



Woodstock Community Unit School District 200

For Immediate Release

May 21, 2024

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Total of 114 District 200 grads earn Seal of Biliteracy

As Woodstock Community Unit School 200's Dual Language program celebrates its 20th anniversary, it's fitting that the Class of 2024 from Woodstock and Woodstock North high schools had the largest group of Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy graduates in District history.

A total of 114 students earned the Seal of Biliteracy in Spanish and English this spring. Students undergo rigorous reading, writing and speaking tests in order to receive the seal. Most of those students, 100 of them, were enrolled in the Dual Language program, while 14 students earned the seal after completing high school coursework.

Keely Krueger, D 200 assistant superintendent who oversees the Dual Language program, said she's pleased to see the program thriving after two decades.

District 200 has even reaped some of what it has sewn. This past school year, seven district Spanish teachers were graduates of D 200's Dual Language program.

"Our multilingual students are an asset to our schools, community and world. Obtaining the Seal of Biliteracy is a remarkable accomplishment with most students studying for years to meet the requirements to demonstrate proficiency in two languages."

"The ability to speak, write and read two languages will open many doors to these students as they continue their college and career paths," she added.

Dariana Urbina, a 2024 WNHS graduate, is planning to study secondary education at Loyola University Chicago.

"Knowing two languages creates a whole other aspect to the world. Being able to speak in Spanish and English will help me not only communicate, but also have the honor to teach two languages fluently," Urbina said.

Regina Murray, chair of the World Languages Department at Woodstock North, said she and her colleagues are thrilled to be sending a large group of bilingual students out into the world.

"They have worked hard to develop their language skills and embody what it means to be bilingual, while always promoting the importance of biculturalism," Murray said.

WHS 2024 graduate Grace Topf plans to continue developing her language skills by majoring in psychology and minoring in Spanish this fall at the University of Missouri.

“I've always known I wanted to help people work through challenging times, and I would hate for there to be a language barrier making it even worse. I believe everyone should have easy access to the help they deserve, no matter what language they speak,” Topf said.

Bronte Borter, chair of the World Languages Department at Woodstock High School, said she was proud of the students who obtained the Seal of Biliteracy or language commendations whether through the Dual Language program or traditional language classes, all of whom had some of their education interrupted by the pandemic.

“These past four years have not been the easiest for them and receiving the Seal/Commendation really shows their perseverance and strength with the language,” she said.

Krueger said the skills these students have obtained will open many doors in college and in the workforce.

“The real work happens in ensuring that students have the access to recognition of their existing bilingualism and also coursework to further their bilingualism,” she said.