Kalamazoo Public Schools
EXCELSIOR
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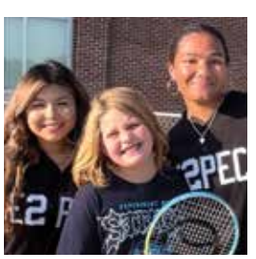
Exploring the Treasures of Asylum Lake

(PHOTOS ON PAGES 6-7)

Dr. Darrin Slade Presents Achievement Data. **pg. 10**



Family Fitness Night at **Milwood** in pictures. **pg. 16**



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Parents Are Our Most Important Partners

A Message from the Superintendent



Dr. Darrin Slade

OUT OF ALL of the community partners that a school district relies on to build success for its students, there is one group that matters more than any other: our parents.

You have heard this before. Parents are our students' first teachers. Parents are our students' biggest cheerleaders. Parents make a difference.

This is a truth that I have experienced as a teacher, a principal, a deputy superintendent, and now as a superintendent. The strength of any district is only amplified by parents who show up and support the work we do in the classroom with your children — and with all of the children in the community.

We cannot do this work without parental support and involvement. The efforts we launched last year that aimed to tackle critical issues of attendance and behavior are essential measures to ensure students can find success when they are in school. Parents are key to the success of those efforts.

Making students understand the importance and value of being in school all day, every day begins at home. Making sure students understand how their behavior affects not only their grades but the ability of everyone else in their class to learn and succeed is a lesson that has to begin at home. Celebrating success is all the more meaningful when parents are invested in those achievements.

I appreciate the support of the parents and community members who have seen how these measures have improved the climate and culture in our buildings and — how along with renewed attention on instructional quality, professional development, and the protection of instructional time — has led to improvements in student achievement.

We have made great strides over the past year. You will see that in the story about our improvements in attendance and student achievement elsewhere in the Excelsior. The other thing you will notice is that it is very clear there is still much work to be done.

There is much work that can be done — with your continued help.

My first request is for all parents to carefully monitor your child's progress. That is most easily done through our PowerSchool Parent Portal at kalamazoopublicschools.powerschool.com.

Parents can find everything from attendance records, calendars, email notifications, test scores, report cards and school bulletins there. It is an invaluable resource that can help you stay involved and on top of your child's progress and needs. The simplist way to access the portal is through the KPS app, which can be downloaded from your phone's app store.

But outside of that vital virtual way to check in and be involved, we would love to see you at at school conference, PTO meetings, sporting events, plays (all of the fall musicals are coming up in November and December), GradBash committees, multicultural celebrations — all of the things that help build a sense of community.

Your involvement and help will make these events stronger but your presence has an even more important impact — it signals to your children that you value our schools, that you think the work they do (we do) in their schools is valuable and worthy of your time and interest. It tells them that you are paying attention and they should too.

There are many other ways you can impact your student's success. Read to them early and often. Create a quiet place for them to study at home — and ask about their school day and what they have been learning. Limit their screen time, which will not only give them time to study but will help with their social emotional health. See yourself as a partner with the school — not an adversary — and help us help your student find success.

If you struggle or if your child is struggling, talk to our school staff. We are here to help and support our families. Thank you for being our most important partners in ensuring our children succeed and are excited about school, learning, and becoming the best possible versions of themselves.



Loy Norrix Students Have New Outdoor Classroom

LOY NORRIX art teacher Greg Stevens has long been interested in outdoor education and the belief that it is a natural complement to a more traditional education setting.

Several years ago he began developing the curriculum for a class called EcoArt, that is a combination of his pursuits in the arts, sciences and experiential education.

"I had always thought that in an ideal world, I would be able to teach much of this class in the outdoors, but lacked a reasonable place to do so. In addition, I believed in the need for Loy Norrix to have a space for all classes to use as an outdoor space for instruction," he said.

Because Norrix sits on some interesting and aesthetically pleasing grounds, Stevens said, the staff often take students outside to complement their curriculum. Unfortunately, without a designated place to rest and take materials, often these visits were just quick trips and failed to give students an adequate amount of time outdoors.

"Teens spend less time outdoors than any other generation in our history," he said. "Specifically 4 to 7 minutes a day, while consuming on average 7.5 hours of screen time according to the CDC. Coined 'Nature Deficit Disorder,' by Richard Louv, the lack of exposure to the natural world is having devastating consequences that can be linked to anxiety, depression and other disorders.

"So, in essence, I think the outdoor classroom will not only help with students academically, it will also aid in some of the SEL and technology initiatives (like the cell phone ban) the district is pursuing. It's part of a holistic view of education that recognizes the role of the educational environment as a builder of mental and physical health."

EcoArt gives students the opportunity to make art inspired by nature while emphasizing the relationship between art and science, Stevens said. Students create works that use natural materials, have ecological messages, and is made outdoors.

After his EcoArt curriculum was approved last year, he began to seriously consider the idea of making an outdoor classroom his professional goal for the 2023-24 school year. He selected the site and designed the classroom. He collected all the needed quotes from contractors and coordinated the logistics by meeting with facilities personnel.

The classroom was mostly completed over summer and early fall. LN Principal Chris Aguinaga, Facilities Department Director Karen Jackson, and lead art teacher Mandy Clearwaters, as well as the facilities crew, "were extremely supportive and the project would have never come to fruition without them," Stevens said.

The new space is behind the school's A-wing, on the edge of the woods to provide needed shade. Teachers can sign up to use the space. Stevens said he hopes the space inspires others to consider ways to incorporate the outdoors into their teaching.



Art students use the new outdoor classroom.



ARTISTS' CORNER

Kyle Pfeuffer's fourth-grade artists at Arcadia Elementary School celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by drawing Aztec suns. Artists found inspiration from the Mayan calendar to come up with their pieces. Students learned about radial symmetry by designing different patterns, shapes, and designs. "At Arcadia Elementary, we are proud of our diverse population of students from all over the world," Pfeuffer said.



Aws Altawalbeh



Bryson Sanders



Chrisiah Nabors



Rana Khawooj

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EXCELSIOR

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KPS SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Darrin Slade

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Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

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) 337-0180

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Director of Human Resources
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District Directory at :
www.kalamazoopublicschools.com



Recipe
from the KPS Food Service, Chartwells



Kirsten Strong, registered dietician nutritionist

Chilled Balsamic Beet and Goat Cheese 'Lasagna'



THANKSGIVING is right around the corner. Do you have your dish to pass planned? If not, consider this eye-catching layered beet salad. It looks fancy, but is quite simple to put together. The flavors of the goat cheese, beets, pecans, honey, sage, and balsamic glaze are especially complementary, creating a flavor party for your taste buds. That's right. This recipe tastes as good as it looks. Be ready for some "oohing and aahing" once you reveal this dish.

INGREDIENTS

(Serves 6)

2 pounds of beets
11 ounces of goat cheese (softened to a spreadable room temperature)
¼ cup honey
½ cup balsamic glaze (can be found in the grocery store near the vinegar or salad dressings)
¾–1 cup pecans, chopped
4–5 sage leaves, minced
1–2 tablespoons of butter
Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Boil about 8 cups of water (or enough water to cover the beets) in a large saucepan.

