



A MESSAGE FROM
Dr. Janet Sardon,
West Jefferson Hills School District Superintendent
AND
Dr. Matthew Patterson,
Assistant Superintendent



The 2022-23 school year has quickly come to a close. This year, we've had seven employees retire from the WJHSD that have given their time and expertise. We would like to thank and congratulate the following retirees for their years of service to the West Jefferson Hills School District and wish them a lifetime of health and happiness.

- Mr. Kevin Gennaula: 33 years
- Mrs. Sherri Meucci: 31 years
- Mrs. Connie Testa: 32 years
- Mrs. Patty Zeleznick: 25 years
- Mr. Scott Milburn: 5 years
- Mrs. Ramona Ohm: 17 years
- Mrs. Lina Vetter: 21 years

We have had an impactful year with many accomplishments, including a new comprehensive plan, a five-year working plan, an approved special education plan and continued strides in improving student achievement, programming and safety for students and staff throughout the district.

The new district comprehensive plan is being implemented with a focus on providing meaningful professional development opportunities for staff. We conducted training this year on school safety, mental health and wellness, and academic programming, with a focus on math and reading for all students in Grades K-12. We have begun the process of revising our Science curriculum to meet the new standards set for 2025.

In May, students in grades K-11 were assessed using the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) in math, reading and science (3-8). Additionally, all students in grade K-3 and some fourth and fifth-grade students completed their end-of-year Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) reading test.

As a result of this collaborative effort between home and school, we would like to congratulate our entire school community on the following noteworthy achievements:

- 82% of students in K-3 scored at or above the benchmark on the end-of-year Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) reading assessment.
- Students in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 5, and 9 scored at the 92nd national percentile or higher in math. Students in grades 4, 6, 8, and 10 scored at the 85th national percentile or higher in math. National percentiles for grades K-8 are at their highest level in three years in math.
- Students in grades K, 1, and 6 scored at the 93rd national percentile or higher in reading. Students in grades 2, 3, and 5 scored at the 85th national percentile or higher in reading.
- Students in grades 3-8 scored at the 73rd national percentile or higher with grade 3 scoring at the 87th NP in science.
- The percentage of PHMS students projected to score proficient or advanced on the 2023 math PSSA by grade has increased 10-20% since the fall NWEA MAP assessment. These same projections are higher than one year ago.

Over the last four years, the West Jefferson Hills School District has collaborated with more than 30 school districts from across the United States and locally regarding our K-8 reading program. This year, the District welcomed multiple school districts to our classrooms and established collaborative relationships with each. In May, a team of district teachers and administrators presented to over 50 educators from multiple Allegheny County school districts and presented to a neighboring school district's K-8 review team. A team traveled from suburban Chicago to WJHSD and spent two days in our school district observing and learning. We remain incredibly grateful and proud of our

teachers and administrators for their continued willingness to share best instructional practices with school districts striving to provide their students with effective literacy instruction. Our school district has quickly developed a national and local reputation for providing students with effective, research-based literacy instruction.

The district five-year working plan will be approved by the West Jefferson Hills School Board in June. The plan will be revised on a yearly basis and will be posted on the district website, www.wjhsd.net. The goal of the working plan is to show areas of accomplishments, while keeping track of things we need to work on over the next five years. We encourage all faculty, administrators, staff, and community to offer their thoughts and feedback throughout the year so we can continue to make the great strides that make the West Jefferson Hills School District a great place to live and work.

As a district, we are continuing to keep a close eye on our growth within the community. We continue to hold the designation of fastest growing district in Allegheny County, and 16th-fastest growing in the state. We have hired an Architect of Record to begin the process of developing a sound plan for capital projects, while conducting a thorough evaluation of our current facilities. Our first priority is to demolish the old TJHS to continue our quest to improve our school properties. More information will follow, but look for some basic improvements this summer to include new asphalt at four of our properties, and continued improvements to the curb appeal.

The demographic study by Dr. Shelby Stewman has been completed. The district will do a review of the data from the study, as well as a full analysis of the district financial position. This coupled with the feasibility study will help guide the future decisions of the West Jefferson Hills School Board and Administration.

As school starts up in August, there will be a new visitor management software in place that is interlaced with our emergency management system. Please be advised of this change, as all visitors will be required to provide driver's license information on their first visit to our schools. The change saves the district money, while continuing to integrate school safety within the district. We will continue conducting our practice drills throughout the year, working with our community first responders to provide a safe, healthy and caring environment for all students.

During the summer months, the district administration, building administration and staff will continue to upgrade curriculum, provide camps for students, and prepare for the upcoming school year. The summer is an exciting time of growth and rebirth in school districts as we welcome new students to the district, while promoting others to new grades and buildings.

