

May 10, 2019



WE are Lakota

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Second Annual Military Commitment Ceremony Salutes 43 Lakota Seniors

The Lakota community came together on April 30 to recognize 43 students who have made a commitment to enter either a military academy or branch of service after graduation.

The moving ceremony began with choirs from both high schools joining together to perform the National Anthem during the Presentation of Colors by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Color Guard, Post 7696 West Chester. It was followed by a medley of familiar U.S. Armed Forces songs; veterans and current military members stood during the anthem of their branch of service.

The keynote speaker was **Connie Spotts**, a retired Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Reserve. She has also served as a Lakota teacher, parent and volunteer for 35 years. "I come from a family with a long tradition of service, and many of you will be honoring your family tradition or maybe you are starting a tradition of your own. Hard work lies ahead of you, but you are ready for the challenge. You are the hope of our great nation, and your community will be rallying loudly behind you."

Military recruiters then presented a certificate and a challenge coin to each student.

Student speakers included **Grace Keith** (East) and **David Germanozashvili** (West).

Grace, who received an appointment to West Point, started the Lakota East Veterans Network that connects students to veterans and veterans' organizations. "My passion is the military and will continue to be the military. Serving those who have served us is imperative to who I am as a person and who I want to be."

David, who is involved with Lakota West's Patriotic Firebirds student organization, spoke about what it means to him to be part of the military. David enlisted in the Army National Guard at age 17 during his junior year. He attended boot camp last summer and plans to go to UC in the fall, hoping to eventually join the FBI or become a SWAT team member.

The program concluded with Freedom Elementary School students singing Lee Greenwood's "Proud to be an American."

Students recognized during the ceremony include:

Academies

Samuel Billisits: East (West Point)

Jacob Jones: West (Naval Academy)

Grace Keith: East (West Point)

Huakai (Joe) Qin: East (Naval Academy)

U.S. Air Force

Katherine Harvey: East (ROTC)

Zion Ingram: West

Ethan Noble: East (ROTC)

Gabriel Pegram: East
Nicholas Robbins: East
Isabel Steen: West (ROTC)
Alexander Strack: East (ROTC)

U.S. Army

Trace Cummings: West (Reserve)
David Germanozashvili: West (National Guard)
Faith Gims: West (National Guard)
Bradley Groth: West (National Guard)
Samuel Howard: West (National Guard)
Reed Hummel: West
Conner Iliff: West
Katelynn Kocur: East
Nathan Martin: West (National Guard)
Samantha Mascara: West (National Guard)
Juan Mercado: East
Jacob Rethman: West
David Ryan: East (National Guard)
Jeffery Shook: East
Brayden Theis: East (National Guard)
Nolan Warren: East (Reserve)

U.S. Coast Guard

Reid Sizemore: East

U.S. Marine Corps

Gabriel Cain: West
Brayden Kreiner: West
Brady Lambright: West (Reserve)
Matthew Linville: East
Piotr Mieczkowski: West
Nicholas Peter: West
Dalton Rhodus: West
Latre' Robinson: West (Reserve)
Logan Thomas: East

U.S. Navy

Amy Bohorfoush: East (ROTC)

Gabrielle Eppinghoff: West
Matthew Saurine: West
Logan Shaw: East
Joseph Trent: West
William Weisbrod: West

[Click here to view a Facebook album](#) capturing highlights of the evening, and [click here to watch a video of the ceremony](#).

Thank you to these students for putting service before self by committing to serve in the U.S. Military.

Lakota Educators of Excellence 2019



Freedom Counselor
Audrey Young



Endeavor Principal Andrea Blevins



Ridge Jr. Teacher Jennifer Dietsch

Announcing Lakota's 2019 Educators of Excellence

The Community Foundation of West Chester/Liberty, in partnership with Lakota Local Schools, is proud to announce the three recipients of the 2019 Lakota Educator of Excellence Awards. The 2019 honorees include:

- **Elementary (PreK-6) Winner: Audrey Young** (*Counselor – Freedom Elementary School*)
- **Secondary (7-12) Winner: Jennifer Dietsch** (*Choir teacher – Ridge Junior School*)
- **Administrator Winner: Andrea Blevins** (*Principal – Endeavor Elementary*)

The Lakota Educator of Excellence Award was established in 2007 to recognize educators in the Lakota School District who demonstrate consistency and high commitment to students. These individuals motivate, share ideas, inspire, support, create and go beyond to make a difference in the community. The grade level awards include a \$1,000 grant for the implementation of a special project or program at the recipient's school, made possible this year through sponsorship from Phelan Insurance.

"The Foundation is proud to partner with Lakota Local Schools, and Phelan Insurance, on the Educator of Excellence Awards," said Erin Clemons, Foundation President & CEO. "As a community foundation, we believe that a strong school system means a strong future for our community. This award is one way we can support outstanding educators who work diligently every day to make the future a little bit brighter."

A selection committee consisting of Community Foundation and Lakota staff reviewed the nomination letters and voted on the final recipients. Two winners are selected to represent grades PreK-6 and 7-12. The committee can also opt to recognize a deserving administrator or support staff member, without the attached monetary award.

"The Educator of Excellence award reminds us just how high our teachers, support staff and administrators set the bar for one another," said Lakota Superintendent Matthew Miller. "The caliber of professionalism and dedication described in all 30-plus nominations should make Mrs. Young, Mrs. Dietsch and Mrs. Blevins especially proud of their recognition. It was an exciting few days sharing the news with them."

