



Monday, September 22, 2008

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Contact: Diana L. Spencer, 410-887-4243

Have you heard?

The Baltimore County Public Schools story - Recent honors and accomplishments from Baltimore County Public Schools

From the time that its Blueprint for Progress set the school system on a course for excellence eight years ago, Baltimore County Public Schools has continually demonstrated measurable success in advancing achievement for all students. Research reveals that the percentage of elementary students scoring proficient or advanced in reading on the Maryland School Assessment has increased from 66.8 percent in 2003 to 87.3 percent in 2008. In math, the improvement was from 59.2 percent to 84.8 percent. For middle school students, the rise was from 60.8 percent to 78.5 percent in reading and from 40.2 percent to 67.2 percent in mathematics. For the past two years, 40 percent of the school system's high schools have been ranked among the top 5 percent in the nation by Newsweek magazine, and high schools across the district are regularly cited in national media and education publications as being among the best in the state and nation for specific programs and accomplishments. In addition, among the nation's 50 largest school districts, Baltimore County Public Schools has achieved the fourth highest overall graduation rate in the nation (according to Education Week) and the highest graduation rate for African American males (according to the Schott Foundation).

The recent achievements below are further evidence that the school system's commitment to improving academic rigor and providing access for all children to a quality education is working.

Towson High School teacher one of the first in the nation to achieve geneticist-educator certification

Christine Roberts, a biology teacher and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) coordinator at Towson High School, is among **the first teachers in the nation to successfully achieve certification from the Geneticist-Educator Network of Alliances (GENA)**. The GENA project is a National Science Foundation-funded project sponsored by the American Society of Human Genetics and the Genetics Society of America. The year-long certification process requires teachers and geneticists to collaborate on using novel techniques for teaching and assessing student understanding of the most challenging genetics topics. Roberts, working with Dr. Forrest Spencer of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, developed curriculum exploring the connection between genes, inheritance, and traits. The pair presented their work at a conference in July.

Contact: Dr. Jane Barranger, principal, Towson High School, 410.887.3608

Superintendent Hairston named to *Scholastic Administr@tor* Editorial Advisory Board

Baltimore County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Joe A. Hairston has accepted an invitation to join **the Editorial Advisory Board for *Scholastic Administr@tor* magazine**. A national magazine published eight times per year, *Scholastic Administr@tor* focuses on using technology to support education and each issue reaches 85,000 school system leaders and administrators. As an editorial advisory member, Dr. Hairston will help drive the publication's editorial coverage and direction.

Other national boards on which Dr. Hairston serves include the Horace Mann League of

the USA Board of Directors, College Board's Superintendent Advisory Panel, Blackboard's K-12 Advisory Board, and AVID National Conference Advisory Board.

Contact: Diana Spencer, communications officer, Office of Communications, 410.887.4243

Baltimore County Public Schools shares in national achievement award for innovative summer program

The Summer Camp/Summer School Program for students with disabilities received a **County Model Program Award** in July from the National Association of Counties. The camps, a collaborative project of Baltimore County Public Schools and the Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks, provide "student campers" with a mix of recreational activities and trips along with the educational classes and behavioral supports to maintain academic continuity. Among those honored for their leadership roles in the program were BCPS social workers Bernie Yates (camp director at Chatsworth School in Reisterstown) and Bev Tellis (camp director at White Oak School in east Towson).

Contact: Office of School Social Work Services, 410.887.0305

Bridge Center wins national award

The Baltimore County Public Schools Bridge Center was awarded a **National Association of Counties 2008 Outstanding Achievement Award** as a model program for working with at-risk students. Established in 2005, the Bridge Center is a short-term intervention program based in Lansdowne that serves middle and high school students from the county's northwest and southwest areas. These students may be entering the system from other states, school systems, or by agency placements, and they are generally at-risk for academic failure for various reasons including gaps in school attendance or lack of current or complete records. While at the Bridge Center, students prepare for entering a comprehensive school by taking English, reading, mathematics, and other skills courses. Assessments and counseling are completed, and the center staff stays in touch with students even after they have left the Bridge Center and entered a comprehensive school. In July, the National Association of Counties honored the Bridge Center as a model of interagency cooperation. The award was shared with the Baltimore County Department of Social Services for providing social workers to work with the students.

Contact: David Lloyd, principal, The Bridge Center, 410.887.6832

Eastern Technical High multimedia communications students win Baltimore 48-Hour Film Festival

Under the direction of teacher Brian Schilpp, a team of 20 current juniors and graduates from **Eastern Technical High School's Multimedia Communications Department won five of 17 awards offered** – including best film – in this past summer's Baltimore 48 Hour Film Festival. In addition to the best film award, the Eastern Tech film "Of Mares and Men" was honored for best use of prop, best costumes, best choreography, and best directing. The 48 Hour Film Festival for 2008, which took place in 77 cities across the country, challenges professional and amateur filmmakers to create a 4- to 7-minute film in 48 hours, all incorporating the same prop, character, and a specific line of dialogue into their short film. The winners of each American city competition then compete in the Panasonic HD Shootout. In March 2009, the Eastern Tech team will be featured at the Cinequest Independent Film Festival in San Jose, California, where the team will receive the Baltimore City trophy.

