

The Lamplighter

Vance County Schools/Employee Newsletter/May 2014

Whitney Johnson is U.S. Presidential Scholar

NVHS senior will be honored in Washington

Whitney Johnson has been selected as one of 141 outstanding American high school seniors to receive the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars award.

Her selection was announced in early May by Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education.

Johnson is a top graduate in the Class of 2014 at Northern Vance High School.



Johnson

In his announcement, Duncan noted that Johnson and all of the U.S. Presidential Scholars were selected because they have demonstrated outstanding academic achievements, artistic excellence, leadership, citizenship, service and contribution to school and community.

All of the U.S. Presidential Scholars will be honored for their accomplishments in Washington, D.C., from June 22 through June 25.

Johnson is one of only five students from North Carolina who have earned the national award for this year. She was nominated from the state by Dr. June Atkinson, state superintendent of the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

The Presidential Scholars are comprised of at least one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico and from U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large and 20 students in the arts.

The scholars will be honored in several events during their three-day stay in the nation's capital in late June. They will reside on the campus of Georgetown University during the three days. The students will visit historical sites in the Washington area, attend information sessions and have opportunities to meet leaders in the U.S. Congress from their home states and other states. A Scholar Orientation session will be held for all honored scholars in the afternoon on June 22 at Georgetown University, followed that evening by the 2014 Medallion Ceremony for the 141 honored students in the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium on Constitution Avenue in Washington. Each Presidential Scholar will be recognized during the "Salute to the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars" event on the evening of June 23 in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington.

Johnson is in the top 10 percent of academic achievers in her senior class at Northern Vance. She is president of the school's chapter of the National Honor Society and a member of the National Technical Honor Society and Key Club. She is the former president of the Spanish Club. She is the founder of the Hats for Hope Foundation, Cards for Hope, team captain of Whitney's Hope Foundation Relay for Life cancer fund drive and a member of St. James Missionary Baptist Church.

She will attend the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in the fall where she plans to major in nursing.

Western Vance honors deceased local officer

Administrators, staff members and students at Western Vance High School gathered on the front steps of the school on May 6, to honor a fallen officer of the Vance County Sheriff's Department.

Brandon Coker was remembered and recognized during a solemn ceremony that also was attended by his parents and brother. Coker died in the line of duty a year ago. He had been a resource officer at Western Vance High School for several years.

Principal Eric Pierce, who led the ceremony, spoke fondly of the dedicated officer. He presented Coker's mother with a certificate of dedication, shown above.

The ceremony dedicated a U.S. Flag, which had flown over the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., in Coker's memory.

Assistant Principal Mark Lawhorne, with assistance from teacher James Realon, raised the flag on the flagpole in front of the school. During the flag raising, 10 officers from the Vance County Sheriff's Department stood by in salute formation, shown at bottom.

The officers were joined at the ceremony by Vance County Sheriff Peter White. Ronald E. Gregory, the school system's superintendent, also attended the dedication event.



VCS Photos

Two VCS principals complete state leadership program

Principals Anne Garrison of Zeb Vance Elementary, and David Westbrook of Carver Elementary, have completed the Distinguished Leadership Program (DLP), a year-long leadership development program for participating school principals designed and provided by the N.C. Principals and Assistant Principals Association in partnership with the N.C. Department of Public Instruction

and UNC-LearnNC. The program is offered in Wilmington, Raleigh and Charlotte in order to serve principals in all eight regions.

The DLP uses a non-traditional professional development model that is aligned to the performance evaluation standards adopted by the state. Principals engage in activities to build the capacity of their schools and their own capacities as leaders.

Pendergrass going to Governor's School

Christopher Pendergrass, a junior at Northern Vance High School, has been selected to attend the prestigious North Carolina Governor's School this summer.

He was selected because of his outstanding academics in math.

Pendergrass will attend the Governor's School on the East Campus of the program at Meredith College in Raleigh, June 15-July 23. Students also attend the West Campus at Salem College in Winston-Salem.

The North Carolina Governor's School selects only the top achieving rising seniors in high schools from across the state to attend the summer residential program and experience enrichment studies in the areas of mathematics, English, Spanish, French, social and natural sciences and the arts.



