

VALUE Education

RyeNeck Schools
LEARN • ACHIEVE • LEAD

Graduation 2021

Superintendent's Notebook

Barbara Ferraro, Ed.D.

This year we have highlighted 22 graduates from the Class of 2021 who are representative of our student body. These students are just a snapshot of an entire graduating class of special and celebrated young men and women. All of our students make us very proud, not only for what they have accomplished, but for who they are as individuals.

The Class of 2021 is the 126th class to graduate from our high school. I have had the honor of presiding over 30 Rye Neck graduations. Each year, I am filled with pride at the accomplishments of our students. Our graduates benefit from a resource-rich and challenging program and an extremely supportive community. They leave us equipped with the knowledge and skills to be lifelong learners and creative problem-solvers. These scholars, athletes and artists are excited to move forward and are ready to make their mark on the world.

It is also important to note that the Rye Neck High School graduation is a true celebration of our entire community, representing our district's long-standing commitment to excellence in education, Panther Pride and school spirit. On behalf of the Class of 2021, I thank you for your ongoing support. Working together, we continue to create the kind of environment where students flourish and ideas take root. Please join me in wishing our graduates continued success and also in welcoming Dr. Eric Lutinski, who will be taking over as Rye Neck's superintendent of schools on July 1.

Best wishes for an enjoyable summer.



A Message from High School Principal

Tina Wilson, Ed.D.

Four years ago, this class of graduating seniors began their high school journey. Many of them entered the Performing Arts Center on Orientation Day nervous and excited for what the next four years would have in store.

The next two years and six months would mirror the experiences of those who walked the halls before them. Their time was filled with memories of their participation in the typical events and activities that make high school special. They completed group projects with classmates, participated in sports, clubs and drama productions, attended pep rallies and school dances, and of course, enjoyed simply spending time with their friends. No one could have imagined what we, along with the rest of the world, would experience next, a global pandemic.

In spring 2020, this group lost the opportunity to learn and socialize in school, play spring athletics and participate in other traditional rites of passages, including prom and Junior-Senior Day. In light of these and other challenges over the last 16 months, this group of extraordinary seniors has accomplished so much.

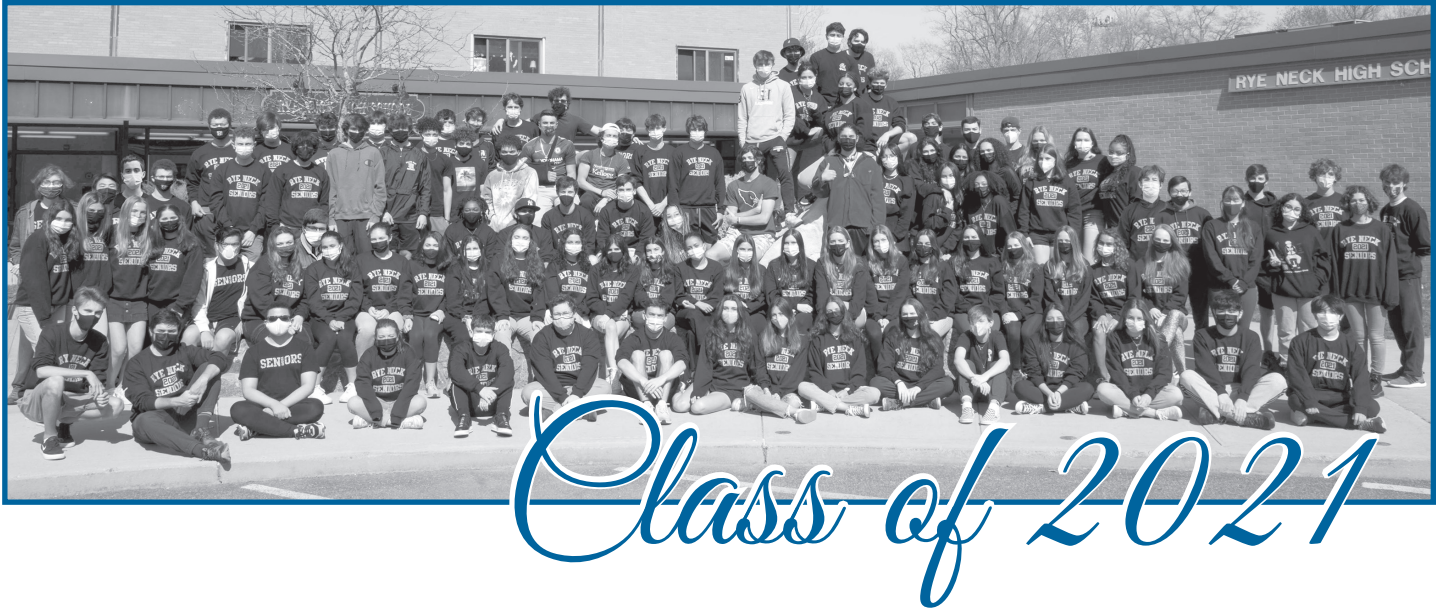
The 116 members of this graduating class received 484 acceptances to 192 colleges and universities and earned \$54,750 in national, state and local scholarships. This fall Rye Neck will be represented at 66 universities in the United States and abroad.

