

Our Schools

The Community Newsletter of the Farmingdale Public Schools • Spring 2013

Science Education at Farmingdale - The Future is Bright

Farmingdale's current science programs have increasingly earned recognition, as the number of students earning honors and awards continues to climb. Enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) and high-level Regents science courses has risen, as students recognize the many career paths which require a strong background in the sciences.

Soon, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) will be released. The NGSS are intended to reflect a new vision for American science education and provide an important opportunity to improve not only science education but also student achievement. Similar to the ELA and mathematics Common Core Learning Standards, these new K-12 national science standards will be rich in content and practice; they are arranged in a coherent manner across disciplines and grades and designed to provide all students an internationally benchmarked science education.

The NGSS are student performance expectations that clarify the expectations of what students will know and be able to do by the end of the grade or grade band. The NGSS are organized by grade level for kindergarten through grade five, and as grade banded expectations at the middle school (6-8) and high school (9-12) levels. As the District considers implementation of NGSS, it will be important to thoughtfully consider how to organize these grade-banded standards into courses that best prepare students for post-secondary success in college and career.

Farmingdale students are currently exploring the many areas of science. At the elementary level, instruction is focused on scientific inquiry. As students explore buoyancy, electrical circuits, the environment, matter, and chemistry, teachers align science topics with the Common Core through nonfiction reading. Howitt Middle School equips students with the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to prepare for their future. Farmingdale's science clubs have been recognized for participation in local, state, and national competitions that provide our students with a number of opportunities to explore various areas of science.

Science Olympiad

Howitt Middle School and Farmingdale High School have entered Science Olympiad teams in regional and state competitions this year. High school teachers Theresa Bianco, Bob Clark, Charles Collica and Ann Grady led three separate Science Olympiad teams (a total of 42 students) in the Western Long Island Regional Competition, held in February. The competition featured 22 different events and activities, including the opportunity to design and build airplane gliders for maximum time in flight and to participate in magnetic levitation car races, forensic exams and rock and mineral identification. FHS finished in the top ten and will move on to participate in the New York State Science

Olympiad in March, competing in the NY State competition for the second consecutive year. The Howitt team will be heading to its first competition on March 16, led by teacher Kathy Sluszka.

2013 Intel Science Talent Search

This year, Nakul Gupta was named a semifinalist in the Intel competition for his research on proteins and RNA. One of 300 semifinalists from around the country, Nakul will receive a \$1,000 award for his research. The Intel Science Talent Search is the nation's most prestigious pre-college science competition. The program awards the nation's most promising high school seniors who have the potential to solve the world's challenges. Nakul has been enrolled in the FHS science research program for four years working with teachers Lorie Shienwald, Ann Grady and Pete Macchia.

U. S. Department of Energy National Science Bowl

In January, teacher Pete Macchia coached the FHS Science Bowl team to a third-place finish in the regional competition at the Brookhaven National Laboratory. The U.S. Department of Energy National Science Bowl is a nationwide academic competition that tests students' knowledge in all areas of science. Farmingdale's teams have twice captured first place at regional competitions and traveled to Washington, D.C., to compete at the national level.



The students who won medals at this year's Nassau County Regional Science Olympiad competition helped the team qualify for the New York State Science Olympiad in March: (L-R) Nakul Gupta, Elijah Mas, Katie Gileran, Brian Coyne, Annie Chen, Andrea Santos, Jonathan Leifer and Minhal Ahmed.

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE 2013 WALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY

Monday, April 29 • 6:30 p.m.
Farmingdale High School
Thomas W. Guilford
Lecture Hall

This year's Wall of Fame honorees are excellent role models for our students. They are:

Daniel L. Domenech
Class of 1998

Mr. Domenech is an actor currently starring in the Broadway musical, "Rock of Ages," at the Helen Hayes Theatre. Along his journey to Broadway, Mr. Domenech worked in Regional Theater, playing the lead in "Aladdin" at the Tuacahn Amphitheatre in Utah, as well as Angel in "Rent" at Jones Hall in Houston, Texas, to name a few. Mr. Domenech starred as Chase Madison in the popular television show, "Glee." Besides his numerous credits in Regional Theater across the country, Mr. Domenech also toured internationally. Adding to his acting credits, Mr. Domenech was an assistant choreographer both in film and television.

Importantly, Mr. Domenech is engaged in community service as well. He has performed in Lollipop Theater's Rhythm of Hope (NYC), a nonprofit organization in which musicians teach music and songwriting to pediatric patients. Mr. Domenech also engages in raising funds for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids (NYC). In Santa Clara, Utah, Mr. Domenech volunteered to help clean up the muddy mess from flooding.

