



SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

# DIGEST



## CELEBRATING AN *Academic Milestone*



More than 800 members of the Smithtown Class of 2017 celebrated their academic accomplishments during the district's 102nd annual commencement on June 22.

At High School West, Superintendent of Schools Dr. James Grossane welcomed the students and their guests. In giving advice to the graduates, Dr. Grossane called on the lessons learned in the readings of "Winnie the Pooh" stories as they related to individuality, unselfishness, comfort, wealth and trust. "Trust in your abilities to deal with anything," he said.

During High School East's ceremony, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Jennifer Bradshaw spoke to the graduating class about smart goals and dream-driven goals. "As you embark on the next stage of life, consider not just your next goal, but also your next journey and how you want to spend that journey," she said.

Both High School East Principal Dr. Kevin Simmons and High School West Principal John Coady urged the graduates to dream big. "This is an unbelievably exciting time in your life," Dr. Simmons said. "All doors are open as you decide what your next chapter in life will be. Keep making informed choices and educated decisions. Continue to test yourself and stay

committed to your beliefs, because you know what's best for you."

Continuing tradition, an honor speaker for each class was selected to deliver the commencement address. HSE's student honor speaker, Kyle DiPietrantonio, took a moment to reflect on how far the class has come. "These past four years, we have been working to create our own identity," he said. "You have the power to make a difference. You have the ability to impact and influence. Leave your legacy."

West student honor speaker Cory Zhou encouraged classmates to find passion in their lives and use their natural talents. "Do not subjugate your gifts out of fear," he said. "Instead, flaunt them and be proud of them."

The members of the Class of 2017 were then called to the stage one by one to receive their diplomas from administrators, Board members and faculty and pose for a picture before tossing their caps high into the air to celebrate the end of their time at Smithtown School District.



# A Message from Your Superintendent

Dear Residents,



Another year has quickly come and gone, and we capped it off by wishing the Class of 2017 well in their future endeavors. If their achievements during their time at East and West are any indication, their futures are bright! This September, we will welcome our incoming kindergartners, the Class of 2030.

As we look back on the 2016-17 school year, I continue to be amazed at the achievements of our students. A few of the accomplishments are highlighted in this edition of the Digest, but I recommend you visit our website to stay up-to-date on the daily happenings of our students and staff. We are extremely proud of them and look forward to highlighting many more great achievements in the coming school year.

Throughout the summer, our teachers and administrators have been preparing for the start of the 2017-18 school year. Thanks to our community's support of the budget this past May, we will be enhancing our student programming in a number of curricular areas, including the introduction of AP Capstone at the high schools, the expansion of Project Lead the Way at the middle schools, and increasing student access to iPads and Chromebooks.

Enjoy the last few weeks of summer vacation. I look forward to seeing everyone again in September!

Sincerely,  
James J. Grossane, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
[www.smithtown.k12.ny.us](http://www.smithtown.k12.ny.us)

# WELCOME TO THE Wellness Corner



## Healthy Snacking

Many people find themselves hungry and craving snacks between meals. It can be tempting to grab a candy bar from a convenient vending machine, but a little bit of planning can make a big difference in satiating hunger.

Snacking properly curbs a person's appetite so that they're not starving at mealtime and can help control portion sizes to avoid overeating – a common cause of weight gain – according to Liz Moore, a dietitian at Harvard-affiliated Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

It is important to choose foods that are not only healthy, but also filling. Simple carbohydrates found in some snacks billed as “low-fat” or “low-salt” are

processed quickly in the body and can leave a person feeling hungry sooner rather than later. It is best to choose snacks that haven't been heavily processed and are good sources of fats, carbohydrates and protein. Whole grains, nuts, nut butters, fruits and vegetables are all great options.

To make snacks more convenient, it is suggested to spend a few minutes each week on snack preparation. Chop vegetables or fruits, scoop out some hummus or nut butter, or take a handful of whole-grain crackers to put in some grab-and-go containers. If they're prepared and handy, healthy snacks will be just as convenient as that candy bar from the vending machine. Happy snacking!

## School Breakfast Program UPDATE

The Smithtown Central School District is requesting an exemption from participating in the 2017-2018 breakfast program from the State of New York. If granted, breakfast would not be offered in the elementary schools next year. If you have any comments regarding the exemption, contact Director of Child Nutrition Regina Dunne at 631-382-5500.

