

Sunnyside Elementary Students Create Mural

By Kassie Petermann

A whimsical, colorful mural that each Sunnyside Elementary student had a hand in creating earlier this year is now a permanent piece of art at the school.

Every school year, the PTA supports an artist in residency experience for Sunnyside students. Artist Shane Anderson led this year's project. Funds totaled \$6,500, which included a large initial contribution from the PTA and kick-starter funds from parents, the community and teachers.

"It was amazing the response we got," said Amy Wagner-Wieland, Sunnyside's PTA vice president and fundraising chair. "People were so excited about it."

Before beginning the mural, Anderson met with students and asked what Sunnyside means to them. He taught students age appropriate color theory, and kids picked one or two shapes and the color they wanted to use.

"I don't tell them necessarily what color to paint or what to do with highlighting or shading," Anderson said. "I leave it up to them, so they could be a little more creative. I'm a firm believer in kids expressing themselves creatively."

"The kids were so focused," he added. "They wanted to do this project so much."

The mural was created the last week in January. The school's art room was transformed into a studio, where students painted 10 canvasses with acrylic paint.

Kindergartners who will be first-graders next year were bused up to Sunnyside from Pike Lake Education Center to participate in the process. About 600 students in all helped create the piece



of art. Kindergartners also got a tour of the school and were paired up with fourth-graders during the project.

The mural was unveiled for teachers on Feb. 16, and the unveiling for students took place Feb. 17.

'Wonderful experience'

"The students looked up to Shane," said art teacher Jodi Vanderbilt. "I feel like they made a connection with him as an artist that was really special. . . . It was a wonderful experience. I consider it in all my (18) years of teaching one of the

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Grandview Students Share Westonka's Past Using Technology of Today

By Lorrie Ham

Sixth-graders in Jessica Rashleger's classes at Grandview Middle School are making history—or are at least sharing it with others. Thanks to a unique collaboration between the school and the Westonka History Museum, museum visitors now have access to years of history right at their fingertips.

When Rashleger's classes visited the Westonka History Museum last year, she knew the experience could open doors for her students. "I felt it was a great experience for our students who study Minnesota history, but knew I could do more with it," said Rashleger.

During a teacher technology training last summer, Rashleger and Grandview Principal Christy Zachow came up with an idea to collaborate with the museum on an interactive project. The idea was to share



Dr. Pam Myers and Jeanne Brustad of the Westonka Historical Society thank Grandview Middle School sixth-graders for the collaboration with the Westonka History Museum

student research projects with museum visitors through the use of QR codes—scannable codes, consisting of an array of black and white squares, that provide easy access to information through smartphones.

"I feel so fortunate that the Westonka History Museum is working with Grandview on this project," said Rashleger. "The students are excited to not only have their work on display in the museum but also to be a part of sharing Westonka history with others."

Rashleger put together a student research assignment centered on a Westonka History Museum trip and then met with Westonka Historical

Society president Dr. Pam Myers and board member Jeanne Brustad to work out

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Champlin-Brooklyn Park Academy Kids Klub Pairs Teens With Elementary Students for Friendship, Fun



Anoka-Hennepin School District

For the past 20 years, the Kids Klub program has been helping elementary students at Champlin-Brooklyn Park Academy for Math and Environmental Science (CBPA) gain self-esteem, improve behavior, and form relationships with positive role models by pairing them with Champlin Park High School (CPHS) students who act as friends and mentors.

The club was originally founded by Kathy Suski, a Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) teacher at CPHS, who retired at the end of the last school year, and Mary Nettleton, a social worker at CBPA.

“You watch these little kids look at a teenager and it’s like they’re gods,” Suski said. “They just shine when they see this person coming in and being part of their world, even if it’s just once a week.”

Modeled after Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the teens visit their little friends once a week throughout the school year, where they spend up to 45 minutes socializing, playing games, or doing other activities. At the end of

the year, they all spend the day together at the zoo, looking at the animals and going on rides.

The teens are students in the CPHS FCCLA classes Suski once taught who are offered the chance to participate in the program at the beginning of the year. The majority of the 30 to 35 students in the class each year choose to volunteer, she said.

“A lot of the kids are interested in working with people, so this is a wonderful opportunity for them to get involved and mentor someone that needs a little extra help,” she said.

And while teachers have noticed positive changes in the elementary school students over the years, such as improved behavior and increased self-esteem, the high school students actually end up benefitting just as much from the relationship, Suski said.

“The teens blossom as much as the little kids. They don’t think they will, but they do,” she said. “They get really attached. It’s wonderful to see these kids interact with these younger students.”

Moving forward, Nettleton will spearhead the program, along with a to-be-determined teacher. They will spend two days each year

matching teens to children, using forms the teens have filled out as well as their personal knowledge of the students. When possible they will try to match students with similar circumstances, such as those from military families or with divorced parents, Nettleton said.

“We spend quite a bit of time really trying to match them,” she said. “We usually feel like we do pretty well. We take it pretty seriously.”

Nettleton remembers one child last year who would sit under his desk and not talk to anyone. His teen Kids Klub mentor just sat with him, week after week, humming or just sitting quietly. After several weeks the boy started talking to her and really came out of his shell.

“They ended up being a great match,” she said.

