

COPIAGUE *Connections*

A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN



2022

Class of

CELEBRATES FINAL CHAPTER

Surrounded by family, friends, administrators, Board of Education members and faculty, the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Class of 2022 celebrated their commencement exercises at Suffolk County Community College's arena on June 23.

The soon-to-be graduates marched into the arena to "Pomp and Circumstance." Senior class president Paris DeFreitas led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Board of

Education President Brian J. Sales offered his congratulations to the graduating class.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kathleen Bannon offered her words of advice to the graduates before high school Principal Joseph Agosta addressed the seniors about how far they have come and his expectations for them as a class.

Salutatorian Devonie Rhoden challenged her classmates to be the best they can be in this

world, while valedictorian Joseph Falco Jr. spoke to his peers about overcoming challenges.

Students were then called up one by one to receive their diplomas and congratulations from Dr. Bannon and Mr. Agosta. Once the final name was called, Mr. Agosta instructed the students to turn their tassels to signify their status as graduates. Caps flew high in the air as the arena resounded with applause.



PIECES OF



"Imagine life is a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air: work, family, health, friends and spirit. And you're keeping all these in the air. You will soon understand that work is one of the balls that, if you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls – family, health, friends and spirit – are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will forever be scuffed, marked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life."

–Brian J. Sales
Board of Education President

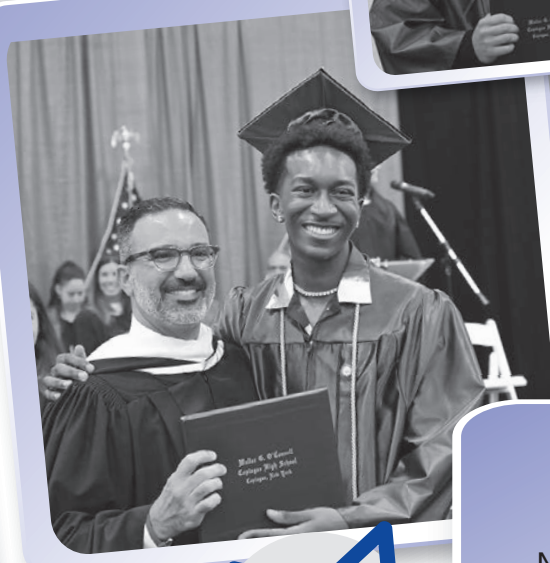
"Every single one of you here has that same potential that I do to rise up and become your best self. Effort and the drive to succeed is found in all of us, whether we're brimming with strength and confidence or are too scared to put ourselves out there."

–Valedictorian Joseph Falco Jr.



"Looking forward, I expect much from you and I know that the future will have great people working toward bringing our humanity together. I have great confidence that you will be the people making that change. The past few years, we have all faced many challenges. But those challenges are what has united us in so many ways. We are truly lucky to live and work in Copiague. It's a place that we can all call home – a place where everyone is accepted."

–Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Principal
Joseph Agosta



Class Achievements

Number of Graduates: 335

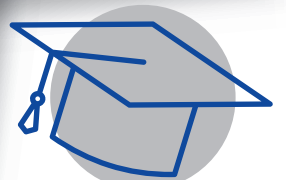
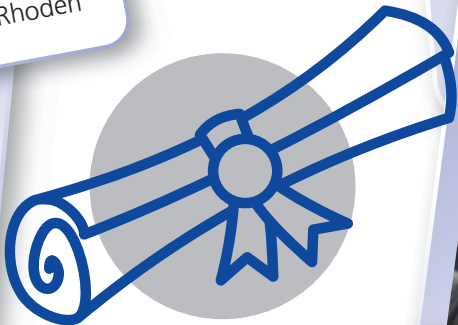
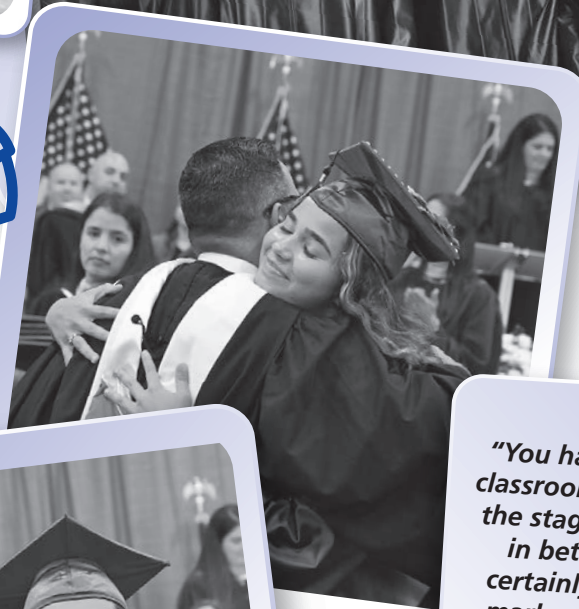
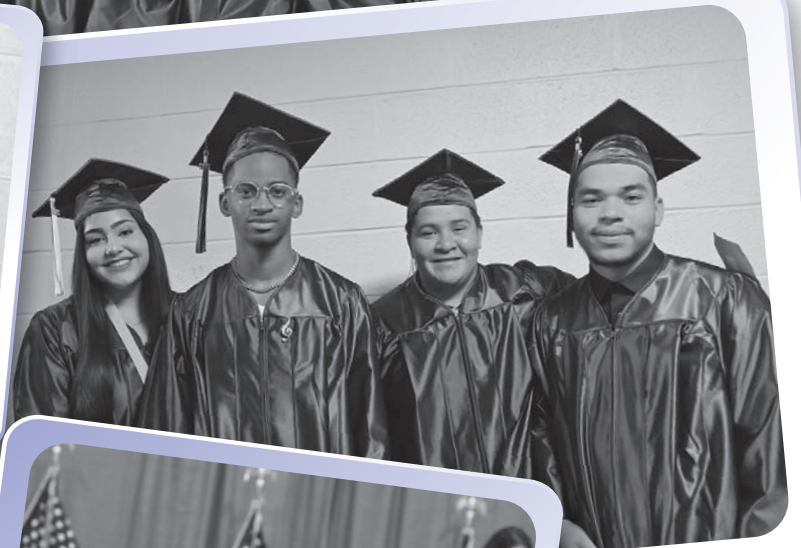
Number of Students Entering the M

