



BENSON TECH

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The Official Newsletter of the Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Association (BPHSAA), April 2026 Edition

Tech Show — April 16 and 17 — BE THERE, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

by Rob Johns (Class of 1977), Chair, BPHSAA



Poster designed by Gilbee Sussee

It is that time of the year again when all the Benson Tech alumni, students, teachers and the greater Benson Tech community members can celebrate the school in action. There is no better way to see Benson Tech than when the kids are active in their Career Technical Education areas of focus. (We used it to call those shops and majors!) Please make your way to the new Alumni Room for connections, cake, and catching up with other alums!

The Alumni Room is on the second floor behind the auditorium's balcony (officially known as Room 213). There will be posters around the school with directions to the Alumni Room. You can access it through the main front door and walk through the auditorium or simply walk through the front yard courtyard to the ground-level door to the auditorium. An elevator is available.

The BPHSAA will provide cake and coffee and we have a number of great Benson Tech alumni investments in the digitizing of the old Tech Pep newsletters. Be sure to take in the Benson Tech memorabilia. The yearbooks will be out for each decade from the past 80 years.

The BPHSAA Board members will be looking forward to seeing you. We have focused our work for fellow alumni to help in the work of making class reunions more successful and better attended so we like to keep up with your email addresses. We also have a special "ask" this year. Were you a member of the Benson Auditorium Technical Staff (BATS)? Would you like to help the current BATS keep their club running? You know how vital BATS has been through the years. We are looking for BATS adult advisors to participate in the current remaining school year and step into that role in the fall of 2026.

We all can think back our own Tech Show days. Come and see how the modernized Benson Tech looks with an eye to your Tech Show days. I know for myself, my first Tech Show experiences were with my father (Benson Tech, Class of 1946), taking me to the school annually from 4th grade on. I know we each have experiences and good memories from past Tech Shows. We look forward to seeing you and welcoming you to the only dedicated Alumni Room in the city of Portland's schools.

You will find food and beverages available in The Commons Area and there will be a food truck. Support your successful Astros teams (yes, we know it is a change from Techmen and Techsters!). For you auto majors, we will have the Model T Woody making its appearance. Astro

(continued on back cover)



Benson Tech Athletics updates

by Jessica Russell, Benson Tech Athletic Director

Winter Sports Recap

What an exciting year for Benson Tech's winter athletes! Tech wrestling returned this year under alumni head coach Robert Caudillo. The Astros sent one wrestler to state, junior Gaius Vickery. The Benson Tech swim team continues to increase their participation numbers. The team, led by Benson Tech educator Steve Espe (Class of 1984) and recent Astro grad Max Eppley (Class of 2024), had the strongest district meet performance in years, with a few swimmers just barely missing the state meet.

Incredible seasons for both boys and girls basketball program

The girls finished undefeated in league with an overall record of 26-3. The only team from Oregon that beat our Benson Tech girls were the state champions, West Linn.



Top: Benson Tech's girls basketball team at the 2026 OSAA state championships. **Bottom:** The boys basketball team also competed in the OSAA state championships this year. Photos courtesy of Jessica Russell.

Benson Tech fell to West Linn in their semifinal game at the state tournament. The Astros went on to win their next game, defeating the defending state champs and top seed of the tournament, Tualatin. The girls were in high spirits as they accepted their third-place trophy.

Benson Tech also had the opportunity to face off against a talented high school team from China in February, which served as a great warm-up for the team going into the tournament. The girls basketball program, led by second-year head coach Precious Alex, graduates three major contributors in 2026: Kelyn Johnson, Jaiden Young, and Samarah Massey. As we plan for next season, the team plans to travel out of state for a holiday tournament in addition to participating in the Pacific Office Automation's Holiday Classic here in Portland.

The Benson Tech boys basketball program made a splash in the state tournament as the 17th seed underdogs, upsetting Sheldon in the first round, Southridge in the second round, and Clackamas in the quarterfinals. While each victory was a tough battle filled with tension only the playoffs can bring, the buzzer beater, three pointer that Tech freshman Kendall Hopkins-McGlothen drained to beat top-seeded Southridge in their gym was a moment that will go down in Benson Tech history. That shot allowed the team to go on to the Chiles Center for the state tournament, where the Astros went on to beat Clackamas, the eighth seed, in the quarterfinals. Benson Tech students showed up in full force to the Chiles Center to support the boys (and maybe to miss some class). The team, led by alumni and veteran head coach Earl Clark (Class of 1995), lost to the state champs, Tualatin. The program finished fifth in state after falling to Jesuit in their final game of the year. The Astros graduate three seniors: Ezra Webb, Saad Ibrahim, and Dache Acelar.

While adding trophies to the newly-renovated cases on 546 NE 12th Ave was certainly a proud moment, it has been a tremendous honor to see the strong support our coaches and athletes received this season. People with no affiliation to Benson Tech made a point to reach out formally and informally to congratulate our programs on a job well done. They noticed great sportsmanship, discipline, coachable athletes, and coaches who were engaged and dedicated.

