

The School District of South Orange & Maplewood

Board of Education Recognitions

May 16, 2022

Student Recognitions:

NAME/SCHOOL	RECOGNITION
SOMSD Music Department:	<p>Congratulations to the SOMSD music department for once again earning a Best Music Community Designation from the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) for 2022.</p> <p>SOMSD is among 738 school districts that are among the Best Communities in the nation for music education. The award program recognizes outstanding efforts by teachers, administrators, parents, students and community leaders who have made music education part of a well-rounded education. Designations are made to districts and schools that demonstrate an exceptionally high commitment and access to music education.</p> <p>Founded in 2006, the NAMM Foundation advances active participation in music making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving and public service programs. Congratulations to our entire District music department staff, students and parent community for helping us to achieve this prestigious recognition.</p>
CHS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cole J. Strupp ● Jadyn Park 	<p>Congratulations to Cole Strupp and Jayden Park who were both National Merit Scholarship finalists and both were awarded National Merit Corporate scholarships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jadyn Park has been selected as a winner of the National Merit Pfizer Inc. Scholarship, sponsored by Pfizer Inc.,; and ● Cole J. Strupp has been selected as a winner of the National Merit Gannett Foundation Scholarship, sponsored by Gannett Foundation, Inc.
CHS: Liping Meng (Chinese Teacher and advisor to the team) Jenny Lezzi (Chinese Teacher) CHS students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Silas Silverman-Stollo → Irene Chen → Sabrina Mannion → Nigel Hu, → Sophia Tierney → Charlotte McCourt → Lola Christie → Abigail Freeman 	<p>On April 30, 2022, Columbia high school team won the 14th NJ Chinese cultural project contest in Seton Hall University. Ms. Liping Meng was the adviser of the CHS team.</p> <p>The team's final presenters were Silas Silverman-Stollof, Irene Chen, Sabrina Mannion, Nigel Hu and Sophia Tierney. The other team members included Charlotte McCourt, Lola Christie and Abigail Freeman. Ms. Jenny Lezzi and other students of the Chinese program helped make props for the final presentation.</p> <p>This cultural contest was a research-based project which took more than five months and had semi-final and final rounds. This year the research topic was: How Do TV Shows Reflect the Chinese and American Cultures? The students did interviews, conducted a survey, analyzed the data and prepared PPT slides for the semi-final. For the final, the students presented their research findings and illustrated their analyses with skits. The students did an excellent job in both presentation of the research and performance of the skits, and they won high praises and big applauds from the judges and audience.</p>
CHS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tim Van De North 	<p>CHS coding students, Tim Van De North, created a GPA calculator for the CHS website. Students and parents can use it to check what their final grade will project to be for full-year</p>

	<p>classes. The calculator can be found at: https://www.somds.k12.nj.us/columbia/school-info/calculator/</p>
<p>CHS Production Newsies</p>	<p>Congratulations to CHS's Newsies production who received 12 award nominations and 1 honorable mention for Paper Mill's Playhouse, 2022 Rising Star Awards presented by Investors Foundation.</p> <p><i>Newsies' 2022 Rising Star Awards Nominations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical 2. Outstanding Lead Performer in a Female-Identified Role: Grace Trenouth as "Katherine Plumber" 3. Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Female-Identified Role: Rocky Anicette as "Medda Larkin" 4. Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Male-Identified role: Alex Iozzio as "Davey" 5. Outstanding Performer in a Featured Role: Katie Trzaska as "Race" 6. Outstanding Performance by a featured ensemble group: "The Bowery Beauties" 7. Outstanding Performance by a Chorus 8. Outstanding Achievement by a Teacher or Outside Director: Tricia Benn, Bethany Pettigrew 9. Outstanding Achievement in Choreography and Staging: Tricia Benn, Bethany Pettigrew 10. Outstanding Scenic Achievement: Louis J. Medrano 11. Outstanding Lighting Achievement: Tara Marie Abbondante 12. Outstanding Hair and Makeup: Derek Alfano <p><i>Honorable Mention:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outstanding Costuming Achievement: Barbara Canace
<p>CHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Burton Alexander, Junior ● Noah Morros, Junior 	<p>Noah Morros & Burton Alexander, both Juniors at Columbia High School, recently participated in Harvard Project - The International Socioeconomic Laboratory's annual socioeconomics symposium. Working in a research group with students from around the world, Noah and Burton presented their poster to judges from the University of Michigan, Tulane University, the University of Paris, and more. The two earned first place out of 12 other groups. Their poster highlighted discrepancies in New York City Parks, and their paper will be submitted to the Elsevier Journal, "Regional Science and Urban Economics."</p>
<p>District Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tahlia Mazzocchi, 6th grade, MMS ● Bonney Donachie, 11th grade, CHS ● Chloe Miles, 12th grade, CHS 	<p>INSPIRED MINDS: Young Artist Exhibition is a visual arts program designed to strengthen the impact of arts and arts education through the local school districts. This annual program gives a comprehensive professional experience to Essex County high school arts students from submission, selection, exhibition, and possible sale of their artwork. Each year, thousands of submissions are juried by a panel of distinguished artists, photographers, museum curators and arts advocates. The result is an exciting and eclectic body of work from the perspective of young emerging artists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tahlia Mazzocchi, a 6th grader at MMS, was given a special invitation to participate alongside the high school artists, and in a blind adjudication all of her pieces were accepted, so she will be included within the exhibition. → Bonney Donachie, an 11th grader at CHS and AP Studio Art student of CHS Art Teacher Mr. Kirk Maynard, will have 2 of her art works exhibited; "Trapped" & "Elephant"

