



WALLA WALLA PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
>> GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION <<  
2024



# WELCOME

Walla Walla Public Schools'  
Graduates of Distinction  
program provides an avenue  
for recognizing high school  
graduates of Walla Walla  
Public Schools.

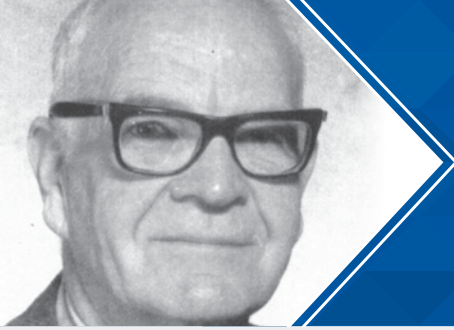




## GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION

These outstanding graduates have distinguished themselves in their communities and professions. This award also provides a platform to honor Walla Walla Public Schools staff members who were the most inspirational in their lives.

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## DOUG GWINN

*-Class of 1932*

*A lifelong educator who was ahead of his time with inclusion, equity and belonging.*

» Mr. Gwinn had a profound influence on the lives of countless boys and girls. His willingness to work with young people and his interest in them were evident.

A native of Walla Walla, Doug Gwinn came full circle graduating from the 8th grade at Jefferson Elementary School to holding the position of principal. At Walla Walla High School he played football and was in ROTC. He began his career in education in Pomeroy, then returned to Walla Walla in 1943 where he taught Physical Education and Shop at every grade school with the exception of Prospect Point and Berney. He became the Principal at Jefferson Elementary School in 1950.

During his 23-year tenure at Jefferson, Mr. Gwinn was a hands-on educator working through many challenges. Jefferson was the designated school for physically and developmentally disabled students. He was heralded by his staff at his retirement in 1973 for his direct involvement with the students.

While Jefferson's student body was economically diverse, many of

Jefferson's students were living in poverty, so he created a closet with his own money where children in need could discreetly select clothing. On his own time, he held Saturday PE in the gym for students and took physically handicapped children to bowl.

Mr. Gwinn helped start the Walla Walla Junior Wagon Wheelers, and organized outdoor recreational programs at Camp Wooten for Walla Walla youth.

His teaching legacy includes his three sons, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren who became teachers. His wife Helen also taught at Washington Elementary School. Doug's nomination was spearheaded by Pam Ray, with help from Brian Jones, Brenda Jones and Jon Campbell.

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MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

**ALVIS EAST, <<**  
*5th Grade Teacher*



## KAREN HEDINE

-Class of 1972

*A non-profit leader who puts the health and wellness of her community first through inclusive practices.*

» Karen is a great communicator who brought 30 years of executive leadership in the global life sciences industry to the YMCA when she took the helm in 2019. Karen can quickly identify a situation's priority objectives and motivate a team to achieve them in record time.

For example, Karen pushed for licensure of the YMCA's child care program, and it is now fully licensed by the states of Washington and Oregon. She also pushed for expansion of the Aquatics program, and it now provides training and operational support for other area pools. She consistently strives to make the YMCA a good community partner. Karen has made connections with other community nonprofits in order to better both the Walla Walla YMCA and other area nonprofits.

Prior to her time at the YMCA, Karen was a trustee for the Life Sciences Discovery Fund, established in 2005 by the Governor and Legislature of Washington state to foster growth of the state's life sciences sector and improve the health and economic wellbeing of its residents. She served as a business mentor for the nonprofit Kids in Medicine Seattle,

providing science and technology tools and training for K-12 teachers. Karen has served as a business mentor at the University of Washington Foster School of Business, and locally for students at Walla Walla University. She is active in the United Way's Elevate program for middle school students and has served the past two years as the YMCA's Youth and Government Advisor; a student-led program that develops future leaders through civic engagement.

Karen currently serves on the board of the Association of American University Women (AAUW) and Walla Walla Chamber Music Festival, and is active in the Nonprofit Confluence of regional nonprofits.

Karen's nomination was submitted by fellow Graduate of Distinction Mike Monahan, along with Mona Geidl, Helen Rockey, Tim Donaldson and Betty Woods.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBERS:

DAVID BERG, <<

*Wa-Hi Russian Language Teacher*

HARVEY WELLINGTON, <<

*Social Studies Teacher & Coach*



## BILL FLEENOR

*-Class of 1969*

*A civic-minded leader with a passion for youth sports and coaching.*

» Bill's passion for contributing positively to his community is evident in everything he does. He has a long history of serving on many community boards and participating on the Walla Walla City Council. Bill has a love of youth sports and has given much of his time coaching and refereeing in the Walla Walla area.

