

Advocate

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The newsletter of the
Owen J. Roberts
School District

July 2015

Inspiring Each Student for Success Today and Greatness Tomorrow

Message from Superintendent Michael Christian

Congratulations to the class of 2015 for their exemplary achievement in the classroom, in the arts, on the athletic fields, and in the community service arena. Student accomplishments are hallmarks of the culture of excellence that defines Owen J. Roberts School District. As a community, we celebrated many of those personal attainments at the Senior Awards Ceremony on June 14. Some acknowledgements were based on assessment scores and overall academic achievement while others were based on character, effort, dedication, and service. Each student was congratulated for his or her unique contribution to the school and community.

More than \$341,150 in awards was distributed at the ceremony thanks to government and community organizations, district groups, recreation leagues, families, and high school clubs and organizations.

Class of 2015 accolades included three Eagle Scouts and one Girl Scout Gold Award recipient. Miller-Keystone Blood Center recognized the high school as a Local Leader for Blood Donation and eight senior students were acknowledged for donating blood at least four times over the course of their high school years. Two students received Seeing Eye Scholarships for service to the Seeing Eye organization. Eighty-eight students, earning a 4.0 or greater, were recognized and encouraged to contribute in "writing the next great chapter in the American story" through the President's Education Award.

This year Owen J. Roberts is honored to have one of our own selected to receive an appointment to the United States Naval Academy. Upon completion of a four year education, Laurel Wynn will be commissioned as a United States Navy Ensign. Her appointment into a service academy includes a scholarship worth more than \$400,000 and job placement after graduation.

The Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps receives tens of thousands of applications each year from those who wish to become United States Naval or Marine Corps Officers and very few are considered. Benjamin Fogwell, who will be attending Virginia Tech majoring in Chemical Engineering, was accepted and will receive a NROTC scholarship worth \$180,000. Upon graduation he will be commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy.

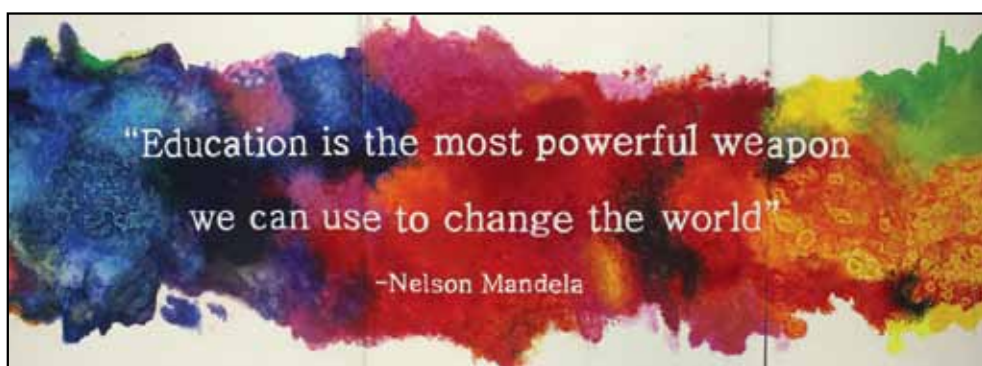
A deserving Owen J. Roberts student writer, Abigail Reisner, was the recipient of the \$30,000 Greater Pottstown Foundation Shandy Hill Scholarship, an annual essay contest for seniors in our region.

Over the past five years, Owen J. Roberts seniors have been awarded three of five Greater Pottstown Foundation scholarships for those who will continue their education in the visual arts. This scholarship demands excellence in all areas of art making, as well as the ability to communicate a creative vision, and it was awarded to Jennifer Miller.

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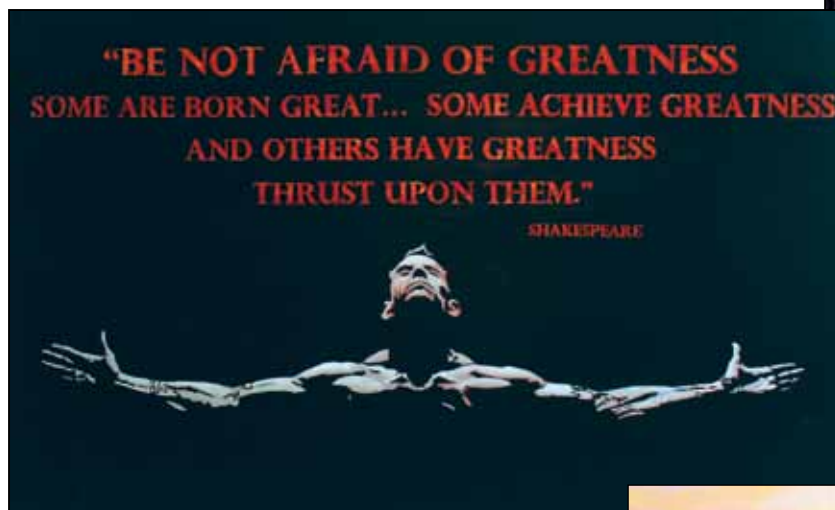
Celebrating the Class of 2015 with Murals and Quotes

"In a universe where the answers to the most important existential questions vastly escape the scope of human understanding, I urge you all to define your own meaning in this life. Find something you love and make it your destiny." *Patrick Henry Shaw, Valedictorian, Class of 2015*



Sarah Berkey

"In the coming years, when we are the new entrepreneurs, doctors, lawyers, educators, servicemen, engineers, and coworkers, we will look back and



Tess VanDerWerf

realize that not only did we graduate students this night, but we granted diplomas to musicians, artists, athletes, explorers, and a bunch of stand-up comedians. We will remember that we brought to this stage those who mastered the ideals of integrity, service, compassion, humility, perseverance and justice. All of us leave this great institution tonight as valedictorians in our own right." *Utkarsh Pandey, Valedictorian, Class of 2015*

"...each of you is gifted in some way. Some of you display your gifts on the athletic fields. Some of you display your gifts in the classroom. Others of you display your gifts through giving of your time and talents where help is needed. This is a gift that any of you can give and many of you have through Service Learning. We have a proud tradition of Service Learning at OJR and the class of 2015 strongly continues that tradition." *Mr. William S. LaCoff, School Board President*

"Each one of you has to embrace your talents, maximize your strengths and find your purpose in life.

