



Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Mark Scott

Board Members

Helen Hughes, Chair

Dr. Rick Unruh, Vice Chair

Dave Crockett

Mark Ivory

Lori Johnson

Jon Nichols

Bryan Upshaw

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 17, 2024

Release #2023/24 – 074

Contact: Jennifer C. Jones, Director of Community & School Affairs, (478) 988-6390, Jennifer.C.Jones@hcbe.net

Meet the 2024 Houston County School District Valedictorians and Salutatorians



HOUSTON COUNTY, GA – High schools from throughout the Houston County School District will graduate on May 24-25, 2024. Each ceremony will feature remarks from the school's valedictorian and salutatorian. The top graduates from each high school are:

- Houston County High - Valedictorian Mackenzie Davis and Salutatorian Shiva Soundappan;
- Northside High - Valedictorian Calvin Clark and Salutatorian Sahaj Patel;
- Perry High - Valedictorian Fraser Knapek and Salutatorian Abigail Milby;
- Veterans High - Valedictorian Ananya Shah and Salutatorian Zorayah Menefee; and
- Warner Robins High - Valedictorian Taryn Long and Salutatorian Christian Narsing.

MORE

Valedictorians and Salutatorians / page 2 of 4

Houston County High School

Valedictorian Mackenzie Davis is an active member of Beta Club, National Honor Society, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. She has also participated in varsity sports, including cross country and soccer for the past four years. In soccer, she received offensive MVP twice, as well as second team all-region. In cross country, she served as captain for two years and was a one-time county champ and two-time region champ. Mackenzie has received several awards including AP Scholar with Distinction, the Georgia Certificate of Merit award, and the AP Chemistry Student of the Year award. Outside of school, she enjoys volunteering with the nursery/preschool team at Centerpoint Church, playing club soccer with Legion FC, and refereeing youth soccer throughout the area. Mackenzie will be attending the Georgia Institute of Technology and majoring in biomedical engineering.

Salutatorian Shiva Soundappan has served as Region Vice-President for Georgia FBLA, National Member-at-Large for the Young Investors Society, and Vice-President of BETA Club. In addition, he is a member of the Varsity Tennis team where he plays singles and is a violinist on the Macon Youth Orchestra. He is also involved in the Houston County FIRST Robotics Team 3635 and the National Honors Society. Shiva is an alumnus of the Yale Summer Program in Astrophysics where he researched the supernova 2023ixf. He also is a student researcher in the Fort Valley State University Computer Science department, where his work has earned him invitations to the International Science & Engineering Fair and the Georgia Junior Sciences & Humanities Symposium. His honors include Region 6 STAR Student, Georgia Tech Stamps Scholarship Finalist, National FBLA Parliamentary Procedures Finalist, 2nd Place in the Georgia History Day competition, GMEA All-State Orchestra Finalist, Advanced Placement Scholar with Distinction, and Golden Eagle Nominee. He is also active in his community through his work as a volunteer at the Warner Robins Parks & Recreation Tennis Department, running junior summer tennis camps, and aiding local elementary and primary children through the National Honors Society and BETA Club. He plans to pursue a degree in computer science.

Northside High School

Valedictorian Calvin Clark has been awarded for being in the top 5 percent of his class for each year of high school. Additionally, he has earned both the AP Scholar Award with Distinction and the National African American Recognition Award. Throughout his time in high school, he has maintained a deep extracurricular involvement. Calvin has been a member of DECA club for three years and serves as the current chapter president. He has also helped to run the school's Math Club this year. Furthermore, Calvin has contributed a lot of time volunteering. He volunteered as a tutor during his 9th and 10th years for the program ISparkle2 and has participated in the Houston County Back to School Bash each summer to help provide the community with school supplies. Some of Calvin's hobbies include programming, learning about languages, and watching movies. Calvin has been accepted to the Georgia Institute of Technology and will enroll in the fall with a major in Computer Science.

Salutatorian Sahaj Patel has been in the top 5 percent of his class all four years of high school. Throughout high school, he has been a part of DECA, Beta, and the varsity tennis team. Additionally, he has volunteered hundreds of hours at a non-profit to help teach grade school children. Sahaj was a state level nominee for the Governor's Honors Program in 11th grade. He was also a tennis captain and the vice president of finance for DECA his senior year. Finally, he was the STAR student for Northside High School boasting an SAT score of 1500. Sahaj plans on enrolling at the University of Georgia to begin his career in dentistry.

MORE



Valedictorians and Salutatorians / page 3 of 4

Perry High School

Valedictorian Fraser Knapek has been nominated for the Governor's Honors program in science, mathematics, and agriculture and was also a nominee for the science Golden Eagle. Throughout high school, Fraser has volunteered with multiple community organizations such as Perry Leisure Services, Perry Presbyterian Church, and Perry FFA. Her involvement in FFA has led her to win two national awards in the National Agriscience fair as well as top ten individual finishes in the national Nursery Landscape and Floriculture Career Development Events. As a four-year member of the varsity soccer team, Fraser has won three-time region defensive player of the year. She has maintained a 4.0 grade point average while taking AP Statistics, AP World History, AP Chemistry, AP United States History, AP Literature and Composition, AP Language and Composition, AP Computer Science, AP Calculus, AP Macroeconomics, and AP Psychology. Fraser plans to attend the Georgia Institute of Technology where she will major in Electrical Engineering.

