Career and Technical Education Centers Inducts 42 into National Technical Honor Society

Orleans/Niagara BOCES’ Orleans and Niagara Career and Technical Education Centers celebrated 42 of its students who were accepted into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS). The students are required to have a minimum average of 89.5% in their career and technical education program and an 84.5% average in their home schools. They must also have only four or less sick days and their teacher has to recommend them for the honor.

At the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center (OCTEC) this year’s inductees are:
- Crystal Borynski (Security and Law Enforcement-Lockport)
- Ashley Bower (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Mason Brownlee (Welding-Newfane)
- Paige Childress (Health Occupations Technician-Lockport)
- Ashley Childs (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Carlie Coleman (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Andrew Cutlip (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Emily Faltyn (Graphic Communications-Royalton Hartland)
- Andrew Gelyon (Electronics-Barker)
- Samantha Gordon (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Jessica Heary (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Madison Hiddie (Early Childhood Education-Royalton Hartland)
- Evan Kindron (Welding-Royalton Hartland)
- Savannah King (Cosmetology-Lockport)
- Jessica Lesser (Cosmetology-Barker)
- Jordanna Lieberman (Culinary Arts-Royalton Hartland)
- Alyssa McManus (Culinary Arts-Lockport)
- Breyana Neal (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Zachery Pisarski (Electronics-Barker)
- Sarah Plotner (Culinary Arts-Newfane)
- Katie Przybyl (Welding-Barker)
- Mariah Rees (Allied Health-Royalton Hartland)
- Sarah Sanders (Early Childhood Education-Lyndonville)
- Jenna Snell (Cosmetology-Royalton Hartland)
- Cassandra Wheeler (Health Occupations Technician-Lockport)
- Tessa White (Security and Law Enforcement-Medina)

At the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center (NCTEC), the following students met the criteria:
- Nicholas Busch (Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning-Starpoint)
- Katie DeRose (Fashion Design/Interior Design-Niagara Wheatfield)
- Alexander Gentile (Early Childhood Education-Lewiston Porter)
- Brian Kowalik (Digital Media-North Tonawanda)
- Jacob Kujawa (Digital Media-Niagara Wheatfield)
- Thomas Kunkel (Heavy Equipment/Diesel Mechanics-Starpoint)
- Malorie McLean (Cosmetology-Starpoint)
- Ariel Mrzygut (Cosmetology-Niagara Wheatfield)
- Christina Nubelo (Digital Media-Lockport)
- Matthew O’Connor (Project Based Engineering-Lewiston-Porter)
- Derrick Orszulak (Project Based Engineering-Royalton Hartland)
- Douglas Potozczak (Heavy Equipment/Diesel Mechanics-Wilson)
- Braxton Schafer (Project Based Engineering-Royalton Hartland)
- Luke Tyler (HVAC-Royalton-Hartland)
- Matthania Volmy (Health Occupations Technician-CAWNY)
- Brittany Weinfurtner (Cosmetology-Lewiston Porter)
Niagara Academy Students Hold Culinary Fundraiser to Raise Money for Worthy Cause

Niagara Academy students in Marla Rudin’s Participation in Government class talk about world hunger as part of their course. It was very eye opening and upsetting to them when they learned about the number of people who are in a crisis situation around the globe. Last year the students held a chili cook-off and tasting that raised money for Free the Children. Since it was such a huge success students decided to offer food tastings from around the world to raise money for the International Rescue Committee.

The organization was started by Albert Einstein and helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control of their future. They provide healthcare, infrastructure, learning and economic support to people in over 40 countries and resettle about a thousand refugees in the United States.

