

May 11, 2018



**WE are Lakota**

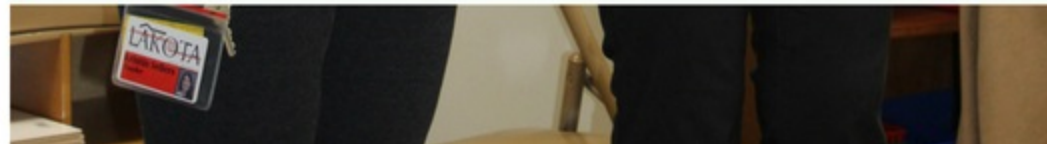
**John McCutchen**



**Jennifer Parrett**



**Kristin Sellers & Eunice Vogelsang**



**Community Foundation, Lakota Announce & Congratulate  
2018 Educators of Excellence**



The Community Foundation of West Chester/Liberty, in partnership with Lakota Local Schools, are proud to announce the three recipients of the 2018 Lakota Educator of Excellence Awards. The 2018 honorees include:

- Elementary (PreK-6) Winner: **Eunice Vogelsang & Kristin Sellers** (first grade team teachers – Liberty Early Childhood School)
- Secondary (7-12) Winner: **Jennifer Parrett** (Honors American History teacher – Lakota West Freshman School)
- Support Staff Winner: **John McCutchen** (Head Custodian – Adena 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 Community Foundation and Lakota Schools have had a long-standing positive relationship, and the Educator of Excellence Award is an important piece of that," said Erin Clemons, Foundation President and CEO. "We recognize how integral our educators are in creating a strong and vibrant community, and this is just one way we, as a Foundation, can support their efforts."

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 is a great reminder that our community stands behind our educators," said Lakota Superintendent Matthew Miller. "With nearly 30 outstanding educators nominated for this year's award, our winners should be especially proud that they stood out among their peers. We are very proud of Mrs. Sellers, Mrs. Vogelsang, Mrs. Parrett and Mr. McCutchen."

Each recipient was honored within their school communities with a special surprise recognition, as well as at the Community Foundation's 2nd Annual Leadership Through Philanthropy Event.

Sellers and Vogelsang, the first teaching pair to win the traditionally singular award, were compared to peanut butter and jelly, salt and pepper and macaroni and cheese in on nomination letter. [Click here to watch a video about Sellers and Vogelsang.](#)

Parrett, who has made teaching a second career, has made a big impact in a short period of time. [Click here to watch a video about Parrett.](#)

McCutchen, who has served Adena for eight of his more than 25 years at Lakota, was likened to "the glue that holds (Adena) together" in his nomination letter. [Click here to watch a video about McCutchen.](#)

Miller added, "The committee's selections were reinforced by the resounding excitement and agreement among each winner's peers. It was an exciting few days delivering the news."

[Click here to read more about the award winners and to see a list of other nominees.](#)



**Parade of Graduates Celebrates Class of 2018,  
Inspires Youngest Learners to Dream Big**

To the cheers of students, staff, parents and members of the community, approximately 900 seniors from both Lakota East and West high schools walked the halls of their elementary buildings during the second annual Parade of Graduates.

**Amy Alexander**, an academic coach at Liberty Junior School and the coordinator of the parade, came up with the concept two years ago after seeing a viral video on social media about a similar event. A member of Lakota's Champions for Change, Alexander brought it to the group, which immediately jumped on board to help.

The Champions, Lakota's cultural proficiency training program, helps to build a stronger environment of inclusiveness that supports high achievement for students of all different backgrounds throughout the district. The Parade of Graduates captures the essence of the program and is an opportunity for younger students to have everyday role models. "We want the little ones to see people who look like them - regardless of skin color, socio-economic status, ability, religion, cultural background - in graduation robes, successfully reaching the goal of a high school graduation," explained Alexander.

For seniors, it's a chance to reflect on how far they've come during their years in Lakota, and a chance to revisit their early stomping grounds, to see teachers and staff members who have had an impact in their lives. "Walking through my elementary school for the Parade of Graduates at VanGorden was overwhelming - but in a good way. I was able to see my sister and my mom cheering me on at a such a big milestone in my life. I'm glad Lakota gave me this opportunity," said **Julianne Ford**, a senior at Lakota East.

Another goal of the annual event is to build up the seniors so they see themselves as role models and to know that they have the support of Lakota as they move on to the next chapter of their lives. As they parade through the hallways, the seniors carry signs that show their post-graduation plans. "We want the little ones to see the big ones and think to themselves, 'I WANT THAT!' We want them to read the graduates' signs and be inspired, thinking, 'I have options! There are lots of possibilities out there when I'm a graduate. They're doing so many exciting things! If this person can stick with it and graduate, so can I!'" Alexander noted.

Once the parade is finished, the seniors are given letters written by the elementary students. The letters contain words of encouragement and advice such as how to live a happy life, how to be a responsible adult and how to accept people who are different than them - all from the perspective of elementary aged students. Alexander hopes that "the sweet, earnest sentiments from the little ones will stay with them as they leave the Lakota School District behind. For the seniors who are able to parade in the elementary school they attended, it's a lovely way for them to 'come home again' before they head out into the big world."

Emotions were worn on heartsleeves at all 10 of Lakota's elementary buildings, both by the seniors and the well-wishers. "It was emotional to see all your teachers," said Lakota West senior **Nina Emlemdi**. "It was crazy to see how fast time went by."

Alexander's goals for the Parade of Graduates include giving the seniors a heartfelt send off from the district. The participation by parents and community members is not only a show of support for the seniors, but also encourages a connection between the school district and resident without students at Lakota.

**Tune in for an interview about "Parade of Graduates" on this month's edition of "Listen Up Lakota." The program will air on WMKV 89.3FM and WLHS 89.9FM (a better signal in Butler County) on Friday, May 18 at 5 p.m. and Thursday, May 24 at 1 p.m.**





East, West Honor 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.

