

# Tribute to a Tanner

Peabody/Saugus wrestlers honor the late Freddy Espinal

By Matt Williams

» Staff Writer

PEABODY — It's a time honored tradition that a wrestler leaves his boots in the circle in the middle of the mat when he's finished his last match.

On Dec. 18, that solemn duty fell to the captains of the Peabody/Saugus co-op wrestling team — and there weren't many dry eyes in Veterans Memorial Fieldhouse as they placed the black-and-white Nikes Freddy Espinal expected to wear this winter in the center of the ring.

The entire North Shore wrestling community came together to honor Espinal, a Peabody High student who passed away unexpectedly this past fall, in a dual meet that featured the host Tanners against visiting Marblehead/Swampscott.

Before the match, more than a dozen members of Espinal's family were greeted with applause and appreciation by the big crowd. His dad, Freddy Sr., was an honorary captain, while money from concession sales, T-shirts and silent auctions was raised for a scholarship in Freddy's name.

"Not a day has gone by that we haven't thought about Freddy," said Peabody/Saugus head coach Wayne Moda. "Wrestling was his absolute favorite thing to do. His memory means everything to us."

After the lights were dimmed and all the fans held up their cell phone lights in a moving scene,



WAYNE MODA/Courtesy photo

## Freddy Espinal

the wrestling action got going and did not disappoint.

Peabody/Saugus pulled out a 47-30 win over the Black-and-Blue co-op. With competitors in all 14 weight classes, there were competitive and spirited bouts all night to highlight what was a tremendous showcase for high school wrestling.

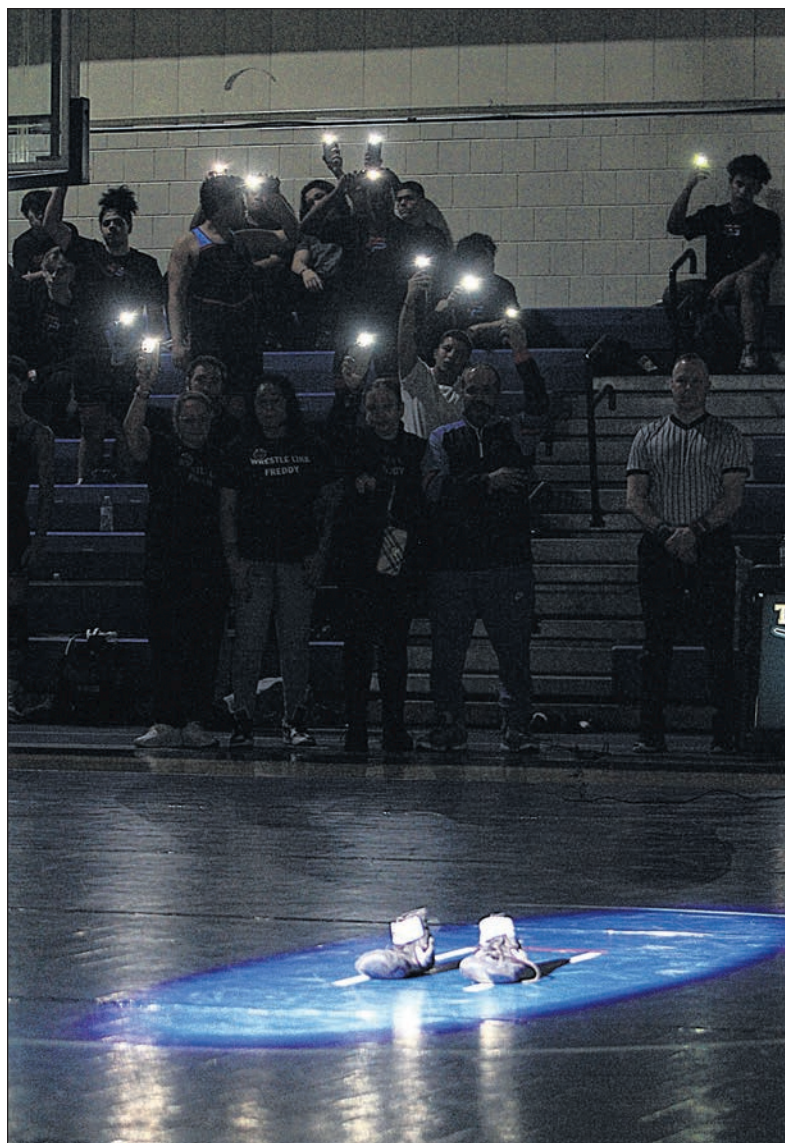
"This is what our sport should be. What a great atmosphere," said Marblehead/Swampscott coach Mike Stamison. "I'm amazed by what Wayne and his guys and girls have been able to do, and our heart breaks for what they're going through. We experienced it in Marblehead when James Galante passed away a few years ago and we just want to be there for them in any way we can."

