

J O Y F U L
Echoes

Welcome!

Joyful Echoes is an Alumni Newsletter published by the Onondaga Central School Education Foundation for the purpose of keeping alumni and friends of OCS engaged with the Onondaga community and informed of current activities happening at OCS.

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 4&5 *by Natalie Price, Class of 2023*

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
DR. RICHARD ALEXANDER

C L A S S O F 1 9 6 5

by Natalie Price, Class of 2023



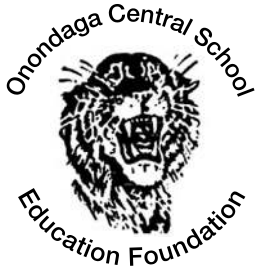
Dr. Richard Alexander, OCS Class of '65, recently shared his memories and personal story with *Joyful Echoes*. He has lived his life through the lens of the golden rule — treat others how you wish to be treated.

Dr. Alexander, though now a Texan, has deep roots in the OCS community. Before

Onondaga was a consolidated school district, his father attended a one-room schoolhouse in the District. His older brother graduated just three years before him, and his younger brother followed a few years later. Growing up in South Onondaga, he woke up at the crack of dawn to trap muskrats in the creek before heading off to school.

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About the OCSEF The Onondaga Central School Education Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit, all-volunteer 501(c) charitable corporation whose purpose is to provide support to students, staff and academic programs at Onondaga Central through charitable donations. The OCSEF was founded in 1984 with a vision of growing an endowment over the years. Please visit our web page: <https://www.ocseducationfoundation.com/>



OCSEF UPDATE

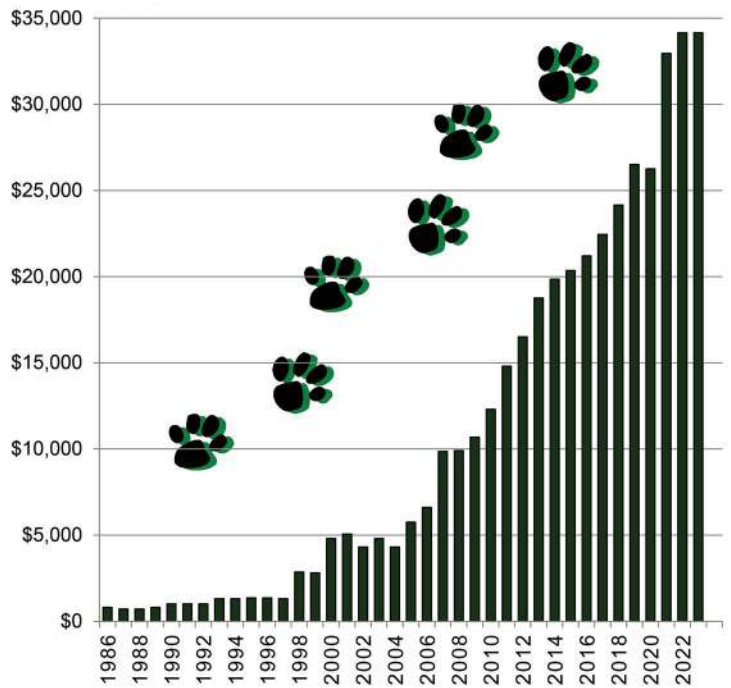
TILE-BY-TILE PROGRAM

The OCSEF Tile-by-Tile program is a unique opportunity to raise funds for scholarships by recognizing individuals in the OCS community with tiles on the wall at the OCS Jr/Sr High School. Tiles are mounted on the wall leading into the school gym. These tiles make excellent gifts and will enable you to preserve the memory of a cherished member of the greater OCS community. To honor someone with a tile, please see the instructions on our web page: ocseducationfoundation.com/fundraisers/tile-by-tile-program/

THANK YOU FOR THE CONTINUED SUPPORT

The OCSEF is happy to share that since 1986, \$408,625 has been awarded to graduating seniors, thanks to our generous community. Thank you for helping us increase awards to our OCS graduates!

