



Linking the Past, Present and Future



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Brent Ogle

Past, Present, Future

On The Cover: (2017) West Park students wait for the ball return during a class trip to the alley in May of 2017. (2023) These middle schoolers note the taste, textures and smells of a Nebraska-produced Buffaloberry jam. The students used local products when creating a menu of bison pizza and Buffaloberry jam vinaigrette for a salad.

Stay in Touch



@TheAnchorCPS



@CHSAnchorAlumni

www.cpsanchor.com

The Columbus Public Schools Foundation wants to help link the past, present and future alumni and students by keeping in touch. Check out our pages for an easy way to stay connected daily.



BOYS BOWLING Head Coach - Bob Jaster ('88)

Assistant Coach - Jim Henerson Ryland Prokopec
 Taylor Cooney Jacob Staub
 Andrew Gassmann Gavin Unger
 Colin Jaster Kelton Zimmerer

A Round of Applause

FALL AND WINTER SPORT STATE CHAMPIONS



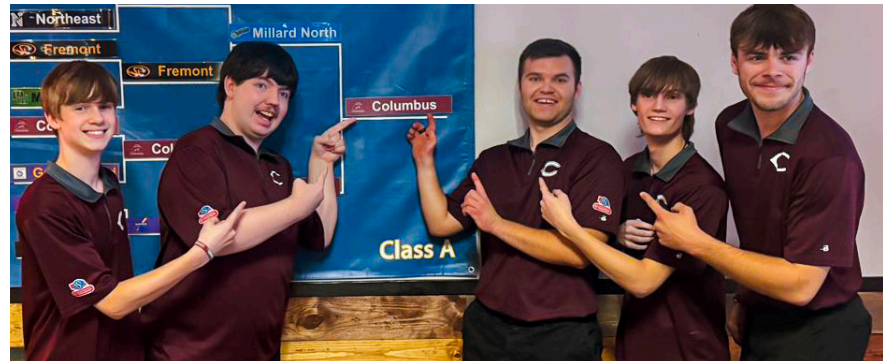
WRESTLING - 165LB

Jaeston Delano
Senior



WRESTLING - 150LB

Mason Petersen
Sophomore



BOYS UNIFIED BOWLING Head Coach - Jackie Eickhoff

Assistant Coaches - Bob Jaster ('88) and Jim Henderson

Alex Unger
Randy Champlin
Matt Holcomb

Gavin Unger
Taylor Cooney



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Join Us, Support Our Teachers

As we look toward the future of education in Nebraska, we are reminded of the profound impact that teachers have on shaping lives and communities. In response to the growing teacher shortage crisis, significant strides are being made to ensure that every student has access to quality education, and Columbus Public Schools (CPS) is leading the way.

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), in partnership with educational institutions like Wayne State College, has rolled out the Nebraska Teacher Apprenticeship Program as part of a groundbreaking initiative to recruit and train the next generation of educators.



Give online:

cpsanchor.com

Mail to:

CPS Foundation,
PO Box 947,

Columbus, NE 68601

This innovative program, made possible by the enactment of LB705 in 2023, introduces an apprenticeship model that places a strong emphasis on hands-on experience.

