Lasting Legacies of Forward Falcons
The long and distinguished history of BGSU women’s sports was made possible through the efforts of three groups of passionate and dedicated individuals: student athletes, who enjoyed athletic competition and represented their University with pride; physical education faculty members, who assumed coaching responsibilities—frequently without pay or recognition; and athletics administrators, whose leadership and vision enabled many generations of women to compete against other highly skilled athletes in the games they loved.

The legacies left by these pioneers have taken several forms: named buildings and spaces both on campus and in the wider community; professional achievement honors and awards; and scholarships, awards, events, and funds that bear the names of many forward Falcons. In this chapter, we describe those legacies in the hope that they will bring pride to those of you who shared the early years and inspire younger readers to aspire to similar heights.
On January 18, 1979 the BGSU Board of Trustees named the soon-to-be-renovated HPER building the Gertrude M. Eppler Complex. The following October, Ms. Eppler herself broke ground. Looking on were Assistant HPER Director Terry Parsons, HPER School Director Betty van der Smissen, Dean David Elsass, and President Hollis Moore.

A large, enthusiastic crowd of alumnae, faculty, administrators, and friends celebrated with Ms. Eppler as the partially renovated complex was officially dedicated on October 2, 1981.
On October 21, 1995 HPER Director Mary Ann Roberton presided over the re-dedication of Eppler Complex, which had undergone a $10-million renovation. Other speakers on the festive occasion were President Sidney Ribeau, Chair of the Board of Trustees Jack Laskey, Dean Les Sternberg, and Director of Recreational Sports Richard Bowers.

Later that day, two rooms in Eppler Complex were dedicated to former faculty members Mary Watt and Mary (Eli) Whitney.

An enthusiastic Mary Watt expressed her appreciation for the dedication of the Mary A. Watt Learning Resource Center, a room that reflects her students-first philosophy by providing space for students to pursue a variety of activities.
The Mary Elizabeth (Eli) Whitney Dance Studio, located in the former South Gym, was dedicated to the nationally recognized dance instructor who created many special memories of their dance experiences for multitudes of BGSU students.
Today, Eppler Complex encompasses the former Women’s Building, the former Men’s Gym, and the space where the Natatorium was located.

The Gertrude M. Eppler Complex stands in tribute to the woman who was Head of the Women’s Division of the Health and Physical Education Department from 1941 until her retirement in 1969.

Miss Gertrude Eppler, assistant professor of physical education at Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti, Mich., will become head of the women’s division of the department of health and physical education of Bowling Green State University, it was announced today by President F. J. Pruett.

Miss Eppler, for 10 years a member of the Ypsilanti faculty, will assume her duties here in September. Her appointment completes the personnel of the recently reorganized department of physical education which combines both men’s and women’s divisions under the direction of Harry Ockerman, department head.

Miss Eppler holds degrees from Michigan State Normal College and the University of Michigan. She taught for three years in the Michigan public schools before going to the state college faculty. For three years she was assistant director of Camp Wasauquah, Platt Lake, Mich., and has been on the Highland Park recreation staff for a number of years.

In addition to college teaching, Miss Eppler is supervisor of health and physical education at the Rockham school for handicapped children at Michigan State Normal College.

At the Michigan University, Miss Eppler is advisor of the Physical Education Club and the Theta Sigma Upsilon sorority, a national education sorority of which she is also a member. She is a member of Delta Omega, public health honorary fraternity. She is a nationally rated basketball official and has officiated widely at southern Michigan games. She holds the national Red Cross instructor’s certificate in swimming. The present staff in women’s physical education at the university will continue to serve under Miss Eppler’s direction.
On October 4, 2003 the North Gym in Eppler Complex was officially dedicated as the Dorothy M. Luedtke Gymnasium (aka Bergen’s Gym).

The room was full of anticipation as a large crowd of alumnae, faculty, friends, and family gathered to pay tribute to Ms. Luedtke.

Affectionately known to colleagues and students alike as “Bergen,” the honoree taught physical education and health-related courses at BGSU for 33 years and had a well-deserved reputation as a demanding and caring teacher. She also made numerous noteworthy contributions to the women’s sports program.

Following the dedication ceremony, former students and athletes posed for a photograph that now provides a lasting memory of this very special occasion.
**LEFT**

Cheryl Renneckar and Bergen shared a laugh as they anticipated their turns to address the audience.

**Below**

Connie Wood Anderson and her family were on hand to witness the historic occasion: (left to right) Scott Sansone, Dan Allen, Kathy Allen, Connie, and Hank Anderson.
Top Left
The smiles of Carol Durentini, Sue Gavron, and Joy Sidwell reflected the atmosphere of the day.

Middle Left
Alumnae Tina Bryant, Jenn Gorecki, Sue Telljohann, and Bobbi Little shared the excitement with Ina Temple (second from right).

