

*Adams-Friendship
Academic Hall of Fame
2022*



James Brien
Distinguished Alumnus



Richard Pease
Distinguished Alumnus



Kevin Beaver
Distinguished Alumnus



Robert Beaver
Distinguished Educator

James Brien (1965)

Though shy, the encouragement of teachers from elementary through high school inspired James Brien to step out of his comfort zone and participate in a variety of activities, including forensics and band. In addition, he was part of the drama club stage crew. These experiences developed his appreciation for the arts. His 1965 graduation from high school was during the war in Viet Nam. Young men as young as eighteen were required to register for the active draft. During his draft physical in 1966, a kidney issue made James ineligible for service. His path took him to what is now the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point where he earned a degree in forestry and resource management. This degree led him to the small Wisconsin town of Wausaukee where he spent his career working for the Department of Natural Resources. He met his wife, Pat, a kindergarten teacher, raised two daughters and retired in 2005.

In 1982, life was interrupted with glomerulonephritis, a diagnosis requiring a kidney transplant. James received a kidney from his younger brother, Jerry (Class of 1970). This gift from brother to brother inspired him to make the most of this second chance at life. Based on his experiences, he became an advocate for organ donations. James reached back to his high school forensic experience to promote organ donation. He shared his knowledge with school groups and other organizations. In 2004, he competed in the first Transplant Games, a celebration of life. He competed in downhill and cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and attempted curling. He has competed on six continents, earned numerous medals, and holds the world record for race walking in his age group. He remains active participating in local 5Ks. James competes in the senior games and qualified for the nationals. In 2017, he was one of two receiving the Chris Klug Bounce Back Award in Aspen, Colorado. This event and award highlights achievements of transplant recipients. He serves as co-team manager for Team Wisconsin.

Hall of Fame inductees all provide an answer to the question, “How did Adams-Friendship Schools prepare you to perform for life?” While participating in a foundation fundraiser (400 miles on a bicycle), James shared that he had a lot of time to think about this subject and the people that influenced him throughout life.

James credits the teachers he had along the way. Experiences with his fifth-grade teacher, Mrs. Davis, inspired his interest in Wisconsin and other states. Field trips, projects (He still has his “Wisconsin Booklet” which was a class project.), and even an appearance on the Channel 3 Noon Show broadened his views. He never imagined how important Mrs. Zika’s typing class would be. The encouragement of speech teacher, Miss Newel, gave him the confidence he needed to do public speaking and scripture readings at church. The teacher he admired the most was the legendary Mr. Lavalley, the band director who always found time to provide life lessons through discussion and example. James admired Mr. Lavalley’s participation in the Lions Club and fire department. He recalls Mr. Lavalley’s philosophy—“If you teach in the community, you should be involved in the community.”

He recalls motivational speakers such as athletic banquet speaker, Glen Cunningham, who inspired him to be a miler in track. Participation in Boy Scouts and Mr. Woodzik, ranger station dispatcher, piqued his interest in the outdoors leading him to a career in Natural Resources. Participation in 4H and Ivan Morrow’s lessons in woodworking, electricity, and gardening all formed him during his passage to adulthood.

In Wausaukee, as he presents a scholarship at graduation, he passes on an important reminder. “Some of you will be staying in Wausaukee, some will be off to the military, some to tech schools, and others to college. Wherever you go, remember who supported you here; your family, teachers, and community leaders.”

In his initial response to the Adams-Friendship Academic Hall of Fame, James shared that he struggled with grades, but that many teachers from kindergarten through his senior year in high school “believed in me as a person not just my grade achievements.” This is an important reminder that academic success is not just about grade point averages and

class rank. Academic success is also about learning that happens along the way and how that learning is used to support and inspire others.

How did Adams-Friendship Schools Prepare James Brien to Perform for Life? The teachers who believed in him and the community that supported him should take pride in the role they played leading to his induction to the A-F Academic Hall of Fame.

Richard Pease (1980)

If you live in the Adams-Friendship community, it is likely that you have crossed paths with 1980 AFHS graduate and Alumni of the Year (2006), Richard (Rick) Pease. You may have seen him leading an A-F Board of Education meeting at some point in the past twenty-five years where he has been recognized with an award from the Wisconsin Association of School Boards. In addition, he has served on the CESA 5 Board since 2002. Perhaps you know him from sporting events during his thirty-one years of service for the WIAA. Maybe you've joined him in volunteering for youth sports.

His activities take him beyond supporting the youth of the community. Over the past four years, he has been a member of the Adams County Board serving on various committees focusing on issues concerning land/water resources, public safety, administration/finance, as well as those that focus on workforce and economic development. Though the list of his activities seems endless, it is not yet complete. You may also find him supporting families during some of the most difficult periods in their lives. Rick may be assisting with planning a "Celebration of Life" for a friend or loved one in his role as Assistant Funeral Director for Roseberry's Funeral Home.

