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Spotlight on New Milford Schools

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Deaf Music: Universal Design in the Classroom & Beyond

(Julia Silvestri, Ph.D., NMPS Teacher of the Deaf; Paul Shim, SMS Music Teacher; and Lauren Dick, ASL Interpreter, collaborated on this article)

In November of 2016, the Deaf Education Program at Teachers College, Columbia University, received the Diversity and Community Initiative Grant for a project on Deaf Music and Universal Design for Learning. This project was led by New Milford's very own Teacher of the Deaf, Dr. Julia Silvestri. Dr. Silvestri, along with other colleagues in the Deaf Education Program at Teachers College, collaborated with professionals in various fields to spread awareness and set a framework for how Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can enhance the experience of music. Collaborators for this event included Maria Battle, founder of the Muse Seek Project; Robert DeMayo, a deaf performing artist; Treshelle Edmond, a deaf Broadway actress from Spring Awakening; Danielle Holridge, an ASL interpreter and member of Cuatro Puntos, Jay Alan Zimmerman, a deaf musician and composer; Paul Shim, a music teacher at SMS; and Lauren Dick, an American Sign Language interpreter at SMS.



Dr. Silvestri and these collaborators held an event at Teachers College in April of 2017 to facilitate an open panel discussion about how UDL can enhance the experience of music and to premiere a film showcasing the collaborators' work in their field. The film, *Deaf Music: Universal Design in the Classroom and Beyond*, can be viewed here: vimeo.com/nmpsdeafed/deafmusic

Universal Design is a concept that first emerged in the context of architecture. It is the concept that buildings, products, and environments should be accessible to all people, regardless of age or disability. A classic example of this is a curb cut where the sidewalk dips in to create a

small ramp into a crosswalk. While curb cuts were initially created for people who use wheelchairs, they also benefit people with strollers, people on bicycles, and more. A feature created in accordance with Universal Design often makes the environment better for all.

Although it was initially defined in terms of architecture, the concept of universal design has spread widely and now influences many other fields – including education. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational technique that creates opportunities for learning according to each individual student's strengths and needs. UDL aims to provide three main principles: to provide multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. Representation refers to the “what” of learning. How is information presented? Is it equally accessible to students with disabilities? In addition to providing equal access to all students, multiple representation also helps all students better understand concepts and transfer their learning to new situations. Expression refers to the “how” of learning. How can students demonstrate their learning? How can teachers assess student learning in a way that measures true understanding, not just performance on a specific pre-determined task? It's important for students to have options for expression that best enable them to learn, most accurately represent their learning, and most strongly empower them to showcase their learning. Lastly, engagement refers to the “why” of learning. What makes students motivated to learn about a particular topic or subject? What conditions enable students to work best? Different students will find motivation in any number of places and will work best in different learning situations. All students should have the opportunity to feel motivated and supported.



At Schaghticoke Middle School, Mr. Shim is using the principles of UDL to enhance the music classroom. He says, “In our Music Technology class we use various apps on the iPads to create our own projects and songs. With UDL in mind, I’ve modified a speaker so that students can feel the physical vibrations of sound. This way hearing, deaf, and hard of hearing students can experience their project physically rather than auditorily.”

This speaker, which the students have named BOB, is a relatively simple tool that has had large impact on how the students perceive their projects and the adjustments they make after this feedback. Currently SMS is renting a Subpac M2, which is wearable technology that transfers low frequencies directly to your body and provides students with a new physical dimension to the music experience. With BOB and the Subpac, we are able to represent sound in an entirely new medium.



Mr. Shim continues, “Along with BOB and the Subpac, I use various apps to represent sound as well. We have apps to represent sound by intensity (decibels), frequency, and various visual aesthetics. Having these options available ultimately helps students be more creative and expressive in their projects. Also having a talented American Sign Language interpreter like Mrs. Dick in class is extremely helpful. As wonderful as BOB, the Subpac, and our apps are, nothing can replace having Mrs. Dick there to interpret sound. She’s able to convey not only the properties of sound (volume, frequency, texture) but more importantly Mrs. Dick can convey the emotion of sound through her movements and facial expression. It’s truly a gift to have such a talented interpreter in class and she really lays the groundwork for a lot of the great experiences we can offer to students.”

