

# News AND Notes

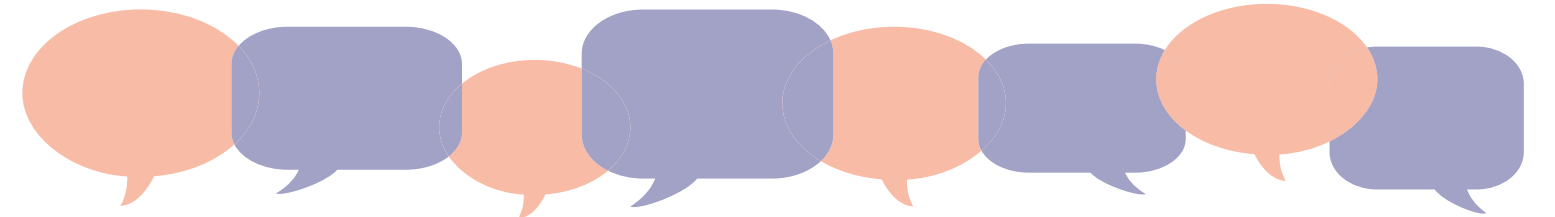
SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



# DIGEST

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY

## Communication is KEY



Communication is an essential part of what makes the Smithtown Central School District a special place. We strive to tell our story through various media, social media and other communication outreach tools.

The district is committed to open, honest and ongoing communication; we understand that maintaining a two-way conversation with our community, parents and students is essential for building relationships. These relationships are the foundation for a strong school system.

In the last year the district's Communications Committee was formed to help evaluate district communications to

ensure effective and consistent channels of information regarding district activities.

Through communications, our goal is to keep strengthening connections with all members of the Smithtown Central School District community. From the launch of the new website to the introduction of the e-newsletter, The Bulletin, the district is frequently reviewing ways to enhance its communication with residents, parents, students and staff. This edition of the Digest features just a few tools used to ensure the Smithtown school community is kept informed.

*"We strive to ensure effective and consistent channels of information regarding school district activities," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Secaur. "Our goal is to keep strengthening connections with all members of the Smithtown Central School District community."*



## District Launches New Website

For some, school districts' websites are simply the hub of an individual school's online presence. But here in Smithtown, we believe our website is the hub not just of our online communications plan but our offline communications plan as well.

The district's new and improved website makes accessing important information easier than ever. It has a clean and modern design which incorporates more imagery and has robust and engaging department pages. Our site has quality pictures and videos to highlight our students throughout the SCSD.

In addition, the individual school pages are much easier to navigate, and we have also provided a quick links page giving you easy access to the pages you use the most.

For communications such as an emergency, school closing or important announcements, we may activate a web alert either as a pop-up alert or red scroll across the top of the homepage.

The responsive design is optimized for tablet and mobile device use.

Visit us online at [smithtown.k12.ny.us](http://smithtown.k12.ny.us).



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SMITHTOWN POSTAL CARRIER

### SCIENCE STAR

High School East's Holy Mary Zaher is among 300 students nationwide named scholars in this year's Regeneration Science Talent Search. Ms. Zaher's research project was titled "The Correlation Between Peroxisome Levels and Short-Term Memory Loss in a PINK1-/- Rat Model of Parkinson's Disease."

The focal point of the study was to look at the cellular level in those who have Parkinson's disease. Rat models of Parkinson's disease were used to investigate memory deficits by exploiting rats' natural tendency to explore.

Ms. Zaher counted over 45,000 points delineating pyramidal neurons in the selected brain regions. No difference between the intensity of the organelle's presence and Parkinson's disease was found. However, this leads to the next step of investigating if the organelle is functioning to its full capacity.

High School East's science research coordinator Maria Zeitlin says Ms. Zaher's research was especially impressive because she was the one who created it.



### VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

Olivia Wolber has done it again! The High School West junior, who won the local VFW Voices of Democracy essay contest, recently won the contest at the New York State level. Olivia's essay was chosen over 200 other submissions and earned her a \$2,500 scholarship. Olivia had to write and record a three- to five-minute broadcast script on a patriotic theme, "Why Is the Veteran Important?"

One excerpt of Olivia's essay reads, "They are examples for all to look up to, thank and

follow. They are educators of love and tolerance. They are reminders to the youth and to the naive why we should rise for our pledge to the flag of a country we get to call our own. They remind us why we put our right hand over our beating hearts during our national anthem. Because it is them who had the whites of their eyes go red from crying their tears of blue in heartbreak watching brothers and sisters fall around them."



