

MILTON  
HERSHEY  
SCHOOL®

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ALUM

SUMMER 2024

# THY *Traditions*

MILTON HERSHEY SCHOOL® ALUMNI MAGAZINE

# DEAR





# A Note

## Dear Milton Hershey School Alumni,



I am honored to write the welcome letter for the summer edition of Thy Traditions Dear. This magazine has been a source of comfort and connection for me, especially when I lived in Colorado. It is only fitting that a visit to the Sweetest Place On Earth to celebrate my 15th anniversary Homecoming led to me returning “home” for good.

On Sept. 30, 2020, I saw a post from Milton Hershey School about the new Early Childhood Education (ECE) Initiative to create equitable and accessible early learning opportunities for our youngest and most vulnerable

population, children from birth to five. As someone passionate about ECE who earned her master’s degree in the field, I immediately felt a sense of pride and curiosity. My alma mater and my passion for ECE were intersecting.

I monitored the pulse of developments with what would eventually become known as Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning and chatted with its recruiter during my 2022 Homecoming visit. I was reminded that, no matter where I went in the world, MHS would always feel like home.

I know that’s a sentiment that many of you, my alumni brothers and sisters, can relate to. So, two weeks later, when my Milt brother Joe Melo ’07 sent me a job posting for assistant director at CHS Harrisburg, I knew I had to apply for consideration.

I am beyond grateful for this full circle opportunity to reconnect with my Milton Hershey roots. I promise to honor the legacy of Catherine Hershey by serving Harrisburg children and families with a mission that aligns with everything I love and respect about early childhood education. In my role, I have the privilege of leading our scholastic team—which includes three MHS alumnae—as we learn, grow, and prepare to open our second CHS Center in the fall of 2024.

Since returning to Central Pennsylvania, I love being able to volunteer and give back to MHS students and reconnect with my Milt family. It’s also special to introduce my two daughters and husband to the place that raised me. I am grateful to be connected to our alumni network. We are a community of diverse, dedicated, and dynamic individuals who understand that positive intent paired with action can change the world. Recently, my family ran into an elementary girls’ student home at Wildwood Park. When I told them I was a Milt too, they exclaimed, “She has the ring!” I replied, “Yes, I do, and I wear it with pride!”

With gratitude,

Chantal Fae Rukundo-Karaara ’07

## THY Traditions DEAR

The Mission of *Thy Traditions Dear* is to share the stories of the Milton Hershey School family with our alumni, students, staff, and retirees in honor and celebration of our founders, Milton and Catherine Hershey.

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### ABOUT THE COVER

The staff of Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning look forward to opening the second CHS center in fall 2024. On the cover of this issue of *Thy Traditions Dear* are four alumnae who are among the scholastic team preparing to open Catherine Hershey School for Early Learning, Harrisburg. From left are Kelsey “Lola” Bazan ’20, Janessa Kiehl ’07, Felicia (Saunders) Tuttle ’87, and Chantal Rukundo-Karaara ’07, assistant director of the center.

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# MAUI FIRE

## Destroyed His Home but Not His Dreams

BY JOHN FORRY, MHS BROWN AND GOLD FAMILY CENTER, AND CATHERINE SKENA, STRATEGY AND RESEARCH

On June 10, 2023, Inoke Taufa '23 walked across the stage at GIANT Center to proudly accept his Milton Hershey School diploma. Shortly afterward, he traveled home to Hawaii to spend time with his family before returning to Pennsylvania to continue his education at Millersville University.

Two months later, on Aug. 8, wind-driven wildfires destroyed more than 2,200 structures on the island of Maui. It was the fifth deadliest wildland fire in United States history and the worst natural disaster in Hawaii's history, according to a blog published by the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency.

That orange and red demon wiped out Inoke's family home, his village, his island, and nearly stole his dreams. All he had was destroyed in the fire—including his computer, phone, birth certificate, and clothing. As the oldest child in his immediate family, Inoke felt compelled to stay with his mother and four siblings. Inoke's other sister, who also was enrolled at MHS, was already back on campus.

Inoke and his family worked hard to get back on their feet again. But his dreams of going to college seemed to go up in flames.

What Inoke had not anticipated, however, was the determination of the MHS community to rally in support of him, his family, and his dreams.

When alumni and staff at MHS became aware of Inoke's situation, they worked feverishly to get him back in time for the start of his freshman year at Millersville. Many answered the call to help Inoke pursue his goal of continuing his education to build a life for himself and his family back home.

"The Milton Hershey School family was eager to rally around Inoke to provide for his needs during this challenge," said Lorraine (Hissick) Romberger '83, MHS director of alumni relations.

Inoke returned to Hershey with a pair of shorts, a t-shirt, and a couple other items he was given back on Maui after the fires. Unsure of what lie ahead, Inoke also began to understand he would not have to pursue his dream alone.

"MHS staff, the Dearden Foundation, and the MHS Alumni Association organized to support Inoke with transportation, clothing, food, and college supplies," Romberger said.

Inoke came to MHS in eighth grade. During his time at the school, he always seemed to have a smile on his face. He has a personality that tends to make others around him feel happy. That personality



*Inoke Taufa '23 enrolled at MHS in eighth grade. When he arrived for his admissions interview, he saw snow for the first time and learned to make a snowball.*

allowed Inoke to make connections that would last much longer than he could have imagined. Compassionate members of the MHS community gave him everything he would need to start his college career, not for glory or praise but to support the young man they had come to respect.



*Inoke Taufa '23 was the first in his family to graduate from Milton Hershey School. His sister Felisita graduated in June. Two younger siblings are still enrolled.*

Grateful for the support of the MHS community, Inoke remained concerned about his family back home. When he talks about that time, Inoke appears to be drifting back in his mind, reliving the nightmare. He said it was tough in the beginning, with the challenges of starting a new school and all the nuances that accompanied the move, including having to replace several legal documents. Being the Spartan he is, Inoke bravely faced each challenge and broke through to continue moving forward. With his freshman year of college complete, he is doing much better now.

"Inoke is a great representation of a Milt with determination, hard work, and strong values," said Deb Turnpugh, MHS regional admissions recruiter who has worked closely with Inoke and his family.

Inoke's mother learned about MHS from her employer who knew she was looking for a better life for Inoke and his siblings. She knew about Kamehameha School in Hawaii but had concerns about his possible enrollment because she was born on another island. She investigated several residential schools and ultimately selected MHS. Following in the footsteps of Inoke and his sister, Felisita Vasquez '24, are two younger siblings, Salote Vasquez, a rising 10th grader, and Saravia Vasquez, a rising eighth grader, who were enrolled after the fire. Read more about Felisita on Page 5.

When Inoke arrived for his MHS admissions interview, he saw snow for the first time and learned how to make a snowball. Upon enrollment, Inoke's first houseparents were MHS alumnus John Kirk '77 and his wife, Jennifer, at student home Adriatic.



*Jenny Slatt, education and human services teacher, congratulates Inoke at MHS Commencement 2023. She is among the MHS staff who made a memorable impact on Inoke.*

Inoke said there were many adults involved in his life at MHS, and there are several who had a memorable impact on him, including Jenny Slatt, education and human services teacher; Matthew Edris, social studies teacher; Jennifer Hendry, learning resource specialist; Molly Bechtel, high school English teacher; and houseparents Grant and Valerie Powers and Kenneth Wilson and Taisha Tarvin-Wilson. In addition to the impact they had on him during his time at MHS, he credits them with helping him become the person he is today.

Never asking for anything nor expecting anyone to go out of their way for him, Inoke appreciates the gift of MHS, including the opportunity to accrue

Continuing Education Scholarship funds and the gracious support extended to him and his family by the MHS community. Having witnessed other college students worry about paying back loans and keeping up with paperwork for grants, Inoke realizes he does not have that burden and can focus on his education.

It is in our darkest times that the light shines more brightly. As a young man, Inoke has gone through one of the darkest of times a person can face, only to realize the value of MHS and those who work here. With the support of an MHS education and the MHS community, Inoke can continue striving toward his dreams. The light at the end of the tunnel for Inoke is once again bright. 🌟



Dear Alumni Brothers and Sisters:

On June 9, 2024, 193 Milton Hershey School seniors joined our community of nearly 12,000 alumni at our 90th Commencement Ceremony. For schools across the country, graduation day represents excitement, joy, and the beginning of a new journey. At MHS, it means so much more.

This celebration each June is a defining moment for many of our students. It reflects the determination, resilience, and strength it took to reach this milestone and serves as a reminder of the opportunities to come. It is both the end of a journey and the start of a new one.

We all know, as MHS graduates, that leaving our Home and School to embark on a new adventure can be exhilarating and frightening. It is up to all of us to ensure these young graduates continue to feel like they are members of this community.

Our Commencement Ceremony often reminds me of our responsibility to ensure the feeling MHS evokes in the lives of our students and graduates continues in perpetuity. Put simply, this means our lived experience as MHS graduates and beneficiaries of Mr. and Mrs. Hershey's legacy are our greatest assets.

We know firsthand the value MHS adds to a child's life. We understand the importance of raising the bar and elevating expectations to achieve greatness. This experience is what led me to start my career at MHS after graduating from college.

It is what leads many of our alumni to join our mission through working at MHS and Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning, like Chantal Fae Rukundo-Karaara '07, Meghan Guyette '13, Kelsey "Lola" Bazan '20, Victoria Aleman '24, and Andrew Salaman '24. It is also what led our community to support Inoke Taufa '23, who lost his family's home in the Maui wildfires—the worst natural disaster in Hawaii's history.

There is power in this community. But we are stronger when we rally together around one mission—our mission. It is my hope that each of you will join us in changing our world for the better. 🙌

Sincerely,  
Pete Gurt '85  
MHS President

**Learn More about Careers at MHS and CHS:**



## Milton Hershey School Theme Homes Help Students Perfect Skills



*Residents of student home Union Canal and student home Grant lived in first responder theme homes for the 2023-24 school year.*

**R**esidents of two Milton Hershey School student homes share a common interest in saving lives. Student home Union Canal and student home Grant were designated as first responder theme homes for the 2023-24 school year. In their first year, theme homes group students with similar talents, skills, classes, and schedules so their schoolwork can be reinforced.

Rodney and Amy Sonderman, houseparents of student home Union Canal, believe theme homes help them better focus their attention on students' needs because they share interests. The students also gain leadership skills by helping each other achieve breakthroughs.

"The kids who are doing very well can be challenged and pushed farther," Sonderman said. "The ones who are struggling, we can pick up and push farther."

Rodney Sonderman also serves as deputy chief of the Hershey Volunteer Fire Department. Some of the students in his home also volunteer with the department.

"Having student volunteers serve as junior firefighters gives the adults the opportunity to focus on the fire while the students carry ladders and open hydrants," Rodney said.

The students' work is also a benefit to the MHS community. Eleventh grader Jaydiel Garcia has received two life-saving awards for helping students experiencing a medical emergency. For Garcia, the experience has given him the opportunity to fulfill a lifelong goal.

The Sondermans are in their 25th year of houseparenting at MHS. They believe the new theme homes will give them the opportunity to make a larger impact on their students' lives.

"If I go back and look at the hundreds of graduates we have had, the ones we have had the most impact on are the ones who were involved with the fire department," Rodney said. 🙌



*Milton Hershey School Culinary Arts Teacher Samantha Katzaman, center, and senior students Felisita Vasquez and Zhawna Freeland.*

## Milton Hershey School Students Excel in NASA H.U.N.C.H. Challenge

**T**wo Milton Hershey School students stepped out of their comfort zones this spring and experienced a Breakthrough moment. As a result, they realized their work is truly out of this world. MHS Culinary Arts Teacher Samantha Katzaman's Nutrition and Food Science class placed in the top 10 schools in the nation in the NASA H.U.N.C.H. Culinary Challenge.

Katzaman and senior students Felisita Vasquez and Zhawna Freeland traveled to Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas in mid-April to compete in the finals. For Felisita and Zhawna, being members of a class that earned such a high accomplishment was a team Breakthrough and a personal one.

Neither of them had much culinary arts experience before this year. Both decided to try something new by taking a class not required for their Career and Technical Education career pathway.

"I love jumping around and trying different opportunities at MHS," Felisita said.

For Zhawna, the drive to take Katzaman's class was much more practical.

"I never knew how to use a knife before. I figured it was something I should know," Zhawna said.

Participants were required to create a savory breakfast dish featuring a vegetable that astronauts could eat in space. Zhawna proposed a chickpea and vegetable scramble, which almost fit the

challenge's nutritional requirements. However, to succeed, the class first had to do some problem-solving.

The H.U.N.C.H. Challenge required the class to submit a research paper outlining microgravity's effects on the human body and how food is processed in outer space. The students created a video to help judges understand their dish and the process they used to create it.