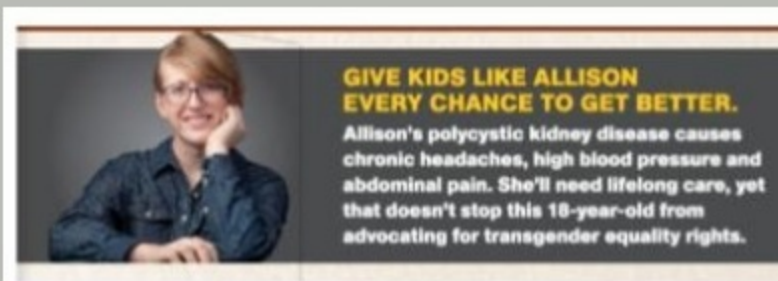
Each recipient was honored within their school communities with a special surprise recognition. [Click here to view a video that captures their reactions.](#)

[Read more about each winner and to see a list of all nominees.](#)



Top left: Elizabeth Pinder (L) and Hannah Nguyen win state competition.

Below: Lakota East choirs take home national and state wins.



Above: West's Allison Kurtz graces boxes of Nature Valley Granola Cups. Left: Signing Day for East's scholar-athletes.

East's Singing Thunderhawks Bring Home Awards

The Lakota East **Singing Thunderhawks** found success at recent competitions, both at the state and national levels, achieving superior and excellent ratings, along with a Best in Class for their division.

Festival Disney:

Men's Ensemble: Excellent

Women's Black and Silver: Superior

Eastside Music Company: Superior

Eastside Voices: Superior, Best in Class Division AAAA, 3rd Place Bronze Mickey for Concert Choir

OMEA Southwest State Competition:

Women's Black & Silver

Eastside Voices

Women's Freshman Ensemble

West's Kurtz Featured on Nature Valley Granola Cups Box

During the month of May, **Allison Kurtz**, a senior at Lakota West, can be seen on specially marked boxes of Nature Valley Granola Cups at Costco. The retailer is celebrating Children's Miracle Network Month in May by carrying the boxes. The items are available at all Costco locations. Allison will be making special appearances throughout the month at Cincinnati locations.

East Holds Final Athletic Signing Event

On May 1, Lakota East invited signed college athletes and their families to attend the final Athletic Signing Day, where all 44 scholar-athletes who signed throughout the school year were recognized, including:

Riley Adleta: Urbana University (Volleyball)

Casey Berglund: Wilmington College (Baseball)

Nathaniel Bird: Mount Saint Joseph University (Lacrosse)

Jada Bouyer: University of Toledo (Volleyball)
Max Chandler: Bluffton University (Cross Country & Track)
Sean Church: Otterbein University (Football)
Brandon Clark: Trine University (Lacrosse)
Ethan Crawford: Capital University (Baseball)
Andrew Douglas: Trine University (Lacrosse)
Logan Fox: Otterbein University (Basketball & Lacrosse)
Garrison Hamilton: Ohio Dominican University (Baseball)
Grayson Hamilton: Ohio Dominican University (Baseball)
Sydney Harrison: Miami University - Hamilton (Basketball)
Madison Hart: Mount Saint Joseph University (Soccer)
Megan Hatfield: Ohio Wesleyan University (Basketball)
Chloe Heard: Capital University (Lacrosse)
Kaylyn Heath: The Ohio State University (Track & Field)
Ethan Hubbard: Lincoln Memorial University (Volleyball)
Trey Jesse: Capital University (Football)
Will Johnston: Mount Saint Joseph University (Basketball)
Lindsey Kluesener: University of Findlay (Track & Field)
Jenna Kralik: Ohio University (Soccer)
Kate Larbes: Morehead State University (Soccer)
Sydney Larson: Ohio University (Softball)
Andrew Macedo: University of Cincinnati - Clermont (Soccer)
Avi McGary: Bowling Green University (Football)
Quinton Moss: Centre College (Football)
Shane Murphy: Capital University Golf
Ali Neumeier: Wright State University (Cross Country & Track)
Dylan Newman: Wilmington College (Baseball)
Katie O'Brien: Upper Iowa University (Basketball & Lacrosse)
Katherine Picray: The Ohio State University (Rowing)

Kyle Schmidt: University of Dayton (Golf)
Savanah Schwarz University of the Cumberlands Volleyball
Luke Shelby: Tiffin University (Soccer)
Kalie Siereveld: Otterbein University (Basketball)
Kaitlyn Smith: Indiana Wesleyan University (Cross Country & Track)
Grant Spicer: Ohio Wesleyan University (Basketball)
Jake Ware: Otterbein University (Lacrosse)
Bash Wieland: Bellarmine University (Basketball)
Tyler Wilkerson: Otterbein University (Football)
Donnie Wilkinson: Muskingum University (Football)
Emily Willms: Otterbein University (Lacrosse)
Bree Wilson: Rhodes College (Golf)

East Seniors Win Ohio Computing & Technology Award

Lakota East seniors **Elizabeth Pinder** and **Hannah Nguyen** have been named 2019 Ohio Affiliate Award for Aspirations in Computing winners. Presented by the National Center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT), this award honors young women in high school who are actively involved in computing and technology. Only 17 students in Ohio received the award.

AROUND LAKOTA



Kindergartners at Shawnee Early Childhood School prepared a re-enactment of "Peter and the Wolf."

Arts Find a Place in Core Curriculum at Shawnee

For teacher **Rebecca Striet**, the arts don't have to be limited to the art room every six days.

In fact, the Shawnee ECS kindergarten teacher is so committed to intersecting the arts with the core curriculum that she teamed up with colleague **Katie Welch** to give their 50 kindergartners the invaluable experience of performing a full-scale re-enactment of “Peter and the Wolf.”

“I am so passionate about the arts and making the arts accessible to all children,” said Striet, noting how her own childhood experience with a dance company went as far as to shape her career path. “I am very happy that Lakota brought back daily specials for kindergarten, but I consider this my personal contribution to my students’ fine arts early childhood education.”

