

Briarcliff Manor

Union Free School District



Twenty Students Recognized in 2020 National Merit Scholarship Competition

Five Briarcliff students were named Semifinalists in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Competition: **Daniel De Castro, Gil Halevi, Joshua Jacobs, Matthew Li, and Michael Tu.**

Additionally, fourteen Briarcliff seniors were recognized Commended Students: (front row) **Sophia Gifas, Katy Burns, Emma Smoler, Lauren Rogers, Stephanie Markowitz, Mark Rogers, Kevin Mani, Jack Dorkin,** (back row) **Fareed Mohideen, Christopher Arroyo** (National Hispanic Recognition Student), **Lawrence Meng, Joseph Murray, Casey Lindemann, Christopher Li and Albert Guan** (not pictured).



"Once again this year, Briarcliff has reason to be proud. It is a pleasure and an honor for our entire school community to have our students highlighted on a national level every year," Principal Debora French said. "This year's unprecedented five students ranked nationally once again speaks to both the quality of education and the caliber of student that exists in Briarcliff."

Semifinalists, who represent less than 1% of United States high school seniors, will now compete for a share of 7,600 scholarships worth more than \$31 million. Winners will be announced nationally between April and July next year. Commended students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.5 million students nationwide who took the qualifying test.

Facilities Planning Committee Update

After completing a state-mandated Building Conditions Survey, the Briarcliff



Board of Education determined that significant updates and renovations were needed. The survey was conducted by architects and engineers in consultation with District administration. As a result, a Facilities Planning Committee (FPC) comprising of representatives from all three schools, District administration and community volunteers was formed and met for the first time in November. Meetings are open to the public and community members are encouraged to attend. Full details of the FPC can be found on the District website under District Information, Facilities Planning Committee at www.briarcliffschools.org/district-information/facilities-planning-committee.



The Boys Varsity Cross Country Team placed 4th at the 2019 New York State Public High School Athletic Association Championships in Plattsburgh.



More Senior Recognition Day photos on the back page.



Seventh Grade and Kindergarten Reading Buddies Enjoy Annual Meet-up at Todd

Seventh graders at Briarcliff Middle School didn't just pick books off the shelves for the reading buddies project with the kindergartners: They wrote their own stories and created their own books for this fun collaboration with young students.

The reading buddies project began in the Briarcliff Middle School Library. Library Media Specialist Kathleen McCabe lead an in-depth discussion with the seventh graders about picture books, with a focus on the differences between picture books and other literary books.

"The discussion includes what topics make the most sense for 5 and 6-year-olds," said seventh grade teacher Mary Beth Craven, who has been coordinating the project for many years. "We also look at the books

visually, taking note of things like how many words per page and how much of the page illustrations should occupy. And because we bind the books, we look at binding, gutter and pagination."

The assignment is very specific: Each book that the seventh graders create must be 15 pages long and each page must have text and pictures that together tell the story. Topics need to be simple and age appropriate, mostly falling into the "how to" category. Some of this year's books tackled topics including how to share, how to make a friend, how to enjoy kindergarten, how to be kind, how to say I'm sorry, and how to say "I don't know."

The reading buddies project is in keeping with the district's focus on project based learning. "Because they are going to be shared publicly, the expectation is that every book will be perfect," said Mrs. Craven. "The process includes the concept, getting something down on paper, conferencing with the teacher and



several rounds of peer reviews." After adding color and binding to the books, the project culminates with the seventh graders visiting the kindergartners.

"At Todd, the Teachers College Writers

Workshop curriculum was launched this year," kindergarten teacher Leslie Newman explained. "Older students have for many years been invited to share their work with kindergarten students and story writing modeled by older students has always helped kindergarten students to develop their writing skills. This year, as an added bonus, it fit in perfectly with our new reading program."



Briarcliff High School Distinguished Alumni Award: Now Accepting Nominations

A true measure of a school's success can be found in the actions, achievements and contributions of its alumni and alumnae. Briarcliff High School graduates have accomplished a great deal and contributed to their professions, communities and our nation through government and/or military service and volunteer activities. The Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes an alumni/alumnae for outstanding achievements, service to their communities and/ or service/support of the Briarcliff School district. The honor is granted annually as part of the High School Awards assembly, although multiple awards may be granted in a year and in some years no award has been granted.

Nominees must be graduates of Briarcliff High School and must have graduated at least 10 years prior to the school year in which they are nominated. Nominations should be submitted to the Briarcliff High School

Principal Debora French using the nomination form accessible through the high school home page, left side bar, at www.briarcliffschools.org. Nominations must be submitted by **February 3, 2020** via an email attachment (dfrench@briarcliffschools.org) or hard copy to **Briarcliff High School, 444 Pleasantville Road Briarcliff Manor, New York 10510**

Attention: Debora French, Principal. Nominee(s) will be informed of the honor and invited to the High School Awards assembly for the presentation of the award. A plaque will be provided to the award recipient and a duplicate will be put on display in the high school lobby.



left to right Principal Debora French, Dr. Linda Thomas 2019 Distinguished Alum, Assistant Principal Diana Blank, Superintendent James Kaishian before the Awards Ceremony last Spring.

