

March 2010

County Board of Education Honors Black History Month



Monterey County
Superintendent
of Schools

Nancy Kotowski, Ph.D.

Monterey County
Board of Education

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From left to right: Mel Mason, Village Project; Katrina Ognyanovich, President of the Monterey County Chapter of the NAACP; and Judy Pennycook, President of the Monterey County Board of Education

At its meeting of February 17, 2010, the County Board of Education presented a Resolution of Commendation honoring Black History Month to Mel Mason of the Village Project and Katrina Ognyanovich, President of the Monterey County Chapter of the NAACP.

The Board of Education's resolution's closed by saying "the Monterey County Board of Education celebrates BLACK HISTORY MONTH, February 2010, "to honor the many achievements and contributions made by African-Americans to our Nation's economic, cultural, spiritual and political development; and . . . reaffirms its commitment to the founding principles of the United States of America that 'all Men are created equal,' and calls upon the citizens, educators and students

of Monterey County to commit themselves to observe BLACK HISTORY MONTH with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities."

Steve Nejasmich, Assistant Superintendent, Students Services reported on the wide range of activities and observances being held in the schools of Monterey County to learn about the African American experience.

"Textbooks today more fully include Black American's history and contributions," he said, "and that will continue as the writers and publishers revise their editions and school boards adopt new series."

"We are always working on expanding the recognition and discussion on the contributions of the many groups that have made America a great nation. Our teachers use classroom activities to broaden students' understanding and appreciation of African American history. We try to make the study of Black history more than a one month long experience. We strive to make appreciation of the contributions of others and gratitude for the diversity of our society simply part of the day."

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Important Upcoming Events:

The Monterey County Board of Education meets twice a month, the first and third Wednesday of the month. Occasionally, scheduled meeting dates will conflict with holidays, other dates or events and may necessitate a meeting be postponed, canceled, or location change.

County Board Meetings:

- March 3 County Board of Education Meeting
- March 17 County Board of Education Meeting
- April 7 County Board of Education Meeting
- April 21 County Board of Education Meeting

Calendar of Events:

April 2010

- MATHEMATICS AWARENESS MONTH
- MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD
- 2 International Children's Book Day
- 4-10 Labor History Week (California Education Code Section 51009)
- 6 California Poppy Day (California Education Code Section 37222)
- 7 World Health Day
- 11 Holocaust Remembrance Day
- 11-17 National Environmental Education Week
- 11-17 National Library Week
- 18-24 Public School Volunteer Week
- 11-17 Week of the Young Child
- 19-25 National TV-Turnoff Week
- 21 John Muir Day (California Education Code Section 37222)
- 22 Earth Day

May 2010

- NATIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH
- NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AND SPORTS MONTH
- 2-8 Be Kind to Animals Week
- 8 Mathletics Competition
- 10-16 National Children's Book Week
- 12 Day of the Teacher (California Education Code Section 37222)
- 12 National School Nurse Day
- 12-13 State Board of Education meeting, Sacramento
- 16-22 Classified School Employees Week (California Education Code Section 45460)
- 22 Harvey Milk Day (California Education Code Section 37222)
- 31 Memorial Day (California Education Code Section 37220) (MCOE Closed)

Joshua R. Jorn, Director of General Services



Joshua was recently appointed the new Director of General Services for the Monterey County Office of Education. Joshua was born and attended primary school here in the Monterey Bay, but relocated to the Central Valley for high school. After attending Buchanan High School in Clovis, California, Joshua began his higher education at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and majored in Architectural Engineering. In late 2001 he transferred to California State University Fresno to earn a Bachelors Degree from the College of Engineering and Construction Management. From there he interned as a Project Architect and later began a career as a Project Manager with multiple firms in the Fresno area. Joshua's primary focus was on k-12 conventional school construction and modernization. After an illustrious eight years in the field of architecture and construction management he was offered a position with a local school district. There he spent four years as the Director of Maintenance Operations and Transportation with most of his time focused on facilities and new school construction within the district.

