

IN

An IN Community Magazine

Fox Chapel Area

2022-2023 Fox Chapel Area School District State of the Schools

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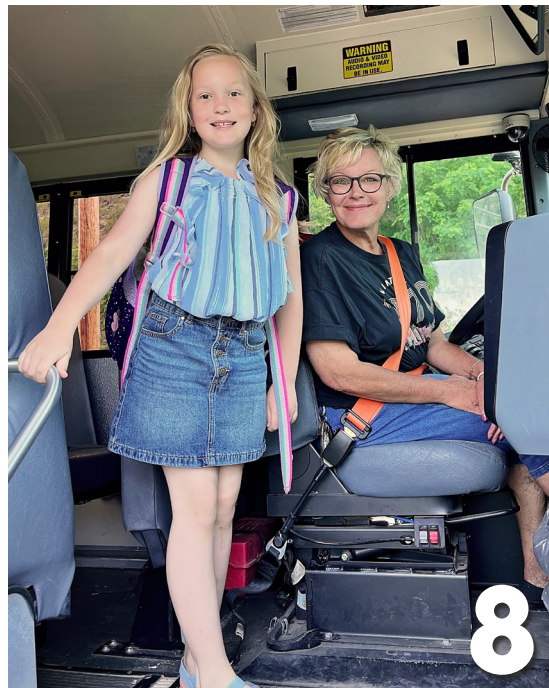
Our annual Holiday Events Guide offers a host of activities to spread some holiday cheer. From festive lights and concerts to Christmas parades and Santa sightings, there's no shortage of things to do and see!

50 Under the Christmas Tree

Here are just some of the local antique shops where you can find the perfect vintage gift for (almost) everyone on your list!

53 Special Section: Higher Education Outlook

As goals and career aspirations shift, students stepping out of high school are taking a hard look at their options for the future.



on the cover

Fairview Elementary School second-grader Aviana Schaffer stops for a photo with bus driver Melissa Shockley on the last day of the 2022-2023 school year. Aviana's mother, Kayleigh Ramadan, said her daughter adores her bus driver and asked to have this picture taken. She explains that Ms. Melissa has left a lasting impact on the children: "Each day, she greets them with a warm smile, ensures their safety during the journey to and from school, and instills a sense of comfort in parents with her responsible conduct."

IN Community is a publication dedicated to representing, encouraging and promoting the Fox Chapel area and its comprising municipalities by focusing on the talents and gifts of the people who live and work here. Our goal is to provide readers with the most informative and professional regional publication in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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FOX CHAPEL AREA

State of the Schools



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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Fox Chapel Area Community,

Each year is its own journey, filled with opportunities and obstacles, and everything in between, and the 2022-2023 school year was no exception. I'm so proud of the collaborative work of our students, staff, and the other members of our school community.

As I always do throughout the school year, I visited our schools and observed students learning, working together, finding out new things about themselves, demonstrating kindness, and also having fun! I saw our teachers create meaningful, relevant, and practical real-world lessons for our students. I witnessed our support staff members helping our students in myriad ways. I watched as administrators worked hard behind the scenes to continually identify ways to strengthen learning for everyone. I wish each member of the school community could see what I see on a daily basis. I know that I'm so very fortunate to work in the Fox Chapel Area School District. It is truly a special place.



One of the highlights of the 2022-2023 school year was the development of a new strategic vision and a related comprehensive plan. With the help of stakeholders from the entire school community, we came together to determine areas that will lead our students and staff forward. The strategic vision is the framework that will guide the district in making informed decisions for the betterment of our students and community. As a school district, we must not be stagnant. We need to always be moving forward to meet the many and varied needs of our students. As the world changes, it's important that we evolve with it. And, of course, this is just the beginning. Our new strategic vision and comprehensive plan will guide the way for us. Our various stakeholders will see these plans put into use in our daily learning, teaching, and growth. We will continue to report on the implementation of the strategic vision to ensure we are meeting the high standards that our community has come to know and expect.



As a school district, we will continue to redefine our identity. We will adapt to change. We will celebrate successes, and we will overcome obstacles. And, most importantly, our students will be the biggest part of forging the future of our district.

Thank you for being our partner in education. I'm grateful and honored to continue to lead the Fox Chapel Area School District.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac
Superintendent



FOX CHAPEL AREA COMPLETES WORK ON STRATEGIC VISION

Perhaps the largest undertaking in the Fox Chapel Area School District during the 2022-2023 school year was the completion of a new strategic vision. The monthslong process was designed to foster reflection, collaboration, and imagination. More than 100 stakeholders from across the district – from students and staff members to parents/guardians and community representatives – were part of the process.

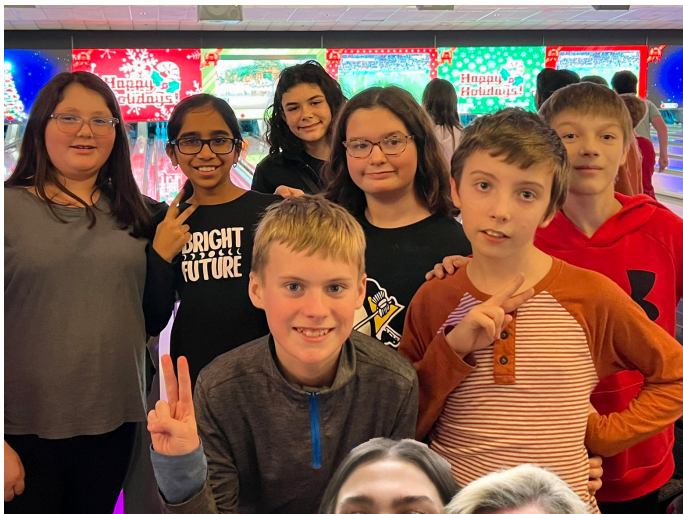
Teams embraced nine characteristics that are strongly correlated to consistently high-performing educational institutions. These nine characteristics are Clear and Shared Focus; High Standards and Expectations; Effective Leadership; High Levels of Collaboration and Communication; Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Aligned with Standards; Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning; Focused Professional Development; Supportive Learning Environment; and High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement.

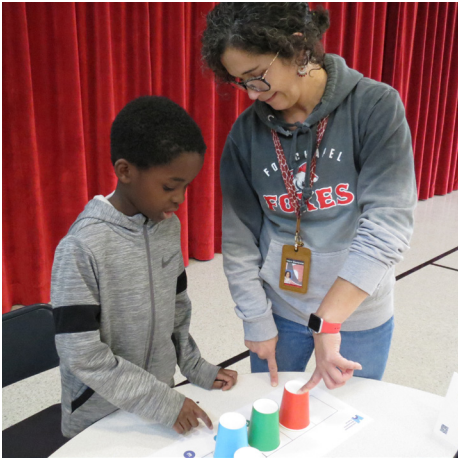


“Elevating voices from multiple representatives helped provide a more extensive picture of the desired culture and perspectives of the community so that the charted path is as representative as possible of what the community values for its school district,” says Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac, Fox Chapel Area School District superintendent.