After reading several different versions of the symphonic children's fairy tale, students were assigned a role, at random. For two weeks, students were given 30 minutes each day to work together and prepare not only their lines, but also their costumes, sets and music. On May 9, they performed their production before a gym full of Shawnee staff and parents.

For Striet’s students, the experience was a second one this year, following their earlier performance of “The Nutcracker.” While theatrics teaches her students many skills they’ll use into their adult life, Striet zooms in on the maturity it instills in them. It’s why she addresses them as professional performers throughout the entire experience.

She also plans to continue the tradition because of the impact it has on her parents.

“Parents see their children in a way they might not have ever expected to see them,” Striet explains. “They are all stars in their parents’ eyes already, but seeing them perform with a group of their peers is different. They truly can see the value and joy the arts can bring to people’s lives.”



VanGorden Students Get Hands-on Lesson about Metamorphosis

When third-grade teacher **Katie Frambes** asked, “Chicks are an example of what kind of metamorphosis?” just about every one of her students raised a hand. (*The answer: incomplete metamorphosis.*)

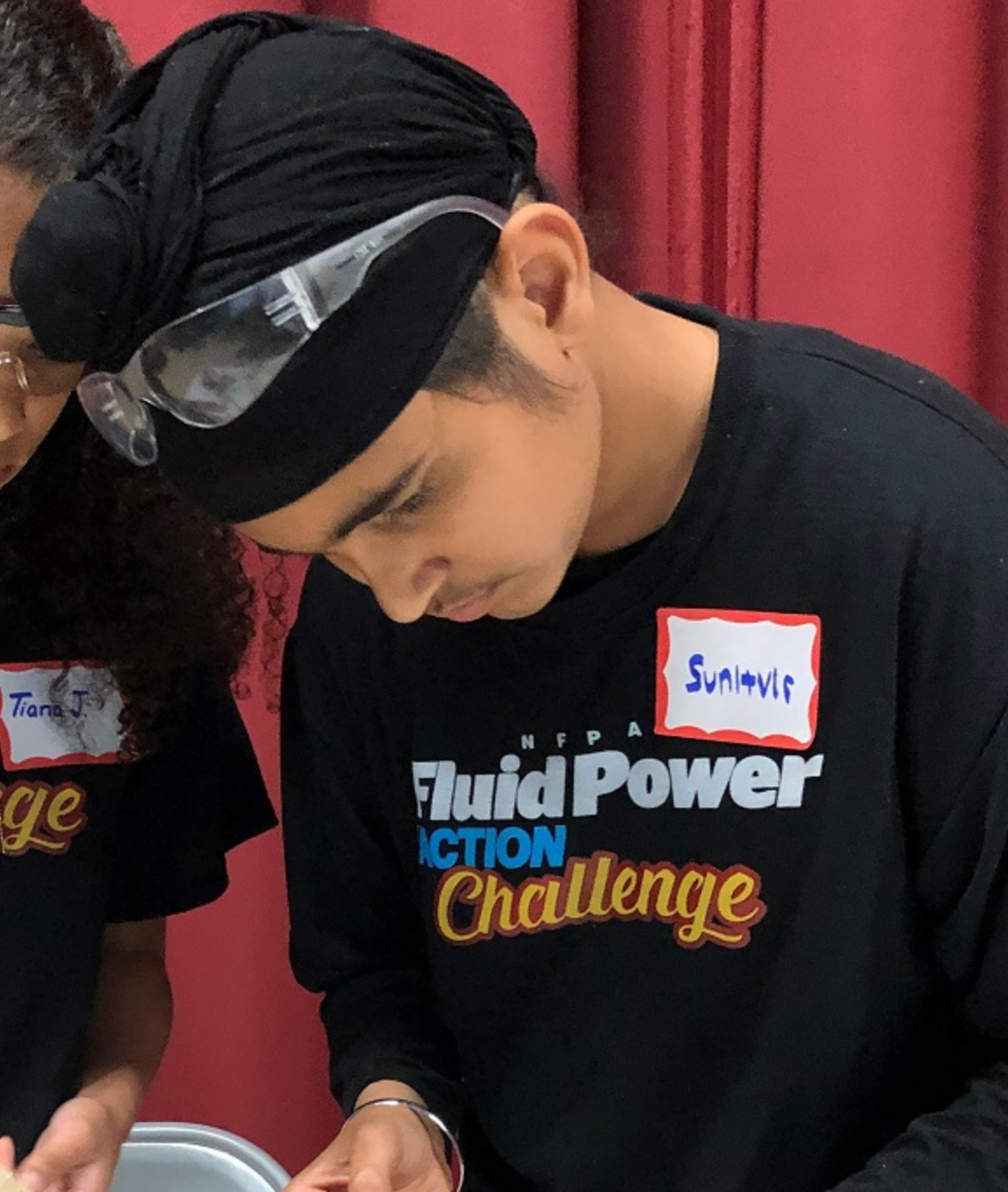
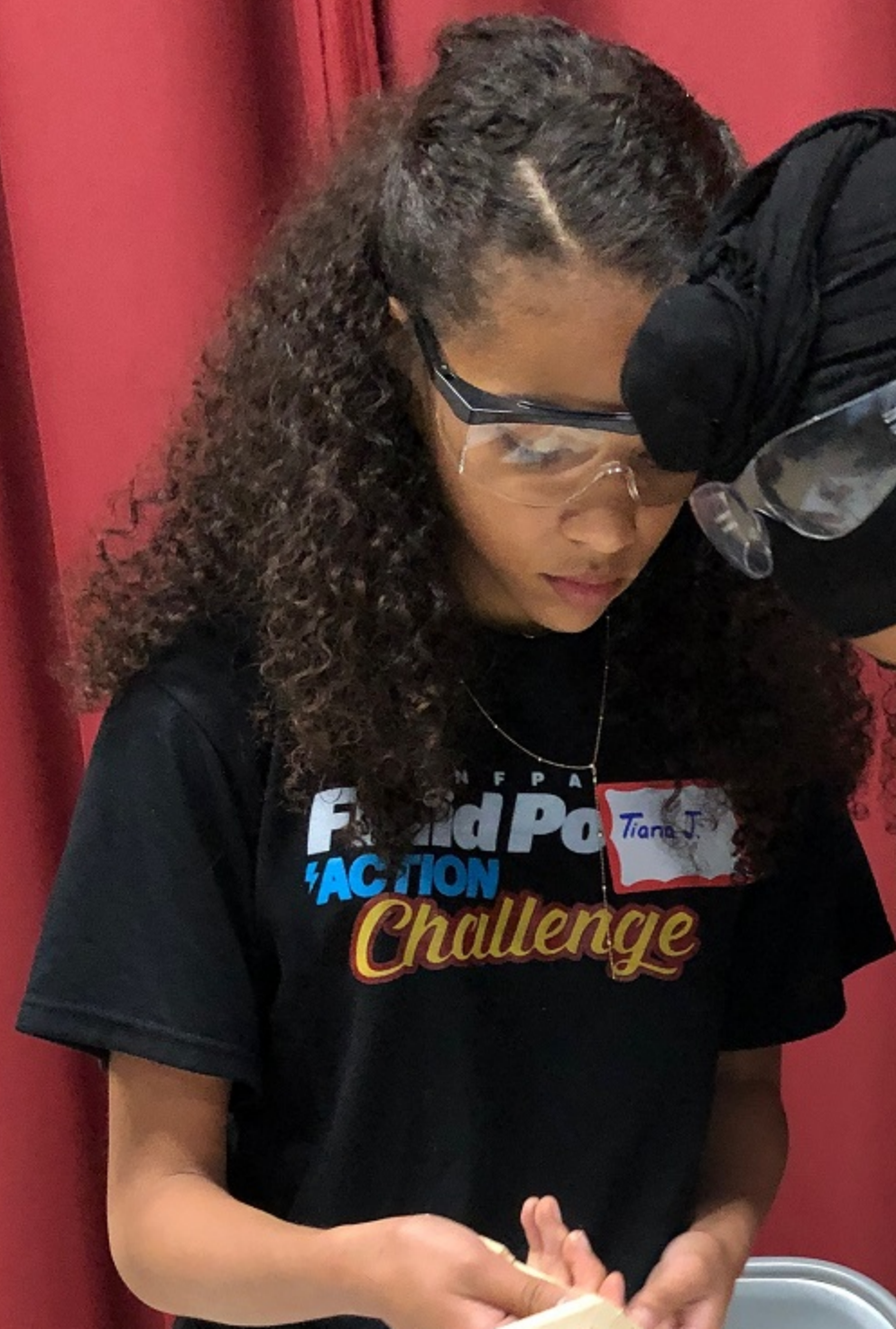
These VanGorden Elementary students are totally immersed in their life science lesson about life cycles. The third-graders are literally viewing the stages of complete and incomplete metamorphosis right in their classroom. They have watched caterpillars turn into beautiful butterflies, are awaiting meal worms to turn into beetles, and are now witnessing eggs hatch into baby chicks.