Ari Ott



Maddi Matarazzo

Once you find that purpose – every step, every small and big action, every obstacle and challenge, every accomplishment creates a powerful life in which you can make the world a better place." *Dr. Richard Marchini, High School Principal*

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Staying the Course



East Coventry Elementary School expanded their positive behavior program by creating monthly events in which students could use their green tickets. Students earn green tickets by following the “wildcat way”--being responsible, respectful and safe. As an extra incentive for the May/June event, students were able to purchase tickets to the first-ever wildcat obstacle challenge. The four-lane course was designed by Kristy Mitchel, Health and PE teacher. The students ran through an agility ladder, flipped a tire, jumped in a potato sack and ran to the finish line while cheering for each other. After completing the course, students received a healthy snack. The weather was perfect for this great event which rewarded “staying the course”!

Schoolwide STEM



Owen J. Roberts Middle School celebrated a STEM experience day. The Franklin Institute Traveling Science Show kicked off the day with their special brand of science, challenging students’ ideas about what is hot and what is cold. In addition, to the study of matter, students watched a rocket launch, had opportunities to interact with local scientists and engineers, and shared some of their physics and science projects with one another.

Proclaimed National People’s Favorite

Thanks to the support of the entire Owen J. Roberts community, Aqua Squad was honored with the People’s Choice Award at the National e-Cybermission Competition. The East Vincent Elementary e-Cybermission team, the Aqua Squad, met Vincent Elementary alumnus, Congressman Ryan Costello, as part of their tour for the National Judging and Education Event. The three students: Jeanne Tokay, Andrew Bilotta, and Jackson Massey, investigated why students and teachers were bringing in water to school rather than drinking from fountains. Their research won them, and their teacher, Ms. Carrie Mitton, an all-expenses-paid trip to the Washington D.C. area June 15-19, to participate in the national competition of the 13th annual eCybermission competition sponsored by the U.S. Army (<http://www.ecybermission.com>).

The National Science Teachers Association administers the competition which challenges students to identify real-world problems in their local communities and create solutions using science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The students won savings bonds totaling \$4,000 each for the state and regional titles. Students were featured in the Reading Eagle, Philadelphia Inquirer, Pottstown Mercury, Fox 29 Weekend on PHL 17 Eyeopener News. Using the scientific method, the students proved that the drinking water in the school fountains was not only safe to drink, but the economically responsible choice over bottled water.



Staging Farm Day

While they may not be able to plan having a duckling hatch right before the eyes of the children (as one did this year), they do plan for hundreds of other realistic farm scenarios. Most of the work for the kindergarten students from five elementary schools is done in the months leading up to the event. The actual transformation of the courtyard and classrooms into a farm experience must happen the morning of Farm Day. Each year, the day invites the district’s youngest students to consider life as a farmer and to understand the work that goes into growing food and bringing it to market. High school students design hands-on, interactive experiences targeted at kindergarten learners.

When the big day arrives, Owen J. Roberts High School Animal Studies students report no later than 6:00 a.m. to deliver farm animals, set up stations of interactive activities, and put final touches on displays and props. Cages have been constructed, cleaned, and secured. The spaces

are checked for safety. “It is orchestrated in advance and it is all-hands-on-deck”, offered Josh Braun, class of 2015.

“You learn to adapt to the needs of a five-year-old”, said Kira Schmale, class of 2016. She explained that students perform much research on the animals displayed, but often the kindergarten students are more interested in “touching”. Kindergartners have plenty of opportunity to be hands-on with animals. which are transported and cared for by the animal studies students. This year, new stars were born with a dwarf pygmy pig named Bacon Bits, a turkey named William, friendly alpacas, and a popular horse.

During farm day, high school students audit the stations and encourage teacher feedback which they use for planning subsequent events. When the day is done and the last bit of



straw is swept up, students review and evaluate each station and make notes for the following year—always looking to improve. “We have staged the event for enough years now that rising middle school students

remember experiencing farm day as a kindergartner and want to be part of making it special,” commented animal studies teacher, Mrs. Julie Taney.

Wee Wildcats

Owen J. Roberts High School is pleased to announce a new program as part of the Family and Consumer Sciences department coming Spring of 2016. The new course, Preschool Lab Experience, will provide an opportunity for high school students to reinforce learning through observation and direct contact with young children under teacher supervision. Intended to strengthen student knowledge of child development and promote leadership and service skills, the new course will invite the community to join in on this exciting journey. Twelve community children (ages 3 ½ -4 ½) will be selected to participate in the student-run preschool, which will be named “Wee Wildcats.” Registration begins July 1, 2016. If interested, please contact the department director, Lindsay Hale, at LHale@ojrsd.com



Intro to Engineering

The high school will add an Introduction to Engineering course fall of 2015. The course will introduce STEM topics by utilizing the basics of design. Students will learn how research and analysis, teamwork, and effective communication drive the engineering and design process. As part of the course, students will explore the impact of design on humans and the environment. Engineering standards and technical documentation will be used to create a professional portfolio. Students will be immersed in design opportunities to investigate topics such as sustainability, mechatronics, forces, structures, architecture, aerodynamics, agriculture, design, manufacturing and the environment.

11th Film Festival

On Wednesday, May 20, 2015, Mr. Brian Sponagle and the Owen J. Roberts High School Video Production Club held the club's 11th Annual Student Film Festival. Owen J. Roberts alumni judges selected 16 films from the 33 films entered for viewing at the festival. Over 300 people attended the event which raised money for the annual video production scholarships. This year, Sarah Davies, Bradley Kincker, Tyler McGee and Jeffery Savant were awarded scholarships. The festival award-winning films can be viewed by going to the high school web page, selecting Wildcat TV and OJRHS Student Short Films.

