Students Selected as Young Math Scholars

High School students Jaclyn LaSita and Christine Joseph are two of 75 students selected as Young Scholars of Mathematics by the Institute of Creative Problem Solving for gifted and talented Students at SUNY College Old Westbury. Their acceptances were based on recommendations from math teachers Ms. Becker and Ms. Fraser, a rigorous examination, a school transcript, and a brief statement from each student.

Jaclyn and Christine will spend 60 hours in class during 20 Saturday mornings on related outside projects. The curriculum will cover mathematical topics from algebra, geometry, and number theory that are not included in the standard course of high school study.

District Schools Take on the Issue of Bullying

Throughout the Shoreham-Wading River School District, administrators are making efforts to ensure that students are informed about how to recognize and respond to the damaging impacts of bullying and cyberbullying.

“It is our goal to provide students, staff, and parents the greatest range of tools and strategies for increasing awareness of bullying and preventing it from creating a negative learning environment in the schools and in our community,” Director of Curriculum and Instruction Alan N. Meinster stated.

At Briarcliff Elementary, the lessons of “bucket filling,” or doing and saying positive things for others, continues to be reinforced through readings and activities. The Caring Kids program is also being implemented in each classroom. The school psychologist uses story telling, role playing, and puppetry to teach empathy and respect for differences, and to respond to “bucket filling” behaviors.

In September, the Miller Avenue Elementary School PTO sponsored an anti-bullying assembly entitled “No Bullies Allowed.” This program focused on helping students identify, respond to, and halt bullying behaviors. A parent guide entitled “Not Cetera” was also mailed home to provide parents with information on how to discuss online safety with their children.

During faculty meetings, teachers and support staff at Wading River Elementary School discuss District policies related to bullying and cyberbullying and how to recognize these behaviors in the classroom and building as a whole. Suffolk County Police Officer Nancy Ward of the PoliceSmart Program has also presented fifth-grade students at Wading River and Miller Avenue Elementary Schools with the tools to examine cyberbullying and to stay safe while using the Internet.

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Superintendent's Message

As with the beginning of school in September, the New Year is a time to review the past and consider the future. During the first four months of this school year, Shoreham-Wading River students have been receiving more intensive and rigorous curricula. The elementary students are being asked to read and write more often and for longer periods of time. Math activities are being redesigned so that all students gain a deeper understanding of mathematics. In September, sixth graders began the first year of the accelerated math course leading to the Integrated Algebra Regents in eighth grade and all seventh and eighth-grade students are participating in an honors curriculum in Social Studies. Moving to an all-honors English curriculum in the Middle School is also under discussion.

These changes are prompting corresponding changes in the High School. High school students are encouraged to take Advanced Placement (AP) and college credit-bearing courses (some AP courses also allow the students to earn college credit). This year, 295 students are enrolled in Advanced Placement courses and 97 students are enrolled in college credit-bearing courses.

Our District’s work to raise the standards for academic success stems from two core concerns. One is to prepare students for the changing curriculum and assessments. The NYS Learning Standards are being replaced with the Common Core State Standards. Beginning in 2012-2013, State assessments will be based on these new guidelines. This school year and next will be transition years. Assessments will contain more varied questions and longer reading passages. To be successful, students must be more accomplished readers and thinkers than was required previously. To do this, they need to read and write often and for sustained periods of time. In the elementary schools, student reading logs are used to promote reading at home which is critical to their academic progress. The most important factor in improving reading and writing is for students to read and write. And the most important factor in improving math is for students to use math. Parents are critical partners in educating our children and parental support for reading, writing and math at home is essential to student academic success.

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, we understand that assessments will include traditional test items and newly constructed performance items. These assessments will be linked to national standards and assessments. Students will be tested on their ability to think critically, solve complex problems, conduct research, and write. Our students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade will take the new assessments. Information about the changes will be sent to districts as the State finalizes their work in this area. In the meantime, we are preparing for these changes now by raising standards and revising curricula.

