



# WILLIAMSPORT

## AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER | FALL 2019



**INSIDE >>**

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI | 'BE PRESENT' CAMPAIGN | FEASIBILITY STUDY COMMISSIONED**



## 3 SELECTED TO RECEIVE 2019 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS DURING FALL EVENT

Three WAHS alumni have been selected to receive the 2019 Distinguished Alumni awards. Each has been invited to accept their award at the foundation's second Donor & Alumni Appreciation Event on Sept. 26, where they will be inducted into the Distinguished Alumni Wall of Fame.

**Dr. Callah Antonetti '05** will receive the Distinguished Young Alumnus Award.

Antonetti earned her bachelor's degree in biological sciences from the University of Pittsburgh Honors College and her medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

After completing her pediatrics residency training at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, she obtained a position in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Florida. There, she serves as an assistant clinical professor and is the Assistant Director of the Pediatric Residency Program and Pediatric Hospitalist at the Studer Family Children's Hospital at Sacred Heart.

**Susan Durrwachter '81** will receive the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award.

After seven years at NBC, Durrwachter became an editorial producer for CNN in 2009, where she continues work today, booking and producing guest segments for many shows, including: "CNN Tonight with Don Lemon," "Inside Politics with John King," "CNN New Day," "Campbell Brown" (now canceled), and "Piers Morgan Tonight" (now canceled). She continues to produce CNN's annual New Year's Eve special in Times Square with Anderson Cooper and Andy Cohen.

Her work has earned her a number of awards, including a 2017 CNN Emmy nomination for Outstanding Live Interview with Anderson Cooper, two CNN Peabody Awards for the Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 crash in 2014 and the Gulf Oil Spill in 2010. She's also earned two NBC Universal Ovation Awards, one for Outstanding Teamwork in 2005 and another for the NBC



ANTONETTI



DURRWACHTER



TZOMES

Torino Olympics in 2006.

**Capt. Chancellor Alfonso "Pete" Tzomes '62** will posthumously receive the Distinguished Alumni Service Award.

Following his time at WHS, Tzomes studied at the State University of New York, Oneonta, before entering the U.S. Naval Academy, from which he graduated in 1967 with the rank of ensign.

Advancing through the ranks over the years, Tzomes became the first African American to command a nuclear submarine for the U.S. Navy, the USS Houston, in 1983. The milestone yielded national attention, including a feature story in the December 1985 issue of "Ebony" magazine.

He moved on to hold several high-level assignments. He served as Director of Equal Opportunity Division for the Bureau of Naval Personnel. He also was a member of the Pacific Fleet Nuclear Propulsion Examining Board; Force Operations Officer on the staff of Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet; and Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations/Inspector General at Naval Base in Charleston, S.C., where he retired in 1994.

Tzomes' nearly 30-year military career earned him several awards: Legion of Merit (with two gold stars); the Meritorious Service Award (with three gold stars); the Navy Commendation Medal (with two gold stars); unit and campaign ribbons; and, in 1991, the Black Engineer of the Year Award for his effort to lead the Navy's equal opportunity programs into the 21st century.

He passed away on June 13, 2019.

**To read fuller profiles on this year's recipients, visit the foundation's website at [www.wasdeducationfoundation.org](http://www.wasdeducationfoundation.org).**

## AUTHOR, INNOVATOR TO SPEAK AT DONOR, ALUMNI CELEBRATION

Malawian native William Kamkwamba will serve as this year's keynote speaker at the education foundation's second Donor & Alumni Appreciation event, sponsored by Larson Design Group.

Kamkwamba is the author of the 2009 *New York Times* best-selling memoir *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, which served as the basis for the 2019 critically acclaimed Netflix film.

After experiencing severe drought and hunger that decimated much of his country, a 14-year-old Kamkwamba dreamed of a way to prevent future famine by bringing electricity and running water to his farming village of Wimbe.

Armed with only deep curiosity and determination, he began borrowing books from a small lending library at his former primary school. It was from there he borrowed an eighth-grade American textbook, "Using Energy."

