

OTTAWA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME

2014



STEPHEN NELSON

Class of 1980



Stephen (Steve) Nelson received varsity letters in three sports at OTHS: football, wrestling, and tennis. In football he was a two time varsity letter winner and designated first team All-State his senior year. In wrestling, he was a three time letter winner finishing his senior year at 30-1 with a 5th place finish in the 185 pound weight class of the 1979-80 Illinois High School Association (IHSA) AA state tournament (the largest class of the two class event). In tennis, he earned four varsity letters and qualified for the IHSA state tournament in each of his last three years. After graduation from OTHS while attending the University of Illinois he continued to excel in both football and wrestling, earning varsity letters in each sport for the Division I programs. As a University of Illinois football standout he was a two year starter at defensive tackle, participating in the Rose Bowl in 1984 and at the Tokyo Bowl all-star game in 1985. As a wrestler at the University of Illinois he qualified for the national championships in both 1984 and 1985 by placing in the top three in the Big Ten Conference Tournament. In 1985 he defeated, in a dual meet, the NCAA Division I heavyweight champion Kirk Trost, which was Trost's only loss of the season. Steve Nelson earned a bachelor of science degree in economics from the University of Illinois. He trades Standard and Poor's 500 options and futures on the Chicago Board of Options Exchange, leasing two seats for the independent trading company which he owns.