North Coventry Career Day

On April 28, North Coventry Elementary School partnered with the Technical College High School (TCHS), Pickering Campus, to hold its first 5th Grade Career Day in North Coventry's all-purpose room. 95 students rotated through ten interactive stations to learn about careers in engineering, commercial graphic design, criminal justice, culinary arts, automotive service technology, allied health, animal science, cosmetology, and carpentry from 22 TCHS students.



West Vincent Student Council

This year was West Vincent Student Council's first full year in operation. The Council was comprised of 24 class representatives from grades 4-6, elected by classroom vote, and four officers, elected by Council vote. The year focused on the three pillars of student government: Service, Spirit, and Social events. Student Council sponsored several activities throughout the year, including collecting supplies for shelter dogs, holding a Soup-er Bowl to benefit the Coventry Food Pantry, sponsoring several spirit days, and running the school store. In addition, Student Council members developed their leadership skills through training and had many opportunities to put that training to practice. They met with Chef Rick to discuss food services, surveyed students K-6 about their needs and wants, brought concerns to Mr. Smith, and worked with parents to assist with several events. Student Council advisors were Mrs. Riggs, West Vincent librarian, and Mrs. Kooker-Kuttler, West Vincent guidance counselor.



Superintendent's Message

Continued from page 1

On June 12, our community gathered to celebrate the 60th annual commencement exercises for Owen J. Roberts School District. As we celebrated the Class of 2015's achievements, we acknowledged that student success is due to the dedication and caring from teachers, staff, families, and community. With commencement, students become more independent than ever before. Our hope for each student is that he or she may remain interdependent as well—serving, and being nurtured by, the greater community. Congratulations to the class of 2015 and best wishes for success in future endeavors.

Mark your Calendars



- September 12:** Ed Foundation Consignment Sale
- October 2:** Pink-out Football Game, Food Drive Kickoff
- October 2-23:** Make a Difference Food Drive
- October 3:** Cavalcade
- October 29:** REA Safe Trick or Treat
- November 7:** Run 101: Color Run; Best Buddies/Ed Foundation

French Creek Stream Study

French Creek Elementary grade 6 students performed a stream study at neighboring Warwick County Park. The students were able to walk from their school building to the stream study site. The daylong hands-on field study included stations for Physical Assessment, Chemical Testing, Biology, Nature & Writing, Habitat Assessment and Hiking. Students gathered chemical data conducting tests on water color, turbidity, pH, dissolved oxygen, alkalinity, phosphates and nitrates. Their biological study of the stream included gathering, classifying, and recording stream organisms. Students used the data they collected to complete a stream study reflection project.



Spotlight on the Class of 2015

The Class of 2015 achieved greatness in academics, in the arts, on the athletic fields, and in the service learning arena. The graduate biographies below give a sense of the diversity and accomplishment of the class, as well as a snapshot of some of the experiences available to our students.



Jennifer Miller began sewing when she was about 8 years of age. She diligently learned her craft and spent thousands of hours

working on her skills. This year, her advanced placement art concentration was called “stitch in time”, where she explored costume design throughout history producing costumes with regularity every two weeks. Her creations were specific in the style specific to an inspiration or a period of time. She would perform research on an era before constructing any historical piece. The production process included initial sketches, pattern drafting, and accessorizing. In addition to AP work, she also acted as costume director for children’s productions at Steel River Playhouse.

Jennifer was selected as the recipient of the \$10,000 Greater Pottstown Foundation Scholarship for the Arts in partnership with ArtFusion 19464. She was happy to donate three pieces of artwork to the Greater Pottstown Foundation and another to Owen J. Roberts High School so that people might enjoy her work.

She plans to attend the Arts University of Bournemouth in southern England to study costume design. She has every intention of designing clothing and accessories for movies.



Weston Lickfeld helped organize the Super Smash Brothers Tournament fundraiser at the high school, which was a rousing success.

Proceeds helped to fund philanthropic activities such as meals for those in need. He appreciated the tournament experience in which a video game brought a diverse group of students together for a common cause with the serendipitous benefit of forging friendships as part of the process.

Weston was part of Owen J. Roberts swimming since age six, becoming a Wildcat standout and captain of the swim team. He worked as a lifeguard teaching swimming to children ages three to eight and liked sharing his love of swimming with younger children. Weston qualified for the District 1 swimming championships all four years of high school and

qualified for states in the breaststroke and medley race. He was named to the Mercury All-Area and PAC-10 first teams, and also named to the PAC-10 All-Academic Team. He was a member of National Honor Society, National Language Honor Society, Wildcat Ambassadors, and choir. He loves to swim, but his college selection process was driven by academics and engineering first, then swimming. Weston will continue his academic and swimming career at Division I Lafayette College.



Annelisa Davis loves the physically demanding sport of motocross racing in local, regional, and national events. She competed in both the hare

scramble and motocross venues. She was a Series Champion Women’s Class in the PA State Harescramble Series along with taking prizes in motocross and off-road motorcycle racing. She combined this love with her personal faith and became a counselor for the organization Motocross for Christ. She plays piano and practices Tae Kwon Do. Annelisa volunteered at the North Coventry Food Pantry and helped plan and teach Spanish to elementary students through the World Language Elementary Program.

Annelisa credits Mr. Garman for being the person who has most prepared her for life. She mentioned that many students fear his class, but she felt forced to mature and become more responsible. Annelisa was a member of National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, Wildcat Ambassadors, and Anchor Club. Annelisa plans to attend Lehigh University.



Nicole Testa was a member of the American Lung Society’s Teens Against Tobacco Use (TATU)—a peer teaching tobacco prevention program. She

was also a member of Key Club and has served as a volunteer youth softball and basketball coach. According to the PAC-10 Sports website, “Testa was in the enviable position of being proficient in two sports – an All PAC-10 caliber performer who is equally adept at hitting shots on the hardwood or diamond.” “Nikki” was captain of the Varsity Girls Basketball team and captain of the Varsity Softball District-1 AAAA championship team winning league accolades in both arenas. She was awarded the Rich Nocella Memorial Scholarship through the Norchester Youth Athletic Association.

Nicole feels her time at Owen J. Roberts High School was life-changing. Math was Nikki’s favorite subject and she credits Mr. Hunter

and AP Calculus BC for inspiring a career interest in the engineering field. She will attend Penn State, University Park in the fall.



Laurel Wynn was active in Girl Scouting earning the highest level achievement—the Girl Scout Gold Award. Laurel found her passion and worked

to make a difference by helping to protect women and girls from violence. She researched and participated in mixed martial arts self-defense classes in order to develop a curriculum for a workshop which she could share with others. She credits fellow scouts in Troop 4340 for helping her along the way. Laurel taught classes to middle school, high school, college-aged girls, and older women. She broadened the learning community by developing a website with free materials dedicated to helping women of all ages become more aware and prepared against violence.

During high school, Laurel received several recognitions for good citizenship and community service, logging more than 200 hours of service per year. Laurel held several offices in Owen J. Roberts Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC), including squad leader, platoon chief and Executive Officer (Second-In-Command). She led an underwater robotics team for her unit. Laurel credits NJROTC and Master Guns for her inspiration to join the military. Laurel worked hard on her academics, her personal fitness level and on public speaking to attain her goal of attending a military academy. She was recognized by Congressman Jim Gerlach, who nominated Laurel as the primary candidate for the United States Naval Academy. Laurel then went on to win an appointment to the Academy. The Naval Academy’s acceptance rate is about four percent and comes with a scholarship valued at more than \$400,000. Laurel will join an esteemed class of about 1,000 cadets at one of America’s most prestigious schools, the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD, this fall.



Samantha Garritano was homecoming queen, carrying out duties in the Pottstown region; part of which included raising money to support

the Pottstown Fourth of July events. Samantha is a 2nd Degree Black Belt. She was a key player on the successful Owen J. Roberts Varsity Softball and Field Hockey teams, where she feels she made memories she will have forever. The Owen J. Roberts Softball Team reached state-level competition and won the AAAA District Title this year. Sam helped coach younger girls in the Xtreme Fastpitch softball organization. She was also part of the Wildcat Ambassadors service

club. She especially liked helping new students become familiar with the school and volunteering for school activities such as OJR Cavalcade of the Bands, Senior Citizens Tea, New Student Orientation, 9th Grade Orientation, Middle School Visits, Senior Awards Reception, and the Friends of the Arts Craft Show.

In addition to being an involved athlete and community member, Samantha was a dedicated student taking advanced placement courses in United States History, English Language and Composition, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, English Literature and Composition, Biology, and Spanish Language. Sam was a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish NHS. Sam plans to continue her education and her softball career at Ursinus College this fall.



Jonathan Cervi is intent on pursuing Sports Marketing as a career. He first became attracted to business when his chemistry teacher, Mr. Walmer,

suggested the fit. Jonathan experimented with different electives at the high school to explore career interests. One of those electives was Sports Marketing, which sparked his attention. He is excited to continue the path at Saint Joseph’s University, study the promotion of sports events and teams as well as the promotion of sports products and services.

Jonathan liked working as an instructor in the Youth Wildcat program where he helped with football practices. He plays piano. He lettered in Varsity Track and Field, Basketball and Football. He was a member of Leo Club, Letterman’s Club and National Honor Society. Jonathan moved into the district in grade seven and felt an immediate attachment and sense of belonging. He noted an appreciation for caring teachers and involved principals. He always felt there was a positive attitude which permeated from students and from workers. Jonathon was a recipient of the Senator John C. Rafferty Jr. Good Citizenship Award exemplifying the qualities of outstanding character, scholarship, leadership, and acceptance of responsibility.



Linh Nguyen came to the United States in 2012 with, what she calls, “a thankful attitude to this country”, settling in the U.S. to be reunited with her family.

English was not her native language and she had to work exceptionally hard to overcome a language barrier in learning and relation to social interactions. She immediately found the high school to be an energetic and friendly environment, and she

was determined to succeed with her education as a way to make her life better. She focused on studying to get a chance to enter college, translating her work each night. Over two years, she improved her English to pass the ACCESS exam and all Keystone exams. She earned the highest score of five on the AP Calculus AB exam, and graduated with a GPA greater than 4.0.

Understanding firsthand what it could be like to be thrust into a new culture and environment, Linh was dedicated as a Wildcat Ambassador and volunteer for many school activities. She helped students learn to use the library, the test center, and other facilities. Linh worked part time throughout school and volunteered at Phoenixville Hospital. She has a constant urge to “give back” to a community and country that welcomed her. She was a frequent “Student of the Month” for exceptional citizenship. She feels that need to contribute to community will drive her to help others throughout life. She was a member of the Robotics Club and National Honor Society. Linh is ecstatic to explore her abilities by studying Engineering at Penn State Berks Campus this fall.



Calculus, Physics, and Chemistry coursework convinced **Nathan Smith** to pursue a major in Materials Science and Engineering. He will

study at Johns Hopkins University and hopes to one day work in the industry application of the materials engineering field. He successfully completed a three week Cryptology Course through Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth. Nathan was a Salutatorian of the Class of 2015.

Nathan has many interests, so learning to balance time was of paramount importance to him. He felt well supported by teachers. He was an executive officer for the Wildcat Ambassadors, a member of Key Club, National Honor Society, and Spanish National Honor Society. He was a captain of the Varsity Soccer Team and All-Pioneer Athletic Conference Team Honorable Mention. He was a captain of the Varsity Track and Field Team and named Second Team All-Pioneer Athletic Conference. He was also named a U.S. Army Reserve-Scholar Athlete.



Shannon Kolb was instrumental in Owen J. Roberts High School winning the Shire’s Great Food Fight for Philabundance two years in a row; helping

to raise more than 64 tons of food collectively with other schools. The tremendous amount of work put into that project came with satisfaction that the school was able to help to put food on the table for struggling families.

Shannon was active in student government acting as freshmen class secretary, sophomore class director, and junior class vice-director. She was president of the Wildcat Ambassadors and out of school was a worship leader at Action-Impact Youth Group. Shannon was a member of National Honor Society, National Latin Honor Society and active in Owen J. Roberts fall plays.

