



COMMACK

COURIER

October 2010

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A Message to the Community from the Superintendent

Dear Commack Community Members:

The opening of school went very smoothly and my First 100 Days as your new Superintendent have been both exciting and informative. I'd like to thank all of you for such a warm welcome and for inviting me into your homes and organizations. To date I have met with more than 400 community members and I will continue to meet with groups at PTA and neighborhood meetings, and also in larger public settings. Every community member I have spoken with has been open and candid, and their willingness to engage in meaningful conversations about our schools has been energizing. Overwhelmingly, people have expressed a high level of satisfaction with our District, with some offering valid suggestions for improving our already outstanding program.

Additionally, during the past several weeks, I have made it a priority to spend a considerable amount of time in each of our schools meeting with teachers, administrators, staff and students. I have enjoyed meeting with our professional team as well as our students, from the littlest kindergartners just beginning their academic adventure to our high school seniors finalizing their preparation for the future. This process has given me the opportunity to meet staff members every day, with time to engage in conversations about teaching and learning and other areas of interest.

At the September Board of Education meeting, it was announced that the District is embarking on an energy efficiency project known as Energy Performance Contracting (EPC). EPC was developed by the State Legislature and enacted into law as "New York State Energy Law

Article 9" as an incentive to schools to engage in work related to increasing energy efficiency. The project begins with a detailed inspection of energy operations, such as lighting and heating, and their associated costs. Once the review has been completed, a detailed plan for increasing our energy efficiency will be developed and submitted



Dr. James has been meeting with students, parents, staff, and community members. In photo, a discussion with students at the high school.

to the State for approval. Once approved, the District will enter into a partnership with an Energy Services Company (ESCO) to complete the construction. There is no cost or risk to the District, as by law all project costs must be paid out of guaranteed energy savings. Further, the project will receive State aid at a rate of approximately 60%, which will create a positive cash flow for the District. Details about this project will be presented at future Board of

Education and public meetings. In addition, we will send out additional information via our e-mail system, website, and the Commack Courier.

There is no doubt that there is a great deal taking place here in the District. As such, I would like you to know that I will make every effort to communicate District happenings to each of you in numerous ways. Please feel free to call me at 912-2010, or email me at djames@commack.k12.ny.us with any questions or concerns. Don't forget to check the calendar you received in the mail or the interactive calendar on the website for information on upcoming events and activities.

Sincerely,

Donald James, Ed.D
Superintendent of Commack Schools

FIVE COMMACK SENIORS NAMED SEMIFINALISTS



National Merit® Scholarship Semifinalists are congratulated by (standing, left to right) : Director of Guidance Jonathan Macaluso, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Donald James, Commack High School Principal Catherine Nolan, and Assistant Principal Susan Shapiro.

The National Merit® Scholarship Program honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. Congratulations to our five Commack High School students who have achieved this status, as announced on September 15: Matthew Katz, Matthew J. Kim, Erica B. Portnoy, Arpon P. Raksit, and Michael Zhang. These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 8,400 National Merit Scholarships, worth more than \$36 million, that will be offered next spring.

The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, which represents less than one percent of U.S. high school se-

niors, includes the highest-scoring entrants on the 2009 PSATs in each state, the initial screening for the competition. The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors. To become a Finalist, a Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by the high school principal, and earn SAT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test. The Semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, which includes the student's essay and information about the Semifinalist's participation and leadership in school and community activities.

About 90 percent of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and approximately half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar® title. That announcement will be made during the months of April through July of 2011, and Finalists will receive at least \$2,500 in scholarships.

CHS Principal Cathy Nolan stated, "We are incredibly proud of our students who have achieved this national recognition. They are exemplary students who have made a commitment to personal excellence in all areas of their development. Most remarkable about these students is their propensity to use their gifts to benefit others within their school and local communities."

Public Announcement

The Commack School District has a legal responsibility to keep the Commack community apprised of policies and regulations affecting its residents. New York State regulations include the mailing of certain "required notices" each year.

Many of these notices are included in the District Calendar that is sent to each residence within the Commack School District's boundaries. We have received a few emails and telephone calls from residents who no longer wish to receive mailings from the District, however we are required to distribute certain information. In an effort to limit costs the District does not send individual notices, but publishes these announcements within the **Commack Courier** and the calendar, which are sent via bulk mail.

