CSDNR Receives Nearly $24,000 Rebate for Energy Savings Program

The City School District of New Rochelle received a $23,943 rebate check this week for reducing its energy usage during peak periods this past summer. The rebate was earned through a “demand response” program from Sustainable Westchester and its partner, Logical Buildings.

As part of the program, the school district turned off air conditioning for four-hour periods when there was peak demand on the electrical grid. The shutoffs occurred when students and staff were either out of the buildings or when the buildings had been pre-cooled to a comfortable temperature.
The rebate check was presented before a meeting of the Green Schools Committee, which has prioritized developing a comprehensive utility management program to maximize the conservation of natural resources.

"Strategically curbing energy consumption during peak times aligns with our school district’s strategic goal of managing resources efficiently and economically. It seamlessly connects with the priority of our Green Schools Committee to reduce the school district’s carbon footprint," expressed Superintendent Corey W. Reynolds. "The acknowledgment through this rebate is a testament to our dedication to fostering an environmentally sustainable school district, ensuring a greener future for our students and community alike."

The schools that participated in the program were New Rochelle High School, Albert Leonard Middle School, and Trinity, Columbus, and Ward Elementary Schools. The school district is considering expanding the program for the 2024 summer cooling season.

IEYMS Literary Magazine Wins National Recognition

The Isaac E. Young Middle School literary magazine has been recognized as a Publication of Distinction by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

Stacked up against 375 student magazines from middle and high schools, as well as higher education
institutions in 46 states and five countries, the magazine, titled “Resist, Refuse, Restore, Reclaim Art and Literary Journal,” earned the achievement in the Recognizing Excellence in Art and Literary Magazines (REALM) contest for the NTCE.

“It is so exciting for us and the whole student body,” said Filomena Daniele, who is the faculty advisor on the magazine with Isabel Maldonado. “We are proud to represent our students on their journey of authenticity and empowerment,” said Ms. Maldonado.

About 25 students in grades six, seven, and eight worked on the magazine, collating, editing, and designing the 32-page publication, which features a selection of student poetry and art.

“In addition to the incisive and creative contributions of our editor, Ryan Birmingham, creative editors, Yuderlin Santana and Samantha Lopez, and student staff members, we ask the art and English teachers to send us extraordinary student work to be considered for inclusion,” said Ms. Daniele.

The theme of the 2023 Art and Literary Journal “reflects the sometimes quiet, but always powerful activism inside of each of our amazing students,” the magazine states in a foreword. “The four R’s - resistance, refusal, restoration, and finally reclamation - represent our students’ journey toward empowerment and a demand for change in a world that does not always represent them.”

Although it has been published for decades, this is the first time the school has entered REALM. “We were encouraged to enter by our amazing Humanities chairperson, Beatrice Lopez,” said Ms. Daniele.

“It is a great joy to witness the artistic and literary expression of our incredible Isaac E. Young Middle School students and fantastic faculty being nationally recognized and honored,” said Chairperson Lopez. “Our kids are amazing and their brilliance is harnessed and guided by terrific teachers like Ms. Daniele and Ms. Maldonado.”

The award-winning magazine can be seen here. The 2023 Isaac E. Young Literary Magazine cover features artwork by Nuria Pereiria, now a freshman at the high school.

Robotics Teams Shine at Bot Contest
New Rochelle High School sent two robotics teams to the VEX robotics competition at Farmingdale High School earlier this month. Team B competed for the first time, reaching the semifinals, and the more seasoned team, Team A, placed 14th in skills ranking in a field of 34 teams.

Run by the Robotics Education and Competition Foundation, the largest and fastest-growing middle and high school robotics program globally, this year’s contest required students to program robots to place acorn-shaped “balls” into goals. The match starts with a 15-second autonomous period when the robot operates independently, followed by a 1-minute 45-second driver-control period. Other criteria and hazards add to the challenges.

The teams, coached by Maria Walsh and Zach Biondo, included seniors Saintecile Johnson, Rebecca Prasad, Donovan Vernon, and Jeila Scrivens-Taitt; juniors Arismendy Escano, Jasper Todd, and Jackson Dennin and sophomores Valeria Bances Sanchez, Scarlett Hartzman, Maxwell Smith, Noah Rosencrantz and Joseph Kurtin.

“It was a great day of learning and friendly competition,” said senior Jeila Scrivens-Taitt. “Team A exceeded their expectations and Team B excelled with launching mechanisms and coding skills. The semi-finals were a tough match to compete in, but it provided the team members with first-hand experience that will give us the opportunity to develop game strategies for upcoming competitions.”

The NewRo Bot teams are now preparing for contests in February at Vaughn College, Queens, and JFK High School in Somers, where they expect to compete against more experienced teams.

