



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY

SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

# DIGEST



## Class of 2020 SHOWS THEIR STRENGTH

It may not have been the ceremony they had envisioned when picturing their graduation, but High School West and High School East's Class of 2020 still had a chance to celebrate their accomplishments in smaller, more intimate commencement exercises on July 21 and 22. During the two-day period, each school held small ceremonies to keep to social distancing limitations. Two guests were permitted to accompany each graduate on the football field.

High School East Principal Dr. Kevin Simmons welcomed students and guests. "We have the faith and belief in you [our seniors] that what is impossible can indeed be possible when pursued with passion and enthusiasm," he said. "We are gathered here today to celebrate the closing chapter of our graduating seniors' careers in the Smithtown Central School District. We are so proud of what you have accomplished, and more importantly, what your future successes will be. We know that the future is bright with you at the helm of our community."

High School West Principal John Coady said the senior class has shown their true strength during this time. "The close of your career at Smithtown has been a turbulent time, with much sadness and loss," he said. "During the last four months, we have seen the amazing true character of our student body. You have gone above and beyond to help others during this pandemic, and we are so proud of you. You are a special group who will always have a special place in the history of Smithtown West."

During the High School West ceremonies, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Mark Secaur addressed the students. "Resilience is defined as the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties," he said. "We know that success depends on our individual and collective ability to recover from difficult situations. This ability will allow you to confidently address adversity in future settings."

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Jennifer Bradshaw offered words of advice for the soon-to-be graduates at the East ceremonies. "You have taught us lessons about strength and resilience and how to be there for each other and for our community," she said.

This year's honor speaker for High School East was

Erin Holler. She spoke to her peers about the new normal and how to move forward and make it the best world they possibly can. "Who could have imagined that this would have been the ending we would get after 13 years of education in Smithtown?" she said. "We were left without the closure of a true last day of classes, without the big senior barbecue and without graduating as one whole senior class. It seemed as though the best part of senior year was taken from us. In spite of all that we have lost over the last four months, there are still things that a pandemic can never take away. For better or for worse, Smithtown East has shaped us into the people we are now. If any class can handle going out into an uncertain world, it is us. So do not accept going back to our old normal; strive for just a little bit better than we had before. Because each baby step we take will one day add up to a huge leap."

West's honor speaker, Luke Muratore, spoke to his classmates about their resilience during the pandemic and how they rose above as a class together. "We, the Smithtown West Class of 2020, are the class known for strength and adversity rather than social media trends and senior pranks," he said. "The class known for our unique celebrations rather than traditional senior perks. We have gone through the worst of a global pandemic. We are about to enter a world completely different than the one we are comfortable with. If we enter it fearless and willing to learn about and from each other, we will better ourselves and thrive in the ever-changing world around us."

Each student was then called to the stage to receive their diploma from Dr. Simmons at East and Mr. Coady at West. After each name was called, the students were instructed to move their tassels from right to left to signify they were now official alumni of the Smithtown Central School District.



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## Waving Goodbye TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

They may not have had the traditional sendoff to high school, but the district's eighth graders surely felt special during their drive-by moving up ceremonies. The district's three middle schools – Accomsett, Great Hollow and Nesaquake – each hosted parades on June 16 to celebrate the achievements of their eighth grade classes. Administrators, teachers and staff members lined the sidewalks of each respective building, holding signs of congratulations for the students as they celebrated their milestone of moving up to high school.



**Class Achievements:**

- National Letters of Commendation: 15
- National Merit Finalists: 2
- Scholastic Art and Writing Awards: 7
- NYS Awards of Academic Excellence: 22
- Regeneron STS Semifinalist Scholar: 1
- Regeneron STS Scholars: 2
- National Scholastic Art and Writing Award Winner: 1
- National Letters of Intent: 22



**Class Notes:**

- The Graduates: East and West
- Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation: 77%
- Total Regents Diplomas: 97%
- Total Local Diplomas: 3%
- Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation in Science: 20%
- Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation in Science and Math: 16%
- Cohort Graduation Rate: 97%



