

FOCUS

February/March 2019

Today's main entrée: college and career readiness

Oliver Middle School students are being served up college and career readiness for lunch in the form of first-hand accounts from presenters in a diverse assortment of career fields. The school's Family and Community Connections Committee launched a new initiative this year called College and Career Lunch Bunches. In addition to promoting college and career readiness, the goal of the lunch bunches is to grow community engagement.

OMS students sign up for lunch presentations of interest, then seven students from each team are selected to attend. The presenter speaks with one class during each grade level's lunch period. Students get their lunch and report to the classroom, where they eat while learning the ins and outs of a specific career, the education required and ask any questions they may have.

The series kicked off on Nov. 26 with a visit from Brockport Police Lt. Stephen Mesiti, who spoke with students about his role in keeping the community safe. Legislator Mike Rockow led the next lunch on Dec. 5 with a focus on his career as a construction material salesman and politician.

Longtime local basketball coach and business owner Charlie Hage visited OMS on Dec. 6, where he discussed the path that led him to his current role as owner of Brockport



Carpet. Hage stressed the meaning of perseverance by defining "no" as "next opportunity" and "fail" as "first attempt in learning." Hage shared tips to success, but ultimately encouraged students to love what they do in whatever field they choose.

Chris Trapasso, NFL draft expert for CBS Sports and freelance columnist for the Buffalo News, led the following lunch bunch on Dec. 17. The most common question students asked: "Have you met the Buffalo Bills players?" They loved hearing about Trapasso's interactions with the Bills, but were also intrigued to hear how skills he learned in school such as punctuation and grammar have been vital in his career.

"I learned that you can get paid money for doing a job that is fun and you can do it in your own free time," said Mary Kingsley, OMS seventh-grader.

The December lunch bunches wrapped up with a visit from Sue Feuerherm, an office manager and accountant for Flower City Habitat for Humanity. Feuerherm spoke with students about the vast array of fields existing at Habitat for Humanity, including family services, accounting, human resources, development and marketing, in addition to construction and trades that are required when building new houses.

Family and Community Connections Committee member and OMS science teacher Amy Phillips said the initiative is off to an incredible start.

"The Family and Community Connections Committee is so excited to be offering the College and Career Lunch Bunches," said Phillips. "We believe it is never too early to be exposing students to potential careers. The students have seemed to really enjoy the variety of lunch bunches offered!"

Organizers hope that every Oliver Middle School student will attend at least one College and Career Lunch Bunch by the end of the year.



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Dear Neighbors, Friends and Community Members,



Lesli C. Myers, Ed.D.

It is incredible that we have reached the halfway point of the school year. Our students have made remarkable progress with achievements in academics, athletics, performing arts and community service.

On Jan. 7, 36 new members were inducted into the Brockport High School Chapter of the National Honor Society for their demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service and character. These students excel inside and outside the walls of the classroom. Congratulations to our new inductees – your hard work and perseverance is commendable!

Our staff members have also spent the first half of the year making tremendous strides in engaging and empowering students to achieve excellence as learners and citizens. On Jan. 9, Oliver Middle School welcomed 29 educators from 12 different school districts and a parochial school to showcase our instructional practices through learning walks. Learning walks allow participants to witness first-hand the innovative curriculum and educational experiences that students receive at the middle school. Attendees left reinvigorated and excited to implement our strategies into their own districts. Their enthusiasm about the great work occurring in our schools is a true testament to the high caliber of staff we have in our district.

Our classified staff have also demonstrated immense dedication throughout the first half of the year, particularly following last

month's snow storm. We are fortunate to have amazing buildings and grounds staff, transportation employees and security personnel who worked tirelessly to clear our campus and ensure a safe return for students following the snow and cold during the holiday weekend. Thank you for all your efforts – you are appreciated!

