



*Supporting the Needs of
High Ability Students in the
Johnston Community School
District*

2019-2020 Board Members

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Friends of Johnston ELP Spring 2020 Newsletter

The Spring Semester that Wasn't

When students and teachers walked out of school on March 13, no one knew that this would be the last time we'd walk out of our buildings for the rest of the school year. COVID-19 wreaked havoc on our state, our country and our world. All of the experiences we were looking forward to—academic competitions, spring sports, spring musicals, senior recognitions, prom, elementary and middle school year-end celebrations, and even graduation—suddenly and unexpectedly gone, a heartbreaking end to what promised to be yet another fabulous year for our school district.

But our students and teachers are resilient. Virtual learning curriculum that would normally take months to pull together was available within weeks. Zoom became our students' and teachers' go-to for classroom learning and a way to connect during these times of social distancing. Simply put, we all made the very best of an extremely challenging time.

We hope you and your families are safe and healthy. We hope you find ways to enjoy what will undoubtedly be a very unique summer. And we sincerely hope to see you all next fall.

—Friends of Johnston ELP Board and ELP Staff

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Ding Advances to Finalist in U.S. Presidential Scholars Program



JHS Senior, Matthew Ding

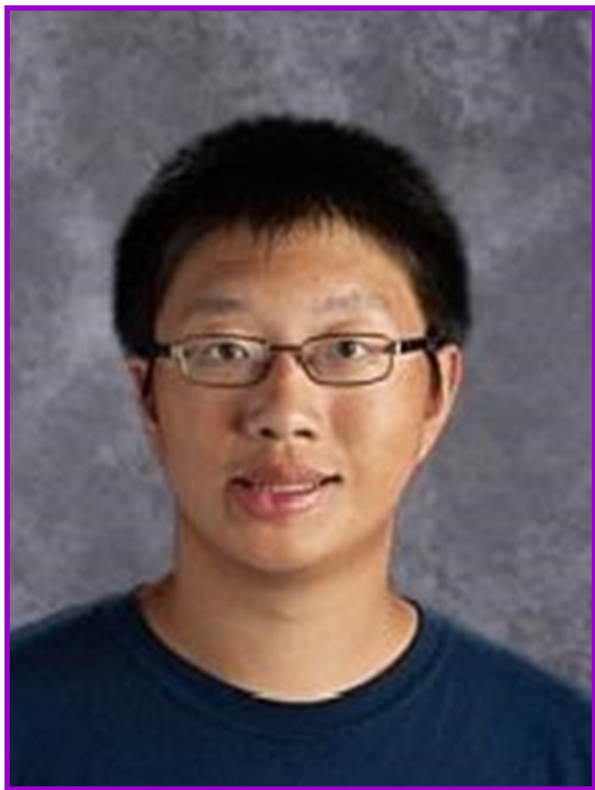
Matthew Ding, a senior at Johnston High School, has been named a finalist in the prestigious U.S. Presidential Scholars program. He is one of 620 students nationwide to advance from the semifinalist round. The program starts with a pool of 5,600 candidates from across the country.

According to the U.S. Department of Education website, "The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964, by executive order of the President, to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. Each year, up to 161 students are named as Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school students."

Congratulations to Matthew on this outstanding honor!

Congratulations!

Janni, Ding Named to 2020 Iowa Governor's Scholar Program



JHS Senior, Matthew Ding



JHS Senior Anna Janni

Iowa's top academic students have been chosen for the 2020 Governor's Scholar Program. The Governor's Office, the Iowa High School Athletic Association, and its title sponsor, the Iowa Farm Bureau, are presenting this recognition which began in 2003.

Johnston seniors Anna Janni and Matthew Ding are among the 424 seniors statewide being honored and were selected by their high schools as the highest academic achievers. All students will receive a recognition plaque and certificate to commemorate their achievement. In addition, each student's most influential teacher will also receive a certificate of appreciation.

The in-person ceremony for this year was canceled due to COVID-19 and the ongoing guidelines concerning public gatherings. With that in mind, the student honorees are being announced via social media and the IHSAA website.

"The principles learned through academic success, like those learned from participation in school activities, help develop outstanding young leaders," said IHSAA executive director Tom Keating. "The partnership between the IHSAA and the Iowa Farm Bureau, along with the great cooperation of the Governor's Office has made this prestigious program possible for many years."

In addition to being recognized as the state's brightest students, more than 99 percent of the group participates in school activities. More than 60 percent plan to pursue their post-secondary education in Iowa.

