

Dr. Caradonio retires after 15 years in Worcester

After a journey that started with him working as an ESL teacher in Puerto Rico in 1970 and included stops in Cambridge, Boston and Rhode Island, Dr. James A. Caradonio retired this month after 15 years in Worcester Public Schools, the last nine as superintendent.

"I've been very fortunate to work in Worcester," he said. "My perception of Worcester was very positive when I came here and it turned out to be even better than I ever imagined."

Dr. Caradonio, who was born in New Jersey and grew

Superintendent Dr. James A. Caradonio gets a happy sendoff from Chandler Elementary School students.

PHOTO: REBA
SALDANHA

See DR. CARADONIO Page 13

Exxon/Mobil grant fuels increased AP opportunities

BY RICH FAHEY

Worcester is one of only four school districts statewide to be included in the first round of grants from a program designed to use school/college partnerships to increase the number of under-represented students who take and succeed at Advanced Placement (AP) exams.

Worcester's North High School received the grant from the Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative (MMSI), a new non-profit funded primarily by the Exxon Mobil Corporation, working with Mass Insight and the Mass. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition to North, schools in Marlboro, Chelsea and Boston were also successful in

See GRANT Page 13



MMSI President Morton Orlov speaks at the grant announcement at North High School.

EXPAND LEARNING TIME? YES WE CAN!



Jacob Hiatt Magnet School student Gregory Theos reads to Gov. Deval L. Patrick, who visited the school to see the Expanded Learning Time program in action. The governor's FY09 budget included \$17.5 million for ELT. **Page 5.**

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Published by:
Worcester Public Schools
Dr. James A. Caradonio
Superintendent

Submit stories to:
Joan M. Fitton, Manager
Governmental Relations and
Elementary Initiatives
Worcester Public Schools
20 Irving St.
Worcester, MA 01609
Tel: 508-799-3110
Fax: 508-799-8158
fittonj@worc.k12.ma.us

Produced by:
GRANT COMMUNICATIONS
CONSULTING GROUP
Boston ♦ New York
781-598-8200
gccg@grantgroup.com

Leaving the T.E.A.M. with fond memories



Dr. James A. Caradonio

This issue of *The Worcester Educator*, my last as superintendent, again details the positive programs that our professional educators provide our students. As I leave Worcester Public Schools, I am so mindful of and grateful for the consistent, creative and caring supports that all our WPS employees provide each and every day to all our students.

We have focused on increasing expectations and academic rigor. Through relationships and collaborating with our partners from colleges, universities, businesses and cultural institutions, the relevance of the high-quality instruction that our students enjoy has been increased.

Because of the collective efforts of all WPS employees and our partners, many colleges seek out and admit our graduates. Each year, the Colleges of Worcester Consortium's Talent Search program helps hundreds of our students complete the college admissions process. WPS alumni such as Doug Luffborough III (see page 6) inspire us with their success and determination.

During this year, as in the previous 15 years that I have been working in Worcester, our staff

has demonstrated continuous improvements in curriculum and instruction. For example:

Advanced Placement increases: Our efforts to increase the number of high school students in Advanced Placement (AP) classes received significant support from Exxon/Mobil's Massachusetts Math Science Initiative.

Meeting the needs of all learners: Dr. Vera Blake, from the national Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), trains and coaches our principals, teachers and coaches in strategies that differentiate instruction, so that students have multiple ways for taking in and interpreting information. WPS teachers continue to learn how to adjust curriculum to their students' readiness levels, interests and learning preferences. Teachers, such as those at University Park Campus School and Claremont Academy, share their effective practices with one another.

Expanded Learning Time: Gov. Deval Patrick visited Jacob Hiatt Magnet School to see in action a model Expanded Learning Time program, one of the key initiatives in the governor's educational readiness plan.

Each year we are proud of our students' many extracurricular accomplishments, whether it be in the Special Olympics or Mini-Olympics, performing live before Julie Andrews at the

annual WEDF benefit concert, or the Burncoat High School Quadrivium chorus winning awards at the Heritage Festival in Virginia.

Perhaps most memorable for me is how we have all worked together to improve our students' academic achievement during the same time that our district lost funding for staff, materials and instructional supplies. From 2004-2007, the percentage of WPS students who scored Advanced/Proficient on MCAS exams in English and math increased.

T.E.A.M. (Together Everyone Achieves More) has been our guiding principle and focus. All our T.E.A.M. members – principals, teachers, instructional assistants, student support staff, school plant staff, cafeteria staff, bus drivers and monitors, central office administrators and the Worcester School Committee – have focused their time and energies on improving our students' academic achievement and preparation to be successful 21st century citizens.

I am confident that the positive outcomes that are the hallmark of the Worcester Public Schools will continue because of you, our dedicated WPS employees.

Dr. James A. Caradonio is superintendent of schools.

2008 WPS graduates accepted to top colleges nationwide

Members of the Worcester Public Schools Class of 2008 received acceptances from the following colleges and universities:

University of Akron
University of Alabama
American International College
American University
Andrews University
Anna Maria College
University of Arizona
Art Institute of Boston
Art Institute of N.Y.
Assumption College
Atlantic Union College
Bancroft School of Massage
Barry University
Bay Path College
Bay State College
Becker College
Benedictine University
Bentley College
Berklee College of Music
University of Bridgeport
Bethune Cookman
Blinn College
Boston College
Boston University
Brandeis University
Bridgewater State College
Brigham Young University
Brooklyn CC
Bryant University
Bunker Hill Community College
Cape Cod CC
Catholic University

Cedar Crest College
Clark University
Cleveland State Univ.
Coastal Carolina Univ.
College of the Holy Cross
College of New Rochelle
College of Santo Domingo
College of Staten Island
University of Colorado
Univ. of Colorado - Denver
Columbia University
Community College of R.I.
Concordia University
Connecticut College
University of Connecticut
Connecticut Culinary Institute
Cornell University
Curry College
Daniel Webster College
Dartmouth College
Dean College
Delaware State Univ.
Drew University
Drexel University
Eastern Nazarene College
Elms College
Emerson College
Emmanuel College
Endicott College
Fairfield University
Fashion Institute of Technology
Fisher College
Fitchburg State College
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical Univ.
Florida Atlantic Univ.
Florida CC-Jacksonville
Florida Institute of Technology

Fordham University
Framingham State College
Franklin Pierce University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Gordon College
Goucher College
Hallmark Institute of Photography
Hampshire College
Hannepin CC
University of Hartford
Hartwick College
Hesser College
Hofstra University
Holyoke CC
University of Houston
Houston CC
Indiana University
Ithaca College
Jacksonville University
Johnson & Wales Univ.
Keene State College
Lab Institute of Merchandising
La Salle University
Lasell College
Le Moyne College
Lesley University
Liberty University
Lincoln Technical Institute
Lincoln University
Louisiana Tech. University
Loyola University Chicago
Lynn University
University of Maine
UMaine-Farmington
Manchester CC
Manhattanville College

University of Maryland
Marymount Manhattan College
UMass Amherst
UMass Boston
UMass Dartmouth
UMass Lowell
MassArt
MassBay CC
Mass. College of Liberal Arts
Mass. College of Pharmacy
Merrimack College
Middlebury College
Mills University
Mt. Ida College
Mt. Wachusett CC
National College of Business and Technology
New England Institute of Art
New England College
University of New England
New England Institute of Tech.
University of New Hampshire
University of New Haven
New York University
Newbury College
Nichols College
Norfolk State University
UNC Charlotte
North Carolina State
Northeastern University
University of Notre Dame
Nova Southeastern University
Pace University
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia University
Pine Manor College
Univ. of Pittsburgh
Plymouth State University
Point Park University

Porter and Chester Institute
Providence College
Queens College
Quinnipiac University
Quinsigamond CC
Regis College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhode Island College
University of Rhode Island
Rhode Island School of Design
University of Rochester
Rice University
University of Richmond
Rider University
Rivier College
Rob Roy Academy
Rochester Institute of Technology
Roger Williams University
Rutgers University
Sacred Heart University
St. Anselm College
St. Cloud State University
St. John's University
St. Joseph's College
St. Leo's College
St. Mary's College
St. Michael's College
Salem State College
Salter College
Salve Regina University
University of Scranton
Shaw University
Simmons College
Skidmore College
Southern Connecticut State Univ.
Southern NH University
University of Southern Maine
Spelman College
Springfield College

Stanford University
SUNY-Albany
SUNY-Oswego
SUNY-Stony Brook
Stonehill College
Suffolk University
Susquehanna University
Syracuse University
Tallahassee CC
University of Tampa
Temple University
University of Texas
Texas Christian University
Tufts University
Tulane University
University of Toronto
Union College
Universal Technical Institute
Ursinus College
Utah State University
Utah Valley State Coll.
Utica College
University of Vermont
Virginia Commonwealth Univ.
Virginia Polytechnic University
Virginia State University
Wake Forest University
Wake Technical CC
Wellesley College
Wentworth Institute
Western Connecticut State Univ.
Western New England College
Westfield State College
Wheaton College
Wheelock College
Wingate University
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Worcester State College
Wright State University



Reaching their potential

BY CAITLIN BOWLER

The 500 Worcester Public Schools students who headed to college or a post-secondary program this year can thank Education Talent Search (ETS) for help navigating the often complex and lengthy process.

The federally funded program is a partnership between Worcester Public Schools and the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, a 40-year-old alliance of 13 area colleges that works cooperatively both to further the missions of the member institutions and to advance higher education in the region.

The underlying purpose of ETS is to identify those students who teachers believe have high potential for succeeding in a post-secondary program, and are at high risk of not getting there, or possibly not even graduating from high school, for any number of reasons. To qualify for the federal funding that sustains the program, two-thirds of the students served by ETS must be from low-income families or be the first generation in their family to pursue higher education.