Reflecting on the first half of the year, we are reminded of the wonderful community partnerships we have that allow us to focus on high-quality education. Our partnerships with local law enforcement are vital to the safety of students and staff. Throughout the months, the Brockport Police Department and Monroe County Sheriff's Office have maintained a presence on campus, thus creating relationships with students and staff and assisting when difficult situations arise. Further, our partnership with The College at Brockport continues to grow through multiple facets such as the institution of the Diversity Certification Program. Our continuous collaboration with community partners is essential to the success of our district.

Looking ahead to the second half of the year, may we view it through the lens of opportunity. It is an opportunity to explore new things, push the boundaries and remember our "why."

Yours in Education,

Lesli C. Myers-Small, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

New law requires senior citizens to verify income for Enhanced STAR tax rebate

A new law designed to combat fraud requires senior citizens to verify their income to remain in the state's Enhanced STAR tax rebate program.

Property owners age 65 and over who are applying or reapplying to receive the Enhanced STAR exemption in 2019 must enroll in the Income Verification Program. Previously, enrolling in the Income Verification Program was optional; however, a new law that went into effect Jan. 1, 2019 made enrollment mandatory. Forms are available on the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance's website.

The Enhanced STAR tax rebate program refunds a portion of school property taxes on senior citizens' primary residences if they are 65 or over and fall under the income cap (\$86,300 for the 2019-20 school year).

If you have questions regarding the new law or the STAR program, contact your local tax assessor's office.

What language do computers speak?

Ask any Ginther kindergartener or first-grader what language computers speak and they will likely tell you they speak computer code. In recognition of Computer Science Education Week held Dec. 3 – 9, Ginther students practiced computer coding during library. Both grade levels used Tynker, a program that incorporates visual code blocks to represent real programming concepts. Students quickly picked up the concept and enjoyed completing sequences and advancing to higher levels.



Instruction Office

BCSD receives universal pre-kindergarten grant for 2019-20

The Brockport Central School District will again offer a grant-funded universal pre-kindergarten (UPK) program. The program, with a strong focus on early learning, will start in September and follow the school calendar. Children will attend school five days a week for two and a half hours a day during morning or afternoon sessions. Since the grant requires a collaborative effort between BCSD and area childhood education agencies, some children will attend private schools, in addition to the majority of students who attend Brockport's Ginther School. All sites will use the curriculum developed by the UPK Advisory Board and will be taught by a certified teacher.

To be eligible for the UPK program, children must be 4 years old by Dec. 1, 2019 and be a Brockport Central School District resident. Families are responsible for making their own transportation arrangements, as transportation is not part of the New York State Education Department grant.

If your child is not yet registered to receive UPK-related mailings and should be, please call the Registrar's Office at 637-1857. Applications will be mailed to all eligible families.

Frequently asked questions about the program may be found on the Ginther School's website under "Academics." You may also call 637-1816 for additional information.



Meet our new OMS assistant principal!

Name:
Rebecca Tibbitts

Background:
Churchville-Chili graduate, now lives in Fairport

Education: SUNY Geneseo (bachelor's degree), Nazareth College (master's degree) and Canisius College (admin certification)

Family: Justin (husband) and sons Max (9) and Mason (5)

Favorite color: Purple

Favorite food: Pasta

Favorite movie: Too many to name just one!

What you're most looking forward to this year at BCSD: Meeting some new, amazing people and becoming a part of the Brockport Community.



Kindergarten parent info night

Parents of children who will attend kindergarten this fall are invited to attend an information night on Monday, March 4 from 6 – 7 p.m. at the Ginther School. Topics will include screening, registration and support services, easing the adjustment to school and kindergarten readiness activities to practice at home. Guided tours of the building will also be provided.

Please note, this meeting is for parents and guardians only. Child care will not be provided.