"Judges seemed impressed that we brought the actual freeze-dried version of the dish they created," Katzaman said. "One of the food scientists said she was actually working on a similar dish herself." 🙌



## Milton Hershey School Houseparents Thrive in Their Second Career

**T**enacity and grit—leadership traits that create the recipe for a successful student home. Andrea and Matthew Cedro’s careers were built on these principles before becoming houseparents at Milton Hershey School in 2018. Today, they support elementary-age boys. In this second career, they teach the boys life skills, encourage them to try new things, and always bring their previous work experiences into the student home.

Andrea and Matt, originally from the Pittsburgh area, had very specific career trajectories and personal goals after they graduated from college. Andrea worked on a cruise ship to satisfy her desire to travel the world. Matt climbed his way up in the culinary industry.

After Matt saw a job description for MHS houseparents in an email, he applied immediately and encouraged Andrea

to do the same. The second career was not hard to sell to Andrea as it checked all of the boxes that they were looking for—proximity to family, purpose-driven work, and the opportunity to continue to work together. The skills and talents they gained in their previous professions even transferred in a very positive way in the student home.

“With Matt’s experience in busy kitchens, he brings a calm demeanor and is always looking for efficiencies. I bring an expertise in the administrative side and neither of us are ever stressed about the inventory management and have fun cooking together,” Andrea said.

Caring for children may seem like an unusual career shift, but some of life’s greatest adventures are unplanned.

“Timing is everything in our career journey and we know that everything



*Andrea and Matthew Cedro find purpose in their careers as Milton Hershey School houseparents.*

happens for a reason, whatever the reason. In it all, you have to be open to leaps of faith,” explained the couple. “We hold on to our ‘why’—which is we love parenting and we love working together. We have a mindset to do this amazing job, but just like all jobs, it can be hard.” 🧡

## Milton Hershey School Student, Campus Safety Officer Save Life



**A** man is alive today thanks to the quick and professional actions of a Milton Hershey School student and Campus Safety Officer.

An avid cyclist was biking through the MHS campus in mid-May when he got dizzy and lost his vision. He pulled over, sat under a tree, and waved for help. Student Intern Marilyn Purcell ’24 was riding along with Campus Safety Officer Taylor Heisey when she noticed the man and alerted Heisey. He stopped, called 911,

and cared for the cyclist until paramedics arrived. Medical personnel did not mince words—if the cyclist had waited any longer for help, he would not have lived to thank those who came to his aid.

For Purcell and Heisey, the response was simply putting their training into action.

“It was just a regular day of doing my job of watching campus to see what is going on,” Purcell, a member of the MHS Class of 2024, said.

The man wrote a letter to Campus Safety Director Rick Gilbert expressing his appreciation to everyone at MHS who helped save his life. Gilbert presented Marilyn and Heisey with commendations for their actions, an honor that is rarely awarded.

“This would be a memorial service, not a commendation ceremony, if it were not for that young lady,” the man said after meeting his lifesavers.

Additionally, Campus Safety Supervisor Patrick McKenna knew the man had someone at home who would be waiting for him to return from his ride. After unsuccessful attempts to call his wife, McKenna drove to their home to share the news and return his bicycle.

For Heisey, the opportunity to connect with MHS students like Marilyn makes his job as a campus safety officer special. MHS students can participate in real-life, hands-on internship experiences. The internships match each student’s chosen career pathway in the School’s award-winning Career and Technical Education program. Through the program, students also learn employability skills, like teamwork, time management, and organization. 🧡



## MHS Diver Succeeds Outside of Comfort Zone

BY MARC DANIELSON ’24

**F**or my last year at Milton Hershey School, I wanted to do something big. I enrolled in the School as a sophomore and never participated in anything outside of school or my student home. I knew I liked swimming, so I joined the team. Swimming is an all-inclusive cardio workout that burns a lot of calories so I knew it would also help me with my goal to get in better shape.

What I did not expect was that I would place 16th in the 2024 Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association Boys 2A Swimming and Diving Championships.

I knew if I were to experience any success, I had to be teachable. Coach Amanda Edwards and Coach Heather Dougherty were extremely supportive and patient. Thanks to them, I saw success quickly. I qualified for the MidPenn Swimming Championships, then the district championship, and finally states.

No one should hesitate to try new things.

As Milts, we know about the opportunities MHS offers. As I leave the School, new opportunities will present themselves in the future. Thanks to my MHS education and experience on the Swim/Diving Team, I know it is never too late to try. 🧡



## Hardships Lead to Breakthroughs

BY SARAH BRADLEY ’24

**A**s I leave Milton Hershey School, I am filled with a mix of emotions—gratitude, nostalgia, excitement, and perhaps a hint of apprehension about what lies ahead. My MHS journey was long and difficult, and by the end, it feels like my classmates and I have completed a marathon. I now see the beauty in every obstacle.

Our freshman year was the year when COVID was rampant—so there were limited sports, activities were restricted to Zoom, and we spent a lot of time in the student homes.

As I reflect on the theme of this school year, “Breakthrough,” I am reminded of the beauty of being uncomfortable. The best growth comes from when you are weak and feel like you can’t go on anymore. It may feel impossible, but the Apollo class is living proof that we are stronger than we even realize.

We have, in every sense of the phrase, grown up together. Leaning on one another for support as we have physically aged from Elementary Division to Middle Division and now have aged out of high school. Despite the hardships we encountered, there are sources of comfort and support to sustain us. 🧡



## A Lifer Reflects

BY RODNEY DRAKE ’80

**M**ilton Hershey School lifer is a title that I will always bear with honor and pride. We persevered, stayed “Spartan Strong,” overcame many obstacles, and achieved many Breakthroughs.

MHS lifers’ Breakthroughs start on their enrollment day, a special date for all MHS students. Every MHS student has a different story, but all can relate to how their houseparents, transitional living staff, parent/sponsors, teachers, and friends have helped them get to where they are now.

Without Mr. and Mrs. Hershey’s generosity and love of children, none of this would be possible.

My life has been changed forever by Milton and Catherine Hershey. I’m confident in saying that the Hersheys would be particularly proud of the MHS lifers in the Class of 2024. Alumni have a responsibility to pay forward the gift of an MHS education by coming back to help students, speak at career days, and sponsor a senior at Alumni Fellowship Brunch. We also pay it forward by telling people outside MHS how the School impacted them.

Congratulations to all 2024 MHS graduates, including our 18 lifers! I am excited to see how you continue to be a part of this amazing community. 🧡



# HOUSEPARENTING RUNS IN THE FAMILY

BY CATHERINE SKENA, MHS STRATEGY AND RESEARCH



Anna Kauffman '14 and Eric Holland '14 have a close relationship with his former houseparents, Daniel and Vanessa Medlin, who are houseparents at Middle Division student home Carousel. Pictured, from left: Anna and Eric, their daughter Emma, Vanessa, and Daniel.

Houseparenting runs in the family for alumni Yvonne (Smith) '04 and Nick Serrano '04, and Eric Holland '14 and Anna Kauffman '14, who recently returned to Milton Hershey School as full-time flex houseparents.

Anna, Eric, and Nick are MHS lifers who enrolled in first grade or earlier. Yvonne enrolled in ninth grade. Eric and Yvonne are brother and sister. When Eric was a student, Yvonne visited him at MHS and took him out during breaks for visits. She was like a mother to him.

Through the years, the four talked about returning someday to MHS to work as houseparents. Anna described her desire to be a houseparent as a calling and an opportunity to give back to MHS, one that she had considered since she was 18.



Yvonne and Nick Serrano worked as relief houseparents for Matthew and Andrea Cedro at Elementary Division student home Pitcher, where they enjoyed working with the boys who lived there. Pictured are the Serranos, their daughters, Mackinze and Malana; and the boys on the playground outside the student home.

The two couples were surprised, though, to learn that they each had applied to be houseparents at about the same time and ended up in the same cohort for relief houseparent training and for flex houseparent training. Flex houseparenting is the first step toward becoming full-time houseparents assigned to a permanent student home.

Each couple emphasized the importance of being in a good place with their marriage and family before taking on the responsibility of houseparenting. Yvonne and Nick have two daughters, one who has

Down Syndrome. Anna and Eric have one daughter who is a toddler.

Houseparenting is so much more than a job—it's a purpose, and the four embrace it. They consider it a way of life and an opportunity to create a family environment like they experienced for current students. Years after graduating, they continue to remain close with some of their former houseparents and MHS staff who had an impact on their lives as students and continue to consider them to be role models.

Anna talked fondly about her relationship with her former houseparents

and MHS staff member Charlene Ferrick, whom she considers a mentor. As a student, Anna met Charlene when she worked in the Home Life office. Charlene now works in the MHS President's Office. Anna laughed when she said she visited Ms. Ferrick nearly every day during high school. The two still stay in touch.

While a student, Eric established a close relationship with his houseparents, Daniel and Vanessa Medlin, a relationship that has grown stronger through the years. Together, Eric and Anna consider the Medlins extended family. Eric and Anna dated during high school, married shortly after graduating from MHS, and when their daughter Emma was born several years later, the Medlins became like grandparents to her. The Medlins continue to serve as houseparents at Middle Division student home Carousel.

Yvonne learned from her houseparents, the Garcias, that the key to creating a family-like atmosphere is to strike a balance between holding students accountable and allowing them to be kids. She and Nick strive to help students become their best selves by providing a balance between accountability and allowing them to grow as individuals. She described it as planting the seeds for life skills to help grow good and successful people.

As a student, Nick played soccer and participated in track and field. He still runs and plays soccer with a group of housefathers every week. He also worked as a summer intern at the school's last cow farm. It is not uncommon to see Nick running and playing games with students outside a student home. Having considered MHS his home, Nick said it is important to him to help create that



Anna Kauffman '14 met MHS staff member Charlene Ferrick when she was a student. She continues to consider Charlene as a mentor.

atmosphere for current students. Just days before MHS Commencement 2024, Nick reflected on his own graduation experience. He said he can relate to the mixed emotions experienced by many recent MHS graduates.

Each of the four grads said their student experiences and relationships with staff allow them to bring a unique perspective to houseparenting. Since returning to MHS, they continue to learn from staff members who serve as role models for them. While they acknowledge there have been changes at MHS since they were students, they said the commitment to creating a supportive home and school for students remains.

Both couples are eager to be assigned to student homes as full-time houseparents. Until then, they will continue to learn from other staff and their experiences with the students they serve as flex houseparents. Each interaction provides an opportunity to plant seeds for students to grow to become successful individuals.

## RETURN TO MHS AS A STAFF MEMBER

Have you considered returning to MHS as a staff member? Visit [mhskids.org](https://mhskids.org) to view the range of job opportunities available at MHS, including houseparenting, health care, teaching, and many others. MHS hires for a variety of part-time roles, as well.

Scan the QR code to learn more.







## William E. Dearden '40, A Dream Fulfilled

**D**uring the Great Depression, enrollment at Hershey Industrial School (now Milton Hershey School) increased three-fold. By 1935, the School expanded to more than 800 students, one of which was 13-year-old William “Bill” Dearden, the only MHS graduate to serve as chief executive officer of The Hershey Company.

After the loss of Dearden’s mother, his father struggled to find a job and provide for his family. Coming to HIS provided stability for both William and his younger brother. Having three meals a day, good clothing, and a stable home was a significant change for him. As he later stated, “Mr. Hershey built a bridge for those of us who have been fortunate enough to be one of ‘his boys.’”

While at school, Dearden was involved in everything from athletics to glee club and graduated at the top of his class. He believed that participating in athletics taught him how to build a great team, and that one person cannot do it all. The idea that a team is only as great as the sum of its parts is the philosophy that would later follow him into his own career.

After his graduation in 1940, Dearden attended Hershey Junior College for one year before accepting an athletic scholarship to

Albright College. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and the United States declaration of war, he enlisted in the Navy in 1942 and was sent to Harvard Business School as a part of his military service.

By the early 1950s, he found himself back at MHS as the assistant placement director. Dearden felt that he owed a great debt to both Mr. Hershey and the school community because of all the opportunities the school gave him. When discussing coming back to the School, he said, “One of the reasons for my returning to my alma mater was my strong feeling toward the School and what it did for me as a student.”


In 1957, Dearden accepted a position to work as the assistant to John J. Gallagher, chairman of the board at The Hershey Chocolate Corporation. From there, climbing the corporate ladder, he led The Hershey Company through difficult challenges that would



set the company on the path to success. He built departments from the ground up, implemented new products, created a marketing department, and revamped sales while diversifying the company’s business interests. Eventually, as CEO, he launched Hershey Chocolate into the number one confectionary firm in the United States. He is also credited for saving High Point Mansion, Milton Hershey’s home, when he turned it into the new corporate offices after there was talk of selling or even demolishing it.

