

# Colonial

SCHOOL DISTRICT

2017-18 Year in Review



# FULL S.T.E.A.M. AHEAD!

We are proud to provide financial support to the School District's educational programs and share in its mission of preparing our youth for the challenges of tomorrow.



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**Administrative Offices**  
 230 Flourtown Road  
 Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462  
 Phone: 610-834-1670  
 Fax: 610-834-7535

**Quick Facts**

Location.....Plymouth Meeting, PA  
 Serving Conshohocken Borough,  
 Plymouth Township and  
 Whitemarsh Township  
 District Population\* ..... 41,475  
 White .....91.0%  
 African American ..... 4.0%  
 Asian ..... 3.8%  
 Hispanic ..... 1.1%  
 Other ..... 0.1%

\* 2010 United States Census Bureau  
 Data from American FactFinder.  
 Number of Employees .....685  
     405 Teachers  
     45 Administrators  
     235 Support Staff

Total Enrollment .....5,139  
 Special Education..... 17.0%  
 Gifted..... 2.0%  
 Low Income..... 22.5%  
 Average Class Size..... 18-23  
 2018-19 Budget .....\$126,066,500  
 Highly Qualified Teachers ..... 100%\*

\*The CSD policy requires all teachers to hold the appropriate state certification and nearly 92 percent of the CSD teachers have at least a master's degree.

This publication is produced by the School Board Community Relations and Student Life Committee, the Community Relations Office, Community Relations Coordinator David M. Sherman and Assistant Community Relations Coordinator Kim Newell.  
  
 Call 610-834-1670, ext. 2115, with comments or questions.

**School Board**

Felix Raimondo ..... President  
 Leslie Finegold..... Vice President  
 Mel Brodsky..... Member  
 Jennifer Dow..... Member  
 Eunice Franklin-Becker..... Member  
 Susan Moore ..... Member  
 Rosemary Northcutt..... Member  
 Cathy Peduzzi ..... Member  
 Adam Schupack..... Member

**Administration**

Dr. Michael Christian  
 Superintendent of Schools  
 Karen Berk  
 Director of Pupil Services and  
 Special Education  
 Andrew Boegly  
 Director of Technology  
 Dr. Elizabeth McKeane  
 Director of Curriculum,  
 Instruction and Assessment  
 Dr. Leticia Rodriguez  
 Director of Human Resources  
 David Szablowski  
 Business Administrator  
 Terry Yemm  
 Director of Operations  
 Carol Chasen  
 Supervisor of Special Education,  
 K-5  
 Eileen Spector  
 Supervisor of Special Education,  
 6-12  
 Dr. Katy Giovanisci  
 Curriculum Supervisor  
 Denise Marks  
 Curriculum Supervisor  
 Edward Merk  
 Curriculum Supervisor  
 Maria Wileczek  
 Curriculum Supervisor  
 Joe Lally  
 Director of Facilities

**Schools**

**Plymouth Whitemarsh High School**  
 Principal: Dr. Jason Bacani  
 Assistant Principal: Maico Azcona  
 Assistant Principal: Heather King  
 Assistant Principal: Steve Price  
 Asst Principal/Athletic Director: RJ Bretz  
 Phone: 610-825-1500

**Colonial Middle School**  
 Principal: Robert Fahler  
 Assistant Principal: Phil Chang  
 Assistant Principal: Tara Collice  
 Phone: 610-275-5100

**Colonial Elementary School**  
 Principal: Rose Rock  
 Assistant Principal: Kylene Phillips  
 Phone: 610-941-0426

**Conshohocken Elementary School**  
 Principal: Dr. Terese Boegly  
 Phone: 610-828-0362

**Plymouth Elementary School**  
 Principal: Rosemarie Gregitis  
 Assistant Principal: Kelly Udovich  
 Phone: 610-825-8190

**Ridge Park Elementary School**  
 Principal: Eileen Carr  
 Phone: 610-825-1083

**Whitemarsh Elementary School**  
 Principal: Donna Drizin  
 Phone: 610-828-9092

The Colonial School District (CSD) is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability and/or handicap or age in its admissions procedures, educational programs, services, activities or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 and/or any applicable federal statute.

The CSD will assist students who have Limited English Proficiency to participate in all programs, services and activities.

For information regarding civil rights, admissions, grievance procedures, bilingual education and accessibility of programs, services, activities and facilities that are usable by persons with disabilities, contact the Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, Colonial School District, 230 Flourtown Road, Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania, 19462.

**On the Cover:** Members of the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Class of 2018 celebrate at commencement on June 12. Read all about the class beginning on Page 3.

# Colonial School District 2016 Annual Report

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## Congratulations to the PWHS Class of 2018!

Three hundred and forty Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) seniors received their diplomas at commencement ceremonies on June 12. More than one third of the class, or 37 percent, graduated with a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 or higher. More than 91 percent are continuing their education, 74 percent at a four-year school and 17 percent at a two-year school. Seven students are entering the military, and four students are going to college outside of the United States, two in the United Kingdom and two in Canada.

The PWHS Class of 2018 also includes eight students recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, one as a National Merit Finalist and seven as Commended Scholars. Members of the class are receiving scholarships and grants totaling nearly \$15.5 million over four years.

Class members were accepted into many of the nation's finest colleges and universities, including:



Albright College  
 American University  
 Amherst College  
 Arizona State University  
 Auburn University  
 Boston University  
 Bryn Mawr College  
 Bucknell University  
 Cabrini College  
 Carnegie Mellon University  
 Catholic University of America  
 Chestnut Hill College  
 Colby College  
 College of William & Mary  
 Delaware State University  
 Delaware Valley University  
 DeSales University  
 Dickinson College  
 Drexel University  
 Duke University  
 Duquesne University  
 Elizabethtown College  
 Elon University  
 Emerson College  
 Emory University  
 Florida Atlantic University  
 Florida State University  
 George Washington University  
 Georgetown University  
 Georgia Institute of Technology  
 Gettysburg College  
 Goucher College  
 Hampton University  
 Hofstra University  
 Hood College  
 Howard University  
 Indiana University Bloomington  
 Ithaca University  
 James Madison University  
 Juniata College  
 King's College  
 Lafayette College

Lehigh University  
 Lock Haven University  
 Loyola University Maryland  
 Marymount Manhattan College  
 McGill University\*  
 Millersville University  
 Monmouth University  
 Moravian College  
 Muhlenberg College  
 Neumann University  
 New York University  
 New York Institute of Technology  
 North Carolina State University  
 Northeastern University  
 Ohio State University  
 Pace University  
 Pennsylvania State University  
 Pratt Institute  
 Purdue University  
 Quinnipiac University  
 Rider University  
 Robert Morris University  
 Rochester Institute of Technology  
 Rowan University  
 Rutgers University  
 Savannah College of Art & Design  
 School of the Art Institute Chicago  
 School of the Visual Arts  
 St. Joseph's University  
 Stevens Institute of Technology  
 Stony Brook University  
 Susquehanna University  
 Syracuse University  
 Temple University  
 Thomas Jefferson University  
 Towson University  
 Tulane University  
 Union College  
 University of Alabama  
 University of Arizona  
 University of Bristol\*\*  
 University of California Irvine

University of California Los Angeles  
 University of California Santa Barbra  
 University of Central Florida  
 University of Colorado at Boulder  
 University of Connecticut  
 University of Delaware  
 University of Florida  
 University of Georgia  
 University of Iowa  
 University of Maine  
 University of Maryland  
 University of Massachusetts  
 University of Miami  
 University of Michigan  
 University of Pennsylvania  
 University of Pittsburgh  
 University of Richmond  
 University of Scranton  
 University of South Carolina  
 University of South Florida  
 University of Southern California  
 University of Tampa  
 University of the Arts  
 University of the Sciences  
 University of Toronto  
 University of Vermont  
 University of Virginia  
 University of Wisconsin  
 Ursinus College  
 Villanova University  
 Washington University St. Louis  
 Wesleyan University  
 West Chester University  
 West Virginia University  
 Western New England University  
 Widener University  
 York College of Pennsylvania  
 York St. John University\*\*

\* Located in Canada

\*\* Located in the United Kingdom

# Celebrating the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School

## Shreya Bhutani

Shreya was one of many members of the Class of 2018 who took advantage of the more than 120 clubs and activities available to Plymouth Whitemarsh High School students. She was a leader in the Technology Student Association (TSA), serving as President, Vice President and Secretary and won 72 regional, state and national awards. She was inducted into the National Technology Honor Society and earned Gold, Silver and Bronze Leadership Achievement Awards. Shreya also received an Outstanding Technology Student scholarship at the 2018 Pennsylvania TSA State Conference. Pennsylvania TSA awards the \$1,500 scholarship to a female and a male who have shown noteworthy achievements and leadership in Pennsylvania TSA. Shreya is using her scholarship at Bryn Mawr College where she is majoring in Growth and Structure of Cities.

In addition to TSA, Shreya was a member of the Class of 2018 Steering Committee, The Colonial Players, was a state officer in the High School Democrats of America, served as Secretary and Executive Board Member of the Gay-Straight Alliance, was an Anti-Defamation League Peer Trainer, served as Treasurer of the Glamour Gals and more. A Distinguished Honor Roll Student, Advanced Placement Scholar and member of the National Honor Society, Shreya was also a Magna Cum Laude Award Recipient from the National Latin Exam.



## Brandon Cohen

An Advanced Placement Scholar and a Distinguished Honor Roll student every semester since the beginning of sixth grade, Brandon is one of the top students in the Class of 2018 with a weighted Grade Point Average over 5.0. He is also one of the most active in school activities and community service. He has served as a student representative to the School Board, as Public Relations Officer, Treasurer and President of the Student Council, as a member of the Principal's Leadership Council, as President of the Math Club and Future Business Leaders of America, and as Founder and President of the Micro Finance Club among others. He is a varsity letter winner on the Boys' Soccer Team.

Brandon has been an active volunteer and student leader for Simon's Club, including creating and serving as President of the Ambassador Council. He has also served as President of Warming Philadelphia and assisted with the organization's annual clothing drive. He is active in the Congregation Or Ami Federation of Temple Youth and is the lone student on the Colonial School District Education Foundation Board of Trustees.

Brandon is attending the University of Pennsylvania and majoring in Economics.



## Sam Cohen

An Advanced Placement Scholar, a member of the National Honor Society and a Distinguished Honor Roll student every semester since the beginning of sixth grade, Sam is one of the top students in the Class of 2018 with a weighted Grade Point Average over 5.0. As a junior and a senior, Sam qualified to compete at the DECA International Career Development Conference. This past spring he was a finalist in Business Financial Services and placed among the top 20 of 20,000 competitors.

Sam has served as Vice President and President of the Mock Trial Club and interned for two years in the Victim's Unit in the office of Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele. He was a four-year member of the Student Council and his class Steering Committee and, as a freshman, was selected to participate in the Hugh O'Brian Youth leadership Seminar at Villanova University. Sam also served as an Anti-Defamation League Peer Trainer, was active in the Ski Club, Tutoring Club and Micro Finance Club and was a varsity soccer player.

Sam is attending Duke University. He plans to major in economics or political science.



## Class of 2018 Fun Fact

**The Class of 2018 was the first to visit their elementary schools in their caps and gowns.**

## Alexandra Evan

A Distinguished Honor Roll student, Alex participated in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, was inducted into the National Honor Society, the National Technical Honor Society and was accepted into the Honors Allied Health Program at the Central Montco Technical High School (CMTHS). At CMTHS, Alex received NOCTI certification, DPW certification, OSHA certification and CPR certification. She also works at an internship at the Montgomery County ENT Clinic.

