



GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2020

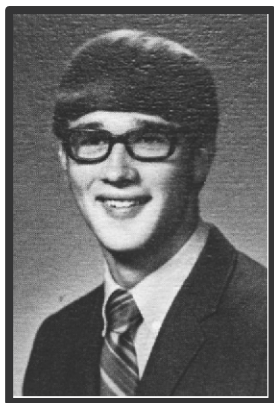
Gregory P. Fritze '72
Britt J. Carpenter '85
Susan A. Gibson '89
Bryan J. Walter, Lt Col, USAF '97
Dr. Nicholas J. Gidosh '07

Class of 2022

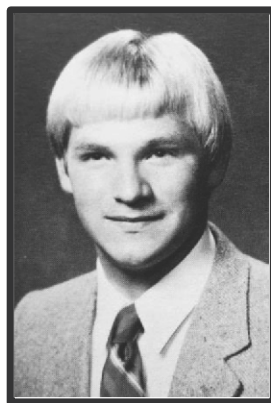
Douglas W. Edelman '54
Gregory J. Hessinger '83
Jayne Ann Wright Recker '83
Barthelomew "Bart" Cooper '97

INDUCTION CEREMONY

The Whitehall-Coplay School District takes great pride and pleasure in recognizing the recipients of the 2020 and 2022 Zephyr Graduates of Distinction Award. The alumni are being honored for their personal and professional achievements which have made significant contributions to their field of endeavor and to society.



Gregory Fritze '72

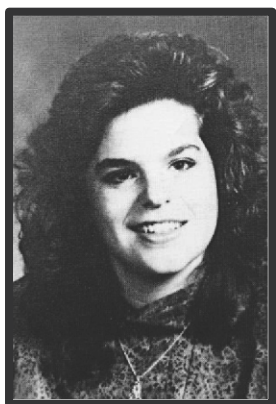


Britt J. Carpenter '85

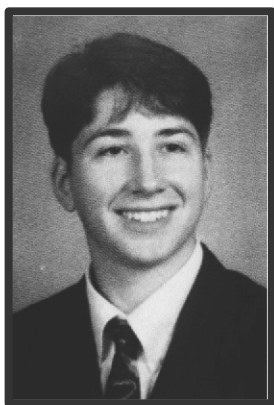


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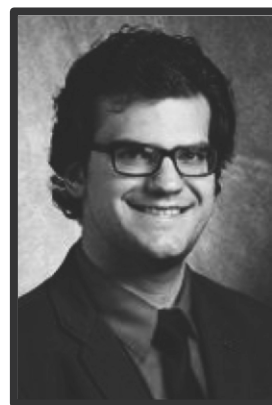
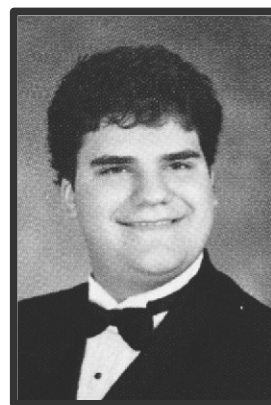
Class of 2020



Susan A. Gibson '89



Bryan J. Walter, Lt Col, USAF '97



Nicholas Gidosh '07

Gregory P. Fritze ***Class of 1972***

Boston Conservatory of Music - Bachelors, Music Composition 1976

Indiana University Bloomington - Master of Music with Distinction, Music Composition 1979

