

Michael Rotondi

Read the story of how this Central Valley junior went from a BOCES behavioral adjustment program in elementary school to a successful student, Junior ROTC member and BOCES Culinary Hospitality student.

Inside:

Meeting agenda, budget and voting info, Community Partnership Award, Student Spotlight, Program Highlights and more!



Herkimer BOCES Annual Meeting - April 2, 2020

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The Annual Meeting Report serves as the program for the 2020 Annual Meeting and provides news, budget information and feature stories.

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Agenda for the Annual Meeting

In order to assure everyone's safety and well-being as we all navigate the coronavirus challenge, we have revised the Annual Meeting to meet the statutory requirements only.

I. Call to Order

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Approval of 2019 Minutes

II. Adjournment

Administrative and capital budget primers

Administrative Budget Primer

BOCES operates with the collective support of its component school districts; the districts must pay an administrative assessment to cover the administrative portion of the total costs of operating BOCES.

A district's responsibility or level of ownership of the administrative budget is determined by its student population. The number used is resident weighted average daily attendance [RWADA].

Each district's proportion of the total RWADA for all districts is the district's portion of the administrative budget responsibility.

The BOCES Administrative Budget is submitted to each component Board of Education for annual approval in April.

If approved by the Boards of Education, the administrative budget is reviewed by the State Education Department for

its compliance with law and regulation.

Upon approval, the administrative budget is static. This means that, unlike program budgets maintained by BOCES, the administrative budget does not fluctuate because of district requests.

The categories that make up the administrative budget are prescribed by law and, therefore, are consistent BOCES-to-BOCES throughout New York state.

Capital Budget Primer

An estimate of the rentals, capital expenditures and debt service of the BOCES is presented along with the



Herkimer BOCES Automotive Technology student Michael Spratley, of Frankfort-Schuyler, works on a vehicle in class.

BOCES administrative budget.

State legislation, which gave component boards the right to vote on the administrative budget in 1994, purposely exempted the capital budget from a vote.

Were the capital budget fixed, BOCES would be unable to respond to mid-year district requests requiring additional classroom rentals, such as special education classes.

Minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting

Scot Mondore, chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. and requested everyone rise to recite the "Pledge of Allegiance." Mondore reviewed the notice of Annual Meeting and the 2018 Annual Meeting minutes.

Ronald Loiacono moved and Robert Maxwell seconded a motion to approve the 2018 Annual Meeting minutes. All members present voted in favor.

Mondore noted the BOCES Annual Meeting report that was distributed to attendees.

Herkimer BOCES Board of Education Vice President Thomas Shypski and District Superintendent Sandy Sherwood recognized Herkimer BOCES Board of Education President Daniel LaLonde for his 15 years of service to the Herkimer BOCES and his 19 years of board service to the former Ilion Central School District Board of Education and the Central Valley Central School District Board of Education.

LaLonde welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting and introduced the BOCES Board of Education. The Richfield Springs Drumline directed by Paul Blake was complimented on providing an award winning performance, and students in the BOCES Culinary Hospitality program and their instructor Dominick Mauro were recognized for providing the evening's hors d'oeuvres and dinner.

The "Creating Opportunities for Growth" presentation was given by Sherwood.

Three candidates have been nominated for three BOCES Board of Education seats, which are for three-year terms.

At this time, the candidates seeking a position on the BOCES Board of Education were introduced and given an opportunity to speak on behalf of their candidacy: Janine Lynch – West Canada Valley Central School District; Daniel Voce – Herkimer Central School District; Jane North – Central Valley Central School District.

With no further business, Voce moved and Lynch seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. All members present voted in favor.

-Shawn Maxson, Clerk of the Board

A letter to our component school board members and superintendents

April 2020

Dear component board members and superintendents,

This is my first year serving as the president of the Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES, and it has certainly been a busy year! Let me start by saying thank you to all our component boards and superintendents for the continuing support and many conversations around student needs and how we can work as a region to meet them in the most cost effective way.

While there are many challenges for our region with declining enrollment but increasing needs, this also creates the opportunity for us to forge new collaborations and create new classrooms to meet the needs of the students. We have seen an increase in the number of special education classes being offered through BOCES and wonderful growth in student-led programs as well as more services in our alternative education program over at the Remington building. Even though the public vote has been delayed, I remain hopeful that we will end

up owning the Remington building and that this will create more opportunities for students.

A big thank you goes to Linda Tharp, president of the Owen D. Young Board of Education, administration and the Owen D. Young students for intending to host this year's Annual Meeting and provide the entertainment. The meeting won't be the same without our usual chance to see the hard work of students in person by seeing, hearing and tasting the many talents and efforts of students from our region.

I look forward to our continued advocacy for all the schools and children in the region. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me or any of the BOCES board members with your ideas and suggestions. . . together we are so much stronger than any one of us on our own.

*Sincerely,
Tom Shypski
Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES
Board of Education President*



Herkimer BOCES Board of Education members, from left, front: Ronald Loiacono, Jane North, Janine Lynch and Michele Szarek. Back: Linda Tharp, Daniel Voce, James Schmidt and William Miller.
Absent from photo: Thomas Shypski and Michael Clements.

2020-21 Proposed Budget Summaries

Summary of Proposed Administrative Budget

Personal Services*	\$488,963
Fringe Benefits**	\$264,621
Equipment	\$0
Supplies and Materials	\$35,000
Revenue Note Interest Expense	\$18,000
Total Contract Expense	\$287,950
Retirement Benefits	\$1,874,767
Net Transfers (other than capital)	\$226,449
Total Administrative Budget	\$3,195,750

*Salaries of central administrative and supervisory personnel.

**Benefits of central administrative and supervisory personnel.

Summary of Tentative Capital Budget

Rental of Facilities	\$229,342
Transfer to Capital Project Funds	\$1,346,047
Total Capital Budget	\$1,575,389

Summary of Tentative Program Budget

Career and Technical Education	\$4,779,789
Instruction of Students with Disabilities	\$7,531,409
Itinerant Services	\$4,249,282
General Instruction	\$2,884,207
Instructional Support	\$1,974,214
Total Program Budget	\$21,418,901

Compensation of District Superintendent of Schools

State Salary	\$43,499
BOCES Salary	\$129,541
Annualized Benefits	\$22,258
Total Compensation	\$195,298

