



THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Immediate Release

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EHS January 2026 Senior Spotlight: Meet Chaz Gilliard



Happy New Year!! It is the start of a new year. Do you have a New Year's resolution for 2026?

To live in the moment and be more present.

If you could use one word to describe yourself, what would that word be?

Outgoing!

You are a Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) Scholar. It is required that Scholars and their parents sign a contract to participate in the program. The expectations and guidelines are pretty rigorous, and there is an oath. What were your thoughts when you signed your name to this three-year commitment?

At first, I was nervous because it seemed like such a big commitment, but there was another feeling — a feeling of excitement and anticipation for what my future would hold.

The PUPP Scholar Oath:

I am a PUPP Scholar.

I am here because I was selected to be here.

I am here because I am supposed to be here.

I am here to represent my community, my school, my family, and myself.

I commit to accomplish all that is required of me.

I will fulfill all obligations expected of me.

I will achieve what is destined for me.

I will strive to be the best PUPP Scholar that I can be.

I am a PUPP Scholar.

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Please list your three top takeaways from the PUPP program that have helped you become a better student and person.

Never be afraid to take up space, always ask questions, and know that no dream is too big or too small.

Why should Ewing High School freshmen apply to the PUPP program?

PUPP not only builds and hones your skills academically, but interpersonally as well. PUPP has helped me build my confidence in ways I never imagined it would.

You are finishing up your first semester of senior year at the end of January and will complete the following courses: AP Literature and Composition with Ms. Ginsburg, Pre-Calculus Honors with Mr. Zedalis, Probability and Statistics with Ms. Tuccillo, and Human Behavior with Mr. Ballek, along with Peer Leadership Honors. Which class are you finding the most challenging and why?

The course I've found the most challenging is Pre-Calculus. I've never been the biggest fan of math, but I decided to challenge myself, and to be honest, it's not that bad!

Do you have a favorite subject?

My favorite subject has always been English, specifically creative writing.

Who is your favorite teacher and why?

My favorite teacher would have to be Mr. Hammer. He and I have known each other since my freshman year through the Student Council. He has always been an influential figure in my high school career. He has always pushed me to do more, and I thank him for that.

What activities do you participate in at school?

Quite a few- I am Co-Chair of Spirit and Events for Student Council. The secretary of the National Honor Society, Treasurer of Black Student Alliance, and Executive Council for Key Club. I am also responsible for the revamping of the social media presence of the Ewing Wackos as well as the Class of 2026's Instagram page.

What activities do you participate in outside of school?

Aside from PUPP, I have worked part-time at ShopRite for the last year.

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

I am most proud of being inducted into the Ewing High Chapter of the National Honor Society and then additionally being voted secretary. Winning homecoming king in the fall was also pretty amazing.



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What is your favorite memory of high school to date?

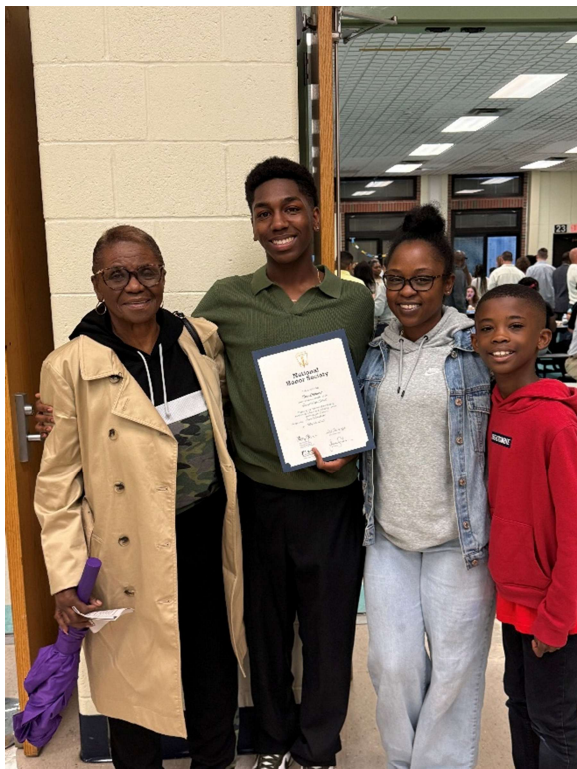
One of my favorites aside from winning Homecoming King was over the summer, when the senior class came together to personalize and paint our parking spots. It was a time where we bonded, sooooo many trips to Home Depot!

Who or what has positively impacted your life?

I like to think that everyone who has interacted with me has affected me positively in one way or another. More specifically, I would credit my family or my village as I call them. My village has been beside me since the beginning. I would love to thank my Mom, Poppop, Gigi, my siblings, Curtis, Canien, and Amiri. I would also love to thank my Grandma Joan and Aunt Donna. They are my village, always front and center.

How do you define success?

Being able to wake up every day and be your most authentic self.



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

Attend a four-year university, majoring in Psychology and becoming a Psychologist.

What is your favorite quote or book?

My favorite quote is "People have thrown dirt on my name; others have given it flowers. It's all a garden to me." -Barbara Howard, *Abbott Elementary*

What are your hopes and dreams?

I want to leave behind a legacy that makes not only my family but me proud.

Tell us something about yourself that your peers don't know... only if you would like to share.

Something that most of my peers probably don't know about me is that I love to bake. I learned from my great-grandmother when I was young. We have baked together for every holiday ever since.

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Lastly, you are a role model for your younger brothers and sister. What words of wisdom do you have for them as they continue to pursue their own interests and educational journey?

The biggest piece of advice I would give to my siblings is to simply never be afraid to take up space, and that you can do anything you put your mind to. I know it sounds cliché, but it's so true.