However, these statistics do not adequately capture those intangible elements that make this graduating class so special. This class completed 15,311 hours of community service. Faced with COVID-19 restrictions, they searched for creative ways to make a positive impact in their community. They created heartwarming videos and greeting cards for the residents of the Osborne Home and local nursing homes. They recorded read-alouds for elementary-school-aged children. These are just two examples of this group's creative and collaborative approach to problem-solving.

Like true Panthers, this graduating class has persevered with constancy of purpose in the face of adversity and the unknown. They demonstrated true strength of spirit and character. These skills will enable them to meet future challenges confidently.

Congratulations to the Rye Neck High School Class of 2021.





Cara Y. Allen*
 Jeremy M. Allen*
 Caleb Cook Alter*
 Olivia Andreoli
 Juliana Apoldo*
 Michael T. Barbieri
 Madeline J. Bayha*
 Joseph Bell
 Justin Bell
 Jesse N. Ben-Meir*
 Benaëlle M. Benoit*
 John A. Bianchini*
 Sarah Bigaouette*
 Valentina Cajas
 Aaron Caplan*
 EllaRose Capparelli
 Kimberly Ehi Carlton*
 Brandon Casamichana
 Anastasiia Cheipesh
 Ethan H. Chin
 Michael Georges Cohen*
 Gianni Attilio Coletta
 Corinne Collado*
 Clarke Edward Cooper*
 Matteo Cooper
 Florencia Naomi Coronel
 Freya Crook*
 Kevin Charles Cucchiara
 Brandon C. Cure

