

YOUR SCHOOLS

2024

Aurora City School District

From the Superintendent

By MIKE ROBERTO
Superintendent of Schools

As the 2023-2024 School Year came to an end there were many causes for celebrations as well as excitement for the upcoming school year. Since our last *Your Schools* publication in February both the Winter

and Spring sports seasons brought in several notable accomplishments including multiple state placers in wrestling and track highlighted by an individual gymnastics state title on the balance beam by **Hannah Salgado**. We also collected our fourth Softball League title in the last four years. In the Arts, we were treated to the Spring Musical *Legally Blonde* under the direction of **Rob Albrecht** and the District Art Show which featured work ranging from our first graders up through our Advanced Placement artists at AHS. Spring Concerts for Orchestra (grades 4-12), Choir (2nd-12th), and Band (5th-12th) also filled the auditorium with beautiful music so needless to say a lot was going on in our district outside of the school day for the community as well as during the school day with the community.

The Aurora community/school connection continued to take place as this Spring Harmon welcomed 17 volunteer presenters from all different backgrounds for their 7th grade Career Day. Thanks go out to the **7th Grade Team** and especially to math teacher **Lauren Sobolewski** for recruiting the presenters and coordinating this event. At AHS, science teachers **Laura Bell** and **Megan Watt** paired up with Aurora City's NOWCorps Service Member, **Jake Johnson**. This is a volunteer position through AmeriCorps, which is a federal program that encourages its members to serve the community. Jake

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U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT BEST HIGH SCHOOLS 2024

This year, U.S. News & World Report magazine analyzed nearly 25,000 public high schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and then ranked nearly 17,600 of the highest-scoring public high schools in the nation on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college. Using these metrics Aurora High School (AHS) was ranked in the 97th percentile in the nation and in the State of Ohio.

Aurora High School (AHS) was ranked by the publication at #2 in the Akron Metro Area, #7 in Northeast Ohio, #20 in the State of Ohio (out of 705 Ohio high schools) and at #569 in the country in their Best High Schools 2024 article.

The methodology used by U.S. News & World Report for this article focuses on six factors which include, College Readiness (30%), State Assessment Proficiency (20%), State Assessment Performance (20%), Underserved Student Performance (10%), College Curriculum Breadth (10%) and Graduation Rate (10%).

AHS Principal, Mike Hayes, said, "These rankings are nice for our community to see and are certainly reaffirming all the great work that goes on daily within The Greenhouse! However, like any quantitative metric, there is a qualitative story behind it that seldom gets told. In this case, that story exists in the wonderful relationships nurtured with students, the valuing of the process of learning, the ability to practice and develop empathy while becoming more resilient through collaborative efforts and critical thought. Thank you to all the Aurora staff and community members who work so hard to nurture learner roots allowing amazing human beings to blossom!"



SUPERINTENDENT STATE OF THE SCHOOLS ADDRESS 2024

Superintendent Mike Roberto was invited to speak on behalf of the Aurora City School District (ACSD) at the



Aurora State of the City luncheon on February 21, 2024. Roberto, who has just completed his 4th year as district superintendent, focused on the numerous recognitions the district has received. The ACSD

earned the highest Ohio Report Card rating of five stars in all five components of the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce state report card (Aurora is one of only six school districts out of over 600 in Ohio to earn this recognition both years the state has used the five-star designations). The state has also awarded BOTH Leighton and Miller Elementary Schools the Ohio PBIS Gold Recognition Award for their work during the 2022-2023 school year for designing a

supportive and systematic implementation of Positive Based Intervention and Supports (PBIS) throughout their respective buildings. Aurora High School (AHS) was also recognized by the State as a Purple Star School given to military-friendly schools that show a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military.

Along with those accolades, Roberto explained, "Leighton and Harmon Elementary Schools were recently listed in the U.S. News & World Report Best Elementary and Middle Schools respectively. Leighton was rated 205th out of 3,034 Ohio Elementary Schools (Top 7%) and Harmon was ranked 66th out of 2,446 Ohio Middle Schools (Top 3%). Leighton and Harmon Schools join Aurora High School which was once again recognized by the U.S. News & World Report as one of the best high schools in the United States. The U.S. News & World Report evaluated 1,011

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WHO'S WHO & WHAT'S NEW

The AHS **Quiz Bowl Team** (Julia-Marie Cooch, Preston Duncan, Ben Hercik, Bella Shorr, and Philip Yao) had a fantastic season which included being undefeated and winning the **Portage County League** (17 area school participants). The league's top individual scorer was Aurora's **Philip Yao** who competed in a tournament in Chicago and placed 49th in the nation. They then competed in the championship round of News Channel 5's Academic Challenge and won 2nd place! Complete episodes can be seen on the Academic Challenge webpage. The team went on to compete in a regional tournament in Solon and qualified for State competition where they finished in 7th place. Amazing accomplishments! Congratulations to **Coach Annie Walker** and the entire team.



