



2025
**HALL OF
FAME
BANQUET**

CELEBRATING THE
INDUCTIONS OF:

**Charles Devlin
Penelope Jahna
Dr. Katharine Markell
Dr. Robert Palmer**

Saturday, March 8, 2025



Tonight's Schedule

Welcome Walter Nunnallee
Invocation Pastor Anthony Gordon
Tables Called By Number For Buffet Walter Nunnallee

Buffet Dinner

Entertainment Award-Winning APHS Show Choir
Announcements Chet Brojek, President
President's Award Chet Brojek, President
Student Scholarships Scott Dressel, Vice-President
AP Baseball Museum Presentation Dr. Ronald Seigny

Induction of Charles Devlin

Induction of Penelope Jahna

Induction of Dr. Katharine W. Markell

Induction of Dr. Robert Palmer

Closing Remarks Chet Brojek, President

Our Purpose

The purpose of the Avon Park Champions Club is to create a championship environment in Avon Park both by honoring the past and supporting our local academic and athletic programs. All the championships in the history of Avon Park were a product of the support of families, coaches, teachers, teammates, classmates - the entire community. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community effort to produce championship caliber programs. The Avon Park Champions Club was formed to provide the support necessary to afford each student that same opportunity that many of us experienced in years past. To steal a quote from Field of Dreams, "build it and they will come;" create a championship environment in our community and the championships will come!

If you are interested in supporting the Champions Club, please visit our website at www.apchampionsclub.com or scan this QR code to make a donation



For more information:
118 South Lake Avenue, Avon Park, FL 33825
Phone: 863-453-5959 | Email: info@apchampionsclub.com

Tonight's Sponsors

PLATINUM PLUS (\$1,250)

Avanti Co.	Huston Chevrolet
Bagwell Lumber	Jahna Concrete
Bill Jarrett Ford	Jarrett-Gordon Ford
Carney Foundation	John Palmer Electric
Cowpokes Watering Hole/Wild	Kenny Dixon
Turkey Tavern	MIDFLORIDA Credit Union
Crews Bank & Trust	NUCOR
David Sisemore	Sevigny & Associates
devtech	SouthState Bank
Heartland Bank	Walter & Joyce Nunnallee

PLATINUM (\$500)

Avon Park Noon Rotary
Chet & Chris Brojek
Dr. James Marcum
Edgewood Landscape
Everglades Seasoning
Florida Majestic
Griffins Dry Cleaning & Laundry
MagicBus.com
Pink Pineapple Catering Company
Souther Signs
Steel Blue Fabrication
Wells Family

GOLD (\$250)

Barben Fruit Co.
Buffaluca Restaurant
Designer's Top Shop
Dennis Johns, LLC
Edward Jones (Jeff Roth)
GeoDev
Hicks Oil
Home Depot
Long's Air Conditioning
Olympic Restaurant
Taylor Construction & Renovation

SILVER (\$100)

Hal and Johncyna McRae
Jean Lund
Jeff and Sherri Saunders
Patty Palmer
Dr. Ron Sevigny
18 East Restaurant

Hall of Famers

Class of 2012

Lucy Derkman
Joe Franza
Reginald "Guy" Garrett
Thomas Gordon
Ronnie Jackson
Bill Jarrett