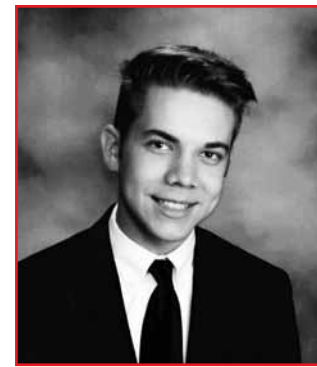
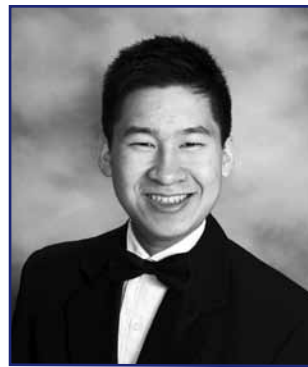
# Honor Speakers

In lieu of a valedictorian and salutatorian, Smithtown's two high schools each select an honor speaker, chosen by members of the class. During the commencement exercises, High School West honor speaker Cory Zhou and High School East honor speaker Kyle DiPietrantonio addressed each high school's Class of 2017.

Cory served as a member of the National Math and German honor societies. He was captain of the Math Team, which finished in first place in Suffolk County. He was also a member of Science Olympiads,

DECA, Freshman Kickstart Mentors and Symphonic Band. Cory played on the varsity badminton and tennis teams as well. In the fall, he will pursue a biomedical engineering degree at Yale University.

Kyle served as co-president of DECA as well as vice president of Suffolk County DECA. He was co-president of the Spanish Honor Society and co-president and captain of the Academic Quiz Bowl team. He was also part of the Smithtown



Industry Advisory Board as a member of the International Business Committee. In addition, he was a member of the National, Social Studies, Business, Math and DECA honor societies.

Kyle will attend George Washington University to double major in international affairs and Spanish.

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## Embarking on a *New Journey*



Celebrating the end of one chapter and the beginning of a new one, eighth-grade students from Accomsett, Great Hollow and Nesaquake middle schools were recognized during their respective moving up ceremonies. Fifth-graders also were acknowledged for their move to the middle school in September during ceremonies held in the last week of June.

At the middle school ceremonies, student council presidents and National Junior Honor Society officers addressed their classmates and recalled fond memories, lessons learned and adventures shared at Accomsett, Nesaquake and Great Hollow.

Both elementary and middle school principals offered the outgoing classes words of wisdom, encouraging them to take advantage of the opportunities in their new schools as they continue on their educational journey.

# HIGH ACHIEVERS



High School East

## ABOUT THE HSE CLASS OF 2017

Intel Science Finalist: 1  
 Intel Science Semifinalist: 1  
 National Merit Winner: 1  
 National Merit Finalists: 4  
 National Merit Letters of Commendation: 7  
 NYS Awards of Academic Excellence: 11

### Class Statistics:

Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation: 69.50%  
 Regents Diploma: 28.85%  
 Total Regents Diplomas: 98.35%  
 Local Diploma: 1.65%  
 Regents with Advanced Designation with Mastery in Math: 5.44%  
 Regents with Advanced Designation with Mastery in Science: 8.51%  
 Regents with Advanced Designation with Mastery in Math and Science: 16.78%  
 Cohort Graduation Rate: 98.13%



## College Bound...

Smithtown's Class of 2017 from high schools East and West will attend some of the top colleges and universities in September. Below is just a sampling of where you will find Smithtown graduates continuing their academic success:

Binghamton University, Boston University, Carnegie Mellon University, Clemson University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Davidson College, Florida State University, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, LIU Post, New York University, Northeastern University, Ohio State University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, Stony Brook University, SUNY New Paltz, Syracuse University, University of Delaware, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania, University of Texas, Austin, University of Virginia, Vanderbilt University, Villanova University and Yale University.

