

October 2024

A report from the October 2024 meeting of EASTERN's Joint Operating Committee. EASTERN is a part of the school districts of Abington, Bryn Athyn, Cheltenham, Hatboro-Horsham, Jenkintown, Lower Moreland, Springfield, Upper Dublin, and Upper Moreland.

Summary

- October Student of the Month
- National Hispanic Heritage Month
- Career and Technical Student Organization
- Personnel
- September 30 Enrollment
- Potential Third Session

Coming Events

Joint Committee Meeting

*November 13, 2024

*December 11, 2024

January 8, 2025

February 12, 2025

*March 12, 2025

April 9, 2025

*May 14, 2025

June 18, 2025

**Seminar Room 8 PM

*Get the Board Brief by email
contact Amy Shields
for more information at
ashields@eastech.org
215.784.4806*

Visit our website

www.eastech.org

October Student of the Month

Xavier Watson-Greene, an Abington Senior High School senior, is the October 2024 Student of the Month at Eastern Center for Arts and Technology (EASTERN) in Willow Grove. Xavier is being recognized for his outstanding work in EASTERN's Protective Services program. The Student of the Month Award is sponsored by EASTERN's faculty, the Joint Operating Committee, and the Willow Grove Rotary Club to highlight student excellence, success, and service. Ten students each year are selected for this honor.

Xavier's father, stepmother, uncle, and grandfather all serve as Philadelphia First Responders, instilling in him a deep understanding of the importance of helping others from a young age. At 14, Xavier joined the Roslyn Fire Company's Explorer program, designed for individuals interested in firefighting at an early age. He continued to volunteer with them and became a full-fledged member over a year ago. One of Xavier's favorite aspects of being a volunteer firefighter is being there for people at their worst moments. Recognizing Xavier's passion for helping others, his Abington Junior High School principal suggested that he explore the Protective Services program at EASTERN.

Shortly after joining the class, Xavier was identified as a potential leader, prompting his instructor, Mr. Michael Raggi, to select him to attend the Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Leadership Conference in the Poconos. With his outgoing and engaging personality, he was also chosen to speak to the tenth-grade class at Abington Senior High School during EASTERN's Career Expo presentation. As a junior, he was selected by his peers to be the class Sergeant, which is a rank of honor and leadership in the class.

Xavier has attained his Fire Fighter 1 certification through EASTERN's partnership with Bucks County Community College. At EASTERN's May 2024 Awards Night, Xavier was awarded the prestigious Director's Award, recognizing his great potential for future leadership. Xavier was one of only five students who received this award, out of the 19 outstanding students interviewed.

"Xavier comes from a long line of individuals who are dedicated to helping others," said Mr. Michael Raggi, EASTERN's Protective Services Instructor. "He strives to be a role model in the class and a positive influence on his classmates. His upbeat personality and confidence will take him far in his career."

Following graduation from Abington Senior High School and EASTERN, Xavier plans to join the Philadelphia Fire Academy. He also plans to become an EMT and attain his Firefighter 2 certification.

October 2024

BOARD BRIEF

National Hispanic Heritage Month

During September and early October, EASTERN recognized four students for National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Lezli Rios, a Hatboro-Horsham High School/EASTERN Cosmetology senior

Lezli takes immense pride in her rich cultural heritage, rooted in both Costa Rican and Puerto Rican traditions. Her father, born in Costa Rica, made the move to the United States in his 20s, while her mother's roots trace back to Puerto Rico where Lezli's grandparents were born. Lezli plans to study Business in college to open her own salon in the future.

Evelyn Escamilla-Gomez, a Hatboro-Horsham High School/EASTERN Cosmetology senior

Evelyn's parents are both first-generation immigrants from Guatemala. At Hatboro-Horsham High School, Evelyn is the co-president of the Latin American Student Organization, where she recently went to Keith Valley Middle School to discuss the club and its value to the Hispanic community and culture. In the fall, she plans to begin college, pursuing a program in the medical field.

Mary Rivas-Leiva, a Hatboro-Horsham High School/EASTERN Allied Health senior

Both of Mary's parents are from Guatemala, but they met in Philadelphia at a restaurant owned by Mary's great-aunt. Every summer, Mary cherishes their trips back to Guatemala, immersing herself in the warmth and vibrancy of her cultural roots. Mary hopes to pursue her nursing degree at Gwynedd Mercy. Her ultimate goal is to become a nurse anesthetist.

Virgymar Basabe Ruiz, a Cheltenham High School/EASTERN Allied Health senior

Virgymar, born in Puerto Rico, spent the first six years of her life there before moving to St. Louis later settling in Pennsylvania in the fifth grade. She makes annual trips to Puerto Rico to visit her father and grandmother, cherishing her roots. Virgymar was deeply drawn to the Allied Health program at EASTERN, inspired by her personal experiences caring for her grandmother. Virgymar is driven to pursue a future in dermatology.

Career and Technical Student Organization

The Joint Operating Committee approved 40 students and 5 chaperones to attend the SkillsUSA Fall Leadership Conference from November 13 – 15, 2024 at Kalahari Resorts in Pocono Manor, PA.

Personnel

Instructor/Coordinator of Part-Time Nursing Cohorts

The Joint Operating Committee approved the appointment of Michelle Haines as the Practical Nursing Instructor/Coordinator of Part-Time Nursing Cohorts effective October 1, 2024.

Practical Nursing Instructor – Half-Time

The Joint Operating Committee approved the appointment of Anastasia Przybylski as Practical Nursing Instructor- Half Time effective October 14, 2024.

Student Success Counselor

The Joint Operating Committee approved Jennifer Rubin as Student Success Counselor, effective December 11, 2024.

Facilities Maintenance Technician

The Joint Operating Committee approved Kyle Maurer as Facilities Maintenance Technician, effective October 7, 2024.

September 30 Enrollment

The official September 30th enrollment is 680 students with 72 students still on a wait list. Waitlisted programs are Automotive Technology – 4 students, Construction Technology – 14 students, Cosmetology – 8 students, Electrical Technology – 13 students, HVAC – 7 students, and Welding Technology – 26 students.

Potential Third Session

In response to growing waitlists for EASTERN's programs, EASTERN is exploring the option of offering a third session next year in Welding, Electrical, and Automotive where students may attend Mondays through Thursdays from 3:00-6:00. The overview and approval timeline was shared with the Joint Operating Committee. Surveys will be administered to evaluate student interest before making a recommendation to move forward in the approval process.