

District Highlights

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Bayonne High School Students Achieve 2nd Place in “We The People” Constitution Competition

On February 8, 2008, Michael Freizer’s and Antoinette De Luca’s Sophomore Honors Class, representing the 13th Congressional District, delivered their formal presentations at the “We the People” simulated congressional hearings at the State House in Trenton, New Jersey. Bayonne High School sophomores placed second in the N.J. State Finals.



Pictured in the State House are (top row, left to right): teachers Michael Freizer and Antoinette De Luca; and John Calimano, Advisor & Consultant for We the People Constitution Competition. Seated (left to right) are students: Johann De Luca, William Golden, Nicolette Archiello, Daniel Durak, Madeline Smith, and Iman Saad.

A total of eleven teams from various districts of New Jersey participated in the event. This was a great accomplishment, as expressed by sophomore Alexa Sanniola, “We competed against the best teams in the state, and most of the other teams were composed of seniors who are enrolled in either AP or elective courses.” The class was divided into six teams, each representing a different Constitutional topic, such as the Bill of Rights or the role of the citizen in American democracy. Each group was given four minutes to present prepared statements and then responded to follow-up questions which were designed to perceive if the students could apply their knowledge to past and present events and case law. The judges consisted of law professors, state officials, attorneys and journalists. The students were scored on their understanding of the topic, constitutional application, reasoning, supportive evidence, responsiveness and participation. All of the students who participated in this academic program agreed it was a rewarding experience. According to Arianna Gorden, “The entire process will never be forgotten; it gave us knowledge of American history and the ability to speak in front of an audience. We will use these skills for the rest of our lives.” Her classmate Danielle Jimenez agrees, “Not only did I learn the importance of citizen participation, but I also gained much confidence.” Matthew Stefanski expressed his satisfaction with the competition, “I can name Amendments and Supreme Court cases left and right. This was not only a competition; it was a life-changing experience.” Everyone in the audience was impressed by the students’ performance and agreed that the students were very articulate and precise in their responses. Mr. Freizer and Ms. De Luca were pleased that the students were able to apply all the knowledge they had gained through classroom instruction and practice sessions.



Pictured are Bayonne High School sophomore English and History Honors students at The State House in Trenton, New Jersey.

According to the Center for Civic Education, the national sponsor, students who participate in such academic contests report greater interest in keeping abreast of political affairs. Professor Richard Brody of Stanford University conducted a study of high school students who participate in the “We the People” Program and noted these students display more political tolerance and feel more politically effective than most adult Americans. The program is the largest civic education program in the country. It was established in 1987 under the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution, and is funded by a Congressional appropriation to the U.S. Department of Education, and administered by the Center for Civic Education. Mrs. Evelyn Taraszkievich, Director of Social Studies/Language Arts and English for the Bayonne District implemented the program at Bayonne High School in 1987. She comments, “It has been my fervent desire that as a result of participating in this program all our students will take an active role in the political life of our community, state, and nation. Students need to believe that it is their government and it is essential for them to be a part of it. As Jefferson in 1820 so eloquently said, “I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion.”

Bayonne High School Circle of Ten



Class of 2008 Circle of Ten (left to right) are: Richard J. Baccarella, Principal; Gabrielle Nadolny, Agustin Paniagua, Ericka Rodas, Mohamed Misbah, Iriny Ekladious, Hadir Fahim, Magy Gad, Dominick DiRienzo, Diana Malinowski, and Eric Delgado.

Board of Education Appoints New Board Trustee



Bayonne resident, Christopher Grella, was recently appointed as a new Board of Education Trustee. “On behalf of the entire Bayonne Board of Education, I welcome and thank Mr. Grella for volunteering his time, commitment, expertise, and service to the students, staff, parents, and the entire Bayonne community,” states Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools.

Christopher Grella is an independent Investment Advisor Representative affiliated with Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. He specializes in providing estate planning, wealth management, and insurance services for individuals, charities, foundations, corporations, and municipalities.

Before joining Raymond James in 2003, he was an Assistant Vice President for Retail Sales at Janney Montgomery Scott, and an Associate Vice President at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, both in New York City. For the past fourteen years, Mr. Grella has designed investment strategies to achieve his clients’ objectives. He has obtained several financial services licenses and certifications. He is a member of the National Financial Planning Association, the New York Financial Planning Association, the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, the Bayonne Education Foundation, and the Bayonne Chapter of UNICO. Mr. Grella is a member of the Bayonne Zoning Board of Adjustment, the Governing Board and Membership Committee for the Tiro A Segno Club of New York City, and United Cerebral Palsy of Hudson County. He is the former President and current Vice President of the Bayonne Rotary Club.