Alex was president and founder of the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Anti Domestic Violence Club. She also served on the Young Adult and Teen Task Force at the Laurel House. Alex frequently volunteers for local organizations including the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit and the Intensive Care Nursery at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

Alex is the first in her family to attend college in the traditional manner. She is majoring in the Biology Pre-Med Track at Drexel University.



# Class of 2018 - Senior Spotlight

## Ryan Heaton

An Advanced Placement Scholar, Ryan took advantage of the many clubs and activities available to PWHS students and made the most of his high school experience. He was vice president and co-founder of the Micro Finance Club, co-president of the Mock Trail Club, vice president of Student Council, vice president of service for the National Honor Society (NHS), a member of the Principal's Leadership Council and his Class Steering Committee. Ryan also served as an Orientation Leader. He participated in DECA, the Tutoring Club and was a member of the Boys' Soccer Team.

Like many PWHS students, Ryan also found time to give back to the community. He helped organize clothing drives for Warming Philly to provide for families in need throughout the region. He also volunteered at a number of youth soccer clinics and various activities for the NHS.

Ryan is enrolled in the Lehigh University Integrated Business and Engineering Honors Program. He is majoring in Industrial & Systems Engineering and Finance.



## Alyssa Jamison

An All-American who competed at the state level in academic competitions and who found time to volunteer to help others, Alyssa was active during her four years at PWHS. As a freshman, she was one of four PWHS cheerleaders to be named All-American by the Universal Cheerleading Association. She was one of only 25 of 1,000 girls who were invited to try out for All-American and one of just 12 who received the honor. She would later be named captain of the PWHS squad.

Alyssa also participated in Track & Field in the spring, and the French Club. She was also a member of the National Honor Society (NHS) and her Class Steering Committee. Among her community service was assisting with the PWHS Breakfast with Santa and volunteering for various project for the NHS.

Alyssa was also active in the HOSA Club as a student at the Central Montco Technical High School. She took part in the HOSA-Future Health Professionals State Conference after qualifying to compete in the Medical Math event in which she placed fourth.

Alyssa is attending Temple University as a pre-med major.



## Class of 2018 Fun Fact

**If you found yourself doing a double take when looking at the PWHS Class of 2018, you probably weren't alone. The class includes nine sets of twins and two sets of triplets. Five of the sets of twins are mixed, while there are two sets each of brothers and sisters. Both sets of triplets are also mixed with one set of two girls and a boy and one of a girl and two boys. While the large number of multiplies may seem surprising, the sophomore class at New Trier High School in suburban Chicago set a world record this year with 44 sets of twins and one set of triplets.**



**The multiple siblings and their parents gathered for a group photo in the high school cafeteria courtyard on May 2.**

# Celebrating the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School

## Kezia Jemison

A Distinguished Honor Roll student, Kezia was selected to participate in the Hugh O'Brian Youth leadership Seminar as a sophomore. She was a member of her Class Steering Committee for four years and served as vice president.



An Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) student, Kezia was also a member of the Colonial Players and a Student Council Representative. She worked on the yearbook, was a member of the Medical Science Career Club and the Robotics Club.

Kezia helped her AVID classmates conduct a gym class for Life Skills students.

Kezia is majoring in Biochemistry at Duquesne University.

## John McGrath

John embodies the PW philosophy of community service. The Distinguished Honor Roll student spent countless hours working with the United Way and its Day of Caring program, Cradles to Crayons, the Chester County Food Bank, Paradise Farms Camp and many other causes through his commitment to the Boy Scouts.



Last October, John earned the Eagle Scout honor after spending many hours working to clean, paint and landscape St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Lafayette Hill.

John is attending York College and majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

## Taylor O'Brien

A Distinguished Honor Roll student, Taylor O'Brien will be remembered as one of the best athletes ever to graduate from PWHS. She was named First Team all Suburban One League Continental Conference (SOLCC) in volleyball as a senior after helping the Colonials to a share



of the SOLCC Championship. As a junior, she was a member of the team that won the SOLCC Championship and advanced to the District 1 Finals and the PIAA Quarterfinals.

In track and field, Taylor was an all-state medal winner in the high jump as a junior and a senior and in the 300 meter hurdles as a senior.

But it is on the basketball court that Taylor will most be remembered. A four-year starter, she led the Colonials to two straight SOL American Conference Championships, two District 1 Playoff appearances and two PIAA State Playoff appearances during her junior and senior seasons. She was named First Team All-State both years. As a senior, the 5-foot-9 guard scored a career-high 36 of the Colonials' 57 points in a dramatic 57-55 overtime win at Upper Dublin on January 6. That gave her 1,623 points to surpass the 1,615 scored by Nikki Flocco between 1993 and 1997. Amazingly, O'Brien eclipsed that mark in 31 fewer games.

On January 9 at home against Hatboro-Horsham, Taylor banked home a 3-point shot with 3:57 to play in the third quarter to become the all-time scoring leader in PWHS history. The trey gave her 19 points for the game and 1,642 for her career, one better than Thomas Young scored for the Colonial boys between 2003 and 2005. Later, during a District 1 Playoff game at Abington, O'Brien scored her 2,000th career point. Following the season, she was named the Pennsylvania Sports Writers' 2017-2018 Class 6A Girls Basketball Player-of-the-Year.

Taylor finished her career with 2,040 points, a 19.6 average in 104 games played. She scored at least 30 points in a game 11 times. She is attending Bucknell University on a basketball scholarship.

## Class of 2018 Fun Fact

**The class includes seven boys named Ryan, making it the most popular boy's name, and seven girls named Sarah, also the most popular girl's name. But two Sarahs spell their name without the "h".**

## Stephen Longo

Stephen was a four-sport athlete for the Colonials. He earned three varsity letters in baseball and two each in football, soccer and ice hockey.



He was one of the top hitters on the baseball team this spring and had the distinction of hitting the first home run in an official game on the new turf baseball field. Stephen was named Third Team All-Suburban One League American Conference (SOLAC). He scored six goals and added 11 assists during his two years on the ice hockey team. As a senior, he was an assistant captain and was named the Colonials' recipient of the Hobey Baker Award given to a senior who plays with integrity and a positive attitude, is coachable and who displays outstanding sportsmanship and community spirit.

Stephen split time between soccer and football during the fall but it was in football that he made his mark. A 5-foot-11, 180-pound kicker and punter, he was the Colonials' Special Teams Player of the Year as a junior and a senior. In 2016, he helped PWHS to the SOLAC Championship and was named First Team All-SOLAC as a kicker and Third Team All-SOLAC as a punter.

Stephen is continuing his education and playing football at Widener University.



# Class of 2018 - Senior Spotlight

## Isabella Paladino

A Distinguished Honor Roll student with a cumulative weighted grade point average of nearly 5.0, Isabella was very active in school and community activities. She was the Class of 2018 Treasurer, a member of the National Honor Society, the French Club and the varsity swimming team.

In the community, Isabella served as vice president of Warming Philly which provides winter clothing for families in need in the Philadelphia region. She is also active in a number of service projects for local parishes as a member of the Saint Philip Neri Youth Group. Additionally, Isabella is a member of the Institute of Dance Artistry Repertoire.

Isabella is attending Villanova University and majoring in computer science.



## Gia Schweitzer

A Distinguished Honor Roll student and member of the National Honor Society (NHS), Gia was very active during her four years at PW. She was a letter winner in both Field Hockey and Basketball and was a captain of both teams as a senior. Gia was named the Colonials Basketball Teammate of the Year as a junior and a senior. As a senior, she was named to the Pennsylvania High School Field Hockey Coaches Association All-Academic Team.

Gia also took part in the Student Coalition, Best Buddies and completed 45 hours of community service for the NHS. Her volunteerism included donating time for the Sandy Rollman Ovarian Cancer Foundation and the For Pete's Sake Foundation.

Gia is attending Lehigh University. She plans to major in Environmental Engineering.



**PW**  
Colonials

## Anthony Sanchez-Rojas

Like many of his classmates, Anthony took part in several community service projects including the annual Colonial Neighborhood Council Food Drive and Toys for Tech. A Scholastic Honor Roll student, he found his niche at the Central Montco Technical High School (CMTHS). Combining a love of art and graphic design he excelled in the Visual Communications program at CMTHS. Anthony is continuing his education at Montgomery County Community College with a goal of becoming a graphic designer.



## Jake Tassoni

A Distinguished Honor Roll student and Advanced Placement Scholar, Jake was voted the Class of 2018's Best Dancer, Class Clown and Most Spirited. He also organized the high school's first Mini-THON, a 12-hour dance marathon and yearlong fundraising effort that netted over \$23,000 for Four Diamonds, whose mission is to conquer childhood cancer by assisting children and their families through superior care, comprehensive support and innovative research.

Jake also volunteered his time painting and cleaning schools in underprivileged Philadelphia neighborhoods, recruiting blood drive donors and more. A member of the National Honor Society, he participated on the wrestling team, his Class Steering Committee, the Metaphysics Club and the Karaoke Club.

Jake is continuing his education at the University of Georgia.



## Class of 2018 Fun Fact

Seven members of the Class of 2018 are entering the military. Owen Keogh, shown at right with his parents, Beth and Danny and two U.S. Army recruiters, entered boot camp at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri following graduation.



# Plymouth Whitemarsh High School 2018 Senior

## Athletics

Cardin D. Brown - Most Courageous Athlete Award ..... Sarah Putsch  
 Cardin D. Brown - Most Courageous Athlete Award ..... Blake Rosen  
 Conshohocken Bulldogs Student Athlete Award..... Meghan Ely  
 Denise Cotteta Memorial Award ..... Stephen Longo  
 Denise Cotteta Memorial Award ..... Gia Schweitzer  
 Donna Zuck Scholar-Athlete Award..... Taylor O'Brien  
 George Purvis Memorial Soccer Award..... Victoria Betterly  
 George Purvis Memorial Soccer Award..... Alexander Lefkowitz  
 Joe Murray Memorial Wrestling Award..... Warren Young  
 Mark Combs Memorial Scholarship ..... Sophia Kolkka  
 Mount Carmel Sports Award - Nick Salamone Award..... Michael Iannarelli  
 Mount Carmel Sports Award - Nick Salamone Award..... Taylor O'Brien  
 Mount Carmel Sports Award - Rick Narciso Award..... Kirk Bell  
 Mount Carmel Sports Award - Rick Narciso Award..... Lauren Fortescue  
 Plymouth Jr ABA League Victor Negron Scholarship ..... Ali Diamond  
 Plymouth Jr ABA League Victor Negron Scholarship ..... Alan Glover  
 PWCC Coaches Award ..... Nicole Olejar  
 PWCC Spirit Award..... Alyssa Jamison  
 Robert F. Kline Jr. Memorial Athletic Award ..... Julia Fiddler  
 Robert F. Kline Jr. Memorial Athletic Award ..... Griffin Kolkka  
 The Clark Doebler Memorial Scholarship Award..... Alan Glover  
 Thomas Manuel Golf Award..... Jonathan Silberman  
 U.S. Army National Scholar Athlete Award..... Kenneth Diamond  
 U.S. Army National Scholar Athlete Award..... Michelle McGrath  
 U.S. Marine Corps Distinguished Athlete Award..... Emma Clancy  
 U.S. Marine Corps Distinguished Athlete Award..... Stefan Kolkka  
 Whitemarsh Baseball Association Scholarship Award..... Steven Blum  
 Whitemarsh Youth Basketball Award..... Stephen Longo

## Band

Adam M. Wilson Memorial Award ..... Zachary Arnett  
 Colonial Band Award..... Franklin Ashton  
 John Philip Sousa Award..... Autumn Loughery  
 Keith M. Stimson Memorial Scholarship ..... John O'Brien  
 PW Jazz Band Award ..... Sean McLaughlin  
 U.S. Marine Corps Semper Fidelis Award ..... Lexia Tomino  
 Whitemarsh Lions Club Band Award..... Rachael O'Shea

