

THE LYNN EDUCATOR

A PUBLICATION OF LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Vol. 3, No. 2

Summer 2007



An artist's snapshot

Tech student's photography is picture-perfect

BY BILL BROTHERTON

There is no formal art program at Lynn Vocational Technical Institute, but that hasn't stopped Gabriela Gonzalez from winning a slew of awards. The sophomore recently won the grand prize in the Sixth District Congressional High School Art Competition, sponsored by U.S. Rep. John F. Tierney. Before that, the five photos she entered in the annual Boston Globe All-Scholastic Art Awards all won prizes.

Gonzalez was 12 when her parents, Mauricio and Sara, moved the family from their native Chile, settling in Boston and moving to Lynn two years later. Artistic talent runs in the family: Her dad was vocalist for the popular Latin America band Kollahuara

Tech student Gabriela Gonzalez won the Congressional art competition for this photo of her sister, Beben.

See GONZALEZ Page 10

INSIDE

Class of Classical

2007 graduates headed to top colleges

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Some might call them the Elite Eight.

They are the Classical High School 2007 graduates who are enrolling in three Ivy League schools, and three other top-ranked universities.

They are: Angela Christian, Georgetown University; Tiffany Clark, Vanessa Francois and valedictorian Minela Gacanovic, Boston College; Vincente Gonzalez, Cornell; James Khun, Dartmouth; Jazmine Ramirez, Harvard; and Melissa Suon, Stanford.

The schools are among the most difficult to get into in the country, but Classical students are proving they can compete and succeed among the best of the best.

"The education here is extremely competitive," said Classical Principal Warren White. "These kids are motivated and they realize that furthering their education is the key to success. They took advantage of the opportunities here at Classical and I'm confident they will do well at the



From left, Vincente Gonzalez, James Khun, Tiffany Clark, Jazmine Ramirez, Principal Warren White, Angela Christian, Mayor Edward J. Clancy Jr., Minela Gacanovic, Vanessa Francois, Melissa Suon and Superintendent Nicholas P. Kostan.



From Lynn
to La-La

Page 3

See CLASSICAL Page 10

LYNN EDUCATOR

City of Lynn

Edward J. Clancy Jr., *Mayor*

Lynn School Committee

Mayor Edward J. Clancy Jr.

Chairman

Patricia Capano

Vice Chair

Daniel F. Cahill

Donna M. Coppola

Arthur C. Fiste

John M. Ford Jr.

Jeffrey T. Newhall

Published by:

Lynn Public Schools

Nicholas P. Kostan

Superintendent

Dr. Catherine Latham

Deputy Superintendent

Dr. Jaye Warry

Deputy Superintendent

Submit story ideas to:

Thomas P. Iarrobino

Secretary to the School Committee

90 Commercial St.

Lynn, MA 01905

Tel: (781) 477-7220 x157

Fax: (781) 477-7487

iarrobino@lynnschools.org

Produced by:



GRANT COMMUNICATIONS
CONSULTING GROUP

Lynn, MA ♦ New York, NY

(781) 598-8200

gccg@grantgroup.com

There's no shortage of good news in our schools



**Edward J.
Clancy Jr.**

As we conclude another successful school year, it is appropriate to look back on some of the noteworthy accomplishments of our students and teachers over the past 10 months.

On the front page of this edition of *The Lynn Educator*, you will meet some students who have distinguished themselves through their academic and artistic pursuits – endeavors that have been acknowledged by some of the nation's most prestigious colleges and universities, as well as the U.S. Congress and a prominent regional art competition.

Everyone in Lynn should be proud of the eight Classical students who will be matriculating at Ivy League schools, as

well as Stanford, Georgetown and Boston College. They truly are the best of the best of the Class of 2007.

We also applaud the creative talents of a young woman from Lynn Tech whose photography was judged to be the best in the Sixth Congressional District, and which earned an impressive five awards in the Boston Globe Scholastic Art Competition.

It would be remiss to not also recognize the critical role that these students' teachers and parents have played in their success. They, too, should share the spotlight.

It is certainly heartening to see the great pride with which a Classical alumna speaks of her alma mater and her city, even while living amongst some of the biggest names in the entertainment industry –

including her Academy Award-winning husband.

This edition also contains stories about three principals at various stages in their career – one who is retiring after four decades of service, another whose efforts have been honored by Salem State College, and a third who is a veteran educator completing just her second year as a principal. We thank them for their leadership.

As our students and teachers take a well-deserved break for the next few months, we wish them and everyone a safe and restful summer.

Edward J. "Chip" Clancy Jr. is mayor of Lynn.

