

November 2019

BOCES BITS

Message from the Deputy Superintendent:

As you may recall, I vowed to start the 2019-20 school year with an "attitude of gratitude," making a conscientious effort to be thankful for all the blessings I see in the world each day, including all the amazing things we do at OCM BOCES.



Being grateful is something I have always strived to do, but it seems especially appropriate in light of this year's theme — *Culture Counts ... Wellness Counts* — and because this particular month brings the quintessential holiday of gratitude, Thanksgiving. It's wonderful to count your blessings during holiday celebrations, filling our hearts with love and warmth, but it is also something we can do on a regular basis to boost our physical and mental health. In fact, I am quickly finding out that being grateful is one of the easiest and most overlooked tools we can use to boost our personal wellness.

I think you will be amazed at some of the scientifically proven benefits of gratitude, which include:

- Relieving stress.
- Reducing anxiety and depression.
- Increasing overall energy.
- Building our immune system.
- Improving our sleep.
- Making us more open to building positive relationships.

This is not a complete list, but you get the idea. I hope you will give gratitude a try, in whatever form you choose. Some people keep a gratitude journal, meditate, or verbally share their appreciation with others. As we approach this holiday season, I would encourage you to appreciate the simple but powerful benefits of gratitude and strive to make it a routine part of your life.

Crown Road Referendum: Please vote Nov. 19!

I hope all of you had a chance to attend a staff presentation or check out our [dedicated website](#) about the Nov. 19 referendum to purchase the Crown Road Campus. Purchasing this site offers a wonderful opportunity for OCM BOCES to keep a well-designed and well-maintained home for many of our Special Education and Innovative Education students. It also makes sense from a financial perspective.

OCM BOCES can end its 32-year lease at the site, take advantage of a sound investment opportunity, and offer long-term savings of at least \$2.2 million for our component districts.

We hope everyone will vote! Please spread the word to friends, neighbors and any eligible voters in our component districts to mark their calendars for Tuesday, Nov. 19. We will be offering four voting locations:

- Crown Road Campus, 4500 Crown Road, Liverpool
- Main Campus, 110 Elwood Davis Road, Liverpool
- Thompson Road Campus, 6820 Thompson Road, Syracuse
- Cortlandville Campus, 1710 NYS Route 13, Cortland



Voting will take place between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. You are eligible to vote if you are at least 18 years old and have lived in one of our 23 component districts for at least 30 days.

Anyone who needs more information can be directed to our Crown Road [web page for information and updates](#). I would like to thank everyone who has chipped in so far to get this referendum off the ground, from all the employees who stuffed envelopes with absentee ballots to the construction and career development students at Thompson Road (in photos) who crafted and stained ballot boxes. It has truly taken a team effort. I have no doubt that all the hard work will be worth it.



Until next time, I would like to thank you for the hard work and dedication you give to OCM BOCES each day, no matter what your role in the organization. I hope you and all of your loved ones have a wonderful and relaxing Thanksgiving holiday.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Colleen Viggiano".

Colleen Viggiano
Deputy Superintendent, OCM BOCES



**Update on search for new OCM BOCES
District Superintendent**

This update was submitted Nov. 4 by search consultant and Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES District Superintendent Brian Hartwell:

As you know, the application period for the next District Superintendent & Chief Executive Officer for the Sole Supervisory area of Onondaga-Cortland-Madison Counties closed on September 13th. The Board of Education met on September 26th at the Main Campus to review and discuss applications and prospective candidates. Additionally, the Board of Education met on October 22nd to craft interview questions and review aggregate data from the survey that was administered during the application period.

The Board of Education (was) scheduled to interview on Wednesday, November 6th. The remainder of the process and timeline includes interviewing with the Interim Commissioner, stakeholder group interviews and a convening of the Board of Education where they will make a final determination. If the Board has procured an appointment order from the Commissioner of Education, they may then formally vote on the appointment of the next District Superintendent & Chief Executive Officer on the date directed by the Commissioner. I will be in touch at the appropriate time (I believe within the next 2 weeks) to identify stakeholder groups, representatives and a training and interview date.

I will provide another update when sharable information becomes available.

We need your input! What kind of OCM BOCES and CNYRIC clothing would you like to see for sale?

OCM BOCES is working to set up a clothing store for employees who wish to purchase apparel with either the OCM BOCES or CNYRIC logo embroidered on the clothes. Because we are initially limited to offering five styles of clothing, we would like your feedback on what kind of clothing appeals to you most. [Please go to this survey link to view the clothes and tell us what you like!](#) The deadline for filling out the survey is **Tuesday, Nov. 19**. Prices are indicated next to each item, as are the color options. Styles come in men's and women's cuts.

Once the survey is tabulated, we will let you know the results. We will also let you know when the store is open, how to order, and other details about the process. Thank you for your assistance!



