



Dutchess BOCES honors PCSD students

On Wednesday, Dutchess County BOCES held its annual Dutchess County Honor Student Recognition Breakfast at Brookmeade in Rhinebeck. The Honor's Breakfast was established in 2018 by Dr. Richard Hooley, former Dutchess BOCES Superintendent. It brought all 13 Dutchess County school districts together to recognize high school seniors who have displayed various levels of accomplishments throughout their high school careers and highlight their post-secondary plans.

The Poughkeepsie High School Color Guard opened the program in regal fashion presenting the United States and State of New York flags, leading all participants in the Pledge of Allegiance. John Jay High School String Quintet (Wappingers Central School District), provided music for the occasion. PHS 2022 Valedictorian Elijah Johnson and PHS 2022 Salutatorian Constance Pillsbury, accompanied by their parents, were recognized as Poughkeepsie City School District honor students. Elijah, accepted into Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts will study computer science, electrical engineering and business. Constance, accepted into SUNY Geneseo will major in biochemistry.

PHS Principal Kelleyann Royce-Giron, Board President Dr. Felicia Watson, and Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, superintendent of schools, were present for the event along with Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro as Elijah and Constance were honored.

Keynote speaker Jesse Jackson III, a Hyde Park graduate who is the youngest full-time instructor at the Culinary Institute of America, shared some unexpected advice.

"It's okay to quit," he said, describing how a former chef/owner demeaned him.

"I stayed professional, packed up my tools, my recipes, and quit. I left Nantucket and moved to Boston and within two weeks I had a better job making more money."

Being brave enough to take the risk and quit a prestigious position, allowed him to pivot, move on and achieve so much more.

"If you don't have a seat at the table," Jackson said. "Pivot and build your own table."



PHS class of 2022 valedictorian Elijah Johnson, salutatorian Constance Pillsbury are surrounded by family and district leaders at the Dutchess County Honor Student Recognition Breakfast May 25, 2022.



Mentor program recognizes teacher from middle school

Today's Students, Tomorrow's Teachers (TSTT) celebrated Poughkeepsie Middle School teacher Ashley Bass May 26 during its annual recognition brunch at the Westchester Marriott in Tarrytown. Bass teaches English as a New Language to 6th and 7th graders.

She received a Golden Apple award, honoring teachers who have worked in the field for 10 years.

PMS teacher Ashley Bass works with student Angelique Castillo Diaz.

"I'm just excited," Bass said. "I can't believe it's already 10 years that I've been teaching." Throughout the program's 27 year history, Bass is the first PCSD teacher to receive this honor and joins an elite group of only 25 other teachers. Many educators leave the field after three to five years, so seeing anyone reach the 10 year mark is astounding.

"You look for someone that definitely would have stayed the course in education," TSTT's founder and CEO Dr. Bettye Perkins said. "When you see teachers that stayed that long, they're really beating the odds." Bass was recommended to join TSTT as a student at Hendrick Hudson High School by an assistant principal. TSTT offered many opportunities to Bass, such as attending educational conferences, doing mock job interviews and learning plenty from her program mentor.

"All of those things were very helpful in terms of me being successful," Bass said. "The TSTT program is really good; it would be nice to get it here in Poughkeepsie."

The students in Bass' ENL class see her as a resource and she is motivated to continue teaching every time a student thanks her for helping them. When students are able to speak and write in English by the end of the semester, Bass sees her efforts having a profound effect.

"You can see the kids who come in with no English and by the end of the year, they're able to talk to you," Bass said. "That really made me want to work with that population."

Perkins saw Bass grow from a shy student to a tough, but caring and committed teacher who she considers one of the best students she ever had in the program. Perkins said Bass is having a profound impact on students and appreciates her continued involvement in TSTT.

"I'm so proud of her," Perkins said. "She was one of the students I would never forget."

PMS Principal Joseph Mazzetti is proud to see Bass receive the recognition because she is a dedicated teacher who provides tremendous support to her students.

May Athlete of the Month

Pitcher Martin puts in work to achieve success



Corey Martin winds up to deliver a pitch.

