



# THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Class of 2013 Falcons Fly

**VALEDICTORIAN TYLER DOOGAN**  
 School Attending: University of Buffalo  
 Honors College

**Awards & Recognition:**

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- Italian Honor Society
- Scholar-Athlete
- Math Team Captain
- Academic Team Co-Captain



**Extracurricular Activities & Community Service:**

- World Languages Foreign Exchange Student Tutor
- Long Island Junior Soccer League Assistant Referee
- Deer Park Community Center Haunted House Volunteer

**SALUTATORIAN JORDAN RIOS**  
 School Attending: Cornell University

**Awards & Recognition:**

- National Tri-M Music Honor Society
- National Spanish Honor Society
- Grade of "A" on All-State NYSSMA Solo
- Editor of The Falcon Report
- Drum Captain
- Director of Fall Festival Play



**Extracurricular Activities & Community Service:**

- Marching Band
- Sound and Stage Crew
- Science Olympiads

# TOP Ten



3. Christopher Cook



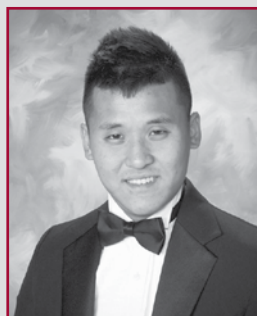
4. Liza Chowdhury



5. Amanda Giglio



6. Kimberly Block



7. David Ho



8. Alicia Legland



9. James Gentile



10. Alexander Stephani

# A Message from Your *Superintendent of Schools*



Dear Residents,

This summer marks the completion of another successful school year. It's a time to reflect on the advancements we have made and look towards plans to propel the district's educational mission forward.

Our goals are realized through the collaborative efforts of our students, teachers, administrators and community members, whose efforts have made Deer Park an epicenter for academics, arts and outreach services. This

summer newsletter is a platform for sharing a sampling of these achievements and highlighting the celebratory advancement ceremonies at each of our buildings.

Although school is not in session for most, the district is busy preparing for September, completing facility upgrades to ensure students are learning in the safest and most up-to-date environment. Administrators and teachers continue to review and analyze curriculum and assessment requirements

to develop instructional strategies that best fit students' needs.

I encourage families to create learning opportunities throughout these months and students to continue to challenge their academic prowess by finding a rewarding balance between relaxation and education.

Sincerely,  
Eva J. Demyen

## *New Challenges*

### **Common Core & College Readiness**

Many of you have already read articles from the Commissioner of Education's Office regarding students college and career readiness. In alignment with the new standards, our administrators and teachers have been attending workshops and training programs to prepare for the ongoing implementation of the new Common Core curricula.

The commissioner has made several statements about the curricula and tests becoming more challenging and rigorous for the students in New York State. Most of you experienced this firsthand with your children during this past administration of the grades 3-8 assessments. To this end, the commissioner has also informed us that this year's results will be baseline results.

This translates to nearly a 50 percent drop in performance percentages statewide.

It is extremely important not to be overly concerned about these drops in scores because, as previously stated, this year is a baseline year, so the scores will reflect that. Moreover, a new statistic will be included on the score reports – a percentile that compares your child's performance to all others in the state. This is the statistic that will be most informative to you. Please know that the Deer Park UFSD is well ahead of the curve in preparing our students for the future and this redirection of scores by the State Education Department for all students in New York State will not deter us in our efforts to ensure our students receive optimal services and a stellar education.

# Senior Scientist



*Liza Chowdhury is a recipient of the New York State Outstanding Senior Science Student Award.*

High school senior Liza Chowdhury was honored as an Outstanding Senior Science Student by the Suffolk Section of the Science Teachers Association of New York State. Liza was selected for this award by the Deer Park Science Department based on her science achievements and contributions throughout her high school career.

Deer Park High School science teacher David Knuffke attended the awards ceremony and presented Liza with an engraved plaque. Mr. Knuffke, who was Liza's honors chemistry teacher, shared her myriad of academic accomplishments and spoke of her upstanding character. "Aside from achievement, Liza brings a spirit of wanting to know more and do better in her coursework," he stated. "Where some students might become discouraged when encountering new and demanding material, Liza becomes more interested and willing to take on the challenge. She is always willing to help her peers and her teachers, and she is never anything but friendly."

In addition to propelling herself to the top of her class, Liza has also made a positive impact within the district. In tenth-grade, she wanted to be part of a Science Olympiad team, but Deer Park did not have a chapter. Through her efforts, she worked with a handful of other students to found a chapter in the school, recruiting many upper and lower classmen to ensure that the club continues for many successful years to come.

In the fall, Liza will begin her studies at Stony Brook University to pursue a career in medicine, with the specific goal of helping people in need.

