

Please join us for our
Fifth Annual Falcon Awards Night
Wednesday, October 18, 2017

at the
Goei Center
818 Butterworth St. SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

6 p.m. Cocktail Reception
7 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Awards Presentation

\$100 per person
(Share a table with friends, 10 seats to a table)

Business Attire (with an optional splash of green)

Register online, and/or become an event sponsor
www.grwestcatholic.org/giving/falcon-awards-night
or mail to 1801 Bristol Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504



Questions?

Contact Dannita Stimson at dannitastimson@grwestcatholic.org or 616-233-5918

PAST HONOREES

2016

Alumni Excellence Award Mary Kay VanDriel
Falcon by Choice Award Steve Abid
Lifetime Achievement Award Bob Misner
St. John Paul II Award Mary McGrath

2015

Alumni Excellence Award Dr. Dan Arsulowicz
Business Excellence Award Greg Alksnis
Lifetime Achievement Award Hank Makarewicz
St. John Paul II Award Father Mark Przybysz

2014

Alumni Excellence Award Mike Van Gessel
Business Excellence Award Joel Langlois
Excellence in the Catholic Faith Award Sr. Miriam Therese Gil
Falcon by Choice Award Ed Wagner
Veritas Award Deb Bailey

2013

Alumni Lifetime Achievement
and Excellence Award Greg Meyer
Business Excellence Award Tom Ryan
Distinguished Faculty and Staff Award Eugene Jaglowski – (posthumously)
Excellence in the Catholic Faith Award Monsignor R. Louis Stasker
Falcon by Choice Award Patrick Murphy – (posthumously)



FALCON AWARDS NIGHT

AN INVITATION



grwestcatholic.org

WEST CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
HONORS THESE OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS



Edward “Ed” Elderkin (posthumously)

Business Excellence Award

David R. Arbanas

Falcon By Choice Award

Fr. Anthony Russo

St. John Paul II Award

Michael Wolfston

Lifetime Achievement Award

Edward “Ed” Elderkin (CC’59)

Business Excellence Award

Ed Elderkin was a hard-working businessman who attained great success in his 76 years. He began at Budres Lumber Company in an entry-level position without a business degree. In 1985, Ed had earned the opportunity to purchase the company. For 21 years he led his employees with enthusiasm, compassion and generosity. He mentored them, helped with family hardships, and paid tuition to better their skills. He invested in his staff by taking them on football, golf and fishing outings. He was a one-of-a-kind boss!

Ed’s generous heart led him to various philanthropic endeavors where he was able to share his prosperity, and support the community. He believed in Catholic education as a foundation for his success. He wanted others to have that opportunity. In 2013, Ed and his wife, Sharron, established the Reynolds-Elderkin Family Scholarship. They felt this was a meaningful way to provide that same experience to students with a financial need. A similar scholarship was created by the couple at Aquinas College. In 1996, Ed was given the distinguished alumnus of Catholic Central award. He has participated in many fundraising efforts for Catholic Secondary Schools, such as holding “phone-a-thons” at Budres to raise money for the schools.

Beyond his accomplishments in business, he was a loving husband, father, grandfather and friend to many. His loving spirit and generosity will be remembered by all.

David R. Arbanas (CC ‘58)

Falcon By Choice Award

David Arbanas has been a supporter of West Catholic for more than 40 years. While a graduate of Catholic Central (’58), his youngest siblings attended WC as did all three of his children: David ’81, Ron ’82, Lisa ’83, and his granddaughter and three of his four step grandchildren. When considering his children’s education, there was never a question as to whether they would attend Catholic school, and specifically WC. David was so committed to West that he began volunteering before his children were old enough to attend. Once his children started high school, David became more involved with the WC Boosters, eventually taking on the role of President. During David’s time as President, the athletic fields were envisioned and completed. David is very proud of the fact that the athletic fields were built using only donated money, via the “Project Falcon” campaign which reached out to alumni for donations. Events such as Arts & Craft fair, Football Sweepstakes, New Years Eve Dances, and weekly Bingo were used to raise money and bring the community together.

Also during his tenure, the golf outing was started, which continues to be a successful event today. David believes that West Catholic is a unique environment that continues to see success and improvements due in part to the tremendous community support it has always received.

David was a local businessman owning and operating a Farmers Insurance Agency for 37 years. He was also VP of the Association of Farmers Agents. When David decided to take a less active role in volunteering at WC, he continued his service to the Catholic community as a Past Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus and as Chairperson of the Sacred Heart Renovation from 2009-2013.

David credits the support of his wife Roselyn for his ability to give so much to West Catholic.

Fr. Anthony Russo (WC ‘84)

St. John Paul II Award

Fr. Anthony S. Russo has always attended Catholic schools starting at Holy Spirit and then on to West Catholic, graduating in 1984. Father Russo received his Bachelor of Science degree from Franciscan University of Steubenville in 1992. Fr. Russo then attended University of St. Mary the Lake - Mundelein Seminary. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Grand Rapids on June 3, 2000.

In July of 2000 he was assigned Associate Pastor at Our Lady of Consolation and Diocesan Master of Ceremonies. As Master of Ceremonies he served Bishops Rose, Britt and Hurley until 2006. He was assigned Pastor of All Saints, Fremont and St. Joseph, White Cloud in September of 2002 until September of 2007 when he took on the role of Pastor at Our Lady of Consolation where he continues to serve today. At Our Lady of Consolation, he implemented perpetual adoration as well as started a program called “Living Your Strengths” and the “Alpha” program with over 350 parish participants. In 2011, he oversaw the acquisition and installation of the Tabernacle at Our Lady of Consolation.

Fr. Russo credits his path to the priesthood to his father and his rock-solid Catholic faith. Fr. Russo enjoys his parish and rejoices in the Celebration of the Mass, seeing the transformation of the penitent in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the serenity found in the classroom of silence. When not serving his flock, he enjoys time with family and friends, indulging in fine wines and an occasional cigar.

Michael Wolfston (WC ‘66)

Lifetime Achievement Award

Michael Wolfston has always been a person who believed in giving: giving of his time, treasure and talents. He gave himself to our country serving in the Air Force and then spent his career convincing others to give to various worthy causes. Michael is a 1966 graduate of the first four-year class of West Catholic High School, after attending St. Mary’s. The day after graduation, Michael left for boot camp in the Air Force. During his time in the service, he spent 18 months in Korea, advancing to Staff Sergeant. Michael received an Associates Degree from GRCC and a Bachelors Degree in Human Services from Ferris State in 1975.

Michael started his career at Starr Commonwealth where he worked with delinquent youth. He then moved on to St. Vincent Home for Children in Lansing where he worked for 23 years. Through his tenure at St. Vincent, he worked as Home School Coordinator, and began the development program in 1976. He worked tirelessly to raise funds, culminating with \$750k for a gym with the help of Oldsmobile & GM Supervisors. Before leaving St. Vincent, he oversaw the merger with Catholic Charities. He moved on to raising money all around the country for the VFW National Children’s Home. In 2002 he settled down in Lansing once again, working as Director for Burcham Hills Foundation. In 2011 he postponed retirement and took a position with the Foundation for Catholic Secondary Education in the Grand Rapids Diocese. During his time at the Foundation, Michael established 28 new scholarships for WC and CC. Michael has raised \$50 million for the four non-profits that he worked for, over the past 45 years. Michael retired in 2016.

Michael and the love of his life, Jan, have been married for 44 years. They have one daughter Emily, and a new grandson. Michael is enjoying his retirement and is able to now spend time doing what he loves: going to baseball games - especially Tiger games, spending time near the lake in Grand Haven and playing golf with Emily.