



# DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

VOLUME XXXIII, MARCH 2010

## WASHINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL CELEBRATES ITS 2009 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON



The Bayonne Board of Education is proud to announce that Washington Community School has been designated as a 2009 Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.



The Blue Ribbon Schools Program is a United States program created to honor schools, and it is considered the highest honor that an American school can achieve today. The Blue Ribbon Award is a testimony to Washington Community School's teachers, parents, students, and administration for their true commitment to student excellence. The Washington Community School Blue Ribbon celebration was held on January 15, 2010. Principal Peter Anastas and Vice Principal Maureen Hurley Brown greeted the audi-

ence, and Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, spoke of the pride and privilege felt in being personally involved in three Blue Ribbon School distinctions, earlier as Principal of Midtown Community School, and as Superintendent of Schools for the

*(Continued on page 3)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| BHS HIVE VOLTAGE               | 2 |
| TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS | 2 |
| BHS SCIENCE ACHIEVERS          | 3 |
| CARING & SHARING VOLUNTEERS    | 3 |
| BHS POETRY AWARD               | 4 |
| MIDTOWN 100TH DAY              | 4 |
| HARRIS REACH                   | 5 |
| PROJECT INDEPENDENCE           | 5 |
| WILSON READ ALOUD              | 6 |
| BHS AMERICAN ESSAY             | 6 |
| MANN GETS PHYSICAL             | 7 |
| WASHINGTON FEARLESS MUSICIANS  | 8 |
| BAYONNE EDUCATION FOUNDATION   | 8 |

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## BAYONNE HIGH SCHOOL “HIVE VOLTAGE” DEBUTS



Pictured at Opening Ceremonies are BHS students: Elijah Moawad, Matt Padilla, Akash Ramkirath, Frank Vorrius, Rafal Kierznowski, Gemma David, William Golden, Elvonney Poole, Hannah Catbagan, Angelique Reyes, Anthony Gold and Dan Borowski.

Thanks to a generous grant from IMTT Bayonne High School now has a FIRST Tech Challenge team, Team 3774, called “Hive Voltage”. FIRST which stands for “For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology” was founded by Dean Kamen to inspire young people to dream about becoming heroes of science and technology. Hive Voltage made its competition debut at The Garden State Rumble, the official FTC state tournament for New Jersey, on February 7<sup>th</sup>

at NJIT. Over 40 teams coming from Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York participated in two divisions, “Parkway” and “Turnpike”. BHS placed 11<sup>th</sup>, about midway in the Turnpike division standings. Not bad for a rookie year! The second year Engineering students, Gemma David, Rafal Kierznowski, Elijah Moawad, and Frank Vorrius, led the design and construction effort and were assisted by several students in the Intro to Engineering classes, many of which

hope to lead next year’s team. At the competition, Matt Padilla and Akash Ramkirath assisted as pit crew mechanics and robot drivers. Dan Borowski presented our soon to be launched team website. Anthony Gold and Elvonney Poole represented the team’s marketing plan. Anthony designed the team T-Shirt. The team has been working on this project since September in class and attending training sessions and scrimmages. Some team members even attended train-

ing events over the summer to prepare. Now that the big tournament is over the senior members of the team will document their work as a legacy and start to train next year’s team. They will also prepare a demo of their robot to present to the school later this year. They hope to present it to elementary schools in the district and start a robotics club to generate interest in robotics outside the engineering classes.



The team with the robot at the Jan 16 Scrimmage, from the left Matt Padilla, with the robot, Frank Vorrius, Gemma David, and Elijah Moawad.

## TEACHER OF THE YEAR RECIPIENTS

Maryann Mikolajczak, Henry E. Harris School  
 Gerald J. Murphy, Philip G. Vroom School  
 Juana Saborido, Dr. Walter F. Robinson School  
 Helen Zebrowski, Mary J. Donohoe School  
 Patricia Gonzalez, Lincoln Community School  
 Lyndia Hayes, Horace Mann School

Leticia Sisk, Midtown Community School  
 June Bianchini, Washington Community School  
 Cosimina F. D’Alessandro, Woodrow Wilson School  
 Karen Guidera, John M. Bailey School  
 Cheryl Patti, School #14  
 Stephen M. Yurchak, Bayonne High School

*Congratulations!*

## BAYONNE HIGH SCHOOL YOUNG SCIENCE ACHIEVERS

Four BHS students won slots in the Young Science Achievers Program in late December. On January 9th they were invited to the YSAP-MIRTHE Science Day at Princeton University. They spent the day touring labs and participating in various science activities. The Young Science Achievers Program supports students all over New York and New Jersey with industry and university mentors and funding for their projects. At the end of the day in Princeton the girls were assigned their mentors, and received \$660 in mini grants to buy the supplies needed for their science projects. In May they will submit their research papers, and in June present their work for prizes. All four will also enter the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium and the Hudson County Science Fair.



