Raymond Delucci Elected New York State SkillsUSA Secretary

When Niagara Wheatfield junior Raymond Delucci decided to come to the Culinary Arts program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center he got a lot more than he bargained for. “I always had a love of cooking and my mother and I would cook together all the time. She suggested that I think about going to Orleans/Niagara BOCES to study culinary arts. I wasn’t sure, but it was the best choice I could have made.” Not only did he thrive in his teachers’ classrooms of Mr. Bob Ihle and Miss Lisa Cook he started on a path that would lead him to being the first New York State SkillsUSA officer from the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center in its history.

SkillsUSA is an organization for high school and college students whose focus is to empower its members to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible citizens. When Mr. Ihle approached Ray about going for an officer position in the organization, it was obvious he saw those traits in his student. “Ray is a hard worker that has a passion for doing his best and helping others. He has natural leadership ability and he is a very consciousness and thoughtful. I knew he was a perfect candidate.” “I like being in a leadership position,” says Ray. “I am an Eagle Scout and I have always had an interest in student government. When I went to the Fall Leadership Conference in Syracuse I talked to the current officers and it definitely seemed like something I would be good at.”

Ray started his campaign as Regional Area 1 President. When he did not receive the nomination he did not let that deter him from trying for Secretary at the New York State level. “It was a tough road, but I was lucky to have my friends help me campaign and of course the support of Mr. Ihle and the SkillsUSA advisors at my center. The staff here is amazing. They really care about us and want us to be the best that we can be.” After several grueling days of campaigning at the State Skills USA competition, giving speeches and being interviewed Ray was elected the winner by his peers. “I remember just waiting for the announcements and saying a little prayer that if this was God’s will I would win. I was so relieved. It was the hardest thing I have ever done.”

He is looking forward to going to the National SkillsUSA Competition in Kansas City, Missouri where he will be meeting with all the state officers from across the United States. He is also keeping his eye on the prize for his education. “One of the great things about going to BOCES is that is lets you see what you are good at and how to succeed. I know now that after graduation I will be going on to college and studying to be a chef. My hope is to be a master chef and own my own restaurant. I feel like I have all the tools to be successful thanks to my experiences here at BOCES and the support of my family and friends.”

Record Number Competing at National SkillsUSA Competition

We are sending twenty-one students and lots of luck to Kansas City, Missouri for the National SkillsUSA competition. We couldn’t be prouder of:

**NCTEC Students**

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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Program</th>
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<tr>
<td>Edward Briggs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raymond Delucci</td>
<td>Niagara Wheatfield</td>
<td>Culinary Arts</td>
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<td>Jacob Farmer</td>
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<td>Daniel Greaser</td>
<td>Niagara Wheatfield</td>
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<td>Sarah Kushner</td>
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<td>Cody Wick</td>
<td>Starpoint</td>
<td>Diesel/Ag/Diesel/Heavy Equipment</td>
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<td>Wyatt Wolf</td>
<td>Lewiston Porter</td>
<td>Project Based Engineering</td>
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**OCTEC Students**

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<th>Student</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paige Childress</td>
<td>Lockport</td>
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<td>Calee Coleman</td>
<td>Royalton Hartland</td>
<td>Allied Health</td>
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<td>Alissa Connolly</td>
<td>Royalton Hartland</td>
<td>Early Childhood Ed</td>
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<td>Andrew Cutlip</td>
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<td>Allied Health</td>
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<td>Seth Heath</td>
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<td>Electricity/Electronics</td>
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<td>Ashleigh Miller</td>
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<td>Allied Health</td>
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<td>Candace Orton</td>
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<td>Roy Phipps</td>
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<td>Kyle Shanahan</td>
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<td>Samantha Wendling</td>
<td>Medina</td>
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Good luck everyone!!
EMS Students Fund-Raise for Classmate Who Is in the Fight of His Life

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) students at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center are studying to help others; they never suspected that they would be helping one of their classmates. Seventeen year old Nathan Brundage, from Niagara Wheatfield, was playing dodge ball and received a head injury. When the doctors did a scan on him they had bad news; he had stage four brain cancer. His classmates were devastated to hear the news.

