

A publication of Ottawa Hills Local Schools

# AROUND these HILLS

JUNE 2025



## The making of a Green Bear

A look at student growth and achievement

### Inside this issue:

Choraliers return to state stage

Freshman places 3rd in state 3200M

Student researchers take top honors





**Ottawa Hills**  
Local Schools

*Defined by excellence. Supported by tradition.*

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**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.

**CONTACT:** Ottawa Hills Local Schools  
4035 W. Central Ave., Ottawa Hills, OH 43606  
ohschools.org | 419-536-6371  
info@ohschools.org

**EDITOR:** Katie Cho

**CONTRIBUTOR:** Ben McMurray



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**CONTACT:** Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation  
4035 W. Central Ave., Ottawa Hills, OH 43606  
esilk@ohschools.org | 419-214-4838



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@ottawahills.foundation



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**DISTRICT LETTER**

# Preparing students for lives of purpose and impact

Dear Ottawa Hills Community,

This past year, our leadership team led the district in embracing the mindset of digging deep, a theme that continues to guide and inspire us as we reflect on where we've been and where we're headed. Our team has worked intentionally to ensure that every decision reflects our commitment to excellence. From outstanding academic achievements and creative exploration to meaningful service and strong community partnerships, this year has been a testament to what's possible when we dig deep together.

As you explore the stories and celebrations in this magazine, you'll see the many ways our students, staff, and Green Bear community are digging deep academically, creatively, and personally. Whether through accomplishments in the classroom, service projects that make a difference, finding ways to save and make cost efficiencies in our budgets, or partnerships that extend learning beyond school walls, this year has been a powerful reminder that excellence comes from effort, heart, and community.

Digging deep also means leading with heart. It's about our staff and teachers, myself included, leaning into vulnerability to try something new for the betterment of our district. It's about our students pushing through obstacles to discover their full potential. It's about our families and community members showing up again and again with trust, questions, and support.

This school year, district leadership and I focused on three priorities of our Strategic Plan:

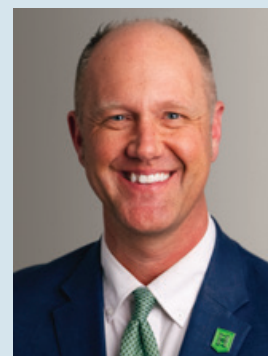
- Strengthening academic supports
- Fostering positive connections both internally and externally
- Maintaining fiscal responsibility and operational efficiency

These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to nurturing a joyful pursuit of learning, creating a lifelong sense of belonging, and ensuring a strong foundation for the future.

One meaningful example of fostering positive connections has been our Coffee & Conversations series. This school year, we hosted four events, inviting all Ottawa Hills residents through mailed postcards last fall. Guests were welcomed with coffee from our very own STEAM Café before hearing short presentations from our Treasurer/CFO Tom Siloy and myself. Each event included time for open dialogue and time to connect directly with district leadership. These small-group conversations helped build stronger understanding between the district and community members on topics such as school finances, curriculum and instruction, permanent improvement planning, and more.

Throughout the district, we have continued digging deeper into our Strategic Plan by prioritizing belonging, innovation, and personalized learning. We have evaluated how we allocate resources, expanded academic supports, and increased opportunities to connect with our broader village community.

Ottawa Hills is more than a school district. It is a vibrant, tight-knit village rooted in tradition and growing toward a learning-centered future. Each and every day we focus on "growing a Green Bear"; from kindergarten to graduation, the success of our students is our top priority. Thank you for believing in our mission and walking alongside us as we dig deeper into what it means to educate with excellence, preparing students for lives of purpose and impact.



*Adam Fineske*

Superintendent Dr. Adam Fineske  
afineske@ohschools.org



AdamFineske

# INSIDE JUNE 2025



**Welcome to Around These Hills!** Published twice yearly by the school district's communications office in partnership with our development office, this magazine offers a thoughtful look into Ottawa Hills Local Schools. Within these pages, you'll get to glimpse growing up a Green Bear in a semester snapshot. This publication features student achievements, athletic highlights, campus and district news, important district finance updates, and how the Foundation enriches educational experiences. Thank you for reading and joining us in celebrating the continuous growth that transforms curious kindergartners into accomplished graduates ready to lead. Whether you're a parent, community member, donor, or alum, we're grateful for your connection to our schools and hope you find these pages both informative and inspiring.



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### CHORALIERS RETURN TO STATE STAGE

Our elite Choraliers returned to the state contest for the first time in several years. Shown here after walking through the school halls to cheers and applause during their schoolwide spirit tunnel send-off.



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### FRESHMAN PLACES 3RD IN STATE 3200M

Freshman Natalie Nixon placed 3rd at the OHSAA Division III State Championships with a time of 11:06.18 in the 3200m race. She also broke 2 school records this year!



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### STUDENT RESEARCHERS TAKE TOP HONORS

Ottawa Hills chemistry students excelled at the University of Toledo research symposium, earning Special Projects recognition and first place honors for their grant-funded environmental research projects.

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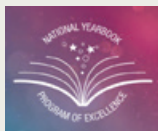
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### AN AWARD-WINNING DISTRICT



**School Report Cards**  
2023 - 2024 Report Card for  
**Ottawa Hills Local**



Significantly  
exceeds  
state standards

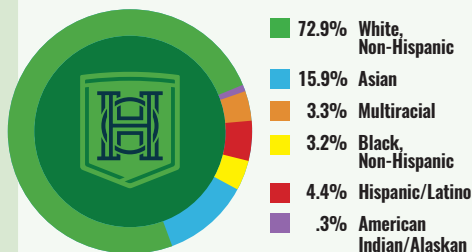
Total State Report Card  
Rating Points = 4.893



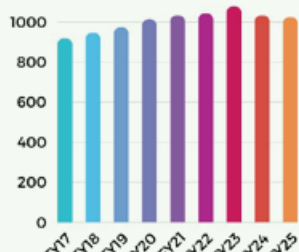
Send information, corrections, or change of address requests to the editor at [info@ohschools.org](mailto:info@ohschools.org)

## 2024-25 District Profile

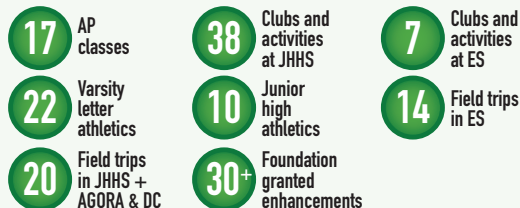
### Student Body Snapshot



### FY 2025 Enrollment: 1,024



### Student Experience Snapshot



### Staff Snapshot



## Green Bear Finance update

### Planning for the future

Fiscal responsibility and efficiency were Strategic Plan goals for the 2024-25 school year and a major way leadership worked towards achieving those goals this year was by creating a Five-Year Permanent Improvement (PI) Plan. This plan will ensure we are thinking ahead to maintain and upgrade our facilities.

The Five-Year PI Plan was created utilizing a walkthrough of campus last fall by Treasurer/CFO Tom Siloy and Superintendent Dr. Adam Fineske with operations staff and building principals. A teacher survey was conducted, and community feedback was gathered prior to the plan being presented to the Board of Education in January. Leadership used a rubric to prioritize projects planned for the next five years based on:

- Direct impact on classrooms, students and learning
- Routine use
- Safety and security
- General maintenance and replacements

Projects in the plan may change based on priorities and needs, how best to use available resources, and the potential of available grant funding. The Five-Year PI Plan includes a reserve of \$50,000/year for unforeseen expenses and pays back the 2017 loan from the general fund by the end of fiscal year 26-27. You can expect to see the following projects completed in the next few years based on the Five-Year PI Plan:

- Basic renovations to school bathrooms
- School parking lots resealed and restriped
- Safety and security upgrades
- Renovations to the music rooms
- Classroom upkeep (paint, flooring, etc.)
- Saving for track and turf maintenance
- Replacing lunch tables
- Auditorium upgrades
- Technology upgrades

### Seeking savings, going for grants

To remain fiscally conservative, the district has reduced future expenditures in the amount of \$121,000 over the past 12 months. These cost saving initiatives include removing unneeded software and renegotiating copier, trash, phone and banking services and much more. These ongoing savings will be fully realized in the 2025-26 fiscal year.

This spring, in collaboration with the treasurer's office and district grants committee, the district applied for safety grant funds through the Ohio Attorney General's Safety Grant and was awarded \$44,636. These funds will help offset the cost of planned safety upgrades included in the district's Five-Year PI Plan. Enhancements at both the junior/senior high school and elementary school will include installing 3M shatterproof film on exterior doors and windows.

### Advocating for Fair School Funding

Throughout the school year, Ottawa Hills has been working to advocate for a more equitable state funding model that recognizes our district's unique needs. With nearly no commercial tax base, 80% of our general fund revenues come from residential property taxes, which is much higher than the 68% average for state defined peer performing districts.

Mr. Siloy is working to collaborate with peer districts very similar to Ottawa Hills, in terms of being small landlocked communities with limited commercial tax base, to begin the work towards long-term legislative solutions. In the short term, he continues to advocate for full implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan (FSFP), Ohio's 2021 effort to better align state funding with actual education costs and local wealth.

Under the FSFP, the state looks at household income levels and property values in each district. If a district (like Ottawa Hills) is considered to have higher wealth, the state gives less money because it believes the local community can provide more tax dollars than less wealthy districts. Currently, Ottawa Hills receives



\$2,239 per student from the state, just 27% of the average cost to educate a student in Ohio. The FSFP is in year four of its six-year rollout, set to be fully phased in by 2026-27, assuming it has legislative support.

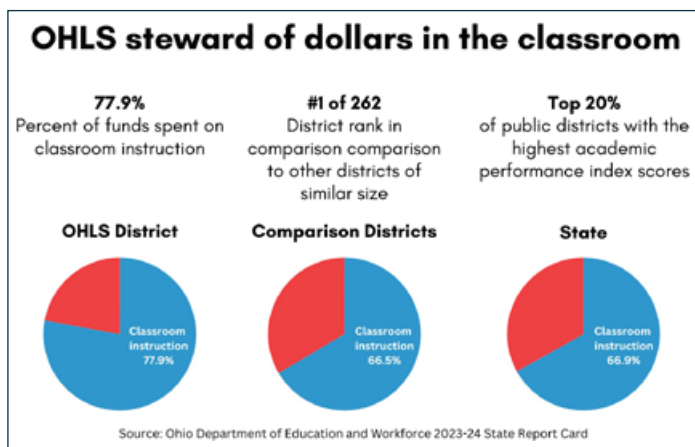
In February, Governor DeWine proposed continuing the FSFP, but with outdated cost inputs (from 2022) and updated local wealth data. This would have reduced Ottawa Hills' state funding by \$500,000 over two years. Our district responded with letters to legislators urging full funding using current data.

In April, the Ohio House proposed scrapping the FSFP entirely, instead offering minimal per-student increases (\$20 and \$30 over two years). Worse, they proposed a cap on cash reserves, which could harm districts like ours working to rebuild long-term financial stability. Once this plan was announced, the Treasurer's Office emailed all Ohio Senators asking for changes that better support districts like ours.

In June, the Senate's proposal was released and they plan to continue the FSFP, but they did not increase the inputs necessary to fully fund the program. Like the House, their proposal included a cap on cash reserves. With the Senate's proposal, we are expected to lose \$100,000 over the next two years in funding. We'll continue advocating for fair funding that supports our students, recognizes the large dependency on our residential taxpayers and protects the district's financial future.

## The road ahead

Fiscal transparency is a top priority to communicate to the Ottawa Hills community. We are proud to have been ranked #1 on the Ohio Schools Report Card for percentage of general fund dollars being spent directly in the classroom for similar-sized districts for the 2023-24 school year. If you would like to know more information on Ottawa Hills Local Schools financials and school funding in general, Mr. Siloy has many district finance resources available on the treasurer's page of [ohschools.org](https://ohschools.org).



Throughout this Green Bear Finance Update we have reviewed the plans for permanent improvement spending, ways we are utilizing alternative funding sources, and current and long term funding advocacy plans. Now we want to remind you of the plans for future levy requests to our community. As we have communicated previously, the district must continue to ask for levies every three years to keep up with the cost of inflation, salaries and benefits increases, curriculum needs, etc. That is because our main source of revenue (residential property tax dollars) remains stagnant due to HB 920 rollbacks. If a levy fails to

pass, the district will make budget cuts for the immediate following school year.

