

THE HERALD

a publication of *Eastern Christian School*
Volume 61, Issue 2

The COVID-19 *Edition*

FALL 2020

PLUS
HONORING EC SENIORS



Unprecedented...

The 2020 spring semester at Eastern Christian School was like no other in our 128-year history.

On the evening of Thursday, March 12 we were informed of an order from the Bergen County Executive's office that all schools in the county were required to suspend on-campus activities as of the following day. Upon our receipt of that order, Eastern Christian began an instructional and operational pivot to remote learning that would continue for the remainder of the spring semester.

From the moment of learning that we would be abruptly leaving our campuses until the very last day of the semester, the Eastern Christian School community rose to the occasion and performed with distinction. Our school community has much to be proud of in the manner in which it responded to this challenge.

This issue of ***The Herald*** chronicles this unprecedented period of our history – from the exemplary efforts of our students and staff to continue living out our core values of service, community, compassion, and excellence in a completely new context – to the personal experiences of members of our school community with illness and loss and the sense of sadness resulting from the loss of milestones such as final athletic events, artistic performances, social events, and in-person graduations.

As of the date of this writing in early August, we are looking forward to the reopening of our campuses on September 1 – every student, every campus, every day. And while we pray that these plans will not be unduly disrupted by an increase in COVID transmission, we move forward in the sure confidence that our Sovereign God reigns and will sustain us whatever the circumstances that we may face.

We hope that you enjoy this issue of ***The Herald*** as we tell the story of Eastern Christian School in COVID-19.

Thomas G. Dykhousé '76
Executive Director & Head of School

About the cover
2020 graduate Zhilin
(William) Zhou with his
homestay family.



EASTERN CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL

THE HERALD

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4th grade fair

The Herald is a bi-annual publication of The Foundation for Eastern Christian School. The purpose of this publication is to share the story of Eastern Christian School and to strengthen the bonds among our extended school community in support of Christian education. **The Herald is mailed free of charge to over 6,500 alumni, families, and friends of the school.**

Our address database is always being updated. If you would like to update your contact information or if you know of someone who would like to receive *The Herald*, please contact The Foundation for Eastern Christian School Association office and we will be very happy to update our database accordingly.

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Coronavirus, EC edition

Timeline of events



[WE] WILL ATTEMPT TO HONOR THE HEROES, CELEBRATE THE WINS AND MOURN THE LOSSES.

In its 128-year history, Eastern Christian School has been carried through disaster and turmoil before.

Its 10-year anniversary was marked by a smallpox epidemic that swept through the area. In 1927, a diphtheria outbreak hit, with 46 recorded cases, according to Prospect Park records. The 1930s saw the impacts of a world depression. Locally, flash floods and a World War abroad brought challenges in the 1940s. Polio arrived in the 1950s, briefly closing the school. And in more modern times, there's been major storms, wars and rumors of wars, and of course, the anguish of 9/11.

Despite uncertainties, Deuteronomy 7:9 is a reminder to the Israelites, and an encouragement to the EC community: *"Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments."*

2020 has unexpectedly turned into a year for the record books. This issue of The Herald will attempt to honor the heroes, celebrate the wins and mourn the losses.

COVID-19: EC TIMELINE OF EVENTS

February 2020

On February 28, the news at CNN.com was the 64th new case of coronavirus in the United States, almost exclusively contained on the West Coast. Closer to school, it also marked the first day the education council of EC—consisting of **Tom Dykhouse, Karyn Baitzel, Sandy Bottge, Mary Faber, David Intlekofer, Dan Lazor, Suzanne Kraai, and Ruth Kuder**—met for the first time to discuss a new possible challenge on the horizon. The meeting also included Director of Technology, **Ben Spoelstra**, and **Rich Kuder**, who had been involved in launching a school in China.

"When we met on Feb. 28 to begin planning, the idea of having to close our buildings and shift to remote learning seemed far fetched. However the team was very intentional in thinking through both the theoretical and practical issues," shares Kuder.

First communication, March 2

Days later, the Coronavirus hit much closer to home. On March 1, the New York Times broke the story that a Manhattan woman was the first COVID-19 positive case in the area. On March 2, families at Eastern Christian received their first communication about Novel Coronavirus (see image).



**EASTERN CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL**

March 2, 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff and Students,

Eastern Christian School continues to monitor the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). **There are no reports of novel coronavirus at our school.** As you are aware, the coronavirus continues to spread to new locations on a daily basis. In countries that have been most heavily impacted by the coronavirus, schools have been closed, some for many weeks. An outbreak in the United States is a possibility. In the event of an outbreak in our area, the CDC has recommended that schools start planning for the possibility of remote instruction.

**DEUTERONOMY 7:9
IS A REMINDER TO THE
ISRAELITES, AND AN
ENCOURAGEMENT TO
THE EC COMMUNITY**

COVID-19: EC TIMELINE OF EVENTS

March 2020

The beginning of the month felt surreal: a mixture of business as usual with an increasing sense of concern. A March 7 newsletter to the upper elementary and middle school grades captures the paradox in the early days of coronavirus clearly. Nestled in between announcements about spring sports, International Day, and pizza hot lunch, there was a nondescript, six-line paragraph explaining that all students will need devices that connect to the Internet in the case “it becomes necessary to deliver instruction through online methods.” It was a small hint that something was amiss in the midst of a lot of what felt normal, but then again, on March 7, only four individuals in the state had tested positive for COVID-19.



Geneva College's Genevan Choir during a workshop time with Eastern Christian's Concert Choir the morning of March 9.

What started as a trickle at the beginning of March, soon became a raging flood. On the morning of Monday, March 9, Geneva College's choir visited with Eastern Christian's choir for a workshop and concert. By the afternoon of March 9, “out of an abundance of caution,” stated **Principal David Intlekofer**, out-of-state spring break trips and the senior trip were cancelled. In a note to student reporter **Nicola Venturini**, teacher and Mission Trip Coordinator **Stephen Bailey** expressed a mixture of disappointment and hope: “As a senior class, you have handled this cancellation with dignity and grace. My hope is that we as a school can do something very nice for you once we return to school [after spring break].” Neither the article—nor the entire March student paper—would have a chance to print.

On Wednesday, March 11, the fourth graders proceeded as planned with the annual 4th Grade

EC TIMES

Eastern Christian Schools
50 Oakwood Ave
North Haledon, NJ 07058

March 2020, Issue 4, Volume 7

The Student Newspaper for the Eastern Christian School Community

Spiritual emphasis week forms a new precedent

By Chas Phillips

A Pastor Bob Parker chose his sermon on Tuesday morning in late January. He invited students to stay for worship and more than half of the student body responded to the invitation. A day later, the same students stood remembered, as Pastor Richard Jones Sr. preached to the people to love and accept one another. Later in the week, religious scholars and students alike take the stage, answering questions and telling their personal testimonies about their journey with Christ. These scenes, and many others equally as

date and sold go with God and they [Project Focus] did everything.” Everything that was seen during the week was planned by students and though speakers like Pastor Jones and Pastor Parker were invited, the student testimonies and prayers both Friday during chapel and during the worship night that Friday were even done by students. This openness of praise from students allowed for the spiritual movement that was to come. As Project Focus member Will Cincchold points, “It was incredibly cool in chapters to see people openly moved without embarrassment and to see everybody



The cover story of the March issue of the student newspaper was about Spiritual Emphasis Week, with callout stories regarding spring sports and an alternative prom for children with special needs. It never printed.

State Fair. As was the case in other years, each fourth grader was previously assigned a state and decorated a booth. For many, this included giveaways such as food. Fourth grade teacher, **Donna Hoogerhyde**, reminisces: “There was a lot of conversation about COVID. We had hand sanitizer out on tables at the entrance. Adults seemed to be keeping their distance from each other...it all happened so fast. That was the only precaution we had in place.”



The 4th grade fair occurred just three days before school closure. Pictured, Yuna Choi

On day 2 of the high school student musical—Thursday, March 12—the following announcement came through:

3.12.2020 9:43 PM EDT

Eastern Christian School has been advised that all Bergen County public schools are suspending classes and student activity as of the end of this week. In the interest of public health, we have made the decision to follow the recommendation of the Bergen County Executive. We will therefore also suspend classes and student activity on all three campuses as of 6 PM tomorrow night until we are permitted by the authorities to resume classes on our campuses. It is important that all students be in attendance on March 13 as we prepare our school community for the implementation of our remote instruction plan. More detailed information will follow.



COVID-19: EC TIMELINE OF EVENTS

March 2020

And just like that, on Friday, March 13, school as everyone knew it—halfway through theater performances—was now dismissed.

As yearbook staffers rushed to complete the yearbook several weeks early, they took some photos related to the 3D cover they had designed. From the pictures it's clear that social distancing—the act of standing at least 6 feet apart, preferably with a mask—was not yet practiced.

The first week of remote learning brought another jolt to this community. On the evening of March 18, Head of School **Tom Dykhouse** made the serious announcement that a staff member at the high school campus tested positive for COVID-19. Although he had the right to remain silent, staffer **Jesse Wright** revealed himself in order to bring a hopeful perspective, as well as to allow staffers and students to ask questions. Later he shared with EC student reporter **Emmanuel Dyer**, "I was more than

a bit surprised [by the diagnosis]. I had already been symptom-free for a couple of days."

