

Building Futures

Summer 2011

Issue No.129



Class of 2011 Graduates

Rochester School for the Deaf celebrated its 135th year of continuous service to families with deaf and hard of hearing children in Western and Central New York State by honoring the proud achievements of ten dynamically diverse individuals at their Class of 2011 Commencement Ceremony. The intimate festivities were held in the Westervelt Hall auditorium on the evening of Thursday, June 23.

Superintendent/CEO Dr. Harold Mowl, Board of Directors Vice President Mr. Bernard Hurwitz, and Director of High School Programs Mrs. Nancy Heaney, were joined by graduates' families and friends, RSD teachers and staff, and school alumni, to witness high school seniors' passage from their beloved school to college or the world of work.

Dr. Mowl was particularly honored to welcome back Mr. Anthony Napoli, a 1994 graduate of RSD, who provided a thoughtful and inspirational commencement keynote address. Mr. Napoli is a Case Manager in the United States Environmental Protection Agency, in Washington, D.C. From RSD, he went on to earn undergraduate degrees in Criminal Justice and Management Development from Rochester Institute of Technology and a graduate degree in Public Administration from American University.

Graduates who addressed the assembly include Salutatorian Rebecca L. Sturm, of Spencer, NY, and Valedictorian Bo D. Kaplan, of Henrietta, NY.

To her graduates Mrs. Heaney said: "Your teachers, your parents, and others who have supported you throughout your lives have taught you the skills and given you the tools to become happy, successful individuals. The RSD school community is very proud of you. I will miss each of you greatly—your smile, your kindness, your work ethic, and your perseverance. On behalf of the faculty, staff and students of RSD, it is with pride and love that I congratulate you and wish you much success in your future endeavors."



Dr. Harold Mowl



Mrs. Nancy Heaney



Rebecca L. Sturm,
Salutatorian



Bo D. Kaplan, Valedictorian



Mr. Anthony Napoli

Rochester School for the Deaf • 1545 St. Paul Street • Rochester, NY 14621

With Regents-level educational programs, outreach services, and cultural support, Rochester School for the Deaf is one of America's premier schools specializing in the education of children with hearing loss. Since 1876, RSD has built successful futures for deaf and hard of hearing children and their families in Western and Central New York State.

To learn more, please contact us today. Call 585-544-1240 (Voice/TTY) or visit www.RSDeaf.org.

Meet the Graduates



Jennessy dela Cruz Empang, of Navotas City, Philippines, is a kind young man who traveled far from his home to attend RSD as an eleventh grade exchange student, through the Council of International Education Exchange Program. He has been a cherished member of our community this school year, and attended many RSD events. Participating in RSD's first annual William "Dummy" Hoy Birthday Baseball

Game as a Red Sox player, Jennessy declared that baseball is a great sport. He will return to his home country to complete his high school education. His passion is his art, but his English skills grew so much this year. For his hard work he was given the award for the most improved high school student in ELA. He is interested in three-dimensional design, which he hopes will turn into a career some day.



Joshua Scott Jones, or "Josh" as his friends call him, of Batavia, NY, has been an integral part of the RSD school community. He participated in RSD's Work Experience Program and developed many skills necessary for the world of work. He also went to BOCES and studied Automotive Services in the Bridge Program. This year he demonstrated good work skills at ARC.

Josh hopes to work in an enclave setting at Genesee County ARC in the field of recycling. In addition to his plan and love for fire engines, Josh hopes to continue his volunteer work in the Batavia Fire Department.



Blaine D. Kaplan, of Henrietta, NY, started his education in RSD's Early Childhood Programs. He has blossomed into a high school graduate with the honor of earning a Regents Diploma. Blaine's high school experience was full of highlights, such as his participation in the Junior National Association for the Deaf, Varsity Soccer and Basketball, Academic Bowl, F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Club, and the Travel Abroad Program to Italy.

Blaine also participated in the Secondary Educational Enrichment for Deaf Students (SEEDS) Program that culminated in a trip to

Japan this school year. He will be attending Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Blaine is this year's recipient of the RSD Board of Directors Award for Leadership Excellence.



Bo D. Kaplan, just like his twin brother Blaine, came to RSD at a very young age. Bo calls RSD his second home, and graduates as the Class of 2011 Valedictorian and recipient of a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation. Bo enjoyed various academic challenges, successes, and friendships during his high school years at

RSD. Of the many opportunities he has had through RSD, he views the SEEDS Exchange Program with deaf Japanese high school students as a very inspiring learning experience. He will attend Gallaudet University, in Washington, D.C., where he will major in Psychology. Bo is this year's recipient of the RSD Board of Directors Award for Academic Excellence. He also received a scholarship toward college from the Rochester Chapter of Hearing Loss Association of America.



