“Beat the Odds” Scholarships Awarded

The Department of Pupil Services (DPS) Shows Strong Support in 15th Annual “Beat the Odds” Scholarship Awards

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) DPS staff nominated six students and were represented by Broad Run High School’s counseling director, Casey Sarafinas; Rock Ridge High School’s counselor, Jennifer Dominques; Briar Woods High School’s counselor, Richard Mondloch; Briar Woods High School’s parent liaison, Sue Spiotto; Loudoun Valley High School’s career center assistant, Kristi Lincicome; and Potomac Falls High School’s social worker, Christopher Smith. Students were nominated by DPS staff for the Children’s Defense Fund and the Loudoun Bar Association Chapter of “Beat the Odds” 15th Annual Scholarship Awards night. DPS staff nominated, authored powerful statements, and gave speeches highlighting the resiliency, determination, courage, and spirit of a senior from each school. Students were chosen from a wide pool of nominees and received scholarships ranging from $1,000 to $17,000 (plus a laptop computer) to continue their journey in higher education. Loudoun County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Judge, Pamela Brooks, presided over the ceremony at the Loudoun County Courthouse. Virginia General Assembly Delegate, David Reid, and Leesburg Town Councilman, Fernando “Marty” Martinez, were in attendance. To date, the Loudoun “Beat the Odds” Chapter has awarded $221,100 in scholarship funds.
The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation (JKCF) Good Neighbor Grants Program was established in 2012 to identify and strengthen ties with youth-serving nonprofit organizations in the Northern Virginia; metropolitan Washington, DC; and Maryland areas that helps students with financial need reach their full potential through education.

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation awarded a $10,000 Good Neighbor Grant to the CAMPUS Program. CAMPUS is an academic and college preparation program designed to meet the specific needs of LCPS students who are prospective first-generation college students in attaining higher post-secondary education.

CAMPUS Program Manager, Chris Clarke, says the grant will enable students to double the number of college visits they will attend in 2019-2020. Currently, students visit one college in the fall semester and a second college in the spring semester. The grant will cover transportation costs, as well as the cost of meals during the trips.

On May 2, 2019, Transition Services provided professional development training to approximately 23 Transition Services staff for their last session of this school year. In addition, on May 15, 2019, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) recognized LCPS staff and business host, the National Conference Center, by presenting an award to the Project Search Program. Project Search is a trademarked all-day work immersion program for post high school students with disabilities ages 18-21 and is located in over 400 businesses in the United States and in over 50 international locations. The program was established over thirteen years ago by a nurse in an Ohio hospital and is also a partnership with the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Project Search has served nine LCPS students each year the past three years and will serve eight LCPS students for school year 2019-2020.
Community and Schools Together (CAST) will host an end-of-the-year ceremony/graduation program on Tuesday, June 4, 2019. The celebration will recognize over 53 businesses who partnered with CAST this year to support LCPS students and celebrate 13 students who completed the CAST Program. If you are interested in attending the CAST ceremony, please rsvp to Janet Clarke at janet.clarke@lcps.org. Project Search’s graduation for their nine students will be held at the National Conference Center on June 6, 2019 and is by invitation only. Questions can be directed to Mary Young at mary.young@lcps.org.
COUNSELING SERVICES

On May 1, 2019, in a countywide effort, every high school celebrated its senior class by hosting events for the first annual Decision Day. Seniors embarking on the next phase of their lives, whether it be college, military, workforce, or gap year, participated in a variety of ways: photo booths, Mardi Gras beads, and signing banners (just to name a few). Congratulations Class of 2019!
COUNSELING SERVICES (CONTINUED)

On May 15, 2019, Colleen Hurley, counselor for Freedom High School, and Jennifer Reed, counseling director for Tuscara High School, were recognized at the 2019 Recognition of Excellence in Supporting Special Education Awards Ceremony. This award ceremony honors exceptional educators, programs, parents and students who go above and beyond what is typical and expected to positively impact and set a standard of excellence for success of students with disabilities. Ms. Hurley was recognized for her involvement in the Unified Sports Program she coaches at Freedom High School. Ms. Reed was recognized for her efforts with the Special Education Buddy Program at Tuscara High School.

