



# KENNETT

CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

December 2014

## Nonprofit Organizations Supporting KCSD Students

Here in the Kennett Consolidated School District, we are very fortunate to have many outstanding local nonprofit organizations that support our school community. They work in conjunction with the schools to provide programs, volunteers, services, camps, activities, and all types of support for students in the Kennett schools. Highlighted below are just three of the many organizations that play a key role in helping our students.

**After-the-Bell** was created specifically to address the 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. time period after school but before parents get home from work. In this transition time, interested middle school students are provided a safe, enriching environment with a wide array of activities from which to choose. It is a free program to our middle school students and comes at no direct cost to the taxpayer or School District. The program fosters values such as respect for self and others, caring relationships with adults, improved interpersonal and social behaviors, appreciation for volunteerism, and exploration of varied opportunities.

There are a wide variety of academic, recreational, social, and cultural activities to meet the varied interests of middle school students, with students choosing two activities per cycle. The exceptional list of activities includes programs such as Reading Olympics, Science Experiments, Lego Robotics, photography, knitting, guitar lessons, gardening, arts and crafts, cooking, Homework Help, board games, computers, dance, babysitting classes, first aid, bowling, yoga, tennis, martial arts, swimming, and many, many more fun programs. Additionally, all students receive a free healthy snack and free bus transportation home.

The After-the-Bell program relies heavily on volunteers to run the programs and personal financial gifts and in-kind donations to fund the programs. Find out more about After-the-Bell at [www.afterthebell.org](http://www.afterthebell.org).

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## Kennett High School Celebrates Seniors Recognized by National Merit

Kennett High School is proud to announce this year's National Merit Semifinalists and Commended Students.

### Semifinalists

Seven Kennett High School students (pictured at right) have been recognized as National Merit Semifinalists in the 60th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Seniors (back row, from left) Richard Doty, Jonathan Baumel, P.J. O'Sullivan, Liam Bonnage, (front row, from left) Katie Gallivan, Dave Lavin, and Nichol Brown were among approximately 1.4 million juniors who entered the 2015 National Merit Program by taking the 2013 Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test that served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists represents less than one percent of high school seniors and includes the highest scoring entrants in each state.

These students are eligible to continue in the program competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarship awards worth more than \$33 million to be offered in the spring. To advance to the finalist level and to be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, semifinalists must fulfill several additional requirements. These include an outstanding academic record, endorsement by the principal, and SAT scores that confirm the preliminary results.

### Commended

Eleven Kennett High School seniors (at right) received Letters of Commendation in recognition of their

outstanding academic promise: (back row, from left) Stephen Doroba, Annabelle Schmitt, Jessica Rosenau, Phoebe Hertler, Arshia Faghri, Matthew Bunke, (front row, from left) Kavya Shetty, Hali Jiang, Zixuan Shen, and Laura Elliott. Not pictured is Jacob Ettinger, currently attending the University of Southern California.



Dr. Michael Barber, Kennett High School principal, said, "We are so proud of these outstanding students, not only for their exceptional performance on standardized tests but also for all the other ways in which they enrich the Kennett Square community."



## Kennett Consolidated School District Ranks Among the Best

Kennett Consolidated School District has been ranked the 42nd best school district in the Commonwealth, according to a national ranking agency that rates both hard data and student surveys.

The rankings were compiled by Niche.com. The website, founded in 2002 by Carnegie Mellon University students, has grown into one of the largest websites in the country to evaluate, among other things, colleges and school districts.

In combination with insight from students, parents, and professionals, Niche.com uses the most recent statistics from the U.S. Department of Education to determine rankings.

School districts also received letter grades in seven different areas, including academics and extracurricular activities, student culture and diversity, and

resources and facilities to elaborate on rankings. The Kennett Consolidated School District received an overall grade of A. "Kennett has a lot of strengths, but there is no greater strength than the parents in the District who cooperate with an outstanding group of teachers and administrators," said Dr. Barry Tomasetti, superintendent of the Kennett Consolidated School District. It's a combination of hard-working students and very competent and diligent teachers. Our teachers at all levels are very generous with their time in meeting with students before school, after school, and during planning periods. Those efforts have measurable results."

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## District Directory

### KENNETT CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

300 East South Street  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
610-444-6600  
Fax: 610-444-6614  
www.KCSD.org

#### Board of School Directors

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Sharon Bennett, Director of Special Education  
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Jane Pedroso, Curriculum Supervisor for Language Arts and Social Studies  
Dr. Lydia Hallman, Curriculum Supervisor for Mathematics and Science

#### Kennett High School (grades 9-12)

100 East South Street  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
610-444-6620  
Dr. Michael Barber, Principal  
Raymond Fernandez, Assistant Principal  
Dr. Tomorrow Jenkins, Assistant Principal  
Jeffery Thomas, Assistant Principal and Athletic Director

#### Kennett Middle School (grades 6-8)

195 Sunny Dell Road  
Landenberg, PA 19350  
610-268-5800  
Dr. John E. Carr, Principal  
Lorenzo DeAngelis, Assistant Principal  
Dr. Jeremy Hritz, Assistant Principal

#### Bancroft Elementary School

181 Bancroft Road  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
610-925-5711  
Leah McComsey, Principal

#### Greenwood Elementary School

420 Greenwood Road  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
610-388-5990  
Tracey Marino, Principal

#### Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center

409 Center Street  
Kennett Square, PA 19348  
610-444-6260  
Carla Horn, Principal

#### New Garden Elementary School

265 New Garden Road  
Toughkenamon, PA 19374  
610-268-6900  
Susan McArdle, Principal

#### Non-Discrimination Policy

The Kennett Consolidated School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. Kennett Consolidated School District students and parents who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination, or who need information about accommodations for persons with disabilities, should contact the Superintendent's Office at 300 East South Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348, telephone (610) 444-6600.

