

## Choices Abound for Commack Students

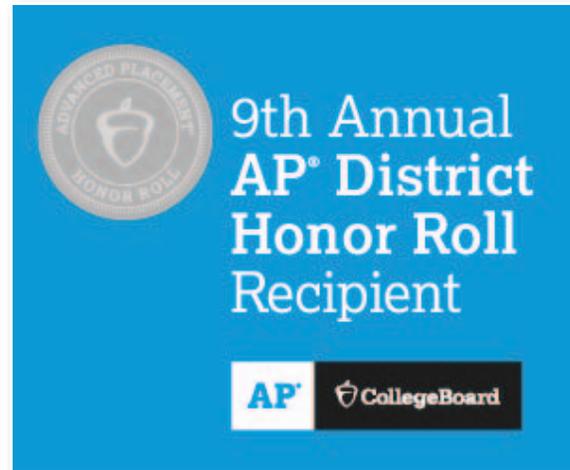
Commack High School was named to College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) District Honor Roll for its commitment to providing students with the access and opportunity to enroll in AP courses. College Board recognized only 373 school districts in the U.S. and Canada for increasing access to AP coursework while maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on AP Exams. This is the second time since 2010 that the College Board has recognized Commack. Reaching these goals shows that Commack is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for AP.

"This is another testament to our dedication and commitment to our 'Access and Opportunity' philosophy, which allows all students to access higher-level courses of interest," said Superintendent, Dr. Donald James.

Commack's Access and Opportunity program offers much, much, more than AP courses. In addition to nine (9) AP classes at the High School, there are

more than 90 other college-level courses including six (6) Project Lead the Way courses (college level engineering classes), 56 International Baccalaureate (IB) courses (internationally recognized college level classes), and 29 college credit-bearing courses through affiliations with colleges and universities.

To assure students are ready for these classes, we offer pre-college level classes to all 9th and 10th graders. This program has had astounding results with approximately 66% of all students slated to graduate with five college-level classes on their transcript this year and 90% with at least one class on their transcript. There are increases in student participation in these classes every year. Dr. James believes that, "Real life, high-level experiences for all students has put Commack in a unique position that prepares them for whatever they want to achieve when they leave our schools. I am 'Commack Proud' of our students and staff for their continued efforts and achievement."

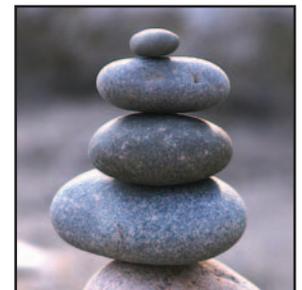


## Balanced Educational Programming Building on Success

The Commack School District is focused on providing a student-centered school environment. By supporting the enhancement of a well-balanced, developmentally-appropriate curriculum in grades K-12, our mission is for all students to be prepared to accomplish their individual goals.

The framework for developing student-centered schools is through stakeholder engagement and research. Factors such as the community's expectations, student and staff interests, aspirations, and strengths are the first step. As presented by Commack Superintendent, Dr. Donald James, at the recent NYSSBA Convention and Educational Expo, forming quality relationships and communicating within our schools and the Commack community is an important step for creating balanced schools, and helps determine the priorities for our academic and social-emotional programs.

The next step is to look at what the research says about learning. For example, re-



search from Montessori shows that movement, recreation and play that links sensory-motor, cognitive, and social-emotional experiences provide an ideal setting for brain development. The new Movement in the Arts (MITA) program that Commack began last year is an example of this type of learning through play. Providing hands-on project-based learning opportunities at all grade levels leads to an exceptional educational program that is key to each student's future success.

By continuing our practice of keeping class sizes small, providing the access and opportunity for unlocking a child's potential, we will continue to build on our recipe for success!

## It's BUDGET Season!

Please consider taking an active role in shaping the school budget by attending a Budget Workshop or Board of Education Meeting.

BOE Meeting Budget Workshop	March 14, 2019	Hubbs	7 p.m. 8 p.m.
Budget Workshop	March 21, 2019	Hubbs	8 p.m.
Informal Budget Hearing	March 28, 2019	Hubbs	8 p.m.
Budget Adoption & BOE Meeting	April 11, 2019	Hubbs	8 p.m.
BOE Meeting & Budget Hearing	May 9, 2019	Hubbs	8 p.m.

## Board of Ed Corner



Dear Commack  
Community Members,

On behalf of the Commack Board of Education, we hope that everyone had a great holiday season. The Board is continuing to work with the administration team on our goals, set forth earlier this school year.

