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Madison-Oneida
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FYI: From Our Board to Yours

October 2018

Career and Technical Education

HRC CLASSES PLAN SUICIDE AWARENESS EVENT

Health Related Careers seniors organized an awareness and education event on September 14 for their classmates in recognition of Suicide Prevention Awareness Week.

Students decorated the Courtyard with signs encouraging kindness and information on seeking help for depression. The Rossetti front lawn had signs with statistics and information on mental health issues. Students staffed a compliment box and a trivia game, handed out ribbons, led students and staff on a guided tour of their outdoor posters, and offered temporary tattoos of a semicolon, one of the symbols of suicide awareness. Students who stopped by the event could sign the “I Promise” board and offer quotes of hope and kindness on another wall poster.

Keryn Buda, of Oneida, dressed up as Captain Nice, offering positive messages to those she saw. Captain Nice began two years ago as a staff initiative. This was the first time a student has played the role.

Staff and Curriculum Development

PRINCIPALS COMMITTEES HOLD FIRST MEETINGS

Elementary and secondary principals from around the region participated in the first of their monthly regional meetings on September 18. The Elementary Principals Advisory Committee (EPAC) and Secondary Principals Advisory Committee (SPAC) offer building leaders from the region an opportunity to learn about state and regional initiatives and workshops and to discuss current regional issues and trends. During these monthly meetings, participants also have a roundtable period to share best practices and offer ideas to colleagues.

Each committee is led by a principal facilitator. This year, Oneida Middle School Principal Todd Wiedrick is the SPAC facilitator and Wettel Elementary School (VVS) Principal Vince Pompo is the EPAC facilitator.

COUNSELORS BEGIN NEW LEARNING COMMUNITY

Camden guidance counselor Christine Kio held the first meeting of the new School Counselors Planning PLC on September 21 at the Costello Transportation Center. More than 30 school counselors from across the region participated. The introductory agenda included discussions about the regional advisory council and common calendars, time for district teams to work on planning and current issues, and a presentation by guest speaker Mark Mason of the New York State School Counselor Association.

This PLC is the 17th active professional learning community currently running through the MOBOCES.

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**Adult and Continuing Education**

**TWO STUDENTS EARN STATEWIDE HONORS**

The New York Association for Community and Continuing Education (NYACCE) will honor two recent BCCE graduates this month as 2018 Students of the Year. Myo Min Tun and Sandy Rolf will receive their awards on October 23 during a statewide recognition dinner. During their trip, they will tour the State Capitol Building and meet with local elected officials to help advocate for adult education programs.

Myo, a refugee from Burma, enrolled in an ESL class at the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees in 2015, just two months after arriving in the United States. In 2017, he transitioned into Adult Basic Education classes at the Veterans Outreach Center and Utica ACCESS Site, and he completed a summer vocational and literacy training program. He earned his high school equivalency diploma in June 2018 and now hopes to become an automotive mechanic, building on his experience in Burma repairing small engines.

Sandy left high school at age 17. She enrolled in a high school equivalency preparation class at the Rome ACCESS Site in May 2017 and earned her diploma in October 2017. She currently attends Mohawk Valley Community College full-time, working toward an associate’s degree in General Studies, and hopes to transfer to a four-year college. She also works full-time at MetLife.

**Alternative and Special Education**

**HIGH SCHOOL ADDS NEW SEMINAR CLASS**

As part of its Restorative Justice and Culture of Care initiatives, the Alternative Education High School has created a new seminar class, which all high school students have daily during first period. The seminar is designed to foster student/teacher relationships and create small communities among students to build a sense of belonging.

The first lesson of the year engaged students in an activity called “The Social Contract,” which built off of a successful professional development workshop last year on “Capturing Kids’ Hearts.” The contract asked staff and students to answer four questions and use their responses to create an agreement of behavior for their group. The Social Contract is a working document that will be utilized throughout the year to redirect students, remind them of expectations, and create a positive learning environment within the classroom.

**Early Childhood Education**

**DIVISION BEGINS MENTAL HEALTH E-NEWSLETTER**

Early Childhood Director Colleen Wuest has begun a quarterly mental health e-newsletter for school administrators, building leaders and mental health professionals. The publication, “Let’s Talk About Mental Health,” will offer critical statewide resources, important articles, professional development opportunities and tips for parents and teachers to better support students’ social-emotional development. The first issue was sent out in early September and the next one will come out around December.

**Regional Information Center**

**CAMDEN STUDENTS TAKE EXPEDITION TO NYC**

Camden Library Media Specialist Shelley DeLoosh recently led McConnellsville Elementary School fourth graders on a virtual field trip to New York City using Google Expeditions. The trip was the culminating activity for a unit on the classic children’s book “The Cricket in Times Square” and gave the students an opportunity to see some of the places they read about in the book. Model Schools Instructional Technology Integration Specialist Tanya Snyder helped Shelley set up the activity and provided her with training in advance of the lesson.

Google Expeditions is a virtual reality educational tool that uses an app and special viewing goggles to allow teachers and students to explore places around the world right from their classroom.

**ROME UTILIZES VISITOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Rome began this school year with a new visitor management system in two of its schools as a way to increase building security. Through the MORIC’s Visitor Management Solution, Administrative Systems team members implemented VisitU at Rome Free Academy and Stoughton Middle School. The product helps manage visitors who enter the building and sends out internal alerts via text and email when a flagged visitor tries to enter. Parents have so far been pleased with this addition to the district’s security procedures.

**Management Services**

**CAPITAL REGION TEAM VISITS COSTELLO CENTER**

A team from Capital Region BOCES recently visited the Costello Transportation Center and spoke with Transportation Supervisor Frank Slawiak about the Shared Bus Maintenance service he coordinates. Capital Region BOCES began a shared bus maintenance program this past summer for two of its districts, Niskayuna and Scotia-Glenville. They wanted to see how the MOBOCES service runs and sought recommendations on making the business and operations functions more effective.

MOBOCES has offered a Shared Bus Maintenance service since 1980 and has one of the oldest programs in the state.

**STATEWIDE MEETING FOCUSES ON COMMUNICATION**

Public Relations Coordinator Sapna Kollali participated in a statewide meeting of BOCES communication leaders on September 26. The meeting, hosted by Oneida BOCES, was organized by BOCES of NYS, the statewide umbrella for all 37 BOCES centers.

Discussion topics included a discussion of crisis communication, internal communication, website accessibility and social media best practices as well as current legislative issues related to education. These are areas in which the MOBOCES School Communication team routinely supports component districts.

This is the second annual statewide meeting for BOCES communication leaders. MOBOCES hosted last year’s meeting.