

Cedar Cliff Special Interest News

Mrs. Angela Kamps, M.Ed. Gifted, Gifted Support Teacher
May 2020, Year in Review

Message from Mrs. Kamps:

This newsletter greets you at a time when we are in a very different teaching/learning environment due to COVID-19.

In reflecting upon this school year, I'm incredibly proud of the Special Interest students' accomplishments! This newsletter covers a lot of territory, eight months of activities, that the students have completed through the Cedar Cliff Gifted Program, either as enrichment projects/activities or as graded work through the Special Interest Independent Study elective class.

In the following pages, you'll see Special Interest students receiving awards and honors, attending guest speaker events, and participating in competitions; all offered through the CC Gifted program. Through the students' hard work and focus on self-selected, personalized learning activities, they continue to advance their knowledge and skills, all while having fun along the way! I look forward to the day that I'll safely see you in-person in the classroom!

Congratulations Thussenthan Walter-Angelo

First Place in the PA Stock Market Game!

Accepted to Princeton University!

PA Recipient of the Cooke College Scholars Award!



Thussenthan pictured above left in the CC Gifted Room and above right with the 50 recipients of the Cooke College Scholars Award <https://tinyurl.com/ydgcwkm>.

Thussenthan has had a busy senior year! He was one of nine Special Interest teams to compete in the 10-week online PA stock market game challenge from September 30-December 6. Thussenthan ended the game in first place out of 88 teams competing in the region! His highest earning stocks were QGEN Pharmaceutical Company, which jumped from \$25.52 a share to \$41.81 a share, as well as Immunomedics, which experienced a 64.55% growth. After starting with "\$100,000" to invest, Thussenthan ended the ten weeks with an equity of "\$123,496.26." He outperformed teams from Manheim Township, Warwick, and East Pennsboro, to name a few. Well done!

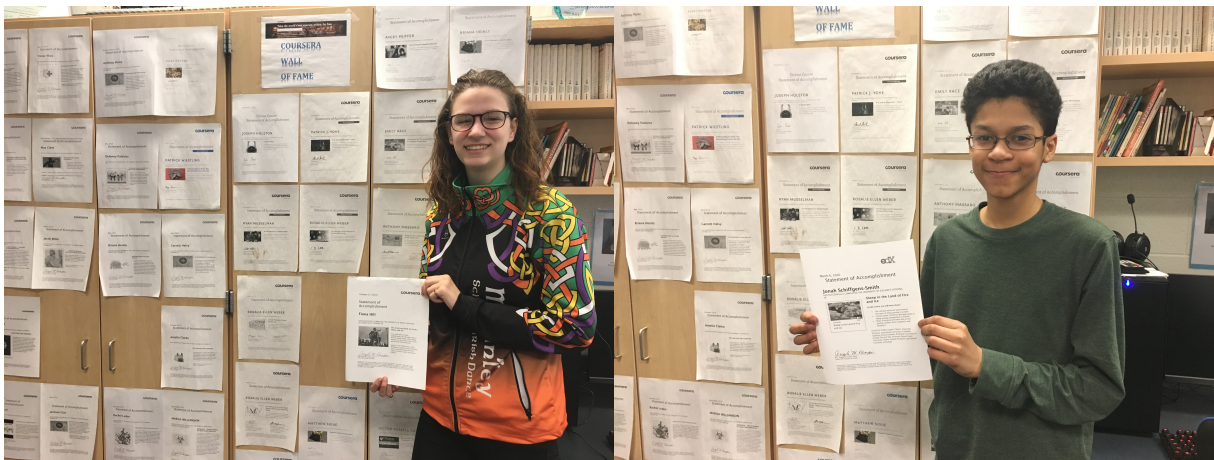
Even more momentous, on April 17, Thussenthan received the exciting news that he was among the 50 recipients of the Cooke College Scholars Award. He was the only Pennsylvania recipient and will receive \$40,000 a year as his scholarship. Thussenthan will be attending Princeton University in the fall and plans to pursue a medical degree. We are so proud of his hard work and accomplishments!

