A-PLUS TEACHER...Brookside Place Elementary (BPS) School Kindergarten Teacher Anne Marie Francis is named the BPS Classroom Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Francis Is Named BPS Teacher of the Year

CRANFORD—Brookside Place Elementary School (BPS) is pleased to announce that Anne Marie Francis has been selected as the Classroom Teacher of the Year from nominations made by the school community as part of the New Jersey Department of Education 2018-19 Governor's Educator of the Year Program.

Mrs. Francis has served the Cranford school district for 20 years, with 11 of those years teaching kindergarten at BPS. She has also taught grades 4 through 8 as both a classroom and gifted and talented teacher, grades K to 8 as a character education coordinator and grades 9 though 12 as a service learning coordinator.

She was a kindergartener herself when she decided she'd one day emulate her kindergarten teacher and sit around a circle, teaching kindergarteners. "I feel that teaching chose me!" Mrs. Francis said. "It's all I ever wanted to be."

Before the start of every day, she said, she reads to herself a page-long doctrine she has compiled entitled "This is What I Believe," which lists statements of positivity to guide her teaching philosphies. "I believe I can make the biggest difference in a child's ability to learn. I believe all children are filled with curiosity and it is my responsibility to illuminate their path to discovery," she said.

In her cheerful kindergarten classroom, Mrs. Francis said she creates an environment for learning based upon those beliefs and what she has learned in life to "create a place that is nurturing, safe, inviting, rewarding, stimulating, loving and fun!"

She is very humbled by her nomination as the BPS Classroom Teacher of the Year. "I believe that the BPS staff is a truly exceptional group of professionals who collaboratively push each individual along to reach their full potential. This honor belongs to all of us," Mrs. Francis said.

The Governor's Educator of the Year Program highlights educational innovation, student achievement, the rewards of teaching, and important services outside the classroom environment that lead to student success. Further, it seeks to attract public attention to the positive aspects of our educational system. For more information, please visit: http://www.state.nj.us/education/educators/rpr/recognition/educators/geoy/.

More Education next page

Christiano of CF Earns Dean's List at Lehigh

CRANFORD — Luke Christiano, of Cranford, was named to the Dean's List at Lehigh University in the Fall 2018 semester.

Dean's List status is awarded to students who earned a scholastic average of 3.6 or better while carrying at least 12 hours of regularly graded courses.

Children of Holocaust Survivors Visit EIS Students

WESTFIELD — Eighth graders at Edison Intermediate School (EIS) recently heard compelling, and sometimes emotional, accounts from a group comprised of children of Holocaust survivors who shared facts, photographs and a common message that hate cannot be tolerated anywhere.

"The Holocaust was the systematic murder of 6-million Jews and other populations," said Lydia Fogelman to a class of eighth graders. "We are here now to tell you the stories of our mothers and how they survived."

Fogelman was one of six members of the Second/Third Generation Holocaust Survivors Group to visit Edison to share their family stories of loss and survival. The group was co-founded by Claire Bornstein, Rita Geller and Faye Bodenstein at Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains in 2015 and includes members from throughout the area.

"The group's objectives are to share stories, provide support, to learn even more about our history and, most importantly, to create opportunities for Holocaust education in our schools, synagogues and community," said Barbara Simon, whose maternal and paternal grandparents, an uncle, and three aunts were among her family members to die during the Holocaust.

Ms. Simon said the visit to Edison was the group's first experience speaking in a school. "We hope to continue," she said. "Our goal is to instill our 'be an Upstander, not a bystander' philosophy. We hope the students understood the message that we cannot change the past but they should participate in the future. We wish to instill confidence in the kids to not only be able to recognize hate, but to also feel empowered to realize that staying quiet should not be an option. Hate is not okay."

Joining Simon and Fogelman in speaking to three eighth grade language arts classes were Claire Bornstein, Rita Geller, Debra Feldman and Gila Glassel.

"Edison's eighth grade language arts classes are currently involved in a social justice book club unit. Students are reading a number of books that deal with the themes of prejudice, righteous individuals, bravery, and morality," said principal Matthew Bolton. "We are incredibly fortunate to have members of the Second/third Generation Holocaust Survivors Group share their compelling stories of sadness and survival with our students."

