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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, Jan. 10 & 24, 2019

7 p.m.

Administration Building

1220 Howard St.

For more information, call

(269) 337-1572

December 24 – January 4

Winter Break

January 25

Half-day, K-8

No PEEP

January 30

Conferences, 4 – 7 p.m.

Grades 9 – 12

January 31

Half day

Grades 6 – 8

Conferences to be scheduled

by schools

January 31

Conferences, 5 – 8 p.m.

Grades 9 – 12

Inside

KPS Students Join

Regional Honors Choir

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KPS Teachers Honored

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Kalamazoo Central Marching Band: Taking Giant Steps Together

It starts with a few awkward notes. Throw in some fancy footwork and lots of practice. And in the end, it has you cheering.

While some may see marching band as a sideshow, for the musicians, teachers, and families, marching band is the main show of the football season.

Talk to those who march and their affection for band comes through clearly.

“I really love marching band,” said Rocio Gonzalez, one of three seniors who served as a drum major for Kalamazoo Central High School this year. “Everything about it is cool, but the friendships we make here, I think, are the best thing.”

“If I had to give a freshman advice, I’d say ‘just do it.’ Just do marching band and you’ll find that you love it.”

But how 100-plus students become a band that plays and moves in sync is a complicated



Serenity Rostick plays with the Kalamazoo Central Marching Band at a home game.



Trinity Hardy smiles on the field.

process. Here is a look at a season in the life of the Kalamazoo Central Marching Band.

In the beginning

Marching band season starts in late February. That is when band director Dan Stout decides on the music for the coming

fall. Sometimes, like this year, he chooses a theme, but more often he’ll brainstorm with other staffers to select a musical focus.

This past fall’s show had a James Bond theme, mostly because he’s always wanted to do Bond, James Bond. The show was drawn from theme music for the

popular movie series, as well as snippets of songs such as “Live and Let Die,” “Moonraker,” and Bond music simply labeled “The Chase.”

Stout sends the music to a college buddy, who is an arranger in South Dakota. He arranges it

(continued on page 6)

Adult Education Launches Distance Learning Classes

Kalamazoo Public Schools Adult Education has launched a new distance learning initiative to provide students with yet another way to pursue their high school equivalency.

Already the adult education program serves about 450 students annually, with an average 50 students graduating every year.

Students can access KPS

adult education services at six sites throughout the community, and the program maintains an open test center that no other adult education program in the county offers, said Kimberly

Bell, leader of the adult education program for KPS.

“In adult education, we don’t have boundaries,” she said. “If you can make it here,

(continued on page 5)

Kalamazoo Public Schools is Hiring.

Find information at <http://www.kalamazoopublicschools.com/Departments/HumanResources/EmploymentOpportunities>

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Tremendous Challenges, but Wonderful Partners

Around this time each year, a lot of us take stock of our blessings. Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) certainly has many significant challenges with which our children and families deal on a regular basis, but we are also fortunate to have more than 200 partners in the community. Let me tell you about a few of these great partners.

Communities in Schools (CIS) of Kalamazoo is the most integral partner that KPS has. Working within 20 of the 26 KPS schools, CIS recruits and coordinates volunteer tutors and mentors, as well as partner agencies, to support KPS students. Through its school site coordinators, CIS helps KPS coordinate the mobile health and dental units of the Family Health

Center. It helps KPS coordinate mental health services with Kalamazoo County Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and Family and Children Services. CIS runs after-school programs in 15 KPS schools, with federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers after-school grants awarded by the state. CIS helps reduce or remove the barriers that get in the way of our children's success.

Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes is a food bank and food distributor in Kalamazoo County. It has partnered with



Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
Superintendent

KPS and CIS for many years to help feed KPS children and families, first through weekend food packs and in the last several years through a growing number of school-based food pantries. Currently, Loaves and Fishes stocks food at 10 food pantries at 10 KPS schools, with an 11th on the way in the coming months. Through its work in and leadership of its Hunger-Free Coalition, Loaves and Fishes helps KPS children and families address hunger outside of school. Loaves and Fishes partners with KPS Food Service, which has expanded the number of free breakfasts, lunches, and even dinners served over the last 10 years.

First Day Shoe Fund raises funds for and annually purchases thousands of pairs

of shoes for KPS elementary school students. Distributed during summer school and into the early fall, the shoes help KPS students get off on the right foot at the start of the school year. For some who have never had to worry about a pair of shoes that is too small or is worn out, it may be hard to understand the value of a new pair of shoes for our children. When you see our kids' faces light up when they get a new pair of shoes, it becomes very clear very quickly just how important the shoes are to our students.

The YMCA runs before-school and after-school programs at five of our elementary schools that, with the help of KPS Transportation, serve children from six other elementary schools as well. In

addition, the YMCA has an after-school youth center at Lincoln International Studies School, offers school break camps, has a preschool program, and runs a summer camp. The Y has been a great across-the-street partner of Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts, as well as of the district, for many years.

Throughout the year, we continually work on improving services for children in our schools and community. Periodically, it is important simply to acknowledge how fortunate we are to have so many supports for our children. Thank you to all who pour into our children in any way, large or small. We appreciate you.

