Three Seniors Awarded the Ralph and Janet Capasso Scholarship

By: Diane DiChiara

On Thursday, May 25th, the Wappingers Congress of Teachers awarded the Ralph & Janet Capasso Scholarship to three high school seniors. The scholarship honors Ralph Capasso, former president of the WCT from 1973 through 1990. Ralph, a gentleman, scholar, and union activist with the support of his wife, Janet, made a difference in the lives of thousands of teachers, students, and their families.

This year, 16 students applied and the parents of last year’s scholarship winners interviewed five prospective applicants. To be considered, students must submit a resume that includes major areas of study, volunteer experiences, school/community activities, and awards, as well as an official transcript, letters of recommendation, and an essay. Many thanks to Paul Lander, Mary Turi, and Shareen Whitehouse for all of their work on the scholarship and for setting up a lovely reception.

The 2017 scholarship recipients are Jack Irvin, son of Gayhead teacher Maureen Irvin, Hannah LaSusa, daughter of Brinckerhoff teacher Brian LaSusa, and Hailey Neevel, daughter of Brinckerhoff teachers John and Karen Neevel. Jack, Hannah, and Hailey each received $2,000 to help defray upcoming college costs.

Congratulations to the scholarship winners (left to right): Hailey Neevel (going to FIT), Jack Irvin (going to Marymount Manhattan College), and Hannah LaSusa (going to FIT)

WCT President, Pasquale Delli Carpini, addressing the reception attendees
Scholarship Recipient Jack Irvin

By Paul Lander

Jack Irvin is the son of Maureen Irvin, a fifth-grade teacher at Gayhead Elementary School. This fall, Jack will attend Marymount Manhattan College in New York City where he plans on studying digital journalism and screenwriting.

Jack is an early admissions student at Dutchess Community College, where he carried a 3.85 GPA into the Spring semester. He has taken a variety of bridge courses, including Introduction to Communications Media, Introduction to Media Writing, Composition I and II, and Public Speaking, that will serve him well at Marymount Manhattan and allow him to quickly settle into core courses.

While attending John Jay High School, Jack remained active in the music and theater departments. In particular, he's been a Costume Crew Chief for Proscenium since 2015, and a member of the Chamber Choir since 2013. He was also a member of the Art Crew and the Gay Straight Alliance, and he was the recipient of an Honor Thespian from the International Thespian Society. In addition to balancing his school work and outside interests, Jack works part-time at Starbucks in Poughkeepsie.

Identifying influential people comes easy to Jack. The first is Candice Ruffalo, the Choral Director at John Jay. "We've had lots of meaningful conversations," he says. The second is his Aunt Rose. "She's given me a real-life path." Jack says he will call upon their sage advice as he prepares to navigate college life in Manhattan – what he comfortably calls a small fish in a big ocean.

Scholarship Recipient Hannah LaSusa

By Shereen Whitehouse

Hannah LaSusa is the daughter of Brian LaSusa of Brinckerhoff Elementary School. Hannah is currently a senior at Arlington High School. She will attend the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City in the fall. Hannah is interested in design and hopes to be a designer in the future.

Hannah is a member of the National Honor Society, the Italian Honor Society and has also been the recipient of the Outstanding Admiral Award. During high school, Hannah has been involved in many activities including FBLA, Band, Trim Music Honor Society, and Jujitsu. Her class rank is 98/842.

Hannah began taking jujitsu at the age of seven and always wanted to teach her own class. She accomplished this goal at the age of fourteen. She became a Sensei and began teaching classes where she enjoyed working with the children. Hannah's great-grandmother has most influenced her life so far. Hannah said Harriet Tubman inspires her because, "she put herself in danger for others."

Hannah presented herself to the committee as a poised, warm, friendly, and goal oriented young lady. In 10 years' time, Hannah would like to see herself establishing her brand as a fashion designer.
Scholarship Recipient Hailey Neveel

By Mary Turi

Hailey Neveel is the daughter of Karen and John Neveel who both teach at Brinckerhoff Elementary School. Hailey is a senior at John Jay High School and will be attending the Fashion Institute of Technology in the fall majoring in textile design. She is ranked 58 out of 505 students in her class and is a member of both the Italian and National Honor Societies.

Hailey is a very bright, hardworking, and focused young lady. Fashion has always been her passion and she has taken many classes at FIT and Marist. She spent two weeks in Florence, Italy studying her craft and learning about Italian fashion and art history.

What also impressed us about Hailey was her willingness to share her talents by helping others. She is making dresses and other clothes for an organization called Little Dresses for Africa. They provide clothes to young women in Africa and Hailey plans to continue to support this organization when she attends college.

Hailey's accomplishments make her a very deserving recipient of one of this year's Ralph and Janet Capasso scholarships, and we enthusiastically select her. Hailey's hard work, dedication, and strong work ethic will no doubt lead her to continued success.

Italian Honor Society - Getting Involved with an Earthquake Relief Fundraiser

Following a devastating series of earthquake in central Italy’s most prominent regions, John Jay’s Italian Honor Society, Società, intervened in grand style on April 21st.