AHS Quiz Bowl Team

Thank you to AHS November 2023 Veterans Day guest speakers, **Ralph Ware** (ACSD parent, retired Colonel) and **Tony Tritto** (Veteran, ACSD SRO), who gave moving speeches focusing on the importance of events such as these for veterans and the powerful connection they give to area veterans.



Ralph Ware



Tony Tritto

Congratulations to **City of Aurora Police Officer** and **ACSD School Resource Officer (SRO), Tony Tritto**, who was named the 2023 Aurora Police Officer of the Year for his ongoing service and dedication to the community. Tritto became the ACSD SRO in 2022.



AHS alumni, **Caitlin Houlahan** (2009) and **Daniel Sovich** (2014), appeared in the same Thursday, March 21, 2024, "Third Man Syndrome" episode (Season 25, Episode 8) of **Law & Order: Special Victims Unit**. The episode, which involved a brutal assault in the street and the support of an agoraphobic witness to afraid to leave her apartment, can be seen online.

A big thank you goes to the **Numerous Volunteers** from the ACSD who gave so generously of their time on Saturdays in April to help the Aurora community **Fill A Bag, Feed A Family Charitable Food Donation Fundraiser**.

A special thank you goes to the **AHS baseball players** and coaches **Dalton, Knapp and Krontz**, who chose to skip their baseball practice and instead helped roll over 7,000 bags for the fundraiser. They doubled the number of volunteers that night and fundraiser co-ordinator **Bruce Harris** was extremely grateful. The fundraiser supports the local **Volunteers of America Food Pantry**.



Local students took the stage with renowned piano legend, Lang Lang, in a community centered **101 Pianists** event on May 3, 2024 at the Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) Metropolitan Campus Auditorium in Cleveland. AHS Junior, **Arjun Lokesh** and his 7th grade brother, **Akash Lokesh**, joined Lang Lang on stage with young pianists selected from Northeast Ohio schools for a

unique master class and public performance. Tri-C's Creative Arts Academy organized the selection process and event. Piano instructors throughout Northeast Ohio recommended students ages 6-18 with strong musical ability, performance experience and the ability to work in a group setting. "The students who were selected to perform bring a high level of talent and will make this performance a quality event," said Emanuela Friscioni, director of the Creative Arts Academy.

Congratulations to all of the students who participated in the **Aurora Rotary Club's 4-Way Speech** contest. First place went to **Leo Sesuraj**, second place was earned by **Mitchell Edgecomb**, and third place was awarded to **Xavier Board**. Each student won a cash prize. Sesuraj then earned second place and \$900 in the Rotary District 6630 speech contest.



Harmon 8th grade student **Aryan Agarwal** finished in 4th place at the **State Math Counts Tournament** which qualified him to head to Washington, D.C. at the **National Tournament** in May.

Two ACSD staff members, **Jennifer Bindus** (Leighton) and **Jason Burdett** (Harmon/AHS) have been nominated as **Ohio Teacher of the Year for 2025**. They were selected by the Ohio Department of Education Workforce to apply, which is an honor by itself, it is the first step in a long process. Best of luck to both!

The **Harmon Student Council**, with advisors **Kory Rorabaugh** and **Laurie Schofield-Carter**, collected 866 boxes of cereal to donate to the **Aurora Food Bank**. Way to go!

Congratulations to **Playhouse Square AHS 2024 Dazzle Award Nominees: Best Supporting Actress, Kaityln Tanski; Musical Apprentice, Philip Yao** (Violin); and **Best Musical** (Tier 1), **Legally Blonde the Musical**.



YOUR SCHOOLS

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Your Schools is a publication of the Aurora City School District. Its purpose is to keep residents of Aurora informed of current events and progress in the Aurora City Schools and to foster pride and a continuous communication link between the schools and the community.