Best wishes for a happy, healthy, and productive new year!

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January Mobile Health, Dental Clinic Schedules

The Family Health Center Mobile Health Clinic and Mobile Dental Clinic serve Kalamazoo Public Schools students and their families. The medical clinic provides physicals, immunizations, and well-child visits, among other services, while the dental clinic can clean teeth and provide sealants. The clinics take insurance and offer a sliding scale fee. Below are the January schedules for the clinics. Schedules are subject to change. For more information, visit www.fhckzoo.com/mobile-units, call (269) 349-2641, or contact the Community in Schools

of Kalamazoo office at your school.

Mobile Dental

Jan. 7-8 - Northeastern
 Jan. 9-10 - El Sol
 Jan. 14-15 - Spring Valley
 Jan. 17 - Washington
 Jan. 18 Woodward
 Jan. 22-23 - Milwood Elementary
 Jan. 24 and 28 - Arcadia
 Jan. 29-30 - Woods Lake

Mobile Health

Jan. 7-8 - El Sol
 Jan. 9-10 - Spring Valley
 Jan. 14 - Linden Grove
 Jan. 28 - Washington
 Jan. 30 - Woodard



El Sol, Winchell Walk the Walk on Walk to School Day 2018

El Sol and Winchell elementary school students took to the streets in October – simply to take to the streets.

The students were celebrating International Walk to School Day, a global event that involves students from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on the same day. The event launched in 1997.

Walk to School Day is celebrated as a way to promote independence and adventure. Organizers say the day promotes

healthy lifestyles by encouraging children to incorporate physical activity into their day, helps the environment by reducing pollution from car traffic, and promotes walking safety.

Some of the best ways to increase the safety of a child walking or biking to school are:

- Provide safe, well-maintained walkways separate from vehicles.
- Teach children to cross streets at marked crossings and to always look left-right-left.

- Slow traffic in neighborhoods and near schools through traffic calming strategies and enforcement efforts.
- Work with parents of children with disabilities and special education professionals to identify accessibility barriers.
- Ensure that walkways are continuous and meet national accessibility standards.
- Install curb ramps at every intersection and at mid-block crossings.
- Provide accessible pedestrian signals at intersections.



A group of El Sol Elementary School students and staff carry a banner while they walk on Walk to School Day.



Finley Richardson, Alexander Osborn, Scout Richardson, Elizabeth Delp, and Tyler Thompson pause on their way to Winchell Elementary School on International Walk to School Day on Oct. 10.



Barbara Wilson, left, and Zanaya Wilson, posed for a photo with Nkenge Bergan, KPS director of student services on Walk to School Day. Barbara and Zanaya walked and rode a scooter to school that day.



Eleanor Bryce and Harrison Bryce cross the street on their way to Winchell Elementary on Walk to School Day.

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KPS Students Join Regional Honors Choir for October Performance

Kalamazoo Public Schools students from Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts, Hillside Middle School, and Kalamazoo Central High School participated in the Michigan School Vocal Music Association's Regional Honors Choir Day on Oct. 20. Hillside and Kalamazoo Central are under the direction of Theresa Williams-Johnson. Maple Street is under the direction of Julie Davis.

Sixth grade:

Elyse Link
Isabella Johnson
Taniyah Pritchett
Catherine Frink
Naomi Kimbrough
Ava Ritenour

Seventh grade:

Caitlin Gillish
Braeden Davis
Charles Kutzko
William Murphy

Rami Moghrabi
John Dolan
Emmalee Murphy
Alason Murphy
Miriam Verne
Adeline Ulmer
Ellen Terzino
Chloe Rathbun
David Fooy
Jazmine Gray
Charlie James

Ninth grade:

Martell Underwood (not pictured)

Eighth grade:

Alayna Boucher
Merrie Crawford
Georgia Hutton (not pictured)
Madison Vasquez
Emma Schrum
Sophia Brandt
Davion Hubbard
Zada Rose
Cristiana Worthams

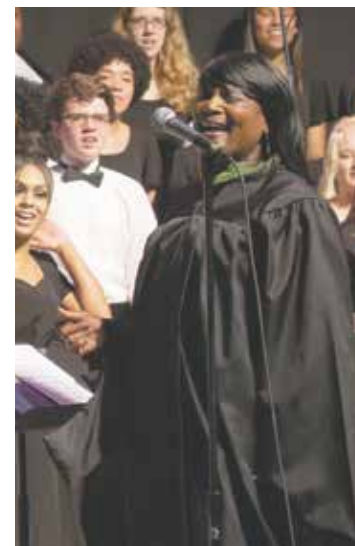


Hillside, KC Choir Director Honored at WMU

Theresa Williams-Johnson, choir director at Hillside Middle School and Kalamazoo Central High School, was honored at Western Michigan University during its Extra Yard for Teachers Week. She was recognized during the WMU vs. Delaware State game on Sept. 15.

College football teams across the country honored teachers during the annual event.

