

The Alumnus



1992 Fordson Graduate Brian Mosallam was recently elected to the MSU Board of Trustees. Photo Credit of Joe Slezak, Dearborn Press & Guide



Alumni Association of
Fordson High School
P.O. Box 1382
Dearborn, MI 48121

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FORDSON ALUMNUS

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Dearborn, MI 48121

The Alumni Association of Fordson High School, founded November 12, 1987, is a nonprofit organization commemorating all Fordson High School alumni, faculty and students. The Board of Governors meets on a regular basis throughout the school year.

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The **Fordson Alumnus**, an official publication of the Alumni Association of Fordson High School, invites correspondence and suggestions from Fordson Alumni and friends.

Visit our website at: www.fordsonalumni.org
Download the membership application.

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NEWS FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

COURTYARD UPDATE!

A dedication ceremony in June and the first delivery of inscribed bricks marked the culmination of the initial phase of the project. The first student work day is complete with more to come. Alumni are reminded that support for the courtyard project has come largely from the sale of bricks. Have you purchased your brick? You may contact Donna Vaseau at Fordson via the web. VaseauD@Dearborn.k12.mi.us You may also view the planning and schematics by visiting You Tube Fordson Courtyard at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcQdovsTQnw>.

2012 GRADUATION CEREMONY

Five hundred twenty seven students participated in the June 16 Saturday graduation ceremony. Leading the class in honors were Valedictorian Mariam Jalloul and Salutatorian MohamedAli Sareini. Thirty-six students are members of the National Honor Society. Fifty-seven students wore gold cords indicating cumulative grade point averages of 3.8 and above. Fifty-five class members wore blue and white cords having earned a g.p.a. between 3.5 and 3.79. Seventy-eight students received silver cords honoring g.p.a.s of 3.0 – 3.49. The honor students represent 30% of the class. Congratulations to all! We hope that many graduates will bring their skills and energy to membership in the Alumni Association.

• **Principal Youssef Mosallam** was recently honored by the University of Michigan-Dearborn as the School of Education Alumnus of the Year. Those selected by the University for the title of Difference Makers are considered persons who have a positive impact on the work place and the community. They are also considered strong role models for U of M-D student leaders. Congratulations to Mr. Mosallam!

- Fordson senior **Husain Bazzi** took on the refurbishing of the basketball courts at Hemlock Park as his Boy Scout project. With permission of the City of Dearborn to work on the courts, Bazzi enlisted fifteen friends for help and raised \$800. Over the course of two days, the young men "...pulled weeds, poured hot, sticky asphalt sealer between the many cracks and coated the courts with asphalt paint." Husain chose this project to help the kids in the community. "A lot of the kids, this is all they have. They wake up in the morning, they come here, the sun sets and then they go back home." On behalf of the community, Thank you, Husain! (Source: *SCHOOL LIFE* September 2012)
- **Marwa Harp**, another Fordson senior recently was awarded a \$10,000 Ten4U Scholarship and a laptop from Nordstrom. About a thousand people applied nationally. The selection process included submission of a scholarship application form, an essay and an interview before fifteen people at Nordstrom's at Somerset Mall. Marwa is one of six people from the Michigan, Ohio and Indiana region to win this scholarship. (Source: *SCHOOL LIFE* October 2012)
- **MSU President Lou Anna K. Smith** Visits: On October 15, Dr. Lou Anna K. Smith of Michigan State University addressed Fordson juniors and seniors interested in college. Students questioned the university president about various programs at MSU, how college could be affordable, and asked for any advice that she might give them. Representatives from the National Honor Society gave Dr. Simon a tour of the Media Center (library) as well as other parts of the building. Impressed with the students and the building, Dr. Simon said, "Our hockey coach (Tom Anastos) is a graduate (of Fordson) and speaks very highly of the quality of education he received and the values that are reflected here. I think this is an extraordinary place that, I think, is underappreciated in all of the rhetoric about K-12 education in southeast Michigan. What you see here is the fact that things are possible; the passion to learn, the passion to ask questions. You have a sense of students being interested." (Source: *SCHOOL LIFE* November 2012)



We are proud to claim him as a member of the Fordson High School Alumni Association.