Your Schools has been awarded the "Mark of Excellence" and "Best of the Best" Awards by the Ohio Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association for service as a school district newsletter. *Your Schools* is a quarterly publication, mailed to all residents of Aurora. For information, comments, or story ideas, e-mail Editor Stacey DeAnna at: yourschools@aurora-schools.org.

Princess Prom Was Magical



A magical evening took place at the Princess Prom on January 27, 2024 for students in grades K-5. This year's theme, Princess Era, sponsored by the Aurora Elementary PTO, encouraged girls to dress up as their favorite princess, Barbie or Taylor Swift era character.



Goodyear STEM Day



On Saturday, April 27 **Mary Beckstrom**, **Michelle Blazer**, and **Kim Kish** accompanied 47 Harmon students to Firestone High School to participate in the Goodyear STEM Career Day. This annual event informed and encouraged middle schoolers to pursue opportunities, both educationally and professionally that exist in the STEM disciplines. Students tried their hand at various STEM-related tasks and participated in a large group hands-on activity that challenged students to apply their engineering talents to the solution of a problem, while working together as a team. Students received a t-shirt, swag bag, & lunch provided by Goodyear and other sponsors. **Louise Beckstrom** (AHS class of 2015) represented her company Bescast, a big sponsor of the event.

CRADDOCK SCHOOL LOOKING FOR AURORA READS VOLUNTEERS

Craddock Elementary School is looking for volunteers to help re-start their Aurora Reads Program this fall. The reading program will have area volunteers come to the school building and have them work with an assigned teacher to help students improve their reading skills. Volunteers are asked to commit to the same 30-60 minute time slot every week. Training will be provided beforehand. A BCI background check will be required for all volunteers. If interested, please contact the Craddock School Aurora Reads program at AuroraReadsOhio@gmail.com.

Author Visits

Harmon Middle School

On Wednesday, April 24, 2024 Harmon Middle School held its Language Arts Festival that was facilitated by **Mary Beckstrom** and sponsored in part through the Aurora Schools Foundation and the Harmon High PTO grants. The visiting author and illustrator presenters were **Misty and David Wilson**, the husband-and-wife team behind the award-winning graphic memoir *Play Like a Girl*. The Wilson's presented to each grade level about their process of writing a graphic novel and then went on to conduct an afternoon writer/illustrator workshop in the media center to a select number of students. In addition, Harmon students **Anna Braisel**, **Lila Yurman**, and **Giulia Zayas**, spoke to their peers about being girls on the Harmon School football and wrestling teams. Students also had the opportunity to purchase the *Play Like a Girl* novel through a pre-sale option and at the day of the event.



Craddock Elementary School

Craddock School students enjoyed a visit from author and illustrator, **Nomar Perez**. Craddock teacher, **Jessika Gonzalez**, and the Craddock Culture Committee arranged the visit on May 3, 2024. Perez spent approximately 30 minutes with each of the classrooms and during that time he shared details about his upbringing in Puerto Rico which inspired one of his books titled, *"Coqui in the City."* The heartfelt picture book is based on Perez's own experiences about a boy (Miguel) who moves to the U.S. mainland from Puerto Rico and realizes that New York City might have more in common with San Juan than he initially thought. The classrooms read the story of Coqui (Miguel's pet frog) and then learned how to draw a coqui, the common name for several species of small frogs native to Puerto Rico.



ELEMENTARY DONUT DAYS WERE SO SWEET!



State Of Schools - Continued from p.1

high schools in Ohio and over 18,000 across the United States to develop their annual ranking. Aurora High School ranked as the number one school out of 52 high schools in the Akron Metro Area and within the top 1.7% (18th) of schools in Ohio as well as within the top 2.75% (495th) of all high schools across the country."

Roberto also provided an update on the potential new construction in the district. He explained, "Over the last two years, there has been overwhelming support to look into the possibility of new construction with the goal of replacing Craddock, which was built in 1911, with a new 9-12 high school and then moving the first and second grades in Craddock along with the preschool at Miller to Leighton which would also create more room for our kindergarten classes at Miller. Grades 3-5, currently at Leighton, would move to Harmon, and grades 6-8 at Harmon and the Board of Education offices would then occupy the old high school. This plan would provide much needed updated facilities and room to grow for literally the next generation of Greenmen. Over the next year, we will continue to work on our Master Planning process with a goal of having a series of staff and community meetings that will help our

architects from ThenDesign Architecture (TDA) to develop a solid overall plan for a new high school. The goal of the district is to have a Bond Issue for this project on the November 2024 ballot." Roberto said, "Although there is still a long way to go and much work to be done, we are excited for the journey. Over the next year we, along with TDA, will be holding meetings and will continue developing the Master Plan for this project." He added, "For the latest information on this project, visit our district website at www.aurora-schools.org and click on the link titled "ACSD Facilities Master Planning Project."

