



# The Beacon of Hope

EAST ISLIP UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Senior Selected for Global Business Competition

Justin Ovalle, a senior at East Islip High School and a member of the school's International Business Career Academy, was selected as the first Long Island student to compete in the WISE Global Business Challenge (GBC). The competition took place on April 6 in Manhattan.

The WISE GBC is a virtual enterprise competition at which mock firms are invited to analyze a company and make recommendations to address the company's issues. Justin's "company" consisted of ten students, whom he has never met, from around the world. His company competed against several other companies.

Justin was chosen for this honor based upon a nomination from East Islip's Director of Guidance, Israel Malinowitz. The selection process also entailed a look at Justin's work ethic within the Academy, his attendance, GPA, as well as other recommendations from teachers. As part of the International Business Career Academy, Justin and his classmates formed a mock-company called Mobile Revolution, Justin was the Director of

Human Resources for the group. In its first year, the program worked through the Virtual Enterprise system and interacted with other virtual enterprises worldwide.

"I like all the people I work with," Justin said. "The Academy gave me a lot of competitive experience and helped me make business connections for the future." Justin also placed in the Best Foot Forward Competition. His video related to the Career Academy theme of "Project Green."

The GBC provides an exciting opportunity for students to apply their expertise and work collaboratively with a team of students from across the globe to solve problems. At the competition, Justin engaged in the art of negotiations, worked as a member of a team, and designed, implemented and evaluated a business plan.



## Educator Named Distinguished Teacher of 2011

Valerie Tator, a social studies teacher at East Islip Middle School, has been named a Distinguished Teacher of 2011 by the Harvard Club of Long Island. Nominated by Harvard student Mary Hallowell, Mrs. Tator was honored with the award at the Harvard Club's annual University Relations Lunch on March 27.

Mrs. Tator, who has taught eighth-grade American History in the East Islip School District

for 21 years, currently advises the school newspaper and has coached the school's mock trial teams. She earned her bachelor degree in history from St. Joseph's College and her master's in history from SUNY Stony Brook. In addition to her education, Mrs. Tator has practiced karate for thirty years and holds a 5th degree black belt.

Mary Hallowell, who was a student of Mrs. Tator and is now a member of the Harvard College Class of 2014, said of her former teacher: "[She was] one of the first teachers to truly acknowledge my potential. Having her approval greatly helped my confidence as a student." Ms. Hallowell added, "She assigned many projects that gave us much

creative leeway, and this, I believe, helped me to recognize my interest in theater (I wrote a play about the 1930's as my final project in her class) at a time when I had only been involved in athletics."

"All of us in East Islip are thrilled," commented Wendell Chu, Superintendent of Schools, on learning of Mrs. Tator's award. "Mrs. Tator brings social studies to life for her students and connects what has happened in the past with the issues and concerns of today." He further noted, "She designs lessons that put her students in the roles of the people during the era the class is studying. In this way, her students experience the mood of the times. We all congratulate her on this award."



## ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENTS

### Exciting News: Access to Parental Portal

We are pleased to inform you that parents of high school and middle school students will soon be able to access their children's progress reports and report cards online. We are in the midst of preparing to open the Parent Portal portion of our student management system called Infinite Campus.

Parents who register and activate accounts will be able to view different areas of information concerning their children. Initially, your children's report cards and progress reports will be presented for viewing. In future years, our goal is to have student schedules, immunization information, attendance and other areas made available. We hope to have the Portal open for elementary parents and legal guardians during the 2011-2012 school year.

Each parent or legal guardian of a high school or middle school student in our district will be able to create a unique username and password for the Portal. In order to gain access, parents or legal

guardians will need to read the East Islip School District Parent Portal Acceptable Use Policy and complete and sign the East Islip School District Parent Portal Registration Form. Parents must register in person with the district.

For any parent who was unable to register during the previous designated days, daily ongoing registration will be held during the school day at the high school and middle school beginning May 1, 2011. Registration should take approximately 10 minutes.

