The Connection

WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

Bringing the accomplishments and initiatives of the Waterford Public Schools to the Town, Community and beyond to create a ***Connection*** *that will reinforce a strong commitment to coming together to educate the whole child.*

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CAPSS Student Awards

The Waterford Board of Education had the honor of presenting the first annual Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendent's Student Awards at the April 27, 2023 Board of Education meeting. Four students, two from Waterford High School and two from Clark Lane Middle School were recognized for their community service, academic prowess, and leadership service. Recipients of this year's award were CLMS students Marlena Childs & Mason Huoppi, and WHS students Vincent Antonelli & Jordon Dunkerley.

See page 8 for more information on Student Achievements in WPS

At the May 18, 2023 Board of Education meeting, former Board Member **Michele Devine** was recognized for her years of service on the Waterford Board of Education. Ms. Devine served from 2019 through 2023 and has been an important part of the Board. Serving on the board during the time of the pandemic, Ms. Devine provided valuable input on social emotional programs for our students and was a great resource for our district. We thank Ms. Devine for her dedication, commitment, enthusiasm and devotion to the staff, students, and parents of the Waterford Public Schools.

- **Michele Devine**
  Served November 2019 - February 2023

The board also welcomed new board member Mindy Stone who will serve the term February 2023 through November 21, 2023.

School Community Gardens Update

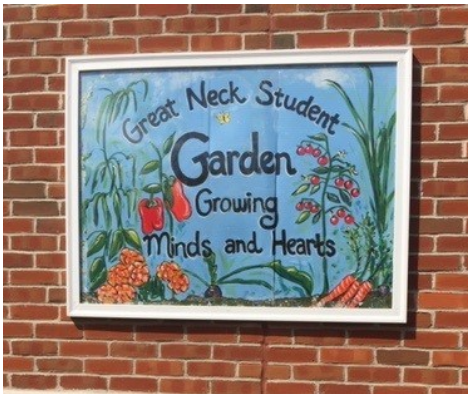
In the Fall edition of *The Connection*, the school community gardens were featured and the educational lessons taught by board member Marcia Benvenuti were highlighted in the GN Garden Report. As promised, a spring/summer update has been released and Ms. Benvenuti has provided more information on the progress of these wonderful hands on learning experiences. See page 3 for the complete Garden Report.

