



Boyertown

SUMMER 2017

ESSENTIALS

To enable all students to succeed in a changing world.

BOYERTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Message to the Class of 2017



Richard Faidley, Ed.D.
Superintendent

At the Class of 2017's commencement ceremony, I was honored to speak to the graduates before they were presented with their diplomas.

Likening the feeling they were experiencing that evening to the same sense of excitement and fear that they experienced on their first day of Kindergarten, I reminded them

that, as Robert Fulghum, the author of *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, wrote, they learned many lessons that guided them through the next 12 years. Lessons such as:

- Play fair.
- Live a balanced life - learn some, drink some, draw some, paint some, and sing and dance and play and work every day some.
- When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.
- Be aware of wonder.
- Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why.

I reminded them that they conquered Kindergarten and walked into first grade, and into their elementary school years, open to new ideas and eager to explore their new world. They learned not only how to read, write, and add fractions; they learned empathy for their classmates and those in the community. They discovered the power of working in a team, both in the classroom and on the playground. They formed friendships that have carried them through to graduation. And, while they experienced bumps and bruises along the way, their teachers and parents were there with band-aids and words of encouragement when things got tough.

Before too long, Dr. Cooper was welcoming each of them to Boyertown Area Senior High as a member of the Class of 2017. And, as teachers, coaches, mentors, guidance counselor, and parents were there to help them balance, they negotiated the twists and turns of high school.

Since Kindergarten, our graduates have been given the tools they will need to navigate our crazy world. I encouraged each of them to use those tools to share their unique voice, and to go into the world with confidence knowing that their teachers, parents, mentors, and coaches have prepared them for what comes next.

Celebrating the Class of 2017

During the 125th commencement ceremony on Thursday, June 8, 563 graduates walked into Bear Stadium to receive their diplomas. Student speakers included valedictorian Grayson Hamrick, salutatorian Lucy Bellino, and senior class president Oren Fanok.

Grayson took a different approach to the traditional valedictorian speech: crowdsourcing. "Seeing as tonight is a celebration about all of us . . . it only seemed fair to let you guys have some say in what was a part of this speech," he explained.

He told his peers to be as silly or deep as they wanted, then presented their words as advice for the Class of 2017, from the Class of 2017. Here is a sample:

- Embrace every moment you are given and every person you meet, because it makes up who you are.
- Everything works out in the end. If it hasn't worked out, it isn't the end.
- Make sure your feet are in the right place, then stand firm.
- There are awesome opportunities available to people who step out of their comfort zones.
- High school wasn't anything I expected it to be, but it was everything I hoped it would be.

Lucy's speech explored her favorite moments in life—the moment of anticipation right before an event. When the lights go down as a concert is about to begin and the silhouette of the artist is all that is visible, she said, that's the moment when her heart thumps the hardest, because what comes next is unknown.

"Time is just kind of suspended for a second as you try to process the upcoming event," she continued. "You don't have any expectations for those moments. . . . The possibilities for the outcome are infinite.

You have no idea what the main event holds, and that is so scary and exciting, but in my opinion, that's the



Superintendent Dr. Richard Faidley and Boyertown Area Senior High Principal Dr. Brett Cooper (not shown) handed out diplomas during the June 8 graduation ceremony.

best feeling."

Lucy concluded, "For most of us, graduation seems like the main event. We think of it as an ending. And in a way, it is. It is the end of high school. . . . But I'd prefer to think of this moment, as one of those moments right before the big event—your life—and it is going to be great!"

Owen gave his peers a look back on their time at Boyertown Area Senior High, thanking parents, guardians, and the teachers who supported them as they made their way toward graduation. He also shared some simple advice: "You are never too important to not take the time to be kind to another human. The interactions you'll have with your coworkers, friends, family, and even your garbage man will shape who you are for the rest of your life."

For more on the Class of 2017, see pages 4, 5 and 8.

BASH Student Elected PA Youth Governor

The Boyertown Area School District is proud to announce that Colin Black has been elected the 2018 Youth Governor of Pennsylvania by Youth and Government (YAG) delegates at the Model Convention in Harrisburg. In April, more than 700 students from across Pennsylvania traveled to Harrisburg to participate in this unique learning opportunity and simulate the legislative and judicial processes of state government.

The YAG program allows students to emulate the political processes of US state governments and provides them with a platform to discuss and debate issues that directly affect their communities. Participating in the program expands students' public-speaking skills and provides them with a safe place to talk through their beliefs and opinions on pressing issues and express them articulately.

Colin Black was one of 100 students from the Boyertown YMCA's Youth and Government delegation who took over the Capitol Building. The students spent close to 14 hours a day in chamber and committee rooms practicing the roles of different positions



Colin Black was honored at a recent School Board meeting. He is pictured here with Superintendent Dr. Richard Faidley (left) and School Board President John C. Landino (right).

in and around the government, including those of lobbyists, representatives, senators, judiciaries, press, and administration. Among the activities designed to give students a firsthand look at government work were debating bills, creating newspapers, and arguing cases in court. The program culminates with students serving as delegates at their state conference, debating bills on the floor of the legislature.

Colin Black worked hard to build a platform for the election. "It is an honor," he says, "to be elected as the 72nd Youth Governor of Pennsylvania, and I cannot wait to help the youth of our state find their voice and speak about what they are passionate about."

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The Boyertown Area School District Newsletter is published by the Boyertown Area School District.

For questions or comments regarding this publication, please contact Kristine Parkes at communications@boyertownasd.org.

Boyertown Bears: Always Up for a Challenge

This spring, the Boyertown Area School District hosted the 2017 Bear Challenge, a full-day event that invited 75 students from across the District to participate in exciting para-athletic activities that promote healthy competition and socializing among friends.

The day began with a parade of athletes; representatives from each school proudly displayed custom-made banners as they made their grand entrance. After the parade, the athletes were divided into smaller groups so that they could move between the activity stations set up for the event.

With everything from obstacle courses to soccer kicks to participate in, the Bear Challenge athletes could choose from a wide variety of activities targeted at various levels of physical ability. Among the challenges were face painting, a bean-bag toss, and bike riding on adaptive tricycles. Each athlete was accompanied by a student volunteer known as a Bear Challenge Buddy. The buddies provided support and encouragement as the brave athletes completed each activity.