## INNOVATIVE THINKING



*Suffolk County Legislator Lou D'Amaro presented student Brendan Eising with a proclamation for his first-place win at the Brookhaven National Laboratory's Elementary Science Fair.*

John F. Kennedy Intermediate School student Brendan Eising won first place in the Brookhaven National Laboratory's Elementary Science Fair in the fourth-grade division. More than 100 schools were represented at the fair, with over 500 projects competing for top honors. To commemorate his achievement, Brendan was honored with a proclamation at the Suffolk County Legislature's meeting by Legislator Lou D'Amaro.

Brendan's project, "Shake It Up," was inspired at his grandmother's 80th birthday when he noticed that as she cut her cake, her hands were very shaky due to chronic arthritis. Similarly, he was also aware that his grandfather suffered from the same affliction as a result of Parkinson's disease.

Brendan learned how to solder and build circuits and came up with the idea to make a circuit maze game to test the level at which a person's hands shake and see if this affects their fine motor skills and hand dexterity. Brendan's hypothesis stated as people age, their hands become more shaky and they are not able to move or use them as well as younger people.

Brendan is looking towards real-world applications where his research could be useful in testing individuals whose hands are critical in their profession, including dentists, electricians and surgeons.

# 50<sup>th</sup> Commencement

To commemorate Deer Park High School's 50th commencement ceremony, the Class of 2013 donned the district's original robe colors of maroon and white while the American Celtic Pipe Band led students in procession across the school's front lawn. The graduation paid tribute to the school's legacy and looked toward the future of the graduates.

Superintendent of Schools Eva J. Demyen shared a personal story about Superstorm Sandy to draw correlations between the growth of students and their ability to overcome challenges throughout the years. She encouraged students to find their way through life, make smart decisions and, most importantly, enjoy the journey. Since their freshman year, senior class advisers Jessica Adamo and Kristen Small have formed strong relationships with students. The pair addressed their fellow graduates, thanking the group for the unique memories and special events shared, including fundraisers, dances and group achievements.

Elected by her peers, Senior Class President Nicolette Tortorici emphasized the feeling of community and reinforced that the class will leave the high school knowing who they are and that they have all had an impact on one another. Salutatorian Jordan Rios, who will be attending Cornell University in the fall, reflected on what the students had survived and what they will leave behind as a class. A sense of unity was felt in his words as he described how the class was together at the start, supported one another, and will now venture out to sow new seeds. Valedictorian Tyler Doogan, who has been accepted

into the University of Buffalo's Honors Program, directed his peers to face the future head-on. He explained that while the future is unknown, it is filled with limitless possibilities, and while there are no certainties or guarantees, one should follow the head and heart.

In Deer Park tradition, the valedictorian from 10 years prior served as the honorary guest commencement speaker. This year, Class of 2003 co-valedictorian Dr. Thomas DePrima spoke to students directly and identified the commencement as "a day about you, and a celebration of you." He reminded students that they are entering a new phase of their lives that holds more freedoms to make decisions, and that while these decisions may have lifelong impacts, they can always be edited. With so much at stake, he instructed students to employ a healthy skepticism, conduct their own research and carefully consider the advice they receive.

Principal James Cummings highlighted the class's achievements in the areas of academics, arts and athletics and drew upon the class's yearbook theme, "lucky." He reminded students that luck was only a small part of their success, and that it was their hard work and dedication to their education that had created for them these rewarding opportunities.

The Board of Education, administrators and faculty then presented the awarding of diplomas to the Class of 2013, after which the Deer Park High School Symphonic Band and the ninth-grade band, under the direction of Jerry Cannarozzo, closed out the festive milestone event.





# Robert Frost **Ready to Advance**

The words of Dr. Seuss – “Today is your day. You’re off to great places! You’re off and away!” – set the theme for the moving up exercises of Robert Frost Middle School. Principal Eliana Levey welcomed all in attendance and encouraged the graduating eighth-grade class to enter the high school with the same determination and drive they had applied throughout their time at Frost. She described the limitless potential of the students as individuals and encouraged them to connect with the high school culture by joining various clubs and organizations.

Student Council President Anthony Henkel directed his peers to approach each day equipped with the resolve to go make a difference. He explained that their actions could be large or small, but either way they would make a positive impact. Recognizing the achievements of the student body, school administrators and community members and groups presented students with various awards based on their academic efforts and volunteer service contributions. Among the recognitions were the Presidential Academic Achievement Award and membership into the National Junior Honor Society.

Eighth-grade students received their certificates from Board of Education trustees and district administrators, who congratulated each student as they walked on stage, signifying their successful advancement to the high school.

