

'Winning the Homework Battle' As School Starts

By CHERYL ANN NOTARI, Ph.D.
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

AREA — If getting your child to do their homework is like attempting to nail gelatin to a tree, then this article is for you. Avoiding homework is an art for some kids. Many of us wish they would apply their creativity and ingenuity to the actual homework rather than spending their energies in avoiding it. You, as a parent, can help your child refocus their talents and apply them to their studies. Here are a few pointers:

First, if the key to real estate is location, then the key to homework is structure. Designate a time and place for homework and stick to it. Homework should be done at the same time and in the same distraction-free zone every day. Avoid times that could potentially be derailed by more attractive outside activities. And make sure that there is down time between homework and bedtime. No one likes to go to bed thinking about work.

Some practical suggestions for times include: immediately after school, one hour before dinner or immediately after dinner. A child's bedroom may not be the best place to do homework. Today, children's bedrooms are filled with televisions, computers and video games. Pick a location free of these temptations. Turn off their cell phones to avoid interruption. Having a consistent schedule and providing a distraction-free zone will go a long way in helping your child form good study habits.

Second, get your child a homework planner and teach them how to use it. Many schools offer children planners, or you can pick up an inexpensive one at your local office supply store. Learning to write down homework and plan for tests and papers is a skill. Children need to be taught how to do this. Sit down with your child and review his/her assignments with them before he/she starts on

his/her homework. Ask them what will be easy for them and which ones will be harder. Offer to help them with or to go over the harder assignments. Don't wait to be asked.

Third, be present and supportive. Check in with your child while they are working on their homework. When they complete an assignment, compliment their efforts. Children who avoid homework often do not feel competent in the academic world. Showing your appreciation for their efforts and being positive goes a long way toward building confidence and self-esteem.

And fourth, reward your child's efforts. Completed homework should be rewarded with some valued activity. For younger children, the reward may be time playing a game or reading a book with Mom or Dad. For older kids, the reward may be time on the computer, talking on the phone with a friend or watching a favorite television show. Avoid giving candy or food as a reward. Whatever the reward is, it should reflect what is valuable to your child and it should only be allowed once homework is completed.

Finally, if you have not had routine for homework in your house before, don't expect this new demand to be welcomed and embraced. A little resistance on the part of your child is natural. It should take about two weeks of consistency and persistence on your part to establish a pattern for success. Once established, you and your child should experience less fighting and more compliance with homework. Then, hopefully, all of that creativity and ingenuity will be channeled in the right direction.

Editor's Note: Ms. Cheryl Ann Notari is a Westfield resident, a licensed psychologist with a private practice in Summit. She has 22 years of experience, including education administration.

CONCEPTS & THOUGHT



Dr. Mark Cereface

WF's Mark Cereface Receives MD Degree

WESTFIELD — St. George's University, School of Medicine, awarded Mark Cereface the degree of Doctor of Medicine during a ceremony held on June 12 at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, New York City.

Dr. Cereface will be performing his residency in internal medicine. As a student, he was a three-time winner of the Legacy of Excellence Scholarship, and made the Dean's List.

Dr. Cereface is the son of Leonard and Mildred Cereface of Westfield. He has two sisters, Julia and Jenna, and is married to Theresa Perez Cereface, who is a teacher.

Keeton Awarded BA

SCOTCH PLAINS — Carolyn Keeton, the daughter of David and Rita Keeton, graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University at the university's 161st commencement on Sunday, May 8.

Pre-Employment Program Is Eyed

WESTFIELD — The Union County Educational Services Foundation (UCESF) is looking to implement a Pre-employment Training Skills Project (P.E.T.S.) at Westlake School in Westfield.

The goal of this project is to prepare physically and mentally disabled students to obtain employment upon graduation from the school. The P.E.T.S. Project will provide entry-level employment training in hospitality service, retail, silk screening, graphic arts and print shop operation.

The foundation works to support students who are in need of assistance, like those at Westlake School, who cannot be served in a traditional school environment. Statistics indicate that they will not obtain self-sustaining employment after they graduate from school, unless pre-employment training skills are provided, a Westlake spokesman said.

The cost to fully develop and implement these new training programs is estimated at \$125,000, including the cost of materials and equipment. After the start-up money has been raised, these programs will be covered by tuition. UCESF is looking to community to raise the start-up money.

UCESF is the fund-raising arm of the Union County Educational Services Commission and provides resources for the creation and development of unique or innovative programs and services that help the disabled and non-disabled students become well-adjusted, functional members of their communities.

Donations can be sent to: Union County Educational Services Foundation, 45 Cardinal Drive, Westfield, 07090.

For More Education News, see PAGE 19

WF Students Participate In Community Service At F&M

WESTFIELD — Nicole Zubizarreta and Edward Kerins, 2005 graduates of Westfield High School, are among 11 first-year students who participated in the Putting it Together (PIT) community service project at Franklin & Marshall College.

Nicole took part in the Clean Air, Clean Water project, while Edward participated in the Friends For Life workshop. Nicole is the daughter of Lucia Zubizarreta. Edward is the son of John and Sally Kerins.

