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Union Free School District
BETHPAGE
Newsletter
SUMMER 2026

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Golden Eagles Take Flight:

Bethpage High School Celebrates the Class of 2026

With diplomas in hand and caps soaring into the summer sky, Bethpage High School's Class of 2026 officially became Golden Eagle alumni during commencement exercises held Friday, June 26, on the school's football field.

Throughout the ceremony, speakers reflected on the importance of community and encouraged graduates to carry the connections they built at Bethpage into the next stage of their lives. Senior class president Isabella Richemond, student council president Sarah Oh, salutatorian Andrew Hacker, valedictorian Gregorio Andres Bonetti, Superintendent David Scheider and Principal Jantz each shared words of encouragement and celebration.

Mr. Jantz highlighted the remarkable accomplishments of the Class of 2026, including a 99.6% graduation rate and 98% of graduates earning Regents Diplomas, with 70% receiving the advanced designation. This fall, 90% of the class will attend colleges and universities across the country, while others will begin careers, apprenticeships or military service.

"As America begins its next 250 years, your generation will write the next chapter," Mr. Jantz said. "Not only through the careers you pursue, but also through the choices you make, the way you treat others and the communities you help build. The nation's strength has always depended on the strength of its communities, and strong communities depend on people willing to contribute, serve others and leave things better than they found them."

Bonetti closed his valedictory address by encouraging classmates to embrace the unknown with confidence. Quoting Spanish poet Antonio Machado, he reminded graduates, "Traveler, there is no path. The path is made by walking." He added, "We don't need a perfect plan for the future. We just need to start walking."

Following the presentation of diplomas by district administrators and members of the Board of Education, Mr. Jantz officially declared the students graduates of Bethpage High School. As tassels shifted from right to left, the Class of 2026 celebrated together one final time, tossing their caps into the air.

Bethpage gave them wings; now watch them soar.

Mir Aayan
Bridget Ackerman
Elizabeth Adelman
Tasnim Adhree
Isabella Adrian
Rebecca Ahmed
Sana Ali
Andrew Almonte
Mafaz Altaf
Mateo Alvarez Vizuete
Nathan Aminov
Melania Antongiovanni
Christopher Apolinar
Lianna Appice
Madison Arthur
Elyas Assani
JohnCarlo Aurisano
Omar Azizi
Shaima Baki
Jacob Bartow
Hunter Baudille
Jake Baudo
Dylan Bedoya Moncada
Brayan Benitez Alvarenga
Olivia Bergin
Karla Bermejo
Ryan Betwinek
Dilpreet Bhalla
Abiha Bhatti
Zain Bhuiya
Kristen Bogovic
Anjan Bohara
Gregorio Bonetti
Isabella Brady
Payton Bromberg
Thomas Burke
Cristina Camacho
Diana Caputo
Erin Carney
Matthew Casey

Grady Castle
Anthony Cataldi
Christopher Ceglio
Gavin Cha
Hailey Chadwick
Insiya Fatema Chatriwala
Jimmy Chen
Curtis Choi
Benjamin Ciervo
Ikey Cohen
Jacob Collar
Jax Colleluori
Damian Colon
Lauren Como
Timothy Conlon
Thomas Costanzo
Ariel Cuji-Ruilova
Myles Daly
Muhammad Hadi Dar
Diondre Denson
Jessica Dexter
Mariah Diaz
Christina DiMaggio
Joseph DiNuzzo
Sophia Donovan
Max D'Orazio
Craig Duszak
Daniel Dziurka
Christian Edwards
Francesca Elardo
Adair Escorza
Anthony Escorza
Daniel Fasulo
Charles Ferrante
Vanessa Formato
Logan Fornelius
Sam Fornelius
Jessica Galantini
Suany Galdames-Reyes
Alexa Galletti

Christopher Garcia
Connor Gassar
Michael Gaudio
Samreen Ghotra
Ava Gianfrancesco
Juliana Giglio
Mehar Gill
Braeden Gorman
Jamell Greene-Gray
Juliana Grgin
Vincent Guo
Tara Gyaltsen
Anthony Hacker
Nicole Hanson
Logan Harrison
Morgan Hartmann
Benjamin Hau
Timothy Hau
Anthony Herman
Cleverson Hernandez Villalobos
Chris Heusel
Carlos Hills
Hunter Hinson
Ella Holz
Alivia Ippolito
Lion Jang
Christopher Jenal
Jocelyn Joseph
Akith Kaluarachchi
Sukhman Kaur
Tarunjot Kaur
Aryaan Khalfan
Kaylee Khan
Sami Khan
Aria Kim
Brandan Kotapka
Christopher Kucica
Antoni Kulak
Micah Lambert
John Lapertosa

Congratulations to the Class of 2026!

