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## Albany High School: where community meets opportunity

Given the size of Albany High School, it should come as no surprise that when seven college-bound seniors were asked to reflect on their time there, they recounted experiences as diverse as the student body itself.

Yet a common thread ran through each narrative: Despite Albany High's size, there exists within it an undeniable sense of community and a wealth of opportunities.

The students' stories were shaped by that place where community and opportunity met for each of them. For some this was music, for others it was athletics and for many it was rigorous academics. (Visit page 3 for a full listing of schools that accepted Albany High seniors this year.)

For Raphael Cohen, it was his experience writing a musical during his sophomore year.

"One of the advantages of Albany High School is not only the opportunities that are available for you to take advantage of, but the ones you are able to create as well," said Cohen.

He will study musical composition at Brown University.

Amherst College-bound Noah John reminisced about his musical experiences as well, noting his time in jazz band, wind ensemble and pit orchestra. John also reflected on the sense of community he found on the football and baseball fields, and gave a special shout-out to the



Ready to take on the world: Graduating from Albany High School, from left, are Noah John (Amherst College), Ridhwana Haxhillari (Harvard University), Assalah Othman (Siena College), Jaylen Rivera (Hudson Valley Community College), Jarrell Chaney (University of Connecticut), Juliette Pluviose-Philip (Boston University) and Raphael Cohen (Brown University).

supportive friends and family who fill the stands of the Falcons' Nest.

Jarrell Chaney echoed this sentiment when describing his transition from a shy middle-schooler to a standout student-athlete at Albany High, citing the help of his coaches in particular.

"Albany High is a place where you can come and be yourself, a place where you can expand not only academically, but as a person," said Chaney, who will study marine biology at the University of Connecticut.

Juliette Pluviose-Philip named math teacher Margot Wyan and the International Baccalaureate (IB) community as her source of inspiration. The challenging IB coursework helped her find the well-rounded education and international perspective she was looking for.

"I wouldn't trade my experience here for  
(continued on page 6)

### Student achievement

## Presidential Scholar semifinalist hands-on about his future

If he has his way – and he plans to – Albany High School senior Santos Otero will be a professional woodworker and furniture-maker.

To prepare for that dream job, Otero has honed his talents and his love for the craft in the Carpentry Program pathway at Albany High's Abrookin Career and Technical Center.

And he's gotten so good that he was named a semifinalist this year in the highly competitive and highly prestigious U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

Otero and Albany High classmate Jacob Citone were among just 25 students nominated from throughout New York; Otero was among five nominated statewide in the Career and Technical Education category.

"Santos has talent and passion for woodworking," said Construction Technology teacher Art Erbe. "His interest and enthusiasm are obvious whether he's working on one of his own designs or helping a peer or teacher with a project."

Santos first dabbled in carpentry at William S. Hackett Middle School. He didn't get serious about it until he started taking classes in high school.

His skills caught Erbe's eye early on, and Otero credits his teacher for his success.

"Mr. Erbe taught me everything I know," Otero said.

Since January, Otero has had internships through the state Office of General Services. He's learning plumbing and carpentry trades, but it's woodworking that captures his interest the most – crafting



Albany High School senior Santos Otero, U.S. Presidential Scholarship semifinalist, has a knack for carpentry and woodworking.

cabinets, tables, shelves and chairs.

"I really like working with my hands and creating stuff," he said.

After graduation, Otero is contemplating whether to pursue a Building Technology degree at Hudson Valley Community College, where he has been accepted, or a union apprenticeship through the New York State Department of Labor.

Whichever pathway he pursues, his status as a Presidential Scholars semifinalist puts him in good standing for the next steps in his life.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is one of the highest honors for graduating high school seniors. Students are recognized for their outstanding work in academics, the arts, or career and technical education.

The State Education Department nominated Otero and Citone in December at the recommendation of Assemblymember Patricia Fahy.

"It feels good to have been nominated," Otero said.

## Abrookin pathways provide college and career edge

Career and technical education, or CTE, has gone 21st century in the City School District of Albany.

Gone are the days of vocational education offerings that largely were limited to shop and home economics. Today's students at Albany High School's Abrookin Career and Technical Center enter "pathways" in skilled trades, applied sciences and technology.

A pathway is a series of classes in a particular area that prepares students for an entry-level job, college or both.

"Students are given the opportunity to not only graduate high school with a Regents diploma but with a state-approved technical endorsement," said Abrookin Principal Andrea Marques.

"This endorsement shows that the students have the 21st-century skills needed to enter the workforce or attend

### Career pathways

- Automotive technologies\*
- Business-accounting\*\*
- Business-administrative professional\*
- Carpentry
- Construction technologies\*
- Cosmetology\*
- Culinary arts\*\*
- Family and consumer sciences-early childhood development\*\*
- Health science-nursing assistant
- Media arts-digital film and TV production \*\*
- Technology-pre-engineering\*

\*State-approved

\*\*State approval anticipated this year

college today."

Abrookin offers 11 CTE pathways; five are state-approved and an additional four will be approved this year, Marques said.

The state's backing is a professional "Good Housekeeping" seal of approval indicating that students who complete the program have mastered entry-level industry standards through hands-on

class study, old-fashioned book learning and on-the-job training.

