

New Playground stands tall at Hayes Elementary School



September 20, 2014 was a Saturday. The weather was still balmy and many people were spending as much time as they could outdoors before the bitter cold of winter set in. That afternoon, two teenage friends out and about in the neighborhood stopped by the south playground at Hayes Elementary School. The playground, while on school property, is open and available to the community to use and enjoy.

One of the teenagers would later recall that when they left the playground, unbeknownst to them, a discarded cigarette butt would soon cause a spark of fire in the wood chips at the playground. In no time at all, that spark turned into a raging fire, billowing thick black smoke that was visible for miles. While Fridley firefighters put out the fire, the playground could not be saved.

"It is one of those phone calls you do not expect to receive," said John Piotraschke, Hayes Elementary School

principal, "and the images of that playground on fire were horrific."

Piotraschke said that the initial feeling of relief that no one had been hurt in the playground fire was quickly followed by questions of why and how this could have happened. These sentiments were reflected in the gazes of many students who paused by the school's back glass doors the following Monday morning and stared in somber silence at the skeletal remains of the playground.

"This accident," said Piotraschke, "caused a great loss to our students and community. And as with any loss, there was a grieving process while we all came to terms with what had happened."

Piotraschke added that community members helped build the old playground. "They made an investment of their time and energy in creating something meaningful and fun that hundreds of students have enjoyed over the years."

Hayes is home of the giraffe, a beloved mascot that stands tall and proud in the center of school's courtyard. In his communication to staff informing them of the incident, Piotraschke reminded the school's staff that "We are giraffes. We stand tall, we have big hearts and we stick together."



The playground at Hayes a few days after a fire destroyed it on September 20, 2014. Bottom: A new playground has been rebuilt a few feet from the ashes of the old one.

Part of having a big heart is being able to forgive and when one of the teenagers came to the school accompanied by his mother and apologized to Piotraschke, he accepted the apology on behalf of the entire Hayes community.

"This was an unfortunate accident and there are lessons here for all of us to learn," Piotraschke said. "And it was great to start that healing process with forgiveness."

Fridley High School named one of Minnesota's Best High Schools



U.S. News and World Report, in its 2014 High School rankings, has named Fridley High School as one of the Best High Schools in Minnesota. Coming in at number 29 out of more than 500 public high schools in the state, Fridley High School's success is based on how well the school prepares students to demonstrate proficiency in basic skills as well as readiness for college-level work.

According to the U.S. News Best High Schools ranking methodology, a Best High School is one that succeeds at the following steps.

Step 1: Attains performance levels that exceed statistical expectations given the school's relative level of student poverty, as measured by state accountability test scores for all the school's students in the core subjects of reading and math.

Step 2: Achieves proficiency rates on state tests for its least advantaged student groups – e.g., black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students – that exceed state averages.

Step 3: Prepares its students for col-

lege, as measured by student participation in and performance on Advanced Placement exams or International Baccalaureate exams.

Since 2007, the Best High Schools project has identified the country's top performing public high schools while also providing a clear, unbiased picture of how well public schools serve all their students—from the highest achieving to the lowest achieving.

This year, 31,242 public high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia were analyzed and this number was reduced to 19,411 that were eligible to be ranked.

"It is rewarding to have Fridley High School validated on a national level for working to provide our students with the knowledge and skills for college and career readiness," said Renee Van Gorp, Fridley High School Principal. "This is a great testament to the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum and the work our teachers and support staff do every day to help each student succeed," said Van Gorp.

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DISTRICT BULLETIN WINTER 2015

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Fridley, MN 55432

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School Board Meetings

The Fridley School Board regular meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month in the Fridley Council Chambers at Fridley City Hall, located at 6431 University Avenue NE, Fridley, MN. Meetings begin with a work session at 5:30 pm, followed by a public forum at 7 pm and a business meeting at 7:30 pm.

Hayes playground continued from cover page

Next came the process of rebuilding. Working with the district office, the school quickly went through the logistics of replacing the damaged playground.

Piotraschke said that the process of selecting the best playground design for their school involved staff members, parents and PTO members who all looked at and evaluated the merits of different playground designs to determine the best one for the school.

The design that was finally selected has interactive features that include various activity stations to keep students busy with interactive play. The playground has areas for climbing and crawling, stations for younger students in grades Kindergarten through 1, and “more challenging” stations for students in grades 2-4.

“The new playground has many safety features that will make the playground safer for students,” said Piotraschke. The clamps, bolts and joints connecting the stations are secured internally, instead of externally - a safety feature that prevents clothing from being snagged in sections of the playground while a child is playing.

“I know the students are eager to try it out,” said Piotraschke. “I probably get asked about 40 times a day when the new playground will open,” he said.

The students will soon play on the new playground, the images of the devastated old playground a fading memory. “We have come a long way in a short time and are past the September incident,” said Piotraschke. “I feel a sense of peace knowing that we have a new beginning to focus on and enjoy.”

Hayes Elementary School recognized as a Minnesota School of Excellence

Hayes Elementary School has been validated as a Minnesota School of Excellence by the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA). This prestigious honor was awarded to Hayes for its commitment to 21st century teaching and learning.

The Minnesota School of Excellence Program promotes excellence through a rigorous evaluation process that showcases dynamic schools of the 21st century. This year, only four schools in the state achieved the Minnesota Schools of Excellence recognition.

MESPA endorses schools where a team made up of the principal, staff, students, and community members demonstrate the desire to strengthen education by successfully undertaking the research-based Minnesota School

of Excellence school improvement process. This includes a systematic school-wide self-study, and the development and implementation of a school improvement plan. The entire Minnesota School of Excellence Program is aligned with six national standards: Learning Centered, Diverse Communities, 21st Century Learners, Quality Instruction, Knowledge and Data, and Community Engagement.

Hayes Elementary School is a K-4 International Baccalaureate World school with a student population of 585. Out of this number, 189 students have chosen to attend Hayes from other school districts and are open enrolled students. This is a testament to the quality of education Hayes offers and the staff's commitment to the success of their students.



Fridley School Board

(L-r): Kim Sampson, Marcia Lindblad, Fred Bischke, Mary Kay Delvo, Chris Riddle and Joe Sturdevant.

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Fridley Middle School

Principal - Matthew Boucher
Assistant Principal - Amy Starr

Hayes Elementary School

Principal - John Piotraschke

R. L. Stevenson Elementary School

Principal - Daryl Vossler

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Educational Services - 763-502-5009
Human Resources - 763-502-5013
Nutritional Services - 763-502-5021
Special Services - 763-502-5025
Technology - 763-502-5032
Technology Integration - 763-502-5037
Transportation - 763-502-5026
IB (DP) - 763-502-5062
IB (MYP) - 763-502-5036
IB (PYP) - 763-502-5317

Fridley students prepare for culinary competition



First row l-r: Brittney Gillette, Vanessa Ramos Serrano and Mai Yang. Back row l-r: FHS Teacher Marsha Chizek, Akaysha Hobbs, Jeffrey Agostino and Chef Brent Preppernau of Cargill

In preparation for a cooking competition of a life time, a team of Fridley High School students participating in the ProStart program were part of the featured chefs during the 4th Annual Stars of the Future 'small plate' tasting fundraiser.

The fundraiser, hosted by the Hospitality Minnesota Education Foundation's ProStart Program held November 7, 2014 in Minneapolis. Brent Preppernau, a chef who works in research and development at Cargill, worked with our students to give them food preparation and culinary tips.

ProStart is a two year "hands on" career-building program for high school students interested in pursuing a career in the restaurant industry. The featured event of every year for ProStart programs around the country is the Annual ProStart Invitational Competition where winning ProStart teams from each state compete for national recognition and scholarships. Our students

will participate in this competition.

Proceeds from the event are designated for travel expenses for the winners of the Minnesota's ProStart Invitational to attend the national competition. The following high schools also participated in the Stars of the Future event: Park Center High School, Elk River High School, Brooklyn Center High School, Sauk Rapids-Rice High School, Integrated Arts Academy, Anoka S.T.E.P., Hopkins High School, and St. Michael/Albertville High School.



Students don their chef's suits ready for culinary lessons from Preppernau and Chizek.

Fridley junior to compete in Harvard-MIT Mathematics Tournament



Jakob Hofstad, a junior at Fridley High School has been invited to be part of a Minnesota high school team that will compete in the Harvard-MIT

Mathematics (HMMT) Tournament to be held on February 20, 2015.

Jakob will be part of a team of 6-8 metro students that will compete in the tournament to be held at Harvard University. More than 1,000 top high school mathematicians from around the world will compete.

The HMMT holds two tournaments annually - one in November and the other in February. The primary difference between the HMMT November and the HMMT February tournaments is the degree of difficulty. While both tournaments are intended to challenge strong math students from all around the world, the February contest demands a considerable amount of mathematical maturity and problem-solving experience.

Jakob will compete in the February tournament - that happens to be one of the most prestigious and difficult high school math tournaments in the world. His team members are top students from Minnesota High Schools. Congratulations to Jakob and we wish him the best at the tournament.