The evening ended with a buffet for the attendees. It was a time to renew acquaintances and enjoy memories of the school. The National Honor Society members were a strong presence, assisting with the refill of foods. President Asma Baban had led the Pledge of Allegiance at the ceremony and introduced herself at the buffet. She is a potential MSU student following her graduation next spring.

All in all, Fordson Alumni can point proudly once again to this extraordinary school which has served so many different populations in its history.

DEARBORN HOMECOMING 2012 PHOTOS

As always many Fordson Alumni from many classes set up picnic tables to host their fellow alumni.. Please enjoy these photos from the 2012 event.



Retired Social Studies teacher **Jim Petrie** accompanied the students and Dr. Smith and spoke highly of student conduct and attitudes throughout the tour.

- Seniors **Ali Farhat** and **Ali Hammoud** placed among the top three percent of students nationally taking the Pre-SAT in 2011. The cousins were named National Merit Commended Scholars. (Source *SCHOOL LIFE* November 2012)

We thank the following recent retirees: **Tony Bumbaca**, Vocal Music; **Tahsine Bazzi**, Community Liaison; **Mohammed Sion**, Social Studies

Former FHS, new retirees: **Maggie Maul**, School Nurse, and **Rob Tyler**, Biology

NEWS FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Donations to Fordson 2011 – 2012:

- \$900 to the Auto Program for expenses related to the student-built car
- \$1000 to the Business Department for the reopening of the Tractor Stop Shop
- \$750 to the Vocal Music program for an accompanist for practice/performance
- \$1000 Alumni Association Scholarship to 2012 graduate Mayla Harp

SAYING GOOD-BYE:

Three long-time Board members are ending their service to the Alumni Association of Fordson High School as of December 31. **Maureen Ewasek**, **Ganelle Shooshanian** and **Barbara O'Brien** have decided to start a second retirement some 14 years after their first.

Ganelle is a Fordson graduate, the wife of Harry and mother of five, including Dearborn Councilman and Fordson Athletic Director, Mark. Ganelle started her administrative career at Fordson in 1986 and worked diligently as an assistant principal until her retirement in 1998. She is the person responsible for the memorable 60th Anniversary Celebration of the school, planning and executing numerous activities for the enjoyment of the students, staff and alumni. One of those activities was the opening of the cornerstone and the documents therein. Had this not been done, those documents would have been lost to history as dampness had already started their deterioration. They were preserved for future generations and returned to their resting place inside the cornerstone. Ganelle brought her commitment to thoroughness and to detail to the position of Treasurer of the Alumni Association. She also was responsible for organizing the 2005 Golf Outing enjoyed by many members. She has continued as an active member of the Board until the present. We wish her well in the future. You will probably see her with Harry at FHS football games. She has said that when her time is up, her ashes should be sprinkled on the football field!

Maureen is also the mother of five adult children. Her late husband, Dick, taught Science at Salina School for many years. Maureen taught at Adams and at Woodworth before coming to Fordson. She chaired the Counseling Department after the retirement of Verlyn Beardslee and continued the strong Group Guidance program which he had initiated with Principal Harvey Failor. Maureen was dedicated to promoting a sense of Fordson heritage and history among students in the guidance program. She remembers teaching the Fight Song to 9th graders although she always says that she really can't sing well. Her counselees remember her assistance not only in solving problems, but also her help in confronting issues facing them. She helped many students clarify their value systems. It was not unusual for her to go to a student's home and help his parents roust him out of bed so he would get to school. Maureen is known for her bright wit and love of politics. She has been the Secretary of the Alumni Association for many years. Thanks, Maureen!

