

CLASS OF 2023

Benjamin Abrams
Kendyl Allen
Troy Anderson
Abigail Baker
Travis Baker Jr.
Trinity Baker
Ryan Beaulac Jr.
Emily Beckwith
Lily Beers
Logan Bell
Celeste Beyel
Ethan Brazie
Brayden Burke
Nicholas Burth
Marjorie Castilla
Jack Chase
Kaden Christmas
Dylan Clark
Gabriel Clemens
Chelsea Coady
Cody Condon
Carson Cook
Luscious Corn
Theodore Countryman
Gianna D'Amico
Caleb Davis
Camron Davis
Mitchell Davis
Connor Dean
Josephine Deperno
Devyn Dewan
Christopher Dobbins
Joseph Doran
Kaylee Drought
Dominick Edwards
Kaitlyn Findlay
Carl Finen III
Michael Flagg
William Forbes
Vincent Frataccia
Andrew Freer
Timothy Grinnell
Ian Hansen
Cody Harp
Emilia Harring
Rudee Harris
Abigail Henderson

Brianna Henderson
Kylee Hendrickson
Jacey Hinds
Dawson Hinman
Katie Hite
Mark Josue Honrales
Marissa Hook
Bradley House
Lillie Howe
Robert Jackson
Patrick Janes
Seth Johns
Hayden Johnson
Jacob Johnson
Ryleigh Johnson
Paige Jones
Jordan Kever
Morgan Keil
Katelynn Ketchum
Trey Kimball
Hunter Koenig
Galen Kowalski
Gavin Kuc
Tanner Lane
Reuben LeBron
Patrick Leonard
Gianni Liberatore
Tanner Lukacz
Emma Lundrigan
Kimberly Lusby
Connor MacArthur
Dominique March-Rizzo
Aurora Mariano
Trevor Marsden
Kaden Marsh
Allesandra Marsh
Hailie Matthews
Katie McCarthy
Cole McClain
Hannah McCormick
Jamie McCormick
Conor Meagher
Ashlie Metott
Marina Mikhaylyuk
Noah Morse
Zander Mosher
Ivy Murphy

Payton Napolis
Alexia Nichols
Zoey Olson
Cameron O'Neil
Alexis Orsino
Elizabeth Paligo
Selena Parent
Connor Perrotta
Santana Phelps
Hal Pickering Jr.
Lillian Piersall
Dylan Piersall
Michael Pitoniak
Joshua Plumley
Malory Poulin
Aidan Pritchard
Joshua Pritchard
Zachary Roberson
Brooke Robinson
Brandon Rodriguez
Benjamin Rogers
Taylor Rowe
Joshua Salsman
Summer Sands
Kiara Santiago
Jerome Seidl
Sean Seymore
Tyler Skinner
Mya Skinner
Gavin Sleeman
Jayvin Smith
Tyler Spencer
Alexis Stevens
Buck Strebel
Nick Sumner
Grayson Susco
Ean Sweeting
Nathaniel Tubilewicz
Koen Turner
Bryan Tyler
Justin Vanderweyde Jr.
Mya Varacalli
Lyle Walker
Aliyah Wallingford
Trenton Warren
John Wines
Quinlan Wing
Erica Zike



CAMDEN CONNECTIONS

Your Guide to What's Happening In The Camden Central School District

SUMMER
2023

A Note from Dr. Root

To Our Camden Central Schools Community:

I hope this message finds you in good spirits as we enjoy the beautiful weather this summer. It's a great time to renew and recharge for the challenges of the year ahead, and we hope that you have been able to do that with family and friends. With regular instruction on pause, summer is not only a time of reflection, but a time of growth and the pursuit of new opportunities.

