



WELCOME

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

2020-2021

>> **GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION** <<
PROGRAM





GARTH LINDSEY

-Class of 1962

A Certified Public Accountant who headed up financial operations in television.

» Music became Garth Lindsey's primary interest in grade school and it guided his life's path into college at Brigham Young University (BYU). It even helped him meet his wife Mary, daughter of his college choral director.

But, everything changed when he took an introductory accounting class as a junior. That class inspired him to eventually become a Certified Public Accountant and led to a career that would span 35 years, most of it in the television industry heading up financial operations and managing stations around the country.

Wa-Hi classmate, Judy Holloway, says he has always been a "listener and observer. His successful career has made 'giving back' and enhancing the lives of others a priority." Retired since 2001, he continues to make music and humanitarian causes a priority in his life. An active member of the LDS Church, Garth and his wife Mary established an accounting scholarship fund at BYU, which annually serves at least four deserving people each year. He also is a significant contributor to the annual Olympic Music Festival.

Perhaps Garth's most impactful local cause came to his attention around the time of his 50th high school reunion, when he attended a planning potluck and heard about classmate Jerry Zahl's plan for a Walla Walla Public Schools' High School Scholarship Fund. Garth quickly responded by offering to match the first \$5,000 in contributions and has generously matched other class reunion gifts in ensuing years. Jerry says that "because of his encouragement and support, more than \$130,000 has been raised to help Walla Walla high school graduates."

Garth's nomination was spearheaded by Judy Holloway, with help from Brent Allen, Stewart Swartz and Jerry Zahl.

Garth chose George White, his music/choir teacher at Wa-Hi, as his most inspirational staff member. Garth says he so appreciated Mr. White's "dedication to teaching music and his interest in his students. He instilled in me a love of music."

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

GEORGE WHITE, <<
Wa-Hi Music/Choir Teacher



ELIZABETH “LIBBY” FRAZIER

-Class of 1973

A retail & real estate expert who dedicates her time to serving the community.

>> According to one of her nominators, Libby's experiences as a student were formative to her attitude toward her career, her community and her life. "She is the rare individual who shows up to model accountability and trustworthiness by keeping her pledge, rolling up her sleeves and getting the job done."

After graduation from Washington State University in 1977, Libby was hired by The Bon Marche and began a 19-year career that would combine business with her love of Walla Walla. In her 11 years as manager, the store enlarged into the restored Liberty Theater next door and served as an inspiration and anchor for downtown revitalization. In 1998, she became manager of the Blue Mountain Mall and kept it alive in challenging times by hosting community events and groups. She then had a successful career in real estate before retiring in 2013.

She has always been very active in Walla Walla organizations and non-profits. The list includes Providence St. Mary's Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Walla Walla and Fort Walla Walla Museum, where she helped with expansion efforts as a board member. In 2019, she became only the second

woman to serve as Board President for the Walla Walla Country Club.

Throughout it all, she has kept her family in the forefront. Her daughters, Megan and Brooke remember that she never missed a game, would travel with them to basketball and softball tournaments, as well as ski races. "She was (and still is) one of our biggest cheerleaders," they wrote in her letter of nomination.

In retirement, Libby enjoys golf, paddle boarding at Priest Lake and being a grandmother.

Nominators for Libby were her daughters, Megan Frazier Golden and Brooke Frazier, as well as Terri Turner Hansen, Jeff Blanc and Shauna Fouts Andrews.