Benson Tech bowling team at state championships

by Jacob Patterson (Class of 2006), Instructor - Radio Broadcasting

The Benson Tech Bowling Team made history this year at the 2026 Oregon State High School Bowling State Championships at Park Lanes in Hillsboro in February. It was the first appearance in 23 years at State for the boys' bowling team. Benson Tech made it to State after almost winning first place at Districts just a month prior in January. Our team lost to Corbett in the District Championship match to take second place, the team's best finish there in decades. At the State Championships, Benson Tech finished two days of qualifying rounds as the eighth seed out of 16 teams. The team made it through three final match rounds before being eliminated and finishing as 10th place overall.

Benson Tech bowled well at State, including several impressive games of 191, 224, 194, 223, 191, 205, 203, and a 241. Our 241 game was the highest game of any team during Sunday's qualifying round and the seventh highest game in the entire tournament. The team's MVP Johnny Caldera, a freshman, placed fourth on the State All-Star team! Meaning he was the fourth-best individual performer at the entire tournament, earning him a special scholarship and a shot at the upcoming All-Star tournament. Johnny also placed fifth at Districts All-Stars and has proven he is one of the best high school bowlers in the entire state of Oregon. This could be the first time ever in school history, or at least the first time in many decades that a Benson Tech bowler placed on both District All-Stars and State All-Stars. We want to also recognize our graduating senior bowlers: Kaleb



Above: Benson Tech's bowling team for 2025-2026

Pate, Caleb Butler, Matai Acker, Karuna Hubble, and Nicholas Propst as well as the entire State team: Aden Wellington (freshman), and Ian Propst (junior).

NOTE from Bob Trimble (Class of 1977), Treasurer, BPHSAA: "Jacob is not just the bowling coach for Benson Tech. He's the bowling coach for the PPS District. The only PPS bowling team is based out of the KBPS studio at Benson Tech. Any PPS high school student or home schooler is eligible to play. Any alumni who has family members or friends in PPS who might be interested should encourage the bowler(s) to come try out. Jacob can be reached at jacpatterson@pps.net and the team has an active Facebook profile <https://www.facebook.com/bensonbowling/>. It is a very friendly and social crowd but the players are expected to play hard and improve to stay on the team. This is not just a PE class."



Left: Benson Tech's boys basketball team finished fifth in the OSAA state championships this year, with a loss in the semifinals to the state champions breaking a 12-game winning streak. **Right:** The girls basketball team took home a third-place trophy in the OSAA state championships, ending their season with only three losses. Photos courtesy of Carson Doht ([capturedby.Carson](https://www.instagram.com/capturedbycarson) on Instagram).

Benson Tech robotics level up competition stats

by Matt Pellico, Instructor - Science

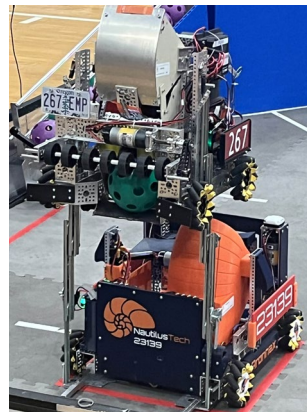
In March, Team 267 EMP competed in the Oregon State Championships. The event was held at Liberty High School in Hillsboro. This year, 48 teams competed in two divisions, vying for six spots to the World Championships.

Team 267 built on the strength of last season with a core group of returning juniors and seniors. This group likes to take on the most difficult challenges of the game. In this year's challenge, Decode, the normal 18-inch cube size limit needed to be adhered to for the first two minutes and 10 seconds of the match. Then in the final 20 seconds, robots are allowed to expand vertically, so that two robots could park simultaneously in a designated 18-inch square. Team 267 designed and built a four-stage linear slide that elevated the entire robot about 19 inches into the air. Then a partnered robot could park directly below. In the latest posted statistics, Benson Tech was ranked third in the world for scoring with this maneuver.

In the seven round-robin matches, Team 267 had a couple difficulties with its driver controller in the early rounds. Team Nautilus Tech (23139) generously loaned the team a spare controller for the remaining matches. Benson Tech's team record of 4-3 should have been 5-2 or better. Nonetheless, during tournament alliance selection, other teams recognized our strengths. Team 267 was selected by Team 23664 Eagle Tech from Harrisburg, OR, as the third-seeded alliance into the double elimination tournament. In the tournament, the team won two and lost two, eventually falling to the championship team just before the finals.

In the final ranking (a combination of performance and awards), Team 267 ended 12th in the state of Oregon. This is an improvement from last year, but misses the team's target of advancing to the World Championships. This year, six teams from the region will advance to the Worlds. Looking at the 11 teams ranked above Team 267, the students and coaches are satisfied with this final ranking position. Overall, it has been a very successful season.

