

Avenews

News from the Allegheny Valley School District

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District Holds Graduation

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Congratulations to the Springdale Jr-Sr High School Class of 2019. Sixty-seven students participated in their graduation ceremony on Friday, June 7. Highlights of the Class are listed on pages 6-7.



*In the District...*To expand its commitment to education, Allegheny Valley begins Pre-K program...*Story on page 3*



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*At Springdale Jr-Sr High School...*The Class of 2019 included a surprise member...*Story on page 7.*

SHS Holds 87th Graduation

Family and friends joined the 87th graduating class of Springdale High School on June 7th in the Marshall Auditorium. As the ceremony started, the 67 members of the Class of 2019 began their last official event as students in the Allegheny Valley School District.

"Most of the days we love, you do not remember...tonight is not that night," Principal Michele Welter told the class, as the evening began. "This class is special - they are true humanitarians and give back."

Valedictorian Anna Yaksich told her classmates that "it's because this place and these people gave us so much that it's time to go." She commented that Allegheny Valley provided everything the class needed to give back to the world. "I cannot wait to see who we all become."

Salutatorian Breanne Hurley commented to the class on love, noting that, "I truly appreciate the ones who make it incredible." She explained that love should be used as a noun, something tangible. "One gift we can all give back to this world is love," she said, wishing her class luck.

Superintendent Patrick Graczyk addressed the class, challenging and encouraging them to "Make your mark." He detailed successes and honors that were attained throughout their years in the District.



Salutatorian left, and valedictorian, right, prepare for Springdale Jr-Sr High School's 2019 graduation ceremony.

This class earned more than \$2 million in scholarships, served hundreds of hours in the community, and worked to donate thousands of dollars to charities.

Gabrielle Yost, Senior Class President, touted the class' accomplishments, thanking them for all the memories of their school years. "I believe we truly care for one another," she stated, and encouraged them to take their compassion with them. "It is never too late to make a positive difference."

For the pride that they have brought to the District, congratulations and best wishes are extended to all members of the Class of 2019.



Superintendent Patrick Graczyk speaks at Springdale Jr-Sr High School's 2019 Graduation Ceremony.

cal knowledge with self-awareness, communication skills, and social problem-solving in our schools as evidenced by the creation of our pre-school program and the summer career workshop, PROJECT LAUNCHPAD. An emphasis on sound instruction as well as marketable skills and educational programs will better prepare our students to be more well-rounded individuals and sought-after future employees in the workforce.

District Begins PreK Program

Students to Join Acmetonia Elementary

The Allegheny Valley School District is excited to launch a Pre-Kindergarten Program for the 2019-2020 school year. The program will be held at Acmetonia Elementary and is open to resident children of the school district.

The program expands the District's commitment to education, and will build a solid foundation for young students. Since the Pre-Kindergarten program will be new to Allegheny Valley families, it is important for parents to realize the expectations of the program for their child's growth and development, and also the parameters of the curriculum and elementary school procedures. Communication, then, will play a large part in the program.

The designed program will promote positive approaches to learning, while working collaboratively with families. It is built to provide a quality course for young students. Aligned to the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, the Pre-K program offers a supportive classroom environment that prepares children for early literacy and cognitive and mathematical reasoning activities needed to be successful in Kindergarten.

The content and activities are structured with the intent to strengthen students' social, emotional, and behavioral skills using the *Big Day for Pre-K* and *Eureka Math Pre-K* curriculum programs. A certified Early Childhood Education teacher and an instructional assistant will teach the core program with Allegheny Valley encore teachers delivering special area classes, including music, art, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math), and physical education.

The program will include two half-day sessions. Enrollment in the morning or afternoon session is open to District children who are 4-years of age by September 1, 2019. The program requires a five-day-a-week commitment from families beginning August 26, 2019 and will follow Allegheny Valley's 2019-2020 Master Calendar (included on page 14 of this newsletter). Once the maximum of 20 students per session are enrolled, a wait list will be created for others interested in the program.

Additional enrollment criteria and access to the registration form are located on the District Website at www.avsdweb.org or <https://parents.csiu-technology.org/AVAL>. For a paper application or additional information, please call Ms. Rhonda Caldwell (rcaldwell@avsd.k12.pa.us) or Dr. Janice Nuzzo (jnuzzo@avsd.k12.pa.us) at 724-274-5300.

Begins...August 2019



2019 Alumni Hall of Fame



The 2019 Alumni Hall of Fame inductees from left to right: Donald Grinder, Jeannine Hurley McCutcheon, and Emilio Saldari.

The Allegheny Valley School District inducted its Alumni Hall of Fame, Class of 2019, on Saturday, April 22. Developed to recognize, celebrate, and honor those alumni who have distinguished themselves through public service, academic achievement, and professional contributions, the Alumni Hall of Fame honors alumni who serve to enhance the prestige and excellence of the school district.

Donald E. Grinder (attended 1968-1981) - Donald E. Grinder graduated from Springdale High School in 1981. He went on to attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania, graduating with a degree in Criminology in 1987. He began working with the Arlington County (Virginia) Police Department as a patrolman. He served the department in several capacities, eventually working his way into the detective bureau and subsequently being promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Don spent most of his career in Special Operations assisting federal agencies in the protection of several presi- (continued on page 13)

Superintendent's Message

Recently, the Pennsylvania Department of Education released an infographic "The Anatomy of a Quality Employee" to school districts. This brief, yet meaningful text emphasizes three career marketability skills that students need so they can be successful beyond their years at schools. These necessary skills are Self-Awareness and Self-Management or the ability to understand and gauge one's emotions, Establish and Maintain Relationships or the capability to communicate verbally and in writing with diverse groups of people, and Social Problem Solving-Skills or possessing empathy as well as the ability to respect the views of others.