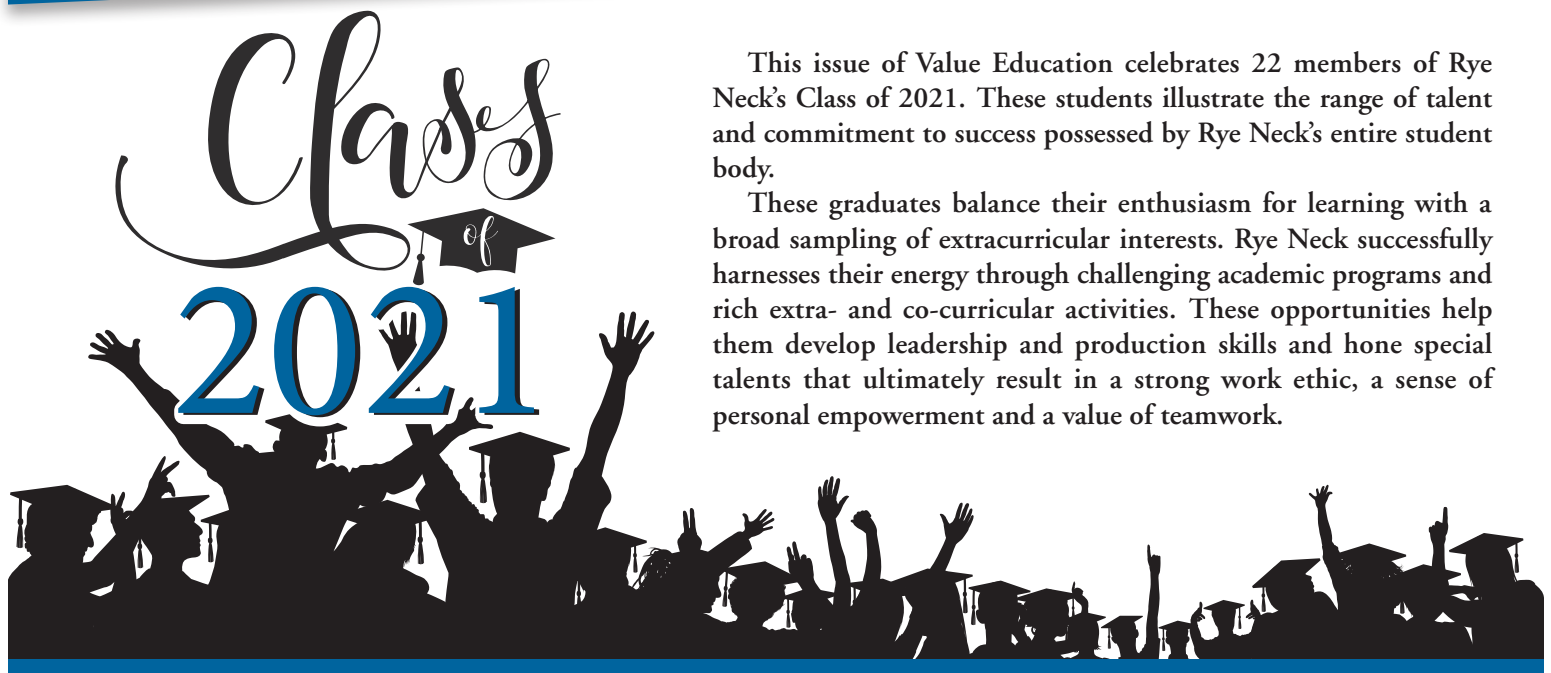
Arian W. Daly
 Bloeme Daly*
 Julia A. DeLitta*
 Steven Richard D'Errico
 Massimo DiCicco
 Peter Michael DiLillo
 Harrison Du*
 Mia Dwyer*
 Stephen J. Echeverria
 Melanie Maryanna Espitia
 Chase Fagen
 Evan A. Falco
 Sofia Figueroa
 Christian A. Frabasile*
 Lucy Friedman*
 Maura Elyse Gabriele*
 Matthew Noel Garcia
 Sophia Elizabeth Gennusa*
 Natalie Jane Goldberg*
 Paulina González Salinas
 Kayla Rose Gorin*
 Vincenzo J. Griffo*
 Dominic Marie Grullon Dume
 Alexa Isabel Guedez Ramirez*
 Isaac Guzmán
 Kaci Mary-Ann Harris*
 Erik Hennenfent*
 Jackson Lankford Hillyer*
 Julia Paul Hodys*

Kyera Hutt
 Mako Ikeda*
 Justice Markell Jewell
 Ivan Yurievich Kapustin
 Jack Francis Kenney
 Sarah Klur*
 Rina Koike*
 Elizabeth Lagani*
 Thomas Philip Lavelle*
 Zachary Leontiou*
 Ruby Isabel Liebmann*
 Julia Luceno
 Antonio D. Maffei
 Ava Sofia Meier*
 Matthew Melegrito*
 Edwine S. Mendez
 Diego R. Merlos Jr.
 Joseph Palmer Meyer
 Mallory Michaels*
 Gabriel A. Miller*
 Lily Elizabeth Morningstar*
 Lily Muller*
 Anna Isabel Murphy*
 Madeline Anne Murray*
 Vincent Napolitani
 Elliott Nevejans*
 Simon James O'Rourke*
 Sofia Palacios Ferrer*
 Luke Park*
 Lillian B. Radcliffe*
 Mario Razzao