The team was anticipating winning the Innovate Award, but was surprised to be awarded the second-place Control Award. This award celebrates a team that uses sensors and software to enhance the robot's functionality. Team 267 demonstrated innovative thinking in the control system to solve game challenges such as autonomous operation, enhancing mechanical systems with intelligent control, or using sensors.



Top: Team 267 EMP of the Benson Tech robotics program. This year, it was one of 43 high school teams that competed in the Oregon State Championships held in March for six coveted spots to enter the World Championships later this year. **Left:** Team 267 EMP's innovative solution for this year's Decode technical challenge was scored third in the world. The last part of the challenge required the team to park two robots within a designated 18-inch square space simultaneously.

The four seniors are leaving the team in capable hands for next year. Grady Morgan, Baxter Ward - lead builder, Jacob Powell - driver, and Desmond Butzeby - primary coder will all be missed next season.

Benson Tech is currently negotiating with ORTOP to host the 2026-27 First Tech Challenge kickoff next September. It also would like to be considered for the host site of the Rose City League. The newly remodeled building is well suited to serve a host site, Plus being a host would help Team 267 EMP toward the goal of winning the Inspire Award in the coming season.

Editor's Note: While Team 187 Phoenix of the robotics program didn't compete in the state championships, it did take second place in the Think category at the Spark Invitational Tournament held in February in Philomath OR. The Think award is given to teams with the best engineering notebook and documentation. The team also improved its Rose City League play, finishing sixth out of 18 teams compared to 17th last year and generally improving its design and building skills.

After Many Years of Silence, Band Returns to Benson High School

Band is once again meeting frequently, now as a club, in the face of funding challenges

by Zayd Faruqui, Benson Orbit Editor

After a long hiatus, Band has returned to Benson! Heide Goertzen, who teaches History and Psychology, and has taken on the role of one of the advisors of the club, highlighted how important Band is for the community. “I think band is important at Benson because it brings, it helps bring school spirit and it helps bring this element to Benson that is missing, which is like this creative outlet that a lot of our students miss, and that has been a big part of our students’ lives.” Band meets during B flex, and on Wednesdays from 3:45pm–5:00pm.

When asked about her reasons for starting Band, Goertzen mentioned that Benson has a legacy of having a band, and she worked with the former Band director, Dan Foster, to get band started at Benson. Another person that helped with Band at Benson is Gene Burton, a retired band director at the Gresham-Barlow School District and the current leader of Warner Pacific University Band.

In spite of all the support and talent, starting up was not without difficulty. One issue was with getting the instruments to students. BPHS hasn’t had instruments for years, and the band does not have any access to instruments from PPS because they’re not a class. However, that’s where the club’s advisors stepped up. Gene Burton shared some instruments from Warner Pacific University. Jacob Patterson, who teaches radio at Benson, also provided some instruments.

Goertzen says that, due to the lack of instruments, she was originally thinking of starting a chorus instead — but later realized that many students at Benson played in middle school, and that bringing back band would be a great opportunity for Benson students. When asked about band becoming a class in the future, Goertzen stated, “We’re in the midst of huge budget cuts. They’re saying that budget cuts next year will be worse than they were this year. So it’s just hard for a lot of schools to give FTE for, you know, creative classes like music and art and dance and things like that.” In summary, it is unlikely for band to have a class in the near future, due to a lack of budget.



Top: Benson Tech's Pep Band at practice. Photo courtesy of Heide Goertzen. **Bottom:** The band performing at the Winter Sports Assembly. Photo courtesy of Kelly Janes.

Benson Junior Noah Johnson-Green expressed, “I know that there are a lot of people who want to come to Benson but can’t justify [it] because of the lack of really any music programs. And so I think having this band and maybe hopefully some more curricular music programs that will lead to will just encourage growth of the school in general and just create a more positive and better atmosphere at the school.”

Original article published on Oct. 25, 2025 on the Orbit's website at [bensonorbit.com](https://www.bensonorbit.com).

IN BRIEF | BPHSAA AND BENSON TECH NEWS

2026-2027 enrollment continues to increase

As of late March 2026, Benson Tech's student enrollment is distributed as follows:

Freshmen	319
Sophomores	280
Juniors	192
Seniors	186

For the upcoming school year, Benson Tech enrollment will grow with an incoming class of 335. More than 600 eighth graders applied at the end of 2025 for those openings. Portland Public Schools (PPS) sent acceptance letters to 380 student this January. That letter instructed them to actually contact Benson Tech to "forecast" their fall classes. To date, over 310 have done so. With an updated "waiting list," Principal Curtis Wilson is confident there will be all 335 "slots" filled this August as school starts.

