

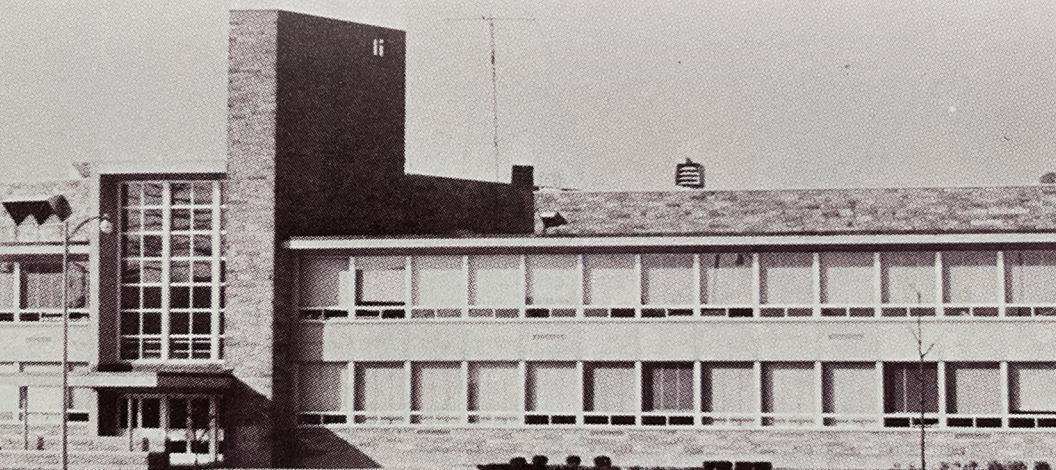
COLONIE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

**2023**

CLASS INDUCTION  
CEREMONY



**OCTOBER 6, 2023 | 5 P.M.**

Colonie Central High School



## Agenda

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### Colonie Central Chamber Singers

National Anthem

Alma Mater

### Welcome

**William Roemer**

South Colonie Director of Physical Education, Athletics and Intramurals

### Master of Ceremonies

**Rodger Wyland**

WNYT Channel 13 Sports Director

### Hall of Fame Inductees

Kyle Brown - Athlete, (2000) Baseball

Brian O'Keefe - Athlete, (2011) Baseball

Barbara Leicht-Bowers - Teacher/Coach,  
Boys and Girls Bowling

Paul Mason - Athlete, (1972) Basketball,  
Football, Track

1970-1971 Boys Basketball Team

### Closing Remarks

**William Roemer**





## 2023 Inductees

### **Kyle Brown (2000) Baseball**

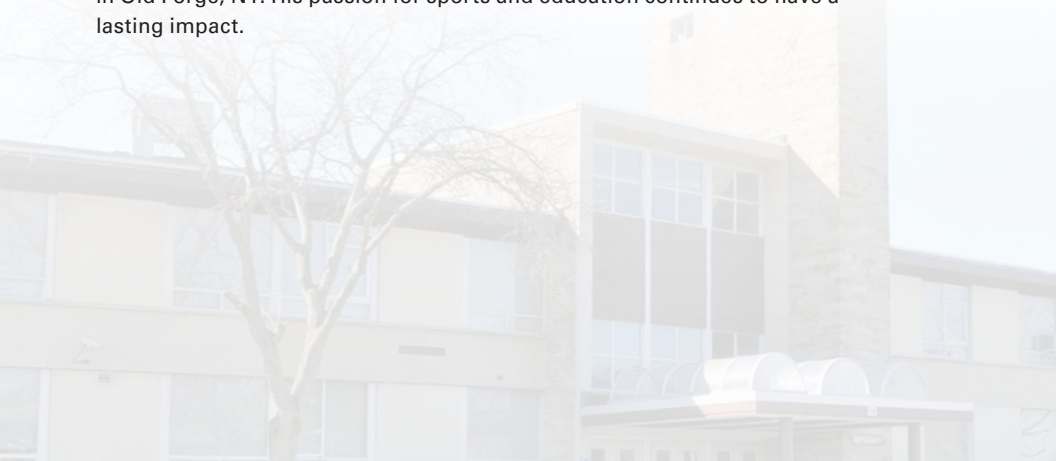
Kyle Brown had an impressive career in baseball, spanning various levels of the game. He played three years of Varsity Baseball at Colonie, earning the distinction of First Team All Suburban Council for three consecutive years. In 1999, he was recognized as the Times Union "Player of the Year." During his time at Colonie, he established and, in some cases, still holds numerous individual season and career records.

He was a key member of the Adirondack Empire State Gold Medal-winning baseball team in both 1998 and 1999. Additionally, Brown contributed to the South Troy Dodgers baseball team's remarkable journey to the 2000 Connie Mack National Runner-up position, where he also earned a spot on the First Team All-Tournament team.