"It's sad that this is the reason for an event like this, but I'm sure that if

Freddy could see this he would have loved it," Stamison said.

Espinal, 17, was a junior at PVMHS who was "caring and compassionate with his family, teammates and friends," his family said. "His positivity, even on the worst day, inspired those around him."

After doing some volunteer work last summer, Espinal decided he wanted to pursue a degree in criminal justice when he got to college. So, his family has decided that a scholarship in his name will go to a Peabody High senior who intends to study criminal justice. Donations are being accepted @Freddy-Espinal-Scholarship on Venmo, or by sending a check to PVMHS made out to the school with "Freddy Espinal Scholarship" in the memo line.



NICOLE GOODHUE BOYD PHOTO

The 'boots' of late Peabody/Saugus wrestler Freddy Espinal are displayed before the Dec. 18 match against Marblehead/Swampscott while fans help illuminate the center circle with their phones.



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# Schools honor students at Multilingual Learner Family Night

8 students cited for achieving Spanish proficiency, 112 for English proficiency

## By News Staff

SALEM — Salem Public Schools honored 120 students who achieved measurable proficiency in a second language at the Multilingual Learner Family Night earlier this fall at the Saltonstall School auditorium.

The first of three Multilingual Learner Family nights throughout the school year, more than 200 residents and school family members attended.

“It took a huge amount of outreach from our staff to make this happen,” said Andre Fonseca, Director of Multilingual Learner Education. “Our staff got on the phone and encouraged families to attend, some more than once. That personal touch drove our attendance. We wanted families to know their voices are being heard.”

Student work and artwork was on display throughout the auditorium and many teachers representing eight schools were in attendance



COURTESY PHOTOS

**Bentley Academy Innovation School Principal Elizabeth Rogers and Bentley fourth-grader Luna Cabrera.**

to encourage their students.

Eight students at the dual language Bentley Academy Innovation School received certificates for achieving proficiency in Spanish while 112 students were honored for attaining proficiency in English.

To reach proficiency in Spanish, Bentley dual language scholars were required to score adequately on the LAS Links Assessment testing, which includes speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Similarly, English learners entering the district's Multilingual Learner program were required to score at least



**Bates Elementary School fifth-grader Berely Caceres Jimenez, left, and Andre Fonseca, Director of Multilingual Learning at Salem Public Schools.**

a 4.2 (out of 6) in the speaking portion and a 3.9 in the literary portion of the ACCESS exam to reach Former English Learner (FEL) status.

“This is a process that can take 3-6 years to reach the minimum of 4.2,” Fonseca said. “It was a big step for us to be able to celebrate Spanish proficiency as well.”

The next family night events are scheduled for Monday, Mar. 10, and Wednesday, June 11. The English Learner Parent Advisory Council virtual meetings are scheduled for Monday, Jan. 27, and Monday, May 19.

Below are the students who were honored:

## Dual Language Spanish Proficiency Awards

### Bentley Academy Innovation School

Luna Cabrera, Hendrix Rowan-Seepo, Benjamin Iregui Bernal, Nicholas Vitini, Valeska Subero Travieso, Elisaiaas Arias Franco, Anaya Jimenez Mota, Elisa Zheng

## Celebration of Former English Learners (FELs)

### Bates Elementary School

Jose Reyna Carrasco, Elias Quintero Castro, David Defreitas, Nicholas Napolitano Dos Santos, Santiago Fernandez, Darius Frakulla, Axel Mendoza Galan, Nourien Hassan, Berely Caceres Jimenez, Jonas Mejia, Lovenica Tima Paul, Emmanuel Pena, Jailyn Rodriguez, Dahigreny Gomez Rodriguez, Sebastien Gonzalez Santos, Ayla Soares

### Bentley Academy Innovation School

Yuhanny Ramirez Ballesteros, Yudith Carvajal, Jhoan Diaz, Justin Olaverria Encarnacion, Camille

Amparo Espinosa, Elisaiaas Arias Franco, Azalea Gonzalez, Pedro Henzo Gomes, Taaseen Islam, Adelle Reinoso Jimenez, Tara Li, Isabelle Madou, Gianna Mejia, Sharlene Castillo Munoz, Gian Novas, Za'kyrie Paradis, Kiana Rodriguez Pena, Mariel Manana Rodriguez, Joniel Sanchez, Jam Alvino Valdez

### Carlton Innovation School

Ruth Ayala, Matthew Romero Kingsley, Jayleen Melo, Zaira Lemos Ruiz, Sebastian Santos Trejo

