



Outreach

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Two Apple Distinguished Schools: *Jackson Avenue & Mineola Middle School*

The second school in the district to receive the distinction, Jackson Avenue School has been named an Apple Distinguished School for the 2015-16 school year. A limited number of schools in the nation were selected for this award, which is reserved for those that have demonstrated Apple's highest vision of a successful 21st-century learning environment. The award is a testament to the district's dedication to enhanced learning for students through iPads for home and school use.

"This [designation] would not have been possible without

the teachers," Jackson Avenue Principal Dr. Janet Gonzalez said. "They really take my ideas and run with them, bringing them to life."

In order to qualify for the award, schools had to be nominated by Apple and then demonstrate, through an application process, that they meet Apple's vision of success. This vision includes providing visionary leadership, innovative learning and teaching, ongoing professional development, a flexible learning environment and compelling evidence of success.

The vision began in Mineola as



a pilot program for fifth-graders at Jackson Avenue in the spring of 2010. In the five years since then, the district has received numerous accolades for its integration of

technology into the classrooms.

Mineola Middle School was honored as an Apple Distinguished School in 2013 and qualified for the award again this year.

Mineola High School announced its top 10 students in the graduating class of 2016 on Oct. 5, with Katie Shi named this year's valedictorian and Marissa Karasz named salutatorian.

Rounding out the 10 in order from the top are: Catherine Leong, Claudia Serna, Kyle Kern, Christin Candela, Linda Jin, Madison Brady, Gina Koros and John Rhim.



Mineola Union Free School District
121 Jackson Avenue
Mineola, New York 11501

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Top row, from left: Christin Candela (#6), Linda Jin (#7), Madison Brady (#8), Gina Koros (#9), John Rhim (#10); bottom row, from left: Kyle Kern (#5), Claudia Serna (#4), Catherine Leong (#3), Marissa Karasz (#2) and Katie Shi (#1).

Building Life Skills Through Work-Based Learning

The life skills program at Mineola High School is a class that specializes in functional academics and career transition for high school students through the age 21. In place of a standard curriculum, the program, which is directed by Susan Palladino and Kathryn Haberman, focuses on a student's Individualized Education Program and facilitates his or her successful transition into the adult world. Students who participate in the program are highly engaged in the school community through clubs, extracurricular activities, community service, and courses such as physical education, art, the drama club and all schoolwide programs.

Once a student learns the vocational skills needed to succeed in a work-related field, he or she is given the opportunity to participate in a work-based learning project, or vocational program. Typically granted to those 18 and older, the program has expanded this year to include a group of 15-year-old students who, along with their job coach, have been visiting the local Walgreen's to perform tasks such as greeting customers, distributing flyers in-store and removing expired goods from the shelves.

"The skills these students learn by entering the vocational program go beyond work skills," Catherine Fishman, the district's director for pupil personnel services, said. "They learn social skills that are applicable to everyday life and are out in the community, meeting people and making many positive associations."

To prepare for the vocational program, students work in computer programs to develop skills such as counting money or determining whether a date has passed. In the classroom, Ms.

Palladino and Ms. Haberman focus on functional academics such as money management, time, time management and how to sign a formal document, as well as building a student portfolio, which can be taken anywhere the student needs to go.

"My son has learned a lot from his job training," said Signe Fitzpatrick, the mother of a student in the program. "The job training has given him a sense of responsibility, and he is applying what he learns to everyday life. He now wears a watch to keep track of time and takes his wallet with him everywhere he goes in case he wants to make a purchase."

Just before leaving class to participate in the off-site work-study program, the students get together to form a positivity circle, where Ms. Palladino, the teacher aides and the job coaches enthusiastically remind each student of his or her many positive attributes.

"The most amazing part of this so far has been seeing how positive the kids are with one another," Ms. Palladino said. "They really cheer each other on and respond to the power of positive words."

In addition to the vocational program, the class runs the school store at the high school and hosts a holiday party each year for staff members.

"It's so important for everyone to know that our students are involved in many high school activities," Ms. Palladino said. "Whether it's making sandwiches for the INN, participating in a play or collaborating on activities with Advanced Placement courses, our students are always included."



