

Local Schools



TOP

Students Decide What is Taught for a Day

JUNE 12TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Students Decide What is Taught for a Day

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Poplar Bluff Junior High School educators figured out a sure-shot way to tap into the intellectual curiosity of students – let them decide what to learn.

Following MAP testing, Junior High faculty hosted a student professional development day on Tuesday, May 23, after asking one simple survey question: If you can come to school and learn about anything you want to learn about, what would it be?

The results included self-defense, Japanese culture, germs, sign language, feline behaviors, game meat and hip hop dance. District teachers, fellow students and community partners—even the Southeast Missouri Regional Bomb Squad—volunteered to teach the range of topics.

“I didn’t get much sleep thinking about it,” said outgoing seventh grader Carson Nagy when asked about his level of anticipation. Of the sessions he participated in, Carson said his favorite was Highway Patrol because he learned DNA tests take much longer than depicted on CSI, suspects are not so easily identified and forensic scientists experience a higher degree of frustration.

Selecting five sessions apiece gave students a taste of arena scheduling, plus exposed them to possible career paths. Eighth grader Jayvon Holloway chose a welding workshop since his father works in the field, he said. He also tossed in a ‘fun’ class: messy kitchen experiments, taught by instructor Brandon Moon of the Technical Career Center’s

Culinary Arts program.

Holocaust, presented by social studies teacher Josh Wesemann, who also hosted survival 101, was suggested by eighth grader Sierra Sievers. Her favorite session, however, turned out to be mystery dissection during which students handled fetal pigs under the instruction of Ashley Woolard and Krista Yarbrow of PBJHS.

Communication arts instructor Julie Gambill, who helped put on a workshop about horses, commented that she gained more insight about what students do not know from the experiment.

“It’s career day meets club day,” incoming Junior High principal Candace Warren said. The brainchild of Warren, student PD day was conceived earlier this year during a Midwest Education Technology Community conference she attended in St. Louis. “It has every aspect—the arts, science, physical activities—to meet students’ interests, expose careers and ultimately make a well-rounded person.”

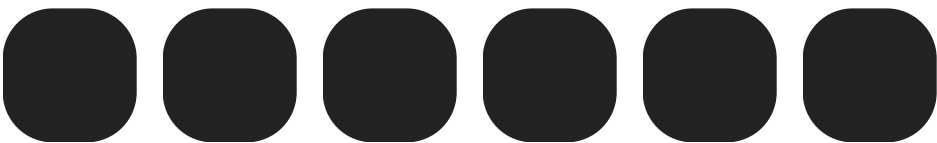
Shown in the photo: Hicks Animal Hospital staff introduces participants to 30-year-old tortoise, Toracle.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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Building Trades Program Completes House

MAY 31ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Building Trades Program Completes House

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - The final touches are being made on the 38th house constructed by the Building Trades program of the Poplar Bluff Technical Career Center.

The three-bedroom/two bath, 1,694-square-foot house including a two-car garage, is expected to go out for bid next month for opening by the school board during the July 20 meeting.

“Going over the bookwork, and then seeing that excitement when students do something and it works—it’s a good feeling,” program instructor Jody Cochran said. “Not all kids are college-bound. You need kids with skills to earn money so they can make a living.”

While some vocational schools teach students to build modular structures such as sheds, the TCC has maintained its tradition over the decades of constructing a full house that is up to code and completed under professional carpentry standards, according to TCC Director Charles Kinsey.

During the two-year program, students prep the site, dig the foundation, pour the concrete, lay the floor, frame the walls, wrap the structure, install windows and doors, place vinyl siding and put up a roof. Then they place drywall, paint, lay the carpet and flooring, install cabinets, hook up plumbing, perform electrical work, connect the appliances, et cetera. When designing the layout, Building Trades students subcontract the HVAC class to install the heating and cooling system.

“Like Mike Rowe (of ‘Dirty Jobs’ fame) says, the community would be lost without your technical people,” Cochran said. “Your lights would no longer work. The plumbing would shut down. Automobiles wouldn’t run without mechanics.”

While Cochran has been building houses in the field for over 20 years, this will mark the first house completed from start to finish under his supervision as an instructor. Having

started his tenure at Poplar Bluff R-I during the 2014/15 school year, Cochran was named the TCC Teacher of the Year both in 2016 and ‘17.

Two open houses at the 108 Avery Street location will be scheduled this summer. Advertisements can be found in the Daily American Republic in the near future, or look for updates on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pbtcc.