Matteo A. Renda*
 Andrew J. Ricci*
 Michael Anthony Rivituso*
 Joshua Charles Rubin*
 Alexander Nicholas Saltus*
 Maximillian Saltus*
 Stefanie I. Santoli*
 Elona Stella Rebecca Sebbane*
 Madeline Christy Shaw*
 Sydney Simon*
 Harry Joseph Sisson*
 Dylan Aron Spencer*
 Jonas Stoeckhert
 Daniel Lee Super*
 Natalie Kristina Sutter
 Tyler Kennedy Swift
 Angel M. Tapia*
 Sofie Thonhauser*
 Noah Sam Thurer*
 Eulalia Tisnovsky*
 Kyosuke Tsunoda*
 Catherin Gisell Velasquez
 Ariana Remark Victor*
 Kathleen Radmila Victory*
 Shayna Viola*
 Joshua A. Willmore
 Naomi Grace Young*
 *National Honor Society

College Acceptances – Class of 2021

Adelphi University	Georgetown University	Rutgers University – New Brunswick	Tufts University
Allegheny College	Gettysburg College	SUNY Broome Community College	University at Albany
American University	High Point University	SUNY Buffalo State	University at Buffalo
Amherst College	Hobart and William Smith Colleges	SUNY College at Geneseo	University of California – Berkeley
Appalachian State University	Hofstra University	SUNY College at Oswego	University of California – Irvine
Arizona State University	Howard University	SUNY College at Plattsburgh	University of California – Los Angeles
Bard College	Indiana University – Bloomington	SUNY College at Potsdam	University of California – Santa Barbara
Barnard College	International Christian University	SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill	University of Central Florida
Bentley University	Iona College	SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry	University of Chicago
Bergen Community College	Ithaca College	SUNY College of Technology at Alfred	University of Colorado Boulder
Binghamton University	James Madison University	SUNY College of Technology at Canton	University of Connecticut
Boston College	Johnson & Wales University – Providence	SUNY College of Technology at Delhi	University of Delaware
Boston University	Juniata College	SUNY Cortland	University of Denver
Bowie State University	Lafayette College	SUNY Maritime College	University of Florida
Brandeis University	Le Moyne College	SUNY Morrisville	University of Maine
Brown University	Long Island University	SUNY New Paltz	University of Maryland – College Park
Bucknell University	Louisiana State University	SUNY Oneonta	University of Massachusetts – Amherst
CUNY Brooklyn College	Loyola Marymount University	SUNY Polytechnic Institute	University of Miami
CUNY City College	Loyola University Maryland	SUNY Purchase College	University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
CUNY Hunter College	Lynn University	SUNY Westchester Community College	University of New Hampshire – Main Campus
CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice	Maine College of Art	Sacred Heart University	University of New Haven
CUNY Lehman College	Manhattan College	Salve Regina University	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CUNY Queens College	Manhattanville College	San Diego State University	University of Pennsylvania
California Institute of the Arts	Marist College	Savannah College of Art and Design	University of Pittsburgh – Pittsburgh Campus
Chapman University	Maryland Institute College of Art	School of Visual Arts	University of Rhode Island
Clark University	Marymount Manhattan College	School of the Art Institute of Chicago	University of Richmond
Clemson University	McGill University	Seton Hall University	University of Rochester
College of William & Mary	Mercy College	Siena College	University of Scranton
Columbia University in the City of New York	Miami University – Oxford	Skidmore College	University of South Carolina – Columbia
Concordia College – New York	Monroe College – New Rochelle	Sophia University	University of South Florida – Main Campus
Concordia University – Montreal	Morgan State University	Springfield College	University of Southern California
Connecticut College	Mount Saint Mary College	St. Bonaventure University	University of Vermont
Cornell University	Muhlenberg College	Stetson University	University of Virginia – Main Campus
DePaul University	New Jersey Institute of Technology	Stevens Institute of Technology	University of Washington – Seattle Campus
Delaware State University	New York Institute of Technology	Stony Brook University	University of Wisconsin – Madison
Dickinson College	New York University	Susquehanna University	Utica College
Dominican College of Blauvelt	Nichols College	Syracuse University	Villanova University
Drew University	North Carolina State University at Raleigh	Temple University	Wake Forest University
Drexel University	Northeastern University	The College of Saint Rose	Waseda University
Duke University	Northwestern University	The George Washington University	Washington & Jefferson College
Elon University	Oberlin College	The New School	Washington University in St. Louis
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University – Daytona Beach	Otis College of Art and Design	The University of Alabama	Wesleyan University
Emerson College	Pace University	The University of Tampa	Western Connecticut State University
Emory University	Pennsylvania State University – Main Campus	The University of Texas at Austin	Wheaton College
Fairfield University	Pepperdine University	Trinity College	Williams College
Fashion Institute of Technology	Plymouth State University		Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Florida Atlantic University	Pratt Institute-Main		York College of Pennsylvania
Florida State University	Quinnipiac University		
Fordham University	Roger Williams University		
George Mason University			



