



Trumbull ACE Foundation Newsletter

Year in Review: 2023-24

Our Commitment to Excellence

For 20 years, the Trumbull ACE Foundation has promoted the advancement of academic excellence and active citizenship for all K-12 Trumbull students through financial support and development of competitive academic groups and civic service clubs. Our aim is to promote the development of a “full student,” well prepared for challenges and opportunities following high school graduation.

The ACE Foundation has contributed more than \$250,000 to support programs that align with its mission. Funding comes from various sources, most importantly from families of students who have benefited from these programs, with some of these contributions coming long after the students have graduated from Trumbull’s schools. This support is critical to the Foundation’s continued success and we welcome contributions that can be made via PayPal or mailed checks. A summary of the Foundation’s 2023-24 activities appears in this newsletter. All academic groups featured in this newsletter received support from the ACE Foundation in the past year.

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120 Campbell Road, Trumbull, CT 06611

<https://trumbullace.org/>

Model Congress Represents Trumbull in Washington, DC



THANK YOU

Trumbull High School
Model Congress Club

Trumbull High School's Model Congress team traveled to Washington, DC to participate in Princeton's Model Congress competition. Twenty-one students attended and participated in various committees, including Education and Labor, Intelligence, Foreign Affairs and the Judiciary. Throughout the weekend, the students passed their legislation through committee level and a few even passed in the full Senate and House sessions! Seniors Jash Desai and Rashas Kulkarni won Honorable Mention (2nd place) in their committees. The students were also able to meet with Representative Jim Himes on the Capitol steps and tour several museums and monuments.

Trumbull's We the People Team Competes at Nationals



We the People empowers students to become better researchers and public speakers and to gain an appreciation of our past and become knowledgeable and engaged citizens. The THS We the People team won their 29th state title in the program's 36 years . After gaining the State Championship they competed at the national level in Washington, DC and proudly earned the Unit 3 championship, which added to the THS legacy on the national stage where the teams have finished in the Top 10 ten times.

Madison and Hillcrest Esports Team Wins Vanta Rocket League Title!



For the third season in a row, the Madison and Hillcrest Middle School esports team claimed the Association of Middle Level Education Vanta Rocket League Title!

Collaborating with the district administration that provided the necessary infrastructure and support systems, the ACE

Foundation provided a generous grant to purchase the equipment required for Trumbull Public Schools to launch the esports capability for the systems middle and high schools in 2022.

Adrian Ayala, who graduated from THS in the Spring of 2024, now attends Thomas College in Waterville, Maine. Adrian used StayPluggedin to track his high school progress and was recruited by Owen Vining, Thomas's esports head coach, who offered him a \$10,000 scholarship each semester to play Rocket League. Adrian is now on both the Varsity Rocket League team and Overwatch 2 team. We wish him luck in his future at Thomas University and can't wait to see the other opportunities that esports will provide for our students.



THS Model UN Club Competes in Ivy League and Washington, D.C. Model UN Conferences



The THS Model UN Club competed in the prestigious Ivy League Model UN Conference hosted by the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in January. Twenty delegates participated in challenging geopolitical debates with high school students from around the world. As the teams' most notable accomplishment, Delegate Audrey

Zelezniak-Berezowski was given a verbal commendation award for her role as Chief Marine in the California Gold Rush Crisis Committee.

The Club also competed in March in the Washington Area Model UN Conference hosted by George Washington University. Club delegates drew up diplomatic resolutions on some of the world's most pressing issues that were debated by hundreds of high school students from around the world. Vice President Audrey Zelezniak Berezowski took home the award for Honorable Mention in her role as Director of Public Relations in the WAMUNC Emergency Crisis Committee.

THS COLT Poetry Recitation Club Earns 14 Medals in Statewide Competition



Sponsored by the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers, the THS COLT Poetry Recitation Club competed in the statewide contest for the 15th consecutive year with the support of ACE Foundation funding. The team participated in this competitive program that requires students to recite a poem in their language and level of study or heritage. The competition featured 15 different languages and levels and the THS team competed in nine: Greek, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, French, Russian, Mandarin, and Spanish. Following weeks of preparation with members of the THS World Language Department, the Trumbull students earned the most medals of all participating schools: 14, bringing their 15 year total to more than 300!