EIS students will also hear from a Holocaust survivor who will visit the school next month, Mr. Bolton said.

"The teaching of the Holocaust and genocide has been part of the K-12 curriculum in Westfield Public Schools for more than two decades, with a multidisciplinary, age-appropriate approach at all grade levels," said Superintendent Margaret Dolan, Ed.D. "This visit by members of Congregation Beth Israel and other presentations on the Holocaust provide important real-life context to classroom experiences at our intermediate and high schools."

LEADING THE WAY...The Education Enrichment Foundation of Scotch Plains-Fanwood hosted their annual Leadership Training Conference (LTC 100) on February 2. Over 100 student delegates, recommended by the faculty of Park and Terrill Middle Schools and St. Bartholomew's Academy (grades 5-8), participated in this event that develops, reinforces and promotes leadership skills. The delegates learned leadership skills through class work and hands-on activities, such as Effective Communication, Speaking with Ease/Public Speaking, Elected to Lead Everyone and T.E.A.M Time! (Together Everyone Achieves More). LTC 100 takes some of the best features of the New Jersey Association of Student Councils four-day LTC program held in the summer and condenses them into a one-day program for the Scotch Plains-Fanwood students.

KIND KIDS...Franklin School second graders created themed baskets for Westfield's first responders and other public service providers as part of grade-level kindness activities.

Spreading Kindness in Westfield Public Schools

WESTFIELD — On any given day throughout the school year, in any of the 10 schools in the Westfield Public School District, there are coat drives and food drives and collections of everyday items for communities in need. There are Two Lunch Thursdays and Extra Lunch Wednesdays where students bring an extra lunch and meet to make sandwiches, donating the lunches and sandwiches to food pantries and homeless shelters. There are dance-a-thons and math-a-thons and many other initiatives to raise money for pediatric cancer research and other charitable causes.

And whether observing Kindness Month or taking The Great Kindness Challenge or encouraging Random Acts of Kindness, there's a common theme taking place this month and last across the district.

"You are ambassadors of kindness and respect," said Wilson Principal Joseph Malanga at the closing ceremony for the Month of Hope on February 1, when, as part of a full assembly agenda, he recognized 20 students he had quietly observed doing something kind. Each week during the Month of Hope in January, Wilson students, parents and staff focused on a particular need, collecting gently used sports equipments one week, non-perishable food items another, making sandwiches for St. Joseph Social Service Center in Elizabeth, gathering pet food and treats for abandoned animals at the Linden Animal Shelter, and raising $11,696 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Fourth graders in Branice Moore's class at McKinley were Soup-er Bowl champions, collecting 388 non-perishable food items while the entire school community collected 3,465 food items – on average 10 items per student – for a local food pantry.

"McKinley loves participating in this food drive because we get to help others," said principal Marc Biunno.

Jefferson School kicked off The Great Kindness Challenge with an assembly focusing on the 6 Pillars of Character – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. At Franklin School, which has participated in the kindness challenge for the past several years, second graders created themed baskets for Westfield's first responders and other public service providers as part of grade level kindness activities.

Tamaques teachers are conducting individual lessons on kindness as the school prepares to kick off its 2019 Reading Marathon this month, having raised $17,046 last year for families in need. Washington School and others are celebrating the 100th day of school by partnering with volunteers at "Connect for Community," a program created to demonstrate to children what 100 cents can buy.

"The basic premise of the program is asking each child to bring in one personal hygiene product that we use every day," said Washington Principal Andrew Perry. "Many of these items, such as soap, toothpaste, deodorant, dishwashing liquid and toilet paper, are not covered by government assistance programs yet are necessities in life."

The Good Vibes Tribe at Edison Intermediate School recently made 1,000 origami peace cranes for Children's Specialized Hospital, while visitors to Roosevelt Intermediate School were greeted by a large bulletin board declaring such Random Acts of Kindness as "invite someone new to sit at your lunch table," "give a classmate a pencil or pen," and "let someone go ahead of you in line." Members of the RIS Looming our Love (LOL) Club met to loom and knit caps for babies and adults in cancer units at Valley Hospital in Ridgewood.

