

Quakertown Community School District
Special Graduation Section

The Class of 2022

Defining Moments



By Gary Weckselblatt

The Quakertown Community High School community celebrated more than 400 seniors as a group who embraced opportunities and persevered through challenges. In a packed Alumni Field on a beautiful June 8th evening, these students were recognized at the 2022 Commencement Ceremony for their sac-

Class of 2022 embraced them and thrived!

rifices through the difficult years of COVID and how they adapted in ways that demonstrated true character.

Class advisor Sandi Frisch told the students their life will be filled with defining moments. "Tonight is one of them," she said. "Many more are on your horizon, like finding your future career, building relationships with friends and future partners, traveling, having children, and even celebrating a night like tonight with those children."

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Representing the Class of 2022 advisors - Lindsay Alcaro, Adriane Carickhoff and Bethany Fuller - Mrs. Frisch shared with the audience of proud family members how students “learned new skills, and used your ideas and imagination to survive in a new uncertain environment. You stood and faced these moments and embraced opportunities. Class of 2022, you amazed and inspired us with your dedication.”

Just two days after the community rallied with support in the third annual Parade of Graduates down Park Avenue and Juniper Street, grads enjoyed a fireworks display following the celebratory tossing of caps into the air. Then it was a mob scene as students and teachers found people to embrace and soak in the emotional final moments of their K-12 student life.

It was a glorious night as everyone was entertained by the QCHS band and chorus, listened to the words of Principal Mattias van't Hoenderdaal, School Board President Jonathan Kern (who received several ovations), and student leaders Madelyn LaBonge, John Juszynski, Amelia Cianciola, and Madison Jeffery.

“I see strength and resilience,” Madison said from the stage. “I see a class of self-assured students prepared for what comes next. Getting to the back of the bus or forging our way to the front of the stands wasn't always the easiest journey. Yet I say, thank goodness for the surprises and the detours! Sometimes the universe hears our plans but sends us down a different road, and because of the path of the past two and a half years, we head into a future equipped to navigate any obstacle in our way.”

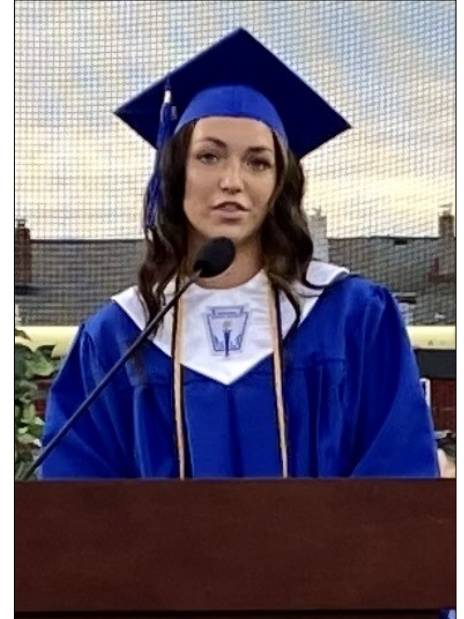
As each student walked off the stage, they were met at the bottom of the steps by Superintendent Dr. Bill

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“I ask my fellow graduates to remember that when we encounter those rougher patches, stormy skies, and turbulent times, those who surround us, our community, will support us and guide us forward.”

Madelyn LaBonge



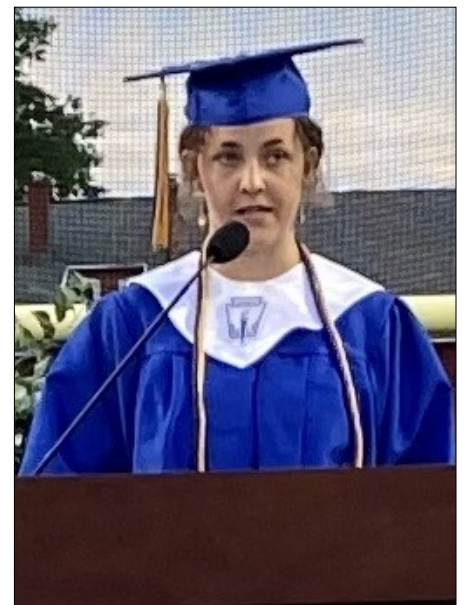
“Sometimes the universe hears our plans but sends us down a different road, and because of the path of the past two and a half years, we head into a future equipped to navigate any obstacle in our way.”

Madison Jeffery



“When we hit our lowest moments, fell short, missed our mark, ... we didn't have to go through those moments alone. We had people beside us to help us off the ground, pick us up, and help us achieve more than what we could have ever thought possible.”

