

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter from the Somerville Public Schools – January 3, 2020

News & Notes

SHS Trio Places 3rd at 2019 Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge



Somerville High School's Personal Finance class team of Joseph Carey, Jonathan Chan, and Theo Tourlentes placed 3rd out of 35 teams at the Junior Achievement's Stock Market Challenge held on Thursday, December 12, 2019 at the new headquarters for State Street Corporation in Boston. Also making a good showing at the competition were the Somerville High School teams of Eric Lemus, Michael Rivillas Escalante, and Marco White, who finished 14th in the competition; as well as Joseph Amari, Erik (Matteus) Anell, and Andrew DaCosta who placed 23rd.

The Stock Market Challenge is a fast-paced competition in which students use their collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills to achieve the greatest rate of return on their investments over a 60-day market cycle. Each team begins with a hypothetical account balance of \$500,000. Somerville's winning team was among the top five spots from the beginning of the competition and ended with a portfolio value of \$619,669. Students interested in more information on how to get involved in next year's competition are encouraged to contact Business Teacher, Michele Harney (mharney@k12.somerville.ma.us).

Brown School First-Graders Share Bridge Building Project with Families

Just before the winter recess, first grade students at the Benjamin G. Brown School proudly displayed the bridges they had been busy designing, building, and writing about. As a culminating activity of this project-based learning experience, students enjoyed a Bridge Breakfast publishing party with their families the Thursday before the break. Their bridges were on display, and students had an opportunity to share their work and their thought process with their parents.



Winter Hill School Community Supports Families in Need during Holiday Season

Generous Winter Hill school community members and staff collected and donated an amazing \$3500 to give to families in need in its community. School Secretary Nancy McWeeny and School-Based Family and Community Liaison MaryLou Carey-Sturniolo started with a list of families who receive Weekend Backpack donations in order to develop a list of Winter Hill community families who might be struggling financially during the holiday season. (The Weekend Backpack program sends home healthy meals and snacks to families facing food security challenges.) Community members poured out to support their friends and peers by donating gift cards and cash that could directly support families. Nancy and MaryLou organized gift cards for distribution and made sure families in need had a little something to celebrate before the winter break.



Full Circle Students Explore Gentrification through Photo Essay Project

Students enrolled in a new course at Full Circle have been exploring the impact of gentrification in their community. They recently shared their work in "Whose Somerville", a photo essay exhibit and reception at City Hall. Ten photo essays are on display at Somerville's City Hall, depicting how each student feels about how gentrification is changing their community. The exhibit is the culmination of an inter-disciplinary unit this fall in which students researched how specific economic development activity in their community might be affecting their city.

Students were asked to take a position on how they feel gentrification is affecting their city, and conveying their story using photo images. The course is co-taught by Tim Dempsey, a social studies teacher at Next Wave/Full Circle, and English teacher Sarah Blanchard. Students worked with professional guest photographers to gain photo techniques that would help them tell their stories through images. Each image also included a brief description and explanation of how the image supported their point of view. Students were available to share their work with community members and answer questions about their respective projects. Guests also had an opportunity to enjoy an array of tasty hors d'oeuvres prepared by the Somerville High School Culinary Arts students. Read all about this outstanding project in a recent article by The Somerville Times: <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/96143>. To learn more about Next Wave/Full Circle, visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us/nwfc.



Final “Topping Off” Ceremony Signals Milestone in SHS Building Project

Despite the bitter cold, the final Topping Off ceremony for the Somerville High School Building Project signaled a time for celebration as the highest beam in the east wing of the project was set in place. Guests had an opportunity to sign the beam before the start of the ceremony. Members of the Somerville High School band kicked off the ceremony with a brief rendition of “Somerville Leads the Way”, following by the traditional Topping Off event in which the highest structural element is set into place. A short speaking ceremony highlighted the importance of the project and paid tribute to Leo DeSimone, who unexpectedly passed away the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Mr. DeSimone was Associate Principal and Director of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at Somerville High School. He was also the Somerville High School lead on the building project. CTE students engraved a metal plate bearing his signature, which was welded onto the beam. Read all about this event in this recent Wicked Local Somerville article:

<https://somerville.wickedlocal.com/news/20191219/city-celebrates-final-topping-off-for-new-high-school-remembers-leo-desimone>. You can watch the Topping Off ceremony at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVGuHjCRsd4>.



