CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS

Our students certainly know how to celebrate the holidays. Our Culinary Arts students at the NCTEC helped Lockport’s George Southard students make a Thanksgiving feast and carved turkeys for the Salvation Army. The Roy Hart Learning Center held their annual Thanksgiving feast. The Lockport Learning Center rang the bell for the Salvation Army at Tops and the North Tonawanda Learning Center students got a visit from the Pendleton Lions and Santa and Steven Porter created a gingerbread replica of Buffalo’s City Hall with the help of his classmates.
That’s A Lot of PB & J!

Niquia Holloway, Valerie Bloom, Liz Slaugenhoupt, Adrienne Folby, Carly Burris, Tarah Lavett, Kasey Schnittker, Stephanie Morgan, Emma MacDonald and Destinee Bensley.

Tamia Martin, Ashlie Sanders and Jasmine Coates from the Culinary Arts program.

Students at the NCTEC and OCTEC participated in the 3rd Annual Peanut Butter & Jelly Drive. The NCTEC donated 160 jars with Mr. Ihle’s Culinary Arts class collecting the most. At the OCTEC 190 jars were collected with Mrs. Carnahan’s Cosmetology Program taking the honors for collecting the most.

PMT Program Wins Educational Award

The Orleans Career and Technical Education Center’s Precision Machine Technology Program has received the 2012 Clips & Clamps Industries Institution Award for Outstanding Program. Teacher Bill Rakonczay says the primary focus of his program is “jobs, jobs, jobs”.

There are currently 49 students in both of his classes with 24 seniors and 25 juniors. “Students enter the program their junior year and by the end of their senior year, they are expected to be ready for the workforce with good entry-level skills,” says Rakonczay. His classroom is a mix of theory work and hands-on practice. In addition to technical knowledge and practical skills, students are required to demonstrate organization, responsibility, good attendance, a positive work ethic and all the attributes that make a good employee. Successful students capstone, which is placement at local companies, where they work four days of the week. He is very proud of the fact that after graduation 75% of seniors are successfully placed in work study programs and 50% of the students in the class achieve National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certification each year. The Precision Machine Technology Program is the only secondary program in New York State certified by NIMS. Articulation agreements have also been forged with Erie Community College, Monroe Community College and Genesee Community College, through which students may choose to earn college credits through the program.

The Educational Institution Award is one of eight Awards of Excellence in Metalforming presented annually by the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA). It recognizes a public or private educational institution that provides outstanding training and educational services to companies in the metalforming industry.

Mr. Rakonczay (left) accepted his award in Las Vegas from Clips and Clamps Representative Jeff Aznazorian. The money will be used to purchase equipment for the program.
North Tonawanda HS Raises Money for Red Cross

Orleans/Niagara BOCES students at North Tonawanda High School raised over $100 for the Red Cross for their Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund. Mark Kurtz and Judy Wagner's classes collected bottles and cans to help victims of the super storm.


ACF Honors Chef Kurcsics

The American Culinary Federation (ACF) recently recognized Chef Otto Kurcsics, a Culinary Arts teacher at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center with Lifetime Achievement certifications. Kurcsics, originally from Hungary, has been teaching at the Sanborn site for 18 years. His illustrious career started when he worked as an apprentice at a culinary school in Budapest where he was able to learn from some of the most famous chefs in Hungary. When he enlisted in the army it was as a chef and he earned three stars for his contributions. After he was discharged he and his brother decided to escape communism and journey to America. They stopped in Italy and Chef Kurcsics was able to obtain a position cooking at the Vatican for visiting high priests and even the Pope himself. He eventually completed his journey to America and worked for several upscale restaurants and country clubs and owned the Gazebo Restaurant on Delaware in Buffalo. Chef Kurcsics was honored with certifications as an Executive Chef and a Certified Culinary Educator. The ACF recognizes chefs who have demonstrated a lifetime of commitment and dedication to the culinary profession especially those who prove to be great leaders in the industry and motivate others to achieve excellence in the profession.

Bells Are Ringing

The Bell Choir conducted by Melynda Pezone recently entertained shoppers at the Niagara Falls Outlet Mall with a concert.

Students from the Lockport Learning Center and North Tonawanda High School performed various holiday songs.
NYSSBA Attendees

Several members of the Orleans/Niagara BOCES Board of Education joined other school board members across New York State for the annual New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) Convention and Education Expo in Rochester. Board President Rebecca Albright, who represents Wilson, Janice Covell, who represents Starpoint, Carmelette Rotella, the Niagara Falls representative, Keith Bond from Roy Hart and Ruth Smith from Barker, spent the convention attending sessions on health and wellness, school improvement, school law, student achievement, technology and governance. “These conferences are very helpful to school board members,” says Mrs. Albright. “It helps us meet the challenges that we all face and gives us the opportunity to share our expertise and knowledge.”

