

December 2015



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

the Virtual View

Season's Greetings!

Can you believe how fast this school year is going? It seems like only yesterday we felt the excitement of a new school year and I wished you and your students much success and joy in learning this year. Now we are already approaching another holiday season and the end of the first semester! I see from the newsletter articles you submitted that your students are indeed experiencing success and joy in learning. From a new rock and roll course to learning about sea turtles and cleaning up Florida's beaches, your students are actively engaged in learning. We are proud to share your accomplishments and events with the larger world through this newsletter.

We in the virtual education office wish everyone a happy holiday season and hope you have time to relax and make new and cherished memories with close family and friends. We look forward to working with you in 2016 and hearing more great news about the success and joy your students are experiencing through the virtual learning opportunities you provide. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year from the tower!

Sally, Sandy, Lisa, Meagan and Pradeep

Florida Online Course Catalog

The Florida Online Course Catalog is growing and becoming a wonderful resource for students and parents! (<http://app4.fldoe.org/coursecatalog/>)

Did you know there are many useful features available in the catalog? For example, the catalog includes two easy-to-use help resources located at the top of the catalog page. These are the Online Tutorial which is a scripted PowerPoint presentation demonstrating how to use the catalog and a User's Guide which provides a catalog overview and guidance about how to search for a specific course and how to provide course feedback. Directly below these help resources, catalog users can access the course catalog statistics that display the total courses, total unique courses and total providers listed in the catalog. The catalog currently includes over 10,500 courses!

Check out the catalog today and "Like" us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/EducationFL/?rf=155081801181251>

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“To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting.” - Edmund Burke

Turtle Talk in Brevard

On September 30th, Brevard Virtual School (BVS) Gifted QUEST students travelled to Pelican Park to hear from experts presenting a Turtle Talk, followed by a Beach Clean-Up to help preserve our turtles' natural habitat.

The Turtle Talk, given by Tiffany Gray with the Barrier Island Sanctuary in Melbourne Beach, relies on funds from the Sea Turtle License Plate Grant to provide the Sea Turtle Academy Program for our community. The Beach Clean-Up, hosted by Bryan Bobbitt, works with Keep Brevard Beautiful (KBB), a non-profit organization that provides supplies that enabled our BVS students to secure a substantial amount of trash from the shoreline including Mylar balloons, broken glass, plastic wrappers, cigarette butts, Styrofoam cups and more. All of this trash pollutes our environment and threatens our turtle population. While on the Clean-Up, students found a baby turtle egg and learned how our community helps these important reptiles to flourish on our Florida coasts. BVS students of Dr. Rogers recently attended a Beach Clean-Up hosted by KBB, also.



Thank you to our Gifted QUEST students who, along with their Gifted teachers Mrs. Arrouet and Mrs. Cheshire, decided to “take ownership” of our beaches by learning how turtles and other wildlife need our help. With the help of the Barrier Island Sanctuary and Keep Brevard Beautiful, our BVS Gifted QUEST students can now empower others as they spread this “eye-opening” news: our human actions can hurt or help sea turtles and other precious wildlife.

To learn more visit: <http://keepbrevardbeautiful.org/> Submitted by Tia Gaspar

Lake Virtual Student Honors Veterans



Benjamin Mack-Johnson, a 13 year-old 8th grade Lake County Virtual School student, has launched a special project to honor our veterans. The World War II Veterans History Project was started to preserve the memory of the men and women who fought to save our country and the world. The main feature of the project is a website Benjamin runs at www.ww2veteranshistoryproject.com. He records a 20 question video interview with WWII veterans and shares their stories on the site. In an effort to encourage people to learn more about these veterans Benjamin is happy to provide the questions he uses for these interviews and to post interviews others provide. He also invites U.S. civilians who were actively involved in war efforts to contribute their stories. He hopes to inspire the younger generations to appreciate the sacrifices made by these men and women.

Submitted by Mike Elchenko

Future Physicists in Bay

Seven middle school students from Bay Virtual School with potential in the field of physics were inducted into the Future Physicists of Florida on October 29 at Florida State University's Panama City campus. Alan Bense, the former Florida House of Representatives Speaker, welcomed over 200 Bay County students to the event. Future Physicists of Florida recognizes physics as the gateway subject to careers in modern science, engineering, and technology. Speaker Bense was followed by keynote speaker, Dr. Mark Riley, a Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of Physics at Florida State University, who spoke on the mystery and imagination within the world of physics. As the inductees were announced, Dr. Paul Cottle, the founder of the Future Physicists of Florida, noted that Bay Virtual School was the first virtual school to have students inducted into the organization.



Submitted by Carra Summers

Hernando's Rockin' New Course

Hernando eSchool instructor, Dave Pletincks, launched a new virtual course, History of Rock, in August of 2015. To date, students are enjoying the course and enrollment requests are exceeding expectations!

