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CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

Eagle News *August 2026*



Watch this video to meet our new Generation "C" Chair, Kane Adkisson, CHS 2011



Dear Supporter,

As summer flies by, I hope you're having fun in the sun and staying cool in these heatwaves!

We are excited to announce Kane Adkisson, CHS 2011, as our 2026-2027 Generation "C" chair! To learn more about Kane, click on the video above and read the details below. Thanks to the dedication of Generation "C" members, we can continue to help our Eagles soar! **Please join Generation "C" today!**

We are looking forward to hosting our annual back-to-school teacher luncheon on Wednesday, August 12th. We are fortunate to have countless incredible faculty and staff members at Central, and the Foundation is honored to host this annual event to ensure our teachers are welcomed back before the start of the school year.

Lastly, don't forget to mark your calendars for the Central High School Hall of Fame celebration on Thursday, October 8th. This special evening will honor our newest inductees. Read their bios below and don't forget to register to be part of the fun!

As always, thank you for helping perpetuate more than 167 years - and counting - of tradition and excellence.

Go Eagles!
Sincerely,
Michele Roberts
Michele Roberts, Executive Director

Introducing our 2026-27 Generation "C" Chair



Since graduating from Central High School in 2011, Kane Adkisson has built an internationally recognized culinary career while remaining deeply connected to the school that helped shape his journey.

Following elementary school at Belle Ryan and Swanson, and middle school at Westside, there was never much doubt about where Kane would attend high school. With a family legacy of Eagles, his mother and her sisters are all Central graduates, Central was always part of his future.

During his four years at Central, Kane valued the opportunity to learn alongside classmates from diverse backgrounds and cultures. His favorite course, Holocaust Literature, challenged him to think beyond the surface and engage deeply with history and humanity. A class trip to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., remains one of his most meaningful educational experiences and left a lasting impact on his perspective of the world.

After graduating from Central, Kane attended Metropolitan Community College's Culinary Arts program. At just 19 years old, he moved to Oslo, Norway, to begin his professional career at the Michelin-starred restaurant Maaemo. Over the next several years, he trained and worked at some of the world's most acclaimed restaurants, including Saison and Coi in San Francisco, as well as Crony and Nihonryori RyuGin in Tokyo. While living in San Francisco, Kane launched kanō, a pop-up dining concept designed to introduce diners to Nebraska through food. After returning to Omaha, he reimagined kanō as a private in-home dining experience, bringing a Michelin-level tasting menu directly to guests. In 2023, Kane and his team earned national recognition as James Beard Award semifinalists for Emerging

Chef, and in 2024, he was featured by the James Beard Foundation, further establishing his reputation as one of the Midwest's most innovative culinary talents.

Omaha is also where Kane met and married his wife, Meg. Together, they enjoy traveling, playing pickleball, cooking, and taking on home improvement projects. They are proud to call Omaha home and are committed to building their future in the community. Kane credits Central with providing the foundation that prepared him for success both professionally and personally. His experiences at Central fostered an appreciation for culture, diversity, curiosity, and lifelong learning – values that continue to guide him today.

As Chair of the Central High School Foundation's Generation C Campaign, Kane is proud to give back to the school that invested in him and wants to ensure that current and future Eagles have access to the same life-changing opportunities and experiences that helped shape his own journey.

Join Generation "C"

Register for Hall of Fame



The 27th Annual Central High School Hall of Fame Dinner and Ceremony will be held on Thursday, October 8, 2026, at Central High School. The Central High School Alumni Association is proud to induct ten individuals whose paths from the halls of Central High School led them to the highest levels of achievement in business and community service. Inductees are selected by the Central High School Alumni Association, and the program is presented by the Central High School Foundation. To learn more about the Alumni Association, click here.

Schedule of Events

Social Hour in Courtyard: 5:30 PM

Dinner in Courtyard: 6:15 PM

Ceremony in Auditorium: 7:30 PM

Thank you for your support. We will see you October 8, 2026!

Register for Hall of Fame

2026 Hall of Fame Inductees



Edward Bennett, Ed.D. *Distinguished Educator*

Dr. Ed Bennett is a distinguished educational leader whose career with Omaha Public Schools spans decades of dedicated service and impact. Beginning in 1995, he served in various roles across the district, including Assistant Principal at Central High School from 2006 to 2011 and later as Principal from 2013 to 2021. During his leadership at Central, Dr. Bennett helped usher in the International Baccalaureate program and led the development of the school's Library and Arts addition, strengthening both academic excellence and student opportunity. His steady guidance during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated resilience and an unwavering commitment to students, staff, and the community. Known for his approachable leadership style, humor, and dedication to tradition, Dr. Bennett fostered a culture of pride, inclusivity, and achievement. His legacy is defined by inspiring generations of students and educators while elevating Central High School as a premier destination for learning.