As a superintendent and assistant superintendent, we look forward to seeing everyone in August and meeting more members of the community this summer. The start of the 2023-24 school year for students is Monday, August 28. Class schedules, bus schedules, and other important information will be available through the Skyward portal beginning on August 16.

Have a great and safe summer with family and friends!

Dr. Janet M. Sardon – Superintendent, West Jefferson Hills School District

Dr. Matthew Patterson – Assistant Superintendent, West Jefferson Hills School District

Jaguars Embrace Emerging PIHL Girls Division

By Jeff Nelson

In the Western Pennsylvania sports world, a need finally began to be met in the Spring of 2022 when the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Hockey League (PIHL) launched its first girls hockey division for high school players. The league was scheduled to begin in 2020, but was delayed two years by the pandemic.

The news was met with excitement and some hesitation for area players, including two Thomas Jefferson High School students, recent graduate Jillian Piscitelli and rising senior, Alana Briscoe. Piscitelli played for the Central team last year, while Briscoe took a wait-and-see posture.

"I heard about PIHL Girls Hockey before COVID-19," Piscitelli said. "I was hesitant at first; I didn't know how big it would be. It was really fun last year; I loved it. You see and play with a lot of people you know. There are more teams this year; it's crazy how big the girls hockey community is."

Piscitelli, who plays defense, and Brooklyn Joyce, helped the Central team finish as the runner-up during the 2022 inaugural season, which featured six teams. Joyce moved out of the district after last year. Piscitelli hadn't planned on playing in the PIHL Girls Division this year, but changed her mind as the season grew closer.

"I decided to give it one last hurrah," she laughed. "I hadn't played since the PIHL Championship game last June."

The success of last year's PIHL inaugural season and the growth of girls hockey sparked an increase in the number of players who wanted to participate in the 2023 season, including Briscoe, who is a goaltender.

"I wasn't sure how competitive it would be," said Briscoe, who also is a member of the TJ Boys varsity hockey team. "It's highly competitive. It's been very good to see a bunch of women come together and have fun. It's been very uplifting and positive."

Piscitelli and Briscoe were placed on the Southeast team, as the PIHL Girls Division grew to seven teams when practice began in April. They joined high school players from Bethel Park, Chartiers Valley, Mt. Lebanon, Peters Twp. and West Mifflin, and one player from Morgantown, W. Va. to form the squad, which plays its home games at Ice Castle Arena in Castle Shannon. The regular season ended in late May with the playoffs starting in early June. Sixth-seeded Southeast beat the No. 3, 1 and 2 seeds en route to winning the 2023 championship.

"A lot of us are clicking. We get along and hang out outside of hockey," Piscitelli stated about her Southeast teammates.

Piscitelli and Briscoe fell in love with hockey at an early age. Piscitelli said she loved going to hockey tournaments. Her older brother, John, was captain of the TJ Hockey team and a cousin, Brett Smith, was an assistant captain on TJ's 2022 Penguins Cup Championship squad. Briscoe also had an older brother who played hockey, Jonathan, who inspired her to begin playing.

For the pair of Jaguars, the PIHL Girls Division has been a long road since they began playing hockey 12-13 years ago. But, they are excited not only about this opportunity but the continued growth of girls hockey in Western Pennsylvania.

"I remember I was nine years old, playing with 16-year-olds (girls). I always played up," Piscitelli recalled. I've played in many boys leagues. My freshman year (at TJ) I played boys hockey. The boys treated me well; I know that's not always the case (in some boys leagues).

"Now there are more girls teams; it's so neat being able to play and represent your high school in your sport, added Piscitelli, who coached a girls Under-10 team this past year.



"There's more opportunity now for girls, as well as coaches with more experience," Briscoe stated. "When I started playing, it was a 12-and-under league. Now there are U-8 teams."

A member of the National Honor Society, Piscitelli is matriculating to the University of Pittsburgh, where she plans to major in biology and is keeping an open mind on playing in a women's league in college. "The people I've met (playing hockey); it has been so rewarding."

Briscoe enters her senior year at TJ looking to continue her hockey career beyond 2024. "I want to play hockey in college; I've been contacting schools," she said.

Piscitelli and Briscoe have likely inspired young girls in WJHSD and the South Hills to pursue hockey and help the PIHL Girls Division to continue growing well after they've graduated from Thomas Jefferson HS.

*Jeff Nelson is the WJHSD
Public Relations Coordinator*



TJ students Jillian Piscitelli (L) and Alana Briscoe.