Fridley High School holds AVID Program induction ceremony



More than 75 Fridley High School students gathered in the high school auditorium on Friday, September 5, 2014 to participate in the district's second annual Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) induction and commitment ceremony.

The AVID program, now in its second year at Fridley High School, is dedicated to closing the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities. In Fridley High School, the first students to participate in the program are now seniors who will graduate in May 2015.

"By making this choice," Fridley High School Principal Renee Van Gorp told the students, "you have made a commitment to make education your number one priority and I applaud you for that."

The students were joined by their parents, families, and Fridley High School

staff members and were greeted and presented with certificates by their AVID teachers Adam Fischer, Liz Jensen, Rick Robel, and Carrie Wrona.

Student speakers Alexis Genung and Justice Jones spoke of the AVID student and staff community as a family. "Our teachers are like our family," they said. "They are moms and dads who are involved in all aspects of our lives," they said.

The ceremony concluded with the students reciting a pledge of loyalty to the principles of AVID success; hard work, dedication, motivation and self-respect.

Fridley students receive National Merit Scholarship Program commendation



Fridley High School students (pictured above l-r) Yash Khataavkar, Michael Lipa, Wyatt Shaw, and Mary Yocum have been named Commended Students in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program. A Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), which conducts the program, was presented by the principal to these scholastically talented seniors.

"The young men and women being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success," commented a spokesperson for NMSC. "These students represent a valuable national re-

source; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success."

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2015 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top five percent of more than 1.5 million

students who entered the 2015 competition by taking the 2013 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

All our commended students are full Diploma students who have managed to balance the rigorous demands of the full Diploma program and participation in school clubs, sports and community service. "These students are nice, kind and caring young people who are great role models for other students," said Fridley High School principal Renee Van Gorp. Congratulations Yash, Michael, Wyatt and Mary!

Arel Moodie speaks to 9th grade students



Fridley High School 9th graders had a surprise visit from someone familiar in November 2014. Author and inspirational speaker Arel Moodie returned to Fridley as a special guest invited by the GEAR UP program (Gaining Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) to speak to students about success and confronting fear of failure.

“Arel spoke to this group of students while they were in 7th grade,” said Mary Vang, GEAR UP Program director. Those 7th graders are now in 9th grade and are the first student cohort participating in the GEAR UP program in Fridley.

“At that time, Moodie encouraged students to get excited about learning and think of creative ways to ‘freak out the teachers’ by being prepared, engaged, and proactive in their education,” said Vang.

Moodie started his speech by recalling an earlier experience in his life where

he confronted his fear of heights at the urging of his friends. “Do something good and positive that you didn’t think you could do,” said Moodie. “you can take something that you believe to be impossible and make it possible,” he encouraged students.

Moodie, the author of *The Student Success Action Guide*, believes education was key to helping him overcome the harsh and challenging circumstances of his environment. The best selling author, entrepreneur and founder of The College Success Program grew up on welfare in the projects of Brooklyn, NY.

GEAR UP is a U.S. Department of Education program that increases the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. The program serves at least one grade level of students, beginning no later than 7th grade, and follows them through high school graduation and first year of college. GEAR UP services include tutoring, mentoring, academic preparation, financial education and college scholarships to improve access to higher education for low income, minority and disadvantaged first-generation students and families.

Fridley Public Schools participates in the GEAR UP program in partnership with Hennepin Technical College.

Fridley to implement online enrollment system

Parents enrolling their children at Fridley Public Schools will soon be able to do so through EnrollView, an online enrollment program. Developed in partnership with TIES, the online program allows parents to fill out enrollment paperwork, attach required documents and submit completed applications with the click of a mouse. TIES began work on Fridley’s site during the 2013-2014 school year.

Among its many features, Enrollview has a school finder option that allows registering parents to enter their home zip code to see which school their child may attend. Parents also need to enter basic general information such as home address and phone number once and the program will populate those related fields for additional child registrations.

Customizing and set up for the online tool was completed in December 2014 and the program will be available for use by the end of January 2015 for select buildings. Enrollview will also be available for the elementary schools’ kindergarten registration period in April 2015 and the rest of the district schools (middle school, high school and ALC) will be using the program by July 2015.

**Fridley Public Schools is now accepting
Open Enrollment applications for the 2015-2016 school year!**

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE WORLD SCHOOLS
Primary Years, Middle Years and Diploma Programs

Fridley Public Schools offers a “small school atmosphere” with “large school” opportunities. For more information on registration, please visit us online at www.fridley.k12.mn.us or contact Rocky Johnson at 763-502-5009.

Fridley teachers awarded H. B. Fuller STEM Grants



L-r: Jennifer Bowman, James Hron and Karyn Meier

Congratulations to Jennifer Bowman, James Hron and Karyn Meier, all recent recipients of H. B. Fuller STEM Mini-Grants.

These grants are awarded by the company to support youth initiatives in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

H. B. Fuller's vision is to prepare youth for the future so that they can become

successful adults. The company awards grants for STEM Education and Leadership Development for Youth.

Meier's application for educational mechanical Lego sets was approved and awarded in the amount of \$2,885. Hron will use his \$3,234 grant award for a 3D printer, and Bowman will use the \$6,559 funding she was awarded for much needed science resource materials.

Stevenson Elementary wins ExploraDome Scholarship

Stevenson Elementary School has been selected as a recipient of an ExploraDome Scholarship. The ExploraDome is an immersive learning environment where visitors experience "hands-on and minds-on" learning through planetarium shows.

The Bell Museum will bring the wonders of the universe to Stevenson with its ExploraDome Outreach traveling dome. Our students will receive a full day of ExploraDome programming, up to 6.5 hours within one school day.

Once inside the Exploradome, students will experience a virtual journey from inside the subatomic realm to the edge of the known universe. The ExploraDome visit is made possible through a generous donation by Xcel Energy.

Fridley teachers named 2014 TIES Exceptional Teachers



Fridley Public Schools teachers Joel Weingart (pictured left) and Tim Leistikow (right) were recognized as TIES Exceptional Teachers at the TIES 2014 Education Technology Conference on December 9 at the Minneapolis Hyatt Regency. They were among 91 teachers from 48 districts who were honored.

Honorees are chosen by their superintendents for the TIES Exceptional Teacher award, which recognizes teachers who model the best practices in their classroom and engage students in learning with technology.

Weingart is a 6th grade math teacher who saw the need to differentiate math instruction for his students. He wrote a grant to the H.B. Fuller Company and was awarded a classroom set of chromebooks. By using the new chromebooks, he is able to use Google forms and Google Classroom as well as access online manipulatives to set up personal learning plans for his students. Weingart's enthusiasm and expertise has

moved beyond his classroom and into the way they do business at the middle school.

As a high school Language and Literature Teacher and an Instructional Leader, Leistikow has led a systematic approach of integrating Google Classroom and Google Apps into teaching and staff development. He and his team have gone completely paperless and are working hard at changing the mindset of students who are content consumers to students who are content producers. In addition to his technology integration leadership, Leistikow hosted our district's first ever TEDx Fridley Public Schools event for K-12 students.

Dahl is 2014 Lifelong Learning Award recipient



Pictured l-r: Debbie Dahl, City of Fridley Human Resource director, and Toni Craft, Fridley Community Education director

Fridley Community Education recently awarded its annual Life Long Learning Award to Debbie Dahl, human resource director for the City of Fridley. The award is given to a community member who demonstrates the mission of Fridley Community Education, which is to support life long learning in the community. The award was presented by Toni Craft, Fridley Community Education director.

“Debbie Dahl is a role model for life-long learning,” said Connie Thompson, Fridley’s Senior Citizen Program coordinator. “Not only does she volunteer with the Fridley Community Theater (scene painting, construction and photography), but she constantly challenges herself by doing new things such as taking classes in painting, journaling, photography, yoga and tennis,” said Thompson.

While Debbie would be the first to say she does not deserve such recognition, she would also be the first to encourage others to be all that they can be. Though not necessarily an instructor, she consistently teaches others in an indirect, affirming way to make the most

of their talents and try new things. Debbie supports lifelong learning by being an active participant. She promotes a strong, healthy community by being actively engaged in promoting communication through mediation and a healthy conscious lifestyle. She has served as a volunteer with Anoka County Mediation and is an adventurer who never looks at limitation but the solutions to make things happen.

“Debbie Dahl is a great role model for life-long learning and very deserving of this award,” Thompson said.

Community Education has been active in Fridley for over 30 years and has supported the community by offering programs and activities such as Adult Enrichment, Adult Basic Education, School Age Childcare, Youth Programs, Aquatics and Early Childhood Family Education. Community Education also helps keep the school buildings open to the public and operates the Fridley Community Center. Community Education strives to identify and address the needs of the Fridley community.

Baker selected to review IB Diploma Program Data Analysis Service



Fridley Public Schools International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program (DP) Coordinator Jessica Baker has been asked to be part of IBO’s roll out of its Optimizing Assessment Analysis service.