Trustee Grella is a graduate of Miami University of Oxford, Ohio, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Marketing. At Miami University, Grella minored in International Business.

Superintendent McGeehan adds, “Again I congratulate him for serving as a new school board trustee. I, along with central office administrators and board members, look forward to working with him. I also wish him success in serving as a new board trustee. I also would like to congratulate and extend special thanks to Jose Casais, and Nina Dobkin for serving another term as board trustees.”

Washington Community School Celebrates Week of the Young Child

Washington Community School offered many activities and events for the primary grade students during the Week of the Young Child. A major activity for students was the tie-dyeing of t-shirts. The primary grades teachers decided to color the t-shirts red, white, and blue that would match our school colors. The teachers found a company in Colorado that provided safe dyes in bright and vibrant colors. Both teachers and students from Pre-K through fourth grade made t-shirts that were worn on the last day of celebrations. Principal Peter Anastas said, "It was so nice to see all the children wearing their tie-dyed shirts to school on Friday. They were so proud of their creations!" The teachers assisted students in creating designs for their t-shirts by rolling the shirts and placing rubber bands in different patterns. The students applied the dye to the shirt and then the teachers treated and rinsed the shirts for the students. On Friday, School Spirit Day, students and teachers wore their shirts and also had a dance.

Midtown Community School Week of the Young Child Celebration



Midtown Community School was very proud to be the host for the Bayonne School District's Week of the Young Child Celebration on April 10. This year's theme was "Midtown Community School: Bringing Communities Together for Children for 15 Magical Years!" Almost 500 early childhood students at MCS demonstrated their enthusiasm for their school and fellow classmates while performing in a beautiful celebration



honoring the school's 15th birthday. The performance included songs, video presentations, and words from city officials. The Honorable Terrence Malloy, Mayor of the City of Bayonne, presented the school with a proclamation. Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools, also made a presentation and commended the school for its many successes.

Midtown Community School, which opened its doors in 1992, has truly embraced the concept of community education. According to Principal Christina Mercun, "Our many distinguished awards, accolades, and successes throughout the years were truly a TEAM effort. We are successful because MCS students, staff, and teachers have joined together with parents, community leaders, school officials, and citizens of Bayonne as a family committed to excellence."

The school was brightly decorated and adorned in primary colors, with icons of children, bears, and penguins. According to Principal Mercun, "We will always be proud to be the

BEARS! This year, we adopted 36 penguins from the World Animal Foundation. Because of penguins' strong sense of community and loyalty, MCS included them in the theme." According to Patricia Dziubek, Vice Principal, "Our teachers, teacher assistants, and the entire staff are to be commended. They have worked very hard to make this program, and everything we do at MCS, a success. It is a testimony to their commitment and dedication." Chairpersons for the event were 2nd grade teachers Angela Cuttruff, Kathleen Dooley, and Sally Shovlin. The school would like to thank everyone for playing an important role in "*Bringing Communities Together for Children at Midtown Community School for 15 Magical Years!*"

BHS Choirs



Joan Rosen, Director of Music & Art, announced that members of the Bayonne High School Choirs performed at Carnegie Hall in Stern Hall, on April 15, 2008, with the National Festival Chorus under the direction of Jeffrey Redding. The students participated in a large ensemble along with other high school vocalists from various locations in the United States. Each high school had to submit an audition tape to be accepted for this auspicious event.

Lydia Megale is Vocal Music Director and Vasyl Hrechynsky is Assistant Vocal Music Director.



Henry E. Harris Embraces B.E.A.R. Day



B.E.A.R. Day, Be Excited About Reading, was the theme for April 11, 2008, the first of many B.E.A.R. days at Henry E. Harris School. Students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade participated. Students brought to school a stuffed bear or some other favorite stuffed toy. The district-wide activities centered around reading, and varied from school to school; but no matter what each school did, it was an activity embraced by ALL.

Some activities included upper grade students reading to lower grade students, upper grade students wrote bear stories to read to the lower grades, community read-aloud (guest visitors read to various classes), some teachers brought in their favorite book from their childhood and read it to their class, and some art teachers made banners for B.E.A.R. Day.

Horace Mann School Student Earth Day Calendar Contest Winner

Angie Marin, a fifth grade student at Horace Mann School, won first place in the Hudson County Improvement Authority's 3rd Annual Earth Day Calendar Contest. Angie is a very talented art student who has exhibited her work at the Bayonne Public School Library Art Exhibit and won awards in the Fire Prevention poster and American Legion coloring contests. Under the guidance of their art teacher, Catherine Nicaretta-Duffy, Angie and a group of other fifth graders spent their lunch time working on their contest entries.

