



# REGION 12 SCHOOLS



## SPRING 2021

# SUPERINTENDENT'S *Letter*



Dear Residents of Bridgewater, Roxbury, and Washington,

Region 12 Schools continues to showcase how three towns unite to provide a strong and comprehensive educational school system for its children. We are proud of our educators, staff, and community members who guide our students to achieve their personal best each and every day. *“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”* – Margaret J. Wheatley. Our community has shown a great deal of care for our children. Your investment in our children and their safety permit us to help our youngest citizens to grow and thrive as students and as people.

This year, our students were able to feel safe in the nurturing environments of our classrooms and through remote learning. The goal of our educators is to meet the students where they are so we can bring them to where they can go. We may be a small district but our students are provided immense opportunities to explore their intellectual, athletic, and artistic abilities.

I hope you look through each page of this newsletter and see the evolution of our schools. We are growing and changing for the betterment of our students. Our students receive enrichment opportunities because of the investments made by our community. At Shepaug, the new science labs allow students to investigate and study science supported by modern technology and equipment. Our agriscience facilities are not just for our agriscience students; all of our students are able to engage with our animals in the barn, explore plant sciences in our greenhouse, design and build in the power structures classrooms, and explore culinary arts in the food science kitchen. The new tennis courts offer exercise for our students and community members. I invite you to explore our Shepaug campus when school is not in session to see how much we have grown. We look forward to the day when we can once again safely open our doors to the public.

Our elementary schools have made shifts to promote learning and safe socialization during the pandemic. The hallways have “airplane arms” to make sure there is safe space and markers on the floors as visual reminders of social distancing. Pool noodles allow students to play tag at recess and, with comprehensive planning, students are able to safely use the playground equipment. Within the classrooms, teachers found creative ways for students to connect and learn together. The reminders of Be Kind are not just on the walls, but it is in the hearts and minds of the students and staff.

You can find stories about Booth Free School, Burnham School, Washington Primary School, and Shepaug Valley School on social media and via email blasts. Please follow us on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or through our website. We regularly show off our talented students and staff through these platforms.

Thank you for being our partners, advocates, and cheerleaders for our students and schools. You have helped us through our challenges and made us thrive. We continue to be *“Creating opportunities for the future.”* I invite you to see what we offer Region 12 students.

Respectfully,  
Megan Bennett  
Superintendent

# BOOTH FREE, BURNHAM & WASHINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

## *The Power of Social Emotional Learning*



Social and emotional learning is the core of every elementary classroom. Fostering positive learning communities where adults and students understand and appreciate the unique strengths and needs of one another supports individuality and healthy relationships. Teachers draw inspiration from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning framework (CASEL) to integrate essential competencies of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making into daily practices. Through our Second Step social skills program, students build self-awareness by identifying their own emotions through catchy songs, real-life situations and self-reflection.

Growth mindset lessons enhance students' understanding of self and others as they develop personal passions and learning plans to achieve their goals. Students are encouraged to have an "I Can Do" attitude valuing effort and the importance of seeking out new learning opportunities and persevering through challenges.

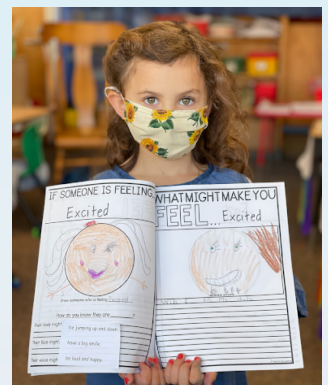
Coaching students to develop positive learning habits of how to plan, to focus and to be flexible with tasks is essential in growing self-regulation skills. Mindfulness practices help support the development of self-regulation by teaching students to manage stress and emotions, skillfully approach challenges, and promote an open mindset. To respond to the daily demands of learning and to support the well-being of students during a pandemic, our elementary classrooms integrated regular mindfulness practices into their daily schedule. Students learned how to use breathing and physical movement techniques to relax their mind and body and to use their senses to stay focused in the present moment. Books such as the *Alphabreaths* by Christopher Willard and Daniel Rechtschaffen and *Puppy Mind* by Andrew Jordan Nance along with resources such as the *Find Your Yeti Body*, *How to Practice Mindfulness* from Smiling Minds and *Fablefy 21 Days of Mindfulness Bootcamp* built a repertoire of activities for students to learn and apply mindful strategies with independence.



Although the pandemic has resulted in changes in social distancing, elementary schools have risen to the challenge of fostering relationships in creative and safe ways. Students regularly engage in teamwork, collaborative problem solving, and shared tasks. Technology has provided the ability for students to work together

with the use of Zoom, Google Classroom and other applications. Videos and virtual celebrations highlight student presentations and work samples. Adjusting the classroom space with visual markers or relocating to larger spaces has afforded the students small group interactions that promote listening skills, the exchange and respect of diverse ideas, and the strengthening of collaborative problem solving.

These learning environments empower our students to become self-aware, confident, and flexible in the face of a changing world.



# REACH PRESCHOOL

The REACH preschool program has not looked the same this year due to COVID-19 restrictions as three classrooms became one. Socially distant three and four-year-olds wearing masks is our new norm and shared materials are a thing of the past. Our teachers, paraprofessionals, specialists, students and families are making the best of the restrictions put in place to keep us all safe this year. Although the program does not look the same, the REACH team continues to plan for the upcoming year when we hope to all be together again, bringing back many of the enriching aspects of the program that are currently on hold this year.

One may be surprised at how many staff members are on the REACH team. There are three preschool teachers with a classroom paraprofessional working to support our students daily. Our team also includes related service professionals who specialize in the fields of motor, speech and language, and social emotional development. The specialists included on our team are an occupational therapist, certified occupational therapy assistant, physical therapist, speech-language pathologist and a school psychologist. Each team member plays a vital role in our preschool program. When the REACH team was asked to share some information about themselves along with their work with the REACH preschool, they shared their passion and how they love their work with our youngest students. As you continue to read, you will see what truly makes REACH so special.



## **Anthony Weymouth, Preschool Teacher**

Every part of the preschool day is considered a ‘teachable moment’. Therefore, learning happens through all activities, all day. Whether a child is seated at a teacher-directed lesson or cleaning up after playtime, learning is happening. When learning is meaningful and embedded in their daily experiences, children grow and mature while having fun. What I love most about what I do is learning from the students and watching their growth. No matter what we said, or did, the

children deserve the credit for listening, assimilating and applying any and all lessons in the most astonishing ways. Each day I am reflective and thankful for the lessons I learned as well.

