

Faribault High School



“High Flyers” Distinguished Alumni Award

2024 Award Recipients

Faribault Public Schools

April 20, 2024



“High Flyers”

Distinguished Alumni Award

Every year, graduates of Faribault High School will be honored for distinguished achievements or careers. These inductees have attained a high level of achievement in one or more of the following areas:

- Personal and/or professional life
- Community service
- Humanitarian activities

Members of the Alumni Award Steering Committee include Jill Fagerlund, chairperson, Ellen Bisping, Sue Feyereisn, Cheryl Freund, Barb Wertish, and Mary Ziegler.

Members serving on the 2024 Alumni Award Selection Committee were Marian Bahl, Ardys Johnson, Randy McDonough, Elizabeth Prange, and Mike Young.

A permanent display in the lobby of Faribault High School honors Alumni inductees with framed photos and an engraved plaque recognizing each of the winners. In addition, individual etched metal plates with each winner’s photo and biography are featured in the Alumni hallway near the Counseling office at FHS.

Special thanks to Superintendent of Faribault Public Schools Jamie Bente, FHS Principal Joel Olson, and the Faribault Booster Club for supporting and installing the Alumni Award displays at FHS. The committee also thanks Brendan Cox, Jami Kenney, Troy Temple, The Faribault Daily News, FCTV, and KDHL for technical, printing, publishing, and advertising assistance.

To Recognize, to Honor, and to Inspire



“High Flyers”

Distinguished Alumni Award

Program

Welcome Jill Fagerlund,
Alumni Committee chairperson
Edna Thayer, Retired Nursing Instructor

Jeff Elstad **Class of 1988**
Nominated by Jane Draheim

Robert “Tip” Enebak.....**Class of 1959**
Nominated by Jake Enebak

Roger Koopmans..... **Class of 1949**
Nominated by Virgil Luehrs

Carrie Gramse Kremer, MD**Class of 1992**
Nominated by Harvey Schuldt

Hung Nguyen.....**Class of 1987**
Nominated by Harvey Schuldt

Sandy Bokman Paddock**Class of 1979**
Nominated by Deb Timmers

David Sauer **Class of 1984**
Nominated by Kris Sauer

Brian Shellum **Class of 1972**
Nominated by Kristine Warren Samsel

A DVD of tonight’s program may be purchased by contacting
Troy Temple at 507-332-7787 or mailing \$20.00 to: Troy
Temple, Faribault Community Television, 922 Newhall Drive,
Faribault, MN 55021. Make checks payable to FCTV.



Jeff Elstad

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, COMMUNITY LEADER

FSHS CLASS OF 1988

Jeff Elstad's passion for young people and their futures shine through all he does. He has devoted his 30-year career to the field of education, both as a teacher and administrator. He currently is the Superintendent of Schools in Owatonna. He credits his parents, Gordy and Edith Elstad, as his first best teachers by instilling in him qualities of perseverance and empathy. These characteristics are evident in his work and personal life.

In addition to academics, music and sports were important parts of Jeff's time at FSHS. Becoming a Bruce Smith Memorial Award winner remains a highlight for him, and his involvement in music continues to this day.

Jeff's professional career began as an early childhood special education teacher in Benson, MN. Teaching and administrative jobs followed in Owatonna, New Prague, Rochester, and Byron. As superintendent, he spearheaded successful building projects in both Byron and Owatonna.

Jeff builds relationships with all types and ages of people. A colleague remarked that he is a strong leader, equally comfortable on the floor with preschoolers as meeting with legislators or CEOs. He was instrumental in inspiring the passage of a significant bond vote that resulted in the new Owatonna High School that opened in 2023. Another colleague remarked that many positive changes in the church, community, and school district are the result of Jeff's empathy, ethics, and passion for developing and encouraging people.

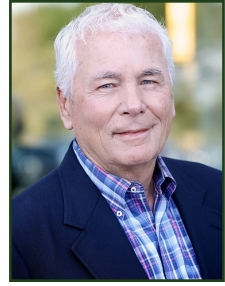
Jeff has been recognized with awards and recognition for excellence in various educational organizations. He has also been lauded for his involvement and leadership in community organizations such as Rotary and Lions Clubs, United Way, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Trinity Lutheran Church.