### JUST KEEP SWIMMING

Give it up for Smithtown's first state champion swim team! The Smithtown/Hauppauge swim team won the team state title this past November and was later honored by the Suffolk County Legislature. This is the first girl's state championship in Smithtown High School athletics history!



### MASTER TEACHERS!

Congratulations to three Smithtown Central School District teachers who are now Master Teachers. Accomsett and Great Hollow Middle School science teacher Louis Mincieli, Smithtown Elementary School STEM specialist Kelly Bigliani and Mt. Pleasant Elementary School STEM specialist Kathy Smerechniak have each earned the honor.

"It is an extremely rigorous program, and Smithtown is excited to have these three teachers recognized for the outstanding work they continually engage in," Director of Science K-12 Dr. Stephanie O'Brien said.

Mr. Mincieli is in his sixth year working in Smithtown. At Accomsett Middle School he teaches Science 7, Science 8 and Project Lead the

Way: Medical Detectives.

"I am excited to network with other Master Teachers and explore new topics that I would not have the opportunity to otherwise," he said.

Ms. Bigliani has been an elementary teacher in Smithtown for 27 years. She is the STEM specialist at Smithtown Elementary School. Ms. Bigliani is also a Master Teacher for Project Lead the Way.

Ms. Smerechniak has been an elementary teacher in Smithtown Central School District for 24 years. She is the STEM specialist at Mt. Pleasant Elementary.



The New York State Master Teacher Program is a professional network of more than 1,400 outstanding public school, K-12 STEM teachers throughout the state who share a passion for their own STEM learning and for collaborating with colleagues to inspire the next generation of STEM leaders.

### SCHOOL & COMMUNITY DIGEST

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SMITHTOWN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

# DIGEST

Smithtown Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of handicaps or on the basis of sex, race, or ethnic background in the educational programs or activities which it operates.

# Keep **CONNECTED**

## SMITHTOWN BULLETIN

The district celebrates the accomplishments of its students and staff with our monthly Smithtown Bulletin, which is communicated to families and the community using our mass communications systems and social media outlets. Each edition begins with a message from Superintendent Dr. Secaur and goes on to feature information about the curriculum and highlight achievements in areas such as academics, the arts and athletics.

In any particular Bulletin, viewers may read about topics such as the Business Olympics, student-run fundraisers and scholar-athlete teams from all of our schools.

The Smithtown Bulletin also provides the community with awareness of upcoming events and matters of mutual concern while maintaining a balance among elementary, middle and high schools.

Read all about it. Scan the QR Code to read the monthly Smithtown Bulletin highlighting our Smithtown Central School District students.



## @SMITHTOWNCSD ON SOCIAL!

Having a social media presence helps the SCSD communicate important information and get feedback from the community. Information is shared on social media sites including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter from our social media handle, @smithtowncsd.

Community members can see pictures, videos and graphics daily highlighting achievements throughout the District as well as updating the community on upcoming events.

One popular video feature we showcase is our "Senior Spotlight." This one-on-one interview with a senior allows each student to express themselves by telling us future goals, personal hobbies and what Smithtown pride means to them. Additionally, the SCSD strives to increase positive stories in the media and showcases student achievement in local newspapers and television.

## PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal is where parents of students can update contact info, opt in to text messaging and sign up for emails.

**Alert phone calls/text messages:** SCSD sends pre-recorded phone calls and text messages in the case of emergencies, closings and nonemergency information. Parents/guardians are automatically signed up using the contact info on file with the school. Please keep contact information updated.

**Alert email messages:** Occasionally, an email may accompany a phone call/text message alert. The district may also send general information via email messages. Parents/guardians are automatically signed up using the contact info on file with the school. Please keep contact information updated.

## GOLD CARD

It has been a long-standing tradition of the Smithtown Central School District to offer senior citizens in our community the opportunity to become "Gold Card Members," which allows them to attend events that our schools are hosting free of charge.

"It's a great opportunity for senior members of the community to attend free local events that showcase the developing abilities of our children that reside in Smithtown," said Director of Fine Arts Michael Mastrangelo. "I can guarantee that the children will make your day and you will leave with a smile!"

To sign up for the Gold Card scan the QR code.