# Where They Are Headed...

- Adelphi University  
 American University  
 Anderson University  
 Arcadia University  
 Baldwin Wallace University  
 Baruch College of the CUNY  
 Belmont Abbey College  
 Bentley University  
 Berklee College of Music  
 Binghamton University  
 Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania  
 Boston University  
 Brandeis University  
 Bryant University  
 Bryn Mawr College  
 Bucknell University  
 Clemson University  
 Coastal Carolina University  
 College of Charleston  
 Columbia University  
 Cornell University  
 DePaul University  
 Drexel University  
 East Carolina University  
 East Tennessee State University  
 Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - Daytona Beach  
 Emerson College  
 Emory University  
 Fairfield University  
 Farmingdale State College  
 Fashion Institute of Technology  
 FIDM - Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising - Los Angeles  
 Five Towns College  
 Florida Atlantic University  
 Florida Institute of Technology  
 Florida Southern College  
 Florida SouthWestern State College  
 Florida State University  
 Fordham University  
 Georgia Institute of Technology - Main Campus  
 Gettysburg College  
 Hamilton College  
 Harvard College  
 High Point University  
 Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
 Hofstra University  
 Iona College  
 Ithaca College  
 Jacksonville University  
 James Madison University  
 Johns Hopkins University  
 Johnson & Wales University, Providence  
 Kent State University at Kent  
 Lehigh University  
 Le Moyne College  
 Liberty University  
 Lincoln Technical Institute - Queens  
 LIU Post  
 Lycoming College  
 Manhattan College  
 Marist College  
 Marquette University  
 Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences  
 Mount Saint Mary College  
 Nassau Community College  
 New York Institute of Technology  
 New York University  
 Northeastern University  
 Nova Southeastern University  
 Pace University - New York  
 Pennsylvania State University  
 Providence College  
 Quinnipiac University  
 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
 Robert Morris University  
 Rochester Institute of Technology  
 Sacred Heart University  
 Salve Regina University  
 Seton Hall University  
 Siena College  
 Skidmore College  
 Southern New Hampshire University  
 Springfield College  
 Stevens Institute of Technology  
 St. John Fisher College  
 St. John's University  
 St. Joseph's College - Long Island  
 Stony Brook University  
 Suffolk County Community College  
 SUNY Broome Community College  
 SUNY Buffalo State College  
 SUNY College at Brockport  
 SUNY College at Cortland  
 SUNY College at Geneseo  
 SUNY College at Plattsburgh  
 SUNY College at Potsdam  
 SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry  
 SUNY College of Technology at Alfred  
 SUNY College of Technology at Canton  
 SUNY Delhi  
 SUNY Fredonia  
 SUNY Maritime College  
 SUNY New Paltz  
 SUNY Oneonta  
 SUNY Oswego  
 SUNY Purchase College  
 Susquehanna University  
 Syracuse University  
 Temple University  
 The College of Saint Rose  
 The New School - All Divisions  
 The Ohio State University  
 The University of Alabama  
 The University of Arizona  
 The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
 The University of Scranton  
 The University of Tampa  
 The University of Texas at Dallas  
 Three Rivers Community College  
 Towson University  
 Trinity College  
 Tulane University of Louisiana  
 Union College - Schenectady  
 United States Air Force Academy  
 United States Marine Corps  
 United States Military Academy  
 University at Albany  
 University at Buffalo  
 University of Central Florida  
 University of Colorado - Boulder  
 University of Connecticut  
 University of Dayton  
 University of Delaware  
 University of Florida  
 University of Georgia  
 University of Hartford  
 University of Maryland - College Park  
 University of Massachusetts - Amherst  
 University of Miami  
 University of Michigan - Ann Arbor  
 University of New Haven  
 University of Notre Dame  
 University of Pennsylvania  
 University of Rhode Island  
 University of South Carolina - Columbia  
 University of Vermont  
 University of Wisconsin - Superior  
 Villanova University  
 Virginia Tech  
 Wagner College  
 West Texas A&M University  
 Western Connecticut State University  
 Winthrop University  
 Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
 Yale University



# DR. MARK SECAUR Named **NEW** Superintendent

Following a nearly yearlong search, the district has found its next leader. At the June 4 Board of Education meeting, veteran educator Dr. Mark Secaur was announced as the next superintendent of schools.



