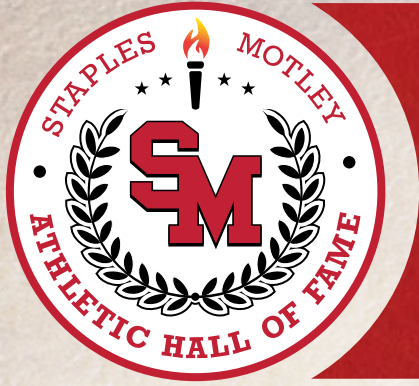




Recognizing the value of our high school legacy in athletics
by honoring our athletes, coaches and competitive spirit
of our athletic teams.

2023



Time fades everything...
except what we collectively value...
and choose to recall

Welcome to the 2023 Staples/Motley Athletic Hall of Fame inductee celebration. Thank you for joining us on a historic journey back in time as we collectively reflect on our athletic legacy. We appreciate your support as we gather to honor our current inductees and look forward to future inductee celebrations.

MISSION

To inspire future athletes, coaches and teams to reach higher levels of athletic achievement.

BELIEF

As a core foundation of the athletic legacy of our school and communities, we reflect on our athletic tradition that is built to last. As the Staples/Motley Athletic Hall of Fame committee, we collectively believe that participating and coaching in high school athletics, has life-long benefits with lessons that become core elements in the development of our personalities and commitments to our families and careers. We believe that athletic training, competition and related experiences, regardless of the level of success or achievement, will never stop transforming our lives and contributing to who we are as individuals.

For coaches and athletes who reach a high level of athletic achievement, there is a level of responsibility to model and set examples for others to follow. As time passes, it gets easier to forget our past success and harder to recall the amazing pathway of our athletic legacy. We believe it is vital to our future success in athletics, to recall, highlight and honor the athletic achievements that we all commonly respect. Understanding the level of commitment that leads to a high level of athletic achievement, will guide our evaluations leading to future inductees. We are committed to the evaluation and selection process that leads to celebrating the athletic achievements and related legacy of our athletes, coaches and teams.

INTENT

The intent of the Staples/Motley Hall of Fame is to honor and reflect the success and achievement surrounding our school's athletic legacy, and to tell the stories that highlight the journey and contribution of our individual athletes, coaches, teams, cheerleaders and community supporters. Our vision is to leverage the story of each Athletic Hall of Fame inductee to inspire others to set a higher level of commitment, leading to a higher level of athletic achievement. The opportunity to pay it forward to those who are inspired by the Staples/Motley Athletic Hall of Fame inductees, is the core intent and purpose of recognizing and honoring individual and team achievements.

2023 ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME



COACH

JOE JOERGER



Joe Joerger came to Staples in 1970, as a college student intern. He worked in the Staples school district business office, helped coach junior high basketball and baseball.

This is where Joe met Tom Wolhowe and Jerry Riewer, two men who became influential mentors, and upon graduating from Bemidji State in 1971, Joe accepted a teaching position for the Staples school district. As a natural passion, Joe's priority was to coach and develop athletes at various levels within the boys' basketball and baseball programs. Joe's contagious energy and positive attitude led athletes to respectfully refer to Joe as "Jumpin' Joe".

Tom Wolhowe quickly leveraged Joe's interest with an invitation to assist in teaching and coaching tennis as a summer activity. Even though knowing very little about tennis, Joe was more than willing to learn fundamentals and strategies of the game of tennis.

The tremendous amount of energy, talent and commitment demonstrated by various aged athletes amazed Joe. When the opportunity to start a Cardinal boys' tennis team presented itself, it was too much to resist, and he left the baseball field for the tennis courts.

Not only did Joe create a boys' tennis team, but he also created a competitive tennis culture and vision. Joe tirelessly gave his time and energy, often taking many kids to summer tennis tournaments and competitions. The athletes interest and commitment continued to build undeniable success and potential.