Class of 2013

Chet Brojek
Frederic "Fred" Jahna
Virgil Martin
Rance "Hoppy" Rewis
J. C. Walker

Class of 2014

Ralph Hill
Dewayne Lemler
Dexter Seigler
Ronald Sevigny
Don Sisemore

Class of 2015

Robert Barben
Rodney Davis
Dale Landress
Jean Lund
Jimmy Prevatt

Class of 2016

Alvin Conner
Cherri Lee
Al Loveless
Fred Montsdeoca
Wendell Williams

Class of 2017

Chuck Anderson
Thomas Bagwell
John Crittenden
Willie English
Anthony Gordon

Class of 2018

Charles "Charlie" Bonjokian
Joe Jackson
Laurie Welch
Stanley Wells

Class of 2019

Ann Carter
Kenny Long
Steve Maxwell
Clyde "Chop" Pough

Class of 2020

C. Elton Crews
Kenny Dixon
Dean Lemler
David Sisemore

Class of 2022

Kimberly Best
Dr. Catherine P. Cornelius
Sherwin Mackintosh
Durrah Martin

Class of 2023

Adrian Battles
Don Hickman
Dr. James Marcum
Walter Nunnallee

Class of 2024

Bryan Arnold
Mort Jackson Jr.
Dr. Katharine W. Markell
Hal McRae
Lew Mundt

Supporting the Present

The Avon Park Champions Club helps support the following programs, sports, clubs and organizations:

All Avon Park Public Schools
APHS AVID
APHS Culinary
APHS Baseball
APHS & APMS Basketball
APHS & APMS Cheer
APHS Football
APHS Soccer
APHS Softball
APHS Tennis
APHS Volleyball
APHS Girl's Flag Football
APMS Volleyball
Avon Park Diamond Club
Avon Park Youth Football
Avon Park Dixie Youth Baseball
APHS Choir & Band
Boys' and Girls' Club
Music on Main Street
APHS Student-Athlete of the Month
Parade of Athletes
Central Florida Striders
Champions Elite Track Team
Children's Museum of the Highlands
Marc Mero (motivational speaker)
Jingle Bell Run
Harvest Festival Anchor Sponsor
School Advisory Committee
Joe Franza Scholarship
Sebring Firemen, Inc.
APHS Robotics
APHS FBLA
AP Touchdown Club
APHS Project Graduation
School Advisory Council
Leadership Highlands

Encouraging The Future

The Avon Park Champions Club seeks to assist students who have demonstrated integrity, strength of character, financial need, a good academic record, commitment to pursue a college education and a desire to contribute.

Scholarship Recipients

2014

Charles Council
Maria Tataris

2015

Brianna Cox
Rachel Gaidos

2016

Paul Devlin
Chase Langston

2017

Cassidy Beers
Luis Cervera
Jaydee Grice
Diana Eugenio-Hernandez

2018

Kristen Farless
Joseph Franza
Bryce Langston
Denise Limdimas
Madison Thomas

2019

Neaychma Fogle
Kirsten Oca
Magnolia Santiago
Amy Schlosser
Miranda Bustos

2024

Robert Border
Jerico Burgos
Kendel Lambert
Josh Morey
Katiana Reyes-Negron

2020

William Parker
Jacey Pella
Kevin Myers
Olivia Guerndt
Aiden Pierce

2021

Hannah Loomis
Joshua Farless
Jazmia McDonald
Samuel Morgan
Jocelyn Hernandez
Ja'Nya Jenkins

2022

Alicia Perry
Hadley Jackson
Landon Cox
Addie Ferguson
Briana Martinez
Adrianna Martinez

2023

Reagan Richards
Ryan Rivera
Janelle Hamilton
Jack Barben
Madison Cornell
Bonny Sizemore
Britney Sosa

CHARLES DEVLIN

Charles Devlin was born in Decatur, Georgia during the summer of 1969 to his parents Paul and Justine Devlin. He was the fourth of five children, Chris, Michele, Tim, and Helen. They soon moved to Chicago for a short stint where his father's job took them, and his youngest sister was born. His father made the decision to head to Avon Park, FL. again for a job, but this time to start his own business. Paul had spent many summers as a child on Lake Tulane and thought it would be a good place for his family to live. When they arrived, Charles entered the 2nd grade at Avon Elementary and then on to Avon Park Middle.



