

July 2024

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Participating Districts:

- Brighton
- Brockport
- East Irondequoit
- East Rochester
- Fairport
- Hilton
- Honeoye Falls-Lima
- Penfield
- Pittsford
- Rochester
- Rush-Henrietta
- Spencerport
- Webster
- West Irondequoit
- Wheatland-Chili

From the Director's Desk

Greetings and Happy Summer!

We are excited to bring you the summer edition of Urban-Suburban's newsletter highlighting our first in-person award ceremony since 2018, the graduating class of 2024, and host of wonderful accomplishments and partnerships!

A special thank you to the Urban-Suburban Program Staff, Districts, and most importantly the families who work tirelessly to maintain the program's integrity and achievement.

Thank you for your continued support of Urban-Suburban!

Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,

Felicia A. Smith
Program Director



Congratulations, Class of 2024!

Hard work, perseverance, and dedication have brought our Urban-Suburban graduates to this remarkable milestone. As they step into the next chapter of their lives, we celebrate their achievements and anticipate the incredible contributions they will make to the world. Endless possibilities await.

Irondequoit High School



Zoe Briggs



Deacon Ferguson



Abiola Koumassou



Jizellie Medina



Mi'Asia Rolon



Mercedes Shaya Ruiz



Amaya Taddonio



TeJon Tejada

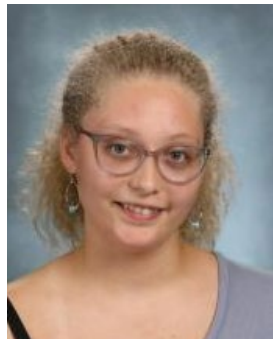


Amiyah Williams

Brockport High School



Braxton Campbell*



Mary Kingsley



Sarah Kingsley



Naria Larkin-McClary



Jyonnah Ware*



Prophecy Wood

** Urban-Suburban Scholarship Award Recipients*

Brighton High School



Reylon Day



Alexandria Hall



Kaden Retamar*



Josiah Robinson



Nasir Smith



Reggie Smith Jr.



Samantha Som



Dasani Williams

Penfield High School



Damoni Antonea Davis*



Zulaika Holmes



Andreus McQueen



Ethan Muroski



Wyatt Newton



Sydni Powell*



Chrishon Pryce*



Jade Stewart*

Pittsford Mendon High School



Jorge Alegria



Jamar Frison



Laniyah Gaines



Island Jacobs



Drunasia Simmons



Navaeh Sneed



Malikai Solomon

Pittsford Sutherland High School



Christian Acosta*



Calayah Anderson



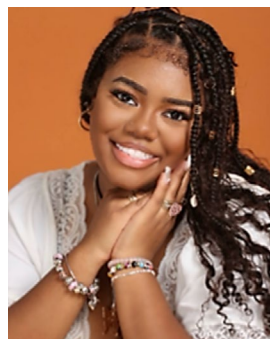
Antonio Brown



Holden Milne*



Nicky Ni



Kahmari Ward

Fairport High School



Aniyah Barron*



Neftali Colon Jr.