Joe's leadership and coaching strategy led the Cardinal Boys Tennis Team to dominate the Mid-State Conference from the mid 80's through the early 90's. The pinnacle of the Cardinal Boys' Tennis team program was winning back-to-back Minnesota State Team Championships in 1990 and 1991. In 1992, the Cardinals had their first individual state champion singles player and doubles team state champions. Years following produced multiple individual state runners-up in both singles and doubles. Joe's success and impact was formally recognized by the Minnesota State High School Tennis Coaches' Association when he was inducted to the Hall of Fame in 2009.

Joe's passion for athletics led him to officiating football and basketball at the varsity levels, and on occasions, he was a part of the state football playoff officiating crews.

Always looking for opportunity, Joe accepted the head coaching duties of the Cardinal Girls' basketball team in 1985. Joe focused on the elementary and middle school programs to ensure success at all levels. At the local and regional varsity level the competition was intense and Cardinal teams under Joe's leadership were always competitive and regularly vying for conference and sub-section championships. Joe retired from coaching in the early 2000's.

Joe's goal in coaching was simple: Work with athletes to position and motivate them to commit to a level of success beyond their goals and at times, beyond their natural ability.

TEAM

1972 MOTLEY FOOTBALL



It's been 50 years since Motley High School's 1972 football team compiled an undefeated regular season record and earned the school's first state football tournament berth. The '72 Rocket football team was one of only four teams to qualify and compete in the Minnesota State High School League's inaugural Nine-Man State Football Tournament in November 1972. The Rockets were ranked #1 in the Minnesota state ranking for much of that season and finished second in the final rankings. The Rockets outscored their opponents 274-64 during the regular season.

The 1972, senior-led team was the part of the 1971, Motley Rocket football team that made the transition from 11-man to 8-man football. Embracing a new playbook, the Rockets opened the 1971 season against arch-rival Pillager Huskies, suffering a loss in their inaugural 8-man game. The Rockets then rolled off six straight victories. A late-season loss in snow to the Backus Wolverines completed the 1971 season, at 6-2 and were runners-up in the Longbow Football Conference.

Following the Longbow Conference team format, and in 1972, the Rockets transitioned to 9-Man format/playbook for the 1972 season. The Rockets completed a dominating unbeaten regular season record capturing the competitive Longbow Conference Championship.

As a top rated 9-man football team in the state, the 72' Rockets rolled to a 50-6 early season win over the Deer Creek Wildcats, followed by a 42-6 victory over the Nevis Tigers, capturing the Longbow Football Conference title. The Rockets wrapped up their 72' season with a 42-0 shutout of the LaPorte Wildcats. The Rockets finished the season ranked #2 in the final state 9-man football ranking, and competed in the first Minnesota prep football playoffs. The Rockets met top ranked Cotton Cardinals on the Rockets home field in the 9-man state semifinal game. In a hard-fought gridiron battle, Cotton won the inaugural state tournament clash 30-18.

Senior halfback Randy Frisk received All-State football honors, with the following stats in seven games; rushed 113 times for 1,152 yards, 51 solo tackles, 31 assists, 17 sacks, recovered six fumbles and intercepted one pass.

First Team Longbow All Conference selections; Randy Frisk, halfback and defensive tackle; Kevin Swecker, offense and defensive end; Larry Converse, offensive end and safety

Second Team: Bill Christenson, offensive center

Coach Bill Finn was selected as the **Longbow Conference Coach of the Year.**



Row 1: T. Sampson - Manager, B. Simons, K. Swecker, L. Converse, R. Frisk, G. Ward, M. Bettis, R. Rittenhouse - Manager. Row 2: K. Stelck, M Frisk, S. Cook, B. Christenson, R. Hart, K. Skeesick, J. Guerts, K. Boldan. Row 3: B. Silgjord, M. Frisk, J. Neelan, R. Zetah, D. Robinson, B. Silgjord, M. Lorber. Row 4: Mr. Torgrimson - Assistant Coach, N. Digiovanni, J. Albrecht, D. Briggs, C. Cronin, Mr. Sullivan - Assistant Coach, Mr. Finn - Head Coach



