

Rummel Foundaton Funds Kean Univ. Scholarships

AREA - Financial aid, grants and scholarship support are essential to upholding the status of Kean University. Each year since 1999, the Fred C. Rummel Foundation has provided scholarships for deserving high-school students who will attend Kean.

The Rummel Scholars Program, administered through the Kean University Foundation Division of Institutional Advancement, provides six scholarships, each in the amount of \$5,000, to needy students who are graduates of Essex and Union County high schools.

Recipients must demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and exceptional leadership capabilities, as well as trustworthiness, honor and character, through service to their communities or participation in various extracurricular high-school activities.

Each of the scholarships is renewable for up to a total of four years; students must reapply for the scholarship on a yearly basis. Recipients for the 2007 scholarship awards will be announced and recognized at the up-

Marionni Serves as Susq. Sorority Officer

SCOTCH PLAINS - Jenna Marionni of Scotch Plains has been selected to serve as vice president of new-member education of Sigma Kappa Sorority at Susquehanna University.

Susquehanna is home to four national sororities for women that comprise the Panhellenic Council: Alpha Delta Pi (Gamma Omicron chapter), Kappa Delta (Beta Upsilon chapter), Sigma Kappa (Epsilon Delta chapter) and Zeta Tau Alpha (Iota Nu chapter). The officers work toward improving life at Susquehanna through community-building events and social activities.

Jenna is a junior earth environmental science and political science major at Susquehanna. A 2004 graduate of Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, she is the daughter of Roland and Debra Marionni.

coming Kean University Scholars reception on Wednesday, March 21.

The Fred C. Rummel Foundation is an independent foundation that was established in 1997. Its mission is to provide grant-funded support to the educational institutions, as well as health, human services and youth development organizations throughout New Jersey.

WF Women Earn Colgate Honors

WESTFIELD - Two Westfield High School graduates recently earned honors at Colgate University.

Megan Fowler, the daughter of Karen and Tom Fowler of Westfield, is a recipient of the Dean's Award for academic excellence during the fall 2006 semester at Colgate, where she is a member of the Class of 2009.

A 2005 graduate of Westfield High School, Megan concentrates in the classics and biology at Colgate.

Lizzie Trimble, the daughter of Jim and Tucker Trimble, is a recipient of the Dean's Award for academic excellence during the fall 2006 semester at Colgate, where she is a member of the Class of 2009.

A 2005 graduate of Westfield High School, Lizzie concentrates in architectural studies at Colgate.

To be eligible for the Dean's Award, a Colgate student must achieve a 3.30 or higher average while carrying a full course load of four courses per semester.

WF Students Make Syracuse Dean's List

WESTFIELD - Westfield's Jason Mesches, a junior majoring in drama, and Daniel Schwartz, a freshman majoring in illustration, are both enrolled in the College of Visual and Performing Arts at Syracuse University and were named to the dean's list for the fall 2006 semester.

To qualify, students must achieve at least a 3.4 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) during the semester.



ONE HUNDRED DAYS OLD...Kindergarteners at The Wardlaw-Hartridge School in Edison marked 100 days of school with special art projects and activities on Friday, February 16. Jack Sildat of Mountainside is shown sharing his artwork that used 100 colorful rhinestone stars and other craft materials to illustrate the number 100. Wardlaw-Hartridge kindergarten teacher, Donna Gurkas of Westfield, looks on.



PREP TALK...Scotch Plains resident Chester Baker (holding cup) talks with fellow 2006-2007 Mock Trial Union County Champion teammates Stephen Scirocco, Joe Weinboffer and Peter Arre, right. At The Law Center at Rutgers University on February 13, Oratory Prep School's team advanced to the semifinals for a chance at the state title, which will be decided by another two rounds of competition. Oratory Prep School in Summit has been the county's Mock Trial Champions three out of the last four years under the direction of coach Bill Martin.

Oratory Prep Wins County Mock Trial Championship

AREA - The Oratory Prep School's Mock Trial team recently won the title of Union County mock trial champions for the second consecutive year, winning the county championship three of the last four years.