One thing William Dearden never forgot was the ultimate mission of The Hershey Chocolate Corporation, which was keeping Milton Hershey’s dream alive through MHS. He understood the importance of creating a modern strategic plan with positive outcomes which would lay the groundwork for a successful company and, in turn, a successful school. In addition, as a member of the MHS Board of Managers, he was vocal in his determination that the School should integrate and supported the 1968 decision to include boys of all races and then later to include girls.

From humble beginnings, William Dearden became the first MHS graduate to lead The Hershey Chocolate Corporation and fulfill Milton’s dream that one day one of “his boys” would run his chocolate factory.

A new special exhibit exploring the life of William “Bill” Dearden opened at The Hershey Story Museum on May 3. You can also learn more about Dearden at The Dearden House Museum on the William E. Dearden Alumni Campus at MHS. 

### You're Invited!

*Milton Hershey School Alumni:*

You and a Guest Are Invited to Experience  
the New Special Exhibit at The Hershey Story

### EACH MHS GRADUATE, AND ONE GUEST, IS INVITED...

to experience the new special exhibit exploring the life of William “Bill” Dearden '40—the first and only graduate to run The Hershey Company—at The Hershey Story Museum.

**Clip the invitation to the right** and present it for free admission to The Hershey Story Museum before Dec. 31, 2024, compliments of The Hershey Company.



**From  
Hershey  
Industrial  
School to  
Hershey CEO**  
The Story of Bill Dearden

*A Special Exhibit at The Hershey Story Museum*

**Simply present this postcard for FREE admission to  
The Hershey Story Museum, compliments of The Hershey Company.**

The Hershey Story Museum is located in downtown Hershey  
at 63 West Chocolate Avenue.  
Open daily from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.

This offer is good through December 31, 2024.  
Does not include the Chocolate Lab or Chocolate Tastings.



## Hershekoko: A Town Was Born

As Milton S. Hershey set out to create his chocolate factory, he also set out to build a town where there were once only dairy farms and a small village. Mr. Hershey had a dream, not just of a new business venture, but of a top-notch transit system, affordable housing, and plenty of recreational opportunities for his employees to enjoy. He was not just creating a town; he was investing in the future.

Building a town from scratch, though, had its difficulties. It took time to build the trolley system, park, restaurants, and places to stay for both employees and tourists. Mr. Hershey spared no expense and said he was prepared to invest \$1 million to make sure the town was perfect.

There was one aspect of the town, however, that Mr. Hershey put in the hands of his lawyer, John Snyder, and that was applying for authorization of a new post office with a name so people could begin receiving mail. Snyder decided that creating the name would become a contest, open to the public, with the best name winning a \$100 prize. Thousands of names were submitted from Beansdale to Oasis, and even St. Milton. The public had a field day with the variety of names they submitted, and there was passionate excitement as they voted for their favorites.

Then, on Sept. 1, 1904, Mrs. T.K. Doyle of Wilkes-Barre took home the prize money for the winning name: HERSHEYKOKO.

If you are wondering why you have never heard of the town Hershekoko, it is because almost immediately after the winning name was selected there were many who protested it. The United States Post Office complained that the name was “too commercial.” In fact, even the name itself could not be properly decided with some newspapers naming it Hershekoko and others claiming it was Hersheykoko.

After much thought, the most agreed upon name naturally became “Hershey,” which had been proposed by more than 2,000 contestants. In the end, Mr. Hershey accepted it, and we all can be thankful for it. 🍫

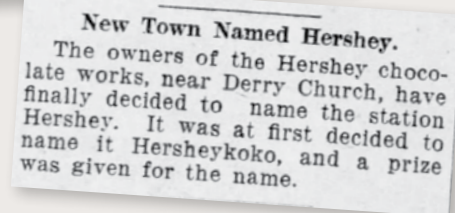
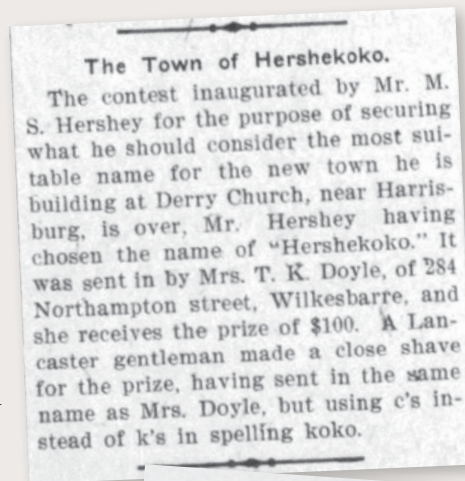


## School History Manager Retires

Susan Alger, former manager of School History, handed the reins of School History and the Heritage Center at Kinderhaus to Alicia Schlossberg. Susan retired in August 2023 after more than 20 years of service and returned as a part-time contractor until the end of May.

Alicia has an M.A. in history from Villanova University and previously worked as an educator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Susan was a member of the advisory committee for Thy Traditions Dear since it was first published in 2006. Thank you, Susan, for your dedication to the mission of the magazine, which tells our family stories. 🍫



## Milton Hershey School's First Gold Star Boy

The Milton Hershey School Gold Star Alumni roster includes 57 graduates spanning eight decades, starting with Harold Ashenfelder '40, who served in the United States Navy during World War II. He is memorialized through student home Ashenfelder.

### Early Life

Harold enrolled in Hershey Industrial School (now MHS) in 1932 after his mother passed away. He lived at student home Swatara with 20 other boys. Harold worked on the farm, milked cows, and helped with household chores. At school, he participated in the accounting, agriculture, and leathercraft clubs and played football for one year.

His classmates spoke highly of him. They recalled that he collected pictures of movie stars and hoped to one day be the president of MGM Studios. After graduation, he worked at The Hotel Hershey, which often hosted famous clientele who came to visit the town or perform at Hershey Theatre.



### Answering the Call

Just 12 days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Harold enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He was trained as a radio operator in a seaplane. After some basic training in Virginia, he was deployed to Newfoundland. There he supplied support to facilities critical to the squadron's upkeep.

While in Newfoundland, the weather was often extremely difficult for flying, and new radar technology was prone to frequent failures. On June 8, 1942, just two years after graduating from MHS, Harold was on patrol when bad weather and heavy fog forced the plane to land in the Atlantic Ocean. Rescue aircraft were unable to reach them in time. All 10 members of the crew were reported lost at sea.

Today, Harold is memorialized on the East Coast Memorial in New York City dedicated to those who lost their lives at sea during World War II. MHS remembers its first Gold Star Boy through student home Ashenfelder, which was created in honor of both Harold and all MHS Gold Star Alumni. 🍫

## THANK YOU to Our Donors

Thank you to those who donated or shared historical materials with the Milton Hershey School Department of School History as of March 2024. If we inadvertently missed listing your gift, please contact us so we can include recognition in the next issue of Thy Traditions Dear. 🍫

The Bertino Family | Donald Bilger | Elaine Brubaker O'Neal  
| Helen Dodge | Jenn Graybill | Ed Ruth | Ron Weaver '81



**MHS Honors its Gold Star Alumni who served and died while in honorable active military service to their country:**

- Bruce F. Anello '65
- Harold H. Ashenfelder '40
- Gerald F. Ayres '57
- Jack R. Bennett '42
- Mark E. Blizzard '48
- Warren M. Bolden '40
- Robert E. Booth '39
- James F. Brooks '34
- Chester Craven, Jr. '47
- Richard L. Davis '71
- William H. DeWald '41
- Robert S. Eckert '42
- Charles Samuel Engle '35
- George J. Ensslen, Jr. '41
- V. Benjamin Eshelman '41
- Henry E. Flowers '40
- Harry P. Forry '38
- William M. Fuhrman, Jr. '39
- William J. Gorrell '68
- Walter L. Goshorn '65
- Donald F. Grady '41
- Robert H. Grell '39
- Harry R. Hawk '64
- John G. Herr '34
- J. Wilmer Hershey '38
- Calvin L. Horn '38
- Asa T. Johnson '61
- Charles E. Johnston '39
- Philip H. Kase '36
- Joseph W. Kerico '40
- Victor E. Kuhns '62
- Ralph E. Lamma '37
- Robert F. Lawson '40
- Charles H. Ludwig '39
- John A. Luther '39
- Richard C. Martin '42
- David E. Mitchell '72
- Eugene L. Mowrer '38
- Frank T. Murray '62
- Thomas H. Parkinson '45
- Daniel R. Phillips '62
- Boyd E. Piper '67
- E. Darlington Poticher '35
- George D. Potteiger '41
- Arthur Quillman '58
- George S. Race '40
- Paul E. Rhoads '44
- Paul H. Rickmers '48
- Raymond L. Seed '41
- Robert M. Seiders '43
- Christian G. Shireman '44
- Robert E. Shuttlesworth '40
- Joseph C. Smith '38
- John C.H. Tice '41
- Clarence Willman '70
- William H. Wolf, Jr. '41
- Timothy Mark Wrightington '12



# Alumna Builds on MHS Authentic Work Experience to Create Her BREAKTHROUGH



When you Google “The True Meaning of Family,” one of the first links posted is a blog on Milton Hershey School’s website written in 2016 by a school graduate. At the time, as a freshman in college, the author talks about how blood relations do not define family. It’s characterized by those who love and support you. It’s fitting because the author, Tatiana Ariola ’15, is a storyteller by nature and now by profession. Even years later, her story continues to invite more and more people to learn about MHS.

Growing up in a coal mining town in northeastern Pennsylvania, Tatiana struggled to foresee a future for herself. When she was 10 years old, her mom got sick and went through a very long process to be eventually diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Her mom was in and out of work, struggling to support three children. That’s

when Tatiana heard about MHS through her brother’s classmate.

“I actually convinced my mom to let me apply,” she said. “I knew Milton Hershey School helped pay for college, and in my head, I knew that was my only route to college. I knew I didn’t have the money to pay for it myself.”

A motivated student, Tatiana always knew she wanted to be involved in the arts. She enrolled in the seventh grade at MHS in 2009. She found her passion in high school and leaned into the Graphic Communication Technologies pathway as part of the Career and Technical Education program. There, she met and started training with teacher Mindy Harmon, who helped mold Tatiana’s passion and helped her learn an art career could be a good choice.

“Ms. Harmon helped me develop my skills. She helped me get certified in

things that led me to get graphic design internships and, eventually, jobs. Those jobs financially supported me through my first year of college.”

While at MHS, Tatiana interned as a graphic designer with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts in its creative department and helped design a new cup for the Hershey Bears. That same year, she interned with the MHS Office of Communications and worked on various projects, including updating the Spartan Head logo.

In fall 2015, she attended the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York, and continued to expand her skills and knowledge. She interned in New York City with a commercial advertising still-life photographer. When she graduated from RIT, she worked as a marketing assistant doing photography and design and started Tatiana Ariola Photography in 2018. A year later, she and her partner opened Hill



“In retrospect, I’ve been working in the graphic design industry for more than 10 years, and I’m only turning 28. That’s pretty wild. The opportunities I received at MHS created a snowball effect. They led me to RIT, which helped me get jobs and put me on the path to financial success.”

+ Valley Creative, a full-service production company based in Rochester.

“I don’t know what it is, but I’ve always had an internal satisfaction of doing things,” she said. “I think I’m a little selfish because a lot of my success comes from an internal need to be happy. I’ve found that happiness and health create wealth, and I’ve found a life that helps me do that.”

As Hill + Valley’s creative director, she crafts her clients’ stories through photography, video direction, postproduction, and design. She also runs Tat Voyage, a travel consulting business that helps people travel on a budget.

As for the true meaning of family?

“It’s funny when I say I’m going home, people assume that my parents live in Hershey,” she said. “It’s funny, (MHS) is not just a school, it’s home. It’s having a support system. If I ever needed help, I would find it there. The MHS network transcends so many ideations of what networks are



supposed to be. Home is where the people that you love are. It’s a place of safety and comfort. If I could say thank you to anyone, I would say thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Hershey for literally everything.”

Scan the QR code to view a video featuring Tatiana.



## Breakthrough Moments

During the 2023-24 Opening of School Assembly, members of the MHS community, including Tatiana, were recognized for their Breakthrough accomplishments. She shared how authentic work experiences at MHS helped launch her career in photography and videography. 📸

## INTERNSHIPS WITH THE HERSHEY ENTITIES PROVIDE VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE

The Hershey Company  
Internship webpage:



Hershey Entertainment  
& Resorts (HE&R)  
Internship webpage:





# MHS Celebrates THE CLASS OF 2024 at the 90th Commencement Ceremony



On Sunday, June 9, Milton Hershey School graduated 193 seniors during an emotion-filled 2024 Commencement Ceremony at GIANT Center. Parents/sponsors, students, alumni, and staff cheered on the graduates as they achieved their educational Breakthrough.

