

# FOX TALES

QUARTERLY



A STUDENT PUBLICATION



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It only  
*takes* one  
person  
to change your  
*life*: YOU



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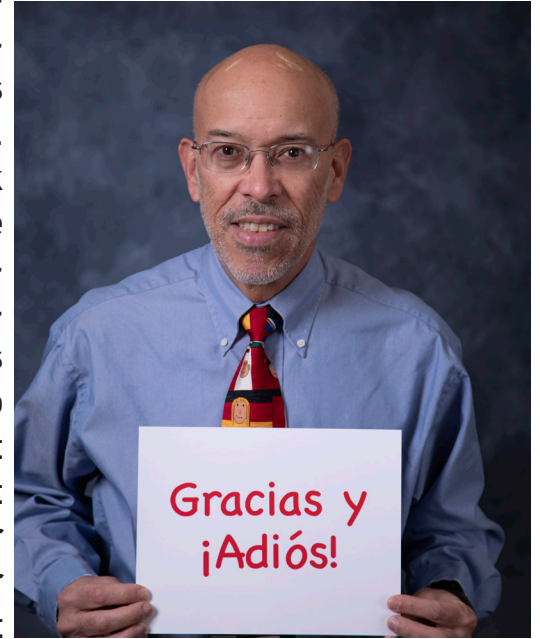
**22** TELETHON



# ADIOS, SR. GONZALEZ

BY GRACE HAN

After 16 years of teaching, beloved Spanish teacher, Sr. Gonzalez, is retiring at the end of the first semester. He plans to spend time with his family (especially his recently born granddaughter), travel throughout the U.S. and to other countries to visit friends and family, and work towards bettering our environment and political climate through social justice movements. Sr. is excited to continue playing lots of music and spend time at his neighborhood garden with his wife. Over his teaching years at Fox Chapel, Sr. says he will miss getting to know so many wonderful people from his classes. His proudest moments as a teacher have been the times when past graduates contacted him to express their gratitude for the Spanish program at FC and how it has changed their lives. One thing Sr. wishes more people understood about teaching is that it "is a lot harder than most people think and that as a society, we need to continue to put MORE resources, not less, into our school systems."



In the classic Friday, Sr. Gonzalez's Spanish class fashion, he leaves us with lyrics from the song Fe (Faith) by Maná:

El mundo puede cambiar  
Sólo hay que intentarlo  
No hay que odiar, hay que amar  
No hay que odiar, hay que amar  
Hay que intentar, hay que intentar  
No hay que perder la fe

The world can change  
We just have to try  
We don't have to hate, we have to love  
We don't have to hate, we have to love  
We have to try, we have to try  
We mustn't lose faith



## THANK YOU CUSTODIANS! – BY JUSTINE ENG

How many times have you smiled at a teacher or a friend in the halls? Probably quite a few; but how many times have you smiled at one of our amazing custodians? The Fox Tales Staff decided to let the custodial staff know how much they are appreciated by sending them a card and some tasty treats to thank them for keeping our school clean and tidy, keeping us safe, and always being here for us. Next time you have the chance, a small smile and a simple thank you could be your way of showing appreciation to our wonderful custodians. Let's also extend our appreciation to all the SPECTACULAR Fox Chapel Staff and make sure to treat everyone with kindness and respect.



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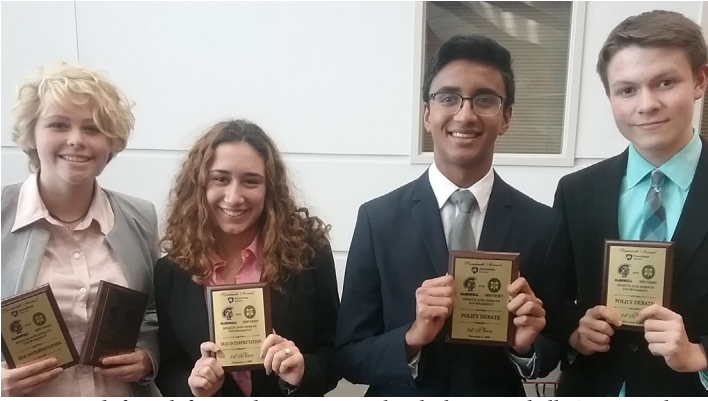
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7:30AM-7:30PM**



**FCHACKS**



## STUDENTS PLACE IN ERIE FORENSIC TOURNAMENT



*Pictured, from left to right, are Hannah Jahnke, Annabella Zgurzynski, Siddharth Yende, and Jackson Romero, all first-place winners at the annual M & M Forensic Tournament.*

Six Fox Chapel Area High School students recently placed at the annual M & M Forensic Tournament in Erie, Pennsylvania. The team of junior Jackson Romero and sophomore Siddharth Yende won first place and the team of freshmen Marie Romero and Prajval Sreenivas won fourth place in Policy Debate. The team of juniors Hannah Jahnke and Annabella Zgurzynski were awarded first place in Duo Interpretation. Hannah also won third place in Dramatic Performance.

The tournament, sponsored by Mercyhurst Preparatory School and McDowell High School, was held November 2, 2019, at Penn State Behrend. Approximately 140 students from 11 high schools from across Western Pennsylvania participated in the event.