### Horace Mann Laboratory School

Lavinia Rodrigues Barbosa, Enmanuel de la Cruz Urena, Lucca Ferreira, Adriana Lopez Lopez, Keila Lopez Lopez, Eliana Aguilon Macario, Kaymelee Morcelo, Emiliano Martinez Ortega, Jexiel Febres Rosado, Klarianys Febres Rosado, Johnny San, Neisha Catulle Thomas, Daphne Santos Trindade, Isaily Gutierrez Veloz

### Saltonstall School

Jose Cruz Baez, Kaba Mohamed, Jose Luis Motino, Alice Balbino Correa Bueno Oliveira, Brihanny Bueno Ramirez, Leanette Roman, Jackeisy Reyes Tejeda, Leyla

Vidal

### Witchcraft Heights Elementary School

Asaph Lopes Alves, Djamir Jean-Baptiste, Djamira Jean-Baptiste, Mel Mesa Castillo, Bernardo Duarte Colen, Luis David Nataren Guzman, Indra Merida Jacobo, Yirianis Gonzalez Maria, Johan Matul Merida, Noah Pleitez Moreno, Arianna Rubiera-Genao, Eliot Garcia Santos, Felipe Ferreira Silva, Vinicius João Alves Souza

### Collins Middle School

Dairi Herrera Alejo, Alice de Almeida, Kiara Janice Gomes de Cruz, Carla Macario De Leon, Sleyre Infante, Elisa Lopez Matul, Rebeca Pedroso e Oliveira, Davi Pereira Pinto, Melissa Landaverde Pleitez, Nikaury Corcino Ortiz, Julia Das Dores Silva

### Salem High School

Angel Galeas Barahona, Axel Reyes Bisono, Arnelis Devarieux Concepcion, Carlos Carvajal Diaz, Dislenny Garcia Jerez, Midasendjie Jeune, Alvin Laurent, John Medina Ortiz, Wasckelly Veloz Pena, Alexis Josmil Canela Reinoso, Karelis Saez Rivera, Daniel Schneider, Daniela Trytiak, Sayelhi Veloz

## 100 WINS FOR GOLD

Beverly's Tristan Gold picked up three more wins on Saturday, Jan. 4, giving the Panther wrestling captain 100 for his career. Here he is pictures with his parents, Paula and Steve, after hitting the milestone.

COURTESY PHOTO



## United Soccer awards for Danvers girls, Masco boys and girls

By Matt Williams

» Staff Writer

Only 12 girls high school soccer teams in the entire country received the United Soccer Coaches Platinum Team Ethics Award for this past fall season — and two of them play in the Northeastern Conference.

Danvers High, coached by Jimmy Hinchion, and Masconomet Regional, coached by Alison Lecsse, were both cited with Platinum status in the 2024 United Soccer Coaches ethics and sportsmanship awards.

In order to qualify for the

honor, which recognizes teams that model fair play and sporting behavior, teams must complete the entire season without receiving a yellow card or a red card. Masconomet, which went 22-0-1 and won the Division 2 state title, did not, nor did Danvers, which amassed a 14-4-2 mark and reached the Division 3 Elite Eight.

Awards are also given to teams that receive cards in a certain percentage of games on a gold, silver and bronze basis.

Masconomet's boys earned a bronze citation based successful and sporting 15-3-2 season.



STEPH TRAVERS/photos

**Danvers girls soccer coach Jimmy Hinchion and his team received a Platinum Ethics award from the United Soccer Coaches.**

Only 53 teams, boys and girls, from across the nation earned the award at one of the four levels. Out of the Cape Ann League, Triton's girls received gold and Pentucket's boys were in the silver category.

# Freiermuth takes over Essex Tech football program

Connors to remain as associate coach

By Matt Williams and Phil Stacey

» Staff writers

It's a new coaching position for Tim Freiermuth ... but much of it will be very, very familiar.

The 29-year-old Freiermuth, who spent the last three seasons as the head football coach at Hamilton-Wenham Regional, is changing Cape Ann League addresses to take the same job at Essex Tech — where he already works as a wellness teacher.

Dan Connors, the Hawks' head coach for the last eight seasons, is staying on and will serve as the program's associate head coach. It was Connors who first broached this idea with athletic director T.J. Baril.

"I talk to Danny all the time, being in the building and coaching in the same league," said Freiermuth. "So he approached me about wanting to further build the program and wanting to get as many good coaches on staff as possible. We had some conversations before winter break with TJ, and the talks we had about the direction of the program got me excited.



DAN RYAN/File photo

**Tim Freiermuth will be changing Cape Ann League football coaching addresses, moving from Hamilton-Wenham to Essex Tech.**

"It's a real credit to Danny," Freiermuth added. "I'm sure it was a really tough decision for him, but the bottom line is he saw this as an opportunity to

build up Essex Tech football. I'm really looking forward to it."