Roberto rounded out his speech by saying, "Thank you for your continued support and partnership as we all work to nurture the competencies within our strategic vision that will lead to young people in our schools becoming Aurora Learners who are Future Ready. Hopefully it is clear to you that we are deeply committed to protecting and promoting the strengths of Aurora; and undoubtedly one of them is the Aurora City Schools. I'm honored to lead this wonderful school system in such a great community and we appreciate the amazing support you give to our district. It is truly a fantastic time to be an Aurora Greenmen."

SPORT REPORT

Congratulations to **Girls Basketball Head Coach Erica Greenberg** (front row, middle) on her 200th win at AHS.



AHS Girls Basketball Team

NCAA SIGNING DAYS

Rocco Courtad, Greenmen football offensive lineman, will be attending Ohio University and was featured signing his acceptance papers on NCAA Signing Day on February 7, 2024.

Congratulations to **Cassidy Trem** who was featured at the NCAA Signing Day on February 27, 2024. She will be joining The Ohio State University Rowing team this fall. Good luck!



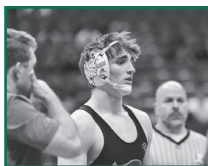
The University of Miami will be gaining a new member, **Maggie Anzell**, to their Dance Team. She accepted her offer from the university at a Signing Day on May 17, 2024.



Suburban League Player of the Year, **Vince Cannata**, officially signed on to continue his tennis career at Baldwin Wallace University on May 29, 2024. Good luck!



The Greenmen wrestling team had member **Cole Walton** earn the recognition of being named Academic All-Ohio this past season. Making Greenmen Nation proud!



The **AHS Gymnastics Team** placed second in the **Suburban League Championship**. AHS Senior **Hannah Salgado** was named the **Suburban League All-Around Champion** and earned **First Team All Suburban**



League honors. **Riley Verespej** earned the **Second Team All Suburban League** title. **Salgado** was also named the **Suburban League Gymnast of the Year** and headed to **State gymnastics competition** where she won a **2024 Beam State Championship** and set a new state record for the highest score ever recorded at the state meet! Salgado also earned a 9.375 floor routine which earned her a 3rd place finish in the all-around, placed 5th with a 9.675 vault and received a 9.225 score on the uneven bars. An amazing State performance by Salgado to cap off her historic high school gymnastics career!

Greenmen **Varsity Basketball Coach Cody Calhoun** was honored with the impressive title of the **Suburban League Coach of the Year!**

Katie McArthur's first grade classroom was treated to a special guest reader, **Greenmen alumni** and **National Champion, AJ Barner** (2020). Barner read to students in the Craddock library and answered questions only 24 hours before the NFL draft in which he was projected to be selected in the 4th or 5th round. Barner was in Aurora with his family for the draft and was selected by the **Seattle Seahawks** in the 4th round. Barner even made time to stop and address the football team while visiting. A big congratulations goes to Barner and thank you to Miller/Craddock librarian **Barb Kudley** for organizing this special visit.



The **Girls Softball Team** earned the District champions title and made it all the way to Regional competition before losing to Canfield. Congratulations on your amazing accomplishments and exciting season!

Congratulations also go to **Suburban League Pitcher of the Year, McKennah Metzger** who is heading to Coastal Carolina University to continue her outstanding pitching career.



AHS MUSICAL and DISTRICT ART SHOW

This year's AHS Drama Club's Spring Musical and Annual District Art Show ran from April 12-14, 2024. The musical comedy, directed by Rob Albrecht, (choreography by Amie Gabel), with Music Director, Eddie Nabring, was based on the novel *Legally Blonde* and the 2001 film of the same name.