Boyertown Area Senior High senior Kate Kada volunteered as a Bear Challenge Buddy because she enjoys working with children who have special needs. She has volunteered with the Special Olympics since she was in seventh grade.

“The Bear Challenge is a huge event for our District. It is a culmination of months of training for our athletes,” said Ms. Eydie Bennett, Boyertown Area School District’s physical therapist. “All of our athletes are winners, and all left with custom T-shirt designed by our very own Boyertown Area Senior High students.”

Sixth grade student Sarah Ringle was one of the



Nate Antonio, a student-athlete from Colebrookdale Elementary School, participates in the soccer kick activity with a little encouragement.

athletes at this year’s Bear Challenge. Her parents, Eric and Kelly Ringle, enjoyed watching their daughter engage with her friends and said they appreciate the smaller size and community feel of the Bear Challenge as compared to the larger county-wide Special Olympic event.

“Everyone does a fantastic job with this event,” Mr. Ringle added.

The enthusiasm of the athletes lit up the entire room. Throughout the day, athletes, buddies, and spectators enjoyed great music, snacks and beverages, and exciting activities. The upbeat environment inspired impromptu dance contests, funny photos, and, no doubt, lifelong memories. It was a day that will surely not be forgotten.

“The 2017 Bear Challenge was an inspired event, providing opportunities for all students to enjoy a little friendly competition,” Ms. Bennett said with a smile.

Child-Find Services Explained

The Boyertown Area School District conducts ongoing Child-Find activities for the purpose of locating, identifying, and evaluating school-age students with potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate needs that are best addressed by special programs or services. Additionally, parents and teachers who suspect a child might need such services can make a referral to their child’s school counselor to explore additional educational supports and classroom modifications. Multi-disciplinary evaluations follow at regular intervals to make any needed changes for those not making sufficient progress with the classroom supports that have been put in place. Parents can also directly request multi-disciplinary evaluations regardless of whether their child attends public, private, or parochial school.

Evaluation Process

A multi-disciplinary evaluation consists of information provided by parents and school personnel, from classroom observations, from a review of records from school or outside agencies or providers, and from assessments by specialists when appropriate (e.g. school psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech and language therapist, behavior specialist, consulting psychiatrist). The results are summarized in an Evaluation Report that discusses eligibility, need, and recommendations for specially designed instruction and related services. The report must be completed within 60 calendar days. An initial evaluation cannot begin without written parental consent.

Individualized Education Process

If, through the evaluation process, a student is found to be eligible and in need of specially designed instructional strategies, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting is held with team members (parents, school personnel, specialists) to develop an IEP. The IEP team determines the instructional program

goals, objectives, related services, supports for school personnel, and elements of instruction specially designed to meet the needs of the student. The team must convene within 30 days of the date of the Evaluation Report.

Notice of Recommended Educational Placement

Once the initial IEP has been developed in cooperation with the parents, a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement is presented to the parents for their signature. If the parent approves the Notice of Recommended Educational Placement, the child will begin to receive special education services.

Review Process

IEPs must be reviewed at least annually. This means that the team reconvenes to review the progress of the student as measured by the IEP goals and objectives and makes necessary revisions. The reevaluation process takes place three times a year, except for students with an intellectual disability, in which case it is done biannually. Teams can choose to conduct a review of records if no additional testing is deemed necessary.

A parent can request that an IEP be re-opened at any point during the life of the IEP if they feel changes are warranted. Parents can request a re-evaluation at any point in the two- or three-year cycle if they feel additional testing is necessary.

Disability categories include: Autism, Deaf-blindness, Deafness, Emotional disturbance, Hearing impairment, Intellectual disability, Multiple disabilities, Orthopedic impairment, Other health impairment, Specific learning disability, Speech and language impairment, Traumatic brain Injury, Vision impairment including blindness.

For more information, or to request a multi-disciplinary evaluation, please contact Kalyn Bartman, Director of Special Education, at kbartman@boyertownasd.org or 610-473-3616.

Good Books on the Menu

Washington Elementary School fifth grade teacher Mrs. Kim Seiz put a fun spin on the book club concept by turning it into a book tasting.

To begin, the students were seated at tables of four in a restaurant setting (empty classroom). The tables were desks that were pushed together and draped with a tablecloth. On each table was a menu that included a listing of the 11 books written by author Gary Paulsen, along with the actual books.

The diners (students) were asked to read a little bit of each book and pick their top five. The students were given discussion worksheets to assist with this exercise. Mrs. Seiz then seated the students with others who wanted to read the same book.

Payton McDonald enjoyed the book “tasting.” “It was fun to sit with friends like we were at a

restaurant,” he said. “It was reading in a new way.”

Over the next few weeks, the students read their books independently then discussed them with the group. Group members rotated between five jobs that were outlined in their Google Classroom folder. (Google Classroom is a free web service that enables students and teachers to collaborate on projects inside and outside of school.) The jobs and their particular tasks were:

- Discussion Director: was tasked with creating questions for the group to discuss
- Illustrator: was to create a visual using Google Draw
- Word Detective: was tasked with choosing vocabulary from the section to discuss
- Passage Picker: chose passages to discuss and identify their content (signposts, figurative

language, etc.)

- Texter: was tasked with creating fake texts between characters from the story using a website where the characters could text each other questions, ask for advice, or discuss problems.

For each job, the students were required to make a Google Slide and present it to their group during a discussion period.

Preston Stabley enjoys reading and thought that the book tasting was a fun activity, “It encouraged us to read a book that we may not think that we would like.”

Classmate Sakura Gehman agreed, saying, “the book tasting was fun, and I was able to recommend a book to a friend.”

Knit One, Purl Two

During the cold winter days when recess was held indoors, a number of sixth grade students at Colebrookdale Elementary School took their teacher up on her offer to teach them how to knit and crochet—and the Knitting Club was born.