The organization relies on teachers' recommendations to identify these students who then work with ETS staff starting in their sophomore or junior year. The guidance that ETS provides can take many forms. Staff may work with students to fine-tune their schedules, advise them on SATs, review transcripts, proofread essays, or help with financial aid applications and fee-waiver

Federal program for talented, at-risk students, a success

paperwork. They also advise on colleges and post-secondary programs.

"In the beginning of the process we have a conversation with each student: 'What kind of life do you want to be leading in 10 years? Where do you want to live? Do you want to have a family?,'" said Pamela Boisvert, vice

president for Higher Education Access Services for the Consortium. "Invariably, it becomes clear to them that further education is the only way they can meet their goals. At that point, we start helping them take those first steps to achieving that."

The ETS goal is to provide any help it can

that will allow a student to access the system.

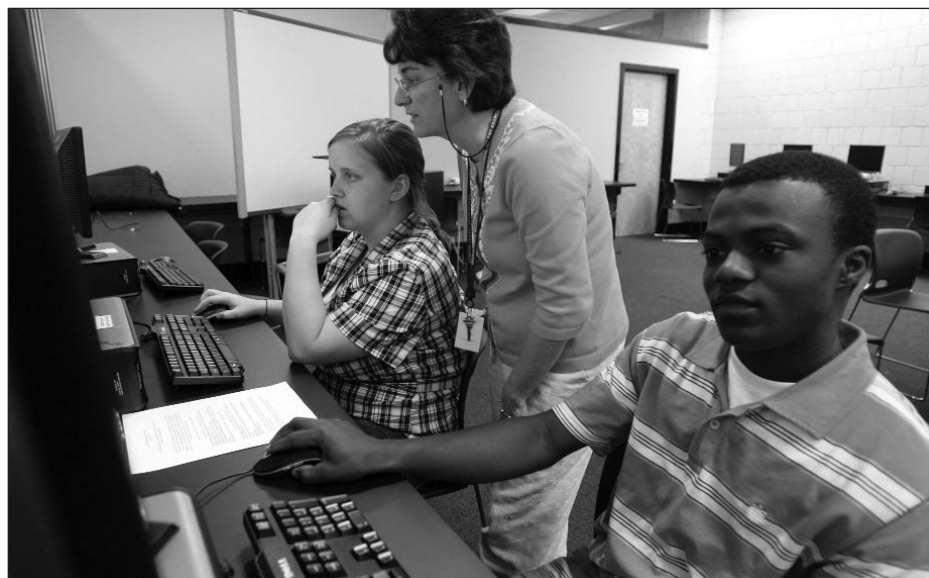
"In a sense we work as troubleshooters," said Donna Connolly, who mentors students at South High School and coordinates ETS staff throughout the district. "After we've identified a struggling student with lots of potential we ask, 'What issues or barriers are going to keep this person from going to college?' Then we try to help them address that issue or try to remove that barrier. The barrier could be organizational, financial, or even familial. There's just no typical case."

The work ETS staff does is also highly individualized.

"Some students just need help thinking about financial aid options," said Connolly. "Others need to be double-teamed. Working together with the school guidance counselor I can become another person helping to keep a kid on track, cajoling them to get their paperwork in, asking for that last revision of an essay."

Finally, because of the nature of the organization — a consortium of colleges and universities — ETS staff have a broad view of what options exist in higher education.

"Part of what we do is raise awareness of what is possible," said Boisvert. "Many of these students don't realize the range of colleges and schools in the Worcester area alone, let alone in the state and region."



South High School ETS Director Donna Connolly works with Grace O'Day and Charles Duodu. Top photo: Pam Boisvert, vice president of Higher Education Access for the Colleges of Worcester Consortium, chats with O'Day and Connolly.

Improving student achievement is a top Priority for Schools

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Equipped with the task of “making good schools better,” the Worcester Public Schools has utilized the



Joseph Palumbo

a senior executive with FOR, has worked with the WPS since February. He is targeting the district’s 18 Commonwealth Priority Schools. A Commonwealth Priority School is any school that has a No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability status of Corrective Action or Restructuring in English language arts and/or mathematics. The WPS received state funding to support the implementation of

resources of Focus on Results (FOR), an educational consulting group with offices in Boston and Huntington Beach, Calif.

Joseph Palumbo, a

improvement plans and related strategies at these schools in order to improve student achievement.

As an expert facilitator, Palumbo has trained, coached and provided technical assistance to hundreds of school-based personnel engaged in whole-school improvement. He was contracted to work with the WPS by the Mass. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Since his start, he has spent 10 days a month in Worcester, hosting monthly presentations and workshops and providing follow-up visits to the individual schools. He is confident about the district’s progress.

“The Worcester educators have all the tools they need,” said Palumbo. “They have a coherent focus and a passion for making schools better. I’m really looking forward to this year, pushing these good schools towards the next level.”

“Good days are ahead,” said Dr. Stephen Mills, WPS deputy superintendent. “With the great support and new relationship we have with the DESE and with Joe



From left, teacher Kathy Foley, literacy coach Pat Andersen and Principal Ellen Kelley, all from Roosevelt School, discuss ways to improve student achievement.

(Palumbo) and his staff, we have the tools to lead this district to a better place.”

Palumbo and Mills agree the key to success is collaboration. At a workshop on June 9, Mills described a case in which a group of heart surgeons from New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine took the initiative to regularly meet with one another. Collectively, the fatality rate at their hospitals declined 25 percent in two

years.

“That’s the power of working together and sharing ideas,” said Mills. “That’s what we’re trying to do with all of you.”

“We want to tap into the power of the group, so that teachers and principals within the schools and district are working with each other and talking to each other,” said Palumbo.

At the June meeting, each school

team shared with other schools some of the work they have accomplished in the past few months. Kerry Purcell, the principal of Harvard Park Elementary School in Springfield, Ill., also presented some of the lessons she and her staff have learned, as well as the tools and strategies they have tried to help support all students. While Harvard Park’s poverty rate has increased to more than 90 percent in the past few years, student test scores and parent involvement levels have significantly grown. Purcell worked with Palumbo to overcome the challenges of the school environment and make those gains.

“We learned to focus on the most important thing in the school setting, and that’s the teaching and learning,” said Purcell. “The ah-ha moment came the day we turned the mirror away from curriculum barriers and excuses and onto identifying and using research-based teaching practices to meet the needs of each student.”

DESE will continue to fund Palumbo’s work with Commonwealth Priority Schools this school year.

Success is the only option for Dr. Blake

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

“Success is the only option as we strive to leave no child behind.”

That is the motto of Dr. Vera J. Blake, a veteran educator who now serves as a school improvement coach and professional development consultant in districts across the country. In the Worcester Public Schools, Dr. Blake is working with Commonwealth Priority School principals, teacher leaders and coaches at the elementary level to help improve student achievement.

Dr. Blake’s professional development program reinforces the philosophy of differentiated instruction — an approach to teaching and learning in which students have multiple options for taking in and interpreting information. The model requires teachers to be flexible and able to adjust curriculum to their students’ readiness levels, interests and learning preferences (rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum). Earlier this year, all WPS teachers and administrators participated in professional development training in differentiated instruction, using Carol Tomlinson’s book, “Differentiating Instruction in the Mixed-Ability Classroom.”

The WPS recruited Dr. Blake through the Association for Supervision and Curriculum

Development (ASCD) and is funding the training with Title I school improvement funds, along with Title I general funds. Dr. Blake is providing on-site training in six schools and is working with all principals and coaches in elementary schools identified as needing improvement.

“My goal is to review the school improvement plans and offer advice and strategies that will work,” said Dr. Blake. “As an external consultant I can be more objective and offer solutions that have been proven to work.”

Her initial reaction to Worcester’s progress has been a positive one.

“I’m impressed with the level of commitment of the educators in this district,” said Dr. Blake. “I think they’ll exceed their own expectations.”

At the Roosevelt School — one of the six schools receiving on-site training — Dr. Blake gave teachers suggestions for differentiated instruction activities and examples of student interest surveys. She stressed the importance of knowing each and every child and understanding, appreciating and building upon student differences.

“She was extremely inspiring,” said Roosevelt School Principal Ellen Kelley. “The teachers loved her presentation and are ready to implement her ideas and activities in their classrooms. She

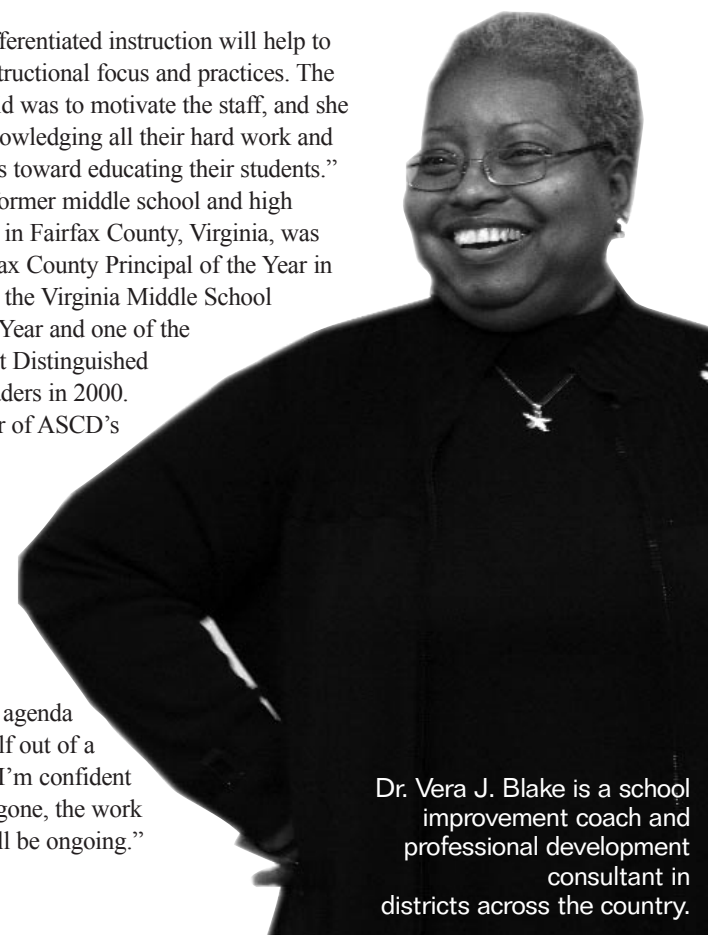
showed how differentiated instruction will help to promote our instructional focus and practices. The best thing she did was to motivate the staff, and she did that by acknowledging all their hard work and positive attitudes toward educating their students.”

