Dear Members of the Clark School Community,

The months of May and June have been extremely rewarding ones for our schools. Amidst the busyness of closing the school year, we have gotten to see a great number of our students receive awards and scholarships. These honors are obviously a result of their superior work in the classroom and/or on the field/stage. With that being said, the generosity of this great community of ours is what makes all of this possible. This outpouring that we are most appreciative of was beyond evident at the Senior Awards Ceremony on the evening of June 12. I must say that this event is one of my personal favorites of the entire school year due to the warmth and joy that can be clearly felt throughout the room. ALJ Valedictorian Eric Velasquez and Salutatorian Krista Ginesi are deserving of a special acknowledgment for their extraordinary academic achievements. Although these honors are noteworthy in and of themselves, they give our students a definitive advantage as they embark on their post-secondary careers. Some of our noteworthy ALJ alumni were honored at the fourth annual Hall of Fame induction ceremony in May. This honor is a most prestigious one that links members of the ALJ family over an extended amount of years.

The student bodies of our district’s schools displayed their facility in the field of fine and performing arts in a variety of ways this spring. For instance, our school plays/musicals were of the highest quality. In addition, the school concerts and district-wide Band Bonanza proved to be highly effective means of showcasing our students’ musical talents while the various art shows were equally impressive. In fact, our ALJ honors music students performed at a fundraiser dinner for the Morris-Union Jointure Commission (MUJC) in mid-May. Since that time, I have received numerous compliments regarding their superiority. Sabrina Parin (grade 12) and Jenna Wiese (grade 9) of ALJ along with Gabriela Mintz (grade 8) of CHK had their artwork selected for the Union County Teen Arts Touring Exhibit. This selection is a tribute to these three artists of ours along with the teachers who helped guide them.

Our athletic teams showed an equal level of greatness this past winter and spring. The ALJ boys’ basketball team, for example, received the honor of being named Sky Division Champions and the ALJ lacrosse team were Kimber Division Champions for the third consecutive year. In addition, the ALJ girls’ basketball team were Mountain Division Champions, our cheerleaders were Group Two State Champions, and Junior Christopher Fuschetto was a District Thirteen Champion Wrestler with One Hundred Career Wins. Our student athletes, along with other student and staff volunteers, are to be commended for assisting with our Special Olympics program that was held at our Recreation Center on Saturday mornings in April and May. At the middle school level, a number of our teachers and administrators were highlighted at the annual New Jersey Association for Middle Level Education (NJAMLE) Conference in March at Kean University. NJAMLE is the same group that re-designated CHK as a School to Watch this past winter. Most recently, our Teachers of the Year, i.e., Katrina Poskay (ALJ), Victoria Sasso (CHK), Laura Venezio (FKH), Jennifer Guenther (VRS), and Megan Consiglio (CPA), were recognized at Kean through a breakfast ceremony. They, along with our Educational Services Professionals of the Year, i.e., June Curti (ALJ), Joan Zawacki (CHK), Donna Kircher (FKH), Lorraine Haney (VRS), and Lauren Ceccarelli (CPA), deserve an extra special thanks for all of their good, hard work with our students.

With the school year closing and summer break on the horizon, I would like to send my sincere thanks to all of you for the support of our district’s schools and programs. Speaking of summer, this most enjoyable season was informally introduced through the informative Memorial Day programs that Mr. William Duffy, Former Clark Police Department Captain, delivered for our students. Mr. Duffy has dedicated much of his life to researching our local heroes that gave their lives in defense of our great country. His accompanying display was housed in the ALJ front foyer for some weeks after these programs. We have an immense gratitude for all of our veterans because it is due to them that we are able to enjoy our freedom as Americans. In these summer weeks that lie ahead, please make certain to take the time needed to recharge with family and friends. I hope to get to see many of you around and about and am looking forward to us all getting to reconnect in the fall.

