

B.M.C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass.  
DEDICATED, JUNE 19, 1887

# DURFEE Chimes

Vol. 44 Season 2024

A publication of the B.M.C. Durfee High School Alumni Association

## Distinguished Alumnus Dr. Joel Potash



Joel Potash '54 was the youngest of three boys, all born in Fall River, and all graduates of Durfee High School. Joel's dad and mother immigrated as young children in the early 1900s from Poland and Belarus, respectively, and moved to Fall River from New York City around the time of the great depression, when his dad got a job in a curtain factory in Fall River. His mom was a graduate of Hunter College, but his dad only went as far as the sixth-grade, although he later attended the Bradford Durfee Textile Institute. Joel

attended the Dubuque School, the Highland School and Morton Junior High prior to Durfee. What he remembers most about his education in Fall River was the personal attention and encouragement of his many teachers.

Once he obtained a work permit, he worked after school and on Saturdays in his father's curtain factory in Union Mill #3, and later during the summers between college years. He attended Dartmouth College, where tuition and a dorm room was about \$1250, helped by a Charles V. Carroll scholarship from Durfee, which he repaid as soon as he could, and his factory earnings. He could also hitchhike from Fall River to Hanover NH. At Dartmouth, while a pre-med student, he found his science courses difficult. He majored in English, which he loved, graduating with Honors in his English major and three citations from Professors for Excellence in English. In 1962 he entered Boston University School of Medicine, found his first two years of basic science difficult, but loved his last two years of clinical study in hospitals and clinics. At that time, he wanted to become a general practitioner. He went with a colleague and best friend to St. Joseph's Hospital in Syracuse, NY, to intern, since his friend sought cold weather and copious amounts of snow. This was the time of the Vietnam War.

On completing his internship, he was drafted into the US Army, commissioned a Captain in the Medical Corp., and stationed at Ft. Sam Houston, in San Antonio Texas, where he headed with his wife and daughter. He worked in the out-patient department for two years and was head of Exam Board #3 as well. On honorable discharge in 1965, he received a citation for his service. While in Texas, the specialty of Family Practice, later called Family Medicine, was being conceived. He returned to St. Joseph's, one of the six pilot Family Practice residencies in the US, and took another year of training with

*Dr. Joel Potash cont. on page 5*

## Distinguished Alumna Dr. Elaine Ostroff



Elaine Phillips Ostroff was born on February 27, 1933 and grew up in Fall River, Massachusetts. She graduated from Durfee High School (1951), received a B.S. from Brandeis University (1955), was awarded a Radcliffe Fellowship (1970) and an Ed.M from Harvard University (1972). She is a pioneer in The Universal Design Movement, an international effort advocating design for disabled persons to enjoy access, independence, and convenience. It can aid

persons with mobility, visual, hearing, cognitive, developmental, neurological, and other disabilities.

In 1978, Ostroff co-founded with Cora Beth Abel the Adaptive Environments Center (now the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD) to confront the barriers which prevent persons with disabilities and older people from fully participating in community life.

In 1989, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, she developed the National Universal Design Education Project (UDEP) at Adaptive Environments. A national project, UDEP sought to incorporate universal design in professional curricula. Ostroff coined the term "user/expert" in 1995 to identify individuals whose personal experiences give them unique critical capacity to evaluate environments.

As an educator, Ostroff has been involved with the accessible environments effort on a national and international level since 1971. She was the former director of training for the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health where she developed graduate programs and courses to sustain community based living for people with disabilities.

In 1977, she was the United States representative to the United Nations meeting on the Rights of Children. She convened the national seminar on Design for All People that provided the framework for the UDEP in 1982. In 1986, she developed the "Best of Accessible Boston," an awards program honoring the architects and owners of buildings that exemplified good as well as accessible design.

In 2001, she was the senior editor of the "Universal Design Handbook"

*Dr. Elaine Ostroff cont. on page 2*

**Annual Meeting ~ May 23, 2024 ~ 7:00 PM ~ Nagle Auditorium ~ Refreshments 6:00 to 7:00 PM**

# Durfee Chimes

**A publication of the  
B.M.C. Durfee  
High School Alumni  
Association**

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P.O. Box 9656,  
Fall River, MA 02720-0011

# Letter from the President



Dear Fellow Alumni,

The tradition of continued excellence continues at Durfee at every level. This year, our Chimes highlights a couple of our Hometown Tributes, educational, trade school and performing arts successes, reunions and last year's scholarship winners. Starting this year, the Alumni Committee is also starting a new tradition of awarding 10 individual scholarships to CTE (Career and Technical Education) graduates.

Please join us for our Annual Meeting which will be held on May 23, 2024, at Durfee, starting with our social hour at 6pm in the grand North Entrance and then followed at 7pm by the meeting in the new Nagle Auditorium. This year we will be honoring two

Distinguished Alumni, Elaine Ostroff, '51 and Dr Joel Potash, '54, as well over 20 seniors who will be receiving scholarships from the Fall River High School Scholarship Association. We also mark the loss of two Distinguished Alumni, Richard Rosenberg, '48 and James H. Smith, '47 and those Hilltoppers that have also passed this year.

Finally, as my last few months wind down leading this amazing organization that represents the many tens of thousands of Durfee alumni, I leave you in the very capable hands of our new President, Lisa Lundy Kusinitz, '78, Treasurer, Charlotte Costa Thomas, '65, and Secretary, Judith Conrad, '70, as well as the rest of the executive committee.

Thank you for being a Hilltopper  
Joseph R. Costa, '81

## *Dr. Elaine Ostroff continued*

used as a textbook in educational settings.

