



**MUNDELEIN™
MUSTANGS**

DISTRICT 120 UPDATE

MAY 2020

THE MESSENGER



Dedicated to
academic excellence
for all learners
through the core values
of equity, growth,
and collaboration.

We are MHS.



#mundypride

Honoring the Senior Class of 2020
amid the Covid-19 crisis



What's inside

At Mundelein High School, we are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, supporting our students' particular needs and interests, and developing the skills they need to succeed in life. Our faculty is dedicated to inspiring our students to grow into unique individuals.



In this issue, learn how we...

- ▶ Insure the safety of our students, faculty and staff during the Covid-19 crisis
- ▶ Celebrate our students, staff and alumni success
- ▶ Become inspired by the accomplishments of others
- ▶ Are grateful to our charitable community
- ▶ Celebrate the arts

We are proud of the rich tradition in our community.
#MundyPride



KEVIN MYERS, PHD
DISTRICTS 75/120
SUPERINTENDENT

U.S. News & World Report
2020 Mundelein High School rankings

Best College Prep or Public High School:
#57 of 651

Best Public High School in Illinois:
#85 of 689

Most Diverse Public High School
#82 of 832



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Historic school year comes to a close—

Looking back on the past school year it would be difficult to imagine what a year this has been! We have experienced two major events together: the first year of the Shared Services Model, and of course, the historic pandemic. Each has affected us both individually and collectively; however, we can proudly say "We made it!"

It has been my honor to serve as Superintendent for both District 75 and District 120. What I have witnessed and experienced during the past year has been inspiring. Since the first day of school, our staffs have come together on the opening Institute Day and immediately began to form bonds. We look for ways to work together on a common goal—a top-notch education for all our students, from Pre-K through grade 12.

Under the leadership of building administrators and with cooperative work amongst both staffs, many great educational experiences have been bringing our programs together. While in any major change there are bumps along the way, the atmosphere in our buildings continues to remain positive. I am looking forward to our second combined year together as we continue to provide the best educational experiences possible for all of our students and staff.

And then came the pandemic! Whether you are a new employee or a soon-to-be retiree, a parent or community member, none of us have ever experienced anything like this before. The Stay-at-Home Order placed us in a position where we were challenged with implementing remote learning procedures. The cooperation of the staffs was immediate and thorough, and I have been in awe of how everyone pitched in to make the best of the circumstances.

Continual communication among various groups including school personnel, parents, students, village officials and many more have brought our community together. Special thanks to those who gave so much of their time in distributing food to our families in need and by seeking donations for many critical items.

There has been a lot of disappointment with the loss of spring sports seasons, fine arts performances, activities and events. Even promotion and graduation ceremonies are still being rescheduled well into July. But we are resilient, and we will meet our challenges head-on thanks to all of you. To our seniors who were unable to finish their final semester in person and attend milestone events: our plans and hopes are to celebrate with you soon. Let's also hope we can have a more "normal" summer and come back together in August with a continued resolve to provide the best education possible for all our students.

My sincere gratitude to all of you.

—Kevin Myers, PhD
Districts 75/120 Superintendent

Students and staff stay connected during the Covid-19 crisis

Though our world was turned upside down due to the Covid-19 virus, students and staff work to stay connected in meaningful and engaging ways while our faculty continue to educate students. These unprecedented times have brought out the best in our students, staff and community.

E-Learning began in late March and will continue to the end of the school year. Students and staff alike are making adjustments to our “new normal,” while trying to make the best of this situation. While there was much disappointment in the canceling of the school year, spring athletics, clubs and activities, fine arts, music and theatre performances, prom, award ceremonies, and more, the main focus will always be, the safety and well being of our Mundelein nation.

Plans are ongoing for possible Senior Honors Day, prom and graduation, all dependent on safety recommendations by the government and health officials. Since the shutdown, students and staff have volunteered to help the community with collecting and distributing food and other goods and services. SALT and Student Leadership groups collected funds and donations to help local families with food security. “The Mundy Project” feeds 120 local families through donations collected via www.gofundme.com/f/the-mundy-project.

