

# THE WATCHDOG

2023 FALL EDITION

Watchdog

FOUNDATION



## Cultivating Lifelong Ties: Alums Connections



As an integral part of the Watchdog Foundation's mission, we want to make strong, mutually beneficial ties between the school district and its diverse alums. This summer, we embarked on a journey to reconnect with alums who had been recipients of the Shanna Rae Christensen Memorial Scholarship (SRCMS) and had graduated between 2011 and 2022. The Watchdog Foundation awarded the SRCMS to Beresford seniors pursuing health care, education, or rehabilitation studies. The scholarship has been a source of financial support, contributing a cumulative total of \$19,450 in 12 years. The average award amount per recipient thus far has been \$500.

Our outreach strategy encompassed a range of communication channels, including text messages, emails, and social media platforms. Notably, the involvement of the recipients' parents played a crucial role in facilitating these connections. Thanks, Mom and Dad! The response was overwhelming, with over 75% of the contacted alums sharing their stories and many expressing heartfelt gratitude for the financial assistance they received.

Remarkably, 84% of the alums stayed true to their original intentions, either establishing themselves in their chosen careers or continuing their education journeys in healthcare or education. Many of these Beresford alumni decided to pursue higher education in South Dakota, with over one-third choosing to live, work, and raise their families within the state.

### In the realm of healthcare, the stories of our alums paint a diverse and inspiring picture:

- Nurses who thrive in a variety of roles ranging, from orthopedics and trauma to female pelvic medicine, to working with COVID patients their first year as a nurse, while another is leading other RNs in a managerial role.
- A Speech Therapist who makes a difference by working with deaf students and another embarking on a master's program in speech therapy as well as one entering physical therapy school to earn a doctorate.

- Flourishing careers in nutrition and sports dietetics to assist athletes in achieving their performance goals.
- Various roles, including research assistants, chiropractic assistants, dental assistants, certified nurse assistants, and laboratory technicians, showcase our alums' breadth of impact.
- One alumnus is on the verge of completing an Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine residency, paving the way for a future in medical practice.

### On the education front, Beresford alums have ventured into diverse roles:

- Teachers spanning K-12 special education, 7th grade, 6th grade math, physical education, K-8 reading, and elementary art are shaping young minds.
- Coaches are fostering a culture of growth, collaboration, and resilience.

### Beyond these pursuits, our alums have explored other careers:

- Successful business ownership has become a reality for one.
- Another has found a meaningful role in the state attorney's office, serving as a victim witness assistant.
- Specializations in psychology, criminal justice, and medical law highlight the breadth of academic pursuits our alums have embraced.

### The voices of our alums resonate through their quotes:

- "Being a nurse has been the most rewarding experience, and I wouldn't trade any of my experiences. Your family's scholarship fund helped me achieve my dreams of becoming a nurse today, and I'm so thankful!"
- "The scholarship has supported me in paying for an education (elementary education) that has challenged me in many ways."
- "Thank you again for all you do with this memorial scholarship. It means a lot to every recipient!"

If you're an alum interested in sharing your journey, please [fill out our form](#) and someone from our team will contact you. Let's continue to celebrate the remarkable journeys our alums are forging and strengthen the bonds that make our Beresford community truly exceptional.

# Year in Review

## May / June / July



Mrs. Rhonda Peterson and Mrs. Kaye Kennedy were recognized by the Beresford School District for their 35 years of service. Mrs. Peterson retired after the 2022-2023 school year. Mrs. Kennedy continues to serve our learners at Beresford Elementary School.



During their inaugural season, the Watchdog softball team qualified for the State tournament in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The Watchdogs finished in 7th place. Brenna Dann was named to the All-Tournament Team, and Keely Merrigan was named a South Dakota All-State Selection at Catcher.

In State track, Joseph Sharpe placed 14th in the discus, the boys medley relay placed 6th (Gaval Valder, Peyton Fridrich, Brody Andrews, and Andrew Atwood), Jade Rhody placed 24th in the girls high jump, Peyton Fridrich placed 18th in the boys triple jump, Andrew Atwood placed 3rd in the boys 800 meter (breaking Mike Sebern's school record by running a 1:55.84), Peyton Fridrich placed 10th in the boys long jump, and Andrew Atwood placed 12th in the boys 1600 meter run.

Mrs. Jessica Paopao was named the 2023 Union County Child Advocate of the Year. She earned the award because of her commitment to educating and shaping the lives of the children and families in the Beresford School District and Union County.