With the current seniors graduating and an incoming freshmen class of 335, Tech's enrollment (with a little rounding to reflect "estimated attrition") will look like this for the coming 2026-2027 school year with a significant increase in the junior class:

Freshmen	335
Sophomores	315
Juniors	280
Seniors	190

If the District allows 335 incoming freshmen in successive years, Benson Tech will have over 300 students in each class by 2028-2029 and a total enrollment of more than 1,200

Continuing budget woes

PPS again is facing budgets shortfalls (and rising costs). For the coming 2026-2027 school year, the District is facing a \$50 million shortfall that is requiring "cuts" for every PPS school. Despite Benson Tech's growing enrollment (see above), this time, the school has not been spared.

PPS dictated that Benson Tech would have to reduce its staff by four full-time equivalents (FTEs). With a larger overall student count, and especially with over 80 more juniors (see numbers above), Benson Tech needed to hire more teachers for English, math and science classes. The end result is that Benson Tech has had to cut a total of six FTE via retirements, reducing some teachers from full-time to

three-quarters time, etc. Fortunately, the reductions will not affect any of the school's CTE programs in the 2026-2027 school year. However, PPS is predicting further budget shortfalls in the following year and additional staff and resource cuts for every school. More tough decisions ahead for Benson Tech and perhaps its CTE program.

HOSA - Future Health Professionals (HOSA)

Benson Tech's HOSA Club hosted two blood drives this school year in a partnership with Bloodworks Northwest. One on November 10 and another March 11 for those over 16 years old. While HOSA members organize the event and registration, a phlebotomist from Bloodworks Northwest draws and stores the blood.

Benson Auditorium Technical Staff (BATS)

Benson Tech's BATS held a March Talent Show after school showcasing a number of talented students. The event, though after school, attracted a large crowd of students and their families. During Tech Show, the BATS club members plan to conduct a few small group "back stage tours."

Varsity football this fall

Finally, after a long pause, Benson Tech will be fielding a Varsity Football team to compete in the Portland Scholastic League (PIL) against Portland's neighborhood high schools. Coach Kendall Lewis is expecting most of last year's Junior Varsity players to return. The team will play their home games at the Marshall Campus where there is permanent seating. As of this time, the season schedule has not been released. Look for it in our August newsletter or on the PIL webpage. In addition to the varsity team, Tech will have a JV team and possibly a freshmen team as well.

Benson Tech's 2026 Rose Festival princess



Adora Tran is a senior majoring in Medical Professions. She has been active in tennis, student body government, leadership, and the Asian Culture Club. She enjoys snowboarding, exploring the Pacific Northwest, and doing arts and crafts. She plans to attend a four-year university, major in nursing or pre-med, and become an allergist.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS NOW AVAILABLE

Benson Tech alumni can now purchase lifetime membership to the BPHSAA.



Lifetime memberships: \$200
Annual membership: \$20 per year.

To sign up, visit <https://bensontechalumni.org/product/lifetime-membership/> on the BPHSAA website.

ALUMNI TEXT CREDITS

Co-Editors & Writers: Dale Bajema and Roger Edwards

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BPHSAA TRiViA QUIZ

- **Question 1:** Why does the Cognia accreditation banner have display space in the school's commons area?
- **Question 2:** What are the requirements for a Cognia accreditation?
- **Question 3:** What led to Benson Tech becoming interested in accreditation?
- **Question 4:** What other local high schools have won accreditation?
- **Question 5:** Why was accreditation such a minor concern for Principal Charles Cleveland?



