

The Bulletin Board

News from the Hicksville UFSD



CLASS OF 2016 *Commences Its Future*



A beautiful Sunday afternoon in June was full of bright stars on the back field of Hicksville High School. With their proud families, friends, administrators, members of the Board of Education and teachers applauding all of their hard work, the Class of 2016 celebrated its graduation and looked ahead to the promising futures of all of its members.

The glowing graduates filed onto the field during the processional as “Pomp and Circumstance” filled the air. The picturesque ceremony, which began with a rendition of the national anthem by senior chorus members directed by Michelle Emeric, featured several motivational speeches delivered to and by members of the graduating class as they prepared to begin the next chapter of their lives.

Principal Raymond Williams spoke about the importance of constant learning, and tasked the graduates with continuing to follow their dreams.

“You must be in the constant pursuit of updating your knowledge base,” Williams said. “With knowledge of who you are, what you stand for, a strong academic

foundation, wisdom and humility, you will succeed. I encourage you to dream big and open the doors of opportunity. Graduates, you must always continue to dig deeper and discover gifts you never knew you even had. To the Class of 2016, onward and upward!”

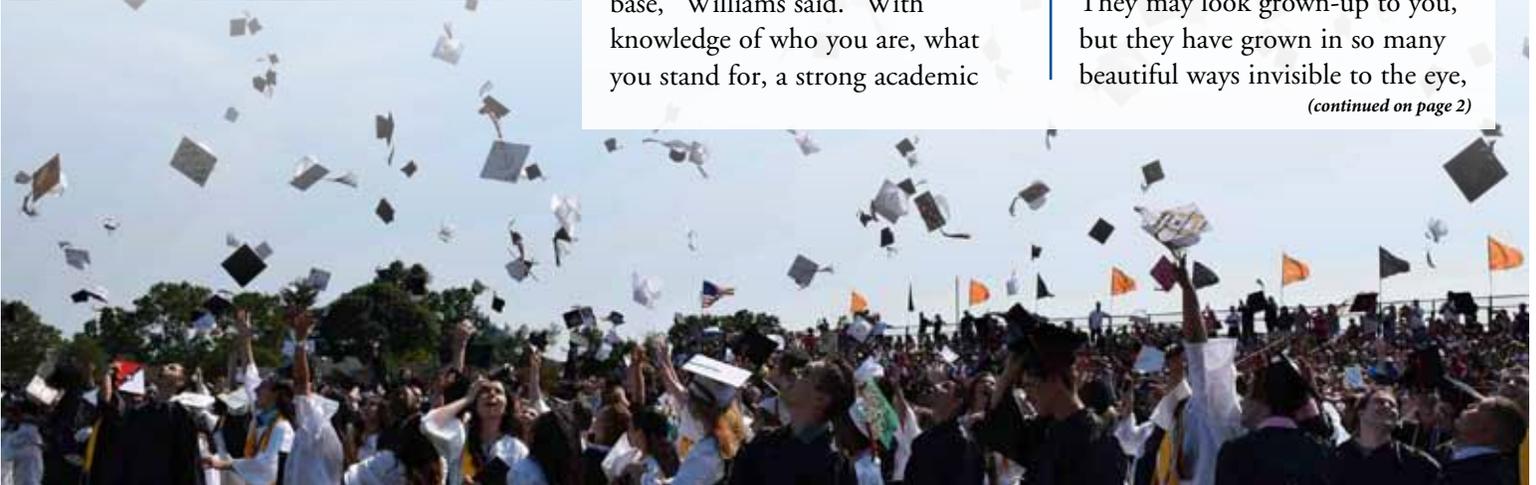
Class of 2016 salutatorian Rujuta Desai spoke to her classmates about what she believes are the catalysts for success, and how to combat mediocrity.

“I believe that a sincere pursuit of learning, diligence and a persistent work ethic will help in the battle against mediocrity,” said Desai. “None of us are average; however, some of us choose to be average. We all have the capability to fight averageness, and we are all certainly able to win this battle with the right mindset.”

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carl Bonuso said that the true meaning of graduation is how the student has grown within.

“The ceremony each year is held outside,” said Dr. Bonuso, “but the true graduation takes place inside. They may look grown-up to you, but they have grown in so many beautiful ways invisible to the eye,

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Class of 2016 Commences Its Future

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unless you are lucky enough to see their gestures, passion, compassion and kindness. To truly be graduating from our schools today is an achievement and acknowledgment of what has happened to all of our students inside — what has happened to their intellect, mind and heart.”

Dr. Bonuso’s speech was followed by Board of Education President Phil Heckler quoting author C.S. Lewis in saying, “Isn’t it funny how day by day, nothing changes, but when you look back, everything is different” in his speech, and using it to identify with students on their special day. Nassau County Legislator Rose Walker then urged the graduates to always give a piece of themselves to others, since so many have done the same for them.

