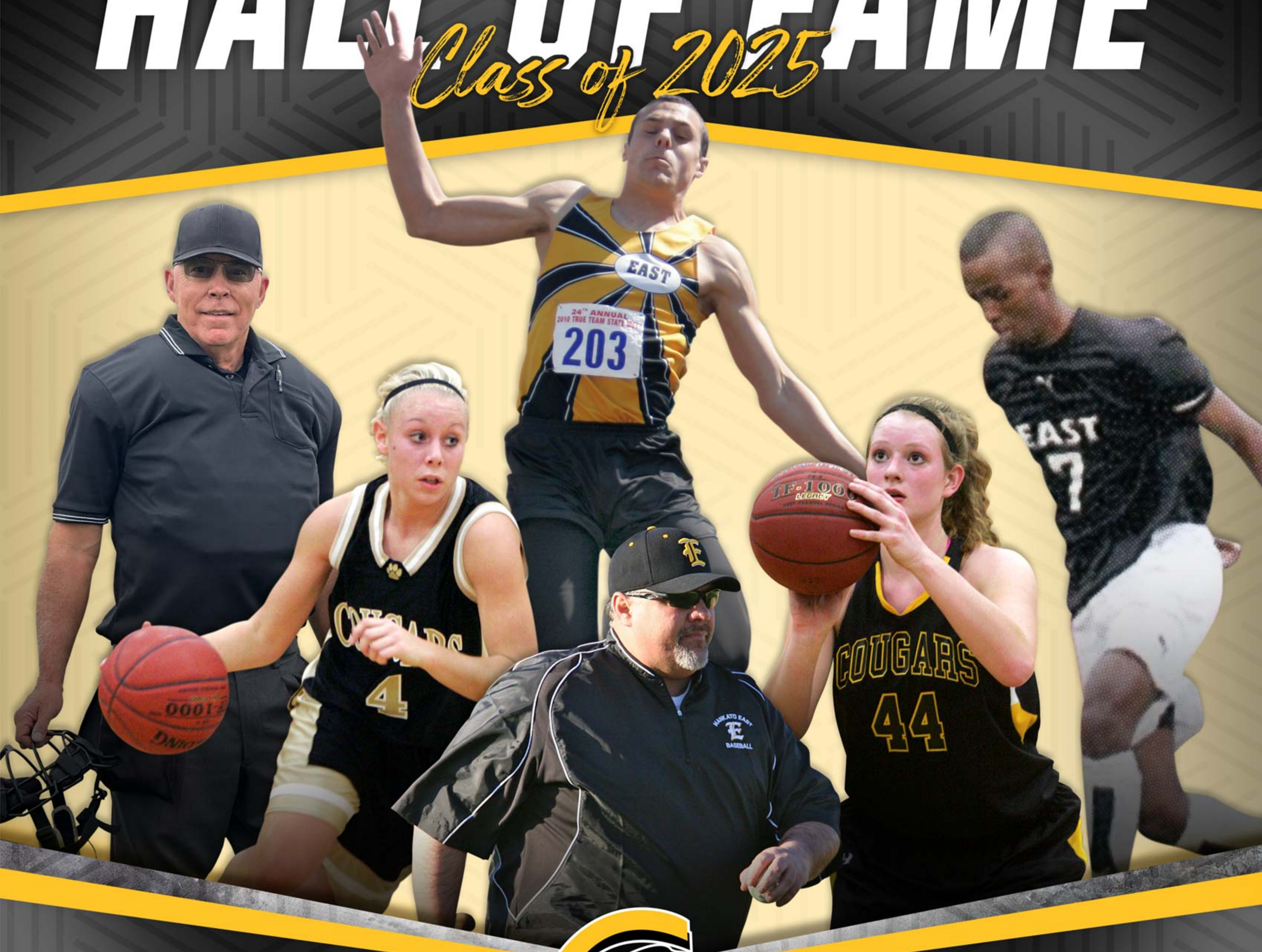


MAN KATO EAST COUGARS

HALL OF FAME

Class of 2025



JORDAN BENESH *ATHLETE*

SARAH (BROZIK) OSTERBERG *ATHLETE*

GARY NOREN *COMMUNITY MEMBER*

SHAFI QANYARE *ATHLETE*

DAN QUAME *COACH*

CLAIRE (ZIEGLER) PETERSEN *ATHLETE*

JORDAN BENESH - Athlete



Jordan Benesh, the son of Marilyn and Virgil Benesh and 2010 graduate of Mankato East High School, amassed a variety of terrific accomplishments as a student-athlete in his time here at East and beyond!

On the gridiron, Jordan earned three varsity letters as the starting quarterback. He was All-City his junior & senior years and was Big 9 All-Conference Honorable Mention both years as well. His senior year he was nominated as a captain and was named Academic All-State. Currently Jordan ranks in the top three in career passing attempts, completions and yards, and is 4th in career Touchdown passes as well.

During the winter, Jordan was a three-year letter winner in basketball where he typically defended the other team's top guard threat and was a team captain as a senior. Although it was undoubtedly his third sport of the three he competed in, he approached it like it was his #1 sport and competed relentlessly.

In Track and Field, Jordan lettered four times and was again, named a team captain his senior year. He was a member of the 2010 True Team State Championship Team and the 2007 runner-up at State True Team his freshman year. He was Big 9 All-Conference in '08, '09, & '10 and earned Academic All-State honors all four years he competed. At the time of his graduation, he held the 2nd best triple jump distance as a Cougar (45'1") and third best long jump mark (22'2.5"). He also high jumped 6'2" in his tenure at East High, making him a coach's dream in the field events.

Jordan went on to compete collegiately at Arizona State University in the then extremely competitive and accomplished PAC-12 conference. He was a walk-on to the track and field program and excelled, finishing 8th in the 2013 PAC-12 Championship's triple jump competition (48'8.75") and 11th in the 2014 Championship as well. Jordan