The students were hoping to make at least $100 to send to the charity so enlisted their teachers and their principal to help make a dish that honored their heritage for them to sell. The dishes ranged from a curried stew to poutine. The tasting was not only a taste sensation, but a huge success with the students more than meeting their goal in one hour.
Graphic Communications Program Students Attend Code and Design Camp

Recently five students in the NCTEC’s Graphic Communications class spent a Saturday refreshing their web skills. Thanks to a new start-up company called Whitespace, that provides education in software development and design, the students in Karen Krull’s class got a chance to advance upon their skills in HTML and CSS programming. The sold out class was located in downtown Buffalo and students reviewed the basic building blocks of website development and design.

Niagara County resident David Bachowski is one of the founders of Whitespace. He has a development and management background in mobile video games and enterprise software development. He has development and production credits on over 20 apps in the mobile game space and is currently managing a team of enterprise software developers and has opened up and runs an overseas development studio in London, UK. Co-Founder Chantal Calato has a masters in Theater Design from Northwestern University and five years of teaching experience at the university level. She has design credits on over 75 theater productions and film designs.

“It was such a great opportunity for my students,” says Ms. Krull. “I am very proud of them for taking the initiative to keep current with the trends in web development. They are getting a jumpstart on lifelong learning.”

Mike Fisher Leads Successful Common Core Night at Niagara Wheatfield

On November 17th, Niagara Wheatfield Central School District held its first ever Common Core Parent Night at West Street Elementary School. Parents of students from kindergarten to 5th grade were invited to dinner and then attended a two hour session with Michael Fisher from Orleans/Niagara BOCES, an author, curriculum coach, and educational consultant. Mr. Fisher has worked internationally with schools around Curriculum Mapping, Common Core integration, Instructional Technology, and Curriculum Upgrades and Transformations. He discussed strategies on how to work with and support their children in this new landscape of education.

Over 100 parents attended the session and engaged in a question and answer period after the presentation. Superintendent Dr. Lynn Fusco and Principals Elizabeth Corieri, Theron Mong, Nora O’Bryan and Charles Smilinich were also on hand to discuss how the standards will affect their child and ways to help them at home.
Visit from Culinary Institute of American Inspires Future Chefs

Nick Altero, a recruiter from the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), recently spent some time with the Culinary Arts students at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center. Teacher James Atzrott was pleased to welcome the guest who talked to his students about what the college could offer them in advancing their skills and professional opportunities. He also did some cooking demonstrations and answered questions about the college and the degrees students could receive. “I really enjoy talking to young culinary students,” said Mr. Altero. “A recruiter came to my school and that is what inspired me to go to the CIA. It was a great decision for me and that is why I like talking to students who are on the verge of making those decisions for their future”.

Orleans/Niagara BOCES Continuing Education Class Helps Students Get Cosmetology License

The first class for Cosmetology Make-Up Hours at Orleans/Niagara BOCES’ Continuing Education program was a huge success. Teacher Pauline Carney helped several adults complete their 1000 hours of training to prepare them for their New York State Licensure exam. “I am very proud of my students. They worked hard and I am hoping to hear that they were all able to successfully pass the exam,” says Ms. Carney.

The program is held twice a week in the evenings and is 80 hours total. Ms. Carney’s program consists of lectures with an emphasis on hands-on review and practice and NYS exam preparation for the written and practical for adults who have at least completed 840 hours already. The next session will be start in February of 2015. For more information, you can contact Stephen Blask at (716) 731-6800, ext: 2252 or sblask@onboces.org.

Culinary Arts Students Take Home Silver at Gingerbread Competition

Culinary Arts students at Niagara Career and Technical Education Center tapped into their holiday spirit for the American Culinary Federation’s annual Gingerbread Competition. Richie Pysz and Erica Fruscione made a breathtaking castle that involved gingerbread, fondant figurines and candy to show off at the Niagara Falls Culinary Institute’s event to raise money for the Food Bank of Western New York which supports Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara Counties.

Many high school, college and professional chefs submitted houses to be judged and raffled off to raise money for the cause. Richie, Erica and their teacher Bob Ihle were thrilled when they heard that the creation took second place. “We worked for two weeks on our house,” says Richie. “It was so much fun to be able to be creative and work on this every day.”

