VIKING ALERT

Volume 34, Issue 2 Fall, 2026

Hall of Distinction Inducts Five



HALL OF DISTINCTION INDUCTEES. *The North Canton Alumni Association's Hall of Distinction grew to 188 members with the induction of the five-member Class of 2026. Pictured above (l to r) are inductees Christopher Boshkos, Paul D. Kieffer, Amanda (Grandjean) Gould, Ellsworth Smith (represented by his granddaughter Cathy McNeela), and Michael Foltz. See full biographies of the inductees inside.*

The Newsletter of the North Canton Alumni Association

A Look Back at the Hall of Distinction Ceremony



North Canton City Schools Superintendent Timothy Walker served as emcee.



Inductee Michael Foltz (far right) watches the ceremony with his family.



Alumni Association President Jim Strauch welcomes the crowd to the ceremony.



Inductee Amanda (Grandjean) Gould addresses the crowd with her son by her side.



Long-time Hoover High School teacher and 2026 inductee Paul Kieffer speaks at the induction ceremony.



Christopher Boshkos

Dr. Christopher Boshkos has a long-standing philosophy in his practice of medicine. As he puts it "our patients' interests have always come first, because patients are the reason why we are in practice."

Chris was born in Canton, Ohio, to Macedonian and Greek parents. Macedonian was his first language which he spoke at home until he began elementary school. His father owned and operated a family downtown restaurant for more than 30 years where he and many family members worked. Chris attended Orchard Hill Elementary and remembers all the students working to create the school's ceramic wall mosaic. During his time in North Canton, he won two science fairs. At Hoover, he was busy outside the classroom as well. He ran track for three years and "tried to play" football. He participated in debate, and was Junior Achievement president. He graduated in 1973.

Chris attended the University of Cincinnati where he graduated with a degree in Biology-Chemistry in 1977. He attended medical school at The Ohio State University. Chris completed his internship residency and chief residency in internal medicine with Summa Health Systems in Akron. Chris furthered his medical training to complete two separate fellowships. First at Stanford University Medical Center as a fellow in general nephrology, followed by a fellowship in transplant nephrology at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation Hospital.

In 1987, Chris became a founding member of Northeast Ohio Nephrology Associates, an academically-oriented, single-specialty, private practice specializing in transplant, interventional and general nephrology.

He served as the medical director of transplant programs at Summa Health Systems Hospital for 18 years and was an attending nephrologist at Summa Health for 33 years. He earned the position of Clinical Professor of Internal Medicine at NEOMED for his teaching efforts of medical students and resident physicians. As of January 2021, Chris transitioned to the biotechnology world as a team member in a precision-medicine organ transplant genomics company, CareDx, and later as a senior medical director in a contract medical research organization, CTI, Inc.

Chris's practice had focused on the management of patients with complex chronic kidney and autoimmune diseases, dialysis patients, hypertension, and the care of kidney/pancreas organ transplant recipients and evaluating potential organ donors.

Chris has received a competitive "Top Doctor" recognition 7 times between 2011 and 2018. He has been named a Cleveland Super Doctor by *Cleveland Magazine* and was on *Northern Ohio Life and Leisure Magazine's* Best Doctors List numerous times.

Chris and his wife, Vicki, live in Akron where he enjoys boating, cross fit, cycling, and reading. They attend St. Hilary Catholic Church. Their son, Ben, is married and living in Florida with their grandson. Their other son, Mitch is engaged to be married this fall.



Michael D. Foltz

You may not have paid attention to the name tag on one of the most frequently working officers patrolling Hoover football games and helping to manage its traffic. If you had, you would have read the name Michael D. Foltz. For literally decades, North Canton has relied on Mike to serve and protect its citizens, and he has served admirably.

Mike was born in North Canton to William and Leanna Foltz. At the time his family lived on Pittsburg Rd. In 1964, the family moved to Schneider Street. He attended Clearmount Elementary from kindergarten through sixth grade except for fifth grade when Clearmount was experiencing construction and he went to Orchard Hill. He attended Portage School and the junior high before graduating from Hoover High School in 1978.

During high school, Mike began working at various jobs before finding work at Bill's Import Auto Sales. He stayed there until he took a job at John Edwards Pontiac and later at Willis Motors in 1981. He attended the Canton Police Academy and graduated in 1982 with an Ohio Peace Officer Certificate. At that time he began working with the North Canton Police Auxiliary as an unpaid part-time officer. In 1986, Mike was hired as a special patrolman part-time. He continued at Willis and in those roles until 1992 when he was hired as a full-time officer with North Canton Police Department.

