

Celebrating the 2001 School Citizens of the Year

Seventy-six exemplary students in grades two through twelve are the 2001 SCOTY (School Citizen of the Year) Award winners.

These West Cook students were recognized at the SCOTY Awards ceremony held March 7 at Riverside | Brookfield High School. Families and friends filled the auditorium to celebrate the students' accomplishments.

It is not easy to be a SCOTY winner. Only one student is nominated by teachers and administrators per school. Nominees must be "good role models for other students to emulate."

At the ceremony, SCOTY Award winners were recognized individually on stage and received a medal and certificate. All attendees received a copy of the SCOTY Honor Role: A booklet with profiles of each SCOTY recipient. Entertainment was provided by Ken Schultz, juggler, Adam Wilhelm, Riverside | Brookfield High School pianist, and the Riverside | Brookfield High School Chamber Quartet (Clarissa Gonzalez, Joe Holocek, William Huebler and Bethany Landa). Refreshments were served.

For the first time, exemplary students in West Cook Regional Safe School Programs were recognized by the SCOTY Awards.

West 40 created the SCOTY Awards to celebrate the positive accomplishments of today's youth. Congratulations to the 2001 SCOTY Award winners: Marlon Acosta, Whittier School, District 87, Berkeley; Michael Aguilar, Rhodes School, District 84.5, River Grove; Aamina Akram, MacArthur Middle School, District 87, Berkeley; Maria Alvarez, Lincoln Elementary School, District 89, Maywood; Jeffrey Angileri, Ridgewood High School, District 234, Norridge; Richard Anys II, West Leyden High School, District 212,

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Summer Professional Development

Take some time this summer for professional development with a host of classes tailored to the needs of today's educators. Check out the Summer West 40 Professional Development Catalog for a complete listing. Or go to www.west40.k12.il.us and view the catalog on-line. New programs include:

On-Line Staff Development! West 40 proudly announces self-paced on-line staff development through CASTLE Technology Online. The programs are: "Designing Technology-Infused Learning Experiences" and "Using Productivity Software in Your classroom." Earn CEUs or graduate credit. An orientation at West 40 is required. Register by: June 27 and 28. Orientation: July 11/12

A great opportunity: *International Treasure - Travel, Theatre and Talk*. Hop on the bus to Ontario for the acclaimed Stratford and George Bernard Shaw Theatre festivals. Six plays, backstage tours and commentary from the experts highlight this six-day literary journey. July 16 -21. Register by June 13.

Author Kathie F. Nunley presents information from her book *Brain Biology and Layered Curriculum*. She will teach ways to reach all students in mixed-ability classrooms. June 19. Register by June 5.

Digital Media Mania for the Classroom shows participants how to easily create digital presentations for the web, video and the classroom. Participants will develop units for use in their classrooms. June 13-14, August 16. Register by: May 30.

West 40 also helps teachers navigate the complex certificate renewal process. *Writing Your Certificate Renewal Plan* is a two-hour workshop held June 4, July 10 or August 8. Respective registration deadlines are May 21, June 26 and July 25.

Students Shine in Talent Searches

Each year, several West 40 events give students the opportunity to showcase their talents. The Writing Talent Search, Speech and Drama Festival and the Junior Math Olympiad are annual events for students throughout West Cook County.

The Junior Math Olympiad was held February 3 at Forest Park Middle School. One hundred sixty-four students in grades one through eight competed to test math skills in individual and team events. First, second and third place teams at each grade level received a trophy. Each student received a certificate; the top ten scorers at each grade level received a ribbon; and the top three scorers at each grade level received a gold, silver or bronze medallion.

At the Speech and Drama Festival held February 10 at Riverside|Brookfield High School, 575 students in grades five through eight competed in categories such as oral interpretation, poetry, drama, humor and chorale. Many prizes, including plaques, individual medals and ribbons were awarded. A special thank you to Pat Braun, District 90, and the many volunteers who have made this event possible for the past 15 years.

Winners in the Writing Talent Search for grades one through eight celebrated at an awards ceremony held at Riverside|Brookfield High School April 24. Eighty students were recognized for their original works in prose and poetry. First, second and third place grade level plaques were given, and all 200 entrants received certificates. Each finalist also received an anthology of winning works.

