

# RSTA

# Greatness happens here! 2025 Brags

## Automotive Technology

### Welcoming a CRLS/RSTA Alum to the Team

We proudly welcomed **Luis Barrios Hernandez**, a 2011 CRLS/RSTA graduate, as our newest automotive instructor. Mr. Hernandez brings valuable industry experience, particularly his expertise with Volkswagen, enriching our program with real-world insights and elevating the learning experience for our students.

### Enhancing Hands-On Learning with Advanced Equipment

Thanks to a generous grant, we installed a state-of-the-art **Snap-on Wheel Balancer**. This cutting-edge tool utilizes advanced laser and camera technology to capture precise tire data, ensuring optimal balancing accuracy. Integrating this technology into our curriculum provides students with vital, hands-on experience using industry-standard equipment.

### College and Career Readiness Through Field Experiences

Mr. Hernandez organized a field trip for our Level 1 automotive students to attend an **open house at Massachusetts Bay Community College** (MassBay). Students explored MassBay's robust automotive programs and engaged directly with faculty members. They gained exposure to training pathways supported by top manufacturers including Toyota, General Motors, BMW, and Chrysler, offering them a clearer vision of post-secondary opportunities and careers in the automotive field.

### Exploring the Future of Automotive Technology

We hosted a visit from the **Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology**, where students had the unique opportunity to interact with a Tesla vehicle and learn about Benjamin Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology's innovative Electric Vehicle (EV) program. This experience offered a valuable look into emerging technologies and the evolving landscape of the automotive industry.

## Business Education

### Enrollment & Engagement

- **100% Enrollment** in Business electives maintained.
- **Business Club/DECA** enrollment doubled, demonstrating increased student interest and engagement.
- **Sustained growth** in student enrollment and retention across all Business classes, including underclassmen participation.
- **Expanded student engagement** across all grade levels through innovative programming and outreach.

### Career & Industry Readiness

- **Increased student participation** in industry-based competitions, including DECA and MSBA.
- **Four DECA students** qualified for Nationals through the School-Based Enterprise (school store).
- **SkillsUSA Gold Medal Winner** in Customer Service.
- **Credit for Life Fair** was a resounding success, promoting real-world financial literacy.
- **Pathway to Business Certifications established**, with an emphasis on Financial Literacy.

### School Store Success

- Achieved **SBE Gold Medal Certification** through DECA.
- **30% increase** in school store sales since 2019—demonstrating strong student leadership and real-world business application.

### Financial Literacy & Curriculum Integration

- Ongoing initiative to expose all CRLS students to Business and Financial Literacy through:
  - **Falcon Block sessions**
  - **Credit for Life Fair**
- Received a **FOCRLS grant** to support the Financial Literacy-Business Initiative.

## Leadership & Community Impact

- **Continued leadership** in post-grad planning and mentorship, supporting student career pathways.
- Chaperoned the **HBCU College Tour** (Year 4) and supported attendance at the HBCU College Fair.
- **Strengthened partnerships** with the local business community and banking institutions to support student learning and access to opportunities.



## Carpentry

### Major Donation & Partnership Highlight

Received a generous professional-grade tool donation from Bosch Tools, in partnership with the Boston Bruins Foundation, to support hands-on learning and career readiness in the skilled trades.

### Museum Display Case for City Hall

Designed and built a custom **museum display case** for the Mayor of Cambridge, showcasing craftsmanship and civic pride.

### Custom Furniture for the Boston Bruins

Created two Adirondack chairs, two cornhole boards, and a table for the **Boston Bruins**, combining functionality with high-quality design for a professional sports organization.

### Custom Shed Project

Constructed a **paneled shed** for a Cambridge teacher and community member, demonstrating teamwork and practical construction skills.

### Support for Arts Education

Built a **cello storage rack** for the Rindge Avenue Upper Campus (RAUC), supporting the school's music program with functional and durable craftsmanship.

### Urban Agriculture Initiative

Constructed **10 raised bed planters** for a Cambridge-based community organization, promoting sustainable gardening and food equity.

### Campus Safety and Maintenance

Replaced broken glass in six fire doors at CRLS, contributing to building safety and functionality.