The Kennett Consolidated School District Newsletter is published by Kennett Consolidated School District

For questions or comments email us at [PR@KCSD.org](mailto:PR@KCSD.org)

## Alumni Spotlight: Kennett Alumni at Home in the Courtroom

Even before pursuing a career in law, Mr. Ryan A. McLeod, class of 2000, was proving himself to be a leader. During his time at Kennett Middle School and Kennett High School, Ryan was instrumental in the fledgling years of three popular organizations: After the Bell, Kinetic Energy, and the Latin Club.

Ryan explained that Kinetic Energy was founded at the middle school to encourage parents to keep their children in public school. Ryan was also one of After the Bell's first high school facilitators teaching creative writing and computers, commenting that he loved that program.

Arriving at Kennett High School, Ryan worked with Mr. Vince Civiletti found the Latin Club. For Ryan, one of the highlights of participating in this club was attending the Junior Classical Week Convention at Penn State.

Looking back on his years at Kennett High School, Ryan speaks fondly of Mr. Civiletti and Mrs. Deborah Roselle. "Both teachers managed to blend robust intellectual curiosity with fun," Ryan said. "This is a mix I inspire to achieve in the classroom."

And while he didn't like math, he said that Ms. Anne Carroll had a great impact on his work ethic.

Ryan received his bachelor's degree in Latin and English, graduating summa cum laude, from Ursinus College in

2004, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He received his Juris Doctor from the Duke University School of Law, where he graduated magna cum laude and was elected to the Order of the Coif and was awarded the Faculty Prize for Achievement in Business Law and Finance.

Ryan had considered teaching for a long time but wasn't enamored with the education courses he took at Ursinus College. After considering his strengths — reading and writing — he decided to pursue a career in law. "It is an intelligent profession," Ryan said. "It is problem solving that involves collaboration with individuals who are smarter than me."

Ryan joined Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen, & Katz's Litigation department as an associate in 2008. Located in New York, his practice focuses on representing corporations and directors in complex corporate, commercial, and deal-related litigation and on advising clients on transactional, fiduciary, and governance matters.

"A comedian once said that practicing law was like constantly doing homework, and I loved homework!"

Ryan teaches seminars on corporate litigation at Columbia Law School and the Duke University School of Law, and



he is admitted to practice in New York and Delaware.

While he admits that he spends a lot of time at the office, Ryan focuses on seeing friends as much as possible and has taken up running to relieve stress. Ryan also enjoys traveling and recently visited London to attend a wedding.

*If you know of a Kennett High School alumnus who would be a good candidate for a spotlight, please email [PR@KCSD.org](mailto:PR@KCSD.org).*

## Title I Parent Night Provides Overview of Program

The library at New Garden Elementary School was bustling with energy as the Title I interventionist, Mrs. Jennifer McGee, provided an overview of the Kennett Consolidated School District's Title I program. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the purpose of Title 1 funding is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and to reach, at minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

The basic principles of Title 1 state that schools with large concentrations of low-income students will receive supplemental funds to assist in meeting all students' educational goals. Low-income students are identified as those enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program. For an entire school to qualify for Title 1 funds, at least 40 percent of students must enroll in the free and reduced lunch program.

At New Garden Elementary School, as well as at the Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center and Bancroft Elementary School, any child who scores below benchmark on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) test is offered additional support that is made possible through Title I funding.



This support includes half-hour small group reading sessions that are facilitated by Mrs. McGee

"The overall goal is to ensure that every child is on target with his or her grade level," Mrs. McGee said.

To receive Title I funding, schools are required to conduct an annual meeting with parents and guardians in order to provide assistance in understanding the Commonwealth's academic content standards and student academic achieve-

ment standards, state and local academic assessments, the requirements of Title I, and how each child's progress is monitored.

During New Garden Elementary School's Title I Parent Night, Mrs. McGee modeled how to ask comprehension questions while reading to a child to keep them engaged. Parents, students, and teachers also recited a promise to help their child reach his or her reading goals and to stay involved in their child's learning.

## Excel Boot Camp for College Students

College undergraduate students with time off between semesters have a unique opportunity to learn Microsoft Excel from industry leader Chatham Financial. During this two-day workshop on January 6-7, 2015, students will learn new skills that will build their resume and set them apart from the crowd. The event includes an intense Excel seminar and an interactive case study exercise, plus chances to network and learn about the finance industry.

Registration is first-come-first-served, and space is limited for this free boot camp at Chatham Financial in Kennett Square. Attendees will need to complete a pre-requisite online Excel course by December 30, 2014, to complete the registration process. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/1oop17r> or email [bootcamp@chathamfinancial.com](mailto:bootcamp@chathamfinancial.com).

## Winter Weather Reminder

While falling snow brings snowmen, sledding, and hot chocolate, it can also bring delayed openings and school closings. In either event, the District's communication system, Connect-ED, will be used to notify parents. Please have an emergency plan for your children to follow should school be dismissed early and no one is home.

Listed below are valuable sources that will carry school closing, late opening, and early dismissal information for the schools in the Kennett Consolidated School District.

Transportation Hotline: 610-444-7456

TV Stations: Fox-TV 29, KYW-TV3, NBC-TV 10, WPVI-TV 6

Radio Stations: KYW-1060 AM, WSTW-93.7 FM, WCOJ 1420 AM, WDEL 1150 AM, WILM-1450 AM

The District's school number is 880.

