

TWO D211 ALUMNAE WIN SCHOLARSHIPS FROM PALATINE'S WOMEN IN BUSINESS ADVISORY FORUM

Two District 211 alumnae recently received scholarships from the Palatine's Women in Business Advisory Forum (WIBAF).



| *Kathleen McManus*



| *Nina Vrtjak*

Palatine High School Alumna Kathleen McManus and Fremd High School Alumna Nina Vrtjak each received \$1,000 from the Palatine Chamber of Commerce group. The non-renewable funds will go toward college tuition, fees, books, or supplies.

To be eligible for the scholarship, female students must have a 3.0 GPA or higher, with the intent of attending a two-year or four-year college or university to earn a

degree in a business-related field. Other criteria considered by the judges included business coursework in high school, employment experience, clubs/activities/service/volunteer roles, two short response questions, and two letters of recommendation.

Kathleen, the recipient from Fremd High School, will be attending University of Alabama where she plans to major in Marketing. Kathleen's many activities in high school ranged from clubs to theater groups to the competitive dance team. Kathleen has been working in marketing while attending high school through an internship in digital media—a position she earned through a networking connection formed in her Business Incubator class at Fremd.

Nina Vrtjak, the recipient from Palatine High School, will be attending University of Minnesota-Twin Cities where she will be majoring in Accounting. Nina's application demonstrated a strong combination of coursework and employment experience and she was also very involved in clubs and athletics at Palatine High School. One of Nina's essays described a mentoring relationship she built as part of her Small Business Incubator class—which truly relates to the relationships built by members of the WIBAF networking group. Nina plans to study accounting, which she describes as being like a "jigsaw puzzle" because there is always "an answer that adds up."

This year's scholarship committee volunteers included WIBAF members Joan Scovic from Palatine Park District (committee chair), Fay Ellen Buican of HomeSmart, Deb Gabriel with Edward Jones, Amanda Kamick from Sport-Clips – Palatine, and Alex Looff with Signs By Tomorrow – Arlington Heights. Funds for the 2016-2017 scholarship program were raised through a fashion show fundraiser and raffle prize drawings offered at WIBAF's monthly networking luncheons.

PHS, CHS STUDENTS WIN BIG AT DISTRICT 211 BUSINESS INCUBATOR PITCH NIGHT



Students in High School District 211's Business Incubator program spent the school year developing business ideas to try to bring them to life with the help of investors.

Six of the best teams from each school's Business Incubator course were selected to compete at the District Pitch Night for real funding this past May. After planning and preparation, each team presented their business idea to a panel of judges in hopes of being awarded \$20,000 in seed money from the District 211 Foundation.

Two teams won this year's seed money: *Green Dirt* from Conant High School and *Snow and Co.* from Palatine High School. Green Dirt also was recently invited to compete at the INCubatoredu National Pitch Competition that will take place at the Loyola Corby Law Center in Chicago this July.

Students enrolled in the Business Incubator class learn what it takes to be an entrepreneur, as well as how to be successful in creating their own product or service. The course covers topics about marketing, human resources, accounting, and the legal aspects of operating a business. When preparing for pitches, students worked not only with their classroom teacher, but also had support from community content experts and mentors. For the teams that did not receive funding, investors encouraged them all to continue pursuing their ideas.

The following teams participated at the District 211 pitch night event:



WINNER: Green Dirt – Conant High School

Students: Akash Moozhayil, Kunal Mahajan, Stoil Ionov, Rohan Antony, Patryk Barszczuk

Mentor: David Wolff of Wolff's Fleamarket



Company overview: *GreenDirt is a startup company that addresses the major problem of food waste. We collect scraps from local restaurants, convert to a premium gardening product, vermicompost, which we then sell to local nurseries and garden centers.*



WINNER: Snow and Co. – Palatine High School

Students: Alex Brztowski, Katherine Perez, Nemecio Luna, Reil Snow

Mentor: CJ Ritterbusch of Concord Marketing Solutions



Company overview: *The Janus Pack is the solution for students who need to charge their electronics while helping students with organizational skills.*



Finalist: KickCarrier – Schaumburg High School

Students: Katherine Edeus, Daniel Galovich,
Lisette Hurtado, Vincent Kandefer



Mentor: Jon Zaley of Odem Expo

Company overview: *KickCarrier is a unique platform where sneakerheads can buy, sell, or trade shoes. If it doesn't sell, we will buy it!*



Finalist: ProjectTapp-Tapp Camp – Conant High School

Students: Eliot Chang, Mitesh Patel, Michael Kim

Mentor: Jim Gallo of Specialty Finishing Group



Company overview: ProjectTapp is a start-up mobile app developer for the private and public sector providing an incubator-type platform that integrates TappCamp, a coding educational and training service. TappCamp educates students in grades 5 – 12 to become app writers and future app developers for ProjectTapp that, in return, adds more innovation and creativity to the mobile app industry.