ELECTION RESULTS

Several hundred people gathered in the Fordson auditorium the evening of December 19 to attend the swearing-in ceremony of newly elected Michigan State Trustee Brian Mosallam, Fordson Class of 1992 and Michigan State University Class of 1996. The audience included Brian's family and friends and a long list of dignitaries from Wayne County, the City of Dearborn and the Dearborn Public Schools. Hosting the evening was Fordson Principal Youssef Mosallam, Class of 1994. It was truly gratifying to note that all of the presenters are Fordson graduates. They included Keynote Speaker Sir Michael Berry, Class of 1938 and former Chairman of the Wayne County Road Commission. Mrs. Berry read his presentation on behalf of Sir Michael. Other speakers included Rudah Saghir, President of the Fordson Alumni Association, Class of 1992; Thomas Tafelski, President of the Dearborn City Council, Class of 1987; Leith and Lexis Zeidan, Classes of 2007 and 2010 respectively. The Honorable Judge Charlene Mekled Elder, Judge of the Wayne County Circuit Court and Fordson Class of 1987 administered the oath.

The evening was a celebration of Brian's election and of his connections to Michigan State. In the November election he won his seat with over 1.9 million votes! Brian graduated from MSU with a degree in Engineering Arts. He was co-captain of the 1996 MSU football team and was named Academic All Big Ten three times and a District IV Academic All American. He is currently a financial advisor with AXA Advisors. He also chairs the Dearborn Public Schools Education Foundation.

In his acceptance speech Brian attributed much of his success to the values taught by his parents. He told both amusing and serious anecdotes of growing up in a home dedicated to education. He thanked his wife, Abir, for her commitment to him and their children while he traveled the state prior to the election. He promised to bring the best of himself to the position of trustee, dedicating his work in that position to the betterment of the experience for students. We have no doubt of his dedication.

“And the reason”, Arcy says, “was that a gear of that particular design couldn’t be fabricated with existing gear-cutting machines. To build a machine that would mass-produce the gear would have taken six months, Arcy says.”

“Arcy took the problem back to his little shop and in one night he produced a gear that would work. The next day the brass, resplendent in their uniforms, pushed into the machine shop and asked him to show a bigger company how he had done it. Arcy replied, ‘The day I fail to give you as many as you want, that’s the day I’ll show you how I’m doing it.’ That day never came. Arcy produced the gears throughout the war, using two machines in the process, neither of which had been designed to cut that kind of gear. And when he is asked how he was able to figure it out when so many others had failed, he says, ‘It was with the confidence and the technology I learned in the trade school. It was no hardship. I just had to improvise.’”

Other articles speak to Henry Ford having started trade schools in the south and, shortly before World War II, having established a trade school associated with the navy which was also housed at the Rouge.

This was fascinating reading as was reviewing the pictures of the young men in suits, shirts and ties standing in front of the Henry Ford Museum or at work in aprons and skull caps at machines in the factory. There are probably as many stories to be told as there were graduates of the trade school. I think they are best summed up in the title of the article from which most of the information came; “The Best Idea Henry Ford Ever Had.”

The quotes, as well as much of the other information in this piece, came from an article by Kirk Cheyfitz, “The Best Idea Henry Ford Ever Had.” No publisher is cited; it is stamped “From the collections of The Henry Ford.”

Barbara has been the editor of the *Alumnus* since the retirement of Oscar Nunez in 2003. She was principal of Fordson from 1986 until her retirement in 1998. She spent many hours with Norbert Karmann in 1986 as he and his committee worked to establish the Alumni Association. Norbert was its first president (1987 – 1989) and it would be hard to find anyone who loved the school more than he did. He was present at the ground breaking and was in the first class of boys who came to classes in the school even before entry steps were installed. They entered by walking on boards set up against window openings. Barbara has continued working with the association since her retirement. She looks forward to additional time with her three adult children and three grandchildren.

WE HOPE THAT ALUMNI STEP FORWARD AND VOLUNTEER TO JOIN THE BOARD.