## FC STUDENTS WIN AWARDS AT PITT MODEL UN CONFERENCE

Several Fox Chapel Area High School students recently won awards at the Annual University of Pittsburgh High School Model United Nations (UN) Conference. Senior Zeynep Ozkaya won a Best Delegate (first place) award. Outstanding Delegate (second place) awards went to seniors Rajeev Godse, Gavin Hitchens, and Henry Jacques. Third-place (honorable mention) awards went to seniors Noah Hertzman, Aaron Santilli, and Ameya Velankar; junior Cecilia Rike; and sophomores Alaina Kaslewicz and Siddharth Yende. Additionally, the team of Noah, Ameya, Cecilia, and junior Abigail Rickin-Marks were named the Best Small Delegation (first place).



Approximately 500 students from 27 public and private high schools from Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Eastern Ohio competed at the 23rd Annual University of Pittsburgh High School Model UN Conference. The conference was held November 4, 2019, at the University of Pittsburgh.

The purpose of the Model UN conference is to enable students to role-play and simulate the countries in the United Nations. As a part of the conference, students debate and try to solve global problems from the perspectives of other countries.



# MUN WINNERS FROM VIRGINIA!

Members of the Fox Chapel Area High School Forensics & Model United Nations team competed at the 39th annual University of Virginia High School Model United Nations Conference. They were among 1,240 students representing 60 public and private high schools from states such as California, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida.

The following FCAHS students won awards: In the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) committee, eleventh grade student



Antoinette Faucher and tenth grade student Omar Shalaby earned a Verbal Commendation (4th Place); in the Wilson Global Systems Simulation (a 4-way crisis committee pitting the space agencies of the United States, Russia, China, and Europe against each other in a race to Mars in the year 2025), as Samantha Cristoforetti of the European Space Agency, junior Jackson Romero was recognized as the Outstanding Delegate (2nd Place).

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# THESE GIRLS ARE NO POWDERPUFFS

BY MAGGIE KELLY

This year's powderpuff game was easily one to remember. Both classes (2019 and 2020) brought their A-game. Many students and parents came to support their friends and children. To get into the game the tickets were \$3 and if you brought a canned food they were \$2. The game raised over \$1,000 for the local community food bank. Going into the game, everyone expected the senior class to win. There is a legacy of seniors winning and it is very rare for the junior class to win. Every member of the 2020 team was ready and eager to play and win since they lost the previous year. The class of 2019's star player, Lucy Ream, led the team to their victory against the senior class. She scored two touchdowns and junior Emma Wecht scored one. The final score of the game was 18-12.



## FCAHS STUDENTS CHOSEN FOR PMEA HONORS BAND

Five Fox Chapel Area High School students were selected to perform with the 2019 Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 1 Honors Band. The students chosen were seniors Jacob Rendall and Anzu Sekikawa, juniors Nathaniel Kisslinger and Joey Wang, and sophomore Janise Kim.

The PMEA District 1 Honors Band concert was held November 24 at North Hills Middle School and included approximately 120 of the best student musicians from Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland counties. The guest director was Dr. Andrew Yozviak, the director of bands at West Chester University.



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# TIKTOK: STILL TRENDING

BY MAGGIE KELLY



The app TikTok was the hottest trend of 2019. If you have never heard of the app, it's a social media platform where creators can make 15-second videos to showcase their comedic, singing, acting, or other special talents. TikTok started as an app called Musically in August of 2014 and became TikTok in September of 2016. Musically originally was a lip-syncing video app, but merged into many different things. When TikTok started to gain momentum, the app turned into not only lip-syncing but a comedy platform. In September of 2018, the app became the most downloaded free app on the Apple Store in the United States. Although popular in 2018, the app didn't become trendy to high school students until summer 2019.

TikTok became an addiction for most students in the summer of 2019. The reason for this is unknown, but it might have to do with the shortness of the videos. Each video is 15 seconds which is a short enough time to be engaged and not so long that it leads to boredom. TikTok appeals to all types of audiences. You can go on the app and find a funny meme, or watch your favorite artist dance to a song. Many YouTubers, artists, and actors are using the app. They use it to showcase their new movies, songs, or to interact with their fans.

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## MARCHING FOXES WIN FIRST PLACE IN PIMBA CHAMPIONSHIPS



*The Fox Chapel Area High School Marching Foxes.*

The Fox Chapel Area High School Marching Band recently won first place at the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Marching Band Association (PIMBA) Championships. The Marching Foxes placed first in Class 2A at the competition which was held October 26, 2019, at Gateway High School. The Marching Foxes earned a combined score of 81.075, earning high honors for music and visual performance.

This year's show, "Conquest," features the main theme music from HBO's award-winning television series "Game of Thrones," the epic sounds of "Adiemus" by Karl Jenkins, and the music from the motion picture "Gladiator" by Hans Zimmer.

The Fox Chapel Area High School Marching Band is under the student leadership of drum majors senior Hanna Chen and junior Jack Scott, and band directors Daryl Lesnik and Evan Hertrick.



# WORLD AFFAIRS INSTITUTE FOR STUDENT LEADERS

BY ANNIE YONAS AND KAYLEE URIBE

Eleven Fox Chapel Area High School Students were sponsored by the Fox Chapel Rotary to attend the 49th Annual World Affairs Institute for Student Leaders at the Heinz History Center. The World Affairs Council organized this dynamic yearly event and every year, our local rotary generously provides the scholarship money for students to attend. This year, the event addressed the topic: "What Will It Take to Achieve a Sustainable World for All?" and focused on the Sustainable Development



Sophomore Gabrielle Uku addresses more than 400 attendees of the World Affairs Institute for Global Leaders about her group's proposed solution to an environmental sustainability issue.

Goals adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015. The three main areas of sustainability covered were environmental, social, and economic.

