

DUTCHESS BOCES Spotlight

July 2026

Resilience Academy Graduation

Thirty-two Resilience Academy (RA) students are now officially graduates following the annual Graduation Day Ceremony & Celebration on June 24.

Prior to the students receiving their diplomas and moving the tassels on their caps from right to left, they heard many words of inspiration, including from fellow graduate Alexandra Varble, who described RA as a second home. While time has flown, Varble noted that her and her classmates still have 85% of their lives left to take the world by storm and explore opportunities that await them.

"You have all the time in the world and then some, so take a minute to stop and to reflect, slow down and stop to smell the flowers," Varble said. "You may feel that you haven't accomplished much so far, but that's only because you haven't lived enough of your life yet to be able to see what you are fully capable of."

Guest speaker Heather Ann Pitcher, CEO and Founder of the Brain and Body Coalition, noted that the school's name made her think about how the word resilience has been part of her journey, as it helped her overcome obstacles to start her organization.

"Resilience is not a destination; it's a journey. Each person defines it differently," Pitcher said. "Resilience is often born from challenge ... it develops when things do not go according to plan."

Pitcher then referenced the old saying "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade," noting how life has handed students plenty of "lemons," including loss, grief, rejection and making mistakes. While they do not have a choice about what happens to them, they have options on how to respond to those situations, which can lead to better outcomes.



RA graduates are applauded during the ceremony.

"I don't like lemonade, but I do like lemon cookies ... When life gives us lemons, why not do something different? Make lemon cookies, lemon pie, make something sweet with your sour situation," Pitcher said. "Turn your lemon into growth, learn from it."

District Superintendent Dr. Jodi DeLucia said that when she "looks across this room, I don't just see graduates. I see stories. Each of you has your own story. Your own journey. Your own experiences that brought you to this moment."

Kellianne Erdman is happy to have completed her GED with the help of Teacher Erin Weidner, who pushed her to not give up. This kind of support is what Erdman will miss the most, but looks forward to starting her freshman year at Clinton Community College.

"It's bittersweet, definitely and I'm really going to miss this place," Erdman said. "I feel very excited for the future and what opportunities come next for me."

Legacy Anderson-Joyner is attending Dutchess Community College to study psychology and will miss her teachers and friends the most. She shared what advice was given to her at RA that will stick with her.

"Never let yourself down, always believe in yourself and never give up," Anderson-Joyner said. "I never thought I would actually make it to graduation, but I am here."

SPC Eighth Graders Move On To The Next Chapter



Reagan Albach receives her certificate.

Twenty-three Salt Point Center (SPC) eighth graders are now ready for high school following the annual Moving-Up Day Ceremony & Celebration on June 11, where their achievements at the school were recognized.

Family members, classmates and staff cheered for the students, dressed in decorated banners and blue caps and gowns, as they proudly entered the

gym and when each went up to accept their certificates. The ceremony was enhanced with poetry readings, musical numbers and a video montage of events throughout the school year. One of the ceremony's most heartfelt traditions included students handing out flowers to adults that helped them through their journey.

"None of us reaches milestones like this alone," SPC Principal Melissa Murphy said.

continues on pg. 2

SPC Eighth Graders Move On To The Next Chapter

continued from pg. 1

"Families, teachers, teaching assistants, therapists, clinicians, nurses and support staff have all played an important role in helping you succeed."

Murphy is proud of the departing eighth graders who all grew in their own unique ways, while learning new skills, building relationships, overcoming challenges and achieving goals that were thought to be out of reach. She added that the lessons they learned and experiences they had at SPC will serve them well wherever they go.

"Remember to be kind, work hard and believe in yourself; continue to learn, continue to grow and never be afraid to ask for help when you need it," Murphy said. "At Salt Point Center, we know that success looks different for every student and every accomplishment deserves to be celebrated."

Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Denise Dzikowski noted that students worked hard to grow and develop resiliency to make it to the ceremony. She predicts they are ready for any challenge high school presents and

said they should be proud of their achievements, but not in a boastful way.

"I'm talking about the quiet, deep satisfaction that you get inside, knowing that you've done something that was hard for you and you were able to do it," Dzikowski said of having pride. "Just because you don't get it right the first time doesn't mean you're a failure, it means we're going to try again, and I've seen each of you do that."