SCOTY Up Close

The SCOTY Award winners are very special people and if there were room in this newsletter all of their stories could be told. Here, we give you two:

Andres ("Andy") Lopez is a sixth grade student at Roosevelt School, District 99. This year the 12-year-old was elected to student council and earned good grades. His accomplishment is remarkable because, while standing on his front porch last fall he was the accidental victim of a gang shooting. In spite of the pain and trauma of the event, several surgeries and making up a month of school-work, Andy has achieved success. His mother, Elitañia and father, Miguel, report that Andy has always been motivated and a good student, and he plans to finish high school and college. Andy, who loves animals, aspires to a career working at a zoo. Andy's courage and motivation are an example to all.

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Educators' Accolades

Jone Vaznelis, library media specialist at Roosevelt School in Cicero District 99 completed the Master of Library and Information Science Master's Program at Dominican University. Jone also holds a Master's Degree in Education from Lewis University and is a recipient of an Illinois State Library Training Grant as well as a scholarship from the Hinsdale Chapter of the American Association of University Women.

Karen Tiemann, director of west 40's Middle School Regional Safe Schools Program, was honored by the Illinois Math and Science Academy as the teacher who most in-

spired IMSA sophomore Margalit Faden, a former student of Karen's at Grayslake Middle School. Karen was recognized at an awards ceremony and reception.

Educators, send West 40 your news! E-mail to Kay Poyner Brown at kpoynerb@west40.k12.il.us or fax to Kay at 708/447-6732. ■

Visit West 40's Improved Web Site:
www.west40.k12.il.us

Meet the West 40 Staff: Introducing Berni Austin



school teachers and students in tobacco prevention. In addition to these duties, she is coordinating teacher recertification programs, and helps educators develop their teacher recertification plans.

Berni is uniquely qualified to lead both efforts. She earned a Master's and Doctorate in curriculum from Loyola University. In thirty years as an educator, she has been a teacher, administrator, author, grant administrator, grant director, and curriculum specialist. Her work has encompassed all grade levels including college. At Loyola and Dominican Universities, Berni was an instructor in education to graduate and undergraduate students. She is the co-author of "The

Art of Tutoring," an instructional video, was the director of a U.S. Department of Education Literacy Corps Grant, and most recently, was the principal of St. Mary's School in Riverside. She has even given private music lessons and taught music theory.

Her career accomplishments alone are impressive. What is even more impressive is that she did all of these things while raising ten (!) children. Berni and her husband,

Bert, have six boys and four girls.

She has, both personally and professionally, devoted her life to children. "I love children," she stated. "I believe in them and believe that they are worth spending time with and for."

Berni is also enjoying her work at West 40. "There is a tremendous amount of talent here," she remarked, "and the environment encourages people to do their best for others." ■

Dr. Bernardien ("Berni") Austin came to West 40 last October as the Tobacco Prevention Consultant, a new position created by a grant from the tobacco settlement. Since then, she has not only jumpstarted the new program, but is making great progress in developing curriculum, coordinating efforts and designing activities to engage middle

To get involved in the middle school Tobacco Prevention Program or for help with certification plans, don't hesitate to contact Berni Austin: 708/447-6070 or baustin@west40.k12.il.us



SCOTY Up Close *Continued*

It is not easy to be a SCOTY award winner — only one is nominated from each participating school. Imagine the odds against having two from the same family! This year, sixth grade student Joshua Heller was the SCOTY recipient from Ideal School, District 105. In 1998 his brother Matthew, then a sixth grade student at Ideal was the school's SCOTY recipient. According to their mother, Kelley Heller, Joshua "lives for sports." He is a talented, natural athlete and a real charmer. He also manages to receive top grades and is the student council

president. Matthew, who is now a freshman at Lyons Township High School, is hard-working, conscientious and responsible. His strengths are his extreme perseverance and tenacity. Although Matthew has a reading disability, he manages to do well. Both boys are courteous and conscientious.

