

Albany High: unparalleled support for unlimited opportunity

As the Albany High School Class of 2018 prepares for the next steps in school and in life, six of its members recently took time to reflect on their high school experiences.

For these students, Albany High's unique community served as a canvas of possibilities limited only by their own dreams. They described a school filled with caring staff who helped guide them along their respective paths.

The teachers and staff at Albany High "become your family," said Max Heller, the top-ranked student in the Class of 2018.

"They are so incredibly caring and will really push you to succeed, but also be there to support you every step of the way," said Heller, who will attend Brown University to study computer science.

Erin Lippitt expressed the same sentiment – but on an even larger scale. She



College-bound seniors (L-R): Immanuel Williams, Erin Lippitt, Robert Quaye, Max Heller, Harry Zay and Renee Wright.

found that same level of support throughout her entire academic career in the City School District of Albany.

"I've been a district student my whole life, and I really give the credit for the success I've had so far to my Albany education," she said.

"By my sophomore year I knew I wanted to study astrophysics at Yale, and Albany High has helped me realize that

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Middle school discussions move forward

The City School District of Albany Board of Education has narrowed the list of possible middle-school options as it plans for the most effective way to provide equitable access to programs and opportunities for all students in grades 6-8.

At its May 17 meeting, the board eliminated three options that involved converting Arbor Hill Elementary School to a middle school. All four remaining options would keep Arbor Hill as an elementary school.

Three of the options the board still is considering would use Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence and North Albany Academy as middle schools.

The fourth option would use North Albany as a middle school and convert O'Neal to the new location of the Albany International Center, which serves refugee and immigrant students.

That program, new this school year, currently is at North Albany.

North Albany's elementary students would move to Arbor Hill in all scenarios that the board still is considering; the board also is evaluating transportation options as part of these scenarios.

Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School and William S. Hackett Middle School would remain middle schools in all scenarios.

The board plans to complete the evaluation and selection process in the fall. That will include public meetings at potentially affected schools and other opportunities to allow families and community members to provide input and feedback.

Any building project the board approves then would require voter approval.

The district is planning for a public vote in May 2019. With a positive outcome, the new facilities would be ready for the 2023-24 school year (when this year's kindergartners are heading to sixth grade).

In the meantime, there will be no changes to elementary and middle-school configuration for the 2018-19 school year.

The district started planning for long-term middle-school enrollment and facilities needs in 2015 to address its growing enrollment. The current middle schools – Hackett, Myers and O'Neal – don't have enough space to serve all students in grades 6-8.

The board began its review process in December with three options; a feasibility study presented to the board in April identified seven potential scenarios. The district's most recent demographic study, also completed in April, estimated that total enrollment in grades 6-8 will grow by about 235 more students in the coming years.

There are about 250 sixth-grade students in elementary schools now, providing inequities in access to programs and opportunities. One such example: sixth-graders in elementary schools get 30 minutes less instruction per day than sixth-graders in middle school – more than 2½ weeks less over the course of a school year.

To read more or learn about opportunities to comment on plans as they unfold, please visit the Middle School Configuration section at www.albanyschools.org.

Student achievement

Athleticism and inclusion in a new team

Albany High School's newest athletic team had a whirlwind debut season this spring, finishing second in the Section II Unified Basketball Tournament in May.

Unified sports teams are composed of students with intellectual disabilities (athletes) and students without intellectual disabilities (partners). Albany High's 16-member unified basketball team is co-ed and made up of students in grades 9-12.

Sophomore Jasmine McCall never played a sport and joined the unified team as a motivation to exercise. She scores most of the time she shoots, but playing in front of a crowd makes her anxious and so does the thought that other players might be better.

Taking a deep breath helps.

"Sometimes I want to quit," she admitted. "But I can't because the team depends on me."

Junior Paul Criscione plays varsity soccer for Albany High. He learned the school was forming a unified basketball team and decided to join as a partner.

"I like helping out kids who are unable to play on a regular sports team," he said. "This is a very special thing because they get to have that experience, and I like being a part of that."

Junior Ondia Logan decided to become a partner after a youth actions summit raised her awareness about being inclusive. She's also a "Best Buddy" at Albany High.

"They're a very talented group of kids," she said of her teammates. "I'm the one who's not very athletic – I'm in the school



Albany High's newest team, unified basketball, fared well its rookie season.

band – but they make me feel like a superstar of the team. There's no judgement."

Senior Iazel Royal plays forward on the team. Basketball is his favorite sport and he comes from a family of athletes. He takes his position seriously, but always has a smile or joke for a teammate.

"Teamwork goes a long way," Royal said. "We cheer each other on. If you miss a shot, you do it over. If I fall I get right back up again. We go with it."

Teacher Stacy Spilman led the effort to set up the team at Albany High, and she serves as an assistant coach to Nick Davey, also a teacher at Albany High. Davey's assistants also include school counselor Kristy Koldis, teacher Matt Moore and home school coordinator Deon Thomas.

"Unified sports give every player an opportunity to contribute to the success of his or her team through their unique individual skills," Spilman said. "Including all students is the most conducive way to break down stereotypes and build relationships, and that is what makes unified sports such an amazing experience for all."

'For the sake of our kids'

First class nears completion in unique teacher prep program

This July, 15 aspiring educators will become members of the first graduating class to earn master's degrees in teaching thanks to a unique partnership between the City School District of Albany and New York University.

The district began collaborating last year with NYU's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development on the Embedded Master of Arts in Teaching (EMAT) program.

The goals of the partnership are to prepare high-quality teachers, expand the racial and gender diversity of the district's middle- and high-school teaching force, and cultivate the talents of people already working in district schools.

