

BOARD AGENDA INFORMATIONAL ITEM

DEPARTMENT: Communications/Public
Information Department

TOPIC: GOOD NEWS

FOR THE MONTH OF: November 2022

1. **W.A. Bess Elementary** was honored during the 2022 National Blue Ribbon School ceremony in Washington, D.C. Principal **Laura Clark**, teacher **Nikki Simmons**, and Superintendent of Schools **W. Jeffrey Booker** attended the ceremony to accept the award from the U.S. Department of Education. The school conducted a ceremony on Thursday, November 17 to celebrate the school's distinction as a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School. The recognition is given annually by the U.S. Department of Education to schools that have shown consistent outstanding academic performance and achievement.
2. **Gaston County Schools** held its annual Marching Band Fanfare on Saturday, November 5 at **Stuart W. Cramer High School**. The event featured performances by all high school marching bands.
3. The **Gaston County Schools** Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department sponsored the National Technical Honor Society induction ceremony on Tuesday, November 15 at **Stuart W. Cramer High School**. Nearly 300 students were inducted as members of the National Technical Honor Society.
4. The following students were chosen as **Gaston County Schools'** nominees for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Presidential Scholars recognition: **Kaneisha Gladden, Ashbrook High School; Hannah Mitchell, Bessemer City High School; Joseph England, Cherryville High School; Paxton Free, Stuart W. Cramer High School; Anhelena Becerra, East Gaston High School; Georgia Becton, Forestview High School; Josefina Houchard, Highland School of Technology; Bradley Mattice, Hunter Huss High School; and Jenna Mason, North Gaston High School.**
5. The following educators received grants offered by the Kines family in memory of Kay Searce, who taught for 31 years at **Bessemer City Primary School**. The grant recipients are **Stephanie Plong, Bessemer City Primary; Erica Hawes, Bessemer City High School; Michelle Leagan, Brookside Elementary; Porsha Leathers, Brookside Elementary; Brooke Silver, Cherryville Elementary; Jasmine Rompilla, Lowell Elementary; Chelsea Harley, New Hope Elementary; Mary Prunty, Page Primary; and Aristela Torres, Pleasant Ridge Elementary.**
6. The elementary school student winners in the Keep Gastonia Beautiful recycled art contest are **Wendy Mendoza Martinez**, first place, **Lowell Elementary; Hunter Clark**, second place, **Bess Elementary; Mariana Osornio Resendiz**, third place, **Lowell Elementary; Eason Hobbs**, honorable mention, **Bess Elementary; and Mackenzi Boyd**, honorable mention, **Bess Elementary.**

7. The following middle school students were winners in the Keep Gastonia Beautiful recycled art contest: **Emily Carroll**, first place, **Belmont Middle**; **Charlotte Aschmann**, second place, **Belmont Middle**; **Mackenzie Dumont**, third place, **Belmont Middle**; **Ava Peloso**, honorable mention, **Belmont Middle**; and **Campbell Kolbash**, honorable mention, **Belmont Middle**.
8. Students from **Belmont Middle**, **Cramerton Middle**, **Stuart W. Cramer High**, **East Gaston High**, **Forestview High**, **Holbrook Middle**, **Hunter Huss High**, **Mount Holly Middle**, **Pinewood Elementary**, **Pleasant Ridge Elementary**, **Rankin Elementary**, and **Stanley Middle** participated in the Mount Holly Lantern Parade. Students carried their own handmade lanterns alongside other lanterns that complemented the “European Style” theme. Stanton Enterprise and the Gaston County Development Foundation donated supplies for teachers and students to create the lanterns. In addition, the parade was led by members of the Roaring Panthers Marching Band from **Pleasant Ridge Elementary**.
9. The following teachers received one of the Ron L. Ensley grants, which are presented by the Gaston County Education Foundation and fund classroom learning projects (project names listed in italics): **Melissa Chappel**, **Tracy McKoy**, and **Meagan Ingram**, *Life Cycles in Action*, **Gaston Virtual Academy**; **Susanne Raxter**, *Mind Mover Engineering*, **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**; **Susanne Raxter**, **Stephanie Witten**, **Majorie Bone**, **Wendy Cheek**, and **Amber Robertson**, *Oh! The Places We Will Go*, **Hawks Nest STEAM Academy**; **Melanie Weaver**, *The Little English Class That Could*, **Highland School of Technology**; **Dawn Chatkin**, *Flexible Seating*, **W.A. Bess Elementary**; **Donna Smith**, **Susan Tobiasson**, and **Anna Czekaj**, *Shedding Light on Watershed*, **Stanley Middle School**; **Rhonda Fancher**, *Adopt a Furry Reading Buddy*, **Bessemer City Central**; **Summer Kelly** and **Anna Howard**, *Makerspace*, **Holbrook Middle**; **April Collins**, **Taylor Detwiler**, **Jorge Hero**, and **Jordanna Jones**, *Symbioses Trail*, **Holbrook Middle**; **Christine Tileston**, *Tools for Functional Math*, **Webb Street School**; and **Shelbie Setzer**, *Math in Motion*, **Lingerfeldt Elementary**.
10. The “Do the Right Thing” award winners for October are **Journey Jones**, **Bessemer City Primary**; **Darluh Mattaldi**, **Kiser Elementary**; **Valentina Gomez**, **Cramerton Middle**; and **Jack Hayes**, **South Point High School**.
11. **Ashbrook High School** and **Hunter Huss High School** students hosted a trick-or-treat event at their school for the community. Students decorated classroom doors and handed out candy to children.
12. **Ashbrook High School** held a fall arts showcase that involved students who are in the school’s art, band, chorus, and theater classes.
13. **W.A. Bess Elementary** fifth grade students teamed up with The Cato School of Education at UNC-Charlotte to collect new and gently used books and stuffed animals. Through this program, literacy awareness is emphasized by putting books and reading buddies (stuffed animals) in the hands of every pre-kindergarten through fifth grade student at Nations Ford Elementary School in Charlotte. The students collected a total of 351 books and stuffed animals.