In August 2026, the treasurer's office will work with the Board of Education to determine whether a levy is needed and to explore levy options that may have community support. In December 2026, the Board of Education will decide on the type of levy and the estimated amount to place on the ballot. In May 2027, the next general fund operating levy for Ottawa Hills Local Schools will appear on the ballot. If the levy does not pass in May, it will appear again on the November ballot. We will continue to keep our stakeholders informed about school finances and will clearly communicate what to expect as we approach the next levy cycle.

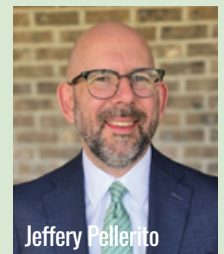


*I welcome questions from all district stakeholders and can be reached at [tsiloy@ohschools.org](mailto:tsiloy@ohschools.org). More detailed information relating to all things district finance can be found at [ohschools.org/about-us/treasurerfinancials](https://ohschools.org/about-us/treasurerfinancials).*  
– Treasurer/CFO Tom Siloy

## Leadership positions filled for coming year

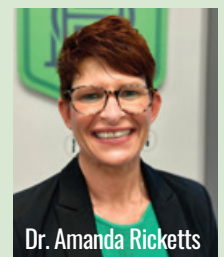
### Ottawa Hills Local Schools welcomes Jeffery Pellerito as director of student services.

Mr. Pellerito brings extensive educational leadership experience, including his recent role as assistant director of special education/pupil services at Perrysburg Public Schools and nearly a decade as director of student support services in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Mr. Pellerito will oversee all student services programs to enhance learning outcomes. He will ensure compliance with legal requirements for special education, 504 plans and English language learners. Additionally, he will manage Tier II and III interventions within our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.



### We also welcome Dr. Amanda Ricketts as junior/senior high school assistant principal.

Dr. Ricketts is an experienced transformational school leader and instructional coach with expertise in improving student-teacher relationships from her most recent role as assistant principal at Fostoria Junior/Senior High School. As assistant principal, Dr. Ricketts plays a pivotal leadership role in supporting a culture of academic excellence, strong relationships, and community engagement. She will help shape and sustain a safe, inclusive, and student-centered environment that prioritizes high expectations. Welcome to Green Bear Nation!



We extend our best wishes to Dr. Jill Michelson and Jasa George as they pursue new opportunities, which created openings for these positions.





## Superior! Choraliers sing their way to Superior rating



In April, the Choraliers qualified for the Ohio Music Education Association State Contest after earning the highest possible rating at the district contest. Led by vocal music teacher Hayley Hoss and accompanied by Bob Duris, the elite group of students were tasked with performing three contest pieces and sight-reading a new piece of music to demonstrate their musical ability. The Choraliers were thrilled to earn a coveted Superior rating, once again achieving the highest possible distinction. We are proud of these outstanding vocalists for their dedication to the arts and for once again showcasing the strength of our music program with Green Bear pride and professionalism.



## Cutting loose with 'Footloose'

Dozens of high school students cut loose last December in the school's spirited production of "Footloose the Musical."



## Thank you supporters...

The district is proud of our commitment to arts education and providing creative outlets for our students. Our strong music and arts programs would not be possible without the dedicated support of dedicated volunteers, Ottawa Hills Music and Theatre Association and the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation.

## 'Hadestown' brings powerful performance to stage

Bravo to the cast, crew and musicians behind "Hadestown: Teen Edition"! This spring's musical delivered a stunning blend of energy, emotion, humor and heart, with more than 50 Ottawa Hills students coming together to bring the mythic love story to life. The production was not only visually and musically impressive, it was also a rare opportunity. Rights to perform "Hadestown: Teen Edition" are limited and highly competitive, with schools across the country vying for the chance to stage this Broadway favorite's teen edition. Ottawa Hills was honored to be among the select

few granted permission. From haunting solos and rich ensemble harmonies to immersive lighting and set design, every element of the production was executed with care and creativity. A small but mighty live orchestra added depth and drama, enhancing the show's emotional impact. While many memorable productions have graced the stage at Ottawa Hills, this one stood out. Audiences left the auditorium praising the show as unforgettable and uniquely powerful. Congratulations to everyone who helped make this ambitious musical a success!







## 'Do you hear the choirs sing?'

The choir season finished with a big finale with all 7-12 grade choirs and chorales singing "Do You Hear the People Sing" from "Les Misérables." It was a powerful ending to a beautiful spring senior concert. The junior high choir surprised Elvis-loving history teacher Sean Mercer with "Can't Help Falling in Love," a pitch-perfect sendoff for his retirement after 31 years in the classroom.

Earlier in May, Ottawa Hills students from elementary through high school joined voices for the first-ever Big Sing concert. Led by elementary music teacher Kimberly Manchur and junior/senior high vocal director Hayley Hoss, the collaborative performance showcased musical talent across all grade levels. The successful concert demonstrated the district's commitment to arts education and established what organizers hope will become a cherished tradition celebrating music, community and creativity.

## OH Theatre is ready for a REVIVAL!

We're bringing back some of our theatre favorites for 2025-26.



## Young actors soak up applause in 'SpongeBob'

More than 140 elementary and junior high students brought underwater adventures to life in the February Acting Out! Production performance of "The SpongeBob Musical Youth Edition."

The musical, based on the beloved Nickelodeon animated series, featured students portraying SpongeBob SquarePants and friends as they fight to save their hometown of Bikini Bottom from catastrophe.

Young performers showcased their talents through energetic dance numbers, colorful costumes and memorable songs from the Tony Award-nominated Broadway show. The production incorporated students from multiple grade levels, giving performers of various ages the opportunity to develop performance skills and work collaboratively.

*Thank you VVOH for use of all musical photos.*

## Serving up support

This spring, the Ottawa Hills Schools Parent Association and the Ottawa Hills Athletic Boosters joined forces to bring back Celebrity Wait Night, paired perfectly with a stellar silent auction. Held at Inverness Club, the evening raised more than \$125,000 to benefit students, teachers, athletes, and educational programs at Ottawa Hills Local Schools.



The event celebrated 100 years of Green Bears with vintage uniforms and memorabilia displayed throughout the venue as decorative touches that honored the district's rich history. From start to finish, the event showcased the power of collaboration between our support organizations and their dedication to the school district. Celebrity Wait Night was more than just a fundraiser, it was a reminder of what makes Ottawa Hills exceptional: a generous, engaged community that works together to support student success. We are deeply grateful for this ongoing partnership and the impact it has on our schools.





## Showcasing student creativity: the 2025 smART Show

On an April evening, the junior/senior high school became a vibrant gallery filled with color, creativity and craftsmanship for the annual smART Show, a true celebration of student expression. While rooted in the visual arts, this event also highlights the talents of our musicians, performers and scholars, making it a showcase of the many ways creativity comes to life at Ottawa Hills.

With hundreds of works on display, every junior high and high school art student had the opportunity to share their talent, technique and imagination with the community. For the first time this year, elementary students were also invited to participate in the show by entering a “LEGO Masterpiece” build; this excited the young artists so much that plans are already underway to continue this in some way going forward.

What began decades ago as a way to highlight the excellence of Ottawa Hills students has evolved into the dynamic, cross-disciplinary event we now know as the smART Show. This well-publicized, family friendly event is free and open to the public. We loved seeing so many parents and community members attend this years’ show.



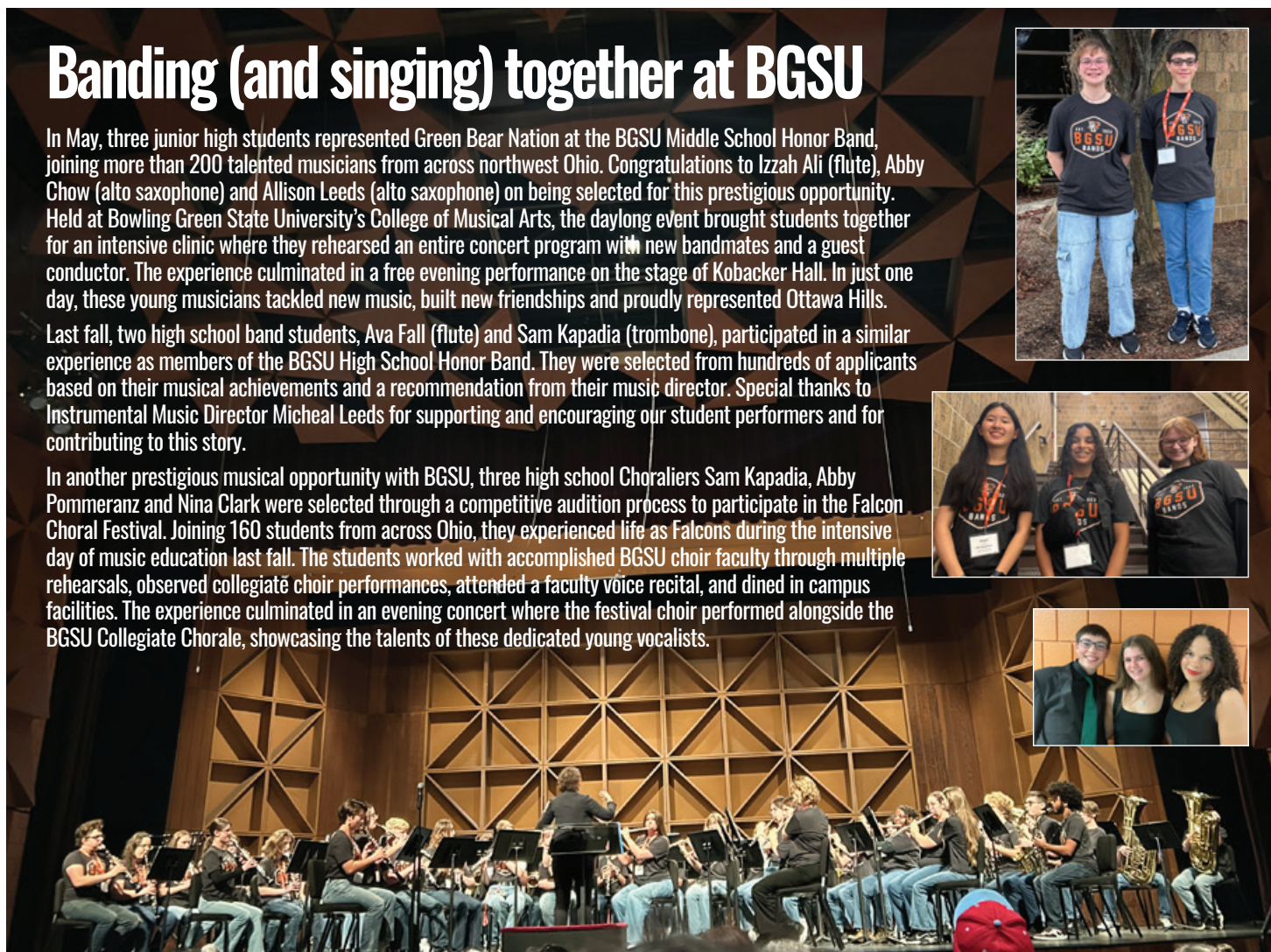
From an interactive ‘Scream’ to a clay-clad skeleton to new “LEGO Masterpieces,” the smART show featured diverse expressions of artistic and creative talents.

## Banding (and singing) together at BGSU

In May, three junior high students represented Green Bear Nation at the BGSU Middle School Honor Band, joining more than 200 talented musicians from across northwest Ohio. Congratulations to Izzah Ali (flute), Abby Chow (alto saxophone) and Allison Leeds (alto saxophone) on being selected for this prestigious opportunity. Held at Bowling Green State University’s College of Musical Arts, the daylong event brought students together for an intensive clinic where they rehearsed an entire concert program with new bandmates and a guest conductor. The experience culminated in a free evening performance on the stage of Kobacker Hall. In just one day, these young musicians tackled new music, built new friendships and proudly represented Ottawa Hills.

Last fall, two high school band students, Ava Fall (flute) and Sam Kapadia (trombone), participated in a similar experience as members of the BGSU High School Honor Band. They were selected from hundreds of applicants based on their musical achievements and a recommendation from their music director. Special thanks to Instrumental Music Director Micheal Leeds for supporting and encouraging our student performers and for contributing to this story.

In another prestigious musical opportunity with BGSU, three high school Choraliers Sam Kapadia, Abby Pommeranz and Nina Clark were selected through a competitive audition process to participate in the Falcon Choral Festival. Joining 160 students from across Ohio, they experienced life as Falcons during the intensive day of music education last fall. The students worked with accomplished BGSU choir faculty through multiple rehearsals, observed collegiate choir performances, attended a faculty voice recital, and dined in campus facilities. The experience culminated in an evening concert where the festival choir performed alongside the BGSU Collegiate Chorale, showcasing the talents of these dedicated young vocalists.