As a first step, the district surveyed members of the school community to gather input on the district’s current vision, mission, values, core values, and beliefs, as well as other major areas of focus. The district then established four subcommittees – an overall steering committee, a Learning and Teaching Committee, a Supports for Students Committee, and a Community Engagement Committee that each met several times to guide the process.

To further elaborate on the concepts that emerged from the strategic plan survey and subcommittee meetings, the district held 90-minute focus groups in March. The focus groups engaged a wide variety of stakeholders and voices from the community at large. The focus groups were open to all residents and business representatives in the community, as well as students, parents/guardians, and staff members.





Upon completion of the development process, a main strategic vision emerged: The Fox Chapel Area School District will engage students in a learning community that values belonging and focuses on the education of the whole student through four pillars for success:

Purpose: Learning and teaching through inclusive, standards-aligned, and culturally responsive approaches that meet the needs of all students, while monitoring growth and success through a data-informed approach for continuous improvement

Passion: Providing students with authentic learning experiences that motivate them to pursue their interests with a focus on educating the whole student

Care: Fostering safe and supportive learning environments that value the diversity, individuality, social and emotional wellness, and belonging of all students

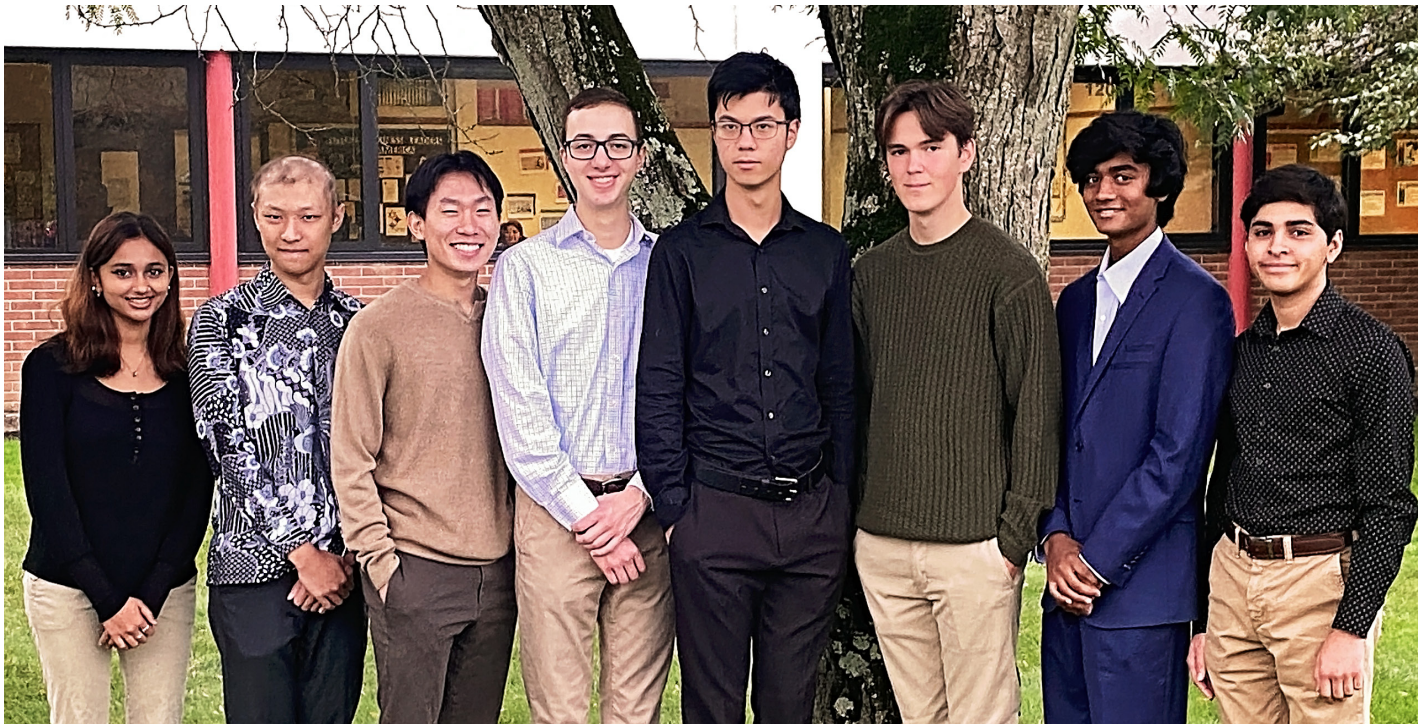
Community: Partnering and collaborating with the community. The four identified pillars will serve as a foundation for success and will be developed and monitored during implementation, according to Dr. Reljac.

"These major focus areas will anchor the work of the district," Dr. Reljac says. "The district will regularly report on its strategic vision and set new parameters to continue its progress."

The strategic vision informed the district's comprehensive plan, which was approved by the Fox Chapel Area School Board in October 2023. Pennsylvania public school districts are required to complete a comprehensive plan every three years for the state Department of Education. The comprehensive plan is dictated by a consistent planning framework for all entities that focuses on continuous improvement.

For more information about the strategic vision and comprehensive plan, please visit <https://www.fcasd.edu/about-us/comprehensive-plan>.





HIGHLIGHTS

- Nine high school seniors were designated as National Merit Semifinalists, and 16 were named Commended Students in the 2023 National Merit Scholarship Program. The Finalists from Fox Chapel Area High School were **Elijah Conklin, Aiden Dorneich, Arjun Golla, Lawrence Liu, Silas Owens, Mahitha Ramachandran, Arvind Seshan, Dylan Srodes, and Ethan Tan**. The Commended Students from Fox Chapel Area High School were **William Fera, Zoe Fitzsimmons, Zachary Gordon, Nathaniel Green, Ananth Kashyap, Paul Kullmann, Matthew Lu, Kevin Quinn, Diya Reddy, Luka Romero, Thomas Selwood, Sophie Shao, Prajval Sreenivas, Blaz Vavpetic, Daniel Wang, and Bowen Williams**. The Finalists represent less than 1% of the nation's high school seniors, and the Commended Students are among the top 5%.

- Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Arvind Seshan** won a fourth-place Grand Award in the Computational Biology and Bioinformatics category at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair 2023 in May. More than 1,600 young scientists from around the world were judged for their projects' creativity, innovation, and depth of scientific inquiry. This was Arvind's third consecutive year qualifying for the international competition.



- The Fox Chapel Area School District police department was named a recipient of the 2023 National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Model Agency Award. The recognition was given for exemplifying NASRO's triad concept of school resource officers serving as mentors, educators, and law enforcement officers. Fox Chapel Area's police force was the only department in Pennsylvania and one of only 10 from across the nation to receive the award this year.





- The Fox Chapel Area School District was named a 2022 "Lighthouse System" by AASA, The School Superintendents Association. The award recognizes districts that serve as role models for schools across the country and for their service to all learners. Specifically, Fox Chapel Area was honored in the "Early Learning Area of Redesign," also receiving recognition for its "Systematic Approach to Serving the Whole Learner with Strength in Early Learning." Only eight districts from across the nation were chosen, and selected schools serve as models of positive change in public education.

- Three high school students were named national winners in the 2023 Scholastic Art Awards. Senior **Siheng Chao** won a Gold Medal for his drawing, "The Flood," and junior **Mikayla Korczynski** won a Gold Medal for her editorial cartoon, "Would You Like a Bag?". This was the first time a Fox Chapel Area High School student has ever won an award in the editorial cartoon category. Additionally, senior **Mikhail Ion** won a Silver Medal for his portfolio, "Fantastical Creatures." For being named national Gold Medal winners, Siheng and Mikayla were invited to attend a ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

- High school senior **Arvind Seshan** and junior **Shriya Krishnamurthy** were named to the League of Innovative Students. The program is part of Digital Promise's League of Innovative Schools, of which Fox Chapel Area School District is a member. The goal of this new network is to provide a platform for and center students' voices in education. Arvind and Shriya met monthly with students from across the nation to co-design the work of the League of Innovative Students by providing feedback on the skills they want to learn and projects in which they are most interested.

- The annual district telethon was held in December 2022 and raised \$95,638. This brings the total money raised by the Fox Chapel Area community to more than \$1.1 million over the last 33 years for various local and regional charities. The telethon raised money for Fox Families Care, an organization that works to bridge the gap between the needs and resources of children and families in the school district.



- Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Alexandra Sroufe** and sophomore **Avanti Muvvala** were selected to receive 2022-2023 National Community Service Awards, presented by the United Nations Association of the USA and InnerView Technologies. The awards recognize student commitment and community service impact in support of the UN Global Goals. In addition to the National Community Service Awards, both Alexandra and Avanti were awarded Zero Hero Awards, which are given by the Kroger Co. to students for taking action to help create communities free of hunger and waste.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- High school seniors **Zoe Broyles** and **Cali Johnson** were named first-place winners in the Prevent Suicide PA PSA contest for Youth Suicide Prevention. They created a 60-second public service announcement video for the 988 National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.
- Dorseyville Middle School seventh-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy** was named one of the Top 300 Junior Innovators in the inaugural Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge (Thermo Fisher JIC). Thermo Fisher JIC is the nation's premier science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) competition for middle school students. The Top 300 Junior Innovators (including 15 from Pennsylvania) were selected from nearly 2,000 students. Rishabh was chosen based on his project, "Modeling the Detection of Pathogens in Sewage Sheds."
- High school senior **Marley Pistella** was named a top 30 finalist in the U.S. in the Junk Kouture contest. As part of the competition, Marley created a high-fashion couture outfit titled "In Bloom" from used jeans and other found fabrics. Only two students from Pennsylvania were named among the 30 U.S. finalists.



- A team of high school students was named the overall grand champion in the 'Burgh Bash National Championships, hosted by the BotsIQ manufacturing workforce program. The team members were seniors **Aiden Dorneich**, **Kevin Quinn**, and **Adam Zimmerman**; junior **Eduardo Phelan-Vidal**; sophomore **Jackson Hagler**; and freshman **Benjamin Sun**. The other members of the robotics team were senior **Samuel Kuhns**; juniors **Ava McCaffrey**, **Aiden Purcell**, and **Lucy Rygelski**; sophomores **Riley Puklus**, **Graeson Santucci**, and **Keegan Scanlon**; and freshmen **Krisztian Salvador** and **Alanna Sloss**. A total of 38 teams participated in the 'Burgh Bash National Championships, including teams from California and Kansas.

- Eight Dorseyville Middle School students qualified for national and international contests through the International Academic Competitions (IAC). Eighth-grader **Simon Richter** and seventh-graders **Lucas Ahern**, **William Henderson**, and **Diego Pelfrey** qualified for the IAC National Geography Bee Championships, and William and Lucas also qualified for the International Geography Championships. Eighth-grader **Gabriel Yassin** and seventh-graders **Jonah Driver** and **Steven Hu** qualified for the IAC National History Bowl, and Jonah also qualified for the IAC International History Olympiad. Seventh-graders Jonah Driver and **Kanisk Gaurav Prakash** qualified for the IAC National Science Bee and the International Environmental Science Olympiad.

- Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Elijah Conklin** placed eighth in the nation in the United States Geography Championships, part of the National History Bowl. Seniors **Nathaniel Green**, **Caleb Hahl**, **Arvind Seshan**, **Prajval Sreenivas** and junior **Logan Dressman** also qualified for the National History Bowl.

- Three high school students placed at the 2023 Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) National Leadership Conference in June. The team of sophomores **Kai Edwards** and **Gabriella Hample** won second place in Hospitality Management, and freshman **Joshua Shah** was awarded sixth place in Introduction to Financial Math.



- Fairview Elementary School kindergarten student **Mason Merriman** and Hartwood Elementary School first-grader **Avery Munsch** were named winners in the national 2023 WOED Writers

Contest. Mason was named a first-place winner for his story "From Foxes to Penguins," and Avery was named a second-place winner for her story "When I Grow Up."

- Senior **Casey Forst**, a Fox Chapel Area High School and A.W. Beattie Career Center student, placed first in the SkillsUSA Pennsylvania District 8 medical math competition. Casey was a student in Beattie's Introduction to Pharmacy program and also qualified for the SkillsUSA state competition.

- The Fox Chapel Area School District was named among the 2023 Best Communities for Music Education. This is the 11th year that the district has received this designation recognizing outstanding commitment to music education.



STUDENT HONORS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Arvind Seshan** was named a semifinalist in the 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. Arvind was one of nearly 630 high school seniors from across the nation, and one of only 16 from Pennsylvania, chosen as a semifinalist. Additionally, **Aiden Dorneich**, **Arjun Golla**, and **Ethan Tan** were named candidates in the program. Students are selected for the program based on their superior academic achievements, personal characteristics, and leadership and service activities.