Under the guidance of Oratory Prep Athletic Director/teacher Bill Martin and attorney/parent advisers Patrick Arre and Bob Scirocco, the boys took home the title at the Union County Courthouse in Elizabeth in early February.

Then, on February 13, they competed against other county winners to advance to the semi-finals.

Mr. Arre, the father of junior Peter Arre, one of the teen defense attorneys, said he was amazed at the dedication of the teens. "I'm really proud of them," he said of the 10 members. "The boys have such busy schedules; they are all involved in sports and other activities. I give them a lot of credit."

Steve Scirocco, one of the teens

who took the role of the plaintiff's attorney, said the process of getting to the regional finals has been a long, but fulfilling journey so far.

This year's Oratory team started practicing in September, meeting weekly at various team members' homes or through the week after school at the Roman Catholic boys' school in Summit.

The trial case, which is given to the mock trial coaches in October, is studied and rehearsed with team members taking the roles of attorneys and witnesses.

On the state level, these teens are prepared like actors in a play: they know their lines and stay in character, spouting legal terms like it is second nature to them.

The February 13 mock trials were held in the auditorium in the Law Center of Rutgers University where the Oratory Prep boys presented their cases.

Coach Martin said, "The teens need to display an understanding of law, logic and the rules of Mock Trial as published by the New Jersey State Bar Association, the sponsoring organization."

The next round of finals will take place at Rutgers University on Friday, March 16.

THE STUDENT VIEW

The weekly column written by local high school students

Workloads Cause Physical, Mental Health to Decline

By SARA BIRKENTHAL
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

I feel the need to express my complete disbelief as to how much homework the average Westfield High School (WHS) student receives.

My homework load, as a sophomore in (WHS), has gotten to the point where it is necessary for me to stay up until 1 or 2 a.m. almost nightly in order to finish every assignment.

Although I am slightly guilty of being an overachiever, it is not even that I am going above and beyond the requirements of all assignments; I am simply attempting to finish everything.

I acknowledge the fact that I chose to take the advanced level classes in which I am enrolled, but the expectations of many teachers are ridiculous. In fact, it has become almost commonplace in the high school these days to stay up until all hours of the night/morning, simply to complete assignment after assignment.

Each and everyday as you walk the halls of our very own WHS, cries of "I'm so tired!" ring piercingly from student to student. Sitting in the cafeteria or library, it is not unusual to hear students comparing how many hours of sleep they squeezed in the night before, with almost every single student falling pitifully below any range of requirement or belief.

I cannot sit back and watch the physical and mental health of so many students decline, due to the indisputably high workload and the drive to succeed that WHS is infamous for.

This homework quickly turns into a rather viscous and physically harmful cycle, with many students falling asleep in class and while sitting at their desks to do homework.

I personally have gotten to the point where every moment of my school-obsessed life is spent either doing homework or feeling extreme guilt that I am not doing my countless hours of homework.

Little things in life that I used to enjoy, such as reading a novel at a speed less than 100 pages per night or playing a sport without being so tired that you can barely function, have no spot in my life anymore.

If I cannot have fun and enjoy myself now, then when can I? These are supposed to be the best years of our lives; yet, somehow our homework load seems to instantly form a dark shadow over that idea.

On top of all of this, many teachers repeatedly lecture us that we are not working to our full potentials and not putting our whole efforts into their classes. Some days, I am so exhausted that I get nothing out of any of my classes, because I cannot concentrate on anything other than attempting to keep my eyes open.

I understand that homework is a useful tool in learning and that teachers have rapid syllabi to follow, but at some point, the workload becomes overkill. The fact of this situation that frightens me the most is that I am merely a sophomore; I cannot even imagine what junior and senior years are going to be like.

It seems extremely ironic and hypocritical to me that after last year's school examination by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the entire board of education is overwhelmingly concerned with "student wellness."

How are we supposed to be physi-

cally, mentally and socially "well" if our entire lives are based solely on school? There is absolutely no time left in my jam-packed day for rest, relaxation, family time, reading for pleasure, non-academic, non-college application-oriented hobbies, or friends.

