

The STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

THE ROAD TO *College*

From prekindergarten to graduation, the Deer Park School District guides and nurtures students on the road to college. The district's guidance team works tirelessly to help students prepare to make crucial choices for their postgraduation futures, including annual events such as Financial Aid Night, held last Oct. 19, and the upcoming College and Career Fair on March 21, featuring guest speaker Eugene Rogers, a Molloy College financial aid counselor.

The web-based Naviance platform prepares students for postsecondary success, providing them with tools to plan for a future that aligns with their strengths and interests. Naviance implements holistic counseling in a single platform where students, families and staff can collaborate to build and track students' plans for future success; ensures every student has access to high-quality resources to achieve milestones toward their postsecondary goals; and enables staff to measure outcomes and manage tasks more efficiently, giving them time back to engage with students and support their success. The tool gives students the chance to conduct detailed



college searches, including visits; provides a list of schools that match the students' needs perfectly; and lets students share the progress of their applications and application status. Naviance displays a list of colleges a student is interested in and has applied to, along with application deadlines; a list of teacher recommenders and recommendation letter status; lists of scheduled college visits; and web-based resources related to colleges and financial aid.

Another major part of the road to college is the high school's Advanced Placement course offerings, helping prepare Deer Park's students for the rigors of college work. This includes a growing number of courses – including the added Computer Science Principles and Human Geography – as well as the AP Capstone program. In the past decade, Deer Park has gone from



465 AP exams taken to 711, and the number of enrolled students has remained above 300 per year.

In a testament to the program's excellence, a total of 80 Deer Park High School students earned AP Scholar, AP Scholar with Honor, AP Scholar with Distinction and AP Capstone Diploma recognition in the last year, and Class of 2021 alumni Jasleen Kaur and Brandon Yasin both earned a rare perfect score on the college-level AP Research Exam in spring 2021. They are in select company, being two of only 375 students in the world who earned a perfect score on this exam.

Kaur, the class valedictorian,

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earned every point possible on the AP Research Exam. Her research identified a new process using soxhlet extraction and transesterification to create biodiesel from waste avocado pits and successfully produced usable biodiesel. Kaur is studying physics at Harvard University.

Yasin, a top 20 graduate, also earned a perfect score on the AP Research Exam. His yearlong project looked at the stigmatization of mental health in the Indo-Guyanese community and its influence on the relationship between immigrant parents and their American-born adolescent children. Yasin is studying engineering at the University of Pittsburgh.

Both Kaur and Yasin were part of Deer Park High School's inaugural cohort of 24 students receiving the College Board's AP Capstone Diploma. Students earned this great distinction by completing AP Seminar, AP Research and a minimum of four additional AP exams, scoring a 3 or higher on all.

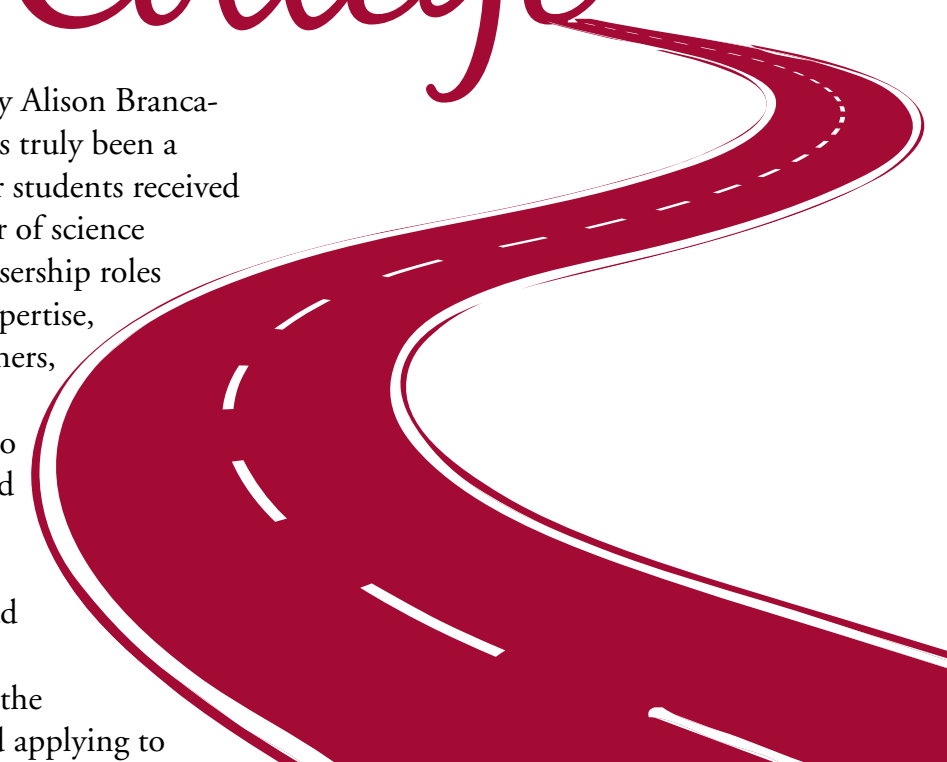
"I couldn't be prouder of both our staff and students during the establishment of the AP Capstone program at Deer Park High School," Curriculum Associate for

Science and Technology Alison Branca-Peterson said. "This has truly been a community effort. Our students received support from a number of science teachers who took advisership roles using their scientific expertise, while AP Seminar teachers, PPS staff and the administrative team also helped our students and the program become what it is today."