Contact: Thomas G. Evans, principal, Eastern Technical High School, 410.887.0190

Patapsco High School Student wins the 2008 Congressional Art Contest for Maryland's 2nd District

Brett Shinsky, a 16-year-old student at Patapsco High School and Center for the Arts, won the **2008 Congressional Art Contest** for his artwork "Confusion." The piece is a digitally hand-drawn self-portrait comprised of 2,000 to 3,000 individual shapes. This was the 27th year of the national contest. Shinsky's artwork is now on display in the

Cannon Tunnel at the US Capitol.

Contact: Edmund L. Mitzel, Jr., principal, Patapsco High School, 410.887.7060

Students of Norwood Elementary earn state recognition in the Maryland/District of Columbia Stock Market Game

Several Norwood Elementary School students **earned state recognition for their achievements in the Maryland/District of Columbia stock market game.** The stock market game is a 10-week simulation of Wall Street trading involving more than 100 area schools. Students were divided into teams of three to five students and assigned the task of investing \$100,000 in common stocks. From Norwood, students Taylor Rudolph and Destiny Schriefer won first place. Muluken Tekle, Krystal Grudinsky, Laura Harris, and Brandi Spiker won second place. Other participating students from Norwood – also recognized for their stocks knowledge – were Jaclyn Rajewski, Rachel Pavlosky, Kaitlyn Freels, and Sommer Petrecca.

Contact: Patrice G. Goldys, principal, Norwood Elementary School, 410.887.7055

Perry Hall graduate earns the prestigious Coca-Cola Scholarship

Raza Hasan, a 2008 graduate of Perry Hall High School, **received a \$10,000 Coca-Cola scholarship.** Hasan was **one of only 250 students nationwide who were chosen to receive this prestigious scholarship through the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation.** The scholarship competition began this year with more than 80,000 applicants. Fifty national scholarships of \$20,000 each were awarded along with 200 regional scholarships of \$10,000 each. Students are honored for both academic excellence and commitment to their communities. During high school, Hasan served as the president of Perry Hall's chapter of the National Honor Society and on the Executive Board of the Baltimore County Student Councils. Now studying at the University of Missouri Kansas City, Hasan plans to attend medical school. As a Coca-Cola scholar, Hasan could choose a past teacher as the "Educator of Distinction" who has most influenced him. Hasan chose Perry Hall High School Advanced Placement chemistry teacher Andrei Yelovich.

Contact: George Roberts, principal, Perry Hall High School, 410.887.5108

Four elementary students are awarded bond scholarships

Jermaine Arbuah from Chase Elementary School, Victoria Mathena from Sussex Elementary School, Mason Snyder from Essex Elementary School, and Savannah Olenick from Seneca Elementary School were awarded **bond scholarships from Vigilant Federal Savings Bank.** Each of the four elementary school students received a \$250 bond scholarship and a framed certificate. The requirements for this contest were a completed application, two letters of recommendation, a grade point average of at least 3.0, a copy of the most recent report card, and an essay describing how the scholarship would be beneficial in the applicant's future education. The applicants also had to be graduating from 5th grade and going to middle school with proof of residency in the 21221 or 21220 ZIP codes.

Contact: Sharon L. Whitlock, principal, Chase Elementary School, 410.887.5940; Thomas R. Bowser, principal, Sussex Elementary School, 410.887.0182; Amy H. Grabner, principal, Essex Elementary School, 410.887.0117; Charlene Behnke, principal, Seneca Elementary School, 410.887.5945

Pinewood Elementary principal wins statewide award

The Maryland Association of Educational Office Professionals has named Kathryn Arnold, principal of Pinewood Elementary School in Timonium, the **2008 Maryland Administrator of the Year.** Arnold will receive her award on October 17 at the association's annual conference. The conference will be held this year in St. Mary's County. A few years ago, the same group named Arnold Administrator of the Year for Baltimore County.

Contact: Diana Spencer, communications officer, The Office of Communications, 410.887.4243

Franklin Elementary student wins national short story contest

The General Federation of Women's Clubs selected Madeline Lutwyche, a fifth-grader at Franklin Elementary School in Reisterstown, as **the national winner of its short story contest**. The announcement came in June at the organization's national convention. At its September meeting, The Woman's Club of Glyndon honored Madeline for her achievement and presented her with the award and a bookstore gift card. To be eligible for consideration for the national prize, Madeline first won at the local and regional levels. Her award-winning story, "Three Eggs," describes a pig who cares for three abandoned eggs until they hatch.

Contact: Joyce M. Albert, principal, Franklin Elementary School, 410-887-1111

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