

COMMENDATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS  
APRIL 2015

**Staff**

Deanna Baird, Upper St. Clair High School German teacher and world languages curriculum leader, was chosen as the Nominator's Choice champion at the 2015 Champions of Learning Awards Dinner hosted by the Consortium for Public Education.

High School science teacher, Dr. Dominic Frollini has received the Keiven Burns Award from the Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh (SSP). The purpose of the award is to recognize excellence in teaching of science at the secondary school level. In recognition of this honor, Dr. Frollini will be recognized at the Annual SSP Awards Banquet with a plaque and honorarium.

Congratulations to Middle School Math teacher and curriculum leader Andy Lucas, the winner of the 2015 Students' Choice Award. The Students' Choice Award is presented to an online or blended teacher by popular vote of their students. During the school year students vote for their teacher through the Blended Schools Network website. Students' Choice Award winners are active users of Blended Schools Network curriculum and technology.

**High School**

Congratulations to the following students for taking first place in the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh's 2015 Academic World Quest. Their win earned them a spot to compete in Washington, DC in late April for the national title. Students on the team are Paul Abrams, Gaurav Bhushan, Thomas Mologne, and Dan Pituch. Gifted coordinator Pat Palazzolo coached the students.

The High School Mock Trial team earned a spot in the Pittsburgh finals of the 2014-2015 Pennsylvania Bar Association competition. After four rounds of competition, the team presented as the prosecution, taking on Eden Christian School, and finished in second place in the Pittsburgh region. Team members included Amna Amin, Kevin Monpara, Erin Graham, Abbie Wagner, Melissa Levine, Arushi Kewalramani, Wyatt Keating, Katherine Starr, Rishabh Kewalramani, Natalie Urban, and Tyler Clark. Upper St. Clair High School alumnus Sam Hornak served as the team's mentor lawyer and gifted coordinator Pat Palazzolo served as the school sponsor.

After a series of practice problems and a state qualifying problem grounded in the idea of *propaganda*, two USCHS Future Problem Solving teams earned spots at the state competition in Carlisle, PA in April. The problem-solving topic for the state competition is *enhancing human potential*. Students on the tenth grade team are Tommy Bednarz, Tyler Besselman, Tyler Clark, and Joe Violi. Eleventh grade team members include Gaurav Bhushan, Michael Nastac, Misha Rameswarapu, and Steve Wagner. Gifted coordinators Pat Palazzolo and Tim Wagner will accompany the students to the state competition.

Congratulations to high school students Meredith McDonough and Chet Stein for receiving SHASDA (South Hills Area School Districts Association) Student Awards at the SHASDA Conference on April 25. Two students from each SHASDA school district are chosen to receive Student Awards for having demonstrated significant improvement in student performance and/or have overcome obstacles in attaining their present academic status.

On Monday, March 23, President Obama hosted the fifth-ever White House Science Fair, welcoming more than 100 students from across the country to share their projects and celebrate their extraordinary science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) achievements. Sahil Doshi, high School freshman, visited the White House for this event and showcased his innovative design of a carbon-dioxide powered battery called *PolluCell*. In addition, the Pittsburgh Business Times recently selected Sahil as a winner in the Student Project category of the 2015 Energy Leadership Awards, which honors individuals and companies in our region for being pioneers in our booming energy sector. Sahil will be honored at an awards program in May for his PolluCell innovation.

Congratulations to Megan Jones, Jonny Summers, Carly DeCock, and Mary Molitoris on being selected to represent USC at the 2015 PMEA All-State Choir and Orchestra in Hershey, PA.

The USC Speech and Debate team competed in postseason tournaments at the PHSSL state league and the CFL & NSDA national leagues. Following are the top finalists:

Caleb Troughtzmantz placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in Declamation at Nationals

Erin Graham placed 5<sup>th</sup> in Poetry at States

Saraj Quinto placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in Dramatic Interpretation at Nationals

Sriparna Sen placed 1<sup>st</sup> in Humorous Interpretation at States

Krishna Monpara placed 4<sup>th</sup> for Original Oratory at States

Gaurav Bhushan placed 5<sup>th</sup> for Extemporaneous Speaking at States

The teams of Arushi Kewalramani, Macey Kaplan, and Thomas Mologne placed 5<sup>th</sup> for Parliamentary Debate at States  
Raahema Durrani placed 5<sup>th</sup> for Lincoln-Douglas Debate at States  
The team of Rishabh Kewalramani and Eliana Ondrejko placed 3<sup>rd</sup> for Public Forum Debate at States  
The team of Brian Kaplan and Morgan Cook placed 5<sup>th</sup> for Public Forum Debate at States.