Williams-Johnson has taught music in public schools for more than 33 years. Her choirs have participated in Michigan School Vocal Music Association events, including district and state choral festivals and district solo and ensemble festivals and have consistently received Division I/ Superior ratings. Her students



Theresa Williams-Johnson

have also performed in MSVMA state, all-state, and all-state jazz honors choirs every year.

She directed the MSVMA State Honors Choir in 2010.

She is the former director of the Kalamazoo Children's Chorus Preparatory and Concert Choirs. She was the recipient of the KPS Medallion of Excellence Award, presented by the Kalamazoo Education Association in 1997 and the Excellence in Education Significant Educator Award in 2005 and 2017.

She has her bachelor's degree in music education from Western Michigan University.

Williams-Johnson is also the coordinator of music for the Tabernacle Church of God in Christ. She resides in Kalamazoo with her husband Todd. They have two daughters, Torian and Taylor.



The Seventh Annual Storytelling Festival at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum Life in the Mitten celebrates Michigan's past and present with stories and songs of nature, history, and legends.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1 | 5 – 8 PM

Storytellers and singers Robin Nott, 6 p.m. and Allison Downey, 7 p.m. will kick off the Festival Friday night during Art Hop.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2 | 10 AM – 5 PM

A full day of storytellers, including Jenifer Strauss, 10 a.m. and Adam Mellema, 11:15 a.m. and many others.

Find out more about the visiting storytellers at: kalamazoomuseum.org/plan/storytelling.html



Handicapped accessible. Sign language interpreters may be scheduled with a minimum of two weeks' notice. Assisted listening devices are available in the Stryker Theater and planetarium.



The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees

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kalamazoomuseum.org

NOTICE

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

Director of Student Services

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

District Directory at :

www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

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Adult Education Launches Distance Learning Classes *(continued from page 1)*

you can attend here. It doesn't matter where you're from."

But, even with those open policies, sometimes it is still difficult for students who want to pursue their high school equivalency. Work, childcare, and transportation can all pose barriers for students.

"Distance learning addresses those barriers and provides students with another opportunity for success in reaching their academic goals," Bell said.

Teacher Dana Gay is spearheading the distance learning effort, which involves students working remotely with learning software that students use for credit recovery in high schools, as well as Screencastify, which allows her to create custom 10 minute videos for students struggling with specific content areas.

The new program launched in September. Currently, Gay is piloting the program with four students.

Gay said she began talking to Bell about the possibility of offering distance learning about

a year ago. Bell worked on finding grants to provide additional support for the effort and putting the technical logistics in place for the program.

So far, Gay said she's pleased with the effort. Students are required to score a 145 on their tests to earn their GED, and the students in her program have been passing in their 160s.

Gay said she would not call herself a "techie" in any way, but she does like technology's potential to help students achieve their goals.

"I like what it can do for education, and I'd like to use it for our advantage and the advantage of our students," she said.

One of the big challenges for Adult Education students is access. Many are working or have family responsibilities that can make going to a brick-and-mortar program difficult.

"They can't come 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. or 12 to 3," she said. "With this program we're seeing good attendance, by that I mean they might not be seated in class, but they are showing a real commitment to the program."

"I have students who are logging in at 11 p.m., after working their jobs and taking care of children all day."

Students interested in the program must register at the Adult Education office, located in the Community Education Center in Old Central, where they are tested to evaluate where they are in their educational journey. It's then that they can discuss, whether they want to attend classes to work on their GradPoint program at CEC or if they want to try distance learning.

The distance learning students must have reliable technology, but more importantly, Gay said, they must have a good work ethic and be willing to commit to active participation in the program. It requires students to check in daily with her and lays out weekly and monthly goals, with the hopes of students earning their GEDs within four to five months of starting the program.

"We set the bar high, but we can adjust it as we go along," she said.

While the students work on GradPoint, Gay is constantly monitoring their progress. If someone stumbles over a specific content area, she can create a video for the student to provide more in-depth explanation and assistance on that specific topic, such as plant and animal cells or fractions. The videos she creates are generic enough that they can be re-used with future students struggling in the same areas.

The distance learning provides independence and freedom, but it does not come without challenges. Not seeing students face to face means that it can be difficult to build a rapport with them, but she is making phone calls to talk to them, especially early in the process, and the videos are personable — students can see her talking to them.

"I admire my students," she said. "I think they're brave for trying this new class. We have a broad spectrum of students in Adult Education. We're trying to find ways to accommodate all of them."

Kalamazoo Central Marching Band: Taking Giant Steps Together *(continued from page 1)*

depending on what Stout hopes to do with it in the show.

The first time the students play the music together is the last Wednesday in May, when Stout meets with his new recruits and returning band members.

They run through some scales and then launch into the music.

It can be a little ... rough.

“This year after that first night, on Facebook, an incoming freshman parent posted on Facebook, ‘I think I’ve just heard the worst rendition of ‘Live and Let Die’ in my life,” Stout said with a laugh. “I wanted to comment, just wait. It always sounds that way on the first run. Most parents only hear it at competition. They don’t know the process it takes to get it to that point.”

Before the band plays

Stout knows what it takes to get to that point. He was one of those marching band kids.