Kevin LaValley
Giuseppe Licandro
James LiPetri
Ray Liu
Andrew Loaiza
Naidelin Lopez Trigueros
Isabella Luparello
Alexa Luther
William Lynn
Aidan Lyons
Charlotte Ma
Flora Ma
Benjamin Maciel-Seidman
Derek Maglione
Jessica Maietta
David Makuch
Shaan Manten
Zainab Marafi
Aidan Marcheselli
Jeremy Marino
Dimitri Markopoulos
Darryl Martine
Stacy Martinez
Brissny Matheu
Anderson Maziero
Katherine McHugh
Declan McMorrow
Hailey Medrano
Brian Melgar
Samantha Mertz
Paridhi Miglani
Grace Miller
Jaden Miller
Maggie Monasterio
Anthony Moreno Sorto
Ava Morgan
Payton Morgan
Vincent Morice
Samantha Morlando

Sahajdeep Multani
Caroline O'Connell
Sarah Oh
Yeslyn Ortez Bonilla
Daniella Palmeri
Sotiria Panagos
Anna Papadelias
Lauren Park
Sahana Passaro
Ava Peace
Gabriella Perillo
Michaela Perillo
John Perrone
Rylee Petruskie
Gabriel Pflug
Victoria Pilarte
Gabrielle Poggio
Jack Poppe
Nathalie Prudencio
Amna Raja
Francisco Ramos
Maryam Rana
Emma Ranaldo
Isabella Richemond
Aidan Richter
Caithynn Rivas
Diego Rivera Martinez
Brianna Robinson
Grace Rojas
Aaryan Rupesh
Daniella Russo
Gabriella Russo
Amanda Santana
William Scales
Anthony Scelta
Leana Sciame
Abigail Scully
Justin Serio
Maahin Sethi

Gabrielle Severin
Katherine Sfeir
Imaad Shaikh
Angela Signoriello
Lilibeth Simon
Fateh Singh
Harkaranbir Singh
Mankirat Singh
Kate Skaferowsky
Thomas Smith
Prabhvir Sohal
Chase Solliday
Cameron Soluk
Jamie Soto
Julia Steele
Catherine Taaffe
Jeremiah Tessono
Madeline Tolchinsky
Joseph Traversa
Dennis Tsouros
Hansen Tu
Matthew Tusa
Maybellyne Ulloa
Melissa Vaquerano
Alexander Vazquez
Michael Verbanac
Gianna Vertuccio
Gabriella Vucetic
Troy Wang
Luke Waxer
Roger Wei
Avery Wheeler
Ashley Wodicka
Jessica Wojnicki
Jonathan Wong
Jenna Woodworth
Nickolas Zgombic
Rayya Zheng

Celebrating a Momentous Milestone

CBS GRADE 5

CCS GRADE 5

KLS GRADE 5

JFK MS GRADE 8

Bethpage High School Awards The Seal of Biliteracy to 54 Students

Bethpage High School is proud to announce that 54 of its students have earned the prestigious New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB). The NYSSB is awarded to students who demonstrate a high level of proficiency in English and at least one additional world language.

Earning the NYSSB involves a multistep process that includes successfully completing state and national language exams, as well as additional demonstrations of reading, writing, listening and speaking proficiency. Students who receive the NYSSB not only have the distinction affixed to their high school diploma but also wear a special medallion at graduation.

Bethpage's recipients this year included three students – Cleverson Hernandez, Ava Morgan and Lukas Varratos – who received the seal for proficiency in two or more world languages, in addition to English.

Bethpage congratulates these students on this exceptional accomplishment. Their achievement not only sets a standard of excellence at Bethpage High School but also positions them as competitive candidates for postsecondary education and employment.

Bethpage High School Students Complete New EMT Program

This school year, 12 Bethpage High School students had a rare opportunity: to graduate from high school already qualified to work in emergency medicine.

The students were enrolled in Bethpage's first EMT program, offered through the district's 21st Century program. The certification course combined lectures with hands-on lab work and medical training, covering trauma care, life-saving medical procedures and rapid patient assessment. Students also shadowed EMT professionals during emergency room rotations.

The course culminated with students sitting for the certification exam through the Nassau County Emergency Medical Service Academy. During the final weeks of school, four students took the exam and all four passed. The remainder of the class will sit for the exam later this summer. Several students also plan to pursue the national certification exam, allowing them to work as EMTs in other states during their college years.

Students came to the program with a range of goals, but for all 12 students, the certification means leaving high school with a credential that makes them immediately employable.

Bethpage High School's
Top Two Graduates Reflect on a Remarkable Journey

By the time they crossed the stage at Bethpage High School's commencement ceremony, Gregorio (Andres) Bonetti and Anthony Hacker had already distinguished themselves through years of academic excellence, leadership and involvement. Named valedictorian and salutatorian of the Class of 2026, the two graduates leave behind a legacy of curiosity, determination and service.

Valedictorian Andres Bonetti graduated with a 110.32 GPA after joining the district his freshman year. He balanced a demanding academic schedule with varsity soccer, marching band and Bethpage's science research program.

Among his proudest accomplishments was earning second place in environmental science at the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. Through the SPARK (Student Partnerships for Advanced Research and Knowledge) mentorship program at Brookhaven National Laboratory, he also helped conduct research on heavy metal pollution and its health effects, presenting the team's findings at Brookhaven's Users' Meeting and Scholars Symposium.