During the November Board of Education meeting, we started our State of the District presentations. This presentation focused on District Operation: Plant and Facilities. In particular, we discussed the Capital Projects, which we will be undertaking this coming year. In addition, all of the planned maintenance and repairs completed during the summer along with the upcoming facilities updates were reviewed.

The district is engaging in the second half of the Smart School Bond Plan. There will be updates in areas of school connectivity and classroom technology.

The Board will continue to advocate for the Commack School District with our elected representatives. The Legislative Advocacy Committee (photo above) met and they have started the planning for Lobby Day in Albany in March. This committee is comprised of Board members, administration, faculty, parents, and most importantly, members of our student

body. During the first meeting, the committee met with Assemblyman Andrew Raia. Everyone had the opportunity to speak with Raia and gain insight on his background and the workings of the State Assembly.

We're proud that Commack High School was named to the College Board's Advancement Placement District Honor Roll for commitment to providing students with the access and opportunity to enroll in AP courses. The Board continues to support numerous opportunities for all students to explore the wide variety of programs from K-12.

The Board of Education is continuously looking for feedback from the community. Your best method of communication is to email us at [boe@commack.k12.ny.us](mailto:boe@commack.k12.ny.us). Individual Board members' email addresses are listed on the Board of Education page on the District website: [www.commack-schools.org/BoardofEducation.aspx](http://www.commack-schools.org/BoardofEducation.aspx).

The community is welcome to attend our meetings, which are also simulcast. The videos and presentations are also posted on the website.

Have a wonderful 2019!  
Thank you,

**Steve Hartman**  
BOE President

## Courant and Crossroads Take Home the Gold!



Current newspaper and yearbook staff are pictured above.

Commack High School's student newspaper, *The Courant*, and the yearbook, "Crossroads," entered the Empire Scholastic Student Press Association's high school journalism competition. This annual competition is hosted by Syracuse University and includes entries from high schools across New York State. Both *The Courant* newspaper and "Crossroads" yearbook were ranked Gold/All-New York publications.

Congratulations to the following students, and to their advisor, teacher Christina Semple.

### Crossroads 2018: "Reflect: 30th Anniversary Edition"

- Ashley Borruso, Class of 2018: Best Cover/End-sheet Design, Best Divider Pages, Best Theme presentation, Best Feature Photograph
- Michael Kaimis & Skyler Quigley, Juniors: Best Club/Organization Spread
- Michele O'Kane & Mary Girgis, Class of 2018: Best Academic Spread
- Angelina Tassone, Class of 2018: Best Writer Portfolio
- Sarah White, Class of 2018 & Emma Lanza, Junior: Best Sports Designer Portfolio
- Crossroads Staff: Best Student Life Spreads

### The Courant: Volume 30 2017-2018

- Maheen Khan, Senior: Best Editorial Writing
- Danielle Ranucci, Senior: Best Editorial Writing
- Christine Kong and Funda Sahin, Juniors: Best Feature Writing
- Funda Sahin, Junior: Best Sports News Writing
- Yasemin Sahin, Senior: Best Feature Writing
- Kathy Cao, Senior: Best News Writing
- Melissa DiGiorgio, Class of 2018: Best News Writing
- Courant Staff: Best Front Page Design Portfolio

## Keep in Touch in Winter Weather!

In the event of a school closing or delayed opening, we will first post the information on the Commack Website: [www.com-mackschools.org](http://www.com-mackschools.org), and contact parents and staff via email, text, and phone calls.

Local television and radio stations will also broadcast this information, and we will also post on our app and our social media platforms. Please make sure your contact information is up to date so we can keep in touch!

# Superintendent's Message

Wishing you all a terrific 2019! As we begin 2019, we are eagerly anticipating the myriad of opportunities a new year brings and the excitement of celebrating the successes of our students and faculty.

Some news, a major goal this year is to further improve our lines of communication with parents and the community at large. We formed a new committee to research and engage in community outreach to help us understand how best to communicate with our community, staff, parents, and students. Watch your email for a survey from the committee. Community members can also participate by signing up for [Community Connect emails](#). The link is under the Community News button on the home page of the website.

Another major means of improving our communications is the new Commack Schools App - have you downloaded it to your smartphone or tablet? Its available at the [App Store](#) or [Google Apps](#) and is another way to stay "in-the-know" about District or school happenings through push notifications right to your device. The App also makes navigating the District website more efficient by having targeted links for each school like lunch menus, calendars, and teacher websites. Don't forget to follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)! Join us in the classroom, the gyms, and the fields to see all the great things happening in our schools.

