

***EAST GREENBUSH  
CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT***

***2015***

***THIRTEENTH ANNUAL***

***ATHLETIC  
HALL OF FAME***



***SPONSORED BY:  
COLUMBIA ALL SPORTS CLUB***

# **ALUMNI ATHLETE INDUCTEES**

A student athlete alumni whose accomplishments at Columbia High School represented the highest caliber of achievement in his/her time as well as athletes who have achieved success after graduation.

# **COACH FACULTY/STAFF INDUCTEES**

A coach or faculty member whose contributions and achievements have improved the reputation and brought credit to our school or have inspired our student athletes to achieve their own personal level of excellence. Not based solely on wins and losses and championships but determined by the degree of respect given the coach and program by other people.

# ELIZABETH ELLIOTT

Class of 2000



In her exemplary athletic career, Elizabeth (Elliott) Palushaj earned fourteen varsity letters in soccer, indoor track and track. Elizabeth (“Liz”) played varsity soccer for three years, scoring the winning goal in the 1998 sectional game and earning an honorable mention for the All Suburban Team the following year. Yet it is safe to say that rewriting the school’s record books in track was her signature trait throughout her years at Columbia. Her performances in sprint and relay events at various meets—including the New York State Championship—inspire awe to this day and would take several pages to appreciate fully.

The number fourteen was innate to her career—aside from fourteen varsity letters, Liz won fourteen sectional titles in indoor and outdoor track, and qualified in fourteen events for the New York State Championship meet. Her talent was evident before she was even attending Columbia. As an eighth grader, Liz went to the state meet in 1996 as a member of the outdoor 4X 100 meters relay team, and returned in that event in 1997 and 1998. In 1998, Liz was a member of the record-setting Columbia girls’ indoor 4X 200 meter relay team that placed fourth in the state. In that meet, Liz also ran in the 300 meters, which she would revisit at the state level in 1999 and 2000.

The definition of dominance was Liz Elliott’s performance in Section 2 meets in 1999-2000, when she went undefeated in the 100 meter, 200 meter, and 300 meter races. Liz won sectional titles in the indoor 45 meter (2000), indoor 300 meter (1999; 2000), outdoor 100 meter (1999; 2000) and outdoor 200 meter (1999; 2000). During her high school career, she won sectional titles in several relay events: 4X 100 meter relay (1997; 1998), 4X 400 meter relay (1999; 2000), and the 4 X 200 meter (1997; 1998; 2000).

She also won numerous Suburban Council championship races and invitational races, including the Queensbury Invite (two individual meet records in the 100 and 200, and the outstanding track athlete award), the Schenectady Invitational (double winner in the 100 and 200—*twice*), and 4 X 200 meter relay titles at the Eddy Meet and Yale Invitational. Newspaper accounts from that era reveal that she often did it all with a beaming smile.

An impressive scholar-athlete, Liz received several academic and athletic recognitions in her senior year: the Robert Chip Award, the Edith Cosgrove Award, the Coaches Versatility Award, the East Greenbush Democratic Party Award, the Columbia Social Studies Department Award, and the Columbia Marketing Award. When she graduated, Liz held nine school records in individual and relay events, more than any other track athlete holds. When she graduated, she also was on Section 2’s all-time Top 10 performances list in three outdoor events (200 meters, 4X100 meter relay and the 4X200 meter relay) and four indoor events (45 meters, 55 meters, 300 meters, and the 4X 200 meter relay). Fifteen years later, she holds four school records: the outdoor 200 meters (25.0); and the indoor 45 meters, 300 meters, and 4 X 200 relay events

After Columbia, Liz attended Plattsburgh State, earning a degree in Psychology. Today, she resides in Carmel, NY with her husband, Kola, and their baby girl, Livia.

# STEPHANIE ARANGO

Class of 2003



Stephanie Arango's love of distance running began early, when she started training for The Freihoffer's Run for Women as a 3rd grader at Green Meadow under the guidance of Coach Peter Citrolo. Stephanie would go on to run for Columbia, earning a varsity letter in cross-country and track by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. In the spring of her freshman year, she discovered lacrosse and later field hockey. Although lacrosse would become her sport of choice, later providing her a college scholarship, she used the speed and endurance she gained from distance running, often utilizing those skills to be one of the quickest athletes on many of the teams she played on.