Special Interest Independent Study Classes

Students have selected interesting and challenging projects to complete during their Independent Study classes. In addition to self-selecting curriculum, students complete two philosophical Socratic Seminars each semester. This year we have studied through Touchstones Curriculum portions of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Mencius's *The Seven Books*, and Saint Augustine's *The Confessions*.

Some students have chosen to complete online college courses. Others have learned computer programming, focused on world languages, creative writing, history day entries, or art projects, to name a few.

College Courses



Pictured above: Fiona Hilt completion of the course: The American South: Its Stories, Music, and Art through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill via coursera.org, completed during the fall semester in Independent Study class.

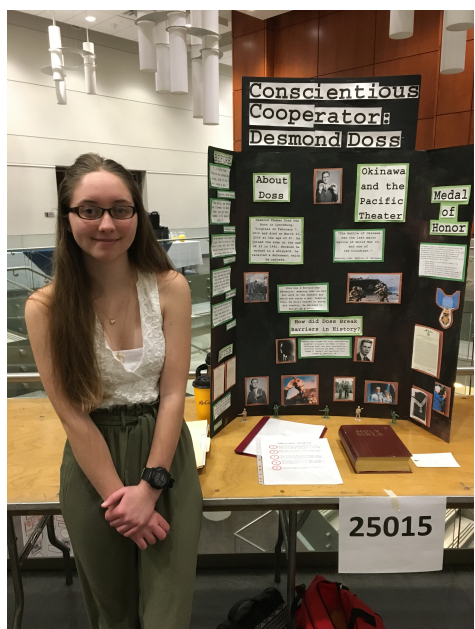
Pictured above: Jonah Schiffgens-Smith completion of the course: Sheep in the Land of Fire and Ice through the University of Iceland via edX completed during the spring semester in Independent Study Class.

We Are Cedar Cliff!



During the spring semester of Independent Study class, sophomore student Izzie O'Shell volunteered to help Mrs. Guistwhite, CCHS Librarian, in painting and creating the "We Are Cedar Cliff" display case in the front lobby of the school. The display greets students, staff, and visitors with images of Cedar Cliff students. We are Cedar Cliff! Izzie is also completing a career research unit and an original breakout activity as Special Interest Independent Study projects.

Breaking Barriers in History



Sophomore student Emma Kurt-Olin (pictured left) decided that she wanted to create a history day project during her Special Interest Independent Study class this spring. This was the second year that Emma competed in History Day.

Emma researched United States Army corporal Desmond Doss as her topic for the *Breaking Barriers in History* theme. Desmond Doss served as a medic during WWII and was twice awarded the Bronze Star Medal. The movie *Hacksaw Ridge* is based on his life.

The National History Day competition took place at Messiah College on Saturday, March 7, 2020. Emma presented her project at the competition.

Students may enter projects, performances, websites, papers, and movies for History Day. Looking ahead to next year, the 2020-21 theme is *Communication in History*.

<https://www.nhd.org/>

Fall Special Interest Independent Study Lateral Thinking Puzzle Winners Period 5



Congratulations to Zoe Koutsokostas, Fiona Hilt, and Maria Rahmouni for achieving the best overall time in the fall semester lateral thinking puzzle competition. They chose Neato Burrito as their reward! All Special Interest Independent Study classes partake in this friendly competition during the semester.

Final Times:

First Place:	Block 5	1 hour 11 min. 26 sec.
Second Place:	Block 6	2 hours 12 min. 27 sec.
Third Place:	Block 1	2 hours 26 min. 46 sec
Fourth Place:	Block 3	2 hours 27 min. 51 sec.

Writing

Susquehanna University Creative Writing Day



Pictured above (from left to right, back to front) Emma Kurtz-Olin, Makenzie Elliot, Natalie Delavan, Trevor Flick, Jonah Stiffens-Smith, Kate Gannon, Jackson Green, Nathaniel Stains, Eliah Houck, and Eli-Domanski-Ferris



Students are in the auditorium ready for the opening presentations. From left to right: Jonah Schiffgens-Smith, Kate Gannon, Trevor Flick, and Emma Kurtz-Olin.