Speaking of communications, with the winter weather upon us, please make sure your contact information is up to date. In the event of inclement weather, we will communicate via our website, phone, email, text, app, and social media to let you know if schools are closed or we will initiate a delayed opening.

Artistically, our students thrive

and I hope you had a chance to enjoy a concert and/or art show during the month of December. If not, don't worry, there will be another round in the spring. Our music program boasted 17 All-State musicians this year, the most ever, who performed with other accomplished students across the state. Commack Proud!

You might also be interested to know Commack is on the cutting edge with technology. Due to State and BOCES aid we have embarked on completely upgrading the technology our students will have access to in the secondary schools. Through these funding streams (with little local funding needed), 1,500 laptop computers were purchased to be installed in the High School (every student will have access and have their own O365 account

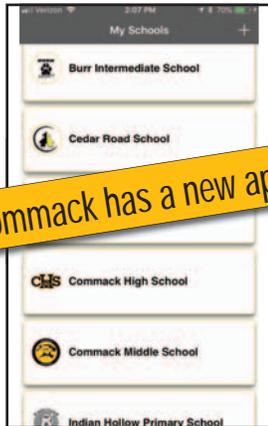
to do school work), and we have upgraded our network infrastructure, wireless capabilities, firewalls, and servers to support this effort. We are now working on a similar model for the Middle School, and the elementary schools will see additional tablets, laptops, and upgraded smart boards. You should know, we see technology as a tool for students, a tool directed by instruction and managed by the classroom teacher to enhance instruction.

We hope to see you at one of our upcoming "State of the District" presentations or budget meetings (if you are unable to attend, these meetings are simulcast and posted) or at one of the many events at our schools. As always, if you have any questions, suggestions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Donald James*

Superintendent, Commack Schools  
[djames@commackschools.org](mailto:djames@commackschools.org)



**Commack has a new app!**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING!

## BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

*Meetings are Simulcast on the Commack Website*

Thursday, January 10, 2019 - 8:00 p.m.\*  
Thursday, February 28, 2019 - 8:00 p.m.\*  
March 14, 2019 - 8:00 p.m.\*  
Hubbs Administrative Center

\*The Board will convene at 6:30 p.m. and is expected to adjourn into Executive Session. Public meetings will commence at times stated above.

PTA Founder's Day Celebration  
February 7, 2019

District Art Walk/Music Concert  
February 11, 2019 - 6:00 p.m.  
Commack Middle School

100th Day of School  
February 14, 2019 (tentative)

Winter Recess  
February 18 - 22, 2019

Click the Community Events link on the  
Commack Website for more events  
[www.commackschools.org](http://www.commackschools.org)

Follow us on Twitter: [@Commack Schools](#)  
and on Instagram: [@CommackSD](#)  
Follow Dr. James on Instagram:  
[@commack\\_supt](#)

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

Children who will be five years old on or before 12/01/2019 are eligible for admission to Kindergarten for the 2019-2020 school year. Kindergarten registration for these children will take place in January 2019. (Please see the District Calendar for specific building registration dates.) Information concerning registration was mailed in December. If your child is eligible for Kindergarten and you did not receive a registration packet, please call Linda Caccamo in the Registration Office at 912-2028

# Schools Have Changed a Bit in the Past Two Hundred Years



Rolling Hills second grade children went back in time to the 1800s when they took a trip to Nassakeag, a one-room schoolhouse, housed at the Long Island Museum.

Dressed in period clothing, and assigned old-fashioned names for the day, the students ate “dinner” in school - lunch was called dinner, and dinner was called supper. They learned how to use dip pens, write in script, read for the teacher, and even about old-time punishments for misdeeds. They used a bucksaw to cut wood for wood-burning stove (photo).

When they returned to their 21st Century classrooms, the children wrote about their trip, using laptops to compose their stories. Students learned to change font types, sizes, and to insert photos into their work.



## Spreading the Holiday Spirit



The students in Mrs. Ammirato and Mrs. D’Allesandro’s third grade classes at Burr made needlepoint bookmarks as part of their Gift of Giving service project. Parents, grandparents, and special guests were invited to assist with any knots and tangled yarn along the way!

The handmade bookmarks were each wrapped with a new book and a personal note from the students. A gift box of 44 books with bookmarks was delivered to Stony Brook Child Life Services just in time for the holidays.