2007 graduates are prepared to make their mark



**Nicholas P.
Kostan**

Congratulations to the Class of 2007. Our graduating seniors have distinguished themselves by the numbers who are moving on to continue their education at some of the finest colleges and universities in the nation. Once again, Lynn Public Schools students have been extremely successful in gaining admission into America's top schools.

Lynn seniors will be attending community colleges, state colleges and universities, as well as highly selective institutions such as Harvard, Dartmouth, Cornell, Stanford, Georgetown and Boston College. It is our hope that our graduates will move on to

become leaders in medicine, law, education, and government and will serve as role models and mentors for younger brothers, sisters, and the community in general.

Graduating seniors owe a debt of gratitude to their teachers, coaches, and especially their parents who have sacrificed so much to ensure their success throughout their K-12 careers. You, as graduates, have the knowledge, the training, and the support of all who have been associated with your success to this point. It is now time for you to make your mark in the world.

Just remember to never forget where you

came from or your roots in this community. We look forward to your giving back to your school, your city and your country. As Mr. Paul Buccheri, a retiring teacher at Lynn Vocational Technical Institute, said in his remarks at the LVTI graduation exercises, "Education is a roadmap. If you don't have this map you are lost. If you have it, you can go anywhere."

Best of luck and continued success to all of our graduating seniors.

Nicholas P. Kostan is superintendent of schools.

Ford students to come early, stay late, learn more

BY BILL BROTHERTON

Students at the Robert L. Ford School will spend more time in the classroom this fall if a state grant to extend the school day is approved as expected.

"We are waiting to hear with anticipation," said vice principal Barbara Kelly, referring to the Mass. Department of Education 2020 grant.

Currently, students are in class from 7:45 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. The funding would allow Ford's staff to teach from 7:15 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

"Plus, it will add lots of enrichment and provide for new materials. It means we will be able to improve the wonderful things we do now and add things we have not had the time to do," said Kelly. Staff development and more resources are part of the equation as well.

Teachers are on board, as are Superintendent Nicholas Kostan, his administration, the School Committee and the teachers union.

Ford has really turned things around in the 15 years Dr. Claire Crane has been principal. It's become a model of how the community-school concept should work, thanks to a committed staff, involved parents and community partners.

Being a vibrant community school is the main focus at



Jenn McCarthy's sixth-graders, from front to back, Chris Zaccagnini, Jonathan Crosby, and Nicholas Medeiros.

Ford. Parents are incredibly involved with their children's education, and night classes for parents at the school have been an overwhelming success. Crane has added services for parents, students and staff every year. Partnerships have been formed with Salem State College, North Shore

Community College, Gordon College and corporate sponsors such as General Electric.

What was once a troubled school has become, through determination and hard work, one of the city's best.

"We started this process a long time ago," said Crane. She references the Saltonstall School in Salem, which went year-round earlier this decade. Crane was to be interim principal there for a year to learn all she could and bring that knowledge and experience to the Ford. That didn't happen.

Still, she and others persisted. About 18 months ago, Crane sought funding through the School Committee to extend the school day, but the money wasn't there. Now, state funding is likely and the Ford staff is optimistic the grant will be approved.

Perhaps the most exciting program at Ford has been the NASA Explorer School. Ford is the only school in the Northeast that will have a live feed from the International Space Station, which its students will be able to watch thanks to North Shore Community College and Digital Learning Network video equipment.

Crane, Kelly and three teachers went to Houston for orientation and one week of training at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

From Lynn to La-La

1990 Classical grad Nash-Whittaker hasn't forgotten her roots

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

In her 1990 Lynn Classical yearbook, Keisha Nash-Whittaker listed as her ambition, "To be successful and live the lifestyles of the rich and famous."

Mission accomplished.

The actress, model and entrepreneur – and wife of Academy Award winner Forest Whitaker – was born and raised in Lynn and attended Connery Elementary, Breed Middle and Classical High schools. Whitaker's parents, Jeffrey and Laurie, as well as her younger brother, Jeffrey, are all graduates of Classical. She and her family moved to Georgia when she was in seventh grade, but returned during her junior year of high school.

"I loved my junior year, falling back in line with my friends," said Whitaker. "I cultivated some great lifelong

friendships, and I still stay in touch with a lot of those people."

At Classical, Whitaker was a member of the Yearbook Committee, African-American Club and she played Powder Puff football. She was chosen junior prom queen and voted "Best Dressed" as a senior.

"She was just a lovely girl," said Classical Principal Warren White, who was vice principal when Whitaker was at Classical. "The fact that Keisha still keeps in close contact with her classmates speaks volumes about the sense of family here."

