

# NEWS FROM THE HIVE

A BI-WEEKLY ONLINE PUBLICATION OF  
THE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW BRITAIN



## GAFFNEY AND SLADE DECLARED WINNERS IN ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL DA VINCI BOWL

The Elementary Leonardo da Vinci Bowl was held on March 21 while the Middle School Leonardo da Vinci Bowl took place the day after on March 22. All students showed incredible math content knowledge, problem-solving skill, and teamwork.

“The purpose of the competition is to showcase math talent in the district AND give our top math students a chance to compete in a friendly, bowl-like event with an audience of family and friends, administrators, teachers, and support staff,” said District Coordinators of Curriculum Amy Anderson (K-5) and Lara Bohlke (6-12).

In the elementary school level, it was a back and forth race throughout the entire evening, with different teams pulling ahead and then falling behind as each round progressed. Amidst the cheers in the audience, the students kept their composure on stage and were great sports throughout the competition. With a few other schools creeping up, Gaffney Elementary School was able to hold them off and were declared the victors!

In the middle school competition, it was a tight race up until the very last question, but Slade was able to pull away ahead of DiLoreto, HALS and Pulaski. DiLoreto and HALS both gave Slade a run for their money but they were able to seal the victory by answering the last two questions correctly.

It was a fun two nights of problem-solving & computation, with all our elementary & middle schools represented. Congratulations to all the participants!

March 26, 2017 | Volume 1, Issue 19

## UPCOMING EVENTS

For a list of home and away match-ups for our spring athletic teams, please scroll to the back cover of the publication.

**March 29 - 5:30 - 7:00 PM**

CSDNB Annual Autism Dinner at Gaffney

**March 30 - 5:00 - 7:00 PM**

NBHS Climate and Sustainability Art Exhibit and Award Presentation - Stockman Gallery

**March 30 - 5:30 - 7:00 PM**

Preschool Early Learning Night at RELC

**March 30 - 6:00 PM**

DiLoreto Paint Night with Ms. Ramsey

**March 31**

Dress Down Day for Autism Awareness

**April 2 - 5:00 - 7:00 PM**

RELC Autism Awareness Celebration

**April 3-5**

Elementary and Middle School Conferences  
Early Dismissal

**April 3 - 10:00 AM**

Chamberlain Book Fair Begins (Through 04-07)

**April 10-14**

Spring Break!

**April 17**

Finish the Race at CCSU

**April 17 - 6:00 PM**

Board of Education Meeting

**April 18 - 6:30 PM**

Elementary Spelling Bee (Grades 4-5)

# NBHS FINISHES SECOND WITH RECORD-BREAKING SCORE AT NUTMEG STATE GAMES' ANNUAL WEIGHT LIFTING COMPETITION

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The New Britain High School football team finished in second place overall at the Nutmeg State Games' Annual Weight Lifting Competition at New Britain High School on March 11 with the second highest point total in the competition's history. The team finished with a score of 12,705 points.

More than 400 student athletes from at least 25 of Connecticut's top football programs participated, competing in the bench press, power clean, and squat. Battling back and forth throughout the day with South Windsor for the top spot in the competition, New Britain fell just short with only 145 points separating the two teams. They outperformed all five of the top seeds

in last year's Class LL Football Playoffs: Southington, Shelton, Newtown, Norwich Free Academy, and West Haven.

Joseph Pinchera, Principal of New Britain High School applauded the team for their determination.

"We are so proud of our boys. They have been working very hard in the offseason and now we can build off the momentum of this competition. NBHS Strength and Conditioning Coach Mark Blancato is extremely dedicated, detail-oriented, and passionate about his craft. The boys really respond to his intensity and drive."

There were four individual winners for the New Britain Hurricanes. Jayshawn Alexander placed third overall in the 160 and under weight class while Muhamed Codjoe placed second overall in the 181-200 weight class. In the 201-220 weight class, Johnny Velez placed third overall and Jaylen Rivera placed third in the power clean for the 160 and under weight class.

Blancato recognized the team for their sportsmanship, as well as their perseverance throughout the off-season in preparation for the competition.

"This year's team is tenacious. The team and individual wins at this year's competition will only add fuel to their burning desire to improve every day and they will carry this forward with them going into their 2017 football season. The team handled themselves with humility and class. We are very proud of them. It was a great day for New Britain."

## APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR ROBERT T. KENNEY SCHOLARSHIP AT AMERICAN SAVINGS FOUNDATION

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The Robert T. Kenney Scholarship Program at the American Savings Foundation is now accepting applications from high school seniors, current college students, and nontraditional adult students who will be enrolled in college for the 2017-2018 academic year. In 2017, the Foundation expects to award over \$750,000 to 400 new and renewing scholars who will be studying at a wide range of four year colleges and universities, two year colleges, and accredited technical/vocational programs. The application deadline is March 31, 2017 and you can apply online at [www.asfdn.org](http://www.asfdn.org). For more information, please visit that website or call 860-827-2556.

## CONTACT OUR STUDENT AMBASSADORS!

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Our Student Ambassadors help play a big part in bringing the CSDNB message throughout all of our schools. If you want to reach out to them with any questions, comments or concerns, you can send an email to [studentambassadors@csdnb.org](mailto:studentambassadors@csdnb.org).

The e-mail account is monitored by Leona Clerkin, our District Coordinator of Fine Arts, but all e-mails are given to our Student Ambassadors to review.

## DR. SHUANA K. TUCKER, CHIEF TALENT OFFICER, HONORED AT THE 100 WOMEN OF COLOR GALA & AWARDS

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The Consolidated School District of New Britain's Chief Talent Officer Dr. Shuana K. Tucker was honored at the 100 Women of Color Gala & Awards on March 24 at The Bushnell in Hartford.

The 100 Women of Color Gala & Awards celebrates the power of family, friends, and the community in honoring the past, present, and the future. Sponsored by June Archer and Eleven28, the gala recognized the contributions of women in business, education, entrepreneurship, entertainment, government, and service who have impacted the local communities in Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Tucker is the Consolidated School District of New Britain's first talent officer and has been with the district since August 2016. She has worked to increase minorities teaching in New Britain by preparing middle and high school students for careers in education. One of the ways Tucker has accomplished this has been fostering a close relationship between the school district and local universities, such as Central Connecticut State University.

Tucker said that she was honored to be recognized at this year's event.

"I am humbled by this award. I feel blessed by the opportunities afforded to me in my life. My philosophy is and has always been to assist others so that they can succeed and be excellent in all they do. This applies not only to education and students and colleagues, but also civically. My family is rooted in the belief of 'lift as we climb' and 'to those much is given, much is required.' My husband and I embrace this and are engaged in our community as we instill this in our son and local youth."

Tucker previously worked as Talent and Professional Development Director at Waterbury Public Schools and as Director of Adult and Continuing Education at Danbury Public Schools. A former UCONN faculty member and Director of UCONN's Administrator Preparation Program, she earned her Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Nancy Sarra, Superintendent of the Consolidated School District of New Britain, said that the district is proud of Tucker's contributions to New Britain and the community.

"We are honored to have such an inspiring and passionate educator among us here in New Britain. As a district, we congratulate Dr. Tucker on this incredible accomplishment."

## CSDNB AND ANA GRACE PROJECT FEATURED ON FOX5 IN NYC

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Back in February, we received a call from the Associated Press saying they wanted to write a story on the impact that Love Wins and The Ana Grace Project has had on the Consolidated School District of New Britain. Seeing an opportunity to have the good work that is being done in our schools spread to a national audience, we quickly jumped on the opportunity.

A few weeks after the story ran in papers in all 50 states, we received a call from FOX 5 / Fox5NY.com saying they also wanted to do a story. Although they are based in New York City, we saw a great opportunity to once again have our good work spread to the largest market in the United States.

Through many weeks of coordination and planning, we welcomed a news crew to Chamberlain Elementary School on March 23 and on March 24, Nelba Marquez-Greene and Chamberlain teacher Craig Muzzy took a trip to New York City for a live in-studio interview.

As with the Associated Press article, this piece focuses on the Love Wins Program via The Ana Grace Project and how it is truly helping our children. Currently, this program is in four of our elementary schools (Chamberlain, DiLoreto, Northend and Smith) but we are working with Nelba to expand this throughout the rest of our elementary schools. To view the report and interview from Fox 5, please visit [www.csdnb.org](http://www.csdnb.org)!

# CHILDHOOD CONVERSATIONS CONFERENCE COMMITTEE TO HONOR CSDNB WITH COMMUNITY VISION AWARD

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The Childhood Conversations Conference Committee will be awarding the Consolidated School District of New Britain with one of two Community Vision Awards at its annual conference on April 1.

Besides CSDNB, the Coalition for New Britain's Youth will also be honored with the award. The award recognizes individuals or communities who have made great efforts to support children and families.

