

The Bulletin Board

News from the Hicksville UFSD

A Message from Your

COUNCIL CO-PRESIDENTS

The PTA (Parent Teacher Association) is a powerful, nationwide organization with state and local affiliates throughout the country. Today's PTA is a network of families, students, teachers, administrators and business and community leaders dedicated to the educational success of children and the promotion of family engagement in schools. Each local PTA partners with parents, teachers and schools and promotes parent involvement in our school communities to support our students.

Founders Day is when we come together each year and renew our commitment to be a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for parents and an advocate for their education. We celebrate the legacy and the work of founders Phoebe Apperson Hearst, Alice McLellan Birney and Selena Sloan Butler to better the lives of every child in education, health and safety. These women had a simple idea to improve the lives and future of all children. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, "The greatest gift you can give a child is an imagination." Our founders had imagination and courage, and that same commitment, imagination and courage is what our PTA community also represents here in Hicksville.

In our community we celebrate the commitment of our members who constantly strive to better the lives of our students. The dedication is exemplary and we are grateful for your hard work. We celebrate this perseverance and congratulate all our wonderful honorees. Our 70th celebration of Founders Day will take place at Crest Hollow Country Club on March 2. Thank you for all your ideas, time, effort and presence that make such a difference in our students' lives and community.

This year's District Honored Guest exemplifies the qualities of a strong leader and has been an active part of this district since 1997. We congratulate Miss Stephanie Sullo as our 2023 District Honored Guest. Her dedication to the students, community and PTA go back to her first role as PTA liaison for the teachers of Dutch Lane Elementary School. Each year Miss Sullo assists the PTA in setting up the PARP program and has been a Founders Day Honoree twice. Miss Sullo has served as the district president of the Hicksville Congress of Teachers over the past four years. In this role she has worked with the HCT officers, HPS administration and the Hicksville Council of PTAs to create a healthy and harmonious environment for students, parents, staff, administrators and faculty. Miss Sullo sits on various district committees. She encourages her members to join the PTA and this year instituted a pilot program in which PTA and SEPTA dues were paid through HCT union dues, increasing PTA membership to all units. We thank you and congratulate you again, Miss Sullo, for your dedication, focus and new ideas that continue to make Hicksville a place of which to be proud.

Along with Miss Sullo we will honor the many individuals in our district who come from the seven elementary schools, middle and high school and, last but not least, SEPTA. All your endeavors are respected, and you have received this Founders Day honor from your respective PTA units. We are proud to work with this fantastic community and all the individuals who work hard to make a difference. Being your Hicksville Council of PTAs co-presidents is an honor, and we are proud to be part of this great community that feels like a family. It takes a village, and with your dedication we continue to be great! Congratulations to all our 2023 PTA Founders Day honorees.

Sincerely,
Nicole Fragopoulos and Patricia Bulerin

Introducing...the 2023

PTA FOUNDERS DAY HONOREES

BURNS AVENUE

Nancy Cuevas – Parent
Michelle Lombardi – Staff
Jamie Mendolia – Staff
Christina Pusinelli – Parent

DUTCH LANE

Melanie Barro – Parent
Melissa Morales – Staff
Heather Quinn – Parent
Daisy Vasquez – Staff
Edward Weih – Parent

EAST STREET

John Morgante – Parent
Javier Ospina – Parent
Susan Peterson – Staff
Alvin Smith – Staff

FORK LANE

Amy Huang – Parent
Jillian Leone – Parent
Jacqueline Notti – Staff
Christina Werner – Staff

LEE AVENUE

Elaine Chow – Parent
Michele Fortini – Parent
Maria Ippolito – Staff
Michael Maffeo – Staff

OLD COUNTRY ROAD

Billy Cataldo – Parent
Eileen Chen – Parent
Mark Hesse – Staff
Gaia Manbhat – Parent
Meredith McGuire – Staff
Cindy Vanacore – Staff

WOODLAND

Eileen Cheng – Parent
Corinne Ehinger-Maou – Parent
Dana Mirro – Staff
Jim Pangarliotas – Staff
Erica Sabatella – Staff
Mike Weiner – Staff

HICKSVILLE

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Victor Lam – Staff
Marilyn Paulis-Kneski – Parent
Margaret Pusinelli – Parent
Kim Raspanti – Parent
Lara Richman – Staff
Jan Siegel – Staff

HICKSVILLE

HIGH SCHOOL

John Bertuzzi – Staff
Ryan Chaplin – Parent
Alyssa Fiorese – Parent
Nora Jennings – Parent
Arthur Mediate – Staff
Dr. Pnina Powell – Staff

SEPTA

Bernadette Costas – Staff
John Romero – Staff
Kristen Sullivan – Parent
Jill Zeilander – Staff

*Congratulations to
all our honorees!!!*

SPECIAL DISTINCTION

This year's PTA Founders Day District Honored Guest is Stephanie Sullo. She is being recognized for her outstanding involvement in the community and for her commitment to the students of the district. To learn more about Miss Sullo and her accomplishments, see page 2.

District Honored Guest

Stephanie Sullo has been an active part of the Hicksville Public School District since she was hired in 1997 to be a fifth grade teacher at Dutch Lane Elementary School. As a new teacher, there weren't many committees Stephanie was given the opportunity to join; however, when she learned that she could share the responsibility of being PTA liaison for the teachers of Dutch Lane with a veteran teacher, she jumped at the chance. Stephanie has been the PTA liaison at Dutch Lane ever since. As liaison, Stephanie has attended both Dutch Lane PTA meetings and events throughout the last 26 years. She assists the PTA each year in setting up the PARP program for the students of Dutch Lane and has been the caller at their Penny Auctions since 1998. Stephanie has been honored twice before, first in 2000 and again in 2020, at the Hicksville Council of PTAs Founders Day by the Dutch Lane PTA. She was the first staff member honored twice by the Dutch Lane PTA.

