

Kalamazoo Public Schools

EXCELSIOR

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Eclipse Eyewitnesses

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took the path
less traveled to
find success.
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Lisa Dewey
brings a desire to
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to new role as
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Student Achievement Cannot Be Measured by Standardized Tests Alone

A Message from the Superintendent

Dr. Darrin Slade



KALAMAZOO Public Schools has emerged from its spring testing season.

Although we call them summative assessments now, many parents are more familiar with the term standardized testing. For much of the month of April, staff and students devoted their time and attention to the task of taking and proctoring these tests across the district.

The tests given included:

- The Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP), which was administered online to students in grades 3 to 7 to measure their knowledge in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics according to state standards. It was also given to students in grades 5,

8 and 11 to measure their knowledge of science and social studies.

- The PSAT 8/9 was administered to measure ELA and math skills among eighth-grade students and ninth-grade students.

- The standard PSAT is used to evaluate ELA and mathematics skills of students in grade 10. It also helps students prepare for the...

- SAT college entrance exam, which is given to every high school junior as part of the Michigan Merit Examination. That test consists of the free SAT with Essay to test ELA and mathematics; the ACT WorkKeys, which is a work skills assessment; and the M-STEP for science and social studies.

Coordinating and administering these tests is a huge task, so kudos to the teachers, administrators and other staff members who contribute to making sure this undertaking goes as smoothly as possible. And, thank you to the students for doing their best on these tests to demonstrate

the skills and knowledge they've worked so hard to attain, and to our parents for everything you do to ensure students are prepared for the rigorous testing schedule.

Standardized tests or summative assessments are important for the district because the state and federal governments use the information on the tests to make a host of determinations on everything from policy decisions to accountability measures to funding.

And the tests are used to set standards that give KPS an opportunity to examine certain benchmarks across time, which can help us evaluate achievement across the years. For better or worse, the tests are also used by some to compare school districts.

These tests are important but flawed tools, in part because of what they don't measure. For instance, many might assume that the tests always measure what is taught in school. While that may be generally true, it's not an absolute. School districts may have variances on

what specific concepts are taught and when during a school year. Topics may not be covered in one district's chosen textbooks or curriculums.

Also, how well a student, groups of students, or a district performs can be heavily influenced by what students learn outside of the school setting. Even if one could assure that every single child received the exact same exposure to the same concepts, with the same expert instruction, how could anyone factor in the very different life experiences a child has at home or in the world?

On a standardized test that asks a child to identify the natural structures in the Grand Canyon, the child who has been to the Grand Canyon has a much better chance of answering the question than one who has never been there. Or, the child whose parents have read to them every night presumably has a distinct advantage on a standardized test over the student who is new

(continued on page 2)

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This activity is brought to you in partnership with the City of Kalamazoo, LISC, Kalamazoo County support from other grant funding partners.

Kalamazoo Math and Science Institute Accepting Applications for 2024 Summer Session

THE KALAMAZOO Math and Science Institute is for any student. “The KMSI will appeal to any students interested in math, science, technology, engineering or environmental studies,” said Kristen Miller, the math and science coordinator for Kalamazoo Public Schools. “The program is also perfect for students who want to take a hands-on approach to learning. By participating in this program, students earn a half credit of high school science, which opens up opportunities to take more science electives later in high school.”

The program is accepting applications through May 24 for the 2024 summer session, which runs 8 to 11:30 a.m. June 24 to July 25. The program is open to any rising freshman (those students who are currently eighth graders), with a special emphasis on enrolling students who are traditionally underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields.

“Essentially, you are learning a trimester worth of material in five weeks,” Miller said. “That said, if you’re a student who is motivated but needs some support with achievement and academics, the KMSI staff and teachers will be there to support you along the way.”

“If you come with a growth mindset, you will be perfectly prepared to be successful in KMSI.”

Students have the opportunity to take an in-depth look at the health of waterways in Kalamazoo County.

They get hands-on experience conducting field studies at nearby lakes, operating drones, and working with microscopes, all while developing analytical and communication skills.

Students get to meet scientists and interact with college instructors and students. The program is supported by Albion College, Kalamazoo College, and the Michigan College Alliance, a group of 15 private colleges and universities that accept The Kalamazoo Promise.