- **Answer 1:** The Cognia accreditation banner is visual proof that from 1948 on, an education at Benson Polytechnic School has met and meets high school standards. When the Portland School of Trades was upgraded in 1916 to become the Benson Polytechnic School, there was no requirement that students attending classes there to obtain high school credits. The Portland School of Trades provided attendees training for vocational careers. Students enrolled for classes at Benson Polytechnic School in the fall of 1917 were given the option of this same vocational training that required three years of classes. A four-year course that would add required high school credits to vocational career training was also made available. Most students selected this latter option.
 - **Answer 2:** Cognia is a non-profit organization formed in 2019 from a collection of other bodies offering verification of credible education programs in secondary schools, colleges, and universities. High schools seeking this distinction must show they are meeting the requirements of local jurisdictions, plus 31 Cognia standards focused on the school's "Culture of Learning", the "Leadership for Learning" that oversees their school, the "Engagement of Learning" provided to their students, and the "Growth of Learning" their students exhibit as they progress. Schools meeting these standards are retested every six years.
 - **Answer 3:** After more than three decades of serving as the principal at Benson Tech, Charles Cleveland resigned this post after the 1946 school year due to poor health. Rein Jackson was moved from this position at Jefferson High School to succeed him. After his first year at Benson, Principal Jackson toured regular and technical high schools in the Midwest and brought home the idea of accreditation. "I want Benson to receive full credit for the particular kind of education which it offers". This quote of his appears in the March 9, 1949 issue of the Tech Pep, which also reported that the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools had granted accreditation, and the school could now change its letterhead to read "Benson Polytechnic High School". This organization was established in 1917 and through a series of mergers and name changes, became a forerunner of Cognia. A more significant change than new stationery justified the designation of the school's name as "Benson Polytechnic High School" on the school's diplomas. Accreditation also phased out the three-year vocational career option. The vocational courses were still available but students adopting this option were apparently now compelled to complete a fourth year to meet graduation requirements. They spent less time in their shop classes than the technical students, which allowed them to take more academic classes for a broader education.
 - **Answer 4:** In the Wikipedia list of "Schools Accredited by Cognia," there are 88 high schools from Oregon. Many are private schools with non-specific names such as the Columbia Christian School and St Mary's Academy in Portland, Oregon School of the Deaf, Chemawa Indian School, and Blanchet Catholic School in Salem, and the Looking Glass Riverfront School and Career Center in Eugene. The name inscribed on the front entrance of Benson Polytechnic School belongs in this category as well. Benson is the only public school on the list from Portland, but Catlin Gabel School, Central Catholic High School, Jesuit High School, La Salle High School, Oregon Episcopal School, Tualatin Valley Academy, and Country Christian School are all other local accredited facilities.
 - **Answer 5:** Charles Cleveland was named principal of the Portland School of Trades in 1913, one year after he joined the staff as an electricity instructor. To relieve crowding, the girls who joined the PSoT in 1909 were moved to a separate building in 1913. Nonetheless, interest in the school's boys classes soon produced a search for a larger structure. The purchase of the NE 12th and Irving property in 1915 led to the Simon Benson donation and the construction of Benson Polytechnic School. So from the beginning, Principal Cleveland was aware that his school would not lack for students. There are still more applications to attend Benson Tech than the enrollment slots allotted.
- The Tech Pep began publication in 1920 and by the end of the decade, it was the largest school newspaper in Oregon. They published multiple articles of visitors to the school who praised the instruction they witnessed in the classrooms and shops. Even before the Benson Tech radio station obtained the KBPS call letters, KFIF broadcasts were heard in New York, Mexico, Hawaii, and Alaska and like distant Tech Pep subscriptions, generated letters to the school seeking information about their programs and admission requirements. A -front page article in the 9 October 1924 Tech Pep reprinted a letter from the Registrar of Purdue University stating, "The program of study of the Benson Polytechnic School is amply sufficient to meet the entrance requirement for any one of the schools of Purdue University". Should Principal Cleveland have ever thought about accreditation, it is likely that a new visitor, a letter from a hopeful applicant, or a returning graduate thanking him for the education he had received, would have turned his thoughts elsewhere.

Remembering Benson Tech's teachers

The Class of 1966 will be celebrating its 60th reunion this August (see Reunion Info on Page 9 for more details.) In anticipation of this upcoming milestone, class members have been

reflecting on their most influential instructors while at Benson Tech and how their efforts shaped student lives both in and beyond the classroom.



CARLTON BRYSON | MATHEMATICS | YEARS AT BENSON TECH: 1955-1990

by John DeLacey

The teacher who made the biggest impact on me at Benson was Carl Bryson, who taught junior-year mathematics. The textbook we used was called "College Mathematics." In one year, Mr. Bryson took us through the entire development of mathematics from numbers and numeracy all the way up to what we call pre-calculus now. Every lecture

made sense and gave us the foundation to understand everything that followed. Each day's material was presented in a logical progression of ideas that was perfectly understandable.



ROBERT BONNIWELL | ENGLISH | YEARS AT BENSON TECH: ~1953-1983

by Mike Stefik

The Class of '66 enjoyed several great teachers. These included Robert Bonniwell. It is said that people in technical careers often have a narrow exposure to literature also lack the skills needed for clear writing. My memories of his classes include our assignments to read and analyze plays by Shakespeare and books by Hemingway. Class experience included seeing "Waiting for Godot" at the Portland Civic Theater. Class projects included an assignment to write, perform, film, and present a video of a "show" that

we wrote. Bonniwell carefully directed our attention to where our writing needed to be improved. At the end of our freshman year several of us wrote and recorded a "radio mystery play" that we presented to him in appreciation for everything. Somewhat over the top, we also made and gave him a ridiculous wooden throne. This nonsense was intended to show appreciation for his care and efforts to broaden our vision beyond a technical education.



MAYO ROY | COMBINED CLASSES | YEARS AT BENSON TECH: 1955-1966

by John M. Wong

My most influential teacher was Mrs. Mayo Roy, who also served as my counselor for four years. When I entered Benson, my plans were rather mundane: study math and science and earn an engineering degree. That changed during my freshman E.E. English and Social Studies classes with her. She introduced us to big ideas - drawn from the Chicago School - and to world history, including the study of religions. It was eye-opening. As a counselor, she encouraged students with good grades to aim high -

toward top-tier colleges - and emphasized the importance of extracurricular activities. In my case, she suggested learning a "lifetime sport" like tennis or golf, advice that stayed with me. More than anything, she expanded my sense of what education could be. She opened my eyes to the wider world, to enduring questions, and to the value of the liberal arts. Above all, she was passionate about teaching students how to think.



