A monthly, online newsletter to keep our MHS family and residents informed February 2019



Nominations now being taken for Distinguished Alumni Award 2019

Mundelein High School is looking for nominations for the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Awards ceremony to be held Saturday, Sept. 21 which is also Homecoming Weekend. Nominations will be accepted through Sunday, April 14.

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Dr. Kevin Myers presents a plaque to Randall Schenk, Class of 2004.

The award was first instituted in 2017 when the District decided to begin honoring a group of alumni each year who are contributing to different aspects of society. In an opening speech at the first ceremony, Dr. Kevin Myers, superintendent, said that "It is gratifying to see how many outstanding things our graduates have done with their Mundelein High School education."

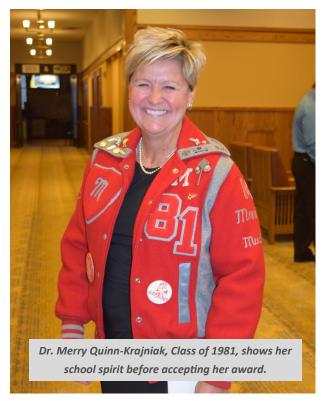
To be eligible for the award, nominees must have graduated at least 10 years prior to the ceremony. Anyone who nominates a graduate needs to have basic information about the nominee including address, phone number and email. Nominees should have excelled in a chosen profession, community service, civic involvement, etc. There is no one set criteria as to what "excelled" includes but the selection committee looks for evi-

dence of our core values of equity, growth and collaboration.

A nomination form must be completed for a nominee to be considered. Anyone may nominate and alumni may also nominate themselves. In addition, deceased alumni may also be nominated.

To nominate a graduate for the award, please complete the form by following this link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd6dhhgQZ3TdkxYYLOt-cH3MYd5HE-UKVv4YD4ZHeW8s ykHA/viewform

"What better way to celebrate the positive contributions of our alumni than to spend an evening together reminiscing about the "good ole days' of high school and also sharing what has been happening since receiving that diploma?" Myers said.



Robotics Team competes in California; meets up with MHS alum at Google



The MHS Robotics Team flew to California Feb. 15 to compete in a Signature Event, VEX Robotics Tournament, hosted by Google. The competition is a nationwide, invitation-only event, reserved for those who have won tournaments and/or received distinguished awards in their respective states. MHS Robotics was the only team to represent Illinois. The five MHS participants included Steffen Brown, Raymond Hogea, Brendon Valeroso, Edward Hogea and Matthew Chen.

"Though we were unable to participate in the final elimination bracket, our

team was able to compete and score in every match throughout the day," said Manny Aldana, Robotics Team advisor. "It

was a great opportunity for our students and they remain fired up for state competition this weekend," he said.

Aside from the competition, the team also had the chance to spend some time with an MHS graduate, Peter Kowalczyk, Class of 2012, who works at Google. He took the group on a tour of the Google Campus in Mountain View. "During the tour, he was able to share stories about the time when he was in Robotics at MHS gave ad-



vice to our students about how to create a path leading to a career that is both lucrative and fulfilling," Aldana said.

Kowalczyk works as a software engineer at Google. His department combines programming, security and cryptography to make logging in to Google easier and safer for its users. In high school and college, he joined groups that provided an outlet for his specific interests.

"At MHS I joined Robotics Club. It was awesome to write some code that made an air-powered kicker push out at the press of a joystick button," he explained, "or to make the robot follow a line on the floor all on its own."

The team placed 28th of 56 teams at state competition. Pretty good for a first year, all-freshman team!

New football coach hired for 2019-2020

The Mundelein High School District 120 Board of Education has approved the hiring of Vince DeFrancesco as head varsity football coach and wellness teacher beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. DeFrancesco will replace Head Coach Larry Calhoun who stepped down from that role at the close of the 2018 football season.

DeFrancesco is currently the head varsity football coach at Lincoln Park High School in Chicago where he has been since 2014. His overall record is 28 wins, 10 losses and five consecutive IHSA 7A playoffs. In addition, the football program went from about 30 to more than 120 student athletes over the past four years.

In June of 2017 he also took on the role of athletic director for Lincoln Park. During his career there he coached varsity football, varsity boys lacrosse and freshman boys basketball. He also taught physical education, health, physical fitness, aquatics and driver safety. During that time he gradually moved into leadership positions and was a member of the physical education leadership team. The new MHS coach also taught driver education courses at Lane Tech College Prep High School.

"We're excited to have Vince join our athletic program.

He is dedicated and enthusiastic about coaching and teaching and creates an atmosphere of hard work and selfless commitment," said Troy Parola, MHS athletic director. "We're looking forward to working with our newest Mustang,!"

DeFrancesco
earned a
bachelor's of
science degree from
Southern Illinois University
with a major
in physical
education. He
received a



master's degree in Teaching English Learners from the American College of Education with a 3.9 GPA on a 4.0 scale.

"I'm extremely excited to begin my journey as a Mustang," DeFrancesco said. "It has been a lifelong dream to coach at a school that shares the same vision for success: community involvement, high academic standards and athletic performance. As an alum of Vernon Hills High School and former student-athlete of the North Suburban Conference, I know how much pride Mundelein has in their Mustangs," he explained.

DeFrancesco continued, "On the field I look forward to building a football program that promotes lifelong relationships. Through hard work we will overcome adversity and by overcoming adversity, we will create a culture that breeds success. I truly feel it is our time," he concluded.

Go Mustangs!

MHS alumna named a Fulbright Scholar



Adina Cianciotto, MHS
Class of 2014 and a
2018 graduate of
Northwestern University, was recently named
a Fulbright Scholar and
will work and study
abroad.

Cianciotto is already doing research in cognitive neuroscience in

several laboratories and is published in the Journal of Cognition and Neuroethics. She worked at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab (formerly the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago), the most prestigious rehabilitation hospital in the United States and is currently ranked number 1 in US News and World Report. She also won the Outstanding Achievement Award in Korean Language and Culture from Northwestern.

"I am passionate about a neurophysiological approach to elucidate behavior, human thought, and to better under-

stand the underpinnings of neurological and neuropsychiatric disorders," she said of her work.

"Regarding research experience, this is an excellent start to her career," said AP Psychology instructor Dean Petros. "Since cognitive neuroscience is "my thing" academically I can actually say that she makes me jealous of her at some level. Her studies align with my academic interests," he said.

The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 under legislation introduced by then-Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas. The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The Fulbright Program awards approximately 8,000 grants annually. Roughly 1,600 U.S. students, 4,000 foreign students, 1,200 U.S. scholars, and 900 visiting scholars receive awards, in addition to several hundred teachers and professionals. Approximately 370,000 "Fulbrighters" have participated in the Program since its inception in 1946.

Nine students honored as February Mustang Pride Award recipients



In alphabetical order: Madeline Aquino, Julissa Argomanicz-Aparicio, Steffen Brown, Angela David, Susi Nieves, Carly Rand, Bianca Rico, Audrey Schiro, Inez Shelato.