The "History of Rock" is a full year virtual high school course that was created out of a partnership with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Hernando eSchool. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame opened their archives for the students to learn about the founding fathers and mothers of rock and roll. Students explore the decade of the 50's and artists like Bill Haley and His Comets, Chuck Berry, Fats Domino and Elvis. Students then travel into the 60's and discover the impact that folk music and protest rock had on an ever-changing America. Students learn about artists like Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, Simon and Garfunkel and Creedence Clearwater Revival and the major impact they had on the lives of American young people.

The unit on the women of rock introduces students to Janis Joplin, Pat Benetar and Grace Slick; women who forever changed the face of rock music for generations of women to follow. The British Invasion unit examines how America was primed for a change musically and why The Beatles and The Rolling Stones were just what the young American teens were looking for.

Finally, students look at the late 60's and the impact that Motown Records had on the careers of young African-American artists in Detroit. The Jackson Five, The Temptations and The Supremes were all artists who have inspired the pop and R&B artists we listen to today.

Through reading the biographies of all these artists and watching video footage of them in concerts and on TV talk shows, students learn how rock music evolved from it's earliest influences of country, hillbilly, rhythm and blues and gospel music.

Submitted by David Pletincks

New Clay National Honor Society Members Volunteer

Clay Virtual Academy (CVA) National Beta and National Honor Society members started the Fall Semester with the annual induction ceremony on September 24. Thirteen new members participated in the oath and pinning ceremony.



Following the ceremony, fall service projects began in full swing as members volunteered on September 30 at Asbury United Methodist Church in Orange Park to unload and set up 2,000 pumpkins for the church's annual pumpkin patch.

Making Strides in Clay



CVA students, teachers, staff, and parents recently participated in the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer, raising approximately \$800 for the walk on October 10. For the past three years CVA has participated in the event and CVA's Beta/NHS club has led the fundraising efforts. Students volunteered to prepare a dish for a teacher and staff luncheon, with donations going to the American Cancer Society. Students, teachers, staff and parents also raised funds online through the [Making Strides website](#).

Submitted by Jennifer Green

Hispanic Heritage Contest Winner Inspired by Sister!

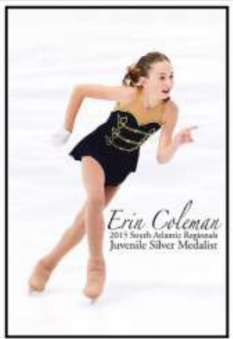
Governor Rick Scott and First Lady Ann Scott named Lee Virtual School (LVS) 6th grade student Julie Canete a winner of the Governor's Hispanic Heritage Essay Contest. Julie, the only middle school student (grades 6-8) to win the prestigious award, was recognized in Tallahassee and received a four-year Florida College Plan scholarship by Florida Prepaid College Foundation.

The theme for this year's essay and art contests was "Recognizing the Past, Honoring the Present, and Celebrating the Future." Students were asked to research and write an explanatory essay about a Hispanic person or event significant to Florida's past, present and/or future. The Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest was open to all Florida students in grades 4-12. Julie chose to write about her sister and her inspiring project "Mely's Dream Project" to help other hospitalized children find comfort. The essay was a personal, touching story about her hero.

"On behalf of the entire Lee Virtual School family we are extremely proud of Julie's academic accomplishments," said Principal Al Shilling. "Julie represents how Lee Virtual School continues to lead, not only Southwest Florida, but the entire state in academic achievement."



Lee Students Take Home Titles



LVS 9th Grader Erin Coleman recently finished 4th at the 2016 South Atlantic Regional Figure Skating Championships in the Intermediate Ladies Free Skate event. This is a tremendous accomplishment from such a dedicated athlete to compete at this level; having invested more than seven years in the sport and over 15 hours per week of training. The intermediate level is the second of five competitive levels within the U.S. Figure Skating qualifying system. By placing in the top four at her regional championship, Erin earned the opportunity to compete at the 2016 Eastern Sectional Figure Skating Championships, November 17-21, in Simsbury, CT. At this sectional event, Erin competed against other regional medalist and came in 7th place. Way to go, Erin!

LVS senior, Conlan Pottinger, took first place in the 77kg weight category at a USAW Olympic Lifting Competition in Orlando in October, bringing home the gold in his first meet. Conlan trains with Fireball Strength at CrossFit High Performance.

Submitted by Ann Taylor



Go, Grace, Go!



Congratulations to Bay Virtual School's Grace Johnson on her golf scholarship to Oklahoma Baptist University! Her proud virtual school administrators and family attended a signing ceremony and reception on November 18th. Grace plans to major in Education and minor in Ministry.

