

June 2009 New Milford High School Monthly Report

Compiled by Eric Sheninger

1. Observations

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Observed by</u>
----------------	----------------	-------------	---------------	--------------------

Summaries:

2. Guest lecturers

- Joshua Dela Cruz, a NMHS '07 alumnus and current Musical Theater Major, conducted the "Acting for the Singer" workshop during Mrs. Swartz's classes for the last two and half weeks of school. The objective of the workshop was to give students an understanding of how to use context, such as song structure, lyric composition, or harmonic tension that the composer and librettist leave for the actor in order to create compelling and more importantly truthful characters and performances. The students each wrote a paper following the guidelines of the process description, completed a character map, provided a musical analysis of their song, and a lyric sheet. Joshua personally picked out a musical theater song as a challenge for student to sing. Their experience culminated in putting together a concert during the classes for the staff and peers to enjoy. Each student grew in CONFIDENCE, knowledge of the theater, and perfected their talents as a performer. Josh was an AMAZING COACH and the encouragement he gave in lessons he taught will be part of their lives forever.

3. Innovations:

- During the month of May and into June, Mr. Engstrom along with an In-Class Support teacher Mrs. Mackey, read William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar with the C.P. English 9 classes and developed an alternate assessment activity. The students were given small comprehension quizzes after each Act, but for the final assessment, the teachers decided to change things up a bit. The students were separated into five groups, each of which was assigned a different Act. The groups then re-worked each Act, rewriting them in modern-day English. The "rules" were that they had to include at least three lines from each scene in their act; most acts had three scenes, which made for a total of nine quotes. They were allowed to include music, props, and costumes. The students were given class time to write their lines and rehearse their act. They were given a due date, with two typed copies to be handed in to their teacher at the beginning of the class. Finally, they were given a rubric so they knew what we would be looking for when we did our assessment. The students were told that they would perform their final Caesar test on the HS auditorium stage, with the principal, vice principal and a few select teachers invited to watch on June 8th, 2009. The collaboration between students was commendable. They were excited about their ideas on how to interpret Shakespearean English. Each person in the group was required to write, and each student had to have an equal part. The result was exactly what Mrs. Mackey and Mr. Engstrom were looking for as well- not a perfect performance on the stage, but a perfect showing that they knew and understood Julius Caesar.
- This year's 9th grade Honors students in Ms. Schlamp's class studied Homer's epic poem, *The Iliad*. As their final culminating assignment, students were asked to summarize *The Iliad* in song! Students were assigned groups and each group was assigned five books of *The Iliad*. They then were to re-tell the plot of the story to the tune of already existing music and songs. Upon completion, we took to the auditorium and belted out, in Broadway fashion, *Iliad: the Musical*. Singing group names varied appropriately from The Goddesses, to the Singing Scops to Woods (a student's last name) and the Assorted Foliage. We heard the tale

of Achilles, Helen, and Agamemnon to the tune of Britney Spears, Black Eyed Peas, and Will.i.am. It was such fun and music to our scholarly ears!

- The freshmen students in Computer Applications have started to think about the college process. Mrs. Vicari and Mr. Ivchenko visited collegeboard.com with the students and demonstrated how to use the website to search for college information. The students completed a Final Exam project using collegeboard.com to create a college database using Microsoft Access. The students were then asked to create a PowerPoint presentation using the information from the college database. Some of the information they were required to find were:

1. College Name
2. Address
3. Tuition
4. Type of School
5. SAT Math, Critical Reading, Writing scores
6. Setting
7. Number of Undergraduates

- As an In Class Support teacher for C.P. English 9, Mrs. Mackey wanted to create an anticipatory set for The Miracle Worker that would have enough of an impact on the students to prepare them for the story ahead. On Thursday June 4th, 2009, upon entering the classroom, Mrs. Mackey had the students tear a sheet of paper into five pieces and asked them to list five different things. They were instructed not to rush, and that their answers can be as personal as they wanted to make them, as she was not collecting this and they would not be required to share their answers with the class.

They had to write:

1. Their favorite relative
2. Their favorite possession
3. Their favorite sense
4. Their favorite personal skill
5. Their favorite personal accomplishment

Once they were done with this, the students were instructed to take one away. They absolutely MUST give something up. This was repeated, slowly and deliberately for each piece of paper. One by one, Mrs. Mackey asked the students to remove something that was near and dear to them, and the response was incredible. One girl was laughing at herself because she began to cry at the thought of choosing between such important things. When the kids were left with two pieces of paper, and they were given a moment of believing they would be able to keep these precious two, they were then asked to take one more away. The class went wild! They felt it was too hard to choose and there were so many mixed emotions being expressed. Finally, when the students settled down and had chosen to keep that one piece of paper, the one that was their most important thing of all, they were instructed to write a paragraph on it. They had to explain why this final choice was so important to keep that they were willing to get rid of everything else. Now it was the teacher's turn to cry. The students wrote for 5-10 minutes straight, you could have heard a pin drop in the room, and the ones who offered to share their thoughts brought tears to Mrs. Mackey's eyes. Many students chose to share their inner most feelings, and exposed a very private and sensitive part of themselves with their peers. As stated by Mrs. Mackey, "It was one of the most powerful moments I had ever experienced in the classroom".

To complete the circle of the anticipatory set, Mrs. Mackey then explained to the students about The Miracle Worker, the uniqueness of the main character, and the fact that *Helen Keller did not have the option to choose what she loses*.

