Seneca Valley Sports Hall of Fame

Thirteenth Annual Induction Banquet
September 18, 2021

Seneca Valley Sports Hall of Fame

Thirteenth Annual Banquet and Induction Program

September 18, 2021
Seneca Valley Senior High, Harmony, PA 16037

Banquet

Banquet Doors Open	Seneca Valley Senior High	5:15 P.M.
Welcome	Mr. Mickey Flood, SV '90	5:45 P.M.
Buffet Dinner	Seneca Valley Senior High Cafeteria	

Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Induction Ceremony	Seneca Valley Senior High Auditorium	7:00 P.M.
Welcome	Mr. Wayne Roccia, SV '68	
Welcoming Remarks	Mr. Ron Butschle, Dean of Students at Seneca Valley Senior High *on behalf of the Seneca Valley School District Administration*	

Presentation of Inductees

Cathy (Black) Beighey [SV '70] Unable to attend; statement of appreciation will be read

Brianne Morgan (SV '96) Introduced by *George Trew* (Brianne's Coach)

This Hall of Fame Award is accepted posthumously tonight by *Mrs. Helena Morgan*, Brianne's Mother, on behalf of herself and her husband, *Mr. Gary Morgan,* and the entire Morgan family.

Brandon Fusco (SV '06) Introduced by *George Mihalik* (Brandon's College Football Coach)

Don Barclay (SV '07) Introduced by *Donald "Chip" Barclay* (Donny's Father)

Ron Gruca (SV '91) Introduced by *Graeme Eastgate* (Ron's Friend and Teammate)
Introduced by *Will Gruca* [Ron's Son]

Roberta (Pickens) Groner (SV '96) Unable to attend in 2021

Roberta has deferred her induction and acceptance until the 2022 Hall of Fame. Due to a series of conflicting events for family and her professional running schedule, she made the difficult decision to request this deferment, and thanks the committee for understanding. Roberta sends her congratulations to her fellow Hall of Famers - Cathy, Ron, Brandon, Don, and to Mr. and Mrs. Morgan and their family for this honor for Brianne, her fellow '96 graduate.

Congratulations to the 2021 Seneca Valley Sports Hall of Fame Inductees!





Cathy Black Beighey
Seneca Valley Class of 1970
Basketball

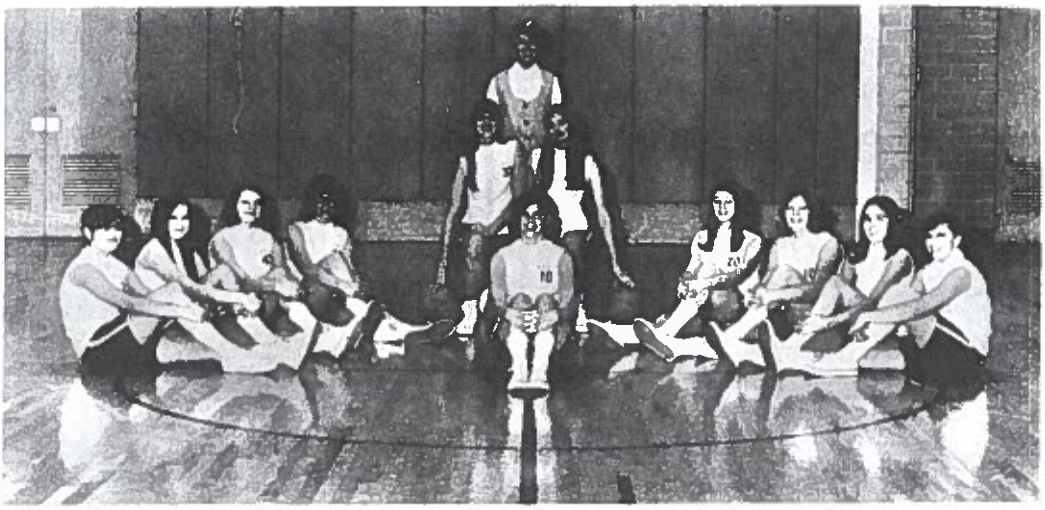
Cathy (Black) Beighey, 1970 graduate of Seneca Valley High School, was a pioneer in girls' athletics for the Raiders and excelled in the classroom. During her scholastic years, there were only three sports offered for females, and freshmen athletes could not earn a varsity letter. Much has changed and evolved since that era, and Beighey has been in the front row throughout the decades. First, she cheered her fellow athlete sisters Amy Black and Beth Black (Hall of Fame 2009) in their multiple sports as she and her husband John Beighey '70 started their family. All three of their children, Liz '92, Sara '96, and Brian '02 were multi-sport athletes at Seneca Valley. Today, some of her grandchildren are SV Raiders.

Not only were there few opportunities to join teams, but in her chosen sport of basketball, the game was just blossoming for girls. Beighey and her teammates were only permitted to play 10 total games each year. Girls' basketball was still played as a half-court game only. In addition, female players were restricted to only three dribbles per possession before shooting or passing. As a guard, that rule was challenging. Until her senior year, the girls had to provide their own uniforms. Later, as a parent of two female basketball players at Seneca Valley, Beighey got involved as a booster to ensure that opportunities were offered for all the girls.

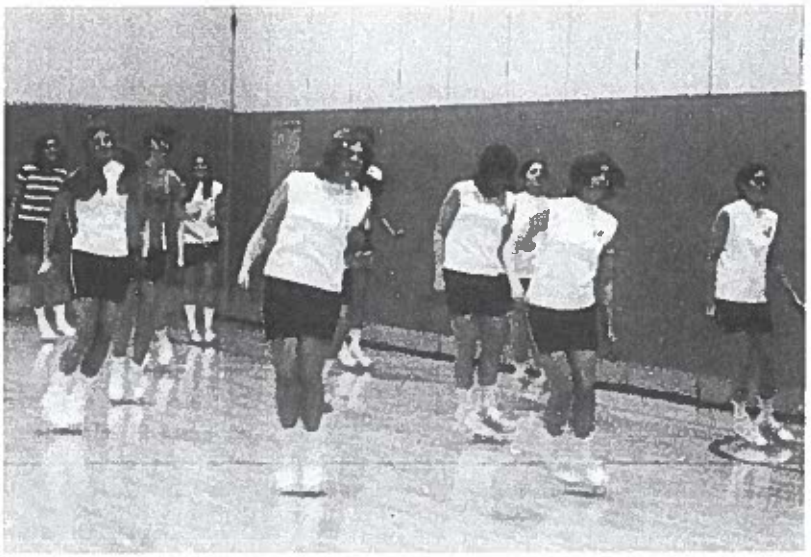
Beighey earned three varsity letters for girls' basketball at Seneca Valley. In her senior year, the 1969-1970 season, Cathy scored 41% of the team's total points enroute to a 6-4 record. Her total points for that season was 118 to lead the team to a successful year. The school was in its sixth year of existence, and that season was the first winning one for the girls' basketball program in Seneca Valley's history. Since then Cathy (Black) Beighey has enjoyed Raider athletics for many seasons. Today, Cathy is owns and operates of Eastern Architectural Products of Zelienople with her husband John and son Brian. She works out daily to maintain her health and endurance.













