth adding 160 new students districtwide since 2017 per enrollment data from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. We are also proud of the cultural diversity growth in our student population, staff, and community, and we have worked hard to become better citizens by learning from each other's differences.

As growth continues, we also face challenges. The combination of a tough state funding model and the increase in student academic and social emotional needs has resulted in greater costs to maintain the strong levels of support our kids need to succeed. Our future financial success is at a crossroads right now, and will be impacted in the coming weeks by the results of the March 19 election. We are working hard to build continued trust in our community and change our mindset on how we make financial decisions to keep our district strong. I am committed to this change. We are making great strides already in creative and innovative ways.

We continue to reflect and strive to be more successful, and we remind ourselves that success is what we make it to be. As we move forward to face and overcome our challenges, and work together as a community to remain the best school district in Northwest Ohio, I continue to find myself reflecting on how truly fortunate I am to work with so many outstanding educators, administrators, parent volunteers, school board members, community advocates, and best of all, kids. All of these together make the magical formula in Ottawa Hills that is so unique and special. Thank you for all you do to be part of it.



Ottawa Hills Local School District received 5-stars, the highest rating possible, on the Ohio State Report Card for the 2022-2023 school year. This rating was only granted to 12% of school districts statewide.



*Adam Fineske*

Superintendent Dr. Adam Fineske  
afineske@ohschools.org

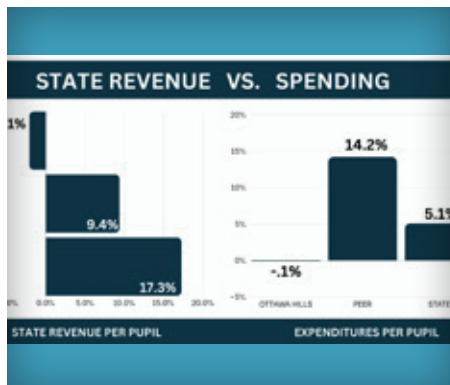
AdamFineske fineskeadam



## 8

### DOMINATING FALL FOR GREEN BEAR ATHLETICS

Tennis, cross country, and golf teams all competed at the state level. Green Bear football made school history advancing to round 3 of the playoffs.



## 12

### FINANCIAL FUTURE OF THE DISTRICT

The Board of Education has asked voters to approve a 12.9 mill operating levy to generate \$2.3 million in revenue. Read more on what the district has done to reduce expenses and where funding will be eliminated without additional revenue.



## 21

### CELEBRATING ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT

The 2023 Athletic Hall of Fame Awards included recognizing the Girls Athletic Association members from the class of '63, who, before Title IX, carved a way for female athletes to compete at the highest levels.

## DEPARTMENTS

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### AN AWARD-WINNING DISTRICT



### ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION:

Throughout this magazine, we welcome you to explore the “Part of Your World” that is Ottawa Hills Local Schools. Whether you are an alum, a community member, a donor, a teacher, a volunteer, or a student, our district is a part of your world. The district takes pride in publishing this magazine through our communications office twice a year, in collaboration with the Ottawa Hill Schools Foundation, to showcase campus events, highlight athletic accomplishments, share vital district updates, and offer insights into the Foundation’s impact on student experiences. As a part of your world, the district remains committed to embracing growth and preserving success.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:

*Around These Hills* welcomes letters from readers at [info@ohschools.org](mailto:info@ohschools.org).

### ADDRESS CHANGE REQUESTS:

*Around These Hills*, 4035 W. Central Ave., Ottawa Hills, OH 43066





## Part of Your World

The Ottawa Hills Music and Theatre Association (OHMTA) and Acting Out! Production of Disney's *Little Mermaid, Jr.* experienced record-breaking ticket sales, with nearly every ticket sold out for all four shows held from February 9-11! Over 140 students in grades 4-12 participated in the musical, showcasing their talents in singing, acting, stage crew, costume design, makeup and hairstyling, audio/visual, and more. As always, our outstanding theatre program owes its success to the support of OHMTA patrons and dedicated volunteers.



Photos courtesy of Village Voice of Ottawa Hills



A special shout-out to Erica Kelm, Maria Jun, and their team for handcrafting all 196 costumes!

## Election Insights: Decoding Democracy Through Data

In Mr. Torio's Discrete Mathematics class, students delved into the mathematics of elections, culminating in a project where they designed and conducted their own election. They created preference schedules and employed four different voting methods to assess if varying methods would produce different outcomes. Throughout this unit, students pondered the concept of fairness in elections and recognized the importance of comprehending not only the process of vote collection but also the methods used for tallying votes to determine winners and rankings.



## Voters of Tomorrow

Every year, students who turn 18 are given the opportunity to register to vote. This year, senior class students had the chance to hear from Leena Jhunhunwala from the League of Women Voters. A reminder: the next Election Day is March 19, coinciding with Ottawa Hills' spring break. As with all elections, early and absentee voting options are available.

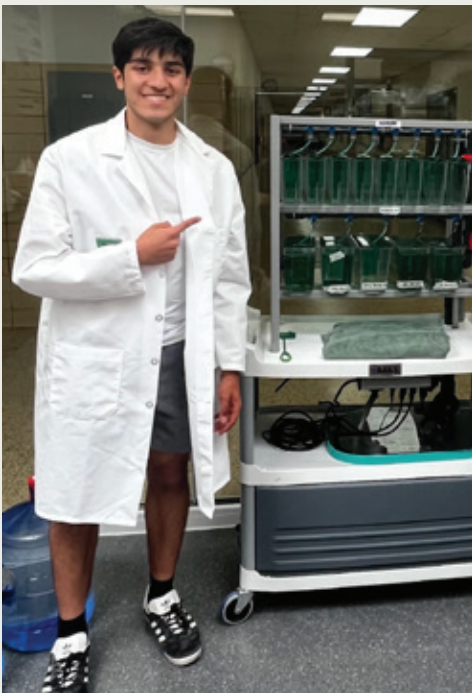




Rohan Padhye concluded his participation in the World Youth Chess Tournament held in Montesilvano, Italy, last fall with an impressive score of 7/11. He secured a position in the top 20, ranking 17th out of 138 players in his section (U16 Opening), which featured participants from 91 other chess federations in addition to the United States. Notably, he clinched the 1st position among the four US players in his section. Throughout the tournament, Rohan achieved 6 wins, 2 draws, and 3 losses. Over the course of 11 rounds, he competed against opponents hailing from Scotland, France, Romania, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Norway, Greece, India, China, England, and Slovenia.

## A Perfect Score

Senior Ali Sediqe achieved a perfect score of 36 on his ACT test! Less than 0.25% of students who take the ACT earn a perfect score. Ali is the Student Council president, played varsity soccer, and embodies the true spirit of a Green Bear! We greatly value his leadership and unwavering school spirit, and can't wait to see what he does with his bright future.



## Isailovic Presents to the International Great Lakes Commission

Olga Isailović, a senior honors scientific research student, presented her project titled "Establishing a Difference Between the Relative Frequencies of Microcystins Using Different Methods of Lysis Induction" at the 2023 International Great Lakes Commission meeting. The Great Lakes Commission aims to maintain a balance between the utilization, development, and preservation of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence rivers through policies implemented by elected representatives from eight U.S. States and two Canadian provinces: Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, New York, Illinois, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Ontario, and Québec. Isailović was chosen as one of two youth speakers to present her findings on Lake Erie, in collaboration with the University of Toledo, and to represent Ohio at the conference as a member of the Department of Natural Resources' Teen Advisory Council.



## Power of the Pen Triumphs at Districts

The Ottawa Hills 8th grade Power of the Pen team secured 1st place at this year's district competition held in Tiffin, Ohio. Evelyn Sandretto claimed 1st place and Shivani Pindiprolu 2nd place as individuals at the competition. Power of the Pen is an interscholastic creative writing program for middle school students across Ohio, with over 300 schools participating in statewide writing tournaments. Many thanks to the Ottawa Hills Schools Parent Association for their ongoing support for this activity.





# Exploring Light

Students in Dr. Kreischer Gajewicz's AP Chemistry class conducted a lab to investigate absorption and transmittance of light. To complete the lab, students needed to activate prior scientific understanding of concepts such as solution, molarity, light, wavelengths, and color. The lab helped students understand Beer's Law and other important concepts in chemistry.



## Don't be a 'Mean Girl'

The OHMTA fall musical, *Mean Girls*, was not only a stellar performance by all involved but also created an opportunity for an important conversation about peer relationships and high school culture. Written by Tina Fey, *Mean Girls* addresses mature topics such as relational aggression. The musical contributed to ongoing efforts to foster a safe and healthy school environment.



## New World Culture Program Creates Connections

**Contributor:** Lisa Marinelli

The Kindergarten World Culture class had special guest teachers from the high school's new Cultural Diversity Club. These older students led engaging lessons highlighting the cultures of Taiwan, Puerto Rico, China, India, Nigeria, and Native America.

The Kindergarteners watched and listened as the high school students shared interesting facts and personal stories about their family traditions. The young learners also actively participated by asking questions and relating the lesson to their own cultural backgrounds. Hands-on activities included coloring the Puerto Rican flag, drawing Native American pictographs, and learning to pronounce words in different languages. Some students also played a simplified Indian tag game called Kho-Kho and crafted Chinese paper lanterns.

The Cultural Diversity Club, initiated by a passionate group of students, aims to bridge connections across cultures and promote a comprehensive understanding of diversity in the community. Art teacher Ms. Caitlin Shawaker serves as the club's advisor.

The Kindergarten team, along with their teachers Mrs. Currens and Ms. Marinelli, are excited about the possibility of hosting more guest teachers from the Cultural Diversity Club in the future. They also extend an open invitation to other members of the OH community to share their love for any culture with an eager audience by contacting [LMarinelli@ohschools.org](mailto:LMarinelli@ohschools.org).



Michel holding the Green Bear flag at the homecoming football game

## US Department of State Medallion School

Ottawa Hills has been designated a Medallion School by the U.S. Department of State as we host Michel Andreev from Germany for the 2023-2024 school year. Michel, an 11th grader, is participating in the U.S. Department of State Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange program. He expressed his anticipation for bringing his passion for cross country back to Germany. This medallion serves as a symbol of recognition and pride, signifying our school's commitment to exposing our students to diverse cultures, attitudes, beliefs, and languages, thus preparing them for life's challenges regardless of where their future endeavors may lead them.



# 2023 Conservation Educator of the Year

Mrs. Lianne Genzman, a 5th Grade Science teacher, was honored with the Lucas County Soil & Water Conservation District's 2023 Conservation Educator Award, in part, for her ongoing work with students involved in the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) Student Watershed Watch. This collaborative effort, conducted in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, focuses on removing invasive species and educating students about methods to enhance the overall health of our watershed.

At the TMACOG Student Watershed Summit, 18 students in 5th grade placed in two categories within the grade 5 - 8 division. They were recognized for being "Most Creative" and were awarded "Best Overall Presentation" for their creation of a news broadcast video. This video shared the results of their sampling of the Ottawa River that runs through the village.



