



MANKATO EAST

HALL OF FAME

CLASS OF 2019



**MITCH GOSSON
TIM KNOWLES
SARAH (ROBBINS)
DEKRAMER**

**KELLIE SEILER
MARK SEILER
JESSICA SMITH**

MITCH GOSSON - ATHLETE



Mitch Gosson, a 2005 graduate, left a memorable mark at Mankato East on both the gridiron and basketball court. Mitch continued that success on the hardwoods at Minnesota State University - Mankato as well. He is one of only 6 players in program history who have gone on to play at the D1 or D2 level for basketball.

In football at Mankato East, Mitch was a two year starter and letter winner, playing on both sides of the ball at tight end and defensive end. Mitch was part of the 2004 Section Championship team that went on to host Northfield in the state tournament his junior year. Mitch was a key part of two winning programs during the '03 and '04 seasons.

On the basketball court Mitch spearheaded arguably the best three year run in East boys' basketball history. In that span, the Cougars were a combined 56-25, won 2 section titles and were runners-up in the section finals the other year. As a sophomore, Mitch led the Cougars in rebounding, pulling down the 9th most rebounds in a single season. He averaged 8.5 rebounds per game and was just getting started. His junior year he pulled down 250 rebounds (8.9 per game) which is the 4th most in program history. During his senior year where the Cougars were 25-6 and finished 3rd in state, the highest finish in program history, Mitch hauled in a record 293 rebounds (9.5 per game) and completed his career with a school record 772 total rebounds, which is 117 more than the next best rebounder at Mankato East ~ Mitch is the best rebounder in East history and he carried that with him to the next level.

Not only could Mitch "get on the glass", he also was a major point producer in the program. He was a consistent scorer and in his final two seasons he averaged 13.4 and 13.7 points per game on two exceptional teams that were deep with talent. His 416 points scored during his senior year is 18th all time in school history in a single season and his 1050 pts puts him #9 all time in program history. He did this while shooting at a 57.5% clip his senior year and a 55.9% mark during his junior year. Mitch was a tremendous shot blocker and could guard multiple positions on the floor. He was a two time All-Big 9 performer and a two time All-City performer. He achieved Class AAA All-State status his senior year and was a member of the 2005 MSHSL Basketball Tournament All- tournament team as well.

At Minnesota State University - Mankato, Mitch was a 4 time letter winner and 2 year starter while being a member of 4 conference title teams in 4 years. Mitch led the Mavericks in rebounding his senior year averaging 7.8 per game and was 3rd in scoring at 11.4 points per game while shooting 55.5% from the floor. He finished with 850 points and 636 rebounds in his career as a Maverick and was voted Honorable Mention All-NSIC his senior year.

TIM KNOWLES - ATHLETE



Tim Knowles, a 1983 graduate, was a throwback even in his era. Tim was a no-nonsense player in all of his sports (no towels, tape, wrist bands, or batting gloves for Tim). He was "old school" and ready to compete at all times. During an era when underclassmen were rarely brought up to play varsity - Tim could have easily made that leap in both football and baseball as a sophomore. He was a starter and lettered in football, basketball, and baseball his junior and senior seasons. Tim was a captain in all three sports his senior year. On the baseball diamond, Tim's most accomplished sport, he was voted Big 9 All-Conference both years ('82 & '83) and played in the Lion's All-Star Baseball Series on the outstate team, one of only 18 players selected statewide. Tim held the single season batting average record when he graduated by hitting .430 his senior year and was voted male athlete of the year by his peers.

While ample opportunities presented themselves for Tim to go to college and also play baseball, Tim chose the United States Army by enlisting immediately following high school graduation and served for 3 years, reaching the rank of Sergeant (E-5). Tim then enrolled at Minnesota State University and graduated with a degree in Social Studies in 1991 and was immediately commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army.

Tim served two tours of combat in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. His awards during his illustrious military career include: Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal 2x, Meritorious service Award 3x, Army Commendation Award 7x, Army Achievement Award 5x, Iraq Campaign Medal with 2 stars, Army Superior Unit Award 2x, The Defense Service Award 2x, Global war on terrorism expeditionary Award, Global war on terrorism service award, non commissioned officer development ribbon and 4 overseas service ribbons. He has a parachutist badge, Air Assault badge, and US Army recruiting badge as well.

Tim graduated from the US Army Command and Staff College in Ft. Leavenworth, KS, in 2003 and received his Master of Arts degree in Management from Webster University in St. Louis, MO, in 2007. Tim, who retired a Lieutenant Colonel after 23 years as a Field Artillery Officer, was personally responsible for the welfare, training, and readiness of thousands of young men and women for their military service and their preparation for reintroduction into the civilian sector.