**Please be sure to bring the following with you when you register:**

1. a valid photo ID
2. a signed EISD Parent Portal Registration Form
3. a valid e-mail address

Once registration is complete, each parent or guardian will receive a unique portal activation key

code (or GUID #) along with instructions on how to set up his/her account on the portal via e-mail. Login and navigation information will also be provided in the e-mail, as well as on our school website at [www.eischools.org](http://www.eischools.org). From the district's homepage, click on the tab "Parents" and click "Infinite Campus Parent Portal." Parents can e-mail our Parent Portal Help Desk for all questions regarding the portal or to send updated information at the following e-mail address: [parentportal@eischools.org](mailto:parentportal@eischools.org). Inquiries will be answered in the order they are received. Unfortunately, we will be unable to provide help by telephone.

We hope all of our high school and middle school parents and guardians will take advantage of this opportunity, which will result in cost savings of paper and mailing in the future, while making access for parents quicker and easier.

### PLEASE REMEMBER...

Due to the use of two of our snow emergency days, schools will be open on Thursday, May 26 and Friday, May 27. School will not be in session on Monday, April 25 and Tuesday, May 31.

## 2 Board of Education Message

Ken Cronin, President



Decisions...

According to the calendar, spring is here. This morning, we had snow mixed with rain. The weather is not the only thing that is hard to predict this time of year. There are many decisions that have to be made with regard to the upcoming budget. Five years ago, we had a failed budget and had to go on contingency. Electives were gone, clubs and sports were gone, and so was some of the feeling of East Islip Pride.

Over the last four years, we have been able to rebuild. We have added many of the lost

electives, revived our clubs and sports, and provided a sound foundation for our yearly budgets. This was done by having sufficient funds to offset spikes in tax increases. Now, Albany has thrown a monkey wrench into the works.

It is bad enough that there are double digit increases in retirement system and health care costs. In addition to those increases, the new state budget calls for more cuts to our state aid. These cuts are in addition to the cuts that were forced upon us last year. Forget about gradual reduction, this could be devastating.

This leads me to the title of this article. Don't for one second think that every item is

not analyzed to see which will have the least impact on the students. We, as a Board, are asked to make decisions that sometimes affect part of the community, and sometimes all of the community. They are not easy decisions to make.

At the time of this writing, we are in the middle of budget presentations. We look out over the crowd and see the same faces that we see at our monthly Board meetings. We thank them for coming. Be informed, read the literature, ask questions. We need to have the whole community educated on which decision they will make in the upcoming budget vote.

Please be part of the process on May 17.

Sincerely,

Ken Cronin

## Superintendent's Message

Wendell Chu



Every year it becomes harder and harder to continue providing the programs children need while remaining fiscally responsible to our community. This dilemma is due in part to rising costs

and increased demands for services, but lately it has been dramatically deepened by reductions in state aid to education. There has been a broad public outcry over rising property taxes on Long Island, and all of us in education have heard the message and are working hard in continuing to find cost-cutting efficiencies. At the same time, some information that is not as widely publicized is being overlooked.

The proposed state budget will reduce

East Islip's state aid by \$2.2 million. This will put state aid at a level \$4.7 million lower than it was in 2008-09. Currently, there is a lawsuit settlement known as the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE,) that provided a formula for increasing the state's contribution to the education of children. This settlement came as a result of the state's recognition that it was not supplying funding appropriate enough to provide a sound, basic education to its children. Districts like East Islip have long recognized that the state's contribution to the cost of educating the district's children was insufficient to meet the growing needs of our student population. Now this formula, which was frozen for the past two years, has been suspended until 2016-17. It is no wonder all of us are considering drastic measures in order to find a budget that our

community can accept.

In trying to prepare our children for the 21st century and the skills needed to be successful, we have been stifled in many ways. As we try to imagine what the world will be like for our children, we increasingly ask them to be patient for the tools and programs that will help them find success. As an educator for the past 38 years, I have always worked to build the skills of my students and capture their passions and interests in the content I present to them. How do I capture both the attention of our state government and the trust of our community in order to provide for the children I serve? This is not a task I do alone, but in conjunction with all of you. We must work together to find the means to ensure that all of our children have the opportunities they desire and deserve as they move from childhood to adulthood.

