

THORNTON HIGH SCHOOL MAINTAINS 92%

by Karl Nifontoff, High School VP

Too often in life we fail to take the time to recognize progress and achievement. Instead, we focus our attention on the negatives: What if parents were more involved? What if we had more time?

While it's easy to have this mindset in the midst of day to day monotony, I feel it's important to recognize the great things happening at Thornton High School. It is through the hard work, determination and dedication of all staff that Thornton High School continues to be a "School in Good Standing."

To borrow the words of our District's leadership, "Parents send us the best they have. They don't keep the best students at home!" Our task has been to come up with a vision of how best to utilize our strengths as educators. MVFT members, with the support of leadership, have formulated and executed a plan, one which we are recognizing the success of today. Above and beyond, before and after, within and during, our dedication has led to what should be our ultimate measure of success: the knowledge and achievements of students. From students who return to visit from their four year college or those who have carved their own career paths, students understand and appreciate our efforts! Graduation rates continue to stay steady as a result of

the vision and mission we all share here at Thornton High School. I am happy to report that for the second year in a row, Thornton High School has maintained a graduation rate of 92%!

With the success we have recognized, it is important not to rest on our laurels. We will continue to dedicate our efforts and passion to ensure that all within the Thornton family benefit. A heart felt thank you to all for your dedication, pride and effort, which have made us a "School in Good Standing."

VIRTUAL PHONE BANK PARTY AT THE MVFT OFFICE ON MARCH 27TH



L-R: Solivette Dachunha, Kyrstyn Petrucelli, Carene Domato, Jeanne Casino, Lisa Cavallero

THANK YOU for all of your efforts in helping elect our NYSUT endorsed public education champion **Shelley Mayer to the State Senate**. At her victory party, Shelley made it a point to thank the New York State United Teachers for all of our advocacy on her behalf. She won by a **commanding 16 POINTS!**

We also saw Terry Clements, a twenty-two year classroom educator in New Rochelle, win a Westchester County Legislator seat to secure the super majority on the board to ensure County Executive Latimer can continue to make positive change for Westchester.

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY PASSES BILL TO STOP SCHOOLS FROM LINKING STUDENT TEST SCORES TO TEACHER EVALUATIONS

by Jeff Yonkers, MVFT President

If you haven't seen this headline, take note! While teachers were busy preparing for and proctoring the statewide math exams in early May, the state assembly overwhelmingly passed new legislation. This bill prohibits the use of standardized tests in teacher evaluations. For several years, NYSUT and many parent groups have lobbied our legislators to address the many errors involved in over-testing and the "one size fits all" agenda. In Albany, the most recent infusion of professional educators to New York's Board of Regents may have been the addition needed for those legislators to see the light. Led by our one time superintendent, Judith Johnson, the Regents also began lobbying the governor and Albany's political leaders to address this failing agenda.

The Assembly's bill inserts "local control" and negotiations as necessary factors moving forward in all teacher evaluation processes. This action by the assembly is not the finish, but the beginning; it is a step forward. The Senate must act, and together the two houses will forward a bill that Governor Cuomo can sign.

Carl Heastie, Assembly Speaker, has called for "common sense reform." The senate's Education Chair, Carl Marcellino, has been quoted as "supporting the de-coupling of student test scores from teacher evaluation."

I caution all. This is not the end of this story; it is the first, large step in the effort to return our schools to "common sense" approaches for addressing students' needs. We all agree that properly crafted exams can be a helpful tool for an educator when planning for and addressing students' needs. However, connecting test scores to teacher evaluations, the "one size fits all" approach has proven itself a total failure. This effort, to begin to right this wrong is a first step worth acknowledging!



L-R: Gabrielle Gilpin, Lisa Pizzolla, Josephine Kirkland-Hudson, Eric Morris, Adrienne Stanley, Carene Domato, Francina Jubilee, Maeve Nolan, Charissa Ayala, Jeanne Casino, Pamela Tumminello, Melissa Sansotta, Back: L-R: Thomas Pufahl, Scott Pollard

MVFT Team Solidarity finished strong and united at the Annual Race for Solidarity at FDR Park on April 14th. Our very own Eric Morris (MVHS) placed second overall, winning a gift card and making the rest of us shine! It turned out to be a beautiful day and we got to meet the second generation of up and coming runners. All proceeds from the race will benefit ASK (Alliance for Safe Kids).

