



# THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## A Look at the Class of 2012

### VALEDICTORIAN KEVIN TRESSELT

School Attending: Princeton University

#### *Awards & Recognition:*

- Gold Honor Roll – Four years in a row
- College Board AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society member
- Tri-M Music Honor Society
- Academic Team The Challenge Quiz Bowl
- National Italian Honor Society

#### *Extracurricular Activities &*

#### *Community Service:*

- Varsity Leaders Club
- Chamber Orchestra
- Jazz Band
- Student Council
- Lessons for Life Foundation



### SALUTATORIAN ISHRAT AHMED

School Attending: Barnard College

#### *Awards & Recognition:*

- National Honor Society
- Spanish Honor Society Vice President
- Assistant Director of Dramatic Productions
- Student Government representative

#### *Extracurricular Activities:*

- Student Council Vice President
- Team Universal Peer Model volunteer
- Library volunteer
- Yearbook Editor



## CLASS Success

The Class of 2012 is set to attend some of the finest academic institutions across the country. In addition, students trained in skilled labor will enter the workforce in various industries, while others will bravely serve our nation in the armed forces. Below is a selection of schools Deer Park students will attend in the fall:

- New York University
- Princeton University
- Boston College
- George Mason University
- Wake Forest University
- Barnard College
- Stony Brook University
- Penn State
- Johnson & Wales
- Fairfield University
- Fairleigh Dickinson
- SUNY Albany
- University of Massachusetts
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Towson University
- University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- University of Connecticut
- St. John's University
- Delaware State University
- Baruch College



# A Message from Your *Superintendent of Schools*



Dear Residents,

Another successful year in the Deer Park School District culminated with a wave of tasseled caps thrown into the air at the 2012 High School Graduation Ceremony. This joyous occasion highlighted the impressive academic careers of our students and celebrated the unlimited potential for their futures. Through a variety of Advanced Placement course offerings, as well as unique opportunities made available

through our internship program, students are equipped with the necessary tools for success.

Once again, through the collaborative efforts of teachers, administrators and the community, Deer Park was at the forefront of educational evolution in developing Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) plans for teachers and principals. In the coming school year, we will work to seamlessly integrate these comprehensive plans into classroom instruction.

The administration and I

would like to congratulate John Gouskos on his reappointment as president of the Board of Education and welcome Keith Rooney to the role of vice president. We thank Frank Wilkinson for his work and dedication as vice president and look forward to his continued contributions as a valued trustee.

Sincerely,  
Eva J. Demyen

## New York State

### SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

The district hosted the New York State Science and Engineering Fair at Robert Frost Middle School. Over 375 students from various middle and high schools presented their science research to judges. Among those awarded for top projects were Deer Park eighth-graders Mohammed Babar and Nicholas Pascalli.

All seven of the district students selected to participate were middle schoolers enrolled in STAR (Science, Technology and Research) classes. Students researched a concept, conducted research on the science behind their idea and designed an experiment to conduct independently.

Matthew Pacheco, Ahmed Abdeltawab, Daniel Perepezko, Neha Ali and Joseph Sanchez were also selected for the competition and showcased diverse topics, including those representing the environmental, electrical and chemical sciences. During the fair, students presented their research problems, methods, abstract summaries, research logs and results to the judges.



*A Robert Frost Middle School student displayed his competitive work at the NYS Science and Engineering Fair.*



*Tanger Outlets at the Arches General Manager Nancy Larson (second from left) presented Superintendent Eva Demyen (far left) and (l-r) May Moore instructional technology teacher Wendy Kraus and speech teachers Karen Acquilino and Christine Michels and JQA math lab teacher Marianna Grieco with educational grants.*

## Tanger Outlets Present Grants

*May Moore and John Quincy Adams*

*Elementary Schools to Benefit*

Tanger Outlets presented grants to the district's elementary schools to support their educational programs. May Moore Elementary School received a \$4,000 grant to purchase 15 iPads to be used by language and speech classes, while John Quincy Adams Elementary School was awarded \$1,010 to help support its Family Fun Math Night event. Both grants were offered as part of the TangerKids grant program.



# *A Year to Remember*

May Moore and John Quincy Adams Primary Schools culminated a year of learning and laughter with moving-up ceremonies at their respective buildings. The district's second-grade class came together to celebrate their achievements and look forward to their new adventures at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School in the fall. The festive mornings featured a presentation of the class, which was highlighted with student academic, community service and attendance awards. Students also expressed their talents through musical performances and thanked their buildings' respective PTAs for their support throughout the school year.

May Moore second-graders wore signature maroon school shirts and sang the school song, performing the tune in English, Italian and Spanish. To conclude the ceremony, students showed their patriotism by waving American flags as they marked the end of the school year.