The Epic Lego Wall

On Friday, Oct. 16, Meadow Drive School unveiled an Epic Lego Wall in Katelynn Schmidt's STEAM room for kindergartners through second-graders. Select second-graders assisted in removing the wall's paper covering to reveal surprise Lego creations. Although only one class could fit inside the room, the entire school witnessed the unveiling through a live stream on the district's website.

"This is our own Lego wall," Ms. Schmidt said to her students. "You are going to be engineers and create anything you want on here. And if it doesn't come out exactly as you want, you can take it down and try it again."

At the primary level, Lego walls provide an opportunity for students to exercise creativity, out-of-the-box thinking, fine motor skills, mathematics and the early stages of robotics-style thinking. Having the Lego foundation on a wall allows for three-dimensional building and fun with learning and exploration, all key components to creating life-long learners. The STEAM room that houses the Lego wall is a specially designed learning area that fosters discovery and a culture of creativity in the areas of science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics.



International Appeal

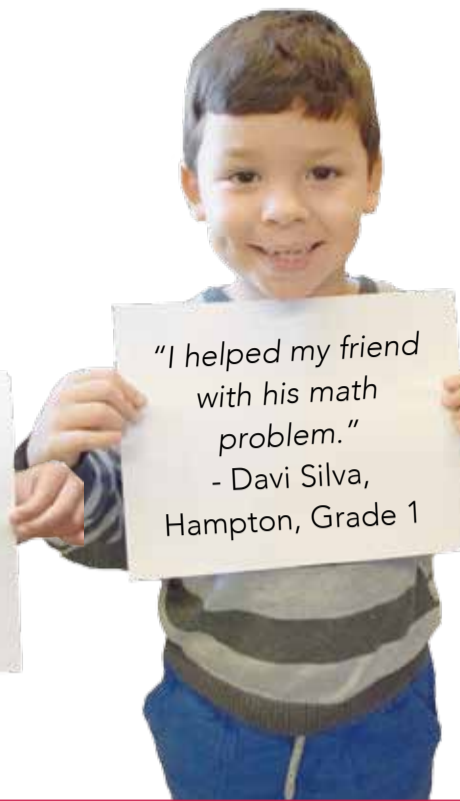
Prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, 25 educators from China visited Mineola Middle School. As part of a tour of notable schools across the United States, the educators visited classrooms to hear directly from students on how their engagement with the district-issued iPads has enhanced their educational experience. Mineola's teachers shared with the visitors tips on integrating the technology and maximizing its use for student success. An Apple Distinguished School, Mineola Middle School was the only school on Long Island that the group visited.



"As captain of the color guard, I helped new members learn specific moves."
Taylor Dalton,
Grade 12



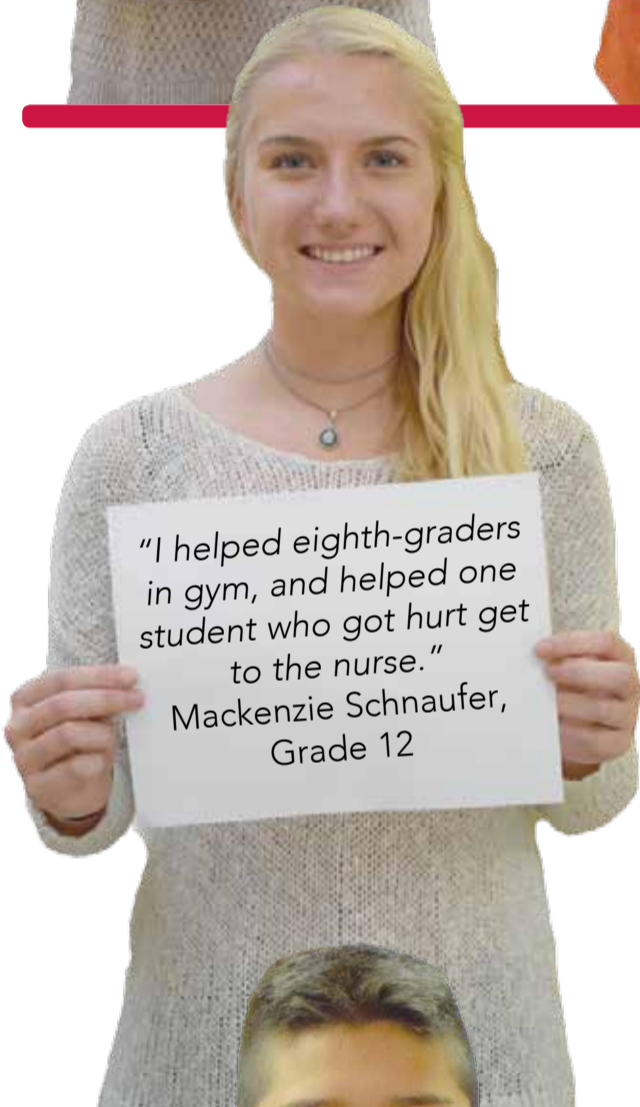
"I helped my brother with his homework. I also helped my dad at my sister's soccer game."
Gregory Vescovi,
Grade 3