According to an article in the Paterson Times from that day, Jesse was among only 18 in Passaic County (with a population of a half a million) confirmed infected. Sadly, there would be thousands more to follow (more than 16,000 in Passaic County alone before school would end in June).



AND JUST LIKE THAT, ON FRIDAY, MARCH 13, SCHOOL AS EVERYONE KNEW IT... WAS NOW DISMISSED.



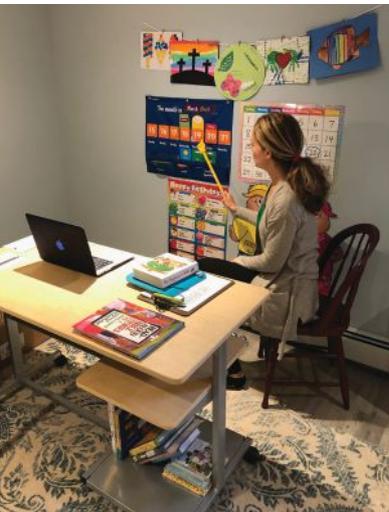
The High School musical, Seussical, experienced a hastened curtain call, with last performances occurring on Thursday rather than Saturday.

COVID-19: EC TIMELINE OF EVENTS

April 2020

The beginning of April brought with it thousands of new cases of COVID-19 around NJ every day, with Bergen and Passaic counties among the top six counties in NJ hit the hardest. The hospitalizations would peak on April 14, according to later articles from NJ.com, and with the virus so widespread, the vast majority of people sheltered in their homes this month. Even with extreme precautions in place, multiple members of the community tested positive. Thankfully, no students, parents, or staff members were lost to the disease.

As the school transitioned into a new normal, teachers embraced this new way of learning thrust upon them and celebrated many remote learning wins. Here is a glimpse:



PRESCHOOL

*This is what a preschool classroom looks like in spring 2020. Teacher **Jenna Beverly** speaks to her class virtually, creating and teaching from a space repurposed for the task. Recognizing that compounded screen time is not ideal, especially for the youngest of students, teachers were creative with their lesson plans,*

*assigning projects and tasks that could be done away from computers. As an example, student **Owen Hagedoorn** lined up his stuffed animals from the largest to the smallest (see photo in Table of Contents).*

*“Remote learning for preschoolers is not ideal, but it has been good. It has been difficult, but worth every moment that a preschooler feels secure. It has had technical difficulties, but it has also had times of growth. It has been sad to finish the school year apart, but remote learning has allowed us to be joyful, as we continue to do what we always do: learn, sing, and play all to the glory of our God,” shares preschool teacher **Sarah Vander Wall**.*

ELEMENTARY

*What does a typical day look like in remote learning elementary school? For first grade teacher, **Jessica Truran**, her classroom sometimes opens before she wakes up. Thanks to technology and the ability to set posts ahead of time, a variety of activities go ‘live’ at 6 a.m. to allow students to work around family schedules. Work, she says, “consists of anything from a book review to a neighborhood scavenger hunt.” Then, “At 10 a.m., our class gathers for a morning meeting that includes time to share, sing, exercise, and play games. We also use this time to read devotionals, memorize scripture, and pray for one another. This keeps us connected as a group, even from afar. After the morning meeting, I meet with students in small groups or individually for additional instruction and connection.”*



This schedule has enabled a stronger partnership between home and school, Truran shares. “Remote learning has brought new depth to the partnership of parents and teachers in each child’s education. I have enjoyed getting to know my students’ parents, siblings and homes in a way that I would not have in the classroom. Again, I am so thankful for the amazing EC parents who have come alongside their children, demonstrating Jesus’ sacrificial love for us.”

*Second grade teacher **Megan Glanzman** shared similar sentiments. She has also appreciated that remote learning has enabled increased student choice based on interests and learning styles. “One of my favorite lessons was a reading lesson on character and setting. Students examined the characters and setting of a story together and practice reading strategies in the process. Then, they had three options for a follow-up activity. Students could choose to create a news report, complete a word search, or create their own quiz and answer key. It’s always fun to see which activity the students will do and how they make it their own,” she shares.*



UPPER ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL

Academics are important, but teachers across all levels of the school also recognized the need to tend to the whole child. “In our remote classrooms, we are still able to focus on our school’s mission. The students are working very hard on their academics, but we are also focused on nurturing the spirit. I have seen significant growth in their spirituality as they share from their hearts about COVID-19, how it has impacted those around them, and how they can respond to others. The students are sharing thoughtful prayers in our morning meetings,” shares fourth grade teacher, **Donna Hoogerhyde**.

She adds, “the relationships between myself and my students, as well as student to student, has changed and deepened. We’ve had more glimpses into each others’ personal lives. Our bonds, in some unique ways, have grown stronger. The students are patient and very understanding of each other’s challenges of working from their homes. They have all been very supportive in helping each other, especially with technology issues, and I must admit, sometimes helping me, too!”

Eighth grade teacher, **Emily Bradley**, also commented on remote learning in regard to EC’s mission. As a math teacher, she has had to implement more projects that promote creativity and demonstrate understanding of mathematical processes, rather than rely on tests for assessment. She adds, “EC’s style of remote learning definitely engaged the mind because students are still fully participating in the learning process rather than just doing packets...I feel like my students have really risen to the occasion by being mature and independent learners. I see them becoming stronger from this and the type of learners who will change our world.”



HIGH SCHOOL

Teachers interviewed for this story mourned the loss of human connection that cannot be fully replicated over a screen. However, many recognized lessons learned that will come back with them into a traditional classroom. “Remote learning has highlighted (for me at least) the importance of identifying ways in which the students can demonstrate their learning. I am less central and the focus is more

Ruby Bridges and School Desegregation (1960)



“The thought I passed every morning as I walked to the school’s steps were full of hate. They were white, but so was my teacher, who couldn’t have been more different from them. She was one of the most loving people I had ever known.”



Ruby Bridges

Ruby recalls the racist and the kindness of her teacher, who risked her own safety after all the other white children were escorted from her class by their parents.

“The Problem We All Live With” Norman Rockwell (1964)

Ruby’s courage in the face of adversity was highlighted by Norman Rockwell in the above painting. Ruby was escorted into school by federal marshals, protecting her from the violent protesters. When asked how she endured such suffering, Ruby responded that every day on the way to school, she would pray for the people verbally abusing her, just like Jesus prayed, asking God to forgive them because they didn’t know what they were doing.



Ruby Bridges was the first African American child to desegregate the all-white William Frantz Elementary School in Louisiana in 1960. She was six years old at the time of the event. This photo shows Ruby and her first grade teacher.

In a high school US history class, “students created exhibits for some of the major Civil Rights protests of the 1950s and 1960s. They included images, video, quotes, and emphasized the role of the individual in bringing about change. This highlighted their skills at annotating primary sources, communicating in a concise and coherent manner, and placing an event in its greater context. When completed, the students were able to explore their own Civil Rights ‘museum’ on an at-home ‘field trip,’” shares **Melissa Troast**.

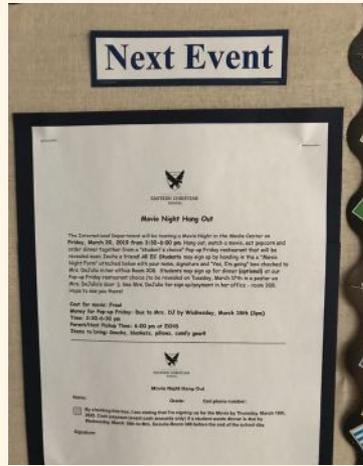
on the students. To me that’s an exciting opportunity,” shares chemistry teacher **Petra van’t Slot**.

Teaching a lab-heavy class in an environment without a classroom lab has forced her to become increasingly creative in assessments. She shares one of those wins, a project she developed called World Without Oil: “After learning about all the ways that our society relies on fossil fuels and petroleum-based products such as plastics, I asked my students to imagine what a future without oil would look like. I’m a huge fan of tapping into students’ creativity and have them use that to learn or demonstrate learning. So for this project, I gave them a list of formats to choose from, with some guidelines for each format. They then picked the format that spoke most to them and showed what a world without oil can look like.”

Similarly, high school senior history teacher, **Melissa Troast**, shares: “I am enjoying having to stretch and grow as an educator and having the opportunity to try out new approaches. Engaging the students with the material and making it personal has been my priority. I want them to leave recognizing the role that they play as a Christian and an active and informed citizen not only of the country but of the world. Remote learning has definitely highlighted the need for authentic student engagement, and I have certainly learned a lot from this experience that I will take back to the brick and mortar classrooms.

Signs of the times

Coronavirus, EC edition



◀ In June, Eastern Christian High School's hallways were still frozen in time. The front office still displayed a sign for St. Patrick's Day; a sign outside the international office invites students to sign up for an event that would never happen; wipes are marked with a classroom number in the early days of concern.

Across the area, signs began popping up in lawns starting in April. A safe way to communicate, many expressed thanks. ▶



Elsewhere at the high school, glimpses of the pandemic are apparent. A rock painted with the words: 'the quarantined class' appeared outside near the front lawn



Throughout the long quarantine, 'drive by' celebrations—essentially car parades with cheering and signs—were one way to connect with others.

