

The Voice

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Columbus Education Association

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Columbus high schools gain national attention

In a first-ever ranking of America's Best High Schools, released in a recent issue of the magazine, *U.S. News and World Report*, eight Columbus City high schools were listed among the nation's best: Beechcroft HS, Bronze Award Winner; Briggs HS, Bronze Award Winner; Centennial HS, Bronze Award Winner; CAHS, Silver Award Winner; Eastmoor Academy, Bronze Award Winner; Ft. Hayes Arts & Academic HS, Silver Award Winner; Northland HS, Bronze Award Winner; and Whetstone HS, Bronze Award Winner.



Schools were ranked according to a system designed by the magazine. Factors included state-testing performance, with adjustments for student circumstances; performance of disadvantaged students; and the types of college-level coursework provided at each school. The analysis yielded 1,591 schools with rankings of gold through bronze.

CEA President Rhonda Johnson said she was thrilled to learn about this survey. "Columbus has excellent schools because we have excellent teachers and students who are curious, talented and eager to learn," she said. "It is our job to nurture them. These schools are role models for everyone, and we need to let the community know that this important work is possible and happening here now."

Surf to: <http://www.usnews.com/articles/education/high-schools/2007/11/29/americas-best-high-schools.html> to read more about how the schools were evaluated.

Make your reservation for the King dinner

Make plans to attend CEA's Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Dinner on Jan. 16, 2008. The deadline for purchasing tickets is Jan. 8.

The dinner begins with a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Columbus.

This year's honorees are the Rev. Leon Troy, former Columbus school board member, pastor and community activist, and long-time Association member Cathy Nelson, developer of a nationally distributed civil rights curriculum. The keynote speaker is Thomas N. Todd, a nationally recognized civil rights attorney. Todd has spoken here before, and he was one of the most dynamic presenters we have ever brought you.

Make your reservations through Minority Involvement Program (MIP) committee members, faculty representatives or call the CEA office at 253-4731.



CCS recognized for student growth

Data released by the Ohio Department of Education on Dec. 13 showed that Columbus City Schools students realized more than a year's worth of academic growth during the 2006–2007 school year. The new measuring report referred to as "Value Added" assesses whether students' academic performance in a given year "exceeds the state's growth expectations," "made a year's worth of growth," or "not showing enough growth." In the 2006–2007 school year, CCS students showed 1.4 years academic growth across all grade levels, meaning CCS "exceeded the growth expectations." Of particular note were the gains made in mathematics in 2006–07. Students saw a growth rate of 2.9 years across all grades.



Leading the way: PAS

Salary incentives have been an important issue for your Association. Group incentives were approached through Gainsharing. But we also focused on individual teachers and developed the Performance Advancement System (PAS).



Any member can apply to be part of the PAS program. The main requirement is a willingness to work with a specific group of children and demonstrate advancement over one academic year. An evaluation agency, outside the district, examines the results using a variety of tools. Teachers who are successful then become a new resource for the school district by sharing their best classroom practices.

Each PAS awardee receives a \$2,500 bonus. If they share their best practices with other teachers through professional development programs, they qualify for a second \$2,500 bonus.

A joint committee of Association members and administration representatives monitors the program and sets evaluation standards annually.

More teachers take part in the PAS program each year. That means we have been able to focus more sharply on the academic needs of students and of the school district. We hope every teacher will be part of this valuable effort.

Bargaining team update

Our team is up and working, and we want to congratulate the work that is being done so far. Peggy Chavez, OEA communications expert, gave two evening seminars on developing plans that allow us to communicate effectively to our members during the bargaining process. Chairperson Deborah Huffman-Mirib said, "I am very pleased with the team. Everybody is contributing to our ongoing conversation. Everyone on the team is serving an integral role in representing all members."

Share your tax prep skills

The Franklin County Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition is looking for volunteer tax preparers.

One of the goals of this program is to inform eligible residents that their families may be eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Relatively few who are eligible (only about 20 percent) have claimed this credit. Volunteers also help these struggling families for free, thereby eliminating the fees they often pay commercial tax preparers.

The EITC helps low- to moderate-wage workers by providing a refund of up to 25 percent of their annual income, depending on income level, marital status and the number of dependent children. This is a valuable benefit, because it means extra money for groceries, bills or education.

The EITC Coalition began in 2006, a project of United Way. In its first year, it served 1,700 families, refunding \$1.6 million to the community and saving taxpayers \$495,000 on preparation fees.

But success depends on help from volunteers. If you are interested in getting involved with this important project that will benefit many of your students' families, contact Matt Kosanovich at 241-3075 or at matt.kosanovich@uw-centralohio.org.

United Way prize winners

We extend our thanks to employees at these schools who donated to United Way. You can feel great about the good you are doing, providing assistance to needy families, improving the community through economic development and creating a sense of communal responsibility for each other.