Some teens, especially those that attend a local college after graduation, even continue the friendship beyond the school year after getting permission from their student’s parents. The high school students are really moved when they see the difference they can make with these kids, Suski said.

“Some of these little kids have tougher circumstances, and when the teens can see a

breakthrough with them, when they finally earn their trust, they see what a difference they can make all by themselves in someone’s life,” she said. “My students say it’s one of the best things they’ve done. They just feel such fulfillment.”

Nettleton said Suski has shown a level of dedication to the program that will be hard to duplicate, but she’s hopeful someone will step into the role with her.

“It’s definitely a time commitment,” she said. “But it’s a really special deal. It’s worth every bit of the commitment just to see that smile on their faces.”

Suski said she is hopeful for the program moving forward without her.

“It really is worth all the effort,” she said. “We’ve seen so many wonderful things happen for these kids over the years. The whole project holds a special place in our hearts.”

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freighters bypass the St. Mary's rapids. Across the river is Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, a city of 75,000.

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LSSU has operated its Aquatic Research Laboratory on the St. Mary's River for more than 30 years. For many of those years, it

has been involved in the establishment and maintenance of an Atlantic salmon fishery that attracts anglers from throughout North America to our region every year. Students perform a variety of research on fish populations, fish health and Great Lakes ecosystems health through the lab every year.

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- ▶ **\$75.00 cash prizes from *Teaching Today™ MN* will be awarded to each of the six Honorable Mentions.**

This contest is open to all high school students in Minnesota. Essay entries are to be between 500 and 600 words in length. A Word document or PDF is preferred. Power point entries must be accompanied by a 175–225 word description to run in the print copies of *Teaching Today™ MN*. Links to power point entries will be posted on the *Teaching Today™ MN* website and blog site.

We will be featuring the six winners in our Holiday Issue which will be released in mid-December. The six honorable mentions will be presented in the following three issues.

This contest begins on October 5th and the deadline for submissions is December 4th at 6:00 p.m.

**Whatever your dream career is Teaching Today MN wants to read about it!
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Please send entries to:

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Teachers ‘Get Their Game On’— at Fourth Annual Westonka Tech Academy

By Becca Neuger
Westonka Public Schools

Around 100 educators spent the first part of their summer vacation in the education technology game at the 2015 Westonka Tech Academy. Held June 9 and 10 at Mound Westonka High School, the fourth annual academy challenged teachers and staff to strengthen their technology skills with the theme “Get Your Game On.”

WTA is organized each year by the Westonka Technology Integration Learning Team (TILT). This year’s academy offered more hands-on technology courses than ever before and, for the first time, was open to educators from outside the district.

The 55 course offerings catered to all ability levels. Attendees explored flipped classrooms in “Handing the Playbook Over to the Students” and learned the ins and outs of a learning management system in “Scrimmaging for Schoology.” New course topics included personalization at both the elementary and secondary levels, coding, mobile app creation, makerspaces, Socratic seminars and digital writing.

“It seems everyone, no matter the content area or comfort level with tech-

nology, found something to help them ‘get their game on’ in the fall,” said Westonka Technology Integrationist Kristin Wallace.

Jen Hegna, director of information and learning technology for Byron Public Schools, was this year’s keynote speaker. Hegna has 18 years of experience in education technology and is a proven leader in 1:1 mobile device integration, technology training for educators and the design of learning spaces.

“Hegna spoke about the importance of students and staff having a growth mindset: embracing change and being open to failure as a means of learning,” Wallace said. “I saw that constantly from the staff throughout the two days.”

A sports costume competition, a selfie contest and a prize drawing were among the highlights of WTA 2015.

More about Westonka TILT

TILT is comprised of 18 teachers representing each school in the Westonka District. Its main goal is to support the district’s Edge21 Technology Plan by integrating technology programs that per-



Team members include Wallace, Sue Simonson, Pam Tremblay, Sarah Morinville and Anitra Trapp from MWHS; Brenda Hoogeveen, Megan Lhotka, Jessica Lunski and Julie Thomas from Grandview Middle School; Michelle Hempel, Melissa Abernethy and Mindy Barrett from Hilltop Primary School; Jennifer Naslund, Dan O’Brien, Scott Lhotka, Aaron Thorpe and Sarah Wright from Shirley Hills Primary School; and Sarah Grimm from Westonka preschool and early childhood education.

sonalize learning and by embedding 21st century skills into the Westonka curriculum.

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Grandview Students Share Westonka’s Past Using Technology of Today

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a great field trip experience. Students went on a scavenger hunt, created by Brustad and Myers, covering all rooms of the museum. Rashleger said the activity gave students “a fun and interesting way to explore the museum.” At the end of the trip, the students each picked one area of the museum

to research further.

Back in the classroom, students narrowed the focus of their research, discussed how and where to research their chosen topics and brainstormed presentation formats. The students worked on their projects in class for a few days and then did

work outside of class—gathering resources, conducting community interviews and creating Google slideshows or posters with their results.

“We’re so proud of the sixth-graders who visited the Westonka History Museum and then developed history research papers based on what they have learned there about our community’s past,” said Myers.

After the projects were completed, Westonka Technology Integrationist Kristin Wallace helped the students to create QR codes that linked to their projects. Students then presented their research projects to the class and used QR code scanners to view each other’s projects.