At Allegheny Valley, we embrace our responsibility to teach these skills, as well as offer programs that reinforce such skills in order to help prepare students for their future. This summer, a team of teachers and school leaders examined and identified instructional practices that we believe will lead to deeper student awareness. Allegheny Valley acknowledges the importance of instruction that carefully blends criti-

District Highlights

The Successes of 2018-2019

The theme of *Make A Mark* encouraged students, staff, and community to foster creativity...express yourself, inspire others, and help build a better Allegheny Valley School District. Whether through academics, athletics, social, or extra-curricular areas, Allegheny Valley continues to build a first-class educational experience for all. This year, the District took another step forward as additional technology, initiatives, and creative teaching ideas were brought to classrooms. Now, the District takes time to celebrate the following achievements:

- Allegheny Valley was awarded over \$80,000 in various grants throughout the school year. One of the largest, a Safe Schools Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education was accepted for \$40,000 to fund a School Police Officer position at Acmetonia Elementary. In addition, an AIU Center for Creativity Catalyst STEAM Grant was awarded for the Acmetonia STEAM classroom for \$16,500.
- The Allegheny Valley School District completed a \$13 million renovation/construction project on Acmetonia Elementary School. The project brought all elementary students, Kindergarten-grade 6, into one facility. Construction included a new classroom wing, an expanded gymnasium, and classrooms for vocal music, instrumental music, technology and STEAM education. Renovated areas included the

Students on KDKA's Home-town High Q won all the way to participate in this year's finals.



- kitchen and cafeteria, main office, and some work throughout the original classroom configuration.
- The Allegheny Valley School District was awarded a Golden Achievement Award from the National School Public Relations Association for its opening event of the Acmetonia Elementary School.
- One SHS junior completed the 2018-19 Westinghouse Science Honors Institute. Students must participate in at least seven Saturday morning lectures for this award.
- One senior student won First Place in Edgar Snyder's Words to be Heard scholarship contest and a \$10,000 scholarship with her video project "Up That Road."

Two SHS students brought home the first place trophy in the Combat Bots competition.



- Two junior students placed first in the Combat Bots competition; another two students placed third.
- One Acmetonia 6th grade student received a Robert Morris University Classroom All-Star Award. The program recognizes students who display leadership in their classroom. The Acme student led the elementary recycling team and is a leader in classroom and school technology, growing into a motivational friend to many students in the 6th grade class.
- Three Springdale Jr-Sr High School students won awards in the Waldman International Arts and Writing Competition hosted by the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. The theme was "Women in the Holocaust." For the second year in a row, in the art category, SHS students won 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in the competition. In addition, one 8th grader won 1st place in the junior high division of the competition.
- One senior student was selected as the Valley News Dispatch/Tribune Review High School Male Athlete of the Year. This same student was selected for a KDKA Extra Effort Award in February, winning a \$250 donation for the school's athletic program.
- The 67 members of the Class of 2019 earned more than \$2.03 million in scholarships, accepting over \$1.26 million of that amount. This fact makes the class the 21st to collect over \$1 million and the 16th to garner over \$2 million dollars in scholarship money.
- Seventy-eight students in the Class of 2031 participated in this year's Kindergarten graduation events.

Principal Gregory Heavner congratulates Kindergarten students at their graduation event.



(continued on page 11)

Future Famers Recognized

Allegheny Valley acknowledges the efforts of students to show support for the areas in which they show innovation, creativity, and dedication. In its fourth year, the Future Famers Program recognizes current students, at any grade level, who consistently demonstrate an outstanding commitment to improve the District through school and community involvement, entrepreneurship, and/or scholastic achievement. An extension of the District's Alumni Hall of Fame, it is a prestigious honor awarded to students who impact the school community.

Students are selected to the program who demonstrate superior leadership, integrity, and achievement through community involvement, participation in school activities, innovation, and/or scholarship. These student leaders distinguish themselves from many other outstanding students by their actions in the classroom and throughout the local communities.

The intent of the program is to encourage and emphasize that students can succeed on whatever path they choose. The 2019 class of Future Famers includes: Liam Dale, grade 10; Breanne Hurley, grade 12; Simon Jaronski, grade 12; Kathleen McNally, grade 12; and Caitlyn Ullger, grade 12.

These students signify a bright future for District alumni, becoming role models at a young age. They have taken the extra steps necessary to work hard, grow their talents, and continue to go the extra mile to see that their dreams come true. On a daily basis,



they remind us that there are no limits to what Allegheny Valley students can achieve. They represent the District in the most positive manner and truly exemplify the meaning of the word Dynamo.

Allegheny Valley Holds Drill

The Allegheny Valley School District held its annual large-scale emergency drill in June. These drills have become a regular and necessary part of the Emergency Management Program since 2009. This year, the drill used an evacuation scenario, incorporating students and staff at Acmetonia Elementary.

Planning began in the fall with the local emergency management coordinator. Reviewing evacuation procedures with staff and students, establishing a scenario, and working through communication items completed preparations through-



Local Emergency Management Agencies participated in this year's large-scale drill.

out the school months.

This year's drill was a review for all elementary students, with the merger of the Colfax and Acmetonia buildings. Local Emergency Management Agencies (EMAs) joined the Allegheny Valley Regional Emergency Management Agency to execute the scenario. Specific processes and procedures were tested and reviewed, including response, communication, and student accountability. The drill was a success in the testing of procedures.