## Our Tech Department

At the beginning of the '23-'24 school year, the district filled the vacant roles within our technology department with the hiring of Mr. Trevor Hug as the Director of Technology and Ms. Paige Espiritu as the Assistant Director of Technology and Integration Coach.

Paige focuses on how the district can use technology to its fullest potential by empowering teachers with regular tech-centered professional development opportunities, coaching, communications, and by co-facilitating the new student technology team.

Trevor focuses on the day-to-day tech needs within the district. He troubleshoots any issues with computers, interactive displays, projectors, printers, copiers, and Wi-Fi, among others. He also oversees access control for door locks and Raptor systems, security cameras, and manages software, servers, user accounts, and PowerSchool. Trevor says, "One of my goals is to ensure cost-effective use of technology and to make the best use of what we have."

## New Student Tech Team

The newly formed Student Technology Team, operating out of the Tech Bar in The Foundry, provides a platform for students to explore their tech interests and gain practical, hands-on experience. This shifts students from consuming tech to being design makers and thinkers. This independent study opportunity allows students to work in collaboration with the tech department to provide technology support within the district while building their own digital portfolio that meets their interests.

The Student Tech Team will work closely with Trevor and Paige to meet individual goals as well as provide support on campus for in-house repairs. Instead of sending a MacBook out to get a screen repaired for \$500 from Apple, the Student Tech Team has already begun to perform in-house repairs for \$200. This not only makes the district more cost efficient, provides a quicker turn-around for repairs, but hones tech skills of students.

## Immersion in the 360 Room

Trevor and Paige have worked as a team to make the Immersion 360 Room more accessible for teachers. This type of space is so unique; our district is 1 of only 3 schools to have an immersion 360 room in the country. Recent changes, including a more user-friendly software and training, have led teachers to feel confident and comfortable using the room to elevate lessons. The room has been a great tool to boost confidence, spur creativity, and enhance lesson comprehension for students.



Tech Support



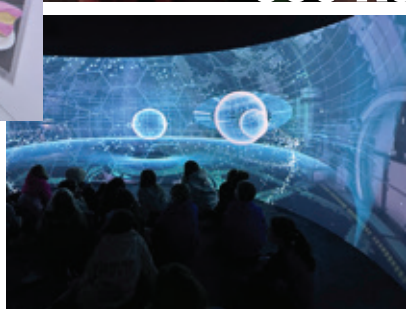
**25 JHHS students/day** get immediate in-house tech support

**35 and counting tech-focused professional development sessions** provided to teachers and staff

**400+ Resolved tech help desk tickets** since September



360 Room





## Tennis Duo Hits Hard at States

Junior Catherine Rhegness and sophomore Bryn Tangeman (pictured) took 1st place at district and finished the season 4th at the Division II State Tennis Tournament. The girls' tennis team competed in the Ohio Coaches Tennis Association Tournament finishing 4th. Congratulations to these outstanding individual and team athletes.



## Linksters Compete at States

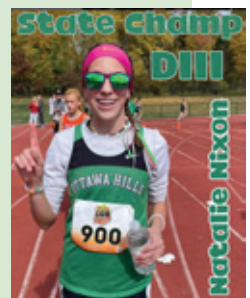
The boys' golf team won 1st place at the district tournament, and went on to secure their place as TAAC champions for the 15th year in a row. Coach Kruse led the team to a strong finish in 6th place at the state competition.



## Cross Country Teams Sweep TAAC, Runners Compete at States

The Ottawa Hills cross country teams dominated the TAAC championship, securing first place finishes for both the varsity boys' and girls' teams, as well as the junior high boys' and girls' teams.

This cross country season held special significance for the Nixon family, with both Riley (12th grade) and Natalie (8th grade) clinching 1st place in the TAAC, winning district championships, and competing at states. Natalie will be an athlete to watch next fall, with her impressive state championship performance on the junior high team.



## TAAC Champs x 4







## Football Team Makes School History

The varsity football team made school history by winning the round #2 playoff game against Colonel Crawford and advancing to round #3 of the playoffs for the first time. The Green Bears won 11 football games in a season for the first time in school history. Shout out to Coach Carter for being named TAAC Coach of the Year in his inaugural season. He led the team in an undefeated regular season and made school history in the playoffs in his first year.

All-Northwest Ohio  
District D6  
Coach of the Year!



Congrats  
Coach Carter



## Soccer Champions

Above, the varsity boys' soccer team crowned sectional champs. Below, the varsity girls' soccer team TAAC Champions



## Volley for the Cure, and a Championship

The junior varsity and varsity volleyball teams wore special uniforms and played with a pink ball to raise awareness about breast cancer and to raise money for research. The team helped raise several hundred dollars in donations for the Susan G. Komen Northwest Ohio affiliate, which works to save lives and end breast cancer forever by empowering people, ensuring quality care for all, and energizing science to find the cure. OH volleyball teams had a powerhouse season, with undefeated in-conference records and TAAC champions for both the 8th grade and (pictured) varsity teams.



## Champs!

Ottawa Hills High School Field hockey took home a big win against longtime rivals the Maumee Valley Hawks at the MVCDS Invitational.



# Voice of OH Athletics Inducted into TAAC Hall of Fame

Thousands of fans have heard Mr. Dick Bing broadcast from Norm Niedermeier Stadium, Chris Hardman Field, and John Lindsay Court. Since 1994, Dick has been the voice of Ottawa Hills High School Athletics. In total, he has announced over 150 football games, 280 girls' basketball games, 260 boys' basketball games, and 100 baseball games at Ottawa Hills. Dick and other inductees were honored in November at the annual Hall of Fame banquet, where they were inducted into the Toledo Area Athletic Conference Hall of Fame. He and his wife, Lois, are longtime residents of Ottawa Hills and proud parents of two OHHS graduates, Jeff ('99) and Erica ('04).



Ottawa Hills Marching Band was selected as the BCSN and Chick-fil-A Band of the Week last fall. BCSN came to Green Bear nation to interview band members, learn more about our marching band program, and create an amazing hype video of our talented marching musicians.



## 100+ goals

### Athletes to Watch This Spring

<b>Girls' Lacrosse:</b> <b>Skylar Silk</b>	<b>Boys' Lacrosse:</b> <b>Reese Hill</b>
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Both have scored well beyond 100 goals in their HS career and will begin that final season this spring.



**Never a doubt!** Never a doubt that the Green Bear student section is always full of school spirit!



Ohio House Representative Michele Grim, whose district encompasses Ottawa Hills, came to campus to honor the accomplishments of our fall sports teams, coaches, and individual athletes. Pictured is Rep. Grim with Coaches of the Year Carter and Fairchild, along with junior high cross country coach Nixon, and our fantastic interim athletic director Rick Kaifas.



# League and above honors fall athletics: 2023-2024

## FOOTBALL

### **Coach of the Year**

Brandon Carter

### **TAAC Player of the Year**

Luke Gnepper (defense)  
Micah Walker (special teams)

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Ben Burke  
Luke Gnepper  
Reddik Pillarelli  
Rocco Pillarelli  
Jackson Snyder  
Jack Vicente  
Micah Walker

### **TAAC 2nd Team**

Jack Perozek  
Teddy Szyperski

### **Honorable Mention**

Nick Anderson  
Cooper Eidenier  
Mitch Eidenier  
Chase Miller

### **1st Team All District**

Luke Gnepper  
Reddik Pillarelli  
Rocco Pillarelli  
Jack Perozek  
Jack Vicente

### **2nd Team All District**

Jackson Snyder  
Micah Walker

### **All Ohio**

Luke Gnepper  
Reddik Pillarelli  
Rocco Pillarelli  
Jack Perozek  
Jack Vicente

### **All Blade Special Mention**

Luke Gnepper  
Reddik Pillarelli  
Rocco Pillarelli  
Jack Perozek  
Jack Vicente

## BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

### **Coach of the Year**

Tyler Fairchild

### **TAAC Runner of the Year**

Riley Nixon  
Joe Mayer-Heckathorn

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Kaed Egan  
Joe Mayer-Heckathorn  
Thomas Lathrop  
Riley Nixon  
Quinton Smith  
Griffin Wilson

### **TAAC 2nd Team**

Graydon Begeman  
Mashrafi Ryaan Bhuiyan  
Chris Culler  
Cole Green  
Ian Jones

### **TAAC Honorable Mention**

Michel Andreev  
Ethan Green  
Twayne Lai  
Seamus O'Brien

### **District 1st Team**

Riley Nixon: 1st place  
Joe Mayer-Heckathorn:  
2nd place  
Kaed Egan

### **Regionals 1st Team**

Riley Nixon: 1st place  
Joe Mayer-Heckathorn:  
2nd place

### **All Ohio 1st Team**

Riley Nixon: 5th place  
Joe Mayer-Heckathorn:  
8th place

## GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

### **Coach of the Year**

Tyler Fairchild

### **TAAC Runner of the Year**

JoAnna Kelley

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Anna Ellingson  
JoAnna Kelley  
Mary Lathrop

### **TAAC 2nd Team**

Mercy Alamina  
Elsa Klaas  
Freya Klaas  
Emily Timmerman

### **TAAC Honorable Mention**

Ella Majerski  
Evelyn Parsons

## BOYS' SOCCER

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Julian Jaume  
Brandon Lingo  
Akash Parikh  
Evan West

### **TAAC 2nd Team**

Hutch Carter  
Houssam Hajar  
Vaughn Mackey

### **TAAC Honorable Mention**

Maddock Robson  
Ali Sedique

### **District 1st Team**

Julian Jaume  
Evan West

### **District 2nd Team**

Brandon Lingo

### **District Honorable Mention**

Akash Parikh

### **All Ohio 2nd Team**

Julian Jaume  
Evan West

## VOLLEYBALL

### **TAAC Coach of the Year**

Heather Holly

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Lily Berenzweig  
Rose Kowalczyk  
Sydney Snyder

### **TAAC 2nd Team**

Evie Heidenreich

### **TAAC Honorable Mention**

Peyton Lorenzen

### **District 2nd Team**

Lily Berenzweig

### **District Honorable Mention**

Sydney Snyder

## GOLF

### **TAAC Player of the Year**

Will Swigart

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Daniel Beck  
Yale Feniger  
Anthony Packo