14. As part of the Gaston County Career Awareness Program, **W.A. Bess Elementary** fifth graders participated in hands-on activities such as learning how to take temperatures, blood pressure readings, check a pulse, and how to properly perform CPR.
15. The following middle schools won championships during the fall sports season: golf, **Cramerton**; softball, **Belmont**; and football, **Belmont**.
16. **Bessemer City Middle School** promoted Hispanic Heritage Month by hosting a discussion panel of eighth grade students who identify as Hispanic or Latino. Students were engaged in the program as they learned about food, music, holidays, school experiences, and challenges that are faced in the Hispanic culture.
17. The **Cherryville High School** volleyball team hosted a powder puff volleyball tournament to raise money for childhood cancer. The tournament raised \$1,000, which was donated to Levine Children's Hospital. Senior **Raleigh Kiser** organized the event.
18. The **Cherryville High School** junior class visited Appalachian State University and toured the campus, visited the athletic facilities, and ate in the campus cafeteria. The trip was funded by the Cherryville High School Education Foundation.
19. **Cherryville High School** seniors **Kelly Diaz** and **Katie Diaz** won the Southern Piedmont 1A/2A doubles championship in tennis, finished fourth in the 1A regional doubles tennis championship, and qualified for the state championship.
20. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** senior **Nathaniel Cheek** was selected for the Western Piedmont Youth Symphony Orchestra.
21. The **Stuart W. Cramer High School** Stagestruck Players presented "A Cemetery Walk Through Time" at New Hope Presbyterian Church in Gastonia. Students gave tours through the cemetery and introduced participants to people from the past. The event served as a fundraiser for the school's theater arts program.
22. Two **Stuart W. Cramer High School** students earned awards at the North Carolina Theatre Conference High School Play Festival for the school's production of "Aladino!" **Bowie Werran** received the Excellence in Acting Award for his role as Arlecchino and **Caleb Bailey** received the Excellence in Acting Award for her role as Brigella. In addition, the entire cast received the Excellence in Ensemble Acting Award, and teacher **Chuck Stowe** received honorable mention for distinguished play.
23. The **Stuart W. Cramer High School** public safety class visited Gaston County's 911 Communications, Emergency Management, Fire Services, and GEMS Center to learn about careers and professional opportunities in public safety.
24. **Stuart W. Cramer High School** senior **Charlie Sly** committed to wrestle at Gardner-Webb University, and senior **Peyton Conroy** committed to playing softball at Michigan State University.

25. Three **East Gaston High School** students were selected to sing at the Mars Hill University Choral Festival: **Pressley Rankin**, **Breana Connelly**, and **Kathryn Meranto**.
26. The **East Gaston High School** cheerleading team competed in the Davidson College Spirit Invitational on October 29 and received the highest score of all teams competing in the game day routine category. The cheerleaders also competed at the Mountain Regional Cheer Competition on November 5 and received first place in the traditional routine and third place in game day routine categories.
27. **East Gaston High School** senior **Grace Doster** signed a national letter of intent to play soccer at Belmont Abbey College.
28. **Forestview High School** student **Georgia Becton** received a \$1,000 scholarship for her first-place lantern titled “Artemis” in the Mount Holly Lantern Parade.
29. **Forestview High School** senior **Elizabeth Foor** passed the Board of Review and became an Eagle Scout. She completed the requirements of an Eagle Scout in three years after Boy Scouts of America allowed females to join. Her project included constructing a covered bench and swing set for Dove’s Nest, an outreach program of the Charlotte Rescue Mission that provides temporary housing for women who are transitioning out of an addiction program.
30. **Forestview High School** junior **Rennie Liu** won the 3A west regional individual tennis title and was a semifinalist in the state 3A tennis individual championship.
31. **Forestview High School** sophomore **Emily Raspanti** finished first at the Big South Conference meet and qualified for the 3A cross country state championship.
32. The **Forestview High School** marching band competed in the Pirate Cove Classic and placed first in percussion, first in color guard, second in general effect, third in drum major, third in visual performance, third in music performance, and third overall.
33. **Gaston Early College High School** sophomores assisted Keep Gastonia Beautiful with decorating for the holiday season. The group also assisted with sprucing up the Highland Community Garden.
34. **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences** partnered with the Chick-fil-A Leadership Academy and involved 30 students, who packaged books for **Costner Elementary**. The students will participate in monthly leader labs and three community service projects throughout the year.
35. A group of **Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences** students loaded items into a moving pod and made tie dye shirts for the Gaston County Child Advocacy Group.
36. **Hunter Huss High School** Career and Technical Education teacher **Amy Wooten** took a class to Gaston College to learn about apprenticeship programs and skilled labor positions.

