



LEGACY LEDGER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER OF LEGACY NAFC ALUMNI



*A Message from the NAFC Education Foundation
Alumni Coordinator, Sherri McKeen*

As we move into spring, we're excited to spotlight two extraordinary alumni whose experiences in NAFC schools helped shape the entrepreneurial spirit they carry today. These graduates not only launched successful businesses in our community—they continue to give back in meaningful ways.

Their stories are a powerful reminder of the long-lasting influence of great teachers, classrooms that sparked curiosity, and a school community that nurtured creativity and confidence.

And we know they're not alone. If you—or someone you know—is an NAFC graduate who owns a business and is making a positive impact, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out anytime at SMcKeen@nafcs.org and help us celebrate the many ways our alumni continue to lead and serve.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Amanda Beam, Guest Contributor

The Road to the Final Four begins in... Floyd County?

This was the case for both of our NAFCS alums this month. Their dedication to academics and athletics has led them beyond the Big Dance, and brought them success in all areas of their lives.

Defenders don't stand a chance when **Sean East II (NAHS 2018)** is on the court. As a sophomore, he helped the New Albany High School boys' basketball team clinch the 2016 IHSA 4A State Basketball Championship. His standout seasons at the University of Missouri and notable performance at the 2024 NBA Summer League have solidified this 25-year-old's legacy.

Jake Heidbreder (FCHS 2021) is the Swiss Army Knife of the hardwood. He can do it all. In his junior year, he and his Highlander teammates clinched the sectional title, breaking FC's 31-year drought. Now a graduate student playing at Clemson University, Jake lived the Hoosier dream of making two NCAA Tournament appearances. With one more year of college eligibility, this guard has plenty of opportunities to keep taking his shots.

This March, go a little mad with us and learn more about these all-around achievers below.

Sean East II (NAHS '18): Taking his shot with the pros

When asked which New Albany High School teachers impacted his life, Sean East II exhales and considers his response.

He's not being cautious but considerate. The 2018 NAHS grad doesn't want to leave any staff out. Toward the end of the phone conversation, Sean pulls up the school's website, scans the staff list and mentions name after name.

"There were so many teachers that helped me in my time there," says the 25-year-old, who also attributes his success to his parents and their hard work and sacrifice. "It was a good, life-changing experience that I enjoyed, and some of the best days of my life."



Known as a leader and a team player, Sean doesn't need to be as humble as he is. He's crossed off almost every dream of a high school baller.

- **Win a state title?** Yep. As a sophomore, the 6'3" point guard made a 3-pointer late in the third quarter, propelling NAHS past McCutcheon in the Indiana 4A Boys Basketball Championship. Their opponents never regained the lead. The Bulldogs almost were best in the state again his senior year, with the team making it to semi-state.
- **Take the court at an NCAA D1 university?** Check (thrice). Sean started his post-high school career at the University of Massachusetts in 2019, before transferring to Bradley University the following year. The player who began hooping at 2 years old finished his college journey at the University of Missouri, where he averaged 17.9 points a game in his final season.
- **Go to the Big Dance?** Affirmative. Sean and the rest of the Missouri Tigers roared to the second round of the 2023 NCAA Division I men's basketball tournament. "When you see that one shining moment thing, this is really once in a lifetime. There's nothing like it," Sean says. "You've got to cherish it, because it's really hard to get there, and it's not easy to make it back."
- **Earn a college diploma?** And then some. The 2024 SEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year graduated Mizzou in 2024 with a degree in General Studies. After this, he studied Positive Coaching and Athletic Leadership through their Master's program. He says he'd eventually like to coach youth basketball.
- **Play professionally?** You betcha. The LA Lakers picked up Sean for the 2024 NBA Summer League. This past fall, he competed for the South Bay Lakers in the NBA's G League. You can find him now playing professionally in Europe, accumulating tape and experience for the future. "My goal is definitely to get in the NBA, for sure. I think I'll be there one day, sooner rather than later, but that's my ultimate goal," Sean says. "After that, to retire my mom and dad, so they don't have to work anymore. And then, you know, just have a good family."

Let's get back to that humility. Yes, Sean knows his dedication and hard work have driven his basketball breakthroughs. Having a good family and the right people behind him also helped. But first and foremost, he credits his higher power for his accomplishments.

"Nothing's possible without God," he says. "There's been so many situations that I know I've been in that could have gone the other way but went the right way."

So, how can students achieve similar success? Sean suggests staying consistent with goals, and working hard to achieve them. Aligning your current life with what you want for the future also helps.

"Stay the course. When things get tough, just stand there and keep fighting and going after your dreams," he says. "Everybody can do what they strive to do if they just keep on outlasting and working hard. Eventually, they'll get there."



Jake Heidbreder (FCHS '21): Living the Hoosier Hoop dream at Clemson

Wander around the knobs of Southern Indiana, and you'll spot plenty of folks wearing Louisville red, Indiana crimson and Kentucky blue. But this March Madness, you may notice some orange and purple making their way into the mix.

The reason? Jake Heidbreder.