Dr. Silvestri is continuing to research and apply UDL principles to all musical settings, not just the classroom. In collaboration with Jay Alan Zimmerman, Treshelle Edmond, and Robert DeMayo, Dr. Silvestri is passionate about enhancing the musical experience in concerts, musicals, and theater settings. The group of panelists is also working to spread awareness through global initiatives, organize workshops and conference presentations, and help facilitate a music curriculum in deaf schools. They are currently submitting an article for review to the Journal of American Sign Languages & Literature while collaborating with The Muse Seek project to publish a series of trilingual science books. Everyone has been greatly inspired and is excited for the projects ahead!

NMHS Students Participate in EMT Olympics

Students in the EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) class at New Milford High School participated in an EMT Olympics Competition on May 16th at the Bethel Firehouse. They competed in events against all the area schools that have an EMT class. The events are judged by EMS personnel from our area including nurses, paramedics and EMT's.



The competition consists of a team event which simulates going into an emergency Mass Casualty Incident and triaging, properly assessing and treating victims. The individual event in the competition consists of performing all the skills necessary to practice for the State EMT examination.

In the main event, which was the team event, New Milford student Barbara Rountos was a member of the team that took first place, Gabriella Kovalenko was on the team that took second place and Christopher Kipp was on the team that took third place. In the individual event, completing all the skills properly to practice for the State EMT examination, Kaitlyn Smith came in third place.

NMHS Health teacher and EMT class instructor Mrs. Denise Duggan says, “All our students who attended really did a very nice job representing our school. The mass casualty scenario was very authentic, and the day is very stressful for them. I was proud of their effort and accomplishment.”

Junior Achievement In Action at HPS



If you happened to walk into Mrs. Regan's Grade 2 classroom in May, you might have seen students busily engaged in running their own donut factory and getting "paid" for their efforts. The lesson is one in a series presented under the umbrella of Junior Achievement (JA) of Western CT.

Molly Anderson Diker, JA Program Manager for the Danbury area, says "The mission of Junior Achievement is to provide young people with the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their futures, and make smart academic and economic choices. Our volunteer-based programs start as young as kindergarten to foster financial literacy skills, build work-readiness and develop an entrepreneurial spirit. The program is provided free of charge to schools."

Hill and Plain Elementary School has partnered with JA for over ten years now. Teacher participation is voluntary; sign up takes place at the beginning of the year. This year, JA volunteers from Union Savings Bank and Savings Bank of Danbury are visiting classrooms in grades kindergarten through two. Junior Achievement provides them with a five week program that is grade appropriate and designed to be fun, interactive and engaging.



Volunteers at the kindergarten level use *JA Ourselves*, a hands-on program that provides students with an introduction to the choices consumers make to meet their needs and wants. It also introduces students to the role of money in society while providing them with practical information about earning, saving, and sharing money.

JA Our Families introduces first grade students to the concept of entrepreneurship and how family members' jobs and businesses contribute to the well-being of the family. Lessons explore the differences between needs and wants, describe jobs people do, identify goods and services provided to a community by businesses, and allow students to analyze what skills they have to help their families.



In grade two, volunteers use the *JA Our Community* program to explore practical information about business and the many jobs businesses offer in a community. Students explore production methods through a simulation game, and they learn about taxes, decision making, and how money flows in our economy.

