



Soaring

Rocky Point Schools

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY POINT UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT



Turning Tassels, MAKING MEMORIES

Draped in school colors and honor cords, Rocky Point High School's Class of 2015 marched to the sounds of "Pomp and Circumstance" to signal the commencement of this year's graduation ceremony and the start of the next chapter of their lives.

Surrounded by family members, friends and educators, the soon-to-be graduates sat in seats of distinction on the stadium field and listened as several speakers bestowed words of wisdom and reflection.

During his address, Principal John DeBenedetto listed a number of accolades the class had collectively achieved during their time at Rocky Point High School and reminded the students that "as significant and far-reaching as your

accomplishments have been, they will prove to you that life is not a destination, it's a journey."

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael F. Ring echoed this notion and encouraged the students to embrace the challenges that lie ahead with determination and commitment. "Always remember that a beach is built a grain of sand at a time," he said. "Create your grains of sand and see them not for the grains, but for the vast beaches they will help build."

Reflecting on the significance of the day, salutatorian Joseph Niver said, "We've been on quite an exceptional ride here at Rocky Point High School. Throughout our time here, we've learned to work hard and be creative. I hope you all keep on dreaming and

creating as you go forward in life."

Looking to what lies ahead, exhortation speaker Brittany Rinaldi said, "To most of us, the future is filled with uncertainty... but we must embrace this uncertainty and continue to dream big and work hard to accomplish our goals and reach our full potential." Valedictorian Lauren McBrearty told her peers, "We have to forge our own path as we embark on our journey after high school; we have to write our own story... [for] it is our ingenuity that is going to make the world a better place."

Before each graduate crossed the stage to receive his or her diploma, members of the teaching staff and community helped to present several department awards and scholarships.



A Message from Your Superintendent

DR. MICHAEL F. RING

I hope all in our community are enjoying the summer relaxing with family and friends. As we move from one school year to the next, this is the time to reflect on the wonderful accomplishments of our students and staff, so many of which are chronicled in this edition of Soaring.

Although more than a month has passed since our commencement ceremonies, I remain in awe of all that our recent graduates have accomplished in their educational careers. I am truly proud of every member of the Class of 2015. Moreover, I know that their accomplishments came through hard work and perseverance, as well as the efforts of their parents, teachers and other influential individuals in their lives.

With the start of a new school year approaching, we have a number of important leadership changes in our schools to announce. As you will read in this newsletter, a number of our

veteran school administrators have agreed to take on new and challenging roles to help support and advance our academic mission. I know you will join me in welcoming Mrs. Susann Crossan as our new high school principal, Mr. Joseph Tapler as our new high school assistant principal, and Dr. Courtney Herbert as the new assistant principal at the Joseph A. Edgar school. These exceptional individuals bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to their new positions and will surely play a key role in supporting improved outcomes for our students.

While the months of July and August may be referred to as the lazy days of summer, they are anything but that for the dedicated professionals who work tirelessly throughout these hot months to prepare our schools for the year ahead. Our outstanding buildings and grounds team is working feverishly to ensure our schools are in top condition for the arrival of students and teachers in September. I hope you will join me in extending my thanks to these dedicated professionals for their hard work over the summer months.

As we prepare for a new and exciting school year, I wish all in our community a summer filled with family, friends and fun!

Honoring Retirees

This June, the district bid farewell to five dedicated professionals who collectively served the district for more than 120 years.

“These individuals have been an instrumental part of the Rocky Point community and have helped to shape generations of students into the leaders of today and tomorrow,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael F. Ring. “On behalf of the school district, I extend my deepest gratitude for their service and wish them well in their retirement.”

Michael Gilroy

HS mathematics teacher – 18 years of service

Teresa Krupski

JAE senior stenographer – 15 years of service

Thomas Rotanz

HS mathematics teacher – 30 years of service

Corrine Salbu

MS teacher – 30 years of service

Laura Schechner

FJC speech and hearing teacher – 30 years of service



Board Notes

During its annual reorganization meeting in July, the district welcomed new trustee Edward Casswell to the Board of Education. Both Mr. Casswell and re-elected trustee Scott Reh were sworn in and officially began their new three-year terms of service. Susan Sullivan and Mr. Reh were re-elected as the 2015-16 Board president and vice president. During the Board's last meeting in June, the Board thanked retiring trustee John Lessler (pictured above) for his years of service, dedication and commitment to the community and children of Rocky Point.



