



Columbia

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

QUARTERLY CONNECTION

WINTER 2018

SUMMER



FALL



SPRING



Assistance League distributes grants to area schools

The Assistance League of Mid-Missouri awarded more than \$119,000 in grant funding to educators in Columbia Public Schools. While this year’s requests covered topics ranging from geometry to zoology, there were several grants with a special emphasis on literacy. Teachers Trina Liebhart and Mallory Sims each recieved \$700 grants to address literacy in their classrooms.

Liebhart, a first-grade teacher at New Haven Elementary School, submitted a grant inspired by a need for more non-fiction literature for younger students; when she found a publication

appropriate for her students, she jumped on the opportunity.

“This news magazine, which is published by Scholastic Magazine, offers non-fiction reading at a level that my students can comprehend,” said Liebhart. “The content is relevant and timely to what we’re learning in class.”

In addition to a print magazine, online quizzes, lessons and games that help students improve their comprehension, vocabulary and punctuation are also included.

At Blue Ridge Elementary School, Sims, a speech pathologist, is working to redefine how students approach reading comprehension. Her grant involves hands-on materials, like photo cards,

storybooks and vocabulary books, in addition to iPad software for students with language delays.

“When a student doesn’t understand a word or a picture, I give them synonyms and antonyms or try to make a connection to real life experiences,” Sims said. “I can see that lightbulb moment when it finally clicks.”

According to Links to Learning Grant Chair Linda Cook, one of the best parts about volunteering with the Assistance League of Mid-Missouri is the positive reaction from teachers and students. “We encourage teachers to apply because it’s such a great opportunity,” Cook said. “It’s worth their time to submit a proposal and get the chance to expand their students’ education.”

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WHEN IT SNOWS

School will be canceled or a 2-hour delayed start will be implemented only after roads are tested. Should cancellation, a 2-hour delayed start or altered bus routes be necessary, efforts will be made to notify radio and television stations by 6 a.m. Information will also be sent to parents via the district's messaging system, posted on the district's website (www.cpsk12.org) and on CPS-TV.

Parents may make the final decision regarding a child's attendance. If the parent views the weather too severe or the road conditions too dangerous, absences will be excused. Difficulty in contacting parents usually prevents early dismissals, but under appropriate circumstances the district may dismiss early. On inclement weather days, please listen to local radio and television stations for news of early dismissal. Additionally, information will be sent via the district's messaging system.

BOND UPDATE



Principal Jen Wingert cuts the ribbon at Grant Elementary School, celebrating the completion of the \$5.6 million renovation.



Rock Bridge High School cuts the ribbon upon completion of its stadium renovation. The \$6.4 million project was paid for with funds from the 2014 voter-approved bond issue. Major renovations were made to the press box, concession stand, restrooms, grandstand bleachers and track.



Breaking ground on the new middle school in Southwest Columbia, set to open in 2020.

CPS student drumline performs at National High School Culture Festival in Japan

This summer, 20 Columbia Public Schools students represented the United States in the National High School Culture Festival in Matsumoto, Japan. Columbia Percussion United, a group composed of students from Battle, Hickman and Rock Bridge high schools, was one of many groups to represent their home country in the festival's 42nd year.

Japan hosts the festival in a different part of the country each year, and Columbia Public Schools students were able to perform in various sporting arenas and parades in Nagano, Japan.

Columbia students auditioned for the group in August 2017. The students then practiced once a week and more often as the trip drew closer.

Leading up to the trip, the Columbia Public Schools Foundation helped cover the cost of passports for the students, as well as Japanese etiquette training.

Battle High School Band Director and Columbia Percussion United Co-Director Bob Thalhuber selected Missouri-influenced music such as Scott Joplin and Nelly to represent Missouri and the United States.



Battle sophomore Logan Morris played the lowest bass drum after trying out as a freshman. He said his favorite part of the trip was experiencing other cultures. "Meeting other students and talking with someone who lives in an entirely different area than you do was so crazy," he said.