Linda Thorne, Libby's high school sociology teacher, is her inspirational staff member. Libby says "She was a great role model for me in the 70's - a professional woman juggling a job and family, and excelling at everything."

~~~~~  
**MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

LINDA THORNE, <<  
*Wa-Hi Sociology Teacher*



## KATHY COVEY

-Class of 1973

*A pioneer in social services who broke barriers for women in the community.*

>> “Kathy has been ‘in the trenches’ with people for 40 years,” according to a friend and longtime colleague in her letter of nomination.

Following her 1978 graduation from Eastern Washington University, Kathy returned to her hometown and began working for Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC), as a youth employment specialist, placing teens in educational and employment opportunities to equip them for successful lives. Her leadership and caring attitude were recognized as she moved into positions of more responsibility, until she ultimately became the CEO in 2014. BMAC now serves more than 5,000 people annually, with a staff of 53 and an annual budget over \$7 million.

Kathy doesn't limit her community involvement to her job. She served as director of the Community Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center, is on the board for Trilogy Recovery Center, and has volunteered for the Salvation Army, Homeless Alliance and the Walla Walla Downtown Work Group. Kathy was also the first woman president of Exchange Club. One nominator says “she steps into our Valley with a message

of hope, commitment and bridge-building, recognizing when we serve collaboratively, we serve best.”

She was instrumental in working with other area non-profits to finance and build a Teen Center, The Hub, which includes a homeless shelter, health and childcare center. She established a special BMAC program for veterans to support them and their families in a variety of ways. And she was at the forefront when BMAC recently moved back into the downtown core to be closer to the people who need services.

Kathy's nominators include Nancy Riggle, Tim Meliah, Cindy Widmer, Tim Koehler and Steve Moss.

Her inspirational staff member is Tom Barbour, her high school psychology teacher, who inspired her to go into the field of social work. She said, “It was as much about how and what he taught as it was about how he taught and dealt with challenging students. He was an incredible teacher and human being.”

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

**TOM BARBOUR, <<**

*Wa-Hi Psychology Teacher*



## JUDITH HUNTINGTON

*-Class of 1964*

*A healthcare leader empowering nurses to better serve their communities.*

>> Judy has always been enthusiastic for the betterment of those around her, whether it was in the Pep Club at Wa-Hi or serving as executive director for associations benefiting fellow nurses, says one of her nominators.

She has spent more than five decades in the nursing profession since graduating from the University of Washington in 1968. After working in several Seattle area hospitals, she was named Interim Director of the Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA) in 1983, received her Master's in Nursing in 1985, and moved to Washington, D.C. for nine years to work in a variety of capacities for the American Nurses Association.

Her home state drew her back in 1999 for an 18-year stint as Executive Director of WSNA. She has received more than 23 awards, faculty appointments and citations of merit throughout her life. She was among the founding members of the Washington State Commission for Affordable Health Care to better serve low income people in rural areas who would not otherwise have health insurance.

Her nominators agree that Judy sees it as her mission to open up dialogue among nurses, health leaders and government. They say her impact has been "incredible and indelible." She helped develop a website called Nursing World to give those professionals access to more than 10,000 resources, including educational and conferencing abilities.

In retirement, Judy continues to serve on health care committees and task forces and was recently vice president of the executive board for the Washington State Labor Council.

Nominators for Judy include Jani Kay Smith, Sofia Aragon, Frankie Manning and Sally Watkins.

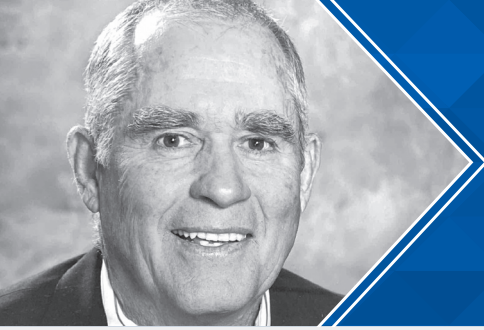
Johnnie Dennis, Judy's physics and geometry teacher at Wa-Hi, is her most inspirational staff member. She remembers that "he taught his students important critical thinking and study skills that are invaluable to this day."

---

### **MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

**JOHNNIE DENNIS, <<**

*Wa-Hi Physics/Geometry Teacher*



## MIKE MONAHAN

-Class of 1960

*Irrigation sales leader who champions health and fitness in the community.*

>> You might say athletic pursuits are in Mike's blood. He grew up at the Walla Walla YMCA, where his grandfather and then father were executive directors. He was a three-sport athlete at Wa-Hi, then played and later coached football while he earned his Bachelors and Masters in Physical Education.