◀ A giant sign with the word, "Hope" appeared near the North Haledon municipal building this spring. Photo courtesy of EC student Thomas De Block.

End of school year belongings pick up ▶



COVID-19: EC TIMELINE OF EVENTS

June 2020



On Tuesday, June 2, the first day of exams, Eastern Christian High School entered another virtual ‘first’, with Principal **David Intlekofer** calling a virtual assembly to discuss current events surrounding the murder of George Floyd and the ensuing unrest that quickly moved the country from a place of sheltering in place, to mass protests across the United States. Although it was optional, more than 90 people attended.

Three local pastors, Pastor Richard Jones, Pastor John Algera, and Pastor Noel Owuor, agreed to serve as virtual panelists. Moderated by teacher **Alisa Engelhard**, and opened with prayer by teacher **Jesse Wright**, each pastor shared and then the floor was opened for student questions.

Pastors Jones, an African American, and Owuor, an African expatriate, shared personal testimonies where they had been affected by racism in the US. For example, Pastor Jones shared the time growing up in Los Angeles where he was confronted by police for doing nothing but playing basketball on a public court. Pastor Owuor shared the time one of his children was surrounded by police for fixing a bicycle in their own NJ suburban neighborhood. In regard to George Floyd and in light of his own personal experiences,

Owuor shared, “I am trying to figure out what to do with all of this emotion. I read my Bible and it says, in your anger, do not sin.” Owuor suggested that students look to the Psalms for inspiration: “We can be honest with God. We can express our emotions and have a place to process.”

Pastor Algera, who is a white person, shared with the students how he was inspired by Daniel’s corporate prayer of repentance, and he felt a burden to write out a prayer of repentance and share that prayer with others through social media. He also read it to students. He suggested that although he hasn’t had the same experience, one thing he can do is “listen to other people’s stories and believe them.”

Students posed a variety of questions on an online document and were also encouraged to speak out in the virtual forum. Questions and comments ranged from whether or not condemning looting is racist, to why there was outrage with Colin Kaepernick and the NFL.

The event ended with a focus on the kingdom of God, which includes—as the school theme of the year says—every tribe, every nation, every tongue. Algera added, “We need a place where we can be honest. It’s important to have unity in the body of Christ—even where there’s pain.”

Owuor ended with a call back to biblical standards, even when the conversation is hard. “This is an opportunity for us to experience grace, not guilt. Grace is found when we spend time in the presence of God, pouring out our

hearts...The apostle Peter was driven by grace, and was able to sit with Jesus and have the difficult conversation.”

Difficult conversations are always hard. Difficult conversations amidst extraordinary isolation is harder still.

But there is a season for everything. On June 9, one day before the live airing of the virtual high school graduation, one additional announcement occurred to end this wild year: Governor Murphy signed an executive order to lift Stay-at-Home restrictions. After 81 days of mandated shelter in place (although longer for most EC students), it was over.

In the midst of such an unpredictable and uncertain year, it is good to again reconsider the school’s spiritual theme, set well before anyone heard the phrase COVID-19 or knew the name of George Floyd. Reprinted below are the verses that inspired the theme. May it also serve as a reminder that God is sovereign over all things in heaven and on earth, and that he is sovereign over Eastern Christian School, bringing us over the past 128 years from a small school for Dutch immigrant children settling primarily in Prospect Park and Paterson, to a diverse and vibrant institution with graduates that have come from and settled all over the world:

“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”
—Revelation 7:9-10

High School Graduation

Class of 2020

It took about 1,000 pieces of media and many hours of labor to accomplish the first-ever high school virtual graduation (see page 20 for the background story).

In the end, the event—lasting slightly over an hour—retained many of the same features as a typical graduation: processional, class song, prayers, addresses, tassel move and faculty benediction, to name a few. It also included original touches, like a 15-minute photo slideshow countdown prior to the ceremony.

In a year like none other, where many classmates grieved the losses caused by COVID-19, Valedictorian **Isabelle Lazor** spoke about the faithfulness of God, sharing stories from her own life: “I want to exhort you to glorify God without being unrealistic about the struggle to praise Him in every circumstance. Most of all, I want us to remember the faithfulness of God without



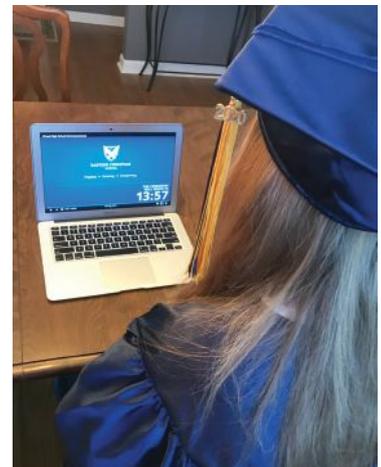
Class of 2020 remotely sings their class song together; Commencement speakers, socially distancing; Leah Boonstra prepares to watch her graduation on her computer.



Kiandra Dussard

spouting the false promises of prosperity gospel,” she shared as she opened.

She spoke extensively about loss, both in her life and in the lives of her fellow seniors, but ultimately pointed them back to the hope they have in Christ. She ended with: “As high school comes to a close, take courage...One day, there will be a new Earth, one not riddled with disease and fear, but One instead filled with people who believed God’s promises and in His faithfulness even while in that old earth of sickness and decay. On that day, we will not be six feet apart. While we wait, while we mourn, while we cry out to God, my prayer is that we also remember that Restoration is coming, and that we are not alone in the fire of our circumstances. As we move forward, I want to encourage you all to remember that God is faithful, and He has given us reasons to trust Him. Even when the things we love or are looking forward to loving are taken away from us. Will you remember His faithfulness?”



GRADUATIONS

Commencement speaker, teacher **Elizabeth Van Ryn**, presented the graduates with an original spoken word poem comprised of her words woven in with a number of others—voices that included students, poets, authors and musical artists. She shared: “I did this because I want you to see the importance of perspective. I want you to know that you have a uniquely valuable perspective, that each of your classmates and every person you encounter has a uniquely valuable perspective. And you have this because you were made to reflect your Creator, who has the ultimate, omnipotent perspective, knowing and seeing all things.”

Her poem, titled Look, included the following stanza, an exhortation to all:

“Look

Look from your own eyes

Look from others’ eyes

Look from God’s eyes

*Who sees others as necessary,
complementary, integral*

*Who sees you as beautiful, talented,
valuable*

*Who is doing a new thing in you
and through you (Isaiah 43:19)*

*He will use your perspective to
perfect his purpose”*

Isabelle Lazor



Joshua Borduin

“I WANT TO EXHORT YOU TO GLORIFY GOD WITHOUT BEING UNREALISTIC ABOUT THE STRUGGLE TO PRAISE HIM IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE.” —Valedictorian Isabelle Lazor



Emily Candela

SPECIAL THANK YOU

Mr. Philip Verrengia
for coordinating virtual commencement

Mr. Justin Van Dyke
for filming and editing the virtual commencement video

Mrs. Jane Okma
for support in editing commencement speeches

Mr. Tim Steen, Mrs. Leah Genuario, and Mrs. Sarah Binkele
for helping collect photographs and video clips used in the virtual commencement ceremony

Mrs. Suzanne Kraai, Mr. Rob Flim, and Mrs. Elizabeth Yoder
for helping with the creation of the faculty benediction song

Mr. Ben Fuller and Mrs. Catherine Lang
for collecting post-graduation plan information

Mr. Jeff Botbyl
for coordinating use of the high school campus for filming

Mr. Jim Stegink, Mr. Dave Brain, and Mr. Pete Damsma
for preparing the high school campus for filming

Mr. Tom Dykhouse, Mr. David Intlekofer, and the EC Board of Directors
for their support in producing this virtual commencement ceremony

North Haledon Mayor Mr. Randy George
for supporting our plan to film our virtual commencement ceremony on campus during social distancing

North Haledon Police Chief Mr. Todd Darby
for providing police support while filming

North Haledon Department of Health
for helping set safety guidelines to safely bring students and families to the high school campus for filming



The Class of 2020

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. —Isaiah 43:19



Kimberly Abbas



Michelle Aguirre



Daniel Bautista



Bridgett Boonstra



Leah Boonstra



Molly Boonstra



Joshua Borduin



Francesca Boru



Tara Brain



Jenna Brooks



Emily Candela



Luciano Catizone



DingKang Chen



Anthony Condegni



Matthew Cook



Elijah Crefeld



Chase De Jong



Cassandra De Julia



David De Vries



Destiny Diaz



Liam Duffy



Sydney Duga



Kiandra Dussard



Naomi Engelhard



Amanda Faber



Samuel Faber



Victoria Farrow



Analyse Figueroa



Daylyn Fortuna



Rebecca Hagedoorn



Hope Hartman



Pinze Huang



Grace Kellogg



Michael Kuehlke



Emma Lapinsky



Isabelle Lazor



Allison Leber



Abraham Lee



Joshua Lee

GRADUATIONS



Armando Lopez



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Victoria Sweetman



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Elizabeth Thomas



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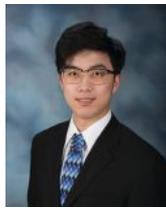
Kaitlyn Van Olden



Nicola Venturini



David Visser



Huizhe Wang



Caitlin Westra



Mark Whittingham



Ke Xu



Yuchu Yan



Pulan Yang



Hongkai Yu



Chen Zhang



Zhilin Zhou



John Zuidema

*Congrats
Class of
2020!*



BUT THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH. THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES; THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY, THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BE FAINT."