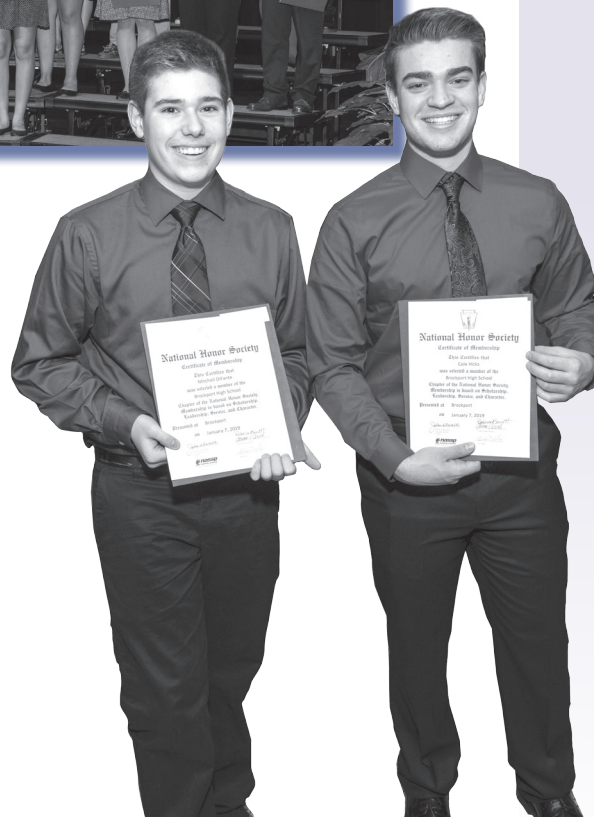
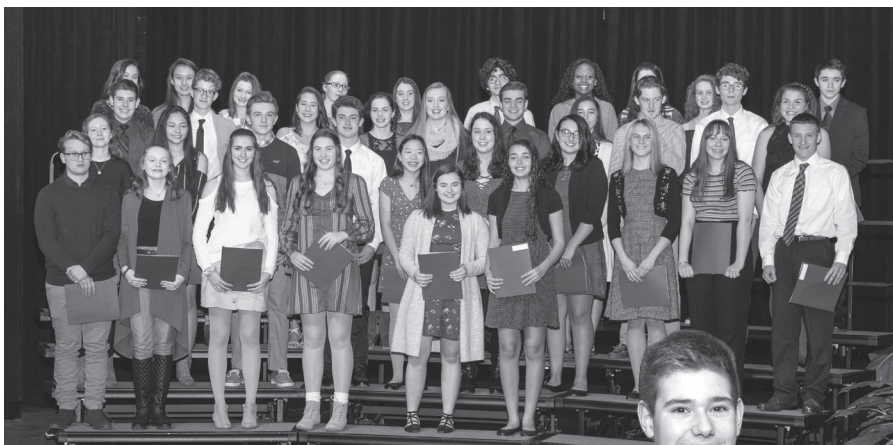
Children must be 5 years old by Dec. 1, 2019 to attend kindergarten in September 2019. If your child is eligible for kindergarten and you have not received a student information form, please contact the Registrar's Office at 637-1857.

National Honor Society inducts 36 new BHS members

The Brockport High School Chapter of the National Honor Society formally welcomed 36 new members during an induction ceremony held at the high school on Jan. 7. The National Honor Society is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership and character.

The ceremony began with greetings from BHS Principal Dr. Brian Weller, followed by opening comments from NHS advisers Patricia Arnold and Rebecca Barrett. This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Gina Cuyler, an internal medicine physician who shared her story of overcoming adversity to follow her dream of becoming a physician. She inspired students with her perseverance and encouraged them to make their dreams a reality.

Following speeches from current NHS officers about each of the four pillars in which the society is built, inductees were presented with certificates. The evening concluded with a celebratory reception in the high school foyer for students and their families.