The 90th Commencement Ceremony included student speeches, special video presentations, and personal recognition of each graduating senior.

Susan Kargbo, a member of the Class of 2024 and one of two student speakers, reflected on her mother's journey from Congo to America. Kargbo praised her mother's resilience in immigrating to a new country and her willingness to send her daughter to a residential school so she could earn an exceptional education.

"Although all our stories are different, we all took off from our own places, migrating to Milton Hershey School, thanks to our benefactors Milton and Catherine Hershey, to embrace the possibilities of something new," Kargbo said.

2024 Alumnus of the Year Douglas I. Oliver '93 reminded the graduates to not

forget the lessons Mr. Hershey instilled during the School's earliest years—be honest, follow the Ten Commandments, train yourself for useful work, and move forward from failure.

"This four-part directive makes plain what his expectations are for us. We don't have to wonder," Oliver said. "Be honest, follow God, work hard, and be fearless. It is just that simple."

MHS President Pete Gurt '85 praised the graduates for overcoming obstacles to earn their diplomas.

Gurt also reflected on the 2023-24 school year theme, Breakthrough, and told the graduates that if they carry forward the lessons they learned at MHS, they will achieve many more Breakthroughs.

"All Breakthroughs are achieved by looking in first and having the honest conversation with yourself to build the commitment and confidence necessary for success," Gurt said. "Never hesitate to reach out to your support network to cheer you on."

To loud cheers, Gurt announced Ember Simmons is the Class of 2024

Valedictorian. Ashley Spence earned the dual honor of Salutatorian and Most Nearly Ideal Senior. The Most Nearly Ideal Senior Award is annually presented to a graduate who highlights the pursuit of excellence in all endeavors while upholding the MHS Sacred Values and serving as a role model for the entire school community.

After the Class of 2024 received their diplomas, while their support systems cheered loudly, graduate Garrett Harden concluded the 2024 Commencement Ceremony with his heartfelt student speech.

Harden reflected on the deaths of his parents and the subsequent struggles he faced. Harden said his life changed the day he received his acceptance letter from MHS.

"I didn't know it at the time, but that letter was my Breakthrough," he said. "A Breakthrough from the path I was heading down and a Breakthrough that caused me to redirect from a life riddled with uncertainty, sadness, excuses, and self-pity."



Watch the 2024 Commencement Ceremony



## Commencement Speaker Excerpts



### Garrett Harden

"We are breaking through to our true potential, the potential we may have never comprehended until we broke through our circumstances."

### Susan Kargbo

"Although all our stories are different, we all took off from our own places, migrating to Milton Hershey School, thanks to our benefactors Milton and Catherine Hershey, to embrace the possibilities of something new."

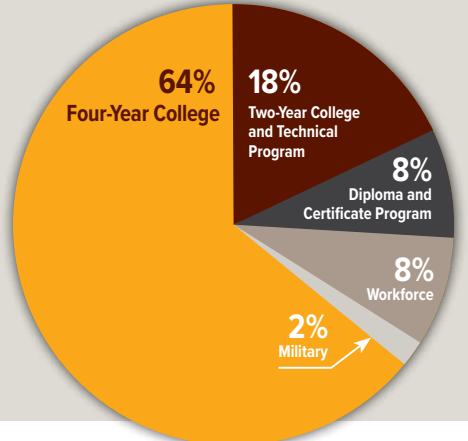


## By the Numbers

The Class of 2024 demonstrated the school's four MHS Sacred Values of commitment to mission, mutual respect, positive spirit, and integrity as they navigated their high school career. As a class, the 193 seniors volunteered more than 5,020 hours toward community service projects. One-hundred and fifty students graduated with college credits.

This graduating class was involved on campus in several ways. Fifty-four seniors were National Honor Society members. Fifty-five participated in the National Technical Honor Society, 20 participated in the National Art Honor Society, and 12 were members of the National Math Honor Society. To top that, more than 156 members of the Class of 2024 completed internships while at MHS. Nearly 89 seniors also earned a Varsity H Award for their participation in co-curricular activities. Graduates received more than \$100,000 in awards for their accomplishments.

After graduation, the members of the Class of 2024 planned to find success in many ways:



## Milton Hershey School Celebrates End of Breakthrough Year

Students and staff at Milton Hershey School celebrated the Breakthrough school year as the community closed out the 2023-24 school year. The Class of 2024 also participated in several senior-only activities to help them reflect on their time at MHS.

On Wednesday, June 5, seniors celebrated their final day of classes with encouragement from MHS and Hershey Entertainment & Resorts staff on their walk to school.

After finishing their final class periods, seniors participated in a ceremony where they each received their class rings. The ceremony included remarks from MHS President Pete Gurt '85.

During this event, seniors signed their classmates' yearbooks and reminisced on their MHS experience.

On Thursday, June 6, the Class of 2024 enjoyed an afternoon at an arcade and traveled to the Philadelphia area for a riverboat cruise.

On the final day of the school year, the MHS campus was full of joy and pride. Elementary and Middle Divisions celebrated with Fourth and Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremonies, while seniors had an enchanting evening at prom in Founders Hall.

All students and staff geared up to celebrate the soon-to-be-graduates.

Read more about the MHS Academic Experience







## Milton Hershey School Celebrates 2024 Fourth Grade Promotion Ceremony

Milton Hershey School fourth grade students celebrated a thrilling Breakthrough on Friday, June 7, when they were promoted to Middle Division. Family, friends, teachers, Home Life staff, and other supporters packed into Memorial Hall to witness the 2024 Fourth Grade Promotion Ceremony.

“Congratulations, you made it through a remarkable year filled with learning, growth and countless Breakthrough moments,” Amanda Smith, MHS Elementary Division principal, told the class.

Smith reminded the students to express gratitude to the many adults who helped them achieve this milestone. She commended the students’ ability to overcome fears and face challenging situations.

“Each test, each project, each hurdle has brought you closer to becoming the amazing people you are today,” she said.

Smith encouraged the students to expand upon that work ethic as they enter Middle Division. She told the class their Elementary Division support system will continue to follow their educational journey.

“Believe in yourselves, work hard, and never, ever be afraid to ask for help when you need it,” she continued. 🙌



## Milton Hershey School Celebrates Eighth Graders at Promotion Ceremony



Milton Hershey School Middle Division students celebrated their Breakthrough moments during the 2024 Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony on Friday, June 7. Parents/ sponsors, teachers, administrators, and other supporters filled the Catherine Hall Auditorium to mark the special occasion.

Middle Division Principal Kara Schoessler kicked off the event by recognizing the importance of this milestone in the students’ lives.

Student speaker and eighth grader Jairus Appiah focused on the 2023-24 school year theme. He spoke about how hard work, teamwork, and perseverance are needed to achieve a Breakthrough.

“If we do not acknowledge how far we have come, we will not be able to recognize

the behavior we need to continue to succeed even more,” he said.

Student Angela Santiago expressed gratitude to her teachers, houseparents, peers, and especially, Mr. and Mrs. Hershey.

“My gratitude to them is unexplainable both in regard to my life and others,” she said. “They’ve changed thousands of lives and helped a thousand more.”

Eight eighth-graders were recognized for their exceptional commitment to the MHS Sacred Values of commitment to mission, mutual respect, integrity, and positive spirit. Milton S. Hershey showcased these values during his life and expected the students who would enroll at his school would too.

Joseph Kandakai and Angela Santiago were honored for their commitment to mission. Jairus Appiah and Mab Colyer were recognized for their integrity. Matthew Gilreath and Hermiley Chalfant were celebrated for their positive spirit. Trevor Mugure and Lillian Fritsch for showing mutual respect.

This year, a new award was introduced to recognize a student exemplifying incredible skill and vision in artistry.

Baelin Gilliland received the Principal’s Art Award.

The School also recognized 16 students who enrolled in MHS in pre-K or kindergarten.

Middle Division Home Life Director DJ Hedrick closed the 2024 Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony by congratulating the students as they moved into the Senior Division.

“It has been a pleasure being part of your Home Life journey in Middle Division!” Hedrick said. “Parents, sponsors, teachers, houseparents and support staff, thank you for all you have done to guide, mentor, and support students in preparation for their launch to high school.” 🙌



## Seniors Receive Alumni-Sponsored Awards

Nearly 50 students from the Class of 2024 received alumni-sponsored awards at the Milton Hershey School Alumni-Student Awards Luncheon on Sunday, May 19. Awards were sponsored by the MHS Alumni Association and several of its chapters, The Dearden Foundation, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, and several alumni. Sponsors’ generosity provided more than \$82,000 to assist the recipients with their postsecondary plans.

Five awards were presented for the first time: The MHS Scholarship, sponsored by the Dissinger Foundation and created by Alexander Dissinger ’09 to alter the course of a student’s family history by offering financial support, mentorship, and recognition to the recipient; the Nurse Jane Award, sponsored by Julee Hixon ’84 in memory of her mother, Jane Carole Mann Hixon, who earned multiple degrees and certifications in nursing and worked as a nurse until she was 80; the Joseph Deubel Memorial Award, founded by the Deubel family in memory of Deubel, who had been an electrical inspector and an avid Hershey lover; the Robert Rodriguez MHS Scholarship, created in memory of Roberto A. Rodriguez ’89, who was a retired New York City Police Department detective; and the Carl Tritle ’66 Trades Award, established by Jennifer and Daryl Horst in memory of Tritle, who worked as an electrician for 40 years. The award is to be presented to two MHS seniors planning to pursue a postsecondary pathway in the trades.

Five existing awards were presented in tribute to alumni, including the late Jack Cleaver ’54, William E. Dearden ’40, William R. Fisher ’50, Dick Purcell ’61, and Henry Torres ’03.

Eighteen Members of the Class of 2024 who enrolled in first grade or earlier were honored as MHS Lifers by the MHSAA Honorary Chapter. They received personalized blankets at the luncheon. The MHS Alumni Association also honored the MHS Lifers with lifetime memberships. 🙌



### Recipient

Jose Aviles ’24  
Sarah Bradley ’24

Lany Brode ’24  
Jason Burney ’24

Aixa Delgado ’24  
Cali Donahue ’24  
Alison Foltz ’24  
Aaron Hayes ’24  
Patricia Hockenberry ’24  
Jayce Householder ’24  
Brianna Irizarry ’24  
Susan Kargbo ’24  
Jedrek Kumi ’24  
Jennifer Leandre ’24

Erin Miles ’24

Shayanne Morris ’24  
McKaya Nash ’24  
Solange Otchere ’24

Steven Penley ’24  
Marilyn Purcell ’24

Wolfgang Quesenberry ’24

Payton Reid ’24

Daden Rockwell ’24  
Alhaji Saccoh ’24

Rose Singleton ’24

Ashley Spence ’24

Mia Tejada ’24

Katianna Utley ’24  
Angel Velez ’24  
Kiana Washington-Cruz ’24  
Faith Wratto ’24

Peryn Yanu ’24  
Rayleen Wayoe ’21

### Award

William R. Fisher Scholarship Award  
Melissa Peeples-Fullmore ’91 Aspiring Educator Award  
McAndrews Award  
MHSAA Homestead Chapter Spartan Pride Award  
Nurse Jane Award  
MHSAA Stamp Scholarship Award  
MHSAA Stamp Scholarship Award  
MHSAA Culinary Award  
Joseph Deubel Memorial Award  
Carl Tritle ’66 Trades Award  
MHSAA Culinary Award  
Robert Rodriguez MHS Scholarship  
Robert Rodriguez MHS Scholarship  
Melissa Peeples-Fullmore ’91 Aspiring Educator Award  
MHSAA Homestead Chapter Spartan Pride Award  
McAndrews Award  
MHSAA Culinary Award  
Brown & Oliver Enterprising Student Scholarship Award  
MHSAA Culinary Award  
MHSAA DMV (D.C., Maryland, Virginia) Chapter Community Service Award  
Dick Purcell Career Technical Education Award  
MHSAA Harrisburg Chapter Career Technical Education Award  
Carl Tritle ’66 Trades Award  
John “Jack” Cleaver ’54 Award for a Graduate Entering the Military or a Trade  
Dick Purcell Career Technical Education Award  
Robin and Zuleika Ferrer Health Care Leadership Award and Milton and Catherine Hershey Citizenship Award  
William E. Dearden Emerging Leadership Award  
The Dissinger Foundation MHS Scholarship  
MHSAA Culinary Award  
MHSAA Culinary Award  
Henry “Hank” Torres Spirit Award and Memorial Scholarship  
William R. Fisher Scholarship Award  
Barbara Polk Award

### MHS Lifers 2024

Josiah Acosta  
Tawiah Amanor  
Jose Aviles  
Mohammed-Lamin Bamba  
Jalynn Braxton  
Brandon Burke

Gavin Gatone  
Dikizeko Gomes  
Jaiylah Gonzalez  
Susan Kargbo  
Elizabeth Konneh  
Kyla Martin  
Christopher Metzger

Adrian Rodriguez  
Alexa Teglas  
Brigette Thompson  
Brittney Thompson  
Johanna Yeagley



# Seniors and Alumni Celebrate During Alumni FELLOWSHIP WEEKEND 2024

Milton Hershey School and the MHS Alumni Association thank alumni who participated in events throughout Alumni Fellowship Weekend in April. The weekend began with a Career Expo, during which alumni talked with sophomores during panel discussions. That evening, MHS President Peter Gurt '85 and MHSAA President Angela Shade '95 hosted the Presidents' Reception at the Milton & Catherine Hershey Conservatory at Hershey Gardens. On Saturday, alumni hosted nearly 200 members of the Class of 2024 for the Alumni-Senior Fellowship Brunch. 2023 Alumnus of the Year Robin Ferrer '00 offered inspiring remarks to the seniors, and several alumni and seniors were presented with Alumni Achievement Awards. On Sunday, MHSAA hosted the second annual Senior-Alumni Celebration at Purcell Friendship Hall where seniors and alumni participated in activities and were entertained by alumnus Kayvon Asemani '14.



