



A Tradition of Excellence

SUMMER 2016

AROUND THESE HILLS

A publication for alumni and friends of **Ottawa Hills Local Schools**

THE
ARTS are
ALIVE AND
WELL in
OTTAWA HILLS
FULL STORY ON PAGE 5

OTTAWA HILLS SCORES
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TOP
LOCAL
REPORT CARD

FULL STORY ON PAGE 5



Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation Surpasses Founders' Society Goal



Photo courtesy of Kathleen Clayton



OTTAWA HILLS SCHOOLS FOUNDATION SURPASSES FOUNDERS' SOCIETY GOAL

Thanks to many, the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation has *surpassed* its goal of raising \$600,000 in contributions and pledges for its Founders' Society campaign.

"I am blown away by the support the community has shown for the creation of the Foundation. This support came from current parents, staff, alumni, people who still call northwest Ohio home, and those who have moved far away. It is clear that the Ottawa Hills Schools hold a special place in the hearts of many and their support will ensure our schools continue to be a special place for future generations."

—George Lathrop,
Foundation Board President

In typical Ottawa Hills fashion, the Foundation raised an *additional* \$20,328 to make the Foundation's initial campaign an incredible success.

This effort started in 2014 when longtime Ottawa Hills Schools supporters Dr. Lance and Dee Talmage led the way with an initial gift of \$100,000 to the Foundation. Their generous donation was quickly doubled — and then some — by members of the Foundation's Board of Trustees and the members of the Ottawa Hills Schools Board of Education.

Today, the Foundation touts more than 120 donors who are now members of the Founders' Society. Contributions will be used to establish an endowment fund for long-term viability of the Ottawa Hills educational experience. The endowment fund, recently named the **Talmage Family Fund**, will focus on curriculum enhancement and expansion, classroom experiences, opportunities in the arts, extra-curricular and co-curricular programs, and experiences for students beyond school walls.

Thank you to everyone who has shown their faith in Ottawa Hills Schools and the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation. Foundation Trustees will work hard to ensure your investment was, indeed, a wise one.



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Founders' Society members were honored at a reception on May 24 when the Founders' Society Wall was unveiled in the lobby of the junior/senior high school. A similar recognition plaque was also placed at the elementary school.

The mission of the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation is to permanently enhance and extend the unique experience of excellence that defines Ottawa Hills Schools.

SUPPORTING THE O.H. FOUNDATION IS EASY!

Visit the Foundation's website at ohschoolsfoundation.org and give online or use the envelope attached to this newsletter.



First Gift Sends Choraliers to Carnegie Hall, Inspires First Alumni Reception

Our students have already experienced the impact of Foundation donors' generosity. The OHHS Choraliers received the very first Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation gift to support their trip to New York City to perform at Carnegie Hall in February.

This trip also included the Foundation's first-ever alumni reception. Foundation Trustees welcomed alumni from the NYC area for a pre-concert

reception at the Park Central Hotel. Seventy guests attended the reception and enjoyed an evening of reminiscing and celebration of their alma mater. Especially meaningful was an opportunity for former Choraliers to connect with their director, Steve Wipfli. After the reception, many of the attendees made the trip across the street to enjoy the Choraliers' performance at Carnegie Hall.



MARCH 19 WAS A TRULY ENCHANTED EVENING AT THE HISTORIC SECOR BUILDING IN DOWNTOWN TOLEDO AS 365 VILLAGERS AND FRIENDS OF OTTAWA HILLS SCHOOLS CAME TOGETHER FOR THE 2016 GREEN BEAR BALL. THIS YEAR'S EVENT RAISED A RECORD-SETTING \$130,000!

Two-thirds of the revenue raised by the Green Bear Ball will be used to fund two major school projects: the creation of a land lab at the elementary school and the purchase of microscopes for all 7th – 12th grade science classes.

One-third of the funds will go to the Ottawa Hills Athletic Boosters to help support athletic programming.

Thank you to Green Bear Ball Chairs Kathy Lathrop and Jackie Berenzweig, members of the Steering Committee, the ticket ambassadors, and everyone else who helped produce this incredibly successful Green Bear Ball.

HELP WANTED: Director of Development and Alumni Relations

The success of the Ottawa Hills Schools Foundation has led members of the Board of Education and the Trustees of the Foundation to seek a Director of Development and Alumni Relations.

The job opening is currently posted on the school district website at ottawahillsschools.org.

Applications will be accepted through June 30.