(LtoR) Carmelette Rotella, Ruth Smith, Rebecca Albright and Janice Covell.

Orleans Learning Center Says K9 Visit was A-OK

The Orleans Learning Center recently had a visit from Medina Police Department Sergeant Todd Draper and his partner K-9 Kye. Sergeant Drapper talked to the students about what their role is in the Police Department. His duties include tracking, drug detection, building searches and criminal apprehension. While the students were interacting with Kye, Sergeant Draper answered questions about the Begian Malinois who joined the force in April of 2012. Some of the students wanted to know what Kye liked to do while he was off duty. “He loves to play fetch and swim in the canal,” Sergeant Draper told the students.

Student Ryan Thompson said, “I thought it was cool and I really liked learning about what the dog does.” Isaiah Demler says his favorite part was when Sergeant Draper showed how Kye would attack a suspect. Teacher Susie Zafrano said the students had a great time and she is very appreciative of the time that Sergeant Draper and Kye spent with them. “Overall I believe the program was enjoyed by all our students. We are planning on doing a fundraiser to help with the purchase of a ballistics vest to protect Kye when he is on duty.”

Photo Caption: Teacher aide Cindy Spikes, Melissa Whitmyer, teacher aide Julie Vallese and David D’Angelis with Sergeant Draper and Kye.
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

Pump You Up!

The Personal Training Program at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center is expanding. For the 2012-2013 school year, the program has upgraded to a bigger classroom with a built in fitness center. The fitness center recently acquired $14,000 worth of brand-new equipment. Additions include aerobic steps, dumbbells, a universal machine and two giant power lifting racks complete with weight plates, olympic bars and benches. Teacher Jared Karas says, “The equipment allows the personal trainers to learn new skills and exercises. They can apply these skills and exercises to their client workout plans. The Personal Trainer program has future plans of training community members to enhance the experience level of its students.”

Photo Caption: Chelsea Kerrissey from Starpoint.
OCTEC Helps Out Sanctuary

In September a devastating fire swept through the Lakeview Animal Sanctuary in Pendleton killing half of the 100 animals that found shelter there. The sanctuary was home to animals rescued from dangerous circumstances including puppies, kittens, rabbits, horses, goats and pigs. Two Orleans Career and Technical Education Center students, Cassidy Rohde and Victoria Szott, wanted to do something to raise money to help rebuild the sanctuary. Victoria has been a volunteer at Lakeview. “I knew I wanted to do a fundraiser to help them out. We decided to do a pizza sale at our center, so I did the advertising, ordered the pizzas and arranged the sale. We made $100.” Cassidy approached school counselor Kara Kirk about having a coin contest, something they had done in the past for other local organizations. “I volunteered at the sanctuary for six years and actually adopted a rabbit from there. I have become very close to the Director Sandy Pfohl and when I heard about the fire I was devastated.

I just lost it when I heard about how many animals died and how they didn’t have a place to house the surviving ones. I know they were trying to raise about $60,000 for a new barn. We raised about $550 from our coin drive from students and staff here.” Both students said they were pleased about what they were able to achieve for Lakeview and will be volunteering to help rebuild. “When I gave the check to Sandy she was so happy,” said Cassidy. “She said it was enough to build a horse stall. The poor things are now in trailers so knowing in a couple of months we will be able to provide one of them with a stall makes us feel great.”

(LtoR) Victoria Szott (Royalton Hartland) and Cassidy Rohde (Lockport).

Academy Donates to Niagara County SPCA

Usually the teachers at the Niagara Academy donate $150 to buy the students gifts for the holiday. “Last year we started a tradition where we take the money and donate it to a worthy cause that the students connect to,” says teacher Heather Sternin. “This year we chose teh Niagara County SPCA. The students are very fond of animals so we thought it would be a good choice.”

Officer Bob Schildhauer says the money will go to go use to help the animals that they take care. “We are very appreciative of this gift.”

