



# Penn High Alumni

Winter 2015

## Hope honored as 2015 principal of year

On Nov. 22, the Indiana Association of School Principals recognized Penn High School Principal Steve Hope with its highest honor – 2015 State High School Principal of the Year.



Steve Hope

Hope admits the award was a surprise, but emphasizes it was truly a group effort. "I am honored to receive the award, but really accepting on behalf of the work of everyone here at P-H-M," said Hope. "It's a lot to overcome our size issue, but we have amazing people here. The award is a testament to our teachers and staff who work to make everyone in this building feel known and supported."

Under Hope's leadership, Penn's graduation rate has risen from 79 percent in 2008 to 97 percent in 2014. Hope believes the development of Penn's Smaller Learning Communities and the focus on making a large high school manageable for each student contributes to the increased graduation rate,



Steve Hope (center) was surprised not only by the announcement of his award, but by the number of P-H-M colleagues on hand to congratulate him on Nov. 22 in Indianapolis. From left: Superintendent Dr. Jerry Thacker, Health & Human Services Academy Leader Sarah Hickle, Early College Academy Leader Beth Zachary, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kay Antonelli, Penn head secretary Pam Hunsberger, Meadow's Edge Principal Jayson Snyder. To the right, Schmucker Principal Sean Galher, Director of Student Learning and Professional Development Heather Short, Director Exceptional Education Gena Todd, Director Human Resources Mike Lureman, and State Superintendent of Instruction Glenda Ritz.

and thus educational success of the students. Freshman academies, for example, make the school environment feel smaller, with four teachers sharing 150 students. After the first year, students choose an Academy whether their goal is college, military or trade-focused.

Hope used a \$1.7 million federal Small-er Learning Communities grant to lead the reorganization of Penn from a traditional high school to one that offers supportive

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### Alumni News

## Distinguished alumni nominees sought

■ Nomination forms can be found at [pennhighalumni.org](http://pennhighalumni.org); due by Feb. 29, 2016

Nominate a classmate or staff member for the Penn High School Distinguished Alumni Award. This honor recognizes Penn High School graduates who have distinguished themselves and serve as positive role models for the students at Penn High School.

The Alumni Association also will honor P-H-M staff members who have distinguished themselves while em-

ployed at, or retired from, the P-H-M School Corporation.

Nominations are due by Feb. 29, 2016, and may be emailed to [alumni@phmf.org](mailto:alumni@phmf.org) or mailed to Penn Alumni Association, 55900 Bittersweet Road, Mishawaka, IN 46545. Additional forms may be found at [pennhighalumni.org](http://pennhighalumni.org).

Selection will be made on the basis of the following criteria:

- An individual must have graduated from Penn High School at least 10 years ago (for alumni) or currently

be employed at, or retired from, the P-H-M School Corporation (for staff members)

- How the candidate demonstrated a high level of achievement in his/her field and/or made significant contributions in the community
- How the candidate serves as a positive and inspiring role model for Penn High School students by exhibiting leadership, character and service.

The Penn High School Alumni Association initiated its first Distinguished Alumni Award in 2009.

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**Online**



[facebook.com/pennhighalumni](http://facebook.com/pennhighalumni)



On the web:  
[www.pennhighalumni.org](http://www.pennhighalumni.org)

# Penn High teams strong at state

## Spell Bowl wins state title

Penn Spell Bowl coach Pete DeKever took his team's elite status to a higher level at the Spell Bowl state championship Nov. 14 at Purdue University. Penn earned the state championship with a perfect score of 90. This was Mr. DeKever's 15th state title.

## Wrestling wins invitational

The wrestling team won the Elkhart Memorial Invitational with a score of 460. The Kingsmen had six wrestlers win their weight classes and seven other wrestlers finish in the top 5.

## Football runner-up in state

Kingsmen lost a close 6A state championship game to the Center Grove Trojans on Nov. 28

at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

## Girls soccer state runner-up

Penn girls varsity soccer team won 2015 Class 2A state runner-up in a heartbreaking loss to Brebeuf (Brebeuf 2, Penn 1) in the state championship game on Oct. 31.