Comfort Baker Caldwell *CHS 1889*

Comfort Baker Caldwell was a pioneering educator and trailblazer whose achievements broke barriers and reshaped opportunities for future generations. In 1889, she became the first African American woman to graduate from Omaha Public Schools, earning honors and demonstrating exceptional academic determination despite significant financial hardship. With the support of a local teacher, she attended Fisk University, where she again graduated with honors, beginning a lifelong commitment to education and service. Over a distinguished career, she taught for more than two decades and continued her professional development at institutions including the University of Southern California and the University of

Arizona. Caldwell made history once again in Phoenix, becoming the first African American teacher and later the first African American principal in the Phoenix Union High School District. She also founded a school serving Black students in the community. Her enduring legacy reflects courage, leadership, and an unwavering dedication to education.
Comfort passed away in 1946 at the age of 76.



Alex Harz *CHS 1991*
Alex Harz has built an extraordinary career that combines adventure, filmmaking, international business, and storytelling. Born in Spain and raised in both Europe and Omaha, Harz developed an early passion for exploring the world and understanding different cultures. Following his studies at the University of Nebraska Omaha and the University of Colorado Boulder, he pursued careers in international business, sports marketing, and information technology before turning his focus to filmmaking and exploration. In 2018, he achieved a lifelong dream by summiting Mount Everest, joining a small group of individuals who have reached the world's highest peak. Drawing on that experience, he created "The Quest: Everest" and "The Quest: Everest VR," groundbreaking documentaries that bring audiences to the summit through immersive storytelling and virtual reality. His work has earned recognition at film festivals worldwide and reflects his commitment to education, adventure, and cultural understanding. Harz credits Central High School's diversity and strong sense of community with helping shape the values that continue to guide his work and inspire others.



Morris Jacobs *CHS 1914*
Morris Jacobs was a visionary entrepreneur, civic leader, and pioneer in the advertising industry. Beginning his career as a reporter for the *Omaha World-Herald*, he developed the storytelling skills that would shape his future success. In 1921, Jacobs co-founded Bozell & Jacobs in Omaha, growing the firm from a single desk into a nationally and internationally recognized advertising and public relations agency. Under his leadership, the agency helped shape modern communications and produced iconic campaigns while promoting major clients and community institutions, including Boys Town. Deeply committed to Omaha, Jacobs played a key role in supporting civic and cultural organizations, including Ak-Sar-Ben, the College World Series, the Omaha Symphony, and local universities. Recognized for both innovation and integrity, Jacobs exemplified the belief that success carries a responsibility to serve, leaving a lasting legacy in Omaha and beyond.
Morris passed away in 1987 at the age of 90.



Heather Schacht Reisinger, Ph.D. *CHS 1992*

Heather Schacht Reisinger, Ph.D. is a nationally recognized medical anthropologist and implementation scientist whose work has improved healthcare delivery across the United States. As a Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine and inaugural Director of the University of Iowa Implementation Science Center, she has helped transform how scientific discoveries are translated into effective patient care. Dr. Reisinger has secured more than $37 million in research funding, authored over 150 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters, and mentored numerous physicians and scientists. Her research has advanced the fields of rural health, telemedicine, veteran care, and healthcare quality improvement, influencing practice and policy. A respected scholar, educator, and mentor, she has dedicated her career to improving health outcomes through innovation and collaboration. Dr. Reisinger credits Central High School with introducing her to the field of anthropology, fostering her intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and lifelong love of learning that continue to guide her distinguished career.



Alvin R. Samuels Jr., DDS *CHS 2006*

Father, son, educator, military officer, dentist, and community leader describe Dr. Alvin Samuels. After earning his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from Creighton University, he served five years on active duty as a dental officer in the United States Navy providing care to service members across multiple assignments. For his exemplary military service, he earned the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal and Surface Warfare Medical Department Officer designation.

Upon returning to Omaha, Dr. Samuels joined the Creighton University School of Dentistry as an Assistant Professor. A published researcher and award-winning educator, he has received Creighton's Dr. Harry & Maude Boyne Memorial Award for Outstanding New Faculty, the Student National Dental Association Faculty Member of the Year Award, and Summit Dental Health's Doctor of the Year Award. Through community health fairs, mentorship, charitable initiatives, and leadership within the Central High School Alumni Association, he embodies a lifelong commitment to service, education, and improving the lives of others.