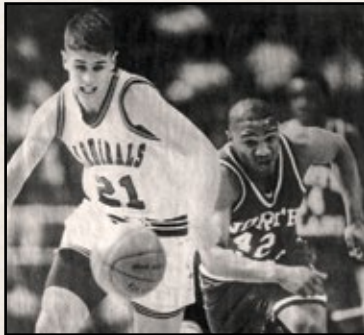
TEAM



1995 BASKETBALL



Row 1 (L-R): Kyle Stevens, Scott Moore. Row 2: Assistant Coach Kevin Coughlin, Jamie Dolezal, Jamie Nichols, Bob Hazuka, Jeff Joerger, Cy Bestland, Jason Becker, Craig Noska, Assistant Coach John Loney. Row 3: Manager Jerrod Busker, Erik Kelly, Blaine Joerger, Jim Goff, Chris Heier, Loren Brownell, Dan Otteson, Rob Opheim, Manager Scott Brever, Head Coach Lynn Peterson.



The 1995 Cardinal Boys Basketball season closely paralleled the movie "Hoosiers" as underdogs. Coming into the season, the Cardinals returned All-Conference players Blaine Joerger and Cy Bestland from the 1994 Section 6A runners-up team, having graduated a lot of veteran talent. This team would need to rebuild a foundation of young and inexperienced players. Without a doubt, the season's success would rely on a talented group of sophomores; Erik Kelly, Chris Heier and Dan Otteson.

Cardinal Pride was on the line, the 25-2 '95 Cardinals were determined to earn a trip to the Minnesota State Boys Basketball tournament.

Prior to the season, the Minnesota State High School League launched a two-year experimental "Sweet Sixteen" format. For the first time in 25 years the new format would have the smaller Class "A" schools playing the larger Class "AA" schools, with a single Minnesota State Champion. Despite the disadvantage for smaller schools, the format was set. The storied '95 Cinderella season unfolded, the Cardinal state tournament run resonated throughout the high school basketball community. The Championship game against the Minneapolis North Polars became a media sensation and is still talked about today as one of the classic high school games in the history of Minnesota basketball and is truly a part of our Cardinal basketball legacy.

Tournament games that led the Cardinals to the championship finals were filled with intense competition. The David vs. Goliath scenario was set for the state finals as the Cardinals were seated to face the unbelievably talented 30-0, Minneapolis North team. The Polars team had future NCAA Champion/NBA player Khalid El-Amin, along with three other Division I players; Chris Rainey, Jabbar Washington and Ozzie Lockhart. The Polars from Minneapolis North, were recently voted a top five team in the 100-year history of the Minnesota Boys' Basketball Tournament.

Against all odds, the underdog Cardinals played with grit and determination. Staples-Motley stunned North by coming out with hot shooting, building early leads of 17-5, 23-9 and a 31-26, halftime lead. The game became a battle of will, as both teams trade baskets right up until the final moments of the game. Over 10,000 fans were all standing in anticipation of the final play of the game, a historic moment was to be etched in the memory of Minnesota State High School basketball. With seconds remaining El-Amin, drove the lane, launched a contested jump-shot that rolled off the rim where Kavon Westberry was there to tip it in off the glass, for a 54-52 win for the Polars.

The run of the 1995 Cardinal Boys' Basketball team received a lot of attention and the welcome home for the team found cars and fans from all over, backed up for miles. In a jam-packed Cardinal gymnasium, players, managers and coaches gathered one last time as a team thanked their fans. We're all grateful for the memories of the '95 Cardinal Boys' Basketball team and season.

ATHLETE

COLLIN BEACHY



As a three-sport standout athlete, Collin Beachy, a 1989 Staples Motley graduate, was a leader in Cardinal team's success in the late 1980's. Collin advanced to state competition 11 times becoming a three time Minnesota High School League State Champion in individual competition in Cross Country and Track. Collins' amazing athletic career earned eight individual state championships and 13 state level medals in multiple sports over the course of his high school athletic career.

