



# Rod Wilt

*Class of 1982*

Business Leader / Government /  
Community Advocate

Rod Wilt is a 1982 graduate of Greenville High School. While at GHS, Rod found a love of wrestling. He was part of the mat program from 1979-1982. He was a member of the 1982 Trojan Northwest Regional Champion's team.

After high school, he attended and graduated from Thiel College where his mother, Sonya Wilt, was a speech and language professor. As a youth, he spent many hours on Thiel's campus and was very comfortable with the people there. In addition to his academics, Rod participated in Thiel's wrestling program and was a standout! In 1986, he was a NCAA Division III wrestling All American and an Academic All American. Rod was selected the PAC Most Valuable Wrestler and won the NCAA Regional Title. As a result of all these accomplishments, Rod was inducted into the Thiel Athletic Hall of Fame in 1996.

After his college career ended, Rod began his climb in the business world. He worked for some of the top organizations in Mercer County to include the Hudson Real Estate Group and the Winner International Organization. In addition, he served as acting President of the First National Bank of Mercer County. His early career in business led him to seek elected office following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Ray Wilt who represented the 29th legislative district in Allegheny County and his father, Roy Wilt, who represented Mercer County. In 1996, Rod was elected to represent the 17th district in the House of Representatives and held this position until 2006.

After leaving office, Rod became the state director of the Keystone Energy Forum. This forum seeks to educate the public and elected officials to understand the benefit of increasing US domestic energy production. After having spent many years away from Greenville working in real estate and land development, Rod and his wife, Jill moved back to Greenville where he was named Director of Penn Northwest Development Corporation. With his background in state government and an extensive professional network, this appointment has been an asset to our region. The Penn Northwest Development Corporation is Mercer County's leading economic development agency. Through Rod's leadership, Mercer County is seeing a real growth in job opportunities nurturing a vibrant, prosperous environment where both enterprises and individuals can flourish.

Rod and his family have a long standing commitment to Thiel College. He and his wife created the first endowed coaching chair in the sixty year history of the Presidents' Athletic Conference. They endowed the wrestling coach position in 2015. In 2023, he was honored by the college with the Louis and Barbara Thiel Distinguished Service Award: given to "community members who demonstrate exemplary character, continuity of leadership and long term service to Greenville

and its environs." He was also named Greenville Area Business Person of the Year in 2023. Presently, Rod is the President of the Thiel College Board of Trustees.

Finally, when asked who had influenced him in high school, Rod replied, "Many teachers stand out, but three were the most impactful.

1. Terry Cooper, my wrestling coach for the 1981-1982 season
2. Lorie Sanderson, my English teacher and our class advisor
3. Ted Marantis who treated all of us to what life would be like when we graduated – Challenging!"

Advice to his younger self:

"Slow down and enjoy being a teenager. Don't be in such a hurry to grow up! ...and make a lot of friends."

Rod and his wife, Jill have one son, Tanner (wife Danielle).