Yours sincerely,
Edward Grande
ALJ Student Artwork Featured at Kean University

The artwork of two Arthur L. Johnson high school students, Morgana Haub and Emily Dumansky, was featured as part of the I Learn America exhibit at Kean University. According to the I Learn America Initiative, “These novice and accomplished creators seek to foster community conversations that raise public awareness, breakdown stereotypes, and celebrate diversity.”

Students watched the I Learn America documentary in their Holocaust and Genocide Studies class. The documentary follows students attending the International School in Brooklyn as they not only adjust to school but also adjust to life in America. After watching the film, students were encouraged to create a series of images that allowed them to discuss their experiences of identity, inclusion, and diversity.

“Looking at the value of art and the process of its creation is a terrific way to allow students to showcase thoughts and ideas that words simply may not do justice. Looking at historical examples of artwork from the Holocaust to allowing students to create their own images was a unique way to not only promote discussion, but also reflection on historical and current events,” stated teacher, Mr. Franklin Stebbins.

Their work was displayed at the Human Rights Institute Gallery at Kean University in May.

ALJ Students View Performance of The Children of Willesden Lane

Both students in the Holocaust and Genocide Studies course at Arthur L. Johnson High School, and those in band attended a performance of The Children of Willesden Lane by Mona Golabek, concert pianist, author, and daughter of novel subject Lisa Jura. This performance took place at Kean University on March 2. Throughout the school year, students have been working with this novel, which describes one young woman’s journey from the streets of Vienna through the Kindertransport through the Royal Academy of Music. The Kindertransport is a wonderful example of how upstanders saved thousands of Jewish children by sending them to families throughout Britain. The novel has been read not only to raise awareness of the rescue efforts but to show the value of music in coping with personal tragedy. Dana Evelina, student, commented, “It really touched me when she played Claire De Lune because I'm learning that song on piano and I now look at it a whole different way; it holds a different meaning now.” Teacher Franklin Stebbins stated, “Bringing music into the lessons allowed students to connect to the literature through a strategy other than just reading. The partnership with Kean and Facing History and Ourselves has provided students with terrific opportunities to connect to programs in and out of the classroom.” Through a grant opportunity and collaboration with the Holocaust Resource Center and Facing History and Ourselves, funding was made possible for transportation, tickets for the performance, and 60 copies of The Children of Willesden Lane.

Clark Board of Education Receives Heart Grant

The Clark Board of Education was awarded a 2016 HEART (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) Grant from the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs to digitize and upload 11 Arthur L. Johnson yearbooks to the Clark Archives Website. The ultimate goal of this project is to preserve educational and community history in a format that will not succumb to age and nature. The goal is also to continue to strengthen the bonds that yearbooks create between peers, community members, and cross-generational relationships such as father and son or grandmother and granddaughter. The Clark Archives website is a collaboration among our community with support from Mayor Sal Bonaccorso, Clark Town Council, Clark Benefit Fund, Clark Board of Education, and Clark Public Library.

http://www.digifind-it.com/clark/home.php
ALJ Winter Athletic Awards

The following student athletes were honored at the 2017 Winter Athletic Awards Program, which was held on March 27, 2017:

Winter Student Athlete Award:
Eric Velasquez.

The G.P.A. Challenge Award:
Girls’ Track and Field Team with a G.P.A. of 3.8247:
Gianna Randazza, Samantha Wagner, Grace Duffy,
Lindsey Hofschneider, Jessica Knowles, Yasmine Torres,
Katelyn Falke, Kayla Kowalenko, Natalya Torres,
Kylee Zawacki, Emma Hilton, Julia Kalynchuk,
Shailynn Rapp, and Taylor Turek.

The Best Teammate Award:
Boys’ Basketball – Ray Williamson
Girls Basketball – Amy Wysocki
Wrestling – Tyler Bohm
Ice Hockey – Mike Adamowitz
Boys’ Winter Track & Field – Alex Hampp
Girls’ Winter Track & Field – Lyndsey Hofschneider
Swimming – Cameron Hund
Bowling – Evandro Galli
and Cheerleading – Alexa Cutro.

