



Bust of Laurent Clerc first erected at the Asylum Avenue school circa 1873 before being moved to the West Hartford school. The signs at the base of the statue spell Clerc.

Photograph courtesy of Lukas Houle.

200th Anniversary of the American School for the Deaf

But for the intersection of four people—three from Hartford and one from France—American Sign Language and education for the deaf might not exist as it does today. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, born in Philadelphia, moved to Hartford with his family at a young age. His neighbor, Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell, had a deaf child, Alice. For years, conventional wisdom had labeled deaf people also “dumb” or unable to communicate and learn. Gallaudet and Dr. Cogswell, however, personally observed Alice’s attempts to communicate with her sisters and others around her. In certain areas of Europe and on Martha’s Vineyard, deaf people had learned to communicate through gestures and hand signs. Gallaudet, by this time studying to become a minister, worked with Alice to demonstrate her ability to communicate and learn.

Lamenting that no schools in America educated the deaf community as those in Europe did, the two men studied population information and became confident that enough potential students existed in New England and the United States to warrant an American school. In 1815 after a single afternoon’s efforts, Cogswell and Gallaudet raised enough funds to launch the first phase of such a school, sending the young scholar Gallaudet to Europe to learn their methods of teaching the deaf. It was on the trip to Europe that Gallaudet met Laurent Clerc, who, having lost his own hearing in childhood, taught French sign language to deaf students. Gallaudet convinced Clerc to travel to America with him and open a school for the deaf. On the sea voyage across the Atlantic, Clerc taught Gallaudet the gestures that composed French Sign Language and Gallaudet taught Clerc English.

Once they arrived in America, Clerc, Cogswell and Gallaudet raised funds from like-minded members of communities throughout the northeast. On December 24, 1816, the *Connecticut Courant* reported on one of these efforts in Philadelphia that had occurred earlier in the month. A public meeting chaired by the Honorable William Tilghman, the Chief Justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, was attended by a large group of men and women from around the area who were interested in the education of the deaf. Gallaudet read aloud words that Clerc had written describing the origin of signing in France, its spread throughout Europe and the principles

that would be instilled at the American school they hoped to open. Clerc implored his audience to

become patrons of the school. “What satisfaction will you not feel, Ladies and Gentlemen, in seeing the good you will have done!”

After much effort, the new school opened on April 15, 1817. The Connecticut Asylum at Hartford for the Instruction of Deaf and Dumb Persons, as it was originally known, was located on the corner of Main and Gold Streets in the Old City Hotel, where Bushnell Towers stands today. A bronze marker notes the corner’s significance in history as the school’s original location. In 1819, the school became the first recipient of state aid for education in the country with a grant from the Connecticut General Assembly. A year later, it became the first school to receive federal aid for special education.

When the school opened, Alice Cogswell was one of three students. That year, the class grew to thirty-three students from various states ranging in age from nine to fifty one. Gallaudet used the theory behind Clerc’s French Sign Language to combine the English language with gestures being used by students from Martha’s Vineyard and other states to develop what is known today as American Sign Language. Sign language is a series of gestures and hand signals used to visually communicate. One example of the development of these gestures comes from when President James Monroe visited Hartford in the first year of the school’s existence and met a group of its students in State House Square. He was wearing a bicorn hat that the students imitated with a gesture that now means “president” in American Sign Language.

On July 13, 1830, after the school had been in existence for over a decade, the *Connecticut Courant* printed an article on the school’s Report of the Directors. The institution had grown from three students at opening to 119 students enrolled in May of 1830. By this time, the governments of all New England states except Rhode Island contributed financially to the school’s operation. Government funding covered the tuition of the majority of enrolled students. In the years since 1817, over 333 pupils had been enrolled in the school.

In the years following the opening of the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, additional schools opened in New York, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Virginia and Indiana. By 1900, more than fifty schools for the deaf had been established in the United States. After graduation, many students

stayed on working as support staff in their former schools. Others worked in their communities in many different careers. Some became teachers, and by the 1860's, almost forty percent of teachers for the deaf in the United States were deaf themselves.

