

Jackson Middle School Student Saves Family From Fire Using Lessons Learned At School



Communications Department
Anoka-Hennepin School District

Ruth Nyaberi blushes when she's called a hero, but local fire officials said the sixth grader definitely acted heroically on the night there was a fire in her home.

Not only is she credited with saving her family, but maybe the house, too, according to Brooklyn Park Fire Chief Ken Prillaman, who recognized Ruth's actions with an award on Oct. 12 at her school, Jackson Middle School.

"Getting an award is nice," Ruth said, "but at the time it was scary. And I didn't know if my family could do anything, so I tried."

"Hearing Ruth recount how she used lessons from those fire prevention visits at school were validating for Chief Prillaman and Mark Lynde, Brooklyn Park's fire prevention coordinator.

"I can't begin tell you how impressive her actions were," Prillaman said. "It's really the ultimate payback — that our efforts work in trying to educate our youth."

The scary situation started around 8 p.m. on Sept. 28. Everything was normal — so normal that Ruth doesn't remember what she was doing when her sister suddenly called out to her.

"There's a fire in the kitchen," Ruth remembers her sister yelling.

It turns out the chicken their grandma was making for dinner had started on fire in the stove.

That's when Ruth says the things she learned in school when she was a student at Champlin-Brooklyn Park Academy (CBPA)

popped into her head.

At first her sister wondered if they could just put water on the flames, but Ruth knew better. "There was oil, so I remembered water would be bad," she said.

Instead, she called 9-1-1 to report the fire, and then evacuated her family outside.

"It's what we learned in school," she said, recalling the time when a firefighter came to one of her classes while

at CBPA. Teachers across Anoka-Hennepin

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Community Comes Together to Make Media Center the Heart of their School

Stillwater Area Public Schools

The media center at Afton-Lakeland Elementary School looks very different this year, and students and parents have taken notice. Dozens of kids and adults gathered in the center during the back-to-school open house on August 24 to inspect and admire the colorful, open space and its variety of fixtures and seating options.

"It's really bright and fun," said student Keira Benson, as she wiggled back and forth on a rounded-bottom stool. "I like everything about it!"

With new paint on the walls and carpet on the floors, the media center looks fresh and modern. But it's the unique new furniture that is central to the re-design. Different areas have been set up in the large open space to give students and teachers many options for learning. Some areas have low tables with wobbly stools, while other areas have tall tables with chairs that rock and bend. Soft couches and comfy cushions can be found throughout the media center, and a brightly colored plush rug is tucked between modular bookshelves for cozy story times.



"We want the media center to be the heart of the school. It will be a place of collaboration with spaces for younger kids and older kids alike, as well as a space to accommodate multiple classes at the same time."

"The concept is to create an inviting place that students will flock to," said Greg Jaeger, an Afton-Lakeland parent who served as the volunteer project manager. "We want the media center to be the heart of the school. It will be a place of collaboration with spaces for younger kids and older kids alike, as well

as a space to accommodate multiple classes at the same time."

While books and bookshelves are still a key component of the media center space, shelves are primarily on the outside walls to leave a large open space in the middle of the room. All of the furniture is on wheels or casters and can easily be moved around in whatever configu-

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Whether it's a Metro Transit bus pulling into our parking lot to give students a low stress first exposure to riding public transit, or students throwing a baby shower for a staff member to learn valuable organizational and social skills, Minnesota Life College provides unique hands-on experiences to give individuals with autism and learning differences opportunities to grow, thrive and learn valuable life skills.

Giving Students Space to Learn

"Giving Students Space to Learn", the theme for the Dream Flight USA STEM Shuttle, is in a sense a description of what the shuttle program is all about. The 45-foot-long converted motor coach, designed on the outside to spur the imaginations of space travel, is in reality a mobile classroom. The mission of the Dream Flight USA Foundation is simple: To motivate students to learn.

Tips for Supporting Those With Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a language-processing disorder, not a disorder characterized by "reading words backwards," writes Donell Pons, a certified dyslexia screener, consultant and tutor. In this blog post, she details her family's experience with dyslexia and advocates for universal screenings.

Teacher Uses Emojis in Literacy Lessons

Fifth-grade teacher Marissa King writes in this blog post that using emojis in class can help students transfer their digital-literacy skills into reading comprehension. She describes a three-step lesson that includes having students write emoji-use guides.

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Jackson Middle School's Environmental Science Students Take Action



Sarah Garrett
Jackson Middle School
Anoka-Hennepin School District

Every year, eighth grader Environmental Science students at Jackson Middle School, a Specialty School for Math and Science, design a service learning project around an environmental issue that they care about. This project-based learning experience allows students to take what they have learned in class and apply it to an environ-

mental problem in their community that they find interesting.

During the 2015-2016 school year, students did just that. Students in one class completed a school "environmental audit" where they investigated water quality, sustainable practices, and energy consumption. Students noticed that parking lot runoff collected in a basin that flowed to a small runoff pond across the street. They learned in class that runoff often contains oil, salt, and other pollutants that get washed out into the watershed. During the year, they experimented on different "treatments" that could be used to stop erosion and runoff in a garden. These students decided to create a raingarden to treat the runoff and increase infiltration on the school grounds. Students helped shape the land to create a berm (speedbumps that would slow down the flow of the water), added river rock and mulch, and planted native pollinator friendly plants. In addition to the raingarden, students had a bake sale during parent-teacher conferences to raise funds for a well to be drilled for a school in South Sudan that did not have clean water.

Another class of eighth graders noticed that there was a significant amount of lunch waste that included plastic bottles. They decided to focus their service learning project on educating their fellow classmates



on the importance of recycling. Students produced short movies that emphasized placing lunch waste in the correct container - trash, recycling or organics. In addition, they created simulations to help teach others about the impact the Pacific Garbage Patch has on animals that become trapped by the floating trash. Students also walked around the Jackson Middle School grounds and picked up trash on Earth Day, and then used the materials they collected to make recycled art pieces. Sarah Garrett, Environmental Science teacher at Jackson Middle School, hopes that by completing environmental

service learning projects "my students will become better informed citizens, who can critically think about an environmental issue, design a solution and have the courage to follow through with actions necessary to remedy the problem."

anoka.k12.mn.us
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ECO ITEMS OF INTEREST



Get to Know Nature Contest

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. This contest is all about having fun and spending creative time outdoors.

Deadline: Entries due November 1, 2016

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

How Will You End Littering Video Contest

The "How Will You . . . End Littering?" Video Contest open to students in grades 9-12, asks the next generation of community stewards to share their ideas about how to end

littering by educating and motivating people to properly dispose of their trash.

Deadline: Entries due November 7, 2016

Website: endlittering.strutta.me/

Land Conservation Video Contest

How do you connect with the land? Do you play on it? Make your living from it? Explore it? Just look at it? Share your connection to the land and how that makes your life better in a short video for the chance to win up to \$4,000. Open to ages 13 and older.