Anthony Boy and Inari Powell work with Kalamazoo College biology student Katie Rock to collect macro invertebrates at River Oaks Park.

But the most important connections students will make is with like-minded students who share their interests in science, Miller said, “With participants from all four KPS middle schools, students are sure to meet at least one new friend during their KMSI summer experience.”



Kalamazoo Math and Science Institute students hike through the Kalamazoo Nature Center toward the Kalamazoo River.

Student Achievement *(continued from page 2)*

to the country and is still learning English or the one whose parents struggle with their own literacy.

Standardized tests also don’t measure the many other kinds of learning that go on in our schools every day. There is not a place on standardized tests for art and music. The tests don’t measure social emotional learning and interpersonal skills. They have little room for a measure of creativity or skills that might serve a student well in

the world of work, such as teamwork and adaptability.

Testing is a fascinating but challenging aspect of the world of education. We will continue to work on improving our test scores, because they are an essential part of the educational landscape today. But just as importantly, we will continue to provide a quality education for our students, one that has an impact far beyond the limited measure of standardized tests.



Kalamazoo MATH & SCIENCE Institute



JUNE 24 – JULY 25, 2024 8:00 – 11:30AM

FREE Summer STEM Program

KMSI offers 9th graders a chance to dive into STEM concepts through fun, hands-on activities. KMSI Scholars collaborate with Kalamazoo College and Albion College students and faculty to study the Kalamazoo River watershed. Field trips and activities include invertebrate surveys, water and soil testing, microscopy, photography, and drone piloting.

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Questions? Contact Kristen Miller at millerkm@kalamazoopublicschools.net or 269-808-9409
Please register by May 24, 2024

ARTISTS' CORNER

Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts visual arts educator Kristen Stevens shared some recent realistic drawings by her eighth-grade students. The eighth graders focused on improving their shading skills this trimester. Projects ranged from simple value scales up to the realistic ice cream drawing project.

Students were given an image of a soft-serve ice cream cone, then they used the grid technique to enlarge the image onto drawing paper. They worked on matching tones and smooth blending to create their realistic images. "They did a fabulous job," Stevens said.



Alont'e Woodard-Bell



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

**Director of School Improvement,
Title I and Assessments**

Kalamazoo Public Schools

1220 Howard St.

Kalamazoo, MI 49008

(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

**Assistant Superintendent of
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Recipe

from the KPS Food Service, Chartwells

Kirsten Strong, registered dietitian nutritionist

Samuel Dunn, executive chef

White Borscht

THIS SOUP is a Polish classic! The ingredients may sound unusual for a soup, but the flavors compliment each other wonderfully. Think smokey and creamy with a hint of sour — but in a good way. If you are looking to mix it up, or if you have some eggs to use up from the recent holiday, this recipe is for you! It is simple to make and includes common ingredients, but like mentioned before, its unique flavor will excite your taste buds.



INGREDIENTS

1 pound smoked kielbasa, raw or cooked (use smoked turkey kielbasa for a healthier version)
2 tablespoons butter
2-3 medium onions, diced
2 celery ribs, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
4 medium russet potatoes, peeled and diced
Chicken stock paste or bouillon, as needed
½ cup fresh dill, chopped

1 ½ cup sour cream (use reduced fat for a healthier version)
¼ cup all purpose flour
½ cup horseradish
4 eggs, boiled and cut into wedges
Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place kielbasa in 8 cups of water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook for 25 minutes to flavor broth.

2. Pour liquid and kielbasa into a bowl; reserve.
3. Return the saucepan to medium heat. Add butter, garlic, celery, and onion; cook until soft, about 10 minutes.
4. Add reserved liquid and potatoes and bring to a boil. Add chicken stock paste or bouillon if you need to add flavor. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until potatoes are tender, about 30 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, whisk sour cream and flour in a bowl, add ½ cup hot broth, and whisk until smooth. Pour mixture into soup; cook, stirring, until thickened, about 5 minutes.
6. Cut kielbasa into ½-inch thick slices; add to soup along with horseradish, salt, and pepper. Garnish with dill and eggs.
7. Serve with buttered sourdough for an extra treat!

