

TOGETHER

December 2019/January 2020

Crystal Apple awarded to Betsy Armes

What can't Betsy Armes do?

To the Department for Exceptional Children, which campaigned to nominate her, the answer is probably... nothing. It's Armes' drive, leadership and passion that made her a shoo-in to receive the 2019 Crystal Apple award.



If Armes could be summed up in one word, it would be: dedicated. Armes has proven time and again to being dedicated not only to her department as a whole, but to her employees, to students, to the organization, to high standards and to striving for improvement in all areas.

"Whether you work directly with students, or in other roles that support the many needed facets of running a district, know that I am truly honored to work alongside you," said Armes. "It is in seeing the high quality of your diverse work that inspires me to do better. And it is in the providing and receiving support from one another throughout the years that forges those bonds that make us an extended family. And our family mission is to serve others."

After her 26-year tenure with the Department for Exceptional Children, the question on everyone's mind is: when does Armes sleep? She seems to have her hand in every area of the department, from providing training to all staff during New Staff Orientation to overhauling a number of processes like completing Functional Behavior Analysis or developing Behavior Intervention Plans. In addition, she has also created or participated in a range of important BOCES 2 committees. It's widely agreed that Armes has improved the quality of BOCES 2 and Department for Exceptional Children services.

“ Betsy Armes has worked tirelessly to propel BOCES forward as a collaborative force in our region.

- Barbara Martorana, director of the Department for Exceptional Children

” “Betsy Armes has worked tirelessly to propel BOCES forward as a collaborative force in our region,” said Barbara Martorana, director of the Department for Exceptional Children. “Just a few highlights among her many accomplishments include a rock solid, experienced TIG (Trauma, Illness, and Grief) team, the annual School-Based Mental Health conference, and close relationships between BOCES and local child welfare/mental health support agencies. Betsy stands out as always wanting to find a way to improve the ways we support each other, as well as our students and families.”

As Chairperson of the Mental Health Department, Armes is the primary resource for over 40 social workers and psychologists. She coordinates reevaluations, works with Dr.

John Erhart on psychiatric consultations and evaluations, seeks out and provides professional development to the department, and advocates for practices that support our students' mental health. She is regarded by many as the go-to person for individuals and groups both inside and outside her department.

Armes takes her passion for mental health services outside of work to the community, and represents Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES well while she's at it. School psychologist Lynette Maheu said, “Whether it be through the TIG Consortium, the Collaborative Care through Communication committee, or many others, Betsy is always on the front lines of knowing what is happening locally in the mental health field, and shares the BOCES perspective back with important stakeholders in order to positively impact our community.”

“Not only would our department be less without Betsy's leadership, so would the entire Department for Exceptional Children,” said Mary Beth MacKenzie, school psychologist. “She works tirelessly for us and for our students. Betsy is most certainly deserving of this recognition of her consistently outstanding and wide-reaching effort.”



Colleagues from the Department for Exceptional Children pose with Crystal Apple winner Betsy Armes.

National Technical Honor Society inducts 26 CTE students

This past November, 26 Career and Technical Education students were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS), an organization that honors top CTE students and their achievements.

During the ceremony, opening remarks were given by Robert Hill, assistant principal at WEMOCO and Theresa Cortez, NTHS advisor. School counselor Dave Mancuso addressed the students with a rousing speech about inspiration, going into detail about those who have inspired him throughout his life, and encouraging students to recognize those inspirations in their lives.

Perhaps most importantly, the students participated in the candle-lighting ceremony, where eight candles were lit – seven of which represent the attributes of membership to the NTHS: skill, honesty, service, responsibility, scholarship, citizenship and leadership.