Brianne Morgan
Seneca Valley Class of 1996
Softball, Basketball

Brianne Morgan, a 1996 graduate of Seneca Valley, earned four varsity letters in softball and three varsity letters in basketball during high school. She left an unforgettable impression on her teammates, coaches, and friends with her positive and fun demeanor, her passion for athletics, and her insight about team unity. Not only was Morgan a talented softball player, but also a great all-around athlete.

While a Raider on the Seneca Valley girls' basketball team, she was coached by Todd Schoeffel with assistants Tony Clark, Lisa Brand, Nancy Graham, and David Wilson during her years playing. Blessed with talented teammates, the basketball team advanced to the playoffs during Brianne's junior year in the 1994-1995 season where they played Upper St. Clair. During her senior year in basketball, she was part of a team that won 9 of their last 12 games to finish a strong winning season. Brianne Morgan was a member of a talented squad of basketball players.

After growing up playing community softball, Morgan played for Seneca Valley's softball team from 8th grade through her senior year with much individual and team success. Coached by Greg Hayward and George Trew, Brianne lettered on varsity four years after watching that team win the WPIAL during her 8th grade season. A most impressive statistic is Brianne's .450 career batting average for the Raiders. In fact, she batted just over .500 during two seasons of play. She was named to the All-

Section team in the 1994, 1995, and 1996 seasons as a shortstop. One thing memorable about Morgan was that she could be counted on for key big hits to lift her team in competition. The Raiders' softball team played in the WPIAL playoffs; Morgan was also a member of the PIAA Runner-Up Team during her senior year. Morgan also played fast pitch softball during the summers of 1995 and 1996 for the Patriots. One highlight was the invitation she received in 1996 to play against the Team USA Olympic softball team in Drifton, PA. Brianne Morgan was the only player on her team to get a hit against the Olympians.

Her softball career continued at third base for Robert Morris University, which granted her a full scholarship. Her career batting average was .338, which is 6th in the team's history. Brianne played in 96 games for RMU, scoring 60 runs with 51 RBIs. She was 14 for 17 in stolen bases during her collegiate career. The 1998 team made it to the NCAA Tournament in the post season. If you look at the softball media guide for Robert Morris, you will find Brianne Morgan's name throughout its history. As a freshman, her team was the regular season NEC Champions with a 34-19 record, 14-2 in the section. The next year in 1998, the team was 26-20-1, with a 10-1-1- conference record and made the playoffs. While at RMU, Morgan earned two letters in her two seasons of play. She was named 1st Team All-NEC for third base in both 1997 and 1998. Brianne is in the RMU record book for the following categories: All-time hits with 54 in 1997, 4th in Runs with 36 in 1997, and 7th in RBIs with 34 in 1997. Her 1997 and 1998 teams are listed in the team records with seven Top 5 records including 1st in runs with 293, 1st in hits with 431, and 1st in doubles with 70. She played two successful seasons for RMU before her untimely death on May 14, 1998, just one week after her sophomore softball season ended at the NCAAs. However, she made such an amazing impact for the softball program at RMU that she was posthumously inducted into the RMU Hall of Fame in 2002. In addition, the RMU softball locker room is named in her honor in 2018. Brianne Morgan is the daughter of Gary and Helena Morgan of Evans City.









Brianne Morgan

BATTER UP! Nine-year-old Brianne Morgan, softball MVP, steps up to home plate for a backyard game in Evans City. She had played since age 3.





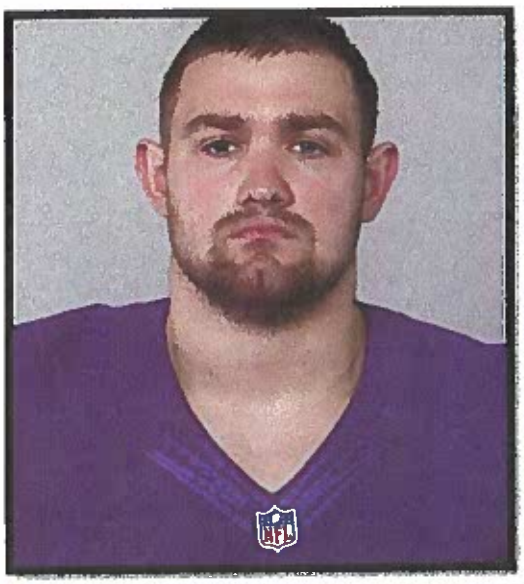












Brandon Fusco

Seneca Valley Class of 2006

Football

Brandon Fusco, a 2006 graduate of Seneca Valley, got back into football his junior year (after playing as a youth) and started on the line for the Raiders, earning two varsity letters. That decision led to his outstanding gridiron career at Slippery Rock University, ultimately leading to his NFL career. The son of Stephen and Deborah Fusco, Brandon has a sister Brittany and one nephew, and his fraternal twin brother Josh with whom he played alongside on the Raider football team. In 2016, Slippery Rock University retired Fusco's #74 jersey in a ceremony that meant so much to him, considering the generations of great SRU players.

While at Seneca Valley, Fusco was awarded Honorable Mention Quad North All-Star Team. He was also an excellent student. The football team experienced strong success during his high school years, and Fusco was noticed. He ended up choosing Slippery Rock University to continue his football career. He proudly earned his bachelor's degree in Safety Management from SRU.

While at SRU, Fusco started all 44 games at center during the four seasons of 2007-2010. He was honored as a Division II All-American three of his four years. Additional accolades during his time at SRU included: AP Little All-American as a senior, 1st Team All-American, and Gene Upshaw Division II Lineman of the Year Award in 2010 as a senior (after finishing third in the voting as a junior). He was 3-Time All PSAC All-Conference and 3-Time All-Region. Fusco was the first player in the history of SRU to participate in the Senior Bowl and soon after in the NFL Scouting Combine. He worked hard with dedication to refine his natural athletic ability while playing for Slippery Rock University. In addition to playing on the line at center, Fusco was versatile and also could play at guard or tackle. He was rated the number 12

center prospect for the 2011 NFL Draft and was ranked 1st among all non Division I players. A team captain, Fusco once caught a pass for 9 yards vs. Edinboro to leave a mark in the stats column for SRU.