4-6 ServingsKirk Newman Art School
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Daniel Henry Took the Path Less Traveled to Find Success

KALAMAZOO Central alum Daniel Henry didn't take the usual path, and that, he says, was the key to his success.

When other kids were playing baseball and basketball, he chose to play tennis.

When his friends urged him to attend a Division 1 university to play tennis, he chose to attend Kalamazoo College, a small liberal arts school.

While he was studying computer science, he opened himself to a new challenge of working at a law firm and found an unexpected way to use his CS skills.

In May, Henry, 25, graduates from Loyola Law School with his law degree. After he passes the bar exam, he expects to begin work with Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP, in Chicago as a patent prosecution associate attorney in the electrical engineering and computer technologies practice group.

The Kalamazoo native grew up in the city's Northside neighborhood, attending Northglade Montessori Magnet School, Woodward School, Linden Grove Middle School and Kalamazoo Central High School.

His father, Daniel Ray Henry, died when Henry was 5, and he was raised by his mother and grandmother, Gina Mari Rickman and June Rosilee Cotton.

While at KC, he was best known for his prowess on the tennis court. It was a sport he tried as a young child but then abandoned — until it came to the fall of his freshman year.

"All of my friends in the neighborhood were playing basketball or baseball. In high school, I tried out for the tennis team just because I didn't have a fall sport,"



Kalamazoo Central graduate Daniel Henry has just completed his studies at Loyola Law School.

he said. He wasn't doing great at any of them and then his mom gave him an ultimatum: Choose one. "She said I can excel at one or be mediocre at all three."

He chose tennis and eventually that became a driving force in his life.

In the summer between his freshman and sophomore years, his mother died of breast cancer, and in the middle of his sophomore year, his grandmother had to move to a nursing home after developing a blood clot.

The turmoil and grief of his personal life were too

much. By his junior year "I wasn't getting up. I wasn't starting my day. I wasn't moving from bed," he said.

But, his desire to play tennis kept him connected to school. He became obsessed with improving. In a way, it was how he could stay connected to his mother, who had been his main support system and No. 1 cheerleader. His hard work paid off when it came time for the college recruiting season.

"Tennis is what I had to look forward to. It is what drove me," he said. "School felt very secondary to my purpose of trying to get better at tennis and to get better quickly.

"I was replacing my grief with tennis."

He visited several schools, but the one that made the biggest impression was Kalamazoo College. There, he got to see K's star tennis player Branden Metzler, who made it to the national championships that year, and to witness the strong tennis culture at K led by tennis coach Mark Riley.

"That was very different from high school, where no one seemed to care about the tennis team," he said. "It felt good to see such a good culture around things."

While his friends urged him to check out big Division 1 schools, he chose to attend Kalamazoo College because of Riley's positive attitude about the school and tennis.

K turned out to be the perfect spot for him.

He was admitted on conditional enrollment because of his less than stellar high school grades. Riley became key to helping Henry build his academic

(continued on page 7)



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Daniel Henry (continued from page 6)

resume as well as his tennis skills.

“I got to college and I was practicing as hard as I could. I was playing after practice. Then, I’d be in one class doing the homework for another class. I wasn’t really as locked into school as I should have been,” Henry said. “Coach was not OK with that. He said, ‘My men here do everything at a high level.’”

It was the push Henry needed. He started studying harder, sometimes with his teammates. He began going to professors’ office hours and on-campus tutoring.

“I just really made sure to be really committed,” Henry said. “Mostly I was willing to take advantage of the extra time offered by the professors in office hours and the tutors. One time, I even got a personal tutor because I had a class that was so foreign to me.

“I got someone who could coach me through it. I was trying to take the same approach that I took in tennis and to be willing to take input and be coached. Applying that mindset to my academics made a huge difference.”

Riley would have another impact on Henry’s life. Henry had decided to major in computer science, but in the summer between his sophomore and junior year, he was struggling to come up with a CS internship. Riley encouraged him to try something different, and introduced him to attorney Ben Johnson, a tennis team alum who practices personal injury law in Detroit.

That summer, Henry discovered a new love — law, which he’d only ever seen portrayed on television and in movies. Seeing it in actual practice was eye-opening and he fell in love with the social and competitive nature of the work.