- High school senior **Arvind Seshan** was selected as a Regional Finalist for the 35th class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program. Arvind was one of 250 students from across the nation, and one of only 10 from Pennsylvania, to be selected as a Regional Finalist. Students are selected as Semifinalists based on their academic excellence, leadership, and service demonstrated in school and community activities. Additionally, senior **Ananth Kashyap** was named a Semifinalist in the competition.

- Senior **Keonha Ye** was named a second-place winner in Pennsylvania in the fifth-annual Just Drive public service announcement video contest. Students representing 92 high schools from New Jersey and Pennsylvania created 30-second video PSAs highlighting the dangers of distracted driving. Keonha's video, "Driver's Test," encourages drivers to exercise the same responsible behavior they used to pass their driving test. Keonha's second-place PSA earned Fox Chapel Area High School \$10,000.



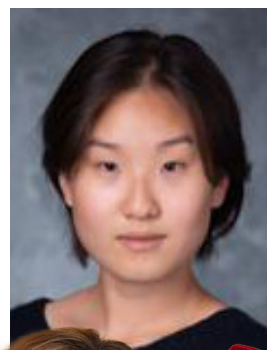
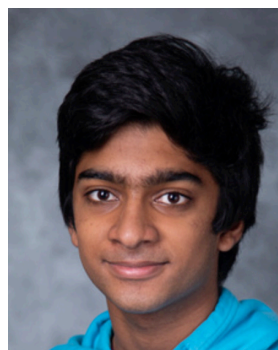
- Junior **Logan Dressman** won a first-place Diplomacy Award at the American University Model United Nations (UN) Conference. He was selected for exemplifying the attitude of an individual who prioritizes learning, mutual understanding, and respect over winning. Students from four countries participated in the conference.



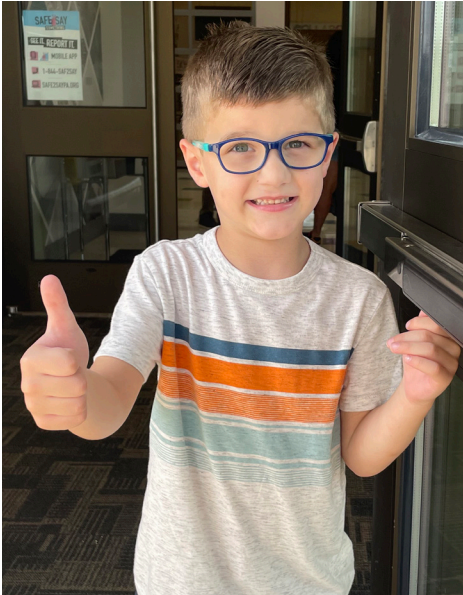
- The high school team of junior **Adhitya Thirumala** and sophomore **Moonyoung Hwang** were among the top teams in the nation in Policy Debate at the National Catholic Forensic League Grand National Tournament.

- Three Fox Chapel Area High School students were named state champions at the Pennsylvania High School Speech League Championship Tournament. Junior **Isabella White** won first place in Commentary. This is Isabella's second state championship, as she was named the state champion in Lincoln-Douglas Debate in 2021. The team of junior **Adhitya Thirumala** and sophomore **Moonyoung Hwang** were named the state champions in Policy Debate. Additionally, the team of senior **Sonny Hur** and sophomore **Swati Mylarappa** ranked among the top 10 in News Broadcasting. Also qualifying for the state tournament were junior **Lakshanya Rajaganapathi** in Informative Speaking and freshmen **Ulyana Kubini** in Persuasive Speaking and **Joanna Li** and **Zachary Rubin** in Duo Interpretation.

- Two high school seniors, **Caleb Hahl** and **Blaz Vavpetic**, were named 2023 Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA) Global Scholars Graduates. The purpose of the PSMLA Global Scholars program is to develop global awareness and competency.



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STUDENT HONORS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Three Fox Chapel Area High School students placed in a Black History Month essay contest sponsored by Stop the Violence Pittsburgh. Junior **Isabella White** was awarded first place, junior **Safiyyah Muhina** won second place, and senior **Nathaniel Green** was awarded third place.

- Eleven students placed at the 2023 Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) State Leadership Conference, and seven qualified for the FBLA National Leadership Conference. Juniors **Micah Cagley** and **Dylan Work**, sophomores **Kai Edwards** and **Gabriella Hample**, and freshman



Joshua Shah all won first place, and juniors **Harry Littwin** and **Gloria Wen** won second place. Other state place-winners were juniors **Laney Porterfield** and **Jacob Anthikad**, and sophomores **Kai Edwards** and **Jackson Hagler**. Additionally, Dorseyville Middle School sixth-grader **Matthew Bartolacci** placed second at the state conference. Ninety-one Fox Chapel Area students placed at regionals and/or qualified for the 2023 FBLA State Leadership Conference.

- Six high school students were inducted into the FBLA National Business Honor Society: senior **Stella Ruane** and juniors **Annalese Bartolacci**, **Maria Costantino**, **Whitney Jones**, **Angela Ngo**, and **Kieu Uyen Tong**.

- Three Fox Chapel Area High School students were recognized in the 2023 Trib Total Media Outstanding Young Citizen program: juniors **Camryn Eisner**, **Anna Isabella**, and **Eduardo Phelan-Vidal**. The awards are based on academic achievements, extracurricular activities, and community service.





- Fairview Elementary School third-grader **Nora Diven** won second place in the third-grade division of the Pittsburgh area U.S. Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) annual Earth Day Poster Contest. The theme of this year's contest was "Invest in Our Planet. What Will You Do?". Students were invited to design posters featuring their favorite ways to restore the Earth and its precious resources. Nora's poster encourages people to "make our Earth a better place" by planting more trees and flowers, and picking up trash and throwing it away. The contest was open to elementary students from NETL's laboratory sites in Pittsburgh, West Virginia, and Oregon.

- Fox Chapel Area High School and A.W. Beattie Career Center students senior **Casey Forst** and junior **Christina Panza** were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society.



STEM RECOGNITIONS

- Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Arvind Seshan** was named one of the top 300 scholars in the Regeneron Science Talent Search 2023. Arvind was one of only eight students in Pennsylvania, and one of 300 from across the nation – as well as from China – chosen to receive this designation. Scholars were selected based on their outstanding research, leadership skills, community involvement, commitment to academics, creativity in asking scientific questions, and exceptional promise as STEM leaders.