## Chess champs!

Pictured:  
The OH Chess Club

Bears capture 5th straight title with perfect season

The junior/senior high school Chess Team continued its dynasty, securing a fifth consecutive Greater Toledo Area High School Chess League championship with a flawless 10-0-0 record! Led by Team Captain Kunjal Raskar and state's top-ranked junior player Rohan Padhye, the strategic squad dominated the competition by capturing an impressive 36.5 out of 40 possible board points. Team members Aman Hasan, Christopher Thompson, Nicolas Quiroga, Graydon Corns, Kevin Hill, and Miles Franckowiak all contributed to maintaining the team's undefeated league streak. The perfect season showcased both exceptional individual talent and outstanding teamwork. Chess Advisor/Coach Tim Adkins is already excited about next year's prospects with both returning players and promising newcomers.

## Senior wins \$10,000 BCSN Scholar of the Year award

Senior Irene Sun received the prestigious \$10,000 BCSN Scholar of the Year award during a surprise presentation in her AP Statistics class this April. Irene, who will attend Yale University to study biochemistry and pre-med, was initially selected as one of eight BCSN Scholar Spotlight recipients from across the Buckeye Broadband viewing area. Each spotlight scholar receives a \$1,000 scholarship, with one standout student earning the top scholarship of \$2,500 per year for four years. The program honors exceptional seniors who demonstrate academic excellence and plan to attend an accredited U.S. college or university. BCSN's Jodi Dixon and a camera crew surprised Irene with the announcement during class, celebrating her remarkable dedication and accomplishments throughout her high school career.



## Student diplomacy brings Model UN honors

Model UN Club members showcased their diplomatic skills at the Canadian-American Security Council (CASC) Conference in Lansing, Michigan last December and returned with impressive accolades! Ten talented students joined the international gathering of more than 400 high school students from across the Midwest and Canada. Our delegation tackled challenging global issues including migration management, gender equality, NATO's Eastern European presence, and the complex situation in Sudan and South Sudan.

The OH team brought home some serious diplomatic bragging rights! Junior Anushka Agarwal (representing the Russian Federation) earned Highest Honors for her outstanding contributions in the Security Council, while junior Sahil Parikh (United States) secured Second Honors in the same category. Junior Meral Humaida (Slovenia) impressed judges with the club's most compelling position papers. Our other amazing international representatives included juniors Sharon Lim (Germany) and Joan Seo (Portugal); sophomore Rory Norris (Italy); and freshmen Lily Denk (Germany), Pranathi Gundabolu (Papua New Guinea), Eylan Humaida (Mozambique), and Sungjoo Park (Cook Islands).



## Yearbook team captures national gold award

Congratulations to all the Mesasa students for earning Jostens' National Yearbook Program of Excellence Gold Level award. The talented team, led by student editors Hannah Chernow, Claire Rotman and Vaughn Mackey, demonstrated exceptional skills in journalism, photography and design while creating an inclusive record of school life. Their dedication in this competitive elective course resulted in a publication featuring every student at least once and more than 95% of students multiple times. Jostens recognizes only select schools nationwide that excel in creating inclusive content, generating school engagement and managing the publication process effectively. The yearbook elective offers students real-world experience in communication, collaboration and digital literacy while producing a lasting archive of the school year.



## Famous author 'zooms' into The Wondry

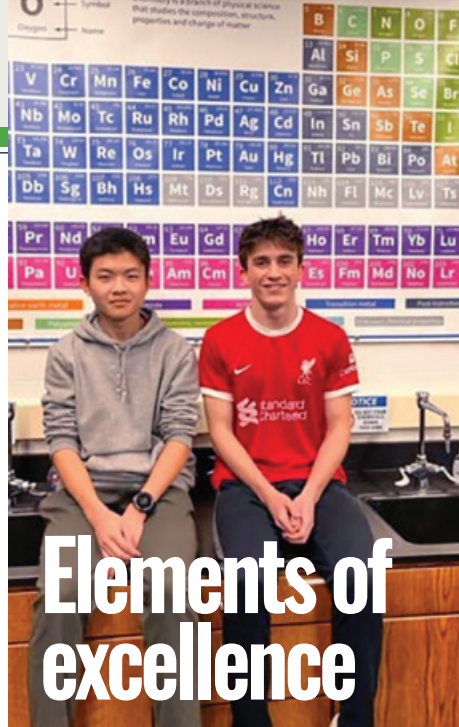
Fifth graders in Ashley Christen's class experienced the thrill of meeting literary hero Lauren Tarshis during a

Zoom session hosted in The Wondry. The virtual visit gave young readers a rare opportunity to engage directly with the author of the award-winning and wildly popular historical fiction "I Survived" series.

The adventures have

transported millions of children to pivotal moments in history from the sinking of the Titanic to the California wildfires. The students were excited about the opportunity to meet the author, having read many of her books in the series.

The coveted virtual meeting spot wasn't easy to secure. Literacy and innovation specialist Amanda Sanderson sprang into action when she learned about the opportunity through Mackin's Storyteller Spotlight program, quickly submitting the application that secured this lucky STREAM class for one of the limited slots. Mackin's Storyteller Spotlight brings celebrated authors directly to classrooms, creating memorable literary experiences that bring stories to life. The program features live readings followed by interactive Q&A sessions where students can engage directly with their favorite authors.



Juniors Ian Jones and Twayne Lai represented our district with distinction at the prestigious National Chemistry Olympiad Exam after qualifying through a rigorous local competition. The talented chemistry students demonstrated exceptional scientific knowledge and academic dedication in the American Chemical Society-sponsored event, which recognizes the nation's top high school chemistry talent. Their participation showcased the strength of Ottawa Hills' science program on a national stage. Thank you to teacher Dr. Gloria Kreischer-Gajewicz who provided valuable support and coordination for the students throughout the selective competition process.



## Beary good surgeons practice skills in STREAM

Students experienced a creative blend of healthcare education and hands-on development during "Stuffed Animal Surgery" in The Wondry. This innovative STREAM activity, led by Mrs. Sanderson, transformed traditional sewing lessons into an engaging medical simulation. The experience began with students watching video presentations from Dr. Algendy and Dr. Gupta, who explained how STEM skills apply in medical professions. The physicians highlighted connections between precision movements, spatial awareness and problem-solving abilities essential in surgical procedures.

Following the presentations, students entered The Wondry's transformed "operating room," where they encountered stuffed animal "patients" requiring surgical intervention. Armed with suturing materials, students practiced techniques as they repaired torn seams, reattached limbs and performed "transplant procedures." Unlike traditional home economics, this approach contextualized fine motor skills within real-world applications while encouraging students to envision healthcare careers they might not have previously considered. The project successfully bridged practical skill development with career exploration through Mrs. Sanderson's creative reimagining of traditional curriculum components.





# IProject: Freshmen explore identity through immersive digital storytelling

Freshmen transformed personal journeys into powerful multimedia experiences through the IProject, presented in the school's cutting-edge 360 Immersion Room. Above, freshman Eylan Humaida presents her IProject to classmates in the Immersion 360 room. This innovative identity exploration traces students' development across five key life stages: preschool, elementary school, junior high, freshman year, and future college and career aspirations. The project blends personal reflections, interviews, research, and connections to literature, academic texts, music, and film, all brought to life in a fully immersive digital environment. English teacher Darrin Broadway incorporated the presentations into final exam assessments, encouraging students to think deeply about their personal identity formation and future aspirations. The 360 technology provides a unique platform for students to express their evolving sense of self. The immersive format enables viewers to step into each student's personal narrative, creating a rich and multidimensional storytelling experience for both creators and audience.

## Student Visionaries join forces to raise record funds for blood cancer research

Ottawa Hills students have set a new school record by raising more than \$223,000 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) through the Student Visionaries of the Year program, bringing the school's total contributions since 2017 to an impressive \$447,000. For the first time, two teams from Ottawa Hills High School participated in the initiative. "Bears Beating Cancer," led by Bryn Tangeman and Isabella Leonardi-Wilkins, raised a record-breaking \$204,473 and earned runner-up honors in the regional campaign. Team member Piper Downing received special recognition as Team Member of the Year. The second team, "Bear the Fight," led by Abby Speakman, Esther Yang and Samantha Brandstatter, raised an additional \$19,180.

The students' efforts contributed to a regional total of over \$960,000 raised in collaboration with students from other schools throughout the Eastern Great Lakes Region. Through the program, participants developed fundraising and outreach strategies while raising awareness about blood cancers. Ottawa Hills recognized the achievements during a special ceremony when Allison Boesel and Daryl Rakosy from LLS visited the high school to honor the students' work. The teams were also celebrated at an event in downtown Toledo on March 22, where they received the official fundraising tallies.

The district is incredibly proud of these students for their leadership, compassion and commitment to making a difference. Their efforts inspire the entire school community and demonstrate the impact young people can have in the fight against blood cancer.



## Mascot magic

The Green Bear was joined some familiar faces at the OHSPA carnival.



## Platinum penmanship at state writing competition

The Power of the Pen team: Allison Leeds, Gabriella Hreish, Tabitha Mezo, and Molly Mullan (pictured) competed at the state competition at Ashland University in May, bringing home impressive honors. Tabitha received the prestigious "Platinum Pen" award, signifying her story may be selected for publication in the annual Power of the Pen anthology. Molly earned 2nd place in the state for 8th grade. These achievements reflect the exceptional talent of our young writers and the dedicated guidance of their advisor, Karen Fischer.





## Students support free veterans dental clinic

Area veterans received free dental care, courtesy of Wildwood Family Dentistry and Drs. Jaime O'Neill, Michael O'Neill, and Emily Spetka. The dentists were supported by the Toledo Smile Project, a group of Ottawa Hills High School students who volunteered their time to welcome patients, assist with paperwork, and provide companionship. Their efforts helped create a warm and supportive atmosphere for all participants.

Student Arianna O'Neill founded the Toledo Smile Project last fall and has dedicated the group to serving populations in need. The organization has already demonstrated its commitment through multiple service initiatives, including a successful "Teddy Bears and Toothbrushes" drive held during the holiday season. The collected items were distributed to local children's organizations and clinics serving underserved communities. The group continues to develop new projects aimed at improving dental health access across the Toledo area.

## 'Let's Pull Together'

Elementary staff and students led a "Let's Pull Together" campaign in memory of elementary principal Dr. Jeremy Bauer's daughter, Charley. Charley passed away in February after a brave battle with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Students worked to collect pull tabs from aluminum cans to raise funds for Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC). Over 42 gallons of pull tabs were collected. RMHC is paid by recycling companies for the aluminum and uses the funds to purchase meals for families using their programs.



## Business education comes alive in student-run STEAM Café

The STEAM Café by the Frankel Family was student-led and student-run this year, and turned a profit! As part of the professional networking and connections (PNC) and entrepreneurship business classes taught by Troy Brown, students were able to use the STEAM Café as an experiential learning laboratory.

In PNC, students developed customer acquisition strategies, prepared client consultations, conducted workforce analytics, and implemented dynamic pricing models. The team identified a significant human capital shortage in February when many students achieved their service hours requirements; in response, they developed a comprehensive talent retention plan for next year that includes strategic partnerships with student organizations to enhance workforce sustainability.

Entrepreneurship classes were focused on consumer demographic analysis, competitive market research, and multichannel marketing campaigns to optimize revenue streams and increase brand visibility throughout the junior/senior high school. After completing his first year teaching business classes at Ottawa Hills, Mr. Brown is excited to challenge his students further in the 2025-26 school year.



## Hunger helpers

Elementary Student Council members with the nearly 3,000 items collected during the fall canned food drive benefiting Our Lady of Lourdes Soup Kitchen.



## Foundry programs connect students, parents with experts

The Foundry hosted two impactful program series this year: **Empowering Parents** and **Big Futures**.

**Empowering Parents** featured a collegiate sports panel where veteran OH parents shared insights on NCAA recruitment, scholarships, and preparing student-athletes for college athletics.