John Juszynski



“To the families and friends here tonight, you have led your graduate through some of the most challenging years of their lives; your love has allowed them to begin their next chapter with confidence in knowing that they have support.”

Amelia Cianciola

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Harner, who asked them what they plan to do next. The following night at the School Board meeting, Dr. Harner praised teachers and curriculum writers in the Office For Teaching and Learning for “knocking it out of the park” in helping students succeed. Students were destined for college and immediate careers in the workforce, with many going directly into military service in the Marines, Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard.

The Class of 2022 included:

- ◆ 64 seniors who earned membership in the National Honor Society.
- ◆ 10 seniors who earned membership in the National Technical Honor Society.
- ◆ 50 who achieved Advanced Placement Scholar recognition by their 11th-grade year, including 15 with Honors, and 14 with Distinction.
- ◆ Eight students who earned AP Capstone diplomas: Yelizaveta Hernandez, Eliza Menser, Delaney Peckham, Madelyn LaBonge, Alexis Mowrer, Lucas Schwartz, Paul Lancos, and Sara Nouri.
- ◆ \$9 million in scholarship awards.
- ◆ 10 students who committed to serve our country in the Armed Forces: Shay Causerano, Madison D’Cruz, Daulton Grainger, Jordan Mitchell, Aiden O’Connell, Dominick Peterson, Andrew Proffit, Alexia Ramirez, Kaden Roesener, and Freddie Steinmetz.

“It is my hope that we have instilled in you a desire to grow in character - that we have made just a small contribution in your journey to becoming a person who is unwilling to give up when they fail,” Mr. V said. “A person who will always work hard, care about those around you and build strong relationships, and that you stay true to who you are. That you dedicate yourself to becoming just a little better every day, and that you start taking pleasure - not in the destination alone - but in the journey itself.”

Mr. V also gave a shout-out “to the families of this excellent class. Thank you,” he said. “Your support has been critical in the achievement of this milestone in the lives of the young people sitting here today.”

Madelyn kicked off the student speeches, saying “I know I would not be the person I am today without my classmates, teammates, and friends before me. Since kindergarten, 180 days for 13 years, these graduates in this stadium

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“Students, I see in you a group of individuals with immense potential.”

Mattias van't Hoenderdaal, Principal



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have been my community. Now, it is time for us to separate and pursue our dreams; the dreams we planned together.”

John said, “As we move forward in our lives we have a myriad of decisions we must make. Decisions that will affect us for years to come and possibly the rest of our lives. We are prepared to make those decisions. So, make them with a level head, take the time to think about what you’re doing, and at the same time make sure to have fun along the way.”



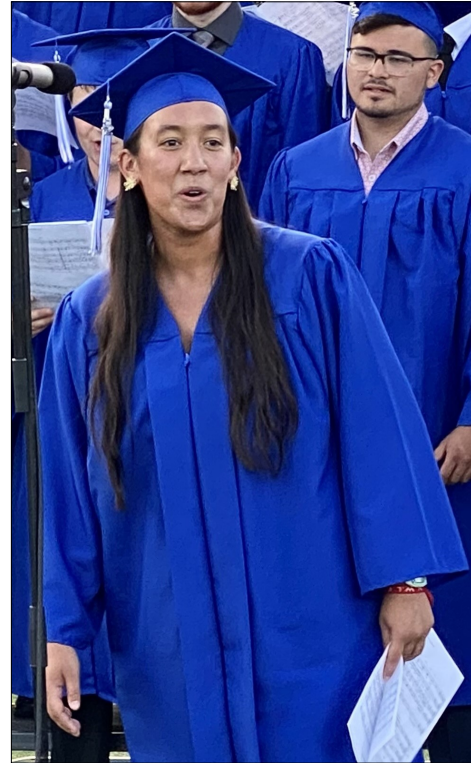
And Amelia echoed Mrs. Frisch’s theme: “Every single one of you has persevered through the multitude of unique obstacles that have been put in front of us throughout our academic careers. You each have your own individual skills that will stand out among the rest. Take pride in knowing that you can make an impact on this world just as John Mayer said, ‘One day our generation is gonna rule the population.’ While this may be a frightening realization, I truly believe the world will be in good hands.”



The essence of Mr. Kern’s speech: “If you have learned how to learn, you are set for life. If not, it is not too late to start.”

Gary Weckselblatt, QCSD Director of Communications, writes about the people and the programs that impact the Quakertown Community School District. He can be reached at 215-529-2028 or gweckselblatt@qcsd.org.

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Graduation Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Uo8_1pS4X8



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