Lawrence N. Masullo, M.D.
Class of 1981

Dr. Masullo is a Board Certified Emergency Room Physician, presently practicing in Texas. Graduating from SUNY Oneonta in 1985 and the University of Texas Medical School at Houston in 2002, Dr. Masullo was an Assistant Professor at Baylor University from 1996 to 1998. Dr. Masullo, an Iraqi War Veteran, was appointed to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army Medical Corps in 2009. Dr. Masullo was the ER Physician (Acting Chief) during the horrendous Fort Hood shooting on November 6, 2009.

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Non-profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Farmingdale Union
Free School District

Farmingdale Public Schools
Administrative Offices
50 Van Cott Avenue,
Farmingdale, New York 11735
(516) 752-6666

SCAR-RT SORT
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Important Budget Information and Upcoming Dates

The Board of Education is hard at work developing Farmingdale's 2013-14 budget proposal. Our long-term goals include maintaining the District's excellent programs, insulating our programs from fluctuations in state aid and other revenue, and adopting a tax levy acceptable to our residents. As a result of recent legislation transferring the costs of certiorari judgments from Nassau County to school districts, a substantial increase in the District's state-mandated contribution to the employees' and teachers' pension funds, and the tax levy cap, there are significant challenges in developing the 2013-14 budget. We strongly urge you to attend our upcoming Board meetings. While it is always important for community members to learn about the budget process and join the discussion, this year is an especially critical one. Mark your calendar now and plan to take an active role in the budget process. For more information, please contact District Clerk Mary E. Rogers at (516) 752-6552.

Wednesday, March 20

BOE Special Meeting
Budget Workshop
Howitt E. Cafeteria
8 p.m.

Thursday, March 21

Voter Registration
Summit Expo
High School Gymnasium
6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 10

BOE Regular Meeting
Budget Workshop/
Public Input
Proposed 2013-2014
Budget
Howitt E. Cafeteria
8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 17

BOE Special Meeting
Budget Adoption for
Voter Approval
Adopt BOCES
Admin. Budget
Howitt E. Cafeteria
8 p.m.

Wednesday, May 1

BOE Regular Meeting
Howitt E. Cafeteria
8 p.m.

Saturday, May 11

Voter Registration
Howitt E. Lobby
3 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Tuesday, May 14

BOE Special Meeting
Public Hearing 2013-14
Proposed Budget
Howitt E. Cafeteria
8 p.m.

Thursday, May 16

Last Day to Register for
Budget Vote and Election

Tuesday, May 21

**BUDGET VOTE
and ELECTION**
Howitt E. Gymnasium
6 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Voter Information

Q. Who is permitted to vote in the school Annual Budget Vote and Election?

Only registered voters are permitted to vote in the school Annual Budget Vote and Election. All residents who are registered for either school district or general elections are eligible to vote without re-registering, provided they have voted in a general or a school election within the last four years.

Q. Can anyone register to vote?

A person who is not registered may register to vote if he or she is a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years of age, and a resident of the district for at least 30 days.

Q. Where can I register to vote?

Voter registration will be held on March 21, 2013, at the Summit Expo and Health Fair from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the Farmingdale H.S. Gymnasium, and on May 11, 2013, at the Howitt East Lobby from 3:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Residents may also register on weekdays in the Office of the District Clerk between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. The last day to register is Thursday, May 16, 2013.

Q. Can I vote if I will not be in town on the day of the election?

Absentee ballots are available. Please contact the District Clerk for an application for an absentee ballot and/or information regarding the absentee ballot process. Note that individuals who are designated as "Permanently Disabled" by the Nassau County or Suffolk County Boards of Election will be sent an absentee ballot automatically.

Q. If I have questions about voting, who should I call?

If you have any questions regarding registration, eligibility to vote, or absentee ballots, please contact Ms. Mary E. Rogers, District Clerk, at (516) 752-6552.

For school district information and board meeting agendas, sign on to www.farmingdaleschools.org.

Representing the Community's Needs, Legislative Action Committee Travels to Albany

The Farmingdale Legislative Action Committee visited the state capitol in January to present the District's 2013-2014 legislative proposals and to pursue increases in education aid from the state and federal governments. Students, PTA members, teachers, administrators, community members and the Board of Education comprised the committee and advocated for the District's current programs, vocalizing their concerns. The teams in Albany met with Senator Kemp Hannon, Assemblymen Steven Englebright, Chad Lupinacci, Tom McKeivitt, Michael Montesano, Joseph Saladino, Robert Sweeney and Fred Thiele and Nicole Fosco of the Senate Finance Committee.



First and foremost, the representatives urged state officials to restore high-tax aid to the 2012-13 funding levels. Governor Cuomo's recent proposal calls for a reduction of \$1.4 million in high-tax aid to the Farmingdale School District and a \$37 million reduction in total high tax aid to all Long Island school districts. With a loss of state aid, many student services on Long Island will be disrupted.

