

COMMENDATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS APRIL, 2016

District

Dr. Sharon Suritsky was recently honored with the 2016 Distinguished Female Educator Award from the Tri-State Area School Study Council. The award was presented to Dr. Suritsky during the 14th Annual Dr. Jean E. Winsand Institute for Women in School Leadership on April 6, 2016, at the Edgewood Country Club. The Jean E. Winsand Distinguished Woman in Education Award recognizes effective educational leaders who also value and cultivate emerging leadership in others.

Chief of School Police, Joe Conners, was selected as a finalist in the Leadership Category for the Champions of Learning Award sponsored by The Consortium for Public Education. As a crucial contributor to creating a conducive teaching and learning environment for all staff and students, Chief Conners has transformed learning, expanded opportunities and the environment for learning, demonstrated innovation and creativity, inspired students and staff, and is a role model to our youth. Chief Conners was recognized at a dinner event on Saturday, April 2, at the Pittsburgh Marriott City Center.

Upper St. Clair was named as a NAMM Foundation Best Community for Music Education. The award recognizes the commitment of USC school administrators, School Board, teachers and parents who believe in music education and are working to ensure that it is part of a complete education for all children. The award highlights music education in USC, demonstrating that students can achieve at a very high level in both music and academics, and that each supports the other.

Middle/High School

The regional PA High School and Middle School Computer Fairs were held on Wednesday, March 16, 2016, at the Carnegie Science Center. At the high school level, Connor Byrnes earned first place in both the Programming category, with his Party Planning app, and also the Logo category, with his Warhol inspired design. Sam Burt earned second place in the Programming Category, with his educational app for the Periodic Table. At the middle school level, Antara Cleetus earned third place in the Animation category.

Connor Byrnes will compete in both the Programming category and the Logo category at the state-level PA High School Computer Fair at Dickinson College, on Tuesday, May 24, 2016. The students were mentored by Connie Gibson and Jason O'Roark.

High School

Congratulations to the USCHS students who participated in PMEA Region Choir, four of whom successfully auditioned for the PMEA All-State Choir. PMEA Region Chorus took place at Western Beaver HS March 16-18. The four students moving on to PMEA All-State Choir in Hershey, March 30- April 2 are Carly DeCock, Mariya Savinov, Cara Ravasio and Ben Nadler.

The students are all in the choral program at USCHS, directed by Lorraine Milovac.

Upper St. Clair High School senior, Kevin Liu, made the trial cuts for the U.S. Olympic Swim Team in the 2016 Time Trials March 25 – 26 at the University of Pittsburgh. He will travel to Omaha, Nebraska in June to compete in the 100 and 200 backstroke at the U.S. Olympic Trials. The Olympic Trials ranks as the biggest swimming event in the country and will select the 2016 U.S. Olympic Swim Team, which will represent Team USA in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The competition will take place June 26 - July 3, 2016, at the CenturyLink Center Omaha. Kevin plans to attend South Carolina University this fall where he will compete on the swim team. Qualifying for the Olympics has been his long-time goal.

Upper St. Clair High School trumpeter Steven Fontanella and percussionist Matt Higgs earned placement in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association All-State Concert Band, the highest level symphonic ensemble for Pennsylvania students. Steven and Matt were selected based on auditions held recently at the Western Region State Band Festival at Valley High School. Steven and Matt are members of the USC High School bands, under the direction of Mr. Don Pickell and Mr. Frank Eisenreich. The All-State Band will present a public performance on April 2 in the Great American Hall at Hershey Lodge.

The Upper St. Clair Mock Trial team became regional champions and qualified to advance to the 33rd Annual Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition in Harrisburg, April 1-2. The team of Erin Graham, Katherine Starr, Amna Amin, Tyler Clark, Raahema Durrani, Macey Kaplan, Arushi Kewalramani, Yash Lahoti, Natalie Urban, Vicki Wang, Wyatt Keating and Abbie Wagner is the first Upper St. Clair Mock Trial team ever to reach this level. The team is coached by Gifted Education Coordinator Pat Palazzolo. The group's mentor lawyer is Upper St. Clair High School alum, Samuel Hornak.

