Student Comments on Significant Educators
“When I think of someone who has made an impact on my life, I think of Mrs. Esman. It is obvious that she loves all of the kids that she has taught. She always made time to listen to her students and offer words of encouragement, even when she had other things to do. Mrs. Esman is always full of joy, and she never fails to put a smile on anyone’s face. One of the…
…most important lessons that I have learned from Mrs. Esman was to never give up on learning. She always inspired her students to push themselves and reach for their full potential. Mrs. Esman has had a significant impact on my life by teaching me valuable life lessons and encouraging me to keep learning even when it becomes difficult. I am truly grateful for her guidance and mentorship.”

- Hannah Schreuder
“Mrs. Wintz has been an influence in my life both in and out of class ever since I stepped foot in her classroom sophomore year. She has been a warm hug and shoulder to cry on during the tough days, and a cheerleader during the exciting. Mrs. Wintz introduced me to the classic novels and eye-opening non-fiction. She also taught me how to...
…properly write but most importantly, she allowed me to discover my confidence with her daily journals and public speaking practice. Mrs. Wintz has opened my eyes to the world and taught me to think deeper than the surface. Without her as my teacher, I would not be the person I am today and I will forever be grateful for her guidance and kindness the last three years of my life.

- Liberty Cottick
“Mr. Houtrouw has been such a big inspiration for me. He taught me how incredible computer science can be and has urged me to explore that passion both inside and outside the classroom. Through his classes, I have learned many coding languages, neat tricks, and more. The 3 years that I have had with him have been amazing, and I will never forget them.”

- Anshul Mohanty
“This educator’s passion and dedication to teaching inspired me as a student, and all of the students who had the privilege of being a student in room 221. Not only was this educator my teacher, but he was my coach. I’m forever grateful I had the chance to learn and grow from them, and I’ll always remember Hafer as the educator who helped me bring back my passion for running and learning.”

- Emilee Rudlaff
SHAY WINTZ

“I’ve been blessed to have had Mrs. Wintz as an educator for three consecutive years. I’ve had Mrs. Wintz for Honors 10 English, Literature Through Film, and AP Lang. The compositional skills I’ve learned from her will, without a doubt, last a lifetime. I recall that when I went to take the AP Lang exam, I walked into the exam hall with confidence as a result of Mrs. Wintz’s dutiful teachings and practice. Mrs. Wintz has…
...consistently pushed me to strive for new heights. Whenever I need an article or publication proofread, I can count on her to provide honest yet gracious feedback. Mrs. Wintz is someone who sacrifices her own time in order to uplift her students. She is an educator who always empowers and celebrates her students’ accomplishments. Mrs. Wintz is not afraid to be forthright, yet she is utterly compassionate; someone who puts her heart and soul into making sure her students succeed. The second I step foot in Mrs. Wintz’s classroom, I always feel right at home.”

- Aliah Mohmand
JOVAUGHN CARVER

“I chose Mr. Carver to be my significant educator because he made me realize what profession I wanted to go into. Mr. Carver had the most significant impact of any educator on my life. Mr. Carver got people whose professions were in the STEM field to give a presentation to the class about their careers which made me realize what I wanted to become.”

- Aiden Rudlaff
“Mrs. McCarthy was my precalculus teacher my junior year. Her enthusiasm for math made her class fun and inviting. She’s great to talk to and is always understanding and sympathetic to her students’ challenges.”

- Zane Sandelin
“Every single day, I walk into my fourth hour and Mr. Searing greets me with a fist bump and a smile. A seemingly insignificant action, but it represents Mr. Searing as an educator amazingly. My older brother had Mr. Searing in his senior year, and his glowing review made me very excited when I found out I’d have both my
… 4th and 7th hours with Mr. Searing this year. My expectations have only been exceeded. Mr. Searing’s compassion and kindness show every single day in his classes. His guidance as the IB director at our school has been invaluable to me in pursuing my dreams. Furthermore, his leadership through extracurricular activities like Interact Club has pushed me to be a better person. Mr. Searing has made the stress of my Senior Year a much less daunting prospect, and I will be forever grateful for his dedication and excellence as a teacher.”