Professional Highlights

- A prize-winning composer and Fulbright Scholar to Spain, his work is performed extensively throughout the world
- Recipient of a Walt Disney Fellowship
- An active composer, educator, performer, lecturer and conductor, his compositions include works published by several music publishers in the U.S., South America and Europe
- During his tenure as Professor and Chair of Composition at Berklee College of Music
 - Chaired the Composition Department for 14 years
 - Conducted the Berklee Concert Wind Ensemble for 15 years
- Written over 100 compositions for orchestra, band, chamber ensembles and soloists
- His compositions include works recorded by Musica Nova, Mark Records, Crystal Records and CRI Records
- Served as Principal Tubist with the Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra
- Principal Conductor – Boston Brass Ensemble 2001-2014
- Member of the Cambridge Symphonic Brass Ensemble and Colonial Tuba Quartet
- Over two hundred performances of his compositions available on YouTube and SoundCloud by ensembles around the world
- Compositions have been performed over a thousand times in twenty-six countries
- Presented over one thousand lectures and workshops in fourteen countries
- Performed with several famous musicians including Ray Charles, Itzak Perlman, Gunther Schuller, Mel Torme, The Moody Blues and others
- Participated in over thirty visiting composer residencies in the U.S., Europe, Central and South America
- Board of Directors – Daytona Beach Symphony Society, Florida 2016-present

Professional Honors

- Winner of over seventy composition awards both nationally and internationally
- Brookwright International Brass Ensemble Composition – First Prize
- World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE) International Composition Contest 2017 – First Prize
- René Fisher Composition Prize – First Prize
- Concurso Biental de Composición de Musica para Banda, Ciudad de Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Spain) – First Prize
- Menzione d'Onore (highest award given) of the Mario Bernado Angelo-Comneno International Music Composition by the Accademia Angelica Costantiniana Arti E Scienze (Italy)
- T.U.B.A. International Etude Composition Competition – First Prize
- ILBA Grand Prize in Composition by the European International Competition Ibla, Sicily
- WASBE International Composition Contest 2019 – Second Prize

Greg Fritze and his wife Linda Marie Slampyak Fritze (Class of '72) reside in Daytona Beach Shores, Florida where he continues to compose music.

Britt J. Carpenter

Class of 1985

East Stroudsburg University - B.S. English, Secondary Education

Professional Highlights

- Career began in post-secondary education for a span of 18 years
 - Campus Director – Career College
 - Vice President of Admissions – Corinthian College
 - Director of Recruitment – ITT Technical Institute
 - Director of Community Relations – Career Education Corporation
- Embarked on entrepreneurial opportunities
 - Owner and Director of Operations – Muttropolitan Pet Sitting and Dog Walking, a full service company since 2012 serving the Philadelphia area
- Founder of the Philly Unknown Project 2015-present
 - A community betterment based non-profit organization that works closely with homeless and addicted individuals by offering clothing, food and assistance to find housing
 - Provides guidance, compassion to those addicted to drugs
- Talk Show Host at USALA Radio, Philadelphia
 - “Be a Voice” focused on community and national leaders who are making a difference in our world 2018-2021
- Co-Founder, CEO Triumphant Transitions – transition recovery homes for recovering addicts
- Narrated the documentary “The Damage Done, The Unwanted” filmed on the streets of Philadelphia, Nashville and Miami 2020
 - Five episode series focusing on the nation’s opioid crisis, how lives and communities are being tragically transformed by drugs
 - Awarded the Associated Press Award for Best Public Awareness Documentary

Professional Activities and Honors

- Philly Unknown Documentary – Philadelphia Film Festival Award
- Free-lance writer for many publications, featuring: Love What Matters; Philly Magazine: “Day in the Life; Philly Current: “Day in the Life”
- Founder of community focused Instagram account “Philly Unknown”

Community Service

- Board of Directors – Morris Animal Refuge 2012-present
- Board Member – We Love Philly 2020-present
- Board Member – Harmful Ethics Review 2021-present
- Assisted in forming the Healing Garden of Philadelphia, a place to help recover and heal the pain for individuals harmed by violence

Britt Carpenter resides in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania devoting his life to assisting the homeless and the addicted.

