

Paw-sitively Connected

Great Path Academy at MCC



Mega Education is Mega Supportive of GPA

On November 21st, Mega Education visited GPA during our all-school meeting. They recognized students for a variety of accomplishments, such as straight A's the first marking period.

Jeffrey Drexler, a local lawyer, spoke to the student body about the scholastic incentive system. He spoke to inspire and help students feel that their hard work is worth it. He said, "I have seen the future and it is you. I do this because I have faith and confidence. I see that in this school you have confidence in yourselves and that is the first step." He spoke of Joe Young, a cartoonist, who has created a movie based upon his story from Hartford. Joe Young will be visiting GPA on December 19th to present on his movie, which is about a kid in the North end of Hartford who raises himself. The protagonist made mistakes and grew and learned from a mentor how to use his genius for good.

Drexler said, "Each one of us is the protagonist in our own book. We all dream— if we didn't, life

would be boring— that's good, that's what moves us forward. If you write a book about yourself, you're the star of your own book. I don't know what you're going to write! I'm still writing my book!"



GPA students acknowledged for accomplishments from Mega Education!

Samuel Vega, Jr., the program coordinator for Mega Education also spoke.

As the mega education website states, "As an amateur boxer, 'Sammy' won 7 [SEVEN] National Championships and a Bronze Medal at the 1997 World Junior Olympic Championships. He was the first boxer from Connecticut to win the National

Silver Gloves Championship and only the second boxer from Connecticut ever to win the National Junior Olympic championship."

He spoke of how boxing taught him to use his head and his brain to solve problems and walk away from any potential street fights. He stated, "We all plan to go to college," then paused and looked around at the audience of GPA, "Actually, you're already in college! I wish I had this when I was back in school. You're graduating already ahead here, you should be proud of that."

Mega Education offered incentives to perfect homework, as well as the straight A's and perfect attendance students. They gave out restaurant gift cards, movie tickets, Best buy gift cards and an Android tablet. They also gave out one night out for dinner for six in a limo.

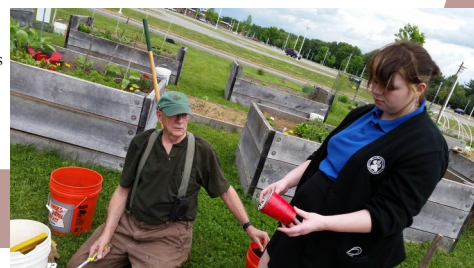
As the presenters stated, "Just for doing homework? Are you serious?!", in a teasing tone.

They stated, "If you are in this school, you are privileged, if you do well here, you can choose where you go— you are writing your scripts, your roles, right now!"

the Amazing Grace store, both in Middletown.

In his time with us, John has spearheaded numerous garden projects and garden experiments. He was able to get many donations for the club, from seeds, catalogs, and lumber for a raised garden bed, to a set of books on small-plot, high-yield gardening from the author and owner of a local herb garden, Sal Gilbertie. A man of many talents and stories, who is willing to share them all, John has been an amazing asset to our club and we look forward to each Wednesday when he comes in to share tales of life and the garden.

Photos: (left) John directing the students how to use garden tools to till the soil and (right) John, working with Meghyn Barger last year as we planted our tomato plants.



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December 2014

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GPA's Gardening and Sustainability Club Community Partner, John Carlson

For the past year and a half, the GPA Garden Club has had the distinct pleasure of working with UCONN Master Gardener, John Carlson, who volunteers his time and knowledge each Wednesday during clubs to help grow the skills of our GPA gardeners. John hails from Haddam, CT where he resides and maintains his own expansive gardens with his wife, Carole. He has been an avid gardener since Victory Garden

became popularized in the early 1940's. In 1994, after retiring from the Westinghouse Electric Company, where he was involved in sales and many other aspects of the company, John successfully completed his

Master Gardener Certification course through UCONN. He then joined the Connecticut Master Gardener Association (CMGA) where he is currently on Board of Directors. In his role, John coordinated the yearly CMGA Symposium which is held, right here at MCC in March. He also takes on many other projects from working with Boy Scout Troops, to giving lectures on composting, maintaining both a Community Demonstration Garden at the UCONN Extension Center in Haddam and trees in a CT Arboretum, and working with the GPA Garden club at our community garden plot and in the classroom. The edibles from several of his garden projects are also frequently donated to charities such as St. Vincent DePaul's soup kitchen and

