

Rocky Point Soaring

E-News Edition - Summer 2024



EAGLE PRIDE

WELCOME TO THE ROCKY POINT E-NEWSLETTER

This is the official e-newsletter for the Rocky Point Union Free School District.

Rocky Point Pride Continues

EAGLE PRIDE SOARS!

Excellence in education was in full force this spring, with many traditional events, opportunities, award ceremonies, art shows, music festivals and more taking place, and a few new ones, including our inaugural and successful Rocky Point Day.

Here are several of the exceptional highlights of the past few months. We all look forward to another year to witness and share in Rocky Point pride!

Bravo, Class of 2024!

Members of Rocky Point High School's Class of 2024 began the next stage of their lives at the district's annual commencement ceremony on June 26. The ceremony began with a welcome from Principal James Moeller, who thanked administrators, Board of Education members, educators, parents and family members for the collective guidance and support along the students' path to success.

Student Renee Ortiz sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," accompanied by the High School band conducted by Amy Schecher, which was followed by Exhortation Speaker Parker Matzen who shared the history and lessons that he learned along with his peers.

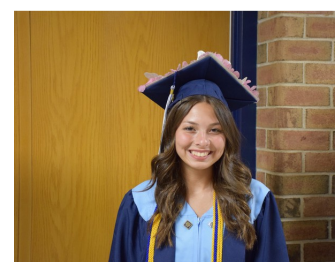
Principal Moeller applauded the Class of 2024 for their achievements in school and in the community. He tied Dr. Seuss' "Oh, the Places You'll Go" with the steps the students took to get to this point. He highlighted the inaugural Unified Basketball team as a true showing of Rocky Point community and pride and spotlighted other athletic teams, accomplishments in academics, arts and more.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Scott O'Brien shared the symbolism of Rocky Point's mascot, the eagle, noting they are not just symbols of strength and freedom but also share valuable lessons about perseverance, growing stronger and more confident until one day they fly effortlessly through the sky. He stated that just like Rocky Point's esteemed mascot, the students have embodied resilience, strength and grace throughout their educational journey.

Valedictorian Isabella Rooney and salutatorian Sofia Haviland each addressed their fellow classmates, sharing words of remembrance from their time spent in Rocky Point, as well as encouragement for their peers' new journey ahead.

Board of Education President Jessica Ward then officially presented the candidates for graduation to all those in attendance.

Check out more photos here: <http://www.rockypointufsd.org/news/article.aspx?id=177999>





Rocky Point's Top Two!

Valedictorian: Isabella Rooney

Headed to: Stony Brook University

Major: Molecular Biology

Wise words: "You will never regret hard work."

Isabella has taken more than two dozen Advanced Placement, honors and college-level courses while in Rocky Point High School. In her senior year alone, she has taken seven AP classes while

dancing and training for more than 20 hours each week. She is a member of the History Honor Society, Homecoming Float Design team, Math Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Honor Society, Science Honor Society, Students Council and Yearbook Club.

Isabella's community involvement includes participation in various back-to-school and toy drives for the Heather N. Kaplan Foundation. She is also involved in the National Art Honor Society's Mr. Gobbles Charity, the Student Council holiday clothing drive, peer tutoring with the English, Math and Science honor societies, and teaches classes at Inishfree School of Irish Dance, sharing Irish culture through community performances. She has received numerous school awards including AP Scholar with Distinction, the Mark Twain Literary and Art Contest Prose Honorable Mention as a sophomore, the Mark Twain Literary and Art Contest Poetry First Place honors as a junior and the Mark Twain Literary and Art Contest First Honors and Art First Honors as a senior. She has also been honored as a third-place recipient in the Mid-Atlantic Region in Irish Dance, placed eighth in the country in Irish Dance, 18th in the Irish Dance World championships and honorable mention in the 2023-2024 Suffolk County High School Art Exhibition.



Salutatorian: Sofia Haviland

Headed to: Boston University

Major: Chemistry

Wise words: "Relax, don't stress over the little things."

Sofia has taken advantage of many of Rocky Point's AP, honors and college-level courses, including 12 AP courses and 12 honors

courses. She is a member of the high school's Human Rights Club, where she has served as president for the past two years and is secretary of the National Science Honor Society. She is a member of the History Honor Society, National English Honor Society, National Honor Society and the New York State Math Honor Society. She is also a member of the school's pit orchestra and the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of New York. She has worked as a pool attendant for Aquatech Management of Long Island and helps at community events, including



being a volunteer at the annual Prom Impact organized by Suffolk County Association of Women Police and a volunteer at STEAM nights, both of which she has been involved in since grade 10.

