



# WILDCAT REVIEW

OXFORD COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



SUMMER 2017

# WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION

## OHS ANTI-SUICIDE INITIATIVE “13 REASONS WHY NOT”

### GAINS GLOBAL ATTENTION



The press conference held at OHS during the mid-point of the 13 Reasons Why NOT initiative.

On May 1, a group of Oxford High School students began an initiative called "13 Reasons Why NOT." This project was created in response to the tremendous teen viewership of the television series, "13 Reasons Why." Students felt this show did not offer hope or resources for help and perhaps even glorified suicide. In the past, Oxford staff and students have been scarred by loss from suicide. They wanted to combat the myth that suicide is ever an answer.

For 13 days, select students and administration shared their most painful struggles over the public address system and concluded their message by thanking and honoring those who were there to support them during their darkest moments. The messages

offered hope in overcoming life's struggles and served as a reminder that the care and compassion we extend to those around us may make the difference between life and death. The focus of the initiative was to open dialogue and to send a strong anti-suicide message.

Our courageous students were given the opportunity to share their message to reach beyond Oxford and make a global impact. Media outlets world-wide took notice of the "13 Reasons Why NOT" initiative which resulted in numerous articles and interviews locally as well as nationally, including Newsweek, ABC's Nightline, and CBS News. We are inspired by our students who have volunteered to use their personal experiences to help others. Both our students and staff have truly exemplified the IB traits of being a caring risk-taker. We are so proud of all our Wildcats, tomorrow's leaders.

### BOND PROPOSAL APPROVED FOR NOVEMBER BALLOT

On May 23, the Oxford School Board approved a bond proposal to be placed on the November 7, 2017, general election ballot. The Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, Sam Barna has a current list of needed capital improvements throughout the district that exceeds \$30 million. The proposal will request approval for \$28.2 million in qualified bonds. This amount will keep the district's current debt service at 7.9 mills causing no tax increase to residents yet will allow the district to fund infrastructure improvements. The district is currently considering a sinking fund proposal as well to make up for the shortfall between the district's needs and the bond amount.

Identified improvements target many of the district's safety concerns, provide higher energy efficiency which will lower utility expenses, and will aid in maintaining previous facility investments. Some of the identified needs include select roofing replacement, and the electronic control building manage-

ment system. Oxford Community Schools Director of Maintenance and Operations, Tony Sarkins, shared, "Currently, the existing building management system (BMS) is outdated and failing. A new BMS will provide better efficiency and comfort for our students, staff and community." The fire alarm systems in select buildings need to be updated to meet state and local guidelines. Deteriorating asphalt in parking lots and concrete walkways district-wide need to be replaced along with the addition of exterior energy efficient LED lighting for safety and security purposes. At the middle school, the aging hot-water boilers and the sanitary and heating piping throughout the building needs to be removed and upgraded.

The sinking fund would be utilized to acquire needed technology upgrades. Additionally, should the legislature pass further sinking fund reform regarding the allowance of school bus funding, new busses would be purchased as well.

## ROBOTICS TEAM RANKS

### AMONG BEST IN THE WORLD



Archimedes Sub-Division Champions and sixth-place World Championship alliance drive team:  
Team 1058 (Londonderry, NH), Team #2137 (Oxford, MI),  
Team #1640 (Downington, PA), Team #67 (Milford, MI)

Oxford Robotics team, TORC 2137, became one of the best robotics teams in the world at the FIRST World Championship in St. Louis, MO from April 26-29, 2017. Its four team alliance finished as Sub-Division Champions and placed sixth on the Einstein Championship Field making this the most successful season in Oxford robotics history. According to the FIRST Robotics website, there are 6,671 robotics teams across the globe consisting of over 460,000 students worldwide. TORC's 2017 graduating seniors have earned \$462,150 in college scholarships. What a great accomplishment!

