



Jericho School News

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April 2010

Jericho Students Cruizin' In to Test Drive the Future

With today's rapidly changing advancements in science and technology, it can be quite a task for students to stay on top of what's next in medicine and technology. However, students at the Jericho Middle and High Schools don't have to look any further than their classrooms.

On March 23rd, Jericho Middle and High School students had the chance to test drive the breakthrough da Vinci Surgical System, designed to enable surgeons to perform complex procedures like cancer and heart surgery using a minimally invasive approach. Long Island Cruizin' for a Cure (a NY 501C3 Not For Profit Corporation) and South Nassau Communities Hospital teamed up to offer students this unique opportunity to not only learn about cutting edge technology, but to see the integration of science and technology come

to life before their very eyes.

Long Island Cruizin' for a Cure, with their annual antique/classic car show, is no stranger to educating the public. The group's focus is raising awareness around Prostate Cancer, which affects 1

Long Island Cruizin' for a Cure will be offering free PSA screenings for the early detection of Prostate Cancer at Jericho Middle/High School on May 18th during Budget Vote and Board Elections between 10:00 AM-2:00PM.

in 6 American men and is their 2nd leading cause of cancer death. When diagnosed early, Prostate Cancer is a highly curable disease, with multiple treatment options. Awareness is the key to ensuring patients get tested and make informed decisions about the best

(continued on pg. 5)



Students had the opportunity to operate the daVinci Surgical controls. ▲

In this Issue:

- Jericho Board of Ed Adopts Proposed 2010-11 Budget
- Jericho Students Receive Community Service Awards
- National Brain Bee Champion
- New Healthy School Lunch Options Available
- New Philosophy Intro Class
- Building Outstanding Leaders
- Schools Celebrate Diversity
- Jammin' Jayhawks
- Important Dates to Remember



Jericho Middle School technology students examine the daVinci Surgical system. ▲

Jericho Students Honored In National Youth Volunteer Awards Program

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism, named Christopher Lam, a senior at Jericho High School, New York State's top high school youth volunteer for 2010. The awards program, celebrating its 15th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

As a state honoree, Christopher will receive \$1,000, an engraved silver medallion, and an all-expense-paid trip in early May to Washington, D.C., where he will join the top honorees from each of the other states and the District of Columbia for several days of national recognition events. Ten students will be named America's top youth volunteers for 2010 at that time.

Christopher co-founded and leads an international pen pal program that provides emotional and financial support to children stricken or orphaned by AIDS in China's impoverished Henan Province. While volunteering at a Manhattan hospital in 2007, Christopher heard about an AIDS epidemic in Henan caused by the widespread distribution of tainted blood, resulting in huge numbers of AIDS orphans and HIV-positive children. He further discovered, after some research, that these children received very little help. He decided to offer his.

Christopher convened a committee of two medical professionals and three other students to help plan what became the "China AIDS International Pen Pal Program." Christopher and his committee then recruited high school students, matched them with young pen pals in Henan, solicited donations from individuals and businesses, and hosted tennis party fund-raisers. He also organized a summer trip to China to meet the children and distribute backpacks, water bottles, educational software and other items. About 400 AIDS/HIV-affected children are now enrolled in the pen pal



Jericho High School Principal Joseph Prisinzano (R) and Middle School Principal Donald Gately (L) congratulate senior Christopher Lam (R) for being named New York State's top high school youth volunteer in the 2010 The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program and Jericho Middle School student Christopher Yao (L) for being named a Distinguished Finalist.

program and are receiving services from a children's center in Henan that Christopher's fund-raising supports. "Surely there is no way we can change the mistakes of the past," said Christopher. "However, it is possible to alleviate the pain and suffering of these children and give them a chance at a brighter future."

Program judges also named Christopher Yao, an eighth-grader at Jericho Middle School, one of eight students from New York as a Distinguished Finalist for his impressive community service activities. Christopher formed an online organization that recruits young people to participate in volunteer opportunities and causes that promote a peaceful, charitable world. He also has raised funds for Smile Train and other charitable

organizations, and educated the public about foul language, homelessness, and global warming. He will receive an engraved bronze medallion.

While in Washington, D.C., the 102 State Honorees will tour the capital's landmarks, attend a gala awards ceremony at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, and visit their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. In addition, 10 of them – five middle level and five high school students – will be named National Honorees on May 3 by a prestigious national selection committee. These honorees will receive additional \$5,000 awards, gold medallions, crystal trophies, and \$5,000 grants from The Prudential Foundation for nonprofit, charitable organizations of their choice.

USA National Brain Bee Champion



Senior Yvette Leung was recently named the 2010 USA National Brain Bee Champion. The Brain Bee is a neuroscience competition for high school students. Thirty-seven regional winners from around the country competed at the University of Maryland, Baltimore and the National

Institutes of Health during Brain Awareness Week. To advance to the USA Championship, Yvette won the Regional Long Island University Brain Bee.

