

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR, EMMA VASILAKOPOULOS, IS ANNOUNCED AS NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP SEMIFINALIST

High School Senior, Emma Vasilakopoulos, has been selected this year as a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist!

Officials of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation announced on Wednesday, September 9th, the names of approximately 16,000 Semifinalists in the 66th annual National Merit Scholarship program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million that will be offered next spring.

As explained in the September 9th announcement, "To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. Over 90 percent of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and more than half of the Finalists will win a National merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar title."

Over 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment and honors and awards received. They must also have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, and write an essay. Semifinalists that advance to the Finalist level will be notified of this designation in February.

National Merit Scholarship winners of 2021 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July. These scholarship recipients will join more than 353,000 other distinguished young people who have earned the Merit Scholar title.



Chris Cook
Principal
High School

Emma
Vasilakopoulos
HS Senior

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Emma has made the most of her time in school activities. She has been in orchestra since elementary school and in every play since entering high school. Emma is currently the president of the Hauppauge Orchestra and is the Treasurer of Model U.N. and received a "Best Delegate" award.

Emma is a full IB diploma candidate who has taken and excelled in the most rigorous courses from the day she entered high school. Emma also received several medals at the regional Science Olympiad competition that Hauppauge hosted this past year and was supposed to be on the team that travelled to the State level, but it was cancelled due to COVID-19.

Emma is not yet sure where she will attend college. She is thinking of studying political science and ultimately going on to Law School.

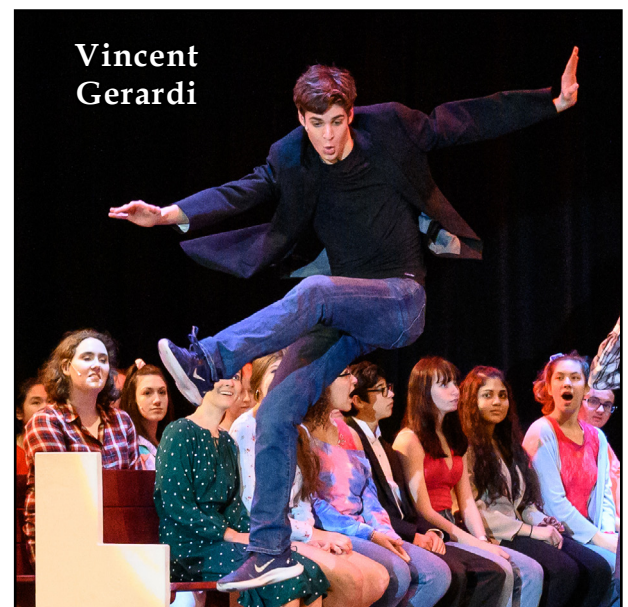
Congratulations, Emma! We look forward to following your progress in this competition!

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR, VINCENT GERARDI, IS NAMED A "LONG ISLAND SCHOLAR ARTIST"

Each year the Long Island Scholar Artist program recognizes students who excel academically and in the areas of either music, visual arts, dance, theater, or media arts. This year, high school senior, Vincent Gerardi, has been named a "Long Island Scholar Artist" for Theater.

Vincent is one of twenty selected Scholar Artists from across Long Island. *Newsday* will publish the profiles and photos of those selected during the school year. Vincent will be featured in the month of February.

Congratulations, Vincent, on this well-deserved honor!



MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF WORKS TO PUT STUDENT SAFETY FIRST WHILE BUILDING IN A SOCIAL CONNECTION

Christine O'Connor is the Principal of Hauppauge Middle School. Recently, she spoke at a Board of Education meeting and talked about how they are handling student safety while building in a social connection for their students during the return to school during this COVID crisis.

Mrs. O'Connor mentioned that the District Staff recently had a Superintendent's Conference Day speaker from the "Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement," Scarlett Lewis. She founded this movement after her son Jesse was murdered during the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy in December 2012. At six years old, Jesse, alongside 19 first-grade classmates, died. Yet, law enforcement says Jesse used his final moments to heroically save nine of his

friends. Shortly after his death, Scarlett decided to be part of the solution to the issues that we are seeing in our society today. She created the "Choose Love Movement" and became an advocate for character development and social and emotional learning which teaches children how to manage their emotions, feel connected and have healthy relationships.