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

Thursday, October 21, 2010
Commack High School Art Gallery - 7:30pm

November 18, 2010
Hubbs Administration Building - 8:00pm

BLOOD DRIVE

Wednesday, November 17, 2010
from 11:00 am - 7:45 pm at Burr I.S.

For more Community Events listings:
[www.commack.k12.ny.us/communitynews/
communityevents.asp](http://www.commack.k12.ny.us/communitynews/communityevents.asp)

You are cordially invited to meet our new Superintendent,

Dr. Donald James

*Please stop by to chat informally, ask any questions you
might have or just say hello*

October 20, 2010

October 25, 2010

*Burr
Intermediate School*

or

*Mandracchia Sawmill
Intermediate School*

7:00 pm

10:00 am.

RSVP to: Debbie Virga - dvirga@commack.k12.ny.us - or call 631-858-3623

New Assistant Principal at CHS

At the Board of Education Meeting on Thursday, August 26, 2010, Anthony Davidson was appointed as the new Assistant Principal at Commack High School. Anthony has served in the District since 1998, as an English teacher at Commack Middle School, and also as Chairperson of the English Department. He is a graduate of Hofstra University, received his Masters from Stony Brook University, and earned his professional diploma in school administration from Touro College.

Anthony lives in East Northport with his wife and three children. He volunteers locally, coaching for the Commack Soccer League and Commack North Little League, as well as raising funds for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society through his participation in a triathlon. He has also finished three sprint-distance triathlons since last year.

"After spending twelve years at Commack Middle School, I certainly will miss the remarkable people with whom I am parting ways. I am, however, grateful to have the opportunity to remain the district and to work alongside the incredible staff and students at the Commack High School," he said.

In photo on right, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Donald James (r) congratulates Anthony Davidson on his appointment.



High School Art Students' Work Goes International

Several pieces of artwork done by Commack's International Baccalaureate (IB) students were recently selected to be displayed in a collage of art photos at the new IB Americas Global Centre in Bethesda, MD.

Students from the Americas region submitted photos of original artwork reflecting one or more attributes of the IB learner profile.

The new Centre will support schools throughout the Americas, and will house several global divisions, including professional development, policy and research, and school services. The Centre is part of the orga-



nization's plan to move the mission and its programs forward into a new chapter in the IB's history - one that will not only provide more service and support to every IB World School - but also increase access to IB programs

Infante congratulate IB artists John, Kate, Rachel, Ashley, Melissa, and Anthony on their displayed artwork. Gemma's (not in photo) artwork is also on display, but she is not in the photo.

to more students. If you would link to view the images, go to: http://www.smugmug.com/gallery/13593419_z2x4h#991460327_mZBuu or for a video: www.ibo.org/iba/.

In photo, high school art lead teacher Robert Raeihle (left) and Director of Fine and Applied Arts Paul R.

A Heads-Up on Concussion Care

The Commack School District has always taken a proactive stance on injury prevention and the safety of its athletes. Before a student can participate in any team sport, they must first undergo a physical by their own or the school's physician and nursing staff, and attend a mandatory assembly, accompanied by a parent or guardian. At this year's mandatory meeting, the focus for the football and cheerleading teams and their parents was the diagnosis and treatment of concussions.

Hayley Queller, MD and Michael Sileo, MD of Orthopedic Associates of Long Island volunteered their time and expertise to answer questions and provide an informative presentation regarding the facts about how to recognize and treat a concussion. A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury that typically results in the "rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurologic function that resolves spontaneously." In other words, it is not a structural injury like a broken arm, but rather a disturbance in the brain's function relating to decreased blood flow and an increased demand for glucose.

According to doctors, 63% of all concussions occur in football, and up to 20% of football players will sustain a concussion each season. If an athlete is completely recovered (there is a five step protocol that includes resting, both cognitively and physically), there will be no lasting damage. If an athlete returns to play prior to complete recovery however, concussions are cumulative. Rest

and being seen by a medical provider are advised in all concussive injuries.

Also on hand was Martin A. Moskowitz LCSW, Program Director, from North Shore LIJ Health System's Mineola Community Treatment Center. He spoke about drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse, and their effects on student athletes. He also discussed signs of abuse, and their physical effects on the body.