earned the following awards in his time with the program; 8-time Sun Devil Scholar Athlete, CoSIDA/Capital One Academic All-District 1st team 2013, CoSIDA/Capital One Academic All-American nominee, Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF) Indoor Track and Field Academic All-Conference first team ('13 & '14), 2-time PAC-12 Academic All-Conference first team ('13-'14), and was an NCAA postgraduate scholarship nominee in 2014.

Jordan graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2014 from ASU with his bachelor's degree in Accounting, a minor in Communications, and certificate from Barrett Honors' College. He was awarded the prestigious Moeur Award in 2014 for graduation with a 4.0 GPA. He then went on to earn his Master's Degree in Accounting from the W.P. Carey School of Business at ASU in 2015. Jordan helped launch a student-run nonprofit organization, Arizona Microcredit Initiative, which provided small business loans, entrepreneurial classes and consulting to local business owners who lack traditional access to these services.

Since graduating from ASU, Jordan has been a licensed CPA in the state of Arizona since 2016, spent seven years at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) from 2015-2022, and has currently been the director of financial planning and analysis at Trinity Capital. Jordan is a volunteer coach with the AZ Youth Track and Field Club and a member of Redemption Tempe Church in Tempe, AZ. He has been married to his wife Bethany since 2016 and has 3 children, Elza (6), Miles (4), and Josie (1).

SARAH (BROZIK) OSTERBERG - Athlete



Sarah (Brozik) Osterberg, a 2010 graduate, had a spectacular high school career, embodying what the term student-athlete is all about throughout her career as a Cougar. As a three-sport athlete, Sarah excelled in soccer, basketball and golf, lettering an incredible 16 times while at East. Her leadership qualities were every bit as impressive as her athletic accomplishments and her teams benefitted tremendously from her ability to motivate and elevate those around her to be the best that they could be.