Rashleger chose the top projects to be placed in the museum on subjects like Kevin Sorbo, Tonka Toys, Lake Minnetonka hotels, Patty Andrews, Laverne Andrews, Maxene Andrews, Burial Mounds, Early Westonka Schools and more. Students whose projects were selected for the museum include Lydia Emery, Jenna Courneya, Kylie Anderson, Alyssa Bourdon, Tavia Snyder, Logan Leonard, Ella Clobes, Ava Kittelson, Maya Jable, Harry Moen, Brooke Pioske, Mackenzie Wallace and Avery Finck. Rashleger presented the QR codes to the museum, where the codes will

give visitors the chance to enjoy a more in-depth look at some of the subject areas.

“I feel so fortunate that the Westonka History Museum is working with Grandview on this project,” said Rashleger. “The students are excited to not only have their work on display in the museum but also to be a part of sharing Westonka history with others.”

“The Westonka Historical Society enjoys our relationship with the sixth-grade classes at Grandview, highlighting the history of our community during their study of Minnesota history,” said Brustad. “The individual projects completed by the students will add a unique deeper look into several parts of our history. What an incredible collaboration of the local school district with the museum and the use of this new technology to share our history.”

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Minnesota Awards Program Recognizes the Next Generation of Women in Technology

Encourage High School Girls to Apply by Oct. 26

Aspirations for Women in Computing award winner, Erin Mitchell, has been busy with college and work since winning the award in 2013 as a junior in high school. This past summer she interned at UTC Aerospace where she learned about the industry environment and what it's like to work with a team on real-world, customer facing projects all while expanding her community of networks. Mitchell says winning the award "secured her decision to choose engineering as a career path". Before winning the award, Mitchell was contemplating a future in management with a focus in engineering or finance but when the door opened as an award recipient, and with support from the NCWIT community; she realized she could actually be an engineer. Now she's attending Iowa State University as an Industrial Engineering major and is learning how to "think like an engineer".

Erin is one of many tech stars that have been recognized through the Minnesota Aspirations in Computing Awards program over the last three years. And, there continues to

be a strong need to find and encourage the next generation of women tech enthusiasts. While women today comprise more than half of the U.S. professional workforce, they play only a small role in inventing the technology of tomorrow.

Advance IT Minnesota is dedicated to helping bridge the gender and talent gap. Their collaboration strategy starts with identifying, developing and recognizing female high school students who are beginning to demonstrate their technology interests, achievements and aspirations. The organization — which engages employers, educators, technology professionals and learners to develop a more robust IT workforce in Minnesota — is partnering with a growing number of companies to offer and showcase the fourth annual Minnesota Aspirations for Women in Computing Awards.

Interim Executive Director, Russell Fraenkel says 2016 will continue to build on the past three years of success in finding and supporting Minnesota's best female high school tech stars. "Our goal with the awards

program is to continue inspiring significantly more young women to get involved with technology," Fraenkel said. He also stresses that high school is the ideal time to encourage, recruit and support young women interested in technology. "Our workforce needs their creativity and innovation, and these women have a phenomenal opportunity to be the next generation of leaders and innovators in a rapidly growing field."

Last year, the Minnesota awards program honored 22 winners and runners-up across the state for their computing-related achievements and interests, a 46% increase in honorees from the previous year. Additionally, four students were recognized nationally.

Awards will be made based on the interests, accomplishments and community involvement of young women in computing and technology, as well as for their aspirations in computing and technology-related fields. Prizes for the award winners include scholarships, tech devices, cash prizes, and paid internships at Minnesota technology firms.

Students can submit applications for the award online at advanceitmn.org/aspirations-in-computing-awards through Oct. 26, 2015. Winners will be chosen in December 2015 and honored by sponsor partners at an April 2016 awards ceremony in Vadnais Heights, MN. All Minnesota applicants will automatically be entered into the national awards program. National winners will be honored at the 2016 Bank of America Technology Stars of the Future Showcase in March 2016.

Do you know a young woman in high school with big tech dreams? Encourage her to apply and don't let what Mitchell refers to as "imposter syndrome" strike; feeling like you don't belong or minimizing your accomplishments. Support that young student and help her to realize that what she's done thus far is pretty amazing and is a result of her hard work and passion; this is her opportunity to shine.

Know any high school girls who are
creative/coders,
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gamers, or
tech wizards?

Encourage them to apply for the 4th annual Minnesota Aspirations for Women in Computing Awards

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9-12th grade girls with computer-related achievements and interests

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Prizes include scholarships, tech devices, cash rewards, mentorship/job shadowing opportunities and more!

Questions? Email or follow us on Twitter!



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Welding team wins first place at MN Skills USA



Matt Brown,
Social Media Editor, *The Pony Express*
Stillwater High School

Everyone has a different set of skills and talents, such as sports, music or academics. At Stillwater Area High School, there are students who excel at construction and welding. On Friday, April 10, a group of welders bused over to Ridgewater College in Willmar, Minnesota to compete in a competition known as

Minnesota Skills USA.

Skills USA has helped many young adults along the paths of their careers, and has served more than 10.5 million members since its founding in 1965.

Todd Kapsner teaches in the Industrial Technology department and was also the supervisor of the welders that attended the competition.

