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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meetings
Thursday, May 11 & 25, 2017
7 p.m.
Administration Building
1220 Howard St.
For more information, call
(269) 337-1572

INSIDE
KPS Job Fair
4-6 p.m., May 19
West Main Professional
Development Center
Page 6
K-Central, Loy Norrix Concert
with Moxie Strings
7 p.m., May 16
Kalamazoo Central auditorium
Page 10

GRADUATION DATES
Adult Education Graduation
7 p.m., May 22
Chenery Auditorium
Phoenix High School
Graduation
7 p.m., June 6
Chenery Auditorium
Loy Norrix High School
Graduation
7 p.m., June 7
Wings Event Center
Kalamazoo Central High School
Graduation
7 p.m., June 8
Wings Event Center

Bronco Buds Introduces Students to WMU Life, Encourages Success

More than 1,000 Kalamazoo Public Schools sixth graders visited Western Michigan University in March as part of the Bronco Buds program, which introduces students to college life during a daylong campus visit. This was the eighth year of students touring the campus as part of the program, which was started in 2009 by WMU President Dr. John Dunn and WMU Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion Dr. Martha Warfield. During the visit, students heard from WMU student representatives, and toured the campus to



Milwood Middle School students meet their Western Michigan University student tour guides right before beginning a tour of the WMU campus as part of Bronco Buds.

see residence halls, classrooms and the student recreation center. The day also included lunch on campus. Dunn welcomed Milwood Middle School students to campus on March 23 and encouraged them to make the most of the day. “This is a day that is planned to help you think carefully (continued on page 5)

Please Remember to Vote on May 2

On Tuesday, May 2, voters in Kalamazoo Public Schools and all other districts in Kalamazoo County will be asked to vote on the renewal of a 3-year, 1.5 mill property tax to help continue to fund operations of our schools.

Q: Is this a new millage or a millage increase?
A: No. This is a renewal. Taxpayers will be paying the same millage rate for this millage that they have paid for the past three years.

Q: What would be the impact on Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) if this millage question is defeated?
A: Kalamazoo Public Schools receives \$4.3 million annually from this millage. These funds are budgeted in the district’s operating budget. If these funds are eliminated, budget cuts would be inevitable.
Q: How much would this renewal request cost the taxpayer?
A: Since it is a renewal, it would not cause an increase in tax

rates. Defeat of this proposal would result in a decrease in taxes of \$75 annually for the typical homeowner (with a house with a value of \$100,000).
Q: This is a millage assessed across all Kalamazoo County school districts in the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency (KRESA). Does KRESA keep the money?
A. No. The tax revenues are fully distributed by KRESA to the school districts in the county, including KPS, on a per student basis. Each school district receives the same per student amount.
Q: How has the school funding situation changed since 2014?
A: Local school districts are heavily reliant upon the State of Michigan for funding. In many respects, the state’s funding of local school districts has not improved since 2014. In fact, when considering inflation, our buying power is less. (continued on page 3)

FIRST SATURDAY @ KPL May 6
The next First Saturday @ KPL event will be held at the Kalamazoo Public Library, downtown, on April 1, 2017, from 2-3:30 p.m.

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District Graduation Rates Mostly Up; Five-Year Rate Hits New High

According to figures recently released by the state, for the fifth straight year Kalamazoo Public Schools' rolling three-year average rates for graduation in both four years and five years increased in 2016. Just as significantly, 2016 marked the district's highest five-year graduation rate in the history of the uniform federal formula for calculating graduation rates developed by the U.S. Department of Education in 2007 and effective across the country in 2008.

From 2009 to 2011, KPS averaged a rolling three-year graduation rate in four years of 63.7 percent. From 2014 to 2016, KPS averaged 69.6 percent, the fifth annual increase in a row.

Similarly, from 2009 to 2011, KPS averaged a rolling three-year graduation rate in five years of 69.4 percent. From 2014 to 2016, KPS averaged 74.7 percent, also the fifth annual increase in a row.

Using three-year rolling

averages to track graduation rates provides a more stable measurement than simply using one-year graduation rate figures. It's not that the district doesn't use one-year rates as well; it certainly does. Nonetheless, it is instructive to use three-year rates since, given the larger numbers of children, the three-year rates tend to detect trends more accurately than do the one-year rates, which can move quite a bit, either up or down, for a given year without representing a trend.

That said, our 2016 one-year rate for graduation in five years was 78.3 percent, our highest in the nine years of the uniform federal graduation rate formula. The last two years have



Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
Superintendent

"If you are not already doing so, please join the hundreds and hundreds of community members who volunteer in our schools."

been two of the highest three in the nine years of the federal graduation rate formula, and we trail the state's rate by only 4.5 percentage points, the lowest gap in the nine-year period.

At 78.3 percent for our five-year rate, KPS exceeds Flint at 65.1 percent, Grand Rapids at 61.1 percent, and Lansing at 66.1 percent. At 80.5 percent, Saginaw's five-year rate is a couple of percentage points ahead of ours.

The only major graduation rate indicator that didn't increase was the one-year rate for graduation in four years, which was 69.0 percent in 2016, our third highest figure in the nine years of the federal

graduation rate formula and two percentage points off last year's high for the nine-year period.

Given challenges statewide and nationally, the state began to monitor the African American male graduation rate and the rates of other demographic subgroups in 2013. Our African American male four-year graduation rate has risen each of the last three years, from 46.7 percent in 2013 to 53.2 percent in 2016, 7.8 percentage points behind the state at 61.0 percent.