- **First and foremost, we extend our congratulations to the Class of 2023 as they move to the next chapter of life.** We are excited about the contributions you'll make to our world, nation, state, and community. You have accomplished so much, and yet it only marks the beginning of your capabilities. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of our graduates. We wish the Class of 2023 all the best. We have lists of our fourth grade, eighth grade, and high school graduates for you to enjoy and remember in this issue.
- **We salute our spring sports teams for their successes.** Softball enjoyed an undefeated regular season led by record-breaking outfielder Brooke Musch, and track and field athlete Connor Dean is now a state pentathlon champion. Camden swept Tri-Valley League player and coach of the year honors in baseball and softball this spring and we couldn't be more proud of Brooke, Jed Musch, Jake Bates, and Ryan Leos for their playing and coaching achievements. Young athletes, take note and remember this is all possible for you here in Camden.
- **Our summer programming is in full swing** and our students have been taking the opportunity to grow, improve, and explore their interests together through those programs. Our award-winning Camp Sum-More-Fun program just wrapped up a great two weeks of camp at Camden High School, and we look forward to seeing the evolution of our Brain Gain Institute and Kindergarten Boot Camp programs in their second year. The award-winning Special Education Summer program continues to blaze a trail of new experiences for the students it serves. We also have our Middle School orientation program returning in late August for our rising fifth grade students. None of these valuable programs would be possible without your continued support.
- **Our pre-kindergarten classrooms will be moving exclusively to McConnellsville Elementary School this fall.** This will allow our teachers to learn and grow together while teaching all of our Pre-K students. Moving to McConnellsville also allows our Pre-K students to receive additional learning opportunities by participating in specials such as music, art and physical education. With that said, we feel moving these classrooms to McConnellsville will strengthen our capability to offer access to a more comprehensive pre-k program. See page 10 to learn more.
- **Construction projects are moving forward** and we hope to see them completed as close to the allotted time frame as possible. During the current phase, we are working on two years of construction. We are building a needed gymnasium/auditorium at McConnellsville, adding a second set of single use bathrooms at Camden High School, and we continue to progress on the new turf baseball field at Camden Middle School.
- **Finally, I want to welcome our former Treasurer and new Assistant Superintendent for Business, Karen Jones, to her new role.** Karen will bring continuity to the position while also offering a fresh perspective that we are excited about.

I hope you enjoy the rest of your summer vacation to its fullest. We plan on hitting the ground running in September and achieving even more together in the year ahead.

Dr. Ravo Root
Superintendent of Schools

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dr. Ravo Root Ed.D.", is positioned to the right of the typed name and title.

A NEW PICTURE OF OPPORTUNITY

Unified
Fine Arts
program
launches
at CHS



On an early June afternoon at Camden High School, there was an unusual buzz of activity coming out of the art classroom for that time of day. Over twenty students were laughing, smiling, collaborating and painting together as they followed teacher Natalie Archibee's instructions for the day's project.

The students weren't just creating art. They were sharing in an entirely new experience. This spring marked the debut of the District's new Unified Fine Arts program. The group met five times after school throughout late May and early June, and completed projects step-by-step with the help of Archibee, art teacher Amy Andrews, and special education teacher Shannon McPheron.

Unified Fine Arts is a program based on a similar premise to the wildly successful Unified Sports programs. In the Unified Sports programs, players with intellectual disabilities compete on teams alongside players without intellectual disabilities. Every student is given an opportunity to use their skills to contribute to team success.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ravo Root and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Jason Evangelist helped to bring the program to Camden after learning about a similar program from a district located downstate. The concept fits in perfectly for what the District wants to accomplish in providing access to opportunities for all students.

"The District values learning, growth, and performance opportunities for all students," Root said. "This program is an example of providing one of those avenues where all students can create and participate."

In Unified Fine Arts, the spirit of teamwork and focus on a common goal that has driven Camden's Unified programs to the pinnacle continues. However, the Fine Arts program offers a non-competitive environment that allows students to pursue an interest other than sports.

As with the sports programs, students of all backgrounds participate together and work towards completing a project each day. They share ideas and assist each other along the way.

As an after-school program, no grades are given. To Andrews, keeping a grade out of the equation keeps the focus on creating great art and forming lasting friendships. That allows many of the students in her program to thrive in the process of creating something they can be proud of.

"I think that it's fun for students to experience the visual arts in a way that doesn't end with a 'grade'," Andrews said. "In a typical art room setting, specific expectations are put into place and some students stress about adhering to specific criteria rather than focusing on the experience of creating. This program allowed students from all corners of CHS to come together and enjoy the process of creating art. They worked collaboratively to reach collective goals and had so much fun along the way."

The group may have only had a short time to meet this school year, but McPheron sees that time having a lengthy impact on every student that took part. Many of the students entered as relative strangers, but left as fast friends.

"The biggest benefit the students received from this program was hands down being able to build relationships with students from all different parts of the building," McPheron said. "It also helped to break down different social barriers that some students may have faced at the beginning of the program. At the end, they felt comfortable interacting with everyone in the room."

The District hopes to build off the program's promising start by adding a performing arts component in the future.

Digging Into Local History

In today's fast-paced world, it can be easy to forget that we walk right in the footsteps of history.

