

## **Superintendent's Student & Staff Accomplishments February 5, 2025**

**East High School Updates:** Pocono Mountain East's Varsity Boys Basketball team has qualified for the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Playoffs. The EPC Quarterfinal Round will pit 7<sup>th</sup> place Cardinals against 2<sup>nd</sup> place Liberty, at Liberty, on Friday, February 7 at 8 p.m.

Chess Champions: Congratulations to the Pocono Mountain East Chess Team for winning its 24th championship title in 25 years. The team defeated a strong Parkland squad 5-2 to claim the East Pennsylvania Conference Championship on February 4. Varsity Chess Team members: Matt Doughty, Joseph McKinley, Shu Leong, Sam Oh, Josue Villalta, Preston Taylor and Brannock Taylor.

MCTI Recognition: Congratulations to the following East MCTI students who were recognized as Second Marking Period Students of the Quarter:

- Autumn Hessek for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Science
- Ray Velez for HVAC
- Jack Meinweiser for Masonry
- Olivia DeMilta for Therapeutic Science
- Dontae Allen for Welding Technology
- Jaslynn Delgado for 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Science
- Elijah Simmons for Electronics Technology
- Zachary Rowe for Welding Technology

CyberPatriot Winners: Congratulations to East High School / MCTI Computer Networking and Security students Davis Vergara and Carlos Vergara for placing First in the CyberPatriot 17 State

Round 2024 – 2025 Pennsylvania Open Division Competition sponsored by the Air and Space Forces Association.

East Farm Show Winners: Congratulations to the following East High School / MCTI Students for their achievements at the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Hannah Bruss - 1st place - Bud Vase Arrangement  
Hannah Bruss - 2nd place - Valentine's Day Arrangement  
Saritah Smith - 2nd place - Topiary Design Fresh Flowers  
Breanna Santomauro - 3rd place - Bridal Bouquet  
Autumn Hessek - 2nd place - Agricultural Education/Food Products and Processing Systems

Hannah will have first choice to compete at the PA FFA Summer Convention, which will be held at Penn State University in June.

EPC Girls Wrestling Medalists: Congratulations to the Pocono Mountain East Girls Varsity Wrestlers for their outstanding performance at the EPC Championship Tournament at Liberty High School on January 25.

Keziah Wilson, Elaina Mercadante and Neysa Lynch earned 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medals, Janalice Pellot-Feliciano and Kamora Gilbreath earned 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Medals; and Olivia Brisebois earned a 4<sup>th</sup> Place Medal.

**Tobyhanna Elementary Center Update:** Kindergarten students at Tobyhanna Elementary Center have been actively learning about Native Americans as part of our new Amplify Program. The creative, interactive lessons included playing traditional instruments, building a teepee in the middle of the POD area, and designing wampum belts with beads and seashells.

The kindergarten students also visited the 5th grade E/LA classroom students who were also studying various Native American people. The children were improving their reading skills while expanding their history knowledge simultaneously.

**West High School Update:** Congratulations to West High School junior Na'Fee Hunter and senior Maya dos Santos, who both auditioned in December and qualified to participate in the PMEA District Band celebration, which was held January 23rd through the 26th at Catasauqua High School.

SkillsUSA Medalists: Congratulations to the following West High School MCTI students who earned medals at the SkillsUSA District competition which was held on January 22nd: Aimee Rosario won first place in Job Skill Demo Open; William Bostic won second place in Cyber Security Team; Amir Nicolas won second place in Cake Decorating; Amaya Bonilla won third place in medical terminology; and Hope Rodriguez won third place in cake decorating. Some of these students will move on to compete in the state competition in the spring.

West High School Athletic Hall of Fame: On Saturday, January 25th, the West High School Athletic Department inducted the first members of the West High School Athletic Hall of Fame at its inaugural induction ceremony. Congratulations to Brad Pensyl, Jackie Benitez, Franklyn Quiteh, Jon Mangual, Anita James, Ian Walsh, and Kristin Boesenberg who were this year's inductees. The Hall of Fame is available virtually through the district's website or can be viewed on the display outside of the West High School gymnasium.