Amanda Beyer from Lockport.
Niagara Career and Tech Ed Students Hold Food Drive for Local Food Pantry

For the month of November, the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center SkillsUSA students sponsored a food drive to benefit the Heart, Love and Soul Food Pantry in Niagara Falls. SkillsUSA encourages community service along with leadership skills.

Students and staff at the Orleans/Niagara BOCES’ center donated over 450 non-perishable food items along with $300 that was used to purchase additional food items for the pantry. Two of the Junior Class SkillsUSA officers, Keira Fletcher from Wilson and Emily Knibbs from Starpoint, donated their time to do the shopping for the additional items.

Michael Daloia, Operations and Personnel Manager from Heart Love and Soul, along with his helper, Dolan Reynolds, picked up the donations Monday, November 24th, so the supplies would be available for the Thanksgiving holiday. Vicki Augugliaro, SkillsUSA advisor at the center, said the SkillsUSA students were much honored to help Heat, Love and Soul make sure everyone has a happy holiday!

Pendleton Lions Club Makes Holiday Wishes Come True for BOCES Students

For over 20 years the Pendleton Lions Club has been playing Santa to Orleans/Niagara BOCES students at the North Tonawanda Learning Center. The tradition started when the class was originally housed in Pendleton and the Lions continue their holiday visit with the children in the program. “It’s a real highlight for us,” says Lions member Marty Cicatello. “We really look forward to seeing the children’s faces when they see Santa and open their gifts.”

The Lions Club collects donations throughout the year and talk to the teachers to see what the students need and want and do their best to accommodate them. Each teacher takes a turn bringing out their students to Santa and the reactions are priceless. Most of students squeal with delight and one little one would not let go, telling Santa that he is his best friend.

“We look forward to this all year,” says Mr. Cicatello. “It’s a lot of preparation and coordination, but none of us would miss it for the world. It really brings the meaning of the holiday home to all of us.” “This is just such a wonderful thing for them to do for us,” says Coordinator Ann Logel who administers at the site.

“It brings everyone here a lot of joy and the students are just so excited to see Santa. We are very grateful.”
HVAC Student Luke Tyler Wins Scholarship

Luke Tyler, a senior in Tom Destino’s Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center will be starting his college career with a $20,000 scholarship in hand. Luke was on a campus visit to University of Northwestern Ohio this past spring exploring their HVAC program and had a chance to take an exam to see if he qualified for a scholarship.

He recently received word that he won $20,000 thanks to the score on his test. “When the representative called me to tell me I won, it was such a big relief. Now I don’t have to worry about paying tuition.” University representative Tom LaRose says he is not surprised that Luke won. “I am very aware of the great program that Mr. Destino runs at Orleans/Niagara BOCES. We had a former student of his Jacob Dullen, who was the National SkillsUSA winner, attend here as well. It is a very impressive program that produces outstanding students.”

Luke says there was never any doubt that he was going to attend the HVAC program at BOCES. “I knew that is what I wanted. I had heard success stories about people coming here and getting skills and getting great jobs. Mr. Destino has a lot of experience and he knows what we need to learn and really helps us.” As for Mr. Destino, he could not be prouder of his student. “He is a wonderful young man and I know he will do great things.” Tyler is the son of our very own Julie Roloff.

PB & J Drive Brings Out Generosity of Orleans Career and Tech Ed Center Students

Over the course of one week students at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center collected over 250 jars of peanut butter and jelly for the annual food drive. Students in the SkillsUSA organization rallied their classmates to contribute to the cause that benefits local food pantries. SkillsUSA advisor Sarah Gebhard says she was particularly impressed with the seniors in the Electricity/Electronics program who donated over $100 to the cause. Aaron Wysonchanski, who is in the program and is the SkillsUSA Vice President at the center, was instrumental in getting his classmates to give. “Every day I would walk up to everyone and ask them to help my cause and make our class stand out. The response was great.”