Finalist: BlissFoot – Fremd High School

Students: Laura Bienek, Aarsh Desai, Hanna Murakami, Luke Schoffstall, Gianfranco Torres

Mentor: Chris Banakis of Acuity Advisory Partners LLC



Company overview: *BlissFoot provides competitive long distance runners and other endurance athletes with on-the-go protection against friction, and the resulting irritation, in order to reduce discomfort and enhance performance.*



Finalist: InnerMap – Hoffman Estates High School

Students: Chloe Jefferson, Edlawit Zerihun, Errick Delaney

Mentor: Sheila Serafin of RIM Logistics

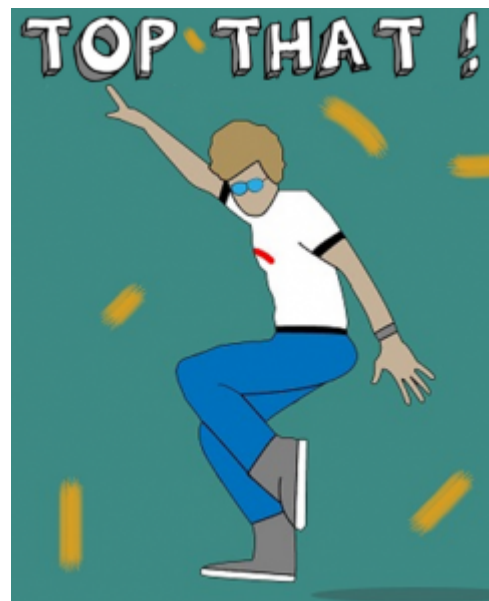


Company overview: *InnerMap will design and create indoor mapping for large public buildings such as malls, airports, and stadiums. The software and app will provide*

consumers with step by step directions to where they need to go as well as allow retailers in the buildings to push advertising and promotions to potential customers nearby.

COMMUNITY INVITED TO PALATINE HIGH SCHOOL VARIETY SHOW APRIL 20, 21, 22

The annual Palatine High School Variety Show will take place on April 20, 21, and 22 at Palatine High School, 1111 N. Rohlwing Rd. The family event is open to the community. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$8 for adults. Palatine High School students have worked to create a show that will make the audience sing, dance, and laugh in their seats. Attendees will see performances from vocalists, dancers, comedians, instrumentalists and more.



For more information, please contact Palatine High School.

PALATINE PIRATES HAVE NEW HEAD BOYS SWIM COACH

Kathryn (Katie) Mroz has been named head boys swim coach at Palatine High School. Mroz will replace John Schauble who is stepping down after two years at the helm of the Pirates boys swim program.



“We are really excited that Katie will be leading our swimming program,” said Palatine High School Principal Gary Steiger. “Her experiences as both an athlete and a coach make her the perfect fit for the job.”

Mroz has been assistant coach of the girls swim team at Palatine High School for the past three years. She has worked as a speech-language pathologist for three years at Conant and Palatine High Schools, as well as at the Higgins Education Center. Prior to coming to High School District 211, Mroz worked in both medical and educational institutions as a graduate clinician from 2012 to 2014.

Mroz earned her bachelors’s degree in linguistics from Emory University in 2011, and her master’s degree in speech, language, and hearing sciences from the University of Arizona in 2014. In college, Mroz competed for Emory University (Atlanta, Ga.), swimming the breaststroke and mid-distance. Among many athletic accomplishments, she was a 10-time, Division 3 All-American and was the 2009 NCAA Champion and record holder as part of the school’s 800-freestyle relay.

[UPCOMING PALATINE HIGH SCHOOL PIRATE PETE TRIVIA NIGHT TO SUPPORT RAY MILLS FUND](#)

Pirate Pete Trivia Night is returning to Palatine High School to support the Ray Mills Fund and students in need.

The event will be held on April 7 starting at 7:00 p.m., in the Palatine High

School cafeteria, 1111 N. Rohlwing Rd. Tables are \$50 for a team of up to eight players, and all are welcome to participate including teachers, students, and community members. Registration can be completed online at www.phs.d211.org.

“In tough times like these we have seen an increased need and we are hopeful that this event will help us replenish the fund and continue to provide support to our students,” said Nicki O’Keefe, chemistry teacher and Ray Mills Fund chairman.