Deadline: Entries due by noon November 11, 2016

Website: www.landismy.org/

International Compost Awareness Week Poster Contest

The U.S. Composting Council is accepting submissions for its annual poster contest. The winner will receive \$500 and his or her poster will be used to promote 2017 International Compost Awareness Week. This year's theme is, "Compost! Healthy Soil, Healthy Food."

Deadline: Entries due November 14, 2016

Website: compostfoundation.org/ICAW-Poster-Contest

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Edison High School Leads the State in Going Green

School partners with community stakeholders to protect environment, offer unique hands-on learning opportunities for students



The community garden, under construction. Photo Courtesy Mississippi Watershed Management Organization.

Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

On Sept. 9, Thomas Edison High School in Northeast Minneapolis celebrated its transformation into a first-of-its-kind “Green Campus,” featuring state-of-the-art stormwater and energy-efficiency measures that together create an outdoor environmental laboratory.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place just before the season’s first home football game.

Students, teachers and local officials gathered on the school’s new plaza to mark the completion of a five-year effort to make Edison a model of green infrastructure.

“Edison’s green campus is an innovative project that will benefit students as well as neighbors. It’s a great moment for the community, and an example of what can happen when schools, local governments and neighborhood groups

work together,” said Kevin Reich, Minneapolis City Council Member and Mississippi Watershed Management Organization Board Chair.

Highlights of Edison’s new green campus features include:

- A stormwater re-use system will store up to 110,000 gallons of captured rainwater, which will be used to irrigate the new athletic field.
- The school’s redesigned parking lot can capture and treat more than 47,000 gallons of polluted stormwater runoff at a time.
- A “solar canopy” over the plaza (to be installed this fall) will generate enough energy to power up to 53 homes per year, offsetting 40 percent of the school’s electricity needs.
- A new community garden and greenhouse will provide hands-on learning opportunities for students.

The stormwater infrastructure at Edison is projected to capture and treat an estimated 1.5 million gallons of runoff each year that would have otherwise drained untreated to the Mississippi River. Each of the new green campus features has also been designed in such a way as to be integrated into the school’s educational programming, such as Edison’s International Baccalaureate Biology courses, which have incorporated this impressive infrastructure as powerful learning tools.

“We are thrilled to have the state’s first green campus at Edison,” said Superintendent Ed Graff. “We see this as a way to strengthen the engagement of our students, while connecting learning to their environment and community.”

The school’s green campus initiative came about through a first-of-its-kind collaboration between Minneapolis Public Schools, the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and the Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association.

The changes at Edison are also part of a neighborhood initiative to transform the area with new public art and green space, culminating in a first-of-its-kind community Green Campus.

“Over almost 20 years of community conversation and action, we have seen the Green Campus evolve into something bigger than we imagined, moving us forward in our goals surrounding community resilience and sustainability. We are excited to celebrate this phase of Green Campus development with all the project partners, and look forward to what the next 20 years could bring,” said HNIA Board President Jared Hoffman.

edison.mpls.k12.mn.us
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ECO ITEMS OF INTEREST



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World of 7 Billion — Student Video Contest

The contest is open to all middle and high school students worldwide and the deadline for submissions is February 23rd, 2017. We’re hoping that by giving teachers enough lead time that they’ll be able to incorporate the contest into their syllabi. Participating teachers can receive free curriculum resources and the student winners receive cash prizes.

Deadline for submissions: Thursday February 23, 2017

Website: www.worldof7billion.org/student-video-contest

Stephen J. Brady Stop Hunger Scholarships

The Stephen J. Brady Stop Hunger Scholarships recognize and reward students

(kindergarten-graduate school) who are working to eliminate hunger in America. If your students volunteer in a school or community garden, they might be eligible. Each student selected as a scholarship recipient will receive a \$5,000 scholarship, as well as a \$5,000 grant donated in their name to the hunger-related charity of their choice in their local community.

Deadline: Apply by December 5, 2016

Website: us.stop-hunger.org/home/grants.html

Farm to School Grant Program

The purpose of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm to School Grant Program is to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Planning grants range from \$20,000 to \$45,000, and Implementation and Support Service grants range from \$65,000 to \$100,000

Deadline: Applications are due December 8, 2016

Website: www.fns.usda.gov/grant-opportunities/farm-to-school



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IT'S FREE

North Junior High Student Places First at State Fair for Project About Wildlife Gardening, Conservation

Wildlife gardening is more than just a passion for 13-year-old Felix Fettig, and it won him top honors at this year's Minnesota great get-together.

Hopkins Public Schools

When North Junior High eighth-grader Felix Fettig talks about native vegetation, reptiles, or anything environmental, his face lights up. His passion for conserving the natural beauty of Minnesota took root when he was just a toddler. And his love of the subject is evident in his work with wildlife gardening, a venture that won him first-place honors this summer at the Minnesota State Fair.

What started as a project for his Gifted and Talented ALM (Autonomous Learner Model) program last school year has blossomed into an award-winning hobby taking up much of his parents' backyard. At North, students in an ALM elective class complete an in-depth research project in an area of interest. With the help of educator Kristin Lee, Fettig naturally turned to nature. Over a period of about four months, he watched as his wildlife garden grew, researched conservation efforts, and learned all he could about the environment and native vegetation.

"Wildlife gardening is so important for the environment because native vegetation has an impact on everything," he explained.

"If everybody would plant native vegetation or have a wildlife garden, there would be a lot more pollinators, which would help make more food. If everyone wildlife gardened many species would be doing way better."

After presenting the project and his wildlife gardening website to his class, Fettig's mother suggested he submit it into the State Fair, a decision that would pay off. He entered it into the K-12 division of the technology education category where it was viewed by thousands of fair-goers making their way through the education building. On the first day of the fair, Fettig and his family saw the coveted blue first-place ribbon on his project.

"The project was presented in new medium — my website — so I was excited that it took first place," he said. "It was easy to do this because this is my passion. And my parents were really excited for me and proud of me."

Understanding how humans impact the environment is what Fettig hopes to continue doing for a long time. His aspirations include studying herpetology — the study of reptiles and amphibians — and honing his knowledge



of native vegetation. His ultimate goal is a Ph.D.

"Felix is very passionate about learning how to help the pollinators, how to increase biodiversity, and how to keep balance in nature," Lee said. "He has applied this knowledge to his own backyard and shares this information whenever he is given an opportunity. I'm so proud of Felix."

To view Felix's ALM project and website visit sites.google.com/a/apps.hopkinsschools.org/wildlife-gardens/home-1

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VANTAGE Students Polish Interview Skills and Much More



Minnetonka Public Schools

On the surface, Human Resources Day is an opportunity for VANTAGE students to gain job search skills and practice interviewing. Dig a little deeper and you see it is much more than that. It is a chance for students to build confidence and start their VANTAGE journey on the right foot.

"This event sets the tone for the year," explains Dick Hurrelbrink, VANTAGE Program Director. "For many of these students, it's the first time they have dressed professionally and had to interact with a business professional. This is their chance to start building soft skills like self-assuredness, maintaining eye contact and appropriate body language."