Tim has been married to his high school sweet-heart Jean Beutz, class of '83 Mankato East, for the past 33 years. They have 3 adult children and 2 grandchildren. Since deployment Tim has been stationed in Ft Hood, TX, as a General Dynamics Land System Manager.

SARAH (ROBBINS) DEKRAMER - ATHLETE



Sarah Robbins DeKramer was a standout student-athlete during the 1991-1996 time period. As an 8th grader one could already tell the impact that Sarah would make as a three sport athlete at Mankato East.

As an 8th grader, Sarah played on the varsity tennis team, earning the first of her many letters. Her second letter came on the hardwoods with the girls' basketball team, while also being named to the Mankato All-City team and earning Honorable Mention All-Conference. In the spring she earned a varsity letter on the diamond in softball. She did all this while still finding time to play trumpet in the band.

It got much more exciting her freshman year when she earned All-City honors in tennis, All-Big 9, All-City, and KEYC prep athlete of the week in basketball, and again lettered in softball while playing shortstop. Sarah not only continued in band but was also an honor roll student and extremely active in her church and church youth group.

As a 10th grader who was Vice-President of her class, Sarah was again All-City in tennis and auditioned and made the concert band. In the winter she was All-City and Big 9 All-Conference once again and finished the year as a letter-winner and Big 9 All-Conference performer in softball.

Going into her junior year, Sarah was already a 9x letter winner and multiple All-City and All Big 9 performer. She continued in Student Council and band while once again winning letters in tennis, basketball, and softball. She earned

All-City and All-Big 9 honors in basketball while going over the 1,000 point scoring barrier to boot. She once again lettered in softball and was selected to Girls' State at Bethel College.

Her storied high school career ended with 3 more letters her senior year for a total of 15! She was class president, participated in band, and swam for the first time competitively, earning a letter in her first year of swimming. In basketball she once again was All-City for her 5th straight year, All-Conference for a 4th time, and finished as the 9th all time scorer with 1373 pts and 9th in rebounds with 573. In the spring she earned All-Conference Honors and played in her first state tournament in softball where the Cougar 9 finished 3rd in state class AAA and were Big 9 Champs for the 2nd year in a row.

Sarah received a full ride scholarship to South Dakota State University in the NCC and graduated with honors with a Nursing degree and a minor in Biology. Sarah has been a registered nurse for 18 years and currently works as a cardiology care manager in Sioux Falls. She has two children Abbie (16) and Josh (13), a sister Julie who resides in Minneapolis with her children, and parents Dianne and Jim who continue to reside in Mankato. Sarah loves teaching pilates, running, traveling, and doing Yoga.

JESSICA SMITH - ATHLETE



Jessica Smith, a 2006 graduate, was an extremely accomplished three sport athlete who set records in track and field, flourished in dance, and made great waves in the pool.

In the fall season, Jessica earned 4 letters in varsity swimming and was named "Swimmer of the Meet" in the Section Finals for her performance in the 50 meter breast-stroke her junior year. She also performed and worked hard in the winter as a member of the East Dance team as well. She won the overall concept award with her dance to "Welcome to the Jungle" during the 2005 Dance Company season and again earned a letter all four years of performance at Mankato East.

It was in the spring season that Jessica shined the brightest as a member of the track and field program, where she captained the team and broke five high school records in her tenure. She was a member of four different school record relay teams, the 4x200, 4x400 and the sprint medley relay, which all remain school records and the 4x800. Her 4x400 team took 3rd in state in '03, 2nd in state in '04, and won the State Championship in '05 and her 4x200 team took 5th twice at the state meet. Individually she competed at the state meet in both the 200m dash and 400m dash, finishing 4th in the 400m in both '04 and '05. All said, Jessica is a 12 time state participant and still part of 3 school records as well as posting 3 times ranking 2nd best in school history (200m and 400m), and 2 times ranking 3rd best in school history (100m and 800m). Jessica proved to be a rare breed of runner demonstrating her mastery of the 100 m and 800 m races and every distance in between, all of which are glaringly different types or races. Jessica earned All-Big 9 Conference status for 4 straight years and her teams won a Conference Championship in 2005 to go along with two straight State True Team championships in 2003 and 2004

and a State True Team Runner-up finish in 2005.

Upon graduation from East Jessica received a full ride track and field scholarship to NDSU. She then transferred to Minnesota State University of Mankato where she also earned a track and field scholarship. She anchored the 4x400 team that ran in the Drake Relays and in the indoor and outdoor National Championship while competing with the Mavs.

