

Students in the News

Amherst Student Makes Dean's List

Paxton, MA - Anna Maria College announces that Dimitri Elias of Amherst made the Dean's List for the 2013 Fall Semester.

Area Residents Named to Dean's List at Quinnipiac University

HAMDEN, CT - Aidan Tatar of Amherst was named to the dean's list at Quinnipiac University for the Fall 2013 semester. To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible.

Area Students Make Dean's List at Assumption College

WORCESTER, MA - The following students have been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2013 semester at Assumption College. To make the Dean's List, Assumption students must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Heidi Springmann of Mont Vernon, class of 2014. Katherine Lynch of Amherst, class of 2016.

Bentley University Names Area Students to Honors Lists

Waltham, MA - Bentley University President Gloria Cordes Larson, along with Dean of Business Roy (Chip)

Wiggins and Dean of Arts and Sciences Daniel L. Everett, recently announced the names of students who were honored for their outstanding academic achievement in the fall 2013 semester.

The following students were recognized:

Nicholas Hession, a Junior from Amherst was named to the Dean's List. Anne Citarelli, a Junior from Amherst was named to the Dean's List. Chelsea Larivee, a Senior from Amherst was named to the President's List.

Amanda Wagner, a Senior from Amherst was named to the President's List.

Connor Holbrook, a Freshman from Amherst was named to the Dean's List.

To be named to the President's List, a full-time student must have a grade point average of 3.7 or higher with no course grade below 3.0 during the term.

To be named to the Dean's List, a full-time student must have a grade point average of 3.3 or higher with no course grade below 2.0 during the term.

Brandeis University Announces Dean's List

Brandeis University Dean of Arts and Sciences, Susan Birren named Ceara McNamara of Amherst to the Deans List in recognition of her fine academic record for the Fall term of 2013.

Ithaca College Students Named to Dean's List

ITHACA, NY - Ithaca College congratulates more than 1,400 students who made the Dean's list in the fall 2013 semester.

Kristin Leffler of Amherst was named to Dean's List for the fall 2013 semester.

Local Student Named to the University of Vermont Dean's List

BURLINGTON, VT- The following student has been named to the dean's list for the Fall 2013 semester at the University of Vermont.

Michael Kosofsky of Amherst, a Biological Science major in the College of Arts & Sciences. To be named to the dean's list, students must have a grade-point average of 3.0 or better and rank in the top 20 percent of their class in their respective college or school.

Local Student Named to the Dean's List at the University of New Haven

WEST HAVEN, CT - Samantha Jones of Amherst was named to the Dean's List at the University of New Haven for the fall 2013 semester. Full-time undergraduate students must have a 3.50 or better cumulative GPA for the semester to be eligible for the Dean's List.

Local Students Named Clarkson University Presidential Scholars

POTSDAM, NY - The following local student was named Presidential Scholars for the fall 2013 semester at Clarkson University: Jessica Ann Roberge of Mont Vernon, a freshman majoring in biomolecular

science. Presidential Scholars must achieve a minimum 3.80 grade-point average and carry at least 14 credit hours.

Local Students Achieve Dean's List Status for Fall 2013

NORTH ANDOVER, MA - Jacquelyn Jones of Amherst was named to the Merrimack College Dean's List for Fall 2013. To achieve Deans' List status, a student must earn a 3.25 gpa out of 4.0.

Local Residents Named to Stonehill College's Fall 2013 Dean's List

EASTON, MA - Stonehill College recently named the following local residents to its Dean's List for the Fall 2013 semester.

Mont Vernon resident Andrea L. Aiken, a member of the Class of 2016. Amherst resident Melanie A. Brayman, a member of the Class of 2014.

Mont Vernon resident Megan M. Brown, a member of the Class of 2016.

Amherst resident Kara J. Foley, a member of the Class of 2016.

Mont Vernon resident Tate M. Molaghan, a member of the Class of 2014.

Amherst resident Patrick W. O'Mara, a member of the Class of 2015. Amherst resident Alison F. Sumski, a member of the Class of 2016.

To qualify for the Dean's List at Stonehill, students must have a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better and must have completed successfully all courses for which they were registered.

