

THE SARATOGIAN

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GRADS

FROM PAGE 1

while pointing out the value of a small, Catholic school education.

"This is exactly what a Catholic education has taught us, giving back and helping those in need," said Bielefeld, who plans to pursue a medical career.

School board Chairman Dr. Stanley Weeks joked that he had the ultimate small-school experience. There were three kids in the class of the one-room schoolhouse he attended as a child.

He encouraged graduates to "become the best version of yourself you can be."

In his commencement address, school Chaplain and Spa Catholic graduate Rev. James Ebert said, "When you leave Saratoga Catholic don't leave God behind. Take God with you wherever you go. Never stop learning and always take the initiative."

Quoting President John K. Kennedy, he urged graduates:

"Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country."

"We live in an age today where people feel like society owes them something," Ebert said.

Instead, he told

listeners to make the world a better place, in large ways and small such as helping the sick or simply picking up litter "to leave someplace better than you found it."

Diplomas were conferred by Weeks, Bishop Emeritus Rev. Howard J. Hubbard and school Superintendent Michael Pizzingrillo.

Nine graduates attended Catholic schools from kindergarten through high school.

They are Bielefeld, Naughton, Peter Francomano, Emma Lenz, Mariah Murray, Andrew Welcome, Valian Englert, Andrew Hennessey and Shane McCarty.

Forty-one of the 42 graduates are heading on to 32 different colleges and universities including Siena, Boston College, Marist, St. Michael's and Savannah College of Art & Design.

Five are going to SUNY Adirondack and three will attend Fairfield University.

One graduate, Thea J. Lundgren Schumann, is returning to Norway.

"I'll be sad to go, but excited to see where life takes us," Bielefeld said.

Quoting a scripture verse, Ethier said, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."



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Tyler Klingenberg, left and Owen O'Reilly, right, congratulate each other following Saratoga Central Catholic High School graduation ceremonies on Friday.



Saratoga Central Catholic High School seniors are all smiles as they head toward graduation ceremonies on Friday at St. Clement's Church.



A crowd of family, friends and well-wishers gather with Saratoga Central Catholic High School graduates outside St. Clement's Church after Friday's ceremonies.



Saratoga Central Catholic High School seniors are all smiles as they head toward graduation ceremonies on Friday at St. Clement's Church.

AUDIT

FROM PAGE 1

industry.

Cuomo has called for a NYRA board makeup that would continue the state's influence over the firm — it currently has 12 state appointees — and eliminate some of the money NYRA gets from Aqueduct's casino.

Under NYRA's franchise contract, the state agreed that NYRA should receive a percentage of gaming revenue each year for operations, purses and capital projects.

DiNapoli said: "NYRA relies on video lottery terminals to stay in the black, but that revenue stream isn't guaranteed to continue as strongly, especially as new casinos open up across the state. NYRA needs to come up with a plan to make money on racing operations, especially as it seeks to return to private control. Without such a plan, NYRA's long term solvency could be a long shot."

If DiNapoli is correct in saying that NYRA depends on gaming revenue,

then Cuomo's plan — if approved — could have dire consequences for NYRA.

Johnson, the comptroller's spokesman, said the audit was prepared "without any consultation with the governor's office whatsoever."

"The bottom line is, NYRA will be destitute without VLT (video lottery terminal) money," Hendrickson said Friday. "It's part of their business plan."

He called DiNapoli's audit "another cheap shot, released by an Albany politician, the day before the Belmont."

"The governor's budget director was on the NYRA board," Hendrickson said. "It sounds like DiNapoli is saying Governor Cuomo's

government-appointed board failed? If so, why would we now want even more of the same? I believe this audit illustrates that stealing VLT funds makes no sense if you truly care about NYRA's financial health."

"NYRA had received a clean audit from KPMG (a global auditing firm) for the past four years," Hendrickson said.

"NYRA uses the same accounting practices as New York government agencies. NYRA and the comptroller disagree on

how the money is shown on a balance sheet. But the bottom line is the report showed the legally owed VLT mortgage payments are vital to racing's survival. The VLT money is contractually owed for land that was given to the state. They are not support payments. They are mortgage payments."

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