The Legislative Action Committee also discussed the following with the legislators in Albany:

- The state must recognize regional cost differences to ensure that Long Island schools have the same buying power as dollars allocated to schools in other regions.
- Districts should be permitted to establish a Teacher Retirement System reserve and support a minimum contribution to the retirement system to smooth out spiking rates.
- School districts should be permitted to use the Employee Benefits Accrued Liability Reserve to offset state aid reductions.
- The state must ensure that the funding of charter schools does not adversely impact funding of public schools and that charter schools are held to the same financial audits and academic standards.
- The state must maintain funding for Teacher Center Programs that provide teacher mentoring and staff development; these training opportunities are focused on student learning.

Thank you to the following students, PTA members, teachers, administrators and Board members who represented Farmingdale School District in Albany:

Cordelia Anthony, Karen Bensen, Chris Brandimarte, John Capobianco, Danielle Cappadona, Gabrielle Cappadona, Paul Defendini, Stacie DeRosa, Tina Diamond, Kim Donuhue, Jon Falco, Olivia Gordon, Destiny Halling, Barbara Horsley, Terry Kane, Steve Kramer, Kathy Lively, Rosalie Longo, Kevin Loud, Alex Melton, Casey Marlow, Joe Valentine, Raymond Webb and Glen Zakian.

You can view the committee's 2013-14 legislative proposals on the District website at www.farmingdaleschools.org.

2013 Wall of Fame Inductees

Continued from page 1

Lieutenant Colonel Richard A. Vargas

Class of 1972

Lieutenant Colonel Vargas is a graduate of SUNY/Regents College (A. S.-Liberal Arts, B.S.-Sociology); American Military University (M.A.-National Defense Management); Air War College; and Command Staff College. He is fluent in Spanish and German and speaks (limited) Arabic.

Lieutenant Colonel Vargas has received the following awards and decorations: the Bronze Star; Meritorious Service Medal (2 awards); Army Commendation Medal (2 awards); Army Achievement Medal (2 awards); Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (4 awards); Armed Forces Reserve Medal (3 awards); Iraq Service Medal; Global War on Terror Service Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Army Service Ribbon; Army Overseas Service Ribbon; Humanitarian Service Ribbon; Army Reserve Overseas Service Training Ribbon; Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal; and the Joint Service Meritorious Unit Award (2 awards).

What's Happening in Our Schools

Albany Avenue Elementary School

There are few stories more inspiring than a human being fighting adversity and emerging as a role model – as a living example of perseverance. Dennis Oehler is one such person, and students and teachers at **Albany Avenue Elementary School** were grateful to have the opportunity to meet him. As part of the school's work with the Dignity for All Students Act, children were treated to the Changing Hearts and Mind program. Years ago, Mr. Oehler, the program's founder, was one of the top soccer players on Long Island, but a tragic car accident resulted in the amputation of his leg. Since the accident, Mr. Oehler has become an accomplished Special Olympics runner and public speaker. His story is one of determination and courage, and the path he embarked on post-surgery is one of positivity and encouragement. Mr. Oehler spoke to Albany Avenue students, offering an inspiring message about motivation, positive attitude, and respect for people with disabilities.



Northside Elementary School

As part of **Northside Elementary Schools'** Visiting Artists in Residence Program, fourth graders recently had the opportunity to work alongside professional artist and sculptor Cliff Mendelson. The program was sponsored by the PTA Enrichment Committee. The workshop was designed to provide the student's with a visual representation of Native American vessels, and how they played a major part in Native American culture. Mr. Mendelson put his skills on display with a demonstration of creating pottery by hand. After the presentation, all 99 students at the presentation created their own individual clay pieces using Native American symbols, patterns and imagery. Northside art teacher Jean Napolitano and Mrs. Kathy Perry, District Arts in Education Coordinator, were on hand to assist with this activity. The Visiting Artists program is a wonderful way to enrich students' art curriculum and give them a fun, hands-on way to learn of different cultures.

Saltzman East Memorial Elementary School

Second and third graders at **Saltzman East Memorial** were visited by several students from the middle school under the direction of teacher Allyson Pietronigro. In conjunction with the Dignity Act and anti-bullying initiatives, the middle school mentors wrote original picture books, which they read to the elementary children. The mentors followed up their reading with comprehension questions. At the end, all of the students recited an original anti-bully pledge and their 4 STAR steps to prevent bullying. The Saltzman students were inspired, impressed and engaged throughout each presentation, and the message was especially well received because it came from their mentors. The Q & A session provided the children with the opportunity to learn more about bullying.



Woodward Parkway Elementary School

New technologies offer tremendous benefits for students; however, nothing takes the place of curling up with a good book. When parents read to their children aloud, not only does the experience foster a child's love of reading, it is also a special way to bond. **Woodward Parkway** PTA aims to strengthen the parent-child relationship through reading by taking part in the state-wide Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) program. During the week of January 25-February 8, Woodward Parkway parents stressed the importance of regular reading in the home by reading with their children for 15 minutes per day. Additionally, Woodward Parkway instituted a theme to help develop enthusiasm for reading: Reading Can Take You Around the World. PARP is a New York State program founded on the belief that children who read at home are better prepared to succeed in formal education.