## DECA MEMBERS FINISH TOP IN INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION



International DECA Third Place finishers:  
Sergio Borg, Ben Nuss, and Rick Galbraith

Oxford students had a tremendous showing on April 25-30 at the DECA International Career Development Conference in Anaheim, CA. DECA is a student organization that is designed to prepare emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. Twenty-seven Oxford DECA members advanced beyond the state level to compete among 19,000 students from across the globe. Judges and conference officials gave Oxford teams high marks and praise! Placing at the international competition in Anaheim were:

### Third Place

Sergio Borg, Ben Nuss, and Rick Galbraith - Financial Literacy

### Top 16

Grace Freiberg, Lauren Sakosky, and Taryn Tucker - Business Services Operations Research

## VISIT FROM SISTER

### SCHOOL IN MEXICO

One of Oxford's sister schools, Juana de Asbaje, located in Tlalnepantla, Mexico brought a group of 14 students (grades three through six), an English teacher, and their principal for a ten day cultural exchange with Leonard and Lakeville Elementary Schools and Oxford Middle School at the end of May. The guests stayed with host families from these three schools while visiting. The Mexican students enjoyed experiencing our American culture and shared a bit of their own culture with our students as well. The delegation performed some traditional dances for the students at Leonard and Lakeville Elementary. It was a great and memorable experience for all that were involved.



Sister school students from Mexico dress the part to perform traditional Mexican dances for Lakeville and Leonard students.

## OMS TAKES HISTORY

### LESSON OUTSIDE

The 8th grade American History classes were busy studying the American Civil War during their second semester. In May, they got out of the classroom to experience what life may have been like as a civil war soldier. Mr. Cisneros' and Mr. Clark's classes loaded up their backpacks with all their belongings and headed out on a one mile hike around the grounds of OMS. Along the way, they talked about battle strategies that worked and some that did not. The hike concluded at "Camp Wildcat" (the OMS football stadium) where the students were treated to some crackers, grilled spam, and a sip of black coffee to simulate a basic meal a civil war soldier may have eaten.



Middle school students hike OMS grounds while studying about the American Civil War.

# OXFORD MUSICIANS ENTERTAIN AT DISNEY WORLD



OHS Orchestra and Marching Band pose for a group shot at Disney's Animal Kingdom.

During Spring Break, Oxford Orchestra and Marching Band traveled to Orlando, FL to delight the crowds at Disney World with their musical skills. The Oxford High School Marching Band played ahead of the Main Street Electric Parade in the Magic Kingdom and the Oxford High School Orchestra entertained audiences at the Disney Springs Pavilion.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE



Maria Wolbert  
20 years



Elizabeth Tiffany  
22 years

**ENJOY RETIREMENT!**

## BPA STUDENT TAKES 8TH PLACE NATIONALLY

The Business Professionals of America (BPA) is a career and technical organization for students pursuing futures in business management, office administration, information technology and other related career fields. This year, senior, Danielle Kemp, competed with BPA in the field of Graphic Design Promotion. She had an outstanding year and advanced to the national competition in Orlando, FL, where she finished eighth of the 48 competitors from around the country in this category. Excellent job, Danielle!



## ALUMNI GATHERS \$3,000 WORTH OF AUTO SHOP DONATIONS FOR OHS

Oxford High School's Automotive Technology Program received a generous donation of supplies to help aid students in their education. The gift is due to the efforts of Oxford Alumni Mike Lawrence ('07). He is the current Operations/Engineering Manager for Turn Key Automotive. Mike credits his current success to Oxford teacher Dan Balsley and the OHS Automotive Program. He wanted to give back to the program and decided to coordinate donations from area automotive businesses. His endeavors were met with an excellent response when over \$3,000 worth of supplies were given from Oxford based businesses: Quality Fastener & Supply Co., Steve's Automotive, and Turn Key Automotive. The supplies include items such as welding rods, wire, cleaners, tire swabs, drill bits, grease, washers, tire patches, nuts and bolts, solder fuses and floor de-greaser. Mr. Balsley is very grateful for the donation and knows it will come to great use in the auto shop. Mike also helps OHS auto students by serving on an advisory committee that meets twice a year. The committee helps guide the direction of the auto program to ensure it continues preparing students to meet the needs of future employers.