Our community has also shown their #MundyPride with “Friday Night Lights” and hanging posters in their windows.



THE MHS COMMUNITY LIT UP THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS IN A SHOW OF SOLIDARITY AND #MUNDY PRIDE ON APRIL 17.



VOLUNTEERS ELLA BRANDT AND DAMIA ALI COLLECT DONATIONS FOR THE MUNDY PROJECT FOOD DISTRIBUTION.



FINDING THE FUN IN E-LEARNING, MIA MARSHALL KEEPS COMFORTABLE WHILE GETTING HER SCHOOLWORK DONE.



MOD PIZZA OF VERNON HILLS DONATED 40 PIZZAS TO THE MHS FOOD DONATION PROJECT.



ART TEACHER DAVID MORK CONDUCTS E-LEARNING FROM HIS BACKYARD OFFICE.



COMPUTER VIEW OF AN E-LEARNING “CLASSROOM”

#MundyPride



Mundelein High School is ranked one of the best Illinois public high schools for the second year in a row.

U.S. News and World Report ranked high schools based on their performance in college readiness, college curriculum breadth, math and reading proficiency, math and reading performance and graduation rate.

Read more at www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools



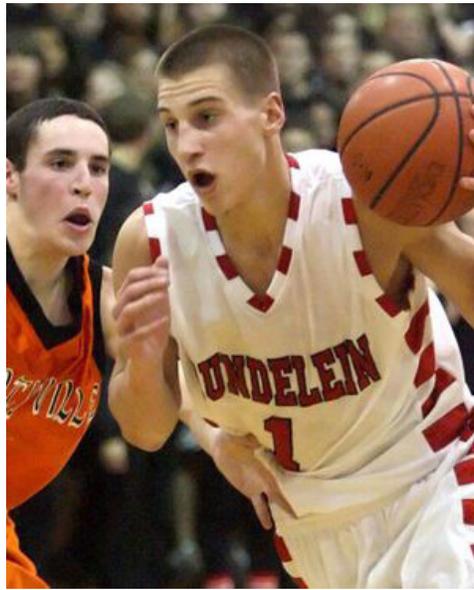
ATHLETICS
HALL OF
FAME



Erin Falconer '15 inducted into Lake County High Schools Sports Hall of Fame

Erin Falconer, Class of 2015, was inducted into the Lake County High Schools Sports Hall of Fame in December. While at MHS she was a member of the State Champion 200 Free Relay Team (2013), Second in State in both the 100 and 200 Free, Third in State 200 Free (2014), Second in State 100 Free (2014), and many other top finishes. She was an All-State and All-American multiple times.

During her years at Auburn University, she was SEC Champion in the 200 Freestyle and 400 Free Relay and an NCAA All-American many times. In 2019 she was fifteenth in the 200 Backstroke, and tenth in the 200 Free. She has multiple Top 10 places in 400 Free Relay, 800 Free Relay and 400 Medley Relay. She left Auburn University as one of the most decorated swimmers in Auburn history.



Ben Brust '10 inducted into Mundelein's Boys Basketball Hall of Fame

Mundelein High School's Athletic Department inducted 2010 graduate and University of Wisconsin basketball standout Ben Brust into the MHS Boys Basketball Hall of Fame during halftime of the Mundelein vs. Waukegan home basketball game on Dec. 13. He also broadcasted his ESPN Radio Show live at MHS that day.