Kelley, a registered nurse, and Paul Heller, an electrician, have taught their two sons to always give their best efforts and not be focused on the outcome. Obviously, they are succeeding. ■

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Continued

Northlake; Casey Bare, S. E. Gross Middle School, District 95, Brookfield; Claude Belton, Lexington School, District 89, Maywood; Katherine Bird, Costello School, District 103, Lyons; Eric Brown, Hester Junior High School, District 84, Franklin Park; Lindsay Buoniconti, River Grove School, District 85.5, River Grove, Katherine Butler, John Laidlaw School, District 101, Western Springs; Marty Calkins, Brook Park School, District 95, Brookfield; Anthony Carozza, Stevenson School, District 89, Melrose Park; Edgar Chaidez, Pietrini School, District 84, Franklin Park; Crystal Cleveland, TALENTS Program, District 209, Maywood; Marie Connelly, Emerson School, District 100, Maywood; Jessica DeLaCruz, Riley School, District 87, Northlake; Talia Delpino, Home Avenue Elementary School, District 103, Berwyn; David Dixon, Lyons Township North High School, District 204, LaGrange; Jaimie Duffek, Hollywood Elementary School, District 96, Riverside; Jessica Dunne, Forest Park Middle School, District 91, Forest Park; Kate Feifar, Heritage Middle School, District 100, Berwyn; Tina Frierson, Washington School, District 89, Maywood; Agustin Garcia, Grant White School, District 91, Forest Park; Raul Garza, Hiawatha Elementary School, District 100, Berwyn; Bernadette Gil, James Giles School, District 80, Norridge; Adrianna Gonzalez, North Elementary School, District 84, Franklin Park; Larry Gorski Jr., Westchester Middle School, District 92.5, Westchester; Adam Gress, Komensky School, District 100, Berwyn; Alberto Guerrero, Morton Alternative High School; District 201, Cicero; Alma Guzman, Proviso West High School, District 209, Hillside; Deiby Guzman, Melrose Park School, District 89, Melrose Park; Briana Hanny, Sunnyside School, District 87, Berkeley; Joshua Heller, Ideal School, District 105, Countryside; Priscilla Hernandez, Seventh Avenue School, District 105, LaGrange; Cynthia Herrera, Grant Elementary School, District 88, Melrose Park; Katie Hughes, Forest Hills School, District 101, Western Springs; Kiana Jackson, Proviso East High School, District 209, Maywood; Brittani Kindle, Jefferson School, District 87, Bellwood; Alyssa Krueck, Pershing School, District 100, Berwyn; Ariel Lickton, Elm Middle School, District 401, Elmwood Park; Octavio Loera, Northlake Middle School,

District 87, Northlake; Nick Loiacono, Roosevelt Middle School, District 90, River Forest; Andres Lopez, Roosevelt School, District 99, Cicero; Melissa Mayerhofer, Robinson Elementary School, District 103, Berwyn; Marty McAndrews, Garfield School, District 91, Forest Park; Heather McGovern, Hillside School, District 93, Hillside; April Mozdzierz, Hodgkins School, District 105, LaGrange; Ben Mueller, Field Park Elementary School, District 101, Western Springs; Dennis O'Reilly, Edison School, District 103, Berwyn; Nick Obradovic, Gurrie Middle School, District 105, LaGrange; Sandy Ocampo, Piper School, District 100, Berwyn; Kristen Olszewski, Mannheim Middle School, District 83, Franklin Park; Jennifer Opatrny, East Leyden High School, District 212, Franklin Park; Kim Parrilli, Elmwood Park High School, District 401, Elmwood Park; Lucia Pena, Komarek School, District 94, North Riverside; Christina Perez, Oliver Wendell Holmes School, District 97, Westchester; Jentl Pugh, Emerson School, District 89, Maywood; Mirek Purpura, Leigh School, District 80, Norridge; Shima Rolle, Jane Addams School, District 89, Maywood; Katie Ross, Westchester Primary School, District 92.5, Westchester; Antonio Schaffer, Jr., Garfield Elementary School, District 89, Maywood; Emily Seifert, McClure Junior High School, District 101, Western Springs; Luke Sikora, Riverside | Brookfield High School, District 208, Riverside; Kristen Skvarenina, Irving School, District 100, Berwyn; Daniel Smith, Westchester Intermediate School, District 92.5, Westchester; Brendan Splon, Riverside | Brookfield Late School, District 208, Riverside; Samantha Stephen, Field Stevenson School, District 91, Forest Park; Alyssa Tellez, Betsy Ross School, District 91, Forest Park; Kristina Wallner, Spring Avenue School, District 105, LaGrange; Teresa Walter, Passow Elementary School, District 84, Franklin Park; Justin Williams, Roosevelt Elementary School, District 89, Maywood; Jeremiah Wise, Irving School, District 89, Maywood; Sean Wixted, John Mills School, District 401, Elmwood Park; and Ebonick Young, Wilson Elementary School, District 88, Melrose Park.

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