

Edwardsville High's Sami McKenney Earns Spot In Prestigious NYT Summer Academy

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville High School junior Sami McKenney, a second-year journalism student, has been accepted into The New York Times Summer Academy, which offers high school students the chance to explore multiple course offerings taught by Times staff and industry leaders.

The program usually draws 10,000 applicants and accepts approximately 2,000 students each year. McKenney met the priority admissions deadline in February 2024. She was recommended by her adviser, Amanda Thrun.

The Edwardsville student also submitted an optional writing sample, an unpublished piece that explores how EHS students, particularly those with religious and familial connections to the conflict in Gaza, discussed the events in healthy and constructive ways with the assistance of knowledgeable teachers and club sponsors.

The chance to experience New York City and learn from industry leaders led McKenney to apply.

“I applied because I thought it would be a good opportunity — it’s The New York Times— and it was flexible,” McKenney said.

The academy offers four two-week sessions over the summer from which students can choose, and all offer experiential learning with working journalists.

McKenney was accepted into the opinion writing track and will attend in July.

“I’m most looking forward to learning from the guest speakers and instructors who have a lot of experience in the field and who have written work I admire,” McKenny said, “and working with students who enjoy opinion writing as much as I do and have a multitude of perspectives from which to comment on and criticize the world around them.”