### Neighborhood Literacy Project

Built a **Little Free Library** for Mrs. Radzvilla, supporting neighborhood literacy and community engagement.

## Creative Design

### Award-Winning Student Work

Multiple students recognized as Scholastic Art Award Winners, celebrating excellence in visual arts at a regional and national level.

### Live Work Contests & Real-World Projects

- **FOCA Logo Redesign** – Students participated in a live branding project for the Friends of Cambridge Athletics (FOCA).
- **Blue Bikes PSA Poster Campaign** – Designed impactful Public Service Announcement posters displayed on Blue Bike station panel boards across the city.
- **CRLS Yearbook Cover Design** – Student work selected for the official yearbook cover, showcasing school pride through creative design.
- **Cambridge Library Foundation Library Sticker Contest**

### Freelance & Commissioned Projects

- **Library Drawings Triptych** – Created a custom three-panel illustration series for a local library.
- **Save-the-Date Postcard Design** – Designed and delivered a professional-quality invitation for a community event.
- **Galápagos Islands Logo & Buttons** – Developed a themed logo and promotional button set for an educational project related to the Galápagos Islands.

### Portfolio Development for Higher Education & Careers

- Designed and published professional portfolio websites for junior and senior students, preparing them for college applications and freelance opportunities.
- Produced print portfolios in both physical book and electronic PDF formats, showcasing technical skills and personal branding.



### Creative Design Partnerships & STEAM Integration

- Since January 2021, the Creative Design Program has maintained a dynamic partnership with **The Hive Makerspace** at the Cambridge Public Library.
  - This collaboration provides students with access to state-of-the-art equipment, design software, and expert mentorship, enriching their learning experience.
  - As a result, students have been able to expand the scope and complexity of STEAM-based projects, integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math into hands-on, real-world design work.

## Culinary Arts

### Competitions & Live Events

- **East Cambridge RibFest**
  - 2nd Place – Judges' Choice Award
  - 30 students competed in this high-profile local event.
- **MRAEF ProStart Culinary Boot Camp – Johnson & Wales University**
  - 13 students participated in intensive hands-on training focused on food innovation and technology.
- **Mass National Guard MRE Challenge** (In-House)
  - 18 students competed in a creative military-style Meal Ready-to-Eat challenge.
- **SkillsUSA State MRE Challenge**
  - Two teams of 3 competed and earned the Creativity Award.
- **RSTA Burger Challenge**
  - 34 Level 2 & 3 students participated in this in-house competition showcasing technical and creative burger concepts.

### Major Achievement – MRAEF ProStart State Invitational @ Gillette Stadium

**RSTA's ProStart Team dedicated over 150 extracurricular hours preparing for the state competition and achieved outstanding success:**

- 2nd Place Overall – Team Competition
- 3rd Place – Cake Decorating: Saidia Wright
- Kitchen Boss/Line Manager Award: Jahsmine Son
- 1st Place – Non-Alcoholic Mixology: Isabella Benttencourt
- Educator of Excellence: Chef Rick McKinney

### Student Leadership & Recognition

- MAVA / MassCTE Outstanding Student of the Year: Julia Barriga Cortez
- SkillsUSA District Championship – Silver Medal (Culinary Arts): Julia Barriga Cortez
- SkillsUSA State Leadership Conference – Bronze Medal: Julia Barriga Cortez

### Post-Secondary Success & Scholarships

- **15 graduating seniors** accepted to 48 post-secondary institutions, including:
  - 9 Culinary/Hospitality programs
  - 2 Ivy League schools (Hospitality/Nutrition focus)
  - *First student ever* accepted to Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration

### MRAEF ProStart Renewable Industry Scholarships

- **4 students** awarded scholarships for continuing culinary education.

### Looking Ahead

- **13 sophomore and junior culinary students** attended the State Invitational, with next year's team already in development and menu ideation underway.





## Early Education and Care

### Practicum Experience & Student Placement

- This year, **Level 2 EEC students** were placed in local early childhood classrooms, working hands-on with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarteners.
- **Three students** are actively participating in practicum placements across Cambridge, gaining valuable real-world experience in early childhood education settings.
- The program has developed and expanded partnerships with several community-based **early childhood centers**, strengthening career pathways for students.