"The club made a goal to donate 200 hats this year and we've already made over 120," said LOL Club advisor Carine Helwig in mid-January.

The Community Service Club, Baking a Difference, Operation Smile and other service-oriented clubs at Westfield High School raise money and awareness year-round.

"It is impossible to name every community service effort, every act of kindness, every demonstration of good character taking place in our schools," said Superintendent Margaret Dolan, Ed.D. "We are truly fortunate to have students, parents, and staff who believe strongly in making a difference."

In March, Westfield Public Schools will observe its 2nd Annual Community Service Day, a district-wide coordinated effort organized by school Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) where families take part in planned activities in support of homeless shelters, fighting hunger campaigns, senior citizens, rescue animal organizations and others in need of charitable help.

HONOR ROLL

Park Middle School - 2nd Marking Period

Grade 8 Distinguished Honor Roll

Hasan Ali, Naa Dei Ashie, Abigail Balagot, Grace Beirne, Riley Bhatia, Lily Camacho, Cara Checchio, Kendall Chiang, Samuel Chichester, Disha Debnath, Ivana Delgado-Arvelo, Madison Diaz, Olivia Eckstine, Carter Fallon, Emma Fang, Lily Friebely, Sophia Gallo, Grace Germinder, Justin Koizumi, Lucia Laumbach, Gavin Lesnevich, Allison Lesser, Ava Mach, Shehzad Madraswalla, Dylan Mathew, Ella Mauer, Meagan Migliaccio, Danielle Most, Alicia Murphy, Matthew Murray, Denys Muryn, Jessica Navarro, Emma Nobile, Sarah Paolella, Ella Platts, Zoe Quraishi, Katherine Ramalho, Vikram Ravishankar, Jordana Reisberg, Morgan Ritter, Catherine Rodrigues, Emma Schramm, Andrew Smith, Dominic Souza, Alicia Valenciano, Bianca Valente, Jayleen Velez, Gabriella Virga, Christina Wang, Margaret Whitney, Georgia Williamson, Andy Zhu, Mattingly Zullo

Grade 8 Regular Honor Roll

Jason Abate, Alyssa Barbossa, Andrew Bartley, Ryan Baumgartner, Stephan Baumgartner, Jenai Berry, Elisa Bianco, Ava Billotto, Isabella Blake, Morgan Boone, Kylie Byers, Orencia Casimiro, Claire Cassidy, Ryan Cawley, Nicholas Champagne, Helena Chan, Alexandra Chouinard, Zachary Chung, Mia Cutaia, Syona Dalvi, Rushil Damania, Ananda Daniel, Joseph DeSantis, Theresa DeVall, Madeline DiSalvo, Matthew Dolowy, Julia Encarnacion, Olivia Encarnacion, Jack Fallo, Shaylin Farley, Matthew Fela, Sean Ferrone, Emmet Fynes, Thomas Gain, Ella Goldstein, Zachary Gray, Jessica Gui, Paige Hagman, Annie Hansen, Trevor Headrick, Leah Herb, Camila Hernandez, Maximilian Ho, Emily Homer, Khan Lagemann, Matthew Laurenzano, Wesley Lewis, Daniel Mahr, Mikayla Mari, Kaelan Mattos, Thomas Metzger, Ava Niemczyk, Alden Nyamiaka, Daniel O'Brien, Katelyn Oser, Nefeli Pappas, Dylan Patel, Jay Patel, Zachary Redling, Peter Reilly, Kady Rettino, Mireille Silva, Leila Simeon, Jay Slack, Briana Talmadge, Hazel Thurman, Anthony Tittanegro, Gianna Tucker, Ketevan Vepkhvadze, Lauren Verrastro, Isabelle Verrico, Morgan Virgil, Maya Viscardi-Carelse, Elijah Ware, Dylan Young