Apprentices work side-by-side with experienced teachers while

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Legacy

JILL HOOPS SEIDEL

CLASS OF 2003

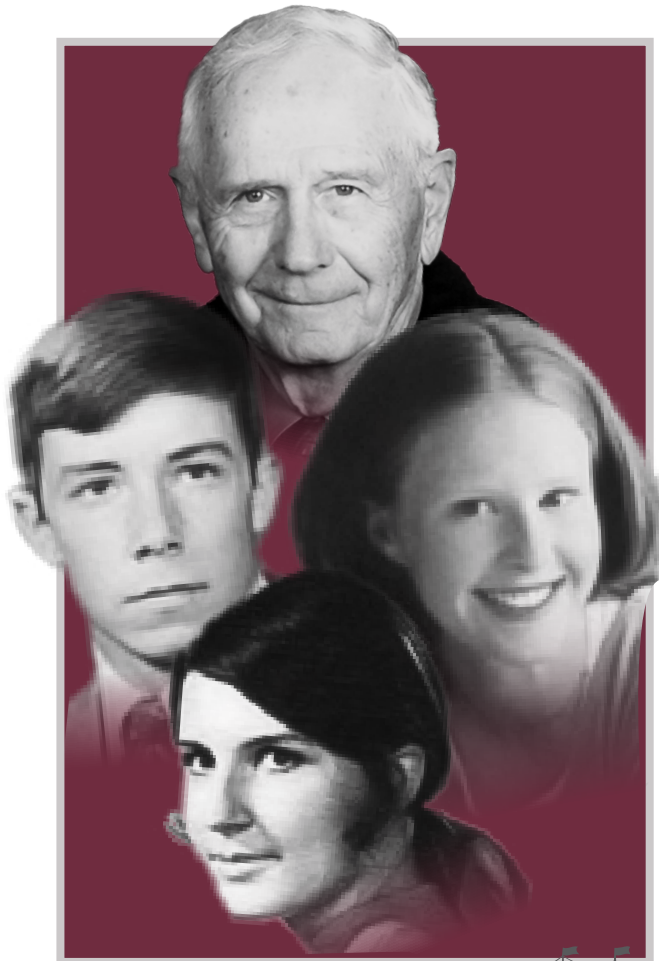
Following graduation from CHS, Jill attended the United States Military Academy at West Point where she majored in mechanical engineering and earned the Superintendent's Award for Achievement.

As a member of the sport parachute team, she won a national championship and earned her skydiving D license and Pro rating.

Following graduation from USMA, Jill was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army and became a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot. She accumulated over 750 flight hours and earned her Pilot-in-Command certification. She was deployed to both Iraq (2009-2010), where she was a flight platoon leader, and Afghanistan (2012-2013), where she managed aviation current operations and updated the software systems for flight planning and tracking. She was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and the Bronze Star.

After her Army career, Jill earned graduate degrees from Northwestern University, in business administration from the Kellogg School of Management, and in design innovation from the McCormick School of Engineering.

After graduating from Northwestern, she managed the mobile applications for Angie's List and HomeAdvisor as a Director of Product Management. As of 2025, she was working for Amazon as a Technical Product Manager in their advertising Measurement and Data Science Team.



Discoverers OF DISTINCTION



DAY | DATE | TIME
THUR | APRIL 10 | 5:30 P.M.

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
WWW.CPSANCHOR.COM

FRED BELLUM

In 1973, Dr. Bellum received his Doctorate of Education Degree from the University of South Dakota in School Administration, along with advanced study in physics, chemistry, mathematics, and guidance counseling.

He served as the superintendent of Columbus Public Schools from 1973 to 1995, playing a key role in shaping the educational landscape of Columbus.

During his time, he consolidated nine elementary schools into five, spearheaded the middle school, and helped implement the change at Columbus High School to four grade levels.

At the state level, he served on the Governor's Committee on instructional television and on the unicameral education committee on school district reorganization.

He is a past president and board member of the Nebraska Center for Excellence in Education, a member of the State Board of Education Special Education Advisory Committee, a past president of the Nebraska Association of School Administrators, and past board member of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators. He also served as the past president of the Northeast Nebraska School Superintendents and trustee of

the Nebraska Council for Economic Education.

Locally, Dr. Bellum has served as a board member and past president of the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce and past president of the ESU 7 Administrators Association.

He has been involved with organizations such as Federated Church, the Columbus Area Arts Council, and the Columbus Family YMCA. His awards include the Boss of the Year Award, Distinguished Service Award, and NASA Superintendent of the Year in 1993. His dedication to academic innovation and community collaboration made him a beloved figure.

Honorary

Legacy

MICHAEL FLOYD

CLASS OF 1968

Michael is a founding partner in QVerity and a NY Times Best Selling co-author of *Spy the Lie: Former CIA Officers Teach You How to Detect Deception and Get the Truth: Former CIA Officers Teach You How to Persuade Anyone to Tell All*.

Michael is the founder of Advanced Polygraph Services, where he spent 10 years conducting high-profile interviews and interrogations for law enforcement agencies, law firms, and private industry.