Nicolas Davis



Jaelan Law



Taryn McCullough



Quintarrius Reed



Mikayla Seth*



SyMira Watson*



Oh Naing Zar*

Spencerport High School



Clint Bilkodeau-Castrechino



Declan Claeys



Alicia Gayle



Tyran Hoyte Jr.*



Diego Rodriguez*



Jaedyn Smith*

East Rochester High School



Kayla Blackman



Marlo Henry



Modesty Knight



Jalen McCoy*



Nia Robinson*



Mya Samuels



Shane' Smith

Eastridge High School



Theo Bandyh



Shaniya Campbell*



Sandy Chi*



Frank Colon

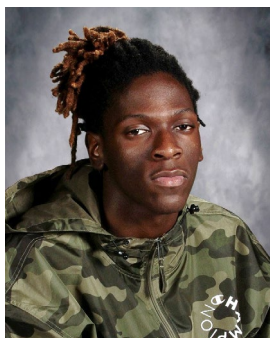


Kaleigh Watt

Rush-Henrietta High School



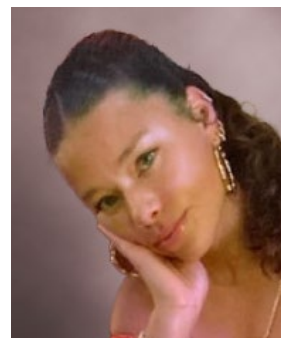
McKenzi Snowden*



Carlos Glasgow



Lionis Vallejo



Chylene Whitcomb*

Wheatland-Chili High School

* Urban-Suburban Scholarship Award Recipients

Urban-Suburban Award Night

The Urban-Suburban Award Night is an opportunity for us to celebrate the outstanding students in this program. At this year's ceremony, 524 awards were presented to U-S students in grades 6-12. Congratulations to every student who was recognized for their achievements during the 2023-24 school year.



Award Ceremony Photo Gallery



Award Ceremony Photo Gallery



Award Ceremony Photo Gallery



Special Service Awards

There are so many incredible people who support our program, our schools, and our students throughout the year. The Special Service Awards recognize some of those dedicated individuals.

Congratulations to the following “Slugger Award” recipients:

- Dr. Tasha Potter, Penfield Central School District
- Holly Juliano, Brighton Central School District
- Christopher Doran, Regional Transit Service
- Jackie Saunders, Webster Central Schools
- Dr. Tonya Guzman, Nazareth University
- Kristin Paolini, Hilton Central School District
- Karen Spillman, Hilton Central School District
- Dr. Meghan Bello, East Irondequoit Central School District
- Nerlande Anselme, Rush-Henrietta Central School District



Congratulations to the U-S Parent Advisory Council Special Service Award recipients:

- Cheryl Poole, Webster PAC Representative
- Janice Kpor, Brighton PAC Representative



Student Spotlights

Eastridge graduate recognized for multiple achievements

Sandy Chi, a dedicated graduate from Eastridge High School and the Urban Suburban program, was recognized as one of Monroe County's outstanding seniors. This honor is awarded annually to students who exemplify excellence in scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Sandy represents the spirit of the Dr. Michael C. O'Laughlin Outstanding Senior Recognition Program. Her achievements, leadership, and character make her a deserving recipient of this prestigious award.

Sandy was also Eastridge High School's Class of 2024 Salutatorian and received the Principal's Award during the Urban-Suburban Award Night.



West Irondequoit 4th Grader medals at Team USA national karate competition

Krisdiana Dillard has once again secured her spot on Team USA after earning a gold, silver, and two bronze medals at the World Karate Commission USA National Competition June 8-9, 2024. She placed first in Classical Kata, second in Sparring and Third in Weapons and Hardline Kata.

The middle school student has been devoted to karate for nearly three years and she's already a blue belt. Krisdiana was a green belt last summer, the first time she found out that she would represent Team USA on an international level. Krisdiana's mom tells us she brought home the bronze medal for Sparring at the 2023 World Championships in Orlando, Florida.

Now, after her latest wins at the National Competition, her mom says she is ranked seventh in the world in Kata and Weapons. The word proud doesn't begin to describe how Krisdiana's mom feels about her accomplishments.

The family's next stop is Portugal for the WKC World Championship 2024 this October.



West Irondequoit Outstanding Senior charts ambitious future

TeJon Tejada, a 2024 graduate of Irondequoit High School and recipient of the prestigious Dr. Michael C. O’Laughlin Outstanding Senior award has a clear path forward. His immediate plans include joining the Army National Guard and going to college. This decision-making process was highlighted in the West Irondequoit Central School District’s video “Finding their Path.”

In the video, TeJon explains that he learned about the Army National Guard at a work event in October 2023. He started considering it as an option when he found out that he would be able to work in the military and pursue his dreams.

His journey begins with bootcamp and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) to become an Information Technology Specialist. Following his military training, TeJon plans to attend college to study business and video. Though he has specific educational goals, he remains open to discovering his long-term career path over time.

"Even if you don't know what you're going to do, this gives you an opportunity to learn a new skill (and) meet a whole bunch of new people like you would do in college," said Tejada.

You can watch the West Irondequoit CSD video “Finding their Path” in the article about TeJon on monroe.edu/us.



