



CPW's BRIDGE School at Rye Brook Holds Virtual Graduation Ceremony

June 26, 2020 – Cerebral Palsy of Westchester's BRIDGE School at Rye Brook, a NYS Department of Education-approved special education center serving students with disabilities, ages 5 to 21, held an online graduation ceremony Wednesday morning June 24, 2020. The school's five graduates in formal cap and gown attire were surrounded virtually by all BRIDGE School staff, family, friends, and peers on their special day. Hosted by Principal Barry Wasser and fellow administrators, the celebration was a memorable success.



Principal Barry Wasser (top left) with teachers, staff, and clinicians during graduation ceremony on Zoom.

With over 70 participants, the event was filled with happiness and love. Two of the graduates opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Star-Spangled Banner. Principal Wasser presented a slideshow of the graduates interacting with friends and staff members during their time at The BRIDGE School, and shared a montage of videos by teachers, clinicians, and staff offering

words of encouragement to each of the graduates embarking on their new journeys. Wasser noted, "Class of 2020, while this has been the most unusual year ever, you are pioneers in virtual learning, making history by showing the world that you are unstoppable!"



Executive Director Linda Kuck sending her congratulations to the 2020 graduates via Zoom

While the COVID-19 outbreak has significantly impacted CPW, The BRIDGE School has provided a multitude of resources for students and their families during this difficult time. Throughout the spring, staff members have utilized virtual platforms to connect with their students, teachers have mailed activities and daily lesson plans to students' homes to keep them mentally engaged, and CPW's therapists have conducted tele-therapy sessions over Facetime and Zoom with their patients.

The BRIDGE School at Rye Brook, a division of Cerebral Palsy of Westchester, offers a comprehensive program that connects families, students and educational professionals to help each student reach their academic potential and discover what the possibilities are for them beyond the school setting. Now in its 71st year, **Cerebral Palsy of Westchester's** mission is to advance the independence, productivity, and full citizenship of people with all developmental disabilities including autism, neurological impairments, intellectual disabilities, epilepsy, and cerebral palsy. Through a comprehensive network of educational programs, therapeutic services, employment training, recreations, advocacy and residential sites, the agency helps thousands of children and adults in Westchester and Fairfield Counties live more productive and satisfying lives. The organization's motto is: *Realizing Tomorrow's Potential . . . Today!*

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