Voraciously reading the contents of the textbook to understand the science of electricity and the anatomy of windmills, he worked to build his own, using scrap metal, spare radio and tractor parts, and bicycles halves. Ultimately, he engineered a contraption that towered over his village and spun into realization the miracle he envisioned.

In addition to his keynote, Kamkwamba will work with middle school students, a visit funded by the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania through Educational Improvement Tax Credit donations.





NEWSLETTER • FALL 2019

**Board of Education**

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**BOARD MEETINGS**

- Sept. 17
- Oct. 1
- Oct. 15
- Nov. 5
- Nov. 19
- Dec. 3

All meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are held in the District Service Center Board Room.

The Williamsport Area School District newsletter is published twice a year for alumni, families, friends and community. Portions of the newsletter may be reprinted without permission as long as it is credited.

The Williamsport Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and handicap, in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX Ed. Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped individuals contact: Anne M. Logue, Director of Human Resources Williamsport Area School District 2780 W. Fourth Street Williamsport, PA 17701, phone (570) 327-5500, ext. 40210.



wasd.org

Thanks to Albright Studio Photography for providing selected photos for this edition!



COURTESY OF THE WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Community,

Welcome to the start of the 2019-2020 school year!

It's hard to believe that our students and faculty have already returned to the classroom. The start of a new year — like any year, quite frankly — begins after an enormous amount of work and preparation that takes place over the summer. I commend our entire team, from administrators to our maintenance crew, for their work and diligence to ensure that we were ready to go on Aug. 26.

This summer, in particular, we worked against an aggressive timeline to complete an extensive construction project to Millionaire Lane (see below), which has significantly improved access to and from the high school.

That project notwithstanding, maintaining the integrity of our infrastructure is vital to the health and future of our district. Last spring, our board of directors approved the

commission of a district-wide comprehensive feasibility study to get a clear appraisal of our facilities. Once complete, we can take the information presented to develop a prioritized plan to address our needs (see page 4).

Looking back, I'm proud of the work accomplished over the summer to get us to a new year. We're also proud to have capped those productive months by once again serving as host to the DCA World Championships at STA Stadium over Labor Day weekend.

To that end, I hope you enjoy a review of our news and achievements outlined in this newsletter.

I'm looking forward to another year of new growth and new levels of success.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Timothy S. Bowers**  
Superintendent



**NEW AND IMPROVED** ▲ Those traveling to and from WAHS will now have a smoother ride on Millionaire Lane, the one-mile stretch of road that winds from West Fourth Street to Fox Hollow Road. Work this summer included a complete resurfacing of the road, new curbing and drainage, along with the installation of new lighting and sidewalks for pedestrian traffic. (Note: Pictures shown here represent work completed from mid to late August.)



# around wasd



## 35 SCHOOL-TO-WORK STUDENTS

were honored during its annual Community Partners Appreciation Breakfast in May. In partnership with local employers, the program places students in job positions around the community. Seventeen of the program participants this year were seniors, each of whom received a certificate honoring their accomplishments.



## 75 STUDENTS WERE INDUCTED

**INTO** the National Junior and National Honor societies between the Williamsport Area Middle School and Williamsport Area High School.

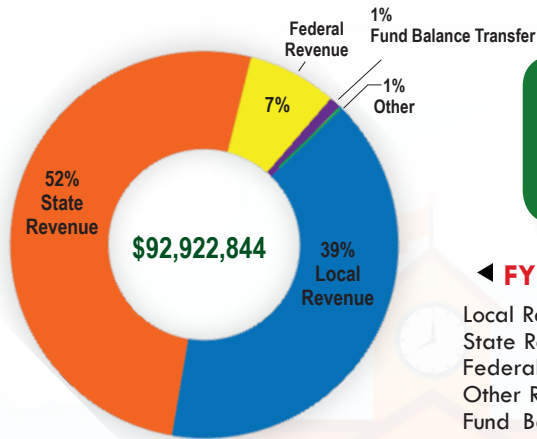


## THE WAHS MOCK CRASH

returned in a brand-new format, providing a lesson to students on the dangers of impaired driving and substance abuse.