## What Is Mental Health? Tips for Parents and Educators

October 10 celebrated World Mental Health Day and reminded us to be aware of our own mental health as well as that of those around us.

Mental health, like physical health, may be viewed as existing on a continuum from healthy living to chronic illness. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. A person with positive mental health uses interpersonal skills and coping skills to function successfully in his or her daily life. Mental health problems emerge when the coping skills begin to deteriorate, resulting in a struggle to cope with life's challenges and responsibilities. The continued deterioration of these skills signals the onset of mental illness as significant distortions to thinking and coping that impair a person's ability to perform daily activities. Mental health concerns affect individuals regardless of races, religions, and socio-economic status. All people fall on the continuum on any given day.

Children and adolescents spend a majority of their time in school. Schools are primarily academic in focus. However, in order to have students meet their potential, schools must be able to remove barriers to student learning such as mental health concerns. Research demonstrates that students with good mental health are more successful in school. One study provided strong evidence that interventions that strengthen students' social, emotional, and decision-making skills also positively affected their academic achievement in terms of higher standardized test scores and better grades (Fleming et al., 2005).

### How can parents and educators support the mental health of children and adolescents?

Home and school connectedness. Building strong, positive relationships among students, school staff, and parents is important to promoting mental wellness.

Promote resilience. Adversity is a natural part of life and being resilient is important to good mental health. Connectedness, competency, helping others, and successfully facing and problem-solving difficult situations can foster resilience.

Develop competencies. Children need to know that they can overcome challenges and accomplish goals through their actions. Achieving academic success and developing individual talents and interests helps children feel competent and more able to deal with stress positively. Social competency is also important. Having friends and staying connected to friends and loved ones fosters mental wellness.

Ensure positive, safe home and school environments. Feeling safe is critical to students' learning and mental health. Promote positive behaviors such as respect, responsibility, and kindness. Prevent negative behaviors such as bullying and harassment. Provide easily understood rules of conduct and fair discipline practices at school and at home. Teach children to work together to stand up to a bully, encourage them to reach out to lonely or excluded peers, celebrate acts of kindness, and reinforce and identify the availability of adult support.

Teach and reinforce positive behaviors and decision-making. Provide consistent expectations and support. Teaching children social skills, problem-solving, and conflict resolution supports good mental health. Positive feedback validates and reinforces healthy behaviors.

Encourage helping others. Children need to know that they can effect change. Helping others and getting involved in the community reinforces being part of their community.

Encourage good physical health. Good physical health supports good mental health. Regular exercise and a healthy diet decreases negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, and depression.



Educate staff, parents, and students on symptoms of mental health problems and on available help. Information enables adults and students to recognize when to seek help. School mental health professionals can provide useful information on symptoms of problems such as depression or suicide risk. These can include a change in habits, withdrawal, decreased social and academic functioning, erratic or changed behavior, and increased physical complaints.

Access school-based mental health supports. School psychologists, counselors, and social workers can provide a continuum of mental health services for students, ranging from universal mental wellness promotion and behavior supports to staff and parent training, identification, and assessment; early interventions; individual and group counseling; crisis intervention; and referral for community services.

Establish crisis response plans for at home and at school. Being prepared to respond to a crisis is important to safeguarding students' physical and mental well-being. Families should review safety and crisis plans in their home. School crisis teams should include relevant administrators, security personnel, and mental health professionals who collaborate with community resources.

### When do I seek help, and where do I go?

If you see a change in habits, withdrawal, decreased social and academic functioning, erratic or changed behavior, and increased physical complaints of your child/student, you should contact

your school counselor, social worker, or psychologist to discuss support options.

Please contact me at [KRentschler@kcsd.org](mailto:KRentschler@kcsd.org) should you have questions or ideas for future articles.

This article is adapted from the following:

National Association of School Psychologists. (n.d.) Supporting children's mental health: Tips for parents and educators. In Resource Library. Retrieved November 21, 2014, from <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/mentalhealth/mhtips.aspx>

Skalski, A. K., & Smith, M. J. (2006, September). Responding to mental health needs of students [Electronic version]. Student Services column. Principal Leadership, 12–15. Retrieved November 21, 2014, from <http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/School-Based%20Mental%20Health%20Services%20NASSP%20Sept%202006.pdf>

### Resources

Fleming, C. B., Haggerty, K. P., Catalano, R. F., Harachi, T. W., Mazza, J. J., & Gruman, D.H. (2005, November). Do social and behavioral characteristics targeted by preventive interventions predict standardized test scores and grades? *Journal of School Health*, 75(9), 342–349.

# High School Senior Youngest to Present at American Association for the Surgery of Trauma Conference

Kennett High School Senior Richard Doty (pictured at right) has always enjoyed speaking with his uncle, a trauma surgeon, when they were together at the holidays and family gatherings. Earlier this year the pair spoke about a widespread belief in the medical community that the very largest “mega hospitals” deliver the lowest mortality rates, thus leading to billion dollar investments in these huge centers.

“My uncle found it interesting that no one was conducting research in this area,” Richard explained. “I also found it to be an intriguing question, and with my father’s and uncle’s help I decided to spend time researching it.”

Richard’s uncle gave him access to the National Trauma Database from which he was able to pull data samples from 2012 and 2013. Richard explains that he was thankful for the new computer that he had recently finished building.

“To work with the amount of data I was looking at I needed a computer with more memory than the standard computer you buy off the shelf,” Richard said. “For example, Excel is normally only able to support up to 1 million lines of data. I was working with upwards to 2 million lines of data.”

