



Class of 2023 Report



REGION 12
SCHOOLS

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Members of our Shepaug Community,

I am honored to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of the 68 graduates in the Class of 2023. This remarkable group of individuals has left an indelible mark on our district, showcasing their academic prowess, athletic ability, and artistic talents. Their accomplishments are a testament to their dedication, passion, and the unwavering support they have received from their families, teachers, and the communities of Bridgewater, Roxbury, and Washington.

Scholastic Excellence

The Class of 2023 has proven that hard work and a thirst for knowledge are the cornerstones of academic success. Among these graduates, we have National Merit Scholars, students pursuing further study at fine colleges and universities, and some taking their knowledge and skills directly into the workforce. As their Senior Projects can attest, this class' commitment to learning and creativity is awe-inspiring and a shining example for their peers.

These students have not only excelled in the classroom but have also actively contributed to the Shepaug community in other ways. They have taken on leadership roles in clubs, organizations, and student government, driving positive change and fostering a sense of unity within our schools. Their educational achievement and dedication to the school will remain an example of excellence for generations of Shepaug students.



Athletic Triumph

The Class of 2023 enjoyed success on the field, court, and track. They have redefined our school's athletic programs, reaching state championships, breaking records, and embodying sportsmanship. Whether on the football field, the basketball court, or the swimming pool, these seniors have shown dedication, teamwork, and an unrelenting competitive spirit.

These student-athletes are champions in their respective sports and the classroom. Their time management skills and commitment to balancing academics and athletics have prepared them for success beyond high school. This class set a high bar that will inspire underclassmen to set lofty goals and persevere in achieving them.

Artistic Brilliance

The Class of 2023 demonstrated incredible talent in the arts. From the stage to the studio arts, their creative talents enriched our community and brought joy to all who have witnessed their work. These seniors have been instrumental in our school's theater productions, music ensembles, and visual arts exhibitions. Their artistic accomplishments testify to the power of creativity and self-expression. They have demonstrated that the arts are an integral part of a well-rounded education, and their passion for music, drama, and visual arts has left an enduring impact on our district.

“The future challenges us to be creative and innovative. In Region 12, we are not just looking to think outside the box. Our passion lies in rethinking the box altogether.”

In Conclusion

The Class of 2023 is a shining example of what can be achieved through hard work, dedication, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. They have raised the bar for our district's academic, athletic, and artistic achievements, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come. As they embark on their next journey, we are confident that they will carry their lesson from Shepaug to go out and positively impact the world.

To the parents, teachers, and the entire community, thank you for your support in nurturing these exceptional young individuals. We are proud of our graduating seniors, and we eagerly anticipate their incredible contributions in the years ahead.

Congratulations, Class of 2023. You have made us proud, and your futures are bright with possibilities.

Dr. Marc J. Gosselin Jr.
Sincerely,

Dr. Marc J. Gosselin Jr.
Superintendent of Schools



Leslie Holst-Grubbe, World Language Teacher at Shepaug Valley School, was selected by her peers as Region 12's 2023-2024 Teacher of the Year. Leslie was honored to accept the accolade and addressed her colleagues at convocation in August with the following message.

It's hard to believe that 10 weeks have passed since we were waving goodbye to students and looking forward to summer break. Time flies, and at my age, trust me, it goes even faster.

Despite the speed of summer, I have been able to spend quality time with family and friends; I've read some good books, eaten too much food, and otherwise enjoyed myself. I've also lived vicariously through many of your social media posts - what wonderful experiences you have shared! Of course, interspersed among your beautiful photos of exotic places, adorable children, and enviable experiences were the ever-popular teacher memes. You know the ones I mean: The "how I think I'll look during summer vacation" (picture a perky bathing beauty sipping on a fancy cocktail) versus "how I actually look during summer vacation" (picture an exhausted human lying on a couch surrounded by take-out containers). Or another favorite: The happy teacher with the caption "Ah summer, when teachers don't have to wait for a bell to use the bathroom." Still another, but without an illustration: "Teaching seems to require the sort of skills one would need to pilot a bus full of live chickens backwards, with no brakes, down a rocky road through the Andes while providing colorful and informative commentary on the scenery." Credit for this goes to author Franklin Habit. Yet here we are, looking forward to another year, anxious to get to our rooms and prepare for what we do best - to connect with our students and establish those relationships that will foster kindness, curiosity, and perseverance.

Most of you know that I officially retired last June. After 26 years, I wasn't going to set an alarm clock for o'dark 30; I wasn't going to say "NO" to any mid-week evening activity, and I wasn't going to fall victim to those Sunday night nerves. But ah, the best-laid plans! So I now have a NEW role in Region 12 - I will be a part-time instructor bringing Spanish into the lives of our K to 5 students. Learning curve? You bet!