Brust attended John Hersey High School his freshman year in 2006-2007 before transferring to MHS for his remaining three years. As a senior, he averaged 24.6 points, 5.9 rebounds, 5.0 assists and 3.1 steals per game during his senior season, topping the 40-point mark on four occasions. He originally committed to the University of Iowa, but after a coaching change he revisited his options about where to play and ultimately chose the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

At Wisconsin, Brust started in all of the Badgers' games during his time there. In his junior year he led the team in minutes and assist-to-turnover ratio with a 2.0 and led the team in scoring for the Big Ten Conference games. In his senior year, 2013-2014, he averaged 13 points per game, 4.5 rebounds, 1.3 assists and 89 total three-pointers through the team's first 35 games. He also had the second-most three-pointers in a career at Wisconsin.

His senior year at Wisconsin was a big season for Brust. Prior to making it into the Final Four in 2014, the team finished the season 30-8, 12-6 in Big Ten play, and received an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament as a Number 2 Seed in the West region, their sixteenth straight trip to the tournament. The Badgers defeated American and Oregon to advance to the Sweet Sixteen. There, they defeated Baylor and Arizona to advance to the Final Four where they were eliminated by Kentucky.

After graduating from Wisconsin, Brust joined the Milwaukee Bucks for the 2014 NBA Summer League. In October of that year he signed a one-year deal with Pieno Zvaigž�dės of the Lithuanian Basketball League. In 39 Lithuanian League games, Brust averaged 6.0 points and 2.5 rebounds per game. He also averaged 8.1 points, 3.0 rebounds, 1.2 assists and 1.2 steals in 14 Baltic League games.



Currently, Brust is a sportscaster for the Big Ten Network. He also has a radio show on ESPN Madison.



SENIOR LESLIE OSORIO WITH HER PARENTS, FORTINO OSORIO AND CECILIA MERIDA, AND HER COUNSELORS JIMMY KU AND ARACELY LAWRENCE

Leslie Osorio earns full tuition scholarship to Trinity Christian College

Mundelein High School Senior, Leslie Osorio, has earned a full tuition scholarship to Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL. Known as a “first gen” student, Osorio is the first person in her family to attend college. The award was presented this past February, with her parents, counselors and several of her teachers on hand.

Osorio plans to major in nursing and minor in Spanish. During her years at MHS she has been a member of National Honor Society, Link Crew, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Medical Club, Puertas and also a member of her church choir.

Swetha Chandrasekar to conduct cancer research at University of Illinois at Chicago

If universities are able to open their doors this summer, MHS Junior Swetha Chandrasekar will be paired with a faculty research mentor at the University of Illinois at Chicago and work full-time on a cancer research project. Chandrasekar is one of 30 students selected for ResearchHStart which connects cancer researchers at the University of Chicago, Rush University, Northwestern University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Chicago with top tier, science-focused students.

“We are proud of Swetha’s accomplishments and so pleased that her coursework at MHS has prepared her for acceptance to this cutting edge research opportunity,” said Dr. Anthony Kroll, Mundelein High School principal.

Nearly 300 students applied to the program. Chandrasekar is the second Mundelein High School student to be chosen for ResearchHStart. She’s eager to join the research team.

ResearchHStart is a one-year program for high school students. Participants in the program undergo rigorous research training that is complemented by career development, a faculty lecture series and a network of faculty and peer mentors. The program, funded by the National Cancer Institute, culminates in a research symposium for family, friends and members of the scientific community.



“I’m immensely grateful for my experiences at STEM camps and MHS classes that have allowed me to develop

a fascination with biomedicine,” Chandrasekar said. “I’m thrilled to conduct real-world research for the first time, collaborate with peers/mentors, and dive into the realm of oncology. I hope to create advances—big or small—that play a role in bringing our world closer to understanding and treating cancer,” she explained.

Megan Mekinda, assistant director for cancer education at the University of Chicago Medicine’s Comprehensive Cancer Center, looks forward to educating the next generation of cancer clinicians and researchers, “We feel so fortunate to work with talented young people like Swetha. We can’t wait to get them in their labs and engage hands-on in groundbreaking cancer research.”



