



Mason Public Schools

Keynotes

September 2019

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Ribbon cutting ceremony at
Harvey Education Center

JAMES C. HARVEY EDUCATION CENTER IS COMPLETE

The first major project funded by the Mason Public Schools' (MPS) \$69.7 million bond, the largest in District history, is complete. This week, the community joined District and Mason Chamber of Commerce representatives to cut the ribbon on the project which broke ground in August 2018. The ribbon cutting took place just prior to a community open house in which students, parents and residents were encouraged to tour the building.

The renovation of the James C. Harvey Education Center (HEC), which was previously Cedar Street Elementary, is the first project completed in Phase 1. Construction and renovations at North Aurelius Elementary and Alaiedon Elementary are ongoing and scheduled for completion in August 2020.

In 2009, Cedar Street Elementary was repurposed due to declining enrollment numbers and renamed after former Superintendent, James C. Harvey. The HEC housed the Child Development Center and District administration offices. After the passing of the bond in the fall of 2017, the plan was to move all of the Kindergarten classrooms to the HEC. Strengthening this connection between early childhood and Kindergarten students is a unique approach for school districts to reinforce learning and literacy efforts for its youngest minds.

"First and foremost, we want to thank the community for investing and believing in Mason Public Schools," said Angie Vandecar, Principal of the Harvey Education Center. **"Blending staff and parents from four different buildings was no easy feat. But this project and the driving goals of better connecting early childhood and Kindergarten programs together, are so important to the growth of this community through high-quality education for our earliest students."**

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KITA students playing soccer

MASON TEACHER FOUNDS SOCCER SCHOOL IN NIGERIA

Nigeria has been ranked among the lowest countries for educational attainment in the world. Paul Kato, Mason High School teacher, has been leading a project to help change this. After working to establish a residential “soccer” school in Nigeria for 10 years, the school officially opened in 2018 and now is celebrating the completion of its first year.

Paul was born in Kwoi, Nigeria and moved to the U.S. when he was 12 years old. “While visiting Nigeria after 15 years away, I was shocked at the living and education conditions there. I knew I had to do something to help,” said Paul.

While growing up in Nigeria, Paul and other young people experienced playing soccer as a “safe space.” He wanted to encourage this for other young people in Nigeria. “This is my small attempt to bring about change to north central Nigeria and give the kids a fighting chance for a better life,” he said.

The Kato International Training Academy (KITA) was opened in 2018 with 24 students. Enrollment has begun for next year and the school expects to welcome over 50 students. Additionally, this year, the team is busy upgrading infrastructure and expanding the school farm to meet the food needs of the school.

After moving back and forth between Nigeria and the U.S., Paul graduated from Spring Arbor University and eventually worked to become a high school teacher. Paul is an active member of the Mason community and his love of soccer and passion for education have allowed him to develop the vision and build KITA. His goal is to use the power of education to change the lives of every child who will attend KITA.

The Kato International Training Academy (KITA) is a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization and donations can be made through the website. For more information, visit www.kitanigeria.org or www.facebook.com/KITANigeria.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATING CLASS OF 2019!

In the June issue of Keynotes, our editorial team made a mistake and omitted a couple student names from the list of graduating seniors. We truly apologize for this error. Congratulations to the following students for their accomplishments!

Vy Nguyen
Patrick O'Connor
Andrew Oesterle
Dustin Otis
Jacob Page



MASON TEACHER RECOGNIZED AS AN INNOVATIVE EDUCATOR

Mason Public Schools teacher Ben Shoemaker is among 10 educators selected to join Michigan’s Innovative Educator Corps. Mr. Shoemaker’s work developing and expanding Mason’s exemplary Robotics Program made him a strong candidate for this honor.

The Innovative Educator Corps, authorized under the Marshall Plan for Talent, is a recognition program for Michigan teachers who employ an innovative educational program, methodology, or strategy to help prepare their students for future career success in high-demand fields. In order to be nominated to the Innovative Educator Corps, an educator must pioneer innovative practices and embody the passion, energy and professionalism of the teaching profession through dedication to their students and community.

As a member of the Michigan Innovative Educator Corps, Mr. Shoemaker will receive a \$5,000 award and an additional \$5,000 stipend to expand the Mason Public Schools’ innovative robotics programming.

