

HICKMAN HIGH SCHOOL'S 87th GRADUATING CLASS 120 YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL

High school in Columbia began in the 1880s, and by 1889, Columbia established a two-year high school at 713 Rogers Street, the current site of Jefferson Junior High School. The course of study was adjusted to three years in 1895, and to four years in 1896. Extracurricular activities naturally evolved. A literary society was formed in 1898, and a choral union, orchestra, and debate team were established in 1899. Sports teams were already present, although the district did not provide paid coaches.

Soon overcrowding at Columbia High School became a concern. In 1909, the community approved the demolition of the old school at Ninth and Rogers and the building of a new high school on that site. The new structure held the district's first gymnasium and a physical education credit was added to graduation requirements. A coach was employed to work with athletic teams and an art/music teacher was hired, providing the first elective courses. The first edition of the yearbook, the *Cresset*, was published in 1912. Commercial studies, teacher training, home economics, and mechanical drawing courses were added to the curriculum in 1913.

World War I brought changes to Columbia High School: the German Club was removed from the list of extracurricular activities in 1915 and a Current Events Club was established in 1918. In 1917, students over 14 years of age were excused from attending school to be farm workers as part of the war effort.

Following World War I, Columbia continued to grow. In 1925, the community decided to build a new high school on the David H. Hickman estate. Construction soon began, and Hickman High School opened in 1927. At the time, some complained that the school was located too far out in the countryside! Students in the high school manual trades program built some of the furniture used to furnish the new school. In 1927, the first Hickman graduates began a grand tradition of excellence in academics, the arts, athletics, and service to the community.

The 1930s brought the Depression to Columbia, and the school district felt the economic pinch. For the first time, the district operated with a deficit; however, the high school building was expanded, thanks to low interest loans and the Works Progress Administration. While the district's special education program was eliminated, Hickman's first counselor was hired. On-the-job training and employment for credit were added to the curriculum, and Hickman's verse speaking choir performed throughout the state. Kewpie wrestlers garnered three state championships during this decade. In 1938, Hickman's marching band first performed, and the Student Council financed purchase of the band's first uniforms in the early 1940s. Hickman's first operetta, 1944's *Tune In*, began an annual tradition that continued for many years.

During World War II, curricular changes reflected the times; courses in international relations, aeronautics, and home nursing were added. Hickman participated in a fund-raising drive for the war effort and collected salvage items. Driver's education was offered for the first time in 1948, and the tradition of requiring sophomores to wear beanies was restored. Many Hickman graduates served in the armed forces, some giving their lives in service to their country.

The end of segregation in the school system occurred in the late 1950s. Hickman's faculty voted in 1952 to adopt competitive letter grading (E,S,M,I,F) in place of the previous Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading system. Continued expansion of facilities resulted in new construction. High school special education and adult classes were initiated in 1955. Vocational classrooms, laboratories, and the swimming pool were built in 1956, doubling Hickman's classroom space. During this decade, many graduates served in the Korean Conflict.

In 1960, Hickman established an honors program to add academic rigor. The green and white sophomore beanies were worn for the last time in 1961. David Wheeler was named Hickman's first Presidential Scholar in 1964, the inaugural year of the national recognition program where two outstanding high school graduates per state per year are recognized for stellar academic achievement. The Kewpies finally beat the Jefferson City Jays in football in 1966, the same year William "Bill" Galeota became a Presidential Scholar, followed in 1967 by Robert "Corky" Cartwright. Four state athletic championships in three different sports proved Hickman an intimidating opponent during the 1960s. Again, Hickman graduates were in service to their country during the Vietnam conflict.

The 1970s brought district growth and expanded opportunities for Hickman girls, including the election of Hickman's first female Student Government President and another Presidential Scholar in 1972, Susan Wakerlin (Durkin). By the mid-1970s, Hickman offered competitive women's teams in tennis, basketball, golf, swimming, track, and volleyball. A growing music program produced a number of outstanding performers. Overcrowding, seemingly a constant issue in Columbia's schools, became a concern; in 1973 a second high school, Rock Bridge, opened and the Bruins, along with the Jefferson City Jays, became Hickman's greatest rivals.

National recognition came to Hickman in the 1980s, as Hickman was chosen to receive the Excellence in Education (Blue Ribbon) Award in 1984-85. President Ronald Reagan visited Hickman in 1987. Additional athletic and fine arts recognitions were earned by Hickman students, and four additional Presidential Scholars were selected, Melissa Parisi (Onzay) in 1983, Eleanor Kaufman in 1985 and in 1988, both of Missouri's scholars were Kewpies, Scott Murphy and Becca Dillingham (Learmouth).

