West Babylon Alumni Foundation

Hall of Fame Induction Dinner

October 24, 2009
Program

Welcome
Ralph Rienzo ‘64, President,
West Babylon Alumni Foundation

Superintendent’s Message
Anthony Cacciola ‘79

Masters of Ceremony
Martin P. Kennedy
Dr. Anthony Capone
Mathew Wilensky

Hall of Fame Inductees
Erica Crespi ‘88
Jonathan Reese ‘86
Mozelle Thompson ‘72
Judy Skillen
Senator Owen H. Johnson
Helmer Petersen (posthumously)

Closing Remarks
Ralph Rienzo
Erica Crespi graduated from West Babylon High School in 1988 then attended Lehigh University on an academic scholarship and graduated with a dual major in journalism and biology. After Lehigh, Erica continued her education by earning a fellowship at Wake Forest University to receive her Masters Degree, and followed that by attending the University of Virginia where she was granted another fellowship along with other grants to earn her PhD in Biology. She went on to further her research, winning a post doctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan.

Erica is currently employed at Vassar College as an assistant professor of Biology. While at Vassar, she has received several grants including National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health grants. Vassar had not been known as a research institution, but due to Erica’s efforts of earning sizeable grants, the school has opened up a new direction. *The Vassar Alumni Bulletin* will be doing an article on Erica later this school year regarding her bringing a new dimension to the College.

Erica is well recognized both nationally and internationally, as one of the foremost authorities in her field. As a teacher, researcher, speaker and writer Erica is leaving her mark on society.
Jonathan Reese

Jon Reese is a 1986 graduate of West Babylon High School where he was involved in many school activities. Jon was an outstanding athlete and was named team MVP in lacrosse, football and basketball. He was named to Newsday’s All Long Island Football Team and a two time All State Selection. In basketball, he received All Conference Honors. In lacrosse, he was the winner of The Ray Enners Award (voted by Suffolk coaches as the most outstanding player), The Adelphi University Award (County player with the highest academic average), Captained and led the Empire State Lax team to a Championship, and a First Team All American.

Jon attended Yale University where he continued to play both football and lacrosse. In football, he was a three year starter and he was elected captain and MVP on a team that won the Ivy League Championship in 1989. In lacrosse, he was a two time MVP and three time All American. In 1990, he was named NCAA Division I Midfielder of the Year and season leading goal scorer (82 goals) in the country and his record still stands.

After graduating with a degree in psychology, Jon worked on Wall Street for 12 years at Lehman Brothers HSBC. Following the events of September 11th, he decided to spend more time at home with his family and giving back to his residence community and West Babylon. Jon spends time mentoring young people on their college and employment careers and is deeply involved with benevolent ventures.
Mozelle W. Thompson

Mozelle W. Thompson is the founder of Thompson Strategic Consulting where he provides strategic policy and business advice to innovative corporations like Facebook, Inc. He served as a Commissioner on the US Federal Trade Commission from December 17, 1997 until August 31, 2004 where he was one of five Commissioners, nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to enforce Federal antitrust and consumer protection laws. During his tenure at the FTC, Commissioner Thompson worked in all areas of agency responsibility, but had notable leadership roles in the areas of international consumer protection; high technology; media and communications; online privacy and financial services; intellectual property and competition; and newly de-regulated industries, such as energy. He is internationally recognized for his expertise in these fields.

Most recently, Commissioner Thompson served on the Obama-Biden Transition Team where he was on the Economics and International Trade Team. He was co-leader of the review of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Mozelle W. Thompson is a 1972 graduate of West Babylon High School.
Judy Skillen attended West Babylon Schools and received her BS in Elementary Education from SUNY Oswego, MS in Special Education from Syracuse University and MS in Education in Administration from L.I. University at C.W. Post. She served as chairperson of the West Babylon Schools Special Education Dept. from 1982 – 2000. She also served as chairperson of CSE meetings, Manifestation Determination meetings, 504 Committee, as well as serving in leadership roles for many other professional and volunteer organizations.

Judy received the distinct honor of being selected as a “Woman of Distinction” by the New York State Senate in 2008. She received this honor due to her commitment and contributions to her community. Just recently, Judy received the Village of Babylon distinguished Nathaniel Conklin Award for volunteerism and outstanding community service.