### **TAAC 2nd Team**

Brandon Lingo  
Walker Peterson

### **District 1st Team**

Will Swigart

### **District 2nd Team**

Yale Feniger  
Brandon Lingo

### **Ohio 1st Team**

Will Swigart

## GIRLS' TENNIS

### **Ohio 1st District**

Bryn Tangeman  
Catherine Rhegness

### **Ohio 1st Team**

Bryn Tangeman  
Catherine Rhegness

## GIRLS' SOCCER

### **TAAC Co-Player of the Year**

Sadie Dale

### **TAAC 1st Team**

Ellis Carter  
Sadie Dale  
Kierstin Hoelle  
Abby Speakman

### **TAAC 2nd team**

Quinn Culler  
Mary Lathrop  
Ashleigh Speakman  
Erin Wilmore

### **TAAC Honorable Mention**

Tara Brown  
Alexa Potts

### **District 1st Team**

Sadie Dale

### **District 2nd Team**

Abby Speakman

### **District Honorable Mention**

Ellis Carter  
Mary Lathrop

## FIELD HOCKEY

### **Northern Region Honorable Mention**

Addie Marshall  
Julia Vicente



# The Financial Future of the District

## The State of the District: How Funding Will Determine the Future of Our Schools

In January, the district invited all residents in the Village of Ottawa Hills to attend the State of the District. The evening included a presentation from Superintendent Dr. Adam Fineske and Interim Treasurer Mr. Cajon Keeton, with student council representatives Ali Sedique (12th grade), Johanna Mullan (5th grade), and Nadia Clark (6th grade). A large focus of the presentation was on the financial future of the district. Following the presentation, the audience had a chance to ask questions, with answers provided

by district leadership, Board legal counsel, and members of the Board of Education. A recording of this presentation is available at <https://www.ohschools.org/about-us/board-of-education>

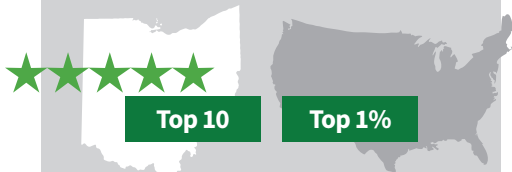
### Heart of the Community

A theme throughout the presentation was how our district is unique and is the heart of the community. Our district elevates the entire community, providing community events such as the recent Ottawa Hills Music and Theatre Association production *Little Mermaid, Jr.*, bringing Green Bears together at athletic events, and hosting many community-centric activities such as the upcoming Ottawa Hills Schools Parents Association Spring Carnival. The school is often a main driver for new families moving into the district seeking smaller class sizes, more opportunities for students, and a long history of academic excellence. Our consistently high-performing school district also helps maintain property values for all residents in the village.

### Challenges

Being a unique district also presents challenges. Our school district has drawn so many families into the village that, since 2017, enrollment data from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce shows that we have added 160 new students, the equivalent of adding two additional graduating class sizes. Most school districts in Ohio have seen a decrease in enrollment. Having so many additional students requires hiring more teachers, especially at the elementary school, to provide the small class sizes parents expect. Teachers have also seen an increase in social-emotional, behavioral, and academic support needs; a trend seen nationwide following the Covid pandemic. As a top public school in Ohio, we strive to give all our students the best education possible, and this has caused our day-to-day expenses to increase. Another driver of increased day-to-day spending is inflation. Every family has felt the effect of inflation, from higher grocery bills to higher utility costs.

### A High Performing District



#### 5-Star State Report Card Rating

(Only granted to 12% of public school districts statewide)

#### Ranked in Top 10 school districts

statewide (U.S. News & World Report 2023-2024)

#### Top 1% of public school districts

nationwide (U.S. News & World Report 2023-2024)

### Unique Enrollment & Funding

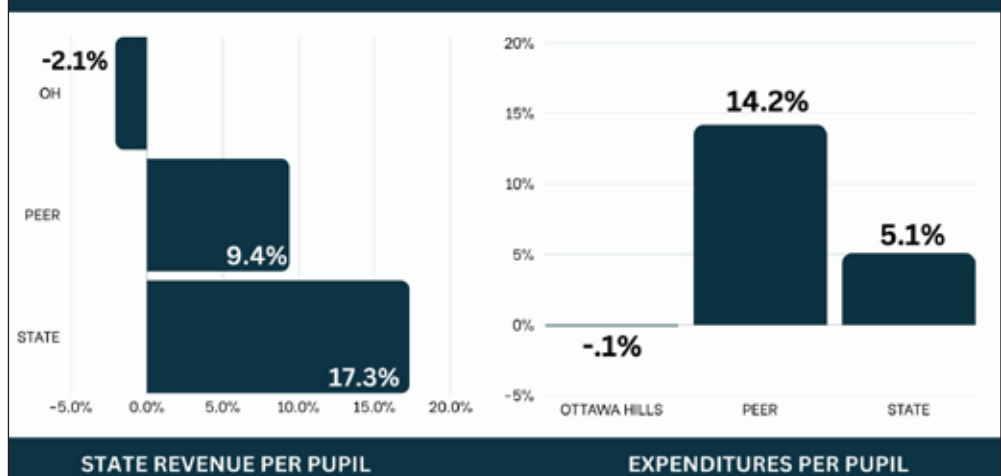


**3% increase** in revenue since 2018

**1.6%** commercial tax base, **98.4%** homeowner tax base

**\$2,400** in per-pupil funding from the state

### STATE REVENUE VS. SPENDING

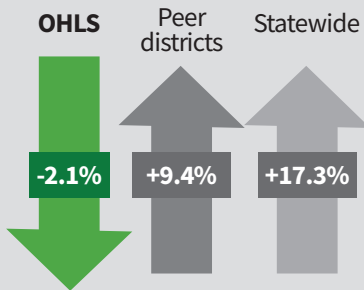




## Brass Tacks

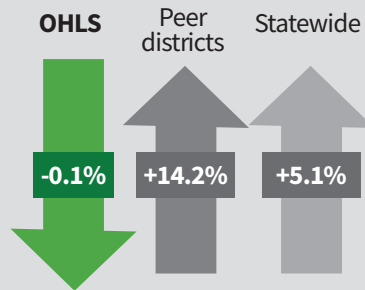
### State Funding

FY 2022 to 2023



### Expenses per Pupil

FY 2022 to 2023



## EXPENSES THROUGH 1.31.24



## Unique State Funding

While spending more on operating costs such as utilities is not unique to our district, we are unique in how our state funding is allocated. Under the new Fair School Funding plan, the state of Ohio factors residents' income level per pupil and district valuation to determine a state and local share for funding. The amount that the state of Ohio has determined to fund every student is \$2,405.90. To complicate this issue further, the state of Ohio is not currently fully funding the school funding formula for any Ohio school district. Bottom line, in Ottawa Hills, state funding makes up about 15% of our district revenue, and we must rely on property tax for the rest. This also means that we receive about \$1,500 per additional student; however, the actual cost per pupil in our district is closer to \$18,000, leaving the additional expense up to the taxpayers to cover.

## Property Tax Revenue Generation

Unlike many districts in Ohio, income from property tax levies comes almost entirely from village residents. Most districts have commercial, agricultural, or public utility tax bases to offset what residents pay in property taxes. Our community's taxable valuation is \$179,059,000. This means that 1-mil brings in \$179,000. Our district needs to generate \$2.34 million for the next school year to maintain current standards for students. That requires a 12.9 mill levy. Our neighbors can raise the same revenue for a much lower millage rate. For example, Sylvania would need just over 1 mil to raise \$2 million in their school district. As with many districts, HB 920 prevents OHLS from generating more property tax revenue when home values increase. The only way for OHLS to generate more property tax revenue is to have it approved by voters in the form of a millage.

## Thomas Siloy Joins OHLS as New Treasurer/CFO

The Board of Education has hired Mr. Thomas Siloy to fill the position of Treasurer/CFO of Ottawa Hills Local Schools, overseeing the financial operations in the district. Mr. Siloy, who started full time March 1, has already been successful in finding grants and areas to gain further support from the state, such as engaging in an electric audit which will allow a five year lookback to receive reimbursements on past bills.



Mr. Siloy joins OHLS after almost a decade as Treasurer/CFO of Old Fort Local School District and Bellevue City Schools. He also brings expertise in school district audits, having worked as an auditor with the Ohio Auditor of State. Mr. Siloy is highly regarded by his peers and has been recognized as a leader in the field, having been honored with the Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) Northwest Regional Distinguished Service Award and appointed as Chair of the OASBO Education/Finance Committee. Mr. Siloy is originally from the Cleveland area and now resides in Oak Harbor, Ohio with his wife, Taylor, a 1st grade teacher at Benton-Carroll-Salem LSD. They have two sons, Crew (3) and Kane (6 months).

On joining the district as Treasurer/CFO, Mr. Siloy says, "I'm thrilled to join the best school district in Ohio. This is something that you strive for in my position, and I'm excited to be working with the staff and community in this phenomenal district."

The district thanks Mr. Cajon Keeton for the dedication he gave our district as interim treasurer since October. His insight into state funding has helped the district understand how we can better secure the financial future of our district. During his time here he was able to renegotiate daily banking rates, secure new state reimbursements, and has provided recommendations on our vendor contracts. These revenue changes and expense recommendations will likely yield savings and added revenues in excess of \$100,000 annually.



## Opportunities for Our Students

100%

Elementary and junior/senior high student body have **access to STREAM** (science, technology, reading, engineering, art, mathematics)

74%

Junior/senior high students enrolled in a **world language course**

Nearly 60%

Of students in 9-12 participate in at least **one athletic extracurricular**

59

**Electives** in the junior/senior high school

19

**AP course offerings** in the junior/senior high school

23

**Varsity sports**

**AGORA** (longstanding tradition that provides experiences outside the traditional classroom)

## Small Class Sizes

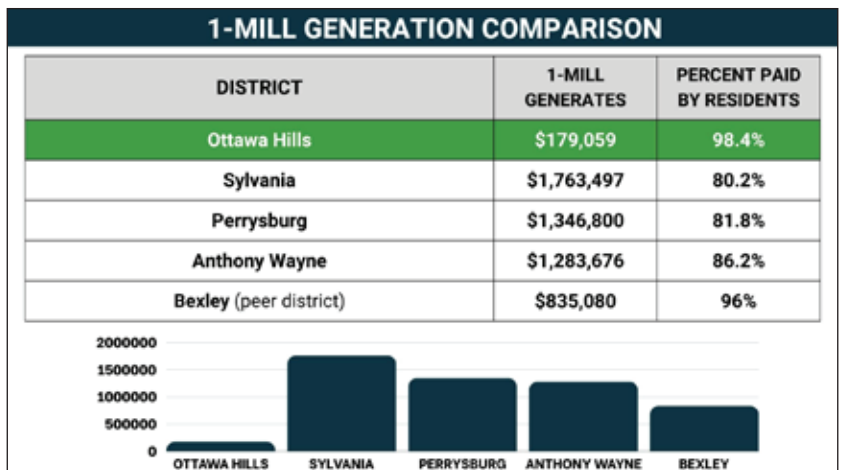
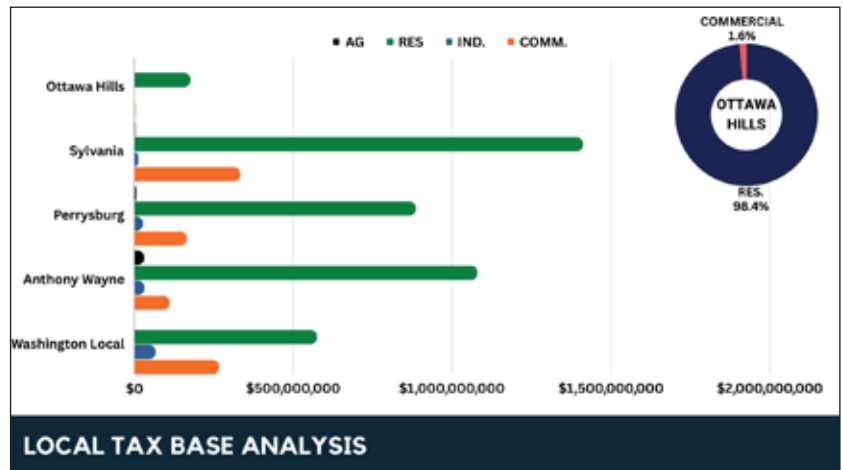
As mentioned before, small class sizes are a big draw for families moving into the district and something that parents and caregivers have come to expect. For the 2023-2024 school year, the average class sizes are: 19 in grades K-2nd, 21 in grades 3rd-6th, and 18 in grades 7th-12th. The OHES average class size chart provides a glance at current average class sizes in the elementary school and what each class size would look like with one less teacher per grade. Without additional revenue for the 2024-2025 school year, four elementary teachers will be cut, as well as not replacing a retiring elementary teacher.

