



MetroWest Resident Robert El-Rassy Honored as Olympia High School Valedictorian

After graduating first in his class as Olympia High School valedictorian, MetroWest resident Robert El-Rassy now turns his sights toward achieving an equally successful college career.



Robert, 17, graduated from Olympia in May of this year. He previously attended Chain of Lakes Middle School and MetroWest Elementary School. During his active high school career, Robert played violin with the Olympia orchestra and participated in Science Olympiad. He served as Vice President

of the National Italian Honor Society, Treasurer of Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society, and President of National Honor Society. He also volunteered at Second Harvest Food Bank.

Robert is fluent in English and Portuguese, and proficient in Italian.

This fall, he will attend the University of Florida in Gainesville in the Honors Program and University Research Scholars Program (URSP) majoring in biology.

URSP is by invitation only and

introduces its scholars to the exciting world of academic research. In the program, students are exposed to many opportunities in which they can improve upon their skills as undergraduate researchers.

Robert's family includes parents Monica Luiza Ferreira El-Rassy and Michel Elias El-Rassy of MetroWest, older brother Richard, 27, his wife Elizabeth and their one-year-old son, Richard Michael, all of Washington D.C. Richard graduated from the University of Florida and received his law degree from George Mason University. Richard is a regulatory law attorney and Elizabeth works in politics specializing in elections law.

Thank You to Our 2023 MusicWORKS Sponsors

With the support of these wonderful organizations, the MetroWest Master Association was able to stage the fifth annual MusicWORKS event July 2 at MetroWest Golf Club. Thank you!

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FIFTH ANNUAL MetroWest MusicWORKS

Draws 10,000 Attendees

An estimated crowd of more than 10,000 attendees enjoyed an evening of music, food and fireworks at the MetroWest MusicWORKS event July 2 at MetroWest Golf Club.

MusicWORKS offered food trucks, rides, vendors, live musical performances, a skydiving spectacular honoring the armed forces, and an exciting fireworks show.

every performance to a fallen hero, carrying with them an American flag that will be presented to that hero's family. The MusicWORKS performance was dedicated to Marine



Staged by the MetroWest Master Association (MWMA), the free, public event featured accomplished musicians Will Donato, Matt Marshak, Jeff Kashiwa, JJ Sansaverino, Khristian Dentley and Charlyce Simmons performing "Red White & Blues – a Tribute to American Blues."

Another highlight was Team Fastrax, the largest professional skydiving team in the world, diving into the event with a 2,000-square-foot American flag. Team Fastrax dedicates

"We are very pleased that so many people joined us to celebrate Independence Day," said Julie Sanchez, MWMA General Manager. "MusicWORKS is one aspect of what makes MetroWest such a great place to live, work, play and connect."

Lance Cpl. Charles S. Sharp, who died July 2, 2009 while serving during Operation Enduring Freedom.

The amazing 20-minute fireworks show that concluded MusicWORKS 2023 was staged by Pyro Shows, a 50-year-old pyrotechnic company headquartered in Tennessee.

During MusicWORKS, MWMA presented representatives from Westpointe Elementary and MetroWest Elementary each with checks for \$5,000, donations MWMA makes annually.



Stina D'Uva Announces Retirement from the West Orange Chamber



After more than 20 years as the President/CEO of the West Orange Chamber of Commerce (WOCC), Agostina "Stina" D'Uva has announced her impending retirement later this year.

Stina has been an integral leader in the Orlando community for decades. Under her direction as President/CEO, the West Orange Chamber has grown into the driving force of business that it

is today. During her time at the Chamber, the WOCC earned Certified Plus status and Chamber of the Year three times.

Stina also has served as a Planning & Zoning Commissioner and on the Orange County Charter Review Commission. Stina was recognized as Orange County District 1 Citizen of the Year in 2007 and was awarded the 2013 Central Florida Women's League Heart of Florida Woman Award. In 2014, she was elected to and continues to serve on the MetroWest Master Association

(MWMA) Board of Directors, currently as Vice President.

