

# Paterson Post

Paterson — A Promising Tomorrow

Together We Can

JULY 13, 2020

## WALKING THE LINE

### *Class of 2020 Graduates In-Person Amid COVID-19 Restrictions*

In caps, gowns and personal protective masks, the district's Class of 2020 graduates walked in numerous outdoor, in-person ceremonies at last week. The steaming July heat and COVID-19 restrictions were no match for the jubilation of the graduates and their families who gathered at Bauerle Field and Pennington Park. "Your high school graduation is a transformational event," said Deputy Superintendent Susana Perón, speaking to the Pennington Park crowds. "You are no longer the person you used to be. You're better." The ceremonies capped off a year that had been blunted by the worldwide pandemic, with school buildings closed since March and many of the senior year rites of passage cancelled. "You have been on a rough road to get to this moment. But you made it and you most certainly should be proud," Perón said. At Bauerle Field, where ceremonies for all of Eastside High School's academies were held, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer offered a remembrance of Dr. Gerald Glisson, Eastside's Principal of Operations who died in May after testing positive for the virus. Dr. Glisson was a gentle giant who loved the City of Paterson and loved the students," Shafer said.





The In-Person High School Graduations were more than a milestone for the Class of 2020. They were a chance for our district community to come together (maintaining social distance), after months of having to staying apart, and celebrate resilience, perseverance and accomplishment. Here are a few moments from the ceremonies.







**Congratulations**  
**Paterson Public Schools**  
**Class of 2020**

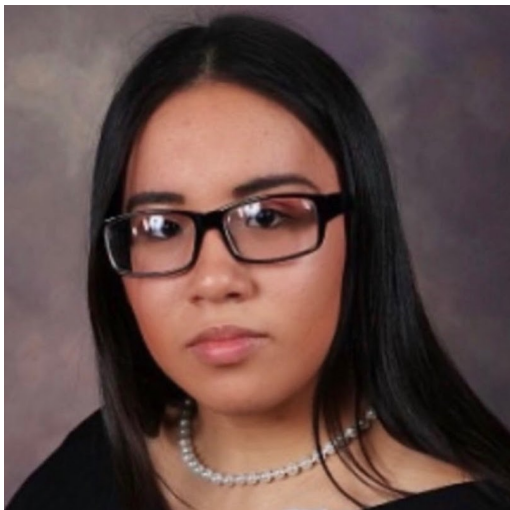




# Three IHS Grads Score IB Diplomas



*Cindy Munoz*



*Nicole Velecela*



*Angel Leonora*

Overcoming obstacles imposed on them by the COVID-19 pandemic, three graduates of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program at International High School (IHS) received notification that they have met the rigorous requirements to earn the distinctive IB Diploma. The three recipients are Cindy Munoz (IHS valedictorian), who will attend the University of Pennsylvania, Nicole Velecela (IHS salutatorian), who will attend Cornell University, and Angel Leonora, who will attend Seton Hall University. The three IB Program graduates are the latest to earn the IB Diploma since Amaya Perez became the district's first IB Diploma recipient in 2019. Principal of the IB Program at International High School Catherine Forfia-Dion said that the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of school buildings made earning the IB Diploma more difficult because the students couldn't take the required exams and therefore had fewer scoring opportunities. "They were evaluated primarily on course assessments, the extended essay and oral exams as well as the other requirements they were able to complete before school buildings closed," said Forfia-Dion. Also this year, 14 IB students passed the IB Mandarin exam and nine IB students passed the IB World Religions exam. One student, Fabeha Choudhury, earned a perfect score on the exam for IB World Religions, a course offered for the first time during the 2019-2020 school year.

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# BTMF DECA Students Launch Fundraiser For Nursing Home Essential Workers, Restaurants



A group of students at the School of Business, Technology, Marketing and Finance (BTMF) at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex have launched an online fundraising campaign to benefit nursing home essential workers and local restaurants. The students are all members of the school's DECA chapter.

