

A blurred background image of a classroom. In the foreground, the back of a student's head with a ponytail is visible. In the middle ground, a boy is seen from the back, and a girl is holding up a piece of paper. In the background, a male teacher is interacting with students. The classroom has yellow walls and a whiteboard.

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Erie 1 BOCES
JOURNAL

erie boces

Winter | 2024

Classroom through career continuum

Creating a sustainable
teacher pipeline

Pg. 8

English language learners

Supporting linguistic diversity across
Western New York

Pg. 3

Veterans shine bright

Cosmetology students helping WNY

Pg. 14

Computer-based testing

School assessments go digital

Pg. 13

Inside:**Enhancing Instruction****3 English language learners**

Supporting linguistic diversity across Western New York

4-5 Together toward progress

Building safer school communities

Career & Tech**6-7 IRONMAN competitor**

Congratulations, exercise science instructor

Special Section**8-9 Classroom through career continuum**

Creating a sustainable teacher pipeline

E1B Scene**10-11 Photos from 16 around E1B****Exceptional Education****12 Maryvale Academy Veterans Day**

Students give thanks to local veterans

Technology**13 Computer-based testing**

School assessments go digital

Workforce Development**14 Veterans shine bright**

Cosmetology students help local veterans

15 Small fairs, big success

Removing networking barriers

**Message from the district superintendent****Growing stronger together**

As I reflect on the events of 2023, it is evident that we have achieved several significant milestones. From inaugurating a new career and technical education center at Calspan Business Park, to spearheading a county-wide mental health initiative and more, this past year was full of accomplishments.

This newest issue of the E1B Journal, which takes readers from a mini job fair in West Seneca to a triathlon through a lava field in Hawaii, recaps the exciting start of the school year. The issue also shows how Erie 1 BOCES is working with community partners to create safer schools and highlights a multilingual tradition in Western New York.

Be sure to check out the special section about the classrooms through careers continuum and work being done to support teachers at every stage of their work. With an estimated 180,000 new teaching positions becoming available in New York in the next decade, the efforts of Erie 1 BOCES and the Western New York Regional Information Center aim to create a homegrown pipeline of talented educators to support our schools into the future. Furthermore, we recently learned that Erie 1 BOCES, in collaboration with local school districts, has been awarded a \$3.12 million grant from the Empire State Teacher Residency program. Erie 1 BOCES will utilize the awarded funds to support 104 teacher residents. The partnership with 21 Western New York school districts across the region underscores the program's commitment to reaching a broad spectrum of students and communities.

This is an exciting time for Erie 1 BOCES, and we're eager to reach new heights together in 2024!

Sincerely,

Michael Capuana, Ed.D.

District Superintendent/Chief Executive Officer
Erie 1 BOCES

Supporting Erie Path

Erie 1 BOCES joined Erie County at Kenmore West High School to support the announcement of Erie Path, a free digital resource connecting parents with mental health and behavioral resources for school-age children. During the press conference, Jessica Karches, associate director for leadership development at Erie 1 BOCES, made remarks about the growing need for mental health resources in schools.



Photo courtesy of Ken-Ton Union Free School District

English language learners

Supporting linguistic diversity across Western New York

By Michael Duffy, Supervisor, RBERN West

Did you know that for the majority of the 19th century Buffalo was considered a bilingual city, where most residents spoke English and German? Western New York has a rich history of immigration that spans centuries. We recognize that we share our land with the Haudenosaunee and, beginning in the early 19th century, waves of immigrants have populated this land.

For many decades, families and individuals arrived from Northern and Western Europe and, later, Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean Basin. Since the passage of the federal Refugee Act of 1980 and as various economic and agricultural disasters, political conflicts and social injustices have emerged around the world, Western New York has become a safe haven for those seeking stability and opportunity. In more recent decades, we have welcomed immigrants from Southeast and Central Asia, Eastern and Central Africa, the Middle East and all parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

While the cultural and linguistic diversity of our Western New York community has evolved over time, one thing remains: immigration is what has made our community grow and what has made it strong. In fact, immigration has helped slow and, in some zip codes, reverse a decades-long trend of population decline, revitalizing many communities. As of the 2023-2024 school year, students in Western New York come from over 95 language backgrounds and many different



Agneriliz Pagan Mendez, Dunkirk High School, presents to a panel for the NYS Seal of Bilingualism.

ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The 19 component districts of Erie 1 BOCES serve a combined 7,800 English language learners (ELLs), which makes up roughly 5% of the total student population. Our newest Americans come via many immigration pathways, whether they are on visa, hold refugee status or are seeking asylum from persecution and imminent danger.

Erie 1 BOCES has long supported districts in their efforts to welcome and educate these newest Americans. Since 1982, Erie 1 BOCES has held one of the New York State Education Department regional contracts to do this work. Once called the Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Center (BETAC), the current Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) housed at Erie 1 BOCES serves the 86 school districts and 19 charter schools of Western New York. This team provides on-site instructional and administrative support to targeted districts, regional professional learning opportunities for all educators and regulatory technical assistance to ensure districts stay in compliance with the requirements of Part 154 of the Commissioner's Regulations, the standard that governs school districts' responsibilities for ELLs.

The mission of the RBERN team is to collaborate with educators, parents and community members to promote academic excellence and ensure high school graduation for all multilingual learners. Their vision is a community that provides access to an excellent and equitable education for multilingual learners that prepares them to be prosperous participants of a free and democratic society.

Erie 1 BOCES is committed to educational equity and excellence for all students, especially its most vulnerable students. There are countless success stories of immigrant children and families who fix up old homes, start small businesses and go on to college to become doctors, teachers and contributing members of society. We are proud to be a part of this success in our partnership with our component districts.

Dawn Novak, Elizabeth Kuttesch, Michael Duffy, Melissa Duquette and Claribel Gonzalez of the RBERN West team.



Teachers participate in a two-day professional development session, "5 Essentials for Co-Planning."



Together toward

Building safer school communities

By Melissa Rechin, Communications Coordinator

As part of a statewide initiative to “develop a comprehensive Domestic Terrorism Prevention Network,” the Erie 1 BOCES Health, Safety and Risk Management team has been working the past several months with the Erie County Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services to bring threat assessment trainings to school district and law enforcement personnel in Erie County.

“Assess & Progress” is a revolutionized student intervention-focused training that provides skills to quickly and accurately assess if a student truly poses a danger and the abilities and materials to progress them to a safer place. These training sessions are designed to empower and support school district threat assessment teams -- multidisciplinary teams comprised of superintendents, principals, school resource officers, counselors, social workers, teachers and others -- who are focused on making their school communities safer and more effective learning environments.

“The Erie 1 BOCES Health, Safety and Risk Management team is proud to help facilitate the ‘Assess & Progress’ sessions for school districts,” said Karen DePalma, Erie 1 BOCES director of Management Services, which includes Health, Safety and Risk Management. “Our team’s focus, as always, is to help our school districts maintain a comprehensive program of health, safety and risk management, and we see these classes as an important tool to help promote this end.”

The overarching goal of these sessions is to assist school districts in implementing an effective violence prevention strategy that involves identifying student threats to commit a violent act; determining the seriousness of the threat; and developing intervention plans to protect potential victims and address the underlying issues that precipitated the threatening behavior.

Speaking with Don Shomette, a nationally recognized violence prevention expert and creator of the “Assess & Progress” trainings, he shared his holistic approach to student intervention and belief that “people are not a problem to be solved, but to be protected, helped and loved.”

What is the impact of this training for Erie County?