Collin was an inspiration to his teammates, along with young athletes who looked up to Collin and were motivated by his positive encouragement, competitive commitment and dedication on and off the field of competition.

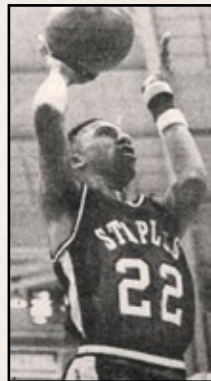
Collin was the top runner for Jerry Riewer's teams, earning five entries to the State Cross Country meet. His Cross Country career culminated with an individual State Championship title in 1988, which he competed during a blizzard on a snow-covered course.

Collin was a four time All-State CC competitor (1985/20th, 1986/12th, 1987 /6th, 1988/ 1st), led three Cardinal teams to the State CC Meet (1984/5th, 1987 /10th, 1988 /5th). Collin earned numerous Region, District and Mid-State Championships individually and as part of the Cardinal teams.

Collin was a three-year varsity basketball player, helping lead the Cardinals to a 62-13 record, including a 30-1 record in the Mid-State Conference over a three-year period from 1987 -1989. Collin was a two-time All-Conference selection, finished his career with 681 total points, a 13-point career average. Collins basketball career was highlighted by a Minnesota State Tournament third place finish in 1989.

Collin was a powerhouse on the oval track and one of the most respected mid-distance runners in the state of Minnesota. Collin was a three-time entry at the Minnesota High School State Meet. In his individual career he earned two MSHSL State Championships (800 and 1600 m/1989), two MSHSL runner-up finishes (800 and 1600m/ 1988).

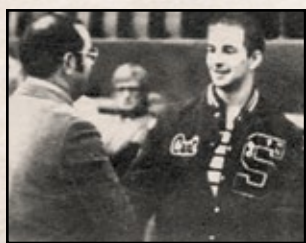
During his Junior and senior years, Collin was a dominant force in the Class AA True Team State Track meet earning five individual State Titles in the (400, 800 and 1600m) competitions. Collin was a leader on the 1988 Cardinal track team that finished as the Class A State Runners-up and a third-place finish in the State True-Team Class AA Championship. As a reflection of a true team achievement Collin was a key member of the 1989 Cardinal Track team that claimed the Minnesota True-Team State Track & Field State Championships. As a pinnacle to Collin's athletic career he and his brothers Arden and Ryan, collectively captured the 1989, Minnesota State High School League Team State championship.



ATHLETE



CURTIS JENKINS



Curtis Jenkins, a 1983, Staples High School graduate, an extraordinary athlete who's being honored with a well-deserved induction into the Staples-Motley Athletic Hall of Fame. Curtis's remarkable swimming career now spanning several decades, is a testament to his unparalleled determination and commitment to competitive excellence.

Curtis graduated from Staples High School as a standout swimmer, leaving an indelible mark on the sport. He exemplified true greatness and athletic achievement when he set the state record twice while claiming the Minnesota State Championship in the 100-yard butterfly event and achieving Minnesota All-American status. Competing in a one class system against all schools in Minnesota, Curtis's awe-inspiring time of 50.86 seconds remains faster than many high school records to this day.

Following his success in as a Cardinal swimmer, Curtis signed with Division I University of New Mexico, where he competed at the highest level of college swimming throughout his distinguished four-year collegiate career. Curtis earned numerous collegiate honors, including WAC championship in 1986 and was named Co-Captain in 1987. His dedication and prowess in swimming continued to shine brightly as he made his mark at the college level, further solidifying his reputation as a true leader in the sport of swimming.

Curtis' love for the sport of swimming led him to coaching and inspiring competition in young athletes. He coached White Bear YMCA Mariners from 2007 until 2012, leading to several state championships with his teams. He proudly co-led the initiative to reestablish the Boys High School Swim and Dive Team at White Bear Lake High School, where both his sons Chris and Will have been successful swimmers. Daughter Lily, now taking a similar form to her dad in the pool at White Bear Lake.