So why come back? Well, why do any of us come back? Hopefully, the overriding reason is because we love what we do.

We come back every year because we have more to offer, we have more to share, maybe because our students make us smile (dare I say laugh?), but definitely because doing anything else just doesn't touch our hearts in the same way.

Now, I'm not going to pretend that returning to the classroom is a walk in the park. It's not. It's not all "nectar and ambrosia" as my grandmother used to say. And while some years may be easier than others, each September (oh right, each AUGUST) presents unique challenges that we have to address, to figure out, to negotiate.

But the wonderful thing about a teaching community is that generally, colleagues are willing to listen and to offer ideas. Colleagues in Region 12 demonstrate collegiality. That is to say, and I paraphrase from the Oxford dictionary, there is a sense of "companionship and cooperation between colleagues who share responsibility." Our shared responsibility is ensuring that all of our students have what they need to be successful, in and out of the classroom. We bounce ideas off of each other, and we take what works for us and make it our own.



So while the month of August is quickly coming to a close, and your uninterrupted sleep patterns of summer may not be revisited until next June, remember that you are not alone. Reach out to your colleagues, demonstrate companionship and cooperation, lend an ear and maybe a shoulder to cry on, and you will be rewarded many times over.

Finally, I want to say that it has been an honor working with you all. Thank you for your help, support and friendship along the way. Borrowing from the children's author Amy Krouse Rosenthal, I wish you all a year filled with "more" - more successes than failures, more smiles than frowns, more laughter than tears.

2023 AP SCHOLARS

Advanced Placement (AP), through the College Board, provides students the opportunity to take college level courses and earn credit at the collegiate level. Of our 68 graduates, 55% of the class completed one or more Advanced Placement (AP) courses and, additionally, 26 or 38% completed two or more AP courses during their high school career.

The AP Scholar program recognizes students who have met benchmark scores on multiple AP exams taken in the same year. There are four levels of recognition.

After another successful AP testing season, 11 students in the Class of 2023 were recognized as AP Scholars.

[AP.CollegeBoard.org](https://ap.collegeboard.org)



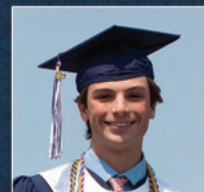
AP®

AP SCHOLARS WITH DISTINCTION

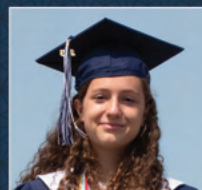
AP Scholar with Distinction is awarded to students earning an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken and a 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.



Jack G. Buchholz



Samuel W. Butts



Mary Katherine Eddy



Julianna Fontanilla

AP SCHOLARS WITH HONORS

AP Scholar with Honors is awarded to students receiving an average score of at least 3.25 on all exams taken and scoring a 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.



Maria L. Strattner



Charles J. VandenBosch

AP SCHOLARS

AP Scholar status is awarded to students receiving scores of 3 (out of 5) or higher on three or more exams.



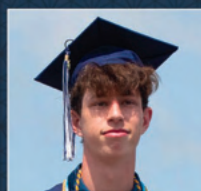
Morgan Farrison



Sophia T. Granata



Grace M. McKinnon



Matthew J. Ruffler



Alina C. Shyshkov

Class of 2023



Presented with
\$100,000+
Local Scholarship Awards



68

Graduates from

Bethel
Bridgewater
Brookfield
Danbury
New Fairfield
New Milford
Newtown
Roxbury
Sherman
Washington



26

Students received
scholarships to assist
with education



36%

Of graduates attending
secondary programs
received local scholarships

ACCREDITED BY



NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CLASS PROFILE

48

Accepted to
Postsecondary Program

46

Accepted to 4-Year Program

44

Attend 4-Year Institution

1

Gap Year

7

Attend 2-Year Institution
or Technical Institution

10

Employment

2

Military

2

Transition

INTENDED MAJORS



Animal Science
Anthropology
Architecture
Astrophysics
Automotive Technology
Aviation
Biology
Business
Carpentry
Chemical Engineering
Communications

Computer Science
Construction
Criminology
Culinary
Cyber Security
Diesel Tech
Electrical Engineering
Elementary Education
Engineering
Environmental Science
Equine Chiropractor

Equine Studies
Film Studies
Fisheries Science
Forensic Science
Heavy Machine Operations
History
International Business
Marine Biology
Marketing
Mortuary Science
Nursing

Pharmacy
Political Science
Pre-law
Pre-Vet
Psychology
Social Work
Sociology
Spanish
Studio Art
Welding

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT



The Class of 2023 was a diverse group of hard working students with 83% accepted to post-secondary institutions, and 25% pursuing direct employment or vocational training. Shepaug offers over 20 honors courses across all subjects including agriscience, art, history, language, literature, music and science, over 17 college level courses, as well as extracurricular opportunities for students to challenge themselves throughout their academic careers.