Susan A. Gibson

Class of 1989

University of South Carolina - B.S. Criminal Justice
Notre Dame - Executive Leadership Course
University of Virginia - Senior Leadership Course

Professional Highlights

- Career began as a Police Officer and Narcotics Detective – Mt. Pleasant Police Department, South Carolina 1993
- Joined the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as a Special Agent assigned to New York City Division's High Intensity Drug Trafficking Unit 1997
 - Gained invaluable experience conducting both domestic and international narcotic investigations
 - Trained as a Trauma Team Member responding to critical incidents from job related shootings to death notifications
- Promoted in 2005 to Group Supervisor for New York City Drug Enforcement Task Force – the oldest and most successful task force in the country – supervising DEA Agents, NYPD Detectives and NYPD Investigators. Led the group during the Fentanyl surge in NYC.
- Joined the DEA's Office of Professional Responsibility 2010
 - Assigned to an Executive Priority Investigation targeting corruption amongst international vetted units assigned to DEA
- Promoted to Assistant Special Agent in Charge of New York City Drug Enforcement Task Force overseeing six active enforcement groups 2014
- Selected to the Senior Executive Service as Deputy Assistant Administrator DEA's Diversion Control Division's Regulatory Program with responsibility over 1.8 million DEA registrants
 - Led programs responsible for regulations of all controlled substances within the United States

Professional Activities and Honors

- Represented DEA to work with China's Ministry of Public Safety to advocate the control of all Fentanyl substances resulting in the control of 32 substances in China
- Testified before U.S. Congressional House and Energy Committee on dangers of synthetic drugs and efforts of DEA to combat the importation and distribution within the U.S.
- Essex County Opioid Task Force Recognition Award – 2019 for her effort in drug education and combatting drug overdose deaths
- Appeared in National Geographic's "World's Most Dangerous Drug, Meth" documentary 2019
- Recipient of Women in Federal Law Enforcement Leadership Award (WIFLE) 2020
- Schneps Media Honoring the Power of Women of New York who are making an impact in business and government – Citation of Honor and Recognition Certificate 2020
- Bergen County Certificate of Commendation for her heroic efforts that saved a child's life 2021

Susan Gibson resides in New Jersey serving as Special Agent in Charge, New Jersey Division of Drug Enforcement Administration.

Bryan J. Walter, Lt Col, USAF

Class of 1997

Pennsylvania State University - B.S. Meteorology
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Florida - M.S. Aviation Safety
Air War College - M.S. Strategic Studies

Professional Highlights

- Prior to attending the Air War College, served as Commander for 451st Flying Training Squadron, 479th Flying Training Group, 12th Flying Training Wing, Naval Air Station - Pensacola, Florida
 - The 451st Flying Training Squadron conducts advanced Combat Systems Officer Training in 21 modified T-1A Jayhawk aircraft and the T25 simulator training devices
 - Unit trains over 350 active duty, guard and reserve officers in advanced navigation, electronic warfare, and weapon systems employment to meet service and combatant commander operational requirements
 - As Commander, oversaw the safety, supervision, training, curriculum development and standardization of over 125 instructor CSOs, Airmen and civilians assigned to the 451st Flying Training Squadron
 - Performed flight duties as an instructor for undergraduate students
- As a B-52 Evaluator Radar Navigator held assignments at Scott AFB, RAF Lakenheath, Randolph AFB, Barksdale AFB, Offutt AFB
- Deployed multiple times to Andersen AFB Guam in support of the PACAF Continuous Bomber Presence
- Currently completing a degree program at the Air War College, Montgomery, Alabama – May 2022
- Colonel Select Walter will be pinned in November 2022 and was recently appointed Director of Operations, 8th Air Force at Barksdale AFB, Haughton, Louisiana

Professional Activities and Honors

- Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster
- Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters
- Air Force Achievement Medal
- Distinguished Graduate, Combat Systems Officer Training
- Ira J. Husik Award, Top USAF Graduate, Combat System Officer Training
- Top Third Graduate, Squadron Officer School

Community Service

- Purple Heart Homes, Pensacola Chapter – provides housing solutions for service connected disabled and aging veterans. Helped build suitable living facilities for qualified veterans

Colonel Select Bryan Walter and his wife Leslie will reside in Haughton, Louisiana with their two children Cora and Aiden.