## Business

Conshohocken Business & Professional  
 Women's Club Award ..... Sophia Kolkka  
 DECA Scholarship Award..... Justin Hong  
 Dr. Kenneth L. Wilkinson Memorial Business Award..... Sam Cohen  
 Junior Women's Club of Conshohocken0  
 Award in Business ..... Rachel Hidalgo  
 Wells Fargo Bank Finance Award..... Audra Polsky

## Chorus

Colonial Chorus Award..... Karen Minecci

## English

Language Arts Department Award  
 for Excellence in English ..... Sam Cohen  
 Language Arts Department Award  
 for Excellence in English ..... Sanya Kunicki  
 Walterian Theoretical Gummed Star Award..... Cole Walther  
 Whitemarsh Lions Club Award in English ..... Ashley Ryan

## Fine Arts

Art Teachers Award ..... James Ronan  
 Excellence in Photography Award ..... Autumn Loughery  
 Excellence in Photography Award, Honorable Mention..... Sarah Forchielli  
 National Art Honor Society Award, 1st place ..... Maddy Fair  
 National Art Honor Society Award, 2nd Place ..... Kiersten Pokorny  
 National Art Honor Society Award, 3rd Place..... Gozzal Berdimuratova  
 National Art Honor Society Award, Honorable Mention..... Rosena Chan  
 Whitemarsh Lions Club Fine Arts Award..... Erin Moore

## Mathematics

AP Calculus Award ..... Christopher Ward  
 AP Computer Science Award..... Darius Grosch  
 AP Statistics Award..... Thomas Weinstein  
 National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics Award..... Meghan Ely  
 National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics Award..... Sanya Kunicki

## Orchestra

Colonial Orchestra Award ..... Lexia Tomino  
 PW Orchestra Achievement Award..... Ari Kaganovsky  
 PW Orchestra Achievement Award..... Madison Lee  
 PW Orchestra Service & Dedication Award ..... Robert Gutman  
 PW Orchestra Service & Dedication Award ..... Katherine Houghton  
 PW Orchestra Service & Dedication Award ..... Kasey Krausse

## Principal

National Merit Scholarship Program Award, Commended  
 Alexandria Dippolito, Nicolas Elvins, Zachary Fisher,  
 Savanna Goldstein, Anya Popko, Christopher Ward and Sara Yuter

National Merit Scholarship Program Award, Finalist  
 Adam Hong

President's Award for Academic Achievement  
 Safiyah Bouguerra, Kayla Castor, Christopher Denolfi,  
 Josephina Gonzalez, Ryan Greenbaum, Amanda Kay, Gabriella Sansone  
 and Tyler Wootten

President's Award for Academic Excellence  
 Barrie Berger, Joshua Berger, Alexandria Chin, Makenna Chun,  
 Emma Clancy, Brandon Cohen, Sam Cohen, Alexandria Dippolito,  
 Nikolas Elvins, Meghan Ely, Maddy Fair, Steven Fandozzi,  
 Savanna Goldstein, Alyssa Green, Robert Gutman, Ryan Heaton,  
 Joshua Joffe, Eric Jordahl, Ari Kaganovsky, Sanya Kunicki,  
 Samantha Lacoff, Alexa Lavanchy, Michelle McGrath, Bridget Mctamney,  
 Erin Moore, Amanda Nerenberg, Isabella Paladino, Brian Paul,  
 Anya Popko, Gia Schweitzer, Jake Tassoni, Christopher Ward,  
 Remi Weinstein, Thomas Weinstein and Sara Yuter

## Science

American Association of Physics Teachers Award  
 for Excellence in Physics..... Emma Clancy  
 Philadelphia Section of the American Chemical  
 Society Award..... Eric Jordahl  
 Richard Coletta Science Award..... Ari Kaganovsky  
 Society of Women Engineers Award, High Honor..... Sarah Clancy  
 Society of Women Engineers Award, Highest Honor..... Makenna Chun  
 Society of Women Engineers Award, Honor..... Sarah Scanlin  
 The Roger J. Allan & Lee T. Allan Memorial  
 Scholarship Award..... Jules Kowalski

# Awards by Department

## Service

Class of 1962 Award to Outstanding Senior.....	Kezia Jemison
Congressman Patrick Meehan's Good Citizen Award.....	Kirk Bell
Congressman Patrick Meehan's Good Citizen Award.....	Maria Robinson
Conshohocken/Plymouth-Whitemarsh Rotary John Ondik Service Above Self Award.....	Amanda Nerenberg
Conshohocken/Plymouth-Whitemarsh Rotary John Ondik Service Above Self Award.....	Quinn Watton
Freedom Valley Award for Community Service.....	Jake Tassoni
PW Service Award.....	Elliot Anderson
State Senator Daylin Leach Good Citizenship Award.....	Kaitlin Atkinson
State Senator Daylin Leach Good Citizenship Award.....	Steven Fandozzi
The Rotary Club of Norristown Scholarship Award.....	Shreya Bhutani
The Rotary Club of Norristown Scholarship Award.....	Amanda Nerenberg

## Social Studies

Daughters of the American Revolution Award in American History.....	Bridget McTamney
Ed Swetkowski Social Studies Award.....	Brandon Cohen
Herbert C. Mayson Memorial Award.....	Ari Kaganovsky
John R. Kilpatrick Award.....	Thomas Weinstein
Kathy Tavani Social Studies Award.....	Sanya Kunicki
National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution Good Citizenship Award.....	Christopher Ward
Robert F. Kline Jr. Memorial Social Studies Award.....	Jake Tassoni
Ronald Lopresti Scholarship Award.....	Joshua Berger

## Special Awards

6abc Best of the Class Award.....	Brandon Cohen
B.C.A. Club Award of Merit.....	Emma Coleman
B.C.A. Club Award of Merit.....	Phylicia White
Bright Futures Award.....	Ryan Greenbaum
Cheltenham Area Branch NAACP Scholarship Award.....	Safiyah Bouguerra
Distinguished Student Council Award.....	Brandon Cohen
Dr. Kenneth L. Wilkinson Foundation College Scholarship Award Shreya Bhutani, Mollie Blum, Sam Cohen, Brandon Cohen, Alexandra Evan and Christopher Ward	

Junior Women's Club of Conshohocken Scholarship Award.....	Myriah Johnson
Phi Beta Kappa Association of the Delaware Valley Award.....	Isabella Paladino
PWHS Leadership Award.....	Shreya Bhutani
PWHS Respect the Difference Award.....	Alena Disanto
Student Council Scholarship Award.....	Sam Cohen
Student Council Scholarship Award.....	Ryan Heaton
Student Council Scholarship Award.....	Amanda Nerenberg
The Pat & Josephine Sparango Endowment Foundation Engineering Scholarship Award.....	Ryan Heaton
U.S. Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award.....	Remi Weinstein
U.S. Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award.....	Jacob Welsh

## Technology Education

John Loughridge Award in Design and Innovation.....	Kenneth Diamond
John Loughridge Award in Technical Drawing.....	Karen Minecci

## Theatre

Braun Littman Theater Award.....	Audra Polsky
Choreographers Award.....	Kayla Mastronardo
Colonial Player of the Year Award.....	Cole Walther
Director's Choice Award.....	Aidan McEleney
Fall Drama Dedication Award.....	Sara Yuter
Keith M. Stimson Memorial Award in Technical Theater Craft.....	Liam Jolley
Robert Reilly Spirit Award.....	Bailey Bower

## World Languages

James J. Doyle Memorial Award.....	Thomas Weinstein
Junior Women's Club of Conshohocken Award in World Language.....	Kelly Nguyen
La Grande Medaille Moliere Award.....	Nikolas Elvins
Latin Language Award.....	Alexandria Chin
Miriam & Milton Prince Memorial Scholarship Award.....	Sarah Forchielli
The Maurice Anthony Doroba Memorial Award.....	Sanya Kunicki

## PWHS Scholarship Fund aids 34 seniors

Thirty-four members of the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) Class of 2018 received scholarships from the PWHS Scholarship Fund at commencement exercises on June 12. Now in its 32nd year, the Scholarship Fund is a nonprofit organization and is not part of any other organization. It exists only to help young people who hope to further their education after high school. Since the Fund awarded its first two scholarships totaling \$800, it has helped more than 700 PWHS graduating seniors with awards totaling more than \$800,000.

Tax deductible contributions may be sent to the PWHS Scholarship Fund, 201 E. Germantown Pike, Plymouth Meeting, Pa., 19462. Checks should be made payable to "PWHS Scholarship Fund." Donations may also be made online through the Colonial School District Education Foundation at [www.colonialsd.org/store](http://www.colonialsd.org/store).



**Front Row (L to R):** Remi Weinstein, Brian Paul, Shreya Bhutani, Phoebe McCullough, Alexandria Chin, Kelly Nguyen, Caroline Coffey, Isabella Paladino, and Emmie Cohen. **Second Row (L to R):** Madison Lee, Mollie Blum, Sarah Forchielli, Nathaniel Rell, Brandon Cohen, Justin Hong, Emily Belford, Amanda Nerenberg, Phoenix Spencer, Natalie Paskin and Alyssa Green. **Third Row (L to R):** Maria Robinson, Cole Walther, Ari Kaganovsky, Alex Lefkowitz, Bradley Krenicky, Sam Cohen, Thomas Weinstein, Kirk Bell, Christopher Ward, Ryan Heaton, Blake Rosen, Jake Tassoni and PWHS Scholarship Fund Chair Bernie Biasi. **Not pictured were** Makenna Chun and Alexandra Evan.

# Making a Difference!

## Colonial School District students, teachers and staff have a

The Colonial School District offers many opportunities for students to make a positive impact on their school, their community and their world, and the results have been impressive.

- The two regional Cradles to Crayons Battle of the Schools top winners hail from the Colonial School District: Colonial Elementary School (CES) for most items collected and Conshohocken Elementary (CE) School for the most items collected per student.
- Laps for Leukemia at Plymouth Elementary School (PE) brought in almost \$20,600 — the most of any elementary school in the eastern part of Pennsylvania — for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.
- Plymouth Whitmarsh High School's first Mini-THON, an all-night dance marathon and outreach of Penn State's THON event that supports pediatric cancer, raised more than \$23,000.

Whether giving their time and talents or collecting donations, students and staff throughout Colonial's schools are Making A Difference in a variety of ways.

### Inspiring others to give: CES Cares at Colonial Elementary School

Colonial Elementary School's service club, CES Cares, brings more than 100 fourth and fifth graders to school an hour early each month to help their peers get excited about contributing to the greater good.

"I'm here because the first meeting was hurricane relief," said Blake Sweely, a fourth grader. "I knew there were hurricanes, and I wanted to help."

The students create posters and speeches and decorate collection boxes related to the different charities that benefit from their efforts. For the winter holidays, the students buy presents for other children whose families have fallen on hard times.

"You get to join your community and help out," said Kayla Cohen, who is in fifth grade. "You get to meet more friends and to donate, and then after that you feel really good about yourself, because you know

you're doing the right thing."

CES Cares is open to all students in the school -- as well as any of the teachers who would like to help. The sponsors, CES teachers Ken Grimes and Michele Yavorski, rotate the mornings throughout the year to make sure that students who have other activities like band or floor hockey can still participate in the club.

"I think it's amazing to see how these kids want to give back to their community and how, just from the bottom of their hearts, they want to help others," said Ms. Yavorski. "That's what they get out of it, and it's inspiring to watch them give."

### Giving their time: PE Spirit Team at Plymouth Elementary

During the 2017-2018 school year, Plymouth Elementary School's PE Spirit Team started making visits to Brightview Senior Living Center in East Norriton.

