

SALEM HIGH SCHOOL



Alumni & Friends

Newsletter

April 2026

Some great things happened in Salem this winter that brought together Salem High School alumni from all corners:

- Firstly, underscoring the District's progress and direction, the combined graduation rates of all three high schools at Salem Public Schools – New Liberty Innovation School, Salem Prep High School and Salem High School – increased by more than 4.7% from one year ago based on the statewide school graduation rates released by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on Thursday, Mar. 5. Salem's cumulative graduation rate jumped from 81.6% in 2023-24 to 86.3% in 2024-25. Salem High School's graduation rate was 89.5% and New Liberty Innovation School's graduation rate was 69.3%. Additionally, the District's dropout rate – 1.7% – is the lowest figure since 2014-15 and exceeded the Strategic Plan's goal of 2.0%. Over the last five years, the dropout rate has declined by a startling 67% (from 5.2% to 1.7%).
- **Evelyn Oquendo '82** had her No. 24 jersey retired on Friday, Jan. 24, for which teammates, family and friends flocked to the Veterans Memorial Fieldhouse for the ceremony. The event also coincided with the 1986 Salem State women's basketball team's national championship reunion on Jan. 25, on which Ms. Oquendo, **Beth Kapnis '82** and **Holly Brennan '82** were members.
- SHS Boys Basketball Coach **Tom Doyle '90**, who won the 1990 state title as a player, has now won it as a coach. Mr. Doyle led the Witches to their first MIAA Division 3 State Championship since 1995 on Saturday, Mar. 14 with a 57-51 triumph over top-seeded Hanover. As detailed in



[a recent Salem News article](#) by **Matt Williams**, SHS's run to the title brought well wishes from many alumni, including state champions **Rick Brunson '90** (and son **Jalen**), **Scoonie Penn '96**, and **Jamaal Camah '96**, the Principal of New Liberty Innovation School.

We've also received many other updates noted in our Alumni News & Noteworthy section below. As always, we strongly encourage you to share your news with us at publicrelations@salemk12.org.

These are the stories of Salem High alumni. It's a good day to be a witch.

Once a witch, always a witch.

[Share Your News](#)

Donate to Salem Public Schools

Salem Public Schools accepts donations online and the area of your choosing. Alumni and friends of Salem Public Schools can navigate to the City of Salem donations page and complete the short form to submit a donation.



[Donate Now:](#)

1. At the Unipay home page, type Salem
2. Select 'City of Salem Donations'
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In the dropdown option, donors can choose from several categories:

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Every donation helps Salem Public Schools achieve the four core principles of its Strategic Plan: Elevate learning, empower educators, center belonging and strengthen its foundation.

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VIEW GALLERY | Evelyn Oquendo No. 24 Jersey Retirement Ceremony

Three retired numbers grace the wall of the Salem High School Veterans Memorial Fieldhouse: One of a former NBA player, one of an NBA draft selection and, as of Friday, the greatest women's basketball player in SHS history, also an all-star educator, coach and mentor. **Evelyn Oquendo '82** joined former Witches standouts **Rick Brunson '91** and **Scoonie Penn '96** when her No. 24 jersey was retired Friday, Jan. 23, in front of well over 100 co-workers, community and state leaders, former SHS and Salem State teammates, school committee members and family at the Veterans Memorial Field House. [View the Gallery](#)



Media Roundup:

- [The Boston Globe](#) | [A trailblazer still, Salem High honors Evelyn Oquendo by retiring her No. 24 jersey](#)
- [The Salem News](#) | [Salem's legendary Oquendo becomes first female in school history to have number retired](#)
- [The Salem News](#) | [Oquendo has jersey retired by Witches \(Photo Gallery\)](#)
- [Press Release](#) | [Salem High School to Retire Former Standout Evelyn Oquendo's No. 24 Jersey Friday](#)

The Salem News | Salem's basketball family has the perfect proud papa in Doyle

SALEM – There might not be a better high school basketball coach in Massachusetts than Salem's Tom Doyle.

You know what? There might not be a better high school coach in America. Period.



Saturday night at the Tsongas Center, Doyle led the Witches to the crowning moment of his 23 years as head coach with Salem winning the Division 3 state championship via a 57-51 victory over top-seed Hanover.