Raymond Diaz graduated Albany High in 2016. The Abrookin automotive technology pathway he took included a paid Cooperative CTE Work Experience Program, or co-op, at DePaula Chevrolet.

Now he has a job at DePaula and studies Automotive Technology at Hud-  
(continued on page 3)



Albany High School sophomore Omokhele Itebe is learning her way around a professional kitchen in the Culinary Program at Abrookin Career and Technical Center.

## From the interim superintendent Success, together



Kimberly Young Wilkins, Ed.D.  
Interim superintendent

Thank you!  
There are no more fitting words to express my sincere gratitude to our Albany community.

This was reinforced on May 16 when 75 percent of voters approved our 2017-18 school budget.

It was the highest approval rating ever for our district in the 21 years that we've held school budget votes. I believe that support reflects our community's trust that we are serving our students – and our rapidly growing student population – in a fiscally responsible manner.

Your continued support allows us to improve our efforts on behalf of all of our children.

Another way your support came to fruition was the official May 10 opening of the new swimming pool at Albany High School (please see page 4 for photos). The ribbon-cutting ceremony was an exciting event as we celebrate our continued progress at Albany High and look to the future.

It will be just about a year from now that we are celebrating another important milestone – groundbreaking for the first phase of our major Albany High rebuilding project. We are extremely excited as we move forward with the transformation of the entire campus.

We couldn't do it without you.

Along those lines, our Board of Education Facilities Committee will lead our continued efforts to engage our community in outreach around job opportunities and opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses on the Albany High rebuilding project. This initiative is critical and we are committed to it.

We will be engaged in community outreach around those opportunities this summer, and we are looking ahead to additional community meetings and events beginning in the fall.

Looking ahead to the next school year, we are excited to open our new middle school at 50 North Lark St. (see page 7 to read more).

The school at 50 North Lark will serve students from the north side of the city for the next few years as an advisory committee, and ultimately, the board develop long-term recommendations for middle schools throughout the district (read more on page 3).

September also will mark another first: a New-comer Program to serve newly arrived refugee and immigrant students in grades 6-12. The program will be located at North Albany Academy and serve about 175 students whose English is limited enough to merit extra help and attention.

In a district where students speak 57 languages, this program is the most cost-effective way to provide English-language learners with the programs and supports that will help them become successful students.

As our diverse community grows and flourishes, we will continue to welcome all family and community members to join our efforts to keep great things happening in Albany's public schools.

Have a wonderful summer!

*Kimberly Young Wilkins*



**CAPITAL  
education**

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## Voices

### Q: What's your favorite memory from this school year?



My favorite Hackett memory was in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Club. In a competition in STEM Club, we had a question we had to answer through an essay, skit and a 3-D model. Luckily, this year a couple of friends and I were chosen to do the skit.

We created a city named Aurora Fresca where public spaces ran on three types of energy: piezoelectric, solar and wind. As a result, our team ended up coming in eighth out of 30 teams!

– Elizabeth Alzawahra, eighth grade  
William S. Hackett Middle School



My favorite memory of the school year is going to the computer lab and learning about technology. My favorite projects were the STEAM units that we did. STEAM means science, technology, engineering, arts and math, and I especially liked learning about roller coasters. I

liked designing one, creating it on the computer and making a 3D coaster. The name of my roller coaster is "The Polar Express."

– Nazae Anderson, sixth grade  
Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST)



Star Wars Day – definitely! I like Star Wars Day because we had fun and also did math and science. I like Star Wars in general. We all made unique light sabers out of foam pool noodles. We used tape to make designs on them. We used black tape to design the handles. In the epic light-saber battle, we sparred with our sabers. We learned about Newton's laws of physics. We even ate "Newtons."

– Miguel Jones, fifth grade  
Montessori Magnet School



For the April 12 Leadership Assembly, we performed a play, a dance and a song to show synergy. We practiced each part separately and put it all together the day before. On the day of, we rehearsed in the morning and continued until just before the show. As soon as everyone was in the gym, Jayla and I said our intro. Tru-Quan and Tracy shared quotes and speeches. Then Cosmo started the play. After that, Asma introduced the song "If We (Synergize)" and we had the lyrics for everyone to sing along. Gisele commented on the song and started the dance. Everyone enjoyed that the most. After that, I said closing remarks. Then Mr. Retell dismissed everyone and we danced the Whip and the Nae Nae. It was a blast!

– Amari Scott, sixth grade  
Pine Hills Elementary School



My favorite memory from the school year was when we did a music video for Morning Program. It was a rap about citizenship because that was the character trait of the month. We did a lot of brainstorming to figure out the words for each verse. When we figured out the words we had to memorize them, but it was still a lot of fun. That was my favorite memory from the school year.

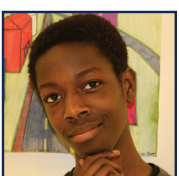
– Tanaya Barnes, fifth grade  
Delaware Community School



My favorite memory from this school year was when the school had a free comic book day. Almost all of my friends were there. There were (obviously) free comics and video games. I was able to play a video game called Super Smash Brothers. I lost two rounds, but I still

enjoyed myself. I think Albany High should continue to have a free comic book day every year because of the fun memories it will make for new students just getting used to the school.