Shannon worked approximately 15 hours per week after school at the Outlets and at Kolb’s Farm Store. Shannon appreciated her participation in Allied Health through the Technical College High School, Pickering Campus and Phoenixville Hospital. She shadowed mentors in all units of the hospital. This solidified her interest in a career in the healthcare field. She will attend West Chester University in the fall.



Donald Morris was very involved with the high school’s successful Mini-THON which is affiliated with the Four Diamonds

Fund and the fight against pediatric cancer. Active on the hospitality committee, Donald worked with a team to attract Owen J. Roberts students to participate in the all-night, interactive, fun-filled event and become part of a large and growing community of students focused on one goal - providing hope to children and families battling pediatric cancer. In 2014, students raised \$16,788. This year, the completely student-led event raised more than \$32,717 toward conquering childhood cancer, empowering students through philanthropy and service.

Donald was also involved in other service organizations: Leo Club, National Honor Society, and National Spanish Honor Society. He was vice president of Wildcat Ambassadors and vice president of the Spanish Club. He participated in fall play, spring musical, and the Prom Fashion Show. Donald will study business at Saint Joseph’s University. He credits business courses at the high school, as well as Wildcat Ambassadors, for inspiring an interest in the business field.



The University of Tennessee named fifteen students—including aspiring biomedical engineers, public servants,

and linguists—as the 2015 class of Haslam Scholars. **Emily Diehl**, who plans to study industrial engineering, was honored to be among the chosen group which carries a scholarship valued at over \$160,000. She has done research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s AgeLab, a program that seeks to improve the quality of life for elderly people and their caregivers. She also participated in a five-week college preparatory program at Vanderbilt University called PAVE.

Emily will never forget Dallas Fries at Wildcat football games, but she is ready to bring that Wildcat spirit to the south. Emily was treasurer for National Honor Society and was a member of concert band, marching band, and concert choir. She was on the Downingtown West Girls Ice Hockey Team. She was on the Owen J. Roberts Crew Team serving as captain and co-captain of Crew.



Julianna Clark describes the class of 2015 as passionate and dedicated. She was “truly proud to be part of a group of influential people who

have been able to harmoniously put forth their diverse interests and talents bettering themselves and their community”. She also found the high school to be a place of comfort and appreciated the refuge where she and her peers could grow. An award-winning artist, Julianna Clark was professionally commissioned for a painting by her junior year. Two years in a row, she received the highest certificate which could be achieved for her bodies of work at the Montgomery County Community College Art Show. Her use of vivid color and artistic detail set her paintings apart, but it is how they affect others which she appreciates, saying, “I strive to inspire others to take a break from the schedule they are stuck in to recognize the beauty and wonders around them.”

Julianna was a member of the National Art Honor Society. Outside of art, it was her high school coursework in the sciences, particularly biology, which sparked an interest to continue studies in life sciences. Julianna will pursue a major in biology and minor in art at West Chester University in the fall.



Alex Jennion knew for several years that he would pursue a degree in materials science engineering and busied himself preparing

with technical knowledge in math and science. Alex credits his parents for fueling his interests, “I was born with an interest in building and fixing things and my parents did everything in their power to encourage and help me develop my passion.” Alex was selected for the American High School Innovation Honor through the family of Rudolph Blythe and the American High School Innovation Foundation. The award is to recognize innovation as a keystone of the American way of life.

Alex was very active at Owen J. Roberts High School as a member of Key Club, National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, and German National Honor Society. He was team captain and president of the Varsity Soccer Team and feels that the biggest contribution to his class and the school was helping lead the boys’ soccer team to win the PAC-10 this

past fall. Alex was happy with the time he spent coaching Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) track. He was team captain on the OJR varsity track team.

Alex describes the Class of 2015 as “one of the most diverse collections of people you could ever hope to find.” He felt that he learned a great deal on how to handle people with varied personalities.

Alex is excited to finally start focusing on a major field of study. In addition to his academic interests. Alex can’t wait to start a new life in the fall at the University of Maryland.



Ahmed Farhan was able to conduct computer science research at Cecil College with Dr. Ahmed Tarek for four

years. As a research assistant, he was able to co-author a paper on optimizing the spatio-temporal complexities of an algorithm and present alongside the professor at the World Science Engineering Academy and Society (WSEAS) conference. Amhed volunteered at various hospitals, including Paoli Hospital, Phoenixville Hospital, and Chester County Hospital, during all four years of high school. In all, he accumulated more than 300 hours of service. He says he feels very grateful for this opportunity because it has not only allowed him to help people at some of the most vulnerable points of their life but also to observe doctors at work which reinforced aspirations for being a physician. In fact, he was able to view a coronary artery bypass graft multiple times. Ahmed also conducted research with biophysics professor Dr. Joseph Bentz at Drexel University, exploring Cytokine Storm Syndrome and Multidrug Resistance Protein 1.

Ahmed was secretary of Key Club and a member of the National Honor Society. Ahmed will remember his years at Owen J. Roberts as a time of expanding himself beyond his comfort zone to find where his true talents lie. This was through the opportunities afforded to him at the school as well the faculty who inspired him to approach everything with a sense of passion. He took full advantage of summer courses and Advance Placement coursework and feels the rigor gave him a good work ethic.

Ahmed became fascinated with anatomy and physiology. He believes that the most valued contribution to his school was his part as a co-founder of the Computer Science Club. At the University of Pennsylvania this fall, Ahmed cannot wait to meet people with far-ranging interests and experiment with even more activities as the resources around him expand.

Each Other’s Eyes

Owen J. Roberts High School celebrated their first Challenge Day on April 29. The event provided students with an experiential program that demonstrated the possibility of positive connection through the celebration of diversity, truth, and full expression. The day-long event gave students the opportunity to work in small groups with adults on intellectual flexibility, leadership skills, diversity practice, self-confidence and social competence. The theme, “through each other’s eyes”, from Henry David Thoreau’s quote, “Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other’s eyes for an instant?” prompted students to adopt a greater sense of empathy. Challenge Day was supported by the high school, the local Lion’s Club, and a grant through the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation.