Charles graduated from Avon Park High School in 1987. During his four years, he excelled in academics, baseball, and football. He was a member of the 1984 and 1987 State Champion Baseball teams, a member of the 1985 and 1987 Dixie Majors State Champion teams and 1987 Dixie Majors World Champion team as an outfield and pitcher. He played quarterback and safety on the football team, including the final game of his senior season where they routed Sebring 37-0.

Although Charles was an accomplished athlete, he chose the academic route to college. He received a scholarship to South Florida Community College where he received his AA degree in 1989. He then attended the University of South Florida in Tampa where he graduated in 1991 with a BS in Business Management. He proudly graduated from both schools with honors all while working part time jobs to pay his way.

Upon his return to Avon Park, he began working in the family business, the Avanti Company. He started out in Outside Sales, then Sales Manager and eventually worked his way up to President several years later. He worked at the Avanti Company from 1992-2010 until he made the decision to start his own business, Devtech, in 2011. He also founded 4 Bulls, Inc. in 2021 which is a commercial property business used to support his other two businesses. Charles is the co-founder and a co-owner of Steel Blue Fabrication along with partners, Doug Lemler, John Paul Heston, and Steve Baltzley. Steel Blue, which has only been in operation since 2019, is one of the fastest growing privately owned businesses in Highlands County. The facilities have tripled in size in the past few years due to its growing success.

Devtech has been recognized for excellence in this community and in the oil and natural gas industry. Devtech received the USF Fast 56 Award in 2016 as one of the fastest growing alumni owned businesses. Devtech also received several North America Channel Partner of the Year Awards from various vendors including Honeywell, Itron and TERI/OGI. In its first year of existence, Devtech received the Avon Park Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award. Charles has served on numerous Florida Natural Gas Association committees, has chaired several conferences, and has been recognized a distinguished

leader by the Florida Energy Pipeline Association.

Devtech employs 16 individuals several of which are Highlands County residents and Steel Blue employs approximately 30 Highlands County residents. Both businesses have been staunch supporters of multiple school events and organizations including the Avon Park Champions Club since its inception.

Devtech also supports the APHS AVID Program, multiple youth sports programs, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, St. Jude Children's Hospital, Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church, and Our Lady of Mercy in Boca Grande.

Although Charles has had much success as a businessman, his personal life is what is most important to him. In 1992 shortly after his return from college, he met his wife, Stephanie. They married in 1994 and lived on Lake Tulane where the Devlin family first started in Highlands County. They had two children, Teresa and Paul. Their children both excelled in the classroom and in sports at APHS. They followed in the footsteps of both parents and graduated from the University of South Florida, hence the business name 4 Bulls. Stephanie was a teacher at APMS for 13 years and coached volleyball at both the high school and middle school level. She later joined Charles at Devtech. Teresa worked with her parents for a few years until she and her husband started their own hay and farm supplies business. Teresa's husband, Jake, also works for Devtech as a certified technician. In keeping with the family tradition, Paul joined Devtech first in Inside Sales and presently as the Operations Manager. Charles's nephew, John Paul, also works at Devtech as the Sales Manager. As you can see, Charles has been an enormous influence within his family even when it comes to business.

Charles loves his family and community and has given back in a number of ways including, coaching youth baseball and football, volunteering as a Big Brother, serving on the Avon Park Chamber board as President, chairman of the Florida Natural Gas Association's Supplier's Committee, Avon Park Zoning Board of Adjustments, co-founder and serving on the board as a member, President, and Vice-President of the Champions Club, Parrish Council at Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church.

His newest adventure was becoming a grandpa in 2022 when his grandson, Holden was born, and he now eagerly awaits another grandson due in May. Becoming a grandfather has been a blessing and has taken up a lot of his time, but he's always looking for more ways to give back. He does enjoy some free time and that is usually spent fishing with friends and family in Boca Grande where he and his wife have another home. He also enjoys the occasional day of golf especially if it benefits a charitable organization or involves entertaining business customers.