After the certificates were awarded, SPC & Resilience Academy TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication Handicapped Children) Coach Maria Sita awarded the Dutchess BOCES Faculty Award Association for Citizenship to Rama Haridevara as he met the award's criteria of demonstrating perseverance, respect, positive participation and meaningful growth in the school community.



Jayden Riley receives his certificate.

Tessa Ryan, who sang the song "My Lighthouse" by Rend Collective for the audience, is excited to be moving on, but nervous for high school.

"I'm happy, but I'm going to miss my teacher, though," said Ryan, whose teacher was Kourtney Fitzmaurice.

Ethan Horton will most miss how all of his SPC classes were on one floor, but shared "I'm looking forward to taking baking classes," Horton said. "I feel 100% happy."

SPC Kindergartners Share ABCs In Style



Salt Point Center (SPC) kindergartners closed out their school year in style, wearing handmade vests bearing the letters of the alphabet during the annual Alphabet Parade & Moving Up Celebration on June 17.

Before the parade, SPC Principal Melissa Murphy congratulated the kindergartners on the progress they made this year, as well as teachers, staff and families for their support in these endeavors.

"Today's a wonderful opportunity to recognize the growth and learning accomplishments of our students," Murphy said. "Please join me in celebrating our kindergarten students as they parade through the alphabet and take the next exciting step in their educational adventure."

The students, their teachers and aides paraded into the school's gym, dancing to the Jackson Five's "ABC" dressed in their alphabet vests, with some wearing black graduation hats. They later sang two alphabet-related songs, "ABC Song" and "See You Later, Alligator," reiterating what they learned during the school year.

Before handing out certificates to their students, teachers Jen Florio, Trisha Pagliuca-Johnson, Tiffany Fielding-Clarke, Christie Campanaro, Nicole Pastre and Michelle MacDonald all shared how proud they were of their students for reaching this milestone.

Some older SPC students helped out by handing out programs to visiting families.



Top: SPC kindergartners show off their letters.
Bottom: Students hopping to the song.

GED Brings Brighter Future to ALI Graduates

The stories shared during Adult Learning Institute's GED graduation were inspiring, emotional and brought joy to all in attendance on June 17.

From a young lady overcoming drug addiction to two students who only recently started learning English, they spoke about how it wasn't easy, but was definitely worth the effort.

Before the students spoke, administrators shared encouraging parting words.

"Tonight is a reminder of what is possible," Christine Thomas, Adult Education Program Coordinator, told the audience.

"Every graduate here has a story. Each one is different, but they all share the determination to keep going."

The graduates are in good company. Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino told them she went through the GED program, but didn't talk about it for many years - until after she was elected. "Tell your stories. They're important to tell," she said.

And, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instructional Services Rebecca Green shared that actor Mark Wahlberg, actress Drew Barrymore and musician Katy Perry also completed their GEDs.

"Every day, you chose to show up," Green said, adding that it wasn't just the academic lessons that students learned in the program. "You discovered that not everything is correct the first time. ... You learned that growth comes from reflection and perseverance. ... You learned you could!"

Students Natalia Meza and Juan Marin shared similar challenges, as neither knew much English when they began, but each decided to pursue their GED in English instead of



Natalia Meza addresses her fellow new graduates.

Spanish. Since exams are given individually in the subjects, they chose to take the English language arts exam last so they could continue improving their English, Teacher Dianne Ham said.

"I am pleased to have finished my GED in English, because it was difficult for me to gain the confidence to express

myself and be able to speak in that language," Meza said from the podium. Though the language is still new to her, she spoke confidently, joking with the audience "Wow, there's a lot of people." Later on, she thanked her Aunt Dora, who motivated her in her studies and life, the BOCES staff and Ham.

Marin shared part of his story in his speech. "It is impressive how everything can change so quickly. A year ago, I was taking my first ESL class and today I am receiving my GED and I am up here thanking you all for what you have done for me," he said.

Graduate Kalene Marsh told a very different story. "Life took me down a difficult path, and there was a time when I struggled with addiction and did not make education a priority," she told the audience. "Back then, I often felt lost and uncertain about my future."

She talked about committing to showing up each day, and how with every lesson she learned and every challenge she overcame, she "gained confidence, strength and determination. Little by little, I began to believe in myself again."

Before taking the stage, Marsh said, "I am getting my life on track and this is a great accomplishment. It will help me get a lot of jobs and advance in life."

That ties in to what Director of Career and Technical Education and Adult Education Nicholas Millas told students in his comments. "Whatever you do next, do it with the same tenacity you pursued your GED with. You are now opening doors that were previously closed to you," he said, before adding, "Keep learning."