To view additional photos from Alumni Fellowship Weekend 2024, scan the QR code.





## MHS Honors Outstanding Alumni and Student Achievements

Milton Hershey School proudly honored three outstanding graduates and three members of the Class of 2024 with Alumni Achievement Awards at the Alumni-Senior Brunch on Saturday, April 13. The annual awards, introduced in 1997, honor graduates and seniors for career, academic, and community service accomplishments.

The following members of the MHS community were honored: Zainabu Sesay-Harrell '95 and Jedrek Kumi '24, career accomplishment; Joshua Arledge '15 and Ashley Spence '24, academic excellence; and Todd Leiss '82 and Christopher Koehler '24, community service.

### ALUMNI RECIPIENTS



#### Zainabu Sesay-Harrell '95, Career Accomplishment

Zainabu describes herself as an ambitious leader and entrepreneur who aims to improve outcomes in under-served communities around the world. She strives to help people acknowledge and understand the need for community awareness and identify health disparities. She promotes inclusiveness, engagement, and education through leadership and empowerment.

Zainabu has 32 years of health care experience, including 24 years of professional experience as a registered nurse/advanced practice nurse in international and global health, medicine, surgery, and critical care. She also has extensive experience in project execution. She is passionate about implementing, supporting, and promoting health services, and delivering quality care. She has been a nurse educator, pharmacy executive and owner, organizational education coordinator, and environmental advocate for chronic illnesses.

More recently, she helped others learn how to create small business opportunities in and with Africa. An advocate for communities in Africa and in the United States, she focuses on health care, education, youth, women, and injustice reduction. She also is a professional consultant for The Republic of Sierra Leone, West Africa, and founder of Connectin the Dotz, a mobile marketing and consultation agency providing all forms of marketing, branding, promoting, and advertising. In addition, she has been a candidate for member of Parliament for The Republic of Sierra Leone, West Africa. In March, she was appointed as a university professor in Makeni, Sierra Leone, and as an instructor for the City University of New York.

Zainabu earned a bachelor's degree in nursing at The College of New Rochelle and a master's degree in nursing with a concentration in adult health education at City University of New York – Herbert H. Lehman College. She is enrolled in a doctoral program at Ernest Bai Koroma University of Science and Technology in Sierra Leone.

Zainabu is a member of many professional organizations, including but not limited to Sigma Theta Tau International nursing honor society, the National Black Nurses Association, including 10 years on the executive board; and Sierra Leone Nurses Association, Inc., where she has served as president, founder, and international health and global health education coordinator and consultant.



#### Joshua Arledge '15, Academic Excellence

Joshua is a teacher of the deaf and an American Sign Language instructor who has earned bachelor's and master's degrees.

During his undergraduate education at Gallaudet University, the only university in the world for deaf students, Joshua participated in several international exchange programs, including a semester in Buenos Aires, Argentina, an internship at the National Institute for the Deaf in Bogota, Colombia, and a research project in India as a recipient of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship from the U.S. Department of State.

In 2019, Joshua earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education with a specialization in deaf education and a minor in Spanish from Gallaudet University. He was also recognized with two awards, including the Most Outstanding Undergraduate award for his dedication to excellence in the field of education and the Delaney Townsley Yeager Award for his dedication to deaf populations in Latin America.

Joshua completed his student teaching requirements in a fourth-grade classroom at Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C. He then went on to teach fifth grade at Westhill Institute in Mexico City. During the 2020-21 school year, Joshua taught at Texas School for the Deaf. He then spent a year teaching American Sign Language as a second language through Pearson Connections Academy. In May 2022, Joshua completed a master's degree in deaf education, maintaining a 4.0 GPA and obtaining additional certification in English as a Second Language instruction at Texas Woman's University. He completed this degree through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

Joshua currently works as a contractor providing virtual services to deaf and hard-of-hearing students in underserved communities across the country. In addition, he most recently became an associate faculty member at Cochise College where he teaches American Sign Language 101. As an MHS senior, Joshua was awarded the MHS Alumni Achievement Award for career accomplishment.



#### Todd Leiss '82, Community Service

Todd is the founder of TIM Heroes, Inc., a non-profit organization with a mission to provide outreach material, resources, and training related to traffic incident management (TIM) to the public, schools, motorists, and emergency responders. The organization will also work closely with similar non-profits and organizations to support their missions. The main objective of TIM Heroes is to raise awareness about the importance of roadway safety and provide funding for training related to this issue.

Todd joined Jacobs Engineering as a traffic incident management specialist after retiring from the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission in 2023. He also serves as the Deputy Director of Training at the Emergency Responder Safety Institute.

Todd received numerous awards for his work in traffic incident management and public safety communication. In 2023, he was honored as the 2023 Pennsylvania Turnpike "Turnpiker" Employee of the Year. In 2022, he received the Mrs. Smith Award for Traffic Incident Management and Responder Safety from the South Central Task Force at the Homeland Security Conference. In addition, Todd received the Joseph W. Bukowski Memorial Award for Outstanding Efforts in Highway Safety, issued by Cumberland Valley Volunteer Fireman's Association in August 2019; the 2018 ITS-PA Person of the Year, and the 2019 and 2023 ITS-PA Project of the Year issued by Intelligent Transportation Systems - Pennsylvania.

Todd earned a certificate in public safety communications from Jacksonville State University. He is certified as a master traffic incident management (TIM) instructor and a public safety telecommunicator instructor by APCO International, the world's oldest and largest organization of public safety communications professionals.

### CLASS OF 2024 RECIPIENTS



#### Jedrek Kumi '24, Career Accomplishment

Having enrolled in MHS in 10th grade, Jedrek became active in a variety of extracurricular programs, including Student Government Association (SGA), varsity soccer, and track and field. He also was an active member of the School's Mock Trial team. Jedrek excelled as a leader and a scholar during his tenure at MHS. He was a member of the SGA Executive Branch and served as the diversity, equity, and inclusion representative. He was a member of the National Honor Society and the National Technical Honor Society in the MHS Law and Public Safety pathway. He plans to attend the University of Pennsylvania to study public health, followed by a pre-law track, with the goal of becoming a lawyer in the health care field.



#### Ashley Spence '24, Academic Excellence

Ashley arrived at Milton Hershey School almost seven years ago as a fifth grader. Since then, she flourished by demonstrating academic achievement, leadership qualities, and efforts to serve the MHS community. Ashley was highly active in a variety of MHS programs including having served as an MHS student ambassador and participating on the varsity girls' swim team, and the cross country and track and field teams. As a member of the swim team she recently set a school record in the 200-medley and freestyle relays and competed in district competition. She was a

member of the National Honor Society and served as its president. She also was a member of the National Art Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta math honor society. Ashley plans to earn a degree in biochemistry from the University of Pennsylvania to help her prepare to become a dermatologist.



#### Christopher Koehler '24, Community Service

Originally from Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, Christopher was at MHS since eighth grade. He demonstrated leadership in the MHS community and upheld high academic standards. Christopher was a member of the SGA Executive Branch and served as the chief of staff. He was also a member of Hershey Community Youth Alliance, a Rotary Club of Hershey program. Passionate about helping the newest students at MHS, Christopher served on the New Spartan Social program and the H.O.N.E.S.T. program, both programs that support the School's newest enrollees. He also participated in the Writing Club, was a member of the National Honor Society, and a member of Mu Alpha Theta, the math honor society. Christopher plans to attend the University of Chicago to earn a bachelor's degree in journalism and public policy. 🗣️

### Nominate a Graduate for an Alumni Achievement Award

MHS accepts nominations for Alumni Achievement Awards throughout the year. Nominations received by Oct. 1, 2024, will be added to the candidate review list for the 2025 awards. For nomination details, visit [mhsalum.org/stay-connected/alumni-recognition/alumni-awards](https://mhsalum.org/stay-connected/alumni-recognition/alumni-awards) or scan the QR code.





## Alumni Relations and GPS Staff Answer Questions During Family Weekend



**D**uring Winter Family Weekend, students and their parents/ sponsors had the opportunity to visit with representatives from Alumni Relations, GPS, Social Work, and Career Services during lunch at Founders Hall. In the the left photo, Unique Patterson, higher education support specialist, visits with a recent graduate and current student. In the second photo, Josi Rhoads '17, alumni engagement coordinator, talks with a student and parent/sponsor. 🗣️

## Alumni Volunteer Support Empowers Students

**A**lumni support of Milton Hershey School empowers students to pursue their dreams and is key to their success. Thank you to the more than 150 alumni who volunteered to support Milton Hershey School programs throughout the year. Many of these individuals participated in more than one program in addition to their involvement in an MHS Alumni Association chapter. Below are photos from just a few of the programs offered during the 2023-24 school year. To learn more about volunteering at MHS, visit [mhsalum.org/give-back/](https://mhsalum.org/give-back/). 🙋



*Calista Beard '17, Tonji (Bell) Grissinger '17, Ambra Haskins '07, Chanel Moffitt '11, Zahraa (Hbailu) Mouzon '02, Marrika Phillips '19, and Deanna (Bradley) Slamans '91 volunteered for the eighth annual Girls Grace Empowerment Conference.*



*Kwasi Abrokwa '00, Samson Arnold '17, Bryson Moore '19, Matthew Ortiz '05, and Jamar Royster '13 volunteered at the third annual Boys Leadership Conference in March.*



*Nearly 50 alumni volunteered to read to MHS Elementary Division students at Go R.E.D. (Read Every Day) Family Reading Night in February.*



*Nicole (Forson) Walters '03, second from left, was one of six alumni who spoke at the Student Government Association Leadership Conference in April. Not pictured are Kwasi Abrokwa '00, Christine (Brennan) Cook '81, Maria (Trinh) Kraus '89, Rasheeda McLean '11, and Zahraa (Hbailu) Mouzon '02.*

## Class of 2024 Celebrates Post-Graduate Plans

**O**n May 16, Milton Hershey School seniors gathered to celebrate the diverse array of post-graduate plans within the Class of 2024. Students and staff members met on campus for this celebratory event with walking tacos, an ice cream truck, games, a dunk tank, and other activities.

The third annual GPS Plan Celebration was a twist on National Decision Day. Originally created to celebrate MHS seniors' finalization of their post-graduate plans, this event was held three weeks before the school's 90th Commencement Ceremony, on June 9 at Giant Center.



One of the most important tools that MHS provides soon-to-be young graduates is the ability to find their passion and pursue it following high school graduation. The Graduate Programs for Success Division (GPS) and Senior Division scholastic team work diligently with students during their senior year to finalize plans for post-graduate success.

Following the Commencement Ceremony, MHS staff continue to work with the Class of 2024 to ensure they have the resources to follow through on plans they created during their senior year.

This GPS Plan Celebration was a collaboration with the GPS team, Transitional Living staff, and the Student Government Association. In addition, representatives of GPS partner schools were invited.

More than 60 percent of the Class of 2024 planned to pursue four-year bachelor's degrees, while 18 percent planned to pursue two-year associate or technical education programs. Other members of the graduating class planned to pursue certificate programs, enter the world of work, or join the military. 🗣️



*Representatives from several GPS partner schools attended the GPS Plan Celebration to connect with seniors who intended to pursue degrees at their campuses.*



## Dick Purcell Spartan Classic Benefits Recent MHS Graduates

**T**his year marked the sixth Dick Purcell Spartan Classic at Hershey Country Club. The event is a joint effort between The Dearden Foundation and the Milton Hershey School Alumni Association to raise money to benefit recent graduates through scholarships, mentoring programs, and support services. Thank you to all sponsors and players for their support. 🙋



Scan the QR code to view photos.