Once Stephanie was able to sit on committees as a tenured teacher, she became a member of both building and districtwide committees. Under the principalship of Mrs. Litzman, Stephanie became a member of the Dutch Lane Site Based Committee. After taking a break from this committee, she

is once again a member, this time under the principalship of Mrs. Rossi. She has also served as a representative on the Curriculum Council, numerous committees to choose both reading and math programs, and under the principalship of Mrs. Strauss became a member of the Board of Education Policy Committee in the year of its inception. Stephanie continued to volunteer for both Dutch Lane and districtwide events throughout her career. She participated in Talent for the Troops and is a staple at homecoming.

For the past four years, Stephanie has served the district as the president of the Hicksville Congress of Teachers. In this position, Stephanie has worked diligently with the officers of the HCT, the administration of Hicksville Public Schools and Hicksville Council of PTAs to create a healthy and harmonious environment for students, parents, staff, administrators and, of course, faculty. Stephanie is proud of the role she played during the pandemic in keeping everyone safe. Currently, she is a member of the Board of Education Curriculum Committee, Board of Education Policy Committee, Districtwide Safety Committee and the Professional Development Committee, to name a few. As president, she spent



STEPHANIE SULLO

the first three years encouraging her members to join the PTAs of Hicksville. This year, Stephanie instituted a pilot program in which PTA and SEPTA dues were paid through HCT union dues. She hopes to continue this program in the future. When asked about Hicksville, Stephanie said, "Hicksville is my home. The students I have taught through the years will always be my kids, and the friendships I have forged here have already proven that they will last a lifetime. I look forward to continuing the work we do to ensure Hicksville continues to be a place in which everyone can be proud."

BURNS AVENUE *Elementary School*



NANCY CUEVAS

Nancy Cuevas has been a lifelong resident of Hicksville, where she resides with her husband and two children. She was also a graduate of Burns Avenue and is so happy both of her children had the same educational experience. Nancy has been a New York City public school teacher for the last 24 years. She has taught in both middle school and high school as a reading specialist and ELA teacher.



JAMIE MENDOLIA

Jamie Mendolia is a lifelong resident of Hicksville, graduating from Dutch Lane, the former Hicksville Jr. High and Hicksville High School. She has now held PTA positions at all three schools as well. Jamie is a Council Delegate for the HHS PTSA. This second-time honoree was previously honored as a Dutch Lane parent and is now being honored as a Burns Avenue Teachers Assistant. Working with the pre-K students and interacting with the children makes each day more rewarding for Jamie. "I am lucky to work at Burns Avenue with great people who support each other," she said. "It means so much to me to be honored by the Burns Avenue

PTA." Jamie holds a bachelor's degree from LIU Post and resides in Hicksville with her two daughters, Eliana and Lyla.



MICHELLE LOMBARDI

Michelle Lombardi is in her 34th year in the Hicksville School District, although she has taken time off for the birth of her two children, Stephen and Michael. She worked at Willet Avenue and Dutch Lane, and is in her 20th year at Burns Avenue. This third-time Founders Day Honoree has been a member of School Site Based Teams and District Curriculum Council for many of her years in Hicksville. She has taught every elementary grade but third! "I am honored to be a part of the village of parents and professionals that work together to support so many children in Hicksville," she said. Her own children, as well as her stepdaughter,

Meghan, and husband, Dean, have been her behind-the-scenes cheerleaders with whom she is truly blessed.



CHRISTINA PUSINELLI

Christina Pusinelli has served on the Burns Avenue PTA for the last six years, two years as council delegate, two years as treasurer and currently as their corresponding secretary. It has been her pleasure to work with amazing teachers, staff and other PTA members at Burns Avenue. Christina has helped at various activities and events over these six years. She lives with her husband, John, and their 10-year-old son, Dominick, who is in the fifth grade at Burns Avenue. "Congratulations to all my fellow honorees!" she said.

DUTCH LANE *Elementary School*



MELANIE BARRO

Melanie Barro has been involved with Dutch Lane PTA for the past eight years. Despite her unpredictable work schedule, Mel has managed to squeeze in time to volunteer in school events such as picture day, various school boutiques and yearbook. But her most favorite thing to do is volunteering as the PTA class helper between her three kids, whom she adores. As a first-time honoree, she said, "I am extremely humbled to be recognized by this community, which has welcomed me and my family with open arms." Mel has lived in Hicksville for the past 12 years with her husband, Rainier, and their three children, DJ, Gabriella and Landon.

DUTCH LANE *Elementary School (continued)*



MELISSA MORALES

Melissa Morales has been a district employee for the past eight years. She began her journey in the Hicksville Public Schools as a permanent substitute for her first two years until she became a full-time teacher in 2017. Since then, she has had the pleasure of being a first grade teacher at Dutch Lane and Woodland. In that time, the first-time Founders Day Honoree has sat on various committees, including Curriculum Mapping, Extended Day, OLWEUS, Safety Committee and Summer School. In addition, Melissa has been a very active participant in many PTA events such as the Penny Auction and Snuggle Night. Melissa holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from LIU Post and a master's in special education (B-2) from Queens College. "I am so grateful to receive this honor," she said. "Hicksville has become my home away from home. I have created such a wonderful relationship with not only my coworkers but also the families in Hicksville!" Melissa has lived in Oceanside her entire life and is married to her high school sweetheart, Matthew, with whom she has a daughter, Reagan.