Pictured left, retiring middle school teacher Corrine Salbu accepts her retirement plaque from (l-r) MS Principal Dr. Scott O'Brien, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Deborah DeLuca and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael F. Ring.

Welcoming **NEW** Administrators

SUSANN CROSSAN – ROCKY POINT HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Susann Crossan, who has worked as a high school assistant principal in the district for more than 12 years, has been appointed the new principal of Rocky Point High School. She has been a valued member of the school's Shared Decision Making Committee, aided in the district's implementation of Project Save legislation, and facilitated many components of the district's substance awareness, prevention and intervention action plan. To help foster a stronger home-to-school connection, she developed the ninth-grade parent orientation program and, drawing upon her previous teaching experience, provided support to her colleagues by creating a teacher handbook and new teacher orientation program.

JOSEPH TAPLER – ROCKY POINT HIGH SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Joseph Tapler has been appointed to fill the high school assistant principal role previously held by Ms. Crossan. Mr. Tapler has been an educator in the district since 2004, serving as a middle school assistant principal before holding his current role as assistant principal at Joseph A. Edgar Intermediate School. During his tenure, Mr. Tapler has helped to design and implement the district's Response to Intervention program, instituted a school-to-work prevocational program for self-contained special needs students, and worked to improve parent and community involvement at the building level.

DR. COURTNEY HERBERT – JAE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Dr. Courtney Herbert, the current assistant principal at Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School, has been appointed as the new assistant principal at JAE. Dr. Herbert has served as FJC's assistant principal since 2006 and has been instrumental in supporting literacy and curriculum development initiatives, as well as fostering a strong home-to-school connection to ensure a sound educational foundation for all students. Additionally, she is a contributing member of the Shared Decision Making Committee and has played a critical role in implementing educationally enriching activities, such as the Parents as Reading Partners and student mentoring programs.

TANESHA HUNTER, ED.D. – CSE ADMINISTRATOR

Tanisha Hunter, Ed.D. joins the district as a new CSE administrator from the Automotive High School in Brooklyn, where she worked as an assistant principal for special education. There she was responsible for facilitating the development, communication, implementation and evaluation of students' IEPs, helping to strengthen lines of communication between the home and school as well as overseeing compliance requirements related to students with disabilities, Commissioner's Regulations Part 200, IEPs, 504s and Chapter 408 Compliance. In Rocky Point, she will serve as the CSE for grades 6-12.

PAUL MARTINEZ – DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES III

Paul Martinez joins the district as the new director of facilities III from the Brentwood Union Free School District. Since 1994, Mr. Martinez worked as Brentwood's maintenance mechanic III, where he served as the project manager for various projects, facilitated communication with all levels of administration and supervised the electrical shop.



Moving Up



“At FJC, we have had the pleasure and honor of introducing your child to his or her first experience as a student and watching them become readers, writers and thinkers, as they’ve matured into the wonderful children before us.”

Virginia Gibbons, FJC Principal

“You have learned to think like a mathematician, study like a historian and experiment like a scientist...In the future, remember to always try your best, get involved, enjoy what you are doing, be a good friend, always thank your parents – they were your first teachers – be kind, tell the truth and smile.”

Linda Towlen, JAE Principal



“I remember commending this group of students [during their second-grade moving up ceremony] for their outstanding achievements and undeniable sense of character. It was evident even then that this group of students was destined for greatness.”

Dr. Scott O'Brien, MS Principal

Top of Their Class



LAUREN MCBREARTY – VALEDICTORIAN

Lauren took 19 Advanced Placement and honors courses during her high school career and was named an AP Scholar with Honors and a National Merit Commended Student. She was the rank and section leader of the school's award-winning marching band and a member of six other music ensembles. She was also a member of the National Honor Society and New York State Math Honor Society. She was one of the captains of the varsity soccer team and played for a travel soccer team outside of school as well. In addition, Lauren received the Suffolk County Girls Soccer Academic All-County Award in the fall of 2014. She is bound for Cornell University in the fall.