Elias Photopoulos crowned Mr. Mustang 2020

Fourteen seniors competed for the title of Mr. Mustang during an evening of entertainment this past February. The “Who Dunnit” theme for the night was “The Mystery of the Missing Crown.” Earlier this year, senior girls voted for their favorites to be contestants.

The evening’s events included a dance act involving the entire group, talent acts, the contestants reading a letter to their parents and more. The talent acts included dancers, singers, skits, musicians, comedians and a Taekwondo act.

Congratulation to Mr. Mustang 2020, Elias Photopoulos. A first runner up tie went to Derek Lee and Colin Nacion.

The Mr. Mustang event is a fundraiser for the senior class each year.



CAYETANA GELLER

Sophomore published in DePaul's "Best of Illinois High School Writing" Blue Book

Sophomore Cayetana Geller had her work "My Name" published in the *DePaul Blue Book: Best of Illinois High School Writing 2018-2019*.

Geller originally submitted her work to the MHS literary magazine where it was chosen for publication. English Teacher Laura Garcia then submitted the work to the DePaul publication which went online in January.

"If you know/see Cayetana, please congratulate her on her selection. (And to our staff), thanks for all your work in supporting our young writers and encouraging them to submit to *Voices Magazine*," Garcia said.

Students earn awards in essay contest; American Legion and Auxiliary select students for Boys and Girls State

Mundelein High School students took first and second place among Class III Americanism Essay Contest entries submitted to the Mundelein American Legion Auxiliary and Post. Senior Miles Chubin and junior Daniel Reed wrote responses to the question, "What can I do to unite our country?" Their responses earned first place for Chubin and second for Reed with cash prizes of \$50 and \$25, respectively.

A panel of judges from Mundelein's American Legion Auxiliary #867 and the American Legion Post #867 selected the winners. Chubin's essay is now competing against first place essays from high schools throughout Lake County in the Legion's District 10 region. Results are anticipated in June. The annual essay contest is open to students in grades 3-12 and is co-sponsored by the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of Illinois.

The American Legion Auxiliary and Post also selects students to represent Mundelein each year at Boys and Girls State, mock government programs presented in all 50 states. The Illini events held at Eastern Illinois University unite hundreds of seniors from across the state to learn about the democratic process by offering a model for students to run for a myriad of offices, draft legislation, build coalitions and enforce Constitutional procedures. Ilya Vynnyk and Giselle (Gigi) Prado will represent Mundelein High School at the week-long 2020 convocations provided the event is able to be held, with the hope to be selected as an Illinois "senator" at Boys and Girls Nation in Washington, D.C. In the past three years, two MHS students were selected for this honor.



TOP: MILES CHUBIN, DANIEL REED
BOTTOM: GISELLE (GIGI) PRADO, ILYA VYNNYK

The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary sponsor contests and programs for students from elementary through high school, the most well-known of which is American Legion Baseball which fosters sportsmanship, patriotism and encourages active citizenship.

In addition to the Americanism essay and Boys and Girls State programs, The American Legion sponsors a nationwide oratorical contest. Mundelein High School's senior MacKenzie Stewart placed fourth in state at the Illinois 2020 High School Oratorical Contest.

Many of the programs, established in the 1920s and 1930s, provide scholarship opportunities.



Spanish Magazine Awards

Congratulations to Stephen Douglas and Stephanie Gutierrez!

A student and staff member were honored recently by Reflejos Magazine at the Eighth Annual Reflecting Excellence Awards on Nov. 13. Both honorees were nominated for the awards by MHS staff member, Laura Garcia.

Stephen Douglas, instructional aide in student services was recognized with a "Diversity Award", and senior Stephanie Gutierrez was honored with the presentation of a Reflejos Scholarship worth \$1,000. Both were chosen by the leadership of Reflejos, a National Association of Hispanic Publications (NAHP) award-winning publication.

Senior Natalia Lusinski featured in new tech program at College of Lake County

Congratulations to Natalia Lusinski on being one of the students featured in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at the Lake County Tech Campus.

