



JAGUAR NATION

NOVEMBER 2017 • VOLUME 7, No. 1

SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

TWO SCVTHS STUDENTS ARE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP SEMIFINALISTS

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Dear Families of SCVTHS,

I extend a warm welcome to our new and returning students and parents as we begin another exciting and productive school year.

I am extremely proud of our High School and its accomplishments and our continuing quest to improve and strive for excellence in the classroom and beyond. Our Board of Education continues to support our mission statement which is to provide educational programs of excellence in which all students achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all grade levels for the purpose of becoming responsible graduates who are academically, technically and vocationally competent and prepared for the future.

I encourage any and all feedback you may have. Remember to keep a look out for emails on our events!

School Spirit Alert

- 10/20 - Haunted Halls
- 10/30 - Thanksgiving Food Drive Begins

On The Field

Welcome Coach Gillooly and new coaches Kiser for girls soccer and Violante and O'Reilly for boys Soccer. Seniors on the Field: Lily Chang, Novena Petryk Cordi, Jessica D'Agostino, James Maxton, Jenna Molfetta, David Petersen, Noah Rodellus, & Brian Turck, Kate Kelly and Rebeka Quagliato. Check out our sports schedule on our website and come on out to support and cheer our teams on. Go Jags!

Sincerely,
Diane M. Ziegler



Approximately 16,000 Semifinalists were named in the 63rd annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$32 million which will be offered next Spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship® award, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist standing. About half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholarship® title.

Steps in the 2018 Competition

About 1.6 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools entered the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2016 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and his or her high school must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

From the approximately 16,000 Semifinalists, about 15,000 are expected to advance to the Finalist level, and in February they will be notified of this designation. All National Merit Scholarship winners will be selected from this group of Finalists. Merit Scholarship designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference.

National Merit Scholarships

Three types of National Merit Scholarships will be offered in the spring of 2018. Every Finalist will compete for one of 2,500 National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships that will be awarded on a state-representational basis. About 1,000 corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards will



(l-r): Semifinalist Students in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program Catherine Chen of Warren and Julia Garaffa of Skillman.

be provided by approximately 230 corporations and business organizations for finalists who meet their specified criteria. In addition, about 190 colleges and universities are expected to finance some 4,000 college-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards for Finalists who will attend the sponsor institution.

National Merit Scholarship winners of 2018 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July. These scholarship recipients will join more than 330,000 other distinguished young people who have earned the Merit Scholar title.✽

For more information, contact James Strickhart at jstrickhart@scvths.net or (908) 526-8900, x7169.



SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL SCHOOLS
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SCVTHS THEATER ARTS
PROGRAM presents

The Skin Of Our Teeth

Nov. 17 & 18, 2017 • 7:30 pm

School Auditorium

call (908) 526-8900, x7258

HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

October 30th to November 17th



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NOVEMBER 2017

SCVTHS SOCIAL STUDIES INSTRUCTOR ED GRAF RECOGNIZED BY SOMERSET PATRIOTS

SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

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On Friday, September 8, 2017, Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School (SCVTHS) Social Studies Instructor Ed Graf was honored by the Somerset Patriots for his work with injured veterans and first responders. As part of the opening ceremonies before the start of the Somerset Patriots baseball game, Mr. Graf received an award from the New Jersey Veterans Network and Operation Rebound. As Mr. Graf explained "I got to meet Sparky Lyle, he gave me an autographed baseball and I threw out the first pitch!"

At SCVTHS, Mr. Graf has been instrumental in recognizing the United States armed forces and veterans by hosting a yearly event each May called Proud to be an American Day. Mr. Graf's vision and purpose for Proud to be an American Day is to honor the memories of fallen veterans, promote patriotism, create unity as a school community and nation, teach students the importance of honoring our veterans and the reasons we celebrate Memorial Day. At the most recent Proud to be an American Day on May 25, 2017, the event was expanded to include high schools from around Somerset County. Each year, a special tribute is made to local military residents who have lost their



SCVTHS Social Studies Instructor Ed Graf throws out the first pitch at the Somerset Patriots baseball game.

lives in the line of duty. Demonstrations involving armored vehicles, wreath presentations, bagpipe and bugle player performances, twenty-one gun salutes and cannon volleys are also part of the day's events. In addition, over the past three Proud to be an American Days, Mr. Graf and his students have been able to raise thousands of dollars for both the New Jersey Veterans Network and Operation Rebound.✱

For more information, contact James Strickhart at jstrickhart@scvts.net or (908) 526-8900, x7169.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH



Abigail Podejko

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Abigail Podejko, a junior in the Agricultural Science Program, has been selected as Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School's Student of the Month for October 2017. Abigail is the daughter of Bryan and Jennifer Podejko of Raritan.

SCVTHS Science Instructor Ushma Mehta nominated Abigail for Student of the Month because she is a "mature young lady with a positive attitude. Abigail is an outstanding student and role model in and outside of the classroom. She is very respectful and helpful to her teacher and peers. She is an ideal student and a pleasure to have in class."

SCVTHS Agricultural Sciences Instructor Erik Fargo said, "Abby is a true leader. She leads by example and takes great pride and ownership for all she does. Abby has a very strong work ethic and communicates well. She shows maturity beyond what is expected and I am sure she is going to be a great leader in the future."

At SCVTHS Abigail is a student ambassador who volunteered this past summer to represent our school at Somerset County's 4H Fair. She serves as the vice president of the FFA chapter and also is the secretary for the National Technical Honor Society. Additionally, Abigail has obtained her Greenhand Degree through the FFA and has been nominated to attend the Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders in 2018.

Outside of SCVTHS, Abigail works at Baja B Que in the Bridgewater Commons Mall. In her free time, she enjoys drawing, listening to music, spending time with her friends, and gardening with her grandparents.

After graduating from SCVTHS, Abigail plans to attend RVCC and then transfer to Rutgers for their Agricultural Science Education Program. Abigail said she aims "to be an Agricultural Science teacher, just like my role model, Erik Fargo." After graduating with her bachelor's degree, Abigail hopes to come back to SCVTHS to teach. She also hopes to pursue her master's degree in the future.✱