# 13 STUDENT-ATHLETES SIGN ON TO PLAY AT COLLEGIATE LEVEL

Thirteen student-athletes have committed to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level next fall:

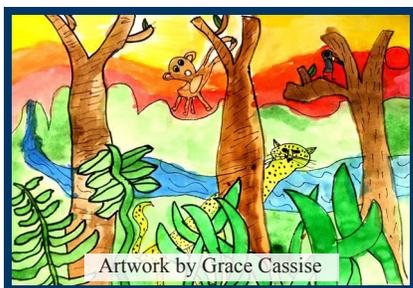
- Ethan Williams- Northern Michigan University (Football)
- Lucas Sereno- Alma College (Swim)
- Kaitlyn Romano- Rochester College (Cheer)
- Drake Barry- Lawrence Tech (Football)
- Sophia Bell- Bethel College (Soccer)
- McKenzie Chaisson- Madonna (Golf)
- Madison Dinges- Ferris State University (Softball)
- Emma Gordon- Adrian College (Soccer)
- Jordan Jadan- Kansas Community College (Basketball)
- Ryan Motala- Wayne State University (Football)
- Spencer Petoskey- Grand Valley State University (Lacrosse)
- Adam Bell- Hope College (Lacrosse) (not pictured)
- Anthony D'Alessandro- Rochester College (Baseball) (not pictured)



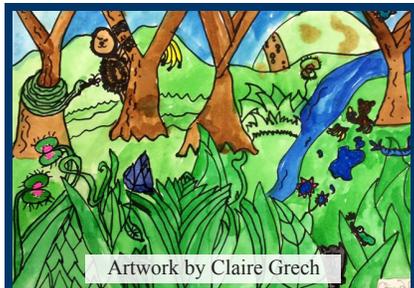
Photo by Elise Shire

# IB LESSON AND ART PUBLISHED IN NATIONAL MAGAZINE

An article on IB art teacher Jon Hazlett's recent classroom lesson, accompanied by works from his students, was published in the June edition of Arts & Activities- one of the nation's leading art education magazines. The publication took notice of Hazlett's lesson, and the pieces that his students produced by way of the Artsonia website. Artsonia functions as an online portfolio for students' art. The lesson was on *How We Organize and Re-organize Ourselves* applying concepts of depth, pattern, and balance using the rainforest as subject matter. "Understanding the interconnectedness of art to other subjects demonstrates a deeper understanding of our world, and that art is connected to all subjects," Hazlett explains as his philosophy behind his instruction. Editors at the magazine chose to publish pieces from Daniel Axford Elementary second-grader Grace Cassise and Clear Lake Elementary second-grader Claire Grech that best defined the elements of the project. Hazlett credits the use of classroom iPads for students' research, which aided in the successful execution of their compositions.



Artwork by Grace Cassise



Artwork by Claire Grech

# 2017 TEACHERS & SUPPORT PERSONS OF THE YEAR



Each year a select number of teachers and support staff in the district are chosen to be honored for their exemplary service.

One teacher from each school in the district is nominated by students, parents, and colleagues for the Teacher of the Year Award. From these teachers, one from each school level is then selected by the district to be honored at the Oakland County Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award Program. This program recognizes teachers who have achieved, through their effort and example, the highest standards of excellence in teaching. This year Joe Amabile, Jan Flynn, and Helen Andreou were honored by Oakland County.

Nominees for the Support Person of the Year are members of transportation, maintenance, custodial, clerical, food service, or classroom support and paraeducators who go above and beyond the call of duty in creating a supportive learning environment. They are active not only in their schools but in the community as well. Each school is asked to select one person from its building. From those selected, one person is chosen by the district to be the district nominee for the Oakland County Support Person of the Year. This year that individual was Stacy Ruch.

Oxford Early Learning Center  
Sue Roehner, Child Care Program Coordinator

Daniel Axford Elementary  
Judy Bozynski, First Grade Teacher  
Brett Pulley, Custodian

Oxford Elementary  
Robin Graft, Resource Room Teacher

Clear Lake Elementary  
Melissa Peruski, Fourth Grade Teacher  
Craig Birrell, Custodian

Lakeville Elementary  
Helen Andreou, Special Education Teacher  
Valarie Logan, Paraprofessional

Oxford Middle School  
Jan Flynn, Vocal Music Teacher  
Stacy Ruch, Special Education Paraprofessional

Oxford High School  
Joe Amabile, Math Teacher  
Catherine Guy, Paraprofessional

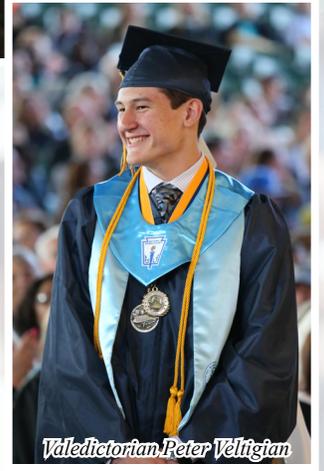
Oxford Schools Early College  
Laura Merritt, OSEC Mentor Teacher