He has most recently been involved in providing training and consulting services in the areas of detection of deception and information collection to firms in the financial services and audit communities.

Michael began his career as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Military Police, serving in the U.S. and Asia. After spending 6 years on the staff of John E. Reid & Assoc. as a polygraph examiner and instructor on detection of deception, interviewing and interrogation, he subsequently served as an Officer with the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency. Throughout a career that has spanned more than 50 years, he has conducted over 10,000 interviews and interrogations worldwide.

A graduate of the University of South Dakota with a B.S. in Education, Michael also holds an M.S. degree in Detection of Deception from Reid College and a JD degree from Seattle University School of Law.

Legacy

KAREN BLESSEN

CLASS OF 1969

Karen Blessen is an artist and writer who has engaged in purpose-driven art for decades. In 1989, she was the first graphic artist to win a Pulitzer Prize for art done for a Dallas Morning News special section, "Anatomy of an Air Crash."

At the DMN, she specialized in award-winning complex stories that combined her art and writing. "Faces of a Plague" (2002) reported on her travels in Africa with Save the Children, documenting the stories of those living with HIV/AIDS.

"ONE BULLET" (2003) was a three-year project that followed the spiraling impact of a murder in front of her home. Her free-lance clients include the Times Square Alliance, Lincoln Center, Absolut Vodka, American Red Cross, and many others. Her illustrated books include *Be An Angel* (1995) and *Peace One Day* (2005).

Karen co-founded and serves as the Executive Artistic Director of 29 Pieces, an arts organization based in Dallas, Texas. 29 Pieces developed an arts-based curriculum, *Artists Making a Kinder World*.

Since 2005, more than 1,500 teachers have been trained to deliver AMAKW lessons to more than 250,000 students in 24 states and Washington DC. 29 Pieces also does public art sculptures and exhibits. The University of Nebraska acquired her artist journals for their archives.

At The Forefront

Continued from Page 3

receiving academic training through partnering higher education institutions. This unique model not only accelerates the development of educators, but also ensures they are well-prepared to step into classrooms and make an immediate impact.

At the forefront of this initiative is Columbus Public Schools, which has launched a collaborative project with Wayne State College to address the teacher shortage head-on. This program is a shining example of CPS's commitment to innovative and sustainable solutions for the district's educational needs. The program focuses on recruiting and training special education teachers, a field where the demand is particularly high. CPS aims to enroll eight individuals in the program each year, at a total cost of \$70,000 annually. These funds will cover both the academic and hands-on components of the apprenticeship, ultimately supporting the development of educators who are ready to serve CPS students.

Currently, CPS faces a significant challenge in special education, with 16 open positions that need to be filled. This shortage highlights the urgency of this program and the importance of nurturing local talent to meet the district's needs. To address this gap, all scholarship recipients commit to working for CPS for five years following the completion of the apprenticeship program, ensuring a long-term benefit for both the district and the students they serve.



West Park kindergarten teacher Fayth Wayman aids a student during reading earlier this year.

Calling On Our Community

Thanks to the generosity of Columbus High School alum Ralph Castner, class of 1981, this program has received a significant boost. Ralph has pledged a \$35,000 matching donation, doubling the impact of every dollar donated to the program. His commitment, along with support from CPS and the CPS Foundation, has also led to the securing of an additional \$200,000 in grant funding from the Nebraska Department of Education. This extraordinary support brings us closer to meeting our goal, but there is still more to be done.

We are now calling on our community to help us raise the remaining \$35,000 needed to fully fund this essential program. Whether through financial contributions, mentorship, or simply spreading the word, your support is critical to the success of the Grow Our Own Teacher Program.

As alumni, we understand the transformative power of education—it shapes lives, builds communities, and prepares the next generation to thrive.

The Grow Our Own Teacher Program is a pivotal step in addressing the teacher shortage, and it

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JASPER OWENS

Real Estate Agent

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Prepare The Next Generation

Continued from Page 5

is through initiatives like this that we can ensure a bright future for the students of Columbus Public Schools. We invite you to be part of this vital effort. Help us reach our goal of raising the remaining \$35,000. Together, we can invest in the future of education and empower the next generation of leaders in our classrooms.