## BY THE NUMBERS > 2019-2020 BUDGET



A .39-mill increase, or 2.4% tax increase, was approved for the 2019-20 fiscal year. For a property assessed at \$100,000, the increase will be \$39.

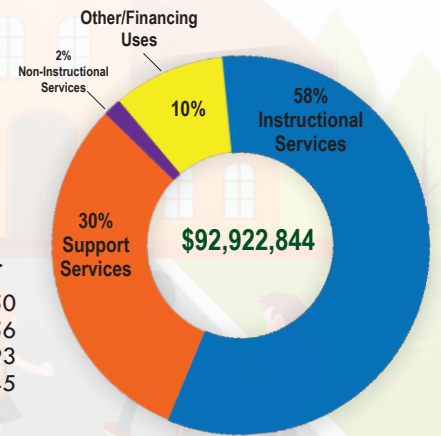
### FY20 Estimated Revenue

|                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Local Revenue            | \$36,861,099 |
| State Revenue            | 48,124,824   |
| Federal Revenue          | 6,965,272    |
| Other Revenue            | 300,000      |
| Fund Balance Transfer(s) | 671,649      |

With a projected enrollment of 4,826, the cost per student for FY20 is \$19,255.

### FY20 Estimated Expenses

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Instructional     | \$54,049,850 |
| Support Services  | 28,205,056   |
| Non-Instructional | 1,488,793    |
| Other/Financing   | 9,179,145    |



## FEASIBILITY STUDY COMMISSIONED TO DETERMINE FUTURE OPTIONS FOR WASD

Last spring, the WASD Board of Directors authorized the commission of a district-wide feasibility study to develop a long-range comprehensive facilities improvement plan and to determine current facility project needs.

In April, the district issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to collect a roster of prospective architectural and engineering firms that could conduct the study.

The study will provide an appraisal as to each facility's ability to meet current and planned educational program needs.

In May, the board approved a shortlist of firms from which to invite Request for Proposals (RFP): Highland Associates; Crabtree, Rohrbraugh & Associates; El Associates; and Marotta/Main Architects.

At time of this newsletter production, the district plans to approve one of the firms during a board meeting in September.

Not since the 2007-2008 academic year has the district undergone a

comprehensive feasibility study, which, at the time, served as a launching pad for the 2013 district-wide grade reconfiguration and the construction and renovation projects at WAHS and what is now WAMS.

"Our goal is to get a clear and defined picture on the state of our facilities so that we can develop a prioritized course of action," said Superintendent Dr. Timothy S. Bowers. "The health of the district not only depends upon the strength and relevancy of our programs but also on the state and conditions of our buildings. We believe strongly in protecting our assets. This feasibility study will help us to develop a plan that keeps us on pace and as cost-effective as possible in our operations."





## 148th COMMENCEMENT: **CLASS OF 2019**

**Congratulations to the Class of 2019—you made it!** Best wishes to our recent grads as they move into their future this year. We're proud of all you've done and can't wait to see what you'll do. Best of luck, and remember, *once a Millionaire, always a Millionaire.*

**311**

students were awarded their high school diploma

**\$54,679**

was awarded in scholarships and awards by the WASD Education Foundation



"The accomplishment that graduation signifies is undeniable. On this very special day, every person's mind is on the future. I think I speak for most of us, that, though the future is uncertain, it is a hopeful place where any dream can be obtained."

**KAYLEIGH EARLY**

*Valedictorian, Class of 2019*



WATCH VIDEO







**WORLD HISTORY** — The Williamsport Area Middle School OM team secured a historic third-place win at the 2019 World Finals in May at Michigan State University. A team from Cochran also advanced to the international tournament, earning a 12th-place win.



**MORE THAN 25 AWARDS WERE EARNED** by the 46 WAHS students who attended the 2019 Model UN event at Lycoming College in April. Model UN is an authentic simulation of the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, or other multilateral body.

**A TEAM OF SEVEN WAHS BIOTECHNOLOGY STUDENTS TOOK FIRST PLACE** in the regional level of the 2019 Governor's STEM Competition for its Cup of Grow Project, a device that would be used to repurpose organic industry waste into soil amendment. Having snagged the first-place regional title, the WAHS team competed (but didn't place) at the state level. The competition's theme this year was "Improving Pennsylvania Through STEM."



