

WESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS REPORT

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Weston High School

Lisa Deorio, Principal

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PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

This month marks the closing of first semester with our midterm exams and the beginning of second semester with a look toward registering for the 2019-20 academic year. Pictured is "Daisy" Hoffman, our beloved therapy dog, who visits during midterms and finals along with "Nellie" Albright. I want to thank all of the class officers as well as the administrative team for providing healthy snacks and other treats during midterms to encourage and support our students. In addition, we would like to extend our appreciation to Ms. Hilary Misano for running two mindfulness workshops leading up to exams. In second semester I encourage all of you to follow us on social media as we have re-activated our Instagram and Twitter accounts. Please follow us on Twitter: @WestonHS_CT and Instagram: Weston_High_School_CT.



ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

On December 7, Westport Police Officer James Loomer brought his two K-9 dogs for a presentation for AP Psychology and Introduction to Psychology students. He showed the students how methods of learning, most specifically operant conditioning and positive reinforcements, are used to train the dogs to track humans and sniff out drugs or explosive devices. Students were amazed to see the abilities of the dogs and the intensive nature of the training. This was an excellent example of psychological principles in the real world. At the end of the presentation, some students were able to interact with the dogs. A special thank you goes to School Resource Officer, Joe Mogollon, for setting up this experience.



This past month, all tenth grade Modern World Studies students completed an inquiry benchmark investigation involving the Interwar period of 1919-1939. Students created their own inquiry questions, thesis statements, and defense through web-based instructional tools. With the help of library media specialist Ms. Snaith, as well as our Technology integrator Mr. Webster, students created web diagrams using Prezi and Google Sites to defend their investigation. This rigorous task highlighted the students' critical thinking, analysis, and problem-solving skills to understand how different elements of the time contributed to the start of the Second World War.

Students in Miss Conetta's Sociology class traveled to New York City to the local neighborhoods of Little Italy, Chinatown, and SoHo as part of their unit on Race, Ethnicity, and Culture in America. Students visited the different neighborhoods as a study of ethnic enclaves and their unique space in a larger city. As part of the various tasks on the field trip, students interviewed local civilians, tasted different cuisines, visited cultural centers, and identified certain architectural structures specific to each of the neighborhoods. The goal of this trip was for students to analyze how certain groups of people adapt in different settings, how spaces are specially designed to meet the needs of their inhabitants, and how enclaves create distinct cultural norms.



The Physical Education department invited Officer Mogollon, Officer Kim and Officer Curcio to teach self-defense to the senior classes. Students learned about situational awareness, which is useful for when one is in unfamiliar territory, and especially as they head off to college. They also actively took part in escape moves and strategies for self-advocacy.

Mr. Bill Greeley visited the Introduction to Economics students to talk about his career as a derivatives trader. He showed the class his trading terminal, and explained how commodities affect students on a daily basis. Mr. Greeley encouraged students to engage in current events, and pursue the markets that fascinate them most.



On Tuesday, January 8, Weston High School received approximately 200 trout eggs to raise as part of the national 'Trout in the Classroom' program. Students in the AP and Standard Environmental Science courses will take special care of the trout from now until May when the young fish hatchlings will be released into a local stream in Weston. The program is designed to teach students the importance of maintaining a healthy watershed ecosystem while also allowing students to participate firsthand in the conservation of local wildlife species. Special thanks to the Weston PTO who made this program possible through a generous educational grant.

Weston High was recognized as a **CT Green Leaf School**. In December, Laurel Kohl, a CT DEEP representative, honored Weston High School in a banner dedication ceremony in recognition of our school's commitment to pursuing sustainable initiatives. Last year, students Collin Socha and Matt Oshin, under the guidance of adviser Nancy Johnston, completed a rigorous school self-assessment which helped Weston High earn this special recognition. As a Green Leaf School, Weston High is committed to pursuing further initiatives to improve the health and well-being of both the Weston population and environment. With the help of the newly formed Weston High 'Green Team' Club, Weston aims to expand their environmental initiatives and is even in the process of pursuing national recognition as a Green Ribbon School.



Journalism students Katherine Franco, Tom Carlon, and Zoe Yung interviewed Will Haskell (the 22-year-old newly elected state senator representing the 26th District) for a journalism project. They will be submitting the interview for a NPR Podcast Challenge.

ATHLETICS

Esports finished 6th overall in the state and we're very proud of the team that participated. Mr. Ungar worked very hard with the team and built a very strong foundation for the future at our school. Esports returns in March for their second season, and Mr. Ungar is reporting an increasing number of students expressing interest.

Weston Athletics has joined forces with Joel Barlow High School and Abbot Tech High School to form an ice hockey team. The team is well represented by Weston athletes who in seven games (5-2) have accounted for 90% of the team's goals. Daniel McKiernan, Dante Esposito, Travis Nussbaum, and Ronan Duffy lead the high powered offense currently ranked 4th in CT Division III hockey rankings. Our team plays their home games at the Danbury Ice Arena.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

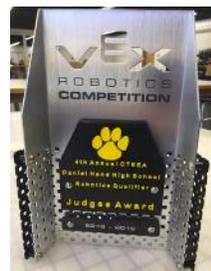
Weston High School received a \$500 grant from ExxonMobil and the Educational Alliance Program. The Educational Alliance Program is a nationwide initiative created by ExxonMobil to enhance math and science learning at K-12 institutions.

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS



Twenty-five Weston High School students auditioned for and participated in the CMEA Western Regional Music Festival the weekend of January 11 and 12 in Darien. These outstanding musicians spent two days preparing concert band, orchestra, jazz band and mixed choir pieces for concerts on Saturday with other high school musicians from our region. Our students worked hard and had a great musical experience!

The Weston High School Robotics team had their second VEX Robotics Tournament of the year on January 12. They competed against 60 other teams from 15 schools at the tournament. This event was a qualifying event for the New England Regional VEX Robotics Championships in Worcester, Massachusetts. The next tournament the team will attend will be at the University of New Haven on February 16.



Weston High School's chapter of the National Honor Society hosted two midterm study nights in the school library. Members of NHS were on hand to help students study for just about every subject. For those students not looking for help, it was a chance to gather with classmates to conduct some intense and productive study sessions. NHS hopes to sponsor more nights like this in the future to keep the studying going all year long.

ALUMNI NEWS

Alexander Ishin, Class of 2015, was asked to speak on behalf of the student body at Texas A&M University's December 15 graduation ceremony. [Click here](#) to read what Ishin had to say about his experience at Texas A&M.