Brandon Fusco was drafted 7th in the 6th Round by the NFL's Minnesota Vikings in 2011. From 2011 - 2017, Fusco was a starter inn 63 of 66 games at both left and right guard for the Vikings. After playing in three games in 2011, he started all 16 regular season games and the Vikings' one playoff game in the 2012 season. After recovering from an injury, he worked his way into starting 3 games in 2014 and all 16 games in 2015 at left guard for Minnesota. In 2016 he played both at the right and left guard positions as needed. After his career with the Vikings, Fusco played as a starter on the offensive line with the San Francisco 49ers. After that, he was with the Atlanta Falcons for one season, starting the first seven games before a season-ending ankle injury. In all, Fusco played in 90 NFL games and started in 87 on the Minnesota Vikings (2011-2016), San Francisco 49ers (2017) and Atlanta Falcons (2018).

Brandon Fusco's NFL career started with youth football in Cranberry Township. His positive impact upon Seneca Valley football is strong. Key high school teammates were Donny Barclay, Kevan Smith, and Zach Duggan, coached by Ron Butschle and position coach Jim Lucot. Some Key college teammates for him were AJ Hopp Brian Henion, Marty Kern, John Skebo, Kevin Guidish, Aaron Nall, Zach Sheridan, and John Krauland. Fusco added that key professional teammates for him included: Phil Loadholt, John Sullivan, Adrian Peterson, Joe Staley , Jimmy Garrapollo, and Matt Ryan. He is grateful for all of his opportunities in football over the years.

Here are some reflections from Brandon Fusco about his football career:

Winning our first game of the season my Senior year at SV against Kiski Area is a great memory. We trailed for most of the game. My fellow Hall of Fame inductee Don Barclay made some key plays that game to help us win that game. When we won, everyone stormed the field. It was an amazing moment.

Without my family's support throughout years, I wouldn't have done or accomplished what I done my whole life. They had an exceptional influence and helped me so much through the good times and the bad times of my career. I couldn't ask for a better support system. Also I need to include my college head coach George Mihalik. He would call me every week to check on me and see how I was doing. We would talk about anything from football or just life. He always gave me great advice, and I have appreciated everything he has done in my life.

My message for current and future Seneca Valley athletes is this: Don't ever let someone tell you that you aren't good enough. Have the belief in yourself knowing that you were brought on this planet to make an impact in some kind of way. That doesn't always have to be sports. Give everything you have at all times. Work when no one is

watching. If you know within yourself that you gave everything you got, you will be able to live with that. Don't leave a reason for regrets.

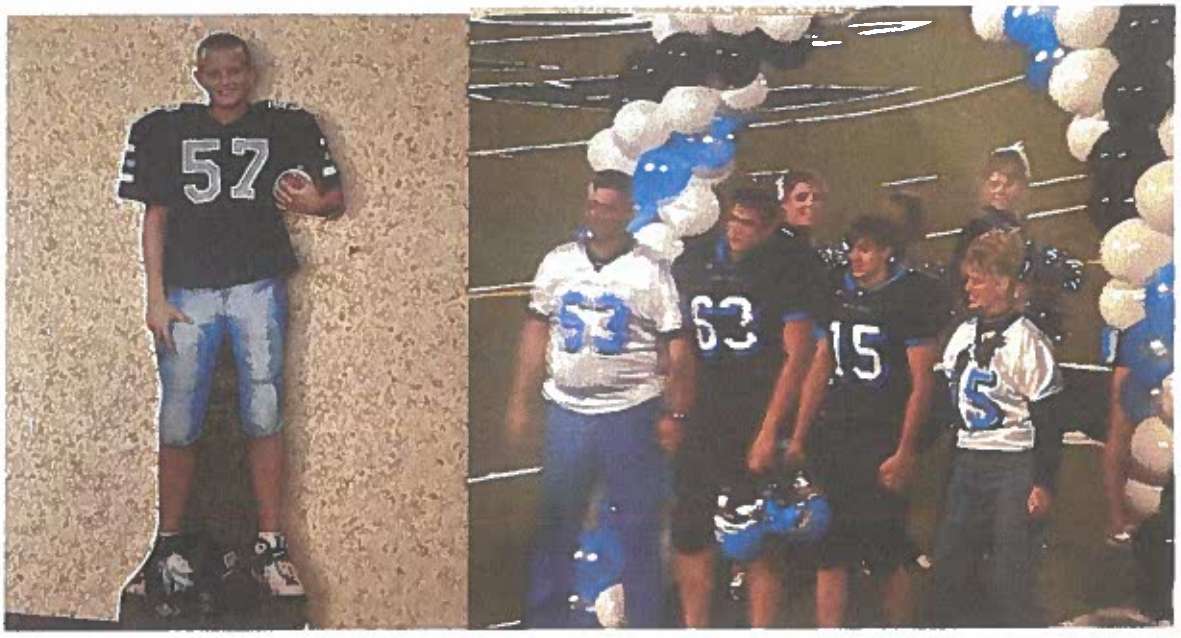
There were many challenges I had to face throughout my career. I've had to overcome multiple injuries and surgeries. I've had to overcome times where I wasn't playing my best. No matter what, I always kept a positive attitude and worked my way through it. I know when I was playing I gave everything I had.

Athletics influenced and taught me a lot. Showed me the importance of accountability, trust and discipline. Football teaches you so many life lessons that I use today. I've had many teammates over my career that I can thank for helping me along the way. Vikings teammates Phil Loadholt and John Sullivan were very influential earlier on in my career. Showing me as a rookie to become a true professional. They set the way for me to learn how to handle myself and play a long, successful career.

I felt a great deal of pride when I was a Raider. I made sure I told myself to represent with respect, commitment and dedication to the program. I hope I made a great impact to others while I was here. I'm very much proud of where I came from.

Honestly, every time I get a chance to come home and see SV, it feels like the same home as when I was attending here. I've had so many good memories here that I wouldn't change for the world!

I had many supporters while I was here at SV, from teammates to coaches to teachers. When I was here at SV, it had a family feel to it. We looked out for each other and cared about each other so much. To this day, I still keep in contact with my many people from SV. I will forever be grateful for the people I had the with whom I had the honor of playing football!

