



# Gaitway Gazette

October 2020

Staff Phone: 440-708-0013 (extensions below)

**Forfia**-152 **Schmelzer**-158 **Cline**-156 **McSherry**-157 **A. Hendrickson**- 154 **C. Hendrickson**-153 **Shannon**-151



## [A Note from the Principal - Mr. Forfia](#)

Gaitway High School students continue to make positive changes each and every day during this first academic quarter. I think that you will be very pleased at this progress when you are able to look at your student’s report card. I am very grateful to our caring staff and our hardworking students! I want to first congratulate our Students of the Month for September and October in this issue of the Gaitway Gazette. Grace, a ninth grade student from West Geauga High School, was nominated and selected for our September Student of the Month Award. She exemplifies the hardworking spirit of Gaitway students. Grace is not only a top notch student; she leads the way during our morning Animal Care Internship class. Working with horses comes naturally to her. Please join me in congratulating her for this honor.

Our Student of the Month for October is Michaila, an 11th grade student student from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. Michaila was chosen as our student of the month for her tireless efforts academically and in our external job training program. Michaila is working ahead in all of her classes and recently asked me if she could add some online courses to increase her credits. Additionally, Michaila is a role model for all of our students with her work in job training. She excels during her time at “Marci’s Hair on the Square” in Chardon, Ohio. Congratulations to Michaila on this honor!

Schools must promote and advertise their positive messages in our current educational landscape. I have recently created a Facebook page and a Twitter account for Gaitway High School. Please look for Gaitway High School on Facebook to see current updates and pictures. You can locate our Twitter account @Gaitway\_HS. I also send positive tweets to our Educational Service Center of the Western Reserve Twitter account accessible @ESCofttheWR. While social media may lead to problems with students, it can be a great help to our schools. Please consider following and liking our accounts.

As always, I encourage you to reach out to me or to the members of the Gaitway High School staff. Effective communication is vitally important during this time. Our email addresses are below and our phone extensions are in the header of each page of this newsletter.

## [Gaitway High School Staff Email Addresses](#)

- Bruce Cline: Intervention Specialist-** [bcline@escwr.org](mailto:bcline@escwr.org)
- Anthony Forfia: Principal-** [afortfia@escwr.org](mailto:afortfia@escwr.org)
- Aaron Hendrickson: Intervention Specialist Job Training-** [ahendrickson@escwr.org](mailto:ahendrickson@escwr.org)
- Cindy Hendrickson: Educational Aide/Job Coach-** [chendrickson@escwr.org](mailto:chendrickson@escwr.org)
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## Social Studies/Project Based Learning - Mr. McSherry

The Social Studies department is enthralled with the opportunities presented with the upcoming Presidential election, and to that end, the students have been working on a two part PBL (Project Based Learning) engagement to better inform and engage them in the election process, citizen responsibility, community involvement, and their own futures. The first part of the project was a research-based examination of a historical election focusing on the the 5W's : participants (the Who), presidential elections (the What) , crucial battleground states (the Where) , description of the era (the When), outcome and significance (the Why). After analyzing the data and completing their reports a presentation is anticipated.

The second part of the PBL project will be focusing on current events and the Presidential election, as all the students will individually be completing a poll on the issues of the day as they complete surveys provided and compiled from the [www.isidewith.com](http://www.isidewith.com). This site is able to analyze their individual results and align their choices with the candidate and party they may be leaning toward.

In American History class we are discussing the concept of cause and effect and actions and reactions in historical cycles. We have recently completed a study of eras from the Industrial Revolution to the Gilded Age and into the Progressive era. Students have seen how the historical pendulum swings back and forth to reflect ideas and movements that are prominent in each era. We will soon be moving into the causes of World War I and what effect arose from those causes. We will use this as a springboard to develop timelines which include major events from World War I into World War II. Students develop depth of knowledge along the way as they do in-depth research into areas of their own particular interest.

American Government classes have been examining the Constitution with a primary focus on the Bill of Rights. We are moving ahead to the study of separation of powers as we look into the Constitutionally defined responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. We will be looking in detail into the checks and balances that each branch exerts on the other two. Current events have provided us with a perfect lab in which to study this. We have recently witnessed the nomination and vetting process necessary to the appointment of a Supreme Court Justice as the vacant seat left by the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg was filled. We will now look at the election carefully as we consider the role the President plays as the leader of the Executive branch.



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## Social Skills - Mrs. Schmelzer

It has been a busy month for Gaitway students. Gaitway is known for its flexibility and creativity in consideration of most matters. I have seen Mr. Forfia working with students to problem solve different situations, and I believe the students are learning this flexibility in problem solving by seeing it in action. As of the last week of the quarter, the skills groups continue on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. We are addressing ways of self-calming and relaxation strategies in the bi-weekly group and qualities needed to get, keep and hopefully enjoy a job in our weekly group. We will be discussing norms that are often formed in groups, and identify any positive or negative norms at Gaitway. Students will brainstorm where change is needed and develop a plan to address that change. Students have also participated in mediations when dealing with issues with peers. I have to compliment them on how well they do in their efforts to find solutions to problems. I continue to meet with students individually for support, problem solving, and to work on their social /emotional IEP goal(s).