As a member of the Walla Walla City Council and as Mayor, Bill has demonstrated his deep investment in the wellbeing of the city and its residents through his 12 years of service.

Bill's dedication to the Walla Walla Country Club is extraordinary as he has been part of the Club for over 60 years and has donated hundreds of hours to its operations. As the chairperson of the Historical Committee, he personally retrieved many important artifacts for the Country Club's 100-year celebration.

Bill is currently the Walla Walla High School head boys golf coach. He previously coached College Place High School's boys golf team and

was head coach of the Walla Walla Community College men's basketball team. Bill was a sports official for the Blue Mountain Officials Association for many years, and also volunteers to serve on the Walla Walla High School Hall of Fame committee. Bill is a die-hard Huskies fan. His commitment and service to the University of Washington from the time he was a student until now is unparalleled. He's been to every home Huskies football game for more than 50 years.

Bill has a big heart and is continually donating to local causes through his philanthropic work. He is always giving back to the kids in some way or form.

His nomination was prepared by Libby Frazier, with help from Jeff Blanc, Gregg Loney and Dr. Craig Johnson.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

**LOLA WHITNER, <<**  
*Wa-Hi English Teacher*



## TRICIA COPELAND LUBACH

*-Class of 1985*

*A selfless leader, innovator and  
advocate of public education.*

» Tricia has served her community in Quincy as a school board member for nearly 20 years. Her educational contributions began when she was elected to the Quincy School Board in 2005, where she has served in all leadership roles, including several stints as Board President. Tricia also founded a private preschool in Quincy to fill an unmet community need for high quality childcare.

Tricia has been most impactful in her current position as the Director of Leadership Development for the Washington State School Directors' Association. Hundreds of potential school board candidates have attended Tricia's orientation courses. Over 1,200 school administrators and board directors attend WSSDA's annual conferences, which Tricia plans and directs.

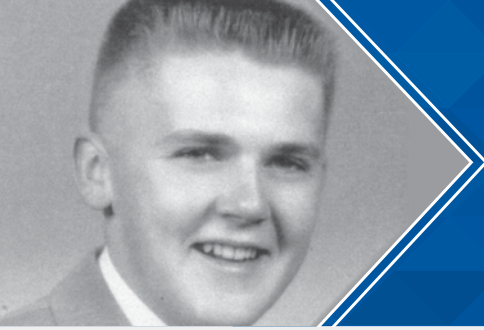
Tricia has worked tirelessly to develop and implement highly effective and engaging professional development for thousands of school board members statewide, including the Walla Walla Public Schools' Board of Directors.

In all her positions, Tricia has demonstrated her dedication to exceptional education for students, and supports professional excellence for the directors and school board teams with whom she serves. She has distinguished herself as an outstanding educational leader, role model and hands-on supporter of the hard-working school board directors across the state of Washington.

Tricia's nomination was compiled by her grandfather Thomas Copeland, Class of 1942 and Graduate of Distinction in 2014, with support from Dr. Nik Bergman, Tim Garchow and Cari Horning.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

**MARY JO GEIDL, <<**  
*Wa-Hi English Teacher*



## DEAN LODMELL

*-Class of 1952*

*A highly accomplished engineer who gives back to his community through his construction expertise.*

» After graduating from Walla Walla High School in 1952, Dean attended Whitman College then Columbia University where he continued his education in civil and structural engineering. He helped manage construction of Dodgers Stadium, worked on several dam projects and constructed highways and bridges in Pakistan. He also worked in New York City during the 1970s building tunnels. Locally, he was the construction manager for the Walla Walla Regional Airport Terminal, Key Technology Facility, Penrose Library at Whitman College, and the Walla Walla College Administration Building.

For years, Dean has served on the Walla Walla Public Schools Community Facilities Task Force to develop long-range facility improvement plans. In the early 2000s, Dean served as construction manager for the Sharpstein Elementary bond project to help modernize the 100-year-old community treasure.

In recent years, Dean assisted with the preparation of the district's 2018 bond election. He served as a volunteer

consultant on the Outdoor Athletic and Activity Facilities Committee which led to recommendations for the 2024 Capital Levy election. Dean was also involved in helping educate the community about the Capital Levy proposal.

