

Willowbrook football coach speaks to Warriors' Class of 2020

Hildreth, a Willowbrook graduate, thanks and encourages seniors, who aren't getting sendoff they deserve

STAFF REPORT

Willowbrook head football coach Nick Hildreth delivered a recent message to the school's Class of 2020.

Hildreth, who graduated from Willowbrook in 2000, spoke to this year's senior class regarding the COVID-19 pandemic that has closed school buildings throughout Illinois since the middle of March. Gov. JB Pritzker recently announced that all K-12 schools in the state would re-

main closed for the rest of the 2019-20 school year.

"Class of 2020—you've often heard me say you get what you deserve," said Hildreth in his message to Willowbrook seniors. "You do not deserve this end to your high school career. You deserve prom, awards ceremonies, graduation; but there's no class more equipped to handle this situation than you."

Willowbrook's Class of 2020, which includes nearly 500 students, was supposed to celebrate its commencement in the school's main gymnasium on May 17. That service has been canceled because of the pandemic. District 88 will hold a virtual ceremony for Willowbrook's senior class on May 17. The district is exploring the possibility of holding an in-person graduation ceremony at a later date.

Willowbrook was supposed to hold its 2020 prom on April 17, at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. That event was canceled because of the pandemic.

"You've consistently maximized each and every opportunity by fighting human nature, and it has been amazing to witness, and just be a part of," continued Hildreth in his recent message, which he released on Twitter. "I cannot put into words what you've meant to me, our community, our school, our football program. So these last few weeks of your high school career, you're going to hear from alumni and community members on just what you meant to them."

Hildreth guided the Willowbrook football team to an 11-2 record during the memorable 2019 season. The Warriors went 8-1 during the regular season. They posted a perfect 6-0 West Suburban Gold Conference record to win the conference title for the third straight year. Willowbrook is undefeated in conference play in each of the last three seasons.

The Warriors won three playoff games to advance to the IHSAA Class 7A semifinals. Willowbrook's 2019 season ended with a semifinal loss to Mt. Carmel—the eventual Class 7A state champion.

"We look forward to everything you are going to accomplish after



CHRIS FOX FILE PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Willowbrook head football coach Nick Hildreth issued a recent message to the school's Class of 2020. "You do not deserve this end to your high school career," said Hildreth, referring to the unprecedented situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Willowbrook has been closed to on-site instruction since the end of classes on March 13. Since then, all school activities, including the commencement service of May 17, have been canceled. Willowbrook may hold an in-person graduation ceremony for the Class of 2020 at a later date. The school will hold a virtual service for this year's graduating class on May 17. Hildreth coached the Willowbrook football team to an 11-2 record and a berth in the IHSAA Class 7A semifinals during the 2019 season. The Warriors went 6-0 in West Suburban Gold Conference play to win the conference title for the third straight season. The Willowbrook football program has posted perfect 6-0 conference records in each of the last three seasons.

Your career has ended here at Willowbrook High School," said Hildreth near the conclusion of his message to the school's Class of 2020. He completed his remarks with a mantra frequently used by the Warriors' football program.

"Maintain the culture," said Hildreth.



Conroy's Community Resource Corner

Call4Calm

The Illinois Department of Human Services' Mental Health Division has launched Call4Calm, a free emotional support text line for Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19.

Individuals who would like to speak with a mental health professional can text "TALK" to 5-5-2-0-2-0, or for Spanish, "HABLAR" to the same number: 5-5-2-0-2-0. Individuals can also text with key words such as "unemployment" or "food" or "shelter" and will receive information on how to navigate and access support and services.

The DuPage County Crisis Hotline 630-627-1700 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year

DuPage County Health Department - <https://www.dupagehealth.org/618-COVID-19-Maintaining-Your-Mental-Health>

National Alliance on Mental Illness - DuPage <http://namidupage.org>

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offers support groups and other resources for individuals who may need help dealing with a mental health condition. Residents are encouraged to call our local NAMI chapter at 630-752-0066 to learn about what resources are available during the COVID-19 crisis.

Kennedy Forum <https://www.thekennedyforum.org/resources/>

The Kennedy Forum is working toward lasting change in the way mental health and substance use disorders are treated in our health care system.

Suicide Prevention Hotline (800) 273-8255

We know how much of a struggle it is right now for everyone to maintain good mental health. Our frontline workers are dealing with this exponentially; We need to be able to talk about it, feel it, and ask others how they are feeling.

Domestic Violence Hotline (800) 273-8255

All calls are free and confidential.

Help is Here.

