



Watchung Hills Regional High School District

Newsletter

April 2016



From the desk of the Superintendent

Dear Watchung Hills Regional High School Learning Community,

I consider it a privilege that with each district newsletter, I am able to personally share with you the magic that our students and staff are creating in this life-giving concept called “school.” In the pages that follow, you will see the tremendous achievement of our students. It is so important to remember the past as we continue to build our future.

The 2015-16 school year has been synonymous with America’s promise. It is all the hope of our nation and dreams of our forefathers captured in a system of opportunity. How fortunate we are to live in a great nation that values a free K-12 education system. Education is the great leveler of our nation, guaranteeing that any child can work hard and rise as high as his or her aspirations.

We can never take public schooling and our good fortune for granted. Yet, across the globe, children are not afforded the same opportunities. Even as I draft this message, my mind drifts to thoughts of children like Nobel Prize winner Malala Yousafzai—the young woman shot by the Taliban for standing up for education for girls.

Malala stated, “In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day. It’s their normal life. But in other parts of the world, we are starving for education... it’s like a precious gift. It’s like a diamond.”

For Malala and many other children across the globe, what we have every day - our school - is like a diamond. As the keepers of this precious gem, we are charged with using its reflective magic to catch the light of tomorrow. It is our duty to teach the young people of this community to cherish their opportunity to shine.

Like Malala, many in our nation’s history fought for this right and lost their lives to bequeath this gift to us. Here, in the Hills, let’s make sure that the sparkle of this special gift, this diamond, is never diminished. Let us all be committed to keep the American dream alive and in our own special way. Let us continue to support our students and our schools to keep the promise of tomorrow alive!

Regards,

Superintendent

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Malala Yousafzai

Painting Series by Art Teacher Kate Griffin

Kate Griffin, who has been an art teacher since 2009 exhibited 12 original paintings in the Masters of Art Education Graduate Show, called "Collective Visions," , April 14, to Friday, May 13, in the James Howe Gallery at Kean University, Union.

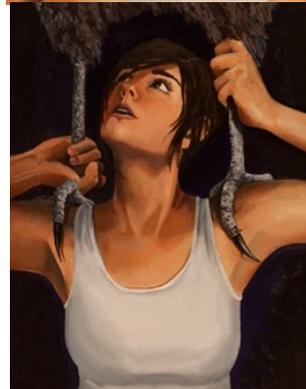
Griffin's series, titled "Seen and Heard," is 12 self-portrait Acrylic paintings on canvas board. "Each of the paintings represent feminist themes such as love, loss, betrayal, triumph and societal expectations, explored both literally and figuratively," Griffin said. "Each work is inspired by modern music, both written and performed by female artists."

She drew inspiration from current artists Sara Bareilles, KT Tunstall, Taylor Swift, Fiona Apple, and more,.

The series has been a year in the making, and pulled from personal experiences.

Her paintings were be among other local art teachers and artists pursuing master's degrees in Art Education at Kean. At WHRHS, Griffin is also involved in the

student drama program, helping with scenic painting, prop work, play bills and posters. She helps enable students to participate in the many behind-the-scenes support requirements for the fall drama and spring musical productions. Her handiwork, and that of the students she has organized, was seen in the spring musical, "She Loves Me,."



2016 Toyota-USA Hockey National Championship

Freshman, Alexa Renzo of Green Brook Township, skated as a center with the New Jersey Colonials U14 Tier 1 Girls Ice Hockey team, in the 2016 Toyota-USA Hockey National Championship, March 30 to April 4, in Minneapolis, Minn.

The NJ Colonials team is ranked 12th in the country, after winning the USA Hockey Tier 1 Atlantic District Championships against the Jr. Flyers of Philadelphia, Pa., on March 13.

This elite girls ice hockey team is comprised of players from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The Colonials play a competitive 60 game schedule against the highest ranked teams from Canada and the Northeastern United States.

