

**Clarence Bee Article – June 2017**  
**Geoffrey Hicks, Ed.D. - Clarence Superintendent of Schools**

**Graduation**

The 145<sup>th</sup> commencement of Clarence High School took place on June 24. It is always the most emotional and exciting event in a school year, the culmination of 13 years of work by students. Their collective accomplishments, in the classroom, on the athletic fields, and in the concert halls are impressive. Consider the numbers for the Class of 2017. One hundred thirty-eight scholarships and awards were presented on Senior Awards night. Sixty-two percent of the senior class graduated with an Advanced Designation Regents Diploma, signifying additional rigor and coursework. Ninety-one percent of the senior class will seek to further their education by attending either a two- or four-year college. Twelve students were selected as 2017 National Merit Commended Students, the highest number ever at Clarence, and two were National Merit Semi-Finalists. Eight graduates are enlisting for military service, including an appointment to the US Naval Academy. Thirty-one varsity sports were designated as scholar athlete teams, meaning the team overall GPA was 90 percent or higher and Twenty-one students were chosen as All-WNY Scholar Athletes. Clarence won thirteen league championships, seven sectional titles, and the Girls Soccer team was in the state final four. Twelve students were commended as National Merit Scholarship winners, and two students were National Merit semi-finalists.

Perhaps the most impressive number for the Class of 2016 is 24,179, which signifies the total number of community service hours worked over the past four years by CHS seniors. Our seniors worked 12,000 hours beyond the community service requirement and 26 seniors received the Distinguished Clarence Community Service Award, indicating at least 100 total hours of community service, led by Emma Switzer who volunteered for an amazing 307 hours in her four-year high school career.

The Class of 2017 made the most of their opportunities at Clarence and their collective success is a compliment to the dedication and commitment of our faculty and the core programs that successfully prepared them for the next level.

In May, the Clarence community overwhelmingly passed the 2017-18 school budget. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the community for sending a clear communication of support for the students of the district. We recognize that with the support of the community comes the responsibility to provide the very best educational, extracurricular, and interscholastic programs possible. I don't believe you could find a better testament to fulfilling that promise than the successes of the Class of 2017.