PARENT RESOURCE SERVICES (PRS)

On May 23, 2019, PRS hosted their last workshop for the 2018-2019 school year. The topic was “Suicide Prevention: What Every Parent Should Know.” In this session, led by Dr. Heather Applegate and Christy Esposito-Smythers, families learned the risk factors and warning signs, strategies parents could use at home, and identifying therapists who specialize in and have the special skillset necessary to treat youth with suicidal ideation. There were 76 participants at this well-received workshop. One parent commented, “Very helpful practical information about what parents can do to support their teens.” Another parent commented, “There were so many strategies I learned today. Many thanks.”

Our first workshop of the 2019-2020 school year will be held on September 18, 2019, “Gender Differences in ADHD.” We wish everyone an enjoyable and safe summer. Please visit the PRS website for additional information.
STUDENT ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Positive Experiences in Educational Relationships (PEER)

Suicide Prevention of Northern Virginia (SPAN) provided funding for five LCPS schools who organized mental health and wellness initiatives during Mental Health Awareness Month. Here are some pictures from Stone Bridge High School PEER who organized a Wellness week to help students relax and refocus before SOL and AP tests. PEER students ran activities during all four lunch blocks.

Monday = Make your own stress ball!
Tuesday = Cloud-watching, bubble machine, and plants
Wednesday = dance party
Thursday = finger painting, paint spinners, and coloring
Friday = cornhole and Kan Jam

Loudoun Valley PEER and Sources of Strength, Freedom PEER, Harmony Unified Mental Health, and Tuscarora PEER also received funding from SPAN for mental health awareness initiatives.

Unified Mental Health

Loudoun Valley Unified Mental Health Team hosts Wellness Wednesday events for students and staff through the school year during Prime, a resource block.

Amy Iliffe, student assistance specialist, Pam Lindo, school psychologist, and Ann Smith, school social worker, hosted their last Wellness Wednesday event on May 1, 2019.

This Wednesday Wellness event included nail stickers, Dunkin Donuts, and good tunes. Student Support Services Supervisor, Dr. John Walker, joined the fun event. All who attended enjoyed good music, donuts, and relaxing together before they start into their busy time of SOL and AP exams.

Follow them on Twitter @LVH-mht

(https://images.app.goo.gl/N1XGlNNHgQimGJrD8)
Freedom High School hosted the first Potomac Region Champions Together Track and Field Championship on Saturday, May 11, 2019. Nine schools from the Potomac Region, of which LCPS is a member, participated. LCPS was represented by teams from Broad Run, Freedom, Loudoun Valley, and Stone Bridge High Schools. Athletes (students with disabilities) and partner athletes (students without disabilities) competed side-by-side in events including long jump, softball throw, shot put, 25-meter walk, 100-meter dash, 400-meter dash, and the 4 x 100 relay. The day kicked off when members from Freedom High School’s chorus sang the National Anthem, United States (US) Customs and Border Patrol Color Guard presented colors, and the torch was lit and carried by Freedom High School and Unified Track alum, Jackson Garber, as well as a current athlete and partner athlete from Freedom’s Unified Sports Teams. It was an exciting day filled with friendly competition, comradery, and fun! All teams were awarded participation ribbons from Special Olympics, with the top three teams being awarded place ribbons and the winning team being awarded a trophy. Freedom High School’s Unified Track and Field team was proud to win first place!
Freedom High School's band held their spring concert on Tuesday, May 7, 2019. As part of the concert, Freedom's United Sound (inclusive band) group performed for their first time. Students with disabilities were mentored by their general education peers and were provided instruction on their chosen instruments for several months leading up to the concert. The group performed Africa by Toto and were greeted with a standing ovation.

Freedom High School's Unified Choir made their debut on Tuesday, May 14, 2019, when they performed during the spring choral concert. The group performed “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers as well as a number performed with all of Freedom's choral groups. The Unified Choir has been practicing for the last few months, and their hard work paid off. They were greeted with an excited round of applause. (https://images.app.goo.gl/Bi5NS88nPhZATBo3A)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **May 2019:** Better Speech & Hearing Month / Mental Health Awareness Month
- **June 4, 2019:** Community and Schools Together End of the Year Ceremony/Graduation Program; Location-LCPS Administration Building (Board Room); Time-1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
- **June 7, 2019:** Last Day of School (Students)
- **June 11, 2019:** Last Day of School (Teachers)

DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP

Dr. Asia Jones, Assistant Superintendent, Pupil Services
John Lody, Director, Diagnostic and Prevention Services/Interim Director, Special Education

Dr. Clark Bowers, Director, Student Services