After high school, Whitaker took a semester off before enrolling at Endicott College to study broadcast journalism. She signed with Maggie Inc., a Boston-based talent agency, and began modeling for local companies such as

Filene's. Hoping to pursue modeling on a larger scale, she attended an open call in New York, but Ford Models Inc. turned her away.

"They told me I'd never be a Ford model, because I wasn't tall enough," said Whitaker. "Six or eight months later,

Maggie felt I had what it

took and sent me back to Ford. I remember going there on a Friday and I was so nervous, until the agent asked me 'Can you move here on Monday?'"

One year later, Whitaker was named the Ford Supermodel of the U.S.

That sequence of events made a lasting impression on Whitaker.

"Don't ever give up," she said. "When something's supposed to be, it will be, in the time that it's supposed to be."

Whittaker has had a successful career at Ford, one of the world's largest, most prestigious and successful modeling agencies. A high point for Whitaker was her part as the first African-American female model for Tommy Hilfinger.

"I remember seeing that billboard and thinking, 'Wow, life is full of endless possibilities,'" she said.

Whittaker met her husband, an award-winning actor, producer and director, in September of 1994. The couple met in Boston, where he was filming the movie "Blown Away."

"I went over to the set with a friend of mine, and the casting director saw me and wanted me to play one of the roles," said Whitaker. "I panicked. I had no acting experience at the time, but it was amazing. One of the producers introduced me to Forest and after that we became friends and started dating."

The couple got engaged in February of 1996, a month after Keisha moved to New York. They married in May of that year in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Devoted parents, the Whitakers are raising four children – Ocean Alexander, Sonnet Noel, True Isabella Summer, and Autumn. They make their permanent home in the Hollywood Hills section of Los Angeles.

"My children are number one, they're so important to me," said Keisha. "We're blessed in so many ways, but in other ways, we're still just a normal family. The kids will call Forest, no matter what he's doing or who he's with, just to tell him about their day."

In the past year, her husband has won several major awards, including an Oscar and a Golden Globe for his performance as Ugandan dictator Idi Amin in the 2006 film "The Last King of Scotland."

In addition to her modeling and acting work, Keisha has been writing for "Boston Common" magazine and working as a correspondent for the television show "Extra." She is also launching her own cosmetics line, Kissable Couture, in September.



Breed students hold up photos of Miep Gies and copies of *The Diary of Anne Frank* with teacher Aili Knight, back row, center.

Living history at Breed

Anne Frank savior drops students a line

BY SUSAN BYRNE

After reading the play and watching the film, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Breed Middle School teacher Aili Knight's eighth-grade English classes became intrigued.

"The kids were just amazed by the people who helped the Frank family," said Knight. "The students were very touched by Miep Gies, the woman who helped hide the Frank family. They asked if they could write letters of thanks to her."

Although Knight has been teaching in Lynn for five years, this is her first year at Breed. What began as required reading soon became an exciting project for Knight and the eighth-graders. Knight actually found Gies' address and students wrote letters to the 98-year-old woman, asking questions and hoping for a response, knowing that she probably received thousands of letters each year. It was also good practice on how to write proper letters, which the students had just learned.

About 20 students wrote letters to Gies in February. Since it had been her birthday, they also included pictures and birthday cards. Knight remembers the students said they didn't think they were going to receive a response and then two days later, Gies' letter arrived.

"They were extremely excited and wanted to go home and tell their families, too," Knight said. Gies sent a letter and picture and answered many of the students' questions. She even specifically addressed some students by name.

Knight was elated as well. "The kids were so excited that they decided to write a letter to the editor of the Lynn Item to talk about the positive things they had done, and the newspaper published it. We have a program at school, which encourages the students to accentuate the positives. We have posters throughout the school which read Find the Good in your Hood."

Overall, the experience was positive for the entire school. "It brought the story to life and made it more meaningful. Also, having their questions answered made it powerful and interactive with a part of history," Knight said.



Keisha Nash-Whittaker, celebrating with her husband, Forest Whitaker, after he won the Academy Award for Best Actor, and in her 1990 Classical yearbook photo, right.

PHOTO: GREGG DEGUIRE / WIREIMAGE.COM



It all adds up for Hood families

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

While the idea of parents and students eagerly lining up to participate in math activities in the evening may seem far-fetched, the scene played out at the Hood School's third annual Math Night.

The event, coordinated by curriculum instruction teacher Heather Angus, was designed to represent each of the five mathematics strands and to connect parents and students with classroom learning.

"Everyone fully enjoyed the time spent with their family," said Principal Paula Akiba. "The children were very excited with the models and other activities that they were able to take home."

Each classroom teacher prepared a math activity for parents and students to share and the standard being taught was posted with each activity. Families learned how math is integrated in everyday life, and how household items can help make learning fun.