Congratulations

TO THE THOMAS JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2023!!



On behalf of the staff and community of the West Jefferson Hills School District, we are honored to congratulate the Class of 2023! Your high school experience presented a variety of challenges most students have never faced and I'm proud of the grit and determination you displayed in learning to adapt in achieving your individual goals and accomplishments.

As a school community, we wish you all the best as you begin the next chapter of your lives. Remember, always expect nothing but excellence of yourselves, never compromise your belief system, value the knowledge and experiences that you have gained through the years, continue to be active participants in your community, provide a helping hand to others and never forget the life lessons learned at TJ. Congratulations!

Congratulations and Best Wishes to the Class of 2023!!

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Donald E. Aber | Jacob Daniel Fair | Eva Claire Lavrinc | Ryan James Rohm |
| Dani Rae Alisesky | Alexander Fedorychev | Oliver Raye Lawrence | Louis Edward Romanello |
| Morgan Rose Allan | Felicia A. Ferraro | Ryan Scott Lawry | Elizabeth Ann Rose |
| Richard Robert Allenbaugh | Alexis Colleen Findlan | Katelyn Marie Leopold | Riley Ann Rotolo |
| Eman Maryam Ansari | Regan Marie Fingal | Braden R. Lesutis | Jenna Lee Rozeck |
| Abby Maureen Atkinson | Isabella Rose Finnegan | Kaden Charles Lewis | Nicholas Rush |
| Nathan Gregory Barr | Daniel Robert Fitzgerald | Torrey E. Lewis Jr. | Shayne R. Sage |
| Grace Elizabeth Bauman-Miller | Nicholas Aiden Florian | Ashley Elizabeth Lieberum | Elizabeth Marie Santoro |
| Olivia Mae Beatty | Michael Ronald Fonzi | Kelsey Elizabeth Loy | Sydney A. Schamus |
| Andre Mason Bekavac | Patrick Franklin Foulds | Carmen Jean Maglicco | Drew Joseph Schliebner |
| Julia Rose Berberich | Elisabeth Kyla Fry | Olivia Grace Majetic | Sydney Rose Schreiber |
| Sarah Ashley Berendowski | Christopher Thomas Fullard | Nathan James Maksin | Colin James Scott |
| Jacob Aaron Bertini | Brenden Fulmer | Domenic Anthony Mancini | Robert George Shoemaker |
| Mikayla F. Bilbie | Catherine Marie Galioto | Michael Darius Manfredi | Cody David Siemon |
| Christopher Morgan Bobak | Gabriel Charles Galioto | Ryan Joseph Mangone | Kyle Thomas Siler |
| Brooklyn R. Bongiorno | Alvi Christian Boniel Garcia | Emma Shea Martinis | Jordan Mckenzie Sinclair |
| Kaden S. Bowytz | Junior Alexander Garcia | Breanne Marie Masters | Logan Robert Sippos |
| Brielle Alise Boyle | Joseph Paul Gardiner | Kayla Nancy Matey | Anusha Siwakoti |
| Angelina Marie Buckiso | James Marino Gillot | Jack Jay Matyas III | Alaina Rose Smith |
| Ella N. Buffo | Amaya Goff | Jordan Paul Mayer | Bane M. Smith |
| Aiden M. Butler | Jadyn Charles Goff | Nico James McCullough | Lance David Smith |
| Ashley Rose Caldwell | Jess Gonzales IV | Connor R. McGinley | Xavier Dylan Snider |
| Felipe S. Candemil | Camryn Nicole Gore | Shanice Annmarie McNeil | Brianna Nicole Sobeck |
| Isabelle Mae Candelaria | Andrew Thomas Graham | Mackenzie Elizabeth Meyers | Giavanna N. Solomon |
| Mikala Mariah Capane | Felicity Elaine Graham | Holden Tyler Michener | Duane James Sontheimer |
| Daniel R. Carroll | Michael Duwayne Greer Jr. | Adeline Jane Milas | Violet Isabelle Spang |
| Adriano P. Casciato | Akash Gurung | Syed Amsl Mohammad | Isabella B. Spencer |
| Eric Chase Chasko | Isabella M. Guzman | Lorenzo J. Napolitano | Dylan T. Stanicar |
| Kasuba Zoë Chibuye | Jayla Krista Hajiyev | Noelle M. Narr | Aidan Nicholas Stella |
| Jackson Gregory Chiprich | Lilly Mae Halliday | Shaye Leon Nickelson | Zachary Michael Strutt |
| Jacob M. Christian | Bryce James Heller | Megan Theresa O'Dea | Olivia Grace Supp |
| Ava Catherine Colosimo | Blaze Brian Henrikson | Lillian Elizabeth Olson | Mary Christine Suski |
| Delaney Ann Concannon | E'Monie Jaffaur Hicks | Jonathan Orellana | Gavin D. Sweeney |
| Ella Katherine Costa | Landen M. Hintemeyer | Joshua Thomas Ormond | Dayne William Sypolt |
| Dakota Rae Culley | Shane Robert Hoffman | Emily Ann Panaia | Brennan Melvin Taylor |
| Katharine K. Cunningham | Nicholas Frank Horgan | Helena Mckayla Pape | Ava Mary Territ |
| Katherine Anne Cunningham | Victoria Ann Housley | Rachael Renee Parsons | Julia Rose Territ |
| Camryn Michele Dailey | Mia Lauren Howley | Amelia Renee Patterson | Soniya Thapa |
| Carter M. Dalton | Erin Whitney Hurst | Taylor L. Patterson | Annali Faith Thomas |
| Matthew Ryan Danen | Joshua M. Hynes | Marissa Nicole Payne | Evan William Thompson |
| Jadyn Ashlee Davis | Katelynn Jean Inks | Matthew David Pearson | Katelyn Olivia Thompson |
| Che Day | John Gregory Janusek | Kaleena Maria Peters | Breanna Dalene Trieste |
| Kaylee E. Dixon | Katie Ann Johnson | Kaylin Peters | Riley Elle Turk |
| Morgan Sydney Dixon | Ashton T. Kahler | Kendall Ryann Pielin | Lance Timothy Vickers |
| Theo Bryan Doerfler | Joseph Andrew Kalafatis | Lily Catherine Pierce | Melissa Dian Volkman |
| Dominic Jacob Donatelli | Cody James Karcher | Jillian Marie Piscitelli | Isabella S. Vozar |
| Kiley Q. Dorrian | Kennedi Ann Kazimer | Dylan Adam Puckey | Lynsee Nicole Wehring |
| Riley Grace Dorsey | Ava Nicole Korshlak | Dominic L. Putignano | Nathan C. White |
| Shaylee Kristina Dorsey | Jacob Kevin Kramer | Josephine Daryl Rae | Aidan Michael Williams |
| Ariann Makena Downer | Peyton C. Krueger | Emma Marie Ratner | Samantha Lynn Withers |
| Blayne Robert Downer | Hayden Matthew Krupp | Emma Elizabeth Rehak | Emma Elizabeth Wodarek |
| Madison Marianna Driskill | Christopher Wright Laing | Paige Elizabeth Reichner | Carly Renée Woods |
| Isabella Lynn Dziadyk | Courtney Ann Laing | Madalyn Marie Ritter | Everly T. Woodward |
| Nathan Joseph Everley | Sonny R. Lang | Tanner A. Rittiger | William D. Worthington Jr. |
| Sabrina Joyce Everley | Dylan Edward Lautner | Liel Lorel Rodriguez | Sarah Lyn Zacur |