2. Remove beet greens tops.

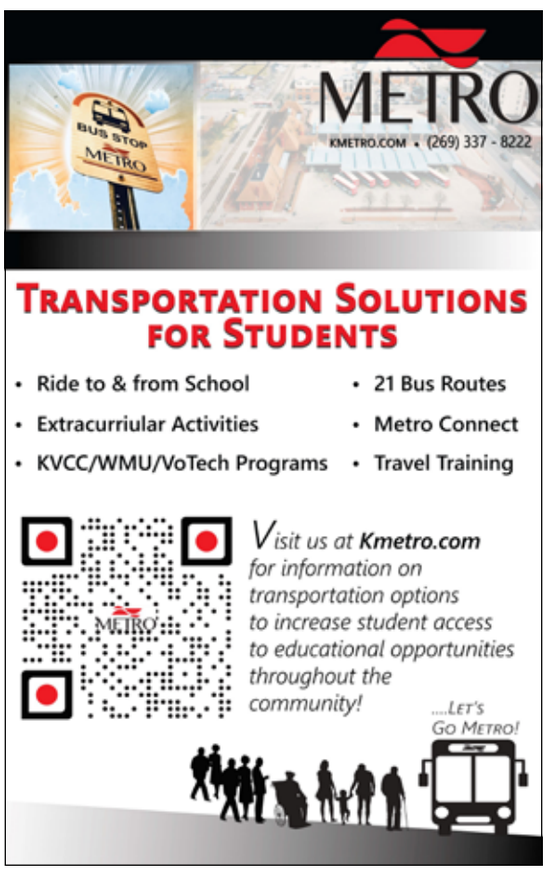
3. Add beets to the saucepan and cook/boil for 25 to 35 minutes, or until a knife is easily inserted into the beets. Let them cool. Peel the beets under running water. The skin should slide right off if you rub it. This can be messy. Be prepared to have lots of paper towels and know that your fingers might stain. Thinly slice the beets, about ¼ inch to ½ inch thick. If you have a mandolin, this would be a great time to use it.

4. Line a 9-by-5 or 8-by-4 inch loaf pan or something similar, with plastic wrap. Use a large enough piece so that there is extra plastic wrap hanging off the sides. Add a layer of beets and season with salt and pepper. Add a layer of goat cheese using a spatula. Continue alternating layers until you run out of ingredients, or you reach the top of the pan. Keeping the beets and cheese in the pan, use the extra plastic wrap to cover the loaf. Let the layered goat cheese and beets cool in the fridge for about 20 minutes.

5. In the meantime, heat a saucepan over medium-low heat and add butter. When the butter begins bubbling, add the minced sage, stirring to coat the sage in butter. When you start to smell the sage, add the chopped pecans. Toast pecans, stirring every minute or so until you can smell them, about 4-6 minutes. Do not walk away from the toasting pecans. They burn easily!

6. Remove the layed beets and goat cheese from the fridge. Cover the pan with your serving plate or platter. Flip the plate and pan together so that the pan is now upside down on top of the plate. Remove the pan, then carefully remove the plastic wrap. Tip: Choose a plate that is a contrasting color to the red beets for a pleasing presentation.

7. Drizzle the top of the beet and goat cheese block evenly with honey and the balsamic glaze, then top with the toasted pecans. To serve, slice vertically like lasagna so you can see all of the pretty layers. Enjoy!



Asylum Lake Preserve Makes the Perfect Getaway

WINCHELL Elementary School teachers took advantage of a resource in their own back yard to provide a unique field trip for their fourth-graders students. Led by art teacher Mandy Clearwaters, fourth-grade teachers Dayon Brooks, Kaisja Johnson, and Elita Jones took their students to the Asylum Lake Preserve just down the street from the school.

Students and parent chaperones were able to walk to the 274-acre preserve, which is owned by Western Michigan University, and explore, sketch, observe wildlife and participate in a nature scavenger hunt.



L to R: Holden McKinney, Henson Stewart (orange shirt), Lewis Teske, Mason Buytendorp, Sara Teske, and Jameson Kutchinski hike a trail in the Asylum Lake Preserve.



Delaney Hines shows off some of her scavenger hunt treasures.



Julia Kwei, Alijah Hicks, and Darnell (DJ) Briggs work on an assignment outside.



L to R: Kai Perry, Delaney Hines, Ruby Rembowicz, Evelyn DiTaranto, Ingrid Aardema, and Caleb Lighthizer prepare to enter the Asylum Lake Preserve located near Winchell Elementary.

Asylum Lake *(continued from paage 6)*

ON THE COVER: **These Winchell students found the perfect climbing spot in the Asylum Lake Preserve, top branch, from left, Darnell (DJ) Briggs, Alex Deweese, Alijah Hicks, Julia Kwei; and, bottom branch from left, Jaelyn Sanders and Liem Morales..**



Winchell Asylum Lake presenta a dramatic learning environment.



Zoe Finchem, left, and D'Azjah Williams take a moment by the lake to reflect.

Gift Book SALE



Begins November 29

Friends Bookstore has hundreds of gift quality, like-new books for all ages!

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Central Library: 315 S. Rose St., Lower Level

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On November 16, celebrate the Air Zoo's 45th Anniversary with a Paper Airplane Championship, 45% off admission, STEAM activities, food, and so much more!



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Maple Street Presents 'Too Many Detectives in the Murder Mansion'

MAPLE STREET Magnet School for the Arts students are rehearsing the play "Too Many Detectives in the Murder Mansion." Performances will be 7 p.m., Friday, Nov. 1 and Saturday, Nov. 2, and 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 2, and Sunday, Nov. 3, in the Maple Street cafeteria.

Tickets are $5 for adults and $3 for students and can be purchased at the door.



Maple Street students rehearse "Too Many Detectives."

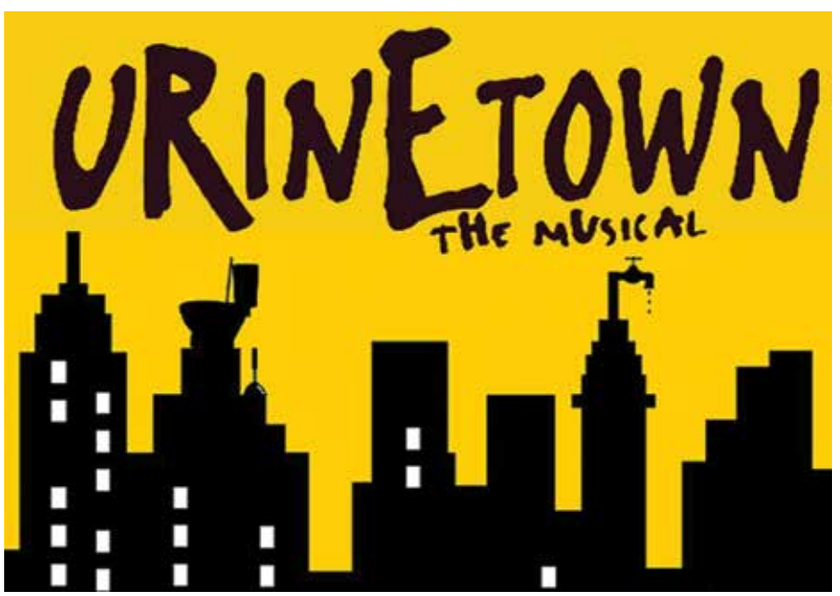
Loy Norrix High School Students Take to the Stage with 'Urinetown'

LOY NORRIX presents the Tony Award-winning satire "Urinetown the Musical," at Kasdorf Auditorium Nov. 6-14.

Teacher and director Dan Lafferty says, "'Urinetown' is a hilarious modern musical that satirizes politics, corporations, and social irresponsibility." In a city that has been suffering from a drought for 20 years, urination has become legalized and public toilets are the norm to try to control water usage.

The Guardian review said, "It's not every day that you find a U.S. musical that attacks corporate greed, rampant exploitation and unsustainable lifestyles – and, while it's not flawless, it has a welcome satirical bounce."