This year, Mary Katherine Eddy was named Valedictorian and is attending the University of Connecticut as a pre-med student and presidential scholar. Julianna Fontanilla was named Salutatorian and is attending University of Oklahoma to study Pharmacy.

ANSWERING A CALL TO CITIZENSHIP

The Class of 2023 contributed significant community service hours. The graduating class of 68 students contributed nearly 3,000 hours of service. This years community service recipient is Arantza Artieda.

COMMUNITY SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

- The Community Service Award recipient, Arantza Artieda, accrued over 200 hours fundraising for her church community in support of trips to underdeveloped countries.
- Fifteen students completed over 50 hours of service.
- The Class of 2023 contributed 2,972 hours of community service.



NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS



The National Honor Society (NHS) stands as a venerable symbol of scholarly excellence. As one of the oldest and largest co-curricular organizations, boasting a membership of over 1.4 million students nationwide, the NHS embodies an unwavering commitment to academic prowess. Far more than a mere organization, the NHS acts as a catalyst, fostering dedication to scholarship, cultivating a passion for altruistic service, refining leadership skills, and molding the character of secondary school students.

Approximately 1.6 million high school students enter the National Merit Scholarship program each year by taking the PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Exam in October of their junior year in high school. The top 50,000 scorers on the qualifying exam are eligible for the awards.

Anchored in its four pillars of scholarship, leadership, service, and character - the NHS shapes well-rounded individuals beyond academics. By fostering dedication to scholarship, refining leadership skills, and promoting a passion for altruistic service, the NHS remains a powerful force in molding the character of secondary school students.



NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLAR WINNER

Julianna Fontanilla received the National Merit University of Oklahoma Scholarship. Julianna is part of a distinguished group of more than 7,000 high school seniors who received National Merit Scholarships for college undergraduate study.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTION CEREMONY



On December 6th, 2022, Shepaug Valley School hosted the National Honor Society Induction Ceremony, a noteworthy event marked by a unique ritual where upperclassmen formally initiated new members. The ceremony featured a candle lighting ritual, symbolizing the illumination of academic excellence and the core principles of the NHS.

As each candle came to life, it signified a commitment to sustaining distinction and underscored the communal values within the school. The Shepaug Valley NHS Induction Ceremony, with its symbolic torch passing and radiant candles, exemplified a dedication to excellence, emphasizing the continuous legacy of achievement within the school's halls.

Local Government



READ ACROSS AMERICA

In partnership with Read Across America, Judge Alexandra DePentima visited Shepaug to read *'This Is Your Time'* by Ruby Bridges, as well as to discuss the US Constitution and answer questions about the legal system. During the engaging session, Judge DePentima emphasized the importance of fostering civic awareness among students, encouraging them to actively participate in their communities and understand the role of the legal system in shaping a just society.



APPELATE COURT VISIT

On Monday, April 17, 2023, Shepaug Valley School hosted the State Appellate Court. Students witnessed two provocative cases and gained firsthand insight into the judicial process. Through its "On Circuit" program, the Appellate Court has presented arguments at various high schools, colleges, and universities since the program's inception in 1996, and this marked the first time the court engaged with Shepaug Valley School. During the interactive question-and-answer session, students exhibited a noteworthy enthusiasm for delving into the legal intricacies presented in the two cases, actively engaging with the visiting lawyers to enhance their comprehension of the judicial proceedings.

Shepaug's Principal Dr. Donald R. Schels expressed his appreciation, stating, "Shepaug Valley School feels very lucky to have this wonderful opportunity for our students to gain deeper insight into the appellate process in our state. It is wonderful that our judiciary considers this type of outreach to be part of its mission, and a continued partnership between the courts and our schools will help our students develop a deeper sense of civic awareness and engagement."



LISTENING SESSION

Students from The Agriscience Academy engaged with Congresswoman Jahana Hayes and Congressman Glenn "GT" Thompson during the Farm Bill Listening Session at Shepaug Valley School on Saturday, July 29, 2023. Proudly hosted at Shepaug Valley School, the event allowed students to participate in discussions about crucial policies for the local agricultural community. They discussed topics like increased funding for small farms, better access to meat processing plants for smaller farmers, and support for BIPOC, young, and beginning farmers, gaining insights into addressing the impact of extreme weather and the climate crisis on local farms.

