

Syosset Pride

A Publication of the Syosset Central School District

www.syossetschools.org

A Class of Character and Achievement CLASS OF 2016

Approximately 550 seniors in Syosset High School's Class of 2016 entered the main area of the David Mack Sports and Exhibition Complex at Hofstra University to the applause of family, friends, teachers, administrators and Board of Education members to kick off the school's 58th annual commencement.

Syosset High School Principal Dr. Giovanni Durante delivered the welcoming remarks, then addressed the Class of 2016.

"Over the course of your education, you were given the opportunity to strengthen your individuality and broaden your horizons," he said to the soon-to-be-grads. "By doing so, you brought a new perspective into our school and made a distinct impact by making us better than you found us. For that, I thank you."

Dr. Durante referenced many of their impressive accomplishments, highlighting the character demonstrated through the outreach and service they provided, including trips to nursing homes, walkathons, food drives, peer tutoring, BravesFest and last year's 7 in 7 Campaign, in which the school collectively raised money for eight heart surgeries for children around the world. The official commencement program highlighted many of the academic achievements of this class as well.

The evening also featured inspirational speeches from Board of Education President Michael Cohen and trustees Christopher Di Filippo and Andrew Feldman, all proud fathers of Class of 2016 members. Superintendent Dr. Tom Rogers, class speaker Sophie Rosenbaum, valedictorian Benjamin Senzer and salutatorian Michael Collet also provided words of wisdom to the graduating class.

Citing many of the interests and career plans of her class members, speaker Sophie said, "Our class is filled with extraordinary people who will go on to do extraordinary things."

Michael urged his classmates to work hard and not sleep on their dreams. "Dreams do not come true just because we dream them," he said. "We shouldn't be

dreamers. We should be doers. We have to earn it."

Benjamin advised the class to avoid being content with their present accomplishments, and continue to strive for greater success and fulfillment in life. "Look up to the future with curiosity and endeavor," he said. "Look up to what you have not yet accomplished. Look up to what you can be."

Class President Josh Thomas and Vice President Jeremy Lamstein presented the class gift: digital message boards to keep students apprised of events and news happening at the high school. Josh was also the recipient of this year's Elisabeth T. Babcock Award, presented by the Board of Education to a senior who best demonstrates altruism throughout the course of the year.

Dr. Durante honored students who had received scholarly recognitions during the year, including National Merit scholars, finalists, semifinalists and Commended Students, as well as the Intel Science Talent Search semifinalists and Siemens Competition semifinalist and regional finalist. Members of Syosset's PTA/STA presented scholarship awards, as did members of SEPTA.

The commencement culminated with each graduating senior walking up to receive his or her diploma, followed by the traditional cap toss. Outside and inside the hallways of the Mack Complex, family members and the newly confirmed grads could be seen well after the closing processional. This was a moment to savor for these grads and their families, a time to celebrate, and certainly a milestone memory that will last forever.

Congratulations, Class of 2016!



Syosset Central School District
Syosset, New York 11791

Nonprofit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No.36
Syosset, NY 11791

****ECRWSS****

Resident of
Syosset Central School District

A Message from Your *Superintendent*



Dear Syosset Community,

As another year comes to a close and preparations for a new one start to gather momentum, it's an opportunity to offer a few reflections.

First, I want to congratulate our graduates. It's hard to put into words how inspiring it is to share commencement with you, the excitement of a long journey finally completed, and the anticipation of new adventures and opportunities just around the next corner. To all of you: well done, keep up the hard work and the successes will take care of themselves!

Next, I want to welcome back all of our students moving up. The teachers and staff are as anxious to get to know you as you are to make new friends.

I especially want to show my appreciation to our staff. I make bold promises to our young people about how wonderful each passing year will be because I've

seen firsthand that it's true. I'm grateful for your hard work and boundless dedication to the success of our students. With each passing week, I'm ever more convinced that these are the keys to Syosset's many successes.

As I've gotten to know more of Syosset's parents and families, I'm endlessly impressed by your commitment not just to your children's success, but to the success of the schools themselves. Your investment of time and energy is an immeasurable resource and a true partnership.