This issue of Value Education celebrates 22 members of Rye Neck's Class of 2021. These students illustrate the range of talent and commitment to success possessed by Rye Neck's entire student body.

These graduates balance their enthusiasm for learning with a broad sampling of extracurricular interests. Rye Neck successfully harnesses their energy through challenging academic programs and rich extra- and co-curricular activities. These opportunities help them develop leadership and production skills and hone special talents that ultimately result in a strong work ethic, a sense of personal empowerment and a value of teamwork.

GABRIEL MILLER

Valedictorian Williams College

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Merit Finalist
- National Honor Society
- National Math Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence
- Student Senate President
- Senior Class Treasurer
- Action Research for Community Change, TEDxRyeNeckHigh, RN Inspires
- Departmental Awards for Science, Social Studies, Math, Computer Science
- Library Advisory Board, Science Olympiad, Mock Trial
- Albert Einstein Achievement Award – AP Physics, AP Chemistry
- Harvard/Radcliffe Book Prize
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Book Award
- University of Rochester Xerox Award
- New York State Senate Citizenship Award
- Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions Club Essay Contest Honorable Mention
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



- The Albert Einstein Achievement Award for Earth Science, Chemistry, Physics, Physiology and AP Biology
- Leonhard Euler Award for Pre-Calculus
- Mamaroneck Knights of Columbus Scholarship, Thomas DeLitto and Sons Scholarship
- Physical Education Award
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more

ETHAN CHIN

Connecticut College

- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- Glee Club, Rye Neck Theater Productions
- The Albert Einstein Achievement Award for Chemistry
- Leonhard Euler Award for AP Computer Science Principles
- Roger Rees Award for Excellence in Student Performance
- Elmira College Key Award for outstanding school and community leadership
- Departmental Award for Outstanding Achievement in AP Computer Science A
- Outstanding Achievement in Computer Science
- Rye Neck Citizenship Award
- International Honor Thespian Award
- International Thespian Society Certificate of Recognition
- Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions Club Essay Contest Honorable Mention
- New York State PTA Youth Humanitarian Award in Memory of Stanley Marcus
- Patty Aloisi Gibbs Memorial Scholarship
- Metropolitan High School Award for Outstanding Male Dance Performance
- Leadership Through Service
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



ZACHARY LEONTIOU

Salutatorian Brown University

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Merit Commended Student
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Outstanding Academic Excellence
- Ann Wilson Award
- Independent Learner Program
- University of Rochester George Eastman Young Leaders Award



HARRISON DU

New York University

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- Independent Learner Program
- Safe to Quit, Founder
- Youth Council, Senator Shelley Mayer
- Mu Alpha Theta Member
- St. Vincent's Hospital Youth Award for Community Service
- The Albert Einstein Achievement Award for AP Biology
- Departmental Award for Outstanding Achievement in AP Computer Science A
- Clarkson University Leadership Award



