

Education Foundation plays major role in district success

Nicole Dalaya
Op/Ed Editor

Since 1995, the West Windsor-Plainsboro Education Foundation (WWPEF) has aided in the success of various programs and activities in the district. Spearheaded by Executive Director Marcia Fleres, one of the foundation's biggest jobs is providing grants to faculty and students to help them in their educational endeavors.

The Education Foundation plays a powerful role in our community. According to *wwpf.org*, the foundation's mission is "to enhance the knowledge, skills, and competitiveness of our students by supporting strategic educational programs provided through the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District." The foundation has been very successful, having brought over 246 programs to the

schools, and contributing over \$187,000 in grants.

In 2004, Marcia Fleres became the executive director of the WWPEF. "As executive director, I am responsible for program development, fundraising, marketing, publicity, and building partnerships in the community," Fleres said. She also works with the programs to which the foundation gives grants. "In addition to managing the day-to-day operations, I coordinate the programs that we sponsor in the district," Fleres said.

Fleres enjoys the many responsibilities allotted to her, especially those not listed in her job description. "It is an exciting job," she said. "Building relationships is an important aspect of my job. I love marketing and publicity to promote the foundation and get the word out about what we do to parents, students and the



Nicole Dalaya



wwpf.org

Left: Mrs. Crochetiere demonstrates on MANIKEN, a human anatomy teaching tool. Right: Marcia Fleres, director of WWPEF, approved Crochetiere's grant.

community," Fleres said.

Currently, Fleres' major role in the Education Foundation is the approval and organization of grants. "A grant is funding that we

provide to a teacher, staff person, or student to conduct an innovative or creative program for students in their school," Fleres said. Students and faculty may write requests for

grants to fund their projects. "WWPEF seeks grant proposals that offer novel concepts and strategies," Fleres said.

A Program and Grant Committee review the proposals for grants. "We love to see creative projects that go beyond to inspire, educate, and challenge students in the district," Fleres said.

Her experiences with WWPEF have led Fleres to stress the importance of education foundations in communities. "Education foundations fund programs that would not be possible without the foundations' support. We provide funding for programs that are not normally provided for in the school budget, and as a way to enhance the educational opportunities for our students," she said.

The foundation has made many

contributions to North that have helped the school. It provided the funding for the High School North Steel Drum Band, the outdoor amphitheater, and the MANIKENs in Human Anatomy. In spring 2005, the foundation awarded North a grant for Adobe InDesign to publish the newspaper. More recently, the WWPEF gave a grant to North's FIRST Robotics team led by senior Libby Kamen and junior Matt Lagana.

Marcia Fleres described the most rewarding aspect of giving grants, and her job in general, as "making a difference every day; knowing that I am working for something that is important and valued by our community—education of children and young people." All district schools, grade levels, and curriculum areas are encouraged to apply for grants and support the significance of education in our community.



Horoscopes

Sagittarius (November 23 - December 21)

You've been feeling particularly unconfident lately, and you've been taking it out on your friends. Don't let your unhappy mood affect your interactions with other people. Try focusing on the positive aspects of yourself, and your self-esteem will improve.

Nomin Ujyediin
Copy Editor

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19):

You're usually apathetic during the holiday season, but this year, you'll be overcome with an unexplainable excitement during the coming weeks. Get into the holiday spirit by taking initiative in cooking Thanksgiving dinner. Your family, especially whoever usually cooks, will appreciate your efforts. Plus, you'll get a tasty treat at the end of the day.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18):

Trouble with a teacher will arise towards the middle of this month. Even if you feel like you're being treated unfairly, just keep your temper cool. Show your teacher that you're capable of handling additional responsibility by taking on an extra credit project; he or she will be impressed by your dedication to the class.

Pisces (February 19 - March 20):

A friend who borrowed one of your belongings last month will confess that he or she has lost it. Don't act angry; being confrontational will only make him or her hostile as well. Instead, try calmly explaining why you are upset, and he or she will replace your belonging by the end of the week.

