

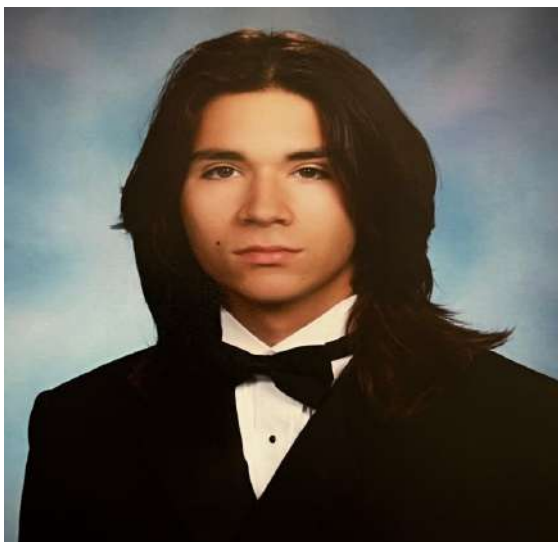


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Immediate Release

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EHS December 2024 Senior Spotlight: Meet James Gummel, Jr.



It is December of your senior year of high school. What has been the highlight of the year thus far?

The highlight of this school year has very easily been the night of Haunted Halls on October 30th. After taking the lead in the production for the last two years I knew it had to be the best it could possibly be for my senior year and I made sure it was. When everything finally came together, seeing all those people lined up in the gym to experience what I worked so hard to bring together was a major highlight of my entire life.

You are a very talented artist. What or who spiked your interest to delve into the world of Art? Do you have a favorite or preferred art medium? If so, how did you make that choice?

First, thank you! Second, I have always been interested in art from a young age. I was always sketching my favorite characters in my notebooks. I don't think anything specifically sparked my interest, but more that I was just born a very creative person. I've fallen in love with charcoal and oil paint over the years because of the unique textures they can create and the way I'm able to play around them to make something fantastic.

This year you are taking the Studio Art Drawing Portfolio AP course, which is a full-year course. Tell us a little about the class.

Unlike most other AP Courses, this one doesn't have an exam in May but rather a portfolio submission. This means that all of our time in the class is spent creating works to submit in May. In addition, each of us has a theme that we work around and write about for each piece. I'm currently working on my third one, and although I haven't completely decided on my exact theme, it's starting to take shape. Mrs. Daidone is extremely helpful with taking us through everything and is an expert on art.

What is your favorite subject?

Math! I'm currently taking APStat but I've always loved all math classes ever since second grade.

Who is your favorite teacher or coach and why?

I could knock out both of those at once with Mr. Burley, who is not only a great history teacher but also made me into the tennis player that I am today. I can't go without mentioning others though, especially

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Ms. Sudol and Mr. Monty, who had a very positive influence on my high school career even at the start of 9th grade.

What activities do you participate in school?

Quite a few. Most notably I'm the president of the International Thespian Society (along with Nayeli Lemus). I'm also a vice president of the Student Council. As mentioned, I've been pretty much running Haunted Halls the last couple of years but am also heavily involved in all of Drama Club. I've been writing for the newspaper since 10th grade, am a member of the National Honor Society, and take part in the service projects of Key, Rotary, and Environmental. Lastly, this was my fourth year doing cross-country and tennis (where I was 1st singles last year!).

What activities do you participate in outside of school?

Most notably, I've been volunteering as an altar server at my church for the past nine or so years and still love doing it every Saturday. I equally love working as a scare actor at Sleepy Hollow Haunted Acres in Newtown, PA (although that's only in October). Recently I've been writing and producing a lot of music in order to channel my creativity. I've also been creating a bunch of films for the same purpose. Lastly, I enjoy adding new records to my collection, going to concerts, and I always love to play tennis.

What awards or acknowledgments have you received in school or outside of school?

After last May I was awarded an AP Scholar with distinction. My artwork has been selected for a couple things, such as the Teen Arts Festival, and won third place in the mental health awareness contest. I got Student of the Month once when I was a freshman too.

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

As mentioned earlier, Haunted Halls has probably been the thing I've devoted most of my passion to. The turnout has been stellar the last two years, and I'm extremely proud that it's now quite actually the largest event that the school does (besides anything sports-related). I'm also very proud of the fact I went from first doubles in tennis during freshman year, to second singles as a sophomore, and finally first singles as a junior.

What is your favorite memory of high school to date?

Nothing can compare to the Peer Leadership retreat. Going out with all of my friends for a couple of days and hardly being able to use our phones was fantastic. I loved all of it. I know it's probably corny to say it was a "bonding experience" or whatever, but it really was. I feel like I got so much closer to everyone and had such a great time doing it.



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Who or what has positively impacted your life?

Music. Music has been what's connected me to so many of my closest friends and has been such a positive thing in my life. Whether it's listening to new genres or creating it myself, everything about music is just so amazing to me.

How do you define success?

Success is happiness. Doesn't matter where you are, what your situation is, or who you're with. As long as you're happy and proud of yourself then you're successful.

What are your plans after you graduate from Ewing High School?

I plan to go to film school in order to pursue writing and directing. I want to be very involved in the general art scene for the rest of my life and work with people who share the same passion and wild ideas that I do. Wherever that takes me, who knows, but as long as I'm having fun, I'm happy.

What is your favorite quote or book?

My favorite book is the manga series Goodnight Punpun by Inio Asano. His artwork is absolutely beautiful, and in an art form like manga when it's made into a story you just get these mind-blowing pages along with the most engaging story I've ever read. Fantastic quotes all throughout. Only media I've ever had the experience of needing to pause it because of how hard it hit me.

If you had one thing you could do over again in high school, what would that be?

Go back and work harder as a sophomore. I wouldn't say as a freshman because I was still easing into things, but I took way too much time off during 10th grade and I think it led me to just be generally very unproductive. Wish I had an earlier start.