The MVPs:
Boys’ Basketball – George Visconti Jr.
Girls Basketball – Sabrina Parin
Wrestling – Christopher Fuschetto
Ice Hockey – Karol Wieczorek
Boys’ Winter Track & Field – Eric Velasquez
Girls’ Winter Track & Field – Gianna Randazza
Swimming – Matthew Gallo
Bowling – Andrew Beach
and Cheerleading – Athena Petronella.

Arthur L. Johnson Hosts Career Day

On Friday, March 10, Arthur L. Johnson’s Guidance Department hosted Career Day. More than 50 professionals hosted tables in the gymnasium while students in grades nine through twelve were able to ask questions and gather information. Among the participants were representatives from the fields of pharmacy, electrical engineering, chemistry, public safety, cosmetology, physical therapy, hospitality, and media. The event also included many ALJ alumni who were delighted to share their career pathways at their former school.

Students came equipped with a list of attendants and recommended questions to ask. Those 16 and older were especially encouraged to inquire about summer internship and/or job opportunities as a number of the organizations represented are local. Many of the participants brought props and giveaways for students. Tables were grouped together by industry: STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), Law/Public Safety, Health/Human Services, Business, Trades/Personal Services, and Creative/Media. ALJ offers an internship program for seniors and several contacts were made for this program through the Career Fair.

Among the participants at ALJ’s Career Day were ALJ alums Dr. Catherine Goncalves, Physical Therapist, and Anthony Poyssick, graduate student of Kinesiology and Applied Physiology at Rutgers University.

Representing the field of Law and Public Safety at the ALJ Career Fair were Officer Weber and Detective Soos of the Clark Police Department.
CALC Reads to Elementary Students

On Tuesday, April 18th, and Wednesday, April 19th, members of the Crusader Athletic Leadership Council participated in the Clark School District’s “2nd and 7 Reading Program” at the Valley Road and Frank K. Henley Elementary Schools. C.A.L.C. members went into the four classrooms and read children’s books to each 2nd grade classroom. C.A.L.C. members Tyler Bohm, Michael Brennan, Jen Casalino, Cristina Casimiro, Jon Duff, Krista Ginesi, Cameron Hund, Gianna Randazza, Brandon Rapp, Deserae Sequeira, Zach Thornton, George Visconti Jr., and Greg Zukowski all took turns reading and discussing various children’s books with the students.

The 2nd and 7 Tackling Illiteracy program includes reading to 2nd graders in classrooms all over the country and providing each of those children with a visit from a positive role model and a new book to take home. C.A.L.C. students read *The Hog Mollies and Sloop the Silver Snake* to the 2nd graders, a children’s book that discussed numerous topics, including bully prevention.

According to Gus Kalikas, Athletic Director at Arthur L. Johnson High School, “The C.A.L.C. was thrilled to be able to assist with the Clark School District’s 2nd and 7 Reading program at both VRS and FKH. It was fun watching the High School Student Athletes as they interacted with the young children, and I think both groups not only enjoyed the experience, but learned a lot while doing it.”

The C.A.L.C. would like to thank Mr. Beltramba, Mrs. Bergin, and all of the Clark School District’s 2nd Grade Teachers for being so welcoming.

---

Carl H. Kumpf School Redesignated as a "School to Watch"

The New Jersey Schools to Watch® Program recognizes excellence in middle level education. High-performing schools maximize student growth, support learning for all students, and prepare students for success in high school, college, and careers.

The New Jersey Schools to Watch® Program is designed to help schools take a critical look at the needs of middle-level students, defined as students in grades 6, 7, and 8. Carl H. Kumpf Middle School became the sixth STW school in New Jersey in 2014. It is a three-year recognition. After the third year, STW schools must re-apply to retain its title and show tremendous growth in the below areas.

