

ISSUE 11

CLAIRE WILLIAMS O'NEIL FOUNDATION





THE CLAIRE WILLIAMS O'NEIL FOUNDATION

*Dedicated to expanding educational opportunities
for Susquehanna area youth.*



FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER ISSUE 11

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Our Annual Newsletter

Over the past year, the Foundation has continued to strengthen its partnership with Susquehanna Community School District (SCSD).

In April, Claire Williams O'Neil Scholarships were presented to two graduating seniors: Jeremiah Hadden, who will attend Cornell University to study chemistry, and Alexandria Hall, who will attend Rochester Institute of Technology to pursue computer science.

The DT Midstream Scholarship was awarded to Travis Rooney, who will study high performance automotive technology at the University of Northwestern Ohio.

During the past year, the Foundation funded three Susquehanna Community High School (SCHS) field trips: one to DT Midstream, another to Marywood University, and a third to Pleasant Mount Welding. In addition, a private tour was arranged for SCSD leadership and faculty at Lackawanna College's new Center for Technology Innovation, where participants explored the robotics and health science laboratories. We are especially grateful to Steve Voytek of Lackawanna College for organizing this interesting visit.

Together with SCHS leadership, we conducted a review of the school's pilot mentorship program, Project Jump Start (PJS). Since its launch in 2022, the program has matured, and we have identified ways to further strengthen it. These improvements will be implemented in the current school year.

Key to making the PJS more effective is the establishment of the new CWOFF Board Associate Panel, which is comprised of PJS Coordinator Paula Stone, Melissa Kukowski, and Emily Staros. We thank these three volunteers for their help, as well as Principal Rich Emmons and Guidance Counselor Bridget Milos for their leadership and support.

The CWOFF is also backing the district's ambitious STEM 2030 initiative, led by Pete Supko, SCSD Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. This multi-year program is designed to position SCSD as a leader in STEM education and deserves the full support of our wider community.

In our work, we have the support of three strong partners: DT Midstream, which provides annual scholarships to SCHS students pursuing studies in technology and business; the Honesdale National Bank, which delivers valuable financial literacy programs at the school; and the Susquehanna County Arts, Education, and Healthy Community Fund, which contributes annually for designated school projects.

Finally, on behalf of our board, I would like to thank the leadership of the SCSD, especially Superintendent John Rushefski, who has created a positive environment for collaboration, as well as Rich Emmons, Brent Soden, Pete Supko, and Bridget Milos for their support and encouragement of the Foundation's work.

Roger O'Neil
CWOFF President

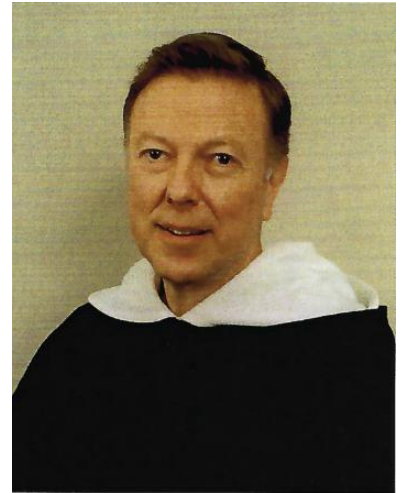
IN MEMORIAM

One of Foundation's founding board members, Father Daniel Morrissey, OP, passed away last December.

Father Dan was a major force behind setting up our Foundation in 2000 with a strong belief that helping our area's youth benefits the entire community.

Raised in Wisconsin, he was a regular visitor to the Susquehanna area over the past forty years.

Following his ordination as a priest in the Dominican Order, he studied theology in France, earning his PhD from Institut Catholique de Paris in 1968. He went on to serve as a faculty member and chair of the Department of Religion, Ethics, and Philosophy at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. He then became a bioethics professor at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health.



His spiritual guidance, energy and wisdom, invariably lightened by a keen sense of humor, will be sorely missed.

2025 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Alexandria Hall

Winner of the 2025 Claire Williams O'Neil Scholarship

Alex, this year's valedictorian, will be attending the Rochester Institute of Technology to study computer science. Her high school extracurricular activities included band, pep band, chorus, Student Council, Drama Club, Scrimmage/Academic Challenge Team, Avedium Club, volleyball, and softball. In addition, Alex volunteered at the local food pantry, at Parent Involvement Committee Events, and as a mentor for the Saber Buddy Program.

"My high school career has been filled with much hard work and lessons that will last a lifetime. I am very thankful to my mentor, Paula, who showed me the value of going outside my comfort zone. I am extremely grateful for my family, friends, and teachers who have helped me become who I am today." – Alexandria Hall



Jeremiah Hadden

Winner of the 2025 Claire Williams O'Neil Scholarship

Jeremiah will be attending Cornell University to major in chemistry. His high school extracurricular activities included concert band, pep/marching band, Student Council, Drama Club, Weightlifting Club, Scholastic Scrimmage Team, Avedium Club, Scouts BSA, and track and field. Jeremiah also volunteered at the local food pantry.

"My high school journey was long and turbulent, but it brought immense personal growth. I entered high school with anxiety and self-doubt, unsure if I had what it took to reach my goals. However, I stayed resilient, and I recognized the need to ask for help from my teachers and peers. As I explored new interests, I discovered passions like music and chemistry, both of which now play a central role in my life. I struggled, especially in calculus, but I kept facing my challenges head-on and continued to grow."