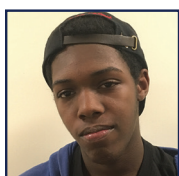
– Haviland Douglas, sophomore  
Albany High School



It was fairly difficult for me to make this decision because I feel like I've had so many experiences here at Myers. My favorite memory from this school year is the Teen Night in late March. When I arrived there, there was an ambience of liveliness and animation that promoted

great excitement. While the first thing I thought to do was to check out the gym, my friends were already in random classrooms doing karaoke, which was hilarious! I look forward to the next one.

– Danvass Gekonge, eighth grade  
Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School



I have many memories from this past year but some moments stand out. One of those moments was when I joined the Music Composition Club because I was actually able to do what I love, which is make music with my friends. It taught me so much about the music industry.

The next moment was the most nerve-racking moment I ever had, but it was a crowning achievement of mine. It was when I entered the Albany High Variety Show. I was so nervous, but when I started rapping and speaking my mind I just let all my energy out and did my thing. I might not have won, but I still went out and gave it all I got.

– Za'nief Washington, sophomore  
Albany High School

## At a glance:

# Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School

**Interim Principal:** Michael Panetta | **Grades:** 6-8 | **Address:** 100 Elbel Court | **Phone:** 475-6425

Myers Middle School is among the newest buildings in the City School District of Albany, built in 2005 as part of the district's work to renovate or rebuild its elementary and middle schools last decade.

The school is named after abolitionists Stephen and Harriet Myers, who lived in Albany from the 1830s through the 1850s. The Myerses played an important role in helping hundreds of enslaved black Americans gain freedom in the Albany area via the Underground Railroad.

**Students:** 680 | **Teachers:** 67 | **Total employees:** 125

#### Points of distinction:

- Myers has two jazz bands, one of which is the All-Girls Stage Band.
- The Myers Garden Club produces numerous vegetables that are sold to local grocers.
- The pool is open for community swimming two nights a week during the school year.

#### Programs and partners:

- Albany Fund for Education
- Band, Chorus, Jazz Band, All-Girls Stage Band and Orchestra
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Capital Region
- Chess Club
- Computer Club
- Gardening Club
- General Electric Co.
- Girls, Inc.
- Interscholastic athletics (11 sports)
- LEGO
- Math Counts
- Parent University
- Peer mediation
- Police Athletic League (PAL)
- PTSA

- Robotics Club
- RPI
- Science on Patrol Club
- Service Learning Club
- Sewing Club
- Siena College
- Ski and Snowboard Club
- Stephen and Harriet Myers House
- Trading Card Game Club
- Yearbook Club

#### What makes our school special?

The Myers mission is to develop and support student academic achievement while fostering respect, responsibility and self-empowerment. Together with dedicated staff, parents and community partners, the school provides a culturally diverse learning environment that enables students to reach their full potential.

#### Did you know?

The house where Stephen and Harriet Myers lived still stands at 194 Livingston Ave. From there, the Myerses assisted hundreds of slaves and published an anti-slavery newspaper, *The Northern Star and Freeman's Advocate*. The house is now a museum.

## Committee readies middle school options

The committee tasked with studying long-term middle school enrollment in the City School District of Albany will present three scenarios to the Board of Education in July.

All the scenarios would enroll students in four middle schools. After the committee presents the options and its preference to the board July 13, the board will begin a review process that will include opportunities for community input and feedback.

A final board decision is expected during the 2017-18 school year.

Changes to the district's middle school enrollment pattern would not be put in place for at least two years. The process also would include a public vote on any proposed facilities work.

The board's July 13 meeting will be at

7 p.m. at Delaware Community School, 43 Bertha St.

The Phase 2 Grade Configuration Steering Committee has been working for a year to develop long-term enrollment recommendations to support the district's rapidly growing student enrollment.

The district has added more than 1,500 students over the past eight years, with most of that growth at the elementary and middle levels. In addition to significant growth in the enrollment of English-language learners, the overall student growth also has been driven by the closure of four charter middle schools in the last five years.

Learn more in the Grade Configuration/Middle School Enrollment section at [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org).

## Summer school info

The City School District of Albany offers summer school programs for students in elementary school, middle school and high school. The district also offers specialized programs for students with disabilities and "newcomer" students who are English-language learners.

Many of these programs are designed to help students meet the state's rising academic standards and graduation requirements.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided at every location.

Transportation will be provided for every school serving students entering kindergarten-grade 8. Transportation also will be provided for high school students that live more than 1.5 miles away from the summer school location.

Please see below for program times and dates. For more information, including contact information for each program, please visit the Summer School section at [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org).

### Elementary school Jump Start

**For:** Children entering kindergarten in September who have not gone to prekindergarten.

**Dates:** July 18-Aug. 11 (Monday-Friday)  
**Times:** 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Elementary Summer Enrichment

**For:** Students currently in kindergarten-grade 5.

**Dates:** July 5-Aug. 4 (Monday-Friday)  
**Time:** 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

### 21st Century Community Learning Centers

**For:** Students currently in kindergarten-grade 5/6 at Arbor Hill Elementary School, Giffen Memorial Elementary School, Schuyler Achievement Academy, Sheridan Preparatory Academy and Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST).

