



The Buzz

FALL
2018



Thomas County Board of Education Newsletter

REACH Scholarships Awarded to Five at Thomas County Middle



Logan Baxter, from left, Keasia Horton, Daviyon Johnson, Selena Diego and Evan Wynn, display their signed contracts with their moms standing proudly behind them.

Five Thomas County Middle School (TCMS) students recently signed to be a part of the Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH) Georgia program, a needs-based scholarship designed to promote academic success and expand access to higher education. The TCMS students chosen to join REACH Georgia are Logan Baxter, Keasia Horton, Daviyon Johnson, Selena Diego and Evan Wynn.

As a part of the program, students signed contracts to agree to meet attendance and behavior requirements, maintain a certain grade point average, participate in REACH Georgia related activities, and meet weekly with a mentor. Their parents or guardians also signed contracts to support their student through their education.

Thomas County Central High School Assistant Principal

Frank Delaney, spoke to the group and encouraged them to work hard to achieve their goals.

“You people have a golden opportunity,” Delaney said. “Work hard and keep your grades up. If you don’t want to learn, there’s nobody in this world that can help you. If you want to learn, there’s nobody in this world that can stop you. Don’t let anyone or anything stop you from getting that scholarship.”

When these scholars graduate from high school, they will receive up to a \$10,000 scholarship to be used at a HOPE eligible Georgia two or four-year college.

After learning about the details of the scholarship, each student along with their parents or guardians signed the scholarship documents

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TCCHS students Douglas Hopkins, from left, and Lang Stringer use 6011 welding rods to learn stick welding techniques from welding teacher Travis Barrett.

County Schools Land Competitive Grant to Enhance Welding Program

The State Department of Education has awarded the Thomas County School System a \$43,000 grant to expand and update welding equipment in the Lee M. Bailey PREP Academy at Thomas County Central High School.

The county school system was one of only ten systems in the state to receive the competitive “Creating Opportunities Now to Expand Credentialed Training” grant.

Grant funds will be used to purchase new welders and a rail torch which will allow students to increase the production and quality of metal cutting, a process which is used in several local industries. The grant will also fund a bending and tensile testing machine that will allow the instructor and students to inspect welds and use the feedback to improve

their performance in a timely manner.

Welding instructor Travis Barrett explained, “It is important that we give the students the opportunity to work with the same type of equipment that is used in industry. I am excited that through this grant they will be able to work with the most up-to-date equipment available.”

CTAE Director Beth Adams agreed, “We are always

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The Buzz is a quarterly publication of the Thomas County Schools. Send suggestions or comments to Melanie Hester, 200 North Pinetree Blvd., Thomasville, GA 31792; 229.225-4380, ext. 115; mhester@tcjackets.net. The Buzz is available online at www.tcjackets.net, Departments, Public Relations.

The Thomas County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin, sex, or disability.

TCCHS Graduate Odom Wins National FFA Award



The Odom family and TCCHS FFA Advisor Glen Gosier celebrate Brentley Odom's win at the 91st National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana. Pictured are (left to right) Brandon Odom, Glen Gosier, Brentley Odom, Brian Odom, Toni Odom and Randy Odom.

A Thomas County Central High School Class of 2018 graduate is already building upon the agricultural knowledge foundation he gained from his time as a Career Technical Agricultural Education student.

Brentley Odom, 18, won a 2018 National Agricultural Proficiency Award from National FFA Oct. 26 during the sixth general session at the 91st National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana. Awards were presented in 47 categories. Odom's proficiency award is in the category of Environmental Science and Natural Resources Management – Entrepreneurship/Placement.

Odom says the win feels amazing and believes his passion for his project helped him mount the podium.

"After all these years of time and effort, it was an awesome way to go out with a bang," he said. "It was extraordinary to experience this once in a lifetime opportunity, and with it being the last contest I compete with

FFA, it made it that much more worthwhile."

Odom advanced to national competition after placing first in this category at the 90th Georgia FFA Convention last April. According to a press release from the National FFA Organization, students in Odom's category receive hands-on knowledge in the principles and practices of managing and/or improving the environment and natural resources.

To make it to nationals, Odom faced challengers from the 50 states and two U.S. territories. Only four individuals in each category advance to the national level and compete at the National FFA Convention.

Each national finalist receives a \$500 cash award and a plaque. As a winner, Odom also receives an additional \$500 award and a plaque.

Odom is currently a student at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. He is studying animal science.

