



BEAR TRACKS



A NEWSLETTER OF THE SCRANTON SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN



Celebrating Our Kids An Evening at The Scranton School

Thursday, March 22 marked The Scranton School's annual community fundraising event *Celebrating Our Kids: An Evening at The Scranton School*. Community members from across Northeastern Pennsylvania joined our faculty and staff on the campus to enjoy a progressive-style event that included fun games, delicious food, and a brief program featuring a video called "The Finnertys' Story." This video highlighted the incredible story of one our students and his family. The story details the journeys of the Finnertys' as their family has come together to ensure Seth's success as a student and, more importantly, as a person. The highlight of the evening was a surprise live performance by Seth that left the audience in awe and inspired to help others succeed.

The event is an annual success thanks to our many partners and supporters. We are especially grateful to Interprettek for being our presenting sponsor. We thank them for their support and partnership over the last number of years and congratulate them on 25 years of serving the Deaf Community. Resources from the event will support the school's Technology Advancement Initiative. ■

SPRING 2018



Our vision

It is the vision of our school to be a **Total Learning Environment**

for our students.

The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children is a special place where...

- Our students achieve at the same levels as other children in our society.
- Our students reach their highest potential in academics and citizenship.
- Our students achieve independence, high personal aspirations, and pride.

The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

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KIDS CAMP

**HEY YOU!
Don't miss out!**
Details coming soon!

Fun Activity programs

Make New Friends



Adventure Awaits!
June 25-28, 2018!

100th Day of School

Students and staff celebrated the 100th day of school by dressing like they were 100 years old. Students participated in classroom activities focused on learning about historical events 100 years ago, counting 100 items, estimating their weight and then comparing to the actual weight. These activities and lessons provided opportunities for our students to practice math and sharpen their observational skills. ■



After School Clubs

The After School programs took on a few new activities for the Spring Session with more exciting opportunities to come as we close out the year. In Coding Club, students are learning the building blocks of programming and code writing using iPads and a program called Scratch Junior. Students are learning how to create interactive stories and environments during this session. Cooking Club brings a delicious twist to our programming as students learn about food safety, taste different foods, and practice preparing some tasty meal items. Additional new programs that will be rolled out as the weather clears are Archery Club and Parkour. Each of these clubs is aimed at getting students moving and having fun in the great outdoors as we banish the winter doldrums! ■





2018 ASL Learning Opportunity

Over the weekend of January 13, the Camp Hill office hosted the American Society for Deaf Children ASL weekend. The weekend consisted of intense ASL training and workshops geared toward parents. ■



Family Learning Weekend

Family Learning Weekend has grown to be a much anticipated event on the Scranton campus. A time for families to come together, meet and learn. This year's event didn't quite follow past tradition. Instead it took a different turn. In fact, it took a right turn...right out of the driveway!

Eleven families from the Choices for Children and school age programs arrived on campus bright and early to board the bus to WPSD for this year's Family Learning Weekend. After stops in Danville and Altoona, we arrived at WPSD ready to move in to the WPSD residence- our home away from home - for the weekend. Friday night, we enjoyed an amazing Signing Time concert by Rachel Coleman. On Saturday, Rachel shared her family's personal journey raising her Deaf daughter, Leah. She encouraged families to "do whatever it takes" to follow their child's lead and always advocate for what meets their child's needs. The busy weekend continued with a very informative panel presentation by Erin Campion, Chastity DiFrancesco, Cathy Rhoten, Ben Moonan and Kara Mazreku. They each highlighted the organizations they represent and the support and resources available to parents. Finally, Sheri Morgan and Christie Homell presented an amazing literacy/ASL workshop highlighted by an ASL story for all to enjoy. After a busy day, we boarded the WPSD coach and were ready to return to Scranton. Of course, no trip



across the state would be complete without a stop at the Penn State Creamery.

The families say it best in their comments about the experience...

"What an amazing group of people!"

"Thank you so much for giving my family the opportunity to participate in this amazing program!"

"WPSD is such a special place!"

We look forward to many more collaborative events where all of our families can learn and grow together! ■



Programs of the WPSD Board Members Visit SSDHHC



Dr. Seuss' Birthday

Students celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday with books and language activities. The school gathered together to hear board member Leo McGowan read the story "I Can Read With My Eyes Shut." After listening to the story, students enjoyed many "Seussical" activities including building a cat hat tower and painting hair on Thing 1 and Thing 2. The "Cat in the Hat" was also at our celebration joining the students in their activities. Each student was given a book to keep and enjoy. Students had a wonderful time celebrating the great Theodor Seuss Geisel together. ■



Welcome to the Team

Dean Pettinato

Position: Assistant Principal

Hello! My name is Dean. This is my first year in the Assistant Principal position. This is a very special place, and I am thrilled to be a part of the SSDHHC family. I enjoy working with our students and their families every day. During my free time, I enjoy spending time with friends, sports, hunting, fishing, but most of all my family that now includes my newborn daughter.