On their first volunteer night, 25 Plymouth Elementary third graders decorated cupcakes with the residents and then played classic board games like Connect Four, Candyland and Uno with the seniors.

"We got to play games with everyone, and I met new people," said Zoe Nguyen, a member of the PE Spirit Team. "I liked making the cupcakes with everybody."

"The kids had a great time, and the residents really seemed to enjoy it, as well," said Lauren Smith, a third grade teacher and cosponsor of the PE Spirit Team. "We received so many compliments on how amazing our kids are, how respectful, how polite. They were just so excited to be around children. I think that was the best part of it all."

Similar to Colonial Elementary's CES Cares, the PE Spirit Team is open to all students in third grade and meets monthly before school. In addition to participating in the occasional after school programs like the visit to the retirement community, the group makes posters reinforcing "Panda Traits" (Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair,

Caring and Cooperative) and runs drives that benefit Warming Philly, Cradles to Crayons, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and other organizations.

### Modeling behavior: The Great Kindness Challenge at Conshohocken Elementary

While many of Colonial School District's schools were holding pep



CES Cares meets monthly and offers different service projects throughout the year. In the past they've collected money, clothing and books among other things to benefit different charities.

## positive impact on the local community and beyond

rallies for the Philadelphia Eagles, Conshohocken Elementary School held a pep rally to build excitement for being kind.

The Great Kindness Challenge, which is a national event held the last full week in January, encourages a positive school environment by challenging the students to complete up to 50 items on a list of kind things to do. The items varied from smiling at people, sneaking an encouraging note into a friend's backpack and saying thank you to picking up trash, making a new friend and reading a book to a younger child.

"People were making hearts and giving them to other people," said third grader Jailynn Brewer. "That was one of our things to do: cut out ten hearts and give them to ten of your friends."

While The Great Kindness Challenge ended on January 26, staff and students noticed a change in their school environment even without the special activities that surrounded the challenge.

"I have seen a difference," said Mrs. Campbell. "I think kids are putting themselves in other people's shoes a little bit more before reacting to situations and just taking the time to do something nice, even if it's just smiling at a friend or smiling at someone they don't know in the hallway. It's building an awareness that hopefully we'll be able to sustain for a long period of time."

### Practicing acceptance: Autism Awareness Month at Ridge Park Elementary

During Autism Awareness Month at Ridge Park Elementary, the students participate in an all-school Autism Walk, read stories about accepting differences and work on special projects like coloring Autism Awareness ribbons to decorate the front lobby.

"Autism Awareness Month is the month we celebrate the people that have autism," said first grader Molly Ronan. "People who have autism were born with some difficulties, like they won't answer questions as fast as other people do. If you ask them if you can borrow something from them, they have to think in their mind of the word. It takes them a long time to figure out what word they're supposed to say."

Ridge Park is home to the kindergarten through third grade autistic support classrooms, and the students in



Plymouth and Whitemarsh Elementary School students collected canned goods for the Colonial Neighborhood Council through a project known as the SOUPer Bowl.

the autistic support program participate with their peers in specialists (music, art, technology, gym and guidance), recess, lunch, parties and other subjects and events as often as possible — which gives all of the children a chance to naturally make connections with each other.

"I think our staff does a really good job building a supportive community of learners, not just for our kids with autism but for anybody with a difference," said Ridge Park Principal Eileen Carr. "Through having opportunities to work and play together, our students really do accept each other for who they are."

Acceptance is also the character trait that the school highlights in January as part of its monthly focus on different traits to help the students develop socially. Because the students are able to dig deeper into their character traits with each new grade level, RP highlights the same trait

during the same month each year. This consistency gives teachers the time to find books and other resources related to



Conshohocken Elementary School students participated in The Great Kindness Challenge, a national event that encourages students to complete up to 50 items on a list of kind things to do.

# Making a Difference!

## Colonial School District students, teachers and staff have a

each trait. The year starts with friendship in September and ends with courage in June.

### Feeding the hungry: SOUPer Bowl at Whitemarsh Elementary

Each school in the District takes a month during the school year to collect donations for the food pantry at the Colonial Neighborhood Council. However, every year, Whitemarsh Elementary challenges its students with a SOUPer Bowl.

The children choose which opponent they would like to win the game by putting their donated food into a bin decorated for a particular team. This year, they had to add an additional bins for the donations in honor of the hometown Eagles; their bins were brimming with cans while fewer than 10 cans sat at the bottom of a large bin marked for the New England Patriots.

"It's a bit lopsided in our cans out there, but it's fun," said Jeff Yeakel, the school's gym teacher who has been organizing the event for the past half dozen years. "It's a way to bring the community together and to show the kids to not just think of themselves but to think of others."

Plymouth Elementary held a similar event this year in honor of the Eagles, and together, the two schools collected more than 800 cans. Many of the schools and clubs also hold food drives around the winter holidays. This year, the SkillsUSA club at Central Montco Technical High School brought in more than 900 pounds of canned goods for Martha's Choice Marketplace, a food pantry located across the street from the school.

### Hands-on volunteering: Community Service Day Pilot at Colonial Middle School

In October, students on the the Eighth Grade Red Team had the opportunity to donate their time at one of four nonprofit organizations in the area: the Williams Jeanes Library, Colonial Neighborhood Council, Friends of the Wissahickon and Mitzvah Circle.

"You were able to pick from four options that were very different from each other but still had the same purpose of helping out your community," said student Alena Epright. "So you could do something you were going to enjoy and get the most out of it."

The eighth graders wiped down shelves and cleaned

and sorted toys at the library, organized the teen room and food pantry at the Colonial Neighborhood Council, carried out nearly 120 pounds of trash from the Devil's Pool area in Fairmount Park and searched for specific clothing sizes to

pull together outfits for people in need at Mitzvah Circle.

"I went into it thinking that a library was just books, but there are computers in almost every room with Internet access for people who don't have it at home and just a lot of things to do," said eighth grader Matt Licwinko. "It makes me feel good that we were able to help them."

With the team model at the middle school, roughly 90 students share the same four core content (Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies) teachers, which makes the Community Service Day project easier to coordinate and schedule. CMS plans to continue and possibly expand the program in 2018-2019.



Whitemarsh Elementary School Teacher Shana Genkin ran the 2018 Boston Marathon to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

### Encouraging new ideas: Plymouth Whitemarsh High School

While most of the clubs at the high school have a service component, PWHS also offers students opportunities to take the initiative to create organizations to fill different needs.

Last winter, the Anti-Domestic Violence Club collected 52 bags of new and gently used clothing for Laurel House, a



In May, students at Ridge Park, Whitemarsh and Conshohocken Elementary Schools collected old and outgrown sneakers to help families of children battling pediatric cancer, through Dunk Your Kicks.

## positive impact on the local community and beyond

local domestic violence agency that runs a women's shelter, offers counseling, advocates for victims and raises funds and awareness. Alexandra Evan, PWHS Class of 2018, (highlighted on page 4) founded the club when she was a sophomore.

"Domestic violence is an under-addressed issue," said Alexandra. "In my life, I went through some things, and instead of thinking of the bad times, I'm using my experience as a reason to bring awareness to domestic violence and help other people — starting in school and throughout my life."

This past year, the UNICEF Club held several fundraisers, including a pancake breakfast and the popular Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF drive, and hosted programs that addressed struggles that people around the world face. Junior Justin Adler started the UNICEF Club at PWHS his freshman year as a positive force in response to what he saw happening in society.

"I found that there was lots of negative energy, and I decided to try to channel this for a great cause," said Justin. "We've successfully raised thousands of dollars in events to provide aid to desperate families throughout the world. We also have tackled some more complicated issues, such as human trafficking, AIDs awareness and women's rights. We have big dreams for the future and will try our best to help create a world where every child has access to education and is not at risk for preventable diseases, famine or other injustices."

Ali Totaro, PWHS Class of 2017, founded the PW Service Club with the goal of traveling and volunteering in a foreign country each year. Now in its second year, nine members of the club recently spent the first week of their summer vacation visiting Guatemala, where they taught English and tiled an outdoor water station at a school in the city of Tecpán.

"It was so rewarding to know that I was both teaching and making connections with the kids simply because I was able to speak a little bit of their language," said Maggie Coyle, a senior who used the Spanish that she learned at PWHS to communicate with the children. "Leaving the school on our last day was very difficult, because we formed such

strong bonds with all of the students. They were so grateful for our efforts, and we were so touched by the generosity and kindness of their community. It was hard to leave that behind."



Colonial Middle School students sorted food in the pantry at the Colonial Neighborhood Council, organized the teen room and helped in the thrift shop as part of a Community Service Day project.

### The Making A Difference campaign

Dr. Michael Christian, Superintendent of Schools, brought the "Making A Difference" campaign to Colonial this past year.

"Service learning is key to a well-rounded education," said Dr. Christian. "It's great to see the students' enthusiasm for different causes and the impact that they're making close to home and around the world."

For more stories about how students and staff are Making

A Difference in Colonial, visit [www.colonialsd.org/makingadifference](http://www.colonialsd.org/makingadifference).



Members of the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School UNICEF Club held a pancake breakfast fundraiser.

## Diamond, Kolkka and Betterly recognized by U.S. Lacrosse

Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) seniors Ali Diamond, Sophie Kolkka and Victoria Betterly were honored at the Philadelphia Lacrosse Association Awards Banquet on June 4.

Diamond, who received a scholarship to play lacrosse at Georgetown University, was named an All-American and an Academic All-American. She was also the Eastern Pennsylvania recipient of the prestigious Jackie Pitts Award presented by United States Lacrosse. Diamond scored 48 goals and assisted on 48 others this season for the Colonials. For her career, she had 208 goals and 123 assists.

The Pitts award recognizes a graduating senior in each U.S. Lacrosse Chapter who truly honors the game, is invested in the development of the game in her community, is an exceptional player who continually strives to improve her game and is an exemplary team member. She exemplifies the spirit of the game on and off the field. Academically, she is an outstanding student and a valued role model in her school.

Ms. Pitts was a member of the U.S. Women's Team and U.S. Reserve Team from 1964-74. She served as the head coach of the U.S. women's squad from 1979-87, winning the first World Cup in 1982. She is a past president and vice president of the United States Women's Lacrosse Association (USWLA) and the International Federation of Women's Lacrosse Associations (IFWLA). She was inducted to both the National Lacrosse Hall of Fame and is an honorary member of the USWLA, the former IFWLA and the Philadelphia Women's Lacrosse Association.

Kolkka was named to the All-Pennsylvania Area Schoolgirls Lacrosse Association (PASLA) Team and was the PASLA Suburban One League American Conference Player of the Year. She was also named an Academic All-American. Kolkka scored 34 goals and had 29 assists this season. She had 109 goals and 48 assists for her career, despite missing her junior season with a knee injury. Kolkka received a scholarship to play at St. Joseph's University next year.

Betterly was also named an Academic All-American. She scored 45 goals and assisted on 23 this season, and had



(L to R): Sophie Kolkka, Victoria Betterly and Ali Diamond.

122 goals and 57 assists for her career. Betterly plans to play lacrosse at Christopher Newport University next year.

Additionally, PWHS senior Meghan Ely and junior Kennedy Reardon received PASLA Academic Awards.

## Polsky wins \$3,000 scholarship in financial jeopardy competition

Senior Audra Polsky represented Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) at the 11th Annual TruMark Financial Credit Union Financial Jeopardy Competition, placed second, and walked away with a \$3,000 scholarship.

The competition tested students' personal finance knowledge in categories such as banking, credit, taxes, budgeting and investments. At the end of the competition, TruMark Financial awarded three scholarships — a \$5,000 grand prize, a \$3,000 second prize and a \$2,000 third prize — to the students

who fared best in the Jeopardy, Double Jeopardy and Final Jeopardy rounds of the competition.

