

HARRISON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Highlights

February 2021

Harrison High School Students Named Among Top 300 Student Scientists in the Nation

Tyler Burden and Christian Spadini Named Scholars by Regeneron Science Talent Search

Society for Science announced Tyler Burden and Christian Spadini, students at Harrison High School were among the top 300 scholars in the Regeneron Science Talent Search 2021, the nation's oldest and most prestigious science and math competition for high school seniors.

Tyler Burden's research is entitled, *Evaluating the Effects of Dance Improvisation on Brain Activity Using a Battery of Cognitive Tests*. Tyler is a competitive dancer on the national level, who trains at a local dance studio. She plays an active role in the dance program at school, serving as President of the HHS Dance Ensemble. Engaging in the practice of improvisation through her dance training led Tyler to become curious about happens in the brain during creative processes, which deepened her interest in neuroscience. Through her research, Tyler was able to combine her passion for dance and neuroscience. Using a battery of cognitive tests, she studied how the practice of improvisation in dance affects brain activity. In the Fall, Tyler will attend Duke University, where she intends to pursue a double major in neuroscience and dance.

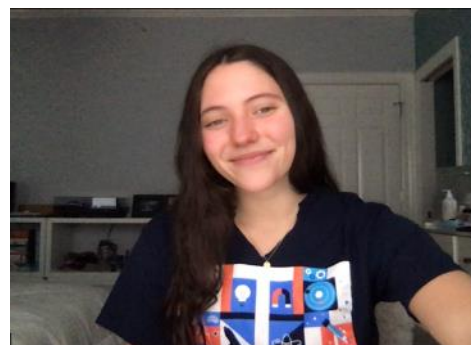
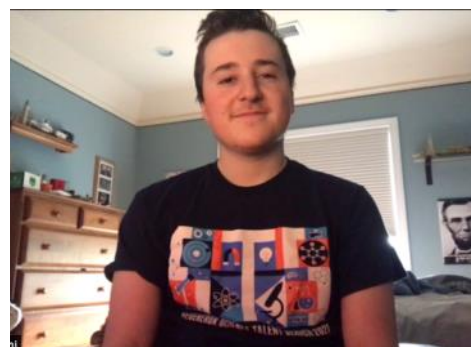
Christian Spadini conducted a research study entitled, *Political Geographical Bias in Congressional House Elections: A Quantitative Analysis of the Real Gap Between the Popular Vote and Electoral Outcomes*. Through internships in state and local government, Christian was exposed to unfair practices in the political system and dedicated his research to finding a solution to an urgent issue: districting, and its consequences on voter turnout. He capitalized on his coding skills to build a mathematical model to look at population distribution through a systematic lens. He credits his ability to shift perspectives to view common problems in an uncommon way as the reason behind his success.

Faculty advisors, Allison Blunt and Randy Gunnell shared, "We are so proud of Tyler and Christian as well as our other six students who entered the Regeneron STS competition. It is gratifying to see the results of three years of hard work for these students." They also credited the faculty and administrators at Harrison High School for supporting the students' efforts.

The Regeneron Science Talent Search scholars were selected from 1,760 applications received from 611 high schools across 45 states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico and 10 countries. Scholars were chosen based on their exceptional research skills, commitment to academics, innovative thinking and promise as scientists, and hail from 198 American and international high schools in 37 states, Puerto Rico, Chinese Taipei, and Singapore.

The Regeneron Science Talent Search provides students with a national stage to present original research and celebrates the hard work and discoveries of young scientists who are bringing a fresh perspective to significant global challenges. This year, research projects cover topics from bioinformatics to public health and energy efficiency.

"The remarkable drive, creativity and intellectual curiosity that each one of these scholars possesses represents a hopeful outlook for our future and our collective wellbeing," said Maya Ajmera, President and CEO of Society for Science, Publisher of *Science News*.



Regeneron Scholars Tyler Burden and Christian Spadini were recognized by the Board of Education at a recent meeting. The Science Research students presented their [award winning research](#) to the Board. Take a minute to learn about the work of these amazing students.

Elementary Program Adapts to Hybrid and Virtual Learning



The goal of our elementary program, especially during these challenging times, is to maximize student engagement at all levels and environments. Engaging students takes careful planning, preparation, and collaboration. Our

leadership team, instructional coaches and teachers continually evaluate and rethink how to connect with students on both hybrid and virtual learning environments. Since the start of the school year, the elementary program has been restructured to increase the number of live Zoom sessions for students and weekly schedules were modified to maximize student teacher connections. Teachers have provided enriching learning experiences for students whether learning from home or attending school in person, created opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding, develop voice, make connections in their learning, and become confident, independent thinkers. Our elementary school teams continue to approach their work with open minds and willingness to adapt to changing circumstances to best meet the needs of students. Everyone is eager for students to be back in school soon!