Mrs. Harney's MVCC Dual Credit New York State and United States History Courses at Camden High School had the opportunity to do exactly that on Thursday, May 11th. The students participated in a local history research field experience in the Florence Hill New York State Forest Preserve, and learned that there is a lot more to that land than meets the eye.

Around 1845, a community known as the Florence Farming Settlement was established on that site. It was intended to create a community where free Black people of the time could own land, establish their own farms, and create economic and social opportunities for themselves in a time period where reaching these aspirations was especially challenging.

Local abolitionist and philanthropist Gerrit Smith gifted the land to several settlers, and through the assistance of Stephen Myers, approximately 80 to 90 families called Florence home by 1849. The community flourished until growing pre-war tensions compromised the safety of the residents, the Florence Farming Association ceased to exist, and the community disbanded in approximately 1860.

Over the last nine years, Camden High School students have assisted in research about the settlement. The classes have the opportunity to walk that very same site and get more detail about the experiences of the people who lived there.

This year's students learned about public lands, state forests, public history, NYS archeology, historic preservation through a comprehensive field experience that contributed six hours of public history research. These hours also counted as community service hours.

Throughout the day, students worked alongside experienced and knowledgeable professionals from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York State Museum, Hartgen Archeological Associates, and the Stephen and Harriet Myers Residence Museum.

Along with professional people, the classes worked with professional-grade archaeological technology including Global Navigation Satellite Systems, GPS, and metal detection. Professional archeologists from the NYS Museum modeled additional data collection techniques such as the Magnetic Susceptibility Meter. Students learned about the laws around NYS Forest Preserves and state lands from Region 6 DEC Forester Jessica Mosher from the DEC's Herkimer office. Mosher assisted the team with permits for research for educational purposes. While the settlement is long gone, there were plenty of signs of life to be found.

"Artifacts found help shape our idea about who lived there and what each building could have been," junior Lilyan Baker said. "The day we went, we found an old stove door. This led us to hypothesize that the building was a sugar shack for maple syrup making."

Harney emphasized that the benefits students receive from this opportunity go well beyond earning a grade, community service hours, or college credit. The lessons and experiences have evolved over time, and students get a chance to make a positive and profound impact while working with dedicated experts.

"While we have been working on this project for nearly 9 years, each year we find something new," Harney said. "Each year, students get to be part of a larger project and are having a real impact in collecting historical evidence and contributing to our larger understanding of the Florence Farming settlement of free Black people from 1846-1860. As their teacher, I am so grateful for all of the professionals from the partner agencies that give their time for my students to be exposed to different career fields that include history, archeology, forestry, and historic preservation while also celebrating our local history."

Baker expressed that the experience was a true eye-opener towards understanding the storied past that we live in the echoes of in the present.

"This felt much closer to home," Baker said. "It made me feel proud to live near such an important historical site. I never thought much about the Florence Settlement before, but now it's like I know a little secret that only a few people know."

The class wishes to thank the Florence Town Board and Town Supervisor Scott Outtrim for their hospitality during their lunch break at the Florence Town Hall.

CHS Students Continue Their Tradition of
Advancing Research at Florence Settlement



8th Grade Blue Team

Matthew Albrecht
Justin Allen
Lilah Armstrong
Reagan Arnold
Halei Barrett
Reese Bates
Kelsey Baughan
Madelyn Blair
Hayden Bristol
Dylan Bush
Leila Cadrette
Guiseppe Chesebro
Ford Church
Alexis Clark
Olivia Cobey
Mikinzie Collins
Katie Cooper
Kyra Cooper
Kenzie Dashnaw
Chloie Dolan
Caleb Doran
Maggie Flatt
Cayden Folsbee
Emily Fox
Caden Frost
Ian Halbritter
Gage Hall
Braden Henderson
Conrad Henderson-Beacraft
Daniel Hernandez
Chase Herper
Alyssa Howe
Gavin Hughes
Cyrlic Johnston
William Kantor, Jr.
Lucas Kidney
Autumn Koenig
Alexander Lallier
Alex Leszczuk
Emma Lindstrom
Robert Lundrigan
Ella Lynch
Jayden-Paul Martel
Heaven Merithew
Ellie Miller
Lola Miller
Michael Miller III
Jonah Moore
Joshua Mullin
Brayden Napolis
Jacob Neve-Rinaldo
Trinity O'Hara
Jacob Parkhurst
Tessa Patterson
Piper Phelps
Diamonique Phippen
Jayden Rattray
Lilly Ritenour
Bryson Roes
Landry Rose
Gianna Roselli
Damien Sands II
JaQuez Saxon
Madeline Segur
Brayden Seymour
Malachi Sherwood
Haylie Smith
Izayah Snyder
Kinley Snyder
Darrell Sumner
Coriann Swinbourne
Felipe Van Slyke
Natalie VanScooter
Isabella Vollmer
Hunter Waterman
Timothy Wheeler III
Shawn Whowell, Jr.
Peyton Wickham
Aurora Williams
Hayden Wilson