Our African American male five-year graduation rate was 63.0 percent in 2016, only 2.5 percentage points lower than that of the state. By comparison, the rate for Flint was 64.3 percent,

for Grand Rapids 56.3 percent, for Lansing 58.7 percent, and for Saginaw 73.2 percent.

Much of what we do to better educate and better support children at different times in their lives reflects in a greater likelihood of graduating from high school, moving to higher education of some form, and being able to pursue one's dreams for one's life. In the last year and a half, hundreds of staff members and dozens of community members have begun to mentor our students on a weekly basis. I appreciate those who have answered the mentoring call and joined our efforts in service to children.

The more we pour into our children, in school or out, by mentoring or by some other means, the more our children will benefit and will manifest this benefit. If you are not already doing so, please join the hundreds

(continued on page 3)

First Saturday @ KPL Saturday, May 6 2-3:30 pm, CEN

Take your family to the library the first Saturday of each month! Get your library card or pick out some books to check out. Enjoy stories, activities, special guests, and door prizes. *First Saturday* is a partnership program for KPL and Kalamazoo Public Schools. Each monthly event is co-hosted with an organization serving children and families in Kalamazoo. **In May, we will collaborate with our host, Kalamazoo Literacy Council!**



Kalamazoo Public Schools

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Western Michigan University Reading Clinic



Kalamazoo
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District Graduation Rates (continued from page 2)

and hundreds of community members who volunteer in our schools. If you would like to volunteer in our schools, please contact Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo at (269) 337-1601. If your organization has individuals who would like to mentor our students in school, please contact KPS Communications at (269) 337-1572. If you would like to do one-on-one mentoring of a student outside of school, please contact Big Brothers Big Sisters at (269) 382-6800.

If you are already actively engaged in helping our students, I thank you for your commitment and ask that you encourage others to follow your good lead. Imagine if every church in Kalamazoo stepped up, if every civic organization stepped up, if every governmental unit and business and nonprofit stepped up to serve children. Imagine what we could do for our children...and how it would ultimately reflect in statistics such as high school and college graduation rates.

Please Remember to Vote on May 2 (continued from page 1)

Q: Who can vote in this election?
A: Any registered voter that resides in a school district within the KRESA service area can vote in this election. This includes all districts in the county: Climax-Scotts, Comstock, Galesburg-Augusta, Gull Lake, Kalamazoo, Parchment, Portage, and Vicksburg.

Q: Can I vote by absentee ballot?
A: A person can vote by absentee ballot if he or she:

- Expects to be absent from the community in which he or she is registered for the entire time the polls are open on Election Day.
- Is physically unable to attend the polls without the assistance of another.
- Cannot attend the polls because the tenets of his or her religion.
- Has been appointed as an election precinct inspector in a precinct other than the precinct where he or she resides.
- Is 60 years of age or older.
- Is confined to jail awaiting arraignment or trial.

Absentee ballots must be requested from the city or township clerk where you reside.

Please vote in this election. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2.



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Special Delivery: Lincoln Students Receive Letter from President Obama

Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo youth development worker Patricia Atkins has had her students write President Barack Obama before, hoping for a response.

Then, in the fall, as time was winding down on his term in office, she gathered her after-school program students at Lincoln International Studies School for one more letter-writing session to thank him for his service to the country. She added a brief note to the letters before she popped them

in the mail.

“Could you please respond to them? It would mean so much to our students.”

Atkins was on medical leave, when she got a call from the school office earlier this year. She had a package from the White House.

She told them to open it, but they said they’d wait until she returned. She could open it with her students.

The students were thrilled.

“I never thought we were going to get a letter back,” said Ciara Smith.

“I was more surprised than ever because I didn’t know he’d write,” said Natasha Vega.

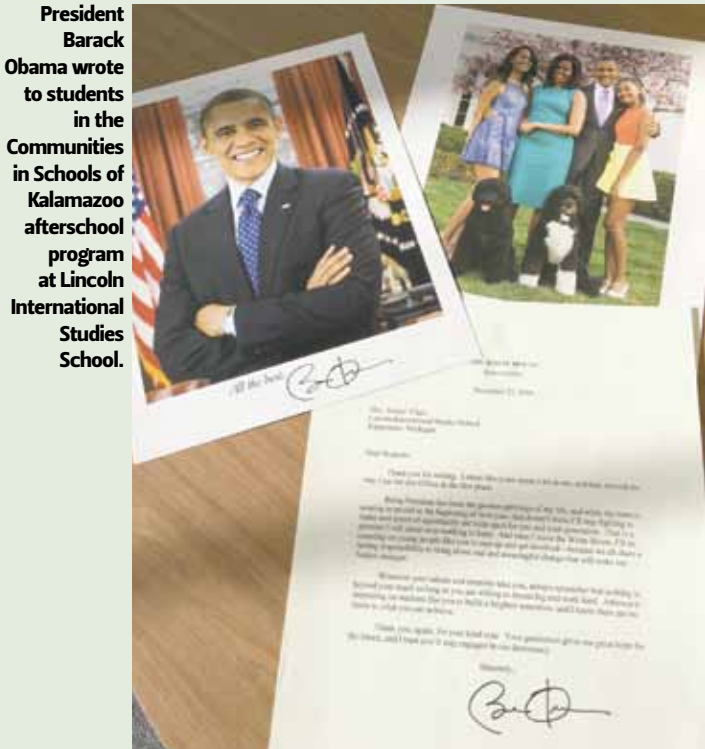
When they opened the package, they found a note from President Obama, a photo of the president, and one of him with First Lady Michelle Obama, their daughters Malia and Sasha Obama, and the family dogs Bo and Sunny.

