



# REBEL ALLIANCE

ALTMAR-PARISH-WILLIAMSTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

WINTER 2023

## APW National Honor Society Recognizes New Inductees

APW Junior-Senior High School celebrated the induction of 24 students into its National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society.

At a ceremony on Feb. 7, students from both groups were recognized and sworn into the prestigious organizations, having already demonstrated academic achievement and commitment to their community. Current members led much of the ceremonies, with student musicians like Kiara Bassett, Jason Bobanick, Noah Clark and Bruce Flanagan performing the National Anthem and school Alma Mater.

NHS and NJHS take great pride in their commitment to scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship and character, considering these to be the pillars of the organizations. Naomi Ryfun, district superintendent, spoke to these values in her address.

"May I submit to you that character is the most important pillar," Ryfun said as she spoke to inductees and gathered families. "Character defines who you are as part of your identity and is what drives you to serve others, to be a leader and to take a stand for what's right, and to keep learning to improve yourself and the world around you."



Students from the APW National Honor Society gather after being inducted into the organization at a special ceremony.



Seventh, eighth, and ninth-grade students from APW JSHS gather for a photo after being inducted into the National Junior Honor Society.

After ceremoniously lighting candles to signify the pillars, each student was introduced by NHS advisor Carolyn Lockette and recognized by Vice Principal Shannon Tanner.

This year's NJHS inductees included Arianna Ash, Eben Alley, Aniyah Auringer, Melody Bailey, Jaylynn Britton, Alexis Bulson, Adele Butterworth, Cameron Dalin, Estelle Dalin, Daphne Fanning, Elizabeth Groesbeck, Carah LaValley-Taylor, Ariana Poel, Makayla Seymour, Rachel Spencer, Leah Tanner and Jocie Wart. NHS inductees included Olivia Dalin, Cali Eipp, Bruce Flanagan, Charley Skellington-Bice, Annaleah Wejko, Wyatt Welytok and Kenneth Braeden Wheeler.

## SEL Tips: Working through ups and downs with peers

Do you remember ever feeling super defeated as a child?

I remember being assigned to a group project in sixth grade and being with other students who mostly wanted to goof around. I knew I would end up doing most of the work!

I was still upset about it when I got home from school. My dad finally said to me, "You won't be able to control what others do in your group; you can only control your actions."

He was completely right. This has been a mantra I have carried with me my whole life and something I am actively teaching my own kids.

Children and teens will continue to go through ups and downs with their peers. They are learning how to work together both individually and collectively. They will be placed in situations where their mindset will be challenged.

Do your kiddos give up after an overwhelming feeling of frustration or disappointment? Or do they pause and try to figure out what they can do in those situations?

As a parent, you can help your kids nourish a healthy control mindset by giving them opportunities for control.

### ***This could look like:***

- Letting them rearrange/organize their room to their preference.
- Allowing them to create a bedtime or wake-up routine that works for them.
- Encouraging them to think through different solutions of a problem or a challenge.
- Asking them for their opinion on family decisions such as meals, activities, etc.

Providing them with opportunities to make decisions and think through challenging problems on their own is a great way for them to establish a healthier mindset.

Does your child embrace challenges, or do struggles cause them to shut down? Send me an email — I'm always here for support or suggestions!

Hillary O'Hagan • [Hohagan@apw.cnyric.org](mailto:Hohagan@apw.cnyric.org)



## A message from the APW Superintendent



Dr. Naomi Ryfun,  
Superintendent

### *Dear APW Community,*

It's so hard to believe that we are already more than halfway through the 2022-23 school year. We've welcomed new families into our community, as well as new students and staff into our schools. I am grateful to be a part of this district and often find myself reflecting on what makes APW so special. It always comes back to

one thing — the people who make up this community.

I'd like to focus on three groups of people who play different but important roles here at APW: our bus drivers and attendants, our food services staff, and our buildings and grounds crew. Without them, we would not be able to operate on a day-to-day basis. They are the backbone of our district!

The drivers and attendants ensure that your children arrive safely to school and back home each day. While they teach students how to properly cross the road and how to exit the bus in an emergency, they also demonstrate character traits such as dependability, patience, and the ability to work under pressure. These are the first faces your child sees on the way to school and then again back home. Thank you, APW Transportation Department, for your service to the students of APW! We appreciate you.