This is the first year that Katie Frambes and fellow third grade teacher **Jean Fox** have included an incubator and eggs into their lesson. The Butler County OSU Extension Office provided everything they needed to bring this experience to their students.

The students were excited to explain how the first egg hatched. “When we came in from lunch, we saw that the chick had poked a small hole in the egg!” Later the chick (nicknamed “S’mores”) emerged and just laid there for a long time. The students postulated that it was because he was tired from all the work to come out of the egg, that his legs were not strong yet, and that the chick was too wet and needed to dry out. Now S’mores is moving around and chirping constantly, waiting for a sibling to join him. The students learned that the sound of chirping helps other chicks to start hatching.

When a student reported that another one of the eggs in the incubator was moving, students rushed to see the egg making slight movements. “I think the eggs and chicks added a new dimension to students’ learning, and I plan to use this experience again,” said Frambes.

Once the eggs have had the opportunity to hatch, the chicks and incubator will be returned to the Butler County OSU Extension Office.



The science department at Plains partnered with a local manufacturer of fluid power technology, Hydrotech, to bring the National Fluid Power Action Challenge to the school this year.

Plains Engineering Challenge Offers Wide Appeal, Career Exposure

An aspiring marine biologist, science teacher, graphic designer and astrophysicist at Plains Junior School all found value in a recent group project that challenged them to solve an engineering problem using fluid power. Why?

“I can see now how much engineering is a part of lots of different jobs,” said eighth-grader **Vanessa Iles**.

“The best part has been designing it and seeing it come together,” said her teammate, **Gavin Jones**. “Everyone had a different vision and we just shared our ideas as we went.”

The science department at Plains partnered with a local manufacturer of fluid power technology, Hydrotech, to bring the National Fluid Power Action Challenge to the school this year. It’s a tradition the sponsor company hopes to expand to all four junior schools in the future.

Designed to introduce junior school students to fluid power careers and the real-world application of technology like hydraulics and pneumatics, the program challenges teams of four to design and build fluid power mechanisms that pick up an object from one platform and rotate before placing it on another. The final competition judges the team’s success in completing this task, but also a portfolio that helps capture their overall approach and teamwork.

The program kicked off with a workshop day in early March that the 20 students, hand-picked by their science teachers, attended at Hydrotech’s facility. Following a tour, they worked alongside professionals to familiarize themselves with the mechanics of fluid power and begin formulating their designs. Students had the option to meet during their daily “Research & Development” time to further fine tune their design before “Challenge Day,” where they actually built and tested their prototypes before facing off against their peers’ designs.

