

# Miller Place

Fall 2020

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT



[www.millerplace.k12.ny.us](http://www.millerplace.k12.ny.us)

## Back to School at Miller Place



*As a school year like no other began, teachers across the Miller Place School District welcomed students back to class with anticipation. Certainly the last several months have been a stressful time for so many, and our classes—with safety barriers in place, social distancing enforced, and everyone wearing masks—look totally different, some things are the same as always: the unwavering spirit of our students and teachers and the quality of education at Miller Place. Enjoy some photos from our opening day and please read on for a little slice of life at the Miller Place School District in the fall of 2020.*



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT



There is no doubt the 2020-2021 school year is a year like no other. Our schools, like schools across the nation, are dealing with the ongoing implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are proud of the resilience of our students, our faculty, our staff and parents during these unsettling times. In the light of unprecedented challenges, our community has risen to the occasion, to keep our schools healthy and safe and open for student instruction.

Despite the unusual start to the school year, there is one thing that hasn't changed: our students are still achieving and learning. We have much to be proud of so far. As you'll read throughout this newsletter, Miller Place students are distinguishing themselves on Long Island and beyond, particularly our student musicians, who have been selected to participate in NYSMMA at an impressive rate. However there is still so much of the school year left, and opportunities to achieve and accomplish. As the year progresses, it's up to all of us to continue our unrelenting efforts to provide students with opportunities for success. We will continue to work hard, aspire to greater heights and make our school community Miller Place Proud. I invite you to read about all of the exciting happenings in our District in this newsletter, and I wish you and your family an enjoyable holiday season.

Dr. Marianne F. Cartisano  
*Superintendent of Schools*

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## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION

On behalf of the Miller Place Board of Education, we would like to welcome everyone back to school—finally—during this incredibly unusual school year. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of our educational lives, and we cannot thank enough the students, families and teachers of our district for their patience, their flexibility and their dedication to our District.

Please read through this newsletter to see how each of our schools are prospering in this young school year. And although it may seem early, we must also start to think about the 2021-2022 school budget as a community, particularly since there is so much unknown about the next year in our country. We have already begun the budget process as a District, and I invite all residents to stay up-to-date on announcements and attend workshops over the winter. Our annual budget funds the wonderful programming and resources every year with input and guidance from the community. Thank you for your support! On behalf of the Board of Education, I look forward to what's to come this year, and I invite every member of our community to be involved in our school community.

Enjoy the holidays, safely and responsibly. Always Panther Pride & Miller Place Proud!

Sincerely,

The Miller Place School District Board of Education

## NCRMS Announces 'Coupons for Character' Recipients

We all need positive role models at any age, and there are no shortage of them at **North Country Road Middle School (NCRMS)**. In October, the middle school announced three recipients for its "Coupons for Character" program, which recognizes those students who serve as positive role models, promoting respect and encouraging their peers to build a caring school community. The most recent "Coupons for Character" go to Brett Winslow, grade 6; Joe Terranova, grade 7; and Carolena Hanauer, grade 8. Congratulations to all three well-deserved recipients.

Each month, the names of students who have demonstrated exceptional character are put into a container in the building's main office. At the end of the month, three students' names are randomly selected to receive a prize for their leadership. Students whose names were put into the jar, but not selected, receive a letter of recognition for their commitment to making NCRMS an outstanding place to learn and gain leadership skills.



# DISTRICT NOTES

## MILLER PLACE SCHOOL DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TEAM WELCOME NEW ADMINISTRATORS

Welcoming new members to our team is a highlight of any new school year, and 2020-2021 is certainly no different. The Miller Place School District administration is thrilled to share that we've appointed Jeffrey Dimoulas as the District's Humanities Curriculum Specialist and Nicole Farley as the North Country Road Middle School Dean of Students. These new additions to the leadership team will help the District expand our student-support services and further our efforts to facilitate a nurturing academic environment for the entire school community. Mr. Dimoulas and Ms. Farley each bring with them a love of teaching, combined with strong backgrounds in educational leadership. Congratulations, and welcome aboard!



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## FRENCH TEACHER TINAMARIE DEFALCO RECOGNIZED BY LI LANGUAGE TEACHERS, INC.



TinaMarie DeFalco, a world language educator in the District, was recognized by the Long Island Language Teachers, Inc. (LILT) for her outstanding contributions in making a difference in the lives of her students and colleagues. TinaMarie, who teaches French at North Country Road Middle School and Miller Place High School, was selected to be interviewed and featured in LILT's September newsletter.

With a desire and passion to help others and her interest in world languages and cultures, TinaMarie always believed she was destined to become a teacher. Many of TinaMarie's successes as an educator can be attributed to the confidence and passion she demonstrates for teaching. Her ability to motivate Miller Place's students to become excited about learning a second language has been a cornerstone of her success as a teacher and mentor.

The Long Island Language Teachers, Inc. comprises Long Island's most distinguished language educators for K-16 and supervisors of World Languages, ENL (English as a New Language), and ASL (American Sign Language). The organization is committed to providing ample opportunities to develop content knowledge, pedagogical and professional skills for the member and its students. Congratulations, TinaMarie!