- Kirby Bach
“This person has been significant in my life. They have not only taught me computer science but also taught me how to respect myself and stand up for what I believe in. He has shown me what I want to do with my life. Without him, I would not be currently wishing to pursue engineering. For all of that, I am seriously grateful and forever thankful for the impact he has had not only on my life but the lives of countless other fellow students.”

- Kenneth Seybold
“Español V con la Sra. Moss es una de mis clases favoritas. Aunque es mi primera clase del día, la señora Moss todavía tiene energía y está emocionado de enseñar nuestra clase. Además, la Sra. Moss es amable y atenta y se ha tomado el tiempo para conocer a cada estudiante personalmente.”

- Emilia VanDerWoude
“Mrs. Cook has been a constant supporter in my high school career. She has advocated for me to receive the best education and participate in programs that have enriched my experience at Loy Norrix. She is gracious and kind and I wouldn’t be here without her support!”

- Bridgette Bol
SEAN BERGAN

“Mr. Bergan is currently my AP Psychology teacher and always has a positive fun classroom environment.”

- Zoe Reeves
“I have taken 3 years of Mr. Sinclair’s classes and they have been an incredible experience and adventure; exploring new, complicated topics via captivating lectures with small jokes sprinkled throughout them. Although he can seem a little intimidating at first, Mr. Sinclair’s openness to conversation about literally anything makes him an amazing instructor. Mr. Sinclair has pushed me to become a better thinker, student, and person creating a lasting impact on my journey towards college.”

- Aaron Teal
“More than any other teacher, Mrs. Alburtus shaped the student I am today by allowing me to test my limits, be creative, and truly discover myself in the classroom. She also helped me through some tough times in my freshman year!”

- Cameron Olson
DENNY ROEHM

“I have had Mr. Roehm as a teacher and golf coach for two years now, and I can easily say that he is one of the most genuine, kindhearted, knowledgeable, and patient people I have ever met. From the way he teaches to the way he coaches he does everything he possibly can in order to put you in a position to succeed.”

- Luke Malocha
“Mr. Martin is a great teacher and mentor and made my time in his class very enjoyable. He's a very loving and understanding teacher who's willing to put in extra work to benefit his students. He's probably the friendliest teacher I've ever had as well as the easiest to talk to. Despite not currently having him as a teacher I still find...
… myself staying in contact with him this year. Overall Mr. Martin is a great teacher who deserves all the praise he gets and more. I hope he continues inspiring kids for many years to come.”

- Idilio Bragagnini
“Mrs. K set me up for success. Whether it was putting me in all of my AP classes or assisting me with my dual enrollment classes. Mrs. K also was always supporting me and checking in on me, making sure I was always doing well in my classes. She is always smiling and very cheering and is willing to help anyone in any way she can.”

- Paul Dykstra, Jr.
“Mrs. Wright is a significant educator in my eyes because of the atmosphere she creates both inside the classroom as well as outside the classroom. In class, she makes both middle school and high school English class fun and is always positive with everyone she works with. Her classroom is a stress-free zone for many students at Climax-Scotts and if you ask anyone in the school about which teacher or class they are most looking forward to take, Mrs. Wright will be a very common answer...
… without hesitation. Outside of the classroom, she works as the advisor of the Climax-Scotts NHS chapter and shows how caring she is to serve others. She is super excited about every volunteer opportunity our chapter has and does her best to spread that joy to her students. Without Mrs. Wright, I would not have the drive and motivation to serve others the way I do now. Everyone in the Climax-Scotts community loves Mrs. Wright for everything she does and the hard work she puts in every single day.”

