



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.

2022- 2023

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





NORM PASSMORE

-Class of 1972

A skilled dentist with more than three decades of compassionate service in the Walla Walla and Dayton communities

» After graduating from high school, Norm spent time at three different colleges, earning two degrees in the field of biology, then working as a chemist for Atwood Adhesive Company.

In 1978, he began a new field of study that led to a 34-year career as a well-respected dentist in Walla Walla and Dayton. In addition to serving his own patients, he found time to provide dental education and care for low-income families. He volunteered at SonBridge Dental Clinic, and was active in the Western Region Dental Board, serving 23 states. He also served on the Blue Mountain Community Foundation Board for nine years.

His nominator said he has always been someone who would give a helping hand, whether it be building projects with friends, church mission trips, or volunteering in his children's classrooms and with school sports. While living in Dayton, he became involved with the Liberty Theatre, donating and volunteering to keep it open and viable. He also helped remodel eight Dayton Main Street buildings.

He was on the Washington State Dental Quality Assurance Commission for six years and the Dayton Hospital board for six years. He also finished his professional career as a Columbia County Commissioner for two years.

One reference said Norm was "clearly as comfortable with sawdust and sheetrock as he was with dental patients" and mentioned how important faith is to him. Another said "his fingerprints are all over Columbia County."

Norm's nomination was spearheaded by his sister Gayle Kinman, with help from Bob Hutchins, Marcene Hendrickson and Kari Isaacson.

His most inspirational staff member is Ron Huntington, Wa-Hi Biology teacher and coach.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

RON HUNTINGTON, <<
Wa-Hi Teacher and Coach



MARY VIXIE SANDY

-Class of 1978

A pioneer in education supporting the development and accreditation of tomorrow's teachers.

» Mary truly appreciated the help and education she received from teachers, so much so that they inspired her life focus after graduating in 1978.

She earned a degree in Philosophy from Sonoma State University in 1984 and soon after began a career in the field of teacher advancement in California. She earned advanced degrees from U.C. Davis (Philosophy in Education) and U.C. Berkeley (Doctorate in Education). Mary has 30 years of experience in education, focusing on helping develop consistent standards for teacher preparation and continued accreditation. For the past 12 years, she has been the Director of California's Commission on Teacher Credentialing. In this role, she is involved in developing new pathways to teaching in the face of teacher shortages and recent COVID-related school closures/re-openings.

When not working, she is a proud member of the Woodland, CA, Chamber Singers, a board member for her local YWCA and longtime member of the Woodland League of Women Voters.

Her nominators praised her dedication to not just teachers, but all learners. One said "she views teachers as game-changers in the lives and trajectories of students." Others said that dedication to all learners is "evident in her unyielding commitment to place well-prepared teachers in all of California's schools," and her focus on prioritizing empathy and transformational change to help students of all ages and abilities.

Mary's nomination was spearheaded by her daughter Bayley Sandy Rea of Walla Walla, along with colleagues Nathan Estel, Haydee Rodriguez and Beverly Young.

Her most inspirational staff members are Ken Rhodes, Wa-Hi teacher and Mountaineering Club advisor and Richard Poole, Wa-Hi teacher.

MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:

KEN RHODES, <<

Wa-Hi Teacher/Club Advisor

RICHARD POOLE, <<

Wa-Hi Teacher



STEVE BUGHI

-Class of 1978

A lifelong farmer and advocate for agricultural education in the Walla Walla Valley.

» Steve Bughi had a good idea where his life and career would be heading. Early on in high school, and raised on a family farm, he began maintaining farm machinery and equipment, and he got a part time job doing the same thing at a local machine shop. After graduating, he and his brother started their own farming business and he earned a degree in Diesel Mechanics from Walla Walla Community College.

Steve and his brother grew Walla Walla Sweet Onions, along with other crops, and Steve became a charter member of the Walla Walla Sweet Onion Marketing Committee. He was also active in various FFA and Fair and Frontier Days projects, including 12 years of volunteering in the sheep barns. In 1994, he designed and manufactured a hillside leveling system for his level land Massey Ferguson combine.

In 2008, he began supervising the Massey Ferguson tractor division for Walla Walla Farmers Cooperative. Ten years later, Steve and a friend purchased that division and began their own company, Walla Walla Farm Center. A nominator said Steve

is nationally respected and sought after for advice on Massey Ferguson equipment.

Steve is a longtime advocate for agricultural education in the Walla Walla Valley. One nominator said the Bughi family, including his three daughters, “has been educated in our school system and then became an integral part of our community.”

His nomination was spearheaded by Arch McHie, with help from Barry Chabre, Bob Castoldi and Steve’s daughter Andrea Bughi Johnson.

Steve’s two inspirational staff members are Charles Clark and James R. McKay, Wa-Hi Vocational Education teachers.

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**MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

**CHARLES CLARK, <<**  
*Wa-Hi Teacher*

**JAMES R. MCKAY, <<**  
*Wa-Hi Teacher*



## TERA WATTS DAVIS

-Class of 1998

*A mortgage specialist with a heart for empowering people to maximize their potential and lift the spirits of others.*

» As a 1998 graduate of Wa-Hi, Tera won the Junior Olympics in the downhill slalom and got to attend the famed Romark Ski Academy in Utah, where the emphasis is equally on good skiers and good citizens interested in a team concept. In her life, since that time, Tera has worked hard to be that good citizen and team builder.