“I started on trumpet and I was lousy,” Stout said. He was lousy but his teacher was great. “I didn’t want to quit. I was in the sixth grade. I was complaining to my director, ‘I’m no good at trumpet. I don’t like trumpet.’ He saw something and he told me to try the drums. It clicked. It made sense. I could wrap my head around that stuff.”

He went on to do marching band as a student at the University of South Dakota. He taught in Iowa, then took over for his old band director in Minnesota. He moved to Kalamazoo in 2001 and was a music teacher at Washington and Lincoln elementary schools.

He was looking at moving to another district when the job of band director opened at Kalamazoo Central. It was a rough transition. Marching bands come in essentially three flavors: corps style, which is a precise military style; Southern style, as often seen at historically black colleges and universities and in the movie “Drumline”; and Big Ten style, which is known for a



Dan Stout, Kalamazoo Central marching band director, applauds his students.



Saxophonist Trinity Scott takes a break at band camp in August.

high stepping form.

Stout comes from a corps style, which was a contrast to the Southern style of the previous director.

“The kids thought I was nuts,” he said. “They said, ‘No, that’s not the way we do it.’ I told them, ‘This is how I’m going to do it.’”

You want me to play music and do what?

Band camp. This is when kids come to understand what they really signed up for. They have to play the music they studiously avoided all summer — while standing in the blazing sun in a high school parking lot, playing the same notes over and over, while coaches tell you to step with your right instead of your left foot, make your stride an inch longer, lower your horn

two inches.

“It was very hard at first, especially in band camp and having to learn all of our dots and getting to know all of the music,” said Thomas Dillard, a freshman alto saxophone player. “But I think the support of my fellow saxophone musicians and fellow students really helped me. It got easier as time went on. We learned the fundamentals and then grew from there.”

Camp kicks off with two solid music days, in which musicians work with their sections, instructors from the school, and community coaches. Each day ends with a full band practice under Stout’s direction.

The third day is for new band members only, and that’s when they learn how to march.

“We just start from the



Benjamin Venus, Alonzo McGill and Megan Rushlau are members of the Kalamazoo Central drumline.



Tuba players Josh Winters-Brown, Moises Cardona, David Macharia and Nick Salvaggio warm up during the May practice.

beginning,” Stout said. “How we want you to stand, what we want your feet to look like, knee angles, elbow angles, shoulder height, how large each step is.”

The next Monday is when everyone comes together, no instruments, to work on the marching formations. When Dillard said, “learn all of our dots,” he was referring to the process by which band members learn how to get from point A to point B on a football field.

Each marcher wears a collection of cards that break down the complex marching formations into a series of starting points and stopping points — or “dots” — for each section of music.

“So Johnny, the trumpet player, is going to stand on the 40 yard line then move eight steps in front of the hash mark where he starts the show,” Stout said.

“Five yards is 15 feet and in band that takes us eight steps. To cross that 15 feet takes us eight steps of 22 1/2 inches. What we’re training their bodies to do is to memorize 22 1/2-inch steps. However, if Johnny only has to move three yards in those 16 counts, he has to train his body to move maybe in 3 1/2-inch steps for those 16 counts because it all has to be one fluid motion.”

What does that mean for marching band members? Practice, practice, practice. Some days in band camp, a musician can march upwards of 19,000 steps.

“It’s a lot of hard work, but when it’s something you love, it doesn’t feel like hard work,” said junior Devin Dee, a member of the colorguard.

It sounds complicated *(continued on page 7)*

Kalamazoo Central Marching Band: Taking Giant Steps Together *(continued from page 6)*

because it is, and teenagers can be unforgiving sometimes — especially with themselves. Stout works hard to help them overcome that.

“We’re dealing with 13- and 14- and 15-year-olds. And they literally can’t play and move at the same time. They aren’t that coordinated yet,” Stout said. “Be patient with the process. It’s going to be hard at first.’ I say that to the kids constantly. ‘Be patient, you’re going to make mistakes. That’s OK.’”

The hard work pays off. The band earned a superior rating at the MSBOA District 11 Marching Festival Division 1. The band participated in five competitions, earning second place in Class A at Hastings, Lapeer and Jenison, while taking fourth at competitions in Otsego and East Kentwood.

“Our goal every year is to just improve with every performance,” he said. “Awards are nice. Trophies are great. But, as a staff, that’s not our motivator. Nothing is cooler to me than when you see a kid at the end of the show and you can just kind of see that look, like they had a good show, they had their best show ever, because they’re just beaming.”

Band is a family

Band is a lot of work. There is a lot of practice. There are a ton of mistakes. But what makes it worthwhile is a musician’s fellow band members.

Gonzalez, the drum major, has been in marching band for all four years of high school,



Kalamazoo Central High School marching band 2018–2019 school year.

marching as a tenor saxophonist for two years before becoming a drum major. She had a sister who was in marching band, but she knew that it was going to be her thing too from her first day of her first band camp.

“It was intriguing,” she said. “I liked the environment. There was no one that was rude. Everyone was genuine and nice.”

The band is one extended family, made up of smaller families or musical sections.

