

# Inside Story

## Common Grounds



### Do You Know About Participation?

At Erie 1 BOCES, mid-January through late-April is when school districts proclaim their desire to "participate" in BOCES services for the next school year. As a result, this season is commonly known as "participation." Many services allow enrollment changes throughout a school year. However, a known intent declared each spring allows leaders at Erie 1 BOCES to draft budgets and plans for staffing, equipment and supplies. All of Erie 1 BOCES services are detailed in an online database called the Service Directory. The [online Service Directory](#) can also prove helpful to Erie 1 BOCES employees looking for contacts or offerings for a district. A

printed brief of these offerings is also supplied. A Digital Media student from Harkness, Collin Henry Shaver of Clarence, designed the cover of this year's printed summary of services.



### External Email Delay on Saturday 2/18

Saturday, February 18th, the spam servers will be down for maintenance from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. During this time, internal emails will still route, including emails to other Lotus Notes districts. Incoming and outgoing emails outside of Lotus Notes will be delayed until after the work is completed.



### Physical Exam Reward

A friendly reminder that NY44 Health Trust enrollees have until July 15, 2017 to submit their paperwork for a physical exam reward. Enrollees must be/have been an active NY44 Trust participant at the time of the physical and provide receipts dated between July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017. A single plan participant can earn \$100 annually. For a family plan, up to two eligible family members per plan year can submit for a total reward per plan year of \$200 (\$100 each). Documentation is available for download [here](#).



### Note of Thanks

Following an Erie 1 BOCES collection effort for Gerard Place, a housing program for homeless single parents and their children, Gerard Place Executive Director David Zapfel sent the following thank you.

"Thank you very much for your recent donation of the baby care items, bedding and diapers ... Your gift helped to make the holiday season special for our families. Our mission could not continue without the generous support of friends like you. Thank you again for your generosity and for caring about our families."



organized interviews.

### Harkness Senior Mock Interviews

This past month, 20 business and industry representatives took the time out of their busy schedules to mock interview Harkness seniors from various Career and Technical programs. Students dressed in interview-appropriate attire and presented their resumes and portfolios to their interviewer. After the professional interview, interviewers evaluated and discussed the results with each of the students. Pamela Santillo, work-based learning teacher at Harkness,



### Fusion Fashion Show

Students of Erie 1 BOCES Fashion Design and Merchandising program will be showing off their creative talents on March 16, 2017. The students, representing various districts, will pizzazz the public with the “Fusion” fashion show. The aspiring designers have gained the tools necessary to kick-start their careers in the fashion industry. Harkness instructor Darleen Meek has led students to stardom in the fashion show for eight years running. This year’s event will be held at Campbell Student Union Social Hall within Buffalo State College at 7 p.m. The show is free

and the public is encouraged to attend. For ticket reservations and other information, please contact Darlene Meek at [dmeek@e1b.org](mailto:dmeek@e1b.org) by March 10.



### Auto Champs

At the Niagara Frontier Automobile Dealers Association (NFADA) 2017 Ron Smith Memorial Auto Tech Competition, high school students from Erie 1 BOCES’ two career centers, Kenton and Potter, dominated the competition. A team from the Kenton Career & Technical Center, seniors Daniel Hudson and Jeffrey Kassmann, placed first in the automotive technician category. In addition to winning a \$1,000 scholarship, the students won an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Automotive Technology Competition in New York City. Their instructors

are Gary Willis and Gary Carlson. [Read more here...](#)



### Tiny House in Home Show

Stop by the Buffalo Home Show to see the “tiny house” constructed by Building Trade students under the instruction of Roger Broeker at the Kenton Career & Technical Center. The show runs for two weekends: March 3-5 and 10-12. [Learn more here...](#)



### Construction Tours

Seniors in the Building Trades program visited local construction businesses at the end of January. Students met with area contractors, instructors and graduates from the Associated Builder and Contractors training program. The students also toured IQ Modular Homes and Lymstone Lofts. [Read more here...](#)



### Choice For Continuing Education

In Dec., readers of Forever Young Magazine voted Workforce Development at Erie 1 BOCES as their continuing education provider of choice. Read the full [list here...](#)



### Diversity Display

Instructional programs at Erie 1 BOCES has filled BOCES Square at the Education Campus with an array of items and projects displaying their efforts. On your next visit, please take the time to learn about our students' work.