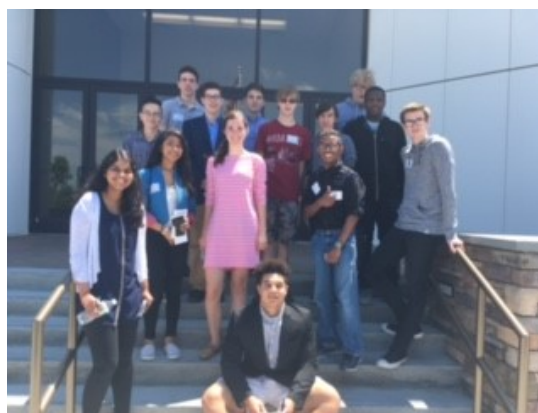
The donut factory is a good example. In this simulation game, student workers produce goods in their factory (the donuts) and sell their service to earn money for their work. Molly says "The students really enjoy the game and are excited about earning their money. They are not as excited when the volunteer then asks for some money back to pay their taxes."

Shelley Turian, an Assistant Vice President of Union Savings Bank, has been volunteering with JA since 2009, including for the past three years at HPS. This year, Shelley is working with Mrs. Regan's class. Shelley says "Volunteering in Mrs. Regan's classroom always brings me joy, the students are always excited to do JA and love learning about their community. This program allows the students to use their imagination. It's especially fun to see the many interesting donut flavors the kids come up with to share. At the end of the lesson, I always leave with a smile on my face and a full heart."



Junior Achievement of Western CT is also sponsoring a job shadow opportunity with students at New Milford High School this year. NMHS Business students visited Cartus Corporation in Danbury on May 18th for a full day event. Business teacher Mrs. Janice Perrone said, "We opened the trip up to selected Business classes, those that are in line with the business units Molly said would be hosting students, and fourteen students were able to participate."

NMHS Business students joined students from Danbury High School and Ridgefield High School at Cartus where they were given a glimpse into the typical "day in the life" of accounting, information technology, legal, marketing, and supply chain professionals. Students were paired up with Cartus employees who shared personal insight into their experiences within their chosen careers. The day included small group workshops and presentations about the role of each area of business, as well as an overview of the company and a tour of Cartus Corporate HQ. Mrs. Perrone states, "Students remarked that the experience brought their classroom learning into the real world for the day and they found themselves wanting to learn even more about some of the careers they were exposed to. Many thanks to JA and Cartus for sponsoring the event."



As for Junior Achievement, Molly Anderson Diker says "Junior Achievement is excited to be in New Milford Public Schools and looks forward to growing the partnership even more in the future."

Welcoming Visitors from Lebanon

New Milford Public Schools played host to some special visitors at the end of April as part of a teacher exchange program with Lebanon. The program is a result of a partnership between the International College of Beirut, Lebanon and the school districts of New Milford, Danbury, Monroe, Ridgefield, and North Salem, N.Y. The Lebanon American Club of Danbury also provides support. Three teachers from Lebanon were able to visit area schools, observe classes in action, and meet both students and fellow teachers. Their visit followed a similar visit by two Danbury teachers and one Monroe teacher to Beirut earlier in the year.



Superintendent Joshua Smith has first-hand knowledge of the program, having participated in the exchange in 2011 while working in Ridgefield. In speaking about the program, Mr. Smith says, “There are few better ways to understand different cultures than to share time with them. Sharing and learning from educators from other countries helps us better understand our craft and ourselves. We learn quickly that there are many commonalities, challenges and practices among teachers and students regardless of where we call home. The better we as teachers understand the world around us, the better able we are to prepare our students for the one they will inherit.”



Here in New Milford, the Lebanese teachers visited different schools based on preferred subject and level. Layla Kateruji, an art teacher, observed art classes at both Sarah Noble Intermediate School and Schaghticoke Middle School. Teacher Jana Bayoud visited ESL classes at New Milford High School and French classes at SMS. Pedro Maalouf, a Biology teacher, observed Biology and Integrated Science classes at NMHS and toured Science labs and PLTW facilities with Science Department Chair Sara Del Mastro. Mrs. Del Mastro says, “I met with Science teacher

Pedro Maalouf. We had a fascinating conversation about the differences in the structure of our schools and methodology of teaching science. I think we both took away some useful and practical ideas to try with our students.”