In 2004, she was the first American, and first woman, to receive the Misha Black Medal from the Royal College of Art. In 2006, the American Institute of Architects awarded her the Honorary AIA designation. Ostroff's experience emphasized creating educational programs for non-designers, facilitating their design advocacy as well as collaboration with design professionals. She has written and produced technical assistance materials on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that were used in the National Network for ADA Technical Assistance.

Her papers are archived in the Smithsonian Institution.

She married Earl Carlton Ostroff (1931-2006) in 1953. The couple had three children, Rebecca, Joshua, and Sam. She lives in Natick, MA.

## **ALUMNI - WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Please complete the form on page 11 and return it in the enclosed envelope or contact the Association by email or telephone with your decision. The telephone number is 508.675.8100 ext. 4998. Our email is [durfeealumniassociation@gmail.com](mailto:durfeealumniassociation@gmail.com). The Chimes may be viewed at the Durfee Alumni website [www.durfeealumniassociation.com](http://www.durfeealumniassociation.com) or if you give us your email address we will be happy to send it to you that way. Electronic copies have color pictures.

Remember that your five dollars (\$5.00) dues or your contribution to The Red & Black Club (\$25.00 minimum per person) is applied to the cost of printing and distributing this annual publication. Additionally, money received by The Association supports scholarships to deserving graduates as well as Durfee High School student and alumni activities.

# 2023 Scholarship Recipient List

"Richard B. and Susan Wolfson Scholarship" & "Peter G. Collias, Class of 1949 & Jeanne B. Collias, Class of 1948 Scholarship Fund", & "Russell L. Mcllwaine Scholarship" ..... Destani P. Alua-Rioux

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... Keirsten L. Anderson

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... Katy P. Andrade

"Stephen & Margaret M. Nawrocki, Class of 1925 Scholarship" & "The Blount Fine Foods Family Fund Scholarship" ..... Rui F. Brito

"Beatrice Capeto Memorial Scholarship" & "Thomas H. Cahill, Class of 1953" & "David P Shea Fund" ..... Josie M. Caine

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... Jasmine B. Caine

"Beatrice Capeto Memorial Scholarship" & "W. Walter Jaffee" & "Clyde T. & Yvonne L Salisbury" & "Helen Winward Brown Fund" ..... Landry E. Caron

"Hyman & Lena Lifrak Scholarship" & "Hon. Beatrice Hancock Mullaney Scholarship Class of 1923" & "Joseph A. Cohen Memorial Scholarship" & "Reynard Thornton Scholarship Fund" ..... Aderline I. Diaz Fernandez

"John J. and Fabiola Moriarty Scholarship" & "Philip Sabatino Memorial Scholarship" ..... Karahlyn C. Dupras

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... ack A. Gauvin

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... Azaria F. Gonzales

"Dennis Rezendes Scholarship" & "Ernest B. Potter, Jr. Memorial Scholarship" & "Class of 1957" & "Gerald J. Harrington" ..... Lauren Kuchar

"Harold R. Bannister in Memory of James Edward and Catherine Manning Bannister" ..... Brady F. Lavoie

"B.M.C. Durfee Athletic Association - George Lavoie" & "Ambrose F. Keeley Scholarship" & "Annie Monk Simmons" & "Brian A. Farquhar & Mary Ann Farquhar Irwin Memorial Scholarship" & "Aiden Wordell Scholarship" ..... Brooke E. Macedo

"John J. and Fabiola Moriarty Scholarship" & "Thomas D. and Betsey P. Covel" ..... Murali Mahaseth

"Betty Monro Welch Scholarship" & "B.M.C. Durfee Athletic Association - Lincoln P. Holmes" & "Class of 1936" ..... Julia E. I. Matos

"Frank S. Feitelberg" & "Friar Family Scholarship" & "George O. Rigby" ..... Kerralen C. Meas

"Brian J. Biancuzzo Memorial Scholarship" & "B.M.C. Durfee Athletic Association - Peter G. Collias, Esq." & "Class of 1919" & "Class of 1920" ..... Bryan B. Moss

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... Angelina R. Ramirez

"Edith Bottomley Scholarship Fund" ..... Esyilin Y. Rivera Santana

"Alumni Scholarship" & "Andrew J. Borden Scholarship" ..... Andrew T. Sanft

"B.M.C. Durfee Athletic Association - M. Norman Zalkind" & "Mildred R. Hawes Scholarship" & "Mary V. McCann" & "Margaret A. Harrington Memorial Scholarship" & "Class of 1940" & "Lloyd H. Dixon & Gladys R. Dixon Memorial Scholarship" ..... Brooke Silvia

"B.M.C. Durfee Athletic Association- Sumner James Waring, Jr" & "Joseph V. & Mary Donnelly Fund - Class of 1923" & "Alumni Scholarship" & "Abraham I. & Harriet G. Yamins" ..... Aimee R. Tiebout

"Catherine Furze Mobouck, Class of 1936" & "The Rae Gitlin Memorial Scholarship" & "Class of 1888" & "Class of 1966" & "Sandra. J. Souza, Class of 1966, in memory of Mary Souza" ..... Juliana Torres

"Louise R. Kay & Violet P. Kay Memorial Scholarship" & "Mary B. Young" ..... Tien T. Tran

"Hon. Beatrice Hancock Mullaney Memorial Scholarship" & "Thomas F. and Alice M. Harkin Memorial Scholarship" & "Mary B. Young" & "Lucille Roussell Hadley '36 and Plummer W. Hadley Scholarship" ..... Alaysia M. Wright

"Alvin E. Hardy (Class of 1935) & Dorothy Boyer Hardy (Class of 1936) Scholarship Fund" & "Hyman & Lena Lifrak Scholarship" ..... Amy Zhang

\*Grimshaw-Gudewicz Charitable Foundation Grant

\*\* Most awards are supplemented with an Andrew J. Borden grant.