The show plays at 7 p.m. Nov. 6-7, 12-14; and 2 p.m. Nov. 8. Tickets are $12 adults, $10 students, $30 for a family of four. Tickets available at loynorrix.ludus.com or at the box office.



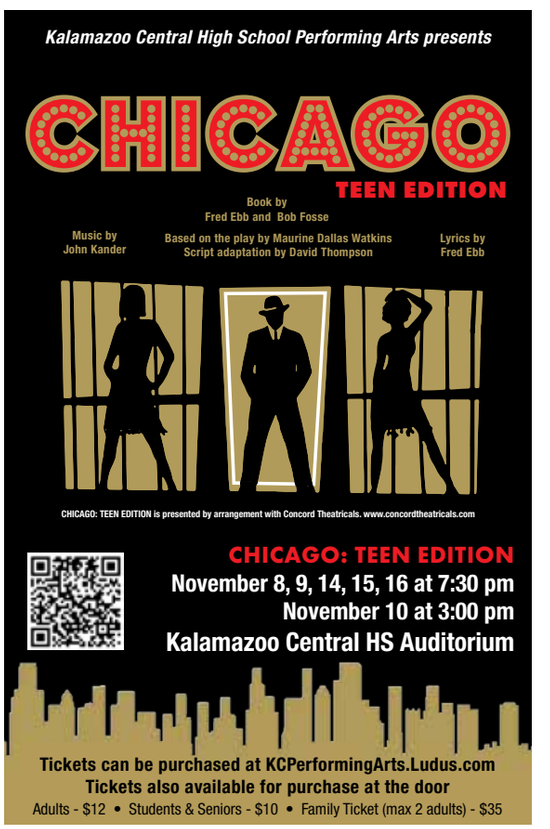
Merry Murderesses Come to Kalamazoo Central in 'Chicago: Teen Edition'

KALAMAZOO CENTRAL presents the teen version of the famed musical "Chicago" this fall.

In Roaring Twenties Chicago, chorus girl Roxie Hart murders a faithless lover and convinces her hapless husband, Amos, to take the rap — which he does until he finds out he's been duped and turns on Roxie. Convicted and sent to death row, Roxie and another "Merry Murderess," Velma Kelly, vie for the spotlight and the headlines, ultimately joining forces in search of the American dream: fame, fortune, and acquittal.

The 1996 Broadway production of "Chicago" is the longest-running musical revival and the longest-running American musical in Broadway history. It is the second longest-running show ever to run on Broadway, after "The Phantom of the Opera."

The show plays at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 8-9, 14-16; and 3 p.m. Nov. 10. Tickets are $12, $10 students and seniors, family tickets are $35 (max two adults). Tickets are available at KCPerformingArts.Ludus.com or at the door.



THE CITY OF Kalamazoo

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City of Kalamazoo
241 W South Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

THE CITY OF Kalamazoo

The City of Kalamazoo is making critical investments in our water and wastewater systems. These investments are funded by all of us through the rates that we pay. Rates in Kalamazoo are still low relative to other communities, but we understand rising costs may create a hardship for some households. Financial and other help options are listed below.

Payment Plans & Due Date Extensions are available. Call 311 or (269) 337-8000 for help.

The Community Action Agency of SW Michigan can help low-income households pay overdue bills. Call 211 or 1-877-422-2726 for more information.

Consumers Energy offers a free home analysis that can help customers save money by reducing energy and water usage. Call 1-888-316-8014 for more information.

www.kalamazoocity.org/Residents/Water-Sewer-Service/Help-with-Utility-Bills

Family Puzzle Race



Family

Wednesday, November 20 | 6–7:30 pm | Central
Assemble a team of 4-6 people and race to finish a 500-piece puzzle before the other teams!

GRAPHIC NOVEL CLUB



Teens

Tuesday, November 26 | 4:30 pm | Oshtemo
Join us for a monthly meeting to talk about the graphic novel of the month, do a craft, and hang out.

Learn more at kpl.gov

Kalamazoo Public Library
kpl.gov

KPS Sees Achievement Improvements Across Grades, Focus Remains on Future Growth

KALAMAZOO Public Schools student achievement improved in attendance, state test scores and graduation rates last year.

Superintendent Dr. Darrin Slade shared a report on achievement at a KPS Board of Education meeting in September, thanking staff, administrators, parents and students for their hard work. But while he celebrated the improved outcomes, he said the district cannot be complacent and that there is still room for significant growth.



Superintendent Dr. Darrin Slade

"Kalamazoo is one of the most improved districts in the entire state overall," Slade told the board. "That's something to be proud of. Everybody played a role in that."

The successful strategies that fueled the improvements will remain in place this year, and in some cases be expanded, he said. These efforts include a strong focus on attendance including efforts by the district's new truancy officer; stronger staff development, an expanded Saturday School program, mandatory Summer School for students who are not performing at grade level, and heightened attention on some of the district's lowest performing schools.

"Although our data has improved, we still have a lot of work to do. As a district we are still below the state average in many areas," Slade said. "We're not where we want to be yet. We want all of our students to be on grade level."

The data provides a strong foundation for more improvement this school year and will help fuel the development of the strategic planning process that continues this fall, he said.

Among the highlights from his report:

CHRONIC ABSENCES

Overall chronic absence rates were reduced by 9.8 percent across the district, with most schools reducing the number of students who were chronically absent by more than 5 percent. In comparison, the state reduced its chronic absenteeism rate by 1.3 percent. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 10 percent of the school year.

"When we're talking about data, a 5 percent improvement is a big deal," Slade said. "An almost 10 percent improvement is just amazing."

The attendance gains reflect the hard work of the entire community, including school staff, students and parents. "It was just a total community effort," he said. It took a "boots on the ground" approach, that included knocking on doors — by staff, board members, and community members — strong communication, and conferences with parents.

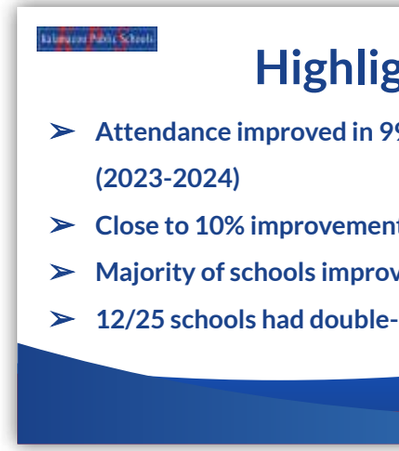
The community can expect continued focus on attendance this year. "Until we have a 90 percent or above attendance rate, we can't be satisfied," Slade said.

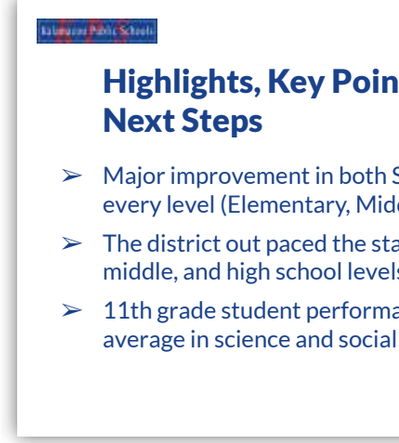
ACHIEVEMENT — ELEMENTARY LEVEL

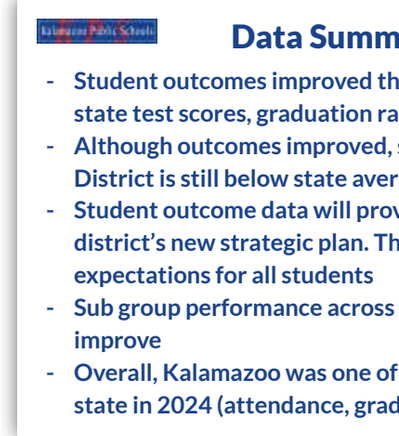
The M-STEP is the computerized standardized test used by the state to measure student achievement.

