



Viking Alert

The Newsletter of
The North Canton
Alumni Association

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2016 Hall of Distinction

Your Alumni Association recognized 4 individuals during this year's annual induction banquet. This year's inductees include: Martin Alexander who had a positive impact on the Hoover High School vocal music programs. Brian Dyak, a 1967 graduate, who spent over 40 years dedicated to addressing serious health and social issues related to mental health, substance abuse prevention and treatment; Former superintendent Michael Gallina who is recognized throughout the Stark County area for his upbeat and positive attitude; Phil Howes, a 1953 graduate, a prestigious lawyer who practiced law for over 50 years in the Stark County area.

This year the Alumni Association presented a special recognition, "The Raymond (Bud) Swope Jr. Outstanding Achievement Award" to Dr. Jonathan Miller, a well known neurosurgeon with University Hospital in Cleveland.



Martin Alexander



Brian Dyak



Michael Gallina



Phil Howes



Dr. Jonathan Miller

This year marked the 27th anniversary of the Hall of Distinction. The original banquet was held in 1990 as part of the year-long celebration of education in North Canton.

This year's class brings the total number of inductees to 120.

In this issue we'd like to feature sisters Courtney and Shannon Howard. Courtney graduated from Hoover in 1999. She was active in choir including the Hi Los under John Hayward. She was also in marching and concert bands and served as first chair clarinet. In her junior year Courtney played the lead role of Nellie Forbush in South Pacific and had minor roles in Fiddler on the Roof, Bye Bye Birdie and Oliver. She was also involved in Mock Trial and National Honor Society. Summers were spent as a lifeguard at the Dogwood Swimming Pool.

Courtney graduated from Ohio State in 2003, where she majored in English with a minor in Political Science. She was a member of the Ohio State Symphonic Choir and was heavily involved in activities such as Student Alumni Counsel, the Dean's Advisory Board for the Humanities and the Honors Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences. Her senior year, she spent winter quarter in Washington D.C. as a John Glenn Fellow, where she took courses and interned at a child welfare public policy organization. Courtney also studied abroad in Bath, England. She also worked throughout college at various jobs including as the Public Policy Assistant for the Association of Nonprofit Organizations.

Courtney is currently as Assistant United States Attorney in the Organized Crime and Gang Unit of the US Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey. She's prosecuted federal crimes such as Ponzi scheme fraud, narcotics distribution, and carjackings. She lives in the West Village neighborhood of Manhattan, and has been in New York for 13 years.

Following her undergraduate years, Courtney moved to New York and attended Columbia Law School. After graduation she worked as an associate at the law firm Davis Polk & Wardwell. From 2008 to 2009, she clerked for U.S. District Judge Robert P. Patterson in the Southern District of New York. After her clerkship, she returned to Davis Polk for 3 years including a post conviction appeal in Tennessee that resulted in the historic vacating of the 1999 conviction and death sentence of a pro bono client. She's also worked at the Chicago Headquarters of the Obama Campaign. She loves living in New York but misses North Canton and Columbus and tries to get back as often as she can to see family and friends.

Shannon Howard graduated from Hoover in 2002. She was heavily involved in choir and drama in school. Her senior year she took video productions from Tom Wilson which began an interest in working in television. She was also involved in mock trial, art classes and served on the Jury of Teen Court through the Stark County Family Court.

In college Shannon majored in Telecommunications with a business minor. She was a part time photographer for campus life activities and was also part of the sorority Kappa Alpha Theta and served as recruitment chair. She also interned out in L.A. during summer both at E! Entertainment and Fox Broadcasting Network.

Shannon is currently the VP of Comedy Development at NBC and has been with NBC for 3 years. Prior to that she worked as an executive at the Mark Gordon Company, a production company. She started her career in comedy television at ABC. They work to foster new comedy shows from pitch to show. They are currently working on an upcoming series "The Good Place" starring Kristen Bell and Ted Danson coming this fall and coming midseason this year, "Powerless" starring Vanessa Hudgens and "Trial and Error" starring John Lithgo.

Obviously Courtney and Shannon are doing quite well.



Courtney & Shannon.

George Hamilton was the unquestioned leader of a surprising North Canton Viking team that went 22-7 in 1948-49 and advanced to the semi-finals in the state Class B tournament in Columbus. It was a role the slender 6'2" senior forward had not envisaged. As a junior he was a reliable sub off the bench on a senior dominated team that also made it to Columbus. Only two juniors, George and Don Humbert saw any appreciable action on the 1947-48 team. Hamilton was projected to play an important role on a team which was expected to have only an average year at best. When Humbert went down with a season ending knee injury in the very first game at Middlebranch, prospects looked even dimmer.