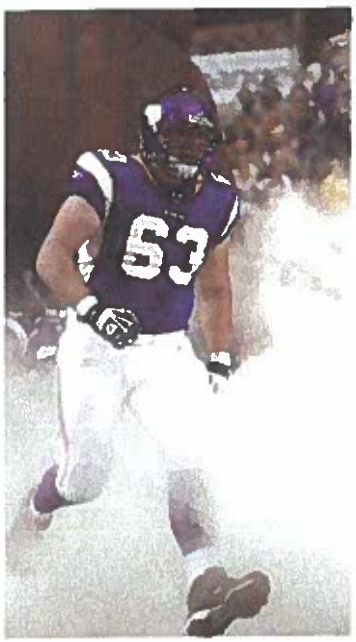

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THE ROCK
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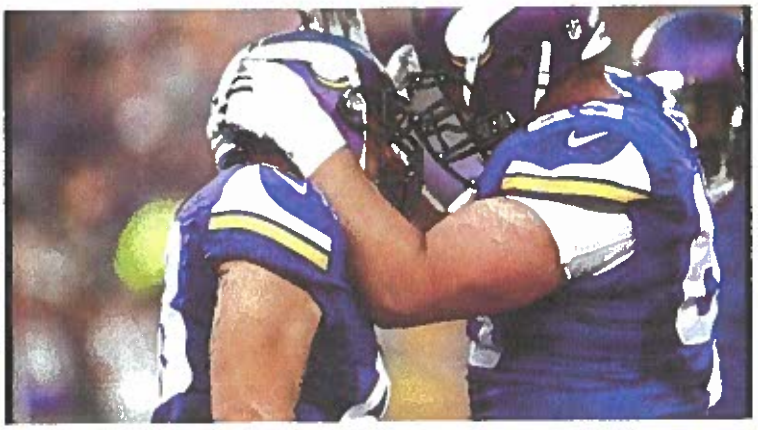

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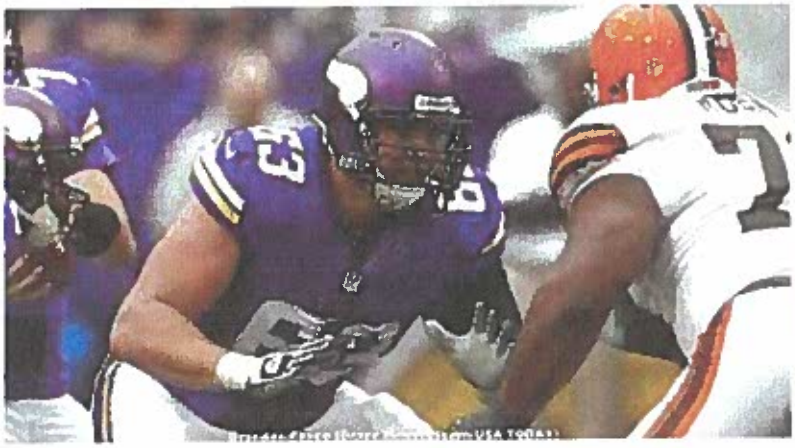

THE ROCK











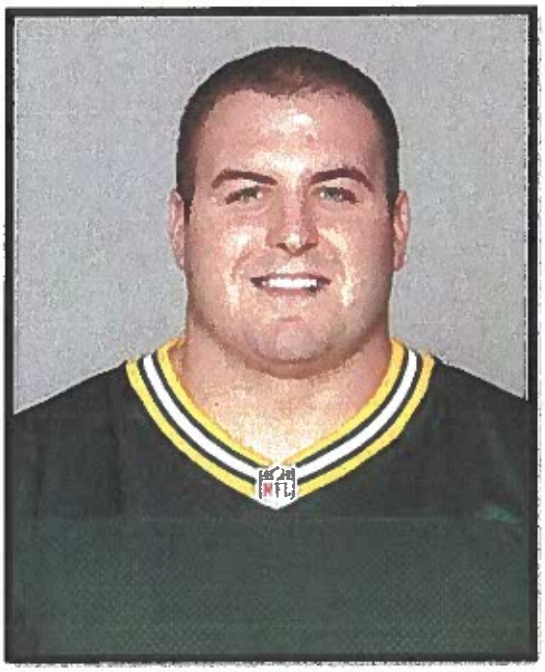





Done


BARCLAY
FUSCO





Don Barclay
Seneca Valley Class of 2007
Football, Basketball, Baseball

Don Barclay, a 2007 graduate of Seneca Valley, first played all three team sports for the Raiders: football, basketball, and baseball. Donny is married to the former Brea Mentus whom he met at WVU, and they are the proud parents of three children: Cooper, Brynn, and Bella. Donny was raised by his parents Don "Chip" and Dana Barclay in Cranberry Township with his sister Brooke and brother Beau. After one year of Raider baseball in 9th grade, and basketball in grades 7 through 10, Barclay set his focus upon football, a choice that led to playing Division I at West Virginia University, and to his NFL career, primarily with the Green Bay Packers.

At Seneca Valley, Barclay was awarded 2nd Team All-State for Offense and Defense on winning teams with head coach Ron Butschle and position coach Jim Lucot. His experience and talent led to recruitment by multiple Division I schools to play football and get his education. WVU was the next level for Barclay, who later earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Management.

At WVU, Barclay started 40 games during his gridiron career for the Mountaineers. He was honored with the Weight Room Warrior Award and the Ideal Mountaineer Man Award, acknowledging his dedication to strength and conditioning. As a junior at SVU, Barclay was named 2nd Team All Big East, playing on the line. During his senior year, he earned 1st Team All Big East honors and was also named a 4th Team All-American. WVU enjoyed success during Barclay's years on the team. In fact they were the Fiesta Bowl Champions one year and the Orange Bowl Champions another year. Another proud achievement for Barclay at WVU was being honored three years on the Big East All-Academic Team. The team was 48-17 during his years, finishing multiple times in the Top 25.

Undrafted by the NFL, Barclay took his ability to play at both tackle and guard to Green Bay, after some interest from a few NFL teams after graduating from college. It worked, and the Packers added him to their roster in 2012. During his career with Green Bay, Barclay started 29 games on the offensive line and played in two NFC playoff games, two Divisional Round Games, and one Wild Card game. In 2017, Barclay was signed by the Detroit Lions and started one game before being injured. Now retired, Donny Barclay took time to reflect upon his years at Seneca Valley which led to both his successful collegiate and professional careers playing football.

Some great memories are the countless friendships I made throughout my years at SV, whether it was teammates or coaches. The long days of hard work and sweat grew these relationships over time, knowing we were working towards being the best we could be.

I have been blessed by several people who influenced me career: My father. He made me the man I am today. I grew through the ways he taught me and trained me. He spent countless hours training me for baseball and basketball as I grew up. He always made time for me to help me improve no matter the circumstances. He taught me the definition of WORK. He would always tell me, "There is always someone out there working harder than you;" "Did you get better today?" and "There is no tomorrow." I feel like it still echoes in my head as I try to accomplish whatever I am doing to this day.