Additionally, a special ceremony was held at halftime of the Boys basketball game following the Hall of Fame induction ceremony in which the gymnasium was named after former Boys basketball coach and athletic director, Brad Pensyl.

MCTI Recognition: Congratulations to the following West High School students who were named Outstanding Students of the Second Marking Period at MCTI: Analee Reyes for 9th grade English and Civics, Sophie Kalman for 9th grade English, and Rachel Berger for Culinary Arts.

Female Athlete of the Week: West High School Girls wrestlers Summer Footit and Autumn Kanas were named the *Pocono Record's* Female Athletes of the Week for the week of January 20th.

West Farm Show Winners: Congratulations to the following West High School MCTI students who earned medals for their horticulture arrangements at the 2025 Pennsylvania Farm Show: Lindsay Mason won 2nd place in the dish garden and house plant categories, and 3rd place in mini landscape design; Aimee Rosario won 2nd place in the centerpiece category; and Zada Johnson won 5th place in the memorial design category.

Silver Keys Winner: Congratulations to West High School senior Haley Lopez who was awarded two silver keys in the prestigious Scholastic Art Competition. To celebrate her achievements, her winning artwork will be displayed at the Silver Key Exhibit at Marywood University which runs from February 8th through March 2nd. Additionally, East High School student, Evelyann Higgins earned an Honorable Mention in this competition.

Suicide Prevention Awareness PSA: West High School senior Haley Lopez was selected as a finalist in the Prevent Suicide Awareness contest. Public voting begins February 3rd and continues daily until the third week of February. Please cast your vote daily to help Haley win a chance to be honored at a Phillies baseball game in the spring.

Music and Art Induction Ceremonies: On Wednesday, January 29th, West High School's music and art departments held their annual induction ceremonies for their honor societies. Eight students were newly inducted into the Tri-M Music honor society for their participation and achievement in music, and 25 students were newly inducted into the National Art Honor Society for their participation and achievement in art.

Hoop Groups Showcase: Congratulations to the West's Boys basketball team for their outstanding performance in the Hoop Group's Lehigh Valley Showcase on Sunday, February 2nd. They defeated Abington Heights, and senior Adrian Brito was named MVP of the game.

West Girls Wrestling Medalists: Congratulations to the West Girls wrestling team for placing 4th in the EPC girls wrestling tournament which was held on January 26th. Autumn Kanas and Summer Footit both took home first place medals, and Madison Clark and Glory Joleto both placed 3rd.

**East Junior High School Song Fest Results:** Five East Junior High School students who were chosen to participate in the PMEA District 10 Intermediate Song Fest on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Congratulations to 8<sup>th</sup> graders Elizabeth Byrne, Jason Melendez, Gabriella Paszkowski, Annie Pratt, and 7<sup>th</sup> grader Lilian Philip.

**West Junior High School Community Service:** Ms. Tolerico's math classes assembled into action to support the Red Cross SoCal Wildfires Relief Fund. They worked through as many Imagine Math lessons as they could to convert their THINK points to \$\$ (dollar) donations, which will help bring recovery to the thousands of people whose homes were destroyed. They earned a well-deserved movie day for their efforts.

**Pocono Mountain School District United Way Donation:** I had the pleasure of joining students from the Tobyhanna Student Government, their advisors and teachers Mrs. Dana Hollar and Mrs. Lori Dalton, and Dr. Kevra in presenting a check for \$12,515.11 to Michael Tukeva, the President and CEO of Pocono Mountains United Way, on behalf of the district. The students held fundraisers and raised more than \$2,000 as part of the district-wide efforts to raise money for the United Way.

**WNEP Good Morning PA:** Next week, our East High School Symphonic Band members will be featured on WNEP's Good Morning Pennsylvania at 8:27 a.m. each day for National Children's Dental Health Month.