8th Grade White Team

Collin Abrams
Richard Angell
Lanna Baker
Kelsi Barok
Aiden Bell
Kendra Bolster
Ashlyn Brockway
Colton Brown
Evan Buckingham
Haylee Bush
Riley Bush
Brendan Carney
Kendra Centro
Brenden Chennells
Andrew Conley, Jr.
Elizabeth Conover
Hailey Cox
Storm Cresswell
Roosevelt Cruz
Landin Cutcher
Maxwell Darling
Kadeyn Dingman
Paul Downing, Jr.
Luke Eveleth
Tessa Fall
Alexzander Freywald
Jasmyn Gerig
Emma Germond
Toree Gilbert
Anna Gilsenan
Emily Gilsenan
Dylan Grass
Garrett Grinnell II
Aubra-Lynn Haner
Payton Hansen
Bradyn Hatzinger
Morgan Haynes
Maddox Hilliker
Jacob Hoag
Kayden Johnson
Tristan Kever
Noah Kelley
Ariana Killino
Emma Kratz
Rylie Kunkle
Tyler Messier
Yulianna Mikhaylyuk
Khloe Northrup
Blake O'Halloran
Braylon O'Neal
Wyatt Outtrim
Philip Parsons
Liam Phelps
Ellianna Pitcher
Addison Pitoniak
Khloe Poulin
Mallory Reader
Hayden Riley
Charles Risley III
Amber Shenk
Cody Smith
Tyler Spellicy
Brianna Stevens
Dylan Stolarczyk
Aaron Sweeting
Lynzee Szczesniak
Krista Thompson
Elijah Trautner
Kadence Walker
Brooklyn Waterman
Julia Waterman
Jacob White
Rylee Willson
Zerahia Wilson-Squairs
Dorothea Wines
Olivia Wing
Jackson Wolford
Jaxon Woodcock
Conner Yerdon

CLASS OF 2023

Tech Students Create Wooden Flags



Ahead of the Memorial Day weekend, the Camden Central School District administrative offices received a few new pieces of patriotic artwork to display.

Mr. Thomas Hickey's technology elective class at Camden Middle School recently constructed wall-hung American flags out of pine, cherry, and walnut wood, and donated two of them to the District Office on Friday, May 19th.

Students were inspired to pursue the project by a painted American Flag they saw. They wanted to make one themselves and take the project to the next level by using skills they've learned in class.

They milled the wood, clamped stripes together, cut out and installed the blue portion, and cut out and painted the stars. Along the way, they learned to use new machinery including a radial arm saw, planer, belt sander, and orbital sander. They also decided to enhance the project by framing the flag in with a border.

The class finished their project with a few coats of urethane finish, which they fine sanded between coats. They each took home a finished project for themselves, while also gifting two flags to District Administration. One was for the common area of the District Office, while the other was given to Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ravo Root.

Many skills were utilized, and many new ones were learned throughout this exciting project that students can use at home, or for the foundation of a career. We salute these students and their teacher for taking the initiative to create something great and executing their vision to the finest detail.

Pictured from left to right in the photo above are: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Ravo Root, Isabella Vollmer, Evan Buckingham, Hayden Riley, and technology teacher Mr. Thomas Hickey. Absent from the photo from this class was Andrew Britchge.

Marching Band Enjoys Spring Season

The Camden Middle School Marching Band had a tremendous 2023 marching season. Led by teachers Jennifer Chase, Joseph Perrotta, and Teresa Stowell-Hollis, the CMS marching band is made up of students in grades 5-10. They began meeting in April to prepare for their performance schedule, which included the Oneida Memorial Day parade, the Chittenango "Oz" parade, and the Boxing Hall of Fame parade.