As I made my way through high school, I began to find more opportunities that allowed me to step outside of my comfort zone. I joined activities I never would've imagined, like track and theater, which helped me build confidence. But with that growth came stress. One of the most valuable lessons I learned was to recognize and respect my limits. It's good to push yourself, but not at the cost of your well-being. High school taught me the value of perseverance, balance, and curiosity, and I'm excited for the next step in my life." – Jeremiah Hadden



Travis Rooney

Winner of the 2025 DT Midstream Technology Scholarship

Travis will be attending the University of Northwestern Ohio to pursue a degree in high performance automotive technology and to continue his baseball career. Travis played on the Varsity Baseball Team for all four years of high school. He was part of the starting lineup as a freshman and named a captain as a sophomore, a role he continued throughout his high school career. In his first year as captain, Travis led the team to becoming the 2023 District II Baseball Champions. In addition, he participated in Walking Club and Coaches vs. Cancer and volunteered at baseball game for intellectually disabled children.

"Looking back on my time during high school, I definitely took a lot of it for granted and slacked where I shouldn't have at times, but in the end, I found where I should be. There are a lot of great memories that I made during my high school career, and I will cherish all of them as I start this next chapter. I'm very lucky to be able to accept the DT Midstream Scholarship, and I am very grateful for it." – Travis Rooney



COLLEGE GRADUATE'S

Taylor Huyck

Elizabethtown College '25 | Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

Taylor graduated in August with a Master of Science in physician assistant studies after completing Elizabethtown's 3+2 Physician Assistant Program. This past year, Taylor completed clinical rotations in several different specialties, including women's health, primary care, cardiothoracic surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry, pediatrics, internal medicine, and orthopedics, all of which have solidified her decision to enter the medical field. For her emergency medicine clinical rotation, she trained at Roseland Community Hospital in Chicago for five weeks. Her master's research project explored the lack of nutritional education in collegiate student athletes and methods to improve this. After graduating, Taylor passed the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam, and she is now applying for a position in family medicine in the Hershey area!



Taylor has greatly enjoyed all of the experiences she has had in the medical field thus far, especially the opportunity to learn every day, which keeps her engaged and motivated. She also really appreciates being able to interact with a diverse patient population, which challenges her to think critically and approach care with cultural sensitivity and empathy. Connecting positively with the community has been yet another highlight. Through preventative care and patient education, she feels that she is contributing to building trust and improving public health outcomes.

"I truly believe that my education has been a foundational part of shaping who I am today both academically and personally. My time at Susquehanna provided me with a solid start, and my continued education at Elizabethtown College has strengthened and expanded that foundation in meaningful ways. Together, these experiences have not only prepared me for my future in the medical field, but also helped me grow into a more well-rounded, compassionate individual. [...] Equally important, I've always valued community and just how vital it is to be actively engaged and connected to those around you, something that I began to value as a student at Susquehanna. These values align perfectly with the kind of healthcare provider I strive to become; someone who listens, supports, and gives back to their community."

Looking back, one thing I wish I had taken more advantage of in high school was the opportunity for job shadowing and career exploration. These early experiences provide such valuable insight into the day-to-day realities of healthcare professions, and I would assume all professions. With experience comes knowledge, not just about the field itself, but about your own interests and goals. Exposure to real-world settings early on can help guide decisions, build confidence, and reinforce your passion for the path you're pursuing."

The Claire Williams O'Neil Scholarship has played a meaningful role in helping me pursue my goals and aspirations in the medical field. It has not only provided financial support, but also encouragement and validation of the path I've chosen. This scholarship and foundation have made a real difference, for me and many others, by opening doors to opportunities. Thanks to this support, I've been able to focus on my education, gain valuable clinical experience, and prepare to give back to the community in a meaningful and lasting way." – Taylor Huyck

Kimberly Swartz

University of Pittsburgh '25 | Bachelor of Science in Natural Sciences

Kimberly graduated with a Bachelor of Science in natural sciences with a concentration in biological sciences. She participated in multiple student organizations throughout her college career, including the Panther Pitt, Students for Sensible Drug Policy, German Club, Pittsburgh Attacks Cancer Together, and Pitt Ski and Snowboard Club for which she was the secretary. In addition, Kimberly worked as a private chemistry tutor, researched antibiotic resistance using frog microbes, and learned how to extract, purify, and sequence DNA.

Kimberly is now working full-time as a pharmacy employee trainer at UPMC Presbyterian in its central pharmacy. She trains all new employees and works with the pharmacy and hospital administration as we transition into our new hospital.

"My time in college was transformative and full of growth. It has given me the tools to continue learning, adapting, and contributing to the world in ways that are bigger than myself. There have been late nights, difficult exams, and times of self-doubt, but it was during those times that I grew the most. Change may seem scary, but it is extremely rewarding in the end! I am proud of how far I've come, and I'm excited for what lies ahead!" – Kimberly Swartz



Left: Cell culture of *Bacillus mobilis* that Kimberly used during her time researching antibiotic resistance.



CURRENT SCHOLARS

Meghan Kiernan

Lehigh University | Integrated Bachelor of Science in Engineering, Arts, and Sciences

Meghan is a senior at Lehigh University pursuing an integrated degree in engineering, arts, and sciences with a concentration in mechanical engineering and product design. She is a tech fellow at Lehigh Design Labs, president of the club softball team, captain of an intramural volleyball team, an active member of the Society of Women Engineers, and president of the oSTEM (Out in STEM) chapter at Lehigh, a professional society dedicated to fostering a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals in STEM.