## **Jill Horan, Preschool Teacher**

My favorite part of our REACH preschool program is the students! In addition, we are very fortunate to have so many resources available to us at Washington Primary School, such as our playground, gym and library. We have a wonderful staff that includes special education teachers, paraprofessionals, an occupational therapist and OT assistant, a physical therapist, a speech-language pathologist and a school psychologist too. Our amazing program is designed to provide a variety of opportunities for students to explore, create, learn, grow and, most importantly, have fun!



## **Ann Wescott, Preschool Teacher**

It has been a pleasure working with so many families in Region 12. I have enjoyed watching my students grow, learn and even graduate from Shepaug Valley School. Every year is filled with celebrations of learning, making friends, playing together and exploring the world. It’s been my pleasure to be a part of the REACH community.

## **Janice Smith, Paraprofessional**

I adore my job as a REACH paraprofessional. Our students’ curiosity and enthusiasm create magical days. We learn together, share together, and most importantly, laugh together.





**Britta Mercier, Paraprofessional**

I love that the children think they are just playing, which they are, but they are also growing and learning from each other every day. I think it is very important in a preschool that children play. I love that everyone is included no matter what their level and it's so fun to see all students grow. What's not to love about preschoolers - they make me smile and they have nothing but love to give. I love teaching and having fun at the same time!

**Monica Burnham, School Psychologist**

I love the energy and creativity the REACH students bring to our school. I work to support the behavioral and social-emotional needs of our preschoolers.



**Claire Rudolph, Occupational Therapist**

I am honored to be a part of the REACH team. We come together to collaborate and find the perfect challenge to allow each student to grow and develop from right where they are in that moment. We also get the chance to find unique solutions to support students who are facing challenges in the classroom. I provide weekly fine motor groups to promote the development of age-appropriate fine motor skills, offering more assistance to those students who may have difficulty with such tasks. This small group work is a great chance for students to model skills and behaviors to their peers and to have FUN!

**Deb Davis, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant**

I enjoy working with the REACH students and supporting them as they become acclimated to the routines and expectations of a classroom environment. In centers, which run for 30-40 minutes, we work on a variety of skills that often tie into the weekly curriculum of the classroom. We also work on letter formation, coloring and scissor skills as well as activities that relate to fine and visual motor skills. It is always such a joy to spend time with our youngest students and watch them grow.



**Rachel Gerowe, Physical Therapist**

I enjoy getting to know all the students in the program through play. I work with students with identified gross motor challenges in small groups to help them learn how to move their bodies with greater strength and control. During center time, students participate in obstacle courses or games designed to learn how to control their bodies as they move or remain still, take turns, maintain space between one another, and stop and start with control. They practice balance, building strength and endurance, and eye-hand coordination, while having a fun imaginary adventure.

**Theresa Gallagher, Speech-Language Pathologist**

I work with all of the REACH students in small groups in their classroom to enhance and promote speech and language development. Through fun and engaging activities such as singing songs around a pretend campfire and making pretend s'mores, I assist all of the children in the growth and development of their speech and language skills. We have a lot of fun at REACH and I thoroughly enjoy working with all of the children.



*The REACH team is truly special and they are looking forward to supporting many more hearts, minds and bodies in the upcoming school year!*

# SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL

## *Middle & High School*



Some areas of school life have been impacted by COVID-19 more than others. So what do music students and teachers do in a world where seventh graders know what aerosolized means and where singing and playing wind instruments are potentially dangerous acts? They get creative!



Shepaug musicians have found many ways to express their musical selves. Students began the year singing and playing instruments outside, spaced at least 12 feet apart. Our young musicians remained busy even if outdoor rehearsals and recording sessions were impossible. Many have been composing original music, using both computer-based applications and paper and pencil. They formed large percussion ensembles that rehearse and record music, including pieces composed by classmates. Students have performed in “remote ensembles” submitting recorded performances that are later combined with classmates’ contributions to make a coherent piece. They have found audiences for their creations, regularly sharing recorded performances with the school community and on social media. At least one community event benefited from original music by SVS musicians: Holiday in the Depot featured a broadcast of choral recordings.

Everyone has learned to play the drums and many students are loving it! Students have become more comfortable in front of the camera. Singers who previously shied away from solos have produced many recorded solos that are combined with peers’ recordings to make an ensemble production. Singers and instrumentalists have gotten more individualized instruction than ever before. Students have recognized the musicianship and creativity of their peers. As SVS music teacher, Mark Obolewicz, says, “They are diving into whatever opportunity they have and they are growing in ways that I never would have anticipated.”

Shepaug music teacher, Beth Harvison, says that “Students are craving creative work and very open to risk through art.” The future is even brighter than the past.



# SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL

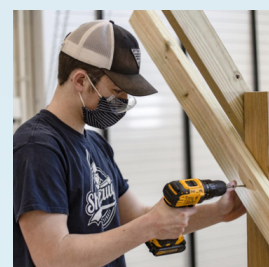
## *The Agriscience Academy*



Shepaug welcomed students into The Agriscience Academy that began its second year this past fall, 2020. The Academy also welcomed many new animals in our animal rooms and barn. Along with state-of-the-art equipment in our three power structure workshops (small engine, welding, woodworking), and professional kitchen, you will find lots of planting and growing activity in the greenhouse. It's all hands on deck as the students in the Animal, Plant, Food, and Power Structural & Technical Systems Pathways learn by collaborating with each other and the entire school and community. Projects underway include students building a shed for our sheep, students planting seeds for the spring plant sale, and students learning how to take care of a crop of newly born lambs.

Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE) are in full swing. Students are engaged in a wide variety of volunteer, research or paid agricultural projects based at school, home, the workforce or online. Our students continue to demonstrate perseverance as they work toward their goals even in the midst of our current global pandemic. The Academy has taken advantage of both in-person and virtual events for the National FFA Organization as our tenth and eleventh graders move into leadership roles. The officer team continues to meet remotely multiple times a month to plan exciting opportunities for our members at the local level. Each month students are encouraged to get involved in our Chapter meetings and scrapbooking our history (both have virtual options to participate). Our curriculum continues to evolve with the integration of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) into hands-on learning, and the addition of new Early College Experience (ECE) UConn courses.

Community contributions have included tractors and other equipment, home-based animal care, towel drives, greenhouse supplies, seeds and nursery plants, as well as monetary donations to support the students. This generosity establishes The Agriscience Academy of Shepaug Valley School as a vibrant and integral part of Litchfield and Fairfield counties. We are excited to continue our growth as we look forward to our third year welcoming students from the seven sending towns as well as Shepaug in the fall of 2021.