During the fall, Sarah performed soccer on the pitch where she lettered six times and captained the Cougars as a sophomore, junior, and senior. She was Big 9 All-Conference in her last two seasons and earned All-City honors five straight years. Sarah also was voted the team Rookie of the Year as a seventh grader and the team MVP three times throughout her career.

In the winter season, Sarah played basketball on the hard court, lettering four times for the Cougars. She was a spark to everyone around her, serving as team captain, earning Big 9 All-Conference, All-State Honorable Mention and All-City honors in both her junior and senior years. Sarah was voted team MVP her junior year and was listed on the 100 Top Players in Minnesota her senior year.

The spring season is where Sarah's leadership skills were on full display. As a 7th grader she was thrust into varsity action and never looked back in the first of her six years of lettering. Her team won three Section 2AA titles with Sarah leading the way as a two-time Section Medalist. In her time on the links with Cougar Golf, Sarah was a 6-time letter winner, 3-time Big 9 All-Conference performer, and captain her final three years.

Sarah was also very involved in Concert Choir and Chamber Singers and was chosen to be a part of the Big 9 Select Choir her senior year. She was also a member of Link Crew and the National Honor Society.

Sarah went on to graduate from St. Cloud State University (Cum Laude) in 2014 with a degree in finance and was quickly hired by TEKsystems in Bloomington. She made a career change in 2019, accepting a position with Premier Bank Minnesota as a Commercial Loan Officer and has quickly worked her way up to her current role as Vice-President of Digital Banking Services. After moving to Hastings in 2018, Sarah has served on the board of directors for the United Way of Hastings the past 5 years. She has been married for eight years to Mike Osterberg and together, they have three daughters: Hallie (4), Zoey (2) and Megan (4 Months).

GARY NOREN - Community Member



Gary Noren's deep-rooted connection to Mankato East High School began in 1976 as a student-athlete and has continued for nearly five decades through his unwavering dedication to athletics, youth mentorship and community service.

As a student, Gary was a three-sport athlete. He was a member of East's first cross country team to qualify for the state meet, contributed to the schools first Big Nine Conference championship in basketball, and earned All-Conference honors in baseball his senior year. He graduated from Mankato East in 1979.

His passion for sports only grew stronger in adulthood. Since 1979, Gary has been a staple in Mankato's softball community as both a player and umpire, participating in commercial, co-ed and church leagues for more than 40 years. During his U.S. Army service from 1983 to 1986, he competed across Europe as a member of a traveling softball team, playing in Germany, Belgium and Holland.

In 1986, Gary returned to Mankato to complete his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management. During that time, he also returned to Mankato East in a new role—as a timekeeper. For nearly four decades, he has worked the scoreboard and game clock at boys and girls basketball games and has also supported wrestling and track competitions. He also served for ten years on the football chain gang. His dependability and experience have earned him similar roles with Gustavus Adolphus College, Minnesota State University–Mankato and Mankato West High School.

Gary has also been a devoted coach and mentor. He coached 8th, 9th and 10th grade baseball teams at Mankato East and, after becoming a parent, expanded into community youth football, basketball, baseball and softball. His deep love of baseball led him to years of service with the Mankato Area Youth Baseball Association (MAYBA), including time as Vice President.

From 2002 to 2023, the Noren family opened their home to collegiate athletes as a host family for the Mankato MoonDogs, welcoming and supporting players from around the country. Gary continues to serve as a youth umpire—a role he has held since the late 1970s.

The Noren legacy at Mankato East is multi-generational. His mother, Marilyn Noren, worked at East from its opening in 1973 until her retirement in 2001. His siblings—Julie (Class of 1976), Vicki (Class of 1978) and David (Class of 1982)—are all alumni. Both of Gary's children, Emma and Travis, graduated from and worked at East, and his wife, Jean, supported the school through active involvement in the Booster Club. Gary himself remains a dedicated member and one of the top raffle ticket fundraisers.