"I helped my friend with his math problem."
- Davi Silva,
Hampton, Grade 1



"I helped my friend figure out how to shut off her iPad."
Julianna Reilly,
Meadow, Grade 2



"I helped eighth-graders in gym, and helped one student who got hurt get to the nurse."
Mackenzie Schnauer,
Grade 12

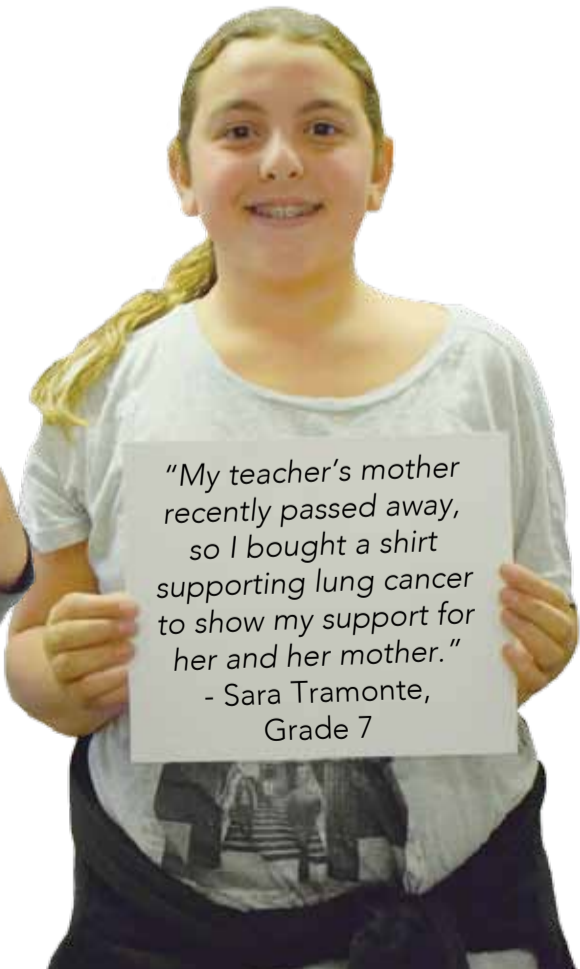
How did **you** help someone THIS WEEK?



"I helped many people by cheering them up and offering help when they needed it most."
- Daniel Granades,
Grade 7



"I helped my mom with the dishes. My sister dried them and I put them away."
Jullian Arango,
Meadow, Grade 2



"My teacher's mother recently passed away, so I bought a shirt supporting lung cancer to show my support for her and her mother."
- Sara Tramonte,
Grade 7

Mission:

The mission of the Mineola Union Free School District is to inspire each student to be a life-long learner, pursue excellence, exhibit strength of character and **contribute positively to a global society.**

Start

Wind Energy Wins

Thirty-eight students from Mineola Middle School participated in the Kid Wind competition sponsored by National Grid. Held at the Cradle of Aviation Museum in October, students brought their completed wind turbines and competed against peers from across Long Island. Prior to the competition, Mineola's engineers worked together in class to collaborate on the design and construction of their turbines, as well as tested their wind turbine efficiency. Mineola students were divided into 12 turbine teams and competed against approximately 50 groups at the middle school level. One of the Mineola teams placed first and another came in second. The students were evaluated on their blade design, knowledge of wind power, innovation of turbine and how many watts were generated.



How is Mineola contributing positively to a global society?

- By developing positive character traits, ethics and values in students.
- By embracing a society which is strengthened from its ability to interact with and learn from individual differences and diverse cultures.
- By providing opportunities for students to contribute to their community and encouraging them to do so.
- With staff and families that lead by example in assisting our students with all of the above.