Dr. Blake, a former middle school and high school principal in Fairfax County, Virginia, was named the Fairfax County Principal of the Year in 1999, as well as the Virginia Middle School Principal of the Year and one of the Washington Post Distinguished Educational Leaders in 2000.

She is a member of ASCD’s Differentiated Instruction and What Works in Schools cadres.

She expects her time in the WPS will be short-lived.

“My ultimate agenda is to work myself out of a job,” she said. “I’m confident that when I am gone, the work and progress will be ongoing.”



Dr. Vera J. Blake is a school improvement coach and professional development consultant in districts across the country.

More time to learn

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

While all eyes were on Gov. Deval L. Patrick as he toured the Jacob Hiatt Magnet School, interacting with students, teachers and administrators, Patrick's eyes were on Expanded Learning Time (ELT) in action. He took a front-row seat in the classrooms, engaging students in candid discussions and observing their daily progress in math and reading.

Patrick visited the school, along with Sen. Ed Augustus, Rep. Vincent Pedone, Rep. James O'Day and Superintendent Dr. James A. Caradonio, promoting his administration's targeted education investments contained in the proposed Fiscal Year 2009 budget.

The governor's FY09 budget included \$17.5 million for ELT — a 35 percent increase from last year.

The premise of ELT is to lengthen the school year by a total of 300 hours. Benefits include additional time for core academic subjects; expanded learning blocks to allow teachers time to teach through hands-on, interactive projects; more opportunities for teachers to collaborate during school; and the integration of engaging enrichment activities.

Gov. Patrick applauds work being done at Jacob Hiatt



"For the second consecutive year, we have increased funding to extend the school day, offering students the additional classroom time they need to meet ever-rising

expectations," said Patrick. "In Massachusetts, we are serious about no child being left behind - and so we have increased funding to help underperforming schools bolster student achievement and to provide individual students the extra help they need to succeed."

The Jacob Hiatt Magnet School in particular has been hailed for implementing an extended day through the Commonwealth's ELT grants. The school was a pioneer member of ELT when it began in September 2006, along with nine other public schools. In September 2007, nine more schools — including City View and Chandler elementary schools — redesigned their day in order to expand learning time, bringing the total to 19 schools in eight districts across the state.

In addition to Patrick, Christopher Gabrieli, former gubernatorial candidate and an advocate for ELT, visited the Jacob Hiatt Magnet School in early

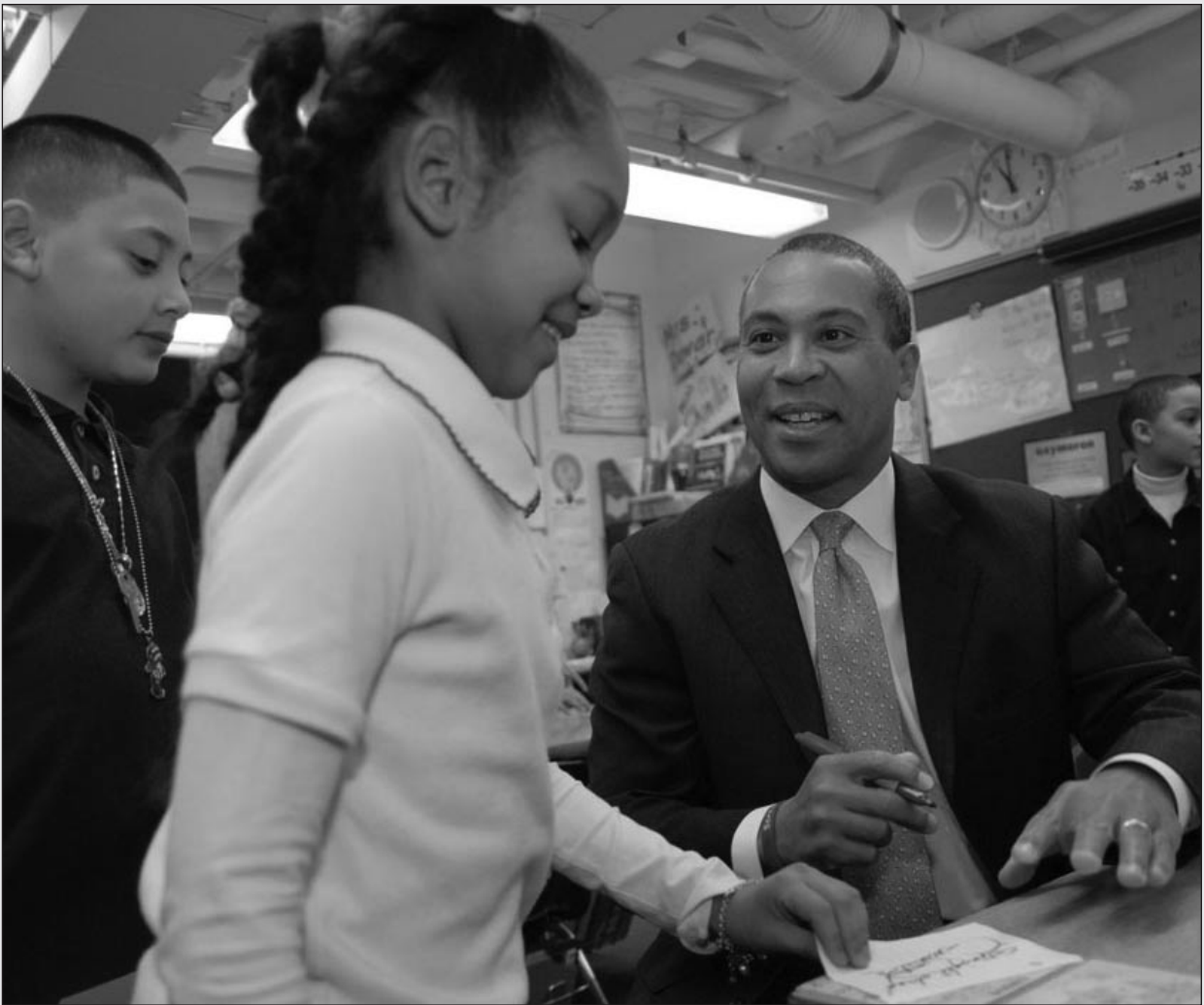
June. Gabrieli is co-founder and chairman of Massachusetts 2020, an organization that works with the state to expand the economic and educational opportunities for children and families across the state. Gabrieli features the Jacob Hiatt Magnet School in his new book, "Time to Learn: How a New School Schedule Is Making Smarter Kids, Happier Parents & Safer Neighborhoods." The book examines how the extended school day is transforming classrooms and improving student achievement.

"With more time, teachers can help more students gain the strong academic fundamentals they need to succeed," said Gabrieli.

“

"For the second consecutive year, we have increased funding to extend the school day, offering students the additional classroom time they need to meet ever-rising expectations."

Gov. Deval Patrick



Top photo: Jacob Hiatt Magnet School students get a visit from Gov. Deval Patrick; above, Gov. Patrick autographs a picture for Celina Miche.



Benjamin Darling reads to Gov. Patrick a story he wrote

ALUMNI PROFILE

Overcoming obstacles

Doherty High grad inspires with his story

BY GRETCHEN WEBER

For six months while he was a senior at Doherty Memorial High School, Douglas Luffborough III was homeless. He had grown up in a house in Tatnuck Square, but in 1986, he found himself living on the



Doug Luffborough III

streets, in shelters, and bouncing between family and friends with his mother and two younger brothers.

While such hardship might have driven others to drop out, Luffborough never considered giving up. He credits his mother for always encouraging him to pursue his dreams.

“What kept me in school was my drive to achieve a college education, my peers who talked about going

to college all the time, and my mom who saw me as college material,” said Luffborough.

After graduating from Doherty, Luffborough attended Northeastern University where he earned a degree in human resources and business management as well as the respect and admiration of his classmates, who elected him to be the student speaker at graduation in 1993. That day, Luffborough shared the stage with President Bill Clinton, the commencement speaker, who was so impressed with Luffborough that he invited him and his mother for a personal tour of the White House 11 days later.

“He came from such humble circumstances to go to college and he made the most of it,” Clinton said at the time. “He never felt sorry for himself, and he had a mother who helped him believe in himself.”

Luffborough’s first job out of college was as a benefits technician with John Hancock Financial Services, but he never forgot his dream of helping others.

“Because of what I went through my senior year of high school, I wanted to one day run my own nonprofit organization and give back to others like someone did for me,” he said.

Luffborough went on to earn a master’s degree in education from Harvard, and he now runs the nonprofit organization he founded called Turning the Hearts



President Clinton shakes hands with Doug Luffborough at his Northeastern graduation in 1993, following Luffborough’s inspirational speech.

Center. Based in Chula Vista, Calif., Turning the Hearts Center is dedicated to empowering youth, developing responsible leaders of tomorrow, and strengthening families. The center provides programs such as anger-management and conflict-resolution classes, career counseling, parenting groups, substance-abuse classes and pregnancy-prevention groups for both girls and boys.