As the second place winner, Ms. Polsky also received a \$200 bank account at TruMark Financial in addition to the scholarship. She plans to attend West Chester University and major in mathematics and secondary education.

TruMark Financial operates seven student-run branches in high schools and colleges throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania, including one in PWHS.





## Colonial TSA chapter brings home international gold medal

The Colonial School District Technology Student Association (TSA) chapter returned with several accolades — including a first place trophy — from the 2018 International Technology Student Association (TSA) Conference in Atlanta, Georgia this summer.

Ten students from Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) and 15 students from Colonial Middle School (CMS) competed at the conference, demonstrating their skills in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) along with more than 8,000 students from across the United States, Turkey, Germany and Japan.

### CMS accomplishments:

- The team of Andrew Beer, Avery Broggi, Benjamin Moldovski, Nolen Morasco and David Ruck placed first in the event Mass Production. In this event, the team used their advanced skills in technical design and construction to manufacture marketable geometric puzzles.
- The team of Morasco and Ruck aided by Zane Al Saleem, Tejaswini Chinta, Anna Harrington and Anahita Mandal secured a fifth place spot in the event Construction Challenge. The event required competitors to create a prototype of a product that fulfilled a community need.
- Moldovsky teamed up with Michael Phair to earn eighth place in the event Technological Design, in which they demonstrated the ability to use the technical design process to solve an engineering design problem.

### PWHS accomplishments:

- The high school team of Scott Horry, Kevin Shi and Dean Suchsland placed eighth in the event Webmaster. Answering the prompt of “Artificial

Intelligence,” the team acted as a fictional robotics company and coded a website from scratch.

- Individual Karen Minecci placed ninth in the event STEM Careers. In this event, participants are expected to choose a prospective career in the field of Science, Technology, Engineering or Math (STEM).
- Individual Shreya Bhutani placed tenth in the event Future Technology Teacher. In order to complete in this event, she researched technology education and created a lesson plan and presentation.

In addition to the regular technology competition, middle schoolers Cayce Becker and Caitlin Dougherty received the Gold Achievement Award, which recognizes TSA members who develop skills in leadership and strive to achieve the ideals of TSA. In preparation, they completed many tasks to promote and engage in STEAM education and leadership initiatives.

“Overall, Colonial TSA students have accomplished great success and have proudly represented the Colonial School District once again,” said advisor and CMS science teacher Clint Rickert. “Their impressive accomplishments at the National TSA Conference demonstrate how our students are inspired by the innovative programs at CMS and PWHS and how they can use the STEAM skills they learn to their advantage to “lead in the technical world.”

The advisors for the Colonial TSA chapter also include Diana Rickert, CMS teachers Neil Engle and Jeff Yeagle, PWHS teacher Rich Evan and PWHS alumni Joe Narke.



## Colonial Players earn Best Musical honor at inaugural Philadelphia Independence Awards

At the inaugural Philadelphia Independence Awards for regional high school theater, the Colonial Players' production of *The Theory of Relativity* enjoyed great success, winning 12 awards and showcasing the talent of the cast through performances of the songs "Me & Ricky" and "Nothing Without You."

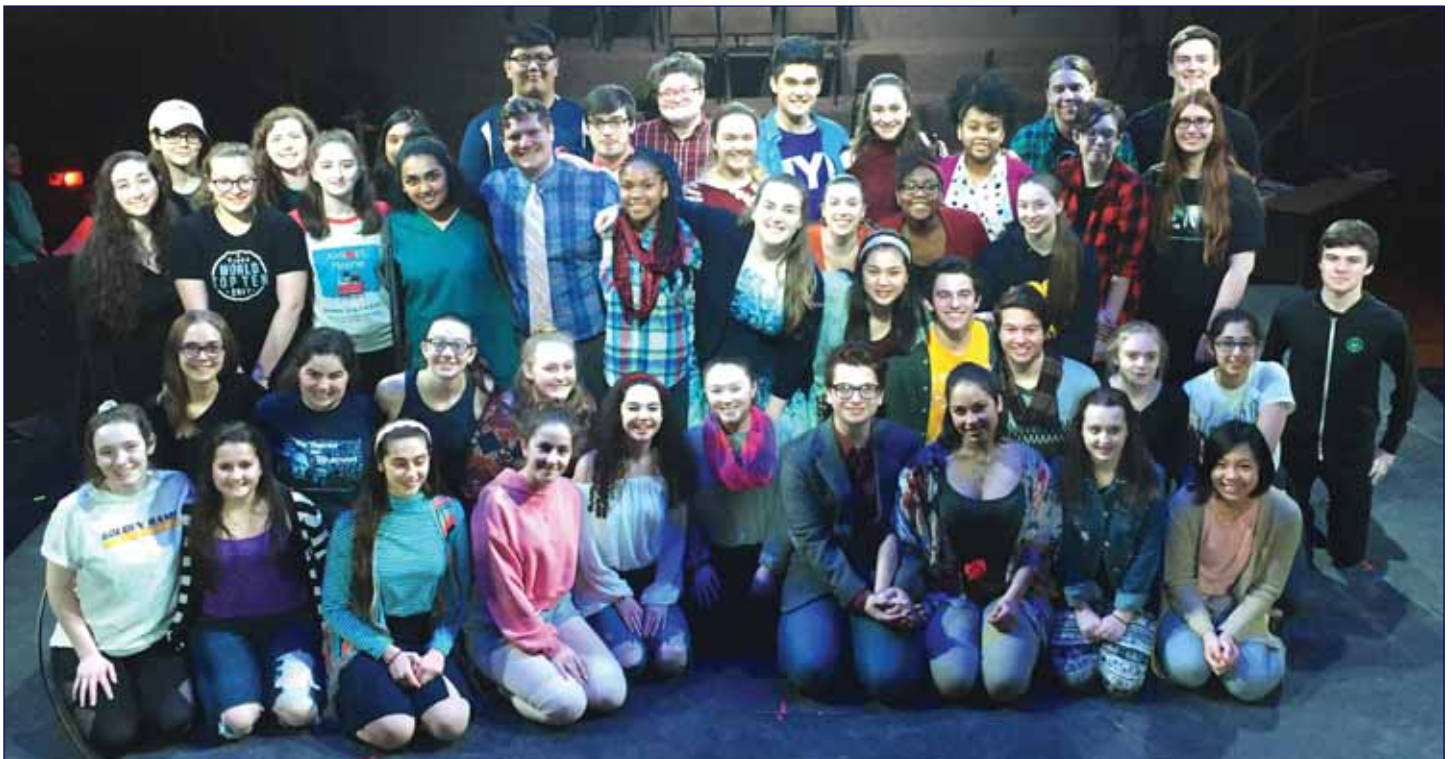
In March, the Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHs) students performed the one-act contemporary musical in the round, with tiered seating on all four sides that offered a more intimate experience for both the cast and the audience.

"We took a chance on a show nobody ever heard of and that's a different style. The kids got behind it, made connections with the audience and turned it into something exciting," said Director Mickey Engel. "They're an incredibly talented and dedicated group of kids."

The Colonial Players took home group awards for Best Musical, Best Ensemble, Best Sound, Best Lighting, Best Scenic Design, Best Creative Effects (The Rotation Crew) and Best Marketing.

Individual Awards went to Katie Smith for Best Featured Actress, Colin Mash for Best Supporting Actor and Caroline Borio for Best Supporting Actress, Best Female Vocalist and Broadway Dreams Scholarship Recipient.

The award ceremony also featured performances by Broadway actress Jenny Lee Stern, the 11th Hour Theater Company, Episcopal Academy, Ridley High School, Central High School and more. Guest presenters at the event included Fox 29's Mike Jerrick, Geno Vento of Geno's Steaks, the Kimmel Center's Director of Education Susan Quinn and others.



The Colonial Players cast and crew of *The Theory of Relativity*.

## Villanueva qualifies for national competition for second straight year

Four Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHs) students represented the Central Montco Technical High School (CMTHS) in state competitions last spring. One student, junior Monserrat Villanueva, qualified for a national event.

Villanueva teamed with three other CMTHS students to place first in the Health Care Sciences Lab HOSA Bowl Event at the HOSA-Future Health Professionals State Conference in Lancaster, Pa. Villanueva was also on a team that won the gold medal last year. She was one of six CMTHS students to qualify for the HOSA National Conference in Dallas, Texas in June.

PWHs senior Alyssa Jamison also took part in the HOSA state conference. She had qualified to compete in the Medical Math event.

HOSA-Future Health Professionals, formerly known as Health Occupations Students of America, is a national career and technical student organization endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education and the Health Science Technology Education Division of the Association for Career and Technical Education.

PWHs juniors Gabriella Tornetta and Justin Richards took part in the SkillsUSA Pennsylvania competition.

**See Awards, next page**

# Colonial students participate in national walkout to protest gun violence

Approximately 1,100 Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) students participated in the National School Walkout to protest gun violence on the morning of March 14. Braving the cold, students gathered on Colonial Field and visited tables set up along the track. Several table displays memorialized victims of the Parkland, Fla. school shooting, and one enabled students to register to vote.

The students then filled the home grandstand and listened to keynote speaker Max Milkman, a 2015 PWHS graduate and member of the advocacy group Philadelphia Ceasefire. Milkman encouraged students to let their voices be heard. He urged them to call state and federal legislators and stress the importance of gun control and stopping gun violence. Milkman also said if the legislators don't listen, students should vote them out of office.

"The students did an amazing job of planning and carrying out this event," said PWHS Principal Dr. Jason Bacani. "It's important for students to have the opportunity to express their feelings on important topics. And when they do so in such an orderly and organized manner, they are more likely to have their voices heard."

At the same time, a large number of students participated in an in-school walkout at Colonial Middle School (CMS).

Students reported to designated areas of the building – eighth graders to the cafeteria, seventh graders to the auditorium and sixth graders to the gymnasium. The time was meant for silent reflection. Several seventh graders expressed a desire to explain why they were taking part in the event and were given the opportunity to address their classmates. They also observed a moment of silence before returning to class.

Both the PWHS and CMS campuses were closed during the events to provide students with secure settings to stage their walkouts.

## School Board speaks out

At their public business meeting on March 15, the Colonial Board of School Directors unanimously passed a resolution calling for stringent legislation to curb gun violence and protect the safety of students and teachers in schools. The resolution calls for the prohibition of assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines, enforcing and strengthening laws to limit access to firearms and munitions, increasing funding for school safety and security

## Awards

The pair qualified by winning gold medals at the District II competition last winter. Both students were from the Culinary Arts Lab with Tornetta competing in the Extemporaneous Speaking event and Richards taking part in the Culinary Arts event. Tornetta placed fifth at the state competition, and Richards placed fourth.



The majority of Plymouth Whitemarsh High School students took part in the National School Walkout on March 14.

initiatives and increasing funding for student and community mental health services.

"Our students are leading on the issues of gun violence prevention and student safety," said Adam Schupack, the primary author of the resolution. "The Board felt it was important to add our voice in support of our students, teachers and staff on these critical issues."

"It is important for us to call on others who can control this issue to take action," added School Board President Felix Raimondo. "It is past time for our state and federal legislators to work together and enact

meaningful measures to address gun violence and student safety. And, it is up to us as a School Board and a broader Colonial community to make sure they get that message."

In addition to addressing weapons, Board member Cathy Peduzzi pointed out it is important that the resolution also addresses increased funding for mental health services and research into the causes of and solutions to gun violence.

Board member Mel Brodsky stated that all Board members have children and grandchildren in District schools and are vested in increasing school safety. In supporting the resolution, he expressed appreciation for the inclusive process and open dialogue that took place in crafting the Board's message.