Jeff states, "We serve the mission of inspiration: **Excellence. Every Learner. Every Day.** This promise drives us to be our best every day and strive to provide excellence in our schools and around the district." It's clear that this mission statement also guides Jeff's everyday life.

Robert “Tip” Enebak

CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OWNER, PHILANTHROPIST

FSHS CLASS OF 1959



Robert “Tip” Enebak wanted to be a football coach. Despite battling polio as a child, he played football at FSHS and attended the University of North Dakota on a football scholarship. After college, he taught economics and coached football in Great Falls, Montana. That job was interrupted by a call to come home to take over his family’s struggling construction company. Under Tip’s leadership, the business began to thrive. Enebak Construction Company is now 118 years old and going strong.

Enebak Construction Company expanded under Tip’s leadership into a multimillion dollar earth-moving and construction business with projects including The Minnesota Zoo, Mall of America, multiple housing developments, interstate highways, county roads, and city streets, city and county landfills, and golf courses in five states. Today, Tip is acting as “company coach” to the fourth generation of Enebaks.

Tradition Companies is a family of nine integrated companies that grew from the business Tip took over from his father. It is the umbrella for two land development companies, five financial services companies, and five homebuilding companies, all in Minnesota. Tip is the chairman of the board of directors of Tradition’s Big T Foundation which supports charities focused on children, veterans, affordable housing, and more. Charities receive much more than a check; they get a relationship as Tradition becomes a part of what they’re doing. Tip coaches charities on the benefits of working together, sharing needs, and collaborating on projects. “Two plus two equals six” is Tip’s motto for stretching resources and reusing dollars by creating trust, collaboration, and synergy among charitable groups.

Tip’s humble generosity arises from his belief that it’s only right to give back. He remains heavily involved in the charities Tradition supports, and, though he has turned over ownership of Enebak Construction Company to his children, he still often goes to the office and runs some jobs. He wants no credit for the philanthropic efforts which he quietly performs, but credits his employees and vendors claiming WE did this. “It’s the people who are doing the work. I guess I’m the head coach.”



Roger Koopmans

LANDSCAPE & DESIGN, BAND LEADER

FHS Class of 1949

“I grew up in the best of times,” states the gregarious Roger Koopmans. He is an inspiration and tenacious in everything he accomplishes. Koopmans was born, raised, and still lives on the east side of Faribault. He is a visionary with many talents.

Koopmans starred in high school athletics and music. He was captain of the basketball and tennis teams, making it to state in tennis and leading the Big 9 in individual points scored for basketball. He received the “Outstanding Athlete of the Year” award as a senior and later was inducted into the Faribault Sports Hall of Fame. How did he have time as a busy sophomore in high school to start a swing band? This band eventually became “Buddy Koopmans & His Orchestra,” a 20 piece band entertaining for 60 years all over southern Minnesota.

After starting out his college education at the U of M, he was called to service in the Korean War. His bravery in combat was rewarded by receiving the Bronze Star.

Roger Koopmans continued with his success by accomplishing so much with his expertise and passion in design and landscaping. Roger started his career as a hybridizer and grower at Lehman’s Gardens. Next he managed a Bachman’s in Rochester, building the organization from one to 50 employees. Returning to Faribault, he established the highly successful Koopmans Landscaping and Design business. Through his leadership, his crews were known for pulling up to a house or business, exiting the vans like a SWAT team, accomplishing their work with speed and efficiency and then disappearing with the grounds looking spectacular and not a weed in sight!

In his “spare” time, Roger and Kak, his hard working wife of 73 years, kept immaculate gardens at home, which were visited by garden clubs from all over. Huge tour buses were known to drive down their neighborhood street to stop and tour their gardens, which were featured in national magazines and catalogs.. His speciality was hosta, showcasing over 350 varieties. He was also known to design stately and grand garden features like waterfalls, stairs, and planters.

Roger was involved in many more civic clubs, church committees, and garden organizations... Always with a smile on his face and a sparkle in his eye!