Renzo began playing hockey at age 7 in the Green Brook Roller Hockey Club. Her passion for hockey led her to the ice at the age of 10 and ultimately to the New Jersey Colonials U14 Tier 1 Girls team in Morristown.

Renzo said she is looking forward to continuing to play for the WHRHS Warriors Ice Hockey Team next season, as well as continue to play for the NJ Colonials.

Renzo, who attended Green Brook Middle School prior to starting at WHRHS this year, also plays for the WHRHS JV Girls Lacrosse Team, and is looking forward to the upcoming spring season.



Script & Cue Performance of “She Loves Me”

“She Loves Me,” this year’s Spring Musical was presented at 7 p.m., Thursday, March 17, Friday, March 18, and Saturday, March 19, and at 2 p.m., March 19, in the WHRHS Performing Arts Center.

The musical is a performance of the WHRHS Drama Department’s Script and Cue Student program, directed by Drama teacher Douglas Eaton, with musical direction from Choral Music teacher Angela DiIorio Bird.

The WHRHS production of “She Loves Me” involves the participation of some 45 students in the cast, another 20 in the orchestra, 20 among the crew, and countless others in set design and ancillary assistance.

Student leads in the play include Jackie

Romankow as Amalia Balash, Sam Sinnott as Georg Nowak, Ryan Prestera as Seven Kodaly, Julia Sluyter as Ilona Ritter, Judy Tounsi as Arpad Lazio, Anthony Speros as Ladislav Sipos, Alex Bird as Mr. Maraczek, and Charles Buscarino as Waiter.

Book, music and lyrics for She Loves Me are by Joe Masteroff, Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, respectively. It was originally directed and produced on Broadway by Harold Prince in association with Lawrence N. Kasha and Philip C. McKenna. Original orchestrations are by Don Walker adapted by Frank Matosich.



Perfect Scores on US Government and Politics AP Exam

Rachel Coleman of Stirling, a 2015 graduate of WHRHS, is one of only three students in the world to earn every point possible on the AP U.S. Government and Politics exam administered last May.

Coleman is now a first-year student at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. She is currently majoring in English Literature, with minors in Spanish and Theology.

History remains one of her favorite subjects, Coleman said. Following up on her memorable History teachers and teachers in other subjects at WHRHS, she said she has had great History professors and professors in other subjects so far at Georgetown. She added she does not feel overwhelmed by the classes at Georgetown, and that is a credit to her teachers at WHRHS, as well as to her home schooling before coming to WHRHS.

She said one of the real advantages of having taken the AP class and exam is that it has allowed her to skip a freshman-level history pre-requisite, and go directly to taking a higher level course. That has been a real bonus, she said.

Advanced Placement exams are reported on a 5-point scale, where a 5 is equivalent to a grade of A in the corresponding college course, according to The College Board.

Some 322 students in the world earned every point possible on AP exams in 2015. Typically, these students answered every multiple-choice question correctly and earning full points on the free-response section, according to The College Board. Students earned perfect scores in 21 of 36 AP exams.

Coleman was one of the three to earn a perfect score in the U.S. Government and Politics exam. The largest number of perfect scores, a total of 67, were recorded in the “Computer Science A” AP Exam. High numbers of perfect scores were achieved also in the following AP exams: 55 in Spanish Language and Culture; 54 in Microeconomics; 36 in German Language and Culture; 22 in Macroeconomics; 16 in Studio Art – Drawing Portfolio; 12 in Calculus AB; and 11 each in Calculus BC and Physics C – Mechanics.



2016 National Merit and Presidential Scholars

Six seniors have been named National Merit Finalists.

They are: Claire Yuxuan Chen, Emily K. Kim, Kunwoo Park, Eric Zhu and Henry Zhu, all of Warren Township, and Isis M. Zhang of Stirling.

In addition, two of the seniors have been nominated also as U.S. Presidential Scholars, Claire Yuxuan Chen and Isis M. Zhang.