Rachel Shukert *CHS 1998*

An acclaimed author, playwright, television writer, producer, and showrunner whose creative work has earned national recognition across literature and entertainment. A third-generation Central graduate, Rachel Shukert first distinguished herself on Central's stage in leading roles in *The Matchmaker* and *Fiddler on the Roof*, laying

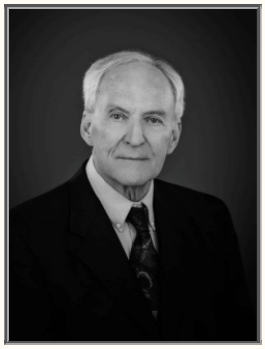


the foundation for a career in storytelling and performance. After graduating with honors from Central, she attended the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, earning her degree in 2002. Shukert has authored four critically acclaimed books, including the bestselling memoir *Everything Is Going to Be Great*, numerous articles, and nine plays performed in the United States and abroad. She later became a successful television writer and producer, contributing to series including *GLOW*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and *The 'Burbs*, earning two Emmy nominations and three Writers Guild of America nominations. As creator, showrunner, and executive producer of Netflix's *The Baby-Sitters Club*, she won two Emmy Awards and two Television Critics Association Awards. Shukert continues to develop and produce major television projects, carrying forward the creativity, passion, and love of storytelling first nurtured on the stages and in the classrooms of Central High School.



Muzette Hill Stallings, J.D. *CHS 1974*

A distinguished attorney, corporate leader, and advocate for diversity and professional excellence, Muzette Hill Stallings built an exceptional career in law, business, and public service. As Associate General Counsel for Ford Motor Credit Company LLC, she provided leadership in consumer finance litigation, strategic planning, international transactions, and operations. She previously led Ford Credit's litigation practice, overseeing complex legal matters and professional development for a 22-member department. Before joining Ford, Stallings was a partner with the Chicago law firm of Lord, Bissell & Brook, where she developed employment and directors' and officers' liability practices. A graduate of Northwestern University and the University of California, Berkeley, she also served as a judicial clerk for judges of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. Her honors include recognition in Crain's Chicago Business "40 Under 40," selection as a U.S. Delegate to the London School of Economics European Series, and the Black Women Lawyers Association Distinguished Service Award. Stallings exemplifies the excellence and achievement of Central High School alumni.



Gary Thompson, Ed.D. *Distinguished Educator*

Dr. Gary Thompson, Distinguished Educator, dedicated his career to advancing education and strengthening the Central High School community. Serving Omaha Public Schools from 1970 to 2002, he held roles as science teacher, department chair, assistant principal, and principal, leading Central High School from 1995 to 2002. Known for his visionary leadership, Dr. Thompson championed academic

excellence, expanded honors and Advanced Placement opportunities, and promoted the integration of technology long before it became commonplace in education. He helped guide major school renovations, modernizing facilities and technology resources for future generations. A strong advocate for diversity, he viewed Central's inclusive culture as one of its greatest strengths. Dr. Thompson also helped form the Central High School Foundation. He was an advocate for the renovation projects that air-conditioned and modernized Central High for future generations of students and athletes. Following retirement, he spent 16 years mentoring future educators, extending his legacy of leadership and service.



Matthew Wynn *CHS 2002*

A passionate advocate for public-service journalism, Matt Wynn has dedicated his career to ensuring that trusted, independent reporting remains relevant, accessible, and impactful in an ever-changing media landscape. His commitment to journalism began during his years at Central High School, where he developed the curiosity, storytelling skills, and sense of civic responsibility that would shape his professional career. As Executive Director of the Nebraska Journalism Trust, he leads the organization behind the *Flatwater Free Press*, a nonprofit newsroom producing some of Nebraska's most consequential investigative and community-focused reporting. Throughout his career, Wynn has held influential journalism positions in Nebraska and across the nation, including roles with *USA TODAY*, *MedPage Today*, *The Arizona Republic*, and *Springfield News-Leader*, championing innovative approaches to local news and civic engagement. At a time when traditional media faces significant challenges, his leadership reflects a deep belief that strong communities depend on well-informed citizens, exemplifying the values of service, integrity, and excellence fostered at Central High School.

Your Impact: 3D Printer

CENTRAL STUDENTS GAIN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE WITH NEW 3D PRINTING TECHNOLOGY



YOUR IMPACT

150+ STUDENTS IMPACTED

AMOUNT FUNDED: $3,200

Project Proposal

To expand the creative processes and products in digital media and graphic design classes, the Foundation has purchased a new 3D printer to enhance student learning in these courses at Central.

Translation to College and Career Readiness

This equipment will enhance learning opportunities as students grow in their ability to navigate and create a whole new world of design. Model making, product design, engineering, architecture, and even the medical field have all embraced 3D printers and 3D design to test out products.

"Giving students a chance to start early and understand the programs is extremely helpful. Careers in prototyping, 3D design, and understanding the 3D world of computing and design are needed for creation of apps, games, visual design, and a lot more. Design itself addresses the need to solve technical challenges and find solutions in the graphic realm as well as moving from the graphic form to a physical product."