DAISY VASQUEZ

Daisy Vasquez is a native New Yorker of Hispanic descent and is bilingual. She earned a B.A. in psychology from St. John's University in 1993 and an M.S.Ed. in school psychology from Queens College in 1995. Daisy began her career as a school psychologist in 1995 working with preschoolers with disabilities for 15 years. She then went on to work with the Committee on Special Education of the NYC Department of Education. This is her fourth year at Dutch Lane Elementary School. In addition, Daisy conducts bilingual evaluations throughout the district. Daisy is a member of the Hicksville District Special Education Advisory Committee, and she has collaborated with Hicksville district colleagues in developing and delivering presentations on mental health and special education topics to Spanish-speaking families. "It has been very rewarding to be able to bridge the communication gap and share educational information with the Spanish-speaking families of not only Dutch Lane but the district as a whole," she said. "Being recognized for the Founders Day award is very humbling. I feel fortunate to be part of such a wonderful school filled with educators who are wholeheartedly committed to the children." Daisy is grateful to the Dutch Lane family for having nominated her as a first-time recipient of the Founders Day award. In her leisure time, she enjoys knitting, hiking, yoga and getting together with her book club. Daisy lives in Bellerose with her sons, Jared and Darien.



HEATHER QUINN

Heather Quinn has participated in the Dutch Lane PTA since her youngest of two boys started in 2011. She has served on various committees such as Bake Sales, Book Fair, Graduation Events, Holiday Boutiques, Homecoming, Paint Night, Penny Auction, Talent Show and the list goes on. Heather has worked at Geico for 22 years. After growing up in Hicksville she and her husband bought their first home here together in 2003. She said, "I feel lucky to raise my children in this town and show them both all of the traditions I enjoyed growing up with." She continued, "This community is like no other. In 2019 our youngest child had become ill with myocarditis and it really takes a village!" Heather will never forget how this community rallied together, showing their support and love to her and her family during those difficult times. "We could never give thanks enough." She feels truly honored to be recognized by her friends and peers. Heather and her husband, Brian, are both Hicksville alumni; they started dating at 16 and are married now for 20 years. They have two boys, Brian, 17, and James, 11.



EDWARD WEIH

Edward Weih has been an active member of the Dutch Lane PTA since 1999. He has been a part of several committees during this time, assisting with numerous Penny Auctions, dances and barbecues around the district. He also held the position of council delegate for Dutch Lane PTA. His favorite Dutch event has been Books Alive; it is one of his children's top memories of him. Ed graduated from Empire State College and is a Local 3 electrician in Manhattan. He enjoys attending his children's sporting events and activities, where he participates as much as he can. In his spare time, he likes to travel, go on road trips and attend concerts and games with the kids. Ed is a lifelong Hicksville resident where he attended Lee Avenue, Hicksville Middle School and Hicksville High School. He and his wife Christine have four children, Marissa, Emily, Brendan and Logan.

EAST STREET *Elementary School*



JOHN MORGANTE

John Morgante has been part of the East Street PTA for the past five years. He has volunteered throughout the years at such events as the Family Picnic, Holiday Party and Trunk or Treat. He has helped the PTA not only at events but also behind the scenes, setting up and cleaning up many East Street events. His favorite part of PTA is playing Santa! John grew up in Hicksville, attending Fork Lane, Hicksville Middle School and finally graduating from Hicksville High School in 2005. He met his wife, Lauren, while attending Hicksville Middle School. Together, they have one son named John who is in fourth grade. John works for Pepsi Co. as a diesel mechanic in the Bronx. This is his first time being recognized for Founders Day. "It's always nice to be recognized but no need - I do it for the kids!" he said.



JAVIER OSPINA

Javier Ospina has been active in East Street PTA since 2007 when Patrick, his second child, was in third grade and his wife told him his help was needed. He has helped set up, pack up and assist children at book fairs, holiday boutiques, plant sales and Father's Day boutiques, far too many to count. He has helped at school dances, car washes, bake sales and family picnics. Although Javier has not held an officer's position or chaired a committee for East Street PTA, wherever and whenever he was needed, he was there. (He might have been barely awake, but he was there.) Now that Paul, his youngest, is in fourth grade, he is counting down the days until he is no longer needed by East Street PTA (just kidding). He is glad and proud to be a part of the East Street and Hicksville community. He is honored to receive one of this year's Founders Day awards from East Street PTA. This is Javier's first Founders Day recognition.



SUSAN PETERSON

Susan Peterson has been at East Street since 2017. Mrs. Peterson has a Bachelor of Science degree in childhood education from Dowling College and a master's degree in library media specialist from LIU Post. "After a few hours of working in East Street, I already felt like part of the family," she said. "Teaching is a team sport and when administrators, teachers, staff members and parents work together, the children benefit. Receiving this recognition is such an honor. I am truly grateful to everyone in the district." Since arriving at East Street, Mrs. Peterson's passion for reading and books has been channeled into updating and modernizing the collection in the library. In her spare time Mrs. Peterson likes to garden, cook and, of course, read! She lives with her husband, Pete, in Brentwood, where they raised their two adult children, Sara and Ryan.



ALVIN SMITH

Alvin Smith has been working as a security guard at East Street Elementary for the last four years. He is grateful for this honor he has received. Alvin loves working with the students and staff of East Street. "It brings me joy every day to put a smile on my students' faces!" he said.

FORK LANE *Elementary School*



AMY HUANG

Amy Huang has served on the board for Fork Lane PTA since 2020, holding the office of treasurer for one year and currently serving her second term as co-president. She has volunteered at various school events such as apparel sales, book fairs, family fun nights, Halloween dances, picture days and others. She has chaired committees such as School Store and Holiday Boutique. This first-time Founders Day Honoree attended Bronx High School of Science and Stony Brook University and works as a corporate sales manager. She has three children attending Fork Lane Elementary.