The inductees are as follows:

Tyler Jones and Mario Milks (Advertising Design/Multimedia II); Logan Biedrzycki and Zachary Cooper (Carpentry II); Michaela Beikirch-Evert, Breanna Fox and Nura Ibrahim (Certified Nurse Assisting II); Joseph Sovereign (Computer Technology II); Anna Bohan, Ashley Fagan, Elysa Forte and Aniya Landry (Cosmetology II); Sierra Gesell and Haeli Santos (Culinary Arts II); Nicole Case and Amra Kapic (Dental Assisting II); Zachary Hursh and Timothy Masetta (Heavy Equipment Operation and Maintenance II); Carter Budziszewski, Matthew DeVos, Matthew DiMora, Domenico Longo and Brandon Roman (HVAC/Plumbing II); Crystal Lee (Laboratory Technology II); and Connor Kaminski and Jayden Pieniaszek (Residential and Industrial Electricity II).



Students don their NTHS honor stoles, waiting for the ceremony to begin.



Haeli Santos, Brockport Culinary Arts student, receives her certificate.



The 2019 National Technical Honor Society inductees.

Foundation fundraising will “Make All the Difference”

The Monroe 2–Orleans Educational Foundation celebrated another year of record-breaking fundraising. Last year, the Educational Foundation raised \$49,000. Thanks to the generosity of sponsors, donors and attendees, this year’s total exceeded that. The amount raised will go towards funding student scholarships. Make All the Difference Scholarship recipients Madelyn Crowley, of Gates Chili, and Janelle Failing, of Brockport, each addressed the crowd of more than 250 people. They shared their stories of how these scholarships made all the difference in their lives. This year’s scholarship recipients will be announced in the spring of 2020. Each recipient will be awarded \$5,000 toward college or further career training.



A student speaker poses for a photo with the foundation board members. Back row, l-r: Student speaker Madelyn Crowley, and board members Jo Anne Antonacci, Susan Rizzo, Michael Crumb, Casey Kosiorek, Keith Bock, Nancy Geraci. Front row, l-r: Elisabeth Curran, Barbara Cutrona, Joseph Kelly, Michelle Erklenz-Watts, Paul Salmin. Not pictured: Board members Dee Alexander, Susan Brannen, William Dadey, Tod Eagle, Matthew Huber, Deborah Leh, Rachel Muniz, Leigh Nenni and student speaker Janelle Failing.

Hundreds of Monroe County students address race relations at ROC2Change

Recently, Pittsford Central School District hosted the ninth ROC2Change Student Summit on Race at the Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES Professional Development Center. Hundreds of students from schools across Monroe County were brought together to discuss race, racism, the implications of internalized racism, non-racist and anti-racist behavior with their peers. Pittsford Mendon and Sutherland High Schools' student-led committee chose the theme "The Power of One" as a reminder that it just takes one person or a single action to make a positive difference.

Pittsford Central School District Superintendent Michael Pero's opening remarks to students reiterated the "Power of One" and the importance of the work carried out by students at and after the event: "Every one of us makes decisions about how we use our time. You have chosen to use your time today to make your schools, and our country, places where humanity thrives and diversity is valued. I know that your work today will make you and those you interact with better human beings – this is the purpose

of 'The Power of One' – as change starts with you."

Facilitated dialogue around race relations and "The Power of One" included interactive group breakout sessions with topics such as:

- The Power of One Connection: Question and Answer Session with Keynote Speakers
- The Power of One Comment: Identifying and Responding to Microaggressions
- The Power of One Response: Responding to Racism, Bullying and Implicit Bias
- The Power of One First Step: Understanding and Dismantling Systemic Racism in Rochester

Students worked together to develop ideas to take back to their respective schools to inspire change. "I hope to bring back more of a positive environment for everyone and also more sensitivity when it comes to what we say because that is something that's needed," said Mendon High School student Melina Golembiewski.

The keynote speakers of the summit were Serve2Unite co-founders, Pardeep Singh Kaleka and Arno Michaelis. Pardeep Singh Kaleka lost his father, Satwant Singh Kaleka, in the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin shooting on Aug. 5, 2012. Arno Michaelis, a former white supremacist, helped start a gang back in the 1980s that produced the shooter of that temple. Michaelis, who had given up his white supremacist lifestyle and felt driven to combat the violence he used to commit, formed an unlikely friendship with Kaleka. Together they created Serve2Unite to foster caring and nonviolent climates in schools and communities.