Students and families from Mrs. Murphy’s third grade and Mr. Zielinski’s fifth grade classes at Sawmill supported our local Adopt-A-Family Program and the Jocelyn Foundation to assist families in need this holiday season. The classes were provided with letters and lists including present ideas for the families.

The students enjoyed shopping, and Sawmill parents also generously donated wrapping paper and supplies. Everyone gathered to wrap the presents and spread holiday cheer. The students learned about the importance of giving to those who are less fortunate.



## INDIAN HOLLOW STACKS UP!

Second graders and their families from Indian Hollow were busy building giant pyramids, cool cup creations, and playing Battle Stack at the first annual Cup-Stacking Night. They challenged their cup-stacking abilities against the clock. Students were timed in the 3-3-3, 3-6-3, cycle and partner stacking.

This event was organized by Mr. New, Indian Hollow’s PE teacher. Over 60 second grade families showed up for this hands-on fun friendly night. Cups ranging from bucket to thimble-sized were used. Students and their special guests rotated through individual and group centers. There were a lot of smiles and some very imaginative stacking! The cups of various sizes are certain to make a holiday or birthday list.



## A Garden is Growing at Burr



During the Lunch and Learn Enrichment classes, students in grades 3, 4 and 5 at Burr Intermediate School had the opportunity to build two Tower Gardens. The Tower Garden is an aeroponic growing system. Vegetables will grow throughout the year that are fresh, nutrient-rich, and don't require soil or sunlight!

Using a water reservoir and pump, the water is pumped into

the tower bringing hydration and nutrients to the plants. LED lights simulate the sun to help the plants grow.

Students were engaged in the building process, as well as planting the seeds. The first crop includes bib lettuce, Swiss chard, bok choy, arugula, kale, and basil. We look forward to watching our garden grow over the next several months!



*The first crop is thriving (photo below).*

**Funds for the Tower Gardens were provided by the school and a grant from Action For Healthy Kids (written by Burr PTA).**



## Character Education: Learning About RESPECT

Every month the students in Mrs. Fox and Mrs. Waldman's classes at Indian Hollow gather to discuss the character trait of the month. December's trait was Respect. After reading "The Berenstain Bears Show Some Respect," the students shared their ideas about how everyone should be demonstrating respectfulness to others. Each group of partners created a picture of themselves with speech bubbles articulating their respectful statements.



## Spreading the Warmth with Sawmill's Pajama Jammie Jam



Even though it's chilly outside, Sawmill students got cozy to spread some snuggly happiness to children in need. The Mandracchia-Sawmill Student Council held a "Pajama Jammie Jam" to provide new pajamas and books to children across the United States. Sadly, many youngsters do not know the comforts of being tucked in at night with warm pajamas and a bedtime story. Sawmill's students and staff had fun helping get PJs and books to those who need them.

Everyone was encour-

aged to donate a pair of new pajamas or a new book, and to wear their own pajamas to school on November 21st. As always, the Sawmill community came through! The school collected 78 pairs of pajamas, 157 books, and \$140! For every \$10 collected, the Pajama Program can provide one child with pajamas and a book to read. Thank you to everyone who participated for their generous contributions and great show of spirit! If you'd like more information on the Pajama Program, please visit [www.pajamaprogram.org](http://www.pajamaprogram.org).

# Authentic Experience for Future Engineering Students

Do you ever think about the valve(s) that stop and start the flow of water in your shower, or the ones that regulate, direct, or control the flow of fluids in commercial and military energy generation plants? That's what the engineers and skilled laborers at Curtiss-Wright in Farmingdale think about every day, and exactly what several engineering-bound students in the second year of the IB Design Technology class and a Wilson Tech welding student learned about on a field trip to the "2018 Manufacturing Day" at Curtiss Wright.

Thanks to the generosity of many of the Curtiss-Wright employees and the diligent efforts of Diane Nelson, Career/Internship Teacher from Wilson Tech (Western Suffolk BOCES), these students were provided the opportunity to meet a number of engineers and welders who shared information about their job responsibilities and some of the challenges they face on a daily basis.

In small groups, the students interacted with engineering, contract writers, assembly & testing, welders, and procurement experts

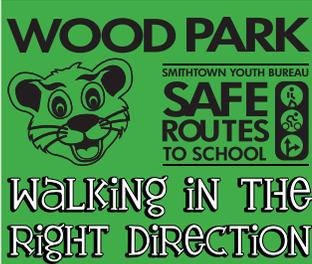


to learn about a number of the facets of their jobs. All staff members were candid about the need for a balance between 'hard' (or technical) skills and 'soft' (interpersonal) skills needed in the workplace. They emphasized that a great amount of the learning for any position happens while employed ('on-the-job training').