Sofia has been honored with a number of awards including the 46th Annual Literary and Art Contest Prose Honorable Mention, AP Scholar with Distinction, Excellent Designation for NCTE Achievement Awards for Writing, National Hispanic Recognition Award, National Rural and Small Town Recognition Award, Principal's List, and Commended Student in the National Merit Scholarship Program. She has also been selected to both the Long Island String Festival Association Division III Orchestra and the Suffolk County Music Educators Association Division III Orchestra.

Athletes Commit to College!

Eleven students will begin their college careers at some of the country's leading universities. Mr. Jonathon Rufa, the district's director of health, physical education, intramurals and athletics, lauded them at a commemorative college commitment day.

The Rocky Point school community congratulates the following students for their dedication to the pursuit of higher education and the continuation of an active lifestyle while engaging in college sports.

Ariana Amato, cheerleading, Long Island University
Matthew Armstrong, soccer, SUNY Old Westbury
Jack Ferrie, soccer, Suffolk County Community College
Jeremy Graham, baseball, Hudson Valley Community College
Jack Hopkins, baseball, University of Mount Saint Vincent
Julia Koprowski, basketball, SUNY Farmingdale State College
Makayla Style, dance, University of South Carolina
Katelyn Tilmont, soccer, SUNY Buffalo State University
Riley Trentowski, cross-country/track, East Stroudsburg University
Ella Velazquez, cheerleading, Hofstra University
Alexandra Viera, wrestling, Sacred Heart University





STANYS Honors

Rocky Point High School senior Abigail Glennon and science teacher Mark Brienza attended the Annual Suffolk STANYS (Science Teachers Association of New York State) award ceremony where Abigail was recognized as an Outstanding High School Science Student. The RPHS Science Department selected Abby for this honor based on a review of 9-12 science performance and engagement with upper-level science content and/or research.



Leadership Award

Senior Avery Ward was recognized by the Suffolk County High School Principal Association. Avery was the recipient of a Principal Leadership Award, one of only seven seniors in Suffolk County lauded for the prestigious honor. Avery was honored at the Senior Leadership Luncheon at Chateau at Coindre Hall.



Art Accolades

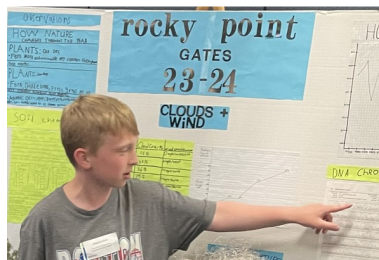
Senior Katelyn Fish was honored with a Juror's Award for her artwork that was displayed at the LIU Post campus in Brookville. The exhibit, "the 19th annual Advanced Visions: High School Artists of Excellence," offered a glimpse into the innovative artwork created by students in upper-level art courses. Her acrylic artwork, "Betty," depicts her grandmother's battle with Alzheimer's disease.



Creativity is Contagious!

The 46th Annual Mark Twain Literary and Art Contest Awards Ceremony was held at the High School. The contest gives students a forum and an opportunity to share their writing and artistic talents.

"Creative individuals help us see the world in a more beautiful, interesting and exhilarating way," co-adviser Christine Blume said. "Our many creative student winners will be the next generation to



Students Present at BNL Symposium

Sixth grade GATES students participated in the Brookhaven National Laboratory Open Space Stewardship Program Symposium. Rocky Point Middle School science teacher Mrs. Audra Mammia has been the teacher mentor since its inception 17 years ago.

Students Blake Barth, Kristopher Citarella, Grayson Ernst, Sofia Fedurina, Lucas Finamore, Collin Fishman,



AP Capstone Medal Honorees

Seniors Simone Carmody, Jacob Donovan, Sofia Haviland, Erin Lynch, Emma Maher, Parker Matzen and Isabella Rooney were honored with AP Seminar Scholar medals by AP Capstone program teachers Rachel Hludzinski and Jessica Sciarrone.

The two-year diploma program requires students to complete AP Seminar and AP Research

inspire art, movies, music, fashion, books, and even architecture, making our world a more beautiful, meaningful place to live.”

Congratulations, students, for your outstanding artistic and literary achievement. We encourage you to continue to create, write, draw, paint and explore, making the world a more beautiful, inspiring place to live.



Music Superior Ratings

Rocky Point High School’s chorus, under the direction of Ms. Jessica Spitz; orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Nicholas Butcher; 9th-10th grade band, under the direction of Mr. Vincent Ragona; and 11th-12th grade band, under the direction of Ms. Amy Schecher, all participated in the High Notes Music Festival this spring.