**STRONG ACADEMICS:** High-performing schools are academically excellent. They challenge all students and offer high-quality classes and expect high-quality results.

**RESPECT FOR STUDENT NEEDS AND INTERESTS:** Schools to Watch® are sensitive to the unique needs and developmental challenges of early adolescence. They encourage the success of all students educationally and socially.

**EQUAL ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION:** Schools to Watch® continuously improve teaching and learning and provide students with the support they need to succeed.

**SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT:** High-performing schools have a sense of purpose that drives every facet of practice and decision making. Families, students, and the community partner with school staff to continuously make the school the best it can be.

In 2016-17, the CHK staff worked diligently over the summer filling out the daunting application. A visit occurred in the fall of 2016 where the STW committee was thrilled with the new programs and positive change Carl H. Kumpf is exploring. STW is a research-based program that seeks schools that are continuously improving student achievement. It requires schools to engage in significant reflection about how they operate, the vision for their work, and the outcomes of programs and services. Schools that meet specific criteria are identified as New Jersey Schools to Watch® and will become part of a state and national network. We are extremely proud of the CHK school community for this re-designation. A banner ceremony will be held in September to kick-off our 2017 school year.
Earth Day Hehnly

To celebrate Earth day, students and teachers of Frank K Hehnly walked to school on Friday, April 21st. The group trudged through the rain in a conscious effort to do their part to cut down on a portion the greenhouse gases each of us generate going about our daily lives. Upon arriving at school, members of the Recycling Crusaders were proud to unveil their “buddy bench” at a ceremony attended by Union County Freeholder Sergio Granados. The buddy bench will be placed on the school playground to foster inclusion and combat loneliness during play times and was paid for via funds raised by the Recycling Crusaders, who sold recycling t-shirts and raffled eco-friendly baskets. The group also encourages daily school recycling and participated in Terracycle and the Tom’s of Maine Recycling challenge throughout the year.

Following the walk and ceremony, the Recycling Crusaders were treated to a field trip to the Union County Department of Public Works, organized by Freeholder Granados and FKH teachers Nina Conner and AnnMarie Estevez. The workshop, given by the Head of the Department of Public Works, Mr. Graziano and members of the Recycling Bureau, featured hands on activities. The students also learned about recycling labels, the utility of recycled materials and even met the Department MVP Kirby, the robotic recycling trash can. The students and teachers left with souvenirs and fresh ideas for inspiring recycling in our communities for years to come.

The pictures show FKH students walking to school, the unveiling ceremony, and the field trip to the Union County Public Works Facility.

Autism Awareness Day at Preschool

On Thursday, April 6, 2017, the Clark Preschool “Lit It Up Blue” by wearing blue in celebration of the Clark School District’s Autism Awareness Day. 1 in 88 American children are diagnosed with Autism. Autism Awareness Day highlights the growing need, concern, and education about autism and issues within the Autism community.

Mrs. Moscarella’s and Mrs. Koepfler’s classes from Valley Road School and Mrs. Bitran’s class from Franklin K. Henley School joined the Preschool for numerous events throughout the morning to raise awareness for autism. Some of these events were bowling, basketball, soccer, a scooter and ice cream relay, a coloring craft, ball toss, obstacle course, parachute, and crafting a puzzle piece necklace. The morning concluded with the students “blowing bubbles.” The “blowing of bubbles” symbolized the spread of hope, awareness, and acceptance for those who have autism. The students who participated in the event seemed to have a smile on their face from start to finish.

Spring Athletic Awards

The 2017 Spring Student Athlete award recipient was Shannon Brogan.

The 2017 Spring Seasonal G.P.A. Challenge was the Girls’ Track & Field Team with a G.P.A. of 3.762. Casey Dohn, Meaghan Gallagher, Samantha Wagner, Payton Wiese, Kellie Bonaccorso, Grace Duffy, Lindsey Hofschneider, Samantha Ianco, Jessica Knowles, Yasmine Torres, Paige Kelly, Kayla Kowalenko, Kylee Zawacki, Emma Hilton, Julia Kalynchuk, Shailynn Rapp, Taylor Turek and Jenna Wiese.