OCSEF DOLLARS AWARDED



THE 2024 CHARLES MOLLOY OCSEF GOLF TOURNAMENT

SAVE THE DATE!
July 6, 2024
tentatively

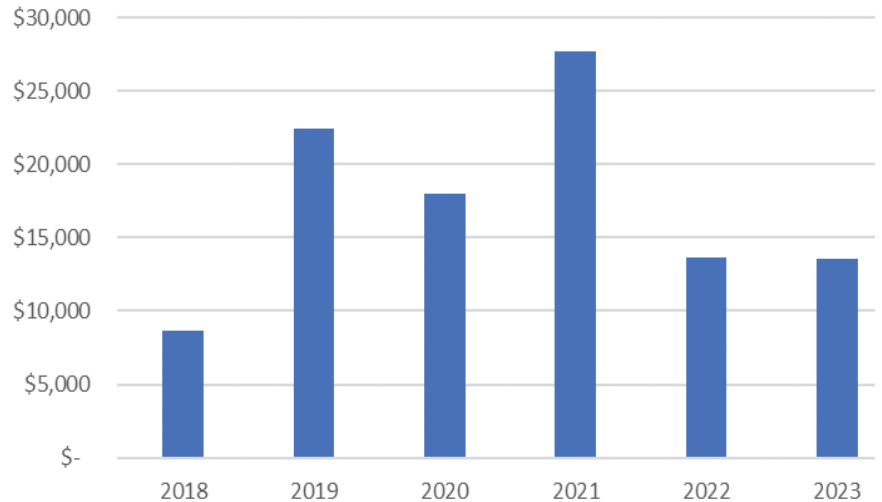
Visit our web page to stay tuned for details:
ocseducationfoundation.com/fundraisers/annual-golf-tournament

VISIT THE OCSEF WEBSITE: WWW.OCSEDFUNDATION.COM

ANNUAL OCSEF FUND DRIVE

Thanks to our generous donors, the Annual OCSEF Fund Drive has collected \$104,000 over the first six years. This goes a long way toward growing the endowment to record levels. In anticipation of another successful Fund Drive in 2024, THANK YOU!

TOTAL DOLLARS DONATED



50+ YEAR REUNION

Reunion ANNOUNCEMENT

Hi, all! Chuck Molloy (OCS class of '62) is organizing the 50+ reunion for those who graduated in 1973 and prior. He'll need some help with checking people in. If you can help, please let him know.

Friday, May 24th, 2024

The View Restaurant

4568 Octagon Rd • Tully, NY 13159

Registration 11:30-12:30

Buffet Luncheon will be served at 12:30

*Pre payment of \$40 must be received by
May 10 to ensure a seat.*

Send reservations to Chuck:

PO Box 87, Morrisville, NY 13408

(indicate class year and name of guest)

Questions? Email: cmolloy@twcny.rr.com

ASK *our* READERS:

Ron Daniels, a friend of the OCSEF, dropped by our table at Homecoming and donated this pennant to the Foundation. *Joyful Echoes* isn't sure about its age or origins, so the editors thought we'd ask our readers. Do you recognize the pennant? When was it sold? Was it part of a class fundraiser? Was it sold with an OCS pin on a clasp? Please let us know . . .



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

DR. RICHARD ALEXANDER

CLASS OF 1965

by *Natalie Price, Class of 2023*

Continued from page 1

Dr. Alexander recalled that during his time at OCS, “Wheeler Elementary was not yet constructed. The current junior-senior high school was a K-12 building.” He remembers his time at OCS fondly because even as a shy child, he loved learning, jokingly adding that his love for school was pretty obvious because he didn’t graduate from medical school until he was 35 years old.

Three of his favorite teachers were Max Metcalf, English; Mr. [Bill] Cook, history; and Tom LaClair, his wrestling coach. All three, he mentioned, “left remarkable impacts on my life.” His teachers were strict, “but in a good way.” These teachers engaged the student, prompting him not just to know the information but to know the “why.” At OCS he ran track, played football, and wrestled, beginning at 103 pounds and competing at 130 pounds as a senior. He was co-captain of the wrestling team and captain of the track team. At that time, the OCS track, he recalled, was “just a dirt trail.” After his graduation from OCS, he attended Syracuse University,

majoring in zoology. In addition to his challenging course work, he was also a member of the wrestling team. He earned his master’s degree in physiology before attending medical school at SUNY Upstate.

Before returning to Upstate to complete his cardiothoracic surgery residency, Dr. Alexander went to Galveston, Texas, to begin his general surgery residency through the University of Texas, where he earned the title of “Outstanding Resident.” During his residency, he worked upwards of 100 hours a week with 36-hour shifts, but he added,

**“EVEN AFTER 39 YEARS,
EVERY DAY IS DIFFERENT, NO CASE
IS EVER THE SAME, AND EACH CASE HAS
ITS RISKS AND CHALLENGES.”**

“This was worth it because when you are in medical school, you are young and want to do it.” He completed his residency in general surgery in 1981 and his residency in cardiothoracic surgery in 1983.

By age 35, he earned the title of doctor and was now a heart surgeon. Although it was a long time to be in school, Dr. Alexander explained why he chose this career. “I wanted to do whatever I could to help my patients,” and added that he liked the opportunity “to stretch my abilities to see what I could do.”