For her Capstone project, Meghan is leading a team of four students to fabricate a new art installation, Mossgrove, that will be displayed for ten years in the Fairchild-Martindale Library atrium. Her specific role is to determine the kinetic aspect of the installation, which features several suspended greenery-orbs with dynamic lighting and movement in response to outdoor conditions. The team has already completed their



stakeholder research, target specification and metric breakdowns, and prototype scale solutions for the installation, and by the end of the fall semester, they will have fabricated scale pieces ready for installation and a guide for maintenance and teardown.

In the spring semester, Meghan was invited by her professors to attend the Da Vinci Science Center Science Soiree to represent the Leonardo da Vinci: Artist & Engineer class. She presented her final project from the class, Capy Bath Kinetic Art, a playful yet thoughtful tribute to the fusion of creativity and engineering that da Vinci embodied through his automata and creations.

Meghan is working closely with a professor on revamping the first-year engineering experience through designing a semester-long project for students to complete. She also enrolled in Lehigh's 4+1 Accelerated Program to obtain her master's degree in mechanical engineering with one additional year of study at Lehigh.

"From SCHS to college, the biggest adjustment was learning to manage time and build independence. College advisors operate much differently than high school guidance counselors! Make sure you are on top of your scheduling and ask questions if you don't know. One tip for college is to visit people in person and ask questions rather than just sending an email. Also, it builds a better relationship with whomever you are speaking: professor, advisor, etc." – Meghan Kiernan



Left: Club Softball Team

Middle: Design review presentation with her Capstone team.

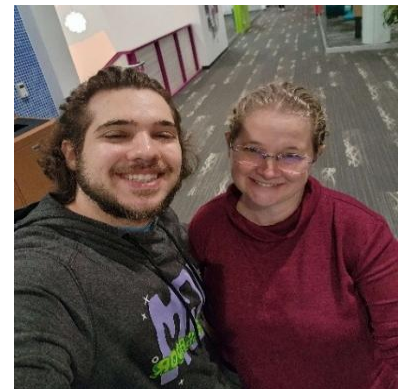
Right: Da Vinci Science Center Science Soiree

Joseph Staria

Rochester Institute of Technology | Bachelor of Science in Game Design & Development

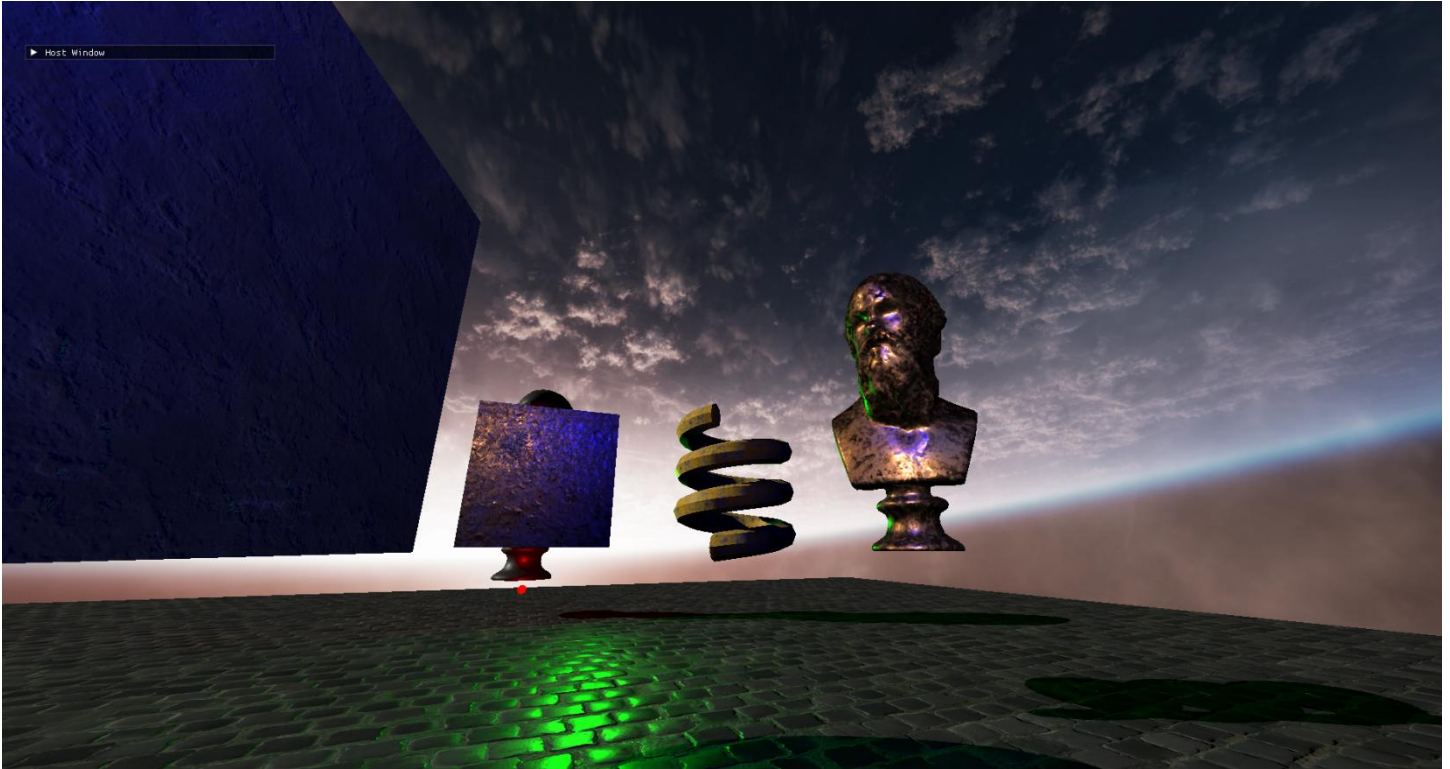
Joseph is a senior at the Rochester Institute of Technology studying game design and development. He is an RIT Student Ambassador for the School of Interactive Games and Media. He has been recognized on the Dean's List and again invited to the Honors Program.

