



# THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## A Lesson in Democracy

The League of Women Voters of Huntington visited the high school to present "Vote 18" to the senior class. These community leaders introduced students to a moving presentation on the importance of exercising the right to vote and the journey to universal suffrage in the United States.

In addition, the league sponsored student Alicia Legland to go on a three-day conference and represent Suffolk County at Students Inside Albany. Students Inside Albany is a conference sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation Inc. The program is designed to increase students' awareness of their responsibility in representative government and provide the tools necessary for meeting that responsibility. While at the conference Alicia explored the political and legal aspects of various environmental issues.



*High school student Alicia Legland was selected to attend the Students Inside Albany conference. She was congratulated by Heather Stewart, the district's curriculum associate for social studies, and sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Suffolk County, represented by Brenda Reiss, League of Women Voters of Huntington co-president; and Judie Gorenstein, League of Women Voters of New York State Youth Program chair.*



*Students visited the fruit station and sampled foods rich in vitamins and high in fiber at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School's Healthy Snack Festival.*

## A Taste of Health

### Students Sample Nutritious Foods

In conjunction with National Nutrition Month, and in an effort to educate students on the new FDA nutrition recommendations, the district's elementary schools hosted a Healthy Snack Festival. Students visited stations set up throughout the cafeteria that featured visual displays and taste samples representing the new food plate in all of the food groups. Students received a sample of grains, fruits and vegetables and accompanying literature on healthy eating.

The district's food service provider, Aramark, sponsored the event.

# A Message from Your *Superintendent of Schools*



Dear Residents,

I would like to begin by thanking the community for their overwhelming support in passing the 2013-2014 school year budget. As always, the development of this financial plan would not have been possible without the team efforts of our Board of Education, teachers, staff, administration and community members. I am proud that we were able to present a balanced budget that supports the exceptional programs we value so highly, while being conscious of taxpayers.

As displayed in this publication, the district has been busy establishing academic innovations and giving back through educational

programs. As a district, we have been recognized by the State Education Department for our efficient and effective infusion of Common Core Standards into the classroom. In addition, we were named a Best Community for Music Education in the nation.

On an individual student level, a talented high school student was selected to participate in a political and economic conference in Albany and a Robert Frost Middle School student put her spelling skills to the test, qualifying to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

All of these accomplishments can be attributed to the differentiated approach our educators take when instructing students. Coursework is

developed to approach curriculum in an individualized and group manner, creating dynamic learners.

As we approach the end of the school year, it is a time for celebration - a celebration of academics, athletics and character. Students are recognized for their achievements in a variety of areas, teachers for their contributions in the classroom, and the community for their tireless dedication in making Deer Park an educational hot spot.

Sincerely,

Eva J. Demyen

## State Education Department Identifies Deer Park *as Top Performer*

John F. Kennedy Intermediate School was selected to be documented by the New York State Education Department Common Core video team for its innovative and effective instructional practices. The footage captured will be part of the state's initiative to create a series of model lessons that will be shared with educators as exemplary lessons, as teachers statewide redesign instruction to align with the Common Core Standards.

Four teachers from JFK were featured by a team of Common Core curriculum experts from the State Education Department and were shadowed by a production crew as they executed engaging lessons with student participation. The collaborative efforts of Superintendent Eva Demyen, Principal Sue Bonner and District Administrator for Elementary Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Danielle Sheridan have led the district in a proactive approach in shifting curriculum. Teachers have been receiving coaching to develop Common Core-aligned lessons in English language arts and math, with differentiated focus on nonfiction reading, social studies and science.

The district congratulates fourth-grade ELA teacher Alexis Ghiraldi, fifth-grade ELA/social science teacher Tara Wellbrock, third-grade ELA/science teacher Lauren Chipkin, third-grade math teacher Christine MacQuarrie and math specialist Rosanne Alfieri, who will be part of these videos, which will function as an invaluable tool for professional development and will support teacher and principal professional growth while strengthening educators' work.

# Playing with Numbers

John Quincy Adams Elementary School hosted a night of numbers with its annual Family Math Night. More than 20 district teachers volunteered their time to share math concepts with students and their parents.

A collaborative learning experience, families visited classrooms equipped with interactive stations that featured math problems, games and puzzles. Students and parents worked together to complete estimating and graphing activities and discuss with teachers grade-specific educational tools and resources.



*A student, with the help of classmates, teachers and community members, utilized a Smart Board to complete math problems at the John Quincy Adams Elementary School Math Night.*

## National Program Spotlights Deer Park for Outstanding Commitment to Music Education

Heralding a commitment to music education, the NAMM Foundation designated the Deer Park School District as one of the districts across the country named a Best Community for Music Education. The Best Community designation recognizes collaborative, from-the-ground-up efforts of teachers, administrators, students and parents who continually work to keep comprehensive music education an integral part of the core curriculum.

