

Louis E. Dieruff High School Alumni Association Newsletter

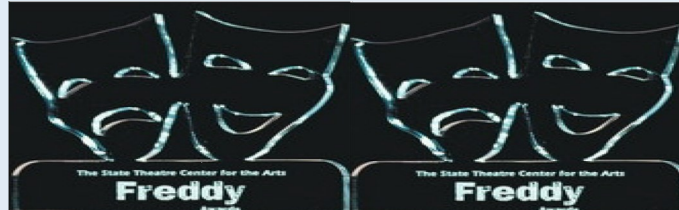


Volume 1, Issue 10

DHSAlumniNews@ptd.net

June, 2016

Dieruff Wins 2nd Consecutive Freddy Award



Back To Back For Best Overall Production

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"WE CAN DO IT" was the reprise in the Mel Brooks musical comedy "The Producers" based on the 1968 movie of the same name. After the successful "In the Heights" brought Dieruff High School its first ever FREDDY AWARD for Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical last year, "The Producers" proved to be a more daring show to produce. But with a plot consisting of Nazis, dancing old ladies, a way to "keep it gay" and a scheme to make money, Dieruff did do it again becoming the first school since the Freddys inception in 2003 to have a back to back winner for Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical.

On the night of the 2016 Freddy Awards, Dieruff captured five Freddys and were nominated for nine others. Precious Correa won for Outstanding Performance by a Female Ensemble Member and Dedrik Ramos won Outstanding Featured Performance by an Actor. The overall show won three Freddys for Outstanding Choreography, Outstanding Production Number and the earlier mentioned Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical.

Congratulations to the outstanding Theater Department on your success and here's to many more Freddys to come!

***This just in to the news department...the 2017 musical will be the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice classic rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar".



The cast of "The Producers" performing on stage at the State Theater during the 2016 Freddy Awards



President's Message

John G. Hughes, Jr. '61

A warm welcome to the Class of '16

If you know anyone in the Dieruff Class of 2016, please let them know there is no need to "join" the Dieruff Alumni Association. In fact, there is no need for any Dieruff graduate to "join" the association.

As soon as any Dieruff student moves that tassel from the right side of the mortarboard to the left at Commencement, he or she becomes a Dieruff graduate... and automatically becomes a member of our Alumni Association.

Commencement for this year's graduating class is scheduled for June 19th at the PPL Center in Allentown. About 430 students will accomplish that tassel move, and will attain membership in our association.

The relationship between the Class of 2016 and our association has been one of mutual admiration and respect. This class has been with us since our beginning four years ago, and we have been with them.

The Class of 2016 has appreciated our support at AFROTC drill competitions and at athletic events. They have enjoyed our nurturing at the association-sponsored CAD and Sew What? Clubs. They have relished our applause at plays, concerts, and pep rallies. The list goes on and on.

And we have been proud to watch them grow and develop, rejoicing in their brilliant accomplishments. We've cheered for a football team that recorded four straight victories over their cross-town rival. We have saluted an AFROTC Drill Team that captured first-place trophies at National competitions. We have been honored as the Dieruff Band performed at Carnegie Hall in NYC, and as a Husky Track Star shattered regional records in the 100 yard hurdles, and then won a bronze medal at states. We have stood in admiration as the Dieruff Drama Department established remarkable standards of performance for high school musical theatre. Back-to-back Freddy Awards for Outstanding Performance of a Musical has been unprecedented, until now. During the last four years, we have witnessed members of the Class of 2016 embrace the Dieruff Spirit and show their Husky Pride. Last month, our scholarship committee was challenged to select the top four recipients of our School Spirit Scholarships.

It was with honor and delight that my wife, Jinny, and I accepted an invitation to



represent the Alumni Association at the Class of 2016 Senior Prom, held on June 3 at the Woodstone Country Club. The event was a joyous celebration of Husky Pride. We were embraced by administration, faculty, and students. Throughout the evening, we received thanks for the support, guidance, and encouragement that the Alumni Association has provided during the last four years.

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I welcome the Class of 2016 as new members of the Dieruff High School Alumni Association.