The Optimizing Assessment Analysis service is designed to increase DP coordinators’ ability to analyze and interpret DP assessment data. There are several tiers of service ranging from a published self-help document to customized consulting for a specific course or issue the school may be having.

“In this capacity, I will be reviewing the materials for this service before it is rolled out to IB schools,” said Baker who applied for the opportunity after learning about it at the IB Americas conference. The current task will take a few weeks, but she expects to be involved on an ongoing basis.

“I am looking forward to the opportunity to participate on a new level in the IB, and in a way that lets my skills be helpful to other schools and coordinators,” Baker said.

Hayes Elementary School earns Reward School designation



For the second year in a row, based on the Multiple Measures Ratings (MMR) system, the Minnesota Department of Education has recognized Hayes Elementary School as a Reward School.

The MMR is a 0-100% score for all schools in the state and includes data on proficiency, growth, achievement gap reduction, and graduation rates. In addition, the Focus Rating (FR) is a 0-100% scale for all schools in the state and includes data on proficiency and growth for only students of color, special education students, English learners and students in poverty. Using the MMR and FR rankings, Title I schools can fall into five groups: Reward, Celebration, Continuous Improvement and Focus.

Reward schools are Minnesota's highest performing Title I schools and are schools that have demonstrated exceptional student outcomes and success in closing achievement gaps. Reward schools are recognized annually. Hayes Elementary School is one of 131 schools in the state to receive the 2014-2015 Reward School designation.

"This type of thing happens because of GRIT," said principal John Piotraschke, "displayed in the relentless pursuit of excellence and student achievement on the part of teachers."

Stevenson receives local support for reading program



Top l-r: Karen Villesky of Presbyterian Church of the Way and Stevenson Elementary School Principal Daryl Vossler. Bottom row l-r: Second graders Hairo Hernandez and Tony Bunay.

Through the support of community members, Stevenson Elementary School will provide more reading support for students who are struggling with reading.

The school's latest financial support comes from the Presbyterian Church of the Way in Shoreview, whose members collected a total of \$2,862 in support of the Lexia reading program to be used by students at the school.

Presenting the check to school principal Daryl Vossler in October 2014, Kar-

en Villesky, a deacon and member of the church, said the money was raised by church members and matched by the church's Mission Awareness Commission.

"Carol Sellers who was a former Stevenson teacher was also a member of our church," said Villesky. "She talked to me one day about the needs of the students struggling with reading at the school and I knew I had to do something," she said.

Sellers died in July 2013, but the effort that she started at her local church will help support more than 60 additional students. To date, Hayes and Stevenson Elementary Schools have received a total of more than \$10,000 from Fridley Redeemer Lutheran Church and Presbyterian Church of the Way to support the implementation of the Lexia reading program.

"This program is helping students struggling in literacy to improve their skills by providing an individualized program," said Veronica Westerman, a teacher and instructional leader at Stevenson.

The cost of the technology based Lexia reading program is \$39 per student. Thanks to the generous support of the churches, 150 students will begin the Lexia program at Stevenson this year.

Helping your child read at home:

- Help your child find books with subject matter that he or she is interested in
- Set a quiet time for children to read every day (turn off television, music, and anything else that may distract your child's attention)
- Let children read for at least 30 minutes every day, and
- Read out loud to your child, and have your child read to you.

Fridley students participate in National History Day competition

The Minnesota State History Day competition was held in May 2014 at the University of Minnesota. Fridley High School students had four projects in the competition. These are projects that advanced from our school competition and the regional competition at Augsburg College. The students listed below worked extremely hard and represented Fridley very well.

- Nicole Tollifson and Zane Neal: website on Roe v. Wade
- Bryan Bennek and Luke Coelho: website on Tinker v. Des Moines
- Cedric Nah: website on the Washburn Mill Explosion in Minneapolis
- Sumaya Alfath: exhibit on the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine

Sumaya Alfath finished 4th in the state competition and Bryan Bennek's and Luke Coelho's top 10 finish earned them honorable mention. Congratulations to all our students on a job well done.



Top picture l-r: Nicole Tollifson, Zane Neal and Bryan Bennek.
Bottom l-r: Luke Coelho, Cedric Nah and Sumaya Alfath

Fridley High School Full Diploma students present Extended Essays



Front row l-r: Samantha Neumann, Kate Nelson, Yash Khatavkar, Brenda Vazquez, and Sydney Larson. Back row l-r: Jack Fite, Wyatt Shaw, Dan Huset, Michael Lipa and Mary Yocum.

Fridley High School held its 5th Annual Extended Essay Silver Platter Celebration on December 12, 2014. During the celebration 11 students presented their essays to their parents, teachers and peers. The Extended Essay is an in-depth study of a focused topic, chosen within a subject group, intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery, and creativity. It provides students with an opportunity to engage in personal research in a topic of their own choice under the guidance of a supervisor. The product is a piece of formally presented, structured writing in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject chosen. This 4,000 word essay encourages students to develop the independent research skills that are expected at colleges and universities.

Keeler named 2014 District Employee of the Year



Congratulations to Stephen Keeler, Adult Enrichment Coordinator, who was honored with the 2013-2014 Employee of the Year award during the district's Opening

Workshop held Monday, August 25, 2014 at the Fridley High School Auditorium.

Stephen has been a district employee for the past 6 years. He is a 2003 graduate of Fridley High School and lives in Fridley with his wife and two young children. Stephen began working for the school district as a Tiger Club childcare staff member, and was later recruited to be a paraprofessional at Fridley Middle School. He was then recruited back to Community

Education where he was employed as a Community Ed coordinator three years ago. This past year he coordinated Adult Enrichment, Aquatics and Facilities Rental for the district.

Stephen wears many hats, and in all of his coordinator roles, he excels at customer service and meeting the needs of users both from within and outside the district. He is continually implementing new program ideas and ways to streamline systems. Stephen is hard working, caring, responsible and a clear communicator. He is especially skilled in the areas of technology and finance, which makes him a valuable member of the Community Education leadership team.

His colleagues comment that Stephen "is patient beyond belief, kind and willing to work with us all," and that he is "dependable, consistent, eager to help, highly professional, and thorough in his follow through."

"Stephen is inclusive, values diversity and seeks to improve life-long learning for our entire community," said Toni Craft, director of Community Education. "He is an absolute asset to Fridley Public Schools and a very deserving recipient of the 2013-2014 Employee of the Year award," she said.

The Fridley Public Schools District Employee of the Year is selected from a talented group of non licensed staff comprised of the school year's employee of the month winners.

These outstanding staff members are nominated by their peers and/or supervisors based on how well they exemplify the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile characteristics of: Open-minded, Risk-taker, Inquirer, Knowledgeable, Thinker, Communicator, Principled, Caring, Balanced and Reflective.

2013-2014 District Employees of the Month



Top row l-r:

Jinny Ranallo, September 2013; Carol Borreson, October, 2013; Laura Bollensen, November 2013; Tom Hauge, December 2013; and Sara Vana, January 2014.



Bottom row l-r:

Marty Nyhus, February 2014; Stephen Keeler, March 2014; Nadine Teff, April 2014; Genea Sintler, May 2014; and Jane Stifle, June 2014.

Fridley Public Schools 2014 Teachers of Excellence



Fridley Middle School's 2014 Teacher of Excellence is Lisa Cortes. Lisa proves that there are many different ways to successfully engage students in the learning process. While she is not gregarious and flamboyant in her delivery, the results are astonishing. Her calm, quiet demeanor hides a tenacious commitment to student learning and growth.

She has a maternal intensity that leaves students powerless to resist the learning process and communicates nonverbally, with absolute clarity that we are here to work and by doing so, learn. She is brilliant and focused on developing the writing skills of English Learners (EL).

"I recall sitting in a pre-conference with her thinking 'how does she plan to get all that done in this lesson?' I found myself considering the many lessons and skills she would have had to have scaffolded into previous instruction," said Fridley Middle School principal Matthew Boucher. "Then came the lesson: She had level 2 and 3 EL students discussing tone and author's intent, supported by keen observations about

word selection and impact. The conversations and understanding exceeded what I often hear from native speakers. I was moved by the opportunities that were being unlocked for 1st generation immigrant, English learners in her class. Her work with students on the writing process is truly exceptional," said Boucher.

Her thoughtfulness and approach to the writing process has left an indelible mark on not just students in Fridley, but IB students worldwide. A few years ago, the middle school staff built an observation and interview schedule for visitors from International Baccalaureate (IB) and Lisa was included in the agenda. "Little did we know that our visitors would be so moved by our colleague," said Boucher.

As a result, Lisa has been invited to work with IB in Cardiff, Wales on a couple of occasions, where she assisted in the development of the new Language B guides, as well as developing teacher resources for training.

Lisa validates that Fridley Public Schools is a World-Class Community of Learners. She is an exceptional person, mother, wife, educator and friend. Her school greatly appreciates her steadfast commitment to the students, staff and families of Fridley Middle School. Congratulations Lisa and keep up the good work!