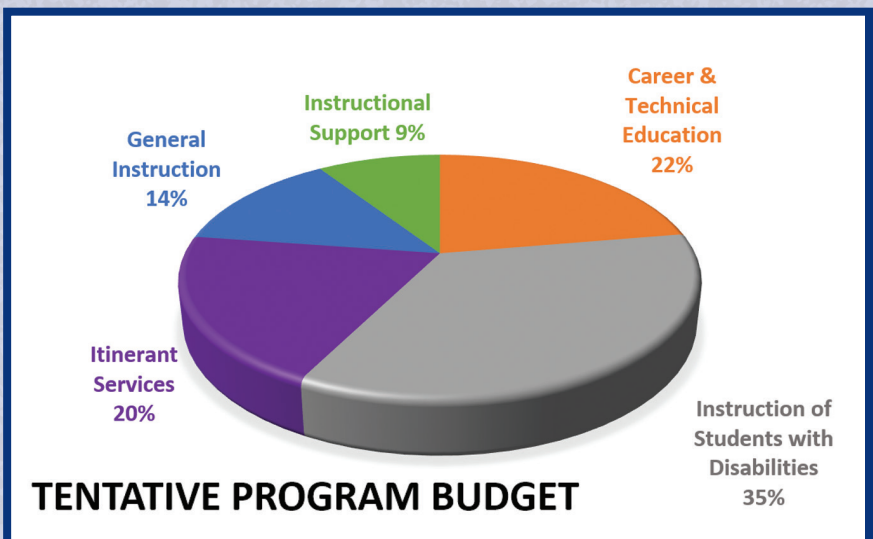
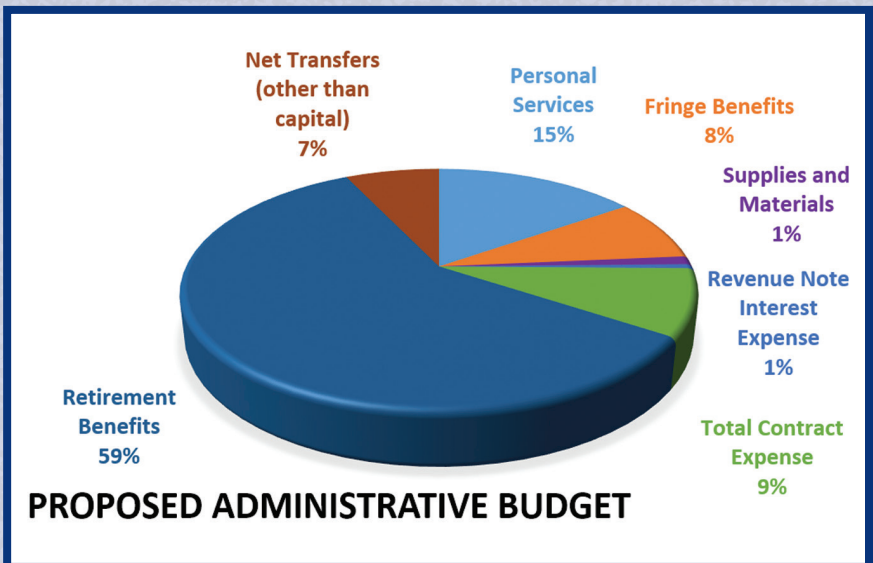
Voting Information

Members of all component boards of education will vote on the 2020-21 Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES administrative budget on Wednesday, April 15.

Voting will take place in each district. After board members cast individual votes, each school board will file a single majority vote.

Component boards will also vote on four BOCES Board of Education seats, which are all for three-year terms.

Nominees for the board seats reside in the following districts: Dolgeville, Mount Markham, Owen D. Young and Poland.



A look at component school enrollments for the last 7 years

Central Valley:

- ▶ 2013-14: 2,238
- ▶ 2014-15: 2,224
- ▶ 2015-16: 2,229
- ▶ 2016-17: 2,216
- ▶ 2017-18: 2,191
- ▶ 2018-19: 2,121
- ▶ 2019-20: 2,114

Dolgeville:

- ▶ 2013-14: 924
- ▶ 2014-15: 877
- ▶ 2015-16: 893
- ▶ 2016-17: 851
- ▶ 2017-18: 874
- ▶ 2018-19: 804
- ▶ 2019-20: 815

Frankfort-Schuyler:

- ▶ 2013-14: 1,027
- ▶ 2014-15: 987
- ▶ 2015-16: 955
- ▶ 2016-17: 942
- ▶ 2017-18: 949
- ▶ 2018-19: 927
- ▶ 2019-20: 942

Herkimer:

- ▶ 2013-14: 1,155
- ▶ 2014-15: 1,132
- ▶ 2015-16: 1,141
- ▶ 2016-17: 1,101
- ▶ 2017-18: 1,052
- ▶ 2018-19: 1,066
- ▶ 2019-20: 1,044

Little Falls:

- ▶ 2013-14: 1,110
- ▶ 2014-15: 1,085
- ▶ 2015-16: 1,075
- ▶ 2016-17: 1,104
- ▶ 2017-18: 1,112
- ▶ 2018-19: 1,096
- ▶ 2019-20: 1,076

Mount Markham:

- ▶ 2013-14: 1,080
- ▶ 2014-15: 1,060
- ▶ 2015-16: 1,055
- ▶ 2016-17: 1,049
- ▶ 2017-18: 1,038
- ▶ 2018-19: 1,058
- ▶ 2019-20: 1,044

Owen D. Young:

- ▶ 2013-14: 193
- ▶ 2014-15: 201
- ▶ 2015-16: 191
- ▶ 2016-17: 191
- ▶ 2017-18: 193
- ▶ 2018-19: 194
- ▶ 2019-20: 184

Poland:

- ▶ 2013-14: 583
- ▶ 2014-15: 585
- ▶ 2015-16: 549
- ▶ 2016-17: 572
- ▶ 2017-18: 551
- ▶ 2018-19: 551
- ▶ 2019-20: 536

Richfield Springs:

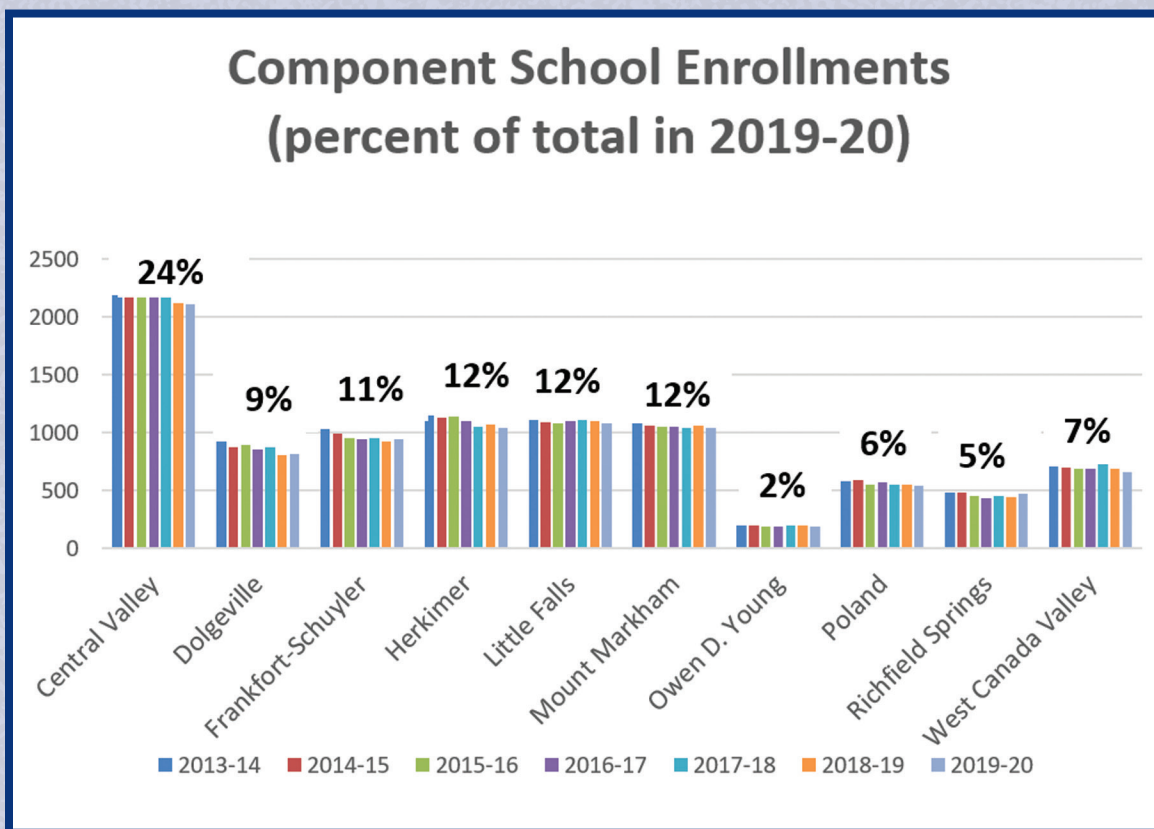
- ▶ 2013-14: 477
- ▶ 2014-15: 478
- ▶ 2015-16: 448
- ▶ 2016-17: 431
- ▶ 2017-18: 449
- ▶ 2018-19: 441
- ▶ 2019-20: 467

