

# The



# Signal

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## FCCLA Placed First at Regionals, Qualifies for State

**By Alexa Toledo**

FCCLA stands for Family Career and Community Leaders of America. Not many students know about this wonderful club/opportunity that runs through the Family and Consumer Sciences department at Fenton.

In this club, students are able to compete in events that will later help them in their future careers. For example, competing in the Children's Literature event allows competitors to develop storytelling and teaching techniques that would be age appropriate for a group of preschool children.

If early childhood education isn't for you, there are many other career related competitions in the fashion, culinary, interior design, and hospitality/tourism pathways!

For example, there are culinary competitions that have cookie decorating, salad preparation, frosting, and cake assembly, and as well as fondant decorating.

Other events include public speaking, apparel & textile, and entrepreneurship. This year all ten members received first place awards at the regional competition and all qualify to compete at the State competition in April.

The members included Arianna Fontanez, Sabrina Paz, Joanna Toledo, Mia Anagnos, Alexa Toledo, Coral Roque, Kaitlyn Hernandez, Yami Morales, Perla Perez, and Lizbeth Ramirez.

Leader board member Joanna Toledo said, "Our group has grown greatly since the last couple of years. I enjoy the time we spend together at our Wednesday meetings, and everyone has such a bubbly personality. I am really looking forward for this year's state competition."

Sponsor and FACS teacher Jackie Fontillas says, "Our students work very hard and score among the top in the county. The competition is an extension

of the learning we do in our Preschool program here at Fenton. I am incredibly proud of our students and their dedication to becoming career ready! Aside from competitions, we have a lot of fun during our meetings building friendships, fostering healthy relationships, and getting more involved in our community!"



Photo courtesy of Jackie Fontillas

## Collaboration for the Future: Fiber Art Installation for ARC

**By Jadyn Golz**

After receiving a grant from the Bensenville Arts Council, art teacher JoAnna Rieger began to build upon the idea of a permanent art installation. She then received more funding from the 21st Century Bison Cultural Connections. James Ongtengco, Superintendent, then helped Rieger find places in the school where they could install the art. This was when Mrs. Elizabeth Wright, librarian, opened up the ARC and the project took flight.

In the early fall of 2019, the AP 3D art class interviewed the school asking what they thought the ARC was all about. Responses varied widely but many followed the basic premise of growth, community, and transformation.

Rieger contacted Natasha Lehrer Lewis, a fiber artist, to aid in the project. Lewis specializes in fiber art which is essentially art made

with wool. The technique used for this project is called Nuno Felting or Laminate Felting; a process where one takes "gauzy, thin fabric and fused it with a soft Merino wool," states Lewis.

During February 3rd to February 7th, the community and students were invited to help in the creation of the new art piece to be hung in the Arc. Students, staff, and parents, guided by Lewis, took silk that she dyed beforehand and placed dyed wool overtop. They then poured water mixed with dish soap on top of the wool to fuse together the two layers. After the entire piece is covered, a cord and another piece of silk is layed on top and the process repeats.

Once that is done, a layer of bubble wrap is placed on top. This is where the agitation begins, or the fusing of the layers into a solid, lightweight material. They achieved

this by covering the bubble wrap with more soap-water, and rubbing the bubble wrap into the fabric. Once that is done, they flipped the piece and repeated the process on the other side.

The last step was the rolling, or the final stage of agitation. They rolled the piece up and back and forth. After 5 minutes, the piece is unrolled, and rolled up again from another side where the process repeats. This happens on the last two sides of the piece before it comes out of the bubble wrap. Then the pieces were wrung and dried before they go to their new forever home in the ARC in the coming months.

Lewis states, "The whole process, from the colors, dyeing and preparation, is customized to each project I do. In the dozens of artist-in-residencies I have done, no two are alike. It is a truly passionate pursuit to create an experience for

the community where they can come together and make a beautiful piece of art that will live on for future generations to enjoy."

During the week, over 200 hands helped create 50 unique pieces. The installation will begin early March and a special dedication with the artist will take place during the FHA Annual Art Fest on April 30th, at 7:30 pm.

The end result of this project: A spiral of vibrant leaves that hang from the ceiling of the ARC above the stage. All leaves will fall in time, but that makes room for new leaves to take our place. Whether you're a Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, or a Senior, let's leave a lasting impression on Fenton. When our successors look up at the ceiling of the ARC in the coming years, they'll gaze upon the legacy of classes 2020-2023.



# Fenton Welcomes Two French Exchange Students

By Lissette Hernandez

Have you noticed new faces recently walking through Fenton's hallways lately? Fenton recently welcomed two foreign exchange students from France, Lino and Suzon.