Congratulations to the WHS Class of 2023

Dylan Jacob Agsalud
Amelia Elizabeth Allen
Vincent B. Antonelli
Matias Carlos Arcelus
Hannah Alison Ard
Musharraf Hossain Atik
Raven Isabella Atkinson
Mason Samuel Baez
Timothy J. Bailey
Jakob Aiden Ballint
Aaliyah C. Banks
Jaelynn Rianna Barnes
Trott M. Barone
Luke Adam Bartlett
Jordan Walker Bass-Wright
Emily Bergamo
Axel George Bergeson
Joshua Kristopher Bertelli
Elizabeth Marie Blain
Bruce Allyn Bliven
Luis Armando Bonet
Destinee Joanie Booker
Nia Katherine Bosco
Ayden C. Bousquet
Donovan A. Bousquet
Gabriella Therese Bousquet
Gabrielle Arianna Brennan
Ella Jane Briggs
Tess Olivia Briggs
Evan M. Brown
Cole David Burgess
Ava Jane Burrows
Camille Ann Caldrello
Isabella Elaine Calo
Julia Lynn Cameron
Rebecca Amy Campbell
William J. Campbell
Tyler Justin Carbee
Ethan M. Cash
Katrina Sagawa Casteel
Jeffrey W. Chin
Emily Grace Church
Rachel Elizabeth Clark
Katie Lee Coleman
Marina Isabella Colonis
Peter William Colonis
Colleen McRae Corman
Ava Elizabeth Costa
Alessandra Ivania Courchesne
Lucy Virginia D'Amico
Christina Lynne Danesh
Maria Eduarda Augusto DaSilva
Ethan Matthew DelGrosso
Nathan Michael DePerry
Emma Faith DeVito [3]
Bryn Alexzandra Dickinson
Arthur George Dollinger
Sara Elizabeth Dombroski
Jack B. Donovan
Jordon Richard Dunkerley
Anna Grace Dziecinny
Jeffrey Roger Fabian
Yankuba Faburay
Dylan Patrick Flynn
Maybel Lanae Fuller
Sophia Claire Furlan
Gaudencio G. Gatchalian
Michael Erik Giansanti
John J. Gomes
Diego Graciano
Kristen Alexis Gregory
Emma Elizabeth Grimsey
Emma Elizabeth Grimsey
John David Gutierrez
Orrie Hagerty
Emma Katharine Hall
Kaeley Marie Hancock
Katherine Louise Hawkins
Julia Elizabeth Hoffman
Starr Isabella Hostnik
Jenaya Marie Hudson
Jackson R. Huta
Nathan Patrick Hynes
Brian Kevin Ingraham
Anthony Hume Jessuck
Jaden Thomas Johnson Taylor
Alexander Jones
Zachery Daniel Karns
Aidan L.A. Kavanaugh
Isabella Alexis Kimball
Katherine Elise Knight
Julia Ann Knowles
Drew Catherine LaFrance
Edward Joseph Lemoine
Jikang Lim
Brian Loch
Sarah Ann MacDougall
Marin R. Mahoney
Kaydence D. Martell
Alexander Martinez
Jada N. Mayer
Kameryn Kelly Mazzulli
Dylan James McCarthy
Ryan James McNeil
Marisa Ann Mellon
Chandler A. Metivier
Jordyn Paige Metivier
Aiydan Eileen Miller
Amadayus W. Morales
John Ashworth Morgan
Delaney Janine Moriarty
Charlotte Grace Morin
Erica Lynn Mugovero
Edwin Mustic
Alexah-Donyce Napoles
Skylar Olive Neidig
James Patrick O'Leary
Matthew Jason Ory
Andrew Scott Pafias
Kyle M. Palmer
Logan John Peabody
Olivia Michelle Pennella
Avery C. Pepin
Mia Adriana Petrini
Natalie Whitney Pickett
Cadence Lynn Peila
Evan Philip Piotrowski
Lea Annette Polcaro
Jenilee Nikayla Porter
Pankhudi Prasad
Damon Anthony Prentice
Alyse Kathryn Puccio
Mia Rita Ramos
Matthew J. Reilly
Jaden Michael Reyes
Derek Rivera
William Theodore Rivers
Julie Samantha Robillard
Dow Rogers
Brody Thomas Ruest
Edward Anthony DeSouza Salvati
Zainab Rahmat Samed
Samantha Lynn San Juan
Lauren Elizabeth Santangelo
Morgan Jean Santangelo
Olivia Grace Santangelo
Lauren Amber Santos
Natalie Jo Schenking
Gianna Michele Serafino
Sagar Sharma
Abigail Leann Silva
Tarance M. Silva
Michael Kohen Skipper
Briana Malia Smith
Jayden Smith
Ayus Arpit Solanki
Gian Carlo Spera
Ashleigh Jean Spitz
Emma Ort Stahl
Myrah Lyn Startz
Madison Delaney Stewart
Caleb G. Stratton
Trevor David Stringer
Juliana Maria Sullivan
Nicolas F. Tesler
Kyra Mae Dunlop Tuckwood
Matthew Raymond Uguccioni
Ashley Michelle Valentin-Hunt
Erika N. Waters
Aiden S. Wayman
Brady G. Wenc
Charlotte Mary Yarmey
Caitlin Ella Yother
Savannah Lee Zamaites

See page 5 for more information on the Class of 2023

GN Garden Report - *Article and photos contributed by Board Member Marcia Benvenuti*

