

March News from the United Teachers of Island Trees

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Throughout the month of March, the teachers at Island Trees have been making learning memorable and fun for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Between competitions, fundraisers, clubs, and field trips, students have made memories that will last a lifetime.

At Michael F. Stokes Elementary School, many students have been participating in an after school Dance Club. Second grade students are getting to learn a new style of dance each week. The club advisors begin each meeting with a fun warm-up and stretch before learning moves from the genres of ballet, jazz, hip-hop and more! It is an exciting way for students to try something new with their friends from various classes. Island Trees High School Principal, Dr. Sventoraitis, invited fourth grade students to attend this year's high school musical. The high school students did a wonderful job acting out the story of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. The actors, actresses, and orchestra were phenomenal. Many fourth grade students stated that they felt like they were at a Broadway production. Fourth graders also had the opportunity to visit the Ronald McDonald House of New Hyde Park. The students were able to participate in a guided tour of the facility. In addition, they were able to see the Mets Room that David Wright designed, and a bedroom where families stay. The students also saw Nora's closet (a room filled with dress up clothes), the game room, meditation room, and the gymnasium. The fourth graders from Michael F. Stokes donated over 600 pre-packaged snacks to the families that stay at the Ronald McDonald House. Students wrote inspiring positive messages on labels that were adhered to each snack, and learned that no act of kindness is too small to brighten someone else's day.

The teachers and students at Island Trees Memorial Middle School had an eventful month! The Science Enrichment 8A students have officially completed and submitted their mission folders to eCybermission! Since last October, students have been pouring their hearts and minds into scientific exploration, facing challenges head-on and embracing the joy of discovery. Their projects touch on issues close to their hearts, such as environmental conservation and community health. This shows their deep sense of empathy and responsibility for the world around them. Ms. Rosenking & Ms. Goldstein are so proud of their students' growth and passion for scientific exploration! On Saturday, March 9th, Island Trees students competed in the Science Olympiad competition at Kellenberg High School. These teams worked very hard building models and studying scientific topics to prepare for this day. Two of our students, Mateo Calabro and Vito Gruposso placed 2nd out of 31 teams in their building event. We could not be more proud of the time and effort put in by all of our students.

Fifth grade students have been learning about the value of being financially responsible through Hofstra's Money & Me program. Once a week, each class gains insight on how to balance a checkbook, earn interest on their money and avoid financial disaster! The eight week course is sure to leave a lasting impression on all and hopefully, a few reminders of common "cents." On Thursday, March 21st all students in grades 1-5 will be participating in the First in Math Regional Tournament. Students are presented with grade-appropriate math challenges to highlight their mathematical fluency. Last year, we had three first grade students qualify for the statewide championship in Albany. We are hopeful our students will perform well again. On March 14th, the math department celebrated Pi Day! Many of our teachers got pied in the face by students who memorized the most digits of π !

The World Language Club participated in the "Pulsera Project." The Pulsera Project is a nonprofit organization that educates, empowers, and connects Central American artisans with students through the sale of colorful hand woven bracelets, or "pulseras" in Spanish. With the money raised from pulsera sales they fund a wide range of social impact programs that empower people. Club members helped sell pulseras during their lunch periods and were able to raise \$600. The BRAVE club made and sold bracelets that resembled "The Little Words Project" bracelets to promote empowerment and confidence. The club raised \$450 that will go towards a scholarship in memory of Colleen Truono. On March 21 st, 6th grade students in Mrs. Triolo's class partnered up with Ms. Alicia Berner's BOCES students to share their love of reading. The students each had the opportunity to partner up and read the book, *Wilma Unlimited*, by Kathleen Krull to celebrate Women's History Month. All students were enthusiastic, and it was clear that they inspired one another. They each gave the experience a 10/10, and look forward to reading together in the near future!

This past fall, students in fifth through eighth grade participated in the National History Bee online qualifying exam through their social studies classes. Based on their scores, many have qualified to move onto the regional competition against local students in our area before moving onto the National History Bee later this spring. This year, Island Trees has been given the exciting opportunity to host the regional competition on Saturday, April 13th. Students in Mrs. Cifarelli's ELA/ENL class submitted literature for the annual Reflections art contest. One of our 5th grade students, Gurmilan Singh, was recognized as a winner in the area of literature. One of our 6th grade students, Giridhar Chopra was recognized as a winner in the area of visual arts. The Reading Department is hosting 5th and 6th grade student-led book clubs after school. Students are given the opportunity to meet twice a week to read choice novels based on their interests along with their peers. Students are collaborating through text based conversations and various activities related to reading.

At Island Trees High School, the Advanced Bake Shop students competed in a brownie plating competition. Teachers throughout the district had the opportunity to vote for the best presented brownie. The Real World living students practiced their communication skills and visited an Assisted Living facility where they organized games for the residents. They also practiced their communication skills and created and recorded an Elevator Pitch. The Robotics Team competed at the SBPLI Regional at Hofstra University on March 21, 22 and 23rd. Students have spent over 200 hours building, wiring, and programming the robot to compete in this year's competition: Crescendo. At Hofstra, the students competed against 49 other schools from Long Island and across the world from countries such as Canada, France and Taipei.

The sports teams at Island Trees High School have been working hard this Spring. The Varsity Baseball and Softball team, under the direction of Ms. Travis, Mr. Messina, and Mr. Valiando, will be holding a "Strike Out Autism" baseball and softball game on Saturday, April 20th at Island Trees High School. Proceeds will go directly to the Nassau/Suffolk Autism Society. In addition, the team will be running a special needs baseball and softball clinic for all students in kindergarten through twelfth grade in Island Trees. The clinic will take place on Saturday, April 20th from 10-11 A.M. at Island Trees High School Baseball Field. Finally, the Varsity Softball and Baseball team will be participating in the ICanBike program run by the Island Trees SEPTA. We wish the Varsity Baseball Team will be participating in the Stars Baseball Challenger Baseball Clinic on Sunday, April 28th.

We look forward to sharing all the wonderful fundraisers, events and activities that the teachers at Island Trees have planned for students throughout the remainder of the 2023-2024 academic school year.



Second Grade Dance Club at Stokes.