Jeremy Thode, Director of Athletics in Commack Schools, is a proponent of laying out the facts for parents and athletes prior to the beginning of each season. He has shared many of his beliefs about training, behavior and dedication to each sport, and feels, "Our goal is to create dialogue and present information so that everyone is informed and everyone feels comfortable communicating. I truly believe

we have made tremendous strides as a school district and athletic department in taking on important issues and working with our students, parents and staff to improve our overall effectiveness. There are a great many possible pitfalls out there, and all of us are dealing with many kinds of problems, concerns, and challenges with our children in our society. We have found additional ways to help in the education and preparation of our children for life off the field, court, track, or pool. I am very proud of that, and we will continue to strive to increase our effectiveness."



In photo above, from left to right: Michael Sileo, MD, Hayley Queller, MD, Commack Athletic Director Jeremy Thode, Catherine Blotiau, Coordinator, Nassau County Safe Kids Department of Public Health Education, North Shore-LIJ Health System, and Martin A. Moskowitz LCSW, Program Director at the Mineola Community Treatment Center.



Solar Power Lights Up the Schools



The Commack School District is committed to “Going Green” to conserve resources and save energy. The installation of solar panels on four school buildings, just completed, is another step toward this goal. An advanced system of photovoltaic arrays will use the sun’s power to generate clean, renewable electricity.

Funded almost entirely by an EXCEL grant from New York State, the installations at Commack High School and Middle School, and at Burr and Sawmill Intermediate Schools will generate about 9% of each school’s electricity. The created DC power is converted to AC via inverters, which are then tied into the buildings’ electrical system infrastructure. Each building is equipped with a web based Solar Electric System Status Monitoring System, which allows the system to be monitored in real time, and provides production history on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. This will open new doors for our students as they monitor the arrays, building math, science and reasoning skills. The system also provides information related to estimated dollars saved and CO2 production avoided. Educational curricula is also available through the New York State Energy Research and Development Agency (NYSERDA) School Power website, for grade levels K-12. Each 50 KW system will power the equivalent of approximately 10,000 square feet of building, and will take an average of 9.25% of each buildings peak power demand off grid, with an estimated annual average electrical savings of \$40,000 per year.

Project specifications include nominal 50 KW Photovoltaic Arrays, consisting of 224 Sharp Poly-Crystalline PV modules, rated at 224 watts each. The panels are supported by a fixed 10 degree angle photovoltaic racking system,



designed to withstand 110 mph / 3 second gust wind velocities, as required by NYS Building Code. The racking system is self ballasted, to eliminate potentially problematic roof penetrations, and to maintain the current roofing system warranties.

Operations of Facilities Admin-

istrator Kevin Carpenter is “enthusiastic about the energy savings, and very pleased about reducing the District’s carbon footprint. We have another large scale energy reduction project in the works (see Superintendent’s message on page 1), and are developing positive strategies on a daily basis.”

Business Department of the Year

The Commack High School Business and Marketing Department was selected as the 2009-2010 Business Department of the Year by the State Education Department for the second time in three years. The award was sponsored in conjunction with the Business Teachers Association of New York State, and a plaque will be presented at the annual conference on October 14-15, in Tarrytown, NY.

"To earn this recognition in 2008 was a tremendous accomplishment. To earn the award a second time in three years is a monumental achievement and reaffirms the excellent programs offered to students that will prepare them with skills necessary to be successful in the 21st Century," stated Paul R. Infante, Director of Fine and Applied Arts.

In photo, from left to right, standing: technology teacher Leslie Kaplan, lead teacher Ana Tuzolino, teachers Robert Plechner and Maryanne McAuley.



Seated: teachers Carolyn Milano and Sandra Braun, and Director of Fine and Applied Arts Paul Infante.

National Merit Commended Students Make the Grade at Commack High School



Eight Commack High School seniors are among the nation's 34,000 students designated as commended students in the 2011 The National Merit® Scholarship Program. Commended students place among the top 5 percent of more than 1.4 million

students who entered the 2011 competition by taking the 2009 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Donald James (left), Director of Guidance Jonathan Macaluso, and High School Principal Cath-

erine Nolan with commended students Danny, Sarah, Christina, Asli, Jamie, Joshua, and Scott, Edward is missing from the photo. Congratulations to these students for their outstanding performance and academic promise.