Special points of interest:

- For delays and cancellations, GPA follows Manchester Public Schools Schedule. You can sign up for alerts from the news, which is helpful, too!
- GPA's "A Second Cup of Coffee" for parents to gather and discuss our school community is here! The next event is scheduled for January 27th, 8-9 am.
- Transportation Inquiries can be made to (860) 524-4077.
- The GPA website is updated multiple times a week in order to get you the most accurate information about our school community available.





Jazz band members jamming out above at a GPA open house for prospective students and above and to the right during practice.



Isabella M. working hard in a GPA breakout area.



Tahira, Nicole and Tobijah staying after school to do work!

Unified Arts News

We would like to warmly welcome Leah Dyckman to the Unified Arts team! Ms. D. comes to us as our new Art Instructor— she attended Penn State and she worked in Hershey, PA where the air really did smell like chocolate. She has most recently been teaching art in West Hartford until now. We are very lucky to have her as a part of our staff!

Spanish II is starting a Unit on getting ready using reflexive verbs. They are preparing to complete a presentation about their own daily routine in the target language.

Spanish 1 has started Chapter 2A, in which students are learning to talk and write about school schedule and supplies. Spanish IV is continuing to read the novel "Cajas de Carton" and practicing the future tense of verbs in Spanish.

Personal Finance: Students are gearing up for another "dress-up day" to be bankers for a day. This time their simulation will be focused on the daily transactions of a bank. The students are developing a list of products and services they will offer, my favorite is the vacation club. They will then be open for

business and prospective and regular customers will come to deposit and withdrawal money and inquire all about what we have to offer. This will be a great learning experience for all of the students.

Culinary 1: We are nearing the end of the piles of book work that come with the articulation agreement and are discussing at great lengths about commercial equipment. We have produced some items that include a thanksgiving dinner, breakfast foods, cheese biscuits and cookies. We look forward to the next section which will feature the foundations of sauces and stocks.



Social Studies News

In Civics for Mr. Buder, students are beginning to learn about the Bill of Rights and the role they play in our everyday lives. Students have been discussing current events in the United States and analyzing protest movements across the country.

In World History for Mr. Buder, students have learned about Apartheid in South Africa. Dur-

ing the month of December, students will be discussing and analyzing the modern day slave trade and other human rights violations in the world.

In addition to investigating the current events in Ferguson, Missouri, Ms. PD's Civics students are learning about the Bill of Rights and the role their role in our everyday lives. Philosophy students are beginning a

unit on Discrimination and creating their first "thought experiments".

In U.S. History we just completed our unit on the 1920's. The students presented their knowledge in various creative forms, i.e. newspapers, children's books and pieces of art. Next we will begin to explore the 1930's and the harsh realities of the Great Depression.

English News

Students in English I are reading House on Mango Street. They are learning how to analyze theme and character development. In English I Honors, students just finished their independent reading projects. They had to write an

essay and create a visual component. They are now reading Night by Elie Wiesel.

Mr. Simpson's American Lit: We are finishing Huckleberry Finn and preparing to write an analytical essay on the novel.

Mr. Simpson's College Writing: Students recently completed One Hundred Years of Solitude essays and have moved on to their study of rhetoric and rhetorical devices to prepare for creating their own speech.



Science News

Biology: Biology students have been working to solve problems involving DNA transcription and translation. They are also applying those processes to learning about mutations in DNA and how that can good variations, bad variations, or no new variations at all.

Chemistry: In College Prep Chemistry, students in Mrs. Chaki's class are exploring the concept of isotopes and average atomic mass. Isotopes of elements like Iodine have uses in biomedical research. An isotope of uranium is used to make atomic bomb. Through the Beanium lab students discover the process of calculating average atomic mass.

In Ms. Thurrott's chemistry class students compare the Bohr model with the modern quantum model of atom. They are exploring the concept

of orbitals through probability.

