



THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Commended Student in 2013 National Merit Scholarship Program

High School Principal James Cummings announced that senior Jessica Curry has been named a Commended Student in the 2013 National Merit Scholarship Program. A Letter of Commendation from the school and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, which conducts the program, was presented by the principal to this scholastically talented student.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Commended Students placed among the top 5 percent of the more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2013 competition by taking the 2011 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

An active member of the educational community, Jessica belongs to the National Honor Society, serves as co-president of the high school's Gay-Straight Alliance, competed in the Varsity Challenge on the Academic Team and is part of the editorial team for Enigma Art and Literature magazine. Jessica also takes advantage of the rigorous coursework the district offers students and has completed or is currently enrolled in multiple Advanced Placement classes, including English Literature, Economics, Government, Art History and Art Portfolio.



High School Principal James Cummings congratulated senior Jessica Curry on her designation as a Commended Student in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

The Power of TECHNOLOGY

The district continued to advance its instructional technology program with the expansion of the one-to-one student laptop program. Currently, students in grades five, six and seven are equipped with personal MacBooks, covering more than 1,000 students across three grade levels and two schools.

Now in its third year, the laptop initiative has placed MacBooks in the hands of students earlier than in the previous years, which is advantageous in supporting lesson plans and academic research and enhances curriculum from essentially the start of the school year. Students will experience differentiated academic-driven activities, and future plans include providing students with virtual field trips and the opportunity to develop and publish their work to a wide Internet audience.

"Over several years, the 1:1 laptop program has evolved and students are further engaged in a variety of diverse subject areas," stated district administrator for instructional technology Andrew Choi. "Instructional technology classroom resources help provide students with individualized lessons while allowing them to learn at their own pace and challenge their learning potential."



Robert Frost Middle School students set up their laptop systems and learned the new operating system.



A John F. Kennedy Intermediate class has begun to use their laptops during instruction to complete educational tasks.

A Message from Your *Superintendent of Schools*



Dear Residents,

As our schools and community recover from the devastation of Sandy it is more apparent than ever that the people who make up our educational community are both resilient and compassionate. Robert Frost Middle School was transformed into an official Red Cross shelter providing housing, food and security to those displaced by the storm. Community members, staff and faculty responded to the call and selflessly gave their time, resources and donated many essential items to those in need. The physical damage to our buildings and grounds is on the mend, but the feeling of unity

and pride that emerged from this natural disaster will remain a strong component of our district's fabric.

As you read this edition of *The Standard* you will learn about the many advancements of our students and staff from national academic recognition to professional development participation, which put our educators at the forefront of their profession.

From the start of the school year students have benefited from unique educational experiences including the addition of technology-focused instructional tools through our laptop program, data driven individualized lessons to ensure student success and a revamped

approach to healthy lifestyle choices that optimize both mind and body. We continue to fuel our students with positive knowledge infusing curriculum topics with themes of good citizenship and provide a hands-on approach to drive home concepts of safety and responsibility.

I look forward to the new year and the new opportunities we will share as a collective group working together for a common goal.

Sincerely,
Eva J. Demyen

Evaluation Plan **APPROVED** by State

The district is proud to announce that its Annual Professional Performance Review plan has been approved by the New York State Education Department.

Deer Park's APPR plan is a multitier initiative that will be used as the tool to evaluate every district teacher on a yearly basis. A committee of teachers and administrators developed a comprehensive plan of action that identifies all facets of highly effective teaching and formulates a way to efficiently review those areas.

Prior to the start of school, Superintendent of Schools Eva J. Demyen asked all teachers to begin the year by setting goals for themselves and their students. Support materials were provided to teachers that outlined the plan and its specific components. Administrators will conduct formal and informal classroom observations, while teachers will be responsible for creating artifact-driven portfolios that feature the diverse projects and assignments completed by students and that exemplify their instructional practices

throughout the school year. This new approach will benefit everyone involved in the educational process, as it will quantify student achievement through assessments, academic growth and higher-level learning while allowing teachers to analyze instructional methods and identify effective practices.