A Night of Remembrance

On Saturday, September 11th, the Commack Public Schools hosted its ninth 9-11 memorial service on the football field at Commack High School attended by hundreds of local residents. Board of Education members MaryJo Masciello, Deborah Guber and Jeffrey Egan, and Commack School Superintendent Dr. Donald James were joined by local leaders. They included Congressman Steve Israel, New York State Senator John Flanagan, Suffolk County Executive Steven Levy, and NYS Assemblyman Andrew Raia. Also in attendance were Suffolk County Legislators John Kennedy and Steven Stern, Huntington Council members Mark Cuthbertson, Glenda Jackson, Susan Berland, and Mark Mayoka, and Smithtown Councilman Kevin Malloy.

NYPD piper Tom Kelly started the procession which included the Marine Corps. Veterans of Huntington, The NYPD Color Guard, members and officers of the Commack Fire Department, Girl Scout Troops 2622, 2420, 2181, 672 and 1, and Boy Scout Troop 403.

The formal program started with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Commandant William Ober, the National Anthem performed by Christine Cirabisi, and Invocation by Rabbi Howard Needleman.

Commack Board of Education President MaryJo Masciello served as Master of Ceremonies, and recognized four Commack families that were directly touched by the 9-11 tragedy. Family members placed wreaths at the newly constructed and installed Twin Towers Memorial. The memorial was designed by Joseph DeFelice, and made a reality by a \$2,000 donation from benefactor Richard Sineno.

Those gathered also heard from Greta Helmke, whose 43 year old NYPD husband Robert was a first responder and died in 2007

from illnesses contracted at the World Trade Center site. Boy and girl scouts presented memorial displays continuously during the event. Taps was played by Commack High School Alumnus Chris Toomey during the candlelight ceremony, and the gathering concluded with the Benediction delivered by Deacon Louis Anetrella. The many participants left the school field clearly inspired and moved by the memories of this tragic event in our history, and the touching ceremony.



for the Heroes of 9-11



A Thank You to the Commack Community

The members of the Board of Education would like to express their thanks to everyone for their continued support of the many programs we bring to the community. A special thank you to Debbie Virga for her dedication and work in making the ceremony so memorable for all involved. Mrs. Virga expressed her gratitude to Joe DeFelice and Richie McMahon for their passion. Joe's symbols of the Twin Towers and his hard work in properly displaying them was touching. The support of the New York Police Department, Marine Corps Veterans of Huntington, and the Commack Volunteer Fire Department adds a special touch each and every year.

We must always remember the lives lost on that horrible day. All of our lives were changed forever. Out of the destruction, our community became stronger and more united. When we gather together, we are a united community, there to support and help each other. That is what makes Commack such a special place to live and work. Thank you.

Fitness is FUN at Rolling Hills

Each time the Rolling Hills Primary School children attend their physical education classes, they participate in a new warm-up routine originated by their teacher, Melissa Reggio. For the first five minutes of each class the students do a three-station fitness circuit.

The three stations involve running laps, jump rope, and sit-ups/push-ups, chosen to improve students' cardiovascular endurance, as well as their muscular strength and muscular endurance. The students are very eager to begin, and according to Miss Reggio, "The children jump for joy when I tell them to get ready for warm-ups as they enter the gym. All warm-ups are done to fun music and the students love them. In fact, when warm-ups are over, the students beg for more. Making fitness fun is one of my main goals." Miss Reggio believes that "The benefits of daily physical activity are endless and include everything from improved self-esteem and confidence to greater academic success."

Through the use of the new Smartboards installed in every classroom and the five-minute exercise videos that Miss Reggio produced, students are also exercising right in their classrooms on a daily basis. "With the new interactive technology, classroom teachers can decide when to get the students up and moving, reaping many benefits for both their bodies and minds," said Principal Janet Studley.

In photo at right, Kristen Fontane's second grade class takes a fitness break to limber up for learning.



First grade students warm up before their physical education class.



Reading to Set a Record!



Fifth grade teacher and School Based Management Team Chairperson Janet Schoenemann leads her class as they read along to break the world record for simultaneous reading as Principal Michelle Tancredi looks on.