Nicholas J. Gidosh, OD, FAAO

Class of 2007

Muhlenberg College - B.S. Chemistry

Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University - Doctor of Optometry

Professional Highlights

- Completed a Cornea and Contact Lens residency at the Michigan College of Optometry, Ferris University
- Works in private practice at Lehigh Valley Eye Center Associates, Allentown
- Served as a clinical investigator for studies involving hybrid, scleral, multifocal and orthokeratology lenses which are presented at national and international conferences
- Areas of research include optimizing scleral lens optical and fitting designs for patients with irregular corneas such as keratoconus and those with multifocal needs
- Research and lectures on myopia control strategies, particularly orthokeratology as it pertains to patients with astigmatism
- Key Opinion Leader - lectures to colleagues, patients and parents at orthokeratology clinics across China in an effort to combat the growing global myopia epidemic
- Served as Assistant Professor and Chief of Cornea and Contact Lens Services for Salus University's Pennsylvania College of Optometry
 - Presented workshops and lectures in the Advanced Studies Program and International Program
- Through the American Academy of Optometry instructs optometrists in China and Scotland on the newest practices in eye care
- Key Opinion Leader giving national lectures in contact and cornea care
- Presently serves as Chief of Cornea and Contact Lens Service at Salus University

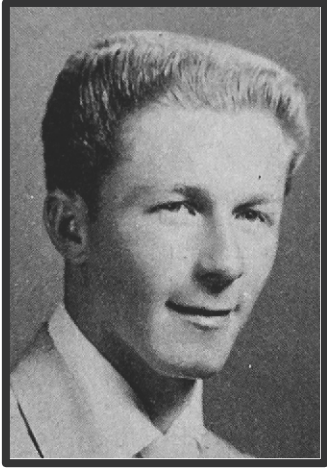
Professional Activities and Honors

- Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry
- Beta Sigma Kappa
- Co-Authored a feature article for Contact Lens Spectrum, December 2017
- Award winning posters in clinical science at the Global Specialty Lens Symposium
- Conference speaker, conducts workshops and provides continuing education for eye care professionals nationally and internationally
- Pennsylvania Optometric Association – active member involved with expanding legislation dealing with Optometry

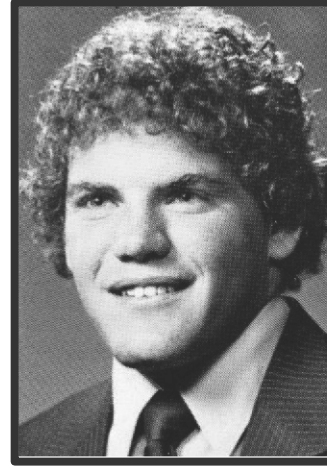
Community Service

- St. John the Baptist Church Picnic - Volunteer
- Muhlenberg College - Supporter
- Guiding Eyes for the Blind - Supporter

Dr. Gidosh and his wife Anna Atiyeh currently reside in Whitehall, Pennsylvania.



Douglas W. Edelman '54

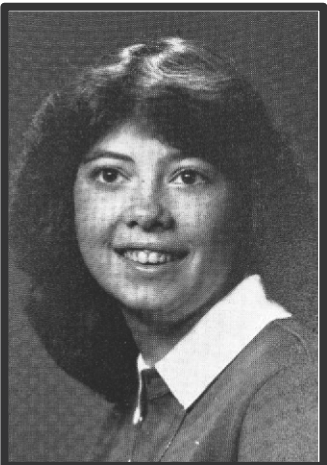


Gregory Hessinger '83

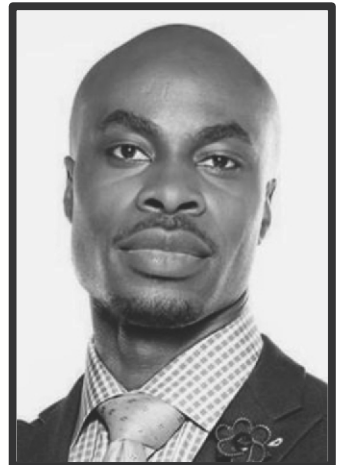
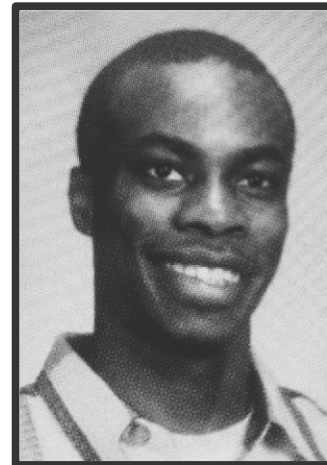


GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION

Class of 2022



Jayne Ann Wright Recker '83



Barthelomew Cooper '97

Douglas W. Edelman

Class of 1954

Curtis Institute of Music - B.A. Music

Professional Highlights

- Attended the Curtis Institute of Music on a full scholarship majoring in Trombone Performance
- While in high school and during college he performed with the Allentown Symphony Orchestra and the Allentown Band
 - Frequently featured as a soloist
 - Also played trombone with the Macungie Band
- Performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra for several years while earning his bachelor's degree
- Played the trombone with the American Brass Quintet 1970-1972
- As a member of the American Symphony Orchestra he performed at Carnegie Hall
 - Described by the New York Times (December 18, 1973) as an expert instrumentalist with an impressive performance of Poulenc's Sonata, maintaining precision even while relishing the playful brash elements in the score
- Played for world-acclaimed symphony conductor Eugene Ormandy
- Served as Principal Trombone for the Baltimore Symphony
- Considered an expert instrumentalist, he's known for maintaining admirable tonal balance and precision regardless of the musical piece
- Appointed the Principal Trombone for the Metropolitan Orchestra, a position he held for nearly twenty-five years
- During his tenure with the Metropolitan Orchestra he free-lanced playing Principal Trombone with the Opera Orchestra of New York and the American Symphony
- Member of the orchestra playing the trombone for the recording of the musical "Strike Up the Band"
 - This musical featured music by George and Ira Gershwin
 - Based on the book written by George S. Kaufman with the same title

Professional Activities and Honors

- Curtis Institute of Music - Supporter
- American Federation of Musicians, Northern and Central New Jersey Musicians' Guild Local 16-248 - Lifetime Member
- Musicians from Marlboro School of Music - Participating Artist

Douglas Edelman lives with his wife Julia in Little Falls, New Jersey. They have two adult children, Karen and Douglas, Jr. and one grandchild.

Gregory J. Hessinger ***Class of 1983***

East Stroudsburg University - B.A. Political Science and Government
St. John's University School of Law - J.D.

Professional Highlights

- Law career began as an Associate with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom
- Represents a variety of regional and national employers in all aspects of labor and employment law
- Served as Director of Labor Relations for CBS Corporation
- Only person and the youngest to serve as National Executive Director of the two largest performers' unions in the world
 - The Screen Actors Guild (SAG)
 - American Federation of Television and Radio Artist (AFTRA)
- In addition to SAG and AFTRA, regularly dealt with the Directors Guild, Writers Guild, IATSE, NABET and the American Federation of Musicians
- Returned to private practice representing a diverse group of clients in the advertising, entertainment and media industries, including movie studios, television networks, talent agencies, advertisers, advertising agencies and major record labels
 - Successfully defended a network owners major market television station against a high profile wrongful discharge arbitration claim brought on behalf of a lead news anchor
- Expert in navigating clients through the audit procedures of pension and health plans
- Represents many clients in the manufacturing, transportation, education and financial services sectors
 - Represented major regional sport network in successfully defeating two separate union organization drives
- Primary legal focus is collective bargaining, labor arbitration and employment litigation
 - Advises clients on full spectrum of employment issues: employment contracts, separation agreements, employee discipline, reduction-in-force, union organizing, discrimination and wrongful termination
- Partner in several law firms before his current position as a Managing Partner and Co-Chair of Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP

Professional Activities and Honors

- St. John's University School of Law - Member of the Law Review
- Trustee on the SAG and AFTRA pension and health plans
- Lebanon Valley College - Board of Trustees
- Lebanon Valley College Athletic Hall of Fame
- Various speaking engagements on Labor and Employment updates

Greg Hessinger and his wife Paula Walgren Hessinger (Class of '85) reside in Chesterfield, New Jersey. They are the parents of Sierra, Derek and Chloe.