**Big Futures** connected students with professionals across multiple industries:

- Marc Paulenich of Hart discussed AI's impact on future careers
- Healthcare professionals explored diverse medical pathways from surgery to holistic medicine
- Building industry experts shared insights on architecture, construction and design careers
- Local entrepreneurs from six businesses offered guidance through panel and breakout sessions



*Many thanks to The Foundry Advisory Board and director Darrin Broadway. Watch for the 2025-26 program lineup in OH Connections communications.*



# ATHLETICS NEWS

## So long TAAC, hello



Ottawa Hills will move its athletic affiliation to the Sandusky Bay Conference (SBC) effective July 1, 2026. Ottawa Hills is currently a member of the Toledo Area Athletic Conference (TAAC), a league it was a founding member of in 1988. The Green Bears will continue to compete in the TAAC for the 2025-2026 school year before making the move to the SBC for the 2026-2027 campaign.

When Ottawa Hills officially joins the league, the SBC will become a nine-team conference. The Green Bears will join Gibsonburg, Lakota, Margaretta, Northwood, and Woodmore as 11-man football playing members while Danbury, St. Joseph Central Catholic (Fremont), and St. Mary Central Catholic (Sandusky) are also full-time members.

Athletic Director Ryan Wronkowicz explained the behind-the-scenes research and work that went into this change during a spring school board meeting. Board Member Jen Kielczewski summarized, "we got the rose," referring to the selective invitation from current SBC schools to invite Ottawa Hills to join the league. Mr. Wronkowicz explained the change will have little impact on overall travel time for league games and will still allow non-conference games to be played with area schools for additional competition for our athletes. "The SBC will provide our student athletes with a high level of healthy competition," said Mr. Wronkowicz.



Ottawa Hills proudly celebrated nine outstanding student-athletes during a special signing day ceremony, honoring their commitment to continue their athletic and academic journeys at the collegiate level. Surrounded by family, friends, coaches, and classmates, these seniors were recognized for their hard work, dedication, and achievements both on and off the field. We are incredibly proud of these student-athletes and look forward to watching their continued success at the next level.

### *Pictured:*

**Nick Anderson** – Football, Gustavus Adolphus

**Alex Duran** – Soccer, College of Charleston

**Maren George** – Lacrosse, Augustana College (Illinois)

**Amalia Rybarczyk** – Ice Hockey, Utica University

**Colin Hennessey** – Baseball, Ohio Dominican University

**Jay Breed** – Baseball, Lourdes University

**Reddik Pillarelli** – Football, Ohio Wesleyan University

**Warren Lampkowski-Sowle** – Triathlon,  
Northern Kentucky University

**Jackson Snyder** – Baseball, Baldwin Wallace University



## Making waves

The 2024-25 swim and dive season proved to be one of the most successful in Ottawa Hills history, culminating in outstanding performances at the OHSAA Division II State Championships and marking several significant milestones for the program. The Green Bears made their mark early, delivering one of the most successful district performances in school history at Bowling Green State University. The exceptional showing earned eight swimmers and one diver spots at the OHSAA Division II State Championships in Canton, Ohio.

### Individual state standouts:

- **Thomas Lathrop** 5th-place finish in the 500-yard freestyle; 6th place in the 200-yard individual medley
- **Audrey Nixon** made Green Bear history as the first girl to qualify for two individual events at state; finished 27th in the 200 freestyle; 23rd in the 500 freestyle
- **Rafaela Marson** placed 16th in the 100-yard breaststroke
- **David Seigar** placed 31st in the highly competitive dive field (Remarkably, David joined the diving team just weeks before earning his state qualification with no prior experience. This rising junior will be an athlete to watch next season!)

### Relay standings at state:

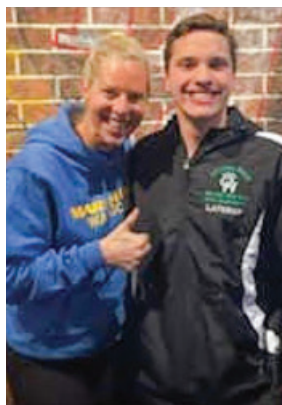
- The girls' 400-meter relay team of **Mary Lathrop, Ella Majerski, Audrey Nixon, and Rafaela Marson** finished 22nd
- The boys' 400-meter relay team of **Seamus Kling, Richard Guo, Tim Lim, and Thomas Lathrop** secured 19th place

These outstanding results reflect the hard work, dedication, and perseverance of our student-athletes throughout the season. Under the expert guidance of coaches Emma Halpin, Sydney Holke, and Phil Koester, the team consistently pushed themselves to achieve new personal bests and school records. The 2024-25 season will be remembered not just for the impressive state finishes, but for the historic nature of the team's achievements and the foundation it has built for future Green Bear swimmers and divers.



## Record-breaking connections

At the state swim meet in Canton, a special moment occurred when Kate Noone, daughter of OHHS Athletic Hall of Famer David Roadhouse ('62), met Thomas Lathrop, the swimmer who broke her father's 62-year-old school record in the 100m butterfly this past December. At the Napoleon Invitational, Thomas swam a 55.64, just under Roadhouse's previous record of 55.7, which he set when he won the state high school championship in his senior year. The meeting created a wonderful connection between Ottawa Hills swimming past and present.



## Nixon's record-breaking year ends at state podium

Following her impressive first place wins at regionals in the 1600-meter and 3200-meter runs, Natalie qualified for state in both races. Natalie went on to claim the 3rd place medal in the 3200m at the state championships.

At the Whitmer Invitational meet, Natalie delivered an outstanding performance in the 3200-meter run, finishing with a time of 10:52. Her effort shattered the previous school record of 11:07.98, set in 2007 by Hollis Barber. Natalie also broke the school record in the 1600-meter run at the Green Bear Invitational, clocking an impressive 5:05 to surpass Elanora Smith's 2023 mark of 5:08.



## Green Bear girls claim TAAC basketball title

The varsity girls' basketball team, led by seniors Lily Berenzweig and Haley Gibson, shot their way to victory last season, earning the TAAC championship. Under Coach Tim Lambert's guidance, the Green Bears demonstrated exceptional teamwork on their path to the conference title. The team also finished district runner-up. Congratulations to the team on this accomplishment!



## Chase nets career achievement

Senior Chase Miller scored his 1,000th career point during a victorious game against Huron this season. Chase has been a varsity contributor since his freshman year.

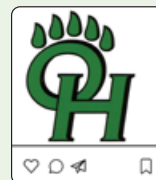
## Doubles delight at sectionals




Congratulations to the boys tennis team on an outstanding performance at sectionals. Ian Marzano and Sahil Parikh captured the sectional championship in doubles, while Micah Walker and Bode Wray finished as runners-up in doubles. Chris Thompson also earned a runner-up finish in singles. All five players qualified for the district meet. Well done to all the players and to Coach Dan Amato on this exciting achievement!



## Follow the action

If you're not following Green Bear Athletics on social media, you are missing out! Our Athletic Director is keeping the social media game strong with pre-game updates, post-game scores, player highlights, and much more.



 [ohls\\_greenbears](#)  
 [ohls\\_greenbears](#)  
 [Ottawa Hills Green Bears](#)





## Girls' and boys' varsity track teams claim TAAC titles

**For the third consecutive year, the girls' track team claimed the TAAC Championship.**

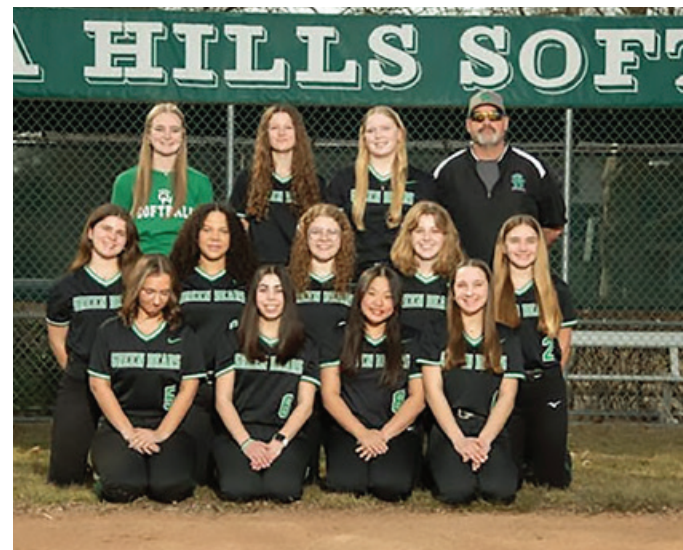
Individual TAAC champions include Audrey Nixon in the 400 meters, Natalie Nixon in the 800 and 1600 meters, Emily Chen in the 3200 meters, and Mercy Alamina in the 300-meter hurdles. The 4x400 relay team of Audrey Nixon, Bella Drouillard, Mercy Alamina, and Natalie Nixon, and the 4x800 relay team of Audrey Nixon, Emily Timmerman, Emily Chen, and Freya Klaas also earned top honors. A special congratulations to Natalie Nixon, named TAAC Girls Athlete of the Year, for her outstanding performances and leadership on the track. Congratulations to Coach Jeremy Nixon, who was named TAAC Girls Coach of the Year for his leadership and dedication to the program.

**The Green Bear boys' track team also earned a commanding TAAC Championship win.**

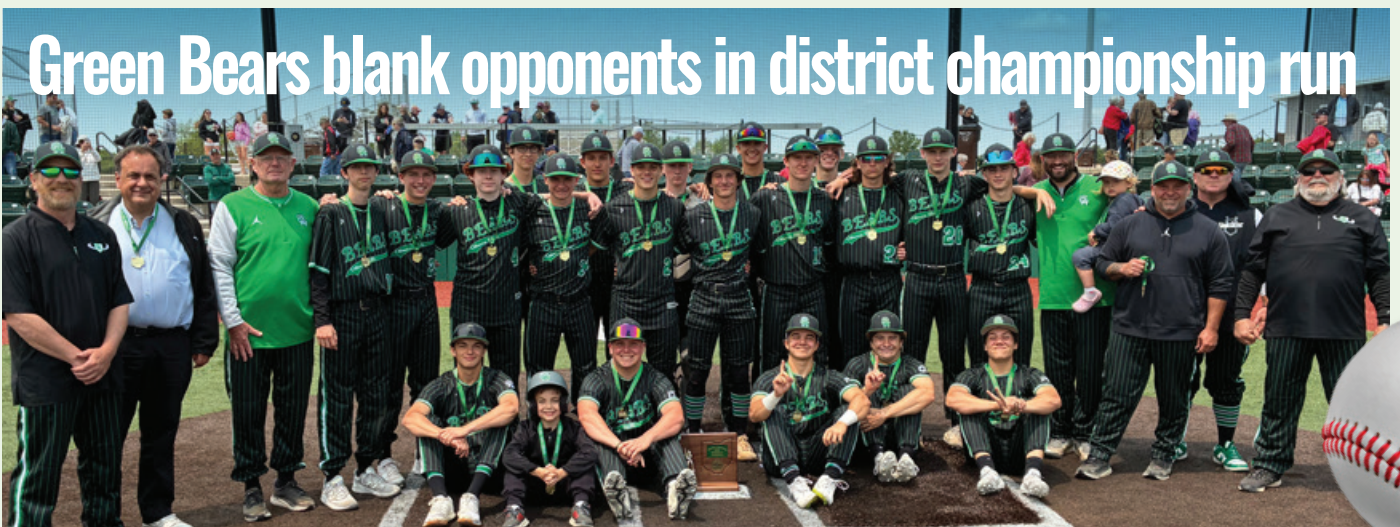
Individual TAAC champions include Hutch Carter in the 400 meters, Ian Jones in the 800 meters, Joe Mayer-Heckathorn in the 1600 and 3200 meters, Seamus Kling in the 300-meter hurdles, the 4x400 relay team of Ian Jones, Chris Culler, Seamus Kling, and Hutch Carter, and the 4x800 relay team of Joe Mayer-Heckathorn, Alex Cooper, Hutch Carter, and Ian Jones. Jace Neuendorf took first in the shot put, with a special shoutout to Cole Coy for his second-place finish.

## Bears clip Cardinals in breakthrough win

Ottawa Hills softball ended a losing streak that dated back to 2022 with a thrilling 12-11 victory over Cardinal Stritch. Warren Lampkowski-Sowle pitched 6 2/3 innings with 10 strikeouts for the win, while Sam Brandstatter earned the save with a closing strikeout. Shannon McCain sparked the offense with a 2-run inside-the-park home run, and Abby Pommeranz scored three times. Aurora Puskala and Sam each crossed the plate twice in the team effort. The breakthrough victory brought immense joy to players and coaches after the extended losing streak.



## Green Bears blank opponents in district championship run



The Ottawa Hills Green Bears varsity baseball team captured the district championship with their third consecutive postseason shutout, advancing to the regional semifinals. The dominant pitching performance continued the team's impressive playoff run, keeping opponents scoreless throughout their championship drive. The Bears' season ended after falling to Coldwater in the regional finals.