During his years in North Canton, Mike served in a variety of roles. He served multiple years as the department's DARE officer. He participated in the GREAT Summer camp with the Jackson Township Police to educate children about gang

resistance before running North Canton's own GREAT Summer camp from 1999 to 2009. Mike received extra training in Radar, Crash investigation, Alcohol Detection and Prevention, and received Community Engagement Training. He was part of the Special Response Team, served as a negotiator, and was a Field Training officer. Mike retired from the department on February 14, 2026 after over 40 years of service.

In addition to his police work, Mike has served the community in other capacities. He was a member of the North Canton Jaycees and served as Vice President and President for the organization. He chaired many of the Jaycees programs such as socials, Safety Town, and the craft show. He also ran the North Canton Police Department's Bicycle Rodeo.

Mike has been honored for his service. He received the Jaycee Brownfield Award in 1990 and the North Canton Jaycees Honorary Lifetime Member Award in 2013. He has been named Outstanding Officer of the Year by the North Canton Jaycees. He has been awarded the North Canton Knights of Columbus Blue Coat for Law Enforcement and the State of Ohio Elks Robert E. Powell Drug Prevention Officer of the Year Award. In 2025, he was honored for bravery in an active shooter incident by the North Canton Police Medal of Valor, and, in 2026, he earned the Blue Line Unlimited Medal of Valor.

Mike and his wife, Lori, are members of Grace United Methodist Church. He has served as Youth Fellowship Leader there. His daughter, Stephanie, is married to Richie Garrott and has given Mike a granddaughter and grandson.

Mike has hobbies that don't involve serving North Canton. He golfs, spends time with his family, and works on his yard and his MG. He and Lori look forward to traveling now that he is retired.

Hall of Distinction Nominations Sought

The North Canton Alumni Association inducted its first class into the Hall of Distinction in 1990. The charter class included The Hoover Foundation, Raymond Swope, and A. R. Basinger, M.D.

Hall inductees are those who have made significant contributions in one (or more) of three categories: (1) A graduate who has shown outstanding achievement in a chosen field or profession; (2) An employee who has performed outstanding service to the North Canton School System; or (3) A person or group who has performed outstanding community service to North Canton or a graduate for their local community.

To nominate an individual or group, visit the alumni association website at www.northcantonalumni.org, click on the honors and awards tab at the top of the page and scroll down to the Hall of Distinction nomination forms option.



Amanda (Grandjean) Gould

Keeping the federal government functioning involves not just our elected officials, but also the hard work of critical support personnel. North Canton native, Amanda "Mandi" (Grandjean) Gould, serves a critical role as Chief Counsel to United States Senator Bernie Moreno.

Mandi was born in August of 1990 to Charlie and Tam Grandjean in Canton, Ohio. She was raised in North Canton with her brother, Brock, and sister, Carlie.

After attending Orchard Hill, Mandi went to the middle school and Hoover High School where she excelled on the swimming and track teams and was inducted into the National Honor Society. She also lifeguarded at Dogwood Pool for many years. She graduated from Hoover in 2009.

Mandi attended Miami University where she earned Bachelor's degrees in Political Science and Journalism, magna cum laude. During her time at Miami, she interned at the Embassy of Iraq and at the Office of the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. John Boehner. She was a delegate to the Student Conference on United States Affairs, and, after graduating in 2013, she was the Media and Youth Vote Coordinator for the Stark County Republican Party. Throughout her college career, she was also a member of the Miami Women's Swimming and Diving Team that won a Mid-American Conference Championship her senior year.

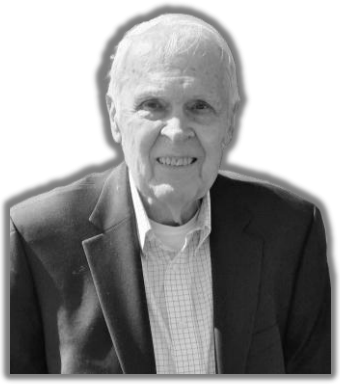
Mandi attended the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law from 2013 to 2016 where she earned her Juris Doctorate and graduated with honors. During that time, she interned at the Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, clerked for Judge Daniel R. Hawkins, served as an editor of the Ohio State Law Journal, was a research assistant for election law specialist Daniel Tokaji, and worked as a summer associate at Bricker and Eckler law firm. After graduation, Mandi began working full-time at Bricker and Eckler where her practice focused on election law, campaign finance, public policy, ballot initiatives, government affairs, ethics, and compliance. In 2019, Mandi was honored with the Miami University Alumni 18 of the Last 9 Award.

