FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN...

The Morris School District is committed to bringing “real-world” STEM experiences to all students, both inside the classroom and out in the field. Classroom extension programs and special pre-professional opportunities are embedded into a levels of instruction, from Pre-K through 12th grade, in order to provide students with authentic, hands-on learning and help them develop essential problem-solving skills. The District partners with national programs such as Project Lead The Way, Girls Who Code, Vex Robotics, Technology Student Association, CyberStart America, Cyber Patriot, The American Rocketry Competition, and the National Society of Black Engineers, among many other organizations dedicated to introducing the next generation of graduates to a range of career pathways and burgeoning areas of study within Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

In both virtual and in-person forums, students at Morristown High School and Frelinghuysen Middle School availed themselves of numerous co-curricular opportunities in STEM this year, and several teams of students received well-deserved recognition for their achievements. more on page 3>

STEM Programs Offer a Platform for Problem-Solving and Career Exploration

In the Spring of 2020, the height of the pandemic, it was challenging to feel connected to friends, family, co-workers, and community members. We longed to participate and cheer on school sports teams, watch students pose for prom photos, and sign yearbooks. The Morris School District schools were closed for in-person instruction, but the camaraderie among our community remained strong.

In June 2020, to foster a sense of community, the Morris Educational Foundation launched Morristown Colonial Nation, a platform for Morristown High School alumni and supporters to stay connected. Through Morristown Colonial Nation, alumni, community members, businesses, students, staff, friends, family, and supporters of district students can stay up-to-date with exciting news, connect with old friends, and find meaningful ways to engage in supporting our students and schools—ALL FOR FREE! more on page 6>

Morristown Colonial Nation - Your Home for Past, Present, and Future Morris School District Connections

One of the disciplines most impacted by COVID precautions was music—a perennial strength in the Morris School District, where students typically benefit from dedicated instrumental instruction beginning in 4th grade. But in-person ensembles were not possible for the majority of the school year, so music teachers came up with a range of creative remote alternatives that allowed students to practice their craft and further their music education in entirely new ways, safely at home. David Gallagher, MHS Director of Bands, helped his students view the challenges presented by the pandemic as history-making opportunities: “At the beginning of the school year, I told my students that this would be a year unlike any other. But that along every step of the way, they would be making history. The way they learned, communicated, built relationships, and interacted with music all made history.”

Even the FMS and MHS concerts, which in non-pandemic times draw hundreds of proud families and community members to share our students’ love of music, were translated to a virtual environment for a history-making experience. more on page 6>

Making Music, Making History

This June, the first Estelle Walker Hinkins Scholarship was awarded to a Morristown High School student. The Bethel Church of Morristown established this scholarship to honor Mother Estelle Walker Hinkins, who graduated from Morristown High School in 1897 with honors and the distinction of class prophet, making her the first African American woman to do so.

Following high school, Mother Hinkins attended Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio, where she earned a degree in Education. After being denied an opportunity to teach in Morris County, she taught in the Atlantic City School District but remained committed to the youth of Morristown, and along with Mrs. Early, started the Phyllis Wheatley Women’s Club on Spring Street. One of the club’s main focuses was teaching children how to read.

Her former students fondly remembered Mother Hinkins as “strict.” They were probably unaware that Miss Estelle, as she was called, was the granddaughter of former slaves in Morris County and desired the best education for her students so that they would never allow that history to repeat itself. more on page 6>

Alumni Spotlight: Estelle Walker Hinkins

Alumni Spotlight: Estelle Walker Hinkins
MHS Equity & Inclusion Student Council Receives State Recognition as Agents of Change

A dedicated and passionate group of students at Morristown High School has been working diligently over the last year to help the MHS actualize its goals for equity, inclusion, and anti-racism. They are members of the MHS Equity and Inclusion Student Council, which was recently selected to represent Morris County for the NJ State Board of Education Student Recognition Program. The group was recognized for this distinction at the State’s Student Recognition Award Ceremony.

According to Interim Executive County Superintendent Dr. Timothy Purnell, the MHS E&I Student Council created a submission that was not only well-crafted and engaging, but which stood out to the judging panel because of its “multi-faceted approach to creating an anti-racist environment.”

With the support and guidance of MHS educators Matthew Carmel and Tanya Cepeda, the students have used their powerful voices, courageous conversations, and advocacy to drive important changes to district systems and raise awareness of the impact that racism and racist acts have on students and faculty. As a result, their actions have been their top priority this year. Along with completing their yearly studies, they have dedicated endless hours to this endeavor. This is a well-deserved honor.