Congratulations Class of 2023!



GROWING MSU SEEKS TO CONNECT WITH DISTRICT COMMUNITY

By Camryn Dailey

In 2019, a group of students brought about the creation of a Multicultural Student Union (MSU) at Thomas Jefferson High School to allow for all students to talk about their experiences, while creating avenues to participate in community outreach programs on the diversity within the district community.

While it was a student-created initiative, the club got its start with the help of teachers Elizabeth Floyd, Ola Jaber, Kelly Miller, Allison Romito and former sponsor Gregg Fouts, among others. Created as an organization meant to provide a comfortable space for conversations and connection, the MSU is a student-led club that focuses on education, discussion, community advocacy and outreach. With official meetings every Friday during Personalized Learning Time (PLT—sponsored by high school Spanish teacher Elizabeth Floyd (who also began TJHS's International Club) as well as many hours outside of the scheduled meeting, the club regularly holds meaningful discussions on topics from A to Z and their experiences, as well as creating events to bring awareness to the larger district community.

Samara Guzman, a rising junior and the MSU's president, typically takes on the responsibility of leading these discussions. Most Fridays, when Guzman and the nearly 20 other active members of the club meet in Floyd's room, Guzman will "put a question or topic on the board—like race and ethnicity, and what the difference is between two things." The group then holds a discussion where they share their "opinions, stories, everything" related to the topic at hand.

Not every meeting is discussion based, however. Sometimes, it's simply a Friday of much-needed relaxation and friendship. According to Joyce Xu, a rising senior member of the club who has participated in MSU since her sophomore year, the MSU also serves as a safe place to unwind. "It's a really nice place on a Friday if you're having a rough week."