The group was looking as sharp as ever due to the generosity of the Camden community. The band would like to thank the Tuthill Grant committee for approving a request to acquire new uniform shirts and shorts for the group. Through a fundraiser held in March, the band also received new guard flags, some needed pairs of marching shoes, and other needed accessories. Several parents donated goods or time to make that fundraiser a reality.



CES Class of 2023

Mrs. Paul

Liam Ariola
 Mackenna Arnold
 Serenity Birmingham
 Jakob Ciani
 Christina Dean
 Noelle Dow
 Hayden Fiorini
 Tomas Fuentes
 Brenden Grass
 Hunter Hastwell
 Matthew Howard, Jr.
 Lily Johnson
 Brentley King
 Avery Lewis
 Mia Medlin
 Jacob Melnick
 Hayden Nobis
 Jasmine Phelps
 Autumn Schremmer
 Jaxon Schultz-Lust
 Annabelle Slover
 Paislee Smith
 Bryce Yerdon

Mrs. Hughes/Mrs. Owens

Brett Barnett
 Payton Billington
 Willow Brower
 Jaicee Brundage
 Caleb Byler
 Madilynn Carpenter
 Akadieon Cartner
 Josephine Chapman
 Braiden Croniser
 Victoria Elthorp
 Christian Jones
 Levi Larkin
 Aaliyah MacFarland
 Silas Mackey
 Bentley Matt
 Ronald Miller
 Rayanne Pritchard
 Paul
 Sophie Westcott

Mrs. Davis

Mersadizes Conover
 Thomas Griner, Jr.
 Alivia Parsons
 Lexi Relyea
 Emily Anne Turck

Mrs. Popple

Kaden Carney
 Finley Christman
 Grace Clemens
 Karter Cobey
 Channing Corbin
 Silas Herper
 Hope Johnson
 Zachary King
 Echo Kingsley
 Hailey Leuenberger
 Calvin Melancon
 Jace Nicoli
 King O'Neal
 Ian Parry
 Eleanor Rogers
 Braelynn Russell
 Jaylynn Sanborn
 Declan Strail
 Aubrielle Waterman
 Emma Williams

Mrs. Pulizzi

Olivia Babcock
 Jordan Blackwell
 Avery Blowers
 Carson Brodie
 Trevor Cadrette
 Kaliana Carnell
 Kandon Cohenour
 Sequoia Cresswell
 Clover Gilsenan
 Katherine Graham
 Annabelle Griffin
 Landon Kerswill
 Ryder Leos
 Annabelle Mikitin
 Vincent Omundsen-Smith
 Ethan Parkhurst
 Bridget Piland
 Emilie Prosser
 Brayden Sands
 Aubree Seymour
 Bradley Spellicy
 Lucian Wilcox
 Spencer Wing



Farewell, Our Friend



On Tuesday, June 20th, students and staff from Camden Elementary School gathered for an in-school remembrance assembly in honor of music teacher Mr. Greg Jerome, who recently passed away after a brave battle with cancer.

Led by Greg's longtime friend and teaching colleague Mr. Rick Rudka, the school community shared songs and laughter in Greg's memory, and watched a video about Greg that included the introduction of a new memorial mural and some rarely-seen video footage from an assembly when Greg was at Annsville Elementary School. The mural is pictured below.



Class of 2023

Miss Barber's Class

Rachyl Bray
Jaxson Corn
Gary Croad
Eli Davis
Taylor Donaldson
James Hatzinger
Sophia Haynes
Easton Loomis
Carson Milano
Samuel Mitchell
Ava Parody
Grayson Rose
Dante Roselli
Weston VanScooter
Emma Watros
Tucker Weaver

Mrs. Brazie's Class

Kallarney Berry
Amelia Boots
Avery Croniser
Zechariah DePan
Hannah Draper
Isabella Halbritter
Orionna Jones
Gabrianna Keyte
Olivia Libby
Chloe McShane
Ryker Mehl
Lacy Parks
Bentley Reinertsen
Kynlee Roes
Zaedyon Zopfi

Mrs. Hollis's Class

Harper Allen
Jacob Attwood
Christopher Christman
Talan Clements
Lillian Durgan
Phoebe Gray
Jax Henderson
Juliet Hummel
Juliana Light
Asher Metott
Jacob Mitchell
Isabella Nellenback
Emily Parsons
Tegan Steele
Lyla Williams

4th Graders Hold Successful Food Drive

Members of the fourth grade book club at McConnellsville Elementary School have once again come together to lead their fellow students towards a tremendous and worthy cause. The nine members of the club helped to raise a total of 465 non-perishable food and toiletry items for the Camden Food Pantry.