So much pressure is put on us from parents, teachers, and administrators to do well, not only throughout high school, but also to achieve high scores on the SAT and other academic tests. How am I supposed to devote any time to preparing for these tests if I have so much other homework?

In addition, we are all encouraged to sign up for countless clubs during Student Council's Club Day, and basically remove anything from our lives that is not deemed "Ivy-League-worthy."

Pressure is applied from every single club, organization, and sport, pressure to commit more time, more energy, more money. More! More! More! Is that really what this community is about, pushing ourselves in every single way to each and every last limit?

It is not only the fact that I feel the need to be enrolled in as many honors classes as possible, nor my group of overachieving, competitive friends, but I can honestly say that every student in WHS is affected by the ridiculous amounts of homework we receive.

In our "perfect," structured, scrutinized little town of Westfield, where overbearing parents are obsessively involved in the PTO and administrators are concerned with everything from student drug use to standardized testing, how can such a vital and fundamental issue be ignored?

I am not sure if parents, teacher, and administrators are oblivious to the fact that students are overworked, sleep-deprived, and living unhealthy lives, but there truly is no excuse.

Students need to make it very clear to teachers, parents, and administrators that the workload in our local high school is neither acceptable nor admissible: committees must be formed and board of education meetings must be attended, because unless the students of WHS act now, nothing will be done to stop this large problem.

If the school board wants to have even a remotely healthy or happy student population, the amount of homework given must be brought dramatically down. Don't worry, parents and administration of Westfield, if a homework change is implemented, just as many kids will be admitted to Ivy League Schools, just as many kids will score perfect scores on their SAT, just as many of your beloved students will be on the honor roll, I promise, but some change needs to occur.

I have to stop now, and trudge up to my room, to spend another seven hours writing my English paper, studying for my Latin test, doing my PSAT prep packet, completing 31 multi-step math problems, reading 50 pages from my history text book, completing my Chemistry Lab and, hopefully, go to sleep, if time permits.

Sara Birkenthal is a Westfield High School sophomore.



HEART OF THE MATTER...Mary Farrell, center, clinical care coordinator and member of the Women's Heart Team at Overlook Hospital, spoke recently to the ladies of the Home Life Department of Woman's Club of Westfield at the Masonic Lodge in Westfield. Ms. Farrell said people should be aware symptoms of heart problems and act quickly in getting medical attention. Also pictured are club members and nurses Delores Kilkenny, left, and Anne Galante.

McDermott's Handy

Performing Traditional Irish Music

Thursday, March 15

7:00 pm



Performing on Celtic harp, fiddle, flute, guitar, mandolin, banjo, bodhran, tin whistle and bouzouki Kathy DeAngelo and Dennis Gormley formed the musical group, *McDermott's Handy*, to keep Irish music alive and well.

Register now!

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Jump Start Students Mark School Day 100

SCOTCH PLAINS -February 20 was the 100th day of school for children in the Jump Start Pre-Kindergarten classes at Brunner Elementary School in Scotch Plains.

The children began keeping track of the days on the first day of school in September and planned a special celebration to mark that they were 100 days smarter. The children decorated headbands, made necklaces with 100 Cheerios and made booklets as members of the "100 Club."

Parents were on hand to help the children work at stations in the classroom that featured the number 100. These included filling a goody bag with 100 snack items, decorating 100 inches of paper and filling a 100-square grid with stamps.

The 100-day activities were planned to help the children begin to develop an understanding of how much 100 is.

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Westfield High School
550 Dorian Road, Westfield, NJ

Catalogs are available at local libraries.

The Rubino OBGYN Group Welcomes Dr. Lisa Abeshaus, F.A.C.O.G.



The Rubino OBGYN group is pleased to announce the addition of Dr. Lisa Abeshaus to the practice. Dr. Abeshaus, who formerly practiced in Springfield, NJ, is a dedicated gynecologist and obstetrician who brings a wealth of experience to the practice. Dr. Abeshaus received her M.D. from Dartmouth Medical School.

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