“Minnesota Skills USA is a national organization that looks at developing skills in

multiple technical areas by giving students the chance to demonstrate those skills,” explained Kapsner.

Teacher Laurie McKenzie is the assisting supervisor with Kapsner and overlooked the competition with him. She explained MN Skills USA further as, “... it gives students working in the trades, which could be nursing, construction or an electrician, an opportunity to work with the knowledge they’ve been given.”

Kapsner offered up this opportunity to students in his classes: to compete against college-level metal workers to create a grill in under six hours. Out of all the students in his class, three of them decided to go: sophomores Garrett Stotts, Jake Lueders and Nick Sonnek.

“[On the day of the competition] we got here around five a.m. and bussed to Willmar and arrived at around 7:30 a.m.,” said Lueders.

Skills USA is organized in different levels known as “chapters”. It has a state chapter and a local chapter, which is what we have here at the high school. The competition was placed at the state level as it included our team and a half dozen others from in-state colleges, such as Superior.

Kapsner explained, “The objective of this competition was to demonstrate their welding

skills. It’s a Metals class that they are in, and one of the things they learn in there is welding and the Skills USA looks at different types of welding processes, and using those different processes they have to incorporate them into the project, and then they get scored on how well they do with the different techniques that they use.”

The team had to pull their knowledge together to construct a perfectly functioning grill in under six hours, which was hard for the team to accomplish as they hadn’t been the most prepared.

“We should have practiced it a lot more, and figured out what we were going to do ahead of time instead of pulling it together last minute,” said Lueders.

However, the team worked hard together and managed to finish the grill just barely under the six hour limit. Luckily, the results turned out in their favor as they got first place.

“Pretty good for high schoolers,” said Lueders.

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From classroom to shop and back to classroom:

Experiences solidify female machinist’s passion for manufacturing



Manufacturing skills are the backbone to many careers. From machinists and engineers to computer technicians and educators, the possibilities are plentiful.

Ridgewater College’s Machine Tool Technology Instructor Tammy Jablonski brings varied experiences to the Hutchinson classroom as she shares her industry passion with budding machinists.

Q: Describe your manufacturing career path.

A: After high school, I enrolled in a Discover program at Ridgewater – then Willmar

Area Vocational Technical Institute. When we toured each program, my plan was to be a nurse, but when we entered the machine shop, I was so intrigued that I switched plans immediately.

I enrolled in Machine Tool Trades at Hutchinson Vo-Tech (now Ridgewater College) in 1994 and graduated in 1997 as a Computerized Numerical Control technician.

There was a push then for women to enter nontraditional careers. Some funding from the Jobs Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) helped buy tools and books for the seven program women.

Upon graduation, I worked at Uni-Hydro in Cosmos, Lifecore Biomedical in the Twin Cities in their inspection department, and then back to running CNCs at Continental Engineering and Manufacturing in Chaska.

During the housing boom of the early 2000s, I worked in construction with my sister. After four years, I missed shop work. I moved back to my hometown of Atwater and worked at Towmaster Trailers in Litchfield in their fabrication shop. Soon I was department lead and running plasma and laser tables and CNC brake presses and saws.

After a few years, I was ready to return to my favorite CNCs, but Towmaster didn’t have vertical machining centers then. So I became

a CNC programmer/machinist at Cokato’s Forward Technology before coming full circle to teach Machine Tool in the same shop I graduated from!

Q: What role models influenced you?

A: My dad. He has always worked in manufacturing and provided well for our family. I wanted to be like him since I was little!

Q: Why don’t you think more women pursue manufacturing careers?

A: Many girls are not exposed to manufacturing environments in their formative years and may not consider it as a career.

Q: What should women understand about manufacturing that might make them more willing to enter the field?

A: It pays well and many positions don’t require the “upper body strength of a man” to do the job. Also, the environment has improved and is safer and much cleaner.

Q: What are top reasons women (and men) should enter manufacturing?

1. Pay – excellent
2. Benefits – great
3. Job openings – many



4. A need for nontraditional and minority employees
5. Fast-paced work
6. Mentally challenging
7. Detail-oriented fulfillment

Q: Name some career options.

A: CNC machinists, programmers, manual machinists, design, fabrication, welding, etc.

Q: What kinds of employers hire women and what strengths do women possess?

A: All employers — big, small, rural, and metro. There is great need for qualified machinists. It’s really about paying attention to details and having a mind for numbers – for men and women. Manufacturing needs both genders.



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Technical Education at Austin High School



Ryan Mayers
Technology Integration Specialist
Austin Public Schools ISD 492

When students in Terry Carlson's Woodworking I class complete their final project, they will have learned about a lot more than how to build a cabinet. "The project the students have in the first course teaches them how to use all the equipment and about a number of different joinery tech-

niques," says Carlson, now in his 18th year in Austin. "We've designed it so that students learn the basics while they're actually creating something."

The concept of performance based learning is very similar to project based learning, where students learn about a subject by creating a final product that demonstrates what they've learned. For Carlson's woodworking students, the product is less important than

the process. "We want them to have a good final product, yes, but we're really focused on how well they learn to use the equipment and their understanding of the various techniques they're using."

