



Academic Excellence

2020-2021

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Mrs. Mary Kriegel, for interviewing and compiling each biography submitted by our seniors to make this program possible. Thank you for going above and beyond to make every effort to reach each of our scholars during these novel times. Compiling these biographies is no small feat during a normal school year.

We would also like to thank our Registrar Mrs. Jennifer Thurn for carefully compiling and tracking the data to determine our class rankings.

Program design and compilation by Ms. Donna Vennera

But most importantly, we wish to thank our students and their families for their hard work throughout their academic career. Earning a spot in the top ten percent of your cohort is no small accomplishment.

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Principal's Introduction

Dear Center High School Scholars and Families,

I am saddened that we are at this point yet again this year and that are unable to come together in person to honor and celebrate the academic excellence of each cohort's top 10%. This is an honor that students, with the support of their families, work toward for years. To not be able to stand on the stage and receive your accolades is heartbreaking. However, if we've learned anything throughout this pandemic is that Center High School Scholars are resilient and have been able to persevere through whatever has come their way. I am so proud of that fact. That is one of the many reasons why I truly love serving this school and this community.

Our Freshmen are just beginning to plant the seed for their legacy at Center High School. I fear they will not understand what a significant honor they have achieved. But here at Center, Freshmen start strong! Our Sophomores are expected to stay strong and our Juniors always continue to be strong.

I feel for the Seniors who have worked hard for not only the last four years, but indeed their entire school career for this moment. And while the rewards for that work transcend more than one ceremony, to be denied a rite of passage they were looking forward to is also heartbreaking, but our Seniors at Center High School finish strong!

Yet, we cannot and will not let these achievements go unnoticed. In difficult times it is important to recognize strong work, and each student listed in this program has indeed shown strength in their academic career. I am reminded of the words by Jesmyn Ward, a two - time National Book Award winner. She said, "Real academic success requires step after step after step. It requires choice after choice; it demands education and passion and commitment and persistence and hunger and patience."

Our students here in Center School District and students all over the country have been through so much during these unprecedented times, however I am so proud of their strength, and their understanding that we may, at times find ourselves down, but we are not out. We are "Center Strong" and I am so very proud of you. Thank you for continuing to push yourselves to excellence. With that, please join me in celebrating their success and achievements.

Edward Tate

Freshmen *Scholars*

KYLIE ALLEN
ANNEMARIE BALL
BRIANNA BELL
AVERY BENNEKIN
SUSAN CAROL BESONG
KAMRYN COPPOCK
FAVOUR EZEUGO
NICCO GIANGROSSO
SIERRA GILLIFORD
TAMARION HILL
KAI HYATT
MIETTE LAFAVER
JASMINE MITCHELL
CHLOE MONTOYA
KISA ROBINSON
JADAN SMITH
NDEYE SONKO
KAREEMA WATERS
WINNI YANG

Sophomore Scholars

MANSOUR BALDE
ANYLA BANKS
BRANDY BARCLAY
ALEEYAH COKER
KENDAL CUNNINGHAM
GIOVANNI GIANGROSSO
DANIELA GUERRERO
GRACE JACKSON
JOSEPH LAHANN
WILLIAM LAHANN
JAYDEN LATHAM
NATHALY MAURO
KIRSTEN MORA VALDES
ABYGAIL PEOPLES
JOSEPH REBERRY
ALEXIS REED
CADIENCE SZAPOCZNIK
TROY TAYLOR
CADENCE THURBER
ALEXIS TRENTADUE
SOPHIA TROUT
DIRAC TSAFACK

Junior Scholars

SAMUEL ASHER
BRANDON CHANDLER
MADDISON CUNNINGHAM
MARQUES GRIFFITH
REBECCA HANCH
SAVANNAH HOLSMAN
LAMAYA JONES
PRIYESH JOSHI
EMILIA LATAS
KADEN MARSHALL
DENNY MOSBY
JAMES MYERS
AMYA SONNIER
JOEY TEJADA
JACOB WESTRING
KAYSHAWN WHITWORTH