The prize for bringing in the most items was a pizza party for the class. Ms. Gebhard says SkillsUSA has a huge focus on community service for its members. “The students really inspired everyone at the school. I think what was so remarkable about the Electricity/Electronics class is that for the amount of money they brought in they could have bought their own pizza party, but they chose to give their money to helping out those who are less fortunate in their communities. It was pretty amazing. I am very proud of the job everyone did.”

Niagara Academy Students Show Veterans Holiday Spirit

Students at the Niagara Academy showed their holiday spirit to some area veterans. Teacher aide Christine LaVigne is very involved in the American Legion Auxiliary and likes to rally the students to show their gratitude to the men and women who have served this country.

The art classes of Rose Lewkowitz made over 200 holiday cards and printed messages of thanks and holiday wishes. Students at the school collected socks and donations so that each veteran at the Buffalo Veterans Affairs Hospital received a $25 gift card and a couple of pairs of new socks. “I am so proud of our students,” says Mrs. LaVigne. “They did beautiful work and the veterans were so touched that we thought of them.”
SkillsUSA State Secretary Ray Delucci Attends Leadership Training in Washington, DC

Niagara Wheatfield senior Ray Delucci was named the New York State SkillsUSA Secretary last year thanks to his education at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center. Ray is in his second year of not only his Culinary Arts Program, but being the first SkillsUSA state officer from the center.

Since taking over the title, it has been a whirlwind of traveling and leadership training. Over the summer he attended his first conference at the National SkillsUSA competition in Kansas City, Missouri. “It was the first time I traveled on an airplane, so it was very exciting,” he says. “I met people from all over the country and I got to develop relationships with the other New York State officers as we went through a week of training that was fun and motivational. The experiences I faced there made me a better leader and person.”

He also attended additional training in Binghamton, New York.

Recently Ray and his Culinary Arts teacher Mr. Robert Ihle were invited to Washington, D.C. to the Washington Leadership Training Institute where he interacted with people from all around the country. “Our main purpose was to advocate for the Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act,” says Ray. “We met with our congress representatives and spent a day at the Capital. It was an incredible experience to see how the process of government works and also see the Smithsonian, the Pentagon and Arlington Cemetery.”

Ray says his involvement in the career and technical education organization SkillsUSA has been an awesome experience and made him an advocate for the organization. “I am gearing up for our New York State leadership meeting and I am hoping to engage many skills members to become more involved and be better leaders in their home chapters and their communities.”

Security and Law Enforcement Students Train with Laser Technology

Retired Western New York police officer Joe Follendorf, who is an internationally recognized defensive tactics and firearms instructor, recently gave John Marotta’s Security and Law Enforcement class at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center some handgun training.

The Orleans/ Niagara BOCES students used laser training pistols, so they could practice trigger control and accuracy without using a real firearm. Mr. Follendorf and Mr. Marotta worked with each student individually so they could get used to the feel, balance and weight of a firearm that they would use if they pursued a career in law enforcement. The students aimed at paper targets at the front of the room and kept track of their accuracy. “These simulators are a good way for students to get a sense of how to hold a gun and also practice gun safety,” says Mr. Marotta. “Safety and security improve with education and training and we are so fortunate to have Mr. Follendorf here, who is one of the best in his field. He is a certified physical force instructor and has trained all levels of law enforcement and security personnel around the world including SWAT teams. The students got a lot out of the experience and I think some of them were surprised how different it felt compared to one that belongs to a video game.”

Roy Hart Learning Center Shows Appreciation to Those Who Help All Year

As everyone knows Thanksgiving is a time to take give thanks. The Royalton Hartland Learning Center likes to give thanks at the beginning of November for all of those who help the staff and the students have a safe and happy school year. Coordinator Paulette Hamilton and her staff set up a breakfast buffet in the school entranceway and invite their bus drivers, maintenance staff, cafeteria staff, Royalton Hartland administrators and local law enforcement personnel to stop in throughout the day so they can show their appreciation for all they do.
Cosmetology Students Help Newfane Learning Center Students with Merry Makeovers

The Cosmetology students at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center invited some special guests from the Orleans/Niagara BOCES’ Newfane Learning Center in for some makeovers. The students were treated to haircuts and manicures so they could look their best for upcoming holiday events.

