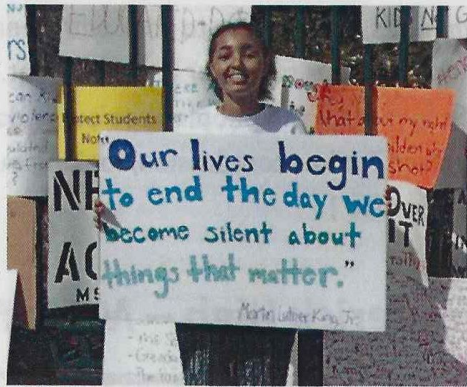


# 2019 Student Peace Award Recipients

## Brunswick High – *Wordda Aberra, Senior*

People have inspired me to undertake this service. I really love people and I love helping people. Making someone's day better or even making their lives a bit easier in simple tasks is something I love doing. Everyone deserves to live a peaceful life and I think everyone can achieve peace if everyone spreads peace. Spreading peace



*Wordda Aberra*

means the world to me. Helping people is my passion and somehow I've found a way to turn it into a career. I live my life everyday trying to spread peace in the world so it simply means living to me. I'm just being me by spreading peace. (At Brunswick High, Wordda has participated in Random Acts of Kindness, Rachel's Challenge, Model UN, as well as organizing Kindness Night and Peace-Not-Violence events.)



*Eliza Phillips*

## Catoctin High – *Eliza Phillips, Senior*

I am so extremely grateful to those who nominated me for this award. Throughout my life I've been awarded for things like grades and talent, but this award is something that's different. It's for my person-

ality, and there's no better feeling than that! My father told me that I should assume everyone is trying their best, and though it's hard to see it that way, communication becomes simpler. A personal ideal of mine is to respect everyone. People may not be the best person but everyone deserves respect, simply for the fact of being human. It's very difficult for me to see people hurt others, when I see injustice I feel as if I must do what I can to make things right. Nobody's perfect, and neither am I, and though I strive for these ideals there's are times when it's hard for me to stick with them. Every day is a new day and there's always room for improvement. It's an honor to be chosen for this award by the people I see every day. (At Catoctin High, Eliza is recognized for her compassion, looking out for others, and for standing up to injustice.)

## Frederick High – *Neha Mathur, Junior*



*Neha Mathur*

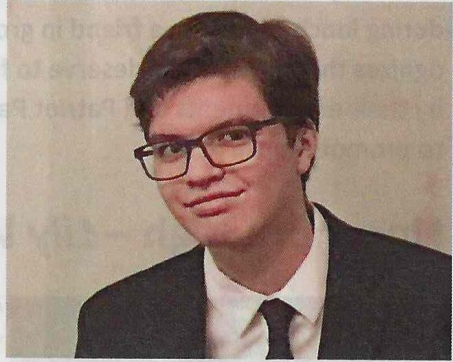
My journey has been very interesting and inspired by people around me who are involved in volunteer work and helping out neighbors. Currently, I am leading the junior executive committee at school, have been involved with library since elementary school, serving as a President of Teen Advisory Board. I am also VP of the newly formed Youth

Advisory Council that would ensure that youth become an integral part of the city's decision-making processes. I was the student representative of the Frederick County Engagement Committee for the past two years, and as a committee our main focus was on providing resources to students and their families by organizing resource fairs, talks and school supplies. My firm belief is that we should keep working towards making the world a better place to live for everyone and little by little we can make a difference and bring peace to our community.



## Friends Meeting School – *Jacob Gorham*, Senior

I have always been sensitive to other people's feelings and it has always been important for me to make sure that everyone is heard and understood. Working with the younger students in Miss Brenda's class has given me a great opportunity to see different perspectives from not only the point of view of the younger students but also from the point of view of the teacher. I've been able to see how we all get a lot from each other. I love helping the kids work on their tasks and enjoy trying to help them resolve any issues with their classmates; and surprisingly, I've gotten a lot of help from them, too. Whenever I am down, the energy from the kids in the class lifts me up and brings me great joy. It's pretty much how I see our community at large. We are all here on this planet together and we should all try to understand, help and uplift each other.