He is an active member at Our Lady of Grace (Avon Park) and Our Lady of Mercy (Boca Grande) Catholic churches. Charles faith is all encompassing in every aspect of his life. It is what leads his journey and guides his decisions. He is looking forward to retiring in the next 5-6 years and spending more time with the people he loves.

PENELOPE JAHNA

In the words of the great poet Bon Jovi, who says you can't go home?

When Penny Langston, daughter to Lois and Norman (AP class of 1947), graduated Avon Park High School in 1982 and left for the metropolis of Lakeland to attend college you could have heard her say on any given day, "I will not be coming home." But a funny thing happens on the way to adulthood. Things that don't seem important at the time become so, and things that a 17-year-old thinks matter end up being not so important.



In 1986, Bachelor of Science in Marketing Management degree in hand, Penelope surprised herself by returning to her alma mater to teach math. Her inspiration to become an educator came mid junior year at Florida Southern College while listening to the chaplain tell a story about a slow learner named Peter. When it got to the third time Jesus asked Pete, "Do you love me?"; she realized that the lesson wasn't just for Pete's sake. If you don't know the rest of the story, an exasperated Peter replies, "Yes Lord, you know I love you." And for a third time Jesus says, "Feed my sheep." Slow learner Penny was listening.

The best way she knew to feed a flock was to become a teacher. Having thoroughly enjoyed her own high school years being active in band, majorettes, tennis, volleyball, Keyettes, Lettermen's Club, yearbook staff, and NHS, Avon Park High seemed like a comfortable place to start that journey. She would stay just long enough to earn her permanent teaching certificate.

At least that was the plan. Until Farris showed up.

It quickly became clear that Avon Park was exactly where she was meant to take root. In 1989 Miss Langston became Mrs. Jahna. Two years later they welcomed new kid on the block Kevin, then Kyle, then Cole. All three boys would grow up as Red Devils and become alumni of APHS. The family has since added two more alumni to the fold, Brittany and Cassidy, and three grandchildren.

In the classroom Mrs. Jahna engaged students through highly effective methods, earning her the title of Highlands County Teacher of the Year in 2005. Modeling the importance of continuing education, she earned her Masters in Math Education from Western Governors University in 2011.

In addition to advancing students academically, Jahna shepherded her students through sponsoring clubs including Keyettes, Mu Alpha Theta math club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Student Council.

For 15 years she was the Senior Class Sponsor and is pretty sure she holds the record for attending the most Grad Nites, proms, and homecomings for a single school. She coached the APHS swim and tennis teams for over 20 years combined, earned Heartland Coach of the Year multiple years and achieved an undefeated tennis season in 1989.

Jahna invested in the community through actively serving multiple years on local boards including the Highlands Education Foundation and the Avon Park Champions Club.

After 31 years leading, feeding and guiding students Jahna retired from Avon Park High School. Since 2019 she has been tending to a new flock of Royals at Warner University.

As far as champions go, she has never been the greatest at anything she did, but she has always tried to be the good in everything she did.

DR. KATHARINE MARKELL

Dr. Katharine Walcott Markell is a dual-boarded general and colorectal surgeon who served 20 years in the Medical Corp of the United States Army, retiring as a colonel in August 2022.

She began her dream of becoming a physician by attending Cumberland University where, having played softball and volleyball at Avon Park High School (graduating in 1993), she had been recruited to play softball and volleyball.

She obtained a bachelor's degree of science in biology with a minor in chemistry and graduated with Honors (Magna Cum Laude).

Dr. Markell joined the Army in 1998 as a recipient of the Army's Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP) and received her Medical Degree in 2002 from the University of Miami School of Medicine. She completed her internship and general surgery residency at Madigan Army Medical Center in 2007 and her first assignment was to the United States Army Institute of Surgical Research, where she served as the Burn Fellow. During this year, she also completed the Critical Care Air Transport Team (CCAT) Course in order to participate on the Burn Flight team.

