

# BOCES BITS

April 2009 Vol. 5 Issue 4

Jessica F. Cohen, District Superintendent • Laurie Cook, Editor

## From the District Superintendent

Dear Staff:

As I write this note to you, we are still awaiting final action on the state budget. It appears that education funding was restored to last year's levels using federal stimulus monies. It is unclear as to how the funding and the restrictions on the use of some of the federal funds will impact our districts but we are hopeful that our final requests will be similar to the initial requests submitted in December. As we learn more, we will share it with you.

Thanks to the staff at the McEvoy Center for helping us have a very successful Annual Meeting on April 2. More than fifty board members from our component districts joined our Board of Education to hear about our administrative and program budgets. Special thanks should go to Culinary Arts instructor, Missy Adams for the delicious dinner and desserts prepared by her students

and to Sue Nagen for beautiful spring flower arrangements that turned the courtyard at Mc Evoy into a dining room. Highlights of our program were certainly the Mc Evoy Chimers musical group taught by Molly Milner and Don Brown and Sarah Fuller, two Cortland Alternative High School Students who talked about their experiences at the alternative school..

The next three months will continue to be busy as we finalize budgets, plan for the next year, and celebrate student successes in celebrations, awards ceremonies, and graduations. In the midst of all of our busyness, take some time out to reflect on all of our success.

*Jessica*

## McEvoy Educators Receive Top Honors in Newspapers in Education Awards!



Congratulations to OCM BOCES Special Education Instructors Brenda Comolli and Jamie Breneman for recently being chosen by Syracuse's *Post Standard* newspaper as overall "Golden Apple" award winners in the

publication's Newspaper in Education (NIE) contest. The ladies' achievement was honored during NIEWeek at the celebration night on March 10, 2009 at Nottingham High School.

Like other educators who use the daily newspaper, Jamie and Brenda completed questionnaires about how they use the *Post Standard* in their classroom. Their responses were reviewed by a panel of educators and they were selected as this year's overall winners!

The Golden Apple Awards recognize educators who make creative and effective use of the newspaper as a learning resource. Judges selected the team from McEvoy for their use of the newspaper as an educational tool in teaching students math and science, about the presidential election and other life skills they will need as adults. Brenda and Jamie were featured in a *Post Standard* article on March 11, 2009. Congratulations to Brenda and Jamie!

## Read Across America Gets Off on The Right Foot in Deaf & Hard of Hearing Program



On March 6<sup>th</sup>, staff and students in OCM BOCES Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program celebrated their second annual **Read Across America** with family and friends. There was a great turnout for the event, which began by students participating in the Read Across America Reader's Oath. Families were given a copy of this oath in their event program, and reading at home every day was stressed.

The students then put on the play "The Foot Book" by Dr. Seuss. After this special play, families and students were presented with certificates for participating in the event. After receiving their certificates, the students and families

were given a basket containing "Read Across America", and "Read Captions Across America" bookmarks, as well as two books that their child had chosen to share with them.

Students also had a special "book sharing" time with their family as well as an opportunity to take a family picture with "The Cat and the Hat," played by Deaf Program Interpreter, Jessica Horner.

At the end of the celebration, families enjoyed a piece of cake with their child. The students and staff worked very hard to put the play and the program together, and it was a great venue to share with families - the importance of literacy development in home and school.



### Read Across America at Cedar Street



In 2009, *Read Across America* was celebrated for the first time at Cedar Street. The teachers at Cedar Street set individual, and classroom

reading goals during Read Across America week. On Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, the students had a special Read Across America Celebration and were presented with the Read across America Reader's Oath. Students who participated in the event received a certificate of participation with the help of the Syracuse Crunch mascot "Al" (Mark Hayes). The students enjoyed cake and received encouragement to continue reading each day by Al.

# — Save the Date! —

Mark your calendars for the 2009

Chase Corporate Challenge

taking place on

**Tuesday, June 23**

at Onondaga Lake Park!

More details to come in future

issues of **BOCES Bits**



## EXPO 2009 a Successful Event

On Saturday, Feb 28<sup>th</sup> the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, in collaboration with PEPNET – Postsecondary Education Programs Network, held “EXPO 2009” at the Central New York Regional Information Center. A committee, comprised of several members of the OCM BOCES Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, organized the event for families of students in our program as well as component (itinerant) and non-component students.

