

TOGETHER

February/March 2021

Electrical Students Charged Up Over Hands-on Solar Opportunity

by Ashley Decker

Hands-on experience - when it comes to developing skills and gaining first-hand knowledge that can be used after graduation, there is no beating it. Students in the Residential and Commercial Electrical program at the WEMOCO Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center can attest to that, as they work on installing rooftop solar panels.

This is the first year that students in the program have had the opportunity to work with solar equipment, something that instructors Mark Chase and Mike Schmitt have been hoping to incorporate into the Residential and Commercial Electrical program for a while now. Students have already been able to assemble solar arrays that produce a measurable amount of energy, and they hope to increase that using an existing inverter purchased for the program years ago.

When Chase saw an ad on Craigslist posted by VP Supply Corp, he viewed it as an opportunity to reach out to the company. After learning about what Chase wanted to do, the company

donated 12 solar panels for the class to use. Chase tapped Andrew Wright from the BOCES 2 Operations and Maintenance Department for guidance, as Wright had prior experience working with residential solar system installations. Wright helped the team create a list of equipment they would need and determine what the process would look like. From there, things took off.

One donation led to another: IronRidge™ offered mountings and fittings to mount the panels on the roof; B&L Wholesale Supply donated roofing materials, including shingles; DiVal Safety Equipment, Inc. donated harnesses so the students would be safe working on the roof; MIG Building Systems donated a gutter to make the simulation similar to what students would experience in the field; and Lowe's donated a cart to move and store the solar panels. Both instructors said it was inspiring to see the community come together to help these students gain hands-on experience they can bring with them to the "real world" after graduation.



"IronRidge is committed to providing materials and training to the solar heroes of tomorrow," said Angie Fryer, Senior Manager of Marketing Communications for IronRidge. "It helps the entire industry to have high quality installations be the norm, and we are excited to be a part of a relatively new and growing profession."

By September, the required materials had been donated, and students were able to start working on the solar arrays shortly

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School Libraries Meet Demands of Pandemic

by Amanda Dedie

Coordinator of School Library Services Jim Belair recently participated in a presentation to the New York State Regents Advisory Council about the role of school librarians in remote and hybrid instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation was sponsored by the School Library Systems Association and the NYS Library. Belair presented alongside Kathy Jaccarino from Brockport High School and Angela Boccuzzi-Reichert from Hilton Merton Williams Middle School.

The pandemic has forced school librarians to develop original programs, shift service delivery models, and create new ways to maintain connections with students, parents and teacher colleagues. These initiatives were made possible by resources, financial support and professional development from the local School Library System (SLS).

Belair facilitated a conversation about Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), which is defined as “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.”

New SEL initiatives emerged during the pandemic, focused on maintaining connections with students during remote learning, creating virtual events to address emotional well-being for students, and zeroing in on culturally-responsive education by conducting diversity audits of library collections.

“The approach we take within school libraries is very involved with Social-Emotional Learning,” said Belair. “This is at the heart of what school library staff members take

seriously, and we try to do it with not only our students, but with our teachers.”

According to Belair, school librarians have been supporting SEL by having one-on-one meetings with teachers and students; helping the community find and identify literature; supporting and enhancing the curriculum academically and developmentally; and teaching information literacy and digital citizenship.

School librarians have also been working on culturally-responsive education by providing professional development for librarians on this topic, and joining the #OwnVoices hashtag movement. This movement was started to recommend books about diverse characters that have been written by authors from marginalized or under-represented groups.

Each BOCES and Big Five city (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers and New York City) has an SLS that provides leadership, technical services, resources and professional development to all member school libraries across the state. This unique program serves as leaders not only in the state, but across the country.

School Librarians Support SEL

- One-on-one with teachers and students
- Help our community find and identify literature
 - Personal reading needs
 - Informational needs
 - Inquiry
- Support and enhance the curriculum - both academic and developmental
- Teaching information literacy and digital citizenship
 - Effective and ethical use of information
 - Information from a variety of resources
 - Digital footprint



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after the electrical lab was renovated to comply with COVID-19 protocols. Students began assembling the roof at the end of January; they have now completed roughly half of the work that needs to be done.