The 2021 Floyd Central graduate plays basketball for Clemson University in South Carolina. On March 20th, he scored his first-ever NCAA tournament points when the McNeese State Cowboys narrowly defeated his fifth-seeded Tigers in the first round.

While the loss ended his season, Jake's basketball journey continues.

If you watched the now 6'5" guard run the courts as a kid, you knew he was remarkable. Sure, he had good size, but he could also fill any role needed on the hardwood be it rebounding, shooting, guarding or creating for others.

Some of this was passed down by his father, Hudson Heidbreder, who played basketball at Hanover College. Hudson taught his son the fundamentals early on coaching Jake until his freshman year in high school.

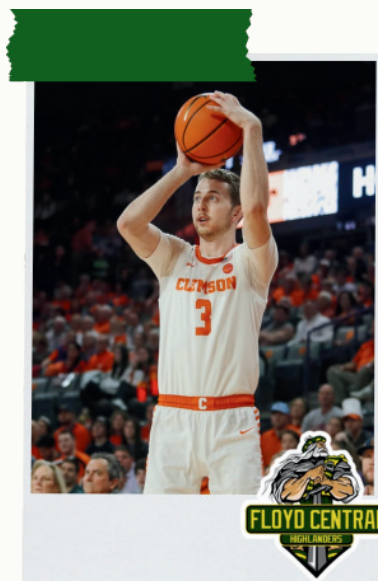
His dad and mother, Julie Heidbreder, also instilled other important principles in him outside of the sport.

"One of the main things is my parents. Just growing up, they were putting discipline in me and the values of our family," Jake says. "Basketball was always my favorite sport. I definitely worked the hardest at it... So just having this opportunity is something that I definitely always dreamed about when I was young."

His basketball skills grew as he attended Highland Hills Middle School, followed by his run at Floyd Central High School. At FC, Jake lettered all four years in the sport, leading Floyd Central to its first sectional victory in 31 years.

Covid stopped the 2020 team's state tournament run. Due to the pandemic, all playoffs after the sectional were canceled. In his senior year, Jake averaged 19.9 points a game, totaling 1,228 total high school points. The A.P. selected him as an All-State honorable mention.

But his time at FC wasn't all about sports. Jake continued to grow his mind as well. The dual credit classes he took during high school gave him a jump at college and allowed him to graduate a semester early with a degree in Economics. He's currently pursuing a master's degree in Athletic Leadership, and hopes to play ball professionally overseas.



“Floyd Central does a really good job, especially the dual credit. Having an advantage by taking college courses, especially in high school, and getting ahead in that area definitely helps you succeed in college,” Jake says. “It also can help you in some cases save money and maybe graduate early.”

Following his 2021 graduation from FC, Jake flew to new heights with the United States Air Force Academy men’s basketball team. His two seasons with the Falcons earned him accolades and honors. The 303 points he scored in his first year is the second-highest for any AF freshman to date. In his sophomore year, he averaged 15 points a game.

Jake transferred to Clemson for his in third year of college, and redshirted for the 2023-24 season. While being able to practice but not play in games, he travelled with the rest of his team to the NCAA Division I tourney last March and celebrated their ascent to the Elite 8. He hit the hardwood for the Tigers this 2024-25 season, where he helped Clemson finish 2nd in the ACC Conference and earn a top 15 national ranking.

How does the Floyd County native balance his academic and athletic lives? He stresses time management skills, and credits the support of the Clemson staff, his family and his high school coaches and friends.

“I think just having fun in high school and obviously making a lot of friends and keeping those connections is a big thing, too,” Jake says.



Help Us Find Our Next Royal Court

Know someone who would make a great addition to the 2025 Legacy NAFC Alumni Royal Court?

We’re gearing up for our fourth year of this fun and impactful tradition! Each November, eight outstanding alumni—four from New Albany High School and four from Floyd Central High School—compete for the crown while raising funds to support innovative learning, teacher grants, and student success across all NAFC schools.

Since launching in 2022, the Royal Court campaign has raised more than \$220,000 for our students and educators, thanks to the incredible efforts of our candidates and the support of our generous community.

If you know an NAFC grad who’s passionate about giving back and would be an amazing advocate for our schools, send your nomination to Sherri McKeen, Alumni Coordinator, at smckeen@nafcs.org.



JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!

Stay updated on your Floyd County classmates, discover thrilling events in your NAFC school community, and learn firsthand about the NAFC Education Foundation by connecting with us at facebook.com/LegacyNAFCAlumni.



The New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that works in conjunction with NAFC Schools to provide privately funded supplemental resources and programs to students, teachers, and schools. Legacy NAFC is the official alumni support group of the NAFC Education Foundation and New Albany Floyd County Schools.

When alumni donate to the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation, you are investing in the success of all NAFC students and educators. Alumni donors become Legacy NAFC members through an annual donation.

Make your impact today and become a Legacy NAFC Alumni Member!

For more information, contact Sherri McKeen at smckeen@nafcs.org or 812-542-2242 at the NAFC Education Foundation.

www.NAFCEdFoundation.org/alumni



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