Aside from meeting students from various parts of Japan, CPS students experienced the festival with a dance group from China, a traditional Korean music group and a string quartet from Vienna, Austria.

Even Thalhuber enjoyed speaking with various band directors from around the world.

"To see how they have similar challenges in the performing arts that we have, even though we're thousands of miles apart," he said. "It's refreshing to see that teenagers are teenagers wherever you go."



State tennis champs

The Rock Bridge High School girls' tennis team won its fifth straight girls' Class 2 State Championship, tying the MSHSAA record. The team, coached by Ben Loeb, includes members Abbie Sivaraman, Addy Valerio, Anjali Ramesh, Dominique Valerio, Maggie Lin, Abby Still, Eleanor Fay, Emily Litton, Lauren Reynolds, Corinne Farid, Gabi Tella, Mary Hose, Alexis Harper, and Sarah Ding.



Between the Rock Bridge boys' and girls' tennis teams, seven consecutive titles have been won by the Bruins—a new MSHSAA record.

The Rock Bridge High School boys' tennis team won its most recent state title in May. It was the third consecutive Class 2 State Championship and the 7th State championship overall in program history. Team members included Zach Grueber, Jake Fraunfelder, Kam Farid, Kavin Anand, Noah Winton, Nate Herting, Luke Bouchard, Ashwath Elangovan and Garrett Roach. The team was also coached by Ben Loeb.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Hickman student named Young Entrepreneur of the Year

The City of Columbia Minority and Women-Owned Business Committee recently named Erin Robinson, a junior at Hickman High School, as the 2018 Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Erin is the CEO of Grey Matter, a start-up that focuses on advocacy and consulting in mental health awareness for youth and parents.

Six Columbia Public Schools students achieve perfect ACT exam scores

Hickman High School

- Rachel Edidin
- Benjamin Lewandowski
- Guthrie Stroh
- Michael Zou

Rock Bridge High School

- Kevin Anand
- Wendy Yan

District earns budgeting excellence award

Columbia Public Schools has been recognized by The Association of School Business Officials International for excellence in budget presentation with the Meritorious Budget Award for the 2018–2019 budget year.

Columbia Public Schools' National Merit Semifinalists

Battle High School Adam S. Lake

Hickman High School Rachel M. Edidin, Benjamin D. Lewandowski, Katherine R. Neff, Guthrie L. Stroh, Teresa S. Tang, Aileen Xu and Erika J. Zhou

Rock Bridge High School Kevin Anand, Riley K. Jones, Joseph Koo, Emily C. Ma, Kathleen L. Meininger, Louise Schul, Wendy Yan and Jia L. Zhuang

The students will now compete alongside 16,000 semifinalists across the country for scholarships totaling more than \$31 million from the National Merit Scholarship Program. More than 1.6 million high school juniors from 22,000 high schools around the country entered when they took the Preliminary SAT in 2017.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation provides scholarships annually for the nation's most academically accomplished.

CPS teacher earns high honor for National History Day

Gentry Middle School Extended Educational Experience (EEE) teacher Gretchen Trower earned a nomination for the James F. Harris Teacher Award, which recognizes teachers across the nation who excel in teaching the National History Day (NHD) program.

Nominees for this award must adhere to the NHD program by encouraging students to participate in NHD projects. The 2018 program theme was, "Conflict and Compromise in History," and students created projects that related to the theme.

"The beauty of NHD is that students have the freedom to choose any topic they wish to research, as long as it fits the annual theme," Trower said.

"The purpose of teaching history is to inspire students to appreciate our history and to understand its place in understanding the present," she said. "I focus on providing connections to history during activities that embrace critical analysis, in-depth questioning, hands-on research, open discourse, creative thinking and choice."