As a parent, Stina was the President of the MetroWest Elementary School PTA, Gotha Middle School PTSA President

Fortunately for MWMA, Stina will continue to serve on the Board of Directors, allowing the MetroWest community to benefit from her experience and wisdom.

and SAC Chair, and a founding member and President of the Olympia High School PTSA. She also earned ADDitions Volunteer of the Year while at MetroWest Elementary and served on the Health Central Foundation board as its Chairwoman.

Fortunately for MWMA, Stina will continue to serve on the Board of Directors, allowing the MetroWest community to benefit from her experience and wisdom.

Calendar

August
10

First Day of School (OCPS)

August
24

MetroWest Food Truck Connection,
5:30-8 p.m.

October
3

MetroWest National Night Out,
5:30-8:30 p.m..



Connect with us!

Like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/MetroWestMasterAssociation) to ensure that you don't miss any MetroWest community news. Also, scan the QR code for our website. It provides a wide range of timely news and updates about MetroWest, including events, business, community stories and more.



Save Money on Back-to-School Shopping

Although the effects of inflation are starting to lessen, back-to-school shopping can still put a strain on family budgets. Here are some back-to-school shopping advice that can save you money, time and frustration.

- Shop with a plan: Create a budget and a strict shopping list with priorities clearly delineated. Older children can benefit from participating in this process, learning valuable lessons about smart money management.
- Shop online: It's easier to stick to your shopping list and compare for the best prices if you shop online. You'll also save yourself the time and aggravation that can come from going from store to store in search of specific items or sales.
- Look beyond traditional stores: Give resale shops a try, especially if your older kids are enamored of trendy labels. Even the most label-conscious teen can enjoy shopping at resale stores because they can buy more designer/brand names for less.
- Take advantage of sales tax holidays: Florida's back-to-school tax holiday continues through Aug. 6. Qualifying items will be exempt from tax including: certain school supplies; clothing, footwear, and certain accessories; and computers and accessories below a set price point. Find out more at floridarevenue.com/backtoschool/Pages/default.aspx.
- Wait until school starts, if you can: While there are good deals during the back-to-school shopping rush, there can be even better deals available after school starts.
- Hit the sales racks first: Especially when it comes to clothes, check out the clearance section first before looking at regularly priced items.
- Compare prices on e-books: For classes with reading lists, perhaps buying the electronic version of a book would be less expensive than purchasing a physical copy.
- Use coupons and watch ads: If you really need to cut corners, use coupons (digital or print) and keep an eye on back-to-school ads for deals on must-have items.
- Ask your friends: Do you have friends with children a bit older than your kids? If so, see if they have any gently-used school supplies that they'd be willing to part with. For instance, in Florida an item like a winter coat might not get much wear before it's outgrown and your friends might want to clear out their kids' closets in anticipation of new back-to-school clothes.

MetroWest Public Safety Corner

School is back in session Aug. 10 for Orange County Public Schools and MetroWest Public Safety is excited to be involved in the 2023-2024 school year.

Part of what makes MetroWest such a great place to live, play, work, and connect, is interacting and seeing the friendly faces of MetroWest Public Safety in your community. One of the amazing benefits of living in MetroWest is that our Public Safety Officers will continue to be present at our community school bus stops. We are there to have positive interaction with students, provide safety tips, meet new students, connect with parents, and say hello to the bus drivers. We make sure that our vehicles are visible in an effort to deter reckless driving around the students. Be sure to say hello when you see us out there!

Back to School Safety tips from MetroWest Public Safety

- Parents, make sure your child stays on the sidewalk and never stands in the road when waiting for the bus.
- Students, do not text while crossing the street, always pay attention to what's in front of you. Also, leave those earbuds out while waiting for the bus or walking to school. Be aware of your surroundings.
- Parents, do not park on the roadway when picking up or dropping off a student at the bus stop. You can cause traffic congestion within our communities and possibly a collision.
- Drivers, yield to pedestrians when crossing the road, be mindful of students and school crosswalks, and never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians.
- Drivers, when the school bus lights are on and blinking and the stop sign is out, STOP! DO NOT PASS THE BUS!