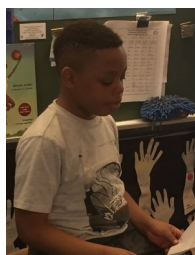
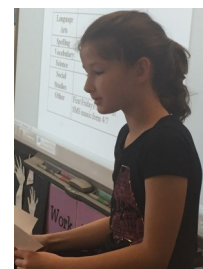
The visiting teachers finished the day by attending a New Milford High School lacrosse game with Superintendent Smith before joining area school teachers and administrators for dinner at the hosting Lebanon American Club in Danbury.



**Photos used courtesy of Hearst Connecticut Media*

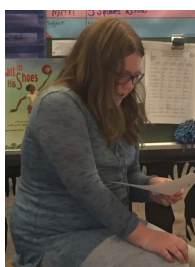
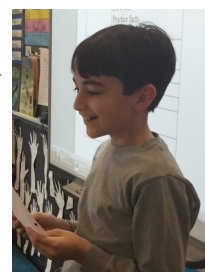
Dreaming Big at SNIS

SNIS Grade 5 students in Mrs. Johnson's class recently participated in the CHET Dream Big! Essay Competition. The annual competition is sponsored by the State of CT Treasurer's Office, CREF, and CHET. It encourages children and families to start thinking about higher education and realize their dreams by answering the question: "How will I change the world after I go to college?"



According to Mrs. Johnson: There was no shortage of dreams when the children wrote about their plans for the future. The students were very enthusiastic about the project and their creativity was inspiring. There was an impressive range of ideas that the students wrote about. Many of them came from the students' interests and issues that touch their lives.

One student would like to develop computer animation apps called "Film Chat" and "Animation Creation." People can create short animated films and then chat with one another about their creations. This would act like social media for animators. The app would be free because "there is no price for creativity." Another student wants to open a Hall of Evolution that would resemble a zoo and include museum-like rooms. The Hall of Evolution would be a destination for people to visit to "inspire future generations to study evolution", and also where biologists and archeologists could study to "revolutionize medicine and history." One dreamer would like to create "The Feeling" which is a device to help alleviate the pain when receiving medicine through an IV. She plans on creating a foam-like cast with a port that the IV could fit in. There would be a remote that could help the patient control the pain while getting the IV. She was inspired while watching her mother fight cancer. She would ask her mom if the IV hurt. Being the "fearless" woman she is, she always said no, but she could tell by her eyes that she hated it.



SNIS students have been winners in the competition for the last three years running. Mrs. Johnson says this year is no exception. "On May 3rd, our class received the wonderful news that Nathan Gray was selected as one of the 48 statewide winners out of more than 2,800 entries. Nathan wrote about how he and his sister suffer from many food allergies. He understands how difficult it is for many children and adults to lead normal lives. His family has a saying 'If you can't read it, you can't eat it.' So Nathan has big plans on how he will help people with severe allergies. Nathan plans on writing a book and opening a store and restaurant. He attended the CHET Dream Big! awards ceremony on May 19th at the Science Center in Hartford with his family. We are all so proud of Nathan and all of our dreamers who will no doubt make a big difference in our world someday."



Congratulations to the New Milford Public School “Stars” for the month of May!

**Michael Clyne
Joan Conn
Catherine Gardner
Madeleine Sanger
Timothy Polhemus
Nicole Lawlor**



Special congratulations to **Madeleine Sanger** who will drive the Ingersoll Auto of Danbury NMPS courtesy car for the month.

Thanks to all who submitted nominations this year!

NMHS German Students Recognized for Outstanding Achievement

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German (CTATG) invited students on the Presidential Honor Roll of the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG) to their annual awards banquet in Redding, CT, on May 22nd to recognize them for their outstanding achievement on the Level 2, 3 and 4 German National Examinations. New Milford High School had sixteen medal winners, the highest total statewide, including seven gold, five silver and three bronze medal winners.