Collage by John G. Hughes, Jr. '61

Alumni Profile — Jessica Riedy Harris '91

Joanne Ogrydziak '76

With Graduation Day approaching and this year's seniors soon becoming our newest members, the LED Alumni Association would like to recognize one of our own who has played a vital role in the formation of those students. In her sixteenth year as an educator and advisor at Dieruff High School, Jessica Riedy Harris '91 is this month's honored alumna.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with "Jess," a multi-tasking busy mom who often attends our monthly meetings with her little boy, Colby. She is a very active participant who expressed a fervent desire to launch an alumni association along with Dieruff's 50th Birthday celebration back in 2009. A twelve-year mentor emerita for the Huskies' Student Council, Jessica currently serves in the Parent/Teacher Organization and as a co-advisor to this year's freshmen, the Class of 2019. During intermission of Dieruff's sold-out theatrical presentations, she can also be found at the front of the long concession stand lines as the manager of the School Store, a duty she has performed for ten years.

As a child who grew up in the heart of Allentown near Bucky Boyle Park, Jessica always wanted to be a teacher and focused her studies on music and math. Following her 1995 graduation from Penn State University, she taught in the Northampton Area and Reading School Districts for five years before landing her "first choice" at Dieruff High School. Returning to her beloved alma mater in the Fall of 2000, Jessica began her ASD tenure as an educator in the mathematics department and currently instructs the Husky ninth-graders. During the upcoming school term, she will teach Advanced Placement Calculus to students in the accelerated program.

Although her required school schedule ends at 2:50 pm, Jessica often remains in her classroom until 5:30 pm to be available to assist her students who seek additional tutoring. (I recall a time



when she graciously opened up the School Store – after school hours – just for me to be able to "shop" for Dieruff shirts during Husky Football season.) Besides her educational dedication to her pupils, Jessica is also committed to supporting our young Huskies in their sporting events and extra-curricular pursuits. She regularly attends their events and is one of their most loyal advocates. As someone who has experienced hardship and loss, Jessica shares those experiences with her students to remind them that they, too, can overcome difficult circumstances to achieve their goals and realize their dreams. A devoted educator who does not seek personal gain nor recognition, she sincerely speaks from the heart when she recalls, with special memories of her former students, the reasons for which she became a teacher.

Whether in the classroom or at an alumni festivity, Jessica Riedy Harris '91 authenticates the true spirit of Husky Pride. The LED Alumni Association is proud to salute and thank her for her steadfast dedication to Dieruff High School and to today's students.



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Dieruff Celebrates 57th Annual Graduation

Kay Kurtz '74

On Sunday evening, June 19, 2016, 436 students from the Class of 2016 received their diplomas at the PPL Center in downtown Allentown to an arena filled with family, friends, faculty and fellow alumni.



Graduate Joemichael Luciano receives his diploma from Dieruff Principal Susan Bocian

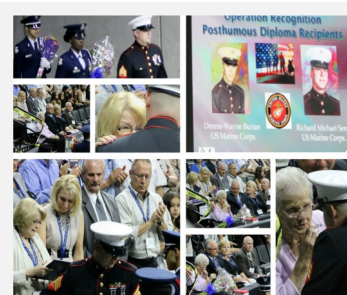
Once again, the tradition of having alumni lead the processional march of students into the arena was given to the Class of 1966 who celebrates their 50th Reunion this year.

The 2016 Recipient of the Honored Dieruff Alumni Award was presented to Mr. Andre D. Reed, Dieruff High School Class of 1981 and 2014 Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee.

The Honored Dieruff Alumni Award recognizes Louis E. Dieruff graduates who have made significant contributions to their community and who have attained a measure of accomplishment and success in their life endeavors. These men and women serve as esteemed representatives of all Dieruff graduates, and they continue to exemplify those ideals that portray the true meaning of Husky Pride – service, honor, commitment, integrity and character.

Previous recipients include Thomas J. Turczyn, Esq. '60, James E. Moniz, '90, Frederick R. Schuler, Jr. '73, Joanne E. Jackson Bauer '64, John G. Hughes, Jr. '61 and Raymond E. Reppert '76.

In his acceptance speech, Andre spoke to the graduates about their capability to achieve goals and dreams if they commit themselves to hard work, dedication and make good decisions. Although Andre resides in the San Diego area, he considers Allentown his home and is still "a kid from the South Side". This statement brought cheers and some jeers (only from the East Siders).