"I wish I had this when I was in high school," says Patrick Karsnick, the Director of Training at a popular coffee shop. Karsnick is a second-time volunteer at the event. "I love helping the VANTAGE students by providing them with experience and feedback interviewing so they are more prepared for the workplace. I have a blast every year."

As the students enter the VANTAGE building for H.R. Day, there is a palpable mixture of nervousness and excitement. "There is a lot of angst over suits and neckties," Hurrelbrink says with a smile. In addition to donning professional attire, students have developed their career portfolios, which include a resume, cover letter and LinkedIn profile.

Maxwell Cavanaugh, a senior in VANTAGE, prepared by researching a company he wanted to apply to. "I reviewed them and went through their website," he said. "Today I also want to learn tips to strengthen my resume, as well as learn how to talk professionally in an interview."

"To get ready for today I practiced my interview questions. I want to gain an understanding of the interview process," says Abigail Baurle, another senior in the VANTAGE program.

The day itself is divided into two sections. The first part includes a panel discussion, with volunteers from the business community — typically H.R. professionals — talking about the do's and don'ts of the application and interview process. The second part allows for small-group interaction in mock interviews.

Five or six students are paired with one of the volunteers for the interviews. The volunteer will take time with each student and ask three or four standard interview questions while reviewing their resume. After all the students have had an opportunity to be interviewed, they are each given specific feedback on their performance.

"I'm always surprised how well prepared and sharp the students are. I don't remember myself being as put together when I was their age. These kids have great questions that are spot on, they are really doing their research," exclaims Karsnick.

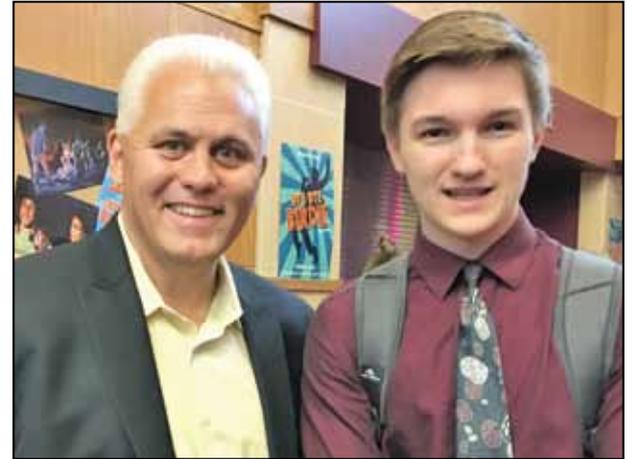
"The students get caring, candid feedback on their portfolio and their soft skills from an H.R. professional," says Hurrelbrink. "It's different than teacher feedback or classroom learning. It isn't theoretical. They are actually doing this and they understand how important it is."

"I really liked being able to get feedback from someone who has experience in this," says Henry Pears, a junior. "I also learned how to conduct myself in an interview and how important body language is."

This annual kickoff event serves as a great benchmark for VANTAGE students, who can compare their portfolios at the end of the program to what they started with at H.R. Day. "Some of the pre and post examples are shared at a year-end School Board meeting and the difference is night and day," comments Hurrelbrink proudly.

Here are a few of the more popular pieces of advice from the volunteers:

- Know about the company you are applying to and have questions prepared. Asking good questions helps to ensure the job is a good fit for you – the structure, work environment, etc. You want the work for the company that is the best fit for you.
- You have one shot at a first impression. Show up on time, dress for the part, and put your best foot forward. It might be your only shot.
- Show enthusiasm. Your affect will go a long way. You don't want the interviewer to have to draw you out.
- It really is ok to say "I don't have experience in that area, but I'm confident I can learn it."



VANTAGE is an innovation project of Minnetonka High School. In this unique new program, students work with a project team to solve real-world problems and learn about the challenges of project-driven work. Under the direction of a licensed teacher and in partnership with professionals, these project teams strive to make a contribution to a partner-defined project while gaining invaluable experience in today's marketplace.

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Essay entries are to be between 400 and 500 words in length. A Word document or PDF is preferred. We will be featuring the six winners in Winter 2017, Vol. 2 issue, which will be released mid-January. The six honorable mentions will be presented in the following three issues. This contest begins on October 1st. Deadline for submissions is January 10, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Minneapolis Language Arts Teacher is 2016 Teacher of the Year



Abdul Wright, who teaches eighth-grade language arts at The Best Academy in Minneapolis, is the 2016 Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

He is the 52nd recipient of the prestigious award, and the first-ever charter school teacher.

An independent selection committee representing Minnesota leaders in education, business and government chooses the Minnesota Teacher of the Year from individuals who are nominated and who then choose to become a candidate.

"Respect is at the center of my values and beliefs as an educator," Wright said. "I try to teach my students that we have to be a model of excellence for the community we want, not



the community we see."

"Mr. Wright embodies what it means to be a transformational teacher," said Meghan Roegge, in her nomination letter for Wright. "He impacts and changes lives every day that he comes to work."

Wright has taught at Best Academy since 2012.

Education Minnesota organizes and underwrites the Teacher of the Year program. Candidates include pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers from public or private schools.

thebestacademy.org
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Minnesota Teacher of the Year nominations opened October 1

Everyone remembers a favorite teacher, someone who motivates and inspires students for a lifetime. Minnesotans have the opportunity again this fall to nominate that unique educator for Minnesota Teacher of the Year.

The Minnesota Teacher of the Year represents the profession as an advocate for education and spokesperson for teachers. The Minnesota Teacher of the Year makes presentations, meets with policymakers and attends frequent meetings.

Nominations open Oct. 1 and remain open through Nov. 15. Nominations can be submitted online by accessing a simple nomination form on www.educationminnesota.org.

The 2017 Teacher of the Year will be named at a ceremony May 7, 2017.

The Minnesota Teacher of the Year also becomes Minnesota's candidate for National Teacher of the Year.

Eligible nominees must meet these criteria:



- Teach in a public or nonpublic Pre-K through 12th-grade school, working at least 50 percent of the time directly with students.
- Hold a bachelor's degree and a Minnesota teaching license.
- Have completed three years of teaching by the nomination deadline.
- Intend to teach during the 2017-18 school year.

Anyone may nominate a teacher. Self-nominations are also accepted.

For more information or to receive a nomination form, call Megan McKeen at 651-292-4872 or 800-652-9073.



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Educators' Road Map to Graduate Studies



There are numerous types of master's degrees in education. The right degree for you will depend on your goals and area of interest. The two main types of graduate degrees in education that people think of are the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) and the Master of Education (M.Ed.). There are also other types of master's degrees in education, including the Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.) and the Master of Arts in Education (M.A.Ed.).

While these degrees are similar in some respects and many use the various terms interchangeably, there are significant differences between programs. Master's programs can focus on a specific area of teaching practice like elementary or secondary education, a particular academic subject, or put a graduate on a track towards school administrator jobs or curriculum and instruction jobs. As a general guideline, master's in education pro-

grams tend to focus on educational leadership and support, whereas master's in teaching programs tend to focus on the development of direct teaching skills.