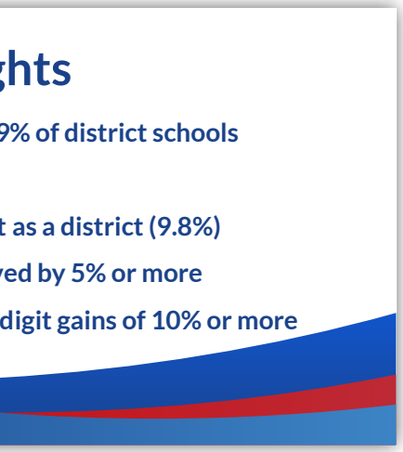
Math: The district made significant growth, with a majority of KPS elementary schools showing improvement in elementary math, this included most of the district's historically low-performing elementary schools — all of which participated in Saturday School last year.

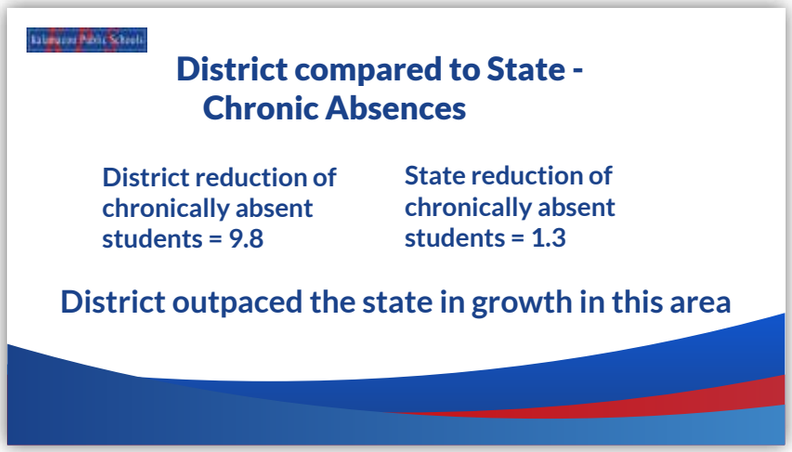
Of the district's 17 elementary schools, 13 improved

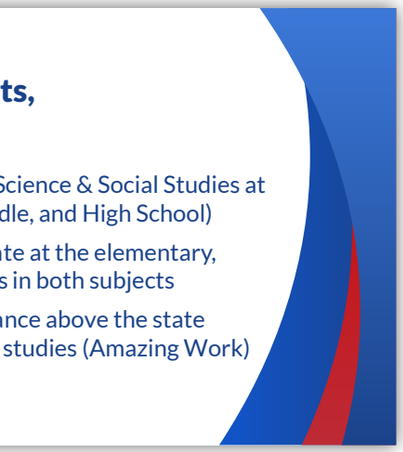


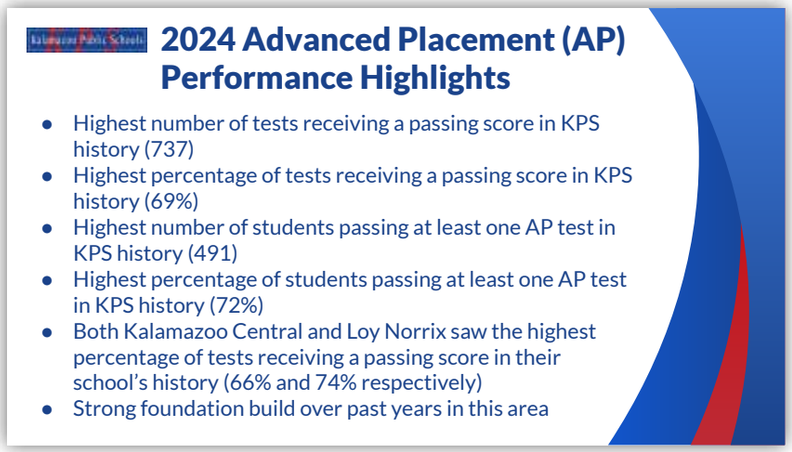


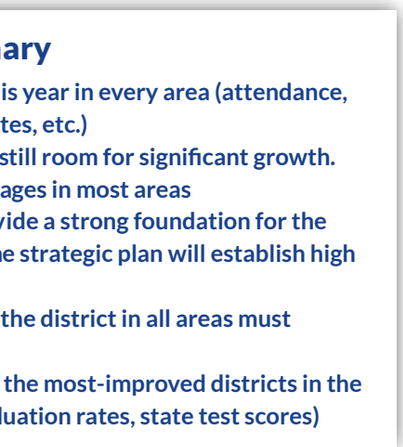


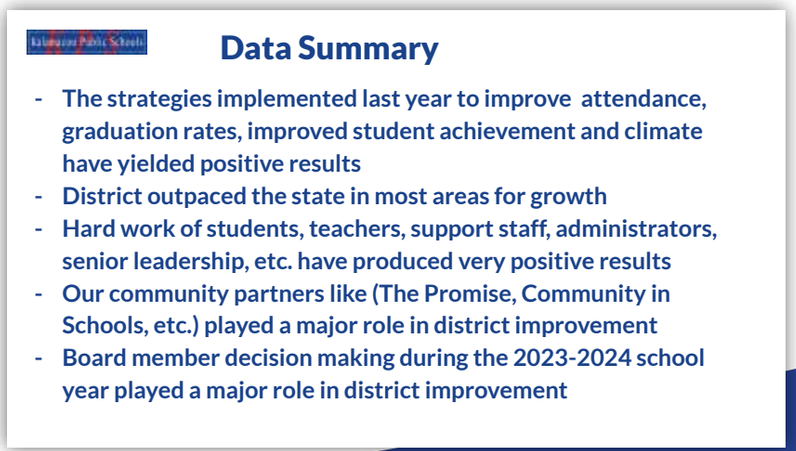












third-grade test scores and 11 had major improvements in fifth-grade math. Eight of the district's elementary schools improved in fourth-grade math, but overall fourth-grade test scores declined by 3.2 percent. Fifth-grade math scores improved by 4.3 percent compared to the state at 1.1 percent.

English Language Arts: Elementary school students performed well on the ELA test, with third and fifth graders outpacing the state average. All of the district's historically low-performing schools improved in reading. Scores improved for third graders at 9 of 17 schools, for fourth graders at 8 out of 15 schools (two elementary schools only go to third grade) and for fifth graders at 11 out of 15 schools.

"We are approaching pre-Covid levels in elementary reading," he said. "Again, that is a testament to the hard work of our teachers, principals and support staff members in our elementary schools."

Moving Forward: The district will maintain focus on its historically low-performing elementary schools with additional supports and more resources such as Saturday School. The key to improvement in all schools will be high-quality instruction, protecting instructional time, and a focus on building skills for the youngest students, he said.

"Our strategic plan will set high expectations and goals for reading," Slade said. "We have to maintain very high expectations for our students, You saw we met a lot of them last year. That will continue."