QR Code

The district is now featuring videos on its website that highlight students fulfilling the mission. Scan here to see how some of our schools are contributing to our community.



Known to most as the "butterfly effect," Mineola believes that small changes can yield big results. In Andy Andrews' book of the same name, he writes, "Every single thing you do matters. You have been created as one of a kind. You have been created in order to make a difference. You have within you the power to change the world." We believe this to be true of each and every one of our students in Mineola, and here are some examples of our proof to these statements.

Kids Helping Kids

Students at Meadow Drive held a pajama donation drive to support the Ashley Wade Foundation and Jake's Jammies, which provides the pajamas to the pediatric units of local hospitals. The goal of Jake's Jammies is to bring love and comfort to all children in the hospital in hopes of brightening their day during a difficult time. Donations of new pajamas in various sizes were requested throughout a week in November. The drive culminated with a celebration of generosity in which students wore their own pajamas to school for a day.



Recycling Priorities

In order to further its recycling efforts, the district has teamed up with the Town of North Hempstead to participate in its school recycling partnership program. In addition to its positive contributions, the program aspires for students to become lifelong advocates for creating a greener environment.

The recycling program is being spearheaded by Mineola High School's Environmental Club and Student Organization, and the high school was the first of the district's buildings to receive the specialized receptacles. By January, each of the schools should have the new bins.

Prior to joining the town's efforts, the district utilized Royal Waste Services for its recycling needs.



Professional Panelist

Mineola High School senior Sanskriti Bimal was one of three expert panelists featured at the New York State School Boards Association's seventh annual Pre-Convention Communications Workshop. As part of the panel on "Understanding Social Media and Student Behavior," Sanskriti served as the student voice for the 90-minute discussion. The workshop took place at the Sheraton Hotel in Times Square on Oct. 18, with members of Mineola's Board of Education, administration and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael P. Nagler, as well as approximately 150 other guests, in attendance.



"Sitting on a stage with a professor from Columbia and an attorney from Harvard might rattle some people, but not Sanskriti," Dr. Nagler said. "As the only student actually experiencing social media in a K-12 setting, she

added credibility to the panel discussion, and I am extremely proud of how articulate and intelligent her points were. She is an excellent representative of Mineola."

Sanskriti served on the panel with Dalia Topelson Ritvo, assistant director of Harvard Law School's Cyber Law Clinic, and William McGuinness, social and digital media manager at Columbia University. "I thought it was a lively and interesting discussion," Sanskriti said of the experience. "Just as I talked to and taught others, I also learned from the experience. My fellow panelists gave a great and accurate presentation."

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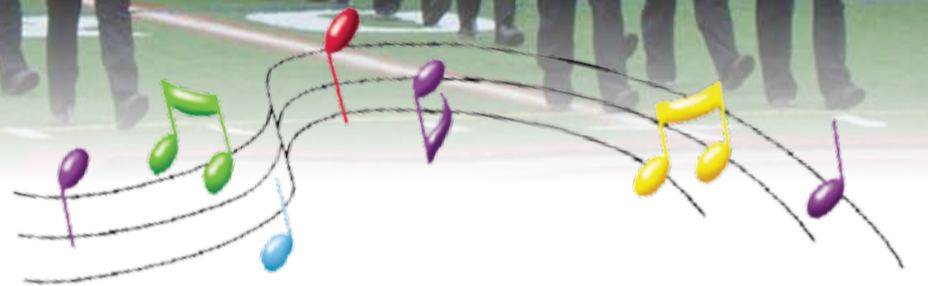
Finish

Successful Strings

Three students from Mineola High School were selected for the 2015 Long Island String Festival Association Honors Orchestra Festival held in November. Congratulations to eighth-grader Isaiah Huang (violin), ninth-grader Samantha Trested (cello) and senior Theodore Bischoff (bass). Since 1956, LISFA has been featuring young and talented string players of Long Island. The program has grown into a largely respected and successful festival throughout the years. LISFA'S dedication to educating young string players has allowed our students to work with renowned conductors and musicians from all over the country.