Beyond the forming of a new language, a new deaf culture was formed across the United States as well. Literature, social organizations and political organizations developed. As the deaf became more able to communicate with each other and the rest of society, they became more able to congregate and advocate. In 1864, the Columbia Institution for the Deaf was established in Washington, D.C. Later renamed Gallaudet University, it remains the only liberal arts college for the deaf in the world.

Beginning in 1880, popular theory shifted away from teaching sign language and toward lip reading or oral communication but the American School for the Deaf decided to teach both forms of communication. Students were first offered oral communication classes and if they were not successful there, they were offered signing classes. This was a reflection of the school's philosophy that continues today: Always able. Over the years, support for signing increased and schools now tend to take the combined approach modeled early on by the American School for the Deaf.

Though the United States struggled with civil rights issues related to race and gender during the majority of the twentieth century, since its founding, the American School for the Deaf has accepted deaf students regardless of race or sex. In 1830, the school reported that new pupils enrolled in the prior year consisted of twenty-one males compared to eighteen females. Over seventy-five percent of students had attended the school on full financial packages. The *Courant* reported that "few of these [students] were from families in more than moderate circumstances."

In the last quarter of twentieth century, controversy around the idea of mainstreaming developed among the deaf community. In 1975, Congress passed Public Law 94-142, An Act to amend the Education of the Handicapped to provide educational assistance to all handicapped children, and for other purposes. This law called for children with disabilities to be taught in the least restrictive environment possible and has been interpreted to require special needs students to attend public schools and to participate in the same education process that is offered to other public school students.

Partially because of mainstreaming, the American School for the Deaf and similar institutions have seen a decline in attendance in recent years.



Undated print of President George Washington wearing a bicorn hat. Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Reproduction Number LC-DIG-pga-13807.



In 1821, the school moved to 690 Asylum Avenue, where it was a Hartford landmark for a century. The site is now occupied by The Hartford Insurance Company.

Lithograph by H.P. Arms circa 1881 courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Reproduction Number LC-DIG-pga.01650.

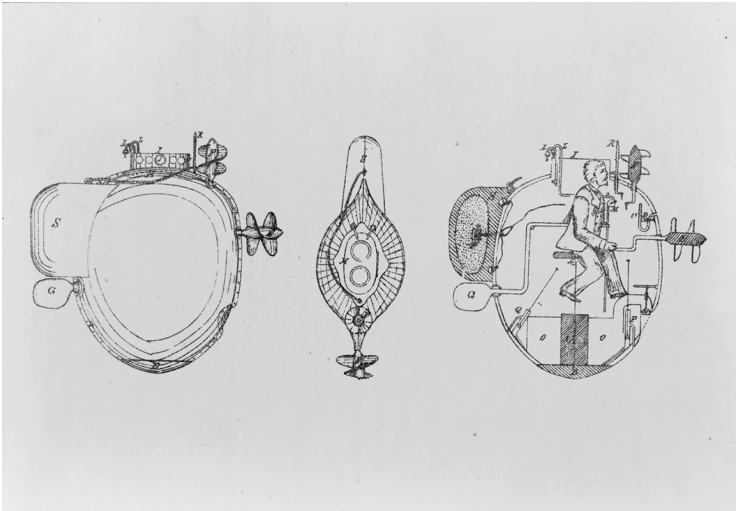


Statue of Thomas Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell located on the West Hartford campus of the American School for the Deaf.

Photograph courtesy of Lukas Houle.

school for the deaf in the United States, the institution has undergone three name changes and five location changes before settling into its current location on North Main Street in West Hartford. On the bicentennial celebration of the founding of this remarkable Connecticut institution and in honor of the contributions of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, Laurent Clerc, Dr. Mason Fitch Cogswell, and Alice Cogswell, I dedicate the 2017 State Register and Manual to the American School for the Deaf. The hard work, dedication and vision of these four inspired a community and continues to help break communication barriers today.

Denise W. Merrill
Secretary of the State



Engraving by Henry L. Abbott circa 1881 shows three views of the Turtle, the world's first submarine.

*Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.
Reproduction Number LC-USZ62-110384.*

Connecticut: Submarine Capital of the World

At the height of the Revolutionary War in 1776, the ingenuity, persistence and sense of community partnership of Connecticut's citizens created the world's first military submarine, the *Turtle*. It was just before midnight on September 6 when Lyme resident Ezra Lee piloted the *Turtle* on its maiden mission, which was met with mixed results: Lee successfully detonated the explosives but was unable to attach them to the intended target. Instead of exploding a British ship, the detonation shot giant water pillars into the sky, intimidating the British into retreating from the harbor. Invented by David Bushnell of Saybrook, the *Turtle* performed two more missions during the war before the British sunk a ship that was transporting it.

Though submarines' potential would not be fully realized until nearly 150 years later, Bushnell and his partners established a model for maritime success through naval defense innovation that has withstood the test of time. Bushnell, a scholar from Yale, worked with local entrepreneurs, including clockmakers Isaac Doolittle of New Haven and Phineas Pratt of Essex, to design and manufacture pumps, valves and other pieces of engineering for the *Turtle*. Silas Deane, a Connecticut member of the Continental Congress serving on the Continental Marine Committee, took up the cause of the *Turtle* through government channels, raising the interest of Benjamin Franklin, General George Washington and Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull. Scholarship, entrepreneurship and government partnerships for the nation's defense is a formula that has repeated itself throughout our state's prosperous submarine history.

What is now Naval Submarine Base New London began in 1868 as a naval shipyard when the cities and towns of southeastern Connecticut, along with the state government, envisioned the establishment of a naval base along the Thames River. The land donated to the Navy by this coalition of governments was first primarily used to store inactive ships. Perhaps because of the especially generous donation by the citizens of New London—\$10,000 to purchase land—New London has always been associated with the base, despite the fact that it is physically located in Groton.

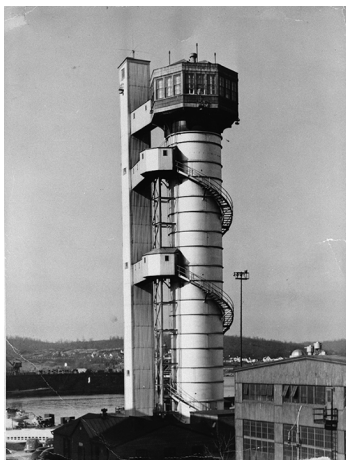
After experiencing lean years leading up to the turn of the twentieth century, the shipyard found new life in 1912 when Congressman Edwin

W. Higgins of Norwich spearheaded an overhaul of the yard that resulted in over a million dollars in upgrades in six years. As World War I broke out, Germany quickly mastered submarine warfare. On September 3, 1915, the *New York Times* reported that a Navy submarine base would be established at New London, to accommodate 150 men and officers along a mile and a half of waterfront. The *Times* noted that “the plants of the Electric Boat Company and the Lake Torpedo Boat Company are nearby.” On October 18, 1915, the yard received its first six submarines with two tenders, the USS *Ozark* and the USS *Tonopah*. Tenders are ships that support and supply submarines while at sea. On November 1, 1915, the first ship built with the specific purpose of being a tender, the USS *Fulton*, arrived at the base. On June 21, 1916, Commander Yates Stirling assumed command of the new submarine base, the New London Submarine Flotilla and the Submarine School, fully realizing Naval Submarine Base New London’s potential. By the end of World War I, 1400 men and 20 submarines utilized 81 buildings.

Though the base saw cutbacks in the postwar years, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Works Progress Administration during the Great Depression brought further expansion, as over two dozen warehouses, barracks and workshops were created on base. Perhaps the most visible structure from this era was the Submarine Escape Training Tank, also known as the Dive Tower. For generations, students at the submarine school ascended this 100-foot column of water in order to practice escaping from sunken submarines.

World War II brought another expansion of Submarine Base New London, as the installation grew to 497 acres, more than quadrupling in size. As the men who worked at Electric Boat and other local manufacturers went to war, more women joined the workforce, contributing to the war effort by building submarine parts. Grace Hitchener of Groton painted submarines alongside other women who were welders and pipe fitters. Lillian Garcia, also of Groton, worked at Electric Boat for over four years before getting a position at the base keeping records for the Dive Tower.

After the war, the submarine force shrank as much of the World War II fleet was moved to storage and eventually sold for scrap. The Cold War raged, however, and Connecticut continued to play a leading role in the development of new military submarine technology. The USS *Nautilus* became the world’s first nuclear-powered ship. Electric Boat, by this time



New London Submarine Escape
Training Tank circa 1968.

*Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and
Photographs Division. Call Number HAER
CONN, 6-GROT, 3A-.*

Interior view of the Dive
Tank with a student
wearing the Steinke escape
Hood (right) and a diving
instructor (left) guiding the
student's ascent. *Courtesy of
the Library of Congress Prints and
Photographs Division. Call Number
HAER CONN, 6-GROT, 3A-.*



Launching of the USS
Nautilus into the Thames
River on January 21, 1954.

*Courtesy of the US Navy Submarine
Force Museum.*

a division of the General Dynamics Corporation, constructed the *Nautilus*. President Harry S. Truman laid the keel of the ship on June 14, 1952. On January 21, 1954, First Lady Mamie Eisenhower christened the *Nautilus* at its launching into the Thames River, becoming the first president's spouse ever to christen a naval submarine.

Able to travel faster and farther than any other submarine in history, the *Nautilus* was home ported in New London for nearly 25 years. In 1958, she performed the first crossing of the North Pole by ship, leaving Pearl Harbor, traveling under the polar sea ice and arriving in England 19 days later. After being decommissioned in California in 1980, the USS *Nautilus* returned to Groton in 1985, having been designated a National Historic Landmark. Today she is an exhibit at the Submarine Force Museum. A contemporary of the *Nautilus* launched in 1959, the USS *George Washington* was another Connecticut first: the world's first nuclear-powered, ballistic-missile submarine. The arrival of this technology heralded a new era of reconstruction on Submarine Base New London that helped establish the United States as a country with immense nuclear firepower.



The sail of the USS *George Washington*, the Navy's first ballistic missile-carrying submarine.

Courtesy of the US Navy Submarine Force Museum

As technology made another giant leap in the 1990s, so did military submarine strategy. Older vessels, with limited missile ranges, required two crews per boat with a supporting dry dock. New technology created increased missile ranges and New London became home to only attack submarines and crews leading into the 21st Century. Southeastern Connecticut has long been known as the Submarine Capital of the World,

and recent years have continued to prove this title well-deserved. *Virginia*-class submarines are scheduled to be produced at a rate of two per year over the next three years, a pace that is expected to continue over the next decade. Additionally, design for the new *Columbia*-class ballistic missile submarines is fully underway. Eventually, all submarines of this class will be built by Electric Boat.

Although General Dynamics' Electric Boat, as one of the state's big three defense contractors, accounts for a significant percentage of submarine-related defense contracts in Connecticut, nearly one billion dollars in contracts are distributed to businesses and educational institutions throughout the state. Hundreds of Connecticut businesses provide parts to Electric Boat in order to produce a single submarine while local companies provide goods and services to Submarine Base New London. Over a thousand engineering jobs have been added in southeastern Connecticut. In all, our state's Office of Military Affairs estimates that the base "generates over \$5 billion dollars in annual economic impact and over 30,000 jobs."¹

Now spanning over 680 acres of land in Groton and Ledyard, Submarine Base New London and its community partners continue to demonstrate the ingenuity and persistence first established by Bushnell, Lee, Doolittle, Pratt, Deane and others during the Revolutionary War. Today, military submarines continue to be designed and built at Electric Boat; the Naval Submarine School provides training for all personnel who will serve on a submarine. The base is also home to the Undersea Warfighting Development Center, the Submarine Learning Center, the Naval Submarine Medical Research Laboratory and the Submarine Force Library and Museum.

For over 240 years, Connecticut has been a world leader in submarine technology. A strong coalition of local, state and federal government along with partnerships with educational institutions and businesses is how it all started back with the *Turtle*. As our state progresses, this successful formula, along with our solid understanding of the power of regionalism, will keep our state the Submarine Capital of the world through the twenty-first century and beyond. It is with great pride in the State of Connecticut's rich submarine history that I dedicate the 2017 State Register and Manual to the hundreds of thousands of people who contributed to—and continue to contribute to—these many achievements.



Denise W. Merrill
Secretary of the State

1. State of Connecticut Office of Military Affairs Annual Report 2016.



President Barack Obama talks with Jahana Hayes, 2016 National Teacher of the Year, and Lynadia Whiting, a student of Hayes, in the Blue Room of the White House prior to an event to honor Hayes and Teacher of the Year finalists, May 3, 2016.