According to NAMM Foundation Executive Director Mary Luehrsen, the Best Communities for Music Education program, or BCME, is the bellwether of rising endorsement for this vital cause. "There is overwhelming research tying music education to higher overall student success in school and in life," she said. "This designation recognizes communities for their commitment to music education and strengthens support for these programs. Having widely embraced the evidence indicating that music education yields great things in schools and communities, people are increasingly affirmative, advocating for school music curricula and championing programs like Best Communities that recognize this commitment to music education."

Now in its 14th year, the BCME program requires each school and district to detail funding, staffing, commitment to standards and access to music instruction. Responses are meticulously reviewed by researchers at the Institute for Educational Research and Public Service of Lawrence, Kan. (an affiliate of the University of Kansas) and the NAMM Foundation to calculate the designated districts and awarded schools.

"It is gratifying that the music teachers and students from Deer Park are being recognized for their exceptional work," stated District Administrator for Fine and Performing Arts Dr. Jeff Dailey. "The music program in Deer Park is very advanced and includes instruction in wind, string and percussion instruments, as well as piano, organ, guitar, didgeridoo, dulcimer and theremin. In addition, vocal music is also an integral part of the program, as is musical theatre, and the district offers college-level instruction in music theory. Our hope is to expand these programs and add new ones in the future."

The BCME program is a significant tool in the NAMM Foundation's advocacy efforts on behalf of school-based music education. Numerous studies have demonstrated that learning to play music can boost student achievement and contributes to a school's and district's goals for success for all students.

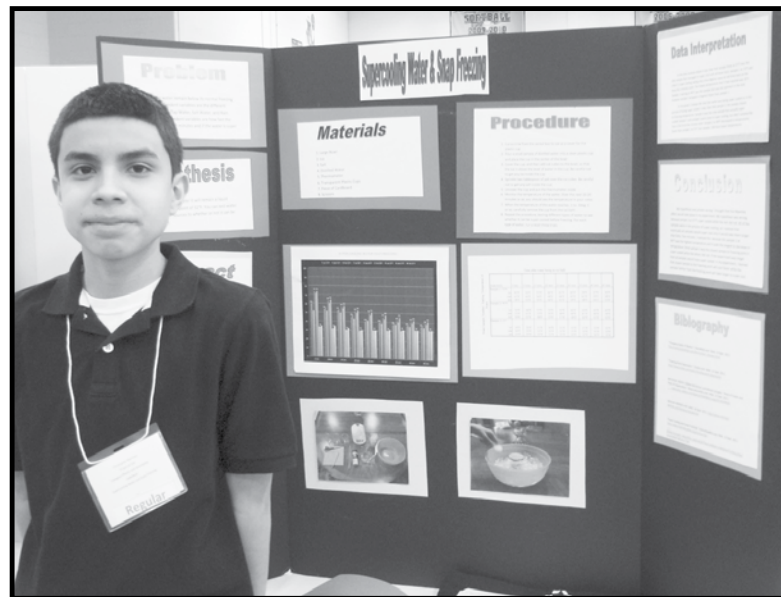


*An ensemble of students performs at one of the district's many progressive fine and performing arts events.*

# A Night for Academic Exploration

Each spring, the high school transforms into a forum for educational advancement during the district's annual College Fair. More than 100 colleges, universities and academic institutions were represented at the event, which is now in its eighth successful year. Students and parents were also able to connect with SAT/ACT test prep centers and financial aid organizations, all critical resources when making educational plans.

The district's goal is to expose students of all ages to the options higher education holds and instill the message that it's never too early or too late to start the college process. To meet students' diverse needs, a variety of representatives were available to students from top-tier universities, vocational training schools and military service academies.



Robert Frost Middle School student Chris Martinez showcased his research project's hypothesis, materials, procedure, data and results to the judges at the New York State Science and Engineering Fair.