Percentage of Students Going to Co

Advice

Copague has a diverse population that is representative of the world, and while we are here, we are fortunate enough to meet and befriend people from different backgrounds, nationalities and cultures. While this variety can be hard to find in some places, do not let that become a limitation. I charge all of you to be the change that you want to see in the world."

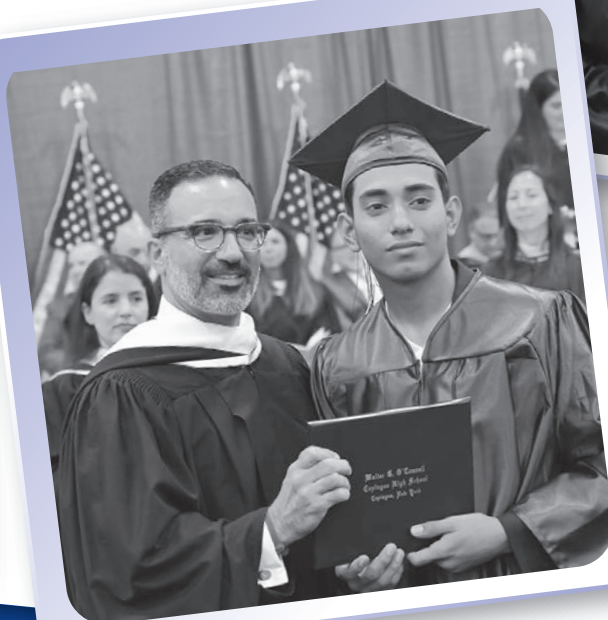
—Salutatorian Devonie Rhoden



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Military: 5

College/Trade School: 65%



"You have excelled in the classrooms, on the field, on the stage and everywhere in between. You have certainly left an indelible mark on the high school. You are to be commended for the positive energy, flexibility and dedication you put into everything you accomplished while you were here. I hope you look back fondly on your years here and remember all the positive experiences you had."

—Dr. Kathleen Bannon
Superintendent of Schools

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www.copiague.k12.ny.us



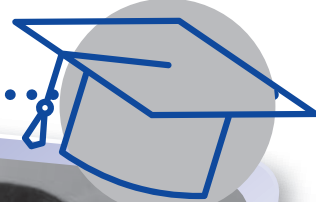
Valedictorian: Joseph Falco Jr.

Valedictorian Joseph Falco Jr. has constantly strived for excellence, pushing himself to achieve high grades while still maintaining a well-rounded life. He has worked to make himself an excellent leader, whether it was as president of school organizations such as the Drama Club and National Honor Society, or creator of the Civil Debate Club. He held office for the Class of 2022 and was a member of the ICS2, Quiz Bowl team, RYLA, STEP and the Science Research Club. He also had many roles in the school musicals and belonged to the Shakespeare Club. Apart from his academic studies, Joseph completed an internship with a cybersecurity firm. His success has been recognized through a vast number of awards, including the Superintendent's Award, Department of Defense certifications, two gold medals in the Long Island Math Fair, and having the best opening statement by a prosecutor in the EDNY Justice Institute. He plans to work in cybersecurity and will be attending Hofstra University in the fall.



Salutatorian: Devonie Rhoden

Devonie Rhoden is ranked No. 2 in her class with a GPA of 104.22. She was president of Key Club, social media manager for One Mind Club and a member of SOUL Club. She was also a member of the Independent Science Research Club, becoming secretary during her senior year. Her interest in the sciences led her to participate in programs at Brookhaven National Laboratory and complete an internship this past summer. Her involvement in research, community service and academics earned her Farmingdale State College stipends, the New York State Retired School Administrators and Supervisors Award and a Town of Babylon Scholarship. She was also named an AP Scholar with Honor and AP Scholar with Distinction, and she graduated with an AP Capstone Diploma. Devonie plans to study medicine and become a pediatrician or forensic pathologist. She will be attending Johns Hopkins University.



Top 10 Students...College-Bound

1. Joseph Falco Jr.: *Hofstra University*
2. Devonie Rhoden: *Johns Hopkins University*
3. Sahil Parikh: *Stony Brook University*
4. Stephanie Cortes: *SUNY New Paltz*
5. Jillian McLaurin: *Stony Brook University*
6. Cathrine Sakin: *Rochester Institute of Technology*
7. Adriana Jimenez Bonilla: *Cornell University*
8. Asiatul Hoque: *CUNY John Jay College*
9. Deep Shah: *Stevens Institute of Technology*
10. Roman Burrus: *Stony Brook University*



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Dr. Kathleen Bannon, *Superintendent of Schools*