Have a safe school year!



New Businesses, Development Choose MetroWest

MetroWest continues to be a highly desirable location for both businesses and new development. Here are several businesses that have recently opened or will be opening soon in MetroWest:

Nutrilux of MetroWest is located in the WaWa at 5810 Raleigh St. and sells nutritional shakes, teas and snacks. The Nutrilux space is still under construction, but owner Harrison Nunez is doing personal delivery in MetroWest. Give him a call at (786) 399-1087 and check out the Nutrilux menu on Instagram: @nutrilux_of_metrowest.

Sapporo Izakaya & Ramen, 2320 S. Kirkman Rd., recently opened with a menu featuring ramen, rice bowls, skewers, mochi, milk tea, fruit green tea, and slushes. Order online at www.sappoororlando.com.



Mecatos Bakery & Café at 2900 S. Kirkman Rd. celebrated their grand opening ribbon cutting July 14. Mecatos showcases delicious and highly sought after pastries, baked and fried foods typical of Colombia, and other Latin American countries in a relaxed, modern and sleek setting. (407) 317-5046, www.mecatoscafe.com/metrowest.

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Sea-San Sushi Bar, at 3120 S. Kirkman Rd. Ste. J, offers an extensive menu including temaki, uramaki, hosomaki, nigiri, and sashimi, as well as hot plates, hot rolls and much more. Order online through DoorDash or call (407) 233-4472.

The Laundry Room, 5836 Raleigh St., is projected to open in late July/early August, offering residential and commercial laundry service, free pickup and delivery for wash and fold services, and full-service laundromats. (407) 601-2465, www.orlandolaundryroom.com.

Renegade Insurance (Morning Star Insurance Agency), 3120 S. Kirkman Rd. Ste. B, is an independent insurance agency founded in 2009 providing a large selection of insurance products including home, auto, commercial, business, and more. (407) 268-6000, www.msinsurance.net.

A new Shell station has opened at 2393 S. Hiawassee Rd. This Shell location is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. www.fnd.shell.com/us/fuel/13021016-2393-s-hiawassee-rd.

Nuspine Chiropractic in 3120 S. Kirkman Rd. Suite 14P provides a wide range of chiropractic services. (407) 749-0386, www.nuspine.com.

In development news, the Paramount Westgate Apartments at 5712 Westgate Dr. will be a 258-unit luxury apartment community on the

6.46-acre site. The unit mix will be 10 percent studios, 46 percent one-bedrooms, 33 percent two-bedrooms, and 11 percent three-bedrooms.



Community amenities include a resort-style pool, business center, hyper-integrated electric vehicle charging system, dog park, fitness studio, locker package system, seventh-story lounge and community event space connecting to the rooftop terrace, a clubhouse with pool and WiFi, and much more. Construction is expected to begin later this year with completion in 2024.

Near MetroWest, a 4.6-acre lot just northwest of the intersection of Hiawassee Road and Old Winter Garden Road is being considered for redevelopment as a mixed-use project. As reported by WFTV, an application was filed June 29 in Orange County to review plans to demolish the existing building at 10 N. Hiawassee Rd. and replace it with a 46,086-square-foot development with “assembly, retail and office uses,” as well as parking, a lobby and covered walkways.



MetroWest National Night Out Returns October 3

Mark your calendars for MetroWest's National Night Out event Tuesday, Oct. 3 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Mark your calendars for MetroWest's National Night Out event Tuesday, Oct. 3 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the MetroWest Golf Club. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes strong police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie, enhancing the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of connection.

To celebrate National Night Out, neighborhoods across the nation host block parties, festivals, parades, cookouts and other community events with safety demonstrations, seminars, youth events, visits from emergency personnel, exhibits and



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much more. National Night Out is celebrated by more than 38 million neighbors across 16,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories and military bases worldwide.

MetroWest's National Night Out will feature vendors and

exhibits, food trucks, kids' activities, and crime prevention and safety demonstrations. Admission to National Night Out is FREE, so please plan to join us for an evening of fun dedicated to strengthening our community bonds.

MetroWest

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