The Annual Aurora Student Art Show was held in conjunction with AHS spring musical and the exhibit was held in the AHS varsity gym. This exhibit gave visitors the opportunity to enjoy the impressive artwork created by the district's talented art students throughout the district. In case you missed the art show, a photo gallery of student work from the exhibit can be viewed on the homepage of the ACSD website at aurora-schools.org.



Congratulations to Suburban League Player of the Year Greenmen **Dom Trivisonno!**

The **AHS Boys Tennis Team** who finished their season as **Runner Ups** in the **Suburban League American Conference Tournament**. **Coach Vince Cannata** received the **Ohio High School Sports Association Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity Award**. Congratulations to all!

ACSD EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE AWARDS



Alisa Deininger



Mary Beckstrom



The ACSD would like to congratulate **Alisa Deininger** (Special Education Occupational Therapist) and **Mary Beckstrom** (Harmon Media Center) for being named the 2024 Excellence in Service Award recipients for all of their hard work and dedication to our district and our students. Deininger was recognized as the Certified Award winner and Beckstrom earned the Classified Service award. To earn the award, at least two staff members and their building principal must nominate a candidate. A district committee then reviews all of the nominations before making their final selections. Deininger and Beckstrom were both honored by the Aurora Board of Education (BOE) at the BOE meeting on May 20, 2024. Congratulations on a job extremely well done.

AHS 2024 NATIONAL MERIT FINALISTS



The Aurora City School District would like to congratulate the two Aurora High School Class of 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSP) Finalist students, **Sofia Kang** and **Philip Yao**. According to the NMSP Finalists press release, "The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. To become a Finalist, a Semifinalist must submit a detailed scholarship application, have an outstanding high school academic record, be endorsed by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test." Finalists compete for thousands of National Merit Scholarships. Congratulations to both finalists for all of their hard work and commitment to earn this honor and the opportunities that are now available.

AHS GREENMEN AWARDS 2024

Aurora High School has announced the recipients of the Outstanding Greenmen 2024 Award. The AHS staff has chosen twelve deserving seniors to be recognized who are chosen based on their strong Academics, Service/Work, School Participation, Leadership and Character. In turn, the winning students then chose an educator to honor as having had a strong influence on their educational career. The winners were honored at a banquet on April 25, 2024 that took place at the Barrington Golf Club.

Congratulations to the student recipients and educators named below with the student's name listed first followed by the educator they chose to recognize:

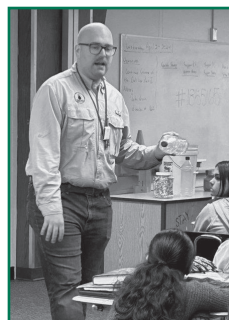


Justin Burick, (Jay Price)
Madeline Dalesandro, (Mary Houlahan)
Brooke Gecina, (Monika Biro)
Ava McGovern, (Shelly Dirda)
McKennah Metzger, (Toni Taylor)
Bennett Mulvaney, (Lauren Brancazio)
Hannah Salgado, (Megan Watt)
Olivia Salgado (Ollie), (Jackie Skeels)
Thomas Sobodosh, (Doc Munson)
Dominic Trivisonno, (Victor Torres)
Dmitry Volf, (Mike Rubin)
Philip Yao, (Annie Walker)

STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK ~ May 6-10. 2024

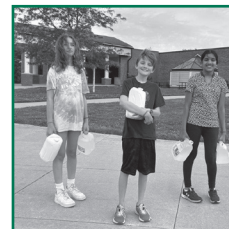


Thank you to the incredible ACSD teachers and staff who continue, through hard work, nurturing and dedication, to make our district one of the top districts in the nation and making sure, "Kids Come First." Superintendent Mike Roberto said, "THANK YOU to All of our Staff for your time, energy, and support of the young people entrusted to us each and every day in Greenmen Nation."



HARMON WATER DAY 2024

The Harmon School 6th grade class participated in their Water Day as a part of their spring water study curriculum. Water Day utilized a typical school day schedule, but in each of the four main 6th grade classes the focus was on water. Once again **Ben Jurek**, Education Director for the **Drink Local, Drink Tap** organization, presented to students. The first day of the presentation was an overview of what is happening to our local waterways and on the second day was a lesson on the 7 R's of sustainability along with teaching the 6th graders how to create reusable bags out of old t-shirts. On May 22nd, students then carried water jugs to simulate the carrying of jerry cans that so many people around the world with no running, clean water have to carry many miles every day.

