

MILTON  
HERSHEY  
SCHOOL®

FOUNDED 1909

# BROWN & GOLD

ANNUAL REPORT  
2024-2025





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# STATE OF THE SCHOOL

Milton Hershey School's 2024-25 school year theme, Raise the Bar, served as a powerful and unifying call to action for our entire school community. More than a slogan, it became a mindset—one that challenged students, staff, alumni, and volunteers alike to elevate their expectations, their efforts, and ultimately, their impact.

At its heart, Raise the Bar was about growth—personal, collective, and mission-driven. Our students were encouraged to go beyond their comfort zones academically, socially, and emotionally. Whether it was a senior committing to the Air Force Academy, a middle school student discovering their voice in our Student Government Association, or an elementary school student setting personal learning goals, each story reflected the same truth: when we push ourselves to grow, we unlock our greatest potential.

Our staff and faculty brought this theme to life each day through their unwavering commitment to excellence. Across every corner of campus—from classrooms to student homes, offices to athletic fields—members of the MHS community proved that raising the bar is not defined solely by achievement, but by attitude, accountability, and service. A custodian's pride in maintaining welcoming spaces, a houseparent's steady support and care, or a teacher's extra effort to ignite curiosity—each act, large or small, reflects what it means to live the Hershey legacy with integrity, compassion, and purpose.

Throughout the year, Raise the Bar was brought to life in signature moments—our Opening of School Assembly, Founders Day, and Mini-THON—all infused with the spirit of excellence and unity. Visits from inspiring public figures like Saquon Barkley reminded our students that success comes from perseverance, humility, and a commitment to constant growth.

As the year came to a close, we celebrated not just milestones achieved but the mindset that made them possible. Raising the bar is not a destination—it's a lifelong journey of improvement and purpose. It's a promise that we will continue to honor the vision of Milton and Catherine Hershey by striving for excellence in all we do, serving with compassion, and preparing our students and more than 12,000 graduates to make a difference in the world.

Together, we have raised the bar, and together, we pledge that this is just the beginning.

With gratitude and pride,



Peter G. Gurt '85  
MHS President



# HONORING OUR FOUNDERS BY RAISING THE BAR

Milton and Catherine Hershey's enduring legacy began with the signing of the Deed of Trust in 1909, establishing Hershey Industrial School with a vision to uplift children through education, character development, and opportunity. Even during the Great Depression, Milton S. Hershey chose to expand rather than retreat—launching the Great Building Campaign and revising the Deed of Trust to broaden student eligibility. These actions reflected his unwavering commitment to community and compassion, allowing hundreds more children to benefit from a safe, nurturing environment. His decision to raise the enrollment age and include children who had lost either parent laid the foundation for the school's growth and mission-driven evolution.

Today, Milton Hershey School continues to honor its founders by raising the bar in every aspect of student care and education. Grounded in the original pillars of character development and career-focused learning, MHS has expanded its reach through strategic partnerships, cutting-edge facilities, and a transformative curriculum. From houseparents modeling Sacred Values to seniors completing internships aligned with their career goals, every initiative reflects the Hersheys' vision. The 2024-25 school year theme, *Raise the Bar*, unveiled at the annual Opening of School Assembly, inspired the entire campus community to pursue excellence, ensuring that students graduate prepared to lead fulfilling lives and break the cycle of poverty—just as Milton and Catherine Hershey intended.



*"To give as many as possible real homes, real comforts, education, and training so they would be useful and happy citizens. It isn't worth much unless love is thrown into it."*

— MILTON S. HERSHHEY

ARTICLE PUBLISHED ON SEPT. 13, 1924, LIBERTY MAGAZINE

## This Is Milton Hershey School

At Milton Hershey School, our core values and purpose have guided every decision we have made since our founding in 1909. In fact, the firm foundation that our founders Mr. and Mrs. Hershey left us remains intact today through five integral elements that remind us that what we do and say has an undeniable impact. The Ten Commandments, Golden Rule, our School Pledge, Sacred Values, and Definition of Success are our north star. These guiding principles mold everything we do at MHS, ensuring that our staff are aligned and our students develop strong character and essential life skills for success.



MHSKIDS.ORG/ANNUALREPORT



Scan to watch the "This Milton Hershey School" video series on YouTube.

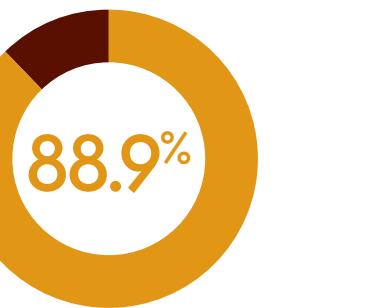
# OUR STUDENTS

At Milton Hershey School, our students are at the core of everything we do, and this year, they rose to the challenge to Raise the Bar with determination, resilience, and pride. With a student population of 2,157, our community reflects a diverse range of backgrounds and aspirations. This year, we welcomed 547 new students, achieving an impressive 93.2% new student retention rate, a testament to the strength of our support systems and the trust families place in MHS. Students hail from across the country, with 65% of our students coming to MHS from Pennsylvania and 35% from other U.S. states, bringing unique perspectives that enrich our school culture. From elementary students setting bold personal goals to seniors preparing for life beyond MHS, students across all grade levels embraced opportunities to challenge themselves, build confidence, and pursue meaningful growth. They showed leadership in classrooms, courage in competition, and compassion within their communities.