The Best Teammate Award winners were:

Baseball – Michael Sot
Golf – Jin Moran
Lacrosse – Dylan Bohm
Softball – Shannon Brogan
Tennis – Anthony Bogash
Boys’ Spring Track & Field – Cameron Hund
Girls’ Spring Track & Field – Lindsey Hofschneider.

The Team Most Valuable Players were:

Baseball – Joe Turek
Golf – Erin Peters
Lacrosse – Josh Hill
Softball – Gianna Randazza
Tennis – Matthew Gallo
Boys’ Spring Track & Field – Eric Velasquez
Girls’ Spring Track & Field – Kellie Bonaccorso.
The Clark Board of Education celebrated the Governor’s Educators and Educational Service Professionals of the Year as well as the 2016 New Jersey Exemplary Elementary Educators during the Board’s Showcase of Success. The Governor’s Educator/Service Professional of the Year Program recognizes “educational innovation, student achievement, the rewards of teaching, and important services outside the classroom environment that lead to student success.” The New Jersey Exemplary Educators program highlights outstanding educators who demonstrate “strong knowledge and skills, an inspiring presence, a rating of at least effective on their most recent final evaluation, and a positive impact on students, colleagues, and the school community.”

The district is extremely proud of the accomplishments of these professionals. Superintendent Edward Grande commented, “These teachers and support professionals are great examples of the impact that an educator can have on a student’s life.”

In photo from left to right: Mallory Applebaum – Elementary School Assistant Principal, Patricia Peitz – Valley Road School Teacher Exemplary Educator of the Year, Nancy Heller – Valley Road School Teacher Exemplary Educator of the Year, Joseph Beltramba – Valley Road School Principal

Not pictured Sarah Badillo – Guidance Counselor Exemplary Educator of the Year

Hehnly Students Study Solar System

Looking at a projected image of the Solar System on their Smart Board, the students in Mrs. Hayes’ class were asked to create a Solar System mural which included details and artwork, while collaborating with each other. The image was divided into 20 pieces and each student was responsible for drawing their section, yet making sure all lines, planets and even the colors were precisely linked with their neighboring pieces. The objective was to create an image of the solar system including planets, their orbits, smaller stars, and the sun. As is evidenced in the photo, the students met their goal with great effort, patience, and pride.
Arthur L. Johnson High School’s *Dracula* Garners 8 Top Nominations from Montclair State University’s Theatre Program

**Anthony Whitman Brings Home Award for Outstanding Performance by a Supporting Actor in a Drama**

Arthur L. Johnson’s spectacular *Dracula*, directed by Mr. Peter Nevargic, was recently recognized by Montclair State University’s Theatre Program garnering 8 top nominations. Montclair’s Theatre Night Awards recognizes excellence in the production of high school and middle school straight plays throughout New Jersey. Their goal is to promote and advance the commitment to high quality productions in New Jersey’s secondary schools. The awards honor the accomplishments of individual achievement of both students and educators in the areas of performance, direction, design, and technical theatre, as well as outstanding productions in the following genres: Drama, Comedy, Classical, and New Work. Over seventy middle schools and high schools submit an application for evaluation and participate in Theatre Night Awards. Schools submit DVDs of their productions for evaluation by panels of Montclair State University graduate students, undergraduate theatre majors and professors as well as industry professionals. The nominees and recipients of the Theatre Night Awards are selected through a rigorous, multi-stage adjudication process. Arthur L. Johnson received nominations in the following categories:

- The Peter Filichia Award for Pushing the Envelope in Academic Theatre, Mr. Peter Nevargic, Arthur L. Johnson English Teacher and Theatre Director with nomination
- Outstanding Performance by a Supporting Actor in a Drama, Anthony Whitman with nomination- WINNER
- Outstanding Performance by a Supporting Actress in a Drama, Madison Law with nomination
- Outstanding Production of a Drama
- Outstanding Overall Production of a High School Play
- Outstanding Achievement in Lighting Design
- Outstanding Achievement in Sound Design
- Outstanding Achievement in Stage Combat

The *Dracula* Ensemble Cast and Director, Mr. Peter Nevargic.