At the beginning of the event, students and teachers were taught about the different branches of sustainability by local experts. First, Dr. Joylette Portlock, executive director of



Fox Chapel Rotary President Nancy Speed, left, recognized 14 students it sponsored to the 49th Annual World Affairs Institute in Pittsburgh. Pictured are, from left: Fox Chapel Area High School QUEST teacher Lisa Gibson, FCAHS sophomore Gabrielle Uku, Shady Side Academy junior Qingqing Zhao, SSA senior Alison Linares Mendoza and SSA history teacher Rachel McCool. At right is Fox Chapel Rotary Youth Committee chair Bill McConnel.

Sustainable Pittsburgh talked about how to be sustainable in terms of the environment. Next, Grant Ervin, chief resilience officer and assistant director of the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning explained the social characteristics of sustainability. Last, Kimberly Kipin-McDonald, head of sustainable development (North America) for Coves-tro explained how important economics are in making sure we build a sustainable Pittsburgh. After the lectures, more than 300 students from 81 high schools split into 17 groups, each covering one of the SDGs (Sustainable Development

Goals) that were shared between all members of the United Nations. After the groups met and brainstormed ways to spread awareness and address the situation of each problem, they reconvened to share their proposed solutions with the rest of the groups.

During each presentation, an artist drew illustrations of the proposals brought up by each group. The institute was an amazing experience that really opened our perspective and insight to the environmental issues around the world. The World Affairs Institute event helped to illustrate how many simple things we do daily that can either improve or harm our planet without us even knowing.



# THANK YOU, MR. EARLEY!

BY CLAIRE KATZ



Mr. Earley could usually be spotted in the business hallway in room 117, usually making jokes or singing for his students. If you were lucky enough to have him for class, you know that these are two of his favorite things. Mr. Earley has the biggest heart, and truly wants all of his students to be successful. This is his 23rd year of teaching, after a 12-year career in sales. After all of his years of hard work, he deserves his upcoming retirement. He is looking forward to spending more time with his son Luke, who is in ninth grade and also plans to

workout more to get in better shape, and do lots and lots of fishing!

Mr. Earley is really going to miss his students and the relationships he has established. Just the daily greetings and smiles of his students always make his day. He wishes that more people would understand how difficult it is to keep emotions in check as a teacher. He is extremely empathetic towards all of his students and wants to help everyone, but has to remember that there is only so much that he can do. His proudest moment as a teacher was getting the opportunity to speak at graduation. His positivity and encouragement resonates with all of his students. Senior Keara Yasko says, "Mr. Earley's class made me confident that I wanted to pursue law, and his support has taught me to be confident in myself and my work." Junior Neena Pietropaolo says, "Mr. Earley is always upbeat and never in a bad mood, you can really tell that he loves his job."

As parting words of advice for his students and coworkers, he shares a quote from his father, "never pass up the opportunity to say nothing." We thank you greatly, Mr. Earley, for all of your years at Fox Chapel spreading your wisdom and positivity, and wish you a wonderful retirement!



Some familiar faces were seen in the halls as Fox Chapel Area High School hosted its annual Past Graduate Day. Some members of the Class of 2019 dropped in during lunches to visit with friends and former teachers, and discuss life after high school.



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**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Email:** \_\_\_\_\_ **School District:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

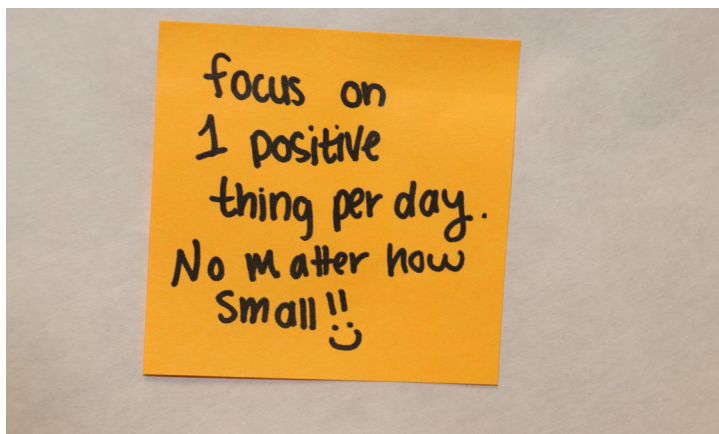
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# ME FIRST

BY ABBY RICKIN-MARKS

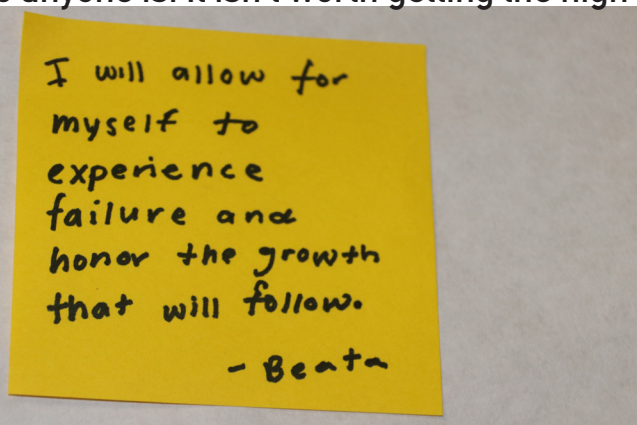


Throughout the country, students in high school struggle with their mental health. According to the Anxiety and Depression Society of America, an estimated 62% of students report marinating in perpetual anxiety, but that doesn't mean that they aren't trying to fight it. At Fox Chapel Area High School, a group of students have decided to take these issues into their own hands by creating a campaign called Me First.