The theme for this year's HCIA calendar contest was "No Child Left Inside" and fostered the idea of unplugging kids from their indoor technology and moving them outside to the many parks, walkways, bicycle paths, rivers and streams found in Hudson County. Since Earth Day is a celebration of our environment and nature, the HCIA hoped to foster the idea of being outside and helping the environment.

First place winners will have their artwork featured in the HCIA's 2008-2009 calendar and receive a \$100.00 American Express Gift Card. An award ceremony was held on April 19, 2008 at the HCIA's Earth Day Fair during which Angie received her award.

Reading is Fun at Mary J. Donohoe School

Reading is fun! This year, Mary J. Donohoe School kicked off its Reading Café Program which is a district-wide program that was implemented in the Bayonne schools in 2004. Under the advisory of Danielle Killmer, the program is a way to encourage early readers and motivate them to be successful in literacy. Eighteen students in kindergarten through second grade were nominated by their teachers to participate in this program. Nine students from fifth through eighth grades volunteer their time to participate in this activity.

Each Wednesday, the students are paired in a one-on-one or two-on-one situation. At the beginning of each reading session, all students have a few moments to relax, browse books, and enjoy an after-school snack. After they are paired, the younger students have the opportunity to read a level appropriate book to their older reading partner. This builds a student's confidence, as they are reading at their comfort level. After the story, the older students check their reading partner's comprehension and understanding of the story by asking questions, facilitating discussions, and completing a small project that is grade-level appropriate. Kindergarten students will draw a picture while first and second graders write one to two sentences about the stories they have read. The younger students listen to their partner read a story of their choice. Students engage in literacy activities and websites on the computer. They play games such as reading bingo and sight-word flash cards, draw pictures, and extend their story understanding to what they think will happen next.

As you walk through the library during Reading Café, you are able to see much more than students scattered on the floor. These are students enjoying reading and strengthening their literacy skills with older readers guiding them. It is an empowering experience for all students who participate.

The goal of the Reading Café is to give students the opportunity to read and be read to by experienced readers. A safe and comfortable reading environment is provided and as a result, student confidence increases as they are celebrated as readers

Woodrow Wilson School "Go for the Stars!"

On April 22, 2008, Woodrow Wilson School PTO hosted a multimedia space program presentation. Gary T. Pozzato, an Aerospace Educator, who has worked with NASA for 25 years on projects including the Space Shuttle Orbiter, the International Space Station, and the NASA Space Suit, came to Woodrow Wilson School with ROBO, the Friendly Robot who talked, moved, and interacted with the audience.

There were three age-appropriate sessions, Pre-K to 2, 3 to 5, and 6 to 8. Students enjoyed a hands-on learning experience and some were chosen in each program to wear astronaut flight suits and assist in the demonstrations. Along with the use of computer-aided technology and numerous props, this presentation created a fun learning experience.

BHS Students Selected to Attend New Jersey Scholars Program



Congratulating the Lawrenceville Scholars are Richard Baccarella, BHS Principal; and Mary Moloney, Director of Student Personnel Services. Student Scholars are (left to right): Anh Hoang and Marina Dimitry.

Richard Baccarella, Bayonne High School Principal, is proud to announce that Marina Dimitry and Anh Hoang have been accepted to study at the New Jersey Scholars Program at Lawrenceville. This is a five week residential program of studies held at Rider College. It is an opportunity for scholars to live together, learn together, and laugh

together. The theme for this year's program is *India, Pakistan and Bangladesh: One History, Three Countries, Shared Future*. The scholars will do an in depth exploration of the history and politics, literature, art and music, and religion of these three key South Asian countries. Because there are specific course outlines, but no grades, participants can focus solely on acquiring new knowledge and ideas and then furthering these ideas through discussion, field trips and projects.

“Only thirty-nine students in the entire state of New Jersey are chosen for this experience. We are very proud that two Bayonne High School students were selected,” stated Mary F. Moloney, Director of Student Personnel Services.

Timothy Maset and Deirdre Hurley, Junior Honors Social Studies and English teachers, chaired the selection committee at BHS. Applications are submitted, and semifinalists are then interviewed at the state level. Both students are members of the honors program at BHS.

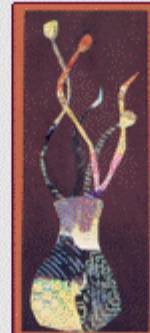


Quratlan Fikher, BHS
Teacher: May Anne Christiana

Zoe McMahon Wilson
Teacher: Dara Fischer



Cindy Kaye, Washington
Teacher: Steve Yurchak



Omar Mansour, Donohoe
Teacher: Joann Flansburg



Aurora Esteva, BHS
Teacher: Terri Graham



Jamel Hart, BHS
Teacher: Thomas Hart



Jordan Skopjak, Mann
Teacher: Catherine Nicastro-Duffy