The program is aligned with the district's strategic goals of closing achievement gaps, increasing graduation rates



Courtney Williams, right, worked with student Davianna Howard in a hands-on lesson on May 30 at Abrookin Career and Technical Center. Williams is one of 15 people who will receive a master's degree from New York University in July, part of a unique collaboration between the college and the City School District of Albany.

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From the superintendent On leadership and learning



Kaweeda G. Adams
Superintendent

Greetings! Thank you so very much for a wonderful first year serving as your superintendent. I had lots of support and wish everyone a fantastic summer. I'm so very excited to continue our work together in the 2018-19 school year.

The City School District of Albany has an abundance of leadership potential within its ranks, both in students and staff. One of the ways we can and will improve student achievement across the board is to cultivate and celebrate those leaders and their work.

You'll find examples of that varied leadership throughout this newsletter.

Each of the seemingly different stories has a common thread: The people in them believe deeply in our community, our schools and our students, and have taken the initiative to immerse themselves in knowledge and go to great lengths to make a difference.

All are leaders.

John F. Kennedy once said, "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

I am a firm believer that we need to be willing to keep learning if we are to be effective leaders, whether we run a school district, a classroom, a household or a business.

That's why the district is nurturing leaders by providing district-wide training designed to improve teachers' ability to tailor classroom instruction to meet individual student needs – known in the business as "differentiated instruction."

It's also why the district is focused on "culturally relevant" teaching practices.

One of our district's greatest strengths is its diversity. Therefore, we are teaching faculty and staff to tailor their communication and instruction styles using strategies that families use to teach children life skills and basic concepts before they come to school. For example, many cultures have strong oral traditions, so using a song or game to teach an idea could be a culturally relevant teaching tool. Think "Schoolhouse Rock," but on a far greater scale.

Leadership has little to do with hierarchy, job position, age, experience or personality. Rather, it involves the ability to see past perceived differences and work together toward a common goal, which is what Albany High School's new unified basketball team did in its successful debut season (*see page 1 to learn more about the team*).

Our school district has so much to offer. I am committed to ensuring that our schools are places that cultivate leaders among students, staff, teachers and administrators. I look forward to working with families and our community partners to help bring this to pass.

One final note: None of our initiatives, leadership or otherwise, would be possible without our community's support. I want to thank Albany voters for overwhelmingly approving the 2018-19 school budget on May 15. The 72 percent approval reflects the fact that our community believes in us, and we will continue to work hard to sustain their faith.

Have a great summer.



**CAPITAL
education**

Capital Education is published by the City School District of Albany.

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Voices

Q: Tell us about the most interesting thing you learned in school this year.



The most important academic lesson I learned this year was that you're responsible for the choices you make with your education. This means if you're worrying about the wrong thing and not your education, you're not going to be successful the way you want to be. You need to come to class prepared and follow the directions instead of being rude, starting drama or being on your phone. This means you want to make good choices for your education and you want to be successful.

– Nas'Ziya Davis, eighth grade
Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence



The most interesting thing I learned this year was dividing decimal numbers. I used to think you could only divide whole numbers, but it turns out you can divide decimals with decimals, and decimals with whole numbers. We built our own race cars this year, and I needed to divide decimals in order to get the exact measurements right. You wouldn't want your car to drive crooked and hit a wall! You'd also need to know how to divide decimals in case you went out to dinner with a few friends and needed to split the check. If you don't know how to divide decimals, you could be stuck paying way too much and nobody likes when that happens!

– Logan Ferro, fifth grade
Eagle Point Elementary School



One of the most interesting things I learned about was ancient Egypt and King Tut. I saw inside King Tut's tomb. I also found that division in math was fun because you can split groups to find out the quotient. There's certain ways to divide, like split up and down and left to right. One of the most important things I learned was to work hard and never give up because I am trying my best to be the best. I am on point and I am an AVID student.

– Keith Gillespie, third grade
North Albany Academy



I've learned so much that it would be impossible to just choose a single thing to talk about. I have learned many things such as slope and how to handle exponents. In social studies, we learned about different time periods and the impact they had on the world today.

Most importantly, I learned things that can't be taught, like how to be a good person and how to build a personality of your own.

– Mohammed Kanneh, eighth grade
William S. Hackett Middle School



The thing I learned is that I can feel like I can be myself with teachers and students. I feel happy when I am in Anime Club with people who have similar interests to me. Some of my teachers make me feel like I can talk to them about anything. I get to make new friends and I know they will accept me. Being near them and going to Anime Club makes me feel happy and safe.

– Joella Pratt, junior
Albany High School



The most interesting thing I learned this year is what to consider when choosing my friends. Earlier this year, I was friends with misbehaving students. Whenever we were partnered up, we would talk and not do our work. This caused my grades to go down, so I decided to unfriend these students. I realized that my grades are more important to me than some friends that don't give a hoot about me and my life. I eventually found a new friend. She is kind, funny and tells jokes that are hilarious. We do art projects together and are in the same clubs. When we are partners, we always finish our work. This is the kind of friend that I want, need and will always have.

– Rihanna A. Roldan, fifth grade
Giffen Memorial Elementary School



There are many interesting things that I learned this year from culinary and forensics, and from my music club. But the most interesting thing was the different knife cuts that help improve my knife skills in culinary, like mincing and dicing, which helped me perfect my cuts and cutting speed.

