

BENSON TECH

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

Benson Tech football is back in the game

by Bob Walker, BPHSAA BOD, Class of 1977

Are you ready for some football? Benson Tech varsity football will be back in full force for Friday Night Lights after a nine-year pause.

Coach Kendall Lewis is back for his third year as head coach with returning coaches, Shawn White, Zack Davis, Walter Garcia-Adams, Daviar Wexler (Class of 2019), Jaylen Russell (Class of 2019), Jacob Deitas, Cedric Walker and Robert Caudillo. New to the staff this year will be, Mark DeKay, Jason Stewart, Orenton Hill-Wingate (Class of 2007), Regi Golden and Cohen Wiblemo.

The team had a busy summer with its June Camp which had a nice turnout mix of incoming freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. It also participated in two 7-on-7 competitions in July. The team also conducted a two-week preseason camp followed by an official start of practices on August 17.

The varsity team's first game of the season will be held September 4 vs. Franklin High School on the field at the former Marshall High School campus (Marshall Field)



Above: Benson Tech squares off against Sandy High School in October 2025. The upcoming 2026 seasons marks the full return of varsity football at Benson Tech Photo courtesy of Benson Tech Football.

at 3905 SE 91st Ave. in Portland , 7:00 p.m. start time. Most home games will be played at Marshall Field, which has permanent seating and lighting, amenities currently not available at Buckman Field. Concessions are expected to be sold at all home games.

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The Benson Tech community celebrates

The BPHSAA is sponsoring a Celebration of Benson Tech—Oregon's premier technically focused high school—on August 22, 2026, from noon to 3:00 p.m. The Benson TechBoosters will be cohosting the event, with assistance from Tech administrators and staff. Anyone with a school connection or interest is invited to attend. Food, drinks, and Tech gear will be available for purchase at the event.

The now-annual Celebration offers alumni and other Benson Tech supporters a chance to view the recently modernized campus, meet Principal Curtis Wilson,

teachers, and athletic coaches, and greet the future alumni of the incoming Class 2030.



Guided tours will be available beginning at 12:15 p.m., and continuing until just after 2:00 p.m. These tours provide new students and their families the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the school before the first day of classes on August 27.

As in prior years, multiple classes have planned their reunions to coincide with the Community Celebration. This year's event welcomes the Classes of 1966, 1996, 2001, and 2006.



Benson Tech Athletics updates

by Jessica Russell, Benson Tech Athletic Director

Spring Sports Recap

Benson Tech had a spectacular spring sports season! Two of our assistant coaches were promoted into the head coach position. Benson Tech math teacher, Andrew Scheirer, took over the boys tennis program. They had another year with high participation numbers and athletes excited to work on their game year-round. Seven of the 12 district tournament participants made it to day two. Former as-



Above: The Benson Tech golf program included a JV team in the 2025-2026 school year to accommodate athletes new to the sport. Photo courtesy of Jessica Russell.

tant coach Ryan Young led the boys golf program and was voted by his peers as PIL Coach of the Year! Coach created a JV team for athletes new to the sport so he could include

everyone who signed up. One of his athletes, Sam Savoie, qualified for regionals!

Girls tennis had another great season with many of the athletes making it to the second day of the district tournament. Junior standout Carlyta Barfield was our district singles champion again this spring! Seeded fourth going into the state tournament, she defeated her second round opponent convincingly, but fell in the quarterfinals to another junior from Barlow. Congratulations on a great season, Carlyta!

Baseball and softball had another great season. While Buckman Field presents its challenges, athletes and families appreciate the short commute to their home field! Both programs played a JV schedule this year, and are looking to add some varsity games to their schedules next year. The goal is for the programs to build to having at least two teams, a lower level team and a varsity team, when the time is right.

Finally, track and field continues to increase their athlete turnout numbers each year and had more athletes qualify for state than previous years. Head Coach Duy Do led four of our athletes - three seniors and one freshman - to the state meet at Hayward Field. Congratulations to seniors Miles Gray (triple jump), Edwin Chang (400m dash), and LaShya'h Vincent (long and triple jump), as well as freshman Zara Pahl Armsbury (shot put)!

Benson Tech football is back, continued from front cover

The first football fundraiser will be SNAP, which will be set up to start in August. Benson Tech's football teams could use all the support they can get to hit the goal of \$10,000. If alumni or anyone else would like to donate to the team, please reach out to Coach Lewis at kelewis@pps.net to discuss options for donations.

Coach Lewis is looking forward to a great year and would love to have everyone join us Fridays, Thursdays, and hopefully Mondays as they plan on fielding a varsity and a lower-level team for the 2026 football season.

The varsity team will have four home games and five away games for the season, with the hopes of making the playoffs starting in November. Varsity games are set for 7:00 p.m. start times, except for the 9/25 game against Roosevelt (4:00 p.m. start). Lower-level games have 4:00 p.m. start times; the game schedule is currently TBD.

2026 VARSITY FOOTBALL GAME SCHEDULE

Friday 9/4	Franklin @ Marshall Field
Friday 9/11	@ Grant
Friday 9/18	@ Jefferson
Friday 9/25	Roosevelt @ Buckman Field, 4:00 p.m. start
Friday 10/2	McDaniels @ Marshall Field
Thursday 10/8	Cleveland @ Marshall Field (away game)
Friday 10/11	@ Wells
Friday 10/23	Lincoln (HOMECOMING) @ Marshall Field
Friday 10/30	@ Crook County High School, Prineville, OR

Updates for football schedules and scores can be found at the Oregon School Activities Association (OSAA) website: <https://www.osaa.org/activities/fbl/schedules>.

