



RIVERSIDE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

SUPPORTING MILWAUKEE'S OLDEST PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

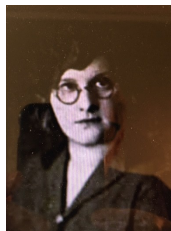
EST. 1868

150 years of Academic Excellence!

October 2020

The Bezella Family Establishes Scholarship

In 2020 the RUHS Foundation awarded its first Bezella Family Scholarship. The family has an extensive history at Riverside and the family's business, Kellner Greenhouse on Humboldt Avenue, was well known in Riverwest and on the east side. An applicant for the yearly renewable \$5000 scholarship must have a minimum 3.3 GPA and plan to study in one of the STEM (science, technology, engineering, or math) fields like so many of the Bezellas did.



The Bezella story at Riverside begins with Dorothy Kellner who, after graduating from Riverside in 1926, went on to bookkeeper training and began working in her father's business, AF Kellner Floral

Decorators. In 1930, she married Martin Bezella who immigrated from Silesia, Germany in 1923. Martin became a naturalized citizen in 1928, and joined his father-in-law's business after WWII. Dorothy and Martin raised 6 children who all attended and graduated from Riverside.

The Bezella children, very active in extracurriculars, excelled at Riverside as students, athletes, and leaders.



Marianne Bezella – Class of 1950, was class valedictorian and played for 2 years in the All City orchestra. She went on to earn degrees in nursing and social work. Besides the years spent raising her family and helping her husband, Paul Martin, with his business, she worked until the age of 81 as a nurse, a social worker in the medical field, a nurse manager in a long-term care facility, and finally, after completing the Parish Nursing course at Marquette University, a parish nurse.



Dr. Winfred Bezella – Class of 1953, was Vice-President of the senior class, was on the swim team, and played JV basketball. He spent 2 years at the UW Milwaukee Extension Division before

graduating from UW- Madison with a BS in Chemical Engineering in 1957. This was followed in 1959 by a MS in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Michigan. After 5 years at Allis Chalmers and 4 at Westinghouse working on water reactors, he began work on his PhD in Nuclear Energy at Purdue University through an Atomic Energy Commission fellowship. He spent 27 years in the Reactor Analysis and Safety Division at the Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois.



Gary Bezella – Class of 1955, was President of his class in both his junior and senior years. Other leadership roles included President of the Honor Study Hall Board and President of the Principal's

Cabinet. He earned 4 varsity E's (for East Division) in swimming and to this day gives credit to his math teacher, Ms. Coons, for tutoring him after school, to Mr. Suchy, his physics teacher who recommended him for the Bausch and Lomb Science Award, and to Ms. Watson, his English teacher, for instilling in him a deep appreciation for literature. Like his brother before him, Gary earned a BS in Chemical Engineering from Madison. After 15 years with American Can Company, he earned certification from the Alexander Hamilton Business Institute and began working in sales with TEC Systems and Celanese Polymers. In 1985, he invested in a printing business, Cross & Oberlie and with

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Principal's Corner

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect Riverside and we have started the 2020 school year with fully remote learning. Students engage with Google Classroom in live, virtual instruction with teachers and peers on four half days per week. The remainder of the school day is scheduled for asynchronous work time for all classes with opportunities for check-ins and tutoring with any teacher. When it is deemed safe, the school may be able to move into a second phase with a hybrid of in-person and remote learning. To accomplish this only half of the students would be in school at the same time. For more detailed information on this regionally decided plan you can go to the MPS website.

Riverside is the only MPS high school to offer pre-Advanced Placement English and Math to familiarize our freshman students with the AP program. Currently we have a 20% participation rate among Riverside students in AP courses and we would like to increase this number.

Advanced placement courses can be applied for college credit.

The current social justice movements within our society cannot be ignored during these turbulent times. Riverside has added a Social Justice Club. The newly formed Social Justice Committee has put together ACP (Academic Career Plan) lessons to support our students who are ready to engage beyond school and with the broader society. As always, we are concerned with our students' emotional and educational needs.

Stay safe and healthy!



Principal Lasky models the mask that was purchased for all students.