– Rameke Thomas, sophomore
Albany High School



This year in Mrs. Oertel's class we have been reading a book called "A Mango-Shaped Space." It is about a girl named Mia Winchell and her life with synesthesia. Synesthesia is a syndrome that allows people to see colors for different things like words, numbers and sounds (in the story Mia can see all of these as colors). For example, some synesthetes could perceive the letter "O" as blue and the number "9" as metallic red. Some synesthetes could also see different shapes or colors when they hear a certain sound. We have read a lot of books this year but this was the most touching of them all. My teachers and I suggest that you read this book with your family.

– Tessa Weklar, fifth grade
Albany School of Humanities (ASH)

Our vision, mission and goals

In the fall of 2017, the City School District of Albany developed the following vision statement, mission statement and goals under the leadership of Superintendent Kaweeda G. Adams. These values guide the district's work in all areas as we work together to raise achievement for each of our approximately 9,500 students.

Our vision

The City School District of Albany will be a district of excellence with caring relationships and engaging learning experiences that provide equitable opportunities for all students to reach their potential.

Our mission

The mission of the City School District of Albany is to work in partnership with our diverse community to engage every learner in a robust educational program designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for success.

Our goals

- Increase student achievement in early literacy, close the achievement gaps and increase graduation rate by focusing on the unique factors that impact student success.
- Enhance the delivery of quality instruction by providing our teachers and staff with high-level, meaningful professional development to promote student growth and proficiency.

- Build our leadership capacity and increase accountability through ongoing professional growth opportunities designed to improve effective leadership in our organization.
- Empower families to support the success of their children through relationships of mutual respect and clear and effective communication.
- Partner with our diverse community, including local businesses and community leaders, to engage and empower stakeholders in the wrap-around services needed to support our students.



Hall of Fame welcomes six new members

The City School District of Albany Hall of Fame will mark its 10th anniversary this fall with the addition of six new members. Please read on to learn more about the members of the Class of 2018.

Gertrude “Betsy” Jackson-Peace, *Albany High Class of '80*. A sprinter and middle-distance standout at Albany High, Jackson-Peace earned a track scholarship to Howard University. She began coaching track with at-risk youth during college. After she graduated with honors from Howard, she began working as a physical therapist and continued coaching track for young people in Washington, D.C. She still does both today.

Elander Lewis, *Albany High Class of '88*. Lewis was the leader of one of the finest basketball teams in the history of Albany High – the “High Slamma Jamma” teams of the mid-1980s. He averaged better than 22 points per game for the Falcons’ 1986 Section II championship team, one of the best in school history. Lewis was among the top national recruits as a high school senior and went on to play at St. John’s University in the heyday of the Big East and later at Virginia Commonwealth.

The late **Henry Linnett**, *Albany High Class of '36*. During nearly three decades teaching in the district, Linnett was a football coach at the former Philip Schuyler High School, a basketball coach at William S. Hackett Junior High School (now Hackett Middle School) and a tennis coach at Albany High. After his 1991 retirement, he remained active in the area’s tennis and health club scenes until his 2015 death.

Joseph Markham, *Teacher and longtime administrator*. Markham began teaching science at Giffen Memorial Elementary School in 1962. He spent most of his 30-plus years

in the school district as the director of child accounting and guidance, where he oversaw school guidance counselors, social workers and psychologists along with other student support services. He also worked directly with local and state officials to better serve students with disabilities, homeless students and vulnerable families. He retired in 1993.

Marc H. Silverman, *Albany High Class of '99*. Valedictorian of his Albany High class, Silverman went on to graduate summa cum laude from Yale University in 2003 and Yale Law School in 2006. After two prestigious clerkships under federal judges, he joined the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Connecticut in 2010 as an assistant attorney. He also became deputy chief of the office’s appeals unit in 2014.

L. Lloyd Stewart, *Albany High School Class of '68*. An exceptional student-athlete while at Albany High, Stewart went on to study at Columbia University and the University at Albany. In 1984, he founded Stewart Associates, a lobbying and consulting firm, and he was identified as New York’s first registered independent African-American lobbyist. He also is the author of two history books. (*Read more about Stewart on page 8.*)

The district established the Hall of Fame in 2009 to recognize accomplished graduates, exceptional district staff people and community members whose efforts support Albany’s public schools. The members of the Class of 2018 will be inducted on Friday, Sept. 21 as part of the annual Hall of Fame-Homecoming Weekend activities.

Visit www.albanyschools.org to learn more about each 2018 Hall of Famer as well as the first nine classes of inductees. Nominations for the Class of 2019 are welcome through Feb. 1, 2019.

Summer school info

The City School District of Albany offers summer school programs for students in elementary school, middle school and high school. The district also offers specialized programs for students with disabilities.

Many of these programs are designed to help students meet the state’s rising academic standards and graduation requirements. Breakfast and lunch are provided at every location.

Transportation is provided for most

programs serving students entering kindergarten-grade 8. Transportation also is provided for high school students that live more than 1.5 miles away from the summer school location.

Please note that summer school may be held in a different location than your child’s regular school. Visit www.albanyschools.org to learn about specific times, dates and locations of each program.

Senior reflections

(continued from page 1)

dream,” said Lippitt, who will do just that when she heads to New Haven, Conn.

Harry Zay arrived in Albany from Burma in his sophomore year. The supportive and welcoming nature of Albany High’s vibrant and diverse community helped set him at ease upon his arrival, he said.

“When I first came here, I didn’t know what to do, but I had my goal of where I wanted to be, and the teachers saw that and took me under their wings,” said Zay, who will study public health at Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.

Reneé Wright recounted the student-led demonstrations in March following the school shootings in Parkland, Fla., as an example of the support she found during her time at Albany High.

Staff kept her and her classmates safe while allowing them to express themselves, make their own voices heard and develop not just as learners, but as leaders.