"MSU Fridays are some of my favorite days," elaborated Floyd. "The night before, I will get excited to come to school because I

know I'm going to get to see a group of people who I really enjoy being with."

One of the MSU's biggest undertakings in this year has been an effort to connect with the other schools in the district, specifically the students at Jefferson Hills Intermediate School (grades 3-5). Last December, the Multicultural Student Union planned a visit to JHIS, coordinated by Floyd and Laura Gilchrist, a teacher at the intermediate school, where the group would showcase a series of culture presentations for the fourth grade students. It served as a highly educational and exciting experience, breaking down stereotypes and misconceptions about a variety of minority cultures and their effect on the Pittsburgh area, while educating students about cultural awareness early, before harmful opinions become harder to change as they grow. While the work took up many hours outside of club meetings, it was rewarding to see "it all come to fruition. It was really great to see all of the kids super excited," recalled Xu.



The MSU members dressed in cultural specific clothing and spoke with the JHIS students with "the hopes of giving them some representation of cultures around the world," Guzman said, something many minority students in the district never had growing up. Xu reflected on what this experience meant to her. "When I was their age... I didn't have a lot of exposure to my own culture, so I really wanted them to see that and to have role models."

For the JHIS students who attended, the representation meant everything and more. For many students, the visit was a unique experience to see their culture represented outside of a familial setting. "There was this girl from Puerto Rico, (the same country of Guzman's heritage) who was...so excited that I was there," Guzman recalled. "[She kept saying] 'There's someone here like me!' It really showed why we're doing this."

While the MSU is planning more events at JHIS encapsulating more grades, and often works in conjunction with the International Club to put together Culture Fest—a day of cultural food and performances at the high school—the club would like to do more high school outreach events in the future. Floyd said they hope to put on a Paint at Your Own Risk event to "get some more artwork around the school that may be culturally relevant" as well as doing more to acknowledge and represent different cultural groups during acknowledgement months, like Black History Month, throughout the year.

Aside from outreach, the MSU has served an integral role in providing a safe space for the students in the club, and has allowed



them to learn and grow as well. “I was in a place where I could talk about things I’ve never talked about... that I never knew how to communicate,” Guzman said.

But, the MSU doesn’t only provide a necessary space for these students to share in their unique experiences, it allows them to learn about the experiences and thoughts of others. “I personally have experience as a Chinese-American in the school,” Xu elaborated, “but when I interact with the other people, I can see what it’s like to be Latina or African-American in this school.”

For Floyd, she hopes the Multicultural Student Union is, above all, “a place for students to be. A place to feel comfortable. A place where they can feel love and support.” The MSU also hopes to be a learning space, allowing students to grow their knowledge of societal issues. “We all make mistakes,” Guzman said, “but if you truly want to better yourself... and spread your education on these topics,” then the MSU is the perfect place to begin.

More than anything, the Multicultural Student Union has flourished into a place “where no matter where you come from, no matter where you are, you can find a group,” as put by Guzman.



Over anything, the MSU aims to provide a place of community for everyone, no matter their background.

The MSU finished out the year with two more events, including another trip to JHIS for the school’s World Cultural Day, and the club’s annual picnic, where the members reflected on and celebrated everything they’ve accomplished this year, and revved up for the exciting future of the Multicultural Student Union.

For any student interested in learning more, MSU meets every Friday during PLT, and more information can be found by reaching out to Elizabeth Floyd or Samara Guzman.

Camryn Dailey is a 2023 graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School





PHMS LAUDS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

At the conclusion of each school year, Pleasant Hills Middle School takes time to recognize our 6th, 7th and 8th grade students for their academic accomplishments. In 6th and 7th grades, students may be recognized for yearly honor roll, department awards and perfect attendance. Sixth grade students can also earn the Reading Challenge Award. The 8th grade recognition program, in particular, is an important tradition at Pleasant Hills Middle School. It's our final chance to spend time with the 8th grade students and express our best wishes before they transition to the high school. Students were recognized for a variety of accomplishments, including: yearly honor roll, perfect attendance, the Presidential Education Award, Department awards, The Tommy Wilson Award and the American Legion Women's Auxiliary Award. Congratulations to all the 2023 student honorees!



8TH GRADE DANCE



Congratulations JHIS **D.A.R.E.** Graduates!

School Police Officer Marlin Foulds and Pleasant Hills Middle School Resource Officer Kristin Mitrising guided Jefferson Hills Intermediate School fifth-grade students through a successful completion of the D.A.R.E. program.

