



PEGGE ERKENEFF
 Communications Liaison
 907.714.8888
 Fax 907.262.5867
 148 N. Binkley Street
 Soldotna, Alaska, 99669

e: Pegge@KPBSD.org
 Facebook: [KPBSD](https://www.facebook.com/KPBSD)
 Twitter: [@KPBSD](https://twitter.com/KPBSD)
www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

KPBSD Inspiration: Jeffrey Dolifka, Class Of 2006

“Take risks and don’t be afraid of failure,” says Jeffrey Dolifka, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, Class of 2006, Skyview High School. “I was always so afraid of failing and embarrassing myself that I missed a lot of opportunities. I wish I had figured that out a lot earlier in my life.”

He’s been in the courtroom since he was five, when he’d accompany his father, and sit beneath a table, look at the judge, and play. Now he is an attorney with his dad at Dolifka & Associates, P.C., in Soldotna, Alaska, a practice that includes Estate Planning, Probate, Adoptions, Guardianships, and Real Estate Law. Jeffrey Dolifka, who attended Soldotna Middle School and Skyview High School (Class of 2006) knew in first grade he wanted to be an attorney. As a young child, he would travel to work with his Dad to court in Kenai, Seldovia, and Homer. Jeffrey says, “My father, Dale Dolifka, was the most influential person on my career path. He has been an attorney in our community for over 40 years. He is a great example for me as an attorney and a father, and always prioritized giving back to the community and trying to help those in need.”

CLASS OF 2006, SKYVIEW HIGH SCHOOL

KPBSD Wednesday #inspiration

JEFFREY DOLIFKA

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS

The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.

ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM
 RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 5, 2018

1 OF 3

Three KPBSD teachers impacted his life, along with Winston Churchill. Dolifka says:

- **Rob Sparks**, my history and government teacher. After seven year of college, I still consider him the most influential educator in my life. Mr. Sparks's designed his classes to challenge students to think outside the box and to challenge the status quo. I learned over and over that if there is an issue or problem that you believe needs changed, it is YOUR job to change it. I spent many classes debating Mr. Sparks. I never imagined it was preparing me for the courtroom and life.
- **Dave Schmidt**, my chemistry and biology teacher. Mr. Schmidt would never give up on a student. It did not matter if the student was the valedictorian or about to drop out of high school, he cared about every student and helped them succeed, staying hours after school every day. He helped me through many rough days in high school and was a great role model.
- **Renee Merkes**, my math teacher. I would not have graduated from high school without Mrs. Merkes. Math was my worst subject and Mrs. Merkes would stay after school for hours each day and help me with my math homework. She refused to give up on me and I cannot thank her enough.

“Take risks and don’t be afraid of failure.”

I was always so afraid of failing and embarrassing myself that I missed a lot of opportunities. The fear of failure causes many people to pass up on opportunities in their life and those missed opportunities can quickly turn into regrets. I wish I had figured that out a lot earlier in my life. I was deathly afraid of public speaking which is tough if you want to be an attorney. A photo of Winston Churchill and his wise counsel kept me going all through college and helped me push through my fear and barriers. Churchill said, ‘Success is the ability to move from one failure to another without loss of enthusiasm.’ That insight helped me to move out of state for school, and kept me going at Western Washing University for one year before transferring to Boise State University where I graduated in 2010 with a Degree of Bachelors of Arts (Major in Political Science, Minor in History). Moreover, especially in my studies at the University of Colorado Law School (2013), and anticipating taking the Bar exam—what if I failed? I did pass the Alaska Bar in October of 2013!

When life gets hard, and it will, what will you do?

“Sports taught me lessons to go through horrible times, and prepared me for life lessons. I love to coach basketball, and hope to coach at Skyview Middle School sometime in the next year or two as soon as there is an opening!”

Fishing

I love fishing. My Mom is an Alaska Native, and starting about four years old, I would go to Ninikchik to fish with my Grandma who instilled a love of fishing in me. Now, during the summer months, you will likely find me somewhere on the river.

Service and volunteering

One of my primary goals is to help children, specifically those who have grown up in tough environments. My parents taught me the value of service, I am involved with several organizations, including the Mae Ciechanski Scholarship Fund*, Kenai River Special Management Area Board, Boys and Girl Club, and I co-chair an advisory committee that is attempting to build a sport complex with an indoor turf field and track.

*High school students, apply for the [Mae Ciechanski Scholarship Fund](#)—especially for the trade and vocational tech scholarships. We have a lot of scholarships to award this year!

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS

The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.

ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM
RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

Soldotna Sports Complex

No stranger to a playing field or basketball court, a big project close to my heart with an important timeline on December 12, is to build a new sports complex in Soldotna. I have been working on the sports complex expansion for over three years. The project has recently taken a step forward to become a reality:

The Soldotna City Council will vote on several ordinances related to the new sports complex at a Soldotna City Council Meeting on December 12, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. The vote will determine whether the City of Soldotna residents will get to vote on the project in early March.

Wherever you live on the Peninsula, if you believe a sports complex would be a beneficial addition to our community, please show up to the meeting and show your support.

When I took the risk to go out of state to college, I never changed my Alaska residency. I knew I wanted to return to this community, where I will raise my family, and give back as best I can.

KPBSD celebrates Mr. Dolifka who is proof positive of the KPBSD mission to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.

Links:

- <https://soldotna.org/government/scholarships>
- <https://soldotna.org/Home/Components/News/News/1394/17>

[Jeffrey Dolifka, Skyview High School Class of 2006 online story](#)

Do you have a story tip about a KPBSD graduate to profile in our Wednesday Inspiration? Kindly email Pegge Erkeneff at communications@KPBSD.org.

###

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS

The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.

ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM
RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

FOR RELEASE DECEMBER 5, 2018

3 OF 3