"Thank you for this wonderful recognition," she said. "It is an honor to be selected, knowing all the other amazing parents who were nominated also give their all to the children and the school. Truly grateful for my Fork Lane family and their support."



JILLIAN LEONE

Jillian Leone has served the Fork Lane PTA as corresponding secretary, membership chair and council delegate. She has helped on various committees since 2015, including boutiques, book fairs, plant sales and candle fundraisers. The first-time Founders Day Honoree and Hicksville alumna attended Hofstra University and is a preschool teacher. She has two children, Luke and Alyssa, with her husband, Matt. Jillian is honored to be recognized. "I look forward to volunteering to see the kids' faces light up!" she said. "From the beginning, I have felt welcomed, valued and included by my fellow PTA family and Fork Lane staff. I am so happy to be a part

of this wonderful community!"



DR. JACQUELINE NOTTI

Dr. Jacqueline Notti has been a district employee for the past seven years. She holds a doctorate in school psychology from St. John's University. She has been a school psychologist at East Street and is currently at Fork Lane. This first-time Founders Day Honoree has served on various committees, including the Safety Committee and the RTI Committee. She received tenure in 2018. Dr. Notti, along with her brother, are third-generation educators following in their grandfather's, father's and mother's footsteps. She resides in Farmingdale with her husband, Mike, a Living Environment teacher, and their two children. Scarlett is 5 and Skipper is 2. "Getting to know the Hicksville Community has been a

privilege," she said. "I am grateful for the opportunity given to me seven years ago. Congratulations, fellow honorees!"



CHRISTINA WERNER

Christina Werner has been a district employee for the past 15 years. She has taught in the Middle School, Dutch Lane and is currently at Fork Lane. This is her first time as a Founders Day Honoree. During her time in the district Christina has taught in various classroom settings as a teacher within the special education department. She has sat on Curriculum Council, Site-Based Team, worked summer school, sat on various committees to pick new educational materials and wrote curriculum for Summer Academy. For three years she also served as an administrator for the Evening High School program, and as the director of the Continuing Education program for five years. Christina

has been married to her husband, Harry, for seven years; they remained in their hometown of Seaford and have three children. Harry is 5, and her twins, Hunter and Ava, are 3. "I was blessed to find my home and family here in Hicksville 15 years ago," she said. "Thank you for this honor and congratulations to all honorees."

LEE AVENUE *Elementary School*



ELAINE CHOW

Elaine Chow served as council delegate for the Lee Avenue PTA from 2021 to the present and has been a volunteer since 2015 as room rep and at PTA events. Her favorites included the book fairs and creating class projects with fun materials such as fake snow and balloons. A Hicksville High School alumna and first-time Founders Day Honoree, Elaine works as a visual designer for a nonprofit, and is happy to apply her skills towards the fifth grade yearbook. "This recognition is an unexpected surprise and an honor," she said. "I do this for the kids. It's a way of saying thank-you to so many others who do so much more for mine." Elaine and her husband, Eric, have two children, Etti and Suvi.



MICHELE FORTINI

Michele Fortini is an Astoria native who moved to Hicksville in 1989. Michele has been involved in the Lee Avenue PTA for over 10 years, running numerous events and fundraisers, including serving as chairperson for the Room Rep Committee, Halloween events, Holiday Extravaganza and Diva Day, as well as several others. She is always volunteering at school events and is happy to lend a hand whenever needed. Michele prides herself on making everything about the kids and does it all to see the smiles on their faces. This first-time Founders Day Honoree is greatly honored to be chosen. Michele is the proud mom to four amazing kids, Angelia, Enrico, Gabriella and Nicco.



MARIA IPPOLITO

Maria Ippolito has been a district employee for the past four and a half years as a nurse at Lee Avenue Elementary. While at Lee Avenue Maria has sat on the Safety Committee and has worked at Summer School. The first-time Founders Day Honoree holds a Bachelor of Science in nursing and a Bachelor of Arts in psychology, both from Molloy University. In her spare time Maria loves to travel and cook for her family. "Thank you for this incredible honor and to my amazing Lee family that are always supportive of me," she said. Maria lives in Deer Park with her husband, Michael; they will be married 25 years in May. Maria has two children, Michael, a recent graduate of Florida State University, and Marissa, who is a sophomore at St. Joseph's University.



MICHAEL MAFFEO

Michael Maffeo has been a member of facilities for the past year and a half. Michael started in the district as a night custodian at Dutch Lane after being promoted to lead custodian at Lee Avenue in March 2022. The first-time Founders Day Honoree has come from seven years of work in buildings and grounds at a previous school district and has always had the mindset that the children and staff both deserve a clean and safe environment to learn, teach and grow. He is honored to receive such meaningful recognition for the work he provides along with his crew. "It is ultimately for the children and to ensure great success in their academics," he said. Michael lives in Port Jefferson

Station with his wife, Yesenia, their 2-year-old daughter, Karuna, and 9-month-old son, Michael Jr.

OLD COUNTRY ROAD *Elementary School*



**BILLY
CATALDO**

Billy Cataldo has served in many roles as part of the Old Country Road PTA since 2013, including Field Day, Council Delegate, Correspondence and running Spirit Wear. The second-time Founders Day Honoree is also lead custodian at Fork Lane School. Billy has lived in Hicksville for the past 18 years and is married to his wife, Laura, with whom they have four boys, John, Ryan, Will and Paul. "It's an honor to be recognized, and a privilege to work with so many people through the years," he said. "The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." -Phil Jackson



**EILEEN
CHEN**

Eileen Chen has been involved in PTA for almost four years since her daughter entered kindergarten at Old Country Road. Since then, she has taken on committees such as Baton, Cookies and Milk, Holiday Boutique and Kickline, and has also been president and now vice president. "Thank you for this honor, and I love the OCR family and help making children happy in school life," she said. Eileen has lived in Hicksville for the past 10 years with her spouse, Daniel, and her only daughter, Ava, and works in St. Stephen's Nursery School.