In the words of a few of the students who attended the trip, twelfth grader Rebecca shared, "I enjoyed the trip because it gave me the opportunity to view firsthand a major company and its functional areas. The ability to personally talk to the engineers added to the understanding of the role of the engineer in a high technology environment."

Senior Ethan explained, "My experience when visiting Curtiss-Wright on Manufacturing Day was one of excellence. I was

able to speak with their employees who have real world experience in their areas. The overall experience was as diverse as it was unique to the company. I hope to join a team like this one in the future."



Wood Park Primary School students took advantage of the fall weather and learned how to be a smart, attentive, and alert pedestrians on our local streets during "Walk Safely to School" month in October. This is the fourth consecutive year that Wood Park partnered with the Smithtown Youth Bureau Safe Routes to School Program to promote walking to school under the supervision of an

adult. Walking to school provided an opportunity for families to bond and for parents to educate their children on safety. The students arrived at school energized and ready to learn, and as an extra incentive, each walker received a walking-themed charm from Mrs. Pugh, the school's PE teacher.

Wood Park also held a school-wide walking challenge "Walking in the Right Direction." Each class, including teachers, that consistently walked throughout the month received a "Walking in the Right Direction" T-shirt donated by the Smithtown Youth Bureau. The class with the most amount of walks for the month also received a first place medal.



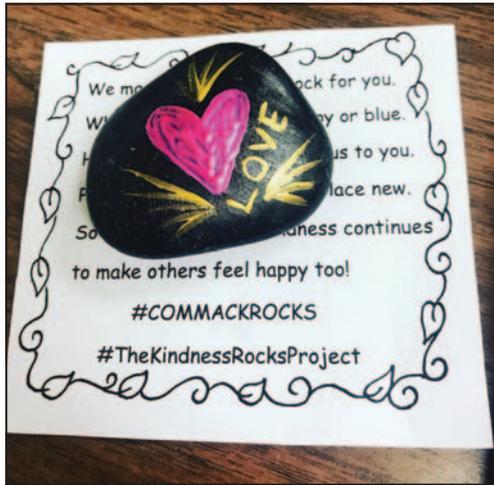
*The children got to pick out a charm for each time they walked to school during October.*

*Feeling great after a successful walk to school!*





# Kindness Rocks!



Commack High School's three 8:1:2 classes participated in the nationally recognized, "Kindness Rock Project," learning about kindness and how to spread it throughout our community. Kindness is defined as, "Showing people they are valuable by how we treat them."

You can see just how much impact this movement has made when looking up #TheKindnessRocksProject on social me-

dia. The students created a rock garden, with their own hand-painted rocks in the courtyard by the greenhouse. The rocks are also placed throughout the building and around our community. Each of these rocks will say, #COMMACKROCKS on the back.

We encourage everyone to take photos of the rocks and post them on social media. Be sure to include, #COMMACKROCKS, so the students can keep track of this grow-

ing movement. If you are having a tough day and the rock is something that puts a smile on your face, you may take it and when you are feeling better put it in another location so that the chain of kindness continues. We hope to have a positive impact throughout our high school and community by spreading kindness.

For more information visit [www.thekindnessrocksproject.com](http://www.thekindnessrocksproject.com).

## North Ridge Students Pay Attention to Details!



Mrs. Chiaino's second grade class at North Ridge Primary School has been studying descriptive language. Students learned how to add detail to their writing by using adjectives to describe their pictures.

To help celebrate the holiday season, the class

first created their own ugly holiday sweaters. Then, using their descriptive language, students wrote a short paragraph describing their design. Finally, students celebrated their writing by having an Ugly Sweater Day in the classroom. Everyone had a great time!

## HEALTHYLIFESTYLES FOR KIDS



Mr. Jon Norberg from "King of Themes" has been visiting North Ridge physical education classes for 15 years. Mr. Norberg is a retired PE and college professor. He sets up the gym with a different theme each December including Winter Wonderland, The Rainforest, Olympics, and Math and Movement. This year's theme is "Healthy Lifestyles for Kids." There are 17 different stations related to

fitness and nutrition that incorporate balance skills, throwing skills, and academics through movement.

The programs are scheduled through the PTA and the Arts in Education program. He believes that the Commack students are the most physically fit of the 26 districts and 70 elementary schools that he has brought his program to these past 18 years!

