

Hastings-on-Hudson Public Schools



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April 1, 2022

Dear Hastings Families and Staff,

April 1st. Today I will be brief. No foolin'.

Celebrating the good among Us has been my theme this year. The beat goes on. I open this week's letter with an extended note on the accomplishments of the Science Research Program, follow with applause for the sportsmanship of a certain winter team and close with a poetry challenge.

Science Research Accomplishments

We learned late last week that Hastings' Science Research Program scored big at this year's Regeneron Westchester Science and Engineering Fair. The competition was held virtually on March 19, with awards announced on March 25. Melissa Shandroff prepared the following testimonial for her students:

*Hastings students received a number of awards, which is a testament to the amazing work they have done over the past two years. I am especially excited to announce that senior **Charlotte Rubin** was one of the top 20 projects out of the 573 projects in the fair. Charlotte will be representing Hastings at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair held in Atlanta, Georgia from May 7- May 13, 2022. She will compete with her project, "The Effect of N-methyl D-aspartate Receptor Shutdown on Neural Stem Cell Proliferation in Zebrafish Larvae," against approximately 1,700 students from around the world. Charlotte also placed second in the category of Neuroscience.*

The other Hastings award winners are as follows:

- **Charles Linder:** Second in Behavioral and Social Science and Mu Alpha Theta Award
- **Benjamin McNulty:** Third in Plant Science
- **Julien Amsellem:** Third in Animal Science and the Bedford Audubon Award
- **Oliver Fuchs:** Fourth in Environmental Science and the National Geographic That's Geography! Cultivating Empathy for the Earth Award
- **Joanna Abi Rizk and Kathleen Rotmil-Eser:** Fourth place in Behavioral and Social Science
- **Martin Trpceski:** Honorable Mention Award
- **Connor Noyes:** Teatown Young Environmentalist Award

- **Manuel Iglesias:** Excellence in Medical Research Award
- **Joaquin Teper:** Excellence in Medical Research Award
- **Kate Ryan and Luisa Scioscia:** NOAA Taking the Pulse of the Planet Award
- **Carina Eisenberg:** American Psychology Association Award

Congratulations to all of the Hastings winners. I want to extend the kudos to each of the teachers who over many years have fostered a love of inquiry and exploration in our students. The 14 students honored today symbolize the work underway every day in every classroom in Hastings.

Winning with Character – Winter Hoops Sportsmanship

Let me be personal for a moment (no foolin'): I deeply value athletics as a means to learning and growth; I am energized by winning programs and teams; however, "winning with character" outshines win-loss records.

Thus, I was pleased to learn this week that Coach Bob DelleBovi and the Varsity Boys Basketball Team were selected for the 2021-22 Dennis T. Hurlie Sportsmanship Award. The award was established 20 years ago by the IAABO Board 52 to honor a Boys High School Varsity Basketball Team and its Head Coach who consistently demonstrate hard work, fair play, team spirit and sportsmanship.

While we cheered for the team's many victories this year and deep run in the playoffs, our applause must be louder for the sportsmanship award. I challenge all our teams to chase this standard.

A Poetry Challenge

April 1 is the first day of [National Poetry Month](#) (no foolin'). I have a hunch that Hastings cares about the written and spoken word, and may be a special place for poetry. Let's test out my hunch this month. **Here's the challenge: Please send to me by Friday, April 22 short poems written by students or staff, and I will share them in a digital format on Friday, April 29.**

Poetry is a powerful form of expression. When I hit difficult moments, poetry provides uplift. Let's see if Hastings can use poetry for the good—for **Us**. I turn to Emily Dickinson to set the tone for my challenge:

“Hope” Is the Thing with Feathers (circa 1861)

“Hope” is the thing with feathers –
That perches in the soul –
And sings the tune without the words –
And never stops – at all –

And sweetest – in the Gale – is heard –
And sore must be the storm –
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm –

I've heard it in the chillest land –
And on the strangest Sea –
Yet – never – in Extremity,
It asked a crumb – of me.

Be well.

Bill

William S. McKersie, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
(No foolin')