In the 1990s, Hickman was again nationally recognized as a Blue Ribbon school in the 1994-96 competition,

and four additional Presidential Scholars were named, David Kung in 1990, John Wright Riddick in 1994, Travis Pittman in 1996, and Anne Roller (Rucker) in 1997. Curriculum took new directions, including interdisciplinary classes, portfolio grading, and infusion of technology. Computer labs were developed and opportunities for true-to-life experiences were expanded, including the nationally recognized Columbia Aeronautics Space Association (CASA) program. The strong, diverse athletic tradition continued. Within this decade, Hickman won six state championships in baseball, women's swimming, men's track, men's cross country, and men's tennis. Fine arts and music programs produced many state award winners.

The tradition of excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts continues into the new millennium. Again, Presidential Scholars were announced, Kate Swearingen in 2000, Saritha Komatireddy in 2001, Ben Robinson in 2002, Doris Lin in 2003, Jessica Hwang in 2009, and in 2011 HHS produced an eighteenth Presidential Scholar, Eric Young. To date Hickman High School has twice the number of Presidential Scholars as any high school in the state. The second decade of the 21st century at Hickman High School has focused on upholding and building upon our valued traditions as an educational institution and as a pillar of the Columbia community.

The new millennium also brought along with it a period of growth and expansion for Columbia, and subsequently Hickman High School. A new commons and classroom addition opened fall 2003, along with extensive renovations throughout the building in 2004, and again in 2008. Hickman celebrated the opening of a long-awaited second gym in December of 2012 with a winning game against Rock Bridge. Vocational classrooms, including a restaurant-sized kitchen, and a renovation of the football stadium were ready for the start of school in fall of 2013. These additional classrooms provided several vocational classes not requiring busing to the Career Center. Construction on new tennis courts, installation of artificial turf on the baseball field, and building of a new wrestling room, baseball concession stand and batting cages all occurred during the 2013-14 school year. Ninth graders were welcomed at the high school level for the very first time during the 13-14 school year along with block scheduling. Many capital improvements were inaugurated in 2014-15: tennis courts, indoor sport facility including a batting cage and space for wrestling, and softball/baseball turf were all in place. The upgrade to these facilities allowed the men's and women's tennis teams as well as the women's softball team the ability to compete at Hickman for the first time in many years. Additionally, a new buzzer system was installed, providing an added level of security to the school community.

College and career readiness has been a foundational building block for Hickman in the 2010s. With continued changes to state accountability measures placed on Missouri public schools, Hickman has remained steadfast in its efforts to provide excellent opportunities for students regardless of legislative changes. Curricular and programmatic changes have provided increased opportunities for students to access advanced placement courses through partnerships with College Board and Equal Opportunities Schools, provided greater access to career and technical education courses through the expansion of on-site career center courses, and has allowed students to engage in programs such as AVID and MAC Scholars—key components of Hickman's college readiness system.

In the last decade, continual improvement and an increased focus on the school's vision of being a highly effective professional learning community have served as cornerstones for Hickman. In 2012, Hickman established a distributed leadership model in the form school-wide teacher leadership teams—*Leadership Council*, *Student Support Team*, the *Learning and Instruction Team*, and the *Interdisciplinary Team*. Additionally, the *T.I.D.E Team* was developed to aid in the continued enhancement of school culture. The name "TIDE" is an acronym derived from the four pillars of Hickman's mission: Tradition, Integrity, Diversity, and Excellence. Hickman also developed a multi-faceted student support model during this decade. The model included the implementation of freshman advisory and sophomore seminar courses, a tiered model for student response to intervention, and a review of the school's philosophy on grading and mark reporting. In 2016, Hickman was recognized for its outstanding work in the aforementioned areas when the school was named an *Exemplary Professional Learning School* by the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education in 2016.

Hickman's most recent graduating classes were comprised of outstanding groups of students with Presidential Scholar nominees, Missouri Scholars 100 honorees, and scores of students recognized as National Merit Scholars. Additionally, on the field of athletic competition, members of the graduating classes of the "20-teens" earned numerous district and sectional victories as well as several state qualifications. During the subsequent years that followed their graduation dates, a remarkable parade of talented Hickman students have translated their hopes and dreams into achievements that should inspire the current graduating class of Kewpies. The challenges that face today's graduates are varied. Opportunities to be of service to self, family, country, and community abound. Wherever they go and whatever achievements they may claim, each graduate will carry memories of their days at Hickman High School.