West Canada Valley:

- ▶ 2013-14: 710
- ▶ 2014-15: 700
- ▶ 2015-16: 683
- ▶ 2016-17: 689
- ▶ 2017-18: 727
- ▶ 2018-19: 686
- ▶ 2019-20: 660

Total:

- ▶ 2013-14: 9,497
- ▶ 2014-15: 9,329
- ▶ 2015-16: 9,219
- ▶ 2016-17: 9,146
- ▶ 2017-18: 9,136
- ▶ 2018-19: 8,944
- ▶ 2019-20: 8,882



Community Partnership Profile: Gehring-Tricot Corp. teams with Herkimer BOCES for recruiting, introducing students to career options

During a recent career day at Poland Central School District that the Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES School to Careers program helped organize, elementary students started chanting for former Syracuse Orange and NBA star John Wallace to conclude his guest speech with a slam dunk.

Wallace obliged to loud cheers and slammed the ball through the hoop with two hands, but that wasn't the most important thing he did that day. Wallace, who attends School to Careers events in partnership with Gehring-Tricot Corp., spoke to students of various grade levels about his own path to success and the local career opportunities at Gehring-Tricot.

Gary Farquhar Jr., vice president of manufacturing at Gehring-Tricot, and Kayla Morrill, human resources manager at Gehring-Tricot, joined Wallace at the career day, as they regularly do at School to Careers events.

Farquhar told students more about Gehring-Tricot, which designs and manufactures textiles for apparel, industrial, sports, medical and aerospace use and pretty much everything in between. The company's Dolgeville location does dyeing and finishing, the Belmont Mills division in St. Johnsville does knitting and the Fall River, Mass., facility does weaving.

"When it comes to textiles, we're one of the leaders in the country," Farquhar said, to Poland students, "and a lot of people don't even know we're there."

That's why Gehring-Tricot Corp. has been happy to work with Herkimer BOCES at School to Careers events and with the Valley Pathways in Technology Early College High School to increase exposure and help with recruiting.

Because these efforts have been helpful to Herkimer BOCES programs and students in component districts, Herkimer BOCES has named Gehring-Tricot as the winner

of the Herkimer BOCES annual Community Partnership Award for 2020.

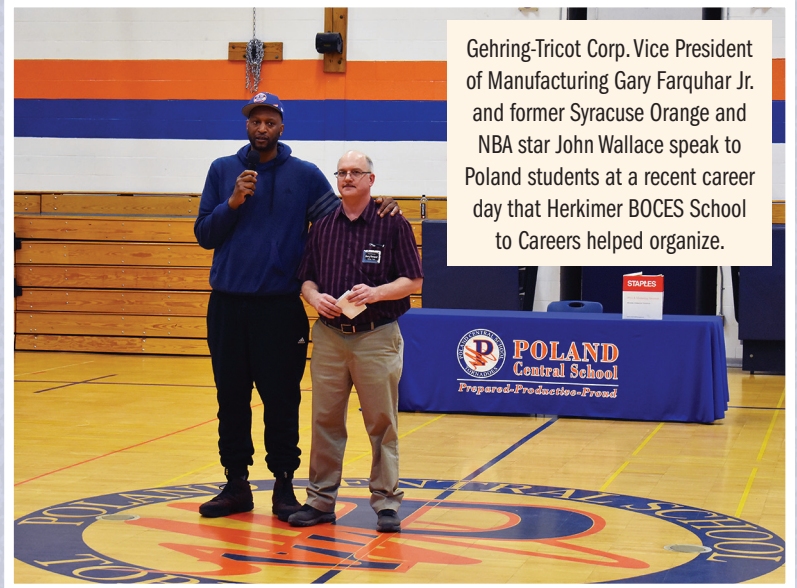
Herkimer BOCES Director of Technical Education and Instructional Support Services Kathy Fox nominated Gehring-Tricot for the award for supporting the VP-TECH and STC programs.

The partnership

Herkimer BOCES District Superintendent Sandra Sherwood sent a letter to Gehring-Tricot officials announcing the award.

"We appreciate your dedication to students throughout the Mohawk Valley by

your participation in many of our programs," Sherwood wrote. "Mentor Mondays give VP-TECH students the opportunity to gain insight into workplace protocols, facility tours provide connection between school and work, and job shadow and internship experiences give our students an opportunity to work one-on-one with



Gehring-Tricot Corp. Vice President of Manufacturing Gary Farquhar Jr. and former Syracuse Orange and NBA star John Wallace speak to Poland students at a recent career day that Herkimer BOCES School to Careers helped organize.

industry experts. Your willingness to assist our School to Careers program with numerous career day presentations and your connection to John Wallace have provided great insight into career pathways. In addition, your support providing mock interviews and guidance through inspirational messages at

VP-TECH Convocation continue to inspire students to strive for excellence. We also appreciate that you are a member of our consultant craft committee for Advanced Manufacturing."

Farquhar said he is proud of the company's involvement in the community and feels honored to receive the award.

"That's great," he said. "It feels good to be appreciated by the community for all the work we're doing."

Herkimer BOCES School to Careers liaison and work-based learning coordinator MaryBeth Napolitano also commented on

behalf of the STC team on the benefits of teaming with Gehring-Tricot.

"Our friends at Gehring-Tricot Corp. see the value in a partnership with Herkimer BOCES School to Careers and VP-TECH," Napolitano said. "They are the pipeline to influencing students to achieve workplace ready skills and the desire to gain a solid



Gehring-Tricot Corp. Vice President of Manufacturing Gary Farquhar Jr. looks into a dyeing tank while giving a tour of the Dolgeville plant.

foundation necessary for employment. Gehring-Tricot is committed to supporting all our programs and initiatives, inspiring our students to become independent and productive citizens."

'Opportunity to grow'

Farquhar's more than 32 years thus far at Gehring-Tricot started in 1987 while he was a part-time worker doing odds-and-ends jobs at the Dolgeville facility such as picking up lace scraps. At the time, he was a Herkimer College student, earning an associate degree in conservation law enforcement.

Instead of a career in the field of his degree, he continued at Gehring-Tricot and was transferred to the lace quality control department in 1989 and then to the expediting department in 1990 and became full-time.

As he stayed with the company, learned on the job and received training, he was promoted to assistant plant manager in 2000, to plant manager in 2003 and to vice president of manufacturing for all three Gehring-Tricot locations in 2011. He also became a member of the Board of Directors/an officer of the company in 2012.

"When I first started, I never imagined being in the position I am today," Farquhar said. "It's been an enjoyable career because I've been able to experience the entire place from start to finish."

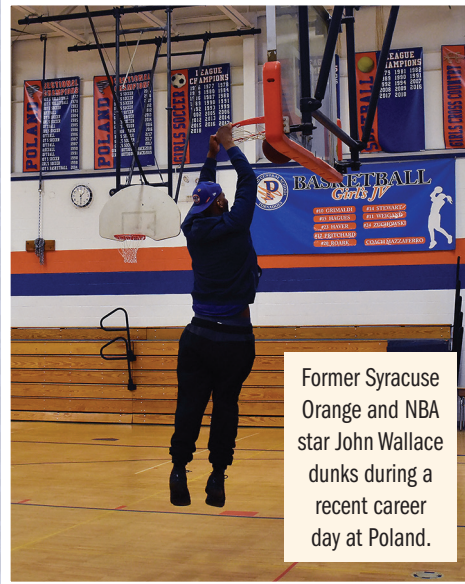
Most managers and supervisors at Gehring-Tricot have been promoted from within, Farquhar said. The company currently has career opportunities available in accounting, quality control, engineering, sales, customer service, entry level production and more. Once hired, people have chances for further education or training provided through the company, he said.