Pictured at the banquet with NMHS German teacher Michael Crotta are Jessica Ho (2017 gold medal winner, and recipient of the 2016 PAAD Scholarship Trip to Germany in 2016 when she also won a gold medal), Lukas Kugler, Joseph Alexander, Aidan Szymczkowski and Caitlin Jellen

Congratulations to **all** the medal winners and to Mr. Crotta.

Poetry Jam A Hit with NMHS Students

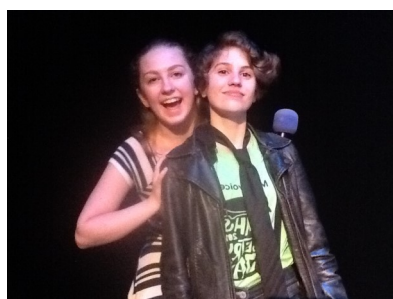
(Summary provided by NMHS English teacher Julie Rose)

Looking around the halls, walls, and classroom doors of NMHS during this year's Poetry Week, one could see haikus, sonnets, poems in the shape of honeycombs (created by students in Ms. Cox's English class who were reading *The Secret Life of Bees*), and much more this April. Sponsored by the NMHS English Department in recognition of National Poetry Month, the 2017 Poetry Week (April 24-28) included many hands-on classroom activities to get all NMHS students writing poetry each day of the week, and culminated in the Poetry Jam on Friday, April 28th.



Backstage at the Poetry Jam, the poets, equal parts excitement and nervousness, and wearing lime green T-shirts announcing this year's theme, "Many Voices: One School," rehearsed their poems for a final time as the theater packed to capacity. With fifteen poets, each of whom composed and memorized his or her own poem to deliver to the school, there was something for everyone. Poems ranged from the sublime delivery by Cassie Bielmeier of her 1st Prize-winning poem, *The Art of Feeling*, to the crowd-pleasing, comedic closer by Will Horvath, *Sound Waves*, which took 2nd prize and had the entire audience hooting with laughter; 3rd prize went to Corrine McDougal for her poem, *Ode to Change*.

In tone, the poems ran the gamut from somber to entertaining. In her poem, Cassie Bielmeier observed, "Welcome to the society where kindness is an afterthought," while Will Horvath reminded us that "We're all just edgy teenagers... But that's okay!" Corrine McDougal declared, "I'm sick of being told that I'm not good enough," which drew applause from both the approximately 800 students in the audience and from the Judge's Corner.



The poets ranged from freshmen to seniors, "all doing a great job despite their nerves," as poet Elizabeth Meskill pointed out afterward. Senior Kay Michelson commented later, "I was backstage and I had my poem, *The Comfort Zone*, all memorized. Then I completely blanked when I went out. But it sort of went with my poem (about stepping out of my comfort zone) that I blanked onstage and that I was okay with it." She added, reflectively, "You know, I just kept going. It happened, and I accepted it and went with it. I guess I'm getting more comfortable with spontaneity." Congratulations to all the poets who, like Kay, were courageous enough to take that walk out of their own personal "comfort zones," get up there onstage, and share their work.

The judges, who did an excellent job at arbitration of this event, were students Luis Henrique Amaral, Lorenzo Pusateri, Bobbie Rountos, and teachers Joe DiFabbio and Colleen Romano. This annual event was sponsored by the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) who provided shirts and prizes for the winning poets. Mr. Jeffrey Bronn and Ms. Julie Rose were the advisors who made the entire event happen. Kudos to Mr. Bronn for the smooth organization. From soliciting student designs for this year's T-shirt, to handling the line-up and staging of this popular event, Mr. Bronn spearheaded the organization of this year's Jam to go off without a hitch.