Mrs. Susan Davis, sixth grade teacher, explained that the mostly female group ate their lunches in her classroom day after day to learn how to knit. “They all showed persistence,” she explained. “They were always willing to rip out their work to start again. Our saying became ‘practice makes progress.’”

Sixth grade student Anna Phipps says her mother crochets, and she wanted to learn to knit so that she could share the activity with her mom. Lily Courtney joined the group to “learn something new.” Many participants said that learning to knit and crochet gave them an opportunity to bond with their grandmothers, some of whom even contributed their yarn stashes. Lily’s father also learned how to knit and visited the club one day.

According to the Craft Yarn Council, knitting and crochet are valuable tools for teaching focus, follow-through, and persistence. Improvements in fine motor skills and critical thinking can also be seen in children who learn to knit and crochet.

As the club members became more proficient, Principal Mr. Michael Stoudt challenged them to raise money and do something for others with what they were learning. The group decided to make adorable “bookworm” bookmarks, washcloths, and shower scrubbies to sell at the school’s book fair. They donated the \$274 they raised to the Boyertown Area Multi-Service.

The group also made holiday gifts for their families—blankets, scarves, hats, and even a hamster bed!

“I hope I’ve taught them a hobby that they will enjoy for a lifetime,” said Mrs. Davis. “They



Daykota Fox, Kimmy Wissinger, Kendall Rinewalt, and Anna Phipps worked together to knit a hat and scarf for Principal Mr. Michael Stoudt.

wanted to learn a new stitch every day ... they couldn’t learn fast enough!”

Exploring the Far East Through Art

On a beautiful spring evening, Boyertown Elementary School students dressed as geisha greeted family, friends, and fellow classmates as they entered the school for the annual art show. This year’s show, Explore the Far East, showcased the students’ artwork. From pottery to three-dimensional pieces that appeared to jump from the walls, the art was intriguing and beautiful.

In addition to still art, fifth grade students Emily Wambold, Madalyn Welles, Rowyn Deininger, and Paige Iacobacci performed Flying Kites, a traditional fan dance (shown at right). Students also brought a Chinese dragon to life, roaming the hallways to the delight of the younger visitors. Congratulations to everyone who worked to make the art show a wonderful success.



PAYS Task Force Focuses on Healthy Community

In the fall of 2013, the Boyertown Area School District participated in the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) for the first time. This biennial survey of youth in the sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth grades has been administered in the fall of odd-numbered years since 1989. There is no cost to school districts to participate.

PAYS collects information on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and other problem behaviors—specifically, what our youth know, think, and believe about antisocial behaviors and about their school environment. Surveys are anonymous and confidential. Data from the survey can be used to leverage funding and other resources to help meet identified needs. It also provides opportunities to partner with organizations to produce healthy youth development.

The Boyertown Area School District has convened a Task Force of parents, teachers, students, administrators, police chiefs, community counseling/education representatives, and others to study the district’s PAYS survey results and identify actions the community can take to make improvements.

“With data relevant to our district, the PAYS Task Force is building a positive climate in Boyertown’s schools,” says Mrs. Marilee Cassidy, school counseling coordinator.

The Task Force identified four areas of need: K-12 education, communication, law enforcement, and safe opportunities for youth. Subgroups of volunteers will facilitate improvements in each of these areas. Below is an overview of their work to date.

K-12 Education

In this area, the PAYS Task Force is focusing on:

- addressing the need for mental health services at a younger age by establishing a student assistance program at the elementary level;
- providing staff development, including ways to speak with students who are grieving;
- adding contact information for mental-health crisis centers to the backs of high-school students’ ID badges; and
- printing contact information for mental-health crisis centers in the handbook/calendars that will be distributed to middle school students for the 2017–18 academic year.

Law Enforcement

In addition to increasing a police presence throughout the District, the PAYS Task Force worked with local law enforcement to create a public service video about how to store and dispose of prescription drugs safely. Medication disposal locations were established at the Boyertown, New Hanover Township, Douglass/Montgomery Township, and Bally police departments.

Communications

In this area, the PAYS Task Force is focusing on developing a “social norming” campaign that focuses on positive messages about healthy behaviors and attitudes. For example, using the results of the PAYS, the Task Force knows that the majority of high school students are not using alcohol. A social norming campaign highlights this fact, showing students that perception is not reality. In addition, parent programs will be held throughout the year on topics such as prescription drugs, teens and tech, resiliency, and talking to kids about drugs and alcohol.

Safe Opportunities for Youth

The District has been partnering with the Boyertown YMCA successfully to create safe recreational opportunities for youth outside school hours.

“The task force is a true community effort, with students, teachers, community groups, and law enforcement working together to improve programs and services to benefit our community as a whole,” comments Mr. Robert Scoboria, assistant superintendent.

To stay up to date on the work of the PAYS Task Force or to join, visit the Parents/Community section of the Boyertown Area School District’s website; www.boyertownasd.org

A Spotlight on the Class of 2017

Our Boyertown Area Senior High graduates have worked hard and persevered through hardships, and will continue to make a difference in the world. To give you a glimpse into the lives of our graduates, we would like to introduce you to the following students who represent this year's graduating class.



Rebecca Ashcom's love for exploration and travel have encouraged her to continue her education at Edge Hill University in England. "I have been to Europe a number of

times, and I've found that the atmosphere fits my personality a lot more than the States," Rebecca explains.

She will study criminology and sociology, and wants to be a homicide detective, possibly a profiler.

She admits that it is a bit strange that she doesn't watch crime-based dramas and explains that she doesn't want to be disillusioned by how her dream job is portrayed on television.

In addition to traveling, Rebecca's passions include acting, art, and horses. She has been drawing for as long as she can remember and enjoys the options that digital art provides. She uses Adobe PhotoShop and has sold her art online. Not only has Rebecca been a member of the high school's drama program, she has also performed on the community theater stage. Outside, Rebecca grew-up around horses and while she competed when she was younger, she now rides for leisure.

Rebecca credits her mother and her guidance counselor, Mrs. Caitlin Hawkins, for being on her side and helping her succeed.



Connor Fellin credits his guidance counselor, Mrs. Beth Shive, for coordinating his internship and for giving him the confidence to approach Mr. Brian Kelly of

Kelly Real Estate.

