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ITEM NO: 1.4

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

BOARD MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 13, 2024

OPENING ITEM: Outstanding Achievements

SUBMITTED BY: Mary Kamerzell, Superintendent

PRESENTED BY: Mary Kamerzell, Superintendent

I am pleased to highlight the following CFSD student and staff achievements:

School Counselor of the Year

Congratulations to Britney Griffith of Esperero Canyon Middle School (ECMS) who is Arizona's Counselor of the Year, an award sponsored by the Arizona School Counselors Association. Britney's nomination noted that she "embodies the true definition of a school counselor, and her passion and belief in the profession have no limits." Britney's accomplishments at ECMS include creating The Counseling Canyon, a dedicated counseling center, and leading the charge to offer monthly classroom lessons to all students.

Flinn Scholarship Finalists

CFHS Seniors Seth Rojas and Ruby Wray are among the recently named 36 Flinn Scholarship Finalists who will interview in March with the program's Selection Committee with the hope of becoming one of this year's 20 Flinn Scholars.

More than 1,000 Arizona high-school seniors applied in the fall for a chance at earning the merit-based 2024 Flinn Scholarship. The 80 Flinn Scholarship Semifinalists were previously announced in early January.

The 39th class of Flinn Scholars will receive funding for tuition, housing, meals, and study abroad--a value of more than \$130,000--and attend the Honors College at Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, or the University of Arizona in the fall.

Yearbook Award

The 2023 CFHS Falcon Yearbook received a 1st Place Award from the Arizona Scholastic Association. A small group of students were on staff last year to create the award-winning yearbook submission. They were Sofia Ali, Tanner Aros, Molly Brunell, Mia Cesarek, Sophia Cho, Kathryn Edmondson, Julia Ford, Chloe Gonzalez, Lucky Le, Ashlee Mendola, and Alli Wilt. Their teacher sponsors were Shireen Behzadi and Kim Gassman.

Teacher of the Year Finalists

This week, the CFSD Foundation announced its 5 finalists for the 2024 Teacher of the Year award. They are Kylie Baker, MZ Kindergarten; Noah Mickey-Colman, VV STEM Integration Specialist; Mary Florek, CV and SD Interdisciplinary Studies; Devon Inglee, MZ Art; and Casey Virgil, ECMS Science. Ultimately, two will be named Teachers of the Year, and three will be named Distinguished Educators.

Navy ROTC Program

CFHS Senior Eliza Cabrera has received the prestigious Navy ROTC Scholarship. It is awarded through a highly competitive national selection process. Recipients receive full tuition, books, educational fees and other financial benefits or room and board at many of the country's leading colleges and universities. Upon graduation, they are commissioned as officers in the unrestricted line Naval Reserve or Marine Corps Reserve.

DECA

CFHS DECA students competed at the District 3 conference at Cochise College in Sierra Vista on January 12. They competed in events that tested skills in marketing, management, finance, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Twelve (12) students scored highly and will move on to state competition: Aiden Amado, Jacob Bergthold, John Donnelly, Joaquin Islas, Andrew King, Lexcea King, Anissa Madrid, Sophia Malino, Ava Mercaldo, Kaylee Ornelas, Shubh Patel, and Zachary Wagenheim. DECA is sponsored by CFHS Teacher Jason Reinhardt.

Choir

High school choir members Senior Julia Jonas, Junior Ellaina Carnahan, Sophomore Jacqueline Foley, and Freshman Abigail Carnahan performed at the Arizona Tier 1 Solo & Ensemble Festival. All 4 singers received the highest possible rating of Superior and have qualified to advance to the Tier 2 festival. Their Choir Director is CFHS Teacher Jeff Evans.

Theatre Arts

Our high school theatre department did very well at the AZ Thespian Regional Festival on Saturday, January 20th. CFHS took home 14 Superiors and an Excellent in Acting and Musical Theatre Performance categories, a Superior in Short Film, an Excellent in Playwriting, and an Excellent in Scenic Design. In the Tech challenges, we received: first place in Cable Coiling, second place in knot tying, and first Place Overall. The actors: Vince Clark, Vivianna Colson, Sixx Elliott, Sofia Galina-Garcia, Wesley Geary, Charlotte Henderson, Haleigh Hinkle, Lance Jacobson, Kiera Kuehnle, Elise McFarlane, Robin Oxnam, Jaden Peterson, Miranndah Rivera, Keyanee Walls, and Jameson Westenskow. The technicians: Dorian Andrews, Vince Clark, Saki Grobe, Elise McFarlane, Robin Oxnam, Jasper Rolfe, and Jameson Westenskow. The CFHS Theatre Arts Teacher is Amy Byroad.

Science Olympiad

CFHS placed first at the Science Olympiad invitational tournament held at Casteel High School in Queen Creek on January 20. Congratulations to the team members and to their Teachers/Coaches Kristen Vanderford and Kevin Duong.