In 2023, Curtis pushed his boundaries further by dedicating himself to training by competing in the Minnesota Master's Swimming competition. Curtis achieved his goal at the Minnesota competition by qualifying for the US Master National Championships held in Irvine, California. This effort resulted in securing top placements, showcasing his competitive spirit. There were 140 swimmers in his age group and 2,480 total swimmers ranging from ages 18 to 101 years old. His goals were realized, by medaling in two of five individual events and in one relay.

Curtis Jenkins's induction into the Staples-Motley High School Athletic Hall of Fame is a testament to his outstanding achievements and dedication to competitive swimming. Curtis's passion for the sport of swimming has led him to be a respected mentor and inspiring example of dedication, training, and overall excellence in competition.

Today, Curtis serves as an Account Manager at LeaderPromos, where he develops strategic partnerships, oversees marketing and promotional solutions for local and national entities.

ATHLETE

BLAINE JOERGER



Blaine Joerger excelled as a talented multi-sport athlete for Staples-Motley that participated at the highest levels of state competition in both basketball and tennis. Blaine's countless hours of dedication and commitment resulted in exceptional athletic achievement not only in high school, but also at the collegiate level.

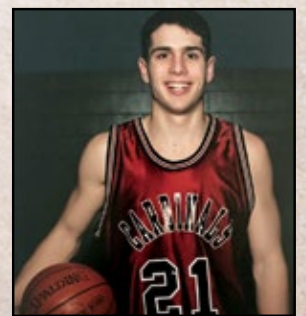
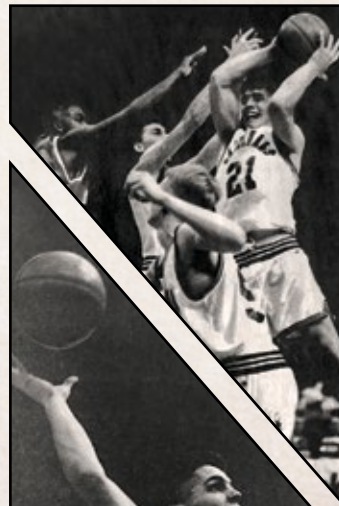
Blaine was a four-year starter for Lynn Peterson's dominate basketball teams and program. Blaine was a captain and leader of a team that produced one of the most memorable moments in Staples-Motley and Minnesota basketball history. The 1995 Cardinal State Tournament team finished their season as runner-up in the one-class Sweet Sixteen format. In the championship game, the Cardinals fell short of an overall state title from an intensely contested last second basket that resulted in a two-point loss to Minneapolis North. Blaine was named to the 1995 All-Tournament team and an All-State selection and is still one of only five players in the history of Minnesota boys' basketball to have scored 100 points or more during a single state tournament.

Throughout Blaine's basketball career, the Cardinals teams dominated the Mid-State conference resulting in four conference titles and was a three-time all-conference selection. During Blaine's career, the Cardinals accumulated a 88-23 record with two Section 6A runner-up finishes in 1993 and 1994, and the upset of number one ranked Morris earning a trip to the state tournament in 1995. At graduation in 1995, Blaine held many school records including points in a game (43), season points (682), and career (1,712). Other records include rebounds in a game (19), field goals (231) and free throws (157) made in a season.

Joerger's dominance on the tennis courts started early as an 8th grade doubles player on the 1991 Cardinal Boys Tennis State Championship team. Blaine went on to qualify for the next four state tennis tournaments in both singles and doubles competition. In 1995 Blaine teamed up with Mike Rollins to earn a Class A runner-up finish in doubles. Along this journey, he amassed over 100 wins, while earning both all-conference and MVP honors three times.