In January of 2019, Mandi became the Director of Elections as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State. There, she helped upgrade the cybersecurity and physical security posture of the 88 county boards of election and oversaw the 2020

presidential election in Ohio. This led to her promotion to Senior Advisor to the Ohio Secretary of State, where she drafted, help successfully pass, and implement the DATA Act to improve election data integrity in Ohio.

While at the Secretary of State's office, she also served as elected incoming president to the National Association of State Election Directors. Additionally, she was an advisory board member to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Election Data and Science Lab, member of the National Association of Secretaries of State, and member of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Election Task Force. In 2023, Mandi took a role as counselor to the chairman of the Federal Election Commission in Washington, D.C. before becoming chief counsel to Bernie Moreno in 2025. She is responsible for the legal functions of his office, nominations and public policy related to judiciary, homeland security, national security, defense, foreign affairs, law enforcement, congressional oversight, and constitutional issues.

When Mandi is not working to help Ohioans, she is dedicating all of her time and energy to her husband, Mike, and their children, Charlie and Monroe. In her free time, she enjoys teaching Pilates, running, swimming, and hiking.



Paul D. Kieffer

Paul D. Kieffer brought excellence to Hoover High School every day of his long career, and he treated his pupils with deep respect and sincere empathy.

Paul was born at Mercy Hospital in Canton, Ohio, on June 2nd, 1938. He grew up at Edgefield Grade School while his father worked in steel sales at Timken and his mother was a teacher and housewife. He had a younger sister, Donna. As a child, he enjoyed playing basketball and baseball. He was old enough to remember childhood during World War II, which he later shared with his students. Paul graduated from Lehman High School in 1956.

After school, he attended Kent State University where he majored in Social Studies Education. During college, his father got him a job on the labor gang at Timken. While he did not enjoy the work – which often involved digging sediment out of the acid pits – and he did not enjoy the hours. He made enough money to pay for his college expenses.

Paul began teaching at Taft Junior High School. After two years, he moved to GlenOak High School before eventually settling in for his 31-year career at Hoover.

During his career, he continued to grow and learn. He earned a Master's degree in history and administration from Kent State, completed postgraduate studies in economics at Akron University, and taught seminars in AP Government and AP U.S. History.

Paul derived great joy from his students. He has said that "the pleasantries of working with students outweighed" everything else. He respected his students and measured his success by their own. Early in his career, Paul lost four students in the Vietnam War. He and his wife purchased plaques in their honor and gave them to the North Canton Heritage Society. Paul's son, Brian, has said that he and his sister, Karla, are so very proud to say that 'everyone's favorite teacher' was their dad. Brian recognized that his dad put "thought, care, and heart into not just what he was teaching but more so who he was teaching."

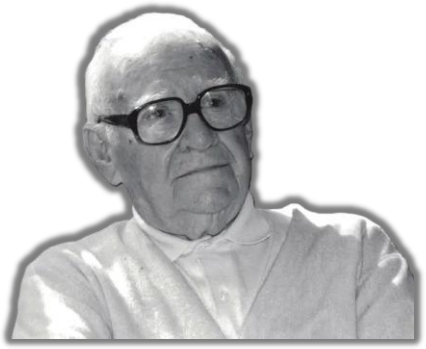
At Hoover, Paul also took on other roles. He served as department chair and spearheaded the addition of Advanced Placement classes. He developed new curriculum such as Psychology, Sociology, and World History and encouraged the department to bring in guest speakers from the community.

He was the school's liaison for the Boys and Girls State programs. Additionally, Paul was the Junior Class advisor – and therefore prom chairperson – for 21 years. He advised the National Honor Society and even coached middle school cross country. During the summers, he worked on a paint crew with other teachers.

Paul has also been active outside the school district. He taught night classes at McKinley's Canton Public Evening School for 5 years. He was an adjunct professor at Malone from 1969-1970 and then returned after retirement. He worked there for 20 years teaching government, American history, economics, teaching methods, and supervising student teachers. Paul has been active at the churches he has attended. He has served as a deacon, taught Bible classes, and served as an elder. He has also served as a board member and officer at the North Canton Heritage Society. In 2002, Paul and Rebecca Hall co-authored A Place in Time, which tells the history of the Hoover Company and North Canton against the backdrop of American history. It has been republished several times.

Paul has been honored for his service. He has received commendations for his book from the Ohio Historical Society and the North Canton Chamber of Commerce. He has earned the Martha Holden Jennings Education Scholarship Award and the Good Citizenship Award from the American Legion. The North Canton City Schools awarded him the Education Endowment Award for his work as a master teacher.

Paul and his wife Jeanne still live in North Canton. They have traveled a great deal over the years, including many summers at North Myrtle Beach. He attends choral and instrumental concerts and follows the Cavs, Guardians, Browns, and our own Hoover Vikings. He still exercises regularly and keeps his yard in perfect shape.



