### WESTMONT HILLTOP HIGH SCHOOL

**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION** 



## WHAA NEWSLETTER

Pride and Tradition

Volume 2 Issue 2 Second Biannual 2014

## **WHAA Donation to Student Council**



The WHAA donated \$50 towards the Homecoming week 'door' prize awarded by the Student Council. WHAA President William Hargreaves presented the check to Student Council President Daniel Cooley at the high school during homecoming activities. Photo of the winning door to the right by Jonathan A. Rutledge.



## **Coming Events**

The 2nd annual Westmont Hilltop All-Class Reunion is in the planning! Mark your calendars! September 19th, 2015 at PNG Park in downtown Johnstown.

## Thank you!

The 1st ever Westmont Hilltop All-Class Reunion was a huge success, as over 300 alumni got together on October 18th at the Boulevard Grill. None of that would have been possible without the amazing people of Hilltopper Nation. Thank you all for helping to make our dream a reality!

## **About The WHAA**

### Your Westy Pride doesn't end when you graduate!

An enthusiastic group of alumni spanning more than 50 years have come together to establish the Westmont Hilltop Alumni Association. This organization will serve both the alumni and current students and families at Westmont in various ways:

- Planning alumni events at key times of year, providing opportunities for graduates to reconnect, network and have fun
- Offering support and resources to class representatives who are planning reunions
- Promoting current school activities, athletics and other events to the alumni community
- Connecting alumni and current students for college and career planning
- Raising funds to provide financial support for projects, updated materials, new equipment and supplies and upgraded technology for current students and teachers

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# Official WHAA

Many of you have joined various Westmont Hilltop alumni groups. Their membership fees and profits only benefit the website owners. The WHAA is acknowledged by the school district; there's even a link to our site on the district page! We are the only group actively working to benefit the students and faculty at Westmont.

The WHAA is currently developing guidelines to award at least one scholarship a year to a graduating senior, beginning with the class of 2014.

We will assist academic, athletic and arts programs in all our schools, to help offset expenses not covered by school budgeting.

Plans for an all class reunion at next year's Homecoming game/weekend are in the works. Mark your calendars for XXX, 2015.

Tailgating at home football games has helped us continue to make our presence known, and increased our donations and memberships.

So, before you pay a membership fee at a site like Alumniclass.com, think about who should benefit from your donation. Join us at www.WestyAlumni.com.

## WHAA Scholarship News

During the December WHAA board meeting, the criteria for the 2015 WHAA scholarship was approved. Thanks to proceeds from the 2014 All Class Reunion, membership fees and additional donations, this year's scholarship was increased to \$300 for each student.

2015 Westmont Hilltop Alumni Association Scholarship \$300 for each student

## You said it! All-Class Reunion

A few random quotes taken from the WHAA Facebook Group:

"Every babysitter we ever had is here tonight!"

"Great start—sure to get bigger and BIGGER!"

"It was SO fun! You have to plan a trip around it next year!"

"Great job all! So much fun!"

"Awesome time! Thanks to all!! Love the pictures! See you all again next year!"

"It was nice seeing old friends and meeting new ones!"

"Great time—I hope to be back next year!"

"It was nice to see everyone! So glad my dad and I were able to attend the very first WHHS all class reunion together!! Great memories shared with old friends—literally and figuratively!"

"Had a great time."

"A fun night reconnecting with all."

CLASS REUNIONS: If you know of an upcoming WHHS class reunion, please let us know and we will post information about it on the WHAA website and Facebook page. If you are responsible for the planning of your class reunion, please email us at WestyAlumni@gmail.com

# Hilltoppers in the News...

# Welcome to WHHH

## **Members**

## **Business Members**

Sue Stept Iserd
Brian Miller
Amy Yeager Tevis
Kristin Miller-Carter
Dana Miller
Barbara Tarris Young
Lawrence Ruhf
Susan Merrits Sheehan
Joseph Skidel
Billie Jo Kisko

Neil E. Lehman—Allstate Insurance Co.