*Jacob Gorham*

## Governor Thomas Johnson High – *Patriot Pals*



*Patriot Pals*

*Represented by Hadley Humbertson, co-founder and president (senior) and Janelle Changuris, Faculty Advisor*

Patriot Pals is an organization that promotes peace, unity, diversity, and friendship in our high school community. Sarah Hendi, graduate co-founder, and I founded this club to socially integrate special needs, pyramid, learning for life,

and general education students into the community. Too often students in all educational programs feel unwelcome and uncomfortable in school, whether the situation be finding a cafeteria table to sit at during lunch or finding a friend in group projects. Our organization recognizes that all students deserve to feel safe, at home, and welcomed by their environments and Patriot Pals aims to not only facilitate, but to promote those values.

## Linganore High – *Lily Weaver, Senior*



*Lily Weaver*

At the age of 10 I was diagnosed with a rare bone cancer called Ewings Sarcoma. I have endured many hospital stays, plenty of needles, surgeries, more needle sticks, gotten sick from chemo, and had a stem cell transplant. Once my first fight was done of cancer, I thought I had completed the most difficult part of growing up. A few years ago I

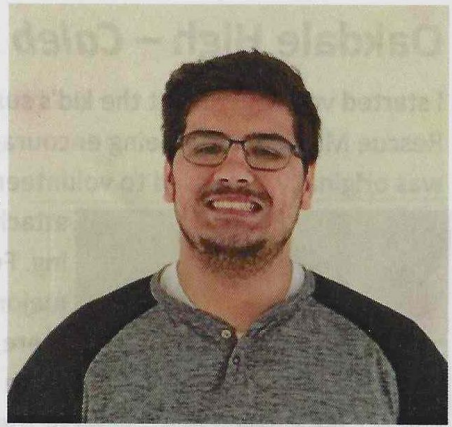
came into contact with Dance, Hope, Cure. An organization that makes childhood cancer their platform. In this organization, I found TheTruth365. TheTruth365 is about spreading awareness for childhood cancer. Last year, shortly after celebrating my five year cancer free anniversary we found out my cancer had returned. I was able to continue my work with TheTruth365 while fighting cancer for the second time. TheTruth365 has given me a voice to help other children fighting for their lives. I am grateful to be able to tell my story, raise awareness and most importantly, fight for those who can't.

## Maryland School for the Deaf – *Rayston Fonseca, Senior*

I love sports, and football is my favorite. My father inspired me to love football, and I am grateful I've had the opportunity to play football my



entire life. Football has taught me the value of teamwork and to be humble. At MSD Rayston is known as a peacemaker, a leader and a student who aims to make a difference among his peers and in the school climate at MSD. "The true test of a man's character is what he does when no one is watching." According to Rayston's teachers at MSD, this quote describes Rayston perfectly. "His character is a positive contribution to our school and community as his character has helped resolving conflicts, addressing controversial issues and bridging differences in order to bring better understanding among peers



*Rayston Fonseca*

## Middletown High – *Katelynn Miller, Senior*

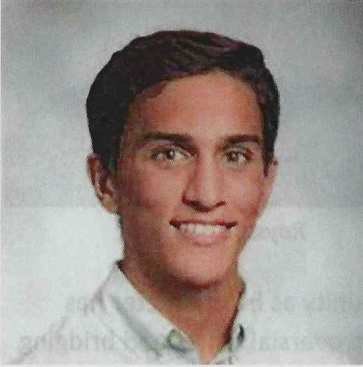


*Katelynn Miller*

Every day, I am continually inspired by the bravery and passion of students like myself across the country who fight for a brighter, safer, and kinder future. If it were not for the courage of my fellow advocates, such as the organizers of the March For Our Lives movement, or the Student Demand Action organization, I would not have the resolve to speak out myself. I believe that our generation works to inspire each other. I want to inspire change and pursuit of knowledge in my community. I felt obligated to organize the Walk Out at Middletown High School. After listening to the stories of victims and the families of those taken I knew I had to do something about it. This is an issue that affects me, and the futures of students to come.

