

Cum Laude Committee Remarks

Matt Cook

Matt, you are a bright young man with a compassionate heart and mind. You exemplify the spirit of our enterprise learning. You see it not simply as a means to an end, but know the purpose of education is to understand. Many of your teachers talked of your growth over the four years in high school. You like to challenge yourself and never seek the easy answer. You easily transition between answering a question with specific examples and notes from the texts to asking broad questions of your peers that show you are thinking about the concepts deeply. In a time when so many high school students desire to study engineering, computer science, or biochemistry, you light up at the thought of digging deep into a college's archive or museum. Curiosity runs deep in you. On behalf of the faculty, let me welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Anna Works-McKinney

Tindar Cyr

Tindar, you have earned a reputation for insatiable curiosity, for hard and careful work focused on deep understanding, for your fluid ability to make insightful connections across disciplines, and for the atmosphere you create in classrooms not only by what you have to say but by how you listen to your classmates. You have learned how to lead without dominating. Whether it be mathematics or art, you take the time to consider multiple perspectives and multiple possible solutions. Every year, each of your teachers sees you working successfully to bring yourself to new heights. On behalf of the faculty, Tindar, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Lenore Horner

Louann Kovach

The faculty have many important reasons for loving your presence in the classroom. You are well known for your wonderfully ebullient personality, fearless pursuit of the most complex material, and gracious openness to instruction and critique. With high energy and great follow through, you exhilarate a classroom and inspire a higher level of thinking among your peers. You come to class exquisitely prepared and willing to articulate important questions to test your understanding. Even when you suffer an occasional academic misstep, you respond like an optimized search engine and activate your mature recovery system. Just as on the golf course when you must decide between the 9-iron and the pitching wedge, in the classroom you make quick and appropriate decisions to enhance your learning and share your many "GIFs" within the community. The tech world is filled with many acronyms. Let me switch one up by calling you out as the Seven Hills' *html* – hyper-talented marvelous Louann! Thank you for all of the trailblazing classroom moments given with humor and imagination. On behalf of the faculty, welcome to Cum Laude!

- Linda Ford

Madeleine Jay

Madeleine, you are an earnest and determined learner, and you never settle for less than your best. But you also bring a valuable global perspective to our classrooms—one that is steeped in a concern for building a community, a society, and a world that is just and fair. Your analysis in your writing and discussions is centered on getting to the heart of the matter and achieving a purposeful goal. When you let your passions be known, you are unstoppable. You once talked to me about sometimes feeling like you are living in black and white instead of color. Madeleine, you have brought so much color to our school, and it is for your intellectual steadiness, articulate and precise voice, and strong character that we are proud to welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Marielle Newton

Carly Jones

Carly, the faculty agrees that you are a sophisticated thinker, eloquent speaker, and an elegant writer. At the same time, you are a powerful advocate for what is right and true and you desire to promote and understand the world through the lenses of equity and justice. While you are eminently respectful of your peers' opinions and ideas during classroom discussion, it is often your insights and intellectual curiosity that drive the discussion, and your classmates' understanding, to a higher level. Not only do you devote yourself to every academic challenge, but you also think deeply about the consequences of your learning and how they connect to the world beyond Seven Hills. Besides being an extremely talented student, Carly, you are also a kind and compassionate individual. On behalf of the faculty, it is my pleasure to welcome you into Cum Laude.

- Katie Swinford

Greg Kalin

Greg, you are an academic powerhouse. Your maturity and personal drive to dig deeper, understand better, and connect seemingly disparate ideas makes your work in all of your classes truly first-rate. Moreover, the precision and clarity of your thinking reflects the intellectual rigor with which you approach any task. Whether you are solving a particularly intricate calculus problem or you are discussing the merits of a literary work, you are calm and steadfast in both your daily preparation and your classroom demeanor. It's that tough-mindedness that makes you such an important leader in any classroom discussion. Even better than that, though, is the fact that you seem to genuinely enjoy the intellectual enterprise. You enjoy the ironies of history as much as you love a successful chemistry experiment, and it's that intellectual engagement that has made your induction into Cum Laude such an obvious choice.

- Beth Driehaus

Felix Karthik

Felix, you have a love of learning in such rare abundance that curiosity, good will, and intellectual engagement seem to radiate from you. It's what makes you such a critical addition to any class you set foot in. Regardless of the subject matter, your teachers praise your thoughtful contributions to class discussions, to lab experiments, and to making impressive connections across disciplines, made possible by your persistence, your diligence, and your raw intellectual talent. This has played out beyond the classroom in your outside research with smokers in Adams County. That you've used the analytical skills you've honed in the classroom is obvious, and coupled with your compassion in your work on the project, you've made The Seven Hills School very proud indeed.

- Beth Driehaus

Aryan Katneni

You are an academic treasure in the classroom. Over the past four years, you have evolved from being a quiet, observant student into a veritable powerhouse. Your teachers gush with their accolades about your classroom contributions, your work ethic, your sturdy intellect, and your academic leadership. No concept, formula, analysis, translation, or interpretation gets by you, and if you don't seize it the first time, you'll surely grab it the second time around. One of the qualities that sets you apart is the degree to which you relish the challenges. You approach your work with meticulous care and a tenacious spirit, asking questions, actively engaging, offering incisive observations. Who would ever have suspected that a chemistry lab book could be a pleasure to read? From all evidence, your classmates and teachers have benefited hugely from your contributions. It's for these many reasons that we welcome you, Aryan, to Cum Laude.