Ron Butschle- Ron is someone I love and appreciate everything he has done for me to this day. I loved going to football every day because I

knew Ron believed in me from day one. When I showed up to practice the first day I had it in my mind I was going to be a tight end. Ron grabbed me that day and put me into the offensive line drills and said STAY HERE if you want to play. I couldn't thank him enough to this day. I have so much respect for Ron because he's not only a great coach but a father.

Jim Lucot- Jim taught me the techniques that I needed in order to be a better Offensive lineman my senior season. He is another coach I love and appreciate because I knew he believed in me. It was enjoyable going to work for him in practice every day knowing how much pride he puts into any work he does. He taught me how to be precise and detailed in everything I do. This helped me transition quickly at WVU. Jim is another great coach and father.

Athletics influenced me tremendously. It is life to me. Sports is what controlled my life over the past 25 years. I'm not ashamed to say that because of all the memories and moments it has created for my family and I. Football is a great sport that I hope my son plays one day. There is no other sport in this world that will test you mentally and physically to its capacity. There is nothing like Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Monday Night Football.

Being a Raider- it means to keep fighting and never leave your wingman. I want the current and future Raiders to understand that to succeed, you need to find something to hold on to. Something to motivate you, something to inspire you.

Supporters in high school- my mother #1. I can't thank her enough for what she has done to support me in life. She was my #1 fan growing up and supported me in every way. I think I have every right to say I have to best mom. My dad, Beau, and Brooke always supported me. They always came to my games and supported me. It never went unnoticed having siblings sit through all games over the years no matter what sport it was. My grandparents - Dave and Janet Melder and Don and Cathy Barclay went to many football, basketball, and baseball games over the years. They even made it to Lambeau Field a couple of times. I can't thank them enough for all they have done. Most importantly, I would like to thank my wife (Brea) for supporting me in every decision I made over the years to what I thought would better our family. You have guided me through my career and mentally keep me going no matter what has knocked me down.

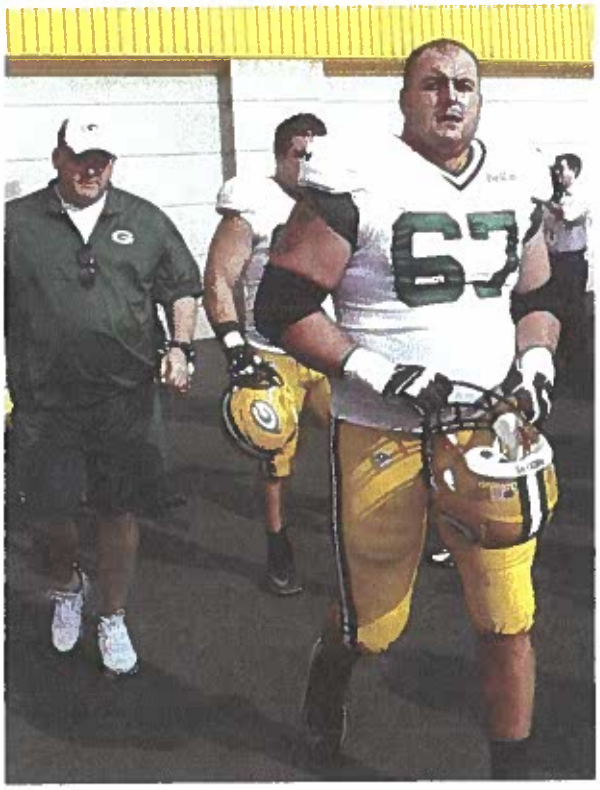






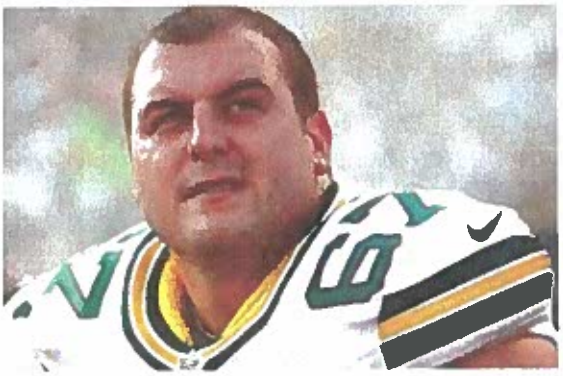


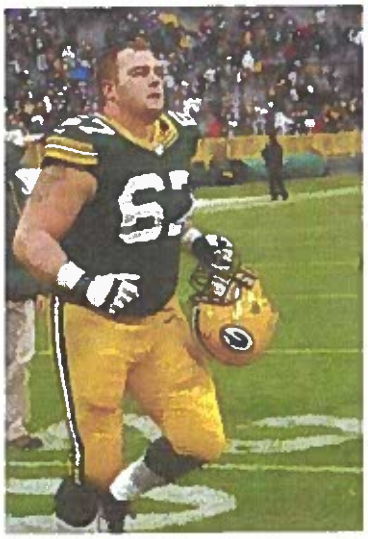




















Ron Gruca
Seneca Valley Class of 1991
Soccer

Ron Gruca, a 1991 graduate of Seneca Valley, still holds scoring records for the Raiders' soccer team, 31 seasons after he set them. The son of Rich and Peg Gruca who raised Ron in Cranberry Township with his siblings Tracy (Gruca) Barron and Rick Gruca, who was responsible for starting the SV soccer program with Jim Wolfe. Ron has made his career working for non-profits and is currently employed by Pressley Ridge where he is Senior Director of Development. He and his wife Cindy live in the Ambridge area with their daughter Emily who attends the University of Kentucky, and their son Will, a junior soccer player at the high school.

During his tenure on the SV varsity soccer team, Gruca was coached by Ken Eastgate who was assisted by Mark Macedonia and Harold Perkins. Ron earned four varsity letters, was named Team Offensive Player of the Year three times, and twice was Team MVP. He holds scoring records as follows: Most Career Goals with 67, Most Individual Goals in Regular Season with 32 in 1990 as a senior, and Team with Most Goals in a Season - 1990. Gruca is tied for the Most Individual Goals in Playoff Games with 3, and leads in the Best Average Goals per Game with 1.8. Additionally, Gruca had multiple games when he scored 4 or more goals to help the Raiders.

During his senior season in 1990, the team made its first WPIAL playoff appearance competing in the first round against Norwin. That team was Section V Champs, the first time to win the section. Gruca was the Section V Player of the Year in 1990, *Post-Gazette* Player of the Year in 1990, *Post-Gazette* Finest All-Stars 1990, and All-Section in 1988, 1989, and 1990 for Seneca Valley. Key teammates of Ron's included Graeme Eastgate, Gavin Eastgate, Brian Hamm, Jeff Kuntz, Kevin VanTine, Jeff Marshall, and Scott Robinson. He remembers the first time beating North

Allegheny as one key highlight. Another award was to be recognized by KDKA-TV for the Extra Effort Award. Gruca also ran SV junior high track and field. He played for the Strikers Soccer Club, coached by Bill Mohney during high school. A member of the National Honor Society, Gruca was awarded the SV Soccer Boosters Scholarship.