After four months of consistent and dedicated work, Signora Fusco and the members of Società hosted a fun-filled night of eating, raffling, and recognition: an event intended to raise money for the earthquake victims. Students transformed the cafeteria into an Italian-inspired venue, complete with abundant homemade decorations, a kids’ crafts table, photo booth, and—perhaps most importantly—food. With the assistance of gracious donations from local business sponsors, both big and small, the Honor Society provided a full-on banquet for guests, including a variety of Italian dishes. Following dinner, students raffled off an assortment of great gifts, from food items to an evening at the theater. The night proved a great success, and Italian Honor Society raised a generous $5,000 donation to be given to the town of Amatrice. The region’s famous dish, “bucatini all’Amatriciana,” is a recipe taught to students at the school of hospitality and hotel management. The donation will help in the rebuilding of the school. This is the true spirit of “community!”
An Open Letter to the Leadership of the Wappingers Congress of Teachers

Hello, to all my fellow WCT brothers and sisters, and especially the WCT Executive Board, and all the other leaders of our great Union. As I approach my retirement at the end of the 2016/2017 school year, I wanted to take some time to write all of you and express my sincere thanks, for all you do. We are so lucky! As I look back at my career, I could not be happier to be part of such a wonderful organization, the WCT.

We, as teachers in New York State, have so much to be thankful for. As I speak with colleagues and friends, who are also approaching retirement, things may not look as good. Yes, many of my friends are looking at retirement much differently. Many of them are looking for health care, and wondering and worrying if their savings plans are going to keep up with them as they begin to enter retirement. I would not want to change places with any of these people. I am so grateful for the benefits we enjoy - pensions, health care, 403-B’s, and many more. To have your health insurance follow you into retirement is an unbelievable benefit. These are benefits that all Americans should have.

I know what the Executive Board, and the leadership of the WCT does every day, and how much time you devote to the Union. Your work, may go unnoticed by many people. However, you safeguard many of the benefits and working conditions that we enjoy. You are very much appreciated, now and forever. You are a great group of people, and as a 31-year member of the WCT, I applaud you and say thank you very much. Keep up the great work in the future, and thank you for looking out for each and every member of the Wappingers Congress of Teachers.

In solidarity,
Michael P. Lyons (Sheafe Road Elementary)

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

On Tuesday, June 6, 2017, there will be an informational general membership meeting in the auditorium of Roy C. Ketcham H.S. at 4:30 p.m. The check-in will start promptly at 3:30 p.m.

Your attendance is of utmost importance.

The following will be discussed:

**Constitutional Convention** by Michael Grubiak (NYSUT Regional Political Organizer: Hudson Valley)

We would like to encourage carpooling with other members to avoid traffic jams. Thank you in advance for your support.
Members’ Classified Ads

18 cu ft. Refrigerator/freezer  6 mo. Old. Purchased for grown kids who moved. Come and take it for $300 (originally $449)
Susan Roger  845-226-8285


This Week in Labor History

http://www.unionist.com

May 23, 1903 - An estimated 100,000 textile workers, including more than 10,000 children, strike in the Philadelphia area. Among the issues: 60-hour workweeks, including night hours, for the children.

May 24, 1883 - After 14 years of construction and the deaths of 27 workers, the Brooklyn Bridge over New York's East River opens. Newspapers call it "the eighth wonder of the world."

May 25, 1805 - Striking shoemakers in Philadelphia are arrested and charged with criminal conspiracy for violating an English common law that bars schemes aimed at forcing wage increases. The strike was broken.

May 26, 1824 - Men and women weavers in Pawtucket, R.I., stage nation's first "co-ed" strike.

May 27, 1935 - The U.S. Supreme Court declares the Depression-era National Industrial Recovery Act to be unconstitutional, about a month before it was set to expire.

May 28, 1912 - Fifteen women were dismissed from their jobs at the Curtis Publishing Company in Philadelphia for dancing the Turkey Trot. They were on their lunch break, but management thought the dance too racy.

Robert Seipp
NEA Retirement Specialist for the WCSD, Investment Advisor Representative,
GWN Securities, Inc.
Cell Phone: 914-204-9062
Email: rseipp@gwnsecurities.com
To learn more about me and my story, click here: https://vimeo.com/123792899

Security and Advisory Services offered through
WCT Welfare Trust Fund
Legal and Financial Days
2016-2017

- June 14, 2017
*If you would like to schedule an appointment, please call the union office at 227-5065.

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**LOCATION OF WCT OFFICE**

280 NEW HACKENSACK RD
WAPPINGERS FALLS, NY 12590
Located directly across from Dutchess County Airport
On the right 2.5 miles from Rt 9
On the left .25 miles from All Angels and 376 Intersection
Next to Mid-Hudson Podiatry

**Important Phone Numbers**

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<td>WCT OFFICE:</td>
<td>845-227-5065</td>
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<td>DANIEL H. COOK:</td>
<td>800-342-6651</td>
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<td>MIRKIN &amp; GORDON:</td>
<td>914-997-1576</td>
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<td>DAVIS VISION:</td>
<td>800-999-5431</td>
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<td>STACY BRAUN ASSOC:</td>
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