Send funds made payable to

CPS Foundation, PO Box 947, Columbus, NE 68601.

Questions? Please contact, Nicole Anderson, Executive Director at 402-563-7000 or andersonn@discoverers.org

Full site: www.cpsanchor.com/get-involved/support-the-grow-our-own-teacher-program.html



A Round of Applause

UDA NATIONAL DANCE TEAM
CHAMPIONSHIP - 3RD PLACE
DII SMALL VARSITY HIGH KICK

Head Coach - Megan Gaston ('16)

Larkin Westfall
Bella Larsen
Jenna Hall
Ruby Shea
Savannah Klee
Raegan Roebuck
Kamryn Reiter

Julissa Santillan
Amelie Masek
Maddi Klee
Addie Frerichs
Emma Hiebner
Kaylynn Behne

Upcoming Reunions

Class of 1960 - 65th Reunion

Class of 1960 Reunion on August 16, 2025 at the Friedhoff Building. Contact Gayleen Hingst at 402-563-2109 for questions or more information.

Class of 1965 - 60th Reunion

1965 - Save the date for 60th Class Reunion for June 6 and June 7, 2025. More details will be announced as the date nears. Class members are encouraged to join our Facebook group page "Columbus Nebraska High School Class of 1965." Updates will be posted there. If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact Carol Loshbaugh Syslo at carolsyslo@yahoo.com or Terry Miller at teztoad1146@gmail.com.

Class of 1970 - 55th Reunion

1970 - CHS Class of 1970 55th reunion will be held August 8th and 9th. On August 8th from 3-7 p.m. the group will meet at Maximus. The August 9th agenda is TBD. Contact Terri Drozd Hoesly at thoesly@hotmail.com. This event will be held during Columbus Days!

More on Page 7

Class of 1975 - 50th Reunion

1975 - Save the Date! CHS Class of 1975 50th reunion will be held August 8th and 9th. Friday night the 8th will be held at the Friedhoff Building (former Schwesers Store) at 6 pm and Saturday night the 9th at the new Prime 10 Steakhouse and Venue (located across from the new Casino), at 7 pm. More details to follow but please save the date. Contact the following committee members for more information: Dave Abegglen: kbe1975@hotmail.com, Cindy Bakenhus Melliger: cmelliger@yahoo.com, Sue Bartholomew Zabawa: szabawa@frontiernet.net, Kathy Bembry Placzek: tmplaczek@icloud.com, Roger Iwansky: rogeriwansky@gmail.com, Lora Palmblade Wieser: wieserlora@gmail.com

Class of 1981 - 45th Reunion

45th Reunion Planning Committee is planning a reunion for 2025. More information to follow.

Class of 1985 - 40th Reunion

July 24-26. Join in where you can and celebrate 40 years! Watch for mailings with details and how to RSVP; join Columbus Senior High School Class of 1985 Facebook page; or email bohattyhome@gmail.com to update your address and for more information. Thursday Evening, July 24 - Races at US 30 Speedway, hosted by Bobby Lincoln Friday Evening, July 25 - Meet up at Maximus or Glur's Tavern, location TBD Saturday, July 26 - Play golf or pickleball in the AM, Tour of new CHS in the PM, Dinner, music and fun at Henry on 11th in the evening.

1958 - Class lunch the first Wednesday of every month at noon at Maximus.
All classmates and spouses welcome.

1959 - Meets the second Thursday quarterly (January, April, July and October) at Stack n' Steak at 11:30 a.m. for lunch and conversation.
Classmates and spouses are welcome.

1966 - Meets the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (always on odd months) at Pizza Ranch at 11:30 a.m.

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Empowering the Future of Education

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Grow Our Own Teacher
Apprenticeship Program

Check out Page 2

**Join Us, Support
Our Teachers**

The Anchor

PG 3 Round Of Applause

Discoverers OF **DISTINCTION**

PG 4 See the 2025 Inductees
and find out how you can attend
the event!

PG 6 Upcoming CHS Reunions

ALWAYS ONLINE
CPSAnhcor.com

Support the CPS Foundation And Alumni

Contact Nicole Anderson at
402-563-7000x12847 or
andersonn@discoverers.org.

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