Recognizing the vital role of agricultural students, Congresswoman Hayes underscored the importance of their participation in shaping policies that influence the agricultural landscape. Emphasizing the significance of bipartisan collaboration and diverse stakeholder input, she highlighted the students' role in contributing to discussions about funding for nutrition incentive programs, equitable distribution of disaster assistance, and support for the Dairy Margin Coverage program.

Overall, the Farm Bill Listening Session not only provided valuable education for The Agriscience Academy students but also emphasized the crucial role of engaged youth in influencing local government issues and shaping the future of their community. Shepaug Valley School takes pride in hosting such impactful events that empower students and contribute to the broader civic dialogue.

The Farm Bill Listening Session at Shepaug Valley School was a vital forum for informed discussions and active civic engagement. The event underscored the pivotal role of students from The Agriscience Academy in shaping crucial agricultural policies and emphasized the enduring importance of such gatherings in building a resilient and sustainable future for our communities.



JAHANA HAYES
5TH DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

August 4, 2023

Dear Chairman Cava,

Thank you for helping to make our *Farm Bill Listening Session* with Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson at Shepaug Valley School a success. Whether you spoke, shared your contributions through our survey, or simply spread word of the event - your partnership helped to foster a robust and informative discussion on issues necessary for inclusion in the upcoming Farm Bill. I am energized and more committed to having a Farm Bill that reflects the needs of Connecticut providers and producers.

It has been my privilege to join with you in this very important effort.

Sincerely,

Jahana Hayes
Jahana Hayes

SENIOR PROJECT

The Senior Project, a year-long course at Shepaug Valley School, offers students a transformative culminating experience in our high school program. In this unique course, each student selects a distinctive project to research and develop throughout their senior year. The comprehensive evaluation encompasses key aspects such as research, implementation, technology integration, interpersonal skills, and unwavering commitment.

As the academic year concludes, Shepaug seniors showcase the fruits of their labor by defending their senior projects in public forums. This not only emphasizes the practical application of their acquired skills but also fosters a sense of accountability and confidence in presenting their work to the broader community, preparing them for future endeavors beyond the classroom. The Senior Project thus stands as a testament to Shepaug Valley School's commitment to providing students with real-world experiences that transcend traditional academic boundaries.

SENIOR PROJECTS WITH EXCELLENCE & DISTINCTION

Each year, Shepaug recognizes and awards Excellence and Distinction to students who demonstrated a strong commitment, diligence, and passion in completing their projects. In 2023, we recognized four seniors for their outstanding exploration, discovery, and execution.



Abigail Creech

Aquaculture for the Ocean

Abby's project fused original research with practical application to combat some of the ways that human behavior exacerbates damage to our oceans. Abby grew corals from polyps in a home tank. She used experimental conditions to determine which factors of lighting, filtration, materials, and nutrients could best lead to a thriving habitat for reef corals. She ended up learning more than she expected about programming home electronics, fixing faulty pumps, managing homicidal clown fish, and interacting collegially with globally renowned oceanographers.



Julianna Fontanilla

Flowers to Remember

Julianna studied the effects of flower arranging on memory with senior citizens. Julianna conducted a comprehensive study that met the highest standards of rigor, including an extensive literary review, multiple trials with different participants, and data analysis. She measured the accuracy of participants' memory using methodologies drawn from her research. She also studied differing styles of floral arranging. Julianna showed superior commitment to excellence and integrity to create a study with scientific integrity and validity.



Rocco Massago

Bringing It To Life: The Barrel Train Express

Rocco took on the challenge this year of restoring and fabricating a lawn tractor into a barrel train. He combined traditional research with hands-on trial and error to bring the train to life. Throughout the process, he truly left no stone unturned, as he essentially stripped the tractor down to its barest elements and rebuilt them all. He kept playfulness and service at the core of his vision as well, and converted old barrels into rider seats for children. As a result of his hard work, the barrel train will be a fun memory for many children at future community events. Rocco has decided to pursue a career in restoration and fabrication.



Dante Vargas

Becoming a First Responder

Dante spent his year looking at what it takes to be a first responder. Dante used a variety of research, from in-person interviews with experts, to a visit to the Litchfield County Dispatch, to actually becoming a certified first responder. He completed a 60-hour course to certify him as an EMR (Emergency Medical Responder). Dante put his research into practice by joining the Bridgewater Fire Department. The Senior Project team was impressed by his consistency and dedication. Dante turned his research into an integral part of who he is. Through this, he is serving his community in critically important ways.

STEPHEN REICH MEMORIAL AWARD



**Jack Buchholz receives award
for exceptional citizenship.**



The Stephen Reich Memorial Award Assembly is an annual event that honors Major Stephen Reich and recognizes the outstanding achievements of exceptional students. Established in 2006 to honor one of Washington, Connecticut's favorite sons, the Award for Exceptional Citizenship is bestowed upon one student each year.

