



PRESENTED BY



2025

Welcome from Our Presenting Sponsor, Gemmen's Ace Hardware

At Gemmen's Ace Hardware, being part of the Hudsonville community isn't just business. Our work is about building and sustaining a legacy. As a family-owned company rooted in service and connection, we're proud to support the 2025 Eagles of Excellence Gala and the Hudsonville Education Foundation's mission to invest in our students, teachers, and classrooms.

Tonight, we celebrate alumni whose personal and professional achievements reflect the influence of the educators, leaders, and neighbors who shaped them. Their stories remind us that excellence doesn't happen in isolation; it is nurtured by community.

We also honor our student Eagles of Excellence and their role model guests. These young individuals are showing us what it means to soar: through tenacity, hard work, and growth. Their journeys are just beginning, and they carry forward the values that make Hudsonville strong.

As businesses, families, and a community, we all play a role in creating lasting impact. Thank you for joining us in this celebration and in supporting the future of Hudsonville.

With pride,

Andrew Gemmen
On behalf of Gemmen's Ace Hardware



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PRESENTED BY



MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Blake Harms, Class of 2017

Wood TV 8 Meteorologist

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2025 HUDSONVILLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

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**MONDAY
NOVEMBER 3, 2025**

**THE PINNACLE CENTER
5:30PM - 7:30PM**

WELCOME

INVOCATION

VARSITY VOICES

-DINNER-

**EAGLES OF EXCELLENCE
STUDENT AND MENTOR
RECOGNITION**

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI
HALL OF FAME INDUCTION**

INVESTMENT TO IMPACT

CONCLUDING REMARKS

-PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES-

INCREDIBLE PEOPLE, IMPACTFUL LEGACIES

Eagles of Excellence Gala

The Eagles of Excellence Gala is an annual event hosted in the fall by the Hudsonville Education Foundation in partnership with Hudsonville Public Schools. The gala unites educators, administrators, students, parents, alumni, and community leaders to recognize and celebrate extraordinary Hudsonville Public Schools students, both past and present.

The evening honors:

Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame

The Hudsonville Hall of Fame honors individuals who have excelled in their professions, made meaningful contributions to their communities, or selflessly served Hudsonville Public Schools. Through these selections, the Hall of Fame celebrates a tradition of excellence, achievement, commitment, and dedication that inspires future generations.

This tradition began in 2017 and was further commemorated in 2023 with the installation of the Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame at Hudsonville High School. Each year, new inductees are added to this permanent tribute.

The installation was made possible through a generous gift from the Wierda family in memory of their beloved wife and mother, Marcia Wierda. Marcia was a 1958 graduate of Hudsonville High School and a 2017 Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame inductee.



Help HEF recognize impactful alumni in the areas of: Career Achievements, Cultural and Performing Arts Accomplishments, and Service to the Hudsonville Public Schools and Community.

Submit your nominations via the QR Code link or through hudsedfound.org. Nominations made by April 15 will be considered by committee in the same year. Nominations received after April 15 will be considered in the following year.

Lifetime Legacy Awards

The Lifetime Legacy Award was created to honor individuals who are not alumni but have made a lasting impact on Hudsonville Public Schools and the broader educational community. This category, while not included in each gala season, recognizes distinguished leaders whose contributions and character reflect the core values of an Eagle.

Eagles of Excellence Student and Mentor Recognition

Students are chosen as Eagles of Excellence by administrators based on their dedication to academics and their demonstration of positive character traits both in and out of the classroom. The Eagles of Excellence mentors are Hudsonville Public Schools educators and leaders selected by the students for their positive influence on lives and educational journeys.