Oxford Virtual Academy  
Matt Santala, Educational Technology Coordinator

# GRADUATION 2017



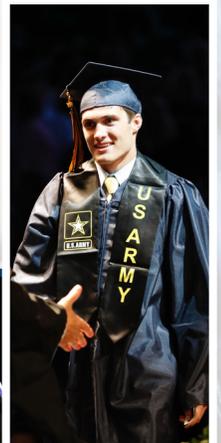
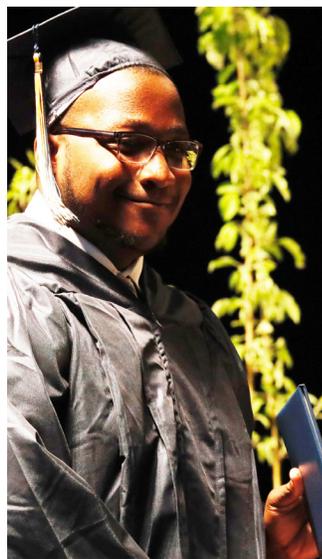
*Valedictorian, Katlin Brantley*

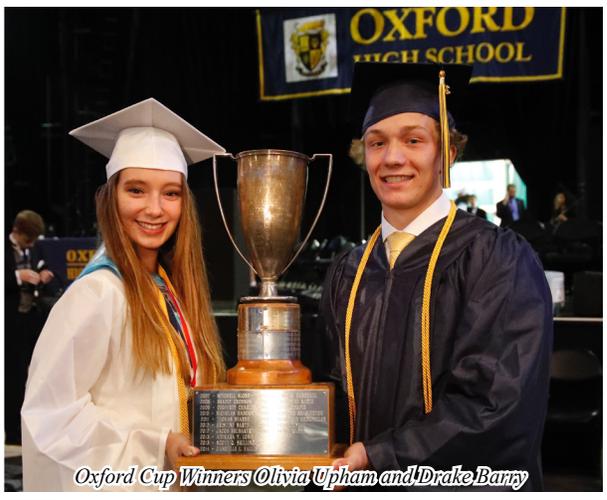


*Valedictorian, Peter Veltgian*



*OHS Graduates*





*Oxford Cup Winners Olivia Upham and Drake Barry*



# DISTINGUISHED 2017 GRADUATES

## VALEDICTORIANS

Katlin Brantley & Peter Veltigian

## SALUTATORIANS

Ethan Culter & Solomon Long

## OXFORD CUP WINNERS

Drake Barry & Olivia Upham

## MOST OUTSTANDING ATHLETES

George A. Prince Memorial Award- Drake Barry

Helen Smith Award- Madison Dinges

## SENIOR SCHOLAR ATHLETES

### OF THE YEAR

Katelyn Kroon & Peter Veltigian



*OVA Graduates*



*Bridges Graduates*



# TOMORROW'S LEADERS

## LAKEVILLE STUDENTS ASK

### YOU TO "PLANT A TREE"

Each year, fifth-grade students district-wide participate in the International Baccalaureate Exhibition. Students work collaboratively in small groups to identify a real-life global or local problem. Then they use a variety of methods to investigate their issue such as first-hand experiences, interviews, surveys, field trips, books, and internet resources. Next, students find a way to take action to solve the problem. On exhibition night, students present their message and share how they took action to help correct the problem to make a positive difference in the world around them.



Bishop Dissmore, Jay Cady, Collin Rogers and Adam Harville plant a tree at Lakeville Elementary to help increase Earth's oxygen levels.

Lakeville students Jay Cady, Collin Rogers, Bishop Dissmore, and Adam Harville tackled the topic of deforestation and its negative affect on our planet's atmosphere for their IB project. The students learned through their research that as trees are cut down and not replaced, Earth's oxygen levels decrease and the carbon footprint rises. As oxygen is a necessity for life, the group sought ways to increase our planet's oxygen levels. The group took action by planting a Norwegian Spruce on school grounds along with reaching out to the local news paper and school newsletter to help spread their message to our community. Collin shared, "We are planting a tree on the school grounds to help grow more trees and stop the carbon dioxide from entering our atmosphere and to release more oxygen. We want everyone to know they should plant more trees!"