His note said, “Wherever your talents and interests take you, always remember that nothing is beyond your reach so long as you are willing to dream big and work hard. America is depending on students like you to build a brighter tomorrow, and I know there are no limits to what you can achieve.”

He closed out the letter saying, “Thank you, again, for your kind note. Your generation gives me great hope for the future, and I trust you’ll stay engaged in our democracy.”

Other students in Lincoln’s CIS program wrote President Obama as well, but Atkins’ group was the only one to receive a reply. The letter and photos have been shared with the other students, but Atkins’ class feels a special pride in the response.

“I was so excited,” said Victoria Williams. “It’s something I’m going to treasure forever.”



President Barack Obama wrote back to Lincoln International Studies School CIS Afterschool students after they sent him letters, which they are holding. Back row, (L to R), Lincoln Principal Linda Howard, Kyree Matthews, Anaesia Foster, Aniya Foster, Naliyah Hayes, CIS youth development worker Patricia Atkins. Front row, (L to R) Ciara Smith, Alexia Vega, Victoria Williams, Natasha Vega, Alaiya Taylor-Harris. Class members not pictured: Michael McDaniel, Nicashia Phillips, and Caleja Nelson.

KAMSC and Adult Education Link Up Through Love of Books

Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center teacher Mike Sinclair issued a challenge to KAMSC students as part of the program’s Spirit Week celebrations: Everyone donate one book for the Kalamazoo Public Schools Adult Education program, which happens to be one of their neighbors in Old Central.

He was hoping for about 300 books. Students and staff donated 632 books.

The Book Nook was started by adult education teacher Dana Gay three years ago. She was looking for a way to encourage students to spend more time reading for pleasure.

“Many of my students, who were apprehensive about reading, were showing new growth and a quiet enthusiasm,” she said.

She found an old book rack in a storage closet and loaded it with books from her home and donations from friends. She topped the rack with a sign that said, “Take a book, Leave a book.”

The Book Nook caught on with students and the rack was quickly emptied. Staff contrib-

uted magazines and books and scoured the Kalamazoo Public Library’s Friends of the Library book sales to get \$2 bags of books to share. And, students made their own contributions to the rack.

“The more our adult education students read, the more interesting class discussions became. They were bringing outside informed opinions into the GED realm and making the text-to-world connections. The biggest reward for us was to hear students discuss these books among themselves and recommend them to each other as they

perused the rack.”

Sinclair launched his book drive after seeing the almost empty book rack on one of his walks through the building that KAMSC and Adult Education share. He was so pleased with the support from KAMSC students, he’s hoping to make the book drive an annual event.

“We’re thrilled that the KAMSC students have the heart to share literacy and the love of reading with fellow students in the community,” Gay said. “We believe that our Adult Education students will benefit and continue to pay it forward in the future.”



KAMSC teacher Mike Sinclair (L to R), KAMSC student senate co-presidents Garrit Rummel and Danielle Janowicz, Adult Education Director Kim Bell, and teacher Dana Gay bring books into the Adult Education literacy center.

Chef Shaun - KPS FOOD SERVICE CHEF

Gingersnap Berry Dessert

Hello Kalamazoo, welcome to the coming berry season. Southwest Michigan berry farms are phenomenal – especially the blueberry farms. Berries are an excellent source of vitamins and antioxidants to keep your family healthy. Please try this excellent dessert with friends and family and enjoy the long-awaited summer. Best regards, Chef Shaun.



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

Ingredients

Crust:

- 1/2 cup finely crushed gingersnap cookies (about nine cookies)
- 1/3 cup finely crushed vanilla wafers (about 10 wafers)
- 2 Tbsp finely chopped walnuts
- 2 Tbsp melted butter

Filling:

- 6 oz. softened cream cheese
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries, divided
- 3/4 cup sliced fresh strawberries

Directions

1. In a bowl, combine the gingersnap crumbs, wafer

- crumbs, walnuts and butter. Press into the bottom and 1 1/2 inches up the sides of a greased 6-inch springform pan. Bake at 375° for 5-7 minutes or until crust is golden. Cool on a wire rack.
2. In a small bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add vanilla. Carefully spread about 1/3 cup over cooled crust.
3. Top with half blueberries. Spread with another 1/3 cup cream cheese mixture. Top with strawberries.
4. Spread with remaining cream cheese. Arrange remaining blueberries on top. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

Serves 4



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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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Bronco Buds Introduces Students to WMU Life, Encourages Success *(continued from page 1)*

and critically about you and your future," he said. "You represent our future. There is an excitement and vibrancy and intellect and creativity you bring to the university and your school. We're very, very pleased

to have you here."

KPS Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice also offered a greeting to the students, reminding them that the visit was a unique opportunity. No other university plays host to so many

local school children each year, he said.

"You are here because Western Michigan University believes in your ability to graduate from high school and to become part of this college or

some other college or university," Rice said. "Western Michigan University believes in Kalamazoo Public School students, and KPS believes in your capacity to be successful here."

This will be the last year of the program under the guidance of Dunn, who retires in June after 10 years at the helm of Western.

"Today is about you and your success," Dunn said. "I assure you that Dr. Rice's and your teachers' and your principals' thoughts every morning are about you and what they can do to make you successful. We have about 24,000 students here at Western, and every day I wake up thinking what I can do to help young people continue on their path to success too."



Milwood Middle School students begin their tour of the Western Michigan University campus as part of Bronco Buds.

Literacy Night Merged with Art Walk at Milwood Elementary School

At Milwood Elementary School, students combined a celebration of literacy with their love of the arts thanks to art teacher Abbey Ruffer.