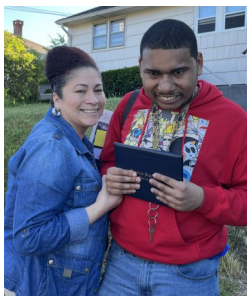


The 2023 school year has come to an end and all the Great Neck crops have been planted by all of our 350 students. Our fifth graders planted peas and lettuce in March. In April the third graders followed with a crop of leeks and the first graders sowed seeds of carrots, parsnips, and beets. May was our busiest month with the fourth graders planting Swiss chard and carrots, the pre-K onions, kindergartners potatoes, and finally second graders set 100 sweet potato slips. Our goal is to have a bountiful crop come fall that can be harvested and eaten at each lunch wave. Hopefully, the pests will stay away and it will rain.

This year we also added three free standing rain barrels and Eileen Boyce completed our pollinator garden to further benefit good crop growth. All are welcome to stop by and take a look or lend a hand with weeding and watering.

Avery Point Transition Program Graduates

Congratulations to our Waterford/Avery Point Transition Program Graduates: ***Khamisi Goode and Andrew Edwards****.* The graduation from Waterford's UConn Avery Point Transition Program was held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 on the Avery Point Campus. The Avery Point Transitional Readiness Program is an initiative that prepares students, ages 18—22, with vocational opportunities while fostering independent living skills and community interactions for students with disabilities.



The following is an excerpt of the graduates provided by the staff at the Avery Point Transition Program: "Congratulations to Andrew Edwards! Andrew achieved many goals while working in the program. He's a quick learner and enjoyed his roles at Mohegan Sun, Goodwill and Pet Supply Plus. Andrew's personal strengths include kindness and empathy. These attributes will make Andrew successful in all he chooses to pursue. We look forward to routing him on at his next Unified event, way to go Andrew!

Khamisi is a joy to be around. When Khamisi set out to achieve a goal, you could count on him to accomplish it. Khamisi is kind hearted to all who know him. Whether he's out and about on the work site or socializing, Khamisi is a good guy to be around. We wish him all the best for continued success!"

Celebrating the Arts at WPS...

WATERFORDrama - Halo Theater Awards

The WATERFORDrama Club earned 8 nominations at the 2022-2023 Halo Theater Awards.

- Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a play: Oliver Smith as J. Finch/Uncle Dave/Sal in Puffs
- Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a play: Karas Boluch as Harry in Puffs
- Best Comic Female Performance in a play: Phoebe Brown as Leanne/Fat Fria/Helga/Myrtle in Puffs
- Best Props Design and Management in a play: Mia Ramos, Anabel Bueno, Analys Bueno and Fern Hill for Puffs
- Best Performance by a Supporting Actor in a play: Tigh Burridge as Oliver in Puffs
- Best Performance by a Supporting Actress in a play: Phoebe Brown as Leanne/Fat Friar/Helga/Myrtle in Puffs
- Best Performance by a Leading Actor in a play: John Morgan as Wayne in Puffs
- Best Performance by a Leading Actress in a play: Ama Rosado as Megan in Puffs

Congratulations to Oliver Smith who was the winner of the Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a play for his role as J. Finch/Uncle Dave/Sal in Puffs.

Waterford Music News

On April 21st, The WHS Chamber Choir and Jazz Ensemble traveled to the University of Delaware for UD's annual jazz festival for middle and high schools. Performing ensembles from New England and the Mid-Atlantic states performed for university professors who gave each ensemble a valuable, detailed performance evaluation. Before heading to the University of Delaware jazz festival, the WHS ensembles performed for students at The Tatnall School in Wilmington, Delaware. The Tatnall music faculty also provided valuable feedback for the WHS ensembles. While in Delaware, WHS students attended a US Army Blues Band concert and visited Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA. Special congratulations goes out to Waterford High's Joseph Mayer for receiving one of the Overall Outstanding Soloist Awards at the University of Delaware Jazz Festival.

WHS Jazz Ensemble

WHS Chamber Choir

In the Schools...