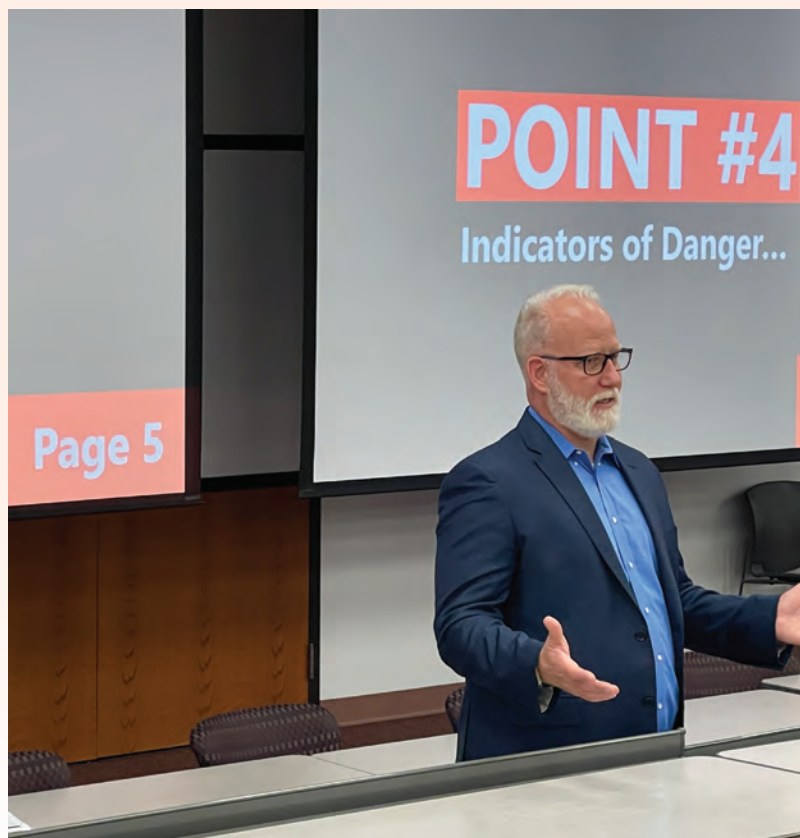
If you can’t identify the threat, you can’t prevent the threat. If you can’t manage the threat, you can’t prevent the threat. Erie County is learning how to identify and manage this threat, therefore, it is gaining some of the tools necessary in preventing extreme acts of violence.

How do these trainings shift the approach of school and student safety?

One of the comments that I hear the most from those who attend this training is that it has helped them to think of safety in a different and better way. Too often we think of safety as a standalone effort. ‘Assess & Progress’ helps participants to think about student intervention and preventing violence holistically. Everything that we do will either raise or lower our vulnerability to violence. Therefore, the best way to lower our vulnerability and prevent such acts is to blend in proven violence prevention techniques that are simple to understand and easy to implement into everything that we do.

How does student intervention play a role in threat assessment?

Nearly 70% of all school attackers are current or former students. That means that if we energetically engage and intervene with students today in a very positive, thoughtful and strategic manner, we could have a profound impact on influencing potential attackers into choosing a better option than violence in the future. Student intervention isn’t just a good idea, but a necessity.



Don Shomette leads the first training session to a group of school professionals and community members.

progress



Photo courtesy of Don Shomette.

This training is funded by a grant initiative after the domestic terrorist attack in Buffalo on May 14, 2022. These trainings are among many steps needed to be a catalyst of change within a traumatized community. In your opinion, what other steps or approaches can be made to continue this path forward?

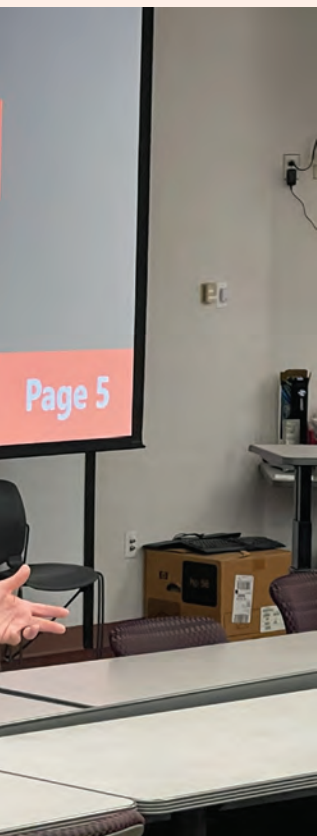
I would suggest two steps. The first one is easier and that's to continue to perfect skills and abilities. Student safety assessments and human threat assessments are perishable skills, therefore, continuing training is critical for maintaining and developing skills. No skill in preventing violence is more important than being able to quickly and accurately assess if a person is truly a danger. You may be the last person who has a chance to prevent a tragedy, so you must be ready.