THS Geography Club Wins First Place in Statewide Competition



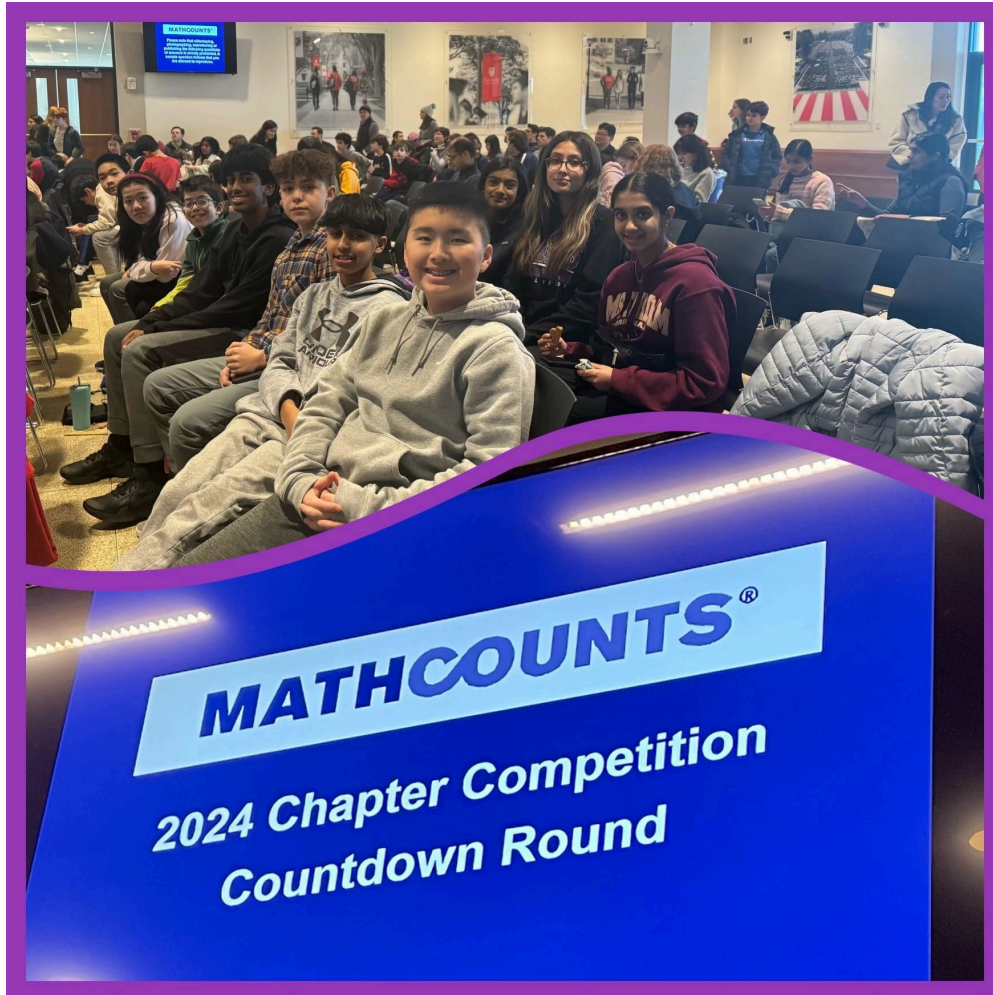
The THS Geography Club earned first place in the 31st Connecticut High School Geography Challenge at Central Connecticut State University. The ACE Foundation supported the team's participation in what is the only statewide interscholastic geography team competition for high school students that tests their geographic knowledge, understanding, and skills through a variety of team activities. The winning team consisted of Abbey Dayton, Cy Pavlov, Luke Simon, Alex Goncalves, and Michelle Haynes. With overwhelming interest among students, Trumbull High was permitted to enter a second team in the competition. It placed 9th and included Aggie Das, Peter Bahr, Logan Luedtke, Sebastian Ramirez, and Neel Jakka.

THS Geography Club Hosts 2nd Annual Trumbull Middle School Geography Challenge



The THS Geography Club hosted the 2nd Annual Trumbull Middle School Geography Challenge. Madison Middle School was the victor. THS club members created three engaging competitions that tested the competitors' skills in problem solving, map reading, and orienteering around the theme of "boundaries and borders". The club members exhibited qualities of mentorship, compassion, and critical thinking and exemplified the skills of innovation, collaboration, and communication within Trumbull's Vision of the Graduate. Further, all four middle school winners from last year were present this year as high schoolers assisting their younger peers in the competition. Building that community of learning and bridging younger and older learners together is what the program aims to achieve.

ACE Foundation Supports MATHCOUNTS



The ACE Foundation supported the Madison and Hillcrest Middle Schools MathCounts clubs that participated in the 2024 chapter competition. MATHCOUNTS is a national program that provides students in grades 6-8 the opportunity to compete in live contests against and alongside their peers. The MATHCOUNTS clubs at Hillcrest and Madison Middle Schools aim to foster mathematical thinking and problem-solving. The teams finished with a rank of 13th (Madison) and 16th (Hillcrest) among the approximately 30 participating teams in this year's competition.

THS Math Team Competes in Fairfield County Math League



The THS Math Team competed in the Fairfield County Math League, which consists of more than 30 teams. By finishing in the top ten, the team qualified for the state-level competition for the fifth consecutive year. Junior Richard Xiong was the high scorer for Trumbull this year and scored a perfect round in the State Tournament, in which the young team finished 7th.