Jayne Ann Wright Recker

Class of 1983

Lehigh Carbon Community College

Professional Highlights

- Career began in retail management, elevating to the regional level of the chain
 - Oversaw operations on the east coast including new store construction, audits and human resources
- Served as a volunteer for the Celtic Cultural Alliance for twenty years
- Currently holds the position Executive Director – Celtic Cultural Alliance 2009-Present
 - Under her leadership transformed an organization near bankrupt to become the largest free Celtic festival in North America
 - Oversees the operations of the festival and the educational outreach programs to fulfill the organization's mission to preserve the Celtic spirit and history
- Celtic Classic Highland Games and Festival is the signature event of the Celtic Cultural Alliance
 - It is a celebration of arts and culture
 - Men compete for the national title - U.S. Highland Game Champion
 - Bagpipe bands from around the country have an elite competition
 - Over seventy musical acts are presented throughout the weekend
 - Held on the last weekend in September, the annual event attracts over 270,000 visitors
 - As Executive Director, her team to coordinate this event consists of one full-time and one part-time staff member and over 700 volunteers
- Under her leadership, classes that promote Celtic music, theatre and art are provided to inspire youth and adults to have a greater understanding of the Celtic culture
 - Up to ten - \$1,000 scholarships are given to students who are pursuing Celtic dance or music
- Created the Parade of Shamrocks held in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania each March
- Develops partnerships with other non-profit organizations to assist with publicity for their cause and help generate revenue
 - Many non-profit organizations are featured during the Parade of Shamrocks and the Celtic Classic

Community Service

- Association of Scottish Games and Festivals – former President, currently serving as Vice President
- Downtown Bethlehem Association – former Board Member
- Easton PA Arts Alliance – former Board Member

Jayne Ann Wright Recker and her husband John live in Northampton, Pennsylvania.

Barthelomew “Bart” Cooper ***Class of 1997***

Professional Highlights

- A multidimensional contemporary artist who was born and raised in West Africa, Liberia
- Drawing since the age of three with a skill and vision beyond his years, the artist was inspired by his country’s vibrant colors and magnificent scenery
- At the outbreak of a civil war, his family fled Liberia moving to the United States where he had the opportunity to study fine art, sculptures and graphic design
- Influenced by Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci, American illustrator Norman Rockwell and American artist Ernie Barnes, he began to push the boundaries on the evolution of art and creativity
- Growing up with customary African values in a westernized American culture, his art merges the traditional with the technological
- Cooper’s signature mixed medium, acrylic style is quickly emerging in the contemporary art scene
 - The unique style has attracted several celebrity clients
 - Private collectors both nationally and internationally have acquired his work
- The fine art collection *Heroes* reimagines the heroes of Black History and Pop Culture, casting famous role models in an exciting new light
 - Black “sheroes” Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Rosa Parks and Winnie Mandela in t-shirts bearing the insignias of Superman, Green Lantern, Iron Man and Black Panther respectively
 - Connecting these freedom fighters with the visual symbolism of superheroes makes a powerful statement
- The *Fame* series features Kanye West in multi-color acrylic portraits, reminiscent of Andy Warhol’s photographic silkscreens
- Dedicated to distinctive figures in Pop Culture, his *Purple* series features Rihanna, Janelle Monáe and Grace Jones
- Celebrity culture is often the center of the artist’s work. His blend of vibrant colors mixed with history and pop culture have been featured in exhibits nationwide and attracted celebrity fans
- Cooper states “I’m not just an artist, I’m a creator... Each Individual piece has a conversation with the viewer’s soul, provokes thought, changes the narrative and inspires you to evolve. It’s all about evolution.”

