

NEXT YEAR

AUG 3-6 NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

AUG 18 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL YEAR

FEB 6, 2021 PROJECT FORUM

Counselor's Corner

As I was beginning to write this last counselor article for the RVGS newsletter for this school year, I looked back at previous years to see what I had focused on before. As I reviewed the information on senior dinner, senior breakfast and other end of the year traditions, I was reminded that this year was truly a unique one. There is no precedence. Instead, I'd like to simply remind everyone that we are about to enter summer...the time of year we should use to unwind, spend time with family, and catch up on sleep. In general, make our health and our relationships priority. Whether on vacation or staycation, we can still keep those priorities.

To our seniors, congratulations! I will miss you and hope you stay in touch and visit when you can. I know you will do great! For those returning, I look forward to seeing you soon.

RVGS Newsletter



An Unprecedented Year

This school year was unlike any other. With schools closing in March, RVGS moved to an online format. The teachers and students met the challenge with typical "RVGS Determined" attitudes! Classes were moved to a format similar to Zoom with classes meeting during normal times. The RVGS teachers did an amazing job of quickly learning to teach and support the students in the new online format. Students did not let the change in setting distract them. Though pajamas became the new dress code, the students managed to maintain their normal dedication to their studies while continuing a nearly 99% attendance rate. RVGS was one of the only schools in Virginia to maintain normal "class" time while offering new curriculum materials for the students. The students continued to be challenged in their classes and prepared for end of year testing. Students prepared and participated so well that RVGS was able to transition to a 4 day a week instruction calendar after Spring Break to allow for decreased screen time. Students taking AP classes received the same review and assistance as past years. Faculty and students at RVGS should be commended for their hard work and positive attitudes during this difficult time.



Message from the Director

The 2019-20 school year definitely did not turn out as we expected, but—from a certain prospective—I would judge this to be a uniquely successful spring semester for our school. While we all would have preferred the past few months had unfolded differently, I can't express how proud I am of the way the whole RVGS community came together (figuratively speaking, of course).

It is a true testament to the culture we have at RVGS that we were able to not only continue instruction, but do so while maintaining our institution's high expectations for student learning. I often stay education at our school is about much more than math and science, with our students equally gaining in areas like work ethic, determination, accountability, self-reliance, time management and more. It is the strong foundation developed in those areas that allowed us to complete the year how we did. Congratulations to our students and teachers for stepping up to the challenge.

While we turn our eyes to classes for next year, I cannot yet give a precise roadmap of how we'll proceed in the fall. We will provide clear communication when plans crystalize, but please keep in mind that the situation will continue to be subject to change. Importantly, know that plans at RVGS will not directly match plans at each of our participating districts because of our regional format.

I hope everyone enjoys a safe and restful summer break.

Departing Physics Staff

The Physics department at RVGS is losing two of our beloved staff members at the end of this school year. Both Ms. Aldridge and Dr. Holt have decided that the time has come for retirement.

Ms. Aldridge has been at RVGS for 3 years. She has taught 1st year Physics and Engineering Design. She plans on retiring to Florida to be close to her family.



Dr. Holt has been with RVGS for 13 years. Though he is best known for his Physics, AP Physics and Engineering design, Dr. Holt also has taught Precalculus and has helped prepare many students for the SAT and ACT tests. He plans to take some time to travel with his wife.

The RVGS staff, students and families will certainly miss both of these tremendous educators. We wish them the best in this new phase of their lives and hope they will find some time to come back and visit!

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One of the highlights of Senior year is the annual Senior dinner. With so many of the typical senior activities being cancelled, RVGS knew that the Senior dinner must go on! Students and families were encouraged to dine at home as a family while live streaming the event. Mr. Levy was the “Master of Ceremonies” and put together the slideshow and photos. Luke Arner (HV) and Mary Grace Giles (PH) were selected as student speakers. Student awards were given out for exemplary service to RVGS.

The Alfred Blease Award was given to three RVGS seniors who exhibit strong academic skills with service to the community and leadership among the students. Mary Grace Giles, Charlie Murphy and Jonas Vanke were selected as recipients. The much anticipated Senior Superlatives had a decidedly RVGS feel and included categories as “Most Likely to Go to Space” and “Most Likely to beat Mr. Smith in Arm Wrestling”. Donations were collected during the event for a senior gift to support the Roanoke Strong Challenge, established by Sweet Donkey Coffee with the goal of providing coffee and kettle corn to all front line workers. The night concluded with send offs from each of the faculty at RVGS. Though a atypical “dinner”, it was wonderful to honor the Class of 2020 and wish them the best in their future endeavors.



Due to Covid-19, the Western Virginia Regional Science Fair, Virginia State Science Fair, and the Virginia Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (VJSHS) ran through a virtual format this year. Students and teachers did an amazing job in adapting to a new digital format. Much thanks to the judges for their evaluation under very difficult circumstances.