2018 NYSUT RA

MVFT delegates attended the 2018 NYSUT Representative Assembly at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center on April 27-28. It was a time to recommit to the democratic processes that keep our union strong.



L-R: Front Row: Christine Ceglio, Jeanne Casino, Anita Amieiro, Keith McCall, Francia Mendoza Back Row: Tashi Campbell- Tulloch, Patricia Griffin, Andrea Gelling

NYSUT WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

by Carene Domato, Vice President

"BEHIND EVERY SUCCESSFUL WOMAN IS A TRIBE OF WOMEN WHO HAVE HER BACK."



Carene Domato and Jeanne Casino visit the NYSUT Women's Committee booth at the NYSUT RA in Buffalo

The NYSUT Women's Committee celebrated their second year of formation. NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango oversees the committee working with the women of NYSUT.

The committee seeks to educate members about the work of the union — whose membership is 76 percent female — and to highlight women-specific issues including: inequalities in pay, health care, and education. Getting more female unionists involved in member retention and organizing in light of the Janus case looming before the U.S. Supreme Court is also a goal.

"We're living through a very real, very painful but transformative moment for women in this country," said DiBrango, noting the #MeToo campaign highlighting sexual harassment and national women's marches. "I'm hoping this movement becomes a revolution where women, particularly labor women, lead the way."

THANK YOU!

by Sophia Williamson, K-8 VP

Being a part of the Mount Vernon Federation of Teachers has been great! I have been a member of the Delegate Assembly for over twenty-five years. I began as a Washington School building representative. Then, on the Executive Board I served as Corresponding Secretary, 2nd Vice President and now retiring as a K-8 Vice President. I have learned a lot over the years attending meetings and workshops, participating on numerous committees and traveling to NYSUT and AFT conferences and conventions under the leadership of past MVFT president, Gerri Hegwood and our current president, Jeff Yonkers. Both of them have been wonderful people with whom to work. I have also had the opportunity to work with a group of intelligent colleagues that have sat on Board with me. After working for thirty-two years for MVCSD, "all good things must come to an end." I am looking forward to retirement and whatever endeavors I am called upon to perform, but hope to see you in the future. My thanks to you all for allowing me to represent you on the MVFT leadership team. Have a happy and healthy summer vacation!

LOCAL LEADER EARNS DOCTORATE FROM ST. JOHN FISHER COLLEGE



Cynthia Y. Palmer, of Mount Vernon, NY, received a Doctor of Education degree from the Ralph C. Wilson School of Education at St. John Fisher College on March 17, 2018.

Dr. Palmer fulfilled all of the required course work for the

Ed.D. in Executive Leadership while enrolled at the College's extension site at The College of New Rochelle in New Rochelle, including an original research study and dissertation: *A Mixed-Method Case Study of a Learning Disability Program at a Private College: Student and Staff Perception of Services & Classroom Accommodations*.

Dr. Palmer is a librarian at Hamilton Elementary School.

SPOTLIGHT

BTMS



Under the guidance of Avid Coordinator, Donna Smith Avid Students at BTMS completed their community service requirements on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. The program began in January.



Pat Griffin, School Counselor; Nikia Jones, School Counselor; Brian Pritchett, Assistant Principal; Dana Doggett, Principal of the Maryland school district, and some of our students from the MVCSD

by Pat Griffin, Pupil Personnel VP

Mount Vernon staff and students had a glorious trip to Japan during their spring vacation. The spectacular seven-day trip to Japan not only opened the eyes of our children, but also the adults. We sampled various foods, visited several Buddhist temples, national parks and rode a gondola car to see Mt. Fuji. This was an experience of a lifetime. The group visited the Tokyo Skytree, which ascends 634 meters. It is the world's second highest structure. This wonderful trip was arranged by the PDC Foundation (Pritchett, Doggett and Clark).