	<p>→ Chloe' Miles, a 12th grader at CHS and Art 2 student of CHS Art Teacher Mr. B. Curtis Grayson, will have 2 of her art works exhibited; "Playa del Hibiscus" & "----".</p>
<p>CHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seth Peiris, 12th grade, CHS 	<p>It is with great pride and honor that I share with the SOMSD community that Seth Peiris, a senior member of the Columbia High School Band, has received the Governor's Award in Music for the 2021-2022 school year. His selection for this prestigious award was announced at the 2022 New Jersey All-State Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble concert this past February, and he will be formally recognized at an awards ceremony on Thursday, May 26, 2022 at the War Memorial in Trenton.</p> <p>A quote from CHS Director of Bands, Peter F. Bauer :</p> <p><i>Seth is one of the most talented, dedicated, selfless, and musical students I have ever had the pleasure of teaching. He is a skilled bassoonist, and has been selected to numerous Area, Intermediate Region, High School Region, All-State, and All-Eastern ensembles during his high school career. He is a cornerstone member of the Columbia High School Honors Wind Ensemble, and served as Assistant Drum Major for the Cougar Marching Band this year. His contributions to the Columbia High School band program are immeasurable, and his presence in the rehearsal hall and on the performance stage are simply irreplaceable. Seth Peiris is the very finest reflection of the students in our school district, and I am honored to have known such an intelligent, talented, humble, and dedicated young man. Please join with me in honoring and congratulating Seth for receiving this most prestigious honor, and thank you for your support of the Columbia High School Band Program.</i></p>
<p>South Orange Middle School</p>	<p>SOMS Unveils Its First Free Menstrual Products Dispenser: South Orange Middle School held a ribbon-cutting ceremony in early May for the first-ever free menstrual supplies dispenser at the school. A bin of menstrual supplies was also placed in the school's gender-neutral restroom.</p> <p>South Orange Middle School Student Body President Scarlett Friedland and Vice President Alyx Cahill initiated the menstrual supplies provisioning project with the support of SOMS Student Council faculty advisers Shawana Andrews and Daniah Aburomi and SOMS school social worker Alison Steiner. At their request, the SOMS Home and School Association provided the funding via HSA Social Work Liaison Melissa Litwin. The SOMA-based menstrual supplies advocacy group Girls Helping Girls Period served as a community partner.</p> <p>Friedland and Cahill narrated a video presentation letting students know about the new dispenser and bin. All SOMS homeroom classes watched the video.</p> <p>The project organizers selected the company Aunt Flow for installation at SOMS, primarily because these products are already in use at Columbia High School, and also because the group came to understand the importance of providing organic products.</p> <p>[Note: Take time to cue the SOMS Period Products in School video - the tech will play - https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=afy_Fem2vZU&fbclid=IwAR20pfUfSLSwKbg_sqmCyCGciraTDgObX3_OuUKjwBkD300OynRWK6jf1Rk</p>

Staff Recognitions:

Teachers Appreciation Week	May 2 - 6 was Teacher Appreciation Week and once again we want to say thank you to the extraordinary educators in our District who work tirelessly w/ students and families and a daily basis to keep things moving forward. We appreciate you and all your hard work.
National School Nurse Day	<p>Wednesday, May 11 was National School Nurse Day and it was established to foster a better understanding of the role of school nurses in the educational setting. School Nurse Day is celebrated on the Wednesday within National Nurses Week. National Nurses Week is May 6-12 each year. We want to take the time to acknowledge the wonderful school nurses who take care of our students daily. Who worked tirelessly during the pandemic and upon our return to in-person learning to ensure that students and staff were safe. We thank our District nurses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Juliane Porter, South Mountain Annex1 and Lead School Nurse2. Therese Crigler, CHS3. Gretchen Shook, CHS4. Keith Turpin, SOMS5. Joann Harrigan, Clinton6. Tanisha Anderson, Jefferson7. Jean Gaillard-Johnson, Marshall8. Steffi Golden, Montrose9. Theresa Oweifie, Seth Boyden10. Sharyn Willis, South Mountain11. Angela Thompson, Tuscan
Cindy Malhotra, <i>Department of Fine and Performing Arts</i>	Cindy (Cintia) Malhotra, Graphic Art Teacher at CHS, will have a photo included in the "The Beauty in Madness" exhibit held at the Praxis Photo Arts Center in Minneapolis, MN, on May 21 - June 4, 2022. This exhibit explores ideas linked to mental health, be it conflict or humor, fiction, or fact, or any other literal or ephemeral lens-based investigation.
Dara Gronau, <i>MMS Principal</i>	<p>Congratulations to MMS Principal, Dara Gronau, who recently presented at the 2022 End-of-the-Year Principals Conference hosted by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project on Thursday, May 12. The conference gathers administrators from across to the stat together to reflect on the year, learn from colleagues and TCRWP staff developers, and hear about offerings for the upcoming school year.</p> <p>Principal Gronau facilitated a discussion on: Teachers Are in Different Places On the Journey Towards Embracing Culturally Responsive Practices – How Can We Understand Where They Are and Help Them Take Next Steps in This Important Work?</p>