Mandracchia Sawmill Intermediate's School Based Management Team, in conjunction with Jumpstart's Read for the Record, will attempt to exceed the world's record of 2.5 million children and adults coming together to share in the reading of one book. Using Smartboards to read Ezra Jack Keats' book *The Snowy Day* online, each class read together on October 7.

This initiative helped to promote the love of reading in our students' lives while also using the most up-to-date technology to do so. Our efforts will also result in the Pearson Foundation donating print copies of this classic book to pre-schools in need. You can also donate directly through Jumpstart's Read for the Record Online Book Drive to help provide the building blocks of dreams—books, as well as supplies to preschool children nationwide!

Thanks for a Real Solution



Students from Commack High School's Real Problems Real Solutions Program were honored by the staff and students at the Children's Center at United Cerebral Palsy in Commack. An indoor play area was created for the students with disabilities, centering around sound and tactile toys and creations called the Play for All.

The project was funded by a \$27,000 grant from ING's Unsung Heroes Program, which the team won for a previous adaptive office project they completed for the receptionist at UCP. For this project, the team engineered and built a giant chime, Velcro Boards Sensory Boards and personal tabletop Velcro play boards.

In September, the Commack HS

students officially presented the play equipment they created to the UCP students. The entire school filled the auditorium for a presentation and touching recognition ceremony. The smallest children held the letters of the words "Thank You" while other students recited why they were thankful for the high school student's thoughtful and innovative play things. It was a chance for UCP to "give back" to the high school team, and UCP presented the students with a huge banner that said, "Thank You Commack High School Students for Creating "Play for All" from the Children's Center at UCP of Suffolk.

This amazing group of students and their advisors have made huge strides in helping individuals with

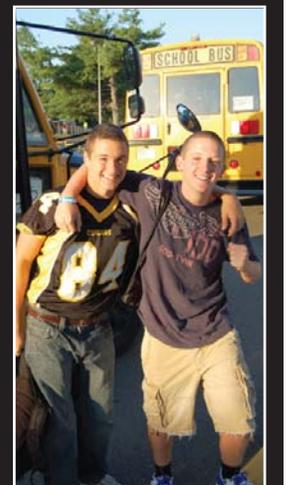
disabilities and have already won top awards in the NEDC Competition for their designs. In June, ABC's "Above and Beyond" featured the team on their program.

So what's the next real solution the team will be working on? Advisor Leslie Kaplan said, "We are currently seeking a person or group that needs assistance or specialized devices for our next National Engineering Design Challenge project. After that we will be working on a water table and a cause and effect wall for UCP. This school year we also look forward to working with North Ridge to make projects for some of the young students there."

Please contact lkaplan1@commack.k12.ny.us if you would like to suggest a project or for further info.



First Day of School 2010



BURR STUDENTS JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH

Two fifth grade classes embarked on a rather unusual field trip, digging their way layer by layer to the center of the earth. With the help of Faith McNulty's "How to Dig a Hole to the Other Side of the World," Mrs. Cestaro and Ms. Quinn took their classes on a perilous journey (note the protective gear in photo).

Students dug through the oreo cookie topsoil layer, then through the crust made out of M&M rocks and Chex Mix fossils. They survived the elements of the molten mantle (jello) and floated through the red-hot core. They were relieved when they surfaced in the Indian Ocean, but the sharks and Swedish fish gave them a bit of a fright. The trip back home was uneventful as they enjoyed munching on the many snacks they earned on the journey.



Wood Park Students Munch on Words During Language "Lunch"

Students whose first language is not English are building vocabulary and developing oral language skills through a unique "lunchtime" program with ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher Stephanie Zweibel. The children have a

wonderful time identifying different international foods that they like to eat, while learning the names and correct pronunciation of the items in English.

Using graphic organizers, wordless picture books, leveled books,

puppets, photographs, puzzles, maps and other materials, ESL students gain an understanding of reading, writing, speaking and listening in the English language. Tapping into students prior knowledge during a lesson makes students feel confident and allows for greater understanding of new information.

Talking about students' cultures and backgrounds validates who they are and where they have come from, and is in compliance with state and federal regulations and methodologies. With many wonderful programs, materials and educators, our ESL students are able to learn and grow in our Com-mack community.