Teacher Sue Lindke says her class enjoyed having the children in. “They are usually working with adults that come to our clinic on Thursdays and Fridays, so this was a different clientele for them and a great experience for everyone involved.”

Certified Nursing Assistants Expand Employment Opportunities with New BOCES Class

Certified Nursing Assistants no doubt find their work very rewarding. However without a Home Health Aide certification they are limited on where they can work. Now thanks to a new 40 hour program offered by Orleans/Niagara BOCES after completing the required hours they can gain additional health care employment opportunities. “Using the experience they have already gained as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) they can now take this course and after passing the exam be able to work in an assisted living residence or do home health care,” says Orleans/Niagara BOCES Nursing Coordinator Karen Kwandrans. “The average pay is $21,000 to $22,000 and there is a huge need for these trained professionals.”

In order to qualify for the program, students will have had to work as a CNA for at least one full year in a hospital or a senior nursing facility or be a home health aide that has not worked in the last 24 consecutive months or a veteran trained as a medical technician or medic. The cost of the program is $355 including the price of the textbook. The first class started January 5th at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center located at 3181 Saunders Settlement Road in Sanborn. For additional information or to enroll contact Karen Kwandrans at (716) 731-6800, ext: 4446 or kkwandrans@onboces.org.
Learning Centers Give Thanks

Staff and students at the Newfane Learning Center, Roy Hart Learning Center and North Tonawanda High School showed off their decorating and culinary skills for their annual Thanksgiving luncheons.

Students and staff at the North Tonawanda High School spent a day in the woods thanks to the generosity of the Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club/Donald F. Miller Park. They spent a day cooking their Thanksgiving feast, walking in the woods and playing games in a cabin.

Niagara Career And Tech Ed Center Raises Funds For Niagara Hospice

Thanks to the cooking skills of Bob Ihle’s Culinary Arts students at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center, Niagara Hospice will be receiving a generous donation. The students prepared a pasta dinner which they sold at the school’s open house. The 384 dinners were sold out and a portion of the proceeds will be going to Niagara Hospice, a charity that was chosen by the class.

“That open house was one of the busiest we have ever had,” says Mr. Ihle. “The students in my class and SkillsUSA did an outstanding job and we were so pleased at the turnout. Altogether we raised about $2,300, which will be used for supplies for the students and to benefit Niagara Hospice.”

SkillsUSA New York State Secretary Ray Delucci (Niagara Wheatfield), who is also in the Culinary Program, helped with the door prizes and then joined classmate Tom Bajorek (North Tonawanda) for the pasta dinner.
Roy Hart Learning Center Has a Boo-Tiful Halloween Celebration

Students and staff put on their Halloween finery to celebrate the holiday at the Orleans/Niagara BOCES’ Royalton Hartland Learning Center. Students played games, including bobbing for doughnut and students led a parade down the hallways where they were rewarded with treats.

Newfane Learning Center Students Give Out Treats at Rehabilitation Center

Students and staff at the Newfane Learning Center have made it their yearly tradition of spending some time at the Newfane Rehabilitation Center on Halloween. Students make Halloween decorations for the residents there and enjoy showing off their costumes and visiting everyone at the center. For the residents it is definitely a treat to see the happy faces of the students and get a treat!

Security and Law Enforcement Student Takes FEMA Preparedness Classes

District Superintendent Dr. Clark Godshall issued a challenge to the Security and Law Enforcement students at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center recently. Since he has been busy taking the National Preparedness Directorate National Training and Education FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) online courses, he offered to treat for lunch and give a certificate to anyone who would take them as well.