"While the conference does not typically award cities, the work of New Britain is a beacon of hope for other communities looking to make gains through the power of school and community engagement," said Ken Anthony, Director of Professional Development & Research at the Connecticut After School Network, one of 17 organizations which make up the conference committee. "This has been reflected through the National Summer Learning Association and All-American Cities Award in 2016, as well as the tireless efforts in addressing chronic absenteeism as part of the Campaign for Grade Level Reading."



Anthony will speaking at the conference on "The Potential and Pitfalls of Partnerships."

The keynote speaker will be Alice Farrell, president and CEO of Olive Branch Clinical and Consulting Services LLC. She is a licensed clinical social worker who also holds a Juris Doctorate and a Masters in social work from the University of Connecticut School of Law and Social Work. Having over two decades' experience as a provider and administrator of children's and family behavioral health programs, Farrell has testified at the Connecticut Legislature and served on numerous state advisory boards. She is the mother of eight children and grandmother of four.

Farrell will speak on "Every Child Needs a Champion: A Call to Action." Following her remarks, attendees will be able to choose three of over 18 workshops, on subjects such as "Talking With Your Kids: Nurturing Conversations, Confrontations and Connections", "Cyberbullying and Sexting: Perspectives and Awareness for Tweens, Teens, and Their Families from Law Enforcement", "Childhood Stress: Helping Adults to Understand", "Social Media Trends & Tips to Help Parents Regain Control" and "Yoga for Kids and the Strategies That Work".

The conference will be held on Saturday, April 1 at the Hartford Marriott Farmington, 15 Farm Springs Road, Farmington, from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be served. For more information, please visit [www.childhoodconversations.com](http://www.childhoodconversations.com).

## CSDNB NOW ACCEPTING REGISTRATIONS FOR INCOMING KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS

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The Consolidated School District of New Britain is now accepting registrations for kindergarten students who will be five-years-old prior to or on January 1, 2018. To register, parents should go to Central Registration, located behind Slade Middle School at 183 Steele Street. Hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM. Proof of New Britain residency, birth certificate, Social Security card and completed health form are required.

Registration will remain open until 6:00 PM on the following dates: Thursday, May 11, Tuesday, May 16, Wednesday, May 24 and Thursday, June 1. Translators for Polish or Arabic are available by arrangement with the Central Registration Registrar. Registration packets are also available online at [www.csdnb.org](http://www.csdnb.org). For more information, please call Central Registration at 860-223-5501.

# MELISSA ZYSK MITCHELL, NBHS GRADUATE, IDENTIFIES WITH STRUGGLING YOUNG READERS

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When struggling young readers come to Melissa Zysk Mitchell for help, she knows exactly what they're going through.

"Through most of my schooling, I struggled in reading," Mitchell said. "When I first started teaching, I was interested in reading because of my early struggles in school. I found that I was naturally inclined to provide effective reading instruction to my students. I credited my natural inclination to reading instruction to my early experiences with teachers in New Britain."

Mitchell, who graduated New Britain High School in 1996, also attended Chamberlain and Lincoln Elementary Schools, DiLoreto Magnet School and Pulaski Middle School. She credits numerous teachers along her academic journey with her success, especially Chamberlain remedial reading teacher Patricia Spring and Pulaski math teacher Charlene Nichols.



"Mrs. Nichols chose me to attend a math field trip and it meant a lot to me because I wasn't often chosen for things like that in school. That had a last impact on me."

After graduation, Mitchell began her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education at Central Connecticut State University, completing it at the University of Central Florida, where she also earned a Master's degree in Reading Education. She is currently employed by the University of Central Florida in the College of Education as a Teaching and Research Assistant while pursuing a PhD in Reading Education.

"I co-teach one of the undergraduate reading education courses in the elementary education program and also supervise the pre-service teachers in the field," Mitchell said. "The most rewarding part of my job is working with pre-service teachers and supporting them as they make the transition into the teaching career. I am also researching effective reading interventions for struggling students in K-12 and have worked with school administrators to help strengthen reading instruction in several schools in Florida."

Prior to her current position, Mitchell taught elementary grades for 14 years, in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Florida. Although she, her husband and their three children reside in Florida, they return to New Britain for frequent visits with family and friends.

## About of Featured Graduate Stories

There are countless success stories of students who have graduated from the Consolidated School District of New Britain. While some move away and contribute their talents elsewhere, there are also many who stay right here in New Britain and give back to the community they grew up in. From time to time, we'll feature a graduate of the New Britain school system, whether it is one that is still here in New Britain or one that has moved away. If you have a suggestion for a featured graduate, please e-mail Matthew Cannata, Board and Public Relations Specialist, at [cannatam@csdnb.org](mailto:cannatam@csdnb.org).

