

WESTBURY UFSD

FALL 2017 NEWSLETTER

Homecoming 2017: DRAGON PRIDE IN FULL FORCE



Some photos courtesy of The Westbury Times

From the Desk of the Superintendent

To the Westbury Schools Community:

As we approach the mid-way point, I am happy to report that the 2017-2018 school year has so far been a great success. Our students are making daily progress in the classroom, and our new Ninth Grade Academy at Nassau Community College (see page 3) is off to a great start.

A particular focus of the District this year is to more fully integrate comprehensive, 21st-century technology into an innovative curriculum. We are building future-ready schools that will leverage emerging technology and resources to increase student achievement in a standards-based approach. We want to stay ahead of the curve and provide our students with a high-level, viable curriculum, providing for them the best environment to learn in the 21st century.

Our families are critical to this process, and we greatly look forward to having you engage with us. Every step of the way, whether we are talking about professional learning of our staff or raising awareness in our schools of cutting-edge technology, we want Westbury Schools families involved in the conversation. Your input is invaluable, and we can't wait to see the wonderful things we can accomplish when we work together.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Eudes S. Budhai

Manilow Music Project Comes to Westbury Schools

Legendary Pop Star Barry Manilow donates piano to Westbury High School, inspires others to donate instruments

The MANILOW MUSIC PROJECT

A Manilow Fund For Health and Hope Program



Barry Manilow may be known as the voice of pop hits such as "Mandy" and "Copacabana," but he's also a dedicated philanthropist. Looking to ensure that music education endures into the future, he created the Manilow Music Project and recently teamed up with Westbury High School. Mr. Manilow donated a beautiful Yamaha piano to the school, and he let all his fans know that anyone who donated a new or gently used musical instrument to the school would receive two free tickets to one of his shows. It was a wonderful gesture that all of us here at the Westbury School District greatly appreciated. Thank you, Barry Manilow!

Books and Buddies: What Could Be Better?

This summer, the Westbury Memorial Public Library held its first-ever Book Buddies program—with help from Westbury Middle School. The Book Buddies event was a celebration of reading, creativity and collaboration. Teen volunteers came to Westbury Memorial Public Library for five weeks over the summer to read, make crafts and play games with younger children. Through this wonderful program, a life-long love and respect for reading was instilled in these youngsters.

Much of the credit for the success goes to Westbury Middle School teacher Christine Erskine. Ms. Erskine publicized the program to the Junior National Honor Society students and made sure to come to each session to encourage them. “I know for certain this program would not have been as successful as it was without Ms. Erskine and Westbury Middle School,” said Alexandra Blau, a librarian from Westbury Memorial Public Library. “On a personal level, it was wonderful getting to know these students. In our exit survey, the majority stated that they enjoyed the feeling volunteering gave them and are looking forward to doing it again.” A big thank you to the following Westbury students for all their help:

Pauline Amukowa
Rebecca Amukowa
Cindy Bonilla
Christine Boyer
Shannon Farnum
Ashley Farnum

Micheka Gene
Jessica Gilbert
Isabel Hernandez
Loren Hunt
Tanya Kumar

Amy Luis
Kevin Moran
Niya Payne
Lesly Portillo
Shan-ee Vanterpool



KIDWIND CHALLENGE TEACHES THE ENERGY SOLUTIONS OF TOMORROW!

Students from Westbury High School’s Department of Technology recently took part in the incredible KidWind Challenge—a team effort of teachers, students, engineers, and practitioners working to make renewable energy education accessible in classrooms around the world. The goal is to engage young minds in hands-on activities and teach students basic science and engineering principles in exciting and challenging ways.

The KidWind Challenge focuses on the promises and opportunities of renewable energy, specifically wind power and its relationship to global climate change. A unique aspect of the KidWind initiative is its efforts to motivate young female students and underrepresented populations to think about careers in STEM fields, especially those related to renewable energy. KidWind fosters opportunities for students to build, test, explore, and understand wind energy technology at a manageable scale. Ten Westbury students who excelled and met the requirements for the KidWind Challenge were chosen to participate at the Cradle of Aviation Museum. They were sixth graders Areej Nawaz, Hidalgo Daelynn, Emily Reyes-Diaz and Daniela Salmeron, as well as eighth graders Julia Barillas, Lisbeth Hernandez, Jacqueline Mendez, Liba Shahid, Deborah Sorto, and Bedsabeht Torres.



KidWind is an innovative educational system that fosters and provides for student learning in an innovative and creative way.

The energy solutions of tomorrow will take innovation and creativity. With brilliant, budding young scientists such as these students from Westbury, the future of energy looks very bright.

DISTRICT NEWS BULLETIN

WESTBURY SHOOTS FOR THE STARS

Students Visit Cradle of Aviation



Westbury Middle School's Earth Science classes recently took a field trip to the Cradle of Aviation, located in Garden City, to delve deeper into the subject of astronomy. Students in Ms. Steinhauff and Ms. Papetti's classes viewed an IMAX movie that presented the advancements in technology over the past half century—allowing humans to punch through the stratosphere, walk on the moon and live continuously in orbit. Students also participated in the interactive exhibit “Living in Space,” detailing the many unique challenges of performing ordinary day-to-day activities while in zero gravity. The middle school students developed an understanding of how astronauts' eat, sleep and stay hygienic while in orbit. The visit to the Cradle of Aviation is part of the Westbury School District's ongoing initiative to offer students experiences that bring their classroom curriculum to life.