Submitted by Carra Summers

FLVS Full Time Unites Against Bullying

Many students and families have been directly and indirectly impacted by bullying. Florida Virtual School Full Time (FLVS FT) understands the damaging effect that both physical and cyberbullying can have on a student's social, emotional and academic well being. Their students, learning coaches and staff members are committed to fostering a safe, nurturing, bully-free zone that allows their students to thrive!

In recognition of Bullying Prevention Month, FLVS FT students, teachers and staff celebrated Unity Day on October 21st. They wore orange to show their school's stand against bullying and their support of kindness, tolerance and inclusion. Several family pets also joined in on the celebration!

Also in honor of Bullying Prevention Month, FLVS FT faculty and staff members signed the National Education Association's "Bully Free Starts With Me Pledge" to stand up for bullied students and display their commitment to creating a safe learning environment for all students.

FLVS FT is proud of their school community's efforts to put an end to bullying by promoting kindness and compassion.



FLVS Student Wins Missing Children's Day Contest

Brayden Hill, a Clermont native and student from Florida Virtual School Full Time (FLVS FT), was named the overall winner of the "Florida Missing Children's Day Statewide Essay Contest" hosted by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The 11-year-old fifth grader was chosen for his essay entitled, "This is How I Stay Safe All Day." As the statewide winner, Brayden and his family went to the Florida Capitol for this year's Florida Missing Children's Day, which was held on Sept. 14. In addition to being honored, he received a trophy, a check for \$100 and a trip to Universal Studios.



FLVS Joins in on Hour of Code

We live in a world surrounded by technology and we know that whatever field our students choose to go into as adults, their ability to succeed increasingly hinges on understanding how technology works. That's why FLVS is joining in on the largest learning event in history: The Hour of Code, during Computer Science Education Week, December 7-13. Teachers and students are planning to help spread the word.

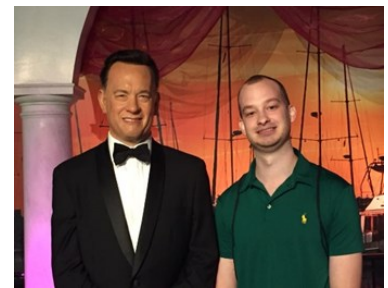
For more information on how to get involved visit <http://hourofcode.com/us>.

Submitted by Suzan Kurdak

OCVS Students Keep Busy in the Community

In October, students and parents from Orange County Virtual School (OCVS) participated in two fun and exciting field trips! First was a trip to the Orlando Eye (the largest observation wheel on the East Coast), Madame Tussaud's wax museum, and Sea Life Aquarium. High schoolers learned about the physics of the Orlando Eye and the difference between a Ferris wheel and an observation wheel. Middle School students learned about the history and accomplishments of Madame Tussaud and how wax figures are made. The second field trip was to visit the Orange County Regional History Center. The five-story museum contains exhibits of Florida historical information and artifacts dating back to 12,000 years ago. Students also got to participate in a fun mock trial in the original Orange County Court House. The next exciting field trip will be an educational trip to Sea World, where students will learn about threatened and endangered ocean life, as well as how Sea World takes care of and rehabilitates the animals.

The OCVS 'Do Something' Club had an event at the Second Harvest Food Bank. It was a wonderful day bonding with others as well as giving back to the community. They were able to build 100 family boxes that will feed 100 families!!! In addition they filled over 60 snack boxes and water boxes along with many candy boxes from the recent holiday.



OCVS Principal Receives Award



Orange County Virtual School Principal, Brandi Gurley, was honored by Florida Distance Learning Association (FDLA) at their annual conference. Congratulations, Principal Gurley on your accomplishments and dedication as an Innovative Leader in Distance Learning K-12 Education!

Submitted by Lacey Anderson

Second Annual Virtual Great American Teach In

During the week of November 16-20, students and parents from around the state joined more than 10 guest speakers for this groundbreaking event.. This year, the Virtual Great American Teach In was hosted jointly by Pasco eSchool and Seminole County Virtual School using Google Hangouts. A complete list of speakers, and recordings of the sessions is available on the following website:

<http://eschool.pasco.k12.fl.us/vgati-2015/#>

We look forward to continuing this tradition and expanding its reach!

A promotional graphic for the "2nd Annual Virtual Great American Teach-In" held from November 16-20, 2015. The graphic features a central logo with a star and stripes design. Below the logo, there are several small portraits of the guest speakers, each with their name and title. The speakers listed are: Nate & Wendy (YouTube Sensations), Sgt. Jennifer Zoccoli (Pasco Sheriff's Office), Holly Holmes (Google Advertising Account Manager), Mawi Asgedom (CEO of Maax Learning), Heather Burch (Author of Young Adult Novels), Stefan Defregger (Professional Soccer Player), Kirsten Joyer (Professional Singer), Mike Kisow (Educational Software Sales), and Yvette Salvatico (Strategic Foresight & Futures Thinking). At the bottom, it says "Please visit eschool.pasco.k12.fl.us for more information".