County Board of Education Honors 95 Year Old Salinas Woman's Lifelong Contributions to Equality

At 95-years-of-age, Agnes Tebo of Salinas has witnessed most of the modern history of the African American struggle for equality. Nevertheless, more than being a witness, she has been a participant in the equality movement.

On October 9, 1939, the Salinas Branch of the NAACP -- the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People -- was established with Agnes Tebo as a charter member. Since its inception, the NAACP has helped residents throughout Monterey County deal with adverse situations in employment discrimination, law enforcement issues, and educational issues.

In the 1980s, Agnes Tebo, and her late husband Louis, established the Tebo Scholarship Fund for under-privileged and needy students who show scholarly promise and want to attend Hartnell College.

"Agnes Tebo exemplifies living African American history. Her life is an integral part of the American story," said Dr. Nancy Kotowski, Monterey County Superintendent of Schools. "The Monterey County Office of Education celebrates Black History Month with a wide range of programs, instruction and events."

"We owe the observance of Black History Month to the brave individuals who risked everything in the struggle for human rights," Dr. Kotowski continued. "Individuals such as Agnes and the other founders of the NAACP worked tirelessly to bring about change, and we must strive equally hard to make the study of black history a year-long practice."

In recognition of her contributions, the NAACP honored Agnes Tebo with its National Presidential Award at a banquet held on the Monterey Peninsula. The County Board of Education adopted and presented, at the event, its Resolution of Commendation Number 09-10-16 to honor Agnes Tebo and the memory of her late husband Louis.

The resolution read, in part, ". . . does encourage the entire community to applaud this outstanding woman and seek to emulate the charity, compassion and goodness of her character."

To read more about Agnes Tebo, check the archives of The Californian and Monterey County Herald newspapers:
<http://www.thecalifornian.com/> <http://www.montereyherald.com/>

Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA)

By Dr. Anna Weidhofer, Coordinator/Administrator, Educational Services

The Monterey County Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Credentialing Program represents the culmination of a professional teacher preparation program. BTSA is the preferred pathway to a clear credential. BTSA provides professional learning opportunities for the Participating Teacher (PT). With the guidance of a trained Support Provider, the PT applies the basic principles, theories, methods and techniques from pre-service coursework into demonstrating and applying what they have learned into their classroom, that are differentiated, comprehensive, and effective.

The Participating Teacher (PT) is required to enroll in the BTSA Program during the first two years of contracted teaching. He or she will then acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities of effective teaching outlined in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) through the use of reflective dialogue and inquiry. Currently, the MCOE BTSA Credentialing Program involves over 500 teachers in the area, which consist of new teachers, support providers, district program advisors and regional facilitators. The outcome of the program is a win-win for all as the new teachers are able to clear their credential while taking their teaching to the next level. Support Providers learn from their new teachers are refreshed and invigorated as they support them, and perhaps most important of all, the students gain from having highly qualified teachers who utilize best practices to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

Denise Hampson, Lagunita School District



Denise Hampson began her teaching career at Chualar USD. A longtime resident of Monterey County, Denise began her preservice teacher education at Chapman University in Monterey, and completed it with student teaching at Robert Down Elementary in Pacific Grove. Upon obtaining her first teaching position at Chualar, Denise began the MCOE BTSA program. After completing the program, Denise immediately became a support provider for BTSA and, in addition, has mentored many student teachers from CalState Teach, Chapman University, and CSUMB. After 6 years at Chualar, Denise participated in “Success for All” as a teacher on special assignment. Denise then moved on to Lagunita School District where she has taught for the last seven years, and has continued her role as a BTSA support provider. She has also had other leadership roles such as serving on the Curriculum Committee, SELPA, School Site Council, and as the current BTSA Program Advisor for Lagunita School District. Denise believes that BTSA provided her with a strong support system from which she was able to launch her career as a teacher leader. She believes that the care given to matching the new teacher with

an appropriate support provider is critical and allows the teacher a safe person with whom to reflect on his/her own practice. Denise also states that this reflection is the key to teacher retention, and she wants new teachers to understand how fortunate they are to teach in a state that values the process of on-the-job experience coupled with support from a trained support provider.