Carrie Gramse Kremer, MD

OB/GYN PHYSICIAN – ADVOCATE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

FHS CLASS OF 1992



As she passed the nursery window in District One Hospital, Carrie Gramse Kremer, MD, then a fourteen- year-old candy striper volunteer, glimpsed her future life's work. Valedictorian of her 1992 class, and voted "Most Likely to Succeed," Kremer believed she was well-equipped to pursue a medical degree.

Kremer graduated summa cum laude from Concordia University, Chicago, with a BA in Biology. She received her Doctorate of Medicine degree from the University of Minnesota, graduating in 2000. After medical school, she completed four years of residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Florida.

After her residency, she returned to Minnesota and practiced OB/GYN with Park Nicollet and Health Partners. Her nominator reported that she "delivered thousands of babies and performed countless obstetric and gynecological surgeries." He stated that "she took pride in protecting the lives of unborn children and providing compassionate reproductive care."

While in medical school, she met her future husband, Matthew Kremer, an internal medicine physician. They are parents of three children. While raising a family and balancing an intense work schedule can be challenging, it was especially so for the Kremers, as Liz, their sixteen-year-old daughter, was born with a rare genetic mutation on the STAG1 gene. Although she is fully enrolled in high school, Liz's condition requires full-time care when she is home. Therefore, Kremer decided to retire from practice in 2023 to care for her family.

Her nominator states that "although medicine was her first calling, Kremer has found her place as an advocate for special needs children and their families." She is a founding member of the STAG1 Gene Foundation and maintains a Facebook page called "Lessons from Liz," with almost 10,000 followers, where she provides hope for families sharing a similar journey.

Dr. Carrie Gramse Kremer's life has come full circle. From the age of 14 to this day, she evinces a passion for the health and well-being of all children and mothers.



Hung Nguyen

ARMY VETERAN, FINANCIAL MANAGER

FHS CLASS OF 1987

Based on a promise to his father and his new country, Hung chose a career serving the United States in the military. Upon graduation, he was accepted into the United States Military Academy at West Point. He was an active duty armor officer, serving in Germany and then to Fort Hood in Texas. Hung then served in a recruiting company in Kansas City, Missouri. His last stint with the army was at the Center for Army Leadership at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Before returning to Kansas, Hung served in Germany. Currently, Hung works as a Financial Manager at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Hung was born in Viet Nam in 1967. His mother, two aunts, four brothers and a sister left Viet Nam in 1975. After a brief stay in the Philippines and Guam, his family arrived at a refugee camp in Arkansas. There they were reunited with Hung's father, a Vietnamese Air Force officer who had escaped Viet Nam. Their family was sponsored by First English Lutheran Church of Faribault in 1975. Hung Hung met his wife in Germany, and they have two children, Victor, 24 and Clark, 20.

His education includes a Masters of Business Administration from Rockhurst University. He completed the Chief Financial Officer Leadership Certificate Program at National Defense University. He is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, Certified Defense Financial Manager with Acquisition Specialty, and DOD Financial Management Certificate Level 3.

Hung's hobbies include reading, biking, running, and swimming. He is a member of the American Society of Military Comptrollers. He has served as President of the ASMC, Heidelberg Chapter, and is the current President of Toastmasters and serves as the President of Phase 2 Advanced Toastmasters Club located in Severna Park, Maryland.

Sandra Bokman Paddock, DNP, FNP

DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE, FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

FSHS CLASS OF 1979



After graduation from high school, Sandra Paddock took a job as a general maintenance worker. It was during that one year that she realized she wanted to do more with people and decided that nursing was the professional path she would take. She enrolled at South Central College in Faribault and gained her diploma as a practical nurse. That first degree was the beginning of a life full of learning and improving herself in her chosen career.

Sandra's dedication to nursing has been demonstrated by her continuous pursuit of educational advancement. Sandra's nominator wrote that Sandra's desire to assist the greater community as a nurse has led her on an educational journey that began with earning a nursing diploma to becoming a Family Nurse Practitioner, and on to obtaining her Doctor of Nursing Practice and more.

In 2001, she added an additional licensure in vocational education. Shortly before that time she had taken a position at South Central College as an instructor in the nursing program. In 2015, Sandra became a professor at Winona State University and is currently involved in the graduate nursing program with students who are seeking their master and/or doctoral degrees.