## JFK Students *Fly*

Kites served as the inspiration for John F. Kennedy Intermediate School’s fifth-grade moving up ceremony, with the journey of a kite’s challenging yet rewarding flight used to mirror the growth of students throughout their time at JFK.

Student leaders, including fifth-grade Student Council President Amanda Poggioli and Vice President Isabella Giglio, shared words of reflection and hopes for the future with their peers and families in attendance. Members of the flute and clarinet choirs performed, as well as the entire fifth-grade class, who sang “We’ll Meet Again,” signifying their transition together to Robert Frost Middle School.

Various awards and recognitions were presented by Principal Susan Bonner to students who had earned academic honors for attendance, performance and commitment to education. Robert Frost Middle School Principal Eliana Levey welcomed students to their new school and looked forward to their orientation program. District administrators and Board of Education members presented JFK students with their moving up certificates as classroom teachers read their students’ names.



# Moving On Up

Two groups of second-grade students at May Moore and John Quincy Adams elementary schools celebrated their moving up ceremonies surrounded by the educational community.

At May Moore, Principal Alicia Konecny introduced the class and described the group as exceptional students. Second-grade students reminisced through an “A-Z of memories,” pumped their fists to “Education Rocks!” and waved American flags during the song “Wavin’ Flag.” At the ceremony’s conclusion, the administrators offered a “flash forward” by dismissing the Deer Park High School Class of 2023, and students danced to “Gangnam Style” as they filed out.

JQA Elementary, “Where Falcons Learn to Fly,” had a balloon-themed ceremony that played off the whimsical journey of these festive favors. During their “Up, Up and Away to JFK” moving up, students performed “Well, It’s Been Fun” and “Ready to Go!” To conclude the school year, JQA’s second-grade class gave back to the district

and environment by planting a Japanese lilac tree. The tree, which was donated by the district’s buildings and grounds crew, was presented by Principal Jennifer Rodriguez, who read facts about it and explained that it represents the second-graders as a class and symbolizes their time spent at JQA. Students from each class had a hand in the planting by shoveling dirt into the hole. Once planted, each student touched the tree for good luck as they move up to John F. Kennedy Intermediate School.

Selected students at both schools were presented with the New York State Comptroller’s Achievement Award as well as awards for perfect attendance. JFK Associate Principal Shaun McLeod spoke to the classes and thanked the teachers and parents for preparing the children for their promotion to JFK. Mr. McLeod described how impressed he was by the students’ maturity, intelligence and good behavior, and instructed them to reach high and dream big as the future of the world.



# Pre-K Students Shine on Stage



The youngest of the district’s graduates showcased their talents and lessons learned at the Abraham Lincoln Pre-Kindergarten End of Year Celebration. Led by Principal Dr. Christine Criscione, each class took to the stage to perform in front of their peers and families. In front of a live audience, students sang both original and classic lyrics that highlighted their achievements and events shared together. Choreographed dances told class stories and illustrated the vibrant personalities of the students.

\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*  
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## Students Bring Color to Peer's Words from the Heart

Robert Frost Middle School eighth-grade student Christy Jourdain received the gift of life with a heart transplant last year, and during this challenging time, used her creativity to fuel her strength. Throughout Christy's journey, which included long stays in the hospital and a myriad of tests, she wrote a series of poems about colors, titled "I Need Colors, Colors Mean Life!" which described the emotions each shade evoked for her at that time.

Christy's sister Saraya, a seventh-grader at Frost, was inspired by her sister's fortitude and bravery and decided to pay homage to Christy's literary works by bringing them to life. Led by art teachers Maria Giglio and Danielle Menig, students honored Christy's vision by taking each of her poems and creating original acrylic paintings to illustrate her words.

*Student Saraya Jourdain (right) was moved by her sister Christy's (left) written words, including the passage, "Aqua Green is the courage to keep going; Nothing is going to stop me moving forward; It would be fire that gets bigger and never stops and always keeps lighting up, like the fire in my heart that never goes out."*



*Robert Frost Middle School students showcased their acrylic paintings, which utilized bright colors to symbolize the strength and courage of heart recipient and classmate Christy Jourdain's words.*

## Frost Student Showcased at Brine National LAX Academy

Robert Frost Middle School eighth-grade student Jarett Bonser has been named a 2013 Brine National All-Star and has been selected to represent the Long Island region at the 2013 Brine National All-Star Lacrosse Academy and Brine National Lacrosse Classic held in Boyds, Md. this summer.

The Brine National All-Star Lacrosse Academy brings the top middle school lacrosse players in the country to one venue, where regional teams are coached by NCAA lacrosse coaches and compete to become the annual National Champion.



*School news  
and photos  
compiled  
by Marissa  
Sanseverino.*

### Board of Education

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