



Purple &
Gold

February 2023

FREEZIN' FOR A REASON: UDHS RAISES MONEY FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS



On Friday, February 9, 90 members of Upper Darby High School (including staff and students) participated in the annual “Cool School Plunge” at Citizens Bank Park. Also known as the Polar Plunge, the event raises money for Special Olympics Pennsylvania. A number of students and staff also took part in the “plunge,” in which participants jump into a small, above-ground pool filled with four feet of water. Participants who raised \$35 or more received a “Polar Plunge” t-shirt. Wawa sponsored the event, and provided lunches to attendees.

Staff and students of UDHS Special Programs were joined by school psychologist Stephani Church and members of the varsity girl's soccer and lacrosse teams, and teachers/tennis coaches Jessica Conroy and Dayna Yael and members of the girls' tennis team. The event was organized by Taylor Goerlach and Jessica Conley, and raised over \$5,056 for Special Olympics.



Organizers Ms. Conley and Ms. Goerlach



Justin and friend



Ms. Church cheers on a student splasher



The cold water didn't chill the enthusiasm of Mrs. Conroy and Mrs. Yael

CULTURAL EVENTS

Lunar New Year with Ms. Ni 's Chinese Club (as told by a student author)

New Year is one of the most important festivals in China. It lasts 15 days in celebration for the beginning of a new year on the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar. The year 2022 was the year of the tiger, and 2023 is now the year of rabbits, according to the Chinese zodiac.

On January 25th, UDHS's Chinese Club members all met in the Royal Kitchen during their monthly meeting to cherish this meaningful event by making dumplings. Dumpling-making at the high school was a long-lasting tradition prior to the pandemic, and the club leaders were happy to bring this back after a three-year absence. We are guessing that perhaps many members joined the club for this!.

Leaders were able to grocery shop for filling ingredients and dumpling wraps under the guidance of Ms. Ni and the contribution of many supportive members. To make sure everyone got the fullest experience in making and eating, leaders prepared the time-consuming fillings beforehand.

With equipment in the Royal Kitchen and help from Ms. Zampirri, members were able to divide the materials and form 3-4 small groups so anyone interested could participate. Making dumplings was simple (or not): scoop the filling, place it on the wrap, and close it up in whichever way you want! Members were able to make it in any appearances they wanted, and the final product was many fully filled plates of dumplings!

Members and leaders then worked together to boil several pots of water before throwing a portion of dumplings in to cook until it floats. They gobbled up the first plate of cooked dumplings within one minute! Despite the time it took, everything was cooked on time and ready for members to taste. The amazing Chinese Club even fed some of the neighboring teachers!

Note to the author—please invite me next year!



Making the dough



Putting the dumplings together

Islamic Fair

The Muslim Student Association held an Islamic Fair for teachers and staff in celebration of National Hijab Day on February 1. The MSA decorated the cafeteria to the hilt, and held a number of activities to educate us on their culture and faith. These include a henna station, readings from the Koran, a photo booth, and a section in which participants had the opportunity to try on a hijab and an abaya (traditional women's garb) and the kufi and thobe (traditional men's garb). The event was catered by Al-Safa Pizza and Grill (owned by the father of a club member), located in Barclay Square Shopping Center, and by the club's own students, who with Ms. Zampirri's help prepared a number of delicious traditional desserts. The event was coordinated by the group's faculty sponsor, Mr. Kevin Ferry.



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Class Participates in PennDOT Innovations Challenge

Mr. Trung Tchiong's class recently submitted a project proposal to the PennDOT Innovations Challenge, a statewide competition that challenges high school students to come up with solutions to real-world transportation challenges. Mr. Tchiong's class is answering the challenge with the following:

Develop an innovative approach to increase commercial truck parking that can accommodate up to 30 semi trucks that are generally 48ft-53 ft long. It will also have restroom facilities, gas services, an on-site medical center, water drainage, and conventional energy security systems to protect all types of drivers—a green energy gadget to promote the echo system and reduce waste.

Regional winners will be selected by PennDOT's Engineering Districts, and the finalist will move on to the state competition. The grand prize is \$5,000.