—Isaiah 40:31

Class of 2020 Awards

Department Awards

Art Department Award
Rebecca Hagedoorn

Art and Technology Department "The Da Vinci Award"
Ke Xu

Bible and Life Award
Cara Shotmeyer

Drama Department Award
Emily Steen

Journalism Award
Emily Steen

Technology Department Award
Zhilin Zhou

World Language Award (for this year only there are 3 subcategories)

World Language Award for Engagement
David De Vries

World Language Award for Overall Excellence
Isabelle Lazor

World Language Award for Academic Performance
Sehyeon Moon

STEAM Excellence Award
Joshua Lee

English Award
Elise Rietsma

English as a Second Language Award
Zhilin Zhou

Mathematics Award
Zhilin Zhou

Science Award
Yejin Park, David De Vries

Social Studies Award
Charles Phillips

Physical Education Award
David De Vries

John Philip Sousa Band Award
Elijah Crefield

The National School Orchestra Award
Joshua Borduin, Jenna Brooks, Isabelle Lazor, Abraham Lee, Joshua Lee, Luke Martin, Sehyeon Moon, Clarisse Pierre, Dorisse Pierre, David Visser, Zhillin William Zhou

The National School Choral Award
Allie Leber, Nicola Venturini

Arion Award
Abraham Lee, Joshua Lee

Faculty Award
Cara Shotmeyer

Valedictorian
Isabelle Lazor



Naomi Engelhard receiving the National Woman in Sport Award at a Seton Hall ceremony in February.

President's Education Awards

- Kimberly Abbas
- Michelle Aguirre
- Joshua Borduin
- Tara Brain
- DingKang Chen
- Anthony Condegni
- David De Vries
- Kiandra Dussard
- Naomi Engelhard
- Amanda Faber
- Victoria Farrow
- Hope Hartman
- Joshua Lee
- Abraham Lee
- Armando Lopez
- Haodong Lyu
- Luke Martin
- Sehyeon Moon
- Grace Na
- Yejin Park
- Benjamin Parker
- Charles Phillips
- Dorisse Pierre
- Clarisse Pierre
- Elise Reitsma
- Madison Ritsema
- Amanda Segreto
- Cara Shotmeyer
- Emily Steen
- Nicola Venturini
- David Visser
- Huizhe Wang
- Caitlin Westra
- Mark Whittingham
- Ke Xu
- Zhilin Zhou

Athletic Awards

ECHS Athletic Department Varsity Club Award
David De Vries, Cara Shotmeyer, Naomi Engelhard

New Jersey Scholar Athlete Award
David De Vries

Athletic Department Golden Eagle Award
Chase DeJong

EC Passaic County Athlete of the Year Award
Benjamin Parker, Grace Kellogg

Passaic County All County
Benjamin Parker

National Women in Sport Award
Naomi Engelhard

NJIC Sportsmanship Award
Destiny Diaz and Benjamin Parker

School and Community Scholarships

Lakeland Bank Scholarship
Hope Urdang

Christine H White Memorial Scholarship
David De Vries

R Bruce VanHine First Responders Award
Matthew Cook

Brett Zuidema Endowed Nursing Scholarship
Elizabeth Thomas

Henriette & Kathryn Houseward Vocational Scholarship
Tara Brain, David De Vries, Sehyeon Moon, Cara Shotmeyer

Harold Phillips Vocational Award
David De Vries

Hoitsma-Jeffer Award
Isabelle Lazor

Smith-Shute Nursing Scholarship
Alexis Struck, Hannah Faber (alumni), Hanna Faber (alumni), Madison Ritsema

Excellence in Creative Writing Award
Isabelle Lazor

Excellence in Scholastic Writing Award
Yejin Park

Excellence in Mathematics Award
Huizhe Wang



Art Department Award winner Rebecca Hagedoorn created this photoshopped project during quarantine

Class of 2020 Colleges

The Class of 2020 reported their college acceptances and post-graduate plans to the College and Career Office. Following is a list of colleges reported.



Luciano Catizone

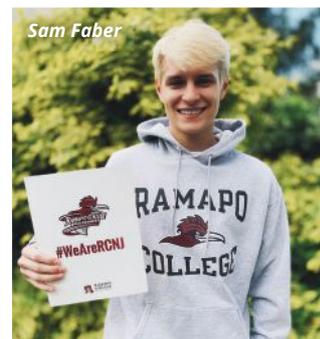
Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Anderson University
Andrews University
Babson College
Belmont University
Bucknell University
Calvin University
Case Western Reserve University
Cedarville University
Clark University
Colgate University
Connecticut College
Dickinson College
Drexel University
Eastern University
Fairleigh Dickinson University – Florham Campus
Fairleigh Dickinson University – Metropolitan Campus
Felician University

Florida Atlantic University
Fordham University (Fordham College at Lincoln Center)
Furman University
Geneva College
George Washington University
Gettysburg College
Gordon College
Grove City College
Hofstra University
Indiana University – Bloomington
Ithaca College
James Madison University
Kean University
Lafayette College
Liberty University
Loyola University Maryland
Marist College
Marymount Manhattan College
Messiah College
Michigan State University
Monmouth University
Montclair State University
New Jersey Institute of Technology
Nyack College
Pace University – Westchester Campus
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Pennsylvania State University



Nicola Venturini

Pennsylvania State University (Smeal College of Business)
Purdue University – Main Campus
Quinnipiac University
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Rider University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rocky Mountain College of Art & Design
Rollins College
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Rowan University
Rutgers University – New Brunswick
Rutgers University – New Brunswick (Rutgers Business School: Undergraduate – New Brunswick)
Rutgers University – New Brunswick (School of Arts and Sciences)
Sacred Heart University
Seton Hall University
Siena College
State University of New York at New Paltz
Stevens Institute of Technology
Stockton University
SUNY College at Geneseo
The College of New Jersey
The New School – All Divisions (Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts)
The Ohio State University



Sam Faber

The University of Alabama
The University of Tampa
University at Albany, SUNY
University of California, San Diego
University of Connecticut
University of Hartford
University of Maryland – College Park
University of Massachusetts – Amherst
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities
University of New Haven
University of Rhode Island
University of Washington, Seattle
University of West Florida
West Chester University of Pennsylvania
Wheaton College
William Paterson University of New Jersey



Elijah Crefeld

“The LORD will guide you always...”

—Isaiah 58:11

Middle School Graduation

Eighth Grade Class of 2020



Pre-ceremony slideshow; speaker Natalie Vincenti

In the midst of a difficult semester around the world, eighth grade student **Grace Schulster's** opening prayer was full of light and life: “One word I’m seeing from you, God, is hope. May we learn to be shining examples of your hope,” she prayed. “We ask you to increase our faith so we completely trust you.”

It set the tone for a beautiful virtual ceremony that honored the graduates while focusing on the Lord. In his commencement address, which was filmed prior to the ceremony outside of the middle school building, Principal **Dan Lazor** discussed the longings of one’s heart. He shared, “See this longing is woven into who we are—a part of our being God’s creation uniquely made in His image, created to be in a relationship with him—a relationship that is unlike

any other. That relationship has been broken and torn and marred, but it is not completely destroyed. And whatever bits of that relationship remain within you beckon to be made whole again. And that’s where these longings come from. Here’s the catch—since these longings have a source—a real source—they also have a real solution—something that will really fulfill them. That source is God himself in the person of Jesus Christ.”

Student Speaker **Natalie Vincenti's** speech explored the various spiritual themes over the past four years. In reminiscing about last year’s spiritual theme of Name Above All Names, she shared, “Not only can we be there for each other, but we can know that God will be there for us. He is always there. He can do anything, and He is doing everything for us. Even



Tom Dykhouse addresses the graduating class remotely for the virtual ceremony; Charlotte Steen



Kim family; Marjorie Kingslow; Austin Foster



if we don't know what it is. He is the Father, Shepherd, Healer, Defender, and anything else we need Him to be. He is the unknown name. He is God. He is the name above all names. He will always be there as part of our community, even if we can't see Him or know exactly what He is doing."

In addition to typical elements such as speeches, this virtual graduation included its own unique elements. Middle school teachers contributed video clips of well wishes and words of advice. The processional included individual portraits

paired with a baby photo. And a slideshow that served as a countdown to the event included photos from the past few years at the middle school.

The virtual celebration wasn't entirely without human contact either. Prior to the event, teachers visited the homes of eighth graders to drop off a congratulatory sign and take a photo. Closer to June, the state was opened up enough to allow families to come to campus to have a picture taken. These keepsakes were incorporated into the virtual program and provided a lasting memory.

"NOT ONLY CAN WE BE THERE FOR EACH OTHER, BUT WE CAN KNOW THAT GOD WILL BE THERE FOR US. HE IS ALWAYS THERE. HE CAN DO ANYTHING, AND HE IS DOING EVERYTHING FOR US." —Natalie Vincenti



Robertson family; Romero family



Elementary Graduation

3rd Grade Celebration Chapel



(Left) The third grade class singing He Reigns; (Above) Aubrie Battle grabs the ball in a virtual game of catch. She shared during her turn that her favorite memory of elementary school was “reading buddies—either having one or being one”

Even in a strikingly different format necessitated by COVID-19, the elementary school celebration chapel still captured the joy of the year and introduced some fun new elements to the ceremony.