"I feel like I have accomplished so much by working for Kelly Real Estate," Connor says. "I am learning new skills that I will use in the real world while I am still in high school."

Upon graduation, Connor will begin working for Kelly Real Estate full time. In August, he will begin real estate courses at the Schlicher-Kratz Institute. He will also attend various seminars over the summer.

Connor has a fondness for basketball sneakers and has been purchasing and reselling them through eBay for years. He explains that he has always loved sales and entrepreneurship. "I believe I will be good at helping people make the most important purchase of their lives."

During high school, Connor played golf for four years. He also enjoyed playing guitar and working out at the gym.



Throughout his high school career, **Will Sheeler** has expertly balanced athletics, extracurricular activities, a job, and academics.

In his freshman and sophomore years, he played varsity lacrosse. In his junior and senior years, he played club rugby, serving as team captain in his senior year.

Will has been an active member of the Technology Student Association (TSA) since ninth grade. In 2017, his team placed third in the state for Engineering Design. In his junior year, he placed fourth in the state for Problem Solving. Will was awarded a \$5,000 TSA scholarship.

Academically, Will made high honor roll throughout high school and received the President's Award for Educational Excellence in ninth grade.

Will has been accepted to Wilkes University and received the Trustee Scholarship, the highest academic scholarship offered by the school. He has chosen to enroll in the five-year environmental engineering program.

"Growing up in a rural area and living on a dirt road, the environment is always at the forefront of my mind," Will says. "The earth is not a right; it is a blessing and we must care for it."

In addition to working at a local horse farm during the school year, Will has worked at Job Site Resources (JRS), a local company that provides excavation, erosion control, Rip-Rap, and concrete mat placement. Will hopes to continue his work with JRS over summers and during winter break.

Will hopes to continue playing rugby at Wilkes University and is looking forward to participating in the school's high-adventure clubs.



Over the past three years, **Brittany Matteson** has made her mark on the culinary arts program at the Berks Career and Technical Center. From appearing on the Food Net-

work's Chopped! to earning Student of the Quarter twice, being named to National Technical Honor Society, and serving as president of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America chapter in her senior year, Brittany has shown that she is ready for what comes after graduation.

Brittany will attend Johnson & Wales University in North Miami, where she will pursue a four-year degree in culinary arts and food-service management. While her short-term goal is to be an executive chef in a high-end restaurant, her dream is to open her own restaurant.

Brittany enjoys being creative in the kitchen and watching others enjoy the food she has prepared. She notes that the weirdest thing she has ever prepared was beef tongue (with her grandfather's help).

Brittany thanks her parents for supporting her dream, especially allowing her to participate in Chopped! and driving her to New York City. While she appreciates all the chefs at the Berks Career and Technical Center, she notes that Chef Lynch was extra supportive as she prepared for Chopped!.



This fall, **Michael Seshier** will fulfill his lifelong dream of attending Ohio State University.

"My father's side of my family is from Ohio and I spent a lot of time there during summer breaks," Michael explains. "Ever since I knew what college was, I have wanted to go to Ohio State."

Michael will major in architecture, a career he has been interested in since his eighth grade CADD class. He was accepted to the Scholars Program, which allows undergraduate students the chance to live and learn with other students who share similar interests.

At Boyertown Area Senior High, Michael made high honor roll all four years and was a member of the National Honor Society. He participated in Youth and Government since eighth grade.

Michael also ran cross-country, winter track, and spring track. His events included the 5k, 200M, 400M, 4x200, and 4x400. In 2011, he was a member of the relay team that broke the indoor 4x400 relay school record. He says that it is difficult to explain the feeling of accomplishment that came over him when his team broke the record.

Michael will continue to run at Ohio State University, saying that it has meant too much to him over the past four years to give it up.



To say that **Lauren Berger** enjoys singing and performing is an understatement. In addition to singing in choir since elementary school, she has been involved in theater just as long.

Lauren has been a member of the Boyertown Area Senior High's show choir and concert choir since ninth grade. She received the Reading Music Foundation's Bach Atonement scholarship and the Reading Music Foundation's Summer Camp scholarship, and was named Lions Club Student of the Month as a sophomore. From seventh through twelfth grades, Lauren placed in the top ten in the county chorus.

On stage, Lauren was a member of the ensemble in the high school's production of Mary Poppins and played the role of Sister Sophia in The Sound of Music.

While Lauren has been taking voice and acting lessons since the sixth grade, she began studying under a husband-and-wife team in Philadelphia two years ago. She credits them for giving her the confidence to find joy in what she does and for carrying her through the college audition process.

For the past four years, she has also

had the opportunity to participate in Broadway Dreams, a summer program of master classes and mentorship opportunities provided by some of the entertainment industry's most distinguished talent.

Outside of singing and performing, Lauren served as the secretary of National Honor Society and a member of Future Business Leaders of America.

Lauren will be attending Wagner College to major in theater performance. She looks forward to being involved in student-run productions, musicals, and the theater advisory board.



After years of practice and sacrifice, **Abby Kapp** is reaping the rewards. As captain of the girls' basketball team, the talented athlete led her team as they became the 2017

Girls Basketball State Champions. Personally, she broke two school records—all-time leading scorer (1,671) and leading rebounder (1,080).

In 2016–17, Abby was named to the First Team 6A All-State Team, the All USA PA Girls Second Team, and the Philadelphia Inquirer All-Southeast Girls Basketball First Team, and was chosen as Pottstown Mercury Player of the Year and Reading Eagle TriCounty Player of the Year.

Abby is grateful to her parents, who have pushed her to be the best person she can be athletically and academically. She also appreciates her coaches, whom she says have shaped her in so many ways.

Abby was also a member of the National Honor Society. She will attend Bucknell University on a basketball scholarship and will enter as an undecided freshman.



Sarah McCafferty has expertly balanced volunteering, extra-curricular activities, and academics.

A Girl Scout since kindergarten, Sarah earned her Bronze Award and recently bridged to adult Girl Scouts. Her favorite two weeks each summer are those she spends at Holly Pines Girl Scout Camp as a counselor. She is inspired by Nikki, the camp director, who she says is "the mom I want to be one day."