In recent years, Dean has been honored with a Community Leadership award from the school district and was also named to the Whitman College Athletic Hall of Fame.

Dean has been married to Betty since 1986. Betty formerly owned and operated Betty's Preschool for decades. Dean's nomination was arranged by Scott Krivoshein with assistance from Steve Kimball, Dr. Bill Jordan and Representative Mark Klicker, 16th Legislative District.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

**FELIX FLETCHER, <<**

*Wa-Hi Teacher & Football Coach*





#### FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about the  
Graduates of Distinction Program  
(*including the nomination process*)  
please visit our website:

[WWPS.ORG](http://WWPS.ORG)



# » GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION « AWARD RECIPIENTS 1999-2024

| AWARD YEAR | RECIPIENT'S NAME | GRAD YEAR |
|------------|------------------|-----------|
|------------|------------------|-----------|

| AWARD YEAR | RECIPIENT'S NAME | GRAD YEAR |
|------------|------------------|-----------|
|------------|------------------|-----------|

## 1999

|      |                        |      |
|------|------------------------|------|
| 1999 | James F. Aylward ..... | 1946 |
| 1999 | Richard P. Neher ..... | 1949 |
| 1999 | Karen E. Glover .....  | 1968 |
| 1999 | Dr. Eric Johnson.....  | 1968 |
| 1999 | Michael Murr .....     | 1969 |

## 2000

|      |                            |      |
|------|----------------------------|------|
| 2000 | Gordon S. Riess.....       | 1944 |
| 2000 | Dr. William C. Dement..... | 1947 |
| 2000 | Wilber Pribilsky .....     | 1951 |
| 2000 | Philip N. Lane, Jr.....    | 1962 |
| 2000 | Bruce T. Bjerke.....       | 1968 |

## 2001

|      |                               |      |
|------|-------------------------------|------|
| 2001 | Gordon L. Jaynes.....         | 1946 |
| 2001 | Ned Lange .....               | 1952 |
| 2001 | Eugene Blattman .....         | 1954 |
| 2001 | Jeanne Parker Miller .....    | 1969 |
| 2001 | Vickie Anderson-VanZandt..... | 1972 |

## 2002

|      |                        |      |
|------|------------------------|------|
| 2002 | Charlotte Wirth .....  | 1944 |
| 2002 | Robert I. Brunton..... | 1953 |
| 2002 | James K. Hayner .....  | 1968 |

## 2003

|      |                     |      |
|------|---------------------|------|
| 2003 | Gene Frank .....    | 1946 |
| 2003 | Mark Anderson ..... | 1973 |
| 2003 | Irene Gonzales..... | 1980 |

## 2004

|      |                        |      |
|------|------------------------|------|
| 2004 | Harold R. Frank.....   | 1941 |
| 2004 | Ned Shafer.....        | 1961 |
| 2004 | Jeffrey Frank Ray..... | 1978 |

## 2005

|      |                                  |      |
|------|----------------------------------|------|
| 2005 | Gerwyn A. Jones.....             | 1928 |
| 2005 | Dr. George Cole Williams Jr..... | 1947 |
| 2005 | Michael Maiden.....              | 1968 |

## 2006

|      |                          |      |
|------|--------------------------|------|
| 2006 | Val Jensen.....          | 1947 |
| 2006 | Dr. Stephen Hayner ..... | 1966 |
| 2006 | AnnRene Joseph .....     | 1973 |

## 2007

|      |                           |      |
|------|---------------------------|------|
| 2007 | Dr. Neil V. Follett ..... | 1944 |
| 2007 | Barbara D. Johnson .....  | 1967 |

## 2008

|      |                               |      |
|------|-------------------------------|------|
| 2008 | Claro E. Bergevin.....        | 1941 |
| 2008 | Gretchen Miller Kafoury ..... | 1959 |
| 2008 | John E. "Jack" Pelo.....      | 1974 |

## 2009

|      |                           |      |
|------|---------------------------|------|
| 2009 | R.F. "Dick" Monahan ..... | 1958 |
| 2009 | Daniel DeSiga .....       | 1967 |
| 2009 | Greg Ralston Pepin.....   | 1968 |
| 2009 | Dr. Philip Phillips ..... | 1975 |

## 2010

|      |                               |      |
|------|-------------------------------|------|
| 2010 | Richard K. Knuth, Ph.D.....   | 1969 |
| 2010 | Mary Jane Towner-Glaser ..... | 1971 |
| 2010 | Tim Donaldson.....            | 1979 |