KARLA HOESCHEN, an occupational therapist in the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program was selected as one of the district's 2013-2014 Teachers of Excellence.

As a member of the ECSE Team and a Birth to Age 3 Specialist, Karla is typically one of the first Fridley educators that young families and our youngest students

come in contact with.

"Watching Karla work with families and young children, the word that comes to mind is 'connection'. You would be immediately impressed with the ease at which Karla is able to establish and maintain a strong, positive relationship with her students and their families," said Dr. Rob Smith, prin-

cipal of Fridley Area Learning Center. Karla knows how to balance personalized inquiries with professional distance. Her students and families readily respond to her genuine concern for them.

"I use the term connection because Karla has the innate ability to connect abstract issues to the students and families' present world," said Smith. All of Karla's students ages Birth to 3 years old are students with special needs who are served through Individual Education Plans (IEP's).

Through the often challenging process of coming to terms with an unexpected diagnosis, Karla has the ability to assist families process this sometime staggering information and help them to reach new and enlightened conclusions.

Some of the families she has worked with commented that Karla "cares about my baby..." and that "I can talk to her about anything." Karla truly makes Fridley a better place for all students and staff. Congratulations Karla and keep up the good work!

Fridley Public Schools 2014 Teachers of Excellence



Hayes Elementary School's 2014 Teacher of Excellence is Devon Moline.

Hayes Principal John Piotraschke said of Moline: "It might be her words, her tone of voice, the way that she crafts language that somehow makes you feel like you are the most important person in the world.

It might be the way in which she expresses how wonderful you are. It might be the way she uses words to wipe away a tear or the pain of a skinned knee or the way she mends a heart that was hurt by something unkind.

It might be how she engages you in the moment at hand getting you to think like a writer or poet or an astronaut. It might be how she somehow gets you to believe that you can accomplish anything.

Language and how we communicate has a way of changing the landscape of a life, a moment, a situation, and when

someone has a gift for using language in that way they change the world one word at a time."

One of the reasons why this gift is so powerful is that it has the ability to create, build and sustain caring, trusting life changing relationships. When a teacher has the ability to craft language in this way, relationships within the classroom grow into something extraordinary; achievement increases, joy is constant, community thrives, self esteem soars and kids develop a perseverance and mindset that suggests they can accomplish anything. That the impossible is truly possible. Moline is truly an incredible person and teacher.

"I have been in her classroom a hundred times and each time I enter I am amazed," said Piotraschke. "Amazed at her ability to reach kids, to create a community of learners that perseveres, contributes, loves, learns and believes in themselves and each other," he said.

"When I told her that she was being selected as our teacher of excellence this year she said with a tear in her eye, 'I want to tell my dad,'" said Piotraschke. Only a few days before, she had said goodbye to her dad. "I'm pretty sure right now he's looking down and has a big smile on his face," added Piotraschke. Congratulations Devon and keep up the good work!



Fridley High School's 2014 Teacher of Excellence is special education teacher Freya Schirmacher.

Freya is a dreamer of big ideas and has the heart and will to see those dreams realized. She goes about achieving the mission at FHS with a positive attitude and is a testament to the IB Learner Profile as is evident from comments her colleagues make about her.

One colleague stated, "She works tirelessly to provide her students with a meaningful and challenging curriculum that develops their critical and creative thinking skills, and she applies that same passion to guiding the staff as an Instruc-

tional Leader. More than anything her positive attitude and desire to continually improve her craft is an inspiration to me."

According to another teacher, "She is one of those quintessential professional colleagues. As Link Leaders would say, she thinks and speaks positively - and when she sees a need, she works to meet the need." Another one added "She always takes time to listen thoughtfully when I come to her. And then she generally comes up with a new, enlightening perspective and awesome advice."

"Freya works tirelessly to ensure we have the best teaching and learning opportunities for students and staff at FHS," said Renee Van Gorp, Fridley High School principal, "and for these reasons and so many more I could mention, I am proud of Freya's achievement. She is a great representative of Fridley High School's Teacher of Excellence," she said. Congratulations Freya, and keep up the good work!

Fridley Public Schools 2014 Teachers of Excellence



Katherine Talafous, a kindergarten teacher at R.L. Stevenson Elementary School, was selected as the school's 2014 Teacher of Excellence.

"Kate" as she is popularly known, has taught kindergarten and first grade at Stevenson for the past 9 years. During that time she has worked tirelessly to become a great classroom teacher as well as a leader at the school.

"Kate's ability to inspire others along with being innovative with her teaching are two traits that have made her a wonderful leader in our school as well as the Fridley District," said Daryl Vossler, Principal at Stevenson. "She has helped move our school along in the area of technology integration and has presented on a larger scale at district workshops as

well as the TIES Regional Conference," he said.

A proud alumna of the University of Wisconsin, Kate holds high expectations for herself as a teacher, as well as her students as learners. She uses student data to make decisions on her instruction and implements best practices to help all of her students be successful. In the area of student interaction, she shows genuine caring for each of the children with whom she comes in contact. She develops quality relationships with students and creates a fun environment for learning.

Last year when the district purchased a new Benchmark Reading Curriculum, Kate stepped up and was part of a team that planned the implementation. One of the things that she is most proud of is her work starting up the district's summer, "Ready, Set Go" program. This ten day program works with incoming kindergartners to help ease the transition to their first day of school. Students at Stevenson Elementary School benefit greatly from her passion for teaching, her caring attitude for all her students and her commitment to their success. Congratulations Kate and keep up the good work!

District honors employees for 25 Years of Service

Two Fridley Public Schools employees were recognized and honored for giving 25 years of service each to the district during the annual district's Opening Workshop in August 2014. These two employees' collective 50 years of dedication have touched the lives of hundreds of students and families in the district.



DIANE POLSKI is described as a calming force at the Fridley Middle School where she has served the students, staff and families for the past 25 years with great dedication and humility. She has been an integral part of the operation of the middle school for two principals.

Former Fridley Middle School principal Margaret Leibfried often talked about how Diane Polski had walked alongside her through the challenging times and the joyful moments, always consistently positive and focused on how to make it better for those we work with and serve.

Principal Matthew Boucher said that staff at the middle school shudder in fear of the day they have to work without Diane. She is the first person many people go to when they have a need or a question. She has a seemingly unflappable

composure, and a demeanor that welcomes all questions.

Diane operates with the highest integrity and consistency. She is so dependable she will never be able to use all her accrued leave. In short, Diane is one of the foundation stones the middle school was built upon and her selfless service and commitment is and will continue to be appreciated.



DEBBIE REIN started working for Fridley Public Schools in 1989 as a kindergarten paraprofessional at Hayes Elementary School. For the next four years, she taught there part time in kindergarten and in the Title I program. In 1994, she started splitting her time teaching Title I between Stevenson Elementary School and the Al Amal School. Then in 2002 she

became a kindergarten teacher at Stevenson where she is still happily working today.

Along with teaching kindergarten, Debbie taught Learning Academy and summer school for a number of years. Debbie has two daughters who both graduated from Fridley High School. When she is not working with kindergartners, she enjoys hiking, fishing, traveling, and spending time with her family.

Student Profiles: Fridley High School Class of 2014

More than 200 students making up the Fridley Class of 2014 graduated in May 2014. In the following profiles, a few of our outstanding graduates shared some final thoughts with us.

CONNOR, ERIN AND JOE GORMAN are triplets who graduated as part of Fridley High School's Class of 2014. While at Fridley, Erin was a full Diploma Program student and her brothers graduated as IB Scholars.

The triplets attended Immaculate Conception School prior to coming to Fridley High School. "My older brother attended Fridley and loved it," wrote Erin, "so we decided to come here too." Their brother Grant Gorman graduated in 2010.



While at Fridley **CONNOR GORMAN** was a member of the Snowboard Club, Fridley Key Club, German Club and Drama Club. He played soccer and tennis where he lettered and was named Academic All Conference in tennis.

His favorite subjects at Fridley were Diploma Program (DP) biology, aerospace engineering and DP physics. Connor credits the challenging DP program and classes with preparing him for future success and will always remember his teachers, the sports he played and the friends he made at Fridley High School.

His advice to current middle school students who will one day transition to high school is to "try your best each year because it gives you more choices for colleges and it helps everything."

Connor was accepted at the University of Minnesota Duluth where he plans to study electrical engineering.

Honorable Mention in track, and All Conference in cross country where she was also named MVP.

Erin will always remember all the friends they made, the teachers who worked hard to help her learn and be successful, and the great memories from her sports.

"The DP classes that I took challenged me everyday and not only did I learn so much material, I also learned time management," Erin wrote. "I know FHS prepared me for starting college this year."

For incoming high school students, Erin's advice is to work hard all four years of high school and get involved in something that the student will enjoy. "This will help you meet new friends, make great memories and help you grow as a person."

Erin was accepted at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. She plans to major in biology.



Like his brother and sister, **JOE GORMAN** also attended Immaculate Conception School and later followed his older brother's footsteps and enrolled at Fridley High School.