Types of Graduate Programs Master of Education

A Master of Education degree (M.Ed.) is usually designed for current teachers who want to move into a leadership role or into another branch of education. The topics covered in an M.Ed. program typically concentrate on the theoretical aspects of education. These theoretical studies often include the areas of education research, education policy and reform, and educational leadership. Common concentrations for M.Ed. programs are in instructional design, learning and technology, and curriculum development.

Master of Science in Education and Master of Arts in Education

Master of Science in Education (M.S.Ed.) and Master of Arts in Education (M.A.Ed) degree programs typically focus on building leadership skills to help current educators move into administrative leadership positions. This focus on leadership is one way that M.S.Ed. and M.A.Ed programs tend to differ from other master's degrees, such as the Master of Arts in Teaching. However, M.S.Ed. and M.A.Ed. programs may also have an academic focus; science and math teachers, for example, commonly earn an M.S.Ed. in their content specialization.

Master's in Teaching

Master's in Teaching (M.I.T.) programs are designed for individuals who have a bachelor's degree in a subject other than education and little or no experience in teaching. Such programs are centered on educator preparation in order to help students transition to teaching careers and meet teacher certification requirements. Topics covered in M.I.T. programs include teaching skills and practices, the use of technology in the classroom, and basic education theory. M.I.T. programs that lead to teacher certification also typically include classroom internships and field experiences.

Master of Arts in Teaching

The Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) degree is a popular option for new and experienced teachers who want to develop instructional strategies and skills or build their content expertise. Some M.A.T. programs provide a path to initial certification and are intended for career switchers who already have a bachelor's degree in another subject. M.A.T. degree programs include a focus area such as elementary, middle, or secondary education and usually an academic content area such as mathematics or English.

Master's in Academic Content Areas or Master's Plus Degrees

Example programs include a Master of Arts in English, a Master of Science in Mathematics, or a Master of Arts in History. When these programs include courses in teaching practice or lead to teacher certification they are commonly referred to as "Master's Plus" programs and may be abbreviated as a MAT+, MA+, or MS+, depending on the degree type. Master's programs that focus on academic enrichment in a content focus area can also be a path towards doctoral degrees such as the Doctor of Education or Doctor of Philosophy, which can lead to positions in administration as well as in higher education.



Master's of Education Degree (M.Ed.)

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Learn More: z.umn.edu/199p

Learn More: z.umn.edu/199x

These programs do not provide teacher licensure



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Dynamic Learning With 1:1 Access Begins This Year

Tony Taschner

Communications Department

Rosemount - Apple Valley - Eagan Public Schools

Independent School District 196

Shortly after the school year began in September, each student in grades 7, 8 and 9 was issued a district-owned iPad Mini to use as a tool for their learning at school and home.

This is the first year of a three-year rollout of the district's learning and technology vision to provide a dynamic learning experience with 1:1 access for all students in grades 4-12. Grades 10, 11 and 12 will be added in fall 2017, followed by grades 4, 5 and 6 in fall 2018. Students in pre-K to grade 3 will also have increased access to technology in their classrooms, but not at a 1:1 ratio.

"As adults, we use technology every day to access information, communicate and complete tasks at work and home," said Director of Teaching and Learning Steve Troen. "That's the college- and career-ready world we are preparing our students to enter after graduation. To be ready, they need to be using technology to access and analyze information, to collaborate and communicate with their classmates, and to problem-solve, innovate and create." Students will also learn digital citizenship skills on how to use technology safely and appropriately.

The vision for a dynamic learning experience with 1:1 access was developed by a district task force three years ago. Without

funding to begin fully implementing the vision right away, the district recruited approximately 80 teachers who volunteered to teach 1:1 beta classes over the last two years. Troen said the purpose of the beta classes was to build greater capacity among a core group of teachers who can now help other teachers effectively use technology in a 1:1 classroom environment. Some of the beta teachers helped present workshops this summer that were attended by more than 500 teachers in grades 7, 8 and 9 as they prepare for the rollout of 1:1 access with their students this fall.

Mark Aronson, a fifth-grade teacher at Diamond Path Elementary School of International Studies, was a 1:1 beta teacher for the last two years. He said the technology gets students more engaged in their learning and empowers them to create a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom walls. "The learning doesn't stop when the bell rings at the end of the day," Aronson said. "My students are constantly seeking out new information and are eager to share it with their peers. In that sense, the technology has created an even stronger culture of community in the classroom. The students feel connected to one another as learners and creators."

Funding for 1:1 access comes from the \$5 million per year, 10-year capital project levy that was part of the November 2015 referendum question approved by district voters.



There is no cost for students to participate, but families may choose to purchase an optional protection plan offered by the district for \$20 per year. If purchased, the plan covers the cost of repair and replacement of the iPad if not purposely damaged or lost. Theft is covered with a police report. All district owned devices can be tracked and disabled to reduce the likelihood of theft. If stolen, the iPad will continue to report to the district's management server if/when it is connected to Wi-Fi. Once that happens, the district is able to request the GPS location of the device.

The district will manage the iPads with Apple ID accounts created for each student

when they receive their device. These accounts cannot be used in Apple's App or iTunes stores. Students will be able to choose apps in the District 196 app store, which offers age-appropriate, instructional apps only. In addition, web filtering that occurs in school will also be in place outside of school, regardless of where the device connects to Wi-Fi.

www.district196.org
(651) 423-7700



Jackson Student Saves Family From Fire

Continued from Page 1

schools often invite members of law enforcement or firefighters to their classes for special presentations or lessons.

Hearing Ruth recount how she used lessons from those fire prevention visits at school were validating for Chief Prillaman and Mark Lynde, Brooklyn Park's fire prevention coordinator.

"I can't begin tell you how impressive her actions were," Prillaman said. "It's really the ultimate payback — that our efforts work in trying to educate our youth."

"We got our victory," Lynde said.

But Ruth's heroic actions didn't stop at calling 9-1-1 or evacuating her family until the fire department came. Her family also had a small, up to date fire extinguisher inside the house. Once her family was evacuated, Ruth said she quickly read the instructions on the side of the can, and tried to put the fire out.

"When we got to the house, the front door was open but there wasn't any smoke, which I thought was odd," Lynde said. "When we got

inside, there was a coating (of fire extinguisher suppressant) all over the kitchen and stove. She definitely put the fire out."

"She probably saved the house," Prillaman said.

When asked about getting the award for her actions, Ruth acknowledged it was "pretty neat," but then got emotional.

"I'm just happy my family is ok," she said.

"What you did was amazing," Prillaman said, comforting her with a hug.

anoka.k12.mn.us
(763) 506-5200



Community Makes Media Center the Heart of their School

Continued from Page 1

ration is needed — allowing small groups or large groups to come together. Chairs and stools are designed to bounce, wiggle or rock, which allows students to maintain movement and focus simultaneously. The large space can house several classes of students at once, and allows teachers flexibility not found in their traditional classrooms.

"This allows us to think differently about how we use space," said Principal Carolyne Zieske. "Our teachers can be much more creative in the types of activities they do with students, and students can be much more engaged and energized in their learning."