Natalia is one of the first students to experience Biomedical Science, a new program at Tech Campus. For #CTEMonth, she shared her thoughts on the new program and plans for her future career in the medical field.



MHS SENIOR NATALIA LUSINSKI

Natalia Lusinski, MHS senior shared.

"I chose Tech Campus because it was a new experience, and it ended up being a really good choice. Now I love coming here every day, and it's what I look forward to"

In Biomedical Science, students are exposed to more than 30 different medical careers. Students experience what those careers are like through labs and various experiments, which Natalia said has helped her to understand the concepts.

"We're learning about the eye now, and we are dissecting it and seeing everything right in front of you helps to have the information stick with you for longer," Natalia said.

Natalia is planning to attend the College of Lake County in the fall, where she will start her collegiate education with several credits already earned through Biomedical at the Tech Campus. She is unsure of what she wants to study but knows it will be something related to labs, after discovering a passion for experiments and problem solving while at Tech.

"I was a little nervous trying Biomedical out for the first time, but ended up being such a good thing because we don't focus on just one thing," Natalia said. "Overall, you will really enjoy Tech if you don't know what you want to do yet."



MUNDELEIN HIGH SCHOOL 2020 SPECIAL OLYMPICS TEAM

Special Olympics athletes take on MHS staff in friendly basketball game

Mundelein High School's Special Olympic athletes took on members of the MHS staff in a Special Olympics Basketball game to help the team celebrate the close of their inaugural season. The Special Olympics athletes were given the opportunity to handpick the staff team. Eric Billittier is the team coach.



The friendly game took place in January in the main gym and all were invited to this free activity. These staff members played in the game:

Morgan Spitz, special education

Heather Ryan, special education

David Mork, art

Ernie Billittier, English

Andrew Rochon, special education

Todd Parola, wellness

Reed Christensen, wellness

Paul Thatcher, dean

Andrew Hood, social studies

Jennifer Taylor, special education

Cathy Schmidt, head of security

Alex Miramontes, special education

Brett Wilhelm, wellness

Brian Goodell, special education

Steve Balogh, school resource officer

Isle of Martinique students visit MHS to meet pen pals



Twenty-one students from the Isle of Martinique visited Mundelein High School in January to meet MHS students with whom they have been corresponding as pen pals. The event was coordinated by Marty Ambrey, French instructor at MHS.

The day's activities included both formal and informal opportunities for the visiting students to spend time with their MHS counterparts. It began with the visitors "shadowing" their pen pals during one of the class periods. They all had lunch

while getting to know each other better and then shadowed a second student. They closed the school day meeting with a French 4 class and then headed for after school activities including Robotics Club, theatre, gymnastics and the Academic Team.

"This was definitely a cultural exchange in many ways," Ambrey explained. "The kids from La Martinique speak French, are of African ancestry and also have their own Creole culture. I think was a great opportunity for my kids to show them what a great school MHS is and that we support equity in many ways," she concluded.



ABBY HAMMER, DANIEL CARRASCO

Two MHS juniors earn awards in writing

Two Mundelein High School juniors received *The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards of 2020* from the Belin-Blank Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development at the University of Iowa.

"According to their website, 'The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Program is the nation's longest running, largest and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens,'" said Laura Garcia, English 3 teacher who taught the two teens.

During the past 95 years, the Awards have recognized and encouraged artists and writers such as Sylvia Plath, Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, Robert Redford, Tom Otterness and Zac Posen, among countless others.

Three different levels of awards are presented: The Gold Key, The Silver Key, and Honorable Mention awards.

Daniel Carrasco earned a Gold Key Award for his poem, "Augilla." Abby Hammer received an Honorable Mention for her poem "It's Okay." Both students wrote their poems during the Narrative Poetry Unit in their English 3 class.

More than 6,000 entries were submitted this year to the 2020 competition for students in grades 7-12. Gold Key works automatically advance to national judging with National Awards announced this past March.