The service, held June 9, 2020 and published via YouTube, opened with Head of School **Tom Dykhouse**. Following the opening, students and families heard heartfelt words and memories presented first by Midland Park Principal **Sandra Bottge**, followed by the primary 3rd grade teachers.

“As the oldest students in the school, you were responsible to serve as leaders and role models and you lived up to that responsibility very well,” shared Bottge, who recalled a class marked by hard work and service. “When we left school on March 13, we



Third grade teacher Mrs. Olsen shares some of her favorite memories from the school year, including celebrating Johnny Appleseed's birthday. Pictured here, Cristina Peralta and Gretchen Lapinsky



...SO MANY THINGS HAVE CHANGED. BUT AT EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL WE SERVE A GOD WHO DOESN'T CHANGE” —Sandra Bottge

didn't know when we would see each other again...So many things have changed. But at Eastern Christian School we serve a God who doesn't change. We know that God is still in control.”

The 39-minute video was filled with photos from earlier in the year, recounting experiences such as Johnny Appleseed's birthday, Grinch Day and projects to help missionaries. All specials teachers and ES staff participated in offering congratulations the students. Through technology, third graders were able to stand together and sing the song, He Reigns, using sign language. They also participated in a virtual beach ball pass, where students reflected on their favorite memories from elementary school and what they are excited about in the future.

The event ended with the ball passing to Wyckoff Campus Principal **Dan Lazor**, who welcomed the students to a new school next year, and exhorted them with the following verse from 1 Timothy 4:12: “Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” (NIV)

Preschool Graduation

Preschool Closing Program



This year, the end-of-year fun was quadrupled. Rather than host one large event to celebrate the end of the preschool year, each class held separate programs utilizing Google Meet—four in total.

Students, parents and grandparents joined at specifically designated times on June 11 for the closing celebrations. The events happened live and were not pre-recorded.

“Good morning! Welcome to your graduation!” shared pre-k teacher **Marilyn Bushman** in the first allotted slot, with a screen background covered in graduation decorations. After welcoming the approximately 40 attendees and starting with prayer, she shared, “Together let’s sing Jesus Loves Me, one of our favorite songs that we sing almost every morning, because Jesus loves us so much.”



Although songs and presentations were personalized to individual classes and tastes, all the programs kept to a similar format, which

Transitional Kindergarten student, Eaden Bignon, would like to be a ninja.



◀ During the slideshow, Colvin Everett’s teacher shared he would like to be a Paleontologist.

(Above) There were a lot of aspiring paleontologists in this year’s preschool program. Wyatt Ritsma, future ‘dino digger’, in his yard with the preschool diploma.

Addison Atuncar watches the virtual presentation from her home. Her teacher shared that she would like to be a veterinarian.



Kaelyn Brown would like to be a “ballerina teacher”

included prayer, singing, a reflection of the year, and a slideshow. The focal point of the event—the slideshow—featured a variety of photos before COVID-19, photos from remote learning, and photos of graduates holding certificates, which were previously mailed to their homes. As the slideshow played, teachers shared what the students wanted to do when they grow up. The answers ranged from doctors to landscapers to princesses.

Pre-school ceremonies are always chock-full of cuteness. 2020 didn’t disappoint here, but the virtual graduation was a more casual affair than years’ prior. This year, a few graduates munched on snacks during the ceremony; some watched the event from outside. The grandparents and parents still managed to snap a few photos with their iPhones, but despite all that was still the same, it was hard to deny that a lot had also changed.

Transitional kindergarten teacher, **Kathy Faasse**, captured the moment well: “We love you all so much. We are so very proud of you and of all the things you have done...to say this is a different year is an understatement, but you kids have done amazing.”

Behind the scenes

Behind the scenes of this year's graduation



A broader view of Middle School Principal Dan Lazor during the filming of his commencement address.

Graduation services at Eastern Christian School typically run like a well-oiled machine, and those involved know their part well.

"We want to make sure that our graduations truly represent EC's striving for excellence to the glory of God. Much time and planning goes into our ceremonies. They run smoothly and seamlessly, only because much planning happens on the parts of many people before the actual event," shares **Phil Verrengia**, who serves as the primary point person for high school graduation. "One thing we stress to our graduates as we practice is that graduation is not just for them, but it is for their parents and grandparents who support them and Eastern Christian, and it is an act of praise to God."

However, like everything else, COVID-19 brought dramatic changes to end-of-the-year celebrations at all campuses. The most obvious: graduation would have to be virtual.

With this new way of celebrating, **Justin Van Dyke's** video production expertise became a critical component to successful events. He was tapped for some of the elementary school production, all of the middle school production, and all of the high school production. In order to pull off this feat, families were asked to submit videos, be at their houses for deliveries, and even come to school at various times to shoot footage such as receiving

diplomas and tossing caps, all while following strict protocols.

As would be expected, the high school graduation was by far the most complex virtual celebration. Gleaning input from the senior class counsel, various webinars, parents, and administrators, Verrengia—who remained intentional in his mission to ensure an event that both honored the class and honored the Lord—set out to coordinate an entirely new type of event, which required new skill sets, new time requirements and new levels of participation.

As much as possible, the high school included traditional elements, such as an all-class tassel move, an all-class song, and an all-faculty chorus, which necessitated the coordinating and editing about 1,000 pieces of media. Van Dyke explains: "A normal ECHS graduation video is maybe two hours of onsite filming and four hours of editing. This year was likely 20 times that. We were on campus photographing and filming for about 20 hours, and editing was unbelievably time consuming."

In addition to the actual shooting and editing of footage, the ongoing pandemic brought additional challenges that required a huge team of people to make everything run smoothly. For example, at the high school, Principal **David Intlekofer** coordinated home deliveries of graduation gowns and signage. At the middle school, a brigade of teachers brought signs and took pictures of 8th graders. At the elementary school, teacher **Lauren Harvey's** husband stepped in to help with editing. Speakers and graduation shots needed the help of Director of Security **Jeff Botbyl** and had to be completed in a way mandated by the North Haledon mayor, Board of Health and police chief.

In the end, the events—though vastly different from previous years--accomplished what they set out to do. "It was really cool to see so many faculty/staff/administrators/board members concerned about celebrating the Class of 2020 well," shares Van Dyke. "I think it's important for the Class of 2020 to know how much they're loved and appreciated by EC."

Notable quotes

The Legacy of the Class of 2020

For the last few weeks of the spring semester, high school journalism students used class time to interview seniors and write profiles that were published on the student news site, *ECtimes.org*. The collective interview transcripts pointed to a wonderful, personalized blend of quotes demonstrating various aspects of the graduate profile. Below is a small glimpse (full articles are still posted on the student site).

The Eastern Christian graduate... "develops a healthy self image... recognizing and responding to the will of God."



CHARLES PHILLIPS

"EC made me a better Christian and got me out of my shell. I'm still kind of an introvert, but EC has been such a welcoming community, it has helped me to become

more interactive and outgoing...I went from literally being a 'Puppet Christian' to actually wanting to learn about and love God." (Emmanuel Dyer, reporter)

The Eastern Christian graduate has "experienced models of Christian servanthood in community"



LIZZIE (ELIZABETH) THOMAS

EC has really made me understand the importance of community that turns into your family...there are teachers that I've created very personal relationships

with... and I've definitely created lifelong friends at EC," says Lizzie. "I really want to recognize and thank all the faculty, staff, and friends at EC, and most importantly God, because they've all played a very important role in my high school career that's led to me where I am today." (Jack Skywalker, reporter)

The Eastern Christian graduate... "is prepared to be a person of Christian vision and influence."



HOPE URDANG

"I feel like people tend to overlook what God wants for them because they think that they know better, but at the end of the day, they are not in control of every little thing.

If you trust that God will put you in

the right spot or that God is leading you to the right place, then nothing will hinder your path." (Sydney Bolt, reporter)

The Eastern Christian Graduate will "develop the discernment that will enable him/her to confidently and intentionally strive for excellence in every endeavor."



DANIEL BAUTISTA

"I am most thankful for the amount of support that I've received from everybody at EC

and the relationships I have made throughout my time at EC...EC shaped me in ways I could never imagine. I feel like I've found myself throughout my time at EC and I appreciate that so much...I think I've just matured every year. I genuinely think I got wiser after each year." (Emmanuel Dyer, reporter)

The Eastern Christian Graduate "utilizes strong academic knowledge"



ANTHONY CONDEGNI

"EC has shaped me to be an intellectually well-rounded person. It allowed me to decide what

my interests are and what major I should study. It taught me how to work well with others on projects and assignments. It helped me come out of my comfort zone and try new opportunities." (Hope Urdang, reporter)

The Eastern Christian graduate has "studied the message of Jesus Christ"

AMANDA SEGRETO

"EC has truly shaped me into the person that I am now because



of the staff and the overall environment. Every teacher has been a blessing in my life by supporting me, challenging me, and praying for me. This school has shaped

me into an individual who has a true heart for Jesus Christ and a true love for missionary work." (Trinity Mickens, reporter)

The Eastern Christian graduate will "think critically, exhibit curiosity... embrace diversity"



JOSHUA LEE

"I am thankful to meet so many people with so many backgrounds... I am thankful for all of the homecoming games I watched, the concerts I performed

in, and for the high school experience that broadened my worldview as a whole." (Nicola Venturini, reporter)

The Eastern Christian graduate "exhibits compassion, offers respect"



MATT COOK

"I want to be remembered at Eastern Christian by my compassion towards people, working hard, pushing others to get to their end goal and

my amazing laugh." (James Klas, reporter)

The Eastern Christian graduate "sees in humanity the image of God... seeks to contribute cooperatively and responsibly to God's mission of renewing all of creation"



EMILY STEEN

"I wanted to major in something [sociology] that would give me the opportunity to analyze different social groups and how they interact in our modern day

society in hopes that I can find patterns that draw conclusions and make a positive impact in our world...I pray we will stand firm as Christian leaders no matter where we go. I pray we will continue to serve others throughout our lives and practice values EC has instilled in us. Let's go change the world!" (Charles Phillips, reporter)

Senior Portfolio

A closer look at worldview

The senior worldview project has been in place for many years, but this year it was re-designed by a team of teachers and students as the Senior Portfolio Project.