Dr. Alexander observed that he also enjoys the technical aspect of his field. “Even after 39 years, every day is different, no case is ever the same, and each case has its risks and challenges.” He performs coronary bypass surgery, aortic and mitral valve surgery, aortic

aneurysm surgery, carotid artery surgery, abdominal aneurysm surgery, endovascular aortic aneurysm repair, and endovascular harvesting of the leg vein for coronary surgery and surgery of the lung and esophagus. His skills

evolve every day both to meet the demands of new technology and to perfect procedures that are the least invasive as possible. He said, "It's amazing what medicine can do. We can replace valves and can stop the heart and almost always the heart starts working again. Then they wake up; the next day they walk around; a few more days later they are home. It is incredible what people can handle."

Over the years, he has chaired many positions in the Memorial Hermann Hospital in Texas, including being voted as Chief of Staff of the Southwest Branch. He also earned the title of Memorial Hermann Physician of the Year and chair of the Heart Surgeons Network in the greater Houston area.

Dr. Alexander has lived "the golden rule" throughout his career. He recalls working through numerous hurricanes in the Galveston area, tending to countless injured civilians and organizing 17 hospitals in moving patients from flooded facilities to his location. Beyond Texas, Dr. Alexander has led countless missionary trips. He first organized a charity called Faith in Practice, taking a team of doctors and students to provide life-saving surgeries in Guatemala and El Salvador. Many surgeries performed were for hernias or surgeries for which the recovery could be left safely in the care of the local doctors. Any leftover medical equipment brought from the United States was left for the local hospitals.

Dr. Alexander and his wife, Dr. Charlotte Alexander, a hand surgeon, completed these missions for over 30 years, later



“DO NOT GIVE UP. GIVE IT A GOOD OLD TRY BECAUSE MOST OF THE TIME HARD WORK PAYS OFF. THERE ARE BUMPS IN THE ROAD, BUT YOU HAVE TO KEEP PUSHING.”

joining a surgical missionary team that traveled to the Philippines. The team performed an array of surgeries. In fact, Dr. Alexander once removed a thyroid that was well over two pounds! The surgical team would also be accompanied by dentists and opticians, providing patients more than 800 pairs of glasses donated on the trips. He believes now his life has come full circle, bringing him back to Syracuse to perform heart surgeries at Upstate Medical for about a week every month.

While not working long hours at the hospital, Dr. Alexander and his wife love enjoying the great outdoors by going hunting, fishing, camping—and even backpacking in their younger years. They have four children, and all have enjoyed success in their

personal endeavors. One daughter is a movie director in California. His other daughter is a pediatric ear, nose, and throat doctor in the Houston area. His sons both work in IT, one in North Carolina and the other in California.

Dr. Alexander appreciates a balance between family and work—but realizes that hard work does pay off, enabling him to enjoy life and live the values he acquired growing up in South Onondaga. After his years in a difficult profession, his advice is to treat others how you wish to be treated, especially offering criticism without being demeaning or insulting. He further added, "Do not give up. Give it a good old try because most of the time hard work pays off. There are bumps in the road, but you have to keep pushing."

HAPPENING NOW

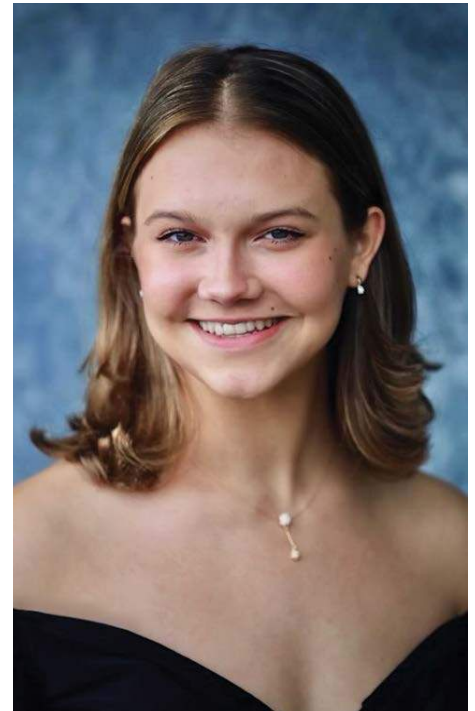
VALEDICTORIAN



NATALIE PRICE

Natalie Price is the 2023 OCS Valedictorian. She graduated with a weighted cumulative GPA of 101.35 while earning 33 total college credits from OCC, TC3 and Syracuse University. She earned qualifying scores on several AP exams. Natalie earned varsity letters in four sports as a senior, qualifying for sectional competition in all four. Natalie also held many leadership roles while attending OCS. She is currently attending American University studying communication, legal institutions, economics and government.