# Commack Middle School Students Seek Societal Changes



Commack Middle School is taking the phrase “a picture is worth a thousand words” to heart. By combining the talents of Melissa Young-Dorn’s eighth grade art classes and Kari Rivara-Sturchio’s The Writers Studio class, students created works of art based on fiction.

It began with students in The Writers Studio authoring texts that embodied the problems they saw within our society. They were inspired by their passions and the need for change in the world. By bringing attention to issues such as LGBTQ rights, mental health, racism, sexism, gun control, animal rights, and others, the students

hoped to raise awareness among their peers. Once the stories were edited and revised, students rewrote the stories by hand in notebooks so that they conveyed an authenticity reflective of both the writer and the issue.

In response to these texts, eighth grade art students created three-dimensional conceptual sculptures to provide a visual lens through which each story’s deeper meaning could be felt. Ms. Young-Dorn’s students brainstormed to explore different ways they could bring the words on the page to life. Once the sculptures were constructed, classes met to assess and reflect

on how their stories and three-dimensional counterparts visually and emotionally complemented their companion texts.

Inspired by the Middle Years Program, this interdisciplinary project provided students with the opportunity to collaborate and make thoughtful connections to the real world. Students’ social awareness sculptures and notebooks are on display near the auditorium in the main hallway of Commack Middle School. The students hope their art will positively influence others and remind them that there are many ways to spark the changes they want to see within their world.

## GLAMOURGALS @Commack High School

Glamour Gals CEO and founder Rachel Doyle, a Commack High School graduate (Class of 2001) came home to encourage the members of the High School Glamour Gals (GG) chapter to make a difference in the lives of local nursing home residents. Club members offer simple make-overs, manicures, and companionship to those living in local nursing homes and facilities for the elderly.



Rachel founded Glamour Gals, a service club, while she was a student at Commack High School. The non-profit club has gone national, and Rachel was featured on Oprah Winfrey for her work in starting this wonderful service club.

Ms. Karen Dow, the CHS Glamour Gals advisor, and several Glamour Gals officers and members attended the annual Glamour Gals Leadership Institute in NYC on November 17. There they learned valuable leadership skills, not only for the club, but also for their future careers. The CHS members felt very special to be able to meet and receive valuable advice and inspiration from Ms. Doyle, especially since she walked the same hallways a few years ago.

## Friendship Makes the World a Nicer Place!



Wood Park students and staff gathered for a Buddy Bench Ribbon Cutting Ceremony recently. Former student Abbey (now a senior) created and built a beautiful Buddy Bench as part of her Girl Scout Gold Award.



At a special school assembly, Abbey and her family (dad helped with the bench, too) presented each student a friendship bracelet.

## Sawmill's New Mascot Voted In!



Thanks to the School Based Management Team, students and staff at Sawmill Intermediate School got a say in whether to keep the Cobra as the school mascot, or change it back to the beaver. Many years ago when Sawmill was a junior high school, the beaver was the mascot.

Thirty years ago when Sawmill became an intermediate school, the cobra was adopted as the mascot. The voting results are in...and the winner is...the BEAVER, garnering 331 votes vs. 229 votes for the Cobra.

One thing leads to another, and in honor of the new mascot, the school-wide reading initiative is aptly named "Read it to Beaver!" Sawmill celebrated its new beaver mascot by coming together with a school-wide DEAR time. Students searched the school for a plush stuffed beaver, with the finder receiving a prize (a book of course!). Students wore their pajamas and snuggled with their stuffed animals and blankets as they read together. More creative beaver-related events are upcoming!



## National Technical Honor Society: Serving the Community

As a community service project, National Technical Honor Society endeavored to help United Cerebral Palsy in Commack with some issues they were having with adaptive and assisted learning devices. The group is happy for the opportunity to further deepen the existing long-standing relationship between Commack High School and UCP.

Over the next eight weeks, members of NTHS volunteered their time to research, diagnose, and successfully repair several of their damaged products (whose sum total retail value was over \$1000). The students involved represented NTHS members and students who volunteered to help. UCP extended an invitation to bring some of our CHS students to meet the beneficiaries of all of

their hard work.

In November, CHS students toured the UCP school, visiting multi-sensory rooms, classrooms, and seeing the adaptive technology already in use. They took extensive notes regarding their ideas for new adaptive tools and devices that could help the children who attend the school.

NTHS Co-Advisors Tom Shea and Michael Gargiulo shared, "The experience was absolutely amazing. In all of our years of working with students, we have never seen such independence and enthusiasm to experiment and tinker. Participants required very little "hand holding" and learned how to solder, use multimeters and other diagnostic methods from each other, and from their own interests. This was truly a service project in all regards."