The event also featured a raffle of baskets that the teachers put together. Proceeds are used to replenish the field trip fund, which lowers the cost of trips for each student.



Student Zachary Ekey-Caron makes a design with tiles at Hood Family Math Night with his father, Sean.



Lynn Tech culinary arts professor Steven Lopez instructs MAST student Peron Chear, left, and Jeron Reddick.

Students MASTER vocational skills

BY BILL BROTHERTON

Four afternoons each week, students from Lynn's alternative high school – MAST (Multi-Agency Student Transition) – make the short trip from Munroe Street to Lynn Vocational Technical Institute.

From 3-5 p.m., they learn the basics of metal fabrication, culinary arts, or machine and tool technology, thanks to a Department of Youth Services Vocational and Employable Pilot Program grant.

"It's set up to handle as many as 15 students," said Bill Newell, MAST program director. "So far, it's paying off pretty well. It's an important thing, to put a bridge out there for these kids so they can transition back to their regular high school. These classes are from 3-5, so it keeps kids off the streets where they might get into trouble. More importantly, they learn a skill that will help them throughout their life."

Dr. Brian Coughlin, Lynn Tech director, calls the partnership "very successful. The kids have done an outstanding job, and they seem to enjoy these hands-on courses, especially after a full day of classroom learning."

Coughlin has particular praise for the culinary arts participants. About 90 minutes

before an April fundraising event in the Tiger's Den in Tech's Marshall's Wharf annex, a glitch meant the caterer would be unable to provide food on time. More than 100 guests, including the mayor and superintendent of schools, were expected.

Steve Lopez, culinary arts instructor, told Coughlin not to worry. He had everything under control. "Those kids stepped up, especially the MAST kids," Coughlin said. "They put together a spread in short order that was out of this world. None of the attendees suspected that just 90 minutes earlier we were

“ So far, it's paying off pretty well. It's an important thing, to put a bridge out there for these (disadvantaged) kids so they can transition back to their regular high school. These classes are from 3-5, so it keeps kids off the streets where they might get into trouble. ”

Bill Newhall
MAST program director

up against it.”

The MAST students also helped cater Classical High's awards banquet and drew compliments for their professionalism.

John Bates, project director at the Department of Youth Services in Lynn, and Newell designed this program. Lopez teaches culinary arts, Joe Fountain teaches metal fabrication and Tim Roche supervises the metal shop. MAST math teacher Peg Aylward and English teacher Erin Doherty monitor attendance and tie in the vocational classes with their daily classwork.

"For now, this is a one-year program," said Newell. "But I hope it can continue. The kids are doing some nice things."

Coughlin lauded the partnership, adding it's important that the MAST students have a work-based program that allows them to work with their hands. "We are hopeful that this will be continued. When you weigh it against the alternatives, such as these kids not graduating from high school or not passing MCAS, the cost is minimal," he said.

"Dr. Coughlin has been very good to us," said Newell. "There are many, many great things happening in the Lynn schools. This is one of the best."

Diligent educator is outstanding

Tracy principal receives award from Salem State College

BY SUSAN BYRNE

The students, teachers and parents at the Tracy School are well aware that Principal Dr. Mary E. Dill is an outstanding educator. Salem State College agrees.

Dill was one of six area educators honored by Salem State with its Outstanding Educator Award, presented annually to SSC alumni who are in the field of education.

Dill received her bachelor's degree in business education in 1981 and her master's degree in education in 1994, both from Salem State. She earned her doctorate in child, youth and family studies from Nova Southeastern University in 2002. In 1998, Dill completed graduate courses from Salem State for certification as an elementary school principal.

When Dill was contacted and told she had been selected to receive the award, she was very appreciative. At the ceremony, she

received a crystal apple along with an award certificate. "It was a great honor," she said. "I was very surprised and thrilled. A lot of people I know were involved. Mayor (Edward) Clancy wrote a recommendation for me."

After teaching at St. Mary's High School for five years, Dill has worked in the Lynn Public Schools since 1993. Prior to being named principal at Tracy School, she worked as a teacher and instructional facilitator.

Dill would rather talk about the good work going on at Tracy than her award. In a study done by the University of Massachusetts' Donahue Institute in partnership with the Massachusetts Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, the Tracy School was named as an "A" achieving school.

The study looked at 10 cities and sought to determine the factors at play in successful urban schools.

"We were highlighted as an urban school

that uses a team approach to successfully influence student achievement," Dill said.

An important part of the success at the Tracy School is the use of the leadership team comprised of Dill and other faculty specialists. The team analyzes student assessment data and translates it into results that are helpful to teachers, allowing them to customize instruction to better meet the needs of their students.