**Dates:** July 5-Aug. 4 (Monday-Friday)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

### Middle school

#### Middle School Summer Start

**For:** Students currently in grades 6-8

**Dates:** July 5-Aug. 4 (Monday-Friday)

**Time:** 8:10 a.m.-noon

### High school

#### High School Summer School

**For:** Albany resident students currently in grades 9-12 who have fewer than 28 unexcused absences who need to recover course credit or prepare to retake a Regents exam.

**Dates:** July 5-Aug. 15 (Monday-Thursday)

**Times:** 8 a.m.-12:25 p.m.

### Specialized programs

#### Special Education Extended School Year

**For:** Special education students in kindergarten through grade 12 (12:1:4 classrooms only) if a student's individualized education program (IEP) review indicates that he or she qualifies.

**Dates:** July 5-Aug. 14 (Monday-Friday)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

#### Summer Newcomer Academy

**For:** English-language learners currently in kindergarten-grade 12.

**Dates:** July 5-Aug. 4 (Monday-Friday)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

## Abrookin pathways provide college and career edge

(continued from page 1)

son Valley Community College.

"Abrookin helped me to develop really different skills and encouraged me to do more – rotors, suspension work, head gaskets – stuff like that," Diaz said. "Thanks to Abrookin I'm working at DePaula, I'm still here and I'm hoping to God I can stay here a long time."

All Abrookin instructors are experienced in their fields, a requirement for getting a teacher certification in career and technical education. Most continue to work in their fields outside the school.

And to assure that pathways keep pace with the demand for jobs, each pathway has its own advisory council made up of professionals that monitor changes in industry and recommend curriculum updates.

Many students aren't sure of their

career plans and want to explore their options. Sophomore Omokhele Itebe is one of those students.

"I have no idea what I want to do," Itebe said. "I decided to take [Culinary Arts] because my brother took it and said how much fun it was."

Already she's prepared food for several local events and is secretary of Abrookin's SkillsUSA Club, a national organization that helps build leadership and technical skills through conferences and competitions geared toward technical, skilled and service occupations.

Itebe balances her culinary classes with a variety of honors classes she takes at Albany High. She plans to take more advanced culinary classes next year.

"At the very least, maybe my cooking will improve at home," she said.

## 2017 grads off to top schools

Brown and Harvard. Binghamton and Geneseo. Howard and Spelman. And so many more.

Members of the Albany High School Class of 2017 have been accepted at more

than 150 public and private colleges and universities throughout the country. Check out the list below – and congratulations to all of this year's graduates!

Adelphi University	Lafayette College	St. Joseph's College/ Brooklyn
Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences	Lehigh University	St. Lawrence University
Alfred University	Le Moyne College	Sullivan County Community College
American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA)	Liberty University	SUNY Albany
American University	Loyola University Chicago	SUNY Binghamton
Arcadia University	Loyola University Maryland	SUNY Buffalo
Assumption College	Lyndon State College	SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Austin School of Spa Technology	Manhattan College	SUNY Polytechnic Institute
Barry University	Maria College	SUNY Stony Brook
Bay Path University	Marist College	SUNY Adirondack Community College
Bentley University	Marymount Manhattan College	SUNY Cobleskill Technology College
Boston College	Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	SUNY College at Brockport
Boston University	Medaille College	SUNY College at Buffalo
Bowdoin College	Mercy College	SUNY College at Cortland
Brandeis University	Mercyhurst University	SUNY College at Fredonia
Brown University	Michigan State University	SUNY College at Geneseo
Bucknell University	Middlebury College	SUNY College at New Paltz
Canisius College	Mohawk Valley Community College	SUNY College at Oneonta
The Catholic University of America	Molloy College	SUNY College at Oswego
Cazenovia College	Montclair State University	SUNY College at Plattsburg
City University of New York/City College of New York	Mount Saint Mary College	SUNY College at Plattsburgh/Queensbury
City University of New York/Hunter College	Nazareth College	SUNY College at Potsdam
Clark Atlanta University	New England College	SUNY College at Purchase
Clarkson University	New York Institute of Technology	SUNY Delhi Technical College
Colgate University	The New School	SUNY Morrisville Technical College
College of the Holy Cross	New York University	Syracuse University
College of New Rochelle	Newbury College	Temple University
College of St. Joseph	Northeastern University	Texas A&M University
The College of Saint Rose	Northern Virginia Community College/ Alexandria	Trocaire College
Cornell University	Northwestern University	Tufts University
Daemen College	Onondaga Community College	Tulane University
Dartmouth College	Pace University/ New York City	Union College (New York) Unity College
Elmira College	Pace University/Westchester	University of Bridgeport
Emmanuel College	Paul Mitchell The School/ Schenectady	University of Connecticut
Emory University	Pennsylvania State University	University of Hartford
Erie Community College	Pratt Institute	University of Louisville
Fashion Institute of Technology	Providence College	University of Massachusetts/ Amherst
Finger Lakes Community College	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of New Hampshire/Durham
Fordham University	Rider University	University of New Haven
Franklin Pierce University	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Notre Dame
Georgia State University	Roger Williams University	University of Pittsburgh
Gordon College	Russell Sage College	University of Rochester
Hamilton College	Sage College of Albany	The University of Scranton
Hartwick College	Salve Regina University	University of Southern Maine
Harvard University	Santa Barbara City College	University of the Arts
Herkimer County Community College	Sarah Lawrence College	Utica College
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Savannah College of Art and Design	Vassar College
Hofstra University	Schenectady County Community College	University of Vermont
Howard University	Seattle University	Washington College
Hudson Valley Community College	Seton Hall University	Wellesley College
Iona College	Siena College	Wells College
Jefferson Community College	Simmons College	Western Connecticut State University
Jewish Theological Seminary of America	Skidmore College	Western New England University
Johns Hopkins University	Southern New Hampshire University	Westminster Choir College
Johnson & Wales University/Providence	Southern Vermont College	West Virginia University
Johnson State College	Spelman College	Wheaton College
Keuka College	St. John Fisher College	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
	St. John's University/Queens	

