Orleans/Niagara BOCES has announced its recipients of the 2012-2013 Employees of the Year. Employees vote for their peers in each of the categories and District Superintendent Dr. Clark Godshall surprised the winners at their job sites at the beginning of the school year with congratulations. This year’s winners are:

In the Administrator category the winner was Mickey Edwards, Coordinator of Instruction and Curriculum. He has been with BOCES for five years and says he enjoys serving BOCES and its component districts in whatever capacity they need. “I am very honored and humbled by this award. We have a number of great employees in BOCES and it has been my privilege to work and learn alongside them.”

In the Clerical category Sue Rohring, a fifteen year veteran of BOCES was honored by her peers. “I love helping people and being support staff for a school. It is especially rewarding because ultimately what you do helps children get an education and realize their potential. This is such a honor to be recognized this way and I feel very appreciated.”

In the Custodian category Chris Gerhard was pleasantly surprised by his recognition. “It’s nice to hear that people do really notice what I do and that’s a great feeling. My favorite part of my job is the wonderful people that I get to work with and for.” Chris has been with the organization for seven years.

Staff Specialist Kathy Donner has been with BOCES for 19 years. “My position as a Special Education School Improvement Specialist gives me ongoing learning opportunities. I enjoy the challenge of working with administrators and teachers in schools that are striving to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. I work with terrific people in our office who are very supportive and I am always learning from them. I was very surprised and honored to get this award. It was very exciting.”

(Story Continued on Page 2)
EMPLOYEES, Continued

Special education teacher Susie Zafrano was named the Teacher of the Year marking her 14th anniversary at BOCES. “I started my career subbing here and then taught 4th-6th graders with emotional disabilities for 10 years and now I work with the 14-21 year old Life Skills students. My favorite part of my job is working with the students. I enjoy the positive relationships I have built with them and the daily interactions we have. It is a wonderful feeling when you see that you can make a difference and influence positive changes. The staff I work with is also incredible and I would not be able to do my job without them. I was in shock when Dr. Godshall told me I had won.”

Karen Green has been a teacher aide at BOCES since 2002. “I have been at a few different places and I have enjoyed them all. I have met so many wonderful people along the way and I have made lifelong friends. BOCES has a lot of great people working for them. The best part of the job for me is the kids; the little ones are the best because they are so happy to be in school. It feels great to have been picked for this award. I would like to thank everyone who voted for me.”

Substitute of the Year Shirley Bentley had worked at BOCES 38 years as a special education teacher aide. After retiring in 2011, she found that she missed the students a lot. “I love the kids and that is why I keep coming back here to sub.” She adds, “How many jobs can you go to where you look forward to going to them? The staff at BOCES is wonderful and it was a great honor to be recognized by them with this award”.

PROVENZANO GETS SILVER AT SKILLSUSA

Electricity/Electronics student Ben Provenzano, a recent graduate from Lockport, has taken second place in the Electronics Technology Competition at the National SkillsUSA contest held in Kansas City, Missouri.

His Orleans Career and Technical Education teacher Bill Leggett says he is very proud of his student’s achievement. “Ben came into this competition with a huge target on his back. He took first place last year and was looking to repeat it. Even though he was unable to add another gold medal to his collection, it is awesome that he came in second with such heavy competition.

Photo Caption: Electricity/Electronics teacher Bill Leggett with Ben Provenzano.
Culinary Arts Students Take Advantage of Harvest

The Culinary Arts students at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center have been enjoying the fresh produce and fruit that have been donated by teachers at the center. The students have been taking the zucchini, peppers, pears and apples and turning them into assorted baked goods and dishes and serving them in the student-run cafeteria. They have taken their creative efforts and turning them into a nice profit of over $500 to use toward the class. “We have made some amazing pies and other items,” says teacher Mr. Ihle. “Not only did the students enjoy making them, the staff has enjoyed eating them. A big thank you to all who donated.”

(LtoR) Brad Wunderlich (Niagara Wheatfield) and Marc Tartaglia (Niagara Falls)

Lockport LC Beautifies Park

Lockport Learning Center students recently spent a beautiful autumn day at Krull Park in Newfane. Since they love the park so much they wanted to make it more enjoyable for everyone so they utilized their time to clean up garbage and debris. “The students had a great time being out in the nice weather and helping out the community,” says teacher Kristina Miles. Ms. Miles and Mrs. Margaret Hagan’s classes ended the day having a picnic as a reward for all their hard work.