- Scholar Athlete Award
- Boys Soccer Team (All League), Boys Bowling (Coach's Award), Boys Lacrosse (All-League, Most Valuable Player)
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more

KACI HARRIS

Cornell University

- National Honor Society
- Independent Learner Program
- Young People's Chorus of NYC
- University at Albany Multicultural High School Scholars Award
- Outstanding Achievement in AP Calculus
- Outstanding Musician – Chorus
- Physical Education Award
- PTSA Scholarship Award
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



MIA DWYER

SUNY Oswego

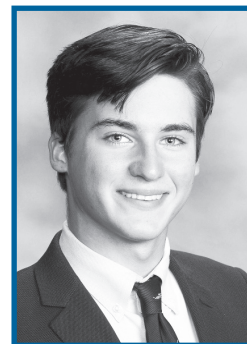
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- Lasell University Book Award
- St. John's University Women in Science Award for Forensics & Environmental Science
- State of New York Office of the Attorney General Triple "C" Award
- Girls Field Hockey Team (Coach's Award)
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



JACKSON HILLYER

Trinity College

- National Honor Society
- Ribbon Award for Motivation, Effort, Growth and Improvement
- Certificate of Meritorious Achievement in English
- The Albert Einstein Achievement Award for Earth Science
- Mu Alpha Theta Member
- Outstanding Achievement in Ceramics
- Michael P. Canno Scholarship
- Boys Golf Team (All-League Honorable Mention, Coaches Award)



NATALIE GOLDBERG

University of Michigan

- AP Scholar
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- Leadership Award for Senior Class Officer
- Peer Leadership Award in 11th and 12th grade
- Saint Michael's College Book Award
- St. John's University Women in Science Award for AP Environmental Science
- Girls Tennis Team (All-League Honorable Mention, Coach's Award)



JULIA HODYS

Tufts University

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- Independent Learner Program, TEDxRyeNeckHigh, Theater
- Swarthmore College Junior Award
- Excellence and Achievement in Reading and Writing
- Girls Tennis Team (All-League Honorable Mention, Coach's Award)
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



VINCENZO GRIFFO

Villanova University

- AP Scholar
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- Independent Learner Program
- The Albert Einstein Achievement Award for Regents Physics and AP Physics
- Leonhard Euler Award for Pre-Calculus
- The Student Sage Award
- Outstanding Achievement in AP Calculus and Ceramics
- Exceptional Achievement in Italian – Native Language



THOMAS LAELLE

College of William & Mary

- AP Scholar with Honor
- National Honor Society
- The Albert Einstein Achievement Award for Chemistry and Anatomy
- Outstanding Achievement in AP Computer Science Principles
- Leonhard Euler Award for AP Computer Science Principles
- Boys Soccer (Coach's Award), Swim, Tennis, Track and Field Teams

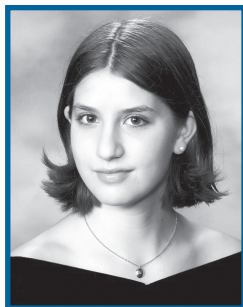


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RUBY LIEBMANN

Barnard College

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- St. John's University Women in Science Award in Physics and AP Chemistry
- University of Rochester (Frederick Douglass/Susan B. Anthony) Award
- The President's Academic Fitness Award for Academic Excellence
- Outstanding Achievement in Chemistry
- Outstanding Achievement in an AP math course for AP Calculus
- Mu Alpha Theta Member
- Exceptional Achievement in Spanish Language and Literature
- International Honor Thespian Award
- International Thespian Society Certificate of Recognition
- Outstanding Achievement in Sculpture
- Commended Student in the 2021 National Merit Program
- AAUW – Westchester Branch of the American Association of University Women Award
- New York State Department of Education Scholarship for Academic Excellence
- National Thespian Society
- Model UN, Rye Neck Theater Productions, TEDxRyeNeckHigh, Spanish Club
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