During the spring semester, Joseph focused much of his time on Foundations of Game Graphics Programming in which he explored setting up a 3D rendering engine from scratch (below). As opposed to using a cross-platform game engine, the class spent the entire semester weaving their engine from vertex buffers, real-time lighting, shadow mapping, post-processes, etc.



In addition to his major, Joseph has decided to pursue a minor in math. His current plan for the future is to gain real-world experience following graduation.

“College life is still pretty great, I can't lie! There's the usual advice I can give, which is to make friends, learn to prioritize effort and participation, and explore opportunities. However, I should mention that pre-college is also just as important. If I were to do anything different that I think would help me out now, it would be to take any dual enrollment classes I could have! I could have graduated a full year or two earlier if I had! Then again, I would not have had the opportunity to meet some of the coolest and most skilled people in my major had I left earlier, so really, your future is up to you.” – Joseph Staria



Joshua Marco

University of Pittsburgh | Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering

Joshua is a senior at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in mechanical engineering. He is the vice president of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers at Pitt. Joshua worked with his classmates and the faculty to reinstate the formerly inactive chapter. He is also a member of the Pitt Ski and Snowboarding Club. During his junior year, Joshua studied finite element analysis software and worked to achieve an engineering simulation in design certificate. Currently, Joshua is completing an engineering internship at Schott Advanced Optics.



Juliann Downton

University of South Florida | Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences & Economics

Juli is a junior at the University of South Florida pursuing a double major in biomedical sciences and economics. She is a member of Stride or Strays, a student organization that volunteers at the Humane Society in Tampa, and Glamour Gals, a national organization that connects volunteers with seniors in care facilities to lift the burden of social isolation. She is also a group fitness instructor at USF, teaching pilates and barre.



Juli's favorite experiences this past academic year were learning to interpret IR (infrared) and H NMR (proton nuclear magnetic resonance) spectra to identify compounds in organic chemistry lab and dissecting and earthworm (left) and squid in biology lab.



Over the summer, Juli went on a cruise with her family and traveled to Germany to visit friends. Together, they visited Amsterdam and Paris!

"In my opinion, one of the best things you can do for yourself is travel period experiencing different parts of the world and immersing yourself in new cultures is incredibly valuable. While travelling may seem daunting or out of reach at first, it is often more accessible than it appears. Many colleges offer study abroad programs, often with scholarships and financial aid to help cover the costs. Keep an open mind, take advantage of these opportunities, and do your best to see the world!" – Juli Downton



Top Left: Teaching an early morning fitness class.

Top Middle: Posing with other students who went on the service trip to Ghana last spring. Juli had the honor of speaking at the luncheon to share what the group had done during the trip!

Top Right: Walking a dog with her roommate for Stride for Strays.

Bottom Left: Geierlay Suspension Bridge, Germany

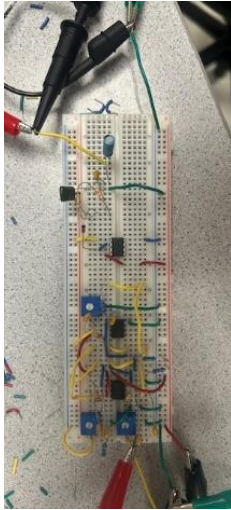
Bottom Middle: Amsterdam, Netherlands

Bottom Right: Paris, France

Reilly Potter

Cornell University | Bachelor of Science in Electrical & Computer Engineering

Reilly is a junior at Cornell University majoring in electrical and computer engineering and minoring in robotics. He is one of two drum captains (top right) for the marching band and a member of the indoor drum line.



Last fall, Riley took an introduction to circuits class and built a circuit (left) to remove certain frequencies from an audio input in order to find a hidden word. He took math and physics in the spring.

Over the summer, Riley returned to Universal Instruments Corporation for a second internship.

“After my first year here, I’ve been able to adjust really well and get used to the environment and what Cornell expects of me. College life is also really nice with all the events that go on, and being able to spend so much time with friends provides a good break from the constant work.”

– Riley Potter



JT Burke

Marywood University | Bachelor of Science in Biology

JT is a sophomore at Marywood University majoring in biology and participating in the accelerated, five-year Pre-Physician Assistant Program. He participates in a wide variety of extracurricular activities, including orientation, cross country, track and field, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Spikeball Club, and Psychlete Club, a club that supports positive mental health in sports and in the gym. He also earned a position on the Dean’s List both semesters.