The Tracy School has made Adequate Yearly Progress based on MCAS scores for four consecutive years. "As a principal, I believe an effective instructional leader does not work in isolation, but must have the support and strong commitment of key personnel to have a successful team," Dill said. "Dedicated teachers are essential for nurturing, educating and challenging students as well as for continued school improvement."



Tracy School principal Dr. Mary Dill with kindergarten students.

Honor was in store for Marshall teacher

BY SUSAN BYRNE

Dan McClorey, a sixth-grade science teacher at Thurgood Marshall Middle School, was awarded a Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year Award. McClorey was one of 49 Massachusetts teachers honored among the 4,000 that were recognized nationwide on May 8 – National Teacher's Day.

"I was very excited and happy to receive the award, but humbled because there are so many worthwhile teachers that are deserving, teaching in this area and right here at Marshall," said McClorey, who has been teaching for 34 years.

The award was presented at a ceremony in the library at Marshall with about 80 students,

teachers and Superintendent of Schools Nick Kostan in attendance.

Marshall Principal Anita Rassias said McClorey is "a wonderful teacher (who) gets so involved with the students and their activities."

In addition to teaching earth science, life science and physics, McClorey coaches the cross country and track teams at Marshall. Prior to coming to Marshall eight years ago, McClorey spent 26 years in special education.

"My philosophy is if you have a good relationship with the kids, than learning is an extension of that," he said. "I always tell the kids not to give up on themselves. If you fall down, just pick yourself up. In general, the learning environment at Marshall is very

productive for the students."

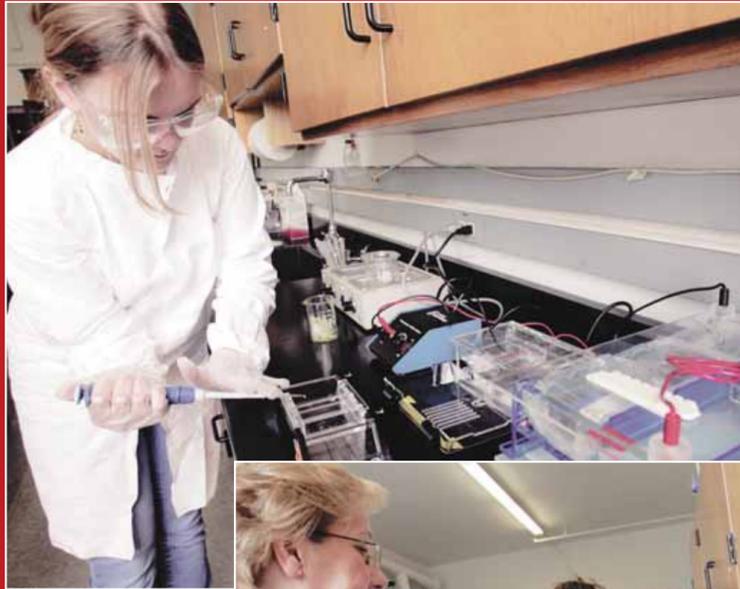
As part of the Teacher of the Year program, each Wal-Mart location selected a local teacher winner from nominations submitted at the stores. "As they grow up, children always remember the teachers who challenged them and encouraged learning," said Ray Bracy, senior vice-president of Wal-Mart Corporate Affairs. "Wal-Mart is proud to recognize these 4,000 educators who are positively impacting our nation's students."

The winning teachers each received a \$1,000 grant for his or her school, a \$100 gift certificate to buy classroom supplies, a Teacher of the Year polo shirt and a personalized certificate.



Marshall Middle School teacher Dan McClorey with student Tatiana Landingham.

Technology — in plain English



Above, Lynn English student Erin Hart works in the lab. Right, English High science teacher Joan O'Connor works with students Erin Hart, left, and Lauren Walsh. Below, student Stephen Haberek works on a project during class.



Right, Lynn English student Katherine Perez works on a project in the lab.

English teams with NSCC to offer biotech course

By MEAGHAN CASEY

From manufacturing to research, the \$410 billion biotechnology industry has mushroomed since 1992, creating an ever-increasing quantity of jobs, products and medical breakthroughs.

Whether it's developing and producing life-saving medicines to treat cancer, Alzheimer's, AIDS and other debilitating diseases or using DNA fingerprinting to improve criminal investigation and forensic medicine, biotechnicians are the pioneers in a new generation of scientists.

In Lynn, students are right on track to join them.

Starting in the fall, students at Lynn English High School will have the opportunity to enroll in a biotechnology course, developed by English High teachers and Debra Bedell, faculty member at North

Shore Community College (NSCC).

The pilot course will be offered to seniors who have completed a prerequisite of biology and chemistry. It will combine hands-on lab work with seminars designed to provide theory and background for techniques and applications basic to the biotechnology industry.