## Agriscience is Making a Difference in the Learning Community!

The Agriscience Academy is much more than a collection of interesting animals and displays. The facility is beautiful and is home to our horses, sheep, and alpacas which can be found outside grazing every morning. The small animal labs are full of an interesting array of exotic reptiles and other small animals. The Academy is an authentic way of educating students through real-world experiences. Our agriscience teachers have already begun to make connections with other disciplines to extend this learning to all students.

# SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL

## *Political Changing Environment*



When the events at our nation's capital were developing on January 6, Shepaug's teachers and administrators began to plan how to discuss this difficult topic with our students, understanding that history was unfolding.

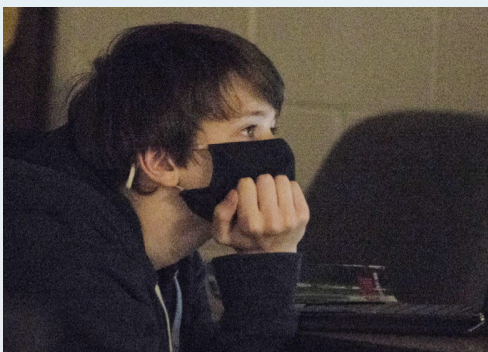
With input from Humanities teachers and other staff members, the following message was included in the morning announcements:

*"Yesterday, an event occurred that will lead each of us to examine his or her call to citizenship. As we discuss current events in our classrooms today, I ask that you remember the tenets of our Core Values and Guiding Beliefs, especially those that are associated with Answering a Call to Citizenship: Awareness, Respect, Participation and Collaboration, and Leadership. In our school, like so many places across every state, we can argue, listen, disagree, and move forward with respect. While we may and probably will disagree, all of us have a voice, and that is what makes our country such a special and powerful place to live. Be Spartans today!"*

Mr. Dennis, Humanities Department Instructional Leader, described the conversations with students as an extension of the Department's goals for purposeful discourse. "We take seriously that our job is to teach kids how to think, not what to think." Our students discussed their concerns, opinions, and attitudes about the historical events of January 6 in classrooms the next day, and at voluntary advisory meetings a week later. In the midst of this concerning, divisive event, our students took part in meaningful, purposeful conversations.

Inauguration Day was the next teachable moment for our students, as they enthusiastically watched the broadcast of our 46th president being sworn into office, a longstanding Shepaug tradition. They listened intently, spoke about their passions on both sides of the aisle, and understood the fact that they were witnessing the very essence of our fragile but enduring democracy...the peaceful transfer of power.

We are proud of our Shepaug students who are clearly traveling the path to becoming lifelong learners.



# STUDENTS LOOKING GLOBALLY

## *Model United Nations & World Affairs*



For the sixth year in a row, Shepaug Valley School was the only public school in the State of Connecticut to participate in the prestigious Harvard Model United Nations Conference. Fifteen of our students enjoyed four days discussing the toughest global challenges we face today, from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to commerce in the COVID-19 era. Our students excelled in their roles as stately policy-makers representing Peru and Estonia on a range of committees and commissions, from the United Nations Human Rights Council to the Disarmament and International Security Committee. They made our community proud with their eloquent and informed speeches and uncanny ability to break through gridlock to find compromise with individuals holding radically different views from their own.

This year's conference had a markedly different format from its 66 previous iterations. Given the circumstances, the conference was entirely remote, with committee sessions and ceremonies taking place over Zoom. Students made the most of this format, innovatively using breakout rooms and direct-message functions to their advantage. Social events took place over online multiplayer games, which afforded students the opportunity to meet with thousands of fellow delegates from hundreds of schools across the world.

Our preparation for this year's conference was quite intensive. All but one student were new to the Model United Nations, so a lot of time was spent reviewing the fundamentals of how the United Nations operates. The students learned that the bodies comprising the United Nations hold an array of legislative powers, enacting change through binding resolutions and direct interventionary measures. Students chose their committees based on personal and academic interest once they understood the responsibilities of the United Nations. They learned that their job as delegates was to represent the unique interests of their assigned country, and to make sure those interests were reflected in resolutions passed by the committee. This required a lot of research on Peru and Estonia, as students needed to digest their unique histories and geopolitical significance. Our students also spent a lot of time getting to know about the nitty-gritty of how the United Nations functions, practicing parliamentary procedure and diplomatic language.

Even though it was intimidating at first, our students rose to the occasion and upheld our school's stellar reputation with Harvard. This would not have been possible without the support of the Shepaug Valley School PTO and the Humanities Department. Our students are looking forward to spending the rest of this school year practicing to do even better at next year's conference!



The World Affairs Forum was held virtually on Thursday, April 8. The topic was "The History and Future of America's Forever Wars." Five student panelists made remarks showcasing their knowledge of foreign and domestic policies. Our keynote speaker was Mark Mazzetti, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winning foreign policy journalist with the New York Times.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## Washington Primary School

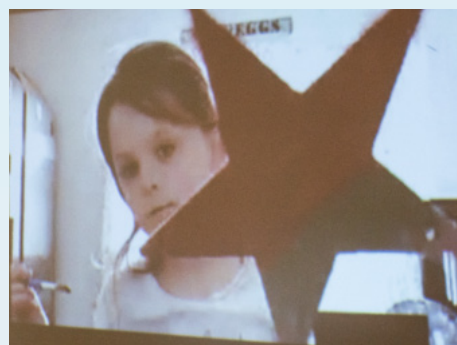
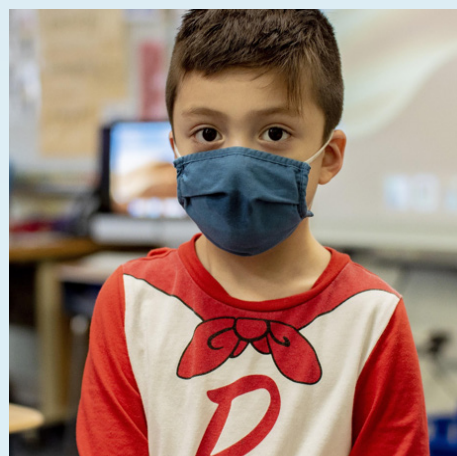


Since the impact of the pandemic, everyone has been called in a special way to rise above challenges and to weave hope and optimism through daily interactions. The “Hero in Training” theme at Washington Primary School has inspired students and staff to be “everyday” heroes, ready and willing to reach out to others and to show genuine care, kindness and friendship.