### United Way Winner

Denise Gopez-Santos from School Support Services was a grand prize winner for the United Way Buffalo and Erie County Challenge. Through her donation, during Erie 1 BOCES' campaign, Denise was entered into the challenge. She won a \$1,000 gift card donated by Tops. Congratulations Denise!



### Hospice Spring Bouquets

A sale for the 31th annual Hospice Spring Bouquets has begun at the Education Campus. Gorgeous mixed bouquets for \$8 and special tribute bouquets for \$30 will be sold. For every tribute bouquet purchased, an \$8 bouquet will be sent to brighten the day of a Hospice patient. To order flowers, see Anne Schuh in the lobby of building A. **Orders will be taken up until Tuesday, February 21.** Checks accepted, made payable to the Hospice Foundation. Flowers will be delivered on Tuesday, March 7.



### Water Results

Erie 1 BOCES voluntarily tested water fountains and break room faucets at the Education Campus on Harlem Road for lead. Dave's Kitchen at the Education Campus was also tested. We are pleased to report that all of the faucets tested came back below the acceptable level of 15 parts per billion.



### Wear Green & Denim

The Education Campus Employee Special Events Committee will hold a "wear green" jeans day on Friday, March 17. Please see your regular ticket seller for your \$2 jeans day pass for that day. Proceeds from the event will support the charity of the quarter and various 12-month employee events.



### MiddleTech

New program titled MiddleTech will be offered to school districts beginning in July 2017. The new academy provides a full-day educational program for academically and socially at-risk 7th and 8th grade students that incorporates Career and Technical Education as part of a project-based curriculum. [Learn more...](#)



### Hamburg Freshman Honored For Efforts

Erie 1 BOCES has selected Hamburg High School freshman Jacob Tonello as the featured student of the month. Jacob is enrolled in the Maryvale Work Readiness program at Erie 1 BOCES under the instruction of teachers Anthony Giambrone, Brenna Towle, Melanie Roth and Marie Szabla. [Read more...](#)



### Valentines For Vets

James Siegel's art class at West Seneca West Elementary made Valentine's Day cards for local veterans. Students had fun creating cards and writing sentiments that thanked our veterans for their service.

## Kudos



### Congratulations!

Michelle Drysdale, who has been a nurse for nearly 20 years and currently is an LPN clinical instructor at Erie 1 BOCES Workforce Development, was inducted into the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing (STTI). Drysdale is also a SUNY Empire student enrolled in the college's RN to B.S.N. program. She said that her induction into STTI was a significant honor. "This is the culmination of all the hard work I have put into (my education)." [Read more...](#)

### Kudos Communication Services

Following the release of the fall/winter edition of Current, a number of positive comments were received. Cindy Stypa, an employee in the Supervisor's Office at the Town of Lancaster, said, "Awesome newsletter! Great job to all involved." Mark Banks, a retiree from Technology Services said, "Nice job by the communications division on this edition." Frances Michienzi, a retiree from Technology Services said, "GREAT ISSUE!"

### Kudos Lori Sosenko

In a note to Lori Sosenko from Communication Services, Grand Island Superintendent Brian Graham wrote, "I just wanted to express my gratitude for your work ... Your ability to craft the three letters we used in our communication plan, in a quick and timely manner, was outstanding. Many thanks for your work and I hope your holiday is exceptional."