“If there is anything Albany High has taught me, it’s how to be a truly well-rounded student,” said Wright, who is

off to SUNY Brockport to study biology.

Along with the dedicated teaching staff, the diverse student body and programs at Albany High were the critical factors of Immanuel Williams’ experience. Williams, who noted the school’s theater program in particular, will double major in art and psychology at Bard College.

He describes his time at Albany High as truly eye-opening.

“I found myself,” Williams said. “I discovered who I am and how to push myself academically and emotionally to pursue the career I want in life.”

Another common thread was the misconceptions many outsiders have about Albany High.

The sincerity of their Falcon Pride was evident as they dismantled rumors about the school, praising it as a world full of opportunities that they wouldn’t trade.

“As much as you put in is what you’ll get out,” said Robert Quaye, who will attend University of Pittsburgh. “I’m going to cherish these four years forever.”

2018 Albany High grads admitted to top schools

Princeton and Yale. Geneseo and Stony Brook. Howard and Spelman. The list goes on.

Members of the Albany High School Class of 2018 have been accepted at

nearly 180 public and private colleges and universities throughout the country. Check out the schools below – and congratulations to all of this year’s graduates!

Adelphi University	Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	SUNY Genesee Community College
Adventist University of Health Sciences	McGill University	SUNY Geneseo
Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences	Miami University	SUNY Herkimer County Community College
American Musical and Dramatic Academy	Middlebury College	SUNY Hudson Valley Community College
College and Conservatory of the Performing Arts	Monmouth University	SUNY Mohawk Valley Community College
American University	Morgan State University	SUNY Oneonta
Andrews University	Mount Holyoke College	SUNY Onondaga Community College
Bard College	Mount Saint Mary College	SUNY Oswego
Bay Path University	Nazareth College	SUNY Plattsburgh
Berklee College of Music	New England College	SUNY Polytechnic Institute
Boston University	New Hampshire Institute of Art	SUNY Potsdam
Bowie State University	New York Institute of Technology	SUNY Purchase
Broward College	Norfolk State University	SUNY Schenectady County Community College
Brown University	Northeastern University	SUNY Stony Brook University
Bryant and Stratton Business Institute, Albany	The Ohio State University	SUNY Sullivan County Community College
Castleton University	Pace University, New York City	SUNY Tompkins Cortland Community College
Cazenovia College	Pace University, Westchester	Temple University
Champlain College	Pacific Union College	Tidewater Community College
Clarion University	Paul Smith’s College	Tufts University
Clark Atlanta University	Pennsylvania State University	Union College
Coastal Carolina University	Pratt Institute	University of Bridgeport
Colgate University	Princeton University	University of Central Florida
College of the Atlantic	Providence College	University of Colorado at Boulder
College of the Holy Cross	Queens College, City University of New York	University of Connecticut
College of New Rochelle	Quinnipiac University	University of Hartford
The College of Saint Rose	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Maine
Cornell University	Roberts Wesleyan College	University of Maryland
D’Youville College	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Delaware State University	Russell Sage College	University of Massachusetts, Lowell
Dillard University	Rutgers University, New Brunswick	University of New England
Drexel University	Sage College of Albany	University of New Hampshire
Eastern Connecticut State University	Saint Michael’s College	University of New Haven
Eckerd College	Sarah Lawrence College	University of Pittsburgh
Elmira College	Seton Hall University	University of Rhode Island
Emerson College	Shippensburg University	University of Rochester
Endicott College	Siena College	University of the Sciences, Philadelphia
Fairfield University	Smith College	The University of Scranton
Five Towns College	Southern Illinois University, Carbondale	The University of Tampa
Fordham University	Southwestern Adventist University	University of Vermont
Gannon University	Spelman College	Utica College
George Mason University	Springfield College	Vassar College
The George Washington University	St. John Fisher College	Villanova University
Gordon College	St. John’s University, Queens Campus	Virginia Tech
Green Mountain College	SUNY Adirondack Community College	Wagner College
Hartwick College	SUNY Albany	Washington Adventist University
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	SUNY Alfred	Wells College
Hofstra University	SUNY Alfred State	Wesleyan University
Howard University	SUNY Binghamton	Western New England University
Illinois Institute of Technology	SUNY Brockport	Williams College
Iona College	SUNY Broome County Community College	Xavier University
Johnson & Wales University	SUNY Buffalo	Yale University
Johnson State College	SUNY Buffalo State	
Keuka College	SUNY Canton	
King’s College	SUNY Cobleskill	
La Sierra University	SUNY Cortland	
Le Moyne College	SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry	
Lehigh University	SUNY Delhi	
Liberty University	SUNY Fredonia	
Long Island University, Brooklyn	SUNY Fulton-Montgomery Community College	
Manhattan College		
Manhattanville College		
Maria College		
Marist College		
Maritime College		
Marymount Manhattan College		

WE CHOOSE



Members of the Albany High School robotics team and their robot Mark Cube-N competed in a world robotics championship in Detroit in April. Although their 3-7 finish wasn't what the team hoped for, Shark Tank investor Mark Cuban got wind of his robot namesake and urged them via email to "keep it going." The Falcon robot was so named because one of its competition tasks was to pick up and move cubes shaped like milk crates. Here, sophomore Derek Dalton tinkered with the robot before it headed to the competition floor.



On May 11, Albany High School held its English as A New Language Potluck dinner, welcoming students and families from Albany International Center and across the City School District of Albany. Pictured celebrating the evening with a selfie are (L-R): Albany High freshman Anika Huda, junior Faria Nazim, freshman Rebeca Huda, teacher Diann Scialdo and senior Arifa Huda.



