

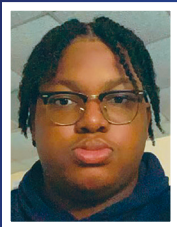


TROJAN TODAY

YOUR SCHOOL TOWN OF HIGHLAND SOURCE FOR NEWS AND EVENTS | OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2021

Highland Education Foundation

EDUCATION FOUNDATION BOARD WELCOMES NEW JUNIOR MEMBER



From his first meeting as part of the Highland Education Foundation, Wilfred Akanbi felt like part of the team.

Akanbi, the HHS junior representative to the board that supports education throughout the district, was the overwhelming choice to serve alongside senior Chloe Churilla and 11 adult members.

"Wilfred is one of those kids who does it all – and does it well," Superintendent Brian Smith said. "No matter how packed his schedule becomes – whether it's football, theatre or the foundation – he focuses on what needs to be done."

With a post-high school future leaning towards a career in medicine where he can help others, Akanbi has always looked for opportunities to improve the human condition.

"I was eager to join the board," he said. "I am even more excited now that I see all they do for students and teachers."

FUNDING INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL GRANTS

From Lego Simple Machine Sets and drones to alternative seating and a sensory room, the Highland Education Foundation funds innovative educational grants to teachers to enhance learning and achievement. Grants are up to \$1,000. Larger amounts may be considered, but will likely be awarded over multiple cycles.

INFO: Application deadline is **OCTOBER 22**. Awards will be announced **NOVEMBER 12**. Visit highlandef.org to apply.

HONOR A TEACHER, COACH, STAFF MEMBER

Make a contribution to the Highland Education Foundation – and an individual of your choice – will be honored with a special card with your name and special greeting as well as an apple pin. The Honor an Educator program is held in conjunction with American Education Week **NOVEMBER 15-19**. Minimum donation is \$11 per honoree and forms must be received no later than **NOVEMBER 5**.

INFO: Forms are available at highlandef.org/fundraising.

SAVE THE DATE – TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER

Join us **FEBRUARY 26** for a night of trivia, food and fun at Lincoln Center! All proceeds fund grants to support teachers and students.

QUESTIONS? Email Jane Kuva at jekuva@sbcglobal.net.

OTHER WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT THE HIGHLAND EDUCATION FOUNDATION



Donate using PayPal or credit: You can make a donation to support our cause through the PayPal. You do not need to have an account. PayPal allows you to use credit or debit card.



Donate using AmazonSmile: Select Highland Education Foundation, Highland IN as your charity. Eligible items will generate a .5% donation to the foundation.



Purchase an educational license plate: You can help support the foundation by purchasing an education license plate from the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

ADMINISTRATION

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SCHOOL BOARD

Robert Kuva, President
Victor A. Garcia, Vice President
Patrick Krull, Secretary
Luanne Jurczak, member
Allencia Ballard, member

The school board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building, 9145 Kennedy Avenue, Highland.

INFO: Visit hhs.highland.k12.in.us for the latest information, including meeting agendas, school policies, board mission, beliefs and values.

Congrats to our College Board Designated scholars for outstanding achievement on PSAT/NMSQT test

Five Highland High School seniors have been recognized by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation based on the results of college-readiness exams they took as juniors.

Nina West, African American award winner, along with Hispanic award winners Celeste Enriquez, Michael Burns, Natalie Cruz and Noah Farrenkopf distinguished themselves among their peers across the country on the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Designation by the National College Board means students may include the recognition on their college applications.

The PSAT is considered a great primer for the SAT and ACT college admission exams. It's more, though, than a trial run. PSAT scores identify National Merit Scholars and award merit scholarships. More than 3.4 million high schoolers take the exam each year.

HHS Principal John Zack said the students are a credit to themselves and the School Town of Highland.

"Each of these students has consistently worked to distinguish themselves academically," Zack said. "They strive for excellence in everything they do."

COLLEGE VISITS & JOB SHADOWING

While students in grades 8-11 dive deep on the PSAT exams in mid-October, Highland High School offers seniors the opportunity to spend the day visiting colleges or job shadowing in preparation for the next chapter in their lives.

Superintendent Brian Smith said it's a great opportunity for graduating seniors to make productive use of their time while their peers are invested in the PSAT exam.

"For students who have yet to choose their university or trade school as well as those who have yet to hone in on their field of study or career choice, this can be a very important day," Smith said.



LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

"It is inspiring to watch our students enjoying their classroom time and thriving as we all move forward"

I am pleased to report our 3,100 students have been completing their assignments, attending after-school activities, joining clubs and meeting up with their friends – in record numbers.

Our eighth-grade students are practicing as they prepare to sit for their first-ever PSAT exams with their high school counterparts.

All of that sounds pretty typical, the type of routine events that wouldn't have been news in previous years. For us, it's as close to normal as we've been in two years – and we're grateful. It is inspiring to watch our students enjoying their classroom time and thriving as we all move forward.

The Highland Education Foundation is hard at work, determining teacher-inspired projects it can fund this year and planning fundraisers to keep their grant program

growing. If you would like to help, please see the information on the front page of this newsletter for donation opportunities.

Keep our activities in mind this fall when you are looking for wonderful entertainment. The first round of concerts – both choir and band – are scheduled as is the theatre company's performance of "Puff."

The Science Olympiad teams will be named in October. The HHS Sustainability Club is working to make the world a better place.

Our students inspire us. They make us proud. They are a reason we give thanks.



Brian Smith
Superintendent
School Town of Highland

HIGH SCHOOL SUSTAINABILITY CLUB



Sustainability Club officers include Head Coordinator Michael Burns, Assistant Coordinator Sarah Krick, Secretary Rachel Krick, Treasurer Bella Demantes, Social Media Coordinator Megan Curran and Junior Coordinator Vy Herrejon. [Heather Oaks photos]



Students making a difference with green initiatives

When high school students Michael Burns, Sarah Krick and Rory Kosier approached Heather Oaks about sponsoring a club focused on green initiatives to reduce detrimental changes to the climate, the veteran biology/biomedical sciences teacher didn't hesitate.

With that, the Highland High School Sustainability Club was born.

Knowing there was no time to waste, the founding members recruited nearly three dozen fellow students who began by managing responsible paper recycling at the high school. That was followed by assisting the town Tree Board in planting saplings. Today, both Burns and Krick serve as members of the

board that has shepherded the planting of 899 trees in Highland.

Thanks to seed money from the Highland Education Foundation, the students were able to plant a garden for pollinators – like bees and butterflies – on the courtyard between the middle and high school buildings.

"This is a group of great kids who come up with the ideas and ways to implement them - on their own," Oaks said. "Next spring, they plan to hold a pollinator/native plant sale with seeds we are gathering now."

INTERESTED IN JOINING? Please email Teacher Heather Oaks at hoaks@highland.k12.in.us.

GRADUATIONS RATES

The deadline to complete credit mandates necessary to become a 2021 graduating senior concluded Sept. 30. High School Principal John Zack said a majority of those who needed just a few more credits completed the work through an intensive credit recovery program that began in June.

"Our goal has been to help these students get their diploma," Zack said. "We celebrated every student as they finished their work."

The expectation is: Highland's graduation rate for 2021 will be at least 90 percent. Zack expects the final count will surpass 91 percent. Here's a look at Highland's grad rates in recent years:

MAY 2016	92.9
DEC 2017	93.9
MAY 2018	90
DEC 2019	94.7
MAY 2020	93.5

LILY SCHOLAR NOMINEE

Congratulation to Rebecca Rzeszut, the School Town of Highland nominee to become a 2022 Lily Scholar.

