

Paterson Post

Paterson — A Promising Tomorrow

Together We Can

September 30, 2019

PPS Students Celebrate Hispanic Heritage

Hispanic
Heritage Month
September 15-October 15



Students from throughout the Paterson Public School District danced, sang, and orated in celebration of Hispanic heritage on September



18th at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex. Second-graders at Public School No. 21 kicked off the evening with a tribute to Mexican artist Frida Kahlo and a Mexican dance. They were directed by ESL Teacher Nicole Echeverry and Jaimeo Brown. Nataly Montiel, an eighth-grader at Public School No. 3, gave a speech on Hispanic pride. Aranza Hernandez Fornerino, who is in the fourth grade at Public School No. 16, was accompanied by her music teacher Jason Quevedo as she sang *Recuerdame (Remember Me)* from the film, *Coco*. Helen Urena, who is in the eighth grade at Newcomers Middle School, recited *Las Horas de Angustia*, a poem by Salome Urena of the

Dominican Republic. The Dr. Hani Awadallah School Dancing Team closed the evening with a dance to the popular song, *Vivir Mi Vida* by Marc Anthony. Deputy Superintendent Susana Peron served as the emcee for the evening, and Superintendent Eileen Shafer and Board Commission Joel Ramirez gave remarks during the ceremony.



Univision 41 “Unites” with PPS Students

by Michelle Depena, Grade 11,

Rosa L. Parks School of the Fine and Performing Arts

Journalists, personalities and media executives from Univision 41 visited Paterson Public Schools on September 20th as part of the network’s “Unidos Por Los Nuestros” (United For Each Other) campaign.

The professionals met with Rosa Parks High School (RPHS)’s communication arts and drama majors about their different media and communication departments, and informed them of the various opportunities within Univision.

The panel included Damaris Diaz, Ino Gomez, and Shino Aguakate. Univision’s marketing and finance team was also present, ready to educate the RPHS students in the more behind-the-scenes aspects of media.

The panel was welcomed by Superintendent Eileen Shafer and Mayor Andre Sayegh, who quickly took the opportunity to spread the word about the upcoming census in Paterson.

Diaz spoke about her childhood as a Latina in New York. She recommended that students try their best in all that they do (a very common piece of advice among the panelists), even in subjects that they dislike. She also advised students to pursue things that “make your heart pound.”



Ino Gomez spoke about his love for radio, calling it “a theatre of the mind” that allows him to create images in the minds of people across the country. His message to the students was to always prove wrong people who might doubt you.

The finance executives provided the students with more grounded, solid pieces of advice. “There is so much more to media than just TV and radio, than just the people in front of the cameras,” one executive said. They recommended getting into finance for

those who enjoy media, but dislike the limelight.

Senior Manager of Digital Marketing Kathryn Jordan stressed the importance of networking with people who can provide opportunities. Students asked questions relating to success, politics, and the professional aspects of working in media and communications.

The team from Univision later visited journalism students at the School of Culinary Arts, Hospitality and Tourism at Eastside High School.

Earlier, Caroline Fernandez, a radio personality on LA X 96.3 FM, visited Public School No. 2, where she attended as a child.

Student Immigration Stories Project Wins Statewide Honor



What began as a teacher's simple writing prompt and later grew into a published book and a museum exhibit is now being recognized as an outstanding educational program by the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA). Paterson Public Schools officials received word from the NJSBA that the *Why I Came To America* project will receive the association's School Leader Award at its annual convention in Atlantic City in October.

Two years ago, Jason Velante, an ESL teacher at Public School No. 21, began giving his students a writing prompt: "Why I came to America." Since then, his students' immigration stories have been published and circulated through the Paterson Free Public Library and the Wanaque Library. They have been exhibited at the Paterson Museum, and they have received a special commendation from the Board of Education.

Darryl Strawberry Talks of His Life Experience with Students

Four-time World Series Champion Darryl Strawberry, who played for both the New York Mets and the New York Yankees, came to Paterson Public Schools on September 17th bringing a message about the importance of staying in school and avoiding life's pitfalls. Strawberry, who now works as a minister, spoke of his own life experiences to students at Eastside High School. Later, he visited younger students at Public School No. 2. There, students were less likely to know of Strawberry's notoriety, which set the stage for Principal Felisa Van Liew to build in a little fun with the school's students through a teachable moment. She gave all the school's students a weekend assignment to conduct an Internet search for facts about Strawberry. Only three students completed the assignment. Those students were each presented with a baseball signed by Strawberry, and invited to take a picture with the major-league slugger.