He was a member of the Key Club, Snowboard Club, National Honor Society, and Spanish Club. Joe also participated in cross country track events, lettered in cross country for three years and received Academic All Conference. His favorite subjects were DP biology, economics and politics.

"I will remember the great teachers and friends that I made," wrote Joe. "Also all the sporting events that I went to, such as football, baseball and basketball games, and winning Key Club's Dodge for Darfur event during my senior year."

His advise to high school freshmen is to "work hard, because you don't want to regret it later on. Enjoy the fun times, but stay focused, work hard and you will be glad you did."

Joe was accepted at the University of Wisconsin, Lacrosse where he plans to study biology and later, physical therapy.



ERIN GORMAN also attended Immaculate Conception School with her brothers and enrolled at Fridley High School as a result of older brother Grant's great experience at Fridley.

While at Fridley, Erin was a member of the Key Club, Drama Club, German Club, Snowboard Club, National Honor Society, Student Council, One Act Play and the Speech Team. She also participated in soccer, cross country, and track. She was awarded All Conference in One Act Play, All Conference

Student Profiles: Fridley High School Class of 2014



IDRIS MOHAMMED attended Fridley Middle School and there was never a doubt that he would attend Fridley High School.

“I had older siblings and cousins that attended Fridley High School,” he writes. His older brothers Mohammed Hussein (2010) and Abdullahi Hussein (2013) graduated from Fridley High School.

At Fridley, Idris was a member of Student Council, Spanish Club, National Honor Society, Diversity Club and was a mentor. He also did strength training, played soccer, was in wrestling and track and field. He was named Most Valuable Senior in both soccer and track, All Conference in soccer and All Conference Honorable Mention in track. He is a four time Varsity Letter recipient in track and soccer and one time letter in wrestling.

His favorite subjects at Fridley High School were Math with Mr. Miller and biology with Mr. Haaheim. “The full DP classes helped me learn how to manage my time,” said Idris. “They also challenged me and prepared me for college classes.”

One of the things Idris will remember is that he was the only senior on the soccer team during his last year. “The soccer team has always been a second family to me,” he wrote.

Idris words of wisdom to middle school students is to be yourself and hang out with people who will make you successful. “Never forget who you are, for the rest of the world will not,” he says. Adding that “wear your true self like an armor and it can never be used to hurt you.”

Idris was accepted at Syracuse University where he plans to study biology in preparation for medical school.



BIANCA ROBISON has lived in the Fridley school district her entire life. She attended Fridley Middle School and naturally enrolled in Fridley High School upon completing 8th grade. She has an older sibling who graduated from Fridley High School in 2007. Her favorite subjects in high school were English, Ger-

man, biology and psychology. Bianca says of her time at Fridley: “The teachers are excellent! The staff members are very helpful to the students and they really want us to succeed. They prepare us for life.”

She believes that Fridley has a lot of resources to help students and families the staff really care about the students.

She offers some words of advice to middle school students: “High School is a lot easier than middle school if you work harder. Make sure to try your best in all your classes because if you fail, you have to retake the class. Never give up and make the most of your high school experience.”

Bianca was accepted at Anoka Ramsey Community College where she plans to study general education.



KEVIN NAH's middle school years were spent at Epiphany Catholic School in Coon Rapids before coming to Fridley High School.

Kevin chose Fridley High School because of its International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (DP). At Fridley, Kevin was a dedicated and motivated student

who maintained a GPA to be proud of.

While at Fridley, Kevin was inducted into the National Honor Society, was a member of the Spanish Club, and the Fridley High School band. He was also a member of the boys swim and dive team. He lettered in Boys Swim and Dive, and Band.

Kevin's favorite subjects at FHS were DP history and leadership. He said that Fridley High School prepared him for success by challenging him with new hard classes and teaching him great values. Of his time at Fridley, Kevin said “I will always remember the friends that I made in school and the swim team. I will also remember my teachers and coaches,” he said.

His words of wisdom to middle school students is to “stay on top of your work, especially if you are involved in sports and activities.”

Kevin was accepted at the University of Minnesota Duluth where he plans to study social work or marketing.

Student Profiles: Fridley High School Class of 2014



AIYANA SOLARIN came to Fridley High School from Northeast Middle School in Minneapolis.

"I came to Fridley High School and immediately fell in love with the diverse atmosphere and the staff members caring personalities," she wrote.

At Fridley she was a member of the Fridley Key Club, STRIVE, participated in track and field events, and was the manager of the football team. She lettered in track and field.

She writes that her favorite subject in high school was politics and adds that "I will always remember how involved the deans and teachers were and how they genuinely wanted all of us students to be successful."

Solarin said that Fridley helped her gain time management and social skills that will help her be successful in the future. She offered the following words of wisdom to middle school students.

"Stay on top of your work, participate in a lot of activities and have fun. Four years goes by much quicker than you expect it to," she said. Solarin was accepted at the Rochester Community and Technical College where she plans to study dental hygiene.



NAMARIG KRAM also attended Fridley Middle School. She has an older sibling who graduated from Fridley High School in 2008.

While at Fridley High School, Namarig was a member of AASU Club, Chinese Club, Youth in Government, Fridley Key Club and was a member of the National Honor Society. She also played soccer.

Her favorite subjects in high school were History and English and she will always remember the Extended Essay experience. She credits the Diploma Program for preparing her for success. Her words of wisdom to middle school students: "High school does not last forever. The sooner you realize that, the better off you will be, the more interesting your classes will get, and the easier school will be."

Namarig was accepted at the St. Lawrence University in NY where she plans to double major in international relations and political science, and minor in Chinese.

Fridley High School Class of 2014



More than 1/3 of the 203 Fridley High School Class of 2014 graduates graduated with honors: 32 students graduated with Highest Honors, 24 with High Honors and 24 with Honors. In addition, the graduates also included 27 IB Scholars, 12 IB Diploma Candidates, 22 National Honor Society members, 2 students who also received their associate degrees and 18 Presidential Award honorees.



Class of 2014: Four graduating seniors named Wallin Scholars

Four Fridley High School seniors were among the 2014 Wallin Scholarship recipients. This year, 386 scholarship applications were submitted out of which 126 recipients were selected.

On May 5, 2014, Christine Hitomi, Paige Nocton and Emma Rusnacko were recognized with other scholarship recipients during the Wallin Education Partners New Scholar Reception held at St. Mary's Lake Calhoun Event Center. Colter Allen, a recipient of the Medtronic Wallin Scholarship, received his award during a ceremony on May 12 at the Medtronic World Headquarters in Fridley.

Congratulations to all our scholarship recipients:
Colter Allen (Medtronic Scholar), Christine Hitomi (Wallin Scholar)
Paige Nocton (General Mills Scholar), and Emma Rusnacko (Esther Johnson Scholar)



Pictured during the May 5 Wallin New Scholar Reception: Paige Nocton (General Mills Scholar) with Brenna Shaeffer (Recruiting Manager), Kate Hagen (Supplier Diversity Associate), Traci Shellum (Administrative Assistant), Andrea Hanson (Recruiting Assistant), and Ken Charles (Vice President of Global inclusion and Staffing at General Mills).

Photo credit - Wallin Education Partners.

Top right picture (l-r): Fridley High School Principal Renee Van Gorp and Colter Allen (Medtronic Wallin Scholar).

Middle l-r: Brad Wallin and Christine Hitomi (Wallin Scholar).

Bottom l-r: Ardes Johnson and Emma Rusnacko (Esther Johnson Scholar). All photos courtesy of Wallin Education Partners.

Fridley Public Schools honor 2014 Distinguished Alumni

Fridley Public Schools held its 5th Annual Distinguished Alumni Awards Banquet on October 24, 2014 in the Fridley High School auditorium.

The purpose of the Distinguished Alumni Awards is to honor alumni who exemplify the spirit of the International Baccalaureate Learner Profile traits and have distinguished themselves in their careers and service to their communities.

Each year, Fridley High School graduates are honored under two categories; individually as Distinguished Alumni and collectively as the Circle of Excellence group honoree.

Our ten 2014 Distinguished Alumni honorees and Circle of Excellence Award recipients (Fridley High School Wrestling Team State Champions of 1975) are listed below and in the pages that follow.



STEVEN D. CARLSON (Class of 1968) formed what is now Keystone Wealth Advisors, Inc., a “Registered Investment Advisory Firm” that provides financial and investment planning to wealthy families and company sponsored retirement plans. The company currently has approximately \$180 million in investments under management for their clients.

In 1977 Steven started Carlson, Poston and Associates Ltd., a CPA firm which was sold in 1995 to Clifton Larson Allen LLP, a large regional CPA firm. Steven has volunteered as a board member for various chambers of commerce, churches, Lions Club and Rotary. In 1977 he co-founded “The Gopher Wrestling Club” a non-profit organization to support amateur wrestling in Minnesota. This organization grew to have an investment account of over \$2.5 million. He has also been a volunteer on various University of Minnesota Alumni Association and University of Minnesota Athletics boards.