**MARK
HESSE**

Mark Hesse has been a district employee for 16 years, and this is his first Founders Day honor. Mark started as a part-time cleaner in the Middle School while working as a printer. He became full time in 2007, advancing to assistant head custodian in the High School in 2011. He is currently the lead custodian at Old Country Road School. Mark also works as district security. In 2013, he served on the interview committee for the High School principal search. Originally from Florida, he has been a Hicksville resident for 32 years and married to his wife Kathleen for 35 years. His two children, Steven and Alyssa, graduated from Old Country Road, Hicksville High School and Adelphi University. He loves

working at the school his kids attended and said, "The people at OCR have made me feel like family."



**GAIA
MANBHAT**

Gaia Manbhat has served as a vice president and council delegate for Old Country Road PTA. She has chaired multiple committees from 2015 to the present, including Dance, Holiday Guesses, Mother's Day, Movie Night, Talent Show and Yearbook. The first-time Founders Day Honoree is originally from the Philippines. She is working as a library media specialist in the Babylon School District and as a part-time children's librarian at the Bethpage Public Library. "Thank you for the recognition," she said. "I truly enjoy doing my part in helping make OCR the great school community that it is." Gaia has lived in the Old Country Road area for the past 13 years with her husband, Anand, and children, Priya and Benju.



**MEREDITH
MCGUIRE**

Meredith McGuire has been a district employee for the past 23 years. She was hired to pilot the Inclusion Program at Old Country Road School in 2000. She has been a special education teacher who has worked in all grades and is currently teaching second and third grade. Meredith has participated on many committees, such as working to mentor new teachers and participating on interview committees. She has attended many PTA school functions. Last year she was selected as The Nassau County Elementary Mathematics Teacher of the Year. This third-time Founders Day Honoree wants to add, "Thank you for this wonderful honor. I love what I do and have amazing friends that I am so lucky to work with

every day. I love seeing my students' faces light up when they meet with success." She likes to say, "If they can't learn the way we teach, we teach the way they learn." Meredith lives in Bellmore with her husband, Dennis.



**CINDY
VANACORE**

Cindy Vanacore has been working in Hicksville Public Schools for about 29 years. She says it is a wonderful honor to be nominated by Old Country Road's PTA as a Founders Day Honoree. Cindy started out at Lee Avenue School as a teaching assistant in the computer room. After 18 years at Lee, she moved to a clerical position at the high school, and six years later she landed at Old Country Road School, where she has been for the past five years. Cindy loves the creativity that she gets to be part of working with children, teachers and staff at the elementary level. The best part of Old Country Road School is being on a team where everyone works collectively to see students succeed and have fun at the same time. Since Cindy worked in three different buildings, she is happy for the wonderful relationships formed and friends found along the way. Cindy and Lou, her husband of 41 years, have raised their two girls, Justine and Jenna, in Hicksville.

WOODLAND *Elementary School*



**EILEEN
CHENG**

Eileen Cheng has been volunteering her time to the Woodland PTA for over six years. In that time, the first-time Founders Day Honoree has helped on various committees, including Audit, Beautification and Family Picnic. She is the treasurer for the Fifth Grade Committee. "We have incredible PTA parents, teachers and staff in the Woodland community, and I'm happy to contribute and help make the children's elementary school years memorable," she said. "Volunteering sets a good example for my children and shows them how important it is to get involved with our community." Eileen has a BBA in finance from Hofstra University and an MBA in management from Dowling College. Eileen has lived in Hicksville since 2008 with her husband, Gary,

and they are the proud parents of two children, Samantha and Connor. Eileen is grateful and honored to be recognized for Founders Day by the Woodland family.



**CORINNE
EHINGER-MAOU**

Corinne Ehinger-Maou was raised in New Hyde Park where she went on to graduate from Herricks High School and Hofstra University with a bachelor's degree in business. Her career in business management began at The NPD Group where she has spent 26 years as a full-time employee and holds the position of executive director. As a member of Woodland PTA, she's held the position of Council Delegate for two years, and has chaired Founders Day, the Holiday/Spring Boutiques and Miss Chocolate fundraisers. Corinne enjoys volunteering and has had fun participating in Book Fair, Field Day and homecoming. She is honored and humbled to have been chosen as a first-time Founders Day Honoree. Corinne

takes great pride in giving back to her Hicksville community and strongly believes that volunteering is a win-win and making kids smile equals smiles all around! Corinne moved to Hicksville 21 years ago where she lives with her husband, Chris, and son, Christopher Jr.

WOODLAND *Elementary School* (continued)



DANA
MIRRO

Dana Mirro is going into her third year as a district employee. During the 2020-2021 school year, she taught second grade at Lee Avenue and is in her second year as a pre-K teacher at Woodland Elementary School. In that time, the first-time Founders Day Honoree has started many initiatives at the school (You've Been Egged, Thank a Colleague), sat on various committees (Technology Committee and Curriculum Council), and taught kindergarten in the summer school program at Dutch Lane Elementary School. Dana holds a master's degree in early childhood education (B-2), childhood education (1-6) and special education (B-2) and (1-6) from CUNY Queens College. In her spare time, she loves to spend time with her

friends and family. "Thank you for this wonderful honor, it means the world to me, and I love my Woodland family!" she said. Dana lives in North Massapequa with her husband, David, whom she married a little over a year ago, and her Maltese Pomeranian puppy, Dash.