I'd be remiss if I didn't thank the outgoing Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Streitman and welcome his successor, Ms. Adele Bovard. Syosset's strong foundation is ready for all the opportunities yet to come.

Lastly, I'll thank the Board, not just for the chance to lead this extraordinary organization, but for their

partnership in the work, and their belief that no matter how well we do, there is always an opportunity to do better. It is that quest for improvement that is the heartbeat of the District.

Hold your breath; catch your breath; repeat.

Hold your breath; catch your breath; repeat.

Hopefully we'll occasionally interrupt this cycle, to find time to not just "repeat," but to reflect, relax and refresh. See you in the fall!

Regards,

Dr. Tom Rogers
Superintendent of Schools

A Message from Your *Board of Education*

Dear Community,

With every passing year, the impressive qualities demonstrated by our students never cease to amaze us. The list of accomplishments continues to grow. Once again Syosset led the state in the number of All-State musicians. The high school again sent an impressive number of students to national competitions covering a wide range of academic categories, including math, science, debate and business. We also fielded championship caliber teams and have an impressive number of student athletes who will continue to play at the collegiate level. You can peruse the centerspread of this newsletter's special graduation pullout section to learn about these accomplishments and how they pertain to the Class of 2016.

Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of our students that shines brighter than ever before comes as a result of a program that bears the same name as this newsletter. The PRIDE program has been a large part of our school culture for many years. Every school has embraced it. The spring edition of The Pride newsletter covered it. It's a program that instills the principles of patience, respect, integrity, dignity and empathy and helping others. Within those middle pages you can also read about some of the altruistic efforts of our graduates.

One of the most gratifying things about serving on the Board is the privilege to be present on the dais at Hofstra University, the LIU Tilles Center and at the respective elementary schools to congratulate our deserving graduates and students advancing to the next school. We congratulate all of the members of the Class of 2016: Syosset High School, HBT and South Woods middle schools and our moving up fifth-graders, as well as those who are moving up to the next grade. You all have worked hard and should be recognized. Promotion celebrations are important milestones in a student's educational career. They are marks of accomplishment. As we celebrate our children, it's important that we take time to reflect on all of the hard work that has gone into getting them to this point. Parents, teachers and of course, the students themselves,

should all be commended.

For those of you who have attended Board of Education meetings this year, you have heard reports from various Board committees on policies, procedures and programs that help to shape the quality of life and education in our district. This has included taking a hard look at our athletic facilities and developing a plan to address them for the long-term. We also continue to assess and address our overall school facilities, including core building systems, such as the roofs at the high school and A.P. Willits, which are being replaced this summer. Health, safety and security are an important piece to this as we explore new ways to make all of our schools even safer. Whether it's unifying a plan to reduce the risks associated with food allergies, or securing entrances at our schools, or even potentially reconfiguring the bus loop at the high school, the health and safety of students, staff and visitors at our schools continues to be at the forefront of our efforts. Thank you to all those who participate in our committees and provide valuable input to us at our meetings and through other correspondences.

Special thanks to the Citizens Advisory Committee on Finance for all of your work in helping us to develop a budget that meets the needs of our students and recognizes the challenges we all face as taxpayers. Thank you to all of our residents who participated in the process, and thank you to the community for your support of the 2016-17 school district budget. Additional thanks to our state officials for listening to the Board and the community's advocates through your restoration of funding previously lost under the Gap Elimination Adjustment.

During the 2015-16 school year, we saw the implementation of the first phase of technology pilots identified by our technology workgroup. We look forward to working with Superintendent Dr. Rogers on the next steps. Dr. Rogers and Assistant Superintendent for Finance Dr. Rufo should also be acknowledged for their work in staying apprised of properties eligible for Nassau County PILOTS and ensuring that our district receives the revenue it is entitled to under the



law. Finally, another topic that has been discussed at multiple meetings this year has been the restructuring of visitation days at our elementary schools. We thank everyone for their input and hope that we have achieved a happy medium between school safety and parental pride and convenience.