In commemoration of Earth Day and Arbor Day this year, the Clark Preschool planted a Flowering Dogwood Tree donated by Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders in Cooperation with the Union County Shade Tree Advisory Board. Among those in attendance at the Clark Recreation Center, included Ralph Bernardo, Recreation Director, Adam Lambert, and the Preschool staff and children.
Hehnly Fifth Grader Wins County-Wide Poetry Contest

In honor of Arbor Day, the Union County Freeholders, along with the Union County Shade Tree Advisory Board, held a contest asking students in Union County to write an original poem honoring trees. Hehnly fifth grader Reese Passuth won first place for her poem “Seasons of Change.”

“I used a tree on the side of my house as my inspiration for the poem,” explained Passuth. “During Hurricane Sandy, I thought that we might lose this tree and I wanted to use it as the subject of my poem as a way of saying that I am glad it's still here.”

Over 50 students county-wide participated in the contest that was open to students in grades 4-8. Winners were selected by a group of volunteer judges. The award presentation was at the Union County Freeholders Chambers in Elizabeth, NJ.

Reese Passuth, fifth grade student at the Frank K. Hehnly School in Clark, won first place for her poem “Seasons of Change” as part of the Union County Freeholder’s Arbor Day poetry contest.

Linden Firefighter and Dad Visits Preschool

Mr. Kaverick, a Linden firefighter visited the Preschool for community helper month for a fire safety presentation. Mr. Kaverick described his role as a firefighter and as a dad of our preschoolers, Cashlyn and Brett. The fire safety presentation included an overview on fire prevention, what to do in case of a fire, activating 911, identifying smoke alarms, fire drills, firefighters as community helpers, equipment, and gear. He reinforced the fire safety ABC’s:

- A-is for Alarm that lets you know there’s a fire in your home.
- B-is for Beep, Beep, Beep, the sound the alarm makes.
- C-is for Calm - calmly get outside when the smoke alarm sounds.

At the end of the presentation Firefighter Barry welcomed the children to examine and try on his gear.

Publishing Party

The students in Mrs. Mary Jo Baker’s 3rd grade class had a publishing party on April 24th. The theme of their writing composition was “My Hero”. The audience was comprised of heroes who were moms, dads, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents and cousins. After the presentation, the audience was treated to “Wind Beneath My Wings”, which was dedicated to all the heroes!
Students at Carl H. Kumpf Middle School Host “Unique Creatures”

Carl H. Kumpf Middle School students in Ms. Marlena Sundo’s science class have recently been discussing animal habitats around the world. As a culminating activity, students got to see and interact with a variety of uncommon animals from Unique Creatures, an exotic animals company located in Bergen County. Larry, from Unique Creatures, brought eight of his animals to visit the students. The visiting animals included a kinkajou, skunk, giant centipede, chicken, boa, iguana, toad, and tortoise. Special thanks to Larry for providing such a detailed and entertaining presentation.

Select 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science students with Larry and Brom the boa constrictor.

Memorial Day Celebrations

On Friday, May 26, both Valley Road School and Frank K Hehnly School in Clark, celebrated Memorial Day with their annual assembly programs. Local veterans visited the schools and shared stories about their service. Mrs. Mary Arrowood, first grade teacher at Hehnly, spoke to the students in both elementary schools about the importance of taking some time this weekend to remember the people who have served our country so that we can enjoy our lives. Then, Mr. William Duffy shared a power point presentation about the 21 fallen heroes who were Clark residents. Student council members lead the schools in the flag salute and read Memorial Day poems. Additional veterans in attendance included, Mr. Robert Kastner, Mr. Frank Tarentino and Mr. Jeff Bartkus. Superintendent, Mr. Edward Grande and two Board of Education members, Mr. Steve Donkersloot and Mr. Henry Varriano, also came to the schools to honor the veterans. At the conclusion of the assembly programs, each student received a poppy, donated by local veterans. These flowers are important symbols of remembrance for military members. As the students exited the assembly programs they thanked the veterans for their service.