### Community Collaboration & Funding

- As part of our community outreach efforts, the EEC program has built a strong **collaborative relationship** with the Cambridge Office for Early Childhood (OEC).
- The OEC generously funded all EEC practicum students for the 2024–2025 academic year, providing compensation for a combined total of **400 practicum hours**.
  - Students receive **weekly pay at \$15/hour**, reinforcing the value of early childhood work and encouraging professional commitment.
  - The program was awarded a **\$6,000** Spring Practicum budget by the OEC, which is on track to be fully utilized by June 6, 2025.

## Entrepreneurship/Business/ Retail Marketing and Management

### Program Growth & Student Engagement

- **100% enrollment** in Business courses maintained.
- Enrollment in Business Club/DECA has **doubled**, reflecting increased student interest and engagement.
- Continued success in enrolling and retaining students in Business electives and expanding student engagement across all grade levels.
- Ongoing efforts to expose all CRLS students to Business and Financial Literacy through Falcon Block sessions and the upcoming Credit for Life Fair.

### Competitive Achievements

- **SBER DECA Gold Medal Certification** earned.
- 4 DECA students qualified for Nationals, showcasing excellence in marketing, finance, hospitality, and business administration.
- **SkillsUSA Gold Medal** – Customer Service awarded to a Business student for outstanding professionalism.
- Increased student participation in industry and career-readiness competitions, including DECA and the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) contest.

### Signature Events & Initiatives

- **The Credit for Life Event** was a resounding success, delivering impactful, hands-on financial literacy education.
- **School Store sales increased by 70%** since 2019, providing students with practical retail and business operations experience.
- Secured a **FOCRLS grant** in support of the Financial Literacy & Business Education Initiative.
- Launched a **new pathway** for industry-recognized Business Certifications, beginning with Financial Literacy credentials.

### Mentorship, Leadership & Community Impact

- Continued leadership in post-secondary planning and student mentorship, helping students explore business and career pathways.
- Chaperoned the **HBCU College Tour** for the fourth consecutive year and supported student participation in the HBCU College Fair.
- Strengthened partnerships with the local business community and expanded collaboration with our banking partner to support student opportunities and financial education.



## Engineering

### Innovative Student Projects – Engineering Level 1

- Students designed and built **Sumobots**, combining multiple fabrication and engineering techniques:
  - Custom gear trains 3D printed with resin printers
  - Laser-cut wooden chassis
  - Soldered motor connections and radio control systems
  - Fully modeled in Fusion 360 CAD with dynamic assemblies
- The culminating **Sumobot Competition**, inspired by BattleBots (without destruction), showcased creativity, technical skills, and teamwork.

### FIRST Robotics Team – Record-Breaking Year

- Achieved **2nd Place at the University of Rhode Island FIRST Robotics Event** – the team's highest placement in 9 years.
- Successfully **recruited technical mentors** to support and expand student learning, helping build long-term sustainability for the program.

### Program Growth & Demand

- The Engineering program **continues to grow** rapidly in popularity:
  - Enrollment in Engineering 1 and 2 exceeds current classroom capacity.
  - Class caps have been raised multiple times to meet high student demand.
  - Demonstrates strong student interest in engineering and STEM pathways.

### Advanced Manufacturing Revitalization

- The Engineering Department's advanced **manufacturing lab** was fully restored:
  - All machines now operational after nearly four years of partial downtime.
  - Equipment is actively used for instruction, allowing for hands-on technical training in modern manufacturing processes.

## Health Assisting

### Student Scholarships & Recognitions

- Students earned **prestigious scholarships**, including:
  - Cambridge Health Alliance Estelle Paris Scholarship
  - Light Someone's Way Scholarship
  - Child of a First Responder Scholarship
  - Dr. David Link Scholarship for Health Professions
- These awards highlight students' academic excellence, leadership, and commitment to careers in healthcare.
- All CNA students took the CNA exam and passed

### Academic Achievement & Leadership

- Two students were inducted into the **National Honor Society** for their academic excellence and leadership.
- Several students were recognized as **Unsung Heroes**, honored for their dedication, resilience, and positive contributions to the school community.