What's Happening

Explore! Somerville Partnership for Young Children Launches New Website

The Somerville Partnership for Young Children (SPYC) recently announced the launch of their new website: www.somervillechildren.org. The website provides information about the SPYC early education partners and enables families to see if they may be eligible for tuition assistance funds and fill out an application online. The goal of SPYC, a collaboration between Somerville Public Schools, Head Start, and participating child care and preschool partners, is to expand access to high quality early education for Somerville children and families. The SPYC website was developed with the support of the Early Education and Care's Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) grant, and is part of Somerville's commitment to developing a coordinated early education system through a mixed delivery model that expands access to high quality programs for all children.

Somerville High School Class of 1970 Graduates Invited to Join Class Day Festivities

Are you a member of Somerville High School's Class of 1970? The SHS Class of 2020 is looking for participants for this year's Class Day festivities, which will take place on Friday, May 29, 2020 starting at 8:00 a.m. at Somerville High School (81 Highland Ave.). We are looking for 50 graduates from the Class of 1970 to participate. If you would like to take part in the celebration, please email Barbara Favalaro, SHS Main Office, Head Clerk at bfavaloro@k12.somerville.ma.us, or call (617) 625-6600 ext. 6110 to sign up. The first 35 to respond will receive a commemorative gift. The SHS Class of 2020 looks forward to seeing past graduates from the SHS Class of 1970!

Upcoming School & District Events:

Visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us and click on the “calendar” link at the top of the page for a list of upcoming activities in our schools and in our District this month.

- **Tuesday, January 7, 6:00-8:00pm: Somerville SEPAC Business Meeting and Officer Elections @ the VNA, 3rd floor Community Room, 259 Lowell Street**
- **Wednesday, January 8: Half Day Wednesday for PK-8 (PK dismissed at 11:30 a.m.; K-8 dismissed at noon)**

- **Wednesday, January 8: WSNS PTA-Sponsored Spirit Day – Pep Rally Theme**, at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Thursday, January 9: Picture Retake Day** at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School (115 Sycamore St.)
- **Thursday, January 9: WHCIS AIM Grades 6-8 Field Trip** to Waypoint Adventure Rock Climbing
- **Thursday, January 9, 7:00-8:30pm: Sharing Our Stories Support Group** at the SFLC Center @ the Cummings Building (42 Prescott St.)
- **Friday, January 10: WSNS 3rd Grade Field Trip** to the Museum of Science

Upcoming School Committee Meetings:

Find the complete School Committee schedule, agendas and meeting minutes (as approved) online at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/school-committee.

- **Monday, January 6, 5:30pm: 2020 Inaugural Ceremony** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave). Public reception immediately following at the Row Hotel at Assembly Row (360 Foley St.)
- **Monday, January 13, 7:00-9:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting** at the City Council Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)
- **Monday, January 27, 7:00-9:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting** at the City Council Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Somerville Family Learning Collaborative Workshops, Events, and Resources:

Find a complete list of SFLC events and workshops at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families.

The Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) enhances the capacity of families and schools to support children's learning and well-being by collaborating with community partners and promoting welcoming, responsive schools and programs. Take a look at the work and impact of the SFLC "by the numbers" in this [2018-2019 report](#).

- **Sharing Our Stories Support Group.** Raising a child who does not always fit in can be challenging. Sharing our Stories is a free, open-ended support group for families with young children who have special needs. The group offers adults the opportunity to share joys, concerns, frustrations, questions and resources about their experiences. Join us on Thursday, January 9, 7:00-8:30pm at the SFLC Center @ the Cummings School (42 Prescott St.). Interpretation available upon request; please call (617) 629-5476.
- **Serve and Inspire SPS Volunteer Orientation.** Are you new to volunteering with the Somerville Public Schools? We invite you to attend an orientation on Thursday, January 16, 6:00-8:00pm at the Cummings Building (42 Prescott St.) to learn about district schools and how SPS volunteers serve, inspire, and support student learning. Contact SPS Volunteer Coordinator Jen Capuano at jcapuano@k12.somerville.ma.us or call (617) 629-5475 for more information, accommodations needed to attend, and to RSVP.

Looking Ahead:

- **Tuesday, January 14, 5:30-7:00pm: Argenziano School Council Meeting** (290 Washington St.)
- **Wednesday, January 15, 8:00am-2:00pm: Argenziano 6th Grade Field Trip** to Biogen
- **Thursday, January 16, 6:00-8:00pm: Serve and Inspire SPS Volunteer Orientation** at the SFLC Center @ the Cummings Building (42 Prescott St.)
- **Thursday, January 16, 6:30-8:30pm: Beginners' Instrumental Concert** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Thursday, January 16, 7:00-8:00pm: Healey Families Community Meeting** at the Healey Library (5 Meacham St.)
- **Friday, January 17, time tbd: WSNS Boosterthon Fun Run** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Friday, January 17, 8:30-9:00am: WHCIS Principal Coffee Hour** at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School Conference Room (115 Sycamore St.)