“I have such fond memories of my youth and the people that left an impression on my life.”

Doug Luffborough

All of Turning the Heart Center’s efforts revolve around the six core values of character, excellence, honesty, integrity, respect, and trust, as well as the guiding principles of being community driven, community service, family centered, inclusive, teamwork, and youth empowerment.

Although Luffborough lives in California, Worcester still holds a special place in his heart. It was here that he developed the values and beliefs that he practices and shares with others today.

“I loved growing up in Tatnuck Square and attending the Worcester Public Schools,” said Luffborough. “I have such fond memories of my youth and the people that left an impression on my life. To me Worcester was a great place to grow up.”

In addition to running Turning the Hearts Center, Luffborough also travels the country as a motivational speaker and trainer, inspiring groups with his personal story of hope and perseverance.

When asked what advice he would share with Doherty Memorial High School students today, Luffborough replied, “Take school and your studies seriously, and never forget those that helped you get there.”

More information about Luffborough and Turning the Hearts Center can be found at www.doughluff.com and www.turningtheheartscenter.org.

No excuses for not achieving

University Park's Eressy builds a culture of success and achievement

By RICH FAHEY

The success of the University Park Campus School, a 225-student, grade 7-12 school adjacent to Clark University, has not gone unnoticed.

University Park Principal June Eressy was one of five winners of the Central Mass. YWCA's prestigious Katharine F. Erskine Award during the 15th annual Tribute to Women on May 6 at Mechanics Hall.

Eressy also serves as principal of Claremont Academy, another grade 7-12 school with 375 students

located on the opposite side of the Clark campus. University Park, Claremont and the Goddard School of Science and Technology all work with Clark under an initiative called the Main South Secondary Collaborative.

While University Park's achievements are well established — its students have consistently ranked in the top 25 percent of all Massachusetts high schools on the MCAS

math and English exams — Claremont has been making steady progress in the past few years.

Eressy has been at University

Park since it opened in 1997, first instituting the English language arts program and then serving as principal for the last six years. She said that by establishing a culture of success and achievement at the school and then building upon that, the road to success was smoother.

"It's much easier to build from the ground up and create a culture than to take an established school and try to turn it around," said Eressy, a veteran of 28 years in Worcester Public Schools.

One of the key factors in University Park's success has been the Clark partnership. The college offers free tuition to University Park graduates who qualify for admission.

"They've been a wonderful



June Eressy, principal of University Park Campus School and Claremont Academy, was recognized for outstanding leadership.

partner," said Eressy, a former Worcester Teacher of the Year. "Their students are in our classes all the time. They conduct on-site

seminars and our students can take classes there for college credit."

The demographics of University Park and Claremont students are not markedly different than those of other city secondary schools, and reflect the adjoining Main South neighborhood. Three-quarters of the 225 students come from low-income families, and more than half are from households where English is not the primary language. Many are reading at well below their grade level when they enter the school in grade 7, and undergo intensive training in grades 7 and 8 to prepare them for a demanding, honors-level curriculum.

Clark has also played a strong role in stabilizing and strengthening the neighborhoods adjoining its campus, offering financial incentives for faculty and staff to live there and helping to attract \$120 million in public and private funding.

Eressy, who has instituted a community service requirement at University Park, said that no one at the school is resting on the laurels of previous years, given how much work goes into getting students ready to do demanding work.

"It's something we constantly work at," she said. "We have high expectations for our students. It's assumed they'll go to college."



Principal June Eressy chats with students Xiomara Rivera, left, and Shaniya Moran.



Above, Kara Farber participates in the Special Olympics with a little help from occupational therapist Gina Conroy, left, and Tracey Stankus.



Above, Sullivan Middle School student Jose Salgado receives a medal from Midge Wetzel. At right, Forest Grove's Edgar Torres of the Hartwell Learning Center throws a ball from the outfield with the support of WPS physical education teacher Juan Lopez.



Forest Grove's Samantha Geary races through the finish line at the Special Olympics.



Above, Gates Lane Middle School runners, from left, Brandon Brais, Estuardo Perez, Harvey Richardson, and Matthew Stepton; at right, Matthew Hamalainen of Burncoat Middle School celebrates his medal.



Special Olympics

Special athletes have a memorable day at Commerce Bank Field

By Caitlin Bowler

It was indeed a special day at Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium June 12, when Worcester Public Schools held its second annual Special Olympics competition. Although only in its second year, the Special Olympics was a big success, according to Colleen O'Brien, Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics. Students from 12 individual schools, including the Hartwell Learning Center, competed in a series of events that included the standing long jump, the running long jump, 25- and 50-meter walks, 50- and 100-meter dashes, 25- and 100-meter wheelchair races, softball and tennis ball throws, and a bean bag drop.

"It was good that we were able to organize

the Special Olympics again this year," said O'Brien. "The kids had a great time competing in the events and participating in the awards ceremony. And all of the staff was incredible—the dedication to the kids and the work they put in is amazing. Everyone had a good time." Massachusetts Special Olympics contacted O'Brien in the fall of 2006 asking if Worcester Public Schools would be interested in hosting a Special Olympics. With support from the administration, physical education teachers, special education teachers, and aides at participating schools organized the event, which was a big success. "This event is memorable for our staff and the students," O'Brien said. "It takes a lot of work to pull it together, but it is a wonderful experience for everyone involved."



Gates Lane Elementary School students root for the athletes at the Special Olympics at Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium.

The hills were alive with the Sound of Music

At right, Worcester Credit Union President and CEO Karen Duffy presents an award to Julie Andrews at the WEDF benefit concert. Below, Andrews shares a hug with Meaghan Molle of Tatnuck Magnet School.



Andrews' appearance highlights WEDF annual benefit concert

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Mechanics Hall came alive with the Sound of Music this spring, as the Worcester Educational Development Foundation (WEDF) welcomed Julie Andrews to its annual benefit concert.

Andrews, an award-winning English actress, singer and icon, is best known for her roles in musical films such as *Mary Poppins* (1964) and *The Sound of Music* (1965). During the concert, held on April 3, Worcester students performed a medley of songs from both films. The event's theme, "The Hills are Alive," was a reference both to Andrews' most famous song and to Worcester's seven hills.

"It was a wonderful event," said Dr. Stephen Mills, deputy superintendent and president of WEDF. "We were thrilled to welcome Julie Andrews, who signed autographs and introduced the performances."

More than 300 musicians, singers and dancers from the Worcester Public Schools took part in the concert, which raised \$50,000 for the WEDF.

Founded in 2005, the WEDF is a non-profit foundation with the sole purpose of enhancing and enriching education in Worcester Public Schools.

The 14-member board of directors includes representatives from education, business and community organizations. The members are united by their desire to generate money to support the programming and materials necessary to extend curriculum offerings in the areas of academics, the arts and athletics.

The idea for the foundation came from

Mills, after witnessing six difficult budget cycles.

"I literally took a \$10 bill out of my pocket, went to the bank and started WEDF," said Mills. "It's become so much larger and more successful than we ever dreamed. There are so many individuals and businesses in Worcester that care about and support our schools."

In just three years, the foundation has raised more than \$2.5 million through private donations and events such as the annual concert and golf tournament. This year's tournament, held on June 9, raised \$85,000.



Dr. Stephen Mills is deputy superintendent and president of WEDF.

Renovations were successful thanks to the foundation's efforts and a \$1 million donation from Commerce Bank & Trust.

To advance its mission, the WEDF continues to seek support from individuals, corporations and foundations. Contributions may be sent to: Worcester Educational Development Foundation, Inc., Room 102, 20 Irving St., Worcester, MA 01609.

The money goes directly back to students and teachers in the form of college scholarships and mini-grants. The mini-grants, distributed twice a year, are used to supplement classroom materials, activities, field trips and programs. To date, more than 200 teachers have been awarded funding.

The campaign to install synthetic turf at Foley Stadium was another major accomplishment of the WEDF.

Dress for success

Adult Learning Center students learn to prepare for job interviews

By RICH FAHEY

When it comes to presenting yourself as a prospective employee, making a good first impression is vital.

But what if you don't have a strong work history, or someone to tell you what you should be doing to prepare for a job interview, or how to put your best foot forward?

Students in the Worcester Public Schools Adult Learning Center, as part of a training program to ready them for the workplace, staged a fashion show to demonstrate to their fellow students what they should look like when embarking on a job interview.

Learning Center facilitator John McGovern said about 35 adult learners participated in the show. "The students were always asking me, 'What do you really mean by appropriate dress? Can we see examples?' So we went to stores and picked out examples of what would be great fashions for the workplace."

The fashion show was greatly aided by corporate contributions, gift certificates, loaned clothes, and clothes donated by local retailers such as Suitable Images, Coldwater Creek and Rob Roy.

"Everyone who participated in the show got an outfit free," said McGovern.

The learning center offers basic skills courses, GED classes, and English classes to those who speak English as a second language. The classes, for people age 16 and up, are held in the Fanning Building on Chatham Street. It is the largest official GED testing center in Central Massachusetts.

McGovern said the Dress for Success program is actually part of an eight-hour course to ready clients to enter the workforce, modeled after a program offered by Junior Achievement (JA) of Central Mass. for young people.

The course offers information about workplace ethics, writing a cover letter and resume, and the importance of being on time and showing up for work every day. The center's clients then conduct mock interviews with members of the JA board and volunteers, including several CEOs and human-resource professionals. The professionals critique the interview skills, resume, and dress of the clients and make suggestions on how to improve.

Deb Hopkins, president of Junior Achievement of Central Mass., said JA shared office space with the Adult Learning Center three years ago and a collaboration resulted.

McGovern and his staff adapted JA's strategies for young people. Hopkins said meeting McGovern's students — many of whom are recent immigrants learning English — also gave her a window into other important aspects of job interviews.