In recognition of his lifelong contributions, Gary has received numerous honors, including inductions into the Minnesota Boys Basketball Ring of Honor in 2019, the Mankato Area Youth Baseball Association Hall of Fame in 2022 and the Mankato Softball Hall of Fame in 2025.

Through his unwavering service, sportsmanship and community spirit, Gary Noren embodies the values of Mankato East High School. The reason for his involvement is not only for love of sports, but also to be able to serve the youth of his community. His decades of contributions have left a lasting impact on students, athletes and the greater Mankato community.

SHAFI QANYARE - Athlete



Shafi Qanyare, a 2008 graduate of Mankato East High School, was a prolific soccer player, contributed heavily to the basketball team, and was a letter winner in track & field.

While at Mankato East, Shafi was a varsity player for six years. He earned Big 9 All-Conference honors four times and also served as a captain. Shafi was named to the Minnesota Coaches All-State team both his junior and senior years. His senior season was a fantastic campaign in which he scored 31 goals and produced 13 assists. Shafi's senior season was one to remember as he put up more goals than any East player before him. The Cougars ended that season 12-8-1. The soccer program would not be where it is today without Shafi. After that season Shafi played in the Senior Classic All-Star game, which is a senior contest for all classes of soccer and was named the game MVP.

Shafi also competed on Nationally ranked AAU teams out of the metro area that traveled to over 40 states and even competed in 13 different countries during the winter, spring, and summer. He was pursued by many colleges to play collegiately but opted to stay home to help with family priorities.

During the winter, Shafi was a big contributor for the East boys' basketball teams as well. He started his basketball career very late, with soccer taking up much of his time, but began to excel heading into his senior season. Shafi went from a non-participant in 9th grade to a Big 9 All-Conference Honorable Mention basketball player his senior year. He averaged 10.7 ppg that year and shot over 40% from 3-point range. He was second in minutes and points that year and led the Cougars in assists with 76. In the Spring, Shafi finished his high school athletic career, lettering in track and field and helping with the team success that season.

After high school Mr. Qanyare served as a mentor and assistant soccer coach for youth and collegiate-level players. He organized and participated in athletic leadership and community outreach programs through university sports clubs. He was selected as team leader/captain for various intramural and club sports teams in soccer and basketball. Shafi was an active member of student-athlete leadership groups, contributing to diversity and inclusion initiatives. He earned his Master of Science in Educational Leadership from Minnesota State, Mankato and a Bachelor of Science degree in Sport Management with a minor in Business Administration.

Currently Shafi is an assistant soccer coach at Faribault High School. He has volunteered as a mentor, Big Brother/Big Sister Program (2008–13) and he has been President of the NAACP Chapter; Black Student Union. He has also been the Somali Student Association leader over the years and has been involved for 15 plus years as a licensed childcare provider advancing equity initiatives. His entrepreneurial background includes creating and selling multimillion-dollar business start-ups, with a strong passion for entrepreneurship and ongoing innovation. Shafi is married to Fardosa Said and they have 3 children (Madina, Mecca, and Mina).

DAN QUAME - *Coach*



Known as DQ or Quamer - Dan Quame is one of just a couple of inductees to lay claim to not only competing at Mankato East, but also coaching for the cougars.

Dan was a three-sport athlete in high school (Football, Basketball and Baseball), where he earned Big 9 All-Conference honors in '83 for football and was Selected All-City. He was a rotation member on the '83-'84 basketball team that was the first boys team to qualify for the state basketball tournament in the 2-class system and was a Big 9 All-Conference player in baseball in '84. Dan was the Wolverton Scholarship Award winner in 1984 as well and Co-Male Athlete of the year his senior year.

Dan, along with several of his Mankato East high school teammates, went on to play for the first Bethany Lutheran College baseball teams in '85 & '86. Dan was a starting Rightfielder for the Vikings.