A debrief meeting was held after the drill for all organizations participating. The responses will be added to the District's Plan. Allegheny Valley's Emergency Management committee is also looking at ways to include additional drills. These changes will be part of the Plan review during the 2019-20 school year. In addition, upgrades will be made to communication, with training held for staff to improve during emergencies.

Congratulations to the Class of 2019

Andrew Alese
Logan Baur
Timothy Bellin
Madison Beyer
Laurel Black
Morgan Blanchflower
Leann Brannock
Alexis Byrd
Erica Crail
Gavin Densmore
Jaden Domaratz
Deserai Duncan
Gianna Foglia
Jocelyn Folmer
Jacob Garmong
Julia Garmong

Christina Gaschler
Kaitlyn Hails
Rachel Halapchuk
Rachel Hayes
Autumn Hein
Sydni Henley
Breanne Hurley
Simon Jaronski
Joshua Jones II
Hannah Kern
Isaac Kern
Katelynn Klaas
Elijah Lang
Nathan Lavelle
Cassidy Liotta
Samantha Lovic

Ashley Marks
Colleen Marsili
Allison McGarry
Kathleen McNally
James Micher
Brittany Moody
Brianna Nash
Sadie Orbin
Beau Ovamio
Hunter Parison
Marissa Pastories
Rylie Patterson
Keidyn Perle
Natalie Pinchok
James Pitts
Sarah Plunkett

Van Pribanic
Jordan Puskar
Megan Rzeszotarski
Alysha Scherba
Matthew Scott
Skyleanna Skiles
Kaitlyn Thompson
Taylor Timko
Caitlyn Ullger
William Vokes
Jade Vrabel
Hailey Wells
Elsie Whelan
Anna Yaksich
Gabrielle Yost
Michael Zolnierczyk



Senior Moments...

As the Class of 2019 leaves Springdale Jr-Sr High School, they can be proud of the following:

- Springdale Jr-Sr High School graduated 67 students in 2019.

- Approximately 53 percent of the class received scholarships. The sources were:

College/university/	
Post-secondary scholarships	\$1,055,958
Armed Service Scholarships	888,329
Local Scholarships	89,1971
TOTAL:	\$2,033,484

- With the total of over \$2.29 million, the class is the 21st to reach \$1 million and the 16th to surpass \$2 million.

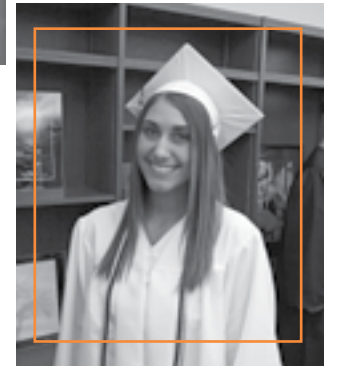
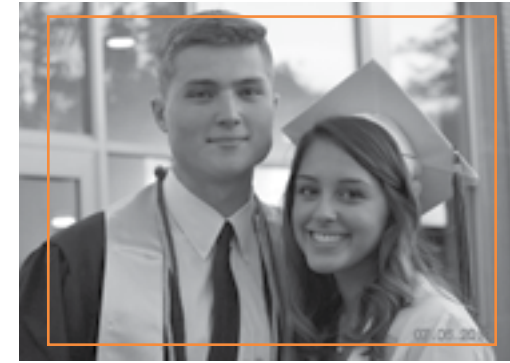
- Approximately \$1,255,876 in 2019 scholarships were accepted by seniors.

- The post-secondary plans of the graduating class:

- 50% pursuing four-year college degrees
- 23% entering a junior college or community college, then planning to transfer to a baccalaureate degree program.
- 2% entering vocational-technical or business schools.
- 5% entering the Armed Services
- 9% entering the job market
- 11% undecided

- Students will attend more than 20 different universities, colleges, and technical schools, and enter two branches of the military.

- Students have registered for many different areas of study at post-secondary institutions.



A Surprise Senior

This year's graduation ceremony started out in a normal manner, but those in attendance soon realized this event would not be the usual event. This year the 67 students in the Class of 2019 added a very special individual to share their commencement.

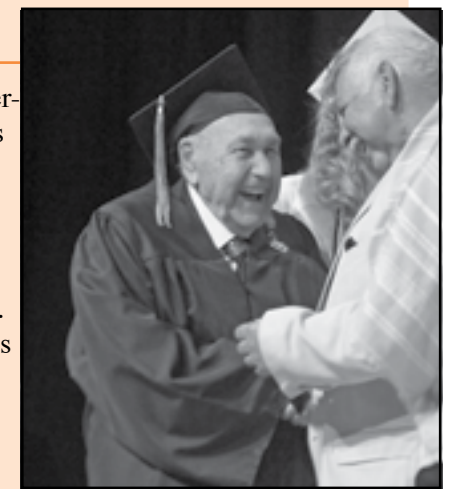
Mr. Emilio Saldari, 94, was drafted in 1943, missing the graduation with his class of 1944. "This group of kids met him and fell in love with his story," explained Principal Michelle Welter. The class wanted to acknowledge Saldari and present him with something that he had been missing for so many years - a Springdale High School diploma.

Saldari was dispatched to France, traveling to the Ardennes Forest and the Rhineland, and fought in four major battles, including the Battle of the Bulge. Upon being honorably discharged, he returned home to Harwick, working in the mines.

Saldari took leadership roles with his endeavors, volunteered throughout the community, and dedicated his life to help others.

