



Immediate Release

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EHS October 2025 Senior Spotlight: Meet Giuliana Gustino



It seems like you may have had a very busy summer! You are part of the Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP), which is a four-year commitment, and you play travel softball for the Ewing Edge Softball team; both of these activities require your dedication and time. Did you have any time to relax this summer?

I did have some time to relax this summer, and I spent part of it at the beach. My family and I went on a small vacation to the Jersey Shore. Although Hurricane Erin didn't give us the best weather, I still had a very enjoyable time. I spent the rest of my free time this summer working on my college applications.

Tell us about your participation in the PUPP program and being selected as a PUPP Scholar during your freshman year of high school.

As a freshman, I was still very unsure of myself, so being accepted into PUPP was a huge eye-opener for me. The application process was intense, but the benefits have truly paid off. Going into my first summer, I didn't know what to expect, but the program broadened my perspectives and educated me beyond what I would have experienced as a regular freshman. Although I was initially wary of the workload, I quickly got used to it.

You have completed the three intense six-and-a-half-week summer institutes at Princeton University over the last three summers. What were the highlights?

One of the biggest highlights of the PUPP summers has truly been the people I've met. Our cohort clicked quickly, and we all became one big family. We supported each other through some of our hardest academic moments. I was able to build relationships with people that I never would have met, and I'm grateful for that. Another highlight was completing a 10+ page social science research paper during my second summer. It was a very strenuous process, but I was really happy with how the paper turned out.

You also participate in weekly PUPP after-school academic enrichment sessions. What are you working on in PUPP now that you have entered your senior year and are preparing to apply for college?

This year, during our academic enrichment sessions, we will be working on our college applications with Dr. Dawn. We'll focus on completing the CommonApp, writing essays, and filling out financial aid documents.

This summer, you also played travel softball with the Ewing Edge, where you played third base and first base. Which position do you like best?

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I like playing third base the best. I started my softball career as a first baseman, but after trying third, I fell in love with it. The position comes with a lot of pressure, which I thrive off of. It also offers more opportunities for trick plays, which I was able to successfully execute this summer.

What are you most looking forward to as you enter October of your senior year of high school?

I am looking forward to senior sunrise and sunset, finishing my college applications, committing to a school, and prom weekend.

You have selected some intense courses to take in your senior year of high school. This first semester, you are taking AP World History with Mr. Dutch, AP Literature and Composition with Ms. Ginsburg, and AP Calculus with Ms. Tuccillo. How are you handling the coursework? Do you like one class more than the other?

The coursework for AP World History and AP Literature is super manageable for me. The homework isn't very intense, and we spend most of the time doing engaging activities in class. On the other hand, I spend a lot of time outside of school working on AP Calculus. I prefer my History and English AP classes more because I am more interested in the content.

What is your favorite subject?

My favorite subject is English, with History coming in a close second. In English classes, there is so much nuance to what we read and the opinions we formulate, which I love. It allows for two opposite perspectives to be correct at the same time because of the way we are able to use evidence. English classes foster healthy debate and communication, both of which I enjoy participating in. History is my second favorite subject because by understanding history it makes it easier to recognize when it's repeating itself, and it encourages me to want to prevent that.

Who is your favorite teacher and why?

There are so many teachers who have made me a better student, so it would be impossible to pick a single favorite. Mr. Burley has had an impact on me as a student since my freshman year and continues to do so because of his down-to-earth character, his humor, and his passion for history and current events. Ms. Chivavuzzo has never failed to deliver things directly and has helped me grow as a person. Mrs. Martucci-Malato always made herself available for me to talk to, no matter what. Ms. Ginsburg makes literature more engaging by consistently adding humor to class and being real about everything. Ms. Kennedy's positive words of encouragement helped me feel more confident in my abilities to succeed in AP Language and Composition. Ms. Bailey-Williams' smile and energy lit up class every day. Mrs. Wilson helped me persevere through a class I was struggling in and made it easy for me to talk to her. Mr. Ballek, Mr. Dutch, Mr. Hammer, Ms. Hutchinson, Señora Mitchell, Mr. Morrissey, Señora Rivera, Mrs. Sipe, and Mrs. Walker have also positively contributed to my experience as a student. I can't forget Mrs. Capozzoli, Mrs. Duncan, Ms. Hanuschik, Ms. Hughes, Mrs. Romanchuk, Mrs. Sharlin, and Mr. Strain, who helped lay the foundation for who I would become as a student.

What activities do you participate in at school?