Collage by John G. Hughes, Jr. '61

During a touching moment of the program, a presentation was given to family members of recipients of the Operation Recognition Program. Operation Recognition is a program through the Department of Military Affairs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania which allows school districts to grant honorary diplomas to individuals who left school prior to graduation for military service.

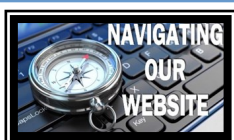


Richard Seng '67

This year's inaugural recipients were presented posthumously to Dennis Wayne Burian, USMC (Class of 1968) and Richard Michael Seng, USMC (Class of 1967). Both were killed in action during the Vietnam War in 1968. Sharon Burian Antrim '66 accepted the diploma on behalf of her brother and Mrs. Mary Seng, 96-year-old mother accepted the diploma on behalf of her son. The diplomas were presented by a USMC serviceman and bouquets of flowers were presented by two AFJROTC cadets.



Dennis Burian '68



Kay Kurtz '74

As site administrator, I've received requests from day one from alumni wanting to know how to review class rosters, lists of registered classmates, who's coming to a reunion/event, etc. All this information is at your fingertips and can be found under the CLASSMATE PROFILES section.

How to view class rosters:

Click on **CLASSMATE PROFILES** found on the top margin of homepage. Scroll down to any year.

Click on a year – Information will appear for the specific year you selected

An Alumnus Profiles Box appears which reflects the following information:

- How Many Alumni in a Specific Class are registered
- Deceased classmates (In Memory)
- How Many Contain an In Memory obituary
- How Many with Military Service

You can click on any of these selections for more specific information. From this section you can click on "Show Alumnus Photos" – this will display all yearbook photos in alphabetic order. For more information on a certain classmate click on their name...It's that easy!

Next month – How to order online event tickets.

Husky Alumni Grant Scholarships

Kalean Wagner '90

May 25, 2016 was a memorable day for a host of Dieruff seniors. Held in the high school's auditorium, the Troika Academic Awards Ceremony paid tribute to well over 100 members of the Class of 2016.

The Dieruff Alumni Association presented "School Spirit Scholarships" to four deserving students. Our scholarship committee had a challenging job selecting the recipients from a total of 16 highly qualified candidates.

Although academics were considered in the selection process, school spirit was of paramount importance. Candidates submitted essays on School Spirit, as well as letters of recommendation from faculty members, transcripts, and application forms outlining personal spirit, scholastic and extracurricular activities, and activities outside of school.

Chosen for the Alumni Association School Spirit Scholarships were Tiana Vega-Cosme, who will attend East Stroudsburg University, Kylie Shiffert, headed for Bloomsburg University, Alfred Fustakgi, slated for Moravian College, and Jack Yacoub, enrolled at Penn State. Each of these recipients expressed their sincere gratitude to the Alumni Association.

During the Troika Awards, many other scholarships were presented. Tyrone Reed, Class of 1980, and his mother Joyce Hemerly Reed-Ebling, Class of 1962, represented the Andre Reed Foundation and presented \$1,500 scholarships to Katie Alvarez and Tariq Jarrah.

Another noteworthy scholarship was the Richard A. King Memorial



Wrestling Award, presented by Richard King, Jr. and Rita Yost King. Rafi Birro received the award.

Our Alumni Association has plans to continue fund raising efforts to ensure that we will be able to make the School Spirit Scholarships an annual tradition.

Kiska's Korner

By Kiska V w/Karen Coleman

"We can do it, we can do it!" So they did. Sending HUSKY PRIDE to all those who made "The Producers" such a success. It was awesome and Mom really loved the Kiska cameo. Two years in a row, best overall musical. Way to go huskies!

But with all that singing, I was inspired. Misha and I met with the cast and had a great time. Some of you know that I sing and howl and talk at home. Being a modest dog, I never thought that I would ever sing in public. But those kids inspired me. Misha and I were at the Troika Awards, doing our Meet and Greet. Well, I did it, yes I did it-----I sang. Everyone was singing the Alma Mater and by the chorus, I joined in. Softly at first, but then it grew. Have a range from tenor to soprano, depending on how I far back I throw my head. Filled the auditorium. Got some pretty good reviews. Watch out Freddy evaluators!

Our big day is coming, GRADUATION. We love the PPL Center. Can feel the excitement and the air conditioning. Cannot tell you how badly we are affected by the heat and humidity. But our great honor is to lead in the class. We walk THE WALK and huskies love their treks. We stand at the stage and get to see each graduate, wishing them good luck and Husky Pride Forever. We never stay too long. All the excitement and noise is really hard on us. We sleep soundly on the trip home.