# WE CHOOSE



The pool at Albany High School opened its doors for the first time in 1974 and remained in service for 41 years until an exterior wall collapsed one cold morning in March 2015. Two months later, voters approved a tax-free referendum to renovate the pool, and October's groundbreaking celebrated the start of this work. Work continued on schedule throughout the fall, winter and spring, and the first drops of water began filling the pool on April 23. The ribbon-cutting on May 10 celebrated the completion of this work, and students marked the occasion with a ceremonial first dip. Now complete, the pool will welcome the Falcons and Lady Falcons home for the 2017-18 school year.





William S. Hackett Middle School eighth-grader Keyshawn Witters was all smiles on May 23 after he received a Mayor's Recognition Award from Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan. He was among more than 100 students of excellence from all 17 district schools honored that day in City Hall.



These Albany High School seniors got silly for the camera on May 12 before they went on to represent the school and the City of Albany in the street scrubbing that kicks off the annual Tulip Festival. Dressed in authentic Dutch attire that is stored and maintained by the City Club of Albany are, front row from left, Gianna Cusato, Helen Conroy, Laura Bulmer and Assalah Othman; and back row from left, Nur Gul, Kassi McTague, Shatara Terry and Kassondra Gordon.



New Scotland Elementary School fourth-graders Simon Carey, left, and Jack Colman conferred on May 12 during a book-making session at the Albany Institute of History and Art. Their efforts were part of the Book Arts Program, an ongoing partnership between the school and museum that encourages students to thoughtfully reflect on their lives and surroundings through drawing. The year-long program includes trips to the museum as well as visits to schools by illustrators, and culminates with students assembling a portfolio of their work in hand-made books they construct themselves.

# ALBANY SCHOOLS



Third-graders Tyrese Myles (left) and Asia Green made sure to give plenty of water to the tree they helped plant at Albany School of Humanities' (ASH) Arbor Day celebration on April 28.



Fifth-grader Julian Jackson, left, and third-grader Rahshid Ford were among the talented musical students who performed for friends, family and staff at Giffen Memorial Elementary School's spring concert on May 23.



Delaware Community School sure knows how to throw a party. On May 5, the school held its annual Cinco de Mayo celebration, with some 300 people flocking to the school to dance, hear music and eat lots of great food. From left to right, first-grade pals Aliahna West, Akira Russell and Lucia Correa took a break from dancing to smile for the camera.

## Summer renovations ahead at 50 North Lark

Renovations to prepare 50 North Lark St., to serve middle school students in the 2017-18 school year will be underway in late June and ready for the start of school Sept. 5.

Voters approved the \$6.5 million facilities project in January so that 50 North Lark will be prepared to help serve the City School District of Albany's growing student population when the new school year begins.

The work at 50 North Lark will allow equitable programming and staffing for the approximately 400 students who will go to school there in 2017-18.

The work will include science, music, art, technology, and family and consumer science classrooms. It also will include a full kitchen and serving area, offices for student support services and updates to the gym and pool areas.

"We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our new middle school have full access to the same opportunities as our students at Hackett and Myers middle schools, as well as the

additional academic and social-emotional supports we will have in place," said Interim Superintendent Kimberly Young Wilkins, Ed.D.

Students from the following schools will attend 50 North Lark beginning in September:

- Arbor Hill Elementary (current grades 5-6)
- North Albany Academy (current grades 5-7)
- Schuyler Achievement Academy (current grade 5)
- Sheridan Preparatory Academy (current grade 5)
- West Hill Middle School (current grade 7)

The interim enrollment pattern will be in place 3-5 years while the district plans for its long-term facilities and enrollment needs at the middle level.

To read more about that long-range planning, visit the Grade Configuration/Middle School Enrollment section at [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org).

## Myers takes part in 'pawsome' art project

Seventh-graders in Caitlyn Ledger's art class at Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School are among the local artists designing specialized "Nipper" statues for a local public art project.

Myers is the only school selected to be part of the project. Twenty local artists including the Myers group are putting their creative spin on three-foot Nipper statues that will be placed throughout downtown Albany in June.