Aries (March 21 - April 19):

Your workload will begin to increase, and you might start to feel overwhelmed and frustrated. Don't let your stressful feelings have an effect on your relationships with those around you. Your friends and family may be hurt by any sudden outbursts of irritation.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20):

Your parents may be acting unreasonable this month—but don't pick too many fights. If they see that you're unable to control your emotions, they will only create more restrictions. Just lay low for a while; eventually, they'll become more lenient and understanding.

Gemini (May 21 - June 21):

In the coming days, someone who you normally find irritating will seem more appealing to you. Try striking up a friendly conversation. You might find yourself with a new addition to your social circle. Your other friends may be suspicious at first, but they will soon warm up.

Cancer (June 22 - July 22):

Your classes will become easier in the coming weeks; not only will your teachers be more laid back, but they will also assign less work. Projects you have been feeling stressed about will suddenly become easier to manage. But don't waste away your newfound free time; use this opportunity to catch up on assigned reading.

Leo (July 23 - August 22):

If you find that you hardly have time to study, consider limiting your internet use. Your activities on Facebook and YouTube are eating away hours of your time, and you haven't even noticed. If you stay away from the web for a few weeks, your grades will improve and your free time will become more relaxing.

Virgo (August 23 - September 23):

If you start to notice that people are whispering about you in the halls, don't be alarmed. The rumors relate to you in minimal ways, so don't get involved. Getting tangled up with gossip will only cause problems for you later. It may be difficult, but you should just ignore the drama.

Libra (September 23 - October 23):

A low grade on your next test may leave you feeling insecure, but don't get too depressed. If you try especially hard to apply yourself, your grades for the rest of the marking period will be solid. But be careful not to stress yourself out too much; be reasonable in the amount of work you do.

Scorpio (October 24 - November 22):

Your lack of sleep is what's been causing all of your problems lately. Try to finish your work early; it is important to learn how to balance school work and extracurricular activities.

Hundreds amused, amazed by Improv Everywhere pranks

Aly Gideon
Business Editor

Ever wonder what would happen if you got hundreds of people in on one joke? Meet Charlie Todd, the founder of Improv Everywhere. "Improv Everywhere causes scenes of chaos and joy in public places," according to the group's mission statement.

Todd, along with his team of comedians and improvisational artists, conjures up large-scale jokes that are sure to make you laugh. These jokes, known as "missions," are given nicknames to make them easier to refer to. The people who carry out these missions are known as "agents."

In the past, these missions have ranged from putting on a spontaneous musical at a food court, having over 200 agents freeze in Penn Station at the exact same time, to having over 400 agents ride the New York subway system without pants. These missions are largely carried out in New York City; however, Improv Everywhere has performed in other large cities, such as San Francisco and Toronto.

Improv Everywhere has been profiled by both national and international media outlets, in-

cluding *The New York Times*, *The Today Show*, and ABC's *Nightline*. "We're out to prove that a prank doesn't have to involve humiliation or embarrassment; it can simply be about making someone laugh, smile, or stop to notice the world around them," Todd told *The New York Times*.

Todd decided he wanted to be a "prankster" in August of 2001. While Todd and his friends were at a bar, he decided to pose as musician Ben Folds, and his friends as his fans. Hours later, he was given drinks on the house, was surrounded by the fans of the actual Ben Folds, and his friends were thrown out of the bar for stealing the wallet of the fraudulent Ben Folds.

"This experience enlightened me as to how far a prank could be taken. As an actor new to the city, I discovered I could create my own theatre, rather than waiting around for someone to give me stage time," Todd said.

Todd updates the Improv Everywhere website, *improveverywhere.com*, after every mission, with a recap and pictures. Videos from the missions are also on the website and YouTube. One mission alone, No Pants 2k8, received over nine million views on YouTube alone.

Junior Statesmen of America promotes political debates

Ranajoy Bose
Feature Editor

With a message of democracy and intentions of making students more aware of their government and its processes, Junior Statesmen of America (JSA) is gaining popularity at North.

JSA is the largest student-run organization in the nation. In JSA, students enhance their understanding about politics through the art of debate. "JSA is about cultivating speaking skills as much as it is about learning the intricacies of the political system," senior president Michael Brett said.