Foundation inducts new class into Hall of Leaders



Each year, the Columbia Public Schools Foundation (CPSF) selects a group to induct into the Hall of Leaders. The honorees represent a diverse group of alumni, volunteers and retired educators who have not only made great contributions in their respective fields but have also shown the community that education is the key to success.

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI

George Galbreath is an artist, educator and graphic designer living in Atlanta, Georgia. His passion for the arts began while he was a Columbia Public Schools student and it eventually led him to Howard University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in graphic design. He continued his education at MU, where he completed his Masters of Education. Galbreath has taught for 15 years, including three years at Rock Bridge High School. Galbreath is the co-founder of Urban Art Expression in Atlanta and the founder of the African-American Art Experience Program in Columbia.

Dan Knight is the prosecuting attorney for Boone County, a position he has held since 2007. Born and raised in Columbia, Knight graduated from Hickman High School and went on to receive a Bachelor of Business Administration and a law degree from MU. He began practicing law as the assistant prosecuting attorney for Boone County. He was elected prosecuting attorney in 2007.

Katie Mustard, a distinguished film producer, graduated from Hickman High School. She earned her bachelor's degree with honors in cinema-television at the University of Southern California. She received her master's degree in creative producing in Tel Aviv and has overseen the production of feature length movies, documentaries, commercials and more. In 2010, Mustard opened her own production company, Mustard & Company, and was named one of *Variety* magazine's "10 Producers to Watch" in 2014.

Susan Ford Robertson, a graduate of Hickman High School, is an attorney at The Robertson Law Group in Kansas City. She is a graduate from the MU School of Journalism and the MU School of Law. In 2012, Robertson became the first female attorney in Missouri elected to the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers. She has been featured on the Super Lawyers' Top Lists since 2005.

OUTSTANDING RETIRED EDUCATORS

Dave Carlson began teaching at Jefferson Junior High School in 1964. He served as athletic director for most of his tenure there, also teaching physical education and health. Carlson coached football, basketball and track for 7th, 8th and 9th grade boys and girls. He also coordinated the intramural program that grew to include 80 percent of the students. He is the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award for track from the Missouri State High School Activities Association.

Curt Fuchs spent 31 years with Columbia Public Schools, starting as the audiovisual librarian at Hickman High School in 1977. He later became director of media services and then the director for instructional and information tech services. By establishing the library/media program in all the district's schools, Fuchs provided resources to literally thousands of students and teachers. He is the only employee to receive both the Ray Lewis

Outstanding Administrator Award and the Outstanding Senior High Educator Award.

Joyce Hulett began her career with Columbia Public Schools at Rock Bridge Elementary School, where she taught second grade for 11 years. Following this, she served as CPS language arts consultant for 17 years. She chaired a committee to write language arts objectives for elementary schools, which became the framework for reporting to families on how students were progressing. She started the outdoor classroom at Two Mile Prairie Elementary School and taught at numerous colleges and MU. She is an author and wrote an educational column for the Columbia Daily Tribune for eight years.

Kathy Ritter spent nearly 20 years at Rock Bridge High School, first joining the staff as assistant principal for activities. She was promoted to principal in 2007 and held the position until her retirement in 2010. Ritter also taught math at Jefferson Junior High School, Rock Bridge and Hickman high schools and MU.

OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

Karen Rawlings has touched Columbia Public Schools in multiple ways as an active volunteer since 1975. She has volunteered at the library, health room, book fairs, field days and more. She served as the PTSA president at Hickman High School, and chaired the Hickman Music Boosters. Rawlings is also one of the founders of CPSF.

Traci Rogers has been an active volunteer in Columbia Public Schools. She has been a PTA officer at three schools. Rogers, an IBM project manager, has logged more than 1,250 volunteer hours through the IBM Volunteer Program, which issues grants to organizations each year. By logging more than 100 hours annually, Rogers has received four \$2,000 grants for Paxton Keeley Elementary School and Jefferson Middle School.