Current officers

- Kaylyn Weits, President
- Rowan Grady, Vice-President
- Lilly Bishop, Secretary
- Liam Schreiner, Treasurer
- Sheridan Grady, Publicist
- Anna Burkhartzmeyer, Junior Officer
- Paul Gluck, Junior Officer
- Adam Juzwick, Junior Officer
- Gina Sauro, Junior Officer

New inductees

- Victoria Allen
- Christina Bishop
- Allison Blum
- Cheyenne Burnside
- Paige Carletta
- Caspar Carson
- Bobbi Cheves
- Ryan Danielak
- Madison Degenfelder
- Mitchell DiFante
- Patrick Farrell
- Ryan Felice
- Amanda Giardina
- Liliya Grego
- Margaret Hanson
- Cole Hicks
- Margaret Hintz
- Pallas Hoffmann
- Sean Keenan
- Henry Kembrowski
- Rebecca Milks
- Jordan Miller
- Tyler Miller
- Nicholas Nealon
- Olivia Petronio
- Molly Rich
- Dakota Ruhlman
- Elizabeth Sagan
- Haeli Santos
- Devyn Scheidt
- Kyle Smith
- Molly Smock
- Emily Vergari
- Anna Wojtas
- Grace Young
- Mikayla Zarr

School HIGHLIGHTS

The best way to spread holiday cheer is singing loud for all to hear

Winter students exuded joy as they clapped and sang along to familiar songs performed by the Brockport High School Band during an assembly in the high school auditorium on Dec. 21. Kindergarten and first-grade students were inspired and thrilled by their older peers who played a variety of holiday favorites including “I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas” and “All I want for Christmas is my Two Front Teeth.” A visit from Santa brought nearly the whole auditorium to their feet in delight as he passed out high fives and took a turn conducting the band. Thank you to the BHS Band for sharing the gift of music to all three elementary schools in advance of holiday recess!



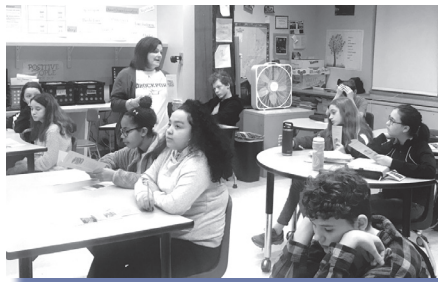
Barclay students take the stage

Four third-grade classes spent weeks preparing for a special performance of Barclay Kids Rock on Dec. 3. Each semester Barclay music teacher Katelyn Marasco works with four classes to hone their singing voices for a community performance. Each concert features three to four songs that send positive messages through group and individual vocal performances. The group pictured below is comprised of students from the classes of Maren Aldrich, Ashleigh Grant, Michelle Huck and Tara Jackson. Kudos to all students for an incredible performance!



Eighth-graders prep for high school

Future freshmen got a taste of high school during visits from BHS students and staff on Jan. 3. In an effort to ease anxiety that eighth-graders may have about their transition to high school, representatives from the high school visited OMS to share exciting class offerings and opportunities that lie ahead. Eighth-graders learned about classes offered in each subject area, along with academic support opportunities that are available in the high school. OMS students also had the opportunity to ask questions about life in high school.



Challenge inspires kindness at Hill

Random acts of kindness took over the Hill School throughout the month of December in celebration of the school's second annual Kindness Challenge. Each class received a bingo board filled with 24 suggested activities intended to spread kindness. Students contributed their time and talent in various ways such as making cards for residents of a local nursing home, smiling at everyone they passed in the hallways and spending the day saying only nice things about others. Students learned that spreading kindness brings joy to all parties involved. Classes that completed their kindness bingo boards were treated to cookies and cocoa, which turned out to be the majority of the school. Great job, Hill students!



Sophomores learn about career and technical education

Brockport High School sophomores had an opportunity to learn about 19 different programs offered through the Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES Career and Technical Education program. On Dec. 7, 94 BHS tenth-graders visited WEMOCO where they saw classes ranging from culinary arts to automotive technology to certified nurse assisting. Current BHS WEMOCO students led many of the tours. The tour occurs annually to give students an inside look at opportunities available outside Brockport High School.



Congratulations to Brockport's Best!