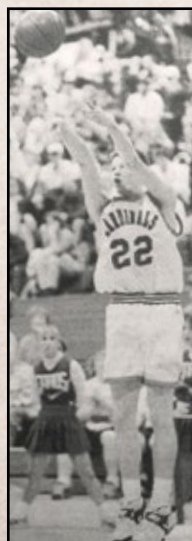
After high school, Blaine went on to attend Division II Mankato State University where he excelled in basketball from 1996- 2000 with the Mavericks. During this time, he was one of the best three-point sharpshooters and overall scorers to ever wear the purple and gold leading the Mavericks as consistent contenders for the NCAA tournament. Blaine was honored as the National DII player of the month, preseason All-American, All-Region, three-time All-Conference and team MVP honors. Upon graduation, Blaine held the Mavericks record for most three-pointers made (241), and was the school's sixth leading scorer with 1,475 points.

Beyond college, Blaine succeeded as a high-level basketball official, officiating in many Minnesota state championships and the NCAA DII and DIII National Tournaments. Currently, Blaine works as a financial advisor for Northwestern Mutual and resides with his family in Richfield.



ATHLETE

ERIK KELLY



Erik Kelly, a 1997, Staples-Motley High School graduate began his athletic career as an 8th grader, a year in which he scored his first varsity basketball points and competed at the Minnesota State Track and Field meet. Erik was a three sport standout athlete earning 13 varsity letters: basketball (5), track and field (5) and football (3).

Among Erik's athletic successes, Erik was most prominently known for and passionate about his prowess on the basketball court. Erik dedicated countless hours of individual and team practice in the pursuit of competitive greatness that led him to become a Minnesota All-State selection. Erik's basketball career began as a starting point guard on the junior varsity team as an 8th grader and continued as a four year starting point guard for the Cardinals. Erik was a team captain, his junior and senior seasons. During his varsity career, the Cardinals amassed a combined record of 104-13. As a team leader, Erik helped guide the Cardinal basketball teams to three consecutive state tournament appearances (1995, 1996 and 1997) finishing (2nd, 3rd, and 3rd, respectively). Erik's senior season began with an unforgettable performance, netting 38 points, and a record 10 straight 3-pointers. Erik exceeded the 1,000-point milestone during his junior year and graduated as the boys' basketball all-time leading scorer (1,749 points). He left his legacy on high school basketball by setting the state of Minnesota and national record for high school career 3-point shooting percentage at an astonishing 47.3 percent. Among his many basketball accomplishments included; named three-time All-Conference selection, three-time All-State tournament team selection and named to the 1997 Associated Press All-State Team. Post graduation, in 2000, Erik was named to the Brainerd Daily Dispatch's 20th Century All Area Basketball Team and more recently in 2018, Erik was named by Minnesota Hoops as one of the State's top 100-point guards in Minnesota boys' basketball history.

Erik's athletic successes were also captured on the track and the gridiron. Erik was a five-time Minnesota State meet qualifier on the Cardinal's track and field team in the; 110 and 300 meter hurdles and as a member of the 4x400 relay team. Erik won countless district/ section, individual/team events; finishing in sixth place at the state track meet in the 300-meter hurdles his senior year. Erik was a two-way starter for the Cardinal football team including; starting quarterback during his sophomore and junior seasons where he led the triple-option offence. Erik accounted for four touchdowns in a single game (three rushing and one passing) in a Cardinal victory.

Erik graduated in 1997, with a nearly 4.0 GPA and was selected the 1997 Staples-Motley High School Male Athlete of the Year.

ATHLETE

JODY WILSON



Staples High School started a Cardinal girl's golf program in 1977, under the direction of head coach Glen Hasselberg. Jody Wilson couldn't wait until she was in 7th grade, so she could compete for a spot on the girl's golf team. As a varsity team player Jody was a six-year letterwinner, competing for the Cardinals from 1978-1983.