Mike's first job was coaching and teaching in Ely, Nevada, in 1966. It was there he met and married his wife, Margy, before returning to his hometown to work as a counselor at the Washington State Penitentiary. He then was hired by Walla Walla Community College as athletic director and assistant coach. In 1978, he began working in sales for Nelson Irrigation Corporation and he ended his 31-year career with the company as its National Sales Manager, a highly-respected member of the irrigation industry.

Mike has stayed involved in the YMCA, serving several times on its Board of Directors and, in 2014 and 2018, serving as a volunteer Interim Director. A fellow Board member and nominator says Mike provided "calm and steady leadership and kept the

Y's focus on its mission to serve area families and youth."

All of Mike's nominators agree that he "represents all that is best about being a community-oriented person... with his deep knowledge and lifelong commitment to sports and healthy living." He remains an avid Wa-Hi sports fan, even though his children and grandchildren no longer play. And he has been recognized as a Hall of Fame inductee for Wa-Hi, Columbia Basin College and the Northwest Athletic Conference.

Executive Director Karen Hedine, the board and staff of the YMCA coordinated Mike's nomination, with help from Tim Donaldson, Bart Nelson, Dan Reid and Bob Rugar.

Wa-Hi's famous football coach, Felix Fletcher, was Mike's most inspirational staff member. He says he remembers him with fondness as both coach and mentor.

---

### **MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

**FELIX FLETCHER, <<**  
*Wa-Hi Football Coach*



## ALLISON BINGHAM, PH.D.

-Class of 1977

*A global leader focusing on improving health to move humanity forward.*

>> In her own words from a career biographical sketch, Allison says her goal has always been to “put people first.” A consistent thread in her life has been to “advance our understanding of the role that people can play in their own development process, especially in resource-poor settings.”

She earned her Bachelors in Anthropology from Brigham Young University, her Masters in Applied Anthropology from Georgia State, and her Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut, Storrs. Her life’s work has taken her around the world, with stops in Latin America, East Africa, central and southern Asia and South America. She lived and conducted extensive research in Mexico and western Kenya. The health concerns at the top of her list are cervical cancer, HIV, nutrition, environmental toxins, malaria and family planning.

One of her nominators praises her as a “key member of many ground-breaking initiatives in Africa... an advocate for the mother, the child and community member.” Most of her career was with PATH, a global non-profit focused on improving health to move humanity forward. She also has worked on sev-

eral grant initiatives sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and she has published more than 30 articles on a variety of health topics.

A friend and nominator describes Allison as someone who is “gutsy and thrives on adventure and being close to nature.” “She is at home in the African bush, hiking the mountain trail, scuba diving in the clear waters of magical lake Malawi....(and) she has given her heart, soul and professional expertise to the continent.” In retirement, she lives and stays active in Roslyn, Washington.

Allison’s nominators are Jan Rolfe, Rikka Trangsrud, Vivian Tau and William P. Handwerker.

Allison chose Diane Briggs, her junior high volleyball and basketball coach, as her inspirational staff member. She has stayed in contact with her for 45 years as a friend and mentor and says Diane’s dedication and support has never wavered.

**MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

DIANE BRIGGS, <<

*Garrison MS Volleyball/Basketball Coach*

# »» GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION «« AWARD RECIPIENTS 1999-2021

| AWARD YEAR | RECIPIENT'S NAME                  | GRAD YEAR | AWARD YEAR | RECIPIENT'S NAME                 | GRAD YEAR |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1999       | James F. Aylward .....            | 1946      | 2010       | Mary Jane Towner-Glaser .....    | 1971      |
| 1999       | Richard P. Neher .....            | 1949      | 2010       | Tim Donaldson .....              | 1979      |
| 1999       | Karen E. Glover .....             | 1968      |            |                                  |           |
| 1999       | Dr. Eric Johnson.....             | 1968      | 2011       | Edward Aliverti .....            | 1950      |
| 1999       | Michael Murr .....                | 1969      | 2011       | Lt. Gen. Robert D. Beckel .....  | 1955      |
|            |                                   |           | 2011       | Larry B. Siegel .....            | 1969      |
| 2000       | Gordon S. Riess.....              | 1944      | 2011       | Drew M. Bledsoe.....             | 1990      |
| 2000       | Dr. William C. Dement.....        | 1947      |            |                                  |           |