We proudly feature Jack Buchholz, the recipient of the Award for Exceptional Citizenship. Jack's unwavering dedication to our community and his embodiment of responsible citizenship make him an outstanding role model.

Region 12 Schools is committed to celebrating the enduring legacy of Major Stephen Reich.

Almost, Maine & The Lightning Thief



BEST PERFORMANCE BY A FEATURED ACTRESS IN A MUSICAL

Maria Strattner as Charon
The Lightning Thief

BEST COSTUME DESIGN AND/OR EXECUTION

Bucky Nunes, Helena Nelson & Amanda Phillip
The Lightning Thief

BEST PROPS DESIGN AND/OR MANAGEMENT

Tommy Day, Grey Pomeroy, Talon Profeta,
Marco LeClerc & Anabella Gronbach
The Lightning Thief

BEST SCENIC DESIGN AND/OR EXECUTION

Tommy Day, Grey Pomeroy, Talon Profeta,
Cooper Awlasewicz, Marco LeClerc
& Annabella Gronbach
Almost, Maine

BEST PERFORMANCE BY A LEADING ACTRESS IN A CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL

Mollie Leonard as Percy Jackson
The Lightning Thief

BEST LIGHTING DESIGN AND/OR EXECUTION

Jack Buchholz, Ryn Hutchings
& Leona Remson
Almost, Maine

BEST STAGE MANAGEMENT

Grey Pomeroy, Tommy Day
Almost, Maine

BEST FEMALE STANDOUT PERFORMANCE IN AN ENSEMBLE PRODUCTION

Mia Francesca Melatti as Glory/Hope
Almost, Maine

BEST SOUND DESIGN AND/OR EXECUTION

Izzy Easley, Jack Samson & Saxton Wodjenski
Almost, Maine

BEST CONTEMPORARY PLAY

Almost, Maine



HALO Award Win

Saxton Wodjenski, Izzy Easley & Jack Samson
Best Sound Design and/or Execution

Almost, Maine

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS ART AWARD

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.



Performing Arts *Abigail Creech '23*

Abby is a strong leader within the High School Band. Her ability to guide, teach and perform is a great testament to her hardworking nature. She continues to amaze those around her, not only with her playing but with her wonderful disposition and attitude. Abby will attend the University of Missouri where she will pursue a career in history and journalism.

Visual Arts

Reagan Rivera '23

Reagan has been drawing since she can remember. Reagan's favorite medium is charcoal but has learned to love sculpture after taking a class at Shepaug. She says, "I loved how I was able to shape and create things exactly how I pictured them. Art has also allowed me to see and understand things from many other perspectives." She will be going to Western Connecticut State University to major in Criminology.