Milwood's literacy night was an "Art Walk," which showcased the arts throughout the building. In addition to having school musical ensembles performing in the lobby to greet guests, Ruffer lined the hallways with student art work and writing and had community groups such as Kalamazoo Children's Chorus, Kalamazoo Book Arts Center, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, the Family Center for the Arts, and the Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation Department offering exhibits and demonstrations.

"I wanted to create a chance for families to come in and learn about art programs in the community," Ruffer said. The project was funded with a \$750 Jack Hamilton Grant from Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo.

Ruffer also set up an interactive painting project, in which students and family members were encouraged to write on and to paint a canvas, which will become a permanent installation in



Autumn Howard and Cydney Blasingame work on the interactive painting project during the Milwood Elementary Art Walk on literacy night.



Kalamazoo Institute of Arts ceramic artist Chad Bagge demonstrates the pottery wheel for Milwood Elementary students Ariyanna Hall, Myracle Brown-Peoples, and Joe McFarlen.

the school.

The classroom teachers and students worked in the weeks before literacy night to create spe-

cial art works and to write artists' statements about their pieces to share their thoughts about what art means to them.



Milwood Elementary music teacher Ben Gudbrandson performed in the lobby with fifth-grade students (L to R): Liam Rutherford, Malik Guy, Jackie Barnes, and Chase Dorko during literacy night.

"I see kids struggle on a daily basis with behavior or frustration in their classrooms," Ruffer said. "They may not understand how they're feeling. I don't have a lot of those same issues in the art room. I think part of the reason is the subject matter, and we talk about feelings. It's calming and relaxing in the art room."

"But we only see kids once a week for 50 minutes in art class. I wanted to give them more opportunities to create and to tell them about opportunities outside of school as well. It's a different way of learning that's important for every child."

Kids in Tune Adds Families in Tune in February

Kalamazoo Kids in Tune (KKIT) — an orchestra-immersion youth development program serving students after school at Woods Lake Elementary: A Magnet Center for the Arts — invited parents and guardians join their orchestra every Thursday for the month of February for its new initiative called Families in Tune.

Families in Tune was created to increase involvement by giving family members a first-hand experience of being a KKIT student. Parents and guardians had the opportunity to play an instrument side-by-side with students in their full orchestra.

Ranging from trombone

to flute players, some parents returned to instruments they played in the past while others were introduced to an instrument for the first time. Each received lessons from the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra.

KKIT is led by Dr. Eric Barth, KKIT curriculum director and conductor. “We’re delighted by the parent participants who have joined us this month as we kick off Families in Tune,” Barth said. “This is a step toward our dream of building a greater music-making community in Kalamazoo built on the foundation we’ve laid over the last six years at Kids in Tune.”

Sarah Garcez has been famil-

iar with the KKIT program since the beginning. Her daughter, Clara, now in middle school, has been playing with the program since its inception in 2011 and still participates by coaching younger Woods Lake players through the KKIT Young Leader program. With encouragement from a fellow parent and without prior experience, Garcez chose to play the trombone.

“We’re constantly trying to push kids out of their comfort zone by encouraging them to try new things,” Garcez said. “But for adults, it’s not always as easy to do the same. It’s been a fun experience and a nice way to connect and support a program that

has given so much to our kids and our community.”

The KKIT program is a collaboration of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo, and Kalamazoo Public Schools. Each student selects an instrument to study and participates in group lessons and orchestra rehearsals.

Every day includes a nutritious meal and assisted homework time. Mindfulness practice is taught in dedicated classes and integrated into music lessons and orchestra rehearsals, creating a culture of kindness to self and others. Additional “club” opportunities

are offered to reinforce academic learning and provide avenues for exploration.

By learning to play instruments in an ensemble setting, students develop a sense of community and build mastery and resilience: skills that make music study rewarding and contribute to success in the classroom.

KKIT is funded largely by the Michigan Department of Education (21st Century Community Learning Centers), the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, and the Greg Jennings Foundation, along with corporate sponsors Chemical Bank, DENSO, and Eaton Corporation.



Parents, Meghan Cook and Sarah Garcez, playing alongside students and program staff in the full Kalamazoo Kids in Tune orchestra.



Having played in high school, Kim Caldwell joined her daughter Alexandria in the flute section for the Families in Tune initiative.



Families in Tune participants (front, from left): Meghan Cook, Kim Caldwell, and Sarah Garcez with Dr. Eric Barth, KKIT curriculum director (rear).



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Attend the KPS Job Fair!
May 19
4-6 p.m.

Pre-register for the Job Fair to be considered for interviews on May 19.

RSVP to Rhonda McGee by Friday, May 1st via email at mcgeerd@kalamazoopublicschools.net

LOCATION:

West Main Professional Development Center
1627 West Main, Kalamazoo, MI 49006

Earn a Bike, Learn a Lesson All Part of Open Roads Program

Fifth graders at El Sol Elementary School recently earned free bicycles through Open Roads, the community program that uses the lure of a free bike to teach children about exercise, social skills, and bike safety.

Eight students completed the Earn-A-Bike program, which was run through the Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo afterschool program at El Sol, said Open Roads Executive Director Erin Denay. The CIS coordinator at the school is Brionne Fonville.

Students gain hands on mechanical skills coupled with social skills, Denay said. The goal is to help them be more successful

as they navigate their daily lives. The program starts with bikes, which are all donated by community members. Students are matched with bikes based on their size and the colors they like. The bikes are assembled but require some repair.