Since June of 2020, the Council has partnered with both high school and Central Office administration to effect real change in the District. Amongst their many accomplishments this past year, they provided outreach to MSD elementary schools about the importance of anti-racism. They have also worked with Central Office staff on a very difficult topic—microaggressions. Their legacy of leadership is beyond compare.

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The Equity and Inclusion Student Council Executive Board, 2020-21

Matthew Carmel
Tanya Cepeda

Together We Did!
The pandemic didn’t stop the Morris Educational Foundation from hosting its annual premier fundraiser, Morristown ONSTAGE, which returned in March as an all-virtual event. The show sold out and was watched by supporters from near and far, including 21 states and five countries!

Finalists shined with awe-inspiring performances, and the MEF awarded $1,000 to the 1st place winners. Right Wings (17 and older) and Mayo Brides (18 and under). Both winners will also perform at Mayo Performing Arts Center when Morristown ONSTAGE returns in 2022. In addition, as the top two vocalists, Mayo Brides and Sabrina Geniesis were presented with the New York Jets Take Flight Award to audition to sing the National Anthem at MetLife Stadium.

Morristown School District music talents were on full display as Aidan’s One-Man-Band, FMS student Aidan Orbeta, winner of the $250 Rossoff Rising Star Award for talent training, performed as Aidan’s One-Man Band: FMS student Aidan Orbeta, winner of the $250 Rossoff Rising Star Award for talent training. Aidan’s One-Man Band: FMS student Aidan Orbeta, winner of the $250 Rossoff Rising Star Award for talent training.

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Students in Christina Doyle’s Dynamics of Healthcare earned a perfect score across all six competitions, only one of nine students in the state to do so. Benson Liu, Ethan Huang, and Vivian Liu were also recognized as high scorers in the state by the League. Under the direction of advisors Marina Bragina and Christiana Kemp, math teachers at Morristown High, the team meets weekly to work through problems using advanced mathematical concepts together as well as enjoy some math activities that are pure fun.

Students in Christina Doyle’s Dynamics of Healthcare course completed group projects for which they had to research how the U.S. healthcare system is in need of improvement and challenges so that our students begin to understand the complexity and importance of healthcare and challenges so that our students begin to understand the complexity and importance of healthcare. They presented their findings to the point person on the topic of their choice at the National U.S. Chemistry Olympiad and Anatomy & Physiology), which allows high school students to earn an academic excellence degree from the National Speech and Debate Association, and many won individual titles throughout the season as well.

The MHS Math Team placed first in Morris County for the third year in a row in the NJ Mathemetic League series of competitions. Mindi Bangalore earned a perfect score across all six competitions, one of only nine students in the state to do so. Benson Liu, Ethan Huang, and Vivian Liu were also recognized as high scorers in the state by the League. Under the direction of advisors Marina Bragina and Christiana Kemp, math teachers at Morristown High, the team meets weekly to work through problems using advanced mathematical concepts together as well as enjoy some math activities that are pure fun.

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MSD IS VIRTUALLY UNSTOPPABLE!

Look at everything we can accomplish this year!
Spring Sports Roundup

In an unprecedented year navigating shortened seasons, schedule changes, and quarantines, our athletic teams made the most of every chance they had to play and focused on their love of the sport. There were many proud moments throughout the 2020-21 school year, and we acknowledge with awe the resilience and remarkable sportsmanship of all of our student-athletes. Here we share some highlights from the spring varsity season:

**Baseball:** 9-12; T. Burns: 1st Team NJAC; A. Watson: 2nd Team NJAC; J. Willette: Honorable Mention NJAC

**Softball:** 6-11; J.R. Jones: 1st Team NJAC, National Division; C. Saia: 2nd Team NJAC, National Division; M. Storno: 2nd Team NJAC, National Division; S. Bedoya: 2nd Team NJAC, National Division; E. Young: Honorable Mention NJAC, National Division

**Boys Lax:** 7-7; L. Davis, 2nd Team All-State, 1st Team Waterman, 1st Team NJAC; J. Byrne: Honorable Mention All-State, 1st Team Waterman, 1st Team NJAC; I. Plott: 2nd Team Waterman, 2nd Team NJAC; J. Hussey: 2nd Team Waterman; L. Chu: Honorable Mention All-State, Honorable Mention NJAC, 2nd Team Waterman; J. Michalski: Honorable Mention Waterman

