

D211 POST: HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 211 ANNOUNCES NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS FOR 2018



NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

High School District 211 announces that 31 students have been named semifinalists in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Competition.

Semifinalists are selected based on scores on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (P.S.A.T./N.M.S.Q.T.).

William Fremd High School students Abhinav R. Balu, Kevin Chen, Varun Cidambi, Bissmun Gill, Matthew C. Grabianski, Kailey G. Henson, Stephanie X. Hu, Jesse Huang, Kashif Javid, Edward W. Li, Anna J. Miller, Allison M. Nakazawa, Adhith Palla, Nicholas L. Parekh, Elizabeth D. Perez, Andrew L. Ruan, Lauren P. Streitmatter, and Jerry Zheng have been named semifinalists.

Anubhav Agarwal, Adithya S. Chari, Annika K. Lafyatis, Bianca Saputra, Nitinshankar Subramanian, Sarah R. Yamaguchi, and Allison L. Zhang from James B. Conant High School have been named semifinalists.

The semifinalists from Hoffman Estates High School are Ryohei Namiki, Megha Ramanathan, and Shashank Sandu.

Schaumburg High School's semifinalists are Lisa N. Bonatz and Edwin J. Suresh.

Bhargav Yadavalli is the semifinalist from Palatine High School.

For more information, see the [release](#) from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

D211 POST: DISTRICT 211 JOINS SPRINT'S 1MILLION PROJECT



Joanna Avalos, a senior at Palatine High School, completes a survey before receiving a wireless hotspot from Sprint as part of the 1 Million Project. Township High School District 211 paired with Sprint in the project which provides free wireless internet to high school students.

Students within Township High School District 211 will have easier access to the internet to complete web-based homework after the District partnered with Sprint in its 1Million Project. The project provides qualifying students a free wireless hotspot from the Sprint Foundation, with an unlimited data package from Sprint, enabling them access they might not otherwise have.

“This generous program will be a game-changer for our students,” said Dr. Daniel Cates, District 211 superintendent. “Since we began the one-to-one program, we have been mindful of students who did not have regular, reliable internet access.”

For some students, it will reduce the number of hours they have to remain after school to work on assignments.

“I will usually stay here until 6:00 p.m.,” said Priyanshu Bahadur, a sophomore at Palatine High School. “If I cannot stay, then I have to come in early the next day to finish.”

With this device, Priyanshu said he would be able to spend more non-school hours at home with family.



Rusty Cumings, the assistant principal at Shaumburg High School, discusses the wireless hotspot from Sprint to a student.

For a student at Schaumburg High School it was time away from school that caused trouble in his ability to do homework. He said when his family is on the road, he cannot access the internet to complete larger assignments. With this device, he will be able to stay on top of his assignments.

For Palatine High school senior Honoer Okhave this will improve more than just his academic performance.

“I didn’t have internet at home, so I just wouldn’t do my homework,” said Honoer. “I used to get in trouble a lot.”

Honoer said he was excited when he saw the letter announcing the new program.

“I used to wish the school could find a way to get us Internet outside of here,” he said. “This is like a dream come true.”

Sprint plans to distribute 1million devices to qualifying students during the five-year project. District 211 is one of the first school districts in Chicagoland to participate.



Joanna Avalos, Priyanshu Bahadur, and Honoer Okhavhe, students at

Palatine High School, learn how to use their new wireless hotspot.

“We are both grateful and excited for our students who will benefit because they now have convenient and reliable access to the same universe of information that others have,” said Dr. Cates.

The District has distributed 225 devices to students. Each device has built-in content filters, similar to filters that are in-place in school networks. Part of the agreement between Sprint and participating schools is that Sprint will handle all technical issues and trouble shooting with the devices.

Students who receive a Sprint device will have access to the service for the duration of their high school career.

Dr. Cates believes this will have a positive impact on students well beyond this school year.

“Once we can draw upon the impact for our first group of students, we hope that no student in the future has to be limited by a lack of internet access,” he said.



Mr. Mike Alther, an assistant principal at Palatine High School, explains how to use one of the Sprint wireless hotspots.

[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 Kandefor



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

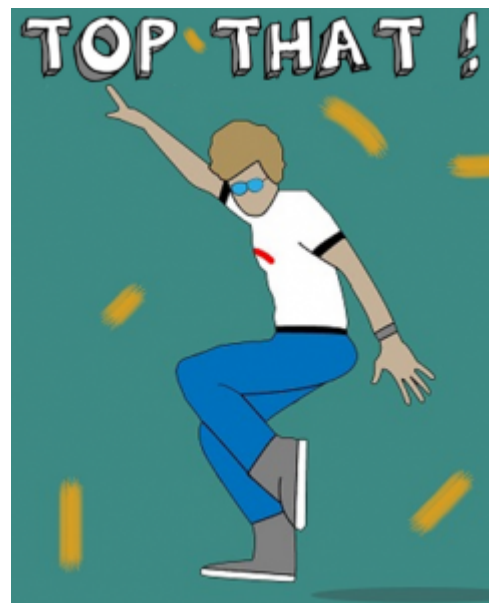


Company overview: *InnerMap will design and create indoor mapping for large public buildings such as malls, airports, and stadiums. The software and app will provide*

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.