District Purchases Air Filtration Units; Prepares for Return to In-Person Learning for All Students

The District's goal is to bring students back to school safely as soon as possible. The Board of Education approved the purchase of state of the art air filtration units capable of cleaning air in classrooms three to five times per hour. Units will be placed in all instructional spaces. According to Dr. Wool, the filtration systems "meet the District's long and short term objectives" by reducing the risk of viral aerosol transmission. The multi-phase return to full in person learning will begin with kindergarten in phase 1, and grades 1-5 in phase 2. Harrison High School and LMK students will return in phases 3 and 4 respectively.

Teachers Bring Learning Alive in Classrooms, on Screens & Beyond...



Research, preparation and designing programs to meet student needs guide decisions at every point of our organization. The District leadership team and faculty began preparing for 2020-21 school year last spring, worked throughout the summer, and continue to reflect and adapt the instructional program to best serve students. Teachers participated in professional development programs throughout the summer and during the school year. Teams of teachers and administrators evaluated and adapted curriculum for hybrid and virtual learning. Supporting student needs and providing high quality teaching in all learning environments remains the primary focus of administrators, faculty and staff. Thanks to our teachers and the entire learning community for all they do in bringing the District's core values to life!



HHS DECA Business Club Students Advance to State Competition

Nearly 250 students competed at the Region 3 Virtual DECA competition. The Virtual environment did not diminish the highly competitive field of students from Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Ulster, and Albany Counties. Twenty-two students from Harrison High School competed, and nine advanced to the New York State competition which will be held later this year. Students who finish in the top five in their category at the Regional competition move on to the New York State competition. The following students advanced to the state competition:

Accounting Applications Series

– David Griff

Restaurant and Food Service Management

– Rachel Kindler

Hotel and Lodging Management

– Michael Griff

Apparel & Accessories Marketing Series

– Rachel Griff

Sports & Entertainment Marketing Team

– Johnny Karipides, Jake Sarlo

Principles of Business Management and Administration

– Shweta Nadagouda

– Emilie Oestreicher

Principles of Hospitality and Tourism

– Savannah Serfilippi

DECA is a not for profit organization that prepares emerging high school students to become leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. The Harrison High School DECA club is open to students in grades 9-12 who prepare and compete in tournaments at the regional, state and national level.

HHS Model Congress Team Earns Top Honors at Princeton Competition



The Harrison Model Congress club competed in the virtual Princeton Model Congress conference. Since the Penn Model Congress trip was cancelled last spring, the team was eager to make a smooth transition to compete virtually. To prepare they hosted virtual meetings to practice the virtual format and developed a strong understanding of current issues, hone their ability to articulate compelling arguments, and analyze mock legislation and public policy. Harrison Model Congress members have consistently competed at the highest levels and perform among the top high school Model Congress clubs in the country. The team earned top awards at the Princeton Conference - two gavels and five honorable mention awards. Roya Azar (Red House Full) and Alec Udell (Red House Energy and Commerce) were named Best Delegates. David Griff (Red Senate Environment and Public Works), Roya Azar (Red House Judiciary), Jack Kelly (Presidential Cabinet), Aidan Lefkowitz (Red Senate Foreign Relations), and Eve Rabin (White Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions) earned honorable mention recognition.

Seniors Inducted into National Honor Society

Members of the Harrison High School Class of 2021 were inducted into the National Honor Society in a celebration that brought seniors together over two days to allow for social distancing. All participants and presenters wore masks and the ceremonies were livestreamed for parents and family members to watch virtually from home.

Principal Kim Beukema observed how students flourished during their years at Harrison High school and adapted in the face of challenging circumstances to represent the NHS pillars and the district's core values. She also recognized the teachers who created the conditions for these principles to thrive in the lives of students.

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Louis Wool, addressed the auditorium filled with "gifted, disciplined, thoughtful students." Dr. Wool reminded the students of their responsibility as leaders as they prepare to leave high school and enter a world that is much different than when they began. He explained that leaders do not get to tell people what to do, but create an environment where people listen to each other, and then do what is right. Dr. Wool reminded students, "leaders look harder to see beyond what others see, and always treat people as if they have inherent worth."