Mrs. O'Connor said, "One of the things the speaker said was 'Physically distanced, but socially connected.' This is one of the things we are committed to that is very important this year. How we can make sure the students are physically distanced, but still socially connected?"

Mrs. O'Connor spoke about how teachers are working on ways of connecting the kids in the classroom with the kids learning from home. She said, "When we look at the curriculum, teachers can design lessons where the students are fully engaged and using technology. They don't need to pull their desks together, but they use technology instead to connect. We are looking at things with new eyes."

Mrs. O'Connor said the biggest challenge they face in the Middle School is people and space. There is no large space, but they have three large areas. She said she is working with personnel to get more subs and more people to accommodate groups. They are getting teachers comfortable with more mask breaks. Mrs. O'Connor said that during double period classes, there is a perfect opportunity on nice days to take classes outside for fresh air.

With regard to lunch, Mrs. O'Connor said, "At lunch our students can be outside if they sit stationary and six to eight feet apart. If they do this, they are able to take their masks off. We had asked for towels on the school supply list so students could sit comfortably outside on the ground. We have to look for these opportunities to make it enjoyable." Mrs. O'Connor also said they are working with their teams on providing appropriate movies in a space for students, as well as a quiet time space and maybe something else they can do during another time in another space.

We are happy to see our middle school students adjusting and doing well. We will keep you up-to-date on these students, and all the students in our District schools each week. Thank you, Mrs. O'Connor and Mr. Caulin, for the wonderful job you do in the middle school!



Christine
O'Connor
Principal

Michael
Caulin
Assistant
Principal

HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR, A'KAI LITTLEJOHN, PARTICIPATES IN FOURTH SHOW AT "NEW YORK FASHION WEEK"

High School Senior, A'Kai Littlejohn was once again on the roster of designers who appeared at New York Fashion Week this year! A'Kai debuted his Spring/Summer 2021 Collection on Wednesday, September 16th, virtually through the Council of Fashion Designers of America - CFDA Runway 360 platform where his showcase went live.

This year, the CFDA created this virtual platform for all designers to showcase their collections creatively using digital content. The platform is called "CFDARunway360." [Click here](#) to access the platform and view A'Kai's collection.

The young Creative Director produced and directed a "short fashion film" with his Spring Summer 2021 Collection of course being the "star" of the production. The short film and collection of multi-media content is available to be streamed at www.akailittlejohn.com and across the young designer's social media platforms.

A'Kai introduced his critically acclaimed and award-winning Spring/Summer 2020 collection last year during NYFW. He was honored with the Cinémoi' Film Fashion Awards "Emerging Fashion Designer of the Year." Daphna Ziman, President of Cinémoi said "A'Kai is our hope for the future. In him we see the essence of elegance that is timeless and enticing. Out of hundreds of amazing designers, we chose A'Kai because of his great talent, but also because of his kindness and grace with which A'Kai welcomes fashion lovers into a magnificent world of art and design."

COVID-19 has affected the young fashion star's breakout year. The pandemic has crippled the production and manufacturing of garments on an international level. A'Kai started making hand made masks. He is now a featured designer on www.thefacesoffashion.com Designer Mask Platform. When we asked A'kai, what is different about this year's collection? He said, "I am bringing more color into this year's collection. I also will be introducing sleeves into the collection."

The links below will take you to some recent content :

1. [A'KAI Acceptance Speech 2019 CFFA Awards Beverly Hills CA](#)
2. [CFAA Emerging Designer Fashion Show](#)
3. [NYFW ONLINE SCHEDULE](#)
4. [CFDA NYFW](#)

A'Kai has participated in New York Fashion Week through each year of his high school career! We wish him well on his new 2021 Spring/Summer Collection Showcase and will continue to follow him as he "takes the fashion world by storm!"



HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR, LUCA IALLONARDI, IS “BIKING TO THE BEACH” TO SUPPORT LOCAL AUTISM PROGRAMS

High School Senior, Luca Iallonardi, is participating in a fundraiser for local autism programs called “Bike to the Beach.” Luca is doing this ride in honor of his brother, Jackson, who has autism. He will be riding his bike 100 miles from Manhattan to the Hamptons. The ride will take place on Saturday, September 26th.

