

## Jeff Gendell '77

The Wyoming School Foundation and the Distinguished Alumni Society proudly announce that the 2013 Distinguished Alumni award is being given to Jeff Gendell, a member of the Wyoming High School Class of 1977. Jeff is the Managing Partner of Tontine Associates LLC, a Connecticut based investment firm which he founded in 1995. Jeff resides in Greenwich, CT with his wife Marty and their three teenage children. Jeff and Marty are extremely involved in numerous community and philanthropic activities and have long been supporters of the Wyoming School Foundation.

Jeff is the middle of seven children, all of whom attended Wyoming Schools from K-12. His three older sisters, Carin (1973), Danna (1974) and Adrian (1976) were followed by three brothers, David (1979), Marc (1981) and Brad (1986). They were the children of the late Gerald Gendell and his wife Marion who lived in Wyoming for nearly 40 years. Gerry also served on the Wyoming School Board and was very involved in Cincinnati community activities through his positions at the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce as well as the head of corporate affairs at The Procter & Gamble Company.

In high school, Jeff was captain of both the cross country team and swim teams and played the baritone in the concert band and marching band. He also represented Wyoming several years as a member of the "It's Academic" quiz team, as well as an Associate editor of the school newspaper. In his spare time he coached his youngest brother's youth baseball team and umpired youth baseball for several years. His high school summers were spent working at LaRosa's Pizza at Kings Island while later, in college, he spent one summer working at Bartlett & Co. and one at Southern Ohio Bank.

He is true blue through and through, first as a Cowboy and then as a Blue Devil at Duke University where he graduated with a remarkable seven other Wyoming students in 1981. That southern movement was driven by a brutally cold winter of 1976-77 when the high

school temporarily had classes at Hilltop Elementary due to mandatory school closures. "We all wanted to head south," said Jeff, "and it was great to have so many Wyoming classmates in college with me". While attending Duke, Jeff was the President of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity and Sports Editor of *The Chronicle*, the Duke daily newspaper. He also wrote feature stories for the

*Associated Press*. When we asked him why he did not major or seek a career in journalism he responded, "I never considered a degree in journalism for various reasons, primarily salary related, but I did consider a job in journalism out of school. We won several awards for sports reporting when I was editor at Duke and I interviewed and had talks with *Sports Illustrated*, the dream job. I was very excited until I saw the level of pay and measured that against my student loans. It was a math problem and being a writer at *Sports Illustrated* was not the answer to the equation. I went into investment banking because no one wanted to do it back then and it paid pretty well."

Jeff received an AB Degree in Economics with a concentration in Mathematics at Duke and earned an MBA degree in Finance from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in 1984. Between college and graduate school he began his career in Corporate Finance at Smith Barney where he focused on the emerging mortgage finance business. "I was one of the few people who knew how to program the computer so immediately they found a job for me."

After he received his MBA, he moved to Prudential-Bache Securities as an associate and later Vice President in Corporate Finance. He then joined Steinberg Asset Management which specialized in value investing in undervalued securities and has remained involved in asset management ever since. In 1990, he joined Odyssey Partners, L.P. which was a large New York City Investment partnership where he became a



General Partner before starting his own firm in 1995 and finally leaving Odyssey in 1996.

Jeff has been married to his wife Marty (Martha) for 20 years and in 1997 they moved from New York City to Greenwich, CT. They have three children: Molly, 19 is a freshman at Duke University while sons Matt, 17 and Chris, 15 both attend Brunswick School in Greenwich. When Jeff was asked if he wished he lived in Wyoming he stated, "Yes, I am disappointed that my kids were not able to spend time at Wyoming at least for a few years. I really would have liked them to spend two or three years in the Midwest. Wyoming is just a really nice part of the Midwest."

His fondest memories of Wyoming include the community involvement in Friday night football. "The athletics in the East have a greater focus on lacrosse and hockey and the community support for football is diluted," he said. "It is really hard for people to understand the Friday night lights of Ohio football." Jeff's love of Cincinnati and Ohio sports continued despite his residence in Connecticut. When he realized that his family was unlikely to move to the Midwest he decided to bring a little Cincinnati back home and joined the local group that purchased the Cincinnati Reds in 2006. "Being one of the owners of the Reds has been a tremendous amount of fun for me and the kids," said Jeff. "We go to Spring Training nearly every year and it is a good reason to come back several times a summer for a weekend of Kings Island and Cincinnati baseball. The management team of the Reds has a tremendous loyalty to the city and the community involvement has been remarkable. Summer baseball at Great American Ballpark is about as good as it gets."

Currently he is a member of the Board of Visitors at the Pratt School of Engineering at Duke University and is a former member of the Board of Visitors at the Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke. He has also served on numerous advisory board roles for nonprofit organizations including the Greenwich Hospital Investment Oversight Committee. He is most proud of serving as a coach for Greenwich youth basketball and baseball leagues over the past ten years. The Gendells also quietly support many nonprofits throughout the United States.

Jeff will be returning to Wyoming for the Distinguished Alumni reception on May 19<sup>th</sup> and for Foundation Day at Wyoming High School on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Jeff will also be hosting a fundraising dinner for members of the Class of 1977 on Saturday Night, May 18<sup>th</sup>. He looks forward to reconnecting with fellow classmates and neighbors and speaking to Wyoming students. For more information, contact Pat Seuberling, Executive Director at Wyoming School Foundation, (515) 821-6909 or [pat-seub@wyomingschoolfoundation.org](mailto:pat-seub@wyomingschoolfoundation.org).

"I have known Jeff since he was a Wyoming Bear in the Green Hat League," said long-time family friend Dr. G. Russell "Rusty" Frankel. "It was at the time I realized that the Gendell family produced not only a genius but an athlete who could break every record in Wyoming School history. Fortunately my prophecy was made to come true...by his brother David", he said smiling in jest. Said Gendell in response, "that comment will free up a lot more of my Reds tickets for my friends!" Congratulations Jeff Gendell!

### Wyoming School Foundation Distinguished Alumni Nomination Form

Please help us continue this tradition by nominating a Wyoming graduate. *All submissions are retained for future consideration.*

Nominee Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (please include Maiden Name where applicable)

Nominee Graduation Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Relationship to Nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

Your contact #: \_\_\_\_\_

I believe this Alumnus has distinguished themselves in the following ways:

**Career Achievements:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Helping Other in Need:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advancing the Potential of Others:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this Nomination Form to: The Wyoming School Foundation, 420 Springfield Pike, Suite K, Wyoming, Ohio 45215  
E-mail the pertinent information to: [info@wyomingschoolfoundation.org](mailto:info@wyomingschoolfoundation.org)