## MHS to Celebrate Homecoming 2024 Sept. 12-15

**M**ark your calendar for Homecoming 2024, scheduled for Thursday to Sunday, Sept. 12-15. This year's Homecoming will coincide with Milton S. Hershey's birthday, and special tributes will be incorporated into the festivities.

Homecoming brochures were mailed to alumni. Scan the QR code for details and online registration. 🗣️





## A Note from the MHS Alumni Association President

Greetings MHS Family,

As president of the MHS Alumni Association, it is my honor to speak for and represent the MHSAA Board of Directors and our Association. With that said, please know that I do not accomplish anything on my own. An amazing team of directors support and advise me. Together, with our volunteers and MHS, we accomplish greatness.

2024 has been a remarkable year. On Jan. 1, we reintroduced the Helping Hands Program, which provides monetary aid to Association members who have urgent financial need. Our desire is to expand the program to also share local and federal resources to assist our brothers and sisters before they find themselves in a crisis.

Alumni Fellowship Weekend was phenomenal! On Friday, April 12, MHS President Pete Gurt '85 and I hosted the Presidents' Reception at the beautiful Milton & Catherine Hershey Conservatory. The evening was filled with laughter, fellowship, and a double rainbow. Raised funds benefitted the Family Gratitude Foundation

and the Helping Hands Program. These programs provide comfort and security and reflect the connection between MHS and MHSAA.

On Saturday, April 13, MHSAA hosted the 68th Alumni-Senior Brunch (formerly dinner). Following last year's brunch, students and alumni asked for more opportunities to mingle with guests beyond those seated at their tables. This year, members of the senior class created a paper mingle game that took place before the brunch to encourage conversation, and interactive games for the Senior-Alumni Celebration hosted by MHSAA on Sunday.

June brought the launch of the new MHSAA branding and logo. The process was long and arduous. The challenge was to represent Hershey Industrial School, MHS, graduates, honorary members, and affiliate members. There was a desire to remember who we were, embrace who we are, and look toward our future. We believe that we accomplished that and so much more.

With a fresh new logo, we recognize that we also need a fresh, new website.



We are planning to unveil one in the fall. The website will provide an excellent user experience on your mobile device or desktop. Stay tuned!

What I have outlined above does not include the great things that have been accomplished by our chapters. D.C., Harrisburg, Homestead, and the Honorary Chapters organize events throughout the year that benefit MHS students and our community. Catch up on their activities in the Chapter News section and consider participating in their events.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at Homecoming, Sept. 13-15, 2024. This year will be extraordinary, as it aligns with Milton S. Hershey's birthday. Until then, chocolate is thicker than blood! 🍫

All the best,  
Angela Shade '95  
MHSAA President

## Reception Supports Two Initiatives

In collaboration with Milton Hershey School, the MHS Alumni Association hosted the Presidents' Reception on April 12 at the Milton & Catherine Hershey Conservatory at Hershey Gardens. The fundraising event was the first of several opportunities for alumni to reconnect during Alumni Fellowship Weekend, and proceeds benefitted the Family Gratitude Foundation and the MHSAA Helping Hands Fund.

MHS President Pete Gurt '85 and MHSAA President Angela Shade '95 graciously greeted guests and sponsors at the reception and thanked them for their generous support. A total of \$20,000 was raised to support the two initiatives.

The Family Gratitude Foundation is dedicated to enhancing the MHS student experience and celebrating the courage, strength, and resilience of those who enroll and support MHS students. The MHSAA Helping Hands Fund offers emergency funding on a case-by-case basis to MHSAA members who have an immediate and critical unmet financial need. 🙏



## Alumni Connect with the Class of 2024 at Alumni-Senior Brunch

Milton Hershey School alumni supported members of the senior class at the 2024 Alumni-Senior Brunch. The event was preceded by a brief networking event in Founders Hall Rotunda. The 2023 Alumnus of the Year, Robin Ferrer '00, was the featured speaker.

In addition, MHS presented Alumni Achievement Awards to three alumni and three seniors: Zainabu Sesay-Harrell '95 and Jedrek Kumi '24 for career accomplishment; Joshua Arledge '15 and Ashley Spence '24 for academic achievement; and Todd Leiss '82 and Christopher Koehler '24 for community service. 🙏



Scan the QR code to view photos.

## MHSAA Introduces a New Logo as Part of Its Rebranding Initiative

In a concerted effort to refresh its identity and present an accurate depiction of the diversity of its members, the MHS Alumni Association embarked on an effort to create updated imagery and branding elements. The previous logo was a heartfelt reminder of our founders' dedication to the cultivation of family and opportunity among those served by MHS. The intent for the new logo is to represent the changing dynamic of the association membership while continuing to embrace its past and look toward the future.

The HIS/MHS class ring is an iconic symbol. Every year, students are awarded this ring for their time and commitment at MHS. This logo honors those accomplishments by utilizing implied lines of the iconic oval shape of the ring to encase the MHS Alumni Association typography without using the direct ring emblem. The secondary line inside of the oval adds dimension to the graphic to further symbolize stability. The bold lettering is emblematic of the Association's historic past, while the progressive gold gradient reveals the gradual reflection of change as the membership moves forward. The swooping arches above and below the MHS lettering represent forward momentum while never forgetting our history and traditions. 🙏



## CHAPTER NEWS Harrisburg Chapter

The Harrisburg Chapter focuses its efforts on programs that engage MHS students. In recent months, it hosted an Easter Party for Elementary Division students who remained at MHS during Easter break and a service project with the MHS National Honor Society.

Students attending the Easter Party met and learned about two horses owned by the mother of alumnae Toni Allen-King '88 and Christine Allen '91. Students enjoyed an egg hunt, pizza party, crafts, games, and individual pictures. Each student went home with at least \$6 in change, plenty of candy—and a \$2 bill, compliments of Horace Flynn '46.

In April, the chapter partnered with members of NHS for a joint community service project at The Bridge in Harrisburg. Lots of good work was accomplished and fellowship flourished, as students and grads worked, laughed, and had lunch together.

The chapter extends a special thank you to MHS teacher and NHS advisor Heather Dougherty for her support of these joint projects.

For information regarding future chapter projects, phone the MHS Alumni Association Office at 717.520.2045. 🙏



## Homestead Chapter

Members of the Homestead Chapter have been lending support to the MHSAA Board, local chapters, and the school at numerous alumni fellowship gatherings, including the Harrisburg Chapter Easter Party, MHSAA Hershey Bears Game, MHSAA Chapter Summit, and Alumni Fellowship Weekend.

A highlight for the chapter remains the Homestead Chapter Alumni Breakfast held the first Saturday of each month during the school year, from 8 to 10 a.m. at the Dearden House. Additionally, the chapter hosted a Spaghetti Dinner on May 16 at Purcell Friendship Hall. The chapter also hosted a baseball and picnic outing in July.

The chapter welcomes new members. For more information, visit the chapter's new Facebook page, MHSAA Homestead Chapter, or email chapter president Mike Mulderig '71 at mikemhs71@aol.com. 🙏



## Honorary Member Chapter

On May 19, Honorary Chapter members represented the chapter at the Alumni-Student Awards Brunch honoring select members of the MHS Class of 2024 at Purcell Friendship Hall. Chapter members Ann Reigle, Connie Jennings, and Ruth Holp presented certificates and personalized blankets to 18 MHS Lifers. The personalized blankets were embroidered by chapter member Julie Mladenoff. 🙏



## Washington, D.C. Chapter

The D.C./Maryland/Virginia Chapter continues an active schedule of fun and philanthropic programs for its members. Through the long-standing Chapter Santa Program, the chapter fundraises to purchase gifts and food items for MHS students who go home for the holidays. In December 2023, the chapter supported six families and a total of 20 children who live in the chapter service area.

In February, alumni gathered for Spartans in the Snow 2024 at Massanutten Resort in Virginia for a weekend of skiing and snow-tubing fun for alumni and their families. Other events included the annual Chapter Summer Picnic, Spartans Go Cruising, a six-day Royal Caribbean cruise to Bermuda; and a Bowie Baysocks AAA Baseball game.

For additional information about DC/MD/VA Chapter events, visit [www.mhsaad.org/events](http://www.mhsaad.org/events). 🙏



1940s

**Charles Schock ’44**, of Media, Pa., is sad to report his wife, Jane, died on Oct. 12 after 75 years of marriage. They had a wonderful life together and raised five children.

**Carl Runkle ’49**, of Narvon, Pa., is living in a retirement community for his fifth year and loves it. All four of his children, 12 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren live out of state, so his life involves lots of travel.

1950s

**Raymond Ballard ’51**, of Hellertown, Pa., retired from Wegmans on Aug. 22, 2023.

**Carl Evans ’51**, of Martinsburg, Pa., lives in a retirement home with his wife of 66 years. He still flies remote-controlled planes at a local club with his son.

**Sylvester Buszta ’51**, of Pottstown, Pa., turned 90 in December 2023. He and his wife, Dorothy, celebrated 62 years of marriage in November and are proud great-grandparents for the first time.

**John Resanovich ’51**, of Lebanon, Pa., will never forget what Mr. and Mrs. Hershey did for him. His granddaughter is a Lebanon County deputy sheriff. He and many other alumni hope that President Pete Gurt ’85 will stay in office for at least 18 years so he will pass J.O. Hershey’s record of 17 years, from 1963 to 1980.

**LaFrance Bragg ’53**, of Lakeside, Calif., has spent 65 years as a Freemason in California. He currently serves as Master of Heartland Masonic Lodge No. 576 and has served as the head of many concordant

Masonic bodies. He supports public schools, building dedications, youth groups, and local police and fire departments. He says he is putting to use the lessons from Mr. Hershey.

**Robert Holton ’53**, of Conestoga, Pa., and his wife, Patricia, have been married for 68 years. They have three children, eight grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.

**George Sweeney ’54**, of Palm City, Fla., retired from Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) after 46 years in 2002. He was the claims manager for the Corporate Law Department in Juno Beach, Fla. He and his wife, Joan R. Sweeney, have been married for more than 67 years, from 1957 to 2023. They live at Sandhill Cove, Lifecare Retirement, in Palm City.

**Walter Hall ’55**, of Lima, Pa., lives at a nursing facility called Fair Acres in Brookhaven, Pa. He celebrated his 86th birthday on Jan. 11.

**Frank Crosscup ’56**, of Harrisburg, Pa., retired with UGI in 1999. He enjoys retirement and spends his time fishing and watching TV. He and his wife, Roberta “Bobbie,” have been married for 55 years.

**Dave Bowser ’57**, of Lititz, Pa., has lived at the gated community Bentcreek Country Club for the last 20 years. He and his wife, Michelle, have three children, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. His granddaughter, Taylor, is attending Bowling Green University in Ohio on a four-year scholarship in women’s soccer.

**Thomas Dressler ’57**, of Jacksonville, N.C., happily lives alone in his 42-foot Newmar motorhome on the roads of America. He also spends some time on his boat out of Fort Myers, Fla.

Navy Veteran Visits Student Homes

In honor of Memorial Day, **Ken Palovitz ’50** visited student homes Eisenhower and Adams to talk to students about his time in the Navy and the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day. He wore his Navy uniform which still fits. 🎖️



MHS Mourns the Death of Former Alumnus of the Year, K. Thomas Davies, Ph.D. ’53

It is with great sadness we have learned about the death of former MHS Alumnus of the Year **K. Thomas Davies, Ph.D. ’53**. MHS honored Dr. Davies and his brother Richard Davies, Ph.D. ’54 in 1978 for their work in theoretical physics. We extend our sincere condolences to his wife, Carol Griffith Davies; his brother, his children, Douglas, Sean, and Beverly Leamon; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and his beloved cats, Rosie and Scarlett. Read the full obituary at <https://obituaries.post-gazette.com/obituary/kenneth-thomas-reed-davies-1089900024>. 🕊️

**Joseph Matisak ’57**, of Montgomery, Ala., celebrated his 85th birthday with family and friends. For several months, he worked with his contractor building a new lake house on Lake Martin. His old house was destroyed by a tornado in March 2023. In December 2023, he spent time hunting with his brother, Ed. He was looking forward to springtime so he could get back to golf, fishing, and spending time at the lake.

**George Fink ’59**, of Chapman, Kan., continues to enjoy retirement as he is working part time at his own HVAC



Alumnus Attends Groundbreaking for CHS Middletown

**Jon G. Wilt ’71**, president of the Lower Swatara Township Board of Commissioners, was among the municipal officials in attendance when Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning hosted the official groundbreaking for its third Early Childhood Education Center, CHS Middletown, on March 6. The 48,692-square-foot building will be located at the corner of Oberlin and Fulling Mill Roads in Lower Swatara Township and is expected to open in 2025.