Athletic Award Winners

BERKSHIRE LEAGUE SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD WINNERS

FIELD HOCKEY

Juliet Eddy

CROSS COUNTRY

Faith Bargellini

Mary Katherine Eddy

Lexi Thomas

SOCCER

Kip Faison

Hayden Fisher

Andrew Konik

Hayden Myles

Marie Sprong

Luca Tammaro

Charles VandenBosch

BASKETBALL

Juliet Eddy

Marie Sprong

Lexi Thomas

Charles VandenBosch

WRESTLING

Kip Faison

INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Mary Katherine Eddy

Josephine Styranko

SWIMMING & DIVING

Faith Bargellini

Michael Campanella

Sarah Jermansen

Lily Tobey

TENNIS

Annabelle Churyk

Mary Katherine Eddy

Juliet Eddy

Kip Faison

Charles VandenBosch

John Wild

TRACK & FIELD

Wylden Abraham

Faith Bargellini

Alice Blyn

Joseph Dickey

Griffin Konik

Elliot Krebs

Gabrielle Neunzig

Krista Rickmers

Marie Sprong

SOFTBALL

Emma Mandracchia

Avery Peburn

2022-23 FIRST TEAM BERKSHIRE LEAGUE ALL-STARS

CROSS COUNTRY

Emma Perun

SOCCER

Samuel Walker Butts

Ronan Feenan

Rocco Smith

FIELD HOCKEY

Sophia Granata

GOLF

Gavin Giroux

BASKETBALL

Phil Ostrosky

SWIMMING & DIVING

Faith Bargellini

Everett Gronbach

Myles Gronbach

Collin Harty

Nathan McVay

Nick Neunzig

Emma Perun

Abigail Perun

Sarah Waters

SOFTBALL

Sophia Granata

Rachel Hofmann

Amelia Jacob

Clare Moore

BASEBALL

Griffin Blum

Jacob Conway

Collin Harty

TENNIS

Annabelle Churyk

Saoirse Crossley

Juliet Eddy

Mary Katherine Eddy

Kip Faison

Everett Gronbach

Phil Ostrosky

Charles VandenBosch

John Wild

TRACK & FIELD

Kaelan McDonald

CAS-CIAC SCHOLAR ATHLETES

Emma Perun

Charles VandenBosch

JOSEPH BABCOCK AWARD

Emma Perun

CHARLES MCGINNIS AWARD

Jacob Conway

BERKSHIRE LEAGUE SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Baseball

BERKSHIRE LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

Golf

Boys Tennis

Softball

CT TECHNICAL CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS

Northwest United Football

CIAC DIVISION V STATE CHAMPIONSHIP FINALISTS

Boys Basketball

CIAC CLASS S STATE SEMIFINALISTS

Softball

2022-23 ALL-STATE

FIELD HOCKEY

Sophia Granata

SOFTBALL

Amelia Jacob



College Acceptances



Future Education Plans

The Counseling Office of Shepaug Valley School is pleased to announce the future educational plans of the Class of 2023.

VALEDICTORIAN

Mary Katherine Eddy



SALUTATORIAN

Julianna Fontanilla



CLASS PRESIDENT

Jack Buchholz



Of the 83% who were accepted to postsecondary programs, 83% will be continuing their formal education in the Fall of 2023. These students have been accepted into a diverse range of institutions, including universities, community colleges, and vocational schools, showcasing the varied academic paths they are pursuing. The Counseling Office extends its heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2023 and wishes them continued success in their educational journeys.

Class of 2023 Matriculation

Bridgewater State University
Central Connecticut State University
Clark University
Delaware Valley University
Fordham University
Franklin Pierce University
Johnson & Wales University-Providence
Lehigh University
Lincoln Technical Institute-East Windsor
Manhattan College
Naugatuck Valley Community College
Pennsylvania College of Technology
Quinnipiac University
Roger Williams University

Skidmore College
Southern Connecticut State University
Suffolk University
Syracuse University
University of Connecticut
University of Hartford
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
University of Missouri-Columbia
University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus
University of Rhode Island
University of Scranton
University of Southern Maine
University of St Andrews
Vassar College
Western Connecticut State University



Scholarship Awards

On May 31st, Shepaug Valley High School celebrated the accomplishments of 26 seniors who were awarded scholarships by prestigious institutions. These scholarships not only reflect their dedication but also their gratitude for their contributions. The Shepaug Valley community is proud of these students and eagerly looks forward to their continued success.



AMERICAN LEGION EDWARD WEEKS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Grace Coutu

AMERICAN LEGION GAGE-ZUMPF POST 87 SCHOLARSHIP

Jack Buchholz

Charles VandenBosch

BRIAN SWANSON TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP

Theodore Valletta

BRIDGEWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

Jack Buchholz

BRIDGEWATER SCHOLARSHIP

Abigail Creech

Caitlin Murphy

Mia Wallace

C. HUGH P. SILK MEMORIAL ROTARY CLUB SCHOLARSHIP

Grace Coutu

CABOT SCHOLARSHIP

Arantza Artieda

Jack Buchholz

Grace Coutu

Charles VandenBosch

CHRIS SWANSON TECHNOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP

Mateo Ramirez

COLONEL JAMES J. HULL SCHOLARSHIP

Jack Buchholz

DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION EVELYN BLAKE MILES SCHOLARSHIP

Grace Coutu

EUGENE M.HORRIGAN SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE GENTLENESS OF SPIRIT

Olivia Schulta

GREATER NEW MILFORD BOARD OF REALTORS THE JAY SOLOMON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Alina Shyshkov

GREATER NEW MILFORD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SCHOLARSHIP

Reagan Rivera

KEN CORNET MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Mateo Ramirez

LIONS CLUB OF WASHINGTON SCHOLARSHIP

Jack Buchholz

Grace Coutu

LITCHFIELD BANCORP SCHOLARSHIP

Gabriel Wilkins

MARYANNE ERICHSEN MEMORIAL/ NATIONAL IRON BANK SCHOLARSHIP WASHINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

Abigail Creech

MIRIUM SUTRO PRICE SCHOLARSHIP

Grace Coutu

NEW PRESTON WOMEN'S CLUB

JACKSON AVERILL SCHOLARSHIP

Cade Sivick

**ROBERT & GEORGIANNA MIDDLEBROOK
WASHINGTON ART ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP**

Jack Buchholz
Gianna Campbell
Abigail Creech
Ella Waupotic

**ROSEMARY ERMINI KINDNESS
TO OTHERS AWARD**

Collin Harty

**ROXBURY SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION
MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Joseph Thomas Awlasewicz Endowment &
Roxbury Scholarship Foundation General Fund**