The design was several years in the making, having started under the late **Paul Beverly's** leadership. This project—which accounts for 25% of the English grade—serves as “a culminating project in which each student is able to express evidence of their growth in Eastern Christian School's goals for students outlined in our Graduate Profile,” reads a school statement. It includes many features, such as an oral presentation, a personal reflection and a final project. Seniors were able to choose a pathway, which included a senior service project, a senior creative project, and a senior academic project. Following are a few examples:

DESTINY DIAZ

“What inspired me to paint this was how similar my faith journey was to the journey of a caterpillar. The caterpillar cannot see for the majority of his life. He blindly climbs up a tree and feels out for a safe place to make his cocoon. When the caterpillar finally finds a safe place it is left alone for 21 days to transform. It is then released and turns into a beautiful butterfly and can see everything it couldn't see before. I believe our faith journey with God has many similarities. When we accept God, we are trusting blindly in him considering we cannot see him physically. We may go through many

obstacles for our faith, just as the caterpillar did, but when we finally get to see what we couldn't before we will be transformed just as the butterfly was transformed. This project recognizes the main perspective most Christians witness when we believe in God and what we have to look forward to because we believe in him.”



DINGKANG (JEREMY) CHEN

“I did a traditional Chinese Culture project in two forms, which includes Graphic Design and Video. First, I designed a branding which can help us know some traditional Chinese culture elements. I designed an envelope, a book mark, and Chinese style folding fan. I did these two works because I am good at using these two ways to show my own things I learned. Also, I thought that culture differences can be a core value in EC. EC is an international High school. We should understand and combine other cultures like China, Korea in our school culture. This showed in my video which combined English and Chinese in the video to help other Americans know how Chinese style cooking is.”



ALLIE LIEBER

“For my senior portfolio project, I decided to show my emotional and spiritual journey through the original songs that I have written over the course of the four years I have been at Eastern Christian. Music has always been a large part of

my life and I knew that publishing my songs would be a great way to end this journey.

“Journey” is exactly what I named the EP, or extended play record, since the songs move throughout my high school years. Within the EP there are five original songs written between my freshman year and senior year. Together these songs demonstrate my journey in seeking truth. The first song was about my inability to cope with certain struggles and it was very personal where if someone else sang it, it would sound ingenuine. My most recent song revolves around Psalm 4:10, which I adopted as my life verse shortly after high school began. Ending with this one helps me and hopefully others see my perspective and my truth that our savior will carry us through the storm.”



ALLAN MWIRIGI

I made a documentary using the metaphor “Life is a Jungle”. It means there are different types of lives people can live, just as there are different jungles, and different ways you would adjust to living in the jungle, just as how you would adapt to changes in your life. I gave examples of how you can change and adapt to the changes in life that are thrown at you without warning.

I chose to do this because most of my life I've had to adapt and never get comfortable where I am. I'm always moving and having to overcome obstacles thrown at me. Just like how animals in the jungle always have to migrate and overcome daily challenges in order to survive to the next day. It shows how I was able to be responsible enough to deal with the problems that came my way.”

Campaign 125

Covid-19 Delays Completion of Campaign 125



This year's indoor track & field team, under the direction of Joel Apol, produced four state champions. Pictured here, Jaden Belen, David De Vries, Anneke Kuperus and Grace Kellogg.

Another thing that has been impacted by the pandemic is our schedule for the high school field renovation. All necessary approvals from local, county and state authorities were received early this spring. It had been our intent to begin the work in April and finish in August. With the

Charles Dickens began "A Tale of Two Cities" with this line: It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. Lately, it feels as though we are indeed living in the worst of times, the best of times.

Covid-19 has brought about what many think is the very worst of times. It clearly has been and continues to be a frightening time for the entire world. As we humans face this difficult time though, we also see some of the best in people and community: Our front line heroes working tirelessly, neighbors helping neighbors, and nonprofits serving their communities. God's church is moving in ways that none of us could have expected just six months ago, reaching more seekers than ever. And Eastern Christian School continued to pursue its mission with excellence, providing a Christ-centered education to every one of our students every day until the completion of the 2019-2020 school year in June. Praise God for his protection and his provision.

Despite the fact that EC quickly transitioned to remote learning, many things had to change and major adjustments needed to be made. Our faculty rose to the occasion and thanks to their incredible effort, Eastern Christian has become a model for remote learning that others followed. Now plans are being made for September. We expect to be providing an excellent Christ-centered education on our campuses, but things will probably look a bit different than they have in the past. I am so thankful for our gifted and dedicated leadership team who is planning for numerous contingencies.

state of emergency and the shutdown of the school, the Board of Directors made the decision in May to delay construction.

This is a temporary delay. The funds given to Campaign 125 are restricted and may only be used for the work outlined in the campaign plan.

Phases I and II of Campaign 125 were completed. That work included security upgrades, classroom renovations, and air conditioning of every learning space on all three campuses including the high school cafeteria. Only the field improvement remains to be completed. Our plans are complete, our construction manager is ready to move forward, and we will proceed when it is clear that it is safe and prudent to do so.

We are so thankful for your support of Campaign 125. We want to assure you that the gifts you have given for this campaign are safely being held in a restricted account dedicated to the renovations of the field. You can look forward to the announcement that construction is starting and we will celebrate together when the field is completed.

EASTERN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL CONTINUED TO PURSUE ITS MISSION WITH EXCELLENCE, PROVIDING A CHRIST-CENTERED EDUCATION TO EVERY ONE OF OUR STUDENTS EVERY DAY UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR IN JUNE.

Special funding

Covid-19 emergency appeal

As you surely know, at the end of the day on Friday, March 13, Eastern Christian School closed all three campuses at the direction of the Bergen County Executive. On Wednesday, March 18, our Remote Learning Plan went live. Each of our 835 students continued participating in live classroom activities each day via the latest educational technology. Eastern Christian School continued to provide our students with excellent Christ-centered education that allowed each student to continue their planned curriculum in order to meet the promotion requirements of the State of NJ.



Several 8th grade boys during High School Preview Day this fall.

While our campuses were empty, schooling continued. And while our students were safely at home, our buildings were being cleaned and disinfected. Along with our own maintenance and custodial staff, outside vendors were brought in with special equipment to fog and disinfect. While this involved significant unbudgeted expense, it assures that our buildings will be clean and safe when on-campus education resumes.

According to NJ12 in a story posted on June 11, 2020, there were 1.2 million claims for unemployment filed in New Jersey, many as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Among those who filed for unemployment were a number of EC parents. More of our families are small business owners who saw their businesses virtually shut down for more than two months. The financial impact of lost jobs and shuttered businesses is significant to those families. ditto of North Jersey, a major source of funding for EC was closed from mid-March until June 16.. The Spring Auction Gala was cancelled and the Spring Golf Outing was postponed until the Fall.. Sports Camp and American Experience were also cancelled. All of this is leading to a severe financial strain for our families and our school.

The Covid-19 crisis is far from over. Praise God, that not one of our students perished from Covid-19.

Now Eastern Christian is determined that not one student should be lost due to the financial fallout from Covid-19. The Covid-19 Emergency Appeal Fund has been established to assist those families who are unable to pay their tuition obligation due to loss of health or income related to Covid-19.

Eastern Christian School is 128 years old. We remain confident that God will continue to lead us through this crisis as he has done with others in the past. It has often been through the sacrificial giving of God's people, that he has provided for the needs of Eastern Christian School. We believe that once again, God is calling on our community to support the needs of his school by supporting our community members in need.

Can you please help us as the EC community faces this increasing challenge?

You can return your gift in the enclosed envelope (check Covid-19 Emergency Appeal). You can also give online by going to www.easternchristian.org/ donate or you can text GIVE2EC to 243725. When asked for a designation, please type "Covid-19 Emergency Appeal".

Your gift will be used to provide emergency tuition assistance to families that have lost their health or employment as a result of Covid-19.

Spring Auction

A Special Thank You to our Spring Auction Sponsors

It was with great disappointment, that a decision was made in April to first postpone and then to cancel our Spring Auction. The auction is an event that our community anticipates each year. It is an opportunity to gather, to laugh and socialize, to eat and drink, and to support Eastern Christian School. It is also the largest fundraiser of the year for Eastern Christian School.

