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Winchester High School PFA Newsletter

April 2016

From the Office
of Interim Principal Chris Kelley

Dear Parents,

Happy spring! This is the time of the year that we all wait for even after our mild winter. I so enjoy our longer days and hopefully warmer, sunnier mornings.

I have been writing all year about Growth Mindset, Fostering

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Resiliency, and Building Grit in our young adults (and for us older adults). I recently read another article that I would like to share with you. The article was entitled "The Biology of Positive Habits: Your Brain May be Hard-Wired to Focus on the Negative, but with Practice You can Reprogram It." It was published in the Harvard Graduate School's recent publication of Usable Knowledge.

In the article, the authors maintain that to manage stress, we must build positive habits slowly over time. They maintain that the human brain has evolved with a "negativity bias." Our memories and psychological state has a predisposition to remember and hold onto negative memories. From a survival standpoint, it works. You need to remember dangerous situations so that you don't replicate them. However, the bias also works in smaller ways too. Our negative thoughts and emotions have a more lasting 'shelf life'. However, there is a silver lining to this new theory. WE can retrain our thinking.

According to researchers at University of California, Berkeley, mindfulness help. Mindfulness can help us be aware of our immediate feelings. We often hear the term of staying present. By keeping focused, you can decrease your anxiety or your worries about what has or will happen and focus on the here and now. By doing so, you can tease out the positive pieces of each experience.

The professor leading a California study on retraining our brains offers five mindfulness exercises that build positive thinking habit they are:

1. Take a break. Look at something new and positive. Savor that feeling of calm.
2. Practice looking for small moments of beauty or kindness. Look at nature or a smile with a stranger.
3. Search for and comment on positive aspects of others.
4. Exercise. Use yoga or meditate to relax and calm.
5. Be persistent. Change takes time.

I really enjoyed this article and hope that you enjoyed my brief summary of it. You can find their free newsletter at: <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/uk>

Quick Links

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PFA News

Is it really spring? The first couple of days of spring and we add another snow day to our school year extending the school year to June 24th. March really is unpredictable and who knows what April will bring. The weather is something beyond our control so I enjoy it no matter what it brings to me.

Thanks to all your contributions to Direct Appeal the PFA was able to provide a second round of grants and we are very excited to provide funds to the Creative Technology Center for their sound studio equipment. Together we can help fund teachers and advisors request to better our student's educational experience. Please consider donating to Direct Appeal today just click here.

The PFA meetings bring a lot of information and is your chance to get informed of what is going on at the high school, each month we have WHS staff present to inform you and to answer questions of their particular expertise. Two months ago we initiated a "Hot Topic" box and through that we have organized a Parent-Teacher Communications Committee which will address these issues. Please bring your concerns and drop them in the box. Can't make the meeting? Email your concerns or questions to whspfa@gmail.com.

The next PFA meeting is April 4th at the WHS dining commons at 7:30pm. We have a full slate of Speakers scheduled:

Class Officers of the Class of 2016:

Oliver George, Rebecca Hao, John Na and Edward Tu.

Faculty (Directors):

English: Judith Hession

Foreign Language: Anna Tirone

Social Studies: Chris Kurhajetz

Library Media Specialist: Andrea Zampitella

I look forward to seeing there.

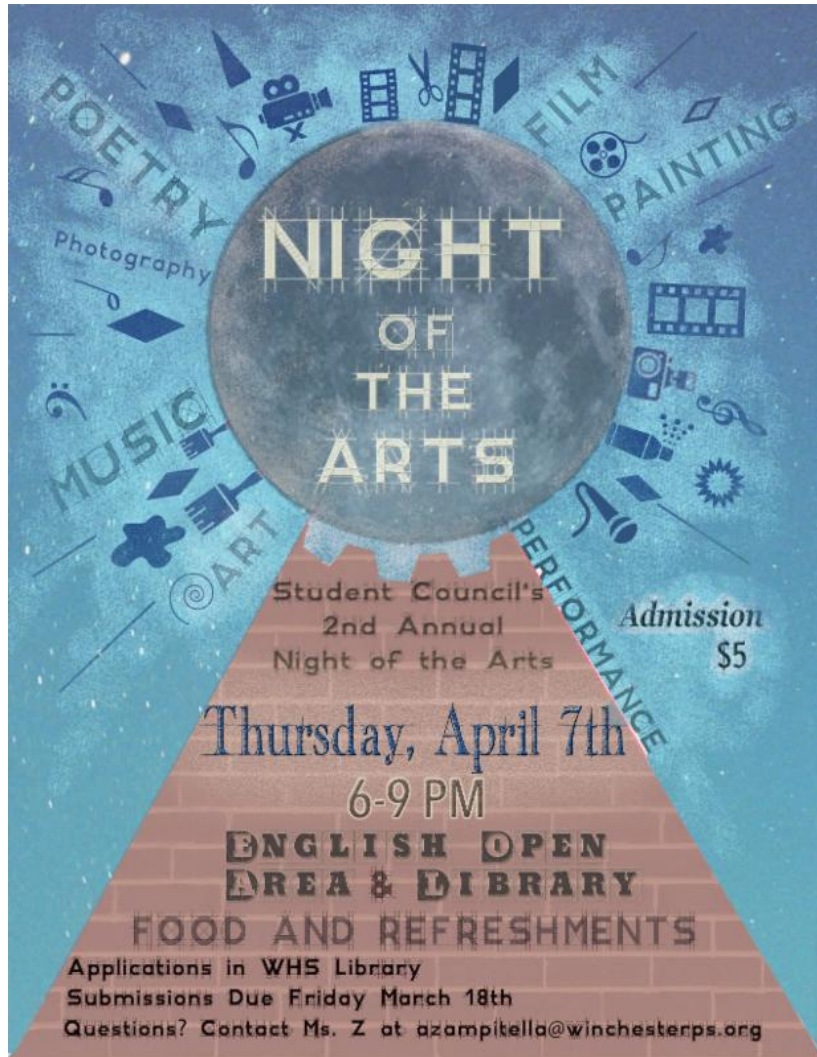
Sincerely

Mikie Ulwick

WHS PFA President

WHS School News

WHS Student Council presents Night of the Arts - Thur, April 7th 6-9pm



Parent Conversations

Topic: Healthy Bodies & Healthy Life: Focus- Eating Disorders

When: April 12th

Time: 9-10 am

Location: WHS library conference room

Parent Conversations are typically held the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

School the World News

Fifteen Winchester High School students spent their February vacation building

a playground with School the World in Guatemala (16 others are anticipating their trip this April)! School the World is a local non-profit dedicated to improving education in rural communities in Central America. The organization offers a Service Learning Program to high school students who wish to travel, learn about the Maya culture and dedicate themselves to service. The April and July trip options are still in the open enrollment period. Please visit schooltheworld.org for more information.

WHS Athletic News

PHYSICAL EDUCATION OUTSIDE ACTIVITY APPEALS

April 8th is the deadline for all Physical Education outside activity appeals. If you are presently participating in a physical activity outside of school for a minimum of 6 hours per week, you may fill in the appeal form to see if this can be used as your physical education credits. This does not apply to Winchester High School Sports teams. The electronic appeal form is found on Family ID and it will remain up until April 8th. No appeals will be accepted after April 8th.

2015 WHS Athletic Budget and Participation Report

Attached please find a pdf outlining the 2015 WHS Athletic Budget and Participation Information. [Click here for link to report](#)

WIN-PAC Presentation

Join Win-PAC for a Workshop:
Executive Function Skills in Children and Adolescents
George Marinakis, Ph.D.
Co-Founder and Clinical Director
Triumph Center

Angela M. DeSilva Mousseau, Ph.D.
Triumph Center

Topics to be Covered Include:

What are executive function skills?

How do executive function skills develop?

How is executive dysfunction different than delayed skill development?

What strategies can be used at home and school to improve executive function skills?

What is the current state of research on executive function?

Monday, April 4

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

McCall Middle School Library

458 Main Street

Winchester, MA 01890

For more information about Win-PAC please visit: www.winspecialdpac.org

Win-PAC organized this presentation, which is free and open to the public. Please direct any questions to Win-PAC Co-Chairs Donna DePriest donna@winspecialdpac.org or Pamela Cort pamcort@winspecialdpac.org.