Over the summer, JT started completing the five hundred patient care hours and fifty shadowing hours required to apply to PA school at Marywood. Currently, JT is a full-time resident assistant.



“I feel very fortunate for my first-year experience at Marywood. I have met so many great people through academics, athletics, campus ministry, housing and resident life, intramurals, and clubs, and they just make me want to be at Marywood. From professors and coaches to close friends, the people at Marywood make me look forward to everything I get to do there.” – JT Burke

Left: Marywood Cross Country at Nay-Aug Park for their annual run to see the Christmas lights.



Jackson Maby

SUNY Oneonta | Bachelor of Science in Adolescent Education

Jackson is a sophomore at SUNY Oneonta studying adolescent education with a specialization in mathematics. He is a 7x SUNYAC Rookie Wrestler of the Week, the New York State Collegiate State Champion, and a National Wrestling Coaches Association Scholar All-American. He serves as a team representative for the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and Morgan's Message. He also earned a position on the Fall 2024 Dean's List.



During his freshman year, Jackson was most excited about his observation hours. During these hours, he observed a local math classroom, which gave him the opportunity to connect what he was learning class to real-world teaching. He was also excited to complete an assignment called, "History of My School," which required him to explore the history of SCSD and the town, finding a painting of the school (left) in the process.



"So far, I have really enjoyed my major. The education classes are very interesting as they dive into different learning and motivation strategies/theories. The math classes are challenging; however, they are very rewarding."

College is definitely different. It requires a lot more discipline than high school as professors are not going to chase you for work. I do believe, though, that Susquehanna prepared me very well for a college setting."

– Jackson Maby



Left: Jackson's finals match at NYS Collegiate States.

Right: Working with a youth clinic that the SUNY Oneonta Wrestling Team hosted.

Lilliana Matis

Rochester Institute of Technology | Bachelor of Fine Arts in Medical Illustration

Lilly is a sophomore at the Rochester Institute of Technology majoring in medial illustration. She is a member of the Honors Program, Brick City Blades (Ice Skating Club), and Vis Viva Dance Company. In addition, she is a Performing Arts Scholar, a student worker in the Honors Office, a Wellness Peer Educator through Health Promotion, and a classroom assistant for a 2D design class.

Over spring break, Lilly participated in an Alternative Break trip to volunteer at Cloudland Canyon State Park in Georgia. She and other volunteers spent a week learning about trail and park maintenance, building bridges, working on trails, redesigning and constructing outhouses, planting flowers, and rebuilding the park's disc golf course.

Lilly then went on to participate in a faculty-led study abroad program titled "Activism and Social Movements in Brazil." This was an honors course designed to teach students about Brazil. She had the opportunity to meet with many individuals and organizations, including Instituto Maria e João Aleixo, an organization that educates and gives knowledge that helps to strengthen the powers of the favelas (peripheries) within Brazil, the director of Organicidade, who taught them about Brazil's biodiversity, and Guilherme Syrkis, the executive director of Centro Brasil no Clima (Brazil Climate Center). Over dinner with Skyris, they discussed his work with the group, and then he answered their questions regarding renewable energies, climate change, and concerns about the Amazon. She also had dinner with a pretty famous magician, Bernardo Sedlacek!

"Do not be afraid to try new things! Over the past year, I have had so many opportunities that have led to even more experiences. If I could go back in time, one thing I would change about high school is how much I worried; I would remind myself that everything will be okay and you will end up exactly where you should be! The world has so much to offer, so don't stress over one bad test grade or deciding to take some time for yourself."

– Lilly Matis



Left: Performing in the spring Vis Viva Dance Company showcase.

Right: Top of Twin Brothers Mountain in Brazil.

Paytyn Sellitto

University of North Carolina Wilmington | Bachelor of Science in Biology

Paytyn is a sophomore at the University of North Carolina Wilmington majoring in biology. She is pre-med and wants to become a genetic counsellor.

Paytyn completed her freshman year at Syracuse University prior to transferring to UNCW. While at Syracuse, Paytyn majored in biology, psychology, and forensic science. She was awarded an Invest in SUccess Scholarship for outstanding academic performance as a freshman and earned a position on the Dean's List both semesters. She was a member of Food Busters, a student organization that traveled to a nearby underfunded high school to provide STEM focused lessons to students who otherwise would not have that opportunity.

She participated in a fifteen-week long study on *Drosophila* (right), in which her lab observed many different species traits, specifically their mating mechanisms. They attempted to cross breed different species such as *D. americana* and *D. novamexicana* to see if reproductive isolation was present. Their studies consisted of looking at wing size, number of sex combs present, and thorax length. They took note of copulation duration and if mating was present at all. These studies were meticulous and were repeated using thousands of *Drosophila* to collect the most accurate data possible. They found that prezygotic and postzygotic isolation

occur between different species pairs due to many of the factors they studied. They concluded that female *drosophila* prefer males of their own species even when a very close sister species is provided as well.

"Just say yes! Do anything and everything even if it may be outside of your comfort zone. This is your time to make connections and lifelong memories. If you ever feel like you are stuck in the wrong place, don't be afraid to make a change for your own well-being. Nobody will judge you, and there is support in every direction you turn!" – Paytyn Sellitto

Left: Paytyn and her friends at the Invest in SUccess Scholarship event.



