RIVERHEAD
NEWS-REVIEW

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Riverhead graduate Kaleb Gatto accepted to West Point after NJROTC success

By Brendan Carpenter

Kaleb Gatto, far right, leads his fellow Riverhead High School NJROTC members. (Credit: Courtesy Riverhead Central School District)

Riverhead High School graduate Kaleb Gatto has been accepted to the United States Military Academy at West Point after emerging as one of the school's top NJROTC cadets.

Kaleb, who graduated last month, served as both commanding officer and executive officer of Riverhead High School's NJROTC unit. He also commanded its orienteering and marksmanship teams.

He received nominations to West Point from U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and Rep. Nick LaLota. He was also eligible for a nomination through Riverhead's designation as an NJROTC Distinguished Unit, which allows the program to nominate select cadets to the nation's service academies.

"Kaleb was identified as the 'top shot' by our unit and others and additionally excelled as a civilian marksmanship program sharpshooter," Riverhead High School NJROTC Commander David Chiaro said. "Since his freshman year, Kaleb has attended over 150 community service events and logged over 600 community service hours."

Kaleb was also an AP Scholar with Distinction and ranked 18th in his graduating class. He plans to major in war studies and minor in physics at West Point.

Riverhead High School's NJROTC unit has grown from a company into a battalion over the past year and now includes more than 150 students. The program expects enrollment to soon exceed 200.

The NJROTC has assisted many local groups, including the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency, 106th Rescue Wing, Rotary Club of Riverhead, the Lions Club, and the Polish Town Civic Association, among several others.

The unit provides color guard for district and community events, and cadets will continue to build their leadership skills over the summer, including leadership academy and sail training, a highly selective two-week program in Newport, R.I., operated by instructors from across the Northeast.