Students & Mentors



Charlotte Baker
Class of 2028
Hudsonville High School



Mike Price
Teacher, Woodworking
Riley Street Middle School



Millie Bendert
Class of 2031
Baldwin Street Middle School



Tracey Weberg
Teacher, English
The 5/6 Building @ Georgetown



Kaden Bredeweg
Class of 2026
Hudsonville High School



Julie Tuuk
Teacher, Social Studies
Hudsonville High School



Addison Daldos
Class of 2029
Hudsonville High School



Timothy Wysocki
Teacher, Social Studies
Baldwin Street Middle School



Sabrina Edwards
Class of 2030
Riley Street Middle School



Kathleen Teall
Teacher, Math
Riley Street Middle School



Oliver Elders
Class of 2029
Hudsonville High School



Craig VanHam
Teacher, Math
Baldwin Street Middle School



Clay Harmer
Class of 2031
Riley Street Middle School



Sarah Lenhart
Teacher, Music
Riley Street Middle School



Lucy Kambestad
Class of 2026
Hudsonville High School



Chris Bolhuis
Teacher, Science
Hudsonville High School



Trav Keskitalo
Class of 2028
Hudsonville High School



Mark Mulder
Teacher, Social Studies
Hudsonville High School



Alaina Luna
Class of 2027
Hudsonville High School



Lauren Jenkins
Teacher, World Languages
Hudsonville High School



Andrew Meerman
Class of 2026
Hudsonville High School



Adam Nelson
Teacher, Math
Hudsonville High School



Colten Oldebekking
Class of 2030
Baldwin Street Middle School



Traci Gulch
Teacher, Resource Room
Baldwin Street Middle School



Students & Mentors



Yuna Park
Class of 2026
Hudsonville High School



Josh Ernstes
Teacher, Science
Hudsonville High School



Kennedy Petroelje
Class of 2031
Baldwin Street Middle School



Christopher Bowen
Teacher, Science
The 5/6 Building @ Georgetown



Rowan Phillips
Class of 2028
Hudsonville High School



Nicholas Huizenga
Teacher, Math
Hudsonville High School



Will Raterink
Class of 2027
Hudsonville High School



Deb André
Teacher, Music
Hudsonville High School



Kyla Reibel
Class of 2027
Hudsonville High School



Elisabeth Doerr
Teacher, English
Riley Street Middle School



Jovi Rios
Class of 2029
Hudsonville High School



Kim Engelhard
Food Service Server
Riley Street Middle School



Caleb Rivas Burciaga
Class of 2030
Riley Street Middle School



Jesse Dueck
Teacher, English
Riley Street Middle School



Evie Stadt
Class of 2030
Baldwin Street Middle School



Rebecca Bush
Teacher, Music
Baldwin Street Middle School



Georgia Tacoma
Class of 2028
Hudsonville High School



Derk Oosting
Teacher, Physical Education
Hudsonville High School



Kohen Van Houten
Class of 2027
Hudsonville High School



Chris Bolhuis
Teacher, Science
Hudsonville High School



Elianys Viego Chávez
Class of 2031
Riley Street Middle School



Aimee Miller
Teacher, Science
Riley Street Middle School



Nolan Williams
Class of 2029
Riley Street Middle School



Matt Baer
Principal
Riley Street Middle School



Distinguished Alumni

HALL OF FAME

2025 Inductee



**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER
LAUREN T. BAGULEY, USN**
Class of 2010

CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

From the pool to the bridge of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, Lieutenant Commander Lauren T. Baguley's journey has always been anchored in water. She began playing water polo in sixth grade and carried her love for the sport through high school, college, and beyond.

"Learning to swim in the environment that Hudsonville provided fostered my passion for the water while instilling lessons that shaped my future. The many hours spent in the pool honed my patience, discipline, and focus—qualities that continue to serve me in the Navy."

A 2014 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Commander Baguley earned a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography and received her commission into the U.S. Navy. While at the Academy, she was a four-year varsity athlete and served as Team Captain of the Women's Swimming Team. She later earned a Master of Science in Operational Meteorology and Oceanography from the

Naval Postgraduate School. Her postgraduate athletic achievements include selection for the World Military Championship Swim Team, with a competitive history of top-ranked performances in backstroke and freestyle events.

Professionally, Commander Baguley has been recognized with numerous military honors, including the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal. She has deployed with two Task Force Naval Special Warfare units and recently served as officer of the deck aboard the USS George Washington, overseeing tactical weapons systems and ship maneuvering. She humbly credits the sailors and airmen she led for keeping operations running smoothly. In October 2025, she joined Vice Presidents and Members of Congress on a long list of prestigious awardees of the Ronald Reagan Peace Through Strength Award.

One standout moment in her career was navigating the George Washington through the Straits of Magellan—an unforgettable and intense experience. Collaborating with multiple South American nations to secure safe passage through regional waters was both a tactical and diplomatic exercise in international partnership.

Her formative years were shaped by Hudsonville educators who sparked her passions and resilience. She fondly remembers Mrs. Myrmel at Bauer Elementary, whose love of reading led Commander Baguley to one of her lifelong favorites, *The Phantom Tollbooth* (Juster, 1961). Mr. Marc Beemer inspired

continued on page 19

Distinguished Alumni

HALL OF FAME

2025 Inductee



DAVID DeJONGE
Class of 1987

CULTURAL & PERFORMING ARTS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

David DeJonge's journey reflects both extraordinary perseverance and uncommon vision. Although his academic path was challenged by ADHD, depression, and academic performance, David found belonging in the camera club, The Vantage Point, and the Pioneer staff. After attending Grand Rapids Community College, a career counselor encouraged him to pursue photography. It was a decision that became the foundation for a celebrated career in portraiture and photojournalism.