The Drug Abuse Resistance Education program (D.A.R.E.) aims to teach students to make informed decisions and to resist the pressures of using drugs. Students were introduced to the D.A.R.E. Decision Making Model and engaged in weekly lessons that helped them navigate through these challenging decisions.

As the culminating event for the 10-week program, the JHIS students were formally recognized during the D.A.R.E. graduation, which was held in the Thomas Jefferson HS theater. Speakers from throughout our community, including members of the Jefferson Hills and Pleasant Hills Police and Pennsylvania State Police, provided words of wisdom and encouragement to help reinforce the important messages the students learned.

Additionally, the essay award winners from each 5th grade homeroom were recognized and three students - Vivian Kiefer, Olivia Machi and Will Cortese - read their essays during the graduation ceremony.



TJ3D Club Visits **INVENTIONLAND**

The fifth grade TJ3D club, which focuses on 3D printing and business management, visited Inventionland for a tour of their unique and innovative facilities. Inventionland has built elaborate workspaces that include a pirate ship, treehouse, castle and more to help inventors think creatively as they work through their nine-step design method for product development and invention.

The JHIS Students learned about the company, products that have been made there and the creative process promoted through their program. Mr. Gebhardt's students also were challenged to a team boat building competition, followed by an insightful Q&A session. The TJ3D Club members were amazed at the facilities and left inspired and thinking of their own creative ideas for the future!



MCCLELLAN CELEBRATES DIVERSITY DAY

McClellan Elementary students held Diversity Day in late May. The second grade students shared their family origins, cultures and traditions with all the MCES K-2 students, teachers, staff and parents. It was a great opportunity for students and staff to learn more about their friends and schoolmates!



FIELD DAY



Gill Hall Celebrates PTA Reflections Honorees

Gill Hall Elementary School students were honored for their submissions in the annual PTA Reflections competition. Students were invited to create and submit original works of art to the PTA Reflections program in the areas of dance, film/video production, literature, music, photography and visual arts.

Special recognition to Rhett Corey, Valeria Greenblatt and Anna Snodgrass for earning awards in multiple categories! Congratulations to all the honorees for the thought and creativity that went into their works of art!



2D Visual Arts

- Nick Viola, 1st place
- Ava Magrini, 2nd place
- Lola Weaver, 3rd place
- London Legge, 4th place
- Evelyn Sommer, 4th and 5th place
- Mila Ferchak, 6th place
- Nora McCarrison, 7th place
- Anna Snodgrass, 7th place

3D Visual Arts

- Rhett Corey, 1st place
- Valeria Greenblatt, 2nd and 3rd place

Dance

- Braylee Neal, 1st place
- April Hunter, 2nd place

Literature

- Dahlia Kilbert Bustos, 1st place

Music

- Anna Snodgrass, 1st and 2nd place
- Valeria Greenblatt, 3rd place

Photography

- Colston Greenblatt, 1st place
- Rhett Corey, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th place
- Nathaniel Davis, 6th place
- Luke Cypher, 7th place

Video Production

- Luke Flood, 1st place
- Liam Molanick, 2nd place
- Sophia Neyman, 3rd place

FIELD DAY





TJHS Celebrates Academic Excellence at Senior Honors Ceremony

More than 150 Thomas Jefferson High School soon-to-be graduates were recognized for academic excellence and community service at TJ's annual Senior Honors Ceremony in late May. A total of 156 students were recognized in the TJ Theater. The 150 honors students represent 68 percent of Thomas Jefferson's 219 seniors who graduated on June 6.

TJ Principal Pete Murphy and Assistant Principals Adam Knarensborough and Erikka Kuhse presented several awards. The officers of TJ's National Honor Society chapter – Theo Doerfler, Kiley Dorrian, Cody Karcher and Kaylin Peters - also introduced several awards and presenters.

The highlight of the evening was the awarding of 27 different scholarships, totaling more than \$45,000, which were won by a combined total of 47 TJ seniors (listed in order presented):

A trio of Jaguars who are National Merit Scholarship commended students were honored - Jacob Christian, Blayne Downer and Gavin Sweeney.

Numerous additional awards were presented and Jaguars who are National Honor Society members, AP Scholars or own a cumulative 3.2 grade point average also were among the students recognized. A school record-tying 24 TJ students earned AP Scholars distinction this year.

A school record total of 282 TJ students took Advanced Placement (AP) exams, well above the 237 students who did so last year and a 33% increase since 2018. The Jaguar students took a TJ record total of 519 AP exams this Spring, again exceeding the total of 400 exams administered last year and a 43% increase since 2018. A record 162 TJ AP students earned 3+ scores on 2022 AP exams, with this year's results to be received during the summer.