Worcester Polytechnic Institute Announces Fall 2013 Deans List

WORCESTER, MA - The following local residents were among 1,303 students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute named to the university's Dean's List for academic excellence for the fall 2013 semester.

Nicholas Kepka Calveti of Amherst is a junior majoring in management engineering. Grant Raymond of Amherst is a senior majoring in mechanical engineering.

Kathleen McNary Makes the Dean's List at Georgia Southern University

STATESBORO, GA - Georgia Southern University recently recognized 2,646 students on the 2013 Fall Semester Dean's List. Kathleen McNary, a Fashion Merch & Apparel major from Amherst has earned a spot on the list for excellence in academics. To be eligible for the Dean's List, a student must have at least a 3.5 grade point average and carry a minimum of 12 hours for the semester.

University of Rhode Island names about 4,300 students to the Fall 2013 Dean's List

KINGSTON, RI - The University of Rhode Island is pleased to announce that about 4,300 undergraduates have qualified for the Fall 2013 Dean's List.

To be included on the Dean's List, students must have completed 12 or more credits during a semester for letter grades with at least a 3.30 quality point average. Part-time students qualify with the accumulation of 12 credits with a 3.30 quality point average.

The following students from your area were named to the Fall 2013 Dean's List:

Jason Bender of Amherst
David Campbell of Amherst
Ryleigh Mullens of Amherst
Dylan Adams of Amherst
Kelsea Bemis of Mont Vernon

Local Student Earns Honors at Skidmore College

SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY - The following local student earned term honors for the fall semester at Skidmore College:

Margeaux Cannon, a member of the class of 2014. She is the daughter of Andrew and Brenda Cannon of Amherst. Term honors are awarded for a quality point ratio of 3.650 from a possible 4.0, for students who have completed 14 credit hours.

Local Residents Named to Clemson University Dean's List

CLEMSON, SC - The following local residents have been named to the Dean's List at Clemson University for the fall 2013 semester:

Nelson Corchado of Amherst, whose major is financial management. Jacob Dworkin of Amherst, whose major is chemical engineering. To be named to the Dean's List, a student must achieve a grade-point average between 3.50 and 3.99 on a 4.0 scale.



Amherst Middle School's Theater Club Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary with a Rollicking Production of "My Son Pinocchio, Jr."

"There is this crazy, special energy when everyone is doing their thing on-stage and back stage, like a three-ring circus times ten," muses AMS Theater Club producer Denise Jacobs. "I love being in the middle of all of that, helping where I can and watching it all hum along."

10 years ago, if kids in Amherst were interested in being a part of a theatrical production, the closest opportunities at the time were in Manchester or Nashua. A devoted leadership team of concerned adults stepped in to form the Amherst Middle School Theater Club, where students in grades five through eight can experience the fun and creativity of live theater. Director/choreographer Jennifer Stover has been with the club from its founding. "We established a dedication to this club, which I believe was the result of a true passion for theater and the desire to foster its opportunities," says Stover.

The Club grew and expanded over the decade to its current level of around 120 kids each year. "Our policy is to find a place for everyone," says Jacobs. "If there isn't a spot in the cast, we make sure to involve them in a crew." A typical

cast size is 65, the maximum that can fit on stage, and there are several "crews" to choose from. Talented painter? Try set design. Love to do hair and makeup? There's a crew for that. Interested in technology? Lights and sound. There are many other ways to go as well, from photojournalism to publicity to the concession stand.

"This club promotes friendships between 10-year-olds and 14-year-olds and everyone in between," says Stover. Each crew enjoys a mix of ages, and is led by at least one or two parent volunteers, so there is the opportunity for parents to get involved as well. Walk down the hall at AMS during a Tuesday/Thursday rehearsal, and you'll experience a busy, lively hive of kids who all know their jobs and places. They work with paintbrushes, cameras, computers, costumes and more. They are dancing, singing and rehearsing. It is a well-oiled machine.

Stover, Jacobs and music director Kim Whitehead, comprising the directing team, bring a higher level of professionalism than many middle school productions enjoy. "Practice, practice, practice!" exclaims Jacobs. "No one on our production staff

ever says 'Oh well, it's good enough for a middle school show.' Everyone involved is always striving to make it the best it can be. And our students are amazingly good at what they do!"