"Our teachers are expertly trained and, as always, prepared to bring exceptional individualized instruction to our students," explained Ms. Demyen. "Deer Park is in an advantageous position, as our plan has been approved by the state prior to the start of the school year thanks to the collaborative efforts of our educational leaders, including the Deer Park Teachers' Association. Our focus can now turn to implementing our progressive plan seamlessly throughout the district."

"Our teachers are expertly trained and, as always, prepared to bring exceptional individualized instruction to our students."

Eva J. Demyen, Supt. of Schools

Teacher Spotlight



John Quincy Adams Elementary School math lab teacher Marianna Grieco has helped to integrate technology-based student performance measures into benchmark testing, which has resulted in



more targeted deployment of resources, translating to student success. Intuitive software provided through the AIMSweb program facilitates assessments schoolwide that students complete three times a year, in the fall, winter and spring. The interactive tool monitors student progress and tracks trends in learning development.

Based on these results, Ms. Grieco has been working with approximately 50 students in grades one and two who have been identified as needing academic intervention services and leads small-group instruction three times a week. During these sessions, students are engaged in activities that are tailored to their learning styles and incorporate verbal, written, tactile and problem-solving modalities.

“Students have shown substantial educational gains with the use of AIMSweb testing and subsequent targeted instruction,” stated Ms. Grieco. “Our goal is to expand students’ learning abilities in order to encourage growth and advancement. We are able to assess concepts at each grade level and teach students based on their specific needs and how they learn best.”

Data dialogue meetings incorporate administrators and classroom teachers into the process in which a team of educators analyze and evaluate student results. In addition, Ms. Grieco conducts routine classroom visits to observe students during math instruction and supports teachers in developing comprehensive lesson plans that engage diverse learning styles.

Arts Council Holds Season Kickoff Concert

The Deer Park Arts Council opened the fall season with a night of dazzling musical performances and art exhibits held in the high school auditorium.

A variety of festivities took place, including an induction ceremony of new Tri-M Music Honor Society members, a keynote address from New York State Board of Regents member Roger Tilles, a performance by the Deer Park faculty jazz band, and a display of artwork by Deer Park art teachers. Regent Tilles thanked the Deer Park Arts Council for showcasing the importance of arts and music to the Deer Park community.

Jeff Dailey, Deer Park’s director of fine and performing arts, praised the art teachers who brought their own works for display. He announced that he hopes to expand the event into a community art show in the future. Dr. Dailey also presented Sarah Mantione with the Director’s Award for Support of the Arts. Additionally, it was announced that the Deer Park High School musical for 2013 would be “The Drowsy Chaperone.”



District teachers showcased their fine and performing arts talents at the Arts Council event.

More Fruits and Veggies on the Menu at Deer Park Schools

New meal requirements promote balanced nutrition and healthy eating habits

This year, district students are enjoying a greater variety of healthy food selections on their cafeteria's menu. As part of the USDA's revised nutritional standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs, Deer Park Schools and ARAMARK have further updated the school menu to incorporate the new meal requirements and offer students additional healthful menu items.

Designed to ensure students receive a balanced meal consisting of foods from all major food groups, the USDA's new standards encourage healthy eating and nutrition education. Additionally, the requirements focus on obtaining calories and other key nutrients from fruits, vegetables, proteins, grains and milk with proper serving sizes for a student's age and activity level.

Through ARAMARK's Healthy for Life initiative, a comprehensive wellness and nutrition education program, a team of dietitians and chefs have been proactively developing new Healthy for Life recipes that reduce added fats, sugar and salt and ensure that menus offer more fruits and vegetables while remaining appealing to students.

To celebrate, the district participated in Food Day, a nationwide movement for healthy, affordable and sustainable food. All Deer Park Schools and ARAMARK celebrated Food Day with age-appropriate displays,

cooking demonstrations, and healthy and nourishing food tastings. ARAMARK food service director Barbara Stabile, coordinated planned activities. These health promotion strategies support the district's larger mission: to create a healthy learning environment for the entire school community.



Guest professional chef Pat Passible conducted a food exhibition at the high school where students enjoyed a menu that featured whole grains, fresh vegetables and low-fat ingredients in flavorful pasta and Mexican dishes.