The students performed and were adjudicated by music educators familiar with the abilities of school-aged musicians. The adjudicators listened for the execution of the skills and techniques the students learn and practice each day, including breath control, intonation, phrasing, dynamics, attacks, releases,

Carter Ford, JP Harris, Salvatore Lasurdo, Gianna Malvetti, Jayden Marciano, Grace Moriarty, Jacob Mulhare, Connor Neligon, Kristopher Ocasio, Shane Piccolo, Meridith Schmidt, Enza Troise, Giulietta Troise, Jackson Wright, Mina Zapata and Jack Zipfel conducted field investigations and presented posters at the symposium. Rocky Point’s students were the youngest presenters of the students from 16 schools.



Music Festival Accolades

Rocky Point Middle School’s 8th Grade Chorus, under the direction of Mrs. Emily Farrell; 8th Grade Band, under the direction of Ms. Kyra Kenwood; and 8th Grade Orchestra, under the direction of Mrs. Meghan Walter, all received Superior ratings at the Long Island Music Festival. The event provided the students with an exciting and fun educational opportunity.

Despite being a group of individuals with varying degrees of musical ability, the festival brought them together as a team striving for a particular goal. They were ecstatic and extremely proud to have achieved success together.

to be eligible for the AP Capstone certificate or the AP diploma. The AP Capstone courses are project-based and evaluate the students’ mastery of skills through group projects, presentations and individual essays completed throughout the year.



Gold from NYSSMA

Joseph A. Edgar Intermediate School’s 5th Grade Select Chorus “High Notes” participated in the New York State School Music Association Major Organization Evaluation Festival.

Led by JAE Chorus Director Mr. Craig Knapp, the students performed three songs and were evaluated by two certified NYSSMA Major Organization adjudicators (with over 70 combined years of teaching experience). The students were evaluated in eight categories: tone, intonation, balance, technique, accuracy/execution, diction, interpretation, and influencing factors. The adjudicators provided written and oral feedback on these

diction, balance, tone, posture, attentiveness to the director and concert etiquette.

Rocky Point came away with Swept Superior, the highest possible rating awarded.

categories, informing the chorus what they did well, and offered recommendations for further developing their skills.

Inaugural Unified Basketball Team

The inaugural Unified Basketball team of 19 Rocky Point High School students had a spectacular season of camaraderie and competition. Under the guidance of the Special Olympics and supported by Section XI, unified athletes (students with disabilities) are paired with unified partners (students without disabilities) on the court at the same time, providing an equal opportunity for all to contribute to the success of the team through their unique skills and qualities.



IMP(P)ACT Award Recipients

Congratulations to Rocky Point's Inaugural IMP(P)ACT Award winners Marianne Barber, Betty Loughran, Jennifer Meschi, Raffaella Nash, Amy Schecher, Susan Sullivan and Mark Yashowitz for your generous contributions to the education of all Rocky Point School District students!

Tenure for Educators

The Rocky Point School District congratulates seven educators for their dedication and contributions to District students. The following were honored for tenure at the May Board of Education meeting by Board of Education President Jessica Ward: speech language teacher Jocelyn Bertone (Aug. 31); ELA/ENL 7-12 teacher Nicole Bongiorno (Aug. 31); speech teacher Gianna Hamel (April 11); ENL teacher Patricia Hancock (March 7); elementary teacher Julianne Warren (Oct. 19); Frank J. Carasiti Elementary School Principal Jason Westerlund (June 30); and ENL teacher James Williams (Aug. 31).



Moving On Up!

Celebrations were held throughout June, as FJC second graders, JAE fifth graders and Rocky Point Middle School eighth graders had parties, bagel breakfasts and yearbook signings prior to assembling before proud parents, teachers and district administrators for their respective school's moving-up ceremonies.



Congratulations to our youngest Eagles!



Readathon Success

The Rocky Point school community once again contributed to the overwhelming success of JAE's readathon to support the Madagascar Ankizy Fund. Fourth graders celebrated the readathon outdoors under the trees with board games and classmates to honor this 26-year-old tradition that has raised money that was used to build The Rocky Point School in Madagascar in 2008. Funds raised help cover teacher salaries; training in basic health, hygiene and nutrition; maintenance of clean water wells and

distribution of mosquito nets, among other expenses.

Youngest Students Choose a Career

FJC and JAE celebrated the importance of education and choosing a career path during College and Career Week. Students shared their excitement for the future by participating in spirit days – wearing Rocky Point gear for “Your Future Starts NOW!” day;



wearing red, white and blue or camouflage for "Be All You Can Be!" day; donning college/university gear for "I'm Geared Up for College!" Day; wearing bright colors for "Your Future Is Bright!" day and dressing up to share what they would like to have as a career for the final day of "Career Day!"

Channels of Communication - Stay Connected With Us!

District Website

District Facebook Page

District Instagram Page



Rocky Point Union Free School District

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Website: <http://www.rockypointufsd.org>

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Our School News