As students progress through the remaining courses in the sequence, they are given more freedom to create what they would like. "Our second year students generally start with a class project, so I can make sure they remember what they learned in the first year. Then, in the rest of the time, they get to choose what they want to make. We're really looking at problem solving and critical thinking skills."

For Carlson, the importance of Technical Education, which encompasses more than just woodworking, is in its connection to everyday life. "Whether you go into a technical field or not, the skills you learn here are incredibly important. From critical thinking and planning to problem solving and work ethic, all the things we focus on here will students be successful after the graduate."

Many of the students that have worked through the Technical Education department have gone on to work in similar fields. "We have kids that have gone on to work with everything from wind energy to auto repair.

There are a lot of opportunities in technical skills right now, and our goal is to prepare students so they can pursue those if they choose to."

While the number of Technical Education programs available at the High School level has steadily declined, Austin's program has remained vibrant. Students have the opportunity to do everything from woodworking and construction to working on small engines and graphics design, all of which share a similar focus on developing students' critical thinking skills. "It's important regardless of whether you go into these fields or not," says Carlson. "If you've worked to develop solutions to problems here, then you should be able to transfer those skills to other areas in your life. It's preparation for life after high school, and really that's our goal."

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- Nuclear Power Reactor Operators
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- Robotics Technicians
- Sawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Wood
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- Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
- Tool and Die Makers
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Please note: This represents a broad and not conclusive list of careers within the world of manufacturing.



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FIRE Academy Strengthens Parents' Connection to District 191 Schools



Ruth Dunn, Communications Director
Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District

Eighty-nine parents who recently completed the first parent academy in Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District 191 participated in a graduation ceremony at Diamondhead Education Center on May 18.

The academy, named FIRE (Family Involvement for a Rich Education), included parents from Sky Oaks Elementary, Nicollet

Junior High and Burnsville High School.

Moms and dads, originally from Somalia and Spanish-speaking countries, met once a week for eight weeks to learn about the American educational system and how they can support their children's learning at school and home. The goal is to form a stronger partnership of parents and school staff that will benefit students and their academic success.

"Filled with new knowledge and tools,

your participation in the FIRE Academy conveys strong convictions about the hopes and dreams you have for your children's education and future," Superintendent Joe Gothard told parents at the ceremony. "Our goal is to reduce historical gaps in achievement. When we look at student's race, socioeconomic level or English language proficiency, we have one strong message — all students can learn and succeed, and it is our collective responsibility to guide our children towards making the most of their educational opportunities."

FIRE Academy sessions were led by four of the district's bilingual cultural liaisons who serve as vital links between families and schools. The academy included topics such as navigating the school system, the importance of grade point averages, how to plan for college, advocating for your child, and more.

At the graduation ceremony, parents shared about their deep trust for schools, literally seeing them as a "second home," how they understand so much more about school and know how they can help prepare their children for college. Another parent emphasized the importance of speaking with her children's teachers and counselors and using SchoolView, the district's parent portal.

"I have personally heard from numerous parents about just how much the program has



empowered them and I see many benefits for our students coming out of this," said Dr. Stacie Stanley, the district's director of equity. "It's exciting to see these new parent leaders with their increased confidence and understanding."

She said that next year more parents will be involved in FIRE at Sky Oaks Elementary, Nicollet Junior High and Burnsville High School, and the parent academy will expand to Gideon Pond, Hidden Valley and Marion W. Savage elementary schools.

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Sunnyside Elementary Students Create Mural

Continued from Page 1



things I'm most proud of.

"It's rare to do a special project like this that includes everybody," she said. "That to me was incredible. Even though Shane has a few touches, this is all their mark. It's Sunnyside — every kid paints differently, and it's their mark."

Wagner-Wieland's two sons attend Sunnyside Elementary. The artist in residency program gives students a sense of pride and ownership, she said.

Principal Paul Good, who said he has a love for fine arts and visual arts, supported the mural project 100 percent.

"It's a wonderful way to celebrate this lovely community. ... It just shows such a wonderful positiveness that can happen across all these dif-

ferent entities to help support a child's education."

Anderson expressed his thanks to Sunnyside staff, Principal Good and the PTA. "They went above and beyond what I could expect from any school," he said.

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sunnyside.moundviewschools.net/pages/SunnysideES
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Special education students meet new four-legged friend

Therapy dog visit adds hands-on activity to Extended School Year

Edina Communications

Special Education students in the Edina High School (EHS) Extended School Year (ESY) program met a new four-legged friend when Getty, a therapy dog, visited their classroom Wednesday.

Getty and her owner, Wendy Hitch, arrived at EHS to the eager welcome of students who had spent the beginning of the week preparing for Getty's arrival by learning about working dogs. From helping police solve crimes, to service dogs, to therapy dogs, the students researched the many ways in which dogs help their human counterparts. The students also looked up healthy dog treat recipes to make for Getty, much to her enjoyment.

Stephanie Briggs, an EHS special education teacher, was looking for a hands-on activity to enhance what her students were learning during ESY. "[The students] had an opportunity to engage in different academic and physical activities while interacting with Getty," she said.

Getty is a four-year-old golden retriever. Her owner, Wendy Hitch, is a founding member North Star Therapy

Animals, a non-profit organization that provides the healing power of therapy dogs to the metro area. The organization is made up of more than 125 teams (owners and dogs) of volunteers.

