TEN PATerson Public SCHOOLS SENIORS ARE GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL WITH A YEAR OF COLLEGE CREDITS AFTER COMPLETING “STEPS” PROGRAM

District partnership with PCCC allowed students to earn college credit during their senior year

PATerson – Among the hundreds of high school seniors who are graduating through the virtual ceremonies today, ten are graduating with a substantial amount of college credits after participating in the Students Taking an Early Pathway to Success (STEPS) program, which was founded last year through a partnership between the district and Passaic County Community College (PCCC). The program enabled the students to complete their senior year at the college.

“We are very proud of the district’s first ten students to participate in the STEPS Program,” said Schools Superintendent Eileen F. Shafer. “These students took on the challenge of college coursework during the senior year of high school. They had no idea how unusual of a senior year it would be. But these students were not daunted by whatever additional challenges the pandemic presented to them, and they succeeded in making significant headway toward their college degrees without taking on student loan debt. I congratulate all of them for their tenacity and achievement.”

Shafer thanked Supervisor of Student Enrichment & Advanced Learning Programs Rita Route for her work in establishing and managing the program, as well as PCCC President Steven Rose and his team for their partnership.

In the STEPS program, all tuition and fees are paid for by the district, and the credits are transferable to other colleges.

The 10 students accepted into the program are as follows.

From the Eastside High School’s School of Culinary Arts, Hospitality & Tourism (CAHTS)
Athziri Castellanos (30 credits earned through STEPS)
Emilly Cruz (29 credits earned through STEPS)
Stephen Octable (29 credits earned through STEPS)
Algeny Zenon (29 credits earned through STEPS)

From Garrett Morgan Academy
Angelica Alayon (23 credits earned through STEPS)
Wilary Fermin (30 credits earned through STEPS)
From PANTHER Academy
Nada Aly (32 credits earned through STEPS and 8 credits previously earned through Dual Enrollment)
Antonio Williams (20 credits earned through STEPS and 4 credits previously earned through Dual Enrollment)

From the Rosa L. Parks School of Fine & Performing Arts
Vicki Ni (28 credits earned through STEPS and 3 credits previously earned through Dual Enrollment)

From the Kennedy Educational Complex’s School of Education and Training (SET)
Andria Felipe (27 credits earned through STEPS)

The 10 students were selected through a competitive application process in which they were required to complete an application and essay, as well as secure two teachers’ recommendation letters. Standardized test scores were also considered, as well as their grade point averages, participation in extracurricular activities and school attendance.

Although STEPS students follow PCCC’s schedule during the school day, they are allowed to participate in high school sports and extracurricular activities, and participate in all senior year activities.
Students accepted into the STEPS program for the 2020-2021 school year will be announced in the coming days.

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