Jonathan Franta, CHS Graphic Design Teacher

Commitment to Closing the Opportunity Gap

Students are always looking for outlets for their creative energy. Digital media and graphic design classes help them explore a rapidly expanding area that offers several career paths. Because the technology needed to study this field and create final projects can be expensive, it isn't widely available. Items like 3D printers spark students' imaginations for what might be possible.

"Thank you, CHS Foundation! It is so amazing that my art can be scanned and then laser engraved on wood!"

Sophi Luethge, Class of 2027

Opportunities like this one are thanks to YOU, Eagle Nation! To continue making an impact, join Generation “C” today!

Join Generation “C”

Open Omaha



Central High will be a featured venue in Open Omaha 2026! The event showcases dozens of fascinating spaces that have shaped our city. Come to Central High School on Saturday Aug. 8 for a quick tour of some notable locales within the historic building, including the new addition. Central was one of Open Omaha's top-visited venues in 2025. This year’s event runs from 10 to 4 and is hosted by the Central High Alumni Association and Omaha by Design.

Learn More

CHSF Scholarships: Claudia Mauwa



Introducing a 2026 recipient of our Paul Jepsen (1929) Scholarship, Claudia!

"This fall, I will be attending Smith College, where I plan to major in neuroscience on the pre-med track.

When I think about what Central means to me, I think of a place where I discovered and developed many of my passions, from healthcare to service. It is also a place where I met people from diverse backgrounds who I hope will remain lifelong friends.

I would like to thank Mr. Flanagan for making English more than just a class, Mr. Wilson for giving history a personality, and Ms. Denton for her constant support and encouragement. I am also grateful to Mr. Forke for sparking my interest in anthropology and encouraging thoughtful debates, Ms. Stastny for her remarkable ability to quote Hamlet from memory, Mr. Franta for creating an after-school gaming community where students could connect, Mr. Morley for his support of HOSA, Mr. Tigani for being the most chill math teacher ever, and Ms. Mulder for supporting Quiz Bowl and helping create a space for students to challenge themselves and have fun.

I am incredibly grateful for the impact each of these teachers had on my experience. Their passion, encouragement, and dedication helped shape my time at Central and made it a place I will always look back on fondly."

Congratulations, Claudia, and best of luck!

Learn More About CHSF Scholarships

New Episodes of Chatting at the C

Chatting at the C is a CHSF-sponsored podcast series by CHS teachers Scott Wilson and Ben Boeckman, which focuses on highlighting the history of Central High School. In each episode, they interview past and present CHS staff to preserve their contribution to Omaha Central High School.



Greg Sand



Jo Dusatko

Listen to Chatting at the C

Join the 1859 Society Today



Named for the year of Central's founding, the 1859 Society honors donors who have included The Central High School Foundation in their estate plans. By arranging for such deferred gifts, alumni, parents, and friends of CHS play a vital role in securing the future of Omaha's oldest educational institution. Combining financial planning, estate planning, and tax planning techniques, planned giving enables donors to make gifts of significance often with tax and financial rewards. If you're interested in joining the 1859 Society and making a planned gift, contact Michele Roberts at the CHSF Office at 402-556-1996 or michele@chsfomaha.org.

Join the 1859 Society

Upcoming Reunion Schedule



The class of 1965 at their reunion in 2025!

Class of 1961

August 21-23, 2026

Dick Zacharia - dickzacharia@gmail.com

Class of 1966

September 4-5, 2026

Cindy Hadsell – clhadsell@aol.com

Class Website

Class of 1976

September 11-13, 2026

Rosalyn Cotton - rosalyncotton56@gmail.com

Class Website

Class of 1981

September 4-5, 2026

Scott Barker - sbarker@episcopal-ne.org

Bob Atherton - athertonrobert8@gmail.com

Class of 1986

October 2-3, 2026

Becky Reynolds Crowell – rebeccajane67@gmail.com

Bart Lovgren – bartlovgren@gmail.com

Class of 1996

October 9-10, 2026

Kelly Titus - kellytitus@me.com

Sally Reiser Christensen - sallyachristensen@gmail.com

Class of 2001

October 2-3, 2026

Jenny Storm – Jennifer.storm@ops.org

Abby Waller – Abigail.waller01@gmail.com

Class of 2006

October 2-3, 2026

Hannah Andahl-Newman - hannahandahl@gmail.com

Jim Hubbard - James.d.hubbard@gmail.com

Alvin Samuels - alvin.samuels1@gmail.com

Class of 2016

September 11-12, 2026

Charita Dailey - daileycharita@gmail.com

If you are the reunion organizer for your class and haven't finalized a date for your class reunion or would like to look at postponing or cancelling it, please contact Erika Buffington at events@chsfomaha.org or call 402-556-1996.

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

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