Biotechnology combines disciplines such as genetics, molecular biology, biochemistry, embryology and cell biology, which are in turn linked to practical disciplines such as chemical engineering, DNA research, information technology and even robotics.

"There's quite a demand right now for biotechnicians," said English High science chair James Connick. "In offering this course, we'll hopefully be sparking an interest among the students and setting them up for future career paths."

The idea to implement the course came from John Olson, president of the Lynn Area Chamber of Commerce. Olson has been active in seeking out donations in equipment and funding from area biotech companies. He also hopes to establish internships and externships for students and teachers.

"The biotech industry has a critical need for workers, particularly in manufacturing," said Olson. "Being involved with the chamber, we're always looking for workforce development opportunities. The biotech field is huge right now, especially in some of the surrounding cities like Cambridge. It's important for Lynn kids to look to the future and seize those opportunities."

To set up the curriculum, English High science teachers Joan O'Connor, Maura Walsh and Bill McHugh have met weekly

with Bedell, who has been able to share with them the foundation of the NSCC biotechnology program. Twenty students are expected to enroll in the course in the fall.

"We're hoping that if this works as a pilot program, we can expand it and institute it at Lynn Tech and Classical as well," said Connick.

The school is currently in the process of developing an articulation agreement, which will enable students to gain four college credits from NSCC if they complete the course.

"They can then go on and use those credits to get an associate's degree at North Shore Community College, and then even earn their bachelor's degree at a four-year college," said Connick. "At the high school level, it's wonderful for them to get this kind of introduction."



Lynn English students who were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society include, from left, Jamie Stevens, David Bransfield, George Ma, Deborah Santos, Lisa Wood, Gerald Owen Duffy Jr. and Shakib Ahmed.

Students honored for technical excellence

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Honored for technical excellence, seven Lynn English High School graduates accepted their diplomas this spring, equipped with the skills and the desire to become leaders — both in the business world and the community.

The students chosen for living up to the seven ideals of the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) were: Shakib Ahmed, honesty; David Patrick Bransfield, citizenship; Gerald Owen Duffy Jr., scholarship; George C. Ma, skill; Deborah Ann Santos, responsibility; Jamie Stevens, leadership; and Lisa Wood, service.

Ahmed will major in computer science at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Bransfield will major in hospitality management at the University of New Hampshire. Duffy will enroll at Merrimack College and study sports medicine. Ma will attend Norwich University, where he plans to study mechanical engineering. Santos will play softball and study English at UMass Lowell. Stevens will enroll at Endicott College. Wood will attend UMass Amherst and pursue a chemistry degree, hoping to one day become a teacher.

To show appreciation to the seven deserving students, English High funded their lifetime memberships in the NTHS and honored them at a luncheon at the Porthole Restaurant after the candlelit ceremony. The students took the NTHS pledge "to maintain the highest standard of personal conduct, strive for excellence in all aspects of my education ... and endeavor to uphold my obligations as a citizen of my community and my country."

In addition to the seven seniors, one junior, Virginia Liria, was chosen to be an usher at the ceremony.

The goal of the NTHS is to recognize America's top workforce education students and to give them job opportunities. English High students learn computer networking skills in Cisco Academy and design skills in the Computer Assisted Design (CAD) program.

Charles DeLuccia, the CAD coordinator, and Donna Akerley, the Cisco Academy coordinator, are the two advisors for the English High chapter of NTHS.

"They have made Lynn English High School not only competitive, but advanced beyond all other schools in Lynn and the surrounding communities," said Vice Principal Donna Hegan. "With a love and natural ability for computers, and a deep commitment to our students, Mrs. Akerley spends endless hours beyond the typical school day. As for Mr. DeLuccia, he is equally responsible for our technological excellence here at LEHS, due in great part to his intellectual curiosity and thirst for new, revolutionary approaches to learning."

Akerley formerly taught a computer science course, and DeLuccia began as a shop teacher. As computer technology advanced, they both seized the opportunity and took workshops and seminars that gave birth to the curriculum currently in place at the school.

"This is an opportunity to honor three or four years of technical community service, in this school and outside," said Akerley, who frequently sends students to help community organizations.

The students have set up computer networks at agencies such as the Boys and Girls Club and have helped design emergency management plans for several schools and organizations.

Paper chase leads illustrator to Shoemaker

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

In a world where bits of paper are transformed into beautiful images, paper relief and mixed media artist Giles Laroche surprises his audiences with his unique ability to create birds, landscapes, bridges, ships and lighthouses out of such simple material.

Using elaborate collages involving many stages of drawing, cutting, painting and gluing to form paper sculptures and illustrations, Laroche's technique is distinctive, and the outcome is unmatched.