Luca has been training for the ride during this past summer. He is riding with Team NSASA (Nassau/Suffolk Autism Society of America) to raise money for individuals with autism in our local communities. NSASA is a non profit organization which provides support to local families affected by autism.

On doing this ride for Jackson, Luca said, “I am so glad I get to raise money and awareness for such an important charity. My brother and other individuals with autism are in need of social opportunities, and I would do anything to help those individuals and their needs. Biking 100 miles couldn’t compare to the hardships Jackson goes through.”

Luca is an IB student, an “All National” vocalist and an incredible piano player. He has played for many school functions, including school concerts, middle and high school graduations, marching band and more. The quarantine gave Luca an opportunity to start riding his bike when he is usually busy with school activities and doesn’t have the time. His dad, Ralph, had been training for the ride and after about a month of riding, Luca decided he also wanted to do the ride for Jackson too. Luca has a twin brother, Bennett, who will be volunteering at the rest stops during the event.

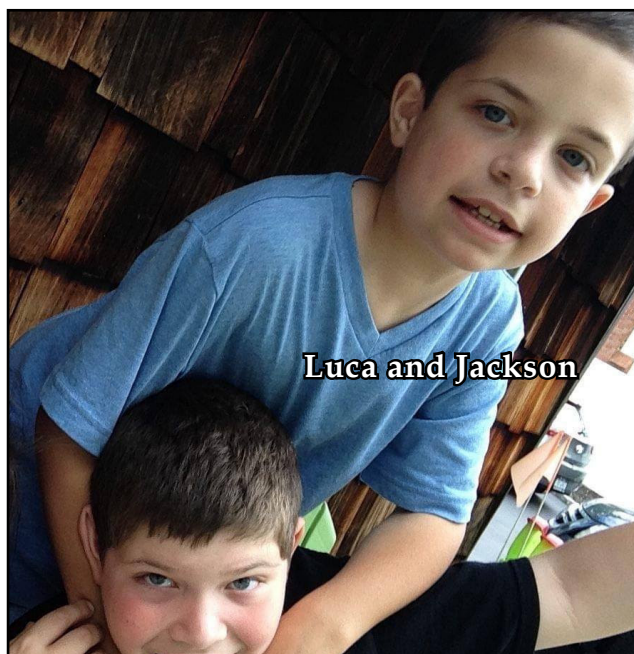
We wish Luca and his team all the best on their ride. If you would like to donate to support Luca on his “Bike to the Beach” [click here](#).



Luca Iallonardi
HS Senior



Luca and Jackson



Luca and Jackson

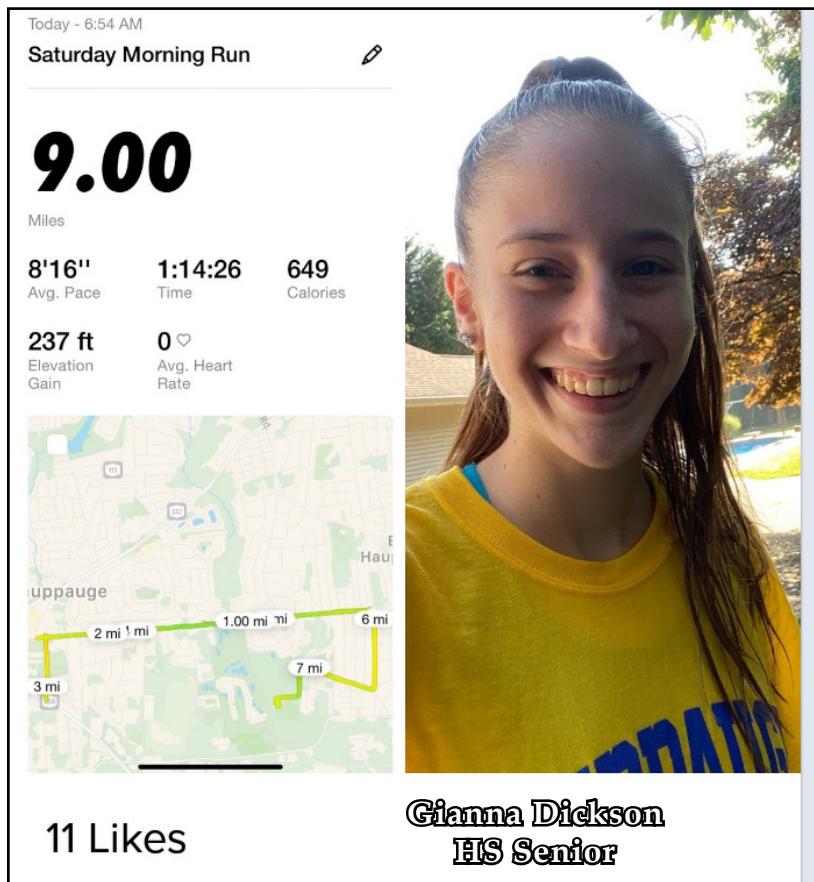
VARSITY GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY TEAM HASN'T STOPPED RUNNING YET