The concept for the new media center began in April 2014 during a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meeting located in the previously drab and outdated media center. Jaeger and a few other parents and teachers began to talk about renovating the space and focused on the need to make it flexible for teachers and inviting for students. Several brainstorming committee meetings later, a

holistic concept was solicited and assembled by a design firm that has worked with the district on past projects. The largest challenge to the project — finding the nearly \$53,000 in funding — was eventually overcome with a combination of PTA budgeting, two Give to the Max fundraising events, and a community donation drive.

"Our community came together to make this happen," Jaeger said. "So much of the work world requires collaboration and this environment will help our kids to learn how to do that. Our hope is that kids will really enjoy it and that they'll learn more — that's the key."

stillwater.k12.mn.us
(651) 351-8340



Young Scholars Expand Their Horizons With STEM



*Carissa Hopkins-Hoel
Communications Coordinator
St. Cloud Area School District 742*

Giggles and laughs echo down the halls of Discovery Community School this summer. It is the Young Scholars Summer Camp, and students are working on their project presentations to parents.

Young Scholars is part of the talent development and accelerated services programming of St. Cloud Area School District 742. It is designed to help kids reach their full potential. Students in this program must be creative and divergent thinkers.

Kindergarten through fifth-graders attend the camp. There are four separate units of engineering and design: bubble bonanza, rocket engineering, earthquake engineering and safety parachuting.

Students are grouped together to design and architect their projects.

Bubble bonanza with kindergarten and first-graders is all about creating the perfect design to make the largest bubble and the most

amount of bubbles as well as to figure out if they could change the shape of a bubble.

During the design process, the students use different types of materials to create a bubble-maker: strings, plastic and pipe cleaners.

String is used for the design in creating the largest bubble. The students realize their string would often get tangled. Straps made of electrical ties are then added as handles to help keep the string from entanglement.

They uncover that no matter what shape they make the bubble-maker, the bubbles only appear spherical. However they do discover by using a three-dimensional cube, the bubble inside the cube would remain a cube. Using a straw dipped in the soap solution and then gently blowing on the edge of the existing bubble would create two bubbles with one straight edge.

“Remember: gently now,” says Jean Sautner, second grade teacher.

Giggling while performing the demonstration to parents, Miranda Frank gently blows on her straw to attach a second bubble

in the cube.

Second and third grade students are anxious to show-off their engineered designs. Rockets made of different types of paper and shapes are rocketed down the hall to determine flight distance. Planets are aligned down the hallway to measure the launch distance of each rocket.

Hannah Schlueter-Block shares, “We had to think about how the airplanes were made with the tiles and the weight . . . My favorite part [of camp] was blasting the rockets.”

Schlueter-Block’s rocket makes it past Pluto on the first try. After tweaking the design, the rocket launches a little farther.

Fourth and fifth-grade students are trying to save lives in an earthquake. They are architecturally redesigning buildings to withstand high-point Richter scale earthquakes.

Lily Mack and Fatuma Hassan explain what the design process is before demonstrating their building design.

1. Ask the question you want answered.
2. Imagine what it would look like.
3. Plan the design.
4. Create the design.
5. Improve on the design.

Popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, tape, paper, cardboard and ping pong balls were

used to build each earthquake resistant structure. Every structure with its unique design is shown to withstand the simulated earthquake.

“Camp was an opportunity to take those kids [Young Scholars] and give them several hours a day to do engineering and hands-on experiences where they were able to apply what they learned in small group Young Scholars to real situations,” says Laura Steabner, licensed coordinator for talent development and accelerated services. “They got to see what real engineers do and replicate some of the things . . . real engineers do. They really got to take what they learned during the school year and work together on a team and collaborate as people do in the real world, to advance that type of thinking and their mindset even more.”

Students experiencing the camp build on the knowledge they’ve acquired during the school year and can’t wait to get back to school to continue on with their work!

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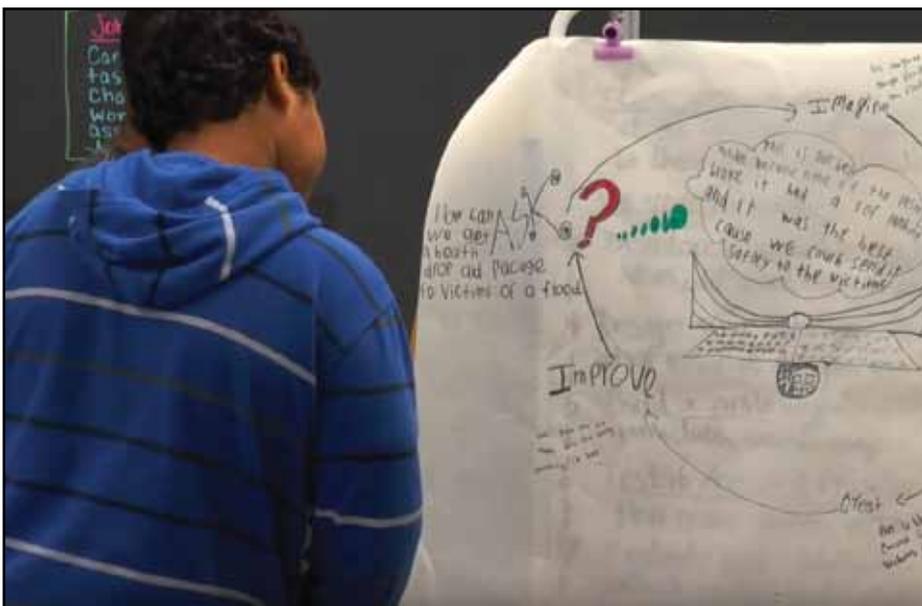
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Student Contests and Awards

Middle School National Science Bowl

The US Department of Energy (DOE) National Science Bowl (NSB) is a nationwide academic competition for middle and high school students that tests knowledge in all areas of science and mathematics. It was created in 1991 to encourage students to excel in mathematics and science and to pursue careers in those fields.

Deadline: Regional competition dates vary.

See the website for specific dates. The national competition will take April 27 through May 1, 2017, April 26 through 30, 2018, and April 25 through 29, 2019.

Website: science.energy.gov/wdts/nsb

Team America Rocketry Challenge

The Team America Rocketry Challenge (TARC) strives to inspire the next generation of engineers and technicians to join the aerospace industry. The challenge is an extra-curricular, hands-on, project-based learning program incorporating aerospace-specific science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Teams of three to 10 students design, build, and fly a rocket. Each year a unique task is included in the challenge.

A pool of over \$100,000 in prizes and scholarships is awarded.

Deadline: Teams must register by December 2, 2016

Website: rocketcontest.org

World Series of Innovation

The Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship's (NFTE) World Series of Innovation, presented by Microsoft, is a fun, experiential activity that allows students ages 14 to 24 to think creatively and invent new products or services that address everyday opportunities. All students are encouraged to participate to develop their creativity and innovative thinking skills.

The winning students receive \$2,000 to share and a prize of \$500 for their school or other nonprofit youth serving organization. Winners may also receive prizes from their category's sponsor.