Seniors Eric Woodams (Kendall) and Brandon Barker (Brockport) were two of the first

students to climb onto the mocked up roof structure and begin assembling the solar arrays. “It’s been fun!” said Eric. “I’m looking forward to seeing if the arrays can power all of the stations in the classroom.” Baker said he definitely plans to continue using the skills he is learning, both in his professional **and** his personal life. “I want to have solar

panels on my own house [one day], and I don’t want to pay somebody else for something I am able to do myself,” he said. “This has been a great, hands-on learning opportunity!”

Come spring, students will have the chance to observe Chase and Schmitt work with the Operations and Maintenance Department to install an additional 16 roof panels, donated by CED Greentech, to the roof of the CTE Center. After the panels are installed, the class, as well as every Residential and Commercial Electrical class in years to come, will be able to observe and track the solar panel usage and energy savings.

Another outcome of this solar project: the student-assembled arrays will be deconstructed and saved for use by Residential and Commercial Electrical classes in the future.



CTE Students Join Security Team for Work-Based Learning

by Ashley Decker

While there have been restrictions on in-the-field work-based learning opportunities this year due to COVID-19, the team at WEMOCO Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center has found a new way to provide students with job-related experience. Seniors in the Criminal Justice program at WEMOCO have been assisting the security team during the 2020-21 school year.

Students in the program are positioned at posts throughout the campus during arrival and dismissal periods, wearing radios and security vests. At times, students are paired with members of the security team, but they also have “shifts” when they are the only person at their station. Responsibilities consist of traffic control, monitoring hallways, checking for parking passes and being another security presence on campus.

Students began the work-based learning at the start of the school year and have already grown, according to teacher Tim Steves and Safety and Security Coordinator Doug Comanzo. “This opportunity allows students to use the skills they’ve learned in a constructive way,” said Comanzo. “We’ve definitely seen their confidence levels increase, and they’ve begun to take initiative on their own.”

Steves said he’s also seen the skills students have developed with the security team transition in to the classroom, notably during the incident command model assignment. Erin Kuhn (Churchville-Chili) agreed. “I hadn’t expected the experience to help in as many ways as it did,” said Kuhn. “During the incident command model, we were able to work together to determine which commands we needed in order move forward with the assignment. This class has prepared me better than any class I could have taken in high school, and I feel way more confident having taken it.”

Both Kuhn and Class Captain Lauren Dauphinee (Greece Arcadia) were grateful for the opportunity to learn more about the mentors they work with throughout work-based learning. Learning about their background and what they have been through has helped students prepare for their own future. “I’ve learned a lot about situational awareness (from the security team),” said Dauphinee, explaining how the work she’s done with people who have been in law enforcement has taught her to check behind her back and look for cars while on traffic duty.

Class Sergeant Brock Gossling (Brockport) wants to enter the field of federal law enforcement following graduation. He said the work-based learning he’s been able to experience this year has helped him develop his people skills. “It’s nice CTE was able to offer this opportunity, when so many law enforcement departments weren’t able to do the same,” said Gossling.

Everybody involved agreed the real-world, hands-on experience is unbeatable when it comes to preparing for a career in the field of Criminal Justice. Whether it’s realizing there are times when the job isn’t as exciting as expected or when they’re forced to confront somebody about an uncomfortable situation, students are learning and growing from these experiences.

Both Steves and Work-Based Learning Coordinator Cindy Christensen see the program continuing in future years, even after opportunities out of the building resume. “This has been as strong as any other work-based learning experience,” said Christensen. “There are great mentors here, who put their hearts and souls into this.”



From left, Erin Kuhn (Churchville-Chili) and Lauren Dauphinee (Greece Arcadia) on their work-based learning assignment in front of the CTE Center during arrival.

Trying New Things at Westview

by Chris Klem

How many of us are always ready to face new challenges or brave enough to boldly taste new foods?

Learning to enjoy new experiences is becoming second nature to the 6:1:2 students at Westview for Exceptional Children.

One of the group lessons class members are exploring is “Autism ... what does it mean to me?” Recently, they studied how sensory input can affect the development of personal likes and dislikes. The curious students decided to combine an experiment using their own five senses with a life skills cooking lesson.

First, Westview staff explained how to properly use electric skillets and cooking utensils, and then students jumped in and cooked breakfast by themselves. They made eggs, bacon and pancakes, along with something none of them had seen or tasted before – venison sausage. Everyone tried the new food, studying its smell, taste, texture, look and sizzle. They discovered that they liked it. Along the way, they also learned how to make a great breakfast safely and independently.