V.G. WILD | ARCHITECTURAL DRAWING | YEARS AT BENSON TECH: ~1925-1965

by Gordon Lee

I intended to learn mechanical drawing. However, by providence, I found myself in an architectural drawing class. The drafting room, on the upper floor of the "Old Gym" wing, its windows facing the bakery, was filled with stand-up drafting tables and well-worn drawing boards. There, wearing a stern expression and a gray shop coat, stood the instructor, who could easily have been mistaken for Frank Lloyd Wright himself. Might he be a curmudgeon? V.G. Wild proved over the years to be a profound influence not only on me, but on a number of young Benson men. Later, we found ourselves privileged to be Portland's "Techmen" architects. He did not drown us in drawing arrow heads and learning to letter like an architect. Beyond studying construction drawings of local completed projects, he taught us first to communicate

on paper artistically- through sketching buildings and even painting shade-and-shadow, Chinese ink washes of Greek orders. We learned two-point perspective drawing, and then a quick method for rendering using the projection of a proportionally dissected cube. He taught us to use dark, soft No. 1 pencils and, with his skilled hands, to sharpen them with a pocket knife and a sandpaper block. I cherish what he taught me. Sadly, Mr. Wild retired before my senior year, but not before honoring me with a treasured gift: his personal oversized 45- and 30/60-degree triangles. Sixty years later, I say with certainty that the foundation of my architectural career was laid in those two years. So, was he a curmudgeon? No. Curmudgeons are unlovable. "Catch'em?"



REUNION INFORMATION

BPHSAA Note: Regardless of if it's part of your class reunion, all alumni (and their families) are invited to attend the Benson Tech Community Celebration on Saturday, August 22 from 12:00 -3:00 pm at the modernized 12th Avenue campus.

CLASS of 1959 - 67th Reunion

WHEN: Wednesday, August 26, 2026

WHAT Class luncheon, 11:00 pm -2:00 pm

WHERE: Milwaukie Covenant Church (12201 SE Linwood Ave, Milwaukie, 97222)

TICKETS: \$15 per person, payable by check to Doug Van Zanten (2457 Mustang Court, West Linn, OR 97068), or by cash or check (paid directly to the church) on the day of the event. Ticket price includes casual lunch.

CONTACT: RSVP required. Please email Ken Snow at ken-snowski@comcast.net, or Doug Van Zanteen at dvz44@comcast.net to let them know if you plan to attend, or if you have any questions.

CLASS OF 1966 - 60th Reunion

WHEN: Weekend of August 21-22, 2026

WHAT: Friday class luncheon, 11:00-3:00pm

WHERE: Eastmoreland Golf Course Banquet Room (2425 SE Bybee, Portland, 97202)

WHAT: Saturday afternoon family-friendly gathering in conjunction with the Benson Tech Community Celebration, 12:00-3:00 pm(ish)

WHERE: BPHS Campus (546 NE 12th, Portland 97232)

CONTACT: For information and tickets (\$91 per person if purchased prior to June 27), visit the Benson polytechnic 1966 60-Year Reunion page on Varsity Reunions (<https://varsityreunions.com/event/benson-polytechnic-1966-60-year-reunion/>). Contact John Wong with questions at john97214@gmail.com or (503) 929-4888.

CLASS OF 1976 - 50th Reunion

Please contact the BPHSAA at info@BensonTechAlumni.org if you are aware of any plans for a Class of 1976 reunion.

CLASS OF 1986 - 40th Reunion

WHEN: Saturday, July 18, 2026

WHAT: Saturday evening, no-host, adults-only get together, time TBD

WHERE: Produce Row Cafe

WHAT: Saturday golf and spa day, details TBD

WHERE: McMenamins Edgefield (2126 SW Halsey Street, Troutdale, OR 97060)

CONTACT: Information about tickets forthcoming. Visit the Benson High School Class of '86 Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/219168118109086>) for updates and details, and contact Leslie Pfau at pfau.leslie@yahoo.com with questions.

CLASS OF 1991 - 35th Reunion

WHEN: Saturday, August 1, 2026

WHAT: Saturday evening, no-host, adults-only get together, time TBD.

WHERE: McMenamin's Edgefield (2126 SW Halsey St, Troutdale, 97060)

CONTACT: Visit the Benson High School Class of '91 Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/bensonHS91>) for updates and details, and contact Sahra Vanderkin Rahimtoola at sahra.rahimtoola@gmail.com with questions

CLASS of 1996- 30th Reunion

WHEN: Weekend of August 21-22, 2026

WHAT Saturday afternoon family-friendly gathering in conjunction with the Benson Tech Community Celebration, ~12:00 pm -3:00 pm(ish)

WHERE: BPHS Campus (546 NE 12th, Portland, OR 97232)

WHAT: Saturday night adults-only reunion, time TBD

WHERE: TBD

CONTACT: Visit the Benson High School c/o '96 Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/961343463910677>) for updates and details (including info about ticket sales and a potential Friday night gathering), and contact Reshawn Nweke at ratta321@yahoo.com with questions.

