Confirmed 2020 Hall of Fame Nominees

Award Categories		First Name	Last Name	RHS Grad Yr
Academic/Career Accomplishments		Jason	Baldridge	1992
Academic/Career Accomplishments		Steve	Polonowski	1992
Honorary Achievement		Roselle	Havens	
Honorary Achievement		Jim	Haskins	
Service to Community/RPS		Paul	Krupp (posthumous)	1972
Service to Community/RPS		Jeffrey	Dr. VanWingen MD	1989
Cultural/Performing Arts		George	Goad	2009

Nominee – Jason Baldrige

Academic & Career Accomplishments

RHS Graduation Year 1992

Currently lives in Mountain View, CA.

After graduating from Rockford in 1992, Jason earned a full-ride Presidential scholarship to attend the University of Toledo, Ohio. He began studying Mechanical Engineering while minoring in Anthropology. After traveling to India and participating in an archaeological dig in Berenike on the Red Sea coast of Egypt (see http://www.jasonbaldridge.com/berenike), Jason switched his major to Anthropology. He took several linguistics classes and discovered that the field of computational linguistics perfectly joined his interests in both the sciences and the humanities. As a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, he discovered a passion for machine learning and formal, mathematical models of human language grammar. After completing masters degrees in Linguistics and Computer Science in 1998, Jason moved to Scotland and earned his PhD in Informatics at the University of Edinburgh. His 2002 dissertation on universal grammar using linear logics won the 2003 Beth Dissertation Prize (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E._W._Beth_Dissertation_Prize). During his PhD, Jason also created the open source OpenNLP software package, which provided natural language processing capabilities based on machine learning. It became a widely used package in both academia and industry and is still being actively developed and used as part of the Apache Software Foundation (https://opennlp.apache.org/), over two decades after its inception.

Following his PhD, Jason did a postdoc at the University of Edinburgh, which focused further on machine learning and parsing for both sentence and discourse structure. In 2005, he joined the University of Texas at Austin as an assistant professor in the Department of Linguistics, where he spent over a decade researching linguistics and natural language processing. Jason also consulted with companies on applications of natural language processing, especially sentiment analysis. After earning tenure, he co-founded People Pattern, a start-up focused on machine learning and natural language processing for major brands to better understand their social media audiences. In 2017, he joined Google Research and now leads a team tackling grounded language understanding in Austin, Texas. His research focuses on using neural networks for representing language and images and using them for problems such as retrieving and generating images based on descriptions and learning computational agents that can follow and give instructions in 3D simulations. For a discussion of this work and its relationship to our scientific understanding of human language abilities, see his 2019 talk Grasping Language (https://slideslive.com/38922462/invited-talk-grasping-language). Jason is an internationally recognized scholar who has written around 90 articles during the course of his career.

Jason married his amazing wife, Cheryl, in Texas in 2006. He has four wonderful children: Olivia (16, from his first marriage), Nash (11), Gray (7) and Esme (2). Jason's family fills him with love and joy -- and keeps him grounded in the real world while he also pursues his research into language and how we can model it in computers. His incredible parents, Fred (a calculus teacher at Rockford High School) and Mary (an artist in Michigan), have supported him throughout his entire life and have proven themselves to be remarkably fun (and popular) grandparents. Other family, friends and colleagues--too numerous to list here--have provided enormous support and inspiration at every stage of his life. In fact, this short biography tells a somewhat tidy story to what is actually a constant renegotiation of Jason's career and

personal life, including straddling academic and industry pursuits and life on three continents. For a discussion of some of the messy details and perspectives on academia and industry, see Jason's interview on the NLP highlights podcast (https://soundcloud.com/nlp-highlights/90-research-in-academia-versus-industry-with-philip-resnik-and-jason-baldridge).

Nominee – Steve Polonowski

Academic & Career Accomplishments

RHS Graduation Year 1992

Currently lives in Chicago, IL

Steve, the son of 2 educators, graduated from Rockford High School in 1992. We went on to obtain a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Business Administration from Michigan State University. During his time at MSU he was the Men's basketball Team Captain (1996-97), Four-time Academic All-Big Ten (1993-97) and Varsity "S" Club President (1996-97). Steve went on to play professional basketball in Europe before moving to Chicago, IL where he has had a successful career.

Steve is a highly accomplished leader of traditional and emerging healthy and wellness consumer products companies. He is a results-oriented general sales manager with demonstrated leadership success at consumer-driven companies. His key strengths and experiences include: P&L management, brand innovation, business leadership and turnaround, effective planning, strategic vision, people management and commitment to quality execution while being acutely aware of his role as brand steward. Steve brings together talented individuals to act as a cohesive team as he establishes clear direction, enables them with the right resources and tools, and leads them to accomplish strong results beyond their expectations. He has gained extensive experience driving successful business initiatives across all trade channels and is especially well-versed at establishing mutually beneficial strategic partnerships with key customers.

