Shead High School names honor parts

Shead High School Principal Paul Theriault has named the honor parts for the 2019 commencement and the students receiving Latin honors. This year, valedictorian honors went to two students: Madison Greenlaw, daughter of Sharon and John Cook of Eastport, and was the PAWS Humane Society Student of the Year. Greenlaw plans to attend the University of New England in Biddeford to major in conservation and work together, and that's what all communities need.”

“...that they then shared with their classmates that they had learned over the course of their unit of study, and one of the main things that they did with alacrity. Teachers came for learning taking place during the school year.”

The Eastport Elementary School (EES) showed off arts integration learning by Laura Whelan

The Eastport Elementary School (EES) gymnasium was humming with excitement May 15, as students from all grades were prepared to perform dance, stories with song, movement and tableau and a combination of all three that they had learned over the course of the school year. The performances were the result of the new arts integration pilot project brought to EES by the Maine Alliance for Arts Education.

Enveloque Director Karen Potters gave a brief overview of the program to those gathered. She explained, “It’s a first, not only for Eastport and Washington County, but it’s just the school-wide arts integration in Maine. This pilot is a pilot project and around the state.”

Starting last August, dance artist-in-residence Kaitena Keller and Ian Bannon, a theater artist and director of education for Figures of Speech in Portland, have been visiting the school about two times per month. They began with teach-the-teach- er sessions and then broadened into the classroom. The culmination of the year’s work brought smiles to their faces.

Performances ranged from exploring the weather seasons and plant life cycles, to a play from the study guide, reading and a dance about climate change by the seventh and eighth graders. Students sat attentively with the formulas, freezing during their acting and being interviewed about how they felt right at that moment as their character. Other characters were interviewed at a press conference about their motivations for acting as they did. Another class performed a tableau from a book but then also created their own story-line tableaux.

The climate change dance involved each student creating an individual move that they then shared with their classmates to make into a whole.

“There’s a lot of creative learning,” Potter explained. “It gives students confidence in their own ideas. Students are active learners, not passive learners.”

Potters says, “In doing this kind of perform- ing arts work, where we’re working with all the students in the class, not a self-selected group, one of the challenges is to help all students feel comfortable performing in front of each other. It’s so helpful for the students to know that all the classes are watching them in the same situation. They’ve been doing this in their classrooms, too.”

The morning’s final performance, exploring positive and negative space, involved as many students, teachers and audience members as possible to participate. The seventh and eighth graders started the first few selecting a pose and their classmates would create it by standing around them, created for instance by a curved arm, with their own pose. The only rule was to have only body parts touching. The other students were then invited to join in, which they did with alacrity. Teachers came forward. And then as the living sculpture grew, audience members were invited, with many jumping up from their seats. Principal Paul Theriault says, “The arts integration program has been very successful at EES. The students and staff have really enjoyed the time spent with the artists. Sometimes, having ‘new’ programs introduced into the school day can be ‘just another thing that we have to do with no time to do it.’ This was just not the case. It was truly enrichment and enhancement of our curricula. We are also excited that a similar program will be introduced into the curriculum at Shead next year.”

Potters says, “The bottom line is how relevant the arts can be — for building communities that can think for themselves, re- spect themselves, get along with each other and work together, and that’s what all communities need.”

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