After a successful eight hour surgery, the students had been sending cards and well wishes to their friend, but wanted to do more. They decided they would raise money to help with Nate's recovery. He still needs to receive chemotherapy and radiation from Roswell Park Cancer Institute and the medical bills are adding up for his family. The students sold snacks in the lobby of the school and even passed a fireman's boot around to symbolize Nate's volunteer work with the Lewiston Fire House Number Two. They collected $1,228.45 from the students and staff at the center.

Nate and his mother came to the center to thank his classmates. Nate was obviously touched by the outpouring of support and received lots of hugs from his class. “This is amazing and crazy. I wasn’t expecting this at all,” he said. His mother told the students, “I try not to get too emotional, but this is the class that he has missed the most. We saved every card that you sent Nate in the hospital. We really appreciate everything you have done for us. I can’t tell you how much it helps.”

OCTEC BOCES Students Raise Money for Relay for Life

Ashleigh Erskine, a senior, has been actively involved in the Relay for Life of Lockport for eight years. The American Cancer Society Relay for Life movement raises money to end the disease that threatens the lives of so many people we care about. Ashleigh decided to reach out to her fellow students at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center to see if they would be willing to donate for her cause. She brought in Relay for Life suns and moons that sell for $1.00 and along with her friend J.C. Christian and other SkillsUSA members sold them around the building to meet her goal of $500. School counselor Kara Kirk added the extra incentive that the program that donated the most money would win a pizza. “Honestly I don’t think the pizza was that motivating of a factor,” says Mrs. Kirk. “We have a very caring community of students here and with J.C. leading the charge in sales the response was phenomenal.”

Not only did Ashleigh meet her goal of $500, she exceeded it by $250. “I was so happy,” she says. “When I went to my Relay for Life meeting I almost started crying. I was just so excited that I raised that much for this cause.” J.C., who they jokingly called the “cancer bully” because of his hard sell style, says he was glad to contribute. “I wanted to do this for Ashleigh and I have had people in my life who were affected by cancer so this is something I could do to help.”

After all the suns and moons were tallied from the windows of the main office at the career and technical education center, the Security and Law Enforcement program won the pizza for donating the most money. Ashleigh says she and her team are gearing up for the June 14th event and plan on walking from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. for the event. “Most of my team is schoolmates from BOCES, so we are all excited about raising more money to fight cancer.”
**Orleans/Niagara BOCES Teachers Awarded Corporate Challenge Scholarships**

Thanks to a large turnout by Orleans/Niagara BOCES staff members at last year’s JP Morgan Corporate Challenge, $1,500 was awarded to the school in scholarship money. The corporate challenge planning team decided to make the donation available to their teachers and asked them to submit requests along with what they planned on spending the scholarship on. “We received over $4,400 in teacher requests,” says planning team member Sue Rohring. “We had a hard time picking four teachers to receive the money to help improve their teaching environment.”

Recipients were Newfane Learning Center teacher Becki Tharp, Niagara Academy teacher Jennifer Jourdain, Lockport Learning Center Kristina Miles and Royalton Hartland Learning Center teacher David Howe. All the teachers were very excited about being able to purchase new technology for their classrooms. Mrs. Tharp will be buying an iPad for her students to use. “It will be great and we can use it to collaborate with other classes and take it mobile.” Ms. Jourdain will be purchasing interactive white board lessons. “They are very helpful in our 8th grade math curriculum. It will cover all the common core standards featuring manipulatives, modeling and math vocabulary. It is very exciting.” Mr. Howe will be using the scholarship for a white board partition so that he can break his class down into smaller groups. Mrs. Miles will also be purchasing technology for her classroom. “I will be getting ActivExpressions, which are hand-held units that work along with Promethean Boards, and will allow me to create more meaningful lessons which promote whole group participation while being able to constantly assess individual progress.”

The team is hoping for another great year of participants so they can receive more money to hand out next school year.

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**LifeSkills Students Celebrate End of Year Prom**

For the LifeSkills students at Orleans/Niagara BOCES, it was a tropical paradise. This year's prom theme saw the over 70 students from Orleans and Niagara Counties wearing leis and enjoying the exotic decorations made by teacher aide Jeff LaFountain and his helpers at the Orleans Learning Center. Students and staff danced as the DJ played songs and recognized the graduating class at Charlotte Cross School in Lockport. Anthony Salvo and Emily Curtis were named the King and Queen and students dined on food prepared by the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center's Culinary Arts program run by Bob Ihle.