Bezella—Continued from page 1

his son and others built it to a \$3,800,000 per year nationwide enterprise. He retired in January of 2020.



Laurel Bezella – Class of 59, participated in many activities at Riverside including the Camaraderie, Home Economics, German, and Dance Clubs. She also was a member of the Pen Pushers, a creative writing group, and GAA. After graduating from Riverside, she attended business school and became a

bookkeeper/accountant. After working for several firms, she joined Blankstein Enterprises and was there for over 30 years. After retirement she spent time traveling, reading, and spending time with her large extended family. She passed away in 2014.



Donald Bezella – Class of 1961, was a competitive swimmer with a city championship win and was also active in the Student Council, serving as its President senior year. After graduation, Don pursued a degree at UWM in Biological Aspects of Conservation (Botany and Zoology) and went on to earn a Master's Degree in Geography. Don had a lifelong love of the Cedarburg Bog and enjoyed focusing his studies on it. He established a cooperative relationship with the UWM Field Station and was a founding member of Friends of the Bog. He worked as Health and Zoning

Administrator for Ozaukee County and then in real estate development and management in the county. An avocational archeologist, he collected artifacts, especially in the Cedarburg bog area and in 1992, he contributed his article, "A preliminary survey of archeological sites surrounding Cedarburg Bog", to the *Field Station Bulletin*. Don's artifact collection was donated to the Archeological Program of the Anthropology Program at UWM after he passed away in 2006.

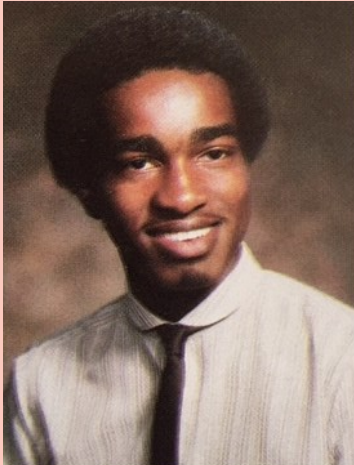


Ron Bezella – Class of 1962, was active in baseball, swimming, Cue and Cavaliers, and Projects all four years. He went on to train in welding and machine shop at MATC. After working for several local manufacturing firms, he joined Evinrude Motors and spent 32 years there in assembly, shop maintenance and machine tool production.



The home the Bezella Family lived in is still standing in the 3200 block of Humboldt Ave. just to the north of the original family business on North Humboldt Ave. The RUHS Foundation is so grateful to the Bezella family for its generosity and desire to see our young people flourish as Riverside graduates just as they did.

Alumni Spotlight: Antonio Riley



Class of 1982

Most Likely to Succeed

It's easy to understand why Antonio Riley was chosen by his fellow classmates **Most Likely to Succeed**. The activities he participated in and the leadership roles he played at Riverside were precursors to the educational and career paths he chose after graduation.

Take, for example, his many forensics competitions in which he recited speeches by President John F. Kennedy. His efforts won

him local and state awards. As a member of Riverside's debate team, he argued on issues of public policy such as environmental protection and a minimum guaranteed income for all Americans. His close knit debate team won city championships and earned a name for Riverside in local debate circles.

Like Kennedy, he chose public service and ran for public office after graduating from Carroll University where he was elected President of the Student Senate. He served for 10 years in the Wisconsin Legislature representing Milwaukee's 18th Assembly district. Fellow debater and also a 1982 Riverside graduate, Daniel Lorentz, was Riley's campaign manager and then served as his legislative aide. Another interesting connection is that Riley was chosen to participate in Badger Boys State, a nationwide program for high school students to replicate their state government.