In photo, ESL teacher Stephanie Zweibel with first and second grade students.



North Ridge's Newest Citizens Join in Constitution Day Celebration

Red, white, and blue makes a proud American out of you! On September 17th, the North Ridge family dressed in the colors of the American Flag as they proudly celebrated Constitution Day. Citizenship was the theme at the school's first Town Meeting, with vibrant American spirit displayed by all.

Gathered in a circle centered around Principal Katherine Rihm, Music Teacher Susan Preddice, and, of course, the American Flag, the celebration began by welcoming the kindergartners, our newest citizens to the North Ridge family. With their hands on their hearts, the school recited "The Pledge of Allegiance" in unity. Then they sang three festive patriotic songs. And a Town Meeting wouldn't be complete without singing "The North Song."

Students celebrated citizenship in their classrooms by discussing the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen in their classrooms, at North Ridge, and in America. The children learned about the U.S. Constitution and made their own "Bill of Rights" for their classrooms. Students



learned that being a responsible citizen means following the rules of your classroom, family, and society. Yes, it was another fine day at North Ridge. "Anchors Aweigh" to the Commack community as we wish all a joyous voyage through the school year!

Building Relationships Through Reading at Indian Hollow



Being the "new kid" in a new school isn't always easy. So to ease the transition, new Indian Hollow principal Brian Simpson has launched a building-wide theme called "Building Relationships."

Continuing the tradition of the principal reading to and meeting all of the students at the beginning of the school year, Mr. Simpson read the book *The New Bear at School* by Carrie Weston and Tim Warnes, to Mrs. Frankenger's kindergarten class. It's the story of a grizzly bear's first day of school. It was chosen by Mr. Simpson to encourage empathy on his behalf, because this year he is the "new kid" at Indian Hollow, and because "it gives me the opportunity to meet each of the children and share the wonders of children's literature."

Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Workforce

Commack Middle School students participated in the 2010 Long Island Works STEM Expo to learn how the subjects they study in school relate to real world careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Thirty-eight students explored different fields of study at the Expo, held at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

In collaboration with major corporations from around the country and region, the goal of the Expo was to create an environment that "empowers students to meet the demands of the 21st century workforce" through exploration of careers. LI Works is now partnered with Goodwill Industries of Greater NY and Northern NJ. The LI Works Coalition builds collaborative relationships among employers, workers, and the educational community. Goodwill provides vocational, training, and



This group discussed genetic engineering and how scientists are able to manipulate the shape of molecules in order to make the administering of medicines more effective. The students are tossing a Bucky Ball they created into the air (the shape is similar to a geodesic dome, a two-dimensional shape), named after Buckminster Fuller.



job placement services, as well as in school and after school programs for people with barriers to employment, including persons with disabilities.

CMS Math Chair Robin Rann attended the Expo and remarked, "What a wonderful opportunity to show students how math, science, and technology are applied in real-world careers. And what a fun day! Students cleaned up a simulated oil spill, made their own Bucky Ball (nanotechnology), and even pretended they were air traffic controllers. As one student expressed, "School should be like this every day."

Students try their hand as flight controllers, using computer simulation to adjust aircraft speed and other variables to prevent collisions in this FAA sponsored exhibit.

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www.live-brary.com



Have you heard about Live-brary.com? This cooperative project of the public libraries of Suffolk County presents a one-stop, digital branch for Suffolk County public library cardholders to access online resources, with a direct and accessible selection menu. It consolidates online content, and is a good example of resource sharing and collaboration that is done by the public libraries of Suffolk County. All you need is a library card!

The Commack School District has made a strong effort to bridge services between

the school and public libraries by sharing ideas and resources. The new interface on Live-brary.com makes it much easier for our students to find quality information such as databases, electronic book downloads, historical newspapers, and other important resources. The community librarians in both the schools and public libraries are working together to provide the best services for our students. Try it out! Links to our local libraries: Smithtown Special Library District: www.smithlib.org/ Commack Public Library: <http://commack.suffolk.lib.ny.us/>

Getting By With a Little Help from Friends

The Commack High School Fashion Club and the Advanced Fashion Illustration classes joined forces to raise money for the Friends for Life Foundation, a support group for breast cancer survivors, their caregivers, and their children. The Fashion Club raised \$2,500 from the proceeds of their Annual Charity Fashion Show, and the Advanced Fashion Illustration classes designed and hand-painted silk scarves that were donated to the women of the Friends For Life Foundation.