ACHIEVEMENT — SECONDARY LEVEL

Math: The district's seventh-grade students outpaced the state in math, but there were no major improvements in sixth-grade or eighth-grade math achievement. Likewise, the district did not see major

(continued on page 12)

KPS Achievement *(continued from page 11)*

growth in high school math achievement, which aligns with state trends which have been stagnant for the last decade — with the one KPS exception being improved math outcomes at Phoenix High School. While the state saw a decline of 3.9 percent in math scores, the district saw an overall decline of 2.4 percent.

English Language Arts: Slade began with praise for eighth-grade students and teachers.

"I wish I could stand up and give a standing ovation for our eighth-grade students," he said. "Eighth-grade students had the highest reading scores" in the last 10 years.

There were still struggles at the sixth and seventh grade, but efforts will focus on reversing those trends this year, he said. The district will take a holistic approach to the issue, including working on attendance and behavior to help students achieve at a higher level.

At the high school level, students performed very well with three of the four high school programs making significant gains.

Moving Forward: In addition to the measures mentioned for elementary schools, such as high expectations and focusing on quality instruction, Slade said the district will be increasing opportunities for tutoring at the secondary level.

Speaking as a former high school principal, he said, "When we offer support, we need students to take advantage of support. If we offer tutoring, we need students to come and attend tutoring. We're talking about student accountability at that level."

SCIENCE AND SOCIAL STUDIES

The district saw achievement improvement at every level, with KPS students outpacing the state in all grade levels. For example, KPS performance in fourth grade science improved by 8.3 percent, while the state averages decreased by 1.5 percent.

Slade said the global economy demands students be prepared with strong science skills to land in-demand STEM jobs and with robust social studies skills to understand the cultures around them.

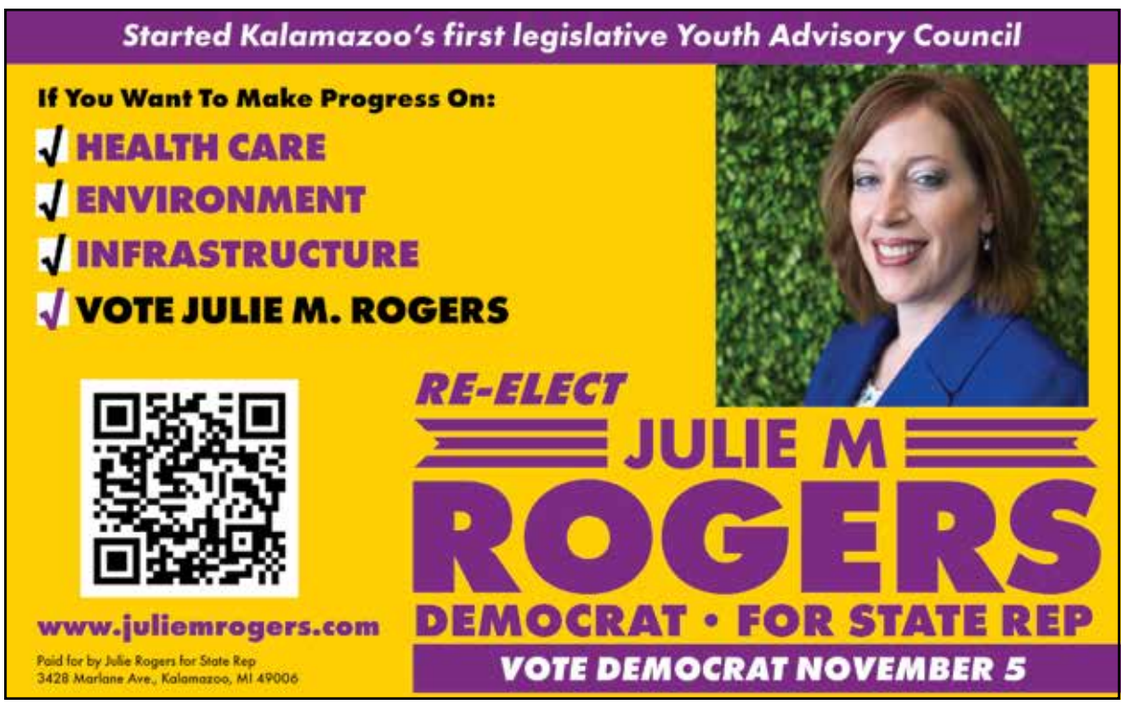
ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Much focus is placed on the achievements of the lowest performing students, but Slade also shared positive news for some of the district's highest performing students, who can often be found in Advanced Placement and honors classes.

Advanced Placement participation was the highest in the history of the district, a fact built on the district's efforts to expand that program in recent years. Not only were students participating in the classes, but on the AP capstone tests at least 80 percent of all students taking the tests passed the exams thus qualifying for college credit in their subject areas. This was the highest achievement rate for AP students in the history of the district.

GRADUATION RATES

Graduation rates will not be officially released until the beginning of 2025, but preliminary data shows graduation rates have improved at every high school in the district, Slade said.





Vote Nate Anderson for Kalamazoo Public School Board

A Collaborative Partner and KPS Parent



Vote for Nate in the non-partisan section!

- ***Parent* of 3 KPS students**
- ***Education* and mentoring *experience***
- ***20+ years in HR and consulting***
- ***Active public school advocate***

Priorities

- Student Outcomes: Data-driven decision-making and measurement
- Learning Environments: Safe, inclusive, and optimal learning and working spaces
- Community Investment: Strengthen KPS as a district of choice

Endorsements:
- **Kalamazoo County Democratic Party**
- **State Representative Julie Rogers**
- **State Senator Sean McCann**
- **Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin (and Candidate for US Senate)**

Paid for by Nate Anderson for KPS, PO Box 21 Kalamazoo, MI 49009



DID YOU KNOW?

All recent Michigan high school graduates can earn a skills certificate or degree **TUITION FREE** with the NEW Community College Guarantee

WINTER REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN
CLASSES BEGIN JAN. 13

COMMUNITY COLLEGE GUARANTEE | MI Student Aid

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KalamazooVALLEY™ community college

Nick Stamper Turns Childhood Passion for Trains into a Career

DO YOU KNOW that kid who is obsessed with something in elementary school — and everyone wonders what they're going to do when they grow up?

Well, if that kid is Nick Stamper, he grows up to do pretty much what he was always obsessed with.

In his case it was trains. It was always trains. And today, after earning a degree in integrated supply management with a minor in business analytics from Western Michigan University, he is a trainmaster for the BNSF Railway in northern Minnesota.

Stamper, 25, grew up in Kalamazoo, and attended Winchell Elementary School, Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts and Loy Norrix High School.

He has advice for those kids who know at an early age that they absolutely love something: "Run with it."

"I was always the kid that got teased in school over my interest in trains, but I stuck with it and now I get to do a lot of really cool things that I never thought I'd be involved in," he said. "Make a plan, stick with it as best you can and don't be upset if you face setbacks.

"The path of life is hardly ever straight, but if you stay with it and work hard, you'll eventually get where you want to go."

Here is a little more about Stamper's story:

Do you remember how you got into trains?

I remember from a very early age that I was introduced to "Thomas and Friends" by my parents and I got hooked.

What did you want to do when you grew up? Did you have a plan for how you were going to do that?

My original intent was to start as a conductor and work my way to locomotive engineer, then go into management as a road foreman of engines, a position which supervises locomotive engineers, helps troubleshoot locomotive operational issues on the road with the engineer and the railroad's mechanical department and generally acts as a subject matter expert with train handling and operations.

I organized a lot of my education around that after figuring out that logistics was the field of study I wanted. I also attended a few summer camps at Michigan Tech to help learn and meet new people, some of whom I still talk to 10 years later.

