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CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
FOUNDATION

EAGLE NEWS August 2025



Our resident artist, Lila Burns (CHS 2026), with the 2025 Annual Report cover that she designed!



Dear Supporter,

Fall is almost here! Central recently opened its doors to the Class of 2029, and we want to welcome them to the Eagle Family!

The Central High School Foundation has several alumni events on the horizon. The Central High School Hall of Fame ceremony will be on October 9th, 2025, so [register today](#) to be part of the fun! Our Passing Periods: Alumni Luncheon, featuring guest speaker Pete Festersen (CHS 1989) will be on October 10th, 2025. [Click here](#) to reserve

your spot!

Keep an eye out for our 2025 Annual Report! Every graduate and supporter will receive one in the mail over the next couple of weeks. This year's annual report details what was accomplished during the 2024-25 fiscal year. I want to thank our Creative Director and Database Administrator, Josh Bucy, for creating the Annual Report. A reminder that if you haven't received our mailings recently, we encourage you to [update your record](#) to ensure that we have your current contact information.

Thank you for being a vital part of the Central High School community. Together, we continue to uphold more than 166 years of tradition and excellence.

Go Eagles!

Sincerely,

Michele Roberts

Michele Roberts, *Executive Director*

Passing Periods: Alumni Luncheon Series



Eagles all across Omaha are brushing shoulders for a quick hello during the Passing Periods: CHS Alumni Luncheon Series, and we hope to bump into you there! For \$20, you can enjoy a great meal, catch up with friends you haven't seen since first period, talk with teachers who you haven't seen since home room and listen to our exclusive lineup of guest speakers.

Join us for our next luncheon:

October 10, 2025

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Field Club of Omaha

3615 Woolworth Avenue

Omaha, NE 68105

Guest Speaker: Pete Festersen ('89)

Pete is the third generation of his family to attend Central and has left his mark in Omaha as the longest serving member of City Council in Omaha history. He is a 2025 Central High School Hall of Fame inductee.

Please register and pay using the online registration button below. You will

receive a confirmation email upon completion of your online registration and payment.

To register by mail, please mail your registration and check to:

Central High School Foundation
1111 N 13th Street Suite 318
Omaha, NE 68102-4252

If you have any questions, please contact the Foundation office at 402-556-1996 or events@chsfomaha.org.

[Register to Attend Passing Periods](#)

[Register for Hall of Fame](#)



The 25th Annual Central High School Hall of Fame Dinner and Ceremony will be held **Thursday, October 9, 2025**, at Central High School. The Central High School Alumni Association is proud to induct individuals whose paths from the halls of Central High School led them to the highest levels of achievement in business and community service. Inductees are selected by the CHSAA Hall of Fame Selection Committee and the program is presented by the Central High School Foundation. [Click here](#) to learn more about the event.

Schedule of Events

Social Hour in Courtyard: 5:30 PM

Dinner in Courtyard: 6:15 PM

Ceremony in Auditorium: 7:30 PM

Is there someone you would like to see in the Central High School Hall of Fame? Remember, for them to be considered by the CHSAA Hall of Fame Selection Committee, they have to be [nominated](#).

[Register for Hall of Fame](#)

Back-to-School Teacher Luncheon a Success



Central faculty were welcomed back to the Nest at the annual Back-to-School Luncheon on August 6th at Field Club of Omaha. After being greeted with CHS themed goodie-bags, faculty were given raffle tickets and then sat down for a delicious Mexican buffet lunch.

Raffle prizes included CHS classroom door bookends, grilling tools, a one-of-a-kind stained-glass lamp, and more. In their goodie bags, teachers were given various classroom supplies to help them prepare for the coming school year.

Tons of fun was had by all! This event provides a special opportunity for teachers to catch up after the summer and enjoy each other's company. Your donation to the Central High School Foundation helps support our teachers at Central High School. To continue to help our Eagles soar, [join Generation "C" today!](#)

[Join Generation "C"](#)

Alumni Association Freshman Ice Cream Social



The Alumni Association welcomed the newest eagles to the nest at the first Freshman Ice Cream Social! The Class of 2029 and their families gathered under sunny skies (and one very curious drone) to celebrate the start of a new chapter. The first-ever Freshman + Families on the Football Field photo was captured using drone photography. The Alumni Association provided free ice cream bars, while PEP shared information and sold memberships. The Alumni Store sold gear. The marching band, cheerleaders, and step team brought the energy, and motivational speeches from the Senior Class President and Student Council President inspired the incoming students to soar.

