

## Students Awarded for Making a Difference

The ESC of Cuyahoga County presents its annual Humanitarian Awards to students from Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, and Richmond Heights School Districts at the end of each school year. One student from each middle and high school received the award, presented by a member of the ESC Governing Board at each honoree's award assembly. Recipients are nominated by their own school's administration for demonstrating outstanding character and service to the community throughout the past school year. In addition to a cash award of \$500 at the high school level and \$200 for middle school, the six students each received a personalized plaque, starfish pin and starfish keychain. The starfish represents a short story about one person making a difference.

This year's "ESC Humanitarians" are:

Cuyahoga Heights Schools  
MarySarah Menkhous, Middle School  
Alisa Cubbison, High School

Independence Local Schools  
Sarah Andexler, Middle School  
Valerie Fletcher, High School

Richmond Heights Schools  
Alexander Vanek, Middle School  
Gabrielle Kisner, High School



## Chamber State of the Schools Luncheon Features Local Superintendents

Superintendent Bob Mengerink of the ESC of Cuyahoga County, addressed members of the Cuyahoga Valley Chamber of Commerce this past May at the annual State of the Schools Luncheon. He was joined by Roscoe Schlachter, Superintendent of the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center; Peter Guerrero, Superintendent of Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools; and David Laurenzi, Superintendent of Independence Local Schools. More than 200 people attended the event.



# the ESC COMMUNITY Connection

Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County

SPRING 2010



## In the Community

### Ohio School Boards Association Honors ESC Board Members Frank Mahnic, Jr. and Tony Hocevar

This past March, the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) honored Frank Mahnic, Jr. and Tony Hocevar, members of the ESC of Cuyahoga County Governing Board, with the 2010 OSBA Award of Achievement as well as its "Master Board Member" Award at its spring conference in Warren, Ohio.

The OSBA "Master Board Member" Award was only presented to 20 out of 3,400 board members in Ohio this year. It is given to those board members who dedicate themselves to improving their boardsmanship skill and knowledge and is only awarded once to an individual and is recognized for life.

The OSBA Award of Achievement is also presented to a very select group each year. Of the more than 3,400 board members in Ohio, only 93 received the honor this year. Award recipients are rewarded for earning continuing education credits for attending seminars, workshops and conferences throughout the year. In addition, credits are awarded for leadership positions such as President, delegate, and serving on boards and state committees.

"Their efforts reflect a true commitment toward public education and the importance they attach to their roles on the ESC School Board," said Al Meloy, OSBA Deputy Director of Search Services and Board of Development.



ESC Board Member Frank Mahnic, Jr., Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools Board President Ken Perk, and ESC Board Member Tony Hocevar all received an award from OSBA.

## American History Comes To Life Through Sound

Approximately 70 teachers from 29 area school districts, including Independence Local Schools, benefited from the \$2 million "The Sounds of American History" grant—a collaboration between the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Cuyahoga County and Cleveland State University. The grant was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History Program.

During the four-year program, teachers increased their history content knowledge and historical thinking skills, developed lesson plans and

curricular materials, and applied new methods and technical skills in the classroom.

"It has been inspiring to see the great success of this program. I believe it will continue in the hearts and souls of all the participating teachers and the students that have been touched. I am very proud that ESC and CSU were able to bring this experience to the Northeast Ohio area," said Bob Mengerink, Superintendent of the ESC of Cuyahoga County.

*"For the past three years, I have participated in workshops on the Civil War, World War I, 1920s, Great Depression, World War II, Cold War, Growth of Suburbs, Civil Rights, Vietnam, the Presidents, Blues, Jazz, and Rock and Roll. All of these workshops have introduced us to materials such as audio and video clips, along with letters, speeches, poems, and songs from those who lived during these events. I have been able to use all of these to bring history alive for the students at Independence High School. This grant also allowed me to purchase more than \$1,500 in teaching materials to enhance my curriculum.*

*I have also had the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues from across Northeast Ohio at these workshops. We created lessons that we shared with each other and they are now available on a website for all to use. This has been an invaluable experience that has not only helped me expand my knowledge base and grow as a teacher, but has also helped the students gain a stronger appreciation for history."*

Jennifer Satola  
History Teacher, Independence High School



Frank Mahnic, Jr.  
Christine Krol  
Tony Hocevar  
Vice President  
Carol Fortlage  
President  
Tony Miceli  
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*"Education is often one size fits all and we need to modify it. North Coast Academy accomplishes that goal." ~ Rena Wertheim, Director, North Coast Academy*

It is amazing to think that North Coast Academy Education Resource Center (NCA) is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> year of education. North Coast Academy is an alternative high school for at-risk students from 13 high schools on the east side. It is located on the second floor of the Sears store at Richmond Town Square in Richmond Heights. Students who attend North Coast Academy are referred to the school by their own school district and go through an on-line curriculum while assisted by several teachers. The school is operated by the ESC of Cuyahoga County and is in partnership with the Simon Youth Foundation.