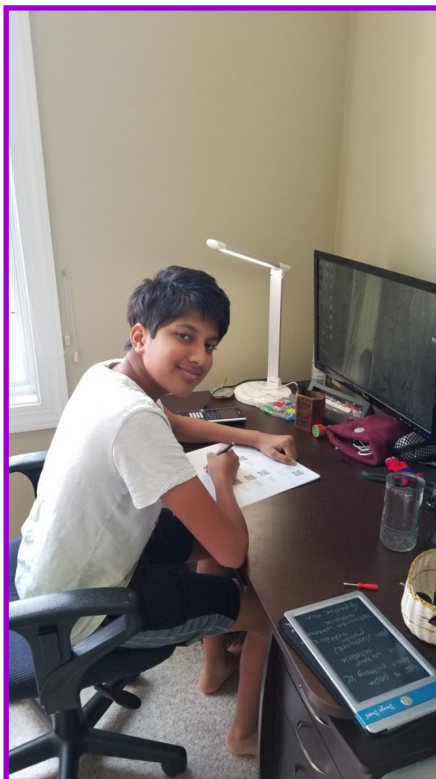
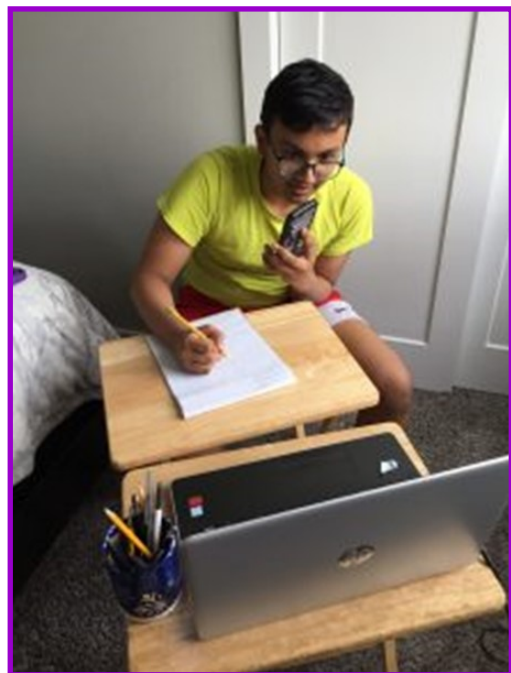
Note: The largest 64 schools in Iowa, according to the Iowa Department of Education BEDS document, were invited to select two seniors who are the highest academic achievers for their first seven semesters. All other schools were invited to select one senior who was the highest academic achiever for their first seven semesters.

Johnston Students Compete in State Math Championships

Congratulations to ten Johnston students who qualified and competed in the online State Math Championship on Saturday, April 25, 2020. Mathleague.org hosted this annual event through a massive Zoom meeting. Each student had a chaperone to proctor the tests and answers were submitted digitally.

Participants from Johnston were Matthew Ding, Aaron Guo, Matthew He, Anna Larson, Kunal Singhal, Pranav Sharma, Owen Smith, Phoebe Smith, Tarun Srikanan, Jenna Woodsmall. The Math Team is coached by Julie Probst.

65 students competed from across the state and six Johnston students qualified to move on to the regional competition in May. Congratulations to regional qualifiers Matthew D, Aaron, Anna, Kunal, Pranav, and Owen!



Congratulations



2020 Mock Trial Teams

Nine teams from Johnston competed this year in the Iowa regional high school mock trial competition. While teams were unable to continue on to the state and national competitions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please help us congratulate all of the students who participated in the competition for their hard work and dedication.



Team 8 Chads and a Karen



Team Awfully Lawful (State Qualifier)



Team Courtnite: Trial Royale



2020 Mock Trial Teams



Team Courtroom Crew (State Qualifier)



Team Dunder Mifflaw



Team John Wheeler Fan Club (State Qualifier)



2020 Mock Trial Teams



Team Lawful Evil



Team Meet the Mockers (State Qualifier)



Team Ock-may lal-tray



National History Day Goes Virtual for 2020 Competition

The regional National History Day competitions were held throughout the month of March. While the COVID-19 pandemic stopped students from competing live, the state and National history day organizers worked hard to come up with a solution to allow all students to continue to compete, while still social distancing. The Des Moines regional virtual history day competition was held on April 1st resulting in 21 Johnston students qualifying for the state competition. The state virtual history day competition was held on May 1st and resulted in 7 students qualifying for the national competition. The National virtual History day competition will be held June 14th-20th. Please congratulate all the students who qualified for State and Nationals!

STUDENT(S)	SCHOOL	CATEGORY
Abigail Good, Ahana Devadas	Summit	Junior Group Documentary
Akshara Eswar	JMS	Junior Individual Documentary
Ani Soni, Jeffrey Zou	JMS	Senior Group Documentary
Anjali Kumar, Eshaan Chandani	JMS	Senior Group Documentary
Rohan Devadas	JMS	Senior Individual Documentary
Ella Prince, Zoe Zhang	Summit	Junior Group Exhibit
Lauren Wessling	JMS	Junior Paper
Paige Thacker	JMS	Senior Paper
Shreyas Shrestha, Kathir Kalyanaraman, Andrew Bogue	Summit	Junior Group Website
Julia Chen, Vivian Chen, Joanne Wu	JHS	Senior Group Website
Anita Dinakar	JMS	Senior Individual Website
Emma Dummermuth	JHS	Senior Individual Website
Kayla Jensen, Dylan Coslin	JHS	Senior Group Performance

National Qualifiers

STUDENT(S)	SCHOOL	CATEGORY
Anita Dinakar	JMS	Senior Individual Website
Shreyas Shrestha, Kathir Kalyanaraman, Andrew Bogue	Summit	Junior Group Website
Paige Thacker	JMS	Senior Paper
Eshaan Chandani, Anjali Kumar	JMS	Senior Group Documentary

Alternates: Julia Chen, Vivian Chen, Joanne Wu- JHS- Senior Group Website