Academically, Sarah took several honors and Advanced Placement classes and volunteered as a Spanish tutor. She credits Senoia Elizabeth Dominguez for igniting her passion for Spanish.

"She made the class fun," Elizabeth says. "She is an awesome leader, kind and fair to everyone."

An active volunteer throughout high school, Sarah earned a Green Cord, awarded to students who contribute at least 100 hours of community service during a school year.

A member of student council since her sophomore year, Sarah served as the Mini-Thon Chair her senior year. She was also a member of the National Honor Society.

Sarah will attend the University of Pittsburgh to major in business and Spanish. Her goal is to become fluent in Spanish and study abroad.

Sarah has played tennis since the ninth grade and was first varsity doubles her senior year. She is looking forward to continuing to play for fun after high school.



After three years in the health occupations program at the Berks Career and Technical Center, **Courtney Moyer** will continue her education at Eastern Uni-

versity. She will major in nursing, a path she chose after standing by her father's side as he underwent two kidney transplants and other health challenges.

While at Berks, Courtney was involved in Future Health Professionals (formerly Health Occupations Students of America) and the National Technical Honor Society. She also had perfect attendance and was named Student of the Quarter.

At Boyertown Area Senior High, Courtney received high honors and was a member of the National Honor Society. She also ran track and field for the high school.

Courtney encourages other students to consider the Berks Career and Technical Center, as it provides "great experience that allows you to get a jump start on your career." Courtney plans on taking her CNA exam before graduation, with the goal of working in her field while attending Eastern.



Christopher Moccia is a dedicated student-athlete who got a jump on his college career.

His high school athletic career included four years each of ice hockey and

lacrosse and three years of golf. He served as captain of the ice hockey team his junior and senior years and as captain of the lacrosse team his senior year. He has been playing both sports since elementary school.

In the classroom, Christopher received high honors throughout his four years at Boyertown Area Senior High. He

also took advantage of the concurrent enrollment program, an effort by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to encourage a broader range of students to experience postsecondary coursework and its increased academic rigor while still in the supportive environment of their local high school. Through this program, Christopher graduated with twelve college credits from Montgomery County Community College. He is grateful to his guidance counselor, Ms. Sandra Gallagher, for helping him to understand the concurrent enrollment program.

Christopher will enter Temple University in the fall and will major in nursing.



From dance to twirling to makeup, **Samantha Yagley's** passion for the arts spans the gamut.

Samantha began dancing soon after she could walk.

She enjoys all types of dance, including ballet, tap, jazz, and modern. She started competing in eighth grade and continues to compete once a year. She began baton twirling at the age of five

and started competing when she was in the fifth grade. She became a volunteer coach in the seventh grade.

Samantha also volunteered at a gymnastics studio during the summer, as well as at the Devon Horse Show. Her volunteer hours earned her a Green Cord.

At Boyertown Area Senior High, Samantha took Advanced Placement Art, where she was able to choose the theme of her work: movie monsters. She also took Advanced Drawing as a concurrent-enrollment course with Montgomery County Community College, where she earned three college credits.

Amid all her activities, Samantha found time to work multiple jobs during the school year and summer months.

Her passion for the arts will take her to the Savannah College of Art and Design's Atlanta campus, where she will major in sculpting, specializing in prosthetic art. With this degree, Samantha can work in the entertainment industry as a makeup artist or create cadavers for medical schools. Samantha will also take fashion classes so that she can understand costuming.

Samantha will minor in dance and is looking for a coach in the Atlanta area so that she can continue twirling.



A Trip Around the World Without Leaving Home

After weeks of research and preparation, sixth grade students at Colebrookdale Elementary School were ready to answer questions and stamp the passports of the tourists (students and families) who stopped by their country during the school's International Festival. Held every year, the International Festival is the culminating event of a research project that celebrates the diversity within the school and the community. Its purpose is to encourage the students to be aware of the larger world through the eyes of their peers.

To prepare for the festival, each sixth grade student

chose a country and prepared a research paper that described the nation's geography, culture, economy, and history. Students were also required to create a display that included a technology component, such as a video or game. Some students added to their display by bringing in food from their country.

Justice Ramsay chose to research Jamaica because it's the country where both of her parents were born, and her ancestor, James Ramsey, was highly influential in the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, which affected the country.

Aiden Izzo chose to do his project on Germany because his mother's family is German and the country's history intrigues him. He also likes its culture and its cars.

Brooke Eidle loves the art and scenery of Paris, so she decided to do her project on France. Brooke brought French macarons to share.

Overall, it was a successful event that will help prepare the sixth grade students for middle school next year. The International Festival also serves as a No Place for Hate activity for the school.

A Hands-On Night of Science

Sixty Pine Forge Elementary School students and their families spent an evening experiencing the wonders of science at the school's second Science Night, hosted by the school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA).

After donning laboratory coats and safety glasses, the students dug into hands-on experiments that taught them about density, electricity, inertia, and chemical reactions. There were six stations, including a simple circuit station and a station that demonstrated a chemical reaction resulting in slime, which the students could take home. Another station explored density by having students make their own lava lamps, using food coloring, water, and vegetable oil.

Mr. Stephen DeRafelo, a parent and eighth grade science teacher at Owen J. Roberts Middle School, amazed the students with presentations about air pressure, centrifugal force, and Bernoulli's Principle.

Even the evening's snacks had a science theme: students learned the science behind ice cream and made molecules from pretzels and cheese cubes.

Overall, it was a great evening, with many teachers and principal Mr. Stephan Pron assisting students with their experiments and helping them further their love of science.

Fourth grade student Lilly Kerkusz learned about currents and electricity at Pine Forge Elementary School's Night of Science.



Innovation Takes Center Stage

Imagine if your employer encouraged you to set aside your workload and explore a passion or idea—and that they allowed you to take a whole day once a week to bring it to life. That's the essence of "20 percent time," in which Google encourages its employees to spend up to 20 percent of their time working on an individually driven project that "they think will most benefit Google," whether it falls under their job description or not. The model has a history dating back to the 1950s, when 3M's 15 Percent Project gave us Post-It Notes and masking tape. Google's program has brought us Gmail, Google News, and AdSense.