Now we close another academic year filled with good memories, great achievements and friendships. The legacy of Husky Pride continues with the Class of 2016.

Now-----do I sing at graduation or will I be too shy? Join us to find out.

LOVE,

Kiska Diva Dog



Members of the Theater Casts - Where are they now?

Joanne Ogrydziak '76

While glancing at the local newspaper on a sunny spring morning back in 2012, I casually noticed an announcement that "Hairspray" would be presented that afternoon at Dieruff High School. Thinking it would be "cute" and wanting to support my alma mater, I decided to drive over to the East Side and take in the matinee show. That is when it hit me. From the opening "Good Morning, Baltimore," I knew the Dieruff Theatre Company was something very special – a shining star that would ignite Husky Pride over Irving Street and throughout the entire Dieruff community. Returning to the school's auditorium the next day for the final performance, which featured Freddy Award-winning choreography, I was moved to tears as my heart soared with pride during the thunderous standing ovation. In only its fourth season, following a three-decade absence from Dieruff's stage, the resurrected LED Theatre Company would go on to earn three Freddy Awards that year for its production of "Hairspray."

With this year's Freddy's Night rapidly approaching, I recently decided to look into the Freddy's Archives in an attempt to find out what our theatrical Huskies are up to these days. While "crunching the numbers" and combing through the categories, I discovered that, in only eight years, Dieruff has been nominated 64 times and has received 22 Freddy Awards! It's also interesting to note that seven of those coveted Freddy's were bestowed for Outstanding Choreography and Outstanding Featured Performance by a Dancer during only a four-year span. Producer/Co-Director Sarah Hinkle Pastelyak (LED '02), who graciously provided me with a spreadsheet of nods/wins, also kindly offered to contact her former students concerning their thespian updates.

The first alumna to reach out to me was **Nadia Marblestone '14**, who perfectly portrayed the lollipop-loving Penny Pingleton and loyal BFF to Zinnia Santiago's Tracy in "Hairspray." Nadia was honored with the 2013 Student Achievement Freddy Award and is now in her junior year as a Dean's List student at Kutztown University. Majoring in Electronic Media, she was also recently named the 2016 recipient of the Broadcast Pioneers of Philadelphia Scholarship in recognition for her academic excellence and high potential.

The next theatre alumnus to contact me was **Victor Abreu**, who sang the opening number at the 2011 Freddy Awards Show and who was a member of the award-winning chorus as Freddy-nominated Claude from that year's

LED production of "Hair." After attending college in NYC at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, Victor returned to Allentown and is now the choreographer for Lincoln Leadership Academy. This summer he will be featured in his first professional production, starring as Graffiti Pete in Muhlenberg College's presentation of "In the Heights."

Another alumna who provided an update was **Khalinta Otts '15**, who was nominated for a Freddy for her role as one of the Merry Murderesses in the Outstanding Small Ensemble Performance of "Cell Block Tango" which featured the Bob Fosse choreography of "Chicago." Pursuing a career as a chef, Khalinta currently attends The Culinary Institute of America and is very excited about beginning her summer externship this month at The Omni of Amelia Island in Florida.

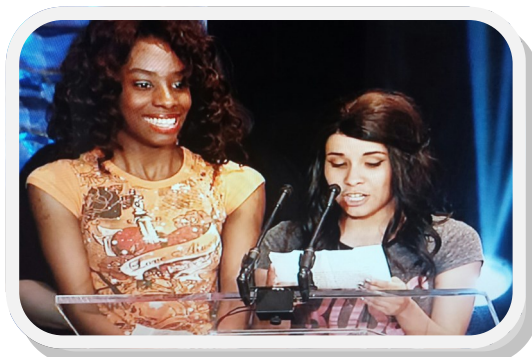
Another cast member from the Freddy Award-winning chorus of "Hair" is **Evan Williamson '11**, who was also nominated from that production in the category of Outstanding Performance by a Featured Male Ensemble Member for his role as Margaret Mead. Following his 2015 graduation from Lehigh University, from which he earned a degree in Supply Chain Management, Evan worked in New York for a year before returning to the Lehigh Valley to embark on a new position as a procurement analyst for Avantor Performance Materials. During his four years at Lehigh, he was very active in improvisational comedy and had performed several times at Bethlehem's Steel Stacks. Evan stated that he now has a "renewed fire to jump back into the Valley's booming comedy scene."