Students are rapt with attention as keynote speaker Arno Michaelis addresses the hundreds of attendees at ROC2Change.



Keynote speaker Pardeep Singh Kaleka interacts with students during his keynote presentation.



Pittsford Mendon students are ready to ROC "2" Change at the annual event.

"I know that your work today will make you and those you interact with better human beings – this is the purpose of 'The Power of One' – as change starts with you."

- District Superintendent Michael Pero

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 74 employees who have achieved a combined 1,205 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 row l-r: Tim Dobbertin, Annalise Johnson-Smith, Jacqueline Kurcoba, Lynette Maheu, BOCES 2 Board Trustee Michael May (Spencerport)

Back row l-r: Darlene McKee, Deborah Parker, Rebecca Spence, Joan Westphal, Martha Willis

Not pictured: Sally Bacon, Marilyn Bohan, Laura Cadregari, Patricia Conroy, Gina Gates, Inis Mahmutspahic, Tamra Maier, Shay Monks, Heather Murphy, Lisa Palumbo, Melissa Pound, James Revell, Maria Siracusa, Mark Straub, Amy Jean Sweeney, Paul Valenti



15 years of Service

Front row l-r: Linda Crist, Brandilyn Gage, Billie Hasenauer

Back row l-r: Danielle Manetta, Corinne Smith

Not pictured: Michael Auble, Mark Bibby, Avril Blackwood, Thomas Carpenter, Stephanie Faulks, Christine Fike, Donna Graham, Alicia Granville, Sandra Loveridge, Richard Muscarella, Sheila Nasradinaj, Marcia Podgers, David Shalke, Denise Stiles, Brian Walczak, Laurie Zelter



20 Years of Service

Front row l-r: Timothy Baker, Donald Messmer, Jacqueline Meyer

Back row l-r: Cindy Minster, Susan Pierleoni, Sandra Schroeder

Not pictured: Georgann Abbondanzieri, Lien Dang, Regina Gurio, Tanya Metras, Lisa Sisson, Maryann Smith, Michael Strassenburgh, Mary White



25 Years of Service

Front row l-r: Karen Arnold, Sharon Ashrafioun, Patricia DiPonzio-Mock

Back row l-r: Anita Ellison, Susan O'Brien

Not pictured: BOCES 2 Board Trustee John Abbott (Hilton), Elizabeth Beairisto, Roxanne Redmond, Lynda VanCoske



30 Years of Service

Carole Bloser, Rhonda Fauci, Sherri Harrington



35 Years of Service

Leigh Nenni

CTE Expo exceeds expectations

The halls of WEMOCO were crammed with parents, students and community members exploring their options at the annual Career and Technical Education Expo. Current eighth-, ninth- and 10th-graders and their families had the opportunity to discover and discuss the CTE programs that would become available to them as 11th-graders.

Attendees were able to participate in hands-on activities from each program. From Advertising to Phlebotomy and Laboratory Science, prospective CTE students had fun seeing what options were available. Current CTE students had an just as much showing the ropes to those who came to visit. Cosmetology students displayed their styling supplies, carpentry students gave woodworking demonstrations, and future chefs made mouths water in the baking classrooms.

Jake Merica, a 12th-grader at Gates Chili and second-year carpentry student, described what it was like to show off his skills to other students.

“It was pretty cool teaching other people what I was doing on the lathe, creating a bowl, and teaching other people what you can do,” Merica said. He also stated he hoped he taught students about “coming here when they’re a junior or senior and being able to do this fun class and work outside.”

Visitors could also discuss local job opportunities with representatives from Monroe Community College, Rochester Works, Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce, Exploring and more.



Baking hopefuls look at a display case of sweet treats.

Jill Slavny, CTE Executive Principal, said the community turnout was encouraging.

“[The large number of attendees] means young people are thinking about careers, because regardless of how they get educated, how much education they get, where they get educated – ultimately, everybody needs a career,” explained Slavny.

She continued, “Here you can visit 21 different industries under two roofs. We want every student to come and spend some time here, just to be exposed to where the jobs are, where the opportunities are, and what the industry looks and feels like. We really wanted to feel like a community [career education] resource that everyone could come and join.”