### Clinical & Community Engagement

- **All Level 3 students** are participating in Co-Op placements at **Spaulding Rehab Hospital**, gaining hands-on experience in a professional healthcare setting.
- **Level 2 students** engage in a monthly Wellness Clinic at **The Cambridge Homes**, practicing clinical skills such as taking and recording vital signs, while providing meaningful service to local residents.
- **Level 2 students** successfully completed their clinical experience at Sancta Maria nursing facility
- **Level 2 students** will sit for their state CNA exam on May 19, 20 2025 with the pinning ceremony May 30, 2025.

### Athletics & School Spirit

- Our program is proud to include **student-athletes** who lead both in the classroom and on the field:
  - Varsity volleyball players (including the team captain)
  - Cheerleaders, track athletes, and flag football players
- These students demonstrate outstanding **teamwork, leadership, and school pride.**



## School & Community Involvement

- Health Assisting students supported **RSTA outreach events at local middle schools** alongside Ms. Chase, serving as role models and inspiring the next generation of healthcare professionals.

## Faculty Growth & Development

- **Ms. McLean** is currently completing leadership training to further support program development.
- **Ms. V recently** earned her Master's in Nursing Education, enhancing the department's instructional excellence and student mentorship.

## Information Technology and Computer Science

### Student Recognition & Awards

- **Monique Bennett-Richard** was named a Massachusetts Regional Award Winner by the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT), recognizing her excellence and leadership in computing.

### Innovative Student-Created Tools

- **Leigh Fraley, Sylvester Broich, Clinton Hoilett, Maya Rosen, and Lyra Ericson** developed a custom application to support teacher-family communication in alignment with educator contract requirements.
  - Each week, the program generates and sends approximately **150 personalized emails** to caregivers.
  - Emails include: weekly classroom updates, student birthdays, upcoming quizzes, and missing assignments with direct Google Classroom links—all automated for ease of use and consistency.

### Work-Based Learning & Cooperative Education Placements

- **Eyal Ben-Dov** and **River Doyle** completed a prestigious work-based learning placement at Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratory (MERL).
  - Their work focused on developing large language models (LLMs), with plans to publish their research in conference proceedings this summer—an exceptional achievement at the high school level.

- **Leigh Fraley** completed an independent, freelance work-based learning opportunity, designing and developing a custom blog website for a community member.
- Through this experience, Leigh gained real-world skills in client communication, user documentation, and adaptive web design, while expanding their professional portfolio of independent digital work.



## Media Arts

### Exploring Careers in the Film Industry

- Organized and facilitated industry engagement with local filmmakers, SFX artists, screenwriters, and union professionals.
- Provided students with firsthand exposure to career pathways in film and television production through lectures, workshops, and networking opportunities.

### Student Achievement in Film

- Angel Santiago Nance (Film 3) received a **four-year merit-based scholarship** to Lesley University College of Art & Design (LUCAD) to pursue continued studies in film production.

### Supporting Student Projects: Ginny Berkowitz Fund

- **The Ginny Berkowitz Fund for Media Arts & Social Justice**, sustained by generous community contributions, continues to fund student projects in media, film, and social impact storytelling.

### Broadcasting Student Work to the Community

- Media Arts students produced and aired over **125 original programs** in 2024–2025, including:
  - Documentaries
  - Music videos
  - Short films
  - Local interviews and news
  - CRLS event coverage
- Programs were broadcast online and on Cambridge cable channels 6/26, connecting student voices with the wider community.

### Upgraded Studio for Real-World Readiness

- The Media Arts Studio installed **eight professional-grade LED studio lights** with advanced controllers, giving students hands-on experience with industry-standard equipment.
- These upgrades allow students to explore modern lighting design and enhance career and college readiness.

### Program Recognition

- Cambridge Educational Access / Media Arts Studio received the **Overall Excellence Award for Educational Access** from the Alliance for Community Media—a prestigious national honor recognizing outstanding programming and student opportunities.

## Super Seniors Recognition

Celebrating **outstanding student achievements** in Career & Technical Education (CTE) pathways:

- Mahelet Asnake – Culinary Arts
- Julia Barriga Cortez – Culinary Arts
- Nia Gueverrero – Creative Design / Yearbook Cover
- Maceo Hobbs – Business (3 years)