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*Olathe Public Schools*

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# *Alumni Association*

The Olathe Alumni Association, with assistance from the Olathe Public Schools, follows a mission statement to support reunions, provide scholarships and recognize alumni.



Olathe Northwest

Ravens



Olathe North

Olathe High  
John P. St. John

Eagles



Hawks

Olathe East



Owls

Olathe West



Falcons

Olathe South

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# *Introduction*

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Dear Patron(s),

The Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association (OPSAA) thanks you for your interest in our alumni programs. This is an easy-to-use, helpful and informative packet outlining our plethora of activities.

First, the Reunion Guide section assists reunion committees with their event planning. We are happy to connect with these committees or speak to classmates during the planned class gatherings.

As Olathe community supporters, it is important to be informed of the many facets of the OPSAA. We are proud to offer scholarship opportunities for students as they begin their post secondary lives. With two of our scholarships being school specific, our latest endeavour is to launch a scholarship to be awarded to any Olathe Public Schools graduate. We are currently in the fundraising stages of this process. We invite you to be an active part of making this all Olathe high school scholarship possible.

The Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association is also pleased to host our annual Wall of Honor ceremony which recognizes Olathe district alumni for their lifetime achievements. This prestigious award not only acknowledges our outstanding alumni but also perpetuates our tradition of excellence and inspires current students. More information about the Wall of Honor recognition can be found in this packet, including nomination forms and past honorees.

Finally, keeping up with Olathe traditions, our association enjoys an opportunity to participate in the annual Old Settler's Day parade. It is a time to let the community see our lifelong pride of being an Olathe alumni. It is exciting when alumni join and march through the streets of downtown Olathe.

Thank you for your interest in the OPSAA. Please let us know if we can assist you in any way!

Sincerely,

Executive Board  
Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association

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# *Introduction*

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Dear Reunion Committee,

The Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association (OPSAA) thanks you for your interest in our alumni programs. This is an easy-to-use, helpful and informative packet outlining our plethora of activities.

First, the Reunion Guide section assists reunion committees with your event planning. We would be happy to connect with your committee or speak to classmates during your fun, class gatherings. We know you will enjoy sharing old memories and creating new ones as well.

As alumni, it is important to be informed of the many facets of **your** alumni association. We are proud to offer scholarship opportunities for students as they begin their post secondary lives. With two of our scholarships being school specific, our latest endeavour is to launch a scholarship to be awarded to any Olathe Public Schools graduate. We are currently in the fundraising stages of this process. Be a part of making this all Olathe high school scholarship possible.

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# *Did You Know?*

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Did you know that Olathe is one of the fastest growing school districts in the area and the second largest district in the state of Kansas? The district's incredible historical journey spans over a century and began back in the late 1800s.

While many schools existed in various buildings in earlier times, it was in 1868 that Olathe built the first school — Stone (Rock) School. Over the next 140 years or so, the district grew from 75 students in 1868 to about 29,400 in 2014.

- 1868 – Stone (Rock) School opened for first through 10<sup>th</sup> grade (seniors)
- 1882 – Central Elementary opened
- 1889 – Lincoln Elementary and Washington Elementary opened
- 1898 – Red Brick High School replaced the Stone School
- 1927 – John P. St. John Memorial High School opened, Red Brick High School became Olathe Junior High
- 1958 – Olathe High School opened, Olathe Junior High took over the old high school
- 1976 – Santa Fe Trail Junior High opened, Olathe Junior High was renamed Millbrooke Junior High
- 1981 – Olathe South High School opened, Olathe High School was renamed Olathe North High School
- 1992 – Olathe East High School opened
- 2003 – Olathe Northwest High School opened
- 2017 – Olathe West High School, the district's fifth high school, will open

Since the first schools were built for the Olathe community, the Olathe School District has continued to grow and currently boasts four high schools, nine middle schools, and 35 elementary schools. More schools are set to open in the future as trending data shows that growth will continue for the next 30 years, pushing our student population to more than 40,000 students.