### **East Top 25 Students**

Hannah Ackerman - The Ohio State University

Ryan Ackerman - The Ohio State University

Katherine Baltrusch - University of Cincinnati

Hannah Beals - University of Cincinnati

Alexa Bencic - College of Wooster

Mitchell Bihn - The Ohio State University

Amanda Bilkasley - Wright State University

Zachary Dendler - University of Cincinnati

Alexander Dunaway - Georgia Institute of Technology

Richard Giang - The Ohio State University

Adam Johantges - United States Military Academy, West Point

Joshua Knull - Purdue University

Ryan Ladle - Brigham Young University

Magdalyn Lehman - Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY

Madison Lentz - Not Reported

Weston Linder - Duke University

Joel Mathew - The Ohio State University

Joseph Mislansky - Purdue University

Matthew Moriarty - The Ohio State University

Wesley Reed - University of Cincinnati

Sofia Seppi - University of Pittsburgh

Logan Steele - The Ohio State University

Elaine Suer - University of Cincinnati

Hannah Wilson - Miami University

Alexander Smith - Undecided

### **West Top 25 Students**

Mariam Alwattari - University of Cincinnati

Navkiran Bedi - The Ohio State University

Jacob Bennett - Miami University

Kristina Borglum - University of South Carolina

Vivian Comer - The Ohio State University

Luke de Villiers - Miami University

Joseph Demarco - The Ohio State University

Emer Goss - The Ohio State University

Andrew Hinchberger - Northwestern University

Sydney Hoffman - Miami University

Caroline Joseph - The Ohio State University

Zoe Kelley - Miami University

Taylor Klunk - The Ohio State University

Olivia Martini - The Ohio State University

Megan Merk - Miami University

Jacob Moore - The Ohio State University

Divya Patel - The Ohio State University

Alejandro Pimentel - The Ohio State University

Betty Richardson - Miami University

Nathan Spinosa - The Ohio State University

Steven Sweeney - Cedarville University

Anna Szolwinski - Purdue University

Douglas Van Arsdale - The Ohio State University

Madison Webb - Ohio Northern University



Robert Wetzler - The Ohio State University

Ashley Willicut - University of Cincinnati

Zixin Yang - The Ohio State University

## Ridge STEAM Team Advances to Nationals

Four Ridge STEAM students will be going to STEAM Nationals in Atlanta, Georgia this summer. **Liana Bohrer** and **Ashlynn Sapp** qualified by winning "Children's Stories". **Elizabeth Ogle** and **Kaitlin Knapek** won the "Structural Engineering Challenge". Participation in the contest is made possible through Lakota's partnership with Butler Tech.

## West's Ali Hausfeld Sets Guinness World Record at Flying Pig

West senior **Alexandra “Ali” Hausfeld** has unofficially set a Guinness World Record at the Flying Pig Marathon on May 6, breaking the record for "Fastest Half Marathon Dressed as an Emoji". The previous world record was 2:30; Ali's final time was just under two hours at 1:59:15.

Ali ran to raise awareness and money for The Dragonfly Foundation, which helps young cancer and bone marrow transplant patients and their families. She raised \$2,500 for the organization.

## Regional Road-E-O Results

Lakota and Petermann drivers participated in the Ohio Southwest Regional Road-E-O held at Plains Junior on April 21. Each spring, school bus drivers from around Ohio gather to test their driving skills and knowledge of the yellow school bus. **Julie Moore** placed first as a single driver and **Matt Hull, Mike Luebbe, Bill Jansen, and Dan Jansen** placed first as a team.

**Michelle Tracy, Beth Koebbe, Julie Moore, and Jennifer Reed** placed third as a team. The team spirit award was given to the Lakota drivers and **Ronda Wambach**.

## **East Spark Staff Brings Home Quill and Scroll Sweepstakes Awards**

The staff of Lakota East's news magazine, Spark, brought home many Quill and Scroll Sweepstakes awards. **Sidney Li** won the sweepstakes in the in-depth individual reporting category and **Julianne Ford** won the sweepstakes opinion column category. The staff also won an in-depth reporting sweepstakes for their “Anti” package. The students involved include **Sidney Li, Julianne Ford, Richard Giang, Lexy Harrison, Michael Croy, McKenna Lewis, Samadhi Marapane, Steven McKay, Tyler Bonawitz, Ruth Elendu, Katey Kruback, Meredith Peters, and Meredith Niemann.**

## **West Students Win Congressional Art Awards**

Lakota West took home many awards at the Congressional Art Competition. **Trey Small** was awarded Grand Prize and will have his drawing, “Skilled Hands at Work,” framed and hung in the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. for a year. Other winners include **Cameron Bryant** who placed second in photography, and **Jennifer Ellison** who placed second in painting. **Christopher Johnson, Jaspreet Singh, and Elain Yang** all received an honorable mention in drawing. **Jaden Strattman** received an honorable mention in photography.

## **Amitoj Kaur Running for National Elections**

West junior **Amitoj Kaur** won the Ohio candidacy to run in national elections for the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA). Elections will be held June 26-July 2 in Atlanta, Georgia. The top ten candidates throughout the nation are chosen and as a team they decide who gets which office.

## East and West Students Elected as State Officers for HOSA

Two Lakota students, through the district's partnership with Butler Tech, have been elected as state officers for Ohio Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) for the 2018-19 school year. Lakota West junior **Alandrea Harris** was announced as parliamentarian and Lakota East junior **Trey Saunders** as the secretary. Both participated in an intensive application process, which included a written test and an interview.

## Alec Reder Earns Perfect Score on National Latin Exam

Lakota West sophomore **Alec Reder** was one of 526 students out of 140,000 students worldwide who received a perfect score on the National Latin Exam. The goal of the National Latin Exam is to provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge of Latin and the Roman world on a test consisting of 40 multiple-choice questions.