"He represents everything we all want for our children," commented Welter to the graduation audience.

But perhaps it was best said by Valedictorian Anna Yaksich, "With everything that he's done, we really knew that he had to be part of our class. He deserves that recognition more than any of us on that stage."



In Our Schools...

Springdale Jr-Sr High School Seniors Choose Military Service

Allegheny Valley and the Springdale Veterans' Association annually recognize senior students who will enter military service after graduation. The event was developed to not only congratulate the students, but to provide additional means of support to students and their families as they enter military service. This year, that event brought another first to the District: honoring an all-female group. Seniors Leanne Brannock (National Guard), Deserai Duncan (National Guard), and Skyleanna Skiles (Air Force) are wished the best of luck and given our sincere thanks for their service.



Honors Banquet Held



One hundred and ten students were recognized at the 2019 Honors Banquet.

For the 36th time, Springdale Jr-Sr High School recognized students in grades 7-12 for high academic achievement. One hundred and ten students were awarded certificates for achieving 94% or above for each of the first three nine weeks of the school year.

These students included: six grade 7 students; 13 grade 8 students; 28 grade 9 students; 19 grade 10 students; and 15 grade 11 students. Twenty-nine seniors were also honored, including five who were recognized for Honors Achievement each year of their career at Springdale Jr-Sr High School.

Athletic Honors

Softball Team Heads To Playoffs

The SHS Softball team headed to the WPIAL playoffs for the first time since 2000, gathering a number of honors along the way. The team ended the season with a record of 13-3, finishing second in their section to enter the playoffs. They beat Quigley in the first round, but fell to Union High School in the quarterfinals. Congratulations are extended to the team and coaches for an amazing season and for the following honors:

- Anna Harmon, Alexis Hrivnak, and Brianna Thompson, selected as Section 3A Softball All-Stars by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
- Alexis Hrivnak, selected to the second team Softball All-Stars by the Valley News Dispatch
- Anthony Pototo, selected as the Trib Live High School Sports Network Class A Coach of the Year



Senior Named Athlete of the Year

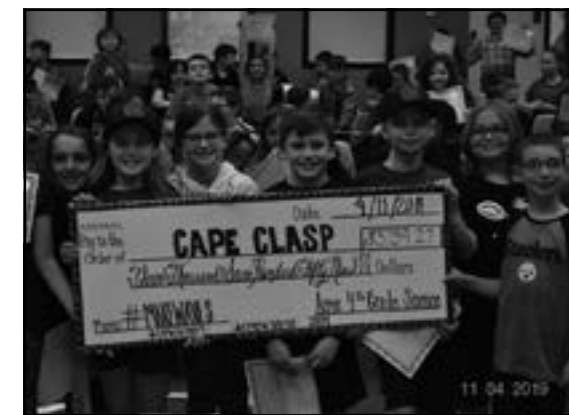
Senior Michael Zolnierczyk was honored by the Valley News Dispatch/Tribune Review as their High School Male Athlete of the Year. Zolnierczyk was an all-star in two sports soccer and basketball. He was acknowledged for his skill on the soccer field with several awards, including the WPIAL Class A Player of the Year. He led his team to the WPIAL playoffs the last two years, with the team winning runner-up honors in the WPIAL Class A in 2018.

Zolnierczyk was also a standout on the court, scoring his 1,000 point this past January in a game vs. Sto Rox. He was honored with the KDKA Extra Effort Award in March for his accomplishments.

Acmetonia Elementary School

Students Learn About the Environment

Grade 4 students learned the importance of giving back while also learning about ecology in their classroom. Students participated in an Ecostudent Challenge, where they were tasked to study 100 facts about the ecosystem. They registered sponsors, who pledged a monetary amount for every fact the student could remember for his/her test. The students did an amazing job and raised \$3,759.27 for the Cape Clasp organization, which helps save the marine life (turtles/ seals/ sharks/ whales) specifically in the Cape Cod area. The students had the chance to talk with the CEO of the organization and present their donation check via a live web cast in April.



Grades 4-6 students completed group work in their Science Olympiad. Multi-grade teams competed against each other to build their science skills and have fun while they learned.



Grades 4-6 Continue Olympiad

For the seventh year, Colfax Upper Elementary School held its Science Olympiad. The event encompasses two days, filled with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) concepts. Students had fun learning academic skills and lessons in teamwork and decision-making.

Students are placed onto multi grade-level teams and begin preparing for the event months in advance with team-building activities, so they understand that everyone on the team has a role to play. During the event, students answer questions, complete experiments, conduct research, and identify objects as part of the various stations.

First Grade Students Become Authors

Grade 1 students had the chance to author a book for one of their classroom activities this spring. Mrs. Taliana's class took the subject of a pet they would like to have, wrote stories on why they chose the animal and why it should be their pet, and drew illustrations to support the story. The submissions were put together into a classroom book.

Taliana then hosted a Book Box Opening Party in May, where the families of the students were invited to take part of this experience. Students had the option of reading their stories, presenting their art, and answering questions from those in attendance. Family members may have been surprised with the request for gorillas, tortoises, and other unusual animals, but a great time was had by all.

Acme first grade students wrote stories and drew illustrations to put together a classroom book.

Kindergarten Students Graduate

The end of the school year brings graduation not only for Springdale High seniors but also for the District's youngest students. Continuing an annual tradition, Kindergarten students held their own graduation ceremony.