- Ryan DeHaan
“Ms. Citino helped me develop a love for English and cinema. Some of my best memories in school are from attending her classes. Her passion for teaching, literature, and movies made me love going to class and engaging with the material to the fullest extent that I could. I enjoyed her teaching so much that I crashed one of her college courses, met with her at a coffeeshop simply to discuss literature and cinema, and continue to email her…
… whenever I watch a movie that makes me think about her classes. She inspired me to start a Film Club at my school and begin making short films. She taught me how to find the meaning behind prose or poetry. She has remarkably impacted my critical thinking and self-identity and I will always remember the classes she taught and the privilege I had to take them.”

- Lukas Price
“Mrs. Chapoton has been my role model throughout my high school experience. Not only has she been there to promote my self-discovery and further my interests in biology and biochemistry, but she has been there for me emotionally, providing me with invaluable advice and unforgettable memories. She has put up with all of my...
…ambitious research goals, my “how do you think the world would be different if,” and the clumsy mistakes I have made as her lab aid. She has been there for me over the past four years: for my stumbles, for my accomplishments, for my breakdowns, for my acceptances. For all of this and much, much more, I thank you. :)

- Nathan Gleason
“Mrs. Kruizenga was my cross country and track coach in middle school. Besides teaching me running technique, she helped me to build confidence in myself, caring for me as a person as well as an athlete. She always put my well being and mental health over my athletic performance and ability. How she came alongside and...
… mentored me not only had a great impact, but became an inspiration as to how I can encourage others. Mrs. Kruizenga taught me grit and perseverance when things got hard, which translated over to my academics, and has helped me over my high school years.”

- Grace Mohney
“I have been extremely fortunate to take Mr. Houtrouw's computer science classes, where I have developed a new passion. From my first day in his class, his enthusiasm for the subject was infectious and sparked my curiosity in CS. Mr. Houtrouw is extremely dedicated to his students and is a strong motivator. Throughout the last three years, he..."
… has had an unwavering belief in my CS abilities and has strongly encouraged me to participate in various competitions. As I enter the next stage of my life, Mr. Houtrouw's influence on my education will remain. Thank you, Mr. Houtrouw, for your constant support throughout my time in your class!”

- Ethan Connolly
“Mr. Ward has been a significant influence in the past four years of my educational walk. I met Mr. Ward during the Covid-19 pandemic. I was a freshman in an online introductory to business course. He asked me if I wanted to join DECA. Little did I know this would change the trajectory of my high school experience. I formed a...
… network, perfected my resume, learned real-life business skills, and traveled to competitions. His stewardship allowed me to obtain a role as class president within my student body and be well-prepared for my apprenticeship at Consumers Credit Union through Kalamazoo Career Launch. So, what makes Mr. Ward a significant educator? He and many other educators in our abundant Kalamazoo community foster hope in children. I appreciate how Mr. Ward has helped mold me into who I am today.”

- Nateya Thomas
“Mr. Bieszard has put an incredible amount of effort into working for the benefit of others with little gain for himself, to the greatest degree of the people I know. Every day, he seems to constantly be working both in and out of class on every aspect of the music program, yet whenever I ask a question or for guidance, he has the time for me...
... and every other student in the music program. I have yet to meet someone so truly dedicated to their craft, and I am immensely grateful for what he has given me and the program as a whole, and I am immensely interested in seeing what we will do with the program in the future.”

- Lucas Oeming
“Mr. Netz was my middle school principal and he’s also my best friend’s dad. He would regularly check on me and my academics and he still does to this day. He is always one of the first people to congratulate me and encourage me in my accomplishments.”

- Paige Triemstra
RACHEL JANSEN

“She comforts all of us even when things look down in class. She puts even more effort into teaching us even when no one understands. She tries her best to have a good learning experience in a good learning environment.”

- Kriss Patel
“Mr. Bieszard has played a significant role in shaping my academic career and personal life. I see him not only as my band teacher but also as a friend with whom I can emotionally confide, discuss my problems, and celebrate my victories. Mr. Bieszard is a very morally mature person and a great role model of how to be kind and considerate. I could lie and say that I think 'What would Mr. B do?' when faced with a problem, but that simply isn't the…
... truth. However, I would be lying if I said that the lessons he has taught me over the years haven't played a large role in making me a more driven, compassionate, and mature person. Although this is the last year that I will have Mr. B as my band teacher, the positive impact he has had on me will last for the rest of my life, and for that, I am eternally grateful.”