In front of the conference center in Princeton (left to right) are: Marisa Portenti, Sarra Dawood, teacher Marie Aloia, Shima Essam, and Jermin Botrous.

### *Blue Ribbon Celebration (Continued from page 1)*

School 14 and Washington Community School recognitions. Student vocal performances included the songs "It's a Great Day" and "Walking on Sunshine." Music teacher Andrew Rosciszewski led the school concert band in the selection "Soaring Through Ionian Skies."



Presentations and resolutions were bestowed by the Honorable Albio Sires, U.S. Congressman representing the 13<sup>th</sup> district; Mayor Mark Smith, city of Bayonne and fellow council members; Hudson County Freeholder Doreen DiDomenico; New Jersey State Senator Sandra Cunningham; Bayonne Board of Education President William Lawson and trustees, and Lisa Franconeri, Washington School PTO representative. Hudson County Superintendent of Schools Timothy Brennan also extended his congratulations and best wishes. Principal Peter Anastas and Vice Principal Maureen Hurley Brown state, "This is truly the ultimate of an educator's dream for a school to receive this extraordinary recognition. We are so very proud of our faculty, staff, students and parents for this outstanding honor! We also want to thank the Blue Ribbon application and committee members for all of their help and dedication." Superintendent McGeehan adds, "Washington Community School is a fine example of what teachers and students can achieve together!"

## 2010 CARING & SHARING VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENTS

Thomas Cotter, Henry E. Harris School  
 Simon Taylor, Philip G. Vroom School  
 Mary Ballweg, Dr. Walter F. Robinson School  
 Debbie Rubino, Mary J. Donohoe School  
 Judy Quinn, Lincoln Community School  
 Jean Mastandrea, Horace Mann School



Tina Mescavage, Midtown Community School  
 Elizabeth Broderick, Washington Community School  
 Donna Ferrari, Woodrow Wilson School  
 Denise Babico, John M. Bailey School  
 Gemma Wright, School 14  
 Maria Duffy, Bayonne High School

**Congratulations!**

## BAYONNE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS RECEIVE POETRY AWARD



Pictured are BHS students who received the Poetic Achievement Award, along with teacher Donna Zervoulis, who received special recognition from Creative Communication - A Celebration of Today's Writers. Approximately 25 NJ teachers are recognized each year for having at least fifteen students recognized as "exceptional" poets. Donna Zervoulis' name will be published in a special section in the Celebration of Poets Anthology.

# Congratulations!

"Fifteen Bayonne High School students received the Fall 2009 Creative Communication Poetry Achievement Award. This award is given to schools whose students' entries to the poetry contest are of exceptionally high merit," stated Bayonne High School teacher Donna Zervoulis. Students are Samantha Beiro, Christopher Cabreja, Tyler Darvalics, Chloe DeFilippis, Naivasha Graves, Erica Hayes, Izabella Kluczyk, Jazmeen Murray, Shannon O'Connor, D.Liz Polanco, Malcolm Salters, Katie Soler, Kaitlin Valencia, Mariam Younan, and Kyrolos Zak.

Creative Communication is dedicated to promoting language arts and has sponsored writing contests for over 15 years. The 2009-2010 Celebration of Young Writers Creative Communications Poetry and Essay Contest is a proven method to motivate and inspire new writers. Students and schools are able to compete for thousands of dollars in prizes and awards nationwide.

Mrs. Zervoulis adds, "I am extremely proud and honored that my students received these poetry awards." Evelyn Taraszkievicz, Director of Social Studies/ Language Arts, states, "I congratulate and commend these students and Mrs. Zervoulis for receiving this wonderful recognition."

## MIDTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOL CELEBRATES 100TH DAY

The 100<sup>th</sup> day of school arrived on February 24<sup>th</sup> with great fanfare. On the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school, MCS was energized by the many creative and ambitious activities that were held throughout the entire school.