A group of individuals was recognized as Brockport's Best during the board of education meeting on Dec. 4 for their contributions to the Foodlink Mobile Pantry at Brockport High School. BHS teacher Mike Zale and his wife Kristen were acknowledged for their efforts in bringing the mobile pantry to Brockport, which resulted in the distribution of food to hundreds in our community multiple times a year. BHS National Honor Society advisers Tricia Arnold and Rebecca Barrett, along with the BHS chapter of NHS, were also recognized for their vital role in the set-up and distribution of food at each event.

The Foodlink Mobile Pantry provides food at no charge to people 18 and older, with no income or residency requirements. Foodlink staff and district volunteers unload, set-up and distribute food directly to families in attendance.



Brockport's Best awards are presented by the board of education to individuals or groups in recognition of outstanding achievement in Brockport Central School District. Nominations are accepted on a continual basis and must be submitted using the nomination form, which is posted on our website at bcs1.org. If you have questions regarding the award, please contact District Clerk Stephanie Williams at 637-1939 or stephanie.williams@bcs1.org.

You're invited!

The fourth annual faculty basketball game to benefit the Unified Sports Program will be held Tuesday, Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. in the Oliver Middle School lower gym.

Let's fill the gym as the elementary teachers take on the secondary level. Donations collected at the door and proceeds from concessions will go towards items such as awards and uniforms.

More than \$2,000 was raised last year to benefit the Unified Sports Program.

The Unified Sports Program pairs students of all abilities together to train and compete in athletic games. The program extends far beyond sports by inspiring compassion, camaraderie, inclusion and lifelong memories for all involved.

Hill students raise nearly \$600 during 'Stache for Cash fundraiser

Hill students collected donations to benefit the Wilmot Cancer Institute during their "Stache for Cash" fundraiser this past November. The fundraiser coincided with No Shave November, an initiative designed to raise cancer awareness.

The top earning classes from each grade, David Resseguie's fifth-grade class and Christopher Albrecht's fourth-grade class, presented a large check for \$575 to a Wilmot representative on Dec. 18.

Way to go, Hill School!



Teacher wins money for schools devastated by CA wildfires

Fourth-grade teacher and 2018 NYS Teacher of the Year Christopher Albrecht was honored with 55 other teachers of year during the College Football Playoff national championship game in California on Jan. 7.



All teachers of the year had an opportunity to throw a football through an Eckrich (a prepared meat brand) target from 10 yards out to win \$1,000 for Extra Yard for Teachers. The money would benefit schools in Butte County that were devastated from the California wildfires. Albrecht, the 40th teacher in line, was the first to make it through the target. He made a deal with the representative prior to throwing that if he backed up and successfully made the throw from 15 yards out, then Eckrich would increase the donation to \$5,000. Not sure if it was luck or skill, but Albrecht successfully completed the throw through the target, winning \$5,000 for Extra Yard for Teachers! Combined with other teachers of the year who made the target, \$25,000 was won to benefit schools in Butte County. Way to go, Mr. Albrecht!

New geography bee champion at Oliver Middle School

A new geography bee champion was crowned at A.D. Oliver Middle School this winter. James Ramsay, an eighth-grader on Team Omega, surpassed 30 other contestants in sixth, seventh and eighth grades to earn the title of school geography bee champion on Dec. 5.



James Ramsay (geography bee champion), Richard Wiest (OMS social studies teacher), Jerrod Roberts (OMS assistant principal), Rebecca Tibbitts (OMS assistant principal)

The contest was sponsored by the National Geographic Society, who will eventually determine a national champion in geography knowledge. Ramsay will take a state qualifier test online to determine if he will qualify to attend the state championships in New York City this March. Once determined, state champions from across the country will compete this spring in Washington, D.C. to determine a national champion. The national champion will receive numerous awards including college funding. Good luck, James!

Paying tribute to Fannie Barrier Williams

Brockport Central School District partnered with community members to pay tribute to Fannie Barrier Williams in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.



