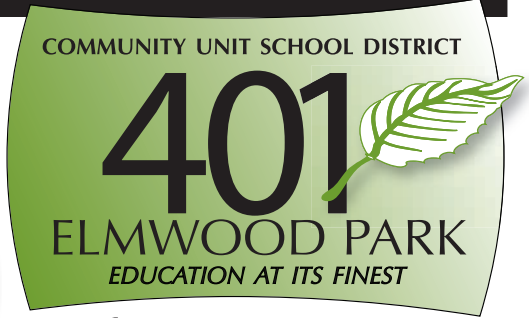


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Class of 2011 Achievers

The end of the school year is a time to pause and reflect upon students' accomplishments. Here are just a few of this year's highlights:

At Elmwood Park High School, 17 seniors are *Illinois State Scholars*. They rank academically in the top 10% of the state's high school graduating seniors. EPHS students won 14 awards in the *Triton Art Fair* and 7 awards in the *Metro Suburban Art Conference*. For the seventh year the DECA Business Club received the



Diamond Award for Excellence in promoting marketing and entrepreneurship, while DECA Advisor Karen Bear received the *Illinois Marketing Educator of the Year*

Award (see article on page 3). DECA students won regional and state recognition. Every school in the district had one student who was honored as the "*School Citizen of the Year*," for being "a good school citizen and role model for other students." Four students earned high honors in the *District 1 Illinois Music Educators' Association Band and Choir Contest*. The Illinois Theater Association recognized 20 EPHS students for their original performance at the *Annual Illinois High School Theatre Festival*. EPHS students took first place in the *Metro Suburban Art Conference*. All schools participated in service projects. Many extra learning experiences, such as the *National Geographic's GEOBEE*, the regional *Speech and Drama Festival*, and the elementary schools' *Spelling Bee* gave

students additional opportunities to achieve.



The EPHS Class of 2011 received scholarships to institutes of higher learning, including *Northern Michigan University, Goshen College, Marian University* and *Triton College*. Some of the graduates' career areas include physics, medicine, cooking, retail merchandising, chemistry, political science and accounting. They will attend colleges and universities such as: *Northwestern, Purdue, Colgate, Columbia College, Dominican University, Le Cordon Bleu, IIT, Marquette, Roosevelt, the University of Chicago, Penn State, Johnson and Wales*, and many *Illinois State Universities*.

ELMWOOD PARK HIGH SCHOOL Valedictorian and Salutatorian

At the top of the EPHS Class of 2011 were Valedictorian **Monica Sadek** and Salutatorian **Barbara Wilczek**.

Scholarships

Graduates were honored for their scholastic, athletic, and civic achievements. Scholarships and the students who earned them include: *Jane Aumiller Memorial Scholarship for attendance at Triton College—Nelya Ruspynska*. *National Honor Society Scholarships—Emma Lambert, Monica Sadek*. *Elmwood Park Women's Club Scholarship for academic achievement and school/community involvement—Emma Lambert, Rosa Rodriguez, Ashley Tritthardt, Barbara Wilczek*. *Elmwood Park Educational Team (E.P.E.T.—District 401 Teachers' Union) Scholarship in memory of James F. Murawska and James H. Roche, to individuals who have excellent grades and are good citizens—Bryan Palmer, Justin Sebastian*. *Cynthia Schulze Memorial Scholarship, Spirit Award and Sports Award—Kate Zucker*. *Peter N. Silvestri Scholarship for academic achievement, school/community involvement and planning a public service career—Monica Sadek*. *John Mills PTA Scholarship for a student who plans a career in education and has a 3.0 GPA—Julie Marzullo*. *EPHS 50th Anniversary Committee*