Family and friends packed the Syria Mosque to help celebrate the conclusion of this group's first year of school. Students marched onto the stage to receive their diplomas and end their days in Kindergarten. Elementary Supervisor Gregory Heavner and the Kindergarten teachers helped students on their way. The Class of 2031 has 78 very proud members.



Staff Members Retire

Over the course of the school year, seven Allegheny Valley staff members announced their retirements. These individuals dedicated much of their lives to the field of education; the District lost numerous years of experience when these staff members walked out the doors for the last time. Each of these individuals has played a memorable and necessary role for the students of Allegheny Valley. We thank...

Michael Davis was hired by Allegheny Valley in 1996 as a substitute. He worked as a custodian in several buildings throughout the District. Davis retires with 13 years with the District.

Linda Durkt joined Allegheny Valley as a substitute clerk in 1990. In 1992, she was hired as a part-time secretary and, in 1995, hired as the full-time secretary for Springdale Jr-Sr High School's Guidance Office. She retires with 28 years at Allegheny Valley.

Carla Lagattuta began working in the District in 1994 as a paraprofessional, receiving a full-time position in 1996. Lagattuta also served as an Academic Games Sponsor and the elementary Technology teacher upon her retirement.

Joseph Lieberton was hired by Allegheny Valley in 1999 as a substitute. He worked as a custodian in several buildings during his time with the District. Lieberton retires with 19 years with the District.

Paula Moretti joined Allegheny Valley as a Cafeteria Worker in 1990. She became the Attendance Clerk in 1993 and the High School Secretary in 2001. Moretti also served as a Ticket-Taker and Volunteer Softball Coach during her time with the District. She retires with 28 years at Allegheny Valley.

Gary Nagy was hired by Allegheny Valley in 1989 as a custodian. He worked at Springdale Jr-Sr High School and Colfax Upper Elementary School during his time with the District. Nagy retires with 29 years with the District.

Jayne Sheldon was hired in 1990 as an elementary music teacher. Over the years, she has served as the elementary choir director, musical pianist, and started the Chamber Singers group. She has been honored with many recognitions over the course of her service. She retires with 28 years with the District.

A very big thank you is sent to each of these individuals on behalf of Allegheny Valley staff, students, and community members. They have touched numerous lives, contributed to various District programs, and made Allegheny Valley a better place. While their departures will leave a void, they are wished the best of luck in whatever path they choose to follow. They deserve a happy and healthy retirement, and will truly be missed.

Financial Update:

The 2019-2020 Budget

At their June 17th meeting, the Allegheny Valley School Board approved an operating budget for the 2019-2020 school year. In the amount of \$23,002,665, this budget is an increase of 1% or \$228,066 over the 2018-19 budget of \$22,774,599. Local revenue for this budget will be provided by a real estate tax of 20.8377 mills, one half of 1% earned income tax, one-half of 1% real estate transfer tax, and \$5.00 local emergency service tax. 228,066 more than the 2018-2019 Budget of \$22,774,599.18

The final budget includes receiving revenue generation balanced by expansion of program offerings with a 1:1 technology expansion with Chromebooks for students in Grades 3 through 8, a Music teacher, and a Pre-K program. This budget also reflects a proactive investment in safety and security, including a Social Worker and the School Police Officer at Acme.

Work on a budget begins months before it is approved. The process starts before school opens, with suggested budgets from the various buildings and departments due to the business office in December. Planning, meetings, and reviews on budget information are held, with presentation of the Preliminary and Proposed Final Budget provided to the Board.

As the new school year begins, the District will continuously look for ways to decrease costs. The
(continued on page 14)

2019-2020 Final Budget Expenditures By Object

Salaries	41%
Employee Benefits	26%
Other Purchased Services	12%
Debt Service	10%
Purchased Professional & Technical Services	6%
Other/Fund Transfers Objects	5%
Supplies, Textbooks, Utilities	4%
Purchased Property Services	2%
Property	1%

Highlights...continued from page 4

- One hundred and ten students were acknowledged at the 36th Annual Honors Banquet for achieving 94% or above for the first three nine weeks of the school year. Twenty-nine seniors were honored, including five who were recognized for Honors Achievement throughout their time at Springdale Jr-Sr High School.
- One District educator was honored as an "All-Star Teacher" by the Pittsburgh Pirates and Pirates Charities. The groups teamed up with Chevron and The Grable Foundation to recognize outstanding teachers in the region and



SHS students participated in the Pennsylvania Jr. Academy of Science competition; one student advanced to the state competition.

give the thanks and acknowledgement that they deserve for their contributions to our community.

- Elementary students participated in this year's International Dot Day. Starting in 2009, a group of educators began the program as "a day for classes to explore the story's [of The Dot by Peter H. Reynolds] powerful themes: bravery, creativity, and self-expression.
- One senior student was a semi-finalist for the Coca-Cola scholars program. The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation notified nearly 1,900 applicants they have been named a semifinalist for the 2019 Coca-Cola Scholarship Program. The students were selected from among 200,000+ applications for their outstanding commitment to both their communities and schools.
- Congratulations to five Allegheny Valley Junior High students who presented at the Pennsylvania Jr. Academy of Science competition. One student qualified for the state competition.
- Congratulations to the District's Team that competed in this year's KDKA Hometown High Q. The team beat both Gateway and East Allegheny in the televised match. The team moved through the competition to participate in the finals.
- Acmetonia Elementary grade 4-6 students took part in the seventh annual two-day, school-wide Science Olympiad. The Olympiad enabled all students to improve STEAM skills and proficiency.
- The Allegheny Valley School District hosted a Career Fair for students in grades 5 - 8. Participants represented various career fields and provided information for students. Thirteen of the presenters were SHS alumni.