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## MILLER PLACE STUDENT PATRICK SERRENTINO RECOGNIZED AMONG LI'S FINEST STUDENT-ARTISTS

Our very own Patrick Serrentino recently received the Award of Merit for Music, presented by the Long Island Artist Program! One of only twenty students on the Island, Patrick's achievement is testament to the quality of art education in Miller Place. See page 5 for more details!





# AROUND OUR SCHOOLS

## ANDREW MULLER PRIMARY SCHOOL



### AMPS has ‘Pumpkin’ to Talk About

Students and staff at **Andrew Muller Primary School (AMPS)** in the Miller Place School District had a blast participating in the school’s recent Pumpkin Patch event for kindergartners, first graders and second graders. Together, AMPS’ young students commemorated the holiday through a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating English Language Arts and science, to engage in imaginative ways. In ELA, classes took pen to paper for a writing assignment that utilized adjectives and sentences to describe the students’ perspectives of pumpkins. In science, classes assessed and analyzed the growth of pumpkins, as well as the life cycle.

## LADDIE A. DECKER SOUND BEACH SCHOOL

### ‘Start With Hello’ at LADSBS Fosters Community and Friendship

This year, for the fourth year in a row, students and staff at **Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School** celebrated “Start With Hello” week, an initiative created by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation. The goal of the program is for everyone to understand that they have an important role in making our school community a friendlier place by following three simple steps: *See Someone Alone*, *Reach Out* and *Help* and *Start with Hello*.

This wonderful program reminds all of us how powerful a simple hello and smile can be. Celebrated during the week of September 28th - October 2nd, “Start With Hello” week invited students—in-school and distance learners—to do different things each day to promote a positive school climate. We rounded out the month of October celebrating Halloween. Students and staff alike dressed up, filling our hallways with superheroes, princesses, and witches. Classrooms celebrated with arts and crafts and plenty of fun and laughter was had by all!



# AROUND OUR SCHOOLS

## NORTH COUNTRY ROAD MIDDLE SCHOOL

### NCRMS Honors Heroes and Victims of 9/11

The students and teachers of **North Country Road Middle School** paid tribute to the thousands of lives lost on September 11, 2001 and the heroism of the first responders that risked their lives for others. North Country Road teachers, Ms. Erario and Ms. Ferro, took the initiative to encourage dialogue among their students about the horrific attacks that occurred through a webinar, interactive activities and videos. The webinar, hosted by the 9/11 Memorial & Museum, connected museum staff and guest speakers with the students where they heard primary stories about the attacks and the importance of commemoration. The in-class history lessons were facilitated utilizing Google Classroom to help familiarize and transition students with their virtual learning platforms.



## MILLER PLACE HIGH SCHOOL

### Miller Place Student Patrick Serrentino Recognized Among LI's Finest Student-Artists

We're always impressed by the talent and ingenuity of young artists! **Miller Place High School** student Patrick Serrentino was recently selected among 20 students on Long Island to receive the Award of Merit for Music, presented by the Long Island Artist Program. Patrick is a role model for all of our students and community as he demonstrates passion and dedication in all that he does.

"On behalf of the Board of Education and central administration, we are thrilled to acknowledge and celebrate Patrick on his hard-earned success," said Dr. Marianne Cartisano, Superintendent of MPSD. "Patrick is a role model for all of our students and community as he demonstrates passion and dedication in all that he does."

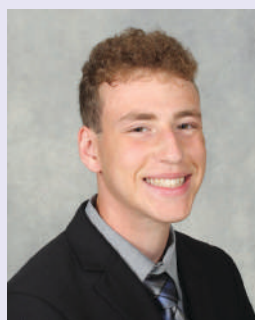
Each year, the Long Island Scholar Artist program acknowledges distinguished students who perform exceptionally in both academics and in the fields of music, visual arts, dance, theatre or media arts. The program's fall kick-off event has been postponed to the spring, as a result of the COVID-19 mandated closures, and will now take place at the Tilles Center for the Performing Arts in the spring.





# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NATIONAL MERIT COMMENDED SCHOLARS

A big congratulations are in order for five students from Miller Place High School's—Devin Becker, Isabella Bierdzinski, Tony Chang, Mei Frawley, and Michael Luo—all of whom have been named Commended Scholars in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program. The students recently placed in the top five percent of the 1.5 million high school students who participated in the nationwide 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, earning them the Commended Scholar designation. In recognition of their scholastic achievement, each student will receive a Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.



Devin Becker



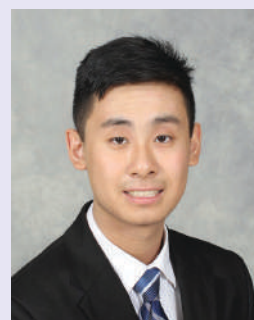
Isabella Bierdzinski



Tony Chang



Mei Frawley



Michael Luo

## COLLEGE BOARD NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM HISPANIC SCHOLARS



Kyla Bruno



Noah Nieves



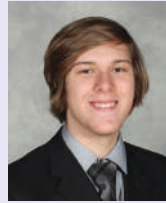
THE AP SCHOLAR AWARDS RECOGNIZE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO HAVE DEMONSTRATED EXEMPLARY COLLEGE-LEVEL ACHIEVEMENT ON AP EXAMS.