## 'Be Present': WASD Launches Campaign to Promote Student Attendance

WASD launched its new "Be Present" campaign, a school district-community call-to-action to promote the importance of being in school every day while also raising awareness against chronic absenteeism.

Last fall, in the wake of an amendment to the Pennsylvania School Code on student attendance, the district joined up with the national nonprofit Attendance Works to motivate students and parents by championing the academic and social benefits of attending school more regularly.

This year, WASD is taking the local lead with its own campaign, designed according to the framework set forth by Attendance Works.

The effort, with a tagline of "attend today, achieve tomorrow," will more pervasively bring attention to the cause with a goal of mobilizing the community to promote the value of good attendance and reduce chronic absences.

Nationally, an estimated 5 million to 7.5 million students are at risk academically each year because they are chronically absent, defined as missing up to 10 percent or more of school days in excused and unexcused absences. During the 2018-2019 school year, about one in six WASD students missed nearly a month of school.

"Every day a student is absent from school is a lost opportunity for learning," said Dr. Richard Poole, WASD's director of student services. "Too many parents and students do not realize that just missing two days each month can be a problem, and that often leads to

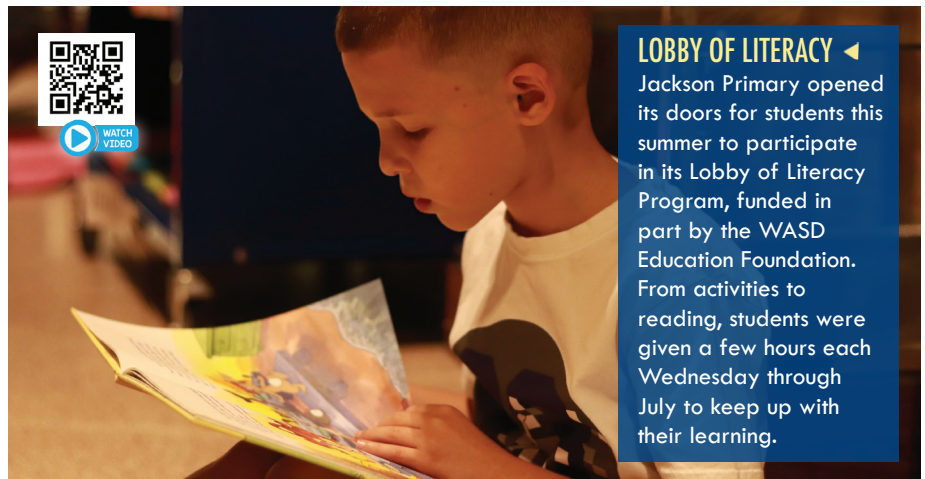


falling behind in the classroom. Even fewer families realize that absenteeism is a problem as early as kindergarten, and building the habit of attendance in the early grades can influence their children's chances of graduating from high school."

"Too many absences not only can affect achievement but also the social and emotional growth of the student," Poole said. "When families understand the negative effects of chronic absenteeism on realizing their hopes and dreams for their children, we can work on improving attendance in WASD."

Over the summer, the district worked to secure its initial batch of partners from area businesses, nonprofits and youth agencies.

**To learn more, or to find out how you or your business can get involved, visit "Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow" under "Parents & Students" at [www.wasd.org](http://www.wasd.org).**



### LOBBY OF LITERACY ◀

Jackson Primary opened its doors for students this summer to participate in its Lobby of Literacy Program, funded in part by the WASD Education Foundation. From activities to reading, students were given a few hours each Wednesday through July to keep up with their learning.



" I like being in school because I get to do math and be with my friends."



**KARTIER MICHAUX**  
1ST GRADE  
JACKSON PRIMARY SCHOOL



 **BE PRESENT**

**ATTEND TODAY, ACHIEVE TOMORROW**



**WILLIAMSPORT**  
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



# sport shorts



**WORLD CHAMP!** WAHS senior **Lydia Smith** claimed a world championship title in swimming at the 2019 Pontevedra ITU Aquathlon World Championships last spring, winning the competition over other female athletes in the 16-19 age group in Pontevedra, Spain.



