



Selected as a NASET (National Association of Special Education Teachers) School of Excellence annually from 2014-2022.

# Maryville Jen School

Holiday Issue

December, 2022

## Principal's Address:

In his 1926 classic, "Winnie the Pooh," A. A. Milne wrote, "Piglet noticed that even though he had a very small heart, it could hold a rather large amount of gratitude." Our friend Piglet expressed his Gratitude for the abundance in his life; great friends, a warm place to sleep, and a few tasty "haycorns" to eat. As we conclude 2022 and break for the winter holiday, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt Gratitude to all who help make Jen School an amazing place to be. We are a community with many gifts and talents, which we share daily with one another and, most importantly, our students. From the classroom to our living room and all points in between, our collective efforts are filled with passion, commitment, and a willingness to work together to benefit our students. I am grateful to our wonderful, talented, creative, inquisitive, optimistic, resourceful, and resilient students. Often, they make us laugh, sometimes they make us cry, but always they make us wonder. Most of all, they make us better. In the spirit of this holiday season, I want to extend my Gratitude to our faculty and supporters for all you do for our school. May the upcoming holidays be filled with blessings and good tidings that make these days special.

With Gratitude, have a safe and joyous Holiday Season,

Ann M. Craig  
Director of Educational Services/Principal



## Social Media

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## CTE Gives Back

By: Stavros Kouriabalis - Para/Job Coach

Christmas is right around the corner and every year Jen School likes to do something special. We all know Christmas time isn't the same for everyone, some of the less fortunate can't afford everything on their wishlist, so we try to help out as much as we can. Jen School staff and students will be helping out by going to purchase toys for some families through Toys for Tots. Staff and students in our CTE program have a fun time going every year knowing that this will make a few kids' Christmas that much more special. We use this activity for both budgeting practice and to give the students an opportunity to be the ones giving back. Each student is assigned an age range and a budget, that way we are sure to cover all the ages of the children served by Toys for Tots and no one is forgotten. Once we have the toys we will be delivering them to the Niles Fire Department where they will find the families that can really use them. We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



## Jen Successes

By: Mark Trerotola - Teacher

Thanksgiving has come and gone, and we have entered the holiday season with bells on. It's nice to see what Jen School is doing during these festive times, but how many know what truly constitutes Jen School. Our student body continues to work towards their academic goals with the support of the talented staff. We currently have 3 students partially reintegrated back in their home schools, 2 students who will be returning full time next quarter, and meetings scheduled for at least two more to discuss starting the reintegration process in the spring. At the completion of the first quarter, we had three students on the 'A' honor roll and seven on the



'B' honor roll (one of which received honor roll for the first time ever in his life). We have 5 students enrolled in CTE Extension and that will increase to 6 students in the new year who will be working on their employability skills. What more can we ask of our students than to keep up the good work! Along with these measurable achievements, students are experiencing personal successes each and every day and we commend all their hard work.

# CLASSROOM CORNER

## Fine Arts

By: Moissette McNerney

Artist Vincent Van Gogh was a Dutch painter and considered one of the greatest of the post-Impressionist painters. Born in 1853, he used striking color, pronounced brushwork, and well-defined forms. His work became remarkably popular after his death, particularly in the late 20th century, when it sold for astronomical sums. And because of his extensive correspondence, he has been mythologized in books, songs, and movies. Miss Mary's class has been studying Van Gogh in their Fine Arts Class. His work encompassed landscapes, flowers, self-portraits, and scenes from his time in Paris and southern France. Reflecting on her visit to the Van Gogh Museum outside of Paris, Miss Mary shared her first-hand perceptions of his art and his home. The Ravoux Inn is situated in the heart of the village of Auvers-sur-Oise, 22 miles from Paris. It was the last home of Vincent Van Gogh who, in a life lasting just 37 years, had no fewer than 37 successive addresses in The Netherlands, Belgium, England and France.

Van Gogh famously suffered from mental illness, eventually taking his own life in 1890. Today he could be categorized as having bipolar disorder. In studying Van Gogh, the class grasped the concept that mental illness is not unusual in artists, making them aware of the all-too-common link between creativity and mental illness. Using a paint by number kit, the Van Gogh unit culminated with the students creating their own versions of *Sunflowers*.