A group of Albany High School seniors donned authentic Dutch attire and took part in the city's annual ceremonial street scrubbing May 11, helping Mayor Kathy Sheehan kick off Tulip Festival. The students are (L-R): Sarha Smith-Moyo, Ashma Thapa, Laura Marin, Juliette Geraghty Gail Cabahug, Abigail Scheuermann, Erin Lippitt and Calena Rodriguez. Thanks to the City Club of Albany, which provides the Dutch clothing, caps and wooden shoes!



More than 300 students and families turned out at Philip Schuyler Achievement Academy's Community Health Fair on May 24 to take part in family activities, eat dinner together, learn important health and wellness information, play games, practice yoga and much more! First-grader Kira Vaughan used a giant toothbrush and set of teeth to demonstrate her know-how of proper tooth-brushing.



Members of the Cosmetology Club at Arbor Hill Elementary School turned out May 5 to help at the annual Mother's Day Spa Day at Albany High School's Abrookin Career and Technical Center. They assisted high school cosmetology students in providing a range of spa services to community members. The aspiring Arbor Hill cosmetologists are (L-R): Elana Temple, A'Niyah Campbell, adviser Maxine Lawson, Kimaya Tatum, Melissa Williams and Mnemosyne Conyers.



Despite temperatures more fitting for Thanksgiving Day than Arbor Day, fifth-graders at Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST) on April 18 planted 36 trees at their school and William S. Hackett Middle School. They were joined by a host of community partners in an effort spearheaded by Albany Goes Green, an initiative coordinated by the Albany Fund for Education with the help of local and state agencies and community groups. TOAST student Al Hasan Khaleel is pictured prepping the dirt for a new planting.



North Albany Academy fifth-graders Mayzon Johnson (front) and Mohamed Abdelkarim sprinted to the finish line during the Police Athletic League (PAL) Track Meet on May 17. Held on Albany High School's track and field, the annual event gives students in fifth and sixth grade from across the city the opportunity to compete with their peers, practice their sportsmanship and proudly represent their schools.



Kindergarteners Elijah Harrison, left, and Mason Daley perused the shelves for their favorite titles at New Scotland Elementary School's Scholastic Book Fair in April.



Biographies sprang off the page and came to life during Eagle Point Elementary School's Spring Literacy Celebration on May 22. Pictured as some of their favorite historical icons are (L-R): fourth-graders Zoe Crawford, Ashley Albritton, Jacob Gardner and Adeline Noble.

ALBANY SCHOOLS



Montessori Magnet School kindergartener Molly Kraus proudly showed off her artwork on May 4 at the Fifth Annual Elementary Art Show hosted by our community partners at the Albany Institute of History & Art. The show exclusively featured artwork by students from all 12 elementary buildings in the City School District of Albany.



William S. Hackett seventh-grader Andre Johnson pulled band teacher Ed Newell aside for a commemorative photo after their spring concert on May 9. Aside from the show-stopping performance, the concert was a heartfelt tribute to Newell, who will retire in June after nearly 34 years teaching in the City School District of Albany.



Every student and staff member at Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence had the opportunity to enjoy a cool treat May 11 thanks to our community partners at SEFCU. SEFCU purchased an ice cream for every member of the O'Neal community to show its support for our educators on the final day of Teacher Appreciation Week. Savoring their ice cream are (L-R): teacher Janet Mangold and sixth-graders Elijah Edwards and Wamedh Othman.

Second-grader gives lessons on living with cystic fibrosis

Delaware Community School second-grader CJ Motta got a chance to be the teacher one day this spring, giving his classmates some first-hand lessons on what it's like to live with cystic fibrosis.

CJ's class had been reading up on the disease, which causes a thick, sticky buildup of mucus in the lungs and other organs, making it difficult to breathe. On May 4, Delaware showed its support for CJ by wearing purple and holding a school-wide assembly about cystic fibrosis.

CJ, his mom Tracy Van Hattum, and Albany Medical Center nurse Leanne DeRosa told students about how the disease affects CJ and others living with it.

CJ's classmates breathed through narrow straws to get a sense of what it's like to struggle to breathe. They also learned that people living with cystic fibrosis need to be careful about germs because they are at high risk for infections. That's why CJ has his own pencils and



Delaware Community School second-grader CJ Motta gave a lesson about cystic fibrosis to his classmates May 4 with help from his mom, Tracy Van Hattum.

school supplies, and school staff cleans his space frequently with anti-bacterial wipes.

CJ also demonstrated his "airway clearance" device, an inflatable vest that vibrates to loosen the gunk in his lungs. CJ has to use the vest up to an hour at a time, twice a day, in addition to taking numerous medications and using other devices to help him breathe.

Albany High inducts 93 into honor society

A total of 93 high-achieving juniors were inducted into Albany High School's Arista Chapter of the National Honor Society on May 8, and 25 of those students received class awards.

To be eligible for National Honor Society, students must maintain an overall academic average of 89.5 or higher.

The National Honor Society was founded in 1921 to help create a better-rounded student who would be willing to put his or her talents to work serving others in society. Albany High's Arista Chapter was formed in 1957 and admitted 15 students in its first group of inductees.

Visit www.albanyschools.org for a



Albany High junior Ondia Logan, left, was one of 93 juniors inducted into National Honor Society on May 8. Her pal Darryl White, also an Albany High junior, is at right.

complete list of this year's inductees – the largest group in more than a decade! – and class award winners.

Busing info for next school year

City School District of Albany families that moved during the school year or have children changing schools need to fill out and return school bus transportation forms for the 2018-19 school year.