## East Celebrates 2018 College-Bound Student-Athletes

On May 3, Lakota East invited signed college athletes and their families to attend the final Athletic Signing Day, where all athletes who signed throughout the school year were recognized, including:

Anthony Achille	University of Mount Union	Lacrosse
Sam Ballman	Morehead State University	Football
Madison Beckham	Miami University at Hamilton	Softball
Alexa Bencic	College of Wooster	Soccer
Jak Birdsong	Transylvania University	Soccer
Katherine Bryson	Thomas More College	Lacrosse
Regan Butikofer35	Miami University at Hamilton	Softball
Jake Christman	Wilmington College	Baseball
Jack Cooney	Washington and Lee University	Lacrosse
Jarrett Cox	Fairmont State University	Basketball
Hallie Crawford	Muskingum University	Softball
Jake Dendler	Miami University at Hamilton	Baseball
Nicholas Edkins	Ohio Northern University	Lacrosse
	Heidelberg University	Basketball



Isaiah Flood  
Dylan Fry  
Jeffrey Garcia  
Natalie Hamilton  
Corrine Haverland  
Dustin Horter  
Jaden Kaznowski  
Hannah Keating  
Ethan Oldfield  
Jalen Peck  
Jonathan Peul  
Mitchell Reardon  
Griffin Rich  
Rachel Rosequist  
Valerie Rosequist  
Benjamin Sabelhaus  
Daniel Sewak  
Dylan Smith  
Collin Smith  
Ariel Swain  
Aiden Talarek  
Max Vogelsang

Olivet Nazarene University  
Urbana University  
Cincinnati Christian University  
University of the Cumberlands  
Indiana University  
Capital University  
Morehead State University  
Marietta College  
Defiance College  
Cincinnati Christian University  
College of Wooster  
Capital University  
University of Tampa  
University of Tampa  
Belmont Abbey College  
Cornerstone University  
Miami Hamilton University  
Muskingum University  
Indiana Wesleyan University  
Miami Hamilton University  
Miami Hamilton University

Football  
Football  
Golf  
Softball  
Cross Country & Track  
Lacrosse  
Volleyball & Beach VB  
Soccer  
Basketball  
Baseball  
Baseball  
Lacrosse  
Beach Volleyball  
Beach Volleyball  
Lacrosse  
Baseball  
Baseball  
Soccer  
Volleyball  
Baseball  
Baseball

## East Artwork Featured at Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center

East students **Ryan Kmieske, Clayton Brown, Madison Lentz, Maianna Wells,** and **Magdalynn Lehman** will have artwork displayed at the Scripps School Program's student art show at the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center (CAC). The exhibition features artwork by students from 15 local schools that participated in the program, and runs from May 7-11.

## AROUND LAKOTA

## New Times for 2018-19 School Year Announced

Students in Lakota’s preschools through junior schools will have slightly longer school days in the fall. Preschool, ECS and elementary students will attend school for an extra 20 minutes each day while junior school students will have their day extended by 15 minutes.

“The change is a complement to the positive shifts we’re making for these students with our new initiatives,” said superintendent Matthew Miller. The additional time will allow for the implementation of daily specials for the primary grades and extended advisory periods for the junior schools.

“The additional time at the early childhood and elementary schools will help accommodate daily specials without taking time away from core subjects,” Miller said in an email to parents notifying them of the change. “At our junior schools, the additional 15 minutes each day allows us to enhance the current advisory class experience and provide more choice in the student day,” he continued.

The six specials that will be rotated daily for students in all-day kindergarten through sixth grade include: music, art, physical education, technology, STEAM and health/wellness. At the junior schools, the district will continue to personalize the learning experience through increased student choice. The additional time will also allow for more intervention.

Times will remain the same for the freshman and high school campuses. District officials have already begun to look at possible improvements to the high school experience in the future.

The school times for the coming school year are below. More information about changes for the 2018-19 school year can be found [here](#).

Preschool	9:10 - 11:55 a.m. (Morning session) 1:15 - 4:00 p.m. (Afternoon session)
½ Day Kindergarten	9:10 - 11:55 a.m.
Early Childhood Schools (All-Day K-2)	9:10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Elementary Schools (3-6)	8:20 a.m. - 3:10 p.m.
Junior High Schools (7-8)	7:25 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.
Freshman Campuses (9)	7:15 a.m. - 2:25 p.m. (no change)
High Schools (10-12)	8:05 a.m. - 2:40 p.m. (no change)





## **Eighth-Graders Get D.C. Send-Off from Congressman Davidson**

At some point during their eighth grade year, Lakota students have a chance to board a bus bound for Washington D.C. to bring American history lessons to life.

Liberty Junior students are on their trip right now, and last week Hopewell Junior students had a special guest send them off for their visit to the nation's capital. Congressman Warren Davidson addressed the Hopewell eighth-graders, sharing why many of the stops they will make in D.C. are so important. In particular, the Congressman talked about "The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier" and how it helps honor all who have served to make our country free and keep it free.

Congressman Davidson also gave a little insight into why he ran for office and about the role of Congress in the government.

Hopewell sent 190 students on the trip this year. Hopewell Assistant Principal **LeAnna Webber**, who went on the trip with the students, said, "Students always have the time of their lives on the trip and come back with so many positive, lasting memories." All chaperones for the trip were teachers who wanted to spend the weekend sharing the experience with their students.

The trips to D.C. are packed from morning to night. Hopewell Junior students arrived in D.C. late Friday night, and Saturday morning they were off on a special tour of the White House. It's very unusual for a group that size to tour the home of the President, but a family connection with the Pence family made it possible.

From there, the group went to the Capitol and Arlington National Cemetery. Sunday was filled with visits to Mt. Vernon, the Holocaust Museum, the African American Museum, and the Tidal Basin walk to view the memorials and monuments. On the way home on Monday, the students stopped in Gettysburg.

"The trip is a perfect complement to the American Studies course taken by our eighth-graders," said Webber. "In the weeks leading up to the trip, many projects and class discussions take place that help prepare students for their time in Washington."



*Ridge Junior students developed their own restaurants to practice the nutrition concepts they learned in health class this school year.*

## **Ridge Health Classes Apply Nutrition to Create Restaurants**

Students in **Matt Abshear**'s health classes at Ridge Junior School had the opportunity to put what they've learned into action. The eighth-graders became restauranteurs as they demonstrated their knowledge about nutrition.