Sandra's focus as a provider and instructor is in health promotion. When asked to explain she said, "I want to help people understand their health needs and ways to prevent chronic disease." Her areas of expertise include being a Family Nurse Practitioner focusing on wellness; Certified Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner competent in assessment, diagnosis, and management of acute and chronic mental health conditions; and Certified Nurse Educator involved in curriculum development, instruction, and differing delivery systems. Her resume includes numerous professional manuscripts, presentations, awards, and memberships in professional organizations.

Sandra has dedicated her life to both her profession and her community. She is an active member of the Minnesota Nurse Practitioner Organization where she has served as president; a board member of Bridges Health in Winona, MN; a member of the Rochester Healthy Community Partnership; and FOCUS in St. Paul. Her skills have also been shared in different ways in Faribault with her church and a Global Health Mission to Guatemala.



David Sauer

CIA, INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

FHS CLASS OF 1984

Few people worry about global security and complex relationships among the United States and its economic and political adversaries: China and Russia. Fortunately, Faribault High School graduate, David Sauer, worked to protect America's national security. From 2007-2019, Sauer served as an intelligence officer for the Central Intelligence Agency with special emphasis on East Asia.

When asked how his interest in international affairs began, Sauer quipped that "he may have read too many Tom Clancy novels." More likely, a three week trip to Eastern Europe sponsored by Gustavus Adolphus College sparked his interest. During his senior year, a CIA recruiter motivated him to join CIA. After graduating magna cum laude in Chemistry from Gustavus Adolphus, he enrolled in the MA Security Policies Studies Program at George Washington University. Upon graduation, he applied to CIA. He was offered employment and entered into duty in February, 1992.

Sauer served in CIA for many years. All together in his federal government service, he served 18 years overseas, completing seven tours in foreign locations. He served in command positions working against the most important national security threats facing the nation. He served multiple tours of duty as Chief of Station and Deputy Chief of Station. In 2017, he was promoted into CIA's Senior Intelligence Service.

While serving in Tokyo, Sauer experienced an unexpected challenge: the March 2011 Tohoku earthquake and resulting tsunami which devastated two Japanese nuclear power plants. Sauer's team assisted the Japanese government and managed the crisis, all while trying to understand the extent of the damage to the Japanese reactors.

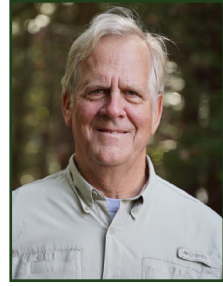
For his outstanding service, Sauer and the Tokyo team were awarded a meritorious unit citation. He has also received numerous Exceptional Performance Awards. He is proud to be one of a few who have met the King of Cambodia, Presidents of both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China, and former U.S. Presidents George H. W. Bush and Barack Obama.

Sauer is retired and lives in Faribault with his wife, Kris. They have two daughters.

Brian G. Shellum

WEST POINT GRADUATE, HISTORIAN, AUTHOR

FSHS CLASS OF 1972



Encouragement from a Faribault Junior High School English and social studies teacher to pursue his interests in history and writing played a major role in Brian Shellum's 20-year military career, followed by 20 more years as a federal civil employee. Even into retirement, he finds himself immersed in researching and writing military history.

Brian holds the distinction of being the first Faribault alumnus to graduate from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He earned a graduate degree from Campbell University and attended the University of Bonn, Germany, where he lived, worked, and studied for ten years.

This Bronze Star Medal, Joint Meritorious Service Medal, and the Order of St. George recipient participated in the Gulf War, served as an army attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Bonn, and was a senior Defense Department analyst. After retiring from the army, Brian served 12 years as historian at the Defense Intelligence Agency, followed by eight years as a senior intelligence officer with the Department of Defense.

In both his military and civilian careers, Brian penned a variety of reports and articles, preparing him well for what was to follow. "I have been researching and writing about the life of Charles Young and the Buffalo Soldiers since I first read of their accomplishments in 1996." Charles Young was the third Black graduate of West Point, and the subject of Brian's first of four published books. His fifth will be released in the summer of 2024.

In addition to being an accomplished author, Brian is a much sought-after speaker, panelist, lecturer, and contributor across the U.S.

