

Superintendent's Student & Staff Accomplishments December 18, 2024

East Science Olympiad: The East High School Science Olympiad teams have been quite busy and successful in their early season competitions.

In early November, the teams competed in the Rickards Virtual competition. This competition brings out nearly 300 of the top high schools from across the country. Medals are given to the top 20 places in each event. For the first time, Pocono Mountain East has medaled in a primary event. Congratulations to Seniors Lila Shelton and Connor Straub, and Junior Mahi Patel on finishing 18th in Experimental Design.

In early December, the teams competed in the Dick Smith Virtual competition. Over 100 teams from across the state competed. Medals were given for the top 10 places. Seniors Lila Shelton and Connor Straub, and Junior Mahi Patel medaled in Experimental Design, finishing 9th.

The East Science Olympiad teams travel to Penn State University on January 18th for the Science Olympiad at Penn State (SOAPS) competition.

PMSD Cyber Jingle Bell Ball: On Friday December 13th, the PMSD Cyber Program held its first Jingle Bell Ball. Music teacher Mandy VanKuren worked with Cyber students in grades Kindergarten through 5th to prepare and present a short winter choral concert. Students, parents and visitors enjoyed the music, hot chocolate and cookies, created a winter craft, and left with a cookie decorating kit with a tree and gingerbread man. The PMSD Cyber Program is thankful to the students, parents and community members who joined them to sing their way into the holiday season.

West High School Update: Congratulations to West High School Junior Ashley Hunter-Ali, and Senior Adrian Brito for winning the *Pocono Record's* Athletes of the Week for the first week of the winter sports season.

Athletic Honor Society Induction: On Thursday, December 12th, West High School held its winter induction ceremony for the National Athletic Honor Society where 19 more student athletes became members of this prestigious group. Congratulations to these students for excelling in varsity sports while also maintaining commendable GPAs and participating in community service. The WHS National Athletic Honor Society will hold another induction ceremony in the spring to recognize additional senior athletes who have met the eligibility requirements and for seniors to receive their graduation cords.

Art Department Day at Marywood University: On December 13th, some of the West High School Advanced Placement art students visited Marywood University for their Art Department Day. It was a fantastic experience for the students as they learned about the university's art programs and explored potential career paths. They also participated in portfolio reviews, which provided them with valuable critique and feedback to help them grow as artists.

Chorus Radio Performance: On Tuesday, December 17th, the West High School chorus performed excerpts from their holiday concert on POCO 103 Radio Live. Their performances were recorded and posted in the POCO Playback section of www.poco103.com.

Esports Champion: Congratulations to West High School Freshman Michael Oke, who won the D2 Pennsylvania Interscholastic eSports Association individual state championship in Super Smash Brothers.

Tobyhanna Elementary Center's United Way Donations:

Tobyhanna Elementary Center's Student Government raised \$2,056 for the United Way campaign this year. After numerous successful years, this is their greatest annual donation to the Pocono Mountains United Way to date.

West Junior High Lego Champions: Congratulations to the West Junior High School Robotics Team, the West Wonders, who won the First Lego League Challenge Robotics competition and are advancing to Regionals in February in Malvern, PA. The team consisted of 8th Graders Khloe Newlander, Delaney Fitzgerald, Liliana Mann, Jaida Diaz, Giana Masotti, and Shirah Alexander. The team is coached by Jim Feuerstein and Cheryll Feuerstein.

Toys for Tots: Thank you to our students from School to Work and the East and West Athlife programs, and everyone else who helped make this year's district-wide Toys for Tots toy drive, dress down day, and the toy distribution event on Saturday successful. It takes a lot of hours to get toys sorted by age and ready for the distribution event. PMSD also raised \$3,404.47 to donate to Monroe County Toys for Tots. Thank you to our staff for their continued support of our district-wide dress down days for such worthy causes.

East and West Digital Magazines: Today, I sent an email out to our entire staff introducing them to the NEW digital magazines produced by our students from the East and West High Schools. These first issues, the winter issues, of East's Elevate and West's BluePrints are amazing and showcase our two high schools and our very talented students so well. We will be sharing links and QR Codes through our websites and social media sites to get the word out to the public on these wonderful digital magazines that our students and their teacher/advisors worked so hard to produce over the past few months. The digital magazines exceeded our expectations in every way, from the stories to the

photos to the creative layout and design. I hope our entire school community will read Elevate and BluePrints and share links to the publications with their extended family, friends and neighbors.

Thank you to our Elevate Team: Students - Farah Abuolba, Jai Colefield, Chance Cortes, Emma DeLuca, Emily Febbraro, Chris Hnasko, Julia Mancini and Ariel Soto; Teacher Advisors - Mrs. Baldauff and Dr. Bracey.

Thank you to our BluePrints Team: Students - Carolyn Sanchez, Kayla Frary, Xavier Fierros, Giavanna Priano and Kailani Thomas; Teacher/Advisors - Mrs. Mancini and Mr. Steinruck.

Happy Holidays: I want to wish our entire school community Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and a very safe and happy New Year.