"I wanted to do something that would take the kids out of just the information part of nutrition and allow them to practice and experience nutrition," Abshear said. After collaborating with co-workers, Abshear came up with the idea of having each class collaborate to build a restaurant. The students utilized their communication, teamwork and social skills to complete this project based learning exercise.

Each class worked together to create a theme for their restaurant, ranging from southern to a sports grill to Italian. Committees were formed to work on different aspects of the project such as developing the menu, room decor and entertainment. **Elizabeth Bacu** enjoyed being on her class's decorating committee. "A lot of recipes (the menu committee chose) have vegetables in them so we decided to use them on our sign," she noted.

The students brought in items to create their restaurants, including food. Lucky staff members became patrons as they stopped by the media center to enjoy lunch.

Abshear is extremely proud of the hard work his students put into the project. "They have exceeded all my expectations and I have learned more from them in the project than they have learned from me. It has been incredible watching them own this thing and just run with it all."





*Amberly Gray (left), a former Plains student and West graduate, and retired NBA player Rick Hughes (right) shared some important messages with students at Plains Junior School.*

## **Special Guests Share Motivational Messages with Plains Junior Students**

It was motivational Monday when two special guests visited Plains Junior School this week. Amberly Gray, a former Plains student and Lakota West graduate, and Rick Hughes, a retired professional basketball player, spoke to the students about hard work and perseverance.

Gray spoke to the students about the importance of finding a network of people who will support you in life. “Surround yourself with people who will make you better. That starts now.” She also shared her life motto: “I can. I will. I did.” This fierce belief helped Gray overcome several serious health concerns she endured while playing basketball for Pat Summit, the legendary coach of the women’s basketball team at the University of Tennessee.

During her recovery, doctors told Gray that she should get used to a new normal. “How can someone else tell you what a normal life is?” she asked the audience. “You have to find your own normal.” She continued to talk about her dream to play basketball again, even as she sat in a wheelchair recovering from a stroke. Today, Gray plays professional basketball in France. “Everyday. I can and I will,” she reminded the students. “If you believe in yourself, you can and you will accomplish your dreams.”

Former NBA player Rick Hughes continued to motivate Plains students by explaining that the power of being positive, even when the going gets tough, will help a person find success in life. “If you stay positive, anything is possible.”

Hughes told the audience of challenges he overcame, including growing up in a neighborhood with gangs. He echoed Gray’s belief that you need to surround yourself with people who will support you saying, “if they can’t build you up, leave them alone.”

Overcoming difficulties is part of life, and a prime example is that this former professional athlete was cut from the basketball team during his senior year of high school. Although he returned to basketball while attending Thomas More College, Hughes also saw the importance of focusing on academics. “Never, ever be ashamed of your intelligence,” he said.

As the gym repeated after Hughes, “I need FOCUS,” he explained that to succeed in life, one needs to have a plan. To Hughes, FOCUS stands for “follow one course until successful.”

Plains eighth grader **William Layfield**’s takeaway from the morning is that it is important to be positive and surround yourself with others who share a similar point of view. “All the negativity and stuff can lead you to bad places. Surround yourself with positive people to help you succeed.”

Language arts teacher **Lisa Wackler Silverglade** arranged for Gray and Hughes to speak to the student body. “It is always a great opportunity for our students to see how hard work and perseverance pays off both in sports and in the classroom.”

## What Would You Like to Learn at Lakota's CommUnity University?

Lakota Local Schools is excited to announce CommUnity University! The mission of CommUnity University is to provide families and community members with training, resources, and access to skills and services – all to help grow, achieve, and empower greater levels of advocacy for children, schools, and the community.

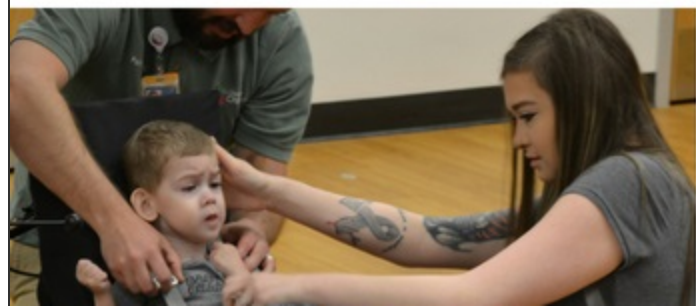
We want to provide meaningful experiences, so we want to hear from you about what topics you’d like to see covered in our CommUnity University.

Some topics already suggested include:

- Positive Behavior Strategies: Positive behavior strategies to increase positive behavior from your children
- Lakota 101: Information about the district and district initiatives as well as academic/enrichment opportunities for students.
- Session focusing on the college admission process with information on financial aid, admission, and finding the right college.

Please take a moment to [fill out this survey](#) to let us know what you you’d like to learn about at Lakota’s CommUnity University.





## East Students Gift Custom Toy Cars, Learn Engineering is Emotional

The smiles and squeals of joy filling the halls at Cincinnati Children's Perlman Center on April 27 was all the payoff Lakota East sophomore **Maddie Barone** needed for the countless hours - both during and after class - that she invested in a year-long engineering project.

"When you think about engineering, you don't necessarily think about impacting people's lives for the better," Maddie said. "But this project showed me that engineering really is important and really can help people."

Maddie and her classmates designed and built specially modified power wheel cars to fit the unique needs of three local toddlers facing mobility challenges. The project was part of a national program called "Go Baby Go," which Butler Tech teachers **Ken Kinch** and **Ed Matlack** have been facilitating in their engineering classes the last couple years.

The modified cars give children with mobility disabilities a chance to play independently and socialize with their peers more easily. Research has shown that independent mobility is linked to cognitive, social, motor, language and other developmental benefits in young children. Having active control over one's own exploration is where the largest developmental gains are seen.

Vercina Warren's three-year-old son, Brian, suffers from a form of cerebral palsy and was one of the recipients. While Brian waits to be ready for his first wheelchair and walker, the car is far more than a toy. A modified Range Rover with padding, a modified acceleration system triggered by touching the steering wheel, and even a remote his mom can use to control it, it's a much safer alternative to a traditional toy car. (It also came complete with under lighting, a built-in auxiliary jack to listen to music and decorative decals of his favorite Sesame Street character, Elmo.)