Benson Tech hosts district construction competition

On April 17, 2026, Benson Tech hosted the second annual PPS Construction Skills Competition in its Construction Wood Shop, bringing together student teams from five local high schools: Benson Tech, Cleveland, Franklin, Grant, Ida Wells, and Roosevelt.

The four-member student teams, including sophomores, juniors, and seniors, worked together to build two Adirondack chairs from raw wood within a four-hour time limit, demonstrating teamwork, craftsmanship, and problem-solving under pressure. Shop teachers from each school accompanied their teams to help answer questions. Benson Tech construction instructors, Luke



Hotchkiss and Dave Keetah, were on site to make shop tools available for each team. Also in attendance were BPHSAA Chair Rob Johns and Larry Erbes, a former drafting instructor at Benson Tech, who came as an observer to this public competition.

The judging of the final two chairs for each team was conducted

by two construction professionals from Mortenson Construction. The first-place prize of four sets of drills funded by the Benson Tech Foundation, went to the Benson Tech team. Roosevelt High School took second place and Cleveland came in third.

Benson Tech graduation recap

by Josh Piper, BPHSAA BOD, Class of 1995

On June 2, 2026, 184 Benson Tech students out of a class of 192 joined our ranks as Benson Tech alumni. The ceremony was held at Portland State University's Viking Pavilion at 4:30 p.m. – the first of two Portland Public Schools (PPS) graduation ceremonies that day and 10 held over the course of five days. PPS had previously been contracting with Providence Park since the pandemic for graduation ceremonies, but had switched to PSU in 2025.

Among the graduates, there were 29 Digital Media Production majors, 10 Building Construction majors, 6 Radio Broadcasting majors, 37 Electric majors, 19 Computer Science majors, 34 Health Occupations majors, 11 Automotive majors and 16 Manufacturing majors. Within the Class of 2026, 4% of the graduates had perfect 4.0 GPAs with another 28% of the graduates having above a 3.5 GPA.

The event was well run, with speedy entrance into the venue despite long lines and robust security. There was ample seating within the basketball arena with generally good views throughout. After a short introduction from Vice Principal Joe Mitacek, Student Body Executive President Celeste Siquina-Calderon did a masterful job of moving the event along as its emcee. The program featured a number of speeches from distinguished guests and honorees such



as Principal Curtis Wilson, Jr. and three of the total seven valedictorians - Brenda Martine De Jesus, Nicholas Oates, and Ziad Faruqui. Mr. Oates' speech was particularly inspiring as he encouraged the graduates to take initiative and go forth to create their big ideas.

(A number of this class not participating in the ceremony will complete graduation requirements over the summer.)

Congratulations to our 2026 graduates! With Tech Pride, we look forward to celebrating your future successes with you.

Six outstanding graduates awarded Alumni Scholarship

by Rachael LK Kuryanny, BPHSAA BOD, Class of 1997

The Benson Polytechnic High School 50-year Reunion Award Fund was founded in 1991 thanks to generous donations from the classes of 1939, 1940, and 1941. In its first year, the fund awarded \$250 apiece to two deserving graduates. In the years since, the endowment (renamed the Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Scholarship Fund in 2012) has grown considerably, and is now managed by the Oregon Community Foundation where its 501(c)3 status allows donors to make tax-exempt contributions. This spring, the fund's earnings provided over \$12,000 in scholarships for six Benson Tech graduates from the Class of 2026. Recipients were selected based on their high school achievements, strength of character, and educational objectives, with preference given to individuals enrolling in two-year vocational training or pre-professional academic programs.

✿ **Liam Thomas Daniel O'Connor** was raised in SE Portland by his mother. An only child, Liam was named in honor of his grandfather and late uncle.

Liam chose Benson Tech for its exceptional Career and Technical Education (CTE) offerings, and considers the choice to forge his own path and not attend his neighborhood school one of the best decisions of his life. Liam flourished at Benson Tech, earning a 3.5 GPA while completing a rigorous courseload that included Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Literature, Language, U.S. History, Government and Politics, Pre-Calculus, and Calculus.



Liam's passion for building and working with his hands led him to major in Construction. With guidance from construction teacher Luke Hotchkiss (Class of 2000), Liam designed and built the 14-foot, obstacle course-inspired "warped wall" that became a featured attraction at the 2025 Tech Show. The wall was such a success that during his senior year, Liam mentored junior construction majors as they created their own version of his interactive installation.

A dedicated and curious student, Liam will enroll in Mt. Hood Community College this fall to pursue an engineering transfer degree, after which he will transfer to a four-year university to complete a bachelors in mechanical engineering. Liam aspires to one day own an engineering firm focused on developing innovative technologies that solve real-world problems and improve people's lives.

✿ **Jeremiah Pickens** was born and raised in the St. Johns neighborhood. He and his twin brother, Jaeson, are both proud graduates of Benson Tech.