"His illustrations are just unbelievable — paper on top of paper," said Shoemaker School library teacher Barbara Camann.

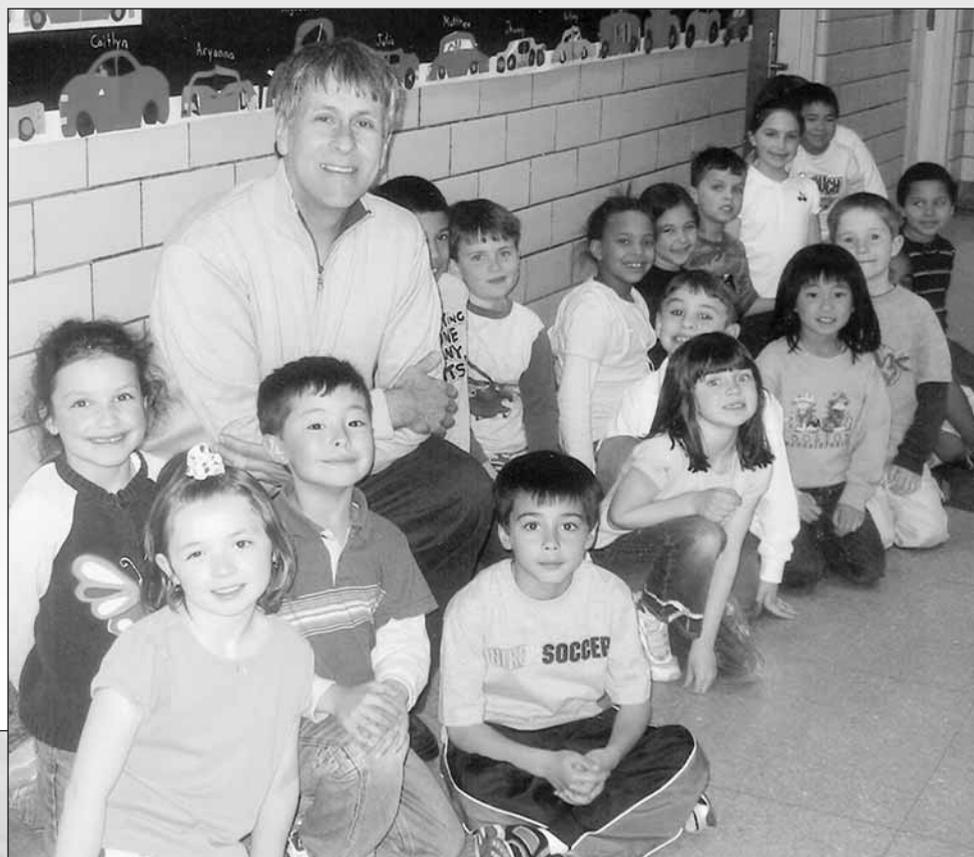
Laroche, who has illustrated a series of children's books with his awe-inspiring paper-cut art, visited Shoemaker classrooms this spring. He held a three-day workshop for students in grades K-5. Each classroom worked with Laroche to learn simple paper-cutting techniques, and each child created his or her own masterpiece.

First-graders learned to make cars and fish; grade 2 students created houses; grade 3 worked on castles; grade 4 sculpted bridges; and grade 5 assembled human faces. The works were displayed throughout the school.

Laroche, a Salem resident, attended Montserrat College of Art in Beverly, where he later worked for 12 years in the children's art department. He now conducts workshops as an artist-in-residence in schools throughout the Northeast.

The visit was arranged by Camann and funded by the Shoemaker PTO as part of Literacy Week.

"We always invite an author or illustrator at that time, and we've been lucky to have such talent," said Camann. "It really makes an impact on the kids."



Above, Giles Laroche with Shoemaker students during his three-day workshop at the school. At left, students Patrick Donnelly, left, and Favian Contreras, point out some of the artwork they created.

Beautiful music: Breed students enjoy Symphony visit

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

The melodic sounds of the French horn and violin filled the walls of Breed Middle School this spring, transporting students to a place far removed from the everyday world of iPods and music videos.

Through a partnership with the district's fine arts department and the North Shore's 35-piece orchestra Symphony by the Sea, Breed students were introduced to the world of baroque and classical music.

Founded 26 years ago, Symphony by the Sea is an all-professional orchestra that performs pieces from Bach to Bernstein. The group plays regularly in Marblehead, Byfield, Newbury and Salem, as well as throughout the North Shore for family and school concerts. The orchestra is committed to introducing young people to classical music and enriching their cultural lives through its in-school presentations and concerts.