Cooper Payne

Pennsylvania College of Technology | Associate of Applied Science in HVAC

Cooper completed his freshman year at Pennsylvania College of Technology, where he majored in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.



PAST SCHOLARS

Alyssa Hubal

2016 Claire Williams O'Neil Scholar | Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine '25 | PhD in Pathology

The summer before my senior year at Susquehanna Community High School, I was brimming with excitement for the year ahead. I had my life meticulously planned. As a perfectionist, I felt immense pressure not just to meet milestones but to excel at every step. My perfect plan began with gaining early admission to my dream school, Johns Hopkins University, a top institution where I believed my journey to becoming a medical doctor would start. I had already visited the campus, completed a pre-med program, and everything seemed aligned.

Then fall came, and I received the rejection letter. I was crushed. Optimism quickly gave way to disappointment as months passed and my other top choices also fell through, leaving me waitlisted and feeling like a failure. My senior year, which I had expected to be filled with joy and anticipation, became a cycle of doubt and frustration.

Everything changed when I visited Loyola University Maryland. It wasn't part of my original plan. It wasn't the most prestigious school on my list, nor did it have the competitive environment I thought I needed. Yet the moment I stepped on campus, it felt like home. The people were kind, open, and welcoming. I trusted my gut and decided to take a leap of faith. Choosing Loyola turned out to be exactly what I needed.

At Loyola, I discovered that I thrived in a collaborative, supportive environment, not a hyper-competitive one. Professors became mentors who guided me through both academic and personal challenges. Friends became my family away from home. In this nurturing space, I realized my initial plan to become a medical doctor wasn't the right fit. My curiosity was strongest in studying the mechanisms and diagnostics of disease rather than patient-facing medicine. This pivot led me to biomedical research, exploring cancer, immunology, and bacterial survival – and ultimately, to pursuing a PhD.

The path to my doctorate wasn't without setbacks. Rejections and challenges continued, but by then I had learned an important lesson: you will end up where you need to be. I found myself in Cleveland, Ohio – a quieter, colder city I hadn't expected to call home. With guidance from mentors and support from friends, I navigated the long, demanding days of doctoral research and discovered my passion for laboratory medicine. This behind-the-scenes role allows me to use my skills to make a direct impact on patient care in hospitals.

This July, I began a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, training to direct clinical microbiology laboratories in major health systems. My "perfect plan" didn't unfold as I expected – but I ended up in the right places, surrounded by people who believed in me.

Looking forward, I hope to return to Pennsylvania and give back to the community that shaped me. I want to show students that paths aren't always straight—that detours can lead to the most rewarding experiences. And I hope to inspire others to embrace new beginnings with courage, knowing that with a supportive community, they can thrive wherever life leads. – Alyssa Hubal, PhD



Jason Smith

2022 DT Midstream Technology Scholar | Keystone College '24 | Associate of Science in Business Administration

Jason graduated from Keystone College in 2024 with an Associate of Science in business administration and started his career at Cobae Management Group in Charlotte, North Carolina. His duties include representing products to customers, advertising for clients, and leading his own team. In June, he traveled to Atlanta, Georgia for a leadership conference, and in August, he went to Dallas, Texas to attend NatCon for networking. Jason enjoys being able to network with high-end sales owners, expanding his knowledge, having the opportunity for advancement, working in a team-friendly environment, and being able to be his own independent contract license owner, which allows him to work with clients of his choosing.

“When I graduated from Keystone College, I was given the opportunity to bring over new skills to my career, including, but not limited to, communication, bookkeeping, finances, and time management. The best advice I could give to someone who is going into college this year is to learn how to manage your time effectively. Whether that is getting a planner or writing it in your notepad. The more you set your schedule and follow through with it, the more prepared you will be.” – Jason Smith



CAREER FIELD TRIPS & PROGRAMS

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the CWOFF supported SCHS student field trips to DT Midstream, Marywood College and Pleasant Mount Welding. Students benefit from these trips by discovering possible future careers and learning how to prepare themselves for college. The field trips are possible because of the generosity of people in the community who have made contributions to the CWOFF.

DT Midstream



In October 2024, nineteen students in Grades 9-12 from SCHS had the opportunity to visit DT Midstream (DTM) under the guidance of DTM's Michael Graves. The students, each of whom expressed interest in careers such as natural gas, engineering, software, and skilled trades, began the day with a light breakfast followed by an overview presentation of the industry. After the presentation, students traveled by bus to the Tingley Lake Shop, where they rotated through a series of hands-on stations. At each station, students gained practical experience and insight into emissions technology, gas regulation repair, instrumentation and networking, and pressure safety valve testing. These small group settings encouraged engagement and allowed students to ask questions and interact directly with industry professionals. The day concluded with lunch and a Q&A session, providing further opportunities for students to connect with DT Midstream staff.

“SCHS sincerely thanks DT Midstream for their generosity and for providing our students with this valuable educational experience.” – Richard Emmons, SCHS Principal

Marywood University



In November 2024, a group of interested students visited Marywood University. The trip was designed to give students who might otherwise not have the ability to visit colleges the opportunity to explore three departments at Marywood.

The day began at Marywood's Office of University Admissions, for an overview of the university, its academic programs, and their application process. Students then toured their chosen departments. In the Multimedia Communication Department, they explored a state-of-the-art podcast suite. In the Nursing, Respiratory Therapy, and Healthcare Administration Department, they explored medical labs that replicate real-life hospital environments. And in the School of Education, they learned about its resources and hands-on learning spaces.