Community News & Events

The Duhamel Star. Is there someone in the Somerville Public Schools that you would like to celebrate? The Duhamel Education Initiative (DEI) invites you to recognize them with a Duhamel Star – a certificate of appreciation given as a donation to DEI in the honoree's name. You can express your gratitude with a personal message and grow student

engagement in SPS through your donation to DEI's grant fund. Duhamel Stars can be purchased at any time. For more information and to order a Duhamel Star, visit www.duhamelsomerville.org/duhamel-star.html#/.

Somerville Parks & Recreation. It's not too early to start planning for February vacation. Check out the Somerville Parks and Recreation Department website (www.somervillerec.com) for information about their February Vacation Floor Hockey program, and other programs and events available this winter. How about a field trip to a fun location in and around the Boston area? A full list of classes, clinics, events, youth and adult league sports, and activities, as well as pricing for each is available at <http://www.somervillerec.com/info/activities/default.aspx?type=activities>.

Middle Grades Writer's Den. Writer's Den is a free weekly evening creative writing workshop open to all Somerville students in grades 4-8. Creative weekly activities and fun writing prompts, storytelling, script writing and more keep students eager to write and share their writing. Publishing opportunities and snacks. Co-Directors Alan Ball, Cara Feinberg, and Allyson Sherlock invite all students in grades 4-8 to join the fun. Parent/guardian permission required. Writer's Den takes place Wednesdays and some Mondays (except vacation weeks or if schools close due to inclement weather). Visit the district website (www.somerville.k12.ma.us/events/calendar) for Writer's Den meeting dates for the rest of the school year. The workshops take place at the Healey School Library, 5 Meacham St.

City of Somerville Teen Snow Shoveling Program. If you are a Somerville teen 13 years or older, the City of Somerville invites you to consider being part of the Teen Snow Shoveling Program. The program is a paid program for youth to provide seniors in the community with snow shoveling assistance after a snow storm. Teens and seniors are paired for the season, and after each storm, the senior contacts their assigned teen to request shoveling services. Visit <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/programs/teen-snow-shoveling-program> for more information including details on how to apply. Questions? Contact Jennifer Mancia at (617) 625-6600, x2406.

Doctor Dolittle Scavenger Hunt. Have you ever wished that you could talk with other animals? Doctor Dolittle, the main character in the Hugh Lofting fictional book *The Story of Doctor Dolittle*, could do just that! The Harvard Museum of Natural History invites you to use clues to find six of Doctor Dolittle's animal friends in the museum and learn how that animal really communicates. The Doctor Dolittle Scavenger Hunt runs through January 31st. *Regular museum admission rates apply.* Learn more at: <https://hmn.harvard.edu/doctor-dolittle-scavenger-hunt>

Girls Who Code Club at the Somerville Public Library. Calling all middle school girls! The winter session of the Somerville Public Library's Girls Who Code club gets underway January 28. Facilitated by volunteers from the tech community, girls join a sisterhood of supportive peers as they learn coding to create a project they care about. The Club meets every Tuesday from 6:30-8pm for 10 weeks at the Central Library (79 Highland Ave). For more information and to register, contact Karen Stevens at kstevens@minlib.net.

City & District Employment Opportunities

Consider joining a winning team! Current city and district opportunities include:

- [Public Space Planner](#), OSPCD – Public Space and Urban Forestry, City of Somerville
- [SomerStat Analyst](#), SomerStat Dept., City of Somerville
- [Program Coordinator](#), Parks & Recreation Dept., City of Somerville
- [Director of Veterans Services](#), Health & Human Services Dept., City of Somerville

Visit <https://www.somervillema.gov/jobs> for a complete listing of current open positions in the City of Somerville.

- [Intermittent Lunch Attendant](#), Food and Nutrition Services Dept., Somerville Public Schools
- [FT Lead Teacher, Community Schools Afterschool Program](#), Brown School, Somerville Public Schools
- [Early Childhood Intern – Somerville Partnership for Young Children](#), Early Education Department, Somerville Public Schools
- [Middle School Track & Field Coach](#), Athletics Dept., Somerville Public Schools

Visit <https://www.schoolspring.com/jobs/?employer=16902> for a complete listing of current open positions in the Somerville Public Schools.

Our Commitment to the Whole Child

VISION: "We believe in developing the whole child — the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical potential of all students — by providing students with the skills, opportunities, and resources that will nurture innovative ideas, foster pride in diversity, inspire students to become lifelong learners and empower them to enrich their communities."