Goodwin University
Magnet School System
Scholars' Alumni Association

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025

Say Hello to Princess Lewis
Connecticut River Academy, Class of 2024



CTRA Decision Day '24 erupted with applause when it was announced that Princess Lewis would head to Smith College that fall - and through early decision admission!

Princess came to Goodwin Magnet School System having attended Odyssey Community School in Manchester for the previous eight years. She recalls having some apprehension about leaving Odyssey to attend CTRA.

"So it was definitely a big change because I was with the same group of people for such a long time. So it was a whole new school, new people. None of my friends from my old school came to CTRA," Princess recalls. "definitely new, but like I got close to a lot of people quickly. It was such a nice community."

Princess remembers the many CRTA teachers, counselors, and advisors Educators that walked with her as she journeyed through the high school years. Of CTRA Principal, Princess recounts, "Mr. Foster. I remember him greeting me every single day when I came in. So, that just like set the tone for the day - a friendly face that I knew every single day."

Princess credits her time at CTRA for helping prepare her for college in two important ways. One is by introducing her to a world of different cultures. "I got the opportunity to meet a lot of new people from different cultures and backgrounds." The other is helping her prepare for college.

Princess recalls some of the many college-bound activities offered at CTRA, “We had a lot of workshops during school during my study halls where we got to apply for scholarships. We worked on Common App and FASA. So, it helped me with financial aid, as well as to apply, and my college essay.”

She also recalled how participating in CTRA’ s dual enrollment program, the opportunity to take free college level courses while going to high school, helped her prepare for college, “Goodwin which definitely prepared me for college because of all the coursework that I did with them. So, I feel like there are so many different components of Goodwin that helped me prepare for college and getting ready for a more rigorous [academic] pace.” By graduation day, Princess had earned 21 college level credits.

With her first year of college successfully completed, both academically and socially, Princess looks forward to returning to Smith College to pursue her studies and to explore new worlds there.

To those scholars everywhere Princess offers this sage advice, “I know sometimes that school can be difficult, and it can be like some challenges and setbacks, which I've had a lot of, but just as long as you keep at...it will be worth it in the end.”

Princess’ alumni profile video can be viewed on the Goodwin University Magnet School System YouTube channel!

Summer '25 Alumni Shout-Out Project

This summer’s alumni “Shout-Out” initiative was successful - engaging and enlightening. Alumni Princess Lewis, Class of 2024; Derrick Christie, Class of 2019; Dr. Taylor Wiggins, Class of 2013, and Talayeh Rivera, Class of 2022 came home to share their experiences when they were here at GUMSS and what they’re doing today. It bears noting that all four alumni spoke very positively about their schooling years here and very fondly about CTRA staff and faculty. These videos will be housed on the alumni page of our GUMSS website, released to coincide with our alumni quarterly newsletter.

On a related topic, we are updating the alumni-focused information on The Goodwin University Magnet School System website. One of the key elements of changes in the process is prominent positioning of a section devoted to building our alumni stories profile.

As previously noted, alumni stories bear witness to the advantages of attending our school district - they serve as one of the best marketing/recruitment strategies to promote the great work we do at GUMSS. Please encourage alumni with whom you

remain in touch to participate in this every important storytelling project by sending Horton Sheff an email. You may also send alumni contact information directly to Horton Sheff for her follow-up.

GUMSS Alumni Holiday Gathering '25

The holidays are on the way. We're looking for a group of alumni to start planning for our annual holiday gathering. If you are interested in joining this committee, or have suggestions for the event, please contact Elizabeth Horton Sheff: ehortonsheff@goodwinmagnetsystem.org.