ROY HART CAREER FAIR

Several Orleans and Niagara CTE teachers, along with aspiring teachers from Buffalo State College recently spent an evening at the Royalton Hartland Middle School where students and their parents were encouraged to start exploring careers and participate in some hands-on activities related to those fields.

“The new Common Core Standards incorporate preparing students for college and career readiness and BOCES is something that students and their parents should think about to help them achieve their goals,” says Niagara CTE Center Principal Anedda Trautman, who helped to organize the event. “We are very thankful to Roy Hart for being so gracious with allowing us this time to talk with their students and getting them to think about their future”.

NT STUDENTS INSPIRED BY UNIQUE DRUM LESSON

Jim Donovan has tasted success as a percussionist in the musical group Rusted Root, a unique fusion of acoustic, rock, world and other styles of music, with a strong percussion section. The group sold more than three million albums worldwide. But now he is tasting success in a different way with working with children. After stepping away from the limelight he became a professor at St. Francis University in Pennsylvania. “I love how people react to music. When I was on stage I felt like I wanted to be closer to the audience. So this was my way of figuring out how to bring what I loved about music into any kind of group so we could do it together.”

He helped to develop a program called Percussion Intervention Training that empowers children, especially those with disabilities, by learning to engage them through rhythm and sound. Thanks to the generosity of the North Tonawanda Learning Center’s parent group, Mr. Donovan was able to visit and work with our students at the North Tonawanda Learning Center and the North Tonawanda High School.

Mr. Donovan brought along several percussion instruments for the students to play and ran them through several exercises. He encouraged the students to tap into their own creative instincts and see where the music took them. “We see that music and rhythm make a big difference and studies show it helps children pay attention to task,” says Donovan. “Being here today working with the students has been incredibly rewarding and satisfying.” Mark Kurtz, a teacher at the North Tonawanda High School says the students had a great time and found the session very rewarding. “A big thank you goes out to our social worker Rich Wolf, who brought Mr. Donovan to our program. I think it was very beneficial.”
Health Care and Flexible Spending Account Info

HEALTH COVERAGE INFORMATION

This reminder applies to those of you who carry, or are eligible for enrollment in, health coverage through the Orleans/Niagara BOCES. It is important to promptly report to the Labor Relations office any change in information that may affect the health insurance enrollment of family members. Examples may include adding a spouse or child due to marriage, birth or adoption, terminating a spouse due to divorce, terminating a child or stepchild due to reaching age 26. Such information should be reported as soon as possible and no later than 30 days after the occurrence. If the Labor Relations office is not timely notified of such changes, then claim(s) denials or processing delays may result.

Employees who wish to either enroll in health coverage or change their current enrollment from one health plan to another generally must do so effective July 1st. The completed application/enrollment form must be received in the Labor Relations office during the month of June. To have a blank application/enrollment form sent to you or if you have any questions relative to this topic, then please contact Lori Bernabei at (800) 836-7510, extension 2224.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA) INFORMATION

By participating in the flexible spending plan, an eligible employee may have deducted from his or her salary a specified amount of tax-free dollars to pay for eligible medical care or dependent care expenses. The flexible spending account plan year runs from September 1st through August 31st. In order to enroll for a plan year beginning September 1st, an eligible employee should send a completed enrollment form to the Labor Relations office generally during the month of June to participate in the plan year beginning the following September 1st. The absolute deadline for the completed enrollment form to be received in the Labor Relations office is August 31st, prior to the start of the new plan year. To ascertain whether you are eligible for participation, to receive additional information, or to have an enrollment form sent to you, please contact Nicole Bensley at the Orleans Career and Technical Center at (800) 836-7510, extension 2203. Enrollment forms may also be obtained at the Benefit Resource web site. An enrollment form does not need to be completed to receive the BOCES contribution to the health reimbursement account.

Benefit Resource link: www.benefitresource.com

You may log on to the Benefit Resource web site using the company code of onboces, your username (four zeros followed by your five digit employee number (employee number is on your pay stub and also on your Wincap Web paycheck self service) and password (zip code). You will be prompted to change your password after your initial sign in. Follow the online instructions to change the password.