We invite you to attend our public meetings, which are listed in the printed school calendar and on the district website: www.syossetschools.org. For anyone who is unable to attend our meetings during the year, a summary of each public meeting is available online by clicking on the Board of Education tab and accessing the Board Notes page, where a list of Board Briefs can be accessed. As always you can email us (our addresses can also be accessed on the Board tab). We also encourage you to join one of our active committees, where you can really help to make a difference.

As your elected school officials, we will continue to act in the best interests of the children of the Syosset CSD and all of its residents. Thank you for your continued vote of confidence and for all that you do for the children of this community.

Have a happy and safe remainder of the summer. We'll see you in September.

Sincerely,

The Syosset School District Board of Education

Dr. Michael Cohen
April Neuendorf
Chris Di Filippo
Andrew Feldman
Tracy Frankel

Rob Gershon
Joshua Lafazan
Susan Parker
Laura Schlesinger

Syosset Pride

A Publication of the Syosset Central School District

www.syossetschools.org


MEET THE

Valedictorian & Salutatorian

Looking back at all they have accomplished, there's no doubt that the Class of 2016 is defined by a collection of scholars boasting diverse interests and varied accomplishments. Valedictorian Benjamin Senzer and salutatorian Michael Collet, who have been setting the example for quite some time, lead this year's very talented and dedicated group.

"Benjamin Senzer and Michael Collet are two examples of students that inspire while immersing themselves in everything Syosset," said Syosset High School Principal Dr. Giovanni Durante. "I am very proud of their accomplishments both inside and outside of the classroom and wish them continued success in their futures."

Benjamin reflected on his first day of high school as one of his fondest memories of his high school career.

"My history teacher urged us to look around at everyone else in the classroom," he said. "She then said that by the end of high school, we would all be great friends with each other. At first, this claim seemed difficult to believe, as the class was filled with so many new faces and personalities. But looking back, I realize just how much of a cohesive community our graduating class has become over the past four years."

For Michael, one of the more lasting memories from high school was also one of the culminating events for classmates and friends: the prom.

"It was great to see several hundred of my classmates come together for one night and celebrate the end of our years together in high school," he said. "The dance floor was packed for most of the night, and everyone seemed to be having an amazing time. It was definitely a night to remember."

Benjamin's strong interest in science and math

(having scored an 800 on both the chemistry and math SAT II) has led him to Harvard University this fall, where he will study biology. His participation in the high school's science research program has been one of the most challenging yet fulfilling experiences of his academic career due to the independence, creativity and collaboration it allowed him to express.

"Within the scope of my research class, I learned that success is only a small piece of the puzzle; working with others, facing obstacles and acquiring new skills has led me to become a better person," said Benjamin.

This year, Benjamin was a finalist in the National Merit Scholarship and Presidential Scholars programs. He was also an AP Scholar with Distinction, achieving an A+ in 14 different AP courses covering math, science, social studies,

English, French and music, as well as advanced research courses. In addition, he was a heralded bassist with the orchestra, achieving All-State and All-County honors and volunteering his time as a pit bassist for theater productions. He also served as editor-in-chief of the award-winning school newspaper and taught Hebrew at the Woodbury Jewish Center.

An entrepreneurial-minded individual, Michael has excelled in marketing, finance and business-related courses and clubs. This includes holding membership in the Business Honor Society and serving as vice president of the Investment Club and vice president for fundraising for Model Congress. He cites his participation in business-related role-play events through DECA as one of his most rewarding experiences, as they allowed him to hone his critical thinking and public speaking skills.

"Over the years, it has been very gratifying to see myself and my peers enjoy success at competitions," said Michael, who won individual first- and fourth-place awards at regionals and states, respectively. "I not only gained valuable business insight, but also met individuals who ultimately became some of my closest friends. DECA has helped me to discover a passion and influenced me to pursue a career in the business world."