Blue Team members are Gwen Alviar, Elliot Aubrey, Francesca Barela, Ava Becker, Logan Curley, Riya Fadia, Jude Fell, Dean Gill, Ella Hennings, Max Henry, Max Irely, Gabi Malo-Molina, Sara Nielsen, Nina Raju, Thomas Scott, and Iliana Wisniewski. Silver Team members are Junchen (Jason) Jia, Liliana Kalish, Gordon Kim, Alex Lehrman, Fritz Mcgee, Brandon Mokhtarian, Raiden Smith, Caleb Vanderford, Ravindu Vithanachchi, Alex Wagonheim, Damion Welz-Rabe, and Cyrus Zhang.

VEX Robotics

The CFHS VEX Robotics Club participated recently in a VEX Robotics Challenge (VRC) at Sahuaro High School. This year's VEX Robotics event is titled *Over Under*, which addresses how the traditional methods of teaching science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) will not be enough to adequately prepare students for the complex world of the future.

During the design/build phase of the event, team members learned how to design, build, and program robots. CFHS had three teams. Each team consisted of six members. This was the first tournament for all team members. Team members were Nathan Adler, Yousif Ghassan Al-kassab, Isabella Ariew, Ingrid Benito, Samuel Cochran, Kristophe Fuentes, Morgan Guillaume, Keavy McManus, Molly Murry, Mud Stafford, and Sebastian Tokkaris. Their advisor is Engineering Teacher Bryan Reyes.

FIRST LEGO League

At the 2024 FIRST LEGO League State Championship, CFSD teams had a strong showing among the dozens of teams who participated from across Arizona. The competition was hosted by the Ira Fulton Schools of Engineering at Arizona State University.

The Escape Artists won the Engineering Excellence Award, which celebrates a team with an efficiently designed robot, an innovative project solution that effectively addresses the season challenge and great Core Values. *The Bright Light Benders* won the Breakthrough Award, which celebrates a team that made significant progress in their confidence and capability in both the Robot Game and Innovation Project and are a shining example of excellent Core Values. *Picture This!* won second place in Robot Design for their outstanding programming principles. *The Rockin' Robots* won ninth place in the Robot Game, successfully completing most of this season's robot missions.

Team members: Escape Artists - Sebastian Bonomolo, Lucas Byrne, Noah Chavez, Luke Danilowitz, Graham Martin, Brendan Suit, and Cillian Walsh. Their coach and mentors are Charlotte Ackerman, Nancy Hsiao, and Henry Bonomolo. Light Benders - Madison Chiem, Audrey Dessent, Reed Maskell, Warren Moore, Sarah Orr, Lucas Rodriguez, Niko Sawatzki, and Jolie Wung. Their coach and mentor are Charlotte Ackerman and Nancy Hsiao. Picture This! - Sophia Barrios, Ella Halvorsen, Ali Lucas, Archer Matika, Lily Ruiz, Michael Stefano, and Gigi Trombetta. Their coach and mentor are Charlotte Ackerman and Nancy Hsiao. Rockin' Robots - Blake Brasfield, Jacob Colman, Landry Henderson, Beckett Latcham, Brooke Miller, Claire Varden, Colin Wilhelm, and Liam Wilhelm. Their coaches and mentors are Noah Mickey-Colman, Maura Baker, Kathryn Varden, and Buddy George.

Graphic Design

CFHS Graphic Design students participated recently in the Quickfire Design challenge hosted by the Arizona Design Education Network. Students have 2 days to design a solution to the given prompt. Giovanni Arenas took 1st place in a competition where students had to design a logo for a restaurant named Metropolis that focuses on cuisine from cultures all over the world. His graphic design teacher is Megan Badger.

Basketball

CFHS girls basketball players, Clara-Mae Hrouch and Kayanna Chief, were named to the Arizona Interscholastic Association's All-Region 1st Team, and Alessandra Egginton and Maliya Tiznado were named to the All-Region 2nd Team. CFHS girls basketball coach, Jake Martinez, was named Region Coach of the Year.

U of A Chinese Language Program

Five (5) of our students have been admitted to the STARTALK Chinese language program at the University of Arizona in 2024. They are Orange Grove students Elijah Barbieri, Madison Chiem, and Jaylin Peterson, and CFHS students Lilian Li and Bella Uzomba.

STARTALK is a federal grant program overseen by the National Security Agency. The goal is to increase the number and capacity of K-14 students being proficient in critically needed languages in the United States. To achieve that goal, the U of A's program titled "Environmental Sustainability: A STARTALK Chinese Immersion in the Sonoran Desert" is designed to provide an immersive experience for K-14 students in Arizona and beyond to learn Mandarin Chinese. It also offers two U of A credits to the accepted students upon their successful completion.

Recommended Motion: Information Item