

# HILLER HIGHLIGHTS

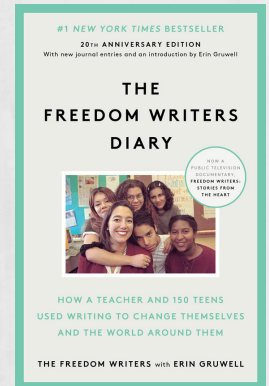
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
HOME OF THE HILLERS!



October 2021-2022

## THE FREEDOM WRITERS PROJECT

The pandemic has affected students in numerous ways. Across America, learning has been disrupted, students' achievement has decreased, and many have experienced feelings of stress and anxiety. This school year, the District wants to help students adjust as they return to a "new normal." We understand that addressing students' social and emotional needs is of utmost importance as they transition back to a typical learning environment and work more diligently than ever to meet their academic goals.



In the spring and summer of 2020, organizations like the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence published resources and recommendations to help educators and students process the stress of learning during an unprecedented time. Among the recommendations is for educators to help students better comprehend their emotions through a social and emotional approach to learning. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a methodology used to invite individuals to understand, feel, and manage their emotions as they exercise empathy for others who experience intense emotions as well. While students of all ages and backgrounds have reportedly experienced stress and anxiety around the pandemic, those who were struggling to manage their academics, behavior, and emotions prior to the pandemic might be particularly at risk. Therefore, Trinity Area will invite specific students to engage in a special experience arranged just for them: to participate in weekly lessons, focused on SEL and taught by Ms. Erin Gruwell.



Ms. Gruwell is an educator and author known for her unique teaching method, which led to the publication of the New York Times Bestseller, *The Freedom Writers Diary*, in 1999 and the subsequent production of the movie, *Freedom Writers*, in 2007. Both book and movie illustrate how Ms. Gruwell transformed her at-risk students' lives by fostering an educational philosophy that values and promotes diversity, students' voices through lived experiences, and a social and emotional approach to learning. In her classroom, she directly addressed the tensions by asking her students to use their pens as weapons against the drugs, gang warfare, homelessness, and homicides riddling the racially divided community in which they lived.

Through literature and media, her students discovered new ways to express themselves, manage their emotions, and embrace hope. Due to Ms. Gruwell's efforts and their faith in her, all 150 original Freedom Writers are high school graduates and published authors. Many attended college, achieved success in their careers, and established families. Impressively, they continue to serve as teachers, volunteers, writers, and assistants to their mentor as they inspire today's at-risk students to do and be their best.

Beginning the week of November 1, 2021 and until the week of March 14, 2022, some of Trinity Area's students will have the chance to meet and learn directly from Ms. Gruwell and her Freedom Writers. Every week for 17 weeks, selected students will engage in a learning experience developed, presented, and distributed by Ms. Gruwell and her staff. Each interactive class will span approximately one hour, and all classes will connect to form a full curriculum grounded in SEL. Classes will be based on a theme, such as hope, resiliency, and empathy, and students will partake in rigorous academic exercises as they think deeply about their own challenges and triumphs. Through their work, Ms. Gruwell and her Freedom Writers have inspired positive change for thousands of students across the country. We are so excited for them to teach our Hillers how to overcome adversity, and to find success both inside and outside the classroom.



**JEFFERSON  
AWARDS**  
—  
MULTIPLYINGGOOD

**TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL'S TLC  
TEAM WINS PA STATE AWARD**

CONGRATULATIONS to TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL who earned the 2021 Students In Action Award for Most Outstanding Service to Others, the Commonwealth's top recognition for youth leadership in public service, as part of Multiplying Good's Pittsburgh Public Service Pitch Day, where participating schools and teams share the impact of their work within their community. Trinity also took home SIA honors for earning a 2021 Regional Gold Banner for their service and the 2021 Regional Award for Best Narrative Blog and Best Oral Presentation describing the service work of their team during the passing school year. During the 2020-21 school year, the Trinity Students In Action team addressed the impacts of COVID-19 on a multifaceted approach: from isolation, to job loss, to food insecurity, and more. Student leaders worked sometimes from school, sometimes online from home, and always socially distanced but community minded. The team impacted 6,000 individuals, engaged 30% of their student body and over 260 volunteers, and completed more than 1,200 hours of service – all during COVID-19. This year-long endeavor is in part illustrative of the collective efforts of Trinity High School's SIA team and other groups, like NHS, Trinity Cares, and more.