“That was where I first realized I can use my analytical skills to have an interesting career that may be science-related but not focused on experiments in a lab,” he said.

He graduated from Kalamazoo College in 2021 and enrolled in Loyola Law School, with the intention of eventually working in civil rights and personal injury law. But in another turn of fate, Henry mentioned his computer science degree to a professor and she encouraged him to apply for an internship at Marshall Gerstein, which specializes in patent prosecution, litigation, trademarks, copyrights and other areas of intellectual property.

“After a couple of days on my internship, I realized this is the type of thinking I really like to do,” he said. “I don’t have to implement some algorithm on a coding project. I can learn about something, frame

it, characterize it and push it through the process, which is called prosecution, and avoid the implementation piece,” he said.

Henry said he is amazed sometimes to see how far he has come when he remembers his struggles in high school, when he was living on Social Security trying to figure out how to take care of himself.

And, here, he has another message for students — especially black males: When you think about taking care of yourself, also be aware of the need to take care of your mental health as well as your physical health. Ever since his mother’s death he has dealt with depression and starting in his junior year of college he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

“When I had my first episode of mania, I didn’t sleep for days,” he said. “The disease exhibited itself in ways I never could have mentioned. To completely lose myself and not know what was happening was scary.”

But, with the support of family and friends, medication and the use of therapy, he has been able to manage the disease and still be successful as an undergraduate and law school student.

“It was hard at first to process that there was this chronic condition that I have to take care of,” Henry said. “Plus in my community this isn’t something that everyone is well versed in, luckily I was surrounded

by people who realized what it was and didn’t stigmatize me or make it more difficult for me to feel comfortable about taking care of my health.”

Now, he is an advocate for therapy and mental health services, especially for black males.

“As black men there are a lot of things we go through that are really difficult to process alone,” he said. “I just think it’s important to have someone to talk to, to figure out how to process life around you. It’s something that’s just as important as making sure you’re physically healthy. You need to check in on yourself or you’re going to put yourself in a position where you’re struggling more — when you can just be working smarter.”

If there’s a lesson for high schoolers to be found in his journey, he suggests it’s to think about the future you want for yourself and to surround yourself with people who will help you achieve your goals.

“When you’re in high school, enjoy where you are but try to do something to think about your next move,” he said. “When I was in high school, my peers said I needed to go to a D1 school to play tennis or I wasn’t worth my salt as an athlete. I’m glad I didn’t follow that type of hype. I went somewhere that I enjoyed, where my tennis got better, and I made good connections.

“You want to be part of a community that is going to look out for you and look to give you options.”



Save the date for this outdoor artistic extravaganza featuring local and regional artists showcasing original paintings, jewelry, garden art, pottery, art demonstrations, and live music on the Metro Toyota entertainment stage!

Sprawling along on the downtown Kalamazoo Mall, this free, two-day arts-filled adventure is supported by the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation and Southern Michigan Bank and Trust.

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Solar Eclipse Excitement

WHEN THE SOLAR ECLIPSE took place on April 8, the skies were clear and bright over Kalamazoo. The city was just outside the path of totality, and local sky watchers were able to enjoy almost 96 percent coverage as the moon passed between the Earth and the sun. The Kalamazoo Public Schools science department purchased solar eclipse viewing glasses for kindergarten through fifth-grade students, and schools planned viewing parties, some of which included creating special viewing masks or pinhole cameras to allow safe eclipse watching. The next total eclipse in the lower 48 states will be in 2044, when this year's kindergarten students will be 26 years old.



El Sol students fashioned their eclipse glasses into masks in the style of luchadores — Mexican wrestlers.

The eclipse was a great time for Woods Lake students to hang out with friends.

ON THE FRONT COVER: Woods Lake students excitedly view the solar eclipse.



El Sol students made pinhole cameras to view the eclipse.



Students basked in the sun at El Sol.



Parkwood-Upjohn students spread out in the school's front lawn to observe the eclipse.



Woodward students watched the eclipse from the school's back lawn.



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Opening Day for KC's Derek Jeter Field for Baseball and the Jeter Family Field for Softball



Duwan Washington is at bat for the KC Giants.