This initiative is the result of the Peer-to-Peer Empowerment Program, sponsored by Crisis Center North. The Peer-to-Peer Empowerment Program is designed to help students identify respect and relationship abuse happening in their school. Participating schools form a team of students who want to develop and lead an initiative that addresses a need in their school or community. This year's team is comprised of senior Ethan Alfery, juniors Suparna Agrawal, Alex Blaylock, Sammi Dunlap, Jake Mulhern, Xavier Perry, Abby Rickin-Marks, and Hayden Rutkowski, and sophomores Danielle Horne and Beata Turnquist.

The team's objective in launching the Me First campaign is to motivate others to take steps to prioritize their own mental health. Many students in the Fox Chapel Area have an extraordinary amount of pressure put on them. They strive to earn stellar grades and participate in sports and clubs, all in addition to multiple responsibilities outside of school. Some students stay up until two in the morning finishing an essay, have mental breakdowns over crippling amounts of homework, and experience panic attacks while taking tests, and that's just academic pressures. Home life and relationships are equally complicated from romantic relationship expectations to parental expectations to standards they must meet to be a good friend. While aspiring to be the best that they can be, they fail to prioritize their own mental health.

Me First promotes the idea of taking some time for yourself. The educational system can sometimes make students feel as if their worth is based on a number, that they're only as good as a standardized test score, but that's not who anyone is. It isn't worth getting the highest number possible when it increases stress to such a level that is unbearable. Besides, teachers want to see students succeed in all areas of life and it boosts teachers' own mental health and self-esteem when they watch students radiate optimism and success. It's better to get an extra few hours of sleep than to study until 2 a.m.. It's better to take a small break from homework instead of break-





ing down. It's better to communicate with friends or a partner than lose them over a small mistake. It's better to remember your mental health than have school or a social issue consume your life completely. These are objectives that Me First wants people to keep in mind. According to the American Psychological Association, there has been a sharp increase in severe psychological problems being reported amongst students. This stress, this depression, these problems eat away at a person's wellbeing until they're only living for the next test in mathematics or for completing the notes for History. A student has a life outside of school that makes them unique and that makes mental health very important.

Poor mental health can disrupt the learning process, ruining what school is trying to do. Stress affects physical health, self-esteem, and relationships – all important elements for living life. Perfectionism rates are very high and yet, as mentioned, students are worth more than a grade.

On top of academic pressures, in a teenager's life, there are issues with social media, relationships, and family dynamics. While Me First primarily targets mental health based on academics, this platform can be used for much more than that. Outside of school, pressure is still felt. Instead of dwelling on what your friends did at a party that you didn't attend, do something that makes you happy. Instead of panicking at your parents' reactions to a fight you got into with a sibling, try to change your mindset to the positivity of a learning experience. There are stressors in any setting and it's important to remember that there is also positive in any setting.

On January 6th, the Me First team put up a board asking students what they would like to do for themselves, what they did to put their mental health above their education and stressors in daily life. It's important to see from other students how they help themselves. Bracelets were distributed to students as a constant reminder to prioritize themselves. The attention brought to this cause will hopefully help students see themselves as a true individual, not just a manifestation of what's going on around them.

You can't help others unless you can help yourself. As much of a cliché as that may seem, it's very true. With everything going on in a student's life from school to home life to relationships, it's important to remember yourself before going through the motions. To help yourself, you have to be willing to ask for help. On most doors at the high school, there are numbers to call if you are feeling anxious or depressed. You can talk to your guidance counselor or the school psychologist. Therapy is also a great option as everyone has mental health fluctuations, so it's nice to have someone to talk to who gives back professional advice.



Students in Mr. Norberg's AP U.S. history class and others heard a talk by John Dean, former White House counsel who testified against President Richard Nixon amid the Watergate scandal. He gave students a background on Watergate, as well as held a question-and-answer session. Mr. Dean's granddaughter is a student at Fox Chapel Area High School.

# TEN THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW TO BETTER YOUR LIFE

**BY DANIELLE HORNE AND BEATA TURNQUIST**

**Drink more water** – Water is the cure to multiple issues, yet rarely teens drink the recommended daily dosage of water. By drinking water, you can reduce headaches, boost your immunity, and improve your brain function. Carrying around a water bottle is an easy task with a crazy amount of benefits!

**Give others compliments** – By complimenting others, not only are you making someone else's day much better, but you will also get a rush of endorphins. These "happy hormones" will be released into your bloodstream, which will result in your mood increasing and a more positive attitude.

**Limit negative self-talk** – David Gemmel said, "Don't speak badly about yourself for the warrior within you hears your words, and is lessened by them." Even though it may seem difficult to become more positive, just being aware of your self-esteem can lead to huge improvements in mental health.

**Aim for activity every day** – It's proven that exercising can improve someone's mood by up to 50%! Exercise can be fun in so many ways! Try going on a walk or run with your friends. Maybe learn how to tap dance or pogo stick! It will make your life much better.

**Identify your values** (school, family, friends) – Balancing a lot of things can become stressful! Try to identify what is more important to you in order to center your focus. This way, you can organize your time in a way that puts what's most important first, rather than becoming stressed over little things.

**Get more sleep** – With the crazy schedules that teens have, sleep isn't one of our main priorities, but a developing teenager should aim to sleep for around eight to ten hours a night. Though it may be difficult to sneak extra sleep in, one can improve their brain function, boost their immunity, and strengthen their memory. By catching some z's, students can perform better in school.