Congratulations are extended to the students who were medal winners at the FBLA State Leadership Conference held on April 13 and 14, 2015. Out of 4000 competitors from across the state, the USC team had a total of 16 medal winners, 11 of those winners finishing in the top 3 in their event, qualifying them for the national competition. Following are the national qualifiers and their categories:

Management Decision Making: Chris Adamo, Rishabh Kewalramani, Geet Punjabi  
E-Business: Kevin Monpara, Brian Tsui  
Sports and Entertainment Management: Anthony Abinanti, Lauren Schoeppner, Jess Sourbeer  
Marketing: Arushi Kewalramani, Macey Kaplan, Vicki Wang

Also finishing in the top ten were Sahil Doshi, Kevin Chen, Akshar Golakiya for Website Design and Sam Schiffman and Zach Barone for Emerging Business Issues.

Congratulations are extended to high school junior, Andrew Wheeler and high school senior, Rachel Mazzie for being selected for first team all section in boys and girls basketball by the section coaches.

### **High School, Boyce, Ft. Couch**

Congratulations to Boyce, Fort Couch, and USCHS students for their participation in the annual regional Computer Fair held at Carnegie Science Center on Wednesday, March 25, 2015. Students entered in a variety of categories including animation, digital movie, graphic design, programming, web page design, and logo design. Special congratulations are extended to four USC students who earned recognition in their respective categories: Fort Couch student Julia Fennell (2nd place, logo design), USCHS students Alex Brufsky & Jacob Lantzman (2nd place, logo design), and USCHS student Connor Byrnes (3rd place, programming).

## **Boyce**

The following 6th grade Boyce Challenge students in Diane Ecker's class have had their poems selected for publication in the Fall 2014 Creative Communication Poetry Contest:

Sophia Shi, Dylan Fall, Jack Myers, Jonah Murray, Harrison Chui, Sara Hess, Kathy Li, Shay McDowell, Jenny Huo, Sophia Pries, Gabby Brubach, Christian Chiu, Henry Zou, Evan Jakovac, Antara Cleetus, Sammie Seewald, Ben Lang, Drew Blodgett, Patrick Joyce, Ami Doshi, Sadhana Boddhula, Sujan Banerjee, Ishaan Shah, Richa Mahajan, Vanessa Rainier, Morgan Meddings, Rohan Mishra, and Amber Seery.

Congratulations to 6th grade Boyce students Shay McDowell, Joe Phillips, Bryce Keating and Morgan Meddings whose portrayal of Titania, Bottom, Oberon and Puck from A Midsummer Night's Dream was awarded an Honorable Mention by the Pittsburgh Public Theater. These Challenge students worked under the direction of Diane Ecker.

Congratulations to Boyce student Daniel Wang, who on Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, placed 2nd at the Western PA Scripps Regional Spelling Bee at Robert Morris University.

## **Ft. Couch**

Congratulations to the following Fort Couch students, who received honorable mentions in this year's Shakespeare Monologue & Scene Competition: Sam Dvorin, Tyler Carroll, Lexi Feldman, Tommy O'Brien & Danny O'Brien.

At the end of February, 25 students from Fort Couch participated in the Pennsylvania Math League competition (PML). The top five 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders were the following:

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Aleksa Rodic

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Vivek Babu

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Jack Clark

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Riwk Sen

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade:**

1<sup>st</sup> Place Sam Ding

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Serena Luo

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Mallika Matharu

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Vikram Reddy

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade team ranked 7<sup>th</sup> out of 80 schools in the state of Pennsylvania and 2<sup>nd</sup> within Allegheny County. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade team came in 10<sup>th</sup> out of 82 schools in the state of Pennsylvania and 1<sup>st</sup> in Allegheny County.

Individually, Aleksa Rodic ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> within Allegheny County and 23<sup>rd</sup> overall for the state for 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Vivek Babu ranked 4<sup>th</sup> within Allegheny County for 7<sup>th</sup> grade. For 8<sup>th</sup> grade, Sam Ding tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place individually for both Allegheny County and overall for the state of Pennsylvania.

Over Spring Break, four of our students participated in the State MathCounts Competition in Harrisburg. They competed against 24 teams within the state of Pennsylvania. Sam Ding, Braden Yates, Dina Leyzarovich, and Jason Choi made up the Fort Couch Team that won 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall in the state competition.

## **Elementary, Boyce, Fort Couch**

Six USC students finished among the top three regional entries in the PTA Reflections contest in each category and moved on to the State level of competition. "The World Would Be a Better Place If..." was the theme for this year's competition. The top three Regional entries in each arts category/division moved on to the state level of competition where USC had six artists place in the top five of their category. First place winners at the State level are now moving on to compete in the National Competition. Students Antara Cleetus and Meredith Roman will represent USC by spotlighting their creativity at the National level.

Congratulations to the following state winners:

Antara Cleetus	Visual Arts	Boyce	1st Place
Meredith Roman	Photography	Baker	1st Place
Madison Kovacs	Literature	Baker	2nd Place
Devan Ekbote	Film	Fort Couch	2nd Place
Samantha Seewald	Photography	Boyce	3rd Place
Dina Leyzarovich	Photography	Fort Couch	5th Place