This three week exchange opportunity offers them a chance to learn not only about English but also American customs. Here at Fenton French teacher Mrs. Kyra Behnke hosted Suzon, and Getsemani Castillo hosted Lino. From staff to students who have spoken to these foreign exchange students we have all been thrilled to welcome them to the Fenton community.

According to Behnke, "Every February a group from Southern France comes to Chicago and any school in the area can host the students, so all the French kids are somewhere along the midwest." Since Mrs. Behnke is also a host herself she also added on, "I think it's really fun to show them Chicago and to hear their thoughts and opinions."

Junior Getsemani Castillo is also a host this year for Lino, and she states, "I don't like how much

time hosting is taking up right now seeing as it is junior year and I have a lot going on, but other than that I like hosting a lot because it gives me a chance to meet new people

from different parts of a country I've always wanted to visit. It also makes me get out more and having somebody to talk to during and after all of my classes has been pretty fun.

I've learned to be more outgoing and social seeing as I'm the one that had to make the conversations and make the exchange student feel comfortable in this new environment. I'm glad I hosted because it's taught me to get a little more out of my comfort zone and experience something new!"

In addition to the hosts, French exchange student Lino said, "There is more freedom here than in France. The periods are shorter and the teachers are more friendly with the students. This school is just bigger in general, too. I discovered a lot of new things such as food, people from different backgrounds, and new weather that I actually really like because it's very different from France."

All in all, both Mrs. Behnke and Getsemani are thrilled to welcome Lino and Suzon to America. Not only is this a new and exciting learning experience for the hosts and the foreign exchange students themselves but also for Fenton's student body so they can get a better perspective of the lives of French students and how different life is across the country.



Photo courtesy of Kyra Behnke

## Class Left With No Adult, Students Removed from NHS

By Jenny Aguilar

Many students look forward to having substitutes in class because that usually means the class period is more laid back than normal. There have been a few instances, however, where not even a substitute shows up to class. This leaves a group of teenagers in a room by themselves for 45 minutes. As shocking as it might sound, this scenario has happened on occasion at Fenton High School, a place where parents expect their students to be supervised by an adult. When this situation does occur, most students treat it as just a study hall to catch up on past work and study for future exams. This is what happened on January 31, 2020, when no substitute teacher arrived for an Algebra 2 class; the students were supposed to take their chapter test.

Sophomore Sofia Guadarrama describes her class period, saying, "I studied for the math test that I thought was being pushed back and caught up on my AP World History homework. I was more focused on my schoolwork than anything else going on in the background."

A few days later, many NHS candidates and inducted members were being pulled from their classes and asked a couple of questions. Someone had taken a photo of the test and it had gotten around. Staff

was trying to figure out who took the picture

Sophomore Xochitl Quiñones, another student in the class, says, "I explained to him how I had sat in my seat with my homework out but hadn't seen or heard anything. I felt incredibly misjudged and ashamed for something I wasn't even to blame for. I didn't feel comfortable nor did I feel as though I was being taken seriously or fairly for what had happened."

Before being allowed to return to class, the students were told that their NHS application was going to be reviewed by the faculty committee to determine what should be done with their application.

The National Honor Society, or NHS, is a high school organization focusing on student's scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Members of NHS are often held at a higher standard than other students.

Dr. George Mussman, one of the NHS advisors, explains what happens to students when they do not live up to these expectations: "When a student does not demonstrate leadership [or any of the other criteria] the information of the situation is taken to the faculty committee."

The faculty then review each individual case and votes on what should be done. Each case is given anonymously to avoid biased

decisions, and only inducted members are allowed a hearing if they wish.

A few days after the faculty meeting on February 10, 2020, many of the NHS students, both inducted members and candidates, were told that their application was rejected.

Mussman says that "[They] try very hard to communicate to students the process and expectations."

He states how Fenton's NHS organization is a lot more open compared to other high schools. However, it still doesn't feel that way for many students.

Guadarrama explains the moment she was told her application was rejected: "I was told that if this had happened at a college or university I would be expelled, but I don't really know the exact reason why my application was rejected. I'm not sure if it was because we didn't do anything about not having a sub or if it was because we didn't do anything about the kids taking pictures of the test we were supposed to take that day."

Quiñones encompasses her feelings about the situation, saying, "I remember how exceptionally small I felt despite having done nothing wrong. I hate the fact that I know so many of my close friends were feeling the exact same way and felt even worse when their applications were rejected for the year."