Prior to starting the drive, students read a book called "Crenshaw" by Katherine Applegate. The story is about a boy and his family that struggles with food insecurity and homelessness. The students wanted to help others in their community who may face similar challenges.

With the guidance of school librarian Shelley Malenowski, the club hung posters and made announcements urging students and staff to donate to their "Feeding Camden: Project Crenshaw" food drive. The drive ran from April 25th until May 8th.

As part of preparations for the drive, students spent time learning about the difficulties that food insecurity presents in the United States through a series of videos.

They also visited Valarie Mudrie in the Connected Community Schools hub to learn more about how she is able to provide essential items for students and families. On May 9th, the students enthusiastically helped to load the donations into a van sent by the food pantry, where they will be inventoried and distributed to families who need help.

The book and the effort needed to make this happen left a lasting impression on the students.

"On the last day of the Book Club, I asked students if this book changed them at all," Malenowski said. "One student said 'I will always appreciate what I have.'"



McVille Gets A Visit From Mobile Museum

McConnellsville Elementary School students from pre-kindergarten through fourth grade got the chance to experience a slice of the Utica Children's Museum during the school day on May 22nd and 23rd. The school had the privilege of receiving a visit from the Utica Children's Museum's Mobile Museum.

Within the confines of a single cargo van, the Mobile Museum brings a variety of large scale items for collaborative play-based learning into the community. The can provide a variety of fun and flexible experiences from building toys, to giant connect four, to a wobble chair that emphasizes an element of sensory play.

It not only brings an exciting experience to the school day, but provides access to some of the museum's materials for every student regardless of resources.

Kindergarten teacher Emily Closinski was the driving force behind bringing this exciting offering to McConnellsville. She was inspired to do so years ago by an advertisement she saw, and got the resources to make it happen through the Madison-Oneida BOCES Exploratory Enrichment Co-Ser, which is a shared agreement between multiple school districts that helps save on costs.

"Students were able to explore and build together, and it was a great team building activity for all grades," Closinski said.



CAMP-SUM-MORE-FUN 2023

Over 400 students in grades K-9 participated in our award-winning "Camp Sum-More Fun" enrichment program this summer.

Our youngest students, the "Happy Campers", explore a wide variety of age-appropriate STEAM activities. An older group of students are known as the "Adventurers" group, and are enrolled into subject-based "cabins" where they can explore an area of their choice such as drones, culinary arts, agriculture, business, music, and theatre.

The program also added a ninth grade "leadership" cabin for the first time. A select group of students were chosen to offer peer mentorship and leadership education to the younger campers, while also supporting the camp's operation in different ways throughout its two-week run.



2023 Seed of Selflessness Winners Go The Extra Mile for Students

The Camden Central School District is pleased to announce that it has selected two recipients for its 2023 "Seed of Selflessness" award.

The honors were made public at the Board of Education Meeting held on Tuesday, May 16th, 2023.

This year's recipients are Food Service Manager Pearl Romano, and Assistant Superintendent for Business Karl Keil. The purpose of the Seed of Selflessness Award, as established by the Camden Board of Education, is to recognize the individual who best represents one or more of the following criteria:

- Has chaired or participated in community and/or school committees that help to improve our school district.
- Has significantly changed the lives of youngsters while motivating them to realize their full character potential.
- Has volunteered or performed these additional assignments inside and outside of normal working hours.

Pearl Romano was nominated by four different individuals for her excellence and care in serving meals to generations of children in the Camden Central School District. She has worked in the district for the last 25 years. She worked at North Bay Elementary and served those students until the building's closure. She has most recently been at Camden High School.

Pearl is known for the genuine relationships she has with staff and students, and ensuring that every student who has passed through her doors has the opportunity to have one hot meal every day regardless of their circumstances. Her team served over 300,000 meals during this school year alone.

It is also an open secret around the District that Pearl makes an excellent turkey dinner. On those days, you can expect to find her hard at work early in the morning to prepare that meal with the care and dedication only Pearl can provide.

When the world's way of doing things shifted in early 2020, Pearl did a lot of the heavy lifting to ensure our students could get the food that they may depend on, whether school was open or not. She was instrumental in setting up distribution sites during the day, and was very adaptable and flexible to ensure that families had an opportunity to receive this service, even if it fell outside normal hours.

At a time when virtually nothing felt normal, Pearl went to extraordinary lengths to ensure that food service continued for our students. Loretta Hickok has worked with Pearl since 2004, and had this to say about her selfless nature in her nomination.