After graduation, Gruca accepted a scholarship to play soccer at Allegheny College in Meadville, PA and was coached by Marty Goldberg. In 1995 he earned his BS degree in Mathematics from Allegheny. His soccer career continued with success during his collegiate years. He finished playing soccer there while achieving 2nd All-Time in Career Goals with 41 and 2nd in Career Points with 97 in the Allegheny record book. Not only was Gruca named NCAC Player of the Week in October, 1992, but also he was a two-time honoree on the All-NCAC Team.

Ron Gruca coached ABE Soccer for a number of years when his daughter and son played in their youth. A 1991 Seneca Valley graduate and 1995 graduate of Allegheny College, Gruca shared these thoughts about his years competing in soccer:

Great memories of SV Athletics:

- Soccer defined me and was really the highlight of my experience in high school – and certainly for college. While there are many fond memories, being a contributor and witnessing the transition of a team who lost nearly every game to winning one of arguably the toughest sections at the time was awe-inspiring.
- Beating North Allegheny for the first time in the program's history and then again on their home turf was a highlight.
- Another of my favorite memories was my senior year against Butler at home. Going up for a header from a corner kick, I was kicked in the mouth by the goalkeeper, splitting my lip and cracking a couple of teeth. I went off the field for a quick look by the trainer (and a Band-Aid to cover the gash on my chin), then returned and scored a goal before leaving for emergency surgery.
- Bus rides home from away games that we won were particularly memorable – the singing and chanting on the bus was awesome ("We are the Raiders, the mighty, mighty Raiders…").
- Receiving the Extra Effort Award in front of the student body was certainly an honor; but it really wasn't about my recognition. It was about respect of our soccer program from the students. That was awesome for our team to have come so far.
- Finally, making the playoffs for the first time in the program's history was a dream, even though we lost.

I can attribute my influences to a small handful of people in my life. By far, my brother pushed me from the time I played on the yellow team in U-10 for Cranberry until I made my debut in high school. His competitiveness has always inspired me and the 6-year difference in age (he was older!) only heightened his mentorship and my admiration. Rich Mykut was one of the first coaches who taught all of us to understand

the game beyond just scoring goals. When I finally made it to high school, Ken Eastgate most influenced my development as a player. He helped me become a leader and motivated me to make a difference every minute I was on the field; he believed in me and the entire team that we could excel.

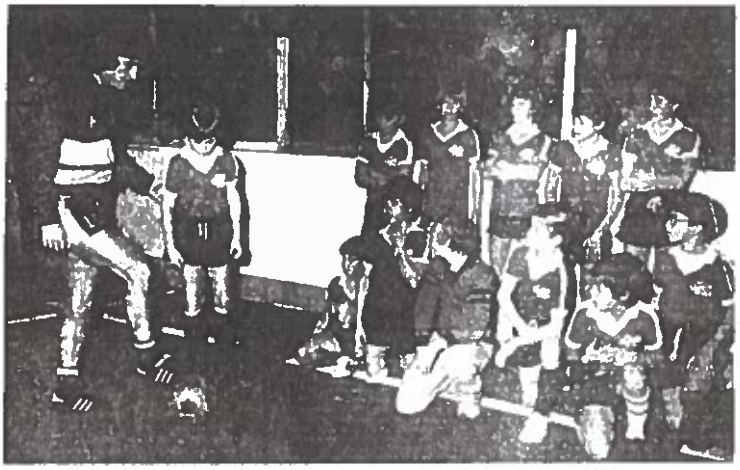
The soccer program found little to no success since my brother first started it in the mid-'80s (and was the program's first MVP). As a result, one of the biggest challenges we all faced early on was respect as a program; we were always the underdog and it took the better part of a decade to change that. Football consistently fared well (in no small part thanks to some of their leaders currently enshrined). It was all about teamwork for us, though. I wouldn't have had the successes or records without a strong team. SV has changed dramatically since I graduated in '91. The Senior High is now the Junior High; there is a new Senior High. The athletic facilities have had massive upgrades. The Myers Soccer Field used to be a cow pasture that we used as a practice field (exaggerating a bit, of course). The class sizes are much larger, for sure. And the reputation as a high quality school district has certainly increased.

I'm certain that my experience has influenced my kids' experiences with athletics to this day. My daughter played high school volleyball, making all-section 3 years; my son will be a sophomore who not only has been a starter for high school, but has made the Olympic Development Program Eastern Region the last several years, traveling to Portugal last year.

I mentioned my brother earlier, as well as Ken Eastgate, who both believed in me. But, by far, the proudest supporters of my high school career were my parents. They cheered the loudest. In fact, my dad was probably the biggest supporter (even though, ironically, I found out later in life he really didn't care for soccer). He never missed a single game, whether club, high school, or even college home games. Having that type of support system made a huge difference in my career. I couldn't have achieved what I did without them.

It's amazing how short being an SV athlete really is, but it can make a huge impact on the rest of your life. Give 100% of yourself in practice, games, and meets and you'll reap the rewards. "I'm still proud of being a Raider athlete, particularly now that the soccer program has evolved so much. Back then, we were the underdog for many years. The support from the school, students, and cheerleaders all gave us the energy and wherewithal to make a difference on the pitch. That's Raider pride."







EXTRA EFFORT AWARD for excellence in academics and athletics was presented to Seneca Valley senior Ron Gruca by Bob Pompeani of KDKA Television at a school assembly last Tuesday. Barb Weisenbaum of Phar-Mor, at left, gave a $200 to the Seneca Valley Athletic Department in Gruca's name. Photo by Ray Thompson