“Mr. Shoemaker’s work with the Mason Robotics Program has been extraordinary. He works every day to inspire Mason students and has continued to look for ways to

expand this innovative mindset throughout the region,” said Mason Public Schools Superintendent, Ronald Drzewicki, Ed.S.

“We are proud of how these educators are changing the way they deliver content and improving the way our students learn – ultimately increasing their opportunity for success,” said Michigan Department of Education Interim Superintendent, Sheila Alles.



James C. Harvey Education Center



Superintendent Ron Drzewicki and former Superintendent James Harvey at the ribbon cutting



Superintendent Ron Drzewicki and HEC Principal Angie Vandecar at the ribbon cutting



Small group educational rooms shared between Kindergarten classrooms



Extended learning/common areas in the addition



Kindergarten classroom



Extended learning/common areas in the addition



Library/media center



Extended learning/common areas in the addition



Library/media center



Library/media center



Kindergarten classroom



New gymnasium/multipurpose room



Superintendent Drzewicki, Kristin Flynn (MVU),
Kristy Sandel, Debbie Lynch (MVU) and Mason
High School Principal Lance Delbridge

MHS LIBRARIAN HONORED BY MICHIGAN VIRTUAL

At the September Board of Education Meeting, representatives from Michigan Virtual attended to honor one of our own. Kristy Sandel, Mason High School Librarian has been honored as a Mentor of the Year by Michigan Virtual.

Kristin Flynn, Executive Director of Student Learning Services and Debbie Lynch, Outreach Coordinator attended the Board of Education meeting to share Michigan Virtual's reasoning for choosing Kristy for the award.

"Ms. Sandel has a remarkable, instant connection with students. Her love for learning, her research into best practices and positive, proactive approach has resulted in a 95% pass rate for Mason students who participate in Michigan Virtual coursework," Michigan Virtual representatives shared at the meeting. Kristy will receive a \$250 stipend for continued course work and training from Michigan Virtual.

Congratulations to Kristy on this distinguished award.

Thank You Mason!

Thank you to every member of the community who voted for the collaboration with the City of Mason for the Community Excellence Award.

Our project is one of four finalists who will present at the Michigan Municipal League's Fall Conference in Detroit at the end of September. The winner will be announced at the conference.





Mason Public Schools Faculty and Staff

WELCOME NEW STAFF

ALAIEDON ELEMENTARY

Debra Jones
Nicole Gray

CENTRAL OFFICE

Adrienne Barna

MASON HIGH

SCHOOL

Jonas Cantrell
Jackson Casper
Danielle Greve

HARVEY EDUCATION

CENTER

Katharine Burkhart
Kandice Erickson
Kristine Hodges
Sidney Hogge
Heidi Spanburg
Emily Epling
Stacey Griffin
Laura Smith

MASON MIDDLE

SCHOOL

Sarah Dawson
Alexander Port

NORTH AURELIUS ELEMENTARY

Brandy Gentile
Hannah Fitzpatrick

STEELE ELEMENTARY

Mary Francis-Steeves
Leisha Greba
Katherine Falck
Jazmine Lucas

TRANSPORTATION

Ashley Cooper
Laura Jurkiw

STAFF MILESTONES

10 YEARS

Jennifer Bauer
Michelle Kirkpatrick
Carrie Mulanix
Cheri Roush
Wes Stid
Ed Wharton
Sara Wilson

15 YEARS

Cynthia Carlsen
Nicole Droscha
Ben Shoemaker
Rocio Kennihan
Jodi Somerville

Ruth Tatara
Nick Toodzio

20 YEARS

Roxanne Blaser
Dennis Brimley
Kally Davies
Sandra Deview
Kim Dickinson
Deb Disbro
Christie Hursey
Mark Page
Sue Patterson
Terrie Zimmerman

25 YEARS

Judy Barratt
Lou Bartolacci
Staci Carl
Colleen Clark
Sherry Dodendorf
Elaine Mullin
Kirk Petee
Tammy Royston
Cheryl Simison

30 YEARS

Larry Crandall
Annette Fidler
Kathy Hicks
Gail Hunt
Cynthia Luce

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Mason Public Schools
Keynotes

Mason Public Schools is committed to academic excellence in a safe environment where students develop critical thinking skills, are empowered to succeed, and are encouraged to serve their community.

SUPERINTENDENT

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