

The John A. Polefka Memorial Scholarship Fund

Established by the Phoenixville Area High School Class of 1968

You won't find John Polefka's picture in the 1968 PAHS Yearbook. He didn't walk across the platform at Washington Field to receive a diploma that year. But to the Phoenixville Area High School class of 1968 he was our friend and classmate. When class members decided to set up a scholarship fund to recognize and assist new Phoenixville graduates pursuing uniformed service careers, John's contribution had already been made.



John enlisted in the United States Army in the fall of 1968 and became a member of the 1st Battalion of the 5th Cavalry Regiment. On August 31, 1969 he died in combat when his unit was attacked at Binh Long in Vietnam. For his sacrifice, Cpl. John Polefka was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart to accompany his other honors including: the Combat Infantry Badge, Marksman Badge with rifle and automatic rifle qualification, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Vietnam Campaign Medal. He is recognized in the Chester County Hall of Heroes. John's name appears on Panel 18W, Row 17 of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington, D.C. For these reasons, the scholarship fund has been named in John's honor.

At this time, over \$13,000 have been contributed to the John Polefka Memorial Scholarship Fund. Six members of the Phoenixville Area High School Class of 2018 have been recognized and assisted by the fund.

Two students, who will be enrolled in criminal justice programs, are each receiving \$2,000 scholarships. Velkin Escobar is currently attending his first year at Valley Forge University. Joseph DiMaio has begun his studies at Kutztown University. Both individuals impressed the scholarship committee with their maturity, accomplishment, and commitment.

Three members of the PAHS class of 2018 are pursuing military service careers. Dameq Aiken, Adam Hopwood, and

Hunter Waltman have entered the United States Marine Corps and all are currently attending their basic training. The scholarship program presented each of them with a Marine Corps Challenge Coin in recognition of their service and, upon completion of their training, each will receive a \$500 stipend as they begin their service assignments.

A special award was presented to Caroline Turner in recognition of her appointment to the United States Naval Academy. On March 27, 2018 a US flag was raised above Phoenixville Area High School in Caroline's honor. This date was significant as the 224th anniversary of the establishment of the United States Navy and also the authorization by the United States Congress to build the USS Constitution, now the oldest commissioned naval vessel in the world. The flag was presented to Caroline in a custom flag case with engraved brass plates documenting the occasion. This case is made of actual wood from the USS Constitution reclaimed during maintenance repair and refitting.



Through generous contributions, the scholarship fund is currently able to help even more PAHS graduates in the Class of 2019. If class of 1968 members are willing, it is possible that the program can continue to support PAHS students further into the future. If you have questions about the program, please track down a scholarship committee member.

John A. Polefka Scholarship Committee Members:

Janice Geisler	Joan Koch
Chas Kopp	Sharon Robinson Lorinskas
Mike Orcutt	Glenn Renick
Bruce Saville	John Trombetta

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Mission Statement

The John A. Polefka Memorial Scholarship encourages, recognizes, and assists graduates of Phoenixville Area High who are pursuing education and training toward local, state, or national level service careers related to the protection and security of America's citizenry.

Recognizing the importance of qualified and competent personnel for both civilian and military services entrusted with the security of our nation and the safety of its citizens, the Phoenixville Area High School Class of 1968 has established the John A. Polefka Memorial Scholarship Fund. This program not only encourages consideration of law enforcement and military service as a career, but also promotes understanding of the broad and varied career paths within these employment options. Candidates are encouraged to consider technical and management opportunities in areas such as cybercrime, forensics, lab analysis, criminal corrections, engineering, digital technology, administration, public relations, mechanical services, and numerous other specialties in addition to the front line positions traditionally associated with the services.

The scholarship committee works in cooperation with the Phoenixville Community Education Foundation. PCEF secures and provides resources that enhance the overall educational experience within the Phoenixville Area School District, including learning initiatives, preparedness programs and out of the classroom activities.

The John Polefka Memorial Scholarship fund provides financial support for graduating students pursuing traditional college programs, specialized skills training, academy development courses that prepare for service careers, and graduates entering enlisted training leading to military occupational specialties. It also provides special recognition to students entering service programs where financial support is not required.