Western Virginia Regional Science Fair Awards

Alternate Grand Award Winners

- Assessment of Neonicotinoids in Blue Ridge Honey**
Shannon Filer RVGS/James River High School
Sponsor: Steve Smith
- Bioremediation of heterocyclic dyes by Pseudomonads**
Murphy Johnson RVGS/Patrick Henry High School
Jack Shepherd RVGS/Patrick Henry High School
Sponsor: Cindy Bohland
- A Novel Algorithm for Cooperative GPS Navigation**
Siddhartha Lamichhane RVGS/Patrick Henry High School
Charles Murphy RVGS/Patrick Henry High School
Sponsor: Doug Divers



Grand Award Winners

These projects qualify for the International Science and Engineering Fair

- A Novel Multi-omic Approach to Identifying Cancer Recurrence-Associated Gene Signatures**
Kevin Sheng RVGS/Cave Spring High School
Sponsor: Cindy Bohland
- The Impact of Visual Input on Glial Cell Development Within the Mouse Brain**
Mary Grace Giles RVGS/Patrick Henry High School
Sponsor: Melissa Fisher
- Developing a Bluetooth Enabled Pill Dispenser**
Grady Brydges RVGS/Cave Spring High School
Luke Arner RVGS/Hidden Valley High School
Sponsor: Brent Holt



Virginia State Science & Engineering Fair

- Maggie Parkhurst and Rebecca Qiu-RVGS/WBHS** Animal Sciences 1st place
- Kevin Sheng-RVGS/CSHS** Biomedical and Health Sciences 1st place and Virginia Bioscience Foundation-Mark Licata Award
- Madalyn Likens and Eleanor Little-RVGS/PHHS** Plant Sciences 2nd place
- Simran Gill-RVGS/SHS** Animal Sciences Honorable Mention
- Uyen Tran-RVGS/WFHS** Chemistry Honorable Mention
- Shannon Filer-RVGS/JRHS** Earth and Environmental Science Honorable Mention



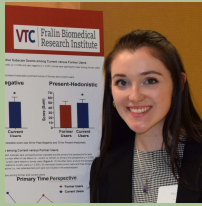
Virginia Junior Science and Humanities Symposium

Uyen Tran— Chemistry **2nd place**
Advancing to National JSHS

Abhinav Karri— Life Science **Category Winner**



Faculty Awards



HOLLY ACKER
In recognition of her assistance with Student Advisory as Co-President



JACKSON MOYER
In recognition of his leadership and dedication to the RVGS morning announcements



GRADY BRYDGES
In recognition of modeling a growth mindset, being a genuine lifelong learner, and using his talents to give back to his community.



CHARLIE MURPHY
In recognition for being the head morning flag officer



MARY GRACE GILES
In recognition for her leadership and dedication to the RVGS morning announcements.



BEN NEWMAN
In recognition for his leadership and dedication to the RVGS morning announcements and his assistance with Student Advisory as Co-President



HANNAH LARGEN
In recognition of her leadership and dedication to the RVGS morning announcements



ERIN WEINKE
In recognition of her assistance with Student Advisory as Secretary

2020 SENIOR CLASS SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The 63 graduating Seniors of the RVGS class of 2020 certainly had a year to remember. While this year ended virtually, the students still had much to celebrate.

Members of the RVGS class of 2020 are attending 22 different colleges, from as close as Roanoke College (14 miles) to as far off as University of Cambridge (3,857 miles).

The most popular destinations this year are Virginia Tech (12 students) and the Universi-

ty of Virginia (17 students). Other state schools such as William and Mary, James Madison and VCU were also highly selected. Students were offered over \$4.8 million in scholarships.

We will miss these amazing students next year. Remember we always love when students come back to visit and share all their new adventures! And remember, it's not goodbye just see you later!



Congratulations Class of 2020!



Holly Acker	University of Virginia	Michael Lin	University of Virginia
Ellyn Anama	Virginia Tech	Elyse McFalls	Duke University
David (Luke) Arner	Brigham Young University	Mason McGrady	University of Virginia
Coleman Blanton	University of Virginia	Rafid Mirza	University of Virginia
Grady Brydges	University of Virginia	Jackson Moyer	Virginia Tech
Harrison Bui	Virginia Tech	Charles Murphy	Carnegie Mellon
Martha Chen	Virginia Tech	Benjamin Newman	Liberty University
Kevin Cruz	Randolph-Macon College	Claire Nichols	Penn State
Anna Dandridge	University of Virginia	Emily Overbay	Clemson University
Reece Derrick	University of Virginia	Venkata Panchumarthy	University of Virginia
Case Eshelman	Virginia Tech	Maya Reddy	William & Mary
Lauren Frampton	University of Vermont	Ryan Rigatti	Virginia Tech
Luke Gardner	VCU	Jonathan Rivers	Undecided
Noah Gettings	Middlebury College	Alysia Sanchez-Huerta	William & Mary
Mary Grace Giles	University of Virginia	Erik Scarlatescu	Georgia Tech
Hayden Gray	Virginia Tech	Kevin Sheng	Duke University
Evan Gross	Virginia Tech	Richard (Jack) Sheperd	James Madison University
Evan Hahn	Undecided	Carson Speakman	Virginia Tech
Liam Heaslip	University of Virginia	Luke Suess	St. John's College
Ella Higgins	VCU	Joshua Taibbi	Gap Year
Henry Holbrook	Duke University	Elisabeth Taylor	University of Virginia
James (Garett) Jetmar	Virginia Tech	Madeleine Taylor	University of Virginia
Murphy Johnson	University of Virginia	Abigail Tershak	University of Virginia
Chloe Johnson-Hodges	University of Virginia	Dylan Tran	University of Virginia
Lilian Jones	University of Virginia	Jonah Vanke	University of Cambridge
Mattie Rose Keely	VCU	Kameron Washington-Brown	James Madison University
Kendall Kelly	University of Virginia	Grace Whitehead	James Madison University
Evelyn Kepley	Undecided	Kaden Whitenack	Roanoke College
Jagger LaDouceur	Virginia Western CC	James Whiting	Virginia Tech
Siddhartha (Sid) Lamichhane	Virginia Tech	Erin Wienke	Georgia Tech
Hannah Largen	The Ohio State University	Ashlee Woldman	West Virginia University
Nathalie Lemon	Yale University		