- Four students won first-place state awards in the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) competition: juniors **Lakshanya Rajaganapathi** and **Adhitya Thirumala**; sophomore **Etash Jhanji**; and eighth-grader **Param Thawani**. Additionally, Lakshanya was named the Pennsylvania Science Talent Search Outstanding Junior. Seven students won first-place awards as part of the 89th Annual Region 7 Meeting of the PJAS: seniors **Lawrence Liu** and **Arvind Seshan**; juniors Lakshanya Rajaganapathi and Adhitya Thirumala; sophomores Etash Jhanji and **Rohit Velankar**; and eighth-grader Param Thawani. The first-place winners qualified for the state PJAS competition.

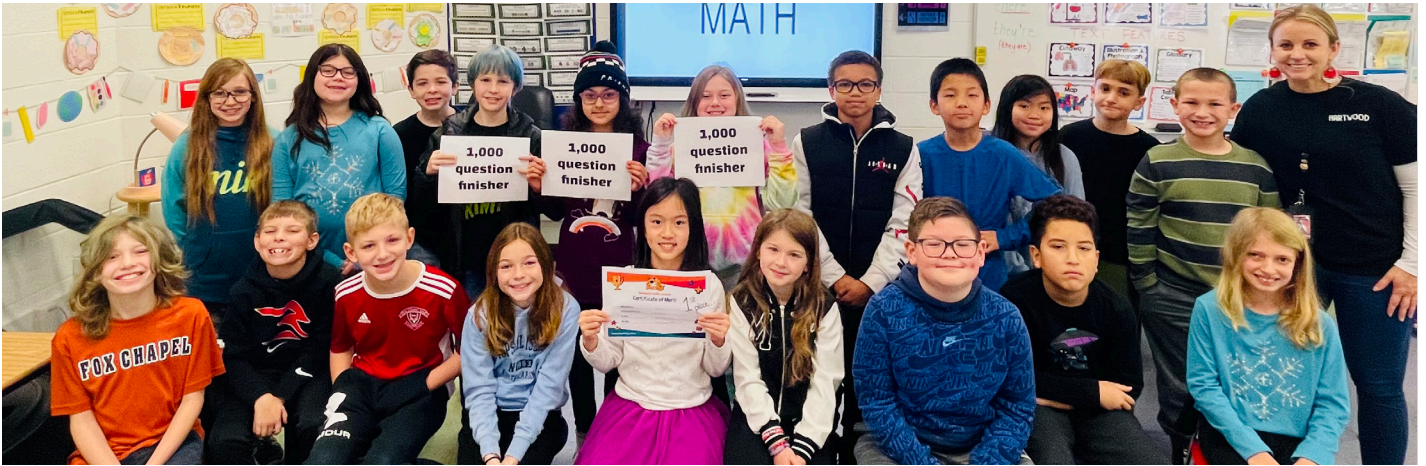
- At the Pittsburgh Regional Science & Engineering Fair, senior **Arvind Seshan** won first place in the senior division computer science/math category, sophomore **Rohit Velankar** won first place in the senior division physics & astronomy category, and sixth-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy** won first place in the junior division behavioral & consumer science category.

- Senior **Arvind Seshan** and junior **Adhitya Thirumala** were honored as part of the Class of 2022 Carnegie Science Award winners. Arvind was honored for being a Champion for STEM Equity and Inclusion, and Adhitya was honored as a Senior Division Student.

- A team of four Fox Chapel Area High School sophomores were named second-place winners in the high school division of the Powering Pittsburgh competition: **Etash Jhanji**, **Arnim Kuchhal**, **Varad Sant**, and **Rohit Velankar**. As part of the contest, the students were asked to reimagine the way the City of Pittsburgh and/or Acrisure Stadium are powered. This is the second consecutive year that this group has won an award in the Powering Pittsburgh competition.

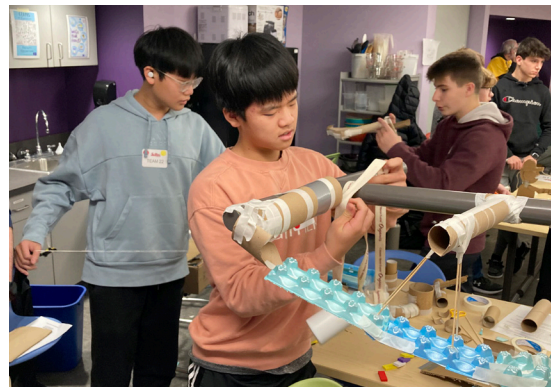
- Two Dorseyville Middle School students tied for first place and achieved perfect scores in the 2023 regional CalcuSolve competition: seventh-grader **Maddox Chiu** and sixth-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy**. Additionally, sixth-graders **Celestial Hou** and **Delaney Liu**; Fairview Elementary School fifth-grader **Shengfeng Fei**; and O'Hara Elementary School fifth-grader **Brian Xu** all tied for third place. CalcuSolve is a competition that tests students' problem-solving skills in mathematics.





• Hartwood Elementary School fourth-grader **Charlene “Cici” Xu** was named the winner of the Allegheny County Sumdog Contest in November 2022. Additionally, in September 2022, Cici finished 32nd (in the top 1%) of all 26,524 students who competed in the national Sumdog September Slam Math Contest. Leah Rea’s class as a whole, of which Cici is a member, finished in the top 10% overall in the contest. Sumdog is a free online math contest offered throughout the year and students compete against other classes and schools, locally and/or nationally.

• A team of Fox Chapel Area High School students won two awards in the Carnegie Science Center’s SciYinz Squad: Chain Reaction competition. The students won a People’s Choice award, as well as an award for Best Presentation. The participating students were seniors **James Harris, William Rice, and Sydney Ward**; juniors **Maria Costantino, Sophia Gass, and Jillian Stahl**; and sophomores **Rebecca Chang, Alex Kim, Kyle Matthew Ong, Sangyon Park, Hyunoh Ro, Gretchen Shelestak, Maria Stiger, and Samuel Ummer**. The SciYinz Squad competitions are held at the Carnegie Science Center and are challenges that encourage teamwork and creativity, all while addressing basic scientific principles and concepts.



• **Madisyn Elwood**, a Fox Chapel Area senior and A.W. Beattie Career Center student, was awarded a silver medal in the medical assistant competition at the SkillsUSA Pennsylvania District 8 contest. Madisyn was a student in Beattie’s Health and Nursing Sciences program.

• Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Lakshanya Rajaganapathi** was selected to receive the National Center for Women & Information Technology Western Pennsylvania Affiliate Rising Star Award for Aspirations in Computing. The award recognizes high school students for their aptitude and interest in information technology and computing, solid leadership ability, successful academic history, and plans for postsecondary education.

