

# Congratulations Christopher!

It's not every day that a student is the only one at a commencement ceremony.

But that was the case yesterday for Christopher Colbert who successfully completed his graduation requirements this summer and was the only one to attend the commencement ceremony in the Newark High School library.

Another Class of 2016 senior, Robert DeTaeye, who also completed his graduation requirements this summer, was unable to attend.

With heartfelt words and reflections, NHS Principal Tom Roote, NHS Assistant Principal Ryan Wagner and Newark Central School District Superintendent Matt Cook commended Colbert for his tenacity in working to obtain his high school diploma.

Before the ceremony, Roote cordially welcomed guests including Colbert's family and friends, some NSCD staff \_ Krista Lewis, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, NHS Counseling Office secretary, Patty VerBridge, NHS counselors Sue Gardner and John Ginter; Rene Sinicropi, NHS psychologist, Jen Singer, NCSD Director of Pupil Services, NHS teacher Deborah McEwen, \_ and Board of Education member Jim Miranda.

After asking guests to identify themselves at the informal ceremony, Roote shared how much he enjoyed presiding over the summer commencement each year because it demonstrates, for students like Colbert, resolve and determination to overcome obstacles and graduate.

Roote then chronicled Colbert's journey to cross the finish line and the noted the help and encouragement he received along the way from various, caring NHS staff members who also were determined to see that he succeed, most especially Danielle McGavisk, Director of Counseling at NHS.



Wagner congratulated Colbert and shared how his unlikely path to becoming a school administrator began with some twists and turns.

"Sometimes success comes by taking a non-traditional path," he said.

Echoing Roote and Wagner's sentiments, Cook, who likewise became a school superintendent after following a less-travelled road, praised Colbert for his persistence and ultimately achieving his goal.

"In life, I have found if you stick to it, good things will happen," he said.

Commencement was followed by a reception for Colbert, guests and well-wishers.