Students in articulated chemistry are applying rules for significant figures to analyze data and making scientific measurements using different instruments. The data obtained is evaluated for accuracy and precision and percent error. Some students have begun their research on creating a timeline for development of quantum concept of atom.

Genetics: The genetics class is working on creating lessons about specific types of mutations and the variations that they can cause. These presentations will be used to teach their classmates how their study of DNA, the Central Dogma, and mutations specifically apply to the real world using very specific cases.

Physical Science: The physical science students are developing mini-presentations on the states of matter to share with each other. Their new knowledge will help them learn

about phase changes and how to graph those changes through our laboratory exercise.

CAPT: 10th grade students are already beginning to prepare for their March CAPT Science. All students have been provided with a www.studyisland.com username and password and they are actively using this wonderful tool in class to help boost their contact with the content. Please encourage your GPA student to continue practicing questions and engaging in the lessons available on study island at home!

CAPT Field Trip!! Students who scored level 5 ADVANCED on CAPT over the past two years are being rewarded with an educational trip to Boston Friday December 5, 2014. While in Boston, students will be visiting the MIT Museum and engaging in a workshop on the physics of Photography. Additionally, they will be creating images as part of a pilot program which may be displayed in an exhibit at a later date!

English News (cont.) / Math News

Honors has just concluded their unit on Lord of the Flies. All students were required to do a creative presentation that examined different aspects of the novels. Projects ranged from scale models to a skit putting the main characters on trial. Students did an amazing job! Honors is preparing for their next unit on The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan. Students will explore the Chinese culture and traditions in compar-

ison to American society.

College Prep just completed a claim based essay on theme in Night. Students practiced peer editing and signal phrases to incorporate citations. Students are now pushing through the rest of the memoir and will be complete by winter break!

In Geometry, students are performing constructions used by the Ancient Greeks, testing their

ability to create with limited resources. As a project, they will be drafting a two panel truss using constructions that will later be built and tested using different weights. In Pre-calculus, students are using transformations on parent functions to understand and describe phenomena in the world, such as the path of a football thrown in the air.

Students and Staff Members of the Month— December

A big, huge congratulations to our Mega Education Students of the Month! Students of the Month for Great Path Academy and students who have awesome grades and have been world class citizens:

FRESHMEN: Shawn Akomeah,



Quyen Le, Jacinda Pinnock, Timothy Powers, Chase Del Vagio, Marissa Guillman

SOPHOMORES: Alyssa Duffy, Ellen Wolfe, Eleanore Hewett, Myia Tedeschi, Nhan Nguyen, Cristian Osorio

JUNIORS: Mark Billingsly, Aaron Hill, John Kaminski, Destiny Arroyo, Cecile Davis, Nancy Lys

SENIORS: Angela Zorilla, Lauren Peoples, Karina Escobar, Joseph Johnson, Javante Danvers, Hannah Polinski

The Staff Member of the Month was Mr. Wosleger— GPA's Inside Suspension Coordinator. He was nominated with 20 student written staff gotcha paws— a record for the Mishi-maya-gat recipients! Mr. Wosleger is nicknamed "Coach", and just accepted a position as an assistant coach for the Wesleyan baseball team. Mr. W. grew up in Stamford, CT and worked in marketing for 20+ years. He left that career path to work with kids, subbing in technical high schools and coaching baseball camps and clinics during the summers. His favorite part about working at GPA is the "students. No matter what kind of day you are having they give you energy!"



Above and to the left: GPA scholars on a trip to Boston!

This is an ongoing study: Ms. Canty, GPA's social worker, is participating in a research study called STARS (School-based Treatment of Anxiety Research Study). The study target group is students who have excessive anxiety, worry and/ or shyness. If eligible, your child will receive one of two types of talk therapy from Ms. Canty. Your child will meet with her for 12 weeks during the school day. After treatment, you and your child will meet with the UConn group for 2 more times to see if your child's anxiety has improved. There is no medication involved in this study. All evaluations and treatment are provided at no cost to families. Families may earn up to \$120 in gift cards for participating in the study. Contact Dr. Jeffrey Pella at (860) 523-6476 or STARS@uchc.edu.



Chef Murdock-Sherman and Ms. Lopez pass on the Mishi-maya-gat trophy to Mr. W.