Pleasant Mount Welding

Students in Grades 9-11 with an interest in STEM-related careers visited Pleasant Mount Welding in Carbondale, Pennsylvania. During the visit, students toured several departments, including engineering, drafting, manufacturing, and welding.

Representatives from each department shared insight into their work, the tools they use, and the career paths available. Students learned about various engineering fields, viewed blueprints for recent projects, and watched a 3D printer in action. They observed the design process in the drafting department and saw high tech equipment in use in the shop area. They asked thoughtful questions about safety, careers, and software systems.

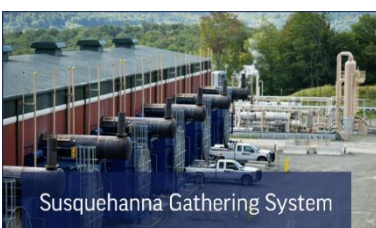


The tour allowed students to get a behind-the-scenes look at how a large manufacturing company operates and witness the process of building and shipping products, bringing real-world STEM opportunities to life.

PARTNERS

We are delighted to continue our strong partnerships with DT Midstream, Honesdale National Bank, and Susquehanna County Arts Education and Healthy Community Fund. These partnerships are making important contributions to the Susquehanna community.

DT Midstream



DT Midstream, a leading operator of natural gas pipelines, storage, and gathering systems serving customers across the U.S. and Canada, has been an important part of Susquehanna County since 2012 as a major local employer.

In 2015, the company partnered with the CWOFF to create a scholarship program for SCHS students wishing to pursue careers in business and technology. To date,

DT Midstream has awarded more than \$100,000 in scholarships while also mentoring recipients throughout their college years.

Beyond scholarships, DT Midstream actively supports SCSD through annual career field trips, donating digital equipment, and participating in mock interviews and career day presentations. Their leaders engage with students, guide scholarship selections, and foster real-world career connections.

“DT Midstream has been a partner that year after year goes out of its way to help our students.”
– Richard Emmons, SCHS Principal

The Honesdale National Bank

The Honesdale National Bank (HNB), an independent financial institution serving Northeast Pennsylvania and the Southern Tier of New York, has long upheld its mission to act in the best interests of its communities. Since 2018, HNB has partnered with SCSD to deliver a comprehensive financial literacy program, equipping students with essential money management skills for today’s world.

The curriculum covers a wide range of topics, including banking services, credit scores, mortgages investing, student loans, and retirement planning. Lessons feature real-life market simulations, hands-on activities, and presentations from HNB experts.

Last year, SCHS welcomed guest speaker Ted Radu of HNB, who provided an engaging overview of financial concepts, including stocks, bonds, crypto, NFTs, diversification, and goal setting. He offered practical advice on saving for retirement, opening investment accounts, and using modern payment tools responsibly, leaving students both informed and inspired to take control of their financial futures.



In last year’s HNB Challenge for Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties, SCHS’s Ryder Hobart, guided by teacher Robert Goodrich, took first place with a simulated portfolio that grew from \$100,000 to \$126,381.40 in just ten weeks. In the spring, Holden Mills earned first place in the Budgeting Challenge, showcasing exceptional financial decision-making skills.

Left: HNB Award Presentation. L to R: Elizabeth Nagy (HNB VP), Robert Goodrich (SCHS Teacher), Ryder Hobart (Student), Holden Mills (Student), Michelle Kowaalewski (HNB Commercial Loan Officer), Richard Emmons (SCHS Principal)

Susquehanna County Arts Education and Healthy Community Fund

In 2021/22, the Fund donated \$5000 to SCHS to update the auditorium lighting board and front stage lighting. This past academic year, the Fund once again made a generous donation of \$5000 to SCHS. This time, to purchase new instruments for the band program as many of the current instruments used by students are in poor condition and in need of replacement.

More than forty students participate in band programs at SCHS, including marching, concert, and smaller ensembles that perform at school and community events. Because most families rely on school-loaned

instruments, this grant has made a meaningful impact on keeping the tradition of music alive and healthy. Student musicians at SCHS now have reliable instruments to use to develop their skills and share their talents with the entire community.

Through this grant, Ken Goody, director of the Susquehanna County Art, Educations and Healthy Community Fund, has ensured that the arts will continue to thrive at SCHS.

“We sincerely appreciate this valuable support for the school’s arts program.” – Richard Emmons, SCHS Principal

PROJECT JUMP START

In 2022, a pilot mentorship program, Project Jump Start (PJS), was set up by SCHS in which three selected high school sophomores per year are matched with mentors, many of whom are past CWOFF Scholarship recipients. Since its inception, twelve mentor-mentee pairings have been active. Since 2023, CWOFF Board Associate Paula Stone has worked with SCHS as the coordinator of Project Jump Start.