In addition to the trivia game, the evening includes raffles, a 50/50 drawing, pizza, and soda. Free childcare will be offered in the PHS Pirate Preschool room that is supervised by student volunteers from the PHS National Honor Society. Chris Smith is the Trivia Event Chairman and will serve as the Master of Ceremonies for the fundraiser.

This year has two divisions, each with a first place prize of \$200, a second place prize of \$100, and a third place prize of \$50. The divisions will be separated by age. If at least half of the team is comprised of high school aged players (or younger), the team qualifies for the Scarlet division. No Scarlet team can have more adults than high school or younger players. The Grey division is available to teams with larger numbers of adults.

The fund is named for a former Palatine High School teacher and counselor who regularly went out of his way to help students in need. The fund, established in Mills’ honor, has fulfilled a wide range of student needs at Palatine High School, including school and project supplies, sports physicals for athletes, nutritious snacks, graduation gown rental fees, and more.

For more information about the Pirate Pete Trivia Night, visit www.phs.d211.org and select the Trivia Night link or contact Nicki O’Keefe at nokeefe@d211.org.

[PIRATES ANNOUNCE NEW HEAD WRESTLING COACH](#)



Jeff Keske has been named head varsity wrestling coach at Palatine High School, effective with the 2017-2018 season.

Jeff Keske has been named head varsity wrestling coach at Palatine High School, effective with the 2017-2018 season. Keske will take over head coaching responsibilities from Dan Collins, who is stepping down after 13 years at the head of the Pirates wrestling program.

“We are thrilled that Coach Keske will be leading our wrestling team,” said Palatine High School Principal Gary Steiger. “Coach Keske has an enormous amount of energy and enthusiasm to share with our student-athletes. He is well-respected by the wrestling community and knows what it takes to lead a team. He will be a great addition to the Palatine High School athletic program.”

Currently, Keske is head freshman wrestling coach at Hoffman Estates High School, a position he has held since 2015. He also serves as the school’s sophomore baseball coach, while teaching physical education at Fremd High School. Previously, he taught physical education at Hoffman Estates High School from August 2015 through January 2017, and was the school’s head freshman baseball coach from 2015-2016. Keske also taught physical education at Schaumburg High School from August 2016 through January 2017.

During his time as the Hawks’ head freshman wrestling coach, his team recorded a third-place finish in the Mid-Suburban League Conference Tournament, as well as winning the Mather High School (Chicago) Freshmen Tournament and placing second at the Elgin Larkin Tournament. Prior to coming to District 211, Keske was assistant varsity wrestling coach at his alma mater, Libertyville High School, from 2013-2015. From 2012-2013, he served as assistant varsity wrestling coach at Warren Township High School (Gurnee, Ill.). From 2011-2013, Keske was a Libertyville Youth wrestling coach and a volunteer football, wrestling, and baseball coach at Vernon Hills High School.

Keske earned his bachelor of science degree in physical education (K-12) with minor degrees in health education and driver education from Northeastern Illinois University in 2015. He was a collegiate wrestler at Augustana College from

2005-2006, leading his team in wins and being named a Division III Top-5 ranked wrestler. Keske also played varsity baseball at Augustana College from 2005-2006.

PHS SENIOR AIDAN BUSCH WINS VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY ESSAY CONTEST



Aidan is pictured (center) with VFW officials after winning at the state level. (From left to right): Brian Duffy, VFW National Commander-in-Chief; Richard Barnes, from Ill. District 4; Aidan; Joseph Wein, from Ill. District 4; and Dave Stout, Commander of the Department of Illinois.

When Palatine High School senior Aidan Busch was looking for ways to help pay for college, he found a scholarship contest that would end up creating opportunities and friendships he never imagined.

Aidan was a winner in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) 2017 National Voice of Democracy Program and recipient of the \$2,000 Department of Kentucky and Auxiliary Brian Duffy and Marion Watson Scholarship. He won the district and statewide levels of the competition and traveled to Washington D.C. as a finalist

for at the national level. He was sponsored by VFW Post 1337 in Mount Prospect, Ill.

“I am honored and humbled at the same time,” Aidan said. “The VFW is a large organization and they do very good work for veterans. To have their endorsement was a very cool thing. It is a huge honor.”

The VFW is a nonprofit veterans service organization comprised of eligible veterans and military service members from the active, guard and reserve forces. The theme of this year’s essay contest was “my responsibility to America.” Aidan had to not only write the essay, but also present the essay in speech format.