She was the epitome of a scholar-athlete, garnering The Columbia All Sports Club Scholarships and induction into the National Honor Society. She also distinguished herself by joining the Iron Devils from 9th grade to 12th grade, winning the lift off competition as a junior. While competing with the Iron Devils Stephanie became a member of the "500 lb. Club," attaining All-State Status and her name on the weight room wall. Stephanie's unique combination of speed, strength and endurance made her a strong contributor to the Columbia lacrosse team and a great competitor. In 2003, she was named to the Sectional II Exceptional Senior Team for Lacrosse.

Stephanie was recruited by several colleges and chose Union College, where she enrolled in the Honors Managerial Economics program. Stephanie played lacrosse the first two years spent at Union, but then turned her attention to rugby, which allowed her to capitalize on her speed and endurance. During her time at Union College, Stephanie attended a term abroad in Athens, Greece. It is here where her running career would come back full circle, as she trained for and completed her first marathon: The Athens Classic Marathon.

At Union, Stephanie majored in Managerial Economics and graduated cum laude with departmental honors in 2007. After college, she moved Cincinnati, Ohio to join General Electric's Financial Leadership Program. Professionally, Stephanie was on the fast track to greater things. Athletically, she was just on the fast track, running. With five full marathons completed over three states, Stephanie set her sights on what most would consider a life-long goal of running 50 marathons in 50 states. Additionally, she decided to do it in two and a half years, with the goal of completing the quest at the distinguished Boston Marathon.

Over the next two years, Stephanie would spend countless hours logging miles, often meeting her marathon partner (her mother) in various cities in a common goal. She would complete her goal, becoming one of the youngest runners to finish a marathon in all 50 states at the 2011 Boston Marathon. She would also become one half of the first (and currently only) mother-daughter 50-State marathon finishers. The pair's singular accomplishment was featured in *Runner's World* magazine and in numerous other media outlets. During these marathons, Stephanie qualified for admittance to the Marathon Maniac Club and a place in the 50 State Marathon Club. Chronicling her quest to complete her 50-State Challenge via a blog, Stephanie "Boston Qualified" fourteen times. Weekends were spent running back to back marathons in two different states on numerous occasions and still "Boston Qualifying" in the second marathon of the weekend.

Stephanie won many awards and titles on her quest: 2009 1st place Woman Dances with Dirt Devil Lake Marathon 2009; 2nd place Woman 2009 Rhode Island 6 Hour Ultra; 1st Woman Overall 2011 Run with the Horses Marathon in South Dakota; and 1st Woman in the 50's for Yo Momma 50k Inaugural Ultra. At the Delaware Marathon, Stephanie became the OH female record holder in 2010.

In the last two years of Stephanie's 50-state marathon challenge, she was also working on earning her Master's in Business while working full-time. In 2013, Stephanie earned her Professional MBA at Miami University in Ohio in Finance and Marketing. Stephanie now works as the controller for Wornick Foods in Cincinnati, Ohio. At 85 marathons (and ultras) and counting, she is attempting to complete 100 in the near future.

# SARAH HAYES

Class of 2005



Sarah Hayes, a three-sport athlete, was the ultimate contributor to the Blue Devil program. Remarkably, her contributions began in eighth grade, when she played freshman soccer, ran varsity outdoor track, and captained the girls' freshman basketball team. Her speed, agility, and perseverance allowed her to be a dominant player. In an era of increasingly single-sport specialization, Sarah bucked that trend and lettered early and repeatedly at the varsity level in all three sports. From 10th to 12th grade, Sarah trained and competed for the Iron Devils, and earned Scholar Athlete recognitions in that program in 2003 and 2004.

In 2001, Sarah was given the Best Newcomer to Outdoor Track Award by the varsity team. That same year, her team won the Gold Division. Sarah would letter three more times in outdoor track, distinguishing herself as a sprinter, long jumper and triple jumper, and earning a number of 1st place medals in the latter two events during meets in her senior year. Meanwhile, Sarah's prowess in soccer in 9th grade got her called up from the junior varsity to play for the varsity team in the sectional tournament; for the next three years, she would bring her tenacity to varsity soccer. Despite her commendable career in outdoor track and soccer, Sarah's most impressive achievements took place on the court--it would literally take a book to catalog her outstanding career as the #3 scorer in Lady Blue Devils history when she graduated in 2005.