## Asst. Superintendent's Message

Susan Kossier (Student Support Services)



Recently, a headline in *Education Week* caught my attention: "Moving Beyond One-Size-Fits-All." I was thrilled to see that general education is developing the tools and the ability to infuse special education strategies into the general education

curriculum. Special education individualizes education for students with special needs through the use of IEPs (Individual Education Programs) and differentiated instruction. IEPs are mandated initiatives that are supported by federal grants as well as local funds. The goal of general education has been to individualize instruction, but many factors have been impeding this initiative, such as class size, class time limits and the hours needed to personalize education. With the advent of educational technology, the Response to Intervention initiative, and access to different methodologies, this goal can become a reality for all students. Teachers are now able to assess student needs, collect data and plan lessons based on student interests and educational needs.

The East Islip School District has made great strides towards the goal of meeting the individual needs of all students. Response to Intervention (RTI) is a New York State mandated initiative that the district has been working toward and which is beginning to be put into practice. The district's RTI Committee

has spent several years researching universal screening and progress monitoring methods as well as research-based interventions. RTI involves the early identification of students' learning problems and the use of focused lessons, or interventions, to address those problems before they can become identified as disabilities. If the student's skills progress, he or she leaves the program; but if there are still problems, the interventions intensify in frequency and length. If the student still does not respond to the most intensive instruction, he or she may be referred for a comprehensive special education evaluation.

In preparation for this initiative, the district has implemented a specific, research-based, early reading program for students in kindergarten through second grade. This program provides instruction for the entire class, as well as targeted additional instruction for students with greater needs. East Islip also provides intense training for many of our teachers in another research-based reading program, which is individualized for qualified students in grades three through twelve. A new reading program based on RTI principles that is designed for grades three to five will be implemented in the 2011-12 school year. These personalized early intervention initiatives, in conjunction with the present Balanced Literacy program, will lead to the early identification and remediation of learning deficits. In many cases, they will also circumvent the need for special education.

The district's recent assistive technology initiative, geared for all students, has helped to provide equal access, support and remediation where needed. Every school has the SOLO 6 software, and every student has the ability to use this software at home. Software components include a talking word processor, word prediction, text reading and a graphic organizer. Ongoing coaching for staff, students and parents will continue to be provided. The recent donation of iPads for our students with significant disabilities has helped to individualize programs for them, as well as provide highly motivating material.

Person Centered Planning is an initiative in the Career Development Program. This process focuses on identifying the strengths of developmentally delayed students and helps them make choices and receive training in these identified areas. We have been able to personalize work experiences to meet individual needs and to develop necessary skills. Indicative of the success of this methodology is that some of our students now have job prospects as they exit the program.

With the support of the staff, the community, and the various organizations that support our initiatives, we will be able to continue on the path of personalizing experiences that will build on individual strengths and remediate weaknesses. Ultimately this will raise students' interest in learning as well as achievement and help them develop into lifelong learners and productive citizens. In the East Islip School District, ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL!

## New Kitchen for Career Development Program

Students in the Career Development Program at East Islip High School celebrated the grand opening of a new kitchen. Teachers in the district's special education department had been



working for the past year with administration to develop a program that expanded upon the curriculum of those students in the life skills classes. Career development teachers Margaret Gallagher and Sabina Uettwiller thought the addition of a kitchen perfectly aligned with the goal of the program, which is to find student interests and strengths and assist them in building upon those skills.

The Career Development Program teaches life skills such as health, consumer mathematics, cooking, office skills, retail skills, and reading to students in the program. Each skill is taught using a method that is individualized for each child's needs. Funds for the new kitchen came from grants, with the E.J. Autism Foundation donating the appliances. "It is the



fanciest school kitchen I've ever seen," said Andrew, who is enrolled in the program. "Thank you so much."