- Wynne Curry

Christopher Nathan

Chris, any teacher who has ever taught you knows you to be a dynamic presence in the classroom—incisive, inquisitive, original, and clever. Motivated and ambitious for all the right reasons, you simply want to learn and to understand the world around you, and you do so with a sense of purpose and a healthy dose of good humor. What sets you apart is your ability to see things in new and unexpected ways, and to share those ideas and solutions with insight and vigor. You are a first-rate writer and analyst, and it's your energy, intellect, and ambition that guide you through the thorniest paths. Open to constructive criticism, you build a solid foundation on what you know and what you need to improve. It's for these qualities and many more that we welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Wynne Curry

Jessica Nordlund

Jessica, over the last four years, the faculty have over and over noted your hard work, dedication, conscientiousness, and good attitude whether in instrumental, in math, in science, in history, in English, or in Spanish. We have come to expect impeccable work, careful reading, and thoughtful questions—often ones, whether you know it or not, that other students need to have answered as well. You are willing to share your knowledge and reasoning with your classmates in quiet and focused group work as well as in thoughtfully led class discussions. Your written work shows deep thought, clarity of reasoning, and attention to detail. Jessica, on behalf of the faculty, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Lenore Horner

Varshini Odayar

Cum Laude recognizes students who have committed themselves to the pursuit of knowledge, and anyone who meets you, Varshini, will be struck by the many ways in which you have already embraced the life of the mind. You are relentless in your desire to fully understand any difficult concept or abstract idea, and you are fearless in your commitment to scientific experimentation, literary analysis, and historical inquiry alike. Not satisfied to distinguish yourself in the classroom alone, you have expanded your love of learning to preternatural heights, earning Congressional recognition for your work on the human genome. And yet, if there's one quality that sets you apart from your peers, it is your endless humility. Quiet, self-effacing, and modest, you never seek the limelight, but the limelight always seems to shine brightly upon you. This evening, it has found you once again. We are so proud of what you have already accomplished, and we can't wait to follow your career. Congratulations and welcome to Cum Laude.

- Nate Gleiner

Nate Rising

Your teachers use many great descriptors to capture your academic presence in their classrooms. They admire your wit and intellect, your tough-minded persistence, and your consistently thoughtful approach to learning. Could it be that you have a head much better suited to scholarship than soccer balls? Yet like all good soccer players, you find the game to suit the challenge. With calm and careful discernment, you weave your way through complex applied math problems, craft clear and concise written analyses, and articulate questions that strike the very heart of important connections among concepts. When you are occasionally caught offside academically, you respond with the resolve and determination necessary to right your course. With humility and nobility, you show great pleasure in stepping up your game and meeting every challenge. Not with red, nor yellow, but only with a green card, the faculty welcomes you to Cum Laude!

- Linda Ford

Caitlin Shaw

Your teachers describe you as curious and tenacious, the cornerstone when it comes to collaborative work. You are at once helpful and deferential, curious and eager to know what your classmates are thinking but remaining steadfast in your own convictions. When called upon to lead discussion, you do so with skill and careful thought. In Spanish, your enthusiasm has never died; on the contrary, it has grown and it has demonstrated the interest and knack you have for the language. You are a leader in the classroom, but one who knows how to leave space for others. Whether it is in journalism, calculus, or digital imaging, you do whatever it takes to find meaning and beauty within the course, and, in turn, our larger world. On behalf of the faculty, let me welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Anna Works-McKinney

Annabel Stanley

Annabel, you are an articulate member of discussion, have a keen eye for analyzing ideas, and an advocate for the underdog and the unheard. These are lovely skills, and you add yet another priceless thing to this community—you model that it is through kindness that one feels truly fulfilled. Your excellence in your courses is undergirded by an earnest desire to lift up those around you, and you bask in others' successes with a refreshing authenticity. When talking about empathy in a class one day, I said something like, "You know those people who care about others so genuinely that it's infectious?" Four students said immediately, "Like Annabel Stanley?" Your intellectual gifts are abundant, and they are only enhanced by your desire to make sure others' gifts are recognized and nurtured, too. We are so pleased to welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Marielle Newton

Avni Varshneya

Avni, you are the kind of student that teachers love to teach. Motivated, diligent, and with an unimpeachable work ethic, you bring abundant ability and unmistakable joie de vivre to class each and every day. Your teachers have commented that their class wouldn't be the same without you to launch lively discussions born from your natural curiosity, and that your insights drive class discussion to new levels of depth and sophistication. You set high academic standards for yourself, often going above and beyond the requirements of an assignment, yet you understand that getting the answer right the first time is not the most important aspect of learning. Perhaps more impressively, though, is your thoughtfulness toward your peers and your ability to share your enthusiasm for learning with your classmates by helping them to make sense of increasingly complex concepts. It is no wonder that you are so respected by your peers and teachers alike. Your great dignity coupled with your

ability to bring light and life into the classroom certainly brightens our day. Avni, we welcome you to Cum Laude.

- Tina Kuhlman

Grant Veldhuis

One of the most important qualities a member of Cum Laude must demonstrate is curiosity—the desire to keep asking questions in order to refine and deepen understanding. Grant, anyone who has shared the classroom with you, students and teachers alike, will have no questions about your love of questions. From the most abstract of mathematical concepts to the most minute moment in a literary text, you find new and innovative ways to challenge those around you to think about things differently, and in doing so you raise the level of academic discourse to new heights. In class discussion, in group work with your peers, and especially in your writing, you dig and dig and dig, and while some might leave no stone unturned, few would go so far as to take that stone, unearth it, burnish, and polish it, until it transforms into something new and beautiful. Keep digging, Grant, as we know you will. There is no telling what treasures you will uncover. Congratulations.

- Nate Gleiner