Judy Skillen has made significant contributions to the West Babylon community as a professional within the community and as a volunteer. She has gained the respect and admiration of her peers due to her efforts. Judy’s endeavors were accomplished out of pure love for her profession, her community in which she lives and the intrinsic desire to give back to society.
Senator Owen H. Johnson

Senator Owen H. Johnson was first elected to the Senate in 1972 and represents the Fourth Senate District, which encompasses portions of the Towns of Babylon and Islip. He attended West Babylon Grade School and Babylon High School. After being honorably discharged from the U.S. Marine Corps, he attended and graduated from Hofstra College with a B.A. degree in Political Science. In December, 1998, Senator Johnson was the distinguished recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Law Degree from Hofstra University.

During Senator Johnson’s distinguished career in the Senate, he has chaired several committees including Transportation, Environmental Conservation, Social Services and Pensions and from 2003 – 2008, the Senator chaired the powerful Finance committee. During his 37 years as State Senator, Senator Johnson has continually represented the West Babylon Community in the NY Senate. He has successfully secured millions of dollars of State funding for the West Babylon School District for a multitude of programs and capital construction projects; for the West Babylon Fire Dept. for the purchase of Fire Department apparatus, life saving equipment and for construction of training facilities; as well as for the Town of Babylon for road construction, drainage improvements, and expansion/upgrades of park facilities throughout West Babylon.
From the early 1940’s to the early 1970’s (when he passed away), Helmer Petersen was the educational leader of the West Babylon Schools. He held the position known then as District Principal and later as Superintendent of Schools. During this entire period, he was also a resident in the school district and his two sons attended and graduated from West Babylon Schools.

His period of service was no ordinary time. Veterans had returned home from World War II service and had begun to move their new families to the suburbs. Mr. Petersen had been a United States Marine during the war. When he first led the District, he found it consisted of one building, the “Main Building”, which soon was unable to house the growing population. In 1958, West Babylon had its very first high school graduating class. Construction began on a new high school building which was located on the “Haab Farm” and the Class of 1960 became the first class to graduate from that building.

Helmer Petersen led the District through these remarkable years. In addition to the growing student population and construction issues, he needed to build a staff at a time when there was a tremendous demand for teachers. He aggressively took trips to teacher training colleges all over the country to recruit the finest teachers he could find and he was extremely successful.

Mr. Petersen’s legacy is that he was “a man of devotion, purpose and leadership”.

“Enter to learn, go forth to serve”
**ALMA MATER**

The Eagle is a symbol of the high school we hold dear.  
A school that those of us who know, regard without a peer,  
Her colors Blue and Gold, when seen, do gladden every eye,  
Of all those sons and daughters of our own West Babylon High.

Chorus

Oh, dear old Alma Mater to you we will be true,  
You’ll live forever in our hearts, West Babylon we love you.
ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The West Babylon Alumni Foundation was established in 1997 and re-organized in 2008. The West Babylon Alumni Foundation is comprised of graduates from 50 years of students.

The purpose of the Foundation is to perpetuate the “tradition of excellence” in the West Babylon School District.

The Foundation has set goals of awarding scholarships, creating a “Hall of Fame” and establishing a website.

THE MISSION

The West Babylon Alumni Foundation, Inc. is a broadly based, non-profit organization whose purpose is educational and charitable to secure and distribute contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations for the benefit of the students in the West Babylon Public Schools and by doing so, perpetuate the unique experience and traditions.

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You can find the Foundation on the school district’s website at: www.wbschools.org

Register as an alumni ~ See Reunion listings ~ Get Foundation Information

Or contact us at: wbalumni@wbschools.org
Donors

Larry Doyle ‘76

Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Wilensky

Dr. Anthony Capone

Mr. & Mrs. Martin P. Kennedy

Cosmo’s Service Center - Joseph Barbieri ‘72

West Babylon Lion’s Club

Brunello’s Pizza & Pasta - John Raimondi ‘89

Looking Back...

'09

the next 50 years

Dr. Capone
“Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle”