

## **Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees:**

**Ellie (Blankenship) Reagan** – Ellie is a 2007 graduate of Kennedy High School. As a Cougar, Ellie was a three sport athlete participating in volleyball, basketball, and tennis. She was incredibly successful in all three sports. In volleyball, Ellie was a three-year starter and letter winner for Coach Michelle Goodall, earning multiple all-conference and all-metro awards. She was 2<sup>nd</sup> team all-state her senior season in 2006 and was selected to participate in the Senior All-Star Volleyball Classic at the conclusion of that campaign. For Coach Dennis Roloff's basketball team, Ellie was a two-year starter and letter winner as well as serving as a team captain her senior season. She was selected to the all-district team in 2007 and invited to participate in the Senior All-Star Basketball Game at the end of the season. Playing tennis for Hall of Fame coach, Vance Fuller, Ellie was a varsity player her entire career, although she missed her sophomore season due to an injury. She was a two-time state qualifier in the doubles competition, qualifying in 2006 and 2007, and she has been a part some of Kennedy's most successful teams on the court. The Cougars were state runner-up her sophomore and junior seasons and capped things off her senior spring with a state team championship in 2007. Ellie was recognized as Kennedy's Senior Athlete of the Year in 2007 and earned multiple recognitions at the state and conference level for academic excellence as an athlete.

Ellie continued her athletic career on the volleyball court for the University of Northern Iowa. Blankenship shined as a libero for the Panthers where she was a four-year starter. Her teams were two-time conference champions and four-time NCAA tournament qualifiers. She earned MVC Libero of the Year for UNI her senior season in 2010 and was an AVCA third team all-American. She was recognized as the NCAA Division-I women's volleyball senior student-athlete of the year when she was selected as the Lowe's Senior CLASS award winner in 2010. This honor recognizes a player the best exhibits excellence on and off the court in four areas – community, classroom, character, and competition. Following UNI, Ellie was a member of the USA Volleyball women's national team in 2011, playing for legendary USA volleyball icons Hugh McCutcheon and Karch Kiraly. She also played professionally in for VC-Triol in Innsbruck, Austria, from August to May, 2012.

Looking back on her high school experiences, Ellis is not quite sure how she juggled it all – zero through 6<sup>th</sup> hour of class, followed by all of the practices and games. States Blakenship, “High school sports are challenging because, unlike college, you do not ‘recruit’. You are confined to the talent that is within the walls of your school. It challenges you as a teammate and athlete to make those people around you better and to perform your best to represent your school in the best way possible. As an athlete, you want to be able to tell people you played for Kennedy and have them respect the name and recognize a great program.” She most remembers being a part of Kennedy's first state championship in tennis in 2007 in come-from-behind fashion, as well as qualifying for the state volleyball tournament in 2005, an event she dreamed of playing in from when she was just beginning to play youth volleyball. She credits high school sports for so many of the lessons learned that have prepared her for challenges later in life, both in athletics and in all aspects of her career.

Ellie has since settled in Colorado, where she and her husband, Tyler, live in Denver. She is currently working for PharMerica Pharmacy as a Team Lean in the admissions department. They love Colorado's never-ending adventures and outdoor activities, including skiing, biking, running, and rafting. She hiked her first 14,000 foot summit last year and has plans for many more.

**Please welcome to the Cougar Athletic Hall of Fame – Ellie (Blankenship) Reagan.**

**Jade Grimm** – Jade is a member of the Class of 2009. At Kennedy, Jade was an exceptional soccer player who achieved the highest of honors and accolades, both individually and as a member of some tremendous teams on the pitch. The Kennedy soccer team experienced an amazing run of four straight state championship game appearances during her career, under the direction of head coaches Sean McCoy and Homer Screws. The Cougars were runners-up in 2006, 2007, and 2008, and capped off that run with an undefeated State Championship in 2009. These teams were blessed with talent, none more instrumental in their success than

Grimm. Jade was a four-time 1<sup>st</sup> team all-conference player, selected three times as the MVC Player of the Year, and two times as the Metro Player of the Year. She earned elite all-state status three times in 2007 through 2009, was the Iowa Gatorade Player of the Year in 2007 and 2009, and was selected an NSCAA High School All-American. At the conclusion of her senior campaign, she was ranked as one of the top 100 players in the nation. She finished her career as Kennedy's career goals leader with 130 as well as Kennedy's career assist leader with 77. Grimm was selected as Kennedy's female Athlete of the Year in 2009. Throughout all of this, Jade maintained outstanding academic performance, earning multiple all-conference and all-state academic athlete awards.

After her career at Kennedy, Jade continued on the pitch at the University of Iowa, where she excelled both in soccer and in the classroom. As a Hawkeye, she earned a spot on the Big 10 all-freshman team and the Big 10 all-tournament team her senior year. Grimm was a member of the Big 10 all-academic team for three years and earned academic all-conference her sophomore through senior seasons.

Reflecting on her high school athletic career, Jade cherishes her senior season in which they were undefeated and State Champions. The build up to that amazing season of three straight runner-up finishes and the lessons learned in that process is also a part of that great high school memory. States Grimm, "My athletic experiences helped prepare me for medical school by giving me a competitive spirit and it taught me to set goals and drive to achieve them."

Grimm has now set her sights on a career in medicine. She is currently enrolled at the University of Iowa College of Medicine. She has volunteered at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, and the Community Health Outreach Program at Carver College of Medicine. She is also an assistant soccer coach at Regina High School.

**Please join me in welcoming to the Cougar Athletic Hall of Fame – Jade Grimm.**

**Amy Wold** – Amy is a 2004 graduate of Kennedy High School. A two-sport athlete for the Cougars, Wold participated in basketball under head coach Dennis Roloff and softball under head coaches Steve Johnson and Janette Stecker. She patrolled center field in the summer as a part of the softball program, making an impact immediately as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader and earning four varsity letters through her junior year. She earned first team all-conference honors in the summer of 2003. Wold excelled on the hardwood as a part of some very memorable Cougar basketball teams, including a perfect 21-0 regular season record during the 2003-04 season. She was a three-year letter winner for Coach Roloff, earning first team all-metro, all-conference, and all-state honors in both her junior and senior campaigns. The team made state tournament appearances in both of those seasons. As a senior, Wold was named the MVC Player of the Year and was the Iowa Prep Report Class 4A Player of the Year.

Wold continued her basketball career at the collegiate level, first playing for national junior college powerhouse, Kirkwood College. Those teams finished 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, respectively, at the NJCAA National Tournaments in her freshman and sophomore seasons. She earned first team all-region in her sophomore year for the Eagles. After Kirkwood, Amy transferred to Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA, to play basketball for the Hawks. She was named the team's most improved player at the conclusion of her senior season.

As she looked back on her time at Kennedy, Amy states, "I remember the teammates and coaches and the everlasting relationships that I made while at Kennedy. My senior year going 21-0 through the regular season and the state tournament appearances will be something I will always cherish and remember. Kennedy athletics helped prepare me for my career by teaching me about dedication and hardwork...in setting goals and achieving those goals."

Amy now lives in Denver, Colorado, where she works at the Eating Recovery Center. She enjoys the vast array of outdoor activities, as well as traveling to visit family and friends.

**Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome to the Cougar Athletic Hall of Fame – Amy Wold**

**Al Feickert –**

**Please join us in welcoming to the Cougar Athletic Hall of Fame – Al Feickert.**

**Ryan Prahm –**

**Please welcome to the Cougar Athletic Hall of Fame – Ryan Prahm.**

**Joe Slaton –**

**Please join me in welcoming to the Cougar Athletic Hall of Fame – Joe Slaton.**

**Booster Hall of Fame Inductee:**

**Ken Terukina –**

**Ken – we thank you for your past, present, and future service to Kennedy High School and Cougar Athletics and we welcome you to the Cougar Booster Hall of Fame.**

**Coach/Administrator Hall of Fame Inductee:**

**Dr. Mary Wilcynski –**

**Dr. W – there are no words large enough to say thank you for the positive impact you have had on the many students, athletes, coaches, and families over the years. We hope tonight's recognition and addition to the Hall of Fame is a small token of our true appreciation. Welcome to the Cougar Hall of Fame.**