

Thank You for Attending
Today's Ceremony

Please feel free to join us at the alumni tent
during the football game tonight.
The inductees will be honored at halftime.

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AURORA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

2014 HALL OF FAME

Induction Ceremony



October 17, 2014
Aurora High School

PROGRAM

Open Reception

Luncheon

Awards Ceremony

Welcome

Brian Brookhart '98

Master of Ceremonies
Alumni H.S. Liaison

Opening Remarks

Matt Shanholtzer '90
President,
Aurora Alumni Association

School Presentations

Aurora Board of Education

Gerry Kohanski
President,
Aurora Board of Education

Aurora Education Association

Michelle Dirda '86
Secretary, A.E.A.

Alumni Hall of Fame Tributes and Presentations

Jericka Duncan

John Kudley
Tribute

Tia Dionne Hodge-Jones
Tribute

Margaret Rothenberg '90

Andrew Kmetz

Mike Fejes '85
Tribute

Eileen Kutinsky

Michelle Dirda '86
Tribute

Closing Remarks

Russ Bennett '78
Superintendent

A grateful school and community honor their best.

Aurora Alumni Association Board of Directors

Matt Shanholtzer '90	President
Derek Kohanski '00	Treasurer
Brian Brookhart '98	H.S. Liaison
Jennifer Shanholtzer '95	Secretary
Ruth Tuttle '65	Reunions
Lisa Adams Brogan '88	Scholarships
Barb Kudley '75	Hall of Fame
Russ Bennett '78	Superintendent
Jen Kutty '91	
Robert Tuttle '63	
Mary Jurkiewicz Beckstrom '83	
Gary Brookhart (Honorary)	

Aurora Schools Administration

Russ Bennett	Superintendent
Pat Ciccantelli	Asst. Superintendent
Bill Volosin	Treasurer
Paul Powers	Athletic Director
Mike Roberto	High School Principal
Brian Brookhart	Asst. H.S. Principal
Mark Abramovich	Harmon Prinicipal
Mike Janatovich	Asst. Harm. Prinicipal
Paul Goodwin	Leighton Principal
Patty Minrovic	Craddock/Miller Principal

Aurora Board of Education

Gerry Kohanski	President
Pam Mehallis	Vice-President
John Sloe	
Annie Grohe	
Beverly Kuch	

City of Aurora

Ann Wolmer-Benjamin	Mayor
James Vaca	Ward 1
Dennis Kovach	Ward 2
Reva Barner	Ward 3
George Horvat	Ward 4
Kathy Grandillo	Ward 5
Harold Hatridge	Ward 6
Amy McDougald	At Large
John Kudley	At Large
Scott Wolf	At Large

Aurora Education Association

Ken Brown	President
Chris Radtke	Vice-President
Judy Dolezal	Treasurer
Shelly Dirda	Secretary

Honored Educator and Staff Member Hall of Fame (Retired)

	Inducted
Dan Dyer	2013
Mary Ann Balbach	2013
Robert Luckay	2013
John Smolko	2013
Eileen Kutinsky	2014
Andrew Kmetz	2014

Outstanding and memorable teachers, administrators, or support staff who made significant and positive contributions to the success of Aurora students and the Aurora City Schools. Must have worked a minimum of ten years in the district and retired for five years.



2013 Charter Members - Honored Teacher Inductees
L-R – John Smolko, Mary Ann Balback, Dan Dyer, Bob Luckay

Aurora Hall of Fame

The Aurora High School **Athletic** Hall of Fame was established in 1982 by the Athletic Department. The **Distinguished Alumni** division was initiated in 2001 by the Aurora Alumni Association. In 2013 all areas of the Hall of Fame were put under the auspice of the Alumni Association who added a third area of recognition, **Honored Educator and Staff**. Under the Alumni Association format, all Hall of Fame candidates are now initially nominated by A.H.S. alumni and selected by a committee chaired by members of the Alumni Association Advisory Board. Future Hall of Fame inductees will be selected in all three divisions as determined by the number and qualifications of the nominated candidates.



Aurora High School Alumni Association

The Aurora Alumni Association was established in 1994 by A.H.S. alumni from the 1970s and 80s. During their first 13 years the group developed a data base of nearly 4,000 alumni, gave scholarships, sent out newsletters and started the Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame program. After a 5 year period of inactivity from 2007 – 2012, the group reorganized under new leadership in 2012 and established a Board of Directors that includes Aurora Alumni from every decade between the 1960s – today. The current revitalized group has established a website, increased their visibility, given scholarships, and is proud to be inducting A.H.S. alumni in our Hall of Fame.