Grade 7 Distinguished Honor Roll

Haley Acevedo, Hannah Alber, Sarah Alnasseri, Sana Anand, Hannah Baik, Alex Baker, Anastasia Berk, Karina Borysiak, Isabella Capati, Callie Capriglione, Grace Carter, Dominique Chitty, Anthony Chrisostomides, Tara Cino, Emily Cuccurullo, Lauren Cunningham, Cole Darmarajah, Joseph DeFrancesco, Mia Delaney, Elizabeth Diamond, Emma Dougherty, Abigail Elliott, Ava Fazio, Valeria Figueroa Rodriguez, Lily Friedman, Julia Friedrichs, Lily Gaulin, Alessandra Gialanella, David Gomez, Olivia Gomez, Samantha Hagopian, Ian Hobbs, Elorie Howell, Nemat Iddisah, Carolyn Joe, Emily Juckes, Kyle Karyczak, Erin Kennedy, Graham Kois, Nathan Korner, Robert Lambert, Sairah Llano, Madeline Paik, Sairam Pantham, Jacob Pinsky, Fatima Qamar, Gokul Ramanan, Elijah Rodriguez, Gianna Rojas, Shannon Rooney, Amelie Rousseau, Raquel Sanisidro, Michael Schmidt, Chloe Schunke, Ryan Serio, Heather Sherman, Maisie Shimko, Aryan Singh, Gianluca Skirde, Dylan Soriano, Anastasia Stellakis, Kelly Stewart, Grace Sweeney, Zuzanna Szewc, Janeli Tenecota Villa, Maria Vitoroulis, Michael Wojcik, Darion Yau, Emma Zheng

Grade 7 Regular Honor Roll

Justin Abadir, Alexander Allegra, Eva Austin, Keira Baerson, Sophia Bansagi, Brian Bartley, Amanda Baylock, Charles Becker, Hana Berisha, Gwendolyn Boylan, Lily Cantwell, Matthew Capozzolo, Jaden Carpien, Elizabeth Chern, Cole Chludzinski, Joshua Citarella, Taylor Clement, Isabella Colon, Grace Conklin, Joss Coppock-Huegel, Isabella Cucci, Tia Culjak, Kristina Decker, Nathaniel Dematteo, Bianca DeVizio, Ethan Diamond, Spencer Doran, Andrew Dreyer, Allison Eggert, Luke Ellison, Julianne Friedson, Matan Goldstein, Ma Victoria Gonzales, Marissa Gregov, Abigail Griffiths, Mackenzie Harmer, Sean Harris, Jacob Hathcock, Hope Hausle, Angelina Holden, Ethan Holt, Ian Hopkins, Zoe Hopkins, Kyle Hunter, Brian Huszcza, Dietrich Jahnke, Aiden Jasul, Valerie Kelly, Aadi Kenwar, Danielle Kramer, Sara Lehman, Isabelle Li, Alexander Liverance, Kelsie Lubalin, Jenalys Lugo, Joshua Madarasz, Lauren McNulty, Giao Nguyen Dao, Tiffany Nguyen, Michelle Nikolaev, Philip Joseph Nitro, Maxine Novello, Jasmyn Nunez, Alexander Patino, Paige Peneno, Chance Perez, Thomas Perez, Sequoia Pilgrim, Anderson Pollack, Grace Price, Ryan Quinones, Gonzalo Ramos, Diane Resnicoff, Sebastian Roman Gaud, Anthony Romano, Katherine Romanyshyn, Aidan Route, Erin Ryan, Audrey Saccento, Anthony Scuorzo, Boushi Siva, Sam Sponheimer, Noah Tamayo, Lindsay Trela, Sherly Velez, Olivia Vella, Emma Lee Vieira, Evelyn Villar, Mackenzie Virgil, Jennifer Walsh, Chase Waxman, Meya Williams, Rebecca Wofsy, Sara Wollman, Youssef Yacub, Sergiy Yurchenko, Rachel Ziegler