**Smile** – Smiling offers a mood boost and releases endorphins from the brain. These endorphins have numerous effects on the body that lead to high productivity levels. Some advantages of smiling are raising levels of confidence, which inspires effort and motivation, and less stress. Smiling is also contagious! So by smiling, not only are you making your day better, but you're improving other's days as well!

**Shake off the little things** – Everyone makes mistakes! There is no reason to become stressed over slight mishaps. If the issue is not going to bother you or affect you in one year then there's no need to become overwhelmed by it! Now the time that would have been spent stressing can be used to better yourself and change your life!

**Take a break** – If you are ever feeling overly stressed or like you might break any minute, try just stepping away and taking a break. Whether it's meditation, taking deep breaths, or even a calming activity, simple measures can help relieve stress and put things into perspective.

**Find one thing about your day that you're grateful for** – Whenever you're having a bad time and are only focusing on the negatives, take a moment to think about some good things that are happening. This will help give you perspective and a more positive outlook on your day.



# GODSE NAMED SEMIFINALIST IN COCA-COLA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Fox Chapel Area High School senior Rajeev Godse has been selected as a semifinalist for the 2020 class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program. Rajeev is one of 1,928 high school seniors from across the nation (and one of 80 from Pennsylvania) to be chosen as a semifinalist from more than 93,000 applicants. Students are selected based on their academic excellence, leadership, and service demonstrated in school and community activities.

"We believe that identifying these young leaders throughout the country and encouraging their passion for serving others not only empowers the students, but also lifts up those around them," said Jane Hale Hopkins, president of the Foundation. "The Coca-Cola system is dedicated to giving back to the communities they serve, and the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation is proud to be a part of that commitment."

Semifinalists will now complete phase two of the application process, which includes essays, recommendations, and transcripts. An independent selection committee will review the applications and select 250 Regional Finalists by the end of January to participate in online or in-person interviews. A total of 150 Coca-Cola Scholars will be named in March and will be invited to come to Atlanta in April for a celebratory banquet and a leadership development institute facilitated by program alumni.

The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, a joint effort of Coca-Cola Bottlers across America and The Coca-Cola Company, is the largest corporate-sponsored, achievement-based scholarship program in the United States. With the 2020 class, the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation will have provided more than 6,300 Coke Scholars nationwide with more than \$72 million in scholarships over the course of 32 years.



Senior Rajeev Godse was named a semifinalist in the prestigious Coca-Cola Scholars Program. Rajeev is one of 1,928 high school seniors from across the nation to be chosen as a semifinalist from more than 93,000 applicants.

# STUDENTS PLACE IN REGIONAL FBLA COMPETITION/QUALIFY FOR STATE CONTEST

Several Fox Chapel Area High School students recently placed in the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Regional Leadership Conference and qualified for the state competition.

Fox Chapel Area first place regional winners included: seniors Jackson Boychuk, Samantha Dockey, Blair Echnat, Gunnar Loeffler Luke O'Connor, Michael Prato, Aaron Santilli; juniors Arda Akinci, Erin Doherty, Zane Gavazzi, Nathaniel Lazzara, Isabella Liberto, Vivian Shao; sophomores Alicia Gu, Paris Wohlgemuth, Siddharth Yende.

Second place regional winners were juniors Kaya Akinci, Kent Baldauf, Elena Bradley; sophomores Russell Fenton, Sydney Kennedy, Nathaniel Mueller and Omar Shalaby.

Third place regional winners were: senior Shane Susnak; sophomores Justine Bennett, Thomas Healy, Kaitlyn Legge and Alex Zatman; and freshmen Sophie Shao.

Fourth place regional winners were: senior Gavin Hitchens; juniors Elia Gillespie, Vinisha Sant; sophomores Carlie Barnett, Iona Clark, Louise Coleman, James Dockey, Ashish Subedia and Ryan Zatman and freshmen Christopher Ernharth, Molly McNaughton, Thomas Selwood, Daniel Uhl, Mert Yanar.

All of these students have qualified to participate at the FBLA State Leadership Conference that will be held April 6-8 in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

The FBLA Regional Leadership Competition was held on December 11, 2019, at The Fez in Hopewell, Pennsylvania. Approximately 400 students from 14 school districts participated in the regional competition (2 schools were inactive this year).





# WINTER SPORTS ARE JUST WARMING UP

BY CLAIRE FENTON

While most of us took the time to wind down and relax during the holiday break, all of our winter sport athletes continued to practice and prepare for the second half of their seasons. The first weekend after Christmas, the boys and girls basketball teams were crowned champions of Shady Side Academy's annual Peter Sauer Memorial Basketball Tournament. The boys defeated Shady Side Academy and Penn Charter, while the girls took down Knoch and Avonworth. Both teams entered the season ranked in the top five in Class 6A, and hope to rack up some wins as they tackle their section foes in the upcoming months.



The wrestling team looks to put forth a strong performance this year under the leadership of eleven returning players and four WPIAL qualifiers. Over the break, they traveled to West Mifflin to compete in a tournament against several quality opponents. As a team, the Foxes placed tenth; Eddie Farrell won the 220 lb. division, Luke O'Connor placed fourth at 182 lb., Josh Miller secured fifth at 152 lb., Jose Morales earned sixth place at 126 lb., and Ray Worsen placed eighth at 120 lb.

