

# OTTAWA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME 2014



## DR. KENNETH NIKELS Class of 1962



Kenneth (Ken) Nikels was active while at OTHS serving as President of the Civic Council, Captain of the OTHS Military Program, and Captain of the OTHS Track Team his senior year. He was also one of three OTHS students to win a national math contest as a senior. He then received his bachelor's degree from Hiram Scott College, his master's degree from the University of Nebraska Omaha, and his PhD in Developmental Psychobiology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In 1971 Dr. Nikels joined the faculty at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He served as Chair of the Psychology Department from 1979-1983, and later became Dean of Graduate Studies and Research in 1987, continuing in that role after being appointed Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs in 2002. Dr. Nikels received the 2001 Distinguished Service Award from the Rocky Mountain Psychological Association. He is extremely active in various civic and community service organizations. In 2012 the University of Nebraska at Kearney named a laboratory, the Kenneth W. Nikels Physiological Psychology Laboratory. At the dedication of the laboratory, the school's Chancellor stated: "Ken Nikels must be included in the "historic figure" category at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He was crucial in instituting undergraduate research and in developing a modern Psychology Department. Ken served the University so well and in so many capacities that he became an invaluable asset to the campus. He will always be remembered for his superior teaching and his vision to improve higher education. UNK was very lucky to have Ken Nikels and his legacy will continue for many years to come."