Inspired by AP Chemistry, AP Physics 2 and Chemistry Honors, Andres will attend Georgetown University this fall to study biochemistry with plans to become a cardiologist. He said performing with the marching band at Friday night football games stands out among his favorite high school memories and credits science research teacher Mrs. Dulaney with helping him become a stronger researcher and more confident public speaker.

Salutatorian Anthony Hacker graduated with a 108.84 GPA after attending Bethpage schools since 2013. He excelled in the classroom while competing on the varsity basketball and soccer teams and participating in Mock Trial and the Investment Club.

Anthony will attend Binghamton University this fall to study political science before pursuing a career in corporate law. He said the friendships built during early morning practices became some of his favorite memories. He credits Mrs. Whalen with strengthening his writing and critical thinking skills, while Mock Trial and Investment Club reinforced his interest in law and business.

Reflecting on their time at Bethpage High School, both graduates encouraged future students to challenge themselves, build strong relationships with teachers and get involved in activities that genuinely interest them.

Bethpage School District

Recognizes 15 Retirees for Their Years of Service

The Bethpage School District honored 15 retirees for their decades of service during a special ceremony on May 26 in the athletic barn at Bethpage High School.

This year's retirees are Elena Becker, district clerk and secretary to the superintendent; Lynn Diamond, secretary to the principal at John F. Kennedy Middle School; John Franchi, director of physical education, health and athletics; Angela Ingoglia, senior clerk for pupil personnel; Renee Katz, senior clerk for pupil personnel; Jacqueline LaRose, clerical for the instructional office; Arati Marathe, math teacher at Bethpage High School; Susan McGarvey, fourth grade teacher at Charles Campagne School; Lawrence Portuese, science teacher at Bethpage High School; Michael Posch, physical education teacher at Charles Campagne School; Valerie Riccardello, senior clerk at John F. Kennedy Middle School; Terri Shutkind, social studies teacher at Bethpage High School; Ellen Tjimos, senior clerk for pupil personnel; Theresa Torti, kindergarten teacher at Central Boulevard School; and Wendy Way, social studies teacher at Bethpage High School.

Way spent 31 years teaching AP World History and College Philosophy at BHS while advising the student council and coaching the ethics team. She considers establishing Bethpage's philosophy program one of her proudest accomplishments, giving students opportunities to present research at colleges, compete nationally and participate in the International Philosophy Olympiad.

"At the end of the day, they become critical thinkers in a world that is in need of more critical thinkers," Way said.

Social studies teacher Terri Shutkind, who joined Bethpage High School in 1992, reflected on the evolution of education from card catalogs to artificial intelligence. She said returning to the classroom after the COVID-19 shutdown was the most challenging period of her career and reminded her that teaching is about more than academics.

"It's about connection, reassurance and showing up for students when they need stability," she said.

Science teacher Lawrence Portuese, who joined the district in 1997, said creating the district's Maritime Festival in 2001 remains one of his proudest achievements. Each year, high school seniors teach hands-on environmental lessons to every third grader, creating what he described as a meaningful full-circle tradition.

As this year's retirees begin their next chapters, the Bethpage School District thanks each of them for their dedication and lasting contributions. Their years of service have strengthened the district and enriched the lives of countless students.

Bethpage Schools

Bethpage Union Free School District
Bethpage, NY 11714

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Bethpage Junior Earns International Recognition for Mind-Controlled Exoskeleton Innovation

Bethpage High School junior Partap Sidhu earned international recognition this spring with a second-place finish at the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Phoenix for his project in the Robotics and Intelligent Machines category.

His invention, "NeuroGait: A Low-Cost, Mind-Controlled Pneumatic Exoskeleton With CNN-Based Control for Individuals with Lower-Limb Mobility Impairments Using Brain Computer Interface," brings together neuroscience, artificial intelligence and engineering to support mobility assistance in a new way. The system uses a brain-computer interface to read neural signals and predict a user's intended movement before physical motion occurs, enabling control of a pneumatic exoskeleton. Remarkably, Partap developed the device for approximately $276, compared to the $40,000 to $100,000 cost of many commercially available exoskeletons.

At ISEF, Partap not only placed second in the Robotics and Intelligent Machines category but also received special awards from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers and the International Council on Systems Engineering, recognizing both technical innovation and systems-level design.

Pen Pals Meet in Person at Bethpage ELL Celebration

A full-circle moment unfolded in Bethpage on June 11, when students from the English Language Learners (ELL) program gathered for a special end-of-year celebration at the Bethpage High School Athletic Barn.

At the start of the school year, students in the program were paired with a fellow Bethpage ELL student from the same country of origin to be their pen pal. Throughout the year, the pairs exchanged letters to strengthen their English reading and writing skills while maintaining a connection with someone who shared their culture. The June gathering marked the first time the pen pals met face-to-face, bringing friendships that had formed on the page to life.

The event opened with a parade of nations, as students connected with peers from their home countries across Bethpage's five schools. Students were formally introduced to their pen pals and spent time chatting and taking photos together. Games such as spike ball and cornhole were available throughout the afternoon, and younger students gathered around bead tables to make friendship bracelets. The celebration concluded with a pizza lunch.

It was a fitting way to close out the school year, marking not only how far these students have come in their English language journey but also how far they have traveled to get here.