An alumna who has followed in the footsteps of her former director is **Sabrina Joseph '15**, who just completed her first year as a Musical Theatre Major at DeSales University. Who can ever forget Sabrina's beautiful, heartwarming acceptance speech at last year's Freddy Awards when she, along with fellow classmate

and cast member **Paris Cordova '15**, tearfully expressed her sincere gratitude and appreciation to their beloved directors for reminding us that "anything is possible with a little *paciencia y fe*." Already a very involved student at DeSales, Sabrina is also a cheerleader and a peer mentor for the renowned school's Gateway to Success Program in which she will assist next year's incoming freshmen as they transition to college life.

The most spirited reply I received was from **Jonathan Shehab '09** who, along with fellow cast member Jose Rodriguez, has the distinction of being the very first Freddy nominee from Dieruff. Jonathan shared his inspiring story of a high school senior who never knew that he liked acting until he took a risk and auditioned for Mrs. Pastelyak's inaugural production of "Back to the '80s" in which he was double-cast. Jonathan went on to further explain, "After numerous rehearsals and pep talks with Mrs. P., and going to thrift stores to find my costume pieces, I became ready to hit the stage and give it all I had! We had a great run for our first musical and I was fortunate enough to be part of the opening and closing numbers of the Freddy Awards Show. I had a lot to represent, and I wanted to showcase our inner-city school and all of the talent we had there. The Freddy's were such a huge part in my career because the program pushed me from that moment on to pursue acting."

Soon after graduation, Jonathan was given the opportunity to audition for the off-Broadway national tour of "Tony N Tina's Wedding." Only 17 at the time, he won over the director and was offered the role of Johnny as the youngest cast member. While still touring with the show, Jonathan continued his theatrical education and graduated from DeSales University with a degree in Acting/Directing. Today he is a represented professional actor who has never forgotten his blue and gray roots which sprouted to life on the Dieruff stage. With all of the exuberance of a true Husky, Jonathan expresses a sincere desire to share his journey with today's students and to remind them that they, too, can fulfill their own dreams with hard work and determination.



Sabrina Joseph (Left) and Paris Cordova (Right) accept Dieruff's 2015 Freddy Award for Best Overall Production

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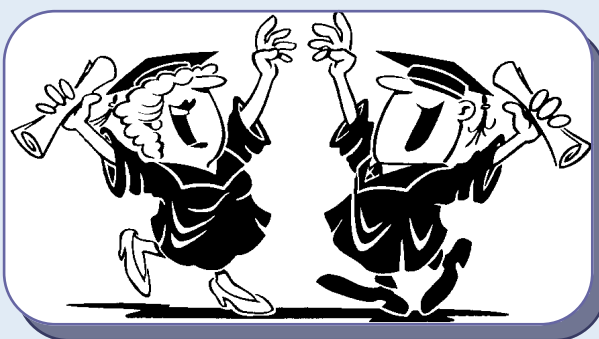
On a personal note, I would like to thank all of the Theatre Company alumni who eagerly responded to my request; this article would not have been possible without their willingness and enthusiastic cooperation. It has been an absolute joy to research and write this piece as it provided me with the opportunity to connect with some of our recent graduates whose backgrounds at Dieruff weave through the same theatrical thread. Each Husky expressed fervent pride and earnest gratitude for their participation in the LED Theatre Company. Another impressive revelation regarding our alma mater's theatrical history is that, back in the '60s and early '70s, Dieruff was one of only two schools in the entire Lehigh Valley which presented musical productions. As a little kid watching a

Saturday morning rehearsal of "Brigadoon" in the LED auditorium back in '68, this proud alumna had no idea what would occur almost fifty years later. Just as "The Producers" Max Bialystock pleaded to Leo Bloom, senior Jonathan Cruz proclaimed to a live televised audience of almost eight million viewers that, "We can do it, and we did it!" In only the eighth season since its 2009 resurgence and under the trifecta genius of its brilliant directors, the Dieruff Theatre Company made Freddys History by being the first school ever to earn Top Honors for the second consecutive year for its "Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical."

They sure did do it and have taken Husky Pride "to the moon!"