Dr. S. Charles Jeter, father of KC grad and Baseball Hall of Famer Derek Jeter, poses for a photo with Scott Spada, the baseball coach at Kalamazoo Central High School.



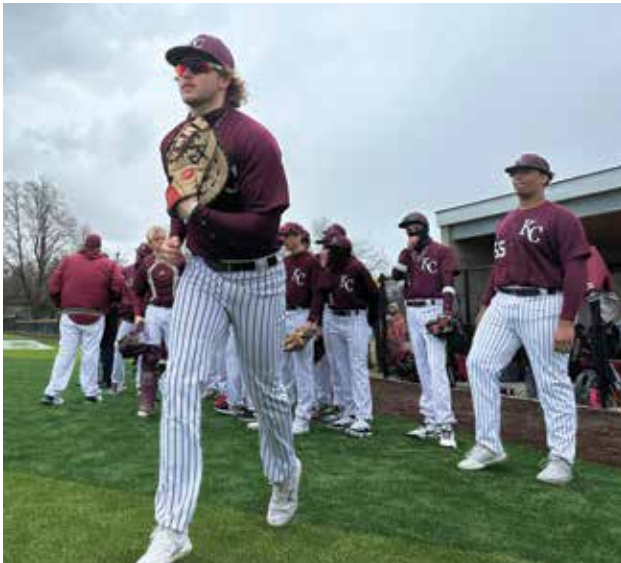
Sharlee Jeter, president of the Turn 2 Foundation and a former Kalamazoo Central softball standout, accepts a softball from Braylin Rabb. The ball was used in the ceremonial opening pitch on the Jeter Family Field at Kalamazoo Central. The \$5-million Kalamazoo Central baseball and softball field renovations were funded in large part by Baseball Hall of Famer Derek Jeter's Turn 2 Foundation with assistance from the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation. Opening day was April 3.



Dr. S. Charles Jeter, vice president of the Turn 2 Foundation board of directors, throws the ceremonial opening pitch on opening day at the Derek Jeter Field, at Kalamazoo Central.



The Loy Norrix softball team is ready to play on the Jeter Family Field for softball.



Aiden Luckett takes to the field during the opening day game at the new Derek Jeter Field at Kalamazoo Central.

Kalamazoo Central Marching Band Seeks Alumni

THE KALAMAZOO Central High School band booster organization is collecting email addresses for anyone who would like to join a band alumni mailing list.

Those who join the list can expect to receive a quarterly newsletter containing information about upcoming activities of the current program. Activities could include concerts, parades, or other public performances. In addition, there will be features on former band members who have continued their

involvement in music. Down the road, the newsletter could lead to in-person alumni events and activities, but for now the focus is on sharing information and connecting with former members.

The newsletter is currently managed by the KCHS boosters but they hope to eventually turn

management over to a band alumnus. Any former member of the band program, parent, or supporter can sign up.

To add your name to the email list, scan the QR code or send an email to kcalumniband@gmail.com.



i If you are looking for information about the current Kalamazoo Central band program visit www.kalamazoocentralbands.com.



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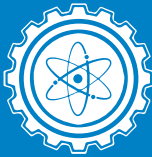
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Lisa Dewey Brings a Desire to Serve All Students to New Role as Student Services Director

WHEN PEOPLE ask Lisa Dewey what her new job as the director of Student Services for KPS entails, she takes a big breath — because it’s a big job.

It’s a job that is involved in a lot of big ideas: such as equity, systems analysis, and orchestrating large projects.

“I thrive in work that involves systems thinking and larger scale projects and how that can help provide students and families with the services that are needed,” she said. “I have a passion for finding ways we can provide more equitable opportunities for all of the students in our school district.”

Student Services is not just a large umbrella of services — it is a large umbrella that covers several large umbrellas, said Dewey, who begins her new role on July 1.

“It involves everything from enrollment to managing student behavior, providing additional learning opportunities in social emotional learning and positive behavior supports for teachers and all sup-

port staff,” she said.

Student Services includes crisis management and all safety and climate and culture issues across PreK-12 programming. She will work with behavior specialists, help develop structures and support for Tier I, II, and III interventions, and work hand-in-hand with the special education team.