“EXPO 2009” brought-in more than 80 people, including families and community members of deaf and hard of hearing students, as well as college students learning sign language. Exhibitors included several community agencies such as Aurora, Whole-Me, Exceptional Family Resources, PEPNET and VESID, as well as assistive technology companies such as Cart, Typewell, Sorenson, Sprint, and Deaf Equipment.

BOCES, and other community Audiologists, provided demonstrations of devices, such as vibrating alarm clocks, flashing smoke detectors and FM equipment. There was also information on post-secondary transition provided by Le Moyne College, PEPNET, and Susan Young the MTP coordinator from OCM BOCES.

In addition to informational tables, there was a kids’ corner which included signed videos, balloon animals, and face painting. There were also several educational presentations each hour during the EXPO.

Participants listened to mini presentations on the following topics: Say It and See It – Speech to Text Technology, Interpreting in Action, Getting an Interpreter for Your Child in the Community, Ready Set Go! The Great Literacy Race and Where to Look for Financial Support for Technology.



## Staff Development at OCM BOCES

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, staff of OCM BOCES took part in a variety of staff development activities throughout the organization. Workshops included Breakfast and a Book at McEvoy, Teaching Assistant Certification Questions and Answers, What is DIBELS, Strategies for Effective Adult Education Classroom Management and Marketing Programs. OCM BOCES Administrators had a chance to visit many of the sites and experience staff working together to improve learning. Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard to set up activities for the day!



## OCM BOCES ADA PEP Takes Part In Town Hall Meeting

Madison County’s Promise Community Drug Free Task Force recently held a Town Hall Meeting on Prescription Drug Abuse at Chittenango High School. The audience of over 80 people, was a diverse group, including parents, students, school administrators and law enforcement. A presentation by NYS Trooper Jack Keller, on current drug trends among youth showed that while some drug abuse, such as marijuana use has declined recently, prescription drug abuse is on the rise.

After the presentation, a panel made up of representatives from Madison County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program, Chittenango High School, Madison County District Attorney’s Office, Cazenovia Pharmacy, Chittenango Middle School, the Alcohol-Drug Abuse Prevention Education Program and NYS Troopers, answered questions from the audience.

## CONGRATULATIONS! KUDOS! GREAT JOB! WELL DONE! BRAVO!

If you know of an OCM BOCES student or employee that has done a great job on a project or if you know someone that should be recognized for an achievement they've made, please let us know about it! We'd like to get the word out about the great things that are going on in our organization. Send your information to Laurie Cook at [lcook@ocmboces](mailto:lcook@ocmboces) or call at 431-8597.

### BOCES Students Compete at ProStart State Competition

After weeks of practice and preparation, OCM BOCES Culinary and Management teams went to the statewide Pro-Start competition at the Wegman's Conference Center in Rochester, N.Y. on March 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. The Culinary Teams competed against 18 other from around the state and while we didn't place in the top four, the teams did a great job and put in a very good effort. The Management team was competing against nine other schools from around the state and was able to finish fourth. Congratulations to everyone that participated in this competition.

#### Syracuse Culinary team:

Scott Babcock – Westhill  
Chris Merrihew – Fayetteville Manlius  
David MonDore – Cicero-North Syracuse  
Chartele Scott – Jamesville Dewitt

#### Syracuse Management team:

Catherine Destefano – West Genesee  
Leah Estock – Baldwinsville  
Greg Kowalski – Baldwinsville  
Nicole Pensabene – Marcellus

#### Cortland Culinary team:

Kristy DuRocher – Tully  
Diana Guest – Homer  
Kory Nauseef – Homer  
Jeffrey Klingenberg – Cincinnatus



### EAP Online at Your Fingertips!

The Employee Assistance Program has a wonderful website with tons of useful information. There are sections about EAP services including wellness topics, workshops, newsletters and how to contact us for an appointment or further information. There are also great links to websites, recommendations on books, customized workshops, self tests and a new employee orientation. So check it out at [eap.ocmboces.org](http://eap.ocmboces.org)!

### OCM BOCES Board Members

Michael J. Brady  
Wayne Brownson, *Vice President*  
Catherine Cifaratta-Brayton  
Mark W. Gilbert  
Mary Ann Haley  
Mike Murphy  
Lisa O'Reilly  
David Paczkowski  
Joan Reeves  
Sandra Rausa  
Ann Wright, *President*