“This gave me a better empathy and greater understanding of veterans and what they have contributed and sacrificed for all of us,” Aidan said. “You hear about veterans’ issues on the news or from your neighbor who served, but when you have face-to-face, extended conversations with veterans, it gives you a perspective of how fortunate we are to live where we do.”



Aidan poses with other scholarship recipients on the last night of the Washington D.C. trip.

Aidan said the whole experience was “mind-opening.” He said he had the pleasure of meeting veterans and gaining friendships with people all over the world.

“I now have friends in all 50 states, Bahrain, Germany, and Puerto Rico, which is a cool thing that came out of this experience,” he said. “I have been in contact with them and we might all meet up over the summer, too.”

In the future, Aidan hopes to study political science or international relations. He is in the process of selecting a university. He will be recognized at a District 211 Board of Education Meeting later this year.

For more information about the VFW contest, please visit the [website](#).

Aidan’s essay is published below:

When I was seven years old, I made my first dollar. I remember less about how I made it and more about being incredibly anxious to spend it. I couldn’t wait to buy something to call my own, a possession that was mine, purchased with my own hard-

earned funds. I didn't realize at the time, however, that not everything can be purchased with a piece of green paper graced with the likeness of George Washington.

Some things can be bought, while others must be paid for. For instance, it's easy enough to go to the grocery store and buy a loaf of bread. No one denies the fact that it is a simple matter to purchase a hammer and box of nails from the hardware store. One can buy an American flag or star-spangled bunting without too much difficulty. However, some things cannot be purchased with a swipe of a credit card. Some things are not readily accessible in Aisle 4 of the supermarket, between refried beans and Tabasco sauce. Liberty is one of these things. Liberty cannot be placed in a shopping cart, or casually tossed in your trunk to take home. No, Liberty is unique in that you cannot buy it. It is something that has been paid for by others. More specifically, veterans, and those who have laid down their lives in service of freedom. You cannot simply "get" liberty by filling out a mail-order form and putting a stamp on it. People have died, paying the ultimate price, so that I may live and enjoy my liberty. They gave up their opportunity to make choices and live their lives free of worry and persecution so that I, someone who has never known that struggle, may enjoy Liberty.

Liberty.

Patrick Henry is famous for his "Give me Liberty or give me Death" speech. But If I may be so bold, I would revise this statement. I would change it to "Liberty, because of death." When I say death I don't mean the sad kind, though death certainly is a melancholy affair. No, I mean sacrifice, the willing substitution of a life, an American life, so that I may live an existence of freedom and Liberty. Those who have paid have missed some of life's most important moments, not being present for things that seem incomprehensible to miss to the average citizen. Events such as the birth of a child, the death of a parent, a daughter's graduation, a son's birthday party, supporting a spouse through an illnesses, teaching their child to throw a football, swing a bat or ride a bike. Missing opportunities to watch that squeaky first fifth grade band concert, or make countless trips to and from the soccer fields. They have missed these major or seemingly minor life opportunities so that I may enjoy them without fear or worry.

This is where I am responsible. Being American is unique in that each and every one of us is standing on ground stained with the blood of patriots. Many of us do not realize that our weekly trip to the grocery store is possible only because those who came before us, and fight for us, have died to make it possible. In some countries, one must kiss the entire family goodbye before leaving the house because they do not know if they will return. In America, we have the relative fortune of forgetting that we do not have these luxuries for free. They have been paid for. It is my responsibility to refuse to take these liberties for granted. It is my responsibility to ensure that every death and every act of service by an American, from March 5, 1770 to the day I die, is not wasted.

I can honor these sacrifices in a very practical way by the way I conduct myself on a daily basis. It is my personal responsibility to use these freedoms afforded to me at such a high price in a responsible manner that reflects the original sacrifice. Everyday opportunities abound, like running ahead to hold the door for a young mother pushing a stroller, or helping an elderly neighbor take out their trash. Removing my hat, placing my hand on my heart and standing tall when the national anthem is

played. By putting others first, I am honoring what has already been done for me.

It is my responsibility to act as if I am walking on hallowed ground, every step paid for by the blood of Americans. It is the veterans, and those who have served our dear country in life and death, who deserve our undying gratitude and attention.

My responsibility is to remember. To remember those few, the white, black, Latino, Asian, male, female, and American few, who have given up their liberty, their peace, to give me mine. If we forget the sacrifice of these few, we will become an ungrateful nation incapable of appreciating the true value of our liberty. Because after all, it was not purchased, but paid for.

Essay by Aidan Busch