

Pioneer Hall of Fame: Clyde B. Coombs, class of 1963



The University High School Alumni Association honors Clyde B. Coombs, class of 1963, as a 2012 inductee to the Pioneer Hall of Fame for his achievements and contributions to his profession, the community and nation, and to his alma mater.

Coombs completed a thirty-two year career at Caterpillar, Inc., retiring as the Inspector in Security Police for World Wide Headquarters. Coombs supervised the areas of fire protection, security and fraud, as well as theft protection for the world's largest manufacturer of construction and mining equipment. Before joining Caterpillar, Coombs served our nation with distinction. He completed Military Police Training at Fort Gordon, Georgia, where he completed Criminology School with a focus on Investigation Division Training. During the Vietnam War, he served as Provost Marshall Investigator. Coombs was selected to guard the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the gravesite of President John F. Kennedy, and to assist in the burial of deceased astronauts at Arlington National Cemetery.

Coombs grew up at the Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School ("ISSCS") in Normal, Illinois. At U-High, Coombs lettered nine different times in track, football, and swimming, was a leader in his class, and was elected Homecoming King in his senior year. Following graduation, he attended Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin, where he planned to study art before he was drafted into the military.

Coombs is active in his community and has received the Historical Restoration and Landscaping Award from the City of Pekin, and the Citizen's Award from the City of Peoria. In 2011, he established the Clyde B. Coombs Endowment Fund, which provides financial grants to U-High students to participate in extra-curricular and athletic activities, as well as to provide scholarships for students attending college in Central Illinois.