[Continue Reading in The Salem News](#) | [View all Boys Basketball Tournament Media](#)

Real Estate 101 Gives New Liberty Students

Lifelong Tools, Homebuying Savvy

The Real Estate 101 course at New Liberty Innovation Academy is not just about simply buying and selling homes. Instructed by **Cynthia Nina-Soto '99**, the owner/principal of Nina-Soto Realty, it dives much deeper into the many issues impacting home ownership such as finance and credit, zoning, tenant-landlord rights, and fair housing to name a few.



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The Salem News | After a dozen years, Bouchard '96 steps down as football coach

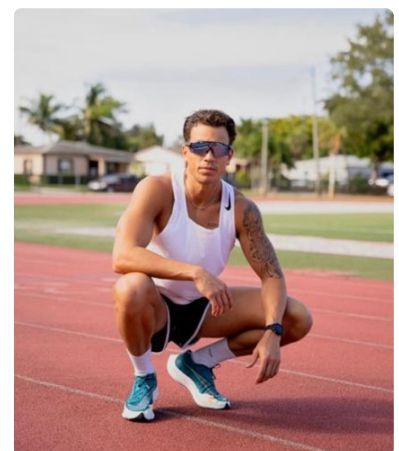
Going back to become the head football coach at his alma mater, Salem High School, was always **Matt Bouchard's** (Class of '96) self-confessed "dream job". But if he could no longer give 100 percent of himself to his players, his assistants, the school and the community itself, Bouchard knew it was time to step away and let someone else do so. The 47-year-old Bouchard, who led Salem to the 2023 Division 6 Super Bowl (Salem's first in 24 years), made that "extremely difficult decision" official Tuesday when he announced he would no longer be coaching the Witches after a dozen years.



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Raphy Medrano '11 running Boston Marathon for families touched by tragedy

Salem High alumni **Raphy Medrano '11**, known locally for his appearance on "The Challenge" on MTV, will be running the Boston Marathon this April while raising money to improve the lives of families touched by tragedy. Medrano, who graduated from Salem High in 2011, has been running marathons for about eight years, but will be participating for his first time in Boston. Describing himself as a lifelong competitor, Medrano said that running during the COVID-19 pandemic was a huge factor in finding a way to push when most other sports became unavailable.



[Continue reading in The Salem News](#)

Tucker '76 encourages student-athletes to chase wins both big and small

Heroism. Leadership. Courage.

The intersection of sports and life is often found in those three words – and they were the trio Essex County District Attorney **Paul Tucker** (Salem High School Class of '76, Athletic Hall of Fame '25) chose to use as his message to the finalists for the 64th Salem News Student-Athlete Award on Wednesday night.



[Continue reading in The Salem News](#)

Perrone looks back at a lifetime of coaching success in football, baseball

The winningest two-sport, two-level coach in North Shore history, Ken Perrone, turned 90 years old last summer. It marked a milestone that made those of us who were fortunate enough to cover his teams recognize our delicate aging process as well.

His 22-year tenure as Witches' head football coach produced a 157-64-7 overall record, tying him with the legendary Bill Broderick for most wins in Salem football history.



[Continue reading in The Salem News](#)

College Corner

Six Former Witches on Gracing NCAA Rosters This Spring

Junior [Jack Doyle '23](#), starting at second base for Salem State this spring, is batting .290 with 21 RBI, 13 runs scored and eight walks. Highlights include a 3-for-4 effort with a triple, RBI and run scored in a 15-5 win over Lesley University, and a 3-for-6 effort with six RBI, two runs, a double and a triple in a 19-9 win over Fitchburg State. The Vikings are 10-11 overall and 6-5 in the MASCAC.



Sophomore [Kianny Mirabal-Nunez '24](#) has seen action in 16 games for the Salem State softball team (17-10, 4-2 MASCAC) and is batting .250 with eight runs. Highlights include a 2-for-2 effort with two runs in a 26-0 win over Lesley University, followed by an 0-for-1 effort with two walks and two RBI in s 20-6 win over Lesley.

[Jayden Benson](#), a freshman on Salem State men's lacrosse team, has seen action in 12 games on defense this season for the Vikings (7-5 overall, 2-3 in the MASCAC) who have won four of their last six games.

