

# **BERLIN HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER**

**Vol.2, No.5**

**June 2016**



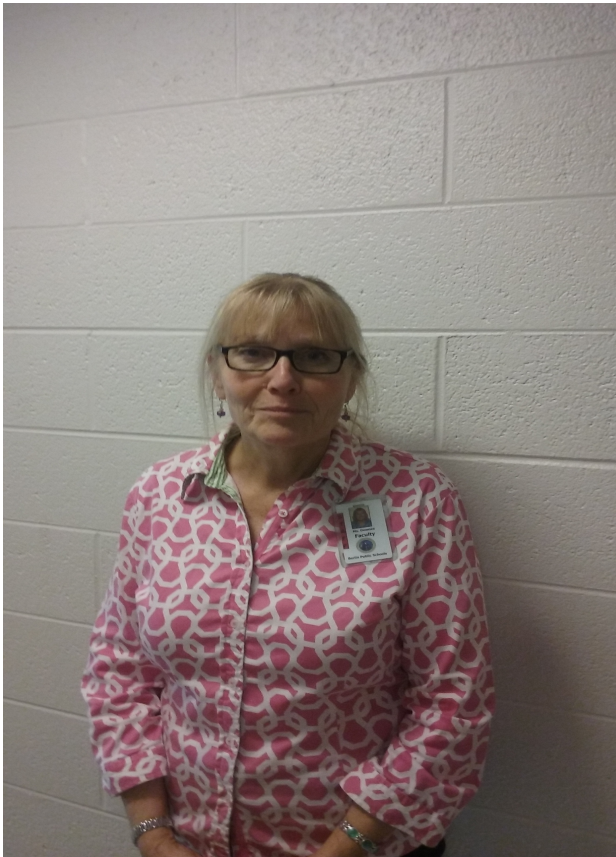
**Composed and published by and for the Berlin High School community.**

**Come to the library next year, and be a part of the team.**

## **Ms Downes, Teacher of the Year By Staff**

Ms. Casey Downes, of the Special Education Department, has been selected as Berlin High's Teacher of the Year for 2016.

Ms. Downes has been at the high school since 1995. Her responsibilities involve transitions from the high school to the world of work. She spends time in the community setting up and monitoring students' work experiences. When in the school building, Ms. Downes teaches students about life skills, including appropriate social skills and workplace etiquette. Ms. Downes also coordinates with outside agencies to assist students in their moves to life and work after high school, so her workday involves a significant amount of traveling through the Berlin community.



This honor brings with it Ms. Downe's entry into the field for the entire Berlin school district's Teacher of the Year competition, followed by Connecticut Teacher of the Year process, possibly even on to the national

been chosen as Connecticut winners – Mr. David Bosso and Ms. Carol Virostek.

## **Graduation News**

The Berlin High school class of 1016 will graduate on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Rejoice! The ceremony will be held at CCSU's Welte Hall. Graduates should arrive by 12:00, in order to prepare for the 1:30 program. Each graduate will be provided with five tickets for family and friends. More tickets may be requested from the BHS office staff. Seniors have been asked to dress appropriately, which means no shorts, or sneakers, and collared shirts for the boys.

The evening of graduation, senior parents will host an all-night graduation party, open and free to all graduates. Creating this party has been a year-long effort by the parents, with lots of community involvement and contributions.

Party-goers will stay all night to enjoy friends, special activities, and plentiful gifts. For sure, a good time will be had by all.





## Day of Silence By Haley Stites

On Friday, May 27th, the Berlin High School GSA+ club will be commemorating the annual Day of Silence. The nationwide date took place during the BHS spring break, so we have rescheduled it so that we can participate as a school.

