

For Immediate Release

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Eastside JROTC Concludes Another Banner School Year

Mighty Ghost JROTC collects 12 trophies at the Tri-State Championship, places third at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst

Paterson, NJ (May 15, 2025) – The Eastside High School Junior Reserve Officers' Corps (JROTC) wrapped up its season in impressive fashion as its Raiders team finished with the most trophies at the JROTC Tri-State Championship on May 3 before the Mighty Ghosts placed third as a team in its final competition at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on May 8.

“The Eastside High School JROTC continues to represent the very best of Paterson Public Schools – discipline, teamwork, and perseverance,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell. “Their success is a reflection of the exceptional leadership of Major Barraza and the unwavering commitment of our students. We are proud of how they carry themselves on and off the field.”

Under the direction of Major Luis Eduardo Barraza, Army Instructors Command Sergeant Major Ricardo Garcia, and Command Sergeant Major Wilson Ormaza, the JROTC Raiders team brought 12 trophies back to Eastside at the Tri-State Championship including five first-place trophies. JROTC students were put through a series of challenging competitions, but they ultimately proved to be up to the task.

“Our JROTC program continues to stand out as one of the most competitive, successful, and well-rounded programs in the tri-state area,” said Barraza. “JROTC's strong dedication to training, mentorship and investment by Army Instructors and senior Cadets continue to show amazing results. On behalf of the JROTC Cadets, we'd like to thank the administration, the teachers at Eastside High School, and the parents for all for your amazing support.”

The Raiders swept the 5K Team Run, placing first in the boy's, girl's and mixed divisions. Here's the complete list of wins:

Boy's Division:

1st Place: 5K Team Run
1st Place: Cross Country Rescue
2nd Place: Physical Challenge
2nd Place: Gauntlet Run
2nd Place: Rope Bridge

Girl's Division

1st Place: 5K Team Run
1st Place: Physical Challenge

3rd Place: Cross Country Rescue

3rd Place: Rope Bridge

Mixed Division:

1st Place: 5K Team Run

2nd Place: Physical Challenge

2nd Place: Cross Country Rescue

In its final competition of the season at Fort Dix, JROTC was once again tested on its physical and mental endurance and came out with a third-place finish as a unit. The battalion collected six individual achievement medals, including three first-place medals.

The JROTC program, which holds a title of “honor unit with distinction” from the U.S. Army, is a part of Eastside High School’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathway. Emphasizing leadership development and citizenship, the program includes courses in leadership and training. Starting next year, Eastside’s JROTC will offer dual enrollment classes in the areas of history and political science, granting students the chance to earn up to six college credits.

Made up of roughly 320 students, JROTC engages in community service and service-learning projects that develop citizenship, leadership, and a sense of civic pride. They also provide community support by conducting color guards in parades, graduations, and various local celebrations. Many of this year’s seniors have already signed contracts with branches of the United States military and many others will go on to attend college.

Eastside’s JROTC program is made up of three teams with synchronized skillsets. The drill team competes in drill and color guard competitions that showcase precision movements and formations. The Raider team challenges cadets physically and mentally in a variety of events, such as physical fitness tests, obstacle courses, first aid and navigation skills. The academic team competes in a Jeopardy-like format, answering questions across various academic subjects. The competition aims to prepare students for standardized tests like the SAT and ACT.

For more information about Paterson Public Schools visit our [website](#).

About Paterson Public Schools

Paterson Public Schools serves over 26,000 students from pre-K to 12th grade in New Jersey’s third-largest city. About 70.6% of the student population is Hispanic, 16.3% are Black, 6.5% are Asian, and 5.0% are Caucasian. Recognizing its proud traditions, diverse community, and strong partnerships, the mission of Paterson Public Schools is to provide an academically rigorous, safe, and nurturing educational environment that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students. The district is committed to preparing students for post-secondary education and careers. Despite the Paterson community being classified as low-income, many of its students achieve high academic success. A growing number of elementary school students are reading at or above grade level, and more high school students are earning college credits through Advanced Placement exams and enrolling in college-level courses before graduation. Paterson Public Schools is distinguished as one of only 17 school districts in New Jersey to offer the competitive International Baccalaureate program and is among just four districts with a P-TECH high school. In collaboration with IBM and Passaic County Community College, the P-TECH program allows students to graduate with an associate degree in applied science and valuable tech sector experience. For more information, visit www.paterson.k12.nj.us

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