“Your section is basically your sanctuary,” said Ben Venus, a sophomore who began playing drums in sixth grade. “You will

always have support from your section. I have people in drumline who are like family, who are like brothers to me.”

Dillard, the freshman saxophonist, said it’s an upbeat environment.

“We focus on having energy and passion for what we do,” he said. “We really get along well. I really believe that we’re part of a big family and we all support each other.”

Dee has been a member of the colorguard for two years. She joined at the urging of one of her friends. She’d done dance before but never felt like she really fit.

Colorguard is different.

“I’m usually a shy person, but I like being out there. It lets me be more confident and it allows me to have fun with my family,” she said.

This sense of camaraderie is certainly born out hours of practice in the hot sun, marching in freezing rain, and bumping into each other on the field. But, it may come from something else too: there are no auditions.

“Our athletic teams in this district are outstanding. And our coaching staffs are outstanding. And it’s a beautiful thing. But,

you know that on those teams you have starters and you have people who don’t start,” Stout said.

“In band, we have very talented players and we have mid-level players. We have kids who like to play, and there are kids who just like being with their friends. We have a variety of ability levels, and a variety of kids from all walks of life. We pull from other sports teams and we pull from other clubs. We have all four classes. Almost everything is represented in band. This is an all-inclusive activity and that’s what I think makes it so amazing.”

Kalamazoo Public Schools Needs Substitute Teachers

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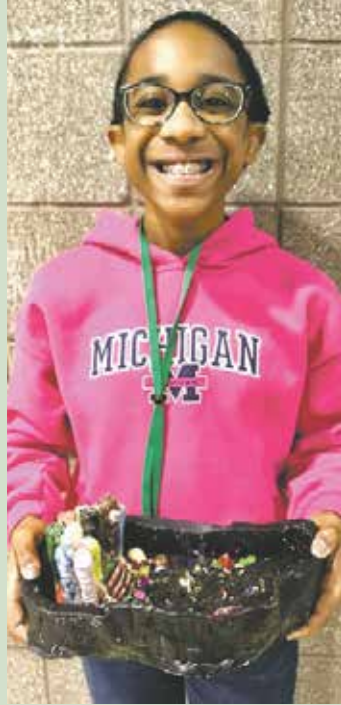
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Artists' Corner

Linden Grove Middle School art teacher Lindsey Borsvold has been working on three-dimensional art with her sixth-grade students, asking them to create clay castles and textured slab planters. Students filled the planters with dirt and seeds and then placed the castles on top of their dirt.



Courtney Gardner



Estella Schuetz



Keelan Burney



Isabella Frederick



Richard Burchfield



SCHOLARSHIPS FOR COLLEGE DEADLINE MARCH 1

Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KZCF) offers more than 58 scholarships and grants ranging from \$250 to \$7,500 to high school students for college.

Students who plan on using **The Kalamazoo Promise** can use our scholarships for other educational expenses.

Deadline for most scholarships is **March 1** (unless otherwise noted).



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Enroll in The Loy Norrix Child Care Center for 2018-19

Is your child ready for pre-school? The Loy Norrix Child Care Center, a five-star rated Kalamazoo County Ready 4s program, is accepting applications for childcare and pre-school for 2018-19.

The center is located inside Loy Norrix High School, 606 E. Kilgore Road. Open 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., LNCCC offers full-day and half-day enrollment, as well as a daily rate. Tuition

is \$160 a week for full-time care, \$105 a week for half-day care, and \$43 a day. Two snacks and lunch are provided for full-time students.

The school accepts 3- and 4-year-olds. Students must be toilet-trained. School district residency is not required for the program, which is open to the public.

For more information, call Stephanie Ludwig at (269) 337-0264.



LNCCC is open to any child, regardless of residency.

Baked Orange Chicken

Happy New Year Kalamazoo! A nice way to incorporate citrus into your diet can be a simple baked chicken dish. Oranges are one my favorite because they bring a bright but subtle sweetness to your cooking. As always, enjoy with family and friends. Best regards, Chef Shaun



Shaun Robinson is the district chef for Chartwells at KPS Food Service.

Ingredients

3-4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Salt and pepper to taste
1½ cup cornstarch
3 eggs, beaten
¼ cup canola oil

Orange Chicken Sauce Ingredients

⅔ cup brown sugar
⅔ cup orange juice
¼ cup low sodium soy sauce
2 teaspoons sriracha
3 tablespoons white vinegar
3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
1 teaspoon cornstarch
Sesame seeds, optional

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Cut chicken breasts into bite-sized pieces and season with salt and pepper.

2. In separate bowls, place cornstarch and slightly beaten eggs. Dip chicken into cornstarch then coat in egg mixture. (Yes, you dip the chicken first in the cornstarch. I promise this method is amazing.)
3. Heat canola oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat and cook chicken until browned. Place the chicken in a 9 x 13 inch greased baking dish.
4. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together brown sugar, orange juice, sriracha, apple cider vinegar, grated orange peel, white vinegar, soy sauce, garlic salt, and cornstarch. Pour over chicken and bake for 1 hour.
5. Stir the chicken every 15 minutes so that it coated them in the sauce. Garnish with sesame seeds for extra flavor.