Senior Scholars

IMANE BOUHAMIDI



Imane Bouhamidi is an 11-year Center student. Imane has made an impression at CHS with her deep, intellectual nature and quiet confidence, ranking in the Top 10% of her academic class for all 4 years and earning an academic letter freshman, junior, and senior years. Upon graduation, Imane will have earned 12 college credits through dual-credit Precalculus and English Composition courses through the University of Missouri-Kansas City with the potential to earn more credits through AP Exams. This year, Imane has also taken on and excelled in college-level courses in Medical Intervention and Biomedical Innovations. During her

sophomore year, Imane was nominated for and accepted to the prestigious Missouri Scholars Academy, an immersive summer camp experience for top-tier students from across the state; she attended in June 2019. Imane Bouhamidi has been accepted to the University of Missouri-Columbia, UMKC, University of Kansas, and Metropolitan Community College. She plans to attend MCC and transfer to UMKC after 2 years. There, she will pursue her goal of becoming a psychiatrist. Go get 'em, Imane!

Senior Scholars

PHUONG THAO BUI

Thao Bui is an 11-year Center student who is off to fulfill her biggest dreams in a far-away city this fall. During every one of her years at CHS, Thao has ranked in the Top 10% of her academic class and has earned an academic letter each year. Thao has also been an active member of the Lady Yellowjackets Tennis, Soccer, and Basketball Teams as both a manager and a player. She is a natural leader and has had the opportunity to exercise this talent through her roles as the Captain of the Tennis Team, National Honor Society Vice President, Class of 2021 Class President, and French Horn Co-Section Leader in the Mighty Marching Yellowjacket Band. The summer after her sophomore year, she represented the Center School District at the prestigious Missouri Scholars Academy, an intensive, month-long program for academically gifted and driven Missouri sophomores held on the campus of the University of Missouri-Columbia. Outside of school, Thao has an active volunteer with her church and has worked a part-time job for much of high school. Thao Bui has applied and been accepted to over 20 colleges and universities including Loyola University New Orleans, Hobart College, and William Smith College. Due to her high academic performance, she has earned merit scholarships from many universities worth up to \$30,000 per year. Thao plans to continue her tennis career at the collegiate level but is still undecided about which school to attend and which area of study she will focus on. Congratulations, Thao!



Senior Scholars

JASMINE CAGE



Jasmine Cage has attended Center Schools for 7 years and will continue her academic career in college this fall. Jasmine is a student known for her maturity and dedication to her studies; she has earned an academic letter each year at Center and has placed in the Top 10% of her academic cohort for two years. Jasmine has taken on a course schedule of nearly all Honors and AP courses her junior and senior years, earning 12 college credits through dual-credit Precalculus and English Composition courses this year with potential to earn more through AP testing. Her junior year, Jasmine also began taking college-level nursing courses through Herndon Career

Center and will graduate as a Certified Nursing Assistant this spring. Jasmine is also active and ambitious outside the classroom: she is a member of the Center Cheer Team and a two-year member of the National Honors Society. Not only that, but Jasmine is an extremely hard worker outside of school, working two jobs. She has worked as a crew trainer at McDonald's and has been a nursery worker at Genesis Health Clubs for three years. She has also volunteered in her community with Center's elementary schools reading to kids grades K-5 and has volunteered at the Church of God in Christ Food Drive. Jasmine has been accepted into University of Central Missouri, the University of Missouri-Columbia, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and the University of Kansas. She has earned a scholarship through KC Scholars worth up to \$50,000 in addition to personally saving over \$17,000 to put toward her college education. Jasmine Cage plans to attend UMKC in the fall where she will continue her studies in the medical field. We're proud of you, Jasmine!