By Coach Mary Nowotarski

The Varsity Girl's Cross Country team has been doing virtual runs as a team every Saturday morning for the past 16 weeks. During the summer they did a run a thon to raise \$ and support a teammate and her Mom who is undergoing cancer treatment.

Despite such a tough diagnosis this special Mom inspired the team with her positive energy and outlook. One of her quotes to the team was: "If my battles with cancer have taught me anything it's this: we all CAN handle anything life throws at us, no matter how difficult. In between the hard days, you will find the brightest blessings, and appreciate them more than you ever have before." The team planned on dedicating they're 2020 season to this special Mom. With the postponement of the fall sports season they hope to be able to do this in March 2021!

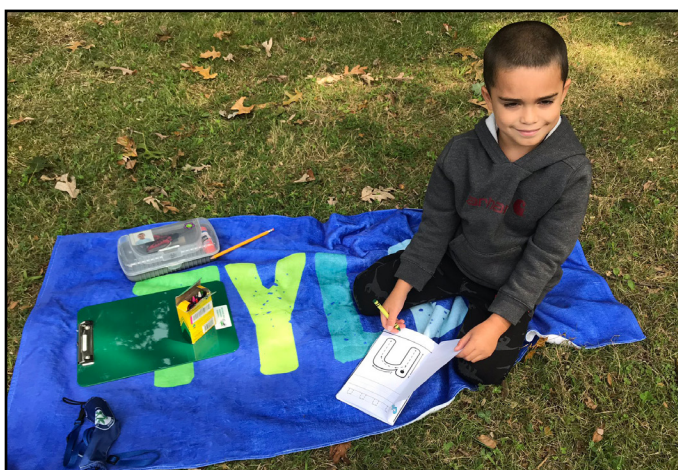
Pictured below are our top two runners who covered the most distance during our run-a-thon: Senior, Gianna Dickson and Freshman, Reese Coughlin.



GO EAGLES !

TIME FOR A BREAK! (A “MASK BREAK” THAT IS)

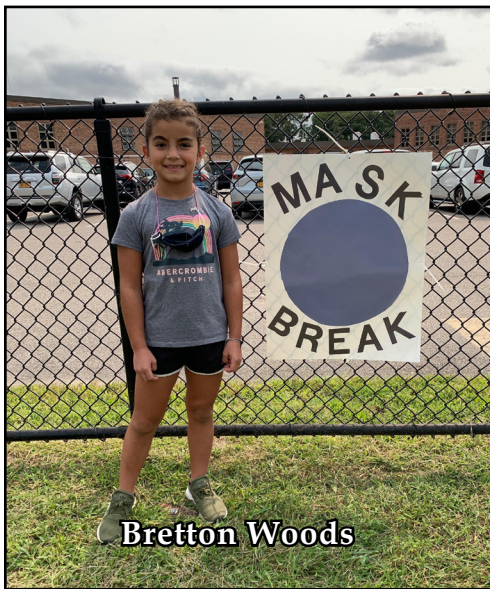
Our students are hard workers and have been so diligent about wearing their masks. But, they do have time for “mask breaks” throughout their day. Here are some great photos of them enjoying some maskless time.



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Bretton Woods Elementary
Mrs. Karpowicz's students enjoying some outdoor reading



Bretton Woods



Forest Brook Elementary
Outdoor Lunch



Forest Brook Elementary
Outdoor Lunch

The Pines Elementary School



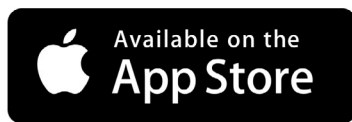
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The Pines Elementary School



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