"Congratulations to both Daniel and Abby," Garcia said.



Adventure Education draws high number of students

Mundelein High School added a new course named Adventure Education to the Wellness Department curriculum this year and it has been quite popular with many students. To date, 318 students have taken this course.



MIKE VUKOVICS

The course idea came from Mike Vukovics who now teaches it. Vukovics received his training at Northeastern Illinois University and where his

interest in adventure education began. He and other Wellness Department members visited Conant and Main West high schools and the Adventure Ed symposium at Lakes High School to learn how these courses were run.

Currently the course includes knot tying, fire and shelter building and high ropes climbing. Vukovics hopes to add kayaking and geo-casting, which is a modern-day version of a scavenger hunt.

Several of the activities in the course depend on trust among the participants. One of those activities is a "One-Armed Challenge" that students complete while blindfolded.

Because the course has become so popular, discussions have begun on forming an Adventure Club which would take place outside of the school day.

"The first three weeks of the course focuses on team building," Vukovics explained. "It's a great way for students to work together in a technical society. And the more kids get to know each other, the better they get along. It is especially important with the climb teams that they build trust and rely on each other."

As the course progresses there are plans to have groups gather materials and tinder and then build an actual shelter. That could be just the beginning as the course continues to develop.

"This is the most rewarding thing (teaching this course) I have ever done," Vukovics said. He is in his fourth year as an MHS instructor and also is a 2001 graduate of Mundelein High School.



Robotics Team advances at VEX competitions, earns bid at national competition

MHS Robotics competed this past November at a VEX Robotics Competition in Chicago. One MHS team went undefeated, beating teams from nine high schools. This qualified the team to the state-wide VEX Robotics Competition in March. Another MHS team became a finalist with an (8-1-0) record.



In December, the MHS Robotics Team scored another big win at the VEX Robotics Competition in Huntley. The winners finished with a 5-2 record against 30 other teams from 14 schools. The championship qualified the team to compete in the state championship in March. They then received an invitation to compete in a nationwide invitational at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Virginia.

“Words can’t express the admiration I have for the hours of work that our students have put in,” said Manny Aldana who has coached the team with Andrew Hood for the past two years.

“First Gen” Carmen Gutierrez studies in Italy



CARMEN GUTIERREZ, CLASS OF 2017

First generation college student, Carmen Gutierrez, Class of 2017, has taken all opportunities available to her at the University of Illinois, including studying abroad. She and three other students were recently featured in the History Department magazine. Some of Carmen’s thoughts are included below:

“I chose to study abroad in Pavia, Italy with LAS, and it ended up being about the same price as staying on campus for a semester. It certainly took a lot of preparation on my end but, I couldn’t be happier with my experience abroad. At the University of Pavia where I was staying, my classes were composed of what felt like 80 percent international and Erasmus students from neighboring nations, everywhere from Brazil, Germany, the US, Pakistan, etc. I mentioned before how I worried that by putting myself in a position abroad I had everything to lose but I realize now that for students who are willing to take on this challenge, in reality, have everything to gain, whether it be personally or academically. If possible I would love to try and study abroad again, but overall I cannot stress enough how pivotal this experience was for me and my future path.”

Technology students inducted into National Technical Honor Society

Corinne Corona and Joshua Bach, both students at the Lake County High School Technology Campus have been inducted into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS). Corona is in the Early Education and Teaching II program while Bach is in the Automotive Service II program.



CORINNE CORONA, JOSHUA BACH

The National Technical Honor Society currently serves approximately 100,000 active members and nearly a million members since its inception in 1984. Awarding over \$2 million in scholarships to date, NTHS honors the achievements of top Career and Technical Education (CTE) students, provides scholarships to encourage the pursuit of higher education, and cultivates excellence in today’s highly competitive, skilled workforce.