## Take a Duck to Class Essay Winner

Eighth-grade students in the Family and Consumer Science Class at East Islip Middle School recently participated in the TD Bank *Take a Duck to Class Essay Contest*. Hosted by the Long Island Ducks, students were asked to submit an essay on "Why my community is important to me." Out of hundreds of essays received from schools across Long Island, four students were chosen as winners of the grand prize. One of those winners was East Islip eighth grader Krista Cook. In her essay, Krista wrote about the East Islip



community and how her friends and church are always there to help.

As part of Krista's prize, she received a Visa Gift Card and her entire class got to meet and receive autographs from Long Island Ducks All-Star Ray Navarrete and team mascot QuackerJack. The entire eighth-grade attended an assembly where Ray and QuackerJack explained to students the importance of a good education and how listening to parents and believing in yourself can help you achieve your dreams. "Whatever it is, it can happen," Ray told students. Despite being told he would never make the varsity baseball team, he added "Growing up, I told myself and my family that this was my dream and I will play baseball."

## Guys and Dolls

Students of the East Islip High School put on a stunning production of the classic musical *Guys and Dolls* on March 31 and April 1 and 2. The performance culminated many months of hard work and dedication. The students have learned every aspect of musical theater production, including acting, singing, dancing, pit orchestra performance and stage craft/crew. Students Evan O'Connor and Sarah Schreiner designed the advertisement poster. In the past, students from the East Islip High School Musical have won Teeny Awards for Best and Supporting Actor and Actress, Pit Orchestra, Stage Crew and Scenic Design. Photographed above: Nick Converso (Nathan Detroit) and Courtney Kenyon (Miss Adelaide) during the show.



## Raising Drug Awareness

In an effort to raise drug awareness, the district recently hosted a special seminar for 6th through 12th grade students and community members. The age-appropriate workshops were conducted over the course of two days by Michael Zotto and Jim Murphy of the Strategic Protection Group in West Islip. The pair held one seminar at the middle school for each grade, a seminar for each grade at the high school, and an evening session for parents and interested community members.

The seminars focused on signs of addiction, how an overdose can occur with any amount, and how to be a part of the solution. "You have no idea how your body will react to something," one of the presenters cautioned students. Mr. Zotto and Mr. Murphy began the workshops with an intense video documentary entitled "Hindsight," and covered such topics as what each drug looks like and its effect on you, as well as the dangers of prescription drugs. They also touched on local stories of drug abuse and its impact on society, as well as national stories of television stars and musicians who should be seen for their entertainment value and not viewed as role models.

# Booster Club Donates \$38K to Benefit Schools

The East Islip Board of Education formally accepted a donation of \$38,000 worth of equipment from the East Islip Athletic Booster Club (EIABC) to the East Islip athletic department. The donation was accepted at the January Board of Education meeting and presented by EIABC President James J. Cummings.

Over the past three years, this \$38,000 donation has enabled the following items to be purchased by the EIABC for the benefit of East Islip athletes:

- Long jump pit on the Middle School track
- New scoreboards for the Varsity Soccer, Varsity Baseball, and Softball Teams
- Digital weight scale for wrestling program
- Scoreboard for Boys Lacrosse, Girls Lacrosse and Field Hockey Teams
- Middle School gym scoreboard
- New portable tent for the track teams
- Ice machine, which is used for all sports programs and many school activities
- Mirrors for weight room

In addition to the items mentioned, the EIABC gives two \$500 scholarships each year to one female and one male

graduating senior athlete. To download the application for scholarship consideration, please visit the booster club's website at [www.eiboosterclub.com](http://www.eiboosterclub.com), or visit their fan page on Facebook.

The EIABC is a non-profit organization that raises funds through two annual fundraisers – a golf outing typically held in July and a dinner banquet held each November. The 2011 Golf Outing is scheduled for July 28, 2011, at Timber Point Country Club. One hundred percent of the proceeds from these events is used to help the athletes in the East Islip High School and East Islip Middle School sports programs.



(L-R) Rick Pearsall, Sue Pierini, Bob Sendel, Traci Begley, and Jim Cummings in front of the donated JV & Varsity Lacrosse Scoreboard. Missing from the photo is Bob Hutchinson.