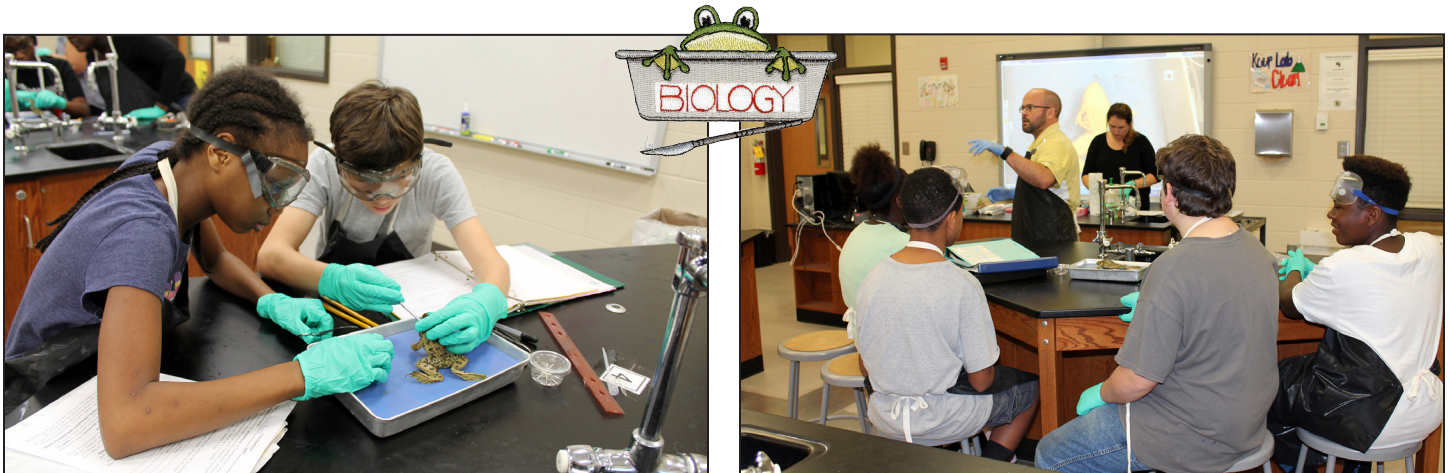


MAKING A SPLASH FOR A GOOD CAUSE - Recently, every student at Cross Creek Elementary School was given the opportunity to attempt to dunk Principal Clay Stanaland. A promise to sit in a dunking booth was made by Stanaland if the school sold more than 10,000 Cross Creek cards. Stanaland happily sat above the dunk tank while every student took a turn. If a student sold more than 100 cards, he or she had five chances with the ball. According to staff members, Stanaland was dunked much more often than he expected, but was a great sport about it.

READING RALLY



Students from Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School recently celebrated reading success with a rousing Reading Rally, an annual event that promotes reading and literacy. The students began the event by choosing a free book. After participating in a pep rally for reading, students had their books autographed by athletes and cheerleaders. Finally, they enjoyed snacks and the reading of several books by community volunteers. Recent book fair profits provided funds for the free book and event expenses. Pictured above are TCCHS football players walking by students who are eagerly awaiting a turn to high five the group of athletes before the pep rally begins.



HANDS-ON LEARNING - Dr. Scott Sweeting, Thomas County's System Math and Science Curriculum Coordinator, recently visited Thomas County Middle School to help students through the process of dissecting frogs. Students from Alex Hollingsworth's and Yvette Morrell's classes experienced a hands-on approach as they explored the internal organs and body systems that they have learned about in class. According to Dr. Sweeting, hands-on labs like this help cement information previously learned in class. In the picture on the left, Janiah Bostick (L-R) and Collin Long prepare to begin their frog dissection. On the right, Dr. Scott Sweeting explains to students how to begin the frog dissection in TCMS's science lab.

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looking for ways to improve our programs, and grants like this one help make sure our students are better prepared to learn the skills they need to be successful after graduation."

"The equipment purchased with these funds will strengthen the connection for students between what is learned in the classroom and how it can be applied in a real-world setting," Adams said.

"In addition to providing updated equipment, these funds will help reorganize the lab space and implement updated safety measures to ensure a safer working environment," Adams added.

"I would like to congratulate CTAE Director Beth Adams and Welding Instructor Travis Barrett on their successful grant application," said Thomas County School Superintendent Dr. Lisa Williams. "I truly appreciate our team of leaders and educators who go the extra mile to seek funding opportunities to make our programs better. The Thomas County School System is

well known for aggressively pursuing grants to keep our facilities and resources cutting edge while minimizing burdens on our local tax payers."