PPS, WPU Celebrate Partnership in Cultivating Ed Leaders

Paterson Public Schools and William Paterson University (WPU) officials celebrated the outcomes of a five-year partnership that focused on developing the abilities of current school administrators while cultivating future educational leaders. Through this partnership funded by Leaders as Learners (LAL) and the Turnaround Partnership - New Jersey (TAP-NJ) federal grants, 72 district administrators participated in yearlong professional development, while 68 of the district's aspiring leaders obtained master's degrees in educational leadership or principal's certifications. "These efforts have benefited the educators who participated in these programs, and increased their capacity to engage in servant leadership," said Assistant Superintendent Cicely Warren, who oversaw the implementation of the grants in the district. "When we invest in the continuum of leadership, our students and our schools benefit."

RPHS Bounces Back to School

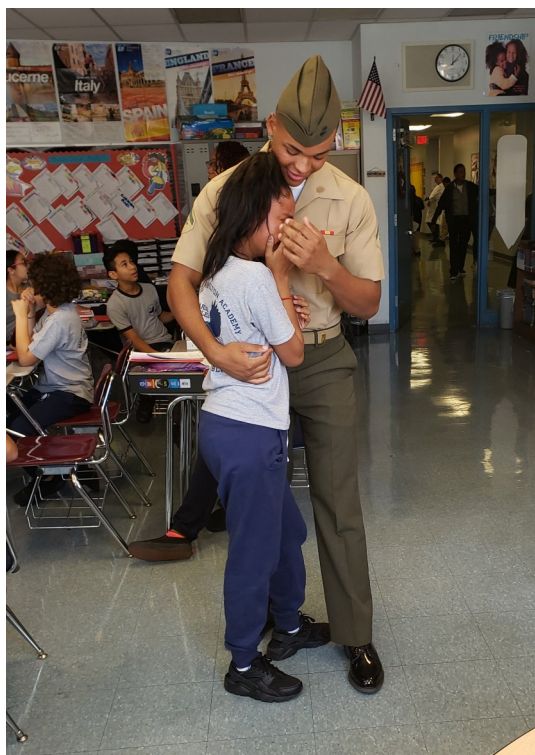
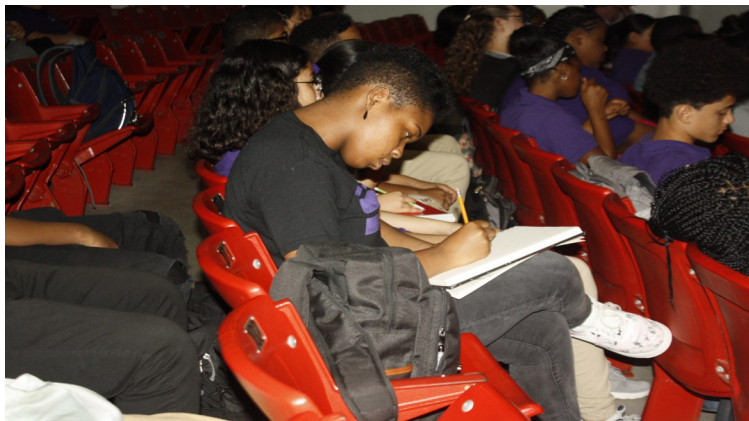
Students and faculty of Rosa L. Parks High School of the Fine and Performing Arts (RPHS) bounced back to school this month. “Bounce Back” is the school theme for the 2019-2020 school year, and works in conjunction with the school’s E³ initiative as school staff and administration continue to encourage, empower, and engage students.

Students kicked off the school year with the annual first-day assembly in which Principal Jalyn

E. Lyde laid out the year’s theme. Her calls of “BOUNCE BACK” were returned by the student-audience, echoing throughout the theater. Paterson’s own DJ Ricky played music, adding to the high-energy atmosphere.