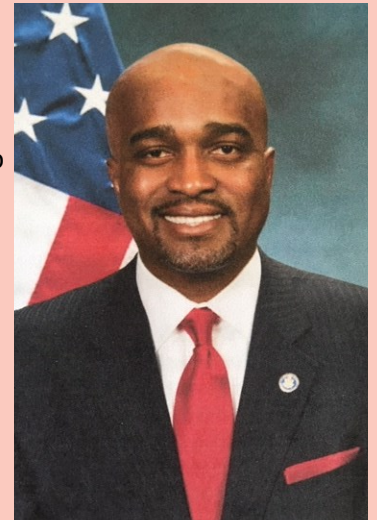
Riley was Class President at Riverside in both his junior and senior years. The leadership talents and skills he developed then remain with him to this day. He was tapped by Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle to become the first African American to head the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority. As executive director of WHEDA, he was in charge of what at that time was the largest bank in the state with a 3 billion dollar mortgage portfolio. Riley worked on increasing financing of affordable housing initiatives and expanding business and agricultural activity in the state. His success at WHEDA led to him being elected by his peers to the Board of Directors of the National Conference of State Housing Agencies (NCHSA).

A graduate of the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, in 2010 Riley was appointed by President Barack Obama as the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's HUD Regional Administrator for Region V, HUD's Midwestern Region. He was responsible for the delivery and evaluation of HUD programs and services in six Midwestern states.

Executive Service and the Federal Executive Board were established by President Kennedy and so Riley again in his life had a connection to JFK. He was a Senior Executive Service leader, the highest ranking in federal service, and served as HUD's liaison to governors, members of Congress, mayors and other local elected officials. Riley became the President of the Chicago Federal Executive Board and was responsible for over 55,000 Federal employees in the metropolitan Chicago area.

After leaving public service, Riley founded Stewart Riley Consulting LLC in 2018 and uses his wealth of experiences and contacts to help others, including municipalities and commercial developers, rebuild communities through sustainable development and housing. He is actively involved in the Milwaukee community currently serving as Vice President of the Board of Directors for the Milwaukee Center of Independence and President of the Board of Directors for Transcenter for Youth. He is also the Board President of the African American Leadership Alliance Milwaukee (AALAM).

Carroll University recognized Riley with a Distinguished Alumni award and he is part of the RUHS Foundation's Wall of Honor. Former Class President Antonio R. Riley became a leader at the highest levels of state and federal governments. He did indeed become **Most Likely to Succeed**.



Showing our Tiger Pride

The Foundation wanted to show our appreciation to the staff for their hard work, especially during this unprecedented time. We purchased “Riverside Pride” masks for everyone. We would like to share our Tiger Pride with our donors. If you make a donation of \$20 or more, we will send you one of our masks to help keep you safe. You can make a donation through our website using the PayPal button (www.riversidefoundation.com). Please make sure you check the box “Share your mailing address with Riverside Foundation” so that we can mail you your mask! You can also mail your donation to our address below. Thank you in advance for helping to support our mission of commitment to Riverside in its continuing effort to provide a high-quality college preparatory education to its diverse urban student body.



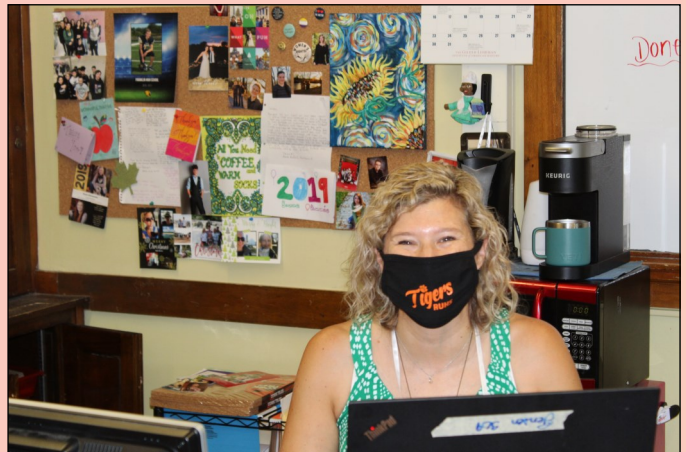
Mike Van Pelt—Instrumental Music



Mary Zeitlow—Math & Stephanie Wolfe—Art



Diana Maldonado & Sherman Dixon—Bookstore



Sharon Jensen-Rugaber—Social Studies

Get a Riverside Pride mask for any donation of \$20 or more!

Mail donations to:
Riverside University High School
c/o Riverside Foundation
1615 E. Locust Street
Milwaukee, WI 53211



Our 2020 scholarship recipients are on display at school!
Hopefully the students will be back soon to see it!