## Enhancements

Our district would not be what it is without the financial contributions of our support organizations: OH Boosters, Ottawa Hills Music and Theatre Association, and the Ottawa Hills Schools Parents Association. Each of these organizations, and their dedicated volunteers, help provide enhancements that elevate the experiences of our student body.

Also, The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation Foundation provides a vehicle for community partners and private donors to give financial support to the district, faculty, and students to enhance the student experience at Ottawa Hills. The Foundation anticipates providing over \$100,000 in grants each year. Examples of grants approved to date include: 2nd-grade Engineering in the Classroom; 8th and 12th-grade trips to Washington, D.C.; biology lab kits; MakerSpace equipment; fitness center training; Home-to-Home; and faculty and staff professional development.

The Foundation also completed its Full STEAM Ahead Capital Campaign in the fall of 2023. Private donations provided 100% of the funding to renovate the former library and media center in the elementary school



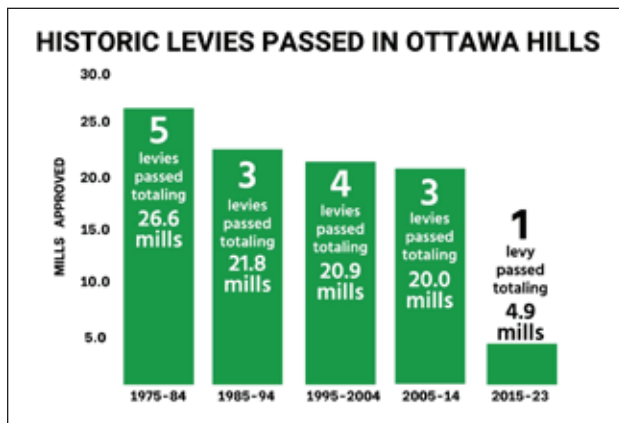
Current Average Elementary Class Sizes					
as of 1/31/24					
GRADE	TOTAL	New Students in 2023-2024 School Year	Class Sections	Current Average Class Size	Average Class Size with One Less Section
Kindergarten	53	1	3*	17.66	26.5
First	72	2	4	18	24
Second	82	11	4	20.5	27.33
Third	89	7	4	22.25	29.67
Fourth	91	8	4	22.75	30.33
Fifth	83	5	4	20.75	27.67
Sixth	80	1	4	20	26.67
TOTAL	550	35	Kindergarten is split into two sections		



into The Wondry, as well as renovate the 6th Grade Science Research Lab, and elementary ArtLab. Previously, the capital campaign raised funds from donors to provide enhancements beyond the structural renovations inside the junior/senior high school. These enhancements were added within and around the junior/senior high school including The Foundry. The building of the learning commons, now called The Foundry, was funded by a bond issue approved by voters in 2020.

## Long Standing Community Support

Historically, Ottawa Hills residents have passed operating levies approximately every 3 years. Regular levy requests are needed to keep up with inflationary increases in district expenses and salaries. Operating revenue is used to pay day-to-day costs such as classroom supplies, building operations, and employee salaries and benefits (86% of the operating



budget goes to personnel costs). A 12.9 mill levy will generate \$2.3 million from village residents to the operating budget annually. This will cost Ottawa Hills property owners \$38 per month for every \$100,000 of the county auditor's appraised value.

## Importance of Timing

The BOE directed the Treasurer's office to place a 12.9 mill operating levy on the March 19, 2024, ballot. Even though the district won't receive funds until January 2025, passage of the levy in March is crucial because it will allow planning for the 2024-2025 school year with inclusion of the first tax receipt (about \$1.1 million) in the budget. If the levy fails in March, the budget will assume no additional revenue in Fiscal Year 2025, requiring at least \$1.5 million in operating budget cuts before the start of the 2024-2025 school year. It is important to note that this Election Day falls over the Ottawa Hills Local Schools' spring break. As with all elections, early and absentee voting options are available.

## A Big Impact

While the district still needs to continue efforts to operate more efficiently and effectively, we will have the ability to better maintain our current staffing and support levels, and start working on accomplishing goals within our strategic plan. Our goal will then be to stay off the ballot for up to three

years and return to our past practice of asking for smaller operating levies, on a more regular basis (every three years) as the community has supported in decades past.

Under the current 5-year forecast, a rejected levy will require \$1.5 million in cuts. The district has had to prepare a budget in the event we do not receive additional revenue and the areas of impact on the budget are outlined below. Additionally, changes to our class sizes and offerings may impact our State Report Card and College Profile.

## Efforts Already Made to Reduce Expenses

The BOE challenged district leadership to find strategic ways to reduce our cost structure while maintaining the careful balance of optimum class sizes and opportunities for every student. As a result, the cost structure was reduced going into this 2023-2024 school year by more than \$1.5 million. Personnel needs were scrutinized, and the reduction of 15 full and part-time positions was achieved through attrition, reorganization, and careful streamlining.

## Moving Forward

A mindset shift is already underway. The district is committed to continuing its efforts to ensure fiscal responsibility and accountability moving forward. All staff and services decisions will be based on need and will continue to be evaluated before the start of the school year. District leadership will continue to explore new opportunities for revenue generation, and look to gain further savings and efficiencies wherever possible. The goal is to stay off the ballot for 3 years, and then return to the regular 3-year cycle of placing regular lower operating levy asks on the ballot.

### District Cost Cutting Plan Without Additional Revenue for the 2024-2025 School Year

Cut \$1.5 million from the operating budget by eliminating funding for:

#### JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

- Dean of students position
- 1 full time world language teacher
- 1 full time math teacher (will impact science)
- 1/2 art & 1/2 computers/tech teachers
- 1 special education support position
- 1 full time building paraprofessional

#### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- 4 regular classroom teachers
- 1 full time special area teacher
- 1 full time gifted position
- 3/4 time counselor position

#### DISTRICT

- Funding for 1 theater production
- Funding for 2 varsity sports
- 1 full time grounds/custodian position
- Delay new classroom instruction purchases

## Changes & Efforts already made...

- drastically reduced spending in all budgeted areas

Cut \$2 million out of operating budget without directly impacting classroom experience for our kids

- consistent discussions around wants vs. needs
- formation of a district grant writing committee
- continue to partner with support organizations for funding support
- renting facilities in new ways to bring in revenue
- transition of district offices back to campus
- lobbying in Columbus for state funding changes



## FOUNDATION LETTER

### Celebrating Community Support and Leadership: A Note of Gratitude

As we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support and trust that you, our community members, have continued to bestow upon the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation. Your steadfast commitment to our mission has enabled us to make a profound and lasting impact on the lives of our students.

It is with immense appreciation that we extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you who has generously contributed to the success of the Foundation. Your financial support has been instrumental in enhancing the educational experiences of our students across all grade levels, encompassing a diverse array of endeavors in the realms of arts, athletics, and academics.

We are indebted to outgoing chairwoman, Jackie Berenzweig, whose leadership and dedication have been instrumental in guiding the Foundation forward. Since assuming the role of president in June 2021, Jackie's visionary stewardship has been evident in her tireless efforts to champion our cause. Under her guidance, the Foundation has flourished, approving a remarkable 60 grants totaling over \$300,000, enriching the student experience in countless ways. Additionally, Jackie played a pivotal role in spearheading fundraising initiatives, contributing to the impressive sum of over \$2,960,000 raised for the Foundation's endowment fund and the Full STEAM Ahead Capital Campaign. Jackie will continue to serve as a trustee.

We also extend our sincere gratitude to outgoing trustees Scott Estes and Jennifer Griffin for their invaluable contributions to the Foundation. Their dedication and commitment to excellence have left an indelible mark on our organization, and we are profoundly grateful for their service.

As we bid farewell to Scott and Jennifer, we warmly welcome new trustees Andy Dale and Liz Puskala. Judd Silverman, who has been a Foundation board member since the Foundation's inception in 2013, will take over leading the Foundation as Chairman of the Board. We are confident that their expertise and passion will help us continue to advance our mission of empowering students to reach their fullest potential.

Looking ahead, we are excited to support upcoming spring events and we eagerly anticipate welcoming the class of 2024 as our newest alumni. Together, let us continue to nurture a culture of excellence and opportunity for the benefit of our students and the entire Ottawa Hills community.

With deepest gratitude,  
Judd and Erica

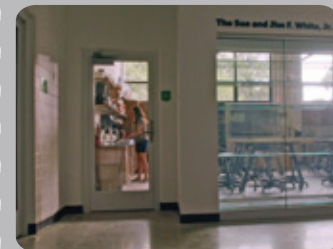
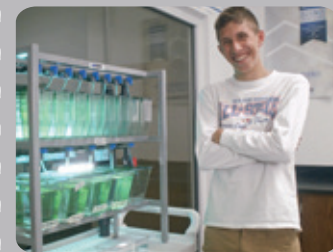


**Judd Silverman**  
(<sup>'74</sup>) is chairman  
of the Ottawa Hills  
Schools Foundation.  
**Erica (Gatchel) Silk**  
(<sup>'89</sup>) is Director of  
Development Ottawa  
Hills Local Schools.

WATCH THE VIDEO



It's the little things that make a big difference in the lives of our students. As long time coach Chris Hardman says, every donation, every dollar, adds up to a major impact and is changing lives and creating a bright future for Ottawa Hills students. Watch the video, narrated by Chris, by scanning the QR code above to see first-hand how the student experience is strong because of the OHS Foundation.