Policy Committee Chair Jennifer Dow agreed.

"It's important for everyone to know that this is the unified voice of the Colonial School Board, and the safety of our students is our highest priority," she said.

"Our students are leading on the issues of gun violence prevention and student safety. The Board felt it was important to add our voice in support of our students, teachers and staff on these critical issues."

**Adam Schupack, School Board member**

SkillsUSA is a national organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations, including health occupations, and for further education.

## Girls In Technology Academy inspires a new generation of engineers

Colonial School District's annual Girls In Technology Academy gives girls in fifth through eighth grade the opportunity to explore robots, 3D modeling and engineering. Part of Colonial's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) culture, the four-day summer camp, which ran from June 18-21, encouraged the girls to work together to solve problems and create new things.

"I did Girls In Technology last year, too," said Samantha Coke, who'll be in seventh grade in the fall at Colonial Middle School. "I keep coming back, because it's nice to interact with other girls who have the same passion as you do: they like technology."

The projects at the Girls In Technology Academy this year included: using 3D modeling software to design and print jewelry, programming robots and working in teams to build "Rube Goldberg" machines — elaborate contraptions with a variety of slopes, pulleys, tubes, levers and found objects — that perform a relatively simple task. For the Girls In Technology campers, the machine needed to erase a word from a whiteboard.

"We get to make a lot of cool stuff, and it's really fun to hang out with girls in the camp," said Zoe Leiby, an incoming seventh grader.

Behind all of these projects is a foundation in the engineering design process. The engineering design process includes: identifying a problem, exploring resources, designing a solution, creating the solution, testing it and making it better. However, the ultimate goal of the camp is to encourage girls to stay involved in technology through high school and consider STEAM careers in the future.

"According to studies, by 2020 there will be almost 1.5 million job openings in STEAM fields, and females hold only about 25% of such positions," said Kevin Willson, Technology Education Teacher at Colonial Elementary School and one of the teachers at the camp. "It's time to level the playing field. Getting girls involved earlier piques their interest and gets them hooked."

The Girls In Technology Academy summer camp in the Colonial School District is funded in part by a grant from The Quaker Chemical Foundation.



Zoe Leiby and Samantha Coke use 3D modeling software as part of the Colonial School District's Girls In Technology Academy summer camp.

## Area companies welcome Colonial students to see engineers in action

Girls from Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) and students in the Technology Student Association (TSA) at Colonial Middle School (CMS) took advantage of visits to local companies to learn more about engineering in a real world setting.

### Lockheed Martin Women's Impact Network STEM Site visit

More than 20 girls from PWHS traveled to Lockheed Martin in King of Prussia to take part in the company's Women's Impact Network STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) Site visit. During the event, the girls learned about the company, toured the facility to see engineers in action and interacted with female employees and executives. The day focused on encouraging girls to study engineering in college and choose it as a career. Only 20% of engineering majors in college are female.

Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 100,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

### TSA visit to Electro Soft, Inc.

Through a grant provided by the Montgomery County Workforce Development, CMS students in TSA and Technology Education Teacher Neil Engle traveled to Electro Soft, Inc. in Montgomeryville. The local company provided students with a firsthand view of advanced electronic manufacturing, including electronic boards created for computers, self-driving cars and satellites.

Electro Soft, Inc. is a tri-state leader in electrical and mechanical contract manufacturing. They specifically focus in the areas of electronic components, assembly services for wave and surface mount soldering of circuit boards, and manufacturing of wire harnesses, cable assemblies, and panel assemblies.

### Career Readiness in Colonial

The visits are part of Colonial's Career Readiness initiative that gives students a better idea of what job opportunities are available and the paths that people take to achieve their career goals.

**Would you like to show Colonial students what your company does?** If so, contact Denise Marks, Development Director and Curriculum Coordinator for Career Readiness at 610-834-1670, ext. 2151, or email [dmarks@colonialsd.org](mailto:dmarks@colonialsd.org).

## Colonial School District beta tests new Google augmented reality

At Colonial Elementary School (CES) and Colonial Middle School (CMS), teachers were offered the opportunity to enhance what the students were learning in their classes using augmented reality.

That meant fifth graders studying the solar system could take a close up look at different planets, CMS students learning French could visit different French speaking countries and seventh graders could experience how armor evolved from the ancient Greeks to the ancient Romans — through an app on a phone.

“You could explore terrain, volcanos and different kinds of stuff on different planets,” said CES Fifth Grader Ryan Venezia. “You could look around it and actually see inside of it, where from Earth you wouldn’t be able to look closely in detail at it.”

“You can basically look at something from different angles, and it seemed to be there,” said Sebastian Krolak, a sixth grade student at CMS, who used augmented reality to explore French Impressionist paintings. “You see it in 3D and get to interact with it, so we could zoom in to see dots and wisps of paint.”

The Google Expeditions Augmented Reality is a stepping stone to their Virtual Reality product that has been a popular teaching tool at CMS.

## Colonial receives PDE Safe Schools grant

Last fall, the Colonial School District received a Safe Schools Target Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the second time in three years. The District was awarded a \$19,145 equipment grant to purchase new surveillance cameras for the Plymouth Whitemarsh High School/Colonial Elementary School campus.

The new cameras will improve the quality of the current system in the stadium at Colonial Field by providing clearer images and additional coverage. Cameras purchased with the grant will also cover the newly installed baseball field located between Colonial Field and Colonial Drive.

The new artificial surface baseball field at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School is covered by cameras purchased with the PDE Safe Schools Grant.



“In addition to curating physical paper resources, I’m also looking for effective digital resources, and virtual reality has been an exciting way to immerse students into a lesson,” said CMS Library Media Specialist Brooke Carpenter. “In the year or so since we’ve adopted the virtual reality goggles, the amount of content available has grown exponentially. We’ve had to purchase more sets so more teachers can use them.”



Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf gets a first-hand experience with virtual reality goggles during a visit to Colonial Middle School in December (see story on next page).

At CMS, teachers have used virtual reality for everything from getting inside of a combustion engine to see how it works in technology education class to taking a tour of the University of North Carolina campus for the students in the AVID elective.

“You see kids get excited and start cheering, when you might not see them as engaged otherwise,” said Mrs. Carpenter. “Interacting with something through augmented or virtual reality helps the kids develop more of a connection to the content than they could get by reading about it. Plus, it’s

adding a fun element to the lesson.”

The new augmented reality product is a way to give students a similar experience without the total immersion of virtual reality, which is not recommended for students under age 12.

Currently there are more than 160 surveillance cameras covering school district property.

In 2014, Colonial received a \$24,720 PDE Safe Schools grant to purchase visitor management kiosks, or Lobby Guard systems in Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, Colonial Middle School, Conshohocken Elementary School, Plymouth Elementary School, Ridge Park Elementary School and Whitemarsh Elementary School. The systems were similar to the one installed in Colonial Elementary School in January 2008.

## Governor visits Colonial Middle School to announce PSSA changes

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf chose Colonial Middle School (CMS) as the location to announce changes to the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Last August, Governor Wolf announced that the number of questions in the PSSA would be reduced beginning this year. On December 6 at CMS, the governor announced a new PSSA schedule for the 2018-19 school year made possible by the reduction in test questions.

“The PSSA test window will be condensed from three weeks to two weeks and be shifted to later in the school year, giving students up to two additional weeks to learn before taking the standardized test and providing school districts with new flexibility to schedule around holidays and breaks,” Governor Wolf said.

While schools were required to start the PSSA the week of April 9 this year, they will have new flexibility to start as late as April 25 in 2019.

School districts had already set their calendars for last spring when the announcement was made, therefore the new PSSA schedule starts in the 2018-19 school year.

### Students showcase STEAM

Following the announcement Governor Wolf got a taste of the Colonial School District's (CSD) Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) initiatives from some CMS students. At the 12 stations set up in the library, students showed the governor what is available in the library's Makerspace, including virtual reality, 3-D printing, robotics, a one-button video studio and even how to install an electrical outlet.

The governor commented that even though he went to MIT, he was having trouble keeping up



Seventh graders Deaglan Buss (pink shirt) and Steve Spruill (plaid shirt) demonstrate a 3D printer for Governor Wolf.



Governor Wolf fielded questions from the media while (l to r) Colonial Middle School teacher Sally Matthews, School Board member Cathy Peduzzi and Superintendent Dr. Michael Christian watch.

with seventh graders Teja Chinta and Sara Zelaya who shared a robotics lesson.

“STEAM is important. It’s basically making sure that we’re preparing all of our students to take a full role in our society and our economy,” said Governor Wolf. “It’s a way of reconnecting schools to the world of work to the broader world our kids go into when they graduate from these schools.”

CSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael Christian, School Board member Cathy Peduzzi, seventh grade Math Teacher Sally Matthews and Pennsylvania Department of Education Executive Deputy Secretary David Volkman also spoke at the event.

## Winter Gold Card event attracts 300 senior citizens

The Colonial School District welcomed more than 300 senior citizens to Colonial Elementary School for the annual Winter Concert and Luncheon in December.

The concert featured Plymouth Whitmarsh High School's Orchestra, Select Vocal Ensemble, Concert Choir and Concert Band. Colonial's Food Services Staff, led by Colonial Elementary Head Cook Sharon Iacovino and Director of Food Services Lori McCoy, put together a buffet that included Chicken Parmesan, green beans, pasta, soup, salad and dessert.

This year's winter concert will feature Colonial Middle School musicians. The event is on Tuesday, December 18. The annual luncheon and matinee performance of the high school musical is scheduled for Saturday, March 9, 2019. Senior citizens aged 65 and older who live in the Colonial School District may apply for a free Gold Card online at:



## Bill and Scott are newest PWHS Distinguished Graduates

The Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) Distinguished Graduates Organization (DGO) added two new members during its 33rd Induction Ceremony on May 11. Mark Bill and Da'Rel Scott were honored at the event.

### Mark S. Bill

Mr. Bill graduated from PWHS in 1976 and was celebrated for his business contributions, specifically in the areas of asset assessment and risk management. For the past 11 years he has served as the founder and president of The Bill Consulting Group, which specializes in assessing and setting up best in class enterprise risk management and vendor management frameworks, including regulatory compliance assurance systems, risk control self-assessment, key risk indicators, fraud prevention and detection, quality control and quality assurance, risk governance and transparency. Among the group's clients are Countrywide; Morgan Stanley/Saxon Mortgage; Peterson, Howell and Heather (PHH) Mortgage; Loan Depot; Bank of America and Key Bank.

During his 38-year career, Mr. Bill has held leadership and executive management positions with all of the companies he now consults for in addition to Citicorp, First Fidelity, GMAC and GE Capital. In 1997, he was one of five employees recognized with the Controllership Award by GE Capital. Throughout his career Mr. Bill's auditing, analysis and suggestions for strategic improvements in the areas of regulatory compliance, risk management, governance and operations have saved companies more than \$100 million.

Mr. Bill is the co-holder of a United States Patent for a computer-assisted system and method for auditing loan portfolios and loan servicing portfolios. He is also co-author of the book *Enterprise Risk Management for Everyone*. He also serves on the executive board of the Dunmore Corporation and volunteers his expertise as president of the Colonial School District Education Foundation and treasurer of the Veterans Community Network.

Mr. Bill holds an Executive MBA from Temple University's Fox School of Business and a B.A. from Villanova University. He is married with two children and lives in Valley Forge.

### Da'Rel Scott

Mr. Scott, a 2006 PWHS graduate was recognized for his athletic accomplishments. He enjoyed a record-setting football career at the University of Maryland before playing three seasons for the National Football League's New York Giants, including being a member of the winning 2011 Super Bowl team.