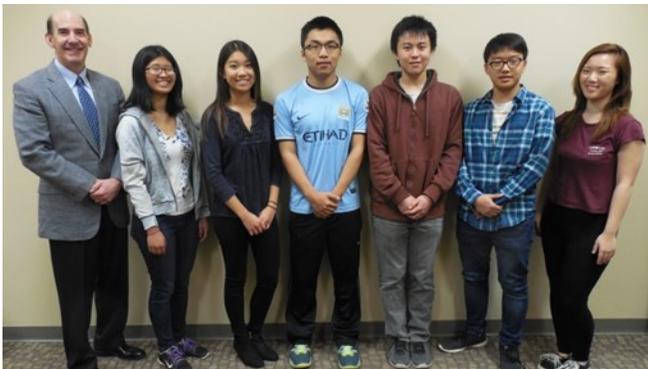
In September, the National Merit Program named some 1,600 National Merit semifinalists across the country, and typically, about 90 percent of the semifinalists go on to be selected as finalists. All six semifinalists at WHRHS have now been named finalists.

The semifinalists qualified as a result of scores in the PSAT NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test), taken during the fall of junior year. In addition, other factors are considered, such as classroom work as verified by an official school transcript, and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores.

The selection of some 7,400 National Merit Scholarship winners, will take place this spring. Scholarship offers will be

mailed to winners at their home address and confidential notification will be sent to their principals.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program, which was started by Executive Order of President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, to recognize some of the nation's most distinguished graduating seniors. It was expanded in 1979 by President Jimmy Carter to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. It was extended further in 2015 by President Barack Obama to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.



Each year up to 161 are named

U.S. Presidential Scholars, out of some 4,000 who are nominated. The majority of the scholars are selected on the basis of broad academic achievement. About 20 students are selected on the basis of their academic and artistic scholarship in the visual arts, the performing arts, or creative writing. Beginning this year, about another 10 students will be chosen on the basis of their ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

The Hills Roundup

- ◆ On February 5th, two professional opera singers, James Morris and his wife Susan Quittmayer, visited Patti Grunther's Italian 4 Honors class. Their visit was part of a new unit on Italian opera that Ms. Grunther introduced this year to her most advanced students. The students studied the opera *Tosca* in detail, reading through the entire "libretto" and then went on a field trip to see the New York City Opera perform it at Lincoln Center. Mr. Morris recently sang a principal role in *Tosca* at the Metropolitan Opera. The two singers discussed their careers and answered numerous questions from students.
- ◆ The Mock Trial team made it to the finals round this year - winning the county and semi-finals championships in January.
- ◆ Two of our students, Abby Ingber and Jordyn Zitman, submitted pieces which were selected for publication in *NU*, which supports Jewish teen writers. Jordyn's poems that were selected are "Sixteen" and "The Ring" while Abby's reflection is "Getting to the next Four Years."
- ◆ Twenty-eight of Ms. Griffin's students entered the Celebrating Art Fall 2015 contest. Twenty-five of the students were accepted. This is a nation-wide contest where students from all over the United States submit works to be published in a "yearbook."

"Education is not filling a bucket but lighting a flame."

William Butler Yeats

The Hills Roundup (Cont'd)