Joyful Echoes sends a sincere thank you to our former student reporter, Natalie Price. Natalie wrote a number of excellent articles for our newsletter including stories about the OCS Drama Club and the undefeated OCS football teams from 2001-03. For our “Alumni Spotlight” articles, Natalie interviewed pro-football star Latavius Murray, heart surgeon Richard Alexander, and OCSEF benefactors Gary and Jean Keehfus. In addition, she did some outstanding digging to locate and interview players who participated in the Tigers’ “impossible” county basketball championship over West Genesee in March of 1958. *Joyful Echoes* is grateful to Natalie and sends our best wishes to her as she begins her college career at American University.



SALUTATORIAN

MADISON JACHIM

Madison Jachim is the 2023 OCS Salutatorian. She graduated with a weighted cumulative GPA of 100.35 while earning 38 total college credits from OCC and TC3. Madison participated in many extracurricular activities while serving in leadership roles. She is currently studying psychology at SUNY Albany.

Forever IN OUR MEMORIES

Sharon Pople Perry

Class of 1966

September 20, 2023

Wayne L. Fellows

Class of 1965

October 1, 2023

Steven Auburn

Class of 1966

April 17, 2023

Michael Clarke

Class of 1966

March 19, 2023

Linda Keller

Elementary Teacher

March 10, 2023

Barb Olson

Coach

Physical Education Teacher

May 26, 2023

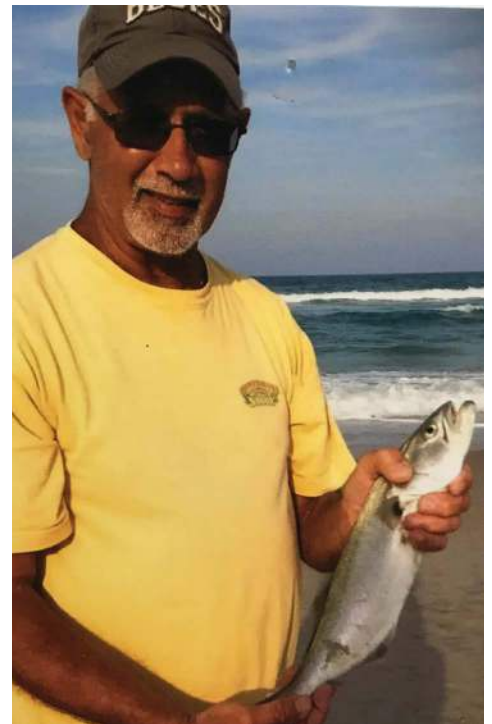
MEMORIAL WAYNE L. FELLOWS

CLASS OF 1965 • OCTOBER 1, 2023

Joyful Echoes was saddened to learn that “Len” Fellows, Class of '65, passed away on October 1st. Butler-Badman handled his funeral arrangements, and readers may visit its website to read more about Len, including his service in the U. S. Army.

Back in 2011, Len wanted to find a way to serve the OCS community. He contacted our treasurer and inquired about the possibility of establishing an annual scholarship. Len made a sizable donation and asked the OCSEF to manage the money. Every year since 2012, the Fellows Scholarship has provided a graduating senior \$500. Len’s gift helped many kids have an easier time during their freshman year, whether the money was used for textbooks or tuition or any of the other expenses students incur. Len occasionally replenished his original fund with new money to protect the Fellows endowment and maintain the annual gift at \$500.

In the 1960’s, graduating seniors would describe themselves in the OCS yearbook on a page called “Life at Central.” In 1965 that page listed each student’s “pet peeve.” Len’s pet peeve was “People Who Say No.” Len certainly said “Yes” to the OCS community through his caring and generosity.



ON BEHALF OF ALL THE KIDS LEN ASSISTED—AND THOSE WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM LEN’S GIFT IN THE FUTURE—JOYFUL ECHOES SAYS “THANK YOU!” WE SEND OUR CONDOLENCES TO HIS FAMILY AND OUR WISHES THAT LEN MAY REST IN PEACE.

REQUEST FOR SUBMISSIONS & INFO

This newsletter is a product resulting from submissions made by our alumni. Please send us your stories and news! Do you have a favorite memory? An interesting story idea? Or an alumni announcement - wedding, birth, obituary - you would like to share?

For submissions of news, ideas and/or stories, please contact us at ocsalum34@gmail.com or send to:

OCSEF Alumni Coordinator
3479 Cherry Valley Turnpike
Syracuse, NY 13215

The OCSEF has established an Alumni Database. It contains contact information of OCS alumni, community members and current and former staff members. If you know of someone who would like to receive future issues of Joyful Echoes and other alumni-related

communications, please forward the Alumni Data Form to him or her. You can find it on the OCSEF Web Page: www.ocseducationfoundation.com

O N O N D A G A

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