Below
The planning committee, seen here with the honoree, was thrilled that the big day had finally arrived. Seated, left to right: Pat Peterson, Dorothy Luedtke, Janet Parks, Mary Watt; standing, left to right: Dolores Black, Sharon Hanna (BGSU Development Office), Sue Hager, Bonnie Berger (HMSLS School Director), Lynn Darby, Joy Sidwell, Roberta Avalos (BGSU Development Office), Jacquelyn Cuneen, Sue Gavron.
During the planning for the dedication of Bergen’s Gym, Leanne Grothe Andreas, a former BG athlete who had been prominent on the national scene of women’s intercollegiate athletics, wrote to some of her classmates requesting donations to assist with the cost of the event. The alumnae were so generous that money remained after the dedication. This windfall led to the mounting of a photo gallery in Bergen’s Gym.

A committee of retired coaches selected more than 20 photographs and had them transformed into banners that were hung high on a wall in the gym. BGSU Executive Vice President Linda Dobb graciously provided frames for the banners, and they now provide a prominent and permanent tribute to the women who participated in sport at BGSU between 1920 and 1977. It is good to know that everyone who participates in Bergen’s Gym today sees the images of these athletes and coaches!
Additional spaces, both on campus and in the greater Bowling Green community have been named in honor of former coaches and faculty members.

**Agnes Hooley**

In 1979, the Agnes M. Hooley Conference Room in the Student Recreation Center (SRC) was named in honor of Agnes Hooley, who played a major role in the creation of the BGSU recreation major during her tenure as a BGSU faculty member from 1954 through 1977. Hooley also served as coach of the tennis and golf teams.

**Mickey Cochrane**

Dedicated in 1980, BGSU’s soccer field is named in honor of Mickey Cochrane, who coached the 1977-78 women’s lacrosse team to a 5-4-2 season. Cochrane, who taught physical education from 1964 through 1985, also coached the BGSU men’s soccer and lacrosse teams for many years.
The Iris Andrews Pool in the SRC was dedicated in 1985. It is named in honor of Iris Andrews, who directed Swan Club shows for 30 years, coached women’s swimming and diving, and made many major contributions to BGSU aquatics and physical education programs from 1945 through 1977.

Former athletes and coaches Dona Rae Whittaker Vogel (1960) and Patti Wallace Welt (1953) celebrated with Ms. Andrews at the dedication ceremony.
Valerie Newell

In the Sebo Center, constructed in the north end of the football stadium in 2007, two-time AIAW All-American swimmer Valerie Newell is the namesake of the VALERIE NEWELL WOMEN’S LOCKER ROOM. Since graduation, Newell has supported BGSU through her service on the Alumni Board, the Foundation Board, and the Board of Trustees, which she chaired in 2003-2004.
On August 24, 2005, the Dolores A. Black Special Olympics Gymnasium was dedicated in the newly constructed Bowling Green National Guard Training and Community Center. The gym was named in recognition of Black’s more than 40 years of devoted service to the Wood County Special Olympics program and its athletes.
In acknowledgment of their significant professional achievements, athletic prowess, and contributions to women’s sports, many forward Falcons have received prestigious honors and awards.

Iris Andrews  
HONORARY BGSU ALUMNA

Julie Bender-Cleary  
GYMNASTICS  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Mickey Cochrane  
LACROSSE, SOCCER COACH  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME  
HONORARY BGSU ALUMNUS

Sue Gavron  
NAGWS PATHFINDER

Laura Murphy  
TRACK  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Janet Parks  
BGSU DISTINGUISHED TEACHING PROFESSOR  
HONORARY BGSU ALUMNA

Charles Simpson  
GYMNASTICS COACH  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Sue Hager  
OAISW HALL OF FAME  
NAGWS PATHFINDER  
HONORARY MEMBER OF VARSITY BG CLUB

Brenda Hollis  
BGSU ACCOMPLISHED GRADUATE AWARD  
BGSU CENTENNIAL ALUMNI AWARD

Agnie Hooley  
HONORARY BGSU ALUMNA

Kim Jamison  
TRACK  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Sid Sink  
TRACK, CROSS COUNTRY  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Tom Stubbs  
SWIMMER, COACH  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Chris Tuttle  
BASKETBALL  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

Cheryl Vasil Christiansen  
GYMNASTICS  
BGSU ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME
The legacies of many pre-1982 female athletes and coaches of BGSU women’s teams live on in the form of scholarships, awards, funds, and events that bear their names.

**Scholarships, Awards, & Funds**

- **Andrews-Hooley Recreation and Tourism Award**
- **Dolores A. Black Special Olympics Internship**
- **Gertrude M. Eppler Secondary Physical Education Award**
- **Jane Shoemaker Smith Award - HMSLS Senior with the highest GPA**
- **Janet Parks Library Fund**
- **Janet B. Parks Research Grant (North American Society for Sport Management)**
- **Luann Simler Alleman Elementary Physical Education Scholarship**
- **M. Joy Sidwell Outstanding Sport Management Internship Project Award**
- **Patricia L. Peterson Academic Achievement Awards (Volleyball)**
- **Patricia L. Peterson Scholarship (Education)**

**Events**

- **Dolores A. Black Invitational (Golf)**
- **Jean Campbell Challenge (Swimming)**
- **Jane Herrmann Invitational (Track & Field)**
- **Tom Stubbs Relays (Swimming)**