Professional Activities and Honors

- Musikfest 2022 – Poster Artist
- *Hereos* exhibit currently on display at ArtsQuest’s Banana Factory Art Center through May 22, 2022
- Hosted educational programs for the District’s students – February 2022

Bart Cooper creates and resides in Hollywood, California. To view Bart Cooper’s work, visit <https://www.bartcooperart.com/hereos>

ZEPHYR GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION 2020 and 2022

An award has been established to recognize graduates of the Whitehall-Coplay School District who have achieved significant accomplishments in the following areas:

**Academic Achievement
Music
The Arts
Civic and/or Military Service
Community Service
Significant Personal Achievement**

SELECTION CRITERIA

Any graduate of the Whitehall High School, past or present employee, or past or present resident of the district may submit a nomination. A nomination submitted will continue in the active nomination file for five (5) years.

- The nominee must have graduated at least ten (10) years prior to nomination, unless due to the nominee being deceased.
- The nominee must have excelled in his/her career, or made an outstanding contribution to society.
- Individuals may be nominated for achievements in academics, music, the arts, civic and/or military service, community service, or a significant personal achievement.
- Inductees will be limited to 3-6 individuals in any given year.

A special acknowledgement of appreciation to the Selection Committee for their time and effort in making the Graduates of Distinction Award a reality.

SELECTION COMMITTEE

Phillips Armstrong – Retired Teacher, Lehigh County Executive
Nancy Buckno – Retired Teacher, Community Member
Judy Ott – Retired Teacher, Community Member
Cheryl Sommer – Retired Teacher, Community Member
Joyce Wheeler – Co-Chairperson, Former School Board Member
Dr. Barbara Chomik – Co-Chairperson/Facilitator, Non-Voting Member

GRADUATES OF DISTINCTION AWARD

In 2000, three graduates of Whitehall High School were inducted into The Arts Hall of Fame. The concept was expanded in 2010 to recognize the accomplishments of alumni in the areas of: Academic Achievement, Music, the Arts, Civic and/or Military Service, Community Service, Significant Personal Achievement.

Since The Arts Hall of Fame inducted members only in 2000, it was recommended the recipients become honorary members of the Zephyr Graduates of Distinction.

Honorary Members

Ronald Demkee '61

Clair Neamand '67

Douglas Wiltraut '69

2011 Inductees

Dr. William G. Bartholomew '32
RDML John Elnitsky, USN (Ret) '76
Nancy J. Bittner Christensen '79
Dr. Jeffrey S. Rogers '81
Dr. Joseph J. Thomas '81

2012 Inductees

Rogers W. Vaughn '49
Peter Stimeling, PWS-ssg '68
Joseph G. McDonald '70
Anthony E. Vlahovic '78
Matthew R. Yudt, Ph.D. '86

2013 Inductees

John "Jack" Sedovy '57
John W. Miller, Ph.D. '67
Erik M. Strohl '90

2014 Inductees

Paul H. Trively '64
Lt. Gen. Richard S. Kramlich, USMC (Ret) '69
Donna L. Miller Scholtis '70
Brian A. Cocca Ph.D., Esq. '93
Lt. Col. Melissa J. Pammer '94

2015 Inductees

Kathryn Charles Seidick '61
Les Steckel '64
Susan Kubik Scott '71
Tracy C. Vlahovic, DPM '92
Christine Kromer '93
Spc. Jesse D. Reed. USA '02

2016 Inductees

Donald R. Marushak '59
Michael J. Bednar '66
Gail Zimmerman Thomas '67
Adam G. Armbruster '79

2017 Inductees

Edward J. Galgon Sr. '39
Kenneth A. Clauser '49
George L. Pavelko, Jr., Lt Col, USAF (Ret) '78
Paul J. Geissinger '99

2018 Inductees

Deborah G. Hagenauer '79
Dr. Paula Radon Regan '87
CDR Kenneth Lieberman '92
Heather L. Miller '02

2019 Inductees

Robert L. Gilly '66
F. Todd Polinchock '81
Kristine Marakovits Roddick '92
Douglas M. Lieberman '93