In addition, we are increasing standards for academic success to ensure that our students are college and career ready when they graduate and that they have the skills to be competitive in the global workforce. The State Education Department is revising the high school graduation requirements so that students will be required to achieve mastery in more courses. Although we do not yet know what the final revisions will be, we are encouraging students to study math and science for four years and to continue taking courses in art, music and a language other than English. The changes in Middle School curricula support the State’s goals and we will continue to review and revise our District’s secondary core courses, student assignments and instructional strategies, as needed.

Our District has begun the process of planning for the 2011-2012 budget. Please refer to the budget workshop dates our District has planned listed to the right. I encourage community involvement throughout the process and look forward to your feedback.

Compiling the 2011-12 budget will be a difficult process for all districts on Long Island, as we are all faced with a set of financial challenges. Among these are the expiration of Federal Stimulus funds that we have received for the past two years; a continued drop in New York State aid; a continued escalation of mandated costs for teachers and employees’ retirement systems; and the possibility of a 2% tax cap as proposed by Governor Cuomo.

Despite these challenges, our District must find avenues of supporting the positive content, student assignments and instructional strategies, as needed.

We encourage community involvement throughout the process and look forward to your feedback.

Introducing a Redesigned District Website

The District recently unveiled a redesigned website which highlights the many events and achievements of our students and staff, as well as important school news, information, and District policy. To access the website, please log onto the web address www.swrschools.org. It is our hope that students, parents, and members of the community will utilize this website as an important communication tool and link to the Shoreham-Wading River School District.
Students Reflect on “Together We Can”

This year, for the first time, students at Shoreham-Wading River High School were invited to participate in the annual PTA Reflections Program, a national competition that encourages students to express themselves artistically based on a common theme. This year’s theme of “Together We Can” drew a wide variety of responses from students, from short stories and poems to self-portraits and photography. In addition to submitting an artistic work, students were required to write an essay that explained how their works of art related to the chosen theme.

Congratulations to the following High School winners, who will continue on to the next level of competition with the Suffolk Region PTA:

**Literature**
- First Place – Isabelle Marcelin
- Second Place – Raann Mariella

**Visual Arts**
- First Place – Nicole Cortina
- Second Place – Emma Stoll

**Photography**
- First Place – Marisa Bruno
- Second Place – Samantha Merzbacher

Wading River Elementary School students also submitted entries to the Reflections contest. Principal Stephen Donohue said, “We really encourage participation at our school. Our students are all winners if they participate!” The school recently recognized the following students who will continue to the regional competition:

**Literature**
- Award of Excellence – Samantha Hunt and Jordan McClintock
- Award of Merit – Ryan Leda and Paul Loscalzo
- Honorable Mention – Kathleen Loscalzo

**Visual Arts**
- Award of Excellence – Samantha Hunt, Trevor Kessel, and Cayden Mulroy

**Photography**
- Award of Excellence – Lydia Kessel, Nicolette Ness, and Julianna Kohlus
- Award of Merit – Kathleen Loscalzo, Joseph Brown, and David “DJ” Brown
- Honorable Mention – Reagan Gulotta
**Students Set Goals for Reading Achievement**

Successful adults create goals and determine the steps they need to achieve them. With this idea in mind, teachers and students in all three of the District's elementary schools are establishing daily reading goals to become better readers.

At **Briarcliff Elementary School**, teachers set daily goals for the District's youngest students. For instance, a daily goal might ask students to read independently for five minutes to help them build "reading and writing muscles."

Principal Jane Ruthkowski explained, "The goal is for students to read for sustained periods of time by gradually challenging themselves to push further." At Briarcliff, students also meet with their teachers individually or in small groups, called "conferences," to discuss individual reading goals.

