

## Comm. Access OK'd to Expand On-Site Training

projected parking demand will be for roughly 80 vehicles.

Retired Cranford Police Officer Patrick Fay said he sought employment with Community Access Unlimited upon retirement, noting the positive impact the non-profit has on building community and making families feel comfortable.

"No negative impact to the community," said Mr. Fay in describing possible downsides to an application approval by the board.

Resident Rita LaBrutto said she has been asking the township committee since 2013 "to certify affordable-housing credits" through negotiations with Community Access Unlimited Inc. Ms. LaBrutto said Community Access owns sites on Johnson Avenue and Glenwood Road with three residential properties totaling 13 bedrooms. She said because the bedrooms assist disabled individuals or are "group homes for developmentally-disabled residents" the affordable-housing credits equate to two credits for one bedroom. Ms. LaBrutto said 13 bedrooms would equate to a realized 26 extra affordable units or "credits" for Cranford.

To develop 26 affordable units would translate to a 180 total unit development in town, Ms. LaBrutto said.

"That's a whole development or a very dense development number," Ms. LaBrutto said. Ms. LaBrutto said she would rather see organizations bettering the community be bolstered or negotiated with instead of another high-density housing negotiation.

Ms. LaBrutto said she is in favor of the applicant, but her comments were not directed towards the board to vote yes or no on this specific application. Ms. LaBrutto said she was advocating for specific township committee and board of adjustment actions moving forward regarding affordable-housing impacts

on the community.

Applicant Florin Traistaru was unanimously approved for a use variance to convert a principal permitted-use space (retail) at 115 Miln Street for a dentist office (conditional use) on the first floor in a zone where such a use is not permitted.

Mr. Traistaru said the basement is connected to the first floor and will be used for storage. The first floor does not exceed 1,000 feet with only nine square feet set aside for storage in the basement. The township ordinance states that the business cannot exceed 1,000 square feet on the first floor without a variance needed within the zone, stated Zoning Officer Ronald Johnson.

Mr. Johnson said when initially discussing with the applicant he was not sure how much of the basement would be utilized and in what function to the dental practice. Mr. Johnson said with 932 square feet being utilized on the first floor, including the basement into the business square

footage, calculations would put the business square footage above the 1,000-square-foot threshold, thus requiring a variance.

Board member Robert Bovasso said he would be "comfortable" with an approval based on a conditional agreement that the basement would be used for storage only and not for additional practice space.

Mr. Traistaru said he would agree to such terms.

### Simmons College Tells Dean's List

BOSTON, Mass. - Charlotte Esteves, a Cranford resident, was named to the 2017 fall semester dean's list at Simmons College in Boston. Their major is arts administration and music.

To qualify for dean's list status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

## GW, Fanwood on Shared Services

board member Kathy Villaggio to the recreation commission and celebrations committee.

"I am excited to help our community and give back. Both the recreation commission and the celebrations committee have a lot going on and to achieve. I am glad I can help them," said Ms. Villaggio.

Mayor Lombardo additionally appointed Debbie McCarthy to the celebrations committee.

Ms. Todisco said a volunteer rewards card has been established, with 12 businesses participating, "Which is really terrific for a new program like this," she added. The cards will be distributed to volunteers next

month.

Mr. Nierstedt said during public commentary that he wanted to introduce a resolution expressing the borough's support towards gun control measures. Former mayor Patricia Quattrocchi originally introduced the resolution in 2013.

The resolution outlines control measures such as required firearm safety training, the re-imposition of a federal ban on military assault-style weapons, a ban of high-capacity bullet magazines or a reduction to 10-round maximum, and the establishment of a regulatory and reporting program for ammunition sales, stated Mr. Nierstedt.

## Personalized Learning Showcased at BOE Meeting

By ROBYN ORR-GIOFFRE

*Specially Written for The Westfield Leader*

CRANFORD — Personalized Learning through Competency-Based Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) was showcased Monday night at the regular monthly meeting of the board of education.

Competency-Based learning seeks to advance students from skill to skill based on how competent they are, as opposed to advancing them based on age.

Jill Hayeck's third-grade students from Orange Avenue School gave the board a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the benefits of this program.

The students compared a traditional classroom to one using Competency-Based learning and told the board students in this environment become independent and work with any style they choose. They further commented that students learn and study at their own pace, take tests when they are ready, have increased ability to meet with teachers and peer experts and are able to move forward or stay behind in a skill even if classmates move on.

The program allows for Innovation Hour, a time for students to explore topics of interest during the day and a time for students to meet and discuss ways to be more successful in the classroom.

Additionally, there is Teacher Time, where students can sign up to meet with their teacher, which can be done with a small group of learners instead of just one-on-one. Students also can consult with the Expert Board, made up of students who have mastered a skill.

"I like this way of learning be-

cause we are not pushed to learn what we are not comfortable with," third grader Riley McGee told the board.

Orange Avenue School Principal Marc Edery commented to board members that for teachers implementing the new program, "The hardest part is letting go" and letting students take control of their learning.

Superintendent Scott Rubin, Ed.D., gave the students accolades for their presentation, commenting, "I have to tell you, I think our future is in very good hands."

Security issues also were discussed at the meeting. The security audit will take place soon and there is a visit planned for each of the schools in the district.

Community meetings have been scheduled at each of the schools to address security concerns and social and wellness issues with students, with a presentation and a question-and-answer segment.

Mr. Rubin told the board that, starting next year, he would schedule an annual meeting to provide an update about safety and wellness concerns. He told the board he views security as "a shared responsibility" and expressed gratitude to the PTA presidents for allowing a dialogue with each of the schools, further commenting that, "it's very healthy to have this mutual dialogue and get to see things through multiple lenses."

The board of education will hold a public hearing on the budget in the board room at Lincoln School at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 30.

*Probitas Verus Honos*