**13 STUDENT-ATHLETES SIGNED** over the course of the 2018-2019 school year to play at the collegiate level starting this fall. Of those who signed, four will play at Division I schools. (Above are those who signed in the most recent round of commitments.)

**A \$9,600 GRANT FROM THE WASD EDUCATION FOUNDATION** will fund the start of a girls middle school volleyball program. The new sports program at WAMS follows last year's successful addition of a high school volleyball team.

**#MILLIONAIRESREAD** Students and teachers shared in their reading adventures this summer on social media. Using the hashtag #MillionairesRead, our school community stayed connected in literacy by demonstrating all the ways they were keeping up with their summer reading, like Curtin Intermediate's Mrs. Anderson, shown at right, while vacationing in Bermuda.

Andrew G. Curtin  
@AndrewGCurtin

Booked for Bermuda: The only thing that disappeared during Mrs. Anderson's recent trip to the islands was boredom. She clearly demonstrates how #Millionairesread when cruising to and exploring new worlds!



2:52 PM · Jul 31, 2019 · Twitter Web App

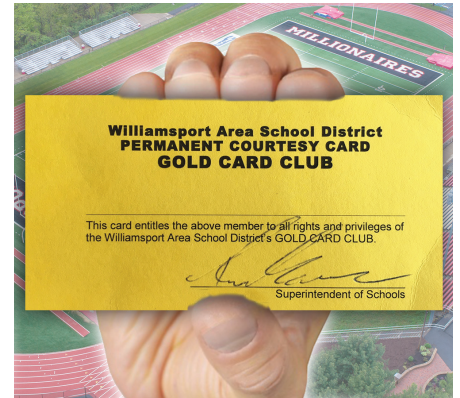
## WASD'S GOLD CARD CLUB OPEN TO SENIOR CITIZENS

Last fall, WASD gave its Gold Card Club a bit of a reboot.

The district is working to more strongly advertise and promote the club card that provides some benefit to WASD residents aged 62 years or older.

Cardholders are permanently granted free admission to district-sponsored sporting and musical events (excluding playoff games and PIAA functions).

Club cards can be obtained by bringing proof of age and residency to the District Service Center at 2780 West Fourth St. between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.



**KICKIN' IT WITH COPS** ▲ WAMS students took the championship title in the first Kickin' It With Cops kickball tournament at Little League's Volunteer Stadium last spring that put area students against district School Resource Officers, including WASD's own, Officer Hitesman and Officer Miller from the WBP.