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# *Did You Know?*

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Another integral part of the school district's history is the way it consistently stays current with the demands of society. Many impressive programs have been put in place to meet the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, including:

- Elementary international language programs
- Elementary weekly computer technology instruction
- Tiered math instruction at the middle school level, including advanced classes
- Reading seminar at the middle school level, differentiated for all students
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) for increasing college readiness at select middle and high schools
- Six international languages offered, including Japanese and Latin
- 21st Century High School Programs in Aerospace & Engineering, Biotechnology, eCommunication, Environmental Design, Geosciences, Leadership Studies, Sports Medicine and Exercise Science, and more
- Technical education programs in Culinary Arts, Construction Trades, Automotive Collision, Welding, and more
- College level classes — Advanced Placement and College Now courses
- eAcademy online education
- Physical fitness offerings at all levels
- Fine arts offerings at all levels — visual arts, general music, choral music, orchestra, band, theatre

These programs and an outstanding staff of almost 4,500 help Olathe students to excel across the board, with high graduation and attendance rates, numerous National Merit Finalists, and millions of dollars in scholarships each year. Our faculty also shines brightly with their achievements being recognized through Presidential Awards for Excellence as well as Kansas Teacher of the Year awards.

The district's rich history draws many families to move to the Olathe community every year. To learn more about the area's past, please visit the Olathe Historical Society's website, [\*\*www.OlatheHistoricalSociety.org\*\*](http://www.OlatheHistoricalSociety.org).

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# *Leadership*

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The Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association (OPSAA) is led by a Board of Directors and Executive Committee made up of recent and distant graduates, as well as district staff who will support the organization on a long-term basis.

## **Board of Directors**

President: Carol (Caenen) Wheeler, Olathe High School Class of 1968

Vice President: Traci Jensen, Olathe South High School Class of 1987

Treasurer: Lew Lewis, Olathe High School Class of 1960

Secretary: Amanda (Mulhall) York, Olathe East High School Class of 1996

Historian: Bob Courtney, Olathe Historical Society

## **Executive Committee**

Lynda (Enright) Allenbrand, Olathe High School Class of 1965

Ed Badsy Jr., Olathe High School Class of 1966

Karen (Sutton) Beets, Olathe High School Class of 1963

Max Beets, Olathe High School Class of 1963

Susan (Ingold) Brooks, Olathe High School Class of 1981

Candy (Shipman) Birch, Olathe High School Class of 1969

Mary Jean (Davidson) Cochran, John P. St. John Memorial High School Class of 1941

Marlene Colgan, district Web manager

Jill (Tobler) Erickson, Olathe High School Class of 1972

Sarah Hart, Olathe Northwest High School Class of 2004

Hazel (Blackwell) Hendrix, John P. St. John Memorial High School Class of 1952

Ken Roberts, Olathe High School Class of 1963

Heather (Devocelle) Schoonover, Olathe South High School Class of 1988;

district Community Development

Dennis Wheeler, Olathe High School Class of 1966

Ivan Wicke, John P. St. John Memorial High School Class of 1954

Becky (Milloy) Vrbas Olathe High School Class of 1974

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# Scholarships

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The OPSAA oversees select scholarships for Olathe graduates. Scholarship applications are available on the Olathe Public Schools Foundation's website at <https://www.olathepublicschoolsfoundation.org/>.

Here is some information about the scholarships and which school(s) and student(s) they benefit. We hope it helps you in directing your donation.

**The Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association Scholarship** has been set up by the OPSAA to be awarded to students from ANY of the Olathe public high schools. The award will be given to a senior(s) who shows active participation in high school activities and shares plans on how they will be an engaged alumni member.

**The Olathe High School Alumni Scholarship** was set up by a group to specifically be awarded to OLATHE NORTH students. This \$1,000 scholarship is offered to a senior at Olathe North High School who demonstrates financial need and participates in at least one school club or activity.

**Ralph Dennis Scholarship** was set up by a group to specifically be awarded to OLATHE NORTH students only. This \$1,000 scholarship honors former Olathe North High School teacher and coach Ralph Dennis. Olathe North seniors who have been a member of the boys or girls varsity basketball teams, earned a 2.0 or higher cumulative GPA, and demonstrated financial need are eligible to apply.