## ABOUT THE HSW CLASS OF 2017

Siemens Regional Finalist: 1  
 National Merit Winner: 1  
 National Merit Finalists: 5  
 National Merit Letters of Commendation: 6  
 NYS Awards of Academic Excellence: 11

### Class Statistics:

Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation: 71.05%  
 Regents Diploma: 26.32%  
 Total Regents Diplomas: 97.37%  
 Local Diploma: 2.63%  
 Regents with Advanced Designation with Mastery in Math: 2.87%  
 Regents with Advanced Designation with Mastery in Science: 9.09%  
 Regents with Advanced Designation with Mastery in Math and Science: 25.84%  
 Cohort Graduation Rate: 95.61%

High School West



# NOTABLE *Accomplishments*

The accomplishments of Smithtown students have not gone unnoticed this school year, with many receiving accolades and recognition on the state and national levels. Below are just a few of their notable honors:



## DECA NATIONALS

Thirty-two students from high schools East and West traveled to Anaheim, California, to participate in the DECA International Career Conference. Students qualified for the competition by placing at the state level in Rochester in March.

Eric Zhang from High School East was named a finalist in the Business Finance competition. East's Kathy Anderson received the prestigious M&M Scholarship from National DECA.

From High School West, Anya Ording was named a finalist and top 10 overall finalist in the Principles of Marketing event, and Rachel Chapman and Courtney Grafstein in the Public Relations event were finalists and top 10 overall finalists for their anti-bullying campaign.



## NATIONAL MERIT WINNERS

HSE's Sanjana Eranki and HSW's Samantha Catalano were selected as winners of National Merit \$2,500 Scholarships. The two Smithtown students were chosen for the awards among 15,000 finalists based on their abilities, skills and accomplishments. The National Merit Scholarship Competition evaluates participants on their academic record, school's curricula and grading system, two SAT scores, school official's written recommendation, and the finalist's extracurricular activities, leadership and personal essay.



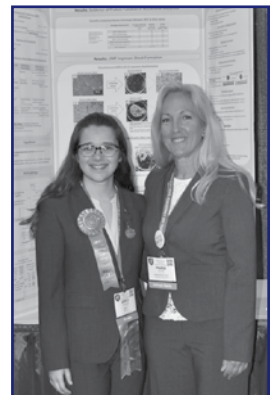
## JUMPING TO NEW HEIGHTS

High School East student-athlete Daniel Claxton took the national championship title in the high jump in June. In his four years at Smithtown, he was named a three-time All-American, three-time state champion, four-time public school champion and six-time county champion.



## RESEARCHER TAKES INTERNATIONAL TITLE

High School East Science Research student Emily Peterson placed fourth in the cellular and molecular biology category at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Los Angeles, California. Her project investigated "Lecithin-Retinol Acyl Transferase in Squamous Cell Carcinoma: The Relationship Between Oncology and Wound Repair." Intel ISEF gathers more than 1,700 students from 78 countries. In order to qualify to compete at ISEF, students must place first in regional fairs held around the world.





# Spreading Kindness

Whether it's right in their local community or many miles away, Smithtown students play an active part in creating a better world by making connections near and far throughout the school year.

For example, the Mills Pond Cares Club spent an afternoon with seniors at a local nursing home planting flowers together on their outdoor deck. The club also hosted a healthy snack sale to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, which grants wishes to children with life-threatening illnesses.

Branch Brook student council members traveled to the Nesconset Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation

to perform songs from their "Broadway Beats" play and spend some time with the seniors.

At Mt. Pleasant Elementary, students created a kindness board to help form a positive classroom and school environment. Students were asked to write kind words about each of their classmates, which helped build self-esteem and a sense of community in the classroom.

In the winter, members of the High School West junior varsity girls basketball team crafted more than 70 handmade cards for children in Stony Brook University Hospital's pediatric cancer treatment unit. In April, the varsity lacrosse teams from East and

West, along with the leadership clubs at their respective schools, held a toy collection during their home games. The teams and clubs asked spectators to bring a new toy when they attended a game and the coaches and team captains delivered the toys to Stony Brook Children's Hospital.

In hopes of building a better world, the Habitat for Humanity Club from High School East attended a student build in Mastic Beach. Sixteen volunteers helped to install insulation and frame the interior of the home. The members spend much of their time fundraising to donate toward building materials.