The Speech & Debate Team tied its best-ever showing with a 2nd place finish as a team at the PHSSL State tournament at Susquehanna University.

To qualify for States, the team won its 6th straight District #3 Championship, claiming more than half of the available qualifying spots, and taking 24 students to the state tournament.

Winners from the District #3 contest included:

Aarya Wadke (Poetry)

Thomas Mologne (Radio Announcing)

Hannah Sanner (Prose)

Yash Lahoti (Public Forum Debate)

Caleb Troughtzmantz (Lincoln-Douglas Debate)

Amna Amin, (Lincoln-Douglas Debate)

Kristen Buckholt (Impromptu)

Neale Misquitta (Commentary)

Jacob Lantzman (Public Forum Debate)

Ethan Bowman (Senate).

Advancing to semi-finals were Jacob Heilman & Ariana Chiu in Student Congress, Saraj Quinto in Dramatic Interpretation, and Erik Warmbein in Prose.

In final rounds, Vicki Wang was 6th in Informative, her second state final, Erin Graham was 4th in Humorous Interpretation, her 2nd final, Justin Brandwein placed 3rd in Extemporaneous Speaking, the team of Hunter Lantzman, Macey Kaplan and Arushi Kewalramani were 3rd in Parliamentary Debate, Rod Smith took 2nd in Commentary, and the Parliamentary Debate team of Chase Miller, Raahema Durrani, and Spencer Miller went undefeated 12-0 on ballots to win the state championship.

High School seniors Aleen Klym and Matthew Colton are congratulated for receiving Student Awards from SHASDA (South Hills Area School Districts Association) at the Student Recognition Program on Saturday, April 30. SHASDA presents awards to two students from each participating high school that have demonstrated significant improvement in student performance and/or have overcome obstacles in their academic careers.

Congratulations are extended to high school seniors Zach Pateras, Ally Steve, and Andrew Wheeler who were selected to play in the Dapper Dan Round Ball Classic on April 16 and 17 at Geneva College.

Elementary/Middle School

Congratulations to the USC Odyssey of the Mind teams that won at the WPA Regional Tournament on March 12 advancing them to compete at the PA State Finals on April 2nd at Moon Area Schools.

1st Place – Vehicle Problem – Division II

Yash Jajoo, Vivek Babu, Isabella Putorti, Maggie Lowden, Jacob Conte, Gracie Lowden, Christine Conte

2nd Place – Balsa Problem – Division II

Shivani Jajoo, Natalie Rach, Sara Hess, Max Mandler, Bryce Keating, Kristian Karidis, Christopher Jahn

2nd Place – Balsa Problem – Division I

Daniyal Badaruddin, Roshan Mishra, Komel Nulwala, Hasan Badaruddin, Ishaan Sharma, Donovan McMillan, Tanav Dandekar

OMer Award for Exceptional Creativity - Primary

Caden Hoffmann, Ishaan Gupta, Natalia DiSora, Camryn Friday, Maddox Orendi, Taylor Gibbs, Pritika Gupta

2nd Place – Classics Problem – Division II

Joseph Markovitz, Victoria Cuba, Sammie Seewald, Constantine Tripodes, Brianna Lin, Eric Wang, Max Murtough

1st Place – Vehicle Problem – Division I

Ben Seewald, Jake Casares, Peter Markovitz, Ben Murtough, Esha Lathia, Stella Moss, Anastasia Gzikowski

In addition, congratulations are extended to the team of Vivek Babu, Christina Conte, Jacob Conte, Yash Jajoo, Gracie Lowden, Maggie Lowden and Isabella Putorti and the team of Victoria Cuba, Brianna Lin, Joseph Markovitz, Max Murtough, Sammie Seewald, Constantine Tripodes and Eric Wang for earning 1st and 2nd place, respectively, at the state competition, qualifying them for the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals in May.

Ft. Couch

Fort Couch Middle School student, Braden Yates, finished ninth in the 2016 Pennsylvania MATHCOUNTS Competition on March 19, 2016, in Harrisburg. Braden reached the statewide competition after placing second in the Allegheny County competition in February. This marked Braden's second consecutive year competing at the state level.