“It was probably one of the funnest programs I’ve been in,” said Jose Trejo. “It’s kind of different from all the programs I’ve been in. There are not many programs where you can build a bike and fix it on your own.”

Jose is now the owner of a red Mongoose, with “all different types of gears.” He’s already had it out for a few test rides on warm



Itzel Cruz Antonio tries out her new bike.



Open Roads instructor Luis Morales works with El Sol Elementary students (L to R) Julian Fred, Eduardo Ricardo, Benjamin Rodriguez, Amy Garcia, Itzel Cruz Antonio, Ayden Abbott and Ramil Diaz Chalas.



El Sol students and Open Roads instructors celebrate the end of the Earn-A-Bike Program, (top to bottom and L to R) Itzel Cruz Antonio, Amy Garcia, Amy Alexander (instructor) Benjamin Rodriguez, Ayden Abbott, Julian Fred, Brionne Fonville (CIS coordinator), Luis Morales (instructor), Ramil Diaz Chalas, Eduardo Ricardo, and Jose Trejo.

days. “I’m looking forward to riding it in the summer.”

Participants learn everything from how to fix bike brakes to how to patch flat tires to how to replace a bike chain.

“We talk about bike tools like wrenches and screwdrivers and how beneficial they are in different ways, especially when we work on our bikes,” Denay said. “Then we talk about giving them social tools, resources they can have in their personal tool boxes, like self control, learning how to express themselves and asking for help. We talk about some really great subjects.

“My favorite day was listening to them talk about their fears and how they can conquer their fears to achieve their goals.”

Fonville said, “The kids had an incredible experience. We’ve had students participate in the past and it really had a lasting impression on them. It was engaging for all the students and brought up some amazing conversations and some revelations about what their goals are and confronting their fears and what they want to do.”

On the last day, the students took home their newly rebuilt bikes, along with helmets, locks

and T-shirts.

Open Roads is working with three Kalamazoo Public Schools buildings this year. They’ve completed workshops at Hillside and El Sol, and are now working with Edison. The program also offers free Earn-A-Bike workshops at its shop at 1523 Riverview Drive. It is open to students 10-15 years old. Applications can be found at www.openroadsbike.org.

Open Roads also offers community rides and neighborhood events. Students can also apply to serve on the group’s youth advisory board.



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Book Arts Center Helps Students Learn About Books from the Inside Out

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The Kalamazoo Book Arts Center has partnered with area schools for almost nine years to help elementary school children learn about book making, everything from papermaking to printing to book binding.

This year some of the participants in the book-making project were from Winchell Elementary, where third and fourth graders traveled to the Kalamazoo Book Arts Center in the Park Trades Building, to make the paper used for their book covers and to create prints that decorated the inside of their books.

Their prints were also featured in the center’s annual “Kid Prints Extravaganza” in February, in which hundreds of works were hung around the gallery for a public exhibition during one of downtown Kalamazoo’s popular Art Hops.

Sarah Cheek-Toomey, art coordinator for Kalamazoo Public Schools, said the book project takes a holistic approach to reading and writing. Not only do the students make books, but they participate in special writing assignments, which are used as content for the books.

“We talk about literature and where books come from in terms of resources, time and energy,” Cheek-Toomey said.

KBAC Executive Director Jeff Abshear started the program and says Kalamazoo Public Schools have participated since the beginning. In the early years, the KBAC artists traveled to schools for the program. Now students come to the center, which has more space for the sometimes sloppy process of papermaking, as well



Book Arts Center Executive Director Jeff Abshear shows Winchell students how to create a plate for their prints. The prints will be placed in their handmade books.

as printing presses to show students.

During Winchell’s visit late last year, students split into two groups. While one group worked with tubs filled with paper pulp and screens to create sheets of paper, the other half of the students created drawings that they then carved out of foam blocks to create prints on colored pieces of tissue paper.

Several weeks later, KBAC’s studio manager Katie Platte went to Winchell, where she showed the students how to do a simple stick binding, with sticks, yarn and beads, to give their books their final form.

“I thought it was really cool,” said Winchell third-grader Savannah Robert. “I liked how we could make our own prints and how we learned the actual process of making the paper. I thought making the paper was a little more interesting. It was fun working with the water and the pulp.”



Winchell Elementary students Mayar Atoum, Nicholas Morales-Sanchez, Jared Kwei and Issac Patrick work on creating sheets of handmade paper, which will become the covers of their books.



Alexander Frost had a Santa-inspired print in his book.



Savannah Robert stirs the paper pulp before she draws a sheet of paper.



Edwin Ciokajlo and Quanna Knox show off the covers of their handmade books, right before binding the pages.



Triston Coulter and Emma Gray work on the binding of their books in art class at Winchell Elementary.

Three Seniors Advance in National Merit Scholarship Competition

Three Kalamazoo Public Schools seniors have moved on in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

Loy Norrix High School students Samuel Ratliff, Lachlan Woods and Ava Wood have advanced to the finalist level of the competition.

About 90 percent of the semifinalists become final-

ists. To become a finalist, students or their schools must submit an application in which they provide information about their academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received.

Students must have an outstanding academic record,

receive recommendations from a school official, write an essay, and score well on the SAT.

About half of the finalists win National Merit Scholarships, which include National Merit Scholarships, corporate-sponsored scholarships, and college-sponsored scholarships.

Cesar Chavez Speaker Encourages Students to Keep Fighting for Equality

Defining what it means to be Latino is more challenging than a young person may think.