Brighton High School awards ceremony

Three Urban-Suburban students were recognized during Brighton High School’s annual awards assembly in June.



Reylon Day received the *Monroe County School Nutrition Scholarship*.



Kaden Retamar was congratulated on his *Urban-Suburban High School Principal's Award* and his *Urban-Suburban Scholarship*.



Reggie Smith Jr. earned the *Hopps Senior Male Athletic Achievement Award*.

Monroe One Educational Foundation Scholarship



Mi'Asia Rolon

Irondequoit High School graduate **Mi'Asia Rolon** and Fairport High School graduate **Neftali Colon Jr.** are the recipients of the 2024 Monroe One Educational Foundation scholarships.

Foundation President Beverly Hooper delivered the scholarship to Neftali Colon Jr. at Fairport High School. Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Technology, Bridget Harris, presented the scholarship to Mi'Asia Rolon at an Irondequoit High School ceremony.

The Monroe One Educational Foundation scholarship is for graduates focusing on post-high school education and work skills to prepare them for competitive employment. The Foundation was established to foster, encourage, and enrich academic programs for Monroe One students. The Foundation works collaboratively with educational and business leaders to raise funds and award grants to staff and students.



Neftali Colon Jr. and Foundation President Beverly Hooper

RIT awards three Urban-Suburban scholars

Three Urban-Suburban graduates will be going to Rochester Institute of Technology this fall having earned a full ride through the Destler/Johnson Rochester City Scholars Program.

RIT provides the opportunity to graduates of the Rochester City School District, approved charter schools, and now the Urban-Suburban program. This is the second year that U-S students have been included.

Scholars are expected to participate in an on-campus enrichment program this summer and will have their own Multicultural Center for Academic Success coach. They will receive support, guidance, and access to resources throughout the academic year.

The following Urban-Suburban students have been accepted into the Program:

- **Kayla Blackman,**
East Rochester Senior High School
- **Amaya Taddonio,**
Irondequoit High School
- **Diego Rodriquez,**
Spencerport High School



Urban-Suburban students receive Urban League of Rochester Black Scholar recognition

This is the 45th consecutive year that the Urban League of Rochester is highlighting the achievements of Black and Brown Scholars in our schools. Graduating students who kept a B-average or better throughout high school receive this honor.

The Black Scholars program acknowledges the hard work and dedication of students by providing recognition, assistance preparing for college, and scholarship opportunities.

2024 Urban-Suburban Black Scholars:

Brighton High School

- Alexandria Hall
- Josiah Robinson
- Brockport High School
- Braxton Campbell
- Mary Kingsley
- Sarah Kingsley
- Naria Larkin-McClary
- Jyonnah Ware
- Prophecy Wood

East Rochester High School

- Kayla Blackman
- Nia Robinson

Eastridge High School

- Theo Bandyh
- Shaniya Campbell

Fairport High School

- Anyiah Barron
- Nicolas Davis
- Taryn McCullough
- Mikayla Seth
- SyMira Watson

Irondequoit High School

- Zoe Briggs
- Abiola Koumassou
- Mi'Asia Rolon

Penfield High School

- Damoni Antonea Davis
- Zulaika Holmes
- Wyatt Newton
- Sydni Powell
- Jade Stewart

Pittsford Mendon High School

- Jamar Frison
- Laniyah Gaines
- Island Jacobs
- Drunasia Simmons
- Nevaeh Sneed
- Malikai Solomon

Pittsford Sutherland High School

- Christian Acosta
- Calayah Anderson
- Kahmari Ward

Urban-Suburban Scholarship Award Recipients

Urban-Suburban was able to raise \$14,000 for our students through voluntary contributions, family dues, and program fundraisers.

Since 1985, \$335,425 has been awarded to 613 program graduates! The scholarship was initially funded by a \$3,000 grant from the Reidman Corporation of Rochester and has been sustained through the ongoing support of Urban-Suburban staff and families.