His father helped him to compile the multiple data sets into one document. He then analyzed roughly a gigabyte of raw data encompassing over 800,000 patient medical records in different ways, and the results were not what he expected. He was expecting to find that the volume and size of the hospital wouldn’t matter and that the experience of the team in the trauma center would matter. However, Richard developed statistically irrefutable proof that “bigger is better” is not the “full truth.” Richard’s work established a groundbreaking finding that even small rural hospitals can perform at the top echelon provided

the patient-to-surgeon ratio is sufficient to give these doctors a high level of experience.

Moreover, through standard deviation mapping of performance quartiles, Richard became the first researcher to prove definitively the long-hypothesized “experience threshold” as a target for clinical practice. His work is equally reliable and vastly simpler than the current approach that relies upon multivariate logistic regression. This finding that experience is equal in value to, yet statistically independent of, size has profound implications for the trauma care infrastructure of the United States.

Through the research Richard conducted, the medical community now has tangible evidence and a proven methodology to show that adjusting patient-to-surgeon ratios is a faster, less costly, and more politically tenable solution than massive hospital construction projects. Richard’s recommendations, if fully implemented, could lower related mortality in under-performing hospitals by roughly 10% while simultaneously reducing trauma center infrastructure investments by anywhere from \$500 million to \$1 billion annually.

After completing this research at the end of his junior year when he was 16, Richard submitted it to the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma. After rigorous peer review of his work, Richard was invited to present his research as a podium speaker before the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma’s national meeting held in Philadelphia this past September. This is the largest and most prestigious governing body for trauma surgery in the United States, and the Annual Meeting is attended by close to 1,000 members. Richard earned his spot as a speaker through a blinded competitive selection process against tenured university professors and funded corporate researchers.

Richard is the youngest person ever to be invited to speak in the Association’s 73 year history; and, ironically, based on



his age at paper submission, would have been banned from even sitting in the audience based on the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma Conference’s minimum age restriction. In fact, due to a typo in the program, Richard was listed as Richard Doty, MD. When Richard reached the podium and disclosed that he was “only” a high school student the audience fell silent and then erupted into applause. In addition to his family, Kennett Middle School teacher Mr. Phil Reggio was in the audience.

“Throughout the years, Mr. Reggio has been a teacher, a mentor, and a friend to Richard,” Richard’s father, Mr. Dave Doty, said. “My wife and I feel strongly that Mr. Reggio went above and beyond every measure as an educator and left a positive and indelible mark on our son.”

“Standing at the podium was surreal for me,” Richard commented. “The entire time I kept thinking that I didn’t belong there.”

Additionally, based on the strength of his work, Richard was invited to submit a manuscript for publication in the *Journal of Trauma Surgery*, which would

make Richard one of the youngest persons ever to lead-author a scholarly work in any peer-reviewed medical journal. It is also notable, as the *Journal of Trauma Surgery* has never accepted a paper from an author not at least in his or her fourth year of medical school, let alone extended an invitation.

The chief of Trauma Surgery at University of Virginia has invited Richard to co-author a follow-on research project as an extension of his current paper that will likely begin before the end of the year.

As for the remainder of his senior year at Kennett High School, Richard will continue his research in preparation for publication. He is also looking at colleges and not surprisingly MIT is at the top of his list. He has also applied to Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania (his parents’ alma mater), Princeton University, and Haverford College. Richard was also one of seven students selected as a National Merit Semifinalist.

## Festival Offers Chocolate Tastings While Raising Funds for Community

Do you love to bake or simply love chocolate? If so, plan to celebrate “all things chocolate” at the Kennett Chocolate Lovers Festival on Sunday, February 8 at Kennett High School between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Professionals, amateurs, and students will vie for ribbons when their creations are judged. Last year, despite power outages and snow, over 200 entries were judged and available for the public to taste. Kennett High School students volunteered at the event and won several prizes in the student category. The festival raises funds for United Way of Southern Chester County, which supports over 30 health and human services programs in the area.

Kennett High School students will once again volunteer at the festival and will compete for prizes in this year’s Kennett Chocolate Lovers Festival. Contestants compete in specific categories, and there is no fee to enter. Entry deadline is January 30, 2015. After the judging, chocoholics of all ages are admitted: Connoisseur ticket holders may enter at 1 p.m.; general-admission ticket holders enter at 2 p.m. Connoisseur tickets are \$25 (or \$45 for two people) and include six tastings, free beverages, free demonstrations by professional chocolatiers, an uncrowded room to circulate in, and free parking. General admission tickets are \$10 (or \$25 for a family of four) and include six amateur tastings per person.

Professional tastings count as two amateur tastings for general-admission ticket holders. Additional tastings are available for 50 cents each. For more info and fastest entry through the express line, visit [www.kennettchocolate.org](http://www.kennettchocolate.org) and buy tickets now. Parking for general admission is \$5 per car.

Last year’s first-place amateur winners collected behind-the-scenes kitchen tours and gift certificates at the Hotel DuPont, Victory Brewing Company, The Gables at Chadds Ford, Pescatore’s Restaurant, and Two Stones Pub in Kennett Square. “We couldn’t do this Festival without the support of our community,” said Carrie Free-

man, CEO of United Way of Southern Chester County. “Thanks to our wonderful student, amateur, and professional bakers and our local sponsors, the Festival raised over \$16,000 for our community.

UWSCC serves the residents of four school districts: Avon Grove, Kennett, Oxford, and Unionville-Chadds Ford. Over 13,000 people received support from UWSCC last year.

