



## News & Updates

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June 18, 2021

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### Science Stars Cap Year by Going Global and Bringing Home 13 Prestigious Awards

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Even when competing against peers from around the world, New Rochelle High School Science Research Program participants are at the top of their game.

Just-released results from the International Genius Olympiad distinguish 13 NRHS students as among the best in a pool of 2,400 applicants and 1,245 finalists from 85 countries.

This is the second time NRHS has participated in the Genius Olympiad, said Jeff Wuebber, who leads the Science Research Program. An impressive nine awards went to NRHS students in 2019; this year's competitors – three seniors, nine juniors and one sophomore – were able to build on the school's previous Olympiad experience and bring home four more awards.



From Gold Medal winners to finalists, Genius Olympiad awardees who are accepted to and choose to attend the Rochester Institute of Technology will receive renewable scholarships ranging from \$10,000 to \$20,000. The medal winners from NRHS were:

- **Gold:** Izzy Balachandran.
- **Silver:** Ella Harshman, Akshara Koottala, Andres Nunez and Julia Yang.
- **Bronze:** Kieran Freed, Jack McCormick and Yaffa Segal.
- **Honorable Mention:** Jackie Ceja, Lily Spertus Newman, Alessandra Pappalardi, Rachel Rivera and Leyla Selman.

Several of these students received additional science competition awards during the school year.

Nunez, a junior whose research on "Molecular Weight Characterization of Trastuzumab Antibody

## Join the Celebrations: Moving-Up and Graduation Schedule



The poster for the City School District of New Rochelle Graduation Events 2021 features a photograph of graduates in purple gowns throwing their caps into the air. Below the photo is a table with the following information:

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.	Scenic Field - New Rochelle
Barnard Elementary	June 22, 2021	Morning and afternoon	Virtual ceremonies in individual classrooms; then afternoon activities for 2nd grade students
	June 23, 2021	1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	Drive-through parade for 2nd grade families
Columbia Elementary	June 23, 2021	9:15 a.m.	Scenic Field
Davis Elementary	June 23, 2021	Morning	Virtual Graduation Celebration
		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
Trinity Elementary	June 23, 2021	9:30 a.m.	Drive-through (Scenic driveway)
Wood Elementary	June 17, 2021	9:15 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 B Individual Classroom Ceremonies
	June 22, 2021	9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.	Auditorium B 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.

For an updated overview of the District-wide schedule, click on the image above. For details on New Rochelle High School's June 24 graduation, [click here](#).

## Barnard First-Graders Create Book, Are Now Published Authors!

## NRHS Principal Search Update from the Board of Education

Dear community member,

We are pleased to announce that the City School District of New Rochelle is commencing a search for a new Principal to lead New Rochelle High School. The anticipated start date for this new hire is slated for August 1, 2021.

The Central Office Team, guided by the leadership of incoming Superintendent Jonathan Raymond, is committed to finding a qualified administrator who embodies integrity, equity, inclusion and diversity for New Rochelle High School.

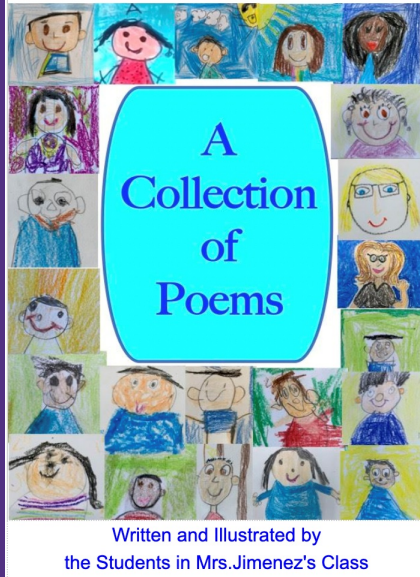
To ensure that this executive search is an inclusive process, a survey will launch on the New Rochelle City School District website ([nred.org](http://nred.org)) on June 21 and will close on June 25 for our community stakeholders to share input regarding desired characteristics and required leadership qualities to guide our search in our selection process.

### The successful candidate will have:

- Experience as an administrator; secondary administrative experience preferred.
- Skills as a courageous and informed leader, able to engage all of the different voices and perspectives within the building and the community towards a unified vision.
- Superior communication skills, demonstrating accessibility and cultural competency in a large and complex school setting.
- Strong management skills and systems-thinking coupled with the ability to build an effective team approach to leadership.
- A focus on decisions in the best interests of a diverse student body.
- A visible and accessible presence that portrays an effective role model for students and staff.