"We're mixed with everything," poet, performer, and community organizer Michael Reyes told students at the Cesar Chavez Day Celebration at Western Michigan University on March 30. The event celebrates the life and work of American labor leader Cesar Chavez, who co-founded the National Farm Workers Association.

The event included poetry readings, contemporary and traditional music, and information on Chavez. Dignitaries included Adrian Vazquez, Hispanic American Council; Miguel Ramirez, WMU Division of Multicultural Affairs; Dr. John Dunn, president of WMU; Gustavo Echarria, Office of WMU Admissions, Rene Meave and Guillermo Martinez, from the Southwestern Michigan band Los Bandits, as well as many WMU students who spoke attesting to the Kalamazoo Promise as well as the advantages of attending WMU.

Reyes told the nearly 1,000 Southwest Michigan high school and middle school students at the event that Latino culture is incredibly complex. Latinos come in all colors. They share a history with African Americans and are impossible to define geographically. There is an indigenous identity from cultures such as the

Aztecs and Mayans. Spanish includes thousands of words from Arabic, which was introduced to the Spanish language during the Moor occupation of Spain.

He shared with the attendees several of his spoken word poems, including "We Are," which includes the lines:

*"We are U.S. treaty failure
We are barrio dwellers
Culture creators cut across
communal skies
We are loving abuelos, abuelas
We are community builders
stopping gentrification
We are presos politicos
We are freedom fighters
We are present farms, urban
harvest
We are the children of Latin
America"*

Reyes, who is based in Detroit, grew up as the son and grandson of migrant workers who traveled between Texas and Michigan. He spent much of his youth in Saginaw.

He eventually discovered poetry and his passion for performance, and it became his life's work to share the history and identity of Latinos through his music and words. His work has been featured on HBO, CNN, PBS, The Chicago Tribune's Hoy Noticias, Latin Nation, Chicago Public



Courtesy of reyespoetry.com

Poet, performer, and community activist Michael Reyes spoke to the students at the Cesar Chavez Day Celebration.

Radio, National Public Radio, Pacifica, WBAI, and Democracy Now.

He has performed and keynoted at over 1,500 institutions including: The Million Man March in Washington D.C., The United States Hispanic Leadership Institute, National Council of La Raza Conference, and the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity. He has worked with the likes of Dr. Cornel West, Lolita Lebron, Dolores Huerta, Oliver Stone, Minster Louis Farrakhan, and Kanye West.

Reyes' main current project is

"Culture Creators," a media company that includes a vlog, music label, youth artist talent management, film production, and fashion segments that are produced in Detroit and Chicago.

During the question and answer segment of his presentation, someone asked what he thought about President Donald Trump's immigration policy.

"The truth is it's not really that much of a shift," Reyes said, telling the crowd that President Barack Obama had deported more immigrants than any other sitting president. "Our labor is valued, but we're not valued."

This fact has long been a part of American culture, he said, or there would never have been a need for someone like Cesar Chavez — who he called a Latino icon — to fight for the rights of farm workers. Injustice will remain a part of the Latino reality as long as workers can be deported, but the companies that hire them continue their practices without facing repercussions.

He urged the students to continue to fight for equality for Latinos.

"Push it further, fight, struggle, resist," Reyes said. "I feel hopeful because I see a room full of brown and black people who are caring and compassionate and thinking about your education and transformation."

Enroll in The Loy Norrix Child Care Center for Fall 2017

Is your child ready for preschool? The Loy Norrix Child Care Center, a five-star rated Kalamazoo County Ready 4s program, is accepting applications for childcare and preschool for fall 2017.

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 \$155 a week for full-time care, \$100 a week for half-day care, and \$42 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 (269) 337-0264, or email hentschlearlym@kalamazoopublicschools.net.



Loy Norrix Child Care Center students study the world around them.



MAY SHOWS

**May 13
MAN-SIZE in MARBLE**

**May 27
The ADVENTURES
of KING ARTHUR**

Funding provided by
Irving S. Schmale
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Back in the "Golden Age" of radio, weekly radio programs brought the young and old to their living rooms to listen to adventurous, mysterious and comical tales. Dedicated to promoting this rich history, All Ears Theatre performs newly scripted radio programs for live audiences, complete with old school sound effects. Shows are later broadcast on 102.1 WMUK-FM. Performances are at 6:00 pm at the First Baptist Church and are **FREE TO THE PUBLIC**.

ac
arts council
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For a complete schedule of shows, visit KalamazooArts.org

May Mobile Health Clinic Schedule

The Family Health Center has a mobile health clinic, which serves Kalamazoo Public Schools students and their families. It provides physicals, immunizations, well-child visits, and other services. The clinic takes insurance and offers a sliding scale fee. Listed is the clinic's schedule for May. For more information, visit fhkzoo.com. Appointments can be made by calling (269) 349-2641 or by contacting the Community in Schools at your school.

May 1 - Phoenix
May 2 - Prairie Ridge
May 3 - Edison
May 4 - Woods Lake
May 5 - Milwood Middle
May 8 - Linden Grove
May 9 - Arcadia
May 10 - El Sol
May 11 - King-Westwood
May 12 - Lincoln
May 15 - Washington
May 16 - Milwood Elementary

May 17 - Northeastern
May 18 - Northglade
May 19 - Edison
May 22 - Parkwood-Upjohn
May 23 - Kalamazoo Central
May 24 - Loy Norrix
May 25 - Phoenix
May 26 - Hillside
May 29 - No school
May 30 - Washington
May 31 - Maple Street



Project Find Is Looking for Special Needs Individuals

If you suspect your child:

- Has a disability;
- Is in need of special attention; or
- Is a student who has received special-education services and has dropped out of school and would like to return, call Kalamazoo

Public Schools' Project Find Coordinator Rikki Saunders at (269) 337-0161.

