

I keep thinking that one day I will not be quite as excited as I have been in the past to go to Class Day. This was NOT the year!! From the minute we walked into the school we were greeted by faculty members, security personnel and administrators as old friends! Once again they had food for all visitors in the guidance office before we headed into the auditorium. Vice Principal John Amberg, who was so helpful to Ron Burke last fall (more in another article about that!) was the master of ceremonies. He spoke to us before the meeting started and was so glad to see Dolani and Dahanah who had been his students.

The ceremony started again with the presentation of colors by the JROTC and with the singing of the Star Spangled Banner by another very talented senior – Tessaiya Loo Boone. Dr. Neely Hackett, Superintendent, and Sandra Boone-Gibbs, Principal, spoke briefly to the students, commending them on their high school performance and congratulating them on their upcoming graduation.

I was pleasantly surprised that there seemed to be a lot more local scholarships awarded this year. The Board of Education actually awarded a total of \$12,000 in awards. The Springfield Business Association is headed by an alum – Dr. Tom Panitch '56 – and after he presented their awards he mentioned our Alumni Association and hoped that all the students would recognize us and be proud of the work we are doing!!

When it was our turn we all went up on stage....Clara Roth'59, Sam Sudfield '57, Marty Jacobs '60, Larry Klepner '60 and Carla Schwab Rodriguez '62 ...and of course the students all cheered when our class years were mentioned!! Dahanah Josias-Sejourns and Dolani Ajanacu were there to receive their Alex Trento award for graduating from college and then I announced our winner for this year – Danielson Joseph – who also was named as class valedictorian. He seemed very surprised and gave me a BIG hug!!

The awards continued with many given for music and art achievement, JROTC and academics. There were at least 15 students recognized for serving in JROTC for all 4 high school years and two students won Navy scholarships. What always impresses me is that no matter the award all the students present seem genuinely happy for the winners.

I have to add that the Jazz Band on stage was great.....and my favorite seems to be each year the Multiport Dancers. This year was no exception. They danced to a song by Alicia Keys – We Are Here. You should listen to it. There were tears in my eyes at the end.

We ended with the singing of the Alma Mater.....always makes us happy to join in!!