Adult Learning Center students are dressed for success.



Noteworthy



The Burncoat High School Select Chorus, under the direction of David Twiss, back left, is one of the best in the country.

Burncoat chorus impresses at music festival in Virginia

By RICH FAHEY

The Latin word quadrivium literally means "the four ways" or "the four roads." In the case of the Burncoat High School Select Chorus, it also stands for the four voices that make up a typical chorus: soprano, alto, tenor and bass.

Burncoat's Quadrivium chorus has only been together since last September, but it has already found its voice. It competed in the chamber chorus division (smaller than 25 students) of the Heritage Music Festival in Williamsburg, Va., in April. Heritage Festivals was established in 1980 by a group of music educators and educational tour professionals who believed that bands, choirs, and orchestras deserved new performing opportunities.

Quadrivium came home with a first-place finish in the chamber chorus division in Williamsburg and an overall silver medal rating, just missing a gold medal score. A total of 36 choruses from all around the country competed in the weekend festival.

It was another award that the chorus earned that really made chorus director David Twiss smile.

"The Spirit of Williamsburg award only goes to one chorus," he said. "It goes to the chorus which best

represents its community and state." State Rep. James O'Day of Worcester recognized the chorus at the State House, where they also performed.

Students must audition for the select chorus; this year there were 20 members, but only 18 traveled to Virginia. Students had to come up with some money on their own and generous contributions from Coghlin Electric and the Worcester Credit Union also helped.

The Burncoat students also had a chance to tour Colonial Williamsburg and Jamestown and participate in a "Ghost Walk."

"It was wonderful," said Twiss, "a very positive experience all the way around."

Twiss said he would like to take the chorus on the road again. A total of 77 students participate in the Burncoat chorus program, offered under the school's Visual and Performing Arts magnet program.

The members of Quadrivium include: Peter Arsenault, Amanda Bonds, Daniel Bourque, Rachael Brown, Mark Connolly, Dominic Dipersia, Kimberly Driscoll, Veronica Elson, Hillary Halzel, Nora Keefe, Henry Lindner, Olivia Michalak, Erin Moynihan, Rose Murphy, Joseph Petmezis, Crystal Quist, Jonathan Wake, Julianne White, Amanda Wolanski and Jaclyn Youngblood.

Tornadoes develop literacy all-stars



BY MEAGHAN CASEY

The Worcester Tornadoes are creating quite a whirl in classrooms across the city, promoting the joy of reading and healthy living.

The minor league baseball organization is active with local youth and educational programs both during the season and in the off-season. Tornadoes staff, coaches and players participate in a variety of literacy programs, healthy lifestyle and physical education programs, autograph signings and baseball camps.

David Smith, Tornadoes third base coach and director of community affairs

and education, schedules and leads the school visits.

"We believe strongly in giving back to all of our local communities and schools," said Smith. "Team members visit schools all year long with the hopes of educating students on why we should find extra time in our day to read, the importance of being active and healthy, as well as the importance of sportsmanship and teamwork."

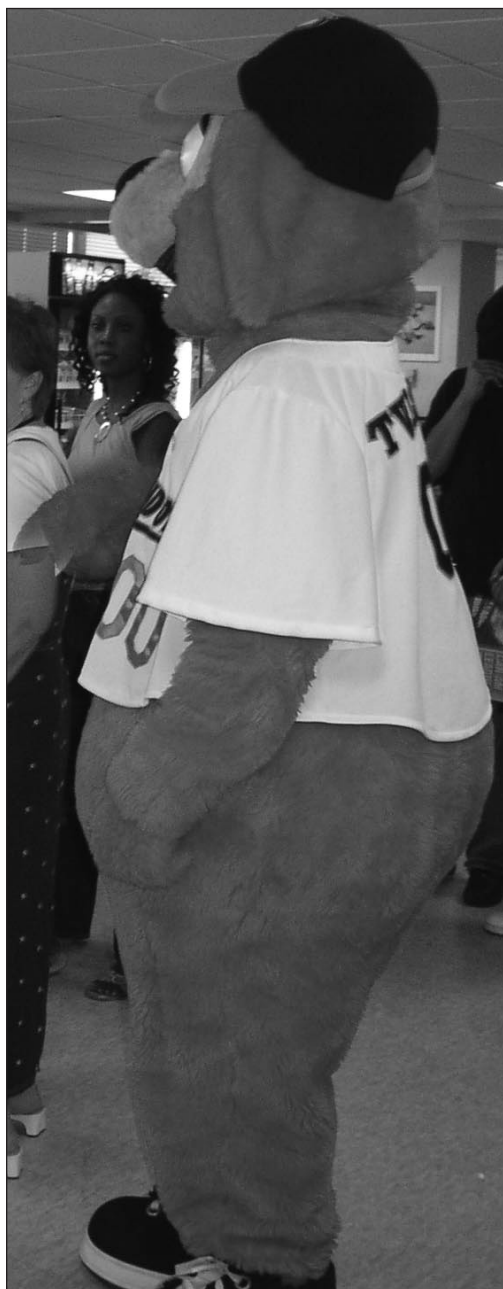
At the City View School, Smith led two school-wide programs on healthy choices and exercise. Every month he, along with pitcher Matt Weagle and first baseman Chris Colabello, visited a fifth grade class.

"It's special for the kids to be able to interact with the players on that personal level," said Michael Dunphy, assistant principal at City View School. "For them to take the time and come here once a month, it says a lot about their commitment."

Team representatives, including beloved mascot Twister, visited 38,490 students in more than 200 schools throughout Central Massachusetts in the 2007-08 school year.

"It's wonderful to see the number of schools that have embraced us and the importance of our message," said Smith.

At each presentation, students received a complimentary community education booklet, thanks to a generous grant from Tornadoes Board of Directors member Mary DeFeudis. The glossy booklet included an outline of the Tornadoes' community education program, as well as information about baseball camps, birthday parties and the Tornadoes Tykes Club. It also featured an activities page with Tornadoes-themed trivia, a word scramble and a word search, as well as a voucher good for one grandstand ticket to a 2008 Tornadoes game.



Tornadoes mascot Twister is a big hit with students.

WPS 2008 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

The Worcester Public Schools Athletic Hall of Fame held its 2008 induction May 16 at Wachuestt Country Club in West Boylston. Honorees included:

ATHLETES

Michael Bradley '97

Burncoat High
Basketball

Sheila Harrity '83

Doherty High
Basketball, Field Hockey and Softball

Michael M. Mazzola '57

Commerce High
Baseball, Basketball and Football

Andrew C. Murch '69

Doherty High
Cross Country and Track

James Murphy '78

South High
Basketball, Football, Track

Martin J. O'Brien '37 (Deceased)

Commerce High
Baseball, Basketball and Football

Patrick Phenix '78

Worcester Vocational
Baseball, Football and Hockey

Ralph A. Raymond '42

Commerce High
Baseball, Basketball and Football

John P. Ricciardi '47

Boy's Trade
Baseball and Basketball

Frank J. Scavone Sr. '39 (Deceased)

Boy's Trade
Baseball, Basketball and Football

Robert V. Vartanian '69

North High
Baseball and Basketball

COACHES

Francis Donaher (Deceased)

Boy's Trade
Baseball and Football

John J. Wallace (Deceased)

Commerce and Doherty 1949-1979
Cross Country, Indoor/Outdoor Track

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTOR

Gabe N. Simon '49

South High
Past president, Boys Club of America

Audit highlights improved schools

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Worcester Public Schools was commended for its substantial progress in areas examined by the state first in 2005, and again in 2007.

The most recent audit, performed last November by the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability (EQA), reflected improvement across the board. In 2005, the WPS had a total of 44 EQA indicators and standards ranked as unsatisfactory or poor. In 2007, the district had zero at those levels and 60 at the satisfactory or excellent levels.

In a notification letter, Dr. John J. Aherne, interim executive director of the Educational Management Audit Council (EMAC), commended the WPS for "the positive changes made by the administration, particularly regarding the use of data to inform instruction and the implementation of performance-based contracts for administrators, and the use of data in developing the school district budget.

"The Council also commends the school district for the opening of the new vocational technical high school, for its use of assessment data, formal walkthroughs by administrators, ELL professional development offerings, and for successfully bringing MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) and AP (Advanced Placement) programs into the district," wrote Aherne. "Your

district has demonstrated improved achievement despite the diminishing resources."

Thirteen auditors visited schools, interviewed WPS and non-WPS individuals, and reviewed hundreds of pages of documents. Auditors rated WPS as being excellent in the following areas: community partnerships; school safety plans; school safety training; and grants and financial management. The report also concluded that WPS student performance improved by five proficiency index points in English and six points in math since the 2005 findings.

As a result of the district's progress, the EMAC voted to remove the WPS from "watch" status, which it has been under as a result of the first audit.

While the overall findings were positive, the EQA report did cite some areas in need of improvement. Those challenges include increasing funding and staffing levels, making all students proficient in English, math and science, and continuing to improve curriculum and staff development.

The EQA was created by the state legislature in July of 2000 to provide independent and objective programmatic and financial audits of the more than 350 school districts statewide. Its determinations of a district's success at improving student performance are based on the standards of effective management and efficient financial control.

Dr. Caradonio retires after 15 years

DR. CARADONIO: from Page 1

up in Houston, attended the La Salette High School Seminary in Jefferson City, Mo. He went to college at the La Salette Seminary in Altamont, N.Y., for two years before transferring to Merrimack College, graduating in 1969. He spent one year in theology school – formal training for the priesthood – before answering a different call, to educate youth. It's hard to imagine him having a more positive effect on so many lives.