In the following days, students began their classes, met with advisors, and started collaborating with staff to help generate ideas for fundraisers and school events. Additionally, students participated in a panel discussion with TV and radio personalities from Univision; had a visit from Mayor Andre Sayegh; and freshmen were greeted by Superintendent Eileen Shafer in an assembly where she discussed the opportunities for success that are available to high school students throughout the district.

“It’s been a busy first month, and we have no intentions of slowing down!” said Lyde.



A Surprise Homecoming U.S. Marines Officer Brandon Humani, Alexander Hamilton Academy’s valedictorian for 2014, came home to his alma mater elementary school to make a surprise visit to his sister, a seventh-grader. She had not seen her brother in more than two years.

Go Fund Me Page Launched for All City Band

In an effort to help raise funds for the All City Band, the Paterson Education Fund has launched a Go Fund Me page. Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer launched the planning of the band last summer.

The All City Band will be a band of students and alumni from all 12 district high schools. The band is slated to make its debut at the 95th annual Thanksgiving Classic football game between Eastside and Kennedy.

To donate at the All City Band Go Fund Me page, click here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/paterson-citywide-marching-band>

To register to play for the All City Band, click here: <https://forms.gle/WRnSeS5WWAwVjrs26>

District Makes Strides in Building Social Emotional Learning Capacity

Great progress has been made in building the district's capacity to address the social and emotional needs of its students by providing [Mental Health First Aid](#) training to hundreds of staff members. Mental Health First Aid USA provides a skills-based training course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-use issues, according to its website. The district's Department of Special Education, under the direction of Chief Special Education Officer Cheryl D. Coy, identified Mental Health First Aid training as an effective resource to help Paterson Public Schools stakeholders recognize that mental illness and addictions are real, these illnesses can be treated, and that people can recover from them.

During the 2018-2019 school year, 325 district staff members participated in eight-hour training sessions on Mental Health First Aid for youth. In August, 300 staff members participated in an eight-hour training session on Mental Health First Aid for adults. Stakeholders included teachers, administrators, parents and recent graduates of the district. The training covered different types of mental illnesses and addictions, and provided instruction on assessing the risk of suicide or harm, listening without judgement, giving reassurance and resources to support, and encouraging self-help and other support strategies. "The point of the training is not to have staff replace mental health professionals or medical attention that may be needed," said Coy, "but rather to enable district staff to better identify potential crises that may occur and to know the correct actions to take in response."

District's Halal Food Program Expands

Following a successful pilot program that began last February, the district has expanded its self-operated Halal food program to 10 district schools with plans to continue expanding the program throughout the school year.

The district's self-operated program is believed to be the first of its kind in the State of New Jersey. Earlier this month, the Halal food program was launched at Public Schools No. 2, 7, 8, 9, 19, 27, 28, Don Bosco Technical Academy, International High School and the Dr. Hani

Awadallah School. The program will expand to all district schools according to a five-phase plan, with the majority of the schools serving Halal food by Thanksgiving. In February, Shafer, Board of Education members as well as district and city officials announced the pilot Halal food program was underway at the John F. Kennedy Education Complex and Public School No. 5. The program is continuing at these schools.



Affirmative Action Training Held



Affirmative Action Officer Houry Yeganeh conducted the first Affirmative Action training of the new school year for building-based representatives on September 19th. The session was filled with information pertaining to Affirmative Action-related policies,

procedures and protocols. Building-based Affirmative Action representatives are volunteer staff members who go above and beyond their contractual duties to assist their school leader and the central office-based Affirmative Action officer by investigating student-on-student discrimination cases, ensuring bias-free education for all our students. They also share Affirmative Action-related policies school staff, and ensure the Affirmative Action program is implemented effectively.

Upcoming Events

Oct. 8: Board of Education Workshop

6:30 p.m. at the Administrative Offices, 90 Delaware Avenue

Oct. 9: Yom Kippur

District Closed

Oct. 11 HARP Blood Drive

8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at HARP Academy, 5 Colt Street

Oct. 14: Columbus Day

District Closed

Oct. 16: Board of Education Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex

Oct. 25: Staff In-service

1:00 p.m. Student Dismissal

Oct. 28 - Nov. 1: Breast Cancer Awareness at Napier Academy

Oct. 29 High School CHOICE Fair

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex Gymnasium