

**NAFC**  
alumni



# LEGACY LEDGER

THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER OF LEGACY NAFC ALUMNI



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

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and it's a meaningful time to recognize the importance of student and educator well-being in our schools.

In 2023, the NAFC Education Foundation expanded our funding focus to include Mental Health Grants after educators identified this as a growing need across the district.

Since then, we have awarded more than 50 grants and invested over \$133,000 in mental health initiatives at all 16 NAFC Schools. These projects are helping create healthier, more supportive learning environments for students and educators.

We're grateful to the educators who continue to identify needs, seek solutions, and advocate for their students every day. Continue reading to learn more about some of the meaningful mental health projects happening across NAFC Schools.

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# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

*Amanda Beam, Guest Contributor*

Basketball is queen in Indiana, and our two alumni this month are several of the reasons why. While both women made their mark as athletes, their impact beyond the game remains one of their greatest achievements.

After being cut from nearly every sport in fifth grade, **Kelsy Taylor (NAHS '18)** refused to quit. Last year, the former New Albany High School standout returned home as the youngest head coach in program history, leading the Lady Bulldogs to one of Indiana's biggest upsets of the season and their first sectional game win in seven years.

The name **Missy Taylor Celichowski (FCHS '92)** still tops the Floyd Central record books more than 30 years after her playing days there ended. Yet her impact extends off the hardwood, where she has spent decades caring for others as a nurse, firefighter, coach and mother while building a legacy of love.

Thanks to both women for pursuing excellence in athletics and in life while continuing to inspire future generations.

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## Once cut, now coaching: Kelsy Taylor (NAHS '18) finds her way back home to NAHS

On the night of February 6, 2026, Kelsy Taylor went home and cried.

It was her first season as head coach of the New Albany High School girls' basketball team, bringing her back to the same hardwood where she once played. Her 4-18 squad was not expected to defeat Bedford North Lawrence in the sectional semifinals that night. The Stars, an Indiana powerhouse, had won 13 straight against the Lady Bulldogs, including a 23-point blowout earlier that season.

This time, though, was different.

Kelsy and her players had learned from their earlier mistakes. The first-year coach had also begun giving herself grace, easing the pressure she had carried throughout the season. In one of Indiana's biggest upsets of the season, New Albany stunned Bedford North Lawrence to earn its first sectional victory in seven years.

"It was just tears of joy. I was so thankful God had called my name out to be the coach, to be in this position," said the 2018 New Albany High School graduate. "To be the person [who] had to go through all the hard to experience this good, it was worth it."



Kelsy has never been one to take the easy route.

When her family moved from Louisville to New Albany during her fifth-grade year, she signed up for sport after sport at Scribner Middle School, hoping to find her place. Volleyball cut her. So did basketball, dance and soccer.

“I did not make a single team in fifth grade. I only did track because everyone makes it,” Kelsy said. “I was not good at any sport, to be honest. I just wanted to be part of a community.”

Still, she kept trying.

By sixth grade, she had earned spots on multiple teams. Through dedication and persistence, Kelsy went on to excel at New Albany High School in varsity basketball, golf and track, qualifying for state in the latter during her junior and senior years.

She was equally accomplished in the classroom. Inspired by her mother, the first in her family to graduate from college and later earn an MBA, Kelsy developed an early passion for business.

At Trine University, she found a way to combine that academic interest with her love of sports. During four years with the women’s basketball program, Kelsy recorded 794 points and 499 rebounds while helping lead the Thunder to the NCAA Division III Final Four in 2022.

But when she graduated from Trine later that year with a degree in marketing, Kelsy knew she was not finished. She still felt pulled toward basketball, as well as toward earning her MBA. Butler University gave her the opportunity to pursue both while using her COVID fifth year of NCAA eligibility.

There, she fulfilled a dream her father, who passed away during her senior year of high school, had always held for her: playing basketball at the Division I level. Using her COVID 5th year of eligibility, she deepened her understanding of the game from a coach’s perspective.

“At Butler, I was able to start thinking like a coach and to see the court differently and to see the defense differently,” she said. “And, I was able to make adjustments and help my teammates.”

After earning her MBA, Kelsy returned to New Albany, serving as an assistant coach for the NAHS girls basketball team. The following year, she relocated to Indianapolis to work for a nonprofit serving Indianapolis Public Schools. Still determined to build a career in coaching, she accepted positions as junior varsity head coach and assistant varsity coach at Westfield High School, where head coach Kelsey Steele became a mentor.

What Kelsy did not know was that a year later, at just 24 years old, she would become the youngest head coach in the history of the same basketball program she once played for.

“This is a marathon. It’s not a sprint,” Kelsy said of her first season. “I’m just learning and growing.”

Now back home teaching business and coaching at NAHS, Kelsy has returned to her roots while rediscovering the sense of community she spent years searching for. And she’s passing the lessons she’s learned throughout her journey to this next generation of female student-athletes.

“I always remind the girls after games that basketball is what you do; it’s not who you are,” Kelsy said. “As long as you’re getting better, you’re becoming a better person. That’s what I want for the girls.”



# From record books to emergency rooms: Missy Taylor Celichowski (FCHS '92) leaves a lasting legacy



For 34 years, Floyd Central High School has seen generations of athletes come and go, yet Missy Taylor Celichowski's name still echoes across the hardwood of her alma mater.