The mainstream teacher, Mr. Engstrom, was absent that day, so Mrs. Mackey asked Mr. Mannupelli if she could leave her seventh period hall duty to do this exercise with Mr. Engstrom's other C.P. English 9th class. She wanted them to have the same experience

as his fifth period class did. Mr. Mannupelli allowed it, and she was fortunate enough to share and learn with another set of great kids. As Mrs. Mackey remarks, "These are the days that I go home and tell people how much I love my job!"

4. Student honors:

- Junior Diane Montecuollo was selected as one of twenty Bergen County Commission on the Status of Women Junior Commissioners for 2009-2010. A panel of judges evaluates the applications and selects young women with exceptional academic and leadership qualities to be appointed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders and Dennis McNerney, County Executive, to serve for a one-year term. During this term, Diane will participate in activities of the Bergen County Commission on the Status of Women and special community service projects of her choosing. She is the first ever NMHS student selected to serve as a Junior Commissioner.
- On Tuesday, June 9th, 2009, the New Milford chapter of the Spanish National Honor Society celebrated its 39th induction ceremony in the high school Media Center. Twenty-one students qualified for membership in this prestigious organization, which has over 1700 chapters in this country and abroad. The society honors and recognizes students for excellence in Spanish, for their determination to speak another language, and for their appreciation of Hispanic cultures. In our ever-complex world, these students sense the importance of deepening the ties of communication and understanding of *all* peoples and of *all* cultures. The ceremony was conducted by Spanish teachers Ms. Solimano, Ms. Grompone, and Ms. Lyons. After reciting the Oath of the Society, the inductees were presented with their honor cord and membership certificate by Principal Eric Sheninger and Vice-Principal Lou Manupelli. Refreshments were served after the ceremony.
- Ali Metwali qualified for the State Meet of Champions on June 4th for the Javelin throw. Going into the meet Ali was seeded number thirty-third in the state. When the competition was over, he had improved to number twenty-two in the state. It may not seem like a big jump but, when you think that he was up against kids from 400 other schools in New Jersey, now the jump seems more impressive.
- The cast of "Working" the musical took home the award for Outstanding Chorus at the 2009 Metropolitan Theatre Awards hosted by the Helen Hayes Youth Theatre Company. The cast and crew also received six other nominations and are very proud to have won this honor recognizing their exceptional performance abilities!

5. Field trips

6. Guidance

- On Tuesday, June 9th, 2009, New Milford High School's Senior Awards Night was held at the Clinton Inn in Tenafly. Over 250 guests attended including faculty, presenters, family, friends, and students. The fifty-two seniors honored at the banquet received over sixty scholarship and recognition awards. Valedictorian, Kinjal Desai, and salutatorian, Angela Wan, were recognized with plaques presented by the New Milford/Teaneck Elks Club. This year's scholarships contain several new awards, including:
 - Jersey Boys Grill Scholarship (funded by the DeMiglio Family)
 - Sanducci's Restaurant Scholarship (funded by the DeMiglio Family)
 - Lauren Savino Scholarship
 - Community Blood Bank Scholarship

We are grateful to all of the generous scholarship contributors and very proud of our outstanding scholarship and award recipients.

7. Professional Development

8. Facilities

9. Other

- The Environmental Club, under the direction of Ms. Torpie, applied for and was awarded a \$1000 Environmental Awareness Challenge Grant from the Bergen County Utilities Authority (BCUA). The grant will be used during 2009/2010 to establish a recycling program at NMHS.
- The Student Assistance Program sponsored a Mock Accident on June 8th, 2009, to enforce the negative impact of destructive decisions, high risk behaviors of adolescents and their views of under age drinking. To enhance the overall message, a pre-prom video was taped which showed the community and family of New Milford High School and how the lives of the students involved in the Mock Accident were drastically modified due to the drivers inability to resist the use of alcohol and drive an automobile. Through a collaborate execution with the New Milford Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Medical Technicians, administration, faculty and the student's involved, this program was a success.
- The following Department websites have been updated this month: Science, English, and Math.
- June has been a busy month for the preschoolers as well as the high school students enrolled in Ms. Beiner's ECD classes. After hosting field day and a number/ letter carnival in May, the students began working on the preschool prom. This event highlighted all the songs and music that the students worked on during the year. The prom was held on June 9th in the old gym. The gym was decorated by the high school students as they waited for the smartly dressed preschooler to arrive. The children walked the red carpet into the gym to sing and dance the morning away.
- On June 11th, 2009, the preschooler's put on the graduation robes and headed for the Auditorium to receive their certificates and entertain the parents with different songs and dances. The parents were presented with a DVD highlighting the year, which was created by Virginia Ameralis, Rebecca Bolivar and Lee Trifai.
- The first NMHS musical will be Little Shop of Horrors and will be performed on July 30th, July 31st, and August 1st, 2009, in the James Africano Auditorium. The musical comedy of a boy and his man-eating plant from outer space with a taste for blood and a desire for world domination. Tickets are now on sale with Ms. Kolb and Mr. Coviello. The show will feature a bevy of NMHS's finest performers such as Matt Kaprielian, Tony Crouchelli, Jennilyn Robles, Alyssa Balderama, Jessica Milne, Bernardo Jimenez, and Kasandra Appice to name just a few. This will also be the first student produced show at the high school. Melissa Milne will be assistant director for the show alongside Mr. Coviello with Kerr Lockhart as music Director and Heidi Kolb as conductor.