Fannie Barrier Williams was an educator, political activist and women's rights advocate who was born in Brockport. She was the first black graduate of The College at Brockport in 1970 and a founding member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Throughout her life, she worked with many social activists including Booker T. Washington, Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. Du Bois. Williams continued to support women's rights until her death in 1944. She died in Brockport and is buried next to her sister in High Street Cemetery.



On Jan. 17, district students and staff joined community partners from The College at Brockport, First Baptist Church and Western Monroe Historical Society to honor the civil rights leader. Following a blessing by First Baptist Church Pastor Dan Brockway, BCSD students Sadie and Genevieve Contrera placed a wreath on her grave.

Holidays around the world

Sounds, sights and tastes from countries around the globe filled the Brockport High School LGI on Dec. 20 during the annual Holidays Around the World event.

Students in Stacy Hurley's class spent two months researching traditions associated with different holidays around the world, then created poster displays featuring their findings. They also constructed artifacts associated with their holidays and cooked up traditional foods to add to the authenticity.

The event began with a concert where students shared musical numbers corresponding to various holidays, then

families, friends and staff in attendance had the opportunity to walk around to see the different posters and ask questions.

BHS teacher Stacy Hurley said the project encourages not only academics, but also communication, social and coping skills.

"Every year we strive for more independence during this project and they really rose to the occasion," said Hurley.

Kudos to Timmy Kemp, Ella Mohney, Ricky Noll, Jalen Prior and Nate Wall for an awesome, informative event!



PTSA News

Events and opportunities coming up soon...



BARCLAY BOOK FAIR: FEB. 25 - MARCH 1
HILL BOOK FAIR: APRIL 22 - 25

We are always looking for volunteers to help us run our book fairs. Keep an eye out on our website and Facebook page for updates!



Barclay Books & Bingo!
Thursday, Feb. 28

Thank you, volunteers!

All of the PTSA sponsored events are organized and run by our volunteers. Thank you for being such dedicated parents, students and community members.

Upcoming PTSA meeting dates

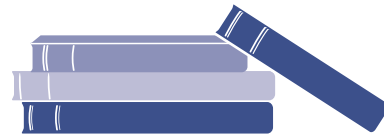
- OMS meetings - Feb. 4, March 11, May 13
- Elementary meetings - Feb. 15, March 21, April 25, May 9, June 17

Children are always welcome at meetings!

Teacher Wish List Books

Teachers love receiving new books for their classrooms!

If you would like to purchase a book to donate, just pick one out and let us know at the register. You can even have your student purchase it with an e-wallet account.



Set up your OMS Book Fair E-Wallet now!

Create an online account with a pre-approved amount your student can spend via charge to your credit card during the book fair!



Anything remaining is credited back to your account at the close of the book fair.

Go to: www.scholastic.com/bf/brockportoms
 →“e-wallet” (green tab) →get started → go to e-wallet
 →add student & card info →

Print & bring in to school to shop at the book fair

DID YOU KNOW

that either our principals or assistant principals from all three of our elementary schools attend our monthly meetings? We love to see new and familiar faces. Put the kids on the bus and join us for coffee and conversation.



● Get Involved ● Stay Informed ● Advocate

Keep in touch with Brockport PTSA!



BrockportPTSA@gmail.com



BrockportCentralPTSA.org



@BrockportPTSA



Brockport PTSA



Leave a message
 (585) 637-1995

Dear Residents,

Welcome to the Brockport Continuing Education program! The mission of our program is to offer continued learning opportunities that meet the needs and interests of our community.

The Brockport Continuing Education program is a self-sustaining program funded by enrollment fees. Since we rely solely on course fees, it is necessary to maintain minimum registration requirements. Please know that classes not meeting minimum registration requirements may be cancelled. Notifications for class cancellations due to limited registration will be made prior to first class sessions and refunds will be issued. Please know that class registration fees do not include the cost of books, materials, or supplies unless noted in class descriptions.