On November 4, 2019, Mrs. Kamps took Special Interest students to Susquehanna University's Creative Writing Day. While there, students listened to a panel of writers and participated in professional writing workshops, which included: fantasy/novel writing, journalism, novel, performance writing, poetry, screenwriting, short story, and sports journalism. Students also had the opportunity to tour the campus and learn about the creative writing major at the university.

Scholastic Writing Winners



Pictured left to right: Emma Kurtz-Olin, Maria Rahmouni, Soloman Khan-Syed, Braedon Dibble, Natalie Delavan, Madeline Graff, and John Gillespie

[Congratulations to the 2020 South Central PA Scholastic Art and Writing Winners.](https://www.artandwriting.org/) These students were recognized for their accomplishments at the Harrisburg State Museum awards ceremony, on Saturday March 7, 2020. Many of these students completed their work as Special Interest projects. Well done! For more information: <https://www.artandwriting.org/>

[Natalie Delavan](#) Honorable Mention in Critical Essay *Abolish the Electoral College*
[Braedon Dibble](#) Honorable Mention in Science Fiction and Fantasy *Life's Destruction*
[John Gillespie](#) Silver Key in Science Fiction and Fantasy *The Sirens Sing at Night*
[Madeline Graf](#) Gold Key in Personal Essay and Memoir *A slippery slope*
[Soloman Khan-Syed](#) Gold Key in Poetry *A Circle and a Line*
[Emma Kurtz-Olin](#) Gold Key in Novel *Wasting Away*
[Maria Rahmouni](#) Gold Key in Poetry *Brother*

Voice of Democracy Audio Essay Winners



Congratulations to Jackson Green and Elijah Houck, pictured above with Mrs. Kamps, CCHS Gifted Support Teacher, for their award-winning audio essays! Elijah won first place and \$200.00. Jackson won second place and \$150.00, at the local level through the New Cumberland VFW Post. Elijah's audio essay then advanced to the district level. There he won 2nd place and an additional \$400.00. Elijah and Jackson wrote and recorded essays on the theme, *What Makes America Great?* The competition was advertised to all Cedar Cliff students. Elijah and Jackson developed and recorded their speeches under the direction of Mrs. Kamps, as enrichment projects through the Cedar Cliff Gifted Program. For more information about the VFW Voice of Democracy Scholarship Competition, check out the link: <https://www.vfw.org/community/youth-and-education/youth-scholarships>. Next year's theme is: *Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?*

Cedar Cliff Academic Worldquest Teams



Pictured Above: Addison Clouser, Thussenthan Walter-Angelo, Eli Domanski-Ferris, Maria Rahmouni, Michael Flamini, Soloman Khan-Syed, and Fiona Hilt, missing: Kate Gannon. Cedar Cliff Academic Worldquest teams had been busy preparing for the competition, which was scheduled to be held on Saturday, March 28, 2020 at Elizabethtown College. Sadly, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the competition was canceled. These student teams, under the direction of Mrs. Kamps, worked incredibly hard preparing for their topics on international issues. Topics included: U.S.- Russia Relations, South Korea, Preventing Extremism in Fragile States, Oceans: The World's Garbage Dump, Brexit and the EU, to name a few. The World Affairs Council of Harrisburg sponsors the local competition.

First Place International Storytelling and Poetry Festival



170,000 by Maria Rahmouni

Arianna Fitts is 2.
Well, actually now she's 6.
She really loved cartoons.
DocMcStuffins was her pick.

She lived in San Francisco,
with her sweet mother Nicole.
But on April 5th,
in her life was left a hole.

He is Kristopher Lewis,
5 feet on the dot,
but it's been 6 years now,
I wonder how tall he's got.

"Kris always came home,"
that's what his mother said.
But on that night in Boston,
she cried by his empty bed.

Now I would bet you money,
that you didn't know these names.
Didn't even know their story,
But you're not the one to blame.

Black kids go missing daily;
just stolen in the night.
But the media reports things
like Trump's most recent fight.

We must refocus our attention.
As a nation, let's step back.
Out of all the missing kids,
37 percent are black.