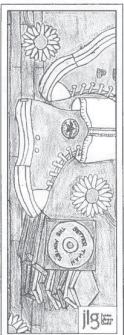


CLASS ACTS

Over the summer months, parents can find information regarding the **ACSD INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL** and **KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION** on the homepage of the district website at aurora-schools.org in the News & Announcements section.

Congratulations to the **HARMON SCHOOL SPEECH TEAM** and **COACH KAREN SUNDERHAFT** who competed in their first tournament in December and out of 400 competitors from 24 schools, Harmon placed 3rd, 5th and 7th

Harmon School student, **OLIVIA DERECSKEY**, designed a unique and creative bookmark for the national **JUNIOR LIBRARY GUILD's** contest (with over 1,000 entries!) selection *Better Than The Movies*. Her entry impressed the judges so much that they awarded the school library a \$250 backlist credit and are having her bookmark professionally printed on bookmarks for the entire school.



Olivia Derecskey's Bookmark

The **AURORA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION** funded **CHOIR DIRECTOR, ROSS DOWNING**, with his grant request for African percussion instruments. This new equipment added diversity and creativity within the program. Thank you to all involved.



Rotary Students of the Month

January 2024 - Harmon - **JOSEPH GERDES, MADELEINE PARENTE**
 February 2024 - AHS - **SAVANNAH BROWN, LEO SESURAJ**
 March 2024 - Harmon - **COLTON LOGAN, LILY SPIAK**
 April 2024 - AHS - **MADDIE HOLOHAN, DMITRY VOLF**

Chagrin Falls dentist and author, **DR. MARK VOGLEY**, and the **TOOTH FAIRY** visited Miller School on February 9th to share the importance of brushing and flossing each day with students. The students had lots of fun learning how to brush for two minutes, floss and learned how teeth create plaque called, "tooth poop" in Vogley's light-hearted book, **TOOTH POOP, THE TRUTH ABOUT DENTAL CAVITIES**.



Mark Vogley and Tooth Fairy

AHS Senior **JAMES BLASER** delivered **SENSORY BOARDS** that he created from scratch, which included 3D printed



James Blaser (right)

components, to Harmon School students. Blaser was exposed to sensory boards during one of his Excel TECC classes last year. Since his mother Michelle works at Harmon as a paraeducator, he wanted to create something similar for younger students.



The **AHS ART DEPARTMENT UMBRELLA PROJECT 2024** included a staff umbrella competition that totaled 148 staff member votes and raised \$315.82. Winners were **LAUREN BAKA** (1st place), **CLARA BULTROWICZ** (2ND place) and **SOFIA QUIDILLA** (3rd place). **HAZEL BREYER** earned the popularity award with **CLARA BULTROWICZ** as runner up and **SOFIA QUIDILLA** earning an honorable mention.

HEIDI MCKENZIE'S AHS BUSINESS CLASS students, President **ATHAN SALGADO**, Vice



President, **PEYTON DUGUAY** and Junior **ETHAN FREEMONT**, partnered with **RDP SPORTS** to develop Greenmen generic sweatshirts and wristbands not associated with any one activity that would appeal to a wide range of buyers. They donated their sales to **PROVIDENCE HOUSE OF CLEVELAND** that supports families and children in need.

The **AHS CHOIR DEPARTMENT** partnered with the **KENT STATE OPERA THEATER** for a unique Saturday night event on our Aurora campus on March 16, 2024. Thank you to **ROSS DOWNING** for being instrumental in this special evening.



The **AHS CONCERT ORCHESTRA** and the **AHS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA** (above) competed in the **OMEA STATE ORCHESTRA COMPETITION**, which is the highest level of competition for orchestras in Ohio, in February. With about 50 orchestras participating, both AHS orchestras received the highest possible rating from ALL four judges. This is the first time in school history that any ensemble received **PERFECT STRAIGHT ONE's** from all four judges in state competition. Congratulations to all on this high achievement.

AHS FRENCH TEACHER, BARBARA COOK, and several ACSD staff members took over

30 AHS and Harmon School students to **QUEBEC, CANADA** this past winter where students enjoyed



dog sledding, curling lessons, virtual reality sessions, museum visits, ice skating, sightseeing, and food exploration. What an immersive and memorable trip for the French class students!