As a young photographer successfully building his clientele at David DeJonge Studio, he made portraits for some well-known people such as President Gerald Ford, Supreme Court Justice Scalia, President of South Africa F.W. De Klerk, House Speaker Newt Gingrich, President George W Bush, Jesse Jackson, New York Times best-selling author, Eric Metaxas, The Betsy DeVos Family, and Edsel Ford II.

DeJonge's passion for storytelling led him to create two major documentary projects

on veterans. The first was titled, "Michigan Veterans of Five Wars" which was co-authored by Karin Orr, the former columnist from the *Grand Rapids Press*. The two interviewed nearly 30 combat veterans from WWI to Desert Storm. The exhibition was featured in the VanAndel Museum and the State Capitol Rotunda.

The second project called DeJonge away from his family and business at a great financial sacrifice. It featured the last survivors of WWI. He interviewed and filmed survivors of America, Canada, Germany and England. President George W. Bush invited DeJonge and 108-year-old Frank Woodruff Buckles, the last surviving American WWI veteran, to the Oval Office for a press conference and an interview with the Today Show. Later that day they unveiled the portrait collection with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon.

After these visits they went to the DC WWI memorial on the National mall to find it in disrepair. Frank asked DeJonge to advocate for its restoration and to create a National one (this was the only memorial to WWI in DC and was to the 499 locals who lost their lives during the Great War). He pledged to fulfill that challenging wish and resulted in the DC WWI Memorial being restored, a new national WWI memorial, dedicated in 2021 in Pershing Park near the White House. And a third memorial in Kansas City also received the title of National WWI Museum and Memorial. DeJonge notes, "Being raised in Hudsonville with the values of our

continued on page 19

Distinguished Alumni

HALL OF FAME

2025 Inductee



DYLAN J. TAATJES, Ph.D

Class of 1990

CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

Dr. Dylan Taatjes has built a distinguished career at the intersection of biomedical research and academic leadership. After graduating from Hudsonville High School, he earned a B.S. in Chemistry from Calvin College and a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He completed postdoctoral research in Molecular and Structural Biology at the University of California, Berkeley.

As a graduate student, Dr. Taatjes studied two antitumor drugs commonly used in the clinic, doxorubicin and daunorubicin, and determined their mechanism of action, which had remained enigmatic for 20 years. He then designed and synthesized derivatives that were 10 to 10,000 times more effective than the parent compounds. During this time, Dr. Taatjes gained an interest in cancer biology, and he learned that many cancers are caused and propagated by defects in transcription (a.k.a. gene expression), which refers to how the human genome is de-coded. As a postdoctoral researcher, he studied how transcription is controlled in

human cells and learned that many proteins that regulate transcription are therapeutic targets. His lab at UC-Boulder combines a variety of methods and technologies to discover fundamental mechanisms that control human gene expression, and how these mechanisms are disrupted in disease. To expand the research scope and impact, the Taatjes lab works with US-based pharmaceutical companies and academic labs from around the world. His discoveries have revealed mechanisms for switching genes on and off, offering new therapeutic strategies for specific cancer types, as well as for developmental and inflammatory diseases.

As a professor at the University of Colorado's Department of Biochemistry, Dr. Taatjes has taught and mentored students since 2004. His mentorship prepares students to become independent scientists who go on to lead biotech companies and academic research labs worldwide. Dr. Taatjes also finds deep fulfillment in service to the scientific community, offering peer review for scientific journals, organizing international conferences, serving on NIH and NSF study sections, participating on editorial boards, and leading science outreach in local high schools.

Dr. Taatjes credits beloved Hudsonville educators, including Bill VanKoughnet, Marinus "Moss" Luttikhuis, David Bolhuis, Larry Byle, Lyne Burkey, and Sue Topp, with sparking the curiosity and tenacity that launched his scientific path.

He lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife, Jessica (Kahn), and enjoys running, hiking, golf, reading, and (of course) science.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI HALL OF FAME

2024 Inductees

Sandra Van Dam Anderson, PhD, MS, BSN, RN
Career Achievements

Colonel Peter J. Gryzen, Class of 1993
Career Achievements

Roger D. Miller, M.D., Class of 1958
Career Achievements

2023 Inductees

Craig Hoppen, Class of 1982
Career Achievements

Henry Luttikhuizen, Ph.D., Class of 1982
Cultural and Performing Arts Accomplishments

2022 Inductees

Ken Sikkema, Class of 1969
Career Achievements

Matt Smith, Class of 2009
Career Achievements

Larry Byle
Honorary & Posthumous
Service to HPS and Community

2020/2021 Inductees

Henry Scholten, Class of 1938
Posthumous
Service to HPS and Community

Elmer Vrugink, Ph.D., Class of 1945
Service to HPS and Community

Ken Goff, Class of 1979
Career Achievements

Kimberly Koster, Class of 1986
Career Achievements

Samuel Maluil, Ph.D., Class of 2003
Career Achievements

2019 Inductees

Marshall Elzinga, Class of 1956
Career Achievements

Stanley Emelander, Class of 1977
Career Achievements

Steven Byle, Class of 1986
Career Achievements

Howard Perrin
Honorary
Service to HPS and Community

2018 Inductees

Thomas W. Warke, Class of 1958
Career Achievements

James W. Serum, Ph.D., Class of 1961
Career Achievements

Larry Gemmen, Class of 1966
Career Achievements

Kurt VanderSchoor, Class of 1981
Service to HPS and Community

2017 Inductees

Harrison Visscher, Ph.D., Class of 1947
Posthumous
Career Achievements

Robert Visscher, Ph.D., Class of 1947
Career Achievements

Marcia Wierda, Class of 1958
Posthumous
Service to HPS and Community

Dave Bolhuis, Class of 1959
Service to HPS and Community

Esther Luttikhuizen, Class of 1969
Cultural and Performing Arts Accomplishments

Marvin J. Overway
Honorary
Service to HPS and Community



SUPPORTING EDUCATION THROUGH HEF

Eagles of Excellence Gala

The Hudsonville Education Foundation invests in academic opportunities for Hudsonville Public Schools students by providing funding for resources that enrich education. The Foundation's strength to sustain academic success and respond to district needs is built through private philanthropic giving from donors.

Contributions to the Hudsonville Education Foundation General Fund support ongoing programming, allowing resources to be directed to both the essential and innovative academic resources necessary to ensure students receive the best educational experience possible.

The Hudsonville Education Foundation Endowment Fund is held at the Community Foundation Holland/Zeeland and ensures donations have a long-lasting and positive impact on education. Charitable gifts live on in perpetuity, leaving a legacy to benefit both current and future generations of students.

Regardless of the fund, your tax-deductible gift will provide tangible, meaningful support to make a difference in the education of students at Hudsonville Public Schools.

General Fund

DONATE BY CHECK

Make the check payable to the Hudsonville Education Foundation.

Denote "Where Needed Most," "Scholarship Fund" and/or "Tribute or Memorial" and include the person's names in the Memo Line.

Mailing Address:

HEF - PO Box 582
Hudsonville, MI 49426

Endowment Fund

DONATE BY CHECK

Make the check payable to the Community Foundation Holland/Zeeland.

Denote Hudsonville Education Foundation in the Memo Line.

Mailing Address:

CFHV - 85 E 8th St., STE 110
Holland, MI 49423

Additional Gift Options

DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS

RA Qualified Charitable Distributions

Gift of Stock

Estate or Trust
Planned Giving

RA QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

For more information, please contact ldixon@hpseagles.net at the Hudsonville Education Foundation.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

"The dedicated community of HEF donors and supporters empowers our students and teachers to stretch their limits, embrace innovation, and create remarkable impacts that transform lives and inspire futures."

Nicole Hansen, HEF Board President



Your gift makes an impact! Support HEF today.

**Impact starts with our community of donors and supporters.
Thank you for your contribution.**

SUPPORTING EDUCATION THROUGH HEF



The Hudsonville Education Foundation makes critical investments into our district through teacher grants and student scholarships.

TEACHER GRANTS

From resourceful tools to innovative applications, the Foundation financially supports educators in creating dynamic and engaging student experiences.

Our donors position the organization to fund \$20,000 per year in grant awards.

Increasing funds to this program means items like adaptable seating, new musical instruments, and plentiful program supplies are part of a student's experience.

Did you know that each additional \$1,000 raised for this initiative can lead to another request granted?

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Graduating seniors are selected to receive HEF scholarships for their pursuit of higher education—be it at a trade school, college, or university—and their role as a first-time post-secondary student in their families.

Our donors position the organization to fund four \$1,000 scholarships.

Increasing funds to this program means more Eagle graduates receive financial support for their post-secondary plans.

Did you know that each additional \$1,000 raised toward this program can lead to another scholarship?