Connors said that there was an instant connection between he and Freiermuth

when the latter began teaching at Essex Tech; not only did they both play offensive line at Springfield College, but both share a love of all things football.

"My mind starts moving: 'I have a brother here, now how am I going to get him here to coach with us?'" said Connors. "I told T.J. I had this idea to get more quality coaches into the program and that I wanted to recruit Fry.

"This was 100% my idea," he added. "I want everyone to know I'm very happy, healthy, my family's good ... I'd just rather be part of a successful program at a place I love than have a title."

Freiermuth said he received "nothing but support from (H-W athletic director) Craig Genuardo and the folks at Hamilton-Wenham" in making going to coach at a place he already teaches.

"It certainly helps that being a teacher at the school, I know most of the players in the program already," he said. "The numbers we have are unreal, too. We'll probably have over 100 kids try out and keep around 85; that's a big advantage in the Cape Ann League. We'll have three true levels (i.e., varsity, JV and freshman teams) and really be able to help develop guys and make sure they're ready for the varsity level. Plus, as the inevitable injuries happen, we'll be able to trust a guy to come into that spot without

losing too much. That's really beneficial to us.

"Staying in the Cape Ann League is big, too. A lot of the other coaches in the league reached out to me and are excited for me, too," he said.

Freiermuth, the older brother of Pittsburgh Steelers standout tight end Pat Freiermuth, was an All-CAL selection at Pentucket Regional, where he played linebacker, fullback and tight end before graduating in 2013. He went on to play four years at Springfield College (starting at center his final two years) and immediately went into coaching afterwards.

He coached at Bates College for one year, Division 2 Geneva College in Western Pennsylvania for two years, and recruited for Bentley prior to COVID in 2020. Returning to the high school game, he coached at his alma mater, Pentucket, for two seasons before being named head coach at Hamilton-Wenham in 2022, replacing the legendary Jim Pugh.

"I loved my time at Hamilton-Wenham. Craig (Genuardo) is awesome; everyone there is," said Freiermuth. "I think once people realized I already taught here at Essex Tech, they knew why I was making this move."

## Salem High, Essex Tech awarded grants to expand voke programs

By Michael McHugh

» Staff Writer

State officials recently announced that Salem High School and Essex North Shore Agricultural & Technical School have both been awarded new Career Technical Education Programs.

As a part of the administration's "Reimagining High School" initiative that provides opportunities for students to receive hands-on

education based on current industry needs, Salem High will be adding carpentry, programming and web development programs, and Essex Tech will add metal fabrication and joining technologies programs.

"These new programs will have a positive impact on our communities, our economy, and our entire state," Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll said. "I'm glad to see our schools adapting to demand and

offering these important opportunities to students."

"I am pleased to see these additional programs brought to our schools, which will provide our students opportunities to explore and develop new skills," Sen. Joan Lovely said. "Thank you to the Healey-Driscoll Administration for making this critical investment into our students' futures."

CTE programs such as the

ones recently introduced provide students with immersive learning time, co-operative education in partnership with local employers, and opportunities to earn industry recognized credentials, all with the goal of helping students to better understand and prepare for their future career paths.

The new programs are building on the CTE Partnership Grants that the Healey-Driscoll administration awarded back in

October which added additional seats for career and technical education programs within the Salem and Beverly school districts as well as the North Shore After Dark Partnership Program.

"Graduates of our CTE programs have the unique opportunity to enter the workforce immediately upon graduation, with industry recognized credentials and real-world

experience that affords them a competitive edge," Gov. Maura Healey said.

"We're excited to be expanding CTE programs across the state so that more students than ever before can leave high school with the skills that employers are looking for in in-demand fields like HVAC, manufacturing and health care."

Michael McHugh can be contacted at mmchugh@northof-boston.com or at 781-799-5202



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# Gloucester students lose break days to strike

By Ethan Forman  
» Staff Writer

GLOUCESTER — February vacation for Gloucester students and their families will melt into a three-day Presidents Day weekend and the last day of school is now scheduled for June 26.

The change in the school calendar follows a 15-day strike by teachers and paraprofessionals in November and the need to make up 10 school days because of it.

“Based on input from families and my recommendation, the School Committee decided that we will use the four days during February vacation and six days in June to make up for the 10 canceled days,” Superintendent Ben Lummis emailed families.

The 10 make-up days, which will be regular school days for all students and staff, are scheduled for Feb. 18-21, which is most of February break, and June



PAUL BILODEAU/Staff photo

Gloucester High School senior Quinn Milner, right, holds a handmade sign up as Gloucester High School students walk out of class at 12:21 p.m. Nov. 7 to support their teachers' fight against the city for a new contract.