At the end of the road to college, Deer Park's seniors are completing the process of selecting and applying to the colleges of their choice. This year's list of acceptances for the Class of 2022 already includes numerous outstanding colleges and universities (see list to the right). Class of 2022 salutatorian Saima Hoque has already achieved her goal of being accepted to Princeton.

"It's everyone's dream to get into their dream school, and the fact that I even got into Princeton is something that I still have to wrap my head around," Hoque said. "I really think that the

reason I was able to succeed is because of everything that's been offered here. I've sampled all the different clubs, and I just found myself falling in love with all the different cultures. There's just such a diverse community of students that really want to propel you forward. The teachers are so supportive, not only helping me academically, but supporting my ambitions and helping me be the best student that I can be."



COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES for the Class of 2022

- Adelphi University
- Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
- Alvernia University
- Arizona State University
- Averett University
- Belmont University
- Berklee College of Music
- Binghamton University
- CUNY Bernard M. Baruch College
- CUNY Brooklyn College
- CUNY Hunter College
- CUNY Queens College
- Delaware State University
- Dominican College
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- Farmingdale State College
- Five Towns College
- Florida Institute of Technology
- Fordham University
- Hartwick College
- Hofstra University
- Howard University
- Iona College
- Johnson & Wales University
- Le Moyne College
- Long Island University
- Marymount California University
- Mercy College
- Michigan State University
- Middle Tennessee State University
- Minnesota State University
- Molloy College
- Mount St. Mary's University
- New York Institute of Technology
- New York University
- Nova Southeastern University
- Ohio State University
- Pace University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Pratt Institute
- Princeton University
- Quinnipiac University
- Russell Sage College
- Rutgers University
- Sacred Heart University
- Saint Elizabeth University
- Saint Leo University
- San Diego State University
- Seton Hall University
- Siena College
- St. Francis College
- St. John's University
- St. Joseph's College
- Stony Brook University
- Suffolk County Community College
- SUNY Buffalo State
- SUNY College at Brockport
- SUNY College at Oswego
- SUNY College at Plattsburgh
- SUNY College at Potsdam
- SUNY College at Old Westbury
- SUNY College of Technology at Delhi
- SUNY Cortland
- SUNY Fredonia
- SUNY Morrisville
- SUNY New Paltz
- SUNY Oneonta
- SUNY Purchase
- United States Merchant Marine Academy
- University at Albany
- University at Buffalo
- University of Alabama
- University of Arizona
- University of Bridgeport
- University of Hartford
- University of Massachusetts Amherst
- University of New Haven
- University of North Dakota
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Rhode Island
- University of Scranton
- University of South Carolina
- University of Tennessee
- University of Vermont
- Utah State University
- Utah Valley University
- Western Carolina University
- Western Michigan University
- Widener University
- Xavier University

GENIUS HOUR ARRIVES for JFK's Gifted and Talented Club

The Gifted and Talented Club at JFK will focus this year on Genius Hour, a program that is student-directed and designed around their interests. Students take part in an interest survey to determine their passions and interests as well as a learning styles survey, then develop a driving question to guide

their research. They will work collaboratively with fellow students with similar interests to research their topics.

Approximately 30 JFK students qualified for the Gifted and Talented Club, run by Lauren King-Hempel. The program serves as an important building block in

supporting learning. All students had the opportunity to take part in the initial qualifying test, the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test. Students who scored in the 90th percentile in the NNAT3, the latest version of the test, and were recommended by their teacher were invited to participate in the club.

"We are very excited to get this club started," Principal Kelly Benson said. "The core purpose of Genius Hour is to create something original. Students may publish, design, act, make or create – there should always be a tangible takeaway from the process."

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A Welcome Return to In-Person Performances

After years of virtual events due to the pandemic, the performing arts in the Deer Park School District have made an exciting return to in-person theatrical and musical productions.

The events kicked off on Nov. 5-6 with the high school's annual One Act Play Festival, a memorable showcase for a variety of short plays directed by students.

"It was awesome to actually be rehearsing live in the auditorium," said Mike Moriarty, the co-director of the festival. "The kids jumped into their parts on stage without missing a beat. Rehearsals ran smoothly and once again the students of Deer Park High School gave great performances. It was such an amazing feeling for the kids – and for the directors – to be performing live again. We were so grateful to be finally allowed to share our plays."

Deer Park welcomed back its winter concert tradition in December with live, in-person events at the high school, Robert Frost and JFK showcasing the talent and hard work of the district's student-musicians.

"Students and teachers produced a

wonderful concert series to usher in the return of live performances in Deer Park," said Bradley Murphy, the district administrator for fine and performing arts.

While Robert Frost Cabaret's marvelous production of "The Lion King Jr." on Feb. 4 was presented virtually, the high school's winter play, a production of the classic courtroom drama "12 Angry Jurors," thrilled audiences on Feb. 4-5, and JFK offered its annual Variety Show on March 4.

In upcoming performances, the Robert Frost Drama Club play will be presented on March 25-26. Dubbed the Robert Frost One Act Showcase, it will feature a collection of short comedies, most written by playwright Laurie Allen. The high school musical, a production of "The Little Mermaid," will be held on April 1-2. Starting in May, spring concerts return at JFK (May 4-5), Robert Frost (May 11-12) and the high school (June 6-7).

"We continue to follow all guidance while continuing to serve our mission of excellence in the fine and performing arts department," Murphy said.