JIM
PANGARLIOTAS

Jim Pangarliotas started his career in his family business, way back when. When they closed the business, he went into security. By far, working in the school system has been his favorite. The energy is contagious and his days are filled with keeping everyone safe and hopefully putting a smile on their faces. Jim lives in Westbury with his wife, Eileen, of 31 years and, of course, their dog, Harley. He is an avid car lover and they love to travel, go to car shows/races and spend time with family. Jim has 18 nieces and nephews ranging from ages 1 to 47. "This honor literally took my breath away," he said. "Although I have only been at Woodland for two years, I love working here and have met the most wonderful people. It truly is a family. I enjoy coming to work every day because of all of you. Thank you for this honor."



ERICA
SABATELLA

Erica Sabatella began her teaching career in Hicksville in 2001 as a permanent substitute teacher. She has taught pre-K, kindergarten, first, second and fourth grades at Woodland since 2002. Erica graduated from Dowling College with a degree in elementary education and psychology. She also received a double master's degree in literacy and special education from Hofstra University. She lives in Farmingdale with her husband and four children. Erica is honored to be recognized by the staff and families at Woodland for doing what she loves and for helping students reach their goals.



MICHAEL
WEINER

Michael Weiner has worked in the Hicksville School District for over nine years. He began as a substitute cleaner, traveling to whichever school he was needed at. In early 2015 he became a nighttime cleaner at Woodland Elementary School, the position he still holds today. The first-time honoree said, "I am so happy to do what I love here at Woodland. I'm grateful that the cleaning I do hasn't gone unnoticed. I truly appreciate this honor." Michael enjoys watching and playing sports. He was an ice hockey goalie for many years and won numerous awards with the teams he played on. Michael graduated from Nassau Community College. He resides in Old Bethpage.

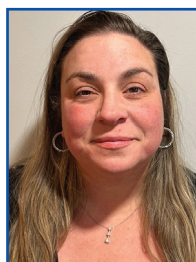
HICKSVILLE *Middle School*



VICTOR
LAM

Victor Lam has been teaching family and consumer sciences at Hicksville Middle School for six years. Although starting his career here in Hicksville at both the High School and Middle School, he eventually was able to focus primarily at the Middle School where his heart belonged. He spends a vast majority of his time collaborating with colleagues to improve the family and consumer sciences department experience for the Middle School students. Victor enjoys seeing his students outside of the classroom at various dances and sports events. He relishes spending his free time traveling the world and experiencing culture through food. Victor is delighted to receive his first nomination as one of this year's Founders Day honorees. He

would like to thank his friends and colleagues, especially Laura Amundsen and Dr. Rose Borda, for their continued support over the years.



MARGARET
PUSINELLI

Margaret Pusinelli has been an active member of the PTA since 2010 when she began serving at Burns Avenue School. Margaret has held the positions of Treasurer, Vice President and Council Delegate. At both Burns Avenue and the Middle School, Margaret has chaired and participated in many committees including Site Based, Bake Sale, Book Fair, Field Day, Holiday Pie Sales, Boutiques, Plant Sale, Scholarships and many more. Margaret said, "I am thrilled to be a part of this wonderful Middle School and I am honored to be recognized." Margaret has lived in Hicksville for her entire life. She has been married to her husband, Frank, for 19 years. Together they have three wonderful children Isabella, Joseph

and Nicholas.



MARILYN
PAULIS-KNESKI

Marilyn Paulis-Kneski has shared wonderful experiences with her seventh grade son, Mackas, by volunteering throughout his school career. She began her involvement in 2016 with the Lee Avenue PTA by joining various committees and serving as a Council Delegate from 2020-2021. Moving up to Hicksville Middle School, Marilyn was the homecoming chairperson for the past two years and hopes to continue that streak in 2023. Marilyn has also been involved with the Hicksville Middle School PTSA-sponsored book fairs, clothing drives, dances, recreation nights and Family Bingo. She stated that "it is such an honor to receive this recognition. Whether I was selling snacks at a dance or straightening up book displays, I witnessed my child's life from a different angle. Moments like

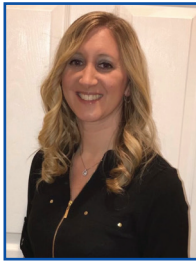
these are limited, but they are priceless. This is a reward in itself." Marilyn is a second-time Founders Day Honoree who moved to Hicksville in 2004 with her husband, Michael. Both are pleased with the educational, athletic and social opportunities the Hicksville School District provides for their son. Marilyn is a retired NYPD detective and now consults as an open source intelligence analyst. She also volunteers as a catechist at St. Ignatius Loyola Church and as the registrar for the Hicksville American Soccer Club.



LARA
RICHMAN

Lara Richman has been teaching sixth grade science at the Hicksville Middle School since 1994. This is Lara's 25th year as the PTSA teacher liaison. During her years of service, Lara has been on several committees and lead workshops in the Academic Enrichment program. She has participated as a judge for the Gregory Museum Science Fair and is often seen cheering for her students at extracurricular activities. She said, "I am so grateful to have a home at Hicksville Middle School. Thank you for this special honor. It is my pleasure to teach your children." Lara holds a master's degree in elementary education and a Ph.D. in educational administration. In her spare time, she enjoys spending her time with her husband, Artie, and her sons, Max and Jake.

