



# The Carillon

The Official Newsletter of the  
Caledonia Education Foundation

## Katie Kowalczyk-Fulmer chosen as the 2014 CEF Honored Alumnus

Fall 2014

The Caledonia Education Foundation is pleased to honor Katie Kowalczyk-Fulmer, CHS Class of 1988, as its 2014 Honored Alumnus for her many years of teaching, coaching, and making a difference in the lives of her students. She is the youngest alumnus to receive this award since its inception in 1998.



Katie will be honored on Oct. 3, 2014, at the Annual Foundation Fest Tailgate Party held before the Homecoming Game.

Katie was born in Alto. She enjoyed growing up in a small town where everyone knew each other by name or face. Some highlights growing up were the 4th of July celebrations in the park and going down to the Wagon Wheel on Main Street to buy a shake before a game. Katie loved going to sporting events and her appreciation for sports began at an early age.

She had many coaches

that impacted her life. Paul Peterman was her sixth grade teacher and her varsity basketball coach during her sophomore year. Katie reflects, "He was a big inspiration to me and someone I will never forget." She would wake up on Saturday mornings eager to go and play basketball with older players. She admired Kris Emerson and Jill Harrison, looking up to them as mentors.

Katie excelled in both basketball and softball as an All-State player at Caledonia High School. "Katie was a point guard and was a major contributor for Caledonia and a leader to her teammates. Katie was a very quick point guard and headed our full court press against opponents.

She was critical to Caledonia's success.

Off the court, Katie was a sweet person, always willing to help others," commented former High School Coach Rebecca Glass McKee. "She was a leader on as well as off the court. It was a privilege to coach Katie K of the Caledonia Sweet Ladies."

She also enjoyed playing the flute in band, working with student council as class treasurer, and was a member of the National Honor Society. In her senior year, Katie was voted homecoming queen and class clown.

After graduating from Caledonia, Katie went on to play basketball at Hope College and continued to increase her skills. She took her first coaching job while still a senior at Hope College. She coached the 7th grade girls basketball

team at Caledonia Middle School.

The Hastings School District hired Katie to teach right out of college but she was asked to be the assistant girls varsity coach under Mike Wilson at Caledonia that year. She then took over the Hastings girls basketball program for several years as she taught U.S. history and physical education. It was here that she met fellow teacher, Paul Fulmer. They were married in 2001.

After a good friend mentioned that the Grand Haven girls basketball program was looking for a new leader, Katie applied and was offered the position.. She taught geography in the classroom and then moved on to physical education. While at Grand Haven, Katie has helped develop their youth basketball program, "Bucs for Better Basketball." Her program has been recognized as one of the most successful in the state. Many of her former players have gone on to play in Division I and II Universities.

In addition to coaching basketball at Grand Haven, Katie also coached track for ten years, including five years as the girls head track and field coach. In 2010, Paul and Katie were blessed with a very energetic little boy, Drew, so Katie stepped down from coaching track to spend time with him and focus just on basketball.

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Katie accepts the Class A State Championship trophy after the Grand Haven Buccaneers win their first state title on March 20, 2012.

*Photo courtesy of the Grand Haven Tribune*

**Katie Kowalczyk-Fulmer continued**

In her 22 years of teaching, she also earned her Master's Degree at Western University. Katie's love for students shows in her desire to be a positive role model in the classroom and on the courts. Katie has been coaching for 23 years. In her 16 seasons as the Grand Haven varsity basketball coach, she has had 13 winning seasons and has won an impressive 70% of her games. As she reflects back, the most memorable seasons for her were winning back to back Class A state championships in girls basketball in 2012 and 2013. She had a three year stint from 2011-2013 with a record of 81 wins and 2 losses. Her teams went 26-1, 27-1, and 28-0 during that time. She also compiled a 57 game winning streak that ended this past season on January 3, 2014.

For these accomplishments and more, Katie has been honored with many coaching awards over the years. This past June she

traveled to a banquet in the state of Wyoming as one of 8 finalists for the National High School Athletic Association's National Coach of the Year Award in girls basketball. She didn't win the award but was humbled to be considered for it. In an article about the national award from the Grand Haven Tribune, Katie remarked, "We've had quite a run the last three years and when you're the coach and you have all that success, you get awards like this, but it's all about the players I've had the opportunity to coach. I've had great kids, great basketball players, and I have a great staff, with all their work and dedication."

She admits the championships and trophies are nice, but it is so much more about the relationships that you develop along the way. Her advice for students and athletes includes, "Don't be afraid to dream. Set your goals high. Respect yourself, your teammates, and your coaches. Have a passion for

what you do. If you enjoy it, I believe you will be successful." Katie is a remarkable example of showing young people that in life, hard work, the right attitude, and dedication will not go unrecognized.



Photo courtesy of the Grand Haven Tribune

**Katie's Coaching Accomplishments in Basketball**

**Coaching Record since 1998 (16 seasons):**

- 8 District Championships
- 6 OK Red Conference Championships
- 4 Regional Championships
- 3 Final Four Appearances
- 2 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS 2012/2013

**Coaching Awards:**

- 6 Time Muskegon Chronicle Area Coach of the Year
- 4 Time Basketball Coaches Association Regional Coach of the Year
- 2 Time Basketball Coaches Association State of MI Coach of the Year
- Associated Press Class A Coach of the Year 2011
- West MI Officials Association Coach of the Year 2011
- Grand Rapids Press Coach of the Year 2011
- Detroit Free Press Coach of the Year 2012
- One of 8 finalists nominated for National Coach of the Year by the National High School Coaches Athletic Association

**BRICK PAVER PROGRAM**



- ◆ honor a parent, loved one or family
- ◆ acknowledge a CHS teacher or alumnus
- ◆ give a lasting gift to a grandchild
- ◆ congratulate a special soon-to-be graduate
- ◆ highlight a community business
- ◆ recognize a community volunteer who gives back



For only **\$75**, you can purchase a brick paver in the **Caledonia Schools Monument**, which was dedicated in Spring 2006 in honor of past CHS staff and students. The engraved bricks around the memorial attest to the fact that Caledonia schools and the community were built, brick by brick, by people who cared about education and each other. All proceeds from the sale of bricks go to the **Caledonia Education Foundation**.

Inscription for Paver: (up to 3 lines, 14 characters per line including spaces)

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