

RBR — OVER 100  
YEARS OF ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE

SUMMER 2018  
COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

RED BANK REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL



# Congratulations Class of 2018- Best of Luck on your Next Adventure!



On June 21, the RBR Class of 2018 took to the stadium field and graduated to the next chapter of their lives. The Class of 2018 is purported to be among the most talented to graduate in many years. A testament to this was RBR Principal Risa Clay's announcement that the class had earned over \$18 million in scholarship money, more than double that of the previous year. The vast majority of students will be attending college in the fall while some will serve proudly in the Military and others seek employment. Valedictorian Harry Jain (Red Bank), a student in RBR's Academy of Engineering, selected Yale University to study electrical engineering and computer science. Salutatorian Willow Martin (Little Silver), a creative writing major in the Visual and Performing Arts Academy, will attend Cornell where she will study physics and astrophysics.

In his valedictorian speech, Harry Jain stated, The strength of our collective group is something I want to talk about...We teach each other, we motivate each other, we inspire each other to be something more than we could be alone."

Using an ancient allegory, Salutatorian Willow Martin offered some sage advice to her class for these controversial times, "If our individual pursuits of truth are genuine, we need to engage in conversations with those who view life through different lenses, who apply different models in their analysis of existence. We have to learn to listen to our peers without hating them for contradicting our own views. For their truth, while it may be different from our own, is not necessarily false."



RBR Valedictorian Harry Jain & Salutatorian Willow Martin



RBR graduates Marine Corp bound

Just a few of the many colleges welcoming RBR graduates next year include: MIT, University of Virginia, Stevens Institute of Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology, The College of New Jersey, Bucknell University, Rochester Institute of Technology, University of Maryland; Rutgers University; Brookdale, Syracuse University, Oberlin College, George Washington University; University of British Columbia, and the University of St. Andrews. Scotland.



Olivia Smelas, President of the Class of 2018

Class of 2018 President, Olivia Smelas, Little Silver, best summarized the experience of her class stating, "Together, we endured the anxiety of the school shooting epidemic, watched natural disasters wreak havoc on our nation and the world, and saw our country split on numerous occasions by controversial legislation. Unbroken and relentless, the Class of 2018 persisted through conflict, navigating complicated issues with grace and intelligence, some of its members going so far as to organize a wildly successful 5k run to bring awareness to mental health and suicide, and participate in a local gun control march in Red Bank. We will never just be the audience to change, nor will we be victims of it. We ARE the change and will continue to be as our voices grow only louder and more confident."

After the congratulatory speeches and the delivery of over 300 diplomas, the obligatory caps were sent flying. Many were distinctively decorated with college logos and mascots, military branch of service or dreams and aspirations. What goes up, does come down, with the exception of one sole graduation cap being pulled by its owner's drone staying aloft in the bright blue sky.



## DECEMBER 11 REFERENDUM UPDATE

Red Bank Regional (RBR) is an exceptional public high school noted for its unique and rich programs and academics. Recent accolades include recognition by NJ Monthly Magazine, The Washington Post, and the award of an "A" rating by Niche.

RBR's state designated Career Technical Educational (CTE) programs in the Visual & Performing Arts, Information Technology, Engineering, and Early Childhood Education enable the district to enroll tuition students from all over Monmouth County. This tuition program both reduces the cost of education to our taxpayers and makes RBR's unique and diverse offerings possible. With our own sending school populations growing, and more of our constituent students choosing to attend one of the above-mentioned CTE academies, the district has been forced to turn away qualified tuition students because of space limitations. The continued loss of these funds threatens the future existence of these exceptional programs and will also impact spending in other vital areas. The recent loss of revenue has already been significant. RBR took in \$4 million in tuition four years ago. Last year that amount dropped to \$2.8 million. By comparison, total state aid is approximately \$1 million.