Milton Hershey gave the world a chocolate bar—but alongside his wife Catherine, he gave something much more valuable: a future filled with promise. What began as something sweet became something extraordinary. Their vision wasn't just about creating joy in a wrapper—it was about creating opportunity for children who needed it most. They raised the bar high then, and today, we continue to raise it—as students, houseparents, mentors, teachers, and Hershey entity partners. Their belief in something greater than themselves is a powerful reminder that the choices we make today ripple forward, influencing lives we may never meet. One HERSHEY'S bar started it all. And now, thousands of MHS students and alumni have been changed because of it.



## RETENTION RATE



## NEW STUDENTS

**547**

## RETENTION RATE

NEW STUDENTS  
**93.2%**

## STUDENT POPULATION

**2,157** Students

**416**

Elementary

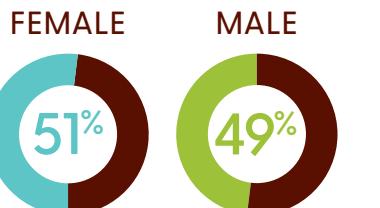
**729**

Middle

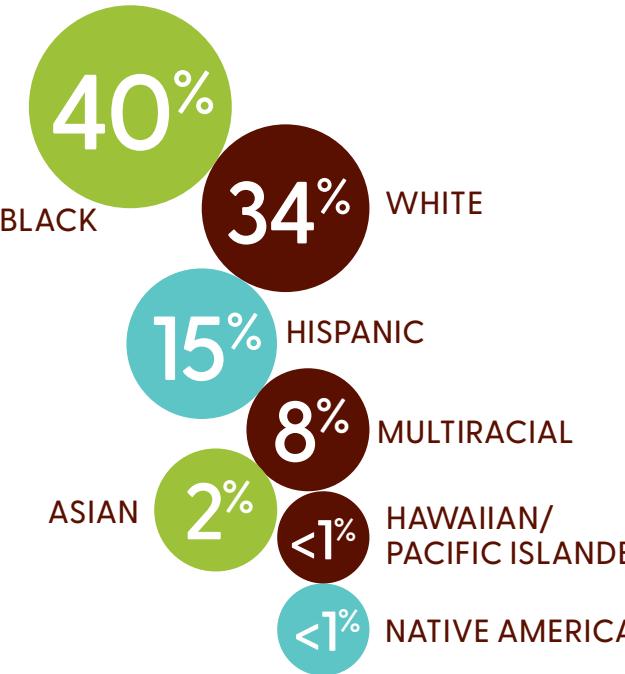
**1,012**

Senior

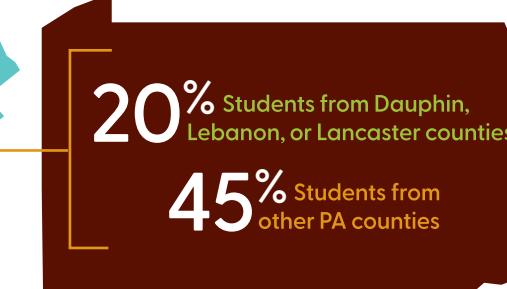
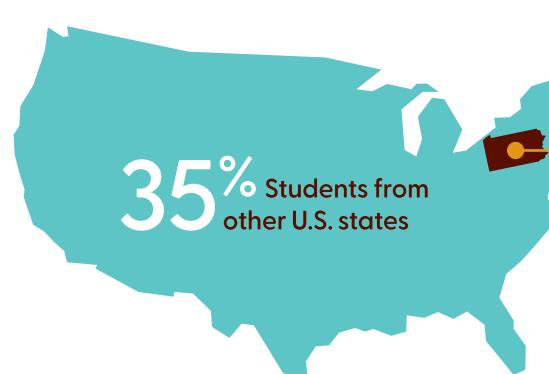
## GENDER



## ETHNICITY



## GEOGRAPHY



## Raising the Bar: Celebrating Excellence and Leadership through the MHS Challenge Coin Initiative

In alignment with the 2024–25 school year theme, Raise the Bar, MHS introduced a challenge coin initiative to recognize students and staff who demonstrated exceptional leadership and excellence. Launched in January 2025, the initiative recognized individuals who went above and beyond in academics, collaboration, and living out the Sacred Values. Commemorative coins were awarded by division heads and the Mission and Strategy Team, serving as a tangible symbol of achievement and inspiration. The year culminated in a celebratory event at the Homestead, where President Peter G. Gurt '85 and his wife, Jane, personally acknowledged the recipients. The gathering reinforced a powerful message: raising the bar is not only a personal pursuit but a shared commitment to uplifting the entire MHS community.