Questions can be directed to Dr. Kevin Miller, superintendent at kmiller@ohschools.org or by calling 419-536-6371.



alumninews

ALUMNI PROFILES

This year's OHHS Career Day featured a number of alumni who came back to speak to students. We have profiled two of them here.

1. **WHAT IS YOUR GRADUATION YEAR?**
2. **WHAT ACTIVITIES WERE YOU INVOLVED IN?**
3. **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY FROM YOUR DAYS IN SCHOOL AT OH?**
4. **HOW HAS YOUR OH EDUCATION IMPACTED YOUR LIFE? MOST IMPORTANT LESSON(S) YOU LEARNED?**
5. **WHY DO YOU STAY CONNECTED?**
6. **WHAT WAS "IN" WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT HERE? FAVORITE SONG/ARTIST, HAIRCUT, FASHION TREND, ETC.?**
7. **ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?**



RICH EFFLER
Co-owner of Valle Homes

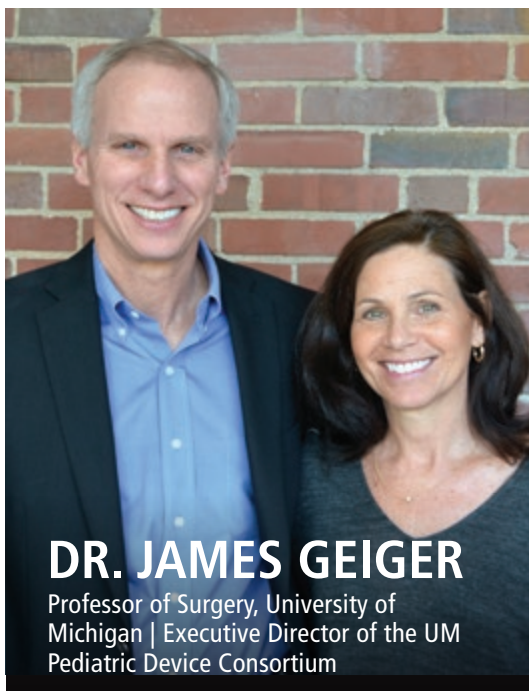
Rich Effler and his partner, John Longthorne (Class of 1972), own Valle Homes. Valle Homes is known in Ottawa Hills and throughout Northwest Ohio for custom home building and expert renovations. Rich lives in Ottawa Hills with his wife and son.

1. Class of 2000
2. I played golf and baseball all four years. I coached baseball camp during the summer session for Coach Hardman each year as well.
3. There are so many, it's tough to choose one!

4. My O.H. education has had a tremendous impact on my life. As college prep goes, I felt very confident going into undergrad. The foundations in comprehension, composition, problem solving, and creative thinking are drawn upon daily in my professional life.

In English, during my Junior year, I learned how to actively take notes. Beyond the structure of an outline, the content and meaning of note taking was developed. The act of writing notes and, in turn, comprehending and prioritizing the content of a meeting is invaluable.

5. I stay connected because doing so is meaningful. I feel fortunate to have been exposed to the O.H. education experience. Reflecting on that good fortune, and recognizing the efforts of my parents and their contemporaries, I can see that staying connected and involved is what makes the O.H. experience so unique.
6. Dave Matthews Band, while not my favorite, was the "in" band when I was in high school. The grunge/flannel phase of the early/mid-90s wore out its welcome by the time I hit ninth grade. It seemed everyone had some version/color of a North Face fleece jacket.



DR. JAMES GEIGER

Professor of Surgery, University of Michigan | Executive Director of the UM Pediatric Device Consortium

Dr. Geiger is an expert in the area of advanced laparoscopic surgery and robotic surgery techniques. He has developed and is commercializing a number of medical devices. Dr. Geiger is active in the Children's Oncology Group and has completed multiple investigator initiated clinical trials in pediatric cancer immunotherapy. Dr. Geiger is a resident of Ottawa Hills.

1. Class of 1979
2. I ran cross country, track, played basketball and tennis, and was President of Student Council. I also sang in the choir and Choraliers.
3. There are many memories, but the excitement around the cross country team's success under new coach Chris Hardman stands out. He had 50 kids on the team and created the slogan "Run Baby Run," which we did all the way to the state competition.

4. O.H. was an amazing educational experience for me. The academics prepared me well for college. I was most impacted by Chris Hardman and Eugene B. Jefferson (music teacher and first African American teacher at O.H.). Through music and sports they taught me to believe in myself and realize that anything was possible.