What makes the ALI program different from other GED programs, is that it is customized for each student, said Ham, who has taught in GED programs for 25 years, 15 of which have been at BOCES. "People come in with different needs." Beyond the actual classwork, Ham and the caseworkers provide encouragement and support throughout the program.

"Sometimes I'll just send them texts to keep them coming," she said.

Green shared this during her opening remarks: "You deserve a place where you feel welcome to succeed. A place where you feel safe, respected and valued."

It is something the students appreciate.

Graduate Ichidi Goulbourne came to the program to complete the English portion of the exam. "They take their time with you and let you do it at your own pace," he said. With his GED, Goulbourne is also enrolled in the Auto Technology program at ALI, where he can learn a trade and earn some industry certifications. He's looking forward to "Life, experiences and more happy days."

Congratulations to all the graduates:

- Tayler Austin
- Gbolahan Barake
- Amber Cosgrove
- Aaron Creisstoff
- Gladys Escalante Salvatierra
- Ichidi Goulbourne
- Eric Kellam
- Juan Marin
- Kalene Marsh
- Natalia Meza



GED students line up preparing to graduate.



Kalene Marsh receiving her GED certificate.

CTI's Class of 2026 Recognized at Annual Ceremony



Makenzie Turner shows off her certificate.

Nearly 400 second-year Career & Technical Institute students are ready for whatever life has to offer them following the annual Recognition Night held at the Majed J. Nesheiwat Convention Center in Poughkeepsie on June 11.

Following a rousing rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner" by Cosmetology students Neveah Pittman and Annalise Perez, CTI Principal Jason Lloyd said that he wanted to see for himself what happens in CTI classrooms during his first year and it exceeded his expectations. He noted that while many high schoolers were learning about future careers, CTI students were living them and developing skills that potential employers value.

"I found young professionals designing,

building, troubleshooting, creating, repairing, caring, leading and learning ...

Most importantly, I found young adults who are determined to make a difference in their communities," Lloyd said.

"Whatever path it is that you choose, know that the skills, habits and experiences that you have gained here have prepared you well for what comes next."

Salutatorian Erik Berg, an HVAC student, noted that he not only learned the technical skills needed for his career path, but also valuable life lessons such as being responsible, confident and working as part of a team. He added that success in school is more than just grades and test scores.

"Success is about growth, it's about showing up when things get difficult, it's about learning from mistakes and continuing to move forward," Berg said. "It [the HVAC class] taught me that every challenge has a solution if you are willing to put in the effort to find it."

Valedictorian Macklin Boyd said that attending the HVAC program made a huge impact in his life where he learned skills that made him more knowledgeable at his job at Ackerman Mechanical in Red Hook, as well as successfully tackling

challenges that have prepared him and his classmates for life beyond CTI.

"I encourage everyone to remember the lessons we've learned here – keep working hard, stay determined and never stop learning," Boyd said. "I wish you all success, happiness and fulfillment on whatever path you choose."

Sisters MoNahjae Dickens and Jurnee Smith are always together, so naturally they enrolled in the Cosmetology program where they had a blast doing what they enjoy. While Smith is pursuing a career as an ultrasound technician, she said she will continue to utilize what she learned in class on the side.

"I think cosmetology is always going to be good because I can always help somebody fix their hair," Smith said.

Dickens said she will miss Teacher Wendy Wabshinak and her classmates, but is excited to study cosmetology at North Carolina Central University where she will put the skills she learned in class to good use.

"They made me more efficient at what I do," Dickens said of the skills. "It feels good to know that I'm about to have a restart on life and it's a new beginning."

HVAC Students Named 2026 CTI Val & Sal

Valedictorian Macklin Boyd

Macklin Boyd was not expecting to be the Career & Technical Institute (CTI) valedictorian, but was proud when he heard the news.

The Red Hook High School senior, who was previously named Dutchess BOCES' Student of Distinction for September, believes his dedication to the work he did in his HVAC class and being highly motivated is why he was chosen. He also credits Teacher James McQuade for going over different HVAC aspects to prepare him and his classmates for the workforce.

"It's definitely helped me excel at work and at school," Boyd said of the class. "I just really appreciate all my peers and teachers for helping me out. Everybody's been great."