It has also helped determine his path to Cornell University, where he will study applied economics and management this fall. Along with meriting AP Scholar with Distinction status in the past, Michael was a National Merit finalist this year and volunteered at the Variety Child Learning Center and the Cold Spring Hills Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation.

Congratulations and best of luck to Benjamin and Michael!



CLASS OF 2016: Students of



Intel Semifinalists.



National recognition for Forensics Society.



National Merit Scholarship semifinalists, finalists and Commended Students.

Academics

Academic honors for the Class of 2016 include:

- Math Olympians
- Presidential Scholar nominees
- Record DECA participation/awards
- Honors for KEN and The Pulse staffers
- More than 300 NHS members
- Approximately 300 members of foreign language and ASL honor societies
- Siemens, LISEF, NYSSEF and ISEF honorees

Athletics

Athletic achievements include:

- All-State, All-County, All-Conference and national qualifying athletes
- County championships in boys and girls winter track, girls spring track, and boys tennis
- County individual champions in winter track, swimming and wrestling
- NYS Champion boys track and field relay team
- Girls basketball and volleyball win Sportsmanship Award
- All-Academic wrestling team
- News 12 Scholar Athlete



Long Island champion girls golf team.



County champion boys lacrosse team.



Collegiate-level commitments.



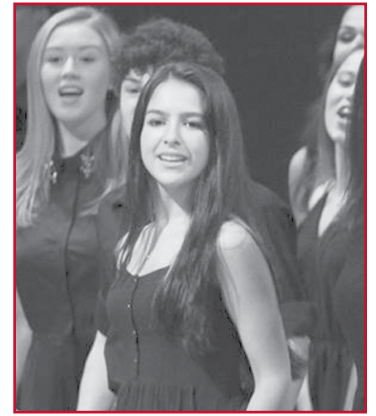
The Syosset High School Class of 2016 is a group of thoughtful, innovative students who don't just strive for perfection, they uphold a high standard for themselves and others. Here is a snapshot of our graduates from the 2015-2016 school year.

of Character & Achievement

Arts

Artistic achievements for the Class of 2016 include:

- Leading number of All-State musicians
- All-County musicians and artists
- Lincoln Center ensemble performers
- Art, Tri-Music and International Thespian Honor Society members
- NYSCAME Scholarship and Leadership Award winners
- National School Choral and Orchestral Award winners
- Town of Oyster Bay Music Scholars
- Advanced Placement Award-winning artists



American Theatre Academy Scholarship.



Long Island Best Artists.



All-National musicians.

Altruism

Charitable efforts include:

- Student-athletes participated in Tunnels to Towers Run
- “Compete to Eat” fundraiser benefited The INN
- Walkathon raised money for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- ACT raised money and awareness for suicide prevention
- Softball Invitational raised money for Multiple Sclerosis Foundation
- Senior Citizen Prom provided a day of dining and entertainment



Student Government-led BravesFest raised funds to benefit clubs and music education.



St. Baldrick's event fought childhood cancer.



The “We CARE” drive collected 150 backpacks filled with useful items for the homeless.

Class of 2016 is comprised of hard-working achievers who achieved personal success, but also demonstrated character in helping others achieve their accomplishments throughout the 2015-2016 school year.

FIFTH-GRADERS MOVE UP TO THE MIDDLE



A.P. Willis



Berry Hill



Robbins Lane

All seven of the district's elementary schools held their moving up ceremonies on June 23, officially transitioning students, ready to enter H.B. Thompson or South Woods middle schools in the fall.

Fifth-graders were honored with multiple awards, from academic awards to recognitions for their participation in student council, NYSSMA, the Nassau All-County Artist program and the character education program PRIDE.

Principals and teachers announced and presented each student with a certificate to recognize their moving up from elementary to middle school. Congratulations to all of the fifth-graders on taking the next step.



Baylis



Village



Walt Whitman



South Grove



EIGHTH-GRADERS STEP UP TO THE HIGH SCHOOL

More than 450 eighth-graders from H.B. Thompson and South Woods middle schools made the transition to Syosset High School during their respective moving up ceremonies at the Tilles Center at LIU Post.