I am a member of the National Honor Society (NHS), and I am the Activities Coordinator for our chapter. As an NHS member, I focus on maintaining a high GPA, displaying admirable character, taking on leadership roles, and participating in service events. In my role as Activities Coordinator, I facilitate brainstorming for new service events and organize tasks for upcoming ones. I have been a varsity athlete on the EHS Softball Team for the past three years and plan to continue this spring. I also participate in Student Council as the Co-President of the Equity and Inclusion Committee. My involvement is rooted in my desire to improve the communication between

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students and faculty. I founded the “Hear Our Voices” Initiative to give students an opportunity to provide feedback about EHS, which we, as Student Council members, can use to find and implement solutions. Lastly, I am the Vice President of Key Club. I have accumulated over 100 service hours, and volunteering is an important part of my life and character. Key Club-sponsored service events allow me to make an impact in my community and even around the world through events like Trenton Plates. As this year’s Vice President, I’ve been working on improving the club’s organization by designing new policies and procedures for attendance and sign-ups. So far, the new system is making a noticeable difference in the club’s dedication.

What activities do you participate in outside of school?

As mentioned earlier, I am a scholar in the Princeton University Preparatory Program. After school, I attend weekly enrichment sessions and monthly cultural excursions. For the past eight years, I have been an athlete on the Ewing Edge Softball Team. On Edge, I was a Co-Captain and spent most of my summer weekends playing in tournaments. I work a part-time job at Cafe 72 as a busser, as well.

What awards or acknowledgments have you received in school or outside of school?

I was named February Student of the Month during my sophomore year. I received the College Board First-Generation Recognition Award in 2024 and the College Board National Recognition Program Award in 2025. I have also been awarded numerous MVP medals during my time on Ewing Edge.

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

Being accepted into PUPP was one of my biggest accomplishments. The pool of applicants was large, and I made it to the final 25. I am very proud to have been selected as the Key Club Vice President and NHS Activities Coordinator. I worked diligently to prepare for the AP Language and Composition exam and earned a 5, which I’m especially proud of given the difficulty of the exam.

What is your favorite memory of high school to date?

One of my favorite high school memories is the Abraham Lincoln trial I participated in for AP U.S. History. Being able to interrogate real witnesses was a lot of fun, and it really played into my passion for legal studies. The fact that the prosecution, for which I served as Lead Prosecutor, won the trial only added to my fondness for the memory. Homecoming junior year and painting my senior parking spot also contributed to my overall high school experience.

What is your favorite memory of kindergarten in Ms. Kalamas’ class at Lore Elementary School?

My favorite memory in Ms. Kalamas’ class at Lore is when we had “play time” at the end of the day, and some of us would use the dress-up clothes and play in the fake kitchen.

Who or what has positively impacted your life?

My grandmother, Josephine Poleo, better known as Memoz, has positively impacted my life in profound ways. She was my role model for selflessness and inspired me to emulate that trait, which is why service is so important to me. Memoz supported every part of me, even the aspects no one else understood. She played a key role in raising me and taught me how important it is to laugh and find humor in life. She brought me nothing but happiness. Without her, I would not be the person I am today, and I hope to become even half the person she was.

Who has been there to support you during your journey?

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My parents, Dominick and Jodie Gustino, have been my number-one supporters since the day I was born. They have shown up for me no matter what, without complaint, and have always reminded me that I will have people in my corner. I wouldn't have been able to do it without them. My grandfather, Dominick Gustino, my godfather and aunt, Dorian and Jenn Galleghar, and Ruthann Manfredi have continued to show up and cheer me on. My closest friends have never failed to make me laugh, lend me a listening ear, and offer words of encouragement. Lastly, I have a team of supporters who are no longer on this Earth but remain in my heart, including my grandmother, Josephine Poleo, my aunt and uncle, Catherine and Edwin Davilla, and my godmother Natalie Delozier.

How do you define success?

To me, success is building a life that brings you happiness. Success, in a way, varies from person to person because our dreams are all unique. However, if you achieve those dreams and feel fulfilled in your own life, then you have reached success.

What are your plans after you graduate from Ewing High School?

I plan on attending a four-year college after graduating. After that, I plan to attend law school to earn my J.D.

What is your favorite quote or book?

My favorite quote is: "A [person's] tenure on earth is limited enough, but once the beetle's ticking begins there's no way to stop it; there's no plug to pull, no pendulum to stop, no switch that will restore the time you once thought you had." by Alice Hoffman. This quote serves as a warning not to take life and the people around us for granted, because we are all inching closer to death, and once we reach it, there is no stopping the clock or turning back. I often find myself moving at a fast pace, consumed by the "to-dos" of my life, but this quote reminds me to slow down and appreciate the beautiful people and world around me.

Looking back, what is your advice for the new freshmen class for a successful and rewarding high school experience?

I encourage all of you to think about your future and what will bring you happiness as an adult. It's important to consider these things when making choices in high school, such as the classes you take, the activities you participate in, and your overall behavior throughout the four years. Don't waste opportunities by focusing on short-term moments of excitement rather than long-term moments of success. That said, it's even more important to remember that high school does not define who you are; you have the ability to shape your life with time and effort. Make as many memories as you can, and don't take the time for granted, because it will end faster than you think. Remember, you are still kids, so give yourselves grace.