



# Huskie Trails

Reno High School Alumni Association – 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2026

Editor: Nancy Kerns Cummins



It's Time to Renew Your  
*Membership*

- Page 2 & 3 . . . . . RHSAA President's Report
- Page 3 . . . . . Platinum Members
- Page 3 . . . . . Our Museum Then & Now
- Page 4 . . . . . Choose Reno High School
- Page 5 . . . . . An Interview with Mike Nakashima, RHS Principal
- Page 6 . . . . . An Interview with Beau Walker, RHS Athletic Director
- Page 7 . . . . . Membership/Donation Form

# RHSAA President's Annual Report

by Alice LeDesma



Years may pass, buildings may change, and new traditions may take root, but one thing remains constant: the shared experience that connects every graduate of our high school. The Alumni Association exists to keep that connection strong—linking past, present, and future students through community, service, and pride. Hello, I'm Alice LeDesma (Tout) class of 1982 and it has been a year since I stepped into the role of President of the Reno High School Alumni Association. I am still learning but deeply appreciate how much our school has and continues to support and contribute to our community. RHSAA has always been about connection—connecting classmates across generations, connecting alumni with current students, and connecting our shared past with a strong and promising future. As president, my goal is to build on that foundation while creating new opportunities for engagement, service, and growth. At its heart, the Alumni Association is about people. It provides a space for graduates from every decade to reconnect, whether through reunions, events, mentorship programs, or community engagement. These connections are more than social—they're meaningful. Alumni networks open doors for students and fellow graduates, offering guidance, internships, scholarships, and career advice that can change lives.

Our foundation has been set by previous amazing alumni leaders who have worked tirelessly to support our school. I am grateful for the constant commitment and look forward to collaborating with our current dynamic alumni board, school administrators, and volunteers to continue honoring our school's traditions while embracing fresh ideas. In that spirit, I recognize that this association is only as strong as the people behind it. I encourage each of you to get involved—attend an event, volunteer your time, share your story, or simply reach out to a classmate you haven't spoken to in years. Your ideas, energy, and participation are essential to our success. The ways you can contribute is limited only by your ideas to get involved. We can play a vital role in supporting our school. Through scholarship, fundraising and volunteer efforts, alumni help enhance academic programs, athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities. Every contribution—time, talent, or resources—helps ensure that today's students have access to opportunities that prepare them for tomorrow.

Our school's legacy is built on the achievements of its graduates. From community leaders and educators to artists, entrepreneurs, and public servants, alumni carry the school's values into the world. The Alumni Museum proudly celebrates these accomplishments, sharing stories that inspire current students and remind us all of how our community has grown. The dedication of those establishing, contributing and maintaining the incredible history in the museum is truly inspiring. If it's been a while, I encourage you to visit and reconnect.

As we begin together, I am confident that our alumni association will continue to thrive, guided by school pride, mutual support, and a shared commitment to giving back.

## Ways to Get Involved

Staying connected is easier than ever. Alumni can:

- Attend reunions, homecoming events, and networking gatherings
- Volunteer at the museum
- Support scholarships and school initiatives
- Share news and achievements for alumni spotlights
- Help plan events or serve on committees

No matter where life has taken you, there is a place for you in the Alumni Association!

I'm enjoying the opportunity to serve and look forward to working with you and celebrating all that it means to be part of our alumni family.

---

# RHSAA PLATINUM MEMBERS

Melvin Allard	Class of '58	Earl Avansino	Class of '38
Bud Beasley	Faculty	Norman Dianda	Class of '57
Link Piazza	Class of '37	Albert Solari	Class of '39

---

## Our Museum... Then & Now



# CHOOSE RENO HIGH SCHOOL

by Stephanie Lerude

## Why Should a Student CHOOSE Reno High School?

The high school enrollment landscape is changing. Students and families have more choices in Nevada due to the rise in the number of charter schools as well as the *School of Choice* system (a process allowing Washoe County School District families to apply to a school other than their student's zoned school.)

So why should a student choose our alma mater, Reno High School?

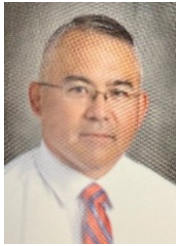
- RHS offers 16 AP courses, more than any other high school in the District. Why does this matter? AP courses offer a standardized curriculum (as well as college credit for many colleges) based on a student's score on the AP exam. In a landscape of grade inflation, AP scores allow colleges to evaluate students on a level playing field. And, most importantly, AP courses prepare students for college level work. And, RHS surpasses the state and global exam pass rates in almost all 16 of those classes.
- National Merit Finalists: 4 of 8 Washoe County School District 2025 National Merit Finalists were from Reno High School!
- Nationally recognized Speech and Debate program: RHS students have qualified for the national competition for 47 straight years!!
- Nationally recognized We The People program: RHS qualified for Nationals in Washington DC the *past eleven years!*



Reno High School remains an academic powerhouse. Spread the word!