Our swimmers have a history of excellence at the WPIAL and PIAA levels, and this year appears to be no exception. Seven seniors, several of whom are individual championship qualifiers, head the girls' side, while eleven lead the boys' side. Both veteran groups hope to lead their respective squads to a section championship over rival Franklin Regional, a feat they have not achieved since 2017. The team is strong from top to bottom, led by elite upperclassmen with championship experience and boosted by promising performances by new underclassmen. The diving team is going for gold as well; Daniel Manelis, last year's silver medalist at the PIAA tournament, is expected to lead the team and contend for championships again this year.

Despite indoor track being in just its fourth year as an official sport at Fox Chapel, our athletes have had a myriad of success competing against the best in the state. Our best cross country and outdoor track competitors continue to hone their skills and stay in shape in what would otherwise be the offseason. Last year saw several runners, including seniors Christian Fitch, Brooke Krally, and Grace Sisson earn individual medals at the state championships; several relay squads found success as well.

A full schedule of all winter athletic contests can be found on our athletic website. Come cheer and the Foxes and support your friends throughout the season!

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

BY ANN YONAS

The Fox Chapel Area theater students put on an incredible performance of Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest". The show tells the story of two men, John Worthing (Salim Bastress), and Algernon Moncrieff (Adi Pattada), taking on the name Ernest as a way to get their women of interest to love them, Gwendolyn Fairfax (Christiana Paljug), and Cecily Cardew (Gabby Bell). The cast was also made up of sophomores Ellen Gray, Lydia Tuthill, and Maddie Muller, juniors Nathaniel Hines and Xavier Perry, and senior Adam Holmes. It took the audience back to the time of Victorian London, despite the fact that it was performed by high school students.



The play was made possible by director Kristiann Josephs, producers Jocelyn Morningstar and Emma Shiner, stage manager Iain Condron, and countless others that participated in set design, stage crew, and makeup. The amazing performance was put together in just over a month. When asked what the most rewarding part of performing the play was, Gabby Bell explained, "I would say the most rewarding part was performing in front of an audience and getting laughs. It was sometimes difficult through the rehearsal process to find the lines that were actually funny, but when we had a real audience we could find those little moments that might not have seemed funny before but actually were."

Soon approaching is the spring musical, which this year is "Legally Blonde," by Heather Hach. It is being performed March 5-8 so make sure to buy your tickets!





# FOX CHAPEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL EARNs MIDDLE STATES RE-ACCREDITATION

Fox Chapel Area High School has earned re-accreditation by the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools, a worldwide leader in accreditation and continuous school improvement.

“Middle States accreditation serves as an independent validation of the good work we do, and the re-accreditation process again focused our attention on comprehensive planning and continuous improvement practices,” said Fox Chapel Area High School Lead Principal Michael Hower, Ed.D. “We are proud to have earned re-accreditation and look forward to continuing to work with our administrators, teachers, and parents to provide a high quality education for all students.”



*A representative from the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools visited Fox Chapel Area High School on Friday to deliver three Program of Distinction awards for the school's school counseling, music, and visual arts programs.*

Accreditation is a multifaceted evaluation process that schools and school systems voluntarily use to demonstrate they are meeting a defined set of research-based performance standards. The 12 Middle States Standards for Accreditation are: mission; governance and leadership; school improvement planning; finances; facilities; school organization and staff; health and safety; educational program; assessment and evidence of student learning; student services; student life and activities, and information resources.

The accreditation process begins with a self-study that is conducted by the school or school system and requires input from school leaders, teachers, parents, and students. Following the self-study, a team of volunteer educators from Middle States member schools conducts an on-site peer review visit to observe school operations and interview various stakeholders.

The visiting team makes its recommendation to the Middle States Association Commissions, which votes on the accreditation.

“The Middle States accreditation process brings together school leaders, teachers, parents, and students to develop a strategic plan for the future that is built upon continuous school improvement,” said Lisa Marie McCauley, Ed.D., president of the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools. “Middle States accredited schools benefit from the power of peer review and should be commended for their commitment to collaboration, growth and advancing student achievement.”

# COUNSELING DEPARTMENT ONCE AGAIN A "PROGRAM OF DISTINCTION"

The Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES) recently recognized Fox Chapel Area High School for its Programs of Distinction in School Counseling. The Middle States Programs of Distinction initiative provides external validation of an accredited school's accomplishments in specific areas of expertise and enables schools to take accreditation to the next level. The Programs of Distinction review process helps already accredited schools identify strengths and areas for growth and provides inspiration and recommendations for maintaining a high-quality program. Fox Chapel Area High School first received a Program of Distinction in School Counseling in 2012. Of note, in 2012, Fox Chapel Area's school counseling department was the first ever in the history of Middle States to receive Program of Distinction status. The School Counseling Program of Distinction recognizes schools with a comprehensive and coherent school counseling program, which features counselors who advocate for equity in student access to all of the school's educational opportunities.





## **FOX CHAPEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION FROM SPECIAL OLYMPICS FOR INCLUSION EFFORTS**

*School is one of only 34 in U.S. Named to the ESPN Honor Roll for 2019*

Fox Chapel Area High School, a Special Olympics Pennsylvania (SOPA) Unified Champion School, hosted a special banner presentation to acknowledge the school's national recognition for its outstanding efforts to provide inclusive sports and activities for students with and without disabilities.

The celebration featured a band, cheering students, and remarks by special guests Matt Aaron, SOPA president & CEO; Michael H. Hower, Ed.D., lead principal at Fox Chapel Area High School; and district administrators. The remarks were followed by the unveiling of the 2019 National Unified Champion School Banner.

