

ESC Recognizes Students 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
Victoria Eder, Middle School
Kayla Evans, High School

Independence Local Schools
Erin Luciano, Middle School
Rio Vincz, High School

Richmond Heights Schools
Alana Lloyd, Middle School
Kathleen Ellen Behra, High School



ESC Board Members Receive the 2009 OSBA Award of Achievement

This past March, the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) honored ESC of Cuyahoga County Board President Frank Mahnic, Jr. and Board Member Tony Hocevar with the 2009 OSBA Award of Achievement.

This award is presented to a very select group each year. Of the more than 3,400 board members in Ohio, only 74 received the honor in 2009. Award recipients are rewarded for continuing education credits which are received 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.



the ESC Connection

Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County

FALL 2009



In the Community



Local Students Attend Chamber Functions

Thanks to the ESC of Cuyahoga County, students from **Independence and Cuyahoga Heights High Schools** have the opportunity to attend the

Cuyahoga Valley Chamber of Commerce luncheons. Students from **Richmond Heights High School** will be invited to attend the Heights Chamber of Commerce breakfasts starting this fall.

ESC Board Vice President Tom Thacker, who also serves on the board of the Cuyahoga Valley Chamber of Commerce, is pictured with students and guidance counselors from Independence and Cuyahoga Heights Schools.

Rokakis Speaks at ESC-Sponsored Breakfast

Cuyahoga County Treasurer Jim Rokakis addressed the Cuyahoga Valley Chamber of Commerce at a Breakfast Networking Meeting this past April at the ESC of Cuyahoga County Professional Development Center. Approximately 100 people attended the breakfast and listened to Rokakis speak about the foreclosure crisis in Cuyahoga County and his plans to help bring economic vitality back to Cleveland.



ESC Board President Frank Mahnic, Jr., Cuyahoga County Treasurer Jim Rokakis, ESC Board Member Tony Hocevar, and ESC Board Vice President Tom Thacker.

The ESC of Cuyahoga County

Welcome to the first edition of *The ESC Connection* newsletter. You will be receiving this newsletter twice a year in order to provide you, our community stakeholders, with a better understanding of the Educational Service Center (ESC) of Cuyahoga County, its purpose and impact on the quality of education in Northeast Ohio.

The ESC is one of the largest educational service agencies of its type in the State of Ohio, employing personnel for Northeast Ohio school districts and offering programs, grants, educational resources and leadership training, as well as supporting special education, curriculum, literacy, technology and more. We partner with local administrators, teachers and other professionals in education as they endeavor to impact their students and families through a high-quality education.

The ESC directly serves **Cuyahoga Heights, Independence, and Richmond Heights Local School Districts**, but also provides programs and services to the other 28 school districts in Cuyahoga County, as well as many districts outside the county.

The ESC Administration Building is located on the east side of Canal Road in Valley View, just north of the Cinemark Theater. It is home to

our superintendent and administrators, professional development, and those professionals who coordinate professional development, special education and gifted programs throughout the school districts.

Also located on the ESC campus is the Lakeshore Northeast Ohio Computer Association (LNOCA) building, easily seen on the west side of Canal Road. LNOCA provides technology services and

training/technical assistance for various schools. Services include everything from accounting, payroll and equipment inventory to student report cards, scheduling and attendance. The building also accommodates small and mid-size meetings, workshops and conferences.

The ESC Professional Development Center, located behind the LNOCA building, offers a variety of meeting spaces that may be rented out for special events, workshops, conferences or meetings by educators as well as local businesses and organizations for educational programs.

Educators are challenged to provide students the best tools and knowledge needed to help them chart their course through an increasingly complex and confusing world. At the ESC of Cuyahoga County, we strive to bridge the gap between the educational needs and educational visions where all schools and students can succeed.

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Meet The New Superintendent

Dr. Bob Mengerink is the new superintendent of the ESC of Cuyahoga County. He started on August 1st and looks forward to furthering the quality of education in Cuyahoga County.

What are some of your goals as the new superintendent? My goal is to continue to see that the ESC makes a difference in education. I will be visible in the community, meeting with superintendents and administrators regularly, to listen to their needs in order to find ways to provide the services they need.

What is the one thing the public may not realize about the ESC of Cuyahoga County? The public may not realize the wide range of services that we offer to districts. When a difficult task needs to be done, the ESC is there to help. For example, we provide instructors to visually-impaired students, who often times translate the textbooks into Braille. Not only do we reach out to the kids, but the educators as well, providing professional and curriculum development.

What is one of the greatest benefits of being a part of education? Being around students who often teach us more than we teach them.

Words to live by? "Seek first to understand and then to be understood."

Where is your hometown? My roots are in Cuyahoga County. I was one of five children who grew up in Parma. I met my wife, Karen, at Parma Senior High. We have four children—a teacher, an artist, and two musicians—and three grandchildren. We also have many relatives who live in Cleveland. It's good to be back home!

"Dr. Mengerink brings a tremendous amount of experience coupled with an excellent academic background. He is an exceptional leader and recognized in the State of Ohio and Midwest for his past accomplishments. The Governing Board feels fortunate to be able to attract such an individual to lead our district. We are excited about the future of the ESC of Cuyahoga County under Dr. Mengerink's leadership."