New Todd Elementary Assistant Principal Named

Anne Marie Foley has been named assistant principal for Todd Elementary School.

An education professional since 2009, Ms. Foley comes to Briarcliff from the Mamaroneck Avenue School in Mamaroneck where she served as a teacher leader. Prior to that, she worked in special education across grade levels, first at a private school in Manhattan; and later at Public School 81 in the Bronx where she was a founding member of the Inclusion Program.

"We are so pleased to welcome Anne Marie Foley to Briarcliff," said Superintendent of Schools James Kaishian. "We know that she will be a wonderful addition to our administrative team as we move forward with our mission to help each student maximize his or her potential to become confident and capable students and young adults who are ready and willing to make positive

contributions to society."

Todd Principal Colleen O'Neill-Mangan added, "Ms. Foley has previous experience in curriculum development, design and implementation of positive learning environments that foster positive social and emotional health and physical development, and the successful execution of district-wide reading initiatives. These strengths are an excellent match for the assistant principal position."

"My decision to become an administrator came from my desire to make a positive impact on an entire school community," Ms. Foley said. "As the assistant principal, I will work diligently with Dr. Kaishian, Mrs. O'Neill-Mangan, our faculty and staff, and community to carry out the vision and mission of Todd Elementary School. This role will provide me the chance to work collaboratively

with teachers on a daily basis, while also remaining connected to our students' growth and learning that takes place in the classroom."

Ms. Foley holds a Bachelor of Science in Inclusive Elementary and Special Education from Syracuse University and a Master of Science in Advanced Preparation in Special Education from Hunter College. Her academic background also includes the study of administration and development of leadership skills at Bank Street College as a Wallace Fellow and member of the Principals Institute.



Meet Todd's New Music Teacher and Chorus Director, Jenna Stufkosky



Todd's new Music Teacher and Chorus Director, Jenna Stufkosky, introduced her students to the rules and procedures for her class by engaging them in two movement games during their first few meetings.

"There's lots of movement in music," she explains to her class. She tests the children's ability to follow directions and to process the sounds they are hearing using clips of different songs, egg shakers and scarves.

In response to the need to refocus a student who is becoming distracted and not following directions she asks, "Can you match this movement? If you hear a steady beat, use the shaker. If not, use the scarf." She

then changes the music and challenges the class to a competitive yet brief round of Freeze Dance and closes out the lesson by having everyone "walk to the steady beat back to your chair."

Prior to joining the Briarcliff Schools, Ms. Stufkosky was a long-term sub in the Three Village Central School District in Nassakeag, NY. In that role, she directed "The Wind in the Willows" as the school's Spring Musical and oversaw the chorus.

"I am excited to have every fifth grader participate in Chorus this year. This will enable me to explore other areas with my oldest group of students including theatre and acting, playing the guitars, writing songs, and discovering types of movement through a wide variety of cultural music."

She has also launched Class Playlists as a way to use the students' choices to teach them about different musical dimensions. She scrolls through one of the lists already started by an earlier class and explains, "For example I could teach them about rhythm or form using this Imagine Dragons song. I can connect it to both a classical and a traditional piece and help them hear how songs are connected and evolve from one another."



Briarcliff Middle School Vocalists Recognized by the American Choral Directors Association

Lend me a tenor, an alto, or a bass.

Briarcliff Middle School vocalists have been recognized by the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Eastern Regional Honors. Students who will be performing in honors choirs at the the association's 2020 Eastern Regional Conference in Rochester March 4 – 7 are: sixth graders Madeline Cohen, Hailey Merker, and Sasha Plitt (all alto Elementary Choir); seventh graders Mia Willey, alto for Junior High School Choir; and Gordon Beckler, bass, Junior High Choir.

Students were selected by audition and will perform with college music students and professional musicians.



Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
White Plains, NY
Permit No. 10050

Briarcliff Manor
Union Free School District
45 Ingham Road
Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510
914.941.8880

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Kenneth Torosian, *President*
Jennifer Rosen, *Vice President*
Janie Chamberlain
Michael Haberman
Michelle Woerner

WWW.BRIARCLIFFSCHOOLS.ORG

CONNECT WITH US

 BRIARCLIFF MANOR SCHOOL DISTRICT

 BRIARCLIFFSCHOOLS  @SUPERKAISH

“ENGAGE, INSPIRE AND ACHIEVE”

To stay abreast of school news, sign up online at
bit.ly/briarcliffnews

“Once a Bear, Always a Bear” —Congratulations Seniors!