The extensive list of Ricks activities is only a part of his story. After graduating from UW-Platteville in 1984 with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, Rick started his career as an intern for the Federal Corrections Institution in Oxford. His path led him through various roles—corrections officer, lead warehouse worker, accounting tech, trust fund tech, trust fund assistant and finally department head as a trust fund supervisor. In this role, he oversaw a two million dollar store, a half million dollar-telephone company, and a half million dollar email system. He oversaw staff, inmate personnel, and a \$350,000 budget used for inmate needs.

When asked how Adams-Friendship schools prepared him to perform for life, Rick looked back forty years.

"From what I remember from high school I had no direction. Heading into my Junior year, the narrative was, well, what are you going to do? Where are you going to work after school? Then, my senior year came, and Brian Morley convinced me to go to UW-Platteville with him, and within an instant the narrative started to change. My teachers rallied around me and asked the most important question of my young life, "How can we help you?" I grew up with two very hard-working parents that taught me the value of a dollar and how to work hard, but they did not have the experience of packing up life and heading out to school. My teachers made sure I was as prepared as an 18-year-old high school graduate could be. Once I went off to school, I had the typical struggles, but there was one thing I had that many students around me didn't. I had a set of teachers that still cared for my success. Every time I came home and ran into a former teacher it was, "How is school going, Rick?" It was the fact they still cared enough to ask that made me realize they were preparing me for the next phase of my life. The days I spent cramming for finals, and writing papers, when I thought about just dropping out and moving home, I knew I had a group of people that I couldn't let down. They cared about my success, and I knew they were rooting me on from Adams-Friendship. After my college career, I was lucky enough to land a job in my field and move back to Adams. I got married and had 3 beautiful children. It was the skills I learned in Adams-Friendship High School and the pride I had in my alma matre that made it a significant reason I wanted my children raised here. I then was elected to the school board, starting volunteering in the

community to help referee tournaments, with little league teams, and make a difference in the lives of the students we served. It has been an honor to even be nominated for this award, as this school district has produced many amazing individuals. I am happy to have watched this community grow over the years and continue with my Green Devil pride.”

Kevin Beaver (1989)

Anyone visiting Gundersen Moundview Hospitals/Clinics for rehabilitation services will probably encounter Kevin Beaver at some point on their path to recovery and improved quality of life. As the Rehabilitation Manager for the department, he may be found working with someone using Fascial Counterstrain techniques to address pain management or providing targeted therapy to increase mobility and strength. Kevin provides leadership in policy formation, training and improvement projects, team building and coordination with other departments to achieve specialized goals for each patient.

Following graduation from Adams-Friendship High School in 1989, Kevin attended Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Biology. In addition, he played football, served on the Student Senate, and joined the Physical Therapy Club. During his summers he worked as a Physical Therapy Aide—assisting physical therapists and other team members with documentation, scheduling, and transporting patients to and from therapy department with treatment guidance. In May of 1996, he earned a Master of Science in Physical Therapy degree from the University of Pacific, Stockton, California. In July of 1996, he joined the team at Adams County Memorial Hospital/Moundview Memorial which is now Gundersen Moundview. In 2012, he became Rehabilitation Services Manager for a team that uses a variety of healing techniques not available at many other Physical Therapy facilities. He has earned recognition as Rural Healthcare Ambassador—Rural Wisconsin Cooperative, Distinguished Alumni award—Adams-Friendship High School Student Council, and the Green and White Award for supporting local sports and youth of the Adams-Friendship Community.

How did the Adams-Friendship School District Prepare Kevin Beaver to Perform for Life? Kevin responded:

“I want to address the basic ways that Adams-Friendship changed my life and expand into some detail to try to explain the long range effects that I experienced since becoming a part of this community. The student body here at AF school district, specifically my classmates, and the greater community of Adams County, were immediately welcoming and willing to accept my family and me when we moved here in 1985 when I was starting as freshman in high school. I had been in a small farming community that I felt, at the time, was what had molded me as a young person. However, it was only the start as I developed in many more areas and qualities through the outstanding amounts of opportunities that were available to me here in Adams-Friendship. The level of acceptance from all groups throughout the school was very apparent, refreshing, and motivating for me, helping me realize that things can always change and be just as good or even better. We found groups of students and people throughout the community who wanted to help, provided a support network, and found and shared opportunities for growth from our first month until the present time. The opportunities in the high school classrooms were extensive and challenging in many areas including: a “5th year” of Spanish as another student and I had started with Spanish 2 as freshmen, having already taken Spanish in Junior High prior to moving to the area; formation of a Physics club with a group of like-minded students who took on additional projects on top of our formal classroom studies; extra training in keyboarding offered by the teacher in addition to the curriculum; a very challenging public speaking course; and our composition class where we completed a research paper that compared two possible careers we were interested in, which pointed me in the direction of