Haunted Season Ends in Second



Eighty of the district's student-musicians competed in the New York State Field Band Championship in late October. The marching band, which worked on their show "Haunted" since the beginning of May, had another very successful season. In seven competitions leading

up to the state championship, the Marching Mustangs were undefeated and took home first-place trophies at each event.

Under the direction of Frank Mauriello, the Mustangs scored their highest in history at the NYSFBC. In their final competition of the season

at the Carrier Dome at Syracuse University, they scored an 89.25, rendering them a final standing of second place in their statewide division.

Congratulations to the Mineola Marching Band on continuing their tradition of excellence with music in motion.

Maynard's Master Makers

Denise Maynard and Hampton Street's STEAM program were invited to present their Cre8ive Container project at Barnes and Noble's first Mini-Maker Fair. Cre8ive Containers, an original program developed by Ms. Maynard, encourages students to recycle, remodel and reuse containers while incorporating an array of science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics standards. Students led the packed house of supporters as they explained the steps they took to become Ms. Maynard's Master Makers.



Alumni Spotlight

JESSICA SHI, CLASS OF 2011 VALEDICTORIAN

Jessica Shi was the valedictorian of the Class of 2011. While in high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society, Student Service Center, Marching Band, Drama Club and Mathletes. Jessica had been captain of the cross-country, winter and spring track teams and garnered awards for her athletic excellence on the school's winter and spring track teams. She was a National Merit Semifinalist and an AP Scholar with Honor who intended to major in a science-related field at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology when she left Mineola High School.

In her first two years at MIT, Jessica was a biology major. "Originally, I had planned on being premed and going to medical school, but I think I was influenced by my family, who all work in the medical field," she shared. "It was hard for me, but I realized that this path may not actually suit me. I realized that I didn't want to study biology anymore, but I also didn't know what to turn toward."

After speaking with peers and professors at MIT, Jessica changed her major to management and graduated in June 2015 with a bachelor's degree in management science. She was hired by Oliver Wyman, a management consulting firm in Manhattan, as a first-year consultant who collaborates with a project team to solve clients' business issues.

During her time at MIT, Jessica was a campus tour guide,

an orientation leader for incoming freshmen, president of Alternative Spring Break and a member of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, Amphibious Achievement club (a mentorship program with Boston high school students) and Women's Business Leaders club.

In college, although she was not part of a track team, Jessica found friends with a similar interest in running and began to compete in half-marathons and marathons. "It's something that has become a pretty important part of my life," she said of running. "It is a constant in my life, no matter what else is going on. It's something I really appreciate and just makes me feel happy, and it's something I learned was within me from my time on Mineola High School's track teams."

Jessica also credits Mineola for her affinity for teaching others and traveling.

"I had a lot of really great teachers; they just genuinely cared," she said of MHS. "Teaching is something I've always been interested in but never thought to pursue as a career path. I believe it all stems back to having such great teachers in Mineola."

It was her interest in teaching and her love for travel that led Jessica to New Mexico in January 2013, where she taught biology and physics as part of Four Weeks for America, a Teach for America program, and then to China in the summers of 2013 and 2015 to teach English and leadership/teamwork at the middle school and high school levels.

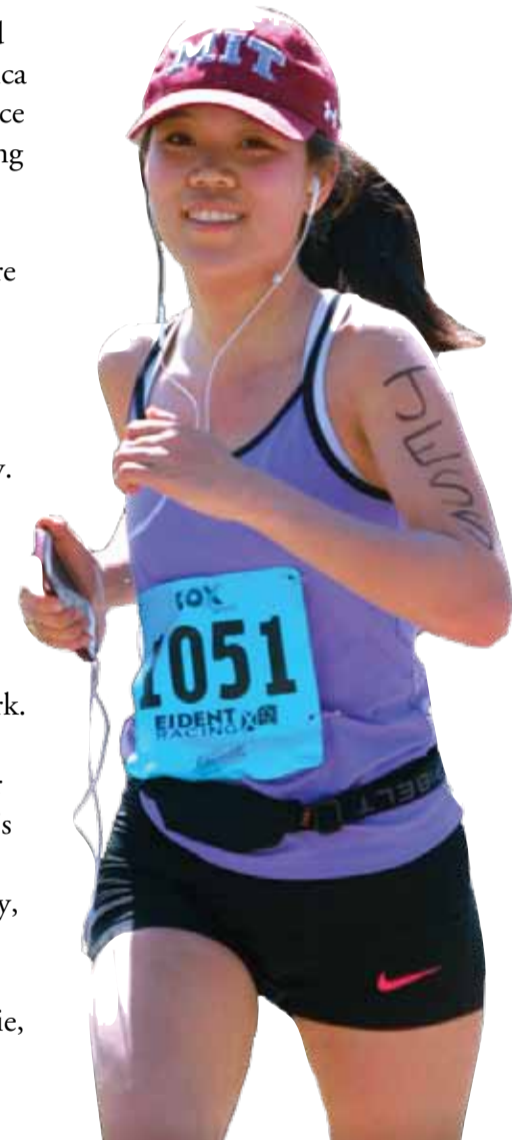
"It was the Portugal exchange during my sophomore year at

