

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 22, 2021



CONTACT

Jeff Nesmith
(301) 244-3600

jnesmith@thesienaschool.org



The Siena School Hosts 16th Annual Celebration

Siena honors Olympian, advocate Noah Lyles along with local key supporters

Silver Spring, Maryland, and Oakton, Virginia, October 22, 2021 — The Siena School held its 16th annual Fall Celebration and Awards Evening on October 21, 2021, as a virtual event. Siena’s nationally-recognized program serves bright students with dyslexia and similar language-based learning differences on campuses in Silver Spring, MD, and Oakton, VA.

Each year, the Siena community celebrates school achievements and recognizes important contributions to both Siena and the wider field of dyslexia education. This year, the Cypress Leadership awardee was Olympian and advocate Noah Lyles. Erik Heyer, Siena’s Founder and Board Chair, presented Lyles with the award. “He has encouraged open conversations about mental health and learning differences, specifically his own dyslexia,” Heyer noted in his remarks.

Most recently, Lyles won the Men’s 200m at the [Prefontaine Classic](#) in Oregon. He also won the bronze medal in Men’s 200m at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

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1300 Forest Glen Road | Silver Spring, MD 20901 | (301) 244-3600 tel | (301) 244-3601 fax
2705 Hunter Mill Road | Oakton, VA 22124 | (703) 745-5900 tel | (301) 244-3601 fax

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In addition to being a world-class track and field athlete, Lyles is also the VP of the [Lyles Brothers Sports Foundation](#), which partners with local community groups to promote youth health and wellness, education, and more through track and field and other sports. Lyles spent his formative years—both as an athlete and an advocate—in Northern Virginia, graduating from [Alexandria City High School](#).

In accepting the award, Lyles spoke about his family, his social justice and mental health advocacy, his training regimen, and his personal experience with dyslexia: “For people to understand Noah, they have to understand the different sides of me, and one of those sides is my dyslexia.” See the full video of Lyles [here](#).

In addition, [Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax](#) (UUCF), [Mindwell](#), and [Dr. Valaida Wise](#) were honored with Siena’s Key Supporter awards. Siena Northern Virginia Head of School [Jennifer Betts](#) thanked both UUCF and Dr. Rachna Varia of Mindwell for their work in welcoming Siena’s Northern Virginia campus.

Siena’s DEIB Committee Chair [Maya Kratzke](#) and Dean of Students [John Lucas](#) presented Dr. Wise with a key supporter award for her consulting work on behalf of Siena’s ongoing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging initiatives.

About The Siena School

The Siena School, a leader in dyslexia education, serves bright, college-bound students with language-based learning differences. The school was established in 2006 in Silver Spring, MD, where it serves students in grades 4–12. The Northern Virginia campus currently serves grades 3–8 and will add high school grades going forward. Siena’s staff and board of advisors include distinguished national, state, and local education leaders and professionals. Siena’s program is designed for students with mild to moderate learning needs who are experiencing a discrepancy between their academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more areas such as reading, writing, oral expression, or math. For further information, contact The Siena School at (301) 244-3600 or visit www.thesienaschool.org.

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