Throughout the school year, kindergarten through fifth grade classes planned a monthly community service activity for the school. Students decided on causes that they believed were important to support and organized a Spirit Day to raise awareness and contributions. Students created posters and encouraged others to participate in their efforts. Kindergartners successfully coordinated a food drive for the local food bank, while others supported hat, mitten, pajama, eyeglass or gently used book drives. These and other donations helped families and children in need within and beyond our school community.

Washington Primary School also partnered with the *Stars of Hope* foundation whose mission is to show compassion and hope through the power of art and through messages of healing. Students and staff painted images and wrote messages of hope and optimism on wooden stars that were donated to local organizations and individuals experiencing situations of stress, sadness, or loss. The creative and thoughtful stars were given to the Washington Fire Department, Washington Senior Center, Women’s Center of Danbury, Candlewood Pediatrics, Roxbury Congregational Church, New Milford First Congregational Church, Wolcott House in Torrington, and Chabad Lubavitch of Litchfield. We hope that our stars will uplift someone’s spirit in times of difficulty. We also thank the Ann Nelson Memorial Fund for donating all the wooden stars to our school for this project.

Making personal connections with family, friends and seniors of our community was another way the WPS students practiced kindness. Each student selected someone important in their lives and wrote a letter of gratitude showing a grateful mindset and a realization that others matter a great deal. Additionally, our fourth grade students developed penpals with local seniors strengthening the connection between our youth and our elderly while supporting caring and healthy connections during a very socially isolating time. The letters from our seniors were filled with wonderful stories sprinkled with a bit of interesting history.



Although the pandemic has reduced many of our traditional connections and activities with our community partnerships, it has also provided new opportunities for our school community to explore avenues that foster a caring spirit and positively impact the lives of others.

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## *Booth Free School & Burnham School*



Booth Free School and Burnham School have created a caring learning community within and beyond the classrooms including COVID-19 safety guidelines. Nestled in supportive and involved communities, our elementary schools actively partner with many organizations to enhance learning for all our students. Our focus on community embraces a wide range of stakeholders, including family and community based organizations such as the Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club, local land trusts/environmental groups, Bridgewater Fire Department, Roxbury Fire Department, Roxbury Conservation Commission, Women's Center of Greater Danbury, and others.

This year the Women's Center of Greater Danbury has provided high quality violence prevention programs virtually. Kindergarteners and first graders learned about care and kindness, safe and unsafe touches, and how to keep their bodies safe. Second graders learned about respect and how to be an upstander. Third graders experienced an interactive reading based on the book *The Recess Queen* by Alexis O'Neill and Laura Huliska-Beith helping children to understand why bullying happens and what can be done to stop it. Fourth and fifth graders learned about personal boundaries and empathy and how it's cultivated and displayed when interacting with

others. These types of programs are part of the efforts at our elementary schools to promote social-emotional health, and to provide a caring and positive learning environment.

Our partnership with the Roxbury Conservation Commission has been an impactful experience. They have provided our Booth Free School students with motion cameras, bat houses, and owl houses along Joey's Trail. It is exciting to see what lurks at night. Additionally, through grant funding, our third graders were provided a weather station to monitor indoor/outdoor temperatures, humidity, wind speed, wind direction, and rainfall. Fifth graders received an aquaponic garden/aquarium. The students are learning about aquaponic farming in the classroom. It is keeping our students engaged with a living model ecosystem that they can interact with as they watch the transformation of the energy in fish waste and solids into substances that plants such as herbs and greens can use to grow.

In addition to our community partnerships, our Booth Free School and Burnham School students find many opportunities to give back to others. This year the students collected food for their town's local food pantry. The need to support our community members is so evident especially during this year with the ongoing pandemic. Our Student Council members sponsored a "PJ Day for the Kids". All proceeds were sent to the Connecticut Children's Medical Center to support children battling cancer. Our school communities also supported two Shepaug seniors with their senior projects. The students supported Hailey Lasky with collecting baby blankets. Her senior project is raising awareness for Gastroschisis, a rare birth defect. The blankets were given to Avery's Angels to keep newborns warm in the NICU. Students also supported Jullian Cody with her senior project in working with the senior housing residents at Bernhardt Meadows, in Roxbury. Students decorated Christmas trees and provided cards for the residents. To show our appreciation for our communities and our senior citizens in Bridgewater and Roxbury, students made and shared additional holiday and winter cards, Valentine's Day cards, and beautiful heart wreaths to lift their spirits and to brighten their days.

Throughout the school year, ideas generated by the students and staff ignite the passion and highlight the importance of connecting and reaching out to others in caring ways for worthy causes.



## 2020-2021 Celebration of Young Photographers

Shepaug students had five photographs selected to be exhibited at ASAP!'s 10th Annual Celebration of Young Photographers. ASAP!'s annual event provides students in grades 6-12 the opportunity to participate in a large scale professional art exhibition and juried show. A panel of professional photographers selected 60 photos to be included in a LiveStream event that took place on December 6, 2020. The top four photographers were recognized for their outstanding work and received the Dylan's Wings Photography Award and a special prize.

Lexi Thomas, a 7th grader, won the Top Middle School Photograph. Arantza Artieda, a sophomore, and Ryan Sarbello, a junior, earned a display honor in the Photography Collective program.



"Home Alone"

**Lexi Thomas** - Grade 7



"Quarantine Litter"



"Stuck With You"

**Arantza Artieda** - Grade 10



"Closed"



"Just the Three of Us"

**Ryan Sarbello** - Grade 11

## 2021 Shepaug Valley School Scholastic Art Awards Winners

Shepaug will be represented very well at the Scholastic Art Awards this year. The Scholastic Art Awards are presented by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. Each year, the Alliance partners with more than 100 visual arts and literary organizations across the country to bring the Scholastic Awards to local communities. Art teachers submit student work from grades 7–12 to their local Art Education Association chapters. Local submissions are then juried by art professionals. Panelists look for works that best exemplify originality, technical skill, and the emergence of a personal voice or vision.

Selected works receive either Gold Keys, Silver Keys, or Honorable Mentions and are celebrated within their communities through local exhibitions and ceremonies. This year's exhibit was a virtual exhibition through the Connecticut Art Education Association website. We are proud to announce this year's Shepaug honorees:

### Gold Key

≈ TAYLOR GIROUX ≈



*Still Life Photograph*

### Silver Key

≈ ARANTZA ARTIEDA ≈



*Digital Photograph*

Gold Key winners will be considered for scholarships as well as National-level recognition.