YOUTH ART MONTH™
Building Community Through Art

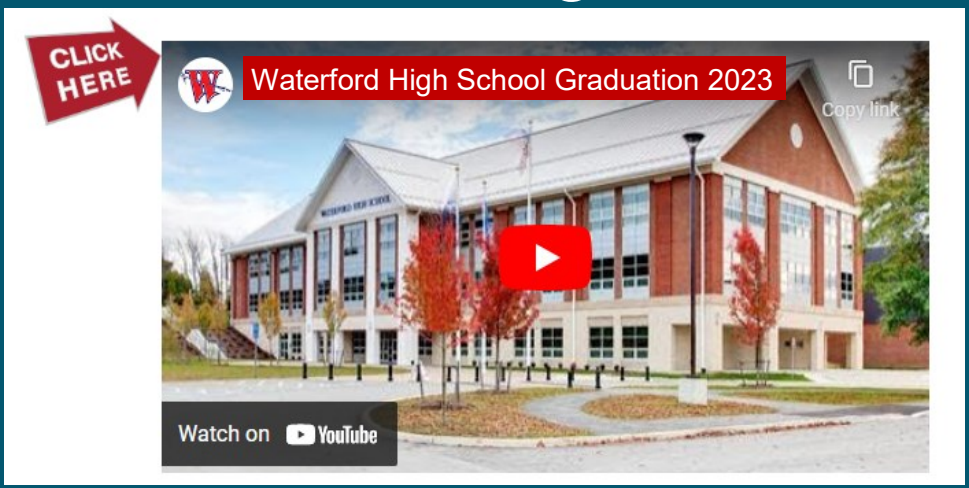
Sapphire Liu (shown left), a third grade student at Quaker Hill Elementary School, proudly shows her drawing that was displayed at Central Office in Town Hall during Youth Art Month.

In the month of March, Waterford Public Schools participated in Youth Art Month, an annual event that promotes art education, emphasizes the value of art in schools, the community and society as well as encourage support for quality school art programs. All schools displayed artwork at the Waterford Public Library and Town Hall throughout the month of March to show the various mediums used and the variety of art classes that are available to Waterford Public Schools' students.

Clark Lane Middle School Promotion

Clark Lane Middle School celebrated the promotion of the eighth grade class on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Check out the event on the CLMS YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-V4M1pejxI

Celebrating the Class of 2023



The Waterford High School Class of 2023 Graduation was held on Thursday, June 15, 2023 on the Waterford High School field. The event can be viewed on the WHS YouTube channel at :

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nm2TibJ60E.

The WHS Senior Awards and Scholarships Ceremony was held on June 6, 2023. We are very proud of our Seniors - their hard work, commitment to excellence and support of our community is greatly appreciated.

* Total Amount of Awards $114,102
* Total # of Awards 235
* Total # of Recipients: 110

From the beginning of the school year at Convocation through the last day of school, the theme for the 2022-2023 school year has been to Empower Excellence. We are proud of our staff who strive every day to embrace this challenge for their students and themselves. Below are a few highlights of staff who have risen to this challenge and have accomplished great things this school year.

Fund for Teachers

Clark Lane Middle School World Language Teacher Nick Giori recently received a Fund for Teachers grant. The Fund for Teachers grant program "strengthens instruction by investing in outstanding teachers' self-determined professional growth and development in order to support student success, enrich their own practice, and strengthen their schools and communities." Mission of Fund for Teachers www.fundforteachers.org

Every year, hundreds of people apply across the state for this highly competitive program. Mr. Giori submitted a grant application to Fund for Teachers and was awarded a grant to travel to Spain this summer. This opportunity will allow him to not only increase his language proficiency but add depth to his instruction by visiting many culturally iconic places. Waterford Public Schools is proud to have had almost 20 teachers dating back to 2017 win grant awards from Fund for Teachers. To learn more about the Fund for Teachers Newest Grant Recipients and their projects visit https://www.fundforteachers.org/documents/2023-Fellow-Compilation.pdf

Waterford Public Schools' Director of Human Resources, Nancy Sudhoff, was named the next President of the CT Association of School Personnel Administrators (CASPA). "CASPA is the professional organization of personnel/human resource administrators, superintendents, and other administrators and support staff who have responsibility for the personnel/human resource functions in Connecticut school districts." Congratulations to Ms. Sudhoff on this prestigious position as this is the only PK-12 public school HR association in Connecticut.