That's a hundred-seventy
thousand.
So I admit I am confused...
More than one third of all cases
but no black kids in the news.

Kris and Ari are still missing.
But they aren't the only two.
More than one third of all cases
but no black kids in the news.

Congratulations to junior Maria Rahmouni, for winning first place in the International Poetry and Storytelling competition for her poem, "170,000."

The World Affairs Council of Harrisburg sponsored the competition and festival, which was held Monday, January 20th at Temple University in Harrisburg.

The festival featured acclaimed poets in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Way to go Maria!

World Affairs Council of Harrisburg Opportunities

<https://wacharrisburg.org/>

Youth and Education

- Intern at WACH
- International Young Leaders Conference
- Global Scholar Certificate Program for High School Students
- International Storytelling & Poetry Competition and Festival
- Academic Worldquest Competition

Cedar Cliff Gifted Alumni Visit and Share Expertise

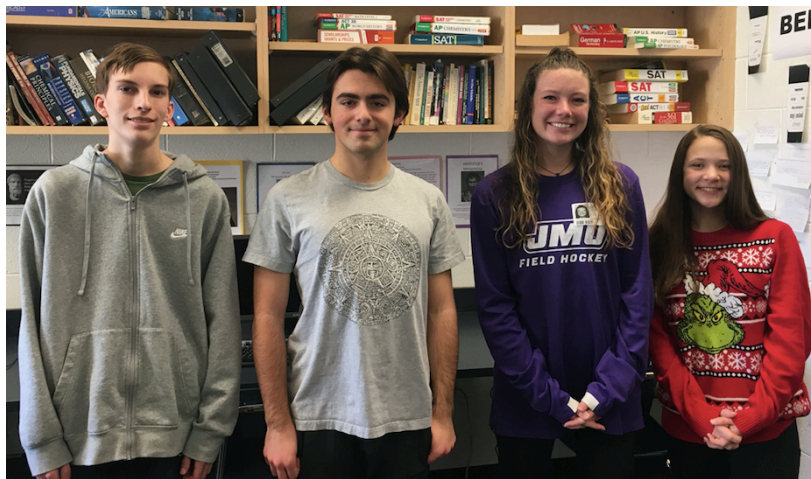
Sarah Brock CCHS class of 2017

On December 20, 2020, Mrs. Kamps welcomed Sarah Brock back to Cedar Cliff Special Interest! Sarah graduated from Cedar Cliff in 2017 and is a biochemistry major attending James Madison University.

Sarah spoke with Special Interest students about her college experience and her research with small molecule acceptors in organic solar cells.

Sarah was awarded a 2018-19 grant from James Madison University for her work *Real Women in STEM*.

<https://tinyurl.com/y94n6oq4>



Pictured above left to right: Braedon Dibble, Nathaniel Stains, Sarah Brock, and Katie Ottenberg

Andrew Tomes CCHS Class of 2009



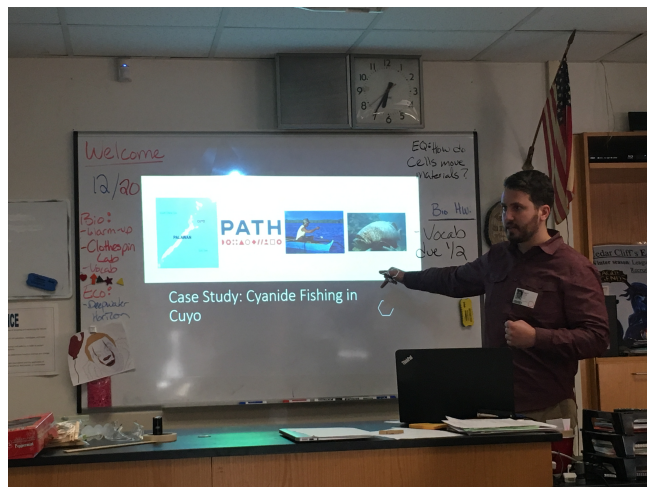
Pictured above: Zoe Koutsokostas, Maria Rahmouni, Andrew Tomes, Kayleigh Hart, Kate Gannon, and Dante Schwartzman.