Scholarship to a boy and a girl involved in school activities, with a minimum 3.0 GPA, who exemplify the TIGER spirit—Danielle Kerschhackl, Vincent Virgilio. *Carl Fiorito Memorial Scholarship presented by Leyden Township—Sharifah Abdallah*. *Women's Auxiliary of Regular Republicans Voters League of Leyden Township Scholarship for academic achievement and extracurricular involvement—Katarzyna Plata*. *Raymond Roehri Memorial Scholarship to a community-minded student pursuing math/science in college, emphasis on engineering—Joshua Ildefonso*. *DECA Scholarship, presented by the Illinois Foundation for Marketing Education—Vincent Virgilio, Barbara Wilczek*. *John Lynn Scholarship to pursue a four-year degree—Frenk Nebiu, Katarzyna Plata, Monica Sadek, Emily Wiklanski*. *Dr. Sharon J. Kaczmarek Scholarship for special achievement—Brandon Ibes*. *Gottlieb Memorial Hospital Auxiliary/Medical Staff Scholarship—Emma Lambert*. *Teamsters Local Union 705 Scholarship—Vincent Virgilio*. *Elmo and Alfreda Ramello Foundation Scholarship—Monica Sadek*. *Triton College Trustee Honor—Maksym Kympan, Matthew Perez, Rosa Rodriguez, Haley Stoller*.

CLASS OF 2011 EPHS ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Dr. Frank McKinzie Scholarship to students who significantly contribute to the sports program, put the team first over self,

Continues on page 2

Superintendent Rudig to Retire

On June 30, after 43 years in education, Dr. Douglas Rudig will retire. Throughout his career—from teaching at an Arizona Navajo Reservation to teaching and administrative jobs in Illinois, Colorado and Connecticut—Dr. Rudig has implemented innovative and inspiring ways to further education. He has been the District 401 superintendent for the past five years.



Dr. Douglas Rudig

Perhaps his creative approach to education comes from the fact that he is a creative person, an accomplished artist. He previously taught art and also authored and illustrated the reading-skills program, “Read With Me: Cross-Age Tutoring for Dual-Level Text.”

“District 401 has been the best district in which to culminate my career,” stated Dr. Rudig. “I am extremely impressed with the school board and staff. I am proud to have worked with them. It has always been my philosophy to encour-

age leadership at all levels, and that philosophy has come to fruition here. Through teamwork, we have made many important improvements that have positively impacted the quality of education throughout the district.”

Some of the district’s accomplishments over the past few years include:

- Developing a four-year “Educational Landscape Plan” that defines multi-year district goals and initiatives
- Improving high school test scores
- Achieving Illinois State Financial Recognition based on the last four years of financial ratings
- Upgrading facilities at all district schools
- Earning the *Energy Star Award* for conserving energy in all five schools. Over six years, this initiative has saved the district more than \$2 million
- Increasing teachers’ professional development and improving staffing (for example, each school now has a full-time nurse)
- Upgrading technology throughout the schools
- Enriching the Summer Learning Academy, with a new, more extensive

program for summer learning that now includes credit courses for high school students

- Expanding assessments to better monitor individual student progress
- Maintaining state assessment scores above the state average
- Enhancing security at all schools
- Furthering and expanding parent, family, community communication and partnerships.

In retirement, he will continue his commitment to children through his family’s foundation, “Families’ World Outreach.” The Foundation’s goal is to help impoverished families all over the world improve their lives through sustainable methods. (For example, a small donation can start-up a new business in South America; in the U.S., \$35 will pay for a low-income student to take a G.E.D. exam.) The Foundation will also help students create and sell their original artwork. On a recent trip to Africa, he implemented the art program with students in Tanzania.

Of course, he hopes to find time to create his own art, perhaps write books for children, spend time with his two grown children in California and Colorado, and with Gerri, his wife of 40 years.

The entire District 401 community extends its appreciation and best wishes to Dr. Rudig.

High School Recognized By State

Elmwood Park High School is one of only 27 Illinois high schools, out of the 759 public high schools in the state, that was recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education and the College Board in making the AP (Advanced Placement) Achievement List. The districts recognized for this honor have either maintained or improved their participation and performance on the rigorous AP exams that students take to earn college credit and placement. The list was announced in March.

“As we move to implement more rigorous learning standards in Illinois, this is a particularly important achievement for these 27 districts,” said State Superintendent of Education Christopher A. Koch. “Many of these districts are not only providing more students with advanced academic courses but showing improved scores. Whether students are honing skills in science, math, a foreign language, history or other subject, they’re pushing themselves beyond high school level work that will better prepare them for success in college and careers.”

Improvement in AP results typically requires sustained effort. The AP Achievement List is based on examination of three years of AP data, 2008 through 2010, from all students who took AP Examinations in May of those years.

The percentage of exams taken by African American, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian/Alaska Native students must not be decreasing.