HICKSVILLE *Middle School* (continued)



KIM RASPANTI

Kim Raspanti is a lifetime resident of Hicksville. She attended Old Country Road, Hicksville Middle School, Hicksville High School, Cultural Arts Center of Performing Arts for Dance and was a Starlet. She has a son, Mikey, in seventh grade who she adores and loves to share Hicksville traditions with. Kim works full time as a supervisor at an insurance company and has been an active member of the PTA since her son entered kindergarten in 2015. This is her second time as a Founders Day Honoree. She was recognized in 2019 by Old Country Road where she held positions as co-vice president and co-president along with chairing many committees. Kim is currently co-president at the Middle School, co-chair of Founders Day for Council and recently chaired District Wide Family Bingo. She continues to volunteer her time at Old Country Road choreographing the fifth grade opening and finale at its yearly talent show. Kim truly enjoys volunteering, trying new ideas and giving it her all. "It's all about putting smiles on the kids' faces, which makes all the hard work seem easy," she said. "It's always about making the best for our children."



JAN SIEGEL

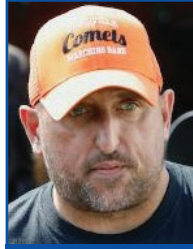
Jan Siegel has been a teacher in the Hicksville School District for over 34 years and is teaching seventh grade math at the Middle School. This first-time Founders Day Honoree has a bachelor's degree from Skidmore College and a master's degree from Hofstra University. In her spare time, she enjoys relaxing in her pool, traveling and going to concerts with her partner, David. Jan was named NCMTA Teacher of the Year in 2002 and over the years has been an adviser to many clubs. Currently she is co-adviser for student activities and seventh grade activities. Jan has two grown children, Alex, who is pursuing a career in environmental science, and Nicole, who is following in her mother's footsteps as a high school math teacher. She said, "I will be retiring at the end of this year and there is no better way to end a fantastic, rewarding career than with this honor."

HICKSVILLE *High School*



JOHN BERTUZZI

John Bertuzzi has been a science teacher at Hicksville High School for the past 28 years and the Hicksville High School bowling coach for 21 years. The first-time Founders Day Honoree has been on the school safety committee and is most proud of his 2006 Teacher of the Year award as well as his girls varsity bowling team's 2008 county championship. John is also a class adviser of the Class of 2025 that holds the banner contest victory at this year's homecoming. "I have gotten to work with many great colleagues and young people during my time here," he said. "Thank you for adding another special signpost on my Hicksville journey with this wonderful recognition." John got married to his wife, Roseann, at the Crest Hollow Country Club two days after being hired by Hicksville!



RYAN CHAPLIN

Growing up in an apartment in Brooklyn, Ryan Chaplin loved Hicksville the second he moved here in 2005. He, along with his wife, Jen, are so impressed by the education their boys, John Ryan (10th grade) and Connor (eighth grade), are receiving here in our Hicksville schools. The relationships they made once their boys started school at Fork Lane are some of the most cherished. Ryan has always enjoyed being involved at events at their boys' schools, from chaperoning dances, to facilitating Career Day at both HMS and HHS, to barbecuing at Family Fun night at Fork Lane or the Courtyard dance at HMS. He is always happy to participate. Ryan's involvement was taken to the next level the moment John Ryan joined the Hicksville Marching Comets. As co-president he has helped lead and organize the Band Parents Association as they supported the band on their journey to conference champions! Go Comets!



ALYSSA FIORESE

Alyssa Fiorese is a second-time Founders Day Honoree. She has been a part of the PTA for over 15 years where she started by serving on the East Street board when her children were students there. Alyssa has been on the SEPTA board for the last four years, as treasurer, president and currently vice president. She's also on the HHS PTSA and Hicksville Council of PTA boards this year. "It is an honor and greatly appreciated to be one of HHS honorees, but it is a collaborative effort," she said. "We do it to make all our children smile!" She enjoys chairing the membership and scholarship committees the most, because it's something she can do at home after work. Alyssa has been a teacher at PS 143Q in Corona since she started teaching over 20 years ago and is currently teaching second grade. She has lived in Hicksville for the last 21 years with her husband, Vincent, and children, Jordana and Cameron.



NORA JENNINGS

Nora Jennings has been a member of the PTA since 2010 starting at Dutch Lane School. She has served as a board member for Dutch Lane, Hicksville Athletic Booster Club, Hicksville High School PTSA and Hicksville Middle School. Nora has helped with numerous committees through the years. She has enjoyed every minute of volunteering and has made some amazing friends. This will be the third time Nora has been honored as a Founders Day Honoree. She is a graduate of the High School of Art and Design, and has worked as an insurance underwriter for the last 14 years. Nora has been a Hicksville resident for 21 years and lives with her husband, Jimmy, daughter, Teresa, and mother, Bernadette.



ARTIE MEDIATE

Artie Mediate has taught English at Hicksville High School for 26 years. He mainly teaches 11th and 12th grade English, along with a Music and Lyrics English elective course he created. This first-time honoree has been the boys and girls golf coach for 14 years, a member of numerous committees, and a founding member and performer for the districtwide Talent for the Troops event (which raises funds for wounded veterans). Artie is an avid golfer, and he also enjoys playing ice hockey and drums as well. He has been married to his wife, Missy, for 25 years and has one daughter, Alexa, who is in the nursing program at Clemson University. Artie believes it is an honor to come to Hicksville High School every day and teach English, and he considers the students, faculty and staff to be a part of his family. Artie thanks the PTSA for this incredible honor, and he is humbled and grateful for being selected.



DR. PNINA POWELL

Ten years of research and teaching at the medical school, where she viewed the lack of chemistry knowledge among medical students, convinced Dr. Pnina Powell to become a High School science teacher to attempt to fix this lack. For the past 23 years the first-time Founders Day Honoree has taught all levels of chemistry, physical and environmental science, as well as science research, at the Hicksville High School. In that time period, her students excelled in their chemistry AP and Regents exams and some participated in high-level science research competitions. During her years in the Hicksville School District Dr. Powell has sat on numerous school and district committees, including Site Based, Shared Decisions, and Safety Committee, and has been a member of the High School PTSA for the past 20 years. In her spare time Dr. Powell loves to read and extend her science knowledge. She spends her summers in Israel visiting her family, but during the school year she sees her students and colleagues as her extended, loved family members. "Thank you for seeing me as a suitable recipient for this honorable award," she said. "Becoming a high school teacher was a rewarding career switch."