In order of appearance, the poets were: Andrea Norem, NMHS English teacher ,who started this year's Jam with her original *Teacher's Lament* performance, Connor Neelands, Olivia Kirby, Eli Roman, Cassandra Bielmeier, Jacklyn Bonomo, Jessica Learson, Connor Caridad, Allison Haywood, Molly Farquharson, Corrine McDougal, Elizabeth Meskill, Kathleen Mickelson, Sydney Martin, Haleigh Grinder, and Will Horvath. As participating poet Elizabeth Meskill noted, "The day ended with all the poets, not just the winners, leaving the school with smiles on their faces."

Go to [Wave TV's youtube page](#) to see and hear the NMHS poets in action. While there, take a listen to the more than 20 student participants in February's *Poetry Out Loud* competition. In this state contest, students chose poems to memorize, and then performed them in front of a live audience.

Piper Magazine Hot Off the Press



The NMHS English department is proud to announce the release of 2017's Piper Literary Magazine. Students of NMHS produce the magazine every year in the spring. It features original art, photography, prose and poetry from the talented student body.

In past years, *The Piper* has been recognized by the National Council of Teachers of English for its excellence in writing, editing, and design. Every year, the NCTE evaluates literary magazines from high schools around the country for outstanding writing, inclusion of a wide variety of genres and interdisciplinary writings, meticulous editing, a unifying design, high-quality graphics, coherence of theme and design, and clear evidence of student involvement on all levels of production. Last year, as reported in the February issue of *Spotlight*, *The Piper* ranked as "Superior" in all of these categories, and actually tied for second best in the state!

This year, *The Piper* was a truly collaborative project. Production began early. Students on *The Piper* staff and in Cut, Paste, and Copy classes designed flyers that were posted throughout the school soliciting work from students. All submissions were catalogued by

faculty advisors, and then entered into a shared folder on Google Drive. Each submission was made anonymous, and assigned a number. Submissions were read by students in Advanced Creative Writing and by *The Piper* Club members, led by faculty advisers Ms. Minto and Ms. Cox. Students collaborated to decide which submissions contained both high-quality writing and a strong message conveyed with powerful voice. The result, students and advisors believe, is a compilation of voices that represent this year's NMHS student body. The magazine contains a wide variety of genres, including poetry, short stories, drama, satire, personal narratives, and essays. It is beautifully illustrated with artwork from the talented artists and photographers of NMHS. Student interns Kyrsten Lane and Kelly Horten were responsible for the layout.

Christina Onorato, Editor in Chief of *The Piper*, thinks this year's magazine is a proper and fitting addition to *The Piper* legacy. "I really like that *The Piper* is different every year; it has distinct personalities. It's not just any magazine; it's something everyone understands as unique to the students of New Milford High School."

Copies of this year's edition of The Piper can be purchased, while available, for \$5. For more information, please contact the staff at thepiperlitmagazine@gmail.com

NMHS Winter Percussion Performs on National Stage

NMHS Band Director Mr. David Syzdek reports that this year's Winter Percussion season was both exciting and successful. The students in the Winter Percussion group participated in three different competitive circuits: USBands, MAC (Musical Arts Conference) and WGI (World Guard International). The group performed their artistic show, *Faceless*, which tells the story of what it is like to be one of the crowd, lost in a sea of faces, only to discover oneself, and the importance of the individual. Their performance begins with faceless shadow-like figures seen on the props and on the floor for the show. Black and grey uniforms cover the faces of each student. As the show develops, the props are moved to reveal mirrors when the students break from uniformity and transform themselves by uncovering their faces. The mood shifts to high gear as a bright yellow sash on each uniform is revealed. The percussion ends calmly and quietly as the students reflect on the discovery they have made together.



Mr. Syzdek says, "Highlights from the season included performing at our home US-Bands competition to start the season, winning the 2017 MAC Championship for our class, and traveling to WGI World Championships this past April in Dayton, Ohio. At WGI World Championships, the group competed against 64 schools from around the country in the preliminary round. We advanced to semifinals and had the opportunity to perform our show, *Faceless*, one last time. At the end of the performance there were hugs, tears and smiles all at the same time. You could tell the students left everything they had out on the floor that night. It was the perfect way to end a fantastic season."