Besides the obvious skills the project promotes - teamwork, problem-solving and critical thinking, just to name a few - science teacher **Heather Blaylock** also noted the perseverance she witnessed in her students in spite of their failure.

“I’m really shocked at how many have evolved as leaders,” added Blaylock, who helped facilitate the project alongside Butler Tech teacher **John Nicol**. “I honestly didn’t know that some of them had it in them. Seeing the kids blossom has been really amazing.”

“These kids have done exactly what we do on a daily basis,” said Hydrotech’s Director of Engineering, **Timothy Porta**, noting how even their communication strategies simulated the challenges of any global company. “They found ways to communicate and collaborate effectively to come up with a great product.”



One session at West Freshman School's recent I.D. Student Conference gave students a taste of the challenges associated with mundane tasks, like using scissors with cerebral palsy (pictured above), reading with dyslexia or getting up a ramp in a wheelchair, for example.

West Freshman I.D. Student Conference Encourages Self-Reflection & Inclusion

A first-ever school-wide conference at Lakota West Freshman School this week encouraged both personal reflection *and* observation of others' differences - all to build a stronger culture of inclusion and understanding.

"I have been trying all year to think of a meaningful way to reach our students about different issues that they are facing and this was the final product of that thought process," said West Freshman teacher **Jennifer Parrett**, who also serves as the school's "Champion for Change" through Lakota's Outreach, Diversity and Inclusion (LODI) department. With this title comes a constant devotion to creating opportunities that promote inclusion.

"It is important because we have groups of students who feel marginalized and are looking for a voice to express themselves or find resources to learn about others not like themselves," Parret continued.

Over the course of an hour, students attending the I.D. Student Conference could choose from four of eight different sessions, some designed to educate students about individuals and groups different from themselves. One such session literally put students in the shoes of people who are wheelchair-bound or struggling with disorders like dyslexia and cerebral palsy, creating activities that simulated the challenges they face. Another spotlighted survivors of the Holocaust.

Other sessions helped arm students with strategies for remaining true to themselves, while still respecting the differing opinions of others. LODI, for example, facilitated one such activity in which students had to agree or disagree with a series of statements. Afterward, the group openly discussed their observations, drawing conclusions about how the activity simulated their daily interactions.

Freshman **Morgan Halstead** participated in another session that challenged her to make a mask that represented how she sees herself versus how others see her. "It made me think about who I am on the inside and that you should always try to be yourself and not think about stereotypes," she said.

Similarly, other sessions helped link students with resources that might help them or a friend needing guidance. One focused on strategies of mindfulness and awareness to overcome negative thinking, while another provided resources on understanding the LGBTQIA+ community. The Hope Squad organized a session where students could create their own stress balls and the district led a session all about internship opportunities to help students zoom in on future career possibilities.

The themes were chosen to try to reach as many students and interests as possible," Parrett said.



*From left to right: Lakota East's valedictorians are **Julia Finley** and **Idris Malik**; Lakota West's valedictorian is **Emma Krusling** and the salutatorian is **Megan Shaffer**.*

Celebrating the Class of 2019

It's time to celebrate Lakota's Class of 2019! Graduation ceremonies will take place at Xavier's Cintas Center; Lakota East's ceremony is on Thursday, May 23 at 8 p.m. and Lakota West will hold its event the next evening, May 24 at 8 p.m. Tickets are not required to attend.

Following tradition, each school's top students will have an opportunity to address their peers, family and friends in attendance. This year Lakota East has two valedictorians: **Julia Finley** - GPA 4.79 and **Idris Malik** - GPA 4.79. Lakota West's valedictorian is **Emma Krusling** - GPA 4.91 and the salutatorian is **Megan Shaffer** - GPA 4.85.

These students are well-accomplished both inside and outside the classroom; here's what their principals had to say about their top students' achievements.

East Principal **Suzanna Davis** said that Julia Finley approaches all she does with passion. "Julia represents the best of what an experience at Lakota East has to offer. From her dedication to her academic studies to her passion for bettering our school and community, I look forward to seeing how Julia will spread her Thunderhawk Wings and change the world. On behalf of the faculty and staff at Lakota East, I offer my sincere congratulations to Julia and wish her the best of luck at the University of Michigan next year where she will major in Biomedical Engineering."

Davis said that Idris Malik also fully embodies the 'Thunderhawk Experience'. "On behalf of the faculty and staff at Lakota East, we congratulate Idris Malik on being named Valedictorian for the Lakota East Class of 2019. Idris is a well-rounded young man that has taken full advantage of the opportunities offered through the Lakota Local School District. Idris excels in everything he does. His spirit and dedication to Lakota East will be missed. We wish Idris the best of luck next year at Ohio State where he will major in Physics."

West Principal **Elgin Card** added this about his students. "Emma Krusling is a very unique young lady with an exceptional future. Her ability to achieve academically at a high level is remarkable in it own right. However, when you take into account that she is a part of the Professional Training Division at the Cincinnati Ballet it is even more impressive. She dances Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and has taken part in several performances. We know Emma has a bright future." Emma will be attending the State College of New York to major in Dance Performance.

Salutatorian Megan Shaffer will be majoring in Chemical Engineering at The Ohio State University. "Megan is an exceptional young lady who always has a smile on her face," said Card. "She is not only a high achiever in the classroom, she is very involved in numerous extra-curricular activities. She has played a big role in starting our Dragonfly Foundation group, is very active in Relay for Life, and is a member of our tennis team. I am proud of her ability to achieve at this level academically, while being so well rounded. Such qualities will allow her to be success moving forward and we cannot wait to see where her journey takes her."

Congratulations to all of Lakota's graduates!



Special Ceremonies Recognize the "Top 25"

All across the district, year-end ceremonies are taking place to honor the academic achievements of our students. At the high schools, the “Top 25” students, representing approximately the upper 4 percent of their graduating class, were recently recognized during some special celebrations at Lakota East and West high schools.