- Rye Neck Theater Productions – Lighting Crew Head
- Girls Soccer Team (Captain, All-League Honorable Mention, Coach's Award)
- Student Athletic Council
- SADD, Mind Your Mind Club, Key Club
- Special Olympics Volunteer
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more

SOFIA PALACIOS FERRER

University of Pennsylvania

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- World Languages Honor Society
- Student Senate Treasurer
- Independent Learner Program
- Hispanic Heritage Youth Award Recipient of the Business and Finance Category
- The George Washington University Book Award
- Exceptional Achievement in the Study of Two World Languages
- Exceptional Achievement in Spanish – Native Language
- Larchmont Mamaroneck Lions Club Essay Contest Honorable Mention
- French Club (Officer), Students Against Destructive Decisions, Model United Nations
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more
- Girls Volleyball Team, Golf Team (Coach's Award)



ANNA MURPHY

University of North Carolina

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- World Language Honor Society
- Senior Class Vice President
- Wells College 21st Century Leadership Award
- Exceptional Achievement in Spanish – Native Language
- P.E.O. Chapter AJ Scholarship in Honor of Jean Bruce
- Girls Soccer Team (Captain, All-League), Winter Track (MVP), Spring Track
- Student Athletic Council
- Spanish Club, Key Club, Mind Your Mind Club
- Special Olympics Volunteer
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



LUKE PARK

Columbia University

- AP Scholar
- National Merit Commended Scholar
- National Honor Society
- National Math Honor Society
- Saint Michael's Book Award
- Exceptional Achievement in Italian Language and Literature
- New York State Department of Education Scholarship for Academic Excellence
- Organization of Chinese Americans Westchester and Hudson Valley Chapter Student Leadership Award
- Marine Clean Project, Founder
- Boys Soccer (Coach's Award), Winter Track (MVP), Spring Track (Coach's Award)



MADELINE MURRAY

Villanova University

- National Honor Society (Vice President)
- National Thespian Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Service, Leadership, Achievement and Rye Neck Spirit
- Student Senate Class Representative
- Independent Learner Program, RN Inspires



HARRY SISSON

George Washington University

- National Honor Society
- National Thespian Society
- Independent Learner Program
- TEDxRyeNeckHigh, RN Inspires
- Wells College 21st Century Leadership Award
- New York State Comptroller Achievement Award
- Youth Leadership Conference



- Social Media Panel Speaker
- Youth Council, Senator Shelley Mayer
- Councilwoman Danielle Tagger and the Rye Human Rights Commission, Internship
- Boys Soccer
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more

DYLAN SPENCER

University of Chicago

- AP Scholar with Honor
- National Merit Commended Student
- National Honor Society
- National Math Honor Society
- Independent Learner Program, Value Education, LMC Media
- Action Research for Community Change, Tools for Change, TEDxRyeNeckHigh
- Albert Einstein Achievement Award for Physics
- Leonhard Euler Award for Computer Science
- Outstanding Achievement in Photography
- St. Vincent's Hospital Westchester 23rd Annual Youth Award for Community Service
- Junior League of Westchester on the Sound Margaret Manley Community Service Scholarship
- President's Volunteer Service Award
- Sequoia Club, Mental Health Club
- ASAP Scraps, Founder
- Library Advisory Board
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



KATHLEEN VICTORY

Boston College

- AP Scholar with Honor
- National Merit Commended Student
- National Honor Society
- Blue Ribbon Award for Consistently Outstanding Academic Excellence
- Senior Class Secretary
- Student Senate Representative
- Departmental Award for English
- St. John's University Women in Science Award for Physics and Environmental Science
- St. John's University's Women in Math Award for Precalculus
- RN Theater Productions – Head of Art Crew
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more
- Girls Lacrosse (All-League), Field Hockey (All-League)



