

District 219 Notes for Oct. 2

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Niles West job fair

Looking for a job? Attend the free Illinois workNet/Illinois Department of Employment Security Job Fair held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Oct. 10 at Niles West High School, 5701 Oakton Street in Skokie. No registration is required. Dress professionally, bring copies of your resume and come prepared for an immediate interview. Some employers may make immediate job offers. Public transportation is available from CTA and PACE bus service with connections to the RTA Skokie Swift-CTA Yellow line. There is ample free parking at Niles West High School.

Contact Mohammed Faheem at mfaheem@worknetncc.com or Deb Lawrence at dlawrence@worknetcc.com for more information.

Master singers at Niles West

Calling all gleeks and fans of masterful singing--the Niles West Master Singers will be performing from noon to 1 p.m. Oct. 8, at the Barnes & Noble store located at Westfield Old Orchard, 55 Old Orchard Center, Skokie. The Master Singers will perform several songs to excite and warm up the crowd in advance of the book signing with actress Jane Lynch, who plays Sue Sylvester on the Fox television show "Glee." Amy Branahl is the Niles West Choral Director.

Niles North newspaper earns top rating

The North Star newspaper earned a First Class rating from the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) for its 2010-11 publications.

The NSPA judge lauded North Star for the scope of student opinion expressed in its Ed-Op pages and its coverage of news and opinion that "related directly to students' concerns." Editorial cartoons garnered praise for quality and humor. The staff also earned high marks for design and layout as well as "crisp and clean" photography, with sharp contrast for both black-and-white and color photos.

Noting that the staff's teamwork produced a series of excellent editions, the judge said their efforts "make it a pleasure to pick up this newspaper and read stories about people and events so far removed from this area and feel involved. Keep it up."

Graduate Mara Joaquin served as editor-in-chief and editorial/opinion editor for 2010-2011. Graduate Maya Erf was managing editor and feature editor. Graduate Rachel Spector served as creative director.

Other staff included graduates Sophie Martin, Sarah Horton, and Sofia Teplitskya as well as juniors Ayana Jamal, Alissa Hirsh, Tommy Dixon, Michael Rowen, Brett Nagel and Jocelyn Warner, sophomore Steffie Drucker and freshmen Ethan Brown and Glenn Weissman.

English teacher Charles Pratt is the newspaper adviser and English teacher Ivan Silverberg is the technical adviser. The 2011-2012 staff is gearing up for the digital debut of northstarnews.org by the end of the

calendar year.

A non-profit educational organization headquartered in Minnesota, NSPA provides materials, media critiques and training programs for high school student publications, including print and online newspapers, yearbooks, and literary magazines.

District 219 National Merit

The names of approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the 57th annual National Merit Scholarship Program were announced recently. Michael Nissan from Niles West High School and Rachel Burton and Benjamin Marks from Niles North High School were named as 2012 Merit Scholarship Semifinalists. The students share the opportunity to continue in the competition for some 8,300 Merit Scholarship Scholarships worth more than \$34 million that will be offered next spring. Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. About 90 percent of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and approximately half of the Finalists will be awarded a National Merit Scholarship.

Physical Welfare Dept. lauded for work

The District 219 Physical Welfare Department was recently profiled in the Sept./Oct. 2011 issue *Strategies: A Journal for Physical and Sport Educators*. District 219, a Blue Ribbon Award Winner for the Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (IAHPERD), has been using heart rate monitors in their physical welfare classes for over a decade, whereby students can target their maximum heart rate and improve their overall physical fitness. This school year, Niles North and Niles West schools are implementing a program for incoming freshmen to utilize a heart rate monitor every day. Teachers will get immediate feedback and can use that to foster conversations with students about fitness levels. According to Director of Physical Welfare Paul Swanson, "We have also utilized the technology to implement a learning readiness program for students struggling in reading. Based on the John Ratey research highlighted in the book "Spark," we have placed a high-energy PE class right before the students' reading class. We have seen small sample results that indicate a correlation between exercise and learning."

Niles Township High Schools have been designed as National Showcase Schools for Polar Electro, Inc., a manufacturer of the Polar heart rate monitor. This honor has been awarded to one other high school in the state of Illinois.

Nurses volunteer for Emergency Corps

Should a disaster or emergency occur in Skokie, nurses from Niles Township High School District 219 are trained and ready to assist. Niles North nurse Ellen Zagazdon and Niles West nurse Peggy Bassrawi are part of the Skokie Medical Reserve Corps, a unit of licensed health and medical personnel volunteers that will respond to local disasters, set up and maintain shelters as necessary and participate in mass vaccinations/prophylaxis or other major public health needs. The volunteers are trained by the Skokie Health Department and complete coursework to meet federal, state, county and village requirements for certification.

Niles North geometry students learn from sculpture

Recently, Danny Newman's Geometry 12-22 class at Niles North was visited by volunteers from Sculpture in the Classroom, an outreach program from the Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park. While the geometry students typically work with shapes along a two-dimensional plane, they welcomed this opportunity to expand their horizons by creating art and forms on a 3-dimensional plane. Students used markers to decorate a wooden base, then twisted and shaped colored wire to create fanciful shapes and works of art. The class will also visit the Sculpture Park to view the large-scale sculptures by noted regional, national and international artists.

The mission of the Skokie Northshore Sculpture Park is to offer an ongoing exhibition of large-scale art of the highest caliber and educational programs to promote the appreciation and understanding of contemporary art.

Live NASA webcast

Students in Niles West teacher Ami LeFevre's Honors Chemistry class and members of the Chemistry Club represented one of only three high schools in the country that participated in a live webcast on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Digital Learning Network. The students took part in the Sept. 22 webcast with scientists from NASA and the American Chemical Society as part of the International Year of Chemistry's Global Water Experiment.

The webinar originated at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston. Niles West students took part in the session via a live hook-up in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics lab. Schools across the country were able to participate by logging on to the NASA website, watching and typing in questions. Niles West students were seen in the broadcast and were able to speak directly to the scientists.

In the global experiment, called "Water: A Chemical Solution," students worldwide are testing local water sources and posting their analysis to an Internet data map where they will be able to view their results and compare them to others. During the webcast, ACS and NASA scientists performed a filtration and purification experiment and discussed how it relates to water purification on earth and on NASA's International Space Station.

Future engineers in summer class

The future looks very bright as more than 230 enthusiastic students participated in District 219's Sizzling Summer Engineering classes held this summer at Niles North High School. Students ranging from fourth grade through eighth grade used sophisticated modeling software to design 3-D objects; built and tested bridges; learned about alternative energies while constructing a vehicle that utilized a hydrogen fuel cell; and designed, built and programmed a remote-controlled robotic vehicle to navigate a maze in a race against the clock, and more.

In just its second year, the enrollment for Sizzling Summer Engineering has tripled. This project-based and real-world problem solving camp is based upon the successful pre-engineering program of Project Lead the Way, which is offered for high school students at Niles North and Niles West High Schools. Sizzling Summer Engineering camps were run by PLTW instructors Ken Albert, Ben Brzezinski, Robb Barton and Brent Garner.

For more information about Sizzling Summer Engineering or Project Lead The Way, visit www.niles219.org/STEM.