A MEMORABLE TRIP TO THE INTREPID

by Matthew Wilbekin, Special Education Teacher



On Friday, April 20th, the 7th grade Iona Team took their *good standing students* aboard the Intrepid Air Space Museum in Manhattan. Our students marveled at all of the aircrafts and were able to go inside some of the crafts including a Coast Guard rescue helicopter. Our tour guide, Patricia, did a wonderful job educating our students about the history of the Intrepid. Many of our students took pictures and asked thought provoking questions. Our kids were so appreciative. It was a fantastic learning opportunity and amazing experience for our 7th graders on the good standing list!

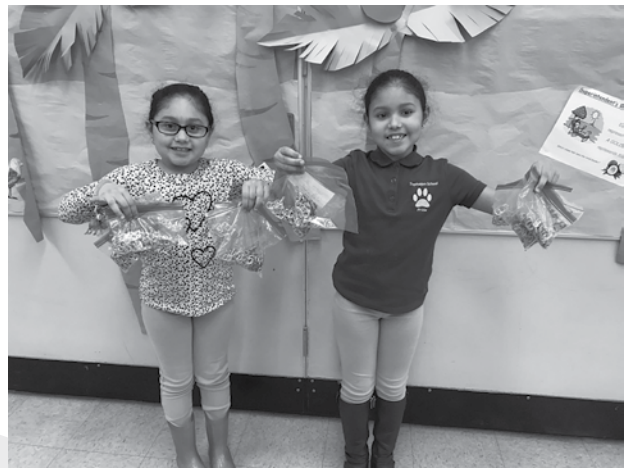
TRAPHAGEN



by Katie Santoro

There has been a lot of educational and fun events happening at Traphagen Elementary School with the staff, students, and parents. In February, we had Parent Involvement Day when parents came to visit their students in the classes and they were able to buy some books for their children from the book fair. The high school students came to Traphagen and worked with the classes for Junior Achievement Day where students enjoyed learning about the economy. The talented students and staff from Traphagen School put on the brotherhood performance called “The Harlem Renaissance” to celebrate some of the famous artists, writers, musicians, and major figures. It was a very eventful month for everyone to learn and enjoy!

Traphagen School has been busily collecting pull tabs from cans for the past several years. We are supporting the Ronald McDonald House at the Maria Fareri Children’s Hospital in Valhalla. The pull tabs are recycled with proceeds helping to accommodate families with children receiving medical services at the Hospital. Traphagen staff and families like the Padillas (Joy and Josie Padilla) have been lovingly sending pull tabs with their children for years. We are very close to our goal of collecting a million pull tabs!



COLUMBUS

by Lenora Shoulders

Scripts were written and re-written, rehearsal time was set all around a busy elementary school curriculum, and students were imbued with excitement and anticipation. What else could be going on at Columbus ES but our annual Black History Month Assembly?

This year, the theme was based on our being an AVID (Advancement VIA Individual Determination) school that promotes college and university attendance. What better way to combine the study of Black History Month with our AVID education than to focus on the history of HBCU’s (Historically Black Colleges and Universities)? The actors took an imaginary tour that exposed them to several HBCU graduates from Wilma Rudolph to Oprah Winfrey to the Tuskegee Airmen to the three human calculators from the movie Hidden Figures: Katherine G. Johnson, Mary Jackson and Dorothy Vaughn who were all HBCU graduates.

Then, to further make the AVID connection, students and teachers used a digital learning tool called Flipgrid which was shown at the assembly. The students and adults were asked why attending college is important to them.

The assembly concluded with the entire fifth grade marching around with HBCU pennants from some of the more than 120 plus HBCU’s to the song, “The Sky is the Limit.” The icing on the cake was the presentation of the Columbus Ice Cold Marching band under the leadership of Mr. White. A great educational time was had by all. The students were thoroughly entertained as they learned more about the history of HBCU’s and why and how they originated.