Andrew gave a presentation to gifted students interested in environmental studies and ecology. He answered questions concerning careers and covered ethics and business while discussing biopiracy. Andrew also spoke with Mrs. Haun's ecology class. He presented case studies and research involving the American Chestnut and Japanese Chestnut trees well as Wetlands research.

On December 20, 2020 Mrs. Kamps welcomed gifted alumnus Andrew Tomes back to Cedar Cliff! Andrew is a graduate of the University of Maine College of Natural Sciences and Honors College where he majored in botany.

Andrew received his Master of Science degree in ecology from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Ecology.

Currently, Andrew resides in Seattle, Washington. He traveled to Seattle to join a startup company which manufactured organic fertilizer out of food waste.



In-House Titan Business Challenge

March 2020

Special Interest students learned about business management by preparing for and participating in the online simulation, the Titan Business Challenge. Junior Special interest student, Karina Chima, led and managed the simulation by organizing online game set-up and directing the student teams. Students reported to Mrs. Kamps's room on March 11th to strategize market share, retained earnings, product sales, and research and development. During the simulation, students sold futuristic products called "hologenerators" and learned about the components of business management, setting their sights on obtaining the highest performance index in order to emerge victorious at the end of this 1.5-hour competition.



Congratulations to team winners: Jackson Green and Billy Georges, first place; Karina Chima, second place; and Michael Flamini and Thussenthan Walter-Angelo, third place!

National 3-2-1 Academic Competition

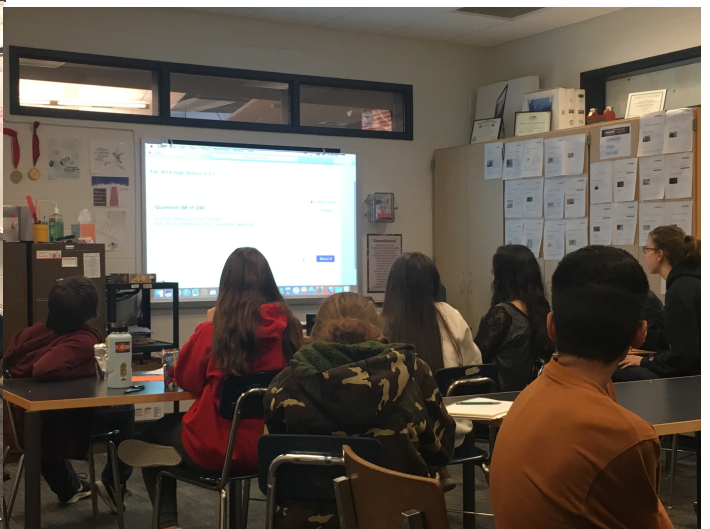
Fall Competition



Pictured left: Thussenthan Walter-Angelo, captain of the team, and Marisa Williamson, assistant captain, prepare to enter the team's answers.

Pictured below are the student participants.

