



School News

Important Dates Coming Soon

Take in HITS Saturday

The History, Industry, Technology and Science Expo — HITS Expo — is 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 3 at St. Charles High School. There will be demonstrations, hands-on activities, along with science and history fair projects on display. An awards ceremony for the fair projects is 5:30 p.m. in the auditorium. The school is at 5305 Piney Church Road in Waldorf.

Three pay dates in March

There are three pay dates this month. The only deductions taken from the third paycheck are taxes and retirement. Other deductions, such as health insurance, are not deducted from the third paycheck in months with three pay dates. Visit MyCCPS at www.ccboe.com to view a list of additional pay dates for the rest of this year.

'Be the Difference' award

Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) is looking for outstanding volunteers who support children by contributing time and resources to schools and the school system. The Outstanding Volunteer of the Year "Be the Difference" awards program is new for 2018 and recognizes outstanding school volunteers for their valuable contributions to schools, students, staff and CCPS. The five award categories are elementary school parent volunteer, middle school parent volunteer, high school parent volunteer, Charles County business volunteer and community organization volunteer. Nominations must be submitted to Kessandra Stubblefield, executive assistant to the Board of Education, by April 1, 2018. No late entries will be accepted.

Wield the whistle

The Washington District Football Officials Association is looking for high school football game officials and clock operators. Applicants must be 18 and older. Call 877-777-1667 or go to www.wdfoa.org.



It takes more than luck to be a champion

After winning the 40th annual Charles County Public Schools Spelling Bee, Milton M. Somers Middle School eighth grader Emily Winkler watches her teammate, Jack Alcorn, a seventh grader, battle for second place against Jasmine F. Flores, a St. Peter's Catholic School eighth grader. Alcorn came in second, Flores placed third. See story, Page 2.

Gifted and Talented Education teachers honored

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education honored four Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) teachers — Christina Caron, Jonica Gaskill, Jessica Meador and Joni Rooney — for their efforts and accomplishments in gifted education.

Each received a 2018 Teacher as Leader in Gifted and Talented Education Award. Nominees were selected by Ann Taylor, CCPS content specialist in gifted education, and Joyce Campbell, gifted education resource teacher for CCPS.

They were honored at a Feb. 21 ceremony held to honor the Governor's proclamation of

February as Gifted and Talented and Education Month. The ceremony was sponsored by MSDE and the Maryland State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education.

Caron has been working with students in gifted education programs for more than nine years and is the learning resource teacher at Mary H. Matula Elementary School. She works with both teachers of advanced students and gifted students at her school. She is often found co-teaching with a gifted cluster teacher or working with small groups of gifted students. She plans regularly with teachers of advanced students to ensure lesson plans are differentiated to meet the needs of all levels of learners. Caron leads professional de-

See Gifted, Page 3



Notebook

On the cover

Pictured on the front cover are CCPS staff members honored by the Board of Education at its February meeting. From left are Nichole Thomas, school counselor at John Hanson Middle School; Connie Sorzano, library media instructional assistant at T.C. Martin Elementary School; and Tina Thomas, secretary at Dr. Gustavus Brown Elementary School.

SECAC noms being sought

The Special Education Citizen Advisory Committee (SECAC) is accepting nominations for the 13th annual SECAC Staff Appreciation Award. Nominations must be made by a parent, guardian or the student, not by other staff members. The categories are individual teacher or aide; child's team of two or more staff members who work directly with the student; related services staff; and support staff/administration. Nominations are due by April 6. Email charles-countysecac@gmail.com or call 301-593-9102. An awards ceremony will be April 27. For more information, go to <https://goo.gl/LxtGzr>.

Concert rescheduled

The JustMusicians Grand Jam has been rescheduled from March 3 to sometime in April. The event is being organized by North Point High School senior Addy Hebou. He is collecting old instruments for his Eagle Scout project, Scouting for Music. The collection of used instruments will go to middle schoolers from low-income families who want to be part of their school orchestras. Monetary donations will help in the refurbishment of the instruments.

Play time

CCPS high schools are warming up for spring plays. St. Charles High School's show "Once Upon an Island" is March 9 to 11; Thomas Stone High School will stage "Beauty and the Beast" March 22 to 24; Maurice J. McDonough High School is performing "High School Musical" from April 12 to 15; Henry E. Lackey High School's "The Pajama Game" is set for April 19 to 21; North Point High School's show, "The Addams Family," is slated for April 19 to 21; "Sister Act" will be performed April 26 to 28 by Westlake High School's theater department; and La Plata High School goes under the sea with "The Little Mermaid" from May 3 to 5.

