

## Westford Academy

### Class of 2019

Valedictorian: Kristen Michelle Colavita

Salutatorian: Helen Yin Zhou

### Most Worthy Representatives

2019 Marcos Acosta, Isabel Redman

2020 Kevin Henderson, Laurel Humphrey

2021 Owen Bramanti, Meghan Mulhern

2022 Peter Alexander, Carly Davey

### 2019 National Merit & Achievement Programs

Semi-finalists: 10

Commended: 49

National Hispanic Program: 2

### 2019 AP Performance

In May 2019, 439 students took 888 AP exams in 17 subjects.

96.3% earned scores of 3 or better.

AP National Scholars: 15

AP Scholars with Distinction: 87

AP Scholars with Honors: 28

AP Scholars: 63

### **Business/DECA**

- The DECA District Competition was a surprising success for the club. Knowing that 40% of our members this year had no DECA experience, the DECA Officers had conducted extra training this Fall. Going into our first competition on Tuesday, we didn't know what to expect for results; just hoped for the best. Even with this inexperience, the DECA members continued the tradition of WADECA Club dominance. The kids won 70% of the possible awards and swept places 1st through 7th in several events. Our 1st-time competitors held their own in a big way! 135 club members qualified for the Massachusetts State Competition in Boston held at the end of February. Congratulations to the DECA kids!!!
- 173 WA students competed the weekend of February 29<sup>th</sup> versus 4000 teenagers from high schools all over Massachusetts for the chance to qualify & represent our state at the upcoming International Career Development Conference (ICDC) held this year in Nashville, TN (4/29 - 5/2). An estimated 20,000 teenagers from around the world will be in attendance there to compete for educational scholarships.
- **This weekend's results:** 40% of our kids this year have never done DECA before. WA competed in 30 events, had 39 qualifiers for ICDC (top-5 winners) and 50 kids finished in the top ten of their event. Allie Lu made ICDC for her 4th time, which is a very rare feat. It's hard enough to make it once. Soumya Vadicharla took 1st place in her Accounting event, and won 2 scholarship awards totalling \$3,300.

### **Computer Programming**

- Westford Academy Programming Club members Jason Liang and Riya Thapar won 2nd place at the 10-hour Hackathon held at Wayland High School on Nov 16th, 2019. Students were asked to build a prototype of an app, game, web site or device that tackles accessibility issues. A Google Nest Hub and shirt were awarded as prizes. - Mrs. Trehan, WA Programming Club Advisor.

### **English**

- WA English Department members Jack Holbrook and Rebecca Ingerslev presented a talk based on their work on rhetoric in the classroom to the annual conference of the New England Association of Teachers of English in Danvers, MA on October 18, 2019. The presentation, entitled “How to Win Points and Manipulate People,” was meant to encourage other teachers in the region to bring the critical thinking and writing skills involved in the persuasive art of using rhetoric into their teaching. Teachers from all over New England participated in Mr. Holbrook’s and Mrs. Ingerslev’s interactive presentation and took away practical strategies for teaching rhetoric in their own classrooms. Holbrook and Ingerslev were inspired to contribute by their colleagues, Emily Coates and Kimberly Hart, who presented “Moving Beyond the Two-Sided Debate: Using the Case Study Method to Bring Multiple Voices into Difficult Conversations” at the NEATE Conference in 2017.
- The Ghostwriter placed in the online newspaper category of Suffolk University's annual greater Boston high school newspaper contest.

### Entrepreneurship

- A total of 25 Westford Academy and Nashoba Regional High School Entrepreneurship students were fortunate enough to compete at the first annual “Innovation Pitch-Off” at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell on Thursday, March 5. Students have been working on an innovative solution to a known problem in society for the majority of the school year in the classroom. Teacher, Gina Mustoe and Tom O’Donnell, Director of the UML Difference Maker program and his colleagues Holly Butler and Ha Pho met several times to create this “Rocket Pitch” event where high school students had the opportunity to pitch to three different UML judges that are currently successful Entrepreneurs themselves.

This task is not easy as you need to create a compelling argument and feasibility analysis for your venture in 3 minutes or less, followed by a 5 minute Q&A with the audience and the judges alike. Our students did a tremendous job presenting their idea as well as handling some tough questions from the panel and the audience.

First prize went to WA Seniors, Adam Batchelder, Justin Carlyle and Zach Lawrence for this invention, the “*QuikLock*”, a state of the art barricade device that quickly and securely eliminates the need for a barricade in a classroom when there is a threat of an armed intruder in the building. This prize includes a \$100 gift certificate to the UML Book Store as well as support from a current UML Engineering student to work with the students to continue work on their prototype and bring this invention one step closer to reality.