Hamilton had sprouted up six inches between his freshman and sophomore years and was still a gangly, growing youth who had yet to display any outstanding basketball skills. Even as a junior, his quiet, modest demeanor made him easily overlooked. But coach Clyde "Red" Vanaman quickly recognized the lad had an unflappable floor presence and a silky, smooth, deadly jump shot.

Hamilton would sing praises to his old coach all his life. "He made believers out of us." It was undoubtedly Vanaman's finest coaching effort. He took a modestly talented bunch of underachievers and molded them into a team that was greater than the sum of its parts. Aside from Hamilton, hardly anyone had any varsity playing experience. Jack Sponseller, a stocky guard who looked like the football tackle he was, perfected an unorthodox left-handed shot that was virtually impossible to block. Gene (Jeep) Boettler was a dynamic 5'8" forward who developed into the team's most tenacious defender. Center Dave Mathie was Vanaman's special project. The amiable 6'3" senior was the team jokester who candidly admitted he couldn't run or jump. But by mid-season Mathie had blossomed into a formidable force under the basket. (Who could forget his wondrous underhand "scoop" shot.) As Hamilton claimed years later, "Vanaman made a player out of Dave Mathie." The 5th starter was guard Bill Fye, an immensely gifted but inexperienced junior who would quickly fit into the team's style of play. Hamilton remembers Fye as "probably our best all-around athlete".

Hamilton was a major factor as the Vikings jelled in mid-season reeling off 14 straight wins to hit the road to Columbus once again. Perhaps his finest hour came in the regional finals at Kent where the Vikings took back to back wins over heavily favored foes in Midvale (24-1) and Lowellville (22-2).

In the semi-final game against Midvale, George dropped in 17 points to lead North Canton to a 37-29 upset against the Blue Devils who had vowed revenge for their 1948 regional final loss to the Vikings. Described by Canton Repository sportswriter Jack DeLong as "cool" with "super vision and ice water in his veins" Hamilton scored the first 3 baskets of the game as the stunned Midvale team saw its revenge hopes vanish. Two nights later, the Vikings punched their ticket to Columbus with a surprising 48-38 win over Lowellville which had demolished a strong Akron Ellet team in the semi-final. Hamilton again led the scoring with 14 but had plenty of help from his teammates.

No one expected them back in the state finals where they lost to a talented Lockland Wayne club 58-39. Fye with 12 and Hamilton with 8 led a valiant but losing effort. Fye and Hamilton were named to the Class B all-tournament team. George would look back and mused, "If we would have had Don (Humbert), I think we might have been undefeated in the regular season."

The 2016 Inductees into the North Canton Athletic Hall of Fame include Dave Clegg, Charles Cropley, Sharon Goodpasture O'Donnell, Holly Goodpasture Collins, Charlie Grandjean, Dick Gross, George Hamilton, Chris "CJ" Mears, Bill Ridge and Karen Theis.

The North Canton Alumni Association

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Recent Deaths- Ann Armour (37), John Armour (67), Verla Marie (nee Kandel) Forney (39), Harvey S. (Sam) Getz Jr. (49), William Haines, Jr. (64), Harold "Dean" Holloway (80), Ron Hushour (48), Riley Marrell (50), Dave Samblanet (71), Neal Surbey (53), Dean A. Warstler (49), Former Hoover High teacher and Tennis Coach Don Miller.

Upcoming Reunions-

See us on the web: <http://www.northcantonalumni.org/>

Or on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/NorthCantonAlumniAssociation>

Your Alumni Association Needs Your Support !

Since it's founding in 1990, your North Canton Alumni Association has been blessed with adequate financial support. This is mainly the result of our members renewing their annual memberships and from lifetime members who continue to contribute each year. We also encourage anyone to make contributions to the Association in memory of a classmate, special teacher, friend or relative. Those contributions are recognized in our newsletters.

Thus far your Alumni Association has presented a total of 110 scholarships and has awarded \$ 55,000 in scholarship money. We can only continue to do this if our membership continues to support our efforts.

You have two options for contributing to your Alumni Association. You can go to our website at northcantonalumni.org and click on giving or send your contribution to the North Canton Alumni Assn., PO Box 2534, North Canton, OH 44720. Yearly memberships are \$ 15, lifetime membership is \$ 100. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.