BUDDING JOURNALISTS AT POWELLS LANE!

Regular readers of *Newsday* know the truth—there's no section more fun than *Kidsday*! Written by kids for kids, *Kidsday* features are the work of local Long Island children, including interviews with celebrities, reporting on events and learning just what it's like to be a journalist for one of the most important newspapers in the country. Recently, students in Melanie Zecchini's English Language Arts class at Powells Lane Elementary School had their own *Kidsday* feature. The children reviewed the very things that *they* are experts in—toys and games. Participating students played with and offered their critical evaluations of selected toy products. Another exciting learning activity that takes place year-round at Powells Lane is the Tower Garden. Children are growing all sorts of vegetables in their classes using a blue light. These gardens help teach vital STEM lessons—and are a bunch of fun!

TEMPORARY NINTH GRADE ACADEMY OPENS AT NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Academy Greatly Mitigates Overcrowding; Benefits Students' Educations

This fall, the District opened a temporary ninth grade academy at Nassau Community College (NCC) to help mitigate the severe overcrowding at our high school. Continued enrollment increases, and the growing body of research attesting to the educational value of ninth grade academies, were the reasons for the District's decision to move the ninth grade class out of the high school. In May, with the passage of the District's 2017-2018 budget, the community approved the allocation of funds required for the move of our ninth grade classes to NCC.

WESTBURY WELCOMES NEW ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR FINANCE AND OPERATIONS



The Westbury School District has welcomed Christine Costa to the District as its new assistant superintendent for finance and operations. Having previously worked as a business administrator in school districts in Smithtown, Middle

County, Syosset and others—as well as in the private sector as a CPA—Ms. Costa will have a host of diverse roles and responsibilities in the District. These will include overseeing Westbury School District's finances, state reporting, school facilities and the business office. It's a job that's especially important as the District heads into budget season. Everyone in the Westbury School District is excited to welcome Ms. Costa to our community, and we can't wait to see the wonderful things she will accomplish.

**WESTBURY UNION FREE
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
2 Hitchcock Lane
Old Westbury, New York 11568

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Eudes S. Budhai, *Superintendent*

******ECRWSS******

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New Westbury High School Press Box Named in Honor of the 'Voice of the Dragons'

Damon Mock, known as Dave, was an icon of Westbury for decades. A Class of 1986 graduate, Dave broadcast Westbury High School basketball and football games for years. He was also an award-winning, longtime writer, publishing his first article in *Advertising Age* magazine at only 15 years old. His career also included writing and serving as an editor for *The Westbury Times* and CBS Radio. Tragically, Dave passed away unexpectedly in 2010, leaving a massive void in Westbury that can never truly be filled. But on October 21, at Westbury's Homecoming, the Westbury High School press box was officially named the Damon "Dave" Mock Press Box, ensuring that Dave's name will live on forever in Westbury.

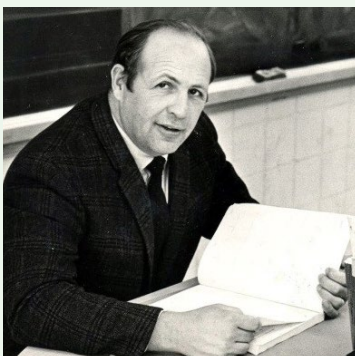
Known around town as the voice of the Westbury High School Green Dragons, Dave excelled as the emcee for Westbury High School's annual Homecoming Celebration and Reid Robeson Basketball Classic. Dave was also selected by Section VIII of the NYSPHSAA to be the announcer of boys' basketball playoff games in Nassau County.

In 1987, as a student at Hofstra, Dave worked as a writer for a morning show on WRHU-FM, a Hempstead-based public radio



station owned by Hofstra. He would stay at the station for nearly nine years and served as a news director, anchor and producer of the station's island-wide election night broadcasts before establishing the Island Radio News Network. In December 1997, Dave began working as a writer and tape operator for CBS radio. His career at CBS would span the next 12 years as he moved up the ranks, serving as a radio reporter, producer and news editor.

WHS Class of 1967 and Former Players Honor Coach John Fasano



A half century later, the Class of 1967 is back. Members of that class joined the Westbury School District community during Homecoming to dedicate the game to Coach John Fasano, who passed away in July of this year. A long-time teacher, football and track coach, and advisor, Coach Faz, as he was affectionately known, was also a fixture of the administration, serving as the department chairman of the business education department. He was also an accomplished football player himself, having won *Newsday's* Tom Thorpe award in 1946 and was a D-3 All-American at Alfred College. Perhaps the most impressive part of Coach Faz's tenure at Westbury was as an advocate for students. He assisted many players in getting accepted into college and remained in contact with hundreds of students long after they graduated, always ready to provide guidance, support and a bit of wisdom.