### Kudos Kenton Career and Technical Center

Veronica E. Connor Middle School students sent letters to Matthew Ciurczak, assistant principal at Kenton, after attending the Taste of Tech at the career center. Connor, a student, wrote, "I greatly enjoyed visiting the classes in welding, automotive technology and collision repair. I hope to get accepted into the air force as a jet pilot, and later retire to become an Aerospace Engineer."

### Dimensions of Diversity: Heritage

Using the "[Diversity Wheel](#)," as introduced to Erie 1 BOCES staff by Dramatic Solutions, the diversity committee continues to highlight employee insights that align with the wheel. Jackie Albarella, teacher and diversity committee member, connected with a coworker to share his heritage.



### Meet Rafael Estrada

*By: Jackie Albarella, Diversity Committee Member*

Rafael Estrada is a TV & Sound and Cyber Security teacher at the Harkness Career & Technical Center.

Rafael was born in Puerto Rico and his family moved to Buffalo when Rafael was in first grade. People often ask him about being an immigrant, and Rafael reminds them that, "Puerto Rico is part of the United States." He is a US citizen, and his family merely moved here. It was just like someone moving from Texas to Florida.

In the beginning, moving to Buffalo was very hard for Rafael. He felt "totally out of his element." Rafael attended a bi-lingual school in the city of Buffalo, where they taught and spoke in both Spanish and English. There was a large Hispanic and Puerto Rican population in the school, and there were the typical cliques that form to separate students.

Rafael remembers that the "cultural differences were staggering." He felt like "a brown M&M in a bowl of blue ones." Everything was different: food, music, the environment.

One of the most obvious differences between his new home and his old one was the food. The food in the lunchroom was totally different than anything he had ever eaten. "It was nasty," said Rafael. In addition, he was the "new kid," with the same insecurities and challenges faced by every new kid throughout the centuries.

When Rafael walked outside he knew it wasn't home. In addition to school, "the cold and gloominess made it worse." He was accustomed to sunshine, breezes, and the sound of the Coqui – very loud frogs native to Puerto Rico. And it got dark here so early!

Rafael credits his parents who taught him and his brothers to "always look on the bright side." His parents spent lots of time with the boys and took them many places, and each summer they would return to Puerto Rico for a few months. The family's positive attitude helped Rafael navigate this new place. He made friends with mostly non-Hispanic, non-Latino kids because Rafael wanted to fit in to this new place. Rafael's American friends loved his culture. They came over to his house often to eat the many delicious treats Rafael's mother would make. These are the friends that remain close even today.

This experience has shaped Rafael as a person and as a teacher. He is culturally sensitive to all of his students. He views each student as a younger version of himself and tries to feel what they are experiencing. He relates to each one by asking himself, "How would I want to be treated?" Rafael makes sure no one in class feels left out because that was how he felt.

When asked if Rafael misses Puerto Rico he answers with a resounding "yes!"

"There is a feeling when I am there- it is deeper even than walking into your front door," said Rafael. "It is a feeling that this is where I am from, this is my origin."

Rafael is married and has a daughter who is being raised bi-lingual. She is learning about both cultures, as Rafael shares his heritage with her from both his homes.



### 3 Simple Ways to Stay Healthy This Winter

*From the Employee Assistance Program*

In the February issue of EAP's newsletter they outline three simple ways to stay healthy this winter. Read the edition here: [Read it here...](#)



### Jokes of the Month

**Q. Where does a snowman keep his money?**

A. In a snow bank.

**Q. What do you call a Snowman on roller blades?**

A. A snowmobile!

**Q. How do snowmen greet each other?**

A. Ice to meet you!



### Free Tax Preparation

The United Way of Buffalo and Erie County provides free tax preparation services. To learn more about these services and eligibility requirements, see [this link](#).



### Like Us, Share Us and Re-Tweet Us

One of the easiest ways you can help promote Erie 1 BOCES is by following us and interacting with us on social media. If you like, share or re-tweet E1B's postings you can quickly spread the word about the great work accomplished by E1B.