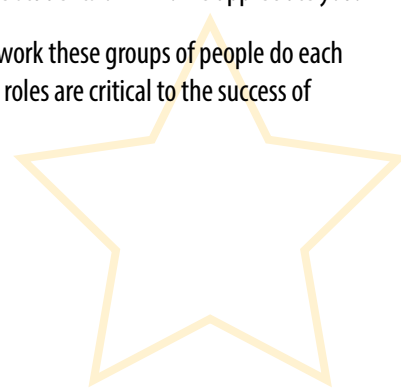
Our food services staff work efficiently and effectively to prepare and distribute hundreds of meals per day to our students. Breakfast and lunch

are available to students. At our home, we often have our six children and their friends for dinner and trying to come up with one meal that they all will eat is like rocket science. I cannot imagine the meal planning and preparation that goes into serving our students on a daily basis (not to mention all the dishes...)! Thank you, APW Food Services Department, for your service to the students of APW! We appreciate you.

Finally, our buildings and grounds crew work so hard to keep the facilities immaculate and in excellent condition. On mornings when the parking lots are filled with snow, while your children are still asleep, our crews are here plowing and deicing. They make sure our heating and air conditioning is working properly, our water is filtered and drinkable, our mail is delivered, our deliveries get distributed appropriately, and that our property is well-maintained. We get compliments all the time from visitors about how clean and well-cared for our buildings and grounds are. The pride they have for their work truly shows. Thank you, APW Facilities Department, for your service to the students of APW. We appreciate you.

Please join me in recognizing the work these groups of people do each day to serve our community. Their roles are critical to the success of our students.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Naomi Ryfun  
APW Superintendent of Schools



## Registration Now Open for APW UPK Program

*Now is the time to register for 2023-24 Universal Pre-K!*

**UPK at APW offers the following great features:**

- Half-Day Program — Both AM and PM sessions offered!
- Included Meals — AM UPK served breakfast, PM UPK served lunch!
- Transportation Provided!
- Same School Calendar as APW CSD!

### **Child Requirements:**

- Must be living with a legal parent/guardian in the APW School District
- Must be 4 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2023
- Cannot be 5 years old or older on or before Dec. 1, 2023

Contact Susan Thorp, District Registrar to register your child today!  
APWRegistration@apw.cnyric.org • (315) 625-5275

## Kindergarten registration begins Feb. 27!



***Get your child ready for a great year!***

Register online at APWSchools.org or contact the district registrar below:

Susan Thorp — District Registrar

APWRegistration@apw.cnyric.org • (315) 625-5275

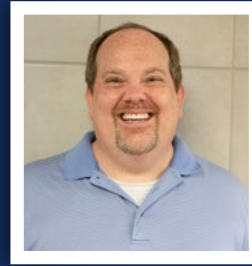


## APW JSHS Continues its Annual “Sled Dog” Races

The day before holiday break is always exciting, but APW JSHS made it even better by continuing its annual tradition of “sled dog” racing! Teams of students tugged their favorite staff member across the finish line in a thrilling display of school spirit. Well done to all the teams that participated – and to the spectators who braved the cold to cheer on their classmates!



## A Letter from the School Board President



### *Thank you.*

Those are two very easy words to say, but do they hold meaning when we say them? Do we say them often enough to the people that surround us?

*Shawn Clark, President*

As I sat pondering what message I should write for this edition of the Rebel Alliance, I found myself repeatedly going back to being thankful. I believe it is important for words to have meaning and substance to them.

### *So, I say thank you!*

Thank you to our community for allowing our board to serve you and the children of our district. Thank you for speaking up and letting us know when something is not going the way you wish. Thank you for your support to offer vigorous programming and opportunities for every student at APW.

Thank you to the staff at APW. Thank you for the interactions that you have that demonstrate care and compassion for our kids. Thank you for getting up every day and coming to work when you are managing households, kids of your own, sports schedules, and family events that make it difficult. Thank you for all the extras that you do every day to inspire children.

Thank you to the kids in our district that are facing difficulties that we never could or would have imagined and work hard every day to overcome them and succeed.

Thank you! Not just two words with letters but two words that have genuine meaning and substance behind them.

Shawn Clark  
APW BOE President



## Looking to run for the Board of Education?

BOE candidate packets are now available at the District Office.

***Petitions are due April 17.***



## APW's Rolling Rebel Serves Up Tasty Treats and Valuable Lessons



Thursdays have gotten a little sweeter this year for the staff of APW Junior-Senior High School. Since the fall, the school's 12:1:1 program has been undergoing an engaging collaboration with the district's food services staff to implement The Rolling Rebel, a student-run mobile coffee cart.

Each Monday morning, JSHS staff order from a selection of hot drinks, pastries and parfaits through an online form. Students organize the orders and work with the school's cafeteria staff to have all items prepped and readied for later in the week. On Thursday morning, students tour the school with their mobile cart, delivering orders and collecting payment. Students are then responsible for making deposits, overseeing accounts, and preparing for the following week.