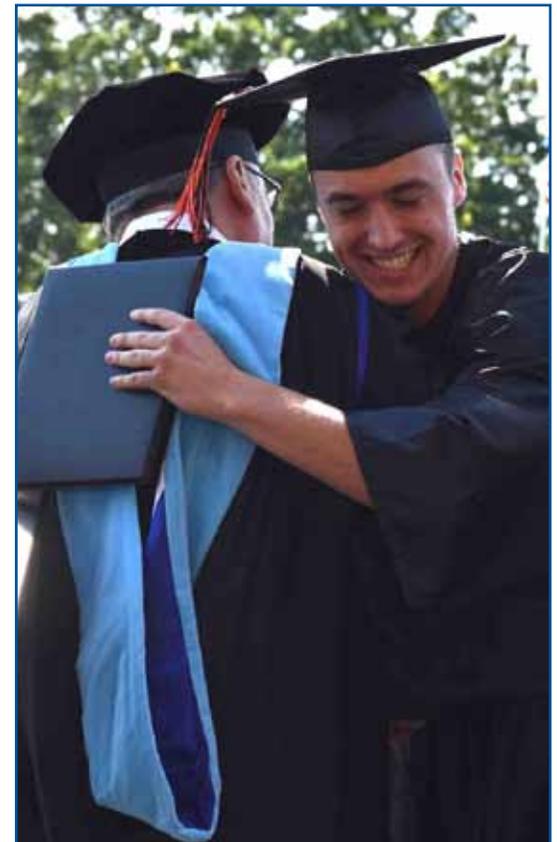
The ceremony also served to recognize Hicksville High School Class of 1961 alumnus Robert Casale’s induction into the school’s Hall of Fame by the Class of 2016, in addition to three students who earned perfect attendance throughout all four years of high school: Ariella Ricca, Angad Saini and Winnie Shen.

Class of 2016 valedictorian Matthew Cimino was introduced by his German teacher, Helena Lipska,

who said that Cimino has epitomized the true definition of a gentleman since she has known him. Cimino offered to his fellow graduates the keys to a truly fulfilling life.

“You just have to wake up every morning and scream out to the world like SpongeBob SquarePants, ‘I’m ready!’ and go do something absolutely awesome,” he said. “I ask that you remember these three words, which truly are the most important things in life: family, friends, and most of all, happiness. If you have these three things, that’s all you will ever need.”

Following Cimino’s rousing speech, the moment students had waited for arrived. One by one, students’ names were announced, and applause and ovations filled the field. Following the announcement of names, the graduates turned their tassels from right to left and tossed their caps high into the air before joining their loved ones for a continued celebration of their success.





Recognizing Excellence

Before the end of the school year, the Board of Education recognized excellence across all of its schools at secondary and elementary recognition ceremonies. In May, students and staff at the middle and high schools were honored, and in June, students and staff at Burns Avenue, Dutch Lane, East Street, Fork Lane, Lee Avenue, Old Country Road and Woodland were celebrated. Both ceremonies featured certificate distributions led by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carl Bonuso, alternating members of the Board of Education, school principals and department supervisors, and opened with musical performances highlighting the talents of students — the high school chamber ensemble during the secondary recognition ceremony, and the middle school eighth-grade chorus during the elementary recognition ceremony. The awards commemorated staff members' service in the district and students' achievements in academics, the arts and various competitions.



Plates and Plaques to Celebrate Greatness

Prior to the June Board of Education meeting, the district's 2016 retirees and staff members celebrated their 25th year at Hicksville Schools with commemorative plaques and silver plates, respectively, during a beautiful ceremony on the Hicksville High School patio. The program featured principals offering heartfelt words about each of the 10 retirees individually, and the acknowledgment of six staff members on their silver anniversary year. The ceremony served not only as a small token of appreciation for all that these special staff members have done for the district and its students during their years of service, but also as a celebration of their illustrious careers.

Talent Nets Thousands for Troops

In June, the district hosted its second annual Talent for Troops program at Hicksville High School and raised more than \$9,100 for the Fisher House Foundation and Nassau County Firefighters Operation Wounded Warrior group.

The Talent for Troops program featured staff members throughout the district entertaining their colleagues through song, dance and poetry, and veterans shared their stories of service in between the acts.

Talent for Troops was an entertaining way for the district to raise funds for troops who have been wounded while courageously serving their country. It also served as a forum for students and staff to applaud the heroes' extraordinary efforts.



Saying THANK YOU

The district extends its sincerest gratitude and appreciation to Board of Education trustees James Mott and Patrick Stines for their tireless service and dedication on behalf of the students and families of Hicksville. Mott and Stines, who served on the Board for the past six and three years, respectively, were honored with commemorative plaques for their advocacy efforts in support of public education and all of their contributions to Hicksville Public Schools.



THE HICKSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Administration Building
200 Division Avenue
Hicksville, NY 11801

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Classes of 2020 and 2023 One Step Closer

Hicksville High School's Classes of 2020 and 2023 climbed up another rung on the ladder of their academic careers by moving up from Hicksville Middle School and the district's elementary schools, respectively.

Eighth-graders at the middle school were celebrated for their stellar achievements and successful completion of the past three years in a moving up ceremony attended by their families, friends, administrators, members of the Board of Education and teachers. In their speeches, Student Council President Aidan Governale and National Junior Honor Society President Hunter Hsiu reflected upon their middle school memories, spoke about the value of hard work and dedication, and congratulated their classmates. Hsiu also likened the past three years, and upcoming four, to parts of a tree growing tall and developing as fully as possible.

"[Today] can be the hardest day

because we have to say goodbye to so many people that we have built a relationship with," said Governale. "But luckily, our memories will stay with us from today and into the future. Gandhi once said, 'Be the change you want to see in the world.' Take this in mind when you go anywhere. Change the world."

The middle school program also featured speeches by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Carl Bonuso, Board Vice President Kevin J. Carroll and Principal Mara Jorisch, all of whom expressed how proud they were of the students, but also urged them to continue working hard in high school and beyond. Students were also recognized individually for their outstanding achievements in areas such as highest GPA throughout all three years and perfect attendance.

The moving up ceremonies at Burns Avenue, Dutch Lane, East Street, Fork Lane, Lee Avenue, Old Country Road and Woodland also celebrated students

for the stellar starts to their academic careers, and served to encourage them to continue working toward their dreams in middle school and beyond.

The names of students in all of the ceremonies were individually announced, just as they will be in four and seven years when they reach the top rung of the district's ladder.