National Board Certified Teachers



Michelle Ignaszewski



**Certification area: Physical Education/
Early and Middle Childhood**

Position held: Adapted Physical Education Resource Teacher- F.B. Gwynn Educational Center

Years of teaching experience: 9

Years with Charles County Public Schools: 9

Education:

Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education (concentration in Adapted Physical Education), State University of New York, College of Brockport
Master of Science in Education with a focus in Adapted Physical Education, State University of New York, College at Brockport
Administrator I Certification, McDaniel College (currently in the process of obtaining)

Memorable Moment:

"During a volleyball unit with second-grade students in the STAY program at F.B. Gwynn, a particular student was struggling with passing a ball and began to get frustrated when I reminded her of the cues to perform the skill and asked her to try again, "one more time." She did and successfully hit the ball. Afterwards she said, "Mrs. Iggy! Look! I did it! I did it!" Her excitement reaffirmed why I love what I do."



Winkler wins 40th annual Spelling Bee

Emily Winkler, a Milton M. Somers Middle School eighth grader, will represent Charles County in the Scripps National Spelling Bee later this year. Winkler clenched the title of champion during the annual Charles County Public Schools Spelling Bee Feb. 15. She correctly spelled "rembrandt."

Winkler is no stranger to the Bee's winner's circle — she was runner up last year to teammate Haley Payton, now a freshman at La Plata High School.

Jack Alcorn, a Somers seventh grader, and Jasmine F. Flores, a St. Peter's Catholic School eighth grader, battled for the second and third place.

The two went back and forth for more than seven minutes to find out who would be this year's runner up. Alcorn spelled "ar-rears" incorrectly, then Flores incorrectly spelled "bounteous." The next round, both spelled their words correctly — "appetite"

for Flores, "comportment" for Alcorn. In the following round, Flores wrongly spelled "quiddity," then Alcorn spelled "ibis" correctly. He placed second by correctly spelling "polenta."

The Somers team, coached by seventh-grade language arts teachers Valerie Amend and Stephanie Walent, finished in first place. The team is made up of seventh graders Alcorn, Chloe Bautista and Jordan Surfield, and eighth graders Winkler and Gabriella Barbone.

More than 45 middle school students from Charles County schools — public and private — competed in the 40th annual Bee which was held at General Smallwood Middle School.

The national competition is set for May 27 to June 1 when top spellers from around the country will travel to Washington, D.C., and the National Harbor to compete in the national Bee.

Neal's Jensen creates vibrant art for national publications company

It was an ordinary assignment in Bryan Hill's art room at Mary B. Neal Elementary School. Last year, Hill, a veteran teacher with District of Columbia Public Schools, was new to Charles County Public Schools and wanted to get a reading on his new students and their level of art skills.

The assignment was to draw a toucan. Samantha Jensen, now a fifth grader, got to work. On a piece of construction paper, she used oil pastels to draw a toucan set against a colorful, abstract background. The reserved and quiet student created a bold, vibrant piece.

"You can express your imagination, what's on your mind," Jensen said about art. "Samantha is very, very quiet, so when she was working, I was like 'What's she doing over there?'" Hill said. "Then it's these big, bold, beautiful colors. I'm like, 'OK.'"

It was eye catching enough that Hill submitted it to Davis Publications, a leading international company focused on art education for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Davis produces a planner each year featuring artwork created by grade school students. Jensen's toucan was selected to be featured on the back cover of the planner. "I was really surprised," Jensen said. "I was really happy people appreciated my work."

All students in first through fifth grades take art in CCPS elementary schools. It's around the middle of first grade when Hill can spot those with innate artistic ability and others he can teach techniques to make them better artists.

"[Art] allows you to think beyond the written word," Hill said. "When they say a picture is worth a 1,000 words, it's true. It's another communication tool."



Above, Samantha Jensen always has a sketchbook nearby to work on her art. Left, Jensen's drawing is featured on the back cover of a Davis Publications planner.

Jensen said her older sister Christina, an eighth grader at Milton M. Somers Middle School, is also an artist who helps her on projects. She has several sketchbooks, always one within arm's reach. Right now she enjoys drawing people in pencil.

"I like doing shading," Jensen said. "And people ... they're like so delicate to draw." Jensen appreciates that art means something different to everyone. "We are all assigned to the same topic, but you have to think outside the box," she said. "We all have to create our own masterpiece."

Gifted

continued from Page 1

velopment sessions, helps to write gifted education curriculum and is a leader among her peers. She also implemented a popular book club at Matula last school year, and serves as the school's robotics and chess club sponsor.

