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News & Updates

June 11, 2021

Science Stars in the Spotlight Again: NRHS Sophomores Nab 7 Regional Awards



Results from the most recent high school science fair competition are in, and once again, students in the New Rochelle High School Science Research Program took home top awards, including four first-place finishes.

Studying subject matter ranging from Alzheimer's to pediatric nephrology, seven NRHS sophomores wowed Westlake Science Fair judges with research ranked among the best presented by 494 students representing 33 high schools. The event, typically held in Thornwood, was conducted virtually last Saturday.

"I am ecstatic about the achievements of our sophomores," said Jeff Wuebber, leader of the program. "Their incredible tenacity and talent was on display at the fair, and they are on their way to becoming outstanding scientists. I am very excited to see the amazing research they will do this summer!"

Four students earned first-place awards: Anna Barlis in the Behavioral Science category, for research on anxiety and screen time; Anthony D'Amato in the Physical Science category, who studied lithium-ion batteries; Julia Ecker in the Life Science category, for research on Alzheimer's care; and Alessandra Pappalardi in the Behavioral Science category, who focused on pediatric nephrology.

Second place in Behavioral Science went to Dylan Sadow, who examined substance addiction

(Please see [Science](#), at bottom.)

Updated: District Graduation Events Schedule Available



CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW ROCHELLE

GRADUATION EVENTS 2021

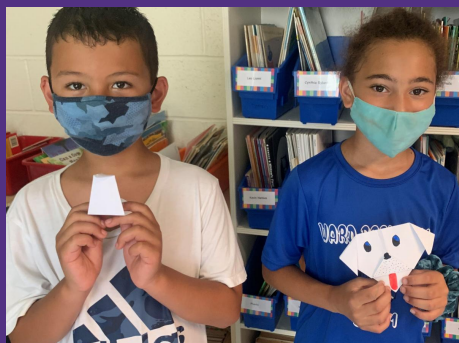
UPDATED AS OF 6/11/21

SCHOOL	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Isaac E. Young MS	June 24, 2021	8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Diploma Day Walk-Through Celebration: Football Field Parking Lot
Albert Leonard Middle School	June 24, 2021	9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Diploma Day Drive-Through Event
New Rochelle HS (2 ceremonies)	June 24, 2021	10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.	Senior Field - New Rochelle
Barnard Elementary	June 25, 2021	Morning and afternoon	Virtual ceremonies in individual classrooms; then afternoon activities for 2nd grade students
	June 25, 2021	1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	Drive-through parade for 2nd grade families
Columbia Elementary	June 25, 2021	9:15 a.m.	Senior Field
Davis Elementary	June 25, 2021	Morning	Virtual Graduation Celebration
	June 25, 2021	Afternoon (12:30-2:30 p.m.)	Drive-Through + On-Site Celebration
Jefferson Elementary	June 11, 2021	9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.	Field by the playground - in back of the school
Timothy Elementary	June 21, 2021	9:30 a.m.	Drive-through (back driveway)
Ward Elementary	June 17, 2021	9:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.	Behind the School
		11:15 a.m. and 1:15 p.m.	Individual Classroom Ceremonies
	June 18, 2021	9:15 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.	Behind the School
		11:15 a.m.	Individual Classroom Ceremonies
Webster Elementary	June 21, 2021	9:00, 10:00, and 11:00 a.m.	Auditorium & Individual Classroom Ceremonies
	June 22, 2021	9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.	Auditorium & Individual Classroom Ceremonies

The countdown to the end of the academic year continues, with schools planning moving-up and graduation events to celebrate our students' accomplishments.

Students and families will receive information specific to their schools.

For an updated overview of the District-wide schedule, click on the image above. For details about New Rochelle High School's graduation, [click here](#).



Third-graders Adrian De Los Angeles and Alina Holness show off their origami creations.

Lessons About

Community: Use Federal Aid to Overcome Learning Loss and Enhance District Facilities

Providing additional instruction to stem learning loss caused by COVID-19 and improving school facilities to advance environmental health are priorities the District should consider when allocating American Rescue Plan funding.