"I know that when I put him in there, I can breathe a little easier," Warren said. "This just came out of nowhere and it's been a complete blessing. We're going to have a good summer."

Sophomore **Jordan Boudinet** reflected on his emotions after presenting his group's car to their child, Sawyer. "At the beginning, we were just building a car and we had paperwork about who Sawyer was but we didn't really know him," he said. "Seeing the finished product and Sawyer's reaction really brought it all together."

In addition to the three cars, one group of students also presented one of Perlman's employees with a speaker system designed specifically for her wheelchair. When she jokingly mentioned the wish list item during the students' first visit, several rose to the challenge. A separate group of East seniors adapted a bicycle to meet the needs of another Perlman patient.

"Giving our students an outlet for applying both their talents and their thoughtfulness is the ultimate classroom experience," said Lakota East Principal **Suzanna Davis**. "I am so proud of our teaching partners at Butler Tech and our students for rallying behind this special project."







## **Freedom Students Help Build Monarch Waystation Garden**

Freedom students **Pranav Khadkikar**, **Holden Burgess**, and **Siddharth Khadkikar** came to Principal **Lance Green** two years ago with a proposal to build a LifeLAB Monarch Waystation garden on school grounds. After getting approval, the students and their families went right to work building the Waystation. They even built a little Lakota history into the garden, using bricks from the former Union Elementary school.

Now the garden is a reality, providing teachers with a myriad of learning opportunities to bring classroom lessons to life. It's part of the Green S.T.E.A.M. movement engaging students in environment-based projects.

Students can make observations (including nature journalism, poetry, and art), collect data, learn about ecology and conservation, take soil samples, and observe the life-cycles of butterflies and ladybugs in nature. Students can also learn about our most important pollinators and the annual monarch migration from Mexico to the northernmost parts of America.

The Waystation is on a national registry to preserve monarchs and includes a variety of indigenous host and nectar plants to host endangered monarch butterflies. "In its first season, the small 200 square foot garden hosted over 100 monarch and swallowtail caterpillars," said parent Aparna Khadkikar. "It was a lot of fun for visitors and children to witness caterpillars growing, butterflies laying eggs, caterpillars metamorphosing into pupa, and butterflies sipping nectar."

To learn more about the Freedom LifeLAB Monarch Waystation, feel free to contact Aparna Khadkikar at [apkhadkikar@gmail.com](mailto:apkhadkikar@gmail.com), or Holly Burgess at [hdburgess@aol.com](mailto:hdburgess@aol.com).



## East Students' Magnified Giving Projects Support Charities

Honors English students at the East freshman campus have recently completed a project not only for a grade, but for a good cause.

The students were tasked to choose a non-profit organization in greater Cincinnati to champion through a research project and presentation. Their fellow students evaluated each presentation, narrowing it down to three: Reach Out Lakota, Broken Bus Ministry and The Battle Buddy Foundation. A representative of the organizations spoke to the students so they could learn more about each cause, with students ultimately voting for the recipient of a \$1,000 grant from Magnified Giving. This Cincinnati-based non-profit organization partners with schools to inspire students to become engaged in philanthropy.

**Chris Mages** chose Reach Out Lakota for his organization, which he learned about during his elementary years at Independence. Through several programs and fundraisers benefiting its outreach efforts, Chris learned about the many programs that Reach Out Lakota sponsors. "(It) also appealed to me because it is a great local organization which tries to help children and adults in need. It tries to address one of our largest problems, poverty," said Chris. Now in its 25 year, Reach Out Lakota helps families in West Chester and Liberty townships through food and clothing assistance. In addition to providing Thanksgiving baskets, the organization also sponsors Adopt-a-Child Christmas and Back-to-School programs.

**Katie Niewald** knew that she wanted to find an organization that benefits veterans. The Battle Buddy Foundation helps veterans acquire service dogs to assist them with combat-related disabilities. "I love how they give back to people who come from similar experiences and trauma. It means a lot to me to see that these brave men and women receive the help they need in a way that will truly benefit them and not hinder them with heavy debts in the end. I feel as though The Battle Buddy Foundation truly makes a difference in veterans' lives. They

address a social issue I strongly believe in and so I greatly appreciate the organization. The difference they make is what truly appealed to me.”

After careful consideration, the students ultimately chose the Broken Bus Ministry as the grant recipient. The group, founded by Greg and Michele Bailes in Liberty Township, serves the homeless in Cincinnati from a mobile service vehicle. It’s a small, grassroots organization that is run solely through volunteer efforts. **Gwyn Woeller** knew about the organization through her Girl Scout troop. “I think it appealed to me mostly because they (are) a small organization that saw a huge problem in our community and (were) willing to do whatever it took to help solve that problem. It showed me that you can start really small and do great things if you just put some work and heart into what you believe.”

Chris, Katie and Gwyn all agree that this is a very worthwhile project for the class. “I thought that this project was a really great experience, and it should definitely be continued in future. I think that it really helped all of us get to know the greater Cincinnati area better and really see all of the problems in it. This project made me realize that I really do have an impact on my community and I can make a huge difference,” said Katie. Reach Out Lakota and The Battle Buddy Foundation both received \$250 from Magnified Giving.



*Lakota West Freshman history teacher Jennifer Parrett has facilitated guest speakers from the Holocaust and Humanity Center's Speaker's Bureau for the last four years.*

## **Holocaust Survivor's Message to West Freshman: Words are Powerful**

The resounding message at Lakota West Freshman from Holocaust survivor Dr. Al Miller last week was loud and clear: "Words are ever so powerful."



After recounting his personal experience throughout this dark time in history, he went on to describe in vast contrast his welcome to America. An immigration officer gave him some wise advice: “Welcome to America. You’re now in the land of the free,” Miller remembered. “Obey our laws, find a job and make something of yourself.”