Dewey, a native of Anchorage, Alaska, comes from a family of educators. Her parents were both educators, as was one of her grandmothers.

“I always loved working with children,” she said. “Even as a teenager, I was a camp counselor and a lifeguard.”

When it came time for college, she knew she didn’t want to stay in Alaska. So her father took her



Lisa Dewey, director of student services

on a 18-state college tour. She landed at Hope College, in part because her family was originally from Michigan and she had relatives in Holland.

She earned her bachelor’s degree in education and biology from Hope. She later went on to earn a master’s degree in educational leadership from Western Michigan University, where she is currently enrolled in a doctoral program in educational leadership, which she expects to complete in 2025.

Shortly after graduating from Hope she married and moved to Kalamazoo, where her husband Bryan Dewey was from. She worked for Kalamazoo Advantage Acad-
(continued on page 13)

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An illustration of two children. A boy with dark hair and glasses is swinging happily on a red swing. A girl with dark curly hair is sitting on the ground, smiling and reading a blue book. The background is light blue with a yellow sun and a green circle behind the girl.

Lisa Dewey *(continued from page 12)*

emy for nine years before joining KPS as a middle school science teacher 15 years ago.

“I would probably still be doing that job today but things happen,” Dewey said. After the district redistricted and moved sixth grade to the middle schools, she found herself out of a teaching position. But she was excited to take on another role within the district by tapping her natural affinity for leadership, and she became a principal at Spring Valley Center for Exploration for six years.

Dewey was the principal at Spring Valley when her husband passed away in 2020. It was just as the school district was coming out of Covid. “I knew at that moment that I couldn’t go back. I needed to take stock of my life and I needed to figure out a new way of life as a single parent,” she said.

She resigned from Spring Valley and began her doctoral program. A year ago, she re-joined the district in the Student Services department, eventually taking over the grant consultant position. She currently

serves as the district’s 31aa Mental Health Consultant, working to implement programs and events to promote wellness throughout the KPS community.

That work has been informed by her doctoral studies, which include research into educator wellness and ideas of mental health and positive behavior supports in schools. She will tap into that research as she heads the district’s renewed focus on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion as part of her new position.

“DEI has become a catchphrase for such complex structures,” Dewey said. “I want to create a welcoming school environment so all families feel able to be actively involved and engaged. One of the components is about access and breaking down any barriers to services. As a school district, we want to seek out how we can be more proactive instead of reactive when there are challenges.”

For those who think DEI work is just about race, Dewey disagrees. As a principal and a parent, she thinks

about all of the different needs of students. In her own family, one child requires special education services while the other is considered academically talented.

“These are two kids with dramatically different needs. I need their teachers and schools to honor and embrace both of them,” she said. For the district, she envisions training opportunities for all staff and embracing an equity lens to review all of the work the district does.

“This cannot be work that is siloed,” she said. “It involves staffing, curriculum, instructional opportunities, classroom management practices. This work requires an open mindset and awareness of our own biases that come very naturally because we are all human and have our own lived experiences. But we have to accept children who have very different backgrounds and experiences. We have to find a way to honor those differences and find ways to create classroom environments that maximize learning for them.”

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Save the date!

Bag of Books Sale

June 8, 10am - 3:30pm
KPL Central Parking Lot



Thousands of gently used books
A bagful for \$3.00 or 25¢ ea

Friends Bookstore

Open Wed Noon to 6pm, Thurs - Sat 10am-4pm
Kalamazoo Public Library, Lower Level
315 S. Rose Street . kpl.gov/friends . 553-7820

KC Mock Trial Team Takes Second Place in the State



The Kalamazoo Central Mock Trial Team won second place in the Michigan High School Mock Trial State Championship Competition held March 23 in Lansing.

Team Member Isabelle Martinez won the Mock Trial Courtroom Journalist Championship. Martinez, a junior, studied journalism with KC teacher Elaine Sayre. The Courtroom Journalist Competition allows students to experience a courtroom setting from the perspective of a news reporter in a competition coordinated by the Michigan Center for Civic Education. Martinez is qualified to compete for the Mock Trial Courtroom Journalist National Championship in Wilmington, Delaware., May 1-4. In addition, Kalamazoo Central freshman Elliana Oram won honorable mention for her drawing in the Courtroom Artist/Illustrator Competition.