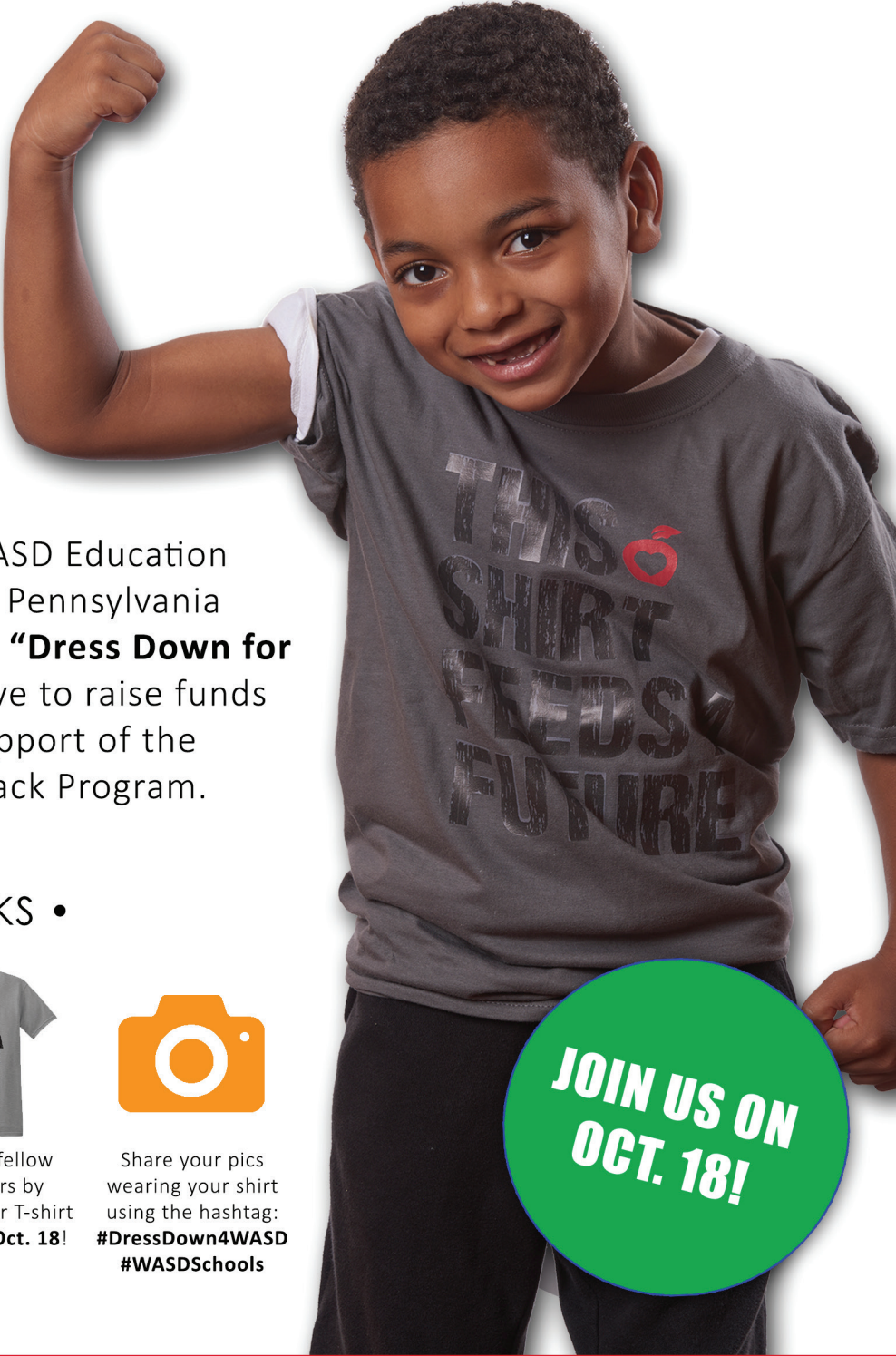




# DRESS DOWN FOR WILLIAMSPORT SCHOOLS

**2,600+** STUDENTS SERVED

**31,300+** BAGS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED



We invite you to join the WASD Education Foundation and the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank for the launch of the **“Dress Down for Williamsport Schools”** initiative to raise funds and build awareness in support of the district-wide Hybrid BackPack Program.

• HOW IT WORKS •



Select your T-shirt size and shipping information.



Make a contribution of at least \$30. **Every T-shirt sold helps feed 10 kids!**



Join your fellow supporters by wearing your T-shirt on **Friday, Oct. 18!**



Share your pics wearing your shirt using the hashtag: **#DressDown4WASD #WASDSchools**

**JOIN US ON  
OCT. 18!**

**VISIT [DRESSDOWN4WASD.COM](http://DRESSDOWN4WASD.COM) TO CONTRIBUTE TODAY!**



PHOTO USED COURTESY OF:  
*Eric Stashak*  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
VIDEO PRODUCTION



# #WASDGIVESBACK



In a show of community 530+ strong, WASD employees were out in the community on June 10 at more than 20 locations. The district team worked to beautify eight parks, lend a hand to nonprofit and church operations and projects, serve or prepare food for the hungry, and entertain children in costume for summer programming.



**IT DOESN'T HAVE TO END HERE!** Want more? Our online presence continues to grow! Keep up-to-date with announcements, photos, news and events happening around the district on a daily basis by following us on social media. Join the conversation and become a part of the WASD online community that has grown to more than 7,800 people!



## FROM THE VAULT ▼



We're taking a look back at life at WHS 76 years ago. With the United States at war, the "United States Office of Education was urged by the Federal government to formulate plans whereby high school students of the nation could immediately and most effectively contribute their services to the National War Effort," according to the 1943 La Memoire.

