

## Alumni Association

*Keeping Ties with Our Alumni*



**TAYLOR**  
School District



January 2019 Newsletter

# IN THE NEWS



## NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The Taylor Alumni Association extends a warm welcome to Dr. Adrien Antaya (above photo) who is a new Assistant Principal at Taylor High School. Adrien wrote:

I graduated from Taylor Center in 1995. I was a football player and threw shot and discus on the track team. I continued playing football at Adrian College and was a member of

the 1997 MIAA Championship team. I graduated from Adrian with a BA in English.

While I was at Adrian, one of my professors spoke with me about her experiences teaching abroad in Japan on the JET Program. She inspired me to apply, and soon I was on my first flight to Japan. I taught English Conversation to high school students in Yokkaichi City, Mie Prefecture. The city was just south of Nagoya. I lived by myself for two years. While I had no command of the language when I went,



I became fairly fluent in Japanese. It was an amazing experience.

When I returned to the U.S., I ended up teaching in my minor. I taught Spanish for about 16 years in various districts, with the most recent being Garden City. I was also the Head Boys Track Coach and an Assistant Football Coach for Garden City.

While a lot has changed in Taylor, I am very excited to see former peers returning to Taylor with their children. It really is an exciting time to be in the Taylor School District.

Taylor Alumni Association  
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[tayloralumni.org](http://tayloralumni.org)



## GOOD THINGS ARE HAPPENING IN THE TAYLOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### ► Debate Team

Kaylee Frerenborough and Miranda Hontz represented Taylor High in the West Bloomfield Invitational and came home with a 12 win 7 loss record. Competing in two other tournaments, Kaylee won awards for top speaker.

### ► Foundation Recognizes and Honors Scholarship Donors

Those donating money for scholarships to be presented to members of the class of 2019 were recognized by the Taylor Foundation December 12th. Ken Nelson, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, reported that the committee has received \$100,000 in donations for current and future scholarships. In thanking the donors who were present, he used the theme "Beacons of Light". Like

the Lighthouse in the harbor guiding ships safely into port, the donors were Beacons by assisting students to achieve their goals. Ken conducted a question/answer session with one of the donors, Tim Rodgers. Tim spoke of the fine education he had received in the Taylor Schools and wanted to repay the system by his donation.

Mr. Nelson also recognized Pam and Roger Swap for their very generous donation to benefit the students of Taylor High School.

Many Thanks to Current Donors. The following individuals have made generous donations to the Taylor Foundation for Scholarships and Education Enrichment programs.

Gaffka, Eric TCH 1979

Kato, Alex TCH 1960

Kato, Phyllis Batchelder 1960

Kyte, Sandra TCH 1962 & Staff

Stephens, William TCH 1961 & Staff



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

TIM RODGERS, JFK (1976)

**M**y name is Tim Rodgers and I am a 1976 graduate of Taylor Kennedy High School. I am composing this letter to talk about my great experience in school and how the teachers and administrators at Kennedy changed my life. Even though this letter is intended to talk about my high school years, I would be remiss if I didn't mention one Brake Junior High teacher, David McGhee. Mr. McGhee was my English and Social Studies teacher and had such a strong influence on me that I began thinking that teaching was what I wanted to do with my life. His natural positive feelings toward all students was always evident and reflected in the great overall atmosphere of his class. He was also my 7th grade basketball coach, which was my first organized sport. David became a lifelong mentor and helped me many times in my life. I am proud to say he is a friend to this day.



Jessica & Tim Rodgers

My first interaction with anyone from Kennedy High School was my counselor, Reginald Dickson. Many families have internal struggles that did not always show from the outside, ours was no exception. Mr. Dickson was a pillar of

strength to lean on for all three years of high school, and believe me it was much needed. I really don't know how I might have turned out if he was not there for the continuous support that he so easily and caringly provided.

The principal at Kennedy, Mr. Maley, was a powerful leader and tremendously respected by all. Here I am now at 60 years old and I have not experienced a better front person. He had great wing men to support him in Mr. Pantalone (JP to you and I) and Mr. Trierweiler. It was truly special to have them around and involved in the entire educational process. I swear JP slept at the school. He was literally at every sport and extracurricular activity we had. He also helped develop a learning environment in the building that was contagious to success. Later in the academic life he became a teaching mentor to my wife Jessica. JP is yet another Taylor educator that I remain friends with at this time.

Our school was blessed with many teachers that were not only outstanding at what they did, but simply ahead of their time. In math Mr. Rocket found a way to make things fun. More importantly we did things with punch cards and Fortran which were precursors to early computer work that other districts did not know existed. Mr. McLean made Psychology so interesting, entertaining and intriguing that it became one of my minors in college. Mr. Raebel taught many levels of Micro Biology and

continue on page 4

continue from page 3 (Tim Rodgers)

made a difficult subject seem second nature to me. Mr. Freeman, also a great science teacher, coached cross country and track. His methods and coaching techniques were so advanced that I didn't experience anything like it until my later years of college. Regretfully he retired from coaching after my sophomore year. Speaking of coaches, the building was loaded with other legends: Bob Sclater, Van Kostegian and Forest Bone to name a few. I played three years of Varsity Basketball for Coach Kostegian; not only was he a powerful influence, he played an important part in my career. I will talk about that a little later.