If you or your group would like to donate to a scholarship fund, please make checks payable to the Olathe Public Schools Foundation and identify the scholarship name on the memo line. Checks can be mailed to:

Olathe Public Schools Community Development  
Attn: Amanda York  
315 N. Lindenwood  
Olathe, KS 66062

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Amanda York via email at [amyork@olatheschools.org](mailto:amyork@olatheschools.org) or call (913) 780-8182.

# Leaving a Legacy

Reunion committees and community supporters often have funds to donate to an important cause. For extra reunion funds, the OPSAA has established a bank account for future reunion use. Contact Amanda York via email at [amyork@olatheschools.org](mailto:amyork@olatheschools.org) or call (913) 780-8182 to have the association hold your extra funds. Checks should be made out to the Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association with the school and class year in the memo line (example: OS Class of '87). Designated representatives for your class may request the money later by contacting the district's Community Development office at 913-780-7002.

Another option for leftover funds is to leave a legacy by donating to one of our scholarships. Please see the SCHOLARSHIP tab in this packet for more information on these scholarships. Unspecified donations will go into the Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association Scholarship which is open to students from all of our high schools.

Your class or community group may want to leave a different kind of legacy in the form of a Wall of Honor nomination. Each year, this honor is bestowed upon some of our amazing graduates who have made a difference in society. Please see the WALL OF HONOR tab in this packet for more information and a list of all graduates honored.





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# Reunion Guide

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Your planning committee has been established and is ready to move forward. What do you do next? Feel free to use these tips to help plan your event.

## **DETERMINING THE DATE**

Look for dates that may draw more classmates to your reunion such as Old Settler's weekend (the first weekend after Labor Day) or homecoming football games. Also be aware of dates, such as holiday weekends, that may impact the availability of your desired location.

## **FINDING YOUR CLASSMATES**

To access your class information on file, contact Amanda York in the Olathe Community Development Department. She can be reached via email at [amyork@olatheschools.org](mailto:amyork@olatheschools.org) or call (913) 780-8182. Other ways to gather contact data could include: using social media or the Internet to search for those you cannot find, perusing the local phonebook because classmates' parents may still live in the area, or asking other classmates for contact information of their best friends in the class. Make sure to update your roster as you locate classmates. Ask for their full name, address, phone number and email addresses. Keep in mind it is cheaper to communicate via email than through postal mail. Be assured this information submitted to the school district will only be used for reunion purposes.

## **PROMOTING YOUR EVENT**

Register your reunion with the Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association by going to [www.olatheschools.com/alumni](http://www.olatheschools.com/alumni). An online form link can be found at the top of the page. We will publicize the date(s) and your contact information on our website, local cable Channel 18 broadcasting throughout Johnson County, and various other communication options. Other ways to advertise the event could include creating a social media page for your class and/or contacting your high school and informing them of the dates in case any of your classmates were to call and inquire.

## **DECIDING ON ACTIVITIES**

It is important to determine the length and extravagancy of your reunion. Take into consideration how much your events will cost and try to keep expenses down so that those who must travel for the reunion won't have a lot of additional expenses. Some activities to consider are:

- Arranging a buffet dinner with DJ and dancing
- Organizing a backyard or local park barbeque that may or may not include children
- Coordinating an informal event at a local restaurant or bar
- Touring your high school or attending a high school sporting event
- Visiting the Education Center at 14160 Black Bob to view an amazing display of school memorabilia dating back to the turn-of-the-century and a timeline depicting the district's rich history. (Please call the Education Center at (913) 780-7000 to see when this exhibit can be viewed.)