Deadline: Submissions are due December 15, 2016

Website: innovation.nfte.com

C-SPAN's StudentCam Video Documentary Competition

C-SPAN's StudentCam is an annual national video documentary competition for students in grades 6 through 12. Individual students or teams of up to three students create a short video documentary on the theme of "The Three Branches and You." Each video

documentary should tell a story that demonstrates how a policy, law, or action by either the executive, legislative, or judicial branch has affected the applicant's community.

Deadline: All entries must be uploaded by January 20, 2017

Website: www.studentcam.org

JFK Profile in Courage Essay Contest

The book "Profiles in Courage," written by President John F. Kennedy and published in 1956 when he was a US Senator, inspires the 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: Applications are accepted September 1, 2016 through January 4, 2017

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

Letters About Literature Contest

The Letters About Literature contest is a reading and writing promotion program of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. Students read a fiction or nonfiction book, poem, or speech, and then write a letter to the author (living or dead) about how the book affected them personally.

Deadline: Entries for grades 9 through 12 are due December 2, 2016. Entries for grades 4 through 8 are due January 9, 2017

Website: www.read.gov/letters/

Doodle 4 Google

Doodle 4 Google is an annual program that invites kindergarten through grade 12 students in the United States to use their artistic talents to think big and redesign the Google homepage logo for millions to see. This year, students can create a doodle that tells the world "What I see for the future." Kids have all kinds of things that make them unique, so they can use all kinds of materials to create their doodles, from crayons, to clay, to graphic design, even food and video games.

A scholarship of \$30,000 and a technology grant of \$50,000 are awarded

Deadline: Entries are due December 2, 2016

Website: doodles.google.com/d4g/

Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Competition

ExploraVision is a science competition that engages students in research and devel-

opment, with students on the winning teams receiving prizes of US savings bonds. Working in teams of two, three, or four members, students study a technology of interest and predict what that technology might be like in 20 years, and then explore what is necessary to make their visions a reality.

Deadline: Projects are due February 6, 2017

Website: www.exploravision.org/what-exploravision

Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest

Teachers of grades 6-12 are eligible to the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest, which focuses on how science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) can be applied to help improve local communities.

Deadline: Applications due November 15, 2016

Website: www.samsung.com/us/solvefortomorrow/home.html

Real World Design Challenge

The Real World Design Challenge (RWDC) is an annual competition that provides high school students the opportunity to work on real world engineering challenges in a team environment. Each year, student teams are asked to address a challenge that confronts our nation's leading industries.

Deadline: Teams must register by November 21, 2016

Website: www.realworlddesignchallenge.org/index.php

Ocean Pals Poster Contest

Beneath the Sea's Ocean Pals Poster Contest is an environmental education-through-art program with the purpose of encouraging young people to become aware of and share their concerns for the marine environment through poster art. This year's theme is "Turtle Turmoil."

Deadline: Entries due December 22, 2016

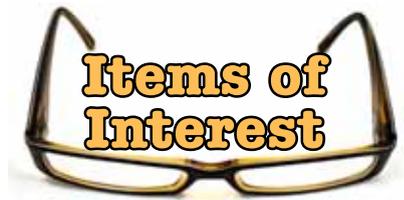
Website: www.beneaththesea.org/ocean-pals/44617

Young Writers Contest

The Young Writers Contest seeks to encourage young people ages 10-18 to express themselves and their thoughts through writing and literacy skills. Have your students pick an environmental theme and start writing! Winners will be selected based on originality, creativity, audience appeal and writing skill. Winners will be chosen in two categories, ages 10-13 and ages 14-18.

Deadline: Entries due December 31, 2016

Website: booklogix.com/young-writers-contest



Science and Engineering Apprenticeship Program

The Science and Engineering Apprenticeship Program (SEAP) provides an opportunity for students to participate in research at a Department of Navy (DoN) laboratory during the summer. The goals of SEAP are to encourage participating students to pursue science and engineering careers, to further their education via mentoring by laboratory personnel and their participation in research, to make them aware of DoN research and technology efforts, and to prepare students to serve as positive role models for their peers by encouraging other high school students to take more science and mathematics courses.

Deadline: Applications are due November 30, 2016

Website: seap.asee.org/program_details

Summer Research Education Experience Program

The purpose of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Summer Research Education Experience Program is to provide a high-quality research experience for high school and college students and for science teachers during the summer academic break.

Grants up to \$100,000 in direct costs per year are awarded

Deadline: Optional Letters of Intent are due 30 days before the deadline. Applications are due March 23, 2017 and March 23, 2018

Website: grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-15-184.html

Paul Gagnon Prize

The National Council for History Education (NCHE) annually awards the Paul Gagnon Prize. The prize is awarded to either a teacher in kindergarten through grade 12 who exhibits exceptional historical scholarship, or to individuals or groups that have made a significant contribution to the promotion of history education.

Deadline: Applications are due December 9, 2016

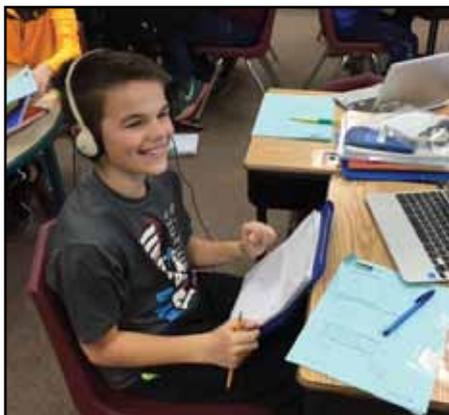
Website: www.nche.net/awards

Teachers of Critical Languages Program

The Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP) is open to all public, private, and charter schools in the United States that have developing or established foreign language programs in Mandarin Chinese or Arabic. TCLP is

Continued on Page 16

Let's Do the Math



Jessica McMahon
Digital Learning Specialist
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools

Flipping Math in 5th Grade

Teachers Scott Geisler and Jeff Sillman wanted to push themselves out of their comfort zone. They'd heard about flipping lessons, and so both teachers created a Personal Learning Goal to flip units in math for their fifth grade students. Flipping their lessons, they prerecorded their direct teaching using Screencast-O-Matic, a free screencasting software.

Although the first recording was deemed "boring" by the students, student response has been very positive. The two teachers learned

to add names, sound effects and even the class stuffed chicken to the videos to capture student attention better. Students are very engaged report both teachers, and watch the videos regularly at home. They come to class ready to apply the new skills, and teachers get more personalized time to work with students who need more help.

Geisler, who teaches the more advanced math class, discovered a problem soon into the flipped unit. "We had extra time in class since many students were quick to pick up the learning from the flipped lesson." Geisler decided to put the students to work for him. The students began to download and try out free math apps and report back to the class. They had to use critical thinking skills to determine which apps were worth using in class, and which were just another flashcard app. So far they've discovered a few apps that Geisler plans to use in the future.

Both Geisler and Sillman plan to continue their exploration of flipped math class in the future. It was a good experience for teachers and students alike. They were able to begin to develop learners who are responsible for their own learning. Students worked very hard on learning math and have been able to take ownership in a new way.