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**Auto Body Class Project Give Wilson Golf Cart a Makeover**

Thanks to Paul Magyar's Auto Body class at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center the Wilson Central School District football team will have a new way to show team spirit. A football player, who is in Mr. Magyar’s class, asked if they could do some work on the school’s golf cart that they use for moving equipment and injured players. The class matched up paint colors to the school's colors orange and white. They disassembled the cart and painted each of the pieces over the course of a month and a half and now are ready to return it to the school. “It was a nice project for our students and we are always glad to help out one of our component districts,” said Mr. Magyar.
Orleans/Niagara BOCES Students Feel the Power

Students at Lockport Learning Center got a personalized tour at the Niagara Falls Power Authority. The students of Mike Brauer and Kristina Miles learned about how the power of Niagara Falls is used to turn on and run various things in the house and classroom. Students were able to participate in various hands-on activities to stimulate how much power would be needed to run a lamp and a microwave. They also problem solved ways to create an electric flow to turn on a light bulb. “The most fascinating part of our trip was learning about the Van de Graaff generator,” says Ms. Miles. “Students were able to create static electricity by touching the generator and moving items in their hands like Styrofoam. It was quite the ‘hair-raising’ experience!”

Newfane Learning Center Gets Moving

Judi Gewand’s Orleans/Niagara BOCES class at the Newfane Learning Center starts their daily routine with dancing. “Some of my students struggle with health issues like obesity and diabetes along with their other challenges. We have a couple of students in class who are well over a normal BMI,” says Mrs. Gewand. “We are obviously aware of Mrs. Obama’s campaign ‘Let’s Move’ and we thought why not incorporate that into our daily routine here in school.”

There are several songs that the students pick from and every morning after the pledge to the flag the students and staff hit the floor and dance along to the music for at least a half hour. “Our particular favorite is ‘Happy’ by Pharrell Williams and the smiles on our students’ faces as they move and interact with each other and the teaching staff starts all of our day off on a bright note. We have even had some of the parents and other classes at our school come and join us. They love being part of our kids’ energy.”

Mrs. Gewand says several students have lost weight and no one has gained any which is great news. “We were very inspired by Mrs. Obama’s commitment to making our children healthier and it has inspired all of us to be more active.”

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) denial(s) 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.

Fashion Design Students’ Looks Hit the Runway

The Fashion Design students at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center rocked the runway with some head-turning looks. The senior and junior classes, with help from their models, showed off the clothes they have been working on all school year. The house was packed at the center with a New York City theme as several local judges watched the aspiring designers’ lines come down the walkway.

Teacher Dr. Donna Bryant said she could not be happier how the show turned out. “I am just so impressed with my students and all the hard work they put into this event. The audience seems to be enjoying the show and I am very proud of all of them.”

The clothes were auctioned off after the show and the money raised will go to buy the students sweatshirts with the name of their program on them.

Niagara Academy Students Help Out Lockport Cares

Students at the Niagara Academy have been studying global issues with teacher Diana Fallon. “We have been talking about the issue of homelessness and the students wanted to do something to help. So we got in touch with Lockport Cares to see what they needed.”

The organization runs a shelter and told the class they were in need of personal items for the people who stay there. The students came back with boxes of items that could be donated. Jahon said that he was glad to help others. “It was nice to help those in need and I had a lot of this stuff around the house, so I brought it in.” Ms. Fallon said she is proud of all the students who participated. “We have very generous students here and they like helping others.”
Niagara CTE Conservation Program Takes First at Environthon

Students from the Conservation Program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center were the first place Niagara County winners at the 2014 Niagara-Orleans Regional Environthon. They beat out thirteen other teams at the competition held at Bond Lake in Lewiston. The event is celebrating its 25th year and tests high school students’ knowledge in five areas: soil, aquatics, forestry, wildlife and current environmental issues. Senator George Maziarz, Senator Chris Collins, Assemblyman Stephen Hawley, Assemblywoman Jane Collins, M&T Bank, Albion Sports and Graphics, Sanborn Lions Club, Orleans Poverty Hill Farm and Newroyal Orchards sponsored the Niagara Orleans Counties Soil and Water Conservation Districts competition.