**Girls Lax:** 12-8; A. Washington: US Lax All-American, 1st Team All-County, 1st Team NJAC; E. Bozza: US Lax All-American, 2nd Team All-County, 2nd Team NJAC; A. Chupak: 2nd Team All-County, 2nd Team NJAC; B. Siverson: 1st Team All-County, 1st Team NJAC; M. O’Brien: 3rd Team All-County, Honorable Mention NJAC; A. Rivetti: Honorable Mention All-County

**Boys Tennis:** 7-10; J. Lim: Honorable Mention NJAC

**Boys Track:** 1-3; J. Brown: NJAC Champion 100m, 1st Team NJAC; J. Coughlin: 2nd Team NJAC; T. Kuelker: 2nd Team NJAC; J. Meza: Honorable Mention NJAC

**Girls Track:** 2-2; J. Robinson: All-County Champion 200; B. Simon: NJSIAA Gr 4, 5th 100, 6th Long Jump, 1st Team NJAC; E. Cerny: NJSIAA Gr 4, 6th 3200, 2nd Team NJAC; T. Webber: 1st Team NJAC; M. Fitzgerald: 1st Team NJAC

**Girls Flag Football:** 1-5-1, inaugural year! MHS is one of 8 schools participating in this pilot league, underwritten by the Jets and Nike. L. McCarthy: Jets Flag Football Scholarship

**Golf:** 18-7; 1st Place Morris County Tournament! North 1 Gr 4 Sectional Champs, 2nd Place NJAC Tournament, 2nd Place Colt Classic, 2nd Place High Bridge Classic; S. Quinn: 3rd Team All-State, 1st Team NJAC, 1st Place Colt Classic, 2nd Place County Tournament, 2nd Place NJAC; A. Yip: 2nd Team NJAC; C. Meldrum: 2nd Team NJAC, 4th Place Highbridge Classic, 6th Place County Tournament; C. Fixter: Honorable Mention NJAC, 2nd Place Girls County Tournament

Thank you, MSD faculty and staff!
Making Music, Making History Cont’d

Through the ingenuity and passions of the middle and high school music directors and student musicians—and thanks to the wonders of modern digital recording software—individual performances were painstakingly pieced together to produce several videos of spirited virtual concerts, featuring the symphonic and jazz bands, orchestras, and choirs.

An added bonus of the video concert format was hearing directly from students who spoke about how important making music with their classmates had been throughout the pandemic. In terms of helping them feel uplifted and connected, even if that connection had taken new and different forms, MHS senior Michael Polonia Vivas remarked, “From online music classes to performing in front of a camera, we’ve all learned something new through the obstacles we’ve faced … Whether the concert is virtual or not, music can still have the power to bring us together in the most unprecedented times.” Eighth grader Hannah Cohen thanked the Morris Educational Foundation for a generous grant that enabled the FMS choir to purchase a set of handbells, which gave students the opportunity to still create beautiful sound together when they were not able to sing as a group in person. “They are so fun, and it is so meaningful for us to be able to make music together during this time,” Hannah said.

The students’ resilience and ongoing commitment to music is not surprising given the role models they have in a talented and enthusiastic cohort of music educators in the Morris School District. For this year’s annual MEF fundraiser, the MSD music teachers formed a band, “Panic! At the Mayo,” and won the Audience Choice award for their lively collaboration.

Music instruction at the elementary level took place in a virtual format most of the academic year, but students still had opportunities to apply their performance skills. For example, they learned a sign language accompaniment to the song “What a Wonderful World,” as well as the “Cups” rhythm featured by actress Anna Kendrick in the film Pitch Perfect.

Finally, in May, Morristown High School welcomed audiences to the Spring Concert—the District’s first in-person concert since December 2019. Families brought blankets and lawn chairs to the school’s practice field to enjoy live music by the MHS symphonic band, jazz ensemble, and wind ensemble. It was a testament not only to our students’ musical feats but also to their enduring strength and spirit throughout this historic year.
Profiles in Excellence: 
Erica Hartman, MSD Tech Director

From designing the Virtual Emergency Educational Plan (or VEEP) and establishing guidelines for Google Meets, providing professional development and securing new state-of-the-art laptops for teachers, to overseeing the distribution of student Chromebooks and WiFi hotspot devices, organizing tech drive-thru’s for Chromebook repairs, and offering workshops to support district families, Mrs. Hartman worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure that MSD students, teachers, and staff remained well connected.