More life skill practice followed breakfast with a lesson on ironing. “Staff brought in button-down shirts and dress pants,” said teacher Kim Stephenson. “Students learned how to use a hot iron and ironing board, and they were able to press wrinkle-free clothes without burning them.” The next exciting challenge for these intrepid students? Iron-on patches!



Christopher enjoys the breakfast he made by himself.



Lucas masters his ironing technique and banishes wrinkles.

A Lifetime in Education: Honoring BOCES 2 Board Member John Heise

by Beth Nash



On December 23, 2020, Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES (BOCES 2) and Holley Board of Education (BOE) member John Heise suddenly died, leaving behind a strong legacy in education and a devastating sense of loss for those who knew him. A cheerful and enthusiastic presence when interacting with both students and adults alike, Heise loved extolling the accomplishments of all students and the educational opportunities he championed in both the Holley Central School District (HCSD) and BOCES 2 programs.

Heise worked as an elementary school teacher and administrator for the Rochester City School District for 11 years, then moved to Holley CSD in 1981 to become the Elementary School principal. In later years, he became the Holley High School principal, and then director of instruction and special programs, before retiring from the district in 2002. He spent his retirement years volunteering as an advisor to Holley students in the Interact Club and connecting with foreign exchange students who spent a year at Holley CSD. Both programs are sponsored by the Holley Rotary Club, of which he was a long-

time member. Heise enjoyed taking foreign exchange students on trips as part of the Rotary International program so they could better experience all Western New York has to offer. He firmly believed in the Rotary Club motto of “service above self.” He was president of the Holley Rotary Club and former district governor for the Rotary Club. Heise served on the Holley BOE for 13 years and the BOCES 2 Board representing Holley CSD for 12 years.

“As a board member, we will miss John’s sense of commitment to our cause, his willingness to take on tough issues to support students and staff, and his invaluable insight,” said BOCES 2 District Superintendent Jo Anne Antonacci. “On a personal note, we will miss John’s unlimited kindness, his genuine concern for others and his ready laugh.” BOCES 2 Board President Dennis Laba echoed Antonacci’s praise of Heise. “We were fortunate to have him as a colleague and blessed to have him as a friend,” said Laba.

Heise’s wife, Sandy, said, “John really enjoyed the BOCES 2 board because it showed him very different ways of educating students and all the different pathways students could take to be successful. He loved the work that BOCES 2 did.”

“Being a Board of Education member was one of the highlights for my dad and something he was so proud of,” said Heise’s daughter, Samantha Zelent, a social worker at Holley Middle School/High School. “He loved and respected everyone on the boards that served with him. Most of all, my dad loved our students.”

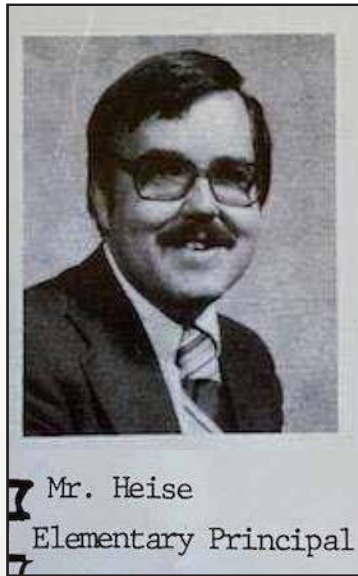


Clockwise, from top left, John Heise presents a Holley foreign exchange student with her diploma at graduation; Holley Elementary School principals Karri Schiavone and Tim Artessa surround Heise and fellow Rotarian Jeff Martin as they receive gift cards from the Holley Rotary Club; and Heise interacts with Holley students at the Senior Citizen Appreciation Breakfast.

Former Holley BOE member Brenda Swanger said, “John always found the time to be at so many events, not only the school events, but extra classes and meetings to better understand and improve our role as board members. He was an educator who was always learning and open-minded to new ideas.”

“As a school board member, John was always the voice of reason,” said Jeff Martin, attorney for Holley CSD and Holley Rotary Club member. “Not only did he bring the perspective of a former school administrator to the board, he had a genuine interest in giving students every opportunity to be successful, and he truly had a lifelong love of learning.”