Johnathan Shehab's Headshot



Back To Your Future

In last month's edition of the newsletter, we asked our readers what advice they would give *themselves* if they were able to go back in time to the day before their graduation:

"Don't be so trusting of others. Also, learn to be a saver. Put yourself first – put a little money away every day while you are young"

Karen Coleman (Nazareth High School – Class of 1967)

"Work hard but remember to take time for yourself and your family"

Jessica Riedy Harris (DHS – Class of 1991)

"Always be humble and kind and love your job and life. Remember you can always do whatever you want to do"

Ruth Scherman Wagner (DHS – Class of 1965)

"Trust in God and follow your heart"

Linda Laubach Latchic (DHS Class of 1974)

"You can work hard for the next four years...or you can work hard for the rest of your life"

Brett Lane (DHS – Class of 1978)

"Focus only on what is positive, and steer clear from anything (or anyone) that is toxic in your life"

Joanne Ogrzydziak (DHS – Class of 1976)

"Find your passion, make it your job....you will love your working life"

Paulette Diefenderfer Kish (DHS – Class of 1967)

"Continue concentrating on yourself learning to improve your mind, body & soul"

Kalean Wagner (DHS – Class of 1990)

"If at first you don't succeed.... perhaps it's time to redefine success. It is okay to reassess your goals and move in a new direction."

John Hughes (DHS – Class of 1961)

"Life happens and changes your ideas and goals. It's ok – make it your own and run with it"

Pam Wescoe Warmkessel (DHS – Class of 1986)

"Stand up for what you believe in and never be afraid to let your voice be heard"

Dana Ziegenfuss (Notre Dame High School – Class of 1983)

*"It's what you learn **after** you know-it-all that counts"*

David Ziegenfuss (DHS – Class of 1986)

Thanks to all for your great responses!

Dieruff High School Alumni Association

Husky Pride... Unleashed



Dieruff Fandangle

A Mega-Reunion For All Classes

Join fellow Dieruff Alumni (All Classes) and Friends
for an afternoon of great fun, music, drinks (beer,
soda, water), and all-you-can-eat catered food.

Saturday, July 30, 2016

2:00 PM to 7:00 PM

East Side Youth Center

1140 East Clair Street, Allentown, PA

\$20 Per Person

**Tickets on Sale at
Stahley's, DHS Main Office,
or on-line at our
website below**

www.dieruff-alumni.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

To get your event listed, please email event before the
24th of each month to: dhsalumni@ptd.net

- July 6** Alumni Association Monthly Meeting 6:30 PM
(Final Meeting Before Fandangle)
Site To Be Determined—Please visit website for more information
- July 30:** **Fandangle IV 2PM - 6PM**
East Side Youth Center - (See page 8 for details)
- August 3:** Alumni Association Monthly Meeting
NOTE: Actual date may change, please visit website for more information
- August 19 & 20:** Class of 1966 50th Year Class Reunion Weekend
CLICK ON LINK FOR DETAILS:
/000/2/6/8/20862/Userfiles/file/DHS-66_50th_Reunion.pdf
- September 7:** Alumni Association Monthly Meeting 6:30PM
Meilinger Center
- November 19:** Class of '74 Turns 60 4:00PM-10:00
American Club of Coplay - See website for details

All events can be found on the DHS Alumni Website: www.Dieruff-Alumni.org



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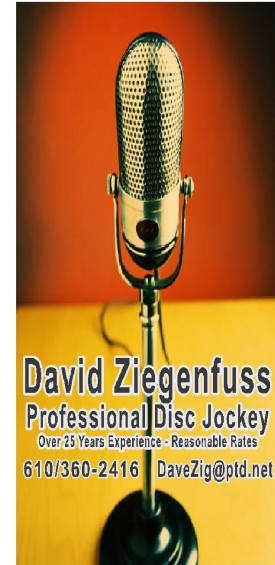
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Louis E. Dieruff High School

Alumni Association Newsletter

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We publish an online digital .pdf copy of the newsletter 11 times annually, with two special printed editions for the Fandangle and Dieruff-Allen Game tailgate. All digital copies will be emailed by or on the 5th of each month. Deadline for inclusion for the next month's edition is by the 24th of each month, unless arrangements are made. Please email articles, advertising and events to:
DHSAlumniNews@ptd.net

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