18, 20, and 23-26. June 19 is Juneteenth, a state and federal holiday that can't be used as a school day.

“By missing school in November,” Lummis wrote, “we lost some of our most productive learning days

in the year. In deciding on using February and June, we are prioritizing having full learning days and

having longer periods without interruption.

“Most of the input we received recommended using February break because it is closer to December vacation. This approach allows us to preserve the April vacation so students and staff get a break between December and the end of the year.”

The district has to plan for the possibility of snow days “and needing time either at the end of June or during April break for additional make-up days. Unfortunately, there is no single solution that will work for every family,” he wrote.

Lummis provided some context during a School Committee meeting. All school districts must complete 180 school days by June 30, but there were only eight possible days available past the planned end date of June 17 to use for the 10 lost school days.

The plan allows for one snow day in June and allows the district to use April vacation for snow days if there is more than one.

When asked about the use of Saturdays as makeup days by School Committee member Melissa Joy Teixeira Prince, Lummis said he was not recommending that.

Prince said she had concerns about school going too far into June, with complaints coming this past June about temperatures in O'Maley Innovation Middle School. Days at the end of June would not be productive learning days, she said.

“There are no good solutions here, OK, there really aren't,” Lummis said.

The plan will have to be reevaluated if there are too many snow days, School Committee member Keith Mineo said.

Ethan Forman may be contacted at 978-675-2714, or at [eforman@northofboston.com](mailto:eforman@northofboston.com).

## National STEM Honor Society rooted in Gloucester

By Stephen Hagan  
» Staff Writer

STEM learning — a focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics — is a relatively new effort in education across the nation.

But what many in the region may not know is that a national advocacy group, the National STEM Honor Society, calls Gloucester its home.

Eric Magers, founder and CEO of the National STEM Honor Society, is no stranger to Gloucester. He serves as executive director of the environmental and sustainability non-profit Seaside Sustainability and, for 20 years, taught in the Manchester Essex Regional School District.

The Honor Society includes students from all over the world, Magers said, with a current membership of approximately 5,000 students.

“The kids not only get involved but they stay involved in STEM,” he said. “Our mission is to inspire the individual. We're not just local but global.”

The organization provides access to a



COURTESY PHOTO

Eric Magers,  
National STEM  
Honor Society

“Google Resources Library” designed for STEM students with “thousands” of opportunities, including grants and scholarships, Magers said.

Professional development opportunities are also available for adults, Magers said.

“We give them the resources to teach STEM,” he said. “A lot of teachers at the elementary school level don't get STEM resources. We provide for the training.”

The society's mission is to inspire innovation and to recognize student excellence from pre-kindergarten to eventual professional careers in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

According to the organization's website, <https://nstem.org>, there is a big gap between the demand for STEM-trained professionals and the supply of career ready, STEM-focused students. The society

believes that STEM is a journey through all grade levels that starts early and lasts a lifetime.

Part of the STEM initiative is based on participation — starting at an early age.

“I would say that in the United States, we want to be a leader in STEM,” Magers said. “It's the best avenue to get kids to engage early and keep them engaged throughout their school career.”

Magers said the requirements to become STEM members include joining a chapter, maintaining essentially a B grade point average and participating in a program called the “Project-based Learning Enrichment Hours.” Such work includes devoting time to educational pursuits after school, on weekends and during the summer.

“You have to get them in early and keep them engaged,” Magers said.

The National STEM Honor Society was founded in 2017 in response to the growing demand for innovative STEM education. To fill this gap, the organization strives to provide students from a young age with opportunities to develop their passion for STEM disciplines.

The popularity of the STEM effort is growing, Magers said, with a California school showing interest in starting a chapter.

“This week, I got a call from (the Stockton, California, Unified School District),” Magers said. “There are 50 schools part of the district. It's a great way to keep the kids engaged.”

Chapters can be started by a school and each school has its own director, usually the head of the school, according to the society's website. Each chapter is led by an advisor who is considered the school's “STEM Champion.”

The society is dedicated to the notion of “IDEA,” or inclusion, diversity, equity and access, with an eye toward ensuring that all students and schools can obtain the benefits of membership.

Annual fees for an entire chapter at all grade levels (elementary, middle, high school and college) amount to \$395 and the individual “Global Membership” fee is \$39.

The society's address in Gloucester is 127 Eastern Ave., Suite 236, and the phone number is 978-381-9305.

# 'Drive High Get a DUI' Gloucester High student posters warn

By Ethan Forman

» Staff Writer

GLOUCESTER — Some students at Gloucester sent a strong message about the dangers of driving while high during a recent poster contest at the school, according to Gloucester Health Department Prevention Coordinator Daniel Liebert.