# ★ Showing Support to Our Veterans ★

Kindergarten students in Mrs. Panzarino's class at North Ridge learned all about Veterans Day and why we honor the very brave men and women in our military.

We learned that they love our country and keep it safe and free. We also talked about our own family members who were in the military. One student has a sister in the army, and Mrs. Panzarino's husband was in the Marines. The children created special badges to thank our veterans for their service decorated in the colors of our flag - red, white and blue.



North Ridge



Commack School District

Families and staff in the Commack School District donated an abundance of food in an outpouring of support for our local Marines. There are 109 Marines stationed on Long Island who did not make it home for Thanksgiving. Commack filled 40 baskets with all the trimmings for a delicious holiday meal, along with letters of thanks from our students, gift cards, and decorations.

In photo, retired Marines from the Sunrise Detachment Marine Corps League, Staff Sgt. Scott Wyllie, and SCPD Deputy Inspector Bill Read came to pick up the goodies. Many thanks go to all of our generous contributors, and to the Commack Teachers Association, Burr Principal Paul Schmelter, the Girl and Boy Scouts, and to Debbie Virga.

Every school in Commack held food drives to benefit those in need, and sent to Long Island food banks. School social workers distributed turkeys and baskets to local families.

In photo on left is Alison Butler's fifth grade class at Burr with those mentioned above.

Social studies teachers Laura Cosentino and Elias Stavrinadis shared a special Veterans Day presentation to all of the students in Commack Middle School. Ms. Cosentino said, "The purpose of this event was to teach the children about Veterans Day, to promote citizenship, understand the costs of freedom, and to teach the children how they can give back to the community." At the conclusion of the presentation, students wrote letters to veterans thanking them for their service to our nation.

In the days leading up to Veterans Day, Ms. Cosentino organized the sale of gold and purple

paw-shaped patriotic stress balls modeled after the purple heart award. The school donated over \$1,200 to America's Vet Dogs. The students in Ms. Cosentino, Mr. Western, Ms. Martin, Mrs. Schouten and Mrs. Ryan's classes participated in the sale.

The mission of America's Vet Dogs is to help those in our community who have served our country honorably to live with dignity and happiness, and places highly-skilled service and guide dogs with veterans with disabilities. The service dog program provides enhanced mobility and renewed independence to veterans, active-duty service members, and



Middle School

first responders with disabilities, allowing them to once again live with pride and self-reliance.

The teachers also created a "Vet-

erans Service Wall" with heartfelt tributes of photos and memorabilia of veterans associated with student's and staff's families and friends.

# Accolades for the Sweet Sounds of Music



Seventeen Commack High School instrumental and vocal musicians were selected to participate in the 2018 New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-State Winter Conference. The selection of these talented students followed competitive auditions involving thousands of music students from throughout New York State. During a lengthy selection process that takes place during the summer, chairpeople from across the state gathered to select the finest musicians to perform in various All-State ensembles at the Eastman Theater located in Rochester, New York.

"Students selected to perform in an All-State ensemble is quite an honor" stated Mr. Paul R. Infante, Director of Fine and Applied Arts. "Each of these musicians possesses exceptional talent and we are proud to have them represent Commack."

Students that participate in the music program are continually recognized for their exceptional talents in band, chorus, and orchestra. This year, the New York State Council of Administrators' of Music Education – Suffolk County Chapter (N.Y.S.C.A.M.E./Suffolk) and the Suffolk County Music Educators Association (S.C.M.E.A.) selected thirty student musicians from the High School to participate in the two organizations' annual High School All-County Festival.

Selection to perform in the All-County Band, Orchestra, Treble Chorus, and the Mixed Chorus is held after a rigorous judging evaluation process by competitive auditions based on the New York State School Music Association (N.Y.S.S.M.A) standards adjudicated by music educators.

"Performing in this yearly event is one of the highest honors a student can achieve on the county level. We are extremely proud to have these young talented musicians represent the music department in this, and other well-known music festivals," said Paul R. Infante, Director of Fine and Applied Arts.