Christopher Pendergrass



Zeb Vance says thanks

Zeb Vance Elementary School students and faculty members gather and hold up signs spelling out "Thank You" for people at East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania for donating hundreds of pairs of sneakers for Zeb Vance students to wear during physical education classes. Zeb Vance's physical education teacher, Anthony Pirrocco, is an alumnus of the university and asked for the donations.

Zeb Vance Photo

SVHS goes to Washington

A total of 41 students in the U.S. history classes of Sandra Wiggins and Joseph Sharrow at Southern Vance High School traveled to Washington, D.C., on April 17. The students are shown at right as they pose in front of the fence surrounding the White House. The students toured the American History Museum and visited the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Washington Monument and the war memorials on the National Mall.

SVHS Photo



Duke researcher leads classes at Southern Vance

Dr. Mayssa Mokalled, a research laboratory staff member at Duke University Medical Center, spoke to five classes of biology students at Southern Vance High School on May 9.

Mokalled focused her presentations on a module about genomics and inheritance.

During the first-period class of the day, Mokalled spoke to the sophomore biology students in the classes of Jennifer Howard and Brandelyn Breinig. She spoke at length to the students about the importance of DNA and how every person has their own unique DNA makeup. She added that identical twins are the only humans that possess similar DNA.

Mokalled talked about the importance of DNA in the study of diseases and how medical professionals can use DNA research to help cure diseases and prescribe effective medications to patients. She also showed students examples of how genes in humans constantly divide to form new genes and with the divisions mutations can occur and cause diseases, such as cancers.

She also discussed how genomics tells people about their ancestry. Mokalled said the continuing study of genomics is leading to more personalized medicine for patients. She currently is involved in laboratory research studying paralysis in humans.



VCS Photo

Dr. Mayssa Mokalled of Duke University Medical Center, speaks in the background to biology students during a first-period class at Southern Vance High School.

Family makes donations to Zeb Vance media center

Jarles Alberg, who lives in Raleigh, has donated money and other items to the media center at Zeb Vance Elementary School in honor of his grandmother, **Ethel S. Edwards** Ethel Gill Stainback Edwards.



The donations, including \$300, a laptop computer and books, were accepted by

Janette Johnson, the school's media specialist, who also is Edwards' great-granddaughter.

Alberg made the decision with help from his family members. They wanted to honor their mother, grandmother and great-grandmother's love of reading and life on her family's farm in Vance County.

Johnson noted that she has used the donated money to purchase additional books that focus on farm life.

"All of us Edwards grew up around farms," she said. "I want books in the library to show our students how important farming has been and continues to be to our community."

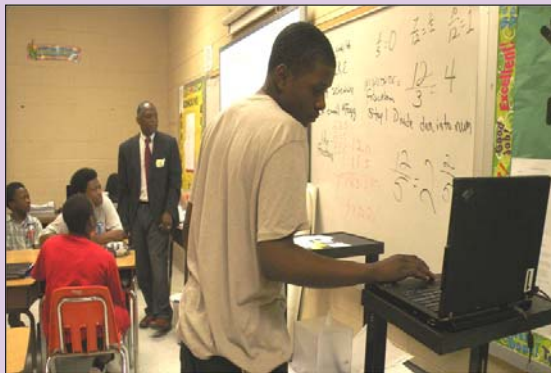
Robots are focus of presentations

Donald McCoy, a retired engineer from IBM and now a STEM consultant who is a member of the faculty at N.C. A&T State University, brought his talents again to Vance County when he led sessions with students at New Hope Elementary School and Eaton-Johnson Middle School on May 13.

At right, McCoy is shown leading the session with the entire student body at New Hope. He demonstrated how to program a robot to follow lines and certain colors. He did a similar demonstration for students in Mary Vicente's and Kevin Johnson's classes at Eaton-Johnson. Students also got the chance to program some of McCoy's robots.



Donald McCoy works with Silekeon Seward, near right, and Jordan Bullock, far right, in programming robots at Eaton-Johnson Middle School.



VCS Photos

Shad in the Classroom

Students in science classes at Southern Vance High School again this spring participated in the "Shad in the Classroom" project, a unique program led by the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences.

The program provided training, tanks and eggs to 23 schools along the Neuse and Roanoke River Basins in mid-April. At Southern Vance, students helped raise the eggs to young fish and used their observations and experiences to learn concepts related to the shad's survival, the species' cultural

and biological importance, its ecological connections to other species and the significance of genetic integrity to population studies. The program heightens knowledge and awareness in future generations of an important migratory fish.