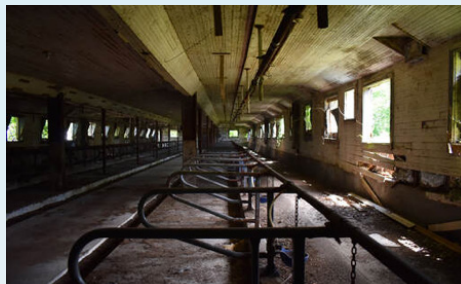
## HONORABLE MENTION



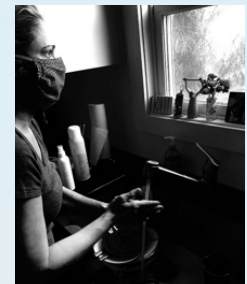
Ava Spencer  
*Pencil Portrait*



Arantza Artieda  
*Digital Photograph*



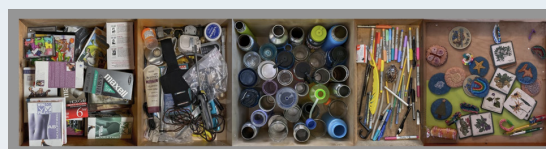
Amelia Southard  
*Photograph*



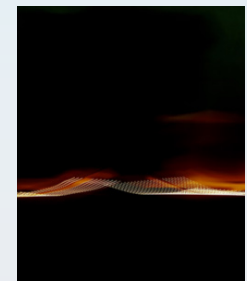
Logan Pacific  
*Documentary Photograph*



Henry James  
*Photograph*



Henry James  
*Photograph*



Cade Sivick  
*Digital Illustration*

## CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS ART AWARDS

The Connecticut Association of Schools annually honors two outstanding seniors from each of the member schools in the state who excel in the performing or visual arts. Students are chosen by their teachers and must possess the qualities of scholarship, leadership, and most importantly, must excel in one or more of the performing or visual arts.

This year the art award was given to **Sydney Vidal** and **Wyatt King**



Sydney Vidal is an outstanding photographer. Her composition and editing skills were evident in her successful 2020 AP portfolio focusing on the patterns and rhythms found in nature. She captured a unique view of our world. Sydney is also focusing on the business of photography through her senior project. As she plans to attend University of Denver to study both Studio Art and Environmental studies, we look forward to seeing how her photography career evolves.



Wyatt King is not only an academically gifted student but is also an artistically talented and exceptional musician. As a core member and leader of the Dramatics club, performer in the band, as well as the student director of the Fall play, his vocals and acting abilities continue to impress the Region 12 community as the roles and challenges he has taken on increase in number and scope. Congratulations Wyatt!

Shepaug is very proud of all our students' artistic accomplishments.

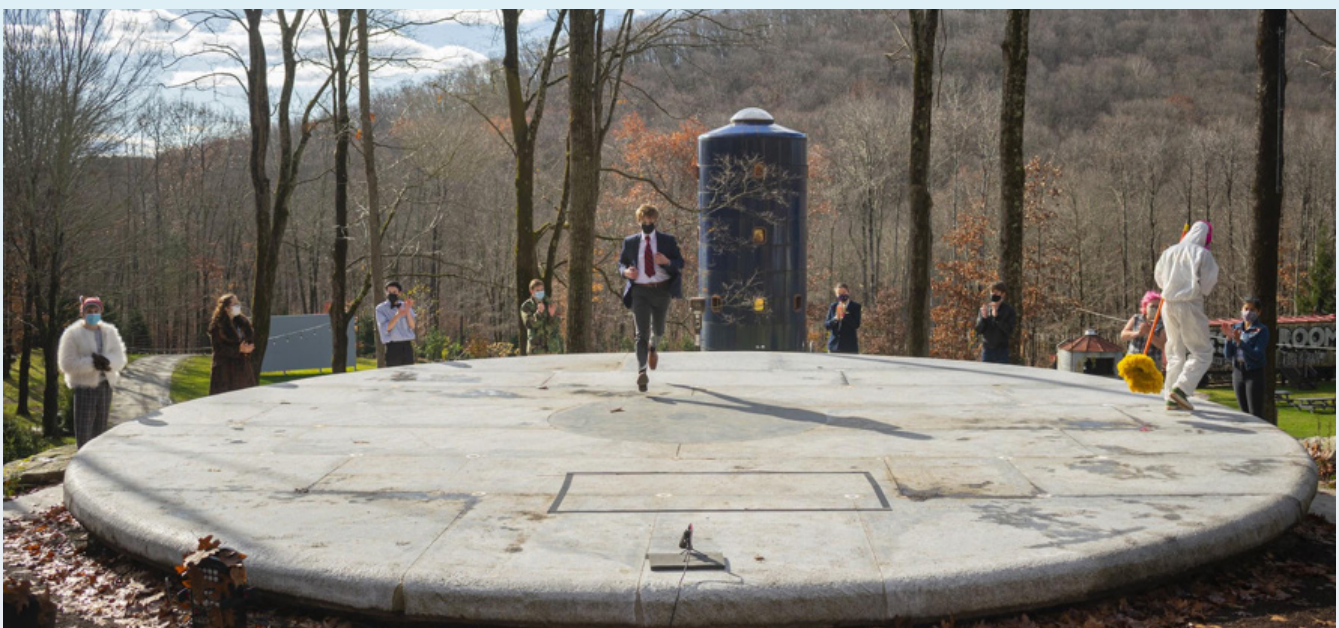
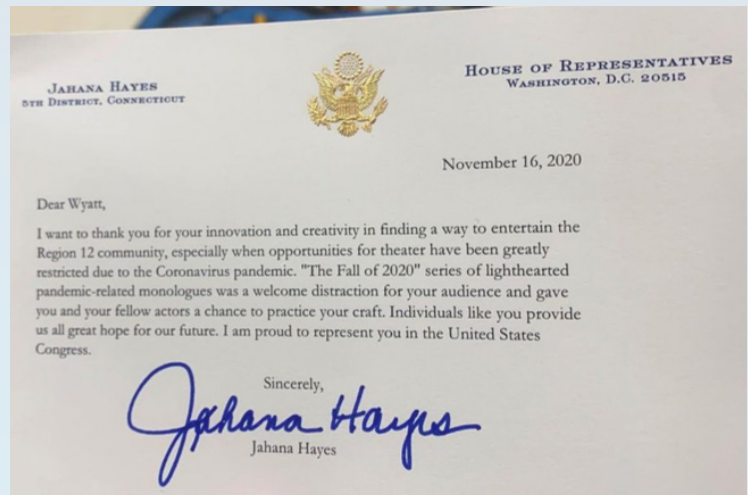
On the weekend of November 14th, students, teachers, parents and community members gathered outdoors at the Spring Hill Vineyards amphitheater in Washington Depot to witness a live production of *The Fall of 2020*, a monologue show created by Jack Buchholz and Wyatt King. It was a historic event: not only was it the first Dramatics' production performed off the school campus, it was performed in the midst of a pandemic.