This was the input from 140 New Rochelle residents who completed a district-wide survey in May; the findings were reported at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting.

Respondents were asked to select their top two priorities from a list of possibilities. More than 52% indicated learning loss and 41% facilities enhancements as top concerns.

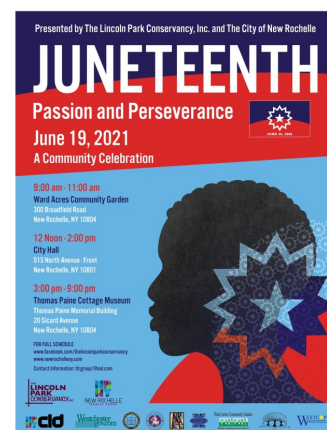
While almost half of the \$14.9 million to be received by the District over the next four years is restricted to specific activities – including interventions that address learning loss, such as afterschool programs and summer school – the District may use some discretion in enhancing these initiatives and allocating the remaining money.

Input will continue to be sought and plans for the funds developed.

Mark Your Calendar: Juneteenth Celebration Next Week at 3 Venues

A community celebration, "Juneteenth: Passion and Perseverance," will be held Saturday, June 19. It is presented by the Lincoln Park Conservancy and the City of New Rochelle.

A variety of events will be held at Ward Acres Community Garden, City Hall and the Thomas Paine Cottage Museum.



Between noon and 2 p.m., at City Hall, Albert Leonard Middle School student Maison Smith, known as DJSmithyBoy, will provide entertainment and New Rochelle High School students Solomon Darden and Darrin Greaves II will share their original spoken-word pieces.

Juneteenth honors the end of slavery in the United States and is considered the longest-running African American holiday. Click on the above image to learn

Asian Heritage at Ward Bridge World

At William B. Ward Elementary School, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month was an opportunity to bring the world to New Rochelle.

"We as educators have the opportunity and responsibility to shed positive light on the culture of people who have made many contributions to our country, both past and present," said third-grade teacher Trisha Goodman.

Goodman, with teachers Angie Obligado, Lori Gomes, Alex Bisaria and Viviana Tamas, created the AAPI Advocacy Committee (AAPI stands for Asian American/Pacific Islander). They constructed lessons and activities for grades K-5 during May.

"We chose four Asian countries (China, Korea, Japan and India) and cultures to focus on," said Obligado, a fifth-grade teacher.

China studies focused on Lunar New Year, pandas and famous Chinese Americans Jeremy Lin, a basketball player, and figure skater Michelle Kwan. Korea studies focused on Korean Thanksgiving, seal stamps and Korean Americans such as author Linda Sue Park and actor Daniel Dae Kim. Japan studies focused on Children's Day, origami, traditional foods and Japanese-American figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi. India studies focused on a holiday, Holi, as well as traditional foods, animals native to India and Indian-American actor Karan Brar. Each morning, Principal Franco Miele announced interesting facts about the nations.

Sidara Gray, a third-grader, said, "I liked learning about new cultures and how different people celebrate things."

Fifth-grader Tiago Coehlo said, "Learning about Asian American/Pacific Islander Month is really impactful to the world. I

more.

WNBC Spotlights NRHS Achiever Who Tenaciously Overcame Odds



NRHS senior Sissi Ochoa De Leon, left, shows WNBC-TV reporter Lynda Baquero her awards and college-acceptance letters as videographer Nicole White records the interview.

Sissi Ochoa De Leon arrived from Guatemala at age 7. She had lost her mother three years earlier. Unable to speak English, she was placed in first grade rather than third at Columbus Elementary School. Now, she's ready to graduate and study psychology at SUNY Purchase.

Her resiliency and commitment earned her the Overcoming the Odds award from the organization Student Advocacy and a \$4,000 Judith Johnson Opportunity Scholarship from the Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents.

That tenacity also inspired WNBC-TV to spotlight her story. The report on Thursday also included an interview with NRHS science teacher Carmen Glenn, her teacher for two years, and Ochoa De Leon's stepmom, Nidia Escobar.

Masks: Outdoor Use Encouraged;

think people should know what is going on with Asian Americans and the people who are important to Asian American History Month.”