Making Music in Math

Students in Andy Martin's Math Projects class were working together to create music, quite literally. The students were creating a PVC pipe instrument. The students were all assigned a specific musical note, and after applying a formula that factored in the diameter of the PVC pipe they had, the speed of sound (in inches), and the frequency (in hertz) of their note, students got a number that indicated the length the PVC pipe needed to be. Students then used a saw and cut the pipe to the correct length and sanded the pipe edges for best optimal sound.

There was an environment of respect in the room that allowed students to work together toward a collaborative goal. Students worked together to check each other's math, helped brace the PVC pipes as they cut and everyone had a hand in sanding. Martin also had the students help devise a method of holding the pipes together. They had to keep each pipe secure and immovable, while keeping some space to allow you to hit the correct pipe.

The concept of the Math Projects came out of the Innovation Academy workshops with Scott McLeod. McLeod pushes thinking of what school and classes look like, and Martin wanted to push his students to think



in new ways. Students must have completed Algebra and Geometry to be in the Math Projects class. Students do a variety of hands on learning in the class, and even make trips to the Fab Lab in Prior Lake High School. These students are heading the direction of being innovative leaders of the future!

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Toshiba America Grant Program for 6-12 Science and Math Educators

The foundation strongly encourages projects planned and led by individual teachers or teams of teachers for their own classrooms. Successful projects tap into the natural curiosity of students, enable students to frame their own scientific questions, and incorporate the expertise of community partners. Applications must be for project-based learning.

Deadline: Grades 6 through 12 applications are accepted year-round. Requests for grants of more than \$5,000 are due August 1 and February 1, annually

Website: www.toshiba.com/taf/612.jsp

Air Force Association's Educator Grant 2016-2017

The Educator Grant program promotes aerospace education activities in classrooms from kindergarten through twelfth grades. The program encourages development of innovative aerospace activities within the prescribed curriculum.

Grants of \$250 are awarded

Deadline: Applications are due November 18, 2016

Website: www.afa.org/informationfor/teachers/k12grants/educatorgrants

Community Action Grants

Special consideration is given to projects focused on kindergarten through grade 12 and community college girls' and women's achievement in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, and to those projects that seek community partners such as local schools or school districts, businesses, and other community-based organizations.

One-year awards range from \$2,000 to \$7,000, and two-year awards range from \$5,000 to \$10,000

Deadline: Applications are due January 15, 2017

Website: www.aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards/community-action-grants

Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation Grants

The Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation supports programs in arts, community, education, environment, health care, and peace. Recent awards include music lessons for people with disabilities, children's theater,

learning center, writing education, after-school and summer activities, literacy programs, and services for at-risk children and youth.

Deadline: Applications are due November 30, 2016

Website: dudleytdoughertyfoundation.org/submit_grant

Voya Foundation Grants

The Voya Foundation supports nonprofit organizations addressing a variety of community needs and resources. The foundation maintains the following two giving priorities:

- Financial education
- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education

Grants of \$2,500 and greater are awarded

Deadline: Applications are due December 9, 2016

Website: corporate.voya.com/corporate-responsibility/investing-communities/voya-foundation-grants

American Academy of Dermatology's Shade Structure Grant Program

The AAD Shade Structure Grant Program awards grants of up to \$8,000 to public schools and non-profit organizations for installing permanent shade structures for outdoor locations that are not protected from the sun, such as playgrounds, pools or recreation spaces.

Deadline: Applications are due November 28, 2016

Website: www.aad.org/members/volunteer/shade-structure-program

Project Produce: Fruit and Veggie Grants for Schools

The Chef Ann Foundation and Skoop have teamed up to help schools increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables for children and youth, and nutrition education in schools. The purpose of Project Produce is to create planned lunchroom activities to showcase and taste fresh vegetables and fruits. Proposed projects must be planned with the intention of offering activities to all students in the school building.

Grants of \$2,500 are awarded

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round

Website: www.chefannfoundation.org/programs-and-grants/project-produce

Environmental Advocacy Grants

The Cornell Douglas Foundation provides small grants to organizations that promote the foundation's vision: advocating for environmental health and justice, encouraging stewardship of the environment, and furthering respect for sustainability of resources.

Awards range from \$10,000 to \$15,000

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round

Website: www.cornelldouglas.org/apply

Schoolyard Garden Grants

The Schoolyard Ecology Exploration (SEE) program at the University of Minnesota, in partnership with the US Forest Service, seeks to increase kindergarten through grade 12 student interest and knowledge about monarchs and ecological processes through direct observation and authentic inquiry-based activities conducted in their schoolyard garden.

Grants up to \$1,000 are awarded

Deadline: Proposals are due Dec. 16, 2016

Website: monarchlab.org/education-and-gardening/gardening-for-monarchs/garden-grants

Let's Move Salad Bars to Schools

K-12 school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program that serve at least 100 reimbursable meals are eligible to receive a six-foot (five-well) salad bar package.

Website: www.saladbars2schools.org

The Harry Chapin Foundation Education Grant

The mission of the Harry Chapin Foundation is to support organizations that have demonstrated their ability to dramatically improve the lives and livelihood of people by helping them to become self-sufficient. The foundation focuses its grant making on community education programs, arts-in-education programs, and agricultural and environmental programs.

Grants up to \$10,000 are awarded

Deadline: Applications accepted year-round

Website: www.harrychapinfoundation.org/focus_focusandguidelines.php#WhatWeHowMuch

Instrumental Music Grants

The Fender Music Foundation awards instruments and equipment to eligible music instruction programs that are part of US public schools or qualified nonprofit organizations. The instruments and equipment are lightly used, blemished, or otherwise imperfect and have been collected from manufacturers and retailers.

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round

Website: www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/grants-info



Continued from Page 14

designed to increase the number of Americans teaching and studying Mandarin and Arabic. The program sponsors teachers from China, Egypt, or Morocco to spend an academic year in participating US schools.

Deadline: Host school applications are due January 23, 2017

Website: www.americancouncils.org/programs/teachers-critical-languages-program-tclp

Prudential Spirit of Community Youth Awards

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards recognize outstanding community service by students in grades 5-12. State honorees are awarded \$1,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C. To be eligible, a young person must be in grade 5-12 as of November 8, have engaged in a volunteer activity that occurred at least partly during the 12 months prior to the date of application, and complete an application form and submit it to a school principal or the head of an officially designated local organization.

Deadline: Applications due November 8, 2016

Website: spirit.prudential.com

Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship

The Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship Program offers current K-12 mathematics, technology, engineering, and science classroom teachers with demonstrated excellence in teaching, an opportunity to serve in the national public policy arena.

During the Fellowship, each Fellow receives a monthly stipend of \$6,000 plus a \$1,000 housing allowance. There is also a moving/relocation allowance and a professional travel budget.

Deadline: Apply by 8 p.m. Nov. 17, 2016

Website: science.energy.gov/wdts/einstein

Gee Whiz Kids Award for Community Service

The Heart of America Foundation's Gee Whiz Kids Award is designed to honor children age 12 and under who have made a difference in the lives of others through acts of caring and compassion.