"We wanted to start a school store," explained Lisa Grenville, special education teacher and advisor to the program, "but we didn't have a space available."

The coffee cart alternative was the brainchild of building Principal Jennifer O'Malley and district Child Nutrition Director Debbie Abreu. Grenville, a seasoned educator who joined the APW faculty in September, immediately spearheaded the program and brought it to fruition by October. With the help and support of many other staff members, the program has developed into an overwhelming success.

Experiences like these are a hallmark of Grenville's work in the classroom. She was also a major organizer of the school's elaborate Holiday Bazaar last December and frequently collaborates with Amy DeJohn, business teacher and advisor to the school's Future Business Leaders of America.

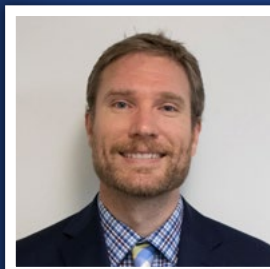
Grenville noted that the program permitted each of her students to excel in their own individualized learning goals, giving them unique experiences in business and responsibility. "Plus, our students are providing a service to the greater school community," she added.



*Students from APW Junior-Senior High School's Rolling Rebel coffee cart collaborate and prepare with APW staff to provide a sense of community and real-world skills.*

## New Faces at APW

*There are a few new faces at APW!  
The 2022-23 school year brings several  
new administrators to the team.*



**PATRICK VROOMAN**  
*Director of Personnel  
and Instruction*

### What brings you to APW?

I grew up in Mexico, NY and was a 2002 graduate

of MACS. I earned my undergrad at Ithaca College and master's degree at Niagara University and then taught social studies at Watertown High School for seven years. I earned my CAS at SUNY Oswego in 2013 and was the assistant principal of Mexico Middle School for five years. I spent the last four years as principal at Pulaski Middle-High School. I came to APW as I was very interested in the opportunity to do district-level work in a school that was close to home and had many staff members that I already had positive relationships with.

### What are your responsibilities within your new administrative role?

As the Director of Personnel and Instruction, my work will largely be focused on hiring, training, and evaluating instructional and non-instructional staff. I lead the hiring and evaluation processes and act as the point person for various personnel issues within the district.

### What are your interests/hobbies outside of your career?

I haven't had many hobbies in recent years, but my wife and I love to travel when we get the chance.

### What are you most looking forward to in working at APW?

This is a great staff and community and I hope to help strengthen relationships and processes in the district.

### What impact do you hope to have at APW?

My hope is to help the district retain and grow its staff in a difficult labor market to help our schools continue to provide excellent educational programming to students.

## SEL Tips: HELP! My child is GLUED to their phone!

I've had so many conversations recently with parents who are not only annoyed but concerned about the amount of time their child spends on devices. There are countless articles and research about the emotional and even physical dangers of our eyes being glued to our digital screens for endless hours.

For teens and pre-teens in particular, it's just easier to rely on their mobile appendage for every bit of information they think they'll ever need!

Even though devices are a part of our lives now and considered "the norm," we as adults should still be modeling the importance of taking a break from them. You can take this parenting-step further by actively helping to reduce your child's screen time.

### Here's how:

- Make their bedroom a screen-free zone: Keep TVs, phones, tablets, and computers out of your child's bedroom to prevent the temptation of using screens when they can't sleep. (TIP: Most Wi-Fi providers now let you schedule which devices can access your home network during which hours. Or you can turn off the Wi-Fi password when you go to bed. I even have some parents make sure that their kids' devices are only allowed to charge in the parents' bedroom at night).
- Encourage non-device interests: Talk to your child about exploring something that interests them, like hiking, learning arts or crafts, participating in a sport). (TIP: Help them choose an interest that is not reliant on technology for learning.)
- Model the behavior you want to see and be the example: Turn your phone on silent during family activities or when you're engaged in conversation with people to model healthy behaviors with devices. Make sure no one is allowed to have any devices at the dinner table (TIP: Be honest with your kiddo and let them know the reason behind this is because you care and want to spend time with them, not them and their Nintendo Switch)

There's no reason to ban screens from your home. However, setting some healthy boundaries can give your child the right balance between screen time and their emotional and physical health.

Do you have any special rules in place regarding screen time? Shoot me an email [Hohagan@apw.cnyric.org](mailto:Hohagan@apw.cnyric.org)

## APW Elementary Builds Character with Young Men's Academy and Empowering Young Women



Officer Robert Ocker and APW Elementary students share ideas as part of the school's Young Men's Academy.