Applications are due by **Friday, Aug. 17** in order to assure that your child will have transportation on the first day of school, which is Sept. 6 for prekindergarten-grade 9 and Sept. 7 for grades 10-12.

You can download an application in the Transportation section at www.albanyschools.org or pick up a copy at any school. Applications also are available at the district's Central Registration Office or Transportation Department, both located at the Harriet Gibbons Student Services Center at 75 Watervliet Ave.

The district transports all eligible students – those who live 1.5 miles or more from their schools – either by yellow bus or Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA).

For more information, or if you have questions about whether or not you need to complete an application, please visit our Transportation section online or call the Transportation Department at (518) 475-6170.

Get the app!

In partnership with our yellow bus provider, First Student Inc., the City School District of Albany offers a bus-tracking and transportation app.

FirstView lets you track the location and direction of your child's bus, its schedule for the day, and times for school arrivals and departures. You'll know when the bus gets to school in the morning and leaves in the afternoon.

To download the app, please visit www.firstviewapp.com. It's free from the Apple Store or Google Play Store. Just search FirstView!

The end of an era at ASH

This year's Big Jump marked the end of an era for Albany School of Humanities (ASH).

For 21 years at ASH – and more than 30 over the course of her career – physical education teacher Leslie Bogucki has organized the Jump Rope for Heart event to benefit the American Heart Association. She and generations of her students have helped raise more than \$200,000 to combat heart disease, the number one cause of death in the United States.

Bogucki will retire at the end of the school year, and although the Big Jump will continue, April's event was her last as the official organizer.

Upon announcing to students that this would be her final year, students dropped their jump ropes and rushed to Bogucki's side to pose for pictures with their beloved teacher.

In addition to her leadership with the



Longtime Albany School of Humanities (ASH) physical education teacher Leslie Bogucki did her last Big Jump fundraiser April 27 because she's retiring at the end of the year. Pictured are (L-R): O'nesa Martin, Bogucki, Alana Richards and Naya Snide.

Big Jump, Bogucki has directed numerous student musicals at ASH through the years. She also coached several sports at the high school and college level, and is the winningest girls' basketball coach in Albany High School history (214 wins, including two Section II titles and the 1997 state championship, before stepping down in 2009).

received 1,203 votes.

Roach and Wilson will serve full four-year terms; Alexander-Mann will serve one year to complete the term that opened with Bruce's resignation. All will begin their terms in July.

The state moved the district's board elections from November to May last summer to align Albany with the vast majority of public school districts statewide, which annually hold their board elections and budget vote together on the third Tuesday in May.

Board President Sue Adler's term will expire June 30. She did not seek re-election.

Voters choose Roach, Wilson, Alexander-Mann

The community elected three Board of Education members on May 15 in the City School District of Albany's first spring board vote.

Four people ran for three seats in the May 15 election: incumbents Ellen Roach and Tabettha Wilson, newcomer Damarise Alexander-Mann and former board member Kenneth M. Bruce. Bruce ran after resigning from the board in May 2017.

Roach received 2,320 votes and was elected to a second term. Wilson, who was appointed to the board in September 2017 to fill the seat vacated by Bruce's resignation, received 2,290 votes. Alexander-Mann received 2,136 votes. Bruce

'For the sake of our kids'

(continued from page 1)

and enhancing the delivery of quality instruction.

Susan Rollin has worked in the district for 12 years, including eight as a teaching assistant. She will be among the program's first graduates.

Rollin said the program provided her with the educational foundation she was lacking, and the emphasis on understanding diversity and other cultures has made her a better teacher.

"For me, EMAT has been amazing," she said. "It taught me why I need to fight so hard to be the best teacher I can be, all the time, every day, for the sake of our kids."

The 12-month program blends online learning led by NYU faculty with structured full-time teaching experiences in district classrooms under the guidance of a mentor teacher.

EMAT students are assigned to and paid as substitute teachers at either Albany High School, Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School or William S. Hackett Middle School. They sub five periods a day and spend the rest of the time with their mentor teacher.

Like Rollin, many of the candidates in the first year of the program were teaching assistants or aides in the district. All had bachelor's degrees and experience in schools, but none had a teaching degree.

Courtney Williams was a teaching assistant in a special-education classroom

at Pine Hills Elementary School. She had a bachelor's in history and special education, but hadn't completed any of the requirements that pave the way for teaching.

She wanted more, and as a new mother needed the flexibility that the EMAT program provided. It allowed her to work full-time while also pursuing her master's degree.

She served as a building substitute this school year at Albany High's Abrooklin Career and Technical Center, gaining valuable hands-on classroom experience. She began the school year observing her mentor. Now she leads instruction independently.

The program has been life-changing, Williams said.

"I've learned so much that I can bring into the classroom to make me a better teacher," she said. "I've also seen myself grow in confidence and I feel like the program has given me a future."

When they complete the program, EMAT graduates will be guaranteed teaching positions in the district in 2018-19 as long as there are openings in special education or the four core subject areas – English, math, social studies and the sciences.

At about the same time as the current group completes the program, the district's second group of EMAT students will start its work for the year ahead.

Theatre Ensemble cleans up in awards

The Albany High School Theatre Ensemble came out on top in this year's High School Musical Theatre Awards, taking home four wins out of six nominations at the May 19 event.

The Theatre Ensemble's March production of "Hair-spray" won best actress, best musical, best technical execution and best choreography execution. A total of 23 area schools took part in the event, which is analogous to the Tony Awards but for the high school set.

Albany High junior **Annabelle Duffy** won best actress for her portrayal of feisty Tracy Turnblad. She will travel to New York City to participate in the June 25 Jimmy Awards, a national stage in which high school performers across the nation will act and sing.