Cortlandville Campus hosts Cortland Madison School Boards Association Annual Meeting and dinner

Culinary and New Vision Environmental Science students collaborated in a unique way recently at the Cortland-Madison School Boards Association Annual Meeting. Under the guidance of instructor **Madison Keehfus**, culinary students prepared an elegant dinner, including a salad that used ingredients provided by the New Vision Environmental Science class (led by instructor **Chad DeVoe**), including the greens and maple syrup for dressing. Great job to our students for working together to make the dinner a success!



At the meeting, ISS Consultant Support Services Coordinator **Janel Payette** also provided an overview of the vaping epidemic. She discussed the dangers of vaping, the devices being used, the physical and emotional effects, and many available resources for schools to share and use with staff, students and families to increase awareness.



Panel at state Mental Health Association conference includes ISS coordinator

As school districts focus on the importance of social-emotional learning, OCM BOCES is working hard to provide training, support, and leadership through its Instructional Support Services (ISS) division. **Kristen Purcell**, assistant coordinator for Innovative Teaching & Learning, was recently asked to sit on a panel at the New York State Mental Health Association Annual Conference in Albany. Purcell and four other panelists answered questions from a crowd of about 150 attendees about the state's requirement for mental-health curriculum at all levels and other related issues. In the photo, Purcell is third from right.



Reflecting Our World: Photo wins big honor in Everson contest

Congratulations to **Braeden Hawkins**, a student at Innovation Tech, for being one of 23 finalists out of 148 entrants who submitted photos for the 11th Annual Bousquet Holstein Photography Contest at the Everson Museum. The contest was open to high school students in Onondaga County. Its theme, "Reflecting our World," was inspired by the work of Yoko Ono, who had a show on display this fall at the Everson. For the contest, students were asked to "create images that are irreverent, reflect living art and the art of the living, embody the unconventional and the revolutionary, and that champion the art of our everyday lives." In the photo, Innovation Tech Facilitator **Christine Alexander** poses at the Everson with Braeden.





Apples galore! Students bite into fun at Beak & Skiff

On a sunny and crisp fall day, students from **Lori Fiumara** and **Amy Whittington's** Special Education classes in the Homer Central School District took a field trip to Beak & Skiff Apple Orchards in LaFayette. They listened to a brief talk from an orchard guide, took a tractor ride to the orchards, perused rows of trees, and hunted for the perfect apple. After picking a mix of Fuji and Golden Delicious, they hopped back on the tractor and returned to some picnic tables for a sweet treat of cider and donuts. Later, students made applesauce with a few of their pickings.



Rachel's Challenge kicks off third year with pumpkins, pink ribbons, more

Students across OCM BOCES are participating in the third year of Rachel's Challenge, a national program aimed at promoting a culture of kindness in schools. The program originated with the 1999 school shooting at Columbine High School, where **Rachel Joy Scott** was the first victim of the tragedy. Here are just a few examples of recent Rachel's Challenge activities:

Students focus on acceptance, appreciating others

At Innovation Tech, four veteran members of a "Friends of Rachel" (FOR) Club led a presentation for all new students regarding the meaning behind Rachel's Challenge. They walked students through a PowerPoint presentation, then guided them through an activity aligned with the school's monthly theme, "acceptance." Using templates in the shape of small pumpkins, students reflected about a time when they felt like "the new kid," and how that changed at a time when they felt accepted. Soon after, FOR Club members kicked off the "Anonymous Compliment" project, where all students randomly drew a name and wrote something kind about that person. "We always find this to be a success for our students!" said **Kayla Beyer**, a school counselor.



Bonus! FOR Club advisors at Innovation Tech meet Darrell Scott

Darrell Scott, the father of Rachel Joy Scott, was the keynote speaker this fall at an "Awaken the Learner" event and at the New York Association of School Psychologists conference, where two FOR Club advisors from Innovation Tech were in attendance. School Counselor **Kayla Beyer** and Social Worker **Kristin Brangman** spoke with him briefly and learned that Rachel's Challenge is working on a national network for FOR Club Advisors to communicate and share ideas. "We also got some great ideas and takeaways that we plan to share with colleagues and teachers," Brangman said. "It was really awesome to hear him speak and to meet him!"



Students in FOR Club "Pink Out" for Breast Cancer Awareness Month

In another FOR Club project, students in STARS, an Innovative Education program at our Thompson Road Campus, spent several meetings in October creating pink-ribbon pins in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. On Friday, Oct. 18, they donned bright pink T-shirts and handed out ribbons to staff in programs all over campus, including STARS, Adolescent Day Treatment, TASC (the high school equivalency program), and Career & Technical Education. Advisor and English Language Arts teacher **Denise Morris** described the "Pink Out" (#pinkout) generated by FOR Club as "a huge success." She thanked everyone involved.