The hour-long show took the audience through an array of characters that had been cooped up since the beginning of March, 2020. By combining the never-ending possibilities of a COVID-19 summer along with massive political upheaval, there was no shortage of interesting wisecracks, emotional outbursts or dramatic wordplay. A time traveler, a newscaster, a GPS computer, and a bank robber all stood together on stage and bowed to great applause.

The takeaways from achieving such a unique and successful experience are difficult to measure, but certainly cannot be ignored. Beginning on day one, each student understood the flexibility required while attempting to put on a live show. It was only a few months earlier that their production of *Little Shop of Horrors* had to be put on hold. However, each obstacle put in front of them became a stepping stone to a different problem-solving opportunity and a path to an increasingly unique and special experience for both themselves and the audience.

Wyatt King and Jack Buchholz received recognition from Jahana Hayes, a former educator, currently serving as the U.S. Representative for Connecticut's 5th Congressional District, for their creativity and innovation for the production.

Congratulations to Shepaug Dramatics for providing a much needed comic relief and paying tribute to all during this pandemic.





Every year, Shepaug Valley School students have the opportunity to take advantage of the abundant scholarship offerings made possible by the very generous Region 12 community. In the midst of the pandemic, Shepaug held its Scholarship Night in virtual fashion for the first time ever in June of 2020. This did not deter our local scholarship contributors from rewarding our students with monetary support.

For the past three years, our community has provided well over \$100,000 to our graduating students. Scholarship donors in Bridgewater, Roxbury, Washington, and Sherman make this happen on a yearly basis; a testament to our strong and proud Region 12 community.

Shepaug Valley School is a place like no other. The Region 12 community plays a vital role in our status as one of the top public schools in the State of Connecticut. Scholarships present the opportunity for students to carry on their education and put Shepaug Core Values and Guiding Beliefs into action. The culminating event, Shepaug's Scholarship Night will take place on Wednesday, June 2nd at 7 p.m. We cannot wait for another great event where our community members graciously support Shepaug's rising stars.

The Guidance Department has taken various steps to facilitate the scholarship application process electronically. Applications are available online through Naviance for the Class of 2021. Contact the Guidance Department for more information.

## Local and Regional Scholarships offered to the Class of 2021

**Bridgewater** - Bridgewater Historical Society Scholarship, Bridgewater Scholarship, Bridgewater Women's Auxiliary Scholarship, Burnham School PTO Scholarship, Persbacker Family Fund Scholarship, Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club Scholarship, Barbara M. Southworth Scholarship.

**Regional** - Bridgewater Grange Scholarship, Washington Environmental Council-Mary Anne Erichsen Memorial Scholarship.

**Roxbury** - Roxbury-Bridgewater Garden Club Scholarship, Roxbury Volunteer Fire Department Scholarship, Roxbury Scholarship Foundation Memorial Scholarships include: Joseph Thomas Awlasewicz, Deborah Ann Chin, Graydon P. & Roselle H. Cooper, Jerry Digioia, Judge Mildred A. Erwin, Reverend Charles Gerlinger, Lloyd George Green, Christy Hoffer, Raymond Hunicke, Allen S. Hurlburt, Everett B. Hurlburt, Lewis & Ethel Hurlbut, Norman & Clara Hurlbut, Brian Paul Jackson, Elloie Joram & William C. Joram III, Phyllis H. Kruse, Denise Dooley Lauriat, Gertrude E. Lingsch, Susan & Bernard Mattuck, Rejean & Maurice W. Metzler, Jr., Inga-Britta Mills, Charles A. & Janice W. Russell, Norman Shidle, Roxbury Historical Society's Robert A. Hodges, Toplands Farm Memorial, and James L. Weaver & Mary Rant Weaver.

**Shepaug Valley School** - Ken Cornet Memorial Arts Scholarship, Tam Farrow Memorial Scholarship, Eugene M Horrigan Scholarship for the Gentleness of Spirit, Tyler Horrigan Scholarship, Litchfield Bancorp Scholarship, Robert & Georgianna Middlebrook Washington Art Association Scholarship, Kenneth K Mills Scholarship, Prevention Council of Bridgewater, Roxbury, Washington Scholarship, Roxbury Road Runners Award, Brian Swanson Technology Scholarship, Chris Swanson Technology Scholarship, Shepaug Valley Education Association Scholarship, Shepaug Valley School PTO Scholarship, Shepaug Valley School Student Council Scholarship, Sheree Lee Williams Scholarship.

**Sherman** - Pat Warde Scholarship. Sherman Higher Education Fund Scholarships include: Mary Hadlow, TJ Lobraico Memorial, and Anah C. Munch.

**Washington** - American Legion-Edward Weeks Memorial Scholarship, Robert J. Benham, Jr. Scholarship, Cabot Scholarship, Colonel James J. Hull Scholarship, Lions Club of Washington Scholarship, Evelyn Blake Miles DAR Scholarship, New Preston Women's Club-Jackson Averill Scholarship, C. Hugh P. Silk Memorial Rotary Scholarship, Washington Business Association Scholarship, Washington Scholarship Fund, Washington Volunteer Fire Department Scholarship.

## Career Café



The College and Career Center offers relevant and meaningful activities and programs for all Shepaug students. We take pride in providing students with information and programming that allows them to carve out their unique path beyond the doors of Shepaug. We encourage students and parents to continue to communicate with our College and Career Coordinator, Michael McManus, with ideas or suggestions to assist in making our Center, whether virtual or in-person, inclusive to all students and their specific interests.

During the fall and winter of 2020-2021, Shepaug hosted 93 virtual college visits in the College and Career Center. Shepaug students took advantage of the opportunity to speak with college representatives to ask questions and gain insight about the school, academic programs, extracurricular activities, and more. Representatives from schools ranging from our state universities to the University of Colorado Boulder in Colorado to Trinity College Dublin in Ireland met with our students. Students from grades 10-12 attended these visits. We look forward to welcoming representatives back in person when we are able.