Nipper is Albany's unofficial pooch mascot, an iconic 28-foot tall, four-ton steel and fiberglass canine statue anchored atop a warehouse on North Broadway.

The project is called "Downtown is Pawsome" and is sponsored by the Downtown Albany Business Improvement District.

The painted pups will be on display downtown through May 2018.



Students from Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School are among 20 area artists who will decorate Nipper statues that will be placed throughout downtown Albany. The Myers artists include, top row from left, Liv Nevo, Cindy Gusho and Eh Gay Taw, and bottom row from left, Ja'lana Thomas and James Benoit.

## Albany High: where community meets opportunity

(continued from page 1)

any other high school in the area," she said.

Pluiose-Philip believes that will give her a leg up when she arrives at Boston University in the College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences: Sargent College.

Iraqi-born Assalah Othman will enroll at Siena College in the prestigious medical school program in partnership with Albany Medical College. Othman also took advantage of the range of academic opportunities at Albany High – including IB and Advanced Placement (AP) classes – all while mastering the English language.

She advised newcomers not to be intimidated by the size of Albany High and instead embrace the diversity and opportunities.

"Be involved," she said. "Be yourself."

Jaylen Rivera discussed academics at Albany High as well, specifically noting the benefits of the APEX online learning

program, designed to help struggling students get back on track.

"Sometimes it's a pain, but if you want to pass you have to do the work," said Rivera, who will attend Hudson Valley Community College in the Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Technical Services program.

Ridhwana Haxhillari remarked on the compassion of Albany High's community, right down to the genuine caring of the hall monitors who greeted her every morning.

"The atmosphere, it's amazing," Haxhillari said.

"That community, within the larger community, is actually what helped push me to where I will be going," she said.

That will be Harvard University, where Haxhillari will concentrate in government.

## Albany High inducts 78 in National Honor Society

Albany High School inducted 78 juniors into its Arista Chapter of the National Honor Society on May 2, and 24 of those students also received class awards at the ceremony.

To be eligible for National Honor Society, students must maintain an overall academic average of 89.5 or higher.

The National Honor Society was founded in 1921 to help create a better-rounded student who would be willing to put his or her talents to work serving others in society. Albany High's Arista Chapter was formed in 1957 and admitted 15 students in its first group of inductees.



Albany High School juniors Cynthia Sengabo, left, and Aminata Toumbou were among the 78 students recently inducted into National Honor Society.

Visit [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org) for a complete list of this year's inductees – the largest group in a decade!

## Bus info for 2017-18

City School District of Albany families that moved during the school year or have children changing schools need to fill out and return school bus transportation forms for the 2017-18 school year.

**Applications are due by Aug. 1** in order to assure that your child has transportation on the first day of school, Sept. 5. Applications are available at each school, at Central Registration, located at 75 Watervliet Ave., and in the Transportation section at [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org).

The district transports all eligible students – those who live 1.5 miles or more from their schools – either by yellow bus or Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA).

You **don't** need to complete an application if:

- You live at the same address;
- Your child will attend the same school next school year as in 2016-17; or
- Your child is moving up from elementary to middle school or middle to high

school.

You need to complete an application if:

- Your family moved. You will need to change the address in person at Central Registration. You can complete a transportation application at that time.

- Your child changed schools. You will need to complete and return a new transportation application if your child is changing from a neighborhood school to a magnet school, changing from a magnet school to a neighborhood school, or attending a different elementary or middle school through open enrollment.

- Your child attends before- or after-school child care.

Also, starting in September the district will have a new yellow school bus provider, First Student. Stay tuned for information about a GPS phone app that will allow you to track where your child's bus is at a given time.

For more information, call the Transportation Department at 475-6170.

## District offers continuing ed classes

The City School District of Albany isn't just about educating kids.

Albany residents over 18 can take a variety of continuing education courses at Albany High School on Wednesday and Thursday evenings in the fall, winter and spring. Cost depends on the course

you take, and senior citizens get a 10 percent discount.

Visit the Continuing Education section at [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org) in early August to get a complete list of courses to be offered in 2017-18.



The Albany High School boys' 4x400-meter relay team dominated the event in Section II this spring. Pictured L-R, seniors Kevin Mitchell, Jarrell Chaney and Syeed Holtzclaw, and junior Blaize Umuhuza took first place at the prestigious William F. Eddy Invitational on May 20, the Division 1 sectional championships May 23 and state qualifiers June 2. Holtzclaw (400 meters), Mitchell (400 hurdles) and senior Eileen Bequette (pentathlon) also competed in individual events at states June 9-10 (results from the state meet were not available when "Capital Education" went to press; please visit [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org) for updates).

## District students earn youth awards

Six City School District of Albany students received Youth Recognition Awards in June from the Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families.