We wanted to share a brief outline of our hiring process:

- Interview committees will be facilitated by Central and School Administration. Students, staff, parents and community representatives, as well as the School Board, will engage in this process.
- Questions and desired qualities for the candidates are being developed based on skills needed and the suggestions offered in your answers to survey questions.
- The position was posted on [olasjobs.org](http://olasjobs.org) today, and several other pertinent sites around the region.
- Resumes will be reviewed in early July. Interviews will begin during the first and second



Students' self-portraits on the cover.

Christopher Geral Ortiz Garay isn't your typical Barnard Early Childhood Center first-grader. He's a published author. So are classmates Ahilyn Chavez, Ruby Valencia Diaz, Olivia Natalie Reid and the rest of Lourdes Jimenez's first-grade class.

"I like doing projects and I want to be an artist. It feels amazing being published," first-grader Garay said.

Jimenez's students at the Barnard Early Childhood Center learned first-hand how poetry could motivate them to read and simultaneously enhance their vocabulary, expressions and writing skills.

After learning about poetry, students wrote their own original poem. In addition, they created an illustration to accompany their work. The collection of poems was compiled into a class book with the help of reading teacher Melissa Head, and they're now available to families for purchase.

"It has been such a challenging year for teachers and students," said Head. "Mrs. Jimenez and I wanted to have some fun with the kids and instill a lifelong love of reading and writing through this experience."

The publishing process was rewarding for the students, who took pride in their poems and

week of July and the process will be completed by July 31.

This is a key position in our District and we encourage minority candidates to apply as well as our internal candidates. All interested applicants must directly apply at [olasjobs.org](https://www.olasjobs.org) by July 1, 2021.

## Juneteenth Events Saturday; Students to Speak, Entertain

A community celebration, "Juneteenth: Passion and Perseverance," will be held Saturday. 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, which became a federal holiday this week, honors the end of slavery in the United States and is considered the oldest African American holiday. Click on the image to learn more.

## 1973 NRHS Grad Made History as the First to Play Pro Basketball Behind the 'Iron Curtain'



illustrations.

Chavez mentioned, "It's amazing because I wrote something neatly and did not rush."

"It was great because it was my first time ever publishing my own book," said Diaz.

To celebrate publication of the anthology, Jimenez and Head held a publishing party on June 18. Children read their poems to their peers while families attended via Zoom.

For families who could not attend, a PowerPoint presentation was distributed, featuring voiceovers of students reading their poems. Recording the stories was a breeze to the students.

"At first I was nervous, sure, but afterward, I was normal," Reid said.

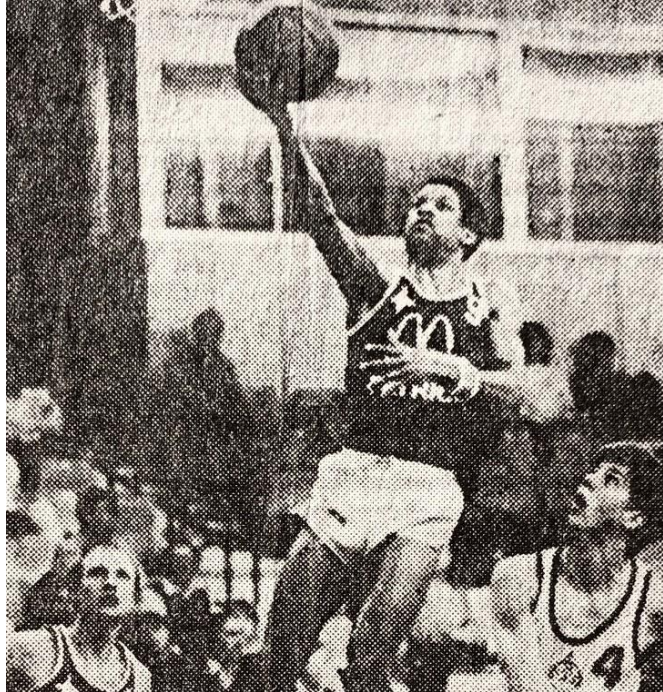
The teachers are eager to publish again next school year. See a video, and hear the students recite their poems, at [this link](#).



Sofia Guglielmo with a Romaine lettuce she planted and harvested.

## At Jefferson, the Fruits of Students' Labor are Vegetables!

Kids who don't like vegetables?  
Not Jefferson Elementary School fourth-grader William



In this newspaper clipping, NRHS graduate Kent Washington shows the moves that made him a basketball trendsetter.

Kent Washington has lived a life fuller than his 140-page memoir might suggest. His is a life more befitting a rich novel, given that this 1973 New Rochelle High School graduate ultimately became the first American to play professional basketball behind the Iron Curtain.