In order to protect and enhance these programs and to meet other facility needs, the school district will hold a referendum on December 11, 2018. The voters in the towns of Red Bank, Little Silver, and Shrewsbury will be asked to vote on two questions.

The first question, projected at \$19.9 million, qualifies for state debt service aid which is anticipated to reduce the final cost to \$15.7 million. This question will fund the addition of 10 classrooms, renovations to other educational spaces and the replacement of a roof that is reaching the end of its lifespan.

The second question, projected at \$2.2 million, will finance long-sought improvements to our athletic facilities, as requested by our stakeholders in the district's strategic plan. The existing grass stadium field will be replaced with a turf field, the concession stand will be upgraded, and stadium bathroom facilities will be added. The second question is not eligible for state debt service subsidy and can only be approved if the first question passes.

While the exact state subsidy amount will not be determined until late August or early September, we can estimate that the tax increase for an average assessed home in our three sending school districts will average between \$82 and \$152 per year in 2023 and will decline to between \$52 and \$92 after 2023 as existing debt is retired.

Over the summer, we will be working on a website to detail all the pertinent referendum information. We are planning a major referendum newsletter to be mailed to our entire sending school communities in late summer and we will hold a special public information session in the fall at the school district. We will also provide a special informational presentation to any group in the towns of Red Bank, Little Silver and Shrewsbury that requests it. We will be reaching out to many known groups, to arrange such meetings. For any questions, or to request an informational meeting, please email [RBR-referendum@rbrhs.org](mailto:RBR-referendum@rbrhs.org).

# MEET SOME SHINING STARS FROM THE CLASS OF 2018

**SHELLEY BANFIELD** of Shrewsbury explored all the different avenues open to her at RBR. A strong science and math student, she enrolled in RBR's Academy of Engineering where she knew "cool things were being created." She also took computer science classes that furthered her career interests. As an STS Peer Leader and high school mentor in the year-long Girls Who Code program for middle school students, she furthered her leadership credentials. She was subsequently recognized as a NJ affiliate winner of the Aspirations in Computing Award for women in S.T.E.M.



Shelley's academic record is exemplary. She has been on the honor and high honor roll throughout her high school years. She is an AP Scholar, president of the Math Honor Society, Treasurer of the Technical Honor Society and a member of the National, Science and English Honor Societies. She competed with her fellow students against other high schools as a member of the Science and Math Leagues, serving a vice president of the latter. As most students in these societies, she gave back regularly by tutoring her classmates.

She nurtured other fun interests in high school by cooking up delectable dishes in the Culinary Club for four years. She also ran track and cross country for most of her high school career and earned a Varsity Letter. Her proficiency in Spanish helped earn her the biliteracy certificate. When visiting her mother's native Ecuador, she and her sister decided to bring much needed school supplies to the impoverished people in the area. That charity work earned her the 2018 Monmouth County Caring Award. She considers the highlight of her high school career, however, the times she spent each month mentoring middle school girls in the fascinating world of coding and computer science in an attempt to demystify the stigma of S.T.E.M that has kept female participation at bay. Shelley received a generous scholarship to Rutgers' Honor College where she will major in computer science.

**CURRAN LANE**, Little Silver, is a very interesting and polite young man who addresses adults as "Sir" and "Ma'am." This probably comes from his experiences on three towns' emergency service squads. He serves on the Little Silver Emergency Medical Services Squad and both Little Silver and Red Bank's volunteer fire departments. He spends his summers as a life guard in Sea Bright where he is only the second 18 year old sergeant in Sea Bright Ocean Rescue and Aquatic Rescue history. He was happy to display some of his emergency training for his fellow classmates, when he participated in the mock crash rescue during last month's Project Prom program to keep kids safe during prom season. In addition to his many hours of volunteer emergency service work, for the past four years he has participated in his town's Snow Shoveling program which matches its youth to its senior citizens for snow shoveling and seasonal yard maintenance.