The web site will enable you to:

- Review your account summary (includes BOCES contribution (if applicable) and employee contributions (if applicable)
- Download forms (claim form, enrollment/change form, medical expense/dependent care worksheets, etc.)
- Link to eligible health care expenses
- Link to plan documents (plan highlights and summary plan description)
- Submit claims online

Summer Tea Party

The BOCES summer school program at the Orleans Learning Center had a traditional tea party for students and staff to say goodbye. Students enjoyed preparing for the party by making decorations and hats for all the attendees. Staff served students sandwiches, salads, desserts and of course various teas.

Cosmetology Program Sets Grads on Career Path

Almost every student who walks into a Cosmetology classroom at the career and technical education centers will tell you that they knew from the time they were small that they wanted to be in the beauty industry. Many will point to family members as their inspiration or tell you about their obsession with cutting their dolls’ hair. Thanks to the dedication and experience of their teachers they now find themselves graduated and with jobs in salons. Their dreams have been realized.

“I had no idea what BOCES was before I took the tour in 10th grade,” says Allison Herian, a Barker graduate. “I walked into class my first day and saw all these other girls who wanted to be what I wanted and I thought this is awesome!” Lockport grad Adrienne Folby says she was always interested in being a stylist and it was her mother who encouraged her to check out BOCES. “I shadowed the class my sophomore year and I loved it. I knew that is where I was supposed to be.” Aubrey Bailey says going to BOCES was the perfect way to spend part of her day when she was at Newfane High School. “I love the opportunity to be able to spend half my day doing something I love to do. It prepared me for everything I needed in the real world to be in this career and my teacher Ms. Lindke was always there for us. I learned a lot from her.”

The program is structured with students learning theory and technique their first year and then their senior year operating a clinic two days a week where clients from the community can come in and for a small cost of supplies get treated as if they are in a fully operational salon. Roy Hart grad Courtney House says she found the clinic invaluable. “It was the best experience. I learned so much and it has really helped me with my people skills and how to handle clients.”

Those skills have really paid off as many of Anne Carnahan’s and Sue Lindke’s students are now proudly working in the community as beauty professionals.

Allison Herian is starting her career at Shear Madness in Lockport. “I am working reception, cleaning, shampooing and rinsing out perms. I also work at a couple of other places as well. It is a great way to get started.” Owner Chris Zigler says she hired Allison because she showed real ambition. “She has been trained really well, but she doesn’t know everything yet and that is why she is assisting right now. She is very talented and a hard worker, so I am sure she will be successful.”

Adrienne Folby is working at Ultimate Cuts in Lockport. “It’s a lot of fun. I am meeting all sorts of nice people and I follow the stylists around to see how they do things. They have been great about giving me advice and letting me work as an assistant until I get more clients.”

Courtney House has been working at Oxygen Salon for a year and a half. “For the time being I am just doing hair and pedicures, but I have ambitions of owning my own salon, so I am going to NCCC to start a business degree.

Aubrey Bailey is currently working for her stepmother at Bailiage in Williamsville. “I am doing a lot of assisting at the moment shampooing and doing manicures and pedicures. I want to get some more training before I start doing hair here.”

Destiny Abernathy just started working at Bella A’more in Williamsville. “I did my shadowing here and was so happy when they offered me a job. It is a great place to work and they are very flexible since I am going to GCC to study business. BOCES has opened up so many possibilities for me.”

Ms. Lindke says she and Mrs. Carnahan could not be prouder of their students and their achievements. “We work very hard to make sure our students have all the skills they need to start their career. It is very rewarding to see that the training we have provided helps students to achieve their goals of getting jobs and that it is respected enough by local salons that they want to hire them. As an educator you really can’t ask for more than that.”
BUILDING TRADES STUDENTS ATTEND CAREER DAY

The Niagara Career and Technical Education Center’s Building Trades students were recently invited to attend a Construction Career Day hosted by Erie Community College. The event was held at the Operating Engineers Facility in Lakeview, New York. “It was a great experience for my students,” says teacher Anthony Molinaro. “In attendance were building trades personnel such as boilermakers, bricklayers, carpenters, cement masons, electricians, elevator constructors, heat and frost insulators, ironworkers, laborers, operating engineers, painters and glaziers, plasterers, plumbers and steamfitters, roofers, sheet metal workers and teamsters. It was very encouraging for my students to be able to talk to them individually so that they could get a better perspective outside the classroom as to what the life of a skilled trades person really means.”