## Penn marching band places 7th

In the Class A division at the Indiana State School Music Association, Kingsmen marching band placed seventh on Nov. 7 at Lucas Oil Stadium.

## Girls cross country places 8th

Penn girls' cross country placed eighth in their state competitions held on Oct. 31.

## Alumni News

### Have classmates join for free - limited time

Do you know of a classmate who hasn't joined the Alumni Association? For a limited time - until Jan. 31, 2016 - a two-year membership is free. Membership forms may be found at

[www.pennhighalumni.org](http://www.pennhighalumni.org) and can be emailed to [alumni@phmef.org](mailto:alumni@phmef.org) or mailed to 55900 Bittersweet Road, Mishawaka, IN 46545. Letters must be postmarked by Jan. 31.

## Reunion News

### Reunion news for Class of '76 and '96

#### Class of 1976's 40th Reunion

Members of the Penn High School Class of 1976 are finalizing plans for their upcoming 40-year reunion scheduled for 2016.

Plans call for an event on Friday, Sept. 30 and Saturday, Oct. 1, 2016. An informal get-together will take place at Between the Buns in Osceola on Friday night, Sept. 30. The garden area of the restaurant has been reserved for the Class of 1976 starting at 6:30 p.m. and will be available until midnight. For those classmates who have an interest, Penn High School hosts a football game against the Clay Colonials at 7 p.m. at TCU Freed Field. Plan to attend the football game to cheer the Kingsmen on to a victory and then return to Between the Buns for more socializing with your classmates!

The main event will take place on Saturday, Oct. 1 at the same location we held our 35-year reunion. Those who attended the 35-year reunion enjoyed The Lodge at Lakeville so much that we are having an "encore presentation" in 2016. Saturday's casual get-together begins at 4 p.m. starting with a catered BBQ

dinner. As evening falls we will have a bonfire complete with S'mores. Those attending in 2011 had such a great time that we hope more show up for the 40-year!

Classmates are encouraged to visit the Class of 76's Facebook page, which will have all of the most up-to-date information on events being planned for the upcoming reunion. Address changes or information on missing classmates can also be shared through the Facebook page. Here is the link: [www.facebook.com/groups/938404396201609/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/938404396201609/) or search Facebook for Penn High School Class of '76 40th reunion.

#### Class of 1996's 20th Reunion

Penn High School Class of 1996 20th Reunion will be held July 16, 2016, at FOP #91 in Mishawaka. The Class will be sending invites and ticket purchasing information in January. Contact Liz if you already haven't with your contact information or email [randolphliz659@gmail.com](mailto:randolphliz659@gmail.com)

## In Memoriam

Remembering Penn High School students, staff, and administrators

- Raymond DeBaets  
Dec. 17, 2015
- Gerald L. "Jerry" Groppe  
Class of 1961, Sept. 9 2015
- Herbert Johnson  
Sept. 12, 2015
- Jack C. Lane  
Student, Dec. 3, 2015
- Jeffrey Michael Lawton  
Class 2001, Aug. 3, 2015
- Bryan Morgan  
Class of 2006, Sept. 5, 2015
- Albert L. Sampson, Sr.  
Aug. 21, 2015
- Jeanne M. Schmitt  
Class of 1968, Nov. 27, 2015
- Mark L. Smith  
Retired staff, Dec. 4, 2015
- Freddie Welker  
Class of 1971, Sept. 21, 2015
- Burton Lawrence Wilburn  
Aug. 16, 2015
- Adriana Wolkiewicz  
Student, Oct. 2, 2015

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environments that cultivate creativity and rigor or where each student is known by his teachers and peers. Uniquely, he emphasized professional development and Penn is now considered to have one of the most professionally trained staffs in the country – where teachers are motivated to deal with students as individuals and equipped with tools for real-world problem solving.

Hope, a native of Holt, Michigan, earned his Masters of Science, and Secondary Education and Educational Leadership from Indiana University South Bend. He is currently pursuing his doctorate in Education Leadership from Purdue University, which will be completed in May 2017.

A tough job? You bet. Hope laughs, but you can tell he is still having fun. His constant presence in the hallways, mingling with students and teachers alike, and genuine laughter is telltale of his compassionate leadership.