Yvette won a scholarship, a laboratory internship with a prominent neuroscientist, and the honor to represent the United States

in the International Brain Bee Championship that will be held this summer in San Diego. She will be competing against other National Champions from countries including Australia, India, Uganda, Romania, Canada and New Zealand.

Schools Partner With Parents to Help Students Make Healthy Choices

The School District Nutrition Committee, comprised of parents, school lunch personnel and administrators, has been holding ongoing meetings to discuss healthy food alternatives for students. As a result of these meetings, Tracy Gilet, the Director of the School Lunch Program, asked K-12 parents and high school students to complete an online survey to assist the district in assessing what healthy food options would be of interest to students.

Based on the results of the survey, new K-12 menu options include: grilled chicken breast, un-breaded all-white chicken breast, grilled chicken Caesar salad wraps, whole grain pizza, whole grain chicken nuggets, all-white meat chicken nuggets and whole grain chicken fingers. Students may select whole grain bread for their sandwich. Hot dogs are no longer offered as a menu item.

Middle and High School students are offered: yogurt parfaits, Greek salad, tuna/turkey/chicken salad and hummus wraps. Light veggie tuna, hulled sunflower seeds and Craisins are now offered as options at the high school salad bar. Other alternatives are currently under review.

New Philosophy Class Sharpens Student Analytical Skills

Jericho High School students recently participated in a Socratic Seminar with members of the Board of Education, district administration and their teacher Mary Moran. This activity, held prior to the March Board of Education meeting, was designed to highlight the new high school Introduction to Philosophy class.

Introduction to Philosophy is a social studies elective being offered to sophomores, juniors and seniors in the spring semester of this school year. The course provides students with the opportunity to actively engage in critical thinking on a daily basis. Using classic and modern western philosophy, students analyze a wide variety of questions and ideas that apply to all dimensions of life and a wide variety of academic disciplines. Possible avenues of exploration include: what is real? what is the purpose of life? what is justice? what is beauty? what determines the boundaries of human knowledge? In the pursuit of this knowledge, students engage in research and active group seminars. This course supports the current trend in Jericho to teach our students skills that will extend beyond the academic classroom including logical reasoning, analytical questioning and rational argumentation.

Jericho High School student Jasleen Kaur joins classmates, members of the Board of Education, district administration and teacher Mary Moran for a Socratic Seminar prior to the March Board of Education meeting.



Jericho Board of Education Adopts 2010-2011 School District Budget

The Board of Education unanimously adopted the proposed 2010-2011 school district budget at an open meeting on March 18, 2010. The \$108.9 million budget represents a 3.50% budget increase and a tax levy increase of 3.92%. Since January, the district has hosted a series of public workshops to review the financial status of the school district and create a budget for the coming year. The Board of Education and district administration requested input from members of the school community at these workshops. "We have worked tirelessly to create a budget that provides the highest quality instructional program while being extraordinarily mindful of the financial impact on our taxpayers," explains Jericho Superintendent Hank Grishman. "In an effort to achieve this delicate balance, the budget we are presenting contains an increase in the tax levy of 3.92%.

The proposed 2010-2011 budget will support educational program enhancements, all of which are based on student need, interest and enrollment. New high school course offerings include: Discrete Mathematics, Ceramics and Sculpture, Dramatic Arts, Tai Chi and Kung Fu, St. John's University Sociology of Enterprise, Chinese IV and Virtual Enterprise. Principles of Engineering, and the third sequence of Project Lead the Way will also be added next year. Course descriptions can be found on the high school website. New middle school electives being offered to 7th and 8th graders include History at the Movies and Seedlings. Competitive Science will be offered to 8th graders. Course information can be found on the middle school website.

The budget increase will enable the district to improve options for students with special needs. Co-teaching will be expanded to 1st grade at Jackson and 8th grade at the middle school (co-teaching will be in grades 6-7-8 next year), and introduced in 4th grade at Cantiague. This model raises the level of effectiveness with a general education and special education teacher in the classroom, but is also more efficient as it

reduces the number of aides assigned to the classroom or to an individual student. Additionally, a grade K-1 self-contained class will open at Jackson next year to support autistic students from all elementary schools.

The proposed budget includes funds for the following technology improvements:

1. Replacement of 300 computer workstations district-wide.
2. Purchase of 37 Smart Boards. Every elementary classroom will be equipped with this technology.



The school district continues technology upgrades with the purchase of 37 Smart Boards. Every elementary classroom in Jericho will be equipped with this technology next year.

3. Naviance, a web-based tool for post-high school planning, will be added. This program contains data on colleges across the country and keeps track of recent Jericho HS college applications, student statistics and admissions decisions. Naviance will be accessible to counselors, students and parents (with a JHS registration code) from computers with web access. This program enables the transmission of transcripts and letters of recommendation to most colleges.