I wanted to share just a little about one of the biggest issues teens struggle with and parents throw up their hands over, which is lack of motivation and how to motivate their students. I did some research to see if there were anything out there that was new or helpful. I did find some information that I will be using with the students to help them increase their awareness of what could be behind feeling unmotivated. The following three important factors were identified as things that affect motivation by Uriah Guilford of Guilford Family Counseling. 1. What a child believes about themselves 2. How they understand their abilities and intelligence, and 3. How they respond to failure. Guilford specified teen males in his information, but I see these three issues as being pertinent to females as well. These three topics will be worked into individual and group sessions. We are also working on making sure students are aware of times they are experiencing internal motivation and pointing out how it is the strongest type and can always be called upon. Pairing this with identifying when they are experiencing internal reinforcers such as satisfaction at helping someone or pride at doing well on an assignment increases their personal power and can increase self esteem as well as improve motivation

Please continue with your calls or emails to keep us updated about your student. It is so appreciated! We will continue on our end. Thank you for being so responsive in your communication. As we approach the holidays, stay safe and keep those masks on!

Uriah Guilford. "Three Step Formula for Motivating Your Teenage Boy." *Guilford Family Counseling*.



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## Transition Options/Job Training - Mr.Hendrickson

Students are becoming more and more independent in both completing vocational tasks and in their studies. In class we are supporting their independence and learning about money management and banking systems. We have also delved into what goes into creating a credit score and how that credit, when used wisely, is an important convenience. We are also exploring the potential negative consequences of the irresponsible use of credit. We recently started creating future budgets that include our ideal living situations and meal planning. As the students are discovering, life is expensive and work is an important component of funding both the necessities and the desires that accompany living. All of these factors go into supporting goals of seeing your students develop a sense of personal financial responsibility.

Keep in mind that the weather is getting colder, so please be sure your students dress accordingly, especially for the morning tasks in the barn. Being prepared is essential to working. Having the correct clothing and now facemasks are essential to everyday life. Masks can be uncomfortable, but the Ohio mandate requires everyone at school to wear a mask at all times (apart from lunch). Students can customize their masks if they would like, but remember they have to still be school appropriate.

Some students have the opportunity to ride starting in November. This is a great opportunity from our partnership with Fieldstone Farm Therapeutic Riding Center. Students will be able to connect with the same horses that they work with in the barn. Horses tend to reflect the same excitement and energy that is presented to them. If someone is loud and moving a lot in a horse's presence, a horse will be anxious and want to flee. Horses are prey animals, and if there is a lot of noise and movement near them, they may perceive a threat and try to get away. So at Gaitway, we practice calming techniques and take therapeutic measures to ensure the safety of both ourselves and the horses.

## Science - Mr. Cline

It has been an exciting time in Physical Science class recently. Students have been working on projects that demonstrate their knowledge not only of both the nature of different types of energy but also their understanding of the laws of motion. We recently completed a lab that showed the link between the science of the spectrum of visible light and the nature of art by mixing paints to form tints and shades. We also examined the psychological effects of color and looked at optical illusions that demonstrate how the cones of our optic nerves respond when saturated with a certain portion of the visible spectrum (we tend to see the color's complement when looking at a white background). Students have also built cars that demonstrate the laws of motion using mousetraps and a variety of found objects. It has been exciting to see students engaged in trying different materials and techniques when the projects do NOT work. It's at these times that students begin to understand that good scientific and engineering practice is not always solving problems on the first attempt. "Back to the drawing board" teaches students the importance of persistence, and in several instances students have seen the necessity of collaboration. The collective of knowledge



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that your students have brought to the task has been truly impressive, and working together has helped some of them achieve social goals specified in their IEPs!

We are pleased that our greenhouse kit has arrived and will soon be breaking ground for its placement in the Gaitway school area. Ground leveling, shelf building, and construction of the kit still lie ahead. All science students will be lending a hand for this exciting project. Environmental Science students are watching over a raised bed containing mixed greens, arugula, and sprouting garlic cloves. As the weather turns cooler, they are considering other winter crops that could potentially survive a cold northeast Ohio winter. Lessons about sustainability and research are regular components of the classroom study.

Some students involved in credit recovery are working on online Biology, Marine Biology, and Forensic Science courses through Virtual Learning Academy. It is a pleasure to assist these students in their independent studies, and some are nearing completion of their courses! Lets keep going strong to finish those courses and earn those credits, students!

## [Independent Study - Ms. Shannon](#)

Students in independent study are enjoying fall, but counting down the days until we can enjoy some delicious Halloween candy!

In **Algebra I**, students just completed a unit on absolute value equations and multivariable (literal) equations. Next up is solving systems. Students in **Algebra I, pt. 1** are following closely behind! They have mastered multi- step equations with variables on one side. Following a review of some geometric terms and basic constructions, we dove into line segments and angle relationships in **Geometry**. Currently, these students are working on identifying parallel and perpendicular lines using geometric postulates, definitions, theorems, and converse. Students taking **Algebra II** are wrapping up a unit on statistics and probability. Once they have completed the unit test, they will be finished with the course!

At the conclusion of the first quarter, students in **Health** have (or should have) completed all 18 lessons and have earned a final grade for the course. As a reminder, students in **Physical Education** are required to complete 1.5 hours of independent activity (signed off on the activity log by a parent or guardian) for each of the 18 lessons. Logs need to be completed and handed in before the question portion of the lesson can be considered complete and ready to be graded. All 18 logs must be completed by the end of the second quarter in order for students to receive a final grade for the course.

[First Quarter Pictures: \(I will place more on Facebook and Twitter\)](#)