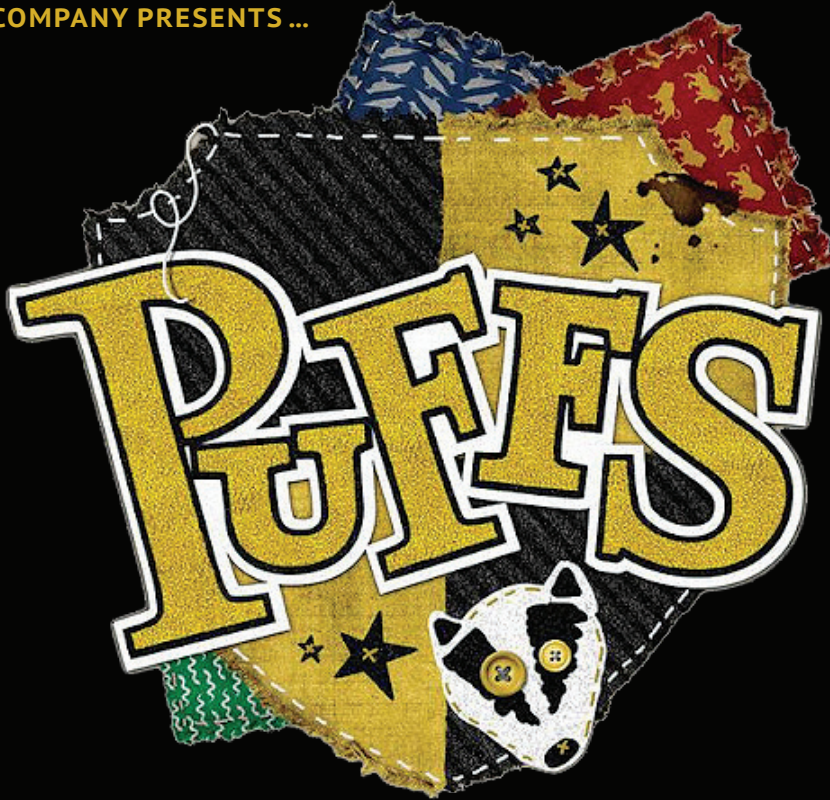
The senior, who plans to study comparative religions in college, has had a full and productive academic career that includes a roster of extracurriculars. She leads the HHS Girl Up Club, an organization that advocates and fundraises for girls around the world; is a member of the Indiana branch of the Youth Advocacy Team, a student-run nonprofit that advocates for legislation to benefit youth in Louisiana and Indiana; and serves as concertmaster of the Northwest Indiana Symphony Youth Orchestra.

"I feel good about how I have improved – both academically and as a person – and continue to improve as time goes by," she said. "I am excited at the possibility of studying topics I am passionate about in college."

POWER HOUR TUTORING

All four elementary schools will continue offering Power Hour tutoring twice a week through the remainder of the year. Human Resources Director Ryan Erdelac said more than 250 students are taking part in the program that has already proven effective in filling gaps in reading and math in a small group setting. "This is an invaluable service we are able to provide for children and families," he said. "We couldn't do it without the collaborative efforts of our principals, teachers, aides and parents."

HIGHLAND THEATRE
COMPANY PRESENTS ...



... OR 7 INCREASINGLY EVENTFUL YEARS
AT A CERTAIN SCHOOL OF MAGIC AND MAGIC

A COMEDIC RETELLING OF THE POPULAR BOOK
SERIES ABOUT A CERTAIN BOY WIZARD

FRIDAY ★ NOVEMBER 19 ★ 7 PM
SATURDAY ★ NOVEMBER 20 ★ 7 PM
SUNDAY ★ NOVEMBER 21 ★ 2 PM

FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFORMATION
WWW.HIGHLANDTHEATRECOMPANY.ORG

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR

Join our talented high school and middle school choir students for a hauntingly good time featuring your favorite Halloween songs from movies, classical music and Masses for the Dead. Admission is free.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, **October 12**

WHERE: Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High School, 9135 Erie St.

FALL BAND CONCERT

Join us as we celebrate autumn's arrival with instrumentals provided by our high school and middle school bands. Admission is free.

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Thursday, **October 14**

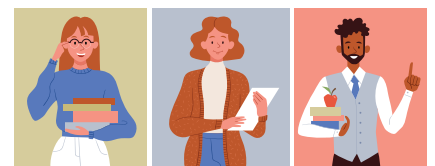
WHERE: Monbeck Auditorium at Highland High School, 9135 Erie St.

BECOME A BOOSTER!

The Highland Performing Arts Boosters are a member network of music and theater enthusiasts, parents, students and community partners who support performing arts in Highland.

Help us promote interest in music and theater and provide support and financial backing for the School Town of Highland Performing Arts Programs. Become a member today!

INFO: Learn more on our website at www.hpabi.org or our Facebook page @highlandperformingarts. Questions? Call (219) 922-5610, ext. 1047.



SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

The School Town of Highland is always looking for good substitute teachers. This is the perfect job for someone who would like to work a few days a month or work specific days in the week and earn a little extra money.

Certified substitute teachers earn \$80 per day; non-certified substitute teachers earn \$70 per day. Interested candidates must complete an online application. Visit highland.k12.in.us, click on **Personnel** and navigate to **Employment Opportunities**.

INFO: For information on how to register with the district as a substitute teacher, please contact Kathy Grzyski at (219) 924-7400.