"She has always put the kids in our District first," Hickok said. "If a child needed anything from a juice, to a cracker, to a hug, she was there."

Karl Keil, Jr. has been employed by the District as its Assistant Superintendent for Business for the last 22 years. He attended Camden from kindergarten until graduation. After being voted "Most Likely to Succeed" by the Camden High School Class of 1978, Karl has succeeded in just about anything he has set his mind to, including working at his Alma Mater. He has been at the helm of the Business Office during a stretch of years where the world has evolved and changed significantly.

He has guided our District through a significant recession in the late 2000s, and a worldwide pandemic while keeping us operating and on sound financial footing. The use of computers and the internet was still very much in a growth stage when Karl joined the administrative team. As the digital age has changed how we disseminate information, Karl has been ready to adapt at every turn.

There is a widely-held understanding in the District Office that Karl is often the first to arrive, and the last to leave. If the lights are still on after hours, it's probably because Karl is still hard at work. That hard work has paid off. Karl has overseen 22 consecutive budget votes without a budget failing. His oversight has driven substantial progress in the district's facilities, with over \$105 million worth of construction and eight successful referendums to approve that construction. He created a solar farm on 9.57 acres of land that has saved the District millions of dollars. All the while, he has routinely kept taxes among the lowest in Central New York for our District taxpayers.

Karl is directly invested in student success, and you don't have to look far to find proof in that statement. He was among the first school business officials in the state to create a Community Eligibility Provision for free meals for all students. He also installed a New York State cutting edge weather station that students could study from. You can find him at a wide range of events, musicals, concerts, and sporting events, and he has helped augment community support for students by arranging for \$11,000 worth of event admission fees to be eliminated.

Karl has led by example from the very beginning, modeling a culture of humbleness, respect, and dedication to the work he does. He has maintained great relationships with so many individuals and groups who have a hand in the District's success, including local governments, teachers, staff, students, parents, unions, and our peer districts throughout the region and state.

His nomination was submitted by District office employee Rachel Archibee.

"Karl has worked tirelessly in support of all students who attend Camden Schools," Archibee said. "He is highly respected as a leader for modeling, lobbying, and advocating for school districts and students throughout New York State."

Karl recently retired from the District, but rest assured, you'll still see him in the community he calls home for years to come. We wish him health, happiness and lower golf scores in the future.

Congratulations to both of our 2023 recipients!



Pre-K Is Moving This Fall!



Camden Central School District

**Goal: TO PROVIDE POSITIVE, MEANINGFUL, PRODUCTIVE
LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR ALL STUDENTS.**

Camden Pre-K Classes Now at McConnellsville

Starting this fall, all Camden Pre-K classes will be located at McConnellsville Elementary. Having our Universal Pre-K program housed in one building has the following benefits:

- **Access to Special Area Opportunities:** Being in one location allows all PreK students to have access to music, art, and physical education on a weekly basis. This is currently not possible for Camden Elementary PreK students.
- **Transportation:** All students will receive free transportation to and from McConnellsville School, regardless of where they live in the district. For students who reside in the Camden Elementary catchment area, your child's transportation will be:
 - Morning Classes:
 - Ride in with all CES PreK-4th grade students, then ride district shuttle bus to McConnellsville with only PreK students.
 - Ride directly home from McConnellsville to their home/sitter.
 - Afternoon Classes:
 - Ride in directly to McConnellsville from their home/sitter.
 - Ride district shuttle bus to CES with only PreK students and then home with all CES PreK-4th grade students.
- **Service Providers:** Students will have equal access to all service providers for related services, such as speech and occupational therapy. This would allow more students access to service providers each day.
- **PreK Specific Playground area:** The playground at McConnellsville has a designated play area with equipment designed specifically for pre-school age children.

We are excited for this opportunity to have all of our PreK students learning and playing together in the same school. Please feel free to call Craig Ferretti, PreK Coordinator, at (315) 245-2616 if you have any questions.

To register if you haven't already done so,
please call: 315-245-4096



Dean wins State Title

Connor Dean '23 has earned lots of athletic accolades during his high school career. On Saturday, June 10th, he added one title that has been long-awaited to close out his high school career: State Champion.