After college, Dan taught for three years in Madelia, MN before returning to Mankato East. He has been a social studies teacher in both the East Junior and senior High School since 1992, served as the Dean of Students at East Junior High for twenty-four years and was the interim High School Activities Director during part of the 2002-03 school year. Dan also coordinated the Junior High Activities for 24 years and coached football, basketball and baseball at the junior high levels at some points throughout his career.

As a coach At the high school level, Dan was a B-squad football and baseball coach from 2002-09. He was also an assistant basketball coach for the 1992-93 season. As the head coach of the baseball program from 2010-14, Dan led the program to a section championship in 2010, qualifying the Cougars for the 2nd state tournament in program history, where they finished 4th.

Coach Quame made his mark as an athlete and coach/administrator for roughly 31 years while at East. Both of his sons Derek and Drew were accomplished baseball players who played for their dad in high school. Dan is a Cougar through and through, spending 4 years as an athlete, and 31 years as a coach and administrator for the Black and Gold, putting him on a short list of Cougar athletes/coaches who have had the opportunity to greatly impact student-athletes over a long and illustrious career.

Dan's wife Susan (Beutz '85 East grad), son Derek ('10 grad) and his wife (Kelsey and grandson Wesley), son Drew ('14 grad) and his wife (Elizabeth and grandson Bridger), brother in law Tim Knowles ('83 grad & East HOF 2019), and of course his mom Jeneane (former East High librarian) were a big part of Dan's life throughout his time at East. Dan is retiring from the Mankato District after the first semester and will be moving with his wife to Yankton, SD, in order to be closer to his sons' and their families.

CLAIRE (ZIEGLER) PETERSEN - *Athlete*



Claire (Ziegler) Petersen, a 2014 graduate, had a spectacular high school career that defines what a student-athlete should be about through her time at East. Amazingly, she lettered a combined 14 times in volleyball, basketball, and track & field while competing as a Cougar.

During the fall, Claire excelled on the volleyball court where she lettered four times and captained the Cougars as a junior and senior. She earned Big 9 Conference Honorable Mention honors in each of her last two campaigns at East.

In the winter season Claire truly shined. She was again a four-time letter winner (captain her final two years), was Big 9 Conference Honorable Mention her freshman year and Big 9 All-Conference in her final three seasons for the Lady Cougars. Claire was a key part of two Big 9 Conference Championship squads in 2012 and 2013 as her teams only lost one conference game in those two years. Claire became a 1,000 point scorer her junior year and finished with 1,648 points for her career putting her 6th on the All-Time scoring list at EHS. She also broke the 1,000 rebound barrier making her the only 1,000 point and 1,000 rebound player in East history. Claire finished her remarkable career with 1,113 rebounds, which still stands as the school record for rebounds in a career. She averaged a double/double over her last two campaigns as a Cougar (over 18 ppg and 10.8 rpg each season), earned All-State Honorable Mention honors her sophomore, junior, and senior years, and was selected to play in the MN All-Star basketball series as a senior.

Claire wasn't done after the basketball season. During the spring season she lettered in track & field six times, starting her 7th grade year. She was named captain her senior year and earned Big 9 All-Conference honors in the high jump, shot put and discus. She set the school record in discus and shot-put her junior year (2013) as well as the Big 9 Conference Championship meet record for discus that same year. She competed in state in both throwing events her final two years and garnered a 5th place finish in the discus her senior year.

After high school, Claire continued her basketball career at MSU-Mankato where she competed in over half the games her freshman year, working all the way up to her senior year where she started all 25 games, recorded 11 double-doubles, averaged 12.3 ppg and recorded a team high 20 double-digit scoring games. She ranked 6th in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) in rebounds with 8.2 rpg and in steals per contest with 1.5. She became the 22nd member of the MSU 1,000 point club, scoring 1,001 pts in her career and she was also the 14th member of the 800 point/600 rebound club. Claire was Second Team All-NSIC and All-Academic twice each in her career and had numerous NSIC "player of the week" honors.