# *Congratulations* Class of 2025



The Class of 2025 gathered with family and friends for commencement on May 30, followed by the now annual parade through the village. Rose Hajjar gave a moving speech on the choices we make and how joy and heartbreak can live simultaneously in life's moments. Commencement student speakers also included Henry Cohen and Houssam Hajjar. Class President Colten Weaver led the graduates in the turning of the tassels.



Rose Hajjar



Colten Weaver









# Congratulations Graduates

**Abdullah Alaani**

University Of Toledo

**Faizan Muhammad Alvi**

University of Toledo

**Nickolas P. Anderson\***

Gustavus Adolphus College

**Madison Leigh Bagby**

University of Toledo

**Anneysha Arunima**
**Bahar\***

The Ohio State University

**Oliver Joseph Barone**
**McClain**

University of Cincinnati

**Lena Elise Bazzoli**

Ohio University

**Daniel C. Louis Beck**

Bowling Green State University

**Lily Jane Berenzweig\***

University of Michigan

**Lauren Margaret**
**Borsody**

University of Cincinnati

**Samantha W.**
**Brandstatter\***

The Ohio State University

**Nicholas Ryan Brandt**

The Ohio State University

**Jason T Breed**

Lourdes University

**Olivia Angelita Bridges\***

Michigan State University

**Jackson Douglas Broach**

East Tennessee State University

**Evan I. Brown**

University of Toledo

**Samuel B. Brown\***

California Polytechnic State University

**Hutchinson L. Carter\***

University of Maryland

**Zayn Afzal Cheema**

The Ohio State University

**Hannah Ester Chernow**

Bowling Green State University

**Henry Richard Cohen**

Ohio University

**Christian Craver**

Miami University

**Jullian Vincent Davis**

University of Toledo

**Van Gregory Demirdjian**

Ohio University

**Isabella Christine**
**Drouillard\***

The Ohio State University

**Alessandro Robert Duran**

College of Charleston

**Caroline E. Durfee\***

University of South Carolina

**Cooper Eidenier**

Miami University

**Mitchell Eidenier**

Miami University

**Mia Caroline Feedback**

Ohio University

**Ian Michael Flanagan**

Xavier University

**Maren Rebecca George\***

Augustana College

**Haley Reese Gibson**

The Ohio State University

**Richard R. Guo\***

University of California, Los Angeles

**Houssam Hajar**

University of Toledo

**Rose Marie Hajar\***

University of Michigan

**Joseph M. Halbig-Sanchez**

Bowling Green State University

**Colin Jacob Hennessey**

Ohio Dominican University

**Xuan Huang\***

The Ohio State University

**Matteson Claire Johnson**

Grand Valley State University

**Jack Austin Jorgensen**

University of Mississippi

**Landen James Kaminski**

Trade School

**Sterling T. Karakas**

Owens Community College

**Chinmay Sanjay Khare\***

Harvard University

**Rachael Elizabeth Kral\***

The Ohio State University

**Warren Constance**
**Lampkowski-Sowle**

Northern Kentucky University

**Audrey Sophia Lenavitt**

Miami University

**Timothy Lim\***

The Ohio State University



## BY THE NUMBERS

4

National Merit Finalists

6

National Merit Commended Scholars

14

Summa Cum Laude Graduates

7

Magna Cum Laude Graduates

9

Cum Laude Graduates

51

Honors Diplomas

31

President's Awards for Educational Excellence

32

National Honor Society Members

83

Graduates



### Shayne Lin

University of Cincinnati

### Peyton Renee Lorenzen\*

The Ohio State University

### Vaughn C. Mackey\*

The Ohio State University

### Alexander John McCaffery

Bowling Green State University

### Kalliopi Lynne

### McCullough\*

The Ohio State University

### Kaiden Everett McLennan

University of Kentucky

### Kori Isabelle Mensior\*

The Ohio State University

### Chase Nicholas Miller\*

Miami University

### Mahd Syed Naqvi\*

Lourdes University

### Nikhila Navaneeth\*

University of Iowa

### Elizabeth C. Olah

Bowling Green State University

### Enzo Gontijo Penrod

Northeastern University

### Reddik Scott Pillarelli

Ohio Wesleyan University

### Abby Marie Pommeranz\*

Ohio University

### Collin Matthew Potts\*

The Ohio State University

### Kunjai Raskar\*

Bowling Green State University

### Ronald William Root II

Trade School

### Anne Marie Rosenberg

Loyola University Chicago

### Claire Abigail Rotman

University of Cincinnati

### Amalia Virginia Rybarczyk\*

Utica University

### Jacob Thomas Rymer

Bowling Green State University  
(Fall 2026)

### Zara Sedige

University of Toledo

### Jackson River Snyder

Baldwin Wallace University

### Madrin Monet Snyder

University of Mary Washington

### Abigail K. Speakman\*

Cardiff University

### William Mansfield Summers

University of Dayton

### Irene Haibei Sun\*

Yale University

### Daniel Shawhan

### Sweeney

The Ohio State University

### Theodore Bruce Szyperski

University of Cincinnati

### Micah F. Walker

Auburn University

### Ashley Y. Wang\*

University of Michigan

### Colton Edward Weaver\*

UC Berkeley

### Griffin Reid Wilson

University of Cincinnati

### Boden Lewis Wray

University of Cincinnati

### Tianyuan Yang\*

Stanford University

\*National Honor Society Member



Value of  
Scholarships Awarded  
**\$8,659,394**





## A Recognition of Excellence

Every spring, Ottawa Hills High School celebrates student achievement at an Honors Assembly. With input from faculty and administrators, deserving students are recognized for their accomplishments in the classroom, in the community, and on athletic fields. Many of these awards and scholarships were created to honor alumni, Village residents, and remarkable teachers. **To honor the individuals and groups who established these honors, *Around These Hills* presents the 2025 recipients of those awards and scholarships.**



### Connections Award

The Ottawa Hills Connection Award is named for the Connections Window that is installed above the front entrance of the high school building, a gift of the Ottawa Hills High School Class of 1959. The window was created by OHHS Alumna Emily Finkel (Class of 2000), designed by current students, and facilitated by high school art teacher, Steven Tozer Wipfli. It serves as a tribute from the Class of 1959 to the synthesis of their experiences; the high expectations, the richness of the curriculum, the close-knit, supportive community and the ultimate connections they have made to the world since their graduation. This award also honors the creative spirit and the many contributions made to our school and community by Mr. Steven Tozer Wipfli. The award honors a student who, throughout his or her high school career, has reflected the characteristics for which Steve has been valued: elevating subjects and experiences beyond the ordinary; promoting the value of arts experiences as part of the education of the whole person; using creativity to enhance learning and the school culture; welcoming collaboration, at school and beyond; engaging personally in learning and experiences; and intuiting connections.

### Abby Pommeranz

### Jon S. Davis Striving to Achieve Scholarship

This monetary award is intended to recognize, nurture and encourage hard work, perseverance, sound judgment and a strong moral compass in students so they can improve their own lives and also serve to improve the lives of others. The honored recipient may have (i) shown unusual inner strength in striving for a goal while overcoming obstacles (personal or otherwise) or (ii) may have upheld a moral or ethical position when it was difficult or unpopular to do so or (iii) may have exhibited extraordinary effort for the benefit of others without any expectation of recognition or reward. Mr. Davis was a 1961 graduate of OH and president of his class. The name of the recipient of this scholarship will be engraved on a plaque that hangs in the main hall of the high school.

### Rose Hajjar

### Tom Docis Phenomenal Physics Award

This award is given to commemorate the many years of dedicated service, practical wisdom, and wry humor which Tom Docis, former chemistry and physics teacher at OHHS, brought to this school, its faculty, staff, administration, and students. The award is presented to the student who best approached the study of physics as Mr. Docis did with wonder and enthusiasm. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the physics laboratory.

### Quinton Smith

### Nanci Kay Effler Memorial Scholarship

This award was established in 2008 in memory of Nanci Kay Effler, mother of seven Ottawa Hills' graduates, a tireless volunteer in the Ottawa Hills Schools, and an accomplished artist. This scholarship is awarded annually to the graduating senior who demonstrates passion and achievement in the world of visual arts.

### Vaughn Mackey

### The Don Fontaine and Noreen Hanlon French Award

This award is presented to a graduating student who excels in the language and shows a genuine passion for and deep connection to French-speaking cultures. This award stands as a lasting celebration of the dedication, inspiration, and love for teaching that both Don Fontaine and Madame Hanlon have shared with generations of students.

### Rose Hajjar

### Kristjan Gislason Award

This award is given to the senior who has given unselfishly of his/her time and talents and who possesses a positive attitude for the benefit of Ottawa Hills High School. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the main hall of the high school. The award was started by Kristjan's father for the family's deep appreciation for the school's friendship to his son when he was an AFS student from Iceland from 1973-74.

### Irene Sun

### Steve Gordon Memorial Scholarship

This award was established in memory of Steve Gordon, a 1957 graduate of Ottawa Hills High School. This scholarship is awarded to a senior who possesses oral and written acuity, eclectic and intense exploration of the literary genre, stylistic sophistication, and intellectual curiosity.

### Henry Cohen

### Archie Griffin Sportsmanship Award

This award, named for two-time Heisman Trophy winner Archie Griffin, is presented each year to a male and female student who have been outstanding in their efforts to promote sportsmanship in their school and community. The Athletic Director chooses this award.

### Maren George Chase Miller

### Brian Nicholas Hoeflinger Memorial Award

This award was established in 2019 in the memory of Brian Hoeflinger. This scholarship is given to a senior who best exemplifies the characteristics of Brian: strong work ethic, academic excellence, optimism, kindness and quirky sense of humor. This award is presented to a graduate who leads by example rather than by recognition, is well liked and respected by peers, and strives to achieve academic excellence.

### Samantha Brandstatter

### Mark James Ganoom ('77) Memorial Scholarship for Literature

Mark Ganoom, a proud member of the Class of 1977, was a lifelong lover of literature with a passion for timeless classics. The Mark James Ganoom Memorial Scholarship honors his devotion to reading and belief in literature's transformative power. This award is granted to a high school senior who demonstrates a deep love for classic literature, intellectual curiosity, and commitment to learning. The recipient should reflect the qualities Mark valued most: independence, curiosity, versatility, and genuine appreciation for the written word.

### Kori Mensior

### Broadcast Student of the Year Lena Bazzoli

### Nancy and Tom Kabat Scholarship

This monetary award is presented to a graduating senior who is known to be an uplifting person, who makes a positive contribution to his or her class, and is well respected by fellow classmates. The honored senior demonstrates leadership, a good work ethic, high academic achievement, and community and school volunteer service. This award was established in 2003.

### Tianyuan Yang Houssam Hajjar

### Karen Klein Music Award

Karen Klein, a member of the Class of 1958, was a talented soprano in the Ottawa Hills High School choir. She died shortly after a rehearsal, preparing for the annual spring concert. She is fondly remembered for her leadership, character, and musicianship. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the music room.

### Mia Feedback

### David M. Larabee Memorial Scholarship

This award was established in 2008 in memory of David M. Larabee, mathematics and science teacher at Ottawa Hills. This scholarship is presented to a graduating senior who demonstrates a passion for learning and talent in mathematics, science, and/or conservation related fields. Special consideration will be given to a student who also demonstrates an interest in the fine arts and represents the qualities of Dave Larabee as a "Renaissance person."

### Hutchinson Carter

### Chad Layne Foreign Language Award

This award is presented to the senior who exhibits a unique appreciation of foreign language study and has excelled in both French and Spanish. The recipient demonstrates an outstanding curiosity, enthusiasm, and diligence for the languages.

### Hutchinson Carter



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## The Lori Warner Levy Memorial Award

This award was established in 1999 in memory of Lori Warner Levy, who was an intensely creative businesswoman and mother, an accomplished musician, and diligence for the languages. This award honors a graduating senior for outstanding creativity in the fine and performing arts.

**Henry Cohen**

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## Phillip W. Longenecker Science Award

This award is selected by the science department and presented to a senior excelling in the field of science. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the main hall of the high school. Longenecker graduated in 1947.

**Chinmay Khare**

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## The National Choral Award

This award is selected by the vocal music teacher and is presented to the senior who has been a member of the high school concert choir for at least one year and has had at least three years of experience in the Choraliers. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the main hall of the high school.

**Abby Pommeranz**

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## OHSAA Award of Excellence

A student who has exhibited qualities that embody good citizenship, good moral character, and good sporting behavior.