Mrs. Ann Tornberg was named the 2023 Middle School National Speech and Debate Coach of the Year.



Kaia Bear, Juliann Seeley, and Maiya Muller qualified for the State A Golf Tournament at Meadowbrook Golf Course! Our golfers were coached by Mr. Brad Muller. The Watchdogs enjoyed success at State Golf with two senior medalists (Maiya Muller - Tied for 7th, Juliann Seeley - Tied for 12th) and one hole-in-one (Kaia Bear - 59th).



The Beresford High School and Middle School Speech Team won several honors at the National Speech and Debate Tournament held in Phoenix, AZ, June 13-16, 2023. Two Beresford high school students and eleven middle school students competed, joining over 7,000 students from across the United States.



Together we aspire,  
act, and achieve!



Academics  
& Achievements



Fine Arts





Athletics



Distinguished  
Service




 Megan DeLay (breakaway roping and team roping), Andrew VanKekerix (team roping), Sylar Carlson (saddle bronc and team roping), and Taten Twedt (tie-down roping and team roping) represented Watchdog Nation at the South Dakota High School Rodeo Association Finals Rodeo.


 Board Member Russell Johnson finished his third consecutive term on July 10, 2023. Mr. Johnson served on various committees during his tenure. Most recently, Mr. Russell Johnson served on the Budget/ Negotiations Committee, the Technology Committee, and as an alternate board representative for the Southeast Area Cooperative. In addition to Mr. Johnson's service, Russell demonstrated servant leadership with his eagerness and selflessness when volunteering to help the District.



 Juliann Seeley placed in the Top 10 at the HOSA International Leadership Conference in the Sports Medicine event.


## August

 The Beresford School District welcomed 675 students to school on Thursday, August 24, 2023.

 Peyton Fridrich (Class of 2023) won the SDATA Iron Will Award. This award is given to one athlete in South Dakota, college or high school, who returned to action after a serious athletic injury. After suffering a complete ACL tear and meniscus tear, Peyton rushed for 12TDs and almost 1000 yards last season, helping the Watchdogs to a state semifinal appearance.



## September

 Senior students voted for the 2023 Royal Court. Queen Candidates were Mya Bak, Megan DeLay, Hailey Hamm, Tessa Henderson, and Larissa Lyle. King Candidates were Andrew Atwood, Jonathan DeLay, Marshall Lyle, Cameron Strom, and Robert Watkins)

 Beresford High School students selected Larissa Lyle as Homecoming Queen and Marshall Lyle as Homecoming King.





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Community businesses decorated their establishments for the annual decorating contest. Beresford High School Royalty selected the following: Best Overall: Beresford Veterinary Clinic, Most Original: ACE Hardware, and Best Watchdog Theme: The Parlour.



The 6th Watchdog Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held on September 23, 2023, at Bridges of Beresford.

## October

The Beresford FFA Chapter served meals in their annual "Feed the Farmer" event at Union Grove, Poet, and the Farmers Cooperative (photograph courtesy of Bergen Hansen, 4H).



Dustin Maas and Kaden Anderson qualified for the State Golf Tournament in Rapid City, South Dakota (Hart Ranch). Mr. Riley Danielsen coaches the golf team. Dustin medaled with a 24th place finish. Kaden finished 27th.



Mrs. Ashley Halvorson was named a 2023 Governor's Awards Recipient. The award is given to an individual or organization (public or private) in recognition of extraordinary contributions to developing and providing a program to assist students with disabilities as they transition from school to adult life. On October 30, 2023, Mrs. Halvorson received her award from Governor Kristi Noem in Pierre, South Dakota.





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Haley Huot, Allie Westra, Larissa Lyle, Kylie Mockler, Laney Andrews, Emma Andrews, Max Josko, Alex Sorensen, Levi Gillespie, and Dustin Maas represented Watchdog Nation at All-State Choir in Rapid City, South Dakota. Mrs. Schmeling is their Director.

## November



The Beresford School District partnered with the Beresford VFW and American Legion for our annual Veterans Day Program. Beresford High School student Elena "Laney" Andrews delivered the keynote address.



The middle and high school vocal ensembles performed on Monday, November 6, 2023. Mrs. Kristin Schmeling directs our 6-12 choirs. Our grade six band started the concert by performing three selections for the crowd. Mrs. Ariana Fickbohm directs the grade six band.



The BHS Theater presented "One Christmas Eve at Evergreen Mall" by Halliday, Hindman, Hutton, and Pospisil. Dr. Merriman directed the production.