Students at APW Elementary School now have the opportunity to take part in two exciting character-building groups: Young Men's Academy and Empowering Young Women.

Young Men's Academy developed in the second half of the 2021-22 school year as an extracurricular program for young men to gather and emphasize positive values and activities. Robert Ocker – the school's School Resource

Officer and the group's founder – wanted to provide a place where boys could build character and establish proactive goals.

For 20 minutes once a week, boys from grades four through six could come together, perform a few physical exercises, and settle into some honest discussions on a variety of topics. By the end of the school year, the group was so popular that students asked to have shirts printed to show their participation in the group.

The Young Men's Academy continued into the current school year, and quickly found itself with a sizeable female counterpart. A growing interest of girls prompted the creation of "Empowering Young Women" in the fall of 2022. Under the leadership of the school counselor Crystal Reynolds, the group provides a space to establish personal and group goals and similarly discuss topics of character.

"The young women have already displayed incredible enthusiasm, beginning to outline collaborative plans to make a greater difference within their school community," Reynolds noted.

Both groups meet weekly, separating their fourth, fifth, and sixth grade members onto different days. The groups are entirely voluntary and meeting times are scheduled for minimal impact on other academic schedules. Each group also takes great care to re-emphasize character traits already being promoted within the school. APW elementary currently has a robust social-emotional learning curriculum and regularly encourages students to be "Rebel Ready" by exhibiting proper school behaviors. Much of what takes place within YMA and EYW reiterates these themes.

"The idea is that if they can learn strong character and positive behaviors here, they can actually use it at the high school," said Ocker. "And of course, in life."



School Counselor Crystal Reynolds collaborates with girls at APW Elementary as part of the school's weekly Empowering Young Women group.



## Science Class Gets a Lesson from NASA Scientist at APW

On Dec. 5, Jessica Halsey's seventh-grade science class at APW was facilitated by an unlikely teacher — Dr. Matthew Bonnema of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Bonnema is a NASA earth scientist, using satellites and other technologies to monitor the earth itself. Bonnema and his team focus specifically on studying surface water levels, noting changes as a result of — among other things — climate change. He is also a member of the NASA cohort responsible for the upcoming SWOT mission, which seeks to further measure surface water and study ocean topography.

Bonnema met with the class virtually, presenting his own work before answering questions from Halsey's seventh-grade students. Students questioned him on everything from climate change evidence and SWOT's upcoming endeavors to why stars disappear during daylight hours.

The conversation was made possible largely by the class's teacher, Halsey, who is part of the NASA Connects program. The program, implemented by NASA, provides professional development and connection opportunities for STEM educators. Though numerous schools around the country participated in the lesson, Halsey's class was one of only three that were given the opportunity to remain on camera and ask questions of Dr. Bonnema.

"It's important for students to hear from scientists because it helps students understand what scientists truly do," said Halsey. "It also shows them that anyone can be a scientist." She pointed to the case of Dr. Bonnema, who never suspected he would work in such a role.

She also appreciated Bonnema's role as an earth scientist within the organization. "NASA is so much more than sending people to space," she noted. "The smaller projects don't always make it to the headlines."

The SWOT program's highly-anticipated satellite launched in December from Vandenberg Space Force Base.



APW seventh-grader Rachel Spencer poses a question to NASA earth scientist Dr. Matthew Bonnema during a special science class.

## Asbestos Management Plan

As provided under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, the Altmar-Parish-Williamstown Central School District hereby makes known the steps it has undertaken to comply with AHERA and the availability of asbestos management plans.

Beginning in 1989, all district owned facilities were inspected for asbestos and management plans were developed for each building according to the requirements of AHERA. Triennial reinspection's are conducted every three years. Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES of Syracuse, NY completed the 2019 AHERA Triennial inspection and update to the asbestos management plan.

Periodic Surveillance of asbestos containing building materials is conducted every six months.

All custodial and maintenance staff have undergone 2-hour Asbestos Awareness Training and provided appropriate instruction.

All response actions taken are within federal and state guidelines.

Limited amounts of asbestos-containing materials remain within the High School. Friable materials are generally inaccessible to students and staff members. Appropriate measures have been implemented to ensure the materials are not disturbed.

Management Plans and records may be viewed at the Buildings & Grounds Office, (Transportation Building, 641 County Rte. 22, Parish, NY 13131) during office hours from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For more information, please contact the District Asbestos Designee: David Poore, Director of Facilities, 315-625-5245.