After a year in Puerto Rico, Dr. Caradonio, who earned his master's at Northeastern and doctorate from Harvard, worked 17 years in Boston Public Schools in a variety of positions, focusing on bilingual and vocational education, curriculum and staff development and computer technology. While he was attending Harvard Graduate School of Education, he worked as a strategic planning consultant in Cambridge Public Schools.

A glance at Dr. Caradonio's résumé shows a career spent almost exclusively in urban public school systems, except for a three-year stint as assistant superintendent in East Greenwich, R.I., immediately before he came to Worcester. According to Dr. Caradonio, that is not a coincidence.

"I spent three years in a suburban system and I enjoyed it, but I knew that when the opportunity arose, I would go back to an urban school system," he said, adding that a number of factors in his background contributed to his proclivity for urban education.

"I always felt a calling to work in places where people needed more assistance," Dr. Caradonio said. "I'm a card-carrying Baby Boomer. I grew up in the era of JFK and Martin Luther King. My dad was an Italian immigrant who was a great volunteer. I always had an affinity for people who came here from other countries and had to struggle."

Dr. Caradonio came to Worcester as deputy superintendent in 1993, working for Superintendent Dr. James L. Garvey. His arrival coincided with the passing of the Education Reform Act, which provided a significant infusion of resources.

"It was a very exciting time," Dr. Caradonio said. "There were a lot of resources and a lot of new programs that provided students with the supports and skills they needed to meet the demands of the 21st century. While we wanted higher standards and outcomes for all our students, we also had the matching resources and support to realize and reach our desired goals."

Unfortunately, Dr. Caradonio said, the last several years of his career have been spent in an almost opposite economic climate: doing more and more with less and less. Nonetheless, in Worcester Public Schools, student achievement has improved, despite the declining resources.

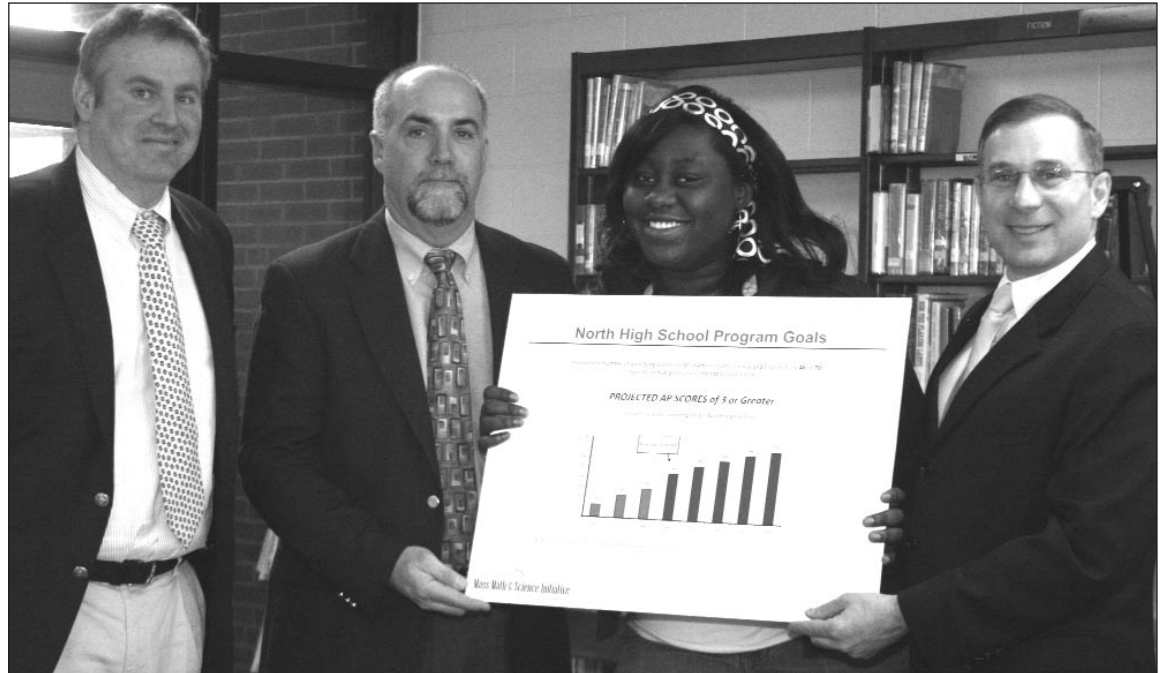
"We had to cut 680 positions – 18 percent of the workforce – and in the midst of all this student achievement has increased," Dr. Caradonio said, noting that the more than 1,000 students taking AP exams last year was four times as many as when he arrived. Worcester also has one of the lowest dropout rates – 5 percent – among urban systems.

Between 2004 and 2007, more WPS students scored Advanced/Proficient on MCAS exams in English and in Math, a performance pattern that few other comparable schools districts have demonstrated.

"It was the best of times and the worst of times and I was here for both," he said.

Dr. Caradonio entered the state's early retirement system five years ago and could have retired two years ago. He remained to see through the building of the new Worcester Tech and the planning for a new North High. Not ready to stop working outright, he is currently looking at different opportunities in public education.

"The people in Worcester were very welcoming," he said. "They're hard workers and they appreciate someone who works with them to achieve results for their children. I felt very comfortable here. I can't believe it's been 15 years. It truly feels like 15 minutes."



Massachusetts Math and Science Initiative President Morton Orlov presents North High School program goals to, from left, Principal Matthew Morse, former Principal David Elworthy and student Rahel Asare at the MMSI grant announcement.

Exxon/Mobil grant fuels increased AP opportunities

GRANT: from Page 1

getting MMSI grants.

Massachusetts is one of seven states nationwide chosen to receive up to \$13.2 million over the next six years from the MMSI Advanced Placement training and incentive program.

Frances Arena, former manager of curriculum and professional development for Worcester Public Schools, said the grant would pay for professional development for AP teachers in the areas of English language arts, math and the sciences, support for students, reimbursement for materials used in the courses, and other benefits.

"The aim is to attract under-represented students and make it possible for them to take the AP courses and get a passing grade of 3, 4 or 5," said Arena.

Worcester had applied for grants for three high schools — Doherty, North and Claremont Academy — and their feeder middle schools — Forest Grove, Worcester East and Claremont Academy, grades 7 and 8.

Arena said Claremont, in particular, was "very close" to succeeding and that Doherty and Claremont would both be applying for the second round of grants, along with Burncoat and South High.

The schools' ongoing relationship with area colleges has been key to securing grants from MMSI and other groups. Those partnerships were celebrated with the Success Initiative on June 19, when WPS secondary school teachers met with instructors from several area colleges.

The MMSI grant program also includes reaching out to parents of students at North to encourage them to make sure their children take rigorous courses in school so they will be prepared to take AP courses later in their high school careers.

Another recent positive trend is that the pool of students taking the courses has increased significantly in past years while the number of passing scores has not decreased.

Ninth-grade students entering North who have



Mayor Konstantina B. Lukes speaks at the grant announcement.

participated in the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program, which seeks to turn B and C students into students who take AP courses, are increasingly showing up in both honors and AP courses, said Arena, who noted North's AVID I class will increase from 15 to 38 students.

The numbers of students taking AP courses this year at North has increased dramatically. For example, the number of students taking AP literature jumped from 10 to 23; the number taking statistics went from 12 to 20; language remained the same at 15; calculus increased from 13 to 16; chemistry from 12 to 17; and biology from 11 to 19. Physics is being offered for the first time.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. James A. Caradonio made increasing the number of students taking AP courses a priority during his tenure.

WORCESTER DIRECTORY SCHOOLS

North Quadrant

Donald Kelley, *Quadrant Manager*
(508) 799-3221

High school
North High School
Matthew Morse, Principal
150 Harrington Way, Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3370

Middle school
Worcester East Middle School
Rose Dawkins, Principal
420 Grafton St., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3430

Elementary schools
Belmont Street Community School
Dr. Susan Proulx, Principal
170 Belmont St., Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3588

City View School
Albert Ganem, Principal
80 Prospect St., Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3670

Grafton Street School
Mary McKiernan, Acting Principal
311 Grafton St., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3478

Lake View School
Margaret Bondar, Principal
133 Coburn Ave., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3536

Rice Square School
Kathleen Valeri, Principal
76 Massasoit Road, Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3556

Roosevelt School
Ellen Kelley, Principal
1006 Grafton St., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3482

Union Hill School
Denise Bahosh, Principal
1 Chapin St., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3600

South Quadrant

Mary Meade-Montaque, *Quadrant Manager*
(508) 799-3264

High schools
Claremont Academy
June Eressy, Principal
15 Claremont St., Worcester 01610
(508) 799-3077

Gerald C. Creamer Comprehensive Skills Center
Timothy Whalen, Coordinator
120 Granite St., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3476

South High School
Maureen Binienda, Principal
170 Apricot St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3325

University Park Campus School
June Eressy, Principal
12 Freeland St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3591

Worcester Alternative School
Dr. Michael O'Neil, Coordinator
22 Waverly St., Worcester 01604
(508) 799-3245

Middle school
Sullivan Middle School
Robert Jennings, Principal
140 Apricot St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3350

Elementary schools
Canterbury Street Magnet School
Elizabeth Army, Principal
129 Canterbury St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3484

Columbus Park Preparatory Academy
Jessica Boss, Acting Principal
75 Lovell St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3490

Gates Lane School
Ann Swenson, Principal
1238 Main St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3488

Goddard School
Marion Guerra, Principal
14 Richards St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3594

Heard Street School
Thomas Brindisi, Principal
200 Heard St., Worcester 01603
(508) 799-3525

Quinsigamond School
Debbie Mitchell, Principal
14 Blackstone River Rd., Worcester 01607
(508) 799-3502

Vernon Hill School
Irene Logan, Principal
211 Providence St., Worcester 01607
(508) 799-3630