The PIT program is a four-and-a-half-day workshop designed to introduce first-year F & M students to volunteer opportunities in Lancaster County, Pa. Students arrive prior to freshman orientation and participate in a variety of workshops designed to help them think critically about social issues, meet a variety of community leaders, and develop leadership opportunities for the next four years.

The Clean Air, Clean Water work-

shop addresses various aspects of environmental action such as recycling and pollution, as well as environmental issues in Lancaster County. Students work in local and county parks to help build trails, clean streams and other such activities that help to reduce the effects of pollution and make parks and other areas more accessible to the public.

"Friends for Life" matches students with the elderly in an adult daycare program. Participants develop activities to play and work with elderly people and assist with the exercises, crafts and other activities within the adult daycare.

WHS Band to Conduct Mum Sale Next Week

WESTFIELD — The Westfield High School Marching Band will hold its annual fall mum sale on Thursday, September 15, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Edison Intermediate School, located at Rahway Avenue and Grove Street in Westfield, on the Clark side of the building. The rain date is Friday, September 16.

The sale will feature nine-inch mums in a wide assortment of colors, priced at \$6 each. Proceeds will help support the many band events, activities and scholarships. For more information, please call (908) 654-5966.

SP Student Earns Degree at Rensselaer

SCOTCH PLAINS — Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has announced that Brendan Bergen of Scotch Plains graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology at its 199th Commencement on Saturday, May 21.

Westfield Farmers Market

Every Saturday - 9 AM - 2 PM
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United States Veterans Can Display VetSignia Stickers Commemorating Service

By FRED LECOMTE
Specially Written for The Leader and The Times

The many proud U.S. Veterans should be recognized on more than just a couple of holidays by having "every-day" visibility. To this end, one group of retired public-spirited veterans decided it was high time people should be made aware of the veterans in their communities all year long.

"The idea came up during a Vets bull session," said Bob Kline, a World War II Marine.

According to Mr. Kline, men and

women who served in the U.S. Armed Forces in the past four major wars can now display stickers on car windows that show the branch of service they were in and the war they fought in with VetSignia Window Stickers. Mr. Kline, who handles the sticker requests, points out that the distinctive stickers let the veteran say, "I did it when it had to be done and I'm proud of it."

The stickers are two-by-four inches and are black on shiny silver metalized film with the Stars and Stripes

background. Thirty-three different stickers are available, including WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Overseas Expeditionary Campaigns, Peacetime with the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard and Merchant Marine. All VetSignias can be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.vetsignia.org>.

ADVERTISING:
Reservations: Friday by 4pm
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ENRICHMENT CENTER PREPARES STUDENTS FOR PSAT, SAT I AND SAT II SUBJECT TESTS WITH SMALLEST CLASSES IN AREA

The Enrichment Center, a full service tutoring and enrichment center, located at 424 Central Avenue in Westfield, offers the smallest class sizes in the area. This complete modern facility is air conditioned, handicapped accessible and has ample free parking to offer its clients. The Enrichment Center has over 150 teachers on staff and all are state certified and experienced. Programming is available for students entering kindergarten through Grade 12.

The Enrichment Center's SAT program is very successful. Mrs. Elaine Sigal, the Owner and Director of The Enrichment Center says, "Our students scores speak for themselves. Our success rate is extremely high for students of all abilities. Students are referring their friends and positive word of mouth is a great compliment."

Students may attend for either the math, the critical reading or the writing sections of the PSAT/SAT I or they may choose all three. The level of learning and retention is very high. As one local guidance counselor says, "This is the best program available!" Strategies for taking this and other tests are covered during class time as well as the learning of subject matter. All of the teachers at The Enrichment Center are New Jersey State certified, not just certified by an organization, and are specialists in their fields. Parents may always ask to see the state-certification of the teacher. Many students start working on the PSAT/SAT I preparation as early as 9th grade. A unique program is also offered for students in middle school. SAT II, Subject Tests, review sections are offered in Math, World History, US History, Physics, Chemistry, and

Biology. Private sessions may be arranged for languages. The SAT II Subject Test is a one-hour subject specific test. While not all colleges and universities require these tests, many do.

The Enrichment Center also provides tutors for all subjects at all levels. As all teachers are state certified in their respective fields, the quality of instruction is very high. SAT preparation is offered by English and Math state certified teachers. Elementary programming is taught by elementary teachers, many of whom have advanced degrees in Reading, Math and Science education.

The College Advising Program is great for students in all grades in high school. Parents and students can learn about the program by setting up an initial meeting with our counselor. While guidance counselors in the schools are well qualified and supportive, they might not have enough time to see students as often as parents would like. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and get help from another source.

The philosophy of The Enrichment Center is that education needs to be individualized and must be enjoyable. If children are engrossed in what they are learning, the potential for achievement is limitless. Experience for yourself what The Enrichment Center difference is and how it makes a true difference in students' lives.

The Enrichment Center has very popular enrichment, gifted, and remedial programs for students going into pre-kindergarten (age four) through grade 12. Call today (908)654-0110 to receive your free brochure or view the web site: www.TheEnrichmentCenter.com.

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Admission tests will be administered on Sept. 24, Oct. 15, Nov. 12 and Dec. 3.

DELBARTON SCHOOL
230 Mendham Road
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(973) 538-3231, ext. 3019