- Rohan Singh
“I have never seen a teacher care so strongly about her students as Dr. Stotz does. In just a few months, she has challenged me to reconsider my career goals and has fundamentally altered my perspective on the world. What more could I possibly ask for in a teacher? I never imagined my writing and thoughts would be valuable, yet Dr. Stotz makes every piece of writing that passes her desk seem worthy of critique. Her feedback on every piece of…
…writing is firm and sincere. I enjoy turning in assignments in her class so that I may read her opinion on them. What more could I possibly ask for in a critic? Dr. Stotz never lets a questioning hand go unnoticed. When I reached out to her for help during a rough period, she offered incredibly thoughtful and valuable advice that lifted me from the rut I found myself in. Dr. Stotz has gone out of her way to support my personal endeavors and ensure I take every opportunity in my path. Even when I am blind to the next step, she encourages me to step up. What more could I possibly ask for in a mentor?”

- Prakash Shekhar
“Mrs. K is the counselor that all kids dream of having. She has the most blissful personality and always has a smile on her face. Mrs. K genuinely cares about her students’ success, and she puts in unparalleled effort to help whenever she can. She’s the first person to step forward when things are hard and the last to leave. I’ve never had a problem that she hasn’t been able to fix. Her ability to not only support but navigate and lead through difficult…
…situations is what makes her such a significant educator. Whenever I needed anything she was right there. Mrs. K has been fantastic to me and to countless other students, and it is my honor to be here with her tonight because if it wasn’t for her, I couldn’t guarantee I’d be here.”

- Charlie Waldorf
Mr. Santilli has been a consistent source of support throughout my high school journey. I first met Mr. Santilli when he was my freshman English teacher during a school year that was completely virtual. He had the special gift of getting a class to have fun together even though many of us had never met each other in person and struggled to express ourselves in an online setting. I have heard some of my classmates say they never would...
...have made it through their freshman year without him. On top of all of this, he has always been there for me to talk about life and any of the problems it brings. Moreover, I decided to take his African American Lit class during my senior year because I enjoyed having him as a teacher and every interaction I had with him in-person during my sophomore and junior year. Mr. Santilli, thank you for your dedication and for making your classes enjoyable! Your support has truly made a difference.”

- Abigail Evans
“Mr. Gottlieb is my most significant educator because he taught me a way to apply my love of math into reality. With his physics teaching skills, I have become talented at applying my skills into real life, and even make a decision on my major of mechanical engineering. We also do physics projects to team build, from which I have made
…some very close friends. On top of all of this, he is a nice guy, one of my favorite teachers I have had in high school that has made learning fun.”

- Jude Boussom
“I have had the pleasure of getting to know Mrs. Thomas very well as a current student in two of her chemistry courses and through her mentorship in my chemistry research. Her structured and creative style of teaching makes the course content engaging and her excitement about the subject is contagious in the classroom. Mrs. Thomas’s influence and...
…mentorship has sparked my love for chemistry and inspired me to pursue a degree in chemical engineering. I have no doubt that she will continue to inspire many other students like me throughout her career.”

- Clara

Centofanti
“Mr. Deschamp is an excellent English teacher. In the classes I have taken with him I have grown as a writer and an analyst, and he has made me feel fully prepared for college courses. He is also always ready to help or give advice, and I have learned many good lessons from the stories he has told. I am grateful to Mr. Deschamp for both what he has taught me about English and what he has taught me about life.”

- Michael Dugas
AMY JOHNSTON

“I have had a class with Ms. J for three years, and every year her class is the one I look forward to the most in the school day. She never fails to make class funny and entertaining and she cultivates a great environment to relax and learn in. Because of Ms. J, I’ve come to love chemistry and physics more than I ever thought I would, and I’m very grateful for all the effort she puts into the education of me and my classmates.”