When your teammates and the coach say you played a key part in the championship season, you know your efforts on and off the field paid off. That's the case for sophomore Corey Martin, PHS Pioneers pitcher, who has been playing baseball since he was three, but only pitching the last four years.

"I started as a second baseman on my Little League team but we didn't have a pitcher so my dad made me one and I stuck with it," Martin said. Martin started playing on the varsity baseball team in eighth grade and attributes his success on the mound and at bat (he batted over .300 with 6 RBIs) to hard work.

"I do a lot outside of practice so I spend a lot of time at Extra Innings in Fishkill - I'm there all the time," he said. "I do a lot of practice by myself. I'm not a great outside hitter, so I work on that and a lot of drill work."

Coach Dylan Tully nominated Martin because of his performance on the diamond. "His pitching carried us through the playoffs. He averaged 12

strikeouts a game and had a 2.20 earned run average," Tully said.

One area he noted Martin made strides in was "how he maintains his composure during rocky times."

Though Martin plays soccer and basketball, too, baseball is his main focus. "I want to play in college and make it to the big leagues," he said.

This year the PHS team was rebuilding, and to win the Section I Independent League Championship was special.

"It felt pretty good for me to do what I had to do to get us there. I felt like a leader of the team," Martin said, adding that at times it felt like the team was on a roller coaster ride.

Martin had this advice for freshmen: "You've got to work for it, you have to put in the hours outside of practice so you can succeed and get better," he said. "Don't be nervous, just give it what you've got." That goes for academics, too.

"I do my homework in the morning and afternoon because I do baseball from 6-10 p.m.," he said, adding that his favorite class is Forensic Science.

The YOUTH LEADERSHIP Program

Chamber youth program accepting applications

Students interested in gaining leadership experience, confidence or experience careers in a field of their choice are encouraged to apply for The Chamber Foundation's

Youth Leadership Program.

During the two-year program, participants will interact with peers, community-based service organizations, institutions of higher learning and professionals from local industries. Sessions occur twice per month on weekday evenings October through May.

In Track 1, students - typically 10th graders - will form committees and work to build a mock company or nonprofit of their choice from the ground up. At the end of the year, they will give a presentation about the entity they created.

"They'll learn leadership skills including teamwork, communications, emotional intelligence and the aspects of starting a company or nonprofit," Laura Doe, director of programming and development, for The Chamber Foundation, said.

Track 2 students - typically 11th graders - begin the year with career exploration assessments to pinpoint fields of interest and goals, Doe said.

The focus throughout the year is on developing a resume, writing cover letters and preparing for interviews. "Students learn about college and career options, including a panel that features representatives from local colleges and trade schools," she said.

A 20-hour internship with a local company aligned with students' career goals helps them apply the skills they've learned in the program.

Students in both tracks attend seminars teaching a variety of leadership skills including public speaking, financial planning for college and career, project management, civic engagement and ethical leadership.

By the end, students will have developed a better understanding of themselves, grown skills and attitudes needed for success in college and in life and develop organizational and problem-solving skills that can help in every aspect of life.

The [Youth Leadership Program application](#) deadline is June 30. Questions should be directed to Ms. Doe at 845-454-1700 ext. 1025 or email laura@chamberfdn.org.



A scene from the Youth Leadership Expo put on by The Chamber Foundation.



Curriculum and Instruction: Teaching in wake of violence

Given the tragedy in Texas, this week's edition offers tips to help teachers in the classroom speak with students about the event. It starts with connecting social-emotional learning with academics, using a head, heart and ethics approach. This edition also highlights the efforts to prep students for and score the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test. Download a copy of [CI Weekly #34](#).

Upcoming events:

- **May 30:** Memorial Day – Schools closed
- **May 31:** [Board of Education](#) meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Building, 18 S. Perry St.
- **June 1:** Scholarship and Awards night, PHS, 70 Forbus St. (4 p.m., National Honor Society, 6 p.m. Scholarships)
- **June 2:** PHS Fine Art and Music Festival, 3-4 p.m. for art show (Lobby); 6:30 p.m. Spring Concert (Auditorium)