On September 13th, the officers of the Fashion Club proudly presented the scarves and a check at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Friends For Life Foundation's new location, at the Suffolk Y JCC on Hauppauge Road.

The students were very moved by the experience. It made all their



hard work in planning the fashion show, designing the scarves, and presenting them to the ladies all the more fulfilling.

In photo, club advisor and art

teacher Marie Adamo with club officers. Each scarf was designed and beautifully painted by the students in an array of gorgeous colors and patterns.

Making a Difference Through Scientific Exploration

The Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition is a grass roots advocacy group whose essential mission is to create accessible pathways to involvement on issues related to the environment and breast cancer, as well as other health concerns. Several years ago, they developed the Students and Scientists Environmental Research Intern Program. Through this program, HBCAC arranges and supports, along with school districts such as Commack, local Long Island students' participation in cutting edge investigations within state-of-the art research faculties in the northeast.

Commack High senior Farooq spent the month of July in 2009 working with a scientist at the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, PA. He investigated the effects of the potentially toxic chemical BPA, commonly found in household plastics including baby bottles, on rodent mammary gland cells to determine its effects on cell development. Bisphenol-A

is a chemical used to make the plastic materials clear and shatter-resistant.

In July of this year, Savitha, also a



senior, interned with research scientists at Tufts University in Massachusetts. She too investigated BPA, but focused her work on its effect on perinatal rodents. As a result of the advocacy of groups such as HBCAC, and research conducted by scientists and students

like Farooq and Savitha, Suffolk County recently passed a first-in-the-nation ban on BPA from baby bottles and cups sold in the county.

On September 21, Farooq and Savitha and other students involved in the Student and Scientists program were invited to a meeting with Congressman Steve Israel to discuss their research and learn about additional opportunities to foster a healthy environment. At the meeting, Congressman Israel shared his passion for his work on consumer protection and congratulated the students on their efforts toward achieving this goal by doing the real research that develops knowledge about the environmental triggers of disease.

Both Farooq and Savitha have been involved in the science research program at Commack High School since they were freshmen, and have won many awards at various regional science competitions. In photo on right is Science Director James Engeldrum.

POSTAL PATRON

**Commack Union Free School District
Commack, New York, 11725**

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Drug Free 24/7 - Awareness Week Kick Off

Please join The Commack Coalition of Caring and the Parent Resource Center in our fight to prevent alcohol and drug abuse

It's never too early to begin this important topic of conversation with your children. Learn how to speak to your children about the dangers of alcohol and drugs.

www.commack.k12.ny.us/CCC

Red Ribbon Week October 25 - 29

Students in grades K-5 will be receiving red ribbons, bookmarks, and pencils as part of the kick-off program.

The Effects of Alcohol and Drugs on the Brain

Video presentation by Dr. Stephen Dewey

Morning Showing

Date: Wednesday, October 20, 2010

Place: Burr Intermediate School
Room 107

Time: 10:00 am

Evening Showing

Date: Tuesday, October 26, 2010

Place: Sawmill Intermediate School
Balcony

Time: 7:00 pm

Please RSVP to Debbie Virga at 858-3623 or [email **dvirga@commack.k12.ny.us**](mailto:dvirga@commack.k12.ny.us)

Parents who Host, Lose the Most: Don't be a Party to Teenage Drinking

Many well-meaning parents think that it is enough to take away car keys at their teen's parties so the teens can't drink and drive. Parents provide the alcohol or allow alcohol to be consumed based on the false belief that it's a rite of passage, especially at prom and graduation parties.

The "Parents Who Host, Lose The Most: Don't be a party to teenage drinking" public awareness campaign was developed by Drug-Free Action Alliance in 2000 to educate parents about the health and safety

risks of serving alcohol at teen parties and to increase awareness of and compliance with Underage Drinking Laws. Suffolk Counties Social Host Law will be featured in this campaign.

The Know! program is based on research citing parents as the biggest influence over the choices children make in regards to substance use. Visit this trusted, credible resource for valuable substance and alcohol prevention information (<http://www.drug-freeactionalliance.org/know.php>).



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