Project Find helps locate individuals from birth to 26 years old with special needs, and works with families to provide appropriate education services. Multiple services are available.

YES 9-1-1

VOTE YES MAY 2

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Paid for by the Citizens for Consolidated Dispatch 4600 Thistle Road Kalamazoo, MI 49006 Ronald E. Reid, Treasurer



Kalamazoo Public Schools middle school and high school students will exhibit two-dimensional and three-dimensional art works in the Kalamazoo Public Schools Annual Secondary Art Show. The show opens with a public reception 5:30-7:30 p.m. Friday, May 5, at the KPS Administration Building, 1220 Howard St. The evening will include music and refreshments. The show remains up during business hours until May 30.

Kalamazoo Central, Loy Norrix to Share Concert with Moxie Strings

The Kalamazoo Public Schools Music Department will present a Showcase Concert with special guest artists Moxie Strings at 7 p.m. May 16 at the Kalamazoo Central High School auditorium.

The concert will feature the Kalamazoo Central and Loy Norrix high school orchestras, chamber ensembles from both schools, and Moxie Strings, an electric string duo based in Ann Arbor. The duo consists of violin-

ist Diana Ladio and cellist Alison Lynn, who graduated from Western Michigan University.

The Moxie Strings will perform with the combined orchestra and by themselves. Their eclectic mix of music has a twist of Irish flavor that is guaranteed to make you want to dance. Read more about the band at www.themoxiestrings.com.

The concert is free and open to the public.



Moxie Strings will perform with the Kalamazoo Central and Loy Norrix orchestras on May 16.

Where Are They Now: K-Central Grad Feels the Call of Computer Animation with 'Call of Duty'

When David Gulisano graduated from Kalamazoo Central in 1990, Mario and Luigi were still throwing highly pixilated fireballs.

He never imagined the gaming world that exists today or that his career would lead him to have a role in one of the biggest games in existence: "Call of Duty," the first-person shooting game universe that includes spheres such as "Call of Duty: Infinite Warfare," "Call of Duty: Black Ops," and "Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare."

Gulisano moved to Kalamazoo as a sophomore, after having spent his early childhood moving around the West Coast, where his father was a construction manager.

Although he lived in Kalamazoo only a few years, it remains one of the most influential places in his life, said Gulisano, who now lives in Madison, Wis.

"I made lifelong friends there," he said. "I married one of my friends from high school. My best friend is from high school."

Kalamazoo is such a key part of his life, he and his wife Rebecca Minsley's love story is part of the movie "Kalamazoo?," which was shot in Kalamazoo and was written by his high school friend Joanna Clare Scott.

Gulisano is a senior animator for Raven Software, which has generally been called upon to help finish games such as "Call of Duty" and get them to market toward the end of development. He estimates that for the most recent games, Raven has provided a quarter to half of the animation.

Gulisano is one of those lucky people who knew what he wanted to do from an early age. There were two key moments that helped define his interest. Both involved film.

First moment, when he saw the movie "Snow White."

"That was super cool to me at the time, and at one point I realized you could do animation



David Gulisano, Kalamazoo Central grad, now is a lead animator for "Call of Duty."

for a living," he said. That became his goal — except for that period when he briefly considered becoming a dentist, because it seemed like they made a lot of money.

"I was the sort of kid who was doodling on every surface you could get your hands on. I remember my mom had a green couch and I took red marker and drew all over it."

He was also fascinated by comic books, and they became his own drawing school.

"Through comic books, I figured out anatomy," Gulisano said. "I didn't know that I was figuring out anatomy, I'd just draw something and think, 'That doesn't look right. His arm shouldn't be that lumpy.'"

He said his Kalamazoo Central art teacher Diana Monovich helped introduce him to the masters such as Michelangelo and how they drew.

After he graduated from Kalamazoo Central, he enrolled at Montana State University. It wasn't the right fit for him, but it was a valuable lesson. He shored up his grades there and built an extensive portfolio, and then his mom suggested he transfer to the University of Michigan, which had been his dream school all along.

He graduated from U of M with a bachelor's of fine arts with a concentration in drawing and figurative sculpture and graphic design.

He worked at Perrigo in Allegan for a year as a package designer, but he knew that wasn't what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. By that point he'd had

that second inspirational moment: He'd seen the movie "Toy Story."

"Once I'd seen computer animation, I was hooked," he said. "The original 'Toy Story,' for sure, was a big influence. And some of the early Pixar shorts were amazing. 'Snow White' was the catalyst for doing animation period. 'Toy Story' was for doing animation with computers."

His job now has little to do with "animation" in terms of drawing and sculpting. As a senior animator, he works with programmers to make sure the software can do what the animators need. He keeps projects on schedule and ensures the animation meets the company's quality expectations.

And, he's constantly working with engineers and coders to build systems that can "make our animation play better in the game and to be more interactive. Sometimes it means just finding new ways to use their existing systems, but often it means finding ways to innovate."

"We're at the very edge of the technology," Gulisano said. "We're creating a lot of it. We look at industry trends and see what's working in other people's games and make the technology for what we need."

"Call of Duty" has been the best-selling game for the past five years and staying on top of what is rated a "AAA" brand name game is challenging. The fans expect the games to continue to grow and evolve, and the company works hard to ensure it meets gamers demands.

Working on the most popular game can be demanding but it also carries a certain cachet with people like his 11-year-old son Jonah Gulisano.

