

Together

December ▸ 2018



Crystal Apple awarded to Leigh Nenni

By Iva Petrosino

If you mention BOCES 2 assistive technology within our area, most often the first response is, “Do you know Leigh Nenni and those shoes?” True to herself, Nenni wore her sky-high heels when she accepted the highest honor at Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES; the Crystal Apple.



“I am humbled and honored to be in the company of this award’s past recipients,” said Nenni. “No honor, award or accomplishment in my career has been about me, but rather about the collective energies and efforts of all the players that have surrounded me. For this reason I don’t believe this is apple is mine and mine alone. Rather it is thin slices, owned by many, held together by a common core belief that ‘kids can.’”

A 30-plus-year veteran of BOCES 2, Nenni began her career in the early intervention program. She advocated for the use of technology in this program, by adapting toys for children and customizing communication systems to supplement language

abilities. These strides in technology afforded students the ability to actively engage, learn and interact.

“Each success story only reinforced my motivation to learn more about the role assistive technology could and should play in a student’s educational program,” Nenni said. “We became the voice for kids who couldn’t speak for themselves. We felt a sense of determination and obligation to convince all parties that infusing assistive technology into our practice and programs would be the key to unlocking a student’s ability.”

A founding member of the assistive technology department, Nenni now serves as the chairperson. In addition to leading the department of 11 people, Nenni still carries a full caseload of students, and assists in the selection, acquisition and use of assistive technology devices.

“It has been so rewarding to watch Leigh take a program from its infancy and mold it into a service that has thrived and blossomed to serve those with unique needs,” said

District Superintendent Jo Anne Antonacci. “Her persistence and dedication to students is paramount as communication is key to forming important connections. Leigh has greatly enhanced the reputation of our BOCES with her knowledge and expertise.”

Long hours, innovations and cutting-edge initiatives have always been Nenni’s protocol. She created the multimillion-dollar Lending Loan Library, to assist all participating districts with accessing communication and educational assistive technologies. As a result of her hard work and dedication, Nenni has helped the assistive technology department grow exponentially.

“Leigh has distinguished herself as a passionate, motivated professional who holds herself to exceedingly high standards, with the result of pushing those around her to do the same,” said Barbara Martorana, director of the Department for Exceptional Children.

In addition to the countless hours she spends advocating on behalf of students, Nenni also volunteers her time and talents to the Monroe 2–Orleans Educational Foundation. For the past three years, she has coordinated the silent auction at the Foundation’s annual scholarship fundraiser.

“This award is about the students, families and educators, who at their core have kept an open mind, recognized AT has the power to unleash all things possible, and faith that with the tools, time and patience, potential will flourish,” she said.



For more details on the
Celebrating You event
see page 4

MOVING FORWARD *together*

By Iva Petrosino

Two former BOCES 2 students are taking the skills they learned in school and applying them to real life in the workforce. Zachary Adams (Kendall) and Lindsay McCafferty (Brockport) participated in BOCES programs such as Work-Based Learning, Bridge to Earning, Learning and Living (BELL), and Project SEARCH.



Lindsay McCafferty and Zachary Adams punch in to begin their work day at Brockway Dining Hall.

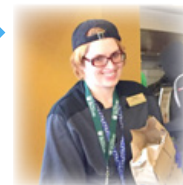
During their time in those programs they learned critical employability skills that helped them to find permanent employment.

Adams and McCafferty have been working at Brockway Dining Hall at The College at Brockport since August as a dishwasher and dining room assistant, respectively. With the help of their employment specialists from Lifetime Assistance, Linda Caruso and Carrie Serow, Adams and McCafferty are settling into their new roles.

"Lindsay is responsible for keeping the dining room clean and reporting big spills and broken chairs to management," said Caruso. "Zach touches the dining experience of every customer that comes into Brockway by providing them with clean dishes. They both show up with a positive attitude and continue to grow in their positions."



◀ "I enjoy working at Brockway so much. I'm so independent. I come in every morning and clock in. I have to be on time. I've made friends. My coworkers are great."



▶ "I really love this job in the dining hall because I get to be around college students and people my age."

So far, both employees have perfect attendance and have been helpful to other staff in the dining hall. Coworkers and supervisors said Adams and McCafferty are friendly and a great addition to the team.