# Welcome New Trustees

## Elizabeth Puskala ('99)

Elizabeth Puskala ('99) has been teaching science at the junior/senior high school for seven years, and will serve as the faculty liaison on the Foundation's Board of Trustees. Liz will help to bridge the gap between what funding sources are available through the Foundation and the needs of teachers and staff in the district. Her passion for STEAM was realized during her time as a Green Bear and she is looking forward to ensuring students will continue to have access to innovative experiences touching all areas of academics, athletics, and the arts at Ottawa Hills.



## Andy Dale

Andy Dale brings decades of experience as a strategic financial executive to the Foundation Board of Trustees. The Dale family relocated to the village in 2017 and chose to live in the Ottawa Hills Local School District not only for the beauty of the village, but more importantly for the reputation of being a high performing school district. He is excited to serve on the finance committee to ensure the success his children have experienced in the district is available to future Green Bears.

# Donor Funds

## Annual Unrestricted Impact Fund

Gifts received and spent in the same year to have an immediate impact on faculty, staff and students at Ottawa Hills Local Schools

## The Irene A. Aubin Student Assistance Fund

To provide financial assistance for students to participate in curricular, extra-curricular and super-curricular programs, regardless of financial ability

## The Billy Ciralsky Entrepreneurial Endowment Fund

For the enhancement of student entrepreneurial initiatives and projects at Ottawa Hills Local Schools

## The Nanci Kay Effler Fund for Visual Arts

To support innovative and impactful initiatives and recognize student passion and excellence in visual arts

## The Heldreth Family Student Services and Support Fund

To support current and future district efforts to meet the academic needs of individual students, their educators and District Interventionists; and to contribute to the educational needs and development of students and the training and tools teachers need to provide effective support

## The Bill and Anne Lathrop Endowment Fund for Educational Innovation

To provide resources toward creating a learning environment for students and teachers that reflect the latest educational developments

## The Mindel Family Athletic Fund

To provide the resources necessary to enrich the lives of student-athletes as they strive to be champions in the classroom and at the highest level of athletic competition

## The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation STEM Fund

To increase opportunities for students and ignite a passion for exploring STEM-based learning (science, technology, engineering, mathematics)

## The Eleanor Seifried Fund for the Performing Arts

To enhance the performing arts – theater, choir, and dance

## The Swigart Family Golf Fund

To ensure the life-long sustainability of the men's golf program at Ottawa Hills Local Schools and provide those student athletes with the highest level of training and competition, as well as an unmatched academic and athletic experience

## The Talmage Family General Fund

The general fund to support emerging needs and initiatives

## Cornerstone Planned Giving Society

Donors who plan for a bequest in their will

*Named funds are established with a minimum contribution of \$25,000 and are often used to support specific initiatives. All donors can give – at any level – to an established named fund.*

# Granted! Grants like these help enhance, extend excellence in Ottawa Hills

**The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation has awarded grants covering a range of faculty and staff requests both inside and outside the classroom.**



## 'Home-to-Home' Fosters Community Connection

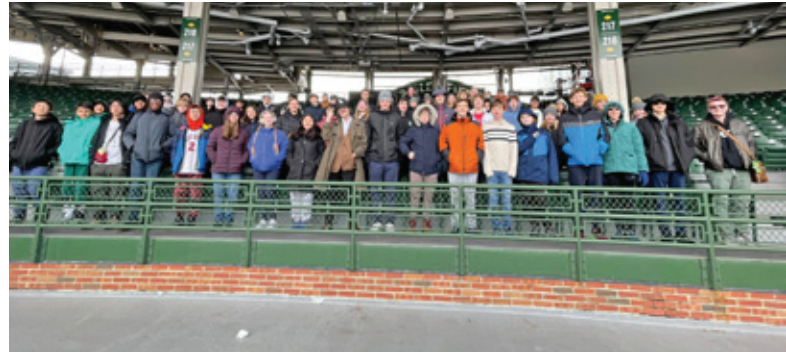
The Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation is proud to continue to provide funding for "Home-to-Home" for the fourth year in a row. This partnership provides a unique and powerful opportunity to build bridges between communities, develop shared understandings, and move towards a common future.

This school year the students in Home-to-Home have enjoyed several experiences alongside their Scott High School peers. In October, the students gathered at Hylant's headquarters to work with Dr. Benson Cooke, Toledo native and professor of clinical psychology at the University of the District of Columbia. Students walked away with a broader understanding of themselves and their relationship to each other and the community. The day ended with a wrap-up with Dr. Cooke and a

powerful presentation by professional storyteller Nykiah Wright, who is also an intervention specialist at Scott High School.

The group also got together on a weekend for a fun-filled afternoon of lunch and the Escape Game Experience at Fallen Timbers. Most recently in January, students attended Sheila Johnson's Author's Visit at the main library in downtown Toledo. Ms. Johnson spoke about her new memoir *Walk Through Fire*. Her powerful story of adversity, entrepreneurship, resilience, leadership, and compassion was inspiring for all.

Home-to-Home would not be possible without the generous support of the Kadens Family Leadership Series. Thank you to Pete Kadens who challenged our schools to foster a deeper connection between our communities, forge a unique partnership, and capitalize on the strengths of both institutions.



## Enriching Experience in the Windy City

The High School Symphonic Band, under the guidance of Music Director Mr. Michael Leeds, embarked on a memorable trip to Chicago in January. The talented high school musicians had the opportunity to partake in a collegiate instrumental clinic led by Dr. Serena Weren from Illinois University at Chicago and showcased their musical prowess with four performances at prominent Chicago landmarks, including the Willis Tower (formerly known as the Sears Tower) and the Field Museum. Despite the chilly temperatures and snow,





the band embraced the charms of the Windy City, attending performances by the Blue Man Group and the theatrical production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. They also explored iconic destinations such as the Art Institute of Chicago, Wrigley Field, Ed Debevic's, and Fulton Market. This trip was made possible through the OHMTA and OHS Foundation.

## Challenge Crew Addresses Mental Health Challenges

The Annual Impact Fund supports advisor Salena Ferguson. She and members of the Challenge Crew participated in suicide prevention training through the QPR Initiative. QPR stands for: question, persuade, refer and is intended to teach individuals how to recognize the warning signs of suicide and provide guidelines to get help.



## Science 'Matter'

The STEM Fund provides support to science teachers in grades 4-6 with the



purchase of consumable materials for lessons and labs.

## Seniors and 8th Grade Class Visit Washington, D.C.

Due to the Covid pandemic, the Class of 2024 missed out on their annual 8th-grade trip to Washington, D.C. However, with the help of the Talmage Family Fund, they were able to make up for this missed opportunity last fall by traveling to the U.S. Capital around the same time as the annual 8th Grade trip to the Nation's Capital. During their visit, they explored various landmarks including the White House, the U.S. Supreme Court, Congress, Ford's Theatre, the Washington Monument, the MLK Memorial, and more, immersing themselves in our nation's history. We extend our special thanks to the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation for their support in making these enriching trips possible for our students.

## Pump It Up

The Kadens Family Fitness Center Fund continues to have a powerful impact on the student body. Over 80% of student athletes in junior/senior high school utilize the fitness center on a regular basis. The Foundation has partnered with OH Boosters to ensure



students have greater access to the facility and fitness center coordinator, Michael Yuschak.

## New Sensory Walk

The Foundation worked with village residents, the Bennett family, to create a Sensory Walk within the elementary school. The walk is designed for kids with sensory processing challenges, but all kids have enjoyed utilizing this fun and unique space.







A note from Sonya Braverman ('63): "Love is all around me and so the feeling grows," sang the Troggs in 1967.

If you had attended the OHHS Class of 1963's recent 60th Reunion, you would know that the Troggs must have been singing about our class. For many of us, our friendships have endured since kindergarten, and those relationships are stronger than ever today. "Our class is very special," said Jim Ashley. "We've never lost the connections we had in school. It's a beautiful thing."

"Over the decades, we've laughed and cried together, supported each other during difficult times, and rejoiced during happier times. Our friendships have survived for over seventy years. And we all feel like kids again when we're together," said Pam LeDuc.

During the reunion, many alumni were introduced to The Foundry. "The awe and wonderment of seeing our classmates respond to The Foundry was nothing short of amazing," said Gretta Laskey. "I think we all wanted to go back in time to experience this kind of learning center."

"We're in it for life," noted Marilyn Jensen. "Our friendships are based on shared memories, experiences, and values. We've never really lost the connections we had in school. With each passing year we seem to have grown closer."

And they can hardly wait until the next reunion . . .

## Upcoming Reunions

Get in Touch!



- 1967** contact Richard Preston: [rtpmap@buckeye-express.com](mailto:rtpmap@buckeye-express.com)
- 1974** contact Sandra Hylant: [Hylant@midlandtoledo.com](mailto:Hylant@midlandtoledo.com)
- 1979** contact Mary and Jim Geiger: [marylgeiger@yahoo.com](mailto:marylgeiger@yahoo.com)
- 1986** contact Tracy Burns Morse: [tracy.morse@promedica.org](mailto:tracy.morse@promedica.org)
- 2004** contact Tenley Yark: [tenley.yark@gmail.com](mailto:tenley.yark@gmail.com)
- 2013** contact Robie Mitchell: [rmitchell377@gwu.edu](mailto:rmitchell377@gwu.edu) or Colleen Levy: [colleenlevy@gmail.com](mailto:colleenlevy@gmail.com)
- 2018** contact Ismael Assi: [assiiz@mail.uc.edu](mailto:assiiz@mail.uc.edu)

## Reunions WELCOME BACK!

OHHS welcomed many reunions back on campus this past summer and fall. Many attended a Friday night football game and returned Saturday morning for a tour of the school. All were incredibly impressed with the recent changes that included The Foundry, Fitness Center, science labs, and art studios and expressed their gratitude for the academic preparation, passionate teachers, and the lifelong connections they forged at Ottawa Hills.





# Celebrating Alumni Achievement

The following nine pages honor **the Class of 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients and Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees.**



The Distinguished Alumni Award was established in 2017 to recognize Ottawa Hills Local Schools' attendees who have made a meaningful contribution to society, and whose accomplishments, affiliations, and careers have honored the tradition of excellence at Ottawa Hills.



The Ottawa Hills High School Athletic Hall of Fame was established in 2019 to formally honor the memory and contributions of the many outstanding athletes, teams, coaches, and supporters of our athletic programs. The Hall of Fame serves as a symbol of our appreciation of the excellence, honor, and devotion displayed by these celebrated individuals and teams.