Youth Recognition Awards honor young people who show tremendous resiliency and growth, perform community service, or demonstrate athletic or artistic ability. The students and their awards are:

- **Kerwin Anthony Blake II**, grade 7, William S. Hackett Middle School – Artistic Expression Award
- **Leighanne Caparelli**, grade 8, West Hill Middle School – Most Improved Student Award
- **Kennedy Foley**, grade 7, North Albany Academy – Ed Roche Outstanding Youth Award
- **Messiah Hodge-Humphreys**, grade 9, Albany High School – Ed Roche Outstanding Youth Award
- **Hope Matthie**, grade 12, Albany High School – Most Improved Student Award
- **Devin Myrick**, grade 6, Giffen Memorial Elementary School – Lt. John Finn Community Service Award

## Twins selected for prestigious language program

Albany High School seniors **Sydney** and **Taylor Kimbrough** have been selected to take part in the National Security Language Initiative for Youth's scholarship for language study this summer in Chengdu, China.

This six-week course of study emphasizes language instruction and cultural immersion. The program is supported by the U.S. Department of State.

Both Sydney and Taylor will be attending Northeastern University in Boston this fall and majoring in international affairs.

## Four teachers recognized in statewide STEM program

Four City School District of Albany teachers have been recognized in the state's 2017 STEM Master Teacher Program, celebrating their work to deliver innovative science, technology, engineering and math education.

The Master Teacher Program network includes more than 800 outstanding teachers statewide. Albany's representatives are among 37 2017 STEM Master Teachers in the Capital Region.

In addition to their dedication to their students, the teachers are recognized for their commitment to professional growth and their enthusiasm for sharing their successful practices with colleagues in their schools and district-wide. Albany's 2017 STEM Master Teachers are:

- **Andre Castagna**, Albany High School, math
- **Erin Erickson**, Albany High School, math
- **Melissa Hirt**, Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School, technology
- **Margot Wyan**, Albany High School, math

Albany High math teacher **Michelle Huckins** also was recognized in a previous STEM Master Teacher group before joining the district in 2016.

## Theatre Ensemble gets six award nominations

The Albany High School Theatre Ensemble's 2017 production of "Oliver!" garnered six nominations for the first regional High School Musical Theatre Awards, including best actor.

Senior **Raphael Cohen**, who played the role of world-class scoundrel Fagin, was nominated for best actor. Other nominations the Theatre Ensemble received included best musical, best ensemble chorus,

best orchestra, best set construction and best execution of choreography.

The Theatre Ensemble performed "Oliver!" in April.



Albany High School senior **Raphael Cohen** earned a Best Actor nomination in the local version of the high school theater *Tony Awards*.

## Junior wins constitutional essay contest

Albany High School junior **Erin Lippitt** was awarded first place in the Constitutional Scholars Program essay contest in May.

The contest challenged students in grade 9-12 to write an essay about the origin of an aspect of the U.S. Constitution. Lippitt wrote about the origins of judicial review.

Her winning essay came with a \$750 prize from the Northern District of New York Federal Court Bar Association, sponsor of the contest. Lippitt thanked Albany High U.S. History teacher **Ralph Pape** for his encouragement.

## Albany High bands capture silver ratings

Albany High School's Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band each earned a silver rating at the New York State School Music Association's Major Ensemble Festival.

The competition took place in April at Ballston Spa High School. Both groups performed under the direction of **John Halvorsen**. Performances are graded as "bronze," "silver" and "gold" and on a scale of I to VI, with VI being the most difficult.

The Wind Ensemble performed at competition Level VI, featuring pieces with the highest degree of complexity: "Xerxes" by John Mackey, "Suite Française" by Darius Milhaud and "Mars" by Gustav Holst.

The Symphonic Band, competing for the first time in two decades, performed a competition Level IV program: "Manhattan Beach" by John Phillip Sousa, "Of Dark Lords and Ancient Kings" by Roland Barrett and "Scheherazade" by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

## North Albany teacher a keynote at national conference

North Albany Academy teacher **George Stahler** has been selected as one of the keynote speakers at this year's AVID Summer Institute in Philadelphia.

AVID, or Advancement Via Individual Determination, is designed to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society.

Stahler, who has been teaching in the City School District of Albany for 29 years, has been one of the driving forces behind the success of AVID at North Albany since Principal **Lesley Buff** began implementing it there two years ago.



North Albany Academy teacher **George Stahler** with some of his students and AVID protégés.

## Albany High teacher joins PAL Hall of Fame

Albany High School physical education teacher **Ashley Chapple** was inducted into the Albany Police Athletic League Hall of Fame in April.

Chapple, an Albany High graduate, became involved with PAL as a teenager. She continues to play an active role in PAL events, perhaps most notably when she brought members of the Albany High girls' basketball team overseas to the country of Georgia on a 20-day trip sponsored by the Department of State.

Chapple also is an assistant coach for the Albany High girls' varsity basketball team, president of the Albany Junior Lady Falcons Youth Basketball Program and a member of the Albany Fund for Education Board of Directors.

## Albany High select choir gets top marks

The Albany High School Select Choir sang three pieces of challenging music at the most difficult level of competition in April and received the highest possible rating.

Directed by teacher **Brendan Hoffman**, the Select Choir earned a "gold with distinction" rating at the New York State School Music Association's Choral Festival at Niskayuna High School.

The Select Choir performed at competition Level VI – the highest degree of complexity. They sang "Great Day" arranged by Marques Garrett, "Come to Me, My Love," by Norman Dellow Joio and "Twa Tanbou" by Sydney Guillaume.