Holley Middle School/High School Principal Susan Cory said, “I was hired here in Holley when John was the Elementary School principal. As I moved into administration, John was always very supportive and a role model. He loved education, and he believed that you supported

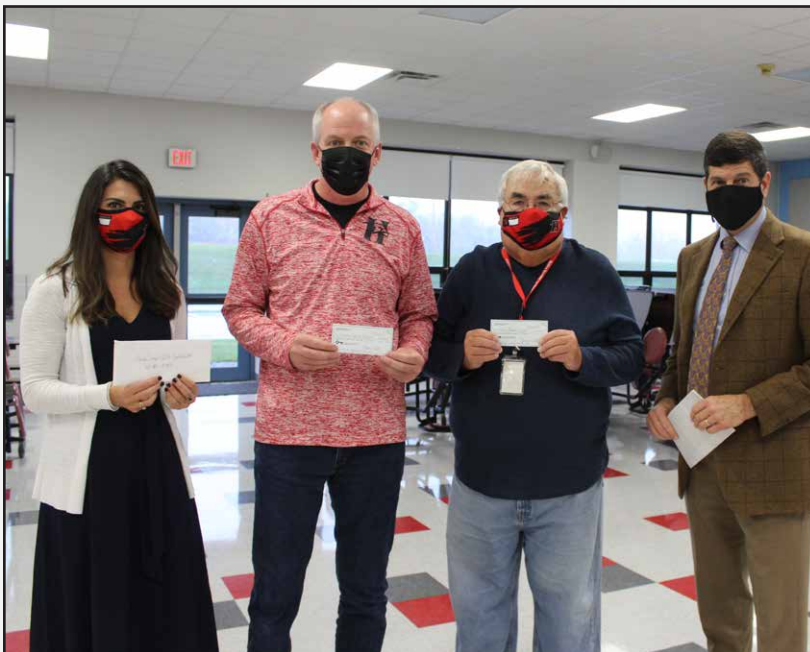


students and teachers the best by being involved. John was an asset to the school, but more importantly, he helped shape me into the educator that I am today. He will be missed.”

“John’s contributions to the Holley Central School District are immeasurable,” said Holley Superintendent of Schools Brian Bartalo. “From the time he spent here as an administrator, right up until this school year as the vice president of the Holley Board of Education, John’s given so much to the district and community. He was a consistent champion for the students of Holley.” The Holley Board of Education gave approval for a new scholarship in memory of Heise in January; the first award will be given to a student who graduates in June.

Heise is survived by his wife of 50 years, Sandy; his son, Kevin (Iris); his daughter, Samantha (John) Zelent; and his grandson, Alexander Zelent, with whom he shared a birthday. He is also survived by his brothers, James (Suzanne) and Timothy (Hope). Heise loved his family, and his grandson was a special light in his life. He and Alexander shared a love of history and reading.

The BOCES 2 community extends its deepest condolences to Heise’s family. “John and all his attributes cannot be replaced, but he will always be remembered,” said Antonacci.



Clockwise, from top right, Heise with the BOCES 2 Board reviewing the Capital Project renovations at BOCES 2; Holley Board Member Melissa Ierlan receiving the Holley Soaring to New Heights award from Heise; Heise with his daughter, Samantha Zelent, and wife, Sandy, at the Holley Senior Citizen Appreciation Breakfast; and Holley Director of Special Programs Stephanie Sanchez and Sports Boosters President Sal DeLuca receive donations from Rotary Club members Heise and Martin.

Roa Selected as Finalist for ATHENA Award

by Beth Nash

Mid-West Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) Coordinator Lourdes Roa has been selected as one of 10 finalists for the 35th Annual ATHENA International Award®. This award recognizes women for their outstanding professional achievements, contributions to the community and active assistance to other women in attaining professional excellence. She will be recognized on April 22 via a virtual awards ceremony, where the top winner will be announced. The ATHENA Award is sponsored by the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce.



In her role at Mid-West RBERN, Roa supports 71 public school districts, and private and charter schools with English Language Learners (ELLs), bilingual education and world languages. She collaborated with local agencies and schools in resettling families in the community after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico. She served as regional delegate for the New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) and co-edited their newsletter. Roa enthusiastically supports her colleagues and current staff members in their pursuit of higher education goals.