Although a lifelong Portlander, Jeremiah moved frequently during his early childhood, making it difficult to establish lasting connections. By middle school, his family became more settled, allowing Jeremiah to begin forging close friendships. He nonetheless opted to attend Benson Tech, having been drawn to the school's hands-on CTE classes. Jeremiah quickly found his footing at Benson, establishing meaningful relationships with his teachers and peers, developing a stronger sense of self, and discovering a clear sense of purpose.



A medical professions major, Jeremiah excelled academically at Benson, earning a 3.68 GPA. He maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA second semester of sophomore and both semesters of his junior year. As a senior, Jeremiah challenged himself with four AP courses—Language, U.S. Government and Politics, Biology, and Statistics—while also earning his Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) credential.

Outside of the classroom, Jeremiah demonstrated a strong commitment to service. He volunteered as a student leader at Camp Kuratli Outdoor School, helped construct greenhouses with the Seed environmental club, and assisted with blood drives through the HOSA/Future Health Professionals club.

Jeremiah will attend Portland Community College (PCC) in the fall, where he plans to earn his associate's degree before transferring to OHSU. He ultimately hopes to build a fulfilling career in healthcare, where he can make a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

✿ **Camila Reyes** was born in California but has spent most of her life in Portland. She is the middle of three children, and the second to graduate from Benson Tech.

Camila opted to attend Benson Tech for its strong Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs. She is passionate about math, taking both AP Pre-Calculus and AP Calculus, along with AP Biology and U.S. History. A construction major, Camila embraced the real-world application of math concepts in the shop, and particularly enjoyed participating in construction competitions.

A well-rounded student, Camila was an active part of the school community at Benson. She was a member of the Native American Culture Club throughout her time at Benson, and played softball for each of her four years of high school as well. Camila volunteered multiple times as an Outdoor School student leader (camp name: Lychee), was nominated to the homecoming court, and was voted Prom Queen by her classmates.



This fall Camila will attend PCC where she will study pre-engineering. After earning her associate's degree, she intends to transfer to a four year university and earn a bachelor's in civil engineering.

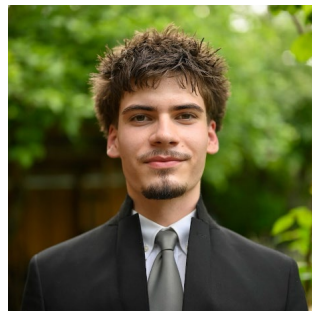
✿ **Julian Tsiomba** was born and raised in SE Portland. The middle of five kids, Julian is not only the second of his siblings to graduate from Benson Tech, he is also the second to be awarded the Alumni Scholarship.

Inspired by his father, an Uzbek-born master luthier, Julian began working with his hands at an early age. A middle school robotics course built on this foundation, revealing his aptitude and enthusiasm for electronics and electrical systems. This experience cemented his desire to attend Benson Tech, and set him on his path to becoming an electric major.

Julian was drawn to the electrical field for its blend of creative problem-solving, practical application, and meaningful impact. He credits his electric teacher, Jorge Maceo (Class of 2005), with cultivating a learning environment rich in excellence, collaboration, and curiosity—qualities that reinforced Julian's dedication to the trade.

An engaged member of his community, Julian regularly assists elderly neighbors with yardwork and volunteers at his church. In addition to these commitments, Julian worked more than 25 hours per week during the school year. In his free time, Julian enjoys cooking, skateboarding, weightlifting, hiking, and expressing himself through piano.

Julian plans to attend PCC, where he will continue his electrical studies in preparation for an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) apprenticeship and an eventual career as a licensed electrician.



✿ The youngest of three siblings, **Wilmer Tuz** was born and raised in Portland. He was drawn to Benson Tech for its emphasis on practical skill development and career preparation. From his first days at Benson Tech, Wilmer immersed himself in his CTE coursework. He enjoyed exploring a variety of potential career pathways, and learning work-force-ready skills such as welding, First Aid, and foundational construction techniques. After discovering both an aptitude for wiring electrical circuits and a natural understanding of the physics of electricity, Wilmer decided to major in electric.



Wilmer excelled in his electric courses, finding the concepts and hands-on work engaging, and the pace well suited to his temperament. His teacher, Jorge Maceo, regularly invited industry professionals to speak with students about the electrical trade. Those experiences, along with Mr. Maceo's mentoring and Wilmer's success wiring a tiny house featured at Tech Show junior year, gave Wilmer confidence that a career as an electrician was the right path for him.

Outside the classroom, Wilmer is actively involved in his church youth group, and was a dedicated member of Benson Tech's Escalera Club throughout high school. From a young age, Wilmer spent many of his afternoons and weekends working for his family's cleaning business. Alongside his father, he removed graffiti, painted, cleaned union buildings and apprenticeship training centers, and maintained commercial properties. These responsibilities instilled in Wilmer a strong work ethic and the importance of showing up, and his father taught him to take pride in his work and to do every job well, regardless of the size of the task.

Come fall, Wilmer will attend PCC where he will complete coursework in preparation for an IBEW apprenticeship. He plans to earn his electrician's license and, one day, open his own electrical contracting business. Wilmer is grateful to the generous donors of the Alumni Scholarship Fund for helping him launch the next chapter of his education and career.

✿ **Mark Crawford** (Major: Computer Engineering) will attend Portland Community College to study cybersecurity. After obtaining his associate's, Mark plans to transfer to a 4-year university to pursue a degree in cybersecurity policy.