The second step is harder because it requires action, effort and sometimes a change in us. Every person who conducts an extreme act of targeted violence travels down the exact same path to violence. It never varies, is always the same and incredibly predictable. It has four distinct stages: idea, plan, prepare, act. Once

a person accepts the idea to use violence, they're a threat. The only question is what is their risk level? The further the person travels down the path to violence, the greater their risk.

With this in mind -- and this is the second step -- we must do more. As families, communities, parents and teachers, we must do everything we can right now to ensure that no one gets onto the path to violence. The more stability, love, character development, wisdom, personal growth and support a person has, the less likely they will ever use violence to get what they want and, therefore, never get on the path to violence.

The Erie 1 BOCES Health, Safety and Risk Management Team hosted two two-day "Assess & Progress" training sessions with Don Shomette in November and December 2023, with plans to offer additional sessions in 2024. For information on these trainings in Erie County, please reach out to Karen DePalma at kdepalma@e1b.org. To learn more about Don Shomette's approach, visit donshomette.com.



community members.

Jane Wright poses for a photo in her exercise science classroom at Kenton Career and Technical Education Center.



IRONMAN competitor

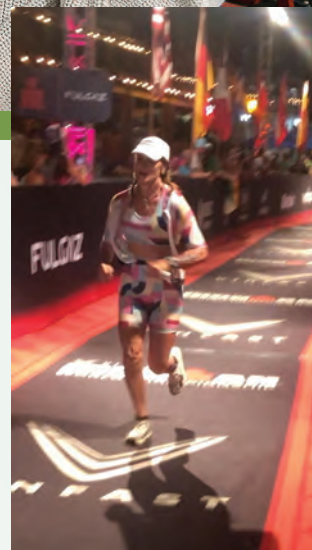
Congratulations, exercise science instructor

By Gordon Block, Sr. Public Relations Representative

In her exercise science careers class at the Erie 1 BOCES Kenton Career and Technical Education Center, instructor Jane Wright teaches her students about concepts like functional movement and physiology along with cardiovascular and resistance training. For Wright, those lessons aren't just found in a textbook, but how she lives her life. The 63-year-old recently completed the 2023 VinFast IRONMAN World Championship in Kona, Hawaii, finishing the 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile cycle and marathon 26.2-mile run in 14 hours, 17 minutes and 22 seconds.

"We live what we teach," Wright said. "These are life skills of discipline. Work hard and be humble. Be proud of what you do and don't let anyone take that away."

The October 14 triathlon was another milestone in a lifetime of fitness for Wright. The Ancaster, Ontario, Canada, native began running cross country and track in middle school and continued through her time at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada. That love of running carried beyond her school days and led her to complete 30 marathons by 2015, including the Boston Marathon.



Jane Wright competes at the 2023 VinFast IRONMAN World Championship in Kona, Hawaii, on October 14, 2023.

Photo courtesy of Jane Wright.

"I feel like it was my being," Wright said. "It was who I was from a young age and my identity."

Wright said she then pursued triathlons to find a pursuit with greater longevity. Overcoming her "doggy paddler" level of swimming abilities, Wright completed her first triathlon in 2017. Developing her abilities in the three disciplines led Wright to put in about 15-20 hours each week in training, a challenge when the weather of Western New York limited outdoor training sessions. Those challenges were magnified during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many events were canceled with limited notice.

Wright qualified for the iconic Hawaii IRONMAN event through the IRONMAN event at Mont-Tremblant, Québec, Canada, in August 2023, the final time that full-length race was held there. With IRONMAN splitting the male and female fields for its championship events, this year's Hawaii event was the first in which only women competed, with 2,000 triathletes from 73 countries making up the field.

"It's a culture of very competitive women like me, but the camaraderie is incredible," Wright said. "Because it was the first-ever women's event, we felt very empowered. It did feel like we were all working together and proud to be there."

