

Our mission is to connect students and teachers with needed resources, enriching the student experience, and advancing equity through collaboration

Letter From The President

As the fall season arrives and another academic year begins, I am reminded of the extraordinary role that education plays in shaping both individual lives and the future of our community. Across Worcester, classrooms have come alive with excitement and possibility.

Young children are experiencing their first year in school in kindergarten, students are returning to familiar hallways and campuses, and high school seniors are beginning a year filled with important decisions and opportunities that will help define their next chapter.

This season is also a time to recognize the incredible dedication of our teachers, administrators, support staff, and families. Their commitment, patience, and encouragement help create the foundation upon which students grow, learn, and succeed. The work they do each day often extends far beyond the classroom, inspiring confidence, curiosity, and resilience in the next generation.

At WEDF, we believe education is one of the most powerful investments a community can make. We are proud to support initiatives that open doors to opportunity and help students reach their fullest potential. We are equally proud of the many WEDF alumni whose accomplishments continue to strengthen our city and beyond. Whether they are pursuing higher education, building careers, serving their communities, raising families, or leading organizations, our alumni demonstrate the lasting impact that educational support and opportunity can have over a lifetime.

As we begin this new school year, let us celebrate every learner's journey. We wish success to the child taking their first steps into a classroom, the student discovering a new passion, and the senior preparing to graduate and embark on the next stage of life. Each milestone represents growth, promise and the potential to make a positive difference in the world.

On behalf of the WEDF Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support of our mission.

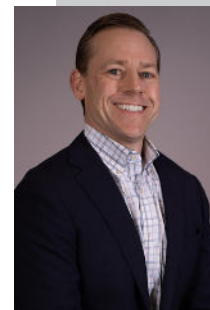
Together, we are helping to create opportunities that empower students, strengthen families, and build a brighter future for our community.

Best wishes for a successful and rewarding school year.

Sincerely,



Matthew Wally
President



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2026 ACADEMY OF DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI & FRIENDS TO BE HONORED THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

Each year the Worcester Educational Development Foundation proudly inducts deserving graduates and supporters of our school system into the Academy of Distinguished Alumni & Friends of the Worcester Public Schools. This annual celebration honors individuals who have made extraordinary contributions in their chosen fields and to society at large.

This yearly event not only highlights the accomplishments of these impressive individuals, it also shines a light on the WPS educators, coaches and mentors who helped shape their journeys. Most importantly, this event inspires current WPS students by showing how our school system can serve as a springboard to endless opportunities.

Lastly, this celebration also serves as an important fundraiser for the WEDF, helping us to enhance the experience of WPS pupils and educators. Please join us on October 15, 2026, at the Hogan Center on the campus of the College of the Holy Cross as we celebrate these remarkable individuals.

2026 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI & FRIENDS OF THE WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Congratulations to the Class of 2026! You bring great pride to our city!

Akosua Agyepong | North High School | Attorney
Joseph Danko | Doherty High School | Engineer
Meenal Datta | Doherty High School | Professor
Italo Fini | Worcester Technical High School | Political Consultant
Kathleen Mitchell, MD | Doherty High School | Pediatrician
Seth Pitts | Doherty High School | Bank President
Luke Thompson | Burncoat High School | Athletic Coach
Son Vo | South High Community School | Restaurateur
Elizabeth Wambui | North High School | Business Executive
Rubby Wuabu | South High Community School | Attorney

Friend of Education Robert Layne, UMASS Chan Medical School

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

Valedictorian

UniBank

Salutatorian

Greenwood Industries
LPA|Architects
Bay State Bank
Assumption University
Guild of St. Agnes

High Honors

Hertz Worcester Airport

Honor Roll

Clifford & Rano
Louise and Jeff Clarke
Murray and Murray LLC

TO PURCHASE TICKETS OR SPONSOR,
PLEASE VISIT: WWW.WEDFWPS.ORG OR EMAIL EXECDIR@WEDFWPS.ORG

WHERE THEY ARE GOING...

Congratulations to the Class of 2026 as you continue your education and career readiness!

Assabet Valley Tech	Job Corps	Tallahassee State College
Assumption University	Johnson & Wales University, Providence	Teachers College of San Joaquin
Auburn University	Juniper Beauty Academy	Temple University
Babson College	Keene State College	Texas State University
Bay Path University	Lincoln Technical Institute	United States MilitaryC
Baylor University	Massachusetts Bay Community College	University Technical Institute
BC MESSINA COLLEGE	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences	University of Connecticut
Bentley University	Massachusetts Maritime Academy	University of Florida
Boston College	Merrimack College	University of Hartford
Boston University	Milan Institute of Cosmetology	University of Maine
Brandeis University	Morgan State University	University of Massachusetts Amherst
Bridgton Academy	Mount Holyoke College	University of Massachusetts Boston
Bridgewater State University	Mount Wachusett Community College	University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
Bryant University	New England Institute of Technology	University of Massachusetts Lowell
Bucknell University	Nichols College	University of Michigan
Centre College	Norfolk University	University of New England
Clark University	North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University	University of New Hampshire
Clemson University	Northeastern University	University of New Haven
Coastal Carolina University	Olin College of Engineering	University of North Texas Dallas
Collective Academy	Pennsylvania College of Technology	University of Rhode Island
College of the Holy Cross	Peterson School	University of Rochester
Columbia University	Porter and Chester Institute - Worcester	University of South Carolina Columbia
Columbia College Chicago	Quinsigamond Community College	University of Virginia
Dean College	Regis College	University of Wisconsin Madison
Drexel University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	Vermont State
Eastern University	Rob Roy Academy	Virginia State University
Emmanuel College	Rochester Institute of Technology	Wellesley College
Employment/Workforce	Roger Williams University	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Esthetician - Florida	Saint Anselm's College	Western Carolina University
Fairfield University	Salem State University	Western New England University
FIT	Salve Regina University	Westfield State University
Fitchburg State University	Simmons University	William Paterson University of New Jersey
Florida International University	Smith College	Williams College
Fordham University	Suffolk University	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Framingham State University	Syracuse University	Worcester State University
Full Sail University		Wyoming Technical
Georgia Institute of Technology		
Gordon College		
Hardwick College		
Harvard University		
Henry Ford College		
Howard University		

