

## September 26, 2011

The recent salvo of State Education Department testing mandates, coupled with countless newspaper stories about standards revision, could lead one to conclude that all schools are experiencing academic problems. It is precisely for this reason that we get so excited when genuine, data based information arrives to contradict the media driven perception. Late last week we received a letter from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation informing us that a record 14 Harborfields students were named as National Merit Commended Scholars. This honor, which serves as a premier academic mark of excellence, is bestowed upon only the top 5% of students in the nation. A Commended Scholar designation means that a youngster has risen through the competitive ranks of 1.4 million students and demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success. We all join in congratulating this year's Commended Scholars as well as the dedicated teachers and supportive parents who have contributed to their academic success.

Eric Chalif	Brielle Levenberg
Jacqueline D'Anneo	Henry Mason
Alec Dauro	Hunter McKane
Kyle Easop	Andrew Moberg
Zachary Franz	Cory Scarola
Annalise Grammerstorf	Kasey Stolba
Mi Kyung Kim	Jonathan Wertheim

Thank you to Kristin Greening and her dedicated Interact students for contributing so much time to this weekend's Greenlawn/Centerport Historical Society Pickle Festival. Kristin spent a great deal of time soliciting dozens of Interact Club volunteers who ultimately served as the backbone of this exciting community tradition. It is wonderful to see the members our high school family working so closely with the various community organizations. We remain very proud of both our teachers and students who continue to represent Harborfields High with distinction.

Congratulations to Chris Zenyuh and our Tri-Fit club on yet another weekend of exciting action. Chris led his dedicated Tri-Fit athletes to success as they took the Inaugural Huntington Sprint Tri by storm and made our Harborfields community proud. Special thanks to our students and teachers for dedicating so much time to making the Harborfields Tri-Fit Club a force in Long Island triathlons. Having our students and faculty members compete side by side in a race speaks volumes about the tremendous relationships that characterize Harborfields High.

Congratulations to:

Robert Simkins: 3<sup>rd</sup> Place (Men's Under 21 Age Group)

Alex (A.K.) Kazerouni: 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (Men's Under 21 Age Group)

Zach Franz, Walter Brandsema, and Chris Kahler: 2<sup>nd</sup> Place (Men's Relay)

Nicolette Gibbons, Nick D'Anna and Chris Zenyuh: 1<sup>st</sup> Place (Mixed Relay)

We have mailed home a Code of Conduct (which is also included in the agenda and school calendar) and plain language [summary of the attendance policy](#) to all students and parents. Parents and students are asked to read this material and return the tear off form to their physical education teacher.

We are very fortunate in that the Rachel's Challenge program will be coming to Harborfields High School on October 4, 2011. Rachel Scott was one of the first students killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion, coupled with the contents of her six diaries, have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing school programs in America. Rachel's family presents a powerful program illustrating the importance of helping every student to feel connected to his or her school community. It has been five years since our high school family was first moved by the positive power of the Rachel's Challenge program. We are very grateful to the PTSA for generously providing this assembly to our school.

The plan on October 4 is to have two one-hour assemblies that address grades 9/10 and 11/12 respectively. Presenters then follow with a one-hour training session for our Natural Helpers and Leadership class students. Our visitors also go to the cafeterias, spending time with students and collecting thoughts on the powerful message. There is then an evening program which is geared more specifically to the adult community. Our last experience with Rachel's Challenge (in 2006) went quite smoothly and the program created a ripple of goodwill that sustained us well into the year.