"For everyone who is a self-motivated individual, this company will give them their opportunity to grow," he said.

Recruiting efforts

Gehring-Tricot started out in Dolgeville as

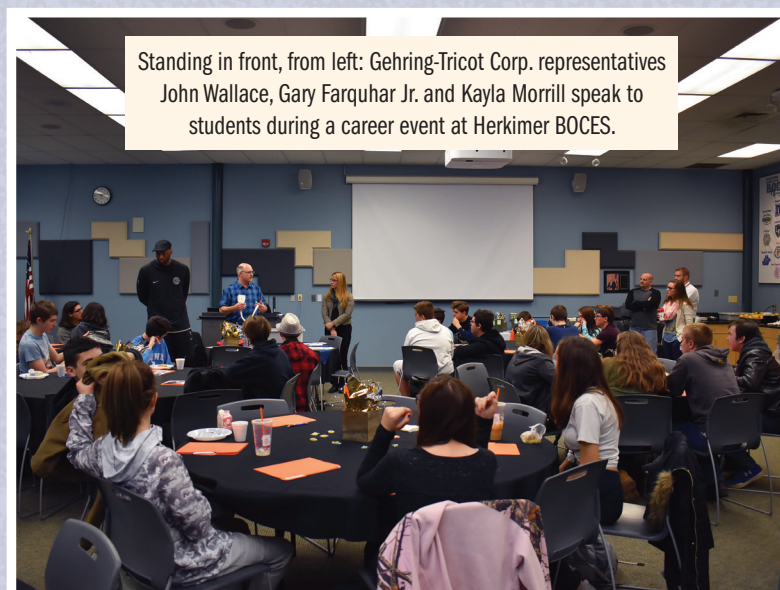
primarily a lace manufacturing facility and has become a very technical production company now with multiple periods of growth, Farquhar said.



Former Syracuse Orange and NBA star John Wallace dunks during a recent career day at Poland.

As the company has grown, there has been some difficulty finding enough people to fill jobs including trouble recruiting young people, so Farquhar reached out to Herkimer BOCES.

The partnership has been going for a couple of years now, so it's still early to



Standing in front, from left: Gehring-Tricot Corp. representatives John Wallace, Gary Farquhar Jr. and Kayla Morrill speak to students during a career event at Herkimer BOCES.

judge the impact, but there have been a couple of adult hires connected to the efforts, and more and more students are finding out about the company, Farquhar said.

"The better we can reach them, the better everything will be," he said.

At school events, Farquhar offers up an

open invite to contact the company for a tour or information.

"Any school or individual that would like to get a tour to see what we are doing, they can better understand what we do by seeing it with their own eyes," he said.

Farquhar said Wallace also makes a big difference with recruiting. It's easy to see that Wallace's fame, personality and energy draw students' attention during events.

Wallace has been close friends with company owner Skip Gehring and his wife, Brenda, for a long time, and that led to Wallace putting on youth basketball camps in Dolgeville in partnership with Gehring-Tricot and becoming involved with the recruitment and apparel aspects of the business, Farquhar said.

"He just enjoys working with us and giving back to the community," Farquhar said.

'What you can do'

When students tour Gehring-Tricot or learn about the company during a career day, they find out Gehring-Tricot does many interesting things such as creating jerseys for college and professional sports teams and making vests, medical devices and antimicrobial tents for the military.

"It's a lot more than what they envision," Farquhar said. "When kids think textiles, they think shirts and pants."

Some examples of what textiles can do include creating chaps that can stop a chainsaw and making the same fabric repel or absorb water depending on what type of textile is used, Farquhar said. One type of white material can have red Gatorade poured on it and then be cleaned off with cold water, he said.

"What you can do with textiles is really unlimited," he said.

When students realize what the company really has to offer, it's a gratifying experience, Farquhar said.

"It feels good," he said. "We can provide them an opportunity to make a very good living for themselves. Once we see motivated individuals, it's in their hands."

Student Spotlight – Michael Rotondi: ‘I wouldn’t be who I am now’

Behavioral adjustment program puts student on successful path including Culinary Hospitality at BOCES

There were times in elementary school when Michael A. Rotondi’s behavior got so bad that staff had to work together to support him and maintain safety.

Now, Rotondi, 17, has good grades as a junior at Central Valley, participates in the U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, runs indoor and outdoor track and takes the Culinary Hospitality program at Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES in preparation for his goal of becoming a chef in the U.S. Navy.

Rotondi credits the teachers in the Herkimer BOCES 8:1:1 behavioral adjustment special education program for helping him turn things around in elementary school and allowing him to return to general education in seventh grade.

Herkimer BOCES has had an important impact on his life, he said.

“I don’t know how it did, but it did because I wouldn’t be who I am now,” he said.

Rotondi, originally a Mohawk student, was in Herkimer BOCES behavioral adjustment classes for grades two to six – including with then-special education teacher Tim Johnston in grades three to five at Benton Hall Academy in Little Falls and with special education teacher Allison Johnson in sixth grade at Herkimer Elementary School.

Johnston and Johnson were a great help, Rotondi said.

“I kind of got lucky,” he said.

Teaching assistants Star Treusdell, Tammy Senft, Shelley Cotton and Sandy Talarico were also part of the team that worked with him during those years.

‘Lots of trouble’

Rotondi has shown “tremendous growth” from where he was in his early school years, said his father, Michael L. Rotondi.

“He had problems ever since he started kindergarten, first grade,” the elder Rotondi said.

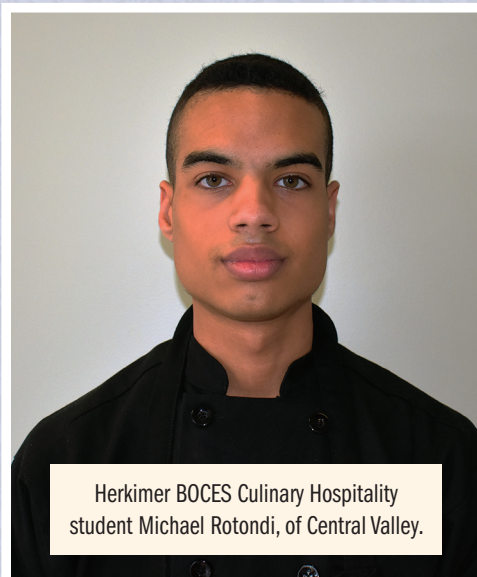
During the school year, the elder Rotondi raised the younger Rotondi and his brother, Tyler, as a single father since they were 4 and 2, respectively. They spend time with

their mother in Miami during the summer.

In first grade, the younger Rotondi couldn’t maintain his behavior for a whole school day, so he was taught core lessons in the morning and sent home for the afternoon.

After the younger Rotondi joined the Herkimer BOCES special education program in second grade, the elder Rotondi went to pick him up one day and saw that staff had to respond to disruptive, aggressive and high intensity behaviors his son displayed.

“It was really, really bad,” the elder Rotondi said.



The younger Rotondi doesn’t remember a lot about why he would misbehave.

“It’s just that I caused a lot of trouble,” he said. “Lots and lots of trouble.”