Ellsworth P. Smith

Hanging on walls in homes and businesses around North Canton are prints of its historical scenes. In fact, the artist has admitted, “I think I’ve painted everything paintable in North Canton, excepting only the sides of a few old barns.” These are the products of artist Ellsworth P. Smith who helped guide the visual and marketing presentation of the Hoover Vacuum Company.

Ells was born in 1895 on Cherry Street in Canton, Ohio, as the last born of six children.

He enjoyed both athletics and arts and spent much of his youth at the YMCA and attending YMCA camp. He was a gifted athlete who played on several city basketball teams and played semi-professional baseball. He was also a gymnast and tap dancer. After graduating from Central High School, he attended art school in Washington DC and Cleveland. During World War I, he served in the Army at Base Hospital 9 and Mobile Hospital 5 near Rouen, France. Though his primary role was to document medical procedures via cameras and sketches, he also entertained the troops, helped wounded soldiers exercise, and helped carry the wounded to hospital beds.

When he returned from Europe, Ells began working at the YMCA in Canton. In 1920, he was approached by the president of the YMCA board, HW Hoover, who was Boss Hoover’s son and second president of the Hoover company. Ells was offered the opportunity to begin an art department at the Hoover Company to design a small magazine for the company’s dealers.

The art department had many projects. It produced artwork for the dealer monthly magazine and the 8-page sales force publication. It also produced a monthly publication for the managers and for the service department and a weekly publication for all of the home office employees. Ells did comic strips for all of the magazines and created artwork to be awarded to employees. He additionally created a character called Whimsie who was performed by comedian Gus Howard at company conventions. Whimsie was an example of what a Hoover salesman should not be. Eventually, Ells’s art department employed 8 artists, 3 photographers, and a secretary.

Inspired by his experiences with YMCA, Ells became interested in the health of the Hoover employees. He encouraged fellow employees to join him at the Canton YMCA for exercise and games. He also captained the Hoover Company’s tennis team.

In August 1921, Ells took the initiative to meet with HW Hoover to propose creating a place near the Hoover factory where employees could exercise and participate in recreational activities after work. His vision and willingness to take that first step set the idea in motion. Without his initiative and his meeting with Mr. Hoover, the YMCA in North Canton would not have come into being. On February 18, 1923, the Community Building YMCA was opened across the street from the factory.

Ells had other impacts on the community as well. He created the most notable records of historical North Canton. He was instrumental in founding the Canton Art Institute and the Little Art Gallery in North Canton. He created a series of patriotic paintings featuring a shabbily dressed character named Gaylord. Jack Nicklaus was appreciative of the series and commissioned a series of 49 paintings from him. In 1960, after retiring from his 40-year career at Hoover, Ells taught art classes in his home – 4 classes a week.

Ells was honored for his work. He worked closely to create award-winning annual reports from 1944 to 1960. His reports won 5 firsts, 3 seconds, and 2 thirds from the Financial Times. When he retired in 1960, he was honored with the first Canton Advertising Man of the Year award.

Ells and his wife, Ernestine Strock whom he called Miss America, built a home on 35th Street in Canton in 1922. There they raised their children, Lowell and Barbara. Lowell also became a notable watercolor artist. Similarly, Barbara was a recognized vocal artist and teacher of singing. Ells lived in that home until his death in 1996 at the age of 100.



A LOOK BACK

Are you, or someone you know, pictured here with the sixth-grade class at the Portage School? This photo was taken sixty years ago this month! Take a look at how the students are dressed. How times have changed.

A Look Back at Your Class Reunions



Class of 1966





Class of 1969



A Look Back at Your Class Reunions





Class of 2006



Class of 1976



Supporting Your Alumni Association

The Alumni Association relies on membership dues and donations from its members and the community to offset the day-to-day operations of the association, to host the Hall of Distinction Ceremony, and to award scholarships to graduating seniors to name a few.

Your support is critical to our success. We are currently collecting dues and donations from our members. As a reminder, yearly dues are $15 and lifetime dues are $100.

We always welcome donations to our scholarship account. To donate, go to: **https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=F52CYN223T8MQ**.

For a quicker option, use the QR code below:

PayPal charges us, a non-profit, a service fee. If you choose to cover that fee, we will be most appreciative!

Did You Know?

The North Canton Alumni Association was founded in 1990.

The first class was inducted during a year-long centennial celebration of education in North Canton. That celebration was spearheaded by Ruth Harpold Basner (a 1993 Hall of Distinction inductee).