Next step, Broadway: Annabelle Duffy

2018 regional scholars named

The Business and Education Partnership honored three Albany High School seniors in this year's regional Scholars Recognition Program.

Gail Cabahug, **Erin Lippitt** and **Harry Zay** are among high school seniors from 11 counties throughout the Capital Region who were nominated by their schools for outstanding academic achievement, leadership skills and service to their community and school.

They were honored at a May 16 dinner and recognized in a special *Times Union* section May 17.

Besides lauding the students, the program spotlights teachers who have had a significant impact on the students' education.

District students earn county awards

Five City School District of Albany students received Youth Recognition Awards in June from the Albany County Youth Bureau.

Youth Recognition Awards honor young people who show tremendous resiliency and growth, perform community service, or demonstrate athletic or artistic ability. The students and their awards are:

- **JaVelle Cooper**, senior, Albany High School – George Roe Athletic Achievement Award
- **Austin Halloran**, junior, Albany High School – Ed Roche Outstanding Youth Award (high school)
- **John Lange**, grade 8, Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School – Most Improved Student Award
- **Desmond Sowah**, grade 6, Edmund J. O'Neal Middle School of Excellence – Artistic Expression Award
- **Nyasia Surgick**, grade 7, Myers Middle School – Ed Roche Outstanding Youth Award (middle school)

Albany High junior takes first prize in essay contest

Albany High School junior **Adam Aleksic** earned first prize in the annual Albany-Tula Alliance essay contest.

Aleksic won a \$1,000 scholarship for his essay, entitled "Intergenerational Linguistic Cooperation in Russia and America." He received the award May 3.

The Albany-Tula Alliance was founded in 1991 as a sister-city program between Albany and Tula, Russia.

Select Choir earns silver at music fest

The Albany High School Select Choir earned a silver rating at the New York State School Music Association Choral Festival in April.

Under the direction of teacher Brendan Hoffman, the group performed "The Ground" by Ola Gjeilo, "Tota Pulchra Es" by Ola Gjeilo and "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel" arranged by William Dawson.

The music they performed was designated Level VI, meaning that it is extremely complex and challenging.

Important information about student physicals

New York has changed the timing of required student physicals and the forms that health providers must complete.

As of July 1, state law will require public school students to have a health physical when they:

- Enter school as a new student
- Enter prekindergarten or kindergarten
- Enter grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11

Health physicals must be completed by a state-licensed physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner.

In addition, the state has created a new form to reflect changes to the law. Health-

care providers must enter the results of a health physical on a form called the New York State Education Department Student Health Examination Form for School.

Visit the Health Services section at www.albanyschools.org to download the form.

If your child already had a health physical for 2018-19 and his or her health provider completed a different form, the City School District of Albany will accept that form. However, starting in 2019-20 only the updated form will be accepted.

If you have questions, please call the nurse at your child's school.

Albany High team wins Stock Market Challenge

A team of aspiring Albany High School financiers defeated students from four other area high schools at the Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge at the University at Albany in April.

The Albany High team of junior **Naesha Harris**, senior **Hope Edwards** and junior **Jalanah Hall** showed a 45 percent profit increase during the competition.

Teams competed in a race to accumulate the highest portfolio while learning the nuances of investing, trading, strategy, why companies issue stock, how actions in one place of the world impact the value of stock in another place, and why the stock market is an integral part of our free enterprise system.

Besides winning a trophy, the school received scholarship funds and the three students split a \$1,000 Crossgates Mall gift card.



Aspiring financiers: Albany High's Naesha Harris, Hope Edwards and Jalanah Hall

Six Albany High artists make regional exhibit

Albany Center Gallery recently selected six Albany High School students to participate in the 19th Annual High School Regional Juried Art Exhibition.

The talented Albany High artists whose work was selected are:

- **Alexia Buddeau**, sophomore
- **Marie Sealtiel Delima**, junior
- **Sophia Doehla**, freshman
- **Jessica Johnson**, junior
- **Shahad Mohammed**, senior
- **Kiara Stovall**, junior

The exhibit featured work by 100 high school students from 24 Capital Region schools. They were selected from more than 500 pieces submitted. The artwork was on display at the gallery April 24 through May 18.

Eagle Point artist wins poster contest

Eagle Point Elementary School fifth-grader **Ariana Barreto** took first prize in the 2018 Earth Day Poster Contest sponsored by state Senator Neil Breslin.

Her poster was chosen from almost 150 submitted by students in Breslin's district, which consists of parts of Albany and Rensselaer counties.

Albany High sophomore

tapped for prestigious conference

Albany High School sophomore **Faith O'Toole** represented Albany County at a statewide "Students Inside Albany" conference at the Capitol in May.

She was selected by the Albany County League of Women Voters.

An Albany High honor student by day, O'Toole also is studying American Sign Language at Hudson Valley Community College. She was the only student from Albany County selected to participate in the League of Women Voters' conference.

The conference is designed to increase students' awareness of their responsibility in representative government, and to educate them about the process by which citizens can participate in the policy-making arena in state government.

Albany High senior

wins honor society scholarship

The National Association of Secondary School Principals has awarded a \$2,850 scholarship to Albany High School senior **Alexandra Sipos**.

Sipos was chosen from more than 11,000 scholarship applicants and is considered to be among the top 500 National Honor Society members in the country. She was chosen based on her application essay, leadership skills, participation in service organizations and clubs, and her academic record.

This fall she plans to attend Middlebury College to pursue her interests in science, history and Chinese.

Check us out online!