- The SHS Future City team earned the "Best Fire Systems" special award at the 2019 Future City Competition.
- One SHS Sophomore participated in the PMEA District festival for instrumental musicians, earning a spot in the ensemble and advancing to the State Orchestra to qualify as one of the top nine best high school orchestral trumpet players in the entire Commonwealth.
- One junior student represented Springdale Jr-Sr High School at the PMEA Honors Chorus, District Chorus, and Regional Chorus. This year is the second consecutive one the student has performed in all three choruses.
- Five Acmetonia Elementary students and three Springdale Jr-Sr High students were selected to the Seton Hill Youth Honors Band.
- Two students were selected to participate at the PMEA Junior High District Orchestra Festival at Yough Intermediate Middle School; two additional students were selected to represent the District in the PMEA Senior High District Band Festival.
- Six SHS students (grades 10-12) participated in the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Apprenticeship program.
- Two SHS students traveled to Washington to compete in the Bundesliga Total! Festival, the finals of a German sports, culture, and language competition.
- Four 6th grade students won their third award for outstanding performance at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Wild Investigation at the Pittsburgh Zoo. The students earned the award by completing a challenging scavenger hunt activity covering the entire zoo complex.
- Five Allegheny Valley students were recognized for outstanding performance at the 2019 National Academic Games Competition. One student won 3rd place (Propaganda, team) in the junior division; two students won 6th place (Current Events, team) in the elementary division.
- Four SHS athletic teams - Boys' Soccer, Girls' Soccer, Boys' Basketball, and Softball, - extended their seasons



Junior High students brought home a special award from this year's Future City competition.

to participate in the WPIAL playoffs. In addition, two members of the Swim team participated in the WPIAL individuals and one athlete competed at the PIAA for individuals.

- Acmetonia Elementary hosted a Disabilities Awareness Day to raise awareness and acceptance of individuals with disabilities.
- Two senior students were honored by the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review in their Elite 100 of the Outstanding Young Citizen program. They were chosen out of 489 nominees from 104 different schools. Two additional students were also nominated in the program.
- Fifteen Allegheny Valley students took place in the Pittsburgh Public Theater's Shakespeare Competition.



Colfax students were awarded for their outstanding performance at the AIU's Wild Investigation program.

- Six SHS students competed in the Pennsylvania Mock Trial program at the City-County Building in Pittsburgh.
- District students participated in the following service projects: the National Honor Society collected \$827 and Acmetonia Elementary raised over \$2,400 for the Lymphoma & Leukemia Society's Pasta For Pennies program; the Family and Consumer Science and Art students once again joined together to coordinate the Empty Dish project raising funds for the Lower Valley Food Bank; the elementary Student Council held numerous Special Theme Days to raise money for charity. Acmetonia students celebrated the 23rd year of sponsorship for St. Jude's Hospital and raised \$550 in their Math-A-Thon program, bringing the total to over \$58,545 that students have donated since 1997. Grade 4 students participated in an Ecostudent Challenge, which had students learning ecology facts in exchange for donations. The project raised \$3,759 for Cape Clasp, a non-profit partnership that supports marine life causes. Staff members participated in the Lower Valley Food Bank's "Secret Santa" program and Jeans for Troops event, donated to building Angel Trees, and raised money for the GI Go Fund. The Allegheny Valley Education Association also continued their annual Dress Down Fridays, which donates funds to the Lower Valley Food Bank.

The District congratulates all of its students and staff members on this year's accomplishments. They continue to work hard to bring recognition and esteem to Allegheny Valley. Parents, community members, and alumni should be extremely proud of a job well done.

Remake Learning... A Successful Evening



Students visit Acmetonia Elementary for the Remake Learning event. They had the chance to participate in STEAM activities throughout the building.

For several years, Allegheny Valley has participated in Remake Learning Days - a week dedicated to engaging learning events throughout the Pittsburgh area. Each year, this initiative extends throughout the state and other areas of the country. With numerous school districts selecting days throughout the week to open their doors and highlight learning, Allegheny Valley is proud to continue to support this initiative.

Remake Learning is a time to showcase STEAM learning - an approach that brings together science, technology, engineering, and math with the arts for a more broad and complete education that includes hands-on learning, problem solving, and collaboration. The program allows an emphasis to be put on education, with the abundance of events being held throughout the communities.

Acmetonia Elementary School hosted this year's event. Administrators and teachers brought the effort together to develop an Open House that featured student presentations, projects, and hands-on activities. In addition, the Special Education Department featured its Disability Awareness program, that allowed visitors a glimpse into what it feels like to have a disability.

Many parents and students took the opportunity to visit the school and learn more about District resources and student programs. Throughout the region, hundreds of organizations joined Allegheny Valley to take part in the Remake Learning Days and show how education is being transformed in the Pittsburgh region. The District looks forward to continuing its commitment to Remake Learning and highlighting the future of education.

Alumni Hall of Fame...continued from page 3

dents and numerous foreign dignitaries. As a Sergeant in Special Operations, he was one of the very first responders to the Pentagon on 9/11, helping lead the initial response. Mr. Grinder was a member of the SWAT team and ended his Arlington career as the team commander. While in Arlington he helped teach newer officers in the department, and was also an instructor at the Citizens Police Academy. His passion for his profession led him to compose, and have published, several articles on best practices in law enforcement. During his career Don was presented with several awards for his heroism and bravery to include one for valor, one for life saving, two for meritorious service, and one purple heart. Don retired from Arlington in 2009 and went to work for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). While at DHS he participated in several nationwide responses to critical incidents. In 2011 Mr. Grinder was asked to join the Department of State to provide safety and security guidance for Americans serving overseas. In this capacity Don has visited over 130 countries in an attempt to help keep Americans safe. One of the most visible examples of this effort was when he was asked to provide guidance for the 2018 Winter Olympics in Seoul, Korea. Mr. Grinder continues his career to this day and his life has been dedicated to service in the local, national, and international communities.