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# Reunion Guide

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## LOCATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Choosing a location can be a time-consuming and tricky task. Ask where others have had their reunions. You may also consider contacting the Olathe Convention and Visitors Bureau at (913) 764-1050 or <https://www.olathe.org/convention-visitors-bureau> for help with meeting and event sites, hotel arrangements and pricing, and other planning tasks. If you have quite a few out-of-town classmates, holding an event at a hotel may allow you to negotiate better guest room and banquet facility rates. Regardless of what route you choose, there are other wonderful event sites located in the area including:

- Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm Lawn or Heritage Center, 1200 N. Kansas City Road, Olathe
- Lake Olathe shelter houses, 625 Lakeshore Drive, Olathe
- Cedar Lake shelter houses, 15500 S. Lone Elm Road, Olathe
- Classmate's home or rural property
- Overland Park Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, 8909 W. 179<sup>th</sup> St., Overland Park
- Kill Creek Park, 11670 Homestead Lane, Olathe
- Shawnee Mission Park, 7900 Renner Road, Shawnee
- Olathe Community Center, 1205 E. Kansas City Road, Olathe
- Prairie Highlands Golf Course, 14695 Inverness Street, Olathe
- Shadow Glen Golf Course, 26000 Shadow Glen Drive, Olathe
- Heritage Park Golf Course, 16445 S. Lackman Road, Olathe
- St. Andrew's Golf Course, 11099 W. 135<sup>th</sup> Street, Overland Park

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION RESOURCES

Our association would love to be a part of your reunion by informing your classmates of the wonderful events, scholarship offerings and community involvement pieces we host and support. We will be happy to attend one of your reunion events to share information with your classmates through a formal presentation, an informal set up of materials with an opportunity to ask questions, or both. You may also choose to have us provide your reunion committee with the materials and information to present on your own at any or all of your events. Once we have your reunion organizer's contact information, an alumni association representative will be in touch to see how we can best meet your needs.

## STAYING IN TOUCH

To make future reunion planning easier, email a copy of your updated class roster to the district Community Development contact, Amanda York at [amyork@olatheschools.org](mailto:amyork@olatheschools.org). The alumni association will keep the most recent list on file. Classmates are encouraged to personally update their contact information with Diane or by going to [www.olatheschools.com/alumniupdate](http://www.olatheschools.com/alumniupdate). If classmates or patrons want to stay informed about what is going on in the school district and with the alumni association, your classmates can sign up for text or emails alerts by visiting our Olathe Alert page at [www.olatheschools.com/olathealert](http://www.olatheschools.com/olathealert).

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# Wall of Honor

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To perpetuate our tradition of excellence and inspire current students, outstanding alumni are selected annually by the Olathe Public Schools Alumni Association for Wall of Honor recognition. The purpose of this prestigious award is to recognize Olathe School District alumni for their lifetime achievements.

Candidates must be Olathe Public Schools graduates, must have graduated at least 20 years prior to the nomination, and must have attained a high level of achievement in at least one of the following areas: personal and/or professional life; community/humanitarian service; or lifelong commitment to educational excellence.

Another award presented each year at the Wall of Honor ceremony is the Distinguished Person of Honor. These candidates are current or former employees of the Olathe Public Schools. They must have made an impact and/or great achievement in at least one of the following areas: personal and/or professional life; community/humanitarian service; or commitment to educational excellence in the Olathe Public Schools.

With our first class of Wall of Honor honorees being inducted in 2007 and our Distinguished Person of Honor recognition beginning in 2012, the tradition continues as additional graduates are selected each year by an OPSAA committee. Nominations are accepted year-round but must be received by March 1 to be considered for that year's inductions.

To honor each inductee, the association has a touch-screen kiosk and plaques in the lobby of the district's Education Center, 14160 Black Bob Road, Olathe, Kansas.

If you know alumni or Olathe Public Schools employees who are deserving of either of these awards, please consider making a nomination. Forms are in this packet or can be found on the alumni association's web page at [www.olatheschools.com/alumni](http://www.olatheschools.com/alumni).