She credits the District’s ability to successfully transition to virtual learning to the efforts of her entire technology team—a task centered this school year by library/media specialists and guidance counselors, who helped deploy 3,300 Chromebooks to students, 400 MiFis to district families, 900 laptops to teachers, 50 professional learning sessions for hybrid and virtual instruction, and reached a total of 2,100 student tech help tickets!

Hartman and other district leaders have been developing and refining the MSD’s signature blended learning methodologies, which integrate the best of digital learning and the best of face-to-face teaching in developmentally appropriate ways, K-12. As a result, when learning shifted to a virtual platform, even elementary-aged students were comfortable with the district-approved learning apps that had been carefully curated to complement other instructional modalities. The District already had in place a 3.1 Chromebook program at the middle and high schools, along with a web-based Learning Management System. Through ongoing training, teachers had built an arsenal of digital tools over many years. Finally, there was also an established system to identify and redress WiFi disparities among district families so that students could move seamlessly from school to home, and, while other districts had to scramble to launch the technology systems and processes necessary to accommodate remote learning under emergency circumstances, the MSD was able to leverage its strong capabilities in technology and pivot quickly to a virtual environment in March 2020 and keep improving upon those capabilities over the next year under Hartman’s leadership.

Hartman says she has been inspired by the resourcefulness of the District’s teaching and counseling staff: “They came up with great strategies to engage our students and present clear and quality content, and many of them went far outside their comfort zone to learn new programs, applications, and digital teaching methods. As difficult as things were at times, I am so proud of our faculty and staff for the way they rose to the occasion and pushed themselves to make sure our students’ instructional needs were met, no matter what the mode of delivery.”

Erica Hartman

When Superintendent Mackey Pendragon called together his Central Office team in February 2020 to begin planning for emergency virtual learning in the event that schools had to close, the Herculean task fell squarely on the capable shoulders of MSD Director of Technology Integration for Instruction, Erica Hartman.

MHS Tech Staff

Great Year for Girls Swim Team; Molly Webber Named Swimmer of the Year

Despite the unprecedented challenges of virtual meets and COVID-19 protocols, 2021 proved to be another record year for the MHS Girls Swim Team. The leadership of junior Molly Webber, who earned the coveted Girls Swimmer of the Year title, and the supportive spirit of the no-cut team paved the way for a highly successful season for the Colonials. The team finished undefeated (8-0) in the Northwest Jersey Athletic Conference and was ranked 12th in NJSIAA.

Said Coach Donna Gelegonya, “I’m very proud of how they handled this year. It’s hard to stay focused and motivated when you are not competing head to head. They worked together to encourage and support each other, and their sportsmanship and total team effort really shone through.

Season highlights included a decisive win over conference rival Chatham, 95-77. Montclair also placed first in both the 200 medley relay and the 200 free relay. Kelsey MacMillan placed first in the 100 Butterfly, and Molly Webber won both the 100 free and 200 free races. Post-season honors for the powerhouse team were in abundance as well, and MHS was named Division Champions in the NJSIAA's North Jersey Conference and Division Champions in the North Jersey Conference.

Eric Jackson, The Ohio State University

Eric Hartman, MSD Tech Director

To assist with in-person and virtual teaching and as a way to say thanks, all certified K-12 teachers received a Tech or Treat package mouses, desktop computer speakers, blue light glasses, Bluetooth headsets with microphones, and more! To support each other, and their sportsmanship and total team effort really shone through.