ALLAN RODRIGUEZ, GABE GOLDMAN, BRI SIERZEGA

MHS students receive national video awards

The Chicago/Midwest chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the same organization that creates the Emmys, awarded Mundelein senior Allan Rodriguez a Crystal Pillar Award for his short fiction film titled “Somnum (sleep)”.

The Midwest Media Educators Association video festival, with more than 50 schools competing, presented a first-place finish to Rodriguez and senior Gabe Goldman for their short film titled “For a Rainy Day.” “It has been a goal after every year Mr. Meister brings us to this event to be the ones up on stage talking about how we made our first-place finish. I am bummed Covid-19 took that away (virtual event), but was still really excited to get first-place.” Goldman said. Another notable finish included a second place award to Senior Bri Sierzega for a commercial she made for local Mundelein accountant Joe Modica and Associates as a class project. Sierzega met and discussed her client’s business needs, then designed a piece for his business. All three videos are available to be viewed through links available on the Mundelein Fine and Applied Arts Facebook page as well as the MHS Film Club homepage.

MHS institutes job board/ career event web page for students, employers

Mundelein High School recently launched its MHS Career Discovery, a job board and career event web page. The purpose is to connect interested students with part-time employment, seasonal and internship opportunities as well as career discovery opportunities. Those include career fairs, employer open houses and various industry-specific promotional events.

“We have included a resource page with contacts so that students may reach out to MHS staff members for help when needed for job applications, resume writing, interviewing tips, etc. and also includes links to other online resources,” said Larry Calhoun, Fine and Applied Arts chair.



**MUSTANG
CAREER
DISCOVERY**

The site contains any employment and internship opportunity postings along with career fair events. Local employers who have part-time, seasonal or internship positions to advertise or have an upcoming career fair or event are encouraged to submit that information directly.

The web address for the new site is www.mhscareerdiscovery.com.

Mundelein Theatre chosen to perform at State Festival

The 45th Annual Illinois High School Theatre Festival kicked off at Illinois State University this past January, and MHS Theatre students were front and center. Their fall production, *The Elephant Man*, was selected to perform at the festival. Additionally, two students, Colin Nacion and Becca Panos, were selected as part of the company of the All-State production of the musical *Aida*.



COLIN NACION, BECCA PANOS (PHOTO CREDIT: GRACIE MEIER)

The Illinois High School Theatre Festival is the largest and oldest non-competitive high school theatre festival in the nation, and is produced by the Illinois Theatre Association. More than 4,500 students, teachers, university representatives, exhibitors, and volunteers come together to put on theatrical workshops and various high school productions that are selected to perform each year. The All-State cast, crew, and pit orchestra are comprised of top student performers, musicians and technicians from Illinois.

Nacion was selected for the cast of *Aida*, performing in the ensemble and understudying the role of Mereb. Panos was selected as part of the costume crew. “It is a huge honor to be chosen for both the cast and crew for the All-State show,” said Jonathan Meier, theatre director at MHS. Three representatives from the Illinois Theatre Association attended the opening night performance of *The Elephant Man* and met with the company afterwards to offer them feedback.

“We are thrilled to be able to perform our show at the festival,” Meier continued. “Performing a show in a different location is a challenge, but we designed the show to tour, in hopes that we would be selected.”

Show Choirs win awards in four competitions

Mundelein High School's three show choirs, Sound, Lights and SoundFX, along with the Noise Band, earned numerous awards during their winter season of competition.



Competition highlights

Prairie du Sac, WI

Lights: Grand Champions
SoundFX: Runner-up
Noise Band: Best Instrumental Ensemble
Sound: First runner-up in Open Class
Matthew Callas: Best Male Soloist

Fort Atkinson, WI

Lights: Grand Champions in Single Gender category
SoundFX: Runner-up in same category
Sound: first runner-up
Matthew Callas: Best Male Soloist

Naperville North High School- Naperville, IL

Lights: First runner-up in Single Gender category
Sound: Fifth in the Finals
Noise Band: Best Band

Totino-Grace High School- Fridley, MN

SoundFX: First in Single Gender category
Lights: Second in same category
Sound: Seventh in Open Class
Matthew Callas: Best Male Soloist

Cory Thompson and Stevee Bellas are the Show Choir Directors.