# Kennett High School Senior Presents Original Research at Professional Conference

Arshia Faghri (pictured at right), a senior at Kennett High School, presented findings from his own research on building environments and health as a featured speaker at the American Planning Association (APA) Maryland/Delaware Conference in late October.

The session titled “Planning Healthy, Multigenerational Complete Communities (Perspectives From Delaware)” was offered for certification maintenance by the American Institute of Certified Planners. The focus was on “healthy, livable communities that meet the needs of all residents regardless of age or ability level.” Along with Arshia, the speakers at the session included David Edgell, AICP (principal planner, Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination), Marcia Scott (policy scientist, Institute for Public Administration, University of Delaware), Andrea Trabelsi, AICP (transportation planner, Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP), and Debra Young, M.Ed., OTR/L, SCEM, ATP, CAPS (owner, EmpowerAbility, LLC).

Arshia was invited to participate as a result of his research paper submission, “The Built Environment and Our Health,” which examined the correlation between “our health and the built environment in which we live” and which was based on results of a questionnaire distributed to faculty, staff, and graduate students who live in the area around the University of Delaware. Faghri’s father, Ardeshir Faghri, is a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Delaware. The American Society of Civil Engineers has named Professor Faghri to its 2014 Class of Fellows.

In his paper, Arshia attempted to answer several questions including “Is our built environment more conducive to physical activity or is it more auto-centered?” and “If we have a more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly environment would we be healthier?” His inspiration for this research came from his desire to ride his bicycle to Kennett

High School, a desire thwarted by the lack of pathways to make it an efficient and safe alternative to car or bus transportation.

In his paper’s introduction, Arshia notes, “Personally, I have always had a profound fascination with learning about human health and its epidemiological aspects. Salient diseases that have had a momentous effect on human development throughout history include but are not limited to: heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, lung disease, hypertension, and obesity. Although there are several factors that instigate the onset of a malady, clinical research has frequently shown that proper health maintenance and engagement in efficacious physical activities like walking and bicycling can counteract the pernicious consequences of these ailments. Historically, pre-industrial society and its laborious tasks demanded the continual use of the legs, hands, and muscles of the human body. It has been only within the past century that we humans have developed a wholly mechanized society and have developed a propensity for the use of cars and machines, as opposed to our own physical capabilities. One possible epidemiological factor that I have always been fascinated with is the question, ‘Why isn’t our built environment more conducive to physical activities?’ For instance, I live and attend school in the small suburban town of Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities for the purposes of recreational use, school attendance, and miscellaneous activities are either non-existent or are exceedingly dangerous to use. It seems to me that our entire built environment has been planned, designed, and constructed exclusively for auto use. For instance, if I could safely walk or bike to my high school from my house, it would take approximately twenty-five minutes and seven minutes, respectively. Interestingly, if I were to take the school bus to school, it would take me approximately thirty-five minutes. But unfortunately there are no adequate pedestrian walkways and bicycling facilities present and the existing roadway infrastructure has only

been designed to cater to the needs of motor vehicles. Also, I don’t believe that my community and I are alone in this respect! And there are countless other neighborhoods suffering from similar difficulties. Thus, modern transportation facilities do not render themselves practical for multi-modal use, such as walking and bicycling.”

The conclusions and recommendations offered by this high school senior show “that there is a direct link between our built environment and human health. Readers should actively participate in mild to intense physical exercise each week, as the level of one’s physical activity is a major contributor to overall health. Depriving society of the very necessary facilities required to nurture its overall health and well-being does not bode well. Drastic changes must be implemented, for a rising pandemic of disease will have dire implications. Society should seek other forms of urban design and community development

to counteract the effects of the built environment. Alternatives include the ‘new urbanism’ movement and the clean streets movement, both of which de-emphasize auto dependency and promote walkability of pedestrian friendly streets.”

Arshia is the secretary for the KHS Blue and White Chapter of the National Honor Society. He is a member of the Kennett High School Academic Competition Team, the Future Business Leaders of America, and Model United Nations, and he is on the staff of the Demon Press. Arshia intends to pursue a career in medicine. For his success in the research and presentation, Arshia credits his father for his guidance in the design of his research process, his teachers at Kennett High School for development of the necessary skills in statistics and technical writing, and his guidance counselor for tips on the design of the project.



# Bancroft Elementary School’s Selfie Project Has Everyone Smiling

Bancroft Elementary School art teacher Ms. Janice Finn knows that the beginning of the school year brings with it excitement and trepidation. To help everyone overcome new-school-year jitters, she brings students together with a schoolwide art project. This year, they created a mural comprised of mini self-portraits of each artist in the school.

“I chose this project as a great way to bring the students together as a school while advocating diversity and individuality through art,” Ms. Finn explained. “Each grade used a different combination of contrasting colors to create a rainbow of crayon selfies, so to speak.”

In creating their individual selfies, students learned about contrasting colors and, as Ms. Finn explained, many were using colors they would normally avoid.

“I want students to explore their creativity in my class,” Ms. Finn said. “The rules are a little stricter in their classroom. In art class, I want students to try things they normally wouldn’t try.”

When the students saw the final project, a rainbow mural that spans approximately 10 by 2 feet, there was a lot of oohing and aahing.



# KHS Teacher Recognized for Sparking Passion in Students

Ithaca College's Roy H. Park School of Communications established the S'Park Media Mentor Award four years ago to recognize high school teachers and others who are dedicated to igniting a passion for media in high school students. The Kennett Consolidated School District is proud that the national search committee chose Kennett High School's media communications teacher, Mr. Frank Vanderslice, as one of this year's five awardees.