# Health Beat: Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

By: Donna Hoffman - School Psychologist

One of the awareness topics for December is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a type of depression that's related to changes in seasons; it begins and ends about the same time every year with symptoms beginning in the fall and continuing through the winter. It can be related to the decrease in sunlight with days being shorter and may be correlated with holiday stress. Most people go through short periods of time feeling "winter blues", but in some cases the depressive symptoms can become more serious. Symptoms may include feeling listless or sad most days, having low energy and feeling sluggish, losing interest in activities you enjoy, sleeping too much, having carb cravings or overeating, feeling hopeless, having difficulty concentrating, social withdrawal, and even having suicidal thoughts.

Research has looked at how levels of serotonin and melatonin are affected during winter. Serotonin is a chemical that regulates moods, sleep, and digestion. Melatonin is a hormone that your brain produces in response to darkness that helps with sleep. Both serotonin and melatonin are affected by the changes in the seasonal night/day cycle. As the levels of each change, they disrupt normal daily rhythms, and some people struggle to adjust. Also, deficits in vitamin D (due to less daylight) may add to SAD as vitamin D is believed to promote serotonin activity. Treatment for SAD may include light therapy, psychotherapy, antidepressant medications, and vitamin D.

SAD can also escalate due to "holiday blues." Depression and anxiety can be caused by stress over a lack of time, money worries, gift-giving pressure, family get-togethers, travel, and taking time off from work. It is important to prioritize self-care if you start feeling down during the next few months. Try to get outside to soak up some sun. Keep exercising to help relieve stress and stay fit. When craving carbs, make sure to add some fruits and vegetables to your daily meals. Get to bed on time and try to wake up at the same time each day. And remember that SAD is a temporary disorder with symptoms slowly lessening as we get closer to spring!

**SELF-CARE**  
FOR  
**SEASONAL DEPRESSION**  
(SAD)

- Focus on eating healthy foods, rest and exercise.
- Build positive experiences into this time of year.
- Have a good support network of family and friends, and reach out to them.
- Talk about feelings, and try not to bottle them up.
- Balance stress.
- Try light therapy boxes. They can be an effective treatment, but talk to your provider about which type is right for you.

UnityPoint Health

## SPORTS PAGE

By: Dan Baffin - PE Teacher

It's been a rollercoaster of a ride the last two months with Jen School taking part in the CAAEL Academic Bowl, heading into our last game of the volleyball season, and making the Super Six Bowling Tournament for our first time ever. We had four students take part in the academic bowl this year as they faced off against teams from across the Chicagoland area. We had a rocky first match, but then kicked it into high gear in the second and third rounds. When it came to the lightning round, we didn't miss a question! That really sealed the deal as we took home the second-place trophy. As we are wrapping up our volleyball season, we currently have a record of 3-1 with two games left to play before the playoff seeding is determined. All the players are extremely motivated to finish the season strong and try and make the final four tournament for the first time. I could not be prouder of our bowling team as they have made the Super Six Bowling Tournament for the first time with a team average of 96.79. Our highest single game score of the year was a 139 and highest team game average was 113.3. Congratulations everyone! Go Jen School!



# Student and Staff Spotlight: Ayaan and Mr. George

By: George Nikolaou - Social Worker

The student we will be highlighting this month is Ayaan. Ayaan is currently 14 years old and enjoys being a part of Jen School. During his free time, he likes watching TV, playing video games when something new and interesting comes out, and playing badminton. Ayaan also enjoys his PE class, where he enjoys challenging himself to do his best daily. When speaking with him, he considers himself a basic teenager and is looking forward to getting good grades, being successful, and hopefully making A Honor Roll.

Mr. George is in his 4<sup>th</sup> school year at the Jen School. He has a M.Ed. in School Counseling and is a counselor, working currently with Freshman and Sophomores. In the past he worked at a K-8 school and high school in the Northwest Suburbs, as well as Thresholds in Chicago. Mr. George grew up locally in the Northwest suburbs, and currently resides in the area as well. He enjoys traveling, eating at different restaurants, collecting sneakers, and hanging out with family and friends. Three words that others would use to describe him are compassionate, hardworking, and adaptable.

## Getting to Know Ayaan and Mr. George

What is your favorite color?

**AH - Red and Blue**

Mr. George - Gray

Have you ever had a nickname? What was it?

**AH - No**

Mr. George - No

If you were a superhero, what powers would you have?

**AH - The power to fly**

Mr. George - The power to travel in time

What is your favorite holiday?