1-833-2-FIND-HELP (1-833-234-6343)

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Recovery

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Playing at the next level



Willowbrook senior K'Altyha Herron announced last week that she will continue her athletic and academic careers at Concordia University Chicago. A standout for Willowbrook's girls basketball team, Herron was named to the 2019-20 West Suburban Gold Conference's all-conference team. The Warriors finished second in the West Suburban Gold Conference standings with their record of 9-3. Willowbrook turned in an overall record of 15-14. Herron set a new program record of steals in a season by making 150 steals during her senior campaign. She completed her Willowbrook career with a program-leading 253 steals.

CHRIS FOX FILE PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing

Conroy highlights expansion of payment relief for student loan borrowers

State Rep. Deb Conroy, D-Villa Park, is informing residents of expanded student loan relief available to residents struggling to make their loan payments due to the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Families in our community are facing financial uncertainty and economic hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and we have to do everything we can to relieve this burden for families who are just trying to get by," said Conroy.

"During these difficult times of financial uncertainty, even a little relief can go a long way," said Conroy. "Families are readjusting their budgets and figuring out how to make ends meet as unemployment rises and the economic future looks to be uncertain. This student loan relief can help many families free up some

extra room in their budgets so that they can ensure the mortgage is paid, their children are cared for, and there is food on the table."

The federal CARES Act provided relief for individuals with government-owned federal loans by suspending monthly payments, interest and involuntary collection activity until Sept. 30.

The state's action last week in cooperation with 20 student loan ser-

vicers will grant similar protections to over 138,000 Illinoisans with privately held student loans. Those protections may include a minimum of 90 days of forbearance, waiving late payment fees, ensuring that borrowers are not subject to negative credit reporting, ceasing debt collection lawsuits for 90 days, and working with borrowers to ensure enrollment in existing programs such as income-based repayment plans.

Consumers should contact their servicers directly to learn more about the relief options available to them.

Borrowers may visit the Department of Education's National Student Loan Data System website at nslds.ed.gov or call the Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243 or 1-800-730-8913 (TDD) to determine the types of federal loans they hold and who the servicers are.

Borrowers with private student loans can check the contact information on their monthly billing statements.

"I am committed to working with the state's leaders to help Illinoisans get through this unprecedented public health and economic crisis," said Conroy.

"I encourage any resident with student loan debt to take the time to understand what assistance might be available to them."

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, says EEH

By now, you've heard the advice. Stay home. Social distance. Sneeze with a tissue or cough into your elbow. Wash your hands. But how can you tell if that cough or sneeze is something to get checked out?

In short, if you have symptoms of coronavirus, your best bet is to call your physician's office. Symptoms of coronavirus are often mild, but in some cases can become serious and life-threatening.

The more typical symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

When you talk to a medical professional, you may be asked whether you have been in close contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 or if you have any underlying health con-

ditions. Those with underlying health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, immunosuppression, cancer, lung disease or kidney disease are more at risk for complications from the virus. Adults over age 60 are also at higher risk.

If you have mild symptoms, your doctor likely will ask you to stay home and recover. If you experience any of the following symptoms, you should seek emergency treatment:

- Difficulty breathing
- A persistent pain or pressure in your chest
- Bluish lips or face
- New confusion or inability to arouse

If you call 9-1-1, let them know you

may have symptoms of COVID-19 so they can take the necessary precautions.

Daily testing is available for patients with a physician's order for a COVID-19 test. At Edward Hospital in Naperville and Elmhurst Hospital, COVID-19 patients and those suspected of having the virus are placed in negative-pressure isolation rooms with a separate airflow system to contain airborne contaminants.

The hospitals have teams dedicated to help care for the patients, which includes regularly checking vitals and continuous monitoring of the heart (through telemetry) and oxygen levels. Staff also take extra precautions and make use of personal protective equipment, including gowns, gloves,

surgical masks and protective eyewear.

Though visitors are not allowed, COVID-19 patients can remain in contact with loved through phone calls and video chats. It's recommended that one person in the family act as the contact person to get updates from the nursing staff about their loved one. This will help get the information to all family members while freeing up the nursing staff to care for all patients.

Use Edward-Elmhurst Health's online symptom checker at www.ee-health.org/coronavirus/screening-options.

Get the latest information on what Edward-Elmhurst Health is doing about coronavirus at <https://www.ee-health.org/coronavirus>.

School districts continue to provide free meals to students while school buildings are closed

Five days worth of food to be provided each Tuesday from 10 a.m. to noon; next distribution is May 12

District 88 is partnering with District 45 Salt Creek School District 48, Addison School District 4, Arden Management, Chartwells and Cottage Hill Operating Company to provide meals to students while school buildings are closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The food service program provides meals free of charge to all residents up to the age of 18.

Beginning on April 7, five days worth of food (five breakfasts and five lunches) were distributed. Five days worth of food will be provided each Tuesday while school buildings are closed to on-site learning.

The next distribution of five days worth of food will be provided from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, May 12.