In a letter to Mr. Vanderslice, Dr. Diane Gyaeski, dean, Roy H. Park School of Communications, commented that the selection committee was greatly impressed not only by the wonderful recommendation written by former student Anne Uhle but also by his outstanding work with K-TV and mentoring film students, as well as his recent selection as a fellow for the ASNE Reynolds High School Journalism Institute.

"I am overwhelmed with the recognition," Mr. Vanderslice said. "Of all the programs in the country, ours was chosen."

To receive his award, Mr. Vanderslice traveled to Ithaca College at the college's expense. In addition to an awards dinner and reception, Mr. Vanderslice had the opportunity to

speak with advisors and managers of Ithaca College's various student media outlets. One of the stops on his tour of the campus was the student-run television station, where Mr. Vanderslice filmed some of the equipment and student activity to share with his students back at Kennett High School. He was also given the opportunity to sit in on two classes of his choice.

"Seeing firsthand the techniques that Ithaca's professors were using to teach scriptwriting and newswriting provided me with affirmation that I am on track with my teaching to prepare students for college classes," Mr. Vanderslice said.

Mr. Vanderslice is a graduate of Temple University with a degree in communications. He also received his master's degree in education from the University of Delaware. He taught media courses for over 30 years before coming to Kennett High School.

Mr. Vanderslice has also been an adjunct instructor for the University of Delaware, Wilmington University, and Cecil College. He has worked as an independent videographer for a number of TV stations and video production companies. He currently serves as vice president on the Board of Directors for Hearts and Minds Films, a local production company for nonprofit agencies.



Upon receiving his award, Mr. Vanderslice poses with Dr. Diane Gyaeski, dean, Roy H. Park School of Communications.

## Field Trip Brings Science to Life



Earlier this fall, fifth-grade students from New Garden Elementary School visited the Brandywine Valley Association's Myrick Conservation Center in West Chester for a full day of hands-on environmental education. Students participated in two separate programs: Adventure Team and Amazing Adaptations.

"It was great to see the students from different classrooms working in a cooperative setting," commented fifth grade teacher Miss Erika Smith. "Each group completed its tasks in completely different ways, which was a big surprise."

In Adventure Team, students worked through a variety of problem-solving experiences that require group participation and physical activity. The elements of the program are designed to break down barriers, foster teamwork, and identify leadership potential among students.

In Amazing Adaptations, students observed a variety of structural and behavioral adaptations of plants and animals at the Myrick Conservation Center. Students played games and went on a hike to see examples of how plants and animals have adapted in order to survive.

"In addition to reinforcing the science concepts that the students recently covered and pre-teaching life science concepts, the cooperative learning strategies the students had to discover were strategies that I couldn't teach," fifth-grade teacher Miss Erika Smith explained. "I am proud of what the students took away from the day."

## KHS Humanitarian Club Helps to Fill the Cupboard

The Kennett High School Humanitarian Club led the student body in the most successful food collection drive ever. All food and money were given to club advisor Ms. Lisa Teixeira who was thrilled with the effort. "This year's response was huge! We collected at least 11,500 cans and raised nearly \$1,000. The Food Cupboard counts by weight, and the final tally was 5,832.4 pounds of food! We had so much food that the Food Cupboard needed to bring it to a local business's warehouse for storage. That's pretty awesome!"

Monetary donations, as well as cans, were collected at the Fall Fest in November. This event, hosted by the Humanitarians, was a great success with 100 attendees and lots of fun on a frigid night. Money was also collected at lunch periods and in advising meetings.

Additional support came from the WIN (Walk In kNowledge) students as well as from the football team and from faculty and staff and members of the Kennett community, especially Rob Moran and his colleagues at the Kennett Fire Company.

In the annual KHS turkey drive led by Mr. Shawn Duffy, who is a member of the Social Studies department, seniors and other students filled up a truck headed to the Kennett Food Cupboard.

Continuing their own partnership with the Food Cupboard and in addition to their donations to the student drives, members of the Kennett Education Association from all of the schools in the District contributed over \$1,000 and turkey coupons for the Thanksgiving drive. This adds to the donations the teachers made during the first Kennett Education Association meeting of the school year. The Kennett teachers have made a practice of donating each time they attend an Association general meeting.



Drop us an email at [PR@KCSO.org](mailto:PR@KCSO.org). We'd love to hear about projects happening in the Kennett Consolidated School District or great news about current students and graduates alike.

# Nonprofit Organizations Support KCSD Students continued from page 1

**The Garage Community and Youth Center** empowers youth to reach their full potential academically, socially, and spiritually. The Garage is a place for middle and high school students to go after school to get help with homework, use a computer, play a game, and meet new friends. The Kennett Square Garage is open after school five days a week and four days a week during the summer. The Garage staff regularly organizes athletic games at Anson B. Nixon Park, and they offer community service opportunities for KCSD students such as working with Good Neighbors Home Repair, the Kennett Senior Center, the Mushroom Festival, the Chester County Art Association, the Kennett Food Cupboard, and After-the-Bell.

The adult mentors provide kids with extra support, opportunities, and meaningful connections. Free tutoring and homework help are provided, as is access to a computer lab with free Internet access and printing. The Garage is also open to the community for various evening and weekend programs such as the Boy Scouts, the MOMS Club, coffeehouses, Saturday morning art classes, Sunday morning worship, and Sunday afternoon youth group activities.

To find out more about the Kennett Square Garage Community and Youth Center, go to [www.garageyouthcenter.org](http://www.garageyouthcenter.org).

