

Mayor Picozzi and Warwick Sewer Authority Announce Scholarship Recipients

WARWICK – Mayor Frank J. Picozzi and the Warwick Sewer Authority (WSA) are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2024 John A. Caruso Scholarship Award.

This year's scholarship recipients are **Michael Costa, Lucas Deutsch, Faith Dagget, and Emily Vigneault** from **Toll Gate High School** and **Braxton Bragg** from **Pilgrim High School**. Michael Costa ranked thirteenth in his class and will be attending the New England Institute of Technology. Lucas Deutsch ranked twenty-first in his class and will be attending Quinnipiac University. Faith Dagget ranked sixth in her class and will be attending the University of Connecticut. Emily Vigneault ranked fifteenth in her class and will be attending the University of New Hampshire. Braxton Bragg ranked twelfth in his class and will be attending Emmanuel College. Each of these fine young college bound students will receive a \$2,500 scholarship award.

The scholarships have been given annually since 2003 in honor of the late John A. Caruso, a longtime chairman of the WSA Board. This year Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator, Edward Mathias, received approval from the WSA Board and Mayor Frank J. Picozzi to increase the scholarship award to \$2,500 and the number of scholarships from three to five. The scholarship is open to college-bound, High School Seniors who are residents of the City of Warwick and are attending a public school within the State of RI. Recipients are chosen each year based on certain criteria, including grades, letters of recommendation, participation in extracurricular/community activities and financial need.

Mayor Picozzi stated “I am very proud of this group of students for going above and beyond during their high school years. As the cost of going to college goes up, I am happy we were able to increase the scholarship award from \$1,000 to \$2,500 so they can continue to make Warwick proud.”

Funds are administered through the WSA's Industrial Pretreatment Program (IPP), which was established in the early 1980's as required by the federal government. In an effort to protect the sewer collection system, treatment facility, Pawtuxet River and Narragansett Bay, the IPP ensures that wastewater discharge permits are in place for all Warwick based industrial and commercial facilities that discharge wastewater into the system. Facilities that violate conditions contained within their permit are subject to fines of up to \$25,000 per day per violation. Most permit infractions are inconsequential, sporadic, non-compliant events constituting minor penalties (\$50 - \$100). These minor infractions, however, escalate when a facility is identified as a repeat violator. Each year, the IPP reserves a portion of the collected fine money for the scholarship program. A panel comprised of WSA staff reviews the applications and determines which applicants will be the recipients of the scholarship awards.

“From its inception in 2003 to the present day, the John A. Caruso Scholarship Award program has distributed \$92,400 among sixty-two of Warwick's most exceptional, and very grateful, high school graduates,” said BettyAnne Rogers, Executive Director. “Given the ever-increasing cost of higher education, the scholarship money is greatly appreciated by these students. We're thankful that we can take a ‘negative-fine’ and turn it into a ‘positive-scholarship’.”