## Oakdale High – *Caleb McNeil, Senior*

I started volunteering at the kid's summer program, at the Frederick Rescue Mission, after being encouraged by my family to do so. While I was originally supposed to volunteer a week, I quickly became

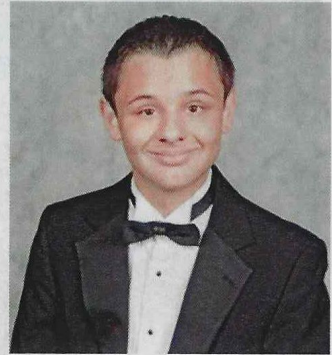


*Caleb McNeil*

attached to the kids and kept volunteering. For the last four years I've spent the majority of my summers volunteering there. I was grateful for the opportunity to be a friend and mentor to each one of these kids. These kids came from tough backgrounds and still always were joyful. It's been a unique experience being able to tutor and play games with the kids. I've been positively impacted by interacting with them.

## Saint John's Catholic Prep – *James McKane, Senior*

After a troubling incident in my freshman year of high school, I wanted to help combat the epidemic of bullying in our community. I was honored in May of 2018, when Stand for The Silent Inc., an anti-bullying non-profit, 501(c)(3) recognized my request to form the "Frederick County Chapter of Stand for the Silent." It is my intent to share the lesson taught through the Stand for the Silent program, that I AM SOMEBODY. Students will no longer have to stand in front of their peers to suffer at the hands of a bully as I once did, but be empowered to speak out and tell the bully to stop. The only ones who can stop bullying are the students themselves. I want to share my experience to demonstrate that it is possible to turn the lowest point of your life into something positive and help others. I plan to dedicate my en-



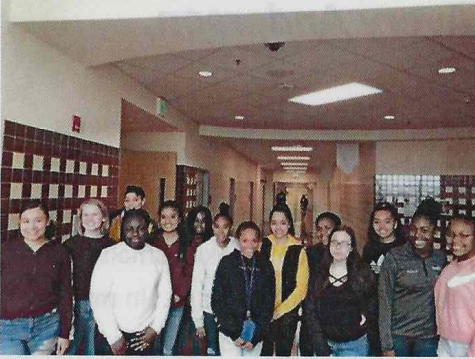
*James McKane*



tire life to help combat bullying by becoming a nurse so I can help change lives for the better

## Tuscarora High—The Lady Luminaries Girls Group

*Represented by Co-leaders of the group: Ciana Lee (junior) and Faith Rogers (junior) and mother*



*Lady Luminaries Girls Group*

Lady Luminaries is a group for young women who are interested in inspiring others while improving themselves. The group members explore various topics related to personal development, such as career choices, women's health, women's rights and community service. We were inspired to create a safe space for young

women to express themselves and develop a future oriented perspective. Personally, despite our differences, I have a new appreciation for how similar we all are. Discussion fosters understanding and the world needs more of that.

## Urbana High – Dabitha Taylor, Junior

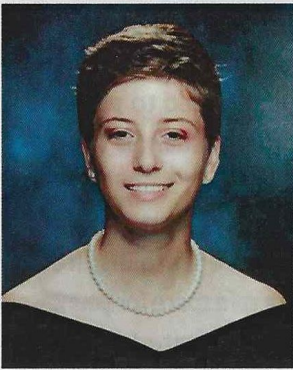
I am greatly honored to undertake this service because it is a necessity for a good human being to do. I desire to continue to help others because there is no better feeling in this world than when you know that you have helped improve or impacted someone's life in a positive way. When I do service projects, like the bake sale I did, I strive to



*Dabitha Taylor*

do it with my best efforts. I am truly blessed that I grew up with a family who has influenced me to do good deeds to everyone, young or old. For me, this award just inspires me to go do more exceptional service for society. (Dabitha has organized fundraisers for local homeless shelters and volunteers at FMH and Homewood Retirement community. She finds bringing peace and happiness to those who are often lonely and forgotten is of vital importance.)

## Walkersville High – *Avery Anderson*, Senior



*Avery Anderson*

Through my participation in Unified Sports and the forming of connections between those who may find themselves alienated due to social constructs, I have taken small steps to make this world a better place. In my school, many students gather to form huge teams during tennis, bocce, and track seasons which creates a melting pot of experience and abilities. This participation is what makes Unified Sports so engaging and fun: everyone is included. This wide participation has also al-

lowed me to believe that the future of my school, community, and world will be alright as we take a step closer to inclusion of everyone no matter their differences.