At **Wading River Elementary School**, Principal Stephen Donohue explained that teachers encourage students to accomplish specific goals, such as envisioning a story in their head, much like a movie. Another goal each student is working on is the ability to make connections between a story and other literary texts, as well as themselves, in order to derive meaning from the content. In order to accomplish these goals, the students are given strategy cards with exercises to help them look, hear, see, and feel the details of a story. "Down the road, these students will be deeper thinkers and more proficient," Mr. Donohue noted.

In Michelle McCarthy's class at **Miller Avenue Elementary School**, the students look at the big goals of becoming a proficient reader. In recording goals in a binder, the students have learned that in understanding the big picture, they must first accomplish smaller goals. Ms. Danielle Algiere has employed a similar method in her classroom with an instant messaging board. Much like a blog, students can post their daily goals with instant messages, which are answered by the teacher each day. "The students love the instant message I write to them, and the whole process comes in handy when I discuss a student's reading abilities with a parent during teacher conferences," Ms. Algiere stated.

Mr. Vallina explained that the key to a student becoming a better reader is setting goals to become better readers. In a recent blog, Jake De Paoli wrote that his goal for the month is to try to remember what happens in the former chapters of the book he is reading.

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In Marcus Vallina's third-grade class, students help each other attain goals on a blog board, where students place their successes and daily reading goals. Fellow classmates can then read their classmates' blogs about what reading techniques work and then respond with suggestions. Mr. Vallina can also blog to the students with suggestions on how to become better readers. In a recent blog, Jake De Paoli wrote that his goal for the month is to try to remember what happens in the former chapters of the book he is reading.

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Mr. Vallina explained that the key to a student becoming a better reader is setting goals. "The student has to know what he or she needs to work on," he stated. "In order to accomplish these goals, the students are given strategy cards with exercises to help them look, hear, see, and feel the details of a story. "Down the road, these students will be deeper thinkers and more proficient," Mr. Donohue noted.

**Book of the Month Club Celebrates Reading, Cultivates Love of Literacy**

At each of the District's elementary schools, students are reaping the benefits of a Book of the Month Club. Now in its third year at Briarcliff Elementary, Principal Jane Ruthkowski chooses a book to share with her students at the beginning of each month. She then wraps the book and presents one copy to each class throughout the school. "It is my monthly gift of literacy to the students," said Ms. Ruthkowski.

The books are chosen to correlate with the school's character education program or a unit of study. Principals at all three elementary schools have noticed that the program has become a motivator for children to read. "The love of literacy is so important," said Ms. Ruthkowski. "This program not only brings our three elementary schools together, but reinforces important lessons with our students."

At Wading River Elementary School, Principal Stephen Donohue takes the monthly title to each of the classrooms. His choice of title coincides with the two other elementary schools and is usually linked to a monthly theme. "We use this opportunity to get the students excited about reading," Mr. Donohue stated.

At Miller Avenue Elementary School Principal Lou Parrinello said the students get very excited when the Book of the Month announcement is made over the loudspeaker. One student from each class is called to his office to take the "special gift" to his or her classroom, and he makes sure to read the book to each class.

"This is an activity the students look forward to each month," Mr. Parrinello explained. "The students here love to read!"

**Books and Blankets**

Approximately 180 pajama-clad readers congregated in the Miller Avenue library to participate in the annual Books and Blankets Read-In, organized by the PTA. Students snuggled up with a blanket and a book with friends and special grownups to engage in the adventures of their favorite characters. Midway through the program, the students received a preview reading of November's book of the month, The Secret of Saying Thanks, read by School Principal Louis Parrinello, and departed with their own book light.

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**M Miller Avenue students, L-R, Page Fabian (Grade 4), Tristan Costello (Grade 5), and Kendall Plushau (Grade 4) display the District's Book of the Month choice.**

**Abigail Wing holds a binder that contains her daily reading goals.**

**Jake DePaoli and teacher Marcus Vallina point out a reading goal on the classroom's blogging board.**

**Miller Avenue students Anna Baumeler and Terrence Nolan.**
At Wading River Elementary School, students recently discovered the history of New York State through an interactive “Curriculum Alive” presentation during their gym classes. Students learned about state traditions, customs, and geography, among other topics, while rotating to a variety of stations set up in the gymnasium. At one center, students could trek through the Adirondack Mountains, while at another station, they could “fish” for brook trout, the official fish of New York State. Students also tested themselves on state trivia through a hands-on matching game.

