

Panther News

March/April 2019

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Mental Health Awareness Day

On March 11th, the Junior/Senior High School produced an enlightening Mental Health Awareness Day dedicated to the well-being of our students, staff, and the community at large. Lena Padovano and Cindy Mahoney, along with the help of the PTA, organized a schedule of events to maximize learning and wellness. The day kicked off with the keynote speaker, Jeff Yalden, a renowned author and teen mental health motivational speaker with two decades of work experience with school communities. He presented three different assemblies; one to our students, a second as professional development to the staff, and an evening event that was open to Midland Park and neighboring residents.

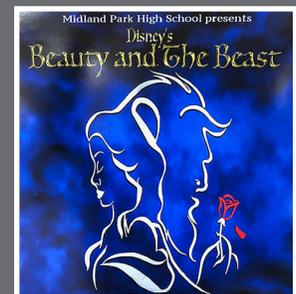


Jeff Yalden is able to touch hearts and change lives. He possesses a strong background in clinical psychology and education, specializing in teen mental health, motivation, teen suicide and suicide prevention. We chose Jeff Yalden as a presenter because he has a way with young people; he related to our students with many testimonies that support that. For many students, Jeff's presentations elicited an "Ah-Ha! Defining Moment" - opening them up to a lasting sense of purpose while building on a foundation of authenticity, self-acceptance, and healthy decision-making. Our students valued how Jeff was transparent and genuine in his talks. They appreciated how he shared his personal life, his struggles, and his victories. Jeff was "real," and the students saw him as a trusted and significant adult who had a message they understood and related to.

After Jeff Yalden's presentation, the school broke into grade level assemblies. Some of the learning and physical experiences our students experienced were Mindfulness, Stress Busting, Yoga, Tapping, Meditation, and Tai Chi. In a world with stressors and occasional negativity, the students had a day of learning geared to bettering their lives in a positive way. I was pleased to see how engaged our students were while circulating the building, and feel confident that they were provided positive strategies and energy to sustain healthy choices for the mind and body.

Computer Science Grant

At the end of January, Governor Murphy announced that Midland Park was one of 29 schools awarded grant funding from the State of New Jersey to advance their Computer Science offerings with AP Computer Science A. Midland Park is set to receive about \$43,000. With this money Midland Park High School will be able to expand its computer science classes, offering students a full four years of CS. We will also be able to get new Desktops and Surface Pros for the computer lab. In today's job market, Computer Science jobs are multiplying at a fast rate. Adding APCSA to our course offerings will help better prepare our students for college and for the job market in this fast growing and changing field.



March

- March 19: Motivational Speaker Sarah Panzau 12th grade
- March 20: Winter Sports Awards 7:30 pm
- March 29-31: *Beauty and the Beast*, musical

April

- April 5: 3rd Marking Period ends
- April 8: 4th Marking Period begins
- April 10: High School Choir Spring Concert 8:00 pm
- April 11: World Language Honor Society Induction 2:00 pm
- April 11: National Honor Society Induction 7:00 pm
- April 15-19: Spring Recess

Bowling

Of the four group runners-up, who will join the winners at Bowlero North Brunswick for Wednesday's state team tournament, three are repeat qualifiers.

West Milford advanced for the fifth time in seven years. Group 4 Wayne Hills (2,971) earned a third straight trip, and Group 2 Mahwah (2,945) makes its third appearance in four years.

Then there was Group 1 Midland Park (2,639). From 2011-12 until last season, the Panthers had one 200-plus game in league and tournament play combined. Saturday, Tim Meima had two (216, 211), while Connor Mazzrillo (201) and Adrianna Kearney (200) added one apiece.

"We got sixth in our league this season," first-year coach Jason Whelpley said. "So [Saturday] was an anomaly that we're really happy with."

Whelpley took over for longtime coach Jay Esposito, who passed away in April 2018. "He was looking down, he saw it," Mazzrillo said.



Meet Ms. Fister

Thirty two years ago Ms. Fister was hired by Mr. DePreker, as a Health and Physical Education teacher and coach. In her first year of teaching, Mr. DePreker clearly explained her role at Midland Park High School "your main priority here is to teach, be involved in the community and make a difference." She has strived to

live by that mantra and make a difference to as many students and families as possible.

In her 32 years at MPHS, she has taught grades 7-12 health and physical education. I have enjoyed rewriting the curriculum to introduce students to fun ways to develop their personal wellness and adapt to the current health trends. Her goal as a teacher, coach and advisor has been to help develop our students into caring, independent thinking, community minded individuals.

Ms. Fister coached softball, volleyball and basketball, winning 8 championships, coach of the year for softball, and had the opportunity to coach at the summer Olympic festival. However, her favorite moment related to coaching was teaching her players to give back to their community. When our athletic trainer was deployed to the Gulf War, the softball team volunteered to cook, clean and provide child care for his family when he was away.

Throughout her career at MPHS, Ms. Fister started and served as an advisor to numerous clubs such as the Outdoor Club, Varsity Club, Spectrum and senior class. She also collaborated with students to fundraise, design and construct the memorial garden in the front of the school. Her most enjoyable experiences at MPHS has been giving back to our town by uniting the students, staff and community members to organize and participate in our charity fundraisers, especially the MP volleyball tournaments.

Chemistry Team

MPHS is proud to announce that this year's Chemistry 1 Team tied for first place in the February Science League meet. There are 2 meets left this year so be sure to cheer on all of the Chemistry 1 Team members - Sarah Reicher, Jocelyn Triolo, Mathew Umamo, Serena Gomez, Grace Adamo, and Eliana Kim.



Armenian Genocide Presenter

On Friday, March 8, Kevork Khrimian, a descendant of Armenian genocide survivors, presented to the Holocaust Studies and Human Behavior class. Mr. Khrimian began by providing background of the region so that the students had a context for the events of the genocide. He then explained what happened to the people of Armenia in general, and then focused on his grandparents' experiences. The students were attentive throughout the explanation, and in the end, had thought-provoking questions about this tragedy. According to senior Jackie Lelino, "I think that it is important that we learn about the different genocides that have occurred. I had no idea the hell that the Armenians were put through, nor the persecution that they faced. They were rounded up and made to walk until death." While the major case study for the upper-level elective in the Jewish Holocaust of World War II, the students study other examples of genocide in the course. Mr. Khrimian's presentation helped the students to see the parallels of such tragic events throughout history.

Beauty and the Beast

Midland Park High School proudly presents their 2019 musical production of *Beauty and the Beast* on the following dates:

Friday March 29 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday March 30 at 1:00 p.m.

Saturday March 30 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday March 31 at 12:30 p.m.

The performances will take place in Memorial Hall at Midland Park High School. Tickets are \$16 each and seats are reserved. Tickets sell out quickly. Purchase your tickets early, cash or checks made out to MPHS Internal Fund.