While the NHS students were ultimately removed from the organization for the remainder of the school year, as of the time of writing this article, there has been no formal consequence for the other students in the Algebra 2 class, including the people involved in taking the picture of the test, whomever they are.

Scenarios like this have happened in the past, where NHS students receive consequences while other students do not, a prime time being homecoming week with the reason being that NHS students are held to higher standards.

This whole issue began with no substitute teacher showing up for an Algebra 2 class and resulted in multiple students being removed from an organization that provides many opportunities for students as they go to college and the rest of their lives.

Guadarrama gives her thoughts on how situations like these could be avoided in the future: "Moving further, the school should make sure that every single class has a sub when the teacher is not present. The students shouldn't be blamed for something the school is responsible for taking care of. Also, there should be an official procedure for this type of situation, if it should ever happen again, that every FHS student knows about."



# Food Deliveries During Lunches, After School Raise Questions

By Malien Tingpalpong

It is no secret students in high school have long mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Some students spend hours in the building attending rehearsals, practices, and preparing for competitions or performances. Students are spending more than 12 hours a day at school. Recently however, there has been rising conflict and confusion about food deliveries at Fenton. During the school day, some students have requested lunches through online food delivery services such as Uber Eats or DoorDash to have their food during the lunch hour and after school. Some students have asked parents to bring them their lunches during the school day.

According to page 22 in the Student Handbook, "Food deliveries ordered by parents, students, and or families will not be permitted at any time in the building. Parents who bring lunch for their students must bring a lunch in a label bag and or prearrange with their students'

Assistant Principal or Dean. Fast food deliveries are not allowed. A full line of food service is available during breakfast and lunch."

Assistant Principal Eileen Roberts oversees lunch supervision at Fenton and has seen an increase in lunch deliveries. She comments on the recent influx of deliveries and sees this as a problem saying, "It used to be just sack lunch deliveries from parents, but some students have ordered food from Uber Eats, then say it is from their 'dad.' I am a rule-follower, so I'm just following the rules."

Senior Jordan Blanche elaborates on the issue with the food policy after school saying, "I think food deliveries should be allowed after and during school because there are plenty of activities that go until 7 or 8 where kids without cars or the time aren't able to go and pick something up for themselves. Parents work, they aren't able to get food. The lunch portions aren't big enough to last the entire day. They don't provide

food after school."

Some students are concerned with getting food after school with their long practices. Blanche states, "Girls without cars have to wait after school without any food. For dance, we had practice from 3:15 to 9 at night and a basketball game at 6. How and when are we supposed to get food without ordering it?"

Blanche continues, "A free and reduced lunch only provides the bare minimum of food. For someone who needs more energy or stayr after school, the portion provided with school lunch may not be enough."

Senior Jimmy Palumbo stays after school far after school ends. He comments, "They don't even let our parents bring our food. In the workplace, you have allocated time to get food. We aren't even supposed to walk around in the building. They try to cut away even more of our own free time, even if it's after school. It's outrageous. It's not obstructive of a learning environment if it's after school. How are we supposed to

develop into adults if we aren't being treated like adults?"

Palumbo goes on to explain his opinion on the food policy saying, "Just because a rule is a rule doesn't mean it's good."

Roberts comments on how these problems do not have immediate solutions saying, "Those are the rules right now. The lunch services provided are through the lunch company. In the end, the student handbook committee has to decide what is best for our community. It will take a little bit of time."

Blanche and Palumbo, among other students involved in multiple time-consuming activities disagree with the rules regarding food deliveries during and after school. Blanche comments, "If Fenton were to provide food after school or free lunches for every student, it would make sense to enforce the no food delivery policy, but some students are stuck in a position where they are not fed after school anyway after-school activities."

## "Pink Zebra" Visits Fenton

By Jenny Aguilar

Fenton Choir invites everyone to their February 26, 2020 concert at 7:00 pm. The February concert used to be in combination with the Concert Band and Symphonic Winds with a chosen theme, but because the combined annual concert was set as the holiday concert the choirs were able to try something a little wild. This performance is unique in comparison to past concerts in that the majority of the music featured is from the composer Pinkzebra. Pinkzebra is the pseudonym of a composer and music producer. Pinkzebra created many albums and composed music for commercials, television, and movies. Pinkzebra has currently gotten into producing choral music.

Choir director Mrs. Seredy Williams describes Pinkzebra's music as "very positive" and in the "pop genre."

