

# The Oyster Bay High School Graduation 2017



Sunday, June 25, 2017 was a beautiful day in Oyster Bay. It was around 80 degrees under bright blue skies. The front lawn of the high school set the scene to celebrate the commencement of the Class of 2017. At the stroke of noon, Mr. Matthew Sisia raised his baton and the Oyster Bay High School combined Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble struck the familiar chords of Edward Elgar's venerable classic, "Pomp and Circumstance."

The crowd was soon surrounded by a sea of purple and white robes as the graduates marched out the doors of the high school led by the Honorary Marshals from the Class of 2018, Keith Cassar, Terrance Cameron, and Jodi Yeh.

Oyster Bay High School Senior Class President, Ashley Duggan led the hundreds of family, friends, and on lookers assembled on the front lawn of the high school in the Pledge of Allegiance. The OBHS Chamber Singers sang a beautiful version of the Star Spangled Banner under the direction of Ms. Meagan Finnerty.

Oyster Bay High School Principal Ms. Sharon Lasher, in her opening remarks, said, “My generation needs you to make our changing world a better place, a safer place, a kinder place. Set your expectations high and your dreams higher. As Steve Jobs said, “The ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.”

To the families of our students, I would like to thank you for being our partners over the last six years. I believe our combined efforts have produced the intelligent, passionate, insightful, caring and compassionate young men and women sitting here today.”

Ms. Lasher turned the podium over to Jed Kaiser to deliver the address of welcome as Salutatorian of the Class of 2017.

Jed Kaiser will be attending [Cornell University](#) in Ithaca, New York this fall. He plans to study [Biology and Society](#) and looks to begin a Pre-Med program.

While at OBHS, Jed served as Secretary of the National Honor Society, President of the Interact Club, Secretary of Student Council, Vice President of the International Club and Opinion Editor of the Harbour Voice. He was a member of the National Science Honor Society, the Yearbook Club, the Foreign Language Honor Society, and the Mathletes Team.

Jed played Varsity Tennis since he was in the 8th grade and was team captain for three years. He was also a member of the Student Athlete Leadership Program for two years.

Jed is currently training to be an EMT and will be earning his certification in July.

In his address, Jed said, “The playwright Henrik Ibsen once wrote that ‘A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to

take the helm.’ Over the last four years, all of us, at one time or another, in ways big and small, has been willing to step up and “take the helm” to steer our ship in directions that have brought great credit and esteem to our beloved high school community. We are, have been and always will be a special community of peers who I know will root for each other’s success the rest of our lives.

To my fellow students, I cannot wait to see all that awaits you. Each and every student on this stage is capable of great things and deserving of every opportunity. I know your futures are so bright. As you succeed in your professional and personal lives, and I have every confidence that you will, I urge each of you to remember to always come back to the community that has given you so much. To always come home to Oyster Bay.”

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laura Seinfeld offered advice to the Class of 2017. She said, “a poem, credited to Mother Teresa summarized my advice to you quite well and so I decided to read it to you today:

‘People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.  
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and  
some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you. Be  
honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight.  
Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be  
happy anyway.

The good you do today will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it will never be enough.

Give the world your best anyway.'

Graduates, remember that we are your anchors.”

Ms. Lasher welcomed the Valedictorian, Jack Casey, to the  
podium to deliver the farewell speech.

Jack Casey finished first in his class to become the Valedictorian  
for the Oyster Bay High School graduating class of 2017. Jack  
plans on attending [SUNY Binghamton](#) in September where he  
will study [Engineering](#).

While at Oyster Bay High School, Jack ran for the Cross Country, Winter Track and Spring Track Teams. He was the Captain of all three teams this year and earned a Medal at the Brown University Cross Country Championships.

He was a member of the Oyster Bay High School Chapter of the National Honor Society, AGAPAE, the Student Athlete Leadership Program (S.A.L.P.) and participated in the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Professor For A Day Program. Mr. Casey was the President of the Chess Club and served as Editor in Chief of this year's beautiful Yearbook.

Jack was also a member of the CYO Swim Team and has worked as a lifeguard.

Jack said, "We live our whole lives worrying about numbers. Our age, total income, the number of likes our pictures receive on Instagram and even our GPA should not define our happiness. Happiness derives from having good friends and family and doing whatever it is you truly love. Money is not the key to wealth, and sophistication is not the ingredient for serenity. As Confucius once put it, 'Life is really simple, but we insist on making it

complicated.’ The best feeling in the world is waking up doing whatever it is you love the most.”

Principal Lasher honored Coach Jay Davis and Mr. Tom Gould who will be leaving Oyster Bay after many years of stellar service.

Mr. Gould had this advice for the Class of 2017, “Dr. Seinfeld was right when she read “People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. If you are honest and sincere, people may deceive you. What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. The good you do today will often be forgotten.’

I am reminded by the words of a teacher named Sanaya who said, ‘Change comes slowly for some and like a speeding train for others, but always it arrives. All of life is about the process of change. Those who accept this and adapt do thrive. Those who fight it and dig in their heels do suffer.

How will you express your true nature? By digging in your heels, or by rising up and accepting the challenges in your life as part of Life itself? Life is far more enjoyable when you go with the flow.’

My advice to you, Class of 2017 is to keep your head up and foster only positive energy. The positivity you create will lead you to positive outcomes. If you always do the right thing, you will never go wrong.”

Ms. Lasher recognized Kevin Duke as the recipient of the Beekman Medal, which is the highest honor given to an Oyster Bay High School student.

OBHS Chapter of the National Honor Society President Evan Mattel introduced this year’s choice for the National Honor Society Honorary Inductee, OBHS Science Teacher, Brittany Badean.

Diplomas were handed out, caps were thrown in the air, then off to parties and the rest of their lives as Oyster Bay High School Alumni.