Thomas Jefferson offers 20 AP courses, offering two new courses this past year – AP Environmental Science and AP U.S. Government and Politics.



"Anything Goes" Earns Three Honors; Two Scholarship Winners at Gene Kelly Awards

Thomas Jefferson High School's "Anything Goes: 2022 Revision" won three awards at the 32nd Annual Pittsburgh CLO Gene Kelly Awards for Excellence in High School Musical Theater. The event was held in late May at the Benedum Center.

Thomas Jefferson senior Ashley Caldwell was named Best Supporting Actress for her portrayal of Erma in Anything Goes. For the second consecutive year, TJ's musical theater students captured Best Vocal Ensemble and Best Crew/Technical Execution in its budget level, moving up to Budget Level IV this year.

Thomas Jefferson's *Anything Goes* was nominated in all eight Gene Kelly Awards ensemble categories, including being one of the two Best Musical nominees in Budget Level IV. The other categories were: Best Scenic Design, Best Vocal Ensemble, Best Dance Ensemble, Best Crew/Technical Execution, Best Costume Design, Best Lighting Design and Best Student Orchestra (one of six overall nominees)

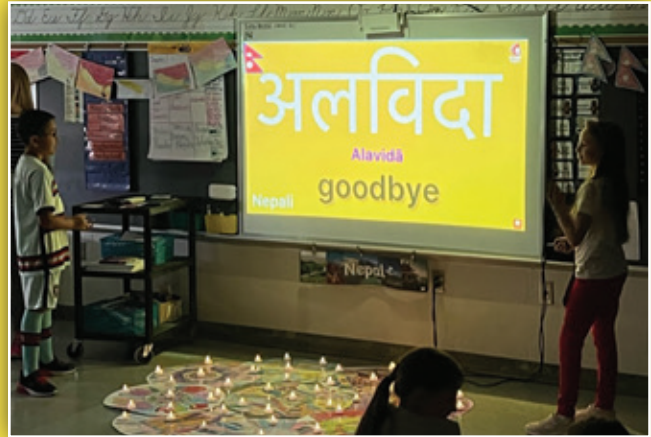
A pair of TJ seniors were awarded scholarships during the Gene Kelly Awards. Senior Hayden Krupp, a finalist for Best Supporting Actor, was the recipient of a \$2,000 scholarship from Robert Morris University, which is renewable each year with his involvement in RMU's Colonial Theater. Senior Rachael Parsons, who was a finalist in the Best Actress category, earned a \$4,000 Gene Kelly scholarship.

Anything Goes was directed by Jim Benedek, who teaches Technology Education at TJ. Julie Tipton, a TJ English and theater educator, was the assistant director and Michele Stoicovy, who teaches family and consumer science at TJ, coordinated costume design. Thomas Jefferson music educators Julie Lucci (vocal director) and Jim Mirabella (orchestra pit director) also were members of the musical production team.

In 2022, Thomas Jefferson's production of "*Legally Blonde: The Musical*," earned five Gene Kelly Awards, including its first Best Musical honor. *Legally Blonde* also won Best Scenic Design, Best Vocal Ensemble, Best Dance Ensemble and Best Crew/Technical Execution in its budget level last year. (Photo by Brian McClain)



Student-Athletes Continuing Careers: At least 13 Thomas Jefferson senior student-athletes are planning to continue their academic and athletic careers in college. The students were recognized during a ceremony in May. The students are, from left: Delaney Concannon (Indiana (Pa.), women's volleyball); Nathan Everley (West Liberty, football); Sabrina Everley (Slippery Rock, cheer); Jady Davis (Pitt-Greensburg, softball); Gabe Galioto (John Carroll, wrestling); Andy Graham (Duquesne, football); Nick Horgan (CCAC, bowling); Lillian Olson (Kent State, bowling); Ava Territ (West Virginia Wesleyan, women's volleyball); Julia Territ (West Virginia Wesleyan, women's volleyball); Lance Vickers (Garrett College (Md.), baseball) and Bella Vozar (American, women's soccer). Not pictured: Jordan Mayer (Wisconsin, football).



JHIS Students Host World Cultural Day

Students at Jefferson Hills Intermediate School planned World Cultural Day, with every classroom learning about the cultures of 15 nations: Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, India, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Russia, Turkey and Zambia. The students had a passport that was stamped after visiting each country.

Members of Thomas Jefferson's Multicultural Student Union also participated, introducing the JHIS students to the people, traditions, food and dance of the countries. It was a fun and educational day for our intermediate and high school students!