*Reno High School's dome entrance*



## An Interview with Mike Nakashima RHS Principal

By Dawn Potter

I am a native Nevadan from Ely, Nevada. I went to school in North Dakota where I got into wrestling, the one thing that drew me out of state. I returned to Nevada and went to UNR and finished up my degree in English and Social Studies. I started teaching at Wooster High School in 1999. I didn't know Beau Walker (current RHS AD) but I'd heard of him as he was a student and was playing baseball. I coached wrestling and freshman football. I was a teacher and coach for 13 years, Dean of Students for 1 year, then Assistant Principal for 6 years.

I gave tours to Wooster Alumni during the summers as there was no Alumni Center. Occasionally, I met Reno alumni that went to Wooster as well. They would always question me "You're in charge of discipline"? After responding "yes", they'd say "you smile too much to be in charge of discipline." Discipline has changed a little over the last 25- 30 years. After 20 years at Wooster, I started to look for other opportunities.

I was hired as the Principal at Swope Middle School and was there for 5 years. Approximately 75% of RHS Students went to Swope Middle School. I know just about every kid here that went to Swope - it's pretty awesome! The Principalship for Reno High School opened up about 3 weeks prior to the start of the 2024 school year. I thought it would be a great job and position for *someone*. I received a couple of calls in July from some parents that had students at Reno High School. They said I should put in for the principal position. I wasn't sure about it but I have always thought of Reno High School as a wonderful place to be. (Yes, even coming from Wooster High School!) We had our rivalry when I was coaching for Wooster against the Huskies and Jeff Tomac (RHS Alumni, Class of 1985) Wrestling Head Coach & Counselor

at RHS (1999-2018). He and I had some arguments/battles and everything else during that time.

Even after all that time at Wooster, being RHS Principal was a very attractive position. Reno High School does great things with their kids and has high expectations of them. One of the things that attracts me is the importance of **character**, from the Freshman Seminar classes to the American Government classes for the Seniors. "RESPECT, HONOR, STRENGTH" isn't just something we say, it's something we live. Character is important and it's something our teachers work to build in our students. We want our students to become good citizens for our community and country. We want them to do great things. We expect our students to come back and share the great things they've done afterwards with current RHS students. I've seen what our kids have done as far as moving through Swope Middle School to the great things they do at RHS. How they would come back to Swope and talk about their experiences at RHS. How welcoming and challenging it was. How they got to do everything from orchestra to football. Getting to participate in anything they wanted including sports and how it really was a community - that was something that attracted me to RHS. At the middle school level, you have 2-3 years to work with your kids. Being able to watch them finish their public-school journey and graduate is what really affected me.

What made me flip and decide on accepting the RHS Principal position really is simple. It was the calls from parents that demonstrated that they believed that I would be a good fit for RHS. I knew that RHS had great teachers. I knew Kris Hackbusch (VP 2010-2012 and Principal 2012-2019) and Robert Sullivan (Principal from 2003-2012). I share their strength of building relationships with kids, staff and families.

I have no children. I have been with Washoe County School District for 26 plus years. It is my passion and so are the students!



## **An Interview with Beau Walker RHS Athletic Director**

*By Dawn Potter*

I graduated from Wooster High School in 2002. I went to Cerro Coso Junior College where I played baseball and graduated in 2004 with an AA degree. I soon realized that my talents and academics didn't all match up so I returned to Reno and graduated from UNR in 2009 with a degree in Secondary Education and History.

I coached at Wooster High School from 2005-2009 under Ron Malcomb (who is now at RHS). I took the Head Baseball Coach job at North Valleys High School from 2010-2013. While there, I got my Master's Degree in Athletic Administration and Coaching, because I wanted to be an Athletic Director. As I continued my education, I wanted to get away from athletics and become a principal. So, I started working on my Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. In 2017, I took the Head Baseball Coaching job at Galena High School, which I held for 8 years prior to retiring from coaching (after 20 seasons in baseball) and I finished my Administration Degree.

After I finished my degree, I was focusing on trying to become a principal. In July 2025, WCSD changed the job description for the Athletic Director position from being a Teacher/Athletic director position to a full-time Athletic Director position. I found it intriguing to be a full-time Athletic Director in a high school in Northern Nevada and not have to leave the area. The same month, the AD Position at RHS job opened up and I interviewed for the job the last week of July/first week of August. Principal Nakashima offered me the job and I jumped on the opportunity and it's been a whirlwind since. That was the first official week of fall sports so no time to settle in! Fall is the crazy season; there are 10 sports in the fall, 4 in the winter and 5 in the spring.