| 2000       | Wilber Pribilsky .....            | 1951      | 2012       | John P. Folsom.....              | 1962      |
| 2000       | Philip N. Lane, Jr.....           | 1962      | 2012       | Jill A. Largent, M.D.....        | 1968      |
| 2000       | Bruce T. Bjerke.....              | 1968      | 2012       | Megan Ferguson Clubb .....       | 1974      |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2001       | Gordon L. Jaynes.....             | 1946      | 2013       | Carol Minnick Santa .....        | 1962      |
| 2001       | Ned Lange .....                   | 1952      | 2013       | Dan Reid .....                   | 1974      |
| 2001       | Eugene Blattman .....             | 1954      | 2013       | Craig Nelson .....               | 1981      |
| 2001       | Jeanne Parker Miller .....        | 1969      |            |                                  |           |
| 2001       | Vickie Anderson-VanZandt.....     | 1972      | 2014       | Thomas L. Copeland.....          | 1942      |
|            |                                   |           | 2014       | Daniel J. Hess .....             | 1968      |
| 2002       | Charlotte Wirth .....             | 1944      | 2014       | Paul H. Schneidmiller.....       | 1970      |
| 2002       | Robert I. Brunton.....            | 1953      | 2014       | David Wagner .....               | 1993      |
| 2002       | James K. Hayner .....             | 1968      |            |                                  |           |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2003       | Gene Frank .....                  | 1946      | 2015       | Judy Chamberlain Holloway .....  | 1962      |
| 2003       | Mark Anderson .....               | 1973      | 2015       | Richard "Dick" Moeller .....     | 1963      |
| 2003       | Irene Gonzales.....               | 1980      | 2015       | Carol M. Barker.....             | 1974      |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2004       | Harold R. Frank.....              | 1941      | 2016       | Gary Hanson .....                | 1976      |
| 2004       | Ned Shafer.....                   | 1961      | 2016       | Mark Kajita .....                | 1987      |
| 2004       | Jeffrey Frank Ray.....            | 1978      | 2016       | Jerry Zahl .....                 | 1962      |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2005       | Gerwyn A. Jones.....              | 1928      | 2017       | Bruce Hunt .....                 | 1974      |
| 2005       | Dr. George Cole Williams Jr. .... | 1947      | 2017       | Jeanne Eggart Helfer .....       | 1977      |
| 2005       | Michael Maiden.....               | 1968      | 2017       | Richard D. Simon, Jr, M.D. ....  | 1968      |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2006       | Val Jensen.....                   | 1947      | 2018       | Terry Atchison .....             | 1966      |
| 2006       | Dr. Stephen Hayner .....          | 1966      | 2018       | Dr. Randall Kenneth Barton ..... | 1971      |
| 2006       | AnnRene Joseph .....              | 1973      | 2018       | Dr. Elizabeth MacDonald .....    | 1995      |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2007       | Dr. Neil V. Follett .....         | 1944      | 2019       | Peggy Blize Needham .....        | 1982      |
| 2007       | Barbara D. Johnson .....          | 1967      | 2019       | Scott Krivoshein .....           | 1983      |
|            |                                   |           | 2019       | Mary Lux Stumph.....             | 1983      |
|            |                                   |           | 2019       | Dr. Tony Billingsley.....        | 1993      |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2008       | Claro E. Bergevin.....            | 1941      | 2020       | NO PROGRAM DUE TO COVID-19       |           |
| 2008       | Gretchen Miller Kafoury .....     | 1959      |            |                                  |           |
| 2008       | John E. "Jack" Pelo.....          | 1974      |            |                                  |           |
|            |                                   |           |            |                                  |           |
| 2009       | R.F. "Dick" Monahan .....         | 1958      | 2021       | Garth Lindsey.....               | 1962      |
| 2009       | Daniel DeSiga .....               | 1967      | 2021       | Elizabeth "Libby" Frazier .....  | 1973      |
| 2009       | Greg Ralston Pepin.....           | 1968      | 2021       | Kathy Covey.....                 | 1973      |
| 2009       | Dr. Philip Phillips .....         | 1975      | 2021       | Judith Huntington .....          | 1964      |
|            |                                   |           | 2021       | Mike Monahan .....               | 1960      |
|            |                                   |           | 2021       | Dr. Allison Bingham.....         | 1977      |
| 2010       | Richard K. Knuth, Ph.D.....       | 1969      |            |                                  |           |