Senior Megan Jobe gives her opinion on the music, stating, "Pink Zebra, for the most part, has a really fun and peppy style. There are also a couple of songs that are more emotional and meaningful, that adds great contrast." The choir students were given a chance to learn firsthand how to perform these pieces when Pinkzebra came to visit Fenton High School to work with all the choirs.

Jobe describes the special experience, saying, "Having the person who created the songs in the room working with us allowed us to improve and perform the pieces exactly how he envisioned!" Leading up to the rehearsal with Pinkzebra, Williams tells how students were journaling the experience, sharing their thoughts and thinking of questions to ask the successful



Artwork by Jesus Amador

composer. Despite the nerves for performing in front of the creator of the song you are singing, the choir students took full advantage of the session, learning so much from Pinkzebra.

The choir concert will include myriad songs, some titles including "Sing," "The Dreamer in Me," and "Amazing," ending in an all-choir performance of the song "Larger than Life." Some songs will be accompanied with more than singing such as a dance solo by Abby Subach, a flute solo by Natalie Worwa, and even featured artwork by Jesus Amador. Throughout the whole experience working with Pinkzebra and his music, students wondered why Pinkzebra chose to even have the alias in the first place. Jobe explains he did this "because he wanted to reinvent himself and didn't want people to confine his abilities to one thing or genre. I think that is a great message that no matter where you are in life."

## DC's Birds of Prey Promises Entertaining Experience With Flaws

By Adam Millard

*Birds of Prey* has been long awaited ever since 2016's *Suicide Squad* had been released. There was talk of a Harley Quinn solo movie, but after the unsuccessful *Anti-Hero Squad* movie, there was little hope that we would ever see it. That was until 2019 where we got the first looks at *Birds of Prey* and the *Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn*.

The film starts off with an introduction to the character, Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie, who was also the producer) who has just had an ugly breakup with her boyfriend, Mr. J. Now the directors of this film introduce something interesting as the plot gets told out of order. This makes for a fun experience of trying to put all pieces of the timeline together, however, it does get kind of confusing with the onslaught of before, after, way before, and present information.

The characters in the film ended up being a tad bit underdeveloped in the sense that, the movie was called *Birds of Prey* but the actual members of the Birds of Prey didn't even include Harley Quinn. Also, the three characters that are in the B.O.P only show up for a small portion of the movie. The film should have just been called "*The Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn*" or even just "*Harley Quinn*" and it might have even done better in the box office.

What was really refreshing about this film was that the main character, side characters director, producer, and a large portion of the soundtrack were all done by female producers and artists. This was the first time we saw a female lead villain character, which was pretty awesome and progressive. A lot of times the film industry seems to think that females can't make movies, but this film proves them dead wrong. The cinematography, sound design, set pieces, and costumes were all very nice to watch on the big screen. It made the film that much more refreshing.

Ethan Diaz, who also saw the film, thought the best character, might have been the villain, Doctor Sleep, played by Ewan McGregor. In this film, he plays "Black Mask," or Roman Sionis, the crazy mask collecting, club running, crim kingpin who has been pushed to the side because of the Joker.

Elizabeth Winstead was excellent, but teen actor Ella Jay Basco, who played Cassandra Cain, was pretty flat and uninteresting. She had a purpose in the story, but she goes from a teen who pickpockets to a teen who hangs out with a murderous basket case with little emotion change. And to be completely honest, if she wasn't in the film, it wouldn't have made that much of a difference. She acted as an extraneous character.

All around, the movie was violent and vulgar. It has an R rating, but it definitely deserved it. The film was incredibly funny and earned a spot on the list of actually good DC movies. The film does not include an end credit scene but has a funny bit at the very end of the credits, so be sure to stick around for it. DC's *Birds of Prey* deserves a solid 7/10. Obviously it's not perfect, but it was a fun, quirky, and interesting movie.



## Dance Force Finishes 8th at IHSA State Finals Tournament



Photo courtesy of Annalis Chaidez

By Olivia Baran

Dance Force is touting a very successful season for this school year. The Dance Force has qualified for state for the 8th year in a row. The girls have showcased extreme talent as they competed in the IHSA State Finals, placing 8th in the 2A division.

"Going to state and placing 8th makes all the blood, sweat, tears and dedication worth it," mentions Junior Carolyn Stadnyk.

Not only did the girls work hard to gain 8th place, they also created an even tighter bond while they were out competing at the State Finals.

Sophomore, Elisa LoDuca states, "The time spent with my team was an even better experience than I could have ever hoped for!"

That is just music to our ears! Having supportive teammates is definitely helpful during any

kind of competition. Cheering your teammates on and being optimistic really helps spread positivity and leads to greater outcome.