Kalamazoo Central High School's 2024 Mock Trial Team. Left to right: Cailynn Oram, Annie Alkema, Ellie Oram, Ian Webster, Trellina Presley, Nate Evans, Lily Mielke, Atreyu Muha, Kate Risley, Isabelle Martinez.

Aaron Mirakovits Named MSBOA District 11 Band Teacher of the Year

AARON MIRAKOVITS was recently named the Band Teacher of the Year for Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association District 11, which covers Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Calhoun, and Branch counties.

The Teacher of the Year honor goes to teachers who demonstrate fundamental musicianship of the highest caliber; service to students, community, and the profession; and consistency in these categories for a number of years.

He was nominated for the honor by a fellow band teacher (nominations are anonymous), who said: "Aaron has consistently served District 11. He always listens to members and takes everything into consideration as he advocates for our district. Besides his service to community and profession — anyone who has been around in District 11 long enough knows the impressive work Aaron has done at Loy Norrix and the amazing results he is getting from his students."

Ryan Kasperski, the KPS district lead music teacher, said, "Mr. Mirakovits is a true advocate for his students and for music education. Students enjoy being in his

class, which is evident by the continued increased enrollment in his band programs at Milwood Magnet School and Loy Norrix High School. His ensembles consistently perform at a high level, receiving the highest possible ratings at MSBOA Marching Festival and Band & Orchestra Festival year after year."

Mirakovits is in his 18th year of teaching, and his seventh with KPS.



Aaron Mirakovits conducts the Milwood Magnet School band at a pre-festival clinic at Western Michigan University.

Mirakovits said he is proud to have re-energized the program at Loy Norrix — attracting more students to the band program, and raising the level of performance in the ensembles.

"The band hadn't received a Division 1 rating for years — until my second year there. It showed the potential of the program," he said. "And, I'm just proud of the real increase in the level of pride that I think our students are taking in the program."

He added, "I wouldn't have been able to do this work without the support of all of my KPS music department colleagues and all of the colleagues throughout the area."

SPRING CONCERT

Soar with the Brass Band of Battle Creek as we present an evening of flight-themed musical selections.

With special guest **Lydia Harrell!**



SATURDAY, MAY 18TH, 2024
7:30PM | W.K. KELLOGG AUDITORIUM

TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW
BBBC.NET OR 269.789.2222

IN HONOR OF BATTLE CREEK AIRPORT'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY



CIS of Kalamazoo Takes Over Operations of Warm Kids Project

Reprinted with permission by Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo

MICHIGAN winters can be extremely brutal, with high winds, dropping temperatures, and sloppy sidewalks. That is why a warm coat and winter boots are essential items for children in Kalamazoo. For 37 years, the Warm Kids Project has been supporting many Kalamazoo County schools, preschools, and agencies by providing winter clothing for thousands of children that need them.

The Warm Kids Project has been an instrumental partner to our CIS Kids' Closet to distribute new winter coats and boots directly to kids in Kalamazoo Public Schools buildings. In its current framework, our site teams identify students who will receive clothing, mature the kids, contact the parents, process the order forms, and distribute the clothing.

We are excited to announce that we have been selected to assume operations of the project and our staff will maintain the legacy of the Warm Kids Project. This past January, we hosted leaders from the Warm Kids Project for a transition celebration.



From the left, Artrella Cohn, Kim Nemire, Linnaea Thomas, Cathy Finger, Leslie Lami-Reed, Bill Reed, Sara Ware, James Devers, and Dr. Candy McCorkle gathered to celebrate CIS assuming control of Warm Kids Project.

CIS Executive Director James Devers stated, "CIS is committed to honoring the legacy of the Warm Kids Project's founders and supporters by continuing to serve the other currently supported schools and organizations in our community."

In addition to the school buildings with CIS coordinator presence, the additional eight school districts, KRESA, and county agencies already supported by the program will continue to be served

through CIS of Kalamazoo.