Nashoba Regional students had some excellent ideas that took 2nd, 3rd and 4th place including 3 apps, including *InstaTutor*, *DropZone* and *SafeGuard*. All of these applications addressed known local societal problems with solid solutions via a smartphone application.

We look forward to continuing this collaboration in the Fall of 2020 and for years to come.

### Fine Arts

- This past Saturday, January 25, 2020, Westford Academy musicians from the Band, Choral and Orchestra programs traveled to Shrewsbury High School to audition for All State ensembles. Students qualifying for this audition must have achieved a District score in the top 50% for their instrument or voice part. Acceptance into this Festival is one of the most prestigious honors a high school musician can receive. Students who were accepted into the All State Festival will perform at Symphony Hall in Boston on Saturday, March 7. Congratulations to the following students who were accepted:  
Alexander Franklin, Grade 11 - Voice  
Alice Guo, Grade 9 - Violin  
Christian Hatke, Grade 12 - Voice  
Zoe McCarthy, Grade 12 - Voice

Alejandro Mejia, Grade 11 - Voice  
Aruli Pillai, Grade 10 - Violin  
Adharsha Ramesh, Grade 10 - Voice  
John Ran, Grade 11 - Violin  
Cordelia Redmond, Grade 11 - Voice  
Marissa Sacco, Grade 11 - Voice  
Ivan Sung, Grade 11 - Violin  
Torsten Ullrich, Grade 11 - Clarinet  
Alex Zhang, Grade 12 - Violin

Congratulations go to the Music Department faculty: Michael Soo, Karen St. George and Kenneth Culver on this outstanding achievement.

- Please join us in congratulating the following students who will be performing as part of the All-State Music Festival (orchestra) in Boston on March 5th and 6<sup>th</sup>: Alexander Franklin, Alice Guo, Christian Hatke, Zoe McCarthy, John Mejia, Aruli Pillai, Adharsha Ramesh, John Ran, Cordelia Redmond, Marissa Sacco, Ivan Sung, Torsten Ullrich, Alex Zhang
- Junior Festival Musicians - On February 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, students in Grades 7-9 traveled to Needham High School to audition for the Massachusetts Music Educators Association Eastern District Junior Festival. Over 1,000 students auditioned, and 454 were accepted to participate in Band, Chorus and Orchestra. Please join me in congratulating the following Grade 9 students who were accepted: Niharika Chawla, flute; Julia Donescu, voice; Audrey Fletcher, viola; Cristina Haraty, voice; Shriya Kareddy, voice Rori Li, flute; Caleb McQuinn, voice; Kirish Raaj, voice; Charlotte Ryan, voice; Jillian St. George, voice; Alexandra Stanglewicz, voice; Lauren Trethaway, voice. Also, I thank and congratulate the work of the Music Department on this outstanding achievement.
- National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation Best Community for Music Education for 6 years in a row.
- Eastern Jr. District Music Festival: 18 students auditioned and 12 were accepted to the festival.
- Eastern Sr. District Music Festival: 50 students auditioned with 30 students accepted.
- Massachusetts All-State Music Festival: 22 students were invited to audition and 13 were accepted! 7 vocalists, 1 wind player, 5 strings players.
- Musicians in all ensembles and those who are members of the Tri-M Music Honor Society volunteer to perform the National Anthem at various sporting events throughout the town.
- Junior Alexander Franklin (Bass) performed in the All-National Honors Chorus this November in Orlando, FL.
- The Troubadour String Ensemble school and community performances this year will again include a slate of bell lobby performances for school events. They have already performed at Jim Arciero's Toys For Tots, the Holiday Bazaar and for Jim Antonelli's Senior Center Luncheon. Troubadours has 43 members this year.
- Members of the WA Improvisation class performed holiday concerts at local nursing homes. The concerts were organized, planned, performed, and booked entirely by the student members.