Mineola High School that opened my eyes to traveling abroad," Jessica said. "It was a really cool experience and it opened my mind to traveling to different parts of the world."

Through a program at MIT, Jessica also traveled to Israel, where she worked at a neuroscience lab in a university near Tel Aviv. In addition, she spent a month in Italy with a host family teaching high school chemistry and biology. She hopes to travel more and is open to taking a job in another country.

Jessica is currently living with her family in Roslyn Heights and commuting to Manhattan for work. She intends to work for at least two years before deciding whether she would like to pursue a master's degree.

She has an older sister, Dorothy, a Mineola Class of 2008 graduate who is a fourth-year medical student, and a younger sister, Katie, who is graduating from Mineola High School this year.





The Mineola athletic program enjoyed a great fall season, as nearly 300 student-athletes participated in the district's fall sports offerings. The season was highlighted with events such as the homecoming parade and football game,

the annual Mustang Cup boys soccer tournament, the girls soccer team's "Think Pink" Senior Night, the varsity football Friday night lights game, the girls volleyball team advancing to the county semifinals, the boys soccer team

advancing to the playoffs in an overtime win, and a rousing fall pep rally.

The following student-athletes were recognized at the winter pep rally as fall award recipients in their respective sports.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

ALL-COUNTY:

Madison Brady, Tara Maloney

ALL-CONFERENCE:

Serena Berger,
Samantha Schroeder

SENIOR SCHOLAR-ATHLETE:

Serena Berger

ALL-TOURNAMENT:

Madison Brady – Long Beach,
Baldwin
Tara Maloney – Mineola

GIRLS SOCCER

ALL-CONFERENCE:

Jillian Palma

SENIOR SCHOLAR-ATHLETE:

Christin Candela

BOYS SOCCER

ALL-COUNTY:

Dimas Cabrera

HONORABLE MENTION

ALL-COUNTY:

Brandon Mendes

ALL-CONFERENCE:

Anthony Abbatiello,

Michael Rodrigues,
Luis Tinoco

SENIOR SCHOLAR-ATHLETE:

Eric Pereira

FOOTBALL

ALL-COUNTY:

Matthew Kosowski

ALL-CONFERENCE:

Michael Bowen

NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION SCHOLAR-ATHLETE: Ben Carbone

UNsung HERO:

Logan Dunleavy

CROSS-COUNTRY

ALL-COUNTY:

Ryan DeMagistris, Matteo Itri

ALL-CONFERENCE:

Joseph Cueter, Filipe DaSilva,
Claudia Serna, Jason Sinert

SCHOLAR-ATHLETE TEAM AWARD:

Boys Cross-Country,
Girls Cross-Country,
Girls Soccer,
Girls Volleyball

PHYS-ED STUDENTS OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Tara Maloney and Matthew Tavernite, who were selected by the Mineola High School physical education department as the 2015-2016 Physical Education Students of the Year. Both Tara and Matt are outstanding student-athletes and exceptional role models in the Mineola High School community. As members of the physical education leadership class, Tara and Matt completed their training as juniors and act as qualified and motivated leaders in physical

education classes for ninth-grade students at Mineola. In addition, both are exceptional athletes. Matt is a three-season track team member, as well as a team captain. Tara is also a team captain and an All-County volleyball player. She helped lead her team to a successful and exciting season that culminated in the county semifinals.

Tara and Matt joined outstanding physical education students from all over Nassau County at a dinner to honor their work and accomplishments. The event was held at the Crest Hollow Country Club on Dec. 14.



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