This year's production, "My Son Pinocchio, Jr." proves to be no exception. Legendary composer Stephen Schwartz, who has written hit musicals such as Wicked and Godspell, adds a fresh lineup of new music and lyrics along with old favorites. Schwartz has said that the show "is entertaining while at the same time dealing with such important themes as individuality, self-esteem and the relation of parents and children."

Every production brings a new set of joys and challenges, and this year the directing team is paying extra attention to stage-craft. "How do you show the inside of a whale?" asks Jacobs. "As a period piece, we needed to dress about 55 actors as 19th century villagers—not to mention additional costumes for fairies, marionettes, animals, perfect children and delinquents. And then there is the small matter of a nose that grows and a puppet that turns into a boy. It is a staggering task."

With great attention to detail, Stover and Jacobs, with Whitehead on the piano directing the music, will find creative solutions and take "My Son Pinocchio, Jr." to unexpected places. "Something that is completely great this year is the amount of comedy in this show," says Stover. "And the complete faith I have in our actors to bring out all the little nuances that will entertain the students and the adults in the audience."

For the past 10 years, the AMS Theater Club has brought the community such great productions as "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "High School Musical" and "Dear Edwina." Stover has her eyes on the future. "My wish is that Theater Club will continue on! It is a unique program, offering a place for everyone and a chance for parents to continue to work alongside their children in roles both on crews and cast."

Tickets on sale at the AMS Main Office, Black Forest Café and The Homestead. The production runs at Amherst Middle School March 13th, 14th and 15th at 7:00 p.m., with a 2:00 p.m. matinee on Saturday, March 15th. Still only \$5.00!

SHS Graduates Make Their Mark on Science and Healthcare Fields

By JEANNE STURGES

Most students who graduate from Souhegan High School continue on to productive lives and careers, applying their talents to a wide array of pursuits. Three Souhegan graduates, Brian Donovan, Kathryn Levasseur, and Erin Kelly, have, in fact, recently been recognized for their highly specialized work in the fields of healthcare-related social work and biology.

Brian Donovan, class of 1997, is currently a PhD candidate in biology education at Stanford's Graduate School of Education. He teamed up with fellow researchers to study the impact of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education on the economy. The report, "Revising the Economic Imperative for US STEM Education" was recently published, along with for-

mer Souhegan teacher, Dan Bisaccio as a co-author. The study challenges the dominant paradigm that says (STEM) education is a critical

"factor in the production of economic prosperity." They argue that "estimates of the future economic value of STEM education ... ignore the impacts of economic growth on biodiversity and ecosystem functionality, which, in the long-term, limit the potential for future economic growth."

Dan Bisaccio, who is currently the director of graduate studies, teacher education, and director of science education at Brown University, has stayed in touch with Brian through their shared interests in biology. Dan commented in a recent email to Souhegan staff that [Brian's work] "is yet another tribute to SHS and the impact it has on 'kids.'" Dan also noted Brian's reference to the

role "hands-on" learning played in his future path.

Another alum, Erin Kelly (class of 1999), was recently featured in an article published by the University of Southern California highlighting the "prestigious award" Erin won for a two-year \$100,000 grant. As a post-doctoral fellow, Erin's award will "support her research efforts in advancing treatment interventions for mental illness." The funds will enable Erin to conduct research on electronic personal health records. The article explains the imperative for Erin's work, stating that the personal health records will allow the seriously mental ill, who are "highly vulnerable and often disempowered... to keep track of appointments, medications, diet, and exercise and complete provider or health navigator forms. The hope is that these records will provide the

patient with a clearer understanding of their health and a paper trail." Erin's work could prove groundbreaking in that the goal is to empower seriously mentally ill patients to "self-manage their treatment [to] promote better mental health."

Kathryn Levasseur, Souhegan Class of 2000, has also recently distinguished herself. Graduating from Harvard Medical School in January, Kathryn received her PhD in molecular biology. She will now continue her work as a postdoctoral research fellow at Boston Children's Hospital.