The movement is catching on in schools, where teachers are beginning to set aside class time to encourage students to pursue this form of self-guided learning.

This year, junior high students in the Boyertown Area School District participated in the Intentional Innovation Project. Students in the Gifted Science Program used the "20 percent time" model over the course of the year to create innovative products based on their skills, talents, or interests. The project culminated in TED-style presentations where students shared their projects with peers, teachers, parents, and community members.

The theory is that this model allows innovative ideas and projects to succeed or fail without the bureaucracy of committees and budgets. In schools, where this type of learning has become more and more common, student-centered learning allows

students the opportunity to develop skills without explicit instruction.

"For over 20 years, a trend in education has been gaining momentum that suggests that the role of the teacher ought to shift away from the industrial model of teaching to a model where educators play the role of a 'guide on the side,'" explains Mrs. Brandy Solomon, one of the educators implementing this technique in her classroom.

The project was structured around a series of small deadlines as students worked through the phases of brainstorming, proposal writing, marketing, developing the product, and then presenting their work in a final presentation. The proposals answered questions such as who would use the product, why it was important, and what expenses and timelines the students expected. The marketing aspect required each student to update a blog about what they learned, what challenges they faced, and what they hoped to see happening as they moved forward with their project.

Shane Gabriel, a seventh grade student, was inspired by his love for hiking and backpacking. Shane wanted to make a water filter that was easy to use, lightweight, and portable. Through his research, he realized that there were several options on the market that offered the same functions he was looking for. Instead of developing a new product, Shane decided to take one already on the market that he knew worked well, made by Sawyer Products, Inc., and design accessories to improve its usability.

"Everyone worked really hard on this project," Shane said. "It was a great feeling to be able to work on something that made me feel innovative. It was hard, but it was so much fun."

Adult mentors were a big part of this project, too. They offered advice, provided informational leadership, and followed the students' progress blogs. Greta Freed, also in seventh grade, credited her mentor and gymnastics coach, Miss Marci, for helping her develop her very own app, designed to increase motivation. "I am both a gymnast and a musician," explains Greta. "It takes a lot of motivation to keep on top of all of my responsibilities, and it can be hard." The app, called iCan, is based on Greta's research on ways to increase the body's production of dopamine, a compound present in our bodies that causes us to feel happiness. Greta built the app using Appy Pie, a cloud-based Mobile Apps Builder Software that allows users to create Android and iPhone applications and publish them to Google Play and iTunes, with no programming skills necessary.

"The project was a huge success for the students, teachers, and mentors involved," says Mrs. Solomon. "Our hope was to de-emphasize the grade, because we didn't want to discourage the innovation and creativity that we were looking for. Instead, we used this as an opportunity to teach students that while they shouldn't strive for failure, they shouldn't be afraid of it either."

The Very, Hungry Caterpillars

After preparing for their arrival by reading informative books and completing instructional worksheets, kindergarteners in Mrs. Caitie Stehman's morning and afternoon classes were excited to welcome special little guests to their classroom on May 4.

Ten caterpillars arrived at Pine Forge Elementary School in closed cups with all the nutritious food and moisture they needed to grow into gorgeous painted lady butterflies. For approximately 10 days, the students watched the caterpillars eat, spin silk, and grow to 10 times their original size. This was Jacob Hoffman's and McKenna Detwiler's favorite part. By contrast, their classmates Kendal Freitag and Tyler Paukovits were convinced that watching the caterpillars to turn first into chrysalides and then into butterflies would be their favorite moments.

Although the students were enthusiastic about seeing and touching the caterpillars, they handled the creatures with care, remembering to stay quiet around them and to never shake the cups.

After the butterflies' emergence from their chrysalides, the students were able to observe their behaviors and feed them fruit and nectar until it was time to let them fly away.

Both the morning and afternoon classes created a classroom journal to record this wonderful year-end activity.



Jacob Hoffman and Kendall Freitag use a magnifying glass to watch the caterpillars eat.

From the Foundation for Boyertown Education Grant Supports Makerspace Carts

After writing a grant to obtain two mobile makerspace carts to house at Pine Forge and Earl Elementary Schools, instructional coaches Mrs. Rebecca Hester and Mrs. Dana Kramaroff embarked on a mission to spread the joy and powerful learning of the makerspace movement. A makerspace is a place in which people with shared interests, especially in technology, can gather to work on projects while sharing ideas, creating, and solving problems together.

In addition to bringing makerspace carts to the two elementary school buildings, Mrs. Hester and Mrs. Kramaroff supported a makerspace experience for classroom teachers and students as part of their coaching work.

For example, they developed challenges to engage Mr. John Hazel's third-grade students at Pine Forge Elementary School. Each challenge used the materials from the cart—such as K'Nex pieces, Dash

and Dot robots, Legos, Ozobots, Makey Makey, a Rube Goldberg kit, and iPad coding software—and required students to apply skills such as collaborative discussion, synthesizing, asking and answering questions, analyzing, and evaluating and critiquing ideas.

One challenge asked students to create a “snowplow” out of Legos and attach it to the Dash robot to move “snow” (cotton balls) across the room. Students used the Dash and Dot application on the iPad to create a program to move the Dash robot.

Another challenge had students create a track for the Ozobot, utilizing four different Ozobot markers. They were required to roll four dice with specific programming patterns and time requirements, then create a track made of those patterns.

The Foundation for Boyertown Education is thankful to the community for helping it support innovative projects in our schools.



TSA Shines at State Conference

This spring, 16 students from the Boyertown Junior High West Technology Student Association Chapter and 32 students from Boyertown Junior High East Technology Student Association Chapter participated in the 2017 Pennsylvania TSA State Conference. There were 1,869 students in total attendance with 702 participating middle school students and 1,167 participating high school students competing.

Two Boyertown West TSA alumni and current Boyertown Area Senior High TSA members ran for state office with one student, sophomore Abigail Reigner, elected PATSA state treasurer for the 2017-2018 term.