Lauren Barnes



Devin Becker



Shane Beseler



Isabella Bierzinski



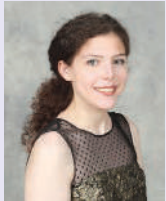
Ashley Bonitch



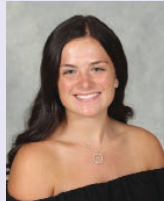
Andrew Bova



Kyla Bruno



Zoe Bussewitz



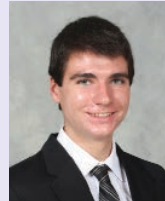
Marena Capocci



Jillian Chamberlin



Tony Chang



Jason Cirrito



Jodie Cui



Leif Dalberg



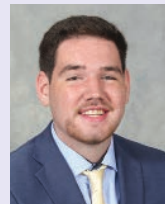
William Dunlop



Odiravan  
Eswaramoorthy



Rebekah Fieldman



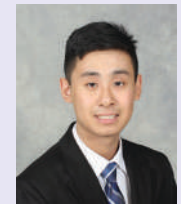
Matthew Kearns



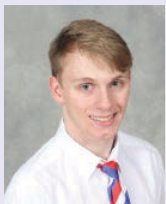
Theresa Lamia



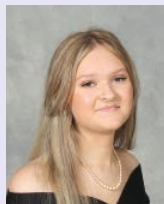
Meghan Luby



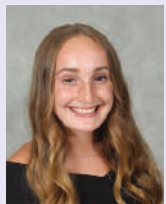
Michael Luo



James McCarthy



Blair McGuire



Kylie Mistretta



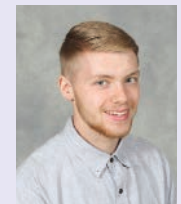
Brendan Muller



Shane Muller



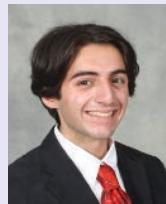
Ivy Newman



Patrick O'Connor



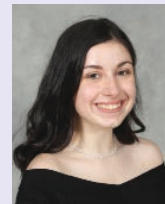
Mollie O'Hanlon



Steven Panico



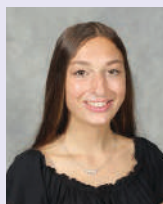
Rebecca Picora



Arianna Portigiano



Shannon Reagan



Abby Rock



Sean Rowburrey



Patrick Serrentino



Grace Sottilo



# ART & MUSIC NEWS

## Miller Place Well Represented Again at 2020 NYSSMA Conference

Selection in a NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) conference is an incredible accomplishment and honor for a young music student, and the Miller Place School District is thrilled to have so many of our talented musicians selected this year. Congratulations are in order for the 8 Miller Place students selected to participate in the 2020 NYSSMA Conference All-State Performing Ensembles. Participation in the event, which was held virtually this year, is the highest level in New York State for a student musician. These outstanding student musicians selected make the entire school district proud. Join us in congratulating the following 8 Miller Place musicians:



Kyla Bruno, *string orchestra*  
Zoe Bussewitz, *symphony orchestra*  
Jodie Cui, *string orchestra*

Will Dunlop, *wind ensemble*  
Marianna Kalin, *symphonic band*  
Aaron Miller, *alternate mixed chorus*

Patrick Serrentino, *instrumental  
jazz ensemble*  
Aidan Wightman, *mixed chorus*

## WINTER ATHLETICS CORNER



### Back on the Field

Fall sports in 2020, for school districts all over the county, looks different than any other year, with several sports pushed to 2021 and others operating in altered ways. It was certainly a heartwarming sight to see our young athletes, pictured here, back on the field in a safe and responsible manner, and we look forward to continuing toward normalcy in 2021.

### Adjusted Tryouts / First Practice Dates for all 2020-2021 Seasons

Be advised that there are adjusted tryout dates, per section IX athletics council vote in September, for Miller Place sports in 2021. New dates are below.

- High School Winter Season: Jan. 4th, 2021
- Middle School Early Winter Season: Jan. 4th, 2021
- Middle School Late Winter Season: Feb. 8th, 2021
- High School Fall Season: March 1st, 2021
- Middle School Fall Season: March 22nd, 2021
- High School Spring Season: April 26th, 2021
- Middle School Spring Season: May 10th, 2021

## MILLER PLACE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

7 Memorial Drive, Miller Place, NY 11764

Board of Education: Johanna Testa, *President* • Richard Panico, *Vice President*

Noelle Dunlop, *Trustee* • Keith Frank, *Trustee* • Lisa Reitan, *Trustee* • Marena Capocci, *Student Representative*

Superintendent of Schools: Dr. Marianne F. Cartisano