The Alumni Association intends to make this an annual event, recognizing that today's freshmen are tomorrow's alumni. From first-year cheers to future milestones, the Alumni Association helped start their story.

Class of 1970 55th Reunion



The class of 1970's 55th reunion was well attended with alums from coast to coast making the trip to Omaha. Their Friday evening event took place at the Marriott Gallery room and featured saxophone music by Dr. Richard Brown.

Acquaintances reconnected, many pictures were taken, and they shared in a delicious buffet.

Saturday morning started with coffee and donuts before they were greeted by the CHS Foundation and began their tour. The alums were impressed by the work of the Foundation, and many of them were not aware of the span of the Foundation's functions. A number of the alumni had not been back to Central since their graduation and were impressed by the renovations. Many of them said that they never thought Central would have a football field and were surprised that the old gym now serves as one of the lunch areas. They were also impressed by the new addition and loved the library! They reminisced about sweating in study halls listening to the pigeons outside, and were happy to hear that the school has air conditioning now.

Saturday concluded with an evening event at The Gallery 1516, where they were provided with another great buffet. Entertainment for the night featured "The King of Diamonds" who played songs by Niel Diamond and other popular hits from the '60s and '70s. The group took many pictures, including group photos of old grade school classes! They departed that evening with happy memories, glad that they made up for missing their 50th reunion which was postponed due to COVID, and are looking forward to their 60th reunion in 2030.

[Donate to the First Class Challenge](#)

New Podcast Episodes: Chatting at the C



[Chatting at the C](#) is a podcast series by CHS Social Studies teachers Scott Wilson and Ben Boeckman, focusing on the teaching history of Central High School. In each episode, they interview past and present CHS staff to preserve their contribution to Omaha Central High School.

Recent episodes below:



[Dr. Gary Thompson](#)

In this episode, they welcome former Omaha Central High principal Dr. Gary Thompson, who was principal of CHS from 1995-2002. He believes deeply in the power and potential of public education and remains immensely proud of the students and staff he worked with for over 50 years.

[Jimmie Foster](#)

In this extra long episode, they are joined by veteran Omaha Central High teacher, Social Studies Department chair, and former CHS wrestling coach Jimmie Foster. Listen as two longtime teacher-friends talk about Foster's 28+ years at Central and so much more!



[John Pehle, CHS 1926](#)

In this episode they sit down with historian Rebecca Erbelding to talk about CHS Hall of Fame inductee, John Pehle, CHS 1926. Erbelding is a historian and curator at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in DC and the author of *Rescue Board*, a

story of how the War Refugee Board (under the direction John Pehle) helped save tens of thousands of human lives in WWII Europe.

[Listen Now](#)

Alumni Spotlight: Boston Eagle Meetup!



Earlier this month, three of our fellow Eagles found each other in Boston!

Pictured: Carol Grissom (CHS '66), Eve Mayberger (CHS '05), and Jim Bergquist (CHS '64).

As many of you know, Eve was our 2024-2025 Generation “C” Chair, and works in objects conservation at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston (MFA). Carol’s sister, Nancy Grissom (CHS '63) encouraged her to reach out to Eve, because Carol also worked in objects conservation at the Smithsonian for forty years, retiring this past January. Jim also works in the museum realm as an art dealer in Old Master and nineteenth century prints in Boston, so the group had a lot to talk about. They had an awesome time at MFA bonding over their shared interests and Eagle pride!

Thank you so much to Eve for sharing this with us! We love seeing Eagles come together!

If you know any alumni who you think deserve to have the spotlight, send them to us at connect@chsfomaha.org.

Nominate an Alum for the Spotlight

Where is the CHS Logo? CHS Costa Rica Trip



This month, we are thrilled to feature a submission from CHS Science teacher, Kristoff Berzins!

Adventure met education as Central students took on Costa Rica with Mr. Berzins this summer! Over 10 days, they kayaked mangroves, zipped through the rainforest canopy, toured bat habitats and farms, and explored two national parks—all while diving deep into biodiversity, sustainability, and global stewardship. Pura vida!