Dean captured his first state title in dramatic fashion in the pentathlon at the New York State Public High School Athletic Association Championships held at Middletown High School's Faller Field Complex on Friday, June 9th, and Saturday June 10th. With a total of 3,498 points, he was the New York State Division II Champion, as well as the New York Federation Champion as the top scorer in the field regardless of classification. That point total is also a school record.

The Pentathlon is a challenging and grueling test of endurance and all-around athleticism. It consists of five events: The 110 meter high hurdles, high jump, shot put, long jump, and 1,500 meter run. Points are awarded on a scale based on an athlete's top mark in each event.

Dean had to rally on the second day of competition to secure the win. On the opening day of competition, he placed eighth in the hurdles scoring 688 points. He notched a third place finish in the high jump with 644 points off a 1.82 meter clearance, and rounded out the day with a solid fourth in the shot put, throwing his best attempt 11.86 meters for 598 points. That trio of events left him with some work to do to secure the title, as he sat in fourth place with two of his stronger events remaining.

Connor led the field in both events to make up the deficit to the competitors in front of him and secure the state championship. He topped the board in the long jump at 6.55 meters to snag 709 points and sit just 41 points off the lead. He finished the job with an outstanding winning effort in the 1,500 meter run. His time of 4:13.20 was clear of Pentathlon runner-up Jaden Bisons of Goshen by almost 21 seconds, and his event total of 859 points locked up the state and federation titles.

Impressively, his 4:13.20 meter 1,500 time converts to an approximate time of 4:31.86 at 1,600 meters. That time would have placed him 29th in the state in the Boys' 1,600 meter championship.

He caps off the season with three Section III Class B1 titles, and additional school records in the 400 meters, triple jump, and long jump. Coach Nate Donaleski says that while his achievements are impressive, his character stands even taller.

"Athletic achievements speak for themselves," Donaleski said. "Everybody knows Connor is a State and Federation Champion. Everyone can read his 5 school records on the recordboard. Connor's greatest achievement though? His ability to make those around him better, coaches included. The boys' track team was very close to 1st place this year at Sectionals and Connor is a significant reason why. Connor is an excellent example of what a high school athlete should emulate. His leadership, mentorship and ability to motivate his teammates are unparalleled. I'll of course miss Connor's ability to score 40 meets at an invite, but I can speak for all the coaches that we will miss Connor as a person the most."

Connor now has his sights set on studying sports management and competing collegiately for head coach James Lemieux at Division III Utica University. Throughout that chapter of his career, Connor will have a familiar face working by his side. CHS graduate Zach Jones '08 is an assistant on their coaching staff.



Eleven graduating student-athletes celebrated their decision to compete in college athletics at our signing day ceremony held on Tuesday, June 13th.

Emilia Harring - Field Hockey - Utica University
 Ivy Murphy - Cross Country/Track and Field - SUNY Morrisville *
 Benjamin Rogers - Cross Country/Track and Field - SUNY Morrisville *
 Connor Dean - Track and Field - Utica University
 Joseph Doran - Track and Field - LeMoyne College
 Ryleigh Johnson - Field Hockey - Utica University
 Jerome Seidl - Cross Country/Track and Field - SUNY ESF *
 Abigail Henderson - Field Hockey - Roberts Wesleyan University
 Gavin Kuc - Football - Utica University
 Katie Hite - Soccer - SUNY ESF
 Kaitlyn Findlay - Softball - SUNY Polytechnic Institute

* - Indicates that the student-athlete is not pictured because they were unavailable to attend the ceremony due to scheduling conflicts.

Congratulations to junior outfielder Brooke Musch on recording one of the greatest statistical seasons in New York State history on the softball diamond this spring.

She finished the season in line to be recognized as the state record holder for stolen bases in a single season, and runs scored in a single season, while also posting the second best batting average in New York State HS history.

Musch was named the TVL Player of the Year, CNY Small School Player of the Year and an All-State selection after leading the Blue Devils to a perfect regular season. They finished the year with an incredible 21-1 record and were 20th in the final NYSSWA rankings. As of this writing, she is committed to play softball at UMass-Amherst following her senior year.



Getting In The Groove

On Wednesday, June 21st, we had the honor of hosting Downbeat Percussion for a morning assembly with CES and MES students!

Downbeat Percussion is from the Syracuse area. They are an incredibly talented percussion ensemble that also happens to be the official game day drumline of the Buffalo Bills.

They played some tunes for the students while demonstrating many of the concepts students are already learning about in music class, such as rhythm and sound dynamics.

They invited students up onto the track to perform with them, and played several of the students' favorites for an on-field dance party!



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