Steven attended the University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management, and graduated in 1973 with a degree in Business and Accounting. He received a Master’s Degree in Business Taxation from the same institution in 1987, and is a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Financial Planner and Personal Financial Specialist.

Steven and his wife Shiela live in Naples, Florida and spend their summers at their houseboat on the St. Croix River in Stillwater, Minnesota.



CHRIS DAHLQUIST (1981) is a financial planner for Prudential Financial. Since joining Prudential in 1998, Chris has built a practice that specializes in comprehensive personal and business planning. He manages over \$100 million for private clients and coordinates employee benefits for over 30 companies ranging from sole proprietors to multi-state corporations.

Prior to his career with Prudential, Chris was a 13 year professional hockey player appearing in 759 games from 1985-1997. His teams included the Pittsburgh Penguins, Calgary Flames, and Ottawa Senators. He was also a member of the 1991 Stanley Cup finalist Minnesota Northstars. Chris attended Lake Superior State University (LSSU) where he graduated in 1985 with a degree in business administration.

While in college, Chris was captain of the Lakers for three years and in 1985 was named to the NCAA “All Academic Team” and LSSU Athlete of the Year. He was inducted into the LSSU Athletic Hall of Fame. He has been active in coaching youth hockey and is on the board of directors of the Minnesota NHL Alumni Association, a local non-profit organization for retired NHL players. Chris resides in Eden Prairie with his wife of 27 years Jeanie, son Chad and daughter Charly.



RANDAL J. FREITAG (1981) is the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Lincoln Financial Group where he provides executive leadership to corporate finance, risk management, treasury, corporate tax, and corporate actuarial, audit and investor relations. He also works closely with senior leaders throughout the company to develop strategies that positively position the company for the future.

At Lincoln Financial, Randal also served as Chief Risk Officer, Senior Vice-President of Product Risk and Profitability, as well as serving in the corporate actuarial area. He is a Board Member and financial supporter of Philadelphia Futures, an organization that focuses on at-risk youth, and provides support and mentoring to youth in grade 9 through college. Randal has also served as a Board Member for Junior Achievement of Greensboro, is a financial supporter of Greensboro Urban Ministry and is a member of the American Academy of Actuaries and the Society of Actuaries.

Randal holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from the University of Minnesota and is a fellow of the Society of

Actuaries. He lives in Devon, Pennsylvania with his daughter Anna and sons, Andrew, Adam and Alex.



WANDA HART (1975) is a top selling realtor for Coldwell Banker Burnett where she has worked since 2003. She has been acknowledged for selling \$3,000,000 in one month, for selling one of the top 10 most expensive houses in the Twin Cities in 2013 and is in the International Diamond Society of her company.

Wanda has also worked as a Licensed Customer Service Representative for 29 years in a Farmers Insurance family business, a flight attendant for Northwest Airlines from 2000 to 2007, a self-employed General Contractor for Grand Entrance LLC where she did staging and design work for clients, and a media technology assistant at the Fridley Middle School from 1990-1998. At Fridley Middle School Wanda was instrumental in setting up the new computer network when computers were introduced in classrooms. She was named Employee of the year for Fridley Schools for 1995-1996.

Wanda created and coproduced *A Sterling Performance*, honoring the 25th anniversary of shows produced on the Fridley Auditorium stage. The production raised over \$40,000 for auditorium improvements. Wanda remains a member of the Sterling Scholarship Committee awarding over \$50,000 to Fridley students pursuing arts in their college education and is a member of the Fridley Alumni Choir, which raises funds for the Sterling Scholarship.

Wanda has been a board member for Grace Manor Ministries since 1987. The Ministries were started by Wanda's husband's great-grandmother as a care facility for aging adults, and currently supports these ministries: Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge; Good News Jail Ministry; the Haiti Teen Challenge; Mom's Haven of Hope and International Justice Mission which works to combat human trafficking. Wanda attended Bethel University, and has been a Licensed Real Estate Agent since 2003. Wanda lives in Fridley with her family and all her children attended Fridley Schools.



BILL INGALDSON (1975) is an attorney and founding partner of Ingaldson Fitzgerald PC, a law firm he formed in 1994. The firm has six lawyers, a paralegal, an investigator and four other staff members. The firm focuses on civil litigation and is recognized as one of the top litigation firms in Anchorage, Alaska.

Bill's clients include Northland In-

surance Company in St. Paul, MN; Target Corporation; Traveler's Insurance; Lloyds of London and several national construction companies. He has handled several liability cases against auto manufacturers. Bill assisted a national child safety group in getting legislation changed to make power windows safer in cars.

Bill is most proud of the pro-bono work done by his law firm. Bill was a founding member of a non-profit charitable organization called the Scotty Gomez Foundation. The foundation has raised over one million dollars to enable economically disadvantaged youth to play hockey and has also refurbished hockey rinks with volunteer labor, and materials. Bill's law firm also sponsors children with special needs from a local high school so they are able to participate in the Challenge Alaska ski program.

Prior to opening his own firm, Bill worked as an assistant District Attorney for the Anchorage District Attorney's Office from 1983-1988. He spent one year with the Alaska Office of Special Prosecutions and Appeals, and then went into private practice with Bliss Riordan, a large Anchorage Law Firm. Bill has also taught trial practice courses for the Alaska Department of Law, has presented at a gathering of International Women Police Officers, and has spoken in criminal justice classes of local high schools.

Bill graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College in 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts in economics and business and graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1983. He lives in Anchorage with his wife and family.



DR. TODD JOHNSON (1976) is the Associate Professor of Global Christianity and the Director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC) where he researches the status of Christianity and world religions in every culture, language, country and city.

He is a visiting Research Fellow at the Institute on Culture, Religion and World Affairs at Boston University. He co-leads the International Religious Demography project and is co-editor of the World Religion Database (Brill 2008). The World Religion Database provides statistical information on Christianity worldwide.

Since 1988, Todd has authored, edited, and contributed to major encyclopedias, atlases, books, and articles. His work has been cited in major media outlets such as the New York Times, the Economist, the BBC, CNN, USA Today, and many others. He has held academic posts at Boston University, Gordon College, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston Theological Institute, as well as Visiting Scholar Trinity College, Singapore. Todd has also given many presentations in-

cluding a paper on “Christianity and Religious Freedom” at a conference in Rome in December 2013 where his group was invited to meet with Pope Francis.

Todd received a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Development from William Carey International University in 1988. From the same university, he received a Master of Arts degree in International Development with a concentration in history of religions in 1990, and a Ph.D. in International Development with a concentration on empirical analysis of Christianity and world religions in 1993.

Todd resides in South Hamilton, Massachusetts with his wife and three daughters.



JUSTINE NAGAN (1996) is the Executive Director for Kartemquin Films, a 48 year-old media arts non-profit based in Chicago, IL that creates powerful social issue documentaries. Since becoming executive director in 2008, Justine has made major strides in building the company’s foundation for long-term sustainability and impact. As executive director, she provides strategic leadership and vision in addition to overseeing all aspects of operations.

The Emmy Award winning Executive Producer also serves as chief board contact and liaison, and is the face of Kartemquin in the community. Justine has held many roles at Kartemquin, including Director of Human Resources and Intern Coordinator, Director of Communications and Distribution, and Board Secretary.

Prior to joining the Kartemquin team, Justine worked at Wisconsin Public Television, Wisconsin ABC affiliate WKOW-TV, Vitality Media Productions, the University of Chicago Arts and Planning Council, and The History Makers for PBS. Justine graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Arts and Journalism from the University of Wisconsin Madison in 2000 and received a Masters of Arts degree in Humanities with an emphasis on Cinema and Media Studies from the University of Chicago in 2004.

She attended Harvard University’s Strategic Perspectives in Non-Profit Management Executive Education Program in 2013. She is currently an active volunteer in the community for such organizations as The Glass Slipper Project, the Hyde Park Art Center and WTTW. She is on the Advisory Board for Midwest Independent Film Festival, has served on the IFP Chicago Board as an elected member of the Badger Herald Newspaper’s Board, and has acted on several other civic and community committees. Justine resides in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago with her husband Matt, and son Rhett.



DAVID P. NEWMAN (1969) is the President and owner of the Bancor Group, Inc., a residential real estate development company, and was the lead principal in the company that developed Wild Meadows, one of Minnesota’s first conservation developments which has been recognized by the Minnesota Land Trust, and the Sierra Club.

Bancor was also one of the principals in the company that developed Locust Hills as well as being a principal in the company that has partnered with the Carlson Family in developing 480 acres on Halstead Bay on Lake Minnetonka, both of which were recipients of the Excellence in Development Award given by the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District.

Among other positions, Dave was the Managing Partner of the law firm of Herrick & Newman, P.A. He serves as a Board Member to Traditional Capital Bank and has served on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Citizen’s Board. Dave served eight years on the Fridley School Board and four years as the Chairman of the Fridley Planning Commission. For the last ten years Dave has served as Board Member and Treasurer of Hope Community which is revitalizing the intersection of Portland and Franklin Avenue in the Phillips Neighborhood of south Minneapolis.