A cosmetology student shows a prospective WEMOCO student a curling iron.



Teacher Jennifer Merkel describes her Advertising Design/Multimedia program to an interested family.



A Certified Nurse Assisting student gives a student a hands-on demonstration of a blood pressure cuff.

What it means to serve

Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES teacher Rob Coatsworth's 6:1:1 Behavior Management class at Churchville–Chili Middle School welcomed a special guest on Oct. 29. U.S. Army Major Ryan Crosby spoke with students about what it means to serve in the military, and answered many questions about life in the army. Crosby even brought his audience some cool Army ROTC Tiger Battalion gear from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) for them to keep, and was able to spend 1:1 time with some of them.

The visit was facilitated by classroom psychologist Ann-Marie DePeters, who contacted Crosby, who is a professor of military science and the director of Army ROTC at RIT. Although this was his first time speaking with our students, he was clearly a great hit. The kids loved his presentation! They now have a much better understanding of the sacrifices military members make in service of our country.



Fall fields full of pumpkins and smiles

BOCES 2 students in teacher Kate McElhaney's Gates Chili Neil Armstrong Elementary School class visited Cobble Creek Farm on Oct. 30 for a day of rich sensory experiences, exercise, socializing and fun with friends. The trip included a tractor ride to the pumpkin fields where each child chose a pumpkin to take home. Students visited with friendly farm animals, toured the huge old barn, saw the jack o' lantern display and tried cider.

Learning takes a field trip

Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES teacher Heather Ferguson took advantage of some lovely fall weather to give her medically fragile students a different kind of learning experience. On Oct. 18, they left their classroom at Quest Elementary School in Hilton, and headed off to Stokoe Farms in Scottsville. Here the friends socialized, explored the farm and pumpkin fields and got lots of fresh air and exercise. Everyone had a great time together!



Annual traditions continue – Santa and SEPTO

On Dec. 11, the banquet rooms at Ridgemont Country Club were decorated with twinkling fairy lights and a beautiful Christmas tree. The magical atmosphere elicited happy oohs and aahs from almost 300 special guests – elementary school students, their teachers and support staff from BOCES 2 programs for Exceptional Children. They were there for Lunch with Santa, organized for over 30 years by our Special Education Parent/Teacher Organization (SEPTO) and the Rotary Club of Greece.

The holiday lunch was served by cheerful volunteers, and entertainment was provided

by a magician, a singing clown and many friendly elves. Of course, Santa was the main attraction, and he did not disappoint.

This was the jolly old elf's second appearance at BOCES 2 for the season. SEPTO also sponsors Breakfast with Santa, hosted by the West Central Kiwanis Club. A buffet pancake breakfast with eggs, sausage, toast, hot cocoa and Christmas cookies was served on Dec. 7 to about 150 students, family members and staff. In addition to Santa, children enjoyed playing instruments and singing holiday songs, led by BOCES 2 Music Therapist Christopher Gold. There were craft stations,

a raffle for holiday books donated by SEPTO, and shopping for presents from the SEPTO Scholastic Book Fair, which had just started.

SEPTO President Colleen Dox-Griffith, who has been hard at work behind the scenes all year, said, "These events are only possible because of our amazing community partners and their tireless collaborations with the many volunteers in our SEPTO. They really are responsible for giving hundreds of children the opportunity to celebrate this season with friends."



Holley students interact with professionals in distance learning program

Sixth-graders at Holley Elementary School were selected twice in the same week to participate in live webinars with professionals as part of the BOCES 2 distance learning program. In October, they asked questions of professional football player Will Shields during the Heart of a Famer program and archaeologist Dr. Michele Koons during the Scientists in Action: Ancient Mummies, New Discoveries program. Schools across the U.S. register to participate in webinars like these, but only a handful of classes are selected to participate in live question and answer sessions with the featured speakers.

Participation in live webinars like these help students meet the new standards for digital literacy, where they are required to use digital tools in learning. For the session with Shields, sixth graders researched information about the Kansas City Chiefs offensive player before drafting their questions about his career and the lessons he's learned from it. The webinar with Dr. Koons helped students kick off their unit on early civilizations. Students asked her several questions

about her methods and experiences on archaeological digs.