Trinity Students’ Artwork Displayed in Albany
For the second year in a row, student work from Trinity Elementary School is included in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Students Art and Essay Exhibit at the state office buildings in Albany.

On display at the Empire State Plaza, the underground corridor connecting state office buildings in Albany, the exhibit includes work from schools around New York State and reflects Dr. King’s Six Principles of Nonviolence.

In a collaboration between classroom teachers and the art department, the Trinity students focused on Principal #5: “Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.”

Using scratch coding, interactive posters, and canvas gem art, Melody Castiglia’s third grade students conveyed what they had learned about Dr. King. “We focused on the importance of loving others,” said Ms. Castiglia. “I am proud of their work and have no doubt that they have a great understanding of who Dr. King was and how meaningful he will always be.”

“In class, they wrote about ways that they could choose love in their own lives. When they came back to art class the following week, they combined their written work with their paintings, and we pieced it together to create what you see,” said art teacher Alana DeVito, who coordinated the project.

“Our students did a wonderful job of taking Dr. King’s message and relating it to their own lives today,” she said. “I love how they were able to come up with actionable ways to make the world a better place, by choosing love instead of hate.”

Some 24 pieces from Trinity students are exhibited in the show, which will run through the end of February.

Excerpts from Trinity Students’ Essays

“Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice. I think this means the whole world wants fairness. One way the world
could be fair is if everyone is treated equally. Another way the world could be fair is (if) all people came together.”

“Nonviolence shows you are helpful and kind.”

“(Martin Luther King, Jr.) said, ‘don’t fight with the person, fight the problem.’ I believe Martin Luther King, Jr. because he tried to not fight and he tried to help the people.”

“If you hate your enemy, you will make more enemies. Also, if you are mean to others, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would say, ‘Stop...is this the path you want to go down?’

“It’s not kind to fight...people can get hurt if we fight and sometimes have very serious injuries...I try not to fight even if it’s really hard.”

“When we are nice to others, others will be nice to us in return. Another example is if you are mean to someone, other people will be mean to you. Spreading love keeps problems away.”

“If you give someone respect, you will get something good in return.”

“Choose love instead of hate.”

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**Project SEARCH Students Brighten the Holidays for Local Care Center**

The holidays for residents of the Schaffer Extended Care Center in New Rochelle were brighter thanks to the hard work of students in the Project SEARCH Program.

The students made holiday cards for the residents of the nursing and rehabilitation center, signing 150 cards with colorful drawings and stickers. They worked on the cards first thing in the morning before going to their job sites each day.

Project SEARCH students first started writing cards for the care center residents in December 2020 when they could not have visitors. “We wanted them to know they were not forgotten,” said Project SEARCH Program Coordinator Kathleen Barbara. “The cards were so well received that it’s become a tradition.”

“We attached a group picture so the residents could put a face to the names,” she said. “Last year, we visited some of the residents later in the year and one of them said, ‘I know you - you’re the ones from the card.’ It really touched our hearts.”

There are over 700 Project SEARCH programs around the world, and New Rochelle High School is the only high school in Westchester to have a Project SEARCH program. New Rochelle’s Project SEARCH is an award-winning program with a successful employment rate of 90%.
Broadway Talent to Headline High School Musical

Broadway musical theater and pop songwriter Joey Contreras is currently working with about 30 high school students in a 15-week residency that will culminate with a show-stopping performance featuring three Broadway artists on February 15.
The composer is working with students in the Musical Theater Class and with others in Master Classes to create portions of an original musical that will be featured in the February 15 concert.

The concert will involve more than 100 students and the work of even more, and will also feature three guest stars from Broadway, Ben Fankhauser (original Davey in *Newsies*), Emily Kristen Morris (Elphaba in *Wicked*), and Julie James (Sirius XM on Broadway). All elements of the high school's celebrated PAVE program will be showcased including song, dance, art, and strings.

Mr. Contreras’s residency began in the first week of November and was marked by two free in-school concerts featuring his music and special guest stars Brian Russel Carey and Diana Huey. Ms. Huey is best known for originating the role of Ariel in the first national tour of Disney’s *The Little Mermaid*, written by New Rochelle alumnus Alan Menken.

Mr. Contreras has written several musicals, including *All the Kids Are Doing It*, *Forget Me Not*, and *I Used to Shine* and he has composed for the Walt Disney Company and various short films. The residency is funded through a BOCES Arts and Education Grant.

“This is a really exciting experience for our students,” said English, theater and film teacher Anthony Stripe. “They will have so much to take away from both the residency and the concert.”

Asked how he got so many Broadway professionals to participate, Mr. Stirpe said. “We asked!” “They were excited to support a good cause. They are also extremely excited to work with the students.”