THS Ethical Debate Team Participates in Connecticut Ethics Bowl



The Connecticut Ethics Bowl is an annual high school ethics competition and part of the larger National High School Ethics Bowl (NHSEB) program. Two THS student teams debated complex ethical issues against 14 teams from other high schools. For three months, THS students prepared for the Ethics Bowl by reading and memorizing cases, debating and considering ethical implications for each case from every perspective, drilled their points, met virtually with debate coaches from UConn, practiced public speaking, organized a fundraiser to pay for transportation to the Ethics Bowl, and participated in mock debates against one another for two weeks leading up to the competition. Both of the teams won two of their debates and lost one.

ACE Foundation Supports Meta^Infinity



The ACE Foundation provided support to the Meta^Infinity robotics team to compete at three events in Connecticut, where they also qualified for the State Championship and won five awards throughout the duration of the season. The support also enabled the team to plan, organize, and run multiple robotics camps online as well as at the local libraries, conduct an informative session at Yale University, host robotics scrimmages for teams across Connecticut prior to the beginning of the competition season, and help everyone with the game challenge.

THS DECA Competes at International Competition



Twenty one members of the Trumbull High School DECA Chapter traveled across the country to Anaheim, California to compete against over 20,000 worldwide students in the International Career Development Conference (ICDC). After earning top honors at the state level, these students tested their business knowledge, took written tests, competed in on-the-spot role plays and delivered prepared presentations in a wide variety of business categories ranging from accounting to finance to marketing and everything in between.

By completing community service and school outreach campaigns throughout the year, the chapter also earned four prestigious spots to the Leadership Academies at the ICDC. Amy Castillo Aldana, Tejas Puthiyavettle, Vrinda Shrivastava, and William Wich attended these workshops, networking with other chapter leaders and getting ideas that will enable them to bring the Trumbull High School DECA chapter to the next level this upcoming school year. While in Anaheim, the students also got to experience the sights and culture of the West Coast with trips to see the Hollywood sign and Walk of Fame, Disneyland, the Santa Monica Pier, and of course the opportunity to eat at In and Out Burger.

"ICDC was life changing. Being able to experience real-world business and talk to students from around the world taught me more than I could ever learn in the classroom. I am so grateful for this experience," said senior Amy Castillo Aldana.

FBLA Team Competes in Spring Leadership Conference



The Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) team participated in the Connecticut FBLA Spring Leadership Conference in March. Several students placed in various business events, including Jash Desai, 1st place in Personal Finance, John DeBiase, 2nd place in Accounting II, Aarav Raina & Pranay Sen, 2nd place in Community Service Project, Gerald Mensah & Nathan Wong, 2nd place in Website Design, Thomas Ou & Jaspreet Singh, 3rd place in Business Management, Vedanta Bhargava, 3rd place in Entrepreneurship, Aarav Raina & Pranay Sen, 4th place in Banking and Financial Systems, and Rithik Gunda & Rahas Sachdeva, 5th place in Graphic Design. Honorable mention to the other competitive members and all their hard work: Nlthin Biju, Krish Desai, Mitchell Haynes, Jyotsna Krishna, Sharvi Kulkarni, Austin Matera, Yareli Molina, Zuri Njoroge, Aanya Parekh, Subhand Prabhala, Tejas Puthiyavettle, and Shaan Antony Raja. Of those qualifying for nationals, the following three students attended: John DeBiase, Vedanta Bhargava, and Gerald Mensah. These FBLA members reported that nationals was an unforgettable experience, connecting with FBLA members from all over the country.

ACE Foundation Awards Heeks Scholarships



The Trumbull ACE Foundation in conjunction with Symmetry Partners, an investment advisory firm in Glastonbury, was pleased to announce the 2024 Michael Heeks Scholarship Award recipients. Now in its 12th year, this scholarship honors the life of Michael Heeks, a 2008 Trumbull High graduate, who tragically passed away at the age of 22 after graduating from UConn and a

brief career at Symmetry. Michael always strived for excellence and was passionate about work, travel, and his family.

Yashas Kulkarni (left) has been a highly involved member of the Meta^Infinity FIRST Robotics and Math teams, a member of the Model Congress team, and an Eagle Scout where he's been a very committed community volunteer. He's also been an active robotics tutor to many. He will be majoring in Computer Engineering at Purdue University.

Isabel O'Neil (right) has been a dedicated member of the We the People team, as well as a member of several honor societies and president of Trumbull High's Peer Leaders. Izzy's been an active community volunteer and Town Hall intern, plus a star performer in many THS theatrical productions. She will be on a pre-law path while majoring in International Relations and Spanish at Tufts University.

Congratulations to these two outstanding seniors who represent the very essence of Michael Heeks as they join twenty Heeks Scholars who have preceded them.

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