## APW CONSERVATION CLUB TREE-PLENISH GIVEAWAY

APW JSHS Conservation Club is hosting a community-wide tree-planting event to offset the amount of carbon our school emitted from electricity and gas last year.

The giveaway will be Sunday, May 7, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Help support our mission by ordering saplings or donating to make a difference.

**Help us make our community more sustainable!**

Choose from Red Maple, Eastern Redbud, and Flowering Dogwood saplings!

Visit the link below to order a sapling or donate to Tree-Plenish!



**OUR GOAL: 421 SAPLINGS = 505 TONS OF CARBON REPLACED**



## At APW, Things Got Hairy this Holiday Season

Between winter concerts, the holiday bazaar, family events and countless fundraisers, the 2022 holiday season was a busy one at APW. New to this year's festivities was APW JSHS's Ugly Beard Contest, which grew the season in an exciting new direction.

From Nov. 22 through Dec. 22, eight brave JSHS staff members fortified their follicles and swayed students into crowning their facial feats as the season's ugliest beards. Mr. DeFranco, Mr. Kovalchik, Mr. Lanious, Mr. Moran, Mr. Ostrowski, Mr. Hogan, Mr. Bogardous and Mr. Algie all participated for the month, growing their most impressive holiday manes. Students voted for their favorites by donating cans and boxes of nonperishable food, all to support APW's Backpack Program.

"The competition was all about promoting a more exciting learning environment," said math teacher Nick DeFranco. "I joined specifically

because I believe that the more fun we can create within the school, the more success we can have in the classrooms."

While new teachers like DeFranco and Moran attempted to influence students with prizes and raffles, they ultimately surrendered to more veteran staff. Hogan was able to raise the most food items while Lanious won as students' choice. The contest brought in more than 600 nonperishable items, resulting in great success for everyone at the JSHS.

When asked if he would participate again next year, Moran – whose enhanced beard made students quick to point out his resemblance to the character Kratos in the God of War video game franchise – answered with an enthusiastic "No, I'm going to WIN next year!"



Mr. Lanious

### UGLY BEARD CONTEST



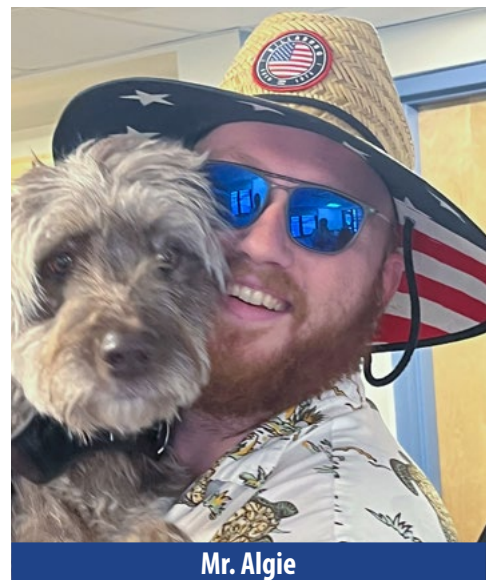
Mr. Hogan



Mr. Moran



Mr. DeFranco



Mr. Algie

# REBEL ALLIANCE



Altmar-Parish-Williamstown

Central School District

District Office

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Parish, NY 13131

315-625-5251

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**ACADEMICS AT ITS BEST • PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE • WHERE STUDENTS COME FIRST.**

For Important Announcements, Annual Notifications, Events, Contact Information and other information,  
visit the APW District website at [www.APWSchools.org](http://www.APWSchools.org)

## *March is* **MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH!**



Visit our district calendar  
on the APW website  
for upcoming events.

# FOLLOW US!



@APWCSD



@apwrebels



@apw\_rebels



APW CSD

WHERE THE  
GOLDEN SUNSET  
MELLOW  
TINTS THE  
WESTERN SKY,  
PROUDLY STANDS  
OUR ALMA MATER  
A.P.W. HIGH.  
SING THE CHORUS.  
LIFT IT UPWARD  
IN HER PRAISES VIE.  
HAIL TO THEE,  
OUR ALMA MATER,  
A.P.W. HIGH

The APW Central School District in accordance with the Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and does not discriminate on the basis of sex or handicap in the educational programs or activities it operates. This includes recruitment and employment of employees; pay and benefits; counseling services for students; access by students to educational programs, courses and activities. The District's Title IX Compliance Coordinators are Jennifer O'Malley (639 Co. Rt. 22, Parish, NY 13131; 315-625-5222) and Crystal Reynolds (639 Co. Rt. 22, Parish, NY 13131; 315-625-5260).