

West Winds

THE NEWSLETTER OF WEST 40 INTERMEDIATE SERVICE CENTER NO. 2

Celebrate the Tenth Annual SCOTY Awards: March 15

Join West 40 in celebration of a landmark event: the tenth annual SCOTY (School Citizen of the Year) Awards. The special awards ceremony will take place Wednesday, March 15, 3:45 PM at Mannheim Middle School, 2600 Hyde Park Avenue, Melrose Park.



School Citizen of the Year

The SCOTY Awards honor students in grades one through twelve who are good role models, setting positive examples for their peers. Parameters are broad, with each school district setting its own. SCOTY winners are not necessarily straight "A" students and some have disabilities. They all share a positive attitude and a caring spirit. In the past ten years nearly 800 students have been proud to be recognized as SCOTY Award recipients.

Every school in the West 40 service area can select one SCOTY winner. Principals received nominating letters in January. For schools that have never nominated SCOTY winners, this is a great year to begin the tradition.

Each SCOTY winner is acknowledged individually on stage during the awards ceremony and receives a medal, certificate, and a copy of the SCOTY honor roll with the students' biographies. Parents, family members, teachers and school administrators are invited to attend the festivities. A live appearance by Fernando Jones' Blues Kids will highlight the day. These accomplished musicians will not only play the blues, but will tell about its history. Composer, musician and author Fernando Jones leads the trio. He has developed a K-12 curriculum about the blues, its culture, history and significance.

Surprises are in store to mark the tenth anniversary celebration. Be sure to nominate a SCOTY from your school and join in a memorable event. For information and nomination deadlines, call West 40 at 708/482-4350, today.

SCOTY Alumni: Where Are They Now?

Do SCOTY students continue to excel years later? To begin to answer that question, here's a look at two former SCOTY winners from the Westchester Schools. If you know what your school's SCOTY alumni are doing today tell West 40 and the information will be posted on their new website. Be sure to send the name of the student, school and district, the year they were SCOTY winners, their grade at the time, why they were nominated then and what they are doing now. Send info to **Kay Poyner Brown** at kpoynerb@west40.org.

In 1998 **Keith Donovan** was the eighth grade SCOTY winner from the Westchester Schools. He will soon graduate from St. Mary's University, Winona, Minnesota. As the SCOTY winner, Keith was recognized for putting 100% effort into everything he did, for his extremely helpful nature, and for his leadership skills. Keith often came early or stayed late at school to help. He was an honor roll student and a talented artist. Keith will soon receive a Bachelor's degree, majoring in English, and plans to be a teacher. At St. Joseph's High School he made the A honor roll all four years, was a tutor, and graduated third in his class. He was freshman class president and received a special award for his helpfulness. In college he has been an RA, helping dorm students. Proud parents are Marilyn and James Donovan.

Erica Litwin was a Westchester Schools' SCOTY winner twice: in intermediate school in fifth grade (1999) and in middle school in eighth grade (2002). She was selected because she was a "wonderful student, very courteous and generous...a picture of what every fifth grader should be." Then, she played drums, enjoyed math, and hoped to be a movie star and appear in musicals. Today Erica is a senior at Hinsdale South where her mother reports she is "doing wonderfully." She is still following the same dreams she had when she was a SCOTY winner, appearing in every Hinsdale South theater production over the past four years. She also still plays drums and is the first percussion chair. Erica is a member of the National Honor Society, Drama Club, Percussive Arts Society and is an officer in the International Thespians Society. She will major in theater in college, has received academic scholarships and is now in the process of applying for performance scholarships. She has made the Dean's list every quarter, won drama and other awards. Erica has two brothers (one is her twin), and her proud parents are Karen and Louis Litwin.

Major Changes to ISATs

In 2006, the Illinois Standards Achievement Tests will undergo the greatest changes in its seven-year history. Students in grades three through eight will be tested in reading and math every year. Included in the reading tests are more questions on literary works and techniques and questions to measure students' ability to follow directions and interpret maps and charts. Both the reading and math tests will be given in three 45-minute sessions, compared with sessions that were previously 40-minutes. Pupils can also have an extra 10 minutes to complete the exams, at the teacher's discretion. Also new are



reading and math questions from the Stanford Achievement Test, a national test that will give schools and parents a way to compare their child's performance with students' nationwide.