Johnston, who is now the supervisor of special education at the Herkimer BOCES William E. Busacker Complex, said the younger Rotondi came to his classroom in third grade with emotional behavioral difficulties and struggled to adjust to the 8:1:1 program. The first couple of years were the roughest, he said.

If the younger Rotondi was asked to do something that he thought was too difficult for him or that he didn’t want to do, he would act out in response, Johnston said.

It was challenging adjusting to the program and spending the whole day with Johnston, the younger Rotondi said. It was

difficult to learn when misbehaving yourself or seeing other students in the program misbehaving, he said.

Johnston at times had to use close proximity and physical deflection to de-escalate the younger Rotondi’s behavior. The younger Rotondi would exhaust such high amounts of energy that it would often result in him falling asleep immediately after the behavioral episodes.

By spring is when his behavior would get the worst, he said.

“I was always a good kid, and then April came, and down it went,” he said.

‘A transformation’

The younger Rotondi was a lovable kid, and the teachers and teaching assistants genuinely liked him and wanted to help him behave, Johnston said.

And help him they did.

“By fifth or sixth grade, it just stopped,” the younger Rotondi said.

He started seeing students getting to take some classes in general education or getting sent back to district.

“So I guess I started behaving myself,” he said. “I think something just kicked in one day.”

He decided to start learning and following directions.

“Be good for one year,” he said, of what he told himself initially.

In fifth grade, he was able to take English and science with Little Falls general education students, he said.

That year was a big turnaround, Johnston said. The younger Rotondi still had some moments such as not putting in enough effort or having mild behavioral issues, but he wasn’t being aggressive or getting suspended, Johnston said.

Seeing the younger Rotondi be organized and driven and talk about his homework and test scores was a remarkable feeling, Johnston said.

“It was just a transformation,” he said.

‘From then forward’

In sixth grade, the younger Rotondi

joined Allison Johnson's 8:1:1 class at the Herkimer Elementary School.

"It's kind of a success from then forward," Johnston said.

The younger Rotondi said he got to know more students that school year. He proved that he could do well with a second teacher, and a seventh-grade teacher from Central Valley observed him and thought she could help him, so Johnson and others determined that he was ready to return to general education.

"It created the opportunity for him to get back," Johnston said. "I think that was the best for him."

Johnston remembers feeling proud, along with some nervousness and hoping that the younger Rotondi keeps it together after all of his hard work.

"To see him go back to district was a reminder of all the hard work that went into that," Johnston said. "He worked at it."

Before the behavioral adjustment program, the younger Rotondi got away with things from teachers, but he quickly learned that he couldn't get away with them with Johnston, and then later with Johnson as well, the elder Rotondi said. Johnston did amazing and really got the younger Rotondi turned around, and then Johnson ran with it from there, the elder Rotondi said.

"The BOCES program helped him out tremendously," the elder Rotondi said. "Tim and Allison were very big influences on Michael."

"The BOCES program helped him out tremendously," the elder Rotondi said. "Tim and Allison were very big influences on Michael."

'Amazingly well'

Mohawk and Ilion had merged into Central Valley while the younger Rotondi was in sixth grade at Herkimer, so in seventh grade, he returned to general education in a new school district.

"Some of the kids remembered me; some

didn't," he said. "I was shy because I was learning the grounds and getting to know Ilion kids."

He mostly stayed quiet and watched what others were doing. About halfway through that year, he felt adjusted.

Once he got his grades up and got on the honor roll, he was allowed by his father to join indoor and outdoor track. The elder Rotondi said it's good to see his son getting good grades, playing sports, having friends and being outgoing.

If the younger Rotondi passes all his classes this year as he has been on course to do, he will already have 22 credits and five Regents and will just need English 12, Social Studies 12 and physical

clearing snow off a porch roof, the elder Rotondi said.

"He's got an amazing work ethic," the elder Rotondi said.

'To be a cook'

Like the younger Rotondi now, the elder Rotondi took a food service program at Herkimer BOCES in 1979 and 1980. He went on to cook in the U.S. Army, held various other jobs and was cook at the Neighborhood Center in Utica for eight years. At 58 years old now, he has spent about 40 years cooking, he said.

The younger Rotondi was influenced by his father's career. Other than that, he isn't sure what it is that appeals to him about cooking – just that it has always been an

interest for him, including watching a lot of Rachel Ray when he was younger.

"Ever since I could speak, I wanted to be a cook like my father," he said.

The elder Rotondi remembers that too.

"Ever since he has been 5 years old, he's never wanted to be anything else," he said.

The younger Rotondi said another factor in

why he likes to cook could be because he has tried so many foods due to his father being Italian and a chef and his mother being Jamaican and living in Florida.

The younger Rotondi remembers visiting the Herkimer BOCES WEB Complex with Johnston, making cookies in a kitchen in the special education wing and getting his hair cut by MaryBeth Napolitano, who was then instructor for the Cosmetology program and is now the Herkimer BOCES School to Careers liaison and work-based learning coordinator. He later came on a tour of the building, before deciding to join the Culinary Hospitality program with instructor Dominick Mauro.

(continued on page 10) ...



education as a senior to meet graduation requirements, the elder Rotondi said.

The younger Rotondi also joined the Junior ROTC as a freshman because he thought it would be a good idea to try it out, and it could help him with his plans for the future.

"He said yes because he loves structure," the elder Rotondi said. "He's in his third year of ROTC now, and he's doing amazingly well."

He also does community service through Junior ROTC helping a friend of his father's from the Army who lives in Cold Brook. When he helps, he spends eight hours per day with tasks such as cutting wood or

Student Spotlight ... (continued from page 9)

Mauro, walked by while the younger Rotondi was being interviewed for this story, and happily offered his endorsement of him receiving the Student Spotlight.

"Great kid right here," Mauro said.

The younger Rotondi's career plans include going into the Job Corps for an 18-24 month program for additional learning and getting a better understanding of how to live on his own, before then going into the Navy and becoming a chef, the elder Rotondi said, noting that he already passed a required military test.

"He's well on his way to a successful life," the elder Rotondi said.

'How far he has come'

In the fall of 2019, Johnston was walking in the hallway at the WEB Complex and saw a young man holding a door open for his classmates. The young man said, "Hey, Mr. Johnston, do you know who I am?"

It turned out to be the younger Rotondi, who was significantly older, taller and more physically fit than when Johnston last had

him as a student in fifth grade.

"When I saw him, I didn't even recognize him at first," Johnston said.

The younger Rotondi's father raised him to be respectful and hard-working, but behavioral issues were holding him back, Johnston said. Now, he is no longer brought down by those issues and has all the attributes you would want to see in a student, Johnston said.

"He's still that very respectful kid, but with a difference," Johnston said. "He's a really nice, genuine, respectful young man who has come forward."

Seeing the younger Rotondi turn things around is a testament to the Herkimer BOCES behavioral adjustment program and creates a feeling of pride, Johnston said.

"I think it's a true sense of accomplishment," he said.

It's great to know that the younger Rotondi was able to continue being successful after the program, Johnston said.

"Just to see him come back to BOCES

and be career driven and committed," Johnston said. "I think that's really a tribute to the type of kid he is and where he's heading."

The elder Rotondi said his son went through many challenges and a lot of counseling and medications as a younger student, but now he has no medications and is doing well. The elder Rotondi said he is very grateful for all the people at Herkimer BOCES and Central Valley who have been very supportive of his son through the years.

In the end, however, it was up to his son to make the change, he said.

"He's come a long way," the elder Rotondi said. "He had a lot of help, but his own determination got him this far now. I'm amazed at how far he has come."

The younger Rotondi was asked to reflect on how it feels to now be considered a BOCES success story after everything he went through.