Proud to Serve

On Monday, May 18, 2015, at the regular business meeting, the Owen J. Roberts Board of School Directors recognized 15 Class of 2015 students who have made the decision to serve and protect our country through the armed forces: Dalton Birnbrauer - National Guard, Ian Brewer - United States Marines, Andrew Carpenter - United States Marines, Robert Dlugaszewski III - National Guard, Michael Dori - United States Marines, Gwynna Dwyer - National Guard, Benjamin Fogwell - ROTC at Virginia Tech, Joseph Frisco - National Guard, Jesse Garvin - United States Marines, Sara Miller - National Guard, Michael Monk - United States Marines, Trevor Morris - National Guard, Alexis Rodriguez - National Guard, Thomas (T.J.) Shaeffer - National Guard, and Laurel Wynn - United States Naval Academy.



Energy Conservation Recognition

Owen J. Roberts High School was awarded an Honorable Mention in the Moving to the Head of the Class: Energy Efficient Schools Award by the non-profit organization, Keystone Energy Efficiency Alliance (KEEA). KEEA began offering the Moving to the Head of the Class Award three years ago hoping to

promote the education of energy efficiency across the Commonwealth. Part of the winning criteria for Owen J. Roberts High School included a reduction in energy consumption of nearly 11 percent during the award evaluation period and nearly 30 percent over the past year. In 2012,

Owen J. Roberts School District partnered with Johnson Controls Inc. on a variety of energy conservation measures and building efficiency programs which included a 553 kW solar photovoltaic array installed at High School as well as a web-enabled educational dashboard to educate

students. Throughout the district, there were lighting modifications, building management and control upgrades, and mechanical system upgrades. Information technology systems, demand response programs, and a proactive building maintenance program put efficiencies into action.

Driving Smart

Unfolding in real time with the realism of an actual crash response, Owen J. Roberts High School hosted the 2015 Mock Crash Event on Friday, April 24 for students in grades 10-12. The staged automobile crash was live theatre creating a dramatic demonstration of what happens at an accident scene when drivers may have been distracted or impaired.

The Mock Crash Event featured professional actors from the Media Theatre as well as OJR student actors. It was sponsored by State Farm insurance in cooperation with Paoli Hospital and the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital’s Cruisin’ Smart Program. The OJRSD Security Department, Goodwill Ambulance, Ridge Fire Company, Pennsylvania

State Police, and local municipal police worked together to encourage responsible driving behaviors among the community’s youth. A medical helicopter landed adding realistic drama and sound wave pulse to the experience, but most students reported that the situation that most impacted them was when the “parent” arrived at the crash scene.

Following the outdoor presentation, students assembled in the high school auditorium for the “Cruisin’ Smart” assembly. The mock crash and assembly are used in conjunction with a comprehensive education and prevention plan for Owen J. Roberts High School students including mandatory driver training class and optional behind-the-wheel driver training.



Destinations: Owen J. Roberts Grads Take Flight

American University: Jack Mannix
Arcadia University: Mia Bertolami
Arizona State University: Michaela Uebelhoer
Arts University, Bournemouth England: Jennifer Miller
Automotive Training Center: Kyle Confino, Erik Keehn, Patrick Kozak, Duncan Tudor
Ball State University: Faith Gorrell, Rebecca Gorrell
Bloomsburg University: Jacqueline Cooper, Cayla Snyder
Boston University: Matthew Devathala, Ethan Gelting
California Lutheran University: David Brown
California University of PA: Sarah Berkey, Alexis Rodriguez *
Carnegie Mellon University: Samuel Bolig
Case Western Reserve University: Allison Drohosky
Central Michigan University: Kelley Klepek
Clemson University: Marisa Puderbach
Coastal Carolina University: Emily Keck
College Of Wooster: Kolten Hainsey
Columbia College Chicago: Sarah Davies
Delaware County Community College: Raquel Allem, Arianna Ertl, Lloyd McDonald III, Samantha Rice, Dominique Roberts, Alexander Widmann, Andrew Winn
Delaware Tech: Gabriella Montagano
Delaware Valley University: Antonio Civetta, Emily Hunter, Matthew Tordone
Drexel University: Chloe Hills, Michael Matteson, Claudia Roland
Duquesne University: Madison Nosia, Kasie Sayers, Eric Trisch, Brynne Zubey
East Stroudsburg University: Madeline Bicer, Timothy Ninnemann
Eastern Mennonite University: Jenna Heise
Eastern University: Madison Fuertsch
Elizabethtown College: Brandon Calle, Felicia Milano
Empire Beauty School: Cheyenne Simmons
Florida Institute of Technology: Alexander Winstead
Florida State University: Conner Ruyak
Franklin & Marshall College: Colin Clark, Samuel Garges
Geneva College: Matthew Lines
George Washington University: Alexander Bendyk, Makenzie Briglia, Sarah Hampton
Georgetown University: John Dyer
Georgia Institute of Technology: Utkarsh Pandey
Grove City College: Claire Dawkins, Regan Sigourney
Gwynedd Mercy University: Marisa Sullivan

