

ELGHS CELEBRATES 2018 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI RECIPIENTS

Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah School District presented its 2nd Annual Distinguished Alumni Award at its Homecoming Game on Friday, September 21, 2018. The Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah School District believes in challenging, inspiring, and empowering their students in a caring and innovative learning environment. The 2018 recipients of the Distinguished Alumni Award have taken this message and paid it forward throughout their lives. This year four alumni were chosen for this prestigious award based on their career success, character and willingness to help others. Though all of them took different paths after graduation, they all share the pride of being a graduate of ELGSD.

Karen Gritzmacher-Atkinson, member of the class of 1967, spread the Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah spirit throughout not only the United States but all seven continents. With a degree from Carroll College, Masters from Marquette University and Doctorate of Philosophy from Bowling State University, Karen has a love for global education and travel. She taught at Hope College, General Motors Institute, Arizona State University Business School, University of Queensland, Australia, and even in China. She has a long list of academic, consulting and community accomplishments both in the U.S. and internationally.

She was on the General Motors fast track progression for women to be in Senior Management. After leaving General Motors Institute she was promoted to a Materials Management Corporate Think Tank position, negotiating steel, petrochemicals and paint contracts. She was a Buyer at Fisher Body Division. She went back to corporate to implement Just-In-Time Manufacturing in GM plants. She also had Production Control responsibilities of managing four plants at Packard Electric Division in Ohio. She was nominated by General Motors Corporation and was a national semi-finalist for the White House Fellowship Program in 1984-85, 1985-86. She also had over 100 published articles and presentations on Leadership, Just-In-Time Manufacturing, Visual Controls and Productivity, Women in Management, and Changing Roles of Men and Women in Management. And, she was editor of the book "How to Do Business in Thailand."

While in Thailand, she was the President of Bangkok Women's Forum, a Board member of the Make a Wish Foundation, a member of American-Thai Chamber of Commerce and Foreign Correspondents Club. She presented the workshop "Conflict Resolution to Achieve Human Security." Karen thrives on learning new cultures, meeting people and exploring the world.

As she is planning her move back to the U.S., her goals for her next stage in her life are "to educate and share domestic and international knowledge as the next generation will be confronted with international decisions, people, and challenges." Hard work, making the right decisions at the right time, a sense of humor, and compassion are paramount for success. Her favorite quote is: "You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." – C.S. Lewis

Kate Kuehl Burgess, a 1987 graduate now residing in De Pere, Wisconsin, is known for her imagination and creativity. After graduating from Marquette University with a Degree in Communications and Marketing, Kate worked for Anchor Foods where she was Vice President of Human Resources. She then ventured out and formed her own company, Elevate97, with her husband in the late 1990's. As CEO and Owner, Kate describes her business in her profile as such, "We elevate brands. Think little boxes to big buildings. We show off world-renowned retail brands like TaylorMade, Nautica, Pandora Jewelry and the Green Bay Packers." Kate "drives growth and commitment to partners through her own deep belief in elevating those around her-- and having a darn good time along the way." Kate has established three pillars for the employees of her company: to focus on improving their teams, their company, and their community. They participate in Habitat builds, clothing drives and fundraisers for those in need. They are also a frequent sponsor of events such as St. Norbert College Girls in Leadership

Camp, Business in Ethics Awards hosted by the American Foundation of Counseling Services and enrollment initiatives for local schools. She has received the ATHENA Award from the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, the Clara Barton Award from the American Red Cross, Board Member of the Year from the Boys and Girls Club and the Professional Achievement Award through the Diederich College of Communication at Marquette University.

Liz Garton Scanlon, 1985 ELGS graduate, models that any dream is possible to achieve. Liz moved to Wisconsin as a teenager and since graduation has lived in abroad and in various place across the U.S., including Austin, Texas, where she now resides with her husband and their nearly-grown daughters. She is the author of many children's books including the best-selling, Caldecott-honored book *All the World*. Her first book, *A Sock is a Pocket for Your Toes* inspired a book-based performance by Salt Lake City's Tanner Dance Company and is a featured garden at Bookworm Gardens in Sheboygan, WI. *Noodle and Lou* was selected for General Mills' Cheerios "Spoonfuls of Stories" literacy campaign and was a featured title at the Texas Book Festival, as were several of her other titles including *Bob, Not Bob!*, *Another Way to Climb a Tree*, *In the Canyon*, and *Kate, Who Tamed the Wind*. She expanded her talents to the middle school level with her first novel, *The Great-Good Summer* and has another forthcoming.

Liz is proud to be a faculty member at Vermont College of Fine Arts and she frequently presents at schools, libraries and conferences, including a visit to ELGS. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Journalism at UW-Madison, her Master's Degree in English and Creative Writing from the University of Texas-Austin and a post-graduate fellowship from the Michener Center for Writers. She's also taught at the Austin Community College and worked in marketing for IBM Global Services. Liz couldn't be here for the Distinguished Alumni ceremony as she's currently speaking to school children across the northeast, but she's flattered and grateful to be included in such amazing company.

Mr. Brendon Weiss, graduate of the class of 1995, was very involved while going to ELGHS. He was a part of band, football, wrestling, Boy Scouts and much more. Brendon earned his Bachelor's Degree from Northern Michigan University. After graduation, he moved to Washington D.C. to be a staff assistant to the then Freshman Congressman Paul Ryan from WI. In 2001, he left Paul Ryan's office to work for a Congressman from New York City (areas of Staten Island and the South Shore of Brooklyn). This area was home to the largest number of NYC police and firefighters who were lost on September 11, 2001. He and his colleagues spent months on the phone and with families who lost loved ones on the day of the attack and led him to working on one of his most rewarding projects of his career. He led the effort on Capitol Hill to remedy one of the biggest problems NYC police and firefighters had on 9/11, their inability to communicate across departments because their radios operated on different frequencies and could not communicate. Working to resolve this problem particularly hit home for Brendon given his father had been a volunteer fireman and mother a volunteer first responder.

After a promotion to Legislative Director for the NY Congressman, he worked closely on rules proposed by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) relating to the modernization of the U.S. equity market structure. Brendon then worked as a Presidential appointee at the SEC from 2005-2007.

While working on his MBA at the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business, Brendon co-founded the Thai-American Business Club with funding from the Thai Embassy. While Co-President, he led a small team in developing a new transportation infrastructure for Thailand that could be used to advance the Thai economy. He also spent a year volunteering through the Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship where he worked with a new company developing products to help stroke patients rehabilitate.

After several years as Co-Head of Government Affairs for Intercontinental Exchange and the NYSE, Brendon became the Chief Operating Officer of MERSCORP Holding, Inc., where his main focus is to digitize the U.S. mortgage market. On a local level,

Brendon resides in Alexandria, VA with his wife and two daughters. He is on the board of the Villamay Community Association and an active supporter of the Washington Humane Society. Though Brendon has had great successes in his life, he also realizes that when a project fails, it reinforces the need to consciously spend time reflecting on what lessons you can take from that experience. As Brendon stated, “ The work ethic and positive attitude that I learned working on farms, playing sports and being around good people at ELGSD, prepared me to take on whatever challenges that lie ahead.”

Presenting the awards were Emma Mrozinsky, FCCLA Vice-President of Service Learning and Community Involvement and Saylor Schoenborn FCCLA Vice-President of Public Relations for the ELGHS FCCLA chapter. FCCLA stands for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America and is the sponsor of the Distinguished Alumni Award. FCCLA is advised by Mrs. Beth Roehl. Nominations are now being accepted for the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award. The application can be found on the ELGSD website.

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