"CIS is honored to continue the nearly 40-year tradition established by the Warm Kids Project," said CIS Basic Needs Coordinator Sara Ware. "I'm excited to expand our reach of meeting students' needs countywide. I'm grateful to Leslie Lami-Reed and the Warm Kids board for their dedication to our area's schoolchildren. Now, more than ever, local families need these resources."



Family

Wednesday, May 15 | 5:30 pm | Washington Square
Celebrate the return of warmer weather with food, music, face painting, balloon animals, games, and more!



Teens

Saturday, May 4 | Open Hours | All Locations
We will be giving away free comics! Come start or add on to your comic book collection. While supplies last.

Learn more at [kpl.gov](https://www.kpl.gov)



Kalamazoo
Public Library
[kpl.gov](https://www.kpl.gov)

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE



EXHIBIT NOW - JUNE 30 | FREE

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A HOMETOWN WRITER

Nationally acclaimed author and Comstock Township native Bonnie Jo Campbell shares her history and writing inspirations in a mini exhibit.



EXHIBIT NOW - JAN. 19, 2025 | FREE

KALAMAZOO STATE HOSPITAL: 165 YEARS OF PSYCHIATRIC CARE

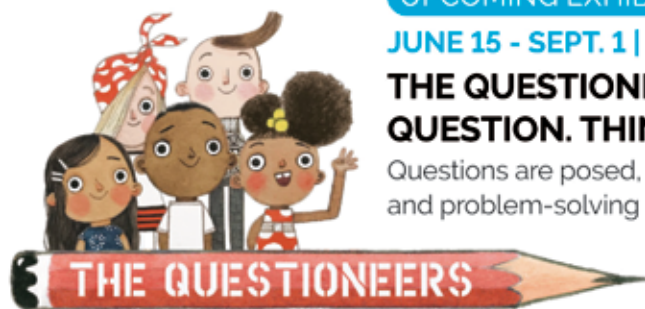
Learn about the history of the patients, employees and buildings on the campus of Michigan's longest-operating mental hospital.



EXHIBIT NOW - JUNE 2 | FREE

SKIN: LIVING ARMOR, EVOLVING IDENTITY

Explore the shape-shifting, color-changing and adaptable nature of skin and the technological innovations it inspires.



UPCOMING EXHIBIT

JUNE 15 - SEPT. 1 | FREE

THE QUESTIONERS: READ. QUESTION. THINK. PLAY!

Questions are posed, challenges identified and problem-solving begins in this traveling exhibit from The DuPage Children's Museum.

READ. QUESTION. THINK. PLAY!



ACTIVITY FREE

THE GILMORE FILM SERIES

Watch four piano-related films at the museum from April 30 through May 7 as part of The Gilmore Piano Festival 2024. Visit kalamazoomuseum.org for more film descriptions.

Tuesday, April 30 | Noon | "Igor Levit: No Fear"

Thursday, May 2 | Noon | "Silenced: Composers in Revolutionary Russia"

Friday, May 3 | Noon | "Through the Eyes of Yuja: A Road Movie"

Tuesday, May 7 | 2 p.m. | "Warsaw Is My Name"

PLANETARIUM EXPERIENCE

MAY SHOWS | \$3 PER PERSON

FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS

Magic Globe | 11 a.m. | 28 min. | Grades K & up

Go on a journey with a young girl, Mia, to learn about the importance of the changing seasons on Earth's delicate ecosystem.

CapCom Go! | 2 p.m. | 24 min. | Pre-K & up

Learn about the goals and missions of the Apollo program that placed 12 men on the moon from 1969 to 1972 and examine what it took to get there.

SUNDAYS

Perfect Little Planet | 1 p.m. | 35 min. | Grades K & up

Discover our solar system through a different set of eyes – an alien family from another star system.

The Sky Above Us | 2 p.m. | 40 min. | Grades 4 & up

Learn about some of the "celestial wonders" that can be seen overhead in Michigan in this live, season-focused program.

HOURS: Tuesday - Saturday | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday | Noon - 4 p.m.

FREE GENERAL ADMISSION

Note: Some areas of the museum may be closed due to exhibit changes, staffing needs, special programs or collections care. We thank you for your patience.

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



230 N. Rose St., Kalamazoo
kalamazoomuseum.org | 269.373.7990