

# I Touched the Future

We would like to recommend **Alan Kratzer** for the **I Touched the Future Award**.

Mr. Alan Kratzer graduated from Nazareth Area High School in 1976. He retired from Nazareth Area School District in 2018 having influenced many, including the following alumni: Todd Silimperi—Industrial Arts Teacher at Solanco School District; Joe Silimperi—Special Education Teacher at Nazareth Area School District; Kenneth Werkheiser—Industrial Arts Teacher at NASD; Damien ‘DJ’ Erdie – Industrial Arts Teacher at NASD; and David Petrushka – Industrial Arts Teacher at NASD. The statement “I touched the future; I teach” is perhaps cliché now, but it rings true. Our group of alumni stretches from the class of 1984 to the class of 2010, so Mr. Kratzer absolutely “touched the future.”

*“In 1981, Mr. Kratzer was my 10<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom teacher. Over the next three years, Al became a friend and mentor as I took as many Industrial Arts classes as I could. I also joined the stage crew, mainly because he was the advisor. I remember talking with him often about my future but also about teenage life in general. His mentorship was the reason I chose to attend Millersville University, also his alma mater, and major in what was then called “Industrial Arts.” When I was hired for my first full-time teaching position in 1990, I sent Al a postcard thanking him for “making a difference” in my life. Fast forward almost 30 years, and my own retirement is in sight. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my career as a Technology Education teacher, and I mostly have Al Kratzer to thank for that.” –Todd Silimperi*

*“I recall being a sophomore in 1981 and having four young ladies in our woodshop class. Back then, this was rare, but he treated everybody the same.” –Joe Silimperi*

*“Mr. Kratzer was involved in many activities while here at Nazareth—both as student and faculty member. He also wore many hats by helping many students with all kinds of things over the years, ranging from financial issues to death of family members, as well as post-secondary education and career planning. I am thankful for his mentorship when I was a student and subsequently a teaching peer.” –Damien “DJ” Erdie*

*“I didn’t get to know Al until I began teaching at Nazareth in 1999. He served as a mentor from day one. Al always put students’ best interests first throughout his career at Nazareth. On any given day, students would visit him, sharing their night’s events or looking for advice. Al always managed to find time to lend an ear and offer suggestions. He encouraged walking a straight line and taking the high road and always said what he meant. A quote I recall: “Words are like arrows; once released from the bow, they cannot be recalled.” –Kenny Werkheiser*

*“I first had Mr. Kratzer for Tech. Ed. back in 2006. When it was closer to my graduation time, I truly didn’t have a really solid plan of what I wanted to do after high school. Without the mentorship of Mr. Kratzer, I can honestly say I’m not sure where I would be at in life. Through his teaching and guidance, I have a very successful career that I am incredibly happy with and proud of.” –David Petrushka*

In summation, here are five grown men who have in some way been impacted by Mr. Alan Kratzer. We, too, touch the future, and all of us hope to do it half as well as “Big Al.”

With much respect, we humbly nominate **Mr. Alan Kratzer**.

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*Joe Silimperi and Ken Werkheiser*