Boyd will attend the Pennsylvania College of Technology to study HVAC and plumbing before going back to work at Ackerman Mechanical in Red Hook, where he currently works. For Boyd, CTI was beneficial because he had trouble focusing in school, so coming to a place where he got to perform hands-on work in his field of interest was a good fit.

"It's made me better at learning," Boyd said. "It's been a lot easier to learn something I actually like."

For anyone looking to succeed in school, Boyd recommends going the extra mile. "You have to be dedicated and ready to study late nights," Boyd said. "Put the extra work in and you'll get it done."



Erik Berg (L) with Macklin Boyd (R)

Salutatorian Erik Berg

Erik Berg was surprised to learn he was named salutatorian as he did not feel his work was up to par, but was happy to learn he was wrong. What helped the Roy C. Ketcham senior get this distinction was always completing his schoolwork on time and knowing what he had to do beforehand.

"It's not like I would ever really guess on anything," Berg explained. "I always take the extra time to study, if need be."

Following high school, Berg plans to join the Sheet Metal Workers Local 38 union in Brewster which will assist him in finding work. He credited both McQuade and science Teacher Michael Traudt for always being available to help if he or his classmates were struggling in class, adding that the BOCES environment is a better fit for him because of the consistent hands-on learning that takes place.

"I really learn better because it's more interactive," Berg said. "We actually learn about HVAC and we do it."

Berg recommended BOCES to students interested in attending, but noted that they get what they put into it, meaning they have to put in the effort to succeed.

"You can't just go into BOCES expecting to go through high school and not really do anything," Berg said. "It just takes dedication."

School of Practical Nursing Sends Graduates Into World

Thirteen students from Dutchess BOCES' Practical Nursing Program are now ready to complete the New York State licensure exam following the program's Pinning Ceremony on June 22 at the large Conference Center.

Following words of encouragement from Career & Technical Institute Principal Jason Lloyd, the audience was treated to a slideshow of previous graduates throughout the program's 64-year history, set to, rather fittingly, an instrumental version of Kenny Rogers' "Through the Years."

A highlight of every pinning ceremony is students reciting the Florence Nightingale Pledge, signifying the journey from first-time student in the program to practical nurse. Each student was given a pin adorned with Nightingale's oil lamp that she used to guide her way as she cared for soldiers during the Crimean War, as well as a replica of that lamp with a candle that was lit and then blown out after the pledge reading.

"The light of her lamp gave the soldiers she cared for hope, and she became known as 'The Lady with the Lamp,'" Coordinator of Health Occupations JoAnne Williams said of Nightingale. "Wear your school pin with pride and always shine your light on those that you care for."

Williams noted that while students worked hard in the program, they concurrently experienced many life-changing circumstances, including becoming naturalized United States citizens, earning their Graduate Practical Nurse (GPD) certificates and getting married.

"Only someone who has walked in your nursing shoes understands what it took to get to this point," Williams said. "You have been through a lifetime of experiences in only 20 months."

Florine Hepburn is happy to complete the program and noted how she improved her nursing skills and learned how to better



The Dutchess BOCES Licensed Practical Nursing Class of 2026

handle conflicts when they arise, which will come in handy as she plans to work in a local nursing home. She gave this straightforward advice to anyone interested in becoming a nurse.

"If you're going in there just for the money, please don't do it," Hepburn said. "It's a career that's highly respected and for me, patient care is my top priority, not the money."

Class valedictorian Haya Swaqed spoke about how her recognition was more than just a title.

"It represents every early morning, every late night, every challenge, every sacrifice and every moment when giving up would have been easier than moving forward," Swaqed said. "I stand here knowing that success is not measured only by grades – it is measured by the kindness we show, the lives we touch and the difference we make in our patients' lives."

While the program's teachers taught Swaqed and her classmates the technical skills required for the job, they also learned valuable skills not found in any textbook.

"It has taught us resilience, compassion, patience, humility and the importance of caring for others, even during our own difficult moments," Swaqed said. "Every person sitting here today has worked hard to get here and I am truly proud to have shared this journey with each of you."



LPN graduates line up to take selfies.



Students blow out the candles after reciting the pledge.



Florine Hepburn receives the Florence Nightingale oil lamp.

Resilience Students' Accomplishments Celebrated

On June 12, students from the Resilience Academy gathered during eighth period for an assembly to celebrate student accomplishments. Outstanding individuals were recognized for their hard work and remarkable progress throughout the 2025-26 school year.