NAOMI YOUNG

University of California at Los Angeles

- AP Scholar with Distinction
- National Honor Society
- World Language Honor Society
- Student Senate Vice President
- Blue Ribbon Award for Consistently Outstanding Academic Excellence
- Independent Learner Program, TEDxRyeNeckHigh
- RN Theater Productions – two leading roles, supporting role, ensemble
- Yale Book Award
- Departmental Award for English, Social Studies
- St. John's University Women in Science Award for Physics
- AAUW – Westchester Branch of the American Association of University Women Award
- Rye Neck Alumni Scholarship
- International Honor Thespian (Vice President)
- Palace Theater Emerging Young Artist Award
- Scholar Athlete Award
- Girls Soccer (All-League Honorable Mention)
- Award for Community Service of 100 hours or more



STUDENT ATHLETES CONTINUING THEIR ATHLETIC AND ACADEMIC CAREERS AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

JULIA DELITTA

Lehigh University

- Division I Women's Lacrosse
- All-Section, All-League, Most Valuable Player
- Outstanding Athlete Award
- Field Hockey – All-Section Honorable Mention, All-League, Most Valuable Player
- Ice Hockey – All-Section, All-League



ALEXA GUEDEZ RAMIREZ

SUNY Cortland

- Division III Women's Volleyball
- All-Section, All-League, Most Valuable Player
- Service to the Program Award



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Mamaroneck, NY 10543

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Dear Rye Neck Resident

Administration 914-777-5252

Dr. Barbara Ferraro, Superintendent
Carolyn Mahar, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

The Class of 2021

Melinda Merkel, Senior Class Adviser



When school began in September, June 22 seemed as far away as the moon – or farther, even. And certainly when we started, the idea that we would all be sitting together on Rye Neck's own football field in June seemed a pipe dream. But here we are, together again in our familiar end-of-year routines, with shifts and tinkering to make it all safe.

In truth, writing this letter at the end of any year is never easy – but this year, it is downright agonizing. Trying to capture the essence of a group of students so diverse and accomplished in a snapshot or two is challenging, but the Class of 2021 holds a unique place in history and in our consciousness – this is the class that started the year at a disadvantage. No prom. No trip. Only half the class on a given day. No gaggles of friends congregating at the senior lounge for laughs...It seemed that the most eventful year of a young person's life would shake out as a year of nonevents.

And in spite of the impact one would think such knowledge would have on this group of students, I have to say, the opposite was in fact true. At virtually every turn, they were

hopeful, cooperative – constantly chiding me: Relax, they'd say. It could be worse. And I think that when I look back on this year, what I will remember most about these young men and women is their fortitude, their adaptability – and perhaps most importantly – their indefatigable sense of hope.

Certainly, by the standard measures, Rye Neck's Class of 2021 is a triumph to be celebrated. There are 73 members of National Honor Society, 10 AP Scholars with Distinction, 10 AP Scholars with Honor and nine AP Scholars. This class also boasts seven National Merit Commended Students and two National Merit Finalists. On the athletic fields, 62 seniors participated in sports, and the varsity baseball team earned the Section 1 Class B championship! Theater students staged "Oklahoma!" out of doors and streamed it into our homes. And collectively, the Class of 2021 has accumulated more than 15,300 hours of community service – and counting!

All these accomplishments obscure the utter lack of normalcy that characterized this year. And so I'm left with trying to calculate

the incalculable. I think back on the gestures of compassion made between students – a book dropped off to a neighbor on remote, the homemade cards for sick friends, the coffee runs, the sharing of notes and Chromebooks and info – and I am again reminded not only of what a special place Rye Neck is, but the enormous uniqueness of the individuals that make up the Class of 2021. And that's the thing: These young men and women knew a better day was coming...and it did.

Suddenly, in April, we learned we could hold a prom, and a senior trip, and Buddy Day, and Junior-Senior Day. As if by magic, the world was restored to some kind of normal; all those milestone activities that every senior had set to the side – for the time being – they materialized! May and June 2021 would be the most event-filled months in the history of Rye Neck. Students attended an entirely outdoor prom – organized in a month! – skated at Chelsea Piers, lunched with sixth graders and put on the most successful Junior-Senior Day competition in recent memory. I am grinning ear to ear at the thought! What fun!