"I don't know," he said. "I'm just kind of happy that I am one."

Program Highlights – updates about just some of the many great programs at Herkimer BOCES

CTE

Welding has had two students achieve their state Department of Transportation certifications. Students who achieve their DOT certifications learn the rigorous requirements to achieve their vertical and/or overhead DOT certification.

Our Building Construction program students, led by instructor John Martin, are well on their way with their 35th annual house. This house is fully framed and enclosed and roofed, allowing students to proceed with interior work during the inclement weather.

Speaking of weather, our students in Heavy Equipment were earning work-based learning hours helping to keep the BOCES parking lots free of snow—as they moved the snow accumulation to make room for future snowfall.

Keeping with the weather theme, students in our Automotive Technology program were inundated with requests for putting on winter tires and winterizing vehicles.



Herkimer BOCES Welding student Reese Battisti, of Little Falls, does welding work in class.

Sarah Weeks, our Child and Family Services instructor, has been running a successful pre-school program twice a week this school year.

Instructor Melinda Maycock and our

Visual Communications students worked in collaboration with public information specialist Bryon Ackerman on our new Career and Technical Education recruitment video.

(continued on page 11) ...

Program Highlights ... **(continued from page 10)**

In our Health Science Careers program, we are proud to recognize 11 new students as certified nursing assistants.

Increased opportunities for technical endorsements: Herkimer BOCES is in the process of adding Precision Exams as a new resource, as one of our CTE certification testing platforms. Precision Exams gives the teacher unlimited access to exams, reports and certifications that validate the skills and knowledge students are gaining in the classroom. There are over 190 CTE exams across the 16 national career clusters. These exams also increased flexibility for students to earn their technical endorsement graduation pathway.

SkillsUSA

More than 30 Herkimer BOCES students won awards from competitions at the SkillsUSA Area 2 Regional Conference on Feb. 28 at Morrisville College.

Herkimer BOCES brought 68 students and eight advisors to the Regional Conference, and all students and advisors also won their Statesman Awards.

The following Herkimer BOCES students won awards in the following competitions:

Advertising Design

- First Place: Sarah Hamilton (Frankfort-Schuyler)

Technical Computer Applications

- First Place: Garrett Lettow (Dolgeville)

Commercial Baking

- Third Place: Lexi Tennant (Dolgeville)

Food Prep Assistant

- Second Place: Andrew Lambert (Frankfort-Schuyler)

Employment Application Process Basic

- Third Place: Keri Delaney (Central Valley)

Extemporaneous Speaking

- First Place: Charles Buckley (Central Valley)

Prepared Speech

- Second Place: Elijah Hermanowski (Little Falls)

- Third Place: Cailyn McCauley (Dolgeville)

Action Skills

- First Place: Brandon Fralick Jr. (Mount Markham)
- Third Place: Michael Martinez (Central Valley)

Promotional Bulletin Board (Team)

- Third Place: Kathryn Marmet (Frankfort-Schuyler) and Don Geyer (Frankfort-Schuyler)

Quiz Bowl (Team)

- Second Place: Marietta Altieri (Herkimer), Jared Lamanna (Central Valley), Zach Kleist (Dolgeville), Zach Janis (Frankfort-Schuyler) and Isaiah Brothers (Little Falls)
- Third Place: Zoe Randall (Central Valley), Alyssa Bregard (Central Valley), Jordan Corsette (Central Valley), Holly Allen (Dolgeville) and Dominic Case (Mount Markham)

Related Technical Math

- Third Place: Olivia Talarico (Frankfort-Schuyler)

Auto Vehicle Maintenance Basic

- Third Place: Zachary Duerr (Mount Markham)

Auto Service Technology

- Second Place: Dylan Coleman (Frankfort-Schuyler)

Welding

- Third Place: Reese Battisti (Little Falls)

Power Equipment Technology

- Second Place: Michial Nichols (Herkimer)
- Third Place: Casey Elthorp (Central Valley)

Small Engine Service Basic

- First Place: Brent Pfeiffer (Mount Markham)



Herkimer BOCES SkillsUSA students who won awards at the SkillsUSA Area 2 Regional Conference on Feb. 28 at Morrisville College pose for a photo.

- Second Place: Meghan Ingalls (Mount Markham)

Motorcycle Service Technology

- First Place: Micky Walker (Mount Markham)
- Third Place: Sheldon Loiacono (Mount Markham)

VP-TECH

Valley Pathways in Technology Early College High School is our program where students enter a four to six year program and simultaneously earn their high school diploma and their associate degree.

Our current program of study with Herkimer College for the associate degree in quality assurance is outlined below with the number of credits next to each course:

First year:

Semester 1:

Business Communications: 3
College Writing: 3
First Year Student Seminar: 1
Computer Applications I: 3
Introductory Sociology: 3
Western Civilization Selective: 3
Total: 16

Semester 2:

College Literature: 3
Intro to Technical Writing: 3
Psychology of Work: 3
American History Selective: 3
Humanities Selective: 3
Physical Education Activity: 1
Total: 16

(continued on page 12) ...

Program Highlights ... (continued from page 11)

Second year:

Semester 3:

Mathematical Statistics I: 3

Quality Assurance I: 3

Lab Science Selective: 4

Lab Science Selective: 4

Physical Education Activity: 1

Total: 15

Semester 4:

Mathematical Statistics II: 3

Interpersonal Communication: 3

Quality Assurance II: 3

Lab Science
Selective: 4

Lab Science
Selective: 4

Total: 17

Total degree credit hours: 64

Herkimer BOCES is exploring, with Herkimer College, the possibility of adding additional degree pathways and programs for our students.

Our VP-TECH students completed some senior internships during the college break between the fall and spring semesters.

VP-TECH students have also participated in several field trips focusing on all aspects of manufacturing – such as visiting Heidelberg Bakery and Gehring-Tricot Corp.

Health and Safety Service

The Herkimer BOCES Health and Safety Service has added new services and partnerships over the last year.

This school year, the Safety Service added a part-time school safety advisor position with James Garcia, a former Utica police sergeant and criminal justice teacher at Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES. The school

safety advisor is focusing on partnering with first responders, coordinating drills and exercises and identifying gaps in safety and security procedures.

One main area Garcia has focused on to date is facilitating regular meetings for the school resource officers stationed in each of the districts to have an opportunity for networking, sharing information and providing professional development. Based on the response to the position and demand for increased services from the districts, the school safety advisor will be a full-time position next school year. He also helped secure a donation of 200 buckets and lids to the Central Valley Central School

districts need at the time of the specific emergency or crisis.

Pathways Academy

The Pathways Academy at Remington has made some very positive changes this past year. Under the leadership of Principal Patrick Corrigan and Assistant Principal Dave Itzo, Pathways is undergoing a year-long social emotional learning project. Our Pathways administrators and teachers are working collaboratively with consultant Diane McDonald and our instructional support specialists to improve the wellness of our staff and students.

Educators, administrators and students deal with tremendous stressors on a daily basis. Stress has a significant impact on

every aspect of our lives, our wellness and our mental health. At Pathways, we borrow an airline safety practice where we recognize the need to put on our own “oxygen mask” first, before assisting anyone else. The staff at Pathways are learning and practicing strategies including breath, mindfulness and neural integration, as well as social-emotional learning as a way to build trust, increase



District from Lowe's. They will be used to store emergency supplies in classrooms across the district.

The Herkimer BOCES Health and Safety Service has partnered with the Madison-Oneida BOCES School Communication Service to offer, on an as-needed basis, assistance to districts with crisis/emergency communications at no additional cost to the districts.