We also had many elective classes that were not only enjoyable but really helped in multiple ways. One of these classes was Advanced Effective Reading taught by Ms. Proctor. This class was a speed-reading class that not only taught me how to read faster but much more proficiently, thus a natural creator of better study habits.

Charlie Dickelman, Big D, the original Michigan Man. Charlie not only deserves his own paragraph, he deserves his own book. The amount of people he influenced in life is immeasurable. He was a naturally gifted teacher. Everyone loved him. If I thought I wanted to be a teacher earlier in my academic life, Charlie sealed the deal. I was going to be a teacher and had hopes of being a fraction as good as he

was. He was a father figure to me, a hilarious one, but one just the same. We became extremely close friends that lasted a life time. I miss him every day.

Charlie helped me land a job at the Athlete's Foot in the Southland Mall - there he was influencing me once again. What a great gig, a jock being around sneakers all the time. Earlier I mentioned that Coach Kostegian had an influence on my career. Playing for him instilled a work ethic and discipline in me that I believe has lasted a life time. He asked me one day, "Rodgers what do you want to be in life?" I replied, "Coach, since I was 13 all I ever wanted to do was teach and coach." He laughed and said, "Son, you would be pretty good at it." Then he gave me some good advice, he mentioned that we should all have a backup plan in life especially for a career. He strongly suggested mine should be in sales because he felt I was made for it.





I went on to Central Michigan University, with a few detours here and there, and earned my degree in Education. I student taught in Saginaw where I met my beautiful future wife Jessica who is a teacher at Novi High School. Due to the lack of teaching jobs at the time, I never taught after that. The job that Big D helped me get at the Athlete's Foot became part of the backup plan Coach Kosi suggested. I parlayed that experience into my first job with Nike. I worked for them on two occasions in my career as well as Fila and Ralph Lauren to name a couple. I am currently the Senior Key Account Manager for New Era Cap, which are the caps you see on all Major League Baseball players as well as on the NFL sidelines. I am in charge of New

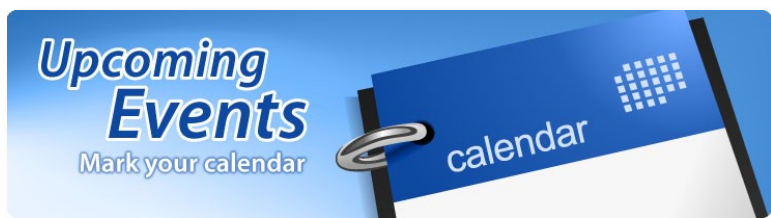
Era sales for Dick's Sporting Goods and Kohl's nationally. We ship about one million caps a week worldwide.

I was also fortunate enough to coach varsity basketball with Mike Lever at Taylor Center High School and then later for many memorable years with Chuck Suttles at Taylor Center and then Truman. My teaching degree did come to good use during all of those years of coaching. I hope I had half the positive influence on some of those players as all of the outstanding teachers, administrators and coaches had on me during high school. Who I am today is a direct reflection of those who were a part of my life at Taylor Kennedy High School. 📖



## **A WISH TO YOU FOR THE NEW YEAR**

*May your troubles be less  
Your Blessings more  
And may nothing but happiness  
come through your door.  
-Your Alumni*



### **Sports Dates below are for all Home Events**

January 8	9th grade Girls Basketball vs Gibraltar pm Girls Basketball vs Gibraltar JV 5:30 pm and Varsity 7:00 pm
January 11th	9th grade Boys Basketball vs Melvindale 4:00 pm
January 15th	9th grade Boys Basketball vs Wyandotte 4:00 pm JV & Varsity Boys Basketball vs Wyandotte 5:30 pm & 7:00 pm
January 17th	Boys Swim Team vs Trenton 6:00 pm
January 18th	9th grade Girls Basketball vs Southgate 4:00 pm Girls Basketball vs Southgate JV at 5:30 pm and Varsity 7:00 pm
January 22nd	9th grade Boys Basketball vs Lincoln Park 4:00 pm Boys Basketball JV and Varsity vs Lincoln Park 5:30 pm & 7:00 pm
January 25th	9th Grade Boys Basketball vs Trenton 4:00 pm Boys Basketball JV & Varsity vs Trenton 5:30 pm & 7:00 pm
January 29th	Boys Basketball JV and Varsity vs Detroit Leadership Academy 5:30 pm & 7:00 pm

### **Theme Day's at the Chopping Block Restaurant in the Taylor Career Center**

January 18th	Mediterranean Menu 10:30 am - 12:30 PM
February 1st	Italian Menu 10:30 am - 12:30 Pm

## OBITUARIES



*The Alumni Association members would like to extend their deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the former classmates mentioned below. You will forever be in our thoughts and prayers.*

### **Taylor Center High School**

Barbara Dul Ridenour, Class of 1958 (passed November 13, 2018).

Kathleen Stewart Norvell, Class of 1970 (passed December 3, 2018).

### **Truman High School**

Vicki Austin Chrzanowski, Class of 1974 (passed December 13, 2018).

### **John F Kennedy High School**

Cornelius Lee Conway, Class of 1966 (passed December 16, 2018)

Lanny Christian, Class of 1970 (passed November 21, 2018).

For more information about the deceased and their families, please visit the alumni website [tayloralumni.org](http://tayloralumni.org) and click on "In Memoriam".