The Day of Silence is a chance to stand up against anti-LGBT+ slurs, bullying, harassment, and oppression. By not speaking for a day, students demonstrate the silence LGBT+ youth are often trapped in when facing harassment in school, and serve as a visual reminder to not be a silent bystander in situations of bullying. By signing up to participate in the Day of Silence, you make a commitment to not speak from the start of the school day until we break the silence as a group in the B gym at one o'clock. This day is not a joke or an excuse to get out of school assignments. In cases of emergency, if a teacher asks you a question, or if you have to give an oral presentation, you must speak.

We have been lucky enough to get the Stonewall Speakers to visit our school on May 27th as well. The Stonewall Speakers are an amazing group who tell personal stories about coming out and experiences within the community. The assembly will take place in the B gym at one o'clock. GSA club members got to see the Stonewall Speakers on their fieldtrip to the True Colors convention, and immediately wanted to invite them to speak at BHS. Only students who sign up to participate in Day of Silence may attend the assembly, so make sure to see a GSA club member in the lobby before school starts to put your name on the list!

The Day of Silence is an important opportunity to make BHS a safe space for everyone. It allows LGBT+ people within the building to see and feel the support in our community. This is a chance to truly demonstrate respect for all people. Nine out of ten LGBT+ students have experienced some kind of bullying, and many skip school out of fear for personal safety. This is a great chance to take a stand on a serious issue.

Please join us in taking a vow of silence. Speak out against anti-LGBT+ bullying by not speaking for a day.



*We represent those who are too afraid  
to represent themselves*

## BHS class Recognized By Ms. Downes

Each day, the students and staff in Ms. Downes' class enjoy keeping up with current events by watching CNN Student News on television. Ms. Bergren has, for a year, been submitting their class for recognition as regular viewers. Friday, May 20, Ms. Bergren's efforts finally paid off, and the BHS class was recognized on the national broadcast.



## B.H.S. Top Honors

It's official. The 2016 Valedictorian is Michelle Grieco. The 2016 Salutatorian is Nicole Flaherty. They will be recognized at graduation on June 19. Congratulations to both these scholars for their acumen and perseverance through the past four years. And best wishes for a bright future to them and to all their classmates as they leave Berlin High for the next stage.

## Capstone Completion

124 graduating seniors have successfully presented their Capstone projects. The presentations took place before rooms full of family and friends on May 11, 18, and 19. The newly open to the sky first floor corridor was the site for Capstoners' table displays, while the adjacent, newly opened classrooms were the venue for associated presentations.

Capstone topics, each chosen and researched by the students, ranged from "Improvements in Fire-Fighting Training Methods" to "Effects of Aging on the Brain."

Ms. Mayette and Ms. Nelson, who are the Capstone Coordinators, are very happy with this year's results, and credit the senior advisors for their ongoing positive contributions to the students' efforts. Ms. Niro advised on technical aspects of the presentations, while Mr. Scannell assisted with the research needed.


This is the second year of full Capstone implementation, and an even more successful operation is expected for next year

## Even More Honors

Each year, each CAS-CIAC member high school selects a single boy and girl to receive to Scholar Athlete Award. The winners of this prestigious award have excelled in both academics and athletics through their high school careers, while acting as exemplars of integrity and self-discipline.

The 2016 Scholar Athletes from Berlin High are Nicole Flaherty, who competed in indoor and outdoor track, and Evan Cornwall, whose teams were soccer, basketball, and outdoor track.

The Berlin winners, along with 346 other Connecticut Scholar athletes were feted at a recent ceremony and dinner at the Aqua Turf. The speaker at the dinner was Ms. Bonnie Edmonson, Trinity College and U.S. Olympic team coach.



THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

PROVIDING EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT PROMOTE EXCELLENCE IN THE EDUCATION OF ALL CHILDREN.