In 2008, she began her Colon & Rectal Surgery Fellowship at Northwest Colon and Rectal Clinic in Seattle and, upon completion, she was assigned to Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) in 2009 as a General & Colorectal Surgeon and Teaching Faculty for the General Surgery Residency. Dr. Markell is dually board certified by the American Board of Surgery and the American Board of Colon & Rectal Surgery and she is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and a Fellow of the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons.

During her career at BAMC, Dr. Markell served in a multitude of positions, including OIC of Wound & Ostomy Clinic for two years, Chief of Colorectal Surgery for three years, Associate Program Director of the General Surgery Residency program for three years and she served as Teaching Faculty for the Residency for 13 years. She served on several SAUSHEC GME subcommittees and has thoroughly enjoyed working with numerous graduating classes of surgical residents.

Her career at BAMC culminated in her being chosen to serve as Chief of the Department of Surgery and Chair of the SAMHS Surgical Care Line Team from 2017-2021, where she oversaw the daily operations of 10 surgical sub-specialty divisions, including over 500 military and civilian members. She worked side-by-side with senior leaders at BAMC and the SAMHS Market.

Dr. Markell served her country with honor through four combat deployments, (16-plus months), including two tours in Afghanistan and two tours in Kuwait. Her final tour in Afghanistan was on GHOSTT team, supporting the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan, where she was the senior-most surgeon on her team, providing lifesaving trauma care to numerous



coalition forces, bolstering the relationship building of the CJSOTF teams with host-nation forces. At the end of her tour, she was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. At the end of her career in the United States Army, she was awarded the Legion of Merit for her time served as Chief of Surgery and all of her military achievements leading up to retirement.

Upon retirement, Dr. Markell joined the South Texas Veterans Healthcare System in September 2022 and served as the Deputy Chief of Surgery and in January 2024, she became the Acting Chief of Surgery for the Department of Surgical Services at Audie Lee Murphy VA Hospital in San Antonio, Texas.

Dr. Markell is a wife to her husband Matt Markell for 18 years and they have two children, Joshua (16) and Rachel (13) and as a family they enjoy traveling, snow skiing, mountain biking, canyoneering and being outdoors with many of the children's sporting adventures.

DR. ROBERT PALMER

Dr. Robert “Bobby” Palmer, a fifth-generation Floridian and proud Avon Park High School graduate, is a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, community leader, and—most importantly—a family man. He lives in Naples, FL, with his wife Lilly, a trauma surgeon, their two vibrant daughters, Olivia and Lillian, and a third little Palmer on the way. At home, Bobby’s world is filled with laughter, dad jokes, dance parties, and adventures with his growing family.

His parents instilled a love for family and a strong work ethic in Bobby and his sister Logan early on. His mother taught him the value of hard work with her vision and tireless example. At the same time, his father, who coached his Little League baseball team, emphasized the importance of family time and encouragement.

Bobby’s childhood was filled with meaningful family experiences. His grandmothers and aunts took him birdwatching and taught him to cook traditional Southern meals, like collard greens and cookies, while he went with his uncles and grandfather hunting nearby leases and fishing trips to Lake Kissimmee, Boca Grande, and Chokoloskee. Summers were spent learning to rope and ride, often working alongside ranchers and cowboys at the Avon Park Bombing Range, where he developed grit, resilience, and an appreciation for hard work. Family time also included adventures in the Florida Keys, “lobstering,” exploring the outdoors, and weekends riding four-wheelers at River Ranch. Summers spent counting inventory at his grandfather’s hardware store, reinforcing the value of diligence and teamwork. At the same time, his extended family contributed unique lessons that would later serve as the foundation for his leadership and problem-solving skills.

At Avon Park High School, Bobby wore many hats. He balanced academics, athletics, and leadership as valedictorian, class president, and a three-sport varsity athlete in football, soccer, and baseball. His involvement in 4-H and FFA, raising pigs and steers, taught him responsibility and a connection to his agricultural roots. Weekends saw him volunteering with his local church, repairing homes for needy families across the U.S., and preaching at his congregation—a role that deepened his faith and commitment to serving others.

