

A-F Area School District Academic Hall of Fame 2018



Tanya Kotlowski **Class of 1990**

*Superintendent
Necedah Area School District*

Education

UW-La Crosse-Bachelor of Science-Exercise and Sports Science/Fitness (1995)
UW-Stevens Point-Certification Health Occupations (2000)
UW-Madison-Master of Science-Ed. Leadership (2001)
UW-Madison-Certification-Principalship (2002)
UW-Madison-Certification-Director of Instruction (2003)
Cardinal Stritch University-Certification District Administration (2011)

How did Adams-Friendship Schools prepare you to perform for life?

“As a high school student, I was blessed to have positive adult role models in my life, including teachers and coaches. These individuals saw potential in me that I was unable to see in myself. It was the positive influence of these teachers and coaches that began to mold my self-confidence and this self-confidence began to impact my motivation and desire to learn, which ultimately led to my pursuit of a college education.”

“My experiences as a high school student not only molded my post-secondary aspirations, but also my professional priorities as a school administrator. I hold an unwavering commitment to student success, both academically and socially/emotionally. I know that without the positive influences of the people within the walls of my own high school, my personal success might have been compromised.”



Kathleen Theisen

Class of 1986

Nationally Certified Teacher of Music
Pianist, Soprano, Conductor

Education

UW-Stevens Point-Bachelor of Music (1991)
University of Michigan- Piano Performance and Pedagogy
UW-Madison-Master of Music (1996)

How did Adams-Friendship Schools prepare you to perform for life?

“The education I received at Castle Rock School and Adams-Friendship High School has had an impact on nearly every aspect of my career. My years at Castle Rock prepared me to get up on stage as a performer and public speaker. We had opportunities to give presentations in front of our class or in front of the whole school. I now give presentations at national and state conferences each year. My years at Castle Rock taught me to be an inquisitive, curious learner. I was constantly challenged with new materials and ideas. This ‘quest’ for knowledge has continued throughout my life and I am now an avid reader who is constantly trying to learn more and more!”

“Another major impact of the A-F Schools was my music training. All of this training led me to major in music in undergraduate studies. I then pursued graduate studies in piano and continued with post graduate studies in voice.”

Ms. Theisen recognizes several individuals who influenced her during her education at Adams-Friendship: Mr. Clark Staehling, Mr. Angelo LaValle, Mr. Bob Pellegrin, Mrs. Diana Johnson, Mrs. Darlene Hovorka and Mr. Pat Hauswald.



Clark Staehling

Educator

As a band instructor, Mr. Clark Staehling has left a legacy of excellence in the Adams-Friendship School District. Students in Mr. Staehling's class knew of his positive reputation before ever entering his classroom. As they grew older, they realized that Mr. Staehling served not only as the backbone to the band program; he served as an exemplar of excellence and a culture bearer of A-F pride. Students knew they were part of something special. His nomination noted three examples contributing to his status as an outstanding educator.

Mr. Staehling built relationships. A former student noted that his office walls were covered in photos of his students, and it seemed that just about everyone was a "favorite." He kept in touch with students and remained interested in their life adventures long after their graduation and his retirement.

The bandroom was a safe and supportive community. Mr. Staehling used fun games, competitions, and small-group lessons as a way to build connections and comfort among students. It was in his classrooms that students built strong and long-lasting friendships. Students were supported to take on public speaking and performance, both of which are crucial to many career paths.

Finally, Mr. Staehling maintained high expectations in his classroom. Students and colleagues have a difficult time remembering more than a time or two when Mr. Staehling had to raise his voice in order to keep the entire band in check. His students respected (and still respect) him and appreciate the lessons learned and the valuable time they spent in his classroom.

"Students rise to the bar you set if you believe in them, and it's clear that this was part of the magic that happened in the bandroom day after day."