“There was no cloud high enough for me in that moment,” said Miller, emphasizing that while words can beat you down, they can also lift you up. Those words inspired him to get a job and eventually, join the U.S. Army, go to college and pursue a lifelong career in optometry.

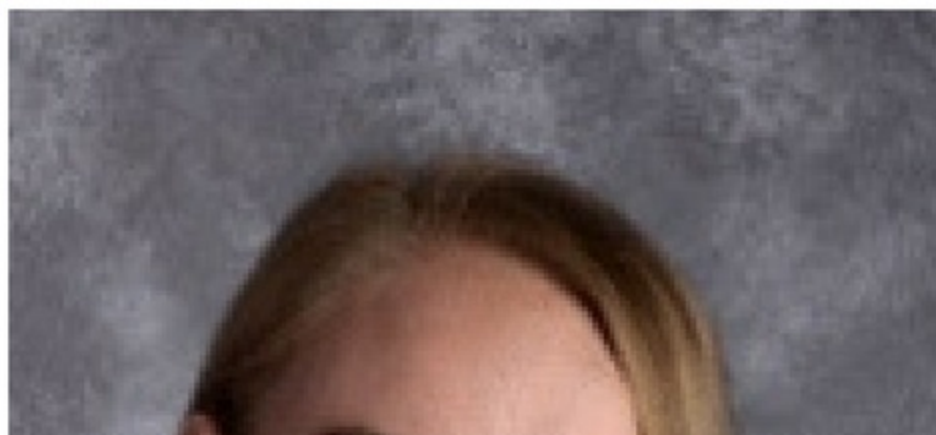
According to World History and Honors American History teacher **Jennifer Parrett**, who organized the all-school assembly, this is the fourth year that West Freshman has hosted a speaker from the Holocaust and Humanity Center’s Speaker’s Bureau. It is now named the Coppel Speaker’s Bureau in honor of survivors Trudy and Werner Coppel, who visited West Freshman at the program’s start and several other Lakota schools over the years.

“I believe this is an incredible resource and I share with my students how lucky they are to hear a primary source in person,” Parrett said. “Students have been very positive about the experience.”

“The assembly was moving and touching. This was REAL!” said freshman **Jillie Rose**.

Others, Parrett said, were impressed by the details that his stories gave about his schooling experience under the Nazi regime and said they could picture what was happening like they were there.

“What is difficult to talk about must be talked about and what is difficult to be confronted must be confronted,” Miller advised his young audience, making the point that it’s the only way to change attitudes and beliefs.



*Class of 2018 valedictorians are Lakota East's Weston Lindner (top left) and West's Anna Szolwinski (top right). Salutatorians are Alexa Bencic (bottom left) from Lakota East and Ashley Willicut (bottom right) from Lakota West.*

## Celebrating the Class of 2018

Graduation ceremonies for Lakota's Class of 2018 will take place at Xavier's Cintas Center. Lakota West's ceremony is on Thursday, May 17 at 7 p.m.; Lakota East will hold its event the next evening, May 18, at 8 p.m. Tickets are not required to attend.

Following tradition, each school's valedictorian and salutatorian will have an opportunity to address their peers, family and friends in attendance. This year's valedictorians are **Weston Lindner** - GPA 4.9879 (Lakota East) and **Anna Szolwinski** - GPA 4.9776 (Lakota West). The salutatorians are **Alexa Bencic** - GPA 4.9685 (Lakota East) and **Ashley Willicut** - GPA 4.8980 (Lakota West). These students are well-accomplished both inside and outside the classroom; here's what their principals had to say about their top students' achievements.

"A natural born leader, Weston is an active member in a multitude of organizations, including governor of the Ohio River Valley State of the Junior State of America and an active member of Boys Nation," said East Principal **Suzanna Davis**. "Weston represents the best of what an experience at Lakota East has to offer. He has intellectual curiosity and approaches everything he does with passion. From his dedication to his academic studies to his passion for bettering our school and community, I look forward to seeing how Weston will spread his Thunderhawk Wings and change the world."

"Anna is an exceptional young lady," said West Principal **Elgin Card**. "She is very involved in our school as a standout track athlete, president of Youth in Philanthropy, and a Spanish club officer. Her hard work and friendly demeanor in and out of the classroom is something that is admired by all. I always tease her that, if you doubled my high school GPA, she would still have me beat. I know she will do great things in the future!"

"Alexa is a true renaissance woman, taking advantage of the wonderful opportunities offered through Lakota and surrounding communities," Davis said of East's salutatorian. "From her athletic performance as a member of our soccer team, to her commitment to a rigorous academic program, to her community service with youth soccer, to her internship with Beacon Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, Alexa fully embodies the "Thunderhawk Experience". Her spirit and dedication to Lakota East will be missed."

Principal Card had this to say about West's salutatorian. "Ashley is both a dedicated student and athlete. She is a great example of the success that hard work and tenacity can bring. Ashley is a responsible, eager student who stood out in the classroom. She is also a Level 10 gymnast at Cincinnati Gymnastics Academy, spending countless hours a week training. Her ability to maintain excellence inside and outside of the classroom is remarkable!"





## **Write Challenge Reception Honors Lakota Authors**

Each year, the Lakota Enrichment and Academic Development of Students (LEADS) hosts the Write Challenge for Lakota students of all ages. The goal of the challenge is to inspire young writers in Lakota.

There were three different categories for the five different age groups. The categories included poetry, narrative, and essay. Every year the LEADS Write Challenge has a different theme for the students to write about. Past themes have been risk, reality, grit, differences, and mistakes; this year's prompt was change.

Winners were recently recognized at a Celebration of Writing Reception where local author Mary Kay Carson shared her journey as a writer. To read an anthology of the winner's works, visit our site: <http://www.lakotaleads.org/write-challenge.html>. Congratulations to these winning authors!