Photo by Pete Souza.

Jahana Hayes: Waterbury's National Teacher of the Year

From May 2016 to May 2017, Jahana Hayes traveled the United States and the world as National Teacher of the Year. Born and raised in Waterbury, where she now teaches at John F. Kennedy High School, Hayes represents the best of the best educators in the country. She grew up in the Berkeley Heights public housing project where it was easier for a kid to get drugs or a gun than a library card. As she recounted during her commencement remarks at Lane College in 2017, when a young Jahana approached local librarians on her own and requested a card, “they wanted a light bill, they wanted a parent with me, they wanted someone to sign for me and I just stood there saying, ‘I just want to read.’ Kids need books as early and as often as possible.” Hayes’s mother, she told the graduates, “was an amazing mother until the point she wasn’t—until drugs stole her from me—but I never wanted or needed for anything because my community just stepped up. I had two grandmothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbors, friends—an entire network of people who believed in me.”

At the White House ceremony honoring Hayes on May 3, 2016, President Barack Obama said, “No one in Jahana’s family had gone to college. No one at home particularly encouraged her education. She lived in a community full of poverty and violence, high crime and low expectations. Drugs were more accessible than degrees. As a teenager, Jahana became pregnant, wanted to drop out of school, but her teachers saw something . . . in her, and they gave her an even greater challenge, and that was to dream bigger, and to imagine a better life.”

A promising student who had been in advanced placement classes until she became pregnant, Jahana was so discouraged at being placed in a remedial program for teen moms at her high school that she started to miss classes. Her guidance counselor took the time to visit her at home and to call her to encourage her to finish her degree, and she did. However, prior dreams of attending college were replaced with a sense of history repeating itself, as she had been the product of a teen pregnancy. Convinced that her life would no longer allow for college but determined to care for her daughter, Hayes went straight into the workforce.

After seven years of earning an honest wage and supporting her daughter, she decided to enroll in Naugatuck Valley Community College, even-

tually earning her teaching degree from Southern Connecticut State University before pursuing her master's degree at the University of Saint Joseph and her sixth year advanced degree from the University of Bridgeport. Mrs. Hayes, as her students call her, started her teaching career in New Haven before returning to teach in the school system where her education began. She finds connections with students every day. When a student's family faces eviction, she is reminded of the time she and her mother were evicted from their apartment. She recognizes her past in students struggling with family addictions and young parenthood. She teaches teens who live in Berkeley Heights and knows the trials they face every day because she lived them.

When faced with a challenge she does not understand, she seeks answers. At the White House ceremony, President Obama recounted a time when Hayes was stymied by a class that seemed unmotivated so she determined to discover what was distracting them. "Seven students in one class had recently lost a parent to cancer. So she organized a Relay for Life team through the American Cancer Society, and it became an annual event. Last year, when Jahana went online to register her team, she noticed not one, not two, but fourteen teams led by former students had already signed up."

Growing up in the Waterbury school system, Hayes was shaped by both positive and negative experiences with her own teachers, from which she takes lessons that inform her teaching style. On November 10, 2016, at a ceremony in Bushnell Auditorium where she addressed fellow teachers, she recounted, "I also remember vividly, down to the blue floral dress and the earrings that she was wearing, the teacher who made the comment that no one in my family cared about me because they hadn't attended parents' night." Hayes then posed to her peers, "I still remember the razor sharpness of that comment, so I ask you the question: How will your students remember you?" She reminded them, "You are somebody's hero and you don't even know it."

Of the many positive encounters she had with educators, Hayes recalls the concerned guidance counselor who helped her finish high school, teachers allowing her to bring books home from school in the absence of having access to her local library and educators who encouraged her to continue her academic pursuits beyond high school. In a White House blog post dated May 3, 2016, entitled, "What the Promise of Education Did for Me,"

she wrote of her former teachers, “They challenged me to imagine myself in a different set of circumstances, no matter how difficult. They encouraged me to do more, be more, expect more, and become the first in my family to go to college. They inspired me to become a teacher so I could make the same kind of impact in my own students’ lives—a teacher whose influence extends beyond the classroom.”