Special thanks goes to the fifth grade students and teachers: Mrs. Dimas, Ms. Bennett and Ms. Mason. Special special thanks goes to the Columbus Encore Dream Team: Mr. Arcara, Mrs. Hubbard, Ms. Blake, Mr. Barnes and Mrs. Shoulders.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

By Anita Amieiro, Secretary

WELCOME BACK

- Meredith Jaffess (Davis)
- Marissa Albano (Williams)
- Katherine Ramos (Graham)
- Michele Giglia (Graham and Parker)
- Eric Chambers (Davis)



GET WELL WISHES

- Susan Stanton (Pennington)
- Sheryl Wirchin (Pennington)

Get Well soon!

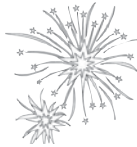
BIRTHS

- Monique Da Costa (Hamilton) birth of son



CONGRATULATIONS

- Charissa Ayala (RTES) birth of granddaughter
- Lawanda Goodyear (RTES) birth of grandson
- Karen Molinaro (MVFT) birth of grandson
- Michael Esteves (Grimes) Master's degree
- Domenica Rinaldi (Pennington) retirement
- Maxine Harris (Pennington) retirement
- Cynthia Palmer (Hamilton) doctorate



CONDOLENCES

- Camille Holmes (Grimes) loss of grandmother
- Auphy Dixon (Mandela) loss of brother
- Victor Diggs (Davis) loss of mother
- Lori Angi (Pennington) loss of mother
- Carleen Rodgers (Williams) loss of grandmother
- Bobbie Joffe (retiree) loss of mother
- Julianne Metz (RTES) loss of grandmother
- Stephanie Turner (Holmes) loss of grandmother
- Michelle Mazzotta (Holmes) loss of brother-in-law
- Karin Aurichio (Davis) loss of father
- Christine Francis (Grimes) loss of husband
- Suzette Francis (Graham) loss of father
- Karen Molinaro (MVFT) loss of father
- Anne Marie Kiernan (retiree) loss of father
- Mansa Gory (MVHS) loss of brother
- Karl Nifontoff (Thornton) loss of grandmother
- Katie Santoro (Traphagen) loss of grandmother
- Patricia Poschmann (Sheridan-Casey) (MVHS) loss of brother
- Karen Wallace (retiree) loss of brother
- Cynthia Maddox (retiree) loss of mother
- To the family of Selma Saal (retiree)
- To the family of Alma Shor (retiree)

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Jeff Yonkers
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- Carene Domato
Vice President
- Angelique Perez
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- Anita Amieiro
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- Karl Nifontoff
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- Richard Suozzo
High School VP
- Jeanne Casino
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- Patricia Duggan
PreK-8 VP
- Andrea Gelling
PreK-8 VP
- Sophia Williamson
PreK-8 VP
- Patricia Griffin
Pupil Personnel VP
- Rochelle Brown
Security Chapter Leader
- Melvin Campbell
Teaching Assistant Chapter Leader

BUILDING REPS

- Annette Coppola #1
- Scott Pollard #1
- Toba Duggan #2
- Karen Wheeler #2
- Luis Angiolillo #3
- Diana O'Sullivan #4
- Shawn Harper-Tarrant #4
- Charlene Clarke #5
- Thalia Langley #5
- Rebecca Challop #6
- Kathryn Santoro #6
- Tashi Campbell-Tulloch #7
- Keith McCall #7
- Lisa Cavallero #8
- Nikysha Copeland-Bey #8
- Christine Ceglio #9
- Francina Mendoza #9
- Marcus Green #10
- Deborah Thompson #10
- Monique Bell #12
- Michael Jernegons #12
- Donald Emerson #13
- Greg Vandecarr #13
- Nicole White Lee #14
- Charissa Ayala #14
- Tonja Hills #16
- Francina Jubilee #16
- Nadine Shields Alcalde #17
- Isabel Garcia #17
- Andre Upson #18
- David Israel #18
- Eddie Sauls #18
- Michael Malocsay #18

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Membership Report

Active	1115
Leave	16
Retirees	538
Total	1669

The Agenda

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Karen Molinaro
Karen Wallace
Jeff Yonkers