## Previous Distinguished Alumni Recipients

1961 Malcolm P. Aldrich.....'18	1991 Marcel P. Joseph .....:53	2009 Dr. R. Judson Carlberg .....:58
1962 Bishop James L. Connolly .....:13	1992 William K. Reilly .....:58	2009 Thomas J. Curry .....:60
1963 Harold S.R. Buffington, Esq.....:05	1993 Brig. Gen. John J. Liset, USAF .....:38	2010 Betty M. Welch.....:45
1964 Edward B. Hanify, Esq. ....:29	1994 Hon. Milton R. Silva .....:40	2010 Louise Durfee .....:48
1965 Dr. John C. Corrigan .....:21	1994 William F. Powers .....:48	2011 James J. Karam .....:65
1966 Myer N. Sobilloff .....:24	1995 Hon. Edward F. Harrington .....:51	2012 Irving H. Picard .....:59
1967 Ellis Gifford .....:02	1995 Joseph E. Mullaney, Esq. ....:51	2012 Joseph F. Sabik, MD.....:79
1968 Jerome Namias.....:28	1996 Michele Kaufman Rallis .....:58	2013 John J. Fletcher, MD.....:53
1969 Helen Winward Brown .....:03	1997 Peter G. Collias, Esq. ....:49	2013 Reena Deutsch, PhD.....:68
1970 Thomas Rodgers, Jr. ....:30	1998 Mel B. Yoken.....:56	2014 Ruth Moss.....:50
1971 John B. Cummings, Esq. ....:08	1998 Faust D. Fiore .....:39	2014 Robert J. Dupere .....:48
1972 Humberto Cardinal Medeiros .....:37	1999 John J. McAvoy .....:37	2015 Joseph A. Conforti, PhD .....:63
1973 Ambassador William J. Porter .....:30	1999 Dr. John T. Harrington .....:54	2015 Ronald A. Schwartz, MD.....:52
1974 Hon. James P. McGuire .....:31	2000 William F. Long, Jr. ....:44	2016 Anthony F. Cordeiro .....:80
1975 James A. Nannery .....:31	2000 Edgar C. Knowlton, Jr. ....:38	2016 Hon. E. Susan Speier Garsh .....:65
1976 Hon. Beatrice Hancock Mullaney .....:23	2001 Lester W. Cory .....:56	2017 Zelma Vincent Braga .....:52
1977 Gen. Melvin Zais .....:33	2001 James Chace .....:49	2017 Charles D. Smith Ph.D.....:54
1978 Francis L. Gragnani .....:36	2002 Kenneth L. Nathanson .....:42	2018 Margery Eagan .....:71
1979 Robert J. Nagle .....:28	2002 James H. Smith .....:47	2018 Hon. Joseph I. Macy.....:61
1980 Hon. Mary J. Fonseca .....:32	2003 Morton Dean Dubitsky .....:53	2019 Jerri Kaplan Sher BFA, MAEd .....:66
1981 Dr. Roger N. Violette .....:25	2003 James F. O'Hearn .....:53	2019 Christopher J. Fontes, PhD .....:83
1982 Florence C. Brigham .....:17	2004 Rev. Shirley Scholes Andrews .....:54	2020-21 Robert S. Karam .....:61
1982 M. Norman Zalkind .....:31	2004 Ernest Moniz.....:62	2020-21 Joseph A. Marshall .....:65
1983 Bayless Manning .....:40	2005 Lucille Roussell Hadley.....:36	2022 Nancy Cooperstein Charney.....:56
1984 Phillip Sacknoff .....:35	2005 Daniel Bogan .....:51	2022 Capt. Paul B. Grozen USN (Ret.) .....:50
1985 James J. Hammond .....:26	2006 Hon. William C. Carey .....:42	2023 Frederick A. Drayton Sr. ....:55
1986 Richard M. Rosenberg .....:48	2006 John Moriarty .....:48	2023 Dr. Rebecca Masterson .....:93
1987 Thomas J. Brown .....:42	2007 Arthur A. Teixeira .....:62	
1988 Frank S. Feitelberg .....:24	2007 George Duclos .....:52	
1989 James Dean .....:50	2008 Col. David W. Gavigan.....:57	
1990 William H. Gaudreau .....:46	2008 Dr. William D. Tompkins .....:39	

To nominate a Durfee Graduate for the Distinguished Alumni Award, please fill out and return the form on Page 11.

# THE CTE PROGRAM: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AT DURFEE TODAY

By Judith Conrad, Class of 1970

When I attended Durfee in the late '60's, I was in the prep-general track. There were other tracks, but I pretty much never saw them, and I was never offered the chance to take any of their classes. I don't remember even venturing onto the floors of the Tech building that were dedicated to their studies, in the whole time I was going to school there.

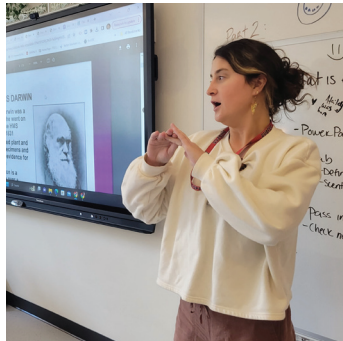
Fast forward to 2024: The Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at the latest Durfee building takes up more or less the entire ground floor. You can't miss it. There's a restaurant, The Granite Grille, run by the Culinary Arts program. There's the Elevations Beauty Academy, run by the cosmetology program. There's the Hilltopper Preschool center run by the child care program - not a TV screen in sight, all stimulating activities for the children. There's a store run by the marketing department. There's a greenhouse and a giant fish tank operated by the environmental sciences division. The engineering program has 30 3-D printers, so students who come up with ideas don't have to wait in line to try them out, The CTE Program has 9 courses of study, soon to be 10: Construction Craft Laborer, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Design & Visual Communications, Early Education & Care, Engineering - Project Lead The Way, Environmental Science & Technology, Health Assisting, and Marketing, with criminal justice coming soon. There are currently 859 CTE students at Durfee (of whom 145+ are English language learners). By comparison, the current Diman Vocational Regional High School was only built to accommodate 800 (though it is now seriously overcrowded and they are building a new, larger one). Durfee is now a major player in the field of training for jobs.