The idea of a teacher’s influence extending beyond the classroom is a principal tenet of Hayes’s teaching philosophy. Because her mother was



Jahana Hayes in her classroom at John F. Kennedy High School.

Source: Waterbury Public Schools.

taken from her by addiction and her community provided for her—family, friends, neighbors, and educators—she sees a responsibility as a teacher to instill in her students the value of community engagement, of caring for neighbors and classmates in need. In her application for National Teacher of the Year, she wrote that students’ academic achievement is “no benefit to anyone . . . if they have no desire or

knowledge of how to help others.”

Aside from getting her students involved in Relay for Life, Hayes has also worked with them to help Habitat for Humanity, support autism research, feed the homeless, donate clothing to the poor, register voters and more. President Obama said of the expectations she places on her students, “She understands that actually sometimes the less you have, the more valuable it is to see yourself giving, because that shows you the power and the influence that you can bring to bear on the world around you.”

A primary source of Jahana Hayes’s teaching philosophy is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who in a 1947 Morehouse College essay concluded that, in Hayes’s words, “The purpose of education is twofold: to build knowledge and character. I realized that by focusing on only the academic side, I was not providing students with a complete education and therefore not

experiencing the chemistry I had longed for so many years ago. The connections we make with students are as important as the content we teach.”² She expanded upon this at the Lane College commencement, “Sometimes we falsely assume that children receive all of the tools to shape their moral character at home and they come to school or enter the world ready to learn and use those skills.”

Whole community engagement is critical to Hayes’s teaching style. Reflecting on how her own community looked after her as a child when her mother could not, she said, “I’m determined to engage villages, churches, schools, businesses, families and any stakeholders so that all of us take a part in educating our children because the responsibility for educating young people is not on teachers alone—it’s on the village—all of us . . . education saved my life and I will use it to save the lives of as many young people as I can. Our circumstances do not define us.”

Just as one of Hayes’s greatest strengths is connecting with her students, she recalls the dearth of teachers of color when she was growing up, something that she continues to seek



A boy looks on as a mob marches to Central High School in Little Rock on August 20, 1969.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Reproduction Number LC-DIG-ppmsca-03094.

to correct today by recruiting more minority teachers into the field. Speaking at the historically black Lane College, she reflected upon the courageous first steps of people of color toward equal access to education: “Would I have done what Melba Patillo Beals did and the Little Rock Nine when they integrated Central High School? Could I have faced an angry mob day after day with the weight of my family being ostracized in the community lingering in the back of my mind?”

2. Hayes, Jahana. “The Importance of Connection,” introduction to *What I Didn’t Know: True Stories of Becoming a Teacher*. Lee Gutkind, editor. Published October 11, 2016 by In Fact Books.

As a parent, would I have done what Abon and Lucille Bridges did when they sent little Ruby to school every day accompanied by U.S. Marshals? Or those thirteen little first graders who integrated Memphis schools? I can only imagine how terrified those babies must have been.” She wants today’s youth to “see that there are exceptional adults—role models that look like them and are walking in authority” so that when they face today’s challenges, they can look to the successes of generations before them for strength.

A central theme of Jahana Hayes’s personal and professional life has been finding hope and beauty where others fail to look. She has sometimes quoted Tupac Shakur’s poem, “The Rose That Grew from Concrete,” when reflecting on the struggles she and her students have faced. At the White House ceremony, she said, “I know what it feels like to struggle to find sunlight and constantly be met with concrete barriers. I see myself in every one of those students and I carry my own experiences as a reminder that as a teacher, I have to do better.” Shakur’s poem reads in part, “Proving nature’s law is wrong it/learned to walk without having feet . . . Long live the rose that grew from concrete/when no one else ever cared.”

Jahana Hayes is an outstanding teacher and member of our community. She serves as a role model for the children she teaches as well as for her own children—her eldest daughter, Asia Coxton, has followed in her footsteps and teaches in West Hartford. In honor of her commitment to education and whole community engagement, I dedicate the 2017 State Register and Manual to Jahana Hayes, a true representative of the many excellent teachers who inspire the young people of our society. Their commitment and devotion to their students’ and their communities’ civic engagement will shape our society for generations to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise W. Merrill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Denise" being the most prominent part.

Denise W. Merrill
Secretary of the State