**The Kennett Education Foundation (KEF)** is a community-based, nonprofit foundation that has been committed to supporting and enriching the education in our District for over 10 years. To KCSD teachers, the KEF awards grants that provide for new and innovative classroom projects and extracurricular activities that cannot be funded through normal District budgeting avenues. These grant projects have proven to be key catalysts to better our schools. Programs that have grown from funded grants are robotics, reading comprehension, fitness, anti-bullying, cultural arts programs, and video production classes. The largest contribution from KEF to date is to fund the KCSD middle and high school STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs. KEF has invested thousands of dollars to bring this growing program to Kennett. The KEF was also instrumental in providing more than 20 seniors graduating in 2014 with scholarships and awards totaling over \$22,000.

Find out more about KEF at [www.kennetteducationfoundation.org](http://www.kennetteducationfoundation.org).

In addition, there are numerous nonprofits that support the children of our community. A partial list of those organizations follows.

**La Comunidad Hispana** is committed to improving the lives of our students.

**Operation Warm** provides new winter coats to children in need.

**The Kennett Symphony of Chester County** founded the Children's Chorus, which offers qualified singers an opportunity to perform while nurturing musical development.

**The Bayard Taylor Memorial Library** serves as a center for lifelong learning and provides many learning programs for children year-round.

**Reins of Life** provides therapeutic horseback riding for children and young adults with special needs.

**Kennett Area Community Service** currently serves people in their time of need from the Kennett, Unionville-Chadds Ford, and Avon Grove school districts.

**The Rotary Club of Kennett Square** has donated children's books to the Kennett Square Family Center, the Kennett Healthy Start Program, and the KCSD elementary schools for eight years and sponsored the Kindergarten Transition Program. They also recognize high school student leaders for academic and community excellence.

**Together for Education** provides regularly scheduled in-class tutoring and additional volunteer services within the District.

**AfterProm** develops and provides activities, games, refreshments, and a place for students to socialize after the prom to keep them safe all night.

**Friends of Music** provides funding and volunteer support to the music, band, and theater departments that otherwise are not funded by the District.

**Kennett Area Parks and Recreation** is a community-based nonprofit organization promoting and encouraging recreational activities, sports, camps, and clinics in the Kennett area.

**Kennett Athletic Booster Club** provides students with necessary athletic equipment, impact testing, opportunities for athletic trips, and other needs related to sports.

Other organizations include: Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) at all schools in our District, The Boy Scouts of America, The Girl Scouts of USA, Girls on the Run, The Southern Chester County Soccer Association, and The YMCA of the Brandywine Valley.

Many thanks to all the nonprofit groups and the incredibly dedicated people working so hard to support the Kennett Consolidated School District students and programs. Most all of these programs are run primarily by volunteers in our community. Please join us in thanking them by donating your time, treasures, or talents!

## Girls Basketball Players Share Their Love of the Sport

Once a week, Kennett High School's small gym comes alive with the sound of bouncing basketballs and sneakers running up and down the court. Now in its fourth year, this basketball mentoring program came about during a conversation between the assistant coach of Kennett High School's girls' varsity basketball team, Ms. Lin Barrett, and players Emily Adelman and Kaitlyn Buchanan.

"Emily, Kaitlyn, and I were discussing the school-based sports, and the girls pointed out that students didn't get the opportunity to play basketball until the seventh grade," Coach Barrett explains. "The girls felt they arrived at the high school level without a good understanding of the fundamentals of the game, and they wanted to start a program that would teach the basics to younger girls."

With freshmen, sophomores, and juniors serving as mentors, each week's session begins with a casual warm-up period followed by stretching and introductions. In addition to the high school mentors, there are 25 girls ranging in age from 9 to 12. The girls find out about the program through word of mouth.

Although Coach Barrett supervises the program, she leaves the coaching and mentoring to the high school girls.

"It is great watching the mentors teach the younger players what they have learned," Coach Barrett says. "The

older players benefit just as much as the younger ones."

Kennett High School junior Christina Fucci is in her third year of service as a mentor. She has played on the high school's team the past three years, and prior to that, she played for two years at Kennett Middle School and in a YMCA program.

"I like teaching the younger girls new skills such as hesitation and reverse dribbling," Christina comments. "Being a mentor also helps me be a better player."

Emma Schwarz is a sixth grade student who has been playing basketball since she was in the third grade. She says she likes having the older girls teach her and is looking forward to using her new skills when she tries out for the middle school's team next year.

Kennett High School freshman Caroline Hertz is a new mentor this year. She

played basketball for Kennett Middle School when she was in seventh and eighth grade. She also plays for the Philadelphia Belles travel team. Caroline enjoys her time with the younger players. "They are so coachable, and they have a great attitude."

Sixth grade student Ellie Mathews began playing basketball at the YMCA when

she was 7 years old. She plays basketball with her father and says she always enjoys her time with the high school mentors.

Coach Barrett couldn't be prouder of her players and looks forward to watching the young participants grow as players.



(Above) Freshman Rosemarie Mastronado directs the girls in defensive drills.



(At left) Sixth grade student Ellie Mathews works on her dribbling skills while Freshman Rosemarie Mastronado looks on.

# Kennett High School Musicians Headed to the Rose Bowl

On January 1, 2015, 20 Kennett High School musicians and members of the color guard will join 134 of their peers from 38 regional high schools to march in the Tournament of Roses Parade as part of the Cavalcade of Bands Honor Band. While the students have been practicing since April, being chosen by the Tournament of Roses has been a two-year process.

