

Life Legacy Award 2021

Congratulations to **Jesse and Susie Landess**, recipients of a 2021 Life Legacy Award! Jesse was a faculty member at GCA from 1976-1983 in the roles of librarian, history teacher, and vice principal. Always well-prepared and with good classroom management, Jesse was known as a tough teacher. His history syllabi were comprehensive and thought provoking, and completion of one of Jesse's classes enabled many students to pass College Level Examination Placement (CLEP). In addition to teaching, somehow Jesse embraced the responsibility of managing a 200-acre farm at the academy.



All students during the Landess' tenure valued Jesse and his wife, Susie, but from the perspective of the Class of '80, the Landesses took the duty of class sponsorship seriously. Their steadfast hospitality provided a base from which they kindly engaged each student with attention to individual personalities and to the needs of the class as a group. Initially, the Class of '80 did not realize the longevity of the steadfast commitment that Jesse and Susie had made, and this has been demonstrated in these forty years when they have prioritized being here each time the Class of '80 has been an honor class, ready to engage, embrace, and encourage all of us.

More recently, Jesse Landess has shifted perseverance and wholistic perspective from students to farming. As a multi-generational family farm in Indiana, Landess Farm uses fun and unconventional approaches; one example was the creation of a "Hometown Heroes Corn Maze." The words used to describe the Landess Farm show the same values Jesse and Susie exhibited at GCA: "As a family, we take pride in our responsible and ethical approach to raising our wide variety of crops. We truly love what we do and it is reflected in our service to you—our customer."

Duty, realism, creativity, warmth, and rigorous thought are key traits the Landesses brought to the GCA family. When a student was with Jesse or Susie Landess, she knew that she mattered. The Landess' loyalty provides a calm reassurance that reminds that each person matters and shows the long-term impact that comes when people extend themselves sacrificially for others.