Saoirse Crossley

Roxbury Scholarship Foundation General Fund

Alina Shyshkov

SHEPAUG STUDENT COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP

Collin Harty
Abigail Stinson

**SHEPAUG VALLEY EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP**

Grace Coutu
Abigail Creech
Abigail Stinson

SHEPAUG VALLEY SCHOOL PTO SCHOLARSHIP

Jack Buchholz
Abigail Creech
Morgan Farrison

SHEREE WILLIAMS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Arantza Artieda
Seann Bennett

TAM FARROW MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Abigail Stinson

TYLER HERRIGAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Kaelan McDonald
Emma Perun

WALTER WRISTON SCHOLARSHIP

Grace McKinnon

WASHINGTON BUSINESS ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP

Charles VandenBosch

WASHINGTON SCHOLARSHIP FUND SCHOLARSHIPS

Arantza Artieda
Sagely Brenner
Jack Buchholz
Grace Coutu
Cade Sivick

WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT AWARD

Dante Vargas

THE WILLIAM HANDEL MAY SCHOLARSHIP

Morgan Farrison

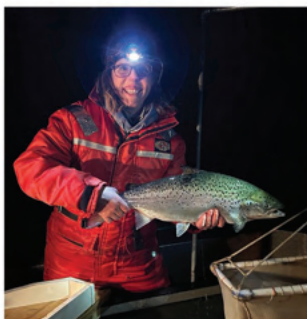


“Thank you, Scholarship Providers!

We are immensely grateful for the scholarships you've awarded us.
Your support not only eases our financial burdens but also
fuels our determination to excel in our academic pursuits.
Thank you for making our dreams more attainable.”

ALUMNI NOTES

Nadia Racz '18



Nadia attended Saint Michael's College after graduating from Shepaug. Upon graduation from Saint Michael's with a BS in Biology, she got a job working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Vermont in Sea Lamprey control. Now Nadia lives in Wisconsin where she is working on Lake Michigan to study native fish species.

Ali (Damon) Kirchberger '00



Ali and her husband Jerrod own and operate Kindergarten & Beyond Learning Center in Woodbury. They started from scratch and have built a wonderful community resource for learners of all ages. Offering private & group tutoring, ESL classes, homeschool support learning, summer learning, and even birthday parties,

Kindergarten & Beyond has grown since its opening in September of 2020. Most recently, they have become a franchise opportunity for other educators and entrepreneurs to consider buying into. All information about their current offerings, as well as the business opportunity of becoming a franchisee, can be found at their website: KindergartenAndBeyondLearningCenter.com

Meghan (Gilmore) Neri '98

Meghan recently published her first book, "Just One Bite: A Food Allergy Mom's Search for Answers". It's a memoir of her family's food allergy journey. "Just One Bite" is a great choice for newly diagnosed food allergic individuals and caregivers, to help them feel less alone. It is also a valuable tool for those looking to learn more about food allergies; family, friends, teachers, coaches, scout leaders, camp counselors, etc. You can find the book at FoodAllergyAllies.com/JustOneBite as well as Amazon and other outlets.



Kim Valentine '14 is a Pilates instructor at Equinox (Seaport & Financial District), Soma Yoga Center (North End), and Impact Pilates (Back Bay). For those in or around Boston, if you are nearby and are interested in taking either a group class or a private session on the Pilates equipment, your first session is complimentary. Feel free to reach out via email kimvalentine-pilates@gmail.com or on Instagram. Check out her website to learn more about Kim and Pilates. KimValentinePilates.com

Jack Roush '18 has completed his Masters degree, and will be starting a PhD at the London School of Economics this fall.

Anastasia Slastushinskaya '18 is a recent graduate from the George Washington University, Class of 2022, with bachelor's in Criminal Justice. She is currently pursuing a masters degree in Criminal Justice Administration while working full time as a Public Service Aide officer for the Cape Coral Police Department in Florida.

Reese Peck '20 is mindful of her time at Shepaug as she nears her college graduation. She writes that, "Shepaug holds a special place in my heart as a cornerstone for my personal, academic, and career growth. I have Shepaug to thank for helping cultivate my confidence and leadership skills, and I am eager to give back any way I can." After graduation, she will be beginning her professional career in investment banking in NYC.

Skylar Soletsky '20 is currently a junior at University of New Haven majoring in Music and Sound Recording with a minor in Communications. This spring she is doing an internship at Make Waves Recording Studio working as a vocal production engineer and assisting with social media marketing.