Entering her first IRONMAN World Championship, Wright said she had to trust her training, preparation and nutrition. Competitors are not allowed to accept any outside assistance beyond provided water, electrolyte and nutrition stations, requiring them to carry the necessary food and supplies to make it through the day. Among the mental challenges during the day was keeping her focus while riding on a highway surrounded by seemingly endless lava fields and relentless crosswinds.

"It was mesmerizing, but mentally exhausting," Wright said.

The running leg of the triathlon was hilly, she said, and the temperatures were still hot late into the day. After hours of running, at points in complete darkness, she could hear the music and calls of "You are an IRONMAN" being played through speakers at the finish line. The final mile was filled with spectators and fanfare, which Wright said made her feel like a celebrity during her moment crossing the line.



In difficult moments throughout the day, Wright said she thought of her friend and fellow IRONMAN triathlete Denise Short, who died in 2014 of cancer. The two had planned to complete an event together.

"It is the toughest endurance event on the planet. You have to have a why," Wright said. "You just think of those who are before you, who were on that course, who struggled, and what you overcame to be in that place."

Despite the excitement of completing the competition, Wright didn't take too long to celebrate. She flew back from Hawaii to Buffalo and was in her classroom just days after completing the race, and Wright was already looking to take advantage of some nice weather in the forecast to take part in a long recovery bicycle ride.

"I don't see anything stopping me," she said.

More information about the exercise science program can be found at www.e1b.org/en/k-12-education-programs/exercise-science.aspx.



Jane Wright, left, coaches a student in her exercise science class through the use of a Jacob's Ladder in her classroom at the Erie 1 BOCES Kenton Career and Technical Education Center.



Classroom through

Creating a sustainable teacher pipeline

By: Amanda Cammarano, Melissa Rechin, Leanne Stuck

The importance of teachers cannot be overstated. They serve as mentors, motivators and role models while fostering creativity, curiosity and critical thinking in their students. Teachers are essential, however, they are retiring or leaving the profession in large numbers and enrollment for teacher prep programs in New York State colleges is down 53 percent from 2009. There is concern there won't be enough teachers in the pipeline to staff the estimated 180,000 new positions needed over the next decade.

Erie 1 BOCES and the Western New York Regional Information Center has seen the need for new teachers on the horizon and is working diligently to encourage new teachers, support current teachers and provide ongoing support to school districts as they look to fill teacher and leader vacancies. This work is all part of the classroom through career continuum effort. This pathway supports prospective teachers, as young as high school juniors, all the way through retirement from the profession and beyond.



Erie 1 BOCES New Visions teacher Anthony Lleras talks with a potential student at the Careers in Education Conference.



Careers in Education Conference

High Schoolers

One-day conference held on a college campus for high schoolers who are interested in a career in education. Attendees hear from panels of teachers and other school support staff, as well as network with area colleges.

Early Childhood Education Program

High School Juniors/Seniors

A two-year program for students interested in a career in early childhood education. The students work side-by-side with a certified teacher in a daycare or elementary classroom. Students will have the opportunity to run their own preschool and/or playgroup.



New Visions Education Pathways Academy

High School Seniors

A one-year academic program that allows students to explore the field of education while earning high school and college credits. Students learn everything from best practices and behavior management to how to write a lesson in consideration of learning standards and objectives. They participate in rotations in a variety of educational settings and specialty areas.

100%

of enrolled students are college/university bound

17

SUNY college credits earned in a school year through the program

"By showing interested high school students all that education has to offer, I'm looking to foster a pipeline of passionate homegrown talent to fill key positions locally, nationally and abroad."

— Anthony Lleras, New Visions Teacher

Teacher Residency

College Students

College students spend a full year in the classroom paired with a teacher mentor while receiving college credits.

career continuum



Students listen to a panel of new teachers at the Careers in Education Conference.



Nicole Kerner leads the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Consortium.