Dignity Throughout the District

The New York State Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) is the latest piece of legislation that works to protect student rights and create a supportive environment. Prior to the first day of school, district staff, faculty and administrators were trained on DASA and its goal to create a safe school climate where students can learn and focus, rather than fear being discriminated against or verbally and physically harassed.

A committee of administrators and teachers has spearheaded the district's specific plans, which focus on fusing education and good citizenship. Educators will continue to ensure student safety from the top down and address all issues in a timely, effective manner. Throughout the district, age-appropriate programs, lessons and activities will be conducted to reinforce key concepts based on developmental stages.

"In Deer Park, we pride ourselves on providing students with excellent educational opportunities within a welcoming, considerate and caring environment," stated Superintendent of Schools Eva J. Demyen. "Bullying and discrimination are cyclical problems, so we must address all facets of each incident and deal with the underlying issues to stop the destructive process. The ultimate goal is to equip our student body with the tools to not only coexist, but also appreciate the differences that make us all unique."

A variety of programs and activities has been put into place, including Project Wisdom, Character Education Week at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School, FAB - the high school's anti-bullying club and the Gay-Straight Alliance club at the high school. In addition, character education will be weaved into classroom lessons and library-based literary lessons throughout the year.

District Enters the First Cohort of Teachers Qualified to Teach Advanced STEM Courses

Teachers Trained as Part of a \$4.8 Million New York State AP STEM Program

Teachers from Deer Park participated in a five-day STEM Summer Institute, part of a new initiative providing advanced coursework professional development training for teachers in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) disciplines throughout New York State. This initiative is the first statewide STEM professional development program for educators teaching advanced coursework, such as Advanced Placement (AP) science and mathematics courses.

“We are very excited to have our first cohort of teachers involved in this auspicious program. This program will enhance our teachers’ ability to increase effective thinking strategies while creating a learner-centered classroom for the sciences,” stated Superintendent of Schools Eva J. Demyen.

The program strengthens the teaching skills of both new and experienced middle school and high school STEM teachers and increases the number of teachers qualified to teach pre-AP and AP STEM, enabling schools and districts to prepare a larger number of students for college-level study and career trajectories in these disciplines.

District curriculum associate for science and technology Samir Biswas and teacher Francis Amendola are among the 700 educators who will be bringing enhanced teaching skills to students across the state.

“It’s exciting to be part of a statewide initiative that is attempting to foster science education at the teaching level instead of through policies,” stated Mr. Biswas. “At the core, the focus of the program is to engage more students in the sciences by vertically integrating science and technology curricula so that students can build on skills and knowledge over the course of their academic careers, instead of viewing science as a series of disjointed courses.”

AP STEM courses cultivate critical thinking, experimentation and problem solving. The program will help improve instruction, provide greater course offerings and increase AP student participation for minority and female students, both of whom have been typically underrepresented in AP STEM courses.



Superintendent of Schools Eva Demyen and the Board of Education presented teacher Francis Amendola with a certificate for his dedication and commitment to educating the students of Deer Park.

54 Advanced Placement Scholars

The Advanced Placement Program, offered at the high school, presents several AP Scholar Awards to recognize high school students who have demonstrated college-level achievement through AP courses and exams. In addition to the honoree receiving an award certificate, this achievement is acknowledged on any AP score report sent to colleges the following fall.

The high school tallied an impressive 54 students who earned a 2012 AP Scholar Award throughout various categories and achieved an average score of 3.30.

TWO NATIONAL AP SCHOLARS

Granted to students who received an average score of at least 4 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

11 AP SCHOLARS WITH DISTINCTION

Granted to students who received an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

11 AP SCHOLARS WITH HONOR

Granted to students who received an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

32 AP SCHOLARS

Granted to students who received scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams.

Homecoming

The Deer Park community celebrated homecoming by paying homage to its past, as the district invited Deer Park High School's Class of 1964 to serve as grand marshals of the pre-game parade and also renamed the football field in honor of former board member and booster club president Al Centamore.