As a redshirt sophomore running back at Maryland in 2008, Mr. Scott was named 1st Team All-Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) after finishing second in the ACC in rushing. That season he rushed for 1,133 yards and scored eight touchdowns for the Terrapins. He capped that season by leading Maryland to a 42-25 win over the University of Nevada in the Humanitarian Bowl when he rushed for



2018 Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Distinguished Graduates (DGO) Mark Bill (left) and Da'Rel Scott (right) with DGO Chairman Mark Hutchinson

a school bowl-record 147 yards. He was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the game.

Mr. Scott capped his collegiate career by being named MVP and breaking his own record with 200 yards rushing in a 51-20 win over East Carolina in the 2010 Military Bowl. He scored two touchdowns in the game, including a career-long rush of 91 yards.

At Maryland, Mr. Scott started 29 of 41 games, including all 13 his senior season. He rushed for 2,401 yards and 17 touchdowns and had 509 yards and two scores receiving. Mr. Scott also completed two of three passes, both for touchdowns.

Mr. Scott was a late round draft pick of the Giants in 2011. He made the team as a reserve running back after an electrifying pre-season in which he scored on a 97-yard run against the Chicago Bears and a 65-yard fake punt against the New England Patriots. The Giants would complete the season with a 21-17 win over the Patriots in Super Bowl XLVI.

Mr. Scott played three injury-plagued seasons with the Giants. He made his first career start in week four of the 2013 season. He appeared in 20 games for the Giants and scored his only professional touchdown on a 23-yard pass from Eli Manning against the Denver Broncos.

Mr. Scott holds a B.S. from Maryland. He lives in East Norriton with his wife, Alana, and three children.

The purpose of the PWHS Distinguished Graduates Organization is to recognize distinguished graduates of Plymouth Whitemarsh High School in the areas of Academics, Arts, Athletics, Business, Humanities and Public Service who serve as examples of excellence for undergraduate students.

## New CHOW program helps those in need pay for lunch

Colonial School District students and staff make a difference in the community every day. Through group or individual fundraising efforts, Colonial has raised more than \$100,000 this year for various local charities, organizations and disadvantaged individuals. Now, the District is turning to the community to help its students in need.

Colonial Helping Others Without (CHOW) is a new program created by the District's Food Services Department to help pay the cost of school meals for those who cannot afford them.

"In regards to state and federal funding, Colonial is considered a wealthier school district according to income standards. Consequently, we are largely dependent on local revenue for our budget," said Director of Food Services Lori McCoy. "But about 30 percent of the families in our community do not have the financial means to pay for school lunches every day."

Mrs. McCoy noted that approximately 1,000 of Colonial's more than 5,000 students qualify for the Federal Free or Reduced Lunch Program, but there are many more whose families fall on the fringe of that program or have simply fallen on hard times.

"It is no secret that adequate and proper nutrition is an essential component to the learning environment and positively contributes to the health of each student. Also, healthy students are better prepared to learn," said Mrs. McCoy, who is a Registered Dietician and a School Nutrition Specialist. "We are committed to providing healthy, nutritious meals to every student every day."

But that comes at a cost. Student lunch accounts had a deficit of more than \$40,000 for the 2016-2017 school year

and that figure continues to rise.

"Our community has a history of helping each other, so we turned to the Community to help fund student lunches," said Mrs. McCoy.

The Conshohocken Kiwanis Club was the first to answer the call. When the Kiwanis learned the District was looking for help to feed hungry kids, they were immediately on board. The Club's Mardi Gras event raised \$3,200 for CHOW.

"We are thankful that the Kiwanis have embraced this program and hope to make it an annual event," said Mrs. McCoy. "Our hope is that other organizations and individuals will help join this effort."

Those interested in supporting CHOW may send cash or checks to the Colonial School District Food Services Fund at the Food Service Administrative Offices, 4118 Franklin Way, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444. Parents who wish to contribute to CHOW and have positive account balances in their child's lunch account may donate all or a portion of that excess balance simply by contacting Sarah Fries in the Food Services Department by emailing [sfries@colonialsd.org](mailto:sfries@colonialsd.org).

To ensure funds are shared equitably between students and schools, a list of students who meet the criteria for consideration will

be developed by May 1 of each year. Then a committee of school guidance counselors, building principals and pupil services administrators will determine which students may receive funding on a case-by-case basis.

"Our goal is to help as many students as we can," said Mrs. McCoy.



Members of the Conshohocken Kiwanis present Colonial School District (CSD) Director of Food Services Lori McCoy with a \$3,200 check to help fund the District's new CHOW program. L to R: Janet DeTuro (Treasurer), Tonya Ciavarelli (Board member), Marie Sweeney (President Elect), Chris Ciavarelli (President), Jen Vare, Lori McCoy (CSD Director of Food Services), Karen Sears (Board member), Lillian Mateja and Lori Tomczak (Secretary).

## Colonial School Board goes paperless with BoardDocs

In an effort to improve its environmental footprint and provide greater public access to documents, the Colonial Board of School Directors has gone live online with BoardDocs, a web-based document management system. With BoardDocs, members of the community may view agendas and supporting attachments online prior to and during School Board meetings.

Newly approved Board policies, meeting minutes and more are available through the BoardDocs site. Over time,

the move to the paperless system is expected to save the school district thousands of dollars annually on paper and copying costs. BoardDocs is easily accessible via the School Board page on the District website.

The Board has also instituted a Q & A page on the District website. Answers to questions raised at Board meetings will be provided on the webpage.



## New Special Education information program for families launched

This spring, the Colonial School District welcomed more than 40 people to the kick-off of Colonial Understands Special Education (CUSP), a collaboration between parents and staff that offers informative topics relevant to Colonial's families and students with special needs.

For the inaugural presentation, "What's the big IDEA?", Karen Berk, the Colonial School District's Director of Pupil Services and Special Education, introduced the group to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the federal and state laws required for districts to provide a "Free and Appropriate Public Education" for students with disabilities. Guests learned about who is eligible for IDEA services, the basics of the evaluation process, what goes into an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and more.

"We have to work within a particular framework that dictates many of the things we do," said Mrs. Berk. "However, each student is an individual with individual needs, strengths and challenges, and this framework offers us the opportunity to address each child one at a time."

The group consisted mainly of parents. However, teachers, staff and school board members also attended the event.

"CUSP is important because parents often feel uninformed about the decisions they make regarding their children. Special education is complicated, and I want parents to feel secure in their decisions," said Jennifer Dow, Colonial School Board member who helped coordinate the event. "I was also happy to see teachers and staff there. When everyone participates in something like CUSP, the positive impact will be much greater."

CUSP topics for the coming school year include, Executive Functions, Transition to Adult Life, Transitioning from Building to Building within the District and Life Beyond CSD — School to Work, School and Life. Interested persons may also sign up for the CUSP e-newsletter at [www.colonialsd.org/cusp](http://www.colonialsd.org/cusp)

## New gym a showcase for Plymouth Whitemarsh

Primary construction of the new 39,000 square foot Plymouth Whitemarsh High School (PWHS) gymnasium was completed in August. After installation of the wood floor and bleacher seating, the new facility was set to open in September.

The gym was built on the site of the school's old west gymnasium and grass area once used for bonfires. The facility features climate controls, new locker rooms and an atrium lobby. There will be seating for 1,750 for assemblies and potential indoor graduations. Seating for basketball games will be 1,300, or 400 more than the current capacity of the Colonial Elementary School (CES) gymnasium, which has been the home of PWHS basketball since the 1960s.

The facility has space for three basketball courts. There are two physical education teaching stations and an auxiliary space, which will be used for adaptive physical education, Adult Evening School classes and practice space for cheerleaders, the drumline, color guard and sports teams. Also included are new locker and team rooms, coaches and physical education offices, a ticket booth, concession area and more.

The public is invited to tour the new facility as a part of the Colonial School District Education Foundation's second annual Foundation Day on September 29. See page 27 and the inside back cover for details.



The new Plymouth Whitemarsh High School gymnasium (above) was set to open in September. Included in the new facility are new locker and team rooms like the one shown below.



## 2018-19 Budget keeps class sizes in optimum ranges

The Colonial Board of School Directors approved a 2018-2019 Budget of \$126,066,500 at its public business meeting on June 21. The spending plan included a millage rate of 21.917 which equates to a 2.4 percent real estate tax increase. The increase is equal to that allowed by the Act 1 Index.

The 2.4 percent increase represents an additional \$4.28 per month for each \$100,000 of taxable assessed value or an increase of \$6 per month on the District's median assessed property value of \$150,750. The credit for approved homesteads/farmsteads is \$31.09 for the year. That's an increase of 2.4 percent from the previous year.

The Budget increase is attributed to the need to add staff, primarily at the elementary level, as a result of increased student enrollment the past several years. Five new instructional positions were included in the 2018-2019 budget.

"The District is committed to providing the necessary personnel and resources in order to keep class sizes low and maintain the high level of instruction we provide our students," Superintendent Dr. Michael Christian said.

Class sizes remain in the 18-23 range with a student to teacher ratio of less than 13-to-1.

Other factors contributing to the increase are higher costs related to charter school tuition, special education services, healthcare, retirement payments and debt service.

Colonial receives the majority of its revenue -- \$102,787,436 or 81.5 percent -- from local taxes. \$86,517,936 is from local real estate taxes, with \$51,101,206.37 of that total coming from residential property owners. The District is fortunate to have a large commercial tax base that accounts for almost 40 percent or nearly \$34.5 million of local real estate tax revenue. The Local Earned Income Tax (EIT) nets the District \$9.1 million with the remaining \$7,169,500 coming from other local taxes, interest income, payments from other local education agencies, donations, advertising and rental fees.

The District expects to receive \$21,644,548 million, or 17.17 percent of its budget, from the state. Less than \$1 million of the budget comes from the federal government and other sources.

The District also used \$724,516 of fund balance to help offset expenditures.

With the 2018-2019 Budget, the Colonial School District maintains the third lowest tax burden in Montgomery County and one of the lowest among the 71 school districts in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

## Breakdown of 2018-19 Budget revenue sources



**Local**  
**\$102,787,436**



**State**  
**\$21,644,548**



**Federal and other  
Miscellaneous**  
**\$910,000**

## Breakdown of 2018-19 Budget local revenue sources



**Residential  
Real Estate**  
**\$51,101,206.37**



**Commercial  
Real Estate**  
**\$34,500,000.00**



**EIT**  
**\$9,100,000**



**Other**  
**\$7,169,500**

Dear Colonial Community:

Thank you for helping to make this past year the Colonial School District Education Foundation's most successful one to date. In addition to hosting our first Foundation Day — a new community event to celebrate the Colonial School District, we have more than doubled the amount of funds that we raised over last year.

What does that mean for Colonial? The CSDEF can provide teacher training and classroom resources to help our children develop the skills and knowledge to be “future ready.” Donations to the Foundation mean kindergarteners can learn to code and students at Colonial Elementary can explore and invent new things in their library's new Innovation Lab. Plymouth Whitmarsh High School's AVID students — often the first in their families to go to college — have an opportunity to visit different universities and get a feel for what's next in their educational career. This summer, children were able to take advantage of a free meals program when the Foundation picked up the cost after the District lost federal funding for the program.

Whether you're taking part in the family-friendly activities at Foundation Day, making a personal or business donation to the Annual Campaign in November or recognizing a teacher during the annual Feel the Love Campaign in February, you're helping to make great things happen for the students of the Colonial School District.

As we head into the 2018-2019 school year, the CSDEF is increasing its efforts to make business connections in our community and increasing its fundraising goals to make sure that Colonial remains one of the top school districts in Pennsylvania. With the support of the Colonial Community, our schools will continue to have everything they need today to encourage our students to be the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

Together, we'll build the future.