**MUNDELEIN
THEATRE**
Mundelein High School



SAXOPHONES

SAMANTHA DEDOMICIS, ALTO
GARETH FULLIN, TENOR
MIRA GUIRITAN, TENOR
NEIL MARTIN, ALTO
GARRETT MUNZ, ALTO
ELIAS PHOTOPOULOS, BARI

TRUMPETS

RYAN BURNS
KATE DRISCOLL
CALLEE SMITH
LAUREN YOUNG

TROMBONES

JACOB GREEN
KEITHEN HOFERITZA
ERICH ROBB
MORGAN SHUMSKI

RHYTHM SECTION

ELLA KASAMIS, PIANO
JUSTIN MJOEN, DRUMS
ISABEL SIOSON, GUITAR
RICKY ZEIGER, BASS

MHS Jazz Ensemble honored with historic invitation to perform at international festival

For the first time in school history, the MHS Jazz Ensemble has received an invitation to perform at the 74th Annual Midwest Clinic. Receiving an invitation is highly selective and a great honor. Each year, less than five high school jazz bands from across the world are invited to perform.

The Midwest Clinic is an international festival that welcomes roughly 18,000 participants every year from all 50 states and 40 countries. The festival is scheduled for December 16-19, 2020, at McCormick Place. Even with the uncertainty of the current health crisis, the Jazz Ensemble is excited and hopeful to begin preparations.

MHS Jazz Ensemble, saxophonist earn high marks at Purdue Jazz Festival; other notable performances

The MHS Jazz Ensemble was recently recognized as the Honor Band in the large high school big band division at the 30th Annual Purdue Jazz Festival. In addition, Garrett Munz, senior alto saxophonist, was recognized as Best Soloist in the same class. Munz is planning to continue his studies and performances at the college level next year.

More than 110 jazz bands from middle and high schools from across the Midwest were selected to compete in this three-day event. Student musicians and the public were able to work with and learn from nationally renowned artists.

The Jazz Ensemble was also selected to perform at the 2020 Illinois Music Education Conference (IMEC) Jan. 29 through Feb. 1 in Peoria.

“This (IMEC performance) is a great honor only provided to a handful of high school jazz bands in the state of Illinois,” said Andy Sturgeon who directs the instrumental music program along with Jerald Shelato.

Also in late January, the Libertyville and Mundelein High School jazz ensembles gave a preview concert at the Mohr Student Center of Lake Forest College.



GARRETT MUNZ IN CONCERT

MHS senior earns first place at Student Silent Film Festival

Mundelein High School senior, Ander Nuttall, earned first place at the annual Student Silent Film Festival held at the historic Sanfilippo Estate in Barrington this past weekend. Students from all over Chicagoland participated in the event.



MHS GROUP WITH SENIOR ANDER NUTTALL AND TEACHER KENT MEISTER

Nuttall earned his award at the event with his short story titled “Skateboard Jungle.” The theme for this year’s video was “Unexpected Hero.”

To add to presentations, the top three entries also had an additional new soundtrack written and performed live by professional organist, Jelani Eddington.

“It is really exciting to have won and I want to thank all the people who helped me create this video,” Nuttall said. “It was really fun to film. One of the things that made it so fun is that we got to skateboard in the halls of MHS which is something you don’t normally get to do.”

Organist Jelani Eddington has performed in most major concert venues throughout the United States and has toured extensively abroad. He has received numerous awards and recognitions, including his selection as the 2001 Theatre Organist of the Year.

“It has been fun to see Ander’s work over the years get better and better with each project,” said Kent Meister, Nuttall’s Film as Literature instructor. Whether it is a short film, news story or music video he thinks it all through ahead of time and that hard work upfront has resulted in some great stories.”



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