## Author Visits EIHS

East Islip High School students and staff recently had the opportunity to meet author Susan Henderson. Each month, approximately ten high school students meet with Librarian Wendy Turkington to participate in an unofficial book club. The club selects and reads a book and discusses it at the following meeting. The group recently completed "Up from the Blue" by Susan Henderson and had the unique chance to have a book discussion with her. Students from the book club and interested staff members were invited to join the discussion.

Ms. Henderson spoke to the group about general book-related topics such as how and why multiple people can have different opinions about the same book, and the environment of a book store. She read an excerpt from "Up from the Blue" and shared her intentions and influences in writing it, as well as the process of being published.



## Spelling Bee



(L-R) Justin Arnold, Jaden Pagillo and Polina Arteev

East Islip Middle School recently held their schoolwide annual spelling bee in order to find a competitor for the 2011 Long Island Regional Spelling Bee. The top sixth, seventh and eighth graders, chosen based upon spelling bees held in their English classes, vied for the first-place trophy and a chance to compete at the regional level. This year, eighth-grade student Justin Arnold placed first in the school competition and represented East Islip at the regionals in March. Justin's winning word was "celestial." This year's runner-up was sixth-grade student Jaden Pagillo, and the third-place winner was eighth grader Polina Arteev.



# NEWS AROUND OUR E

## EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

### Cans for a Cause

In the spirit of the 100th day of school, students at the Early Childhood Center participated in a 100th Day Can



Drive. Schoolwide, students were asked to donate canned goods for the St. Peter Food Bank in Islip Terrace. The goal was to collect 100 cans and build a pyramid; however, students' generosity far exceeded that amount. The school collected a total of more than 600 cans, which were used in conjunction with math lessons for the children. Pictured are select kindergarten students in front of the can pyramid and the overflow of food for St. Peter's.

### Collecting Change for Children

During the month of February, students at the Early Childhood Center participated in an important initiative to improve children's healthcare on Long Island. Each child was given a change box to bring home and was asked to throw any spare change into it as part of the Change for Children campaign through Stony Brook Children's Hospital. The collected change went directly to the hospital in support of the healthcare needs of kids on Long Island. A final collection total was not available at the time of this article.

Pictured are some kindergarten students with the collected boxes.



## CONNETQUOT ELEMENTARY

### Connetquot Cares

Connetquot Elementary School recently started a new schoolwide initiative to recognize students exhibiting good citizenship. Coordinated by the School Improvement Team, a contest was held in the art classes asking students to create a sticker with the slogan "Connetquot Caring Citizens." Second

grader April Ferrandino had the winning design for the stickers. The "triple c" sticker will be given to students who are witnessed by staff members for doing something outstanding, kind or respectful towards their peers. The student will wear the sticker throughout the day at school and will receive a card with his or her name on it to put in a box, from which one name will be selected each month. The selected student will have his or her photograph framed and featured on a Connetquot Caring Citizens wall in the school.



April Ferrandino and art teacher Liz Sullivan display April's winning design, which the school enlarged onto a T-shirt for her to wear.

## RUTH C. KINNEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### Promoting Traffic Safety

Students in Ms. Dana Belfiore's art classes at Ruth C. Kinney Elementary School are participating in the New York State AAA Traffic Safety Poster Contest. Students wishing to participate were asked to work in their spare time on creating a poster that increases

the awareness of pedestrian, bike and school bus safety. The following students created works of art that are being submitted to the AAA for consideration: (Back Row, L-R) Ryan Wesley (grade 4), Kelan Soto (grade 4), Emma Watson (grade 3); (Front Row, L-R) Lillian Scholl (grade 2), Sara Blumberg (grade 3), Elena Esposito (grade 3).



## JOHN F. KENNEDY

### Saving the Sea Turtles

Bridget Welch, a third-grade student at John F. Kennedy Elementary School, recently donated \$68 to SeaWorld in order to help save the sea turtles. After learning that sea turtles are endangered and receiving a bracelet maker for the holidays, Bridget decided to sell the friendship bracelets she was making in order to help save the sea turtles. "I like going to the aquarium and watching them swim," she said of the species.

