

RAYCOVE ACADEMY NOTES

The Newsletter of Bay Cove Academy



Career Counselor Sherri Teixeira and Coordinator of Career Development and Transition Kathleen Pignone with the school award



Coordinator of Student Services Rick Nault updated his CPR skills along with other staff this winter. Here he demonstrates his mastery of and dedication to his new skills.

Career Development Program Receives U.S. Labor Award

By Kathleen Pignone

On December 12, Principal Judy Gelfand, outgoing Career Development Director Lynn Gonsalves, Coordinator of Career Development and Transition Kathleen Pignone, and Career Counselor Sherri Teixeira were presented with Bay Cove's national award for ongoing demonstration of outstanding effectiveness in preparing youth for careers and independent living and learning. Emily DeRocco, assistant secretary of the Education and Training Administration of the Department of Labor, presented the award to Bay Cove Academy's

Career Development Program. She spoke with youth representatives in a town hall discussion format. Students spoke about their programs and their thoughts on working with youth and workforce development.

The National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) sponsored a youth policy forum on Capitol Hill with congressional and other national policy staff. Kathleen Pignone represented the Career Development Program for the discussion on "Youth Employment Programming that Works." Howard Knoll, Chair of the

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Bay Cove Academy prepares for MCAS

In late April, sophomores across Massachusetts will face the MCAS exam, a test with high stakes – graduation from high school. In an effort to prepare its students for the exam, Bay Cove Academy has instituted three test-preparation classes.

The first class focuses on the Math test, while the second and third classes look at the “Language and Literature” and “Composition” sections of the English test, respectively. All of the classes are designed to give students an understanding not only of test content, but also of the formats of the tests and of test-taking strategies.

“Test anxiety is a big obstacle for many of our kids,” said Megan Mercier, Bay Cove’s Education

Director. “We’re hoping that giving them this heads-up, familiarizing them with what’s coming will relieve a lot of that tension and let them put their skills to work.”

“They’re actually interested because they know it’s important,” said Ryan Camire, Bay Cove’s math teacher. His class has a strong emphasis on test-taking strategy, he said, helping students to identify the “key-words” in questions that offer clues about a problem’s solution. He gave the example of

“We’re hoping that familiarizing them with what’s coming will let them put their skills to work.”

the key-word “closest,” which should signal students to perform a rounding operation.


The composition class, headed by John Brister, takes a similar approach, helping students to identify key-words such as “compare and contrast,” “describe,” and “explain” in

writing prompts. Armed with the knowledge of how the tests are graded, the class then develops strategies for responses that are well-organized and detailed, outlining a five-step writing process which is modified for short and long-answer questions.

“Our focus is preparing [students] for what they’ll find on the test,” said Sarah Cleary, who teaches the “Language and Literature” course. “We want them to practice so it becomes more comfortable for them.” Even looking at last year’s

test, it seems, can give students the jitters. To combat this, Cleary said, “we’re breaking the course down

into the different kinds of questions they’ll see from the most basic to the most complex, letting students try it out in a non-test-taking environment.”

All of the students at Bay Cove Academy are eligible for at least some of the accommodations afforded to students, which include an untimed test period, dictionaries, calculators, and having questions read aloud. Given eight weeks of preparation, however, Bay Cove staff hope fewer accommodations will be needed and the problem behaviors that often accompany test anxiety will diminish. But most of all, students and staff are looking for improved performance and the heightened sense of self-esteem that any genuine achievement will produce. 

Bay Cove Academy gratefully acknowledges the recent support of the following:

Avaya
Employment Resources Inc.
Mrs. Ilene Klein
Lehman Brothers
Ms. Sally Thompson
TJ Convenience Store

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ACADEMY NOTES

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Career Development Program Receives PEPNet Award

PEPNet Working Group, moderated the discussion with adults and youth representatives focusing on funding concerns, recruiting and retaining qualified staff and best practices in programming with youth.


The PEPNet Institute was held on December 13 and 14 and was sponsored by the National Youth Employment Coalition. The conference brought together professionals in the field of youth employment/development to focus on issues of effective practice. Dr. Crystal Arlene



Emily DeRocco of the U.S. Dept. of Labor; Lynn Gonsalves, Judy Gelfand, Sherri Teixeira, and Kathleen Pignone of Bay Cove; Ivan Charner and David Brown of NYEC. Bay Cove received the national award for outstanding effectiveness on December 12 in Washington D.C.

Kuykendall, an educator, attorney, human relations expert and motivational presenter, gave the opening address. Dr. Kuykendall shared her insights on the importance of programs that provide support, employment, and workforce development for today's youth. She spoke about

many of the obstacles likely to preclude efforts to bring out the best in all youth as we prepare them for employment and meaningful futures. She also highlighted strategies to facilitate successful youth programming, policy preparation, academic enrichment, employment opportunities, training, and workforce development. Sherri Teixeira and Kathleen Pignone presented on panels focusing on working with youth with challenges and speaking about the PEPNet self-assessment and application process.

Both the awards ceremony and institute were worthwhile and motivational. It was inspiring to hear the testimony from youth involved with the programs. It was an honor to receive this award and rewarding to know that the work we do on a daily basis benefits the students here at Bay Cove Academy. 

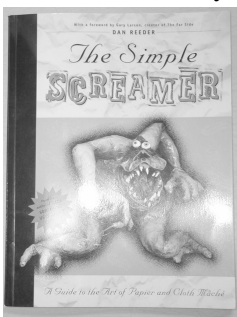
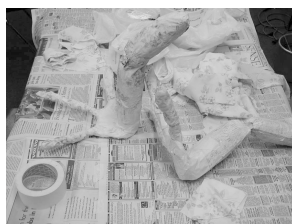
Avaya Sends Bay Cove Students to the Slopes

Avaya (www.avaya.com) provided a generous gift this winter, which paid for a school-wide field trip to Wachusett Mountain in January. Many students had never been skiing before and were thrilled at the opportunity. Thank you Avaya!



Art Class Makes Many Monsters

Students in teacher Alison Hodge’s art class are making 3 foot tall monsters using papier mâché and their imaginations—and having a fun, sloppy time while they’re at it. The project, known as Simple Screamers, is inspired by Dan Reeder’s book *The Simple Screamer* (below). These pics show the early stages of monster creation. Look for more advanced stages in the next issue of Academy Notes....



Upcoming Events

April	
1	Term 4 begins
15-19	Spring Break
May	
10	Mid-term point
17	Mid-term reports
June	
14	Term 4 ends
21	Teachers turn in Term 4 grades
17-21	Student Field Trip Week

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