SNIS Walking Project

The 11th annual Sarah Noble 5th grade Walking Project began on May 3rd. The project, created in 2007, teaches and promotes healthy lifestyle choices to the 5th grade students and their families through education and activities centered around the 4 E's: Exercise, Eating Well, Environmental Awareness and Emotional Health. This year's Walking Project goal is 52,017 miles!



The program fosters community collaboration by partnering the classrooms with local businesses and organizations to support the students' efforts through example, engagement and mentoring. During the four weeks of the Walking Project, qualified community volunteers teach the 4 E's to each 5th grade class through one-hour interactive presentations.

SNIS Grade 5 teacher Mrs. Lisa Montemurro says, "Each student is given a pedometer to help them record the total number of steps they take in a classroom log. In addition, classroom sponsors are invited to walk with the students around the school track, and act as role models to encourage the children's efforts. My students are always so excited to see their sponsors, engage in conversation and enjoy each other's company as they walk."

In addition to the pedometer, students also receive a "token chain". For each goal or program they complete, they receive a special token to attach to their chain. For example, tokens include a broccoli for Eating Well, a frog for Environment, and a jumping jack for Exercise. In order to encourage participation in the 4 E's at home, students are given a Family 4 E's Activity Log that students and parents can complete together. Students are able to earn a "shining example" token for their chain.



Families are invited to attend all of the Walking Project events, which include an Opening and Closing Ceremony, New Milford Youth Agency hikes and Family Night. Mrs. Montemurro reports that this year's Family Night was a huge success. "Sarah Noble families were given a chance to see what the students are learning throughout the Walking Project and to experience a little bit of it for themselves. Activities included vendor tables, a family walk, and many demonstrations and activities, including: healthy food samples and recipes, yoga, dance, karate, and gymnastics sessions.



Mrs. Montemurro speaks for all when she says, "The Sarah Noble teachers, the sponsors and the Walking Project Committee believe that family involvement and encouragement are the keys to success in promoting healthy lifestyle choices and helping students strive for their personal best."





New Milford Public Schools

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Teacher Appreciation

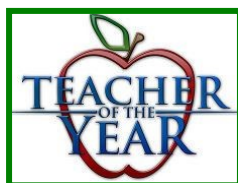
It is fitting as we move into the home stretch for this school year that we take a moment to stop and appreciate the dedicated teachers of New Milford Public Schools.

Author Jonathan Sacks, in his book *From Optimism to Hope*, reminds us of the valuable role of the teacher: "Teachers open our eyes to the world. They give us curiosity and confidence. They teach us to ask questions. They connect us to our past and future. We have lots of heroes today - sports stars, super models and media personalities. They come, they have their fifteen minutes of fame, and then they go. But the influence of a good teacher stays with us. They are the people who really shape our lives."

Andy Rooney of *60 Minutes* fame once said, "Most of us end up with no more than five or six people who remember us. Teachers have thousands of people who remember them for the rest of their lives."

Take a moment to think about the teacher or teachers who have made a lasting impression on you. What are the qualities you appreciated most? How did they most inspire you? Now ask your children the same questions. You may be surprised how similar your answers are.

This year's Staff Recognition program has given us a chance to provide well-deserved public recognition to just a few of our staff. Thank you to all who took the time to submit a nomination.



You have one more opportunity left this year to recognize an outstanding teacher. Teacher of the Year nominations will be accepted through May 31. [Click here for a nomination form.](#)

May brings

The mission of the New Milford Public Schools, a collaborative partnership of students, educators, family and community, is to prepare each and every student to compete and excel in an ever-changing world, embrace challenges with vigor, respect and appreciate the worth of every human being, and contribute to society by providing effective instruction and dynamic curriculum, offering a wide range of valuable experiences, and inspiring students to pursue their dreams and aspirations.