**AH - My birthday**

Mr. George - Christmas

What was your favorite subject in school?

**AH - Math**

Mr. George - Math

What's your favorite movie and/or favorite book?

**AH - My favorite book is *Amulet: The Stonekeeper* (Book 1)**

Mr. George - Not sure of a favorite movie or book, but my favorite show is *Stranger Things*

What motivates you to work hard?

**AH - To get good grades and make my family happy**

Mr. George - Making a difference in a student's life, helping them with a transition plan post high school, and assisting them in growing socially, emotionally, and academically

What is something you've done that you are proud of?

**AH - Beating Coach during PE in Ping Pong and Badminton, as well as working towards making honor roll**

Mr. George - Completing my master's program



# Student Movie Review

Reviews by: ILP

TITLE: **The Christmas Project**

DIRECTOR: **Michael Buster**

## Synopsis

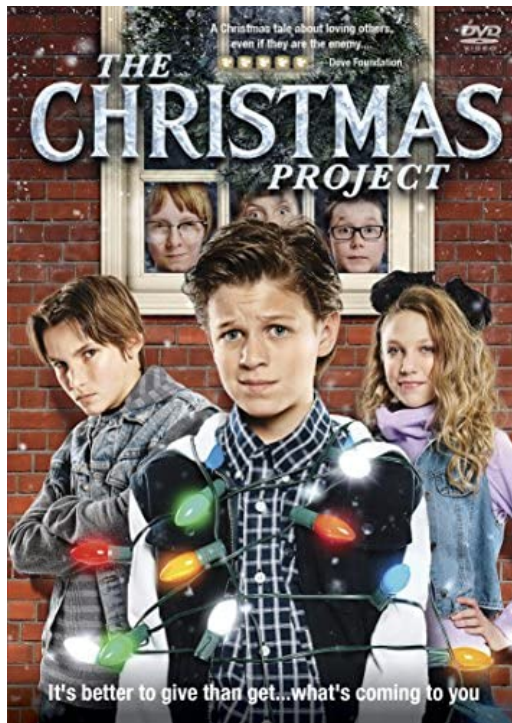
In this movie you'll see how three brothers work to welcome their new neighbors, but soon figure out that their neighbors are rude, nasty, bullying people, not ones they want to socialize with. But they make an effort to change them for the greater good, also in hopes they can see eye-to-eye.

## Review

The Christmas Project is by far my favorite Christmas movie. It is a wonderful movie that will fill your hearts with joy, excitement, and suspense. It will put you in a kind, christmas mood that will last a while, and I promise it will become one of your favorite movies.

**Movie Rating (0-5; 0= DON'T WATCH and 5=MUST WATCH)**

I would rate this movie 5 out of 5!



# Chicken Wings, 2 Ways: Student Food Review

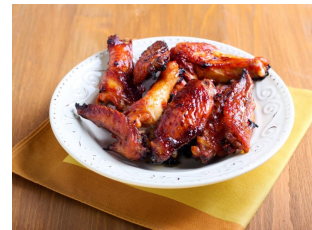
Review by: Savion

This week in CTE I had the privilege of cooking chicken wings with the chef. I was excited to hear that we were going to make buffalo wings. Once I heard we were also making cherry wings, I was a little skeptical because I've never had them but I decided to give it a try. After it was all said and done I gave the wings a try and they were amazing! I preferred the buffalo wings over the cherry wings but both are still very good. If I were to improve the wings I would add a little more spice to them but other than that the wings came out great and I had a fun time making them. I give the wings a 4.8 out of 5, they were that good!

## CHERRY CHICKEN WINGS - MAKE IT AT HOME:

### Makes 3 servings

- 12 whole chicken wings
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup all purpose flour
- 1 cup cherry preserves
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp sriracha
- 1 tsp salt
- Neutral, high smoke point oil for deep frying



### Directions:

- Lightly dredge chicken wings in flour. Make sure to shake off any excess. Set aside.
- In a small pot, bring the preserves, vinegar, sriracha and salt to a boil. Let this slightly reduce then remove from heat.
- Deep fry the wings at 350° until very golden brown and crispy. Be sure to "overcook" the wings so all the connective tissue and cartilage can break down. The internal temperature should be around 200-210° when finished.
- While still hot, toss the wings and the cherry sauce in a large bowl until the wings are evenly coated.