Lakota East held an “Academic Signing Day” where the Top 25 students declared their college choice, as well as a reception prior to the Senior Academic Awards Ceremony. Lakota West continued a longstanding tradition for its top 25 students – a dinner for the students, their parents and a teacher or staff member who has had a big impact on the student.

Congratulations to these Top 25 students:

Lakota East

Madelyn Blake: Indiana University

Amy Bohorfoush: Purdue University

Caroline Bumgarner: Miami University

Clara Erich: The Ohio State University

Julia Finley: University of Michigan

Kalee Grayson: Miami University

Erin Gregg: University of Cincinnati

Rachel Gregg: University of Cincinnati

Heather Heuerman: Undecided

Chloe Huggins: The Ohio State University

Lindsay Isom: The Ohio State University

Grace Keith: West Point Military Academy

William Koger: The Ohio State University

Sydney Larson: Ohio University
Nicholas Legters: University of Cincinnati
Aubert Li: The Ohio State University
Idris Malik: The Ohio State University
Hannah Nguyen: The Ohio State University
Mackenzie Novean: University of Cincinnati
Abigail Pieratt: Miami University
Elizabeth Pinder: The Ohio State University
Lily Rupp: Bowling Green State University
Iman Sennoun: Princeton University
Kristina Townsend: University of Tampa
Claire White: University of Cincinnati
Heath Wilson: UCLA

Lakota West

Andoh Arko: Ohio State University
Sydney Athans: Ohio State University
Michelle Ballman: University of South Carolina
Taylor Creach: Undecided
Benjamin DeWolfe: University of Cincinnati
Alexander Evert: Undecided
Samantha Freeland: Miami University
Orla Goss: Ohio State University
Danielle Gregory: University of Indianapolis
Hannah Hagen: Ohio University
Lauren Hasselbeck: Ohio State University

Matthew Ho: Savannah College of Art and Design

Baxter Huntington: Miami University

Karl Isele: Ohio State University

Emma Krusling: SUNY Purchase

Alexis Lam: Ohio State University

Colin McEwen: Miami University

Sophia Nelson

Tyler Patton: Georgia Tech

Rachel Pizzuco: Ohio State University

Courtney Powless: Case Western Reserve University

Shannon Pullyblank: University of Dayton or University of Cincinnati

Aaron Reilman: Ohio State University

Megan Shaffer: Ohio State University

Elena Tunis: Ohio State University

Kacy Warne: Miami University

Madeline Wilson: Ohio State University or Miami



Lakota West's Annie Clevidence (front row, second from left) was selected to attend and present at the 2019 International Forum for Innovative Teachers in South Korea.

West's Clevidence Presents at Innovative Teachers Forum in South Korea

Collaboration between teachers within a school building happens every day, as well as across the district. But what about collaborating across the country or even the world? **Annie Clevidence**, an English literature teacher at Lakota West High School recently had the opportunity to do just that.

Last June, Lakota was selected as one of six districts nationwide to lead the Real World Learning Challenge Collaborative through Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools. Member districts of the collaborative have been charged with determining how schools can bring authentic, life-relevant opportunities to secondary education and bring innovative ideas to the table as to how to bring real world learning opportunities to students. Clevidence is one of Lakota's teachers involved in the work. "We're working to see where real world learning can fit into the classroom," she said. "How can it be easier and useful for both teachers and students."

Executive Director of Curriculum Keith Koehne, also representing Lakota in the Challenge Collaborative, understands the importance of including real world learning as part of the student experience. "As educators, it is our responsibility to meet students where they are, encourage them and help them move beyond what they think is possible. Real world learning is about being intentional in preparing our students for success beyond high school through connections with our business partners and by teaching students the skills they will need to succeed."

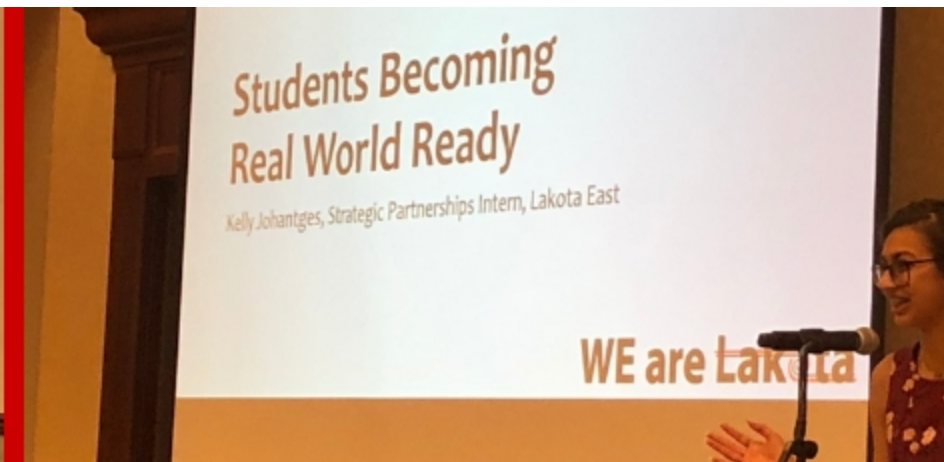
Clevidence's involvement with the League earned her an invitation to attend the 2019 International Forum for Innovative Teachers in Daegu, South Korea. She was one of four teachers from the United States, along with a representative from Digital Promise, to not only attend, but also present at the three-day conference. "Annie has been an important part of our team of teachers who are helping us think outside the box and engage our learners through real world learning opportunities. I'm thrilled that she was selected by Digital Promise to attend the forum," said Koehne.