Jody had a natural competitive edge and quickly developed her strategy, gaining valuable experience and confidence during her first two years of varsity golf. As a freshman Jody earned Mid-State All-Conference honors and competed in her first state tournament placing 15th. She continued to earn All-Conference honors and compete at the Minnesota state meet for the rest of her high school career. Jody placed 16th as a sophomore, runner-up as a junior, and at the pinnacle of her high school career became the Class "A" Minnesota state individual champion her senior year. She was a natural team leader and was selected team MVP from 1980-1983.

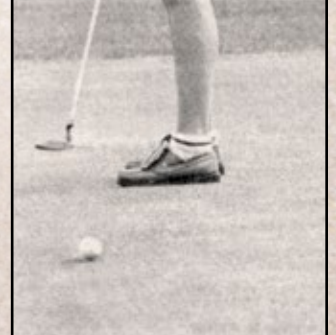
Jody enjoyed many years with great teammates and competitive teams, but probably the best team was in 1981. That year saw great success and the team won the prestigious University of Minnesota Invite. Unfortunately, the team lost in the District Tournament to Wadena who went on to become team state champions.

As the 1983 Class "A" individual state champion Jody squared off against the Class "AA" state champion for the right to represent Minnesota at the National All-American Golf Tournament. It took four extra holes to break the tie after playing 18 holes for Jody to win the qualifier. Jody placed 15th in the three-day golf tournament held in Albuquerque, NM in June.

While in high school Jody also enjoyed being a varsity cheerleader for the football, basketball, and wrestling teams. She was inspired by the many successful teams and individual athletes in their prospective sports as there were so many state tournament entrants during her high school years. There was also a lot of encouragement and support for each other.

After graduation Jody went on to play competitive golf at Concordia College, Moorhead, and then transferred to the University of Minnesota, Morris where she graduated in

1988. Finding inspiration from the many fine teachers and coaches she had while growing up, Jody went on to become an art teacher and golf coach, first at Norman County West, and then at Browerville High School. During those years she did her best to inspire athletes to play the game of golf, as well as that of making art. Jody retired as a teacher and coach in education in 2022. She continues to enjoy playing golf, and has not lost her edge to play a competitive round of golf.





COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR

PAMELA SACHS



Pamela Sachs bled the maroon and white school colors for decades serving as a teacher, class advisor, cheerleader coach, class play director, sports statistician coordinator and school news correspondent, supporting athletes and participants in other activities at Motley High School. She was students and athletes #1 fan! In recent years she was a co-founder and administrator of the "High School Friends" Facebook group for Motley High School, currently the group has 624 members.

During Pamela's 40-year teaching career at Motley and Staples-Motley volunteering as a statistician, an ever-present champion for the football, basketball, wrestling and baseball teams kept her connected with her students beyond the school day. Come rain or snow, Pamela Sachs rode the team bus with other statisticians and cheerleaders to games and back to Motley, where she drove, late-night, to her home in the Gull Lake area. This volunteer time was a true gift to all the athletes and teams through the years. English teachers have essays to evaluate as well as spelling, grammar and tests to correct, but she was willing to put that work off until after the event of the evening.

While she kept the books and stats for teams, she also took pictures and sent them along with short summary articles to the Staples World area newspaper. As a result, the Staples World would commonly reach out to Pamela and asked her to do reporting for them. When the Staples World offered to compensate her, she humbly declined the pay.

Pamela was always ready to step in at a moment's notice, when there was no pep band at a sports event, she would pull out her flute and play the national anthem. Former athletes recall her as an enthusiastic supporter and a confidant. Wrestling was a favorite sport of Pamela's. A former wrestler shared that she was the team's biggest fan and was an inspiration to him and his brother; always had a listening ear when needed. Another student-athlete recalled a situation where she gave some wise advice that was hard for him to hear, but the message was spot-on. A former cheerleader recalls her taking the team to cheer camp at St. Ben's where they were named small team champions. As a volunteer chaperoning many trips and helping at student focused activities, she helped provide lasting memories.

She really cared about her students on and off the court, field, or mat and demonstrated this by the encouragement and guidance she selflessly provided.