Activities also focused on acceptance, kindness and empathy. Tamas, a reading teacher, said, “It is important to promote inclusion and address issues of racism with honesty and compassion. Literature is a great way to help children relate.”



Some of the many Webster students who learned about Autism, including the move from blue to red.

Lesson at Webster: "Autism... is just a different ability"

Daniel Webster Elementary School played a crucial role in outlining the importance of #RedInstead for Autism awareness.

Kindergarten through fifth grade participated in Autism Acceptance Month to share stories, discussions and activities that surely provided a heightened level of awareness and understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

“This year I think there was real awareness,” said Cara Kennedy, a speech pathologist at Webster who helped launch the program.

The activities came on the heels of a worldwide appeal to move Autism’s color of choice from blue to red. As Kennedy describes it, the blue color came up short in fully representing Autism awareness and acceptance, focusing more on raising money for finding a cure than directly benefiting affected families.

Use Inside Schools Mandated

While strongly encouraged, masks/facial coverings are no longer required to be worn outdoors on City School District of New Rochelle grounds.

This policy, effective Wednesday, June 9, includes all members of the CSDNR community and covers all outdoor activities as described in New York State Department of Health guidelines.

The District’s Reopening Plan was updated to include this modification after consultation with District and school building leaders, and leadership of the Federation of United School Employees (FUSE). The modifications stem from updates promulgated by the New York State Department of Health, in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control’s recommendations for outdoor mask/facial covering requirements.

Albert Leonard "Sticks" Together to Create Mural, Promote Unity



A new and unique art piece now decorates the halls of Albert Leonard Middle School.

The mural, titled "Through it All, We Stick Together," was created from artwork from all Albert Leonard Middle School art students. Art teachers said the meaning behind the mural came from not trying to forget this past year — but trying to remember it.

“The mural came from the idea that somehow this year must be memorialized,” said art teacher Sarah Suplina. “Everyone has been affected in so many ways, and everyone has had so many different feelings, so I knew those varying emotions and experiences would make for a very interesting art piece.”

“I put a reverse sign, which symbolizes that all of this COVID stuff should just be flipped around so COVID itself can feel the pain it caused all of us,” said seventh-grader Noah Yairi. “All the artwork in one mural shows how we as a community are still working together as one, even with all the stuff that’s tried to tear us apart.”

The challenge was to complete an art piece that included all art students, attending in person and

Other factors drove the change, including blue typically regarded as a symbol of grief and despair, while red is widely associated with fire, passion and heart.

"The Autistic community came out and said (blue) doesn't represent the communities," Kennedy said. "The most important thing that we can do is try to understand and listen to (those with Autism). We really want to feed the acceptance and inclusion pieces and use this as an opportunity to show our students to use a growth mindset."

Webster students learned why red has become the preferred color. They read stories and held classroom discussions. They participated in activities that focused on inclusion and acceptance. They listened to stories about people with Autism. In a school district with 180 students with Autism, teachers and students alike learned valuable lessons while sharing those messages into homes and communities.

The concepts are important not only in April, Autism Awareness Month, but every month.

Second-grade students provided keen observations from the lessons.

"When people have Autism and you're talking to them, sometimes they look away," Anelka Morales said. "It's not because they are being rude; it's because their mind is overflowing with information and they cannot handle it."

Or as Sariah Webb said so well, "Autism isn't a disability; it's just a different ability."

"#RedInstead was everywhere," Kennedy said. "There are a lot more adults with Autism and a surge in females diagnosed with Autism. I think this speaks to, 'We want to be accepted, not changed.' It is not an affliction; it is not a disease."

virtually. Thanks to the quick thinking of art teachers Larene Del Guercio, Sonia Dellaripa and Suplina, utilizing craft sticks was a successful solution to enable students to sum up their year.

"To me, the mural symbolizes all of my classmates' emotions on one piece of artwork," said seventh-grade student Kenya Clark. "I felt proud that we all came together and made a beautiful piece of art, but I was sad that so many classmates had bad experiences through the pandemic that showed on the sticks."