Substitute Coordination & Recruiting

Districts

Our Substitute Training and Recruiting Service (STARS) develops solutions needed to mitigate the substitute teacher and other school-related position shortages that our districts face. We are working in partnership with school district administrators, human resources faculty and school business professionals to address strategies in recruitment, screening and retention.

Certification Services

Educators

Our Regional Certification Office can assist and evaluate candidates for New York State Certification in most teaching titles and all teaching assistant, pupil personnel and coaching titles. Whether someone is a first-time teacher, interested in adding supplemental certifications or pursuing a career change, our Regional Certification Office can help guide one through the process.

Professional Development

Educators

We staff dozens of experts to provide hundreds of hours of professional development and educator support consortiums to teachers in all subject areas.

"Recent research found that 40 percent of teachers leave the profession after their first five years of teaching."

— Leeza Edholm, Erie 1 BOCES Recruiter



Introduction to Effective Leadership

Educators

Educators with leadership potential can attend a series of courses to prepare them for director, assistant principal or principal positions. This encourages teachers to think outside the classroom and explore how their skills could translate to leadership roles.

"Teacher candidates are seeking more opportunities to advance into administrative type roles. I am excited about Erie 1 BOCES' commitment to steward teacher advancement opportunities."

— Leeza Edholm, Erie 1 BOCES Recruiter

Interim Leadership Program

Retired School Leaders

Schools who have short-term vacancies in leadership roles, like principal or superintendent, can pull from a database of retired school leaders to step into interim positions. Interim leaders allow districts continuity in leadership while giving them time to find and hire the right person for the role long term.





JOINT MANAGEMENT TEAM CONFERENCE

Dr. Michael Capuana, Erie 1 BOCES district superintendent, lead a panel of superintendents at the Joint Management Team Retreat held at Holiday Valley Resort. More than three dozen superintendents from throughout WNY were on hand to network and discuss challenges and opportunities for school districts.



"FORE" A GOOD CAUSE

Organizers of the WNYRIC Open Golf Tournament presented a check for \$8,500 to the Ronald McDonald House of Buffalo. It was the largest donation in the 22-year history of the tournament.



BUILDING REGIONAL BONDS

School administrators from throughout WNY spent two days at a learning and networking conference. One of the sessions focused on project-based learning and challenged attendees to work together to build an arcade game out of cardboard.



2023 WELLNESS CHAMPION

Kate Huber, supervisor of the Creating Healthy Schools and Communities grant was named a Buffalo Business First 2023 Wellness Champion at an awards celebration held at Buffalo RiverWorks.



HALLOWEEN TREATS

Maryvale Academy students made Halloween treats for Kevin's Guest House, which supports patients and their families traveling for medical care.



HELPING SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Brian Doyle, Erie 1 BOCES senior labor relations specialist, spoke to new school resource officers during a training presentation organized by the Committee on Policing and Safeguarding Schools, an organization formed by the New York State Sheriff's Association.



MAKING AN IMPACT

Erie 1 BOCES was recognized by the Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce with the Community Impact award during a ceremony in November.



GET IN THE GAME!

Winchester Academy student Aiden Zotara smiled after receiving a high five from the Buffalo Bills' Stefon Diggs prior to the team's December 31 game against the New England Patriots. Aiden joined other students at the game as part of the team's Play 60 program. Photo by Ben Green/Buffalo Bills.



LET'S GO BUFFALO!

Northtowns Academy cheered on the Buffalo Bills!



DRIVING STUDENT SUCCESS

The Auto Technician Training program at the Potter Career and Technical Education Center was gifted a 2004 Chevy Trailblazer from Basil Family Dealerships, giving students a chance to work on a full frame SUV.



THE GIFT OF IMAGINATION

Students in the Fashion Design program made costume play clothes for the preschool classes within our career and technical education centers.



TASTE OF TECH

Potter CTE Animal Science Instructor Jessica Sawyer taught Frontier Middle School students a lesson on sutures during this year's "Taste of Tech" event.



WELCOME TO THE NTHS

Gurshan Banwait, an Amherst student in the Auto Technician program at the Harkness Career and Technical Education Center, greeted center principal John Wodjeski during the National Technical Honor Society induction ceremony at Villa Maria College on November 2, 2023. 194 students were inducted during the ceremony.