Inspired by these outstanding students? Your tax-deductible donation to the Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Scholarship Fund will support future Benson Tech graduates like those profiled above. To make a secure online donation, visit the BPHSAA website at bensontechalumni.org/sections/scholarship/

Benson community shares perspectives on Lloyd Center's upcoming closure

After serving the Benson community for 60 years, the mall is permanently closing on August 8th

by Zayne Dahlquist, Tobinn Carlson and Kynzee Ferguson

Since it opened in 1960, Lloyd Center has been a staple of the Benson community. Whether students were shopping at Barnes & Noble or Hot Topic, stopping in for a quick bite from one of the many restaurants, or just window shopping, Lloyd was a gathering place right by Benson Polytechnic High School for over 60 years. However, Lloyd has been financially struggling in the years since the pandemic. Despite the number of shops that have moved in recently, the mall still struggles to attain profitability. Because of these long-term financial issues, the mall's owners, Urban Renaissance Group, have decided to permanently close Lloyd Center on August 8, 2026.



Photo courtesy of Zayne Dahlquist.

Jeffrey Shields is a junior at Benson who regularly attends Lloyd, but has strong opinions about what the future of the mall should look like. "I go to Lloyd once a week every Sunday from twelve to six PM," he explained. "Me and some nerds play D&D there for like, six hours and then have a lunch break for like twenty minutes."

In response to a question about the state of the mall, Shields said, "There's not that much in [Lloyd] anymore. They already tore down one end of it to turn it into a theater, which is already starting to look better than it did when they started." He continued, "After Ross and Forever 21 left, it was already bleeding and now it's just a corpse."

Lloyd Center's owners, the Washington-based firm Urban Renaissance Group, plan to replace the 60-year old mall with a mixed-use neighborhood that connects with the surrounding transportation network. There are currently no official plans to preserve any parts of the historic mall.

Shields believes the mall should be redeveloped. "I believe they should tear down Lloyd and make apartments. [...] We have a big homelessness problem in Oregon. I'm not saying the apartments they're building are low-income or very cheap. They're probably going to be as expensive, if not more than the current apartments in Portland. But housing is housing. And we need to get more people off the streets and in their homes."

"I have been going to Lloyd for over 30 years, it was my childhood mall," remarked Benson's general lunch manager, April Mayo. "And it's been amazing because that was where we did all of our shopping, [...] and after shopping we would go to the movies, and the food court after that. They had the arcade, so it was like the best thing ever, and I would look forward to that on the weekends."

"My kids hang out a little bit at Lloyd, they go to the ice skating rink. [...] They love going to Lloyd Center, especially because they go to school here and they can just walk over there and get lunch. They used to get Cinnabon, but of course that is closed down, and so is their popcorn place. [The popcorn place] used to be super famous, and it was a staple of Lloyd Center."

When asked for her thoughts about Lloyd's closure, Mayo said, "In this neighborhood, it's the only mall. If you wanna go to another mall now, you have to travel 25-30 minutes in traffic both ways. So it's really sad to think of it shutting down." Mayo continues, "Here in Oregon, it rains and rains and it's cold and it's soggy. So having something so close to home and having a place for the kids to go, I think it's better to keep that."

"I used to go to Lloyd a lot when it was thriving, [...] but now I mainly go to Lloyd Center for Barnes & Noble," said Cassius Bolivar-Sargent, a junior. When asked how he felt about the plans to demolish Lloyd, Cassius said, "I do love Barnes & Noble, but there are other book stores that I could go to, [and] there's a lot of other malls that are doing way better than Lloyd Center has been doing in these past few years."

Lloyd Center's closure will affect many members of the Benson community in different ways. Whether students see the closure as a loss or a necessary change, the mall is scheduled to close permanently on August 8th, 2026, marking the end of a valuable indoor meeting place for students and a home for many local businesses.

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Benson Tech honors Dan Malone's service and leadership



Left: Dan Malone. **Right:** BPHSAA Board members Gerry Ochs (far left) and Rob Johns (far right) join Dan and Principal Curtis Wilson for a photo at Dan's retirement celebration in June.

Principal Curtis Wilson hosted a retirement celebration for Dan Malone on the afternoon of June 4, 2026 in the school, Dan's last day as a vice principal of Benson Tech and recognizing his service to Benson Polytechnic High School and Portland Public Schools (PPS).

Dan joined Benson Tech in 2020 as Vice Principal for Construction and Modernization, bringing with him nearly four decades of experience at Roosevelt High School, where he had served in a variety of leadership roles, including as vice principal.

Dan was a champion for the Benson Tech campus modernization project and the BPHSAA. During the campus modernization, he oversaw the extensive effort to evaluate

and manage equipment, tools, and materials from the school's venerable career and technical education programs. Drawing on his experience with Roosevelt's modernization effort, he worked with staff and alumni to determine which items would be preserved for the new building, relocated, placed in storage, transferred to other programs, or responsibly retired. His leadership helped balance the practical needs of the modernization with honoring Benson Tech's history and the traditions of its career technical education (CTE) programs.

Benson Tech teachers and staff gathered in the Community Room for a potluck as part of sending Dan off. Joining the attendees were Benson Tech alumni Gerry Ochs (Class of 1977), a longtime friend of Dan's, and Rob Johns (Class of 1977) and his wife Constance Grecco. In a reminder of Portland's close-knit community, Rob had previously worked with Dan's father in the insurance business. Dan had no idea that Gerry and Rob would be there, making for a nice surprise.