We have an Online News Center to provide you as much news as possible about the great people and programs of the City School District of Albany. Visit www.albanyschools.org and click the Online News Center link in the right-hand column to read more about any of these stories and additional articles, including:

- 2018-19 school calendar available
- Two more teachers meet gold standard
- Albany High inducts 24 into French Honor Society
- Albany High junior wins state science prize
- Rebuilding Albany High School project underway
- Spring scholar-athletes earn recognition
- School budget passes handily

Also check us out on Facebook, Twitter and School News Notifier!

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Leading the way Meet Jasmine N. Brown '97 2018 Principal of the Year

Jasmine Brown grew up in Albany, attending and graduating from Albany's public schools. She's now principal of Giffen Memorial Elementary School, and this spring the Greater Capital Region Principals Center named her a 2018 Principal of the Year.

A 1997 Albany High alum, Brown began her career in education as an English teacher at her alma mater in 2002. She left in 2010 to serve as assistant principal at Lansingburgh High School, returning home to the City School District of Albany in 2012 as Giffen's principal.



Jasmine N. Brown

Q: How would you describe your leadership style?

A: I hate to define myself by classifying my leadership style, as I think all school leaders need to be dynamic and willing to change their approach as situations arise. I believe in working alongside my team, creating and establishing systems to carry out the vision that we have set, motivating people to do the important work that we all have set out to do and making learning – as much as teaching – a part of our daily work.

Q: How does growing up in Albany and being a product of Albany schools influence your relationships with students, staff and families?

A: It's difficult not to bring your own upbringing and experiences into your daily decisions and interactions. I am very aware of my own experiences in the classrooms of Albany (good and bad) and keep those in mind when making instructional decisions in my building and having conversations with parents and staff about the many things we encounter day to day.

It is my hope that those that I interact with understand that my history here is directly connected to how I advocate for my students or staff; it is personal and not personal all at the same time.

Q: What made you decide to become an educator? Was there a particular person (or people) who influenced that decision?

A: There was no one person or event that influenced my decision to be an educator. Education was always a priority in my home no matter the other circumstances going on around us. I was encouraged to be a reader and I absolutely loved to read and write. As I got older, I was also drawn to helping those younger than I, whether it was through mentoring programs or being a counselor at camp. It just seemed like a natural progression. As an adult, it is my husband and my own children that encourage and inspire me to continue to be the best educator I can be.

Q: Tell us about a leader you admire.

A: I most admire the strong women that have been present throughout my life – my mother, my grandmothers, my aunts and the many other women in my family. Though not leaders in the formal definition of the word, as an adult I have grown to appreciate the leadership, strength and fortitude it takes to balance career, work and family as a woman. The women in my family who have directly read to or with me, provided for me, disciplined me, cooked for me, encouraged me and still provide support are the leaders that have shaped who I myself have become as a leader, and I am forever grateful.

Alumni achievement L. Lloyd Stewart '68

Lloyd Stewart made headlines in 1967 because of his hands: 28 receptions and 16 interceptions as a receiver and defensive back as a senior on Albany High School's football team.

He's still making headlines more than 50 years later, but they're atop articles and books he writes as an activist, historian and community advocate.

Stewart was a three-year starter at Albany High and captained the Rangers (then the school's mascot) the last two years he played. Senior year, the *Knickerbocker News* named him the area's top player and he also earned national All-American recognition.

As gridiron accolades accumulated, so did interest from colleges. He was wooed by Purdue, the University of Buffalo and Columbia University, to name a few.

Stewart wasn't all about football, though.

An athlete and a scholar, he served on Albany High's student council, took four years of Latin and was a member of the Phi Doria Literary Society. He had a keen interest in history and volunteered in his Arbor Hill community.

While at Albany High, Stewart underwent a profound personal awakening as an African-American. He was a third-generation Albany native and ninth-generation New Yorker, but he wanted to know his history – before slavery.

He was among black students who began asking questions about the lack of African-American teachers and black history courses in the school, students who began to push the envelope on issues of afros and goatees, both forbidden by the school dress code at the time.

"At that point in time, (hair) was a very important expression of blackness," Stewart said.

He picked Columbia, in the Ivy League, for college because of its activist reputation on civil rights issues. His first black history class was taught by an African-American professor, and he was hooked on the topic.

Stewart transferred to the University at Albany, earning a bachelor's degree in history with a minor in African-American history. He went on to work for state Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve and the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, advocating for funding and academic support for disadvantaged students to attend college.

In 1984 he founded Stewart Associates, a consulting firm, and was identified as New York's first registered independent African-American lobbyist.

He took a break from consulting in 1992 to be CEO and president of the Urban League of Northeastern New York, a job he held until 1996. He fondly recalled the midnight basketball games the Urban League offered. Basketball was a hook to get kids involved in employment training and counseling.

"I adopted a lot of community sons through midnight basketball," he said. "They're all over the city. I'll take it to the grave as one of the most enjoyable and meaningful things I did."

He left the Urban League in 1996 to pursue a lifelong dream of living and working in Africa. He spent two years in South Africa before returning to Albany, and spent the next two decades leading economic and community development or running his consulting firm.

He is a prolific writer and historian, with the bulk of his focus on the history of slavery and displacement.

In addition to penning scores of articles about the subject, he wrote two books: "The Mysterious Black Migration 1800-1820: The Van Vrankens and Other Families of African Descent in Washington County, New York" and "A Far Cry from Freedom: Graduation Abolition (1799-1827) New York's Crime Against Humanity."

He will be inducted into the City School District of Albany Hall of Fame in September.



L. Lloyd Stewart: Albany son, activist, athlete, author