**Hutchinson Carter  
Peyton Lorenzen**

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## OHSAA Scholar Athlete Award

Awarded to a student athlete with high academic excellence.

**Caroline Durfee**

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## The Ottawa Hills Education Association Scholarship

The OEA award was established in memory of elementary school teacher, Bob George. This scholarship is awarded to a graduating senior who clearly articulates his or her calling toward the teaching profession and demonstrates an appreciation for life-long learning.

**Jackson Snyder**

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## James Petas Girls Lacrosse Scholarship Award

This award is a financial scholarship given to the senior lacrosse player who best exemplifies dedication, enthusiasm, a diligent work ethic, self-improvement, and an overall positive attitude both on and off the field.

**Maren George**

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## Principal's Choice

This award is presented to a graduating senior who exhibits achievement and effort in his/her academic pursuits, is a good citizen of the school and community, has profoundly impacted the school climate and is respected and appreciated by his/her peers and teachers.

**Houssam Hajar  
Madrin Snyder**

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## The Dion Raftopoulos Award

This award is a music-based scholarship granted annually to the college-bound graduating senior who most represents the lofty ideals of musical accomplishment, scholarly attainment, and moral integrity as exemplified by the life of Dion Raftopoulos.

**Abby Pommeranz**

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## The Kathryn H. Saxby Memorial Award

This award is awarded to a graduating senior based on the following criteria: academic excellence, GPA, class rank, SAT/ACT scores, a demonstrated interest in music, involvement in school activities, and community and school volunteer service.

**Olivia Bridges**

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## Robert Repp Social Studies Scholarship Award

This award, honoring the professional career of Mr. Bob Repp, is awarded annually to a senior who understands the qualities of a good citizen, has excelled over four years in the social studies, and plans to continue those studies on the college level. The recipient should show the potential to actively pursue leadership roles in American society. Members of the Ottawa Hills Social Studies Department provide this financial award.

**Rachael Kral**

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## The John Phillip Sousa Band Award

This award is selected by the instrumental music teacher and is awarded to the outstanding senior band person. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the main hall of the high school.

**Elizabeth Olah**

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## Peggy Thomas Memorial Award

This award is a financial scholarship given to the senior who best exemplifies the characteristics of Peggy: affability, happiness, enthusiasm for life, as well as being an individual who puts forth a determined effort toward his/her schoolwork.

**Maren George**

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## Toledo Spain Award

This award is presented to an advanced Spanish senior who has demonstrated

outstanding proficiency in the language and knowledge about the Spanish-speaking people. The name of the recipient is engraved on a plaque that hangs in the main hall of the high school.

**Chinmay Khare**

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## The Ross Treuhaft Memorial Scholarship

This award was established in 2012, with contributions from the Treuhaft family, in memory of Ross Treuhaft an energetic, enthusiastic, and compassionate person with a great sense of humor. This award honors a graduating senior who exhibits some or all of the following: welcomes diversity; understands and has compassion towards students with special needs, students who are different from the norm; has an interest in special education; demonstrates a desire to include others different from themselves; possesses kindness and joy.

**Ian Flanagan  
Kori Mensior**

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## Donna Tozer Wipfli Choraliers Award

This award, established in 2020, is given annually to a graduating Choralier member who aspires to the passions and artistic goals of Donna Tozer Wipfli, Ottawa Hills Elementary and Junior/Senior High School Vocal Music teacher from 1990-2020. This scholarship award is chosen and managed by the vocal music teacher and the recipient's name will be engraved on a plaque displayed in the music room.

**Rose Hajjar**

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## Mayor Jean Youngen Leadership Award

The candidate selected for this honor exemplifies the traits of Mayor Jean Youngen, former Mayor of Ottawa Hills. The recipient has shown a history of interest in issues to improve the quality of life in our community and specific examples of action related to these areas of interest. Like Mayor Youngen, they have "walked the walk." The honoree has also displayed an ability to engage a cross section of our student body and greater community. Above all, the award winner has displayed the courage to advance points of view that may not always be widely accepted and has done so with positive energy, tact, and enthusiasm.

**Henry Cohen**

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## Outstanding Male Athlete Jackson Snyder

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## Outstanding Female Athlete Lily Berenzweig

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## Arrowhead Leadership and Innovative Journalism Award Henry Cohen

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## Mesasa Editor-in-Chief Vaughn Mackey

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## Mesasa Artistic Editor Claire Rotman

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## Mesasa Photo Editor Hannah Chernow

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## I Make a Difference

The I Make a Difference event honors teachers who play a significant role in a scholar's academic success. Two of the top scholars in the graduating class are selected to nominate a teacher. Students and teachers are honored at a recognition ceremony hosted by the Educational Service Center of Lake Erie West.

**Hutchinson Carter  
Ashley Wang**

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## Courageous Athlete

A student who has been involved in or supportive of, the interscholastic athletic program, and who deserves recognition for courage.

**Rose Hajjar**

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## Sean Mercer Girls' Basketball Sportsmanship Award

This award is presented to a member of the girls basketball team who has demonstrated the following: hard work on and off the court, dedication and commitment to team, mentored younger players, showed respect to players, coaches, referees, fans, and opponents, given back to the community, participated in girls basketball at Ottawa Hills for multiple seasons

**Lily Berenzweig**

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## John Buckey Scholarship

This award gives special consideration to a scholar athlete who demonstrates leadership with a strong moral compass, exemplifying the power of community, hard work, and unwavering dedication to one's interests and passions. This student is supportive of one's peers, setting a positive example with humility, respect, and an easy-going nature.

**Chase Miller**

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## Tyler Thompson Memorial Scholarship for Leadership

Tyler Thompson, a proud member of the Class of 2007, demonstrated keen interest in governmental affairs, community engagement, and business. Known for his strong work ethic, great sense of humor, and willingness to step outside his comfort zone, Tyler was an active student body participant and dedicated Choraliers member. He also achieved the prestigious rank of Eagle Scout, contributing countless hours to positively impact his community.

**Reddik Pillarelli**



## FOUNDATION LETTER

### The strength to lead with integrity and heart

#### Dear Class of 2025 and the Ottawa Hills Community,

As another school year has drawn to a close, we find ourselves reflecting on both the achievements of our recent graduates and the unwavering strength of the community that has supported them every step of the way.

To the Class of 2025—you've reached a defining moment in your journey. This milestone marks not just the end of your time at Ottawa Hills, but the beginning of a new chapter filled with promise. You now step into the world carrying the legacy of Ottawa Hills—a legacy of curiosity, compassion, and commitment. Wherever life takes you, may you always remember the foundation on which you stand, and may it give you the strength to lead with integrity and heart.

And to our incredible community—the Village of Ottawa Hills—thank you. Your belief in the power of education, your constant encouragement, and your generous support of the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation have made a profound difference in the lives of our students. You've shown what it means to be a village in the truest sense of the word: rallying behind our youth, cheering them on, and ensuring they have the tools and opportunities they need to thrive.

This graduating class is a reflection of your care, your commitment, and your belief in what's possible. As our seniors move forward into a wider world, they carry with them not only knowledge and ambition, but the love and support of a community that helped shape who they are.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025. Thank you to our OH community. Together, you continue to show us what makes this place so special.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Judd Silverman  
Board Chair, OHSF

Erica Silk  
Director of Development, OHLS



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

## Hardman's lasting legacy

Final contributions are being collected as part of the Foundation's campaign to Celebrate 50 Years of Coach Chris Hardman. Watch the video with Coach Hardman by scanning the QR code. Donations to this campaign can be made by contacting [esilk@ohschools.org](mailto:esilk@ohschools.org)



SCAN &  
WATCH THE  
VIDEO!

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

OVER  
\$7



TOTAL FUNDS GENERATED SINCE 2013

### Endowment Fund

Ensure long-term financial stability by generating ongoing investment income for consistent funding.

\$2.5 Million+

### Investments in Capital Projects

\$4 Million+

**Kadens Family Fitness Center**  
and renovations of the Mens & Womens Locker Rooms

#### Full STEAM Ahead Capital Campaign

The Foundry, The Wondry with the MacMillan Family Golden Sycamore Tree, The Gupta Family Science & Research Corridor, The Sue and Jim White, Jr. Family Art Studio, The Claire and Caroline Amos ARTLab, and renovations to STEAM spaces throughout campus.

### Funding Over 200 Student Experiences

Provide essential support to K-12 students to enrich learning in the arts, athletics and academics.

\$1 Million+

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.

Learn more at [www.ohschools.org/about-us/development](http://www.ohschools.org/about-us/development)





### **Annual Unrestricted Impact Fund**

Gifts received and spent in the same year to have an immediate impact on faculty, staff and students at OHLS.

### **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 OHLS.

### **Cornerstone Planned Giving Society**

Donors who plan for a bequest in their will.

### **The Dynamo Soccer Fund**

To ensure the life-long sustainability of soccer within the Ottawa Hills community and OHLS.; Recipients will learn to work with others toward a common goal, develop a sense of belonging, learn about teamwork and cooperation, and improve their skills and advance to higher levels.

### **The Nanci Kay Effler Fund for Visual Arts**

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

### **The Don Fontaine & Noreen Hanlon French Scholarship**

To honor exceptional French language students who demonstrate excellence, passion and cultural appreciation while celebrating the legacy of two beloved OHHS French teachers who inspired generations of students.

### **The Mark James Ganoon ('77) Memorial Scholarship for Literature**

To support the transformative power of literature and recognize students with a devotion to reading, intellectual curiosity, and a commitment to learning.

### **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 Kadens Family Leadership Series**

Used to obtain and host national and local authors, scholars, speakers, and other experts who will present forums, lectures, interactive dialogue, and educational opportunities to impact student growth in: learning, leadership, philanthropy, health, wellness, cultural and ethnic diversity, and related subjects.

### **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 Eleanor Seifried Fund for the Performing Arts**

To enhance the performing arts- theater, choir, and dance.

### **The OHS Foundation STEM Fund**

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

### **The Swigart Family Golf Fund**

To ensure the life-long sustainability of the men's golf program at OHLS 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.

### **Tyler Thompson '07 Memorial Scholarship for Leadership**

To honor a student who embodies Tyler's dedication to governmental affairs, community service, and willingness to step outside their comfort zone while maintaining his strong work ethic, sense of humor, and commitment to making a positive impact.

*Named funds are established with a minimum contribution of \$25,000 and are often used to support specific initiatives.*



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

Over the next few pages, you'll discover how donor generosity transforms learning at Ottawa Hills. Each highlighted project received funding directly from the named funds listed on the previous page. These grants create exceptional educational experiences beyond what traditional school budgets can support. Anyone can contribute to these funds, helping to sustain and expand these opportunities for our students.

## Environmental research brings regional recognition

### Fund: OHLS Grants Committee

Dr. Gloria Kreischer-Gajewicz's honors and AP chemistry classes have transformed supplemental grant funding into outstanding research achievements. Through the ACS-Hach High School Chemistry Classroom Grant, secured with help from the development office, Dr. Kreischer-Gajewicz obtained \$1,800 for lab equipment and supplies including Stream Survey Test Kits. The funding enabled honors chemistry students to complete independent environmental chemistry research projects, while AP chemistry students conducted microplastics research. Their efforts culminated in impressive results at the GLOBE Midwest Student Research Symposium at the University of Toledo.



First place honors for environmental research

Students Chris Culler and Gates Begeman earned Special Projects recognition, while Jasmine Hajjar and Mary Lathrop won first place among all projects presented at the regional event. The GLOBE Program, sponsored by NASA, NOAA, and the National Science Foundation, brings together students from across the Midwest to present scientific investigations to peers and STEM professionals. The grant-funded equipment helped students make real-world connections between chemistry and the environment while contributing valuable data to the global scientific

community through authentic research experiences.



Bamboo breakdown

## Village, students team up for bamboo breakdown

### Fund: STEM Fund

The Environmental Club partnered with multiple community organizations to remove invasive bamboo shoots from behind Epworth Church, supporting both local ecosystem health and Toledo Zoo animals. The collaborative project began when Mayor Mark Thompson contacted science teacher Paul Genzman with the opportunity. Students worked alongside representatives from the Village of Ottawa Hills, the Toledo Zoo, the Nature Conservancy, and Epworth Church to address the problematic bamboo growth along the Ottawa River.

Students successfully removed three truckloads of the invasive plant, which had been crowding out native vegetation and disrupting the local ecosystem. The harvested bamboo was transported to the Toledo Zoo to feed animals with specialized diets. Apparently elephants find bamboo particularly tasty. While at the zoo, students participated in a behind-the-scenes tour, enhancing their educational experience.