The posters feature prevention messages of "Do Not Drive While Wasted," "A Few Hits Aren't Worth Your Life," and "Drive High, Get a DUI."

The Prevent Cannabis Impaired Driving poster contest was held at the school in November and December, and it received more than 75 entries, with prizes awarded for the leading messages and drawings. The city's Health Department, in collaboration with the high school, sponsored the contest.

Gloucester High School Student Health Center Program Manager Karen Hurst and Health Teacher Rosa Goulart provided encouragement and time for students to create powerful messages to raise awareness about the risks from driving while under the influence of cannabis, or marijuana, and other drugs.

While there is a high level of awareness about the deadly toll from drunk driving, largely through the efforts of groups such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving or MADD, the sad reality is that in 2022 there were more than 13,000 deaths due to drivers who were operating under the influence of alcohol, according to Liebert, citing a



COURTESY PHOTOS

**Gloucester High Senior Kailyn Tucker, 17, won third place in a recent poster contest at the high school warning about the dangers of driving while under the influence of cannabis.**

National Highway Safety Administration statistic.

Liebert said awareness about the dangerousness of driving under the influence of cannabis is growing.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that "marijuana affects psychomotor skills and cognitive functions critical to driving including vigilance, drowsiness, time and distance perception, reaction time, divided attention, lane tracking, coordination and balance."

Health officials say it should be recognized that cannabis is not harmless, and that driving while high is like driving while drunk: a deadly combination that destroys people's lives.

Researchers from Boston University have found that: **Deadly car crashes** involving both cannabis and alcohol have doubled in 20 years.

**From 2000 to 2018,** the percentage of crash

deaths involving cannabis increased from 9% to 21.5%, and the percentage of deaths involving cannabis and alcohol more than doubled, from 4.8% to 10.3%.

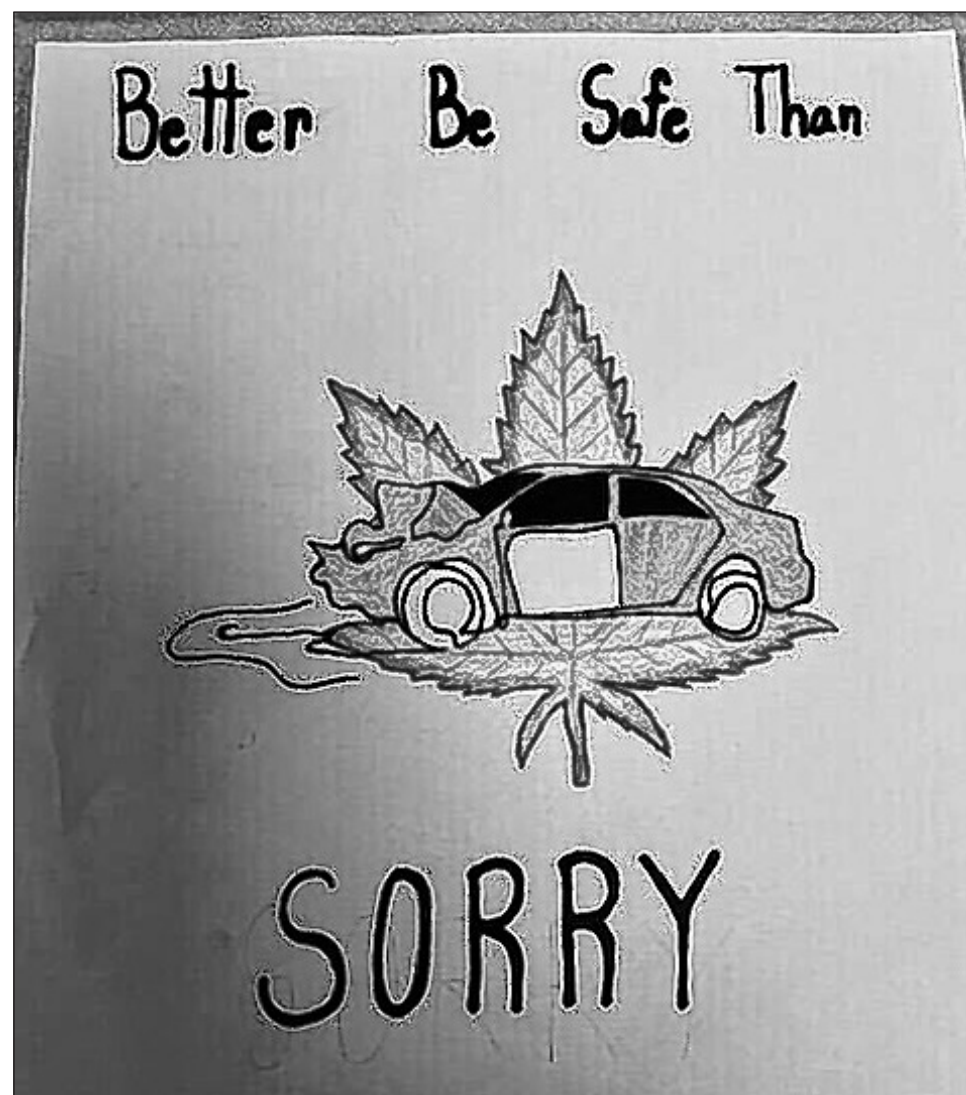
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