The 100<sup>th</sup> day of school is a nationally recognized milestone in the school year. It is a great opportunity to incorporate exciting math activities into all areas of the curriculum.

On the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school, through an array of activities, MCS students demonstrated making mathemat-

ical connections to the real world, while integrating that understanding across the curriculum. Teachers incorporated all subjects into the fun and participated in activities that centered on the number 100. With smiles on the faces of children, picturesque hallways and impressive activities, MCS celebrated a true love of learning and creatively demonstrated understanding through art, music, literature, science, social studies and physical education. It was a fun day for all!



Third grade class at Midtown Community School celebrated the 100th Day of School with an array of exciting activities. The teacher utilized an interdisciplinary approach and an interactive SmartBoard to enhance instruction. Pictured with teacher Tara O'Connell are students Alexander Preciado, Mayeli Paniagua, Jack Tobar, Amanda Munoz, Ejahniya Alers, Lukasz Jerzak, Samantha Rosario, Sara Beshai, Nancy Aly, and Erica Sagna.

## HENRY E. HARRIS REACH PROGRAM

The Bayonne Board of Education's district-wide REACH (Raising Expectations Above Children's Horizons) Program gives students the opportunity to attend enrichment courses each week. The children are able to diverge from their regular compacted curriculum and spend time enhancing their abilities and talents.

Henry E. Harris students are participating in a variety of age-appropriate courses

ranging from Pre-K to grade 8. The courses are geared to challenge, build skill levels, and promote multiple intelligences. Some courses available at Harris are: Rock Your Passion for Fashion, Versa Tile Fun, Engineering is Elementary, Reader's Theater, Sights Seen in the Mind's Eye Can Never Be Destroyed, Transformations and Tessellations, This is Jeopardy, and Cyberchase-Know Your Dough.



Pictured are grade 6 students: Chantel Dunlap, Isadora Faris, and Caroline Gallo.

## PROJECT INDEPENDENCE

Kathy Bingham, House 6 Vice Principal, and Project Independence teacher Karen Gray developed a program to recycle uniform shirts. In June 2009, fliers were circulated throughout the school asking seniors to donate their uniform shirts. Students in Pro-

ject Independence took on the task of laundering all the donated shirts and sorting them by size. A store was set up across from the Student Center in House 6. Families who are experiencing financial hardship are given the shirts for free. Any student



Seniors Cindy Le, Gregory Guerra, Alex Czerwinski, and Theresa Montejo are pictured donating their uniform shirts.



Pictured are students Samantha Ciemiecki, Anthony Bell, Mina Mikhail, Osama Elzwahry, and Scott Stuart.

who forgets their shirt or wears an inappropriate shirt has the opportunity to purchase a recycled shirt. Tee shirts cost \$2.00, collared shirts are \$4.00, and hooded sweatshirts are \$10.00. All proceeds are used to supplement trips and projects for Project Independence students.

Donated shirts are always welcome. They can be brought to the House 6 office.

## WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL READ ALOUD PROGRAM



Pictured are 5th grade students with Hudson County Freeholder Dr. Doreen DiDomenico.



Pictured with students in grade 4 is Dr. Tim Brennan, Hudson County Superintendent of Schools.

Woodrow Wilson School was privileged to have many community leaders visit the school throughout the month of February to participate in the “Read Aloud” program in honor of Black History Month. Selected works included biographical sketches about influential African Americans, as well as literary pieces such as poems and short stories written by resolute African Americans.

The school Literacy Committee reached out to respected members of the community and received an overwhelming response. Showing the true spirit of Bayonne, over 30 influential members of the community gave up their time for Woodrow Wilson students.

“The students at Woodrow Wilson School are the future leaders and policy makers of our nation. They will comprise our workforce and help define our economy,” said Mayor Mark Smith who read to a 6<sup>th</sup> grade class and spoke at length about his duties as Mayor.

Dr. Doreen Di Domenico who asked to be invited back to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to speak further about county government said, “The education they receive must provide them the skills necessary to be active participants in our democracy.”