Her varsity coach, Michael Bennett, recalls, "Sarah made an immediate impact on the girls program. She scored in double figures four times in her first year and became a key starter for the team." An early highlight for the talented freshman guard was at the Averill Park tournament, where she scored 15 points and was named to the All-Tournament Team. She would go on to lead the varsity team in scoring the next three seasons, earning third team honors as a sophomore and junior, and first team honors as a senior. As sophomore, she scored in double figures in all but two games, and shot for 17 points against a very strong Catholic High team in the sectionals. As a junior, Sarah improved her game, adding a good jump shot to go with the first of two seasons leading her team in assists. Aside from being a playmaker, the team captain became an invaluable defensive weapon, as Coach Bennett recalls: "We often needed her to cover the best scorer from the other team. Her foot speed and hand quickness made it difficult for the opponent to score."

Sarah's senior year was high caliber in all aspects of the game. She could break any press schematic by the opponent, and her stat line of 15 points, 5.0 rebounds and 4.0 assists per game led the Blue Devils to their best season in almost a decade. A Suburban Council All-Star, she scored 20 points or more in seven games, and in the Exceptional Seniors Game, scored 24 points en route to being named MVP. The *Troy Record* named Sarah to 2004-2005 First Team All Area Girls Basketball Team; meanwhile, she was a *Times Union* All Star award recipient for the second straight season. One game, however, may have been Sarah's finest moment. Richard Schwarz recalls: "In the most dominating performance I have seen in Columbia girls basketball, Sarah scored 25 points, played lock-down defense, and quarterbacked the seventh-seeded Blue Devils on the road at #2 Bishop Maginn to a 56-37 victory, the team's first sectional win--let alone a road sectional win--in nigh a decade." Bob Pisano, addressing Sarah's selection to the 2005 Channel 13 News Basketball All Star Team, stated, "Sarah was a lefty who was quick. She could push the ball up the court and make scoring passes in transition. She could get to the hoop off the dribble. She was a capable three-point shooter." He later noted that Sarah was quicker with the ball than her opponents were without it. Sarah earned four Scholar Athlete awards in basketball, as well as the Columbia High School MVP award and Gatorade Player of the Year Award in 2005. She would earn four Century Awards in varsity basketball as well.

After Columbia, Sarah played basketball for three years at the State University at Albany, where she double-majored in Economics and Actuarial Mathematics, and minored in Business and Biology. Shortly after her graduation, Sarah began working as an auditor for the NYS Comptrollers Office, where she is employed today.

# KYLE MEYER

Class of 2005



Kyle Meyer's exceptional skill, resilience and leadership were the hallmarks of his three-sport career; he lettered in football, basketball and baseball. Peter A. Citrolo, who taught physical education at Green Meadow, recognized Kyle's athletic potential early on: "Kyle was *on fire*. Even in kindergarten, he wanted to be the best." Years later, Gary Holtz, varsity football coach at Columbia, would laud Kyle at an awards banquet: "Kyle Meyer is one of the best pure athletes at this school, period."