CTE Director Cindy Silvia and some of the 3-D printers available to the students

Modern day kids need to be both college and career ready. Or, as Cindy Sylvia, the current director of the program, puts it, they need to be career and college ready. It's a matter of emphasis for her. Not many students in Fall River have parents who can pay their way through college in the 21st century, and working a part-time job on the side at minimum wage isn't going to help much. But the CTE program can help. Seniors can get out into the field and earn money, and they graduate with all the certifications to get decent jobs right out of high school. The program gives them industry-level licenses and OSHA 10 certification; they take the Certified Nursing Assistant exams, get Cosmetology licenses, Early Education and Child Care licenses. Many of them work for money in their senior year of high school; for example Health Assisting seniors work at Catholic Memorial Home doing a shift from 6 AM to noon - and then rush back to campus for their English and Math classes.

Cindy has been in this field for over 20 years, having worked at Wareham High and then Plymouth Public High School before taking this job 3 years ago. Her pride in CTE at Durfee is very evident; there seem to be exclamation points at the end of every sentence she speaks about the program. "The students have a pathway forward!" She sees that each CTE student creates an online portfolio with videos of them working in their shops and samples of work they've done for traditional classes like English and math, and a business card with a QR code that links to their website, to distribute to potential employers and business contacts. "This will really show who a Durfee grad is!" she said. "Ain't no stoppin' us now!" is the song they march onto stage to at the end-of-year Cords and Awards ceremony.



Ecology program director Tess Bradley in class

They have state-of-the-art equipment, which the city taxpayers have invested millions of dollars in; there is also quite a lot of state and federal grant money. In addition to the Chapter 70 money Durfee gets from the Commonwealth for each student, they get also get \$7800 in Chapter 74 money for each student in CTE. The best students have their way paid to go in the spring to SKILLS USA, a competition for all sorts of trades held in Atlanta, and DECA, a gathering for marketing, hospitality and management in Orlando.

Students start out by applying for the CTE program as 8th graders. This year there are 320 freshmen in CTE, out of 590 total in the class - so it is more than half of Durfee students who try the program. The first year they are in something called "Durfee Discovery", where they get a short introduction to each of the programs plus an OSHA program, while taking a fairly full schedule of general courses. If they go on, they select the program they want to specialize in; sophomores are in the program 5 hours a week, juniors 10 hours a week, seniors 15 hours a week. It still leaves time for a decent general education; they take English all 4 years. Some of them participate in the program where they get college credit for courses in a collaboration with BCC, and many of them do go on to college. Vocational education used to be the track disadvantaged students were put into who

were going off to work after graduation, with the wealthier students put on the track where they were expected to go to college. Not any more. Many of the vocational tracks lead smoothly into higher education.



Every program has a giant career tree on the wall showing what jobs students can aspire to

I talked to a couple of students while being given a tour of the facilities. One was a culinary arts senior named Eshal Zahra, who came to the United States from Pakistan 5 years ago and is now almost a citizen. She is planning to go to college; she has looked at culinary arts and business programs but has also looked at mathematics and international relations. She's in the National Honor Society and the People of Color club. I also met engineering student Anthony Sweatt, a junior who is currently learning circuit boards with kits but is also excited to learn proper soldering technique so he can work on actual integrated systems. His current plan is to go to Mass. Maritime Academy and study marine engineering. He has a mild speech impediment, but functions fearlessly with it; he finds the CTE program very welcoming, almost a family. One hears of other students: one who graduated from the cosmetology program 2 years ago who is now in college studying pre-med, planning to become a dermatologist, an interest she



developed while studying cosmetology; one who started out thinking she wanted cosmetology but became inspired by the new social justice program and now wants to get a law degree and become a prosecutor.

The biggest problem is hiring and retaining teachers. They are required to have 4 years of experience working in the field before they can teach it, and salaries are much higher in the field than they are for Durfee teachers, who only get \$50,000 or so, when, say, an HVAC technician starts at \$130,000. But a consequence of this problem is that the teachers who take the jobs are people who really want to teach. The students have the same teachers all four years, which means that many become real mentors. In the rest of the school students usually have different teachers every year and do not develop those relationships.



A hundred years ago, there were good jobs that required just a high school education; but a few decades ago those jobs began to disappear. Technology and globalization increased the skill levels needed for a lot of jobs, and the labor market also became more volatile. People need to be able to retrain for new jobs, often several times in the course of their careers. To do that they need a good academic foundation. So as vocational education has evolved into career and technical education, the programs have become more complex. In the Environmental Technology program, for instance, students don't just learn how to grow things, they also learn about sustainability, energy efficiency, economics; and they learn how to communicate the ideas they deal with.

The program the alumni board knows best is Culinary Arts, because we have a lot of luncheon meetings in their restaurant, the Granite Grille. We have gotten very fond of the students and teachers we meet there. We have decided to fund a new program this year, where we provide small "toolships" (rather than scholarships) for the top student in each of the CTE programs. The hope is that when they get out into the world they can buy the tools for themselves that they need to carry on with the skills they have learned at Durfee, in this marvelous state-of-the-art facility.



## *Dr. Joel Potash continued*

the help of the GI Bill. Enamored of the rural beauty while at Dartmouth, he found a small town, Cazenovia NY, about 20 miles outside of Syracuse. He and his best friend went there to practice. With the help of the Sears Roebuck Foundation, Cazenovia built a new medical building, charged minimal rent, and eventually turned the building over to the physicians, using their rental toward the purchase price.