Jeannine Hurley McCutcheon (attended 1971-1984) – Jeannine Hurley McCutcheon graduated from Springdale High School in 1984, honored as Salutatorian and May Queen. She went on to secure a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from the University of Pittsburgh. McCutcheon was hired by the King George, Virginia then the Deer Lakes School District to begin a teaching career. Leaving the position to raise her family, McCutcheon continued her profession tutoring students in math and science and developed a focus on service to her community. She created a newsletter that reaches hundreds of individuals each week, providing readers with prayer and item requests, devotionals, and volunteer opportunities throughout the area. Homemade meals are made, money is donated, and numerous families in need have been supported. McCutcheon is also the co-founder and director of Fun and Freedom Youth Sports Springdale Day Camp, a multi-sport Christian Day Camp for area students, involving over 150 campers and 100 volunteers each summer. In addition, she hosts breakfast each month in her home for 30-50 high school students for conversation and fellowship. She has been recognized for her community service activities by the Lions' Club, the Allegheny Valley School District, and the United States Marines.

Emilio Saldari (attended 1940-1943) - Emilio Saldari attended Springdale High School and was drafted to serve in WWII in 1943. He was dispatched to France, traveling to the Ardennes Forest and the Rhineland, and fought in four major battles, including the Battle of the Bulge. Upon being honorably discharged, he returned home to Harwick, working at Edgewater Steel and the Harmar and Harwick mines. Saldari was never content to just be another employee. He took a leadership role with his endeavors, working as a representative with the United Mine Workers Union and serving as President of the Local 4426, fighting for benefits for miners and their families. He has also volunteered with the Springdale Township Volunteer Fire Department, Little League, and Our Lady of Victory Church. He has dedicated his life to help others. For his service, Saldari has been honored with four Bronze Stars, campaign medals, and - at the age of 90 - the Chevalier Award from the French Government, making him the equivalent of a British Knight. Saldari has served his country, community, and profession with dedication and, above all, kindness.

The District has a great history of successful alumni. Not only do these individuals represent the quality of education provided in the District, they serve as role models for today's students. Allegheny Valley will soon begin its search for the next class of alumni to be inducted. For more information, visit the District's web site at www.avsdweb.org.

We Are...Dynamo Proud

Last year, the Allegheny Valley School District began a campaign to celebrate why we are Dynamo Proud. Individuals are asked to pass along stories they hear about successes of our students, staff members, and alumni. General information, photos, media links - whatever they have to share, is appreciated. These items can be those accomplished in the District or throughout the community. Information submitted may be used on District social media pages, in the District newsletter, and/or on the District web site.

As Allegheny Valley continues to build its social media presence, we try to include as many stories as possible over the course of the school year. Community members can also contribute appropriate information by sending it to: jzastawniak@avsd.k12.pa.us. To read the stories and view photos, please friend the District on its Facebook page: Allegheny Valley School District (Official District Site).

2019-2020 District Calendar



July 4, 2019	Independence Day Holiday (District Closed)
August 19-21, 2019	Staff Development (Teachers Only)
August 22, 2019	Clerical Day (Teachers Only)
August 26, 2019	First Day for Students
September 2, 2019	Labor Day (District Closed)
September 12, 2019	School-Community Night (evening hours all schools)
October 24, 2019	School-Community Night (evening hours, all schools)
November 1, 2019	Act 80 - Staff Development (Teachers Only)
November 28-	
December 2, 2019	Thanksgiving Vacation
December 23, 2019 -	
January 5, 2020	Holiday Break
January 16, 2020	School-Community Night (evening hours, all schools)
January 20, 2020	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day/Clerical Day (Teachers Only)
February 17, 2020	Presidents' Day (District Closed)
March 6, 2020	Staff Development (Teachers Only)
April 9 -13, 2020	Spring Break (District Closed)
May 8, 2020	Act 80 - Staff Development (Teachers Only)
May 20, 2020	School-Community Night (evening hours, all schools)
May 22-25, 2020	Memorial Day Break (District Closed)
June 5, 2020	Last Day for Students
June 5, 2020	Graduation
June 8, 2020	Clerical Day (Teachers Only)
June 9-11, 2020	Staff Development - MOU
June 18, 2020	Kennywood Picnic (District Closed)

Local School Holidays: Nov. 29; Dec. 26, 27, 30; April 10.
Weather/Emergency Makeup Days: February 17, April 9, May 22; add to end of year.

School-Community Nights...

Allegheny Valley has included School-Community Nights in its calendar to provide time for inclusive activities. School-Community Nights may be used for parent-teacher communication including open house and parent-teacher conferences, celebration of student learning, and special community engagement events.

School Starts...

Allegheny Valley students will begin the 2019-2020 school year on :

Monday, August 26

Secondary Start: 7:45 a.m.

Elementary Start: 8:30 a.m.

Additional information on items for the start of school will be available in August. Parents are asked to check the District's web site for updated details. Questions should be directed to the schools' main offices.

Budget...continued from page 10

District will also review and evaluate programs, and explore additional funding options.