Dave joined the Fridley Rotary Club in 1981 where for the last seven years he has chaired an initiative by Rotary District 5960 to develop a new model to alleviate extreme poverty in the developing world. The Board of Rotary International honored him with the “Service above Self” award which is the highest award given by Rotary for volunteer effort.

David received a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Minnesota in 1973, and received his Juris Doctorate from William Mitchell College of Law in 1978. He lives in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.



ALAN PALMER (1970) is the owner of Gaytee-Palmer Stained Glass of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Alan opened his own stained glass company in 1979. In 2010 he purchased Gaytee Stained Glass, which is the oldest and largest stained glass studio in the Twin Cities. Gaytee Stained Glass was founded in 1918 by Thomas Gaytee, who studied in the Tiffany Studios of New York. Alan is the 4th owner of Gaytee Stained Glass. With this purchase he combined two businesses, now called the Gaytee-Palmer Stained Glass Company, creating one all-encompassing stained glass studio.

The studio provides artistic development and creation as well as restorative work for churches, historical buildings, and private commissions. The company has received significant national recognition and was recently commissioned to fabricate over 80 stained glass windows for a Catholic church being built in Nevada and 60 windows for a local church, St. Charles of Borromeo Catholic Church in St. Anthony, Minnesota.

Alan has also devoted his time as a coach in the Fridley Youth Wrestling Program for 10 years; he was a referee for high school wrestling for 15 years, was a referee at the Minnesota High School State Tournament for 9 years; served on the Fridley United Methodist Church Building Committee, started and ran the University of Minnesota's Christmas Wrestling Tournament for 20 years; and has been a volunteer at the University of Minnesota's Golf Tournament for 8 years. Alan was an apprentice in the stained glass business for four years. He resides in Fridley with his wife, has raised 5 children and enjoys his grandchildren as well.



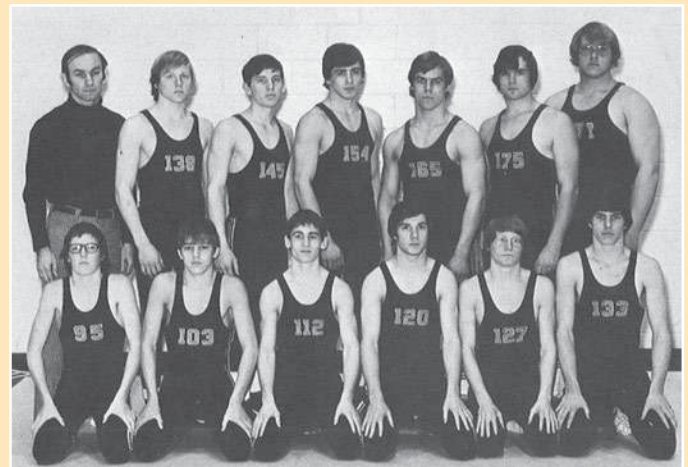
MARIA WALDE-DOUGLAS (1984) graduated from the College of St. Scholastica in 1989 with a degree in Physical Therapy. She is currently a physical therapist at Struthers Parkinson's Center, a National Parkinson Foundation Center of Excellence. This clinic is part of the Methodist Hospital/Park Nicollet Health Services system.

Maria specializes in assessment and treatment of persons with Parkinson's disease and related movement disorders. She is considered an expert in her field and has given webinar presentations for national organizations such as American Physical Therapy Association, Parkinson Disease Foundation and CurePSP. She coauthored "Fitness Counts" a publication for the National Parkinson's Foundation and is a faculty member of their national training program, Allied Team Training for Parkinson's Disease.

Maria has developed programs such as Yoga for Parkinson's and Nordic Walking that have been presented at the World Parkinson Foundation. She has been involved in research on falls prevention in Parkinson's disease and coauthored an article in Movement Disorders Journal. She has developed curriculum on falls prevention in a training program for long-term care facilities.

Maria is married to a fellow Fridley class of 1984 graduate, Jeff Douglas, who is the national collateral risk manager for Wells Fargo Home Mortgage. They have two children, Madelyn age 17 and Alex age 12. Their family resides in Andover. Maria is active in her church and is involved in leading short-term mission trips to Haiti.

2014 Fridley Public Schools Circle of Excellence Award Honoree



VARSITY - *First Row l-r:* James Phillips, Kirby Frank, Jim Hansen, Bill Myers, Scott Dickinson, and Ed Anderson. *Second row l-r:* Coach Joe Frank, Karl Jurisson, Mike Reeves, Mark Obrycki, Dave Lubinski, Lonnie Malikowski and Bernie Sitz.

In 1975 Fridley becomes first in nation to win Dual Meet Crown

Capturing the first ever Minnesota State Wrestling Championship based on a dual meet system in 1987 was an appropriate way for the seniors to end their high school wrestling careers.

The seniors in the team never lost a dual meet in junior high and had a 44-1-0 dual meet record over the previous three years. Their accomplishments include three Skyline Conference Championships, three District 14 Championships, three Region IV Championships, two State Championships, and an overall 5th place state ranking.

In 1975 they were 20-0 in dual meets and defeated the champions of ten different conferences. Seniors Kirby Frank, Jim Hansen (3rd in State) and Scott Dickinson (2nd in State) were untouchable in the first three weights.

Co-captain Karl Jurisson and surprises Ed Anderson and Mike Reeves held down the middle weights. In the last three weights Dave Lubinski, Lonnie Malikowski and Bernie Sitz assured Fridley's invincibility. These seniors and juniors Bill Myers, Mark Obrycki, Randy Sitz, Joe Zemien, Bill Reeves and Greg Cariolano displayed hard work, dedication, sacrifice and accomplished the ultimate in high school wrestling: the title of State Wrestling Champions.



Fridley High School 2014 Distinguished Alumni Honorees

Seated l-r: **Randal J. Freitag** (1981), Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Lincoln Financial Group; **Wanda Hart** (1975), Realtor, Coldwell Banker Burnett; **Dr. Todd M. Johnson** (1976), Associate Professor of Global Christianity and Director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC); **Marie Walde-Douglas** (1984), Physical Therapist, Struthers Parkinson's Center; and **Alan Palmer** (1970), Owner, Gaytee-Palmer Stained Glass.

Standing l-r: **Steven D. Carlson** (1968), Founder, Keystone Wealth Advisors, Inc.; **Chris Dahlquist** (1981), Financial Planner, Prudential Financial; **Bill Ingaldson** (1975), Attorney and Founding Partner of Ingaldson Fitzgerald PC; **David P. Newman** (1969), President and Owner, Bancor Group; and **Justine Nagan** (1996), Kartemquin Films Executive Director.



Fridley High School Wrestling Team State Champions of 1975

Team Members: Ed Anderson, Thomas Brickner, Greg Cariolano, Scott Dickinson, Brian Engstrom, Michael Faber, Kirby Frank, Jim Hansen, Ricky Hartmen, Karl Jurrison, Dave Lubinski, Fred Lundquist, Lonnie Malikowski, Scott Markuson, Bill Myers, Mark Obrycki, B. Olson, Bill Myers, James Phillips, Russell Ponessa, Bill Reeves, Mike Reeves, and Bernie Sitz, Randy Sitz, and Joe Zemien. *Coaches:* Coach Walt Wenholtz and Coach Joe Frank.



Around the District ...

Fridley Lions gift to teachers a big help in the classroom



Top picture: Fridley Lions members Richard Toews, Don Holum, Joanne Toews, Jeff Hood and Brian Toews pose with Hayes Elementary School teachers and (bottom) Stevenson Elementary School teachers.

Members of the Fridley Lions Club visited Hayes and Stevenson Elementary Schools in August 2014 where they handed each teacher a \$100 Target gift card to be used for classroom supplies. Fridley Lion members Don Holum, Jeff Hood, Brian Toews, Joanne Toews and Richard Toews participated in the event.

This is the third year that the Fridley Lions have given the gift cards to our elementary school teachers.

“A few years ago,” said Holum, “my daughter Krista Dorcas who taught at Stevenson shared with me how teachers often have to spend their own money to purchase classroom supplies.” This conversation motivated members of the Fridley Lions to do what they could to support our teachers.

“We borrowed the idea from a group of retired educators in Las Vegas who were giving back to public education by supporting teachers with \$100 gift cards for classroom supplies,” said Holum.

As she introduced herself and the other members of the Fridley Lions, Joanne Toews welcomed the teachers to the new school year and told them that they appreciate the hard work that the teachers do every day.

More than 200 people attend Hayes Math Night



More than 200 people attended Hayes Elementary School's first Family Math Night of the school year held on October 9, 2014 at the school. Dinner was provided to all participants and parents visited grade level rooms to learn math games and meet their children's teachers. Each child who attended was also given math games to practice and sharpen skills at home.

Back to school community event supplies more than 300 backpacks to students

Fridley Public Schools held its first back to school community resource fair on August 23, 2014 at the Fridley Community Center. District and school staff were on hand to great families and provide back-to-school information as well as resources. Area churches and community members donated book bags and classroom supplies that were given out to students at the event. The event, which was organized by the district's Family Liaison, Aloda Sims, also provided free hair cuts to students, free backpacks with school supplies and informational tables on community resources.