## **Donations to WHAA**

A very generous donation was received from Charles and Nancy Zimmerman

## Donations to the WHHS football team through WHAA

William Hargreaves Karen McCreedy

# Congratulations

Winner of the Marc-Andre Fleury jersey: Deb Donahue

Winner of the Sidney Crosby jersey: R. J. Pavlosky

Winner of the 50/50: Cathy Watkins, Class of 1960

## Hilltoppers in the News...

## Rich Verma, Class of 1986, named U.S. Ambassador to India!

The Tribune Democrat, Johnstown, PA

December 28, 2014

## Westmont grad ready to 'do great things' as ambassador to India



Richard Rahul Verma (left), a Westmont Hilltop graduate, takes the oath of office from Secretary of State John Kerry to be the

When former Johnstown resident Richard Rahul Verma was sworn in as the nation's ambassador to India last week, his local roots weren't far from his mind.

The 1986 Westmont Hilltop graduate brought a few of his old classmates with him. And then, there was the handsigned football delivered to his door that day from a famed former U.S. diplomat to Ireland.

"It was from Mr. (Dan) Rooney, wishing me well," said Verma, 46. "That certainly made my day."

It could be quite a day for U.S.-India relations, too.

Verma's appointment makes him the first Indian-American in U.S. history to serve as envoy to India, as well as the first in this area to serve as ambassador to an Asian nation.

"President (Barack) Obama described it as the defining relationship of the century," Verma said of U.S.-India ties. "To be named ambassador, it's such a huge honor."

The Bethesda, Maryland, man will have to hit the ground running with his new post. Currently only days into his new position as ambassador, he's navigating a "whirwind" that will put him in India alongside Obama for a special visit next month.

Obama's visit, in particular, is a historic one for both countries, Verma said.

It's the president's second visit to the nation since 2010, and will mark the first time a U.S. president has made the trip for India's Republic Day celebration. The day marks the date in 1950 when the country adopted its constitution and democratic governing system.

"The fact the Indian prime minister (Narendra Modi) came here in September, and that the president is now returning four months later, is a good indication of how important both leaders view the partnership," Verma said.

That partnership signals "so many areas of opportunity," he said, citing security, energy and trade as examples.

And he cited as the desire to increase U.S.-India trade from \$100 billion to \$500 billion in the coming years as a goal.

"There's a lot of positive momentum building between the two countries," Verma said.

"I think we're only limited by our imagination in terms of areas we can work on together."

Verma is a Lehigh University alumnus who went on to earn his doctorate at American University. He interned in the House of Representatives for the late U.S. Rep. John P. Murtha and later became a field representative for the National Democratic Institute in Eastern Europe.

In the past decade, he served as an assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs – a principal adviser to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

# Hilltoppers in the News...

## Rich Verma, Class of 1986, named U.S. Ambassador to India!

### ... continued from Page 3

But those who know him said Verma has been setting his sights on a distinguished career in Washington, D.C., since his teen years.

"He's probably one of the most ambitious young men I've ever been around," said retired Westmont teacher Colleen Goerlich, recalling days working with Verma in her yearbook club.

"Anyone who had contact with him knew he was going to move on and do great things."

Jeff Stumpo, Verma's longtime friend and classmate, agreed.

"I'm extremely proud of what he's accomplished," said Stumpo, who has known Verma since elementary school.

Stumpo said he and a few Westmont classmates joined Verma in Washington for last week's ceremony. Verma's background and down-to-earth personality make him "a natural fit" for his new role as ambassador to India, Stumpo said.

Verma came to the United States at age 2 and grew up in Johnstown.

He is the son of Kamal D. Verma, a Pitt-Johnstown professor emeritus of English who has taught at the school more than 40 years, and the late Savitri Verma, who was a special needs teacher, counselor and social worker in India, Canada and the United States.

Goerlich noted Verma returned to Westmont Hilltop to address the district's 2010 graduating class and delivered a memorable speech that "anyone can make it big" if they work toward their goals.

And, the now-ambassador continues to set an amazing example for today's youth, she said.