Valley Second Graders Prepare for Surgery

Two second grade classes at Valley Road School spent an afternoon doing “surgery” on their Scholastic News magazines. After learning about non-fiction text features, Mrs. Cahill and Mrs. Petela’s classes hunted through the magazines to find specific features. The students dressed up as surgeons, which added another level of fun to the activity. At the conclusion of the afternoon, the students were extremely proud that they had such an important job.

Pictured are second graders preparing for surgery.
Valley Road Students Day of Design

VRS students took part in the Global Day of Design on May 2. The Global Day of Design focuses on using STEM education and the Design Thinking process in schools. The goal of this event is to inspire a transformation in schools around the world to incorporate design into an every day practice with our students. Students sparked their imagination, critical thinking, creativity and learned to collaborate while they participated in numerous Design Challenges. Over 450 schools and 40,000 students worldwide participated in this event last year. For more information go to http://globaldayofdesign.com/.

Two ALJ Seniors Read to Valley Road Students

Third graders in Caitlin McHugh’s class at Valley Road School, got a special digital treat on Friday, March 3, from Arthur L. Johnson seniors Alison Bretz and Julia Sapia to celebrate Read Across America Day. The seniors chose stories from the famous Dr. Seuss collection to celebrate reading and show how important it is to them. Arthur L. Johnson library media specialist, Ms. Carla Celso, and Valley Road School third grade teacher Caitlin McHugh brought students face to face using Google Hangouts. Bretz and Sapia, aspiring teachers of the Tomorrow’s Teachers program at ALJ were able to read two stories to the students of the third-grade class in real time. “It was awesome seeing the kid’s reactions to the books,” Alison Bretz said, “they were so excited!” Read Across America is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place on Dr. Seuss’s birthday that brings together kids, teens and, books. “It was amazing to see technology bring together the high school and elementary students,” Carla Celso said, “especially to celebrate reading, something so important, no matter what your age.”

Kumpf’s Victoria Sasso Selected as Union County Educator of the Year

Kumpf Middle School has many dedicated, amazing, and dynamic teachers. This year, Victoria Sasso was named the Kumpf Teacher of the Year. To add to this honor, Ms. Sasso has now been named the County Teacher of the Year as well. Ms. Sasso is among the twenty-one teachers in all of New Jersey to receive this honor this year. Ms. Sasso, along with the other County winners, will be honored at a Ceremony in August.

Students in Mrs. Caplette’s fifth grade class at Hehnly School celebrated the achievements of many famous historical women. Students researched the person they were assigned and decorated cereal boxes with facts, quotes, timelines, and pictures of their famous women. Each student presented their cereal box report to the class.
Spotlight on ALJ’s Finest

Valedictorian Eric Velasquez

Eric will be attending Princeton University, with an anticipated major in Economics. He plans to either work in government or pursue social work in Argentina. Eric was also accepted to Yale University, University of Chicago, Rutgers University and The College of New Jersey. During his time at ALJ, Eric reinvigorated the Chess Club, competed in almost every competition for the Chemistry, Physics I and Physics II Science League Teams, was the Vice President of the Science National Honors Society and a member of the National Honor Society. As well, he served a term as the president of the History Club and was a peer leader. Eric was a four-year varsity letter winner in both winter and spring track. He was captain his senior year, chosen as the Scholar-Athlete of the winter season, was a two time MVP, and has been selected to represent Arthur L. Johnson as the Union County Scholar Athlete. Eric feels that the Advanced Placement courses at ALJ provided him with the opportunity to “engage in deeper levels of thinking and explore fields that interest [him] which will serve as a tremendous advantage for [him] next fall when [he] adjusts to a rigorous college schedule.” Eric has thoroughly enjoyed the time he has spent with his track teammates and coaches, calling the experience a “privilege.”