***Note from the BPHSAA:** We thank Dan for his partnership throughout the modernization project and the care he took in preserving Benson Tech's legacy. We look forward to seeing him at future school and alumni events – especially at the Heron Lakes Golf Course– and we wish him all the best in his retirement.*

Saying thank you and 'til we meet again to Jeff Strachan

by Rob Johns, BPHSAA Chair, Class of 1977

On July 16, 2026, at Kenton Station, a grand celebration was held to say goodbye to Benson Tech alumnus Jeff Strachan (Class of 1977), concessionaire extraordinaire, donor, and aviator. Jeff's friends, including BPHSAA board members, gathered to thank him for his contributions and wish him well in his next adventures.

Jeff gave generously of his time and treasures to make Benson Tech Concessions a well-run machine that provided financial support to clubs. (School clubs are not funded by Portland Public Schools.) Jeff was a dedicated regular in the concessions stand at events, providing the food, showing up early, working side by side with the kids from the clubs, and cleaned up afterwards.

At Benson Tech, Jeff was an aviation major, graduating directly to Naval ROTC scholarship at Oregon State University.



Above: Friends and fellow volunteers gathered at Kenton Station to say bon voyage to Benson Tech's concessionaire extraordinaire and volunteer Jeff Strachan (standing third from left).

Jeff will be relocating to the San Diego area to be closer to his grandchildren. While he may be attending fewer Benson Tech events in the future, the friendships and connections he built through his years of support to the Benson Tech community will continue.

Alumni Room draws 300+ during April 2026 Tech Show

Over 300 alumni and their family and friends visited Benson Tech's Alumni Room located behind the Auditorium's balcony during the April 16-17 Tech Show. Visitors to the space browsed among decades of yearbooks, viewed a growing collection of memorabilia, scrolled through the recently digitized copies of the school's former student newspaper the Tech Pep, and enjoyed cake, cookies and fruit provided by the BPHSAA. (Viewing the digitized Tech Pep issues are at other times limited to BPHSAA members.) The Benson Tech Alumni Room is unique among Portland's high schools and was created during the 2016-2024 modernization of the school.

BPHSAA elects a new director

At its regularly scheduled June meeting, the BPHSAA elected Joe Putnam (Class of 1996) to fill the vacancy left by Jeff Strachan's resignation. (See article about Jeff on Page 7.) Joe's professional background is as a graphic designer and photographer, skills that have already been employed by the BPHSAA, including managing the website.

Annual Meeting date set for November 9

The BPHSAA 2026 Annual Meeting will be held on November 9 starting at 5:30 p.m. in Benson Tech's Community Room (located just inside the school's front entrance). The meeting will include a state-of-Benson Tech summary as its enrollment increases and its funding decreases. Refreshments will be available and other BPHSAA business covered, including filling any vacancies among its 15 directors. The meeting is open to all Benson Tech alumni (paid or not) and supporters.

Benson TechBoosters selects a new president

Josh Piper, a long serving Alumni Association Director, was elected in May to be the Benson TechBoosters next president. He will replace Kelly Janes, who has led the Boosters for 3+ years and whose son graduated this past June. Josh intends to continue as a BPHSAA Director, though stepping away from the BPHSAA's website that he

created, to devote more time to the TechBoosters. *Editor's note: Best wishes, Josh with your new responsibilities! And thank you, Kelly for your years support of Benson Tech as well as the BPHSAA.*

Benson Tech enrollment continues to grow and budget woes

Benson Tech's enrollment will continue to grow for the third time for the 2026-2027 school year with 350 freshmen and 25 additional sophomores and juniors. They will "replace" the 192 graduating seniors. If Portland Public Schools' (PPS') plans for another 350 freshmen for the following year prevails, school enrollment will exceed 1,200 for the 2027-2028 school year. During the last year on the Marshall Campus, Benson Tech's enrollment had dropped to about 850 students.

While Benson Tech enrollment has increased since moving into the modernized school building in 2024, it has continued to suffer staff and budget reductions along with all of PPS' schools. The District has been facing rising costs and reduced funding from the State of Oregon. For Benson Tech, the addition of students requires more teachers for the state-required class in English, math, etc., resulting in the school needing to take the staffing cuts in other areas. To meet the coming 2026-2027 year, several teachers will work three-fourth time and others were released. Over the past three years, Benson Tech's CTE programs have been spared. In looking ahead, Principal Curtis Wilson said that may change. He further said if more cuts arrive, the school will deal appropriately with all of its programs when the time comes.

Makerspace shuttered but not eliminated

Benson Tech's Makerspace, the last remaining in the District, was a victim of the 2026-2027 budget cuts as its teacher was one of those cut. For the foreseeable future, the Makerspace will be simply locked and its equipment stored until a time comes with resources to hire a teacher to oversee the program.