Virtual ASL Teacher Pays a Special Visit to His Students

As a part of a continuing partnership with Godby High School and Leon County Virtual School, an American Sign Language Instructor from Pasco eSchool traveled to Tallahassee to visit some of the students they share. During his visit, Mr. Goutoufas was able to provide live discussion-based assessments in lieu of video-based assignments. He was also able to help students learn how to use their smartphone to record videos for required video submissions and collaboration projects. This visit demonstrated both schools' commitment to ensure that all students will have greater academic success without compromising the quality of learning.



As a bonus, Mr. Goutoufas watched the football game, in which many of his students played. It was a very close, exciting game until the opposing team made a eight-point gain at the end. Final score: Lincoln 42, Godby 35.

Pasco Completes the Cardboard Challenge



During the October Live Lesson Day, students and parents watched a brief video about Caine's Arcade and joined the 2015 Global Cardboard Challenge. November's Live Lesson Day for Pasco eSchool's elementary program included many reasons to be thankful! Beyond the wonderful, integrated lessons with a dedicated team of teachers, their youngest Ninjas used their Maker Space time to build a working arcade! To play the arcade games they built, students donated canned goods in lieu of the admission price. You can learn more about the Cardboard Challenge here:

<http://cardboardchallenge.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-Global-Cardboard-Challenge-Info-Sheet-and-FAQ.pdf>

Submitted by Joanne Glenn

Duval Virtual Increases Access for Students

Duval Virtual Instruction Academy (DVIA) is striving to provide innovative options for students to access blended and virtual learning opportunities through both online and live venues. Equally exciting for the school is the growth of its part-time program serving district students enrolled in brick and mortar schools. New options include:

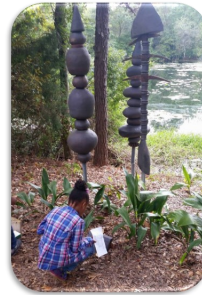
- Working towards every high school in Duval County operating a virtual learning lab for students to complete their online courses during the traditional school day. These labs will be staffed with certified instructors who will work in conjunction with DVIA teachers to support the learning needs of students pursuing online credits.
- Assisting several middle schools to provide creative ways for students to participate during and after school hours in online learning too. This initiative is directed at combating the lack of technological access at home.
- Expanding student support opportunities to include daytime and evening hours both in person at their LIVE Campus and online at their Virtual Campus. They have found that increased support = increased student involvement.
- Offering support for a variety of special needs populations in the district, including teen-parenting students, hospital/homebound students, students with disabilities and students needing additional credits for promotion and/or graduation.
- Assisting traditional and other schools with increasing curricular options in subjects for which they do not have enough students to staff a full-time teacher. For example, DVIA is expanding the world language options for schools by offering virtual courses that would not otherwise be available in the brick and mortar setting. Of course, it is a convenient option for students needing to meet their online requirement for graduation.

By increasing their presence in the district, all students are increasingly enjoying the benefits of DVIA's innovative and exciting opportunities.

Submitted by Kristin Smith

K¹² Students Head Outdoors

K¹² Florida teachers are having fun with their students at local field trips! Last month the Florida teachers met with families across the state to experience local fun! They visited Sweet Season Farms in Santa Rosa, FL; Cornfusion Crop Maze in Lakeland, FL and the Jacksonville Arboretum and Gardens! The students had a blast and learned a lot too!



#ZeroBullying at K¹²

Through this campaign, K¹² raised awareness around cyber bullying. They reviewed the importance of internet safety and encouraged each family to sign the pledge!



Submitted by Kristen Randolph

News From the Tower

Virtual Program Provider and Online Course Provider approval processes currently happening at DOE. The department will announce new providers in January.

New for database reporting this year:

- New edit to capture Florida certificate number for DOE-approved provider teachers. Please be sure to obtain this information from your approved virtual provider partners.
- New Appendix GG in the DOE Database Manual includes assigned provider codes for DOE-approved online course providers. These provider codes are reported for school 7006. Please still report virtual instruction program (VIP) provider codes for school 7001.
- Other noteworthy news to report is our continued interest in online learning for rural students. We have connected the **Regional Educational Laboratories (REL Southeast) with the North East Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC) and the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC)** to collaborate on how to improve educational opportunities for rural students through online learning. Thanks to the research alliance and the consortia for joining together to support and rally around this very important endeavor!



The next newsletter will be published in March. Please submit articles and pictures to virtualeducation@fldoe.org