As a freshman, Kyle was the MVP of the junior varsity football team, leading it in rushing, touchdowns and tackles. Sidelined by a broken ankle and surgery as a sophomore, Kyle returned in 2004 to lead the varsity in touchdowns. In 2003, he was an All-Suburban linebacker and versatile offensive threat, scoring from the quarterback, tailback slot receiver and end positions. Selfless and keen to win, he even took punts and kickoffs to the house during his senior year as captain. Notably, Kyle scored from each position and led the team in touchdowns in 2004; he earned varsity MVP honors in 2004 and 2005 to go with All-Suburban and All Area recognitions as a linebacker, and a Scholar Athlete award from the Capital District Football Hall of Fame. Basketball was another sport in which Kyle excelled, with junior varsity MVP honors as a sophomore, but re-injury of his surgically repaired ankle cut short his varsity season as a junior power forward. Arguably, Kyle's play on the diamond provided the most highlights and enduring moments. Called up to the varsity at the end of the season as a freshman, Kyle quickly established himself as one of the area's premier baseball players. In 2003, he was a *Troy Record* 2<sup>nd</sup> Team All Area second baseman and one of the leading hitters and run producers for the Blue Devils' Suburban Council championship season. In 2004, he enjoyed a 1<sup>st</sup> Team All Area, All Suburban junior season —. 430 at the plate, with 26 RBI, 31 runs scored 26 stolen bases, a .633 on-base percentage, and only three errors in 96 chances at second base. That year, Columbia went 26-2, en route to the NYS Class AA Championship title. In his senior year, Kyle moved to shortstop and produced enviable speed and power numbers—eight homeruns, 23 RBI, 16 steals and a .368 batting average—and earned All Area status from the *Troy Record* and *Times Union* to go with 1st Team All Suburban honors.

Recruited by several Division I baseball and football programs, Kyle accepted a scholarship from Marist College and played baseball in the Metro Atlantic Conference (MAAC). A dean's list student in Business Administration, he started in 162 games for the Red Foxes primarily at second, third and right field, with some stints at shortstop and centerfield, too. As captain in his final two years, he led the team in runs scored. Leading the team in hit by pitches and stolen bases, he hit .456 in conference play during his senior year, when the Red Foxes won the 2009 MAAC Tournament Championship to earn an automatic bid in the NCAA Tournament's Florida State Regional. During his summers off from college, he played in various prestigious wooden bat college leagues. Playing alongside a couple of his fellow Blue Devil alums, Kyle played an integral role in the South Troy Dodgers' East Coast Championship title run in the Elite Atlantic Baseball League. He would later play in the New England Collegiate Baseball League and the Saratoga Phillies, culminating in a 5<sup>th</sup> place finish at the Connie Mack World Series. In five seasons in the Albany Twilight League, he was a four-time All Star shortstop, and head coach of the 2013 League Champion and Regional Runner Up. For three years, Kyle was the first paid assistant baseball coach at RPI, where he earned a Master's in Business and Finance. Today, he works an analyst for the State Department in Washington, D.C., and as a proud sibling is quick to point out, Kyle still finds the time to play recreational flag football, "giving every fiber of existence to every play."

## Mark Joseph Herrington

Class of 2007



Mark Joseph Herrington was an outstanding three-sport athlete (football, baseball and wrestling), but competing as an offensive lineman on the gridiron was his first and greatest love. In his senior year, Mark served as the varsity captain, earned First Team honors, and played in the All Star game.

During his time at Columbia, he also got involved in the Special Olympics, working at fundraisers and playing ball with the athletes at their special events. To this day, his support the Special Olympics is unwavering. Just last January, Mark stood on the roof of Wal-Mart, braving the extremely frigid conditions to raise money for the Special Olympics.

Recruited by a number of schools, Mark chose Union College, which had offered him an athletic scholarship. His commitment to excellence continued. A three-year starter, #79 served as the co-captain in his senior year. Mark's game preparation, competitive spirit and unique mobility at an imposing 6-3, 280 made him a great pulling guard for a Union offensive squad that featured a potent running attack by halfback Chris Coney. Remarkably, the 2009 offensive line allowed just nine sacks in the first nine games, providing protection for a passing attack that ranked second in the Liberty League. In 2009, Union enjoyed a banner season, finishing the regular season at 8-3 as the Liberty League co-champions and winners of the ECAC Div. III Northwest Bowl Championship.

Individual honors came Mark's way, too, in 2010. He was named to the Liberty League All Star First Team; he was also the 17<sup>th</sup> selection in the school's 124 seasons to be honored as an AFCA First Team All American, just the second time in the school's history that an offensive lineman would earn such an accolade. In his senior year, Mark was named to the D3football.com First Team All American Team, as well as the 2010 ECAC Division III Football North All Star Team, which held its awards banquet at the Lexus Gridiron Club at the Meadowlands Stadium in New Jersey. Notably, he was only one of twenty-five players honored for the latter award, and the only member of the Liberty League to be selected for recognition on offense.