Roa has fostered relationships with higher education students as an instructor of graduate courses in bilingual education at SUNY Brockport, Buffalo State College and Nazareth College. She is proud of her former students becoming teacher leaders and administrators. She is also an advocate of women leading socially-, emotionally- and spiritually-balanced lives. Roa is a certified yoga teacher and mindfulness instructor, supporting teaching mindfulness in K-12 education. She even volunteers to teach a bi-weekly yoga class to staff at BOCES 2 to improve wellness initiatives.

A comment on a feedback survey for Mid-West RBERN stated that “Lourdes Roa has been a tremendous support! She goes above and beyond – willing to talk through all sorts of challenges and devise solutions, as well as strengthen the morale of individuals serving ELLs.”

On receiving notification of her finalist status, Roa replied, “Thank you very much. It’s a real surprise!”

McElhaney Honored with 2020 Better Beginnings Award

by Chris Klem

Katie McElhaney, who teaches a Medically Fragile 6:1:1 class located in Brockport’s Hill Elementary School, was recently recognized with the 2020 Helen Bach Moss Memorial Better Beginnings Award. Sponsored by the New York State Department of Education Board of Regents, the award celebrates elementary teachers who are gifted in finding and nurturing the strengths of each student and fostering trusting relationships among pupils, parents, teachers and administrators.



McElhaney was nominated by her colleagues, who included Math Specialist Tina Bonfiglio and the Instructional Specialist team; Special Education Paraprofessional Laura Lockhart and Speech-Language Pathologist Jennifer DiLeo; and Special Education Supervisor Debi Walton. Special recommendations were submitted by 6:1:1 parents Gina Fazzina, and Maria and Hector Hernandez, with personal comments on “Why I Love My Teacher” from students Jasmine and Anthony.

In the eyes of her students, McElhaney is a hero. She makes Jasmine “Happy!” Anthony communicates with his device: “Ms. Kate make, I’m so happy.” He said his teacher helps him: “Do work. Make good choices.”

Anthony’s parent, Gina Fazzina, sees McElhaney as “a remarkable woman and teacher” who “cares as much as we do about our son’s education and future.” The Hernandez family is grateful for the exceptional progress their son has made, thanks to his teacher’s patience, understanding and encouragement. They note that she challenges their son to use his communication skills in class and out, to “socialize with other students in the hallways, making connections and sharing experiences.”

McElhaney’s coworkers see her as a “consummate professional,” “true innovator” and “one of the most inspirational and passionate teachers I have worked with.” DiLeo said, “Kate’s classroom is a very unique, but beautiful place, for students with significant complex needs to receive the intense support they need, and also where they go to be accepted, loved and challenged to ... become the best versions of themselves they are capable of being.”



A surprise presentation on Jan. 20 in McElhaney’s classroom was attended by coworkers and BOCES 2 administrators, and shared with her proud family members over Zoom. During the ceremony, she received the Better Beginnings Award plaque and a cash prize of \$1,000.

Condolences to:

Lisa Bayer on the death of her grandmother; **Kaitlyn Hoag** on the death of her grandfather; **Patti Polino** on the death of her mother; **Lisa Steen** on the death of her mother; the family of **Joyce Warner** (retiree).

Holiday Happenings



Student and staff volunteers assisted with sorting and packing the BOCES 2 Food Drive donations so the boxes could be delivered to families ahead of the Thanksgiving weekend. Fifty-six boxes full of stuffing, potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetables, desserts, bread and apples were distributed. Thanks to all who contributed to this effort.



Holiday Connections donations for 38 families were organized and sorted into boxes in the PD Center before delivery to those in need ahead of the holiday break. That is the largest number ever, an indication of the need in BOCES 2 communities.



Toys for Tots donations collected at various BOCES 2 sites were picked up by the West Central Kiwanis last week so they could be delivered to children in need ahead of the holidays. The West Central Kiwanians were amazed by the number of toys that BOCES 2 staff donated to "Toys for Tots."



The Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO) couldn't host their typical Breakfast with Santa event in the PD Center, so they got creative. The event became a drive-thru in front of ESC on Dec. 5 with Santa greeting vehicles and his elves handing out goody bags to children. Students who were unable to make it to the drive-thru received goody bags through their classrooms. Thanks to all who helped prepare the goody bags, decorated the signs and made sure the tradition of providing holiday cheer continued.