Deadline: Nominations due Dec. 1, 2016

Website: theheartofamerica.wufoo.com/forms/w7jd3qy0lm5m0d

Meet Sydney Raley, Creek Valley Fourth Grader and Autism Awareness Advocate

Communications
Edina Public Schools

April was Autism Awareness Month, when groups work to increase understanding about autism spectrum disorder (ASD). However, students at Creek Valley Elementary, who have had the benefit of being classmates with Sydney Raley, already know a lot about autism because she has taught them.

“It is my tradition to read a book to my class called *ASD and Me*,” Sydney said. She has ASD and is a bit of an expert. “Sometimes people don’t know what it means to have autism. They think it means you can’t speak, but autism has a spectrum and I’m on one side of it.”

Sydney feels it is important to share information about herself and ASD with her classmates during the first days of school. She has been helping her peers learn about ASD since kindergarten. “It is so they can get a feel for me, so if I am having a situation they will be able to find the perfect solution to help me,” she said. Sydney also gets a helping hand from paraprofessional Cyri Prescott, specifically during math and choice time when Sydney needs encouragement to stay focused on the tasks at hand. But some of Sydney’s schoolwork benefits from her

unique take on things.

Having ASD means that “your brain thinks different than everyone else’s,” Sydney said. She has a talent for instant recall -- a photographic memory. Her mom says she has “super brain powers” and her dad calls her an “encyclopedia of knowledge.” One sign of autism can be to have a lasting and intense interest in specific topics. Sydney loves to focus her photographic recall of information on one of her favorite people in history — Abraham Lincoln.

“My love for him started in first grade when I saw a ‘History Comes to Life’ performance about Lincoln. It changed my life forever!” she said. “I was like a sponge and wanted to get as many facts as I could.” She has visited Ford’s Theater and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. and looks forward to going to Springfield, Ill. some day. She can tell you how tall Lincoln was with and without his top hat on, and all of the jobs that Lincoln held, prior to becoming president. “I just thought, wow this guy had so much leadership and bravery to keep our country together during the Civil War.”

She also loves the music of Frank Sinatra, jazz and many other types of music and was moved by the recent death of Prince. Feeling the need to do something, her classmates helped her make posters to

put on lockers in his memory. Another interest is cooking. She is a big fan of Master Chef and Chopped on the Food Network. “I hope to be on Chopped Junior someday,” she said. “I have a cake recipe that I would like to make . . .” And she can tell you the recipe and all of the measurements by memory, if you are interested.

Sydney said talking with others about ASD has been a positive experience. “It has worked mighty fine. All of my classmates help me and sometimes they even look up to me.”

Her advice to students, or anyone who is getting to know someone with autism, is pretty practical. “Don’t be afraid to be their friend,” she said. “You can learn a lot from a kid who has autism, such as interesting facts – like how you have 206 bones in your body.”

And she has words of wisdom for other students who have autism, too. “It isn’t bad to have autism. You are different, but every-



one is different. If everyone was the same this world would be a very boring place!” she said. “Being friends with someone who is different is pretty nice. My name is Sydney and I am EPS!”

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Edina High School Senior Earns National Recognition as 2016 Kennedy Center Emerging Young Artist



Communications
Edina Public Schools

I have autism and I see the world very differently than most. I notice the smallest details that most people ignore – people have a tendency to ignore me because I have a disability. One way I see myself existing in this world is by capturing my reflection in everyday scenarios. Because my autism can be a barrier for me to relate

to the “normal” world, when I capture my reflection in a window, the glass acts as a barrier to whatever is behind the window. In my artwork, the thing behind the reflection is my representation of the normal world and I am caught in another plane that runs parallel to the world in which everyone else lives. By capturing my image in this “in between” state, I’m re-inventing myself in a way that the outside world cannot ignore

me anymore. By looking at my work, I am present in their world. Being present is what motivates me to create.

- Harrison Heinks
Artist Statement for Vanity

Harrison Heinks, an Edina High School senior, was named an emerging artist by VSA, the international organization on arts and disability, and part of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

In his photograph, Vanity, Harrison shows how he believes the world sees him and his existence. The theme for the 2016 Emerging Young Artist Competition was (Re) Invention, and artists were challenged to create work that “exemplifies themes of renewal and self-discovery.”

Harrison remembers well the day he took the photograph. It was late spring, and the sky was gray. “It was the perfect day to get great colors and depth,” he said. “When I heard I received the award, I was first shocked, then I exploded to joy and happiness.”

The 15 Emerging Young Artist winners will travel to Washington, D.C., this week to kick off the yearlong national tour of the (Re) Invention exhibition. This will be Harrison’s first trip to the nation’s capitol, however it is

not the first national trip his art has provided him. In 2013, Harrison earned a gold medal in the National Scholastic Art & Writing competition for his sculpture, The Homeless Shoes, which led to a trip to Carnegie Hall in New York City.

“I am proud that my art has gotten this far,” Harrison said. “Many people get to see the emotion my art portrays. I wonder what they will say. I just want to be known in the world, and there is so much goodness in the world that can be portrayed.”

While Harrison’s photograph shows how he believes others see him, he described how he would like to be seen. “I want others to see me as a good person. A normal kid with a fantastic mind,” He said. “I like my autism; it’s a part of me, like my very soul. Without it, I would be a blank slate.”

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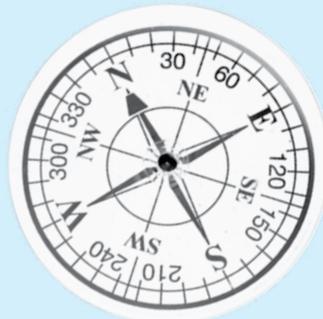
Navigating MSP Airport

The Navigating MSP Airport program includes monthly events, all designed specifically for individuals with autism, that guide families through the steps of an airport visit, from walking in the door to finding their seats on a plane.

During the Navigating MSP Airport event, families will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves with airport and travel procedures. Children will practice entering the airport, obtain a security pass, go through screening at a TSA security checkpoint and walk through the airport to a boarding gate. To culminate their experience, children and their families will board an aircraft and find their seats. Please note that the aircraft will remain on the ground.

In addition to preparing families for a positive travel experience, the Navigating MSP Airport program also will provide a valuable training and awareness opportunity for airport, airline and TSA personnel to learn how to accommodate children with autism and other special needs.

We had an amazing time on the tour. We were warmly greeted and taken on a very informative tour with a great tour guide. Meeting the pilot



and boarding the plane was awesome. When our son got on the plane, the noise was a bit overwhelming, and when he sat down in his seat, he said he didn’t think he would be able to fly on our upcoming trip. BUT, after spending some time on the plane and hearing from the captain, his anxiety began to subside. I know he will still be anxious when we leave, but he has a familiarity with the process now that will help make our trip more successful.

[www.ausm.org/
navigating-msp-airport.html](http://www.ausm.org/navigating-msp-airport.html)



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* National Autism Indicators Study, Drexel University

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