



JAGUAR NATION

MARCH 2019 • VOLUME 8, No. 5

SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

GEORGE BYRD SELECTED AS EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AT SCVTHS

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

Dear Jaguar Nation,

Our Open House was a great success. I want to thank students, staff and our PTO members who contributed their time and efforts to show visitors just how great our school is and what we have to offer.

Special congratulations go out to our Auto Body instructor, Mr. George Byrd, who has been selected as our 2019 Educator of the Year. Mr. Byrd is a caring and dedicated teacher who is also very active in state level SkillsUSA competitions in the areas of Automotive Refinishing Technology, Custom Automotive Painting, and Collision Repair Technology. Over the years, Mr. Byrd's students have won many medals at the State and National levels.

Upcoming Events/School Spirit Alerts:

- Wednesdays in March - 2:30-3:30 (weather permitting) Campus Clean Up - FFA Community Service Project Contact Mr. Fargo for details
- 3/7 - Winter Sports Banquet
- 3/7 - PTO Meeting - General membership meeting. All parents and staff are invited to attend and learn more about how the PTO is involved in supporting our students and teachers
- 3/14 - National Honor Society Induction Ceremony

Athletics

March 1st - Baseball & Softball season officially begins. Think SPRING!

Sincerely,
Diane M. Ziegler



Mr. George Byrd, Auto Body Instructor at Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School, has been selected as the 2018-2019 Educator of the Year. Mr. Byrd is known for being a passionate, hard-working, caring and dedicated instructor.

When Chrys Hartcraft, SCVTHS Superintendent, and Principal Diane Ziegler walked into Mr. Byrd's classroom to announce the award, Mr. Byrd said it was "one of the biggest surprises in my life." Mr. Byrd went on to add, "I had no idea what they were there for. It wasn't my birthday yet."

As a 1967 graduate of Somerset County Vocational & Technical Schools, Mr. Byrd knew when he was still in high school that he wanted to return and teach the Auto Body Program. After spending some years working in the industry and even operating his own business, Mr. Byrd returned to SCVTHS in 1992 to achieve his goal. He successfully completed his alternate route courses at The College of New Jersey and has been in the classroom ever since.

Mr. Byrd's favorite part of his job is working with the students. He remembers being young and not having much guidance, so he's made it a point to keep that focus in mind when dealing with his own students. He attributes much of his students' success to his one-on-one approach and keeping things fun. "It's about them," Mr. Byrd said, "I want to give more than I had." Mr. Byrd went on to add, "Teaching keeps you young. I am happy to be doing what I'm doing."



George Byrd, the 2018-2019 Educator of the Year at Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School

Mr. Byrd is a resident of Somerset, where he resides with his wife Van. They are the proud parents of five children and four grandchildren. In his spare time, Mr. Byrd enjoys fishing, grilling and spending time with his family. Additionally, as a self-proclaimed car fanatic, Mr. Byrd's passion keeps him busy outside of the classroom.*

For more information contact James Strickhart at (908) 526-8900, x7169 or jstrickhart@scvts.net.

SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL SCHOOLS
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**NATIONAL
HONOR SOCIETY**
Induction Ceremony
Thursday
March 14, 2019 • 7pm



JAGUAR NATION

MARCH 2019

SCVTHS STUDENTS RAISE AWARENESS AND FUNDS FOR CHILDREN'S TUMOR FOUNDATION

JAGUAR NATION

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First Place Winner - Newsletter Category

SCVTHS students Ritu Peddinti of Bridgewater, Michelle Masiello of Hillsborough and Mira Amin of Bridgewater have been raising awareness about neurofibromatosis and fundraising for the Children's Tumor Foundation.

The students' project centers on the Children's Tumor Foundation (CTF), which supports research for neurofibromatosis and the families who are affected. Neurofibromatosis is a type of cancer that causes tumors to grow on nerves throughout the body. Over the past year, the students have raised over \$1,000 for the Children's Tumor Foundation through multiple outreach efforts, including fundraising dinners.

"We have already hosted fundraising dinners at Chipotle and Panera, and we have a few more planned for 2019," said Ritu Peddinti.

Additionally, Ritu explained how the team took part in a neurofibromatosis walk in Long Island and supported NF Heroes, who are people who live with neurofibromatosis and are supported by the Children's Tumor Foundation. Peddinti added, "The latest branch of our project is Classrooms that Care. We are reaching out to schools to try to share information about NF in elementary, intermediate, and high schools so that it can be better understood and research can be more widely supported. We have also started



(l-r): Michelle Masiello of Hillsborough, Mira Amin of Bridgewater and Ritu Peddinti of Bridgewater deliver baskets as part of their CTF community service project at the NJ Medical School at Rutgers University located in Newark, NJ.

visiting hospitals in the tri-state area to deliver gift baskets to NF patients in order to brighten their days and show support from CTF advocates to CTF families."

In April, the students' project will culminate with the team competing at the New Jersey SkillsUSA Championships in the community service category, where they will be showcasing the work they've done over the course of the year.

For more information on this story contact James Strickhart at (908) 526-8900, ext. 7169 or jstrickhart@scvts.net.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH



Rebecca Vindas

REBECA VINDAS

Rebecca Vindas, a sophomore in the Law and Public Safety Program, has been selected as the SCVTHS Student of the Month for February 2019. Rebeca is the daughter of Juan and Maritza Vindas of Bound Brook.

SCVTHS Law and Public Safety Instructor Louis Violante nominated Rebeca for the award because she "has demonstrated superb leadership skills, a willingness to help others, and has participated in school events such as the Santa Breakfast." Mr. Violante went on to add, "Rebeca is a great student and has shown a tremendous improvement since her freshman year."

At SCVTHS, Rebeca is a member of the Principal's Honor Roll and the SCVTHS cheerleading squad. In her Law and Public Safety class, Rebeca is currently helping her classmates practice for the upcoming SkillsUSA competitions.

Outside of SCVTHS, Rebeca has been a volunteer at the Bound Brook Library. In her free time, Rebeca enjoys reading books and watching informational videos about her future career options. After graduating from SCVTHS Rebeca plans on attending college to pursue a degree in criminal justice or psychology.

When asked if she had anything to add, Rebeca said, "I'm grateful for my parents who would do anything to ensure that I get a good education, and I'm grateful to be a part of Mr. Violante's Law and Public Safety class of 2021.✿"