## Raising the Bar from Day One: New Students Turn Challenges into Triumphs

Starting at a new school can be daunting, but new students at MHS embraced the challenge—and raised the bar from day one. With courage and determination, they transformed uncertainty into growth, showing remarkable resilience and a commitment to high standards.

Sixth grader Kiera Force, who overcame a difficult journey learning to ride a bike, now shares her experience by teaching others in her student home how to do the same, turning personal progress into leadership. Freshman Scotlyn Jones discovered the value of leaning into discomfort, realizing that striving for what's hard leads to meaningful growth.

Supported by programs like New Spartan Academy and Co-Pilot, and motivated by the steady encouragement of houseparents, teachers, and staff, these Spartans quickly flourished in a community built to empower every student to succeed.



*“The HERSHEY'S candy bar represents a whole family I have at MHS. It represents hope.”*

— ALLISON CARRIER  
MHS PSYCHOLOGIST

*“When I enrolled at Milton Hershey School, I had big dreams. I dreamed of going to space. Because of MHS, I will attend the U.S. Air Force Academy.”*

— JOSH GIBB  
CLASS OF 2025

*“My teachers set goals for me that are challenging, but ones they know I can reach. If I am struggling, they are always there to support me.”*

— SCOTLYN JONES  
MHS STUDENT

*“Thanks to the generosity of our founders, I haven’t gone to bed on an empty stomach in almost two years. But I am still hungry. I’m hungry for more. I’m hungry to end the cycle of poverty.”*

— HAYDEN CLINE  
CLASS OF 2025



# WHOLE CHILD CARE

Caring for the whole child at MHS means nurturing every part of a student's growth—academically, emotionally, socially, and physically. This year, under the banner of Raise the Bar, our commitment to holistic care reached new heights. Staff across campus—from houseparents to health professionals to support teams—collaborated to ensure that every student felt seen, supported, and empowered to thrive. Through innovative programs, personalized support, and a culture of compassion, MHS continued to set a national standard for whole child care, helping students build the resilience needed to Raise the Bar in all areas of their lives.

That care shows up in countless ways. When a student walks into class with clear vision thanks to one of the 1,535 eye exams and 1,449 pairs of eyeglasses provided this year or smiles with confidence after receiving dental care through 13,127 visits and more than 54,000 procedures, we know we're building the foundation for success. Health and wellness remain central to our mission—our nurses and pediatricians delivered 21,929 visits, and 3,137 immunizations helped keep our community safe and strong.

We care for the whole child because we understand that academic achievement begins with stability, health, and belonging. Every student receives comprehensive care—medical and dental services, nutritious meals, clothing, housing, and mental health support—all at no cost. These aren't just services; they are the foundation for confidence, focus, and resilience.



## Meeting Needs, Unlocking Potential

When students don't have to worry about basic needs, they can Raise the Bar in the classroom, on the field, and throughout campus. They can join clubs, compete in sports, explore the arts, and lead with purpose—because every resource and opportunity is within reach. Our year-round model ensures students are surrounded by consistency and care every single day. We also know that growth is strongest when families are involved in the journey. That's why we partner with parents and sponsors, creating a circle of support that elevates MHS families. This includes organizing seminars, support groups, and workshops for parents and sponsors to attend.

### Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and other stressors that impact MHS students\* (New students enrolled during the 2024-25 school year)

- 33% have a family member incarcerated
- 37% experienced family drug or alcohol issues
- 45% have mental health issues in their family
- 23% attended three or more schools before MHS
- 25% have witnessed domestic violence
- 17% experienced homelessness
- 14% experienced food insecurity

\* From the 2024-2025 MHS New Student Profile Database that tracks ACEs and other risk factors.

## IMPACTS OF ACES IF NOT ADDRESSED



Chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood



Decreased education and job opportunities



Toxic stress that affects attention, decision-making, learning, and response to stress



ACEs are linked to five of the top 10 leading causes of death



Significant economic and social costs to families, communities, and society

## WHOLE CHILD CARE STATS



**1,449**  
eyeglasses for students



**1,535**  
eye exams performed in the MHS eye clinic



**13,127**  
visits to MHS dental services



**54,791**  
procedures at MHS dental services



**21,929**  
nurse and pediatrician visits in school clinics and in the MHS Health Center



**3,137**  
immunizations administered

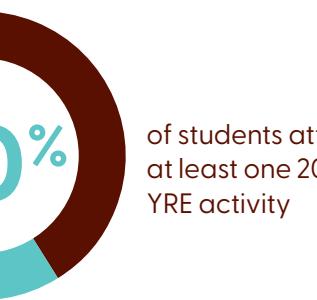


**342**  
specialty care visits

## Raising the Bar Year-Round: Empowering Students through Choice and Exploration

Year-round learning at MHS is a bold commitment to raising the bar in everything we do—every day, all year long. Through our Year-Round Experiences (YRE) program, students who remain on campus during breaks engage in dynamic, hands-on activities that foster curiosity, creativity, and career exploration. This year's approach gave students more choice than ever before, empowering them to shape their own learning journeys in STEM, the arts, fitness, and service.