Brown's baseball talents didn't stop at the high school level. He accepted a Division 1 Baseball scholarship from Le Moyne College, where he played for four years. During his time there, he earned the distinction of First Team All MAAC and Second Team All Region in 2004. Impressively, he holds both the single-season and career stolen base records at Le Moyne College.

In 2004, Brown's skills led to his selection in the MLB Draft by the New York Mets, and he played two years in their organization. After his playing career, Brown became a special education teacher and college coach beginning as an assistant baseball coach at Oswego State. Under his guidance, the team reached the Division III College Baseball World Series twice, in 2017 and 2018.

Beyond baseball, Brown has also made significant contributions to high school sports, coaching in baseball, basketball, football, and unified sports. Currently, he serves as the Athletic Director, Assistant Principal, and Special Education Director at the Town of Webb Union Free School District in Old Forge, NY. His passion for sports and education continues to have a lasting impact.







## 2023 Inductees

### Brian O'Keefe (2011) Baseball

In 2011, Brian O'Keefe demonstrated exceptional baseball skills during his senior year of high school. He achieved a remarkable .561 batting average, with 12 doubles, four home runs, and 35 runs batted in, while striking out a mere three times throughout the season. This outstanding performance earned him Second Team All-State honors in Class AA by the New York State Sports Writers Association. Additionally, O'Keefe received All-Suburban Council First Team accolades for the 2010 and 2011 seasons. Notably, he played a pivotal role in leading Colonie to an impressive 18-2 record in 2011, setting a new program record for team victories. O'Keefe also participated in the Connie Mack World Series in 2011, a testament to his talent and dedication to the sport.

O'Keefe continued to excel in college baseball at St. Joseph's University. During his junior year, he maintained a notable .350 batting average. O'Keefe's exceptional performance earned him a place on the Atlantic 10 All-Conference Second Team and the Philadelphia All-Big 5 Team during his sophomore year. He also led the team in various statistical categories, including at-bats, hits, home runs, and runs batted in.

O'Keefe's baseball journey progressed when he was selected in the 7th round of the 2014 MLB draft by the St. Louis Cardinals. In 2019, he was traded to the Seattle Mariners, where he ultimately made his major league debut on October 1, 2022. During this historic debut, O'Keefe recorded his first major league hit against the Oakland A's. Notably, O'Keefe holds the unique distinction of being the sole Colonie High baseball player to get a hit in a major league game.





## Barbara Leicht-Bowers

Barbara Leicht-Bowers, a cherished educator and coach within the South Colonie School District, left an indelible mark on her community. With a career spanning several decades, she not only excelled in teaching but also displayed extraordinary skill as a bowler, achieving numerous remarkable feats throughout her life. Leicht-Bowers passed away in 2002 at the age of 54, leaving behind a legacy of dedication.

As a passionate Physical Education teacher at Sand Creek Middle School, Leicht-Bowers touched the lives of countless students. She also served as the coach for the boys' bowling team from 1991 and the girls' bowling team from 1995, shaping young athletes both on and off the lanes.

Under her guidance, her high school teams secured multiple Section 2 Bowling Championships. Notably, her talented players earned athletic scholarships for bowling after graduating from Colonie Central High School.

Leicht-Bowers's leadership was particularly evident as she led the boys' bowling squad to an impressive eight Section 2 Championship titles in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2000, and 2001. She also coached the boy's team to reach the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) Finals in 1999 and 2000. Additionally, the girls' bowling team emerged as Section 2 Champions and NYSPHSAA finalists in 1995.

Beyond her role as an educator and coach, Leicht-Bowers had a storied career as a professional bowler. In 1987, she achieved a significant milestone by winning a Ladies Pro Bowler Tour event at the PWBA Metroplex Open in Desoto, Texas. Her excellence extended to winning the state's most prestigious women's scratch singles tournament on four occasions, in 1982, 1983, 1986, and 1992.

Recognizing her remarkable contributions to the sport of bowling, Leicht-Bowers was inducted into the New York State Women's Bowling Association's Hall of Fame in 1989. Her bowling highlights also extended to earning 12 Women's All Star Association titles, further solidifying her status as a bowling legend.

Even posthumously, Leicht-Bowers's legacy continued to be honored. She was inducted into the Capital District Sports Hall of Fame, a testament to her enduring impact on the world of sports and education. In a heartfelt tribute, the Sand Creek gymnasium was renamed the BLB gymnasium, immortalizing the memory of the late Barbara Leicht-Bowers and her lasting contributions to the Colonie community.



## 2023 Inductees

### **Paul Mason (1972) Basketball, Football, Track**

Paul Mason was a standout athlete at Colonie High School, making significant contributions to the basketball, football, and track teams. His work on the court, field, and track left an indelible mark on the school's athletic history.

