

BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

District Newsletter

July 2014

FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Dr. Michael Kuchar, Superintendent of Schools



Last year, American writer and fiction prize winner, George Saunders, offered a speech to Syracuse University graduates that I believe identifies with the character of Bergenfield's students. The essence of the advice offered by this great writer was that, as those graduates move through life, experiencing successes and failures, the most important goal they should strive to achieve was kindness. The students of this community, whose random acts of kindness I have the pleasure of witnessing each day, mirror those beliefs through their actions and set a shining example for others within their generation.

Over this past year alone, I have observed these students display their compassion and selflessness, firsthand—whether collecting funds and supplies for families impacted by the typhoon in the Philippines; gathering canned goods for the local food banks; singing and entertaining senior citizens in a nursing home on the holidays; immediately soliciting clothing, money, and supplies for families impacted by local community fires; collecting coats, hats, scarves, and mittens for the homeless and those without shelter or heat; making teddy bears for children in the hospital; walking in walkathons to raise funds to conquer illness; or, serving as volunteers in hospitals, day care centers, and our own golf program for teens with autism. With my own eyes, I have seen overwhelming acts of kindness demonstrated in big, big ways.

What separates these students from my generation, and those before me, is not the occasional times when they are called to arms to help their fellow citizens, but rather the amazing small

kindnesses they show every single day in the classroom, cafeteria, hallways, and sports fields. Today, Bergenfield's students offer encouragement, acceptance, and friendship to classmates with severe handicaps, who before may have been isolated in the past. Our students welcome and accept peers from every different ethnic group and religion from around the world. These young men and women learn, laugh, compete, and grow along side peers of different sexual orientations yet, they live and act as one. They see no differences when they look to call someone "friend." Our students, today, live as our nation's founders dreamed, believing and demonstrating how one community fosters the dream of life, liberty, and happiness for all. They live by these principles.

It is important for me, as Superintendent of Schools, to tell this year's graduates that I am extremely proud of their acceptances into our nation's most prestigious colleges and universities. I couldn't be more pleased with the amazing things you have all achieved in your academic career thus far, whether in the classroom, on the field, in competitions, or at performance events. But, as a father, an uncle, a husband, and neighbor, who, like you, dreams of a world where our children are safe from violence and fear, I am most proud of the many times you, the Class of 2014, have chosen kindness!

The oncoming 2014-15 school year brings about many exciting changes; most importantly, scheduling changes will better prepare our future graduates for success in college and beyond. As we prepare for the rigors of another year, be sure to stay atop of your summer reading, keeping your brains finely tuned for learning, and remember to practice kind acts daily.

Sincerely,

Congratulations to the
Class of 2014!

The Board of Education
wishes everyone a safe,
happy, and productive
summer break.

See you all in September!

A Message from the Class Valedictorian



I believe that there are youthful qualities that we should never lose. First, we should never lose our curiosity for everything around us. If you're curious about life around you, you will never stop learning and life will always be interesting. Also, take the time to appreciate the little things. Like right now, appreciate all the different events you witnessed on this field over the course of your four years. And lastly, never take life too seriously. Even when you're stressed, remember to give yourself a break and try to make life fun.

As we say our final goodbyes to Bergenfield High School, a place where we all grew and learned about ourselves. I want to acknowledge the determination and success that I know will come as a result of our education. I met some of the greatest people I will ever meet in this town. To all of my fellow Bergenfield High School graduates who are starting a new chapter in their life, remember no matter how far life takes you, you will always be a Bear at heart.

—Samia Khan—

AROUND THE DISTRICT

The Community Mourns



The community mourned the loss of an influential figure in the month of May. Tom Power, a longtime Bergenfield Board of Education trustee, was first elected in 1973. He took a businessman's approach to his service on the board when

making policy decisions and capital improvements to the campuses. Tom was well aware of the role of a trustee and emphasized the importance of letting the administration manage the schools, while the trustees set policy for the district.

Tom was a member of the Bergenfield Lions Club, which provides scholarships to BHS students. He was also the Commander of the American Legion, Post 90, where he established a scholarship program for graduating seniors. He was a true example of community spirit and held a special place in his heart for the youth of Bergenfield.

A Note to Parents on Summer Reading

A goal for students is to continue reading daily over the summer. We ask you to partner with us in developing your child's interest and love for reading.

In June, your child was assessed for their reading level. The reading level identifies the level your child can read text with fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. This information is important because it identifies books that your child can read with ease, confidence, and understanding. A letter will be sent home providing your child's reading level. You or your child may provide a librarian at

the Bergenfield Public Library with your child's reading level, and they can help you select appropriate books.

We suggest that your child: visits the Bergenfield Public Library to join their Summer Reading Program; read a minimum of 20-30 minutes every day; read fiction books (folktales, fantasy, etc.); read non-fiction books (science, history, etc.); read children's magazines; keep a log of the books read with your signature; look for summer assignments for all grades on the left side of www.bergenfield.org; have fun reading and learning!

Hoover Student Wins National Art Contest



Hoover Elementary School fifth grader, Beatrice Aquino, was named the Grand Prize Winner for the 2014 Scholastic MLK Day Poster Contest—a national art competition.