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### Distinguished Honor Roll

**The Shetterly Family**

# Past Honorees



## Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients

### 2022 INDUCTEES

Dr. Jessica Ciralsky  
Carl Heiles ('57)  
Phil Mattingly ('02)  
Cleveland O'Neal III ('74)  
Jim White, Jr. ('58)

### 2021 INDUCTEE

Dr. David Glow ('55)

### 2020 INDUCTEES

Barbara Barker ('79)  
Mary (Carson) Fedderke ('65)  
Constance Hauman ('79)  
Amul Thapar ('87)  
Gary M. Woodbury ('58)  
Robert (Bob) Hinkle ('56) (in memoriam)

### 2019 INDUCTEES

Betsy (Carson) Brady ('64)  
Pete Kadens ('96)

Rustin "Polly" (Steele) Levenson ('65)  
Robert (Bob) Shopneck ('68)  
Dr. Catherine Webb ('66)

### 2018 INDUCTEES

Dr. James Geiger ('79)  
Roa Lynn ('55)  
Larry Mindel ('55)  
M. Scott Peeler ('89)  
Frederic Roberts ('79)

### 2017 INDUCTEES (INAUGURAL CLASS)

Christine Brennan ('76)  
Craig Burkhart ('69)  
Russell Carson ('61)  
Richard DeVore ('51) (in memoriam)  
John Galbraith ('41)  
David Staelin ('56) (in memoriam)  
Sally Stuckey ('74)

## Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees

### 2022 INDUCTEES

Paula (Wagoner) Conway ('94)  
Norm Niedermeier, Coach  
Sandy Osterman, Coach  
John Spengler ('77)  
Jim White, Jr. ('58)

### 2021 INDUCTEES

Wendy (Roberts) Pavicic ('97)  
David Roadhouse ('62)

### 2020 INDUCTEES

Jamie O'Hara ('68)  
Katherine (Jamieson) Folino ('10)

### 2019 INDUCTEES (INAUGURAL CLASS)

Kelly Coleman ('82)  
John M. Hill ('56)  
Laurie Imes ('81)  
Jim Tenney ('56)

# Shelley Wolson ('76)

Creative writer and editor with a passion for words



Shelley Wolson's journey as a freelance editor and writer has been characterized by her passion for words, her diverse expertise in food, lifestyle, and family topics, and her commitment to excellence. With over 40 years in the journalism field, she has crafted a remarkable career defined by creativity, dedication, and an eye for detail.

Throughout her career, Shelley has contributed her talents to an impressive array of magazines and brands. Her work has appeared on the pages of Condé Nast publications such as *Vanity Fair*, *Glamour*, *Bon Appétit*, and *Vogue*. Her copyediting work has also extended to *Scholastic Inc.*, *Money* and *Fortune* magazines, *Fast Company*, and the Hearst lifestyle magazine group, including *Prevention*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Woman's Day*. In 2009, Shelley also wrote *Budget Celebrations*, a book in which she shared ideas on festive, stress-free holiday entertaining.

Reflecting on her time in Ottawa Hills, Shelley cites her involvement in school activities and her teachers as influencing her growth and success. Leadership roles in the AFS club, participation in Student Council, and her cherished involvement in the school newspaper, the *Arrowhead*, equipped her with invaluable experiences. Shelley also competed in state choir competitions and

performed in school musicals.

Shelley said the respect from teachers at Ottawa Hills High School helped set the bar high for her future. Reaching academic goals gave her the confidence and work ethic that carried over into college and grad school, and still impacts her today.

As her career continues to flourish, Shelley has embraced new opportunities. Currently serving as a senior copy editor at AARP, she is instrumental in enhancing the quality of articles for the organization's publications and digital platforms. Shelley is also an adjunct professor at NYU, where she imparts her wisdom to the next generation of aspiring writers and editors.

In Shelley's personal life, she is a dedicated mother to daughter, Emily, and spouse to Bruce. Her family enjoys hearing stories about Ottawa Hills and Shelley's childhood spent in the close-knit community. A treasured memory Shelley shared is from her time working on the *Arrowhead* when she and her classmates barely made a print deadline. With typewriters and rubber glue, they completed the final version, tossing it out the window into the editor's car ready to zoom down Kenwood to the post office with less than 5 minutes to spare. The students met their deadline!



# Steve Jenks ('77)

Venture capitalist, community leader and mentor



Steve Jenks stands as an outstanding citizen at the intersection of business acumen and civic dedication, carving a distinguished path over the past 35 years. He has impacted the landscape of venture capital, fostering growth and change, while maintaining a strong commitment to uplifting the community. In 2008, Steve co-founded Candescent Partner, a venture capital firm, of which he is still a managing partner. Jenks finds his most significant professional achievements were in launching two successful businesses. His first venture took flight at the age of 28, with a second following suit at 49. These milestones underscore his willingness to embrace challenges and adapt.

It's not just about financial investment. Beyond boardrooms, Steve has taken the mantle of mentorship. His engagement with inner-city high school students through programs like BUILD and KIPP Academy speaks volumes about his dedication to change at the grassroots level. His board membership with the Lever Fund exemplifies his commitment to socio-economic transformation. This organization strategically invests in businesses to uplift economically distressed areas in western Massachusetts. His current role as vice-chair of the board of trustees of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art

(MASS MoCA) demonstrates his commitment to cultural enrichment and community engagement.

Steve's roots in Ottawa Hills have profoundly influenced his trajectory. As a stage manager for various theater productions, he learned life lessons that continue to resonate. The theater's demands of preparation, organization, and maintaining composure in high-pressure situations have been key in shaping his approach to business and life. Life lessons he learned in Ottawa Hills helped shape him into a business creator and pillar of community service, standing as an embodiment of how professional success and civic responsibility go hand-in-hand.

Amidst his professional pursuits, Steve treasures the role of family. Together with Lisa, his wife of 41 years, he has raised three accomplished children. His three grandchildren are his greatest joy in life. In reminiscing about his time at Ottawa Hills, Steve fondly recalls the sense of community and culture of family that is central to growing up in the village. A favorite memory of his youth is spending almost every day all winter skating on Ten Mile Creek with friends, venturing all the way to what is now Wildwood Metropark.



# Kristján Gíslason ('74)

Adventurer, writer, documentary filmmaker and businessman

Kristján Gíslason, an OHHS alumnus, has woven a captivating narrative through his life's journey as an adventurer, writer, and documentary filmmaker. Known for traversing the globe on two wheels, he has etched his name in tales of exploration and cultural understanding.

The documentary "Sliding Through" chronicles his remarkable motorcycle odyssey spanning ten months and 34 countries; which made headlines after airing on Icelandic media. His first documentary series covered his trip around the world in three episodes, and he continues to make more episodes covering his travels, 13 in total with 2 additional episodes in the works. Kristján later traveled to Africa on his motorcycle. His literary creations – "Andlit Afríku," "Hringfarinn," and "Sliding Through" – encapsulate the people and places he's encountered, and the proceeds from these works support youth drug prevention programs, and the education of children in Kenya.

Yet, Kristján's journey extends beyond personal adventures. His footprint in the business world is equally impressive. A visionary mind, he became a partner in a software company that crafted a unique GPS fishing device tailored for Icelandic fishing fleets. The company later became a pioneer and dominant player in the satellite communications field for the Icelandic shipping industry. He further worked to establish courses for captains, training and equipping them with navigation device

expertise, something he knew was critical given his background in IT. Kristján's passion for innovation and education seamlessly intersected in these ventures, reshaping the industry.

Generosity and a sense of responsibility define Kristján's character. His endeavors ripple beyond geographical boundaries. His home country of Iceland remains a focal point, but his impact knows no limits.

In reminiscing about his time at Ottawa Hills, Kristján treasures the influence of the Jenks family, his hosts during his senior year as an AFS exchange student. This experience kindled a flame of curiosity, setting him on the path of adventure that would later define him.

Returning to Ottawa Hills in 2022, Kristján shared his insights with the student body. He spoke of intertwining a passion for exploration with a drive to foster global awareness, support education, and combat the opioid epidemic. This visit was a testimony to the enduring connection between his past and present.

Kristján has shared his life with his wife of 45 years, raising three successful children that are influencing the fields of mathematics, photography, and engineering. He has five grandchildren that no doubt love to hear of his many adventures.

# John Buckey and Craig Burkhardt '69 Tennis Champions

Dedication and determination set an example for their peers



John Buckey and Craig Burkhardt, two exceptional athletes, cemented their names in Ottawa Hills High School through their remarkable achievements on the tennis court. In 1969 the tennis doubles team, under coach O'Connell, brought home the first of several state titles for Ottawa Hills High School. John and Craig's names will always be associated with one another in Ottawa Hills tennis lore. Their achievements on the court were the embodiment of hard work, discipline, and a shared passion for the sport.

Beyond tennis, their impact extended to other realms. Craig's talents included cross-country, basketball, musical and theater performances, and journalistic pursuits. John's involvement in basketball showcased his versatility as an athlete. Their dedication and determination set an example for their peers, shaping the ethos of Ottawa Hills High School.

Craig went on to achieve the Western ranking of #6 (which included Ohio and five adjoining states) and a national ranking of #26 in his age group for tennis. He played intercollegiate tennis and squash at the University of Pennsylvania. Notably, Craig coached his sister Wendy, who went on to win two national titles and played in the US Open. He also coached his own children, leaving a lasting impact on future generations of athletes.

A Distinguished Alumni Award recipient from 2017, Craig was recognized for his contributions within the medical community. He completed his medical/dermatology residency at the University of Michigan, received his Doctor of Medicine from the Medical College of Ohio, and his Master of Public Health from the University of Toledo. Craig owns six U.S. patents, is current editor of three journals,



and is author of over 700 publications and 25 book chapters in the fields of entomology, parasitology, dermatology,

otology, and internal medicine.

John's affable personality and quick-witted humor made him a beloved figure, endearing himself to teammates and opponents alike. He was quick to snap into competitive mode with the drive and discipline necessary to be a great athlete. John set a record of most points scored by an individual in a basketball game that was a long standing record at Ottawa Hills. During his senior year, he was a suburban all-star athlete in basketball, averaging 23 points per game.

John continued his tennis triumphs in college, playing varsity tennis for Duke University and working as a tennis pro during college summers. After college, John's accomplishments extended to the fields of law, accounting, and real estate development, where he showcased his entrepreneurial spirit. Together, with his wife, Amy, he cheered on his three children, Brian, Kate, and Laura in numerous OH athletics throughout the years. His son, Brian, continued his legacy by playing tennis and basketball in high school. John's love for sports influenced his son's career as

a sports writer for *The Toledo Blade*.

His engaging nature and unique ability to connect with others made John a cherished friend and confidant. His devotion to family and friends was palpable. John's sudden passing in 2023 marked the end of an era. Craig and John's journey from the tennis courts of Ottawa Hills to the larger world beyond exemplifies the power of friendship, hard work, and unwavering dedication to one's passions.





# Michael Tanner ('73)

Quiet leader and four-year varsity basketball starter



Michael Tanner was the first freshman to start on the varsity basketball team at Ottawa Hills High School. His journey encompasses a legacy of basketball leadership, academic excellence, and a fulfilling professional career.

As a four-year starter, his dedication and skill grew, guiding his teams to three conference championships. Recognized as a three-time, 1st team all-conference player and a two-time first team all-suburban team selection, he went on to achieve in his senior year the accolade of 3rd team all-state player. Michael was a quiet leader on the basketball court who always demonstrated composure and respect for his teammates, opponents, coaches, and officials. Beyond basketball, Michael's achievements reached the state track and field championships, where he qualified in the discus.