As branch manager of the Walla Walla Academy Mortgage Office for 11 years, she “provides clear, concise information, follows through and is committed to high quality service to her clients,” explained one of her nominators. In that job, she has consistently been in the top percentage nationwide in originating home loans. She received the Academy Mortgage Duane Shaw Award, recognizing individuals for their “servant leadership lifestyles.”

Tera founded and continues to be heavily involved with a group called 100 Women Who Care, which has raised more than \$80,000 for charitable organizations in the Walla Walla Valley since 2019. She is a huge supporter of local food banks, participating in

the annual Realtor Care and Share food drives, and the Police Foundation Board, where she personally donates and helps raise other funds in memory of her grandfather and former Police Chief Burt Watts.

One nominator admired Tera for her “light and leadership as a shining example to us all as she selflessly serves those around her.”

Tera’s nomination was spearheaded by her husband Don Davis, with help from James McPherson, Sara Archer and Dennis Ledford.

Tera’s most inspirational staff member is Michael Locati, Wa-Hi teacher and coach.

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**MOST INSPIRATIONAL STAFF MEMBER:**

**MICHAEL LOCATI, <<**  
*Wa-Hi Teacher and Coach*

# >> GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION << AWARD RECIPIENTS 1999-2023

| 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 |

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

## 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 |

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|------------|------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------|
|------------|------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------|

## 2012

|      |                            |      |
|------|----------------------------|------|
| 2012 | John P. Folsom.....        | 1962 |
| 2012 | Jill A. Largent, M.D.....  | 1968 |
| 2012 | Megan Ferguson Clubb ..... | 1974 |

## 2013

|      |                          |      |
|------|--------------------------|------|
| 2013 | Carol Minnick Santa..... | 1962 |
| 2013 | Dan Reid .....           | 1974 |
| 2013 | Craig Nelson .....       | 1981 |

## 2014

|      |                            |      |
|------|----------------------------|------|
| 2014 | Thomas L. Copeland.....    | 1942 |
| 2014 | Daniel J. Hess.....        | 1968 |
| 2014 | Paul H. Schneidmiller..... | 1970 |
| 2014 | David Wagner .....         | 1993 |

## 2015

|      |                                 |      |
|------|---------------------------------|------|
| 2015 | Judy Chamberlain Holloway ..... | 1962 |
| 2015 | Richard "Dick" Moeller .....    | 1963 |
| 2015 | Carol M. Barker.....            | 1974 |

## 2016

|      |                  |      |
|------|------------------|------|
| 2016 | Gary Hanson..... | 1976 |
| 2016 | Mark Kajita..... | 1987 |
| 2016 | Jerry Zahl.....  | 1962 |

## 2017

|      |                                 |      |
|------|---------------------------------|------|
| 2017 | Bruce Hunt.....                 | 1974 |
| 2017 | Jeanne Eggart Helfer.....       | 1977 |
| 2017 | Richard D. Simon, Jr, M.D. .... | 1968 |

## 2018

|      |                                  |      |
|------|----------------------------------|------|
| 2018 | Terry Atchison .....             | 1966 |
| 2018 | Dr. Randall Kenneth Barton ..... | 1971 |
| 2018 | Dr. Elizabeth MacDonald .....    | 1995 |

## 2019

|      |                           |      |
|------|---------------------------|------|
| 2019 | Peggy Blize Needham ..... | 1982 |
| 2019 | Scott Krivoshein .....    | 1983 |
| 2019 | Mary Lux Stumph.....      | 1983 |
| 2019 | Dr. Tony Billingsley..... | 1993 |

## 2020

2020 NO PROGRAM DUE TO COVID-19

## 2021

|      |                                 |      |
|------|---------------------------------|------|
| 2021 | Garth Lindsey.....              | 1962 |
| 2021 | Elizabeth "Libby" Frazier ..... | 1973 |
| 2021 | Kathy Covey.....                | 1973 |
| 2021 | Judith Huntington .....         | 1964 |
| 2021 | Mike Monahan .....              | 1960 |
| 2021 | Dr. Allison Bingham.....        | 1977 |

## 2022

|      |                               |      |
|------|-------------------------------|------|
| 2022 | Russ Colombo .....            | 1974 |
| 2022 | Deborah Underwood.....        | 1979 |
| 2022 | Mark Thompson .....           | 1970 |
| 2022 | J.P. "Jack" Frederickson..... | 1952 |

## 2023

|      |                        |      |
|------|------------------------|------|
| 2023 | Norm Passmore .....    | 1972 |
| 2023 | Mary Vixie Sandy ..... | 1978 |
| 2023 | Steve Bughi.....       | 1978 |
| 2023 | Tera Watts Davis ..... | 1998 |



**FURTHER INFORMATION**

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

**[WWPS.ORG/PROGRAMS/GRADUATES-OF-DISTINCTION](http://WWPS.ORG/PROGRAMS/GRADUATES-OF-DISTINCTION)**

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**Walla Walla  
Public Schools**

» 2022-2023 «