Elmwood Park Students Achieve *Continued from page one...*

and have the respect and encouragement of fellow team members—*Gabriel Arce, Meghan McNulty*. **Booster Club Scholarship** for outstanding students who were involved in two sports each year of high school and will attend a four-year college—*Dorothy Bukowinski, Allison Coglianesse, Katarzyna Plata, and Ashley Tritthard*.

ELM MIDDLE SCHOOL, CLASS OF 2011

Principal’s List for the highest academic achievement every quarter of the school year—*Abigail Bitterman, Barbara Galinska, Ariana Kelley, Paul Lach, Jeana Metcalf, Karli Noone, Gianna Rubino, Emma Samatas and Matthew Ziuzia*. **Eighth Grade Subject Awards**—**Art:** *Sabrina Sabella*; **Band Director’s Award:** *Juan Sanchez*; **Chorus:** *Katelyn Camacho*; **Computers:** *Emma Samatas*; **ELL:** *Donald Cinaj*; **Language Arts:** *Emily Long, Patricia Waksanski, Matthew Ziuzia*; **Mathematics:** *Joseph Mann, Myroslava Vorona, Matthew Walker*; **Physical Education:** *Ariana Kelley, Lucas Kieffer*; **Science:** *Alexander Grabowski, Paul Lach, Alondra Silva*; **Social Studies:** *Alejandra Lopez, Corey Simmons*; **Spanish Language:** *Abigail Bitterman*. **Cougar Pride Award:** *Jonathan Gramata, and Allison Luciano*.

Introducing the New Superintendent

On July 1, the District 401 leadership will change when **Dr. Kevin Anderson** becomes the new superintendent. Dr. Anderson currently serves in Oak Park School District 97 as the assistant superintendent for teaching and learning. The new superintendent earned a doctorate from the University of Northern Iowa. He has extensive knowledge and experience in education gained through his work in a number of midwestern school districts. He has served as a director of technology, a consultant for At-Risk Services, an assistant college professor, and as a teacher. He is also a published author of educational articles. Dr. Anderson has worked with students of all ages.

Recently, Dr. Anderson shared his thoughts about becoming the superintendent of the Elmwood Park Schools:

What is wonderful about the field of education is the feeling of excitement and exhilaration that comes with the start of each new school year. Couple that annual renewal with the added joy and anticipation of starting the year as superintendent of the Elmwood Park Schools, and you have the feelings I'm experiencing as I begin this new leadership position. Rarely have I had a more welcoming experience than the one I just completed with the District 401 Board of Education, administrative staff, teaching staff, support personnel, and parents. I am thoroughly looking forward to the challenges ahead and will do my very best to continue the legacy of outstanding educational programs in District 401.

Celebrating World Cultures

On the evening of April 13, over 2,000 Elmwood Park residents, including District 401 families, educators, community members and guests, attended the Elmwood Park Schools' *Festival of Cultures*. They enjoyed a remarkable occasion that showcased world cultures through music, dance, art, literature, language, games, sports and cuisine.

Joanne Mourikes, the district English Language Learners program director, and a staff of dedicated volunteers, began planning the



A master artist demonstrated Ukrainian egg painting.

Festival of Cultures in August 2010. "We worked diligently to create an event for people of all ages that would spotlight cultures from our strong, multi-ethnic community and other cultures as well."

Professional dance performances by the *Mexican Folkloric Company*, the *Trinity Academy of Irish Dance*, and the *Wici Song and Dance Polish Folkloric Company* awed the crowd. A selection of songs from Cuba, Tanzania, Japan and the U.S. performed by the *EPHS Percussion Ensemble* was also a crowd pleaser.

Individuals, groups and businesses demonstrated their ethnic pride through displays and hands-on activities. Attendees could purchase items from Oak Park's Ten Thousand Villages, a fair trade non-profit retailer of exotic goods from Africa, India, Indonesia and South America. There were demonstrations and hands-on activities involving Hawaiian musical instruments and hula dance, Ukrainian egg painting, Guatemalan Worry Dolls, origami animals, and henna "tattoos." Student-created banners and posters celebrating world cultures decorated the walls.

Festival of Cultures' participants engaged in games and sports. In soccer, they could "score a goal for their favorite country," learn stick games from a representative of the Native American Hopi Nation, play the Italian card game "Scopa," and experience the ancient Roman finger game "Morra," taught by EPHS Culture Club members.