Nearly 150 WJHSD students from Gill Hall & McClellan Elementary Schools and Jefferson Hills Intermediate School trained for, and participated in, the **Kids of Steel** one mile race as part of Pittsburgh Marathon Weekend. A total of 65 Gill Hall students were in the race and the school received a Superlative recognition for the Most Improved participation among the 200-plus teams that competed. Congrats to all the runners and the staff and family members who helped the students prepare!



PMEA All-State Honoree: Congratulations to senior Violet Spang, who was selected to participate in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association All-State Festival! Violet earned the fifth chair of the second violin section and will continue her musical career at Duquesne University.



PHMS Softball Team Excels During Pilot Season

Pleasant Hills Middle School took the first step toward establishing a PIAA and District sanctioned softball team with a highly successful pilot season this spring. Comprised of seventh and eighth grade students, the Jaguars posted a superlative 13-1 record, defeating traditional Thomas Jefferson and PHMS opponents like Baldwin-Whitehall, Bethel Park, Mt. Lebanon, Peters Township, Trinity, Upper St. Clair and West Mifflin, with the lone loss coming to South Park, 1-0.

The Jaguars played their home games at the PHMS softball field and the TJ softball field. A decision on whether the team will join PHMS' other sports offerings will be made during the next several months.



Outfit of the Day Delivers Winning Pitch: Congratulations to the winners of Thomas Jefferson's annual INCubator Final Pitch Event - OOTD (Outfit of the Day)! Guided by TJ Business teacher Lisa Kostella, it was a fantastic year for all of TJ's INCubator teams - Go Plus+, Bus Trace, and Outfit of the Day.



TJ Best Buddies Honored: Congratulations to Thomas Jefferson's Best Buddies club, selected Western Pennsylvania's Chapter of the Year among 65 school chapters! The club's advisors are Emily Leininger and Mike Rose. Kudos to the students and staff for this outstanding recognition of their efforts throughout the year!



Best in Allegheny County: Thomas Jefferson's team captured the Allegheny County Envirothon! The winning students were Lukeman El-Hajj, Hunter Houk, Connor McCann, Kamryn Mull and Reagan Sanderson and the advisors were Dan Giger and Brian McClain. The TJ students received scholarships and participated in the PA Envirothon in late May.



2023-2024

West Jefferson Hills School District Academic Calendar

182 Student Days/190 Teacher Days



August 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
		S-4		T-7		

September 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
		S-20		T-20.5 (Open House)		

October 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				
		S-21		T-22		

November 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		
		S-18		T-19 (PT Conf)		

December 2023						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31		S-16		T-16		

January 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
		S-21		T-21		

February 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		
		S-20		T-20		

March 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31		S-18		T-19		

April 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				
		S-21		T-21		

May 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
		S-21		T-22		

June 2024						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30		S-2		T-2.5		

End of Nine Week Grading Periods						
1 st Nine Weeks: October 31, 2023						
2 nd Nine Weeks: January 18, 2024						
3 rd Nine Weeks: March 25, 2024						
4 th Nine Weeks: June 4, 2024						

Important Dates to Remember:

First Day for Teachers:	August 23, 2023
First Day for Students:	August 28, 2023
Labor Day (No School):	September 4, 2023
Parent/Teacher Conference:	November 21, 2023 (Early Dismissal)
Fall Break (No School):	Nov. 22, 2023- Nov. 27, 2023
Holiday Break (No School):	Dec. 23, 2023- Jan. 1, 2024
MLK Day (No School):	January 15, 2024
President's Day (No School):	February 19, 2024
Spring Break (No School):	March 28, 2024- April 1, 2024
Memorial Day (No School):	May 27, 2024
Last Day for Students:	June 4, 2024
Last Day for Teachers:	June 5, 2024

Kennywood Day:
June 13, 2024

Testing Dates 2023-2024

* Keystone Examinations: (Algebra I, Biology, Literature)

Winter Wave 2: Jan. 3-17
Spring Wave: May 13-24

* PSSA ELA and Math: (Grade 3-8)

ELA: April. 22-26, 2024
Math: April 29 – May 3, 2024

* PSSA Science: (Grade 4 and 8)

April 29 – May 3, 2024

* Make-Ups Grades 3-8

April 29 – May 3, 2024
May 6 – 10, 2024

* Preliminary Testing Window

Teacher In-Service Days (No Students)

August 23, August 24, October 9,
March 11, May 24

Teacher Clerical Days (No Students)

August 25, June 5 (1/2 day)

Act 80 Two Hour Delay Days

September 18, 2023
November 1, 2023
January 26, 2024
February 12, 2024
April 15, 2024