(continued on page 15)



"I was always the kid that got teased in school over my interest in trains, but I stuck with it and now I get to do a lot of really cool things that I never thought I'd be involved in."

Nick Stamper followed his childhood obsession and now works for a train company, BNSF Railway.

Nick Stamper *(continued from page 14)*

Unfortunately with the pandemic that route was not available to me, so I forged a new path and I am still finding new ways to grow and develop the skills I need to achieve my original dream.

What did that translate into in terms of a course of study and degree in college?

With the help of my mom (Dr. Christine Stamper, a Professor of Management and HR Program Director at the Haworth College of Business), I discovered that logistics/supply chain was the field I wanted to study in college and that Western Michigan University and Michigan State University both had excellent supply chain programs. WMU's program focused more on the engineering side as well, given the close ties to the automotive and manufacturing industries in southwestern Michigan, so it gave me insight into things like how to engineer products, using programs like AutoCAD, etc.

Did you do any internships? How did that impact your success?

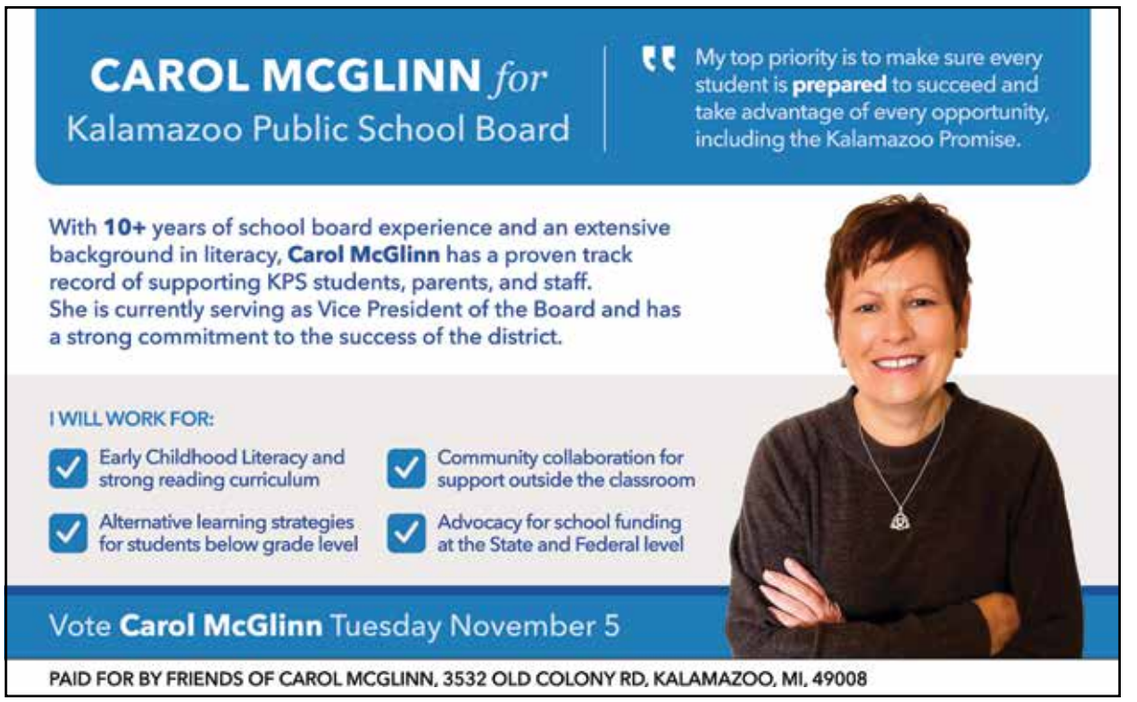
I did a few "externships," which is a WMU College of Business program where first- and second-year students go to a company to tour the place, ask questions, and gain an understanding of what they do and what fields are open to them. It's sort of like a "Day in the Life" type of thing. It's based on what you're interested in. I was a volunteer peer mentor for that same program, helping mentees craft cover letters, resumes, answer questions, etc.

I did technically have an internship with Werner Enterprises, a trucking company in Omaha but it was canceled due to the pandemic. My job at the time, working for a Delta Airlines subsidiary company called DGS as a ramp agent, did end up being considered an internship. I learned a lot about operations management, safety in challenging outdoor environments, regulatory issues, and so forth. DGS ended up being much more valuable in terms of experience of the job I have now.

What are you doing now?

I am a trainmaster for the BNSF Railway. The short version of my job description is that I'm a jack-of-all-trades manager in the transportation department. I do it all.

I craft and execute the daily operating plan in consultation with the yardmasters, conduct safety briefings, help train crews with administrative questions, conduct rules testing as required by law, respond to incidents like grade crossing accidents, work with customers to resolve waybill and service questions, and generally oversee train operations across approximately 450 miles of track across the Minnesota and Wisconsin in conjunction with the division trainmaster, the network operations center and my superintendent.



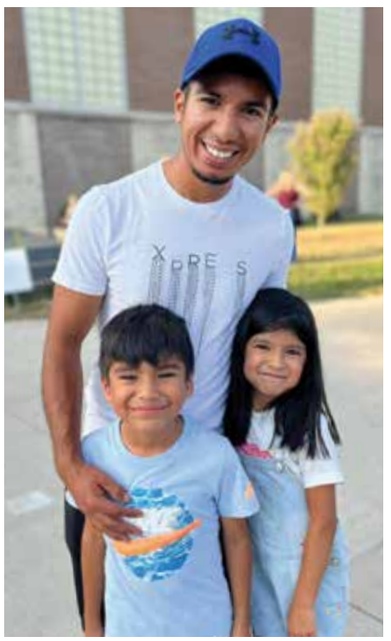


Fun Fitness Night Returns to Milwood Elementary

FAMILIES turned out in droves again for Milwood Elementary School's Family Fitness Night. Designed by physical education teacher Jim Horn about a decade ago, the event celebrates healthy, active lifestyles and encourages everyone to get up and move.

Horn, who also happens to be the head men's basketball coach at Kalamazoo Valley Community College invited his college players to be a part of the festivities, along with other college teams and sports-related businesses. They all shared their excitement about being active and physically fit.

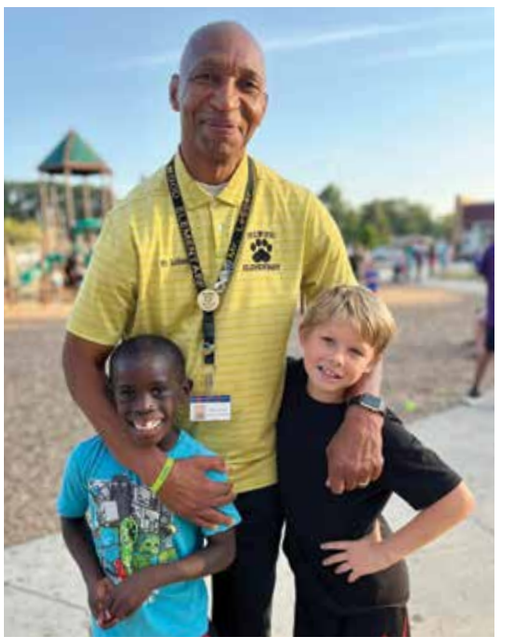
Students and their families could try tennis and lacrosse, martial arts, do pull ups, play basketball and volleyball, run a few laps around the playground, and learn about many of the athletic opportunities around the community.



Adrian, left, and Sophia Lujano are proud to bring dad Jesus Lujano to Milwood's Family Fitness Night.



Rosa and Maya Mellinger take a break from the action at Milwood.



Principal Craig LeSuer is happy to see students Junior Arthanas and Nolan Harding at Milwood's Family Fitness Night.