- Alex Dugas
“Mrs. Millin is an amazing teacher who truly cares about her students. She is always understanding and goes above and beyond to help us succeed. Her dedication to her work is inspiring, and I feel so fortunate to have had her as my teacher. She has prepared me well for my future career in the healthcare field, and I am grateful for everything she has taught me.”

- Isabelle Headley
“Coach Jeff taught me many lessons throughout my time playing under him. He taught me skills on the field as well as communication, sportsmanship and leadership, but most importantly he taught me what it was like to be a member of a program wide family that constantly supports each other. I was injured in the off season, and Coach Jeff would constantly reach out, giving me advice, motivation, and overall just checking...
... in on me. In this time he taught me “not to focus on the what ifs” and to “control the controllable,” two lessons that kept me in good spirits and that I will hold with me all my life. Because of Coach Jeff I not only overcame injury faster but was shaped into a more communicative and confident member of the community, helping me in all aspects of my life.”

- Evan Kaiser
“Mrs. Grueter has been a light in my path of education. I have known her since my freshman year and even though I have been in and out of the building for sports, high school classes, and college classes, she always makes it a point to greet me. She is my favorite educator and counselor and I have hopes to tell her all of my successes throughout my career.”

- Summer Beavers
“Mr. Wagner has always encouraged my studies and has been there when I was in doubt about my academic capabilities. He has also been there to help with my personal life outside the classroom and always made his class enjoyable, even when the subject was not. His class and his passion for his job helped strengthen my love…”
… for the STEM field. It helped me decide that I wanted to go into the neuroscience field. I have had his class almost all my years of high school and I’ve felt like I’ve had a safe space within a school of thousands which is very important to me. I will always appreciate his words of encouragement and support.”

- Isabella Essink
Throughout my high school years, I have been fortunate enough to have Mr. Roehm as my math teacher. Not only is he exceptionally knowledgeable, but he also genuinely cares about his students and their success. He goes above and beyond to ensure that every student understands the material and is always willing to provide extra help.”

- Carter Johnson
“Mr. Lange inspired my passion for Computer Science! I started in his Intro to CS class with little enthusiasm for the subject and no experience in it. However, as I enrolled in more of his courses, such as Cyber Security, Research &amp; Development, and CSIC, I became increasingly interested and excited to learn! I credit Mr. Lange…"
… with having opened the door for me to a world I never new existed, and he showed me just how fun and intriguing it be. Now, I can’t wait to continue to engage myself in that world as I begin college.”

- Ethan Peterson
CLAUDIA WITT-THOMAS

“Since my first day of sophomore chemistry class, Mrs. Witt-Thomas has instilled in me a love of chemistry that I had never expected. From theory to hands-on lab work, she has single-handedly motivated me to explore biochemistry as a career. Her constant support, despite…
… my struggles and failures, has helped me gain confidence and determination in all of my endeavors. I am very grateful for Mrs. Witt-Thomas and hope to one day inspire others as much as she has inspired me.”

- Ashley O’Donnell
“Dr. Weaver is a truly amazing teacher and person. Her passion for chemistry and science has been inspiring to me ever since I took my first class with her in my freshman year. As I learned more and became more interested in chemistry, she was there to answer any questions I had; when I ran out of chemistry classes to take at Loy Norrix, she arranged…"
… the creation of an independent study opportunity to ensure that I was able to keep exploring the subject. Her never ending commitment to education and making learning fun has been a big factor in my success as a student.”

- Odessa Clemente
“Mr. Walker has been my band teacher for the last 7 years, a steadfast and positive influence in not just my life but the lives of all the band students he teaches. Balancing demanding AP classes with a fun and less stressful class like band is important. I know that every day I show up to his class there is a welcoming atmosphere that can be...
…traced back to Mr. Walker and everything he does to make band an enjoyable experience. It has been a true honor to be under Mr. Walker’s direction and guidance for the last 7 years and I know the positive impact he has made will stay with me into my next phase of life at college.”

— Korbin Nigg