

ALUMNI GIVING BACK

Donald J. Chiofaro, BHS Class of 1963**By Dr. Henry Lane**

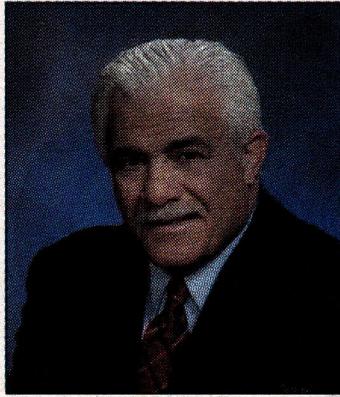
Special to the Belmont Citizen-Herald

Donald J. Chiofaro founded The Chiofaro Company, a Boston-based real estate development and management company in 1980. The Company is engaged in the development, investment, leasing, management and ownership of real estate properties and is one of New England's leading developers in metropolitan and suburban areas. Before starting his own firm, Chiofaro was Senior Vice President of the Boston development company Cabot, Cabot & Forbes.

The Company's flagship development is International Place located in Boston's Financial District. The two towers are 46 and 35 stories tall and it is Boston's largest office complex. Other projects include the Westborough Technology Park, New England Biolabs and many corporate build-to-suits for companies.

Chiofaro is a native, and a current resident, of Belmont. He graduated from Harvard University and the Harvard Business School. As an undergraduate at Harvard he was Captain of the football team and in 1966 and 1967 was selected to the first team of the All-Ivy League Football Team as a linebacker. He was also selected to All New England All East and All American Squads.

Chiofaro is active in civic affairs in the Boston area. He is a founder of the Boston Police Athletic League, an organization of volunteer police officers who develop relationships with inner-city youths through recreational programs. He has served on the advisory committees for Harvard College, Harvard Business School, and Harvard Varsity Club. In addition, Chiofaro has had a long-term interest and commitment to boys and girls youth sports. He has coached



Donald J. Chiofaro COURTESY PHOTO

youth hockey, baseball, basketball and college rugby.

How did Belmont High School contribute to your success?

Almost every important lesson was learned in the Belmont Public School system either athletically or academically. I found joy in playing team sports. I accepted all that came with winning, losing, working hard, sometimes with great success and other times with a lot less.

I think among the most important messages that I came to understand was to recognize and respect differences in people that would allow you to work with, acknowledge and value all the people with whom you would come in contact.

Belmont High had many very talented people. There is no question there were dedicated teachers who not only recognized high achievement but also had the interest and skills to nurture and develop those whose talents were not quite so obvious. I certainly wasn't a candidate to go to an Ivy League school when I entered high school.

That I was able to attend Harvard was a result of not only good fortune but also the fact that I had a lot of encouragement and support from coaches and teachers along the way. I am sure that my story is not an isolated case but that it is repeated time and time again in a public high school, and certainly at Belmont High School.

Why are you now giving back and supporting students at Belmont High through the Alumni and Friends of Belmont High School (AFBHS)?

When I look at the schools that I have had the opportunity to attend such as Exeter post-grad, Harvard College and Harvard Business School, it's obvious that there is substantial financial support for these institutions. Public high schools however, tend to receive less credit and much less financial support from alumni because there is a sense that public schools are funded adequately, or should be, from public funds. However, this is not always the case but pressure continues to be put on public school systems to provide a variety of rich experiences and opportunities for their students. Therefore, it has become essential to engage in outside fundraising activities to enhance the public school experience.

The cost of higher education continues to grow and in many cases is beyond the reach of a lot of students. The focus of this organization, AFBHS, is on providing scholarships for worthy students who have the potential to make an important contribution to society. This is not only a good for the students but it is a great investment in America. Other towns are ahead of us in this regard and ours is an activity focused on improving this situation here in Belmont.

Dr. Henry (Harry) Lane is a Professor of International Business and Strategy at the D'Amore-Mckim School of Business at Northeastern University. He grew up in Belmont and is a graduate of Belmont High (1959). Professor Lane is a Director and Investment Committee member of Alumni and Friends of Belmont High School. For more information about Alumni and Friends of Belmont High School please visit afbhs.org.