physical therapy. These were all supported with opportunities to participate with students from all over the state, country, and the world including: weekend sports medicine and taping clinics in Madison; Badger Boys State participation at Ripon College; hosting the Student Council State convention at Green Lake Convention Center; the FFA and Student Council National conventions, and our Odyssey of the Mind team traveling to the University of Maryland for the World Finals. Our high school sports teams also provided me with outstanding opportunities for growth, learning, and travel as we learned from college coaches in multiple sports and traveled to camps and tournaments all around Wisconsin and the Midwest. This support from coaches, teachers, the booster club, local business leaders and veterans, and church leaders who always were able to provide another ‘good experience’ for me and point me in the right direction to assist with volunteer efforts in our community. The feeling of acceptance after just moving here and continuing throughout my life here in Adams-Friendship is special. It provided a strong part of the basis of my success in many areas and the motivation to create and follow my dreams in all areas of my life. This was the best move that my family could have made to provide opportunities that made me the person I am today. I’m proud to be a graduate of Adams Friendship High School and a member of the community with my own family today.”

The Adam-Friendship community is equally proud to honor Kevin as an excellent representative of an Academic Hall of Fame member. He is very active in the community from directing the Castle Rock Triathlon (2002-2015) to organizing a “Rec League” men’s basketball program (2000-2016). In addition, he serves as president for the Adams-Friendship Area Education Foundation. Kevin and his wife, Amy, have set a strong family foundation for their four children—a legacy that will go with them as they journey to adulthood.

Robert Beaver

The Adams-Friendship Academic Hall of Fame is proud to induct Robert “Bob” Beaver as a “Legacy Educator” for his many contributions to the students in the A-F School District as well as the entire community. His passing in 2021 was a loss not only for his family, but also for the community he called home since 1985 when he accepted the position of District Administrator for the Adams-Friendship School District. Accepting the award on his behalf are his wife, Margo, and sons, Kevin and Kris.

Mr. Beaver, or as he was affectionally called, Beaver, was born in Iowa and attended Simpson College in Indianola. He served his country in the Air Force where he worked in radio communications with a specialty in morse code. After his discharge, education was his calling and became his life’s work. He wore many hats on his way to our community. He was a graduate assistant at Illinois State University, both an assistant principal and principal at Platteville High School, District Administrator in the School District of Blackhawk in South Wayne, Wisconsin, and finally the leader of the Adams-Friendship School District. After his “retirement” he served as the Administrator for the Princeton School District and demonstrated his passion for rural schools as founder and consultant for the Wisconsin Rural School Alliance.

The term “active” is inadequate in describing Beaver’s commitment to community. In addition to his work with the Wisconsin Rural School Alliance, his civic organizations included Grand Marsh State Bank Board of Directors, Moundview Memorial Healthcare Foundation Board, Adams County Chamber of Commerce, Lions International, Optimists International, American Legion, Viet Nam Era Veterans, FFA Alumni, Masonic Lodge, Ducks Unlimited, National Turkey Federation, Boy Scouts of America, Lay Leader United Methodist Church, and Simpson College Alumni Council.

Bob’s honors included Wisconsin FFA Honorary State Degree, Honorary Member of the National Honor Society, Outstanding Young Men of America, Chamber of Commerce-Outstanding Citizen, 1996 Administrator of the Year, Chamber of Commerce – Parr Excellence Award, Board Member of the Year Wisconsin Technical College Boards Association. He was also a board member at Southwest Vocational Technical Institute, Wisconsin HS Forensics, Mid-

State Technical College, Wisconsin Technical College, State Legislative Committee WTCS, and South-Central Instructional Network Group.

Bob was devoted to his wife, Margo, his sons, and their families. He loved outdoor activities and was an avid sports fan. Bob coached football, basketball, baseball, and track early in his career. After the arrival of his sons and grandchildren he especially enjoyed his role as spectator.

Bob's personal mission was to "do what's best for kids." The needs of Adams-Friendship students came first. Under his watch, facilities were updated, and a new high school became a reality. He took pride in the local hospital's expansion and celebrated the addition of a Fine Arts Center.

Teachers, support staff in all departments, and the administrative team of the Adams-Friendship School District did not work *for* Beaver, they worked *with* him, and he worked for them and the community.



