

Pi Day 2017: Accelerating our children's education



Attendees at the Town of LaGrange Pi Day ceremony included (left) John DeSignore, Somer DeSignore, Noah DeSignore, Dawn Galente, Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro, Grace DeSignore and Math & Physics Exploration Director Irvin M. Miller. Above are Town of LaGrange Supervisor Alan Bell, Miller, Molinaro, Joey Colaizzo, Heidi Colaizzo, Jon Baisley, Bridgette Authur-Mensah, Ebo Authur. *Courtesy photos*

by Irvin M. Miller
Math & Physics Exploration

On Tuesday, March 21 and Wednesday, March 22, the Math & Physics Exploration recognized outstanding math students in Dutchess, Ulster, and Putnam counties for the third consecutive year. The Exploration center has an enriched math program which it offers to the Wappingers and Arlington Central school districts and which it provides for students in the Highland, Carmel and other public and parochial schools. Students who were on the Math Counts teams were also recognized for their skill in math.

The purpose of this recognition event is to show these students that their intellect and effort is highly regarded by their school district, public officials, their parents and the community as a whole.

In the afternoon session, County Executive Marcus Molinaro was the keynote speaker. Molinaro issued certificates of recognition along with State Senator Sue Serino, Assemblyperson Kieran Lalor, Chairman of the County Legislature Dale Borchert and School Superintendents Brendan Lyons, Jose Carrion, Mark Villanti, and Deborah Haab. Town supervisors Alan Bell, Barbara Zulauf, Lori Jiava, Jon Baisley and John Hickman issued proclamations and/or also certificates of recognition.

Last year Town of Beekman supervisor Zulauf honored the students from her town. Supervisor Hickman plans the same for his town this year. Principals Eric Seipp, Mary Bish, Adam Gerson, and Eric Schetter were in attendance and many of them signed certificates of recognition.

The Exploration Center has a program for fifth- and sixth-graders that is normally part of a high-school or college math course. While all of the students have done well in the program several were given special trophies for they had learned

programming and how to manually generate logarithm tables. These students were Alisha Mokal, Alex Papazov, Alisha Wallen, Matthew Nieto, Michaela Jacobs, Logan Purcell, Brenda McKiernan, and Zakary Wahl.

Noah Wahl at Carmel High School was recognized for his advanced work. Joey Colaizzo was given a very special trophy and a plaque for being the first student to complete the Twelve Labours of Minerva task.

Several students and their parents gave speeches expressing their appreciation of the program. Somer DeSignore, mother of Graysen, compared the program at The Math & Physics Exploration in how it demystified mathematical concepts. She was delighted in the confidence and skill that her two children received.

Before coming to the Exploration Center Graysen disliked math and found it tortuous. After a few days she found new excitement and confidence and saw significant improvement in her grades at school.

Molinaro told the students how important was their math education and that their excellence was important to the economy and growth of Dutchess County. A special highlight was when County Executive Molinaro gave awards to Ebo Authur Mensah in first grade at St Martin de Porres and Noah DeSignore in the first grade in Arlington for knowing their addition and multiplication facts as well as a third grader.

This was followed by his giving of the Twelve Labours of Minerva Award to Joey Colaizzo, Valedictorian and captain of the running team in Hyde Park.

Daniel Jacobs, father of Michaela, was impressed by his daughter learning mathematical shortcuts, the reinforcement of her math skills, the speed in doing calculations, and meeting and working with other children who are good in math. He also

enjoyed relearning forgotten skills, got ideas how to enrich his daughter's education, and delighted to see a partnership between Arlington and The Math & Physics Exploration.

Michaela now finds school a breeze, can easily do her homework, can find 15 percent tips quicker, and is pleased that her dad has seen significant improvement.

Noah Wahl from the Carmel School district has first-hand experience on how to study. Noah saw himself grow as he recognized that he had to put more of himself into his work. He is able to calculate monthly mortgage by hand that most bankers need calculators to do. Noah and his brother Zak have been taking weekly lessons at the Exploration Center for over six years. Dr. Miller has learned a lot working with Noah and his brother.

Joey Colaizzo, this year's valedictorian at the Hyde Park Central School District, is the first student to receive recognition for completing the 12 Labours of Minerva.

Joey, one of the finest students in FDR history, said of the program: "It required deeper kind of thinking and a recognition of patterns that simply is not taught in the public education system."

Laura McKiernan, a schoolteacher, stated that the philosophy of the exploration center: "Making mistakes is part of the learning process and check[ing] your work" is extremely critical to the learning process. Her son who did not feel challenged at school was totally focused by the program and responded incredibly well to the content and psychology of the teaching approach.

On Wednesday, March 22, several students and parents from the Wappingers School district talked about their experiences with the enriched math program. Though Lalor was not at the session, he sent the comment: "As a former teacher, I know your accomplishments did not materialize in thin air, but were the result of studying and working on projects throughout the year."

Susan Petroccia-Eng read Deborah Gleeson's, MST, MS SpEd, SAS letter about her opinion about the education of her son Logan. She is impressed with the

teaching skills of the Exploartion Center and is grateful for its efforts and dedication.

Ava Gambichler, an outstanding student at Kinry Road, felt that the program made her think and gave her renewed confidence in her work.

Eric Johnston, another Kinry Road student, felt that he had gotten a myriad of knowledge from the class.

Chella Calcagni, Fishkill Plains, felt for the first time that she understood math. This enthusiastic young lady is ready to challenge her parents, classmates and teachers with her newly gained math skills.

Michael Wisker now believes in miracles as he realized the math enrichment was beyond any other math lesson he had received. Michael did not know he was going to make a presentation, but he make it like a pro illustrating that if we have confidence in our children they will not only meet our expectations but go beyond them.

Matthew Krauza felt the program was a great privilege and that the fun part of the program is how far ahead he and his friends Scott McStay, and Alex Malles are. Anthony Grossi thought the program pushed him to his full potential, while Sean Clarke saw his scores in class go way up.

The Exploration Center is also reaching out to parents and teachers to help them understand and appreciate math so that they can help their children reach loftier educational achievements.

This year's program was dedicated to those persons who spent time with their children learning math in greater dept than was taught to them.

The business community's donation to the center allowed us to give more and better recognition to parents and students. These organizations were HVFCU, TEGFCU, Tompkins Mahopac Bank, Salisbury/Riverside Bank, Chazen Companies, Central Hudson, Tops Supermarket, McDonalds, Daily Planet, Joe Cristiano's Pizza, Pleasant Ridge Pizzeria, and Adams Fairacre Farms, and Duane Beyer, photographer.

Visit the websites of Wappingers, Arlington, Spackenkill, and Highland school districts for more information.

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Answers to this week's diversions (puzzles on page 18)

A	D	D	T	A	M	P	A	H	A	R	D		
P	E	A	R	I	D	I	O	M	A	B	E	E	
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SUDOKU
This week's answer

6	7	8	3	9	2	1	5	4
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7	8	3	2	1	5	6	4	9
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9	2	1	7	6	4	8	3	5
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3	9	5	8	2	1	4	7	6