- Frank Mahnic, Jr., Governing Board President



Student Programs

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

Hyland Software

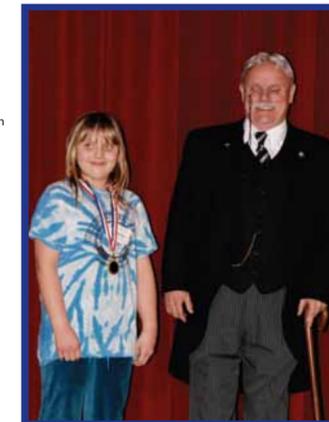


Three times a year, high school students tour and "work" at Hyland Software, an international software company in Westlake.

Students are exposed to experiences in software development and quality assurance from the personnel at Hyland Software and learn what makes businesses successful in today's global economy.

Mr. Presidents' Competition

With the inauguration of our 44th President this past year, United States Presidents were top of mind for local students. This past February, the ESC hosted more than 135 students in grades 4 to 8 from 10 different school districts for the Mr. Presidents' Competition. Students prepared data on the Presidents of the 20th and 21st centuries in their classrooms and were tested at the competition. There was also a special appearance by Theodore Roosevelt, played by a local actor, who assisted at the awards ceremony.



PEP: Positive Education Program

"It makes me feel more confident now that I can read. It's getting over the challenge that makes me feel proud."

These are the words of a 10-year-old in the Positive Education Program's (PEP) Day Treatment Centers who is learning to read for the first time. As Greater Cleveland's largest non-profit agency committed to our community's kids, the caring and competent professionals at PEP help troubled and troubling children and youth successfully learn and grow, blending quality education and mental health services in partnership with families, schools, and communities. The ESC of Cuyahoga County serves as the fiscal agent for PEP—the ESC's largest and most enduring partnership.

In 1971, PEP was created in consultation with area school districts to help the schools serve their most challenging students. Initially, PEP functioned as a consulting organization, but quickly it became apparent that districts needed specialized centers dedicated to meeting the educational needs of their most challenging students. In 1975, PEP

opened its first Day Treatment Center providing a blended educational and mental health program. In 1976, PEP opened its first Early Childhood Center. Today, PEP operates 10 Day Treatment Centers and two Early Childhood Centers, as well as consulting programs (Day Care Plus and PEP Assist) and community-based wraparound services (Connections and Tapestry).

PEP has grown in size and reputation. Locally and nationally, PEP has been recognized for its excellent programming. In 1996, the U.S. Department of Education identified PEP's Day Treatment Centers as one of six model special education programs in the country. In 2000, the U.S. Departments of Education and Justice recognized PEP for being an example of a model program providing intensive interventions to troubled students. In 2003, the Positive Education Program won the Woodruff Prize, a local honor bestowed upon an agency demonstrating excellence in mental health care.

Today, PEP touches the lives of 3,000 children and their families annually and employs 600 caring professionals. To find out more about PEP, please visit www.pepcleve.org.

Beck Center for the Arts

In an ever-expanding world, quality communication is essential to understanding, cooperation, and problem-solving for a more peaceful society. In November, the ESC planned a day at the Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood to provide high school students an opportunity to experience communication through artistic expression from various art perspectives. This past March, the Beck Center for the Arts again



hosted more than 100 arts-motivated seventh graders who explored a variety of cultural arts experiences such as mime, dance, clay, television production, and improvisation.

Channel Stress, Handle It! Workshop



Learning how to handle stress as a high school student was the topic of the Channel Stress, Handle It! Workshop sponsored by the ESC this past spring. The full-day workshop was completely planned by students. High school students met faithfully with Cleveland Museum of Natural History and ESC personnel to plan the event. More than 100 students attended and participated in sessions such as yoga, nutrition, massage therapy, dream school, drum circle, improvisation, laughing, aromatherapy, and hip hop dancing.



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

Have you noticed a windmill on the top of Cuyahoga Heights Elementary School? Last summer, students took part in a Windmill Energy Project in order to study windmills and "green energy." They built the windmill on top of the school roof and, thanks to the ESC Teacher Innovation Grant, plan to continue their studies this new school year by replicating the windmill using paper materials. After conducting experiments with their personal windmills, they will draw conclusions about the process of creating energy from wind.

Independence

Kinetic City: Mission to Vearth! is stronger than ever at Independence Primary and Middle 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. In 2008, the program was expanded to the middle school thanks in part to this ESC grant. Kinetic City has an amazing selection of science experiments, games and projects for various age levels at www.kineticcity.org. The program is a production of the American Association for the Advancement of Science with support from the National Science Foundation.

Richmond Heights

Finding educational solutions for students with autism as well as non-traditional learners is a goal of Richmond Heights teacher Gayle Siebert. Gayle used the ESC Teacher Innovation Grant to attend a five day Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication-handicapped Children (TEACCH) training workshop. The information and techniques taught at this intensive, hands-on training have been utilized by Gayle within her classroom for many of her special education students.

Town Hall Lecture Series

From September through March, ESC provided students the opportunity to attend the Town Hall Lecture Series at the Ohio Theatre in downtown Cleveland. This program provides an opportunity for high school juniors and seniors from Northeast Ohio to attend lectures, enhancing their knowledge of the sciences, history, economics, current events and the humanities.



Lost (& Found) in Space Adventure: GPS Strategies

Students also had an opportunity to participate in workshops at the Cleveland Metroparks in Strongsville and at the South Chagrin Reservation in Chagrin Falls. The Orienteering workshop provided activities for seventh grade students in using a compass and in developing logical reasoning skills. Eighth grade students used a GPS unit to find their way while using problem solving skills.