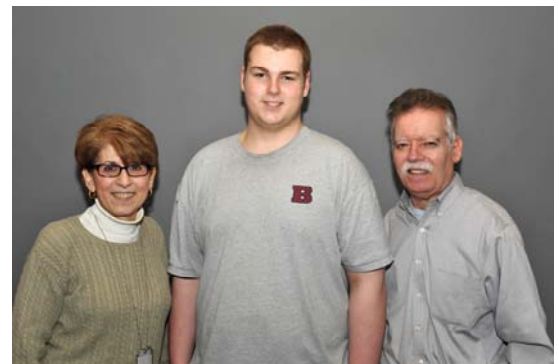
Judge Francis Antonin captured the attention of the 8<sup>th</sup> graders and regaled them with chronicles of her days as a New Jersey Superior Court Judge. She spoke and answered questions for 2 hours and the children were disappointed when the lunch bell rang!

The outstanding leadership of our community and willingness to collaborate with the school system was clearly reflected in Woodrow Wilson’s Read Aloud Program.

## BHS STUDENT WINS “BEING AN AMERICAN” ESSAY CONTEST

Christopher Kennedy, a student in the Sophomore Honors Program at BHS, received the Honorable Mention Award in the 2009-2010 “Being an American” essay contest sponsored by the Bill of Rights Institute. Over 50,000 students throughout the United States submitted essays in response to the contest’s question, “Which civic value do you believe is most essential to being an American?” Christopher focused on the value of perseverance. Throughout his essay, he cited historical and literary figures including John D. Rockefeller, John Adams, Thomas

Paine, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Andrew Jackson. In his essay, Christopher also focused on the perseverance of American citizens after the attacks on the World Trade Center. He also wrote about his determination to attain his goal to become a NASA engineer. Only ninety students received rewards for their essays. Christopher was one of nine students in the Mid-Atlantic Region selected for his insightful response. He was awarded \$250 for his prize-winning essay. Michael Freizer, U.S.1 APH teacher, and Antoinette DeLuca, English Honors teacher, com-



Pictured are teacher Antoinette DeLuca, student winner Christopher Kennedy, and teacher Michael Freizer.

mented that Christopher is a well-rounded student who sets high expectations for himself. They are very proud of his accomplishments.

## HORACE MANN SCHOOL GETS PHYSICAL

To enhance the ongoing study of cardio-respiratory fitness, the Horace Mann School Tigers hosted the Hasbrouck Heights Lincoln Lion's jump rope demo team. The Lincoln Lasers, as they are called, are coached by Dean Hoskins. The jumpers put on an exciting show to "rev up" our HMS students. This assembly was the official kick-off for two American Heart Association Jump Rope for Heart events that took place on February 4 and 5. To date this year, HMS students have raised almost \$8,000 to help combat cardiovascular disease and fund research/education. A third AHA event, the annual Hoops for Heart event for grades 6-8, showcased



aerobic activities. Horace Mann students have been the PROUD participants of Jump Rope for Heart for 25 years! Staffers also did their part by purchasing pins that were worn for National "GO RED FOR WOMEN" Day, another initiative by the AHA.

The Olympic Games are a part of our physical education classes as the students are learning about the significance of the Olympic flag, torch run, oath of the athletes, and Winter Olympic sporting events. Nothing like a good Olympic competition close to home!



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"District Highlights" created by:  
Maribeth Doria, Director of Special Programs,  
and Terri Jasolosky 

## WASHINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL FEARLESS MUSICIANS



The instrumental music program at Washington Community School is a creative and playful introduction to the fundamentals of reading music and performing with a group. Students gain musical awareness, physical coordination, and technical skills on their respective instrument. Advancing students further their development of instrumental technique and sight-reading concepts with an emphasis on listening and playing together while following a conductor. Starting in fourth grade, students can join the instrumental music program as part of the Band or String orchestra. There are many opportunities at WCS to perform on wind, brass, string, or percussion instruments and participate in master classes with young, high caliber musicians. WCS concerts are always filled with exciting and innovative programs you normally don't associate with an elementary school music program. Andrew Rosciszewski, band and orchestra director, says, "The students are really quite fearless when it comes to performing the music I select. There isn't anything they won't attempt without giving 100%. They never cease to amaze me."

"A Washington Celebration" was commissioned by the WCS Percussion Ensemble in celebration of the Blue Ribbon status and composed by Joseph Reichert, a 1988 graduate. They also performed Aram Khachaturian's "Sabre Dance" from his 1942 ballet "Gayane", Bela Bartok's "Indian Dance", Frank Zappa's "The Black Page" and "Peaches en Regalia", and others.

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Story and photos will appear in our next *District Highlights* edition.