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Gateway Underclass Awards had new format this year

Huntington – High school students in grades 9, 10 and 11 experienced a new format for receiving academic and service awards this year. Unlike previous years—where the 3 grades assembled in the auditorium for an awards ceremony, at times known to run a couple of hours in length—this year’s awards were delivered in a smaller, more personal setting.

Each grade was summoned to the “double room” in the Middle School for a smaller recognition ceremony with their teachers, principals and guidance counselors. Awards were handed out in a less formal setting, with teachers having a little more time to explain each award. Students were recognized for academic achievements and their service to the school and community through clubs like Best Buddies, the Red Cross Club, Student Council, National Honor Society and Gay Straight Alliance.

The new format was piloted this year to personalize the awards between teachers and students, and to make it different from the Senior Awards Ceremony. Recent years had seen higher absenteeism among students for awards ceremonies and had also seen fewer parents attending. Principal Jason Finnie welcomes feedback from staff, students and families on the new format.

Teacher Cat Bishop, set to retire at the end of the next day, shared her own remarks when the 11th grade convened. “Thank you,” Bishop said. “Thank you for making my last year of teaching my BEST year of teaching.”

Highly coveted ‘book awards’—many coming with multi-year scholarships to recipients who apply and are accepted—were also announced for Gateway juniors. They included the Student Sage Award (Sage Colleges) to Garrett Bean and Audrey Gamble; the Bay Path University Presidential Award and Elmira College Awards to Lindsae Loomis, Regis College Award to Allie Clark; Boston University School of Education Award to Emily Wilkinson; Dartmouth Club of the Pioneer Valley Award to Dawson Atkin; Springfield College and Smith College Awards to Jessica Van Heynigen; Elm College Award to Michala Torres; St. Michael’s Award to Dawson Atkin and Chloe Otterbeck; US Army Reserve Athlete Awards to Garrett Bean and Olivia Clark; RPI Medal Award (valued at $25,000/year for 4 years) to Joe Coon; Western New England University Award to Zach Peters; Assumption College Award to Anna Davis; Rochester Institute of Technology Award for Innovation and Creativity to Dawson Atkin and Ryley Carleton; Rochester Institute of Technology Computing Medal Awards to Joseph Coon and Megan Wright; Mt. Holyoke Book Award to Megan Wright; and the Lasell College Book Award to Chloe Otterbeck.

A complete listing of Underclass Awards may be found in the June 20 issue of Breaking News, on the Gateway website and in the mobile app.

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