When she first arrived on Wednesday, Hitch introduced Getty to the students and answered questions they had prepared. Students asked if Getty is a boy or a girl, and what about her favorite toy - her hard, green ball. Getty, whose full name is GoldenGirl Getty, was born in Duluth, Minn., Hitch told them. Born in a litter of five female golden retrievers, Getty is named after Estelle Getty, one of the stars of the popular television sitcom, *The Golden Girls*.

Extended School Year is a three-week-long program available to qualified special education students at all grade levels that provides extra support during the summer. "ESY at the high school supports students with disabilities during the summer months to maintain and build functional academic, social, communication, vocational/community and daily living skills," said Briggs. "Students participate in hands-on activities to practice and retain the skills acquired during the school year."

During the three weeks, in addition to daily mathematics, literacy and art activities, students were also visited by a police officer to talk about that occupation and safety in the community, and a firefighter who showed off his fire truck and talked about fire safety in the home.

"[ESY] has been a collaborative effort among administrators, educators, specialists, paraprofessionals, parents and community members to meet the unique learning needs of our students," said Briggs. "The program has positively impacted student growth in various skill areas and assisted students in transitioning back to the regular school year in a few short weeks."



edinaschools.org
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Customer Service with a Smile at Iggy's Coffee Shop

Tami DeLand

St. Cloud Area School District

On any given morning at Apollo High School during the school year, you will find Mary Schmitz, a Special Education paraprofessional, and her team of student workers serving coffee and warm cookies at Iggy's Coffee Shop.

"Hi, how are you doing today?" you will be asked, usually by your first name. "How can I help you?"

Customer service is a primary skill that Schmitz instills in all her students, but certainly not the only one.

"What do you need to do next?" she reminds a student who handled money at the cash register. "Wash your hands, right?"

"Iggy's is a student-operated small business," she explains, "where students work for class credit while learning real-life work skills."

Student workers also learn the process of using a time clock, handwashing, stock-

ing, ordering, cash register operation, record keeping, cleaning, deliveries, phone etiquette and teamwork.

The coffee shop opened in 2000 as a hands-on job site for DCD students and currently involves 75 student workers. Schmitz began working at Iggy's in 2004.

"Many of our student workers have physical, cultural, mental, emotional or behavioral challenges that they deal with each day," says Schmitz. "Iggy's helps

"Many of our student workers have physical, cultural, mental, emotional or behavioral challenges that they deal with each day," says Schmitz. "Iggy's helps alleviate these chal-

lenges by allowing the entire school population opportunities to treat each other kindly and patiently."

students work in Iggy's as teacher assistants, and a few others volunteer their open time to help just because they want to be productive."

Dylan Larson is an 11th grader at Apollo who works outside of school as

well as at FDC.

"I like to work by myself," he admits. So learning patience and tolerance at Iggy's is sometimes a challenge for him, Schmitz explains.

Luke Hummelsund, also in 11th grade, is a "worker bee."

"My favorite part [at Iggy's,]" he says, "is working with customers."

His greatest challenge, Schmitz says, is remembering the steps of the job every day.

Teachers, students and DAO staff are frequent-and loyal-Iggy's customers. Last school year alone, Iggy's Coffee Shop served 51,887 people.

Schmitz says that all profits from Iggy's remain entirely at Apollo High School and have helped to fund student rewards, breakfast and lunch for students in need, Random Acts of Kindness, activity fees for Special Education students and even scholarships.

It is clear to see with your first cup of coffee that Mary Schmitz and her entire team of student workers live the district mission every day when they come to work and create a safe and caring climate by asking, "Hi, how are you doing today?"



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The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), conducts and supports research in the normal and disordered processes of hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech, and language.

For resources, research, news and more check out this link:

Website: www.nidcd.nih.gov/Pages/default.aspx

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The Library of Congress has released a free mobile application, the Braille and Audio Reading Download app or BARD, through Apple's App store that allows users who are blind to download 50,000 books, magazines and other materials to their digital devices in braille or audio formats.

Website: nlsbard.loc.gov/NLS/instructions.html

Center on Technology and Disability (CTD)

The Center on Technology and Disability (CTD) is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The Center is designed to increase the capacity of families and providers to advocate for, acquire, and implement effective assistive and instructional technology (AT/IT) practices, devices, and services.

Website: www.ctdinstitute.org/

Sports-for-All Clinic Grant

VolunTEEN Nation is a group of teenagers and young adults engaged in volunteering and community service nationwide. Created and developed by youth, the Sports-for-All Clinic Grant can provide funding, support, and guidance to any event that aims to provide youth-led sports programs for youth on the autism spectrum.

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round.

Website: volunteennation.org/blog/categories/latest-news/436-sports-for-all-clinic

Andover High School Student Connor Boyer Uses Math to Make Music



Anoka-Hennepin School District

Connor Boyer, a ninth grade student at Andover High School (AndHS), admits he has never been a big fan of math. But he is a big fan of music. So when math teacher Penny Carda offered a challenge to her

geometry classes that combined the two, he was the only one out of more than 100 students to take her up on it.

Carda's challenge to students was this: List all the prime numbers up to 500, and then calculate the difference between each prime number. Then assign musical notes to each difference and put them into sheet music.