Although the event was cancelled, EC was incredibly blessed by our sponsors and donors. Thank you to the many who planned to attend and donated their ticket price. Thank you to others who sent donations matching what they might have spent at the event. We want to especially thank the following sponsors for their support of our cancelled event. Each one of these sponsors committed to donate the total amount of their sponsorships helping EC to salvage a portion of the anticipated income from the event.

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35 YEARS

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Lindemulder

30 YEARS

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25 YEARS

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20 YEARS

Judy Bruinooge
Cathy Clark
Naomi Braunius

15 YEARS

Lisa Dykstra
Sandra DeMarco

10 YEARS

Amanda Post
Stacie Veenema
James Uitermarkt
Suzanne Kraai
George Lindemulder
Laurie Kuipers

5 YEARS

Ryan Dykstra
Dan Lazor
Anna DeJulia
Max Harvell
Elizabeth Mulcock
Todd Elder
Gail Bushman
Bruce Cooper



*Phil Verrengia
at this year's
graduation taping*

Retirements

Donna Acieno
Joel Apol
Marilyn Bushman
Carol Byma
Kathy Faasse

Donna Holly
Ruth Rudd
Elizabeth Tyvoll
Debra Vandenberg
David Visbeen

Alumni Celebrations

WEDDINGS

James Rohner '02 & Emma Aarnes
3/17/20

Daniel Van Lenten '11 & Alexa Morgan
5/1/20

Andrew Fiedler '13 & Whitney Blount
12/20/19

Julie Van Buiten '13 & Aaron McCombs
3/24/20



Andrew & Whitney Fiedler



Aaron & Julie McCombs

BABIES

Mark & Candace (VandenBerg)
Den Bleyker '00
Phineas David 11/3/19

Brad '02 & Emily Jacobs
Kate Evelyn 12/3/19

Mike '05 & Jessica Steenstra
Casey Anneke 3/14/20

Jonathan & Kristen (Tanis) Cawood '07
Jessica Rose 2/28/20

Simon & Laura (Kuiken) Royle '07
Oliver Charles 2/27/20

Ray '07 & Kimberlee Torbet
Ryder David 12/14/19

Jonathan '08 & Erin (Groenewal)
Gorter '07
Jordan Keith 2/19/20

Shaun '08 & Sheree Patterson
Laiya Jaa'nai Jubilee 11/29/19

Steve & Lisa (St. Pierre) Rozgonyi '08
Brody 11/19/19

Joel '08 & Anna Veenstra
Rose Alexandra 11/13/19

Andrew & Steffanie (Boonstra)
Honoré '09
Steffen Frederick 12/1/19

Brian & Jaci (Woudenberg)
Turner '09
Nolan Henry 12/10/19

Scott De Jong '11 & Haylee Williams
Micah Scott 11/5/19

Ryan '11 & Paige (Rainville)
Visbeen '11
Ezekiel David 1/17/20

Joe & Sarah (Gabriele) Wilmot '12
Savannah Grace 12/16/19



Kate Jacobs



Casey Steenstra



Ryder Torbet



Jordan Gorter



Steffen Honoré



Ezekiel Visbeen



Savannah Wilmot

Upcoming Reunions

Due to Covid-19 restrictions for social distancing and indoor gatherings, the class reunions and Heritage Dinner scheduled for this fall have all been postponed or cancelled. To stay up-to-date, please be sure EC has your current email address. Update online at: www.easternchristian.org/alumni or email: alumni@easternchristian.org

CLASS OF 1960 – 60 YEAR
Postponed to sometime in 2021.

Contact Cal Wiegers at calvinwiegers@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1970 – 50 YEAR
Postponed to possibly next spring.

Facebook page: Eastern Christian Class of 1970
Email: ECClassof1970@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1980 – 40 YEAR
Cancelled.

Email: ECHS1980.reunion@gmail.com

HERITAGE DINNER – 50+ YEARS
Postponed to next fall.



◀ Some members of the EC Class of 1981 had a mini Zoom reunion in March to check in with each other during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Pastor Matt Kuiken '99 and his wife Sabrina in South Korea, meeting up with Sieun Lim '08 and her husband this past October. Sieun lived with the Kuiken family for two and a half years while attending Eastern Christian High School. Matt was in South Korea with members of his church and took the opportunity to reconnect with Sieun in person! ▶



Remembering

FORMER FACULTY/STAFF

C. Ruth Spikeboer
North Haledon, NJ 5/2/20
ECSA Teacher 1942-1986

Walter Zinsmeister
Waynesboro, VA 6/10/20
ECHS Custodian 1971-1993

ALUMNI

Jeanette (Greydanus) De Vries '35
North Haledon, NJ 4/18/20

Arthur Jeltjes '40
Myerstown, PA 2/2/20

Claire (Rienstra) Woudenberg '43
Colorado Springs, CO 4/4/20

Herman Schipper '45
Wanaque, NJ 4/2/20

Marjorie (Sisco) Jeffer '46
Wyckoff, NJ 6/3/20

Charlotte Lendick '46
Grand Rapids, MI 1/6/20

Ralph Martin '46
Bridgewater, NJ 4/21/20
ECSA Board Member 1969 -1971
ECSA Board President 1971-1972

Peter Spaak '46
Holiday FL, 5/24/20

Helen (Voorman) Breure '47
Wyckoff, NJ 4/24/20

Corene (Riemersma) De Graaf '47
Orland Park, IL 5/5/20
Foundation for ECSA Staff 2000-2010

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Ossipee, NH 3/24/30

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Thomas Woudenberg '52
Niantic, CT 1/8/20

Raymond Talsma '53
North Haledon, NJ 2/7/20

Marilyn (Jaasma) Rijkse '53
Wyckoff, NJ 4/13/20

Bernice (Bosma) Vogel '53
Pompton Plains, NJ 2/29/20

Eunice (Meyers) Broersma '54
Franklin Lakes, NJ 5/18/20

Richard Kuipers '54
Grand Rapids, MI 4/7/20

John Last '56
Newfoundland, NJ 4/18/20

Virginia (Toth) Palmer '57
Woodstock, VT 2/19/20

Martina (Dykstra) Hagedorn '60
Wyckoff, NJ 3/28/20

Hugo Borst '61
Pompton Lakes, NJ 4/24/20

Earl Schlossman '63
Midland Park, NJ 5/27/20

Samuel Zuidema '63
Hawthorne, NJ 5/7/20

Robert Kuiken '65
Dallas, TX 6/2/2020

George "Bruce" Algera '68
Mahwah, NJ 3/10/20

Douglas Schuurman '73
Northfield, MN 2/15/20

On the front lines of an invisible war

Dawn (Sweetman) Woudenberg, Class of 1984



“It’s been difficult to put the whole picture into words.”

For the past 30 years, Dawn Woudenberg has worked as a registered nurse. Since 2007, she has served in the surgical ICU at Good Samaritan Hospital in New York State, caring for post-operative patients and others who are critically ill or in life-threatening situations. It has been rewarding work. “I honestly love people. I love caring for them and making a difference in their well-being, both physically and mentally. I enjoy being there for families and providing comfort to them also. It’s continually rewarding,” she shares.

However, this spring, surgeries at Good Samaritan Hospital ceased and Dawn found herself at the front lines of a war she had not signed up for: caring for the most critical COVID patients, mainly ones who required intubation and ventilator support. “These patients have been and continue to be some of the sickest patients I have ever cared for during my 30-year career. This illness causes patients to deteriorate very quickly and almost all efforts to give them adequate oxygen does not work. It is truly heartbreaking,” she adds. “This virus has no discrimination. It can infect anyone. The older and those with medical issues are the most vulnerable, but I have seen very young patients and lots of middle-aged healthy individuals get very seriously ill.”

The pressures for nurses, in this, a hotspot for coronavirus infections, have been immense. Aside from being medical providers, they are virtual liaisons between family who must stay away and the patients they love, substitute spouses and children for those who are dying, and oftentimes, spiritual advisers. On top of this, all tasks are completed wearing a full complement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including scrubs, shoe covers, head covers, gown, 2 masks and a face shield. At the end of the day, the worries follow them home. “There are no words to describe the feeling of working in that situation,” says Woudenberg. “I have seen and done things that I will never forget.”

Woudenberg is thankful for the Christian foundation she received at Eastern Christian School, and is especially grateful for the mentorship from Ray VanderLaan and Steve King that has helped shaped her into the person she is today. She also urges those in the Eastern Christian community to take precaution and to remember healthcare professionals through prayer and encouragement.

She says that her faith has always been a huge part of her career and she has appreciated the opportunities to share Jesus with patients and co-workers. However, “During COVID, my faith has become so much stronger. This circumstance has given me the opportunity to be an example not only to my coworkers, but to my patients’ families as well. I don’t know what I would do during this time without my faith...When COVID first started, I was very scared. I drove to work every day with fear and a heavy pit in my stomach. It was indescribable. But as the days and weeks went on, I felt a genuine peace that only comes from God. I truly did. I felt all the prayers from my family and friends. I was much less nervous and I could work without so much fear over me. I prayed with so many people and co-workers—some that I hardly knew. People were very receptive to it. They wanted it. God put the words in my mouth that I couldn’t have done myself. It laid a foundation for the whole day. We had God on our side. We felt it. We knew it. Satan did not have that stronghold on us. Praise God for all His strength and presence during these times.”