Students enjoyed their moments on the "big screen" as they interacted with the professionals. It was eye-opening for them to gain insight into classrooms across the U.S. as they watched other students participate in the webinar.

The distance learning program offers school districts virtual fieldtrips at low cost. Donna Farren, the Distance Learning Specialist at BOCES 2, notifies all component districts of upcoming opportunities and registers them for programs. She can also connect schools with other classes around the state or in the nation so they can exchange ideas and information by grade level regarding specific subject areas. Students are able to tour places like museums that have exhibits that are not normally open to the public, but they gain a behind-the-scenes view of specific areas of study. The visual presentations and conversations with experts in the field helps students better understand the concepts they are learning.



Participation in live webinars like these help students meet the new standards for digital literacy, where they are required to use digital tools in learning.

Building friendships through a love for reading

Little ones love hearing a story, especially if read by an older friend they admire and look up to. Making a special connection over a book is a great moment. Ask any of the ninth- and 10th-graders from Westview Exceptional Children and Westside Academy who visited Neil Armstrong Elementary School in Gates Chili recently.

The older students sat in on classrooms led by Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES teachers Kate McElhaney and Maria Dembeyiotis. Each chose a series of picture books and shared their stories with the preschoolers and medically fragile students. As they read out loud, the high school

students quickly gained confidence in their skills and easily held the attention of their new friends.

The upperclassmen took their responsibilities as mentors very seriously. They treated their younger fans with gentle kindness and respect, each taking time to patiently answer questions. Young or old, none of the students really wanted their time together to end. The field trip was a wonderful opportunity for them all to begin to build friendships and a lifelong love of reading.



Food Wars and S'mores at CTE



The losing team danced in the WEMOCO lobby while waiting to serenade departing students.



The Heavy Equipment Operations and Maintenance class won the food collection contest at WEMOCO. More than 6,800 food items were collected and loaded for delivery to families in need.

Career and Technical Education students at WEMOCO had fun for a good cause by gathering ingredients for S'mores for the Troops and by donating food items for the Spencerport Ecumenical Food Shelf. All students could participate in this event, dubbed "Food Wars," by donating to either the Welding or the Heavy Equipment Operation and Maintenance class. Originally, there was to be a "winning" and "losing" class, but to celebrate reaching their goal, students got to watch teachers from both classes get doused by a front loader filled with water. It is a very dramatic event – there is a LOT of water.

The Heavy Equipment Operations and Maintenance class won the food collection

contest at WEMOCO. More than 6,800 food items were collected and loaded for delivery to families in need.

The Spencerport Food Shelf will feed 140 families over the winter with these donations. Food Wars also included the collection of graham crackers, chocolate and marshmallows for "S'mores for the Troops" that will be shipped to Afghanistan by Brandilyn Gage-Steves.

Also, students from the losing class serenaded students in their classrooms and in the front lobby at WEMOCO at 10:10 a.m. when other students were dismissed.



Jim Slocum, Josh Padlick, Theresa Alampi-Cortez, Brandilyn Gage-Steves and Steve Donlon prepare for the ultimate ice bucket challenge.



Students and staff from Westview Exceptional Children welcomed shoppers at Walmart in Brockport with cheerful greetings this holiday season. Volunteer bell ringers from Westside Academy also participated. Ringing the bell for the Salvation Army is a favorite tradition for many of our students who gladly volunteer their time every year.

Retiree Connections

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 Amanda Dedie, editor, at adedie@monroe2boces.org or mail it to BOCES 2 Communication and Technology Services, 3625 Buffalo Rd, Rochester, NY 14624, attn. Amanda Dedie.

Strategic Plan Update

Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development

Strategic Goal

Continuous Improvement

Key Strategy

Conduct needs assessment to identify leadership support and targeted professional development.