Dr. Wool closed by reminding the NHS inductees, "You have done a great service to your school, now go and do the same for the world."

The ceremonies concluded with the candle lighting ceremony, recognition of each inductee, and the National Honor Society Oath.

Seniors Recognized by National Merit Scholar Program



Eight Harrison High School Seniors have been recognized in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program for having scored among the nation's top students on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Anthony Kang scored among the highest students nationally and qualified as National Merit Semi Finalist.

Rebecca Anderson, Nicholas Colotti, Peyton Gartner, Benjamin Groothuis, Brandon Groothuis, Matthew Siegel, and Christian Spadini were named as Commended Students.

The National Merit Scholarship Program is an annual academic competition open to all US high school students and recognizes students for demonstrating outstanding potential for academic success.

Class of 2021 Receives Academic Honors

Harrison High School announced members of the Class of 2021 who have earned Academic Distinction. Students receive academic honors based on their academic performance through junior year. Graduation honors are bestowed upon students as determined by their cumulative weighted grade-point-average at the end of junior year. Honors include: *Summa Cum Laude*, grade point average 98 or higher, *Magna Cum Laude*, grade point average 95-97.99, *Cum Laude* grade point average 93-94.99. More than 100 graduating seniors earned recognition with distinction: Summa Cum Laude, 45 students; Magna Cum Laude, 48 students; Cum Laude, 30 students.

[Class of 2021 Academic Distinction Scholars](#)

Enjoy a Virtual Performance of *Earth Song* by the HHS Concert Band



[HHS Concert Band Performs *Earth Song*](#)

Harrison Educational Foundation Supports District Initiatives

The Harrison Educational Foundation continues its valued support of District programs and initiatives. Their support impacts the experiences of all students K-12. This year the Foundation has funded three programs, including literacy initiatives at the elementary schools and equipment at the high school fitness center.

Expanding Access to Literature during Remote Learning:

This program provides elementary students access to thousands of online books, hand-picked by each school's Library Specialist. The program was initiated over the summer and remains active during the school year.

K-2 Wilson Foundations Kits for Early Readers:

Foundations is a multisensory, structured language program that provides students with a systematic approach to developing the foundational skills for reading and spelling. The take home kits contain materials for each student to own and use individually. The kits may be used both at home and in school, and ensure equal access to materials and maintain the efficacy of the curriculum.

Harrison High School Fitness Center:

The Foundation provided funding for new cardiovascular equipment for the Harrison High School Fitness Center. The equipment is lightweight, portable and includes rowing machines and assault bikes. This donation provides the Physical Education staff with increased flexibility, creativity and portability, and allows broader access by all students while adhering to COVID protocols.



IB Middle Years Program *Authorization Expected June 2021*

The District completed the final phase of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) authorization process and expects to receive the official MYP accreditation from the IB Organization by the end of the school year. The IBMYP encourages students to become creative, critical and reflective thinkers, emphasizes intellectual challenge, and develops communication skills, intercultural understanding and global engagement. Teachers in grades 6-10 from Louis M. Klein Middle School and Harrison High School have been working in partnership towards the

authorization of our [Middle Years Program](#). Last spring, we finished our consultation process, which included a three day visit with a representative from the IB Organization and the submission of our Application for Authorization. We have completed the final process of the Candidate Phase, the Verification Visit from the IB Organization which took place virtually in the beginning of December. The District is incredibly proud of the work our students and teachers have done throughout implementation process and we are eager to become a fully accredited IBMYP school.

LMK Fall Intramural Program a Success



Students in grades 7 and 8 at LMK Middle School participated in a fall intramural program developed by the HCSD Athletics Department after Section One Athletics cancelled modified sports for the fall season. Approximately 150 students competed in Boys and Girls Soccer, Field Hockey and Boys and Girls Cross Country. Coaches worked on skill development and game strategy athletes will apply when interscholastic athletics resume. Since interschool competitions were not allowed, each team competed in two intra-squad scrimmages for a chance to apply the skills they learned in a competitive game environment. Modified coaches worked hard to provide a valuable and fulfilling experience for student athletes, and our LMK athletes brought Husky Pride to the field each day.