IN MEMORIAM We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of the following:

- Alumni -**
- Chad Everett (Ray Crampton)** 7/26/12
 - David Mannarino** 9/13/12
 - Sally Ann Lawrence** 11/18/12: Sally Ann’s brother, Fred, asked to have information about Sally shared with former friends and classmates. Since he lives in California, he thought most people would not know about her passing. Sally Ann, Class of ’62, graduated from the University of Michigan in 1966 and began teaching in Anchorage, Alaska. She later became interested in a variety of ‘start-up businesses’ which allowed her to travel extensively. She had a passion for learning and exploring. For the last ten years she lived in Arizona, moving to San Diego to be with family in the final phase of her battle with cancer.
 - Gerald (Jerry) Nassar**, Class of ’59, 11/20/12 after his battle with pancreatic cancer

Faculty - **Robert Flee**, Mathematics

HENRY FORD TRADE SCHOOL

Editor's note: This piece came about in an unusual way. I was contacted by a woman in California (She'd found us on the Alumni website.) who was trying to find information and photos about the Trade School for her father-in-law's 90th birthday. He is a graduate of the school. Thanks to the Benson Ford Research Center on the grounds of The Henry Ford in Dearborn for the wealth of information housed there. I was able to forward articles and photos to California, quite sure that the grad would find his young self in the photographs.

In 1911 Henry Ford enlisted a dozen boys and schooled them to become farmers by working a farm that he and Clara owned in western Wayne County. That idea did not work well, and half of the boys left the program after the first year. Mr. Ford simply decided to continue his vision for assisting poor and orphaned boys with training and schooling for factory work. October 25, 1916 marked the opening of the Trade School in Hamtramck with 6 boys and one instructor. The expanded program was eventually moved to the fourth floor of B Building in the Rouge Complex, directly above the assembly floor. Some 36 years later the Trade School closed, having graduated more than 8,000 boys.

The curriculum is impressive as is the design. Academic Training (3 years of high school) included English, Drawing, Shop Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Civics, Auto Mechanics, General Physics, Quantitative Analysis, Qualitative Analysis, Metallurgy, Metallography, Athletic Training and Commercial Geography. Shop Training included Tool Making, Wood Work, Car Parts, Car Service, Sheet Metal, Nickel Plating, and Foundry. Boys spent one week in the classroom, two weeks in the machine shops where they mastered the use of grinders, lathes, shapers, milling machines, etc. Those between the ages of 12 – 15 finished the junior course at 18 and finished the senior course at 20. The senior course included a full day of shop work with some evening classes.

“In the late Twenties, the boys started at a salary (the school called it a scholarship) of eighteen cents an hour. With good marks in both shop and class, there were regular raises of a penny an hour each month. It amounted to \$375 a year to start and went to as high as \$936 for eighteen- year-olds.

Henry Ford valued thrift, and so each boy, in addition to his salary, was given two dollars a month to save. Any boy who didn't have a deposit marked in his standard-issue bank book each month was in trouble and he didn't get the next two dollars. Many boys graduated in the early 1930s with more than \$1000 saved – an impressive amount in the middle of the Depression. “

The graduates of the Trade School were highly valued throughout industry as their reputation spread. Some were hired for high wages before completing the senior program. “A school official once told Henry Ford that his company was losing some of the school's best young men. ‘What do you care?’ Ford wanted to know. ‘Somebody's getting the benefit.’”

“ The school was criticized for being too narrowly focused – it trained most of the boys to be tool and die makers for modern industry. But those graduates today are not only skilled mechanics and the owners of machine tool shops, they are doctors, educators, executives, engineers, designers, Army officers and even an architect.” The school has its own alumni association with a branch in the Los Angeles area.

These young men were invaluable to the country in World War II, appointed heads of departments in GM, Chrysler and Ford as the industry moved to the production of war machines. Edward Arcy, a trade school graduate and at that time an owner of a small tool and die shop, worked on a variety of war projects, most proud of the work he and his company did on the B24. Arcy was called in to help on a problem caused by the outsourcing of various parts to different factories. The fuselage and the turret wouldn't work because one gear which was supposed to turn the gun turret didn't.