Connect and Commit

Connect & Commit April Service Announcement



Drop Everything And Read! (DEAR) - 5 Sessions -2:45-4:00pm

Help instill the love of learning by reading to Lynch Elementary students after school on Wednesdays. The dates below are when volunteers are needed:

April 6, 13, 27

May 4 & 11

If you are interested in being a reader please get a Commitment Letter from Mrs. Winterer in room B217 in the Library and/or click the link below:

[To Sign-up click this link](#)

Volunteers Needed for Giangrade Family Scholarship Fundraiser

Sun. April 10th - 1:30-4:45pm

Volunteer are needed at St. Mary's in Winchester to serve at a buffet luncheon. There is a comedian, Jimmy Tingle, coming at 4pm that volunteers are welcome to stay and enjoy.

[Click this link if you are interested in volunteering!](#)

Connect & Commit Meeting Thurs. April 28th - 6:30-7:30pm

Connect & Commit would like to invite anyone who is interested in service-learning to come to our meeting in the WHS Library. There will be free food, as well as, service opportunities. For this meeting we will be focusing on Food - specifically the importance of Farm to Table. We hope to see you there!

Check out our website to get the latest on Connect & Commit!

www.ConnectandCommit.org

Winchester Youth Center



www.wynec.com

winchesteryouthcenter@gmail.com

781.721.0906

The WYC offers lots of programs, events and youth development opportunities for WHS students. We encourage everyone to stop by the WYC anytime to find out how to get more involved in all the cool things that we have going on!

The WYC Peer Leaders meet for youth group on Monday evenings at 5:30. Any WHS students interested in joining this group which focuses on leadership, service-learning, and good-decision-making should stop by and talk to Rebecca.

The Relay For Life Event Leadership Team meets at the WYC on Mondays at 7:00. Anyone interested in getting more involved with Relay can contact us

at winchesterrelay@gmail.com.

RELAY FOR LIFE OF WINCHESTER

Paint the School Purple Week

April 25-29

The Relay For Life Event Leadership Team will be "painting WHS purple" in celebration of Relay 2016!

There will be opportunities to register for Relay during lunches and buy Relay Sachem t-shirts. We will be handing out purple ribbons and treats for those that register.

Students and teachers will be encouraged to wear purple and post pictures to social media.

Athletic teams will also be encouraged to wear purple on their game days and Relay ELT members will be selling concessions and Relay swag at athletic events throughout the week.

There will be a Coin War in the library with prizes for the class that raises the most money.

Please go to www.relayforlife.org/winchesterma to register for Relay and for a schedule of all paint the school purple activities. Email us at winchesterrelay@gmail.com for more info.

Bowl for Relay @ Kings Burlington

Sunday, May 1st

3:00-5:00pm

\$20 for bowling, pizza and soda

All proceeds go to Relay For Life of Winchester

Buy tickets at the door

Join our event on Facebook

For more info go to www.relayforlife.org/winchesterma

WYC PEER LEADERS' APRIL VACATION HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TRIP

During April vacation the WYC Peer Leaders will be participating in our 10th Habitat for Humanity trip. We will be traveling to Wilmington, Delaware to complete a week-long service-learning experience building homes for families in need.

We are currently working toward fundraising 100% of the expenses for our trip including a \$2000 donation to Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County.

Please contact us if you would like to make a donation toward this amazing service-learning experience.

Proceeds from all of the following fundraising efforts will benefit our trip:

Raffle tickets

Buy your \$20 tickets for the chance to win:

* Kindle Fire *

* Red Sox tickets *

* Gift Cards to First House Pub, The Waterfield Kitchen, Mouradian Guitar and more *

Drawing: April 13th

Contact the WYC for more information

Community News

Every week the WHSPFA sends out a weekly email with upcoming community news. If you are not currently receiving this email, please visit the [WHSPFA website](#) and enter your email address at the bottom of the main page. Instructions on how to update your profile will be emailed.

WHS PFA | whspfa.org | whspfaneewsletter@gmail.com

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