(LtoR) Joe Minicucci, Officer Bob Schidhauer, Amanda El Houssieny and Kayla Harvey.
Hair Guru Addresses Cosmetology Students

To the average person the name Bennie Pollard does not mean much. To hairdressers and aspiring hairdressers he is like a rock and roll star who commands $100 a haircut. He actually encourages the students he talks to and trains to repeat the mantra, “I am a rock and roll hairstylist”. Recently Mr. Pollard made a stop at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center. He talked to students in the three Cosmetology programs there and gave a demonstration of a signature cut he does at his salon “Hair by Bennie and Friends” in Louisville, Kentucky. His salon has been honored as Salon of the Year by Modern Salon magazine and named one of the top salons in the US by Glamour magazine and Launchpad magazine and he has been featured in Good Housekeeping, Glamour and Women’s Wear Daily magazines.

The Cosmetology students sat at attention as he talked about his 25 year career that has also included working on photo shoots, TV shows and movies and also the development of his own product line BennieFactor. He also talked to students about how to present themselves when they are looking for work and how to handle customers so that they will want to keep returning to them. “The students were truly inspired by him,” says teacher Lori Smith. “They understood from Bennie's presentation that carrying yourself professionally is just as important as providing a great service to the industry. True success is when you are a stylist are able to make your client feel good about themselves and how they look. Their eyes were completely glued on him, especially when he was demonstrating some cool cutting techniques. We are very grateful that he was able to share his time and expertise with us.”

Students (LtoR) Anna Gerber, Angelina Falsetti, Kelsey Martinez, Kayla Leiser, Whitney King and Alix Lufkin observe Bennie Pollard give a bob haircut.

Habitat for Humanity

The Building Trades and Electricity/Electronics Program at the Orleans Career and Technical Education Center are working on renovating a house in Medina for Orleans Habitat for Humanity. The opportunity provides real world experience for the students and a nice home for a family in need.

Pictured: Cody Coulter, Nick Fitzak, Zachary Wodo, Joy Howes, Derek Dunlap, Ben Provenzano, Cort Schultz, Matt Stupnick, Austin Bane, Jeff Burke, Matt Montesanti, Brad Osgood, Brock Heitzenrater, Brad Hayes, Dan Byers, Electricity teacher Bill Leggett and Building Trades teacher Matt Anastasi.
30 Inducted Into National Technical Honor Society

The Orleans and Niagara Career and Technical Education Centers recently honored 30 students who were accepted into the National Technical Honor Society. The National Technical Honor Society is the highest award that can be given for excellence in career and technical education. Students must have a grade point average of 3.0 and have completed a certain amount of credit hours. They must also have excellent attendance and disciplinary records.

Staff members from both the centers, representatives from the students’ home districts and family and friends were on hand as students accepted their pins and certificates of achievement. This year’s honorees are:

**Orleans Career and Technical Education Center**
- Joseph Bergeron (Albion) Precision Machine Technology
- Carly Burris (Albion) Cosmetology
- Travis Dixon (Newfane) Graphic Communications
- Cassandra Drew (Newfane) Early Childhood Ed
- Arielle Flowers (Roy Hart) Allied Health
- Adrienne Folby (Lockport) Cosmetology
- Dan Gifford (Barker) Security and Law Enforcement
- Allison Herian (Barker) Cosmetology
- Emily Kress (Roy Hart) Graphic Communications
- Joanna Larsen (Barker) Security and Law Enforcement
- Brittany Manicki (Roy Hart) Allied Health

**Niagara Career and Technical Education Center**
- Nicholas Morse (Roy Hart) Security and Law Enforcement
- Elizabeth Rolon (Lockport) Culinary Arts
- Chayanika Shepard (Roy Hart) Graphic Communications
- Zachary Wodo (Newfane) Building Trades
- Brandon Alt (Barker) Emergency Medical Services
- Brian Alt (Barker) Conservation
- Alexander Busch (Starpoint) Auto Mechanics Program
- Kaitlyn Fox (North Tonawanda) Early Childhood Ed
- Nina Frye (Niagara Wheatfield) Early Childhood Ed
- Kyle Hanes (Wilson) Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration
- Nicholas Hawkins (Starpoint) Project Based Engineering
- Robert Marsh (Lew-Port) Digital Media/Animation
- Daniel Nugent (Wilson) Project Based Engineering
- Megan Perry (Niagara Wheatfield) Cosmetology
- Michael Robins (Niagara Wheatfield) Welding
- Daniel Ruble (Wilson) Auto Mechanics
- William Sattelberg (Newfane) Digital Media/Animation
- Kathleen Siracuse (Starpoint) Health Occupations Technician
- Sarah Volmy (Christian Academy) Security and Law Enforcement

**Board of Education Members**

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