The special unit was sponsored by the Wading River PTA and presented by Cliff and Pat Heinze, retired physical education teachers from the Smithtown School District.

Math consultant Cornelius DeGroot works with math teachers on accelerated math principles.

Curriculum Comes “Alive” at Wading River

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The special unit was sponsored by the Wading River PTA and presented by Cliff and Pat Heinze, retired physical education teachers from the Smithtown School District.

Students of the Month

The high school administration would like to congratulate the following students for their selection as Students of the Month for October and November.

Kristopher Barr – English
Kathryn Birkmire – Math
Jeremy Buro – Science
Carlynn Gostic – Social Studies
Audrey Kelly – English
Jared Lambert – English

Wheveline Orvil – French
Megan Safranek – Technology
Elizabeth Sietzle – Social Studies
Zachary Sperling – Health
Eric Steiger – Technology
Rachel Szymanski – Spanish

This is a Public Service Announcement!

Along with the Eastern Suffolk BOCES TV and Film class, six high school students volunteered to develop a Public Service Announcement (PSA) regarding the Social Host Law, which was aired on Channel 12, Bravo, Food Network, MTV, VH1, AMC, and ESPN this fall. Kyle Barr, Chirag Raparia, Gary Hauck, Kim Giacalone, Dan Hauser, and Tyler Yaskanich (not pictured) helped to write the script and will again volunteer their skills to collaborate on another commercial, entitled, “How Not Every Teenager Drinks.”
Wildcat Pause Editors Win Prestigious National Award

Wildcat Pause co-editors Abbott Brant and Samantha Lacovara were first-place and honorable mention winners, respectively, in the Gold Circle Award competition sponsored by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

The Gold Circle Awards recognize the superior writing by student journalists throughout the country. The judges are experienced journalists and educators familiar with the context surrounding student journalism currently produced in schools and colleges.

Abbott’s first-place entry in the competition’s single-subject news/feature package category was entitled “Teens and the media: What’s the impact?” It appeared in the school newspaper’s April 2010 issue. Abbott is currently a high school senior and plans to study journalism and communications in college.

Samantha’s December 2009 editorial, entitled “Holiday magic may fade, but importance does not,” also received an honorable mention in the competition.

The Wildcat Pause is published monthly and covers issues and events relevant to the school community. The students responsible for reporting, editing and production are enrolled in the high school’s Journalism 1-4 classes, taught by teacher Jean Branna.

Seniors Realize Early Action

It is always an exciting time for seniors who are awaiting an acceptance from the college or university for which they applied. For 13 students, the wait is over. The following students have received early action and early decision acceptances from higher educational institutions along the eastern seaboard. To date, the Shoreham-Wading River High School guidance department has processed approximately 1,000 applications to colleges and universities throughout the nation.

Chynna Anuszewski - Early Action - SUNY Oneonta
Chelsea Carlen - Early Action - SUNY Cobleskill and SUNY Delhi
Sarah Franck - Early Decision - Bucknell University
Megan Harney - Early Decision - Swarthmore College
Sydney Koeppl - Early Action - Sacred Heart University
Cali Lawey - Early Action - Northeastern University
Caitlyn Miao - Early Action - Siena College
Jennifer Moldovan - Early Action - Mount Saint Mary University
Roanoke College, High Point University, Queens University of Charlotte
University of Scranton, York College
Michael Peraza - Early Decision - Cornell University
Joseph Skonupski - Early Decision - Manhattan College
Paige Tilton - Early Decision - High Point University
Danielle Kennedy - Early Action - University of Tampa
Jaclyn Bentivegna - Early Decision - Sacred Heart University

Students who have received early action and early decision acceptances to colleges and universities are pictured with guidance counselors Sal Rosato, Lucy Eschbach, and Alicia Mirabella.