COATS FOR KIDS

For more than two decades, the Coats for Kids program has provided thousands of children with warm outerwear during New England winters. Through a partnership between WEDF and the Worcester Public Schools, the goal is for no child to weather the season without proper attire. In a district where roughly 70% of the students are classified as low-income or economically disadvantaged, the need is great.

If you would like to purchase a coat, please go to wedfwps.org and select "Coats for Kids" when prompted where to direct your support. You may also mail a check to 210 Park Ave., Suite 224, Worcester, MA 01609.



Save The Date: Coats for Kids Fundraiser on November 23, 4-7 p.m. at Worcester Fitness!

HELP WORCESTER STUDENTS GET ON THE ROAD

WEDF Worcester Educational Development Foundation CMSC WORCESTER REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
RECRUIT • RETAIN • PROGRESS

North High South High Doherty Memorial Worcester Tech Burncoat

HELP WORCESTER STUDENTS
get on the road!

Driver's Ed costs \$1100 per student - Help us make this affordable and accessible for all WPS students and make a gift that can change their life's trajectory.

Donate Today!

A driver's license can open the door to a first job, an internship, or a wider range of career opportunities. Worcester Public Schools reports that it is the second most commonly required qualification in job postings nationwide. Yet for some students, the cost of learning to drive puts that opportunity out of reach.

WEDF is working with Worcester Public Schools, CMSC Driving School, and the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce to expand access to driver's education. The program offers discounted classes, and we're raising scholarship funds for students who still cannot afford the cost. Driver's education and licensing can cost more than \$1,000 per student.

A license can also help a young person support their family, whether that means getting to work or helping someone else reach a medical appointment. Make a donation to the WPS Driver's Education Scholarship Fund and help a Worcester student take the next step.



Please consider making a gift to support this life-changing initiative by scanning this QR Code with your cell phone.



wedfwps.org • Follow WEDF:

LEAVE A LEGACY



If you want to honor someone special, WEDF manages scholarship accounts that can help celebrate their memory and support the dreams of deserving students, our future leaders. WEDF works closely with principals and guidance counselors to identify qualified students. Each donor-advised scholarship fund is tailored to meet the wishes of the family and friends of the honorees.

To learn more, contact Mary Rushton Bresnahan, Executive Director, at ExecDir@wedfwps.org.

SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

The Worcester Educational Development Foundation (WEDF) is committed to preparing Worcester Public Schools students for college and career success. Through our College & Career Readiness programs, we help students pursue opportunities beyond high school.

A central part of this work is administering scholarships and awards for Worcester Public Schools graduates. These awards recognize academic achievement, leadership, character, and perseverance while helping reduce the cost of higher education.

Each scholarship also has a story behind it. Awards such as the Nina and Miriam Barber Scholarship and the Ryan Quinn Memorial Scholarship reflect the generosity of people and organizations who want to invest in Worcester students. Together, they honor individual legacies while providing practical support at an important moment in a student's life.

For recipients, an award is more than financial assistance. It is a sign that their hard work has been seen and that their community believes in what they can accomplish. That encouragement can mean a great deal as graduates prepare for a new chapter.

Through these awards, WEDF helps more students take the next step toward their goals with recognition, encouragement, and financial support.

**Each year, WEDF proudly
manages the following
scholarships for WPS
students:**

**Dr. Lee Gurel Award for
Excellence in Learning Advanced
Placement English**

**Nina and Miriam Barber
Scholarship**

Middlesex Bank Scholarship

Mary Murphy Spirit Award

**North High School Alumni
Association Scholarships**

Ryan Quinn Memorial Scholarship

**Elizabeth "Betty" Reidy
Scholarship**

**Shirley Finacom Van Batenburg
Scholarship**

ABOUT THE WORCESTER EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

The Worcester Educational Development Foundation (WEDF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the students, teachers, and schools of Worcester Public Schools (WPS). By building partnerships with donors, businesses, and community organizations, WEDF invests in programs that strengthen academic achievement, equity, and opportunity for every student.

Since its founding, WEDF has funded initiatives in college readiness, STEM education, health and wellness, arts and culture, basic needs, and classroom innovation.

From providing scholarships and mini-grants to supplying coats, athletic equipment, and technology, WEDF ensures that Worcester students have the resources they need to succeed.

At its core, WEDF believes that strong schools build strong communities. By supporting WPS students today, we are preparing the next generation of leaders, innovators, and engaged citizens who will shape Worcester's future.

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DONATIONS TO WEDF'S FUND SUPPORT THE GREATEST NEEDS IN THE DISTRICT. PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING TODAY!