

For Immediate Release
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Ripon High School Announces 2025 Distinguished Alumni

Ripon, WI – Ripon High School is proud to announce Shawn Karsten from the Ripon High School (RHS) Class of 2003 as the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award winner.

Shawn serves as Vice President of Community for XPRIZE Foundation - the global leader in designing and executing large-scale competitions to solve humanity's greatest challenges. In his role, Shawn leads the individual giving team, primarily focused on high-net-worth individuals and foundations to both cultivate and grow XPRIZE's existing benefactor community.

Since 1994, XPRIZE has been a driving force of positive change in the world. Their first XPRIZE, the \$10 million Ansari Prize for private spaceflight, created exponential breakthroughs, spurring the commercial spaceflight industry, inspiring the launch of pioneering companies and household names such as Virgin Galactic, Blue Origin, and SpaceX.

Before joining XPRIZE, Shawn served as Vice President of Advancement, Marketing, and Communications, as well as Chief of Staff at Ripon College, where he oversaw all aspects of Advancement, including Advancement Services, Brand, Communications and Public Relations, Constituent Engagement, and Development. He led the largest and most successful philanthropic campaign in the college's history, The Forever Ripon Campaign, which raised \$120 million over five years. As Chief of Staff and a member of the Administrative Council, he worked

closely with the Board of Trustees and served as a trusted advisor, key communicator, and strategic partner for the President.

In addition to his experience in philanthropic and institutional leadership, Shawn has co-authored two publications and served as a featured keynote speaker for at-risk youth, sharing his personal story of overcoming tragedy and loss while encouraging audiences to use their voice to make a difference in the lives of others. Within the Ripon community, he serves as a volunteer and member of multiple Boards.

Following his graduation from RHS in 2003, Shawn went on to graduate with honors from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh with a degree in Speech Communication and Rhetoric. He and wife Carissa are the proud parents of one daughter and two sons; Evelina, Adler, and Luther.

Any comments or suggestions, please contact Bill Kinziger at (920) 748-4616.

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