### **K-2 Poetry**

- 1st: - Vincent Covell- Hopewell
- 2nd - Leo Sabatini- Liberty ECS
- 3rd - Ellabelle Hawkins- Shawnee ECS

### **K-2 Narrative**

- 1st - Sophia Fink- Independence
- 2nd - Soni Chitnis- Endeavor
- 3rd - Cameron Fancher- Endeavor

### **K-2 Essay**

- 1st - Dominic Sabatini- Union
- 2nd - Yashwanth Reddy Mallu- Endeavor
- 3rd - Pehzad Banaji- Independence

### **3-4 Poetry**

1st - Maggie Lear- Hopewell

2nd - Catherine Pachuk- Hopewell

3rd - Calista Owusu- VanGorden

### **3-4 Narrative**

1st - Carson Collins- VanGorden

2nd - Luke Nomina- Hopewell

3rd - Bonny Kirkmeyer- Endeavor

### **3-4 Essay**

1st - Trevor Breslin- VanGorden

2nd - Bonny Kirkmeyer- Endeavor

3rd - Liam Moore- Heritage

### **5-6 Poetry**

1st - Chloe Sanders- Independence

2nd - Calleigh Ethier- Independence

3rd - Riley Dexter- Independence

### **5-6 Narrative**

1st - Addison Dailey- Independence

2nd - Calleigh Ethier- Independence

3rd - Annabelle Orlando- Independence

### **5-6 Essay**

1st - Leah Schleibaum- Adena

2nd - Jadah Bowling- Adena

3rd - Anna Axelson- Independence

### **7-8 Poetry**

1st - Dana Shi- Plains Junior

### **7-8 Essay**

1st - Abigail Rutherford- Liberty Junior

### **9-12 Poetry**

1st - Anitvir Taunque- West Freshman

2nd - Emily Sanden- East Freshman

3rd - Raissa Ndaya- East Freshman

### **9-12 Narrative**

1st - Sarah Long- East Freshman

2nd - Anitvir Taunque- West Freshman

3rd - Abby Sturgeon- Lakota West

### **9-12 Essay**

1st - Anitvir Taunque- West Freshman

2nd - Allison Reed- West Freshman

3rd - Hope White- East Freshman





## Guest Speaker from Federal Reserve Speaks to East Economics Class

Students in **Ariana Sanders'** economics class at Lakota East learned about the United States Central Bank in a unique way recently. Sanders arranged for a guest speaker from the Federal Reserve in Cleveland to present to the class through the online meeting tool WebEx.

Sanders wanted to find a way to make it easier for her class of juniors and seniors to understand the often confusing subject. "The FED puts out great web resources for teachers, but being able to speak one-on-one seemed to make it go a step further," Sanders said. "I thought since we can't go to the FED museum of money in Cleveland, I'd like to try to make it come to us."

Students were able to interact with Jessica May, a research analyst, during her presentation. "I'm going to tell you why I think economics is cool and why you should think it's cool, too," she told the class.

The class learned that the Federal Reserve was actually the third attempt to create a central bank and it has existed since 1913. Her talk also included a background of how the federal reserve system was formed and its key functions and responsibilities. May also shed some light on career opportunities that can stem from an economics background.

"I think students were the most surprised that this happens close to home. Major economic decisions are being made in Ohio, and even with a branch of the FED in Cincinnati," Sanders said.

This was senior **Kathryn Creehan's** first experience having a guest speaker in this type of setting. "I think it's pretty cool because she's in Cleveland and we would never have an opportunity like this (without the technology)," she said.

[View All  
District News](#)

## FEATURED PHOTOS







*Last weekend Lakota East and West high schools held their annual Relay for Life events to benefit the American Cancer Society. The events were a huge success with 401 Lakota East students raising \$60,573. West had 270 participants that brought in \$31,000!*

*The East event was held in honor of senior **Noah Grace**'s mother, Barbara, who passed away in early December. Noah's dad spoke at the luminaria ceremony and shared her story with the Relay for Life participants. West senior **Kristen Bruewer**, who battled leukemia and is a cancer survivor, spoke at West's luminaria ceremony.*



*Lakota was “Full STEAM Ahead” this week at the 2018 “Full Speed Ahead” Business Expo, hosted by the West Chester Liberty Chamber Alliance.*

*Earning the “Most Creative Booth” award were all of our guest students, including: Lakota East’s national-bound TSA robotics teams (pictured top left) and three more groups demonstrating activities from their school’s STEAM Lab. Endeavor Elementary featured the year-long project that had students designing the school’s STEAM Lab (pictured bottom right), while Freedom Elementary (pictured bottom left) and Heritage Elementary (pictured top right) fifth-graders demonstrated two different robotics activities.*

*A jazz band combo from Lakota East and Lakota West also provided live music to exhibitors and visitors at the Expo’s entrance.*







*From left: Cincinnati Enquirer opinion editor Kevin Aldridge and Dean Hume, advisor to the Lakota East High School SPARK news magazine, listen as Lakota East senior **Vivian Kolks** asks a question after a media panel on fake news April 26 at the National VOA Museum of Broadcasting in West Chester.*

*The Cincinnati Society of Professional Journalists and VOA museum hosted the program, titled “Who Can I Trust to Give Me the Real News?” and nearly 20 SPARK students were in attendance. (Photo credit: Oak Tree Communications)*

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Announcements & Opportunities*

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### Summer Internships for Rising Juniors and Seniors

Lakota has partnered with area businesses to create unique learning experiences that also offer elective high school credit. Below are descriptions of each internship as well the student application. All applications are due by May 16, and interviews will take place on May 21.

[Emery Credit Union \(financial services/sales\)](#)

[ProSource \(finance: IT and network engineering\)](#)

[SanMar \(distribution supply chain management\)](#)

[Various Views Research \(marketing/marketing research\)](#)

[West Chester Hospital \(business operations\)](#)

[West Chester Hospital \(biomedical\) - July 2018](#)

[West Chester Hospital \(biomedical\) - Aug. 2018](#)

[Student Application for All Summer Internships](#)

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## ON THE RADAR

### *Announcements & Opportunities*

### Lakota Adds 24-Hour Safety Tip Line

Lakota Schools is adding another layer to its safety and security protocols. The district has partnered with the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Public Safety to bring the SaferOH tip line to the Lakota community.