Joie Engle, class of 2021, along with seniors Ava DeBoer and Emily Havrila and junior Emily Wickham gave the state presentation virtually to the judging panel in a session that, judged separately, included teams from New York and Massachusetts.



TLC also competed with teams from across the entire country the first week of June - just hours before graduation! - for National Public Service Pitch Day, and they will be receiving a grant and will have a video made for the team this summer by Multiplying Good. Top national SIA Teams were announced at the virtual 2021 Jefferson Awards at the end of September, hosted by CBS Evening News anchor and managing editor Norah O'Donnell.



Recognition goes to the entire 2020-2021 TLC team for this award: class of 2021 students Michael Dunn, Joie Engle, Mady Frazee, Ben Kozak, Emma Malinak, Erin Popeck, Lucinda Towers; class of 2022 students Macy Comfort, Ava Deboer, Emily Havrila, and Daniel Lee; class of 2023 students Ellen McIlvaine, Danny Towers, and Emily Wickham; advisors Mrs. Mary Ann Berty and Mr. Luke Modrak.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO TRINITY'S OWN MULTIPLYING GOOD ONE IN A MILLION AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Kathleen Sabol, Distinguished Alumni Recipient 2019** - She is One in a Million! Co-Creator/Organizer of annual County Sister to Sister Summit (2000-) to address decision-making and leadership skills for 6th grade girls. Organizes annual Rotary Club Charity Trivia Contest fundraiser (2001-) w/ 400 attendees and \$15,000/year for local charities. Co-coordinator (2019-) and coordinating committee (2011-2019) of historic David Bradford House fundraiser the Whiskey Rebellion Festival, one of the largest festivals in the county w/ 30k attendees. Board service: PA Trolley Museum (2019-), Domestic Violence Services of SWPA (2008-17), AAUW, 1997-), Literacy Council of SWPA (1998-2010), Washington Hospital Foundation (2004-06), United Way of Washington County (2002). From 2018 Louis E Waller Humanitarian Award from Washington County Community Foundation press release: "Her contributions to so many aspects of community life in Washington County made her a natural recipient" of the award, which is given to "someone who is devoted to the promotion of human welfare and the advancement of social reform as evidenced by humanitarian deeds in the community."

**Mary Ann Berty, TLC Advisor and former HS teacher** - She is One in a Million! Mrs Berty is the poster for being one in a million. Her tireless dedication to fostering a positive, embracing environment for all students in the community has been over 45 years running. She possesses a knack for creating new environments and opportunities for students to express themselves and proudly represent our school and town, and her decades of sowing positivity for all is evidenced by the generations of families who have been in her orbit. Mrs Berty always looks to help the underdog, whether a student in need or a local organization looking for a new partnership, including senior care centers, public services, domestic abuse awareness groups, community foundations, and local businesses. Her actions serve as inspirations for students to grow into community-minded individual.

# Congratulations October Students of the Month



**Ethan Iams  
High School**



**Meredyth Stimmell and Stephen Bryant  
Middle School**



Gifted students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade competed in the Double Digit Math24 competition at Chartiers-Houston on September 30th. They competed against students from Canon-Mac, Washington, Avella, Burgettstown, Fort Cherry, and McGuffey schools.

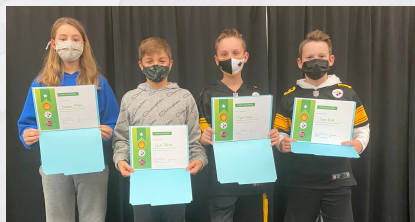
The competition was tough, but Vittoria Emerich managed a second place win for the 7th grade division while Bayleigh Lowe came in first place and Alex Berry came in 3rd place in the 8th grade division. Overall, our team earned third place! Congratulations to all the students who worked so hard to succeed in this competition! Mrs. Gojmerac and Mr. Walsh are so proud of your accomplishments!



Trinity Area is proud to continue our partnership with Carnegie Mellon and Nesra Yannier. Our elementary students are benefiting from these programs every day! For more information, follow the link: <https://t.co/4A6TfB2yjt?amp=1>



Mrs. Gojmerac's gifted students in grades 2-5 enjoyed learning outdoors from some wonderful expert volunteers at this year's Environmental Sciences Exploratory held at Mingo Creek Park. We learned about food chains, nonpoint stream pollution, experimented with water sampling and testing, learned about fish shocking, caught some "fish," and investigated porosity of rocks. What a day!



