



# THE Drum • Beat

OF THE PIQUA CITY SCHOOLS

Congratulations to the class of 2017! With \$2,303,699 in college scholarships awarded to this class, we can be assured that many of our students will have a great start to their college or career/tech education.

Other students planning to join the military or work force will represent this graduating class equally as well.

On behalf of the Piqua City School District students and staff, I wish to thank all Piqua community members for the tremendous support that you give us each year. It is only with your help and continued partnerships that we can continue to provide students with solid foundations that lead to bright futures.

Congratulations Piqua for your role in helping Piqua City Schools successfully graduate a new class of Piqua Alumni!

Dwayne Thompson,  
Superintendent

## TOP STUDENTS THANK THEIR TEACHERS Graduation 2017

Remember a favorite teacher who inspired you as you were growing up? Members of the PHS Class of 2017 conveyed sentiments to teachers who've impacted their lives including Valedictorian Juliya Hsiang who, along with 234 of her classmates, received her diploma on May 26 at Alexander Stadium.

Hsiang, who was graduated with a 5.368 GPA, plans to attend The Ohio State University to major in health/ rehabilitation sciences. She acknowledged Angela Bergman (PCIS) noting "You are an extraordinary teacher who has instilled various life lessons into my life which encouraged me to always strive to be a better person. Due to your guidance during my fifth grade, I have been able to apply my knowledge from this situation to any tribulation in life. I can



**Three salutatorians: Ashley Ho (left), Kaitlyn Evans, and Jordan Booker.**



**Valedictorian Juliya Hsiang.**



truly say that you have played a vital role in my development by your compassion, devotion and love. Thank you so much for everything you have done for me."

PCS's "most memorable educators" attended this year's commencement ceremony and were seated alongside district administrators.

-Jordan Booker, who plans to attend OSU in the fall to major in neuroscience and follow her passion to become a surgeon;  
-Ashley Ho, who has been accepted at North Carolina State University where she'll major in psychology with plans to become a child psychologist; and  
-Kaitlyn Evans, who will attend the College of Wooster to major in neuroscience/pre-medicine with a minor in Chinese.

The class valedictorian was also joined by three co-salutatorians all of whom earned a 5.32 GPA and included:

Graduates of the Class of 2017 earned more than \$2.3 million in scholarships. One hundred and three graduates plan to attend either a two- or four-year college while 130 will join the work force and two, the military.

**The class presidents lead their peers with the tassel ceremony.**





PEF awards thousands of dollars annually to Piqua High School graduates.

## The Piqua Promise Grows

The Piqua Education Foundation (PEF) has "doubled" its efforts by providing 10 members of the PHS Class of 2017 with monetary assistance to launch their post-secondary education beginning this Fall.

PEF Board Member Dr. Jim Burkhardt, along with Superintendent Dwayne Thompson and PEF Board Member Soha Shah, form the nucleus of a unique program known as The Piqua Promise enabling graduating seniors to each receive \$2,500 scholarships to pursue their future careers. This amount is matched by Edison State Community College which provides students with an

additional \$2,500 to cover a full year of tuition. Last year marked the unveiling of the Piqua Promise scholarship program where five PHS graduates were awarded scholarships.

This year's scholarship recipients include Kayli Anderson, Rayna Brownlee, Morgan Hazeltine, Claire Hilleary, Derek Jennings, Dante Kemp, Kelly McClelland, Brooke McName, Jennifer Teilez and Darby Wright.

In addition to the Piqua Promise recipients, Dr. Burkhardt announced 149 scholarships worth an estimated \$263,000 were distributed during Class Night thanks to the generosity

of numerous donors. PEF, he noted, has been granting scholarships to PHS graduates for over 30 years. He anticipates growth will continue as donors demonstrate their willingness to participate. Teacher Elly Snapp launched a campaign this school year among her peers

who contributed toward the scholarship fund.

"At the opening day for the Piqua staff I, as a member of PEF, challenged the PCS staff to raise enough money to sponsor a Piqua Promise scholarship. A teacher at each building was drafted to collect donations and, by mid-September, \$2,500 was raised." Ninety-two staff members districtwide participated. At Class Night, it was announced Rayna Brownlee was the recipient of the staff-sponsored scholarship.

Dr. Doreen Larson, president at Edison, commented "Community colleges were established to provide access for students to gain a college education.

The Piqua Promise scholarship removes any financial barrier students graduating from Piqua High School experience in attending Edison State."

"For many students and their families," she continued, "the Piqua Promise is the key that opens the door to college. We are grateful to the PEF for setting aside specific funds for students to attend Edison State and we, in turn, are able to match those funds to fully cover the cost of tuition and fees for students obtaining these scholarships. We are equally excited to have the number of PEF Piqua Promise students double from last year and we look forward to continuing to grow this most successful investment in our most 'promising' students."

Other members of the PEF board include Sam Robinson, Doug Hulme, Elly Snapp, Sue Yannucci, Steve Greggerson, Bonnie Murray, Matt Cox, Ken Magoteaux, Kelly Hostetter and Dale Davis.

