

# THE HIGHLAND HIGHLIGHT

ISSUE 3 ■ MAY 2022

Published by the Highland Local Schools to promote our students, staff and programs.

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## BEST OF LUCK HIGHLAND CLASS OF 2022!

The Highland Local Schools marks its 69th Annual Commencement at 11 a.m. on May 28 at the Highland Stadium. Congratulations and best of luck to the 279 graduates in Highland High School's Class of 2022!



Chand

**VALEDICTORIAN: ANDREW CHAND**

**GPA: 4.84**

**ORGANIZATIONS:** Junior State of America, Charter and Founding Member HHS; Junior Leadership Medina County, USAG Gymnast, Varsity Diver, Highland Heartbreakers, Student Council, National Honor Society.

**AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS:** National Merit Finalist, Medina Gazette Swimming MVP, Scholar Athlete, Franklin B. Walter All-Scholastic Award for Medina County, Peter and Mary Galassi Scholarship, 2x State Qualifier (Diver), 1x Placer State Diving Meet, Suburban League 2x Diver of the Year, Freshman Pride Award (Music).

Andrew is an outstanding student leader who also volunteers his time in the community including Unified Sports, Buddy Program to assist students with special needs, and visits area nursing homes performing with the Tri M Orchestra Ensemble. He also serves as an NHS volunteer tutor. Upon his graduation from Highland, Andrew plans to attend college and major in Political Science. He is the son of Dr. David Chand of Copley Township and Addie Chand-Hull of Granger Township.



Wuchter

**SALUTATORIAN: JONATHAN WUCHTER**

**GPA: 4.768**

**ORGANIZATIONS:** President of the HHS National Honor Society, Peer Leader, Editor of The Stinger Newspaper, HHS Yearbook Staff, Varsity Golf Team.

**AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS:** AP Scholar with Distinction, Scholar-Athlete (four years), Eagle Scout, National Merit Commended Scholar.

Jonathan has served in various positions in the Boy Scouts of America since 2015. His passion for golf led him to work as a golf attendant at Weymouth Country Club, where he also managed the driving range. The son of Gerald Wuchter and Kimberly Blair of Sharon Township, Jonathan will attend The University of Michigan and study Chemical Engineering upon his graduation from Highland.



Tony & Bernadette Yu

## BERNADETTE & TONY YU: PRIDE AWARD RECIPIENTS

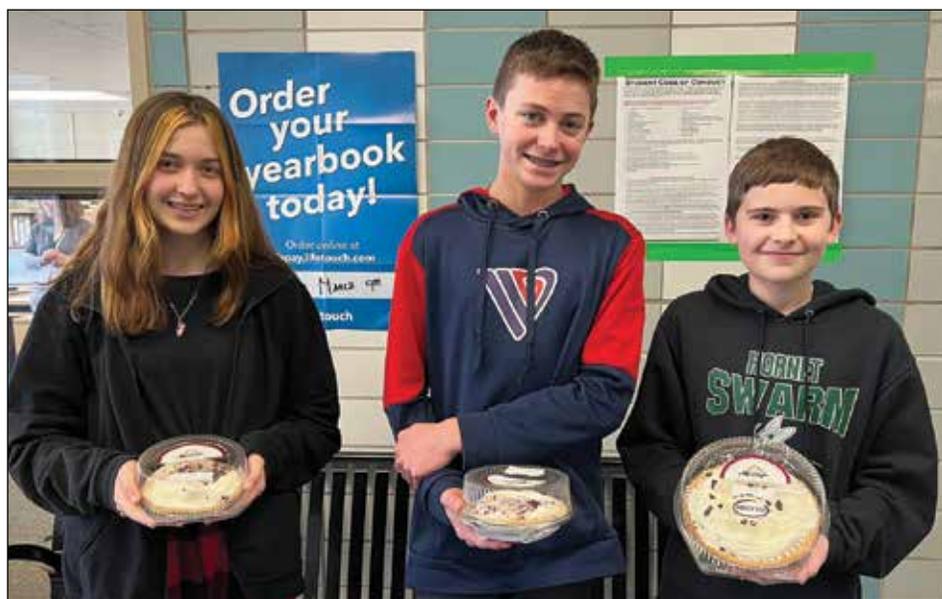
The Highland Local School District is pleased to announce the selection of the 2022 Highland Pride Award winners: **Bernadette and Tony Yu of Sharon Township.**

They will be recognized at the Highland Board of Education meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, May 16 in the Highland High School Media Center. A reception will follow for family and friends in attendance.

Bernadette, a 3rd grade teacher at Sharon Elementary for the past 25 years, and her husband Tony, a long-time community volunteer, were chosen by a committee based on nominations received and in recognition of the unwavering commitment, enthusiasm, and generosity they have shown to the students and the community of the Highland Schools over the years. They now join an elite group of individuals who have been presented with this honor.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

# MAKING HEADLINES...



*Kayla Seiler, Josh Butcher and Joey Gray*

## HIGHLAND MIDDLE PI DAY WINNERS

Highland Middle School students in Mrs. Anna Taylor's 8th grade math classes celebrated Pi Day on March 14 with the annual Pi Digits Memorization Contest. Pi Day is an annual celebration of the mathematical constant  $\pi$  (pi). Students memorized as many digits as they could to compete for a real pie! Congratulations to 1st place winner Joey Gray who set a new school memorization record with 391 digits (the previous record was 351), 2nd place was Kayla Seiler with 100 digits and 3rd place was Josh Butcher with 87 digits.

## GLEBA WINS ARTSONIA ARTIST OF THE WEEK AWARD

Sharon Elementary 3rd grader Chase Gleba was the recent winner of Artsonia's "Artist of the Week" award for the PreK-3rd grade age group. Chase was the finalist who received the most online votes (1,241 votes!) over a seven-day period.

As the winner, his artwork "Tiger Collage" was featured on the Artsonia homepage and he received a commemorative plaque. In addition, Blick Art Materials donated a \$100 gift certificate to Sharon Elementary School and \$50 to Chase!

Chase is the son of Mike and Amber Gleba of Wadsworth.



*Chase Gleba  
with Sharon  
Art Teacher,  
Mrs. Karen  
Gillihan*



*Connor pictured with his parents Scott and Julie Cerrito*

## CERRITO RECEIVES U.S. MARINE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP

Congratulations to Highland senior Connor Cerrito who was recently awarded the United States Marine Corps Scholarship. He was among only eight graduating seniors from Ohio and Michigan to receive the honor. The \$180,000 scholarship covers a full ride to the college of his choice. Following graduation from Highland, Connor plans to attend The Ohio State University and major in business. He will attend regular college classes as well as military training, then attend officer candidate school the summer of his junior year. Upon college graduation, he will serve as an officer. Connor is the son of Scott and Julie Cerrito of Hinckley Township.

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## BERNADETTE & TONY YU: PRIDE AWARD RECIPIENTS

*CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

According to one of Bernadette's nominators, she is like the school district in which she teaches... "exceptional." An engaging and dynamic educator who often uses technology to inspire and instruct her students, she is tireless in her efforts to push students to reach their goals and go above and beyond. She sets a prime example of this through her commitment and dedication to volunteering. For the past several years, she has led the "hair team" for middle school and high school musicals, organized the Uniform Room for the Highland Marching Band, volunteered for the Choir Boosters and Added Attraction, assisted with the Highland Gymnastics Team, and also served on the Facilities Advisory Committee for the new elementary schools.

She has spearheaded school-wide fundraisers to benefit the district and community (too many to count) including collection drives for Feeding Medina County and St. Paul's Sharing Center.

The details and time involved in all her extra volunteer efforts are what sets her apart, in addition to her selfless nature. When Bernadette sees one of her former "star students" mentioned in area newspapers, she quickly cuts out the article and sends it to them at the high school – and several have stated how meaningful that was to them.

There simply is not enough space to list all of Bernadette's volunteer efforts, past and present, but one of her nominators sums it up best. "Bernadette does not take on these added responsibilities because she feels obligated or because a role needs to be filled. She does it because she genuinely takes pride in the Highland community. She wants to contribute to the highest standards possible for our community — in whatever way she can. When people see our musicals, our band and choirs perform or our gymnasts compete, they realize each has been built upon a foundation of pride, and Bernadette has played a large role in strengthening that pride for many years."

When it comes to volunteering, Tony is impressive in his own right. Although the couple works in tandem at many events, Tony also offers countless hours to the band and choir programs in his spare time. For the past five-plus years, he has served as a band trailer volunteer, helping to load and unload the equipment at every away performance of the marching band. He is a band chaperone for trips and a driver on Tag Day. As the President of the Highland Choir Boosters for the past three years, and its former treasurer, Tony understands what it takes to operate a successful committee. He, much like his wife, is involved with every high school and middle school musical production and volunteers at all state choir contests hosted at Highland High School.

Tony and Bernadette have helped to sponsor and coordinate several fundraiser events, including a game night in their own home, literally raising thousands of dollars over the years to benefit the band and choir programs. They recently worked to partner with the Buck family of Buck Chevrolet (a Highland family-owned business) who agreed to donate a car to be raffled as a fundraiser, with all proceeds benefitting the band program.

Now a third-year member of The Highland Foundation Board of Trustees, Tony currently serves as the chair of the Projects Review Committee which reviews teacher grants to help supplement learning opportunities for students and staff. Grant review meetings are held twice each school year (fall and spring) and are very time-consuming, as all proposals must meet certain guidelines and application procedures. As chair, Tony is responsible for bringing the committee's grant recommendations to The Highland Foundation Board of Trustees, who then grant the final award decisions.

It's not difficult to understand why the Yus are appreciated and respected by so many in the Highland community – and why they were nominated for the Highland Pride Award. Their nominators agree that Bernadette and Tony are "Highland through and through and bleed 'green and black.' Their spirit of pride truly shines through in all that they do."

## HHS STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN LATIN

Congratulations to the following Highland High School students who were winners in the recent 2022 National Latin Exam, a test given annually to Latin students across the United States and around the world.

- **LATIN I (Beginning):** Sam Wernet (Gold Medal) Summa Cum Laude; Cameron Cortel (Silver Medal) Maxima Cum Laude; Kevin Curtis (Silver Medal), Maxima Cum Laude; MacKenzie Pawlak, Cum Laude; Lizzy Magoolaghan, Cum Laude; and Emma Smicklas, Cum Laude.
- **LATIN II (Intermediate):** Marissa Marasco (Silver Medal), Maxima Cum Laude; Noah Holland (Silver Medal), Maxima Cum Laude; and Jordyn Tousley, Magna Cum Laude.
- **LATIN III (Intermediate Reading Comprehension):** Helen Chermak, Magna Cum Laude.
- **LATIN IV (Advanced Reading Comprehension):** Brian Marasco (Gold Medal), Summa Cum Laude; and Olivia Wolfgang, Cum Laude. Special recognition goes to Marasco who has won a Gold Medal each year on the NLE for all four years of Latin. This achievement is a testimony of his knowledge and skills. Congratulations Brian!

# HORNET'S NEST

## STEM CLUB WINS NASA TECHRISE CHALLENGE

Highland High School STEM Club juniors David Austin, Ben Houzenga, Evan Davis and Dylan Jones were among 57 winning teams in the inaugural NASA TechRise Student Challenge. The nationwide challenge, which included over 600 applicants, is designed to attract, engage and prepare future science, technology, engineering and mathematics professionals.

Highland STEM Club, under the direction of HHS computer science teacher Richard Holland, competed to create the best experiment that could take place on a weather balloon or suborbital rocket. Students chose which type of flight they liked and designed an experiment to tailor to the selected flight.

On January 21, the Highland team was notified they won the TechRise Challenge for their photo-electric affection-based regolith extractor, abbreviated as PEARE, which is an advanced asteroid mining tool powered by UV LEDs and a magnet. Through the NASA TechRise Challenge, the Highland STEM Club has been awarded a budget of \$1,500 and the opportunity to send their handcrafted experiment into space.



*David Austin, Ben Houzenga, Evan Davis and Dylan Jones*

The Highland team is currently awaiting their budget and 3D printed flight container for the device and will spend the next few months building and testing the experiment in conjunction with NASA. They expect to complete their full build by June and send it to NASA where they will integrate it onto the UP Aerospace Rocket that will launch into space in the spring of 2023. Congratulations!

## PROJECT OFFERS STUDENTS CHANCE TO COLLABORATE



*Tommy Durian, Lola Kiko and Westyn Murray*

Each school year, 3rd graders at Sharon Elementary School read about the Kon Tiki Expedition of 1947 in their enrichment class, learning that the voyage proved the Polynesian Islands could be reached from South America by way of the Pacific Ocean. It was thought that Polynesia could only be reached from Asia before that time. The Kon Tiki was a raft made of balsa wood and modeled after rafts that Spaniards observed Native Americans using off the coast of Peru and Ecuador. These highly maneuverable rafts could hold up to 35 tons of cargo. The Kon Tiki utilized trade winds and made this epic voyage in 101 days.

As part of their reading assignment, students also collaborated to see who could construct a boat using three sheets of tin foil and was able to float. Students researched boat designs and worked together to build and name their vessels. The winning boat, The Tin Foil Titan, crafted by Tommy Durian, Lola Kiko and Westyn Murray was able to float and carry 24 ounces of weight! In 2nd place, The Titanic, built by Xavier Denholm and Morgan Lehman could carry 16 ounces. Even as students were observing their boat through the testing process, they were still communicating about what they would have done differently. "This project is about much more than crafting a boat out of tin foil—it's about the process of communication and collaboration. These kids are learning to work together... and that sometimes true exploration is about the journey, not the destination," said Sharon teacher, Bernadette Yu.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## ANNUAL DARE SKATE NIGHT IS ONE TO REMEMBER!

Highland's annual DARE Skate Night, held on March 16, was a huge success! With over 289 skaters and DARE Role Models in attendance, it was definitely a skate night to remember! A special thank you to DARE Officer Sharon Centner for organizing the event each year.



## S&D TEAM FINISHES 19TH IN STATE, RILEY ADVANCES TO NATIONALS



*Riley*

Congratulations to the Highland Speech and Debate Team and coaches on their amazing finish at the State Tournament in March. The team placed 19th overall out of 79 teams from across the state.

Lauren Riley emerged as a Finalist in Congressional Debate and finished 13th in the state out of 184 competitors. She recently qualified for the 2022 National Speech & Debate Tournament to be held in June in Louisville,

Kentucky, where she will represent Highland and the Eastern Ohio District in the category of Congressional Debate. Her qualification means Highland's 11th consecutive appearance at the National Speech and Debate Association's tournament. Lauren is the daughter of Rodney and Denise Riley of Sharon Township. Good Luck, Lauren!

*Additional State Tourney Accolades:* Sadie Mendenhall made it to the Semi-Final round in Congressional Debate, which is the Top 12 in the state, and the following students made it to the Quarter-Final round, which is the Top 24: Vedant Natarajan, Congressional Debate; Victoria Farrell, Dramatic Interpretation; Maranda Vitko, Dramatic Interpretation; Kourtney Carr, Informative Speaking; and Dylan Jones, International Extemporaneous Speaking.

## MASSARO IS SPEAKER AT TEACHTALK 2022



*Massaro*

Congratulations to Hinckley Elementary School art teacher Katie Massaro who was invited to speak at the Akron Art Museum's "TeachTalk 2022" on April 21.

TeachTalk is an annual professional development event for new and seasoned professionals to come together. There is no cost to attend.

For this year's event, the museum was transformed into the ultimate teacher's lounge where educators shared quick, inspiring, funny and relatable tales about the highs and lows of teaching and learning. Massaro, who was among five educators to speak at the event — ranging from all subject areas and age levels — talked about the wisdom she gained over the course of one year while teaching middle school art amidst a global pandemic.

## HHS ART AWARD ACCOLADES

Highland High School student artists were recently recognized with scholarships and awards by organizations in Medina County and beyond.

Each March, the Medina County Art League presents the Teen Juried Art Show in conjunction with the Medina County District Library. At the same time, MCAL awards scholarships to local high school students in grades 6-12 to further their education. Highland senior Grace Wojtylak won Honorable Mention and \$350, while junior Evan Novak won the league's "Rising Star" award and \$500. Additionally, Teen Art Awards were presented to junior Brooke Boge (1st Place), freshman Andrew Bryan (2nd Place) and sophomore Missy Marasco (Honorable Mention).