A standout feature of this year's YRE program was the wide range of off-campus opportunities. Students engaged in immersive experiences like science exploration at the Lancaster Science Factory, law studies at Georgetown's Law Academy, and community service in Kentucky. With staff leading the programs they helped design—and receiving comprehensive training to support students holistically—YRE became more than just a summer offering. It became a powerful extension of our mission to educate, nurture, and inspire.



of students attended at least one 2024-25 YRE activity

870 students participated in YRE programming



*"I told the students that Milton Hershey School saved my twin brother's life and my life. It also instilled lessons into us that made us the men we are today."*

— **BRADEN MAINES '80**  
MHS CUSTODIAN



“

*"If you want to Raise the Bar on something, might I suggest love. You have one life, don't waste your time. If you are not intentional, it will pass you by."*

— **WILL OGLE**  
MHS DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS



# SCHOOL YEAR SUCCESSES

The 2024–25 school year at Milton Hershey School was defined by remarkable achievements and transformative growth, all driven by the spirit of Raise the Bar. Students and staff embraced the challenge to exceed expectations, resulting in a year filled with academic milestones, career-focused accomplishments, and personal development. From top-tier performance in PSSA testing to standout moments in leadership, athletics, and the arts, the MHS community demonstrated what's possible when high standards and determination are met with unwavering support.

These successes reflect not only the hard work of our students but also the strength of the systems and relationships that empower them to thrive. Students excelled in regional and state competitions, proving that hands-on learning and dedication paved the way to success. Students in Senior and Middle Divisions showed innovation, teamwork, and academic prowess at regional competitions, including SkillsUSA, Future Business Leaders of America, and the Pennsylvania Technology Student Association.

## Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders

Leadership development remains a cornerstone of the MHS experience. At the annual Student Government Association Leadership Conference, 300 students gathered to grow as leaders and changemakers. This event marked the beginning of a year filled with internships, mentorships, and real-world learning opportunities that help students Raise the Bar.

The impact of our students' excellence resonated far beyond campus. Their achievements drew visits from notable figures including former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and radio host Delilah—each inspired by the drive, talent, and promise of the MHS community.



*"I have never been some place where people have focused their whole mind, heart, soul, body, integrity, and work ethic on blessing, building up, and nurturing young people."*

— DELILAH  
NIGHTTIME RADIO HOST AND  
CHAPEL KEYNOTE SPEAKER



*"I've visited hundreds of schools across the country, but have never seen a school like the Milton Hershey School."*

— ARNE DUNCAN  
FORMER U.S. SECRETARY  
OF EDUCATION

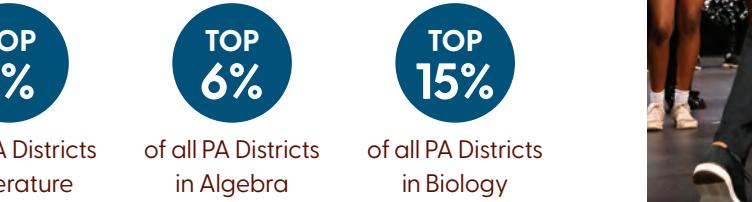
## Celebrating Our Success

During the 2024-25 school year, MHS students raised the bar on standardized testing, scoring in the top 3% of all Pennsylvania school districts in the Math and English Language Arts PSSAs, the top 1% in the Literature Keystone, the top 6% in the Algebra Keystone, and the top 15% in the Biology Keystone. To celebrate consistent academic success and motivate students for exams, President Gurt surprised the community with an assembly featuring a special visit from NFL star Saquon Barkley. Barkley delivered an empowering message to students, encouraging them to continue their hard work and strive for excellence.

### PSSA

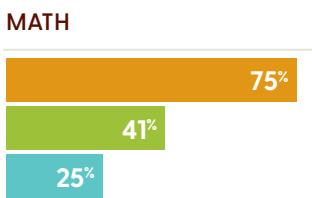


### KEYSTONE



### HOW WE RANK

#### PSSA

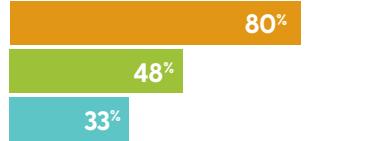


MHS

PA - All Testers

PA-ED

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

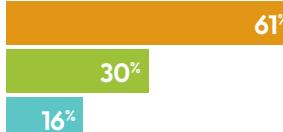


#### SCIENCE

2025 Science PSSA results were not reported, as the assessment was a mandatory statewide field test to gather data for the newly implemented Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy & Sustainability (STELS) standards.