Donations-which are tax deductible-can be mailed to the Piqua Education Foundation, 719 E. Ash St., Piqua, OH. 45356

## Academic Signing Day

Amidst hugs and congratulatory handshakes from parents and friends, a total of 43 members of the PHS Class of 2017 participated in the traditional Academic Signing Day on May 20 demonstrating the seniors' commitment to furthering their post-secondary education.

The annual ritual is synonymous to a sport signing day and

shows a "team effort" not only involving faculty but parents and grandparents helping students attain their educational goal and make college a priority in their life. Each student participant was introduced and accompanied on stage by their parents where they signed a letter of intent to the college/university of their choice.



Seniors show commitment to further their education by signing Letters of Intent to colleges and universities on Academic Signing Day.



## EDUCATORS, STAFF, FRIEND OF THE SCHOOLS

# Awards for Outstanding Work

Like many of her peers Paula Schmiesing exceeds expectations beyond her normal job requirements. The popular PHS intervention specialist has been chosen the 2017 Piqua **Teacher of the Year**. Her efforts were recognized May 26 when she was presented an engraved plaque and kudos from her coworkers.



**Teacher of the Year, Paula Schmiesing.**

"Paula is a very dedicated and hardworking educator that goes beyond the normal job requirements," noted her nominator. "She does not give the minimum, she gives her all. Paula works tirelessly to do her

best for her students so that they are prepared for testing and for life in general. She wants the best for her kids, PHS, and the city of Piqua."

She was among five candidates nominated for this distinguished honor. Others included Jared Askins, PJHS; Angela Bergman, PCIS; Karen Francis, Springcreek Primary School; and Teresa Arp, Washington Primary School.

In addition, Polly Reynolds was recognized as the PCS **Support Staff Employee**



**Support Staff Employee of the Year, Polly Reynolds.**

**of the Year.** Reynolds is an administrative assistant at the Piqua Central Office having served in this capacity 22 years.



**Friend of the Schools, Mike Ullery.**

Other support staff finalists included JoJo Marrs, PHS; Susan Bollinger, PJHS; Robin Phipps, PCIS; Terri Burkholder, Springcreek Primary School; and Shellie Berkemeier, Washington Primary School.



Recipient of the **Friend of the Schools Award** was Mike Ullery, photographer at The Piqua Daily Call. Applauded for his tireless "interest in our schools and community", Ullery was acknowledged for helping to educate the public via lens whether it be sports, academics, clubs, or community involvement.

The new **Golden Apple Award** was presented to Robert Schuller who serves as a substitute teacher. Several teachers nominated him because "he cares about our students learning...the kids know and love him...and he interacts well with the staff." "Mr. Schuller does a fantastic job as a sub in our building," wrote one teacher. "All of the students respect him. He builds relationships with the students

which is very difficult to do as a sub. The students are motivated to work for him because they do not want to disappoint him."

**Golden Apple Award: Robert Schuller.**

## Employee Retirements and Service Awards

Four employees with a combined total of 100 years of service to Piqua City Schools were enthusiastically applauded as Superintendent Dwayne Thompson presented a clock to each of the retirees during the End of the Year Staff Celebration on May 26 at the Hartzell Center for the Performing Arts at PHS.

Those honored included Mark Deal, 23 years; Maryanne

Siefring, 29 years; Roberta Skaggs, 18 years and Sherry Tyson, 30 years.

Years of Service Awards were also distributed during the year-end celebration. Those recognized included James Conley, 40 years; Elly Snapp, Lisa Tabler and Sherry Tyson, 30 years; Teresa Anderson, Mindy Greggerson, Karen Magoteaux and JoJo Marrs, 25 years; and

Gale Bowman, Nicole Ford, Susan Hardman, Martie Mohr, Stacy Patrizio, April Watson and Tom Westfall, 20 years. Also Heather Brandt, Sherry Chenoweth, Lorrie Duer, Beth Fair and Jim Palmer, 15 years; Crystal Ayers, Elizabeth Barhorst, Angela Bergman, Sarah Fromholt, Kathleen Grise, Holly Peoples and Lindsey Penrod, 10 years; and Roberta Conley, Courtney Downs, Shawn Hicks, Kathleen Hoying, Katybeth Jones,

Florent Loisy; Nicholas Neary; Tabitha Varney, Alissa Wesbecher and Nathaniel Wright, five years.

Superintendent Thompson extended a heartfelt thanks to these individuals for their dedicated service and commitment to Piqua City Schools.

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For more information  
check our web site:

[www.piqua.org](http://www.piqua.org)

The best memories from 2017 are always worth a photo!



Students ran in the first Piqua Educator Appreciation 5K.



Piqua Central Intermediate School's sixth grade students dissected frogs in life sciences – a project supported by the Piqua Community Foundation.



Springcreek Primary School's new land lab has been created with the help of Hunter Woods.



Piqua High School's choirs earned top awards. Audrey Jacomet (above) is a soloist in the Show Choir.

Piqua Junior High School students performed the musical, "Annie."