## National knowledge showdown

### Fund: STEM Fund

The Ottawa Hills High School Quiz Bowl team capped off an impressive season with a strong 21st place finish at

the National Academic Quiz Tournaments (NAQT) National Championship in Chicago. The team qualified for this prestigious event after securing third place at the NAQT Small School State Championship. During the national competition, the Bears demonstrated remarkable knowledge and teamwork, finishing day one with a solid 6-4 record to advance to the playoffs.

Though seeded 40th, the team bounced back from an initial loss to upset the 26th seed before being eliminated by 15th-seeded Pandora, one of Ohio's top teams.



Team members Josef Duley, Sahil Parikh, Meral Humaida, Quinton Smith, Rohan Padhye and Zach Rashid compiled a 7-5 overall record throughout the tournament's 13 matches under the guidance of coach Tim Adkins. The team's national performance, competing against the country's elite academic teams, showcased their hard work, deep subject knowledge and competitive spirit.

## New HOSA chapter top 10 in state

### Fund: STEM Fund

The inaugural year of Ottawa Hills High School's HOSA (Health Occupation Students of America) chapter made history this spring, thanks in part to funding from the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation that assisted with registration fees for the state





competition. Led by club advisor Brandon Ku, nine OHHS students advanced to the Ohio HOSA State Leadership Conference held at the Glass City Center in downtown Toledo, competing against more than 2,800 students from across Ohio. The team's journey began when 12 students participated in regionals, with nine qualifying for states by placing in the top four of their events.

The group of students came together and exceeded all expectations, spending countless hours researching and preparing for the competition, which resulted in impressive achievements. Teams competed in Emergency Medical Training, Biomedical Debate and Medical Innovation categories, with all three groups placing in the top 20 and two teams finishing in the top 10. Foundation funding, supplemented by student-led fundraisers, helped the team participate in this internationally recognized organization's competition structure, which includes three stages: regionals, states and internationals. The team is already looking forward to next year and another great season with new faces.

### Home to Home Fund: The Kadens Family Leadership Series

The Home to Home partnership unites Scott High School and Ottawa

Hills High School students through activities designed to foster relationships and understanding across different backgrounds.

This year's highlights included a University of Toledo basketball game where students not only enjoyed an exciting Rockets victory but also met with UT's coaching staff and athletic director afterward. These professionals shared career insights and advice on teamwork and character development. Students later discussed the diverse career opportunities they observed at the event, from marketing and event operations to sports medicine and media relations, opening their eyes to professional pathways beyond playing or coaching.

Students also participated in a health and wellness workshop led by David Bush, Commissioner of Youth Services, and Dr. Tequilla Thomas. The Youth Be Heard (Mind) program taught strategies for mental well-being through self-care, strong connections, and early intervention. Afterward, the group enjoyed bowling at IncrediBOWL, strengthening their new friendships through shared fun.

Despite different schools and backgrounds, participants quickly discover their shared experiences as teenagers. Through these structured activities, genuine connections form as students share perspectives, discuss common interests and support one another. The lessons from Home to Home about breaking down assumptions and finding common ground create meaningful bonds while developing perspectives that will serve students throughout their lives.



### Author-in-Residence: Jasmine Warga

#### Fund: Talmage Family General Fund

Literacy and Innovation Specialist Amanda Sanderson received funding to bring acclaimed author Jasmine Warga to the elementary school as an Author-in-Residence for grades 2-6. Warga is the author of "A Rover's Story," which all 5th-grade students currently read and explore across their curriculum.

The author visit provided students with the unique opportunity to engage directly with a professional writer, gaining insights into the creative process and deepening their connection to literature. This literary experience helps students see themselves as readers and writers while fostering a deeper appreciation for storytelling and its role in understanding important social themes.

### Enhancing mathematical literacy

#### Fund: The Heldreth Family Fund for Student Services

Jill Michaelson and Student Services received funding for Visualizing and Verbalizing teaching kits and teacher manuals that support learning comprehension and math problem solving. These specialized instructional materials provide educators with research-based strategies to help students process information more effectively. The teaching kits implement an innovative, integrated approach to literacy and math instruction, focusing particularly on enhancing mathematical literacy.







## Romantic Idol brings sonnets to the spotlight

### Fund: Annual Impact Fund

Sophomore English teachers received funding for materials, props, and set design for Romantic Idol, a beloved tradition for more than 20 years in which sophomore students present poetry live to all junior and senior high school students. Inspired by the format of American Idol, this event invites students to celebrate the power and beauty of Romantic-era poetry. After competing in classroom rounds, finalists perform their chosen works on stage for the entire student body. Congratulations to this year's winner, Jasmine Hajjar, for her moving interpretation of "The Sun" by Felicia Dorothea Hemans.



Audrey Lenavitt

## Kneading a growing business

### Fund: Billy Ciralsky Entrepreneurial Fund

Senior Audrey Lenavitt (with advisor and business & entrepreneurship teacher Troy Brown) received funding to purchase

a commercial-grade mixer for her student-led bread business, Knead Some Dough. Audrey developed a business model, launched a website, and self-funded the profit-turning business before reaching capacity with her mixer. The new mixer, three times the size of her current home model, significantly increased her production capacity. Audrey has expanded from using her business Instagram account, @KneadSomeDough\_, for direct-to-consumer sales to hosting pop-up shops and weekend events at cafes and coffee shops. She has been working to scale her business for the farmers markets, so keep an eye out this summer for her delicious baked goods as she continues to expand as a young entrepreneur.

## Art department expands creative tools and materials

### Fund: Nanci Kay Effler Fund for Visual Arts

High school visual arts teachers Kristin Johnson and Caitlin Shawaker received funding for new equipment and supplies, enhancing student access to professional-grade art tools. The resources include a Rototrim paper cutter, mat cutter, jigsaw, tripod, C-clamps, screen printing materials, plaster molds and alcohol-based markers.

## New starting blocks enhance track program

### Fund: Mindel Family Athletic Fund

Athletic Director Ryan Wronkowicz received funding to purchase eight track starting blocks and a storage cart for the varsity and junior high track and field teams. This equipment eliminates the need for visiting teams to bring their own blocks and provides Ottawa Hills athletes with consistent, quality equipment for practice and competition.

## Mobile STEM table enhances science exploration

### Fund: The STEM Fund

Science teacher Jonathon Seibenaler received funding for a STEM table and accompanying storage kits for his 4th-grade classroom. This equipment creates a flexible, collaborative space for hands-on scientific exploration and construction projects while helping organize essential



STEM Resources

STEM resources. The mobile workstation supports Mr. Seibenaler's station-based instructional model, allowing students to engage more effectively in engineering challenges and scientific inquiry.

## Sewing new business paths

### Fund: Billy Ciralsky Entrepreneurial Fund

Junior Korren "Ren" Johnson (with advisor and business & entrepreneurship teacher Troy Brown) received funding to purchase a sewing machine for his clothing business, Rens Reality. Ren completed both entrepreneurship and finance courses with Mr. Brown, where he developed essential skills such as budgeting, expanding his target demographic, and managing finances to start his small clothing business. He began with only screen printings and is now expanding his capabilities. Ren recently met with OH Theatre costume department volunteer extraordinaires Mrs. Kelm and Mrs. Jun to learn the tips and tricks of using and caring for the sewing machine. He has big aspirations to expand his product offerings by adding denim, tapestry and secondhand garments.



Troy Brown with Ren and his new sewing machine





### Girls summer basketball development

**Fund: Mindel Family Athletic Fund**

Girls head basketball coach Tim Lambert received funding to support summer basketball camps and tournament fees for 45 athletes spanning grades 7-12. The grant enables players to participate in competitive summer events that sharpen skills, build team chemistry and provide valuable game experience outside the regular season. This investment strengthens the foundation of girls basketball at all levels, creating a more cohesive and competitive program.

### Summer learning program to support student success

**Fund: Annual Impact Fund**

Dr. Bill Miller, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, received funding for the Summer Learning Program, which provides crucial academic support to students requiring intervention in English language arts or mathematics, as well as credit recovery options. Students are selected for this targeted program based on performance data indicating they would benefit from additional instruction before advancing to the next school year. The program helps bridge learning gaps and ensures students have the foundational skills needed for future academic success.

### Boys soccer collegiate camp

**Fund: Dynamo Soccer Fund**

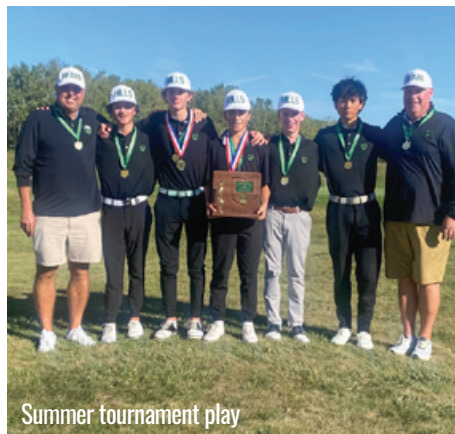
Boys soccer head coach Rodcliff Hall received funding to support a summer soccer camp at Tiffin University for 19 athletes. The collegiate-level training opportunity exposes players to advanced

coaching techniques, tactical development and competitive play in a university setting. This intensive experience helps build team unity while allowing players to develop individual skills and prepare for the upcoming season under the guidance of college coaches. The camp will provide valuable exposure to higher-level play that enhances the entire soccer program.

### Summer tournament play

**Fund: Swigart Family Golf Fund**

Golf Head Coach Justin Kruse received funding to support summer tournament entries and registration fees for the golf team. These competitive opportunities



Summer tournament play

allow players to develop their skills in formal tournament settings during the off-season. Players gain exposure to diverse course conditions and pressure situations that prepare them for the fall season while maintaining their competitive edge against quality opposition.

### Bears' bots battle at Robotics World Championship

**Fund: Talmage Family General Fund**

Three members of the Ottawa Hills High School Robotics Team achieved a milestone by competing for the first time at the VEX Robotics World Championship in Dallas, Texas in May, finishing with an impressive 6-4 record and placing 35th out of 83 teams in their division. Making their world stage debut against more than 820 teams from around the globe, including countries such as Spain and China, the Green Bears demonstrated exceptional technical expertise and strategic thinking. Their standout achievement came with a victory over the seventh-ranked team globally, showcasing their skill and ability to perform under pressure.

The team's historic success represented months of preparation, problem-solving and collaboration in robotics, a growing STEM field. Their strong overall performance in this first-ever world championship appearance demonstrated technical expertise, exceptional resilience and teamwork throughout the competition. Coach and STEM teacher Patty Dowd led the team throughout the season and accompanied the three-student team to the world championships.



Robotics World Championship



Robotics World Championship closing ceremonies





Every year, donors are making possible numerous grants by the Foundation to support student activities and programs. Thank you to these individuals and organizations for their 2024 Annual Gifts and contributions to the Full STEAM Ahead Capital Campaign



Making possible  
**WORLDS OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES**

Through the generosity of OH families, alumni, and others, the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation continues to make a positive impact on students' lives. The Foundation wants to honor those supporters for helping the organization pursue its mission. Those contributions in 2024 and to the Full STEAM Ahead Capital Campaign are enriching the lives of students in every grade and making the district a positive force in their lives.