Congratulations to **BETHANY LAMBERTSON** who took **1st PLACE** in Ohio for **CPR TRAINING COMPETITION** as a part of the **AHS EXCEL TECC FIRE/EMS PROGRAM**. This qualified her for the **SKILLSUSA NATIONAL COMPETITION**.



Five **AHS EXCELL TECC** students qualified for the **NATIONAL TECHNICAL HONOR SOCIETY (NTHS)** this year. A total of 119 students within the program were formally accepted into NTHS and they included (left to right): **REID ACOMB** (CADD Engineering Tech), **GABE BUDZOWSKI** (Welding), **CASEY**

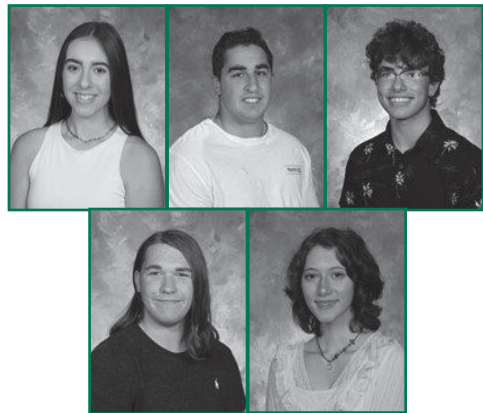
Class Acts continued on p.7

ACSD Launches District Website Facebook Page

Check It Out! The Aurora City School District has officially launched a new district Facebook webpage. This new Facebook page can be found on the district's website at: www.aurora-schools.org in the upper left-hand corner and in the footer section of the homepage, denoted by the Facebook letter f logo. Look for updates and district wide information on the new Facebook page to stay up-to-date and informed.

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MEYERS (Welding), **FINN RODI** (Performing Arts) and **MADELINE YANKOWSKI** (Performing Arts). These students were officially inducted on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at Mayfield High School. Congratulations to all!



Excel TECC NTHS 2024 Members

SARAH HOWELL was announced as the Art Class 1 **ARTIST OF THE YEAR** for 2023-24. Congratulations on all of your accolades!



Miller School Physical Education teacher, **STACEY BARNES**, received a grant from the **AURORA SCHOOLS FOUNDATION (ASF)** and the **AURORA (AEPTO) ELEMENTARY PTO** for \$9,000. The grant made it possible to have bicycles at Miller for kindergartners to learn how to ride a bike. The ASF, AEPTO and **LEE ANGELO'S** employees all helped Barnes with the "some assembly required."



Congratulations to the **AURORA ORCHESTRA ASSOCIATION'S 25TH SOLO COMPETITION WINNERS**.

The competition was held on April 25, 2024. To view a complete list of winners, please go to the ACSD website in the News & Announcements section.

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came in to work with our Environmental Science classes in order to discuss and complete activities focused on watersheds/wetlands. Laura and her **Environmental Science** students also paired up with **Matt Valencic** (Audubon Society) in conjunction with the **Citizen Science Project** connected with **Project H2Ohio/ODNR** to exterminate buckthorn, which is an invasive species in this area. In March, the students braved the cold to help reduce the negative impact on our young forest areas here in Aurora. Also at AHS, Government teacher, **Mike Rubin**, teamed up with Physics Teacher, **Dmitri Kourennyi**, to provide some great insight to the young people in AP Comparative Government Class. Dmitri, who is originally from Ukraine and still has family there, spoke to students regarding his perspectives on the USSR and Russian culture! What a great way to take advantage of a primary resource.

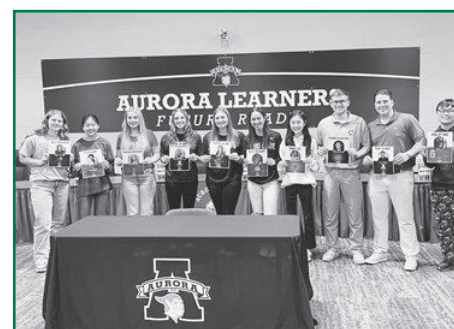
If you have not seen or heard yet, the Leighton Adaptive Playground was "unofficially" opened the last week of school. We will have an "official" ribbon-cutting ceremony in September. A big thank you goes out to so many people, especially staff members **Alisa Deininger** (Leighton), **Jen Simmerman** (AHS), **Kasie Stewart** (AHS), and **Michelle Nizen** (Leighton) who all took the lead on the project. Thank you as well to all the **committee members** who contributed their time to reach this goal as well as to all of our donors from the community. Lastly, despite the rain, there were lots of smiles at the first annual **Exceptional Greenmen Track Event** which replaced our participation in the Special Olympics at Nordonia. Shout out to our entire **PreK-12 Special Education Department** who planned, organized, and of course hosted this event at Veterans Stadium. This change provided a wonderful opportunity for our students to showcase their talents and abilities in a supportive environment right here in Aurora! It was awesome to see these young people compete while being cheered on by typical peers they see each day. What a great experience and memory for all involved.