Curran has a strong academic record at school in the Academy of Engineering as he believes it is a "cool department covering everything from computer design to building things." He took most challenging classes such as AP physics, AP calculus, AP English and many other honor courses.

He excelled as an athlete, earning varsity letters in both swimming and lacrosse which he played all four years of high school. He also loves running and participated in running sports during his freshman years. He is an adroit surfer on both coasts of the country. His interest in music led him to pick up the guitar and ukulele which he learned to play without formal lessons.

When it came time to choose a college, he decided to seek

a different path. He scored well and gained acceptance and scholarships to several colleges. But he knew he would miss the camaraderie and the action he enjoyed on all his emergency service squads. He decided that the Marines were a good fit for him and will be shipping out in September to Parris Island School of Infantry. His scores on his vocational battery test were so high that he was encouraged to attend Recon school, which trains future special ops capable- Force Recon Marines. He says, "College is definitely in my future" and there are many ways to do it through the G.I. Bill, but now he looks forward to his next exciting adventure.

**SUUBI MONDESIR** of Red Bank is a creative writing major in the Visual & Performing Arts Academy, who has a passion for writing and journalism. She was a finalist candidate for the New York Times Nicholas Kristof poetry contest about race, and has earned numerous Scholastic awards including gold and silver keys for her writing. She also participated in the Hugh N. Boyd Journalism Diversity workshop at Rutgers University to help hone her skills and prepare her for a very important job opportunity. For the past two years, she has served as the PR specialist for the T. Thomas Fortune Committee, which administers the long-term project to restore the house of T. Thomas Fortune. He was born into slavery during 19th century America and rose to become an accomplished orator, civil rights leader, journalist, writer, editor and publisher. He settled in Red Bank in 1901 and his home was declared a national landmark in 1976. Suubi devoted herself to the project writing press releases, creating a T. Thomas Fortune Foundation blog, and managing all social media platforms including Instagram and Twitter. She also attends meetings and works at planned events for the foundation. For her invaluable help she was honored by the T. Thomas Fortune Foundation and the State of New Jersey with a resolution for outstanding academic achievement and community service.



Her community service extends to her church, where she grew up and has guided its youth as the president of the Youth Ministry. She is most proud of project Mosaic—teens for religious diversity, where she led her peers to visit other houses of worship to bridge divides between religions and perform charity outreach. Other leadership accolades include mayoral recognition from the YMCA Leadership Program and a nomination to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum for digital media, film and journalism. At RBR, she was selected as a STS Peer Leadership Officer to mentor freshmen.

Academically, Suubi is a stellar student on the high honor roll with membership in the National Italian, Science, and National Honor Societies. She is also a member of the National Honor Society of High School Scholars. She participates in RBR's Key Club and was previously a JV Field Hockey player. Suubi will be attending Fairleigh Dickinson University where she will study communications and journalism.

**DOUGLAS PENA** of Red Bank came to RBR as an English language Learner (ELL) student. His natural intelligence and curiosity quickly established him as leader in his community. He mastered English and tutored his fellow ELL students. He served as a STS Peer Leader for his fellow Hispanic students stating, "They needed help in navigating a new environment."



Douglas also challenged himself academically taking some of RBR's most challenging courses such as pre-calculus, honors anatomy and physiology and AP Spanish. His writing abilities impressed his teachers and he was encouraged to write the first Spanish language articles for The Buccaneer, the RBR

student newspaper. Douglas made the honor roll and gained admittance to the Spanish, Science and National Honor Societies. He was an active contributor to the Multicultural Club and the Culinary Club. He was awarded the "Outstanding Language Acquisition Award" at the senior awards assembly.