## All-State Students 2018

Victoria	Soprano I- Treble Chorus
Miles	Viola- String Orchestra
Kristen	Flute- Symphonic Band
Tyler	Bass I- Mixed Chorus
Alyssa	Trumpet- Wind Ensemble
Daniel	Bass I- Mixed Chorus
Samantha	Soprano I- Treble Chorus
Angela	Viola- Symphony Orchestra
Charlson	Violoncello- Symphony Orchestra
Nelini	Soprano II- Mixed Chorus
Delina	Alto I- Treble Chorus
Isac	Violin- String Orchestra
Michael	Alto Saxophone- Instrumental Jazz
Evan	Bass II- Mixed Chorus
Julianna	Trumpet- Wind Ensemble
Cristina	French Horn- Wind Ensemble
Lydia	Alto II- Mixed Chorus

## NYSCAME/SCMEA All-County Festival

### Band

Kristen  
Matthew  
Elizabeth  
Emma  
Michael  
Julianna  
Louis

### Orchestra

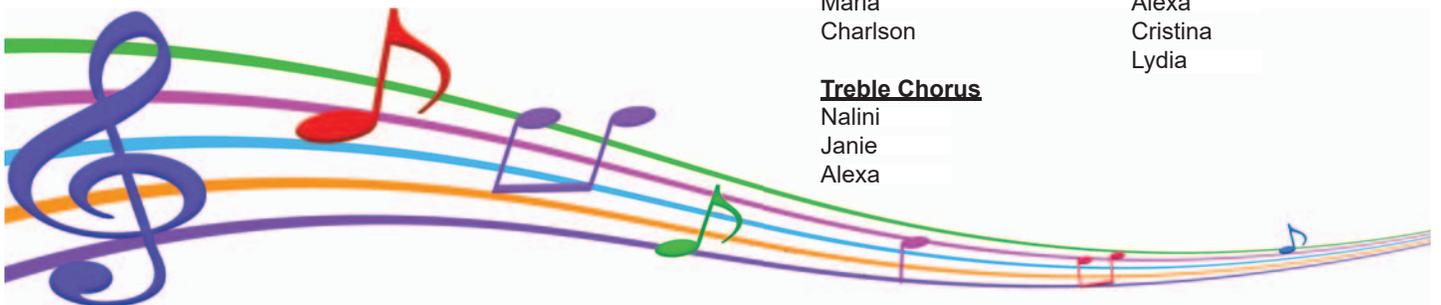
Miles  
Alyssa  
Angela  
Maria  
Charlson

### Treble Chorus

Nalini  
Janie  
Alexa

### Mixed Chorus

Jacqueline  
Victoria  
Rachel  
Riley  
Tyler  
Samantha  
Christine  
Ruth  
Delina  
Pragati  
Isac  
Evan  
Alexa  
Cristina  
Lydia



# Girls Varsity Volleyball Suffolk County Champions 2018



Photo by Bob Williams

Congratulations to all of the Commack athletic teams for a spectacular fall season, especially:

- All Fall Varsity teams for qualifying for playoffs and/or sending representation to county playoffs;
- Girls Volleyball – League, County Champions, and Long Island Finalists;
- Girls Tennis – League Champions and County Finalists;
- Boys Soccer – League Champions;
- Boys Golf – League Champions;
- Girls Swimming – League Champions and sent team members to represent Commack in State competitions;
- Boys Cross Country – Sent team members to represent Commack in State competitions, and;
- Girls Cross Country – Sent team members to represent Commack in State competitions.



**Congratulations to Katie, winner of the News12 Scholar Athlete Award. Katie is a three-sport athlete: soccer, basketball and lacrosse. Katie will be featured on News12 and received a \$1000 Scholarship sponsored by Bethpage Federal Credit Union.**

**Commack's Coaches also won accolades during the fall season. Congratulations to Coaches of the Year Anthony Barone, Jackie Clark, Brian Gasser, and Dave Moran!**

**Many of our student athletes received top awards and made Newsday's All Long Island First and Second Teams. Check out the Athletic Page on the Commack Website or our Twitter or Instagram feeds to see all their accomplishments.**



**Sean and Taylor were recognized as Commack's Suffolk Zone NYSAHPERD award winners, given to the top male and female Physical Education students at the High School.**

## Notice of Nondiscrimination

*The Commack Union Free School District does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, age, marital status, partnership status, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender (sex), military status, veteran status, domestic violence victim status or political affiliation, and additionally does not discriminate against students on the basis of weight, gender identity, gender expression, and religious practices or any other basis prohibited by New York State and/or federal non-discrimination laws in employment or its programs and activities. The District provides equal access to community and youth organizations.*



Commack Board of Education:  
 Steven Hartman - President  
 Jarrett Behar - Vice President  
 Trustees:  
 Jennifer Carpenter, William Hender

Superintendent of Schools:  
 Dr. Donald A. James