The manuscript chronicles an undersized NewRo kid who outworked everybody to become a hoops star, get chosen in the NBA draft and, ultimately, break barriers while enjoying a brilliant career in Europe. It's about parents who inspired Washington without suffocating him, paving the way for everything their son would become.

"They taught me by showing me, not by telling me," said Washington, whose mom, Cooteal, 96, lives with him and his wife Susanne in their New Rochelle home. Washington's dad, Ralph, New Rochelle's first black police detective, passed away about a decade ago.

"Sports were my thing, not their thing. They allowed me to deal with adversity at an early age. They allowed me to mature as a player."

There was one problem, however, that even his parents couldn't fix.

Washington's work ethic represented a passion that bordered on obsession. He worked so hard, starting at such an early age, that as he fulfilled his goals, burnout beckoned. The student athlete came to be known as "Nut" for his obsession with the game.

"I had a real issue, actually: I practiced too hard,"

Gallagher. Count him as a big fan, thanks to his experiences during STEM class.

"I learned so much about different types of vegetables, and I loved eating the delicious salad we made. I licked my plate clean," Gallagher said.



Gallagher and fellow students in Gillian Roshinko and Lucia Brea's class learned the importance of sustainability thanks to newly purchased Tower Gardens (see photo). These vertical aeroponic gardens grow clean, organic plants three times faster than traditional planting.

Students "planted" seedlings on April 20 and had a garden of organic produce in less than five weeks. The harvest included two varieties of romaine and butter lettuce, rainbow Swiss chard, dinosaur kale, and basil. Students raced into class each day to check progress and were amazed at how quickly plants grew.

"My favorite part was seeing how much the plants would grow each day," fourth-grader Krishna Perez Lopez said.

The class harvested the vegetables to create delicious, nutritious salads. Students participated in a "lettuce tasting" in which they tasted one leaf from each plant, illustrated them and then described them using adjectives for growth, color, texture and taste.

Their favorite part was giving the lettuce a rating from one to five, with the most popular being romaine. Students also incorporated their knowledge of fractions to cut their food and make salad dressing.

Fourth-grader Luca Anya said, "I really hope that we have a Tower Garden in our classrooms next year too."

Washington said. "I didn't know when to stop." That explains how a 5-foot-6 point guard made all-county in high school, scored 1,082 points at Division II Southampton College and got chosen by the Los Angeles Lakers in the 10th round of the 1977 draft.

Washington eventually better channeled his passion, understanding that quality workouts trumped the quantity of marathon sessions.

He turned out not to be NBA material – NBA legend Jerry West cut him from the Lakers – but went on to become an American hoops hero in Poland from 1979-83. He was the league's most valuable player once, runner-up twice and averaged 20 points without the benefit of a three-point shot, common today but unavailable then.

He followed that up with a standout 10-year career in Sweden before retiring from the sport at age 38. That's also where he met Susanne, and where their daughter, Kehli, now 28, was born.

The Washingtons moved back home in 1997, and the former basketball star worked as an assistant with the Iona College and Mercy College women's basketball programs and as a teacher's assistant in public schools for 17 years before retiring. The couple plans to move to the Netherlands in about a year to be close to their daughter, who has returned to Sweden to live.

For now, Washington's focus has turned to having his memoir published.

"Kent has had great accomplishments," said City School District of New Rochelle Director of Athletics Steve Young. "His life is an inspiration for all current athletes to strive for. It shows that you don't have to be in the NBA to be successful; there are other avenues to success. And to be a trailblazer like Kent Washington is a great thing."

"I often think of how blessed I was," said Washington, who, at 66 still works out daily. "I remember a journalist in Poland told me, 'Do you have any idea how much of a legend you are over here?' I never thought of it that way."

"I was just playing basketball."

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## National Program at Three Schools Guides Youngsters to be their Best







Second-grade math expert Robert Halle with his certificate.

## Sixth in the Nation: Barnard Proud of its Young Math Whiz

A student at the Henry Barnard Early Childhood Center is celebrating an elite score for his performance in an international mathematics exam.

Second-grader Robert Halle ranked sixth in the country and fifth in New York State in the annual mathematical competition, Math Kangaroo, an international competition featuring 6 million participants in over 80 countries.

With his high score in such a stiff competition, his family has nothing but pride.

"We are so proud of him," said Halle's mother, Aline Halle. "He has a true love for mathematics and always has."

The competition consists of a 75-minute multiple-choice exam that takes place the third Thursday in March each year. Students from grades 1-12 are invited to participate and compete against others across the country each year.

Halle put himself to the test last year as well, finishing 10th in New York State and 18th in the nation among first-graders, an impressive feat that came from his desire for a challenge.