Congratulations is also extended to students selected to have their work displayed at the 2022 Ohio Governor's Youth Art Exhibition in Columbus. They include: Grace Wojtylak, Abby Pappas, Sofiya Cole and Makayla Lyons. In 2021, from the 6,280 regional entries by 2,441 students, 1,030 were selected to enter the state judging. Jurors then selected 342 pieces for the actual exhibition. Highland students who were winners at the regional level included Emily Brogan, Sarah Espenschied, Makayla Lyons, Evan Novak, Abby Pappas, Grace Wojtylak and Dylan Chorba.

## COLBRUNN AWARDED HINCKLEY WOMEN'S CLUB SCHOLARSHIP

Congratulations to Highland senior Gabe Colbrunn, who was the recipient of the Hinckley Women's Club Scholarship. He presented his winning essay to the club membership on April 21. The son of Robb



*Colbrunn*

and Joni Colbrunn of Hinckley Township, Gabe plans to attend Kent State University to major in Robotics Engineering with a minor in Computer Science. He hopes to eventually earn a master's degree in artificial intelligence, then apply what he has learned to help improve peoples' lives through robotics.

# HIGHLAND ATHLETIC NEWS



## New Varsity Head Coaches Announced



Schaefer

Christopher Schaefer is the new Head Coach of the Varsity Boys' Soccer Team. Schaefer served as head coach of the JV team from 2019-21, and most recently led the team to a 14-0-1 undefeated season in 2021. His coaching experience also encompasses seven seasons at the youth level. Additionally, he was a high school referee before becoming the Highland JV coach.



Curtis

Colin Curtis has been named the Head Coach of the Varsity Girls Soccer Team. With several years as a coach and collegiate athlete, Curtis was the varsity assistant coach and JV head coach for the girls' team at Brunswick High School for the past six



McDermott

seasons. In addition, he has several years as a youth travel soccer coach and served as the vice president of the Brunswick Soccer Association. Curtis, a history teacher at Brunswick High School, is eager to share his knowledge with players and bring a new energy and passion to the program.

Laura McDermott will step into the role as Head Coach of the Varsity Girls Volleyball Team after the past three seasons in the assistant coach position and two years as JV coach. With 18 years of experience in the sport, both as a coach and collegiate athlete, McDermott said she will continue to build a culture that is beneficial to and reflective of each year's unique group of student-athletes. A 5th grade teacher in the Highland District for the past seven years, she also assists in a week-long high school volleyball summer camp held at various local schools.

## MADISON IS DI COACH OF YEAR, MILLER GETS SPECIAL MENTION

Congratulations to Highland High School girls' basketball coach James Madison who was named Ohio Division I Coach of the Year on March 22 by the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association. Madison, a Sharon Township resident, led the Hornets to their first Suburban League championship since 1980 and first district title since 1992. The team finished 24-2 on the season, setting a new school record.



Madison



Miller

Congratulations are also extended to Highland senior guard Maddie Miller who led the Hornets with averages of 14.4 points, 4.0 rebounds, 2.8 assists and 2.0 steals, as she received a Special Mention in D-I. Maddie is the daughter of Brian and Rochele Miller of Hinckley Township.



Derek Evans, Alessandra Goyette, Emily Keeling, Emma Hetkey, Keirsten Trayte

## 5 SIGN COMMITMENT LETTERS

Five Highland senior student-athletes signed their letter of intent to attend and play sports for their chosen college. Each received a full or partial academic and/or athletic scholarship. Congratulations to the following:

- Derek Evans: Lake Erie College / Baseball. Major: Sports Management. He is the son of Glen and Tracy Evans of Hinckley Township.
- Alessandra Goyette: Walsh University / Golf. Major: Biology/Pre-Med. She is the daughter of Drs. Michael Goyette and Julie Reeves of Granger Township.
- Emily Keeling: Ashland University / Stunt & Cheerleading Squad. Major: Elementary Education. She is the daughter of Scott and Laura Keeling of Hinckley Township.
- Emma Hetkey: College of Wooster / Softball. Major: Undecided. She is the daughter of John and Patti Hetkey of Sharon Township.
- Keirsten Trayte: Cottey College (Missouri) / Softball. Major: Health and Biomedical Science. She is the daughter of Thomas and Mary Lou Trayte of Montville Township.