After graduating in 2018 with her bachelor's in social work, Claire joined AmeriCorps and was placed in Austin, Texas. She worked two years at a middle school for at-risk youth before moving back to Mankato in 2020 to start a graduate program in social work. She graduated in 2021 with her Master's Degree, recently obtained her LICSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) licensure and is working within the Forensic Mental Health Program at the State Hospital in St. Peter, MN in their Acute Psychiatric/Crisis unit as a clinical social worker. She married her husband Cole in 2023, and they welcomed their son Wyatt in November 2023. Claire was a part of the 2022 girls basketball coaching staff that finished 4th in state that year and continues to volunteer coach at East as time allows.

MANKATO EAST HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

2002 Inductees *(Charter Year)*

Al Blanshan.....Athlete
 Jack Brooks.....Athlete
 Ora Buchanan.....Community Member
 Kendra (Carter) Hinz.....Athlete
 Mark Daby.....Community Member
 Robert Gaarder.....Athlete
 Jerry Maschka.....Community Member
 Kristin Maschka.....Athlete
 Sara Maschka.....Athlete
 Barb (Meredith) Woodford.....Athlete
 Don Miller.....Athletic Director
 Kari (Mitchell) Eckhert.....Coach
 Denny Runck.....Athlete
 Tammy Shain.....Athlete
 Steve Smith.....Athlete
 Amy (Swanson) Hoehn.....Community Member
 Marissa (Tieszen) Rustad.....Athlete
 Mike Wolle.....Athlete
 Scott Wolner.....Athlete
 Merv Wolverton.....Community Member
 Cliff Woodford.....Coach

2003 Inductees

Amy Cazett.....Athlete
 John Coatta.....Athlete
 Chris Draheim.....Athlete
 Andre Harnitz.....Athlete
 Travis Helling.....Athlete
 Amy (Kapsner) Hodapp.....Athlete
 Dan Kapsner.....Community Member
 Chrissa Landwehr.....Athlete
 Bob Maes.....Coach
 Newton Moen.....Community Member
 Randy Schulz.....Athlete
 Tim Stark.....Athlete
 John Stoffel.....Athlete
 Angie (Swanson) DeGraff.....Athlete
 Ron Swanson.....Community Member
 Rod Trongard.....Community Member
 Sarah Winslow.....Athlete
 Kris Wittrock.....Athlete

2004 Inductees

Jon Dierks.....Athlete
 Andrew Graham.....Athlete
 Nordeene Haldorson.....Coach
 Todd Hodapp.....Athlete
 Doris Huepenbecker.....Community Member
 Mark Miller.....Community Member
 Jennifer Mitchell.....Athlete
 Jordann Ojanpa.....Athlete
 Chris Vokal.....Athlete
 Kris Wolle.....Athlete
 Leonard Zimmerman.....Community Member

2005 Inductees

Dennis Blomquist.....Community Member
 Millie Daufenbach.....Community Member
 Gary Dierks.....Coach
 Connie (Fitzloff) Long.....Athlete
 John Huepenbecker.....Athlete
 Jody (Mitchell) Guillemette.....Athlete
 Eric Schmidt.....Athlete

2006 Inductees

Doug Espenson.....Athlete
 Tim Johnson.....Coach
 Ben Kaus.....Athlete
 Kristin (Kachelmyer) Krusemark.....Athlete
 Brian Kvebak.....Coach
 Connie (Spangrud) Robinson.....Athlete

2007 Inductees

Gordy Graham.....Community Member
 Chuck Helling.....Coach
 Bob Schweim.....Athlete
 Mark Spangrud.....Athlete
 Jeanne (Tostenson) Scarpello.....Athlete