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# Wall of Honor Inductees

## 2016 Recipients

*James H. Kean (John P. St. John, 1956)*  
*Michael K. Knop (Olathe High School, 1966)*  
*Hugh W. Speer (Red Brick School, 1924)*

## 2015 Recipients

*Fred Allenbrand (John P. St. John, 1951)*  
*Arthur Caylor (Red Brick School, 1909)*  
*James R. Hubbard (Olathe High, 1961)*  
*Dr. Tom Knappenberger (John P. St. John, 1956)*  
*Roger Russell (John P. St. John, 1952)*  
*Rebecca Milloy Vrbas (Olathe High, 1974)*

## 2014 Recipients

*Donald K. Ashlock (John P. St. John, 1944)*  
*John Douglass (Olathe High, 1970)*  
*Hazel (Blackwell) Hendrix (John P. St. John, 1952)*  
*Jeff Meyers (Olathe High, 1977)*  
*Gary A. White (Olathe High, 1960)*  
*Shannon Wickliffe (Olathe East, 1994)*

## 2013 Recipients

*Mark Cameron (Olathe North, 1988)*  
*Jeff DeGraffenreid (Olathe South, 1988)*  
*William Alden Edson (John P. St. John, 1930)*  
*Floyd Huggins (John P. St. John, 1949)*  
*James H. Roberts Jr. (Olathe High, 1960)*

## 2012 Recipients

*Donald E. Davis Jr. (Olathe South, 1991)*  
*Robert J. Enright (John P. St. John, 1947)*  
*H. Thomas Payne (John P. St. John, 1948)*  
*Rhonda L. Reist (Olathe, North, 1984)*  
*Nancy (Millbern) Schultz (John P. St. John, 1952)*  
*Gregory Sheffer (Olathe South, 1989)*

## 2011 Recipients

*Roger Ellis Alberty (John P. St. John, 1953)*  
*Patricia (Martin) Davis (John P. St. John, 1943)*  
*James Groszek (John P. St. John, 1948)*  
*Cathy (Wollen) Maxwell (Olathe High, 1971)*  
*Edward Redinger (John P. St. John, 1941)*  
*Ivan Wicke (John P. St. John, 1954)*

## 2010 Recipients

*Cliff Ball (John P. St. John, 1945)*  
*Mary Jean (Davidson) Cochran (John P. St. John, 1941)*  
*Greg Kincaid (Olathe High, 1975)*  
*Robert Manning (John P. St. John, 1938)*  
*Harma (Petersen) McKenzie (John P. St. John, 1941)*  
*James Pellett (Olathe High 1898)*  
*G. Joseph Pierron Jr. (Olathe High, 1964)*  
*Richie Pratt (Olathe High, 1961)*

## 2009 Recipients

*Lena Bell (Olathe High, 1890)*  
*James H. Brady (Olathe High, 1880)*  
*Dorothy (Brenner) Francis (John P. St. John, 1944)*  
*Larry A. Haskin (John P. St. John, 1951)*  
*Peter Martin (John P. St. John, 1950)*  
*Lois (Mann) Taylor Roath (John P. St. John, 1944)*  
*Don Temple (John P. St. John, 1945)*

## 2008 Recipients

*Don Ashlock Sr. (Olathe High, 1919)*  
*Marshall Ensor (Olathe High, 1917)*  
*James Flatley III (John P. St. John, 1951)*  
*Doug Knop (Olathe High, 1965)*  
*Bob Millbern (John P. St. John, 1951)*  
*Ernie Miller (Olathe High, 1910)*  
*Maron (Lorimer) Moore (John P. St. John, 1934)*  
*Ned Rose (John P. St. John, 1942)*  
*Frances (Bucknell) Tainter (Olathe High, 1922)*

## 2007 Recipients

*Stanley T. Adams (John P. St. John, 1942)*  
*John Anderson Jr. (John P. St. John, 1935)*  
*Nanette (Hyer) Bohl (John P. St. John, 1947)*  
*Joyce Brown (Olathe High, 1914)*  
*Herbert S. Hadley (Olathe High, 1887)*  
*Harley V. Haskin (John P. St. John, 1928)*  
*Ella Mahaffie (Olathe High, 1885)*  
*Jesse Clyde "J.C." Nichols (Olathe High, 1897)*  
*Charles "Buddy" Rogers (Olathe High, 1922)*

## Distinguished Person of Honor Inductees

2016 Recipient — Margaret (Peggy) Barron

2016 Recipient — Texanna Ollenberger

2015 Recipient — Bob Blackman

2014 Recipient — Ruth Ann Hackler

2013 Recipient — Ed Badsky, Sr.

2012 Recipient — Ralph Dennis