In his Family-Practice, he had junior medical students take six-week electives in his office, as a Clinical Assistant Professor in a newly founded Department of Family-Practice at Upstate Medical University, State University of New York. In 1975 he left private practice to become full-time faculty at Upstate. His major role was teaching family-practice residents and starting a faculty practice at St. Joseph's Hospital.

Medical ethics was on the rise in the 1980's, and Joel took a sabbatical at the University of Virginia in the Religion Department to study Medical Ethics under the mentorship of Professor James Childress. On return to Syracuse, he assumed the role of Ethics Consultant at both University Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital, and later chaired the Ethics Committee at both hospitals. He remains on both Ethics Committees to this day.

In a Consortium of Upstate, LeMoyne College and Syracuse University, he taught courses in Medical Ethics, The History of the Family and Health Care in the United States, Death and Dying, and AIDS in American Literature.

He became part-time Medical Director of Hospice of Central New York in 1989, and as that role grew, he resigned from Upstate Medical School and became full-time Medical Director of Hospice, as well as part-time physician at the Onondaga Nation Territory. He used his training as a Family Physician to visit terminally ill patients and their families at home, often avoiding painful ambulance rides and long waits at hospital emergency rooms.

When he retired from Hospice at age 65, he returned to Upstate Medical School's Center for Bioethics and Humanities as Ethics Consultant and Chair of the Ethics Committee, University Hospital where he also taught Medical Humanities.

Retiring again at age 70, he served as a volunteer physician at the Poverello Free Clinic of the Assumption Church until 2020, caring for people who were poor and/or uninsured.

Joel wrote and received grants from the Regional Medical Program to establish a Physician Assistants office in a medically underserved area, and for continuation of the Georgetown (NY) Medical Satellite. From his days in the Army, he became aware of the important role of Army Medics and the development of training programs to continue their education and training in the new profession of Physician Assistants. In 1992, he endowed the Joel Potash Lectureship in End-of-Life Care. In 1994 the Joel Potash Fund was funded at Hospice of Central New York.

Joel has served on the Boards of Directors of Contemporary Theater of Syracuse, Opera Theater of Syracuse, Salt City Playhouse, New York State Academy of Family Physicians and Society of New Music. He was named New State Academy of Family Physicians "Doctor of the Year" in 1993 and was one of three finalists for Doctor of the Year of the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other awards include the Dr Ernie Carhart Teaching Award, St. Joseph's Hospital, 1989; Onondaga County Medical Society: Medical Society and Community Service Award, 1992; Sister Patricia Ann Award for Excellence, St Joseph's Hospital 1994: and the 2007 Hospice Anita Award "for his active listening, presence at the bedside, and highest standards of practice in end-of-life care." A bench has been placed in St. Joseph's Statue Circle by St. Joseph's Hospital Medical Staff "Honoring Joel Potash, MD for 60 years of teaching and compassionate care of our community". He has received numerous other awards in Syracuse and Cazenovia.

Joel opened and ran an art gallery, Twelve Rms-4, for three years with the goal of displaying the works of area artists. In his 70s, he became a Master Gardener through Cornell Cooperative Extension; he volunteers in the community in this role. As a member of Armory Square Playwrights, his play, "The Miracle", which takes place in a concentration camp in World War Two, between Chanukah and Christmas eve, was produced in Chicago by Redo Opera Co.

Joel lives in Syracuse NY with his wife Sandra Hurd. His daughter Rachel and her husband Patrick Todoroff live in Hyannis, MA. He has three grandchildren and four terrific great-grandchildren. Joel's other daughter, Leslie Roesch, died in 2023 from cancer.

# DURFEE MARCHING BAND TAKES FIRST PLACE!

*By Judith Conrad, Class of 1970*



On Sunday, October 22nd, 2023, the Durfee Marching Band inaugurated a new era: for the first time they hosted a marching band competition in the new facilities. And in that competition, Division II/A of US Bands, they took first place overall, and also took best visual effect and best overall effect. They outscored bands from Case, Dighton-Rehoboth, Portsmouth, Blackstone-Millville Regional and Bridgewater-Raynham, and qualified for the Regional competition the following week in Vernon, Connecticut, where they took 6th place.

Led by Julia Klingner, the Durfee Bands Director, they performed a 15 minute set with elaborate choreography, costumes and props, put together by Durfee instructors Ryan Lewis, Janine Neprud and Erin Moulson, assisted by members of the Durfee Performing Arts Association (who are parents of the performers). They played Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor, Roberta Flack's 'Killing me Softly with his Smile' and "Welcome to the Black Parade" by My Chemical Romance.

"We rehearse two to three times a week, and the kids bring all of the musical and artistic ideas to life," Klingner said. "We feel great about how we performed, especially getting to do so in our home stadium."



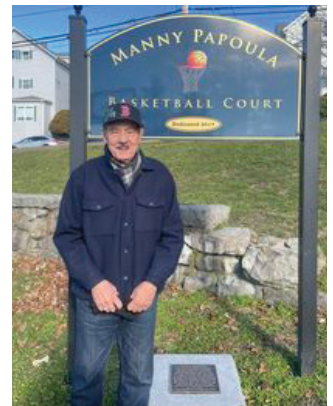
# HOMETOWN TRIBUTE: MANNY PAPOULA, CLASS OF 1962

*Lorna Ponte Tomek, Class of 1970*

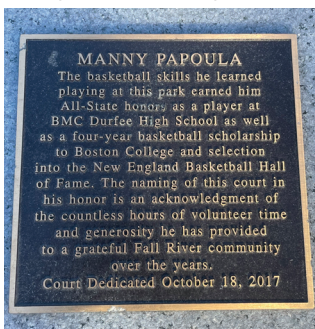
Durfee Basketball Legend Manny Papoula, class of 1962, was an 18 year old senior when he answered a phone call that went something like this:

"Hello"  
 "Hello, is this Manny Papoula?"  
 "Yes."

