

DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD RUTHERFORD HIGH SCHOOL

The Rutherford High School Distinguished Graduate Award was established in 1990 to recognize a graduate of the high school whose achievements reflect a standard of excellence in his or her chosen field. The achievements of each distinguished graduate will be recognized by Rutherford High School so that the person can be seen by students as a symbol of commitment and excellence to which they can aspire.

A simple nomination form is used, which asks that the nominator supply as much background information on the candidate as possible.

The general criteria used in selecting the honoree include the following:

1. Honoree must have graduated from Rutherford High School at least ten years prior to nomination.
2. Honoree's achievement must reflect significant accomplishment in his or her career. No restrictions are placed on types of careers.
3. Honoree's outstanding contributions must have achieved national, state, or local recognition.

The selection committee includes the following people: high school principal (chair), supervisor of planning, research and testing, vice president of the student government, social studies supervisor, and National Honor Society advisor. Committee chair receives and responds to nominations, asks for additional information when necessary, and distributes all materials to committee members before a meeting is scheduled to discuss the nominations. After discussion, committee members vote on the nominations to select the honoree.

A permanent recognition plaque in the high school contains the names, career fields, and graduation dates of all honorees. In addition, the honoree visits the high school to address a large group of students. A lunch reception follows and the honoree will meet with smaller groups, if appropriate. This visit by the inductee is an important part of the project, since students are able to hear directly from someone who shares part of their background and experience.

**RUTHERFORD HIGH SCHOOL
DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD
NOMINATION FORM**

You are cordially invited to submit a nomination for the Distinguished Graduate Award. Nominees must have graduated from Rutherford High School at least ten years prior to selection and attained a significant level of achievement in their chosen field. A permanent recognition plaque will contain the names of all honorees. In addition, a suitable memento of the occasion will be presented to the honoree at a ceremony to be held at a time and place chosen by the selection committee.

DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD NOMINATION

Name _____ Year of Graduation _____
(include maiden name)

Current Address _____ Phone _____

Supporting information (Be as complete as possible. Attach any documentation which will help the selection committee.)

Name of Nominator _____ Phone # _____

Address: _____

All nominations will be kept on file but in order to be considered for the 2025 award, please return the form and all information to CGearity@rutherschools.org or Mrs. Carol Gearity, Rutherford High School, 56 Elliott Place, Rutherford, NJ 07070. The deadline for nominations is May 2, 2025.

Previous Recipients:

1990	Thomas Pickering	RHS Class of 1949	United Nations Ambassador
1991	Peggy Noonan	RHS Class of 1968	Writer
1992	Ferdinand Petrie	RHS Class of 1943	Artist/Illustrator
1993	Sheryl Hilliard Tucker	RHS Class of 1974	Editor/Journalist
1994	John E. Decker	RHS Class of 1969	Aerospace Engineer
1995	Herbert G. Miller, M.D.	RHS Class of 1927	Physician/Public Service
1996	Charles Evered	RHS Class of 1983	Writer
1997	Dr. Nancy Kedersha	RHS Class of 1969	Cell Biologist
1998	Louis Frey, Jr., Esq.	RHS Class of 1951	U.S. Congressman
1999	Sister Sylvia Elaine Postles	RHS Class of 1958	Missionary/Nurse
2000	Thomas Hirata	RHS Class of 1973	Artist
2001	Barbara Chadwick	RHS Class of 1939	Public Servant
2002	Dr. Joanne Spadora	RHS Class of 1976	Molecular Biologist
2003	Ruth E. Shea	RHS Class of 1969	Wildlife Biologist
2004	Leila Kenzle	RHS Class of 1979	Actress
2005	Kirit Bhatt, M.D.	RHS Class of 1988	Physician
2006	Ralph LaRossa	RHS Class of 1981	Industrial Engineer/Businessman
2007	Shimmy Mehta	RHS Class of 1993	Social Entrepreneur
2008	June B. Kress	RHS Class of 1967	Social Justice Advocate
2009	David Palasits	RHS Class of 1977	Humanitarian
2011	Paul Frazier	RHS Class of 1980	Musician
2013	Paul Jackson	RHS Class of 1973	Paralympics Coach
2015	Andrea Covais	RHS Class of 2002	Opera Singer
2017	Patrick Fletcher	RHS Class of 1978	Educator
2019	Laura Battista	RHS Class of 1990	US Army Product Director
2023	Ramy Youssef	RHS Class of 2009	Actor/Writer/Director