37. **Hunter Huss High School** students in **Jessica Brigola's** class connected virtually with students more than 8,000 miles to learn about Philippine culture from their peers and share about the culture in America.
38. The **Hunter Huss High School** cafeteria staff received a perfect 100 percent sanitation rating.
39. **Hunter Huss High School** student **Jaylen Thorne** has been accepted into the Apprenticeship 321 program at Gaston College.
40. **Lingerfeldt Elementary** used the election season to nominate its first student government on November 11. Students were elected from each of the third, fourth, and fifth grade homerooms. Students campaigned and provided speeches to their classmates.
41. **Lingerfeldt Elementary** teacher **Elizabeth Conyers** was named the Department of Exceptional Children Teacher of the Year.
42. **McAdenville Elementary's** first grade class was featured on Queen City News Channel 46 as part of the TV station's hometown series. The news crew filmed students preparing to sing at the Christmas Town USA ceremony. In addition, McAdenville students have been invited to participate in the tree lighting ceremony and the town's yule log parade.
43. **McAdenville Elementary** celebrated the end of a successful Red Ribbon Week with a pep rally on October 28. Cheerleaders and football players from **Stuart W. Cramer High School** participated in the pep rally and spoke to the students about why they choose to be drug and bully free. Each class made up a cheer and performed it during the event.
44. **North Gaston High School** student **Wesley Lawson** won an Excellence in Acting Award for his role as the animal trainer in the play "Elephant's Graveyard" at the North Carolina Theatre Conference High School Play Festival. In addition, the school won the Festival Spirit Award.
45. The **North Gaston High School** yearbook staff spent time mentoring members of the **W.C. Friday Middle School** yearbook staff.
46. **North Gaston High School** senior **Crystal Bender** won first place at the Keep Gastonia Beautiful recycled art contest for her piece titled "Shlomes' Hat." She constructed her life-size hat (able to be worn) out of cardboard, newspaper, magazines for color, and other objects.
47. The **North Gaston High School** Marching Wildcats competed at the Freedom Classic Tournament of Bands. The band won first place in Class 2A, first place in music, second place in marching, first place in general effect, and second place in percussion. In addition, the band competed at the East Burke Cavalier Classic and won second place in Class 1A, second place in music, first place in marching, second place in general effect, third place in drum major, first place in percussion, and third place in color guard.

48. Three **North Gaston High School** students were selected to attend the Winthrop Invitational Band Clinic on November 17-19. **Ajah Harris** and **David Trujillo-Gomez** were selected on clarinet and **Eric St. Laurent** was selected for percussion. Additionally, six students were selected to attend the UNC-Charlotte Honor Band on December 9-10: **Ajah Harris**, **David Trujillo-Gomez**, **Hala Freeman**, and **Ruby Ruiz** on clarinet, **Michael Salas** and **Charlie Eason** on trombone, and **Eric St. Laurent** on percussion.
49. **Pleasant Ridge Elementary** held a Math Fair on November 8 with 146 student projects on display. Eighteen of the projects were selected to advance to the Western Regional Math Fair of the North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics, which will be held at Appalachian State University in March 2023.
50. The **Sherwood Elementary PTO** received a \$5,000 grant for the establishment of an outdoor classroom.
51. **Sherwood Elementary** teacher **Kim Queen** received a \$1,500 grant to provide students with an eBird learning collaboration with the North Carolina Arboretum. Recently, her students focused on the processes needed to observe, study, and collect data as part of the learning collaboration.
52. **South Point High School** senior **Joshua Crowder** was named recipient of the 2022 Michael A. Kahn Community Service-Scholastic Scholarship Award, which is presented by the Michael A. Kahn Family Foundation. He will be recognized by the Charlotte Touchdown Club at the 2022 Bronko Nagurski Trophy Awards Banquet on December 5.
53. The **South Point High School** marching band competed in the Pride of Robinson Invitational at Robinson High School and placed second in percussion and second in color guard.
54. The **South Point High School** girls golf team finished third at the 3A state championship. Team members are **Madison Pruden**, **Amelia Connor**, and **Carli Anne Phillips**.
55. The **South Point High School** cheerleading team placed first at the Marvin Ridge High School Maverick Classic Cheer competition.
56. **Springfield Elementary** received a \$6,250 grant from American Woodworks to purchase new computer chairs for teachers and to help with resurfacing a blacktop space where a mural will be created.
57. **York Chester Middle School** held its annual International Music and Arts Festival and had significant support from the community.