## PRESCHOOL LEARNING NIGHT TO BE HELD ON MARCH 30

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We welcome you to join us for our Preschool Learning Night. Join us on March 30 at Roosevelt Early Learning Center (40 Goodwin Street). Dinner will be served a 5:30 PM followed by an interactive session of games that you can learn to do at home with your children to help them learn. If you have any questions leading up to the event, please contact Maegan Adams at 860-827-2242.

# PULASKI TO HOST COMMUNITY FORUM ON INTERNET SAFETY

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On March 30 at 6:30 PM, Pulaski Middle School will be holding a community forum regarding internet safety.

The forum will be hosted by Scott Driscoll of Internet Safety Concepts. Driscoll is a regular guest on WFSB News Channel 3 Better Connecticut.

Through this presentation, parents will be informed of new trends and techniques that are being used online by predators and by our children. They will also be given tips on what to do to prevent a dangerous situation from happening.

Parents will see how what their children do online now can have long term negative effects on their future. Parents will learn tools and strategies they can use to keep their families safe.

Although it is hosted at Pulaski, please note that this forum is open to the public and all are welcome to attend! We look forward to seeing you there!

## SCENES AROUND CSDNB

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### **Holmes Elementary School holds Family Game Night**

Holmes School recently held Family Game Night. It was a well-attended event and a night full of fun. Those who attended played various games, including everyone's favorite - Bingo!



### **CSDNB holds Annual Bowl-A-Thon**

On March 25, CSDNB held it's Annual Bowl-A-Thon at Lessard Lanes in Plainville. This was an event open to all school district employees to raise funds for the "Road to Recovery" Project to provide supplies and clothing to our homeless students and families.



### **Gaffney students take field trip to the State House**

Students at Gaffney Elementary School recently took a field trip to the State House to learn more about the history of the house and how government works.



### **New Britain High School recognizes those named Student of the Month**

New Britain High School recently held their monthly Breakfast with the Principal event where those who were named Student of the Month were recognized. Congratulations to all!



## DANNIEL RIVERA IN CONVERSATION AS ONE OF TOP UNDERCLASS ATHLETES AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Danniel Rivera, a sophomore at New Britain High School, plays on the Varsity Baseball team but played up as a freshman. After finding much success in his first year, he is now in the conversation as one of the top underclass athletes at the high school level.

Recently, Rawlings and Perfect Game named Rivera an honorable mention when they announced its Preseason All-American Team. Baseball athletes included in these teams are set to graduate in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The Rawlings-Perfect Game Preseason All American 1st, 2nd and 3rd team recognizes 300 players from the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico. Each team consists of 100 players who are currently juniors, sophomores, or freshmen in high school. There is also a high honorable mention and an honorable mention (which Rivera was named to) list to identify other potential top underclassmen.

“With more than 450,000 high school baseball players in the nation, the Rawlings-Perfect Game Preseason Underclass All-American players represent the very best in their class,” said Mike Thompson, executive vice president of marketing for St. Louis-based Rawlings. “Rawlings and Perfect Game are synonymous with the game of baseball, and preseason awards allow us to recognize and reward these elite athletes for their hard work and contribution to the game.”

“To receive the Rawlings-Perfect Game Preseason All-American or All-Region Award is a tremendous achievement for these high school student-athletes,” said Jerry Ford, president of Cedar Rapids, IA-based Perfect Game. “We are proud to recognize their talent as they prepare for their careers playing collegiate or professional baseball.”

## NBHS ATHLETICS

Below is a list of home and away games for New Britain High School sports. Unless otherwise noted, here are the locations for the games:

- Baseball** - Beehive Stadium
- Softball** - Martha Hart Park
- Golf** - Stanley Golf Course
- Track** - Willow Brook Park
- Tennis** - New Britain High School

**March 27 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Baseball vs. Windsor (Scrimmage)

**March 29 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Softball vs. Goodwin Tech (Scrimmage)

**March 29 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Baseball vs. Manchester (Scrimmage)

**April 1 - 10 AM**  
Varsity Softball vs. Rockville (Scrimmage)

**April 3 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Baseball vs. Bristol Central

**April 3 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Softball at Bristol Central

**April 4 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Track at Wethersfield

**April 5 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Baseball at Platt

**April 5 - 4:00 PM**  
Varsity Softball at Platt

**April 6 - 3 PM**  
Varsity Boys Golf at Bristol Central (Chippanee)

**April 6 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Girls Tennis at Rockville

**April 7 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Baseball vs. Goodwin Tech

**April 10 - 3:45 PM**  
Varsity Softball at Manchester



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