The College and Career Center hosted its first Career Cafe last year and is pleased to offer Cafes again this year. The Career Cafe is an opportunity for students in middle and high school to take part in career exploration. Each Career Cafe takes place during an open Advisory period in the Career Center. Students were polled to see what careers they are interested in learning more about. Based on survey results, local professionals were selected to attend a virtual Career Cafe. The Career Cafes that were held during the fall and winter included:

**Paramedic/EMT - Mr. Jim McDonough, Shepaug teacher and Spencer Herron, Class of '21**  
**Police Officer - Officer Rich Innaimo, School Resource Officer, Region 12**  
**Welder - Mr. Ben Bromberg, Con Edison**

On Friday, January 22nd, the Ready to Work Panel took place. Shepaug students had the opportunity to attend this virtual event during their Advisory period. The goal of this yearly program is to expose students to different careers and give them an understanding of the qualifications and education needed. Panelists included:



**Mr. Darryl Wright, Wright Electrical**  
**Mr. Mike Buckley, Buckley Plumbing**  
**Ms. Jessica Reyes, North Atlantic Carpenters Training Fund**  
**Dr. Anne Hermans, The Agriscience Academy**



Students listened to these professionals and asked clarifying questions to better understand what it takes to work in their profession.

*If you are interested in participating in a virtual Career Cafe or Ready to Work Panel in the future, please email Michael McManus, College and Career Center Coordinator at [McManusm@region-12.org](mailto:McManusm@region-12.org).*

## The Spartan Scope



Students in the TV Production and Broadcasting course work hard to understand what makes stories newsworthy, plan how to cover their story, learn how to operate camera equipment, how to conduct effective interviews and finally, edit newscasts. While COVID-19 has stifled many of the community events that our students had covered in the past, the 2020-2021 TV Production and Broadcasting students rolled out a new show titled “The Spartan Scope”. This student-driven show engages the Shepaug student body and staff by highlighting activities, events, and human interest stories that are taking place right within our walls.

The Shepaug TV Production and Broadcasting mission was created by students. It states that their mission is to provide our entire community with relevant information and inspiring segments to positively impact our culture in an informative, honest, engaging, and caring way.



## The Spartan Chronicle



The Spartan Chronicle showcases the students at Shepaug in new and exciting ways. In an era when many newspapers are evolving to meet demand, the Chronicle is joining the trend and working hard on growing in content and our reach. This year, the Chronicle is enjoying a new look and focus, highlighting not only news and information in articles written by students but also showcasing our students in the arts, sports, and other student interests and organizations. Shepaug students are the journalists, writing the articles through their journalism classes and other efforts.

This year, the newspaper has explored students' feelings about how COVID-19 is impacting everything from classes and sports to daily life at Shepaug. There has been thoughtful and well-researched articles on the impact of distance learning as well as how the school has changed in response to the efforts of keeping our Spartan community safe. The newspaper is planning to use its platform to show off senior project work with a 'Senior Project Spotlight'. A 'College and Career' section is currently in development to give students options to explore post graduation planning.

The future for The Spartan Chronicle plans to focus on creating a printed version this spring that will be distributed to local

businesses and community venues. We want our local community to be able to enjoy the exciting things happening in Shepaug. While this has never been a part of the newspaper before, we will reach a larger audience where we can share the daily life and accomplishments of our fellow Spartans.

Come see what we have to offer at [www.thespartanchronicle.org](http://www.thespartanchronicle.org). We can be reached at [spartanchronicle@region-12.org](mailto:spartanchronicle@region-12.org).





**CONGRATULATIONS  
OWEN HIBBARD**

Congratulations to Shepaug senior Owen Hibbard, who broke the All-Time Shepaug Boys Basketball scoring record February 10th with 1,199 total career points! Owen's record is even more remarkable given two shortened basketball seasons his junior and senior year. Additionally, Owen won the Leon Veretto Sportsmanship Award as the top player in the Berkshire League.



### Girls Soccer 6-7-1

Western Connecticut Soccer Officials Association Ted Alex Sportsmanship Award Winners

First Team Berkshire League All-Star - **Eilish Crossley**

Second Team Berkshire League All-Star - **Marissa Perachi, Brooke Donaghey, Sydnie Vidal**

Honorable Mention Berkshire League All Star - **Claire Kersten**



### Boys Soccer 4-5-4

Second Team Berkshire League All-Star

**Walker Butts**

Honorable Mention Berkshire League

All-Star - **Michael Perachi**



### Field Hockey 6-6

First Team All-State - **Haylie Lasky, Brooke Mercier**

First Team Berkshire League All-Star - **Haylie Lasky,**

**Brooke Mercier, Brooke Fredericks, Grace Crispino**

Second Team Berkshire League All-Star - **Sophia Granata**

Honorable Mention Berkshire League All-Star - **Hailie Collette**



### Girls Cross Country 6-3

First Team All-State - **Eilish Foy**

First Team Berkshire League All-Star - **Eilish Foy**

Second Team Berkshire League All-Star

**Mary Katherine Eddy, Emma Perun**



### Boys Cross Country 3-6

Second Team Berkshire League All-Star

**Jakob Wild, Sam Quigley**



**Jemma Roche '15**

Jemma graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 2019 double majoring in Philosophy and Critical Social Studies with a minor in Spanish and Hispanic Studies. She studied abroad in Seville, Spain. Jemma resides and works in Stamford, CT at a boutique marketing and PR agency specializing in healthcare technology.



**Will Garrison '81**

"Here's a picture taken of me last spring with my daughters, Lucy and Rose, in the front entry of Shepaug; the same spot where I sat for my senior/yearbook photo."



**Megan Henry, '05**

Megan will be promoted to Captain in the US Army soon and in March will have competed in US Olympic trials for skeleton in hopes to represent Team USA and the US Army World Class Athlete Program at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing. The Olympic team will officially be named in December.

**Arch Williamson '59** Arch resides in Florida, is retired, married with two children and five grandchildren.

**Carol Northrup Dubourg '73** Carol resides in Winsted, CT.

**Joan Temple '74** Joan is the proud grandmother of Thea (5) and Simon (3), children of her daughter, Jenna '06.

**Jaye Stuart '74** Jaye is still walking the halls of SVS. "Once a Spartan, always a Spartan!"

**Dan Costello '81** Dan is a middle school principal in Maynard, MA. "Has it really been 40 years since graduation? Happy thoughts to all the Spartans out there!"