JSA is made up of nine states; each state is basically a portion of

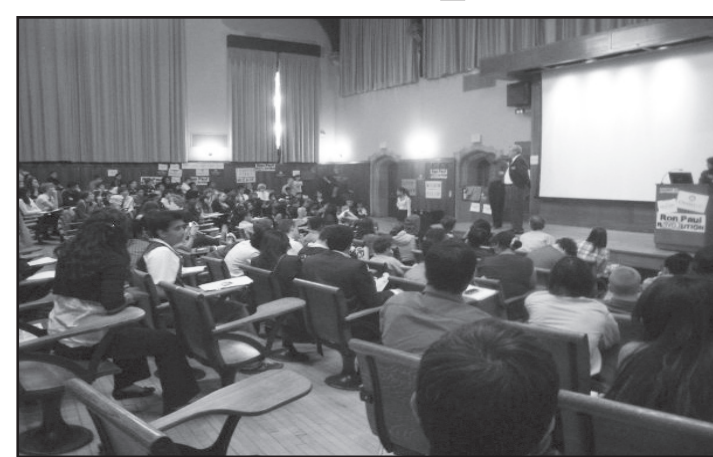
the United States. Each state is then broken up into regions, and both states and regions have their own elected officials.

In 2006, seniors Adam Carlson, Adam Epstein, and Josh Victor established the JSA club at North. On October 11, North attended the Fall Regional at Princeton University.

"We held debates and thought talks with over 300 students from around New Jersey and Pennsylvania. [Junior] Carolyn Lipka actually won the gavel for best speaker at one debate. There were also some notable keynote speakers, and lastly, there was a mock presidential election where all the delegations were assigned a state and we cast ballots as the Electoral College would. I was

really impressed with the turnout and the participation [of] our members," Brett said.

In addition to regional conferences, JSA holds state con-



Provided by JSA

Students debate and discuss the 2008 presidential election at the JSA competition at Princeton University.

ventions. Manas Kulkurni, a senior at South Brunswick High School, is the Lieutenant Governor for the Mid-Atlantic State (MAS), which is a region

that encompasses New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. As Lieutenant Governor, one of his responsibilities is to help organize conventions and conferences in the Mid-Atlantic State. "We have three overnight conventions every year, one in the fall, winter, and spring. At these conventions, students meet others like themselves, debate with each other, compete for best-speaker awards, listen to and question amazing keynote speakers, and just have a good time during the night," Kulkurni said.

Each convention, however, follows a different format. At the fall and spring conventions, students focus solely on debat-

ing, while during the winter convention, students are broken up into Senates and Houses of Representatives to propose and lobby for their own bills.

North plans to attend the Winter Congress, which is held in the nation's capitol, in late February.

JSA meets every Wednesday after school. During meetings, members usually debate major issues that are affecting the nation, but some meetings consist of formal, structured debate where students are expected to give openings, rebuttals, closings, as well as draft resolutions to address the issue in question.

One upcoming debate is about the topic of the healthcare system and socialized medicine.

Knights' Nook: What is your favorite Thanksgiving tradition?



"I eat stuffed cabbage with meat and rice."

- Sophomore Will Whipple

"Waking up early to watch the parade and decorate the dinner table."

- Junior Sara Lieber

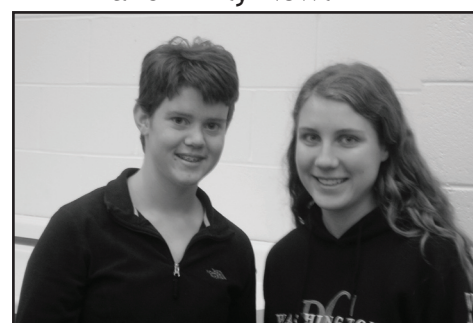


"My mom makes this really good asparagus with a sweet, spicy yellow dressing and we invite our family friends over."

- Sophomore Anton Shvets

"We jump in the freezing cold pool with our family and friends. It's like the Polar Bear Club."

- Seniors Jen Lennon and Emily Nowlin



"I go to Atlantic City every year."

- Freshman Kelvin Zhang