Paul Dewey, who teaches the Conservation program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center, says his students have been preparing for this all school year. “We had five teams competing. Not only did they have to prepare a ten minute presentation on sustainable agriculture with an emphasis on local farms, they had to take exams administered by professionals in the soil, aquatics, forestry and wildlife fields. It is a combination of classroom study, research and hands-on field experience. I am very proud of all my teams.”

The winning team consisting of Billy Caption, Jason Gerety, Austin Heschke, Cory House, and Dan Rohring also competed at the New York State competition May 21-22 at SUNY Morrisville.

Alongside the Orleans/Niagara BOCES teams, students from Royalton Hartland, Lyndonville and Kendall High Schools competed in the event. The Lyndonville team, advised by Kathy Wronski, took first place in the Orleans County division.

Building Trades Class Make Their Mark at Coast Guard Station

The Building Trades students at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center have made their mark at the Coast Guard station in Youngstown. Anthony Molinaro’s class was asked to refinish two signs, that were also made by a Building Trades program, when they started showing signs of age.

The Coast Guard Officer in Charge Adam Pedzich said he was very impressed with the craftsmanship and was grateful to the students for refurbishing the sign. “The students’ goal was to keep the original signs intact to preserve the historic value of each original piece,” said teacher Anthony Molinaro. “Each student took pride in serving those who serve us on the waterways of Lake Ontario.”
Culinary Students Offer Gluten Free Options at Taste of Culinary

Culinary Arts students in Lisa Cook’s program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center are showing off their talents at the Taste of Culinary at the ECC City Campus on April 6th. The showcase had over 30 restaurants, culinary schools and purveyors participating. Ms. Cook says her students have been working very hard perfecting their decadent treats. “There is a big emphasis on gluten free eating right now, so we decided to come up with some desserts that would fit into someone living that lifestyle. Our theme is ‘For the Love of Chocolate’ and we are offering four different chocolate offerings: chocolate mousse cups, orange chocolate truffles, pecan turtles and a chocolate flourless cake.”

Ms. Cook says she steered her team of Dominic Bevilacqua, Sarah Siegman and Genevieve Vater towards this American Culinary Federation event not only because it is a fund-raiser for such a worthy cause, but when she was a student it was something she will always remember. “When I was a student at Niagara County Community College (NCCC) our mentor had us participate and our table won best dessert. It was an awesome experience for me and something I will always remember. All these students will be attending NCCC this fall, which is affiliated with the American Culinary Federation, so this is a good way for them to see what will be expected from them when they get there. I am very excited for them and very proud of their efforts.”

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 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 contribution (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
Security and Law Enforcement Students Visit Niagara Falls Courts

The senior classes in the Orleans/Niagara BOCES’ Security and Law Enforcement program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center recently made a field trip to the courts in Niagara Falls. In the Niagara Falls City Court the students visited the courtroom of the Honorable Diane Vitello. Students observed all aspects of a typical day in City Court from arraignments, pretrials, various dispositions and sentencings. Students were fortunate enough to have a private meeting with Judge Vitello where she explained all aspects of what the students saw and what they might encounter the rest of the court docket. Teacher Bill Taczak said he had a hard time getting students to leave the courtroom. “Many students did not want to move on from City Court due to the numbers of different cases and profiles of the different defendants. They found it fascinating.”

The second part of the field trip for the students was to the Niagara County Family Court at the Civic Building on Third Street in Niagara Falls where they were escorted to the family courtroom of Honorable Kathleen Wojtaszek-Guariano. Judge Wojtaszek-Guariano explained the workings of Family Court from juvenile cases and PINS (Person in Need of Supervision) to support collection and neglect hearings. The judge told them that the favorite part of her calendar involved the success stories, when juveniles have been able to deal with their specific issues and grow to become productive citizens. She said adoptions were a great part of her day, when new families are created. The students ended their day in the Civic Building where they went to the New York State Supreme Court and the courtroom of Honorable Ralph Boniello III. Justice Boniello explained the workings of Supreme Court, from divorces and workers injury cases to mental health hearings and even criminal cases.

