



## SCHOOL COUNSELORS WEEK

It's National School Counselors week, and it's also "scholarship season". Our extraordinary high school counselors work diligently to get our seniors where they need to be, with a good financial boost in many cases. Last week, I featured a middle school Career Café that exposes middle schoolers to career paths they may want to pursue. This week, we will take a brief look at the task of high school counselors, and what they do to prepare students for college in terms of winning scholarship dollars.

Each year, East High School Counselor, Ms. Susie Clar, highlights local scholarship opportunities in her *Community Scholarship Book*. Ms. Clar emphasizes that the opportunities vary widely and that there is something for everyone! [Click here to see the electronic version on our website.](#) Applications are due March 23rd, and the winners are announced at East's Community Scholarship Night in June. "Last year," Ms. Clar says, "The total awarded for the Community Scholarships was \$54,655!" Further, she states that the number doesn't include an even higher number of national scholarships or college-specific scholarships that the students typically earn.

At West Senior, Counselor Jacqueline Kivari notes that scholarships are announced and posted in the Class of 2022 Google Classroom on a regular basis. "These announcements are updated as the information becomes available to us," Ms. Kivari says, "but they are not the only source of information students should consider when looking for money." The local West High scholarship book is also published annually and is [available on our district website](#), as well as in the Student Services Google Classroom. The total amount in scholarships awarded from local donors at West Senior for the Class of 2021 was \$90,672.

Though many of the offerings in the local scholarship books are the same, some are specific to East or West High. Both counselors agree that seniors are encouraged to apply for as many scholarships as they are eligible for. "We meet with the kids about scholarships in the beginning of the year - both in a group setting and individually," Ms. Clar says.

Kudos to local businesses and benevolent organizations for donating to our children's futures, the counselors for making sure students know about the opportunities, and the students for accepting the challenge of winning competitive dollars used toward their education. Counselors are *forever* helping to illuminate the best path for our students, and we are deeply appreciative of their efforts during School Counselors Week and every week of the year!



East Counselors: Kelly Page, Jillian Smilnich, and Susie Clar



West Counselors: Trisha Walsh, Erin Elze, Eric Meslinsky, Jacqueline Kivari, and Jodi Smith

## **WEST SENECA EAST GRAD**

Recently, West Seneca East Class of 2017 grad Courtney Schiersing was featured in *The Buffalo News*. The article tells of Courtney's beginnings as a 26-week gestation, 2 lb. premature baby, to an Oishei neonatal ICU nurse who is being mentored by her own neonatal nurse, Amy DeSantis, with whom she has kept lifelong contact. As the article notes: "Courtney grew up and still lives in West Seneca. She turned her desire to become a NICU nurse into a mission while at West Seneca East High School, enrolling in the Life Science Academy. When she graduated in 2017, Courtney enrolled in the nursing school at Niagara University. By the time she graduated in May, she already had become a presence in [the NICU] unit." Through our Academy Programs, we strive to expose every student to a myriad of possibilities as they forge their paths to the future! Learn more about our [clicking here](#).



Photo credit: John Hickey/Buffalo News

## **6<sup>th</sup> GRADE ANCIENT EGYPT UNIT**

Social studies teachers Dr. Carol Angiers, Mr. Mike Buckenroth, and Mrs. Christine Michalek's East Middle 6th graders just wrapped up their Ancient Egypt unit—mummy style! While students learn that Canopic jars were made to contain the organs that were removed from the body in the process of mummification: the lungs, liver, intestines, and stomach, it's always the "stirring of the brain" that stays with them. After completing the unit, Dr. Angiers couldn't resist allowing the students to have some fun by making masks and wrapping each other up to look like the mummies they had just finished reading about. This cross-curricular unit involved history, literacy, and art, and what you're seeing here is simply the fun part after lessons well learned!



## **ALLENDALE'S WIDE-OPEN SPACES**

Emilee Chiavetta, Allendale Elementary's physical education teacher, and some of her colleagues have been teaching a snowshoeing/outdoor unit to their 3rd-5th grade students. I can't think of a better way for our students to get in some good fresh-air exercise on a snow-covered, sunny West Seneca school day! This, and activities like it, fits in with our whole-child approach to learning and living well.



## **UNIFIED BOWLING**

25 Unified Bowling Team members from both East and West High School eagerly met with students from Clarence on Thursday for a match. The co-ed, Section VI Varsity team ranges from freshman to 21-year-olds encompassing our 12:1:1 and 6:1:1 functional life skills classrooms.

"It is a beautiful program," says Lauren J. Clark, Unified Sports Head Coach. "It allows students in our special education programs to be on a Varsity team with student athletes from our General Education setting to form one cohesive team. It bridges the gap between all students! I have coached multiple levels of volleyball for the District, both male and female, but this experience is by far the most unbelievable program of which I have ever been a part."

West Seneca has had a Unified Sports Program in the district for four years. Unified Basketball is in its 4th season, and this is the 3rd year for bowling. According to Ms. Clark, the students love interacting with new people, traveling to other schools, and competing. "They enjoy all of the perks such as uniforms, buses to and from contests, referees, Varsity letters, accolades, and recognition!" she says, adding, "The students absolutely adore the program and love to talk about it with anyone who will listen. It is something so hard to explain; the feeling is electric and you have to see it to believe it."

One more reason to love this team: They work throughout the week putting together allergy-friendly treat bags complete with bows and labels, welcoming opposing teams upon their arrival (see below). In this way, they employ their stellar social interaction, conversational skills, and friendships that celebrate common interests. Unified Bowling is a big WIN! And our team did win, fallen pin total: WS 2104 to Clarence's 2016.



### 1,000th CAREER POINT!

This week, East senior Hailey Cenname scored a “herstory-making” 1,000th career point. The last time this was achieved was in 2002, when Andrea Laux became the first Trojan to eclipse the 1,000-point barrier (1,005), in a game against Lake Shore in which she scored 16 points. It’s been a long time coming, Hailey. Thank you for putting West Seneca Girls Varsity Basketball back on the books!





## **BEAUTY & THE BEAST**

The West Seneca West production of *Beauty and the Beast* had a nice write-up by reporter Dave Parish in the [2-10-22 issue of the West Seneca Bee](#). You can still see a 7:00 PM show tonight, and 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM shows tomorrow. Tickets cost \$15 and can be purchased at the door the day of the show, or in advance by calling the ticket hotline at 716-677-3421. Masks are required. The talent we harbor in the West Seneca Schools is immense. I saw it last night, and I will tell you, you don't want to miss it!

Have a great weekend!

Matthew Bystrak  
Superintendent