After graduation, Mark worked as a substitute at Columbia High School and helped to coach football. With an affinity for his hometown, he graduated from Albany Police Academy and embarked on a career in law enforcement as an East Greenbush police officer. Honest and community-minded, he serves as a role model to young people and an ardent supporter of athletic programs at Columbia, working games as a police officer with the heart of a proud alumnus. Fittingly, Mark joins his legendary grandfather, Howard Fuller (Class of 1950), in the Athletic Hall of Fame this evening.

# DOUG HADLEY

## Coach / Faculty / Staff



A 1990 graduate of Columbia, Douglas Hadley has been a coach in three sports—girls' cross-country; girls' indoor track; and girls' outdoor track--at his alma mater since 1999. Throughout his career, Coach Hadley has built all three programs, guiding teams to greatness seeing without losing sight of the best interests of his student-athletes. It is no surprise that his girls attain academic awards each year--he expects them to be dedicated to their studies. Over a dozen of his girls have been recognized in the Dunkin Donut Player of the Week program--he takes the time to nominate them. Many of his athletes, who have enjoyed academic success, have gone on to run cross-country and compete in track and field at the collegiate level. Some have even come back to serve as his assistant coaches.

Starting out as an assistant coach, Douglas in due time took over head coaching responsibilities for indoor and outdoor track, and eventually, cross country (his teams won the Rensselaer County Championships ten consecutive years). His preparation for practices and meets is second to none. He epitomizes the dedication, spirit, sportsmanship and vision that the best coaches display and instill in their teams. He has seen his athletes qualify for States, Easterns, and even Nationals.

Meticulously, he keeps track of the Section 2 Leader Board and compiles the CHS Leader Board. Every time girl breaks a record, Coach Hadley contacts Awards by Walsh and purchases new plates so the record board at Columbia can display the accomplishment. He even purchases engraved bracelets for the new record holders to receive at the end of the season banquet. One could say that Douglas is the official historian and statistician of the programs he coaches; indeed, he has a binder devoted to every single cross-country and track and field season, including individual and relay times, weather conditions, workout schedules, correspondence with parents, etc. He was also instrumental in the development of the cross-country course in the woods of Columbia High School--he continues to maintain those trails today.

Parents and former team members have often cited Coach Hadley's ambition to seek out unique opportunities for his girls to face the best competition in local invitationals (The Eddy Meet, Bethlehem Invitational, Queensbury Invitational, etc.) as well as in events beyond the Capital Region (the Manhattan Invitational, Dartmouth Relays, the Yale Invitational, Brown Relays, and Penn Relays). To give athletes such formative experiences is time intensive work, but Coach Hadley never complains. He is willing to fill out the paperwork, and seek the approval of the Board of Education. Unless he has some parental assistance, he is the one doing the hotel booking, securing the buses, setting up the itinerary, handling the deposits and paying the bills. Seeing his athletes give their best effort, regardless of how they place, is his greatest pride.

Beyond his coaching responsibilities, Douglas Hadley has promoted the love of running like no other in the district. For years, he has done the timing and/or helped in the planning of the DPS Fun Run, the Rotary Run, and more recently, the Education Foundation Run. Enlisting the help of his athletes, these events have become highly anticipated by the community. True to form, Coach Hadley chose to honor the legacy of beloved a colleague by establishing the Dennis Barrett Memorial Scholarship Walk/ Run, which funds a scholarship for two Columbia seniors annually.

Coach Hadley has been recognized by Who's Who among American Teachers and Educators (2006-2007), the Town of East Greenbush (2009), and the East Greenbush Board of Education (2012). The Athletic Hall of Fame is honored to induct Douglas A. Hadley, Columbia's tireless advocate, ambassador and mentor for girls' cross-country, indoor track, and outdoor track.



Congratulations to the 2015 Columbia Athletic Hall of Fame inductees. You show the true spirit of our athletes and bring the past and present together as one. Thank you to all for paving the way for all our young athletes and teaching them how hard work, integrity, strength, and pride can pay off. You are the pride of the East Greenbush School District Community & the Columbia Athletic Family.

*Michael G. Leonard,*  
Athletic Director

Thank you to all who have helped in preparing for this year's Athletic Hall of Fame Celebration. Please join us next year.