Boyertown Junior High West students who placed in the top ten in the state in following events included:

Biotechnology: Raegan McDevitt, Natalia Martin, Danielle Eslava, Dana Eslava, Lianne Morrell, and Natalie Zaleski; 10th place

Catapult Design: Ethan Josuweit, Brady Gibbons, and Christian Freimann; 9th place

Essays on Technology: Sianna Swavely; 5th place

Forensic Technology: Sianna Swavely and Emily Hoffmeyer; 2nd place

Invention and Innovations: Danielle Eslava, Caleb Reidinger, and Natalie Zaleski; 9th place

Mass Production: Ty Kennedy, Emily Hoffmeyer, and Sianna Swavely; 8th place

Medical Technology: Dana Eslava, Danielle Eslava, Lianne Morrell, and Natalie Zaleski; 10th place

Microcontroller Design: Dana Eslava, Danielle Eslava, Lianne Morrell, and Natalie Zaleski; 2nd place

Problem Solving: Raegan McDevitt and Natalia Martin; 9th place

PA Digital Video Challenge: Natalia Martin and Raegan McDevitt; 7th place

PA-VEX Robotic: Dana Eslava, Gavin Rees, Caleb Reidinger, and Luke Yambor; 2nd place

“This group of students worked afterschool once or twice a week from October through April as well as sometimes meeting weekends to work on their events,” said Mr. Kevin Reigner, Boyertown Junior High West technology education teacher and TSA advisor. “They were extremely well mannered and behaved during the conference, and truly embodied the Junior High West spirit of “Be Awesome”.

Boyertown Junior High East students who placed in the top ten in the state in following events included:

Career Prep: Scott Barrett, 3rd Place; Daniel Sanchez, 6th place

Challenging Technology Issues: John Black, Annie Howald, Derek Klass, Elizabeth Lilly, Drew Smyth, and Kate Towers, 3rd place; Derek Klass and Drew Smyth, 7th place; Mackenzie Reynolds and Kate Towers, 9th place

Dragster: Cameron Doorey, 5th Place; David Frisco, 7th Place; Kai Gabriel, 8th Place; John Black, 10th place

Essays on Technology: Annie Howald, 2nd Place; Mackenzie Reynolds, 6th Place; John Black; 10th place

Flight: Scott Barrett, 8th place

Junior Solar Sprint: Cameron Doorey, Jacob English, David Frisco, and Kai Gabriel, 3rd place; Katherine Clarkson, Grace Myers, Annalisa Schaar, Rachanee Tith, 9th place; Kyle Engler, Josh Leshinskie, Isaac Miller, and Mark Longenberger, 10th place

Leadership Strategies: Annie Howald, Elizabeth Lilly, and Kate Towers, 3rd place

Mass Production: Scott Barrett, John Black, Cameron Doorey, Jacob English, David Frisco, and Kai Gabriel, 2nd place

Medical Technology Issues: Annie Howald, Elizabeth Lilly, Mackenzie Reynolds, Kate Towers, and Jordan Woodring, 2nd place

Prepared Speech: Kate Towers, 7th place

Problem Solving: Cameron Doorey and Kai Gabriel; 6th place

STEM Animation: Angelique Bauer, Katherine Clarkson, Grace Myers, Daniel Sanchez, Annalisa Schaar, Rachanee Tith; 4th place

Tech Bowl: John Black, Derek Klass, and Drew Smyth; 2nd place

Technical Design: Annie Howald and Derek Klass, 2nd Place; Jacob English and David Frisco, 5th place

Website Design: Katherine Clarkson, Grace Myers, Mackenzie Reynolds, Annalisa Schaar, Rachanee Tith, Jordan Woodring; 5th place

PA - Calculator Robots: Josh Leshinskie and Mark Longenberger; 9th place

PA - R/C Off-Road Racing: Anthony Bauer, Michael Kneidinger, and Wesley Roma; 5th place

PA - Robotics: Derek Klass, Elizabeth Lilly, and Drew Smyth, 3rd place; Angelique Bauer, Katherine Clarkson, Grace Myers, and Rachanee Tith; 10th place

“The students competed at a high level for the duration of the conference,” commented Mr. Todd Kennedy, Boyertown Junior High East technology education teacher and TSA advisor. “With the will to do their best, all student participants proudly represented the Boyertown Area School District. Our chapter’s inexperience was overshadowed by determination and focus. That determination and focus allowed our students to achieve and succeed at a high level on a very big stage.”

District’s Music Program Receives National Recognition

The Boyertown Area School District has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from the NAMM Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. This prestigious award was given to just 4 percent of districts across the nation in 2017.

The Best Communities Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in their efforts to provide music access and education to all students. To qualify, the District answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and community programs. Responses were verified by school officials and reviewed by the Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

“The Best Communities for Music designation recognizes not only the outstanding achievements of the music students and staff in Boyertown, but also the contributions of the entire music community,” says Mr. Michael Jordan, lead teacher for the arts. “The tradition of excellence in our music program starts with the talented and dedicated music staff, but it continues into community music organizations that provide opportunities to perform well after graduation.”

This award recognizes that the Boyertown Area School District is leading the way with music learning opportunities, as outlined in the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

“This award confirms what we know about our

excellent programs for students in music and related arts,” said District Superintendent Dr. Richard Faidley. “It also highlights music’s vital role in our students’ overall success in school and the personal benefits of making music.”

Research into music education continues to demonstrate educational, cognitive, and social-skill benefits for children who make music. A series of landmark studies by scientists and researchers at Northwestern University found a link between students in community music programs and lifelong academic success, including higher high-school graduation rates and college attendance. Another study discovered that early exposure to music education improves how the brain processes and assimilates sounds well into adulthood.

Athletic & Academic Highlights

Congratulations to the Lady Bears Basketball team for bringing home the state championship!

Congratulations to Boyertown Area Senior High junior Colin Black who was elected to be the 2018 Youth and Government Governor. Colin also awarded Delegate of the Year for the Blue House of Representatives.

Congratulations to Boyertown Area Senior High sophomore Abigail Reigner for her appointment as the state treasurer for the PA Technology Student Association State executive board.

