



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA ALERT – Thursday, October 1, 2026

Fargo Public School District #1

FARGO NORTH 2026 HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY

Two North High School alumni, two former faculty members, and one community member who left an impactful legacy at the school are set to enter the North High School Hall of Fame.

WHAT: Fargo North High School 2026 Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
WHEN: **Saturday, October 3** at 9 a.m.
WHERE: North High School, 801 17th Avenue North, Fargo
CONTACT: **Travis Christensen**, North High principal, 701.446.2404 or christt@fargo.k12.nd.us for more information.

North High School will hold an induction celebration for its 2026 Hall of Fame nominees on Saturday, October 3 in the commons at North High School. The event includes a brunch and program featuring the 2026 Hall of Fame inductees Greg Hammes, Shirley McCaslin, Durba Mitra, Prairie Rose Seminole, and Brian Tessman. Tickets for this event were required to be purchased in advance. The ticket deadline has passed, and tickets will not be available on the day of the event.

Inductee biographies:

GREG HAMMES – Frank and Marge Ratti Spartan Legacy Award



Greg Hammes is the recipient of the Frank and Marge Ratti Spartan Legacy Award in recognition of his extraordinary leadership, generosity, and commitment to Fargo North High School. Although a graduate of Bismarck Century High School, Hammes and his family have deep ties to Fargo North, where his three daughters – Ellie (2018), Addison (2021), and Olivia (2025) – all graduated before continuing their education at the University of Minnesota.

Hammes earned a basketball scholarship to Bismarck Junior College before completing a Bachelor of Accountancy and Juris Doctor degree at the University of North Dakota. A Certified Public Accountant and attorney, he has built a distinguished career in finance and law and currently serves as Chief Legal Officer at Bell Bank in Fargo. He and his wife also helped establish North Dakota's first specialty running store in 2007, reflecting his lifelong passion for running after completing 26 marathons.

Recognizing the importance of providing Fargo North students with facilities equal to those of newer schools, Hammes led one of the most ambitious private fundraising efforts in Fargo North history. In 2019, he spearheaded a campaign that raised more than \$1.2 million to install the Spartan Stadium turf field. When Fargo Public Schools constructed a track on campus in 2022, he again led a successful campaign that secured more than \$750,000 to install synthetic turf inside the track. He also directed fundraising efforts for the Spartan Dome record boards, ensuring generations of student-athletes would have their accomplishments permanently recognized. His leadership transformed Fargo North's athletic facilities and created opportunities that will benefit Spartan students for decades to come.

In addition to his work at Fargo North, Hammes has served on numerous community boards, including Village Family Service Center, First Lutheran Church Foundation, Sterling REIT, and the Fargo North Booster Club. His leadership, generosity, and dedication have left a permanent legacy that will benefit Fargo North students for generations.

SHIRLEY McCASLIN – Faculty



Shirley McCaslin served as a counselor at Fargo North High School from 1986 to 2013. A native of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, she graduated from their high school in 1973. In 1977 she earned a bachelor's degree from Minnesota State University Moorhead, and in 1987 she completed her master's degree in school counseling from North Dakota State University. Before coming to North, McCaslin taught English, art and journalism at West Fargo High School for eight years. Her journalism class produced the school newspaper, and she was named *Outstanding Advisor* in 1983 by the Northern Interscholastic Press Association. McCaslin held positions in the West Fargo Education Association, including the presidency, and received their *Golden Apple Award* for service.

During her 27 years at North, McCaslin provided personal, academic and career counseling for about 300 students each year. She served as department chair and on the guidance and counseling study committee. McCaslin piloted a student grief group with Hospice and continued that group through the years, along with other counseling groups. She used her communication background and served as editor for the state counseling association publication. McCaslin enjoyed getting to know students by supervising their activities, and during her career she founded the Environmental Club and advised it for 18 years, and advised the Student Council, Prom Committee, Homecoming Committee, Junior Educators of Tomorrow, Cheerleaders, Pep Club, Key Club, Art Club and the school newspaper.

McCaslin retired in 2013 with 35 years of service. Since her retirement, she worked as a counselor mentor, is involved in Cass County Area Retired Teachers Association, where she chairs the scholarship committee and has received the *Silver Apple Award* for service. She is currently the president of Fargo Garden Society. McCaslin is married to John Peterson, and they enjoy traveling the world, sailing, and riding their bicycles together. Her other passions are gardening, birdwatching and reading.

DURBA MITRA – Class of 2001



Durba Mitra is a 2001 graduate of Fargo North High School whose scholarship and teaching have earned national and international recognition. Growing up in Fargo and attending Fargo Public Schools from kindergarten through graduation, Mitra developed a lifelong passion for history, learning, and public scholarship. While at North, she participated in speech and debate, theater, Latin Club, and National Honor Society.