H S Thespians Perform “Fiddler on the Roof”

The administration would like to congratulate the cast and crew of the high school musical, Fiddler on the Roof. The cast, under the direction of drama advisor Mary Hygom, performed three outstanding shows for the community at the beginning of November and brought the audience to its feet during each performance of this popular favorite.

Fiddler on the Roof is the story about Tevye, his five daughters, and his attempts to maintain his Jewish traditions while outside influences encroach upon the life of his family. He must cope with the strong-willed actions and choices of his three oldest daughters’ choices of husbands and the edict of the tsar that evicts Jews from his village.

Not only was the audience drawn in by the students’ superb acting abilities, they were pleasantly surprised by the vocal performances of the actors who sang favorite melodies, including “Matchmaker” and “If I Were a Rich Man.”
Briarcliff Students Get Fit with “Sweaty Pennies”

Students at Briarcliff Elementary School, under the guidance of physical education teacher Deirdre Gilroy, collected “Sweaty Pennies” during the month of November. The “Sweaty Penny” initiative was a month-long physical activity challenge, with the goal of children exercising for a minimum of 15 minutes each day. Briarcliff students were provided with a “sneaker log” on which they recorded their physical activity. For every 15 minutes of exercise, the students were asked to collect one penny to be brought to school. All money collected is being used to purchase food baskets for local families in need.

Friday Fun at Briarcliff Elementary

Every Friday morning, students at Briarcliff Elementary School begin their school day by uniting for a special sing-along. During this time, students not only share songs, but take time to learn about important initiatives happening within the school. During their sing-along in mid-November, students learned all about Briarcliff’s upcoming Math-a-Thon, through which students seek donations for math problems they complete, all to benefit St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital.

In addition, during each sing-along, students who have been “bucket fillers” are recognized (based on the concept that was introduced to Briarcliff last school year). From cooking a meal for someone who is ill to paying a nice compliment to a friend, students are continuing to “fill buckets” for others.

“The sing-alongs have become a great addition to our school. They give us an opportunity to unite on a weekly basis and celebrate our Briarcliff family,” Principal Jane Ruthkowski stated.

Learning How to Handle Money

It is never too early to learn about handling money, and eighth-grade Home and Careers students at Prodell Middle School are on their way to becoming fiscally responsible adults.

TD Bank representatives Lori Gulotta and Tiffany Cataldo recently visited the students and delivered a banking unit about checking account balances, debit and credit cards, and the advantages to opening bank accounts. The students learned how to write a check and use simple math to calculate their checking account and savings account balances. Each of the students then received a blank register and worked collectively with the representatives to learn how to record transactions. Ms. Gulotta and Ms. Cataldo also touched on the basics of debit and credit cards and transaction fees.

“When students go to college, they often think of the debit card as free money, not realizing that they are responsible for overdraft fees and transaction fees,” Home and Careers teacher Gina Ristau stated. “By offering this class, the students learn to be accountable for their money and the advantages to saving at an early age.”

After the class, each of the students received a gift bag from TD Bank and a ten-dollar coupon to set up a savings account. Their newly found knowledge was reinforced with an exercise from Ms. Ristau. Each student was given a fake account with an opening balance of $200. Laminated cards illustrated debit and credit amounts for imaginary transactions, in which the students were asked to balance a check register.

Did You Know…?