Board of Education members were in attendance at both ceremonies to join Superintendent of Schools Dr. Thomas Rogers in congratulating and giving students words of advice as they prepare for the final stop in their K-12 careers. As Dr. Rogers inducted the middle school grads into the Syosset High School freshman class, he welcomed them to their three-year "seniors in training" program.

Dr. Rogers encouraged the students to make new friends, including seniors in training from both district middle schools,

and to get involved in the clubs, teams and activities the high school offers. He also advised them to take a few chances to challenge themselves in a positive way.

HBT Principal James Kassebaum advised his advancing eighth-graders to use the knowledge acquired in middle school to further their personal growth and take full advantage of the many opportunities at the high school. South Woods Principal Michelle Burget cited the many academic, athletic and community service accomplishments of her eighth-graders as a springboard to further success in these areas at the high school.

Congratulations to the HBT and South Woods eighth-graders who are moving up, and good luck at the high school.



H.B. Thompson



South Woods



STUDENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

National Acclaim for Forensics Society

Congratulations to the Syosset High School Forensics Society, the school's speech and debate team, on another fabulous year!

The team returned from the National Speech and Debate Association's National Tournament in Salt Lake City, Utah this June with four seniors — John Chen, Justin Kang, Niv Skidan (team president) and Faisal Younus — placing in the top six in Congressional Debate. The combined performance of all 10 Syosset High School qualifiers earned the school the National Speech and Debate Association's highest award – School of Outstanding Distinction in Speech and Debate – as one of the top 10 teams in the United States.

Prior to the NSDA Tournament, the team competed at the National Catholic Forensic League championship, where Justin finished fifth in the country in Extemporaneous Speaking (current events

analysis) and Niv finished fourth in Congressional Debate.

Additionally, this spring, the team won two of four team sweepstakes at the New York State Forensic League State Championship held at Hofstra University. Syosset Forensics qualified 83 students for the competition and was the only school out of 75 from across New York State to win two team championships, in Debate and Student Congress.

The team also produced four individual state champions: Ayesha Kamran in Novice Debate, Jordan Korgood in Oral Interpretation, junior Christopher Moon in JV Debate and Faisal Younus in Student Congress. Syosset tied Scarsdale HS for the most individual award winners in the state.

NSDA Hall of Fame member and adviser Lydia Esslinger led Syosset Forensics.



Forensics Society members displayed individual awards and the two team trophies they won at the New York State Forensic League Championship.

News Breakers on The Pulse

Congratulations to the staff of Syosset High School's student newspaper, The Pulse, which received a record 10 awards at the recent Long Island Press High School Journalism Awards. The competition recognizes excellence in student journalism among 124 school districts in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

Sarah Wang won five awards, three for her article "Master of None Brilliantly Discusses Social Issues in a Digitalized Society." Juhi Thomas won first place in the School Column category. Elle Park and Jacob Gordon, writers of The Pulse Online, nearly swept the Online Editorial category with second- and third-place winning entries. Max Salit, editor-in-chief for The Pulse Online, received an impressive third-place award for Overall Best Online News Site. Brooke Lewitas received honorable mention for her article, "Life as a Transgendered Student," among 2,000 submissions.



Award-winning staffers of The Pulse, Syosset High School's newspaper.

SPRING SPORTS WRAP-UP

GIRLS GOLF

The girls won their third consecutive Long Island Championship. Multiple members earned All-Conference honors and placed in the county championships.

BOYS GOLF

The boys finished fourth at the county championships, won a playoff to qualify for the New York State championships and finished with multiple All-County players.

BASEBALL

The team opened the season with four straight wins with multiple all-star caliber players.

BOYS TENNIS

The boys won their second consecutive

county championship, finishing undefeated for the second year with a 33-match winning streak over that time. Four players were named All-State.

SOFTBALL

The girls finished sixth in the county championship and advanced to the quarterfinals of the playoffs.

BOYS SPRING TRACK

The team finished eighth at the county championships with All-County athletes in discus and steeplechase.