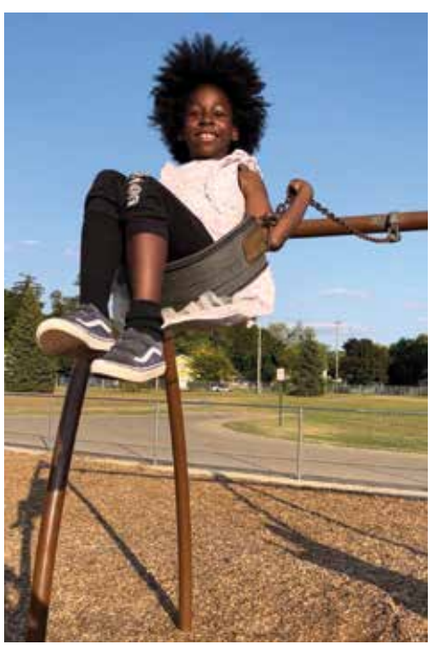
Clara Everage gives tennis a try during the Milwood Elementary Family Fitness Night.



Nora Hayward gets a little hang time as she works on her chin ups.



Physical education teacher Jim Horn, left, thanks Marcus Henderson, a.k.a. DJ No Limit, for providing energizing music for the event. Horn started Family Fitness Night almost a decade ago to help MIlwood families celebrate healthy living.



Brooklynn Sims is flying high on the swingset during the Milwood Family Fitness Night.

Fun Fitness *(continued from page 16)*



Javier Marshall tries to remove a piece from a giant wood puzzle.



Rusi Maria and Braylon Persell Clay battle it out over foosball.



Rusi Maria and Juma Arthanas show that fitness equals peace at Milwood Elementary.



Sawyer Jackson defends against A.J. Brady's attempt to score a goal at the soccer net.



Angelique Nichols and Julius Martin enjoy a break at MIlwood's Family Fitness Night.



Members of Jeter's Leaders from Kalamazoo Central, Loy Norrix and other high schools in the county came to help facilitate activities at Milwood Elementary.

Elect Incumbent Juanita Yvonne Payton



I Will Advocate For:

- Strong Academic Foundation for every student
- Increase Non-Traditional pathways to ensure success at post-secondary levels
- Diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels
- Maintaining a safe and orderly environment for students and staff
- Work cooperatively with parents and members of the community to benefit the academic and social growth of all students

TOP PRIORITY: ENSURE HIGH LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS

VOTE: NOVEMBER 5TH, 2024

Project SEED Participants Reap Rewards with High-Level Research

THE KALAMAZOO section of the American Chemical Society (ACS) worked with three Kalamazoo Central High School students and alums through the ACS Project SEED Program this summer.

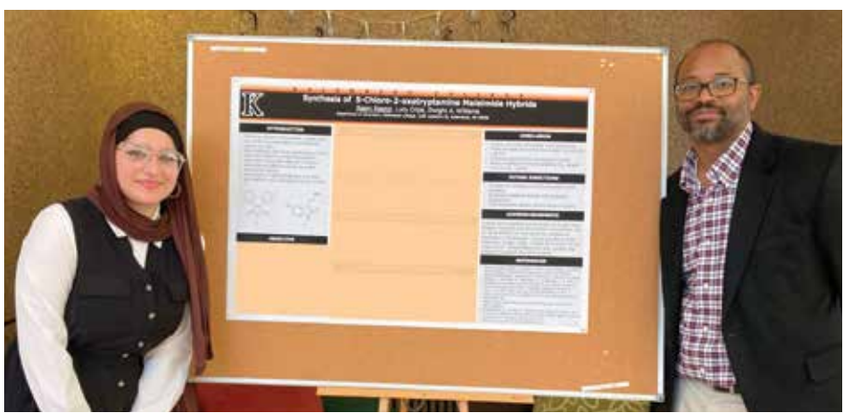
Project SEED's mission is to provide STEM research and learning opportunities for high school students with diverse identities and backgrounds to empower them to advance their interest in chemical science. For information on how to apply to the program, visit kalamazooacs.org/project-seed/.

Over the past 30 years, the Kalamazoo section of ACS has sponsored 88 student student research projects. Each Project SEED fellowship participant receives a stipend.

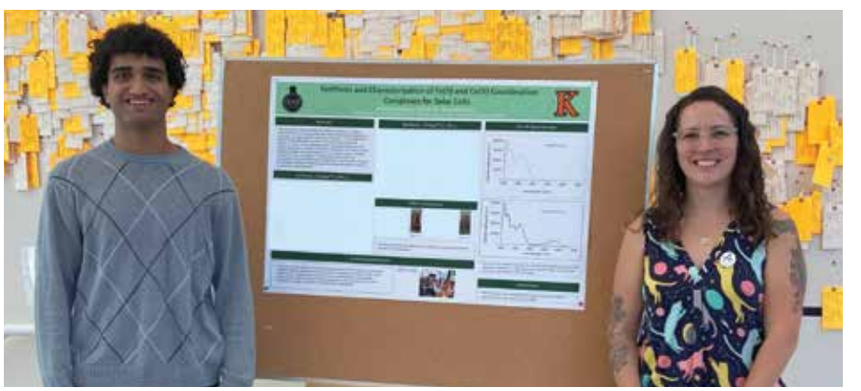
This year's KPS participants were Dorian Roberts, Mahdi Hassnawi, and Reem Rasool. The students presented their research with their mentors at a summer research symposium held at Kalamazoo College in August.

Mahdi Hassnawi worked with mentor Daniela Arias-Rotondo, assistant professor of chemistry at Kalamazoo College. Hassnawi prepared and characterized Schiff base compounds as complexing agents to

(continued on page 19)



Reem Rasool with mentor Prof. Dwight Williams (Chemistry, Kalamazoo College). Reem studied the synthesis of novel tryptamine-maleimide hybrids for potential antibiotic activity. Some data in the photos is blurred because the research is ongoing.



Mahdi Hassnawi with mentor Prof. Daniela Arias-Rotondo (Chemistry, Kalamazoo College). Mahdi prepared and characterized Schiff base compounds as complexing agents to improve photoelectric conversion of solar energy with first row transition metals. He is currently a senior at Kalamazoo Central HS and interested in energy and aerospace technologies.





Project SEED *(continued from page 18)*



Dorian Roberts (Mentor: Prof. Dwight Williams, Chemistry, Kalamazoo College). Dorian studied the synthesis of novel tryptamine-maleimide hybrids for potential antibiotic activity. She is currently a senior at Kalamazoo Central HS and interested in studying chemistry and Spanish in college to prepare for a career in health care.

improve photoelectric conversion of solar energy with first row transition metals. He is a senior at Kalamazoo Central and is interested in pursuing a career in energy and aerospace technologies.

Hassnawi said the experience was enlightening and rewarding, but the importance of the program went far beyond the high level of research he was able to conduct with Arias-Rotondo.

"My project had meaning and it was for something that I valued which helped a lot in the long run," he said. "Seeing the results and all of it coming to fruition was truly great. You do have to be willing to put in some hefty effort for this internship, but in the end it's a solid experience to figure out if you like a certain aspect of STEM and it can get you ahead."