\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*\*

## SMITHTOWN POSTAL CARRIER

# Teacher Spotlight: KRISTEN GUNNING

As a teacher in the Functional Academic Secondary Transition program housed at High School West, Kristen Gunning has been working with her fellow teachers to enhance academic success and communication skills for special education students. The program gives special education students in grades 9-12 the ability to move into a work environment by preparing them with hands-on learning skills.



“This has been a very exciting year in the FAST program,” Ms. Gunning said. “Teacher Sarah Solomos and myself have begun utilizing Soma Mukhopadhyay’s Rapid Prompting Method for improving academic success and communication for [students] with autism.”

The method, according to Ms. Gunning, uses a teach-ask paradigm based upon how the brain works for eliciting responses through intensive verbal, auditory and visual prompts and assumes intelligence on the part of the student. “We have been extremely fortunate to have full administrative support in implementing and training the teachers and staff in the FAST program,” she said. “As a result, there has been significant and consistent success in student achievement, with participation in higher level educational content.”

Most noteworthy, Ms. Gunning said, is the significant increase in communication and motor/daily living skills. RPM’s theoretical and practical approach has ensured student success in the vocational community-based program as well. The district partners with Abilities Inc., an organization that prepares individuals with disabilities for the workforce through job training and employment placement services.

This year, FAST students delivered presentations to district staff, parents and vocational staff to help ensure carryover of the method across all of the student’s environments. “It is exciting for me as a teacher to learn a new way of understanding and teaching students with autism that helps them attain such success,” Ms. Gunning said.

## Farewell to Retirees

The district extends its best wishes to the 2016-17 staff retirees. These individuals have dedicated themselves to the students and their education, and they will be greatly missed. With more than 1,160 years of combined dedication to the Smithtown Central School District, the district bids farewell to the following retirees:

- Jose Alvarez – Auto mechanic, 13 years
- Carmela Amatuccio – Duty aide, 21 years
- Maureen Badillo – Principal clerk, 16 years
- Kathleen Borbet – Nurse, 18 years
- Mary Carey – Nurse, 21 years
- Michael Chicvak – English teacher, 39 years
- Michael Chlystun – Director of social studies, 47 years
- Robert Chulwick – Microcomputer repair technician, 21 years
- Thomas Clifford – Head custodian, 22 years
- Susanne Cooley – Special education aide, 27 years
- Dawn Dost – Assistant cook, 31 years
- Nancy Friedlander – Science teacher, 17 years
- Peter Fucito – Maintenance mechanic, 32 years
- Rose Ann Fudjinski – Lead food service worker, 28 years
- Michael Gall – Groundskeeper, 39 years
- Katherine Giordano – Special education aide, 23 years
- Susan Goldstein – School attendance aide, 18 years
- Jeanne Hall – Elementary teacher, 38 years
- Patrice Hattenback – Home economics/family consumer science teacher, 27 years
- Geraldine Jansen – Senior clerk typist, 31 years
- Carol Ann Levinson – Special education aide, 41 years
- Deborah Margino – Librarian, 29 years
- Ralph Maritato – Science teacher, 46 years
- Michael Martucci – Storekeeper, 38 years
- Patricia Mattis – Duplication machine operator, 47 years
- Margaret Mayer – Senior clerk typist - principal secretary, 19 years
- Arleen McGrath – Senior clerk typist, 20 years
- Wayne McKee – Groundskeeper, 30 years
- Annette Merkel – Special education teacher, 29 years
- Carol Meyer – Clerk typist, 12 years
- Cathy Muchin – Senior clerk typist, 22 years
- Diana Riccoboni – Foreign language teacher, 41 years
- Jeannine Rosengrant – Special education teacher, 7 years
- Frank Rotella – Teacher aide, 16 years
- Eileen Rowe – Director of science, 16 years
- James Schmidt – Security guard, 30 years
- Barbara Siegell – Special education aide, 29 years
- Maria Spera – Elementary teacher aide, 28 years
- Patricia Tripptree – Mail clerk, 36 years
- Joyce Tyree – Reading teacher, 24 years
- Debra Ventre – Duty aide, 20 years
- Barbara Walker – Senior clerk typist, 39 years
- Arlene Wild – Elementary principal, 15 years

## SCHOOL COMMUNITY DIGEST

Published by the Smithtown Central School District

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