Best regards,

Mark S. Bill  
 PWHS Class of 1976  
 President

Denise Marks  
 Director of Development &  
 Curriculum Supervisor for Career  
 Readiness

## STEAM remains the focus in Foundation's biggest funding year

The Colonial School District Education Foundation (CSDEF) raised \$182,414 during 2017-2018, making it the most successful year in the organization's history.

“An investment in the Foundation is an investment in the future,” said CSDEF President Mark S. Bill, who brings a long career in risk management to his volunteer role on the board. “In the past two years, we've started making more ambitious goals so that we can really help Colonial's students have the resources they need now to be competitive tomorrow.”

With the funds, the Foundation was able to purchase drones for the third grade technology classes, Beebots to help the kindergarteners begin to learn coding and, thanks to a generous donation from Firsttrust Bank, everything from 3-D printers and robots to tables and chairs for a new Innovation Lab in Colonial Elementary School's library.

“What the Foundation offers is a way to get resources into the hands of our kids now,” said Denise Marks, Colonial School District's Director of Development and Curriculum Supervisor for Career Readiness. “We're lucky that Colonial is financially sound, especially compared to other school

districts in the region. However, that still means that — without our help — many of these items wouldn't make it into classrooms for two or three years down the road.”

While the Foundation purchased more than \$40,000 in technology and other materials to support Colonial School District's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) culture, the Foundation's focus goes beyond simply adding technology to the classroom. The CSDEF also spent nearly \$6,000 on professional development to help the technology teachers get up to speed on new software and help elementary library media specialists create innovative opportunities in the library makerspaces.

“It's great to be able to provide resources for the classroom,” said Mrs. Marks. “By giving our teachers targeted training, they can implement the new tools faster and really make the most of what they have to help Colonial's kids be future-ready.”

In addition to STEAM, the Foundation also focuses on programs that encourage student success, support underserved populations and provide additional professional development opportunities for teachers.

**Kindergarteners get a foundation in coding by programming Beebots to move in a particular pattern.**



## Thank You, Donors!

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Help the CSDEF continue to support and enhance Colonial School District initiatives by donating today! Visit [www.colonialsd.org/foundation](http://www.colonialsd.org/foundation) to donate online.

## Corporate Partner Highlight: Subaru of America, Inc.

Subaru of America, Inc. has partnered with the Colonial School District Education Foundation (CSDEF) several times over the past year, thanks to dedicated District volunteer and CSDEF Board Member Linda Doll and her husband Tom.

"The Foundation is grateful to the Dolls for their commitment to the educational program in Colonial," said Denise Marks, Director of Development and Curriculum Supervisor for Career Readiness. "Not only is Linda a valuable member of the CSDEF Board, she's also been in Colonial schools every week, donating her time to help teachers and work with children who are struggling with a lesson or concept."

Through Subaru of America, the CSDEF was able to hold a number of raffles for event tickets, including the preview gala for the Philadelphia Flower Show, the Black Tie Tailgate at the Philadelphia Auto Show and sports events including the Phillies, Flyers and 76ers.

In November, the CSDEF was honored to be named one of John Kennedy Subaru's Hometown Charities for their Share the Love campaign. During the campaign, customers choose one of the Hometown Charities to receive a donation from Subaru when they purchase or lease a new car. The CSDEF also will be featured as one of the Hometown Charities for 2018.



**SUBARU**

## CSDEF raises expectations for 2018 Foundation Day

At its first Foundation Day, the Colonial School District Education Foundation (CSDEF) brought together regional crafters and vendors, food trucks, community and business partners for a fundraiser and a way to showcase the new Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) renovations. With its second Foundation Day scheduled for Saturday, September 29, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., the CSDEF has ramped up its family-friendly offerings. Centered in the new PWHS gym, the CSDEF has added a hands-on STEAM Expo with business partner Dell Boomi, athletics testing, a two-mile inflatable obstacle course and more.

“Foundation Day is not just a way to introduce the Colonial School District Education Foundation to Colonial School District families; it’s also a celebration of our schools and the great community that we have here,” said Denise Marks, Director of Development and Curriculum Supervisor for Career Readiness.

In the first year, Foundation Day brought in \$15115, largely through three levels of corporate sponsorships (\$500 Community Sponsor, \$250 Patron Sponsor and \$100 Friend Sponsor) — a practice the Foundation is continuing with for 2018.

Businesses or community members who’d like to donate or participate in Foundation Day can contact Denise Marks at [dmarks@colonialsd.org](mailto:dmarks@colonialsd.org) or 610-834-1670, ext. 2151. For more information and registration materials, visit [www.colonialsd.org/foundationday](http://www.colonialsd.org/foundationday).



Kono Ice is one of the food trucks that will be back for Foundation Day 2018.

## Fighting hunger in the community

For five weeks this summer, the Colonial School District was able to offer its free summer meals program, thanks to a \$10,000 gift from the Colonial School District Education Foundation. Breakfast and lunch at Conshohocken Elementary School and lunch at Plymouth Elementary School were available to any child in the District under the age of 18.

“It’s important to provide this service to the community, because hunger does not take a break over the summer,” said Lori McCoy, Director of Food Services.

When the program lost its federal funding earlier this year, the Colonial School District Education Foundation and the Food Services Department worked together to cover the cost. More than 20% of Colonial School District student benefit from free or reduced lunch during the school year.



All children in the Colonial School District under the age of 18 qualified for the free summer meals program.

## Business-friendly Educational Improvement Tax Credit program brings in \$5,000 for CSDEF

Through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program, businesses have the opportunity to keep their state tax dollars local — at little or no cost to the company — to support special projects in the Colonial School District through the Foundation.

Businesses that are approved for the EITC program receive a 75% credit of the amount donated — or a 90% credit if the company provides a written two-year

commitment at the same donation level. Eligible companies may take up to \$300,000 in tax credits per year. Tax credits may be applied against the tax liability of a business for the tax year in which the contribution was made.

CSDEF business partner Waste Management directed its \$5,000 donation to the Colonial Technology Student Association and other STEAM programs in the District.

## Corporate Partner Highlight: Firstrust Bank

This past spring, guests from Firstrust Bank learned how to program robots, solve a "break out box" and use a MakeDo kit to build structures out of cardboard from fourth and fifth grade students in the new Innovation Lab in the Colonial Elementary School (CES) library. The Innovation Lab is one of the projects funded by Firstrust Bank in its partnership with the Colonial School District Education Foundation (CSDEF).



Fifth Grader Emerson Shapiro shows Firstrust Bank's Senior Vice President and Director of Business Banking Mathew Hein how a robot works while Colonial School Board President Felix Raimondo and Jenna Yablon watch.

With its headquarters in the Colonial School District, Firstrust Bank came forward in July 2017 as the CSDEF's first corporate sponsor, donating \$25,000 to build and stock the CES Innovation Lab which was completed this spring. In September 2017, Firstrust committed an additional \$50,000 over five years for advertising signage at the new Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) varsity baseball field. Those funds are being allocated to support the kindergarten through 12th grade STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) curriculum.

"Firstrust is very pleased to continue its support of the Colonial School District and to be a part of the Plymouth-Whitmarsh-Conshohocken

community," said Mathew Hein, Senior Vice President and Director of Business Banking at Firstrust Bank. "Since its founding in 1934, Firstrust has maintained an unwavering commitment to the communities we serve. We believe there is no better way to show our support than by contributing to the success of our children, the future leaders of tomorrow."

The visit to the CES Innovation Lab was the first stop for the guests from Firstrust Bank in an evening of activities that also included a meet-and-greet with the PWHS Baseball Team at the new field and joint recognition of the company by the CSDEF board and the Colonial Board of School Directors at the school board's general meeting.

## Colonial School District Education Foundation Board of Trustees

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## 2017-2018 Donor-Directed Gifts

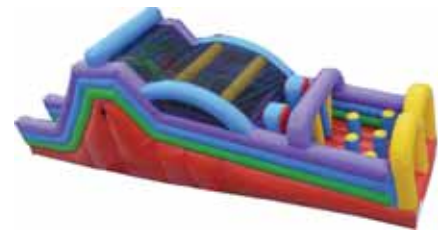
- ▶ \$10,000 grant from Morgan Stanley to Conshohocken Elementary School for Chess Club and mindfulness workshops
- ▶ \$7,625 toward scholarships to the PWHS Class of 2018, including a \$5,000 gift from Ben Sparango and a \$1,250 gift from Linda and Tom Doll in honor of retiring PWHS College Counselor Pat Tamborello
- ▶ \$4,100 to the Plymouth Whitmarsh High School (PWHS) Post Prom
- ▶ \$5,000 grant from Lockheed Martin for Girls in Technology
- ▶ \$5,000 to purchase sensory materials to support students with behavioral needs by Tom and Linda Doll and matched by Subaru.
- ▶ \$2,000 grant to the PWHS Music Department in memory of Mark Santillo, PWHS Class of 1993
- ▶ \$1,600 matching gift to PWHS Girls Lacrosse Team
- ▶ \$1,350 to the PWHS Cheerleading Squad
- ▶ \$1,300 to the Colonial Technology Student Association
- ▶ \$750 grant from Bentley Systems for robotics
- ▶ \$10,000 in support of clubs for economically disadvantaged students.

# Don't miss the Colonial School District Education Foundation's 2nd Annual Foundation Day!

**Saturday, September 29  
11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School**

Fun for the whole family will include:

- ▶ Food Trucks
- ▶ Tours of the new Plymouth Whitemarsh High School Gymnasium
- ▶ Crafts and Home-Based Business Fair
- ▶ Athletic Combine testing. Find out the baseline performance stats for the middle and high school athletes in your family. Presented by Reds Camp and Baseline Athletic Testing. Register at [baselineathletictesting.com](http://baselineathletictesting.com).
- ▶ An Inflatable Obstacle Course Challenge, a two-mile fun fitness run that includes inflatable obstacles (sample shown at right). Please note: Must be 36" or taller. Register at <https://bit.ly/2N6qLQx>



We are also looking for volunteers. If you'd like to help, please sign up online at [http://bit.ly/CSDEF9\\_29](http://bit.ly/CSDEF9_29)

## In memory of Susan Katherine Castle

With heavy hearts, the Board of Trustees of the Colonial School District Education Foundation mourns founding member and past president Sue Castle (shown in photo at right) who passed away on July 18. Sue was an inaugural member of the Colonial Foundation for Educational Innovation in 1995. She served many years at president and in 2012 helped supervise the transition to the Colonial School District Education Foundation we know today. She stepped down from the Foundation Board in 2016. Sue taught science in the District for 30 years. We will miss her omnipresent smile, boundless optimism and love of the Colonial School District.



# Jobs Available

## Substitute Teachers & Instructional Aides

• Colonial School District

 Substitute Teacher Service

1-800-884-SUBS

[thesubservice.com](http://thesubservice.com)

**The mission of the Colonial School District** is to be an innovative educational leader in preparing students to become life-long learners who are successful, contributing members of society. This quest for excellence will be achieved by promoting collaboration among all stakeholders in a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member is engaged, inspired, challenged and driven by integrity and a desire to create a better future.

## Colonial invests in senior citizens

The Colonial “Gold Card” provides the District’s senior citizens with free admittance to one Plymouth Whitmarsh High School Adult Evening School class per semester and free access to regular season home athletic events, concerts, musicals and other District activities. A winter concert and matinee performance of the high school spring musical occur annually. Complimentary luncheons accompany both events.



**For more information contact**  
The Community Relations Office  
(610) 834-1671, ext. 2815  
email: [dsherman@colonialsd.org](mailto:dsherman@colonialsd.org)

## Receive the latest Colonial School District news via e-mail

Receive news updates and announcements from the Colonial School District via email. Simply sign up for our email news list at [www.colonialsd.org/enews](http://www.colonialsd.org/enews).

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