**Island Trees School District News: Students Show Spirit, Creativity, and Service Across the Campus**

Submitted By: Brittany Laht

Island Trees Middle School and High School students have been busy this fall, showcasing their creativity, teamwork, and commitment to causes both local and global.

At Island Trees Middle School, Mrs. Benjamin’s 8th grade Enrichment Classes participated in the “Fright Club” writing contest, submitting 100-word horror stories. The students had a great time creating spooky tales, and although the competition is fierce, they are optimistic about their chances for one of the top prizes. Regardless of the outcome, the experience was a fun and engaging opportunity to tap into their imagination.

Meanwhile, the Future Engineers Club, guided by Mrs. Flecha and Mrs. Scalia, is hard at work preparing project proposals for the prestigious NASA TechRise Challenge. The students are excited about the possibility of launching a high-altitude balloon into the stratosphere, an incredible opportunity to explore cutting-edge technology and space science.

On October 2nd and October 10th, Ms. Ferone’s class led an awareness campaign for Breast Cancer Awareness Month by selling bracelets and pins. The students raised money for Metavivor, a metastatic breast cancer research organization. It was a heartwarming initiative that allowed students to contribute to an important cause.

The 5th grade classes also enjoyed a unique experience to kick off their biography unit: a movie outing to see *Piece By Piece*, a documentary about renowned musician Pharrell Williams. The film highlighted his determination and passion, reinforcing key lessons about resilience and the power of perseverance.

At Island Trees High School, the excitement continued as the ITHS Marching Band, Varsity Kickline, and the newly-formed Color Guard performed at the Newsday Marching Band Festival at Mitchel Field on October 23rd. Their dedication to their craft earned them an enthusiastic reception at this high-profile event.

On October 11th, the school’s Drama students attended Adelphi University’s “A Day With the Arts”, where they had the opportunity to experience a variety of performances and workshops, further cultivating their talents and passion for the performing arts.

Community Service also remains a core focus at Island Trees. In November, the National Honor Society and Key Club organized a school-wide community service project, inviting students to create greeting cards for Cards for Hospitalized Kids. These heartfelt cards will be distributed to children in hospitals, bringing a little joy to their difficult days. This ongoing partnership with the organization continues to be a meaningful way for students to give back.

In the world of technology, AP Computer Science students welcomed guest speakers from CodeHS to discuss careers in programming and the growing importance of computer science in the modern world. The AP students have also begun their annual tradition of teaching coding concepts to younger students at Sparke and Stokes schools. During Computer Science Education Week (December 9th-13th), they will create pre-recorded lessons to teach younger students the basics of sequencing, iterations, and selections, helping to inspire the next generation of programmers.

Lastly, the Class of 2027 held a bake sale in October and raised $75 for the Breast Cancer Research Foundation, demonstrating their commitment to making a difference in the fight against breast cancer.

As the 2024-2025 academic school year continues, the Island Trees community will continue to shine with creativity, collaboration, and compassion, providing students with opportunities to learn, grow, and give back.