#### Keystone

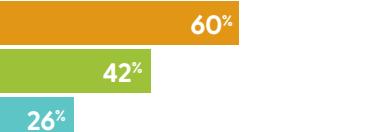
#### ALGEBRA 1



#### LITERATURE



#### BIOLOGY



ED – Economically Disadvantaged | Source: Spring 2025 Pennsylvania Keystone Exams State Content Area Summary Report



*"It's not every day that you get to hear from and be inspired by a professional athlete who has worked as hard as Saquon has. He is not just known for being an extraordinary athlete but for practicing positive daily habits and exhibiting a strong moral character."*

**PETER G. GURT '85**  
MHS PRESIDENT

## Students Raise the Bar with Purpose and Passion

This year, students across all grade levels dedicated themselves to service, contributing tens of thousands of hours to our local community. They packed more than 100,000 meals for Feed My Starving Children and raised approximately \$55,800 for Four Diamonds through MHS Mini-THON. MHS expanded its Career-Focused Education program, strengthening entity partnerships with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning, The Hershey Company, Hershey Trust Company, The M.S. Hershey Foundation, Penn State Health, and Penn State College of Medicine. Our partners supported work experiences for students as the school introduced new industry-recognized credentials, including the Childhood Development Associate certificate and state certifications in automotive and emergency medical services. Improved internships and college course options further enabled students to explore and prepare for future careers.



*"In our daily lives, we Raise the Bar with pride."*

— ZARABELLE WILLIAMS  
MHS STUDENT

### Community Service

**2,432**

service projects completed in every grade level

**46,777**

hours supporting/volunteering in our local community

Raised approximately **\$55,800**

for Four Diamonds through MHS Mini-THON

### Career-Focused Education Experiences

- 1,149 exposures to broaden students' experiential education
- Broadened career-readiness partnerships with The Hershey Company, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, and Penn State Health, contributing to summer 2025 Authentic Work Experiences for 83 MHS students
- Enhanced learning partnerships and courses:
  - **Added** a new industry-valued credential through expanded coursework and internships at Catherine Hershey Schools for Early Learning: Childhood Development Associate certificate
  - **Boosted** students' employability in the automotive industry by offering safety and emissions inspection certifications through the state of Pennsylvania
  - **Expanded** the opportunity for more students to earn the emergency medical technician certification through additional programming
  - **Increased** internship opportunities with Hershey Entertainment & Resorts and The Hershey Company by integrating college course options through Central Penn College

**1,149**

career exposures to broaden students' experiential education

*"I can Raise the Bar in this community by being dedicated to others. I can do this by practicing the Sacred Values wherever I go."*

— EDEN STOVER  
MHS STUDENT



## Raising the Bar Outside the Classroom

**245**

students completed Authentic Work Experiences during 2024-25 through internships, co-ops, and pre-apprenticeships

**169**

seniors completed an internship

**15**

seniors completed a co-op

**19**

students completed a pre-apprenticeship

**26**

students participated in a Domestic Service Learning Experiences trip

**264**

high school students earned college credits

**1**

9th Grade

**20**

10th Grade

**111**

11th Grade

**132**

12th Grade

**47**

students traveled internationally during the 2024-25 school year

**2**

9th Grade

**16**

10th Grade

**29**

11th Grade



## MHS Produces Award-Winning Special

In early 2025, Milton Hershey School strived to reach new audiences in a bold, creative way by producing and airing a 30-minute television special that told the inspiring story of the school's mission and impact. Designed to showcase students' successes and deepen public understanding and awareness of what MHS does, the special aired on multiple stations across Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic region.

Airing from mid-January to mid-April 2025, "A Life-Changing Education" expanded awareness and inspired conversations across communities about the power of opportunity and education. It helped MHS reach new audiences, airing 403 times on 32 stations in 11 markets.



*"A Life-Changing Education"  
earned a Silver Winner  
Anthem Award in the  
Education, Art & Culture:  
Special Projects Category*



*Nominated for an  
Emmy for Long  
Form Content in the  
Education/Schools  
Category*



# CLASS OF 2025

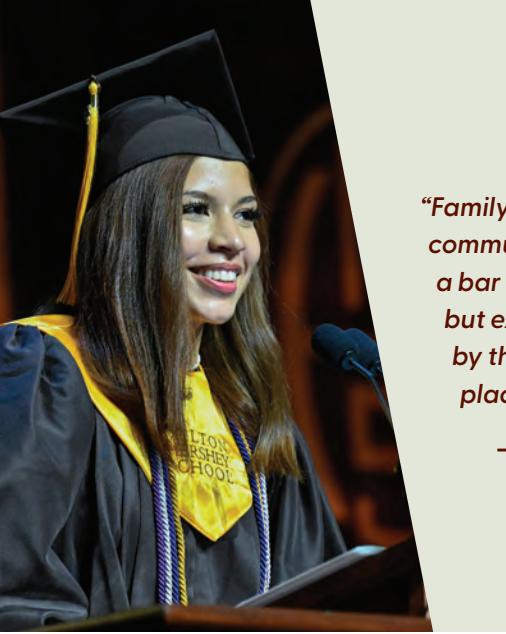
On graduation day at GIANT Center, 205 proud members of the Class of 2025 crossed the stage—each one a testament to perseverance, growth, and the power of opportunity. Some were the first in their families to earn a high school diploma, truly raising the bar for themselves and future generations.

