

# SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF

Together, We are the Champions for Children in Poughkeepsie City School District

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VOLUME 5



## Poughkeepsie recognizes social workers

Poughkeepsie City School District Social Workers	
ELC at Smith School	Toni Nicolich
Clinton Elementary	Amanda Delaney
Krieger Elementary	Darlene Lewis
Morse Elementary	Elizabeth Carol-Clarke
Warring Elementary	Annie Happel
Poughkeepsie Middle School	Simone Stewart
Poughkeepsie High School	Lizabeth Madara

March 3-9 marks National School Social Worker Week. School Social Workers impact the lives of students addressing barriers to learning and increasing successful educational and academic outcomes. Poughkeepsie City School District social workers are vital in supporting students through evidence-based academic, social, emotional and behavioral interventions. Undergirding their professional responsibilities is a passion and deep seeded love for children.

Please join the district in recognizing the critical role school social workers play in helping all children achieve their highest potential by expressing gratitude for their relentless pursuit to support and champion children.

## City honors heroes, PCSD grad with monuments

The steel that was used to construct the memorial at Corey Ingram Circle and the Champions Walk already appears rusty. That's purposeful, Christopher Kroner said. "It creates a resilient rust shell around the entire surface," said the principal of MASS Design Group, which designed the new monuments that stand at the roundabout connecting Smith Street and Creek Road. "You'll actually see that rust deepen into deep, darkened orange. ... You should see the complexion of all that steel evolve over time and showcase its resilience."

Corey Ingram Circle, named for a former Poughkeepsie High School graduate who died while serving in the U.S. Navy, and the Champions Walk were dedicated Thursday in a ceremony at the Boys & Girls Club on Smith Street. Numerous elected officials and community leaders spoke in honor of the six Poughkeepsie residents honored.

The symbols were created to honor the City of Poughkeepsie's past and inspire future generations, said their creators, who envision the Champions Walk to grow and stand the test of time, like the steel with which it's built.



A memorial for Petty Officer First Class Corey Ingram, a PHS graduate (above), a steel monument at Corey Ingram Circle (bottom left); and the Champions Walk (bottom right), were dedicated Thursday.







**Poughkeepsie City School District Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser addresses the crowd at the Boys & Girls Club on Smith Street Thursday.**

While the Poughkeepsie Alliance had already begun discussions on how to use the area of the traffic circle to honor the city's past and as a gateway to the north side, it was Ingram's death that helped crystallize the ideas. Ingram was a 28-year-old naval technician serving on the USS John McCain when it collided with a 600-pound tanker off the coast of Malaysia on Aug. 21, 2017. He was posthumously promoted to the rank of petty officer first class. Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser, speaking at the event Thursday, said Ingram's life can be defined by his contributions "to the joy of others through his affability and keen ability to bring smiles and laughter" to his classmates, and by ensuring "that the freedoms we enjoy as citizens are protected," through his nine years in the Navy. Rosser also

noted following Ingram's death his family set up an annual scholarship for a deserving Poughkeepsie senior. While the Corey Ingram Circle itself was named in June 2018, the monument – steel pillars surrounding the inside of the traffic circle bearing the word "Poughkeepsie," and an informational display outside the circle bearing the words "INGRAMS WE TRUST" – was dedicated Thursday along with the Champions Walk. The Walk is composed of five pillars of steel each bearing the names and details of five of the city's most important contributors: the late Barbara Jeter-Jackson, former Dutchess County Legislator, city Common Council member and Poughkeepsie school board member; the late Lorraine Roberts, a former Poughkeepsie teacher and community activist; the late Theodore "Tree" Arrington, the founder of the R.E.A.L. Skills Network; former Fifth Ward Common Council member Perinella "Penny" Lewis; and Wesley Lee, the founder of Saving At Risk Youth for Corporate America. State Sen. Rob Rolison, who represents the 39th District and was city mayor at the time of Ingram's death, said the tragedy was "the catalyst" for the project's progression. "Corey brought this community together," Rolison said, "And gave all of you and others the opportunity to create this beautiful, beautiful space. "The great thing is," Rolison said, "there's lots of room there. There's going to be lots of other folks that are going to be there along Smith Street."

## Art display inspires confidence for Warring Elementary students

Dozens of pieces of artwork created by Warring Elementary School students are on display at Vassar College this week. The assortment of pieces are appearing as part of the 37th Annual John Iyoya Children's Art Exhibit, at the James W. Palmer III Gallery in the campus' college center. Warring art teacher Kathy Orza said her classes have been taking part in the show for five years. "They absolutely love it," Orza said. "They're so proud of their work, seeing it hung up outside the school. It gives them that pride and that confidence."

Orza said between 80 and 100 pieces from her classes, first grade to fifth, are part of the exhibition. The collection represents "a little bit of everything," with a balance of pieces chosen from each grade level. "In September I start out the year doing certain projects and I just try to pick some of the better pieces," she said. "I try to save some from each project we do. I have some paintings, some clay. Some representing Hispanic heritage, some Black History Month portraits." This year's poster advertising the event features a painting of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Orza created with some of her fifth-grade students. It was one of two such portraits, with the second given to Superintendent Dr. Eric Jay Rosser ([See Superintendent Brief Issue No. 43, Volume 5](#)).



**Dozens of pieces of artwork from Warring Elementary students are on display at Vassar College this week.**



Artwork from Warring Elementary students spans a variety of styles, including Tim Burton-inspired portraits, left, and Mexican Molasses, right, among others.

families. Orza called the event "truly wonderful," noting the college holds a reception with cookies and juice. "The students were thrilled to see their art out in the community," Orza said. "That's what it is all about. I was as excited as they were."

The free exhibit is open from 2-5 p.m. through Friday. Vassar College is at 124 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie.

## White brings classroom experience to middle school assistant principal's role

Pierce White felt it was time for a change and came to the Poughkeepsie City School District. The Rochester native assumed the role as assistant principal for sixth graders at the middle school Jan. 8 after being a social studies teacher for more than a decade.

It's his first position as an administrator since attaining his master's degree to be a school administrator from Hunter College in 2023.

"I felt as though I had reached a point where I had learned a wealth of knowledge in the classroom and it was the perfect time to make the move to start implementing the knowledge I had in something else and helping it grow there," he said.

White previously taught high school social studies in Harlem for three-and-a-half years, and was a middle school social studies teacher in Brooklyn for seven years and Washington, D.C., for two years.

White plans to use this knowledge from the classroom into his new role at Poughkeepsie.

"I saw how important middle school is to the success of students in high school," he said. "I want to help create the best middle school experience as possible for them. I hope I'm able to help middle schoolers become the best version of themselves here, and along with the teachers, make sure they are as prepared as possible for when they enter high school, to be successful there and for that to help them with the rest of their lives once they leave here."

White spent his first month in Poughkeepsie building relationships with staff, students and people in the Poughkeepsie City School District community.

"I've learned the staff are very dedicated to the students," he said. "They want the best. They're trying to help the students reach their highest potential."

"I have learned the students are very enthusiastic in a number of areas."

White earned his bachelor's degree in history with a minor in Spanish language and culture, and his first master's degree in adolescent education, both from the University of Rochester. He enjoys traveling, running, cooking and going to concerts and museums.



Pierce White joined PCSD in January as a middle school assistant principal.