Senior Scholars

ANNA ISAACS

Anna Isaacs came to Center her freshman year after moving to Kansas City from Ketchikan, Alaska. She is off to study Psychology and English Literature in the fall. Anna is following in the family tradition of authorship and has already penned her first complete novel. During every one of her years at CHS, she has received an academic letter and has earned a place in the Top 10% of her academic cohort this year. Anna has steadily increased the challenge of her course schedule every year, taking on a course load of mostly Honors and AP courses her junior and senior years. Anna will have already earned 12 college credits before her freshman year of college through dual-credit Pre-Calculus and English Composition. She has also participated in Center's Environmental Club. Anna has been accepted into programs at Avila University and Park University. She plans to attend Avila where she is the recipient of scholarships and grants worth \$46,000. These funds will help her to pursue her ultimate goal of becoming an adolescent therapist. Amazing work, Anna!



Senior Scholars

BENJAMIN LAHANN



Benjamin Lahann is a 13-year Center student. Each year at CHS, he has been in the Top 10% of his academic class. Ben has also played in the Jazz Band and marched in the Mighty Marching Yellowjacket Band and has competed tenaciously on the Academic, Wrestling, Cross Country, and Track Teams, qualifying for state twice over in Cross Country. Ben's natural leadership skills have been recognized through his roles as Captain of the Cross Country and Academic Teams, as Trumpet Section Leader, and as a Congressional Delegate at Missouri Youth and Government. Ben is also a two-year member of the National Honor Society and Senior Class Vice

President. Outside of school, Ben has represented the Center School District at the prestigious Missouri Scholars Academy and in Boy Scouts, earning the distinction of Eagle Scout in 2018. Ben has been accepted into MU, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Washington University in St. Louis, and the United States Military Academy at West Point. He plans to attend West Point and serve in the United States Army in the fall. Go get 'em, Ben!

Senior Scholars

AINSLEY LEWIS

Ainsley Lewis is a 13-year Center student who will be studying Design and Drafting in college next year. During her years at CHS she had been in the Top 10% of her class each year in addition to earning an academic letter each year. Ainsley is as dedicated an athlete as she is a student. She played on the Girls' Volleyball Team for one year, the Girls' Tennis Team for three years, the Center Swim Team for four years, and the Girls' Soccer Team for four years. Ainsley is a dedicated team player and leader; she has held positions as the Caption of the Tennis, Swim, and Soccer Teams and has been a Section Leader and Drum Major in the Mighty Marching Yellowjacket Band. In addition, Ainsley was a part of Center's Key Club for two years and held the positions of Vice President and Secretary. She is also an active member of the National Honor Society where she serves as Secretary. Outside of school, Ainsley has completed over 75 hours of community service with Harvesters and Key Club service projects. Ainsley will attend the University of Central Missouri this fall to continue her degree. As part of the Early College Program, Ainsley already completed an internship at Black & Veatch while simultaneously taking on a rigorous schedule of night and off-campus classes and will graduate with her associate degree from Metropolitan Community College this spring. Way to go, Ainsley!



Senior Scholars

BRONWYNNE MILLER



Bronwynne Miller is a 13-year Center student who embodies the true Yellowjacket spirit of acceptance, kindness, and excellence. Bronwynne has ranked in the Top 10% of her academic cohort each year of high school and has earned an academic letter each year; she is also a two-year member of the National Honors Society and a Missouri Scholars Academy nominee. Bronwynne has challenged herself academically each year of high school, taking nearly every Honors, AP, and dual-credit course offered at CHS. Upon graduation, Bronwynne will have earned 30 college credits through UMKC in Precalculus, Spanish, College Algebra, Statistics, and English

Composition. She may earn credits in addition through AP Exams. Bronwynne is also an active member of the Mighty Marching Yellowjacket Band and Center's Academic Team. Bronwynne is an accomplished artist, winning the Congressional Art Competition her freshman year and earning a trip to Washington D.C. where her work was displayed on the Washington Mall. Bronwynne Miller has been accepted to Johnson County Community College where she plans to attend in the fall. We're proud of you, Bronwynne!