His nominator and fellow classmate lauded Brian's contributions. "Since retiring from the government, he has continued his public service by researching and writing the untold stories of the Buffalo Soldiers and African Americans in the military."

See brianshellum.com for additional information.



“High Flyers”

Distinguished Alumni Award

Past Winners

2020 Winners

ANNE CARLIN *Class of 1982*
INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTANT

ROBERT DETTMER *Class of 1969*
MN LEGISLATOR, VETERAN, TEACHER

BRENDA THAYER EISENSCHENK *Class of 1988*
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENTREPRENEUR, COMMUNITY LEADER

MICHAEL GRAMSE *Class of 1966*
OWNER OF MGR TOOL AND DIE, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ADVOCATE

DANIEL LIPS, MD. *Class of 1973*
INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGIST, RESEARCHER

VERNON ‘VAN’ NELSON *Class of 1962*
CAREER PEACE CORPS WORKER

2019 Winners

BRAD BURKHARTZMEYER *Class of 1978*
SOLAR ENERGY INNOVATOR, ENTREPRENEUR, TRAINER

THOMAS GAGNON *Class of 1964*
PUBLISHER, COMMUNITY BOOSTER, CIVIC LEADER, ENTREPRENEUR

DEANNA KOZITZA MASON, PhD. *Class of 1992*
NURSE PRACTITIONER, PATIENT ADVOCATE, HEALTH EDUCATOR

BRANDEN S. MORIARITY, PhD. *Class of 2003*
PEDIATRIC CANCER RESEARCHER, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, ENTREPRENEUR

ERIN WEIER REMME *Class of 2003*
ADVOCATE AND FUNDRAISER FOR CANCER RESEARCH, NURSE

LORENE MCDONALD RUTHERFORD, MD. *Class of 1976*
PEDIATRICIAN, HUMANITARIAN, MENTOR

WILLIAM ‘BILL’ SARTOR *Class of 1960*
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY COORDINATOR, COMMUNITY BUILDER

2018 Winners

DONALD "BUCK" BURKHARTZMEYER *Class of 1942*
BUSINESSMAN, PEDORTHIST, COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR

LARRY CHARBONNEAU, PhD. *Class of 1957*
CHEMICAL ENGINEER, PATENT AUTHOR

ALAN MARKMAN, MD. *Class of 1971*
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON, BUSINESSMAN

ANN MICHELS *Class of 1988*
PERFORMER - THEATER AND MUSIC

MARTHA SCHULTZ *Class of 2002*
COMMUNITY ORGANIZER AND ADVOCATE

CAROL LUECKE THOMAS *Class of 1966*
AIR FORCE BRIGADIER GENERAL, NURSE

2017 Winners

MARY ANN BUDENSKÉ *Class of 1966*
COMMUNITY ACTIVIST, LAWYER

RICHARD CARLANDER *Class of 1955*
PHILANTHROPIST, BANKER, COMMUNITY LEADER

RICHARD HAUGLAND, PhD. *Class of 1961*
PHILANTHROPIST, VISTA VOLUNTEER, CHEMIST

TRACY BAHL *Class of 1980*
EXECUTIVE, PHILANTHROPIST, COMMUNITY SUPPORTER

VUI MAI, MD. *Class of 1995*
FAMILY PHYSICIAN

GARY TOLLEFSON, MD. *Class of 1969*
PSYCHIATRIST, PHARMACEUTICAL INVENTOR

WILLIAM BOTTKE, PhD. *Class of 1984*
ASTROPHYSICIST, NASA SCIENTIST, RESEARCHER

ELIZABETH WALL STROHFUS *Class of 1937*
WWII FEMALE PILOT, INSTRUCTOR, STORYTELLER

ERICA STAAB-ABSHER *Class of 1995*
SOCIAL WORKER, AUTHOR

HAROLD PASSER, PhD. *Class of 1939*
GOVERNMENT ECONOMIST, PROFESSOR

JANEL KLEIN *Class of 1994*
JOURNALIST, CORRESPONDENT, ON-AIR TALENT

Donations

To FHS Distinguished Alumni Award Program

2023

Judy and Brad Covert

Donna Crowl

Jerry Robicheau

Diane Clapp

Pat Fuchs

Marlys Johnson

Mark and Kristy Sybilrud

Anne Carlin

Marian Bahl

Linda Butzow

Glen and Shirley Norgaard

Virgil Luehrs

Janel Klein

Mary Niermann

Denny Glynn

Ken and Pat Kangas

Barb and Wade Karli

Anonymous – 12 donors

Tina and Chuck Madson

Steve and Cindy Griesert

Lynda Boudreau

Pete Bachrach

Nancy Homeier

Rod Gramse

Van Nelson

In Honor and/or Memory of:

Brad Nelson in memory of Joanne Frances Nelson

Sue LeMieux in memory of John LeMieux

Anonymous in honor of Van Nelson

Kathryn and Mark Charbonneau in memory of Larry Charbonneau

Anonymous in memory of Dave Thayer

Ken and Vicky Hubert in honor of our children who are FHS graduates

Shirley Burkhartzmeyer in memory of David Burkhartzmeyer

Jeff Sartor in honor of the Bill Sartor family and in memory of Bill Sartor

Keith Glarner in honor of Charlotte Glarner and in memory of Colvin Glarner

Benet Freund in memory of Ray Freund

Kathy Larson in honor of Mae Bottke and in memory of Bill Hohenthaler

Bob and Nancy Fielitz in honor of the Distinguished Alumni Committee

Janna Viscomi in memory of Dena Bertrum

Lyle and Ruth Olson in honor of all Faribault teachers and staff

Keith and Brenda Eisenschenk in memory of David Thayer

Adam and Rebecca Thomas in honor of Michael Gramse
and in memory of Eva Gramse

Chelle and Troy Marquart in honor of Mike Gramse

Ryan Gramse in honor of Mike Gramse and in memory of Eva Gramse

Jane Draheim in honor and memory of my Faribault colleagues

Dan and Betsy Carlin in honor of the Carlin children

Support the Future of Excellence: Donate to the Distinguished Alumni Award

Join us in celebrating and perpetuating the legacy of excellence at Faribault High School. The Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes and honors alumni who have achieved extraordinary accomplishments and made significant contributions to their profession, community, and society at large. By donating to the Distinguished Alumni Award fund, you're not just honoring the past; you're investing in the future of outstanding achievements. Every donation, no matter the size, contributes to a legacy of excellence.

HOW TO DONATE

The best way to make a donation is to place cash or a check into the provided envelope on the table tonight. Beyond that, Online, Mail, and Planned Giving are important methods as well.

ONLINE:

Use Venmo to make a secure donation.

Scan the QR code and make your donation, Please note in the "What's this for?" section that is for the *FHS Distinguished Alumni Award*.



BY MAIL:

Send a check to Falcon Alumni Award, and mail it to:

Falcon Alumni Award
701 East Division Street,
Faribault, MN 55021

PLANNED GIVING:

Consider including the Distinguished Alumni Award fund in your estate planning to create a lasting legacy.

THANK YOU

Your support is crucial in recognizing and celebrating the extraordinary achievements of our alumni. Together, we can continue to foster a culture of excellence that impacts our community and the world. Donate today and be a part of this prestigious legacy.



“High Flyers”

Distinguished Alumni Award *Nomination Criteria*

Every year, graduates of Faribault High School will be honored for distinguished achievements or careers.

1. Nominee must be a Faribault High School graduate.
2. Candidate must have graduated at least 10 years prior to nomination.
3. Nominee must have attained a high level of achievement in one or more of the following:
 - Personal and/or professional life
 - Community service
 - Humanitarian activities

Nomination forms are available on the Faribault Public Schools website under Quick Links >> Alumni or scan the QR code in the bottom corner.

You will be asked to:

- Provide your nominee’s name, graduation year, and contact information along with your name, address, and contact information.
- Describe your nominee’s career path and special interests.
- List your nominee’s service and civic activities and organizations.
- List any special awards, recognitions, and honors your nominee has received.
- Include any additional information about your nominee to assist the Selection Committee in choosing award winners.

Mail the completed nomination form and supplementary documents (optional) **by January 1** to:

Faribault Falcon Distinguished Alumni Award

Jill Fagerlund

701 Division St. E.

Faribault, MN 55021