His most cherished athletic accomplishment started in 9th grade, when he was able to play on the varsity basketball team under the mentorship of Coach Kuzma. Michael attributes Coach Kuzma as laying the groundwork for him to go on to play four years of basketball at Williams College. Ottawa Hills' influence on Michael's life transcends athletics. The rigorous academics and exceptional faculty prepared him for his collegiate challenges. Following his athletic

career, Michael graduated from The Ohio State University College of Dentistry and completed his residency in Periodontics. With over 30 years of practice, he established himself as a respected Periodontist in Columbus, retiring happily in 2018.

Michael's legacy is intertwined with his family's achievements. He has been married to Marie for over 42 years. She is a Registered Nurse at Riverside Methodist Hospital in Columbus. Together, they have nurtured a remarkable family. Their son Stephen flourished into a successful lawyer, married to Kelly, a Ph.D. and Occupational Therapist. Their children, Ben and Will, form a generation of promise. Daughter Christie, an Occupational Therapist, is married to Orthopedic Surgeon Scott, and their sons Adam and Daniel herald a future of accomplishment. Michael's sister Mary Ellen, (Ottawa Hills 1970), has also been a wonderful sister, sister-in-law and aunt.

Amid the accolades, Michael's heart resonates with cherished memories of Ottawa Hills. From a tight-knit community to athletic triumphs and lasting friendships, each facet contributed to the success he had as a youth that continued into adulthood.

# Richard Kuzma

Three consecutive championships as varsity basketball coach



Richard "Dick" Kuzma is a name etched in the annals of Ottawa Hills High School coaching history. Serving as the head varsity basketball coach at OHHS from 1964 to 1974, his impact on the sport and his players is nothing short of remarkable. During his tenure, Dick's leadership was synonymous with excellence. His teams achieved a string of victories that cemented their dominance in the league. A highlight of his coaching career came between 1971 and 1973 when his teams secured three consecutive league championships. This streak was accompanied by an impressive 47-12 record, attesting to Dick's skillful coaching.

Beyond his team's wins, Dick's conduct and demeanor stood out. His coaching style wasn't just about fostering athletic strength but also building character in his student athletes. Dick's kindness, fairness, and unwavering commitment to treating all players with respect made him a true role model. He wasn't just respected within the confines of his team; high schools and coaches across Northwest Ohio held him in high regard.

Behind every successful individual often stands a pillar of support, and for Dick that has been his teammate in life, his wife Barbara. As he dedicated himself to coaching, Barbara played an instrumental role in raising their children. Dick also attributes part of his success to the contributions of his assistant coaches, Bob Walter and Ron Stewart. The camaraderie and teamwork extended to the faculty and students of Ottawa Hills, who rallied

behind the basketball teams with unwavering support.

Reflecting on his time coaching, Dick couldn't help but mention the exceptional seasons he experienced at Ottawa Hills High School. Among the standout achievements were numerous conference championships and a memorable sectional championship. While victories were celebrated, Dick's focus remained on the growth and development of his players. He recalls the incredible talents of the student athletes he was able to coach at Ottawa Hills High School. Many players stood out for their skills and dedication, contributing to the legacy of Ottawa Hills High School basketball.

For Dick, coaching wasn't confined to the court; it was a community effort. He acknowledged the students' competitive spirit and the parents' role in supporting the teams, often providing pre-game meals to fuel their success. Among the many honors Kuzma received, one that was personally special was the dedication of the 1967 MESASA yearbook to him. This recognition was a testament to his enduring influence within the school. In the realm of basketball coaching, Dick's name is synonymous with excellence, mentorship, and sportsmanship. His legacy lives on not only through the championships his teams won but through the lives he touched and the values he instilled in his players.

# Girls Athletic Association

Trailblazers in OH Athletics



The Class of 1963 Girls Athletic Association (GAA) stands as a collective embodiment of remarkable athleticism, unyielding dedication, and enduring camaraderie. Comprising a group of several female athletes, these exceptional individuals left an incredible mark on Ottawa Hills High School's sports legacy.

These extraordinary athletes boasted an undefeated record in approximately 95% of their games over four years. Their commitment to excellence was displayed across multiple sports, including field hockey, volleyball, swimming, tennis, track, and basketball. The GAA members were a testament to the power of unity, sportsmanship, and determination.

Before Title IX was enacted in 1972, athletic opportunities for girls were few- with no uniforms, shoes or transportation. Title IX, among other things, ensured that girls cannot be denied the benefits of athletics in public schools. GAA members said, "It is great to see so many opportunities for young women to participate in athletics today."

When Ottawa Hills High School lacked a swim team these remarkable females shattered barriers in the realm of swimming. They were part of relay



teams that broke national records and even achieved an individual national record.

At the heart of this formidable group was the exceptional mentorship of Barbara MacDonald, affectionately known as Miss Mac. Under her guidance, the GAA flourished, not only as athletes but as well-rounded individuals. Miss Mac's influence extended beyond the sports arena; she emphasized the importance of friendships and character, guiding her students toward success in life.

"Miss Mac" went on to have a great influence on many individuals in girls athletics, until her retirement in 1991, and was an active member in her community. In 2017,

at the age of 82, Miss Mac passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends.

The GAA's impact extended beyond the sports they excelled in. The bonds forged in athletics translated into lifelong friendships and a sense of unity that persists to this day. The lessons learned on the field, on the court, and in the pool, such as teamwork, determination, and resilience, shaped their paths in various aspects of life.

## Penny Carver Dean ('63)

Multi-sport athlete and city tennis champion



Penny Carver Dean was a multi-sport athlete whose talents encompassed basketball, volleyball, tennis, and field hockey where she was a 3-year starter on the team. Her dedication and skill were evident early on, earning the title of city tennis champion multiple times. Penny says her most memorable wins from her time at Ottawa Hills were beating long standing rival Maumee Valley, in field hockey, and Rogers High School in tennis.

Athleticism extended to Penny's college years, where she played in the starting lineup for tennis all four years. She continued playing basketball during her freshman year. Beyond college, Penny's dedication thrived in recreational leagues, where she wielded the pitcher's role in softball and clinched numerous titles in local tennis tournaments.

An athlete at heart, Penny's passion remains unwavering. She continues to indulge her love for tennis, competing in USTA tournaments and recently contributing to a team that secured third place at Nationals in Orlando. Penny has also embraced the popular sport of pickleball, and enjoys active time spent with any four-legged fido.

Penny's influence extends within her family. Her

brother, Gus Carver, a high school superstar, set the precedent for excellence in football, basketball, and baseball. The legacy of athleticism resonated with her children, Debbi and Mike, who both contributed to their high school tennis teams. Her grandson, Carver Dean, continues the tradition, securing his place in three teams that qualified for the Virginia State Championships.

Stepping into the role of a coach, Penny guided the Women's Tennis program at BGSU for a remarkable 25 years. Her commitment to empowering the next generation echoes through her coaching journey and her enduring love for the sport.

Reflecting on the evolution of women's sports, Penny draws a stark contrast between the '60s and the present day. The transformative impact of Title IX has propelled the expansion of women's sports, ushering in new opportunities and increased recognition. From volleyball and softball gaining prominence to female coaches earning substantial salaries, the landscape has witnessed a radical transformation.



# Gretta Fleck Laskey ('63)

National record-setter in swimming



Gretta Fleck Laskey's story is one of determination, achievement, and a commitment to making a positive impact. She has broken records, embraced challenges, and left a lasting mark on Ottawa Hills athletics. From swimming and track to field hockey, basketball, and volleyball, Gretta thrived in a variety of sports.

Gretta's crowning achievement came in 1960 when she shattered a national record in the long course 50-yard pool in Chataqua, OH. Her name, alongside her sister Marianne's, became synonymous with national relay records in the 200-yard freestyle and 220-meter medley events. Gretta's dedication and tenacity were evident in her relentless pursuit of excellence.

Reflecting on her high school days, Gretta says her favorite memories are in the camaraderie shared amongst her teammates. The impact of coaches like Miss Mac (Barbara MacDonald), Coach Peg Seney of Glass City Aquatic Club, and Coach Alex Steve of Sylvania Country Club resonates as she recalls their guidance and support.

While collegiate sports for women were limited at the time, Gretta's affinity for sports remained unwavering. A triumphant triathlon marked her accomplishment post-high school, followed by her participation in Pelotonia, a

charity cycling event supporting the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute. Gretta's commitment to raising funds and awareness for cancer research exemplifies her dedication to meaningful causes.

Retiring in 2022 after 55 years of work, Gretta embraced new pursuits. An ardent pickleball player, she also ventured into substitute teaching, offering her expertise to Ottawa Hills' future generations. Gretta's family life is as dynamic as her accomplishments. Mother to three children, grandmother to nine, and instrumental in raising eight step-children, she radiates the spirit of the "Brady Bunch" era.

Beyond her athletic feats, Gretta's legacy is one of service and humanity. Her involvement with the D.O.V.E. Fund exemplifies her commitment to humanitarian causes, including the construction of Linh Thuong Elementary School in Vietnam in memory of her fallen classmates Ned Dybvig ('62) and Bob Hansen ('59). Gretta reflects on the transformation of women's sports since her school days, attributed in part to Title IX. She finds happiness in the newfound opportunities for women athletes to excel and pursue their passions on collegiate and professional levels.

# Marianne Fleck Gehring ('63)

Swimmer with a long list of athletic prowess



Marianne Fleck Gehring had athletic prowess that spanned across a spectrum of disciplines. She embraced field hockey as a center forward, exhibited her agility in basketball as a roving guard, and showcased her versatility in track, specializing in sprints. Additionally, she ventured into the world of tennis, and her tenacity triumphed in a senior-year match that left a memorable mark.

Amid this varied landscape, swimming remained Marianne's first love since the age of six. Together with her twin sister, Gretta, she spent many hours in a pool. While Ottawa Hills High School did not have a swimming team, Marianne found her platform with the Glass City Aquatic Club, competing in AAU events and contributing to relay teams that shattered national records. She was a successful athlete in synchronized swimming and earned accolades in summer club competitions.

Marianne's fondest high school memory goes beyond the thrill of victories. It lies in the camaraderie of a remarkable group of female athletes who dominated all sports. The unity and shared passion remain as a special bond even decades later.

Post high school, college life shifted her focus from sports to her major in accounting, graduating from Miami University in 1967. However, her college journey was marked by involvement in various organizations, reflecting

her leadership qualities. Marriage to Jeff Gehring (OHHS '61), mother to three children, and a fulfilling career as a CPA/Controller followed, but Marianne's connection to sports persisted. She thrived in the realm of slow-pitch softball, participating with fellow Hall of Fame classmates, and embarked on a successful stint in women's doubles tennis and even clinched a singles event victory in a club tournament.

