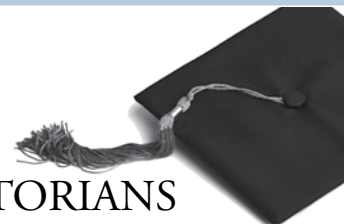




# Community CONNECTION

BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

## TOP OF THEIR CLASS:



### COMMENDING OUR VALEDICTORIANS AND SALUTATORIANS



#### **Mephm Valedictorian, Gina Connors**

Future Plans: University of Notre Dame, chemistry  
Extracurriculars: Class president, captain – track and cross-country, band, National Honor Society, Math Honor Society, secretary – Italian Honor Society, secretary – English Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, student representative for the Board of Education

#### **Mephm Salutatorian, Isabelle Chan**

Future Plans: Boston College, biochemistry  
Extracurriculars: Vice president – Habitat for Humanity, National Honor Society, Math Honor Society, English Honor Society, Science Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, captain – varsity volleyball, varsity track and field, Scholar -Athlete recipient

#### **MAP Valedictorian, Jordan Ladd**

Future Plans: Farmingdale State College, bioscience  
Extracurriculars: President – Key Club, student ambassador, MAP student representative for the Board of Education, a staunch Community Cupboard volunteer, GSA president and founder of the MAP Greenhouse Project, National Honor Society, French Honor Society at Calhoun

#### **MAP Salutatorian, Chazz Opperman**

Future Plans: I plan to expand my part-time job into a full-time job to prepare for the future as an entrepreneur. I would like to have a career in sales and ultimately own my own pet shop.  
Extracurriculars: BMCHSD student ambassador and volunteer at Family Project at Grand Avenue for many years. Honor Roll – senior year

#### **Calhoun Valedictorian, Joy Ma**

Future Plans: Yale University, molecular, developmental, cellular biology with a pre-med track  
Extracurriculars: Fencing (ranked fourth in the nation, silver medalist at 2016 and 2018 Junior Olympics, 2017 Cadet Pan American champion in Cuba), pianist for Calhoun jazz band, second singles for Calhoun varsity badminton, first flutist for Nassau Suffolk Wind Symphony, English, Italian, Math, Music, National, Science and Social Studies honor societies

#### **Calhoun Salutatorian, Amelia Seabold**

Future Plans: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, biology  
Extracurriculars: Secretary general – Model

United Nations, captain – EMSC travel soccer, treasurer – varsity soccer and wind ensemble, English, Italian, Math, National, Science, Social Studies and Tri-M Music honors societies

#### **Kennedy Valedictorian, David Kantor**

College: Dartmouth College, economics  
Extracurriculars: Key Club – president (grade 12) and vice president (grade 11), CEO – Virtual Enterprise, executive board member – wind ensemble and jazz band (euphonium player), starting doubles player – varsity tennis, starting defenseman – junior varsity soccer, FBLA (Stock Market Club), Math Club, Mu Alpha Theta, National, Science, Tri-M and World Language honor societies

#### **Kennedy Salutatorian, Dylan Judd**

Future Plans: Wesleyan University  
Extracurriculars: Varsity baseball, varsity volleyball, Athletes Helping Athletes, Math Club, Tutors for a Cure, Math Honor Society, New York State Science Honor Society, National Science Honor Society, National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society





# High Schools Mark Commencement Ceremonies

The June 24 commencement ceremonies for Calhoun, Kennedy and Mepham High Schools classes of 2018, which were held at the NYCB Theatre at Westbury, celebrated a theme of kindness and empathy, as well as perseverance and exploration, as students advance into this next chapter in their lives.

"You have been heroes," Calhoun Principal Nicole Hollings said. "You are a hero because you stopped your day to be a friend who needed help or for someone who is just different than you, because you stood up to be a champion for the rights of others, because you defend the rights of all. You chose kindness even when someone has been cruel to you."

Students, faculty and Board members addressed crowds that convened for the three high school celebrations.

Kennedy salutatorian Dylan Judd told his fellow classmates that education is something you can't put a price tag on and encouraged them to spark their quest for education with a passion.

"Schools provide the materials to light this flame," he said. "We can engineer the spark with the various tools at our disposal, allowing us to illuminate who and what we are meant to be."

Mepham salutatorian Isabelle Chan noted that her friendships, some since elementary school, enriched her Mepham experience and the school as a whole.

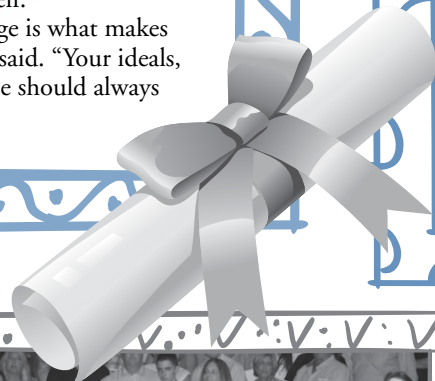
"Mepham High School has forever been made better because you were here," she stated. "Each and every one of us has made a mark on the hallowed halls and in the hearts of one another that will forever resonate and be remembered for years after we close our lockers for the last time."

Calhoun valedictorian Joy Ma told fellow classmates to remember their roots as they set off on new adventures, and to also find the "joy" in their lives.

"We have always been influencing each other for better or worse," she said. "These people, this school, this town. This is our childhood. This is Bellmore-Merrick. We are Bellmore-Merrick. And no matter how far the journey in life pulls us, nothing will be able to take that away from us."

Board member Nina Lanci reminded graduates to remain true to self.

"What should never change is what makes you the person you are," she said. "Your ideals, your values, your heart. Those should always remain a constant."





**BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL  
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
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# Meadowbrook Alternative Program Sends Off Seniors

The Meadowbrook Alternative Program graduated 19 students from its senior class on June 18.

During her commencement speech, valedictorian Jordan Ladd addressed the crowd of fellow graduates, staff, Board members and school administrators.

“At MAP, you’re seen as a whole person,” she said. “You figure out your strengths and your weaknesses and see what works.”

Salutatorian Chazz Opperman thanked teachers and staff for not giving up on him.

“Through a series of blessed mistakes, I’m somehow right

here: exactly where I’m supposed to be, accepting my high school diploma,” he said.

During his faculty address, teacher Zachary Gosse spoke about the importance of experimenting in life and embracing both successes and failures.

“There is no single roadmap that guides you through life,” he said. “Everyone follows their own path. And it is perfectly okay to fail, but it is the insight that you gain from your failed experiments that will once again enable you to be successful.”



## **MAMS, GAMS Mark 60th Moving Up Ceremonies**

Staff at Merrick Avenue and Grand Avenue Middle Schools drummed up the pomp and circumstance for the eighth-grade moving up ceremonies held on June 8. They spoke with pride and joy of the class.

“Collectively, they’ve compiled thousands of hours of community service and are beloved by our staff,” said Merrick Avenue Assistant Principal Katelyn Dunn. “We were successful together because of the amazing partnership in the Bellmore-Merrick community between parents and schools.”

Merrick Avenue Principal Dr. Taryn Johnson echoed sentiments of achievement. “You have permitted us to watch you develop a sense of agency, cultivate the spirit of giving and strengthen your commitment to school and community,” she added.

Grand Avenue Principal Carlo Conte told graduates to take a moment and find an adult in their lives who has influenced them over these past two years and offer a sincere thank-you.

“Use the tools that you have gained here at Grand Avenue in high school and beyond,” he said.

The district congratulates all eighth-grade graduates and wishes them much success as they move onto high school!