Verma credited his own local "support network" from growing up in the Johnstown area as a reason for his success. Without the teachers, coaches and mentors that helped guide his upbringing, "I wouldn't be where I am today," he said.

"I owe the city and people of Johnstown a lot of thanks for helping me get to this point," Verma said. "I'm so grateful."

## October 17th, 2014 Westmont Hilltop High School Homecoming



WHAA set-up a table at the homecoming festivities at the high school. To right are (I to r) Paula Ostrich, Eileen Parker and Carol Pavlosky





Colleen Goerlich provided informational tours of the high school to alumni



Students packing the gym for the naming of the homecoming king and queen



# October 18th, 2014 1st Westmont Hilltop All-Class Reunion



October 18th, 2014 1st Westmont Hilltop All-Class Reunion



## October 18th, 2014 1st Westmont Hilltop All-Class Reunion



## **December 16th, 2014 Winter Instrumental Concert**



## **December 18th, 2014 Winter Choral Concert**



# **JANA ROBBINS**

Broadway Actress, Producer, Director Westmont Hilltop Alumna





# My Life on Broadway: A Musical Review

benefiting the Westmont Hilltop High School Theatre Club

February 22, 2015 at 7 pm

Westmont Hilltop High School Auditorium

200 Fair Oaks Drive

Student \$5.00 Adult \$10.00

Tickets available through the WHHS office or online at www.showtix4u.com Jana Robbins is a Tony Award and Drama Desk nominated Broadway producer and veteran actress and director. Her acting credits include leading roles in GYPSY, ROMANCE/ROMANCE and the national tours of FOOTLOOSE and MAN OF LA MANCHA. Her career also includes guest roles on TV shows including: The Good Wife, Cheers, Nurse Jackie and Law and Order.

To see more visit www.janarobbins.com.





New Officers and Board of Directors, effective July 16th, 2014.

#### Officers

President William J. Hargreaves, '94

Vice President Brian A. Krise, '87

Treasurer Colleen Goerlich, '71

Secretary Paula Ostrich, '85

#### **Board of Directors**

John DeMarco, '87 Eileen Parker, '66 Carol M. Pavlosky, '86 Charles Zimmerman, '49

#### **School Information**

## Westmont Hilltop High School

200 Fair Oaks Drive Johnstown, PA 15905 Phone: 814.255.8726

### Westmont Hilltop Middle School

827 Diamond Boulevard Johnstown, PA 15905 Phone: 814.255.8704

### **Westmont Hilltop Elementary School**

675 Goucher Street Johnstown, PA 15905 Phone: 814.255.8707

#### **Useful Links**

Westmont Hilltop Alumni Association http://www.westyalumni.com

Westmont Hilltop School District http://www.whsd.org/

Westmont Hilltop Recreation Commission http://www.westmonthilltoprecreation.com

### You can Contribute!

If you have information, stories or pictures, please send them to: WestyAlumni@gmail.com

## **WHAA Meetings**

Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm in the board room in the Middle School. Occasionally the date, time and/or location must be changed, so please check the Facebook page and the calendar on the WHAA website for information. We hope to see you!

## Join/Support the WHAA

Support the Alumni Association with a membership and/or a contribution.

Membership amounts are: \$10 Individual, Alumni \$10 Individual, Associate \$35 Family \$50 Business

You can now donate using Paypal! Please visit the WHAA website for details

This Association is recognized by the Westmont Hilltop School District. You can find our link under 'Resources' on the District Websit
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■ Alumni\$10	■ Associate Member\$10	■ Household Membership \$35
■ Business Membership w/web ad*\$50	■ Gift membership\$	■ I'm interested in being a volunteer.
Name:	Alu	mni – year of graduation:
Address:	<del> </del>	
Phone #: (optional)	Email:	

Make checks payable to Westmont Hilltop Alumni Association and send to:

Westmont Hilltop Alumni Association, Middle School Administration, Attn: Mary Hartnett, 827 Diamond Blvd., Johnstown, PA 15905

Website: WestyAlumni.com Email: WestyAlumni@gmail.com