HARRISON HUSKY SPORTS WRAP UP

Harrison High School athletes left it all on the fields, trails and courts as they competed with heart, soul — and HUSKY PRIDE. The Harrison Varsity **Girls Cross Country Team** earned the title of **League Champions**. Senior Areebah Mehmood was named to the Section One Golden Dozen, three student athletes received all section recognition, and twenty-six were recognized with all league honors. Four Seniors committed to college for athletics...read about them on the next page!

Varsity Girls Cross Country

League Champions 2020

Scholar Athlete Team

All-League: Katrina Torelli, Caroline Gilmore, Alexandra Wong, Annika Torelli, Filippa Rasmussen, Mary Gilmore

Varsity Boys Cross Country

Scholar Athlete Team

Varsity Field Hockey

Record: 3-8

Scholar Athlete Team

All-League: Lucila Waisburg, Abby Trotta, Corrie Sandomenico

Varsity Boys Soccer

Record: 1-8-1

Scholar Athlete Team

All League: Martin Torre, John Antolino, Allan Guzman

Varsity Girls Soccer

Record: 5-5

Scholar Athlete Team

All-League: Peyton Gartner, Olivia Perini, Ariana Nero, Julina Paruta, Molly Ryan, Madison Stagg, Maria DiRusso, Erika Miller

All-League Honorable Mention: Lucy Alcoba, Alexandra Stilo, Caela Vasilkioti

All-Section: Peyton Gartner, Erika Miller

All-Section Honorable Mention: Olivia Perini

Varsity Girls Tennis

Record: 3-3

Scholar Athlete Team

All-League: Hannah Rose, Hannah Lubowitz, Rachel Griff

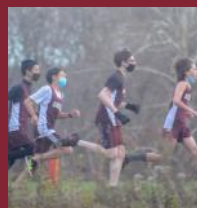
Areebah Mehmood Named to Golden Dozen



Harrison High School Senior Field Hockey Player, Areebah Mehmood, was selected to the Section One Golden Dozen, a selective scholar athlete award to recognize accomplishments on and off the field, including academics, athletics, community service,

extracurricular activities. Areebah is an IB Diploma Candidate, Magna Cum Laude, a member of the National Honor Society and a member of the Harrison High School Band. In addition to sports and music, Areebah's greatest passion is volunteering. She loves to help others and volunteers in the community preparing and delivering meals for senior citizens and tutoring younger children. Field hockey coach, Allison Daday credits Areebah as "a great role model for underclassmen" and values her "leadership on and off the field."

HUSKIES IN ACTION



Life Beyond Being a Husky: Four Senior Athletes Commit

Kate Rube
News Editor

Even in the midst of a global pandemic that has put a hold on many sports seasons, several of our exceptional student athletes still have managed to commit to playing their sports in college next year and beyond.

We are proud to feature four of our senior athletes who have made this commitment, and are happy to give them this chance to express their reflections, hopes, and dreams.

Remember: Once a Husky, always a Husky!

Maddy Pirrello (MP)
University of Florida
Soccer



Husky Herald (HH): How long have you been playing your sport?

MP: "I've been playing soccer for as long as I can remember. I started playing when I was around five years old and haven't stopped since!"

HH: What do you love most about your sport?

MP: "What I love most about my sport are the many amazing life lessons I've learned that I can apply to life outside of soccer. For example, I've learned life skills like teamwork, perseverance, and compassion that help me become a better person on and off the field. I'm very grateful I could learn these life lessons while also doing something I love!"

HH: Who has contributed to your success?

MP: "My parents have been by my side through all the good and bad to help me push through whatever was thrown at me. I definitely can't say everything has been perfect but they've been able to give me the wisdom and knowledge I need to get through tough situations to ultimately lead me to success."

HH: Are you excited?

MP: "I couldn't be more excited to play Division One soccer at the University of Florida. Ever since I was a little girl I always said I wanted to play at a school in Florida and I am so lucky to have received an offer from such an amazing school athletically, but also academi-

cally. Gooooo gators!!!!"

Parker Gibbons (PG)
Kenyon College
Baseball

HH:How long have you been playing your sport?

PG: "I have been playing baseball ever since I was three, but was able to start playing organized baseball for Harrison at age five. I played in the Harrison Little League program until I was 13, which is the age you start to play on the "big field" which is the same dimensions as high school and college. I have played on various teams since I was 13, with the Harrison Babe Ruth program, the Westchester Academy based out of Port Chester, and Crush Baseball in Tuckahoe."

HH: What do you love most about your sport?