“For more than 114 years, Milton and Catherine Hershey’s generosity has enabled thousands of children to reach their fullest potential,” said MHS and CHS President Pete Gurt ’85. “The groundbreaking for the Middletown center celebrates our opportunity to expand on their legacy and work toward impacting the lives of even more children while supporting their families and ultimately strengthening the Middletown and surrounding community.”

company, traveling, and undergoing treatment for bone cancer. He is doing well. He has six children, 17 grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. He and his wife have been married for 61 years. He retired from federal civil service at Ft. Riley, Kan. His wife is a retired state social worker.

1960s

**James Dayhoff ’60**, of Claremont, Calif., is doing well and has no complaints. He welcomed another great-grandchild to the family on Jan. 29, 2024. He says life is good!

**Samuel Montgomery ’60**, of Milton, Pa., is very thankful for the teaching of Miss Harm and Mr. Heller. Otherwise, he would not understand the world or the country he’s living in as anything but corruption or lawlessness. He says, “God bless you and may He keep you in His care, and that He is still in charge.”

**Edward Yenshaw ’60**, of Cambria, Calif., is “still alive and kickin’.” He says it must be from all the wholesome food Hershey Industrial School (now MHS) fed him. Plus, milking the cows and baling and stacking the hay didn’t hurt him.

**David Glass ’61**, of Georgetown, Del., is now an octogenarian! If you had Mr. Fox as your MHS Latin teacher, you know what that means, because it is derived from the Latin word “octo,” which translates into English as “eight.” He welcomes news from other 1961 classmates and octogenarians (or beyond!).

**Johnny O’Brien ’61**, of Easton, Md., just kick-started his ninth decade and his 77th year of being a proud MHS “homeguy.” He says every day is a bonus now. He is honored to help President Gurt and both MHS and CHS in small ways to pay back his life-saving gift.

**Earl Quay ’61**, of Orangeburg, S.C., and M. Denise Quay have been married for 57 years and have six children, 22 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. His volunteer activities include Knights of Columbus, Council 6891 where he is

treasurer; Kairos Prison Ministry at Allendale Correction Institute; Catholic Prison Ministry Program (Weekly Mission); and his neighborhood Crimewatch program.

**Robert Stewart III ’61**, of Old Zionsville, Pa., is proud of his family members. His stepson is working toward advancement at work, and his daughter-in-law is taking care of the home front. His wife continues to work at Amazon.

**David Phillips ’62**, of Cedar Park, Texas, is just enjoying doing what he wants when he wants to do it. He enjoys traveling, hunting, hiking, competitive shooting, checking out historical sites, and trying to keep the house in repair.

**Daniel Bauer ’63**, of Palmerton, Pa., retired in 2010. He plants a large garden every year and gives most of the produce away. He has two grown children, four grown grandchildren, and now two great-granddaughters, a 2-year-old and a 6-month-old. He is a Vietnam veteran and is chaplain of Vietnam Veterans of Carbon County. He and his wife, Carol, have been married for 55 years.

**Richard Forney ’63**, of Warrington, Pa., enjoys retirement. He spends time fishing, gardening, and restoring antiques.

**James Gahagan ’63**, of Woodbury, Minn., and his wife, Dianne, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 2023.

**James Gould ’63**, of Hershey, Pa., has been married for 59 years to his Hershey bride, Shirley. He has two sons and three granddaughters. He is busy with family and helping his wife who struggles with LB dementia. During his life, he has visited all 50 states and lived in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Louisiana, and Kansas. He says God has been good to him and his family.

**Glenn Humbert ’63**, of Phoenix, Ariz., retired at age 69. He was the plant manager for Troy Chemical Co., Phoenix Facility, for 14 years. He was employed at the plant in various positions for 22 years.

**Thomas Leonard ’63**, of Monroeville, Pa., attended his 60th class reunion and is now looking forward to his 75th. He thanks Mr. Hershey for the opportunity his kindness provided all MHS alumni.

**Richard Stewart ’63**, of Clearfield, Pa., and his wife, Mary, celebrated their 56th anniversary on March 11.

**Richard Climenhaga ’64**, of Manassas, Va., is retiring after 15 years with Fairfax County Public Schools. He retired in 2006 from Xerox Corporation after 33 years.

**William Climenhaga ’64**, of Manassas, Va., is retired and active with grandkids and church.

**George Delany ’64**, of Rehoboth, Mass., continues to do fine at home. He got a new dog, a 4-year-old Norfolk Terrier, “HoneyB,” who keeps him amused each day. His wife, Sandy, and two sons are all well. He says “peace” to fellow homeboys of his vintage. To learn more about George, visit his website [www.georgedelanyart.com](http://www.georgedelanyart.com).

**James Dunlop ’64**, of Palmyra, Pa., retired as an industrial arts teacher after 35 years. He served in the U.S. Army in the 101st Airborne Division and is a Vietnam veteran. He received a Purple Heart.

**John Kriner ’64**, of Ellenton, Fla., and his wife, Martha, have been married for 41 years. He has three daughters, seven grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. He is still living in Florida and loving it.

**Clyde Moyer ’64**, of Dover, Del., lost his wife, Penny, who passed away on Oct. 27, 2021. He is a disabled Vietnam veteran and suffers from heart disease and post-traumatic stress disorder. He served as a pastor for 35 years. He says, “May God bless MHS. Much respect and love.” It was a great experience for him.

**Ralph Neeley ’64**, of Chicago, Ill., was fortunate to retire early and has spent a great deal of his free time traveling around the world. He is always attempting to involve himself in as many different cultures and cuisines as he is fortunate to have stumbled



MHS Mourns the Death of 1961 Alumnus of the Year, Laurence Fredrick, Ph.D. '45



It is with great sadness that Milton Hershey School shares news about the death of former MHS Alumnus of the Year **Laurence Fredrick, Ph.D. '45**. MHS honored Dr. Fredrick in 1961 for his work in astronomy. We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends. To learn more about Dr. Fredrick's accomplishments, please view the online memoriam page published by the University of Virginia: [astronomy.as.virginia.edu/index.php/memorial](https://astronomy.as.virginia.edu/index.php/memorial). 📖

upon. He would like to hear from any former classmates that remember him.

**John Pluck '64**, of Honeybrook, Pa., works at 7-Eleven. His wife, Alice R. Pluck, passed away on Aug. 25, 2022. He has eight grandchildren.

**Kenneth Provost '64**, of Harrisburg, Pa., is retired and a cancer survivor.

**Bruce Campbell '65**, of Myrtle Beach, S.C., reported that he and Phyllis celebrated 56 years together and have been living in Myrtle Beach for 11 years. They are looking forward to his 60th MHS class reunion in 2025. They would both like to reconnect with classmates they have not seen since his 50th reunion.

**Fred Hayward '65**, of Portland, Ore., has been retired since 2013 and is happily learning to live on a fixed income.

**Gary Kuhns '65**, of Palmyra, Va., and his wife, Rebecca, have 12 grandchildren combined. He and Rebecca remain healthy. He participates in various organizations.

**Stanley Mitchell '65**, of Paxinos, Pa., reported that it has been five years since his open-heart surgery at age 78. He says God is so very, very good.

**John "Doc" Elliott '66**, of Glen Mills, Pa., recently welcomed his first great-grandchild, a girl.

**Paul Smith '66**, of Hubert, N.C., recently moved to North Carolina. He enjoys boating and fishing with his grandson. There are times when his grandson brags that he caught more fish than his grandfather.

**George Williams '66**, of Elizabethtown, Pa., celebrated his 50th anniversary with his wife, Mary Sue. They enjoy spending time with their five grandchildren and attending their activities. He began a new hobby of beekeeping.

**Daniel Doble '67**, of Rice Lake, Wis., is enjoying all the tools Milton Hershey gave him to be successful in life. These include work ethic, education, trade, and moral direction of right and wrong. He visited Panama this past year, where he enjoyed being in a totally different culture. He also met with classmates from the class of 1967 in a relaxed setting at the Outer Banks of North Carolina. He said it was nice to renew old acquaintances.

**Milton Luce '67**, of Edinboro, Pa., is enjoying the retired life and having more time for family and friends.

**Wesley McDowell '68**, of Sunset Beach, N.C., celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary with his wife, Kara, on April 13, 2024.

**John Furmanak '69**, of Media, Pa., is enjoying retirement with his first grandson and playing golf, fishing, traveling, and catching up with classmates. He has been

married to his wife, Nancy, for 38 years. He teaches advanced adult education. He is involved in his community with the Civil Service Commission.

**Richard Monteviodoni '69**, of Warminster, Pa., works for McGriff Insurance Services and will retire on Dec. 31, 2024, the anniversary of his 50th year in business. He and his wife, Arlene, have been married since 2011. He has six grandchildren. He has a second home in Mesa, Ariz.

**Daniel Stambaugh '69**, of Holiday, Fla., is retired and living the dream with his wife, Donna.

1970s

**Richard Conta '70**, of Annville, Pa., retired after 40 years with The Hershey Company. He and his wife raise and show dogs. In his spare time, he fishes, builds birdhouses, does yard and garden work, and reads.

**William Patts '70**, of Taylor, Mich., and his wife, Caroline, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in May. They have two daughters and four grandchildren. Their grandson Mathew is stationed in San Diego, Calif., in the U.S. Navy. He has one great-grandchild, who is two years old.

**Jan Spangenberg '70**, of Ocala, Fla., is recovering from a stroke.

**Stephen Baughman '71**, of Hanover, Pa., has been retired for five years.

**Bruce Hummel '71**, of Palmyra, Pa., is giving back to Milton and Catherine Hershey by starting his ninth year of volunteering at the Butterfly Atrium at Hershey Gardens. He also gives tours of the Gardens, sharing its history and plant

Retired Kindergarten Teacher Celebrates a Tradition with Former Students

**Christine (Brennan) Cook '81**, 2021 Alumna of the Year and retired MHS kindergarten teacher, continues to stay involved with MHS through the MHS Alumni Association. In April, she attended the Alumni-Senior Brunch where she continued her tradition of taking photographs with the seniors who were in her kindergarten class. 📸



Alumnus of the Year Spends Time with MHS Students

Throughout the 2023-24 school year, 2023 Alumnus of the Year **Robin Ferrer '00** spent time with

students in all divisions on multiple visits to MHS. During one visit, he read a story to elementary students and then spoke with high school students about his career. He finished his visit by spending time with members of the Class of 2024. MHS alumni, like Robin, are consistently stepping up to make a difference. If you are interested in volunteering at MHS, visit [mhsalum.org/give-back/volunteer-opportunities/](https://mhsalum.org/give-back/volunteer-opportunities/). 🙋

identification that he learned at MHS as an agri-business student.

**Eugene Hunking '71**, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., and his wife have been married for 41 years. He has four children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

**Dennis Snedden '71**, of Carnegie, Pa., is starting to teach classes on knife sharpening with whetstones, which he says is very fulfilling. He continues to be involved with the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation, Rainbow for Girls, and DeMolay for Boys.

**Michael DeJesse '72**, of Woodbury, N.J., and his wife, Louise, have been married for 44 years as of April 19. They are both retired and enjoying their time together.

**Randy Elliott '73**, of Beaver Falls., Pa., is settling into retirement with joy and glee. He visits his children and granddaughter as often as possible after working as a surveyor for 50 years.

**Clayton Wilson '73**, of Harrisburg, Pa., volunteers at his church weekly, cooking to feed the homeless in downtown Harrisburg.

**Jim Wishmyer '73**, of Leesburg, Va., retired in July 2023 after 38 years of pastoral ministry in Virginia United Methodist churches, having served five pastoral appointments. He and his wife, Debbie, celebrated 40 years of marriage in August 2023. In September, they enjoyed attending his 50th anniversary Homecoming with his twin brother Jeff and his wife, Patrice.

**Kevin Byam-Brown '74**, of Lancaster, Pa., published the book "The Rise of The Kingdom Runner: Laps in Running The Race!" in which he encourages readers to grow in their faith.

**Rodney Crawford '74**, of Annville, Pa., is retired and pursuing his hobbies of muscle cars and cats.

**William Mottin '74**, of Sewell, N.J., retired from Cima Network. He enjoys staying active with hockey by driving the Zamboni at his local ice rink. He and his wife, Joyce, recently celebrated their 35th year together.

**John Kramer '74**, of New Cumberland, Pa., is retired after almost 13 years at PHEAA. He spends quality time with his 8-year-old retired racing greyhound, Kylie. He also travels as much as possible with his wife and friends.

**Eric Jenkins '79**, of Felton, Del., and his wife are enjoying retirement life after retiring in 2021. They have been married for 36 years. They have six grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and one great-grandchild on the way.

**John Johnson '79**, of West Deptford, N.J., is living one day at a time with his wife of 26 years, Eileen. He retired from UA322 after 42 years, six months, and one week of service. He is very thankful for the man MHS taught him to be.