GEAR UP holds Parent Night



College Now, College Later—It's never too early to plan for college was the theme of the 2014 Fridley Public Schools GEAR UP Parent Night sponsored by Hennepin Technical College's GEAR UP Program.

Parents and students attended the event held on December 4, 2014 to learn more about how to help their children succeed in school and prepare for college. Community organizations and local colleges were available to provide more resources to attendees. Students who started the GEAR Up program as 7th graders at Fridley Middle School are now freshmen at Fridley High School. Sections included NCC requirements for student athletes, options for earning college credit in high school, financial planning for college, the college application process and transitioning to high school and beyond.

Hayes Elementary holds Cookies and Books community event



In an effort to increase family engagement with its community, Hayes Elementary School held a Cookies and Books reading event at the Village Green apartments on October 2, 2014. Originally scheduled for the apartment complex's picnic area, Principal John Piotraschke and teachers had to set up reading stations in the senior citizen lobby next door due to bad weather.

Despite the cold and rain, students and their parents came in, grabbed a snack, and settled down for reading activities with a teacher. Students who read for 20 minutes or more earned a free book to take home with them. Last year, the school held a similar event at the Rice Creek townhomes.

More than 300 attend Stevenson Elementary's Family Night

More than 300 people attended Stevenson Elementary School's Family Night on December 4, 2014. The school's Family Night is designed to give parents and their children an opportunity to learn together. Classrooms were set up where parents and their children could play math and literacy games together. A book giveaway also gave students an opportunity to select a book to take home with them and many parents received valuable technology information in the school's media center. Classrooms were filled with parents and their children and staff were on hand to greet, welcome and assist families. The school provided dinner for all attendees.



Fridley honors five retirees



L-r: Michael Johnson, Janet Herrmann and Scott Wilson. *Not pictured:* Christa Mowrey and Monika Slatten.

Fridley Public Schools celebrated the service of five staff members during a retirement celebration held May 14, 2014. The retirees honored have collectively given 87 years of service to the school district:

- Michael Johnson worked at Fridley Middle School as a custodian. Johnson is a military veteran who worked for Goodyear before retiring and joining Fridley Public Schools.
- Christa Mowery worked for Fridley Public Schools from 1979 and also worked as a nurse assistant at Torino Grace.
- Monika Slatten worked at Hayes Elementary School as a part time art teacher from 2008.
- Janet Hermann taught at Stevenson Elementary School for 21 years, 11 of which were as a kindergarten teacher and 10 years as a 1st grade teacher.
- Scott Wilson, an army veteran, taught earth science at Fridley Middle School for 17 years and 3 years at the ALC. Wilson also coordinated the annual Veterans' Day Program at the middle school for the past 18 years.

Fridley Schools selected for Minnesota Breakfast Challenge

Fridley High School, Fridley Middle School, Hayes Elementary School and Stevenson Elementary School have all been selected to participate in the Minnesota School Breakfast Challenge for the 2014-15 school year. Our schools are among 120 selected from over 380 schools that applied.

Each participating school will receive \$2,500 in unrestricted funds to invest in increasing school breakfast participation. In addition, a \$0.25 incentive will be given per meal served to students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals - for up to 25,000 meals.

The School Breakfast Initiative is a partnership between Hunger-Free Minnesota and Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota. Financial support for the initiative comes from The General Mills Foundation, the Cargill Foundation and the Midwest Dairy Council.

Fridley recognizes volunteers during annual appreciation breakfast



Fridley parents and community members were recognized for volunteering their time to our schools and programs and for their support.

Fridley School District held its annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast on May 9, 2014 at the Fridley Community Center. This annual event honors the men and women in our community who support our students and schools through their volunteer work. Volunteers are nominated by each school and are recognized at the Appreciation Breakfast where each principal or director talks about the great work each volunteer does at his/her school or program. This year, the following volunteers were honored:

Sue Baier, Amber Berg, Marion Bernard, Robyn Blanks, Mary Bowen, Phyllis Christenson, Bill Drigans, Ricky and Becky Duehn, Dean and Bev Eberhard, Michelle Freichels, Kasi Aiten Freese, Diane Graham, Adria Green, Maria Hein, Sharon Helps, Jody Jakubik, Keri Hinnenkamp, Jack and Sue Kretchmer, Gina Larson, Shanna Larson, Greg Leone, John Niewald, Priyanka Rai, Jan Retzer, David Schussman, Steve Seidl, Jim Sovada, Maya Sujey, Nancy Syse, Brian Toews, Richard Toews, Gina Tolifson, Mike and Nancy Varichak, Doug Westholter and Katey Zeleny.

Weather related school closings

The decision to close schools is often a difficult one to make; students need to be in school and closing schools affect families and students in many ways. We are very mindful of this and only close schools when severe weather poses a risk to the safety of our students and staff.

Making the Decision

Primary factors we consider in making a decision include:

- Safety and wellbeing of students
- Severity of the weather
- The ability for buses and cars to travel safely

District officials monitor local and National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts and use that information to determine if weather conditions warrant closing schools for that day. The decision to close schools is made by 6:00 am.

Notifying Families

Once a decision has been made to close schools, the district will notify families as soon as possible through:

- Phone calls and email
- Announcement on local news channel
- District website
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter)

In case of inclement weather, parents may personally decide not to let their children come to school. Children absent in inclement weather when schools are open will be marked absent and treated the same as in any other legitimate absence. The school though, must receive proper notice. Schools will remain open unless you receive a message from the district through the sources listed above.

NWSISD

Students enrolled through the Northwest Suburban Integration School District (NWSISD): If the district you reside in closes school, there will be no transportation for that day. If the district you reside in delays school due to weather, there will be no morning bus service to Fridley on that day.

Annual Notification

Asbestos Abatement Notification

Fridley Public Schools ongoing efforts related to the management and control of asbestos containing materials is geared singularly toward providing a safe and healthy environment for students, employees and other occupants of our buildings.

During the 2013/2014 school year, asbestos containing materials were removed from the Fridley Middle School as part of a roof replacement, and from Fridley High School as part of a restroom remodel project. Asbestos removal was performed by licensed personnel and monitored by the Institute for Environmental Assessment (IEA).

In addition, continuing asbestos operations, maintenance, and regular re-inspections of all remaining asbestos containing materials was performed throughout the District.

The District continues to rigorously follow the proper procedures and steps for the various types of asbestos removal. The IEA has, and will continue to design and monitor all asbestos abatement projects.

In 2014/2015, asbestos containing materials are to be identified and removed from any areas of the District school buildings affected by scheduled construction. Again, asbestos removal will be performed by licensed personnel and monitored by the IEA.

Questions about asbestos maintenance, inspections, or abatement should be directed to Dennis Craft, the District's asbestos program manager, at 763-502-5008.

Monitoring of Indoor Air Quality

The Fridley School District has developed an indoor air quality program designed to make certain that our schools continue to provide a safe environment for students and staff. The program is simple: each school in the district is evaluated on a yearly basis for potential problems. If problems are found, they are promptly corrected.

Indoor air quality problems are becoming a concern in schools around the country and the Fridley Schools will take every precaution to assure that the air in each of our schools is safe.

The yearly evaluation includes a number of steps. Ventilation systems are examined to make sure they are functioning properly and are providing adequate fresh air. Visual inspections are also made to check for signs of excess moisture from leaks that could lead to growth of molds. Finally, cleaning practices are reviewed to ensure that cleanliness is maintained and that cleaning supplies are safe.

This year's evaluation will be performed in February 2015 by licensed personnel from the Institute for Environmental Assessment (IEA). Results are available in the district office.

If you have questions, please talk with your building Principal, or call Dennis Craft, Director of Buildings and Grounds, at 763-502-5008.

FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Fridley, MN 55432

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Coming soon: District to unveil new website



In an effort to make the district website more user friendly and effective, Fridley Public Schools will unveil a new website by the end of January 2015!

While a lot of the content that is on the current website will remain the same, the new website will include a few new exciting features:

- Responsive Design that adapts to the screen size of any device being used
- Single sign-on to portals for staff, students and parents
- Access to the latest news using the website and other forms of social media.

The district's goal is to use the website as a means of increasing communication with parents, students, staff and the community.

2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Hayes Elementary School
April 14, 2015 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.
For more information contact
763-502-5202

Stevenson Elementary School
April 13, 2015 from 6:15 - 7:30 p.m.
For more information contact
763-502-5302



Early Childhood Screening

Minnesota requires every child to participate in early childhood screening prior to entry into kindergarten in a public school.

Fridley Public Schools provides free early childhood screenings to children between the ages 3 1/2 and 4 years old.

Screening will be held on:
March 24, 25, & 26; May 27 & 28, 2015

Appointments are necessary and to schedule one, please call 763-502-5123 or email:
mary.eggert@fridley.k12.mn.us.