• A team of high school students received an honorable mention in the ninth annual Pennsylvania Governor’s STEM Competition. The team members were juniors **Lakshanya Rajaganapathi, Adhitya Thirumala, and Gabriella Urso**, and sophomores **Alex Kim and Swati Mylarappa**. The theme of the competition was “Innovating the Commonwealth through Collaboration and Computing.”

• Dorseyville Middle School sixth-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy** received an honorable mention in the national MathCON Finals. The goal of MathCON is to engage students in STEM outside of the classroom and encourage more students to enter STEM fields.





FINE ARTS & MUSIC RECOGNITIONS

• Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Micah Shelley** was selected to perform with the 2023 National Association for Music Education (NAfME) All-Eastern Mixed Choir. The choir featured the best junior and senior high school singers from the NAfME Eastern Division, which includes students from the northeastern U.S.



• High school freshman **Joanna Li** was named a winner in The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America National Congressional Essay Contest. Joanna was one of 48 winners from across the nation and one of only two from Pennsylvania.

• Five high school students were selected to perform with the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) All-State Ensembles. The student's chosen for the PMEA All-State Concert Band were senior **Elijah Conklin** (French horn) and juniors **Elijah Herzer** (bass clarinet) and **Chloe Kim** (clarinet). **Amelia Costello** (violin) was chosen for the All-State Orchestra, and sophomore **Marina Dunham** (bassoon) was selected for the All-State Wind Ensemble. The PMEA All-State Ensembles bring together the top student-musicians from across the state of Pennsylvania.



• Eight Fox Chapel Area High School students performed with the PMEA Region I Choir: seniors **Nathan Moore**, **Ryder Smith**, and **Sam Smith**; and juniors **Emily Harajda**, **Jack Lynch**, **Kristopher Pizzella**, and **Sophia Rike**. Senior **Lawrence Liu** was selected to be the festival's piano accompanist.



- Four high school students were selected by audition to perform with the PMEA Region I Band: senior **Elijah Conklin** (French horn), juniors **Elijah Herzer** (bass clarinet) and **Chloe Kim** (clarinet), and sophomore **Marina Dunham** (bassoon).

- Junior **Sofia Liberto** was named a winner in the Third Annual Prime Stage High School Drama Awards. Sofia won the award for best student costume design for Fox Chapel Area High School's fall play, "Arsenic and Old Lace." The awards, sponsored by Prime Stage Theatre, recognize excellence in high school drama and were open to schools from across Southwestern Pennsylvania. Six Fox Chapel Area High School students were nominated for the drama awards.

- The high school marching band won first place in the Class AA division at two Pennsylvania Interscholastic Marching Band Association competitions. The band also received awards at both competitions for the highest music, general effect, and visual scores in its division. The Marching Foxes were under the student direction of drum majors senior **Joseph Thomas** and junior **Chloe Kim**.

- Eighth-grader **Joanna Bi** won a Gold Key for her short story, "Old Age," and qualified for national judging in the 2023 Pittsburgh Region Scholastic Writing Awards.

- A total of 39 high school students won awards in the Pittsburgh Region of the Scholastic Art Awards 2023. The Gold Key winners were seniors **Siheng Chao**, **Mikhail Ion** (one for a portfolio submission), and **Jonathan Li**; juniors **Mia Pietropaolo**, **Alexandra Sroufe**, and **Gabriella Urso** (two Gold Keys); and freshmen **Raina Guzman** and **Akshay Lath**. The Gold Key winners qualified for national judging.

- High school junior **Gavin Rosszog** won a writing award from Teen Ink in the magazine's Teen's Making a Difference contest. Gavin's writing, titled "The Cadillac," won a bronze award in the nonfiction memoir category.

- Mini sagas by six high school students were published as part of the Young Writers' Twisted Tales contest: seniors **Hassan Hamadi** and **Daniel Hernandez**; sophomore **Martin Martinez**; and freshmen **Martin Puisseux**, **Benjamin Sun**, and **David Wang**.

- Dorseyville Middle School eighth-graders **Ané Giguere** and **Alyssa Poole** were selected to perform with the PMEA District 1 Junior High Chorus.

- Eighth-graders **Joanna Bi** (viola) and **Simon Goode** (string bass) were selected by committee to perform with the 2023 PMEA District 1 Junior High Orchestra.



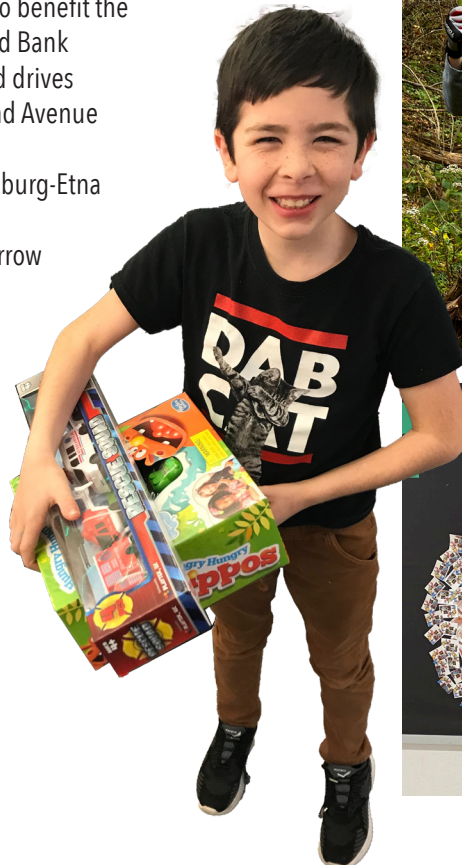


COMMUNITY SERVICE

Fox Chapel Area School District students, families, and staff members continued to place an emphasis on community service activities. Below is a list of just some of the efforts to benefit our school community and beyond.

Fox Chapel Area High School

- Teams from the high school and Dorseyville Middle School raised more than \$30,000 for the district's Special Olympics Unified Sports teams during the Cool Schools Polar Plunge at Acrisure Stadium. This was the highest amount raised by a Cool Schools Polar Plunge team in Pennsylvania.
- Collected 1,352 pounds of food to benefit the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
- Sponsored four community blood drives
- Held a drive to support the Second Avenue Commons homeless shelter
- Participated in the annual Sharpsburg-Etna Earth Day Challenge
- Conducted a Gift of Life bone marrow registry drive
- Participated in a Cookies for Kids' cancer fundraiser
- Assembled luminaria for the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy Fire & Ice event
- Assisted with the stocking of trout in the Pine Creek Watershed
- Participated in a cemetery cleanup



Dorseyville Middle School

- Held a Turkey Trot which raised nearly \$13,000 for gift cards for Thanksgiving meals for local families in need
- Conducted a teddy bear drive to donate to Family House in Pittsburgh
- Made "Jared Boxes" for pediatric patients at local hospitals

All Elementary Schools

- Fifth-graders at all four elementary schools completed the Iron Giraffe Challenge, a fundraiser for Water for South Sudan. Inspired by reading "A Long Walk to Water," which details struggles after a civil war, students and staff raised more than \$2,200 through a series of fundraising activities to help ensure sustainable access to clean water and hygiene training.