At John Quincy Adams Elementary School, "Where Falcons Learn to Fly," the inspirational poem "Children Are Like Balloons" set the stage for a joyful ceremony. In addition to the moving-up tradition, the class left their mark with a tree-planting ceremony. Students gathered on the school's lawn to help fill the hole with dirt where their new crape myrtle tree stands. The school also unveiled their new lettered sign and entrance fence, which was donated by local business Gappsi, with a PTA-led ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Abraham Lincoln's pre-kindergartners invited their families for a day of entertainment at their "All Aboard...Next Stop Kindergarten!" presentation. The children performed unique choreographed songs and dances that conveyed important messages of friendship and learning with numbers such as "Me Complete," "I've Been Working Hard in Pre-K" and "I Am Special."

# Stepping Stones to Success



The district celebrated moving-up milestones at Robert Frost Middle School and John F. Kennedy Intermediate School. The district's eighth and fifth-grade classes were honored at their respective events, which highlighted various achievements and looked towards the future. Students, teachers, families, administrators and Board of Education members supported the student-focused ceremonies with cheers and congratulations.

At Robert Frost Middle School, Principal Eliana Levey opened with a welcome address and Student Council President Joseph Ramirez shared class memories. Board of Education trustees presented student awards, which included academic and service recognitions as well as community-sponsored scholarships. To conclude the ceremony, the eighth-graders received certificates signifying their completion of middle school and their much-anticipated advancement to the high school.

The John F. Kennedy Intermediate fifth-grade class convened in the school's gymnasium as Principal Susan Bonner and Student Council President Dominick Albertelli welcomed everyone in attendance and reflected on the past year. Building administrators presented attendance awards and national academic recognitions, and parent groups selected students for special awards. In addition to entertainment provided by the flute and clarinet choir, the entire class performed a rendition of "We'll Meet Again." Fifth-grade teachers took the podium to speak about classroom highlights before announcing each student, who proceeded to the front of the gymnasium to receive his or her certificate.



## DECA Students in the Business of Winning

Members of the high school's DECA Club have received numerous honors at competitions for their work on various levels this past school year. Students were honored with Suffolk County Legislative Proclamations from Legislator Steve Stern and certificates from the district for their achievements.

Four students earned honorable mention in the Suffolk County competition, with 13 taking home trophies. Kayla Downs won first place in Suffolk County for her project in Food Marketing, while Alyssa Orzo won third place in Apparel & Accessories. At the New York State competition, held in Rochester, four students were named in the top ten. These included Andreas Stamataskis, who also took first-place honors in the county, for Principles of Marketing, Magnolia Chiri and Merly Bonilla for the Professional Selling Event and Phil Scarfi for Food Marketing. Additionally, Merly and Magnolia were invited to participate in the Senior Management Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah.



*Members of the high school DECA Club received numerous honors for their participation in regional, state and national competitions. Superintendent of Schools Eva Demyen and club advisor Greg Menig congratulated the students on their successes.*

## Teacher Spotlight



High School Advanced Placement Biology and Honors Chemistry teacher David Knuffke is a leader in the field of education and has advanced science education within the district and throughout the state.

Through his extensive work on various committees, including the College Board and National Association of Biology Teachers, Mr. Knuffke has received multiple accolades such as the 2012 High School Science Teacher of the Year Award from the Science Teachers Association of New York State and Model Schools Teacher Integration Award from Western Suffolk BOCES.

Recently Mr. Knuffke received a \$1,000 technology integration grant based on his innovative plans to incorporate cutting-edge equipment into the classroom. Using these funds, Mr. Knuffke purchased a digital microscope for instructional use in the science lab. The digital microscope, which is compatible with IOS devices, provides students with the ability to research, collect data and publish their findings to a mass audience. An academic blog will provide a forum for students to discuss their scientific studies and observe the work of their peers. The digital microscope will also be used in conjunction with the class Twitter feed, allowing students to receive live updates on experiments and view critical moments in their experimentation. "In my classroom we focus on science

**"In my classroom we focus on science as a comprehensive process."**

- Teacher David Knuffke.

as a comprehensive process," explained Mr. Knuffke. "My goal is to instruct students so that they develop scientific literacy through the genuine integration of technology in meaningful ways."

## Students Honored for Green Initiatives

Robert Frost Middle School student Gianna Locker is a scholarship recipient in the Babylon Covantage Ecotech program. Expanding upon her eighth-grade curriculum knowledge, Gianna studied the possibility of generating fuel production from goose droppings and developed a comprehensive science research project, which took first place in the competition. She was assisted throughout the research process by teacher Dawn Ferro, who was also recognized for her leadership in science education with the Teacher Advantage Award.

In addition, John F. Kennedy Intermediate students Adriene Campos and Alyssa Rivera took first and second place, respectively, in the Babylon Covanta Recycling Poster Contest. These students identified key issues in the areas of pollution and waste and created viable solutions that address

and remedy these problems.