The area distribution sites include four Villa Park schools and two Lombard schools. The Villa Park schools are:

- Willowbrook High School, 1250 S. Ardmore Ave.
- A. Raftis Middle School, 1110 S. Villa Ave.
- Ardmore Elementary School, 225 S. Harvard Ave.
- Jefferson Middle School, 255 W. Vermont St.
- The Lombard schools are:
- Stevenson Elementary School, 18W331 15th St.
- Westmore Elementary School, 340 S. School St.

Federal REAL ID deadline extended to Oct. 1, 2021

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced on March 26 that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has extended the federal REAL ID deadline an additional year to Oct. 1, 2021.

DHS cited the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact the virus is having on the general public and driver's license and ID card-issuing agencies nationwide. Earlier this month, White, along with other state and business leaders from around the country, called on DHS to extend the REAL ID deadline.

Current Illinois driver's licenses or ID cards will continue to be accepted at airports, military bases and secure federal facilities until Oct. 1, 2021. Once Driver Services facilities reopen, White is suggesting that people who want a REAL ID wait until their current driver's license or ID card is about to expire before visiting a facility to apply for a REAL ID.

For those whose driver's license or ID card expires after Oct. 1, 2021, and want a REAL ID, they can use their valid U.S. passport or

other TSA-acceptable documents to fly domestically until they must renew their current card.

"The decision to extend the REAL ID deadline to Oct. 1, 2021 – a year past the old deadline – is the proper and necessary action during this time of uncertainty and crisis," said White. "I urge Illinoisans with valid driver's licenses and ID cards not to rush to our facilities to obtain a REAL ID once they reopen."

As a reminder, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, White closed all offices, including Driver

Services facilities statewide to the public, through April 7, due to the health and safety recommendations by experts endorsing social distancing efforts to minimize transmission of the virus. Many other states have followed with similar actions.

White is reminding residents that many transactions with the Secretary of State's Office may be conducted online at www.cyberdriveillinois.com. Some Secretary of State employees continue working to process these transactions as efficiently as possible.

Second state lawmaker files suit against Pritzker stay-at-home order

Cabello's case seeks relief for all Illinois residents

By Rebecca Anzel
CAPITOL NEWS ILLINOIS

A second Republican state representative on April 29 filed a lawsuit against Gov. JB Pritzker alleging he overstepped his authority in ordering Illinoisans to stay at home to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

The outcome of Machesney Park Rep. John Cabello's case could affect all state residents, as Cabello filed the suit in Winnebago County on behalf of himself and "all citizens of the state of Illinois similarly situated."

Illinoisans' right to "free movement"—to leave their homes and shop at a local business, for example—were "arbitrarily stripped away from them" by Pritzker's implementation of the stay-at-home restriction, Cabello al-

leges. That order, initially instituted on March 20 and extended through the end of May, "could continue into perpetuity as (Pritzker) solely determines, all without due process of law," according to the court filing.

"No one has that authority—no body, not the governor, not the president," Cabello's attorney, Thomas DeVore, said in a phone interview. "That is the stuff of kings centuries ago. It is unconstitutional."

DeVore is also representing Rep. Darren Bailey, a Republican from Xenia, in a similar case. On April 27, a Clay County Circuit Court judge ruled in favor of Bailey and released him from the governor's stay-at-home orders.

Cabello's case differs from Bailey's in that it alleges the Illinois Department of Public Health has "supreme authority" to close businesses and put residents under quarantine or isolation.

According to the statute creating the

department, officials must either have an Illinoisan's consent when doing so, or obtain a court order. The burden of proof is great—among other things, the department would need to prove to a judge that the community's health is "significantly endangered" by the person it wants to quarantine.

DeVore said the procedure outlined by that statute is "the law of the land" and what should be governing any quarantines.

"... Pritzker has perverted the emergency provisions of the (Illinois Emergency Management Act) in an effort to rip the sacred responsibility of the health and lives of the people away from where the Legislature placed it, being local control of county health departments of the (Illinois Department of Public Health), and in doing so he took complete control of the free movement of every citizen within the state of Illinois," according to the lawsuit.

"Even if well intentioned by Pritz-

ker, his actions as governor have left every citizen of this state completely devoid of any procedural due process rights to protect their liberty" the document continues.

In the court filing, DeVore also takes issue with the governor's disaster proclamations including a 30-day "arbitrarily placed" time frame.

The Illinois Emergency Management Act specifies a governor has emergency authority during a disaster for 30 days, but DeVore said it does not specify that a disaster must include an end date.

He said he believes Pritzker does not have the authority to issue successive disaster proclamations, and he suggested the Legislature should use those 30 days to determine what actions it should take to protect public health.

"They're playing games with this type of language," DeVore said. "The governor's people should appreciate there's a lot of smart people in this state who can see this for what it's worth."