Fairview Elementary School

- Helped raise \$4,287 to donate to Play it Forward Pittsburgh to provide toys and games to families in need
- Wrote letters to veterans and thank you letters to first responders



Hartwood Elementary School

- Collected hundreds of toys for Play it Forward Pittsburgh
- Raised \$1,443 for Ronald McDonald House Charities
- Created valentines and bookmarks for the residents of Harmony at Harts Run
- Visited Humane Animal Rescue and read to shelter animals

Kerr Elementary School

- Conducted a Give A Gift drive which raised more than \$2,000 to buy holiday gifts for families in need
- Held a Volunteer Fair benefiting Backpack for Hunger and raised more than \$1,300

O'Hara Elementary School

- Collected and donated 2,481 food items to the Voegtly Street Shelter and the Southwestern Veterans' Center
- Made hundreds of cards for the Southwestern Veterans' Center
- Assembled 800 care packages filled with personal care products and personal cards for the Voegtly Street Shelter



STAFF ACCOLADES

- Fox Chapel Area School District Superintendent Dr. **Mary Catherine Reljac** was named as the course content lead for the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership Program's course, "Shaping Communication Practices for Improved Leadership." In her role, Dr. Reljac developed the course design and content, and oversees its implementation for educational leaders across the state.

- The school district won 11 national awards in the 2023 National School Public Relations Association Publications and Digital Media Excellence Awards contest. Additionally, the district won 11 state awards in the 2022 Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association Excellence in Education Communications Contest. The district's winning publications were coordinated by **Bonnie Berzonski**, coordinator of communications, and **Jill Leonard**, community engagement specialist.

- Fox Chapel Area High School Lead Principal Dr. **Michael Hower** was one of 15 building administrators in the region to be named a Pittsburgh Penguins Most Valuable Principal (MVP). The honor recognizes principals who demonstrate an innovative approach to learning, continuously strive for excellence, and show a passion for their school and students. The award is sponsored by the Pittsburgh Penguins, the Grable Foundation, and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

- High school transition facilitator Dr. **Stacie Dojonovic** was a contributor to a book titled "Universal Design for Transition: The Educators' Guide for Equity-Focused Transition Planning." Dr. Dojonovic also received the 2022 Pioneer Award from the Bender Consulting Program, Student Business Leadership Program.



- Fox Chapel Area High School counselor **Rachel Machen** and librarian Dr. **Laura Ward** presented at the Pennsylvania School Librarians Association's annual conference, "Breaking Boundaries – Creating Communities." The presentation focused on the new book club at the high school, Bibliotherapy. The club is a partnership between the school counseling department and the library.

- The following employees attained 25 years of service with the district: Administration – **Donna Beley**; Fairview Elementary School – **Heather Fontana**; Hartwood Elementary School – **James DiVittorio III**; Kerr Elementary School – **Carrie Ferguson**; O'Hara Elementary School – **Adam Danielson** and **Joseph Mann**; Dorseyville Middle School – **Christopher Cutone**, **Diana DeCamp**, **Richard DeMedio**, **Catherine Gillner**, **Gregory Laun**, **Sherry Lloyd**, **Allan Quackenbush**, **Mark Walsh**, and **Angela Wilhelm**; and Fox Chapel Area High School – **Shane Billings**, **Bryan Elder**, **Joan Marangoni**, **Donna Rust**, **Heather Skillen**, **Julie Susser**, and **Lawrence Thomas**.





ATHLETIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

– A total of 883 Fox Chapel Area High School students and 566 Dorseyville Middle School students participated in interscholastic athletics.

– The boys basketball team and the boys and girls swimming and diving teams qualified for state competition.

– Individual state qualifiers were seniors **Talia Bugel** (swimming), **Emmanuel Drappatz** (swimming), **Payton O'Toole** (swimming), **Aadil Pattada** (swimming), and **Sophie Shao** (swimming); juniors **Rowan Gwin** (cross country), **Henry Koloc** (swimming), **Isabella Marcos** (swimming), **Claudia Smith** (swimming), **Anna Troutman** (indoor and outdoor track), and **Gloria Wen** (swimming); sophomores **Christian Dantey** (swimming), **Jackson Hagler** (diving), **Owen Howell** (swimming), **Grace Kovach** (swimming), **Sarah Pasquella** (swimming), **Margaret Rusche** (swimming), and **Ethan Vaughan** (cross country); and freshman **Claire Conti** (outdoor track & field).

– Seniors **Talia Bugel**, **Payton O'Toole**, and **Sophie Shao**, and sophomore **Sarah Pasquella** placed second in the state in the 400-yard freestyle relay and third in the state in the 200-yard medley relay. Additionally, Sophie finished second in the state in the 100-yard butterfly.

– The boys and girls golf teams, boys cross country team, boys and girls swimming and diving teams, and boys tennis team won section championships. The boys cross country team, boys and girls swimming and diving teams, and the boys tennis team had perfect section records.

– All high school teams had an average 3.9 QPA. Boys cross country earned a 4.02 team QPA, and girls swimming earned a 4.0 team QPA to win top honors.



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ATHLETIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Fox Chapel Area High school senior **Sophie Shao** concluded her high school career as the most decorated swimmer in Fox Chapel Area High School history. She won 28 medals over four seasons, 16 at WPIALs and 12 at the state level.

- Junior **Sydney Schutzman** was named a USA Lacrosse high school girls All-American. According to USA Lacrosse, an All-American is a player who exhibits superior skills and techniques, possesses exceptional game sense and knowledge, and embodies excellent sportsmanship. Additionally, Sydney was one of two players selected unanimously for the girls lacrosse Class 3A all-WPIAL team.