In appreciation for the good fortune he has experienced in his adopted country and high school he is determined to share the skills he has acquired. He volunteers his services as a translator for the Hispanic parents at the Red Bank Primary school during parent and teacher conferences. He is a member of the Student Advisory Council where he helped plan special assemblies on such important topics as the environment and immigration. For the past three years, he has volunteered his services at Soul Kitchen as he explains, "I am Cooking good food for the poor in my community because I understand the difficulties of being poor and hungry." Douglas also works as a cook in a local restaurant to help support his family. He recently was awarded the Andrew Kroon Memorial Scholarship to help afford Brookdale College where he intends to major in biology. His dream is to become a family physician and practice in his own community as he states, "It is important to pay it forward in order to become a better person."

**ASH RIEGLER** of Union Beach is a creative writing major in the Visual & Performing Arts Academy. While he had a choice of which high school to attend, he believes his decision to attend RBR was life changing for several reasons. He loves the tight-knit community of his fellow creative



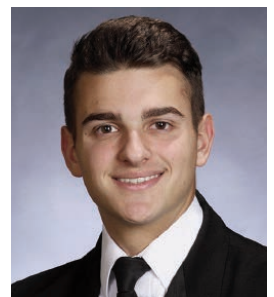
writers who provide him with a great support system in a large school. The writing also helped him find his voice and overcome his youth's shyness. He excelled academically, winning several gold, silver keys and numerous honorable mentions in the National Scholastic Writing Awards competitions. Ash also took challenging coursework including AP and IB classes. He has been active at RBR participating in Mock Trial, the Environmental Club, The Buccaneer school newspaper, the Culinary Club and the French National Honor Society. He has volunteered to tutor students at Red Bank Primary School each week in the Homework Club.

For Ash, the GSA, Gender Sexuality Alliance, operated through The RBR SOURCE has been another very important community family for his development in high school. He states, "It is very nice being around people that understand you. And it is also nice that this community is becoming more recognized and accepted. I find it a very safe space." The Source has also helped Ash in exploring career choices.

Ash also has a passion for cosplay and attends conventions throughout the year that features this "costume play" which is very popular with young people.

He will be attending Marist College on a very generous scholarship to study social work. He states, "This is what I want to be. I want to be able to help younger kids."

**STEPHEN (FORD) ZACKS** of Red Bank can only be described as a Renaissance man who excels academically, artistically and athletically. As a member of the Academy of Engineering, he is most thrilled with his year-end project with his brilliant buds creating a self-driving car using a RC (radio-control) prototype. He relates that his first successful foray in technology was when, as he describes, "I developed a code to do my math homework for me." He is a National Merit Scholar and an AP



*Shining stars continued on page 4*

# Congratulations to our Students and Staff on all their Amazing Accomplishments



Creative writing students won dozens of regional and four national awards in the 2018 National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Grace Davidson and Alexandra Lewis won gold medals. Silver metals were captured by Penny Hill, Gabriela Ortiz and Jay Izzo. Regional gold, silver key and honorable mention winners included: Carla Ortiz-Tobar, Julia Merola, Elizabeth Heinemann, Grace Davidson, Alexandra Lewis, Esmeralda Pita-Herrera, Morgan Almasy, Penelope Hill, Belinda Bohrman, Katelin Rowe, Madison Young, Aurelia Whitehead, Ash Riegler, Corbin Nielsen, Jay Izzo, Justin Campana, and Lillian Thygeson.



Female Tech Students Received Recognition from NCWIT Aspirations in Computing. They include: NJ Affiliate Winners Shelley Barfield, Tess Hintelmann, and Victoria Lloyd, and NJ Affiliate Honorable Mention Winners Marie Davidson and Mackenzie Wood; Mary Fitzsimmons won the NJ Certification "One to Watch" award.

Willow Martin is a semi-finalist in the U.S. Presidential Scholar Program which celebrates excellence in education and the promise of American youth.

RBR had the largest number of participants and teams competing in New Jersey in First Annual GirlsGoCyberStart Competition with a total of 45 girls in 15 teams. For that achievement, RBR received a \$3,000 check from the Director of the New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell, part of the national Department of Homeland Security.