The proposed budget will include \$1,100,000 to cover capital improvements. Next year's projects include: Replacement

of the track at the MS/HS with new drainage, paving at the elementary schools and in the transportation area at the MS/HS, and a security system upgrade.

One of the challenges that the district faced during preparation of the 2010-11 budget is the possibility of a loss of approximately \$800,000 in State Aid as well as a projected loss of interest income of \$400,000 on the investment of school district funds.

For the past several years the district has implemented many cost-saving strategies including, but not limited to, the following: Bond refinancing resulting in a savings of \$955,000; purchasing computer equipment rather than leasing, saving approximately \$250,000 annually; joining a Worker's Compensation Co-operative resulting in savings of \$645,000 over the past 4 years; joining NYS Insurance Reciprocal (NYSIR) resulting in lower annual costs for the past 5 years saving more than \$400,000; and purchasing materials and supplies through co-operative bidding, resulting in an average savings of more than \$350,000 annually.

For specific information about the proposed budget expenditures, please consult our website: www.jerichoschools.org. Complete copies of the proposed budget are also available in the district business office. Please call 203-3600, ext. 3214 for more information.

The budget vote is scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, at the Jericho Middle/High School Samuel Springer Gymnasium. New voters may register in the gym on the day of the vote. A person is qualified to vote if he/she is a U.S. citizen over the age of 18 who has resided in the district for more than 30 days. Two documents must be provided for proof of district residency (i.e.: drivers license, telephone bill, utility bill, house deed or apartment rental agreement). Please note that in an effort to accommodate working residents, voting hours are between 6 am and 9 pm.

Building Outstanding Leaders For Tomorrow

There's a new "buzz-word" around Jericho High School: BOLT. BOLT, or Building Outstanding Leaders for Tomorrow, is an exciting opportunity for High School students interested in developing strong character and leadership skills for all aspects of their lives. Active learning experiences are specifically designed to promote positive changes in the school, local and global communities.

The inaugural year of the BOLT class has been successful. The class has worked on projects designed to better our school and community. One of the group's proudest achievements has been repainting the senior lounge. In an effort to raise senior spirit and create a new tradition, the BOLT class beautified the senior lounge by painting a wall with the class of 2010's signature, SEN10RS. This project, which has been considered for years, has now been completed. "By having the right attitude you can choose to make changes," says Theone Rinaudo, the teacher of this innovative leadership class. Planning is now underway for different projects such as senior pizza and Haiti relief. If students would like to find out more about the BOLT program, please contact Mrs. Rinaudo or your guidance counselor.



BOLT students are proud to complete the repainting of the senior lounge. ▲

Jericho Students Cruizin'

(continued from pg. 1)

treatment option for them.

South Nassau Communities Hospital, a Long Island health care facility that offers comprehensive care for prostate cancer treatment, has joined forces with Long Island Cruizin' for a Cure to help drive awareness and education as a potential solution.

The Jericho School District also extended an invitation for staff and community members to come in for a free "test drive" at the surgeon's console and information in the Jericho Middle/High School auditorium. For further information visit www.licruizinforacure.com or www.davincisurgery.com.

Long Island Cruizin' for a Cure will be offering free PSA screenings for the early detection of Prostate Cancer at Jericho Middle/High School on May 18th during the School Budget Vote and Board Elections between 10:00 AM-2:00PM.

Celebrate Diversity - Celebrate Diversity



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Students recently celebrated diversity of our schools with song, dance and poetry. Students at the middle/high school participated in assemblies for classmates throughout the day. This year, for the first time, a successful combined middle/high school evening performance was held for parents and families. Susan Menkes, Elissa Waters and Dr. Elaine Margarita coordinated these exciting events.

Jericho Union Free School District

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www.jerichoschools.org

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Board of Ed Honors "Jammin' Jayhawks"



JAA and SEPTA are co-sponsoring a "Jammin' Jayhawks" sports program for students who have special needs. The Spring activity is baseball. Clinics will be held at Seaman Elementary School on May 16, May 23, and June 6 from noon to 1 o'clock. Students with special needs will have the opportunity to practice basic baseball skills and social skills with volunteer Jericho High School coaches who will be supervised by an experienced instructor. The program is appropriate for any Jericho student with special needs regardless of school placement. The program will be adapted to the needs of each student. Members of the "Jammin' Jayhawks" sports program were honored at the March Board of Education meeting.

Dates to Remember

Public Budget Hearing & Meet the Candidate Night

Tuesday, May 11th
HS Little Theater 7:30 PM

Budget Vote & School Board Election

Tuesday, May 18th
MS/HS Gymnasium
6 AM-9 PM

Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, May 20th
High School Little Theater
7:30 PM

Schools Closed

Monday, May 31st