Maryvale Academy Veterans Day

Students give thanks to local veterans

By Leanne Stuck, Communications Coordinator

Erie 1 BOCES Maryvale Academy teacher Abigail Ruggles has a passion for giving back.

With Veterans Day approaching and a lesson on letter writing concluding, Ruggles thought it would be perfect timing for her students to put their new skills to the test and write a few letters to veterans.

Her address list initially included veterans in her life and friends and family of other Maryvale Academy teachers, but it grew quickly. A social media post garnered a lot of community support, with many people giving addresses of loved ones who are veterans.

"I think it was an all-encompassing lesson that produced meaningful results," said Ruggles. "Our students were a part of learning about Veterans Day and holidays that honor our military and taking that a little further to support them."

In a matter of days, Ruggles had 10, 20, 30, 40 addresses shared with her. The community service project then left her classroom and expanded to other Maryvale Academy classrooms. Students mailed a total of 47 handwritten letters with lots of thank-you's and colored pictures.

"I think it just goes to show how people are looking for connections these days," Ruggles said. "I think personalized letters and any personalization is important. I think especially this time of year it's an important reminder for our students to sometimes realize it's better to be the giver than the receiver."

After receiving a letter, one veteran emailed Ms. Ruggles and said, "This is a wonderful thing to teach your students and I take my hat off to you. You hit a home run with this project teaching service and patriotism to your students. Keep up the good work."

Ruggles hopes to expand this community service project next year. If you know a veteran who would like to receive a letter, please email aruggles@e1b.org.



Students in Ms. Ruggles' class take a break to show off their letters in a photo.



Local veterans pose for photos with their student letters.

Computer-based testing

School assessments go digital

By Karen Halbert, Senior Supervisor, WNYRIC Data Warehouse and Testing Support

The New York State Department of Education (NYSED) has undertaken the transformative initiative of moving to computer-based testing (CBT) in its NYS testing program for students in grades 3-8. This is a shift in the assessment landscape that has students putting down their infamous No. 2 pencils and utilizing digital devices and testing software instead.

CBT has been around for decades, beginning as early as 2001, but its widespread adoption has been limited due to a lack of devices and a gap in digital literacy. As students transitioned to working on desktops and laptops, their ability to use technology to find, evaluate, create and communicate information has increased.

Student competency in working digitally helped pave the way to a 2022 directive from the NYSED's Office of Assessments to all schools outlining a plan that would require students in grades 3-8 to utilize CBT for state assessments in English language arts (ELA), math and science by school year 2025-2026.

While this transition is a change in how assessments are administered, there are many benefits to both students and schools:

1. **Accurate:** Students can only choose one answer per question and results come back clean with no eraser marks or cross outs.
2. **Secure:** Students access tests via logins and PINs using secure browsers. Schools no longer have to keep boxes of tests behind lock and key.
3. **Sustainable:** CBT significantly reduces paper use in assessments.
4. **Efficient:** Schools aren't receiving, storing and hauling around boxes of tests and scoring guides.

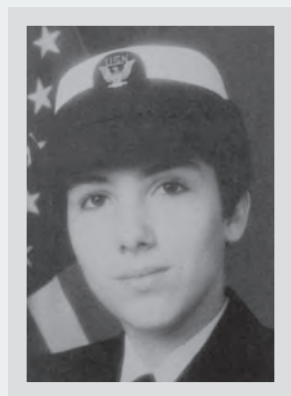
The Western New York Regional Information Center (WNYRIC) is supporting schools in this transition by providing software application and data support, professional development and device procurement in compliance with the NYSED's requirements and deadlines. The WNYRIC supports more than 100 school districts, as well as charter and non-public schools, throughout the region.



Veterans shine bright

Cosmetology students help local veterans

By: Leanne Stuck, Communications Coordinator



Joey Reynolds while she was in the U.S. Navy.