Principal Kiesha Tillman kicked off the event by leading a round of applause to recognize the entire

school team, including teachers, teaching assistants, 1:1 aides, counselors, crisis staff, related services, and clerical staff, for their dedication throughout the year. She reminded the room that, "Community is much more than belonging to something; it's about doing something together."

Pegasus students received recognition for their diverse achievements. Awards included the Community Helper, Class Artist, Most Improved Reader, Character, and Math Achievement awards. Students were also honored for Building Positive Connections, Trying Something New, Helping Out Fellow Students, Overcoming Odds with Mobility, Social/Emotional Learning, Achievement in iReady, and Most Improved for Academic Growth and Commitment to Learning. Ms. Hart's class received the Classroom Community Service Award for their recycling initiative this year.

Resilience Academy students received awards in core subjects, including math, science, English, art, social studies, business, Spanish, physical education, health, and music, as well as specialized electives like journalism, theater and dance, creative writing, history in film, peer leadership, and the history of gaming.

The Phil Parquet Music Award, named in honor of a beloved staff member who passed away two years ago, went to Terrence Hurn, for his love of music. The Work-Based Learning Award went to Jordan Terry, who worked at Big Bubble Laundromat, Price Chopper, Adams, and many other sites completing more than 1,100 hours over the past five years.

Resilience Academy student Micheal Ford was announced as the Student of the Year. "Micheal has been my student for four years.



Micheal Ford receives an award.

We saw him grow tremendously in every possible way," shared his teacher Jeffrey Scalzo. Addressing Micheal he added, "Micheal you will be successful in whatever you do. As you graduate, you may feel life will never quite be the same, but know the school is forever changed from you being here in the first place and we won't be the same without you." Micheal plans to attend Dutchess Community College in the fall to study theater.

The final honor, Teacher of the Year, went to Physical Education Teacher Kenneth Fraser. Chosen entirely by student vote, his win was met with enthusiastic applause from the entire room.



Chloe Yagasitis gives Ms. Muenz a hug.

- Math - Jax Durso , Isaiah Rising, Le'Dones Armwood-Gooding, Emma Waage, Marco Penarieta-Cardoso, Blake Stickle
- Science - Quinlan O'Neil, Desean Jackson, Emma Cirrincione, Aurora Maldonado, Allison Halliday, Mark Irving, Connor VanNorstrand
- English - Phylea Clarke, Allison Halliday, Zeke Byrne-Petrocine, Nia Allen, Terrence Hurn
- Art - Jae'La Francis, Christopher Ellis, Mia Fountain, Jeniya'h Ayers, Alexander Reichman, Justin Bradley
- Social Studies - Emma Waage, Avery Jones, Savion Robinson, Kellianne Erdman
- Business - Micheal Ford, Isabella Salomone
- Music - Lloyd Conners, Dylan Paraszti, Matthew Imperati, Diego Salgado-Barlocco, Justin Bradley, Chloe Yagasitis, Leonardo Sanchez, Jordon Smith, Angelo Mastandrea, Lucia Cirolo, Anthony Ronda
- Journalism - Alexandra Varble
- Theater/Dance - Theater: Micheal Ford
- Peer Leadership - Isabella Salomone
- History in Film - Jayden Weingartner
- Creative Writing - Avery Jones
- History of Gaming - Alex Rivera
- Physical Education - Anthony Ronda, Isaiah Rising, Isabella Salomone
- Health - Jordan Terry, Isabella Ramos
- Spanish 1- Jeniya'h Ayers
- Spanish 2 - Phylea Clarke
- The Phil Parquet Music Award - Terrence Hurn
- Work Based Learning Award - Jordan Terry
- Student of the year - Michael Ford
- Teacher of the Year - Kenneth Fraser

Pegasus:

- Community Helper Award - Dylan Paraszti
- Class Artist Award - Jacob Lloyd
- Most Improved Reader - Matthew Imerati
- Character Award - Lisandro Martinez
- Math Achievement Award - Alyssa Ranone
- Building Positive Connections - Austin Cichocki
- Trying Something New - Going to Work- Ava DiMattina
- Helping Out Fellow Students - Michael Vigna
- Overcoming Odds with Mobility - Angel Ortiz
- Most Improved for Academic Growth and Commitment in Learning - Isaiah Calderon
- Pegasus Physical Education Award - Dylan Paraszti, Chloe Yagasitis
- Kindness Award - Tyrese Williams
- Daily Operations MVP Award - Eugenio Namarubessy
- Classroom Community Service Award - Ms Hart's Class
- Rookie of the Year Award - Jennifer Price

*Additional awards were given to students who do not have media permission.