5. I stay connected for many reasons. My wife, Mary, and I were in the same class (1979). Our class was very close and Mary has done a great job keeping us connected through our reunions.
6. The Rolling Stones and the Police were big. Big hair was in and I guess leisure suits although, thankfully, I never owned one.
7. A natural reaction when one graduates from O.H. is to say I am never coming back. I didn't think I would, but living here and raising my kids here was awesome. "This is a great community with its school system as its foundation."

OTTAWA HILLS SCORES A HISTORY-MAKING REPORT CARD

OTTAWA HILLS MADE HISTORY WHEN IT BECAME THE FIRST SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE STATE OF OHIO TO RECEIVE **STRAIGHT A'S IN ALL CATEGORIES** ON **DISTRICT AND INDIVIDUAL BUILDING REPORT CARDS** ISSUED BY THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.



In recognition of this achievement, the State Board of Education granted the district two awards: the **All A Award** and the **Momentum Award**.

The All A Award recognizes districts that have received A's in every aspect of school performance measured on Ohio's school report cards. The Momentum Award recognizes districts that have received A's on every measure of student academic growth included on the report card.

In presenting the award to O.H., Thomas Gunlock, president of the State Board of Education, noted, "As a winner of these awards, both in their inaugural year, you are part of a small and very elite group of school districts. You are demonstrating high-quality teaching and leadership that result in high academic performance for every type of student."



THEATER ARTS ARE ALIVE AND WELL AT O.H. SCHOOLS

The 2015-2016 school year was another banner year for theater productions at Ottawa Hills Schools. The high school's fall production of *Twelve Angry Jurors* was followed by the winter elementary/junior high production of *Lion King, Jr.*

The January performances involved well over 125 fourth through eighth graders and an army of parent

volunteers who created intricate costuming and designed colorful make-up to rival the finest Broadway shows. The elementary/junior high drama program was started with funding from the 2014 Green Bear Ball. It has quickly become a standard at Ottawa Hill with successful productions of *Willy Wonka, Jr.* in 2015 and this year's *Lion King, Jr.*

The high school's highly successful spring musical, *Godspell*, reprised a 1992 production that many O.H. alumni will fondly remember. The season ended with OHHS's Off-Broadway production, *The Laramie Project*, on Memorial Day weekend.

Photos courtesy of Kathleen Clayton

OTTAWA HILLS ELEMENTARY NAMED Ohio **HALL of FAME** School

There are 2,187 elementary schools in the state of Ohio. In 2016, only seven were named a Hall of Fame School by the Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA). Ottawa Hills Elementary was one of them.

According to Dr. Julie Davis, President of OAESA, "Hall of Fame Schools were chosen by two committees of OAESA members; one of which read and scored the applications and the other that conducted on-site evaluations of qualifying schools. Committee members wrote that, 'Ottawa Hills Elementary School takes great pride in the quality of education provided to its students. Much of the



success that the students achieve is the result of the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders. A climate of high expectations for students, teachers, administrator, staff, and parents could be felt throughout the building."

Elementary students, faculty and staff members, and many parents and Villagers came together on May

27 to celebrate this honor for OHES with a school-wide assembly and fun activities for students on the school lawn. The day also provided an opportunity for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to dedicate the district's new land lab, funded by this year's Green Bear Ball.

ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN CLUB

This year's kindergarten class – the class of 2028 – is the first group of students to experience all-day, everyday kindergarten at Ottawa Hills Elementary School.

We checked to see how the year went for a few of our kindergartners and asked them the following questions.

1. WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT KINDERGARTEN?
2. WHAT WAS SOMETHING FUN THAT YOU DID IN KINDERGARTEN?
3. WHAT WAS HARD ABOUT KINDERGARTEN?
4. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?



BEN BURNS

1. Making friends. Savio was one of the best friends I made.
2. That would probably be doing fun stuff at recess. I like to swing. I like to go down the slide and play tag.
3. Taking tests.
4. That's a hard one. I'm not sure.



SYLVIA FLANIGAN

1. Daily Five. We read to self, did word work, and worked on writing. I liked reading princess and ballet books most of all.
2. Recess. I liked playing on the monkey bars.
3. Knowing what punctuation to put at the end of sentences.
4. A dentist.



ANNA HERTLEIN

1. I liked the recesses. I liked to play with my friends.
2. Art classes. I liked all the things we made.
3. Homework. We had a lot of homework.
4. A dog trainer because my neighbor is one and I help her out sometimes.



STELLA KUHN

1. I really liked playing with my friends and I liked testing sometimes and I liked doing Foundations.
2. We got to do a lot of stuff that will be different from first grade and second grade, but I don't know for sure because this is my first time here.
3. Some of the tests were hard.
4. I think I want to be a veterinarian.