Faculty Council organized the BOCES 2 Food Drive this year, with dozens of people donating from all BOCES 2 building. Students from multiple programs helped with the drive, including: students from the Work-Based Learning (WBL) site at ECLC helped to wrap boxes; students at the Career Exploration Center, and Hospitality and Applied Skills at ECLC pulled clothing requests from the Clothing Closet; and students and staff from the Paul Rd. Transition class helped to sort and pack donations. WBL Coordinator David Liesegang is pictured unloading food during the drive-thru event to drop off donations on Nov. 18 at ESC.

Giving Hearts Warm the Holidays

by Chris Klem



Students in Special Education teacher Susan DeJohn's classroom at Brockport High School love to give back to others in the community. This year, they learned about the work being done at the Willow Domestic Violence Center in Rochester. When they heard that many abuse survivors and their children arrive at the Center with their frightened cats or dogs, they were determined to help make the shelter a welcoming, warm place for these furry family members.

With generously donated materials and help from staff members, the students made soft, comforting blankets for pets. Their caring gifts will make all the difference for many during the holidays and beyond.

Spreading Holiday Joy

by Chris Klem

The tradition of celebrating the Christmas season continued for BOCES 2 students, in spite of this year's cancellation of the beloved Special Education Parent/Teacher Organization (SEPTO) Lunch with Santa. The Rotary Club of Greece, which has sponsored this event for over 30 years, still made sure that our students had fun and made special memories.



SEPTO President Colleen Dox-Griffith worked with Rotarian Judie VanBramer to make the holiday magic happen. Each individual BOCES 2 classroom received a gift card to Wegmans, goodie bag and several seasonal craft projects.



Special education teachers, like Megan Johnson at Brockport's Hill School, planned their own small celebrations. Johnson's students decorated cookies, made gingerbread house picture frames, listened to festive music and watched a Christmas movie. Johnson said her students had a great time, and the folks at Hill School even brought her class popcorn.

Dox-Griffith said, "I am glad that the kids had fun ... we all need these smiles right now!"

If you'd like to get involved with the great work SEPTO does all year long, contact Colleen Dox-Griffith at 585-617-2393 or cgriffit@monroe2boces.org.

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District Superintendent

Jo Anne L. Antonacci

Editor

Beth Nash
bnash@monroe2boces.org
585-349-9028

Contributors

Tricia Croce, Steve Dawe, Ashley Decker,
Amanda Dedie, Jordan Kirkpatrick, Chris Klem,
Beth Nash, Gretchen Spittler

Graphic Designer

Shannon Sweeney



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Monroe 2–Orleans Board of Cooperative Educational Services

3599 Big Ridge Road
Spencerport, New York 14559-1799
Telephone (585) 352-2400
www.monroe2boces.org

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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, religion, color, national origin, disability, creed, marital status, veteran status, military status, sexual orientation, prior criminal offense, domestic violence victim status, gender identity, gender expression or genetic status in its programs or activities, and it provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle complaints/inquiries regarding the BOCES' non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, 3599 Big Ridge Road, Spencerport, NY 14559, 585-352-2420, and is also the Title VII and Title IX Officer.

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/addresses.html> 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 <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintprocess.html>. See also New York State Executive Law 296.

Students Make Connections Between Classwork and Real-Life Examples

by Chris Klem

In the 6:1:1 physiology class at Westview in the Department for Exceptional Children, students learn about cells, homeostasis and the human body. Along the way, these ninth- and 10th-graders also learn the importance of establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships.

As part of a unit on digestion, students explored the role processed macromolecules play in helping long-distance runners face the extreme physical demands of marathon races. They watched videos and read articles on marathon and ultramarathon running. Finally, teacher Mackenzie Garcia challenged students to make a personal connection to the science. She arranged a special visit from an old friend, Ridgcrest Academy teacher Mike Bray.

Most of the students remembered Bray as their former Physical Education teacher. Bray is also an experienced runner, who has competed in marathons of up to 100 miles. Curious students quizzed him on his training, nutrition and hydration. They asked about muscle overuse and strategies for injury prevention. They even asked him if his shaved head was a choice (it is). Bray spoke with several classes throughout the day.

“The students enjoyed being able to learn more about Mr. Bray's personal experiences with long-distance running,” said Garcia. “They enjoyed catching up with their former teacher. It’s important for our students to not only learn academics, but to also establish relationships with each other and the staff. This provided a great opportunity to re-establish a relationship.”

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