ALUMNI TEXT CREDITS

Co-Editors & Writers: Dale Bajema and Roger Edwards

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BPHSAA TRIVIA QUIZ

- **Question 1:** Who are the “pioneers” of the Benson Tech community?
 - **Question 2:** What was the role of the Lloyd Corporation within the neighborhood?
 - **Question 3:** Why is the 12th Avenue viaduct important to the neighborhood?
 - **Question 4:** How can a business in the Benson neighborhood serve a family?
 - **Question 5:** Who were the community members that passed through the neighborhood?
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- **Answer 1:** The community itself is roughly bordered by Sandy Boulevard and Burnside Street on the south, down to about 6th Avenue to the west, Sullivan's Gulch on the north, and including 16th Avenue to the east allows Voodoo Doughnuts to unquestionably be considered a neighbor. They were founded in west Portland in 2003 and set up their second store at 1501 NE Davis Street in 2008. Everyday Music came to 1931 NE Sandy Boulevard in the late 1990s and remained there until 2022 when their building was demolished. The used music store was beyond the “defined” boundaries but did attract Benson Tech students.

Franz Bakery was already here when Benson Tech arrived. Their first location had been established before 1896 as the United States Bakery at E 7th and Burnside. The Franz brothers purchased the Ann Arbor Bakery at NW 16th and Glisan in 1906, and their uncle's US Bakery in 1907. They continued acquiring small bakeries and consolidated the operation with a new building at NE 11th and Flanders in 1912, where the giant loaf of Franz bread was later put on the roof. The Franz name was adopted in the 1920's as a member of the US Bakery company.

The Norse Hall was chartered in 1910 as the Portland chapter of the Sons of Norway. They purchased the property at 111 NE 11th Avenue in 1925, and the hall was built there in 1928. The mortgage was paid off in 1940. The all-volunteer, nonprofit fraternal organization is still attracting people for regular and special occasions to its location as a cultural and event center.

The Caldwell Colonial funeral home can trace their founding at 20 NE 14th Avenue back to 1929, making them another respected neighbor

- **Answer 2:** Ralph B. Lloyd was impressed with the city of Portland when he first visited in 1905 from his home in Ventura CA. He made his first land purchase here of two lots on the NW corner of Union Avenue (now MLK Blvd.) and Multnomah Street in 1910. Flush with oil royalties in 1926, he bought the largely undeveloped blocks of the Holladay's Addition and later added 170 more blocks that were on both sides the Sullivan's Gulch. These empty platted blocks were used for the Big Top tents of traveling circuses for many years before Mr. Lloyd began developing his land into an integrated retail, entertainment, and residential district that would draw attention to the east side of the Willamette from the Portland downtown area.

In 1932 his 9-hole golf course opened along the south side and bottom of the Gulch between the 12th and 21st Avenue viaducts. This project featured an 18-hole putting green, a driving range, and an English architecture club house with men and ladies locker rooms, a coffee shop, and a lounge. The building was later the serial home of Ireland's Restaurant at Lloyd's, Sweet Tibbie Dunbar's Restaurant, the Polo Club, and an office of the Point West Credit Union. The building was demolished in 2017. The golf course itself had been lost in 1955 to the construction of the Banfield Freeway, which also took out the Holladay Bowl amphitheater to provide a parking lot for the Regal Cinemas at 15th and Multnomah.

Mr. Lloyd died in 1953, one year before the heavily windowed, Bonneville Power Administration Building opened at 820 NE 8th Avenue. This building dominated the local horizon for quite a time, even though a cluster of other federal office buildings had been erected nearby in the previous, half dozen years. The building at 811 NE Oregon Street housed the Selective Service office in Multnomah County until the Draft was ended in 1973. When the Lloyd family took over running land sales, Sheraton began their hotel in the block immediately west of Holladay Park, and the more general development of the Lloyd Center mall got underway. The mall opened in August 1960, and as Mr. Lloyd had predicted, the district attracted a lot of attention. Empty blocks found buyers, existing businesses saw their property value increase. Ample parking, the Banfield Freeway and four MAX lines to the area all made access simple. Many of the new buildings had office space that better accommodated the government agencies in the federal buildings. But Portland now has an excess of office space, and the mall will soon be closed. It was not the use of proven business practices that brought about this downturn

- **Answer 3:** The Paving Map of Portland, dated 1 January 1894 shows the status of Portland roads, but also the presence of Sullivan's Gulch bridges at 4th, 5th, and 12th Streets in the city of East Portland. (4th & 5th Streets later became Union & Grand Avenues). These bridges were wooden structures that did not age well. The 4th and 5th Street bridges were built over swampy lands without solid grounds for a stable footing. Bridges built there in 1872-1873 were unlevel and rotten by 1882. The ground at 12th Street was firm enough that authorization for a bridge there was made in 1889. Its cost was estimated at \$6000 to be paid almost entirely by Oregon Real Estate Co. along with a little help from East Portland. The Oregonian

reported the 12th Street bridge was completed in their 31 July 1890 issue. It was 95 feet above the gulch; the highest of other Gulch crossings.