"Manny this is Bob Cousy, maybe you know who I am, I play for The Boston Celtics."  
 "Of course I know who you are! I watch all of the games on TV!"  
 "I'm going to be retiring from playing professional basketball, and this is my last year. I will be the head basketball coach at Boston College. They are allowing me to choose five students to offer full scholarships to, and I would like to offer you one of those scholarships that will include full tuition, room, board, and books, to come to BC and play for me. What do you think about that, and what do you think your parents will say?"  
 "Well, I will have to talk to my parents first, but I think they're going to be very happy, because they won't have to pay anything for me to go to college!"



Manny's parents were very, very happy. They are a Catholic family, and liked the idea that Manny, living away at school, would be under the watchful eye of the Jesuits. Manny was a good kid and loved playing basketball so much, there was never time in his schedule for trouble. At Durfee he played a sport every season, basketball, baseball, and soccer. He was also VP of his class, home room director, and the sports editor of The Hilltoppers. He presented himself as an excellent all around student, and would go on to play basketball for BC, learn from the best, and earn his degree to teach math. Boston College had made a good choice in Manny!



Manny did not touch a basketball until he was older. As a young boy he toddled around the neighborhood after his older cousin Larry Medeiros. Larry played baseball, then so did Manny. At Columbus Park, where Manny played little league baseball, he was the tallest boy in all four teams, and often would hear, "you should play basketball because of your height!" By age 12 Manny was almost six feet tall! For the next few years he played both sports, and was improving his basketball skills, and still growing! He played CYO junior league for St Anthony of Padua Church, won the junior league in the 8th grade, and had already reached a height of 6'2"! At Morton Junior High School, a 6'4" Manny Papoula was welcomed to play basketball for the 9th grade team. At Durfee, Manny was just a sophomore but made varsity and was on the starting five! For a high school boy who loves to play basketball, I could see the excitement in his face as he talked about his Durfee days; pretty cool! His first coach at Durfee was Luke



Urban, and it was Urban's final year as coach; next coach was Skip Karam, whose first two years coaching, were Manny's junior and senior years. They made All State, and then to the State Finals and played at Boston Garden his junior year.

## MANNY PAPOULA...continued

After graduation from BC, Manny first taught in Somerset, and then, after earning his master's degree in education at Bridgewater State in night school, he took a job in Fair Lawn, New Jersey where he taught math for the rest of his career, getting awards for teaching and even being named teacher of the year. After his retirement at age 66, he returned home to Fall River.

It's easy to see why he was chosen to spotlight for a "Hometown Tribute." Manny Papoula is a generally nice guy. His athleticism is equal to his altruism, benevolence, and generosity. Once he had returned home he had some time on his hands, and he filled his hours in the best way possible: Manny volunteered as a math tutor for students in Jobs for Progress (SER). These kids were trying to earn their GED and find jobs. Manny is a believer in and a promoter of education. He also funds many different scholarships for the youth of Fall River, scholarships that combined playing a sport with academic excellence. He has funded scholarships in his former Durfee Coach Karam's name for Durfee basketball seniors, both male and female, and for kids who played in the Columbus Independent Baseball League who attain outstanding grades in school. The scholarships go to senior athletes who also had the highest academic rank, and scholarships for those earning a GED. Manny is constantly giving back to the City of Fall River.

It seems that Manny enjoyed growing up in Fall River and had a pretty happy childhood, and he especially liked shooting hoops at Ruggles Park! He remembered that it was always more enjoyable to hear the sound of that "swish" when the hoop had a net! He noticed that many of the nets either needed to be repaired or replaced. So what do you think Manny did about that? He checked all of the courts in the city of Fall River, and there are over 40 of them, and he created a map for himself to locate all of the hoops that are in need of repair or replacement, and several times a year, Manny makes the rounds to improve the enjoyment of playing basketball for the youth of Fall River. Yes, he single handedly has taken this on, and has been doing it for years. He showed me where the store was located, where he has bought the nets, and he showed me the courts at his beloved Ruggles Park, where he used to play, and probably where he threw his very first basketball into a hoop, now named for him - Manny Papoula Basketball Court! The honor is well-deserved and Manny is very proud to have this court named for him with a beautiful sign, and a plaque. What a deserving thing to do for such a person who displays the purest acts of altruism!

Manny is still tutoring now for children and grandchildren of friends who need him. He is a friend of education, and a friend of the youth of Fall River. He has managed to combine his love of the game of basketball with his love of teaching, to help in ways that he can, to give other kids growing up in Fall River an opportunity that he himself enjoyed.

Thank You Manny Papoula!

## HOMETOWN TRIBUTE: FLORENCE COOK BRIGHAM, CLASS OF 1917

*By Mel Yoken, Class of 1954*



If the legendary red carpet had ever been unrolled in Fall River, it would have been for Florence Cook Brigham, the lady who did just about everything, and she did everything well. Meteorologist, historian, lecturer, curator, docent, she performed all of these in her 100 plus years, and the diminutive, remarkable lady with an indomitable spirit and unlimited energy would be the last to brag about her many achievements. She was the success story par excellence who was filled with qualities of warmth and understanding, intelligence, wit and sophistication.

I knew Mrs. Brigham, a Durfee graduate, class of 1917, and knew her very well. In fact, I visited her and her husband, Richard, many times in their home on the corner of Madison and Florence Street. Often, Richard, who was the Fall River weather observer for many years, and I would expatiate on the daily temperature and precipitation records with great enthusiasm

and intensity. In fact, we three would banter for hours and in all directions—laughing, evoking, invoking, rejecting, adoring, reminiscing and extolling. Nothing seemed too sacred or banal to discuss with the Brighams.