Hailey and Aidan Hamm demonstrated servant leadership via a t-shirt fundraiser and dodgeball tournament for Viborg-Hurley's Kobee Sherman. Hailey organized the dodgeball tournament fundraiser. Aidan organized the t-shirt drive, which raised over \$1620 for the Sherman family.



Watchdog Nation was represented at the 2023 State Cross Country meet on October 21, 2023, by Ella Merriman (finished 72nd), Hunter Penn (finished 51st), and Espyn Klungseth (finished 53rd).



The Watchdog Football Team finished their regular season with a 56-6 victory over Lakota Tech. The team finished with a 2-7 record.



The Watchdog Volleyball Team dropped their Region match against Canton on October 31, 2023. The Watchdogs finished the year with a 2-28 record.

**Did you know...** if you are interested in watching our home activities and concerts online, you can check out the action at [www.watchdogs.live!](http://www.watchdogs.live!) For a detailed listing of upcoming events, check out the Beresford School District's [website](#).

[WatchdogFoundation.org](http://WatchdogFoundation.org)



@watchdogfdn



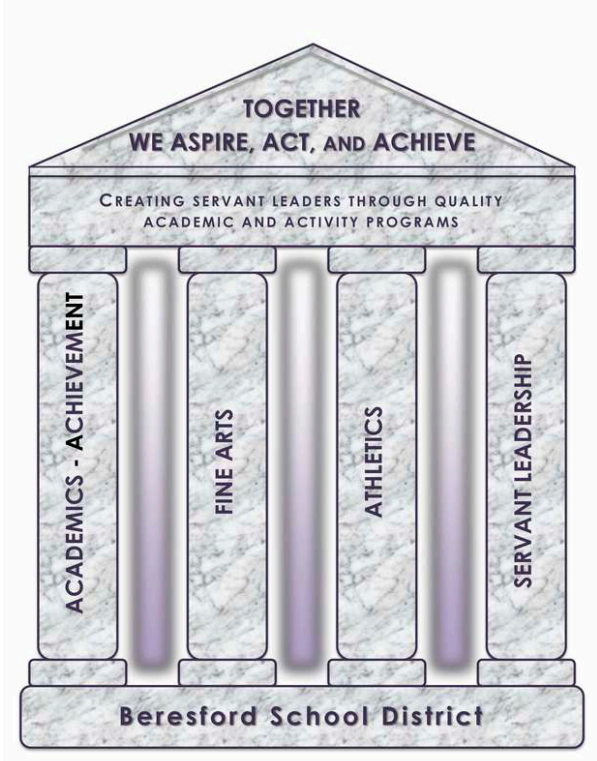
# Help Us Live Our Mission And Vision!

The Watchdog Foundation funds support BHS alums and Beresford School District educators and students through scholarships and grants. The [Watchdog Foundation](#) provides innovative teaching grants, special programs, mini-grants, and scholarships, including the Shanna Rae Christensen Memorial Scholarship. We've awarded 37 scholarships through the Shanna Rae Christensen Memorial Scholarship and over \$40,500 for innovative education grants.

The Watchdog Foundation accepts memorials for loved ones who have passed away. Memorial funds can go to the Shanna Rae Christensen Memorial Scholarship fund or the Watchdog Foundation fund. Memorials and monetary gifts sent to the Watchdog Foundation immortalize the legacy of loved ones and friends. After the memorial is deposited, you will receive a donation statement from the South Dakota Community Foundation for tax purposes.




Invest in the cause by making a donation online ([DONATE NOW](#)) or by mailing your investment to Beresford School District (c/o Watchdog Foundation) at 301 West Maple Street, Beresford, SD 57004



# Watchdog Hall of Fame

The sixth Watchdog Hall of Fame induction ceremony was held on Saturday, September 23, 2023, at 7 pm (Bridges of Beresford). At 6 pm, inductees, friends, family, and community members enjoyed a catered banquet. **Dr. Robin Brown** (Academics), **Mr. Ove Hanson** (Fine Arts), **Mr. Ed Westberg** (Fine Arts), **Mr. David Dolan** (Athletics), and School Board Members – **Robert "Bob" Kennedy**, **Gordon "Gordy" Tornberg**, **Susan "Sue" Christensen** (Distinguished Service), and the **1956 Football Team** were inducted into the Watchdog Hall of Fame.

 Looking to nominate someone for the Hall of Fame? Fill out our [form here!](#)