**The risk of motor-vehicle crashes** is higher among teens ages 16 to 19 than among any other age group.

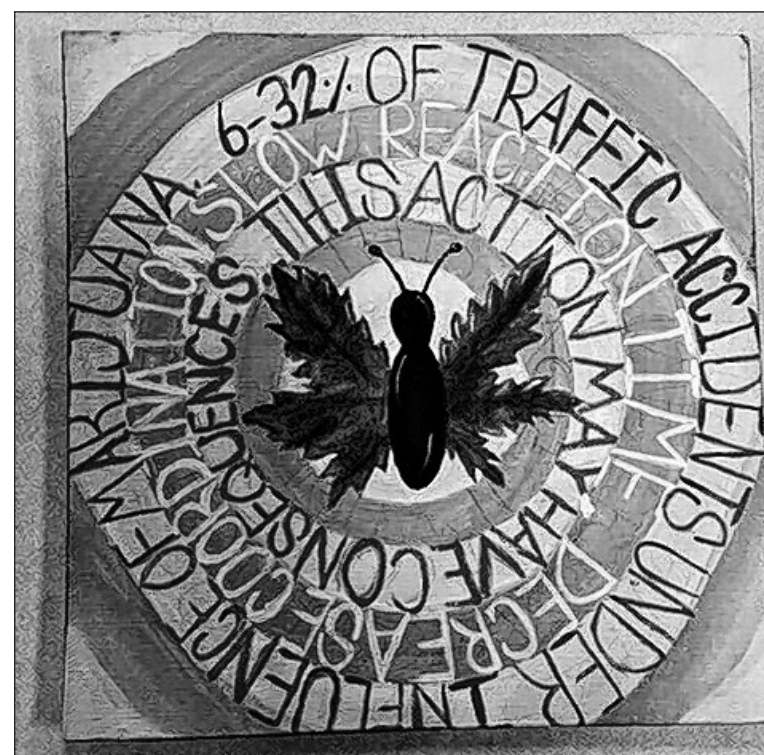
Liebert thanked the Gloucester High teens for creating messages to encourage all drivers to be responsible and "Don't Drive Wasted." The art will be posted in the high school and be used by the Health Department in public service announcements.

More information is available by Lieberting at [dliebert@gloucester-ma.gov](mailto:dliebert@gloucester-ma.gov) or 978-325-5276.

Ethan Forman may be contacted at 978-675-2714, or at [eforman@northofboston.com](mailto:eforman@northofboston.com).



**Gloucester High freshman Annabelle LeClair, 15, won first place in a recent Prevent Cannabis Impaired Driving poster contest sponsored by the Health Department at the high school for her safety message: "Better Be Safe Than Sorry."**



**Gloucester High School sophomore Sara Salvaneli, 16, won second place in a recent poster contest at the school about the dangers of cannabis-impaired driving. The contest fielded more than 75 entries.**



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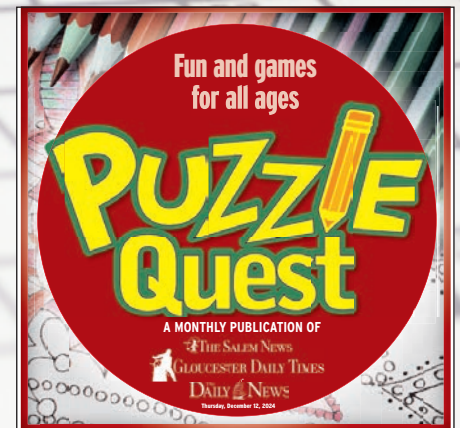
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# Perdue-Deltorchio drops 41 points in Gloucester win

By Nick Giannino

» Sports Editor

Any time a player scores 20-plus points in a girls high school basketball game it's considered a great game.

Topping the 30-point mark is both rare and sensational.

But surpassing 40 points in a single contest? That's almost unheard of.