According to Judie Steinhauser, state board assessment consultant in reading and writing, 30% of

the reading test will be literature questions that test students' knowledge of literary genre and terms, including figurative language. The new reading test will have "functional" passages. West 40 Reading/Language Arts/Gifted Education Consultant Barbara Kurth explains this is the type of reading people use in everyday life, including recipes, timelines, maps

and charts. These will consist of multiple-choice questions. The reading test will continue to include two extended response questions in which students read a passage, identify important information explicitly found in the text, and write an answer based on that information. They will also answer multiple choice questions based on what they read in the passage. For more information on the ISAT reading test, contact **Barbara Kurth** at **708/482-4350, ext. 128**, or email bkurth@west40.org.

Changes to the Math ISAT include short response questions in which students will be asked to explain how they solved a math problem. West 40 Senior Consultant Dr. Doug Dirks states that students will be given rulers, something that was not previously done. Students in grades four and up will continue to be able to use calculators. He also cautions teachers that when a math test must be read to an IEP student, the teacher will have to use a "reader" script. However, the school must request a copy of the reader script from the state or they will not get one. The math test consists of three sections: 1) 40 multiple-choice questions; 2) 30 multiple-choice and 3 short response questions, and 3) Two extended response items. Teachers new to the short response questions need to review. For help, please contact **Dr. Doug Dirks** at **708/482-4350, ext. 126**, or email ddirks@west40.org.

Introducing Dr. Myra Sanders

Dr. Myra Sanders, Superintendent of Westchester District 92½, is the president of the West 40 Governing Board. She is completing the final year of her two-year term. Dr. Sanders is committed to education in her district and in the larger community. She has served on the West 40 Governing Board for the past eight years.

"West 40 is a key organization in the area," Dr. Sanders stated. "It is the neighborhood educational think tank, acting as an excellent liaison between the ISBE and school districts and providing essential services that support education and school improvement. It is an invaluable resource to educators and students in the West 40 region. West 40 provides high quality programs, gives districts the latest and best information, and supplies essential services such as alternate schools through the Regional Safe Schools Program. Many children in these schools will have more successful lives because of West 40. It has also identified regional needs for

professional development including the need for substitute teachers — and helps people with degrees become substitutes. When West 40 saw that many administrators were retiring, they brought a Master's program into the area that is helping create a new generation of administrators. Part of West 40's role is to be current and to identify districts' needs. As such, they provide linkages to districts with similar needs to benefit all. I count on West 40, knowing the staff is professional and on the cutting-edge. As a superintendent, it's hard to imagine life without West 40."

Dr. Sanders has served as Superintendent of the Westchester Schools for six years and previously served as the district's Director of Curriculum. It is her seventeenth year in the district. She has been an educator for 31 years.

She has lived within the West 40 service area since 1979. Her entire family is dedicated to education. Ted, her husband,

teaches math at Riverside-Brookfield High School. Their daughter, Alison, also a high school math teacher, is the family's fourth generation of educators.

Outside of work, Dr. Sanders loves to read, although even her literary pursuits can be work-related. Her current favorite is, "**School Leadership That Works**." She also loves to garden and to travel. Some time ago, a trip to Ukraine was a "life changing experience." Travels to England, Ireland, Scotland and Canada have also been both educational and fun.



Presenting Winter/Spring Professional Development Courses

By now, educators have received copies of West 40's Winter/Spring Professional Development Catalog, which was mailed in late December. Check out all of the excellent courses for professional development. Soon, you can register for all West 40 courses on-line at www.west40.org. A PDF of the catalog is also posted at the website for on-line viewing. Here are a few catalog highlights:

ODD GIRL OUT:

The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls

Sponsored by Lake County Educational Services

Rachel Simmons, renowned author of "Odd Girl Out," and "Odd Girl Speaks Out," is a Rhodes Scholar and Vassar grad. She will share her insights on female aggression at this special presentation. February 22, The Carlisle, Lombard, IL. Registration ends February 8. Fee: \$150. Registration is on-line only at www.lake.k12.il.us. Click "workshops."

