

OTTAWA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME

2019



DENNIS “DENNY” BRUE Class of 1970

Denny Brue was Ottawa Township High School's first state champion athlete, capturing the Illinois State pole vaulting championship in 1970. At OTHS he also played saxophone in the marching, jazz, and concert bands. He then attended Illinois State University (ISU) and there in 1971 was the Illinois collegiate state champion and set both indoor and outdoor records for ISU. In 1973 he was again the Illinois collegiate state champion and was the ISU Track and Field Captain both in 1973 and 1974. In 1975 and 1976 he competed for the Chicago Track Club under Olympic coach Ted Haydon, and there vaulted 16' 8" to defeat 1972 Olympic bronze medal winner, Jan Johnson. Denny Brue shared his experiences as a teacher and coach, serving in 1975 and 1976 as teacher and head track coach at Eureka High School and in 1977 as teacher and pole vault coach at Sterling High School. He coached high school pole vaulters for ten years with eleven of his athletes placing in the state finals. In 1993 he was named Thomas Jefferson Teacher of the Year at the school in Decatur, Illinois. He was also a successful basketball coach in Decatur. In addition during his years teaching and coaching in the 1980's and 90's he ran his own construction company building over 100 structures and directing the building trades programs at Decatur public schools and the Heartland Building Trades Program at Richland Community College in Decatur.