Samuel Thomas Kemp, of Clyde, NY, attended RSD for a short time as a little boy. Then, he left with his family for New Orleans, Louisiana, and returned when he was in fifth grade. Sam has developed into an athletic young man who has a great love for basketball. He was a member of the RSD Boys Basketball Team, and was

named to the DeafDigest 2011 All-American Boys High School Basketball Team. In April, he played on the East Squad of the United States of America Deaf Basketball High School All-Star game in Minnesota. He also participated in various work experiences and really does a great job working with elementary age students. Sam hopes to start a career that will allow him to work with children and sports. After graduation, Sam will continue his passion for basketball and working with children by attending the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf at Howard College in Big Spring, Texas, on a basketball scholarship.



Scott D. Matchett is a congenial young man who has enjoyed a variety of academic challenges and successes during his high school years at RSD. He attended RSD, then went to his local public school, in Brighton, NY, and returned as a 9th grader. In addition to schoolwork, he is a competitive backstroke swimmer. He was on the Brighton High School swim team during all of his high school years. Swimming

is definitely not over for Scott. He will participate in the Deaf World Championships in Portugal this August. He is on the United States Deaf Swimming Team and will compete in 2013 Deaflympics. After the rich experience he had with RSD's F.I.R.S.T. Robotics Club, he will be studying Engineering Technology at Rochester Institute of Technology.



Wai Ling Pan is a friendly young woman who has always been motivated to continue learning. She graduated from high school in Malaysia, and came to RSD as an exchange student under the AFS Intercultural Programs in the fall of 2010. Wai Ling took full advantage of her academic classes, extra-curricular activities

and socializing with new friends in high school. She likes many things about RSD, but the lasting impression she had was the RSD Homecoming Pep Rally where students, led by Dr. Mowl, shouted, "RSD is #1." Wai Ling will return home to her family in Kuala Lumpur, as she considers where she wants to go to college, and what she wants to do for a career goal.

Support RSD Rising Stars!

Donor gifts to RSD ensure that the school and its important programs provide exceptional educational opportunities for deaf children, their families, and individuals across Western and Central New York. We hope that you will continue with your loyal support. Please use this form with your own envelope when sending your gifts to RSD, or make your gift online at www.RSDeaf.org/donate.

YES! I am delighted to support Rochester School for the Deaf. Enclosed is my gift of

\$ _____

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(1876 was the year the school was established)
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- RSD Travel Abroad Program in memory of U.S. Army Cpl. Kevin Mowl
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Alexis G. Petz, of Greece, NY, came to RSD at an early age and started her education in RSD's Early Childhood Programs. She has blossomed into a creative young woman who has taken the opportunity to participate in many rich experiences offered to her through RSD and the community. When she was in Middle School, she attended TechGirlz Camp at Rochester Institute of Technology and the National Technical

Institute for the Deaf (NTID). In her senior year, Alexis became a seasoned traveler by participating in not one but two programs; RSD's Travel Abroad Program to Italy, and RIT/NTID's Secondary Educational Enrichment for Deaf Students trip to Japan. She also has traveled to many Schools for the Deaf as the manager for RSD's sports teams and member of the volleyball team. Alexis will attend the Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf at Howard College, in Big Spring, Texas.



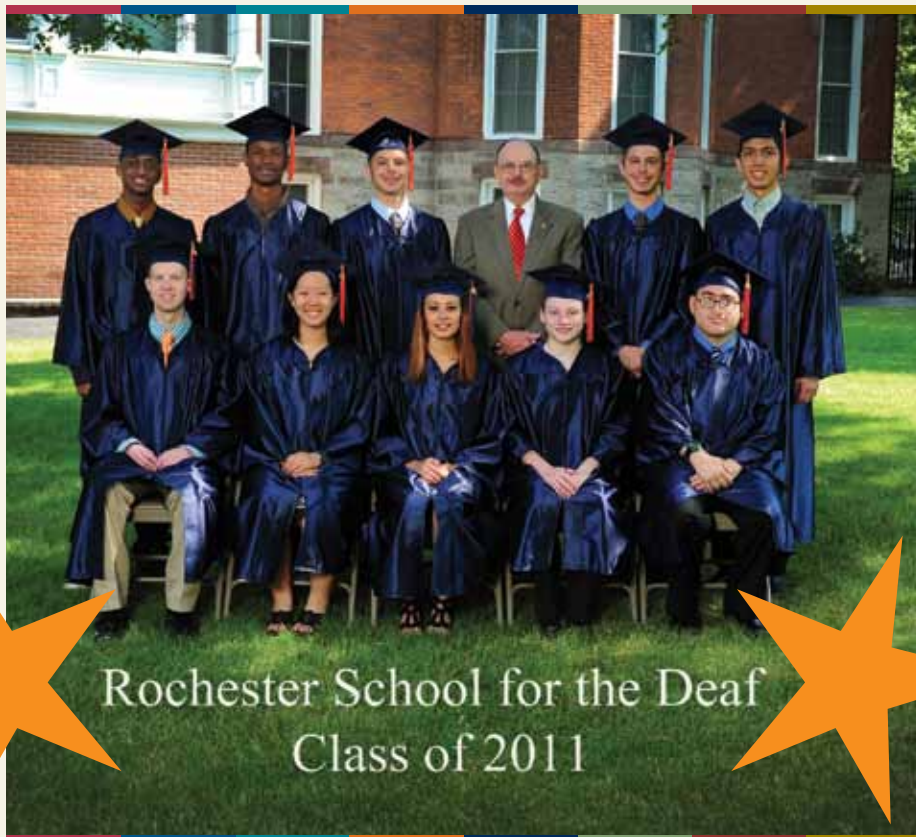
Rebecca L. Sturm, of Spencer, NY, first came to RSD in Middle School. Her teachers and staff at RSD have had the pleasure of watching her develop into a studious young woman who enjoys journal writing. Rebecca works hard and excels in her academic endeavors. When goals are set, she strives to achieve them.