GIRLS BADMINTON

The girls were undefeated conference champions, advancing to the semifinals of the county

championships with All-County players in singles and doubles play.

GIRLS LACROSSE

The girls boasted several players who earned All-County and All-County Honorable Mention, along with two Unsung Hero award winners and a scholar athlete.

BOYS LACROSSE

The boys won the County Class A, Big 4 and Conference I Championships with multiple All-American, All-Long Island and All-County players, including a U19 USA team member. The team also achieved Scholar-Athlete status and coach John Calabria won his 200th game.



The county champion boys tennis team has a two-year winning streak.

• District News & Notes •

New Administrators On Board

The district has hired several new administrators to fill vacancies created from recent retirements and central office restructuring:

Adele Bovard has been appointed as the new deputy superintendent of schools. Bovard fills the vacancy created from the retirement of Dr. Jeffrey Streitman.

Mary Kolkhorst has been appointed as the new principal at Berry Hill Elementary School. Kolkhorst, who had been serving as Berry Hill's enrichment teacher, fills the vacancy created from the appointment of **Joanne Mannion** to assistant to the superintendent for curriculum, research and administrative support. Mannion previously served as principal at Berry Hill.

Mi Jung An has been appointed as the new principal at South Grove Elementary School. Jung An fills the vacancy created due to the retirement of Theresa Scrocco.

V. Dolly Kranz has been named assistant to the superintendent for teaching and learning. Kranz previously served as the coordinator of testing, planning and administration.

Congratulations and best of luck to all of the new appointees.

Register Your Child for 2016-17

If you're new to the district or if your child will turn 5 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2016, you may register your child for the 2016-17 school year.

Registration is available by appointment only. The student registration office is located at South Woods Middle School, 99 Pell Lane, Syosset, NY. The office is open between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday-Friday. Please call (516) 364-5669 to make an appointment.

The Student Registration Form is available in printable format on the district website, www.syossetschools.org. Click the "Parents/Students" tab and scroll down to "Student Registration" to access the form.

First Day of School

As a reminder, the first day of school for students for the 2016-17 academic year is Thursday, Sept. 1.

Lunar New Year Recognized

In response to a petition from residents, the district will recognize the Lunar New Year as a holiday on the school calendar. Syosset schools will not be closed for the Lunar New Year in 2017, as the holiday falls on a Saturday.

Honoring Retirees and Silver Anniversary Staff Members

The Syosset CSD recently honored its silver anniversary staff members along with its retirees during the annual District Reception held in the Syosset High School gymnasium.

Each honoree was introduced by a close colleague, who shared kind words regarding the individual's past service and dedication to the district. Introductions were followed by a certificate presentation by a member of the Board of Education.

This year's group of retirees includes Deputy Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Streitman, who was introduced by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Thomas Rogers and Board of Education President Michael Cohen, both of whom

lauded Streitman for helping the district through the leadership transition a few years ago. The Board also gave him a special tribute at his final meeting.

"When you think about our district and the collection of wonderful educators and support staff we have here in Syosset, everyone has been hired by Dr. Streitman," said Dr. Rogers. "We are very thankful for the kindness and intelligence he has brought to the many aspects of the position, but this undoubtedly will be his greatest legacy."

The district also bid farewell to another key member of the administrative team, Theresa Scrocco, who had served as South Grove Elementary School's principal since 2009.



Superintendent of Schools Dr. Thomas Rogers joined the Board of Education in congratulating the district's silver anniversary staff members and retirees.



Board of Education President Dr. Michael Cohen (left) and Dr. Rogers (right) gave special tributes to retiring Deputy Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Streitman.

SUMMER 2016

SyossetPride

A Publication of the Syosset Central School District

www.syossetschools.org

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Michael Cohen, President	April M. Neuendorf, Vice President
Christopher Di Filippo	Andrew Feldman
Rob Gershon	Joshua A. Lafazan
	Laura Schlesinger
	Tracy Frankel
	Susan Parker

Dr. Thomas Rogers, Superintendent of Schools