Understanding that the Tournament of Roses doesn't take bands with less than 175 people, Kennett High School's band director, Mr. Anton Romano, joined a team of other band directors who compete in the Cavalcade of Bands circuit. Mr. Anton explained that the goal was to sell the Tournament of Roses organizers on the idea of an honor band made up of students who are from schools whose bands are not big enough to ever get a chance to be in the Tournament of Roses.

"Alone, Kennett High School's Marching Band is too small for the Tournament of Roses to consider," Mr. Romano explained. "However, the selection committee loved the idea of sending an honors band of approximately 150 musicians from across the state."

The first year they applied, they were in the final 14 out of 405 applicants, and the parade organizers picked only 12 bands. Last year, the Cavalcade of Bands Association tried again, and they got the official nod in April. "The theme this year is interesting stories," Mr. Anton said. "The Tournament of Roses said they got the idea from our application because they thought it was interesting that we didn't even have a group and were applying to march in the parade."

Bands are selected by the Tournament of Roses based on a variety of criteria

including musicianship, marching ability, and entertainment or special interest value. Twenty marching bands from across the United States as well as from Denmark, Japan, and Mexico will march in the 126th annual parade. The two bands not yet announced will be from the universities competing in the Rose Bowl Game. They will be added to the lineup when those schools are determined.

According to the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, approximately 1 million spectators line the parade route, while tens of millions watch the television coverage in more than 200 international territories and countries. In addition to marching in the 5.5 mile Rose Parade on New Year's Day, bands also perform in one of three Bandfest events scheduled for December 29 and 30, 2014, at Pasadena City College.

In order to be considered, band representatives submitted detailed applications, which included photos, video footage, and letters of recommendation. Bands are required to raise all necessary funds for travel and accommodations. The cost is \$2,700 for each band member. To help the 44 students from Kennett and Unionville high schools raise money for the trip, a new group, the Kennett-Unionville Band Boosters, has been hard at work holding community fundraisers. For more information on how you can support this once-in-a-lifetime trip, visit [www.kubbTOR.org](http://www.kubbTOR.org).

## Bancroft Elementary School Hosts Regional Conference



Since its opening in 2011, Bancroft Elementary School has subscribed to the Responsive Classroom philosophy. More than simply a set of behaviors and rules, the Responsive Classroom is a teaching approach where a social curriculum is fully merged with the school's academic curriculum. It is a research- and evidence-based approach to elementary education that leads to greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate.

This past summer, Bancroft Elementary School hosted a four-day summer institute where teachers could either take the Responsive Classroom overview course or the advanced class. Teachers from school districts across Pennsylvania, as well as nearby states, were in attendance. Melissa Willis, a second grade teacher at Bancroft Elementary School, took the overview course in 2013 and Responsive Classroom II during the summer institute. She is supportive of the approach, stating, "It has created a warm community environment in my class where everyone feels important."

Mrs. Leah McComsey, principal of Bancroft Elementary School, petitioned to bring the summer institute to the Kennett Consolidated School District. She opened the Responsive Class Institute stating, "Hosting the institute is an honor because I believe in the power of the philosophy to create a climate of kindness and acceptance that gives everyone in the school a voice."

In addition to workshop materials, conference attendees had the opportunity to review and purchase resources.

The Responsive Classroom approach was introduced at Greenwood Elementary School in 2009 and at the Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center when it opened. New Garden Elementary School uses concepts and framework from the Responsive Classroom approach but not the actual model.

## Parent/Student Resource Corner



Welcome to the Kennett Consolidated School District's Parent/Student Resource Corner! In each issue of the newsletter, parents and guardians will find educational web sites that will help keep their student academically engaged and challenged outside of the classroom.

**U.S. Department of Education - [www.ed.gov/parents/countdown-success](http://www.ed.gov/parents/countdown-success)**

This U.S. Department of Education website provides reliable resources for pre-kindergarten through high school and includes Countdown to School Success, a month-by-month guide filled with the advice, tools, and online resources you'll need to help your children have a school year packed with fun and learning. Suggestions include 40 ways to help your kids learn more!

**Reading is Fundamental - [www.rif.org/kids/leadingtoreading/en/leadingtoreading.htm](http://www.rif.org/kids/leadingtoreading/en/leadingtoreading.htm)**

**Semillitas de Aprendizaje - [www.rif.org/kids/leadingtoreading/es/leadingtoreading.htm](http://www.rif.org/kids/leadingtoreading/es/leadingtoreading.htm)**

There are plenty of kids today who are reading off of the Internet before reading a book. Reading is Fundamental encourages children and their families to embrace all platforms for reading. Reading is Fundamental's award-winning website and educational video series are designed to help parents and caregivers develop the language skills of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Reading is Fundamental's fun and interactive site offers stories, games, music, and other engaging activities for young children to experience together with adults in English and Spanish.

**ReadWriteThink - [www.readwritethink.org](http://www.readwritethink.org)**

Engaging resources, games, and activities for students at all grade levels, every lesson plan on ReadWriteThink has been aligned not only to the International Reading Association/National Council of Teachers of English Standards for the English Language Arts but to individual state standards as well.

**Colorín Colorado - [www.colorincolorado.org](http://www.colorincolorado.org)**

Colorín Colorado is a bilingual literacy site that provides information, activities, and advice for families and educators of English Language Learners. Colorín Colorado is an educational initiative of WETA, the flagship public television and radio station in Washington, D.C.

**Reading Rockets - [www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)**

Reading Rockets includes information and resources for parents on how young kids learn to read, why so many struggle, and how caring adults can help. Reading Rockets is an educational initiative of WETA, the flagship public television and radio station in Washington, D.C.