So far, my time at RHS has been great! Competitively across the board we did very well. On top of that, meeting the RHS Staff has been awesome and so has the community. I've had a chance to attend a RHSAA meeting to meet everyone, which is such a unique thing for a high school to have. Especially with my history background, I love it!

Our Administration team has been very supportive. The kind of bubble that I have to work in with building and grounds is unique and everyone at RHS wants to do more than they are asked to. This is hard to find anymore - where everyone wants to go above and beyond - it's been awesome. I come up with these crazy ideas and everyone jumps on board. One Friday night, we had a home game where we had a student play the National Anthem on top of the Press Box with an electric guitar. We had to get cables, etc. up there and a platform had to be built with an American Flag behind him. A number of people went above and beyond to make that happen. It was incredible!

I am married to my wife Nina, who is a Principal at Silverlake Elementary. We have 3 daughters; Lucy who is 13, she attends Herz Middle School, plays volleyball and does Olympic weight training. Ellie who is 11 and also attends Herz Middle School, does gymnastics and Olympic weight training. Annie who is 9, attends Hunsberger Elementary, plays softball and does Olympic weight training. They all lift, but each has their own individual sport. My gym is partnered with a Barbell Club run by the Hernandez Brothers (Richie and Carlos). They are great humans!! They started a youth weight lifting club years ago. The way they interact with the kids is so awesome. I knew that whatever sports my daughters wanted to do, strength is obviously the biggest component straight across the board. So, we wanted to get them with really good strength coaches at a young age. They don't push them past their abilities but help them to develop as athletes and humans - what athletics can do for all our kids!



# MEMBERSHIP & DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

MEMBERSHIP OPEN TO ALUMNI, FACULTY & EMPLOYEES OF RHS

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_

Last name listed with your graduating class: \_\_\_\_\_

Attended RHS Dates: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ RHS Teachers & Staff: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**We never share your information without permission. We are a membership dues-based association.**

Please check how you would like to support us and return this form with your payment.

### MEMBERSHIP DUES:

- \$30.00 1-year membership
- \$80.00 3-year membership
- \$130.00 5-year membership
- \$400.00 Lifetime Individual Membership

### SPONSOR LEVELS:

- Bronze \$1,000 - \$4,999
- Silver \$5,000 - \$9,999
- Gold \$10,000 - \$19,999
- Platinum \$20,000 or more

**We welcome gifts from the community to support our museum and for RHS scholarships.**

DONATIONS to RHSAA Scholarship Fund:  \$100  \$250  \$500  Other \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER GIFTS: non-discretionary \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DONATIONS dedicated in memory of, in honor of or in lieu of flowers, please contact us.

Would you like to be involved as a VOLUNTEER?  YES! We'll contact you.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

### Checks payable to:

Reno High School  
Alumni Association  
P.O. Box 5807  
Reno, NV 89513

Federal tax ID 88-0348443  
501(c)(3) tax exempt organization

OR

Go to our website and pay online:

**[www.RenoHighAlum.com](http://www.RenoHighAlum.com)**

Questions: 775-825-2586

Email: [rhsaa@renohighalum.com](mailto:rhsaa@renohighalum.com)

Visit us: 395A Booth Street

### OFFICE USE ONLY

- Membership
- Treasurer
- Life member
- Thank you
- File



Washoe County School District  
 RHS Alumni Association  
 P.O. Box 30425  
 Reno, NV 89520

NON-PROFIT ORG  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
 RENO, NV 89520 PERMIT  
 #217

***Return Service Requested***

**HUSKIE TRAILS – a publication of  
 Reno High School Alumni Association**

P.O. Box 5807 • Reno, NV 89513  
 (775) 825-2586

Museum hours: Monday 2-5pm Saturday 10-2pm

Website: [www.renohighalum.com](http://www.renohighalum.com) Email: [rhsaa@renohighalum.com](mailto:rhsaa@renohighalum.com)

**OFFICERS & TRUSTEES**

Alice LeDesma - President	1982
Jean Parraguirre - VP	1982
KayAnn Pilling - Secretary	1982
Kathy Raven - Treasurer	1982
Donna Abbott	1970
Stephanie Lerude	1982
Howard Moy	1969
Valerie Porter	1989
Dawn Potter	1982

**VOLUNTEERS**

Daryl Pelizzari	Historian
Phyllis Pike	Docent
Lorriane Petersen	Docent
Nancy Kerns Cummins	Newsletter editor

**OFFICE MANAGER**

Connie Barnhart	1981
-----------------	------