

Eric Mooney '78 Distinguished Alumni 2012

Foundation Day Wows Wyoming Once Again

By Ellie LeBuhn, Class of 2012

Ellie is a graduating senior who will be attending Ohio State University and major in International Studies.

Monday May 21st brought a buzz of excitement to Wyoming High School thanks to a few distinguished alumni. Dr. Eric Mooney was this year's recipient of the Wyoming School Foundation's Distinguished Alumni Award, and as he spoke to the student body, both in smaller classroom sessions and during an all-school assembly, it was evident why he was selected for this honor.

Foundation Day brings WHS alums back to their alma mater as a tribute to their laudable life and career accomplishments. Although Foundation Day is meant primarily to commend successes of our predecessors, it also encourages those who have yet to graduate and gives tangibility to the value of our Wyoming education.

Listening to Dr. Mooney speak of the profound work he has done can only be called inspiring. As he asked students during a smaller classroom discussion who might want to study engineering, it was clear that he was there with an interest in his young audience, and the interactivity of his presentation was very well received.

Dr. Mooney's charitable work with reconstructive plastic surgery through the organization Resurge International has led him to exotic locales such as Peru, India, Vietnam, Ecuador, and Bangladesh. Resurge has performed over 85,000 surgeries. He works with burn victims and cleft palates, many on young children. Although the nature of his work is very serious and he showed graphic images of patients, his tone was light and humorous, which kept the high school audience engaged for the entire presentation.

In addition to substantial philanthropic efforts, Dr. Mooney is a plastic surgeon in Cooperstown, New York and is an instructor at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. He credits Anatomy and Physiology at Wyoming High School with sparking his medical field interests. Concluding his talk with the advice, "Work hard, you'll be able to go places," one can only aspire to go as far as Dr. Mooney.

Joining Dr. Mooney this year was Ambassador Thomas Boyatt. He never fails to amaze all with his tale of valor and heroism displayed during the historic hijacking of a TWA plane by Palestinian guerillas. For his negotiation skills, he was recognized with the prestigious Emeritus Award by the U.S. State Department.

Ambassador Boyatt brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to Foundation Day, and words of wisdom, saying, “The better you understand the 20th century, the more successful you will be in the 21st.” His list of accolades and achievements span the lifetime of a successful diplomat. He remains humble, saying he “stands on the shoulders of others who came before,” a testament to the legacy of Wyoming’s distinguished alumni and the bright futures of alumni to come.