Florence Brigham was a great authority on Fall River's most notorious citizen, Lizzie Borden; however, she tried, without much apparent success, not too dwell on the gruesome axe murders of Lizzie's parents that everyone questioned her about. It is well known, although she never told me directly, that she loathed the story of Lizzie's alleged murder of her father and step-mother, and would try to avoid discussing it whenever she could, especially when, starting in 1967, she was curator of the Fall River Historical Society, a position she loved beyond words. While there, she truly loved sharing Fall River's fascinating—and unique—history with children, the younger the better. She was herself the mother of three children.

And she loved discussing with me the world famous Fall River Line, the history of Fall River's mills and, especially, the courageous and intrepid people of many backgrounds and races who lived in Fall River over the decades. The mill history of Fall River, its cotton industry and needle trades and, later in her life, the mill outlet stores, were also interesting to Mrs. Brigham. What did she relish the most about her job as curator? Well, she often said she cherished "the wonderful history of Fall River and its people." And that she did vigorously.

When she was in her early 90's, she sat with me one afternoon in her home, and I noted in my journal how lucky she considered herself, to feel as well as she did at such a ripe old age. But she confessed to having trouble walking, "so I'm putting my life history on tape. I ramble so much, so I often use a typewriter. All this is just for my family, of course." And then suddenly she switched to talking of when she sold children's clothes throughout the years, until around 1940, and her office work in Fall River's mills during the early depression years. Her mind often went from one subject to another in her later years, especially in the last decade of her life.

Florence Brigham's life spanned three centuries which is a rarity, indeed. She knew Fall River's history throughout the twentieth century, better than anyone, due to the fact that she had actually lived through all those years, and observed them amazingly well. In addition, she had superb literary, linguistic and verbal gifts. Her recollections were dazzling, with many plucked from the days of horse-drawn carriages. For example, she loved to tell of her days at Mt. Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts where she majored in German, with a minor in Romance Languages, often riding a horse and buggy to class. She graduated in 1921, then returned to her parents' home and taught German for one year as a substitute at Durfee High School. "That year was not too successful," she bemoaned, "as discipline was my problem." We laughed heartily, comparing the problem in those days to the discipline problems at the present time, the late 1980s.

With a comely, kindly face always filled with wonderment, a face always expressing joy and determination, Florence Brigham was truly one of our most luminous figures. She never sought glory, but will always be recalled as a woman of valor, stature and a quality of life which truly made her one of Durfee's and Fall River's very best!







## **JANE S. FIORE-BIGELOW (1956-2023), FRIEND OF THE ALUMNI**

Born on June 30, 1956, Jane was a lifelong resident of Fall River, Massachusetts. She was a proud member of the B.M.C. Durfee High School, class of 1974. Upon graduation she attended the University of Massachusetts Lowell where she earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music Education with a concentration in piano.

For 36 years, Jane was a performing arts educator at B.M.C. Durfee High School in Fall River and influenced thousands of students. In addition to her classroom work, Jane was music director for the Durfee Theatre Company as well as the co-advisor and co-director, with her husband Gary. Beyond her work in public education, Jane was president of the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild and was later appointed a member of its executive council. She was also a member of the Fall River Cultural Council. Since 1977, Jane performed in, directed or musically directed more than 100 productions at the elementary school, high school, college and community levels. Former students remembered Jane as someone who was able to get them out of their shells, with an endlessly encouraging attitude. She would just smile at you and say, "you can do this". Jane inspired many of her students to stay active in theater long after graduating high school, either as a career or through coming back to Durfee to help out productions. She taught life lessons and provided kindness that changed the course of students' lives.

Jane and her Drama Club served refreshments for the annual Durfee Alumni Association for many years until her retirement.

After retiring from Durfee in 2014 Jane remained active in other parts of Fall River's theater scene, lending her musical directing talents to community theater productions through groups like the Little Theater of Fall River.

Jane received numerous awards over her career, including Fall River Public Schools Golden Apple Awards and many state and civic recognitions. She, along with her husband Gary, were inducted into the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild Hall of Fame in 2017. In addition to her theater work, Jane also served as director of music ministries, organist, pianist and Chancel Choir director at the First Baptist Church as well as musical director/organist/pianist for the Unitarian Society. She also served as guest organist for numerous other Greater Fall River area churches.

In addition to being a talented artist, Jane was a beautiful person, loving mother, brilliant teacher and an honorable friend to all.

The Durfee High School and Fall River's theater scene lost a legend in October 2023 with her passing.



### **REUNIONS: AN APPRECIATION**

**By: Mel B. Yoken, Class of 1956**

I have a confession to make. I am a quintessential school reunion junkie, aficionado, specialist, or call it what you want. I just enjoy attending, participating in, organizing, choreographing and hosting those sometimes angst-producing rites of passage events. I am, and always have been interested in seeing and keeping up with my classmates, especially those who graduated grammar, middle and high school with me.

To wit; several years ago, I decided that there was too much idle talk about having a grammar-school reunion, and I planned a get-together of my grammar-school classmates from the Highland School; and, lo and behold, we all met about a month later, and had a glorious, fun-filled and memorable time. There were about 20 of us; we were all amazed about how the 70 or so years had flown by, and took it from there without a regret or whimper. Yes, for the most part, we all had to look at name tags, but there were no awkward moments.

My classmates' eyes twinkled with enthusiasm as the old camaraderie took hold. There was that ineffable spirit of joy etched on the faces of everyone throughout the time we were together. We all realized how much we, having grown up at the same time, were surrogate siblings to one another, shaped each other's characters and personalities, and brought out each other's finest qualities.