One of those remarkable performances unfolded for Gloucester High School junior Jordan Perdue-Deltorchio on Jan. 3. The talented Fisherman forward dropped 41 points in a convincing win over Salem, setting what is believed to be a single-game scoring record for the Gloucester

High girls program.

"It was insane," Gloucester head coach Tommy McDonald said of his team's 69-13 win. "She did a ton of damage in the paint, got out in transition, made put backs, and was running the baseline very well against the zone and our guards did a great job of getting her the ball."

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of Perdue-Deltorchio's outburst was that she did it without a single 3-pointer. Perdue-Deltorchio made 18 two-point shots and hit five free throws, doing the bulk of her damage in the paint and at the rim.

She scored 18 points in the first quarter alone, six in the

second, 12 in the third, and then once McDonald and his coaching staff realized she was so close to that elusive 40-point mark, she added five more in the fourth before heading to the bench.

"It felt really good to get those 41 points but I couldn't do it without the team and their passing, getting me the ball in the paint to post up almost every play," Perdue-Deltorchio said. "I wasn't even thinking about points that game, just having fun on the court with my teammates."

Perdue-Deltorchio came into the game averaging a team-high 14.7 ppg. After the career-high outing, she was averaging 18.5 ppg.

Perdue-Deltorchio has

been great attacking the basket all season, but after struggling at the line as a sophomore last winter, she's connected on 65% of her free throws and went an efficient 5-for-8 from the charity stripe against Salem.

"Every practice coach has us shoot around 70-100 foul shots, (and) before every game I spend a few hours at the free throw line and work on post-up moves," Perdue-Deltorchio said. "I've definitely changed my routine a little but not much, just my mentality and taking advantage of those free shots. They're named free throws for a reason so you have to make those shots and they can change the whole game."

Perdue-Deltorchio's play so far this season has helped put a young Gloucester team in position to accomplish their goal of qualifying for the state tournament.

"We don't only want to qualify for the state tournament, we want to win," said Perdue-Deltorchio. "It's going to take a lot of practice, strong mentality and team chemistry. But with the team we have this year we definitely have a high chance of doing so. So we just have to keep pushing each other past our comfort zone."

*Sports Editor Nick Giannino may be contacted at 978-675-2712 or [ngiannino@northof-boston.com](mailto:ngiannino@northof-boston.com).*



KIRK R.WILLIAMSON PHOTO  
**Gloucester's Jordan Perdue-Deltorchio dropped a career-high 41 points in the Fishermen's Jan. 3 win over Salem.**

# Teens explore their role in democracy in essays

By Stephen Hagan

» Staff Writer

MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA — Sixteen Manchester Essex Regional Middle School seventh-graders offered their reflections on democracy as part of Patriot's Pen National Essay Contest.

The annual contest, sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, is open to sixth- to eighth-graders. Participants are asked to write a 300-400 word essay expressing their values and opinions on a designated patriotic theme — with the winner receiving a scholarship award.

The theme for this year's essay was "My Voice in American's Democracy?," which encouraged students to explore the ways they might contribute to democracy.

Makayla Miller's essay won first place at the district level and her essay will advance to the state round of the competition. Should Miller place at the state



**Sixteen Manchester Essex Regional Middle School seventh-graders submitted essays to the Patriot's Pen national essay contest, sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, are pictured with District 1 Commander Emmerling, rear, center.**

level, her essay would then advance to compete at the national level.

Other students who submitted essays were Caleb Beausoleil, Melina Binieris, Isaac Collins, Katherine Costello, Scarlett Chobanian, Madeline Eurich, Thomas Frash,

Eleanor Hall, Aviva Hocherman, Myriam Langlois, Layla Mello, Declan McKeen, Ava Porter, Evelyn Rodi and Skylar Rothe.

Superintendent Pam Beaudoin and Principal Joanne Maino said the essays demonstrated the

students' role in shaping America's future.

Veterans of Foreign Wars District 1 Commander Kim Emmerling congratulated the students who entered the contest.

"We are unbelievably proud of each of our students who participated in



MERSD/Courtesy photo  
**Winning essayist Makayla Miller, third from right, with her family members and VFW Commander Kim Emmerling, rear, left.**

this contest and took the time to create thoughtful essays that reflected their honest opinions and beliefs," Maino said. "It is important our students understand the role they have in our society as they continue to grow personally and academically and we are grateful they had this experience to reflect on that."

The participating students are part of English classes taught by teachers Vidula Plante and Jan Gauthier. The essays were judged on the basis of the applicant's knowledge of the theme, development of the theme and the clarity of ideas.

*Stephen Hagan may be contacted at 978-675-2708, or [shagan@gloucesterimes.com](mailto:shagan@gloucesterimes.com).*

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