Due to COVID-19 and the extended school closure temporarily derailing the district's long- and short-term goals, Dr. Secaur began his tenure on July 1 as deputy superintendent and will work directly with interim Superintendent Russell Stewart. Mr. Stewart will remain with the district as interim superintendent for up to one year to ensure a successful transition. Together with the Board of Education, Dr. Secaur and Mr. Stewart will work to restructure the current administration model, consolidate positions and create a structure that is educationally sound and fiscally efficient.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Secaur to our district," Board of Education trustee Michael Saidens said. "His years of educational and administrative leadership will be a tremendous resource as we enter the next chapter of our school district. We are also grateful to Mr. Stewart for remaining part of our team as we navigate our reopening and restructuring. This is a very important time, and we are lucky to have two exceptional educators leading us into the future."

Dr. Secaur joins Smithtown from the Hewlett-Woodmere Public Schools, where he has worked since 2013, currently as deputy superintendent and previously as assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Prior to Hewlett-Woodmere, Dr. Secaur worked in the Oceanside School District as principal and associate principal of Oceanside High School. He began his educational career as a teacher of special education for the New York City Department of Education.

"I am very excited to be appointed the next superintendent of the Smithtown Central School District," Dr. Secaur said. "I applaud the Board of Education for their forward-thinking and long-view approach to navigating this important transition, which I believe will benefit all stakeholders. It is now my job to make sure their faith in me is well-founded and I uphold my commitment to the Smithtown school community."

Dr. Secaur holds a doctorate in instructional leadership from St. John's University, a Master of Science in education and an advanced certificate in school administration and supervision from Brooklyn College, and a Bachelor of Arts from SUNY Geneseo. Additionally, he has served in leadership roles for a number of professional organizations, including vice president of the New York State Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development and president of the Long Island Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

# With Honors

Traditionally, the student body of Smithtown High School East and Smithtown High School West select Honor speakers in lieu of a valedictorian and salutatorian. Honor speakers are chosen by vote from their class peers.

## HIGH SCHOOL WEST

High School West's honor speaker, Luke Muratore, boasted a weighted GPA of 4.42. He served as president of the National Honor Society, captain of the cross-country and track teams, team captain of Relay for Life, public relations officer of the Math Honor Society, and was a member of Athletes Helping Athletes, DECA and the Italian Honor Society. In the fall, Luke will be attending the University of Maryland, College Park, and majoring in computer science.



## HIGH SCHOOL EAST

High School East's honor speaker, Erin Holler, held a weighted GPA of 4.26. Her school activities included co-president of the Math Honor Society, treasurer of Class Council, captain of the swim team, school mascot, and member of Athletes Helping Athletes, the Physics Olympic team, and the English, National, Social Studies and Spanish honor societies. Erin will be attending the University of Scranton to study kinesiology.

# Bidding Farewell TO RETIREES

Smithtown Central School District would like to congratulate the following retirees and thank them for their many years of tireless service and dedication to the students and community.

Jane Bachman, *tutor*  
Alice Cheselka, *family and consumer science teacher*  
Karen Ann Collins, *music teacher*  
Denise Davey, *teaching assistant*  
Janice DeAngelis, *foreign language teacher*  
Lizbeth Dooley-Zawacki, *speech teacher*  
Maria Dresel, *tutor*  
Debra Farkas, *special education teacher*  
Donna Grunenberg, *senior office assistant*  
Judith Hilinski, *special education teacher*  
Mary Hoage, *teaching assistant*  
Allyn Leeds, *elementary principal*  
Laura Lessard, *math teacher*  
Lauretta Majuk, *science teacher*  
Catherine Massaro, *foreign language teacher*  
Lisa Matera, *elementary teacher*  
Linda McCann, *teaching assistant*

Christian Meyer, *custodial worker*  
Elizabeth Nixon, *teaching assistant*  
Debra Nussbaum, *payroll supervisor*  
Ellen Papadopoulos, *teaching assistant*  
Carmine Palladino, *security guard*  
Donna Petralia, *elementary teacher aide*  
Donna Popowitch, *senior office assistant*  
Sharon Prokop, *special education teacher*  
Joann Rapp, *elementary teacher*  
Arthur Sainthill, *custodial worker*  
June Scully, *elementary teacher*  
Loretta Siciliano, *teaching assistant*  
Kristen Thone, *social studies teacher*  
Mona Tobin, *assistant superintendent for pupil personnel services*  
Karen VanDover, *elementary teacher*  
Michael Varvaro, *custodial worker*  
Deborah Verre, *elementary teacher*

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SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

# DIGEST

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