Ethics Bowl Competition

Upper Darby High School students recently competed in the Regional Ethics Bowl at Villanova University. This team of dedicated students worked incredibly hard all year preparing for this event. They performed beautifully, presenting their cases and fielding questions with tact, diplomacy and grace.

They just missed qualifying for the quarter finals, due to a very tough morning schedule, where they faced Wilmington Friends, Conestoga and Princeton. They beat Wilmington by a whopping 23 points, then lost to Conestoga and Princeton by only three points, missing the qualifying round by one.

The best part of the competition was the kindness and collegial interaction between Upper Darby and the students from the other schools. Says faculty advisor Sue Beck, “They represented our school with pride and dignity. I cannot say enough about this talented group of young people.”



Sweet Achievements of Level 2 Baking and Hospitality

Ms. Zampirri's Level 2 Baking and Hospitality class reached a new level of culinary skill by making tasty meringues and crème brûlée.



ARTS AND LETTERS

Congratulations to the UDHS Band as several of its members performed in the PMEA (Pennsylvania Music Educators Association) District 12 concert! Extra congratulations goes to Brahin, Steve, and James, who will be performing in the upcoming PMEA Region 6 Honors Band.



Band members James, Nat, Lylah, Steve, Brahin, and Ryan.

The band's wind ensemble and encore singers also had the honor of recording the Eagles fight song for the team before the Super Bowl. The song, incidentally, was made famous by UDHS alum Bobby Mansure ('85), founder of the official Philadelphia Eagles Pep Band.



"Fly Eagles Fly...."

Speaking of Mr. Ballard, he was recently one of only 20 teachers given the 2023 Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union (FMFCU) Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award! Congratulations Mr. Ballard!

SHOUT OUTS

To Amanda King from Mrs. Wahal—"Amanda King in the math department always brings us cheer and snacks making each holiday special. She decorates our office and personalizes individual treats. She is an amazing asset to UDHS."

To Bonnie Mongelli from Ms. Goerlach—"Ms. Bonnie is an unsung hero. Everyone confides in Ms. Bonnie, looks to her for information, and counts on her for a laugh and a smile. She goes above and beyond day in and day out not only for our students in our class, but all of the students in our program."

To Jackie Sharkey from Mrs. Bralczyk—"I would like to mention Jackie Sharkey (along with all the teachers in our SPED Department) But Jackie, in particular, always goes above and beyond!! Whether it's special activities for the students in her classroom or for a special event on the calendar, she prepares and shares activities with the other teachers in our program. Not to mention picking up the pretzels every week for our students to sell on Fridays. Jackie truly cares about each student that has been in her class. Jackie continues to check in with her students if they move on to another classroom within our program or to

the 18 to 21 classroom. Jackie has endless energy and she uses most of it to care for her students!”

To Trish Bralczyk from Ms. Stump–“I think Trish deserves a shout out. I may be biased but the woman goes above and beyond every single day.”

To Whoever Supplies the Bath and Body & Body Works Soaps in the D-Wing Ladies Faculty Bathroom from Ms. Zoccola–“It’s a small thing but I love the soaps that are there. They smell so good and I love to see them in our little ladies room. Thanks so much!”

To Tara Zampirri, Sue Beck, Roseanne Burns, Julia Rion, and Trung Tchiong from Ms. Zoccola–“Thank you for all of the stories you sent! I wouldn’t have a newsletter without your contributions!”

“Shout Outs” is a new feature to this newsletter. If you have one, please email dzoccola@upperdarby.org.

SAVE THE DATES

Mark your calendars for some big dates coming up in the UDHS social calendar:

- February 20–President’s Day
- February 21–International Mother Tongue Day
- February 28–UDSD School Board Committee Mtg.
- March 1–UDHS Faculty Meeting
- March 1–Spring Sports Parent/Student Mtg.
- March 6–First day of Spring Sports
- March 8–UDHS Home & School Assoc. Meeting
- March 9–Graduation Meeting for Students
- March 9–Graduation Meeting for Parents
- March 10–Early Dismissal
- March 10–*Into the Woods* performance
- March 11–*Into the Woods* performance
- March 16–Top Royal
- March 17–*Into the Woods* performance
- March 18–*Into the Woods* performance (1PM and 7PM)



Have a story idea? Please email dzoccola@upperdarby.org.