Salutatorian Abigail Milby is a recipient of the University of Georgia certificate of Merit. She was also nominated for the Governor's Honors program in both math and science and was a nominee for the Golden Eagle award for mathematics. An Advanced Placement Scholar with Distinction, Abigail has maintained a 4.0 GPA while enrolled in AP Biology, AP Statistics, AP Language and Composition, AP United States History, AP Chemistry, AP Calculus, AP Computer Science, AP Environmental Science, AP Macroeconomics and AP Literature and Composition. Abigail has been a member of FBLA, FCCLA, Beta Club, Prayer Club, Perry Youth Leadership, the tennis team, and served as a FCA leader for three years. She has been a member of Kappa Alpha Zeta service sorority for three years serving as Vice President her junior year and Co-President her senior year, leading over 200 young women to serve the community. Abigail is attending the Georgia Institute of Technology and will major in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering.

Veterans High School

Valedictorian Ananya Shah is an AP scholar with Distinction who has earned the highest average award in AP Psychology, AP US History, and AP Statistics over her high school tenure. She was a Governors Honors Program finalist and attendee in Social Studies, and she was a Yale Young Global Scholar in 2022. A UGA Certificate of Merit recipient, Ananya is a member of the Spanish National Honor Society, Rho Kappa, the Chick-fil-A Leader Academy, Partners Club, National English Honor Society, and Beta Club. She serves as the Vice President of the Science National Honor Society and has been President of her class for the past four years. In her spare time, Ananya runs a nonprofit aiding immigrants with the naturalization process into the country, and she has started a blog about current affairs and government for a teenage audience. She has also participated in Bollywood dance for 11 years. Ananya will attend the University of Pennsylvania after graduation to pursue a career in law.

Salutatorian Zorayah Menefee is an AP Scholar with Honor as well as the Veterans High School 2024 STAR Student. She earned the College Board National African American Recognition in 2022, the UGA Certificate of Merit in 2022, and she has earned the highest average awards in AP World History, AP Language, and AP Chemistry during her time in high school. Zorayah is a member of the Science National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, Rho Kappa, and Beta Club. Additionally, she tutors with Warhawk Workshop, plays in the band, competes with Science Olympiad, and plays varsity soccer. Outside of school, she enjoys reading, knitting, playing video games, and diamond painting. Zorayah plans to attend the University of Georgia and major in Biochemical Engineering. She says that she hopes to use her love of science to create something that will help those in need.

MORE

Valedictorians and Salutatorians / page 4 of 4

Warner Robins High School

Valedictorian Taryn Long has taken 13 AP classes and is an AP Scholar with Distinction, earning 5s in AP United States Government and Politics, AP Psychology, and AP Language and Composition. Taryn was a Governor's Honor Program nominee for Communicative Arts, August Optimist Student of the Month, recipient of the University of Georgia Certificate of Merit, Golden Eagle nominee for Citizenship, the 2024 Warner Robins High School STAR student, and a College Board National Hispanic Recognition Program recipient. Taryn was part of the Varsity Competition Cheer Team and Varsity Football Cheer Team for four years, serving as captain of the Competition Cheer Team her last year. She was also part of the Varsity Women's Soccer Team for three years, where she was captain for her last three years. Taryn was a member of the Partners Club, Beta Club, Creative Writing Club, Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society, Vice President of Spanish Club, and part of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes leadership team. She has completed all requirements needed to earn the rank of Eagle Scout in Scouts BSA Troop 1. Taryn has been accepted at the University of Miami, the Georgia Institute of Technology, and Duke University and will be attending Duke in the fall, majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

Salutatorian Christian Narsing has taken 13 AP Classes and received 5s on AP World History, US History, Psychology, and European History. Christian is a four-year member of the Warner Robins Men's Varsity Cross Country team and Soccer team, serving as captain for both teams. He received the MVP award for soccer during his 10th and 11th grade years and was Second Team All-Region during his 11th grade year. Additionally, Christian received the "Demon" award for cross country during his 10th and 11th grade years. He was a Governor's Honors Program Semi-finalist for Social Studies, a Georgia Certificate of Merit recipient, a Golden Eagle nominee for science, and the September Optimist Student of the Month. Christian has been involved in various clubs, including the Spanish Club as Treasurer, Beta Club, Philosophy Club, and the Quiz Bowl team as Vice President. He has been accepted into the University of Georgia (UGA) and the Georgia Institute of Technology, intending to major in Exercise Science and minor in Spanish at UGA. His goal is to obtain a Doctor of Physical Therapy and open his own physical therapy clinic.

###