Thank you for your support and participation in our program. We encourage you to contact us with questions, concerns or suggestions.

Respectfully,



Debra Waye, Director of
Continuing Education



Katrina Schwartz,
Program Secretary

Refunds: Refunds are provided only if a student withdraws from the class 24 hours prior to the scheduled start date. No refunds will be provided after the first class. If you join a class after the scheduled start date, the tuition will be the same amount. If a class needs to be cancelled due to maintenance or weather emergencies, no partial refund will be issued. *Refunds will be processed for courses that have been fully cancelled from our schedule for reasons such as low enrollment.* Fees for registration do not include the cost of books, materials or supplies, unless noted.

Class cancellation & confirmation: Individual cancelled classes will be rescheduled whenever possible. No refunds will be issued for classes that are not able to be rescheduled. No continuing education classes are held when Brockport schools are closed due to weather cancellations or emergency conditions. Please check the Brockport Central School website, your local TV or radio stations for cancellations. *If you do not receive notification of cancellation, your class will be held. No confirmations are sent.*

Due to holiday observances, school functions or scheduled recesses, classes will not meet on the following dates: April 13-21, May 24-27, 2019

Parking: Please be sure to park in designated areas, not in bus or emergency lanes.

REGISTRATION: (mail-in)

Please mail the completed registration form with payment to:

For Continuing Education Courses:

Office of Continuing Education
Fred W. Hill School
Brockport Central School District
40 Allen Street
Brockport, New York 14420

For Driver Education Courses:

Office of Driver Education
Oliver Middle School
Brockport Central School District
40 Allen Street
Brockport, New York 14420

Exception: Five-Hour Driving Course requires in-person registration at Brockport High School.

All checks must be made payable to Brockport Continuing Education. Our office must receive your registration form and payment one week prior to first class session date. Please remember that prompt registration may reduce the likelihood of classes being cancelled due to low enrollment. You must be 18 years of age or older to be eligible to register, with the exception of those courses designed specifically for younger students.

Contact information:

Continuing Education

Katrina Schwartz

Phone: 585-637-1854

Email: katrina.schwartz@bcs1.org

Driver Education

Trina Kenney

Phone: 585-637-1961

Email: trina.kenney@bcs1.org

WEMOCO adult classes:

A vast number of vocational programs in business, health, trade and industrial areas are available. Information concerning offerings, dates, cost, etc. can be obtained by calling the Center for Workforce Development Office at 349-9100.

We are now accepting registration
and payment online!

Visit bcs1.org/continuinged

Sports and Fitness

Junior Blue Devils Cheerleading Boys and Girls Grades 1 through 8

This league is for young athletes interested in the sport of cheerleading. Our focus will be helping each athlete develop and advance their skills in stunting, jumps, voice, dance and other aspects of cheerleading. Join our team of instructors for this opportunity! T-shirts and bows are included with your registration fee. Please indicate your child's shirt size on the registration form. Space is limited, so sign up early!

Fee: \$75 (includes shirt & bow)

Minimum Enrollment: 5 per age group

Maximum Enrollment: 30 per age group

Coordinator: Gerri Hofstra

Location: High School North Gym

Dates: April 22 – June 3

Grades 1-3: Mondays 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Grades 4-5: Wed. & Fri. 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Grades 6-8: Tues. & Thur. 6-8 p.m.

**All Gymnasium usage is subject to BCSD sports events calendar and may change.*



Golf Lessons Ages 16 & Up

Come out and enjoy this fun four-day class for ages 16 and up. This class will teach the fundamentals of the game of golf and focus on achieving a full swing and solid contact with the ball. Please join the instructor, Tom Stanton, at Woodlands Golf Range, 5500 West Ridge Rd. Spencerport 14559. The fee is \$75 per session; clubs and equipment are included for those who need them. There is an additional ball fee of \$7 per class. There are two sessions available. Please see dates and times below. Class is limited to 10 participants, so early registration is recommended.