Hawaii Pacific University: Catherine Davis
High Point University: Jordan Cassella, Patrick Greene
Houghton College: Macy Baumgarten
Immaculata University: Morgan Bailey, Rachel Irwin
Indiana University of Pennsylvania: Tyler Coll, Quentin Cordaro, Taylor Davis, Scott Kucera, Sarah Mills, Samantha Pennell, Kathryn Mettler, Marissa Nosia, Gabriella Vasile
Iowa State University: Claudia Brady
Ithaca College: Demetri D’Orsaneo
James Madison University: Sarah Buttz, Madison Matarazzo
Johns Hopkins University: Nathan Smith
Kenyon College: Patrick Shaw
King’s College: Anthony Thomas, Nicolas Thomas
Kutztown University: Hunter Albright, Dean Bocci, Tyler Dixon, Robert Dlugaszewski *, Daniel Levitsky, Austin Mancini, Colin Renn, Natalie Rude, Matthew Wilson, Mariah Byrne, Dylan Dougherty
Lafayette College: Weston Lickfeld
Lehigh University: Annelisa Davis, Nicholas Razewski
Lock Haven University: Kevin Lutz, Derek Gulotta, Mackenzie Hodgson, Kody Rhoads, Devon Hennessey, Alexa Miley
Louisiana State University: Savannah Knighton
Loyola University Maryland: Katharine Higgins
Lycoming College: Rebecca Painter
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania: Joshua Braun
Messiah College: Emma Pizzi
Methodist University: Eric Faust
Military - National Guard: Joseph Frisco
Military - United States Marine Corp: Ian Brewer, Andrew Carpenter, Michael Dori, Jesse Garvin
Military - United States Naval Academy: Laurel Wynn
Millersville University: Nathan Childers, Matthew Giaponello, Bridgette Horning, Emily Lutz, Andrew Mento, Amanda Schott
Montgomery County Community College: Devin Bakken, Cloe Barbish, Jacob Bari, Erica Beaudoin, Sigridur Beiter, Jacob Benoit, Dalton Birnbrauer*, Rachel Buckwalter, Anna Confino, Giuseppa Conigliaro, Jillian Cork, Gwynna Dwyer*, Michael Dyszel, Shawn Dutill, Erin Evans, Morgan Favinger, Brooke Feeley, Shane Fegan, Corin Ferguson, Jenna Fritz, Alison Gallagher, Kyle Hoffman, Youssif Hussein, Samantha Hyder, Jacob Jensen, Sean Keating, Samuel Keller, Adam Klossin, Anthony Lanett IV, Jami Lee, Michele Maholland, Breanna Megni, Sara Miller*, Amanda Mummert, Zachary O’Neill, Thomas Perry,

Meghan Pinelli, Nicholas Prueitt, Natalie Roth, Theodore Royer, Hattie Sandberg, Robert Sheehy, Tyler Shields, Lindsay Shoap, Nicholas Simonetti, Matthew Simpson, Colin Sloan, Courtney Smith, Allison Speelhoffer, Gabrielle Szilli, Brittney Torbet, Breanna Venable, Kylah Venable, Samantha White, Lindsey Young, Kira Zulker
Moravian College: Andrew Bainbridge
Muhlenberg College: James Fratantoni
Northampton Community College: Jennifer Espinoza, Connor McCann, Siani Washington, Maya Frierson
Northeastern University: Siena Carroll, Jackson Shimkonis
Pace University: Anna Stuart
Penn State Altoona: Brett Ambrogi, Eva Gerhart, Matthew LeClaire, Thomas Michinock, Brooke Miller, Michael Monk ***, Benjamin Woods
Penn State Berks: Rachel Brobst, Jade Fagley, Nicholas Ficca, Hung Nguyen, Linh Nguyen, Edward Piechowicz, Michael Ruotolo, Jeffrey Savant, Connor Sherwood, Thomas Wolf
Penn State Brandywine: Trentan Wolfrom
Penn State Harrisburg: Trevor Morris*
Penn State Hazelton: Samantha McHugh
Penn State Lehigh Valley: Zachary Fokin
Penn State University Park: Takugo Amy, Mallory Barbee, Alexander Beitel, Olivia Body, Brian Brady, Grant Fitzsimmons, Drew Gerber, Scott Hennelly, Benjamin Huzzard, Christopher Kent, Randall Knight, Annaliese Long, Arthur Minahan, Caroline Stacks, Nicole Testa
Pennsylvania College of Technology: Michael Minninger, Cole Schell
Pensacola Christian College: Robert Moore
Philadelphia University: Laina Healy, Alexandra Williams
Point Park University: Madison Aicher
Reading Area Community College: Phillip Fryberger Jr.
Rhode Island School of Design: Alyssa Ott
Rochester Institute of Technology: Adam Centanni
Saint Joseph’s University: Emily Aiken, Laura Bauernschmidt, Jonathan Cervi, Donald Morris, Erin Nolan, Lauryn Wensel
Scottsdale Community College: Natalie Galante
Shenandoah University: Jacob Leclerc
Shippensburg University: Anastasia Davis, John Ruckle, Morgan Stone, Rebecca Waznak
Stevenson University: Bradley Kinckner
Susquehanna University: Devon Niness

Syracuse University: Matthew Hansen
Temple University: Katherine Dempsey, Caitlyn Koch, Christopher Kovach, Ryan Michener, Miranda Nosia, Alec Nova, Stephen Peduto, Mariel Tucker, Bharvi Vyas
Thaddeus Stevens: Joshua Torrens
The Animal Behavioral Institute: Kaitlyn Miller
The Catholic University of America: Graceton Griffith
The College of Wooster: Matthew Woodward
The Culinary Institute of America: Jessica Becker
The Restaurant School: Thomas Shaeffer*
The University of Vermont: Avery Hart
University of Delaware: Lindsey Cathcart, Ryan Knox, Emma Lavelle, Zachary Mahl
University of Hartford: Stephen Arnold
University of Maryland: Alex Jennion, Abigail Kriebel
University of New Haven: Alexis Barker
University of North Carolina: Niki Avgerinos
University of Pennsylvania: Ahmed Farhan
University of Pittsburgh: Richard Brigandi, Alexander Buruschkin, Emery Chew, Christopher Gardiner, Kylie Glenn, Blake McCourt, Collin McCourt, Tyler McGee, Nathan Raban, Abigayle Reisner, Matthew Serbin, Zachary Serbin, Wyatt Tomko
University of Tennessee: Emily Diehl
University of Vermont: Emily Detwiler
Ursinus College: Damian Creasy, Samantha Garritano, Kennedy Houck
Villanova University: Gabriel Monteleone, Caroline Rajtik, Gabrielle Yuhas
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University: Ryan Dede, Benjamin Fogwell**, Seth Gillen, Eliza Stoner
Wagner College: Daniel Hughes
Washington College: Eric Antich
Wesley College: Paige Brehm
West Chester University: Jensen Caughey, Julianna Clark, Nicolette Cornell, John Dougherty, Zachary Fallahee, Ethan Gallagher, Christopher Honicker, Shannon Kolb, Marissa Krueger, Julie Myers, Sydney Schnarrs, Samantha Terrell, Jillian Trout, Tess Vanderwerf, Madison Willoughby
West Virginia University: Alexandra Friel
Widener University: Zachery Hill, Emily Hopkins
York College of Pennsylvania: Gillian Caplan, Maura Gallant, Benjamin Hiltebeitel, Dominick Petrucelli, Dylan Wisen