The February 15 concert, to be held in the Linda Kelly Theater at 7:30 p.m., celebrates 25 Years of PAVE and is presented by the New Rochelle Fund for Excellence. All proceeds will go to the Aaron Davis Scholarship. Tickets can be purchased at [www.our.show/Joey](http://www.our.show/Joey).
Seven Athletic Teams Recognized for Academic Strength

Congratulations to the seven New Rochelle High School athletic teams named Scholar Athlete by the New York State Public High School Athletics Association.

Girls swimming, tennis, soccer, cross country, and volleyball and boys cross country and volleyball were all recognized. To earn the award, the team must have a 90% GPA as a team.

“This shows that our academic rigor at NRHS is rapidly expanding into our athletics as well,” said Athletic Director Joe Donaldson.
“This is a tremendous achievement for our school and athletics department,” he added, noting the role of the coaches in this achievement. “The coaches were very influential in holding student-athletes accountable both in and out of the classroom, and that helped contribute to their athletic and academic success this past fall.”

Coaches are Girls Volleyball, John Beneville; Boys Volleyball, Jordan Woo; Girls Tennis, Mike Sgobbo; Girls Soccer, Francesco Notaristefano; Boys Cross-Country, Joe Intervalo; Girls Cross-Country, Persico Capellan; and Girls Swimming Kip Fierro.
Huguenots are HOT!
Could this be the year that the New Rochelle boys basketball team makes it back to the state championships? Coach Rasaun Young thinks there’s a chance.

The team got off to a great start this season, clocking up an 11-0 run until falling to archrival Mamaronck 53-58 this week.

New Rochelle basketball was a powerhouse in the 2000s, but it’s been 11 years since we last captured the state title in 2013 - the first year that Coach Young worked with the Huguenots.

“We’ve been back to the final four a couple of times and we’re looking to get back there this year,” said Coach Young, himself a New Rochelle grad who made the state championship game in his senior year in 1993.

The cohesiveness of the team is what gives it strength, the coach said. That, and the hard work they have all put in. “We’ve spent a lot of time together in the off-season and they’re all friends off the court.”

He had eight returning players this season, with one student transferring in, “But he knew everyone already, so it was an easy transition.”

Coach Young is reluctant to single out any particular players, although he acknowledges there are a couple that stand out. “But they wouldn’t be able to do what they do without the whole team,” he said. “This really is a team effort.”

And the community is taking note. “Home games have been really nice,” said the coach. “We’ve had a lot of alumni coming and there are a whole lot of people in the stands. It’s a really good feeling, especially nice for the kids.”

As the season moves forward, the coach is taking one game at a time. “An 11-0 start is very rare, and I’ve got to keep everyone humble. Every game is a big game. We have to play every game like it’s our last, keep focused, and not look too far ahead.”

The high school Varsity basketball team is having a great season! For action photos, check out this LoHud page.
Swim Team
New Rochelle 86.5, Eastchester 83.5
Personal Best: Sam Cave 50 freestyle, Ryan Carsen 50 freestyle, Will McCarthy 200 individual medley, Henry Villanueva 100 butterfly, Mac Bach 500 freestyle, Matthew Bici 100 breaststroke

New Rochelle 86, Arlington 84
Mac Bach was first in 200 and 500 freestyle, Sam Cave took first in the 50 and 100 freestyle. Nate Dower won the 100 butterfly

New Rochelle 51, Yorktown/Somers 42
Personal Best: Sam Cave 100 freestyle, Dylan Cole 100 butterfly, Henry Villanueva 500 freestyle, Angus Gourley 100 backstroke, Travis Hamerling 100 breaststroke

Bowling
Varsity Boys win 5, Yonkers 2, Varsity Girls 0, Yonkers 7.
Girls in 3rd place in the league, boys 4th (8-team league)
New Rochelle 7, Port Chester 0, boys and girls

Varsity Boys Basketball
New Rochelle 64, Mt. Vernon 60
New Rochelle 53, Mamaroneck 58

Varsity Girls Basketball
New Rochelle 47, Mt. Vernon 40
New Rochelle 68, Mamaroneck 59

Junior Varsity Girls Basketball
New Rochelle 50, Mt. Vernon 18
New Rochelle 32, Mamaroneck 41

Junior Varsity Boys Basketball
New Rochelle 46, Mt. Vernon 71

Freshman Boys Basketball - Undefeated!!!
New Rochelle 73, White Plains 41
New Rochelle 69, Scarsdale 49

Middle School Boys Basketball
IEYMS 34, White Plains 28
ALMS 58, Harrison 29
ALMS 46, Mamaroneck Orange 29

Middle School Girls Basketball
ALMS 53, Harrison 23
IEYMS 32, Harrison 22

Check out all the great community events happening now!