Together, the Class of 2025 achieved remarkable milestones:

- Completed 4,321 community service hours
- Participated in 169 internships
- Engaged in 15 co-ops with Hershey community partners or local businesses
- 158 students earned college credits

These experiences helped shape their futures, opening doors to career and life success far beyond MHS. Their post-graduation paths include pursuing two- and four-year college degrees, entering the workforce, and serving in the military.

In 2025, MHS reimagined our end-of-year activities, including Commencement, to reflect the extraordinary accomplishments of our students and provide unforgettable celebrations.



*“Family is in this whole community of people who set a bar that you don’t just reach, but exceed and fly past, fueled by the tremendous support this place provides.”*

— VEYDA RAMOS RAMIREZ  
CLASS OF 2025

*“For me, being a lifer means having the ability to open doors to opportunities I wouldn’t have had at home.”*

— KIERSTEN COLLIER  
CLASS OF 2025



**83%**

of the 205 graduates in the Class of 2025, 170 students plan to pursue postsecondary education

**59%**

Four-Year College

**18%**

Two-Year College and Technical School

**16%**

Workforce  
Diploma, Certificate Program, or Apprenticeship

**6%**

Military

**1%**



## Welcoming Our 12,000th Graduate

Alongside their academic achievements, the Class of 2025 strengthened Milton S. Hershey's legacy in a meaningful way by surpassing 12,000 MHS graduates. Each of the 12,053 MHS alumni embodies our mission and reminds us that raising the bar requires grit, commitment, and a community of support.



*“Milton Hershey School is not just a school—it’s an experience, a family. A home where we live with students from all walks of life. We’ve been given more than just opportunity—we’ve been blessed beyond belief, surrounded by love.”*

— JOHN ADEMUYAGUN  
CLASS OF 2025

*“Without the support of my amazing teachers and staff, and my friends, I would have never left my comfort zone and met new people. Since my arrival, change has radiated through me.”*

— CHASE INGRAM  
CLASS OF 2025





**58**

seniors enrolled  
during elementary  
school



**19**

seniors were "lifers"  
(enrolled in first  
grade or earlier)



**58**

seniors took  
Advanced  
Placement courses



**43**

in National  
Honor Society

**10**

in National Art  
Honor Society



**55**

in National  
Technical Honor  
Society

**15**

in National Math  
Honor Society



**158**

seniors earned  
college credits

**161**

seniors took  
college courses

**1,243**

college credits earned by seniors

Credits earned through:  
University of Pittsburgh, Harrisburg University  
of Science and Technology, Carlow University,  
Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC),  
Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT),  
Central Penn College, and Southern New  
Hampshire University



**37**

seniors  
traveled  
internationally



**3**

seniors participated in  
a Domestic Service  
Learning Experience trip

**4,321**

hours toward community  
service projects by seniors

# LIFE AFTER MHS

Success at MHS is measured not just by graduation, but by how well students are prepared to make a lasting impact. Through our nationally recognized Career and Technical Education program, students earn industry-recognized credentials in high-demand fields, giving them a professional head start after they graduate. This empowers them to enter the workforce or pursue higher education with confidence and clarity.

Our Graduate Programs for Success offers personalized guidance, mentorship, and resources to help alumni navigate college, career, and life. Our Continuing Education Scholarship further helps students Raise the Bar by removing financial barriers, providing them the opportunity to accrue up to \$115,000 in scholarship funding over four years of high school, which can be used for college or career learning. These resources ensure that every student leaves MHS with a plan, a purpose, and the support to succeed.

## Graduates Motivate Students to Raise the Bar

This year, our alumni exemplified what it truly means to Raise the Bar in life after MHS. Marcus Paul James '99, a Broadway performer and proud MHS alumnus, returned to campus as the host of the 2024-25 Opening of School Assembly and as a special guest at the 2025 Commencement Ceremony. His journey—from humble beginnings to center stage—embodies the power of perseverance, passion, and the strong foundation built at MHS. His message to students was clear: your story matters, and your future is yours to shape.

At Founders Day, Mason Symons '07 delivered a keynote that inspired the entire community. After surviving a tragic accident that left him in a wheelchair, Mason refused to let adversity define him. Instead, he raised the bar—becoming a Paralympian and medaling in Paris. His story is one of remarkable endurance and the unshakable belief that strength is found in how we rise.