Currently, Marianne finds joy in the fast-growing sport of pickleball, actively participating in leagues across Delaware indoor facilities. Reflecting on the landscape of women's athletics, she highlights the disparity that existed in the 1960s, with limited scholarships for female athletes. Title IX, although enacted in 1952, was only revamped in 1972 to address educational inequalities and gradually rectify historical gender imbalances.

Marianne's personal journey is interwoven with that of her husband. Jeff's remarkable athletic achievements in basketball and track complement Marianne's legacy. His induction into the Miami University Hall of Fame attests to his prowess, leadership, and impact. A dedicated guidance counselor for 35 years, Jeff's partnership with Marianne embodies shared values and accomplishments, celebrating 56 years of marriage in 2023.

# Diane Smith Kerin ('63)

Decorated athlete who excelled at various sports



Diane Smith Kerin's journey through sports has been marked by natural talent, unrelenting dedication, and a passion for competition. A true multisport athlete, Diane's talents extended across various disciplines, earning her a well-deserved place in Ottawa Hills High School's hall of athletic excellence.

Diane's love for sports was evident from a young age and her athleticism allowed her to excel in numerous sports, making her a standout on the field, court, and beyond. She was on the swim team that broke the national freestyle record. In addition to her personal accomplishments, Diane and her sister Carol (OHHS '62) both received the Outstanding Female Athlete Award at graduation—an honor that speaks volumes about their dedication and influence within the athletic community.

Swimming was not the only sport Diane excelled at. In fact, she seemed to have a knack for excelling in any sport she put her mind to. Other accomplishments of note was her impressive feat of bowling a 600 series underscores her tenacity and skill on the lanes. In golf, Diane not only

reached the status of a district golfer but also claimed the title of senior club champion at Inverness on three separate occasions.

Among Diane's cherished memories at OHHS, the unity and triumph of her class stand out. Her classmates were not only exceptional athletes but also a closely-knit team, conquering opponents in various sports. The remarkable camaraderie and countless victories left an indelible mark on Diane's high school experience. Her journey continued beyond high school, where Diane's competitive spirit remained undiminished. She continued to showcase her talents in softball, bowling, platform tennis, tennis, and golf.

Coming from a large family of seven children, Diane's athletic prowess was part of a legacy of achievement. Her connection to Ottawa Hills runs deep, with her grandchildren representing the fourth generation to attend the school. This multigenerational bond underscores Diane's lasting impact on her alma mater.

# Margo Seney Morrow ('63)

Trailblazing competitor embodied determination



Margo Seney Morrow, an exceptional athlete and trailblazer, embodied the spirit of determination and achievement. While Title IX had yet to be enacted, Margo's high school experience was marked by her involvement in the Girls Athletic Association (GAA), an organization that would pave the way for her athletic success.

Under the guidance of the visionary Miss Barbara McDonald, Margo and her fellow female athletes defied limitations. Clad in distinctive blue uniforms, they competed in a range of sports, including field hockey, volleyball, and basketball. The victories they achieved against rival schools like Maumee Valley Country Day School, Rogers High School, and Anthony Wayne High School stand as testaments to their talent and dedication.

Margo's passion for swimming took root at an early age, with her mother Peg Seney coaching her. Competitive swimming soon became her domain, leading to remarkable achievements in the water. Margo, along with her teammates, contributed to the national record-breaking freestyle relay team, leaving a lasting legacy of success.

In 1972, Title IX was enacted as an amendment to the civil rights law. Having graduated from high school in 1963, Margo and her teammates were not able to benefit from the amendment. At that time, there were few colleges with women's teams and scholarships were not available. Limitations did not keep her from continuing her passion for sports. In adulthood, Margo continued her active lifestyle, participating in college intramurals, Masters swimming, racquetball, jazzercise, aerobics, scuba diving, snorkeling, boating and water skiing. Her family also enjoyed camping and swimming.

Her commitment to physical activity translated into her roles as a teacher, coach, and advocate. Margo taught 4th grade swimming and assisted with the swim teams of various age groups. She became an influential parent in Solon City Schools, championing equal opportunities for athletics and fine arts. Her 20+ years as an elected member of the Solon City Schools Board of Education exemplified her dedication to creating equitable facilities and opportunities for all students.



# Jane Ulmer Kuta ('63)

Multi-sport athlete with passion and perseverance



From her early days as a multi-sport high school athlete to her achievements in college and beyond, Jane's story is one of passion and perseverance. During her high school years, Jane's sporting repertoire extended across an array of disciplines including basketball, volleyball, field hockey, and swimming. Jane acknowledges the trailblazing role of Ottawa Hills High School in 1963. Ahead of its time, the school's emphasis on girls' athletics, led by Miss Mac, offered opportunities that were rare in an era where many high schools lacked inter-school sports for girls.

College beckoned with a new arena for Jane's athletic talents. At Bowling Green State University, she enjoyed success in swimming and basketball, and playing softball in the summer. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree she taught physical education in Michigan. In 1968 Jane married Dave Kuta, a second lieutenant in the Army. The motto of their household became "stay flexible and adjust" which is just what she did. The first assignment was to Bermuda where Jane taught physical education for the

Department of Defense. The Kuta's would end up moving to several states over the years and, with each new move, Jane found ways to share her passions and give back to the community. She found volunteering to be very rewarding and shared her time with schools, libraries, churches, Cub Scouts, and hospitals.

Jane's love for athletics remained steadfast and flourished throughout her adulthood. She enjoys swimming, biking, and pickleball. She also competed in inter-club tennis and the Michigan Senior Olympics, where she has won numerous gold medals. Jane and Dave returned to the Toledo area in 2016 and now enjoy spending time with her sister, Joan, the friends that have shared travel journeys, and with her old friends and teammates from Ottawa Hills. They have two sons, Jeff and Matt (Jill), and five grandchildren (three living in CA and two in Germany).

# Joan Ulmer Fisher ('63)

Diverse talents with a love of teamwork



Joan Ulmer Fisher's athletic journey, she says, would not have been possible without the support of mentors like Barbara McDonald, fondly known as "Miss Mac". Joan credits Miss Mac with instilling in her a love of sports and the concept of working as a team.

Joan's high school years were defined by her passion for volleyball, basketball, and field hockey. The guidance of Miss Mac extended beyond the conventional sports, as she introduced Joan and her peers to the world of bowling at University Lanes. Amid these diverse sports, a standout memory for Joan is the victory over rival Maumee Valley in field hockey.

Post-high school, Joan's dedication to sports continued to shine. She embarked on a collegiate journey at Wittenberg University, where she excelled in both volleyball and basketball for four years. Pursuing a major in Health and Physical Education, she not only honed her athletic skills but also cultivated a deep understanding of sports' impact on health and well-being. Joan spent 25 years working in Toledo Public Schools, where her commitment to education echoed her dedication to sports—both endeavors aimed at nurturing growth and potential.

Joan's post-college life has included various sports. She participated in tennis leagues, co-ed softball, and platform tennis tournaments. She was part of a team that qualified for the Senior Olympics Nationals in basketball. Her enthusiasm for sports evolved as she embraced different activities, including pickleball, kayaking, hiking, bike riding, golf, and travel. These not only kept her physically active but also provided a sense of adventure and exploration.

She was a dedicated mother to her son Timothy and daughter Tracy, both of whom have grown into their own lives with their respective families. Her four grandsons bring an extra dimension of joy and love to her life.

Despite her remarkable achievements, Joan remains humble, attributing much of her success to the mentorship of Barbara "Miss Mac" McDonald. Miss Mac's guidance, passion, and emphasis on teamwork were pivotal in shaping Joan's perspective on teamwork and friendship. She recognizes the evolution of opportunities for young women in athletics today and acknowledges how sports have united her and her peers for over six decades.



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Amber Gresh and James Knapp  
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Nick and Mary Lou Kozimor  
Jane Kuta  
Barbara Larsen  
Carolyn Zanville-Lemieux  
Patricia and Morgan Levey  
Marc Levin  
Aaron and Marayart Li  
Stanley Linver  
Lucas County CASA  
Shahid Mahmood  
Jay McGiveran  
George McKisson  
The Meeks Family Foundation  
Jill Moreau  
Adit Mukherjee  
Beverly J. Newcomer  
Keith Nicholson  
Nancy Nicholson  
Margot and Steven Parker  
Marc and Julie Paulenich  
Pledgeling Foundation  
Ann Poore  
Precision Site Work, LLC  
Leonard and Yvonne Price  
Curt Pritchard  
Jack and Sarah Puffenberger  
Kimberly Ramey  
Jason Rand  
Margaret Reichert  
Edward Reinstein  
Dixie and James Riehm  
Nancie Entenmann Roberts  
Gretchen Rohm  
Salvatore Schiciano  
Carol and Scott Schwab  
Marcus and Colleen Seigar  
Tom Seiple  
Judd and Lisa Silverman  
Steve and Debbie Skutch  
Joe and Diane Stancati  
Emily Stark  
Daniel N. Steinberg  
Philip Stichter  
Spencer and Prudy Stone  
Kristin Strobel  
Temperance Distilling Company  
Russell Tibbetts  
Donna and Steve Tozer Wipfli  
Fred and Julie Treuhaft  
UBS Business Solutions LLC  
Christine Vischer  
James and Julie Vitale  
Dave Walker  
Catherine Webb  
Eric Wilson  
Susan and Gary Wilson  
Gary Woodbury  
Susan Young



# Ottawa Hills Local Schools

3600 Indian Road  
Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
TOLEDO, OHIO  
PERMIT #311

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### March

Saturday  
**16-25** Spring Break

Tuesday  
**19** Election Day



### May Recognition & Graduations

Tuesday  
**28** 8th Grade  
Recognition  
6 p.m.

Wednesday  
**29** 6th Grade  
Graduation  
3:30 p.m.

Thursday  
**30** Last Day of  
School,  
Commencement  
6 p.m.

### April

Monday  
**8** Early Release 1 p.m.  
Solar Eclipse

Friday  
**12-14** OHMTA Spring Musical  
*Chicago*



Wednesday  
**17** Incoming kindergarten  
parent meeting 6 p.m.

Thursday  
**25** smART Show  
6 p.m.

Friday  
**26** Elementary School  
Talent Show

Sunday  
**28** Mercy Health Glass  
City Marathon &  
Owens Corning  
Half Marathon



Tuesday  
**30** Brown Bag Chorus  
Concert  
7 p.m.

### May

Wednesday  
**1** National  
Honors/Junior  
Honors Society  
Induction 7 p.m.



Saturday  
**11** Prom &  
After Prom



Tuesday  
**14** JHHS Choir Concert  
7:30 pm.

Wednesday  
**15** All District Band  
Concert 7 p.m.

Thursday  
**16** JHHS Piano Recital  
7 p.m.

Friday  
**17** OHSPA Spring  
Carnival (May  
20 rain date)



Monday  
**27** Memorial Day –  
Schools Closed

Follow all events at [ohschools.org/calendar](https://ohschools.org/calendar)