RBR photo major CeCe McCarthy's work "Sky Light" was recognized at the Fourth Congressional annual District competition.



Photos by Bridget Kelly, Stephanie Flores, Chloe Rosen, also placed in a regional photo competition held in Ocean County.

Fourteen students from Barbara Beckett's art class had their art selected as ads for the Monmouth Day Care Art Journal; the non-profit's major fundraiser. Hannah Gazdus was the high school grand prize winner. The other student winners were:



Tom Tewari, Jasmine Benito, Katelyn Sandin, Gretchen Ogden, Claire Spencer, Jose E. Azcatl Ortiz, Anyia Jones, Niurka Sandoval, Winnie Zheng, Oscar Zenteno, Kanymah Tucker, Jazmin Contreras, and Veyra Juarez.



Eight Red Bank

Regional vocal majors of the RBR Visual & Performing Arts Academy have been selected for next school year's prestigious All State Choir. They are: Mara Campolattaro, Julianna Conforti, Ben Hahn, Gianna Pallante, Maddie Stout, Talia Tardugno, Claire Taylor and Sara Zerilli. Seven were selected for mixed chorus with Julianna Conforti selected for the treble chorus. Maddie Stout had the distinction of placing second in



the mixed chorus in the audition process. The RBR jazz band, under the direction of RBR music teacher Kevin Pryor, took first place in the Liberty Jazz Festival held at Jackson in late April. RBR was selected the outstanding trumpet section with David Grant named outstanding soloist. The members of the jazz band include: Saxophones -Charlotte Jansky, David Grant, Amy Gardner, Holly Scanlon, Juana Santamaria; Trombones - Tyhler Harty, Lucas Bonnell; Trumpets - Davis Bush, Mike Niro, Nick Rose, Kyle Peschler, Aron Wiener, Village; Rhythm section - Ben Novara, Little Silver; Miles Hansen, William Casey, Kenneth Blake, Aidan Dougherty, Jacob Fisher, and John Simone.

Claire Taylor was honored in June by the State of New Jersey for her first place win at the 2017 All-Shore Opera.

Erica Soya won the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Scholarship, one of two recipients chosen from over 100 essay applications.

The RBR SOURCE staff was recently honored at the Mental Health Association of Monmouth County's annual dinner with the Tony Dowling Child Advocacy Award for "their consistent, concrete, and immeasurable support to the youth and families in the local community for 17 years." The staff includes: Joe Cerbone, Clinicians Matt Checinski, Becky Stevenson, Marisol Mondaca, SOURCE Director Suzanne Keller, Administrative Assistant Linda Schiafone, Youth Development Specialist Lori Lopez and Clinical Supervisor Stacy Liss.



Principal Risa Clay was recently honored by the Monmouth County Education Association at its Award and Recognition Dinner as a "Friend of Education" for the Red Bank Regional Education Association. Mrs. Clay was nominated by her school's Education Association for "Keeping RBR on the cutting edge of instruction and education initiatives."

RBR Board Vice President Emily Doherty, was recognized by the New Jersey School Boards' Association for 35 years of ser-

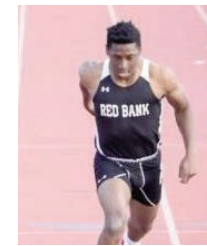
vice to the Red Bank Regional School District. She is the high school's longest serving board member.



## Spring Sports Highlights

### Outdoor Track

Nigel Mitchell became RBR's first State Champion runner in over a decade, winning the 200 meter dash at the NJ Group 3 championship at Central Regional High School (Bayville, NJ) with a blazing time of 21.73. Prior to the championship, he won the Monmouth County Championship 200 meter dash as well as the NJ Group 3 North 2 200 meter sectional championship. He was also the runner up in the NJ Group 3 100 meter dash with a time of 10.93.