*“Coming back to MHS reminded me that I am from this community that is so focused on love. Everyone is here to support the students and give them every opportunity to succeed in life.”*

— MARCUS PAUL JAMES '99  
MHS ALUMNUS AND 2024-25  
OPENING OF SCHOOL ASSEMBLY HOST  
AND 2025 COMMENCEMENT SPECIAL GUEST



*“When you are successful, stay away from complacency. Don’t be content with the success you have achieved because it will only keep you under the bar, and we’re trying to raise the bar.”*

— MASON SYMONS '07  
MHS ALUMNUS AND 2024 FOUNDERS DAY SEMI-BR  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## Raising the Bar on Postsecondary Options

There are many pathways to success. Milton Hershey School continues to elevate postsecondary readiness through meaningful experiences, including internships and co-ops, that help students take ownership of their futures. Senior Division students explored college and career pathways by meeting with partner school representatives, attending the annual Postsecondary Fair, and visiting the campuses of partner schools.

In the summer, more than 20 rising juniors and seniors raised the bar by enrolling in Theories of Leadership, a college-level course offered through the University of Pittsburgh's College in High School Program. Through academic study, reflection, and off-campus experiences—including visits to Gettysburg, the White House, and a roundtable with author Dr. Angela Duckworth—students developed the mindset and skills needed to lead with purpose. This experience not only pushed them to grow as resilient, authentic leaders but also strengthened their confidence and readiness to pursue ambitious postsecondary goals.



**12,053**

total number of MHS graduates



**136**

on-campus visits by Graduate Support Specialists to MHS graduates at 35 colleges



**30**

postsecondary partnerships in 2024-25 school year



of MHS students in college persist to their second year, above the national average



# HOW WE RAISE THE BAR TOGETHER

At MHS, we believe success is a shared journey. Committing to Raise the Bar during the 2024-25 school year applied not only to students and staff but also to Hershey entity partners that play a vital role in helping our students dream big and achieve more. Through strong, purpose-driven partnerships with organizations like Hershey Entertainment & Resorts, The Hershey Company, and Penn State Health, we are expanding the boundaries of what's possible for our students.

These collaborations provide MHS students with real-world, career-focused opportunities that go beyond the classroom. Whether through internships, mentorships, or hands-on learning experiences, our partners are helping students explore their passions and prepare for meaningful futures.

But our community is more than just a network of organizations—it's a united family inspired by the legacy of our founder, Milton S. Hershey. Together, we are carrying forward his vision of nurturing and educating children in social and financial need to lead fulfilling and productive lives. Each contributor plays a role in helping our students become their best selves.



*"The kids get so excited when they see one of us walk through their classroom doors. Having the chance to answer their questions about the team and the sport, and giving back in this way, is really special."*

— CHASE PRISKIE  
DEFENSEMAN FOR THE HERSHY BEARS



“



*"When Mrs. Harmon told me that my artwork got picked, for a while I thought she was joking. I went to the hall and cried tears of joy after."*

— TRUE MARTEL  
DESIGNER OF WINNING MURAL IN LOBBY OF THE HERSHY COMPANY'S NEW REESE PLANT



*"I just absolutely love coming to the high school level and seeing the enthusiasm of the students."*

— DR. MARK DAS  
NEUROSURGEON AT PENN STATE HEALTH MILTON S. HERSHY MEDICAL CENTER

**24**elementary Student  
Government  
Association (SGA)  
members**139**new elementary  
students in the SGA  
Buddies program**209**middle school students  
participated in the  
Milton's Middles program  
for new students**626**middle and  
high school students

through the Mentoring Our Leaders' Development (M.O.L.D.) program

**326**

adults

**273**

MHS staff

**35**

HE&amp;R staff

**9**The Hershey  
Company staff**5**Hershey Trust  
Company staff**4**Penn State  
Health staff**325**students participated in  
7 Project Grow forums

Together as One Hershey, We  
**RAISE THE BAR**

**280**pre-K to 12th grade One  
Hershey career exposures  
and experiences**153**Hershey  
Entertainment  
& Resorts**364**student completed internships  
or worked part-time at Hershey  
entities/community partners**231**Hershey  
Entertainment  
& Resorts**52**The Hershey  
Company**49**

Penn State Health

**30**Catherine Hershey School  
for Early Learning (CHS)**2**

Hershey Trust Company

**142**first-year  
elementary students**77**MENTORED BY  
staff members through  
the Co-Pilot program**3**conferences offered  
for additional student  
character and  
leadership opportunities

# CATHERINE HERSHEY SCHOOLS FOR EARLY LEARNING

CHS achieved several significant milestones in 2024-25, marking a pivotal year in its emergence as a provider of early childhood education in Pennsylvania. The opening of CHS Harrisburg and the completion of two additional centers—Middletown and New Danville—signaled strong momentum in expanding access to high-quality early learning. With 300 children served across two operating sites and construction underway in Lancaster City and Elizabethtown, CHS is laying the foundation for a lasting impact.