- The WA Honors Choir performed at the Annual Holiday Luncheon for Westford's Council on Aging senior citizens group at the Regency in December.
- The Annual Town Wide Vocal Night has grown into 2 evenings held at Westford Academy where more than 400 young vocal musicians will gather for a choral festival held on March 4th and 5th. A festival was also held during the day and included rehearsal and performance time for each choir.
- Members of the WA Improvisation class entertained classmates and staff during their morning entrance to the building.
- The WA Chamber, Symphony and Honors Orchestras will take part in a guest artist clinic this spring.
- Members of WA Ensembles and applied piano, guitar and ukulele classes will be visiting the middle schools to perform and introduce 8th graders to electives at WA.
- The WA, Stony Brook and Blanchard 8th and 9th grade orchestra students will get together for a day of shared music making in the spring of 2020.
- Honors Guitar students performed a recital for the Anime Club on December 16th.
- The WA String Troubadours performed for Bridges by Epoch in October.
- The Tri-M Music Honor Society has produced well-attended Listening Lunches hosted by the library where students can perform for their peers in a relaxed atmosphere during the school day.
- The Tri-M Music Honor Society has served the greater community in various performances and projects including volunteering in the Westford Summer Music Program, at middle school concerts and playing for Bridges by Epoch.
- The WA Percussion Ensemble attended the NESBA regional percussion competition in March and placed FIRST in the festival class.
- The WA Jazz Ensemble performed at the Endicott College Jazz Festival in March
- The WA Jazz Ensemble performed at both the Stony Brook and Blanchard spring concerts for band.
- The WA Band program put on "Bandemonium" in December. This program included more than 100 performers playing for all 4th-8th grade instrumental band students in the town of Westford.
- The WA Grey Ghost Marching Band performed at WA Football games.
- Again this year members of the music department including the Troubadour String Ensemble and Concert Choir played and sang holiday music at the WA Holiday Bazaar.
- The WA Marching Band, Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Percussion Ensemble, Honors Choir and Concert Choir performed annual winter concerts in the WA Performing Arts Center in December.
- WA Orchestras and Choruses presented their annual winter concert in early December in the WA Performing Arts Center.
- The all-student pit for WATA's production of Beauty and the Beast will feature 30 musicians.

- Music ensembles will perform at the annual town wide Art Show to be held at Westford Academy this spring.
- **WPS Music Program Receives National Recognition - Named a Best Community for Music Education for SEVEN consecutive years. (April 2020)** Westford Public Schools has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. Westford is one of 754 school districts across the nation receiving the prestigious award in 2020. The Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students. Westford is leading the way with learning opportunities as outlined in the new federal education legislation, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA recommends music and the arts as important elements of a well-rounded education for all children. The announcement of this year's Best Communities for Music Education brings attention to the importance of keeping music education part of the school's core education for all students. It also highlights the vital role music plays in students' overall success in school. Please join me in recognizing the extraordinary work of our Music Department Faculty: *Elementary*: Patricia Gately, Todd Hamelin, Amelia Jenison, Kristin Lampros, Laurie Oliver, Jennifer Tietze, Susan Turcotte-Gavriel. *Middle School*: Debra Benschneider, Vicki Garino, Julie Ottesen, Andrea Watson, *Westford Academy*: Kenneth Culver, Michael Soo, Karen St. George.

#### **Guidance Department**

- December 4<sup>th</sup>, the Guidance Department hosted the Career Exploration Breakfast for the entire junior and sophomore classes - 835 students! We want to thank the 50 career speakers for spending their valuable time with our students!

#### **Journalism**

- The Ghostwriter recently traveled to Washington DC for the Journalism Education Association's national convention. Our staff learned alongside approximately 6000 other student journalists! They also competed in student media contests and earned recognition in three categories. Please congratulate the following for their achievements at the national level:  
Melanie Duronio--Honorable Mention for First-Year Photo  
Srinithi Raj--Honorable Mention for Feature Writing  
Mahi Kandage--Honorable Mention for News Editing/ Headline Writing/ Current Events

#### **National Honor Society**

- Westford Academy's National Honor Society has worked hard to host a charity event on Friday, March 13th from 7-9:00 PM in the Westford Academy cafeteria. Led by Tera Keang, students have created bowls and coordinated entertainment in order to support the work of the Westford Food Pantry at the Cameron Senior Center.

#### **Science**

- WA Science teacher, Rafael Aguade-Cabanias, had a paper published (in the summer of 2019) in a publication called *Soft Matter*, with the title: "Equation of State of Colloidal Membranes".

#### **Social Studies**

- History Teacher Chris Gorham's article "From the Front Porch to the Nation's Airwaves: The Commercial Rise of Country Music during the Great Depression" was named as one of the Top Nine articles of 2019 by the online History Magazine, We're History.

#### **World Language**

- WA is proud to be participating in the Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy program...this is our first year. This accolade recognizes students who are biliterate in English and another language. Though we

do not yet have the official results, we have had over 50 applicants and will be testing in 11 languages (Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Latin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish).

