



LEGACY LEDGER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER OF LEGACY NAFC ALUMNI



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

May brings one of our favorite milestones—welcoming our graduating seniors into our Legacy NAFC alumni community! Over the past few weeks, we've had the opportunity to connect with graduating seniors from New Albany and Floyd Central as they sign up to stay involved with the broader NAFC community through the Education Foundation. Whether you're a longtime reader or one of our newest soon-to-be graduates, we're glad you're here. This newsletter is for you—filled with stories, connections, and ways to stay rooted in the community that helped shape you.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Amanda Beam, Guest Contributor

William Shakespeare once wrote, “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players”. With award-winning theater and music programs, NAFC schools should be called Earth.

This month, we spotlight several of these performers. Supported by their families, friends and educators, these actors entertain audiences through their many talents.

With nearly 40 acting credits, Kirsten Day’s (FCHS 2000) animation and video game voices are as plentiful as the stars. After graduating from Ball State, she moved to New York City and made her theatrical dreams come true. Now living in Los Angeles, she and her husband founded their own production studio that trains and demos would-be voice artists.

Have you heard of a triple threat? Tyler Bliss (NAHS 2005) is a quadruple one. Not only does he sing, act and dance, but he also leads the Caesars Foundation of Floyd County, a philanthropic organization committed to helping our community. In addition to his full-time job, he can be found singing in the rain- and on stage- at Derby Dinner Playhouse.

Kirsten and Tyler are just two of the many exceptional artists who developed their crafts at NAFCS. Bravo to all our players of the stage and their accomplishments.

Kirsten Day (FCHS ‘00): ***Using her voice to bring joy to worldwide audiences***



After finishing a “Once on This Island” performance at Floyd Central, Kirsten Day returned home to resume her punishment. Her Chemistry grade, according to her mom and dad, was less-than-satisfactory, and so she was grounded. But when she entered the living room, Kirsten found her parents on the couch. Sam and Jackie Day had just returned from watching the musical and wept.

But why were they crying?

“You aren’t grounded anymore,” they told their daughter. “Just keep doing theater.”

They knew she had found her passion.

With the support of her family and her own hard work, determination and grit, Kirsten has built a successful acting career. From the theaters of New York to the recording studios of Los Angeles, the 2000 Floyd Central grad has gained recognition for her roles and discovered her voice.

Well, make that voices. Today, Kirsten thrives as a voice actress. Remember Barbie's little sister Skipper? Since 2018, the Georgetown, Indiana native brings the teen doll to life in "Barbie Dreamhouse Adventures". You also might hear her voice in your favorite video game. She's best known for playing the condescending and quirky Constance von Nuvelle in Fire Emblem Three Houses. With almost 70 acting credits, she's also had roles in "Demon Slayer", Madden NFL 21 and Final Fantasy Brave Exvius.

"What you learn eventually, as you keep doing it, is acting, is acting, is acting," Kirsten said. "Having a theater background really helps you break into the voiceover industry because you are already pretty fearless in front of people, and you're generally comfortable making bold choices. That's what it takes to be in animation."

But before she appeared on screens across America, a seven-year-old Kirsten auditioned for the musical "Clowns" at Mt. Tabor Elementary School. She was thrilled to get the part of Leah Ballerina and has been chasing that feeling of performing ever since.

"What always brought me the most joy was how much joy shows brought other people," Kirsten said. "I think I am in this business to make people happy or, if anything, to make people feel. Actors, that's basically why we do this, to make humans feel something." At Floyd Central High School, Kirsten honed her emerging talents with the help of theater director Chris Bundy. She also made new friends with other students in the program and found a place of acceptance and belonging both on and off the stage.

"The theater kids at Floyd Central High School changed my life forever," she said. "They gave me a place where I could fit in. They gave me a place where I could feel safe to be my weird little self, and I would not trade that experience for anything."

After graduating from Ball State University with degrees in acting and musical theater, Kirsten was enticed by the bright lights and even brighter opportunities of New York City. Here, she joined the first touring company of "Go, Diego, Go! Live" and performed nationwide, including to her hometown crowd at the Palace Theater in Louisville.

A decade and many roles later, she and her husband, sound mixer Steve Bucino, moved to Los Angeles, where she began concentrating on voice work. Along with the birth of their two children, the pair would also found Sound On Studio, a production company that offers voiceover training and demos to aspiring entertainers.