CLASS of 2001 - 25th Reunion

WHEN: Weekend of August 21-22, 2026

WHAT: Friday evening, adults-only reunion and dance party, 7:00-10:30pm

WHERE: Kennedy School Gymnasium (5736 NE 33rd, Portland 97211)

TICKETS: \$60 pp. Price includes 1 drink and live DJ entertainment. Ticket purchasing details to come

WHAT Saturday afternoon family-friendly gathering in conjunction with the Benson Tech Community Celebration, ~12:00 pm -3:00 pm(ish)

WHERE: BPHS Campus (546 NE 12th, Portland, OR 97232)

(continued on next page)



REUNION INFORMATION (continued from previous page)

WHAT: Saturday evening, no-host, family-friendly gathering, 5:00-10:00 pm

WHERE: Kenton Station (8303 N Denver, Portland 97217)

CONTACT: Visit the Benson C/O 2001 25th Class Reunion Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1294341194101667>) for updates. Send questions and photo memories to Kennedy and the 2001 reunion committee at BHS2001Pictures@gmail.com.

CLASS of 2006- 20th Reunion

WHEN: Weekend of August 21-22, 2026

WHAT: Friday evening, family-friendly, no host meet-and-greet, 6:00-10:00 pm

WHERE: Kenton Station (8303 N Denver, Portland 97217)

WHAT Saturday afternoon family-friendly gathering in conjunction with the Benson Tech Community Celebration, ~12:00 pm -3:00 pm(ish)

WHERE: BPHS Campus (546 NE 12th, Portland, OR 97232)

WHAT: Saturday night adults-only reunion, time TBD

WHERE: Rose City Yacht Club (3737 NE Marine Dr, Portland 97211)

CONTACT: Join the Benson Polytechnic Class of 2006 Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/715798701874360/>) and check back regularly for updates, including ticket purchasing info, and contact Heather Taylor and the 2006 reunion committee at BensonTechClassOf2006@gmail.com with questions.

CLASS OF 2016 - 10th Reunion

Please contact the BPHSAA at info@BensonTechAlumni.org if you are aware of any plans for a Class of 2016 reunion.

Is your class planning a reunion?

Does your class end in a "7" or a "2"? Are you considering, or perhaps already in the process of planning a reunion in 2027? The BPHSAA can help to spread the word, and connect you with graduates from your class!

Simply send an email with the following information to info@bensontechalumni.org, and we'll share the details of your reunion on our webpage, social media accounts, and in our newsletters.

- **When** (dates and times)
- **What** (the nature of the events — adults-only or families welcome, catered or potluck, or BYO food and drink, etc.)
- **Where**
- **Cost and how to purchase tickets**
- **Event website or Facebook page** (if applicable)
- **Contact information** for the organizer(s)



Benson TechBoosters update

by Kelly Janes, Benson TechBoosters, President

Stop by the TechBoosters Table at Tech Show

Tech Show is just around the corner, and TechBoosters will be there tabling in the front hall and introducing what we hope will be a new fan favorite: Benson Tech-branded marionberry and apricot jams. These limited-run jars, featuring Benson's logo and school colors, make great gifts and proceeds will support Benson Tech students. Early samples have been a hit. Swing by to buy a jar or three!

While you're stopping by, check out our fall fundraising trophy, proudly on display year-round in the front hall. For the second year in a row, the Class of 1985 took top honors—an impressive repeat victory. The question now: who will 'fund-rise' to the challenge next year.



Want to donate today? Support the Benson TechBoosters' Teacher Appreciation Fund. Visit our PayPal page to donate: bit.ly/FuelTeamBenson or scan the QR code at left).

Passing the Concessions Baton

We also want to recognize an important transition within our program. Many thanks to Jeff Strachan (Class of 1977) for his years of dedication managing the TechBoosters concessions stand. This work requires significant time, coordination, and personal investment, and Jeff's steady leadership has made a lasting impact. We're grateful for all he has contributed. Thank you, Papa J!

Looking ahead, we're pleased to share that the Boosters have voted to pass the baton to our board member, Josh Piper (Class of 1995). Josh steps into this role with a commitment to sustaining this important program. If you'd like to join the team supporting concessions operations, please reach out to bensontechboosters@gmail.com.

Sponsoring Program Gaining Traction

Our sponsorship program is gaining traction, with two community sponsors now supporting Benson Athletics! We offer three packages: Astro, Blue, and Orange.