- In September, 16 students from Westford Academy hosted students from our partner school Colegio Amor de Dios for 2 weeks. The exchange students attended classes and after school activities and toured Boston and Newport. They enjoyed their time living with their host families, practicing English and immersing themselves in American culture. In April the 16 students will travel with Spanish teachers Stephanie Devlin and Andrea Pickersgill to Salamanca, Spain where they will have the same experience practicing Spanish, living with their host family and attending classes at Colegio Amor de Dios.
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#### **Athletics – Fall 2019 & Winter 2020**

- **WA Volleyball** had a solid season and earned an MIAA Tournament bid with their win on the final day of the regular season. Congrats!
- **WA Boys Soccer** finished the season strong but missed the MIAA Tournament by 1 point. Our Boys Soccer team once again participated in the annual “Kicks for Cancer” event at Concord-Carlisle. Thank you for your participation!!
- **WA Girls Soccer** qualified for the MIAA Tournament. After beating North Andover in the 1<sup>st</sup> Round, they lost to a very strong Brookline team in the Sectional Semi-Finals. Congratulations to Senior Ally Giovino for earning “DCL Player of the Year” honors.
- **WA Golf** qualified for the State Tournament. Freshman Molly Smith advanced and qualified to move onto the Regionals!
- **WA Field Hockey** closed out their season strong and was only 1 win shy of earning a MIAA State Tournament bid.
- **WA X-Country** is seen training all around town and at East Boston Camp. X-Country had a terrific season and competed in the DCL Tournament.
- **WA Varsity Cheer** represented WA very well and demonstrated school spirit at multiple football games. They also won another DCL Championship by winning the DCL Large School division.
- **WA Crew** had another great season and participated in several Regattas’ around the area highlighted by going to Saratoga Springs, NY to compete in the “Head of the Fish” Crew Regatta to close out their season.
- **WA Football** brought a lot of excitement to the gridiron this season. They qualified for the play-offs and lost to an exceptional North Andover team. The season was capped off when the Grey Ghosts hosted the annual Thanksgiving Day football game on Trustees Field. Great to see all the alumni at this annual event.
- **WA Marching Band** did a great job once again playing at our football games and performing at half time. This extremely talented group represents WA very well and adds to the terrific environment created at Westford Academy.

WA has sub-varsity teams in every sport. Their ongoing commitment and dedication is the reason for the success that all our Varsity teams enjoy. A shout out goes out to our awesome community for all their support!!

Thank you to all our student-athletes & coaches for a terrific Fall season!

- **Swim & Dive** - WA Girls continued their dominance winning both the DCL and Division 1 MIAA State Tournament! CONGRATULATIONS!! The WA Boys also had tremendous success finishing 2nd in the DCL & 5th in the State.
- **Wrestling** - WA Wrestlers completed a terrific season and were runner-ups in the DCL Conference. WA had several wrestlers qualify for the MIAA State Tournament! Senior Justin Quinton & Junior Will Rudiman (alt.) also qualified for the All-States Tournament. Giselle Piedrahita & Gianna Pannese will be participating in the MIAA Girls State Tournament.
- **Basketball** - WA Girls won the DCL Championship and qualified for the MIAA State Tournament. WA Boys also qualified and hosted the MIAA State Tournament. Both teams played against Wachusett Regional and lost tough battles but represented WA very well..
- **Gymnastics** - WA Gymnastics completed a great season and posted a season-high score in their final meet! Sophomores Ellie Cioffi & Mina Kiefer qualified for the MIAA State Individual Championship last week. Both represented WA well and Ellie placed 7th on the Floor. Congrats!!
- **Indoor Track** - WA Indoor Boys & Girls Track finished their season and had several athletes qualify for the Division 1 MIAA State Meet! Our 4x4 Boys relay team also qualified for the All-State Meet last week! Congrats!!
- **Alpine Ski** - WA Boys team won the DCL Championship! CONGRATULATIONS!! WA qualified Colleen Browne, Shane Cressman, Kyle Murray, Shane Murray and Nick Valcourt (alt.) for the MIAA State Tournament! which was held at Berkshire East.
- **Nordic Ski** - WA Girls & Boys Skiers that qualified traveled to Prospect Mountain in Woodford, VT to compete in the MIAA State Tournament! Both teams represented WA very well and the Boys finished 4<sup>th</sup> and tied our school record!!
- **Ice Hockey** - WA Girls qualified for the MIAA State Tournament but lost to a very strong Braintree team. WA Boys also qualified for the MIAA State Tournament and won their opening round game vs. Bishop Fenwick. They moved on to the Division 1 Quarterfinals and beat Waltham to advance to the D1 Semifinals at Tsongas Arena. Senior Jason Bunyon was awarded DCL/MVC "Player of the Year" Congratulations!
- WA Athletics successfully piloted televised games on *WestfordCAT* and live streaming on *Instagram* this winter. WA Athletics will continue to increase media visibility on various social media outlets including Twitter @WAGreyGhosts and on Instagram @wa\_live\_sports

Congratulations to all our dedicated Westford Academy Athletes and coaches on a GREAT winter season!

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