"I'm very popular, typically, with the 10-to-40-year-old, male crowd, honestly," he said. "Once guys find out I'm part of 'Call of Duty' and produced things they've played, I have an instant conversation starter."

"It's more interesting than telling people I'm a dentist."

Jazmyn C. GENERAL STUDIES



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To find out more, contact your high school counselor and visit www.kvcc.edu/earlycollege.

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community college

MAY @ the library

FIRST SATURDAY

■ Saturday, May 6 / 2 pm / CEN / Enjoy stories, activities, special guests, and door prizes!

STORYTIMES

Adult caregiver must accompany babies and toddlers. Siblings attend as guests.

■ **Baby Lapsit** / Wednesdays, May 3, 10, 17, 24 / 10:15 am / OSH / Songs and rhymes for birth to pre-walking. Siblings welcome.

■ **Baby Steps** / Wednesdays, May 3, 10, 17, 24 / 11 am / OSH / Songs, bounces, and rhymes. Walking to 24 months.

■ **Family Storytime** / Stories, activities and special guests. Birth-5 and their families.

Thursdays, May 4, 11, 18, 25 / 10:30 am / OSH

Fridays, May 5, 12, 19, 26 / 10:30 am / CEN

■ **Preschool Storytime** / Tuesdays, May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 / 10:30 am / CEN / Stories, songs, activities. Ages 3-5.

■ **Cuentos y Canciones** / Saturday, May 20 / 10:30 am / WSQ / Celebrate Hispanic heritage with bilingual stories, songs, and special guests.



EVENTS

■ **Ramadan Kareem** / Wednesday, May 3 / 4:30 pm / OSH / Learn about Ramadan, make a craft, and try some snacks used to break the fast.

■ **Reading with Tucker** / Thursdays, May 4, 11, 18, 25 / 4-5:30 pm / EAS / Enjoy a "pawsitive" reading experience with Tucker. Call the Eastwood Branch Library to register. **R**

■ **Bach in Jammies** / Soprano Jessica Louise Coe accompanied by pianist Carl Witt will send you to the moon and back with this amazing all-ages evening event.

Monday, May 8 / 6:30 pm / CEN

Tuesday, May 9 / 6:30 pm / OSH

■ **Bookworms** / In May, we will read *Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel* by Nikki Grimes.

Tuesday, May 9 / 4:30 pm / OSH

Thursday, May 25 / 4:30 pm / CEN

■ **Mother's Day Gift** / Thursday, May 11 / 4:30 pm / EAS & OSH / Make a very special gift for that very special person, all materials provided.

■ **KSO Peter and the Wolf** / Saturday, May 13 / 10:30 am & Noon / CEN / Explore animals through music!

■ **Washington Square Branch Library Celebration** / Wednesday, May 17 / 5:30-7:00 pm / WSQ / Celebrate the start of spring with Ghostbusters Kalamazoo, a plant exchange, pizza, games and more! All ages.

■ **Tumble Toddlers** / Saturday, May 20 / 10:30 am / CEN / Beginner walkers and caregivers with music. Registration required. **R**

■ **Party In the Park** / Wednesday, May 31 / 10 am / Bronson Park / Calling all childcare providers, teachers, and parents! Come and enjoy this special story hour featuring: A book for each child, costumed characters, storytelling and more!



TWEEN/TEEN EVENTS

■ **Hamilton Throwdown** / Saturday, May 6 / 2-4 pm / CEN / Refreshments, costume contest, trivia, singing and more! All ages.

■ **College Readiness** / Monday, May 22 / 6-7 pm / CEN / Come in and work on your college application essays.

■ **#TAB** / Monday, May 8 / 4:30 pm / CEN & OSH / Attention Teens! Give back to your community while having fun.

■ **Nova VR** / Saturday, May 20 / 2-4pm / CEN / Drop in and experience Virtual Reality.

■ **Tech Tuesdays** / Tuesday, May 2 / 4:30-5:30 pm / CEN: The Hub / Paper Circuit greeting cards. Grades 5-12.

■ **Pop Culture Trivia** / May 1-31 / Open Hours / CEN: Teen Area, EAS, POW & WSQ / Win free movie passes! New questions posted daily.

■ **Pizza and Pages** / Read exclusive unreleased books, come back to talk about it over pizza!

Thursday, May 4 / *Words With Wings*, by Nikki Grimes / 4:30 pm / CEN

Monday, May 15 / *Everything, Everything*, by Nicola Yoon / 4:30 pm / CEN

■ **Beginning Filmmaking** / Thursday, May 18 / 4:30 pm / OSH / Get started in filmmaking with information from local film expert Louis Barrett. Please register. Grades 5-12. **R**

■ **J-Pop Club** / Monday, May 15 / 4 pm / CEN / Drop-in if you love Japanese pop culture! Pocky and sushi samples, Teens Only.

■ **Maker Monday** / Monday, May 22 / 4:30 pm / CEN / Beeswax sheet "sushi" making.

■ **Monthly Game Central** / Wednesday, May 24 / 4:30-5:30 pm / CEN / Super Smash Bros., Mario Kart, Pokken Tournament and more!



■ Baby / Kid ■ Tween / Teen ■ Family ■ All Ages **T** Ticket Required **R** Registration Required

Central Library (CEN)
315 S. Rose St.
553-7800

Eastwood (EAS)
1112 Gayle Ave.
553-7810

Oshtemo (OSH)
7265 W. Main St.
553-7980

Alma Powell (POW)
1000 W. Paterson St.
553-7960

Washington Square (WSQ)
1244 Portage St.
553-7970

kpl.gov/calendar



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