STUDENT AWARD WINNERS

Each year, Ottawa Hills High School students are granted scholarships and awards in memory or honor of Ottawa Hills alumni and former students. Following are recipients of this year's alumni-based awards.



AIDAN McMURRAY, SENIOR

The Steve Gordon Award is awarded to the graduating senior who has exhibited oral and written literary acuity, stylish sophistication, and intellectual curiosity.

The Chad Layne Foreign Language Award is presented to the senior who has consistently demonstrated curiosity, enthusiasm, and excellence in a world language class. This student possesses a unique drive to communicate in other languages and is fascinated with other cultures.

The Dion Raftopoulos Award is granted annually to the college-bound graduating senior who most represents the lofty ideals of musical accomplishment, scholarly attainment, and moral integrity.

BRENT WANG, SENIOR

The Kathryn H. Saxby Memorial Scholarship Award winner is selected by the Music Department. The award is based on the criteria of academic excellence, a demonstrated interest in music, an involvement in school activities, and a commitment to community service.

The Nancy and Tom Kabat Scholarship Award is presented to a graduating senior who is known to be an uplifting person, who makes a positive contribution to his or



her class, and is well respected by fellow classmates. The honored senior demonstrates leadership, a good work ethic, high academic achievement, and community and school volunteer service.



COURTNEY HYLANT, SENIOR

The Kristjan Gislason Award is given to the senior who has given unselfishly of his/her time and talents and who possesses a positive attitude for the benefit of Ottawa Hills High School. It is given in honor of 1973-74 exchange student Kristjan Gislason by his father, "in appreciation for the school friendship shown to his son."



JILLIAN FRYE, SENIOR

The Ross Treuhaft Memorial Scholarship Award honors a graduating senior who welcomes diversity, shows compassion toward students with special needs, has an interest in special education, demonstrates a desire to include others different from themselves, and possesses kindness and joy.

The Karen Klein Music Award is given to a student who shows leadership, character, and musicianship.

ZHENGHAO (LEO) LIU, SENIOR

The Jon S. Davis Striving to Achieve Award recognizes, nurtures, and encourages hard work, perseverance, sound judgment, and a strong moral compass in students so they can improve their own lives and also serve to improve the lives of others.



MADELINE BECK, SENIOR

The Peggy Thomas Memorial Scholarship Award is given to the graduating senior who best exemplifies the characteristics of affability, happiness, and enthusiasm for life, and who puts forth a determined effort toward his/her school work.



MAEVE MCBRIDE, SENIOR

The Phillip W. Longnecker Science Award is awarded by members of the Science Department to a senior excelling in the field of science.



PAULINA MENDEZ, JUNIOR

The Lindy Redmann Sports Award is presented to a junior female field hockey player who exemplifies a love for all sports; enjoyment of team competition; quiet, persuasive leadership; modesty; strong feelings for fair play; loyalty to family and friends; independent thinking; determination; and a keen sense of humor.





OTTAWA HILLS
LOCAL SCHOOLS

Ottawa Hills Local School District
3600 Indian Road
Ottawa Hills, OH 43606

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Don't forget to
share the O.H. News!

To join the mailing list, O.H. friends
and alumni should contact Erica
(Gatchel) Silk ('89).

esilk@ohschools.org | 419-534-5376

ALUMNI CAN ALSO REGISTER
ONLINE AT:

[ottawahillsschools.org/content2/
ohalumni](http://ottawahillsschools.org/content2/ohalumni)

O.H. Teachers are Award-Winning

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUTSTANDING FACULTY MEMBERS WHO RECEIVED HONORS DURING THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR!

Junior high intervention specialist **Kathy Benecke** received the "Master Educator Award" from the Educational Service Center of Lake Erie West.

Kindergarten teacher **Wendi Danzeisen** received the Sun Federal Credit Union "Extraordinary Teacher of the Year" award.

Health and physical education teacher **Jenny Gill**, Spanish teacher **Tim Hood**, and math teacher **Tony Torio** were each named a *Toledo Blade* "Teacher of the Month."

Baseball coach **Chris Hardman** was named BCSN's "Coach of the Year."

High school government and history teacher **Tom McCarthy** was named a BCSN "Teacher of the Month."

Elementary intervention specialist **Megan McKean** received the "Rookie of the Year" Award from the Educational Service Center of Lake Erie West.

Athletic director **Tim Erickson** was presented with the 2015 State Award of Merit by the Ohio Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.



Open for MORE NEWS from
AROUND THESE HILLS!