Agency Recognizes Staff, Awards Employees of the Year

Across the agency, Dutchess BOCES employees shape and change lives for the better. The annual Employee Recognition Awards ceremony is a time when all staff gather to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and honor the contributions of colleagues.

Board of Trustees Vice President Gully Stanford opened the ceremony by talking about seeing the evidence of the work done on campus in the many moving-up and graduation ceremonies. He said that throughout his travels, he hears ringing endorsements from government, businesses and the community for the work done at Dutchess BOCES.

District Superintendent Dr. Jodi DeLucia talked about the many end-of-year moving up, graduation, award and scholarship ceremonies held this year and all the students who earned recognition, diplomas or advancement. She also spoke of upcoming improvements to campus that will enhance safety and security, beautify the campus and improve learning opportunities. "These improvements are about creating environments that reflect the value of the students and staff who learn and work within them. We celebrate today, but our mission continues," she said, adding, "The momentum we have is unprecedented for BOCES."

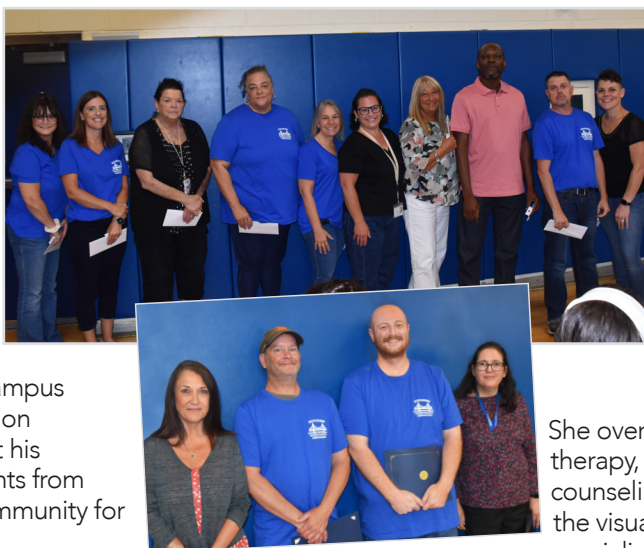
The ceremony recognized the Employees of the Year, staff milestones, employees earning tenure and retirees.

Kicking off the awards part of the morning, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Dr. Norah Merritt said, "It's time to celebrate the people who make Dutchess BOCES a place to learn and grow. These awards come from your colleagues."

And, while only five people are selected, Merritt said all 15 nominees were worthy of being recognized. The five Employees of the Year were:

- Edjane Stewart, Support Staff, IT, for consistently demonstrating dedication, patience and a genuine willingness to help others.
- Regina Mendoza, Clerical, Educational Resources, for proactively completing tasks, anticipating potential barriers and removing those barriers.
- Ryan Brigante, Instructional Support, SPC, for ensuring students transition safely between school and home, helping those who struggle with school anxiety and his ability to de-escalate situations.
- Michael Traudt, Teacher, CTI, for offering innovative ideas, bringing creativity to assignments and adding kindness and care to everything he approaches.
- Karyn Lange, Administrator, Coordinator of Related and Itinerant Services, for demonstrating exceptional leadership and dedication that strengthens delivery of specialized services across Dutchess BOCES and the districts it serves.

For Brigante, being recognized was like a full-circle moment. The



Top: Employees recognized for 25 years, below: Employees of the Year.

crisis team member has been with the agency for about eight years and says it's the kids who keep him coming back.

"They need support in this world and I didn't have it, so I want to be it for them," he said.

Lange, who has worked in special education for over 30 years, said she is "honored to work at Dutchess BOCES," and has a "very dedicated staff who show up and go above and beyond."

She oversees services including occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, counseling, teachers of the deaf, teachers of the visually impaired, orientation & mobility specialists and behavior support teachers. As she completes her sixth year with the agency, Lange looks forward to continuing to provide services to students.

Years of Service

Employees tend to stick with BOCES, as evidenced by the number of employees hitting milestones of 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of service this year:

20 Years: Rebecca Awe and Eric Hirsch

25 Years: Wayne Brathwaite, Lilian Caruso, Kelly Felipe, April Hart, Jodiah Jacobs, Mary Parker, Jacqueline Sharpe, Maria Sita, Sheri Tompkins and Lisa Wilson

30 Years: Brian Conte, Todd Leland and Michael Traudt

35 Years: Adam Repinz

Retirements

This year's retirees represent 292 years of combined service.