JOSEPH NIVER – SALUTATORIAN

Joseph took more than 13 Advanced Placement and honors courses during the past three years in Rocky Point. As a senior, he added to this rigorous course history by taking an additional five Advanced Placement courses. He was named a 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program Commended Student and an AP Scholar with Honor. He was a member of the National Honor Society and New York State Math Honor Society, president of the Rocky Point High School Science Club, and competed on the varsity track team. He will study political science at Vassar College this fall.



BRITTANY RINALDI – EXHORTATION SPEAKER

Brittany is a dedicated scholar who enrolled in several AP courses during her high school career. She was named an Academic All-American lacrosse player and an AP Scholar with Honor. She will attend West Point, where she will also compete on the lacrosse team.



Grads Earn State Scholarships

After 13 years of hard work and dedication to achieving academic success, eight Rocky Point High School seniors were named New York State Scholarship for Academic Excellence winners. This award was bestowed upon the students based on their grades and performance on certain Regents exams.

Annually, the program provides some 8,000 scholarships to eligible New York State high school graduates. Scholarships range from \$500 to \$1,500 per year for up to five years of undergraduate study in New York State. This year's Rocky Point recipients were: Barbara Feng, Ryan Hibbard, Lauren McBrearty, Cole Sugrue, Antionette Timmerman, Tejas Tope, Michael Volpe, Muhammad Yazdanie.

Graduates Set Bar High

Over the past 13 years, the Class of 2015 has earned numerous awards and commendable accolades. Below are some statistics on this impressive group of graduates:

Post-High School Plans:

- 90% of graduates are enrolling in a four- or two-year college
- 2% will enroll in a vocational school
- 2% will join the military
- 6% will enter the workforce

Types of Diplomas Awarded:

- 15% earned an Advanced Regents with Honors diploma
- 25% earned an Advanced Regents diploma
- 4% earned a Regents with Honors diploma
- 49% earned a Regents diploma
- 7% earned a local or CDOS diploma

Next Steps for Top Ten

- Lauren McBrearty – Cornell University
- Joseph Niver – Vassar College
- Brittany Rinaldi – United States Military Academy West Point
- Shaun Martinsen – Boston College
- Muhammad Yazdanie – New York University
- Thomas Dutton – Harvard College
- Barbara Feng – St. Joseph's College, Long Island Campus
- Sara Janus – SUNY Potsdam
- Antionette Timmerman – Wagner College
- Madison Maciaszek – Binghamton University



ROCKY POINT HIGH SCHOOL

2015 Graduates

Olivia Accardi
Recep Ak
Jacob Alkon
Justin Ambroise
Caroline Anderson
Olivia Anderson
Brittany Antici
Giavanna Anzalone
Avery Atkinson
Shaelyn Attard
Brian Baer
Courtney Baldwin
William Barber V
Ece Batmaz
Serpil Bektas
Tatiana Belanich
Elgar Benavides
Nicole Berg
Samantha Blume
Madison Bohlman
Vincent Bonafede
Alex Borja
John Britten
Sabrina Brodman
Brandon Brooks
Maria Brown
Marc Bruno
Kayly Bryan
John Cacciatore
Brendan Cain
Haley Campbell
Giordanna Campo
Melinda Canning
Faith Casola
Matthew Cervello
Matthew Chiuchiolo
Brian Christiansen
Angie Cipriano
Brian Coleman
Hunter Coleman
Michael Coleman
Thomas Cook
Amanda Corbett
Emma Costa
Alana Costantini
Irena Costanzo
Sara Coto
Kayla Cotrone
Jill Countess
Isabella Crane
KeShaun Cuocco
Ashleigh Cutler
Christopher D'Agostino
Erin Damers