Carda said she has always been intrigued by prime numbers, and it's usually a challenge for students to figure them out. She also noticed that the differences between prime numbers seem to have a pattern, and music is all about patterns, which gave her the idea to put the two together.

"I had a feeling something cool would happen, and it did," Carda said. "I wanted to hear the music, but I also wanted to see how the differences between prime numbers repeated themselves in a pattern. Connor was the only one who took me up on the challenge, and he really went above and beyond."

Connor said he accepted the challenge because he likes to write sheet music for fun in his free time, and he has found he learns math better when he approaches it from a more artistic perspective.

"I thought it would be kind of fun to try

this. The original plan was just to do prime numbers up to 500, and I decided to go up to 1,000," he said.

The hardest part was listing all the prime numbers, he said. But once he accomplished that, he started assigning notes to the differences, such as "Do" for the number one and "Re" for the number three. He then input the notes into a web application used to make sheet music.

"When I first put it in, it sounded pretty horrible, like just random notes playing," he said. "So I added some rhythms as a filler, and it got better. Still slightly odd to have just random notes playing that have no music correlation, but it was really fun."

Carda was far more enthusiastic about the result, which Boyer uploaded onto Youtube and sent to her.

"It is extraordinary," she said. "It sounds really beautiful. When he played it and I listened I thought, 'This is so cool.' I'm not musical and I wouldn't know how to apply the notes to it, but he took it and ran with it. He took it even further than I asked him to."

Beyond sounding cool, Boyer said the project definitely helped him understand prime numbers in a way he wouldn't have otherwise.

"I don't really like math. I like to incorporate math with other things to help me learn, usually by reading online or making up games to play. That's usually how I learn best," he said. "With this I noticed there's a huge pattern within the prime numbers, and I thought that was really cool. It's not something I would have really paid attention to otherwise."

The project was completely voluntary, and Carda said she was impressed that Boyer had enough intrinsic motivation to give it a try.

"He worked on it for at least a month," she said. "We keep the kids so busy, they don't have a lot of extra time outside the curriculum. And this required quite a bit of time."

Boyer said he enjoyed the project so much he's thinking of devoting even more time to it.

"I'm thinking now of maybe going up to 10,000. Who knows?" he said. "But that would be a lot more work."

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Student Contests and Awards

Get to Know Art Contest

This annual Art contest is open to US Residents ages 19 and under and runs until November 1, 2015. Get outside and observe your wild neighbors in their natural environment; make sketches, have a photo/video shoot in the best possible setting, get wild inspiration for your poetry or music.

Website: www.get-to-know.org/contest/us

Save the Frogs! Art Contest

Save the Frogs, a nonprofit organization dedicated to amphibian conservation, invites you to create cool artwork that features frogs and says SAVE THE FROGS! or savethefrogs.com (or both) somewhere on it.

Anyone can enter. Save the Frogs encourages students and teachers to get their art classes involved. Amateur and professional artists and graphic designers also may take part. The grand prize winner receives \$100.

Deadline: Entries due October 1, 2015.

Website: www.savethefrogs.com/art/index.html

National Geographic Kid's Photo Contest

The National Geographic International Photography Contest is accepting photos from kids between the ages of 6 and 14. Use photography as an excuse to explore nature! The categories are Amazing Animals, Dare to Explore, Weird but True, and Wild Vacation.

Deadline: Entries must be uploaded or post-marked by October 15, 2015.

Website: kids.nationalgeographic.com/content/kids/en_US/explore/contests/international-photography-contest-rules

eCYBERMISSION

eCYBERMISSION is a web-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) competition free for students in grades 6 through 9 where teams can compete for state, regional, and national awards while working to solve problems in their communities.

Deadline: Team registration deadline is December of 2015.

Website: www.ecybermission.com/HowTo-Compete

JFK Profile in Courage Essay Contest

The contest challenges students to identify an example of political courage on the part of a US elected official at the local, state, or national level during or since 1956, and then analyze what made the person's decision and actions a "profile in courage."

Deadline: Essays are accepted beginning September 1, 2015 and entries must be received online or postmarked by January 5, 2016.

Website: www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest.aspx

Website: recycle-bowl.org

Apply for a Grant



CHS Foundation Mini-grants

The CHS Foundation is committed to investing in the future of rural America, agriculture, and cooperative business through education and leadership development. The CHS Foundation grants up to \$1,000 to innovative academic and leadership programs that strengthen student learning and enhance professional development.

Deadline: Applications accepted year-round.

Website: www.chsinc.com/stewardship/leadership-development#minigrants

School Garden Grant Program

The School Garden Grant Program is a collaboration between the Whole Kids Foundation and FoodCorps. A school garden is a vital educational tool because every seed planted sprouts a new opportunity for youth to cultivate healthful eating habits.

Grants of \$2,000 are awarded.

Deadline: Applications are due Oct. 31, 2015.

Website: wholekidsfoundation.org/garden-grants.php

Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program

Projects must focus on appreciation for nature through the use of and teaching about native plants. The choice of plants must be appropriate to the local ecoregion and site conditions (soil, water, sunlight). Eligible applicants must have a site for the project and

involve students in all phases of development, including project planning.

Deadline: Applications due Oct. 15, annually.