"These individuals expanded opportunities for students and adults," Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Denise Dzikowski said, as she introduced them. "Thank you for building the foundation on which we will continue to grow."

- John Kelly, Teacher Visually Impaired
- Vicki Stillwell, Teaching Assistant, Teacher Aide
- Patti Davis, Staff Specialist - Specially Designed Instruction
- Ramsey Hall, Custodial Worker, Senior Custodial Worker
- Harrison Barritt, Teacher of English
- Eric Delahoyde, Teacher of Special Education
- Lillian Caruso, Teaching Assistant, Teacher Aide
- Stephanie Henn, Teaching Assistant
- Jacobs Jodiah, Teacher of Industrial and Tech Ed
- Rosanne Marrone, Teacher of Health Occupations
- Dawn Sanford, Teacher Aide
- Rosemarie Simmons, Teaching Assistant
- Dolores Spicer, Occupational Therapist
- Holly Townsend, Teaching Assistant, Food Service Helper

Tenure

- Marla Fasano, Art
- Megan Zupan, Deaf and Hearing Impaired
- Nicole Laino, Cosmetology
- Lorianne DiMarco-Evanko, General Special Education
- James Hayes, Electrical Trades
- Patricia Moran, Teaching Assistant
- Peter Hruscik, Vehicle Mechanical Repair

STUDENT OF DISTINCTION

Matthew Spada, who recently wrapped up his time in the Career & Technical Institute's Construction Trades program, was recognized as a Student of Distinction during the Pine Plains Central School District's June 16 Board of Education meeting.

Construction Trades Teacher Tom Skean noted how he is able to spend 2 ½ hours each day with students for two years, more than the average teacher in a typical school setting does. Because of this extra time, he gets to actually know his students, including Spada, who he said is helpful to anyone who needs it.

"He assumes a leadership role with an ego involved and assumes a helping role when it's necessary," Skean said of Spada. "He does the work that is necessary to get things done."

Another reason Skean picked Spada for the honor was because he is humble and kind and is rarely seen without a smile on his face.

"He treats other students with respect and myself with respect," Skean said. "I got to know a good person."

This is not Spada's first BOCES honor. During the 2024-25 school year, he was inducted into the National Technical Honor Society for being an enthusiastic and positive student who is eager to learn.



Matthew Spada receiving his National Technical Honor Society cord.

CTI Alum Earns Mike Rowe Works Scholarship



Troy Martin at his Rhinebeck High School graduation in June.

Troy Martin, who recently completed two years in the Career & Technical Institute's (CTI) Trade Electric program, has plenty to be happy about. He was awarded a \$6,100 Work Ethic Scholarship from the Mike Rowe Works Foundation that he will use toward his studies at the Southeast Lineman Training Center in Trenton, Georgia.

Rowe's official Instagram page announced July 6

Martin, a Rhinebeck High School graduate, felt extremely grateful to receive this scholarship that will help pay for his schooling because not many are given the opportunity. He will study to be an apprentice electric lineman for over 15 weeks with the hope of being offered a job before he graduates in a field he is passionate about. He chose to go to Lineman for a unique reason.

"I chose to attend there to learn how to live miles away from my family and to be on my own trying to achieve my career as a line worker," Martin said. "I hope to go out and continue working with electric my whole life, helping people with no power and turning the lights back on for them."

The Trade Electric program taught Martin plenty, including getting out of his comfort zone to have experiences he never thought he would have before.

"It helped me in my professional journey by showing up every day ready to work and actually enjoy being somewhere," Martin recalled. "It also showed me that you can meet people from all different schools and become really good friends with them and make many memories along the way."

Martin's advice to upcoming CTI students is that connections will get one farther on their professional journey than just education and to persevere when times are tough.

"Stick it out," Martin said. "If it seems boring or too much just keep on pushing, no matter what."

that Martin was one of 322 students from across the country to receive a scholarship in the first of four rounds this year with a total of \$3 million being rewarded. The scholarship helps close the skills gap by supporting people who want to learn a trade in fields as diverse as construction and cosmetology, work hard and take pride in their jobs, according to Rowe's website.

To read more visit: dcboces.org

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