The School Communication Service will be available on a half-day or full-day basis to provide districts with: language to post on website/social media; letters to parents/staff; press releases; media prep; media outreach, etc., tailored to what the

empathy and improve outcomes for all at Pathways, including themselves. Monthly, staff identify personal and professional goals and make commitments to themselves and the group to use a particular strategy or strategies as a way to improve one aspect of their lives. Using these strategies personally is a very authentic way to teach them to students. Seeing teachers using a breathing technique during a stressful situation is much more powerful than telling students about it.

Being knowledgeable of tools and strategies to support moving through stress, anxiety and daily pressures helps to create a community of wellness. When these

tools are applied consistently across all stakeholders, we help to cultivate a culture of positive mental health and social well-being, inspiring collaboration and positive communication.

Corrigan and McDonald will present their social emotional learning project this year at the 2020 National Principals Conference at National Harbor, Md. They have titled their session: “Building School Communities of Wellness, Mental Health and Social Well-Being to Ignite Human Potential.”

Career Pathways

Administrators and teachers are working to create more robust career experiences for students at the Pathways Academy at Remington. This will include the creation of a course structure that maximizes career-oriented experiences for Pathways students.

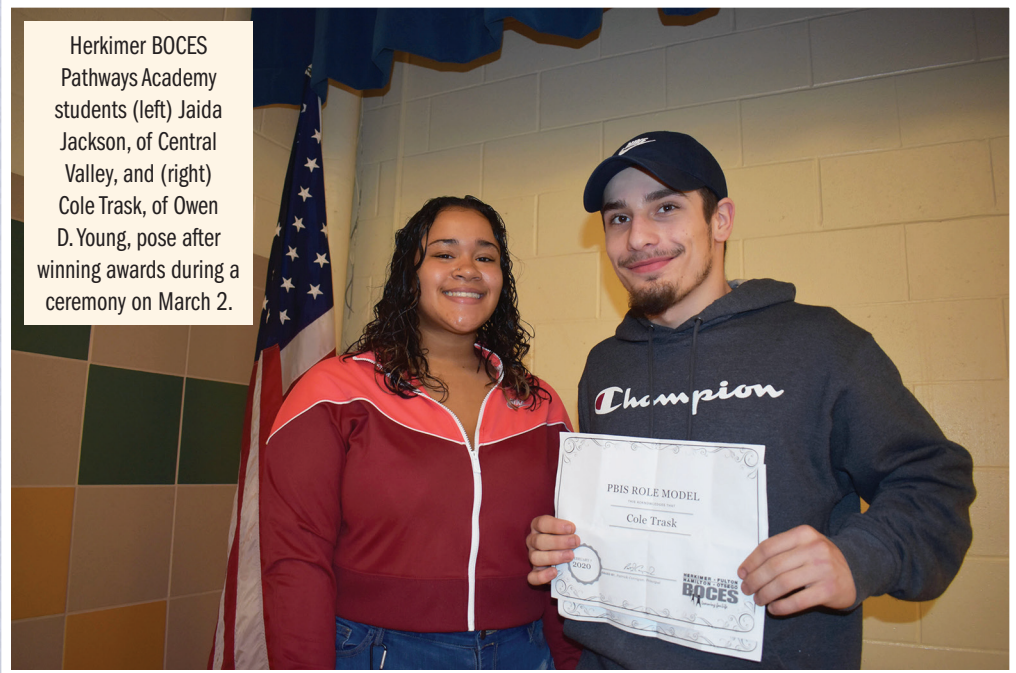
The goal is to increase Career and Technical Education enrollments for 11th- and 12th-grade students, increase access to Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) credentials and create a building-wide emphasis on the 16 career clusters. These experiences will include the foundational elements incorporated into most CTE programs such as: safety, 21st century skills, employability, tool identification, basic carpentry, repair and cooking – to name a few.

Students will have the opportunity to earn 54 work-based learning hours as well as earn elective credit. These experiences provide students with the opportunity to learn about and experience various career clusters. Field trips to various businesses are also part of the student experience. We look forward to providing this experience for our Pathways students.

Special Programs

Our Special Programs division has some unique programs that serve our students with disabilities. One of these programs is our program for students with emotional/behavioral challenges.

We call the program ARCHES. ARCHES is an acronym for Academics Re-imagined Connecting Healing, Education and Supports. The ARCHES program is a collaboration between Herkimer BOCES and the Integrated Community Alternatives Network, or ICAN. The name for our program



Herkimer BOCES Pathways Academy students (left) Jaida Jackson, of Central Valley, and (right) Cole Trask, of Owen D. Young, pose after winning awards during a ceremony on March 2.

symbolizes the connections and supports provided to the students and families served in these classes. Qualifying students have a mental health diagnosis and are classified through their home district's Committee on Special Education (CSE) process as a student in need of intense behavioral support. The model focuses on students' cognitive, social and emotional needs, and it places emphasis on engaging families throughout the education experience.

Herkimer BOCES and ICAN began this partnership four years ago with one class and two students, and we have grown to three classes and 16 students as of this school year. The reason for this growth is the need to support this fragile population differently than we have in the past. Student and family supports cannot end with the conclusion of the school day if we want students and families to be successful. Wraparound services such as mentoring, behavior management and family counseling are a few of the supports that families agree to as part of this program. Our ARCHES is a 12-month program. This ensures that students have consistency in their program year-round.

A teacher, teaching assistant, behavior manager and clinical care coordinator are the professionals that serve this population each day. In addition, we have a licensed psychiatric nurse practitioner who works closely with students and families on mental health needs as well as medication management. Our region and students have

benefitted from this collaborative team approach. Having this level of support for students enables them to get the care that they need and be able to be educated close to home. The goal for our students is always graduation and employment. The collaboration with ICAN allows for these important wraparound services to take place after the school day, thus increasing the likelihood of success for the student and family. Serving the entire family has a strong benefit to the individual student.

Prekindergarten

There are 200 students in the region now in Herkimer BOCES prekindergarten programs across eight sites: two Central Valley classrooms and one classroom at Dolgeville, Frankfort-Schuyler, Herkimer, Poland, Owen D. Young and West Canada Valley.

Herkimer County has begun collecting data that shows students are more successful in kindergarten if they went to prekindergarten and that kindergarten teachers can tell the difference.

Prekindergarten provides the solid foundation for children to be successful.

Adult Practical Nursing

Under the Adult Practical Nursing Program are many options for those wishing to earn their licensed practical nursing (LPN) license. Students can attend full-time from July to June and graduate in a year. Two part-time options exist. Students can attend part-time during days or
(continued on page 14) ...

Program Highlights ... (continued from page 13)

evenings and complete the program in two years.

The LPN program was able to secure funding from the 1199 SEIU Training and Employment Funds. This enabled students to receive online tutoring for the NCLEX exam and fees to cover both the New York state license fee and the NCLEX exam for all of our 2019 graduates. We will be able to provide the same for the 2020 class. This funding has allowed Herkimer BOCES to provide five certified nursing assistant classes (CNA) for the community at no charge. Sixty students were trained. This opportunity will continue in 2020-21 with the opportunity to offer six more classes.

The LPN program and staff continue to work with many healthcare facilities, agencies and funding entities to help fill the gaps in healthcare in our area.

Diplomas for adults

During the 2018-19 school year, 50 local adults received diplomas through either the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC) or National External Diploma Program (NEDP) at Herkimer BOCES.

There were 150 additional adult students that came through the Herkimer BOCES Adult Literacy programs during the school year for assistance.