A display of multicultural books from the schools' libraries, multicultural podcasts created by EPHS students in their native languages, and a selection of Cinderella stories from around the world were among the items representing Language Arts.

Of course there was food! Parent teacher organizations sold Italian, Polish and Greek desserts. Food demonstrations included making Pizell (an Italian waffle cookie) and a lesson in sushi preparation. Guests also learned about coffee growing and processing.

"The great turnout from our community, with the volunteer efforts of our staff, students and community members created a memorable event," Mrs. Mourikes stated. A resounding "thank you" to everyone who showcased their talents and gave generously of their time to create an unforgettable *Festival of Cultures!*



This dancer from the Mexican Folkloric Company gave an electrifying performance.

Illinois Marketing Educator of the Year

DECA is an organization designed specifically for students enrolled in high school marketing education programs. The DECA program at EPHS is extremely strong. For the seventh year the DECA Business Club has received the **Diamond Award for Excellence** in promoting marketing and entrepreneurship, a high achievement. DECA Advisor **Karen Bear** is the **DECA Illinois Marketing Educator of the Year**. Illinois DECA serves over 2,000 members in 60 chapters statewide.

"I am very honored to have received this award as a recognition from my esteemed peers across the state," Karen Bear stated.

"It helps validate that the programs I create work for the students, school, and state." The award would not have been possible without the support of the district administrators, teachers and the community.

"Through DECA, my students have the opportunity to participate in potentially life-changing experiences. Marketing, management and entrepreneurship education demand a high level of teamwork, communication and writing skills, situation analysis, critical thinking, time management skills and the ability to take a concept from an idea to reality. Our projects employ these twenty-first century marketing skills.

The students also gain experience and confidence from making connections within the community and by working directly with business owners."

Ms. Bear has taught at EPHS for 10 years. Some years ago, she left her teaching position at Proviso East, earned an MBA, owned her own successful business, then worked as a troubleshooter for a bank. When a close friend reminded her how much she loved teaching she "came home" to teach at EPHS. Her students' success—and her own—confirm the wisdom of that decision!



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2011-2012 School Year Registration

Registration forms for the 2011-2012 school year were distributed to families in March. Registration forms are also available on the district website: www.epcusd401.org. Families without Internet access can visit the Elmwood Park Public Library (small fee for printing).

This year, each school has introduced an online store, an easy and secure method to pay school fees with a credit or debit card. (Note: As we go to press, the Early Childhood Center is not accepting payments. Please call the school for information—708/583-5860.) Parents have the option of paying online with a credit/debit card, then mailing copies of proofs of residency to Mrs. Kaminski at the high school, or mailing a check/money order along with copies of proofs of residency to her. **Walk-in/drop off payment WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Registration is not complete until payment and residency proofs are received. **Fees must be paid in full by August 31, 2011 to avoid collections and an additional 40% fee.** Families with students who are new to the district must make an appointment with their home school after July 25, 2011. See the website for forms, contacts, phone numbers and dates.

Walk-in payment of fees for returning students will be held on Wednesday, July 20, 2011 from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Elmwood Park High School.

The first day of school is Tuesday, August 16, 2011. Start times vary by school.

Changes to the Board of Education

The District 401 community bids a fond farewell to one retiring Board of Education member and welcomes a newly-elected member.

Angela Stranges, the Board of Education President, stepped down to serve as an Elmwood Park Village Trustee. She served on the board for eight years. The entire District 401 community extends its appreciation to Mrs. Stranges for her leadership, hard work and dedication to the students and families of Elmwood Park, who she will continue to serve in her new role as Village Trustee.

In April, **Peter Volpe** was elected to the Board of Education. He has worked in the banking industry since 1980, and brings his work expertise and strong commitment to education to the board.

Mr. Volpe decided to run for the Board of Education because he wants to keep the community's schools strong, as a continuing foundation for a strong community.

The new board member enjoys working with and mentoring students. For the past few years he served as a DECA Business Program volunteer at EPHS.

"As a member of the Board of Education, I welcome input from my neighbors and all community members," he commented. "I will put forth my best efforts to strengthen our schools."

He and his wife, Elsa, have been married for 27 years. They have one daughter, Laura.