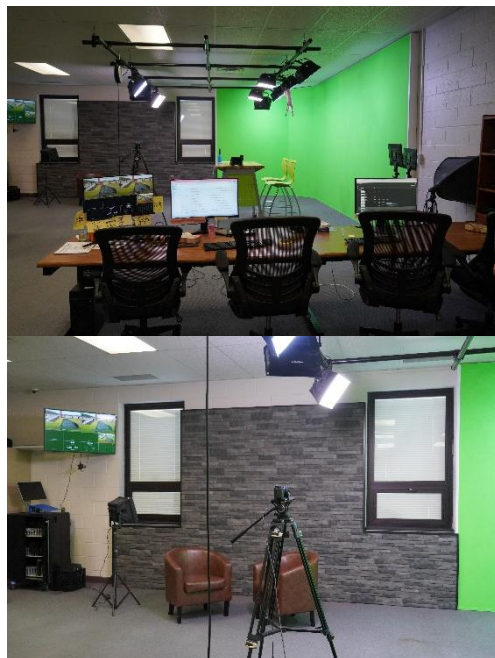
Earlier this year, a review of the program took place to identify opportunities for improvement. Starting in Fall 2025, students at SCHS will be able to apply during sophomore year to participate in PJS, and a panel of CWOFF board associates comprised of Melissa Kukowski, Emily Staros, and Paula Stone will determine which students are accepted into the program and assign mentors. Students will be accepted into the program based on a variety of criteria, including desire to attend a top university, drive to succeed, and performance in school.

The CWOFF provides funding for college visits, summer courses, supplemental math programs, etc. as needed to assist students in achieving their goals and is grateful to our board associates for assisting the school with this program.

INSPIRATION LAB

This past school year, the Inspiration Lab at SCHS found a new home. After discussions with users, it was determined that relocating the Lab would better integrate it into the daily life at the school. Now, the Lab is centrally located within the building, making it more accessible for both students and staff. This move brought several upgrades, including permanently installed microphones and lighting and a larger room to accommodate additional technology and dedicated space for video production (right). In addition, two new 3D printers were added, enhancing project capabilities.

In STEM 9, students have been learning 3D design and printing. Their most recent project involved designing a prosthetic for an animal in need. After selecting an animal, students researched its specific measurements, created a design in Tinkercad, and brought their prosthetic designs to life with the 3D printer (below). Meanwhile, in Environmental Science, Mrs. Batzel’s class developed pathway options for students who walk to school. They created maps, estimated costs, and presented their recommendations to the school board.





Looking ahead, the next phase includes adding high-performance computers and specialized software for coding, video editing, and digital art. The district is also exploring the addition of virtual reality headsets and an Anatomage Table, an interactive anatomy display.

“It was a good challenge learning to work as one big team to design a pathway that could help students and improve the campus. Knowing our work could become a real part of the school made everyone try their best.”
 – Caden Williams, SCHS Senior

STEM 2030: PREPARING EVERY STUDENT FOR THE FUTURE

In Fall 2024, the SCSD Board of Education set a bold goal: develop a district-wide STEM vision with full implementation by 2030. Recognizing the need to prepare students for a rapidly changing, technology-driven world, SCSD launched STEM 2030, a plan to ensure every student, from kindergarten through Grade 12, has access to high-quality, hands-on learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Beginning in 2025, STEM will be part of the specials rotation in Grades K-6, a full-year course in Grades 7 and 8, and a continued elective in Grade 9. Students in Grades 10-12 will have expanded options in computer science, drones, and robotics. The expanded Inspiration Lab will offer a dedicated space for interdisciplinary, career-connected learning.

This year, students in Grades 7-9 experienced a new, project-based STEM curriculum built using the Understanding by Design framework. Projects emphasized authentic problem-solving and collaboration with students applying the engineering design process to real-world challenges. Students used Vernier probes to collect and analyze live experimental data and took on design challenges, such as “Tot Lot: Designing a Playground,” which required research, scaled drawing, and professional-style presentations.

“STEM is a class that requires a lot of creativity and teamwork.” – Brendan Bibik

“It’s about solving problems in the real world.” – Hunter Downton

“You learn how to work and use your brain with all subjects.” – Cora Harcar

“STEM 2030 is for every student, whether their future leads to college, trade school, the military, or the workforce. Our mission is clear: by 2030, every graduate will leave SCHS with the skills, experiences, and confidence to thrive in any path they choose.” – Pete Supko, STEM 2030 Coordinator

SCHOLARS GIVING BACK



One of the Foundation's key objectives is to strengthen community support for Susquehanna's youth by supporting initiatives that benefit the school. We are proud to highlight the many ways our past scholarship recipients are giving back and helping the Foundation achieve its mission, including returning to SCHS to speak about college, serving as mentors through PJS, tutoring math, and conducting medical experience sessions for students interested in healthcare.

The CWO board warmly thanks all our past scholars for their dedication to both SCSD and the Foundation's mission.

DONATIONS

The Foundation is grateful to all those who have contributed to our work in the past and continue to do so. Your donations allow the students of Susquehanna Community High School to participate in programs beyond the standard high school curriculum and use technical equipment that is cutting edge.

Please send contributions to the Claire Williams O'Neil Foundation to:

Claire Williams O'Neil Foundation
Michael Flanagan, Treasurer
2720 36th Place NW
Washington, DC 20007

Please send contributions to support the SCHS Inspiration Laboratory to:

Susquehanna Community High School
Mr. Richard Emmons, Principal
3192 Turnpike Street
Susquehanna, PA 15213

or

Susquehanna Community Inspiration Lab Fund
Community Foundation of the Endless Mountains
270 Lake Avenue
Montrose, PA 18801

Electronic contribution for the Susquehanna Community Inspiration Lab Fund can be made using the following link: <https://community-foundation.org/fund/susquehanna-community-inspiration-lab-fund>.