Other Financial Considerations

The District continues to explore cost containment and revenue generating opportunities. With 76% of the annual budget tied to salaries (41%), benefits (26%), and debt service (9%). Administrators and School Board Members closely examine the remaining areas to see what items can be reduced without affecting the educational program.

As a new school year begins, the District will once again begin the process to find ways to decrease costs. With the elementary program located in one building, the District will monitor if savings can be found in utility, equipment, and resource expenses. Administrators will also review and evaluate programs, and explore additional options for funding.

For additional information on this year's budget, please see: <http://www.avsdweb.org/services/operations/budget>

Thank You...

Special thanks are extended to Mick Werries and Elizabeth Puskar for sharing his photos with the District for this edition of AVENEWS. Way to go Dynamos!!

Dynamo Education Foundation

Foundation Holds Soccer Reunion 2019

The Dynamo Education Foundation has been busy this year establishing new ways to support the Allegheny Valley School District. The group's mission, "to encourage, support, and fund innovative educational and cultural opportunities for the students of the Allegheny Valley School District," depends on the generosity of the community, its businesses, and alumni.

Raising funds happens in several ways. Topping that list is holding events. This year, the Foundation hosted a dinner evening with The Fabulous Gemtones at the Harmar House. A wonderful evening of entertainment, the Foundation hopes to continue it as an annual event. Soccer Reunion 2019 was held in June, with alumni returning to Springdale High School to once again play against their peers. It remains the Foundation's largest fund raiser. The Foundation is currently planning to participate in additional events, including a Back-to-School event.

The Foundation's Partner program, which allows individuals and businesses to pledge money to the grant program, also continues. Over \$5,000 has been donated in past years, and the group looks to secure new partners this year. Partners and a Legacy Program offer ways for individuals to contribute to the Foundation.

All proceeds go to the Dynamo Education Foundation's Grant Program that supports Allegheny Valley classroom projects. From a Career Cafe at Springdale Jr-Sr High School to flexible seating options and STEAM activities for elementary classrooms, the Foundation has awarded eighteen projects over five years. The Foundation will announce the 2019 recipients in August.

The Foundation strongly believes that supporting education means not only funding classroom activities, but also assisting larger events that have a lasting impact on students. The group continues to sponsor additional programs and collaborate with the District to provide the best education possible for students. It will be sponsoring an on-line fund raiser in memory of Alumni Hall of Fame member Dr. Louis Mazzoli. Mazzoli spend the majority of his life in the field of special education, and the project will raise money for a light board at Acmetonia Elementary. Details will be released soon on how to participate.



(top) Alumni participants in the Soccer Reunion 2019 pose for a photo; (bottom) Two former soccer players participate in the alumni game at the Soccer Reunion 2019.

Get Involved...

Strong community support is needed in order for the Dynamo Education Foundation to continue its work to fund educational programs and opportunities for Allegheny Valley School District students. Here's how you can help:

Volunteer: The Foundation welcomes community members and alumni who would like to volunteer on committees to plan, advertise, and carry out events.

Donate: Donations may be made directly to the Foundation. Checks should be made payable to the Dynamo Education Foundation and sent to 300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024.

Participate: Attend events to support the Dynamo Education Foundation and its efforts.

Support: Businesses, community groups, and individuals can support various efforts of the Foundation through its Partnership Program.

To learn more about the Dynamo Education Foundation or to make a donation, please visit the Foundation's web site at www.avsdweb.org.



Allegheny Valley School District

300 Pearl Avenue
Cheswick, PA 15024

***Our Mission:** The mission of the Allegheny Valley School District, a group of small traditional communities, is to educate all students to achieve their maximum potential. A dedicated staff, in partnership with school, home, and community, will empower students to become responsible and contributing citizens able to meet challenges in an international society.*

Allegheny Valley School District
300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024
Phone: 724/274-5300 Fax: 724/274-8040
www.avsdweb.org

And Finally...

Unless otherwise noted, the Allegheny Valley Board of School Directors conducts its agenda planning session on the second Tuesday of the month. Regular meetings are held on the third Monday of each month. Both meetings are held in the Acmetonia Primary School Forum beginning at 7:00 p.m. (A complete list of the meetings is located on the District's web site: www.avsdweb.org.)

The newsletter is published through the Public Relations Department of the Allegheny Valley School District. Comments and inquiries pertaining to the newsletter should be sent to Ms. Janice Zastawniak, Public Relations Director, 300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024.

The Allegheny Valley School District will not discriminate in its education programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, ancestry, disability, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Employees and others involved with the District who have a complaint of discrimination or harassment or require information about accommodations for disabled individuals, should contact the superintendent of schools by calling 724-274-5300 or writing and mailing a letter addressed to 300 Pearl Avenue, Cheswick, PA 15024.

Administration...

Patrick M. Graczyk
Superintendent
Janice E. Nuzzo, Ed.D.
Director of Student Achievement
Peter Simpson
Springdale Jr-Sr High School Assistant Principal
Gregory J. Heavner
Elementary Supervisor/Transportation Director
Jennifer L. Vecchio
Colfax Upper Elementary School Principal

Janice Zastawniak
Public Relations Director/Newsletter Editor

Board Of School Directors...

President	Larry Pollick
Vice President	Glenna Renaldi
Treasurer	Stephen P. Puskar
	James Gaschler, Jr., Joelle McFarland, Elizabeth Moretti, Antonio Pollino, Donald Rocco, Shawn Whelan
Secretary	Hamsini Rajgopal
Solicitor	Matt Hoffman, Esq.