"Zachary has a positive, can-do attitude and is genuinely happy to come to work each day," said Peggy Turlington, assistant manager at Brockport Auxiliary Service Corporation. "Lindsay is a great team player and an asset to our operation. She has involved herself in other areas of the campus and is truly becoming a part of the college community."

Coding: The 21st Century's Literacy

By Kerry Sharp

The integration of technology into the classroom has become second nature; however, a group of 22 talented fourth- and fifth-grade students at Brockport Hill School advanced their digital skills to the next level during a Project ADEPT workshop on Nov. 1.

Students dove into the world of computer programming during the workshop titled, "Coding: The 21st Century's Literacy."

Gabriel Schickling, lead IT technician from Simple Tech Innovations, led students behind the scenes of computer coding using a program called Python. Python is a



powerful programming language used by acclaimed companies such as Google, Facebook, Dropbox and Instagram.

The workshop challenged students to use logic, problem-solving skills and collaboration while they learned the fundamentals of programming and participated in interactive coding games.

The session began with a lesson on "Hello, World," a Python program that offered a simple language with a straightforward syntax. Students said the objective was to program the computer to have a conversation. The class also used coding to program jokes and create "guess the number" games.

Fourth-grader Emilie Ha said the workshop was intricate and required their undivided attention.

"We used a lot of symbols such as colons and underscores," said Ha. "You really needed to be paying attention because if you made one small error it wouldn't work."



Fourth-grader Drew Nicholas agreed, "It was very hard because you had to enter the code exactly, but it was fun, too."

Students emerged from the two-hour workshop equipped with a new skill, along with a sense of pride, accomplishment and enthusiasm for digital learning.

Project ADEPT (A Diversified Enrichment Program for the Talented) is a division of BOCES 2 Gifted and Talented Education.

Future engineers at work problem-solving

By Jackie Finn

T. J. Connor fourth-graders in Wheatland-Chili are working in teams to design a vehicle restraint system to keep a passenger safe during a collision. The students use a combination of VEX Construction pieces, cardboard, cotton balls, pipe cleaners, cushion wrap, and their imagination to design and build a restraint system to protect their passenger. A raw egg will represent the passenger during the ride down a ramp and its impact with a wall. To complete the module the students need to ask, explore, model, evaluate and explain. Both the vehicle (made during a previous class) and the passenger restraint system are Project Lead the Way (PLTW) modules.

Wheatland-Chili CSD is a K-12 PLTW District. PLTW is pre-engineering coursework that engages students' natural curiosity through problem-based learning. Four years ago, Wheatland-Chili was the first district in the area to introduce PLTW in grades K-5.

Recently, the District showcased the work of their elementary students by inviting engineers, company representatives, and Monroe County leaders to visit Pauline Emelson's classroom for a demonstration during Celebrating Our Public Schools Week. Emelson is the PLTW Coordinator for T. J. Connor Elementary School.



We are family

By Chris Klem

Students at Ridgecrest Academy made some magic of their own in October with the help of special guest Rich the Magic Man. Professional magician Richard Stein awed with his witty feats of illusion, mixed with a positive message of support for the Ridgecrest Academy "family."

The show was facilitated by Ridgecrest Academy teacher James Revell, who had met Stein in his other role as a professional soccer referee. Revell believed the experience would bring students together and give them an opportunity to interact, building school spirit while having some fun.



Student Russell DeMocker shared the spot light with Rich the Magic Man at the special Ridgecrest Academy assembly.



Students became part of the show, working together to help perform a series of astounding magic tricks.

Students eagerly vied for the chance to assist the Magic Man with tricks featuring floating ropes, disappearing coins and magic wands. They joined in applause for his call for them to get along, take care of each other and be "buddies, not bullies."

The Magic Man ended his show by inviting student Russell DeMocker to the stage to share his own amazing card tricks. The aspiring young magician thrilled the audience with his impressive showmanship and skill. The afternoon was a great success, full of breathtaking magic and confidence-building stagecraft. It made a powerful point: At Ridgecrest Academy, we are all family.