VISIT THE CAS WEBSITE  
<http://cas.casciac.org>

30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, CT 06410 - [ CAS Contact Info ]

## Departures

Mr. McNulty and Ms. Romano have completed their time at 139 Patterson Way, and have chosen to retire at the end of the year. Farewell and thank you to them both

## **Berlin Schools Student Artists at Museum**

### **By Ms. Miller**

Students whose work was chosen for the 2015-2016 District Art Exhibition at the lovely New Britain Museum of American Art were acknowledged this year with purple wristbands. Inscribed on one side of the bands was "K-12 Art Show 2015-16" and on the other, "Berlin Supports the Arts," as a token of appreciation and thanks for all their hard work and dedication to their artistic practice. Students are encouraged to wear them especially at next year's annual "Celebration of the Arts" event:) Congratulations to ALL of our student artists!

Also, 7 artworks had gold seals on them the night of the opening. This year, we asked Administration to select a student work for their building. Each Principal chose a work from their school to be displayed in their building, and the Superintendent and Assist Superintendent chose one piece k-12 to be displayed at the Board of Education as part of an artistic legacy for years to come! These students will be recognized formally at a Board of Ed meeting. Gold seal selections are: District-Wide Superintendent's Choice – Nathaniel Baretta (Grade 12), Pen/Ink & Watercolor, "Spooky House", Mrs. Kathy Miller Assistant Superintendent's Choice – Matthew Bacon (Grade 9), Book Sculpture, "Ice Cold", Ms. Janet Galasso School Specific Griswold Principal's Choice - Hanna Bednarczyk (Grade 1), Oil Pastel Sunflower Still Life, "Starticle", Ms. Nicole Artemisia Hubbard Principal's Choice - Monika Burbula (Grade 1), Crayon Resist, "Flower Power", Mrs. Mary Smeallie Willard Principal's Choice - Marissa Modifica, (Grade 5), Sharpie and Watercolor, "One Point Perspective Cityscape", Mrs. Kristin Vernon McGee

Principal's Choice - Anna Sarrazin, (Grade 8), Graphite, "Self-Portrait 'Caring', " Mr. David Holland Berlin High School Choice - Kaileen Langlois, (Grade 12), Charcoal, "Brooklyn Bridge."

Gesture drawings were done and offered to the viewers as a memento of the event. An artist trading card table was also there for students to create small works of art to exchange with others. An artist trading card table was also there for students to create small works of art to exchange with others.

## **AP Sciences & the Universe**

### **By M. Rigas**

Here at Berlin High School, our teachers and students alike are actively striving to challenge and better themselves and their capacity for learning. This is especially important in science and science education: regardless of the paths students choose to take as upperclassmen and eventually after high school, fostering a passion for the way the world works is beneficial for everyone and can be applied to any career. Simply put by Haley Hauptfeld, grade 11 AP/ECE Biology and current Chemistry participant, "Everything that can possibly exist in the universe is explained, or attempted to be explained, by science... if you understand chemistry, you understand the universe. That is pretty amazing". That's pretty amazing, indeed. Even if chemistry isn't your forte, pushing yourself to take challenging courses in fields that interest you is an invaluable trait to have, and there's a huge array of options to choose from, including AP/ECE Environmental Science, AP/ECE Physics, and other topics of varying difficulty. There is something for everyone.

On Wednesday, May 4th, AP/ECE

Chemistry students went on a field trip to CCSU's planetarium. On this trip, they explored all sorts of questions and worked together to develop answers and ideas concerning space. They watched a breathtaking presentation on stars and constellations in the sky, and learned about possibilities of life on other planets. As a sentient entity in space, it's hard not to be curious about whether or not we're sharing our space with other life forms. In addition to content, the students also learned problem-solving processes on the trip. They cooperated together to determine what supplies they would need to survive on the moon until they could find safety. Vanessa Reimer, another grade 11 AP/ECE Chemistry student, describes her experiences and what she's gained from the trip as such: "This field trip emphasized the importance of a science education because the knowledge I've gained throughout the year helped me understand the planetarium concepts even further. It applies to everything, and can help any career path or topic. Although AP/ECE courses are rigorous, the course material forces everyone to learn and have a deep understanding of new topics".