Following the construction and failure of another pair of 4th and 5th Street bridges, authorities had decided single span bridges were needed that could be secured at opposite abutments of their crossings. Such bridges were completed at 4th and 5th in 1907 by International Contract Co. of Seattle. In 1910 this same company was hired to build a new bridge at 12th Street designed by Waddell & Harrington Consulting Engineers from Kansas City MO. It would be a steel bridge costing \$61,000. Construction began in April and quickly found the 1890 bridge in need of repair, although it was sturdy enough to help with the new construction. The new viaduct was completed in mid-October. It was 60 feet wide and 320 feet long and facilitated travel from residences in Albina to the north, to the commercial and industrial enterprises in East Portland, Sellwood, and Milwaukie

- **.Answer 4:** Russ's Auto Laundry persisted for over 30 years in locations south of Sullivan's Gulch by offering auto engine steam cleaning. It is first seen in the Portland Directory for 1935 as Dan Schwartz Auto Laundry, at 207 NE 12 Avenue. In 1940 it had become Ed's Auto Laundry at the same address. In 1950 the listing indicates Russ was now the proprietor. The 207 NE 12th address was primarily for Dantley Shell service station that also had a tire dealer, repair service, as well as steam cleaning by Russ George, who had moved from Fairview to 215 NE Davis. His family included his wife Evelyn and two sons, Russ "Skip" Jr. and Richard. The boys went to grade school at Buckman and Skip enrolled at Benson Tech in 1952. His Titian Red, 1948 Chevrolet "Benson Buggie" surely had a very clean engine. After graduating in 1956 he started working at Bonneville for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The work was interesting enough that he took leave from the Corps to enroll at PSC to study geology. He married in his junior year and finished his engineering degree at OSU before resuming his employment with the USACE.

Back at home, the auto laundry had moved to 233 NE 6th in 1965 and was now run by younger brother Richard. The family moved to Parkrose in time for Richard to graduate from the high school there, but he ran the business until it closed in 1985.

- **Answer 5:** Here are some of the neighbors that have come or lingered in our community for a while:
 - Abbey Rents
 - Alfonso Cadillac
 - American Brush Co.
 - American Sheet Metal, Inc.
 - American Steel & Foundry
 - American Steel & Wire.
 - Arctic Circle.
 - Beheme Manufacturing Co.

- Blumenauer Bicycle & Pedestrian Bridge
- C'est Si Bon! Bistro
- Chrysler, Dodge, Ram & Jeep of Portland
- Concord Career College
- Dantley Shell Service Station
- Devilbliss Cigars
- East Side Lodge
- First Swedish Temple Baptist Church
- Gingham Kitchen & Restaurant Supply
- Hippo Hardware
- Jacobsen Salt
- John Hancock Insurance
- Johnson Heating Supply Co.
- Jupiter Hotel
- Interstate Battery Systems
- Lew Williams Cadillac
- Lyman Slack Chevrolet
- Michael's Italian Beef & Sausage Co.
- NPI Elliot Commercial Real Estate
- NW Ice & Cold Storage
- Old Wives Tales Restaurant
- Oregon Athletics & Sporting Goods
- Oregon Olsen Transfer & Storage Co.
- Oregon Macaroni Manufacturing Co.
- Oregon State Vital Records
- Palace Laundry
- Paul Brong Machine Works
- Portland Bottling Co.
- Portland Rock Gym
- Portland School District #1
- Portland Tennis Center.
- Putt Putt Miniature Golf.
- Rhodes Bakery Equipment.
- Scotty's Hamburgers.
- Scovell's Café.
- Standard Fence Co.
- Tik Tok Restaurant
- United Radio Supply
- Webster Funeral Service
- Willamette Valley Meat
- Woodcrafters

Get your business listed in the BPHSAA Alumni Business Directory!

Did you know that there is a Benson Polytechnic Alumni Business Directory?

If you are a Benson Tech graduate who owns a business, this is your opportunity to connect with fellow alumni and expand your reach. The directory is a valuable resource that helps showcase alumni-owned businesses, fosters networking opportunities, and strengthens our community.

The Alumni Business Directory with current listings can be found on the BPHSAA website here: <https://bensontechalumni.org/location/>.

Why Join the Directory?

- **Increase visibility** – Your business will be listed in the directory and may also be featured on the BPHSAA website.
- **Social media exposure** – Gain recognition through Benson Tech's official alumni social media channels.
- **Newsletter spotlights** – Your business could be highlighted in upcoming BPHSAA alumni newsletters.
- **Event opportunities** – We look to alumni businesses for involvement in events like the Tech Show, community celebrations, and networking events.



How to Get Listed

1. **Submit your business** – To get started, fill out the form located here: <https://bensontechalumni.org/AlumniBusinessDirectoryForm>.
2. **Stay engaged** – Follow us on social media and visit the BPHSAA website (<https://bensontechalumni.org/>) for updates.

If you haven't added your business yet, now is the time! There is no cost to add your business to the directory. Let's continue to support our fellow Benson Tech alumni and keep our network strong.

BPHSAA TRiViA Quiz correction

The answer to Question 4 from the April 2026 BPHSAA Trivia Quiz on high school accreditation states that Benson Tech is the only public high school in Portland that has Cognia recognition.

The accompanying photo proves this statement is in error. This photo was discovered by chance hanging in the Cleveland auditorium and matches the banner hanging in the Benson Tech Commons area. Further review demonstrated that all the Portland public high schools in 1948 were included in the accreditation survey. It is natural that this would be so because the accreditation service offered system recognitions and all the schools in the system followed the same protocols. So Lincoln, Jefferson, Franklin, Cleveland, Grant, and Roosevelt, like Benson Tech, do have 1948 accreditation recognitions. Washington High School may also have been accredited, but because it is no longer a school, its name could not be found with the others.





REUNION INFORMATION

CLASS of 1977 -50th Reunion

WHEN: Save the date! August 13-15, 2027

For more information, join the Benson Tech Class of 1977 Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1735792124226303/>). Contact Rob Johns at benson77reunion@gmail.com or 503-314-0041 with questions, or if you would like to join the planning committee.