Over the years, North Coast Academy's enrollment has increased to serve more than 100 students each year. To date, 340 students have completed their coursework at the school enabling them to receive diplomas from their sending school district.

The school has a morning and afternoon session. They expect 90% attendance and 80% scores on lessons and tests. Students also do a research project and volunteer work. About 80% of the graduates go on to college or the military. "We feel strongly that since this program is giving something to the students, they should give back to the local community," said Rena Wertheim, the school's director. The students also get career counseling and learn life-skills as well as meeting weekly with a social worker.



Rena Wertheim, Director of North Coast Academy looks on as Senator Nina Turner (left) visits with students at North Coast Academy this past May.

*"I was skipping out of school, not doing what I was supposed to be doing and hanging out with the wrong crowd. I probably would have dropped out of high school if it wasn't for North Coast Academy."*

*~ Diamond McKenzie, Class of 2010 Graduate of North Coast Academy*



## Teacher Innovation Grants

The ESC of Cuyahoga County presents annual Teacher Innovation Grants to the Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, and Richmond Heights Local School Districts. These funds are used for new, innovative and creative ideas in the classroom. Each district receives the \$1,500 grant annually.

### Cuyahoga Heights

Students in Cuyahoga Heights Schools are using new iPod Touches to reinforce and enrich their curriculum thanks to the ESC grant. The teachers have already seen the students' motivation increase as well as the time on their tasks increase while they are working on the iPod touch. They look forward to developing their own classroom applications that will provide even more opportunities for their students to be more successful in the classroom.

### Independence

Kinetic City: Mission to Vearth! is stronger than ever at Independence Primary School. Kinetic City is a pre-or post-school hours Science Club involving interested students in creative, online scientific problem-solving and research. It was first implemented at Independence Primary School in the 2006-2007 school year. The program has grown into an amazing experience in science for the students thanks to this ESC grant.

### Richmond Heights

Educators attended the Wilson Language Training program with the grant money they received. The goal of the program is to provide teachers with the resources they need to help their students become fluent, independent readers. It also hopes to improve their ability to diagnostically plan and implement a lesson based on the diverse needs of their students. Teachers were provided with hands-on practice and application skills to use with their students who may have reading deficits in grades two through 12.

Throughout the school year, the ESC of Cuyahoga County provides numerous opportunities for Gifted and Talented students in all our surrounding school districts to attend various programs and events to enrich their classroom learning.

## Peaceful Solutions



More than 80 students attended ESC's Peaceful Solutions workshop at the Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood this past November. Students explored a variety of cultural arts experiences in an actual art setting and met with peers to discuss ways to get through life peacefully. Students from Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools were among those that attended.



## Student Leadership

In November, high school students attended a Leadership Workshop at the ESC in Valley View. These young adults participated in activities designed to recognize and improve their leadership skills.



## Equations

This past January, 10 area schools brought more than 160 students to the ESC's Equations competition. Equations is a challenging game played in classrooms across the country that teaches students the critical problem-solving abilities needed to recognize and apply fundamental concepts. Students from Cuyahoga Heights Local Schools Team 1 (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade division) won second place.



## Creativity Fine Arts

There were 120 seventh graders that attended the Beck Center for the Arts program in March. Students participated in hip hop, improvisation, clay, classical voice, acting on the screen, drums, and cartooning. Students from Independence and Richmond Heights Local Schools were among those that attended.



## Hyland Software

Three times a year, Hyland Software, a Westlake-based software developer, partners with the ESC in opening its doors to students interested in careers in information technology. At the visit in April, students had the opportunity to attend the company's quarterly meeting led by President and CEO A.J. Hyland. "There could be a future Hyland Software employee sitting in the audience right now," said Hyland. "It is important for our company to continue opening the eyes of our local students to the many careers in our field and for our employees to serve as mentors."