Laura Carey, Class of 2016



It doesn't seem that long ago that Laura Carey was walking the hallways of Eastern Christian High School...and that's probably because it wasn't really that long ago. Less than four years after putting down her Varsity lacrosse equipment and hanging up her HS graduation gown, Laura Carey unexpectedly found herself on the front lines of the COVID crisis.

“

DURING COVID, MY FAITH HAS BECOME SO MUCH STRONGER.

THIS CIRCUMSTANCE HAS GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE AN EXAMPLE NOT ONLY TO MY COWORKERS, BUT TO MY PATIENTS' FAMILIES AS WELL. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WOULD DO DURING THIS TIME WITHOUT MY FAITH...”

—Dawn Woudenberg

A business administration major, Carey graduated from Montclair State University in January (a semester early thanks to EC's Project Acceleration classes) and has been working for Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, NJ since June 2018. With a plan to coach the EC lacrosse team this spring, she was working in the neurology unit and the outpatient rehabilitation department. Increasingly, her work focused on communications between patients, caregivers and insurance companies. Suddenly, however, everything changed. “I have since picked up many shifts in the hospital,” shares Carey. “Our unit has become a completely COVID-19 positive unit. We wear full bunny suits, masks, bonnets, hair coverings, face shields, and whatever other necessary PPE is required to do the job safely.” Carey explains: “The hospital has re-deployed many staff members to help and it is wonderful to see. We have the outpatient therapy department working as supply runners to ensure all units have whatever they need. We have endoscopy or infusion, and so many other nursing specialty roles, redeployed to help on the inpatient units. We even have doctors from the medical groups coming in to assist the physicians. Everyone is working tirelessly.”

Carey credits her education at Eastern Christian School as instilling a heart for service, and she shares that she has relied heavily on her faith during this trying time. “I have certainly

“...FOLLOW SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES, CONSIDER DONATIONS TO THE HOSPITAL, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, PRAY.” —Laura Carey

relied on scripture throughout this pandemic. I consistently find myself reciting different verses in my head. Philippians 4:6-7 (peace which surpasses all understanding) and John 16:33 (Even though we will have worldly troubles, He has overcome the world) are two that certainly come to mind often.

Although she's hopeful she has survived the peak, she asks that the community continue to follow social distancing rules, consider donations to the hospital, and most importantly, pray. “Prayers for good health and calm nerves are of most importance not only to me, but for all of my fellow co-workers. We are working in a rapidly changing environment with innumerable unknowns. This is obviously extremely stressful, and the stress takes a toll on not only your mental health, but also your physical health. We need to be healthy in order to continue to come to work to care for patients, so prayers that we would all be able to remain resilient throughout this crisis would be much appreciated.”

Thank you, Dawn and Laura, for your tremendous and sacrificial work!

THANK YOU FOR PARTNERING WITH US!

*Publication of the 2019 Annual Stewardship Report was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
The following is the list of all donations in 2019 and from January through June 2020 given in
memory of a loved one.*

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- North Haledon Public Library
- Touch the World
- Project Hope

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To commemorate our anniversary we are offering special sales through the month of September!

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September Sales

SEPTEMBER 1-5

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EC COACHES CELEBRATE OUR ATHLETES FROM THE CLASS OF 2020!

We are so thankful for your contributions to our program and the blessings you have been.

These are just a few of the words that come to mind when we think of you:

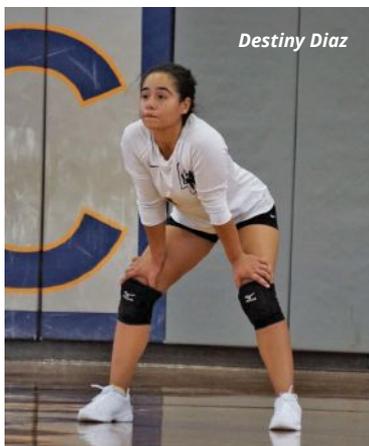


Kim Abbas, Soccer, Track: selfless, excellent sportsmanship, fun-loving

Daniel Bautista, Soccer, Baseball: athletic, acrobatic

Bridget Boonstra, Soccer: confident, team spirit

Leah Boonstra, Volleyball: team leader, unselfish



Molly Boonstra, Volleyball: captain, persistent

Joshua Borduin, Soccer: hard-working, team spirit, unselfish

Francesca Boru, Tennis: good teammate, ready to learn

Emily Candela, Soccer: team leader, hard-working, committed

Luciano Catizone, Track: dedicated, coachable

Matthew Cook, Soccer, Lax: school spirit, never quits, beloved teammate

Elijah Crefeld, XC, Track: servant's heart, all in, great teammate

Chase De Jong, Soccer, Basketball, Golf: well-liked, fun-loving, confident

David De Vries, Soccer, Track: leader by example, perseveres, dedicated

Destiny Diaz, Volleyball, Track: gritty, fearless

Amanda Faber, Soccer: athletic, gifted

Samuel Faber, Soccer, Golf: team leader, dedicated, captain

Analyse Figueroa, Soccer, Lax: determined, strong

Daylyn Fortuna, Track: hard-working, coachable

Grace Kellogg, Track: fearless, leader, captain

Isabelle Lazor, Soccer, Lax: role model, perseveres



Allison Leber, Volleyball: coachable, dedicated

Armando Lopez, Bowling: unselfish, dedicated

Hardy Lyu, Tennis: dedicated, hard-working, team spirit

Allan Mwirigi, Soccer, Track: confident, fun-loving, humble

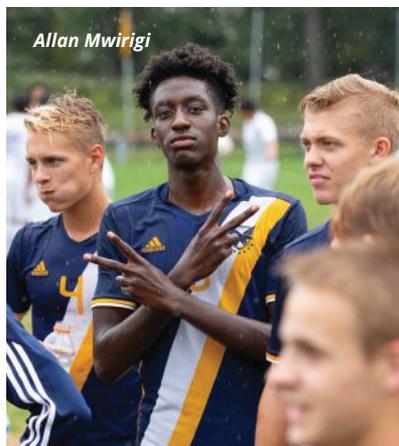
Tricia Owuor, Track: strong, determined, hard-working

Benjamin Parker, Soccer, Basketball: team leader, captain, leader by example

Charles Phillips, Basketball, Tennis: coachable, hard-working

Christopher Pico, Basketball: fighter, perseveres

Clarisse Pierre, Track: determined, nice, good teammate





Cara Shotmeyer

Dorisse Pierre, Track: coachable, joyful, good teammate

Elise Reitsma, XC, Track: strong, leader by example, warrior encourager

Madison Ritsema, Soccer: well-liked, fun-loving, perseveres

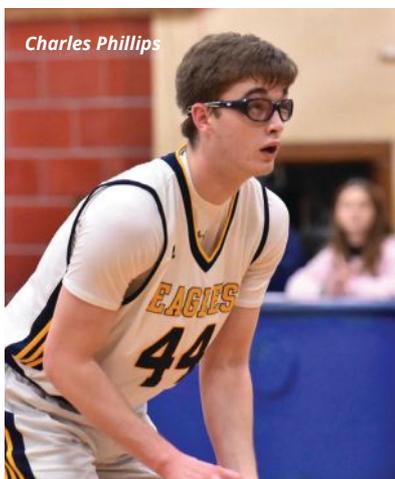
Alexis Schoener, Volleyball, Lax: never quits, determined, selfless

Amanda Segreto, Softball: willing to go the extra mile, leader, hard-working

Cara Shotmeyer, Tennis, Lax: talented, dedicated, focused



Elise Reitsma



Charles Phillips

Kaitlyn Van Olden, Soccer: beloved teammate, humble, works hard

Nicola Venturini, Track: determined, confident

David Visser, XC: hard-working, focused, priorities

Caitlin Westra, Volleyball: coachable, hard-working

Evans Yang, Bowling: solid, hard-working, focused

John Zuidema, Soccer: talented, skillful, focused

2020 SENIOR ATHLETE AWARDS

The EC Athletic Department and community congratulate these outstanding representatives from the class of 2020 for their achievements and thank them for their contributions over the past four years!

David De Vries

Varsity Award (for most varsity letters with 10)

New Jersey Scholar Athlete Award (for outstanding scholarship, sportsmanship and leadership)

Ben Parker

NJIC Sportsmanship Award (for outstanding performance and sportsmanship in conference play)

EC Passaic County Athlete of the Year Award (for most county recognition/ outstanding performance)

Passaic County All County

Cara Shotmeyer

Varsity Award (for most varsity letters with 8)

Naomi Engelhard

National Women in Sport Award (for outstanding overall performance in athletics)

Varsity Award (for most varsity letters with 8)

Destiny Diaz

NJIC Sportsmanship Award (for outstanding performance and sportsmanship in conference play)

Grace Kellogg

EC Passaic County Athlete of the Year Award (for most county recognition/ outstanding performance)

Chase De Jong

Golden Eagle Award (for participating in all 12 seasons of high school athletic career)

MAY OUR LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU AND MAKE HIS FACE SHINE UPON YOU IN THE YEARS AHEAD! YOU WILL BE MISSED AND NOT FORGOTTEN. THANK YOU, AND TO GOD BE THE GLORY!



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