Brendan Loftus was named Sectional Champion in the shot put and broke a RBR outdoor shot record with a throw of 58-6.25.

Brycen Greco broke a RBR triple jump record with a jump of 43-10.25.

Trey Soya, Nigel Mitchell, Alex Terody and Brycen Greco also broke a school record in the 4 x 100m with a time of 43.16.

Maggie Cahill took the 100 meter dash Monmouth County Championship along with placing second at the NJ Group 3 North 2 sectional championship, and placed sixth overall in the Group 3 State Championship 100 meter dash final.

Charlotte Cochrane qualified for the Meet of Champions in the 1600m and placed fourth overall in NJ Group 3 in the 3200m.



Golf: Zach Mueller placed fourth at the NJSIAA Group II Sectional Final golf Tournament at Twisted Dune Golf Course and was a participant in the NJSIAA Meet of Champions Boys Golf Tournament at Hopewell Valley Golf Course

### Girls Tennis

Girls' tennis ended the season with a 16-5 record, the most wins in the last twelve years.

Abby Decker concluded her tennis high school career with 80 wins and 23 losses. She has represented RBR in the States championship for the pasts three years and had her best finish this year reaching the fourth round of the tournament. That is the farthest RBR has ever advanced at States. She was also the runner up in the county tournament last year. Abby has been nominated to the first team All Shore for the past three years



### Boys' Tennis

Boys' tennis had a winning record of 11-6 for the season and finished third in the Division. The team won the opening round of the NJSIAA State Tournament and Shore Conference Tournament.

Freshman, Jake Cohen, first singles, finished the season with a respectable record of 11-6 and qualified for the NJSIAA State Singles Tournament.

Mike Tobin and Dillon O'Connor reached the semi-finals of the Monmouth County Tournament at the third doubles position

Baseball: Jack Povey was named to the Jersey Shore Carpenter Cup Team and played in the semi-finals of the prestigious Carpenter Cup Tournament (hosted by the Philadelphia Phillies) at Citizens Bank Park.

Swimming: Ian Birn is the Jersey Sporting News male Swimmer of the Year.

Lacrosse: Girls LAX Coach Brooke Connell named the All B North Coach of the Year.

## Shining Stars continued from page 2

Scholar of Distinction with exceptional, and in some instances, perfect SAT scores. He is a member of six honor societies including: French, English, Technical, Math, Science and National Honor Societies. RBR selected him as its Boy State representative during the summer of his junior year. He participated in the Math League and Science League, scoring sixth in the state in the latter. He also placed second in the Stockton College Computer Science Competition. Ford earned the Engineering Award in his academy.

Ford's love of music has found expression in RBR's VPA's Concert and Chamber Choir. Two years ago, he formed the very popular Men's a cappella group, named, the "Testostertones," where he serves as president. He has been a student of guitar for the past nine years. Straddling both tight-knit communities of technology and performing arts, he participated in RBR theatre production for three years. He was part of the ensemble in Fiddler on the Roof and landed the lead role in Kismet. He also expanded his technology coursework taking computer science, leading him to consider an entirely new career path. He will continue his technology work with his buddies over the summer developing an app to curate local volunteer opportunities—for those in need of volunteers and those looking to volunteer. He is currently the president of the Computer Club and captain of the tennis team on which he has played doubles and singles all four years at RBR.

Ford also has strong volunteer credentials in the community, participating in Relay for Life for the past three years, acting as a teacher assistant in the Rumson Country Day Robotics Camp and as a classroom assistant teacher in the summertime Horizons program which serves many upcoming RBR students.

He will study aerospace engineering at Georgia Tech next year and looks forward for "whatever fantastic things come next." He states of his diverse, eclectic and amazing time at RBR, "I don't think I could have added more, and I wouldn't want anything less."