Website: www.wildones.org/seeds-for-education

Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership Grants

Grants may fund support of teacher training, curriculum development, and community outreach efforts. The program has generally funded projects such as lecture series about Japanese culture and society, and teacher workshops on how to teach Japanese culture and society.

Grants up to \$5,000 are awarded.

Deadline: Grant applications are accepted year-round.

Website: www.cgp.org/grassroots-exchange-and-education/education-grants

Air Force Junior ROTC Grants

Funds may be used for any aerospace education related activity from purchasing textbooks or videotapes, to going on a field trip to an aerospace museum, Air Force base, or other aerospace facility.

Grants up to \$250 are awarded.

Deadline: Applications are due February 10 and October 10, annually.

Website: www.afa.org/AFA/InformationFor/Teachers/K12Grants/AirForceJunior-ROTCGrant

Environmental Grants

Waste Management, Inc. supports environmental and science education programs, such as science fairs and Earth Day projects targeting middle and high school students. There is also interest in proposals to preserve and enhance natural resources.

Deadline: Applications accepted year-round.

Website: www.wm.com/about/community/charitable-giving.jsp

Journalism Fund

The mission of the Scripps Howard Foundation is to advance a free press through support of excellence in journalism, quality journalism education, and professional development.

Deadline: Requests are due April 15 and October 15, annually.

Website: foundation.scripps.com/programs/grantguidelines.html

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www.wildmountain.com



The Science of Snow Tubing, located at Wild Chutes in scenic Taylors Falls, offers a fun, easy and educational field trip that meets the MN Standards of education for grades 5th-9th.

This educational experience provides students the opportunity to feel physics first hand, while having a thrilling outdoor adventure. Tubing at Wild Chutes is an ideal laboratory for students to witness the laws of physics in operation. Enjoy a day of snow tubing while discovering Work, Power, Force, Kinematics, Speed, Acceleration and more. Students will gather data as a team from the seven marked zones and take that information back to school to calculate in the classroom.

A PDF file of the Student and Teacher

Success with Reading Corps in Austin



Ryan Mayers
Technology Integration Specialist
Austin Public Schools ISD 492

For Julie Shoars, the best part of working with children at Neveln Elementary School is seeing how excited they get when they realize just how far they've come. Julie, a Minnesota Reading Corps Tutor, works with students whose reading fluency has fallen below grade level expectations.

The Minnesota Reading Corps trains tutors to provide reading interventions to help children achieve research based standards. The tutors meet with students daily and help them work through leveled readings designed to develop their reading skills. "What we're looking for," says Julie, "is growth. Has there been a positive change in their reading level?"

According to tutor Jason Beadell, many students aren't reading at an appropriate level

by the time they reach third grade will struggle with reading for the rest of their lives. "There's a switch between third and fourth grades. Before, students are learning how to read. After, they're reading to learn. So, if students aren't able to read at the right level by the time they leave third grade, then they start to have trouble keeping up academically, which winds up causing all sorts of other problems down the line."

"Reading is foundational to success in life," says Kristy Bina, a tutor at Southgate. "Once students move into higher grades, they need their reading skills in order to be successful, whether in language arts or math. Everything grows out of being able to read, so our goal is to give the kids a good foundation to work from."

For Alison Wangen, a tutor at Sumner, the program involves doing more than simply tutoring the students. "We try to develop relationships. When the students get to know us, they feel more comfortable and are able to achieve more. So it's always a goal to talk to the students and get to know them."

Sumner has had tutors for the last three years while Neveln, Southgate, and Woodson have only been using them for the last two. Across the board, however, the program has been a success. "We measure fluency in multiple ways," says Shoars, "from expression and accuracy to rate. What's great is that we typically get through the curriculum in enough time that we

can cycle back to the beginning and show the students exactly how much they've grown. I've had students go from a fluency rate of 46 words per minute to 124, which is outstanding."

All of the tutors try very hard to praise their students along the way. "We make it a point to offer constant positive reinforcement," says Rieley Madison, another Sumner tutor. "When the kids hear praise, it encourages their growth. For a lot of them, they've had issues with reading and it makes them feel like something must be wrong. So, if we can encourage them, then they wind up achieving more."

In the end, the tutoring program has been very successful. Students are developing their reading skills and learning how to be self-sufficient when it comes to learning how to read more advanced material. For Kristy, however, the greatest mark of success is whether or not the students enjoy reading. "Since [reading] is so important to life, we want to make sure the students actually like to read. That way, they'll want to make sure they get better, and that's really the entire point."

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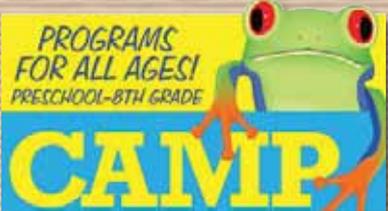


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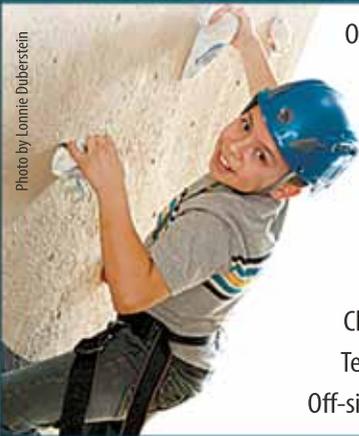


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