PG: "I love that when I play baseball, I can truly be in the present moment and eliminate any worries or distractions on my mind. To me baseball represents something I can truly be myself in each time I step on the field. I also love the relationships I have been able to build over time through playing baseball, which have had such a positive impact on my life. It has introduced me to many coaches and teammates that have helped me get to where I am today as a baseball player and more importantly as a person."

HH: Who has contributed to your success?

PG: "I would say that my parents have contributed the most because they have put their money, time, and effort into helping me continue playing baseball and pursuing my goal of playing baseball in college and beyond. Without them, I would not have been able to play the amount of games that I have or have the lessons and resources that have been integral in my becoming a better player. My teammates and coaches have also greatly contributed to my success because they have provided me with the assistance and knowledge that helps me apply myself and work on my weaknesses."

HH:What are you looking forward to most?

PG:"I am looking forward to meeting my new teammates and friends at college. I am really excited to build new relationships that help me become a better baseball player and person. In addition, I am looking forward to being surrounded by others who are skilled baseball players because of the knowledge and tips that I can learn from them to become a better player myself. Working with the coaches I was recruited by is something I am greatly looking forward to because they have been extremely helpful in teaching me about the culture of the school."

HH:What will you miss about being a Husky?

PG: "I will miss being able to play alongside teammates that I have been friends with my whole life. I have so many fond memories of my time playing baseball for the high school. I will also miss being able to represent the town that I live in and have family and friends come to the games and support me. Lastly, I will also miss the coaches that I have had at Harrison because they have

been so impactful in helping me become a better baseball player physically and mentally."

HH: Are you excited?

PG: "I'm really excited to continue playing baseball for a college that I have wanted to attend for a long time. I am looking forward to meeting my new teammates. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to continue my baseball career in college and am thrilled to begin the next chapter of my life."

Peter Fischer (PF)
Harvard University
Track and Field

HH:How long have you been playing your sport?

PF: "I've been running track since freshman year. At first I joined to stay in shape but I began to really love it sophomore year, and have been very involved since then."

HH: What do you love most about your sport?

PF:"I love the personal battles this sport brings. Of course when you race you want to win, but a lot of the time you're really racing against yourself. Also, relays are the best because it turns track into a team sport. Running knowing your teammates are counting on you is more motivating than running for my own personal time could ever be."

HH: Who has contributed to your success?

PF: "Coach Zanot has put in endless hours training me. During the summer we trained many times a week, despite none of it being part of the school season. Additionally he has helped me mentally because he understands the stresses that track can bring and has helped me perform successfully under pressure. He also connected me with the Harvard coaches to allow for this opportunity. Additionally, my family has been so supportive of my success. My mom specifically has been such a contributor to my success. She goes to every meet and cares so much about my happiness with the sport."

HH: What are you looking forward to most?

PF: "I want to have a strong finish to my career as a Husky. I have a lot of times I am looking to improve this season to make a long lasting mark in Westchester's records. I'm also really looking forward to meeting the Harvard track team, especially being that I haven't gotten to meet my coaches in person due to regulations this year regarding the pandemic. I can't wait to get a better feel of the facilities and team."

HH: What will you miss about being a Husky?

PF: "We have so much spirit at this school, and I will miss the love my teammates, friends, and I all share for this school and the track team. I'll always remember things like winning in a relay race and having my teammates waiting at the finish, or being defended by cheering as you run past your team. We are always complimented by other coaches for being the loudest at meets and we always do a great job of cheering for all athletes as they run."



HH: Are you excited?

PF: "I am super excited to be a part of the Harvard Track & Field team. Years ago I never would have imagined this and it is now a dream come true. There will be a lot of change and uncertainties but I am excited to face them."

Connor Griff (CG)
Hamilton College
Tennis

HH: How long have you been playing your sport?

CG: "At age 10, I started playing tennis once a week. I did not start playing competitively until I was 12. In total, I have been playing for seven years."

HH: What do you love most about your sport?

CG: "The relationships I have built is what I like the most about tennis."

HH: Who has contributed to your success?

CG "A lot of people have contributed to my success. My family and friends are what has contributed to my success along with all of the amazing coaches I have worked with along the way."

HH: What are you looking forward to most?

CG: "I am looking forward to building new relationships. Also, the team environment is something I am really excited about."

HH: What will you miss about being a Husky?

CG: "I will miss the friendships I have built while being a husky. I will also miss the team dynamic."

HH:Are you excited?

CG: "I am really excited for the next chapter of my tennis and academic career. I cannot wait to connect with others and enjoy my time at Hamilton."

