

Nomination for 2017 Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame Award Dr. James D. Robenstine Streetsboro High School Class of 1942



James was born the third son of Nash Robenstine Sr, Streetsboro class of 1918, and Anna Selzer Robenstine. His father wore many hats in his life as a farmer, entrepreneur and engineer at the Gouge Power House in Akron and his mother was a bookkeeper for the M. O'Neal company in the cash office and the Goodyear Bank before starting their family. With his parent's background it came as no surprise that when Jim started school he was already doing math and was able to read and write. Of course having two brothers just slightly older helped him pick up the basics also. Raised on his parent's and grandparent's farm located on the south side of Streetsboro. He graduated from Streetsboro High School in 1942 as class salutatorian with his studies directed to pre-engineering.

After graduation, Jim worked on his family's farm and at the C. L. Gougler Machine Shop in Kent until called to serve his country. Jim served in Patton's 3rd Army, 11th Armored Division, 41st Tank Battalion. This unit was responsible for the liberation of German concentration camps of Mauthouen and Gusen I and II at the end of World War II.

He returned home honorably discharged one day before his 21st birthday after the end of the war in Europe and resumed working for Gougler Machine and on the farm while taking classes at Kent State University. In 1947 he met and married Easter Darling from Kent. They set up housekeeping and soon Jim built a small house on the farm to call home. During the many years of marriage Jim and Easter enjoyed traveling extensively around the United States visiting many historical and scenic sights in all 48 continuous states and most of Canada, meeting and renewing friendships along life's path.

Jim graduated from Kent State University in 1954 with a BS & BA in Business with an emphasis in Commerce, Diplomacy and International Relations. His student advisor asked him to stay on and teach while getting his Masters Degree in Business Administration and in 1956 he accomplished that goal. Jim went on to teach Marketing and Finance at Western Reserve University, that was before it was Case Western Reserve University.

In 1963 Cuyahoga Community College was established and Jim was there. He was the first professor teaching Business Administration and Accounting. He then went on to the University of Michigan as a graduate assistant and in 1970 he earned his Doctorate in College Administration.

He went on to Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Michigan as the Department Chair in Marketing. Then in a move to locate closer to his family here in Streetsboro he moved to Saint Mary's, Ohio and went to work at Wright State University Branch Campus in Celina, Ohio to set up two year programs in Business and Engineering and to establish vocational programs. All totaled Jim devoted 22 years teaching college, two year's Graduate work and seven years in industry teaching shop math and blueprint reading. Jim's philosophy in teaching was to show his students the importance of what they were learning, how to put it to practical use and how to adapt it to other situations.

In his philanthropic and social endeavors he's a member the Rotary, the University of Michigan's Presidential Harry B. Hutchen Society, the Kent State University's President's Medallion Society, Life Member of the University of Michigan Alumni Association, Kent State Alumni Association, Streetsboro Alumni Association, and life member of the Saint Mary's American Legion post 323. Jim also established The Dr. James D. Robenstine Family Scholarship in Business and Applied Engineering at Kent State University.

He is also responsible for the creation and donation of the granite memorial of Streetsboro residents who served in the armed forces during World War II like the one which one stood in the town square. It's now located at Streetsboro's Heritage Society's Singletary House.

Jim has been a long time member of the American Motors Association and traveled all over the United States attending car shows and annual meetings. He's the original owner of Big Red, a 1972 AMC Ambassador with more than 248,000 miles on it. It's a Senior Class status car with many First Place, Best of Show, Best of Class trophies and ribbons. Jim admits he's not as young as he once was and finally gave up changing his own oil a few years ago at the age of 88.