A dedicated area at Trinity for Primary Project learning.

For some elementary school children, gaining confidence and thriving in class requires overcoming shyness, nervousness and understanding how to best interact with other students.

Trinity Elementary School's excellence at helping students in these areas has been certified nationally – for the second time.

Primary Project helps children in pre-kindergarten through third grade deal with social, emotional and school-adjustment issues. Over a few months, child associates meet weekly with students in a one-on-one playroom setting. Play-based strategies help children engage with peers and get comfortable with the school environment.

"As a nationally certified site under the Primary Project Program, Trinity Elementary School serves as a replication model for any school district in New York State or in the United States interested in providing exploratory play as a classroom-learning strategy to improve school readiness in kindergarten through grade 3," said Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services Dr. Jackielyn Manning Campbell.

"The Primary Project, originally funded with a New York State Education Department Grant, operates in Trinity, Jefferson and Barnard Elementary Schools with local funds, and provides an opportunity to enrich and expand our early childhood curriculum. As such, we are eager to extend this unique approach to all of our elementary schools in the future."

Trinity also received the honor in 2017 alongside Barnard Elementary School. A recognition that takes place every three years, the 2020 certification process was delayed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are so proud and excited to have attained national certification once again," Trinity social worker Nelsie Febles said. "Primary Project has helped so many students feel good about their school experiences. It is a true gift to our students."

The [Children's Institute](#), which provides the program, is a national nonprofit that works to strengthen children's social and emotional health through early intervention programs and materials.

## Enjoy PAVE Performances Online

The school year is ending, but you can still check out the work of students in PAVE (Performing and Visual Arts Education) classes via free online viewing:

- Now through June 27, "**Is There Life After High School?**" can be streamed on demand. Donations go to TheatreWorks and future shows. The production appreciates the

"He really wanted to compete against a bunch of other people just to see what would happen," his mother said, adding that her son's increasingly high scores are due in part to Barnard's teachers and staff.

"Barnard really is amazing," she said. "They really foster the love of learning in each child."

"I am so proud of our students' academic skills, especially in the field of mathematics," said Barnard Principal Dr. Nicolas Cracco.

"At Barnard, we use best practices in mathematics and a strong curriculum that supports our students in building this strong foundation in their early mathematical skills."

sponsorship of the New Rochelle Council on the Arts. Click [here](#) to register.

- On Monday at 7 p.m., enjoy **Poetry Project films** created by acting, art and orchestra students. Sign up [here](#).



- The **Best of PAVE 2021** features student talent in band, orchestra, vocal, art, film, dance and acting. Watch from June 21-28 by obtaining a 24-hour pass [here](#).



## More News to Know

### Mobile Food Pantry at Trinity Next Tuesday

The Mobile Food Pantry outside Isaac E. Young Middle School on Thursday evenings has been rescheduled. The pantry instead will visit Isaac Young, at 270 Centre Ave., on Tuesday, June 22, from 1-2 p.m. A lack of food means a lack of consistent nutrition, which can hinder students' success in class or families' abilities to improve their quality of lives. The Mobile Food Pantry provides assistance and healthy options. It is presented by the City School District of New Rochelle's Pupil Personnel Services Department and Feeding Westchester. All in need are welcome to pick up bags of food. For more information, visit the District website, [nred.org](http://nred.org).

### COVID-19 Vaccines for Ages 12+ Available at Montefiore

Students 12 years and up (as well as all adults in our community) now have access to the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine through Montefiore Hospital New Rochelle. The Moderna vaccine is available to those 18 and over. Appointments for the vaccine open on a rotating basis; contact Angela Cermele at [acermele@montefiore.org](mailto:acermele@montefiore.org) or (914) 365-3468 for more information.

## Science (*continued*)

Fragments" earned a Silver Medal, said the experience was "extremely satisfying" and validates the hard work he put into his project. He is looking forward to continuing his research this summer.

The GENIUS Olympiad promotes a global understanding of environmental issues and the achievement of sustainability. This year's event, which also included finalists from 2020 due to COVID, was held virtually. Submissions were judged on poster organization and content, literature review, skills and data management, scientific method, innovation and oral presentation.

NRHS Science Chair Rekha Liveris summed up the successes of this year's Science Research Program students as "awe-inspiring."

She added, "The NRHS Science Department's commitment to providing students with a rigorous curriculum and numerous opportunities to develop a keen interest in science has been the foundation of our Science Research Program. I congratulate all of the students and Mr. Wuebber for an unparalleled year of achievement."

For more about the research projects conducted by some 50 students this year, [click here](#).

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