Congratulations and thanks to everyone who participated in the 2007 United Way Prize Contest. The list of winners include:

Grand Prize

\$200 Target Gift CardBrenda Bryant, E. Pilgrim ES

2nd Grand Prize

\$100 J.C. Penney Gift CardsFranklin Cory, CEA-R
David Perry, Westmoor MS

Blue Jacket Tickets (2 each) ...Terrance D. Garr, Livingston ES @Beck
Alicia Jenkins-Campbell, Oakmont ES @Shady Lane
Marisol Rodriguez, Spanish Immersion
Steve Zwelling, Hudson Center

\$50 Lowes Gift CardsSusan Emswiler, Shepard Service Center
Jeri Hensley, Northgate Center

\$50 Circuit City Gift CardsDeborah Copeland, Deshler ES
John Hank, Walnut Ridge HS

\$30 Target Gift CardsElizabeth Bhasker, Northgate Center
LaShawn Carter, Northgate Center
Leondra Dunning-Washington, Walnut Ridge HS
Judy Gore, Eastmoor Academy
Caroline A. Gunnett, CEA-R
Walter Jeffries, Berwick ES
Linda Koone, AIMS
Kim Roth, Oakland Park ES @Brentnell

\$20 Gas CardsLaura Boyer, NWCC
Mary Ebelyn, Oakland Park ES @Brentnell
Cheryl Harrison, Hudson Center
Kathy E. McPile, Alpine ES
Nancy Moore, West Broad ES
Terrie Parsons, West Broad ES

Also, thanks goes to Johnson Park MS, Monroe MS and Salem ES for completing their United Way campaigns.

Spring elections

The Association has set the dates for the CEA Spring Elections. Members may declare candidacy for open positions from Jan. 11–Feb. 8. The period for campaigning will be from Feb. 11–Feb. 25. Voting will be conducted from Feb. 26–Mar. 10. The CEA Elections Committee will tabulate the ballots on Mar. 11. Positions open for election are: Presi-

dent, Vice President and Governors for Districts 5, 8 and 11. In addition, delegates will be elected for the 2008–2009 OEA Representative Assemblies and the 2008 NEA Representative Assembly. All the rules governing Association elections will be strictly followed. These rules can be found in the *CEA Membership Handbook*.

OEA Minority Leadership Training Program

The OEA Minority Leadership Training Program (MLTP) targets minority members who have an interest in Association activities and leadership roles.

The training fosters development of an understanding of organizational culture, an appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusiveness and identification and demonstration of skills required for effective leadership in a multicultural setting. The training also explores the importance of minority involvement at all levels of the Association.

Training for Region 1 (central Ohio) is scheduled for Mar. 7–8, 2008, at the Crowne Plaza, 33 E. Nationwide Blvd. The registration deadline is Feb. 1, 2008.

There is no cost for this training, which includes dinner, breakfast and lunch. For more information or to register, email Julia Parsley at parsleyj@ohea.org or call at 227-3181.

Help keep everyone connected

CEA is soliciting volunteers to become Legislative Education Advocacy Program (LEAP) liaisons. As a liaison, you become a vital connection between CEA and your fellow Association members, providing updates on important legislative issues.

Your main responsibilities will be to make calls informing fellow members in your building/unit of important meetings and legislative issues of importance to the Association. You also will help collect feedback that can aid CEA in lobbying efforts.

For more information or questions, email Greg Goodlander at ggoodlander@ceaohio.org or call the CEA office.

Gainsharing appeal process

Employees at schools that made substantial progress should have received their gainsharing awards in their Dec. 7 or Dec. 21 paychecks. If you did not receive a gainsharing award, but believe you should have, you may appeal to the Gainsharing Committee.

Letters of appeal may be sent through school mail to DeWayne Howard, Director of Labor Relations, at CEC and to Sally Oldham at the CEA office. Email messages should be sent to both Sally Oldham, soldham@ceaohio.org, and Cathy Tysen, ctysen@columbus.k12.oh.us, by Jan. 23.

The committee will meet Jan. 30 to act on all appeals.

Special notes

- CEA-R** will attend the **Metropolitan Operas**, which will be a **broadcast of Macbeth** at the **Marcus Cinema at Crosswoods** on **Jan. 12 at 1:30 p.m.** The cost is \$20 per ticket. All CEA members are invited to attend. Call Marilyn Allen at 299-4841 for details.
- New teacher members** (with one to three years of experience) are invited to OEA's **Region 1 New Teacher Forum** from 5:30–7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 26, at the Crowne Plaza Columbus-North Hotel at 6500 Doubletree Ave. Learn about professional issues and the benefits of OEA membership. To register, contact Debbie Roberts at 1-800-282-1500 or at Robertsd@ohea.org.
- Blue Jacket Tickets** are available from the CEA office for the following dates: **Jan. 11**, St. Louis (4); and **Jan. 15**, Vancouver (4). Call the CEA office at 253-4731 to purchase tickets.