In basketball, Mason not only served as the team captain but also emerged as the leading scorer for Colonie High. During the 1970-71 season, he played a pivotal role in guiding the team to victory, securing both the Suburban Council and Class AA championships. The team's overall season record of 21-1 reflected their remarkable success, with Mason's stellar performance as a key factor. In a memorable AA Championship game against Troy High, Mason's scoring skills shone as he netted an impressive 28 points, including a remarkable 20 points in the second half alone. His talent and leadership did not go unnoticed, as he earned several local high school awards and a coveted spot on the all-area basketball team. Remarkably, Mason held the distinction of being the team's leading scorer for three consecutive years, culminating in a career total of over 1,000 points, ultimately reaching 1,247 career points.

Mason's athletic versatility extended beyond the basketball court. He also excelled as an outdoor track sprinter and jumper, contributing to record-breaking relay teams. Additionally, Mason showcased his athleticism on the varsity football team, where he was a dedicated player for three years.

After graduating from Colonie High School, Mason continued to pursue his passion for basketball at George Mason University.





## 1971 Colonie Boys Basketball Team

In 1971, the Colonie Garnet Raiders, led by HOF Coach Harold "Pep" Sand, future Hall of Famer Paul Mason, Mark MacDonald, Ken Strube, Mark Shea, and Jim Wirasnik, fought their way through a tough Suburban Council schedule to become only the second team in league history to finish undefeated and the first since the league schedule expanded from 14 to 18 games. The Garnet Raiders also captured the Section 2 Class AA Basketball Championship. This was the 1st Sectional Basketball Championship for the Colonie Boys Basketball program, and also marked the first time ever that a Suburban Council basketball team won a Section 2 Class AA Basketball Championship. They completed the season 21-1 overall and ranked #7 in the state by the New York State Sports Writers Association.

The 1970-71 team had been projected to be a strong team. Colonie had either won or shared the Suburban Council title each of the previous 3 years, but were returning only 2 starters (MVP Paul Mason and Mark MacDonald). This was a talented, balanced, and tenacious collection of athletes. They were a high scoring, up-tempo team with many of their scoring opportunities coming from a suffocating full-court defense. The '70-'71 team was an extremely exciting team to watch. They overcame some tough injuries, with key contributions from all members of the team. This team, due to their grittiness, teamwork, and conditioning, vowed never to be beaten because an opponent was better conditioned. They wore their opponents down with relentless defense, hustle, and poise. They were methodical in their approach to the game. The team's unofficial "6th man" was its home court... "The PIT"! The PIT was the perfect fit for the tenacious full-court defense this team played. Opponents were overwhelmed and intimidated, and the half-moon backboards added to their distress.

The coaching staff of this team was exceptional. HOF Coach "Pep" Sand had put together an awesome staff. Bill Austin, JV Coach/Varsity Assistant, was a defensive and conditioning specialist, responsible for the development of players who were moving up to the varsity level. Larry Marcus, Assistant Varsity Coach, worked on players' individual improvements, both offensively and defensively. Bill Warner, Assistant Varsity Scout, was essential in tabulating scouting reports on the team's opponents. Together, they were the foundation that this team's success was built upon.





**1971 Colonie Boys Basketball Team (continued)**

**1971 Team Members:**

Head Coach Harold "Pep" Sand, 2021 HOF Inductee	Eric Teras (Senior)
JV Head Coach/Varsity Assistant Coach Bill Austin	George Anson (Senior)
Assistant Varsity Coach Larry Marcus	Mark Shea (Junior)
Assistant Varsity Scout Bill Warner	Jim Wirasnik (Junior)
Mark MacDonald (Captain Senior)	Tim Cunningham (Junior)
Ken Strube (Captain Senior)	Gary Hearst (Junior)
Paul Mason (Captain Junior) 2023 HOF Inductee	John Robilotti (Junior)
	Don Williams (Junior)
	Bob Audi (Sophomore)

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**District Administration**

**David Perry**

Superintendent of Schools

**Timothy Backus**

Deputy Superintendent

**Jacqlene McAllister**

Assistant Superintendent for Management  
Services & Strategic Planning

**Christopher Robilotti**

Assistant Superintendent for Human  
Resources & Safe Schools

**Board of Education**

- Brian Casey, *President*
- Stephanie Cogan, *Vice President*
- Thomas (TJ) Blakley
- Rose Gigliello
- Michael Keane
- David Kiehle
- Chris Larrabee
- Bob Mesick
- James (Tim) Ryan

**In Appreciation**

It is sincerely recognized that without the continued support and cooperation of our Hall of Fame Committee members, educators, parents and support staff, this evening would not have been possible. We are proud to acknowledge their hard work and dedication to our student athletes and alumni. We wish to extend our gratitude to the members of the Hall of Fame Committee.

Bill Roemer	Marco Tomaso	Brian Scalzo
Karen Bonitatibus	Don Mion	David Kiehle
Tom Greene	Nikki Caruso	Brian Casey
Mike Trimarchi	Eric McDowell	Frank Donato