Steve is an impactful senior leader executive with a passion for people and a history of driving peak performance with company's including Simple Mills |Glanbia Performance Nutrition | PepsiCo | Krones Group. Has a consistent track record of driving business results and can be counted on to exceed goals by focusing on the bottom line while effectively leading others. Based on his experience implementing strategic business plans and improved capabilities, he has developed significant organizational agility and is well-versed in getting things done through formal and informal processes and therefore can effectively influence an organization's culture. Equally important to his success is building effective teams, creating strong morale, sharing successes and fostering dialogue to develop commitment and establish accountability. Moreover, his extensive experience functioning as a change agent while operating with the highest degree of integrity and transparency in all activities cemented him as a respected leader within the CPG industry.

He married to Marianne for 18 years (she's a Michigan State Spartan and Muskegon Mona Shores graduate) and have 3 energetic boys (Niklas 10th grade, Ian 8th grade and Max 5th grade)
His hobbies include Youth sports coach (soccer and basketball), hot air balloon pilot and fishing in Michigan.

Nominee – Roselle (Chilson) Havens

Honorary Achievement

Currently lives in Middleville, MI

Roselle Havens, former Teacher, Principal, and Director of Special Education Services for over 25 years of service to the students, parents, staff and community of Rockford Public Schools. Some twenty years after her first days in the Parkside Elementary classroom, the region and the state began to recognize her career achievements as a master of innovation for students in both general and special education programs. She was granted the 1984 Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Region 9 Leadership Award. That same year, the River Valley Math Program was chosen from over 150 programs submitted to the US Department of Education, cited as an example of excellence in math instruction to be used as model for schools throughout the country. Two years later, she received the General Educator of the Year Award from the Region 1 Parent Advisory Council for Special Education; and in 1987, the Michigan Association of Children with Learning Disabilities Award of Excellence.

Roselle Havens retired in 1988. In acknowledgement of her uniquely notable service, she received letters of commendation from then-President Ronald Reagan; the US Secretary of Education William Bennett; and a State of Michigan Special Tribute from State Representative Victor Krause. While those tributes currently hang in her home office, she has a number of scrapbooks stuffed with letters of praise and gratitude from parents, students, fellow educators and administrators. And it was hard for her to leave behind the career that had given her so much satisfaction.

She actually returned to the school district in 1989 to resume the principalship of River Valley. She retired for a second time in 1991. The Rockford Board of Education acknowledged their gratitude for her remarkable dedication to the district with the Meritorious Service Award. Her colleagues in the Michigan Elementary and Middle School Principals Association in Region 9 awarded her with an Outstanding Service Award.

Nominee – Jim Haskins

Honorary Achievement

Currently lives in Grand Rapids, MI

Jim Haskins served as the principal of Rockford High School for fifteen years. He came to Rockford High School as an assistant principal in 1983 after spending the first seventeen years of his career as a teacher, coach and administrator within the Grand Rapids Public Schools. After one year as an assistant at Rockford High School, he became the head principal in 1984. He proceeded to guide Rockford High School through years of unprecedented growth, instilling the high standard of excellence that drives the school to this very day. Jim was also very instrumental in the development of the new high school building that opened in 1993. The following year Rockford high School was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School and was selected as one of the top technological high schools in the country. RHS was the first high school in the country to have voice, video and data to all classrooms. In addition, video conferencing, multi-media capabilities, distance learning and satellite uplinks were also introduced. The high school boasted the first Tech Ed department, which replaced Industrial Arts, as well as opened the first TV studio to our area. The school became the benchmark for schools throughout the United States and the world. They hosted 18,000 visitors from throughout the United States and numerous foreign countries.

Mr. Haskins introduced and implemented the Academic Letter award to recognize academic excellence. He also spearheaded changes to the National Honor Society programs. At the state and national levels, he was very involved in committees related to academic programs for secondary schools.

After retiring from Rockford in 1999, Jim went to work for Greiner Architectural Firm that had designed the high school. He became a certified project manager and oversaw technology design for numerous high schools in Michigan and the United States. His management skills led him to be promoted to the Midwest Regional Communications and Technology Manager for the corporation. This role led to involvement with intelligent transportation systems in numerous states and medical technology related to the expansion of the Medical Mile in Grand Rapids and the Secchia Center.

 In 2005, Jim became the first commissioner of the OK Athletic Conference which is composed of 49 schools. The OK Conference is the largest athletic conference in Michigan and perhaps the country.   He directed the league for fourteen years, providing much needed direction and credibility for the conference. Jim introduced software technology for scheduling games, officials and officials' pay. He worked on the VNN system to report conference scores to news media and conference schools. Rockford currently uses this system for athletic communications.   His career in total spanned 48 years in education and local athletics. Jim is still a fixture at RHS home games and other activities in Rockford where his grandchildren are involved.

Nominee – Paul Krupp

Service to the Community

RHS Graduation Year 1972

9.19.54 – 9.1.18 deceased

The late Paul Krupp and his wife Nancy own and manage Krupp Farms which has been in his family and serving the community for over a century. It is an iconic landmark known to thousands of people who come from all over the region each summer to pick or buy strawberries, raspberries and asparagus. Paul especially loved children, so it is not surprising that Krupp Farms includes a playground and an ice cream shop.