CLASS OF 1997 - 30th Reunion

WHEN: Save the date! August 13-14, 2027

For details and updates, join the Benson High School Class of '97 Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/458673384324100>). Questions? Contact the planning committee at Benson97@gmail.com.

Let the BPHSAA help to promote your next reunion!

Does your class end in a "7" or a "2"? Or perhaps an "8" or a "3"? 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)

Finally, consider aligning your reunion events with our August 14, 2027 Community Celebration! This free, family-friendly event provides a perfect opportunity for you and your classmates to tour the modernized Benson Tech.



Top: Former members of Benson Tech's varsity baseball team reunited in June 2026 to commemorate its OSAA state championship win 50 years ago. **Bottom:** The team in 1976, on its way to the first and only state baseball championship in Benson Tech's history.

Benson Tech baseball reunion

by Rob Johns, BPHSAA Chair, Class of 1977

Benson Tech alumni gathered at Kenton Station in Portland on June 2, 2026 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the school's landmark baseball state championship. Coach Bill Ranta joined many of his former players as the team came together to reconnect and commemorate this milestone win.

The reunion was a very joyous and energized event. Smiles and unabashed laughter filled the room as the team reminisced, caught up, and enjoyed the company of old friends, family, and fellow alumni.

In June 1976, Benson Tech beat Grants Pass High School in a 6-0 game, marking the first and only OSAA baseball state championship in Benson Tech's history.

***Editor's Note:** Kenton Station is owned by Benson Tech alumnus James Littlejohn (Class of 1984). The family-friendly restaurant and pub has hosted many gatherings of Benson Tech alumni over the years, including numerous class reunions. The BPHSAA offers an Alumni Business Directory as a resource for alumni-owned businesses looking to be listed or anyone interested in supporting alumni-owned businesses - see article on Page 11.*

Passing the Boosters baton

by Kelly Janes, Benson TechBoosters, Past President

Four years ago, I wasn't planning to join the TechBoosters Board. I had volunteered to help update the organization's website when I learned that TechBoosters had only two officers. Oregon nonprofit law requires at least three. If someone didn't step forward, the organization couldn't continue.

So I agreed to serve as secretary.

At the time, participation had understandably dwindled during Benson's years at the Marshall campus. TechBoosters was being kept alive by a small but determined group of volunteers. More than once, we'd look around our Zoom screens and say, "We'll get more traction once we return to the Benson campus." It became something of a mantra. As it turned out, we were right.



Since then, TechBoosters has grown alongside Benson's return to its beautifully renovated home campus. During my first year on the board (2022–2023), we brought in just over \$17,000. This school year, our community generated nearly \$79,000 through team fundraisers, community campaigns, sponsorships, employer matching, concessions, and countless individual donations. More important than the dollars, though, has been what they made possible: greater support for students, teachers, athletics, clubs, and school-wide programs, along with stronger partnerships between families, alumni, local businesses, and the school.

Still, what I'm proudest of isn't the fundraising total. It's the community behind it. Every volunteer, donor, sponsor, parent, teacher, coach, advisor, and alumnus who chose to get involved helped rebuild a culture of engagement around Benson Tech.

I've often said leadership is like a relay race. None of us carries the baton forever. We simply run our leg as best we can before passing it to the next runner.

When I joined TechBoosters, our focus was simply on keeping the organization alive until Benson Tech came home. Today, it's clear we did far more than come home. We rebuilt an organization worthy of the Benson Tech community and helped reconnect that community around its beautifully renovated school.

As I pass the baton, I couldn't be more confident in the future of TechBoosters. I'm proud to hand leadership to Josh Piper (Class of 1995), a Benson Tech alumnus and parent of a current Benson Tech student-athlete. His commitment to Benson and enthusiasm for serving the community make him the right person to lead TechBoosters into its next chapter.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered, donated, partnered with us, and believed in what TechBoosters can accomplish. Go Tech!

Benson TechBoosters looking to grow

by Josh Piper, Benson TechBoosters, President-Elect

Many thanks to Kelly Janes for her work as Benson TechBoosters President over the past three years. She took an organization on the brink of collapse and grew it into a major source of financial support for Benson Tech's clubs and teams.

With the new school year upon us, the 2026-2027 Benson TechBoosters board is looking to keep that momentum going. We'll be launching our annual Ready! Set! Go Tech! fundraiser in September. This fundraiser has quickly become a hallmark event for us, allowing the TechBoosters to fund over \$20k in grants to Benson Tech clubs and teams over the past two years.

Our support of Benson Tech staff has become another feature the Benson TechBoosters have become known for. Vice President Rachel McDonald is looking forward to another amazing year of partnering with alumni-owned and other local businesses to feed our treasured staff.

With growth comes the need for more hands-on-deck. We're in need of parents, alumni, community members – literally anyone looking to support Benson Tech – to be a TechBooster. Check out our website and see where you can get involved (<https://bensontechboosters.org/get-involved>).



Title: AERIAL OF EMPTY LLOYD BLOCKS, SULLIVAN'S GULCH, LLOYD GOLF COURSE AND CLUB, & BENSON TECH HIGH SCHOOL



Title: AERIAL VIEW OF LAND CLEARED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF LLOYD CENTER, WORK TO BEGIN 1958, FORMER GOLF CLUBHOUSE, LEFT

Photos and captions courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society