Congratulations to the following graduates who earned a U-S Scholarship:

- **Christian Acosta,**
Pittsford High School
- **Nia Robinson,**
East Rochester High School
- **Jade Stewart,**
Penfield High School
- **Aniyah Barron,**
Fairport High School
- **Diego Rodriguez,**
Spencerport High School
- **Jyonnah Ware,**
Brockport High School
- **Braxton Campbell,**
Brockport High School
- **Mikayla Seth,**
Fairport High School
- **SyMira Watson,**
Fairport High School
- **Shaniya Campbell,**
Eastridge High School
- **Jaedyn Smith,**
Spencerport High School
- **Chyene Whitcomb,**
Wheatland-Chili High School
- **Sandy Chi,**
Eastridge High School
- **McKenzi Snowden,**
Rush-Henrietta High School
- **Oh Naing Zar,**
Fairport High School
- **Damoni Davis,**
Penfield High School
- **Tyran Hoyte Jr,**
Spencerport High School
- **Jalen McCoy,**
East Rochester High School
- **Holden Milne,**
Pittsford High School
- **Sydni Powell,**
Penfield High School
- **Chrishon Pryce,**
Penfield High School
- **Kaden Retamar,**
Brighton High School



Thank you, Urban-Suburban Scholarship Committee!



(Pictured left to right: Donna Michel, Karen Bloss, Alesia Tellez, Kristen Rogers, Latoshi Clark, and Erin Shaw)

Thank You!

2024 Urban-Suburban Scholarship Committee

- **Alesia Tellez**, *East Irondequoit Parent*
- **Kristen Rogers**, *East Irondequoit Parent*
- **Yoshida Blackman**, *Fairport Parent*
- **Tonya Lewis**, *Hilton Parent*
- **Latoshi Clark**, *Pittsford Parent*
- **Karen Bloss**, *Spencerport Parent*
- **Donna Michel**, *West Irondequoit Parent*
- **Erin Shaw**, *Hilton High School Assistant Principal*



A group of parents and a High School administrator volunteer their time to serve on our committee each year. They review all criteria for the scholarship awards and allocate funds raised.

Interested in serving on next year's committee?

Volunteers from each of our school districts are encouraged and welcome to join us. The group meets on the first Saturday in May to choose scholarship recipients. Breakfast and lunch are served. Contact Program Director Felicia Smith if you're interested in participating by emailing Felicia_Smith@boces.monroe.edu.

District News

Penfield

Dr. Tasha Potter Named Penfield Superintendent

The Penfield Board of Education has announced the appointment of **Dr. Tasha Potter** as the new Superintendent of Schools for the Penfield Central School District. Dr. Potter has served as the district's Assistant Superintendent for Equity & Access for the past three years. Prior to that, she served as the Director of Diversity and Equity Planning for Monroe One BOCES.

"As a Board, we are looking forward to welcoming Dr. Potter as Superintendent of the Penfield Central School District and are excited to work with her in this new capacity," said Board President Emily Roberts.

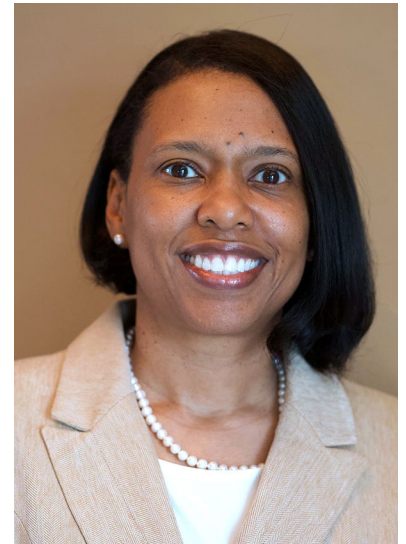
"After interviewing Dr. Potter and hearing her vision for the district, as well as garnering support from the presidents of the teachers' union and the administrative council, we made the unanimous decision to move forward with appointing her as our next Superintendent," Dr. Roberts said.

Dr. Potter's previous experience also includes serving as Director for Equity & Family and Community Engagement, as a principal for 10 years, and as an assistant principal for two years in the Greece Central School District. Prior to her tenure in Greece, she served as an elementary school teacher in both the Rochester and Gates Chili school districts. Dr. Potter has served students, faculty, families/caregivers, and communities in public education for the past 31 years.