While in South Korea, Clevidence had the opportunity to tour schools and learn more about education there. Her favorite experience was visiting the Saeron Elementary School and watching third and fourth grade students coding robots. "The little kids were so excited to learn and excited to show you what they made," she recalled. "There was a wonderful balance of teachers using technology as a tool for learning," which, she notes, is the direction Lakota is headed with this year's 1:1 launch.

The belief that real world learning can be incorporated into many aspects of the classroom has led Clevidence to amplify student voice, which was the topic of her presentation. "Real world learning in the classroom involves building a community and learning to discuss and respect differing opinions," she said. "By giving students a voice, for example they create a unit or they decide what they want to research while I'm still teaching the curriculum, we're teaching real world learning and giving the students a feeling of autonomy."

While she admits that she kept her first year of teaching very structured, Clevidence adjusted her approach during her second year. At the end of that first year, she asked her students for feedback. One student said that he did not understand how what they were learning prepared them for the future. That statement caused Clevidence to pause. "I wanted to break the mold of 'read a chapter then answer questions,'" she explained.

A Lakota alum, Clevidence credits her former teachers for showing her that you need to change the way you teach based on student needs. "Real world learning in the classroom is about giving our students the opportunity to explore ideas in a place where it's safe to fail. Then us, as teachers, are able to guide them to find the answer."



From top left: Tom Daskalakis, Chief Administrative Officer West Chester Hospital and Kelly Johantges, Lakota East junior, speak to guests about the value of the program; Katie Bauer, Lakota Strategic Partnerships Coordinator, welcomes guests to the Business Partner Breakfast.

Lakota Business Partner Breakfast Celebrates Success, Looks Ahead to the Future

On May 3, Lakota Schools welcomed 150 community partners, staff and students to celebrate a successful year and look ahead to the future at its Business Partner Breakfast. **Katie Bauer**, the district's strategic partnerships coordinator, wanted to thank the business community for its commitment to the students at Lakota Local Schools.

From hosting internships to being a guest speaker to facilitating a STEAM² night activity, business partners bring real world learning to students in a variety of ways - and to a variety of grades. At the early childhood and elementary schools, guest speakers and project mentors can be found in many Lakota buildings. Job shadowing and internships are added for the secondary grades.

Mike Parkinson, vice president of architecture at Cincinnati's SHP, said collaboration with Lakota goes along with the company's philosophy of supporting life-long learners. "We feel it is our responsibility to serve and support our local communities in any way we can," said Parkinson. "By working together, we can help support (Lakota's) objectives while getting a few people excited about a career in the future." Parkinson sees mentorship, job shadowing and internships as an opportunity to pique student interest in different career possibilities.

In the past year, Bauer has grown her initial list of 20 partners to 150. In addition to thanking businesses, the breakfast was a way for Bauer to tee up the future. "I wanted to gather all of our people in one place and let them hear what our goals are (for next year)," she said. "I also wanted to gain insight into what (our partners) are looking for so we can guide our curriculum appropriately."

Attendees included staff and students who are vested in this program. Bauer used the breakfast as a vehicle to share with students the opportunities that are available to them. Whether they participated in an internship or completed a passion project about the community, students were happy to be included. A junior at Lakota West, **Alex Gehl** was pleased to be included in the event. "I had a great time talking with people from different businesses and corporations about my 20 Time project. I think it was really interesting talking and hearing ideas to make our school a better place and educational program," he said.

The gathering featured speakers from not only Lakota, but also business partners. Modeled after the four pillars of Lakota's new mission statement, guests learned how the district is personalized, future ready, fiscally responsible and in this together with the community. Small group discussion and feedback after each speaker ensued, giving Bauer many ideas for the coming years. "I think it was a great experience," said **Teriasia Ware**, a junior at Lakota West. "It showed us the 'background' of things and everything they're doing to improve the school. I think it was amazing to hear different views on situations going on and it made me feel like I had a voice."

Bauer has not only expanded the internship program in terms of opportunities, but also time. Previously, internships were available during spring break or over the summer. This year, students participated in programs throughout the year, some being year-long. "The goal was to do one more thing than we did last year," reflects Bauer. That she did. From a UC Health speaker series at both Lakota East and West to pilot programs at East like Engineering and Tech Day as well as 4 Es Day, with the help of partners, teachers and counselors, Bauer has been able to expand the impact and learning of Lakota students.

Looking ahead to next year, there's no rest for Bauer. Plans to expand the Engineering and Tech and 4 Es days to both high schools are being made. She'd also like to add another industry day, lunch and learns where business partners speak to students throughout the year and expand on what has occurred this year. "When everyone is in the same lane, there's great synergy to help our students determine what will come after high school."

[View All
District News](#)

FEATURED PHOTOS



A representative from the Ohio Department of Education visited Lakota West to help celebrate National Teacher Appreciation Week. Thank you to our Lakota staff for giving it their all every day.



Freedom Elementary School continued its 12-year tradition of Egypt Day, where sixth-graders like Ava Claggett (pictured above) used a green screen to transport themselves to Ancient Egypt. The culmination of the grade's Egyptian unit, the day also included writing in hieroglyphics, creating cartouches out of clay, indulging in authentic Egyptian cuisine and participating in a silent auction and Egyptian break out challenge.



Whitney Sagraves was treated to an early Mother's Day surprise when she found out her son Carson, a third-grader at Cherokee Elementary School, won an essay contest about what makes moms special. After learning that he won, Carson read his essay to his mom in front of the class. The school partnered with Yelton Jewelers for the contest and now Mrs. Sagraves will be able to choose a piece of jewelry for herself.

NEW BUSINESS

2019-20 Open Enrollment Applications due May 31, No New Applicants

Due to the high volume of returning open enrolled students, at this time Lakota is not accepting new applicants for the 2019-20 school year.

Lakota will only be accepting applications from current Lakota staff, returning open enrolled students and siblings of returning open enrolled students. The [Inter-District Open Enrollment application](#) must be submitted by all returning students to the Welcome Center by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, May 31.