The 24-hour tip line is another way for concerned students, parents and residents to share information with school officials and authorities anonymously. “The safety and security of our schools is always our number one priority at Lakota,” said Superintendent Matthew Miller. “The tip line is another way we can learn about potential threats to student safety before they happen.”

The calls and texts are answered by analysts in the Threat Assessment and Prevention (TAP) Unit of Ohio’s Homeland Security department. The SaferOH tip line is available to any school district, including both public and private schools, in the state free of charge. The tip line’s number, 844-SaferOH, is now posted on the district’s website and its mobile app. Posters with the phone number will be placed in schools as well.

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## April Video Update: A Look Around Lakota

Lakota Local Schools is proud to share this next edition of its monthly video update, "A Look Around Lakota." The April edition features just some of the latest highlights and happenings around Lakota, including:

- Lakota's first-ever Military Commitment Ceremony;
- The formation of Hope Squads at both high schools;
- Two new literacy partnerships with MidPointe Library and Miami University;
- The new "Lakota Learning Blog," authored by Lakota educators;
- The first-ever CommUNITY Earth Day Celebration; and
- This year's "Educators of Excellence," announced in partnership with the Community Foundation of West Chester Liberty.

[Click here to view the April edition of "A Look Around Lakota"](#) and stay tuned for the final video updates as we wrap up another school year.

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## May Photo Contest: Share Why 2017-18 is a Year to Remember

Now that the 2017-18 school year is coming to a close, it's time to look back at all of those memories and milestones that happened this year.

Show us in photo form what made this a year to remember - it can be a special achievement, a memorable class or activity, or a person that really made a difference this year.

Participate all month long on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram by tagging Lakota's account and #LakotaLooksBack. At the end of the month, the photo with the most "likes" will be declared the winner. [Click here for complete details about the #LakotaLooksBack photo contest.](#)

## May 26: Lakota Spirit Night at FC Cincinnati

Lakota is excited to announce a Lakota Spirit Night with FC Cincinnati!

Lakota families and staff are invited to take advantage of special ticket pricing for the May 26 game. FC Cincinnati will take on Louisville at 7:30 p.m. at the University of Cincinnati's Nippert Stadium. Special activities are being planned to celebrate Lakota's presence at the game, so come and show your Lakota spirit.

Visit [www.fccincinnati.com/group-portal](http://www.fccincinnati.com/group-portal) and enter promo code LAKOTA18 or call 513-977-KICK to claim your tickets.

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## May 15: Story Time with the Superintendent

Be sure to join us on May 15 for our next "Story Time and Supper with the Superintendent". From 6:30 - 8 p.m., students can enjoy a meal and hear a special guest reader share one of his favorite stories. Space is limited. [Please follow this link to pre-register.](#) The event will be held at O'Charley's Restaurant (7866 Tylersville Road in West Chester), where children 10 and under eat free.

## 2018-19 Open Enrollment Now Open

Each school year, the Lakota Board of Education can choose to approve the renewal of Lakota's open enrollment policy. [Under Board Policy 5113](#), students residing in other Ohio school districts can apply to attend Lakota.

Due to the high volume of returning open enrolled students, at this time we are not accepting applicants that are applying for the first time. Per Board Policy 5113 and Administrative Guidelines, we will only be accepting applications from current Lakota staff, returning open enrolled students and siblings of returning open enrolled students.

Click here to download the [Inter-District Open Enrollment Application](#), due to the Enrollment Center by 3 p.m. on Thursday, 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.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### *Event Spotlights*

- Tuesday, May 15  
**Story Time & Supper with the Superintendent**  
at O'Charley's  
6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, May 17  
**Lakota West Graduation**  
at Cintas Center  
7 p.m.
- Friday, May 18  
**Lakota East Graduation**  
at Cintas Center  
8 p.m.

## LATEST E-FLYERS



### *What's New This Week?*

As a reminder, E-Flyers is Lakota's way of distributing information about programs, classes, events and opportunities happening in our schools and around the community. Rather than sending flyers home with students, we are now posting all approved information on the E-Flyer page, making it easy for families to access all current opportunities. Here is a listing of all of the new district and community-sponsored flyers for this week.

### **District-Sponsored:**

- Monday, May 21  
**Lakota Board of Education Meeting**  
at Plains Junior Media Center  
6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 22  
**One-Hour Early Release**
- Wednesday, May 23  
**One-Hour Early Release: Students Last Day**
- Thursday, May 24  
**Teacher In-Service Day**

**See Full  
Calendar**

[Lakota East Women's Soccer Camp: July 17-19 \(Grades 1-8\)](#)

[Lakota West Wrestling Camp: June 6-8 \(Grades 2-12\)](#)

[Lakota East Girls Basketball Camp Flyer: June 25-28 \(Grades 2-6\)](#)

### **Community-Sponsored Flyers:**

[Lakota Tomahawks Football and Cheer Combine: May 20 \(Grades K-5\)](#)

[Voter Registration at the West Chester Memorial Day Parade: May 28](#)

[Upward Summer Basketball Camp: June 21-23 \(Grades 5-8\)](#)

[MetroParks Crazy Cardboard Regatta: July 14](#)

[Springhill Summer Camps at Cornerstone United Methodist Church : July 16-20 \(Grades K-5\)](#)

[West Chester Soccer Club Fall Registration \(Ages 4 and up\)](#)

[British Elite Fall Soccer Tryouts: May 29-June 5 \(Levels U8-U16\)](#)

[Grace Chapel Archery Camp: June 18-22 \(Ages 9-16\)](#)

[Lakota FC Tryouts: May 29-June 9](#)

[Warren County Soccer Academy Tryouts: May 29-June 9 \(Ages 19 & under\)](#)

[4th of July 5K and Parade sponsored by Liberty Township and Cincinnati Children's Hospital: July 4](#)

[Lakota Family YMCA Summer Stingray Swim Team](#)

[Cincinnati United Soccer Club Tryouts: Begin May 29 \(Ages 4-19\)](#)



**All Current  
E-Flyers**



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