"I am honored and extremely excited to have been chosen as the next Superintendent of the Penfield Central School District. Our district is home to talented students, hardworking faculty, staff, and administrators who consistently support our students, and a dedicated Board of Education," Dr. Potter said. "We are fortunate to have families/caregivers who value partnership, embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion, and care deeply about the well-being of the whole student," she added.

"The Penfield Central School District has a strong educational foundation that I look forward to continuing to strengthen. Together we will provide learning environments that prioritize excellence, rigorous instruction, high expectations, and success for all students. I am eager to engage with and listen to students, faculty and staff, and families/caregivers in ways that build trust, and foster relationships and understanding," Dr. Potter said.

Dr. Potter will begin her new position as of Sept. 1.



Dr. Tasha Potter

Pittsford

New Elementary School Principals Announced

The Pittsford Board of Education is pleased to announce two administrative appointments:

Richard Albano was named the Principal of Mendon Center Elementary School, where he served as Assistant Principal for the past seven years. Before joining Pittsford, Albano worked in Victor as the English Language Coordinator and inclusive classroom teacher for eight years. He also has 11 years of industry experience working in engineering, management and training for Eastman Kodak, Sara Lee Foods and SONY Electronics. He will start his new position on July 1, 2024.



Richard Albano

Jeffrey Pollard was named the Principal of Allen Creek Elementary School. Pollard comes to Pittsford from the Rush-Henrietta School District where he served as a Principal at two different schools for 16 years and an assistant principal for two years. He also held elementary school positions for over eight years.



Jeffrey Pollard

Webster

Webster CSD Voters Elect Two New Board of Education Members

During the annual budget vote and board of education election on May 21, Webster CSD voters elected **Jeffrey McCaffrey** and **Michele Lowes** to the board of education. Mr. McCaffrey and Ms. Lowes' three-year terms began on July 1, 2024.

Mr. McCaffrey has 30+ years of experience in the business field, having spent the last 25+ years in management, specializing in project management. Mr. McCaffrey serves as current president of the Webster Youth Sports Council and is director of North Coast Boys Basketball. He has also served the community as a coach and board member for Webster Travel Baseball.



Jeffrey McCaffrey

Ms. Lowes is a WCSD alumna and is the current local director for Person Centered Services. Ms. Lowes serves as a hospice volunteer for Isaiah House, a women's leadership mentor, and volunteers for the United Way Day of Caring, Habitat for Humanity, and Heart of Dance.

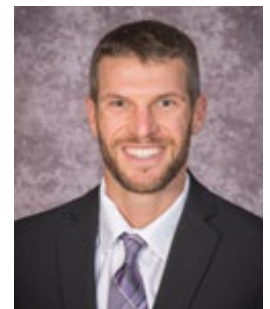


Michele Lowes

New State Road Elementary School Principal Named

Webster CSD is pleased to announce that **Skip Kunecki** has accepted the position as State Road Elementary School's new principal.

Mr. Kunecki previously served Webster CSD as assistant principal at Plank Road North Elementary School from 2021-2023. He then joined Fairport CSD in his current role as assistant principal at Brooks Hill Elementary School. The district thanks Principal Christine Kayes, who retired this school year after 21 years of service to State Road and Webster CSD.



Skip Kunecki

Back to School BBQ

Join our Parent Advisory Council for a day of fun in the sun! Urban-Suburban's Back to School BBQ is on:

Saturday, August 24

10 a.m.–3 p.m.

at Genesee Valley Park's
Tupelo Shelter.

The Parent Advisory Council will provide the hot dogs, hamburgers, and other meats! Please sign up to bring a side dish, drink, dessert, or to volunteer.

RSVP to USPACTEAM@gmail.com



PAC members needed!

Join our team of dedicated parents! The Urban-Suburban Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is looking for representatives from the following Urban-Suburban school districts:

- **Hilton**
- **Honeoye Falls-Lima**
- **Rush-Henrietta**
- **Webster**

The Council is made up of parent volunteers with at least one from each district. The Council's role is to support the program by advocating for students and other parents. Meetings are the first Wednesday of each month, 6:00–7:30 p.m. (unless otherwise indicated).

Interested?

Email USPACteam@gmail.com and Felicia_Smith@boces.monroe.edu



Visit the Urban-Suburban Program website at:

www.monroe.edu/US

A program of