Servings: 4

KCHS Class of 1970 50th Reunion

The Kalamazoo Central High School Class of 1970 is planning a 50th reunion on Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020 (site TBD). Organizers are looking for classmates. Members of the Class of 1970 are encouraged to visit the reunion website and register for free at: <https://classreport.org/usa/mi/>

kalamazoo/central/1970/. Keep up with reunion plans, get information, and learn which classmates have been found. Class members are asked to spread the news about the reunion on social media and other contacts. Questions can also be directed to: 1970kalcenhs@gmail.com.

KC Teacher Shannon Wintz Displays Excellence in Teaching, Caring

Shannon Wintz is a great English teacher who challenges her students.

But more than that, she is an adult who lets them know that she cares, according to a Kalamazoo Central mom who nominated Wintz for the Excellence in Education award from the Michigan Lottery. The mom said Wintz uplifts her students and helped her son deal with depression.

“She has the keen ability to care, love, and yet challenge her students at the same time. She goes above and beyond in her classroom by making each student her top priority.”

Each weekly winner of the prize receives a plaque, a \$1,500 cash prize and a \$500 classroom grant. Wintz will use her grant to buy books for her classroom. One of the weekly winners will be selected as the Educator of the Year and will receive a \$10,000 cash prize.

She earned her bachelor’s degree in education from Western Michigan University and has been an educator for 15 years, the last nine at Kalamazoo Central. Over the years, she has taught repeat ninth-grade English, English 10, Honors 11th English, Literature through Films, and AP Language and Composition.

She said she tries to make her lessons relevant to their lives, and she attends their games and



Kalamazoo Central teacher Shannon Wintz took her father Paul Vanderstelt with her when she went to receive her Excellence in Education prize from the Michigan Lottery.

performances so they know how proud she is of their accomplishments.

“My room is stocked with good food, love, and laughter. My students know if they need me, I will be there,” she said. “Our students have so many abilities. They know more today than we ever knew at their age. Students want to be taken seriously and simply heard. Many adults tell students to get over things, but I sit and listen and help them work through it.”

Wintz said she is honored and humbled by the award, but she hopes her students know that she teaches not for herself but for them.

“My students are my reward everyday they walk in with a smile

and a hug. My students are the light in this dark world. My focus is never on myself; it is solely for each beautiful student that walks in and out of my door. This is their moment to shine, not mine. I would not be here without them.”

Outstanding public school educators may be nominated for an Excellence in Education award at <http://bit.ly/ExcellenceInEducation>. Excellence in Education award nominees are evaluated on excellence, dedication, inspiration, leadership, and effectiveness.

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PeaceJam organized the annual clothing drive at Loy Norrix High School. Students, faculty and community members donated more than 4,500 pieces of clothing, which were distributed to Loy Norrix students and families, Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo and members of the community at Project Connect. Pictured are, from left, Aria Kleber, Tess Cowles, Emma Miller, Westin Grinwis, Emma Knutson, and Asiana Tidwell, and kneeling, Alex King and teacher Sveri Stromstra-May.

Simon Kalil Borst Draws on What He Knows and Cares About

Simon Kalil Borst was that kid ... the one who was always doodling.

Those doodles have turned into a career in graphic design and making a name for himself with several visible comics projects in Kalamazoo.

Borst, who graduated from Loy Norrix High School in 2007, is the talent behind "The Kalamazoo Coloring Book," which was commissioned by and is sold at Bookbug book store. He also created a series of graphic promotions for the City of Kalamazoo, which included a holiday shop-



Simon Kalil Borst, LN Class of 2007

ping bag several years ago; a re-election campaign card for Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell, which was later turned into a poster fundraiser for Pretty Lake Vacation Camp; and several long-form comics for Second Wave Media, including one on the Kalamazoo Promise.

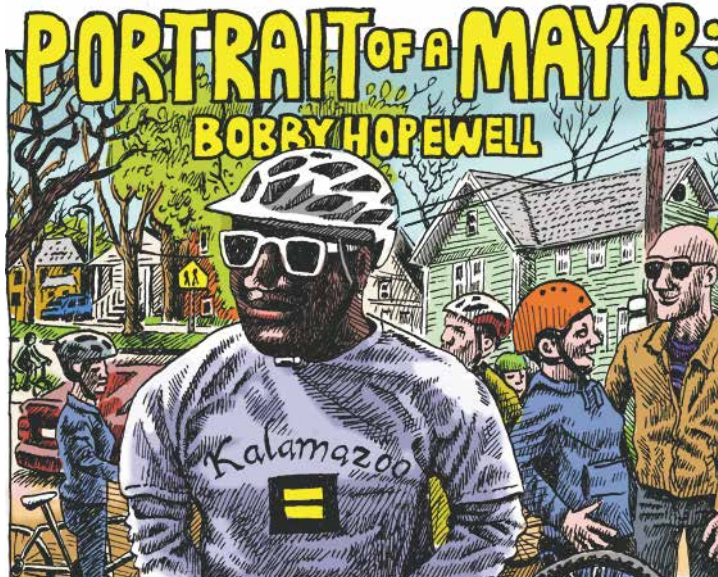
Among the many teachers he had in Kalamazoo Public Schools, three stand out as being particularly influential in his life. They are his three art teachers from Loy Norrix: Nancy Mollhagen, Sue Lyons, and Cindy VanLieu.