Paul was an involved, respected member of the community, and was well known for his exceptional service and generosity. He was a member of the Rockford Lion's Club, Assumption BVM Catholic Church, Rockford Area Museum and North Kent Connect. He and Nancy also own the Antor Travel Agency, arranging and hosting many trips abroad for hundreds of people over the years.

Claire Guisfredi, Executive Director at North Kent Connect, said that Paul was the consummate fundraiser and a true ambassador. "He was passionate about the ministry at North Kent Connect and was a key person on our building campaign committee."

Al Pratt, Co-Director of the Rockford Area Museum, spoke glowingly about Paul's generosity as well. "Paul was extremely important in the creation of the Rockford Area Museum. Without his help with the major fundraising, the museum may have never happened."

To many Paul seemed larger than life, yet he was always selfless and thoughtful. And he was always willing to help a friend, or his community, in times of need.

Nominee – Dr. Jeffrey VanWingen MD

Academic & Career Accomplishments

RHS Graduation Year 1989

Currently lives in Grand Rapids, MI

Dr. Jeffrey VanWingen graduated from Rockford High School in 1989. Following, he attended The Lyman Briggs School of Michigan State University, graduating in 1993 with a degree in physiology, interdisciplinary studies in health and humanities. He was selected as MSU Senior of the Year for the 1992-93 school year. Aside from studies, Dr. VanWingen played tuba in the marching band during his undergraduate years. He received his MD from the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine in 1997. He returned to Grand Rapids for residency training in family medicine, completing the St. Mary's Mercy program in 2000.

In 2000, Dr. VanWingen joined a private practice in Grand Rapids, Michigan and has served the same population of patients since. He is affiliated with the Michigan State University as a volunteer clinical faculty. His teaching experience has included infectious disease curriculum and humanities along with mentoring students in his office off and on since 2007. Since 2015, Dr. VanWingen has served as the medical director for the West Michigan branch of Heartland Hospice and Home Care. He also works closely with Forest View Psychiatric Hospital since 2003 overseeing the medical care of patients seeking inpatient mental health care. He is passionate about teaching, end-of-life care and mental health in addition to the close relationships he fosters with his patients.

Dr. VanWingen has been involved in numerous overseas projects in India and Kenya. In 2018 he helped to found and is on the board of Archana's Hope, a non-profit that helps the underserved through funding and service projects. Dr. VanWingen has an interest in bridging barriers in medical care with technology and since 2016 has helped to develop Care Convene, a telehealth and population health platform. Recently, this program has been especially helpful assisting physicians engage virtually with their patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. VanWingen has a consuming interest in history and empathy as they pertain to medical care and other service venues. He has given numerous workshops using historical artifacts to stimulate empathy and explore its applications in the service of others.

He is married to Magdalena with four children and a dog. He loves antiques, home improvement, playing guitar and travel, especially to India.

Nominee – George Goad

Cultural & Performing Arts

RHS Graduation Year 2009

Currently lives in Montreal, Canada moving to Grand Rapids, Mi (soon)

George Goad graduated from Rockford High School in 2009. He began his musical training on the trumpet at North Rockford Middle School under Cullen McCarthy, and at Rockford High School under Brian Phillips. He had private tutelage under Aaron Good and Greg Good while in middle and high school. In addition to activities in the band programs at Rockford, George was a member of the St. Cecilia Music Society's Youth Philharmonic and the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony.

He was admitted to the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music to study with David Bilger, principal trumpet of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He graduated in 2013 with his Bachelor's degree. He went on to pursue a Master's degree from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, graduating in 2015. While at Rice, he studied with legendary teachers Barbara Butler and Charlie Geyer. During summers, George was selected to participate in the National Repertory Orchestra (Breckenridge, CO) and the Tanglewood Music Center (Lenox, MA).

Following his college studies, George was accepted into the New World Symphony, a training orchestra for young people in Miami Beach, Florida. World-renowned maestro Michael Tilson-Thomas founded and leads the organization. The program consists of community outreach, innovative concert settings, and workshops to help musicians navigate their careers beyond the practice room and concert hall. The following summer, George was awarded a fellowship to spend the summer at the Aspen Music Center.

In 2016, George was appointed principal trumpet with the Columbus Symphony Orchestra. In addition to this role, he performed with the ProMusica Chamber Orchestra, as a soloist with the McConnell Arts Center Chamber Orchestra, and taught at Ohio State University as interim professor in 2018. He was given his first opportunities to perform with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra during this period.

Following a successful audition, George was appointed the position of associate principal trumpet with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal (OSM) in 2018. Along with weekly performances in Montreal, his work in the OSM featured tours to Europe and South America.

Most recently, he has accepted a position playing assistant principal trumpet in the Grand Rapids Symphony and is delighted that his journey has brought him back to West Michigan.