The students maintained the fish hatchery, including testing and maintaining the correct water quality and temperature, for three days before releasing their fish into the Neuse River.



VCS Photo

Books for third graders

Members of the Board of Directors of the United Way of Vance County on May 8, delivered almost 2,000 donated books to third-grade classrooms in all local elementary schools. The donations were the result of a book drive conducted by the United Way and designed to help establish or expand classroom libraries in our third-grade classrooms. At left, Donna Stearns of United Way, holds a large “thank you” card given to her by students in Robin Bowen’s class at E.O. Young Jr. Elementary when she delivered their books.

Chinese Acrobats

The Fabulous Chinese Acrobats gave a special performance for the Carver Scholars in the Carver Elementary School after school program in late April.

Some of the acrobats are shown at right as they perform for the students.

The group performed contortions, plate spinning routines, foot juggling, the Chinese yo-yo and group acrobatics to the delight of the students.



Carver Photo



New Hope Photo

‘Dance and Dine’

Participants in the “Daughter, Dad Dance and Dine” at New Hope Elementary School on the evening of May 2, are shown at left during the event in the school’s cafeteria. They dressed up for the occasion and daughters, all students at New Hope, gave their “dates” a flower and joined them for a very nice dinner. Everyone also enjoyed dancing and great fellowship.



VCS Photos

Students enjoy 'New Hope Day'

Students in every class at New Hope Elementary School took part in "New Hope Day" activities outdoors in April. The day's activities were led by Bernadette Jefferson and her "Fruit of the Spirit" and "Leg to Stand On" organiza-

tions. Activities for the students included sack races, shown at above left, a bean bag toss, shown at above right, character costume races, frisbee toss, group relay races, hula hoop contests and face painting.

N.C. Symphony performs for all fourth graders

William Henry Curry, the conductor for the N.C. Symphony, is shown at right as he talks with students prior to the symphony's performance on April 9, for all fourth-grade students in Vance County in the Civic Center at Vance-Granville Community College. The symphony performed for about an hour playing musical selections by famous composers and shared information with the students about the different instruments the musicians play.



VCS Photo



VCS Photo

Leadership Vance visits

Jenny Waite, standing at left, talks to business representatives participating in the 2014 Leadership Vance Program through the Henderson-Vance Chamber of Commerce during their visit in her fourth-grade classroom at Zeb Vance Elementary School on April 1. The 18 business leaders were taken on tours of the school by student representatives. The group later visited Southern Vance High School as part of their "Education Day" tours.

Students' math talents shine in Math Bowl

The two teams of Clarke Elementary School fifth graders won the award as the "Top School" in the Math Bowl competition hosted again this year at Southern Vance High School on May 1.

The Roaring Tigers team from E.O. Young Jr. Elementary School earned honors at the "Top Team" in the competition. Team members were Harley Newman, Lamyah Towns, Derrick Wiggins, Stephanie Pegram and Ariel Ellis. The team had a perfect score in the competition. Second place went to the Math Pro 1 team from Clarke with third place captured by the Aycock Elementary Warriors.

E.O. Young also won third place in the "Top School" results.

Seven of the top 10 students in the individual math competition are fifth graders in Vance County Schools. They included Kaziyah McCauley, Aaron Labra, Jorge Gomez, Jarell Boyd and Yumyah Hargrove, all of Clarke; Emma Kiefer of Aycock; and Dustin Pulley of Zeb Vance.

The individual competition and the team competition required students to answer questions on a written test. Individuals had 45 minutes to answer all of their questions, while the teams had 25 minutes to complete their tests.

The "Top Team" award in the math competition was won by the Roaring Tigers from E.O. Young Jr. Elementary School. The team members are shown at right holding their certificates as they are joined by the school's second team and their teachers, Robin Sanders, second from left, Joy Darden, center back row, and Principal Marylaura McKoon, far right.



VCS Photos

The "Top School" award in the Math Bowl went to the two fifth-grade teams from Clarke Elementary School. The students are shown with one of their teachers, Carmen Samuels, at center on the second row.



The Lamplighter is published monthly by the Public Information Office of Vance County Schools.

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