Brian, Erin and Kathryn's work in their respective fields is indeed impressive. These success stories serve to remind us of the importance of strong communities and strong schools as a foundation to achieving greatness in our life's endeavors.

Souhegan Students Catch Rare Glimpse into Life of Foreign Correspondent in Jerusalem

Souhegan Alum, Bureau Chief, Skypes With Students Studying Middle East

By JEANNE STURGES

Christa Case Bryant, Class of 1996, recently provided World Studies students a rare glimpse into her life and experience as a foreign correspondent in Jerusalem. Currently working as the Bureau Chief for The Christian Science Monitor, Bryant Skyped (an online video conference app) for nearly an hour with each of Marcey Rawitscher's two classes. Witty, sensitive, and deeply perceptive, Bryant shared stories of what the conflict looks like to ordinary Israelis and Palestinians as well as insights into the political dynamics at play in the region.

As part of a peace conference project in which students seek to settle the dispute between Palestinians and Israelis, Souhegan students came to the Skype session prepared with questions. One student, Austin Quinlan, asked about elections. "There hasn't been an election since 2006; when do you think there will be another one?" It was clear, though, that Bryant's comments provoked a whole other set of curiosities. Students were interested to know how Israelis and Palestinians perceive Western women, and whether there is a discernible difference. Others asked about the fluidity of the border between the ter-

ritories and the rest of Israel, if she has travelled to other areas in the region, and if there are places where she feels less safe.

Travelling throughout the Middle East, Bryant spoke to the shifting nature of stability there. While researching a story on the protests in Egypt, she explained that although Egypt has historically been a U.S. ally, its volatility since the Arab Spring has made travel there as an American more difficult. Though some students' questions naturally focused on the violence resulting from the tensions, Bryant made the point that she is "more interested in the ideas behind the protests and what's motivating people to act and shape the world they live in than in war zones."

In fact, one of the stories that most fascinated Bryant as a reporter was learning that Hamas, Palestine's majority political party, decided they should teach Hebrew in schools. Bryant described the complicated process of crossing the highly secured Gaza border in order for her to talk to a teacher about why Hamas is teaching Hebrew to young Palestinians. "They still watch the Israeli analysis [of the news], and some have personal connections with Israelis," Bryant explained. Indeed, the responses she

gained in her interviews illustrate the multifaceted dynamic between the two sides.

Perhaps most compelling was Bryant's adeptness at describing the intensely complex issues in a way that captivated Rawitscher's students. Bryant offered concrete examples of why reconciling the two sides was so difficult, and how economics, politics, religion, history, even rhetoric, all add to the complexity. It was clear from the discussion that while here in the U.S. we hear "the two-state solution" as an either/or proposition, in Israel the possibilities for a solution are much more nuanced. "There are real challenges" to any solution, Bryant points out; even infrastructure is a topic for negotiation.

At the end of the day, as a reporter, Bryant's objectivity prevailed. She stressed to students the importance of being informed, saying, "It is not a black and white issue. You have to be able to see it from a couple of different sides."

Rawitscher was ecstatic at the experience Bryant provided her students, saying, "Christa's insight into how things work in this really complicated situation was priceless for my students as they negotiate their way through trying to figure out the conflict." In a subse-

quent email Bryant paid homage to Souhegan's commitment to inquiry-based learning as having played a part in her development as a journalist. "One of the most important parts of my job is formulating the right questions that will draw out the key issues and insights that will best inform my readers. So I often think back to Souhegan's focus on equipping students to ask, not just answer, essential questions."

As a teacher, it is a rare occasion to collaborate with a former student. "For me, not only did I get to learn a lot, but I got to see a former student who has grown into a confident, extraordinarily successful young woman," Rawitscher says. "Christa's brilliance was obvious in high school, but it's a real honor to get to see how she grew up."

There clearly is mutual respect and admiration between student and teacher. Bryant concluded her email by saying, "It was really special for me to give back to a teacher who did so much for me. [The] support for individual pursuits definitely helped me develop unique strengths that undergird my work today."

Jeanne Sturges is the Writing Center Coordinator/Literacy Coach, Souhegan High School

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