In January, Bridget's family took a vacation to Florida and visited SeaWorld, where she was able to make her \$68 donation in person. As a result of her efforts and dedication, Bridget received VIP treatment during her trip and visited the sea turtle rescue center, fed the dolphins and stingrays, and had front row seats to the famous show featuring Shamu.



### Above the Rim

Students at John F. Kennedy Elementary School finished the Town of Islip Sharp Shooter Contest. In the girls' competition, fourth graders Hanna Benardos and Nicole O'Connor came in first and second place respectively, and fifth graders Catie Clehane and Ashley Kniff were the first and second place scorers. Brendan Cox and Anthony Gamba were the first and second place winners for the fourth-grade boys, while Patrick Connolly and Justin Kern came in first and second place for the fifth-grade boys. Congratulations to these winners and to all the students who participated.

Photographed are physical education teachers, Mr. Gerard and Mrs. Nagengast with students who participated in the Town of Islip "Just Say No to Drugs" Sharp Shooter Basketball Contest: Justin Kern, Brendan Cox, Anthony Gamba, Hanna Benardos, Patrick Connolly, Nicole O'Connor and Catie Clehane, (not pictured, Ashley Kniff).



## TIMBER POINT ELEMENTARY

### Batty About Education

Fifth-grade students in Mrs. Cathy Boudart's class at Timber Point Elementary School have been studying bats as part of their participation in Disney's Project Challenge. With bat homes on Long Island being threatened,

students also built bat houses in order to provide a safe habitat for bats. After much research, students have learned the importance of bats and how crucial they are for our environment. Class parents assisted with the construction of the houses, which were donated to Seatuck Nature Conservancy for use at Heckscher and Connetquot State Parks, as well as at Timber Point Elementary School. In total, twelve bat houses were donated to Seatuck.



### Studying Simple Machines

Fourth-grade students at Timber Point Elementary received an interactive lesson on simple machines. As part of the fourth-grade curriculum and the New York State Science Assessments, fourth graders are tested on their knowledge of such simple machines as pulleys and levers. In an effort to engage students beyond the classroom, a representative from Long Island Science Center gave an interactive demonstration with the use of Lego-like building materials. The representative gave real-life examples of simple machines and asked students to work as teams of engineers to build their own. Pictured is a highlight of science in action.



# BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

On March 18, East Islip High School held its annual Breakfast of Champions. Honored at this breakfast were students of the sophomore class who have exhibited exemplary character



and conduct during the 2010-2011 school year. Each of the honorees was selected by a member of the High School staff as a student who exhibited these positive qualities in the classroom. During the ceremony, Assistant Principal Mr. Thorley called each student up individually. After receiving their well-deserved applause, each student came to the front to receive a small token of the school's appreciation. Upon completion of the ceremony, students, families of the students and staff members were invited to stay for a light breakfast.

The East Islip High School would like to congratulate the following students and thank the numerous staff members who nominated them for this award.

## Honored students:

Kerrigan Apicella, Anthony Bruzzo, James Burke, Nicole Carapi, Jamie Curran, Daniel Hayden, Bridget Kavanagh, Melissa Kelly, Robert Lea, Jacob Levesque, Elaina Lorefice, Rachel Maretsky, Shane Martensen, Justin Morena, Shannon Murphy, Alex Powers, Tina Regan, Hannah Reilly, Karina Renaldo, Kayla Roundsman, Devyn Schwartzberg, Vincent Sheppard, Victoria Sidorski, Brian Smith, Christopher Sortino, Steven Vecerina, Jessica Willdigg, and Joseph Woodrick

## Participating staff members:

Mrs. Affelt, Mrs. Avila, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Behrhof, Mrs. Camera, Ms. Donahue, Mrs. Ferrieri, Mr. Festa, Ms. Gallagher, Mrs. Gelfer (Nixon), Mrs. Kench, Mrs. Kiernan, Mrs. Neri, Mr. Neske, Mr. O'Neill, Mrs. Palios, Mrs. Pinka, Mrs. Sachs, Mrs. Salvaggio, Mrs. Sawicki, Mrs. Senft, Mrs. Superina, Mrs. Taylor, Ms. Uettwiller, and Mr. Williams

# Student Participates in NYLC

Noah Charvot, a sixth-grade student at East Islip Middle School, was recently selected to participate in the 2011 National Young Leaders Conference (NYLC) in Washington, D.C. The NYLC is designed to instruct and enrich promising students in a hands-on, experiential atmosphere while preparing them for a lifetime of leadership. Noah was nominated for this honor by his social studies teacher, Mr. O'Neill.