# A Conference for Student Innovation

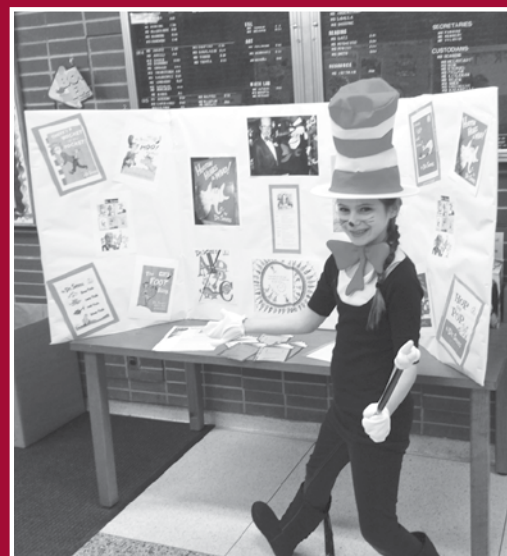
Robert Frost Middle School hosted the New York State Science and Engineering Fair, where more than 350 middle and high school students from across Long Island and New York City presented their research projects to a panel of judges. The collaborative event was a platform for discussion on a variety of topics and provided students with the opportunity to display their work and educate their peers and teachers on their extensive studies.

Seven Robert Frost Middle School students qualified for this prestigious competition and tackled projects including "Testing Lead in Local Soil," "All That Bacteria" and "Oily Aquatic Plants."

# A Night at the Museum

The student government at John F. Kennedy Intermediate School hosted a sophisticated and educational event, A Night at the Wax Museum. Each representative in the club selected a celebrity, historian or athletic figure that inspires them and conducted research through literary, video and photo resources.

At the exhibit, students got into character by dressing up as their figures and positioned themselves in display showcases. Guests toured the hallways, visiting the live student attractions, and read the informative presentations, which served as the backdrop for the museum.



The Cat in the Hat, played by a JFK Intermediate student, symbolized a project on iconic author Dr. Seuss at the student-created Night at the Wax Museum.



Attendees of JFK Intermediate School's Night at the Wax Museum were educated on the contributions of Betsy Ross to America.



Deer Park's latest ensemble, the Didgeridoo Club, rehearses with Project Trio on their musical collaboration.

# Students Collaborate with Professional Musicians

The professional musicians of Project Trio returned to Deer Park to facilitate master classes for district student-musicians. Project Trio worked with students one-on-one and through group ensembles to prepare for a live community concert, featuring the first performance by Deer Park's newest musical group, the Didgeridoo Club.

Music students in grades 5-12 – including the string, band and didgeridoo ensembles and flute, cello and bass players – participated in these interactive workshops, during which they learned unique techniques and fine-tuned their theatrical performance pieces.

# Student Showcases Spelling Skills

Rebecca Fox, a sixth-grader at Robert Frost Middle School, worked her way to the top when she participated in her school's annual spelling bee. The eight contestants in the schoolwide bee were those who received a score of 100 on the written spelling test, which was administered by the middle school's English department to every classroom.

Rebecca's win placed her in the Long Island regional competition, held at Hofstra University as part of the Scripps National Spelling Bee program. Students in grades 4-8 from 103 schools in Nassau and Suffolk counties attended the event, which was led by Hofstra University's Dr. Carole Clark Papper. Dr. Papper, a noted professor of writing studies

and composition, served as head judge and moderator. Rebecca was a strong competitor and had an impressive finish, taking the 18th spot.



Sixth-grade student Rebecca Fox is congratulated by (l-r) curriculum associate Lynn Winters and Principal Eliana Levey.



*Robert Frost Middle School students in Paula Behrens', Cindy Adriaenssen's and Laura Valente's classes worked together to engineer versatile products.*

## From Trash to Treasure

Robert Frost Middle School students committed to a "greener" world and spread the word to their peers to think about the positive impact they could have on the earth by repurposing items. Prompted by this initiative to become more eco-friendly and eco-conscious, they made posters featuring tips on clean living and created mini-books with the message of reduce, reuse and recycle.

Throughout the month of April, students brought in plastics, take-out containers, egg cartons, broken costume jewelry and toys, frames, bottles, glassware and assorted bric-a-brac. The unwanted items received a second life as they were transformed into useful and beautiful products in the "Trash to Treasure" recycling project.

Students were challenged to use their resourcefulness to design, plan and create useful products using the discarded materials. Older students assisted younger students, and all were encouraged to develop their problem-solving skills, working outside the box to accomplish their "green" goals and do their part to improve the environment.

The result was a variety of innovative items, including a vinyl record clock; a "green footprint" shoe organizer; iPod holders; an automatic plant-watering system; hand-sewn grocery shopping bags made from discarded Capri-Sun drink pouches; a purse made from old library books, bamboo and burlap; and leather jewelry made from old softballs. Students learned that transforming old trash into a new product rather than buying a brand-new packaged item saves energy and money and reduces air and water pollution.

## An Earth Day Movement

May Moore Elementary students in Pamela Arcuri's class made an Earth Day pledge to support the sloth. After reading "A Little Book of Sloth" by Lucy Cooke, students were inspired to help these tree-dwelling mammals.