Nicolas Darmiento
Mikaila Davi
Athena DeCarminie
Jacquelyn DeCicco
Briana DeLuca
Anthony DeMaio
Olivia Demmer
Delenn Deszcz
Thomas DiCandia
Christian Dick
Samantha Doscher
Patrick Doyle
John Drews IV
Louis Duffy
John Durney
Thomas Dutton
Stephen Erato
Juan Escobar
George Fabricatore
Wayne Farley
Alexus Farneti
Nicholas Farruggio
Aijia Feng
Michael Ferrara
Scott Finkelstein
Bianca Finocchio
Harmony Fiori
Nicole Flatley
Courtney Flood
Adam Florio
Kyle Fox
James Freeman
Kristelle Friesen
Samantha Gallino
Dean Gandley
Gabriella Garcia
Aiyana Gillespie
Kyle Gilmartin
Brian Glavin
Alexander Gold
Jordyn Gonzalez
Adriana Greco
Nicholas Grepel
Katherine Guevara
Robert Guthy III
Christopher Hackett
Nicholas Hackett
Liam Hallen
William Hanley
Edward Hardwicke III
Alyssa Hassett
Austin-Ray Heinz
Richard Hembury
Ryan Hibbard

Austin Higley
Rebecca Holter
Jessica Hunsucker
Jacob Iberger
Alex Infantino
Brittany Jackson
Dylan Jagdeo
Sara Janus
Anna Johnson
Lawrence Juwana
Kevin Keenan
Dallas Kilroy
Carson Kimball
Sean Kind
Shannon Kirk
Brendan Kirsch
Gabrielle Kistner
Christopher Koch
Ryan Korf
Kevin Kucharczyk
Vefa Kurun
Julia Kutsch
Lisa LaFountaine
Joseph LaGala
Savanna Lake
Spenser Lake
Brianna Landisi
Rebecca Lane
Courtney Lawrence
Kameron Leardi
Brennan LeBrun
Richard LeDoux
Richard Leverock
Amber Litts
Nicholas LoConte
Emily Lonigro
John Lorandini
Sarah Losee
Aron Luebbe
Yevheniy Lyashenko
Alexandra Lynch
Brian Lynch
Cory Macellaro
Madison Maciaszek
Cianna Maffei
Rachel Magnuson
Shannon Magrane
Thomas Mammolito
Diana Manginello
Justin Maniscalco
Azriela Mansilungan
Shaun Martinsen
Andrew Masterson
James Matias

Thomas Mayr
Lauren McBrearty
Megan McCarthy
Catherine McDermott
Samantha McGee
Erin McGuire
Joseph McKenna
Liam Merrow
Erin Michelitsch
Nicholas Migliore
Matthew Mitarotondo
Zackary Modine
Daniel Moran
Brian Morcerf
Kelly Morgan
David Musantry
Anthony Nagel
Michael Natale
Sierra Navas
Taylor Neumann
Chelsea Nielsen
Joseph Niver
Nikki Nociforo
Joseph Norbury
Emily O'Connor
James O'Neill
Sean Orlando
Robert O'Rourke
Antonio Ortiz
Samuel Oster
Athena Papachristos
Alexander Peck
Rebecca Perrone
Benjamin Piekarski
Kyra Porter
George Prechtl
Adam Quaglio
Brian Reilly
Simon Renna
Brian Ricker
Chase Rieger
Brittany Rinaldi
Samantha Rivera
Nicholas Roalef
Cristina Rodriguez
Katie Rosman
Matthew Rubin
Jeffrey Rubino
Anas Sajjad
Whittany Salvatore
Taylor Salyer
Charles Samon
Kerianne Sandstrom
Rita Sanford

Jenna Sanossian
Matthew Santiago
Stephen Scheidt
Kenneth Schick
Frank Sciulla
Nicholas Seberg
Michael Settepani
Gina Sinacore
Annmarie Skula
Amanda Smith
Dana Smith
Nataliya Solovyov
Evan Sotcheff
Emilee Stevens
Jeremy Sticco
Hailey Strack
Robert Strazzeri
Cole Sugrue
Jack Sullivan
Tyler Sullivan
Carson Tagner
Eric Tercasio
Austin Thixton
Thomas Thompson
Antionette Timmerman
Tejas Tope
Steven Townsend
Monica Treutle
Estefany Umanzor
Korinne Utting
Christopher Vaden
Emma Vasquez
Joseph Vento
Jerome Vessichio
Justice Virbalis
Joseph Voight
James Vollert
Michael Volpe
Aidan Voss
Michael Wagner
Andrew Wehnke
David Weinstein
Jacob Weisman
Olivia Weiss
Kody Whitton
Nina Wienckowski
Casey Williamson
Samantha Wilson
Stephanie Wind
James Wolf
Muhammad Yazdanie
Kyle Zawaski
Keegan Ziegler