Adriana Barile '21 is currently a junior at the University of Connecticut majoring in Anthropology with a minor in English. Her plan is to specialize in cultural anthropology with a goal of becoming a museum curator. Even if she hasn't got it all figured out yet, she is following her passions and having fun along the way. Adriana sends a "Thank you to Shepaug for helping me become the person I am today!"

Maya Jacob '21 is in her junior year of college at Thomas Jefferson University. She is in the Pre-Physician Assistant program and is minoring in Medical Spanish. She works as a peer mentor for first year students and is a resident assistant (RA). She often runs community service projects at school as the philanthropy chair of the sorority Theta Phi Alpha. She joined the Bridgewater Fire Dept. over the summer to start volunteering as an EMT and is excited to start going on calls when she's back home!

Anne Kalognomos '73 and family enjoyed a recent month-long return visit to Litchfield County and the Connecticut Shore. The days flew by and I am back in the Florida sunshine, picking up sticks felled in the storm. Idalia's eye missed our area, others weren't so lucky.

Will Garrison '81 is still living the good life in the Berkshires. Their daughter Lucy just started at Mt. Holyoke College. She is enjoying her classes and the many traditions, including an outdoor viewing of "Dirty Dancing" ("Baby's starting Mt. Holyoke in the fall.")

Roderick Wyant '82 sends his greetings to all Shepaug Alumni. He is going into his 19th year at Frederick Gunn School as a Campus Safety Officer. In June of 2023 he was elected as Vice Chair of The Washington Republican Town Committee and is running for another term on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Hope all of you are doing great.

Rob Gollow '84 will be inducted into the Litchfield Athletic Hall of Fame in November, 2023. Crazy that a very proud Shepaug alumni is being inducted into a rival hall of fame! His 25 years coaching at Litchfield (so far) have gone by very fast. We can only assume the original Coach (Fran) Gollow will be very proud. Go Spartans!!!

Brian Fitterman '85 has been working at Eversource, 33 years now, as IT Manager of Work and Asset Management. He is married and living in Westbrook, CT.

Randy Ashmore '88 wishes everyone in the class well and asks all to smile. He is still a traveling Emergency Response and Training Manager working from the North Slope of Alaska to Argentina. His cameras still go with him wherever he goes. Stay safe, stay healthy and smile often is all he asks.

Megan Henry '05 has completed her graduate degree in Sport Psychology and is a High Performance Mindset Coach and keynote speaker for events and companies looking to streamline their organization and build a positive culture. She recently came to speak to the field hockey team about positive self talk. Her passion is helping athletes and any high performer unlock their potential. Megan also likes to speak to coaches and parents on how they can best support their athletes. She has certifications from the Flow Research Collective, is an Enlited Level 2 Coach, as well as her Master's degree from Lock Haven University.

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 provide Shepaug with goodwill and support.

Contact Scott Werkhoven, Alumni Coordinator
alumni@region-12.org to join our mailing list.

Dr. Kristine Averill '01

Kristine has been living in the Ithaca, NY area longer than she lived in her hometown of Washington. Kristine greatly enjoys her life based in the beautiful Finger Lakes Region, where she co-parents two little ones (6 and 8). After earning her PhD degree, she was a research ecologist and instructor at Cornell University for many years. Wanting to be more present for her kids and having the sense that something else was on the horizon, she set out from academic ecology to explore her inner ecology in 2020. After earning certifications in trauma-informed somatic mindfulness and inquiry, yoga, and Reiki, Kristine now helps people get unstuck, manage anxiety, regulate their nervous system, and heal trauma so they too can live the life of their dreams. This year, she expanded her solo wellness business and established Centering to Life LLC. She's deeply passionate about rediscovering the body as an incredible intelligence, listening to and trusting the body's ancient wisdom and intuition to make soul-aligned actions, and replacing burnout and anxiety with a regulated nervous system, confidence, and joy. Kristine regularly visits family and friends at her family's Averill Farm.



Deb Forese '88



Left to right - Kelly Munn, Mary (Ficara) Holoway, Michael Gorra, Michelle Wheaton, Haig Leonard, Alison (Bizer) Knox, Tori Frenkel.

Deb was honored with the Stephen Reich Memorial Award for Exceptional Citizenship on Memorial Day following her passing earlier in the year. This award was based on her life of service to our community, including her years as a volunteer in the Washington Ambulance Association. Several of Deb's classmates gathered at a memorial to celebrate her life, including those pictured.



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Senior Trip

Shepaug Valley School seniors embarked on an exciting trip to Boston for their senior excursion. The itinerary included a visit to Six Flags New England, where the students spent a fun-filled day experiencing thrilling rides and attractions.