Woodland Academy
Patricia E. Padilla, Principal
15 Claremont St., Worcester 01610
(508) 799-3557

Burncoat Quadrant

Mary Meade-Montaque, *Quadrant Manager*
(508) 799-3264

High school
Burncoat High School
William Foley, Principal
179 Burncoat St., Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3300

Middle school
Burncoat Middle School
Lisa Houlihan, Principal
135 Burncoat St., Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3390

Elementary schools
Burncoat Street Preparatory School
Debra Frank, Principal
526 Burncoat St., Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3537

Clark Street Developmental Learning Center
Marie Morse, Principal
280 Clark St., Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3545

Lincoln Street School
Mary Beth Pulsifer, Principal
549 Lincoln St., Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3504

McGrath Elementary School
Nancy Dahlstrom, Principal
493 Grove St., Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3584

Norrback Avenue School
Dr. Karrie Allen, Principal
44 Malden St., Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3500

Thorndyke Road School
Elaine Zingarelli, Principal
30 Thorndyke Road, Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3550

Wawecus Road School
Paula Proctor, Principal
20 Wawecus Road, Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3527

Worcester Arts Magnet School
Susan O'Neil, Principal
15 St. Nicholas Ave., Worcester 01606
(508) 799-3575

Doherty Quadrant

Donald Kelley, *Quadrant Manager*
(508) 799-3221

High school
Doherty Memorial High School
Sally Maloney, Principal
299 Highland St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3270

Middle school
Forest Grove Middle School
Maureen McCullough, Principal
495 Grove St., Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3420

Elementary schools
Chandler Magnet School
Ivonne Perez, Principal
525 Chandler St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3452

Chandler Street Elementary School
Mark Berthiaume, Principal
114 Chandler St., Worcester 01609
(508) 799-3572

Elm Park Community School
Ruthann Melancon, Principal
23 N. Ashland St., Worcester 01609
(508) 799-3568

Flagg Street School
Dr. Sheila Graham, Principal
115 Flagg St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3522

Jacob Hiatt Magnet School
Patricia Gaudette, Principal
772 Main St., Worcester 01610
(508) 799-3601

May Street School
Luke Roberts, Principal
265 May St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3520

Midland Street School
Patricia McCullough, Principal
18 Midland St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3548

Nelson Place School
Malachi Kelley, Principal
35 Nelson Place, Worcester 01605
(508) 799-3506

Tatnuck Magnet School
Thomas Pappas, Principal
1083 Pleasant St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3554

West Tatnuck School
Steven Soldi, Principal
300 Mower St., Worcester 01602
(508) 799-3596

Technical

Donald Kelley
(508) 799-3221

Worcester Technical High School
Sheila Harrity, Principal
1 Skyline Dr., Worcester 01605
(508) 799-1940

The following Worcester Public Schools staff, parents and community members were honored this year:

- Dr. John E. Durkin**
Administration Building Award
Louise L. Clarke
- Female Administrator Frances Perkins Award**
Bette Carr
- Male Administrator John Adams Award**
Dr. James A. Caradonio
- Administrative Secretary of the Year**
Gabrielle E. Zaleski
- Instructional Assistant of the Year**
Cynthia A. Brownell
- Custodian John Lapomardo Award**
Mark S. Sepuka
- School Shop John F. Doherty Award**
Todd M. Gonyea
- Educational Secretary of the Year**
Erin E. Toohil
- Community Service Award**
David Brunelle

2008 AWARDS

- Volunteer of the Year**
Gina Vallee
- School Nurse of the Year**
Mary Jane Leidel
- Teacher of the Year**
Ronald X. Levine
- Thomas Jefferson Awards**
Kelly McNamara, *Belmont Street Community School*
Michelle Wrenn, *Burncoat High School*
Matt Moison, *Burncoat Middle School*
Laura and Mitchell Dyke, *Burncoat Street Preparatory School*
Maureen DiStefano, *Canterbury Street Magnet Computer-Based School*
Gayle Dufour, *Chandler Elementary Community School*
Madeleine Belinskas, *Chandler Magnet School*
Steven Alzamora, *ExcEIl Academy* (New Citizens, EntryWay Programs located at Chandler Magnet School)

- Miere Soares, *City View Discovery School*
Jody Lee, *Claremont Academy*
Deborah Stone, *Clark Street Developmental Learning School*
Barbara Shea, *Columbus Park Preparatory Academy*
Carolyn Waters, *Doherty Memorial High School*
Dana Ramos, *Elm Park Community School*
Gina Goggins, *Flagg Street School*
Fred King, *Forest Grove Middle School*
Angela Dyer, *Gerald Creamer Center*
Sandra Velazquez, *Goddard School of Science and Technology*
Dee Anne Bouffard, *Grafton Street School*
Janet Bertrand, *Heard Street Discovery Academy*
Patricia Genese, *Jacob Hiatt Magnet School*
Jill Shea, *Lake View School*
Maria Gallagher, *Lincoln Street School*
Mary Anne Ferrante, *May Street School*
Angie Miller, *Francis J. McGrath Elementary School*
Laurel Ciprari, *Midland Street School*

- Mindy Mahan & Lisa Lussier, *Nelson Place School*
Christine Rushlow & Kimberly Williams, *Norrback Avenue School*
Gretchen Grogan, *North High School*
Joyce Miller & Vickie Koski, *Quinsigamond School*
Debra Adamonis & Linda Morin, *Rice Square School*
Elaine Marzilli, *Roosevelt School*
(Janet) Ellen Parkinson, *South High Community School*
Kathryn Bastien, *Sullivan Middle School*
Beth Jankowski and Kae Plucinski, *Tatnuck Magnet School*
Lori Simpson, *Thorndyke Road School*
Michele Hoey-Sloan, *Union Hill School*
Daniel Restuccia, *University Park Campus School*
Carlie Geige, Rachel Stearns and Christopher Szkutak, *Vernon Hill School*
Carey Macaruso, *Wawecus Road School*
Patsy Cecil, *West Tatnuck School*
Suzanna Resendes, *Woodland Academy*
Jeannine Fitzgerald, *Worcester Arts Magnet School*
John Healy, *Worcester East Middle School*
Ricardo Torres, *Worcester Technical High School*

Elementary Schools

Belmont Community

Belmont Street School is the proud recipient of a READesign Grant, sponsored in partnership with Capital One and the Heart of America Foundation. This summer, the school library underwent a transformation, complete with new books, furniture, lighting, and a mural painted by a Disney artist. The entire community was invited to join the celebration at an opening ceremony.

Canterbury Street Magnet

Canterbury Street Computer Based Magnet School had a very positive after-school and evening program this year. On Monday afternoons, the Preservation Worcester - This Is My City program allowed fifth-graders to visit spots in Worcester and take part in a mock council meeting. Tuesday through Thursday afternoons featured MCAS tutorial (21st Century) and SES tutorial as well as 21st Century Enrichment on Wednesday. Every Body Move Grant held a Friday afternoon program on nutrition, exercise and interactive games.

Chandler

As part of Chandler Elementary School's Expanded Learning Time initiative this year, students have not only had additional time learning in all core subject areas, but also have participated in a variety of health/fitness and art-related activities provided by several community partners. These activities have included swimming, rock climbing, punk rope, virtual gym, hip hop dance, pottery, map making, quilting and mask making.

Chandler Magnet

As a culminating activity that focuses on the Six Traits of Writing, Chandler Magnet School hosted an Author's Day on June 12. Students displayed their writing in a variety of different ways. Parents listened to students' stories and viewed their work. The preparation for this event began in December. Teachers worked on Six Trait Professional Development with the ELA coach for the major part of this year and many opted to be part of an after-school book study.

City View

For the past several years, a wonderful partnership has developed with the Anna Maria College Alumni Association, which has generously donated more than 250 backpacks to students at City View School. Students in one particular class, Miss Bedrosian's first grade, were treated to an exceptionally generous surprise. On May 6, the association delivered brand-new backpacks filled with school supplies to everyone.

Clark Street

Clark Street School has partnered with the Community School and the health and physical education departments to promote healthy living through exercise, good nutrition and education. Students in the after-school program learn weekly about healthy lifestyle choices and ways to stay healthy. Students have a physical activity session that includes instruction about sportsmanship, leadership, commitment and safety. Students look forward to their bi-weekly sessions that are designed to build strong, healthy bodies. This initiative has been led by exercise and fitness expert LeeAnn Cipro.

Columbus Park

Columbus Park students in grades 4-6 competed in the 2008 National Geography Bee. The following students advanced to the school-wide final competition: Jason Dang, Jose Castro, Roble Adams, Brianna Cann, Patrick Shea, Sabrina Borelli, Joseph Valerio, Christian Guardardo, Kristi Xhelili and Michael Tran. Patrick Shea

won the final competition and took a written test for the opportunity to advance to the state level. He was awarded a medal and certificate of achievement. He went on to represent Columbus Park in the statewide competition at Clark University.

Elm Park Community

The Pedometer Project is an innovative health program which targets children at Elm Park who are at risk for developing childhood obesity. The project involves the use of height, weight, body mass index (BMI), pedometers, weekly logs and charts to generate a system for evaluating and monitoring qualitative and quantitative data. The Pedometer Project was initiated in the fall of 2005.

Flagg Street

Me on the Map was a Worcester Educational Development Foundation grant awarded to the first-grade teachers at Flagg Street School. Students were given opportunities to explore geography, mapping skills and social studies, as well as a newspaper relating to travel and mapping. Through this grant, students developed a deeper understanding of geography and their place in the world.

Goddard School of Science and Technology

Grade 5 students from Mrs. Seles' class broadcast live from the office to the entire school. In concert with administration they have become the voice of weather to their peers and the school community. Teams of students are assigned the roles of videographer and broadcaster. Students video their broadcast and critique oral presentation skills as well as presentations using rubrics developed by their teacher using the frameworks. They share ideas on how to improve their broadcast daily.