The photography of high school students Briana Coffaro, Taylor Huglemeyer, Lindsey Malone, Samantha Merzbacher, and Audrey Ricca have been selected to appear nationwide on cream soda bottles produced by Jones Soda Company. The product can be purchased at local Stop and Shop grocery stores.
The District’s student-athletes concluded the fall sports season with outstanding accomplishments both on the field and in the classroom. Seven of the nine teams were named New York State Scholar-Athlete Teams, having obtained a 90 percent or better cumulative academic average. In addition, the Boys Cross-Country team captured the League 6 Championship, while the Field Hockey team won the title of Small Schools’ Champs, County Champs, and Division III Champs. Field hockey player Debi-Michelle Jantzen reached a personal best, as she was chosen as one of 16 athletes in the country to make the National Field Hockey Coaches Association All-American Team. Here is a list of the athletes’ many individual accomplishments.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY: Scholar-Athlete Team and League 6 Champs
Tyler Keys - All-League and All-Conference
John Lee - All-League, All-Conference, All-County, All-State, Jim Smith Invitational winner/placed 1st out of 122 runners, PAL Championship winner/1st out of 207 runners, Qualified for State Fed. Meet, Qualified for NYS team/placed 15th
Evan Purdy - All-Conference
John Lee - All-League, All-Conference, and All-County

GIRLS CROSS-COUNTRY: Scholar-Athlete Team
Rose Andrews - All-League (3rd team)
Audrey Kelly - All-League (2nd team) and All-Conference
Laura Lee - All-League (1st team)
Codi Mullin - All-League (3rd team)
Danielle Opatowsky - All-League (3rd team)
Kaitlyn Suarez - All-League (3rd team)

FIELD HOCKEY: Scholar-Athlete Team, Division III Champs, Small Schools’ Champs and County Champs
Debi-Michelle Jantzen - All-County, All-Long Island Tournament Team, National Field Hockey Coaches Association All-American Team (1 of 16 athletes in the country)
Cali Lavey - All-County
Demi Lopez - All-Division
Stephanie Sorrentino - All-County
Kaitlyn Taddeo - All-County and All-Long Island Tournament Team
Kristen Torres - All-Division

FOOTBALL:
Joseph Longo - All-League

BOYS SOCCER: Scholar-Athlete Team
Kylie Davis - Academic All-County
Chris Frick - All-Conference
C.J. Higgins - All-League
Gerald Logan - All-League
Will Miller - All-Conference
Davud Oliveira - All-League

GIRLS SOCCER:
Marissa Mertens - All-League (3rd team)
Shannon McDonnell - All-League
Victoria Creta - All-League
Shannon McDonnell - All-League
Kaitlyn O’Toole - Suffolk County Girls Soccer Coaches Association

GIRLS TENNIS:
All-County, All-Long Island Tournament Team, Suffolk Zone Winners:
All-League
Kari Quinn - All-County

BOYS VOLLEYBALL:
Andrew Bentivegna - All-County
Dan Clark - All-Division Honorable Mention
Kevin Galligan - All-League and All-Tournament Team
M. Michael Clancy - All-League
Kevin Galligan - All-League and All-Tournament Team
M. Michael Clancy - All-League
M. Michael Clancy - All-League
Jeff Steinbrecher - All-Tournament Team and All-League

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL:
Emma Houlahan - All-League and All-Conference
Chelsea Hughes - All-League
Madeline Mass - All-League Honorable Mention
Christina Pagano - All-League Honorable Mention

Suffolk Zone Winners: Connor Droste and Kathrin Menaschen

Students Sign National Letters of Intent
The District would like to congratulate Marissa Kluber and Demi Lopez, who signed National Letters of Intent to play college sports next fall. Marissa will play both field hockey and lacrosse at Mercy College, while Demi Lopez is headed to Sacred Heart University to play lacrosse. Both students were joined by their parents and coaches in the high school library during the signing.

Marissa Kluber (center) is pictured with (l-r) lacrosse coach Mary Bergman, parents Christine and Terrence Kluber, and field hockey coach Leah Calligeros.

Demi Lopez (center) is pictured with parents Mike and Janine Lopez and lacrosse coach Robert Viitahkis (standing).

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