## LEADERSHIP

(\$500,000 and above)

The Gupta Families  
Manju and Kul Gupta  
Anil and Anjali ('99) Gupta  
Sunny ('01) and Chelsey Gupta  
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## VALEDICTORIAN

(\$250,000 and above)

The MacMillan Family  
Jim ('63) and Jean MacMillan  
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Jeff ('93), Julie, and Whitney  
( '34) MacMillan

## SALUTATORIAN

(\$100,000 and above)

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Pat and Ann ('67) Hylant  
John ('96) and Shanie Swigart  
Steve ('66) and Mickey Swigart  
Alta Richter, Marc Thompson, and  
Tess Thompson ('09)  
*in memory of Tyler Thompson ('07)*  
The University of Toledo  
Trompeter Family Foundation  
The Sue and Jim White, Jr. Family

## SUMMA CUM LAUDE

(\$50,000 and above)

The Kadens Family Foundation  
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*in memory of Bill and Anne ('59)*  
*Lathrop*  
The Yark Families  
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## MAGNA CUM LAUDE

(\$25,000 and above)

Claire ('10) and Caroline ('12)  
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Molly Zraik and the Brown Boys  
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Ian ('95) and Christina Katz  
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and Charles ('23) Merrill  
Geof ('62) and Molly Meyers  
Owens Corning  
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The Rudolph Libbe Group  
Steve and Mary Saddemi  
Tehmina Malik and Nauman  
Shahid  
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*in memory of Tiffany Staelin ('91)*

Katharine Talbott ('89) and Family  
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David ('67) and Heidi ('68)  
Waterman

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(\$5,000 and above)

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Erica ('89) and Jim Silk  
Kay and Jim Silk  
Adam and Rana Smidi  
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The Stancati Family  
Mark ('90), Merideth, Mickey, and  
Taylor Wagoner



## FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION

(\$1,000 and above)

In celebration of

Elise Ansberg ('23)  
Natalie and Scott Aubry  
The Ballard Family  
Amy Buckey and Family  
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Jeremy ('93) and Alyssa ('96)  
Bauer  
Dr. Karl Borsody and Dr. Jaleh  
Eslami  
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Canberra Corp  
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*in memory of Greg Orgel ('07)*  
Class of 2007  
*in memory of Tyler Thompson ('07)*  
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Paul and Melissa Gagacki  
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and Family  
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Brynn and Tate Harr  
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Huntington  
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Becky and Tom Hauck  
Austin ('02) and Chelsea Irving  
and Family  
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Sandeep Singh and Pravleen Kaur  
*in memory of Harvinder Kaur  
and Brijinder Kaur*  
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and Emily  
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Jim and Diane ('70) Snyder  
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Peter Williamson  
*in honor of Daniel Williamson*  
Amy ('83) and Bill Wolff  
Bruce and Gail Yacko  
The Zimmerman Family

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The Archer Family  
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Gayle Austin  
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Byron Bardis ('85)  
Eric Barnum ('66)  
Harriet Baron  
Bernard and Susan Barrow  
Bill and Cindy Beans  
Roger Bell ('65)

Neil and Paula Best  
David Black  
Timothy Bosserman ('10)  
James and Sandra Brown  
Sandy Brown  
Willis Brown  
John and Mary Ellen Brunner  
Class of 1963  
Class of 1967  
Kelly Ann Coleman ('82)  
Commerce Bank, Will Tunis  
Schuyler Cone ('73)  
Ronald Cooperman ('61)  
Bob and Charlotte Cryan  
Mark Davenport  
James Davis  
Mary Davis  
Annabel ('66) and Bruce DeBoer  
Steve ('67) and Debbie Dolgin  
Lynne and Michael Doyle  
Benjamin and Katrina (Drowatzky)  
DuBose  
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Aaron and Susan Eidenier  
Byron and Janet Moser  
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Gretchen Fineske  
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Paul and Melissa Gagacki  
Nate and Sue Geisler  
Jeffrey Gerber ('70)  
Mary Pat Gilsdorf  
George and Maurine Glasser  
James Goalder  
Sandra and Bruce Goldstein  
Bob, Kristin, and Jackson Grande  
Amber Gresh and James Knapp  
Jennifer and Jason Griffin  
Robert Groh ('53)  
Joan Haigh ('49)  
Ahmed Abdel Halim  
Cathleen Heidelberg  
Raymond and Betty Heitger  
Marsha and John Hinsch  
Joe Holtzman ('59)  
Stephen Van Hooser ('94)  
Robin and Mike Hurtt  
Joel Hutton ('74)  
Eugene and Jennifer Izsak  
Carol Janney  
Marilyn Jensen ('63)  
Joel and Casey Jerger  
Jagadish and Leena  
Jhunjunwala  
Jay Khetani ('88)  
Nick and Mary Lou Kozimor  
Jane Kuta ('63)  
Lauren and Francis Krieger  
Barbara Larsen  
Gretta Laskey ('63)  
Patricia & Morgan Levey  
Marc Levin  
Aaron and Marayart Li  
Shahid Mahmood

Lisa Marinelli  
Jay McGiveran ('58)  
*in honor of Class of 1958*  
George McKisson  
The Meeks Family Foundation  
Jill Moreau ('79)  
Adit Mukherjee ('17)  
Beverly J Newcomer  
Keith Nicholson ('92)  
Nancy Nicholson  
Bob and Jano Nolette  
Dan Noonan  
Stephen Northcraft ('70)  
David and Rachael Novak  
The Packo Family  
The Pfeiffer Family  
Margot and Steven Parker  
Marc and Julie Paulenich  
John and Beth Pfeiffer  
Ann Poore  
Jack and Sarah Puffenberger  
Kimberly Ramey  
Jason Rand  
Margaret Reichert  
Edward Reinstein  
Dixie and James Riehm  
Robert and Donna Repp  
Nancie Howe Entenmann  
Roberts ('52)  
Gretchen Rohm  
James Rorick  
Tory and Carl Schaffer  
Salvatore Schiciano  
Carol and Scott Schwab  
Charles Schwab  
Marcus and Colleen Seigar  
Tom Seiple ('63)  
Mary Selleck  
Caitlin Shawaker ('11)  
Steve ('70) and Debbe Skutch  
Andy ('08) and Alex Stancati  
Joe and Diane Stancati  
Emily Stark  
Daniel N Steinberg ('76)  
Phil Stichter ('56)  
Spencer ('55) and Prudy Stone  
Kristin Strobel  
Walter Thieman ('64)  
Dr. Russell J. Tibbetts ('72)  
Donna and Steve Tozer Wipfli  
Fred and Julie Treuhart  
James Uhlik  
Vincent and Cathy Vanni  
Christine Vischer ('60)  
James and Julie Vitale  
Dave Walker  
Lindy Watson  
Catherine Webb ('66)  
Mary Jo Webb  
Melissa Weisenburger  
Eric Wilson  
Susan and Gary Wilson  
Dick Wolff ('73)  
Gary Woodbury ('58)  
Susan Young





## Alum chef serves community in crisis

OHHS alum Susan Feniger ('71), author and chef, gained national attention in January when she and friend Mary Sue Milliken appeared on "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" to discuss their volunteer work feeding Pacific Palisades fire crews. The accomplished chefs partnered with José Andrés and World Central Kitchen to provide hot meals for firefighters and emergency responders battling the devastating fires. On the day of their interview with Jimmy Kimmel, they had already prepared 1,000 meals, including chicken and cauliflower curry and meatloaf with mashed potatoes. Their "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" segment helped raise funds for World Central Kitchen's ongoing efforts to support emergency crews. Ms. Feniger described the experience of helping others as "an honor."



**Susan Feniger & Mary Sue Milliken**  
PACIFIC PALISADES, CA

## Celebrating Alumni Achievement



### Distinguished Alumni Award Nominees:

Sarah Bloomquist ('90)      Jim Klein ('62)  
Susan Feniger ('71)      Geof Meyers ('62)

### Athletic Hall of Fame Nominees:

Elliot Browarsky ('10)      Megan Jamieson ('07)      2008 Boys' Soccer team  
Burt Jamieson ('80)      Rodger Owen ('58)



Sarah  
(Monoky)  
Bloomquist  
'90



2008  
Boys' Soccer  
team

**We welcome the community to join us in honoring these inductees at halftime of the home football game on Friday, September 19 at Niedermeier Stadium.**



## Alumni reveal college realities

More than two dozen students gathered in January for an engaging alumni panel sponsored by the Foundry Advisory Board. Recent Ottawa Hills graduates Luke Gnepper ('24), AJ George ('23), Sadie Dale ('23), and Alice Denny ('24) returned to share valuable advice about transitioning from high school to college. The panel offered honest perspectives on crucial aspects of college success, including academic expectations, the importance of campus involvement through clubs and extracurricular activities, and effective roommate relationship management.

Alumni also addressed the challenges and rewards of balancing athletics, academics and social life. Their candid insights provided current students with realistic expectations and practical strategies for thriving in the college environment. The session emphasized the importance of getting involved on campus while maintaining academic focus and building meaningful relationships.



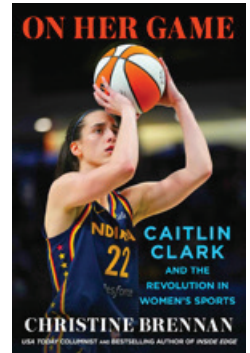


Christine Brennan

## Sports Journalist Christine Brennan Returns to Ottawa Hills

Ottawa Hills will welcome back distinguished alumna Christine Brennan ('76) when the renowned sports journalist returns to campus to discuss her latest book, "On Her Game: Caitlin Clark and the Revolution in Women's Sports." Brennan, a USA Today columnist and best-selling author of "Inside Edge," will share insights from her new work chronicling basketball star Caitlin Clark's impact on women's athletics.

This ticketed event will take place from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 9, in the junior-senior high school. Don't miss this chance to hear from a celebrated Ottawa Hills alumna who has made her mark on national sports journalism. Tickets available at <https://gatheringvolumes.com/events/46904>.



## Upcoming Reunions

Get in Touch!



Green Bear Nation has a robust alumni network. Share your alumni news at [esilk@ohschools.org](mailto:esilk@ohschools.org).

**Class 1965** Contact Judy Winder: [jkappwinder@gmail.com](mailto:jkappwinder@gmail.com)

**Class of 1970** (Oct. 10-11) Contact Nancy Ankney: [nancy.ankney@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ankney@gmail.com)

**Class of 1975** (Sept. 19-20) Contact Larry Mitchell: [mitche32000@yahoo.com](mailto:mitche32000@yahoo.com) or Mark Sofyanos [msofyanos1@aol.com](mailto:msofyanos1@aol.com)

**Class of 1980** (June 20-21) Contact Toddy Glosser: [toddyglosser@gmail.com](mailto:toddyglosser@gmail.com)

**Class of 1993** (Oct. 10-13) Contact Cecily Straub Denny: [cecily.denny@gmail.com](mailto:cecily.denny@gmail.com)

**Class of 1996** Contact Brett McCall: [ottawahillsco1996@gmail.com](mailto:ottawahillsco1996@gmail.com)

**Class of 2005** Contact Grant Kozy: [grant.kozy@gmail.com](mailto:grant.kozy@gmail.com)

**Football Reunion** (July 26) Contact Coach Brandon Carter: [ohhsfootball@yahoo.com](mailto:ohhsfootball@yahoo.com)

## Detailing the path to success

Ottawa Hills alumnus Caden Coy ('22) returned to inspire the next generation of Green Bear entrepreneurs during a recent elementary school visit, sharing his journey from high school student to successful business owner.

At 21, Caden owns Coy's Detailing LLC, a full-service vehicle and watercraft detailing business he founded in 2019 with his brother. Currently studying finance and business management at the University of Toledo, Caden emphasized hard work and resilience as keys to transforming ideas into reality. Much like young dog walkers trying to earn extra dollars for pocket money, Caden was motivated to earn cash for gas money to go places with his friends. Cleaning people's cars seemed like a good place to start his entrepreneurial journey.



Caden Coy

Caden's business received crucial early support from the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation. As a junior at Ottawa Hills, he received a \$400 grant from the Billy Ciralsky Entrepreneurial Endowment Fund to purchase equipment that would help him clean upholstery more efficiently. The support meant more than just the equipment itself. Having people take a chance and invest in his vision was transformative. Getting that machine felt like getting a new car at the time, but looking back, that grant lit a fire under him to see where the business could go. Today, Caden's business employs six team members and serves dealerships throughout the area, demonstrating to young students how early support and determination can lead to entrepreneurial success.





# Ottawa Hills Local Schools

3600 Indian Road  
Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

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ORGANIZATION  
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TOLEDO, OHIO  
PERMIT #311

## UPCOMINGEVENTS

### PLEASE JOIN US

The district invites our community to stay connected by attending any of these upcoming school-related events.

**Tickets to plays and regular season athletic events can be purchased online at [www.ohschools.org/tickets](http://www.ohschools.org/tickets)**

In case of schedule changes, please visit [ohschools.org/calendar](http://ohschools.org/calendar) for the latest event information.



### August

**Monday 18** – OHES Open House

**Wednesday 20** – First Day of School

**Wednesday 20** – JHHS Open House

### September

**Monday 1** – Labor Day: No school

**Thursday-Friday 18-19** – Celebrating Alumni Achievement

**Saturday 20** – OHSPA Fall Fest

*Celebrating  
Alumni  
Achievement*

### October

**Friday 10** – Village Life Parade and Homecoming

**Sunday 19** – Fall Collage Concert



### November

**Tuesday 4** – Election Day

**Friday-Sunday 21-23** – JHHS Fall Play

**Wednesday-Friday 26-28** – Thanksgiving Break

### December

**Wednesday 10** – Winter Choir Concert

**Sunday 14** – Winter Band Concert

**Monday 22- Friday Jan 2** – Winter Break