**Stanley Mowrer '79**, of Marietta, Pa., retired Dec. 1, 2023, after 38 years with the Heim Company, electrical and mechanical contractor in Harrisburg, Pa., and 44 years associated with the IBEW electrical works union in Lancaster/Reading, Pa.

1980s

**John Boran '80**, of Pottsville, Pa., celebrated 36 years of marriage to Michelle Boran. They have two daughters, Molly and Meghan. Molly and her husband made them first-time grandparents on April 17, 2024 with a baby girl.

**Mark Hickey '80**, of Vero Beach, Fla., is an operation manager at Port St. Lucie,

Fla., Station 322, a new FedEx station that completed its second holiday peak season. He is enjoying the Florida environment, and his son recently moved to Orlando, Fla. His daughter, Raya Hickey, a 2021 MHS graduate, lives in Middletown, Pa., and works at a Malamute dog breeding farm. He says, "Love the life you live and live the life you love."

**Blaine Maines '80**, of Clearfield, Pa., retired as manager of American Natural. He was employed in the same job for 41 years. He said it is time to enjoy life, travel, and spend time with family.

**Braden Maines '80**, of Lebanon, Pa., and his twin brother, Blaine, celebrated their 62nd birthday. They are very thankful for MHS and proud graduates of such a unique place. Braden still works at MHS and appreciates everyone. He has been at MHS for 36 and one-half years and counting.

**Dwayne Murray '80**, of Mount Vernon, N.Y., is focusing full time on his Mt. Vernon Junior Knights basketball program, after having been on the road with the New York Rens (Nike EYBL) basketball team for 10 years. The Junior Knights recently received a \$100,000 grant from the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services that will allow them to keep players' fees down and pay their coaches. Dwayne's daughter Natalie graduated from medical school and interns at Albert Einstein Medical Center.

**Michael Winckowski '80**, of Toledo, Ohio, was baptized and became a born-again Christian in 2023.

**Ellen Hansen '82**, of Taunton, Mass., celebrated her 11th anniversary with her partner, Robert, in Nashua, N.H. Despite her disabling conditions, she is a successful fine art photographer, competing all over the country in national and international competitions. She has been an artist in residence with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a county courthouse exhibit for seven years.

**Richard Moszczynski '84**, of Dillsburg, Pa., bought his dream property in South Central Pennsylvania and hopes to develop his mini farm.

**Nicholas Nissley '84**, of Traverse City, Mich., is proud of his oldest daughter, who graduated from Ohio University in journalism and began working at Cincinnati Public Radio as an environmental journalist.

**Tommy Donatti '85**, of New Smyrna Beach, Fla., opened a new storage facility in New Smyrna Beach in 2024. 2023 was his best year to date with Tom Donatti Building and Roofing Inc. He thanked MHS and said, without it, none of this would have happened.



**Dollee Magarotto '85**, of Dekalb, Ill., is good, healthy, and happy.

**Michael Shultz '86**, of Astoria, Ore., retired at the end of 2023. He married Rhondel Shultz on Aug. 4, 2023.

**Lu Bennett '87**, of Palmyra, Pa., was promoted to lead tech at Penske Truck Leasing in the Roadside Assist Department. Her youngest child and his wife recently celebrated 12 years together and their sixth wedding anniversary. Her oldest child works for a bus company in Kansas and had the milestone birthday of 30. Lu is busy selling her art, Happygirl.art, on Facebook.

**Felecia Tuttle '87**, of Harrisburg, Pa., after 36 years, she came back to Pennsylvania to work for Catherine Hershey Schools. She couldn't pass up an opportunity to give back to her Alma Mater.

**1990s**

**Anastasios "Tom" Trispagonas '99**, of Hershey, Pa., is serving as vice president for the MHS Alumni Association. He also recently accepted a new position as vice president of sales for Grove Financial, an insurance and financial planning firm in Central Pennsylvania.

**2000s**

**Tom Elerowski '02**, of Union, S.C., has been living in South Carolina with his family since 2022, when they left Los Angeles, Calif. He worked at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., for a decade, where he won two Creative Arts Emmy Awards. In December 2023, he decided that he was long overdue to go out on his own, so he finally made that happen. His company specializes in large-scale, big-data computer network technologies, as well as the security counterparts that go with a solid network. He has also made it his mission to go back into the theater, behind the scenes and back into stage lighting design, specifically for musicals or plays, and maybe a touring production of some kind.

**Jennelle Cosby '04**, of Mechanicsville, Va., transitioned to a career in cloud engineering in August of 2022 after nine years of teaching English in middle and high school classrooms. Since her career transition, she has been able to work remotely, which allows her a flexible schedule and the ideal work-life balance. She can spend more time

**Alumnus Sets New Scoring Record**

**Don'yaе Baylor-Carroll '18** set a new record as the all-time leading scorer for the Penn State Harrisburg men's basketball team—the same title he holds at MHS. Don'yaе credits the unwavering support of MHS staff and its athletic program for his success. Pictured, from left, are **Pedro Rodriguez '18**, MHS assistant basketball coach and Don'yaе's former MHS teammate; Mark Zerbe, MHS athletic director and former head basketball coach; and Don'yaе. 🏀



with her 4-year-old son. She also purchased a home in September 2023.

**Karasten Yoder '06**, of Steelton, Pa., is an eighth-grade math teacher at MHS Catherine Hall.

**Andrew Ames '07**, of Reisterstown, Md., welcomed the birth of a daughter on May 4, 2023. Andrew and his family are now a proud family of five.

**Joseph Messmer '08**, of Plymouth Meeting, Pa., has been married for three years. He and his spouse have been together 12 years and have a 2-year-old son.

**2010s**

**Alisha Wheeler '11**, of New Castle, Del., earned a master's degree in international business management from Hult International Business School in 2018. She specialized in innovation and disruptive features for futuristic mindsets.

**Melyssa (Lindsey) Cook '12**, of Orlando, Fla., and Joshua Cook were married on Dec. 5, 2023.

**Ashleigh Higgins-Smith '12**, of Philadelphia, Pa., recently celebrated her 30th birthday. She has a 2-year-old and obtained an information technology certification. She is now working to complete a project management certification.

**Austin Shay '13**, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., and his husband, Nick, were married in 2023.

**Kala Walker '14**, of Philadelphia, Pa., is a 2018 college graduate. She is a community advocate and a coordinator of the Why Try Truancy program.

**Gabrielle Wertz '15**, of Shoemakersville, Pa., asks for prayers for family as her maternal and paternal grandmothers passed away within two months. She says, "God bless!"

**2020s**

**Samantha McGill '21**, of East Petersburg, Pa., is a junior at Kutztown University and has maintained a 3.0 GPA all three years. She will have an opportunity to participate in an internship in her field next year.

**Haylee Schaeffer '21**, of Pottsville, Pa., celebrated her 21st birthday on Feb. 12, 2024.

**Jaison Nieves '22**, of Highspire, Pa., is a radio host for Temple Student Radio RNB Now on Mondays 4-5 p.m. on WHIP Student Radio on iHeart Radio. He also is a writer and social media manager for Temple News Sports.

**Sofia Lozada-Delzell '23**, of Hershey, Pa., is a full-time student, member of ALAS (Allied Latinx and Students), and social media manager for the LGBTQ+ resource center on her college campus.

**Deaths**

**Bradley Baumeister '45**, of Cincinnati, Ohio, April 4, 2024

**William Swingle '46**, of Virginia Beach, Va., March 26, 2024

**Howard Trimble '52**, of Hershey, Pa., Dec. 24, 2023

**Joseph Bach '56**, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., Dec. 27, 2023

**Richard Norrie '57**, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., Dec. 31, 2023

**Robert Askey '59**, of Albany, Ga., Jan. 2, 2024

**Emmett Gross '59**, of Mechanicsburg, Pa., Feb. 13, 2024

**Harry Heath '60\***, of Lancaster, Pa., April 10, 2024

**Robert Heller '60**, of Cottage Grove, Minn., Oct. 1, 2023

**Jacob Detrie '61**, of Butler, Pa., Feb. 5, 2024

**Andrew Getsie '61**, of Fort Wayne, Ind., Nov. 18, 2022

**David Andrascik '63**, of Sandston, Va., May 2, 2024

**John Blanshine '63**, of Lewes, Del., Dec. 6, 2023

**Ronald Fogle '63**, of Wilmington, N.C., Oct. 31, 2023

**Robert McHenry '63**, of Souderton, Pa., Sept. 12, 2022

**Gary Herberg '64**, of Lebanon, Pa., April 1, 2024

**James Hanawalt '65**, of Harrisburg, Pa., June 26, 2024



**2024 Graduate Named to PennLive Best and Brightest**

**Yanni Chau '24** was named one of PennLive's Best and Brightest. This annual award recognizes Central Pennsylvania high school seniors who make a difference in their school and community while achieving academic success.

The Best and Brightest class of 2024 included 20 high school seniors from 17 high schools in seven counties. They were selected from 135 applications submitted by students from Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, and York counties. 🏆



**MHS Congratulates Alumni Who Complete Postsecondary Programs**

Congratulations to **Mary Moody '19**, and all recent graduates who earned a certificate, an associate or bachelor's degree during the 2023-24 academic year. Your MHS family is proud of you!

Mary graduated with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from DeSales University.

If you completed a postsecondary credential this year, email a photo to MHSGPS@mhs-pa.org so we can include it in the MHS online photo gallery. Please include your name, class year, postsecondary institution, degree, and graduation date. 📷

**Lynn Hepler '67**, of Palmyra, Pa., March 29, 2024

**Richard Hobba '67**, of Carlisle, Pa., May 16, 2023

**Timothy Strouse '68**, of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Aug. 24, 2021

**Frank Parrish '69**, of Sharon, Pa., Dec. 2, 2023

**Joseph Berning '73**, of Harrisburg, Pa., Nov. 24, 2023

**David Allwein '74**, of San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 4, 2023

**Norman Kromp '75**, of Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 23, 2023

**James Breneman '76**, of Mount Joy, Pa., Nov. 12, 2023

**David Hawthorne '80**, of Fulton, N.Y., April 6, 2024

**Robert Rodriguez '89**, of New Windsor, N.Y., Jan. 19, 2024

**Richard Crout '90**, of Myrtle Beach, S.C., Jan. 17, 2024

**Robert Biddle '92**, of Lebanon, Pa., Feb. 20, 2024

**Milagros Fonseca '12**, of Allentown, Pa., Oct. 22, 2023

**Tasmin Roupp '12**, of Williamsport, Pa., Jan. 1, 2024

**\*MHS Lifer**

**Staff and Retiree Deaths**

**Walter Arthur** died on March 16, 2024. He was employed by MHS from 2020 to 2024 as a houseparent.

**Helen Dodge** died on May 9, 2024. She was employed by MHS from 1966 to 2004 as the Director of Visitor Relations.

**MaryAnn Fink** died on May 3, 2024. She was employed by MHS from 1969 to 1992 as a houseparent.

**John Grimm** died on Feb. 21, 2024. He was employed by MHS from 1974 to 1993 as a psychologist.

**Birgit Miller** died on Jan. 13, 2024. She was employed by MHS from 1989 to 2006 as a houseparent.

**Dominic Nestico** died on Jan. 3, 2024. He was employed by MHS from 1974 to 1991 as a maintenance mechanic.

**Joel Sheaffer** died on March 31, 2024. He was employed by MHS from 1991 to 2020 as a high school English teacher.

**John Yetter** died on Jan. 6, 2024. He was employed by MHS from 1956 to 1992 as a houseparent. 🏆




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# Calendar



## August

- 19 Opening of School
- 23 Cocoa Bean Game

## September

- 12-15 Homecoming 2024
- 13 Mr. Hershey's Birthday
- 13 Spartan Hall of Fame Induction
- 14 MHS Alumni Association  
Annual Business Meeting
- 14 Homecoming Football Game
- 14 Homecoming Banquet
- 15 Graveside Memorial Service
- 15 Homecoming Chapel
- 15 Memorial Grove Service

## October

- 1 Nomination deadline for 2025  
Alumni Achievement and  
Alumnus/na of the Year Awards

## November

- 10-15 Founders Week
- 10 MHS Alumni Association  
Reorganizational Meeting  
(tentative)
- 15 Founders Day (Nov. 15, 1909)

## December

- 31 Deadline for the 2025 Spartan  
Hall of Fame Nominations;  
[mhsalum.org](https://mhsalum.org)

## 2025

### April

- 4-6 Alumni Fellowship Weekend
- 4 Career Day
- 5 Alumni-Senior Brunch

### September

- 12-15 Homecoming 2025

All dates are tentative. Please refer to  
**[mhsalum.org](https://mhsalum.org)** and Spartan Minute for  
updates.



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