

To The Top With Laptops Scholarship Program Expands

As Alex Drechsler of Rye Brook was preparing for his Bar Mitzvah four years ago at Congregation Kneses Tifereth-Israel in Port Chester, he wanted to do something meaningful to help the community. With his father Robert, they developed the idea to start a scholarship program by raising money and applying for grants through philanthropic foundations in order to donate new state of the art Dell laptop computers and printers to 5 Port Chester High School graduating seniors. The administration at Port Chester High School loved the idea and "To The Top With Laptops" was born.

Working with the Assistant Principal and guidance counselors at the school, the Drechsler's created the criteria for bestowing the laptops. It was decided to award computers to deserving seniors who were on their way to college and had shown great strength and perseverance along with academic performance, financial need and service to school and community.



"That first year at Port Chester High School, I was greatly moved at the end of the ceremony when the father of one of our recipients came to the stage to collect the laptop and printer with tears in his eyes," noted Bea Drechsler, Alex's mother. "He said that he did not know how he was going to be able to purchase a laptop for his son for college, since he did not have the money to do so.

"Given the enthusiastic response we received, we decided to expand

Left to right: Sagirah Wheeler (laptop winner), Alex Drechsler, Robert Drechsler, Victoria D'Andrea (laptop winner) and Diana Roggiero (laptop winner). Not pictured winners: Karina Pedraza, Ana Ruano and Dana Dotti.

the scholarship program," she explained. Since that first year, the program has grown to include Yonkers High School and New Rochelle high School. This year at a senior awards ceremony on May 14, we have added Mamaroneck High School. So far, we have donated 45 laptops and printers."

"I am quite proud of my 16 year old son," revealed Robert Drechsler. "Alex has been very involved with the program through the years. We go to the presentations together and he helps deliver the laptops to the students. Whether we can add another school district to the program next year will have to be determined. It depends on the foundation grants that we get. It all takes time but it is very rewarding and inspiring."

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