Jennifer Taylor, King City Union School District

Jennifer Taylor is a lifetime resident of King City. She is currently the Assistant Principal for Santa Lucia and Del Rey Elementary Schools of the King City Union Elementary School District. Jennifer obtained her first teaching position in King City at Del Rey Elementary School in 1993. At that time, BTSA was a 2-year, voluntary program, and took place at the MCOE offices in Salinas on Saturdays. When asked why she would drive the 110 mile round trip on a Saturday for a voluntary program, she stated, “I just wanted to improve and grow in my teaching and it seemed like a good opportunity for professional growth. The leaders of the program informed us that more than 50% of teachers leave the profession after a few years, and that mentoring provided the support necessary for teachers to stay in the field.”

Jennifer has continued to take on leadership roles and has recently obtained her Masters of Arts and is finishing her Tier II Administrative Credential this year. As she reflected on her BTSA experience she stated, “It was the collaborative relationship with my Support Provider that really helped me – and we are still friends! I would like to share with new teachers entering the program, that you get out of it, what you put into it. Your relationship with your Support Provider will be authentic and provide you with growth opportunities that you can take with you wherever you are teaching. Also, BTSA meetings provide a wonderful time for collaboration and critical networking with other teachers throughout the county.”



Becky Moore, Gonzales Unified School District



Becky is a native of Salinas who has always enjoyed the process of learning in school. She always wanted to be a teacher. Upon graduating from North Salinas High School, Becky attended Hartnell and then CSUMB where she participated in the teacher intern program. Her interest and talents developed around Structured English Immersion and her first teaching job was in Gonzales Unified School District where she has continued to work on her teaching career for over a decade.

Becky has taken on many leadership roles such as becoming the BTSA Program Advisor for her school district, a BTSA Support Provider, and facilitator of BTSA seminars. Her leadership also extends to participating on the School Site Council, EL Task Force, SAITE Team, and High Priorities Committee.

Last year Becky was awarded her Master's Degree. She has served on the RICA Design Team for the past 3 years, and on the last Reading/Language Arts Instructional Materials Adoption Panel as a reviewer. When reflecting on her BTSA experience, Becky shared that it was her Support Provider whose easy, nonthreatening coaching and mentoring, provided her with much needed guidance during her first two years. The Support Provider's modeling and 'on the job training,' facilitated Becky's confidence to take risks and to grow as an educational leader. Her final words of wisdom included, "Schools go through many changes over time and collaborative work is the avenue to successful change – BTSA participation provides a foundation from which the effective practice of collaborative work begins."

Ethan Meyer, Salinas High School

Prior to receiving his credential, Ethan began his teaching career by tutoring students while in college. As he began his Master's work in literature studies, Ethan began substitute teaching. Ethan then decided to make the move from Fresno to Monterey, to earn his teaching credential at CSUMB. He completed his student teaching at a small school in San Juan Bautista before being hired by Salinas Union High School District.

Ethan maintains that it was the support he received from his BTSA Support Provider that contributed to his current success. He states, "BTSA forced me to talk to someone, and because BTSA guidelines require confidentiality, my Support Provider was a "safe" person to talk to – it was a lifesaver. My mentor listened, provided feedback, and showed me the many resources that are available at my school to support my teaching." They are still friends and maintain their reflective conversations on a weekly, although somewhat more casual, basis. The BTSA mantra, "Plan, Teach, Reflect, and Apply" (PTRA Cycle) is definitely a solid part of Ethan's educational practice.