PHOTO CAPTION: Mitchell Diesi (North Tonawanda), Marlin Wilson (Niagara Wheatfield), Tyler Reisig (Niagara Wheatfield), Kyle Bennett (North Tonawanda), Louis Krall (North Tonawanda), Michael Nest (Niagara Falls), Michael Aronne (Niagara Falls), Michael Rzucidlo (Niagara Falls), Teacher Anthony Molinaro, Justin Ingram (Starpoint), Brad Robinson (Niagara Falls), Max Mayer (Starpoint) and Christopher Lorenz (Niagara Falls).

Six Inducted in NTHS

Six students at the NCTEC were recognized for gaining entry into the National Technical Honor Society at a recent ceremony. “We are very proud of our students. They have really excelled,” says teacher Donna Quinn. “This honor is only given to students who have a 3.0 grade point average and have completed a set of credit hours. They must also have excellent attendance and an excellent disciplinary record. We were pleased that their parents and their school administrators could be here to celebrate this special day with them.”

Go Bills!

The North Tonawanda Learning Center had a special guest at their Buffalo Bills pep rally recently. Buffalo Jills Alyssa A. stopped by the center to partake in their tailgate party of pizza, cookies and juice boxes and to pose with students who excitedly showed off their Bills attire and the pompoms, megaphones and banners they made to celebrate their favorite team. “I am so appreciative of the greeting I got from the students and staff. It is great what they do here at the center,” she said. “I would love to work as a counselor in a school like this and have a positive impact on children’s lives.”

Speech therapist Kathy Zarzeczny says Alyssa’s visit was all the students could talk about. “We are so grateful she took the time out of her schedule to be here. It meant a lot to the students.”

A Big Welcome To...

Stephen Blask
Stephen is the Certified Work Based Coordinator. He is replacing the retired Roger Amati, working with the Career and Technical Ed staff and students on recruitment and job placement. “I will be coordinating the phases in our two CTE centers, acting as liaison with our district principals and helping our students with capstoning and shadowing opportunities.”

Stephen has a Masters in CTE from Buffalo State College and is a former BOCES student himself. “I went to the Erie 1 Harkness Center for Machine Tool Operation. After graduating from high school I worked at Wilson Greatbatch and then started attending ECC and Buffalo State College to get my degree in technology education.”

His was most recently at North Tonawanda for five years where he was a technology teacher. “I am really happy to be here at BOCES. People have been very helpful and it definitely seems to have a happy family atmosphere. My number one goal will be keeping everyone employed.”

Karen Kwandrans
Karen is the Health Occupations Coordinator. She is replacing the retired Janet Cook and is in charge of Adult LPN, CNA and Phlebotomy programs. She is also lending support to the Health Occupations Technician, Allied Health and EMS programs and the adult evening classes.

Before coming to us, she worked at D’Youville College as Director of the Nursing Workforce Diversity Program and the College Learning Center. She is working at Buffalo State College as well in the Career and Technical Education Department.

“My main goal at BOCES is to determine the educational needs of the community and to grow the Adult and Continuing Ed programs to meet those needs.”

“So far I like working here. It is a bit of a change for me with being in higher education for 15 years. I am lucky to have a hardworking, dedicated staff. They have helped with my transition.”

Sheldon Soman
Sheldon is the Senior Network Services Manager and is responsible for managing the computer networks at our BOCES. “We hope to be installing a district-wide Aruba wireless network that will cover all four district buildings. In addition we are working on installing servers that will allow for user machines to be updated from a central location without having to visit each computer. This will include Windows updates as well as related programs such as Adobe, Flash, Java and others to ensure that all user machines are kept up to date.”

Before joining us Sheldon was the Network Administrator for the Niagara Wheatfield Central School District from 1999 to 2013.

“This is a great place to work. Everyone has been very welcoming.”