Gaskill is a language arts teacher at Benjamin Stoddert Middle School and has been teaching in the gifted education program for eight years. She consistently challenges her students to do their best and motivates them to apply critical thinking. Gaskill strives to create and maintain positive relationships with students and demonstrates a passion for their successes. She attends state conferences to expand her knowledge and skill set in gifted education, and brings that knowledge back to her peers. She is a vocal advocate for gifted learners and oversees the Destination Imagination (DI) program at Stoddert. Additionally, Gaskill helps to write curriculum, serves as the language arts department chair and mentors new teachers.

Meador is a fourth-grade teacher at Matula. She has taught fourth grade for the past six years and works directly with students identified for gifted services. She teaches both gifted reading and accelerated math, and serves as the fourth-grade math team coach. Meador is in the process of completing a master's degree in gifted education and attends local and state conferences to expand her knowledge and skill set. At Matula, she plans with her teammates and mentors other teachers who

have less experience teaching gifted students. She presents to staff and is a strong supporter of her students. Last year, she helped a Matula student through the grade acceleration process and the student continues to excel in middle school.

Rooney is a fifth-grade teacher at C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School and is the grade-level team leader. She has been teaching accelerated math for the past four years and guided reading. Her students excel in class and are eager for lessons she plans in which they are challenged to use critical thinking skills. She constantly attends professional development opportunities to learn new skills and is an expert in incorporating technology into instruction. Rooney has been teaching with CCPS for the past 19 years and has held several additional roles during her career. Rooney has coached Unified basketball, community soccer teams and the fifth-grade math team at Barnhart. She is also a Formative Assessment for Maryland Educators (FAME) cohort in which she works to assist students and teachers is learning how to reflect on their work to improve skills in other areas.

During the ceremony in which the teachers were honored, 13 CCPS students were recognized for their accomplishments in gifted education.

Read about the students honored at <http://www.ccboe.com/pr/students-honored-for-accomplishments-in-gifted-education/>.

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PR
Liaisons
in
Focus



White Coat ceremony

La Plata High School students in the Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Biomedical Science program recently received white coats in the school's first White Coat Ceremony.

The White Coat ceremony is a relatively new practice at medical schools that signifies a student's transition from the study of pre-clinical to clinical health sciences. La Plata's program has 175 students with 38 junior and senior students recognized at the ceremony.

Submitted by Kevin Barry, PR liaison at La Plata.

Safety first

Members of the Hughesville Volunteer Fire Department recently visited with Dr. Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School students and spoke about fire safety. The students checked out and tried on firefighter gear and toured the fire truck.

Submitted by Nathaniel Yake, PR liaison at Mudd



Personnel

Apply for positions online at www.ccoeb.com/jobs/currentopenings.php. All teaching positions require a bachelor's degree and MSDE certification requirements.

Job Openings

Building Service Worker — Mt. Hope/Nanjemoy Elementary School, 12-month position. Applicants must have the ability to read and write effectively and be physically capable of performing manual labor. Good verbal communications and human relation skills, and a willingness to work overtime as required in cases of emergency are a must. Apply by March 5.

Instructional Assistant for Life Skills program — Milton M. Somers Middle School, 10-month position. A high school diploma, experience working with children or adults who have special needs, and the ability to work and interact with students with significant mental and physical disabilities are required. Apply by March 9.

Payroll Accounting Analyst — Jesse L. Starkey Administration Building, 12-month position. Five years of significant experience in a high volume payroll/accounting environment is required, preferably in a large educational organization. An associate's degree or American Payroll Association certification is preferred. Position will be open until filled.

Library Media Specialist — location to be determined, 10-month position. A master's degree in library science from an American Library Association Accredited School is required and applicants must meet certification requirements as established by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Apply by Sept. 30.

Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher — location to be determined, 10-month position. A bachelor's degree is required and applicants must meet certification requirements as established by MSDE. Apply by Sept. 30.

Health Teacher — location to be determined, 10-month position. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and meet MSDE requirements. Other experience as established by Maryland law and Board of Education policy is required. Apply by Sept. 30.

Home and Hospital Instructor — location to be determined, hourly employee. A bachelor's degree and experience working with students is required. Position open until filled.

Building Service Worker Floater — location to be determined. Applicants must have the ability to read and write effectively, and be physically capable of performing manual labor. Position open until filled.

Extra pay positions:

Head Girls Soccer Coach — St. Charles High School. Call 301-753-2090.

Varsity Volleyball Head Coach — Maurice J. McDonough High School. Call 301-934-2944.