"I identified Simon when he was a freshman as an exciting emerging artist," Van Lieu said. "I spoke to his parents and we made sure he got as many art classes as he needed. Later I taught him in advanced studio art for three years. He went on to the Stamps School of Art at University of Michigan (where he earned his bachelor's of fine arts in 2011), where he was again recognized for his outstanding creativity."

Borst attended Lincoln International Studies School and Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts (when it as still called South Junior High). He grew up in the Oakwood neighborhood, where his parents Ruth and John Borst still live. His brother Julian Borst recently competed in the Special Olympics and is slated to run in the Boston Marathon in the spring.

Simon Borst talked to *Excelsior* about his career thus far.

Excelsior: How did you get into drawing comics?



Borst celebrated Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell in a comic (top), and he created a tribute to Kalamazoo for a Hopewell campaign card.

Borst: I was drawing since I was a little kid, then I took a really strong interest in comics at the same time I was learning to read. I never grew out of that. I like how expressive they can be, and the idea of combining words and pictures is something with infinite potential. I like this idea of taking everything that visual art can be and combining it with everything that writing is, both of which are immense. It's really intriguing to me.

Excelsior: What were some of your early comics like?

Borst: When I was in high school, I was in Miss Lyons' two cartoon classes. I drew two comics. One was a secret agent, "Agent 2165" or something like that. It was kind of influenced by the video games I was playing at the time and the character of Jason Bourne from "The Bourne Identity."

The other one was a western. At the time, I don't know that I ever voiced this, but the western was like a political allegory. The

plot was about how these townspeople were being tricked by the propaganda of the mayor of the town. The mayor was actually this criminal who had escaped from another town, but he'd been elected and was now spreading public lies to feed his agenda.

Excelsior: What were some of your main influences?

Borst: Some of the early stuff I was reading included Calvin and Hobbes and early Marvel comics like from the 1960s and 70s. The nonfiction stuff comes from a general community interest and works that I had read in college by artists like Joe Sacco and Chris Ware.

Excelsior: Can you tell us a little more about your interest in nonfiction comics?

Borst: Before and after doing the coloring book, I was doing a lot of nonfiction and journalistic comics. I worked at the People's Food Co-op for five years (after college), and pretty early on they let me do comics for their quarterly newsletter, the Co-

op Scoop. I'd do these one-page comics that were profiles of farmers or other partnerships or people we wanted to highlight in the community. We did a number of longer comics and that caught the attention of Kathy Jennings at Second Wave Media. She commissioned me for some longer-form comics. I ended up doing four articles for Second Wave, the most notable of which was one on the Kalamazoo Promise.

I got a grant from the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo to continue doing that work. As a result of that, I made two more comics. One was a personal story about working on a farm, and the other was about biking in Kalamazoo, which I did shortly after the crash that killed the five cyclists.

Excelsior: How would you describe your visual style?

Borst: I've always enjoyed detail and seeing how much you can pack on a page. My preferred style now is pretty dense and has a lot of cross-hatching and shading. I went to art school after high school and had a lot of formal training there, but I'm still drawing with an ink pen. Lately, I've been drawing big, oversized portraits of people that I know. I'm using eight different photographs of a single person, and collectively picking out parts that I like. It's not quite Picasso-esque, but I like when you can amplify the features of someone. Again, I'm using that same ink pen that I use for comics.

Excelsior: What are you focusing on now?

Borst: I'm in my third year working as a full-time graphic designer. My two main clients are Brakeman Design and Boiling Pot Media. For Boiling Pot, I'm a web designer. I also take commission jobs. I haven't done any comics in a little while, but I'm gearing up to start some of that work again. I think about comics all of the time. I think it's inevitable that I'll get back into it at some point in time.

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Maple Street Teachers Update After-School Tutoring

Maple Street Magnet School has given traditional after-school tutoring a facelift.

The new effort is called the Compass Club, which uses online quizzes and lessons to help students improve their reading and math skills. The Trailblazers seventh-grade team is using it with students who performed in the bottom 50 percent on math or reading assessment scores.

The Trailblazer team includes teachers Jamie Miller, English; Lindsay Filipowicz, inclusion; Laura Ruelas, science; Ryan Toennessen, social studies; and Elizabeth Weaver, math.

The students come to the classroom to work mainly on Khan Academy or Compass Odyssey online learning programs, but they can also access Quizizz, Kahoot and Quizlet Live.

The club focuses on English on Tuesdays and math on Thursdays for 40 minutes after school.

Weaver said teachers have always offered after-school tutoring, and they attend the Compass Club to answer any questions the students have, but using the online tools gives them another avenue to reach students.

“Compass Odyssey and Khan Academy offer students an individual path based on their (test) scores and that allows us to differentiate instruction for each

child based on his or her skill set,” Weaver said. “I think the kids feel empowered to improve their own scores.”