Howitt Middle School

In a struggling economy and tough job market, educators at **Howitt Middle School** realize it is never too early to start thinking about potential career and academic options. Last month, the school took a proactive measure by holding a seminar on college and career opportunities for all eighth grade students. During the event, teachers and guidance counselors decorated halls and classrooms with bulletin boards featuring information about various colleges. Teachers also discussed their own experiences in higher education with students, and they incorporated college-related information into their lesson plans. The classes and extracurricular activities students take in high school play a pivotal role in determining what college or job they enter upon graduation. Therefore, eighth grade marks a perfect time to begin focusing on academic futures. This week represents just one tool in helping Howitt middle schoolers prepare for young adulthood.



Farmingdale High School

A pair of unlikely guests paid a visit to **Farmingdale High School** last month, and automotive technology students turned it into a unique learning experience. With the Advance Auto Parts *Monster Jam* Tour stopping at Nassau Coliseum at the end of January, two of the participating monster trucks were stationed at the FHS auto shop prior to the event. Accompanying the vehicles were Monster Jam mechanics and team members, who gave students a first-hand look at the inner-workings of the giant trucks. They also gave detailed descriptions of how the trucks are prepared and repaired during the lengthy tour. The two-day workshop provided students an opportunity to work on vehicles strikingly different from those they are used to, and gave them a look at the diversity of careers available to automotive technology students. With over 4 million fans attending the more than 325 annual shows per year, *Monster Jam* Tour remains one of largest touring shows in the world. Students and teachers in the FHS auto program were very thankful for the experience.

MUSIC AND FINE ARTS NEWS

Farmingdale High School Well Represented at All-County Music Festival

The All-County Music Festival, held at the Tilles Center in Brookville, featured students from all over Nassau County. The young musicians were selected based on their scores in the New York State School Music Association Adjudication Festival (NYSSMA) and teacher recommendation. Farmingdale High School is proud to announce that 96 FHS students were chosen to attend the prestigious festival.

The nearly 100 attendees were selected from several divisions, including Band, Orchestra, Chorus and Jazz Band. Several students were individually honored as well. Representing Division I was Miles Malanowski, first-chair trumpet; in Division II, Sydney Moore was first chair alto sax; in Division V, Ellen Eivers was first chair in Symphonic Band; and Matthew Rocha was principal trombone in the Symphony Orchestra. Pianist Matthew Malanowski performed solos in the Jazz Ensemble. In addition, Greg Deangelis and Olivia Gordon had several solos in vocal jazz as trombonist and vocalist, respectively.

All of the FHS student representatives prepared diligently for the festival. Practices were held with Farmingdale music teachers before and after school, as well as during lunch. Their hard work clearly paid off. FHS congratulates all the performers who participated in the All-County Music Festival. In addition, thanks are in order for all the teachers who contributed to this exhaustive effort: Emily Rhodes, Sam Gelfer, Barbara Lieberman, Michelle Lindsley, Gina Pellettiere, Jessica Mischke, Andy Segale, Matthew Szabo, Danielle Tucker and Claire Zatorski, Diane Block, Joe DeAngelis, Matthew DeMasi, Joan Drewes, Katie Duke, Pat Facchiano, Erika Felker, Erica Hartmann, Becky Korn, Jennifer Tower and Therese Mannino.



Division I All-County



Division II All-County



Division III All-County



Division IV All-County



Division V All-County



Jazz Band All-County

FROM THE SPORTS DESK

Individual and Team Accolades Distinguish FHS Winter Sports

In any school's athletics program, one record-setting season is cause for celebration. The basketball teams at Farmingdale High School delivered two such seasons this winter, to the delight of Dalers fans.

- Girls' varsity basketball coach Pete Cerrone did something no coach had ever done in Nassau County before: he notched his 500th career win. The victory places him among the best coaches in the history of the county. In addition, Coach Cerrone led the Lady Dalers to an impressive 12-2 record in Conference AA1 this season, earning them an invitation to the county playoffs.
- The boys' basketball team also had a standout season, finishing first place in Conference AA1. Senior athlete Dalique Mingo (pictured left) joined an exclusive group by scoring 1000 points in a season, becoming only the fourth athlete in Farmingdale athletics history to achieve the feat.
- The winter sports also delivered a team championship, as the Lady Dalers bowling team became the Conference III champion, and was invited to the county championships at Hofstra University in February.

These individual and team accomplishments are a testament to the tireless work put in by FHS student-athletes, coaches and teachers. The District is proud to acknowledge these teams and players.

