

# The Remarkables Class of 2022

Musicians, public servants and much more



**Remarkable Rochester**  
Jim Memmott  
Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

There are all sorts of ways to describe a community. Statistics help. So do testimonials from residents.

Yet another way is to think of the people who have made the community proud. Among them are the movers and shakers found on our list of Remarkable Rochesterians, the roll call we started in 2010 and have been adding to ever since.

We made 23 entries to the list in 2022. As always, it's a varied group. There are musicians aplenty (even one quartet). There are athletes. There are public servants.

Some of the Remarkables overcame devastating injuries. Others broke barriers. Sadly, several members of the Class of 2022 died in 2022. Thank heavens, others are still with us.

As always, some of the entries came from reader suggestions, suggestions that I hope keep coming.

There are now 579 entries on the list. As I've said before, that may seem like a lot, but I know that there are many Rochesterians who need to be included, who have done or are doing remarkable things. Please keep the nominations coming.

So, without further fanfare, let me introduce the Remarkables Class of 2022, all of whom are on the list that can be found at <https://data.democratandchronicle.com/remarkable-rochesterians/>

**Mary Stafford Anthony (1827-1907)**

A teacher and school principal in Rochester, the youngest sibling and active supporter of Susan B. Anthony was deeply involved in the suffrage movement.

**Samuel Hopkins Adams (1871-1958)**

Known in the early 1900s for a series of muckraking articles in Collier's magazine that exposed the abuses of the patent medicine industry, he wrote for a variety of publications, and he also produced short stories and novels.

**R. Nathaniel Dett (1882-1943)**

A composer and choral director, he earned a master's degree from the Eastman School of Music and stayed in Rochester, directing choirs and also serving as the president of the local chapter of the NAACP.

**Sam Schafer (1900-1992)**

After a 1972 attack in his grocery store in which he was robbed of \$21.50 and his eyes were gouged out, rendering him blind, he was recognized in Rochester and beyond as a person of bravery and resilience

**Harold "Shifty" Gears (1907-1974)**

An Eastman Kodak Co. employee, he pitched for the company's fast-pitch softball team, often five nights a week, and amassed a career total of 866 wins, 115 losses and 13,244 strikeouts, as well as 61 no-hitters and nine perfect games.

**Ellen Hawver (1919-2007)**

A director, of health, physical education, and athletics in the Rochester City School District, and a star in field hockey, she led the way in organizing inter-scholastic and sectional sports for girls.

**Ruth Shafer Fleisher (1922-2016)**

The daughter of the airport manager in Rochester, she was an aviation ground instructor by the time she was 19 and became a member of the highly selective Women Airforce Service Pilot program (WASP) during World War II.

**Jack Feldman (1926-2021)**

A Holocaust survivor who went on to settle in Rochester, he ran a fish market for years and gave back to the community in many ways.

**George McVey (1927-2022)**

A dentist and a longtime leader of anti-war and social justice activities, he was active in the anti-Vietnam War movement in Rochester with Veterans for Peace and he served as president of Metro-Ac.



Nan Johnson in 1998 with photographs of Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. AIMEE K. WILES



The Ying Quartet -- from left, Janet Ying, Phillip Ying, Robin Scott and David Ying -- has a concert also featuring pianist Elinor Freer at 8 p.m. Friday, April 29, at RIT. J. ADAM FENSTER



Ruth Lempert walks with her grandfather, Sam Schafer, in this Democrat & Chronicle file photo from June 19, 1983. FILE



Bills owner Kim Pegula waves to fans before the game against the Bengals. JAMIE GERMANO/DEMOCRAT AND CHRON

time he started in 1984. A graduate of Monroe High School, he served three tours of duty in Vietnam and was a key stage emcee at the Woodstock reunions in 1994 and 1995.

**Gladys Santiago (1946-2022)**

She was a member of the Rochester City Council for 13 years, including 10 years as vice president and two years as president. During her 23 years at the Ibero-American Action League, she served as senior vice president, interim president, and chief executive officer.

**Jeff Tyzik (1951- )**

The principal pops conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra since 1993, he earlier earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music and went on to tour with Chuck Mangione, playing lead trumpet.

**Ying Quartet (1963 and forward)**

The string quartet was begun in 1988 by the four Ying siblings – David, Timothy, Phillip and Janet, in birth order – when they were students at the Eastman School of Music. The winner of the 1993 Naumburg Chamber Music Award, the quartet, with somewhat different membership, is in residence at Eastman, and has recorded extensively and performed widely.

**Kim Kerr Pegula (1969- )**

One of the principal owners of the Buffalo Bills and the Buffalo Sabres, along with her husband Terry Pegula, she is the president of both teams, the first woman to lead a team in each league.

**Roland Williams (1975- )**

After graduating from East High School, the Rochester native went to Syracuse University, where he starred at tight end, and then, beginning in 1998, he played eight seasons in the National Football League.

**Dema Kovalenko (1977- )**

The 1995 All Greater Rochester boys soccer player of the year, the native of Ukraine, played three seasons for Indiana University, was an NCAA first team All-American, and played for Major League Soccer's Chicago Fire, DC United and the Los Angeles Galaxy.

From his home in Geneseo, Livingston County, retired senior editor Jim Memmott, writes Remarkable Rochester, who use were, who use are. He can be reached at [jmemmott@gannett.com](mailto:jmemmott@gannett.com) or write Box 274, Geneseo, NY 14454



Anthony Adams Dett Gears Hawver Feldman Mcvey McCurdy Relin Gwin Jemison Belton Levin Santiago Tyzik Williams Carballada Kovalenko

**Norma Jean Wagner Meminger (1928-1998)**

Having lost much of her vision in an accident, she attended and graduated from the Batavia School for the Blind and became a Freedom Rider with the Congress of Racial Equality and was a Rochester activist for fair housing, equal employment, and the desegregation of schools.

**Nan Johnson (1930-2022)**

Elected to the Monroe County Legislature in 1976 from a Rochester district, she served until 1995 and was the first woman and first Democrat to be the legislature's majority leader. She was also a trustee of the board of the State University of New York.

**R. Carlos Carballada (1935- )**

Appointed to the New York State Board of Regents in 1978, he served for 21 years, including three as chancellor. A banker, he was the 2010 Hispanic Business Person of the Year.

**Roy McCurdy (1935- )**

A jazz drummer and Rochester native, he studied with at the Eastman School of Music while a student at Madison High School and later played with Art Farmer and Sonny Rollins and was a member of the Cannonball Adderley Quintet.

**Howard Relin (1941-2022)**

The longest serving Monroe County district attorney, he was appointed in 1983 by Gov. Mario Cuomo and was elected as a Democrat five times before retiring at the end of 2003.

**Lucy Gwin (1943-2014)**

Her experience spending a traumatizing month in a Cortland rehabilitation facility while recovering from injuries suffered in a 1989 automobile accident in Rochester led her to become a champion for people with disabilities.

**G. Peter Jemison (1945- )**

From 1985 until his retirement in 2022, this artist and historian served as manager of the Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor dedicated to the story of Native Americans, especially the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois).

**Ruby Belton (1946- )**

In 1976, she became the first African-American woman to graduate from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry and is a board-certified radiologist specializing in breast cancer imaging.

**Brother Wease (1946- )**

Born Alan Levin in Rochester, he has been a force on Rochester radio from the