## 2017 regional scholars named

Three Albany High School seniors have been named in this year's regional Scholars Recognition Program.

**Eileen Bequette**, **Ridhwana Haxhillari** and **Nicholas Rosado** were nominated for outstanding academic achievement, leadership skills and service to their community and school. They were honored at a May 17 dinner and recognized in a special "Times Union" section May 18.

## Check us out online!

We have an Online News Center to provide you as much news as possible about the great people and programs of the City School District of Albany. Visit [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org) and click the Online News Center link in the right-hand column to read more about any of these stories and additional articles, including:

- Join us July 15 for Summer Celebration and Safety Day!
- Information about the last days of school on all levels
- New building leaders for 2017-18
- Record approval for 2017-18 budget
- Stay in the loop on school news
- Working together to keep our students and our community safe

Also check us out on Facebook, Twitter and School News Notifier!

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## Leading the way Kandie Antonetti and Malik Jones Co-principals, new middle school at 50 North Lark St.

The new middle school that will open in September will be led by two veteran administrators in the City School District of Albany: Kandie Antonetti and Malik Jones. Antonetti joined the district 19 years ago and taught at the elementary and middle levels before becoming interim house principal at Abrookin Career Technical Center and then principal at West Hill Middle School in 2015. Jones joined the district as a teacher in 2006 at North Albany Academy and then served in an administrative role at Albany High School before he became principal at Montessori Magnet School in 2013.

## Alumni achievement Catherine McCabe '69

This year Catherine McCabe had one of the toughest jobs in government: She led the United States Environmental Protection Agency during the transition between the Obama and Trump administrations.

That meant McCabe, a 1969 Albany High School alum, had to keep the government's top environmental agency running from Jan. 20 through Feb. 17.



EPA's Catherine McCabe

"There was a very, very high level of anxiety at the EPA," McCabe said. "I had to keep a level of calm and try to get everyone to work together."

McCabe's interest in the environment began as a kid during family camping and hiking trips to Lake George and the Adirondacks. After graduating from Albany High, she studied environmental science at Barnard College and Columbia University and went on to get a law degree from Columbia in 1977.

"Law was an alternative that allowed me to continue to be in touch with all the different sciences and the interrelationships between them," she said, an option she preferred over specializing in a particular branch of science.

After a stint in private practice, she worked as an assistant attorney general for the state. She joined the environmental arm of the U.S. Department of Justice in 1983, moved to Washington, D.C., and spent 22 years prosecuting polluters and defending government laws and regulations.

She made the jump to the EPA in 2005, where her work included serving as a judge on the EPA's Environmental Appeals Board and as the deputy assistant administrator of the EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance. She worked with Republican and Democratic administrations.

McCabe returned to New York in 2014 to become deputy regional administrator of EPA's Region 2, an area that includes New York, New Jersey, eight tribal nations, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

She was there when President Barack Obama tapped her for the transition job.

For a month, McCabe had to get two disparate groups to work together: longtime EPA staffers who built Obama's agenda to combat climate change, and representatives of a new administration skeptical about the concept.

This took place in a backdrop of 20 years of increasing tensions between the EPA and Congress and accusations (overstated, according to McCabe) of government overreaching its powers.

McCabe is now back in New York City and serving as acting director of EPA Region 2. She said she and her EPA colleagues are grateful for the messages from the public supporting EPA's mission and its work: following science and the law.

She remains optimistic about U.S. environmental policy despite President Trump's withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement and his vows to dismantle environmental regulations.

"You have to take the long view," McCabe said. "It's disappointing, but I don't believe America is going to go this way in the long run."

Malik Jones



**Q: How and when will you decide the name of your new school?**

**A:** We have already begun the process of naming the new middle school. We gave students who will be attending the school the opportunity to provide suggestions for a name and we've narrowed it down to the top three choices. We are currently in the process of convening a diverse committee of parents, students and community representatives to pick one of the three, and it's our hope to have a decision in the next few weeks.

**Q: What are your plans for creating a strong sense of pride and community among the students in your school?**

**A:** We started to create a strong sense of pride by first visiting the elementary schools of students who will attend 50 North Lark and introducing ourselves earlier this spring. In order to build excitement, we surveyed students to learn what their hopes, fears and wants are for the new middle school, and we chose the first events and activities of the school year based on those surveys. Students also have had a voice in the process of naming our new school.

We are currently organizing various events throughout the summer in an attempt to build the groundwork for establishing our new school community. Our hope is that we will come together and begin to set the stage for years of synergy, collaboration and the building and sustaining of school pride and student success.

**Q: What would you like to say to the kids who will be your students this fall?**

**A:** Not many students or principals have an opportunity to say they were the first to grace the halls of a new school. Keeping this in mind, we hope you are equally excited to join us in not only opening a new school but also in building and sustaining a learning environment focused on high expectations, safety and maximum student effort.

We are looking forward to partaking in what is sure to be an amazing journey with you. We ask that while you have a relaxing summer, you stay on the lookout for upcoming community events

that will take place prior to the opening of the new school. We look forward to seeing you soon!



Kandie Antonetti