While taking AP/ECE courses is by no means mandatory and maybe not for everybody, it is certainly encouraged because the skills you gain throughout the year- through labs, through lectures, through field trips- will last a lifetime, and learning cooperation and communication early on is favorable when it comes to your career and your future. So why not give another science course a try? Even if you don't take a college level class, stepping out of your boundaries and taking another elective can only help you.



## **Carnage and Caution**

### **By Jordan Rivera**

Blood, exposed bones, gruesomely mangled bodies. That, and more, was presented to BHS juniors and seniors at the Prom Promise assembly convened in the school parking lot on May 20.



All the school's upperclassmen were witnesses to a horrific car crash during Advisory period, Friday morning. Local EMT's, and an ambulance, and BHS members of local volunteer fire companies were called to the scene. Employing the "Jaws of Life," the accident car was taken apart to extricate the seriously wounded driver, who was then examined for injuries and loaded onto an ambulance, hospital-bound.

Throughout this shocking exhibition, a loud speakered voice explained that the students involved in the wreck had been drinking, and this scene was the sad result. The voice suggested that, before imbibing, texting, or getting otherwise impaired, students should reflect on the possible consequences, and act responsibly.

Prom Promise generally is scheduled for the late spring, to coincide with proms and graduations, events which, unfortunately, sometimes are marked by tragic and avoidable accidents.



## **BHS ECE UConn Drawing: By Ms. Miller**

Berlin High School's University of Connecticut, Early College Experience, Art 1030-814 Drawing I students and their work were celebrated at Berlin Peck Library with an exclusive exhibition. The opening reception was on Tuesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:45 and ran through till Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> for viewing. The gallery hours were Monday through Thursday from 10 - 8, Friday 10 - 5 and Saturdays, 10 - 4. We hope you were able to get to the show.



## **Why Take an AP Course? By Karlena Tyburski**

For freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors alike, college is just around the corner. Although it is often difficult for high school students to truly understand what college will be like, taking honors and AP classes is the best way to prepare oneself for it. Honors and AP (Advanced Placement) classes are the most accurate representations of college classes offered at the high school level. A thorough understanding of a wide array of topics makes the heavy work load worth every second of studying. Ask any honors or AP student: the

information one learns in these accelerated classes really is helpful in the professional world. For example, honors and AP student Tess Atkinson says, "These classes can teach you certain core values, such as time management and how to prevent procrastination, but they can also teach you background knowledge that could come in handy for a major or future career" (Atkinson).

On May 9<sup>th</sup> of last week, the current students enrolled in AP Chemistry had the opportunity to visit Alexion Pharmaceuticals in New Haven, CT on a field trip. They were able to talk to real scientists about how prescription drugs for rare diseases are designed, made, and manufactured. They even got to tour various science labs to witness prescription drugs being made right before their eyes. Throughout their day at the pharmaceutical company, the students were able to make connections to the chemistry and biology concepts they had learned in previous AP classes. As AP student Amber Sagan documents, "Having previously taken AP Biology gave me the ability to understand what the employees were talking about related to both chemistry and biology" (Sagan). Taking AP classes taught her and every student on the field trip information that was relevant to actual professions in science. The material covered in honors and AP classes is the same material college students are learning and professionals are using in the real-world.

It is important for every student to challenge herself by taking difficult classes in high school, because life after high school is unavoidably challenging. The only way to be ready for this challenge is to practice in an environment that is most representative of these challenges. Accelerated classes, especially those that are AP, are exact replicas of college-level

courses; there is no better way to prepare yourself for college than to take these classes. Although they may be challenging, the rigor of AP classes teaches students valuable lessons that most people do not have the opportunity to learn until they are in college. Steven Bordonaro, a student currently enrolled in several AP and honors classes, writes, “ AP and Honors classes require a degree of independent thinking and application to real world problems that other classes don’t offer”(Bordonaro). Accelerated classes are a privilege available to any student willing to put in the