Senior Scholars

NEVAEH MISOMALI

Nevaeh Misomali began attending Center High School her sophomore year and has been making a strong impression ever since. In addition to being a member of the Health Occupations Student Association and the Key Club, Nevaeh has been in the Top 10% of her academic class each year at Center in addition to earning an academic letter each term. Outside of school she has stayed involved in her church, has sang in youth choir, and has worked a part-time job while remaining dedicated to her studies. Nevaeh's hard work and steadfast nature have paid off as she has been accepted into Drury University, MU, UMKC, UCM, Northwest Missouri State, Baker University, Missouri University of Science and Technology, and Missouri Western State. Before stepping foot on campus, Neveah will have earned 12 college credits through her efforts in dual-credit Calculus and Composition courses taken through UMKC. Nevaeh has also earned a scholarship worth \$10,000 per year as a KC Scholars recipient and plans to study Chemistry at Mizzou which has offered her additional grants and scholarships totaling over \$14,000 per year. Congratulations, Neveah!



Senior Scholars

ELHADJI MANSOUR NDIAYE



Elhadji Ndiaye is a four-year Center student who this fall will begin his post-secondary studies at Missouri University of Science and Technology where he will major in Aerospace Engineering or Mathematics. He has been in the Top 10% of his academic class and has earned an academic letter every one of his years at CHS. Elhadji participated in Math Relays during his sophomore year and has been a dedicated member of the Center Soccer Team all four years of high school. On the soccer team, Elhadji had the pleasure to hold a leadership role as Captain during his senior year. His unrelenting work ethic earned him a certificate of graduation from

Center's English as a Second Language Program his freshman year after moving to the United States from Senegal, and this year he will earn 6 college credits from UMKC for dual-credit English. Additionally, Elhadji has earned an All-Conference Academic Award and a coveted spot on the All-Conference Soccer Team. Elhadji has been accepted into UCM, Mizzou, Tuskegee University, and Missouri S&T. He plans to attend Missouri S&T which has offered him grants and scholarships totaling over \$18,000 per year. As someone aspiring to a career in aviation, Elhadji is also in the process of enlisting in the Missouri Air National Guard. Congratulations on all your accomplishments, Elhadji!

Senior Scholars

ELEANOR PEOPLES

Ellie Peoples is a 13-year Center student who plans to study Technical Theatre and Directing next year. Every year at Center Ellie has been in the Top 10% of her academic cohort, earning an academic letter each year. Ellie taken on a rigorous schedule of Honors and AP classes at CHS and will have earned 18 college credits before enrolling in college. Ellie is highly involved outside the classroom as well. She has been an active member of the theatre club, Players 58, for four years and been a part of its leadership council for two years, serving as Treasurer her junior year and as Vice President her senior year. Ellie is also a two-year member of the National Honor Society, running to be a member of its board her senior year and winning the position of Treasurer. Outside of school she has found a job that she loves working at Bath and Body Works as a sales associate; she is working on becoming a top seller at her store location. Ellie has been accepted to Johnson County Community College, UMKC, and Avila University. She has earned a \$9,000 per year renewable academic scholarship from Avila. Ellie Peoples plans to attend Avila University next year to further her studies in and passion for the theatre. You'll go far, Ellie!



Senior Scholars

CHRISTIN REY



Christin Rey has been a part of the Center School District for 13 years. This fall, she plans on using her A+ Scholarship to attend Metropolitan Community College where she will study Business Administration. Christin has placed in the Top 10% of her class and has lettered in academics all four years of high school. She has been an active member of several CHS clubs including Key Club, National Honor Society, and Student Government Association, where she was elected Vice President her senior year. Additionally, Christin has been the dedicated Manager of the Center Wrestling Team for four years, earning the Best Manager Award this year. During

Christin's junior year she attended Summit Technology Academy where she studied Business and Financial Technology. During this time, she was able to complete a job shadowing and internship experience through HCA Midwest Hospital where she earned 14 college credit hours. At this internship, she also was able to earn Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word Certifications. In total, Christin has earned 31 college credits over four years both on and off the Center campus! Outside of school, Christin is a member of the Kansas City Roller Warriors, a local roller derby team, where she has been competing fiercely for six years. Christin is excited to start her first semester at MCC and has hopes of someday becoming an Executive Director. Congratulations on all your accomplishments, Christin!