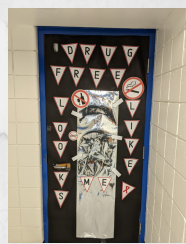
TMS gifted students recently traveled to California University of PA for the Powering Pittsburgh Competition. Students were tasked with creating a cleaner, safer, more energy efficient method of powering Heinz Field and/or the great city of Pittsburgh. Research was conducted, presentations planned, and models constructed before students presented their ideas to the judges at the regional competition.

Congratulations to 6th graders Zach Cholock, Evan Klick, Ryan Lukas, and Daesha Plesko for placing at the regional competition with their project which featured biogas. They will compete at the championship round at Heinz Field on November 17th. Best of luck!!



Every year, Trinity South students participate in Fire Prevention Day.

Thanks to the firefighters from Amity and Lone Pine VFCs for providing various demonstrations including; the smokehouse, fire extinguisher simulator, fire fighting tools, fire hose, and Rocco the search dog!



As part of Red Ribbon Week, 3rd Grade classrooms across the district are participating in a Door Decorating Contest sponsored by the Washington Drug & Alcohol Commission. The door designs must promote a drug free lifestyle or have anti-drug, alcohol, or tobacco theme.

Each classroom was awarded a \$25.00 Amazon gift card and will be competing against other schools for the Grand Prize of a \$200.00 Amazon gift card. Good Luck 3rd graders!



Mrs. Gojmerac's students are loving the inquiry based science experiments we have received from WQED! All four Trinity elementary schools are Smart Schools which infuses research-based resources into schools to educate, engage, and inspire 21st-century learners. We are thankful for their partnership and support!



Trinity's Trailblazers visited The Good Zoo at Oglebay Resort

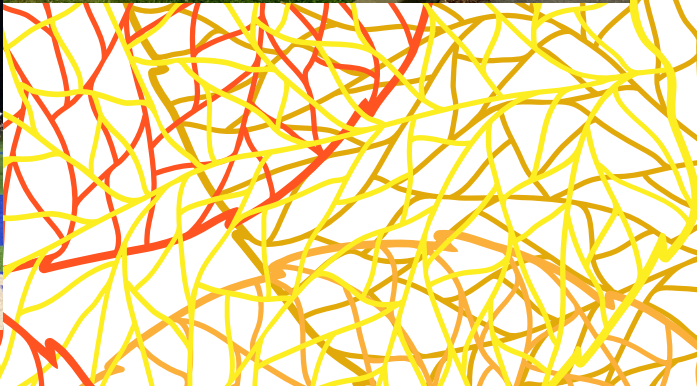
## KINDNESS COUNTS!

In October, Trinity Middle School recognized three kids for their kindness and positivity. Noral Miller was described as a "ray of sunshine" by her teachers and was described as always willing to lend a helping hand to anyone in need. Vittoria Emerich came to the aid of another student when he needed it most, and she was more than willing to put others above herself. And, last but not least, Charlotte Hinkler showed kindness and consideration to a friend in need both in class and in the cafeteria. Trinity Middle School is proud to showcase these positive role models for October.





# Fall FORMAL 2021







Congratulations to the Trinity High School Marching Band on a great competition season!



On Wednesday, September 29, 2021, the Trinity High School Chapter of the National Honor Society held its sixty-first Induction Ceremony in the Trinity High School Auditorium. Sixty-six students were inducted that evening. We would like to thank all inductee family and friends for attending, and congratulate the newest members on this honor!

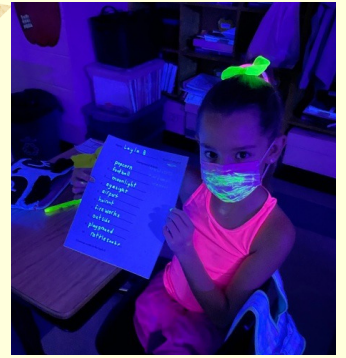
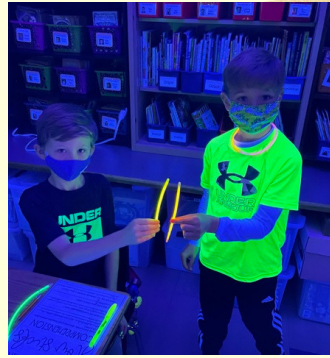


The five, newly inducted officers gave speeches on the four pillars of the National Honors Society: leadership, scholarship, character, and service, and also regarding the history of the NHS. New officers are President Courtney Boardley, Vice President Krista Efaw, Secretary Alexandra Koffler, Treasurer Ava Robinson, and Historian Emily Ewbank.

On behalf of the National Honor Society we would like to thank our administration and faculty advisors for supporting and volunteering their time to make the evening special.