April and May were also busy months for our potential new construction. During the middle of April, we held two Construction Communication Community Nights at the ACSD Conference Center. At these meetings, I shared current renderings of the potential high school which included a campus overview, targeted renovations in each of the other buildings, and then finished with a question/answer period. Our architects from Then Design Architecture shared a similar presentation to the Aurora Board of Education at the Regular April Board Meeting except the latter presentation provided the projected costs for a new high school as well as for the reprogramming of our other four buildings. The Board then held two Special Board Meeting Work Sessions on April 30th and May 18th to further discuss the Master Facilities Plan. At the Regular Board Meeting on May 20, 2024, I presented an overview of this Master Facilities Plan, which included the potential costs, with the Board and for the public to hear as well. There is a recording of that presentation on our website under the May 2024 Board Meeting link. Toward the end of the meeting, the Board gave Treasurer Bill Volosin the green light to start the paperwork process to prepare a resolution for the Board to vote on which would start the process of putting a bond issue on the November 2024 ballot. That resolution will be discussed and voted on by the Aurora Board of Education during a Special Board Meeting on June 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the ACSD Conference Center. If approved there will be a final resolution to be voted on by the Board in July which, if approved, would put a bond issue on the November 2024 ballot. If you would like to learn more and find out the latest on this project, please go to our district website at www.aurora-schools.org and click on the ACSD Facilities Master Plan Project link on the top right-hand side of the webpage.

I hope you enjoy the time this summer with family and friends and I look forward to seeing everyone in August as we look toward the start of the 2024-2025 school year. Go Greenmen!
Mike

AHS ACADEMIC SIGNING DAY 2024

Congratulations to the AHS seniors who were recognized as a part of the AHS Academic Signing Day 2024 in May. These ten seniors, (left to right) **Madeline Dalessandro** (Xavier), **Brook Gecina** (Westminster), **Reagan Kacmar** (Boston), **Sofia Kang** (Northwestern), **Ally Kaufman** (Hiram), **Rory Kilway** (Xavier), **Anna Lee** (Washington & Lee), **Thomas Ploskunak** (US Military Academy at West Point), **Ollie Salgado** (Ohio State), and **Phillip Yao** (Brown), were each recognized for either receiving a merit-based scholarship from the university they will attend that meets or exceeds 50% of the total direct cost of attending the university...and/or... matriculating to a university with a highly selective acceptance rate. Best of luck to all in their college careers.



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Congratulations to all of the Aurora City School District graduates in the Class of 2024! The Commencement ceremony took place on May 23, 2024 at Veterans Memorial Stadium at Aurora High School. Every graduate is wished the best of luck in all of their future endeavors. To view the senior memories of the Senior Walk Down Memory Lane, Senior Slideshow Class of 2024, Commencement 2024 Photo Gallery and the Aurora High School Commencement Ceremony 2024, please go to the district website at aurora-schools.org in the Spotlight section.

AURORA GREENMEN CLASS OF 2024

Class Officers:

President: **Camryn Cohn**
 Vice President: **Raniel Cervantes**
 Treasurer: **Cailor Roche**
 Secretary: **Thomas Ploskunak**
 Senior Class Advisor: **Toni Taylor**

Class Moto: "Don't cry because it's over.
 Smile because it happened."
 — Dr. Seuss

AURORA GREENMEN CLASS OF 2024 GRADUATION CEREMONY

Commencement Speakers:

**Camryn Cohn, Devin Allen, Camryn Cohn,
 Payton Griffith, Leonel Sesuraj**

Graduates:

217 Graduates
 94 Seniors Earned Honors Diplomas
 27 Seniors Graduated Cum Laude
 41 Seniors Graduated Magna Cum Laude
 53 Seniors Graduated Summa Cum Laude
 3 Students Enlisted in the Military