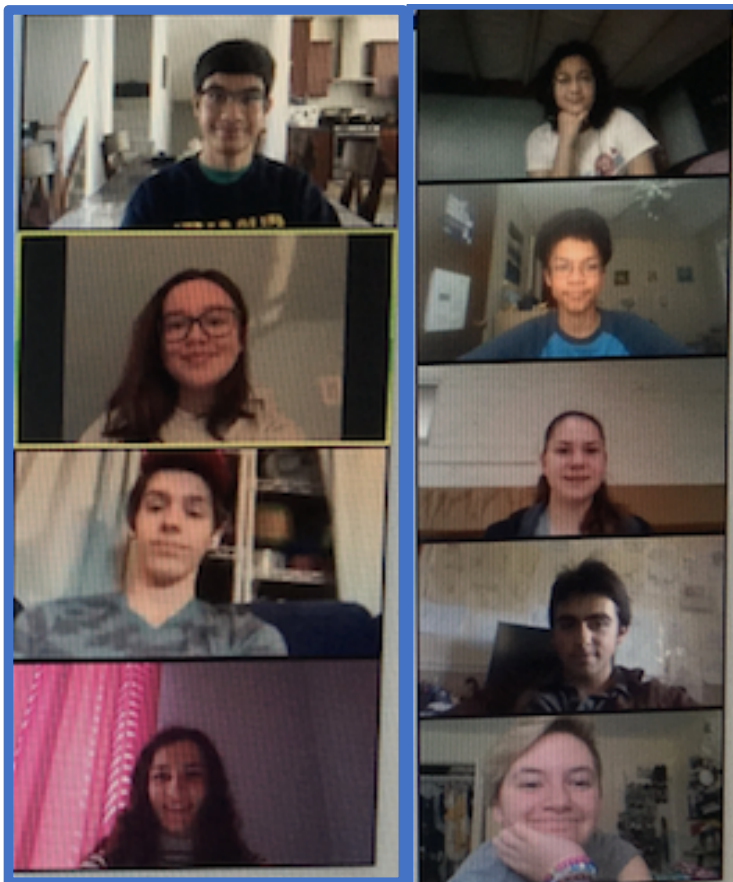
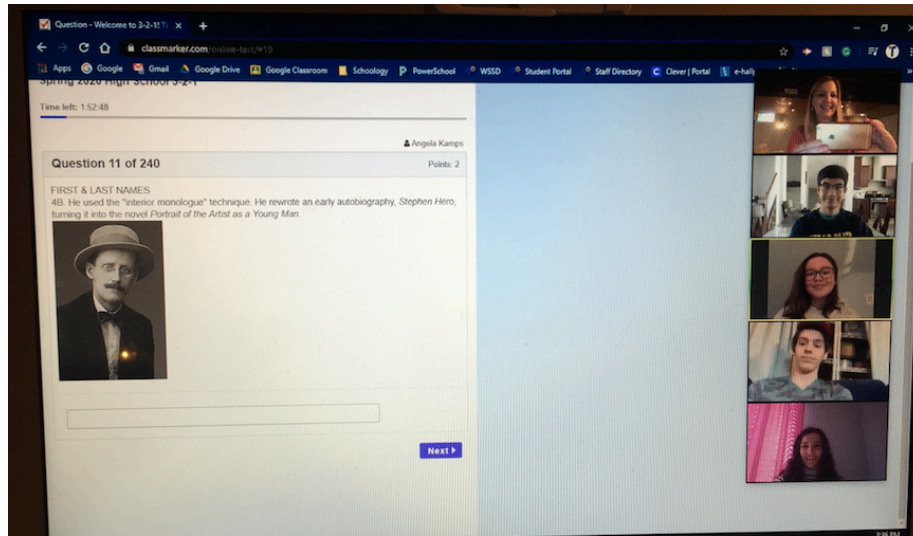
On December 13, 2020, Special Interest students in grades 9-12 gathered together in Mrs. Kamps's gifted classroom to compete in the national online academic competition, the 3-2-1 Competition. The team answered 200 questions within 2 hours and finished with a rank of 8th in PA and 55/171 in the nation with 65.4% answers correct.



National 3-2-1 Academic Competition

Spring Competition

Due to COVID-19 and distance learning, the spring 3-2-1 competition was held a bit differently. Because of increased challenges, many schools across the nation did not participate this spring, but the Cedar Cliff gifted students persevered and competed as an online team via Zoom! It wasn't the same, but we still shared the team spirit and camaraderie throughout the 2-hour competition! Thussenthan Walter-Angelo and Marisa Williamson admirably served once more as captain and assistant captain. The team ended with 55.5% of the questions correct and a rank of 11th in the state of PA.



