

IAR's 2022-23 CAS Scholar-Leaders

For the past 35 years, the Connecticut Association of Schools has sponsored the Middle Level Scholar-Leader recognition program, which pays tribute to two students from each participating middle school who distinguished themselves in the areas of scholarship, leadership, and personal character. We are pleased to announce IAR's Scholar-Leaders for 2022-2023 school year are Shannen Penn and Benjamin Naujoks.

Benjamin Naujoks

Ben has been a Farmington Public Schools student since he joined the Noah Wallace community in Kindergarten. His elementary school teachers consistently commented that, as a young student, Ben was a role model for good behavior and work habits and that he was polite, kind and a friend to everyone. These statements continue to ring true today. At I.A.R., Ben is a dedicated and committed student on Team E. He excels in his school work and consistently performs at an advanced level in all of his academic classes. He is an inclusive collaborator, who helps students be their best selves. Ben helps his fellow students with math through an after school peer tutoring program, he is a Student Ambassador and he participates in Art Club. Annually, Ben participates in Relay for Life to raise money and support cancer research. Ben has also been a part of the district Community Council for Equity and Inclusion (CCEI) for two years. Ben meets with this council, which is made up of students, staff and community members, to discuss ways to improve the I.A.R. community. Ben's maturity and leadership skills are evident as he is often chosen to be a student representative for presentations to the community. In October, he was the only student presenter at a Community Conversation for parents/families centering around social media impact on SEL. This winter he also presented at a Board of Education meeting, along with a small group of his peers, on the great learning opportunities at I.A.R. After an impressive career in the Farmington Public schools, Ben looks forward to continuing to excel at Kingswood Oxford in the fall.

Shannen Penn:

Shannen began her educational career in Raleigh, North Carolina. There, she attended Brier Creek Elementary School until 1st grade, when her family then moved to Miramar, Florida. There, she attended Silver Shores Elementary School until 2nd grade. Her family then moved to Farmington, where she attended Noah Wallace and Westwoods, before making her way to IAR. A highlight of her educational career is when she got the chance to emcee a cultural assembly at Noah Wallace with Ben Naujoks! Some other highlights include: the 7th grade Courage Project, being able to speak to the Board of Education, and being a part of the town-wide Equity and Inclusion Committee. In class, Shannen is a very strong student. She stands out amongst her peers. In school, she is

involved in the Diversity Club, Student Ambassadors, Equity Leadership Club, Debate Team, Student Council, and the volleyball team. She also plays viola and the baritone sax in the school Orchestra and Band. Outside of school, she participates on travel softball and volleyball teams. Additionally, she was a captain of the IAR volleyball team. Shannen has often been chosen to make presentations to the school community and greater Farmington community. Some other of Shannen's achievements include performing on The Hartford Stage, winning various regional and national dance competitions, performing in a Miami Dolphins halftime show, winning a Webby award, acting in the Starz show *Power Book 3*, and starring in the Disney+ show, *The Big Fib*. Shannen looks forward to continuing her educational career at Miss Porter's School in the fall. Future goals include traveling abroad during college and becoming fluent in Spanish, helping out in the community, and attending law school.

The Connecticut Association of Schools will recognize Benjamin and Shannen with a dinner in June at the Aqua Turf.