GREAT PATH ACADEMY AT MCC

A Middle College High School

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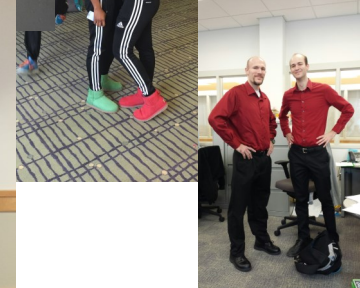
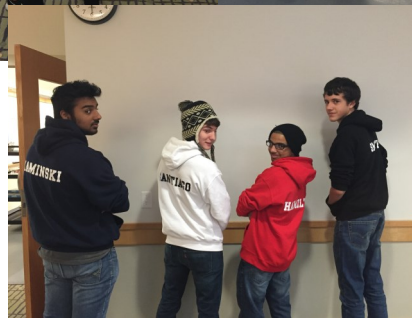
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Respect,
Responsibility and Safety

We're on the web!

www.greatpathacademy.org



Photos from around GPA
from Twin Day during Spirit
Week. "Winning at Twin-
ning!"

Hartford Stage and GPA InterACT to Introduce Students to New Ways to Look at Shakespeare/ Antigone, the GPA Way



Students as "Character Sculptures" in a pre-show *Hamlet* workshop.

Great Path Academy drama students have the unique opportunity to work with the Hartford Stage again this year, through a program called InterACT. During this program series, GPA welcomes a Hartford Stage Instructor, who works through a production with the students through a pre-show workshop, then the students attend the play. After the performance, the instructor visits again for a post-show workshop. This process helps students to become immersed in the world of a production in a wrap-around effect. They have knowledge of the themes, plot and characters going into the play that opens their eyes to appreciate and understand the production on a deeper level. This year, they have already gone through this investigative process with "Hamlet" and now "A Christmas Carol".

If you visit one of the pre-show workshops, you can expect to see drama-based activities. Students participate in

"Character Snapshots", and "Character Sculptures", where they pose and freeze, according to a character description. The whole group then tours the "museum of sculptures" to get the story behind each character. This helps to introduce the students to the vocabulary used and names of the characters, as well as relationships. They then staged the sculptures all together, to demonstrate those relationships. This helps to solidify student understanding of the characters. The InterACT instructor spoke of how "In Shakespeare, there's not there's not a lot of stage directions written in the plays, it is within Shakespeare's lines- it's up to actors and directors its up to the actors to determine what the directions are."

For instance, "oh" is stated in many lines. It is up to the actors to interpret what message to send across with their body language and emphasis when they say "oh". The students all stood in a circle and stated "oh wonderful" with various emotions to demonstrate this. They communicated sarcasm, confusion, lust, joy, anger, fear,

sadness, ecstatic and jealousy.

Antigone, The GPA Way

Antigone will be performed on the evenings of April 30, and May 1 with a matinee on Sat. May 2. This version of the play was adapted from Sophocles' original (5th cent. BCE) by Jean Anouilh in the 1940s. Among other things, it is about the conflict between law and morality - and Anouilh presented in occupied France under the noses of the Nazis. It's also about the conflict of perspectives between youth and age, between men and women, and between idealists and pragmatists - so there is plenty of contemporary resonance. In fact, this production will be experimental in its use of modern dance and pop music to reinforce classic themes.

Because Theatre@ GPA director Dr. Zotos will be in the show playing the role of Creon, senior Alivia Caruso will be assisting him in directing the production as part of her Capstone project.

Great Path Academy @ MCC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, gender, gender identity or expression, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, political belief, veteran status, or sexual orientation. The following individual has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Susan Canty, Title IX Coordinator
tor.canty001@hartfordschools.org

Thank you to the following donors to the PBIS Gotcha Cart this month:

Ms. Deiz, Ms. Ruoff, Ms. DiFedele-Dutton, Ms. Lopez, Mr. Basile, Ms. Spencer, Mr. DeOliveria, Mr. Pappalardo

We appreciate the support for helping to recognize GPA Student Cougars for being Responsible, Respectful and Safe!

If interested, donations can be made to Ms. Canty— please email cants001@hartfordschools.org or call (860) 512-3723.