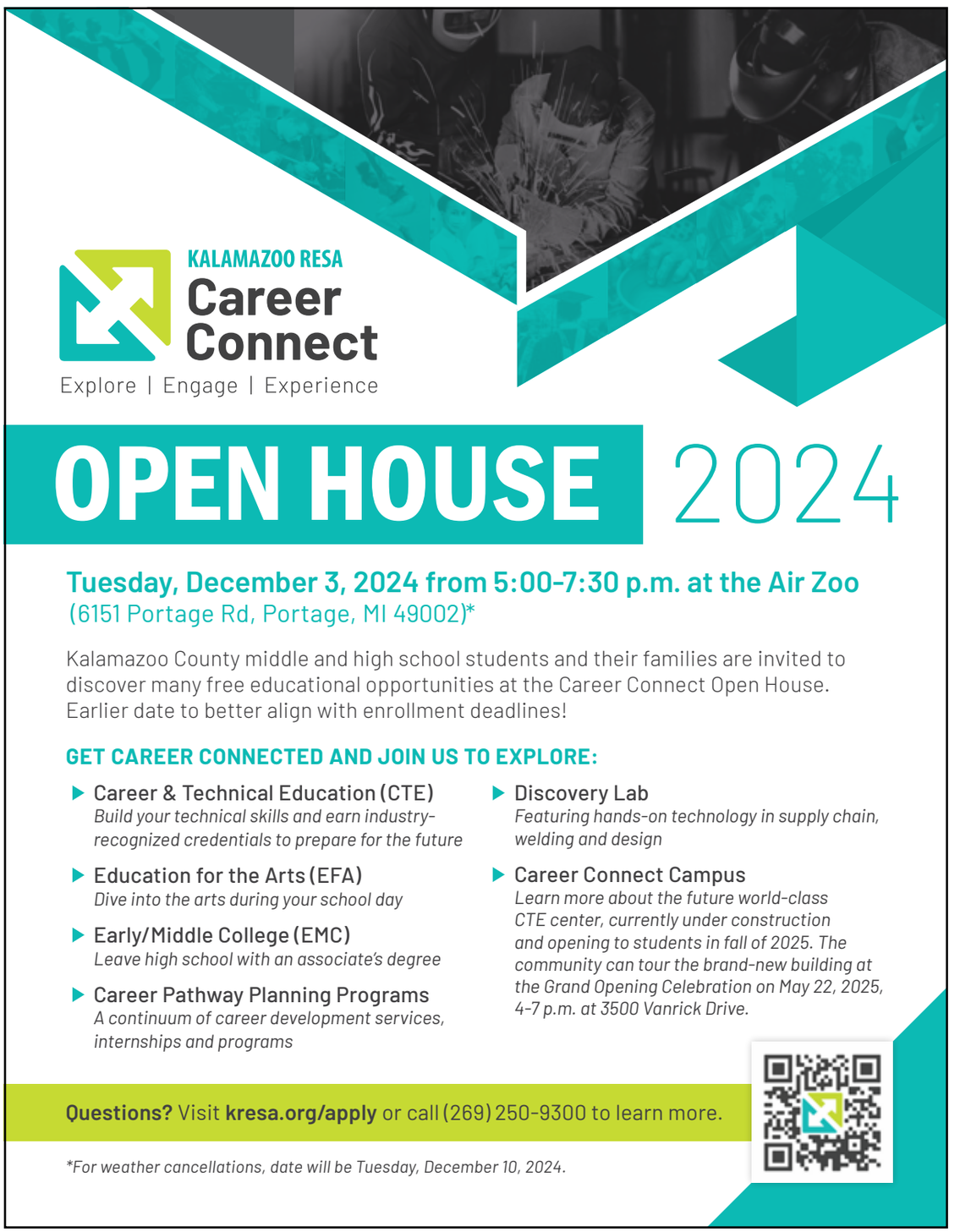
Rasool worked with mentor Dwight Williams, assistant professor of chemistry at Kalamazoo College. Rasool studied the synthesis of novel tryptamine-maleimide hybrids for potential antibiotic activity. She graduated from Kalamazoo Central this year and is currently attending Western Michigan University and planning to major in biomedical sciences.

Roberts also worked with Williams. Roberts studied the synthesis of novel tryptamine-maleimide hybrids for potential antibiotic activity. She is a senior at Kalamazoo Central and is interested in studying chemistry and Spanish in college to prepare for a career in health care.

Hassnawi encouraged high school students with an interest in science to consider applying for the next round of Project SEED in the spring.

"I would say that if you generally like science and are confused on what you would like to do, this internship is a great start that not many people get the opportunity to have," he said. "You get lab experience prior to college. Some people don't touch a lab or get to do any of the work I was performing until their senior year of college."

For information on how to apply to the program, visit kalamazooacs.org/project-seed/.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE Kalamazoo VALLEY Museum KV

NEW EXHIBIT **NOW - JAN. 5, 2025 | FREE**



MYSTERY AND BENEVOLENCE: MASONIC & ODD FELLOWS FOLK ART

Featuring over 80 carvings, sculptures, textiles and regalia, "Mystery and Benevolence: Masonic and Odd Fellows Folk Art" brings to light the histories, symbolism and values of the Freemasons and the Independent Order of the Odd Fellows.

EVENT **SATURDAY, NOV. 2 | 1 P.M. | FREE**

BRAIDING SWEETGRASS COMMUNITY BOOK DISCUSSION

A book discussion about "Braiding Sweetgrass" led by Kalamazoo Public Library at the museum. Author Robin Wall Kimmerer will be a Visiting Writers series guest at Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Texas Township Campus on Nov. 6 at 10 a.m. and 2:15 p.m.



EVENT **WEDNESDAY, NOV. 13 | 7 P.M. | FREE**

HEALING GROUNDS THROUGH REGENERATIVE AGICULTURE: A MODERATED CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRACTITIONERS AND THE PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Liz Carlisle, author of the book "Healing Grounds," will moderate a discussion with local speakers from The Honorable Harvest Lecture Series about how their agricultural work is a part of climate justice and social justice work that they do for our community.



EVENT **SATURDAY, NOV. 23 | NOON - 3 P.M. | FREE**



PARADE DAY: NORTH POLE ADVENTURES

Stop by the Kalamazoo Valley Museum after the downtown holiday parade for a North Pole adventure! There will be hands-on activities, a free seasonal planetarium show, reindeer games and more!

FREE UPCOMING EVENTS

The museum collaborates with community partners to create unique and fun programs both inside and outside the museum walls. Check them out!

- **Tree Lighting Ceremony in Bronson Park | Friday, Nov. 22 |** Organized by Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation, celebrate the start of the holiday season! The KVM will provide hands-on crafts.
- **The Honorable Harvest Lecture Series | Tuesdays through - Nov. 19 | 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.** At Kalamazoo Valley Community College Culinary and Allied Health building after "Taps on Tuesday," check out a different speaker each week on food sustainability and reciprocation related to natural food systems.
- **Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Visiting Writers series with Robin Wall Kimmerer | Wednesday, Nov. 6 | 10 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. |** At the college's Dale Lake Auditorium at the Texas Township Campus, the acclaimed author and botanist will speak.
- **Exoplanet Exploration | Saturday, Nov. 6 | 10 a.m. - Noon |** At Coloma Public Library, explore a NASA exhibit about exoplanets and engage in related hands-on learning led by museum staff.

PLANETARIUM EXPERIENCE | **NOV. SHOWS | $3 PER PERSON**

We Are Guardians | Sat. 11 a.m. & Sun. 1 p.m. | 25 min. | Grades K & up

Satellites reveal how interconnected Earth's ecosystems are, helping us understand the impact of human activities on climate change and the delicate balance of our planet's environment.



The Sky Above Us | Sat. & Sun. 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

SPECIAL NOTICE: The museum will be closed Nov. 28-29

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

Kalamazoo VALLEY Museum KV

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