School Library conference focuses on literature, Virtual Reality, more

Total immersion! That was the theme for about 200 school librarians and other attendees who converged at OnCenter on Oct. 30 for the annual School Libraries Systems Conference. SLS Coordinator **Diana Wendell** said attendees immersed themselves in the wonders of amazing literature as well as the powers of cutting-edge instructional technology, including virtual reality, which involves digital, three-dimensional simulations that people can experience with special equipment. Keynote speakers at the conference included **Hall Davidson**, senior director of global learning for Discovery Education; **Ellen Oh**, founder of the non-profit We Need Diverse Books; and bestselling author **Jewell Parker Rhodes**.





Welding students forge kettles for Salvation Army

The next time you see a Salvation Army bell ringer this holiday season, think about our amazing welding students at Thompson Road Campus. This year, OCM BOCES and the Salvation Army forged a partnership to have the students manufacture a donation kettle and a small "beacon kettle" for the holiday donation drive. In the photo, welding teacher **Duane Debejian** (right) is greeted by Salvation Army Regional Service Coordinator **Sam Reeder** at the organization's annual Kettle Drive kick-off luncheon. Welding students were in the middle of constructing a lighted "beacon kettle" that can be used to signal the location of a larger donation kettle, which the students are also working on. Salvation Army representatives were expected to meet with students on Thursday.



Open House set for Nov. 20 at Seven Valleys New Tech Academy

Are you or anyone you know interested in learning about the unique features of a New Tech high school? Students and facilitators at Seven Valleys New Tech Academy in Cortland will be hosting an Open House from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 20. The school is located at 240 Port Watson St. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to Julie Connors at 607-758-5130. Visitors will be able to tour the school, talk to students, meet facilitators and gather information. Pizza will be provided. Families are welcome. For more information visit the [Seven Valleys website](#).



Looking for the perfect gift? How about a fun, part-time class at OCM BOCES?

In addition to its full-time certification programs, OCM BOCES offers dozens of part-time, evening or weekend classes that are sure to please just about anyone on your holiday gift list. From dancing to cooking to computers to welding to personal finance to self-care — and so much more — OCM BOCES has a class for everyone. Why not give the gift of education and get a discount as well? OCM BOCES is now offering holiday gift certificates valued at \$50 for \$40, a \$10 savings. Just call at 315-453-4455 to find out more.

Need to pick out a class? [Check out our newest course catalog](#) online. This catalog will be arriving in mailboxes soon.



The top portion of the image shows a collage of students in a workshop or classroom environment. Below this is a graphic for the 'ADULT TRAINING PROGRAMS 2019-2020 WINTER-SPRING COURSE CATALOG OCM BOCES - LIVERPOOL & CORTLAND'. The graphic is divided into three colored sections: 'CAREER TRAINING' (orange) listing Welding, Construction, Commercial, Dental, HVAC, and Health Occupations; 'PLUS' (green) listing Part-time Evening Classes, Lunch Classes, and First High School Apprenticeship Program; and 'REMEMBER!' (blue) advising to add classes to the catalog through the winter and spring catalogs, and to view dates on the full course description inside. The OCMBOCES logo is at the bottom.

More than 50 BOCES students attend 'Construction Career Days'

Hundreds of high school students from across Central New York converged on the State Fairgrounds in October for "Construction Career Days," an event that included demonstrations from OCM BOCES Adult Education students in construction, electrical and HVAC/R programs. About 50 students from our Career & Technical Education program and Innovation Tech high school also attended. Another 47 construction students from the OCM BOCES Cortlandville Campus attended a similar event in Broome County earlier in the month. The career outlook for the construction trades is booming as more and more skilled tradespeople retire.



Athletic directors converge on BOCES for certification guidance

About 50 athletic directors from area districts attended a certification workshop recently at the Main Campus. The workshop was held shortly before Elaine

Lisziewski, our regional certification officer, retired Nov. 5 after 20 years of service at OCM BOCES. Her supervisor, HR Director/School Attorney **Joseph Bufano**, said Elaine's "services and certification expertise have been invaluable, and she will be dearly missed."



Get the word out! Teachers, teaching assistants and job coaches needed at OCM BOCES

Why become a teacher or teaching assistant? Or a job coach? The reasons are many: authentic teaching experiences, convenient schedule, great benefits, professional development opportunities — and so much more. Check out our [careers website page](#) to learn more.

Like us on Facebook! Follow us on Twitter! Check us out on YouTube!

While several OCM BOCES programs have their own social media outlets, our organization now has a general Facebook page, Twitter account and YouTube channel that we can use to share news and events across all departments. We are happy to share and retweet any and all of your important news! **PLEASE like us** on [Facebook](#) and **follow us** on [Twitter](#) (@ocmboces). Check out our [YouTube Channel](#) as well.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The OCM BOCES non-discrimination policy is on our website. Please [click here](#) to view it in full.

Need help? Don't forget about our Employee Assistance Program

Don't forget about our confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which can help you with anything from job stress to aging parents to a death in the family. Go to ocmboces.org/eap for more.

If you would like to contribute to the BOCES bits, which is generally distributed once each month, please contact Jackie Wiegand at jwiegand@ocmboces.org or Katie Jensen at kjensen@ocmboces.org.

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