THE HICKSVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Administration Building
 200 Division Ave.
 Hicksville, NY 11801

NONPROFIT
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 HICKSVILLE
 NEW YORK
 PERMIT NO. 126

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Brenda Judson, President
Sunita Manjrekar, Vice President
Linda Imbriale, Secretary

Trustees:
Phil Heckler
Irene Carlomusto
Annette Beiner
Danielle Fotopoulos

Marianne Litzman
Superintendent of Schools

****ECRWSS****

Postal Customer
 Hicksville, NY 11801

SEPTA



**BERNADETTE
 COSTAS**

Bernadette Costas has worked as a teaching assistant at Dutch Lane for the past 24 years. She has also worked the Extended School Year program. This second-time Founders Day Honoree said, "I am deeply honored to receive this award." Bernadette truly loves working with the children at Dutch Lane, and by working the summer program she can see the wonderful progress of her past students. Bernadette is a life-time Hicksville resident. She is married, and her two daughters received their education in Hicksville Public Schools. During the warmer months, you can find her at the beach with family and friends. She is inspired by this message from Mr. Rogers: "Anyone who does anything to help a child in his life is a hero."



**JOHN
 ROMERO**

John Romero has been a special education math teacher at Hicksville Middle School for the past four and a half years. In that time, the first-time Founders Day Honoree founded the Social Awareness Club, co-advised 8th Grade Activities, started "Heart Motivation and Snacks" for vocational students, served on the PBIS Committee and was a member of the Hicksville Middle School Site Based Team. John holds a bachelor of science in accounting from Villanova University and a master's in adolescent education from St. John's University. In his spare time, John enjoys watching the Mets, exercising and spending time with his family. "This honor is the highlight of my professional life, and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to live my dream as a special education math teacher in a truly special district," he said.



**DR. KRISTEN
 SULLIVAN**

Dr. Kristen Sullivan has served as the vice president of Hicksville SEPTA for the past two years and holds the position of treasurer. She has sat on many committees, including the scholarship and membership committees. Kristen also is a co-president of the Hicksville Band Parents Association. This first-time Founders Day Honoree has enjoyed helping with homecoming and becoming more involved with the PTSA. Dr. Sullivan has worked as a practicing veterinarian for the last 20 years. "Thank you for this wonderful honor," she said. "It has been very rewarding to work with this amazing group to help families navigate the special education process." Kristen is a long-time Hicksville resident and is married to James.



**JILL
 ZEILANDER**

Jill Zeilander has been a speech-language pathologist in the Hicksville Public Schools for 27 years. During her time at Hicksville, Jill spent 16 years working with students in the Dutch Lane special education preschool. From there, in 2011, she continued working at the Middle and High schools. Jill is currently working full time at the High School. The Founders Day Honoree has sat on various committees over the years and is working towards certification in a reading program. She holds a master's degree from Adelphi University and a certificate in school leadership. She truly enjoys working with her students and seeing their progress. In her spare time, she loves spending time with her husband and two daughters. She enjoys the beach, reading, traveling and walking with her dog, Parker. "I am truly honored and grateful to be recognized with this award!" she said.

They have two children, Connor and Kaitlyn, who attend Hicksville High School.

A TRADITION OF DEDICATION

More Than 60 Years of Founders Day Honorees...

Gail Hunker	2022	Deirdre K. Ryan	2005	Carol Marks	1988	John McGovern	1971
Catherine Temps	2021	Marianne Litzman	2004	Patricia Rooney	1987	Felice Stein	1970
Irene Carlomusto	2020	Terrie Perkowski	2003	Gerald Klein	1986	Marge Giannelli	1969
Christine Weih	2019	Mike Dunn	2002	Arlene Rudin	1985	Marion Coffey	1968
Susan Strauss	2018	Rosemary Planz	2001	William Becker	1984	Kathy Janca	1967
Brenda Judson	2017	Stephen Aronowitz	2000	Nancy Staron	1983	Geraldine McManus	1967
Dave Bell	2016	Pat Love	1999	Lorraine Losche	1982	Mary Raffa	1966
William McKee	2015	Rose Walker	1998	William Feigin	1981	Louis Millevolte	1965
Effie Rafaelides	2014	Leslie Mann	1997	Dr. Frederick Hill	1980	Donald Abt	1964
Janice Fitzgerald	2013	Nancy Callari	1996	Barbara Smith	1979	William O'Donnell	1963
Carol Foran	2012	Peggy Theis	1995	Shirley Smith	1978	Mrs. Oliver Foran	1962
Dolores Garger	2011	Robert Durso	1994	Norma Dagna	1977	Mrs. M. Polsenski	1961
Susan Powell	2010	Nancy DeSorbo	1993	Richard Evers	1976	Leon Galloway	1960
Maureen K. Bright	2009	Richard Hogan	1992	Muriel Schwartz	1975	Bernard Braun	1959
Patty Angenbroich	2008	Norma Goerke	1991	Lou Penque	1974	Mrs. Harry Glecker	1958
Donna Clark	2007	Terry Moehringer	1990	Grace Cranmer	1973	Mrs. Clinton Foster	1957
Nancy Rooney	2006	Charles Wayne	1989	Neil McCormack	1972	Dr. Eric LeBarron	1956