Debbie Errante

Position: Speech Language Pathologist

Hi! I'm Debbie. I'm originally from Honesdale, Pennsylvania. After I graduated from Marywood and Bloomsburg Universities with a degree in Speech Pathology, the bright lights and city life were calling me, so I packed up my things and moved to New York. I worked there for many years with preschool and school age children, but home is where we always return and I am so excited to be back and a part of the Scranton School staff. There is nothing more gratifying than helping children develop their communication skills! When not at SSDHHC, you can find me at the gym or taking care of our new family dog, Holly, the Golden Retriever.



Lori Hewitt

Position: Administrative Assistant to the Principal

Before joining the SSDHHC Family in August, I worked at St. Joseph's Center for nine years. My fiancé and I reside in Olyphant, Pa. We are looking forward to getting married this spring. I am the mother of two beautiful daughters. Kayla is an Autistic Support Teacher in Delaware County. Megan is a Junior at Kutztown University majoring in Social Work. I am anxiously awaiting the warmer weather. I can't wait to get the bikes on the trail and the kayaks in the water! I am very grateful to be part of such an amazing team here in Scranton!





Monique Kenia

Position: Art Teacher

Hello! My name is Monique Kenia. I graduated from Kutztown University with a degree in Art Education in December of 2016. My hobbies include making art, spending time with my younger sisters, and watching scary movies! I love working with the children at SSDHHC because they are hardworking, kind, and creative students who are always ready to get messy in the art room.

Rich Konzelman

Position: Security Officer

Hi! I'm Rich, the new Security Officer at SSDHHC. I have two Bachelor degrees and one Master's Degree from Baptist Bible College and Seminary of PA. Vocationally, I've been a construction worker, soccer coach, Baptist pastor, dorm supervisor, operations manager, landscaper and have served in the PA National Guard. I have been blessed with a wonderful family that includes my wife, three children and six grandchildren. I am very thankful for the privilege of being a part of the positive and professional staff serving the students of SSDHHC.



Stacy Dunkle

Position: Pre-School Teacher

Hello! My name is Stacy. I graduated from Bloomsburg University in May 2017 with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education (PreK-4)/Deaf Education (N-12) with a minor in American Sign Language. My favorite food is tacos and my favorite color is green. I love to cook, read, sew, hike and spend time with my family. Something you may not know about me, is that I have a twin sister!





PBIS

Our monthly PBIS blowouts have been a success this whole year. These events have been a tremendous motivator for our students to earn the opportunity to attend. In January, our students enjoyed a "Snow Day" celebration. When all of the snow melted, our staff had to put their heads together and get creative. So, we organized indoor winter themed activities. Our kids enjoyed relay races, snowman building, ice-skating, snowball fights, and sled races indoors. After all of the activities ended, fake snow fell down from the ceiling, and all of the kids had an opportunity to play in the "snow." Finally, the kids enjoyed hot chocolate to wrap up the events. This was a true team effort from our staff to create such a special day for our kids. This will be a day that the students will remember forever. To quote one of our students, "This was the best day ever!" ■

PSO

After a busy fall and winter, the Parent Staff Organization of The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children hasn't stopped planning a myriad of spring activities for students and families.

A successful candy sale of Gertrude Hawk candy bars helped with fall and winter programs, including the Halloween party and the purchase of a book for every child. The PSO also purchased winter hats for every child at the school and at the Hershey Preschool. A few months later, the PSO conducted its Spring Easter Candy Sale, with treats made locally by Dunmore Candy Kitchen. Proceeds from the sale exceeded last year's inaugural run and raised \$622.

Some of those proceeds were used to fund prizes and healthy treats for its annual Easter Egg Hunt. Funds raised sponsored the annual Mothers' Day Tea for elementary students and their mothers and grandmothers, as well as Field Day t-shirts for students.



The PSO also organized another special event in April, when deaf chef, Christina Derhammer, visited the school and shared with families how to make convenient and healthy meals.

New members are always welcome and membership fees are \$10 per year per family. This year's officers are Nicole Miller, president; Erica Stone, vice president; and Mark Beagle, secretary, who also moonlights as the Easter Bunny. Director Jon Konzelman is treasurer. ■