Students attending classes virtually were given the option of picking up a stick at the school or creating a digital stick that art teachers could print, cut and glue onto the mural. Art teachers found that the mural had indeed united all Albert Leonard students.

"The mural came together beautifully, creating a quilt look," said Suplina. "More importantly, it visualizes our strength when we create together, work together and stick together."

Section 1 Tennis Championship? New Rochelle High Couldn't Lose!

Two years ago, New Rochelle High School tennis players Emil Grantcharov and Nick Suhanitski teamed up as freshmen to nearly upset the eventual state champion doubles team from Scarsdale High.

Last Wednesday, they faced off for the Section 1 singles title. And the close friends handled it with equal parts determination and grace.



Grantcharov, at right in the photo, defeated his buddy 6-3, 6-4 in a grueling championship match. It capped a unique journey for the players after having last season canceled because of COVID mandates.

"You are competitive and you know it's your friend – it's hard," said New Rochelle High tennis coach Jenn Rock, at center in the photo.

It was her first time in six seasons having teammates in the section singles final, and she had her own nervousness watching two players she admires and respects.

"They have a lot of respect for each other," she said.

And the juniors displayed that respect with two gritty

"We needed to take the negative stigma from how it was previously viewed."

efforts and classy sportsmanship.

"Emil pulled it out, but Nick (at left in the photo) really made a good fight of it," Rock said.

More News to Know

Wild Things and More! Custodian's Nature Photos in NRHS Exhibit

Don't miss out on the spectacular nature photography of New Rochelle High School night custodian Bruno Attisani, second from left in the photo. "Wild Things: A Photographic Exhibit of the Birds & Beasts in The New York Area" is open until June 18 at the NRHS Museum of Arts and Culture. A reception this week attracted about 25 visitors, including some of Attisani's family. The museum is a program of the New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence.



Tonight on Zoom: Albert Leonard Middle School Performance

Yearning for live entertainment? Tonight is a great opportunity to check out a live performance, on Zoom, featuring some Albert Leonard Middle School alumni and current student performers. You're invited to watch *Under the Sea With The Addams Family* at 6 p.m. today. Just visit <https://zoom.us/j/99724092486>.

Now Available: Enjoy NRHS' Innovative Musical Online

If you missed "Is There Life After High School?", you have another chance to see it. If you *did* see it, here's your chance to relive it. The innovative high school musical, recorded in and around New Rochelle High School – and in the performers' homes (with their parents getting into the act) – will be available for streaming through June 20. As a bonus, a behind-the-scenes documentary is included. All proceeds will go to New Rochelle High School's TheatreWorks and future shows. Buy tickets at [this link](#).



Trinity Teachers Thanked for "Knocking Our Socks Off"

About 100 teachers, teaching assistants, specialists and other staff enjoyed a teacher appreciation luncheon hosted outdoors recently by the Trinity Elementary School PTA. "You Knocked Our Socks Off!" signage was a creative way to present the parting gifts: Trinity-themed socks rolled into roses, pictured at left!

Science (*continued*)

treatment, and to Aviva Segal, who competed in the Life Science category with her research on manganese toxicity. Natalie Chang earned third place in the Life Science category for her Alzheimer's Disease research.

Barlis said of the experience, "It was a very rewarding feeling to know that the many hours and long nights practicing and perfecting my presentation paid off. Although presenting over Zoom had its challenges, I felt very prepared, and am so grateful to have had the opportunity to compete."

"It feels great to have recognition for sharing my ideas about a topic that I'm passionate about," said D'Amato, who examined inconsistencies in lithium-ion battery charge/discharge rates.

Ecker noted that the Westlake fair "required a lot of time and work... but it was all worth it." She said it

gave her “the opportunity to learn from others” and discover how she can improve.

Pappalardi reflected on the “instability” of this academic year and said she was able to do well “because of the guidance and structure of the program” and the assistance provided.

She added, “I’m looking forward to the science fairs to come over the next few years, all of which will hopefully allow me to present my projects in person.”

Awardees contacted expressed gratitude to Wuebber for providing excellent support and guidance throughout the year.

For more about the research projects conducted by some 50 students, visit <https://sites.google.com/nredlearn.org/symposium2021/home>.