- ◆ Watchung Hills senior Tess Novak's watercolor "Carrots" was selected to appear on the April cover of *The Warren-Watchung Connection*.
- ◆ The following students earned awards at the 37th annual High School Art show at the DuCret School of Art in Plainfield, NJ: Jenna Charko – 2nd place in Oil for "Boots," Sylvia Baeyens – Honorable Mention in Oil for "Bubbles," Olena Hadlet – Honorable Mention in Acrylic for "Consumed," Ashly Kang – Honorable Mention in Pen and Ink for "East River," Nicole Parisi – Honorable Mention in Pastel for "Ring."
- ◆ Our JSA student members attended the Junior Statesman of America conference in Washington, DC on February 20 and 21 where students serve in the House or Senate to try to get bills passed. Freddie Hayeck won a best speaker award, and Parima Kadikar, Alyse Horan, Molly Shulan, Connell Rae and Hunry Zhu had their bill passed granting representation and voting rights to US territories and DC.
- ◆ The Model United Nations Club attended the University of Delaware's HenMUN IV Awards in Newark, Delaware on February 26 and 27, where Watchung Hills Regional High School won Outstanding Large Delegation. Our students also won individual awards: Honorable Mention—Suchir Govindarajan, Vineet Parikh, and Alex Hentschel; Outstanding Delegate—Justin Panzario and Lizann Sung; Best Delegate—Brooke Stanicki
- ◆ Three of our Watchung Hills students advanced in the FBLA State Conference and have been invited to the National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, which will run from June 29 through July 2, 2016. They are Freddie Hayeck and Radhika Thotakura, who placed 3rd in the Global Business event, and Demtra Chang, who placed 3rd in the Introduction to Business Procedures event.
- ◆ The following are our Scholastic Writing Awards winners who were awarded Gold Key, Silver Key, and Honorable Mention recognitions: Gold Key in Poetry: Danielle Koslow, Daniel Lee, Jacqueline Lee, Gold Key in Creative Writing: Jacqueline Lee, Lizann Sung, Gold Key for Writing Portfolio: Lizann Sung, Silver Key for Writing-Personal Essay/Memoir: Cathleen Luo, Silver Key for Critical Essay: Lizann Sung, Honorable Mention for Poetry, Short Story, Personal Essay/Memoir: Jacqueline Lee, Cathleen Luo-2 honorable mention, Lizann Sung, Carrie Zhang.
- ◆ The Hillsborough Cultural Arts Commission Show was held on March 11, 2016, and four of our art students won awards in various categories for their works as follows: Amanda Soliman -First Place— Fine Art, Graphite , Martina Cruz -Honorable Mention—Photo, Puloma Sen -Honorable Mention—Fine Art, Oil, Abigail Pedroso—Honorable Mention-Fine Art, Colored Pencil.
- ◆ On March 20, 2016, Sydney Bark's and Lindsey Fogel's works were selected for the Morris Museum show, "Fresh Perspectives," 2016. This is quite an honor as the Morris Museum show allows four submissions from every art teacher in the state and only chooses 50 pieces for display.
- ◆ In March, student Peri Martins auditioned and was selected to sing the National Anthem at Patriot's Stadium. The date of this performance will be sometime in late April or early May.
- ◆ In March, student Kayla McNulty completed the United States Equestrian Federation's Equestrian Athlete Lettering program. This program recognizes accomplishments of young equestrians and encourages their involvement in equestrian sport.
- ◆ During the month of April, student artists from Watchung Hills are exhibiting their work in the Watchung Arts Center's Heinz W. Otto Gallery. Students whose work is displayed from the AP Fine Art, Fine Art 3 and Photography classes at Watchung Hills include award winners from this year's 37th annual High School Art Show at the DuCret School of Art. AP Fine Arts Senior Jenna Charko was awarded second place for the Oil Paint category, and seniors Sylvia Baeyens, Olena Hadlet, Ashly Kang, and Nicole Parisi were all recognized as Honorable Mention in Oil, Acrylic, Pen & Ink, and Pastel respectively. Photography student Jenny Yan was recognized as an Honorable mention in Black & White Photography. All of the disciplines of Art, including Painting, Drawing, Photography, Sculpture Digital Arts and Ceramics are on display. The show also features work previously submitted to the 2016 Fine Art and Photo Exhibit through the Hillsborough Cultural Arts Commission in March. Select works from the Fine Arts and Photography students will also be submitted to the 2016 Congressional Art Competition in Washington, D.C.
- ◆ All State Orchestra is a high level, state wide group comprised of students who have previously auditioned and placed into a regional group. Five of our students placed in All State Orchestra. They are: Brian Zheng - Viola , Eris Ulaj - Violin, and Catharine Chen - Violin, Ethan Marmolejos— Tuba, and Jeremy Cui— Oboe.



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