During his time at Wake Forest University, Bobby embraced every opportunity to grow academically and personally. While pursuing his degree in Chemistry with a minor in Biology, he became deeply involved in volunteer work, serving as a Resident Adviser and participating in community service projects through organizations like Alpha Phi Omega and Alpha Epsilon Delta. Bobby also gained invaluable experience tutoring peers in chemistry and Spanish and assisting a classmate with cerebral palsy as a morning caretaker, which heightened his empathy and understanding of diverse challenges. As a Wake Forest cheerleader, Bobby demonstrated his athleticism and team spirit, competing



at the national collegiate cheerleading competition at Disney’s Wide World of Sports. In addition to his academic and athletic pursuits, Bobby worked as a bartender at a local Beef O’Brady’s, where he honed his interpersonal skills and work ethic. Bobby explored his passions beyond academics and employment, earning his private pilot license and scuba certification. These achievements reflect his adventurous spirit and determination to excel in all aspects of life, laying the foundation for his future medical career.

Bobby’s passion for service extended globally when he was named a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar in Santiago, Chile. There, he led a team of international volunteers to build homes for families displaced by the 2010 earthquake, taught salsa dancing to blind people, and fostered goodwill with Rotarians nationwide. While studying Chilean literature and Latin American history at the University of Chile, he immersed himself in the culture, further shaping his perspective and dedication to service.

Dr. Palmer’s journey into medicine was profoundly influenced by the unexpected passing of his father from a heart attack after his first year at Wake Forest University. This devastating loss reshaped his perspective on life and inspired him to pursue a career dedicated to helping children and families live healthier, fuller lives. At the University of Central Florida, he earned his Doctor of Medicine. He launched initiatives like bringing middle school students from Highlands County to experience a day in the life of a medical student—planting seeds for future healthcare professionals. His medical training included service trips to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, where he provided care to underserved communities. He completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at the University of Florida, which included specialized training rotations at Nemours Children’s Hospital and the Mayo Clinic. He completed a prestigious Pediatric Orthopedic and Scoliosis Surgery fellowship at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital.

Now based in Naples, FL, Dr. Palmer continues to push boundaries. As a pediatric orthopedic surgeon, he is pursuing a Doctor of Business Administration at the University of Florida to enhance healthcare access and streamline patient care. His contributions to research, with numerous presentations and publications, have advanced the field of orthopedic surgery. Despite his accomplishments, Olivia and Lillian might argue that his most extraordinary talents lie in grilling out by the pool, wrestling matches, and story time.

Bobby’s faith, family, and community remain at the core of his life. He credits much of his success to the values instilled by his parents and extended family, as well as the unwavering support of Lilly, who gracefully balances the demands of trauma surgery while keeping their busy household thriving. Whether mentoring future doctors, volunteering locally, or leading global health initiatives, Bobby strives to live by the motto, “Leave it better than you found it.”

Dr. Palmer’s remarkable achievements in medicine, education, athletics, and community service make him a worthy inductee into the Avon Park High School Champions Club Hall of Fame. His story is a testament to leadership, perseverance, and service—shaped by family, grounded in faith, and carried forward with heart and humor.

Club Board

Executive Board

President Chet Brojek
Vice President Scott Dressel
Secretary Stephanie Devlin
Treasurer..... Walter Nunnallee

Board of Directors

Adam Crews, Kim Ferguson, Dennis Kelley, Ronnie Jackson,
Dennis Johns, Lew Mundt, Joe Murphy



BBQ Crew



Head Chef

Ronnie Jackson

BBQ Team

Lew Mundt
Gary Smith
Billie Jackson
Keith Bentley
Don Hickman

*Thanks to the
volunteers who help
us cook! We couldn't
do it without you!*