You may know Joey Reynolds as the friendly face that greets you when you walk into Workforce Development North. At Erie 1 BOCES, she keeps all things “trades and manufacturing” afloat, but when she’s not supporting program needs, she’s volunteering to help Western New York veterans.

As a veteran herself, Reynolds said she understands how important the work of organizations like WNY Heroes is to those who have served their country. Reynolds enlisted in the military after high school and served for four years in the U.S. Navy as a paramedic.

In addition to helping plan WNY Heroes’ largest fundraising event of the year, The Red, White & Blue Gala, Reynolds wanted to do more for

the women veterans and military wives who both helped plan and would be attending the event.

“It really did mean a lot to me to do something for them because they are volunteers,” Reynolds said. “We do give them a shoutout at the event, but I wanted to do something to make them feel appreciated.”

The morning of the gala, the Workforce Development Cosmetology program rolled out the red carpet for these local heroes. Students enrolled in the program provided all things glam, including free haircuts, hair color, styling and manicures.

“We had one veteran that came just to get a haircut and we talked her into getting highlights, and all night she said she felt like Audrey Hepburn. It was nice to see her have that confidence,” Reynolds said.

The students were thrilled to play a role in expressing gratitude to the veterans and saw this initiative as a small way to give back to those who have given so much.



Joey Reynolds smiles as a cosmetology student colors her hair purple.



Six veterans pose for a photo in front of a balloon arch at the Red, White & Blue Gala.



A local veteran smiles while getting her hair done by two cosmetology students.



HVAC technician students pose for a group photo during the HVAC job fair at Potter CTE Center.

Small fairs, big success

Removing networking barriers

By: Leanne Stuck, Communications Coordinator

Students in Erie 1 BOCES Workforce Development Trades and Manufacturing program are getting ready to join the workforce. Two career fairs were planned to help these students make invaluable career connections.

“The industry-specific career fairs held for HVAC technician and CNC machining students were in response to our industry partner’s request,” said Trades and Manufacturing Coordinator Jacob Daniels. “Advisory group members suggested focused employment events might be a more

effective way to connect with students for internships and employment opportunities.”

On November 30, 2023, HVAC technician students attended a career fair at the Potter Career and Technical Education Center. Nine HVAC-related businesses were eager to meet with students. Since the event was held at Potter, high school students were also able to meet with these prospective employers.

On December 7, 2023, CNC machining students were given their chance to network during a career fair at the new Workforce Development South. Eleven businesses with



A CNC machining student speaks with two business representatives at the job fair.



A student hands a prospective CNC machining employer his resume during the job fair.

different backgrounds and needs met with the students.

“After seeing the results of these two events, I think hosting mini job fairs is another way we can help our students find employment opportunities,” Daniels said. “One of the biggest barriers I see is connecting employers with prospective employees. These events remove most of the barriers to making the first contact or introduction, and that is always the hardest part.”



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PURPLE HEART SCHOOL PRESENTATION

On November 9, 2023, the Potter Career and Technical Education Center was named a Purple Heart School by the Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 187 Buffalo. The school was gifted a plaque and a flag that we will proudly display in the main office. We want to thank these military veterans for their service and their sacrifice for our country.



ROCK ON!

Two classes of EDGE Academy modern band class students delivered performances for friends, teachers and staff, showcasing skills on guitar, bass and drums developed over the course of a year. Pictured are Mr. Marc Kabigting, Jimmy Graser, Cole Masterson and Jamison Smith.



SUPPORTING LOCAL ANIMALS

Students and staff at Maryvale Academy made more than 200 pet toys and packaged more than 70 pounds of dog bones to support the pets in need at the Erie County SPCA.



TELLING THE E1B STORY

Janell Hallgren and TC Ferrito, manager and senior coordinator of Erie 1 BOCES Policy Services, showcased offerings at the New York State School Boards Association Annual Convention and Education Expo. The Policy Services team works with over 375 school districts across New York State to develop and maintain policy and administrative manuals.



SMILES AT EDGE ACADEMY

Dr. Michael Capuana, Erie 1 BOCES district superintendent, posed for a photo with staff from EDGE Academy.