HEF IMPACT

As a donor and supporter of the Hudsonville Education Foundation, your contribution results in powerful stories. You can make a significant impact on students.

"When I bring Play-Doh, chalk, beads, and other craft supplies into my AP Psychology classroom, I see students engage with the material in ways that a textbook alone can't provide. They build brains out of Play-Doh, piece together neurons with beads and pipe cleaners, and sketch memory systems with chalk. These hands-on activities make abstract concepts much more concrete and give students multiple ways to connect with the content."

Julie Tuuk
AP Psychology and US History
Hudsonville High School

"Thank you so, so much for helping me provide better materials for my students so they can really succeed in learning digital art. I'm so excited to share with the HEF how this award impacts my students at Riley!"

Chloe Lynch
Visual Arts
Riley Street Middle School

"Through scholarships and teacher grants, HEF makes a lasting impact on our schools. Scholarships give students the confidence and support to chase their dreams after graduation, while teacher grants provide the resources and opportunities that spark creativity and innovation in our classrooms."

Doug VanderJagt, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Hudsonville Public Schools



HEF MILESTONES



Hudsonville Education Foundation

2008

GRANT PROGRAM BEGINS

Leaders of the Foundation recognize an important opportunity to invest in educators and reward the pursuit of creative classroom investments. An annual grant application process begins.

2019

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM BEGINS

HEF leaders and supporters launch the first scholarship application process focused on providing resources for first-time college students.

2025

CALL TO ACTION: PROGRAM GROWTH

A record number of teacher grant applications catalyzes the organization's move to two application cycles. The need to fuel innovation calls supporters to action.

2004

FOUNDATION LAUNCHES

The Hudsonville Education Foundation officially launches with a mission of investing in academic opportunities that enrich education.

2017

FIRST GALA, EAGLES OF EXCELLENCE

After years of growing and celebrating the donor community at Family Fun night, HEF's first gala becomes an annual event. There, student leaders, mentors, and alumni are honored.

2023

SOAREE BEGINS

The value of an Eagle network is clear: area businesses, leaders, families, and supporters celebrate comradery as well as their influence on scholarships and grants at spring event.

NEXT

TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPACT

HEF is a multi-generational community of Eagle families and supporters dedicated to celebrating, innovating, and investing in transformational student experiences. Join us!



HALL OF FAME continued

Lieutenant Commander Lauren T. Baguley, USN - cont.

perseverance beyond academic setbacks and brought history to life through immersive simulations. And Mrs. Lauren (Munoz) Jenkins, her Spanish teacher, provided the language and cultural skills that later helped Commander Baguley navigate diverse countries during deployment.

Today, Commander Baguley resides in Bremerton, Washington, where she enjoys swimming, reading, and sunny adventures with her dog, Finley. Whether coaching or supporting water polo programs, her dedication to the water—and the values it instilled in her—remains steadfast.

David DeJonge - cont.

community, combined with my career path, compelled me to stand for those who could not stand for themselves.”

Of his days with Hudsonville Public Schools, DeJonge recalls Mr. John Burgraaf as one of the most influential people of his younger years. Burgraaf’s faith in DeJonge encouraged him through his struggles. Mr. Slotegraaf introduced DeJonge to German class and his first link to photography in the camera club. He credits Mr. David Bolhuis’s list of “indications of maturing” as foundational and DeJonge aspired towards them.

Today, DeJonge is the proprietor of Legacy Icons in Zeeland, a company creating Christian worship goods. He and his wife Gayle have four grown children. His oldest son is in seminary learning Arabic in Lebanon, his next son is finishing his bachelor’s and deciding between business and the priesthood, their daughter serves as an evangelical missionary, and the youngest son is preparing for his role in the family business. He considers his family and the fulfillment of Frank Buckles’s dream among his greatest accomplishments, and attributes it all to divine guidance.

FEELING INSPIRED?



Hudsonville
Education Foundation

Join the Hudsonville Education Foundation’s pursuit of incredible student experiences as a member of the grants committee or scholarship committee. Raise awareness and support for these initiatives and be part of the selection processes. You can make an important difference! Share your interest in the volunteer roles with HEF Executive Director Lacey Dixon at ldixon@hpseagles.net. Are you a donor to these initiatives? Thank you. Your support makes access and opportunity possible.



SAVE THESE 2026 DATES



Hudsonville
Education Foundation

Spring

SOARÉE

·PRESENTED BY

GEMMENS
ACE Hardware

Event & Silent Auction

MAY 6, 2026

Farmhaus Cider



Save the Date

GALA 2026

Monday, November 2



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