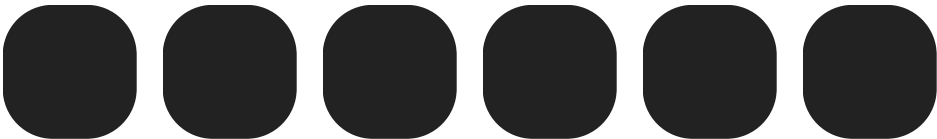
Pictured are standing in the new kitchen are (back, left to right) Teddy Luttrull, Jody Cochran, Cody Buffington, Luke Cook, Matt Harwell and Ronald Anglin; and (front, from left) Austin Farley, Johnny Jaco, Nick Loyd and Ariana Burkhart.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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Mirza Receives Wolpers Scholarship

MAY 31ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Mirza Receives Wolpers Scholarship

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Graduating Poplar Bluff High School senior Hamiz Mirza has been awarded the \$1,300 Mary Lynn Wolpers Scholarship.

Mirza plans to study biology at St. Louis University and then transfer to medical school. He also has an interest in dentistry, he said, having volunteered over 200 hours to the Smiles of Hope Dental Clinic, among other nonprofit operations. Mirza was recently presented the Missouri Award for Outstanding Achievement in Citizenship.

The Wolpers scholarship, designated for a PBHS senior, was endowed in 2007 and has since bestowed a total of \$13,300 to students.

Pictured: Foundation member Emily Wolpers, sister of the late Mary Lynn, presents Hamiz Mirza a scholarship on Wednesday, April 26.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District.

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Moore Receives Foundation Scholarship

MAY 30TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Moore Receives Foundation Scholarship

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Mackenzie Moore has been awarded the \$1,000 Poplar Bluff Public School Foundation scholarship.

Moore has completed 59 credits at Three Rivers College while attending high school through the College Now program. She has plans to enroll in Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, where she will study elementary education with a focus on middle school language arts. Upon completing her master's, she hopes to secure a teaching job in Poplar Bluff, "giving back to the community that gave so much to me," she said.

The foundation scholarship has been awarded to Poplar Bluff High School students, past graduates or present-day, since 2001. The foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to furthering the educational opportunities of its students and promoting innovation in the classroom.

Pictured: Foundation president Dr. Amber Richardson awards PBHS senior Mackenzie Moore a teaching scholarship on Wednesday, April 26.

Photos and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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Education Commissioner and Legislators Honor Student

MAY 30TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Education Commissioner and Legislators Honor Student

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Poplar Bluff High School senior Hamiz Mirza was among 15 select students to receive the Missouri Award for Outstanding Achievement in Citizenship on Monday, April 17, in Jefferson City.

The annual state honor—based on academic achievement, participation in extracurricular activities and service to the community—was established in 1989 as a provision under Senate Bill 198. Mirza will also be recognized on the American Bar Association’s Civics and Law Honor Roll.

“A lot of kids can ace government class, but it’s another thing to go out into the community and change lives,” said Mirza’s AP government teacher Mitch Davis during a special recognition Thursday, April 20, at the school board meeting.

Davis and R-I Superintendent Scott Dill presented Mirza with resolutions from the Missouri House of Representatives and Senate signed by Speaker Todd Richardson and Sen. Doug Libla, respectively.

Mirza, who has been accepted at St. Louis University, received straight A’s in several

advanced social studies classes throughout his high school career, during which he served as captain of the speech and debate team, placing first last year in a district contest. This school year he helped found the Politics Club, a non-partisan student organization that meets weekly, and was responsible for hosting a watch party attended by over 100 students on presidential election night.

“I would argue he has been successful in changing the dialogue in our school from hyperpartisan to more of a reflective, collegial atmosphere where it is now ‘cool’ to hear the other side’s views about the role and scope of government in our everyday lives,” wrote Davis on Mirza’s nomination form, which was also signed by PBHS Principal Mike Kiehne.

Perhaps even more meaningful, as Davis indicated to the Board of Education, Mirza volunteered over 200 hours to Smiles of Hope Dental Clinic, a nonprofit operation that began with one philanthropist making monthly clinical visits to a church. The clinic grew within several years to acquire about a dozen licensed dentists, treating more than 2,000 people and extracting over 6,000 teeth, for little to no cost to the patient.

Mirza was further inspired to spend 50 hours of his own, teaching proper dental care to children at churches and schools. He also volunteered 120 hours at the United Gospel Rescue Mission, along with splitting another 100 hours between hospital work and teaching swimming.

“While witnessing single mothers struggling to feed their children, a health care system that has failed many, and a country that is more divided and partisan than ever, it is easy to allow pessimism to leak into one’s own life,” wrote Mirza in a qualifying essay about citizenship. He went on to state: “As citizens of a representative democracy, the burden of ensuring our government is running properly doesn’t just lie with the people working in Washington – it relies on the work and involvement of everyday citizens who vote and raise awareness for what they believe is right.”

Pictured are PBHS instructor Mitch Davis (left) and R-I Superintendent Scott Dill (right) present Hamiz Mirza with official resolutions for his model citizenry during the school board meeting.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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