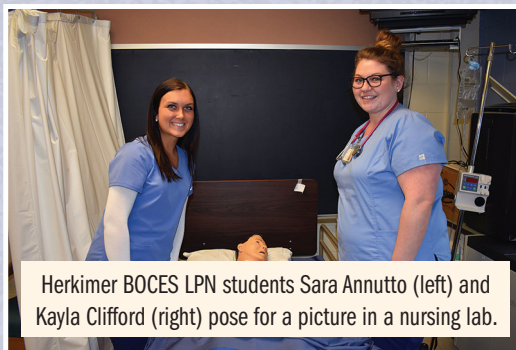
TASC has replaced the General Education Development (GED) as the high school equivalency diploma. Adults can contact Herkimer BOCES for a free screening test and preparation for TASC.

The NEDP is more individualized and includes eight competency projects that can be customized based on interest and previous career experience.

Herkimer BOCES has two three-year grants to fund portions of our adult program. One is for our Literacy Zone, which is located at the Herkimer Working Solutions. A full-time case manager assists students with barriers to their academic success.

The second funds our Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which provides funds for staff to offer classes for those less than 24 years of age.

The High School Equivalency Preparation Program is operated with the support



Herkimer BOCES LPN students Sara Annutto (left) and Kayla Clifford (right) pose for a picture in a nursing lab.

of the local school districts. Students can prepare and take the TASC in lieu of a regular high-school diploma.

Herkimer BOCES provides these services to adults for free, and teachers are flexible with scheduling. Classes are held day and night at various locations in the area. Staff is willing to work with students to help them accomplish their goals.

Mohawk Regional METS

The Mohawk Regional Migrant Education Tutorial and Support Services program provides programs in 14 counties in New York state. These services are targeted for students who have moved for agricultural work. This program was awarded a five-year grant to fund the METS through 2023.

Tutors provide academic assistance in schools and homes throughout the region. Focus is first on school-age children who have moved in the past year.

Staff provides support to families in a myriad of other areas including language acquisition and linking them with medical services to enroll in school.

Mohawk Regional METS is one of eight programs in the state and has operated for more than 45 years.

School to Careers

The School to Careers program exposes all students from our component districts to career opportunities within the greater Mohawk Valley and beyond. By creating real-world work connections with local business and industry partners, students are allowed a chance to experience a more meaningful preparation and application of 21st century workplace skills through a diversified approach to career awareness and exploration.

Since the beginning, STC has provided

and continues to provide an array of career awareness/exploration opportunities such as: job shadowing, business tours, Mentor Mondays, internships, career exploration days, work-based learning, preparatory workshops, HR roundtables, regional events and the newly offered Students Clifton Strengths-Based Assessment pro program in partnership with the Daneli Partners.

The School to Careers highlight focus is on the growth mindset of our CTE and VP-TECH students in that it is the students participating and sharing their knowledge in many of this year's district requests.

Farming Your Future gave BOCES students the opportunity to act as tour guides, event planners and presenters. The Culinary students provided and served the lunches for all of the attendees and demonstrated their leadership abilities in creating a smooth delivery system.

Career Day for the Knights held in January was the first ever STC and Frankfort Elementary School career exploration day collaboration, and several of our students from Conservation, Cosmetology, Child and Family Services and VP-TECH provided hands-on, student-engaging, career awareness activities for all the students in grades K-5. Many of those student presenters were from Frankfort-Schuyler Central School District, and their former elementary teachers stood in amazement, proudly listening, with smiles beaming from ear to ear and many eyes filled with tears. They were seeing the growth of the students' self-confidence, social skills, communication skills, team collaboration, creativity, flexibility, leadership, initiative and self-directedness. In essence, we are building students' self-awareness, career awareness and life awareness – by allowing them the opportunity to expand a more diversified horizon and focus on the soft skills which the School to Careers partners have indicated are the most essential skills.



Culinary students hand out food at Farming Your Future.

The Herkimer BOCES component district boards of education

Central Valley

Superintendent Jeremy Rich, President Kelly Rowland, Vice President Marguerite Wesolowski, Travis Costin, Matt Darrow, Jonah Levi, Jane North and Jason Sanchez

Dolgeville

Superintendent Lynn Rhone, President Scott Hongo II, Vice President Theresa Prestigiacomio, Mary Lou Huddleston, Julie Izzo, Robert Maxwell, James Schmid and Jennifer Williams

Frankfort-Schuyler

Superintendent Robert Reina, President Lisa Morgan, Vice President Joseph Ciccone, Dominick Bellino, Jack Bono, Michael Clements, Kathleen Sarafin and Angela Service

Herkimer

Superintendent Robert Miller, President Brian Crandall, Vice President Diann Fischer, Brandee Bray, Richard Lewis, Michele Gilbert, Robert Mihevc and Scott Petucci

Little Falls

Superintendent Keith Levatino, President Kristina Hameister, Vice President Bernard Jodway, Tracy Coulson, Joseph Finkst, Frank Mendl, Barbara Palmer and Christine Shepardson

Mount Markham

Superintendent Paul Berry, President Thomas Huxtable, Vice President Cynthia Miller, Philip Casler, Robert Cross, Scot Clark, Jay Kulczak, and Jennifer Maine

State Education Department Commissioner Letter

March 2020

Dear Members of the Cooperative Boards of New York State:

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for all the work you do for the students, parents, teachers and administrators in New York state. Your leadership and ongoing efforts to develop and implement the policies adopted by the New York State Board of Regents are essential to our collective success. I can think of no better time than your annual meeting to express my sincere gratitude and thanks.

This past year, we have seen a transition in department leadership, and your continued support and guidance is particularly valuable as we move forward in implementing the Regents

agenda. Of particular note has been your work in supporting the Regents priority to closely examine our high school graduation measures. This comprehensive review is important to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn and develop their skills in order to succeed in college, career and civic life. This work will affect not only our children and their parents, but also many future generations. I am excited to be a part of this work, and I know that with your individual and collective support, this will be a successful process that will guide the work going forward.

Sincerely,

Shannon L. Tahoe

Interim Commissioner

New York State Education Department

Owen D. Young

Superintendent Brennan Fahey, President Linda Tharp, Vice President Quendryth Marshall, Paul Kennerknecht, George Mower and Holly Pullis

Poland

Superintendent Laura Dutton, President Robert Batson, Vice President Pamela Ahles, Danielle Allen, Christopher Fullem, Amanda Hobin, Faith Murphy and Michele Szarek

Richfield Springs

Superintendent Thomas Piatti, President Scot Mondore, Vice President Bradley Smith, Tony Bailey, Julie Gavalo and Thomas Shypski

West Canada Valley

Superintendent D.J. Shepardson, President Charles Gage, Vice President, Jessica Bartlett, Peter Kemler, Janine Lynch, Carson Marko, Shauna Michael and Shawn Schultz



Herkimer BOCES Building Construction student Joe Seamon, of Richfield Springs, works on the modular home the class builds annually.

352 Gros Blvd. Herkimer, NY 13350
315-867-2000

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Sandra Sherwood

**Assistant Superintendent for
Administrative Services**

James Picolla

**Assistant Superintendent for
Business Services**

Jodie Rodriguez

**Herkimer BOCES
2020 Annual Meeting Report**

*Produced in cooperation with
the Capital Region BOCES
Communications Service*

Bryon Ackerman, Editor

Thank you!

A SPECIAL THANKS GOES OUT TO ...

Herkimer BOCES would like to thank the following groups and individuals who were originally scheduled to participate in the Annual Meeting:

**Refreshments
and dinner:**

Students from the Herkimer BOCES Culinary Hospitality program and instructor Dominick Mauro.

Entertainment:

The Owen D. Young Central School 7-12 Chorus directed by Jessica Pollak.