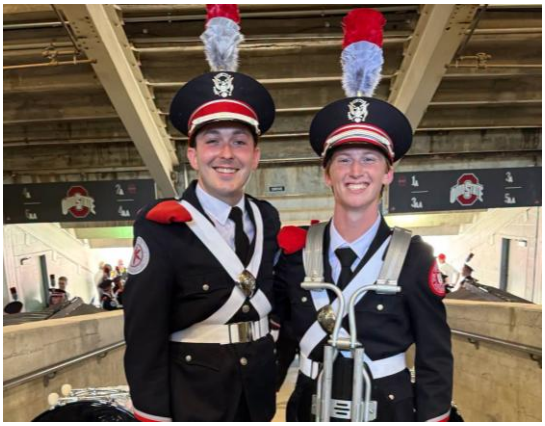
The first class of inductees included The Hoover Foundation, Raymond Swope, and A.R. Basinger, M.D.

As a result of the success of the first ceremony, community support presented an opportunity to continue it as an annual event.

Robert “Corky” Eck (a 2001 inductee) leveraged the support and formed the North Canton Alumni Association and assumed responsibility for the Hall of Distinction Ceremony.



ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES. The North Canton Hoover Athletic Hall of Fame recently inducted eight outstanding athletes and a coach as members of its Class of 2026. Honored were (l to r) Brett Wackerly (2005), Roger Viscounte (long-time coach) represented by his sons Tom and Steve, Trisha Schwerzler (1985), Amber Robinson (2003), John Marchette (1991), Curt Lukens (2003), Jenna (Lilley) Wiesberg (2014), Dom Iero (2013), Craig Erbland (1963) represented by his son Chris Case, and Glenn Collins (2003). Inductees were recognized at Hoover's home football game against Garfield Heights.



They went from being a Viking to making their way onto the field with the Ohio State Marching Band.

Will Wright ('26) and Drew Eynon ('22) are making Vikings proud on the field at Ohio Stadium as part of the legendary Ohio State Marching Band! Will is beginning a pretty epic chapter as Drew brings his to a close. That's one awesome Vikings connection!

Note to the Class of 2026

Graduates, please enjoy this printed version of the alumni newsletter on behalf of the North Canton Alumni Association! To stay up-to-date with future newsletters, scan the QR code and enter your email to receive a digital copy of the newsletter moving forward.

Scholarship Opportunities for the Class of 2027

James Phillip Holl Scholarship

Do you know of any North Canton Hoover graduating seniors who are planning on technical school, trade school, two-year university, or an apprenticeship? Have them apply for this scholarship!
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdf62oQ0wyoZ38mKYX0o86VjdAXiG2xhYb-Dbq24sBMThzU1w/viewform

G. Kenneth Oberlin Eagle Scout Scholarship

Do you know of any North Canton Hoover graduating seniors who are Eagle Scouts? Have them apply for this scholarship!
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeRIti0l2I2LAhhm1aMY87nYOZ3F80_GYC08upU5qUDQ4DbIg/viewform
or
http://www.northcantonalumni.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/08/Scholarship-GKO-Eagle-FINAL.pdf

Did You Know?

The North Canton Alumni Association has awarded more than $90,000 in scholarships since the program began in 1995.

A program of this magnitude would not be possible without the generous support of our members who include us in their yearly giving.

We acknowledge all donations earmarked for the scholarship fund. We welcome any amount, large or small, that members are able to donate.

Watch future alumni newsletters for scholarship opportunities and how you can donate to the scholarship fund.

Recent Deaths*

Kelly Baker Freshour (1985)
Jeanne Lennon Bergin (1986)
Tonya Lynn Kirby Blatt (1983)
Marilyn Baker Boettler (1950)
Judith Ann Kobel Bodenbender (1956)
Ryan Burns (2010)
Connie DeMarco Lucilio (1977)
Barbara Russell Donaho (1951)
(HOD inductee)
Sandra Kaye (Donant) Duncan (1969)
Dennis Dutiel-longtime graphic arts teacher
Carla Gilmore Gerber (1959)
Linda (Shimko) Geronilla (1969)
Tim Gissiner (1978)
Robert L Hessman (1970)
Carolyn Kell-elementary teacher for 30 years
Ronald Morrow (1951)
Elinor Acheson Nelson (1954)
Ronald Obermiller (1982)
Robert (Bob) Radosevic (1967)
Connie Gummere Smith (1954)
Stanley B. Strausser (1973)
Julie Weber (1975)
Walter "Bud" Zimmer (1954)

*Graduation year in parentheses

North Canton Alumni Association
P.O. Box 2534
North Canton, OH 44720

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Canton, Ohio
Permit #58