Jessica has done anything but rest after all of her high school and college accolades. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Urban and Regional Studies, she landed a job in the wholesale fashion industry and moved to Arizona where she worked behind the scenes at Super Bowl XLIX in the media center. She later moved to California with her job and the highlight of that stop was learning to surf. Following her stay in California, Jessica accepted a job in Melbourne, Australia, where she lived for a year helping to open restaurants and experienced scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef! She is currently living in Arizona as a general manager of a multiconcept hospitality company exploring the world of food and travel which are both big passions in her life.

KELLIE SEILER - COMMUNITY MEMBER



Kellie Seiler has been behind the scenes around Mankato East for over 32 years. She has helped with the track and field, football and basketball programs as well as with the booster club in a variety of roles, all in an effort to make life much easier for those coaching staffs and all of those involved at Mankato East.

Kellie was always interested in athletics and in volunteering her time. Put those two things together and you begin to see how her impact on Mankato East started to be put into motion. Kellie and her husband Mark became Cougars in 1987 when Mark was hired to teach at East and coach in a variety of sports. Over time, and especially once their son became involved in high school sports, her role expanded. Kellie helped in the taping of basketball games and working on stats, ran the end zone camera for football, which she still does every Friday night and other tasks such as cleaning shoulder pads and helmets at the end of the season. All of the little things that people would never know are too many to mention. Behind the scenes translates into big impacts.

When it comes to big impacts, perhaps the biggest is the work Kellie has done for the booster club over the last 14 or so years where she is responsible for the entire concession stand operation for the club. This is no small task, being at literally every varsity event concessions are sold at, not to mention adding as many lower level contest as possible...Kellie makes it look seamless covering the 75 plus events a year spanning athletics, dances, speech tournaments and music contests. Her efforts are absolutely invaluable and are responsible for over \$300,000 earned and given back to the students and programs at Mankato East. Never, in 14 years, has a hungry fan had to wonder if they could get a bag of the best

popcorn in the conference.

Kellie and Mark raised their son Nic, who graduated from Mankato East in 2015, to have the same work ethic in life and know that the love for the Cougars is definitely in the Seiler blood. Kellie, who graduated from MSU in '87 with a degree in Interior Design and Housing, is now in her 15th year with Lloyd Lumber, which she refers to as "her real job."

One current staff member was quoted as saying, "Kellie has been the ultimate behind the scenes contributor at Mankato East. She has patiently worked with virtually every program as well as the booster club to help us do the best we can to support and help our student athletes succeed."

Kellie...we thank you!

MARK SEILER - COACH



Mark Seiler has left a lasting mark on Mankato East High School during his teaching and coaching career and continues to be a role model for all.

Mark's story began at Willmar High School where he was a two sport athlete in football and basketball. After graduation in 1981, Mark continued his education at Ridgewater Technical College, where he played football then went on to Mankato State University, earning a degree in Technology Education.

After graduating from college in 1987, Mark began his teaching career and as many young teachers did then, he also began his coaching career, coaching a multitude of sports for the Cougars over his 32 years in education. It all started in the sport of football, when Mark coached the 8th grade team his first year and at one level or the other and in one capacity or another it has never ended. In the winter season, Mark also added to his resume assistant varsity girls basketball coach for a handful of years when a new young coach was looking for some help from a friend. In the spring, it was Track and Field that reaped the benefit of Mark's abilities as a high jump coach for both the boys and girls programs. For every one of his 32 years, Mark Seiler has been there to help where ever needed, he has been there teach specific skills and life lessons and he has been there to mentor young coaches in the appreciation of the little things, all in an effort to make East a better place and our students better people.

Many of Mark's efforts and passions are displayed behind the scenes, which is just the way he likes it. Somewhat of a "MacGyver", Mark has a solution for virtually every scenario that comes along. When the football team needed an end zone camera, Mark made one for a tenth of the price. When the activities director needed someone to set up and score a track meet, Mark took care of it. When the equipment storage area needed to be updated, Mark built it. Year after year, task after task, Mark Seiler was the person you could count on to get it done. Anything to help East be a better place.

Mark has always been a class act at Mankato East and he continues to motivate all those he comes in contact with. His workings in the classroom, spanning from the days of teaching Welding, Drafting and Yearbook in high school to teaching Gateway to Technology to enthusiastic 6th graders, are as important as any task he takes on. With each lesson comes an opportunity for each student to be just a little bit better person today than they were the day before.

Mark has been married to his wonderful wife Kellie for 32 years and they have enjoyed raising their son Nic (22), who is a student coach for the Maverick football team and is working towards his own teaching degree in mathematics.