Ridgecrest Academy gives thanks

By Chris Klem

On the morning before Thanksgiving break, many of the students at Ridgecrest Academy participated in the school's annual Turkey Trot run. Others worked with teachers to create a holiday atmosphere and prepare for a very special Thanksgiving luncheon. This is the fifth year that Ridgecrest Academy has hosted the traditional Thanksgiving feast, complete with turkey, stuffing and pumpkin pie.



Students and staff take center stage at

Celebrating You



Staff reaching milestones of 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of service were recognized at our annual Employee Recognition Event on Dec. 5 in the Professional Development Center. This year we honored 79 employees who have achieved a combined 1,250 years of service. The event also featured food prepared by Career and Technical Education culinary arts, baking and food services students.



10 Years of Service

Front l-r: Karen Alsup, Michael Bray, Cassandra DiPasquale, Kristen Giuliano
Back l-r: Cynthia Hazen-Williams, Julie Masters, Nathaniel Parker, Antonietta Quinn, Amanda Young
Not pictured: Tammy Allen, Samuel Avant, Jr., Matthew Baldassare, Lynnette Brookes, Walter Burrows, Lynn Cometa, Eric Crouthamel, Kelly D'Angelo, Krystal Eichas, Michael Federico, Mackenzie Garcia, John Gigliotti, John Heise, Michele Hewitt, Debra Mannara, Cynthia Neil-Webster, Colleen O'Connor, David Phillips, Kelly Publicover, Terrence Rollins, Jefferi Sonnevill, Shaun Stocking, Lisa Zobel



15 Years of Service

Front l-r: Jennifer Carlenius, Jacqueline Finn, Donald Heinz, Ken Maley
Back l-r: Mari-Ellen Maloney, Karen Mitchell
Not pictured: Jean Bryant, Debra Dear, Mark Donnelly, Christine Ferguson, Charlotte Gage, Sandra Manetta, Raymond Miller, Barbara Murphy Kristin Palmer, Patti Schmitt, Bonnie West, Christine Wydra, Nancy Zambuto



20 Years of Service

Front l-r: Heather Case, Gina Deskins-Garczynski, Steven Frisbee, Shawna Gareau-Kurtz
Back l-r: Ardelle Hurst, Vincy Murgillo, Susan O'Gara, Doreen Parkinson, Felicia Robinson
Not pictured: Emma Arnold, Vicki Brew, Paula Green, Daniel Hill, Linda Ruggles, Robert VanWinkle



25 Years of Service

Elizabeth Armes, Mark Laubacher, Mary Thomas, Thomas Walsh
Not pictured: Judith Dyer, Deborah Walton



30 Years of Service

William Adams, Carole Cook, Marguerite Killip, Carol Osborne, Michele Prince



35 Years of Service

MaryBeth Mackenzie

Bringing experts together to improve educational opportunities for all children in NYS



By Chris Klem

On Nov. 15, Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES hosted a distinguished group of assistant superintendents for instruction and pupil personnel services (PPS) staff from our component districts for a dialogue with NYS Assistant Commissioner of Special Education Christopher Suriano. This meeting, the first of its kind in New York State, brought together general and special education leadership to discuss the latest NYS reports, recommendations and resources.

Suriano, who oversees NYS's efforts to promote educational equity and excellence for students with disabilities, presented an overview of the Blueprint for Improved Results for Children with Disabilities. He also reviewed the State Performance Plan (SPP) and annual Performance Report (APR), which include data on indicators like performance outcomes, least restrictive environment, disproportionality, and transition planning and services. In addition, he spoke about the work being done at the state level around teacher certification, with

the goal of providing relief for the statewide teacher shortage.

Attendees appreciated the opportunity to examine the new data in depth and to ask Suriano questions about new state policies. Participants said that the gathering was a great way to bring experts from different educational areas and districts together to share ideas. Suriano, too, felt that the format was very successful in advancing productive communication. He plans to use it as a model for future annual meetings with educators across the state.

The meeting took place at the Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES Professional Development Center and was facilitated by Barbara Martorana (Director for Exceptional Children) in collaboration with Tim Dobberty (Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Programs) and Dr. Marijo Pearson (Assistant Superintendent for the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development).

Strategic Plan Update

Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development

Strategic Goal

Customer Satisfaction

Provide excellent service while demonstrating care and respect for all.