Fee: \$75 per session

Instructor: Tom Stanton

Maximum Enrollment: 10

Location: Woodlands Golf Range

May sessions: Tuesdays 7, 14, 21, 28

6-7 p.m. Thursdays 9, 16, 23, 30

June sessions: Tuesdays 4, 11, 18, 25

6-7 p.m. Thursdays 6, 13, 20,

27



Arts and Leisure

Brockport Community Big Band

The Brockport Community Big Band is an adult group performing jazz with a focus on big band music from the 1940s to the present day. Rehearsals are in the Brockport High School band room on Tuesday evenings from 7-9 year round. To be considered for membership, a playing audition must be performed demonstrating knowledge of the jazz idiom and a skill level that is commensurate with the standard of the group. Performers on saxophone, trumpet, trombone, bass, piano, guitar and drum set will be considered for membership. Members are required to attend all rehearsals and performances throughout the year. This group is not open to high school age students or college students who do not live within traveling distance to Brockport for weekly rehearsals and performances throughout the year.

For dates and additional information please call Lorie Bryant at 637-7565.





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Term Expires June 30, 2019

Jeffrey Harradine, Vice President
Term Expires June 30, 2022

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Term Expires June 30, 2020

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Term Expires June 30, 2021

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Safe School Ambassadors aim to reduce bullying

Improving school climate was the focus of a special training presented to 46 Hill students on Nov. 30 and Dec. 3. The Safe School Ambassador Program teaches students how to identify conflict and intervention skills to prevent situations from escalating. There are three primary responsibilities in the job description: notice, think, act. Students participated in a variety of activities to gain a deeper understanding of types of conflict and the negative impact of bullying. Pictured here is the bruised apple activity in which students passed around apples and said mean things to them. Teachers then cut open the apples and showed students that they were bruised on the inside, demonstrating the negative impact of hurtful words.



Students from different social groups were nominated by teachers to participate in the program. This year 22 fifth-graders and 24 fourth-graders underwent the training. Brockport was the first district in New York State to implement the Safe School Ambassador program.

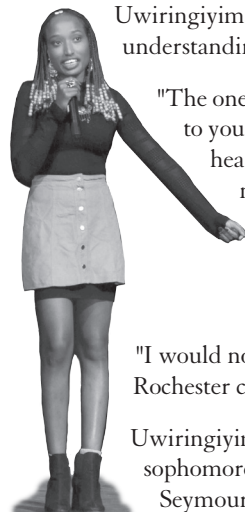
Author visit leaves BHS students humbled and inspired

You could hear a pin drop in the high school auditorium on Nov. 29 as a Democratic Republic of Congo refugee shared her story of resilience with high school students and staff. Sandra Uwiringiyimana wrote the book titled, "How Dare the Sun Rise: Memoirs of a War Child," a book that brought high school students and staff together in a reading project. In the book, Uwiringiyimana tells her story of surviving a massacre, immigrating to Rochester and turning adversity into activism.



Uwiringiyimana spent her childhood fleeing periodically during times of war. When she was 10, she survived a massacre that left her 6-year-old sister, aunt and many others dead. During her presentation to juniors and seniors, she recalled the night of the massacre through teary eyes, to which the students responded with an encouraging round of applause.

Uwiringiyimana focused her messaging on the power of kindness and understanding.



"The one thing I want people to take away is learning to look at the one next to you as an individual, as a human who experiences joy and pain and heartache," said Uwiringiyimana. "Getting to know people as humans and not through your preconceived notions...that is what changes the world."

Though Uwiringiyimana was not warmly welcomed into the U.S., she credits the kind individuals who took the time to get to know her for her success.

"I would not have known my voice mattered if it weren't for the people here in the Rochester community," said Uwiringiyimana.

Uwiringiyimana led two assemblies at the high school, one for freshmen and sophomores and one for juniors and seniors. She also spoke that evening at the Seymour Library during an event open to the community.