To enter the contest, students had to create an original Martin Luther King, Jr.-themed poster that inspires people, his or her own age, to help others through service and answer Dr. King's question, "What are you doing for others?" Entries

were judged equally on artistic interpretation of the Challenge Theme; how well the artwork inspires others to engage in service; originality; and technical skill.

Beatrice Aquino competed against over 4000 posters from across the United States, to be selected as the Grand Prize Winner! As the grand prize winner, Beatrice's entry will be displayed in the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Bookstore in Washington DC, and she will receive a Samsung Galaxy tablet. According to the Scholastic website at www.scholastic.com/mlkday, Beatrice's teacher, Charlene Anolik, will also win prizes valued at \$1,200.

Beatrice's Mom, Cindy Aquino, was thrilled to receive the e-mail notification that her daughter was the National Grand Prize winner.

A Message from the Class Salutatorian

Though the day has finally come upon us, I still cannot believe that the faces I have seen throughout my years at Jefferson School, RWB, and BHS are now of young adults ready to tackle whatever the world has to offer. Yet again, it's back to the bottom of the food chain, as we are all headed off to become freshmen, swept into the anonymity of college. But that does not mean you have to stay anonymous. Live a little. Join new activities, make new friends, become leaders, carve your own paths.

Starting a new journey may not be so hard, but perhaps it has already begun. Some of us are still figuring out our plans for the future, but the situation is okay - I assure you. As we journey forward into higher education and the workforce, we have been taught at BHS to search from within, identify our strengths, weaknesses, and passions, and make a difference.

No one knows what's waiting ahead, nor where you'll end up. But no matter where you do, I'm sure that you will be able to write your own definition of success and exemplify it every day of your life. Though we may all go our separate ways, remember that there are many worlds, but they all share the same sky.

—Kevin Joseph—

Patroller of the Year



Alyssa Greenspan, a 5th grade Jefferson School student, was named AAA North Jersey Safety Patroller of the Year! Pictured above, Alyssa was recognized by her teacher, Ms. Karabin, and Steve Rajczyk from AAA North Jersey, who presented her with a certificate, plaque, and a check for \$200.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2014!

Barbara Tsaousis

2014 Youth America Grand Prix finalist, Chemistry Olympic Captain, attending Lehigh University

**Samia Khan**

Class Valedictorian, Student Congress President, 5 honor societies, 6.0 GPA, attending Rutgers

**Gisell Gomez**

Graduating 3rd in class, STEM, 4 honor societies, 8 AP courses, attending University of Pennsylvania

**Mathew Stypulkoski**

Jazz band, 4 honor societies, varsity tennis, 5.23 GPA, attending Stevens Institute of Technology

Tunisia Kenyatta

Marching band, Academic Decathlon Gold Medalist, full scholarship to attend University of Chicago



WE ARE BERGENFIELD

Laura Medina

Class President, varsity soccer, Spanish Honor Society, attending Ohio State University

**Benjamin Marcelo III**

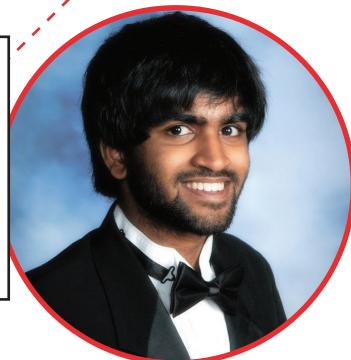
National Honor Society, Academic Decathlon, Presidential Award, attending George Wash. University

Emma Taubner

President of three clubs, award-winning filmmaker, attending NYU's Tisch School of the Arts

**Kevin Joseph**

NJ All-State Chorus, STEM, 9 AP courses, attending Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health

**Nicholas Latorre**

3-year varsity soccer player, Spanish Honor Society, Model UN, volleyball, attending College of NJ



WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

A List of Colleges and Universities to Be Attended by the Class of 2014

Barry University	Kean University	Sacred Heart University
Bergen Community College	Lehigh University	Santa Monica College
Berkeley College	Liberal Arts	School of Visual Arts
Brigham Young University	Manhattan College	Seton Hall University
California College of the Arts	Manhattanville College	St. John's University
Champlain College	Marist College	Stevens Institute of Technology
College of Mount Saint Vincent	Mass. College of Pharmacy & Health	Temple University
College of the Canyons	Monroe College	The College of New Jersey
County College of Morris	Montclair State University	The George Washington University
Criminal Justice	New Jersey Institute of Technology	The Ohio State University
Dominican College of Blauvelt	New York University	United States Military Academy
Drew University	Onondaga Community College	University of Chicago
Drexel University	Pennsylvania State University	University of Delaware
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Quinnipiac University	University of Maryland
Fashion Design/Visual Arts	Ramapo College of New Jersey	University of New Haven
Felician College	Richard Stockton College of New Jersey	University of Pennsylvania
Florida State University	Rider University	Valencia College
Fordham University	Rowan University	West Virginia University
Johnson & Wales University	Rutgers	William Paterson University

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