Senior Scholars

NATASHA RICHARDSON

Natasha Richardson has been a Center student since the second semester of her freshman year and quickly made an impression both in and out of the classroom. Natasha lettered in academics her sophomore, junior, and senior years, and has earned college credits through dual-credit and off-campus classes in Pre-Calculus, Physics, and English Composition. A standout athlete, Natasha played on the CHS Women's Soccer Team all four years of high school and competed on the Lady Yellowjackets Basketball Team her freshman and sophomore years. Natasha also holds school records for Most Saves in a Season and Most Career Saves as goalie. She has also played club soccer, including on the KC Athletics and Elite Club National League Teams, for 14 years and has worked as a referee for the Heartland Soccer League. In addition, Natasha played for the Missouri Olympic Development Soccer Team and was chosen to train with the Region II Olympic Development Team. In the fall, she will attend UMKC to play on the Women's Soccer Team and study Mechanical Engineering. Natasha received the Intercollegiate Scholarship for Women's Soccer which will pay 100% of her tuition. She also received the Chancellor's Scholar Award for academics which will contribute \$3,500 per year toward her college expenses. We're proud of you, Natasha!



Senior Scholars

EMMA ROGERS



Emma Rogers is an 8-year Center student who this fall is off to study at Metropolitan Community College to become a paramedic. During every one of her years at CHS, she has ranked in the Top 10% of her academic class, played the clarinet in the Mighty Marching Yellowjacket Band, and has been an active member of the Political Science Club and the Student Government Association. Emma's selfless and dedicated spirit has been recognized and honored through numerous leadership roles over her high school career: she has served as the President of SGA, President of the National Honor Society, Librarian for the Mighty Marching

Yellowjacket Band, Clarinet Section Leader, Secretary of the Health Occupations Student Association, and Secretary of SGA. She was also involved in the Center Newspaper and was a part of the Chick-Fil-La Leadership Academy during her sophomore year. Emma also attended Missouri Youth and Government for three years of high school and was awarded Best Newspaper Article at MOYAG her junior year. Emma has also raised money for the Special Olympics through the Polar Bear Plunge event each year of high school. She is currently enrolled in the EMT Program at Herndon Career Center and is a member of the National Technical Honor Society on that campus. Emma plans to use her A+ Scholarship to pay for the costs of tuition at MCC. We're proud of you, Emma!

Senior Scholars

JORDAN ROLF

Jordan Rolf is a 1-year Lutheran High student and a 3-year Center High School student. She plans to begin attending Metropolitan Community College Longview in the Spring of 2022 to study Criminal Justice or Sports Medicine. Jordan will have earned 18 college credits through dual-credit courses before her high school graduation. She has been in the Top 10% of her academic cohort since her sophomore year and has received an academic letter each year. Jordan has also played on the Lady Yellowjackets Volleyball and Swim Teams where she lettered in athletics each year she competed. Jordan is responsible and trusted by her peers and was chosen as a Captain of the Swim Team her senior year. Jordan is also a two-year member of the National Honor Society and has participated in Math Relays, Academic Team, and many productions with Center's theatre company, Players 58. Outside of school, she has stayed involved in her church, volunteered at both Vacation Bible School and National Youth Gathering, assisted the Lutheran Urban Mission Agency (LUMA) in community outreach, and worked a part-time job. Jordan has enlisted in the Army National Guard to serve her country and will receive a \$12,500 bonus, the G.I Kicker, 100% Tuition Assistance, a monthly salary, and retirement benefits. You'll go far, Jordan!