Fox Chapel Area High School is the first school from Allegheny County and the eighth in Pennsylvania to receive this national honor. In 2019, Special Olympics selected 125 schools to be designated National Banner Unified Champion Schools – including only two schools from Pennsylvania.

The school is also the only school from Pennsylvania and one of 34 schools nationwide to be named to the Special Olympics – ESPN Honor Roll for 2019. Honor Roll Schools are chosen as a result of meeting national standards of excellence in the areas of inclusion, advocacy, and respect. Because of their commitment to inclusion, these schools serve as an example and model for schools everywhere.

Of note, Fox Chapel Area is the first school district in Allegheny County to have a Unified Track team, which was established during the 2018-2019 school year. The high school also has had a Unified Bocce team since the 2017-2018 school year.

According to Fox Chapel Area School District's Director of Special Education and Pupil Services Tim Mahoney, the award is a tribute to the entire school community, including students, staff, administrators, and parents.

"I am so incredibly excited and proud of this designation," he said. "This is another example of how inclusive our students, staff, and community are, and how collaboration enables us to provide the best experiences for our Fox Chapel Area families."

More than 150 schools are currently participating in Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools programming in Pennsylvania, and more than 5,000 schools across the country are engaged in the program.

"Fox Chapel Area High School has an enriching and nurturing climate which exudes a sense of collaboration, engagement, and respect for all members of the student body and staff," said Matt Aaron, Special Olympics Pennsylvania President & CEO. "The school is the first recipient of this honor in its county, and it has joined a distinguished group of five recipients in PA."



# FOX CHAPEL AREA TELETHON RAISES MORE THAN \$45,400 FOR LIBRARY!

Fox Chapel Area School District students held their 30th annual telethon Friday, December 20, 2019, and raised more than \$45,400! This year's total brings the money raised by Fox Chapel Area students and staff to more than \$900,900 over the last 30 years for various local and regional charities.

The telethon raised money for the Sharpsburg Community Library and involved students and staff from all six schools in the Fox Chapel Area School District (Fairview, Hartwood, Kerr, and O'Hara elementaries; Dorseyville Middle School; and Fox Chapel Area High School).

The telethon was coordinated by the Fox Chapel Area High School Student Government and the digital media production students of the high school who plan and produce the event. The telethon was streamed live on the Swift Fox Media YouTube Channel and can be watched at any time at <https://www.youtube.com/c/swiftfoxmedia>.

The Sharpsburg Community Library is a branch of the Cooper-Siegel Community Library offering a full range of library services: computers for public use; new fiction; non-fiction; DVDs and books on CD; programs for adults, including art classes and book groups; and programs for children including story times, chess club, and STEAM programs.





# NEW YEAR, BETTER ME

BY BEATA TURNQUIST

As the ball drops in the streets of New York, people all around the world are created goals to tackle in the New Year. In order to make these resolutions, they pick themselves apart from head-to-toe and decide what “flaws” they should change in the future. It’s no secret that these plans to becoming a better person disappear quickly, so why do countless people still make them?

Psychologists believe that the thrill of “starting from scratch” entices a majority of people to keep creating resolutions even after they fizzle out during the first few months of the new year. The act of tradition is also a large motivator for some. After years of creating new goals, the task simply seems mandatory! But, for a large sum of the goal creators, the motivation to change specific elements of their life pushes for the creation of resolutions. While some of these New Year’s variations may be necessary, such as dropping a toxic friend or quitting a bad habit like smoking, other goals can be more detrimental than helpful. These include resolutions that revolve around altering physical appearances, such as weight loss or plastic surgery. Due to celebrities in the media and popular fitness fads, the “dream body” is always changing, and usually unattainable. Highly influential people like Kim Kardashian often boast about their workout routines and “slimming lollipops” as if these fads will actually lead to a slimmer body. The only thing that people attain through these crash diets and workouts is a mindset that has been corrupted. These “goals” can lead to a downward spiral when it comes to mental health and physical health. For example, due to diet culture, one’s body image and eating habits can be ruined after pursuing a weight-loss goal. While some people may make these goals in an attempt to become “better,” the effects could be deadly and/or have a detrimental effect on the future of the person.

There is a way to balance goals and better oneself without causing conflicts. It all starts by understanding what one might want to change. In order to change your life, you must change your mindset. A healthy headspace can cause a vast difference in the quality of life. By just taking five minutes a day to focus on breathing or to find one positive thing about the day, can improve your mindset tremendously. Not only will you feel more at peace, but finding gratitude and happiness in day to day life will become a routine. As 2019 comes to a close, rather than finding things to change about yourself, start to think about how you want to grow as a person. Allow for 2020 to be a year for YOU, take time for yourself, and see how you change.



# FC'S GARIMELLA WINS NATIONAL COMPUTING AWARD

NCWIT proudly announced the 2020 NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing (AiC) national recipients, honoring four hundred high school women from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and all U.S. overseas military bases. Fox Chapel junior Amulya Garimella was among this year's winners.

Each year, U.S. high school students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible to receive recognition for their aptitude and aspirations in technology and computing, as demonstrated by their computing experience, computing-related activities, leadership experience, tenacity in the face of barriers to access, and plans for post-secondary education. This year, 40 winners and 360 honorable mentions were selected from more than 4,700 amazing, talented young women.

Thanks to the generous support of NCWIT Award for AiC National Sponsor Bank of America, each of the 40 national award winners receive various prizes, cash, and a trip to Bank of America headquarters on March 6-8, 2020 for a celebration and networking with Bank of America employees.