2020-21 MEF Senior Scholarship Winners

The Judy and Eliot Steinberg Scholarship
Ashley Hernandez, The College of New Jersey
Michael Seven Pala Nia Yvaxa
The College of New Jersey
Clifford Starnett Scholarship
Shaher Aslam, Carnegie Mellon University
Clifford Starnett Award
Ebbebechakwe Ora, Syracuse University
The Barry Family Scholarship
Yana Cho, Rutgers University
Wong Family Scholarship
Natasha Dhop, University of California, Berkeley
George and Michele Becker Scholarship
Katelyn Augenblick, University of South Carolina
Stephen B. Valley Scholarship
Taylor Olsen, Louisiana State University
Capt. Brian J., McNally USMC Scholarship
Koral Bedoya, Boston College
Dorothy F. Johnson Scholarship
Thomas Manente, University of Pittsburgh
Javier Avelar Scholarship
Kerstin Caceres Flores, Undecided
Class of ’79 Mont B Scholarship
Daniela Orellana Castillo, County College of Morris
James B. Gailbraith, Jr., Scholarship
Dylan Comeo, Rutgers University
Montclair Distinguished Wester Student Scholarship
Eric Jackson, The Ohio State University
The Montclair High School Class of 2020 Resilience Scholarship
Donny Chen, Montclair State University
Montclair Educational Foundation Scholarship in Honor of Rick Godley
Aidan Rostand, College of Charleston
John T. Cunningham Scholarship
Caroline Nicolais, Le Moyne College
AT&T Pioneer Scholarship
Aja Mraz, New York University
Mary Bentzin Scholarship
Soifi Bedoya, Northeastern University
The Bruce Chamberlain Scholarship
Olivia Hanyak, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
The Docennais Family Scholarship for Scholar Athletes
Madeleine Beavis, Rutgers University
The Ferrara-Myers Grandparents Scholarship
Natali Arrendondo, Montclair State University
The Hess-Mulcahy Scholarship
Anya Coffeen Vanover, University of Michigan
The Estelle Walker Hinkins Scholarship
Noah Richardson, Ithaca College
The Damiell Johnson “Let’s Get It Going” Scholarship
Ebbebechakwe Ora, Syracuse University
Ruth Mazurz Cohen French Award
Ryan Lynch, University of Georgia
Montclair Animal Hospital Animal Welfare Scholarship
Chloe Sada, University of Massachusetts-Amherst
The Coach Gill Stuecker Scholarship
Brandon Walker, Montclair State University
Shirley Sattler Scholarship
Leah Frantz, New York University

The Montclair Educational Foundation is proud to have awarded over $376,000 in scholarships to 29 deserving Montclair High School graduating seniors. 13 new awards were created this year, funded by alumni, individuals, and foundations, and honor those who have created or wish to create a lasting legacy for the Montclair High School community. If you are interested in supporting or creating a scholarship, please connect with us at info@montefoundation.org.
A joint publication from The Morris School District and The Morris Educational Foundation

The United Way of Northern New Jersey, the New York Jets, and NRG gifted a remodeled, state-of-the-art weight room and fitness center to Morristown High School through the Morris School District and the Morris Educational Foundation as part of the 22nd annual Hometown Huddle day of service. The $75,000 makeover included new equipment, flooring, and wall graphics, which will positively impact all students.

In the District

Morristown High School students and staff were the recipients of the United Way of Northern New Jersey, the New York Jets, and NRG’s charitable gift of a remodeled, state-of-the-art weight room and fitness center. The $75,000 remodeling project included new equipment, flooring, and wall graphics, which will positively impact all students.

A legacy mural funded by the MEF now adorns the halls of Sussex Avenue School—the beautiful result of this year’s 5th Grade Residency. Students and staff identified important landmarks in Morristown to feature in the mural, which captures a central MSD theme: “a community of communities.” Parent and staff volunteers put their painting skills to good use for this special project.

The Morris School District and the Morris Educational Foundation continue their partnership to promote literacy in all 10 schools of the District through a $10,000 grant. Librarians purchased age-appropriate diverse books to expand the school library collections for every student to find books that reflect who they are, while encouraging a window into their peers’ lives.

To help preschool students learning at home, $3,000 of select school supplies were provided to Lafayette Learning Center students to allow for hands-on learning during remote instruction. These materials included crayons, pencils, white boards, scissors, construction paper, and other art materials to spark further creativity.

FMS student Sarah Carroll clinched the title of Morris County Spelling Bee champion, distinguishing herself by correctly spelling words such as “lousicide” and “fructiferous.” She then had the incredible opportunity to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

MHS teacher John Madden led a social justice/historical walking tour of Morristown this spring. The tour, which covered recent local events as well as our town’s historical beginnings, is part of a larger collaboration between Humanities Academy students and faculty and Princeton and Drew Universities on the history of slavery in NJ.

The Morris and Morristown Festival of Books continued their partnership to promote literacy in all 10 schools of the District through a $10,000 grant. Librarians purchased age-appropriate diverse books to expand the school library collections for every student to find books that they are, while encouraging a window into their peers’ lives.

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