Ethan is now co-chair of the English Department and serves as the union site representative. When asked what three pieces of advice he would like to give new teachers, he stated, "Keep asking questions, join or sit in on committees to understand the 'why' of decision making, and don't stop being interested in learning about your subject matter."

For additional information BTSA, contact:
Dr. Anna Weidhofer, BTSA Director
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Carmel student wins back-to-back County Science Fairs

By the Salinas Californian, Kimber Solana • March 8, 2010

With more than 4.1 billion cell phone text messages sent out every day, Dylan Freedman said he wanted to find a way to make sending a text more efficient.

“Everyone pretty much has a cell phone,” said Freedman, 16, a Carmel High School junior. “It’s all about compressing the size of the files, making them smaller.”

Freedman’s project titled “Efficient Text Compression” won the grand prize award at this year’s Monterey County Science and Engineering Fair. Compressing text messages would save data space and sending time, he said.

Freedman has won the grand prize award two years in a row, setting the possibility of a three-peat next year as a high school senior.



“I’m beyond proud,” said Amanda Freedman, Dylan’s mother. “He’s been thinking about this project for a year.”

Dylan Freedman was one of 563 students, from 6th to 12th-graders, participating at this year’s county science fair. His project was one of 345 projects entered, said Science Fair Director Ginny Brown.

Twenty-six projects qualified to participate in the California State Science Fair. Four individual projects and one team project will advance to the International Science and Engineering Fair, to be held in May in San Jose.

“The value in participating in the science fair for our students is that they learn how to utilize the scientific method,” said Nancy Kotowski, Monterey County superintendent of schools. “They learn how to utilize technology and hone their collaborative skills.”

First-place winners in individual disciplines included Salinas High School freshman Aradhana Sinha for her “Effect of Virus Competition and Dominance in Different Host Plants” project in Plant Biology, and Palma High School sophomore Andrew Falconer for his Chemistry project, “Effective Barrier Materials for the Brown Garden Snail.”

Sinha’s project won the second runner-up in the grand prize category.

Along with the grand prize, Freedman also nabbed seven other awards handed out by the U.S. Army, Air Force, Marine Corp, Navy, and Yale Science and Engineering Association.

Last year, Freedman won for his project, “True Random Number Generation from Live Video Source” — a look into combining pseudorandom numbers with a source of moderate randomness to form an unbreakable code to be used for cryptography and software security. List of Award winners: <http://dbdriven.brinkster.net/mcsf/AwardWinners2010>.

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Emma Finch wins county competition with ‘enlightenment’

By the Salinas Californian, Kimber Solana • March 15, 2010

Carmel Middle School sixth-grader Emma Finch said she was surprised to hear a judge tell her to spell “enlightenment.”

“I was thinking, that’s really weird because I know how to spell that word,” she said.

After spelling her way through 17 rounds, with trickier and more obscure words, it came down to a word she instantly recognized to win this year’s Monterey Countywide Spelling Bee Championship Finals.

Emma outspelled 47 other competitors during the spelling bee Sunday held at The Western Stage Theater at Hartnell College in Salinas.

“I’m still in shock,” Emma, 12, said after her win. “I can’t believe it.”

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Emma Finch, Continued from Page 6

Other words Emma spelled include; 'raita,' 'graphitic,' 'garibaldi,' 'Swahili,' 'bequeath,' 'credenza,' and 'metamorphosis.'

"My parents and I just worked on 'metamorphosis' yesterday," she said. "I was spelling it a-s-i-s instead of o-s-i-s."

As the county's champ, Emma will travel to Washington, D.C., in May to participate in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. The semifinal rounds will be broadcast live on ESPN.

"As you're growing up ... the ability to use the written word and to know words deeply is a tremendous skill that will be a great asset to you," Nancy Kotowski, county superintendent of schools, told the students before the competition began.