One of the Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development priority actions this year is providing our component districts who participate in the Reading Recovery intervention service a tool that will foster self-reflection with respect to implementing the program. Once this is complete, CIPD will distribute this needs assessment survey to districts to identify their needs related to quality of implementation and continuous monitoring of the Reading Recovery intervention program.

The needs assessment survey is a comprehensive instrument that assists district leaders such as Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, Directors/Coordinators and Principals, to evaluate the different types of supports given to instructional staff through a rigorous, data-driven process. When the surveys are complete the results will be analyzed, shared with all key stakeholders, and used to develop an action plan which will drive program improvements.

Working together and giving back

On Nov. 7, Monroe 2–Orleans BOCES teacher Kimberly Lobdell's class from Westview Exceptional Children traveled to Cameron Street Ministries in the city to volunteer.

The 10th-graders spent their first hour working in the Emergency Food Pantry, where families can choose from a wide-variety of non-perishable food items to help make ends meet. They shelved and organized donated cans and packages of food, and moved cases of food from the back to make them more accessible for users. One student carefully inspected a crate of apples to make sure they were all still fresh and delicious.

The second hour, spent in the Kitchen, was the most exciting for the young volunteers. Their team worked together to unload a huge truck of donated food from Wegmans. They put everything away and then stocked the bread cupboard, where guests can get fresh bread to take home. Students also filled a cooler with ready-to-take-home meals. Two students worked under the guidance of kitchen staff members, making the day's lunch of baked ziti. There were smiles and laughter all around. One of the budding cooks said he hoped to work at his favorite restaurant someday.

Lobdell said, "This experience allowed my students to use their skills to help others in need.



Cameron Street staff members showed students how they could help in preparing a hearty lunch for over 100 ministry guests.

We had discussions around why we do this and the purpose of the Kitchen and food pantry. The kids felt good about making a difference. They enjoyed the day and asked when we were going to go back."

Students will get that chance in December when Westview Exceptional Children participates in Cameron Street's holiday basket distribution. Our students will help many local families fill their baskets with everything they need for a happy holiday dinner.



The crew took a moment away from all the work to simply enjoy their time together.

BOCES 2 CWD adult student receives statewide Student of the Year Award

Patricia Douglas received the New York Association for Continuing and Community Education (NYACCE) Student of the Year award in Albany. She is an adult student in the High School Equivalency (HSE) class at the Monroe 2-BOCES Center for Workforce Development (CWD) in Gates.

Her CWD teacher, Theresa Parsons, nominated Douglas for the award. In her nomination letter, Parsons wrote, "Patricia left high school in the tenth grade due to unfortunate life circumstances. After years away from education, Patricia summoned the courage to try attending school again. Douglas joined the HSE class one year ago at the Center for Workforce Development and has consistently achieved gains. She works diligently every day to meet her goal and achieve her High School Equivalency."

"I returned to school because this has always been a goal to me. Even when I was told many years ago by a mentor that I could never do it," said Douglas. "All the staff members at CWD have shown me that they have confidence in me, that I can do this."



“ I returned to school because this has always been a goal to me. Even when I was told many years ago by a mentor that I could never do it.

- Patricia Douglas

Upon winning the award, Douglas said, "I finally feel like I was noticed in what I do to try to help others and also that I was not invisible. All I ever wanted to do was to help others in my lessons, to be positive, and remind others to not give up on their goals."

At 65, Douglas owns a small and successful hat making business, Patty D Originals, and is a patent holder. "This diploma will open doors for me," she said. "Maybe I can go to college. It would be a good challenge for me."

In addition to receiving the NYACCE Student of the Year Award, Douglas was honored in a ceremony before her HSE class (see photo below: (l-r) BOCES 2 CWD Director Tom Schulte; her current teachers Andrea Parker and Carolyn Yarton; Patricia Douglas; Senator Joseph Robach; BOCES 2 Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Programs Tim Dobbertin; and BOCES 2 District Superintendent JoAnne Antonacci.)

Senator Robach presented Douglas with a certificate. All agreed she is an inspiration to them and to her fellow HSE adult students.

Douglas continues to work on obtaining her HSE and hopes to graduate in 2020.



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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 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.

'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 seventh year, Holiday Connections 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.