Freshman [Faith Sanchez-Schroeder](#) has featured in eight games (one start) for the Albright College softball team (10-18, 4-6 in the Middle Atlantic Conference)...Freshman [Jordan O'Malley '25](#) is a freshman pitcher on the Northern Essex Community College baseball team (16-6, 10-0 in the Mass. Community College Athletic Conference) and is awaiting his first appearance. NECC is riding a 13-game winning streak...Junior [Jonathan Wasserman '23](#), a member of the Worcester State University men's golf team, placed in a tie for fourth and led the Lancers at the WSU Rich Korzec Memorial Invitational Monday, Apr. 13.

Winter Alumni Recaps:

[Miguel Arcila Londono '25](#), a freshman on the Bridgewater State University wrestling team, went 15-12 in his collegiate debut season in the 149-pound class. Londono capped the season at the New England Wrestling Association (NEWA) Futures Tournament by winning his first four matches and advancing to the 149-pound final, where suffered a 5-2 decision against Nick Sanders of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Along the way, Londono scored victories over WPI's David Parrish (pin), Gavin McKenna of Roger Williams (12-6), Joe Kennedy of Vermont State (4-1) and Hayden Haber of Williams (8-5).

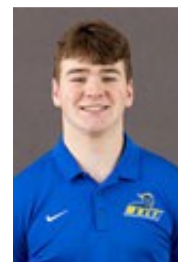
Junior [Amayah McConney '23](#) started 19 of 25 games for the Salem State women's basketball team this winter with averages of 5.5 points and 5.1 rebounds per game. The Vikings finished 13-14 overall and 8-6 in the MASCAC and advanced to the MASCAC Tournament semifinal round...[Andrea Bertini '92](#), in her 21st season as the Westfield State University women's basketball coach, led the Owls to a 17-9 clip (9-5 in the MASCAC), her 15th consecutive season finishing over .500.



**Faith Sanchez-Schroeder
'25**



Jack Doyle '23



Jonathan Wasserman '23

Alumni News and Noteworthy

Mark Henry Bloom, SHS Class of 1977, self-published his book 'Don't Even Go There,' in May 2025, a comedic collection of his travel adventures and misadventures in the U.S. and worldwide. In his words, "Some travel writers produce dry tomes for people needing a reference book, a last-minute

gift, or a door stop. What about the realities of traveling: the scams, tricks, and bad trips out there? When your dream trip becomes a grim reality you'd rather experience second-hand, where do you turn? Don't Even Go There is an antidote to travel guides, a humorous telling of my misadventures around the globe. Each section serves up lessons learned the hard way so you can avoid my mistakes."



'Don't event go there' can be purchased via Mr. Bloom's website at markhenrybloom.com.

A prolific writer, Mr. Bloom lives in Asheville, N.C., and chronicled his experience through Hurricane Helene in November 2024, through which he was without power for three weeks and running water for two months. Read '[Scenes from After Helene Asheville 2024](#)' at his website.

The Fourth Annual Mental Makeover Polar Plunge took place Saturday, Mar. 21 at the Winter Island Park boat launch at which close to 180 plungers took part, including roughly 40 Salem High School alumni. The Plunge is in its fourth year and is one of two signature events held by Mental Makeover each year. The 2026 World Needs You Here Walk, Roll and 5K is slated for Sunday, Aug. 2 at Salem Common (Check-in at 8:45 a.m.).

Mental Makeover was founded by SHS alumni **Emily Lonergan '15** and **Chris Van de Stadt '15** to fight the stigma of and provide valuable resources for those who suffer from mental illness. To find out more, visit mentalmakeovertoday.org.

Michael Ready '22, a four-year member of the Bridgewater State University football team, will graduate in May with a bachelor's degree in marketing. A former all-Northeast Conference standout quarterback at SHS, Mr. Ready switched to defensive back at BSU and played a key role on the Bears' key special teams at nickel corner and free safety. He helped lead BSU to a 23-16 clip in four years.

Gina Cordeiro '18 has immersed herself in the world of anime content creation and fashion. Visit her YouTube page at [@AnAnime Project](https://www.youtube.com/@AnAnimeProject). She also has plans to begin creating her own clothing line.

Submit your news to: publicrelations@salemk12.org



Salem High School Alumni

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