Applicants may not always receive their first school of choice, depending on the school's base enrollment for students residing within its attendance zone.

Each school year, the Lakota Board of Education can choose to approve the renewal of Lakota's open enrollment policy. Under [Board Policy 511](#), students residing in other Ohio school districts can apply to attend Lakota.

C3 and Lakota to Host Mental Health & Substance Abuse Program

The Caring Community Collaborative (C3) and Lakota Schools will present “Through Our Eyes: Mental Health and Substance Abuse – Twin Challenges” on Friday, May 31 at Lakota East High School from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. It is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required.

The program will look closely at mental health, substance abuse and addiction, how they're linked, and what can be done in the local community to help people struggling with these problems. It is sponsored by the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Services Recovery Board, Envision Partnerships, and Positive Leaps.

Multiple break-out sessions will precede a main program featuring both students and professionals in the field. The program is eligible for CEU's and Lakota professional development credit. Lunch will be provided. Pre-register online at [Eventbrite](#) or email contact@c3ohio.org or call 513-939-9255.

Parent Resources from Community Forum on Grief & Suicide

Lakota held a Community Forum for Parents on Grief & Suicide on May 1 that included a resource fair and speakers from the district's partners at Grant Us Hope, Companions on a Journey and Solutions Community Counseling.

Based on questions posed that evening, Lakota has put together a helpful Q & A. [Click here to view this Q & A, as well as the presentations and resources from the forum.](#)

Summer Food Program Uses Food Bus to Deliver Free Meals to Children

The Lakota Local School District is participating in the Summer Food Service Program. Meals will be provided to all children (ages 1-18 and individuals with disabilities through age 21), free of charge, beginning May 29 through August 2 (no service on July 4 or 5).

Meals will be delivered to each of the following locations participating in the Summer Food Service Program via our food bus:

Countryside Village

5126 Hamilton Middletown Rd., Liberty Twp.
11:00 - 11:30 (Monday - Friday)

Deer Run/Mill Creek Apartments

7846 Mill Creek Cr., West Chester
12:20 - 12:40 (Monday - Friday)

Lakota Pointe Apartments

6840 Lakota Pointe Ln., Middletown
1:00 - 1:25 (Monday - Friday)

Meadow Ridge Apartments

5270 Aster Park Dr., West Chester
11:40 - 12:10 (Monday - Friday)

Princeton Village

8953 Princeton Glendale Rd., West Chester
11:50 - 12:10 (Monday - Friday)

North Pointe Apartments

5215 Westwind Ave., Hamilton
11:00 - 11:30 (Monday - Friday)

Boys & Girls Club

8749 Cin-Day Rd., West Chester Rd.
12:30 - 1:00 (Monday - Friday)

[Click here to view a flyer with more details, including sign-up instructions.](#) For any questions regarding the program, please call the Lakota Child Nutrition Department at 513-644-1163.

LATEST E-FLYERS

E-Flyers is Lakota's convenient and eco-friendly way to distribute information about programs, classes, events and opportunities happening in our schools and around the community.

Lakota is proud to partner with Peachjar to share these opportunities in a digital format. Look for district-approved flyers in your email inbox every Wednesday or click the button below to view all current flyers by district or school.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Event Spotlights

- Saturday, May 11
Lakota Spirit Day at FC Cincinnati
at Nippert Stadium
1 p.m.
- Monday, May 20
Parade of Graduates
at Elementary Schools
10 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 21
Student Fanfare at Liberty ECS

ON THE RADAR

Announcements & Opportunities

It's Not Too Late to Apply for Summer Internships!

Lakota is offering a host of summer internship opportunities for high school students. In partnership with our local business community, current opportunities range from business, education and engineering to government, healthcare and marketing/communications -- some are even paid experiences!

Deadlines, applications and the application process varies. [Visit Lakota's internship webpage for details and to apply.](#)

at Liberty ECS
8:40 a.m.

- Wednesday, May 22
Early Release
- Thursday, May 23
Early Release and Students' Last Day
- Thursday, May 23
Lakota East Graduation
at Cintas Center
8 p.m.
- Friday, May 24
Lakota West Graduation
at Cintas Center
8 p.m.
- Monday, May 27
Memorial Day (District is Closed)
- Tuesday, May 28
Lakota Board of Education Work Session
at Plains Junior
6:30 p.m.
- Friday, May 31
Mental Health & Substance Abuse: Twin Challenges
at Lakota East High School
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**See Full
Calendar**

Video Update Shares April Highlights

In this month's video edition of "A Look Around Lakota", Superintendent Matthew Miller and Treasurer/CFO Jenni Logan share just some of the latest highlights and happenings around our district, including:

- High school capstone projects that are helping others;
- First graders finding poetry inspiration in nature;
- Elementary schools are grateful for the Rotary Club of West Chester/Liberty; and
- An update on the financial stability of the district.

[Click here to view this month's edition](#) and stay tuned for one more update as this school year comes to a close.

Alternative Transportation Information for 2019-20 School Year

To ease the transition to a new school year and honor families' requests for alternative pick-up and drop-off locations for transportation, Lakota is enforcing a new deadline timeline.

By default, transportation for all eligible students is based on the home address listed in our student database. If your child will be needing transportation to or from an address different than their home address, please remember to complete a new **Transportation/Child Care Form** with current information. All alternative transportation plans are automatically cleared at the end of each school year, so please complete the form before each school year.

Please honor the following deadlines to receive transportation for the upcoming school year, beginning on the date indicated:

Form Submission	Transportation Available
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July 22, 2019	First day of school
Aug. 14, 2019	Aug. 26, 2019
Aug. 15 - Sept. 3, 2019	Sept. 4, 2019
After Sept. 3, 2019	Forms processed within 48 hours.



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