Hall of Fame Committee

Barb Kudley '75 - Chairperson

Jennifer Shanholtzer '95

Brian Brookhart '98

Barb Brookhart – Retired Staff

Russ Bennett '78 - Superintendent



Jericka Duncan

Class of 2001

Athletic Hall of Fame

Jericka was a three year letter winner in Basketball and a four year letter winner in Track and Field. She was part of seven school track and field records and a three time OHSA State Champion in the 330m Hurdles, 4x100m Relay and the 4x200m Relay. Jericka established 5 school records which stand today including 100m High Hurdles, 330m High Hurdles, 4x100m Relay, 4x200m Relay, and 4x400m Relay. Jericka was on the CVC all 2nd place team in 1998 and was named to the CVC 1st place honors team in 1999, 2000, and 2001. As a senior she was named to the CVC 1st team.

Upon graduation Jericka attended Ohio University on academic and athletic scholarships where she majored in communications and was the 2005 recipient of the NAACP Image Award of Athletics. While there she broke the 100 meter Hurdle record which still stands today. In 2005 Jericka was named team captain and was the team's MVP in 2004 and 2005.

After college graduation Jericka began her career as a correspondent and reporter at WETM-TV in Elmira, New York. In 2007 she began reporting at the CBS affiliate WIVB-TV in Buffalo, New York. In 2010 Jericka joined CBS News at KYW-TV in Philadelphia as a news correspondent. At KTW-TV she earned a first place award from the Associated Press, a local Emmy Award in the "Best Morning Show" category, the 2007 "Best Spot News Coverage" from the New York Broadcasters Association and an Associated Press Emmy nomination for a special report on Social Security scam. In addition, the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists named her "Journalist of the Year".

In 2013 Jericka was elevated to her current position as a CBS News Correspondent for News Services at CBS News, the networks 24 hour television newsgathering service. As a correspondent she has covered the One Year Anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, the D.C. Navy Yard shootings, and was in France to cover the 70th Anniversary of D-Day. Jericka's community involvement includes the Black Leadership Commission on HIV/AIDs, as well as a Boys and Girls club and a Big Brothers – Big Sisters mentor.

Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame



Inducted		Inducted	
Holly Benjamin '86	2001	Michael Shea '84	2004
Byron Spruell '83	2001	Stephen Rumsey '70	2004
Cheryl Woodsy '78	2001	Shirley Greenslade '52	2004
Dick McKinnon '60	2001	Michele Jimenez Belardo '86	2005
Robert Dean '82	2002	Dana Benjamin Gilliland '83	2005
Robert Shaw '74	2002	Scott Keglovic '79	2005
Kathleen Thornton '65	2002	Jim Hickey '76	2005
Susanne Bradley Brown '55	2002	Robert Labadie '67	2005
Paul Farkas '83	2003	Brian Rothenberg '84	2006
Russ Bennett '78	2003	Todd Clossin '80	2006
Gregg Keidel '66	2003	Tia Hodge-Jones	2014
Jody Jurkiewicz Kocsis '85	2004		

Alumni who have made truly extraordinary achievements in their careers, have made significant contributions to society, demonstrated exemplary leadership, and served as role models.
Must have graduated at least 10 years ago.

Athletic Hall of Fame

Inducted		Inducted	
Frank Langmyer '27	1982	James O'Brien '67	1992
Thomas Truce '33	1982	Richard Russell '59	1993
Edward Oswald '45	1982	Robert W. Russell '59	1993
Allen "Pres" Bliss '53	1982	Byron Spruell '83	1993
Thomas Curtis '66	1982	Robert Pealer '65	1993
Harry Gilcrest (coach)	1986	William Miller '48	1993
Charles Brown '53	1986	Harry Lee '53	1995
Todd Jindra '73	1986	John Nussbaumer '69	1995
Stanley Perchan '65	1986	Charles Thorton '58	1995
Michael Scott '73	1986	Tom Courtad '95	2007
Casey Courneen '69	1986	Tim Courtad '95	2007
Greg Johnson '73	1986	Pat Duncan '95	2007
Helen Shilling (coach)	1992	Gavin Sontag '95	2007
Joe Manno (coach)	1992	Mark Tellerico '87	2007
Kim Heisler '71	1992	Dick Bliss (coach)	2007
Patricia Holly '80	1992	Jericka Duncan '01	2014
Edward McVeigh '35	1992		



Alumni who were gifted athletes and made long-lasting and notable contributions to Aurora athletics. Accomplishments may include multiple letters, all conference titles, individual and team State championships, collegiate athletic participation, professional sports, Aurora record holders, and demonstrated leadership. Candidates must have graduated at least 10 years ago.



Tia Dionne Hodge-Jones

Class of 1990

Distinguished Alumni

Tia Dionne Hodge-Jones is an award-winning writer, actor, playwright, screenwriter and director/producer. She earned her M.A. and B.A. in English Literature from Case Western Reserve University.