Gruca Garners Extra Effort Award at SV





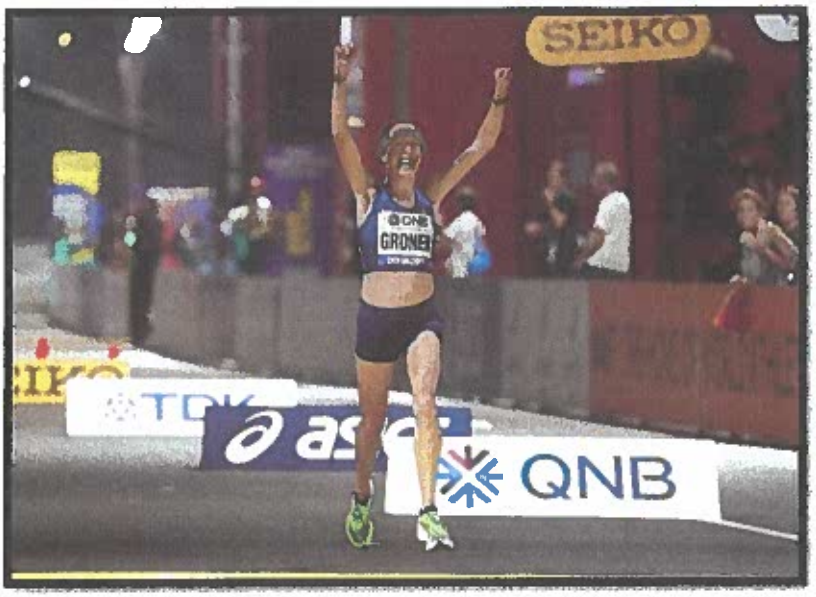












Roberta Pickens Groner
Seneca Valley Class of 1996
Cross Country, Track and Field

Roberta (Pickens) Groner, a 1996 graduation of Seneca Valley, earned eight varsity letters in the two sports of cross country and track and field, excelling as a middle and long distance runner. Her impact was significant for both winning teams. Today, Roberta runs professionally as a marathoner for the United States, while working full time and raising three teenaged sons.

As a Raider, Pickens-Groner was twice named Co-MVP for both cross country and track and field teams. As a four-year member of Coach Randy Huey's cross country teams, Roberta was a key member of teams that were section champs in 1992 during her freshman year, followed by 2nd in the WPIAL Team Championships and 3rd in the PIAA Team Championships in 1993 during her sophomore year. That team was undefeated in the section that year with Roberta finishing 2nd best for the Raiders most often. She was the top girl runner at the Northern Invitational for the region. As a junior, her cross country team was 5th in the WPIAL and repeated as section champs while she improved her speed and strength. SV repeated as section champs for the fourth consecutive year in 1995, compiling a four year record of 29-3 with Roberta on the team. In '95, the team was 2nd at the Big Red Invitational, losing to a team from Ohio by 2 points. They were 6th in the 1995 WPIAL team championship, just missing the PIAA team championships. In the only loss at Butler, Roberta was 3rd overall, the top runner for the Raiders.

The SV Girl's Track and Field team coached by Wayne Roccia was also successful during Pickens-Groner's four-year career. In 1993, her team was 13-2, tying for the section title her freshman year. The next year, Roberta's team was 16-2 and finished as in 2nd place at the WPIAL team championships. She placed 8th in the 1600-meter run at WPIALs, advancing to the PIAA meet. Success continued for the Raider girls' track and field team in the spring of 1995 when they finished 9-2. Roberta began to build her individual resume while helping her team by excelling in the 1600-meter run. She finished 10th in the WPIAL meet as a junior. She also set a new 1600-meter school record with a time of 5:19 that year. During Roberta's senior year in 1996, the girls' track and field team achieved their 13th consecutive winning season for Seneca Valley with an 8-2 record in the highly competitive section. She was the 1600-meter champion in the section and finished 9th at the

WPIAL meet, advancing to the PIAA championship meet. As a senior, Pickens-Groner reset the school record in the 1600-meter run at 5:17.6; this record stood for eight years until broken in 2003! She currently remains in the Top 10 All-Time female runners for SV in the 1600-meters.

Roberta's success as a runner at SV launched her college career at St. Francis (PA) in the rigorous nursing program and she ran three seasons annually for the cross country, indoor track, and outdoor track and field teams. St. Francis won the NEC cross country team championship in 1996 while she was awarded the NEC Freshmen of the Year honor. During her sophomore year at St. Francis (PA), Roberta finished 2nd at the NEC Conference Championships and the team finished 1st to achieve the first-ever title for the Red Flash! During indoor and outdoor track and field seasons, her success grew. The same school year she was named All-Region NCAA Division II for indoor and for outdoor track. She set the school record in the 3000-meter race at 10:34.1 at the West Virginia Invitational and then reset the record with a 1st place finish at the Kent State Invitational the next month. She set a new record in the 5000-meter run that year and reset the 3000-meter record at the Bucknell Invitational.

During her junior and senior years, Roberta continued to run three sports seasons for St Francis (PA). Highlights include some record breaking runs. She was 2nd in the 3000-meter run at the NEC Conference Indoor Track and Field Championships in February, 1998, setting a record of 10:23.70. The same month, Roberta was 1st in the 1600-meter run at the Robert Morris University Invitational, helping her team to a 3rd place finish. In April 1998 during the track and field season, she won the 3000-meter run at the University of Maryland Invitational. These are just some of Roberta's highlights, and keep in mind that she often ran two long-distance races in each meet. By graduation, Roberta Pickens Groner had held school records in the 1500-meters, 3000-meters, and 5000-meters multiple times for St. Francis (PA).

After more than a decade without running or racing, Roberta began to train for marathons in 2011, and she safely completed the 2013 Boston Marathon an hour before it was marred by tragedy. In 2014 after moving to New Jersey for her career, she launched her professional running career with a coach and team. Roberta finished the New York City marathon in 2015 in 2:45:54. At the California International Marathon in 2017, Pickens-Groner advanced to the elite level by finishing 2nd with a time of 2:30.38. Her training continued as she adjusted her goals. In 2019, Roberta qualified for the World Championship after placing 5th at the Rotterdam Marathon in the Netherlands. Worlds was held in Doha, Qatar in spring 2019; the conditions were so intensely hot that the marathon was moved to the middle of the night. Not only did she finish 6th at Worlds, but also she was the first place runner from Team USA at age 42. This led to her advancing to the 2020 Olympic Trials to be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Although she did not make that team, her professional running career continues with a slate of marathons in the coming months. Roberta lives with her three sons, Bryan (17), Aiden (15) and Dylan (14) in northern New Jersey and works on the front line of health care as a nurse.

