KRISTINA CHOTAI

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EDUCATION

Pope John XXIII Regional High School | *Sparta, NJ* — Expected Graduation: June 2027

Syracuse University | *Pre-College Film Program, Rising Junior* — Summer 2025

Fairleigh Dickinson University | *Pre-College Film Program, Rising Senior* — Summer 2026

- Completed college-credit coursework

Montclair State University | *Animation Program* — Summer 2026

CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

Melon (Short Film) | Writer *& Director, Montclair Film* — 2025–2026

BuyMyBuddy.com (Short Film) | Co-*Writer & Co-Director, Montclair Film* — 2026–2027

Filmmaking, Screenwriting & Directing Classes | Montclair *Film* — 2024–2026

- Completed coursework in filmmaking fundamentals, screenwriting, indie production, Adobe Premiere Pro editing, and directing technique (camera, lighting, sound)
- Acted in several short films, while focusing primarily on screenwriting and directing

Montclair Film 2026 Junior Jury | *Junior Juror* — 2026

- Selected through a competitive application process to evaluate festival films, participate in jury deliberations, and help select the Junior Jury winner

Film Review Club | *Participant, Montclair Film* — 2025–2026

- Watched and critiqued recent independent films; analyzed acting, design, sound, and camera work

Kubert School of Comic Art | *Comic Book Art* — 2023–2024

- Developed character design and visual storytelling skills

AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Melon (Short Film)

- Film: Best Short Film, Student Awards; Best Science Fiction Short, NY Sci-Fi & Horror Film Festival; official selections at On The Rise, NJ Horror Con & Film and Five Minute Film Festivals (2026)
- Screenplay: Semi-Finalist, *On The Rise Student Screenplay Competition*; Finalist, *Montclair Film Emerging Screenwriters Competition*

LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

New Jersey Arts Education Council | Student *Advisory Board Member (paid stipend)* — 2024–2025

- Selected as one of 12 students from more than 200 applicants statewide
- Moderated a "Careers in Filmmaking" panel featuring NYU Tisch film students and a veteran playwright/actress/director
- Co-developed the "Art Isn't a Limit" podcast series, including interviewing an art therapy expert
- Served as a Youth Arts Ambassador advocating for greater recognition of the arts in New Jersey high schools; proposed an extracurricular art club and school art Instagram page

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Sparta United Methodist Church, Sparta, NJ | Children's *Program Volunteer* — Summer 2026

- Assisted instructors with a safety training program for young children; photographed the sessions for the organization's social media

YMCA Youth Summer Camp | *Counselor Assistant* — Summer 2026

- Guided young children through arts and crafts activities, encouraging creativity, confidence, and self-expression

St. Matthew the Apostle Parish, Randolph, NJ | *Parish & Confirmation Service Volunteer* — 2024–2025

- Assisted with parish and Confirmation-related service activities, including event hospitality, setup, and cleanup

Resurrection Parish, Randolph, NJ | *Vacation Bible School Volunteer* — Summer 2026

- Supported instructors with classes and activities for children

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS

- **School Debate Club** — 2025–2027: developed skills in persuasive argument
- **Vocal Music, Back2 Rock** — 2023–2025: performed at concerts three times a year
- **Track & Field, Short-Distance Runner** — 2023–2024
- **Independent Creative Writing & Sketching** — 2023–2027: original screenplays (horror, sci-fi, fantasy) and character sketches