Key Strategy

Provide programs and services to meet the needs of customers.

The Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development (CIPD), works directly with our component school districts to provide professional development and instructional coaching to bring about improved results for all students. Dr. Marijo Pearson, Assistant Superintendent, and Stephanie Smyka, Coordinator survey representatives from our nine school districts to review student achievement data, district Professional Development Plans and discuss regional needs. Because of the ongoing communication with districts, CIPD professional development participation increased 76% from the 2016-17 school year. A review of the PD session evaluations also showed that 98% of the participants were positively satisfied with the PD they attended.

During the 2017-18 school year, CIPD has seen an increase in requests for instructional coaching satisfied. All 9 component school districts asked for job embedded instructional coaching to learn more about the Next Generation Learning Standards and implementation. For the 2018-19 school year, districts have also asked for more regional workshops with national presenters. The areas of focus for these sessions include Social Emotional Learning, Poverty, Innovation, Resiliency, Collaborative Practices, and Purposeful Play. By putting the customer first, CIPD has been able to earn a solid reputation with our districts and improve teaching and learning.

NTHS inducts 30 new members at WEMOCO

By Jen Merkel

Thirty students were inducted into the WEMOCO Chapter of the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) on Nov. 8. To be a member of NTHS, a student must have good academic standing, an excellent attendance record, a CTE teacher recommendation and be graduating with a local, Regents or Regents with Distinction diploma. The students must adhere to the seven tenets of the NTHS: skill, honesty, service, responsibility, scholarship, citizenship and leadership. Congratulations to all of the new inductees!



Another record-breaking year for the Educational Foundation

By Iva Petrosino

The Monroe 2–Orleans Educational Foundation set another new fundraising record at this year's autumn celebration. Thanks to sponsors, donors and attendees, more than \$49,000 was raised to fund student scholarships. Former scholarship recipients Paola Del Serrano and Courtney Larkin, both from Greece, spoke to the crowd of more than 220 people about how these scholarships changed their lives. This year's scholarship recipients will be announced in the spring of 2019. Each recipient will be awarded \$5,000 toward college or further career training.



Scholarship recipients pose for a photo with foundation board members. Back row l-r: Paola Del Serrano, Susan Brannen, Nancy Geraci, Keith Bock, Paul Salmin, Susan Rizzo, Kathleen Graupman, Michael Crumb, Courtney Larkin. Front row l-r: Elisabeth Curran, Michelle Erklenz-Watts, Joseph Kelly, Jo Anne Antonacci, Dee Alexander. Not pictured: Barbara Cutrona, William Dadey, David Dimbley, Tod Eagle, Matthew Huber, Rachel Magar.

Santa makes a stop at BOCES 2 Holiday Party

By Chris Klem

There were no disappointed children at the Greece Rotary Holiday Party on Dec. 5. More than 100 Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES students anxiously awaited Santa Claus, and when the jolly old elf finally arrived, happy applause and cheering rocked the room.

The Rotarians made the event special with welcoming elves at the door, a friendly clown and an astonishing magician. A kid-friendly lunch menu, served by wonderful volunteers, was enjoyed by all. A group of visiting high school elves from the Greece Odyssey Interact Club brought smiles to many small faces. Of course, Santa and Mrs. Claus were the highlight of the day, and everyone received beautifully wrapped presents.

The annual Santa luncheon has taken place for more years than anyone can remember. It is always the high point of the holiday season, both for the children and for the many parents and volunteers from the Rotary Club of Greece who make it all possible.

'Tis the season of giving

The kindness and generosity of BOCES 2 staff and students was on full display again this year during the Holiday Connections and Guardian Angel Basket drives. In its sixth year, Holiday Connections



Students sorting canned goods and other non-perishable items for the Guardian Angel Basket drive.

collected dozens of boxes full of gifts, essentials and gift cards for families in need. Meanwhile, students volunteered to sort and pack food to provide meals to those without this holiday season. Thank you to all who donated.



Staff packing boxes full of gifts for families in our Holiday Connections drive.



Communication Services wins 8 NYSPRA awards

Members of BOCES 2 Communication Services were recently selected as winners in the 39th Annual New York School Public Relations Association (NYSPRA) Communication Awards. The group won a total of eight awards.