But Kirsten said all this success wouldn't have been possible without the support of her family.

"If there are any parents reading this who have a weird little kid who's interested in things you might not understand, like art or dancing or theater, I am begging you to support them and love them and let them be who they are," she said. "They can change the world if you let them shine."

Tyler Bliss (NAHS '05): *Pursuing his passion for philanthropy and the arts*

Full circle moments abound for Tyler Bliss.

Some are literal. Playing Don Lockwood, the lead character in the musical "Singing in the Rain," the 37-year-old taps and croons his way around the circular stage at Derby Dinner Playhouse in Clarksville. Tyler knows this theater well. Since he debuted at Derby Dinner in 2007, he's performed in roughly 20 shows. As candlestick Lumiere in "Beauty and the Beast," he even fell for his feather duster onstage love interest Megan Bliss on this spherical dais.

"We always say sparks flew. No pun intended," Tyler said.

A marriage and two kids later, this theater in the round has included Tyler's family circle. In the current musical, Megan choreographed the steps her husband and the other actors are executing. You can also catch his son and daughter acting in certain productions.

"Derby Dinner is an incredibly special place to me and so many other people who have grown up there, who have met their best friends in the world there, who have met their spouses there," said the 2005 New Albany High School grad. "We have this special place in our backyard where we can continue to do theater and do the things we love while maintaining a normal nine-to-five day job life."

And here is another full circle moment - his day job. Since November of 2024, Tyler has served as Executive Director of Caesars Foundation of Floyd County, an altruistic organization that betters the community by awarding grants to local nonprofits. Months after graduating from Indiana University Southeast in 2010 with marketing and business management degrees, he accepted an interim position at the foundation. This 6-month role marked the beginning of his career in the nonprofit sector.

"It feels good to be in a place like New Albany where we've got a lot of wonderful things," said Tyler, who also served as Executive Director of the New Albany Floyd County Education Foundation for 13 years. "It's just a great privilege to be in an organization like the Caesars Foundation where we can continue to make an impact and make changes for the better of everybody in the community."

But who impacted this future foundation leader's appreciation of philanthropy and the arts?

Tyler credits his grandfather, former New Albany City Councilman Richard Bliss, for teaching him the importance of public service.

Likewise, his grandmother, Mary Bliss, fostered his appreciation of the arts. From a young age, they attended plays and other artistic events. His parents also played an important role in supporting his love of theater.



“From the very beginning, it was clear that this was for me and was something that I love to do,” he said. “I’m so thankful that I have a career that provides sustainability and security and lots of wonderful things, but I also am able to creatively fulfill myself. Derby Dinner provides that.”

Tyler added that teachers also influenced his artistic development. From his Slate Run Elementary days, the actor remembered music teacher Jim Stanton obtaining classroom keyboards with a grant and teaching piano. Hazelwood Middle School introduced him to Ruth Bailey, the director of their show choir. And at NAHS, he flourished under the instruction of their choral director Linda DeRungs and theater director David Longest.

“I was just steeped in people around me who also had an interest in the arts and who encouraged me to explore a love for the arts as well,” Tyler said. “I had incredible mentors, teachers and art educators with a long path of art excellence that set hundreds, probably thousands of kids up for success.”

Investing in Mental Health: A Month to Reflect, A Year to Support

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

At the NAFC Education Foundation, we believe that academic success and emotional well-being go hand in hand. That’s why Mental Health Awareness Month is an important time to highlight the impact of our Mental Health Grants. These grants are made possible through the generosity of donors who care about the whole student.



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Since the grant initiative launched in 2022, the Foundation has funded projects across the NAFC schools. Grants have supported calm-down spaces, trauma-informed training, mindfulness programs, therapeutic tools, and school-wide initiatives that help students feel seen, supported, and safe.

These projects are more than helpful resources. They are making a real difference. Throughout May, we’ve been highlighting the impact of our Mental Health Grants, and we invite you to take a few moments to watch this short video showcasing the power of your support in action:

 **[WATCH: Our Mental Health Impact Video](#)**

As we reflect on Mental Health Month, we extend our deepest thanks to the donors, educators, and community partners who make this work possible. You are helping NAFC schools build a culture where Mental Health Matters.



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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.

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www.NAFCEdFoundation.org/alumni



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