Miller said she has seen an improvement in the numbers of students who are able to catch up and meet their growth goals since starting the Compass Club.

The effort is helped by the school’s use of Chromebooks, which are now available at close to a 1:1 ratio of Chromebooks to students, Weaver said.

“We have also had many real conversations with our children about the importance of being on grade level and how difficult it will be to graduate if they are not passing seventh-grade classes,” Weaver said.

And, the program would not be successful without the support of parents, who “want their children to stay after school and get caught up on their work” even if it means they have to pick them up later, Weaver said.

Students earn raffle tickets for prize drawings for passing content quizzes at a score of 70 percent or higher. They also earn gift cards and movie passes for attending the club 10 times. The prizes and snacks are funded with donations from the Maple Street PTO, money from an Innovative Grant from the school district, and donations from Drake Road Orthodontics.



Maple Street Magnet School seventh graders on the Trailblazers team are using online computer programs to enhance their after-school tutoring sessions.

Family Fitness Night Puts the Emphasis on Healthy Fun at Milwood Elementary

Healthy fun was the focus of Milwood Elementary School’s second annual Family Fitness Night on Oct. 11. The event was organized by Milwood physical education teacher (and alum) Jim Horn.

“Our goal is to connect our families with fitness opportunities within our community,” Horn said. “Family Fitness Night was a huge success as it connected over 150 students and family members with more than 25 different organizations from our community. This year was bigger

and better than last year, and we are excited to continue to build on this annual event.”

Activities includes basketball, indoor tennis, dance, yard games, and strength and balance exercises.

Milwood would like to thank the following participating organizations: YMCA, Boys & Girls Club – Kalamazoo, City of Kalamazoo Parks & Recreation, Soccer Zone, Courthouse Athletic Center, Body Love by Laura, Wellspring Dance/Cori

Terry and Dancers, Valor Martial Arts, Kalamazoo College Men’s Basketball, Kalamazoo Valley Community College Men’s Basketball, YMCA Tennis, Western Michigan University School of Nursing, Bronson Athletic Club, Kalamazoo Valley Community College Athletic Training, Real Student Ministry, D.J. Grant Kubiak, T-Shirt Printing Plus, Qdoba Mexican Grill, Kalamazoo Valley Athletics, Kalamazoo College Athletics, Subway, and WMU Athletics.



Josue David Salazar works with a rhythmic ribbon during Milwood Elementary’s Family Fitness Night.



Emarie Kibler and Alexis Green find their balance at the display from Body Love by Laura.



Matt Olsen, director of tennis at the Maple Street YMCA, gives a few indoor tennis pointers to Nashiyha Brown-Jefferson at the Milwood Family Fitness Night.



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KPS Become the Artists in KIA Traveling Exhibition 'do it'

Kalamazoo Public Schools students have been helping shape “do it,” the latest traveling exhibition at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts.

The exhibition “do it” asks, what would happen if an art exhibition never stopped? By generating new versions of itself every time it is presented, “do it” answers that question.



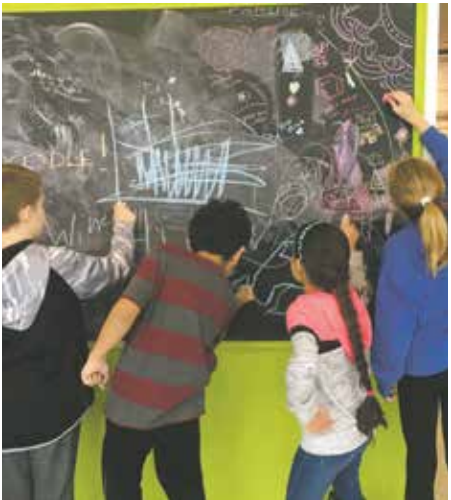
Winchell Elementary School fifth graders Sage Schrader and Savannah Robert work on pieces to add to the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts exhibition “do it.”

Curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, “do it” began in 1993 in Paris as a discussion about how to make art exhibitions more open-ended. The outcome is a collection of 400 written instructions from artists. Visitors are invited to interpret the instructions and create art in real time. The KIA selected 30 sets of instructions from artists such as Yoko Ono and Ed Ruscha.



Lillian Mahar and Mayar Atoum, fifth graders at Winchell Elementary School, explore the interactive exhibition “do it” at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts.

KPS students have been participating in the art project as visitors, but they were also invited to contribute to two specific works. Art classes from Woodward School for Technology and Research, Washington Writers’ Academy, Winchell Elementary and Prairie Ridge Elementary school were asked to draw a “line,” however they wished to interpret that, across long rolls



Winchell Elementary students add their flair to a chalkboard in the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts traveling exhibition “do it.”

of paper. The paper is displayed vertically in the gallery.

Students at Winchell also came up with titles for books that have not yet been written, and high school students in Education for the Arts worked in teams to create book covers for some of the titles.

The exhibition “do it” is on display through March 3 at the KIA, 314 S. Park St.



Prairie Ridge student Amariana Means works on a “line drawing” that is on display in the “do it” exhibition.

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