Medina junior Jessica Reigle decided to accept his challenge and he was surprised when she revealed to him that she had taken several of the classes. He stopped by her teacher John Marotta’s class and recognized her in front of her classmates. “She really impressed me that she had taken the classes and I wanted her to know I appreciated her going above and beyond her normal workload for class.”
Certified Personal Trainer Students Work On Workouts

The junior class in the Certified Personal Trainer Program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center has been hard at work with teacher Jared Karas learning the skills to work with clients. The students have been working on tailoring workouts for different fitness levels.

Twelve Days of Giving Helps Continuing Ed Students Have a Great Holiday

Every day our Continuing Education teachers and staff in the Literacy Program try to help students improve their situation in life. Teacher Stephanie Bevacqua came up with a great idea to help them have a nice holiday meal as well. She asked her colleagues at the YWCA building in downtown Niagara Falls, the Trott Access Center, North Tonawanda site and Christ Community Church in Lockport if they would be willing to bring in a non-perishable food item each day for 12 days, so that by the end of the 12 days, 12 families would have a complete holiday meal including a turkey or ham.

Day one was a box of cereal, day two was a box of mashed potatoes, day three was a box of stuffing, day four was two cans of gravy, day five was two cans of soup, day six was two cans of vegetables, day seven was two cans of fruit, day eight was a box of macs and cheese, day nine was one box of dessert, day ten was two boxes of gelatin or pudding, day eleven was a bag of flour or sugar and day twelve was a ham or turkey.

Teacher Rachael Rossi said everyone was glad to help out. “In adult education, our students often live in poverty. They find it hard to make ends meet, especially around the holidays. We could not get over how much food we collected and how great we felt making our students’ holidays a little less stressful and a little more delicious.”

Niagara Career and Tech Ed Center Holds College Fair

The Niagara Career and Technical Education Center not only prepares students for careers after graduation, they are also giving them the opportunity to gain information if their plans include college. Principal Anedda Trautman invited several area colleges including Alfred State University, Bryant and Stratton, Erie County Community College and Niagara County Community College to set up tables at the Orleans/Niagara BOCES site and gave every student a chance to talk to the representatives and receive literature on the school.
Newfane Learning Center Students Express Thanks to Veterans with Artistic Projects

The students at the Newfane Learning Center have been putting their talents to use in honoring local veterans. Students in Mrs. Margaret Hagan’s, Mrs. Judi Gewand’s and Miss Sarah Koithan’s Life Skills classes collaborated with Mrs. Vicki Bashaw’s Family and Consumer Science class and Mrs. Karen Knight’s art class to create cards, flags out of popsicle sticks, cookies and a special flag made from the students’ handprints. The gifts were for staff and patients of Lockport’s VA Hospital.

The hospital staff was overwhelmed and grateful for the thoughtful gesture and said they had never received a Popsicle stick flag before and they would proudly display the handprint flag in their meeting room. “The students learned a great deal about giving back and honoring those who have served our country,” said Mrs. Krista Macomber, the Coordinator at the Newfane Learning Center.

OLC Students Honor Veterans for Their Service

The students at the Orleans Learning Center celebrated Veterans Day with some special visitors from the American Legion Post 410. Commander Christine Bryan, John Babis, Nancy Babis and Audrey Tracy showed the students a flag folding ceremony and explained its significance. “In the US Armed Forces, the flag is lowered, folded in a triangle and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation’s honored dead,” said Nancy Babis, whose husband John served in the Air Force.

The students sang “America the Beautiful” and talked about the significance of the colors of the flag. They also made their own flag to put on display at the school.

Commander Christine Bryan gives student Kristen Wheaton (Lockport) a flag to honor veterans. (LtoR) Teacher aide Cyndi Barber, Kristen Wheaton, teacher aide Ronda Schul, student Krystly Reimer (North Tonawanda) and Christine Bryan.

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