# Rock Your School!

Trinity East Elementary School participated in the fourth annual Rock Your School event on October 22, 2021. Educators from around the world were invited to participate by creating an outside-the-box educational experience designed to engage their students and bring learning to life in their classrooms. Co-Founder of Get Your Teach On, Hope King, says, "Our mission is to engage as many teachers as possible, who in turn will engage and inspire literally millions of students. It all starts with us. If educators feel inspired, we can be the difference in a child's life. We can help instill the joy of life-long learning in our students." The theme this year was Learning Like Rock Stars! Students participated in various learning opportunities that showcased the fun we have learning math, reading, and science concepts. Glow Day science experiments, thematic centers, and dance parties to celebrate meeting goals were just a few of the events planned by our Rock Star teachers for our V.I.P students.



# Congratulations

## ALL-TIME LEADING GOAL SCORER

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ALYSSA CLUTTER  
97 CAREER GOALS  
MOST IN TRINITY SOCCER  
HISTORY!



## NEW SCHOOL RECORDS CONNOR ROBERTS

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MOST PASS ATT/SEASON  
MOST PASS COMP/SEASON  
MOST PASS YARDS/SEASON  
MOST TD PASSES/SEASON



# WHO WE ARE

## #TRINITYFAMILY



**Andrew Harmon**  
**Trinity Middle School**

Andrew Harmon graduated from Waynesburg University in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics and a Mathematics 7-12 Pennsylvania Teaching Certification. He completed his student teaching at Trinity High School in the Fall of 2011. After college, Andrew began working as a Tracking Center Operator for Consol Energy. His teaching career started after he and his wife moved to Georgia to pursue their careers. His first teaching position was at Cobb County School District. For the 5 years he lived in Georgia, Andrew taught at two different high schools within the same district and taught close to 1000 students about the wonderful world of Mathematics. In 2016, Andrew was selected as the Coca-Cola Teacher of the Month at South Cobb High School. After moving back to Pittsburgh, he accepted a year-long substitute teaching position at Trinity High School. It was then he made his favorable impression on our students and Administration. We are fortunate to have Mr. Harmon as our 7th-grade Math teacher at Trinity Middle School.

**Cool Facts:** Andrew and his wife Kaitlyn are the proud parents of their 4-year-old son, Oliver. He is an awesome dad! Andrew and Oliver spend their evenings and weekends playing catch, watching movies, jumping on the trampoline, playing with video games and hot wheels, and taking walks with their Golden Retriever, Dottie. Andrew is a lifelong Penguins fan and proposed to his wife at a Penguins game. She said, yes! Andrew and Kaitlyn are expecting their second child in February.

**One more thing:** As Tracking Center Operator at Consol Energy, Andrew monitored underground sensors from a remote location. He had multiple opportunities to tour the mines and was fascinated by what takes place underground.

**#trinitypride**



**TRINITY AREA**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

# WHO WE ARE

## #TRINITYFAMILY



**Sally Maxwell**  
**Trinity West**

Mrs. Sarah Maxwell is our new 2nd grade teacher at Trinity West. She is affectionately called Sally by her friends and family. She graduated from the College of Wooster in Ohio with a degree in German Language and Literature. Upon graduation, she worked as a paralegal for a small law firm in Waynesburg. During college, Sally volunteered at local schools and preschools and always felt a calling to work in education. Because of this, she decided to return to school to obtain her K-6 teaching certification from the California University of Pennsylvania. Mrs. Maxwell completed her student teaching at Muse Elementary in the Canon McMillan School District. She has spent the past 7 years in the Waynesburg School District in long-term positions in K-5. With the resources for math and ELA being new to everyone, she has been able to learn alongside her teammates providing insight from her past experiences she gained through her exposure to other school districts. Mrs. Maxwell has created a very positive and welcoming environment in her classroom. She is excited and proud to be a Hiller!