* National Guard
** ROTC
*** Marines

Family Community Event

More than 30 community groups hosted displays at the 7th annual Coventry Woods Festival and several Owen J. Roberts school groups were among them. National Honor Society students helped to greet and direct festival participants, an asset for a festival which



has grown steadily over the years, attracting crowds larger than 1,500. OJR robotics teams set up hands-on demonstrations while high school animal studies students continued the hands-on learning theme by bringing many varieties of animals for festival-goers to handle. The Owen J. Roberts District Elementary Chorus shared some of their musical repertoire with the community on the steps of the Fernbrook Lodge.

Odyssey, World’s Top 1%

A long tradition of success continued this year with three Odyssey of the Mind teams winning first place in the Pennsylvania State Finals Competition qualifying them for the World Competition. High School Engineering Team: Makenzie Briglia, Ethan Conway, Liam Conway, Alex Glasier, George Kullen, Madison Matarazzo, and Caroline Rajtik. The Middle School Engineering Team: Annie Ardit, Maddy Braun, Olivia DeVol, Emily Glasier, Kasey Fitch, Lauren McLaughlin, and Jeanie Tokay. The East Vincent Elementary Engineering Team: Charlotte Camp, Addy D’Arcy, Charlie Kullen, Sofia Loiocono, Jen Plasha, Sarah Ewing, and Nick Wood.

Odyssey of the Mind World Finals, Michigan State University, was a creative extravaganza hosting more than 850 teams from all around the world. Owen J. Roberts students succeeded in solving Odyssey of the Mind problems and competing on the world stage, all three teams placing in the top 10 in the world. Our high school team had the highest finish at 6th place, the middle school finished in 7th, and East Vincent earned an 8th place finish.

STEM Celebration

Elementary ATP students participated in the 4th annual district-wide STEM celebration at the high school. The event allowed students from all elementary schools to work collaboratively and showcase projects related to STEM-based research, learning, and experimentation done during the school year through their gifted goal work.



Language Program Earns Gold

Once again, Owen J. Roberts High School World Language Program has become part of a very elite group of exemplary foreign language programs as recipient of a 2015 Golden Globe Award. The Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA) Exemplary Program (PEP) Awards are given to schools with well-designed, sequential language programs. Documentation of 11 different criteria must be provided. Exemplary PA world language programs are recognized at four levels: PSMLA Golden Globe, Silver Globe, Bronze Globe, and Globe Awards. Owen J. Roberts World Language Program is one of nine programs in the state to receive the highest Golden Globe distinction.

Wildcat Athletic Highlights

Crew

The OJR Crew team had their last event of the season at the Upper Merion 50th Annual Regatta. The team came home with a whopping 18 Gold medals and 12 Silvers. The team had an outstanding showing at the Stotesbury Regatta as well. Congratulations to all the rowers on the team for their hard work to make this season a great one. The rowing team is really putting out a good name for the OJR Schools and showing what great sportsmanship we have as a community.



Softball

Congratulations to the Owen J. Roberts Lady Wildcats Softball team and coaching staff for an amazing run in the District One Playoffs. They won the second District One AAAA title in school history. Our girls and coaching staff have done an outstanding job all year and they deserve to be recognized for their hard work. They also made the PIAA state playoffs. A member of the team, Samantha Garritano, eclipsed the 100th career hit mark. She is only the second player in school history to achieve this milestone, emerging as the new school leader in hits as well. Sam was named to the first team AAAA All-State team.

Baseball

Congratulations to the Owen J. Roberts Wildcat Baseball team on their third place finish in the District One AAAA baseball playoffs. The Baseball team also made the PIAA state playoffs, a testament to their hard work and effort this season.

Girls Lacrosse

The Girl’s Lacrosse team capped off an outstanding and perfect regular season on Henry J. Bernat Field in Wildcat Stadium with the PAC title. Congratulations to the girls and the coaching staff for all of their hard work and dedication this season. They qualified for the District One playoffs and lost in the first round.

Boys Lacrosse

The Boy’s Lacrosse team played an outstanding game, but fell short to the defending champs of Spring-Ford High School in the title game. The boys played their hearts out and the coaching staff did everything they could as well. The boys also qualified for the District One playoffs this season.

Track and Field

The Track and Field team had an outstanding showing in the PAC championships at Phoenixville with winners listed below. These athletes moved on to the District One meet at Coatesville High School.

PAC-10 Champions:

Girls 4x800m Relay team: Mary Bernotas, Megan Bernotas, Alex Glasier, and Allison Brunton. The team broke the meet record previously held by Great Valley in 2002.

Girls 4x400m Relay: Allison Brunton, Angela Feiser, Teneisha Myers, and Morgan Shronk broke the meet record previously held by Great Valley in 2002.

- Savanna Sachar: Girls Pole Vault.
- Allison Brunton: girls 800m run.
- Alex Glasier: 3200m Run
- Teneisha Myers: 100m, 200m
- Morgan Shronk: 400m
- Harley Ginnona: Javelin
- Liam Conway: 800m, 1600m
- Nate Smith: 300m Hurdles
- Abe Van Helmond: 3200m

Savanna Sachar broke the school record in the pole vault by jumping 9’6” in the Pottsgrove Invitational.

MS Track and Field

Our Middle School Boys 4x100 relay team finished 3rd in the Middle School Division at the Penn Relays. We congratulate Ahmeed Alveed, Tucker Pippin, Scott Honicker, Marshall Bergstresser, and Samuel Coroniti (alternate), for their run.

Girls Volleyball

Some exciting news in the athletic area is that we are adding the sport of Girls’ Volleyball at the High School. We will be offering Varsity and JV starting in the Fall of 2015. This is an exciting time for OJR Athletics and the start of an outstanding sport for the students of this great school district.