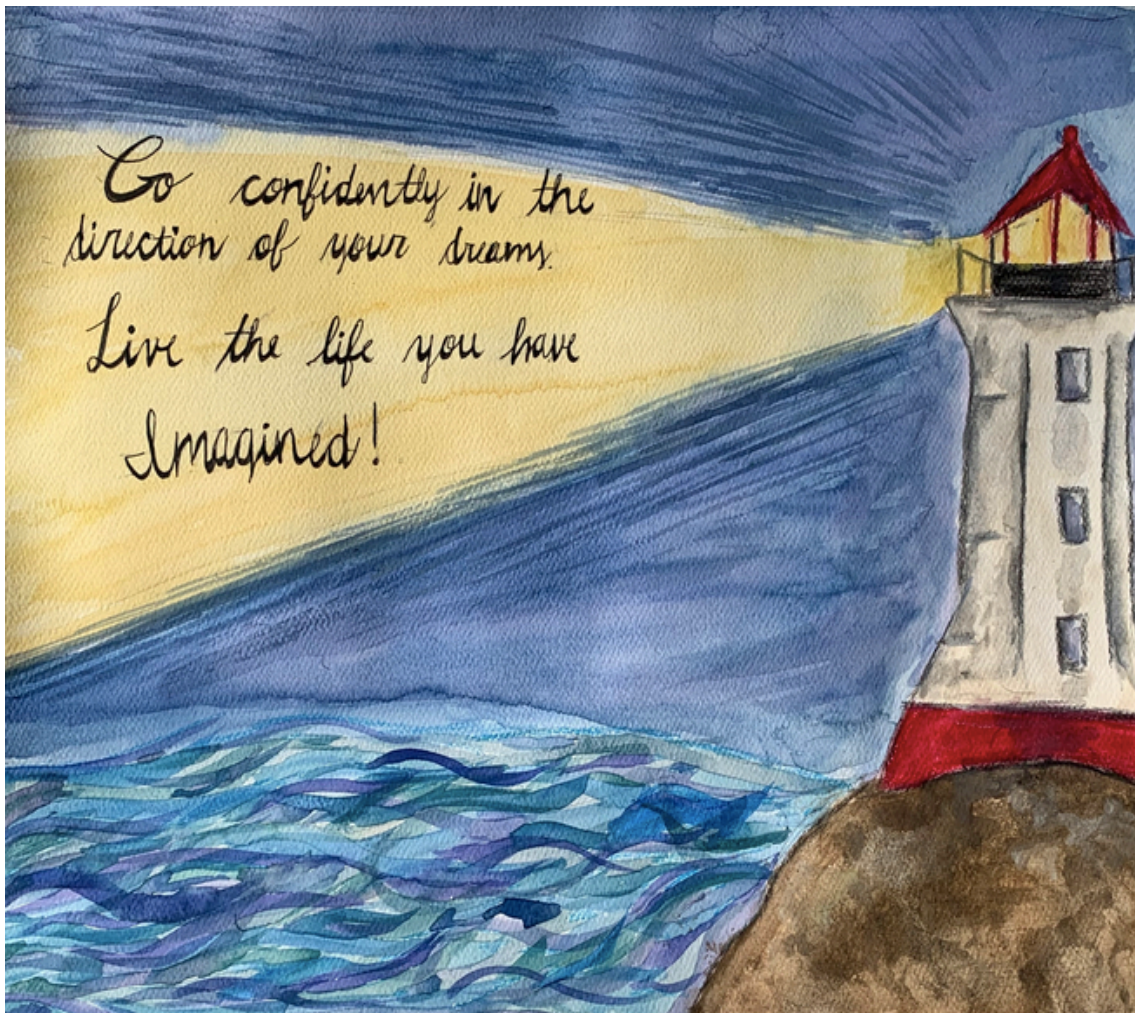
Student participants:
Thussenthan Walter Angelo,
Kate Gannon, Eli Domanski-
Ferris, Marisa Williamson,
Anastasia Jimenez, Jonah
Schiffgens-Smith, Olivia
Mohnkern, Nathaniel
Stains, Percy Baucum,
Emma Kurtz-Olin, and
Karina Chima



Congratulations Special Interest Seniors!

Class of 2020

Katherine Addams
Devon Bertram
Naomi Englehart
Trevor Flick
Romaine Marszalek
Brendan Moore
Thussenthan Walter-Angelo
Marisa Williamson



Artwork by Julianna Thompson, 9th grade CCHS Special Interest Student
Quote by Henry David Thoreau