The CONNECT Grant received by Thomas County Schools supports the state's educational goal to increase the percentage of high school graduates who are college and/or career ready. The grant program is part of Senate Bill 3 that requires the State Board of Education to establish an annual competitive grant program for renovation, modernization, replacement, or purchase of equipment for the enhancement of programs that are currently certified or in the process of achieving industry certification in educational facilities that align to industry credentials linked to an occupation that is part of the skilled trade industry.

"Since 2015, Thomas County has increased the percentage of its welding students who graduate with an industry credential, certified to go to work, by 93% and is widely recognized as one of

the leading high school welding programs in South Georgia," said Williams.

Thomas County's Welding Advisory Committee includes representation from Southern Regional Technical College, Evoqua Water Technologies, Jones Welding and Supply, Cives Steel Company, Hurst

Boiler, Cleaver Brooks, Roscoe Metal Worx, and Cone Machinery. In addition, the instructor has added a former student currently working in the welding industry to serve on the program's advisory committee to provide feedback on program strengths and weaknesses.



Mallory Glass' class from Hand-In-Hand Primary School visited Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School recently to see what first graders do on a daily basis. They visited Katie Sicheloff's first grade class. This experience was beneficial for both grades as the older kids taught the younger ones new skills. Pictured sitting in the desk is kindergartner Archer Chihuahua getting a lesson from first-grader Noah Lewis.

Eighth-Grader Jackson Named Jack Kent Cook Young Scholar

Bishop Jackson, an eighth-grade MERIT student at Thomas County Middle School, was recently named a Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholar. After waiting for more than six months for applications to be reviewed by a national panel of educators, Jackson received an email stating that he was one of 50 selected from more than 2,600 who had applied.

Bishop was assigned a mentor who will follow him through his high school career to monitor his academic progress, help with goal-setting, and provide comprehensive academic and college advising. As a recipient, Bishop is eligible to receive up to \$40,000 in scholarship funds per year in college, as well as the opportunity to attend Cooke-sponsored summer programs, internships, and other learning enrichment opportunities.

When asked about being selected, Bishop said, "I feel very honored and humbled to be a part of the Jack Kent Cooke community. Receiving this honor is a confirmation of the rigorous coursework provided by the MERIT Program at Thomas County Middle School. I am excited about my future with the



BISHOP JACKSON

new opportunity provided by the Cooke Foundation which will allow me to attend any university that I desire in the future."

"It is wonderful to see kids being recognized for the hard work that they do in the classroom," TCMS Principal Jamie Thompson said. "Bishop is more than deserving of the honor of being selected as a Jack Kent Cooke Young Scholar. I am grateful for all of the hard working students and our teachers who work with them on a daily basis. I would also like to thank Mrs. Retha Lee for playing a pivotal role in the Duke TIP program at TCMS."

The Cooke Young Scholars Program is a selective five-year, pre-college scholarship program for high-performing seventh-grade students.

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signifying their commitment to completing the scholarship requirements.

"Just as 'Papa D' has given back because of the opportunity afforded to him through his education, you all have the same opportunity to make a difference and give back tenfold as he has,"

said TCMS Principal Jamie Thompson. "Take advantage of this opportunity and go out into the world and make us all proud."

REACH Georgia was initially launched in 2012 at Georgia Institute of Technology and was only offered to five school systems.



BAKING THE DIFFERENCE - Second graders from Garrison-Pilcher Elementary School recently went on a field trip to Flowers Bakery and Marie's Kakes. Students from Vicki Warren's class compared and contrasted the adventures and experiences from the two bakeries. As they toured Flowers, they saw honey buns, powdered donuts, and bread being made and prepared for distribution. The students experienced making cookies and decorating them at Marie's Kakes. Warren said, "This field trip is always a favorite with the students. We are thankful to Flowers Bakery and Marie's Kakes for supporting our students and allowing them to visit and participate in their businesses. It is an experience they won't forget." Sophie Rehberg, Hollyn Darley, Zhyrhionna Burden, Holten Dennard, Kiara Galvez, Amya Jones, Eli Kipper, Jaylon Tyler, and Evelyn Wright-Barwick stand outside after the tour of Flowers Bakery.



HONORING VETERANS - Cross Creek students honored veterans by raising money to donate to the VFW to help purchase over 4,000 flags. These flags will be placed on military graves throughout Thomas County on Memorial Day. Lynwood Knight and Joey Little accepted the donation from Cross Creek Assistant Principal Ashley Lane and a group of students who participated.

CPR and First Aid will be offered from 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. at Hand-In-Hand Primary School on the following dates:
January 29, 2019 First Aid
February 19, 2019 CPR
Please sign up on PDEExpress to attend!