Oswegatchie Elementary School Principal, Joseph Macrino, received the Letter of Commendation from the CT Association of Schools at the Annual Membership Reception at CAS headquarters in Cheshire. "Letters of Commendation are awarded to practicing or recently retired school administrators who have served the association over an extended period of time or have made extraordinary contributions." Mr. Macrino has been a strong voice, particularly in early childhood education, through his various roles at CAS including chairing the Elementary Board of Control and the Early Childhood Committee; while also serving on the CAS Board of Directors. For more information on this award, please visit Five Administrators Honored at Annual Membership Reception.

Teacher Leadership Academy

Waterford Public Schools in conjunction with the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) relaunched the WPS Leadership Academy to staff for the 2022-2023 school year. This program was put on hold during the pandemic. The Waterford Public Schools' Leadership Academy is a year-long learning experience of five sessions that includes targeted professional learning on effective leadership and completion of a leadership project in the district. Professional development sessions focused on all facets of effective leadership, attendance at select conferences, potential shadowing opportunities, and development of a personal growth action plan. The program is designed to develop a cadre of educators committed to developing their leadership skills, expanding their leadership knowledge base, and taking an active role in school improvement and student success. Waterford Public Schools had 13 staff members participate this year, ranging from classroom and special education teachers to related services staff.

Marine Science Day

On May 30th, students from Quaker Hill Elementary and Waterford High School, along with many community partners participated in Marine Science Day, an exciting event at Waterford Beach organized by the Marine Science Department at Waterford High School and Quaker Hill Elementary staff. Students visited Marine Science Learning Stations throughout the day that provided a hands on learning environment for over 350 students. Check out the Marine Science Day Movie for a first hand look at this exciting event.

Rotary Student of the Year Awards

The Waterford Rotary recently recognized students in all of the Waterford Public Schools who have exemplified leadership qualities as well as community service. The Waterford Rotary is part of an International service organization that prides itself on the motto "Service Above Self". Congratulations to the following students:

Elementary - Kelsey Conigliaro, Caleb Healey, and Adelle Plude

Clark Lane Middle Schools - Brynn Heon, Audrey Westkott, Caroline Bassett, Jack Bassett, Mason Dubicki, Gianna Duzant, and Ashlyn Autrey

Waterford High School - Lucy Mullen, Victoria Sturm, Samantha Silva, and Ethan DelGrosso

Waterford High School Rotary Scholars - Alistair Haglund, Brianne Kilcomons, Maple Siu, and Payton Smith

Reminder from the WPS School Dining and Nutrition Services Department: All Children ages 18 and younger may visit Open Summer Meals sites anywhere in the state to receive a meal. There is no application, identification or commitment to participate in Summer Meals.

https://www.endhungerct.org/services/summer-meals/

For sites near you call 211 or Text the word FOOD to 304-304.

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Waterford Public Schools is a community of learners that fosters and supports high aspirations, ensuring every student acquires the skills and knowledge necessary to be a responsible citizen, prepared to contribute and succeed in an ever-changing world.

Stay Connected…

- **WPS Website - Visit www.waterfordschools.org for up to date BOE, school and event information.**
- **BOE meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month. For the complete schedule of meetings, go to the BOE section of the WPS Website.**
- **Download the WPS App to 'stay abreast' of all the happenings at our schools.**
- **Follow us on Twitter : @WPS_CT and @WaterfordSuper**