Mr. Taczak said it was great exposure for his and teacher Cal Rhoney’s students. “They had the opportunity to see our court system and talk to the judges. They also got to see the Law Libraries in both City Court and Supreme Court and well as the jury deliberation rooms that jurors use to decide cases.”

BOCES Digital Design and Production Student Takes Best in Show

The Orleans Career and Technical Education Center’s Digital Design and Production Class has something to cheer about: Theresa Albone took home Best in Show at the Bryant and Stratton DigiTalent Design Contest. The Royalton Hartland senior walked away with a $5,000 scholarship to the college, an iPad mini and $250 to be given to her teacher Crystal Hall to be used in her program. “I am so proud of her,” says Mrs. Hall. “She came in and was telling me she had been sick and then she says, ‘I have something for you’ and shows me she won the competition. I was like ‘are you kidding me?’ She worked so hard for this and she is a very talented young woman. It is awesome.”

Theresa entered her design of Elvis Presley in the Vector category, but almost didn’t stay through the competition. “I was running a fever and I didn’t feel well, but I knew if I was not there when they announced the winners I would be disqualified.” It is a good thing she did. Out of the design category competitions of Vector, Raster, Desk Top Publishing and Web Page Design she scored 59 points out of 60 making her the clear cut winner out of everyone who submitted a design in the four categories. “I bawled my eyes out. I was so happy. I am attending Bryant and Stratton in the fall and that scholarship money is really going to help.”

Theresa has already won two scholarships to the school and has been taking jump start classes so she can get free credits through the accreditation agreement that her Digital Design and Production program has with the college. “I definitely have to thank all my classmates for their support. I am so grateful to them and Mrs. Hall.”

Graphic Communications Students Win for Ad Designs

Graphic Communications Students won Awards for their advertisements in The WNY Metro’s Ad Craft Competition. The Niagara Career and Technical Education Center students are taught by Karen Krull, who encourages them to enter contests to improve their skills and see what is marketable.

Students were awarded prizes for designing advertisements. The students applied their layout skills to create live ads as part of the Annual Ad craft competitions sponsored by WNY Metro.

Riley Watts came in second place with his ad for Booth Insurance and Christine Westmorland came in 3rd place with her ad for Squire’s Pub.

Ms. Krull says, “It was wonderful opportunity for students to learn what it is like to work with a real project for an Advertising Agency. Riley and Christine along with the rest of the class had put a lot of time, effort and pride into their work. I’m very pleased that the students were given the chance to display their talents.”

(LtoR) Riley Watts (Wilson) and Christine Westmorland (Wilson) show off their awards.
Field Trip Allows Diesel Mechanic Students a Look at State of the Art Facilities

Students in Wes Blydy’s Heavy Equipment/Diesel/Ag Mechanics program were wowed by a recent field trip to Milton-Cat and Monroe Tractor. The Niagara Career and Technical Education students first checked out Milton-Cat, which is a state of the art dealership that deals in equipment for construction, road work and generators. The students were shown a video about the company and were told of the different opportunities for employment. “They told them they needed parts managers, sales associates, shop foreman, field technicians, lubrication technicians, service writers and preventative service technicians,” said Mr. Blydy. “I think it was very important that they know that there are jobs out there for them once they graduate.”

The students then went on a tour of Monroe Tractor where the students were amazed at the GPS technology available on tractors that allows farmers to track fuel consumption, ground speed and can also plant and perform field work in a perfect straight line. “The students were amazed that they almost don’t need an operator except to make sure the equipment doesn’t encounter a rock or a tree. They really got to see some of the best machinery in the industry.”

Mr. Blydy said he was very grateful to both companies for allowing students the opportunity to see their operations and talk to the professionals there. “They were very good to us and even gave each of the students a Cat hat and lunch. It was a great experience for the students and they were very excited about the possibilities with this line of work.”

Enrollment in Medicare
This is a reminder for those of you who are nearing the age of eligibility for Medicare coverage, especially if you are considering retirement. Please visit the Medicare web site at www.medicare.gov or call the Social Security office at (800) 772-1213 for additional information.

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