## OELC HOLDS SPRING

### CELEBRATION



Our youngest Wildcats had a wonderful time at Oxford Early Learning Center's annual Spring Celebration on May 18. Thank you to all who donated their time and goods to make the event a great success for our pre-school and extended day students. The weather was perfect for them to enjoy pony rides, jumping in the bounce house, having their faces painted and so much more!

## BRIDGES STUDENT EXCELS IN OTC

Bridges student, Merritt McGhee, is enrolled and excelling in the Oakland Technical Center (OTC) Construction Technology Program. He is working with professionals in the field to learn skills necessary to build a home. Currently, he is involved in a county-wide project building a home in Pontiac from the basement up. Merritt was honored as the April OTC Student of the Month. His teacher, Mr. Sweeny, shared, "Merritt is a hard working student that does quality work in construction. He has a positive attitude and is always willing to help others." As part of the OTC program, Merritt will earn certifications for post-high school employment.



April's OTC Student of the Month Merritt McGhee

## LEONARD ELEMENTARY THEATRE CLUB



Evangeline Lulgjuraj, Eva Rayner, Evelyn Rippetoe and Sarah Phelps perform in Disney's The Lion King KIDS production.

Photo by C.J. Carnacchio

This year, Leonard Elementary added another extra-curricular club to its list of activities. The *Leonard Elementary Theatre Club* was spearheaded by parent volunteer Lauren LoCascio. Lauren is new to Leonard and witnessed the students to be exceptionally creative, confident and kind. She wanted to start a club where they could explore and showcase these talents and attributes. Beginning in October, thirty-three students met weekly to work on every aspect of producing Disney's *The Lion King KIDS* show. They helped with the sets, costumes, makeup and props. LoCascio shared, "We gave these children that range from first-graders to fifth-graders jobs, responsibilities, criticism, and deadlines that are often given to adults. I literally witnessed each and every one of them rise to the occasion and exceed my greatest expectations. It was one of the best and most rewarding experiences of my life and I can't wait to do it again next year!" On May 13, LoCascio along with the help of Chrystal Boyl, Mr. McDevitt, and several hard working parent volunteers, the Leonard Elementary Theatre Club accomplished their goal of putting on a successful show for the community at the OHS Performing Arts Center.

## CLEAR LAKE ACHIEVES EVERGREEN STATUS

Ten years ago, Oakland County partnered with Oakland Schools to create the Michigan Green School Program. The program encouraged schools to participate in environmentally friendly and energy saving activities. When this initiative was introduced in 2006, Clear Lake Elementary formed a student organization called the Green Team to implement the program. This year, due to the efforts of the Green Team, Clear Lake was awarded the top honor designation as an Evergreen School for 10 years of consecutive participation in the Michigan Green Schools Program. Evergreen status can only be achieved when schools complete 15 to 20 stipulated green school activities. Clear Lake was one of only 14 schools in Oakland County to achieve this high honor.

## HOSA STUDENTS PLACE WELL AT STATE CONFERENCE

Oxford's HOSA – Health Occupation Students of America– competed against over 2,800 students in the Michigan State Leadership Conference in Traverse City, MI. Impressive performances were given by our Oxford students. The following students earned awards for their conference achievements:

3rd Place in Team Competition and National Qualifiers:  
Zackery Acton and Brendan Crabill- CERT  
(Community Emergency Response Team)

Top 8 Finalists in Individual Competition:  
Alyssa Pernicano- Extemporeaneous Writing  
Brennan Burrows- Biomedical Laboratory Science

2nd Round Finalists:  
Madelyn Roop- Dental Science  
Josephine Kane- Veterinary Science  
Sarah Schaefer- Veterinary Science  
Jordyn Zyngier- Sports Medicine  
Daniel Mitchell and Ashley Brandt- EMT  
Madison McClear- Clinical Nursing  
Olivia Rapadas- Clinical Nursing

## OHS LEADERSHIP CLASS ACCRUES MULTIPLE AWARDS

Oxford Leadership students attended the annual Student Leadership Conference hosted by the Michigan Association of Student Councils and Honor Societies (MASC/MAHS) in Grand Rapids, MI at the end of April. The Oxford Leadership class was presented with the Best in Showcase Award, and it was named a Star School in recognition for its excellent work this year. In addition, senior student Jack Arnold was honored with the Unsung Hero Award for his humble leadership style.