# THE HIGHLAND FOUNDATION

for educational excellence

## OVER \$30K IN SPRING GRANTS APPROVED

The Highland Foundation recently approved \$30,966 in Spring grants. Below is a brief overview of each.

**SWERVE WHEEL MODULES FOR ROBOTICS PROGRAM (\$4,700)** -- *Nate Rudolph, Robotics Club Coach, HHS/HMS Instrumental Music.* The Highland Robotics Team will purchase new swerve wheel modules to use in building and programming their annual competition robots. The wheels will replace outdated production models that the team has been using for the last 4-5 years. The new wheels will provide cutting edge technology and mechanisms for robotics members to use in STEM-oriented tasks, such as programming the robot and completing mechanical and electrical construction tasks. The wheels will also include modern sensors and will provide a complex and limitless source of projects, experience, and creative outlets in engineering tasks.

**STEM CLUB (\$1,400)** -- *Rick Holland, HHS Computer Applications.* The STEM Club seeks to assist students on the correct trajectory to match their interests. Specifically, the club aims to help expand students' interests by building projects that start with the basics and end with complex builds. With the purchase of the Arduino electronic development boards, parts and sensors, as well as the 3D printer, the club will have all the basics needed for STEM. These useful and effective tools alone were designed for very beginners as well as experienced users -- perfect for students at Highland.

**HIGHLAND BUZZ NETWORK (\$5,252)** -- *Christopher Meyer, HHS Language Arts Department.* Highland High School's media class (soon to be titled "Digital Media Production") is working to evolve its capabilities to efficiently produce quality video/audio media projects that focus on "all things Highland." Through the production of tri-weekly announcements, the team will highlight as many positive and remarkable people, events, and accomplishments as possible through The Highland Buzz Network.

**HIGHLAND BUZZ JUNIOR (\$1,500)** -- *Bernadette Yu, Sharon Elementary.* This grant will allow for a student news broadcast at Sharon Elementary to deliver weekly announcements. Third graders in Mrs. Bernadette Yu's classroom will learn to plan, write, and produce a weekly recorded announcement to highlight students, staff, and events at Sharon Elementary School. The format will be similar to the Highland Buzz Network. Teachers will also broadcast the announcements in their classrooms. Ultimately, the goal is to incorporate all grades in the production process of The Highland Buzz Jr. at Sharon.

**ART AS THERAPY (\$1,614)** -- *Bonnie Kubilus, HHS Art Department.* This grant will offer Highland High School students Social Emotional Learning (SEL) opportunities through small and large group art projects on a monthly basis during A.L.L. or after school. In addition, the National Art Honor Society (NAHS), will initiate a student committee whose goal is to create SEL opportunities for HHS moving forward.

### CONTINUED GRANTS

**COLLEGE NOW — GREATER CLEVELAND (\$6,750)** -- *Julianna Lakins, HHS Guidance Counselor*

**HIGHLAND INTERCULTURAL PROGRAM (\$9,750)** -- *Robert Murray, HHS Intercultural Program Advisor*



## Save the Date

7TH ANNUAL

# HORNET DASH

## SUNDAY, 6/5/22

### 5k Run/Walk & Kids' Fun Run

Event begins at Highland High School Stadium

Presented in cooperation with:

THE HIGHLAND  
FOUNDATION  
for educational excellence



## NEW THIS YEAR: JOIN THE 'DECADE CHALLENGE!'

The 2022 Dash allows individuals and families to run on their own or as a team to raise funds for Named Scholarships managed by The Highland Foundation.

Additionally, and new this year, The Foundation has committed to recognizing the winner of a "Decade Challenge" that has been issued to all Highland Alumni by the Alumni Association's Hornet Dash Committee. The decade with the most alumni participating in the 2022 Dash will be recognized with a \$1,000 Highland Foundation Scholarship awarded to a graduating 2023 senior in their honor. Will it be the 1970's, 1980's, 1990's, the classes of 2000-2009, or our most recent decade of graduates, 2010-2019?

*We hope you can join us!*