CHS also strengthened its talent pipeline, hosting 28 interns and employing 10 MHS graduates, including Natayla Roberts, who transitioned from intern to assistant teacher. The organization's leadership in the field was further demonstrated by the doubling of attendance at its 2025 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Leaders Summit and the professional advancement of 17 teachers who earned their Childhood Development Associate certificate. By helping 229 parents of enrolled children secure local full-time employment, guiding nearly 90 children into kindergarten, and serving over 100,000 meals, CHS continues to successfully advance its mission of supporting children and families through education, care, and opportunity.



*“As someone who’s passionate about working with young children and committed to making a difference in my community, CHS gave me the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally. Being part of an environment that nurtures and empowers children and families was incredibly meaningful—and it confirmed my goal to pursue a career in early childhood education and return to CHS one day as an educator.”*

— NATAYLA ROBERTS '25  
MHS GRADUATE, FORMER CHS INTERN,  
AND NOW FULL-TIME CHS ASSISTANT TEACHER

## MHS Connection at CHS

**7**  
CHS students  
were accepted  
to MHS

**20**  
MHS students completed internships  
at CHS through our Career and  
Technical Education program

**10**  
MHS alumni are  
full-time CHS  
employees

## 2024-25: A Year of Growth, Impact, and Milestones

**150**  
children served  
at CHS Harrisburg  
upon opening

**300**  
children served  
at **two** fully  
operational centers

**17**  
teachers earned their  
Child Development  
Associate certificate

**229**  
CHS parents gained  
local full-time  
employment through  
CHS help

**755**  
vision, dental, and  
hearing screenings  
provided

**109K+**  
meals served

**510**  
child and family  
professionals attended the  
2025 CHS ECE Leaders Summit



*“CHS enables us to fulfill the Hersheys’ mission by serving even more children in need of high-quality early childhood education and care.”*

— PETER G. GURT '85  
MHS AND CHS PRESIDENT

# THE MILT PLAN CONCLUSION OF OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

The 2024-25 school year marked the end of the MILT Plan—the school's 2020-2025 strategic vision—which resulted in significant progress around education, character development, and career-readiness. Key accomplishments include a strengthened Home Life, top-tier academic results, career pathways aligned with labor market needs, expanded strategic partnerships, national recognition for social-emotional and career-focused education, improved recruitment and leadership development, a safe campus environment, strong risk management practices, and foundational support for the growth of Catherine Hershey Schools. These milestones demonstrate the school's unwavering commitment to its Deed of Trust and its mission to nurture and empower every student.

M	I	L	T
<b>MODELING</b> Character and Well-Being	<b>INNOVATING</b> Career-Focused Education	<b>LEVERAGING</b> Impact	<b>TEAMWORK</b> to Strengthen Community Alignment and Engagement



## The MILT Plan Achievements

The MILT Plan has driven strategic progress across key areas of the Milton Hershey School community. Our next chapter will build on the strategic and operational outcomes of the MILT Plan.



### Home Life

Nurturing and stable family-like environment bolstered by augmented houseparent recruitment success despite sourcing challenges. Integrated and aligned character education expectations brought to life through The Milton Hershey Way and owned by Home Life staff.



### Scholastics

Core academics ensured students mastered high-level literacy and STEM skills required for in-demand, family-sustaining careers. Exemplary academic outcomes, with students performing in top 7% of all PA districts across all PSSA and Keystone exams in 2024.



### Career and Technical Education

MHS career pathways were aligned to high-value labor market needs with embedded authentic work experiences, credentials of value, and early postsecondary opportunities.



### One Hershey

Established One Hershey Vision and scaled Hershey strategic partnerships to support Career-Focused Education, mentoring, job pipelines and placement, and marketing and communications.



### Strong Brand

Brand and model were nationally and regionally recognized as leading in the field of social-emotional skill development and Career-Focused Education.



### Employer of Choice

MHS became a highly competitive employer of choice through targeted marketing, recruitment, and retention efforts, including strengthened professional and leadership development.



### Culture of Safety

CALEA-accredited campus safety staff and school-wide processes provided safe and secure environment for students to learn and develop, and for the school community to flourish.



### Quality and Risk Management

Strong integrated Enterprise Risk Management, Compliance, and Quality Assurance frameworks, controls, and practices mitigated risk while ensuring efficient, effective, and aligned processes.



### Support of CHS

Developed an effective shared services structure to support CHS growth and sustained success.



MILTON  
HERSHEY  
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-  X @MiltonHershey
-  Instagram @MiltonHersheySchool
-  YouTube @MHSSchool
-  LinkedIn @Milton-Hershey-School

Milton Hershey School is one of the world's best private schools, where qualifying students in pre-K through 12th grade live on campus and receive an exceptional educational experience—with all costs covered. For more information, visit [mhskids.org](http://mhskids.org).

*Milton Hershey School does not discriminate in admissions or other programs and services on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, sex, religious creed, disability, or any other status protected under applicable law. Visit [mhskids.org](http://mhskids.org) for more information.*

View the digital version of the 2024-25 Brown & Gold Annual Report at [mhskids.org/annualreport](http://mhskids.org/annualreport).