The elementary schoolers researched the Sloth Sanctuary of Costa Rica, a facility that advocates the protection and rehabilitation of sloths in recovery, and then brainstormed ways they could raise funds for this organization. Students got active, completing earth-friendly chores around the house and writing informative and persuasive essays seeking donations for the Sloth Sanctuary. Their efforts continue as they learn more about the sloth through books and interactive videos.



*May Moore students wrote pieces that described the unique characteristics of sloths, including their habitat and diet, and shared their knowledge with friends and family when raising funds for the Sloth Sanctuary of Costa Rica.*

## Green Innovation at JQA Elementary

At John Quincy Adams Elementary School, students in Lisa Stallone's class honored Earth Day by learning how used items can be transformed into beautiful and useful products. Students collected cans, plastic, paper and wood and used their imaginations to reinvent these materials to create robots, toys, clocks, birdhouses, accessories and stationery supplies. Through careful engineering, students took old water bottles and other used plastic containers to plant seeds and grow plants, demonstrating how something old can be reused to create something new.

In addition, students studied the process of recycling and how to keep our environment clean through books, poems and songs.



*Vegetables and flowers will soon sprout from the used bottles and containers that John Quincy Adams Elementary School students transformed into Earth Day garden spots.*

# Teacher Spotlight



High school math teacher Kristen Small brings her high-energy approach to instruction into the classroom. Whether she is teaching Honors geometry or Regents algebra and trigonometry classes, Ms. Small creates an engaging lesson plan supported by a positive environment of cooperative learning.

To keep curriculum current, Ms. Small infuses songs, rhymes and raps to solidify formula memorization and proper procedure. Student-centered lessons fuel excitement about math and draw on topics that are relatable. To reinforce this approach, Ms. Small has students create their own math word problems, drawing

on personal interests that intrigue them. To promote high-level learning, Ms. Small challenges students to be able to answer “why” and explain their thought process by justifying their answers through logical reasoning.

“I encourage students to have an open mind when approaching math,” Ms. Small explained. “My goal is to show them the value in math and its everyday applications in life. I take pride in being an educator and feed off of my students’ progress and achievements.”

In addition to making an impact in the classroom, Ms. Small connects with students on a personal level outside the



classroom. She has served as class adviser for the past four years, and this June she will send off the senior class after guiding them through various events and programs during their time at the high school.

## The Scholar-Athletes and Good Sports of Deer Park

Members of the district’s athletic teams are well-rounded student-athletes who excel in the classroom and work hard on the playing field. As a result of this commitment, six varsity squads, including girls basketball, swimming and diving, girls track, boys track, cheerleading and kickline, were named New York State Scholar-Athlete teams. To achieve this honor, students had to maintain a cumulative GPA of 90 or better throughout the season.

Demonstrating outstanding character, the varsity wrestling, junior varsity wrestling and eighth-grade boys basketball teams received the Sportsmanship Award. This award is designated for teams who, based on the recommendations of officials and opposing teams, stand out for their fair play and good sportsmanship on the field of competition.

In addition, teams also advanced to postseason play, defeating their competition in tournament playoffs. Boys varsity basketball claimed the League IV championship and were led by coach John McCaffrey, who was named the League IV Coach of the Year. More success on the court was achieved by the girls varsity basketball team, who qualified for the Class AA playoffs.



*The kickline team danced through the season and earned postseason honors as a Scholar-Athlete team.*

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## Center Stage with Deer Park Students

The thespians of Deer Park High School recently presented "The Drowsy Chaperone" as the district's featured spring production. The dynamic parody of a 1920s American musical comedy focuses on a musical theater fan as he plays the record of his favorite musical, "The Drowsy Chaperone." In this unique show-within-a-show setting, the story came to life onstage as the "Man in Chair" commented on the vibrant scenes, lively actors and musical ensembles.

Student actors took on the roles of these versatile characters, telling the tale of a pampered Broadway starlet who wants to give up show business to get married, her producer who sets out to sabotage the nuptials, her chaperone, the debonair groom, the dizzy chorine, the Latin lover and a pair of gangsters who double as pastry chefs.



## DEER PARK HIGH SCHOOL *Class of 1983 30th Reunion*

**We are looking for all Class of '83 Alumni!**

Three days of events:

**Friday, July 19th, 7pm-11pm - Ice Breaker**

**Saturday, July 20th, 7pm - Main Event 30th Reunion**

**Sunday, July 21st, 11am-4pm - Picnic**

*For further information, please email Christina Blake at  
DPHS83@gmail.com.*



*School news  
and photos  
compiled  
by Marissa  
Sanseverino.*

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