"We are all there for each other no matter what, if something wrong happens we are all there to support each other and fix the problem if there ever is one," says Sophomore, Kyla Branch.

The girls do not gain such amazing results without daily, rigorous practices to perfect their routine and discuss critiques from judges, which has allowed them to be successful every season.

Junior Analisa Murillo disclosed, "A daily practice usually consists of running laps to condition and then we stretch. Then we focus on sections of our routine and drill them until they look perfect and we're all doing everything exactly the same."

## Fenton Cheer Ends Season Strong and Closer than Ever Before

By Michelle Agyemang

The Fenton Cheerleading team had an amazing end to their season. They have created amazing memories and friendships to carry on for the rest of the year. Their final competition was Sectionals at Belvidere North.

Sophomore Bella Salgado commented on their performance at sectionals saying, "We hit our routine with 100% execution and when we walked off that mat we could truly say we were proud of what we performed."

When asked what her favorite thing about the Cheer team was fellow cheerleader Senior Cecilia Flores said, "The most memorable thing to me was our sectionals performance. We had been working hard all week and then we hit the best routine of our lives at Sectionals. Immediately after we finished, we all cried and hugged each other and decided we didn't care what place we got because nothing can beat the love we have for each other."

It is apparent that the Cheerleading team has worked incredibly hard this whole season and it finally paid off at the Sectional competition on February, 1st 2020. The hours spent practicing their routine have affected them both on the floor and off.

Senior Elizabeth Rodriguez says, "This season was my last season and it was full of great memories that I will always remember. During January in the middle of the competition season, we had to change our whole routine because multiple people decided not to finish the season with us. In the process, we truly became a family and had the best performance at sectionals full of tears of joy. We all love each other even more because we went through something that no team should have to go through."

The bond that these girls share is something completely special and irreplaceable. We can't wait to see what this team pulls out of its sleeves for the next season!

## Digital Citizenship Classes to be Introduced to Fenton

By Anna Micor

Ever since technology has entered our classrooms, we have all become digital citizens. This technology, such as chromebooks in classrooms, smartphones, and even more are changing the way people engage and interact with each other. As students, learning how to use this technology such as our Chromebooks and phones is important, and it is essential to be using these devices appropriately. Fenton is planning on implementing Digital Citizenship lessons in class in order to better a student's learning habits with technology.

Mrs. Sara Pahl, English teacher and instructional technology coach explains the purpose of Digital Citizenship lessons saying, "We are hoping that our lessons will help students and staff become online sleuths, manage their digital reputations, and assist them to identify tricks and scams."

Incorporating these classes during the day will hopefully create a larger awareness towards behavior online. Along with many positives, there are multiple drawbacks to a more internet dominated classroom that require critical awareness. Pahl elaborates, "This will allow students and staff to become more aware of the internet and what it has to offer, as well as what to look out for when browsing the internet."

The internet can be a dangerous place and a highly questionable place, as Pahl continues, "The instructional technology coaches at Fenton want everyone to learn more about online safety because we think it is important to know this information as our world relies heavily on the internet."

Hopefully through the implementation of these small lessons, large strides can be made as they are set in motion at Fenton. Understanding the power of digital tools will benefit students, and learning about digital citizenship will help them better navigate the internet.

## Girls' Basketball Team Holds Values Above Competition



Photo courtesy of Dave Mello

By Alexandria De Vito

Fenton's girls' basketball team is having a good season thus far. Junior, Madison Spencer, says that it's been a great learning experience for the team.

Head basketball coach, David Mello, agrees with this saying "The team has incorporated many younger members to the varsity team which provides great experiences for the team as a whole and will benefit the team in the later seasons."

Further, the team has played against some of the top teams in the state because of the recent move to the Upstate Eight Conference, which the coach says is another area that the girls could learn in. Of course, it has been a different kind of challenge to adjust to with many new schools in competition with the team.

Coach Mello says he encourages the girls to not worry so much about whether they win all the

time, but rather to focus on improving and maintaining their process in order to be successful.

The team tries to keep five main values throughout the season, Mello says these values include, respect, accountability, commitment, passion, and fun.

It's easy to see that the team is great at keeping these concepts at the forefront of their game and also drive each other to be the best players they can be.

For example, freshman Giselle Sarabia says "The team always knows how to build each other up, especially after a hard game."

Coach Mello is extremely proud of this group of girls and asked for a specific thank you to the parting seniors, Ashley Milano, Becky Millard, and Joni Lucas for giving so much to the program and for setting up the younger players for future successes.