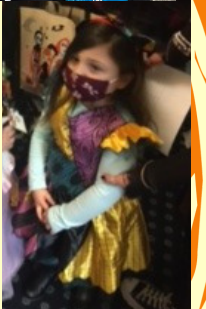
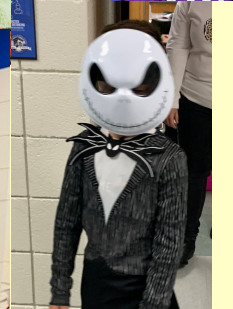
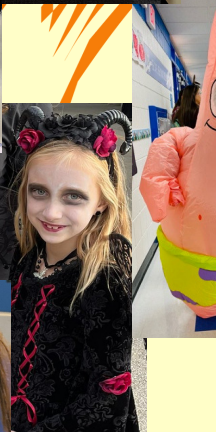
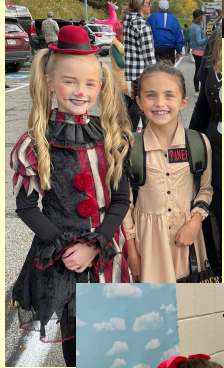
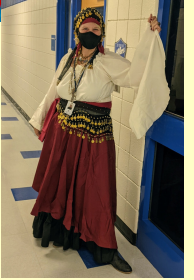
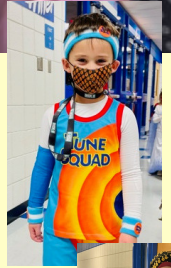
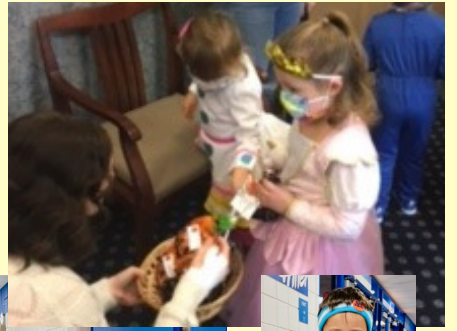
**Cool Facts:** Sally enjoys living in a small town and spending the weekends hiking with her family, riding bikes, and doing all things outdoors. Her children boast that she makes the best s'mores! This is her favorite time of year because she loves all things pumpkin! She lives with her husband, Kevin, who teaches math at Penn State Fayette and their three sons Ethan, Ben, and Will. Sally loves listening to all kinds of music, reading, and her latest hobby is learning to knit. You'll often find her sitting on the sidelines for Friday night football or a weekday soccer game. She and her family are avid "Amazing Race" fans and dream of traveling around the world together. The favorite place she has ever visited is Lauterbrunnen, Switzerland.

**#trinitypride**



**TRINITY AREA**  
**SCHOOL DISTRICT**

# Happy Halloween



Thanks to T ASD Food Service for providing snacks for our Halloween activities!

**Do you have a bachelor's  
degree and want to  
work with kids?**



**THE HR DEPARTMENT IS LOOKING FOR SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS!**

**THOSE WITH A TEACHING DEGREE, AS WELL AS THOSE WITH  
“EMERGENCY STATUS”, MAY APPLY  
(FOUR YEAR DEGREE REQUIRED/NO TEACHING DEGREE NECESSARY)**

**DAILY RATE IS \$125**

**IF YOU ARE QUALIFIED AND INTERESTED  
IN WORKING WITH OUR STUDENTS,  
CONTACT**

**MR. JACK MINNICK  
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR  
FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**724-223-2000 EXT. 7121 OR 7114**



## BUS DRIVERS NEEDED

If you are interested in working as a bus driver for the Trinity Area School District, please contact one or both of the following bus companies:

GG&C  
(724)222-2320

Schweinebraten Bus Co.  
(724)222-4113

To submit an article to be considered for publication in *Hiller Highlights*, email:  
[hillerhighlights@trinityhillers.net](mailto:hillerhighlights@trinityhillers.net)  
or  
[jwalz@trinityhillers.net](mailto:jwalz@trinityhillers.net)

Articles may be submitted in the body of the email or attached as a *Word* document. Documents in .pdf format will not be accepted. Corresponding pictures must be attached to the same email in .jpg format.

The newsletter is released at the end of each month -

September through June

All articles are subject to final approval by the Superintendent.



## Important Dates in NOVEMBER

1 - Teacher In-Service Day/No School

4 - Board Meeting/6 p.m.

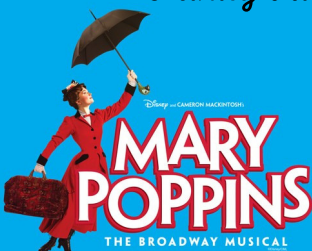
18 - Board Meeting/6 p.m.

25-29 Fall Break

**INFORMATIONAL FLYERS:**  
Flyers are available on the district website under About  
To access, click on the link  
[DISTRICT FLYERS](#)

To request that a flyer be posted on the website, email:  
[jwalz@trinityhillers.net](mailto:jwalz@trinityhillers.net)

Trinity High School performing arts presents



March 31, April 1, 2, 3, 2022  
in the High School auditorium