Gifted and Diverse Learners: The Parallel Curriculum

Establish familiarity with the National Association for Gifted Children's Parallel Curriculum Model, an integrated set of procedures for designing highly motivating curriculum that attends to important student differences. For teachers and administrators who want to meet the needs of all children within the regular or gifted classroom. Presented by Sally Walker, Illinois Association for Gifted Children. Begins April 7. Registration ends March 24. Fee: \$460. 8 CEUs for professional development.

Gifted Education Institute: An Overview of Gifted Education

Explore a comprehensive overview of Gifted Education through topics that include a rationale for gifted education, historical perspective and program prototypes. In-depth coverage of the gifted child's identification, characteristics and social/emotional needs is presented, as well as curriculum design and instructional strategies. Presented by Sally Walker. Begins July 17. Registration ends July 3. Fee: \$440. 3.6 CEUs for professional development.

On-Line Registration at New Website

West 40 has a completely revamped website, with a new website address. Soon, you'll even be able to register for all West 40 Professional Development programs on-line! Go to www.west40.org and see all of the exciting improvements. There's information on certification, System of Support and technology. There's also the latest Professional Development Catalog and years of "WestWinds" newsletters. Educators' Accolades will also be posted on-line (see p.4). More helpful information will soon be added. Visit the improved website today and be sure to mark it as a favorite. You'll want to come back often to check out all of the news and register for your favorite classes on-line!



Check out West 40's new website:
www.west40.org

Coming Soon: On-line registration
for all your favorite programs!

West Cook Unites for Katrina Relief

Students, families, teachers and staff in schools throughout the entire West 40 region opened their hearts and their pocketbooks to Hurricane Katrina victims. Creative fund-raising efforts by students included "coin wars" competitions, penny drives, collections at dances and sporting events, raffles of donated goods, pizza parties, a 5K-community walk, wristband sales, and more. Some schools were able to augment their funds with matching donations from Lowe's Home Improvement or community businesses. Students also collected clothes, baby items, food, school supplies and personal items. Through these efforts, west Cook

County schools raised over \$100,000 for Katrina relief agencies.

To include the amount your school raised for Katrina relief in the total dollar amount raised from west Cook County Schools, and share with other educators the types of fund-raising events implemented at your school, send information to kpoynerb@west40.org. Information will be posted on the West 40 website.

Congratulations to the west Cook County students, families, teachers and staff for their hard work and compassionate response to Hurricane Katrina.

West 40 Governing Board

George Beranek,
Retired Principal
Cicero District 99

Deborah Floto,
Teacher
River Grove District 85½

Barry Greenwald,
School Board Member
Oak Park-River Forest
High School District 200

Bob Ingraffia,
Superintendent
Regional Office of Education for
Suburban Cook County

Lilane Koehn-Mace,
Division Chair, Math & Science
Lyons Township High School
Board Secretary

Raymond Kuper,
Superintendent
Union Ridge District 86

Raymond Lauk,
Superintendent
Lyons District 103

Doug Noyes,
Teacher
Elmwood Park High School
District 401

Myra Sanders,
Superintendent
Westchester District 92½
Board President

Judith Sayre,
Teacher
Riverside District 96

Phyllis Walden,
Retired Dean of Adult Education
& Faculty Development
Morton College
Past Board President

Arleen Armanetti,
Superintendent
LaGrange Highlands District 106
Administrative Agent for West 40,
Ex-Officio



West 40 Staff Directory 2006

The West 40 staff has new email addresses. These are listed here with each staff member's phone extension:

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www.west40.org

SAVE THE DATE

Speech & Drama Festival
Saturday, February 25,
2006

Tenth Annual
School Citizen of the Year
(SCOTY) Awards
Wednesday, March 15,
2006

Educators' Accolades

Educators Accolades' can now be posted at the West 40 website www.west40.org.

Educators, tell West 40 your achievements for all the world to see. Include honors, awards, publications, new degrees, conference presentations, and earning National Board Certification. Send information to accolades@west40.org.