Graduating from RSD as Salutatorian of the Class of 2011, she plans to attend Broome Community College, in Binghamton, NY, where she will major in Computer Security and Forensics. At the recent High School "We Have a Dream" Awards Program, it was announced that Rebecca received a scholarship toward college from the Rochester Chapter of Hearing Loss Association of America.



Mack Mann Thomas doubted his ability to go to college when he was younger. However, through his own hard work and determination, he has proven himself wrong and will attend RIT/NTID. Mack has grown into a young man with confidence knowing that opportunities are his for the taking. He was recognized for

a host of achievements at the 44th Annual Sports Recognition Night Program and RSD High School "We Have a Dream" Awards Program. His most recent accomplishments came through his activism in Albany, NY, for RSD and the 4201 Schools Association. Back in March he participated in Legislative Advocacy Day and again in the Rally for 4201 Schools at the State Capital. He rounded out his senior year by competing on the Wildcat's Track and Field Team and traveling to Rhode Island for the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association Track and Field Championship. Mack is this year's recipient of the RSD Board of Directors Award for Vocational Excellence.



Rochester School for the Deaf
Class of 2011

Third River Ramble Finishes Strong!

Thanks to the largest-ever number of runners and walkers participating, the 3rd annual Rochester School for the Deaf River Ramble was the most successful (so far) 5K run/walk event the school has ever hosted.

At the medal ceremony, RSD parent and River Ramble chairperson Mrs. Amy Williams, along with RSD Director of Fund Development Bill Keenan, announced that the June 4, 2011, River Ramble had raised nearly \$10,000, with pledges and donations still to be counted.

"Earlier this year," said Amy Williams, "my husband Mike and I, along with our sons Jack and Liam, pledged that we were going all out with our family and friends to make this Ramble our most successful ever.

"We went above and beyond our goal, and so did all of you who participated in River Ramble this year," added Amy. "RSD is all about enhancing the quality of education for our deaf children, so that they and their families can grow and thrive. It's an awesome honor and a wonderful feeling to know that so many are actively giving to RSD through this special event."



Adventures in Education 2011 Welcomes



Signmark, whose real name is Marko Vuoriheimo, was born deaf into a world where music was predominately for those who can hear it.

Growing up in Finland, he chased his childhood dream to become the first deaf person in the world to earn a recording contract and perform his rap and hip-hop styles of music in American Sign Language.

October 12-13, 2011, Signmark will bring his unique talents to Rochester School for the Deaf as the special guest presenter for the 19th Annual Adventures in Education program.

Performing alongside Signmark is hip-hop artist Brandon, who lends his voice for hearing audiences, as he supports Marko's

albums, videos and performances. Signmark shows are bilingual and the songs are always performed with American Sign Language and spoken English.

Proving that music is more than just what is heard, Signmark spreads his message over strong beats, low frequencies and deep bass tones. As an artist Marko goes beyond music and lyrics, culture and languages, to help the signing community find their own voice.

Signmark released the world's first sign language hip-hop DVD in 2006. The album "Signmark" takes a stand for equality and aims to bring deaf and hearing people together. Its debut broke prejudices and awakened people to the concerns and aspirations of the Deaf community.

Through the National Eurovision Song Contest, Signmark was introduced to mainstream audiences and worldwide media in 2009, the year he also won The Outstanding Young Person of the World prize. In 2010 he released his second album "Breaking the Rules," which includes the video single "Smells Like Victory."

Advocating for the rights of deaf people in every country he visits, Marko, who holds a Master's degree in Education, teaches deaf children that all things are possible when you follow your dreams.

Visit: www.RSDeaf.org/Adventures where details about Adventures in Education 2011 program, tickets, underwriting and donor information will be posted in the coming weeks before Signmark's appearance at RSD.

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Building Futures is designed to inform staff, families, and friends of Rochester School for the Deaf about the school's programs and services. Communication with RSD is encouraged. To learn more, please contact RSD today. Call 585-544-1250 (Voice/TTY) or visit www.RSDeaf.org.

Harold M. Mowl, Jr., Ph.D., Superintendent/CEO

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