At the conference, Noah will have the opportunity to discuss current events and issues with top policy makers in Washington, D.C., as well as analyze concepts and put them to work immediately. Creative decision-making simulations will challenge him to solve problems and lead him and his peers through role-playing exercises in an energy-charged environment far from the traditional classroom experience.

Noah is congratulated by Mr. O'Neill and Director of Humanities Sarajeon Anderson.



# CAREER ACADEMY RAISES \$4K

East Islip High School hosted a Drive One 4UR School fundraiser, where attendees had the opportunity to test drive some of Sayville Ford's newest model cars while also earning money for their school's Career and Business Academies. For each person who test drove a car that day, Sayville Ford donated \$20 to the Career Academy program.

More than 200 people joined East Islip in the event, which also included a pancake breakfast and Chinese auction prior to the start of the drive. In total, the event raised approximately \$4,000 for the Career Academies.



# SIXTH GRADER WINS REGIONAL CONCERTO COMPETITION

Michael Stevens, a sixth-grade student at East Islip Middle School, recently placed first overall in the annual Concerto Competition of the Northeast French Horn Festival at the University of New Hampshire. Competing against twenty high school and college hornists, Michael was a judge's favorite early-on. "We were speechless; he's a rare talent," they said of his abilities. Michael is a double major at the Manhattan School of Music Pre-College, where he studies horn and piano with Efreem Briskin.



From left: Judges Lowell Greer, Hermann Baumann, Bernhard Scully, and Kendall Betts celebrate Michael's (center) stellar achievement.

# FTK HOSTS 14TH ANNUAL *Black Tie Gala*

East Islip's For the Kids (FTK) Foundation held their 14th annual Black Tie Gala on Saturday, March 12. With this year's theme of "Midnight Gardens," the Foundation honored Robert Chiarelli as the 2011 Educator Advocate of the Year and Theresa Lyons as the 2011 Community Advocate of the Year. The unforgettable evening is one of the Foundation's key fundraisers held throughout the school year to benefit the students of East Islip.

Robert Chiarelli, a teacher at Connetquot Elementary School and resident of East Islip, was honored for being an active member of his community. A roller hockey and baseball coach to his children's teams, Mr. Chiarelli has been a member and co-chair of the School Improvement Team, a member of the Instructional Support Team, a liaison to FTK, advisor to the chess club and a member of the Excellence in Learning and Health and Safety committees. In addition to raising awareness of and funds for Hurricane Katrina victims, he was the organizer of the Earth Walk, which raised enough money to rescue more than 30 acres of tropical

rainforest around the perimeter of Connetquot School.

Terri Lyons has been a life-long resident of Islip Terrace and was a 1980 graduate of East Islip High School. An active PTA participant, she has chaired many PTA committees and held several leadership positions in the organization over the years. Mrs. Lyons also has volunteered as a catechist at St. Peter's Church and has assisted with many FTK fundraisers over the last 14 years. From 2006-09, she served on the East Islip Board of Education. Mrs. Lyons is currently the office manager of her family's plumbing/heating/air conditioning business in Bohemia.

East Islip educators, parents and local businesses represented those who generously made donations toward the evening's mission and celebrated throughout the night. Local businesses and generous community members donated raffle prizes and gifts that helped to make the evening a further success. Funds donated to the schools by FTK provide both academic and cultural enrichment to students.

"We would like to thank you for your support and for helping us meet our goals," FTK Black Tie Gala Chairperson Gina VanDenburg said of the event. "Your commitment to FTK has made us the most successful non-profit school organization in Suffolk County. Your efforts are truly appreciated."



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