A Golden Year IN REVIEW

Throughout the school year, the Eagles accrued a number of top honors and awards. Below is a brief summary of their accolades:

Team Honors:

- Varsity cheerleading earned third place in the nation
- Varsity and JV cheerleading were named Long Island Championship Teams
- Varsity field hockey named Suffolk County Championship Team
- Varsity wrestling was named the Suffolk County Runner-up Team
- 11 teams had postseason appearances
- 21 teams were named NYS Scholar-Athlete Teams, which tied a district record
- Eight teams were named Sportsmanship Award Winning Teams

Individual Accolades:

- Tommy Dutton named a New York State Wrestling champion
- Olivia Accardi (field hockey), Jenna Sanossian (field hockey) and Anthony Cirillo (wrestling) earned All-State recognition
- Olivia Accardi (field hockey) earned All-Long Island honors
- Tommy Dutton (wrestling), Christopher O'Shea (swimming - 100m backstroke & 200m freestyle), JT Vessichio (track - 3200m & 1600m) were named county champions
- Wrestlers Tommy Dutton and Anthony Cirillo were named High School All-Americans
- Wrestlers Tommy Dutton, Jack Gold, CJ Archer and Nicholas Pagnotta were named League Champions
- More than 300 athletes earned the distinction of being a Scholar-Athlete
- 113 individual postseason accolades earned, 23 of which were All-County
- Two Coach of the Year recipients - Darren Goldstein and Anthony Volpe (wrestling)

Superior Musicians

The musical talents of Rocky Point High School's student-musicians captivated audiences on a broader scale this year, as several performing groups showcased their abilities at the High Note Music Festival at Six Flags New Jersey.

During the event, the school's ninth- and 10th-grade band, under the direction of Kelly Gatto, 11th- and 12th-grade band, under the direction of Amy Schecher, and orchestra, under the direction of Nicholas Butcher, performed two pieces for a distinguished panel of judges. Each performance was judged on tone, intonation, technique, interpretation, balance and repertoire, and all three earned the highest score of "superior."



Stars On & Off the Field

As a result of their hard work and dedication to achieving athletic and academic excellence, six Rocky Point High School spring athletic teams earned the Scholar-Athlete Team Award from the New York State Public High School Athletic Association. This honor is presented to New York State teams who possess a cumulative GPA of 90 percent or better.

A total of 21 Rocky Point teams were bestowed with this honor during the 2014-15 school year. Congratulations to the following spring teams and their coaches:

TEAM	GPA	COACH
Girls Track	95.726	John Mattia & Joseph Camarda
Girls Lacrosse	95.437	Daniel Spallina & Ryan McGovern
Boys Track	94.829	Chris Donadoni & Anthony Marchetta
Boys Tennis	94.248	James Buonconsiglio
Boys Lacrosse	92.278	Michael Bowler & Dave Murphy
Softball	90.807	Ron Kenehan & Maria Amoscato

Leaders in the Zone

In recognition of their leadership and dedication, Rocky Point Middle School eighth-grade students Michael Gunning and Brianna Carrasquillo were selected as winners of the 2015 middle school Suffolk Zone Physical Education Student Leadership Award. The students were selected for this honor by their physical education teachers.

District Mission Statement

The mission of the Rocky Point Union Free School District is to develop each child's full potential in a nurturing and supportive student-centered environment that will promote a foundation for lifelong learning.

www.rockypointschools.org



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Susan Y. Sullivan, *President*
Scott Reh, *Vice President*

Melissa Brown, *Trustee*

Sean P. Callahan, *Trustee*

Edward Casswell, *Trustee*

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Michael F. Ring