As an actress, she has appeared in numerous national and regional on-camera and voice-over/radio commercials, and has appeared on 666 Park Avenue, in a number of the Law & Order T.V. series episodes, as well as the pilot The Third Degree for Fox, to name a few. In 1998, she received a Best Actress nomination by the Independent Reviewers of New England for her performance as "Veronica" in New Repertory Theatre's production of Athol Fugard's Valley Song. She has appeared as the recurring characters "Angel Mel" and "Amelia Bennett" on ABC's One Life to Live, and can currently be seen as a panelist on Cafemom.com's Coffee Shop Confessions. Tia Dionne began her career behind the camera as Assistant Director to award-winning director/writer/playwright, Dave Cockley. Tia Dionne went on to write, produce and direct two short films for the inaugural NYC Midnight Movie Madness Filmmaking Competition (2002), and was awarded the First Runner-up prize for *Once Upon A Once Upon*.

Tia Dionne also directed and produced the pilot episode of *UnCorked: A Slightly Irreverent Look at Wine for Wine Ventures* which garnered her a Directors Citation from the Black Maria Film Festival. She has since directed episodes for BN4REAL.TV, and has produced/directed live events and video projects for America Scores and Veterans Across America. Her pilot, *The Whiskey*, was an Official Selection at the Producers Guild of America Lab at the Sundance Film Festival (2009). Tia Dionne is the inaugural recipient of the Adrienne Kennedy Society's Louis Kent-Hope Award for Excellence in Creative Writing & Poetry. She is a former National Poetry Slam Team Champion. Her Cleveland Trilogy plays—*Puddin'*, *Love... Like Lemonade* and *A Spider in Wine*—have all received early workshops by New Jersey Dramatists & Waterfront Ensemble. Tia Dionne is a member of SAG-AFTRA, AEA the Dramatists Guild of America, New York Women in Film, and the National Association of Professional Women. She is a proud acting and filmmaking instructor at Performers Theatre Workshop in Maplewood, NJ, and resides with her husband and daughter in Bloomfield, NJ.



Andrew Kmetz

Honored Educator

Aurora City Schools Art Teacher
1968 - 1985

Andy Kmetz taught us about art and theater – but he also taught us so much about life. He taught us to believe in ourselves. He made all of us feel like we could achieve our dreams. He was our mentor, our leader, our cheerleader and our friend.

– Mike Fejes '85

Andrew Kmetz grew up in Akron, Ohio. As a youth he became an accomplished tap-dancer. When he was twelve years old he spent a year in Hollywood, California working on the set of MGM studios making short movies. After High School graduation he attended Illinois Benedictine Seminary where he earned a Degree in Philosophy and spent a year in the Benedictine Monastery. In 1953 he was drafted into the U.S. Army and spent two years in the Signal Corp at Fort Benning, Georgia.

After the military Andy returned to college at Kent State and earned a Bachelor's Degree in Speech and English. Andy's first teaching position was in the Ravenna, Ohio Schools where he taught High School Speech and English. While in Ravenna he returned to college and earned a Master's Degree in Theater Arts with a minor in Art. These new interests and degrees led to new teaching areas in Ravenna and he began teaching Middle School art and High School Drama.

Andy came to the Aurora Schools in 1968 initially as a High School English teacher. However, he was soon persuaded by Middle School principal Mike Lenzo to join the staff at Harmon Middle School as an Art teacher, a position he held until his retirement. Soon after coming to Harmon School he began a long term collaboration in drama productions with Harmon English teacher Dan Dyer. They would produce countless shows together including the popular "Farewell to Harmon" productions. In the early 1980's Andy also directed musicals at the High School and served as choreographer with the Aurora Community Theater. After his retirement in 1985 Andy taught art as a volunteer at St. Patrick School in Kent. Until recently he also served as a volunteer in the emergency room of Robinson Memorial Hospital.



Eileen Kutinsky

Honored Educator

Aurora City Schools Science Teacher
1965 – 1985

Aurora Teacher of the Year
Coleman Lifetime Achievement Award

Eileen Kutinsky was one of the best teachers I ever had. She made science enjoyable for middle school kids, combining information with hands on experiences that were highly motivating. She was dedicated to education and science and always available to students.

-Michelle Kabbyschaw Dirda '86

Eileen Kutinsky earned her Bachelor's Degree in Science from Mount Union College and her Master's Degree in Guidance and Counseling from Kent State University. She began her teaching career in a one room school house in Lexington, Ohio followed by teaching third and fourth grade at Bolton School. Later she taught kindergarten and first grade in the Streetsboro schools.

Eileen began her illustrious and memorable career at Harmon Middle school in Aurora in 1965 as a sixth grade science teacher, a position she held for many years. She also taught some eighth grade science at Harmon. Eileen's outgoing, challenging, and hands on approach endeared her as a student favorite for several generations of Harmon school students. She was a driving force in the establishment of the 6th grade annual sixth grade camp where her hands on approach to nature and scientific topics were integrated into the learning experiences. Certainly no one in the community or at Harmon school will forget the year they shared the experience of raising a cow at Harmon school.

In addition to her Harmon career, Eileen has taught Science and English at the college level and served as a Student Teaching Supervisor. Ever the activist, Eileen has served on the Streetsboro Board of Education and as a Portage County Library Board member.

Eileen's greatest memories: Kids! Camping! Amazing fellow teachers!