Thank you so much for sharing, Kristoff!

If you have any pictures around the world with the CHS logo, send them our way - we would love to feature them! All submissions can be sent to connect@chsfomaha.org

Submit Your Photos

2025-2026 Generation "C" Chairs



The Past: A Tradition Begins

Jennifer Johnson Taylor, Class of 1991, was the first in her family to attend Central, and in doing so, she began a proud family tradition. Growing up in Omaha's Dundee neighborhood, Jen followed the classic midtown path: Dundee Elementary, Lewis & Clark Middle, and finally, Central High School. The historic architecture of Central first drew her in, but it was the vibrant community and transformative experiences that made her a lifelong Eagle. After graduating, Jen pursued a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy at Hamilton College in New York, then returned to Omaha to earn her Juris Doctor from Creighton University School of Law. Her career has taken her from private practice to public service, and today she serves as Deputy City Attorney for the City of Omaha - working in an office with a view of downtown that reminds her of her days at Central. Jen's sisters, Kathryn Johnson Krueger, Class of 2004, and Molly Johnson, Class of 2014 also joined the Central family further cementing the Johnson legacy at Central.

The Present: Soaring Higher

When she and her husband, Darin, started their family, Jen passed on her love for Central to the next generation. Her daughter, **Cecilia** Taylor, Class of 2026, is a four-year varsity swimmer and state qualifier, a varsity golfer, and an active member of HOSA and National Honor Society (serving as Activities Coordinator). She is also involved in several advanced academic programs outside of Central, including the Haddix STEM Corridor and the UNMC High School Alliance. Cecilia credits Central with connecting her to these incredible opportunities and inspiring her passion for science. She plans to major in Microbiology with a minor in Chemistry and is exploring undergraduate research programs at the University of Washington and the University of Pittsburgh.

The Future: The Legacy Continues

The Eagle spirit lives on in Charles "**Chuck**" Taylor, Class of 2032. Currently a student at Dundee Elementary School, Chuck is already preparing to follow in the footsteps of his mother, aunts, and sister. An avid golfer in the Nebraska Jr. PGA League, Chuck also enjoys basketball, football, swimming, baseball, and chess. His teachers note his love of history and enthusiasm for fun facts. With his boundless curiosity and love for learning, Chuck is ready to carry the family legacy forward at Central High School.

[Join Generation "C" Today](#)

[Join the 1859 Society Today](#)



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

[Click Here for the 1859 Society Brochure](#)

Upcoming Class Reunion Schedule



The class of 1979 at their reunion in 2024!

Upcoming Reunion Schedule

[Class of 1960](#)

September 26, 2025

[Contact JoAnn Kratky](#)

Class of 1965

September 5-6, 2025

[Contact Holly Jepsen Hoberman](#)

[Contact Gary Green](#)

Class of 1975

October 10-11, 2025

Susan Vrbanac Lerdahl , Mark Kresl, Suzanne Tarver, Bridget Brown

[Contact Sue](#) 402-320-6489

Class of 1985

September 19-20, 2025

[Daniel Schinzel](#)

[Carrie Roberts](#)

[Join the Facebook Group](#)

Class of 1990

September 19-20, 2025

[Contact Dana Rouch](#)

Class of 1995

September 12-14, 2025

[Clay Wulf](#)

Class of 2000

September 19-20, 2025

[Jono Croskey](#)

[Tanesha Burns](#)

[Andy Ludwig](#)

Class of 2005

October 10-11, 2025

[Contact Michael Smith](#)

Class of 2010

September 19-20, 2025

[Contact Anna Venditte Diederich](#)

Class of 2015

September 19-20, 2025

[Contact Elexis Martinez](#)

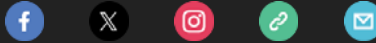
If you are the reunion organizer for your class and haven't finalized a date for your class reunion or would like to look at postponing or cancelling it, please contact the Foundation office at events@chsfomaha.org or call 402-556-1996.

Stay Connected With Us on Social Media



Are you on [Facebook](#)? How about [Instagram](#) or [X](#) (Formerly known as Twitter)? Follow and like us across social media platforms to stay connected to other Central alumni, staff, parents and supporters, all while receiving the latest news.

Thank You to Our Adopt-A-School Partner



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