Heard Street

On June 5 Heard Street School held its first multicultural festival – Heard Street Cultures From Around the Globe. Student artwork was prominently displayed around the building. The all-purpose room had food booths with a variety of culinary delights from countries represented at Heard Street. In addition, there were storytellers, music and dance provided by South High and Heard Street students, as well as the community. Each child received a passport representing the different countries.

Jacob Hiatt Magnet

The students and families of Jacob Hiatt Magnet School continue to enjoy the benefits of a Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Expanded Learning Time grant. Families participated in a family math night sponsored by the Worcester Tornadoes.

Lake View

Lake View School requires all students to take ownership of their learning and achievement. The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) student goal document has assisted with expectations. Students are making academic gains. Those that are not making progress immediately begin an intervention process through a Student Support Process meeting.

Technology accelerated learning this year for the fifth- and sixth-grade students through the Renzulli Learning System, a comprehensive online computer program that allows for the development of educational activities based on individual student profiles.

Lincoln Street

Lincoln Street School RULES: Reads, Understands, Learns, Excels, Succeeds.

Lincoln Street School has adopted a new instructional focus to increase reading comprehension. This will be accom-



plished through the implementation and continuation of research-based best teaching practices. During the kickoff celebration held on May 7, a tree was planted to symbolize that as the tree will grow and flourish, so will students grow and flourish and develop a lifelong love of reading. In order for every student to take ownership in this initiative, they all placed a handful of soil around the tree.

May Street

May Street School expanded its partnership with Worcester State College this year through several new initiatives. A service learning model was developed between Worcester State freshmen and May Street sixth-graders, while K-2 students engaged in weekly hands-on science projects with Worcester State science majors. The school continues to welcome student-teachers. In the area of professional development, all faculty members worked with a consultant from Research for Better Teaching (RBT) in the Skillful Teacher model throughout the year alongside colleagues from Worcester Arts Magnet.

Midland Street

Midland Street School staff and students are very excited about a new partnership with Assumption College. Sixth-grade students were scheduled to visit the college in June to get a snapshot of a day in the life of a college student. They were to work in a science lab on optics and machines, attend an English class and have lunch in the school's cafeteria.

Nelson Place

Nelson Place School prepares students to become self-directed, lifelong learners, skilled communicators and critical and creative thinkers. Students benefit from a very active PTO, which provides many enrichment opportunities for all students. Some of the educational activities provided for the students include Books and Beyond and T.R.I.P.P. reading programs.

The curriculum offers many enhanced programs such as Four Square Writing, Handwriting Without Tears, Junior Achievement and American Sign Language Chorus. Some of the family activities include Build-A-Book, Pumpkin Night, Worcester Tornadoes Night, grade level family activities and community clean-up.

Norrback Avenue

Students at Norrback Avenue School enjoyed many programs this year with a focus on writing. A two-week school residency encouraged students to use storytelling, improvisational theatre and movement as motivational tools, along with their imagination, to extend their literacy and learning. This program was supported in part by a grant from the Worcester Cultural Commission.

Another wonderful program enhancing students' creativity and fostering their imagination while developing their writing skills was Imagine That, the Singing Ringing Tree, an interactive children's theater involving imagination and language which guides students and brings literature and science to life.

Quinsigamond

May was a very busy month for test taking at Quinsigamond School. Students in kindergarten and grade 1 completed their final DIBELS testing for this school year. Everyone in grades 2-6 also finished their computerized Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments in reading and math. In an effort to motivate children to take these district tests seriously, the school created an incentive pro-

gram. For every point that students earn over their winter scores in MAP and DIBELS, they are given a raffle ticket that earns them a chance to win a wide variety of prizes.

Rice Square

Being respectful, responsible, and safe is the motto of Rice Square School, and students are continuing to achieve these high standards. The new school store has been a success. Students use their "Chilly Cards" earned each day for following this motto to purchase items both educational and fun. Everyone is looking forward to continuing to improve the PBIS program to encourage academic and individual success, where individual differences are valued rather than criticized.

Roosevelt

The PTO worked hard raising funds for new preschool/kindergarten playground equipment, which was installed by parents this spring. Young students thoroughly enjoy their new playground area. The PTO is now ready to take on a new playground project for the entire school. Roosevelt parents and community members are in the planning stages to build a playground for the entire school. This facility will be state-of-the-art with a health and fitness focus.

Thorndyke Road

In an effort to celebrate the closing of the school year, Thorndyke Road hosted a week-long celebration with special events for each classroom. This year the Discovery Museum's Traveling Science Show presented a series of workshops in classrooms highlighting topics such as Flight; Light, Lasers and Color; and Bubbles. Additional activities included puppet shows, building life size geo-domes, field day activities, orienteering and nature trail explorations. Arts and Academics week brings learning alive through hands-on, fun-filled educational experiences for students. The culminating event, an annual tradition at Thorndyke Road School, is Family Night, which was held June 13.

Vernon Hill

The third-grade classrooms at Vernon Hill School bustled with science activities in the last quarter. Did you know butterflies smell with their feelers? Sip nectar through a straw-like mouth? Need the sun's warmth to feel or fly? The third-graders in Mrs. Reardon's, Mrs. Thomas' and Mrs. Tribandis' classes do. All third-graders learned the phases of a butterfly's life, including the egg, pupa, chrysalis and butterfly stage.

Wawecus Road

Wawecus Road School worked hard to improve students' performance on the MCAS exams. In addition to differentiating instruction, students in grades 2-6 routinely use Study Island, a Web-based MCAS prep program. During February and March, the focus was on improving math fact recall. Students in grades 1-6 used Everyday Math Fact triangles at home and were tutored by parents during the day.

Woodland Academy

Woodland Academy has been working diligently with community partners in order to enhance the educational experience of all students and families. The school benefits from assistance from the Woodland Academy Task Force, which is represented by many area organizations and caring individuals including the Latino Education Institute at Worcester State College, Centro las Americas, Salvation Army, Worcester Community Action Council, Main South CDC, Literacy Volunteers of Worcester, Family Health Center and City Councilor Barbara Haller. Woodland Academy has organized successful events such as: Family Academies Night, Family Math Night, Family Literacy Night, MCAS Information Night, Latino Family Night and Woodland Adventure Day.

Worcester Arts Magnet

Worcester Arts Magnet School ended the winter season with sixth-graders hosting their version of NPR's "From the Top." Students had a residency with Boston Opera and, focusing on Europe, hosted a school assembly that took the audience on a musical journey featuring the instrumental and vocal talents of students across the grades. Grade 3 students were featured on Channel 11 as they performed an adaptation of Longfellow's "The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere." Grades 3-5 linked Worcester architecture to their class work.

Middle Schools

Burncoat

The Burncoat Middle School golf program completed its second successful year with 26 students participating. These students will be working as caddies this summer at Green Hill Golf Course under the direction of Matt Moison, golf pro at Green Hill.

The students in the AVID program had an opportunity to tour the campuses of Holy Cross, Mount Ida and Quinsigamond Community College. The 21st Century after-school program offered many opportunities throughout the year for students to receive additional help in math, literacy, academics and enrichment.

Sullivan

The students of Goddard Scholars Academy completed a project intended to foster the relationship between Worcester and its twin city in Great Britain, also named Worcester. The students in grades 7-8 wrote letters on one of three topics to the students of the King's School in Worcester, England. Those topics included information about Worcester's past, what the life of a typical American student is like, and things they felt make their city special.

Worcester East

Worcester East Middle School believes in making learning real and relevant. This year, science teachers and students were excited by the fact that the lunar eclipse would take place around the time they were learning about the phases of the moon. What started out as a fairly small event with one teacher and his classes, expanded to the entire science department and 150 parents, students, teachers and administrators participating in the moonlit event.

Tufts University's Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine hosted five students from Worcester East Middle School at Adventures in Veterinary Medicine, a week-long career exploration program.

High Schools

Worcester Technical and South High

Teams from Worcester Technical High School and South High Community High School took part in the inaugural VEX Robotics World Championship at California State University, Northridge. These teams competed using robots created from the popular VEX Robotics Design System to play the game "Bridge Battle."

Team 554 – Maria's Magic – captained and driven by Maria Cantos and operated by Robert Zarella of Worcester Technical High School, completed their qualifying matches with a record of 8-1. This record qualified the team fourth from an international field of 91 teams, and first among U.S. schools. The team from South High – Team 333, the Funky Fresh Juniors – fared very well also, qualifying 18th overall with a record of 6-3. A second team from Worcester Technical High School – Team 555, Get-R-Done – qualified in 32nd place.

SPORTS

THE WORCESTER EDUCATOR



Mini -Olympics



Runners hit the finish line in the Mini-Olympics at Foley Stadium.

Worcester students go for the gold at Foley Stadium

BY CAITLIN BOWLER

Worcester Public Schools elementary students tested their athletic mettle at the 31st annual Mini-Olympics, held June 3 at Foley Stadium.

More than 400 students and parents attended the Mini-Olympics, in which winners from each school's trial competitions competed in four events: standing long jump, 50-yard dash, 300-yard run, and 4 x 100 relay.

"It was a beautiful and very, very busy day," said Colleen O'Brien, Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics for Worcester Public Schools. "The kids just get so excited about this event every year. We've been doing it so long that some of their parents actually competed in the same event when they were kids, and many of them have had siblings who have participated. It's a really fun event and was a success again this year."

Physical education teachers in each elementary school organize the trials. Based on those results, top students head to Foley Stadium in search of titles amongst stiff competition.

"All of the WPS staff do a wonderful job organizing the event," O'Brien said. "So many people have to come together to get it off the ground, but they're so memorable and such a great experience for all the student-athletes."