The response to this appeal launched the establishment of the High School Victory Corps, an organization represented by 6.5 million students and 28,000

secondary schools, including WHS.

About 400 WHS students were members of its chapter.

Projects carried out that year consisted of: a scrap metal and tin can drive (shown above), the making of Red Cross bandages, an explanation of food rationing, a collection of books for servicemen, and the organization of Volunteer Firemen for civilian defense.



## JOIN OUR MAILING LIST GET WASD NEWS IN YOUR E-MAIL

SIGN UP BY TEXT

Text **WASD**  
to **22828**

SIGN UP ONLINE

Go to **wasd.org** and  
sign up using our  
online form.



## FUNDING INNOVATION



### WASD EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDS \$10,381 TO SUPPORT NEW PIANO LAB

A new opportunity this year will work to broaden student reach in the high school's music program, thanks to grant funding provided in part by the WASD Education Foundation.

A grant from the education foundation's **Violet Compton Estate Fund** is supporting a new, innovative music elective that will allow students to make music outside of performing ensembles.

The new WAHS Piano Lab, as it's called, is open to all students at the high school in grades nine through 12 to learn the basics of piano keyboarding and composition.

"Using class piano techniques, students can be playing and creating music of their own over the course of the semester, year or over many years, as this elective can be taken multiple times," said Dr. Bernadette Boerckel, supervisor of secondary curriculum and K-12 unified arts.



The lab is also supported by another \$10,817 grant provided by the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania through EITC donations received from the First National Bank of PA, Highmark Insurance Group and Woodlands Bank. An in-kind contribution was also made by Robert M. Sides Family Music Centers.

Combined, the grants funded the installation of 16 pianos, a teacher piano, headphones, controllers, an expansion kit and training.

"While the initial implementation of this grant focuses on keyboarding," Boerckel said, "this lab will have tremendous potential to grow into a composition and recording studio."

Ultimately, younger students who will enroll in the new high school elective in future years may already have familiarity with digitally composing and mixing music. Last year, WASDEF funded two recording studios and a new digital music curriculum at the intermediate school level.



**GO 'OVER THE EDGE'** Over the Edge is set to return on Saturday, Oct. 26! The event is a fundraising partnership between WASDEF, River Valley Regional YMCA and YWCA Northcentral PA. OTE allows members of the community to voluntarily commit to raise at least \$1,000 for the nonprofit of their choice to rappel from the top of the William Hepburn High Rise apartment building. Last year, the organizations collectively raised more than \$50,000. **Feeling brave? To sign up visit:** [overtheedge.events/williamSPORT/](http://overtheedge.events/williamSPORT/)



**GOLF 'FORE' A CAUSE** ▲ WASDEF's 14th annual golf outing, held on June 24 at the Williamsport Country Club, **raised \$8,831 to benefit the Athletic Program Endowment Fund.** Established in 2017, the fund will provide a permanent funding source to help offset capital improvement and/or program needs of the WASD Athletic Department. As of July 31, the endowment fund had a market value of \$34,137.

**WILLIAMSPORT**  
**AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**EDUCATION FOUNDATION**  
creating *powerful* classrooms  
and inspiring *futures*

**Williamsport Area School District Education Foundation**  
2780 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701  
**Phone:** (570) 327-5500, ext. 40602  
**Visit us on the web at** [www.wasdeducationfoundation.org](http://www.wasdeducationfoundation.org)

The WASD Education Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, is the official gift-receiving entity for WASD.



# Become a substitute teacher!



The Williamsport Area School District is seeking substitute teachers in all areas of certification. The district also is seeking non-certified substitute teachers with a bachelor's degree.

**Find out more about the opportunity to work with our students:**

To apply or for more information, please email our Human Resources Department at [jobs@wasd.org](mailto:jobs@wasd.org), or visit [www.wasd.org](http://www.wasd.org).

Our daily rate for certified subs starts at **\$120 per day** and **\$90 per day** for non-certified subs!



[www.wasd.org](http://www.wasd.org)

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