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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 11, 2024

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Rockville High School's Top 10 Seniors Honor Teachers Who Played a Special Role in Their Lives

VERNON, Conn. – Rockville High School honored the top 10 graduating seniors on Monday, and each senior honored a teacher who had a special influence on them.

The annual Top 10 Lunch is a Rockville High School tradition that highlights high academic achievement and the special role that teachers play in students' lives.

"We want to congratulate all of you," Rockville High Principal Jason Magao told the scholars. "You are the epitome of our mantra – work hard, play hard, own it. We want to celebrate you and we want to say thank you for all of your accomplishments and all of your efforts. We are proud of you."

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph P. Macary said the annual event is one of his favorites of the school year because it honors hard work and scholarship.

"No one is ever going to take this away from you," he said. "You're the top 10 of the Class of 2024 here at Rockville High School. It's a major achievement. It's not one you did in one day or one week. You did it over the last four years. We're proud of what you've done and where you're going."

Class Valedictorian Natalie Crowley, who will attend Amherst College in the fall and plans to major in environmental studies, invited veteran creative writing teacher Victoria Nordlund to the lunch. Through Nordlund's classes, Crowley said, she has become a successful writer, felt enjoyment and excitement about going to school, and learned about who she was and what she could do with her abilities.

"That's something she really prides herself on, helping students be the best they can be," Crowley said of Nordlund, who is retiring this year.

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Salutatorian Katherine Larson, who will attend UConn in fall to study linguistics, invited one of Rockville High School's newer teachers, band director Raymond Sinclair.



Rockville High School Top 10 Scholars, seated, and the teachers they honored, who are standing behind them. Left to right: Katherine Ross and Amy Matyseck, Elisa Ortolani and Michelle Gonzalez, Aleksandra Elcsics and Heidi Stacer, Salutatorian Katherine Larson and Raymond Sinclair, Abigail Aggarwala and Brian Forte, Morgan Fischer and Paul Courtois, Valedictorian Natalie Crowley and Vicky Nordlund, Imaan Chaudhry and David Cruz, Jessica Borisov and Amanda Maskell, and Troy Enamait and Brett Distasio.

Larson, who played in the jazz, marching and concert bands, said Sinclair gave her lessons and invited her to come after school for additional practice sessions.

“During the marching band season last year, I had a solo and I struggled with it,” she said. “I felt really no confidence in my playing and I thought I was not the person to be doing the solo. He helped me through it. He had me stay after school and helped me practice. And he gave me the confidence to actually play my instrument the way I wanted to play. That has changed my ability to play so much. I feel so much more confident now.”

The other graduates shared similar stories about how their teachers provided extra assistance or inspired them with their love for their subject, their energy and enthusiasm in class, and their commitment to teaching all students.

Other members of Rockville High School's Top 10 and the teachers they honored are:

- Abigail Aggarwala, who will attend Syracuse University and the fall, and social studies teacher Brian Forte.
- Jessica Borisov, who will attend UConn to study nursing, and English teacher Amanda Maskell.
- Imaan Chaudhry, who will study elementary education at UConn in the fall, and world languages teacher David Cruz.

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- Aleksandra Elcsics, who plans to study marketing and visual media design at UConn, and art teacher Heidi Stacer.
- Troy Enamait, who plans to attend the State University of New York Cobleskill, to study cybersecurity, and soccer coach Brett Distasio.
- Morgan Fischer, who will attend Endicott College to study exercise science, and social studies teacher Paul Courtois.
- Elisa Ortolani, who plans to attend the University of New England to study marine biology, and math teacher Michele Gonzalez.
- Katherine Ross, who plans to attend the University of California San Diego, and English teacher Amy Matyseck.

Rockville High School graduation is Wednesday, June 12.

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