## 2011

|      |                                 |      |
|------|---------------------------------|------|
| 2011 | Edward Aliverti .....           | 1950 |
| 2011 | Lt. Gen. Robert D. Beckel ..... | 1955 |
| 2011 | Larry B. Siegel .....           | 1969 |
| 2011 | Drew M. Bledsoe.....            | 1990 |

# » GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION « AWARD RECIPIENTS 1999-2024

| AWARD YEAR  | RECIPIENT'S NAME                 | GRAD YEAR | AWARD YEAR  | RECIPIENT'S NAME                | GRAD YEAR |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>2012</b> |                                  |           | <b>2019</b> |                                 |           |
| 2012        | John P. Folsom.....              | 1962      | 2019        | Peggy Blize Needham .....       | 1982      |
| 2012        | Jill A. Largent, M.D.....        | 1968      | 2019        | Scott Krivoshein .....          | 1983      |
| 2012        | Megan Ferguson Clubb .....       | 1974      | 2019        | Mary Lux Stumph.....            | 1983      |
|             |                                  |           | 2019        | Dr. Tony Billingsley .....      | 1993      |
| <b>2013</b> |                                  |           | <b>2020</b> |                                 |           |
| 2013        | Carol Minnick Santa.....         | 1962      | 2020        | NO PROGRAM DUE TO COVID-19      |           |
| 2013        | Dan Reid .....                   | 1974      |             |                                 |           |
| 2013        | Craig Nelson .....               | 1981      |             |                                 |           |
| <b>2014</b> |                                  |           | <b>2021</b> |                                 |           |
| 2014        | Thomas L. Copeland.....          | 1942      | 2021        | Garth Lindsey.....              | 1962      |
| 2014        | Daniel J. Hess.....              | 1968      | 2021        | Elizabeth "Libby" Frazier ..... | 1973      |
| 2014        | Paul H. Schneidmiller.....       | 1970      | 2021        | Kathy Covey.....                | 1973      |
| 2014        | David Wagner .....               | 1993      | 2021        | Judith Huntington .....         | 1964      |
|             |                                  |           | 2021        | Mike Monahan .....              | 1960      |
|             |                                  |           | 2021        | Dr. Allison Bingham.....        | 1977      |
| <b>2015</b> |                                  |           | <b>2022</b> |                                 |           |
| 2015        | Judy Chamberlain Holloway .....  | 1962      | 2022        | Russ Colombo .....              | 1974      |
| 2015        | Richard "Dick" Moeller .....     | 1963      | 2022        | Deborah Underwood.....          | 1979      |
| 2015        | Carol M. Barker.....             | 1974      | 2022        | Mark Thompson .....             | 1970      |
|             |                                  |           | 2022        | J.P. "Jack" Frederickson.....   | 1952      |
| <b>2016</b> |                                  |           | <b>2023</b> |                                 |           |
| 2016        | Gary Hanson .....                | 1976      | 2023        | Norm Passmore .....             | 1972      |
| 2016        | Mark Kajita .....                | 1987      | 2023        | Mary Vixie Sandy .....          | 1978      |
| 2016        | Jerry Zahl .....                 | 1962      | 2023        | Steve Bughi.....                | 1978      |
|             |                                  |           | 2023        | Tera Watts Davis .....          | 1998      |
| <b>2017</b> |                                  |           | <b>2024</b> |                                 |           |
| 2017        | Bruce Hunt.....                  | 1974      | 2024        | Doug Gwinn .....                | 1932      |
| 2017        | Jeanne Eggart Helfer .....       | 1977      | 2024        | Karen Hedine .....              | 1972      |
| 2017        | Richard D. Simon, Jr, M.D. ....  | 1968      | 2024        | Bill Fleenor .....              | 1969      |
|             |                                  |           | 2024        | Tricia Copeland Lubach .....    | 1985      |
|             |                                  |           | 2024        | Dean Lodmell.....               | 1952      |
| <b>2018</b> |                                  |           |             |                                 |           |
| 2018        | Terry Atchison .....             | 1966      |             |                                 |           |
| 2018        | Dr. Randall Kenneth Barton ..... | 1971      |             |                                 |           |
| 2018        | Dr. Elizabeth MacDonald .....    | 1995      |             |                                 |           |



Walla Walla  
Public Schools

» 2023-2024 «