Grade 6 Distinguished Honor Roll

Elizabeth Baglien, Morgan Barbossa, Matteo Barcellona, Caitlin Bellistri, Michael Bellistri, Abigail Bender, David Bolivar, Emma Boris, Grace Bottomly, Isobel Bruce, Emma Carinhas, Grace Cawley, Hannah Charnock, Ethan Cukrow, Emily DeGaetano, Olivia DiSalvo, McKenna Dwyer, Thomas Eisner, Camryn Evans, Amelia Fallon, Julia Farin, Julia Ferguson, Dylan Fitzgerald, Samantha Friscia, Tyler Glynn, Jeff Gui, Sofia Heta, Mary Katherine Hoffman, Clarke Hunter, Blake Jackson, Sean Johnston, Caitlin Keough, Elizabeth Koizumi, Sophia Labazzo, Isabella LaFerrera, Alexa LaRosa, Emily Laudman, Daniel Laurenzano, Darrien Lee, Nathaniel Leversee, Elana Lewis, Madeline Marcovecchio, Enisa Marku, Chelsea Martin, Ryan Mauer, Emily McCall, Wyatt Mendolia, Caitlyn Meyers, Kayla Mohabir, Nicholas Mongold, Matthew Mui, Thomas Mui, Christopher Murphy, Daniel Murphy, Kayla Murray, Sofia Murray, Jacob Ocana, Joslyn Odim, Mizuki Parker, Hanna Pearce, Samuel Perone, Shawn Poliseo, Zoe Psathas, Meredith Reilly, Madeline Richter, Audrey Ricks, Fabian Roman Gaud, Sophia Seith, Sophia Shapiro, Asher Silva, Emily Skara, Angel Skolar, Hannah Spieler, Jack Sponheimer, Jada Sripada, Isabella Stepien, Saanvi Suresh, Cooper Tamase, North Thurman, Angelina Valente, Isaiah Williams, Jia Xue, Riley Yau, Torre Zullo

Grade 6 Regular Honor Roll

Grace Abadir, Christopher Abate, Ethan Afir, Araoluwa Akinwunmi, Brandon Au, Christian Bates, Samuel Beirne, Juliette Besson, Lily Bishop, Arianna Blake, AvaGrace Bozetarnik, Ella Butters, David Camba, Nicholas Cammarano, Michael Cantwell, Adriana Cardinal, Olivia Castucci, Antonio Cerchio Saggese, Jenna Cerchio, Emma Chan, Varun Chauhan, Linxiang Chen, Isabella Cocca, Carolina Conklin, Raya Crisafulli, Savanna Diana, Isabella DiFiore, Carina DiLollo, Elisabeth Dolowy, Juliana Doran, Ysabella Fernandez, Jake Fezza, Lydia Flagg, Dylan Fountain, Victoria Gain, Max Gal, Braedan Galway, Lindsay Gold, Maria Gonzalez, Vania Gonzalez, Luke Hahn, Christopher Harris, Evan Hayeck, Maggie Hayes, Shane Hickey, Tristan Huber, Adelie Hunsaker, Olivia Hunsinger, Lily Kalafat, Grayson Kelly, Louis Kelly, Aditya Khandelwal, Paul Kole-Emmanuel, Annabel Koseoglu, Ryan Lahetta, James Lama, Thomas Levine, Jackson Lorenzetti, Ava Martini, Anaya Mateo, Krish Mathur, Grayce Mattos, Joshua Matty, Jackson Mazzola, Samantha Mingoia, Lucas Mirzwa, Lorelei Morrison, Emily Nguyen, Goro Obara, Nicole Papadakis, Frederick Parchman, Luca Passucci, Evan Phillips, Christopher Plenca, Kalli Preston, Sean Price, Victoria Prizgar, Bakhtawar Qamar, Gabriella Quiceno, Ryan Ricci, Isabella Rocha, Hannah Rosenthal, Timothy Ryder, Andrew Saccento, Sonya Shah, Andrew Sicinski, Gianna Silva, Shreya Singh, Tristan Sirmans, Phillip Snair, Benjamin Thomas, Rocco Trainor, Taylor Tsin, David Tsvayberg, Samuel Valera, Xavier Vega, Gianna Walker-Talbot, Ryan Watt, Meredith White, Erik Widhiatmodjo, Logan Williamson, Tiffany Yang, Sophia Zambrio, Maria Zelener, Luke Zimmerman, Thomas Zimmerman

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