Senior Scholars

KHADIDJA SONKO



Khadidja Sonko is a beloved Center student who has attended school in the district for six years since moving to Kansas City from Senegal. Khadidja states that graduating from her English as a Second Language Program is one of her proudest achievements. Khadidja has been a straight-A student since her sophomore year—the first year she transferred out of her ESL English class and enrolled in a schedule of nearly all Honors or AP classes. During every one of her years at CHS she has earned a place in the Top 10% of her academic cohort and has lettered in academics each year. Khadidja has been part of the Health Occupations Student Association since

her freshman year; her goal is to one day become a physician. Khadidja is a model student who leads by example, and this natural leadership has been recognized across contexts at CHS: Khadidja has served as Vice President of HOSA and Chairman of the Spring Blood Drive organized by Center's National Honor Society. Outside of school, Khadidja also volunteers at a thrift store and works a part-time job. Khadidja has been accepted at Rockhurst University, Mizzou, Westminster College, Buena Vista University, Northwest Missouri State, Indiana State University, and Roanoke College. Khadidja is a KC Scholars Recipient, earning a scholarship worth \$10,000 per year of college and is the recipient of Rockhurst's Breen Scholarship worth \$24,000. Khadidja plans to attend Rockhurst where she will study Biology. Amazing work, Khadidja!

Senior Scholars

ALICIA STEPHENS

Alicia Stephens is a 13-year Center student who will continue her studies in Nursing next year. Alicia has earned academic letters her freshman, junior, and senior years in addition to ranking in the Top 10% this year. She competed on the Yellowjacket Volleyball Team as a setter for three years and was a member of the Yellowjacket Cheer Team for two years. Alicia's maturity and responsibility have been recognized through her role as a Captain of the Cheer Team. She is also a member of the National Honors Society. Since her junior year, Alicia has attended Herndon Career Center and has already earned the title of Certified Nursing Assistant. In addition, she has taken college-level courses through Summit Technology Academy and the University of Missouri-Kansas City to further jump-start her postsecondary career. Outside of school, Alicia works two jobs: one at Genesis Health Clubs and one at Seasons Memory Care. Alicia has been accepted into programs at the University of Missouri-Columbia, the University of Kansas, and UMKC, but she is still undecided as to where she will attend. Alicia Stephens is a KC Scholars recipient, earning a \$10,000 scholarship for each year of college. You'll go far, Alicia!



Senior Scholars

VIVIAN YANG



Vivian Yang is a first-year Center student who recently moved to Kansas City from a small town in Alabama. During her sophomore year, she was Top 15% of her class, and in her junior and senior years, she ranked in the Top 10%. Upon graduation, Vivian will have already earned college credits through dual-credit Precalculus, with potential to earn additional credits through Advanced Placement Government and Psychology courses. Vivian has demonstrated leadership through her roles as a member of the National Honors Society, the Health Occupations Student Association, and her local community gardening and eco-friendly

practices program; she is also bilingual. Outside of school, she has volunteered as a transcriber for the Smithsonian, directed calls for the North Mississippi Medical Center, and designed e-cards for pediatric cancer patients. Vivian has been accepted into the Honors College at the University of Missouri-Columbia as well as to Missouri State University. She has been awarded the Curator Scholarship from MU worth up to \$18,000 and the Academic Excellence Scholarship from MSU worth up to \$8,000. Vivian Yang plans to attend MU this fall to pursue a degree in Biology. Wonderful work, Vivian!

Center Alma Mater

Hail, O Center High School
We will be true,
To the colors high above us,
Gold and Blue.
Mem'ries ever lasting
Through the passing years,
We will always treasure them,
Through laughter and through tears,
Hail, O Center High School
We will all be true,
To the colors high above us,
Gold and Blue!

2020-2021 Academic Excellence Recognition
May 2021