2008 Inductees

Corey Dahline.....Athlete
 Beth (Johnson) Benzkofer.....Athlete
 Barb Kaus.....Community Member
 Joe Madson.....Athlete/Coach
 Patti Maes.....Athlete
 Margaret Schoettler.....Athlete
 Cletus Zitzmann.....Coach

2009 Inductees

Brad Fowler.....Athlete
 Bob Gospeter.....Coach
 Brad Kliegl.....Athlete
 Jim Malcolm.....Coach
 Cathy Matuska.....Athlete
 Briggs Rolfsrud.....Athlete

2010 Inductees

Josh Dobell.....Athlete
 Steve Kibble.....Athlete
 Elizabeth (Landwehr) Mullikin.....Athlete
 Ty Ries.....Athlete
 Mark Schmit.....Coach
 Paul Sorenson.....Coach

2011 Inductees

Jeff Anderson.....Athlete
 John Beeman.....Athlete
 Warren Mickelson.....Coach
 Kristin (Petersen) Stordahl.....Athlete
 Paula (Uttech) Prybylla.....Athlete
 Steve Wolle.....Coach

2012 Inductees

Carrie (Gospeter) O'Hearn.....Athlete
 Bob Matuska.....Athlete
 Lisa (Runck) Newmann.....Athlete
 Leroy Schweim.....Community Member
 Mark Sievers.....Athlete

2013 Inductees

Heather (Bassett) Dahl.....Athlete
 Jeff Brudwick.....Athlete
 Brian Fowler.....Community Member
 Mike Haldorson.....Athlete
 Neil Paarmann.....Coach
 Holly Schlingmann.....Athlete

MANKATO EAST HIGH SCHOOL

ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

2015 Inductees

Mary Conley Athlete
 Amy (Knudson) Hendricks Athlete
 Katie (Kortuem) Olson Athlete
 Marilyn Noren Community Member
 Sam Wigersma Athlete
 Brad Willett Athlete

2017 Inductees

Craig Dahl Athlete
 Ron Kibble Community Member
 Megan (Lundgren) Weber Athlete
 Jamie Steffensmeier Athlete
 Kim (Westendorf) Bazata Athlete
 Tom Yess Coach

2019 Inductees

Mitch Gosson Athlete
 Tim Knowles Athlete
 Sarah (Robbins) DeKramer Athlete
 Kellie Seiler Community Member
 Mark Seiler Coach
 Jessica Smith Athlete

2021 Inductees

Cody Adams Athlete
 Jesse Graves Athlete
 Ann Hendricks Community Member
 Jess (Christensen) Hodgson Athlete
 Mandy (Knudson) Buelow Athlete
 Bruce Urbatch Coach

2023 Inductees

Jeff Dahline Community Member
 Lee Masters Community Member
 Jeff Mathews Athlete
 Coley (Ries) Welter Athlete
 EJ (Scharmer) Lee Athlete
 Chris Ward Athlete

2025 Inductees

Jordan Benesh Athlete
 Sarah (Brozik) Osterberg Athlete
 Gary Noren Community Member
 Shafi Qanyare Athlete
 Dan Quame Coach
 Claire (Ziegler) Petersen Athlete

CRITERIA FOR INDUCTION

Candidates for membership in the Mankato East School Athletic Hall of Fame must be former Mankato East High School students, coaches, or other individuals who made significant contributions to East High School Athletics or to their community. Candidates must be out of high school for at least 8 years. Inductees in any category may be living or deceased.)

Candidates are eligible in three categories:

ATHLETIC - A former Mankato East athlete who competed with excellence and lettered in a varsity sport. Nominees must be or must have been a credit to East High School and the community. Candidates must be a graduate of Mankato East High School and have been out of high school for at least eight (8) years.

COACHES - A nominee must be a former or present coach who has distinguished himself/herself by demonstrating exceptional leadership, character and athletic achievement during his/her tenure at Mankato East.

COMMUNITY MEMBER - An individual who has shown outstanding support of Mankato East High School Athletics.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