**RBR** Red Bank Regional High School  
Board of Education  
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Little Silver, N J 07739  
www.rbrhs.org

### 2017 Board of Education

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**Louis Moore, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Christina M. Galvao**  
Board Secretary/  
Business Administrator

**Risa Clay**  
Principal

### RBR Community Newsletter

Marianne Kligman - Writer  
Gail Van Winkle - Layout/Design

RBR is now on Facebook; go to the link on  
our website [www.rbrhs.org](http://www.rbrhs.org)



## Best Wishes to our Retirees:

*Dusty Bublin, Patrick McCormack,  
Sue Kelly, Lynn Hansen, Kathy Hawley,  
Pat Joiner, Denise Barrett,  
Ericka Robinson, Gretna Wilkinson,  
and Mandy Galante.*

## CONGRATULATIONS RBR 2018 INDUCTEES TO OUR DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI HALL OF FAME

THEY ARE:  
WILLIAM H. TRUSWELL,  
M.D.; FRANCIS HANKINS;  
JOHN "JAY" WATERS,  
COLONEL, US ARMY,  
SARAH LANDY;  
JENNIFER BRUSH.



## Message from the Superintendent

### SUPERINTENDENT'S STATEMENT TO CLASS OF 2018 GRADUATES,

I've been with you for two years and it's clear that you are an extraordinary group. During your time at RBR, there have been triumphs in many areas and, sometimes, setbacks. However, this class has always exceeded all expectations.

As you leave for new pursuits and challenges, I'd like to share with you some ideas about living life in the best possible way. First, press yourselves—as you have done here—to always do your best. Second, live your lives according to your hopes—not your fears. Do not let worry prevent you from pursuing what really matters. Third, continue to live with a commitment to giving back to our communities, our country, and our world; individual success has its place but working others in support of common goals is often the true source of true fulfillment and happiness.



Americans have always thought that our nation is exceptional—a "city upon a hill," as Governor John Winthrop called the Puritan settlement of Massachusetts Bay in the 1630s. The point is Americans have always considered our country to a model society that sets a better example for the rest of world.

We are exceptional because we are and continue to be nation of immigrants where newcomers can start a better life for themselves and their families. Thank you RBR Dreamers for reminding of this.

We are exceptional in that we deeply value the dignity of the individual to think and express themselves freely. We are exceptional because we do not rest on our laurels. Unfortunately in our time, we have become exceptional in some ways that are not so positive: We are exceptional in that our country has the highest rate of income inequality among the world's leading economies. We are exceptional in that we continue to produce the highest rate of carbon dioxide per

capita of any country. We are exceptional in that the rate of childhood poverty in the United States—1 in 5—is the highest of any developed nation

More than 50 years ago Martin Luther King, Jr. warned that indifference is actually more significant than outright hostility in preventing positive change. I predict that the mission of your generation, and this class in particular, will be to sweep away this indifference, to unite our country, and to take on the economic, ecological, and moral challenges we face. To find a way to reward individual achievement and success but also recommit ourselves to justice, fairness, and shared purpose. In sum, to restore Lincoln's vision that the United States continues to be the "last best hope of Earth."

This is not an impossible dream—we can start right here, right now. Think about all that has been accomplished in this year alone. With Relay for Life you led the effort to raise over \$85 thousand to assist those struggling against cancer. RBR students led efforts to plan and carry out the Ridge Road Run that raised over \$120,000 for Suicide Prevention.

You've touched lives by tutoring at Lunch Break or volunteering at Soul Kitchen. You've led efforts to raise awareness about school safety and gun violence in the wake of the mass shooting at Parkland High School. Many chose to participate in the national school walk out on March 14. But whether you participated or not, you all conducted yourselves in a respectful and responsible way. I've seen this at other times: even when you disagree with someone, you are respectful and you listen.

I know that you will continue to hold up the high standards that have been set by your teachers and your families: to reject the comforts of entitlement and instead to embrace the obligations of citizenship. We are proud of you.

RBR Superintendent Dr. Louis Moore