High School Principal Jim Cummings announced that the district wanted to honor the school's original graduating class in recognition of the building's upcoming 50th anniversary. "Some things have changed over the years, but what has never changed is our strong Deer Park community," Principal Cummings told the sizable crowd that turned out for the game between the Falcons and the Huntington Blue Devils.

Additionally, Superintendent Eva J. Demyen was pleased to announce the renaming of the football field in honor of Al Centamore, a lifelong Deer Park resident and former district board member. "We wanted to show our appreciation for Mr. Centamore's lifetime of commitment and his thousands of hours of volunteer work for the Deer Park community," Ms. Demyen said. "His presence has been instrumental in this community for the past 50 years. He is a former Deer Park student, he raised his entire family here, his children are graduates of our great school district, he was on the school board for almost two decades and he is a past president of the booster club."

District student-athletes, musicians and club members walked together in the annual parade and showcased the class floats inspired by this year's theme, cartoon shows. The homecoming court waved to onlookers, and Nicolette Tortorici and Dan Keller were named homecoming queen and king.





Deer Park & Allstate Partner to Construct a Life-Saving Course

In the effort to help save lives and encourage families to make a pledge together to limit or eliminate distractions in the car, Allstate Insurance Co. brought the Allstate Family Driving Challenge course to the high school. The Family Driving Challenge is designed to heighten awareness around the dangers of distracted driving. Participants drove a course, trying to navigate cone-lined lanes and focus on the road while encountering a range of common driving distractions.

Teens, parents and teachers rode

together in the capacity of driver and passenger and attempted to safely drive while texting, talking on the phone, listening to loud music and handling rowdy passengers. Utilizing state-of-the-art driving technology, Allstate driving professionals tracked course data, calculating completion times through the various obstacles and charting the number of objects hit during each run.

"It is imperative that we as a district are proactive in keeping our students safe, whether they be in the classroom or on the road," stated high school

principal James Cummings.

Car crashes are the No. 1 killer of teens and take an average of 11 teen lives each day; motor vehicle-related injuries are the leading cause of death for Americans ages 1-34; and teens crash four times more often than any other age group. Tragically, younger, more inexperienced drivers under the age of 20 are the most likely to be involved in distraction-related fatal crashes. In fact, car crashes remain the leading killer of American teens overall, with nearly 5,000 teens killed and 300,000 injured annually.



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THE COLOR OF UNITY

Red Ribbon Week at Deer Park Schools

Throughout the district, Deer Park students participated in Red Ribbon Week, a national campaign that serves as a vehicle for communities and individuals to take a stand for the hopes and dreams of children through activities centered on drug prevention and education. Students observed the week by making a personal commitment to live drug-free lives, with the ultimate goal being to create a drug-free America.

At Robert Frost Middle School, students participated in the Police Smart program, led by a local law enforcement official. Through grade-specific presentations, students learned how to make smart decisions, rise above peer pressure and recognize the consequences their actions have on themselves and those who love them. In a movement that illustrated their solidarity, students wore red and signed a banner pledging to have a bully- and drug-free school.

John F. Kennedy Intermediate students competed in a live game show, The Brain Challenge - One School/One Goal. Teams of students worked together to answer topical questions during buzzer rounds and complete physical challenges. Students learned the truths about bullying and how it affects their peers, as well as the dangers of drug and alcohol use.



Robert Frost students displayed their school's signed anti-drug and bullying banner.



A quiz show set served as an educational platform at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School during the Brain Challenge.

Fire Safety A HOT TOPIC

The Abraham Lincoln Pre-kindergarten Center celebrated Fire Prevention Week with a visit from the local Deer Park fire department. Students learned from fire and EMT professionals who spoke about fire safety and how to respond in case of a fire emergency.

Students learned to "stop, drop and roll" and how to navigate through a house filled with smoke. A firefighter, dressed in his equipment, showed students how the gear protects him from flames and allows them to handle certain materials. For the grand finale, students received a fire truck tour where they inspected the truck's equipment and witnessed the power of the truck's water hose.



A Deer Park firefighter dressed in his fireproof clothing and wore an oxygen mask to show students how professionals safely enter homes and buildings filled with fire and smoke and save people and animals.



School news
and photos
compiled
by Marissa
Sanseverino.

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