Sponsored by the Town of Babylon in partnership with Covanta Energy Inc., these awards are presented annually to top-ranking school science projects with eco-tech themes. The projects, which in the past have included themes such as alternate fuel generation, emissions reduction, environmental mitigation and sustainable building methods and materials, are meant to help introduce new and creative ways to reduce our carbon footprint.



*Science teacher Dawn Ferro and Robert Frost Middle School student Gianna Locker were honored by the Babylon Covantage program for their work in the areas of environmental preservation.*



# *Class of 2012*

The Deer Park educational community came together for the high school's 49th commencement ceremony to honor the Class of 2012. Seniors, teachers and administrators, dressed in maroon and white caps and gowns, were led by members of the American Celtic Pipe Band, while family and friends cheered for the graduates as they processed into the school's gymnasium.

Student Council President Samantha Effinger began the ceremonies by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by senior Jesse Pimpinella performing a rousing rendition of the national anthem. Senior class advisors Alison Branca and Michael Barrigas introduced president Philip Scarfi, who urged his peers to "remember this moment" and all of the thoughts and feelings associated with this

monumental time. Superintendent of Schools Demyen then congratulated the graduates on their accomplishments and encouraged them to continue their adventures in life, to embrace innovation, continue to learn, and to always move forward.

Valedictorian Kaitlyn Kasper said that their diploma was more than just a road map to their future, and that the class should find their own unique paths and opportunities. Salutatorian Ishraque Khan shared the journey she and her classmates have taken together through their experiences, which will grow into unique lives.

In Falcon tradition, the commencement speaker, 2012 Valedictorian



# 12 Graduates

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peaker was Class of  
an Michael True,

who instructed students to create  
a personal definition of the term  
“success.” He asked students to think  
about what success means to them,  
identify what is important in their  
lives and work towards that goal,  
always staying true to themselves.

High School Principal James  
Cummings concluded the addresses  
and reminisced about his time serving  
as principal of this class at both  
the middle and high schools. He  
described the growth and maturity  
of the Class of 2012 throughout  
the years and the pride he felt for  
the newest alumni of the Deer Park  
School District, who will soon enter a  
new phase in their lives.

Superintendent Demyen performed  
the conferring of diplomas, after  
which Board of Education members  
had the distinct honor of awarding  
diplomas to the Class of 2012.

\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*  
Postal Customer

## FRENCH STUDENTS RECOGNIZED WITH NATIONAL EXAM HONORS

District students have ranked regionally and nationally in the National French Exam, administered by the American Association of Teachers of French. Many students from the district took the test, with four students – two from Robert Frost Middle School and two from Deer Park High School – placing high in Suffolk County and the nation.

Deer Park High School sophomores Danny Desroches and Yasameen Saleem competed on Level 3. Danny was ranked fifth in the Suffolk County chapter and 11th nationally, while Yasameen was ranked seventh in the county and 13th nationally. Robert Frost Middle School eighth-graders Sabah Siddique and Kathleen Colbert placed in the top ten of Suffolk County and nationally. Sabah competed on Level 1A, placing seventh in the county and eighth nationwide, and Kathleen on Level 1B, placing eighth in the county and ninth nationwide.



High School and Robert Frost Middle School students (l-r) Danny Desroches, Yasameen Saleem, Kathleen Colbert and Sabah Siddique were ranked regionally and nationally in the National French Exam and were congratulated by Superintendent of Schools Eva Demyen (left) and Curriculum Associate for World Languages and ESL Gina Palasciano (right).

## Shakespeare on Stage



The district recently hosted its first Long Island Student Shakespeare Festival. Students from schools throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties assembled to perform scenes from Shakespearean plays, explore the world of Elizabethan England and participate in creative activities.

The event was inspired by festivals promoted by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, DC. This unique educational program featured musical performances and interschool activities. Student groups rehearsed scenes from Shakespeare's works before taking the stage to perform for other students.

Festival adjudicator André De Shields, a seasoned Broadway performer, provided feedback for the young thespians.

## Students Honored with Army Scholar/Athlete Award

The United States Army Reserve presented its National Scholar/Athlete Award to High School students Kelsey Dillon and Brandon Lynch, who were congratulated by Superintendent of Schools Eva Demyen and District Administrator for Athletics Dominick Fontana. This honor recognizes high school students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in both academics and athletics, as well as their contributions to the school and community.



## THE SPIANS OF DEER PARK

The Department of Performing Arts is establishing a contact database of everyone in Deer Park who participated in the theatre program here. If you were ever in a play or musical in Deer Park High School, please e-mail your contact information to [dailey.j@deerparkschools.org](mailto:dailey.j@deerparkschools.org).



School news  
and photos  
compiled  
by Marissa  
Sanseverino.

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