# ***CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME***

## **ALUMNI ATHLETE CATEGORY:** (IN ORDER OF YEAR OF GRADUATION)

ROYAL HERRINGTON (1942) \*  
JOHN MARKS (1948)  
DONALD BINS (1949) \*  
PETER B. ASHBY (1949)  
HOWARD FULLER (1950)  
CHRISTOPHER ASHBY (1951)  
JOHN OBERMAYER (1951) \*  
TED BUREK (1952)  
MILT GRAHAM (1952)  
DOUG CANFIELD (1953)  
ROBERT FEDERCHUCK (1954)  
JOHN TULLAR (1954)  
RICHARD ALOISE (1954) \*  
JAMES CLIFFORD (1956) \*  
ROGER HOWARD (1954)  
FRANCIS CLIFFORD (1958)  
CLARENCE SEEBERGER (1958) \*  
RALPH BLAIR (1959) \*  
THOMAS BOYLE (1960)  
WILLIAM GLEASON (1960)  
HENRY ROMER (1961)  
WILLIAM ROMER (1962)  
MICHAEL M. MAHAR (1966)  
ROBERT MOORE (1967)  
GERALD ELLIOT (1967)  
PAUL THOMPSON (1969)  
ALBERT RAUSCH (1973)  
ROBERT HELLWIG (1977)  
MARK NARDACCI (1977)  
ERICA (BERGMAN) PUENTES (1977)  
MICHAEL REGA (1978)  
INGE (STOCKMAN) AIKEN (1979)  
SCOTT PLADEL (1980)  
DONNA GIRTLE (1982)  
PETER HOWE (1983)  
RICHARD ROMER (1984)  
RUSSELL HILTON (1984)  
JOSEPH ROMER (1984)  
BARBARA (FINKE) SAUTER (1985)  
HOLLY CHASE (1985)  
LYNNE (MAURA) FITZGERALD (1986)  
JOHN KELLER (1986)  
ZACHARY SHEA (1987)  
GLENN PASSMAN (1987)  
ROBIN (ROMER) CHUDY (1988)  
LISA (DANIELS) FISHELL (1988)  
KRISTEN RANDALL (1988)  
JUDITH (FINKE) VITALI (1989)  
KURT RANDALL (1990)  
SHAY HARRISON (1990)  
MARC WILLIAMS (1991)

CHRISTINE (NALLEY) ROANE (1992)  
JULIE FREZON (1994) \*  
DOUG KEENHOLTS (1995)  
BECKY SNOW (1996)  
JAMI SERVIDONE (1996)  
MICHELE GOSH (1997)  
SAMUEL GRECO (1997)  
KATHLEEN (SMITH) RUSSELL (1998)  
SUSAN (YUND) HORST (1998)  
IAN LOCKE (1998)  
MELISSA (ROY) BASIUK (1998)  
CRAIG FORTH (2001)  
CASEY HALLORAN (2002)  
CHRISTOPHER ROSENBAUM (2002)  
CHRISTA WITTMANN (2002)  
THOMAS ARCIDIACONO (2003)  
THOMAS GENOVESI (2003)  
JUSTIN HELLWIG (2004)  
ERIC FERGUSON (2004)  
JOHNATHAN NICOLLA (2004)  
KYLE SMITH (2004)  
ALEXANDER ZAMPIER (2006)

## **COACH/STAFF MEMBER CATEGORY:**

NICHOLAS BUDNOWSKI \*  
PETER CITROLO  
EDITH COSGROVE \*  
RICHARD RANDALL  
ROBERT SMITH \*  
THEODORE A. ROMANOWSKI  
HARRY RAPENSKE  
JAMES BERRIER  
GEORGE CZERNO  
GARY HOLTZ  
DENNIS BARRETT \*  
JAMES MCHUGH  
JOHN SERBALIK  
DOROTHY MASIELLO  
JEAN SCHWEIGERT  
MICHAEL LEONARD  
ANTHONY SERVIDONE  
JAMES OBERMAYER  
HENRY WY SOCKI  
ROGER SEYMOUR

## **COMMUNITY MEMBER CATEGORY:**

DICK DORAN \*  
JAMES FINKE

\*Deceased