# OXFORD GIVES BACK

## SPRING CLEAN-UP

Oxford Gives Back Spring Clean-up was bigger and better than ever this year. In 2016, Student Jacinta Hogan had a vision to bring generations together by organizing students, staff, and community members to serve the elderly in the Oxford area. Last spring, over 320 volunteers spent two days cleaning flower beds, raking, and spreading mulch at 34 area homes in need. Jacinta wanted to grow her efforts to reach even more this year and that is exactly what she did! On April 29 -30, Oxford Gives Back Spring Clean-up had 780 volunteers work on 115 yards of those in need in the community. Volunteers from nearly every school and department in the district participated. The student planning committee this year was made up of both OSEC and OHS students:

Jacinta Hogan  
 Regina Hogan  
 Victoria Valvo  
 Ana Gaytan  
 Katherine Mansfield

Lily Kilgore  
 Madison Sparks  
 Amber Clark  
 Victoria Mc Clenaghan  
 Hanna Clark



Photo by C.J. Carnacchio

## SCHOOL BOARD VACANCY

Due to the resignation of Mike Schweig, effective June 30, 2017, one seat is vacant on the Oxford Board of Education seven member board. If you are interested in applying for this position, applications for candidacy will be available on the district website, [www.oxfordschools.org](http://www.oxfordschools.org). The appointment to this position will be in affect until December 31, 2018.

## WILDCAT 5K BENEFITS AUTISM

On May 6, approximately 150 people, young and old, turned out to participate in the 10th Annual Oxford Wildcat Race. This year the event raised \$2,500 for the Autism Alliance of Michigan and \$500 for the Ray Sutherland scholarship fund, which benefits Oxford students.



## DA STUDENTS COLLECT BAGS TO HELP HOMELESS



Renee Green's second grade class at Daniel Axford Elementary worked on a lesson in compassion along with recycling. The class began collecting plastic grocery bags in January to construct sleeping mats for the homeless. Once a week, the students would take time to cut the bags into strips and tie them together to create plastic yarn. Student Makenna Meeks enlisted the skills of her grandma Terry Cooper to help Mrs. Green crochet the plastic yarn into six-foot-long mats. Each mat consists of 700-1,000 plastic bags and takes about 15 hours to complete. The finished mat is lightweight, portable, and produces a comfortable cushion between the ground and the body which helps maintain body heat while sleeping.

Mrs. Green wanted her students to know that each of them can make a positive difference in this world. Even if a child only brought in a single bag, he or she was helping another human being with that effort. The class exceeded its goal of making ten mats by early spring and chose to continue the project through the end of the school year. The mats have been donated to the Baldwin Center in Pontiac.



## ONCE A WILDCAT, ALWAYS A WILDCAT.

### CATCHING UP WITH AN OXFORD ALUM...

Oxford High School alumni, Michael Brosseau ('85), is the President of Brose North America. Brose North America is the North American division of a large global automotive supplier. Michael is responsible for ten locations in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico and nearly 5,000 employees. He is also working with government and STEM organizations to engage students at all levels in STEM related occupations.

After growing up in Leonard and graduating from Oxford High School, Michael continued his education at GMI Engineering & Management Institute (Kettering University) where he graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering in 1990. After graduation he held various engineering and sales positions working for Excel Industries while completing his MBA from the University of Detroit Mercy. Michael joined Brose in 1999 and has been responsible for project teams in Germany, China, and India. He took over the North America President responsibility in 2015. We asked Michael to reflect on how his Oxford experience has influenced who he has become today and to share his advice for current Wildcats.

"While at Oxford High School, I was fortunate enough to have a very diverse educational experience. I played basketball for all four years, took advanced math and English classes, one year of auto shop, wood shop and mechanical design. Through this diversity, I had friends in different groups and had the opportunity to explore different career paths influenced by 'hands on experience.' I think that this is what led me to select Kettering, a university that blends 5 years of college course work with on the job co-op experience.

My advice to current Wildcats is to enjoy your time in high school but to always remember that it is really only the first step in becoming what you want to be and how you want to impact the world. The goal in high school is not simply to graduate. The goal is to prepare for the next step, whatever that is. Use this time to find out what you are good at and more importantly, to find out what you like to do. Find ways to explore career opportunities and to create a plan to achieve your goals. Success is not limited to attending a four-year university. There are rewarding careers that begin with a trade school, community college or the military. Whatever path you choose, always diversify your experience and constantly challenge yourself to step outside of your comfort zone."

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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