

# Auburn News

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## Webster Middle School students among winners at statewide Applied Learning Student Showcase

BOSTON — Students from Webster Middle School joined peers from across Massachusetts on May 8 at the One8 Applied Learning Student Showcase, held at the TRACK at new balance in Boston. The event brought together students in grades 4-12 to present Applied Learning work to more than 500 industry professionals who provided real-time feedback.

“This showcase has become a game changer in our students’ lives. The showcase provides them connections to professionals, as well as other students. The students who excel in this showcase see their lives change in so many ways, including career exploration, confidence building, and acceptance to prestigious programs,” said Kate Berti, STEM Teacher at Webster Middle School.

Webster Middle School was represented by student teams from both the Medical and Engineering Pathways of Project Lead the Way. Over the course of the year, these students tackled real-world challenges, from designing their own experiments in grade 5 to building robots for real clients in grade 8 and at the Applied Learning Student Showcase, they had the chance to share what they built and learned with professionals working in relat-



Dannyelle Powers, Kayliana Rivera, Dahliana Lopez, and Alexis Knowles.

ed fields.

“Creative solutions to the world’s most pressing problems is what Massachusetts does best. The One8 Foundation’s Applied Learning Student Showcase is shining a light on how our students are solving real world challenges and building their future success,” said Gov. Maura Healey.

“We’re thankful for the educators and the industry experts who supported this year’s showcase, and we’re thrilled that so many students from school districts across the state were able to take part in this incredible program.”

“The One8 Foundation’s Applied Learning Student Showcase encourages stu-

dents of different ages, from different cities and towns, with varied interests to explore creative ways

to solve real world problems,” said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. “Across our state, we want our students to

use what they’re learning in the classroom and apply it to the issues that matter to them most. That’s why we’re proud to support the Student Showcase that empowers young people to turn their ideas into meaningful solutions and make a lasting impact in their communities.”

“I’ve witnessed Applied Learning at multiple school districts where students are not just learning content, but using it in authentic ways,” said Education Secretary Steve Zrike.

“One8’s Applied Learning Showcase was an opportunity to see how students across Massachusetts are benefitting from rigorous learning that is relevant, engaging, and connected to the world beyond the classroom.”

“What we saw Friday is what Applied Learning is all about: students wrestling with real-world, meaningful problems, working in teams, then presenting it to professionals who take them seriously and offer ideas to make the work even stronger. That combination

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## Dudley resident named Valedictorian at Marianapolis Preparatory School



Philopateer Basha

THOMPSON, Conn. — Philopateer Basha will deliver the valedictory address, and Charles O’Brien will deliver the salutatory address at Marianapolis’ Class of 2026 commencement ceremony on May 31.

Basha, the son of Sarwat and Rania Basha, resides in Dudley, and will attend Bryant University in the fall, where he plans to study finance.

Reflecting on his time at Marianapolis, Basha said, “I have enjoyed being part of such a supportive community. The people around me have pushed me to become a better version of myself, both in and out of the classroom.”

He added that one of the most important lessons he learned during his time at Marianapolis was the value of stepping outside his comfort zone. “Although stepping into unfamiliar situations is uncomfortable, these moments often lead to the greatest learning experiences,” Basha said.

Marianapolis Head of School, David DiCicco, praised Basha for his academic curiosity and commitment to learning.

“Philo has impressed us with his scholarship and intellectual curiosity,” DiCicco said. “In the pursuit of knowledge and deeper learning, he asked critical and deep questions. We are excited to continue to celebrate his academic journey next year and beyond!”

Basha credited his support system for helping shape his success.

“First and foremost, I owe all my success to God, whose guidance and blessings have helped me throughout every stage of my journey,” he said. “I am also incredibly grateful for my family, teachers, coaches, and friends who continuously supported, encouraged, and believed in

me even during challenging moments.”

When asked for advice to future Marianapolis students, Basha encouraged future students to persevere through challenges.

“My advice for future students would be to not let setbacks define you,” Basha said. “Everyone experiences challenges, failures, and moments where things do not go as planned, but those moments do not determine who you are. What matters most is how you respond to them and whether you continue working towards your goals. I’ve learned that setbacks are often some of the greatest opportunities for growth. Success rarely follows a straight path, so make the best out of the moment and keep moving forward.”

Basha also expressed appreciation for his teachers and coaches.

“They have consistently pushed me to be my best while also offering unwavering support,” he said. “Their encouragement and belief in me has directly contributed to my personal growth and is something that I will remember forever.”

## What in Auburn History would you like to know about?

AUBURN — The Auburn Historical Society & Museum would welcome suggestions about future articles that readers would like the volunteer staff to research about Auburn, or an exhibit that could be highlighted at the museum. Is there a particular person, place, item or event that should be brought to light? Might you have pictures or documents sitting in your attic or basement that may need more details as to their family or community significance?

While you’re doing spring cleaning or downsizing, think about the possible historical value to Auburn before tossing aside those items. Perhaps a visit to the Auburn Historical Society & Museum might be useful.

The Auburn Historical Society & Museum is at 41 South St., and is open Tuesday and Saturday mornings 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. It can also be reached at [auburnmuseum@verizon.net](mailto:auburnmuseum@verizon.net) or 508-832-6856, [www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org](http://www.auburnhistoricalmuseum.org), or follow us on Facebook at Auburn Historical.

## Chaffee Elementary students enjoy hands-on learning with special visitors

OXFORD — Students at Chaffee Elementary School had an exciting and educational few days in May thanks to two special events that brought science, discovery, and wildlife directly into the school community.

On Friday, May 15, Chaffee welcomed the Discovery Museum for an engaging traveling workshop focused on the science of sound. Through a variety of interactive, hands-on activities, students explored how sound travels, how vibrations work, and how we experience sound in everyday life. The workshop combined education with fun, encouraging curiosity and active participation as students experimented, listened, and learned together.

Just a few days later, on Monday, May 18, stu-



dents were treated to another unforgettable experience when Animal Adventures visited Chaffee thanks to the school’s amazing PTO. Students had the opportunity to learn about a wide variety of unique animals while hearing fascinating facts about their habits, behaviors, and characteristics. For many students, the highlight of the visit was the chance to get up close to the animals—and even

touch and pet them if they chose.

Both events created memorable learning experiences that students will be talking about long after the visits ended. Chaffee Elementary extends its gratitude to the Discovery Museum, Animal Adventures, and the PTO for helping bring these enriching opportunities to students.