Emma said she started getting ready about a month ago when she received the list of words from her librarian. She said her parents helped by quizzing her when they found a difficult word on the list.

"She's just a great all-around person so I'm very proud of her," said Adrienne Grover, Emma's mother. "Her dad and I would have been out in the early round. It was so stressful watching."

The competition intensified after round 10 when the top five spellers made it through five rounds without making a mistake.

By round 16, it was up to Emma and Justin Voong, a seventh-grader at Buena Vista Middle School in the Spreckels Union School District.

Voong misspelled "gigabyte." After spelling "imperilment" correctly, Emma had to spell "enlightenment" for the win.

A three-way tie for third place included Joseph Badke, seventh-grader at Palma Junior High School; Dylan Bird, sixth-grader at All Saints' Episcopal Day School; and Mylieneth Guiang, eighth-grader at Harden Middle School.

As the winner, Emma also received the Merriam Webster Third New International Dictionary, a one-year subscription to the student edition of Britannica Online, a \$100 savings bond and a trophy. Her trip to Washington, D.C., will be paid for entirely by the California Lottery. Complete list of winners: <http://www.thecalifornian.com/article/20100315/NEWS12/3150307/-1/news12/Carmel-student-is-county-spelling-champ>

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The Farm Day Experience



The agriculture industry of Monterey County is a world leader in food production, innovative techniques and progressive science. Monterey County Agriculture recognizes the importance of increasing the level of agricultural literacy in its own community.

Each year, the agriculture industry in Monterey County comes together to offer The Farm Day Experience, nationally recognized as one of the leading agriculture education awareness programs in the nation.

This hands on educational program is the largest event of its kind in the nation, as well as the longest running program. Every third grade class in Monterey County is invited to participate in this program that reaches 6,000 third graders in 248 classes, and over 1,500 adults and teachers.

The third Farm Day Experience of the 2009-2010 school year was held in the South County area on Thursday, March 11, 2010. County agriculturalists,
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Office of Education*

*Published by the
Communication &
Community Affairs Office
Ron Eastwood,
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suggestions to
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including cattle ranchers, artichoke and produce growers, nurserymen, wine grape growers, salad processors and vegetable growers, all unite to share their way of life with third grade students throughout Monterey County and to educate them about the origin of their food.

Monterey County Agricultural Education, Inc. (a non-profit organization) conducts The Farm Day Experience with the help of 700 volunteers from agriculture and the community. All costs associated with The Farm Day Experience are paid by Monterey County Agricultural Education, Inc., including bus transportation and teacher training.

By funding the entire program, no class, school or district in Monterey County is left out because of budget concerns.

For the safety of students, location of The Farm Day Experience is not made public until after the event.

Please let us know if you would like to help out with the farm day experience by volunteering your time or donating to our all-volunteer organization as we continue to educate Monterey County about agriculture. Contact 424.1414 or tbaldwin@neh.com.

County Students Victorious At Visually Impaired "Olympics"

Alex Aguilar, a second grader at Cesar Chavez in Greenfield and a student in MCOE's Visually Impaired Program, took First Place at the annual Regional Braille Challenge in Sacramento on February 27, 2010. Five other students competed with Alex in this event.

He, and five other local students, competed in the event.

The Braille Challenge is an opportunity for students from Northern California to come together and compete in various Braille categories, including: spelling, speed reading and comprehension, proof-reading and interpretation of charts and graphs. All of the MCOE students placed first, second or third!



The students who represented MCOE in the competition are:

- Alex Aguilar, 2nd grade, Cesar Chavez in Greenfield
- Luis Castillo, 10th grade, Soledad H.S
- Manuel Castillo, 8th grade, Main St Middle
- Rocco Romeo, 1st grade, Toro Park
- Mia Carius, 12th grade, Seaside High
- Jane Brunson, 9th grade, Carmel HS

Teachers and families attended the event that included a Braille circus with fun activities, balloons and prizes for contestants and siblings.