"I'm delighted our staff received significant number of awards again this year," Communications Manager Steve Dawe said. "The recognition by our peers in school communication reinforces the faith our districts put in us to provide high quality work on their behalf."

There are three levels of distinction; Excellence is the highest, followed by Honor and Merit, respectively. Award winners include Communications Specialists Heather Campo, Chris Klem, Jennifer Merkel, Iva Petrosino and Grace Scism, Video Production Specialist Anthony Puleo as well as Graphic Designers Karen Alsup and Lisa Constantine. Several of the winning submissions were collaborations among many people within the group, including *Together* newsletter.

NYSPRA accepts submissions in 14 different categories and the entries are judged by communications professionals across the country. In 2018, 511 entries were received with approximately one-third of those receiving awards.

The winning submissions, by category, and the BOCES 2 staff involved are:

Calendar

Excellence

- Hilton School District Calendar (Hilton), *Grace Scism and Karen Alsup*

Community Newsletter

Honor

- The Link (Churchville-Chili), *Chris Klem and Karen Alsup*
- Together (BOCES 2), *Heather Campo, Lisa Constantine and SIS Contributors*

Excellence in Writing

Honor

- WEMOCO alum wins \$50k on Food Network show (BOCES 2), *Iva Petrosino*

Merit

- Escape from the ordinary (BOCES 2), *Chris Klem*

Photograph

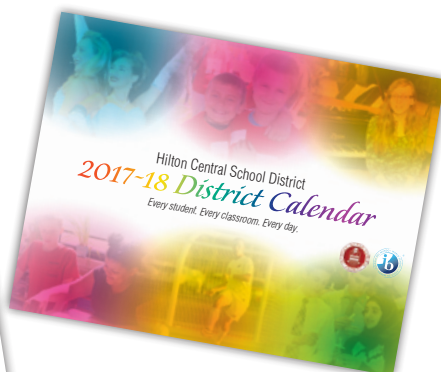
Merit

- Making an Impression (BOCES 2), *Jen Merkel*
- Measure Up (BOCES 2), *Jen Merkel*

Video

Honor

- Hilton CSD: *Quest Elementary School* (Hilton), *Anthony Puleo and Grace Scism*



Retiree Connection



We would like to feature brief updates from our retirees in *Together*. If you are a BOCES 2 retiree and have news you would like to submit for consideration, please contact Iva Petrosino, editor, at ipetrosi@monroe2boces.org or mail it to BOCES 2 Communication & Technology Services, 3625 Buffalo Rd, Rochester, NY 14624, attn. Iva Petrosino.

Condolences to:

Georgeann Beres on the passing of her aunt; **Orrin Bowman** (retiree) on the passing of his wife; **Cindy Chilson** on the passing of her husband; **Kimberly Lobdell** on the passing of her stepfather; **Mary White** on the passing of her father.

Together

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Mission

We provide quality, cost-effective educational services in partnership with school districts and the community in a manner that supports excellence and equity for all learners. We are committed to customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, and personal and professional growth.

Vision

Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES is the educational partner of choice. We strive for continuous improvement in serving the diverse needs of our community, helping all students achieve their full potential.

The Monroe 2-Orleans Board of Cooperative Educational Services does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, color, national origin, disability, creed, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, prior criminal offense, domestic violence victim status, or genetic status in its programs or activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle complaints/inquiries regarding the BOCES non-discrimination's policies: Director of Human Resource, 3599 Big Ridge Road, Spencerport, New York 14559, 585-352-2420, and is also the Title VII and Title IX Officer.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit <http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481. Please note that those wishing to file a complaint may also do so through the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/qa-complaints.html>. See also New York State Executive Law 296-a.

Retirees celebrate the right to vote

On Election Day, a group of BOCES 2 retirees paid tribute to the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. Mary Mort, Diana Jensen-Dooling, Kathy Phillips, and Krystyna Gasiewski-Wojcik visited Susan B. Anthony's gravesite in Rochester, in appreciation for her efforts in fighting for voting equality. During their visit, they bumped into WROC reporter John Kucko, whose video story included these ladies and received national attention from media outlets such as *USA Today* and *The Huffington Post*.