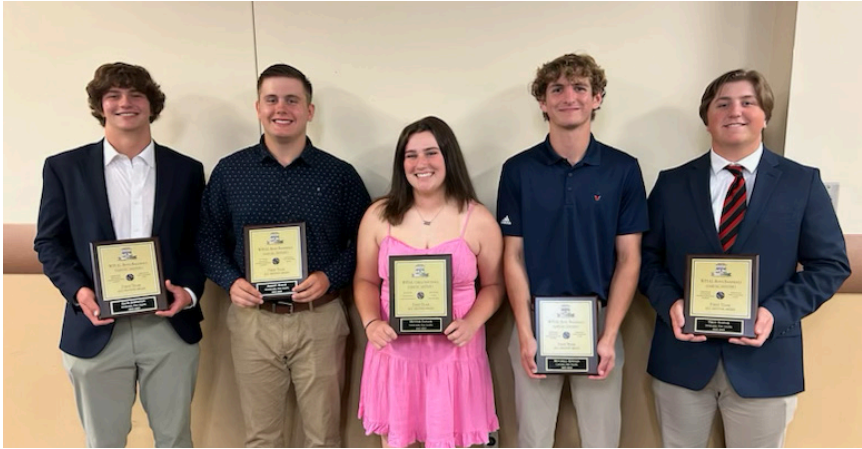
- Four swimmers were named 2022-2023 National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association All-Americans: seniors **Talia Bugel**, **Payton O'Toole**, and **Sophie Shao**, and sophomore **Sarah Pasquella** earned the honor in the 400-yard freestyle relay and the 200-yard medley relay. Additionally, **Sophie Shao** was also named an All-American in the 100-yard butterfly and the 200-yard individual medley. These student-athletes are among the top 100 in the nation in their swimming events.

- For the first time in school history, the varsity cheerleading squad earned a bid to compete at the National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida. The competition is the most prestigious high school national championship in the country. Members of the Fox Chapel Area High School competition squad were seniors **Kathryn Billings**, **Anna Li**, and **Isabella Stipetich**; juniors **Fiona Brown**, **Mia Pietropaolo**, and **Sophia River**; sophomores **Maurena Cilenti**, **Mary Ann Frauenholz**, **Gretchen Shelestak**, and **Alexandra Vita**; and freshmen **Catherine Conway**, **Trista Jackson**, and **Emma Kurtz**.

- Four members of the Fox Chapel Crew Team qualified for the Scholastic Rowing Association of America National Regatta. The team members were freshmen **Charles Hahl**, **Keitaro Inada**, **Gavin Nguyen**, and **Nikolaj Vavpetic**.

- The high school boys varsity basketball team qualified for the PIAA Class 5A playoffs. The team members were seniors **Kameron Greil**, **James Hanna**, and **Erik Wilson**; juniors **Kaden Greil**, **Frederick Hanna**, **Elliot McCann**, **Jefferson Moorefield-Brown**, **Thomas Patterson**, and **William Siegel**; sophomores **Matthew Begg**, **Lincoln Burgess**, **Caden Kaiser**, **Isaac Moser**, and **Asher White**; and freshmen **Alejandro Betancourt-Jones**, **Anderson Dockey**, **Max Melocchi**, and **John Rehak**.





- Senior **Colin Westerberg** was chosen for the Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association all-state team. He was also named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette All-Area boys soccer team, made up of the top 11 players in the WPIAL, and was named to the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review High School Sports Network Boys Fab 15 soccer team.

- Four members of the girls swimming and diving team won gold medals at the WPIAL Class 3A swimming championships. Senior **Sophie Shao** won first place in the 100-yard butterfly for the fourth consecutive year, and she won gold for the second year in a row in the 200-yard individual medley. The 400-yard freestyle relay team of seniors **Talia Bugel**, **Payton O'Toole**, and **Sophie Shao**, and sophomore **Sarah Pasquella** also won WPIAL gold.

- Sophomore **Christian Dantey** won a gold medal in the 200-yard freestyle at the WPIAL Class 3A swimming championships.

- Junior **Anna Troutman** won a gold medal in the Tri-State Track Coaches Association indoor track championships in the high jump.

- Junior golfer **David Fuhrer** won a share of the WPIAL Class 3A Section 8 individual title.

- Junior cross country runner **Rowan Gwin** was the individual first-place winner at the WPIAL Class 3A Section 4 championship.

- Senior **Trevor Katz** was named Western Pennsylvania's "Most Positive High School Athlete" in wrestling. In addition to excellence in their sport, each nominated positive athlete is required to show characteristics such as an optimistic attitude, teammate encouragement, and a passion to help others. In the spring, Trevor set a new student fundraising record for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) for raising \$250,000 for a five-state area. In recognition of his efforts, Trevor was also named an LLS Student Visionary of the Year.



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ATHLETIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Fox Chapel club ice hockey team won the Varsity Class A Blue Division of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Hockey League (PIHL) and qualified for the PIHL Penguins Cup Class A championship game. The team members were seniors **Daniel Downey**, **Mason Heininger**, **Alexander Macek**, **Quentin Miske**, and **Sam Smith**; juniors **Dylan Byersdorfer**, **Grady Cullen**, **Porter Hill**, **Isaac Jacobs**, **Maxwell Kaizer**, **Joseph Rattner**, **Nathan Sarra**, **Hayden Strittmatter**, and **Dylan Work**; sophomores **Dominic Casile**, **Trip Goehring**, **Tyler Goldstein**, and **Liam Wiseman**; and freshmen **Spencer Goehring**, **Killian Kissane**, and **Grant Watson**.

- Seven members of the Fox Chapel club ice hockey team were selected to play on a PIHL all-star team: seniors **Daniel Downey** and **Mason Heininger**; junior **Joseph Rattner**; and sophomores **Dominic Casile**, **Trip Goehring**, **Tyler Goldstein**, and **Liam Wiseman**. Additionally, Fox Chapel varsity head coach **Cam Raidna** was chosen as the coach for the Class A Blue team for the second consecutive year.

- The Dorseyville Middle School girls soccer team was undefeated during its fall season, recording one of the best campaigns in the school's history. The team was 16-0.



- Three high school boys soccer players were selected for the Western Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association all-WPIAL Class 4A team: seniors **John Paul Brach**, **George Tabor**, and **Colin Westerberg**.

- Three girls soccer players were selected for the Western Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association all-WPIAL Class 4A team: senior **Makayla Mulholland** and juniors **Katherine Friday** and **Anna Troutman**.

- Two high school field hockey players were chosen for the all-WPIAL team: seniors **Caroline Bonidy** and **Anna Drum**.

- **John Panos**, Fox Chapel Area's assistant athletic director/athletic trainer, was the recipient of the inaugural Clinical Preceptor of the Year from the University of Pittsburgh Athletic Training Program. Mr. Panos works each year mentoring and incorporating students from local universities into the district's athletic training program.

- Two seniors were selected to participate in the 26th Cager Classic all-star basketball games: **Elsie Smith** and **Kameron Greil**. The two were also selected to play in the Roundball Classic.

- High school junior **Jefferson Moorefield-Brown** was selected to play in the Roundball Classic Rising Stars Challenge.