Sponsors receive:

- Banner(s) in the Auxiliary Gym, Main Gym, and Buckman Field (depending upon which package they purchase)
- Visibility in Principal's weekly newsletter
- PA announcements at home contests
- Logo on the Benson Tech webpage
- Recognition within the Benson Tech community

If you know a Portland-area business owner who may be interested in sponsoring, we're actively seeking additional sponsors for this season! Fill out our sponsorship form. Community partnerships play a key role in sustaining the strong momentum of Benson Tech athletics, with multiple sports advancing to state competition this past season alone.

Leadership Transition Seeking Our Next President

As we plan for the future, TechBoosters is seeking a new president for next school year. This role is critical to maintaining and growing the support systems our students rely on. As the parent of a graduating senior, I expect to transition out of this role at the end of this school year.

This is a meaningful opportunity for someone who cares deeply about Benson Tech and wants to take a hands-on leadership role. The president works closely with the board, school administration, and volunteers to set priorities, guide fundraising efforts, and support the long-term sustainability of TechBoosters.

Parents, guardians, alumni, and community members are encouraged to consider the role or help spread the word. Know someone who might be a good fit? Are you interested in this meaningful volunteer opportunity? Please email bensontechboosters@gmail.com for more information!

Thank You For Being a Friend

Get Involved, Join Us As your Benson TechBoosters, we are so grateful for all you do to support our students and the BPHS Community. In celebration and appreciation, we're hoping to bring the community together with a social event before the end of the school year... more details to come soon! (And if you'd like to help plan and implement such an event, your assistance would be very welcome! ([Just drop us a line.](#)))

Get involved!

At Benson TechBoosters, we believe every contribution makes an impact. Whether through donations, volunteer time, or spreading the word, your involvement helps fuel student success and strengthens the already amazing Benson Tech community.

Your Benson TechBoosters are actively recruiting new volunteers. We have several active initiatives and, as the saying goes, more hands make for lighter work. Keep up to date by attending a meeting (usually third Thursdays – monthly updates and zoom link are on our website (bensontechboosters.org) or following us on social media:

Facebook Group: [Tech Pride Volunteer Community](#)

Instagram: [instagram.com/bensontechboosters](https://www.instagram.com/bensontechboosters)

Thank you for all that you do! Go Tech! Go Astros!

Tech Show, continued from front cover

clothing and gear will be on sale. You can be so proud of the Girls and Boys Basketball teams placing third and fifth in the state respectively. There are a wide range of student clubs, you will be amazed, and some are selling food and clothing.

Speaking of Benson Tech clubs, know that the school district does not financially support clubs. The BPHSAA has stepped in with funds, direct help (particularly in concessions these past five years) and through the Benson Tech Foundation to provide financial assistance in the form of "gap funding" when the club has partially met their funding goal but needs a helping hand.

So, here is the pitch, at a minimum, join and pay your annual \$20 BPHSAA dues so we can continue to support clubs and school functions. (You now have the option of paying \$200 for a lifetime alumni association membership- visit <https://bensontechalumni.org/product/lifetime-membership/>.)

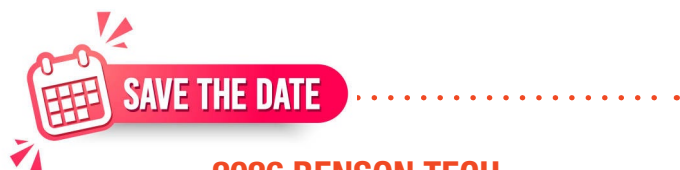
The BPHSAA has fund raised for the Benson Tech Scholarship Fund helping newly graduated seniors plan-

ning to attend college or technical school. (Donate today using the QR code in the poster below.) Look for us at your reunions, we are happy to speak more about the school and what the BPHSAA has been doing to support the students and you, the alumni.

Also in The Commons, "official" Benson Tech Astros clothing and other gear will be on sale. Benson Tech clubs and activities will have students at tables throughout the school, offering food, drink and student-produced products.

It will be a great evening at Tech Show with the excitement of the students showing what they're learning and your own experience from when you were a student and enjoyment at your Tech Shows. Come and see our great school for that shared experience.

BPHSAA Board members will be available in the Alumni Room to talk and learn more of our work to continue supporting Benson Polytechnic High School. See you at Tech Show!



SAVE THE DATE

2026 BENSON TECH COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Sponsored by the BPHSAA

Saturday, August 22, 12:00-3:00 pm
546 NE 12th

Open to all alumni, staff, current or future students and families, and supporters of the school!

- Connect with classmates and alumni from across the years
- Tour the modernized campus
- Purchase lunch from food carts
- Learn how you can support Benson's students, programs, athletic teams, and clubs
- Class reunions including 1966, 1996, 2001 and 2006

Past donors to the Alumni Scholarship Fund
HAVE HELPED
MORE THAN 100
BENSON TECH
GRADUATES
PURSUE
THEIR
COLLEGE
DREAMS.

OMAR LOZANO, Class of 2025

PLEASE HELP
FUTURE TECH STUDENTS
BY DONATING \$25 (OR MORE) NOW.

www.bensontechalumni.org/scholarship/