No one has surpassed the 1,663 career points she scored there, and no other female Highlander has earned a spot on the Indiana All-Star team as she did during her senior season.

Just down the road from Georgetown Elementary School, where her mother taught for 39 years, her father worked the scoreboard and she attended class, you can find a town park basketball court bearing her name. Her signature stretches along the sideline, a constant presence as a new generation of players hoop beside it.

"My whole life, I've lived within a mile of my [childhood] house," said the 6-foot-6 former center. "When Georgetown did that, I was really extremely proud, because I am the only girl around here that's made it that far and got those achievements."

On the opposite side of the court, serendipitously, Joe Hinton's name is etched. The legendary coach helped shape Missy's game after her mother enrolled her in his basketball camp when she was 5 years old. She was the only girl there.

"My mom took my brother, and Joe Hinton saw me. We were sitting on the sidelines, and I was dribbling up and down the court, and he's like, 'Get that girl out here,'" Missy said. "So that's where it started."

Following her decorated high school career, Missy spent a year playing basketball and volleyball at Oakland City University before deciding it was not the right fit. She returned home and continued her education at Ivy Tech Community College.

But basketball is only part of Missy's story. Her impact away from the court has continued to shape the community she's always called home.

First and foremost, Missy will tell you, she is a wife and mother of three. Her children remain her proudest accomplishments. Her son, 2022 FCHS graduate Wes, plays basketball at the United States Air Force Academy, a Division I program.

"He was always looked over as a young kid ... he wasn't the best and he wasn't the fastest and he wasn't picked for everything," Missy said. "And I always kept telling him, don't give up. You have it in you."

Her daughter, 2023 FCHS alum Callie Jo, followed a similar athletic path as her mother. While Missy helped lead Floyd Central volleyball to the state finals in 1990, Callie Jo and FC went to the final four in 2022. She also helped Grace College win the last three National Christian College Athletic Association national championships.

Tyler Bye, Missy's oldest, is also a 2015 FC alum. He and his wife Sam have three-year-old Isabella and one-year-old Jameson, who Grandma Missy adores.

In addition to her devotion to her family, the Highlander legend also enjoys caring for others.

At 30 years old, while raising three children and working the night shift, Missy returned to college.

"Your age doesn't matter, because I was 30 when I got my nursing degree," Missy said. "Just never, never give up on your dreams and never give up on your goals and what you want to accomplish in life."

Over the past 24 years, she has cared for patients in the emergency room at Baptist Health Floyd, first as an ER tech, and then as a registered nurse. She has also served as one of the few female firefighters in Georgetown, as well as working as an EMT medic and a search-and-rescue worker.

And while she may not have been playing anymore, Missy's time on the court evolved. She and her husband Jim coached many of their kids' teams through the years. And in 2017, Missy received the special honor of being named to the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame's Silver Anniversary team, cementing an already storied basketball legacy.

"You never give up on life," said Missy. "Things change, and your dreams can change, but never stop dreaming."



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# Mental Health Grants Continue to Support NAFC Students and Staff

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month, the NAFC Education Foundation is proud to share that Mental Health Grants continue to support meaningful projects across our schools.

So far in the 2026 grant cycle, the Foundation has approved **\$31,357.27 in Mental Health Grant funding** for projects that will be carried out throughout the calendar year. These grants support a wide range of needs, from calming spaces and sensory supports to hygiene stations, student clothing resources, kindness initiatives, self-love retreats, therapy dog expenses, and programs focused on safety, inclusion, and emotional well-being.

Some of this year's approved projects include the **Highlander Wellness Hub** at Floyd Central High School, a calming space designed to help high school students reset during the school day; a **Reset & Reconnect Room** and classroom calm-down kits at Floyds Knobs Elementary; and **Building Calm, Connected Kindergarten Classrooms** at Fairmont Elementary, which will provide trauma-informed resources to support young students' emotional regulation, focus, and coping skills.



This year, the Foundation also introduced a shorter application option for several pre-certified programs that are already making an impact in schools, including **Play It Safe!®, LOOK OUT FOR THE LEFT OUT, B.A.Y.A. “Beautiful As You Are”, and The DUDE Project**. These programs give educators another way to bring meaningful mental health support directly to students.

For our alumni, this is a powerful reminder of how your support continues to shape the NAFC experience for today's students. The schools you remember are still places where teachers and staff go above and beyond for kids. Through the generosity of donors, the Education Foundation can say yes to more of those ideas, helping educators respond to the needs they see every day.

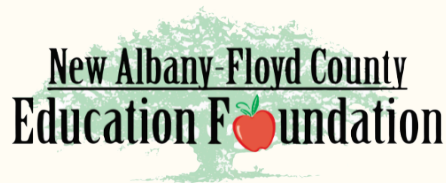
Mental Health Grants are open to all NAFC staff, with up to **\$5,000 available per project, with \$75,000 available for 2026 grants**. Funding may be used anytime during the 2026 calendar year, giving schools the flexibility to support students now and plan ahead for the fall.

Every grant represents more than a funded project. It represents a student who has a place to calm down, a classroom that feels more connected, a child who feels included, or a young person who has access to the resources they need to move forward with confidence.



► Alumni Royal Court Nominations

► 2026 Golf Scramble Sponsorships



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](http://www.NAFCEdFoundation.org/alumni)



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