DECA (Distributive

Education Clubs of America) is a national nonprofit organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. The fundraiser they have launched is called "BTMF DECA Cares," and it is [collecting donations through a special webpage](#) constructed with Square. The link has also been added to the chapter's [webpage for its Bright Knight Café](#). The cafe normally operates as a school store and snack bar when school buildings are not closed. The students have set an initial goal of raising \$1,000 to provide 100 health care workers with meals valued at \$10 each. They have targeted a number of local nursing homes and restaurants, all within the Paterson city limits, as potential participants in the program. An outreach effort is underway to confirm restaurants' ability to make deliveries and nursing homes' abilities to receive food deliveries. The students have also developed a promotional campaign to raise awareness of the BTMF DECA Cares fundraiser that includes social media posts and a video explaining the fundraiser's details. [CLICK HERE](#) to see the video. "The members of BTMF's DECA chapter are living proof that a pandemic is no match for our students' ingenuity and kindness," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. "I want to thank them for developing a way that all of us can help those in need, and I want to acknowledge the work of their faculty advisor, principal and parents in supporting this terrific effort." Teacher Martine Grant serves as the faculty advisor to the DECA Chapter at BTMF, which has achieved a great amount of statewide and national recognition during the past couple of years. Just before school buildings closed due to COVID-19, [five students in the chapter qualified to compete in DECA's national International Career Development Conference](#). The conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. It was the second consecutive year the chapter had members qualify for the national competition.

# DBT Counselor Publishes Book On Her “Current Past”

Jhree Davis-Jones, a school counselor at Don Bosco Technology Academy, has recently published a memoir entitled, *My Current Past*. In the book, Jones, who is also a licensed professional counselor with a practice in Paramus, tells the story of growing up with a mother struggling with addiction. “I learned to accept that I had no control over her sobriety or her ability to love me. This acceptance empowered me to focus on my life, my future, and my path to success,” Davis-Jones said. “Living with my mother’s addiction cultivated in me a passion to encourage, uplift, and provide guidance to others whose lives are affected by a loved one’s addiction.” Davis-Jones is a proud Paterson native and describes herself as a product of Paterson Public Schools. *My Current Past* is available at Davis-Jones’ website, [www.authorjhree.com](http://www.authorjhree.com), and on Amazon.com.



Jhree Davis-Jones

## Summer Reading Bundles Help Keep Paterson Students Reading






The Paterson Public School District has teamed up with Paterson Reads and the Bookends Bookstore of Ridgewood in an effort to make it easy for people to donate new books to district students in grades kindergarten through the eighth grade.

The “Summer Reading Book Bundles” program enables people to purchase bundles of up to six books from the Bookends Bookstore. The books are delivered to Paterson students every week. Each bundle contains books that have been specially selected for each grade level with the help of Paterson Free Public Library librarians. The books are sold by grade level at the Bookends Bookstore website with the store’s teachers discount applied. Also contributing to the effort are Rosie Grant of the Paterson Education Fund and Inge Spungen of the Paterson Alliance. For more information, visit [www.book-ends.com](http://www.book-ends.com).

**HELP KEEP PATERSON STUDENTS READING THIS SUMMER**

Buy a  
Summer Reading Book Bundles  
to benefit  
Paterson Public School Students in grades K-8

Click on [the Bookends Bookstore website](http://theBookendsBookstore.com) to buy a bundle of books selected by Paterson Free Public Library librarians.  
The Bookends Bookstore will deliver the book bundles to Paterson students every week.



### Follow PPS Social Media!

On **Facebook**, it's @PatersonPublicSchools.

On **Instagram**, it's Paterson\_Public\_Schools\_NJ.

On **Twitter**, it's @Paterson\_Public.

# Upcoming Events

**July 15:** Special board of Education Meeting

5:00 p.m. via [www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11\\_BOE/BOE\\_LivestreamPlayer.php](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11_BOE/BOE_LivestreamPlayer.php).

**July 15:** Parent University “Substance Abuse During COVID-19

6:00 p.m. via PPS Parents Facebook

**July 21:** Parent University “The Art of Managing Conflict with School Staff”

2:00 p.m. via PPS Parents Facebook

**July 22:** Parent University “How To Find the Proper Training”

6:00 p.m. via PPS Parents Facebook

**July 28:** Parent University “COVID-19 Conversations With Your Children”

11:00 a.m. via PPS Parents Facebook

**July 30-31:** Eid al-Adha

Paterson Post is a publication of the [Department of Communications](#).

We welcome your submissions on school and district related events. [Click here](#) to submit stories and photos.