Congratulations to recent graduate Abby Kapp for being named Miss Pennsylvania Basketball.

Congratulations to the National Honor Society for being awarded the Miller-Keystone Blood Center award for the largest increase in donations from the previous year (128%), as well as the high school with the most consecutive years of service to their community - 22 years!

Congratulations to the following BASH graduates who will be continuing their athletic careers at the college level:

- Matt Wilde wrestling at Ursinus College
- Katie Armstrong basketball at Emmanuel College
- Nikhil Verma soccer at King's College
- Kaitlyn Berger field hockey at McDaniel College.
- Abby Kapp basketball at Bucknell University.
- Alyssa Acker softball at Alvernia University.
- Allison Bardman lacrosse at Bloomsburg University.
- Cara Megill swimming and diving team at University of Rhode Island.
- Emily Bradley softball team at Philadelphia University.
- Hannah Wentzel lacrosse at the University of Delaware.
- Hailey Heimbach lacrosse at Coastal Carolina University.
- Ivan Escott swimming and diving team at Eastern Illinois University.



- Kaitlyn Kada lacrosse at Seton Hill University.
- Kody Streeter has verbally committed to play softball at Susquehanna University.
- Lauren Gabel softball at Penn State University, Berks Campus.
- Senior Maddy Siejk lacrosse at Lock Haven University.
- Senior Rachel Neff lacrosse at East Stroudsburg University.
- Senior Patrick Holthfeld baseball at Philadelphia University.
- Senior Patrick Lance swimming and diving team at Cleveland State University.
- Senior Tiffany Diachynsky lacrosse at Bloomsburg University.
- Senior Tyler Kreitz baseball at Penn State University, Berks Campus.

BASH Seniors Leave a Legacy



On graduation night, **Lucia Bellino** stood in front of her peers as their salutatorian, an honor that she worked hard to accom-

plish. However, this bright graduate has also left her mark outside of the classroom.

Volunteering through The Seeing Eye, Lucia has been a puppy raiser since eighth grade; she has raised three puppies, helping to prepare them to become guide dogs for people who are visually impaired. She explains that a project she did in seventh grade on therapy dogs led her to persuade her parents to allow her to raise her first puppy. Her volunteer efforts earned her a scholarship from The Seeing Eye.

Lucia was a member of the Boyertown Area Senior High Student Council, and in her senior year she served as the Fun/Wish Week Chair. Wish Week takes place the week before winter break. It begins with everyone in the building making a wish for themselves or someone else in the building. Wishes can be as simple as "I wish for a milkshake to be delivered to me during third period" or as complex as "I wish that the marching band would play Christmas carols through the school's halls." Members of the Student Council grant wishes throughout the week before winter break; in 2016, 919 wishes were granted.

Lucia was inducted into the National Honor Society and served as chapter president during her senior year. In this position, she helped to organize service project opportunities as well as the alumni tea and the senior prom, which was held at Boyertown Area Multi-Service.

She was a member of TSA (Technology Student Association), a national organization that provides personal development, leadership, and career opportunities in STEM. TSA members apply and integrate these concepts through intra-curricular activities, competitions, and related programs. Lucia competed in biotech design, debating tech issues, on-demand video, and digital video production.

Lucia will attend Rutgers University in the fall and has been accepted into the honors college. She

plans to major in chemistry with a minor in environmental science.

Lucia appreciates the time that her science teacher, Mrs. Jessica Donovan, spent with her explaining concepts and guiding her through the college application process.

She also appreciates BASH's flexibility in scheduling, which allowed her to take Spanish and English over the summer of 2016 at Montgomery County Community College. It also enabled her to take additional math and science courses during her senior year.

"I am so glad that I did this," Lucia says of taking the summer classes last year. "It enabled me to find my passion for environmental science in my senior year."



For **Abigail Keebler**, music and science are both her legacy and her future.

Not only does Abigail sing with BASH's chorus and show choir, but she also has played the viola for eight years, and has performed with

orchestras at the county, district, and regional levels. She hopes to continue playing viola at college.

"I have grown so much as a musician by having the opportunity to play challenging music," Abigail says of her experiences over her high school years.

Abigail's passion for science has been nurtured since she was in the seventh grade, and she competed as a member of the high school's Science Olympiad team. In her senior year, she competed in the science competition's Astronomy, Rocks and Minerals, and Dynamic Planet categories.

In the summer of 2016, Abigail attended the PA Governors School for the Sciences. She describes this five-week program at Carnegie Mellon University as a "life-changing event."

"Not only did I learn so much about science," Abigail explains. "I was with a diverse group of students who wanted to learn about science. We were all there for

the sole purpose of learning, and we knew that if we collaborated we could figure out anything."

Abigail will attend West Chester University, where she was accepted into the honors college and received a scholarship. Abigail will major in geoscience with a minor in astronomy. Her goal is to earn her Ph.D.

Abigail did receive a National Merit Scholarship, but will not be able to use it because its use was tied to another college.

Looking back on her years at BASH, Abigail appreciates the relationships she was able to form with her teachers, and says that while the material was challenging, AP Physics was an awesome and rewarding class.



Growing up around his grandfather's garage, **Stone Sheetz** knows a lot about motors and drive-trains; however, he admits that three years ago,

he knew nothing about how to fix a dent in a car. That changed after he enrolled in Berks Career and Technology Center's (BCTC) Automotive Collision Repair Technology program.

For three years, Stone would attend BCTC in the morning and would then go to BASH to take his academic classes. This year, as a member of the Class of 2017, Stone graduated at the top of his class as the Berks Career and Technology Center's Student of the Year.

Stone was a member of the National Technical Honor Society for two years, and competed in Skills USA competitions, where he placed second at the district level in the collision repair competition two years in a row.

While Stone received job offers, he has decided to continue his education at the University of Northwestern Ohio. He will major in High Performance Tech and Motorsports. It is a year-round program that will take him two and a half years to complete. Stone is excited, in part because the college partners with Hot Rod magazine and NASCAR.

Stone recommends BCTC. "The school prepares you for the real world," he said. "The other students and faculty become like your family."