Members of Fox Chapel Area's girls tennis team received their state championship trophies this afternoon. Congratulations again on a job well done, ladies!



# FOX CHAPEL'S GOT TALENT

FCAHS TALENT SHOW

# 2020

THU APR 23 7 PM

FCAHS Auditorium

## Great Family Event!

Talented Performers Raffles Music Magic Comedy

**Tickets**  
at the door

Adult \$7

Student/Senior \$3



## STUDENTS SELECTED FOR PMEA DISTRICT 1 CHORUS

Thirteen Fox Chapel Area High School students were selected to perform with the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 1 Chorus. The students chosen for the choir are: seniors Alyssa Fabian, Christiana Paljug, Preston Rowe, and Ella Tramontina; juniors Matthew Eschman, Catherine Heidenreich, Nathaniel Hines, Xavier Perry, and Dylan Stein; and sophomores Julia DeMarco, Anna Ferris, Jack Lorence, and Simeone Owens.

The PMEA District 1 Chorus featured students from across the Pittsburgh area and the festival concert was held at South Fayette High School January 17, 2020. The guest conductor was Susan Medley, Ph.D., director of choral activities and professor of music, from Washington & Jefferson College.



Fourteen members of Fox Chapel Area High School's Class of 2020 received their diplomas during the district's annual Early Graduation Ceremony on January 16th. FCASD's newest alumni and their families were then treated to a reception afterward. Congrats to all the early graduates!





# Building a Youth Mental Health Advocacy Movement

A youth-led workshop focused on advocacy & mindfulness skills-building

High school students who are interested in mental health and promoting the youth voice in their schools, community, and with Pennsylvania's policy-makers are encouraged to attend this advocacy skills-building workshop.

Designed and facilitated by youth advocates from southwestern PA who want equitable and adequate resources for the mental health & wellbeing of all students.

Receive mindfulness skills-building | Meet with state legislators | Develop an advocacy plan

## MARCH 3 2020

9:00 am – 1:00 pm | Lunch Provided

**David Lawrence Convention Center**

1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd, Pittsburgh

Registration for Student Advisors & Students:

[www.bit.ly/YouthMentalHealthPGH2020](http://www.bit.ly/YouthMentalHealthPGH2020)

Questions: Deborah Murdoch [murdoch@jhf.org](mailto:murdoch@jhf.org)

**REGISTER BY FEBRUARY 14**

*This program offering is separate from the Youth Transition Program for Students hosted by Representative Dan Miller and the PA Youth Initiative and requires separate registration. However, Student Advisors are encouraged to connect with Special Education Coordinators to coordinate transportation and logistics if there are students attending both programs.*

\* Schools are required to obtain parental permission for student attendance.



Fox Chapel Area High School Music Department Presents

# LEGALLY BLONDE

Music and Lyrics by  
Laurence O'Keefe and Nell Benjamin  
Book by  
Heather Hach

*The Musical*



**March 5, 6, 7 at 7 p.m.**  
**and**  
**March 8 at 2 p.m.**

**Tickets \$13 - Visit [web.fcasd.edu/tickets](http://web.fcasd.edu/tickets)**  
**Reserved seating – Tickets are nonrefundable**  
**Fox Chapel Area High School Auditorium**

Based on the novel by Amanda Brown and the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer motion picture

"Legally Blonde The Musical" is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.MTIShows.com](http://www.MTIShows.com)



# CHOO WINS BUTLER SYMPHONY COMPETITION

Fox Chapel Area High School senior J. Oliver Choo recently won the Butler County Symphony Orchestra (BCSO) 2020 Young Artist Competition. For the event, J. Oliver, a piano player, prepared a movement of a concerto. Three members of the BCSO served as the judges of the contest which was open to high school students in grades 9-12 who resided within a 25-mile radius of Butler, or were a high school musician in a Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 5 school.



Justin received a cash prize at the competition which was held January 13 at Slippery Rock University. He also won the opportunity to perform with the BCSO at its concert April 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the Butler Area Intermediate High School.

J. Oliver, an accomplished pianist, first won the opportunity to play with a prestigious orchestra, the World Festival Orchestra, when he was just nine-years-old.

## STUDENTS CHOSEN FOR ALLEGHENY VALLEY HONORS BAND



Several Fox Chapel Area School District students were selected by audition to perform with the 2020 Allegheny Valley senior and junior high honors bands. More than 500 seventh-12th grade student musicians from the Avonworth, Fox Chapel Area, Hampton, North Allegheny, Northgate, North Hills, Pine-Richland, Riverview, and Shaler Area school districts auditioned for the groups, and a total of 230 were selected.

The students chosen from Fox Chapel Area were seniors Roman DiSanti and Jacob Rendall; juniors Madelyn Francis, Arimar Gould, Nathaniel Kisslinger, Wyatt Krisky, Michael VanDemark, Joey Wang, and Matthew Zytneck; freshmen Zoe Broyles, Elijah Conklin, Sonny Hur, Lawrence Liu, George McDermott, Ethan Tan, and Lans Taylor; eighth graders Carolyn Caracciolo, Claire Heary, Elijah Herzer, Chloe Kim, Emma Kim, and Jack Lynch; and seventh graders Marina Dunham, Moonyoung Hwang, Alex Kim, and Varad Sant.

The Allegheny Valley Honors Band Festival was held at Shaler Area High School January 9 and 10 and culminated in a public concert January 10. The conductors were Dr. Stephen Gage, Director of Bands & Orchestra at Youngstown State University, and percussionist, composer, and educator Chad Heiny.