Salutatorian Krista Ginesi

Krista will be attending Marist College, where she will major in Fashion Merchandising. She was also accepted to the University of Delaware, Fordham University, Drexel University and the University of Rhode Island. During her four years at ALJ, Krista was a member of the Key Club, the Crusader Athletic Leadership Council, Peer Leadership, the Spanish Honor Society, the Science Honor Society, and the National Honor Society. She was also a four-year member of Johnson cheerleading, earning a gold letter and a Group 2 State Championship. Krista credits ALJ with providing her opportunities to become independent and with teaching her the time management skills she needed to balance her activities with her schoolwork. She will most remember that “all the teachers at ALJ always went out of their way to help and [she] will miss that dedicated support system.”

Standout Students and Crusaders -Selected Monthly for the 2016-2017 School Year

**September 2016**
Student: Eric Velasquez (Princeton)
Crusader: Hart Tecson (Stevens)

**October 2016**
Student: Krista Ginesi (Marist)
Crusader: Deserea Sequeira (St. Joseph’s- Brooklyn)

**November 2016**
Student: Janelle Pyar (Moravian)
Crusader: Gina Ferdinandi (SUNY-Brockport)

**December 2016**
Student: Nicole Drapinski (U. of Maryland)
Crusader: Gina Pace (Sacred Heart University)

**January 2017**
Student: David Piskadlo (Rutgers)
Crusader: Michael Brennan (Syracuse)

**February 2017**
Student: Jennifer Casalino (Villanova)
Crusader: Gianna Randazza (Boston College)

**March 2017**
Student: Elizabeth Archer (NJIT)
Crusader: Matthew Gallo (Mt. St. Mary College)

**April 2017**
Student: Julia Melao (TCNJ)
Crusader: Mia Lancellotti (Penn State)

**May 2017**
Student: Natalie Carnovale (NJIT)
Crusader: Michael Sot (TCNJ)

**June 2017**
Student: Morgana Haub (Boston University)
Crusader: Brett Roessle (Hofstra University)
Valley Road School Mystery Night

Valley Road School recently held a "Mystery Reading Night" when students in grades 4 and 5 tried to figure out a mystery after watching teachers put on a skit. Students had to seek evidence from the skit and use physical clues that were provided in one of two "mystery rooms". This was similar to seeking textual evidence when they read.

It was a night of campfires, mystery and teamwork as the third, fourth and fifth graders put their minds together to solve what must have happened that night at the campsite. Each group of students was given a map and story, read by Mrs. Peitz. After the story was finished they were guided to two separate rooms. Each room had clues to what had happened that night at the campsite. The students worked together to collect clues and used their minds as they walked around a mock campfire and campsite. The smiles and excitement lit up the room as the students all realized who the aliens were. It was a fun night full of mystery, laughter, and an appreciation for stories and reading.

Valley Road Second and Third Graders Celebrate Dr. Seuss’s Birthday with STEM

Students in Miss Kane’s and Ms. Krick’s second and third grade classes incorporated a STEM project to help celebrate Read Across America Day. STEM education is a curriculum-based method of educating students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The students had a STEM Challenge in which they had to Stack the Cat’s Hat. After reading Dr. Seuss’s Book The Cat in the Hat, the second and third graders worked together using cups to create Dr. Seuss’s hat. They made predictions and began building. They were introduced to new building materials as the activity progressed and were asked to analyze the effectiveness of those materials.

The class also incorporated mathematics by measuring their creations in both centimeters and inches. The second and third graders worked well together, using their creativity and problem-solving skills.

Pictured from left to right. Olivia O’Callahan, Ava Filion, Avery Sailsbury and Devyn Dudas.