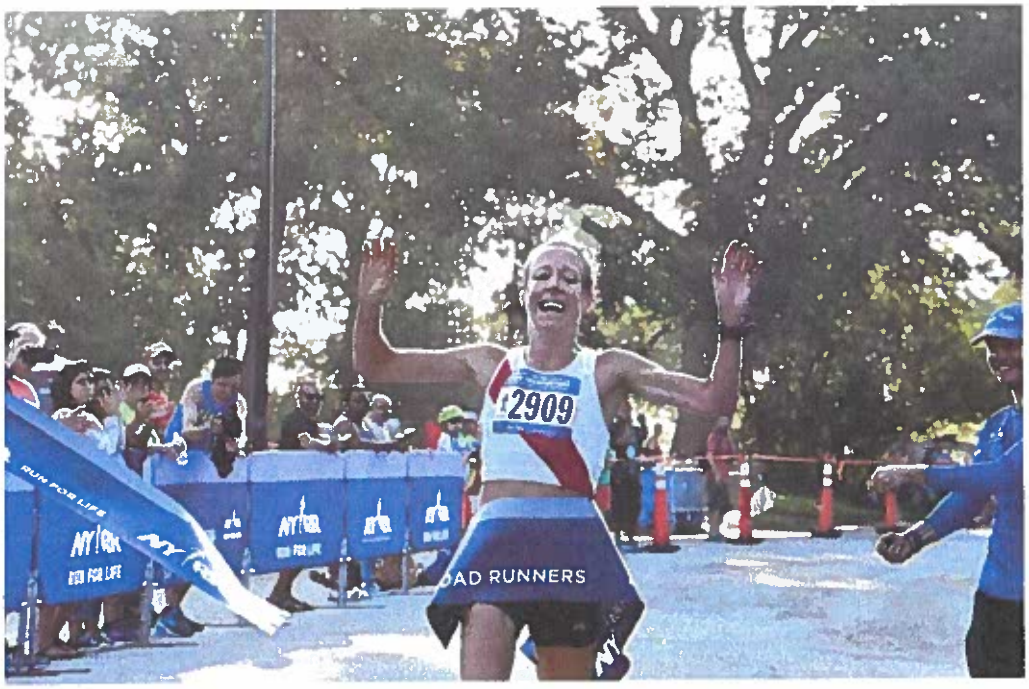

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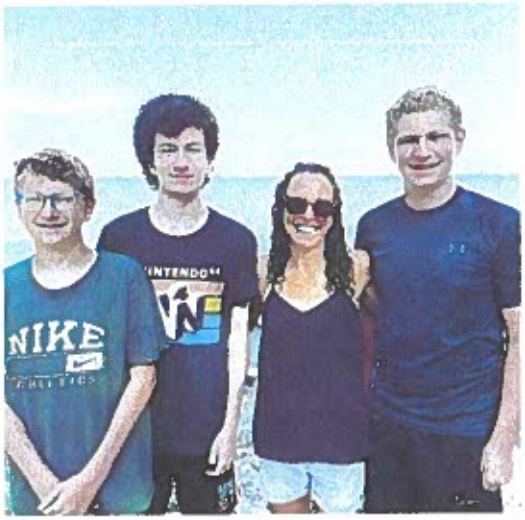





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Thank you to Butler Eagle reporter Derek Pyda for his dedication and outstanding work in researching and interviewing SV Hall of Fame inductees every year and writing the annual series of articles.

Thank you to the Thompson Family for photos obtained from the archives of Ray Thompson.

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SENECA VALLEY SPORTS HALL OF FAME
Inductees Year-by-Year

2008	Rich Barron	SV '82
	Tim Kearns	SV '70
	Ken Lockey	SV Coach
	Gus Nicoll	SV '84
	George "Doc" O'Shea	SV Trainer
	Wayne Roccia	SV '68 + Coach
	Dan Swingle	SV '83
	Mark Van Dyke	SV '75
	Van Walker	SV '68
	Martha Fox Weygandt	SV '77
2009	Beth Black	SV '77
	Wayne Bloom	SV '78
	Denny Britt	SV '67
	Dave Florie	SV Coach
	Richard Lane	SV Coach + SV Trainer
	Norman McMurray	SV Contributor
2010	Thomas Heckendorn	SV Coach + SV Athletic Director
	Lynnette K. McBride	SV '87
	Jose Raymundo	SV '89
	Amanda Smith	SV '02
	Charles C. Stevens	SV '65
	Dennis Stewart	SV '68 + Coach
2011	Matthew Barron	SV '85
	Mark J. Barron	SV '84
	Kari Bonomo Creehan	SV '94
	S. Jason Conti	SV '93
	Megan Gilliland	SV '01
	Bill Miller	SV Coach
	Sean O'Shea	SV '91

2012	David Cashdollar	SV '67
	David Ferianc	SV '68
	Marlesse Schlott Hames	SV '92
	John Paul Thiebaud	SV '72
	Raymond J. Thompson	Contributor
	Janet Wilk Swope	SV '77
	James Walsh	SV '85
2013	Stacie Safritt Anderson	SV '05
	Brian Buerkle	SV '88
	Zach Jackson	SV '01
	Toni Riley Kisling	SV '80
	Joan Sherman Trach	SV '75
	1983 PIAA Champions: Boys' Cross Country Team, *Coach Denny Stewart*	
2014	Kristen Cheman	SV '00
	Jim Harshaw, Jr.	SV '94
	Terry Henry	SV Coach + SV Athletic Director
	Peet Poillon	SV '05
	1995 PIAA Champions: Baseball Team, *Coach David Florie*	
2015	C.J. Brown	SV '09
	Barb Hamilton Druschel	SV '80
	Ralph Gross	SV Coach
	Mike Schall	SV '97
	Christopher Tully	SV '98
	2005 PIAA Champions: Girls' Swimming 200-M. Relay, *Coach Tom Donati; Kylie Gamelier, Stacie Safritt, Mandie Huffman, Kelly Connolly*	

2016	Shawn Cully	SV '01
	Tom Fletcher	SV '01
	Alyson Intihar	SV '06
	Rick Ley	SV '81
	Mary Miller Lococo	SV '79
	Daniel "Tex" Sample	SV '69 + Coach
	Emily Wolfarth	SV '08
2017	Cory Mazzoni	SV '08
	Abby Myers	SV '11
	2007 PIAA Champions: Baseball Team, *Coach Eric Semega*	
2018	Mike Adamczyk	SV '69
	Adam Boylan	SV '96
	Rich Dobrzanski	SV '77
	Dom Duggan	SV '03
	Eric Marton	SV '96
2019	Clair Altemus	SV '70 + Coach + Contributor
	Jill Colbert Brown	SV '96
	Jenny Weyman Gilmore	SV '84
	Bob Harsh	SV Coach
	Robert A. Magerko	SV Coach
	Anthony C. Sunseri	SV '92
	Larry P. Wendereusz, Jr.	SV '92

Nominations for the Seneca Valley Sports Hall of Fame are accepted throughout the year. All nominations are reviewed annually at the end of January to begin the process of choosing that year's Hall of Fame class.

Forms are found online at https://www.svsd.net/Page/22681.
Submit nominations to Wayne Roccia by email: wroccia@zoominternet.net,
or by mail: 415 Ridge Road, Zelienople, PA 16063.