We learned the alphabet together. We learned how to add and subtract, multiply and divide, the first lessons of friendship, and how to get along on this huge planet—and so much more! We've all moved in different directions; we've all had our ups and downs, but we didn't talk about our problems, our worries, our struggles, financial woes, transitional periods of stress, uncertainties, insecurities or hardships. We simply focused on the good times and positive moments in our lives, and there were many! We all had stories to tell, shared photos of our kids and grandkids, and, while doing this, we became gregarious—and, yes, giddy—once again for several hours, reminiscing about events that took place so many years ago, reconnecting with old friends, relishing the dreams we had then, and those we still have today. We smiled and laughed, and we laughed and smiled. As one of our classmates put it: "We really, really had a great class, and we still do!" Another intoned: "I'm so glad I came. Let's make plans to get together again soon." I added: "Old friends are the best!"

As we left, there were plenty of hearty goodbyes, endless hugs and warm-hearted handshakes, and even a few tears along with hope that we would not wait so long to get together once again.

Reunions can be classified as therapeutic. And, most of all, they do bring out how much we mean to each other. And, always will!

Mel B. Yoken, Ph.D. Durfee, Class of 1956

Chancellor Professor Emeritus of French Language and Literature at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

#### **-- REUNIONS --**

##### **DURFEE CLASS OF 1974 - 50<sup>TH</sup> REUNION**

Saturday, August 10, 2024, 5:30 – 10:30  
Whites of Westport, MA  
Contact Person: Florine (Freitas) LeComte  
Email DoctorLeComte@gmail.com  
Telephone: 508.951.4215  
Additional Info: Facebook  
"B.M.C. Durfee Class of 1974 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion."  
Tickets \$75.00, payable Durfee Reunion Class of 1974,  
Mail to: Mona (Maurer) Isaacson,  
342 Dale St., Fall River, MA 02721  
Deadline July 25, 2024

##### **CLASS OF 1959 - 65<sup>TH</sup> REUNION**

Date: August 17, 2024, 2-6 PM,  
McGoverns Restaurant.  
Contact Person: Pat McDonald  
Email: trues62@aol.com  
Phone: 508-965-5583  
Price: \$45 per person, not accepting checks or money orders till June 1, 2024 with closing date of July 15, 2024. Info as to where to send payment to follow later.

##### **DURFEE '64 - 60<sup>TH</sup> REUNION CELEBRATION**

Saturday - September 14, 2024  
McGoverns on the Water  
310 Shove St, Fall River  
Cocktail reception 4:30 PM - 5:45 PM  
McGoverns Deluxe Buffet - \$60. Per Person. Contact Charlotte Thomas,  
cthomas@umassd.edu or  
call 508.674.4951  
Deadline August 14, 2024

## 2024 - 2025 Alumni Information Form and Dues

**The Durfee Alumni Association needs to hear from you if you wish to continue to receive The Chimes.**

\_\_\_ Please continue to mail the Chimes to this address

\_\_\_ Please email the Chimes to me at this email address \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden Name (If applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_ If spouse is a graduate - Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

\*Full Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Do not publish my information

\_\_\_ \$5.00 Dues Enclosed

Red & Black Club Dues (includes basic dues above): Min. \_\_\_\_\_ \$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Other = Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to: **Durfee Alumni Association, P.O. Box 9656, Fall River MA 02720 - 0011**

or pay with Paypal or Venmo @durfeealumniassociation

Submit your personal information and pay your dues or Red & Black at - [www.durfeealumniassociation.com](http://www.durfeealumniassociation.com)

For questions please email us at: [durfeealumniassociation@gmail.com](mailto:durfeealumniassociation@gmail.com)

## 2024 - 2025 Distinguished Alumni Nomination Form

Thank you for taking the time to consider a nominee for the Distinguished Alumni Award. **Please attach a resume, bio, any newspaper or magazine articles and any other information to the Nomination form.** This information is needed to assist the committee. Nominations remain current for a five-year period and should be submitted no later than September 30th, 2023, to be considered by the 2023 Selection Board. **Please note: Nominees are responsible for all travel and accommodation expenses.**

Name of Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person making nomination: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail to: **Durfee Alumni Association, P.O. Box 9656, Fall River, MA 02720**

### Contact us at ...

Our official Alumni website at:

<http://www.durfeealumniassociation.com/contact>

By email at:

[durfeealumniassociation@gmail.com](mailto:durfeealumniassociation@gmail.com)

Like us on Facebook at:

Durfee Alumni Association

Telephone:

508-675-8100 ext. 41998



# Like us on Facebook

Mailing address:

Durfee Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 9656  
Fall River, MA 02720-0011

*Anyone interested in becoming a member of our Red & Black Club, may send a donation of*

*\$25.00 to:*

*B.M.C. Durfee High School Alumni Association*

*P.O. Box 9656,*

*Fall River, MA 02720-0011 or at,*

*[durfeealumniassociation.com](http://durfeealumniassociation.com)*

*to use Pay Pal.*

Visit the new official Alumni website at

<http://www.durfeealumniassociation.com/> to...

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- Submit Alumni contact information
- Request the annual Chimes Newsletter - mail or email distribution
- Check out upcoming reunions
- Nominate a distinguished alumna or alumnus
- Share your reunion photos



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DEDICATED JUNE 15, 1887

Raise our praises high to Durfee,  
Alma Mater dear.  
Tow'ring high beside the river,  
Radiant beacon clear.

God preserve for Alma Mater,  
Standards staunch and true.  
High aloft we'll lift her banner  
Bright with Durfee's hue.

Love and praise we render ever,  
Voices raised on high.  
Loud we sing of Durfee's glory,  
To the earth and sky.

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