**Roderick Wyant '82** Roderick is a Washington Zoning Board of Appeals member, employed at Frederick Gunn School as a night watchman. "Hoping all Shepaug Class of '82 are doing well."

**Brian Fitterman '85** Brian lives in Westbrook, CT, has two children and two step children, and has been working for Eversource for over 30 years.

**Randy Ashmore '88** Randy spent 20 years in the Coast Guard after graduating from Shepaug. He now does Emergency Management and disaster response work around the world, mostly in the maritime domain, but in other areas as well.

**Scott Werkhoven '89** Scott is still roaming Shepaug and living in Washington with his wife Lauren and future Spartans Lexie '29, Drew '31, Jacob '34 and Eloise '35.

**Chris Bruzzi '94** Chris is owner of Bruzzi Landscaping and his garden center, The Greenspot, in Northville.

**Adam Singer '94** Adam is the owner of Connecticut Fence and Landscape in New Milford, CT. James Monastero '96 James resides in NC. With 20 years in the residential mortgage business, he recently joined HomeVantage Mortgage. "Go Spartans!"

**Ann DeVivo, '96** Ann is a UConn graduate and school teacher.

**Krista Fray Tandler '98** Krista started as a nursing supervisor at Devereux Glenholme School in October.

**Caitlin Goos '00** Caitlin lives in Boston and has worked at a hedge fund for the last eight years. She has a son, Miles Eliot, born in May, 2020.

**Ali Damon Kirchberger '00** Ali lives in Woodbury with her husband, Jerrod, and is currently in her twelfth year of teaching fifth grade in Waterbury. Last fall, they opened an academic learning center in Woodbury to provide tutoring services. Ali is very involved with the Education Association and travels as a delegate to the National Education Representative Assemblies. In 2018, she was a Fund For Teachers fellow and traveled to Crete, Greece to attend The Creativity Workshop. Her most recent educational accomplishment was being awarded as a district finalist Teacher of the Year for 2020. Ali was the star of the CEA commercial "Teachers Uniting Us Everyday" in 2019 and a contestant on Wheel of Fortune in 2017.

**Natasha Little '06** Natasha has lived in Washington, DC since graduating from Shepaug. She attended George Washington University for Asian Studies and Japanese Language and Literature, studied abroad for a year at Waseda University in Tokyo, spent several years as a Diplomatic Assistant for the Embassy of Japan in DC before working on fundraising galas and receptions for the Aspen Institute, then became a program manager at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, which promotes understanding and cooperation in U.S.-Asia relations. In 2020, Natasha joined the Wyss Foundation to support land conservation and initiatives to expand economic opportunity.

**Ryan Walsh '06** Ryan is currently a structural engineer and project manager at The DiSalvo Engineering Group in Danbury, CT.



### **Claire Lyons '17**

Claire is studying Outdoor Education and Leadership at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ. "I have met incredible people and explored beautiful places in the Southwest. My classmates and I were deeply immersed into the people and landscapes of the Southwest and the Grand Canyon. Spending nights camping under the stars and days walking through and learning about canyons, forests, and river ecosystems made me realize how education should feel. It is important for Shepaug students to see the places education and life can take you. There are endless possibilities available to you in the world. It is up to you to go out and experience them."



### **Anastasia Slastushinska '18**

Anastasia is currently a junior at The George Washington University, majoring in Criminal Justice and minoring in Law and Society. In 2019, she was a congressional intern working for the U.S. House of Representatives. Anastasia is a legal analyst for The Economics Research Institute focusing largely on national/international laws as well as a chairperson in public relations of The GW Association For Women in Mathematics.

**Ryan Underwood '07** Ryan, who became involved with the local fire department after graduation, began working in the EMS field. He went through paramedic school, and started his career working in New Haven. Currently, Ryan is a firefighter/paramedic for the Ridgefield Fire Department. He lives in Bridgewater with his wife, son, and daughter.

**Ali Moravsky '11** Ali graduated with her masters degree from CCSU with a focus in special education. She is working at Danbury High School in the Special Education Department. She wrote that she was also privileged enough to co-coach the girls junior varsity soccer team, and is an avid crocheter.

**Brendan Welsh '12** Brendan is currently working for the Navy overseas.

**Melinda Fragomeli '12** Melinda is currently a pharmacist at Walgreens in Norwalk after graduating from UConn School of Pharmacy in 2019. Melinda travels to vaccinate the elderly at long term care facilities, and participates in COVID-19 vaccine clinics. "At times it's been difficult being on the frontlines during the pandemic but it has been extremely rewarding to be able to provide shots of hope for communities!"

**Kailee Munson '14** Kailee shares that one of her (many) sisters, Rachel Mikolaycik, who is also an alumni of Shepaug is welcoming her fourth baby to the world in March! Our family is so excited!!

**Ben Levine '15** Ben graduated cum laude from Dean College with a BS in Sports Management in 2019. He is a freshman boys basketball coach at Brookfield High School, a certified basketball referee and a Direct Sales Representative for Spectrum. "Shepaug has taught me how to understand the importance of the world around me. The Shepaug Experience will help you for the rest of your life. Cherish the people that you graduate with and feel lucky to have them as your friends. Go Yankees, Giants, UConn basketball, Sixers and Shepaug!"

**Emily Ward '18** Emily is a junior in the nursing program at Central Connecticut State University. Emily passed her CNA exam and has recently started clinical rotations at St. Francis Hospital on the cardiology medical-surgical floor.

**Olivia Lautier '18** Olivia is currently a junior at Ole Miss: The University of Mississippi studying Integrated Marketing Communications and dreams of becoming a sports broadcaster or marketing manager.

**Autumn Collette '20** Autumn is currently at University of Hartford studying Elementary Education. "I miss Shepaug but I also love it at UHart. The students and staff are encouraging and supportive and my classes are amazing. My appreciation goes to all the people who helped me become a better version of myself throughout my years at Shepaug."

**Nathan Douskey '20** Nathan completed one semester at UConn Waterbury and is now in Air Force boot camp.



### **SHEPAUG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION**

Our Mission is to reach, serve and engage alumni and their families; to foster connections between the school and its graduates, and to provide Shepaug with goodwill and support.

Contact Scott Werkhoven or Michael Boucher, Alumni Coordinators, via email at [SVSAlumni@region-12.org](mailto:SVSAlumni@region-12.org) to join our mailing list.

Follow Shepaug Valley School Alumni on Facebook.

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