Following graduation, Mitra earned her Ph.D. from Emory University and has built a distinguished academic career specializing in the history of women, gender, and sexuality in a global perspective. She currently serves on the faculty at Princeton University after previously teaching at Harvard University.

Mitra is the author of two acclaimed books, including *The Future That Was: A History of Third World Feminism Against Authoritarianism* (Princeton University Press, 2026). Her research and teaching have been recognized for excellence and have helped shape contemporary scholarship on gender, colonialism, democracy, and social justice. Through her writing, teaching, and public engagement, she has become an

influential voice in the humanities and a respected scholar whose work reaches audiences around the world.

Mitra credits Fargo North teacher David Volk as one of the most influential mentors in her educational journey, inspiring the curiosity and critical thinking that became the foundation of her academic career.

Her mother, Dr. Rupa Mitra, a longtime professor at Minnesota State University Moorhead and respected member of the Fargo-Moorhead community, helped foster Durba's love of learning. Today, Mitra continues to inspire students and scholars through her research, teaching, and commitment to understanding history through diverse global perspectives.

PRAIRIE ROSE SEMINOLE – Class of 1998



Prairie Rose Seminole is a 1998 graduate of Fargo North High School whose lifelong commitment to leadership, public service, and advocacy has made her a nationally recognized educator, strategist, filmmaker, and cultural leader. An enrolled citizen of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation (Three Affiliated Tribes) and of Sahnish, Northern Cheyenne, Dakota, and German-Russian heritage, she has dedicated her career to strengthening communities and elevating Indigenous voices.

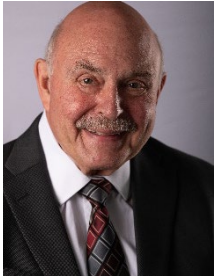
While at Fargo North, Seminole found her passion through theater and civic engagement. She served on the Metropolitan Area Youth Commission, participated in theater productions throughout the Fargo-Moorhead community, contributed youth opinion pieces to *The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead*, and was recognized as the YMCA Young Woman of Tomorrow during her senior year. She also represented the United States as one of four youth delegates selected to participate in international peace talks in Moscow, an experience that helped shape her lifelong commitment to public service.

For more than three decades, Seminole has worked at the intersection of Tribal sovereignty, civic engagement, healthcare, education, environmental stewardship, and social justice. She has advised healthcare systems, universities, nonprofits, government agencies, and faith communities while mentoring emerging Indigenous leaders throughout the United States. She directed North Dakota Native Vote initiatives, served for nearly a decade on the Fargo Human Relations Commission – including three years as chair– and has trained thousands of leaders through national leadership programs.

An award-winning documentary filmmaker, Seminole co-produced *We Ride for Her*, a film highlighting the crisis of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives. Her leadership has earned numerous honors, including Bush Foundation Native Nations Rebuilder, Arikara Woman of the Year, North Dakota Center for Business and Technology Leading Lady, Salzburg Global Fellow, and the inaugural Indigenous Fellow of the National Parks Conservation Association.

Today, Seminole serves as a Culture Bearer with the Northern Plains National Heritage Area, continuing her work to preserve Indigenous history, strengthen Tribal communities, and build understanding through education, storytelling, and service.

BRIAN TESSMAN – Faculty



Brian Tessmann dedicated 17 years of his 41-year career in music education to Fargo North High School, where he inspired generations of students through excellence in music, leadership, and service. A native of Goodrich, North Dakota, Tessmann graduated from Minot State University in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science in Music Education before beginning his teaching career in McClusky and Harvey, North Dakota, and later at Ben Franklin Junior High School in Fargo.

At Fargo North, Tessmann directed the concert bands and jazz bands while reviving the school's pep band, helping foster both musical excellence and Spartan pride. He worked closely with students preparing for regional and state Solo and Ensemble contests, All-State auditions, and honor band performances. Beyond the classroom, he invested countless hours writing letters of recommendation and mentoring students as they pursued opportunities after graduation.

Throughout his career, Tessmann had the unique honor of directing bands that performed for two Presidents of the United States. He also served as tuba section leader for the North Dakota High School Centennial Band, which performed in the 1989 Rose Bowl Parade and throughout North Dakota during the state's Centennial celebration.

Following retirement, Tessmann has remained active as a musician, performing with the Dakota Brass Quintet, FM Golden Notes Concert Band, Lake Agassiz Concert Band, Shriners Circus Band, and annual Tuba Christmas performances. He also served for 12 years as Membership Chairman for the North Dakota chapter of the Music Educators National Conference and has been active in the National Band Association and Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity.

Tessmann believes the greatest value of music education extends far beyond performance, helping students develop teamwork, responsibility, confidence, and lifelong friendships. He and his wife, Candy, have been married for more than 50 years and have four children — all Fargo North graduates — and four grandchildren.

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