This was the third year that Symphony by the Sea musicians visited Breed. In a cross-curriculum unit, musicians sat in on music classes on June 4 and English classes on June 7,

performing and talking candidly with the students. Lyle Davidson of the New England Conservatory also gave a lecture to students about music in education. To cap off the program, the orchestra performed a concert in Breed's lecture hall.

World History teacher Jessica Miles, English

teacher Kim Skeadas, and music teacher Sheldon Lee were active in collaborating with Symphony by the Sea's Ellen Levine to design lesson plans that connected the Symphony to their content.

"We want children to think that school can be fun, because they can learn something enjoyable like music," said Levine, who has performed

with Symphony by the Sea for 20 years.

"Music has that ability to transport you to a marvelous and peaceful place," said Lee. "It was wonderful for students to experience music's power to relax and comfort you."

In addition to connecting with the senses, teachers hoped that students would connect with the material they were learning. Miles' goal was that the Symphony's visits, focusing on music composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Franz Joseph Haydn, would provide students with a better understanding of European culture during the Age of Enlightenment.

Skeadas' objective was to incorporate musical themes and composers into her drama curriculum. Students were asked to write scripts based on what they learned about Haydn, Mozart and the opera, "The Marriage of Figaro."

The Symphony by the Sea visit is an outstanding example of the fine arts department's Connections program — an ongoing collaborative program in which music, art and classroom teachers use music and art to enhance and support existing classroom curriculum.



Breed students take note as Symphony by the Sea musicians Ellen Levine, left, and Vanessa Gardner and Breed music teacher Sheldon Lee perform.

PRINCIPALS OF SUCCESS

Spirito retiring after four decades in education

BY BILL BROTHERTON

After 40 years of enriching the lives of Lynn students, Vincent Spirito is calling it a career. Spirito, 62, is retiring as principal of Lynn Woods School.

"It's a good way to end my victory lap after 40 years of service," said Spirito, relaxing in his cramped office. "The last few years here have been very rewarding."

Spirito said his family has been very supportive through the years and he looks forward to spending more time with his wife of 39 years, Pauline, and their children, Stacey and Todd, and grandson Joshua. "Another grandchild is due any day now. We're so blessed," he said.

A career in public education came naturally to Spirito. It's in his blood. His father, Anthony, was a revered teacher at Lynn's Harrington, Aborn and Hood schools. He also had an aunt who was a teacher.

A lifelong Lynner and 1961 English High graduate, Spirito grew up on Collins Street and spent much of his younger days snacking at Laubner's Bakery and playing ball at Memorial



Lynn Woods School retiring principal Vin Spirito chats students Sean Hemingway and Emma Trahant.

Park. He worked as a sixth-grade teacher at the Harrington School, a job he loved, for nine years. After earning a master's degree in administration at Boston State College, he became principal of the former Light Street School, a tiny space housed in the basement of the old St. Patrick's Church.

"Whenever there was a funeral or Mass we had to be very quiet,"

Spirito recalled, with a smile.

He then served as Connery's principal for 10 years, until Proposition 2½ necessitated the closing of schools and the laying off of teachers in 1980. Spirito returned to the classroom, teaching sixth grade at Ingalls. "It was difficult going back, after being a principal," he admitted, "but the kids were so great I loved it."

Spirito was first on the call-back

list for principals. When his father retired as Hood School principal, he was chosen to replace him, spending 10 years there. He then went back to Connery as principal for another 10-year stint. John Marks retired as Lynn Woods principal 3½ years ago and Superintendent Nick Kostan asked Spirito to fill the job.

"I live just down the street. My kids went here. My time here at Lynn

Woods has been great. The teachers are exceptional. The parents are great and supportive. It's not uncommon for teachers to call parents at night if their kids are having difficulties. Parents still walk their kids to school and meet them outside when school is done.

"It's like the way schools were in the '50s. We affectionately call this the Beaver Cleaver School," he added.

Spirito also made a point to applaud the efforts of Mae Deluca, his administrative assistant. "She's more like a vice principal. She's the one who gets things done," he said.

He also lauded the "leadership and support" of Kostan, a longtime friend and colleague: "Superintendent Kostan is on the cutting edge of education. He knows exactly what the schools need and is a great leader for the city of Lynn."

Spirito hopes to continue helping Lynn students as he is seeking one of two open seats on the Lynn School Committee. "The city of Lynn has been good to me. This is an opportunity to give back," he said.

Next fall, rather than tending to the day-to-day business of running a school, you might find Spirito fishing at Lonesome Lake in Maine, relaxing in Aruba, or playing with his grandchildren. He and Pauline hope to take that long-delayed cruise to Alaska, as well.

New role has changed the life of Riley

BY SUSAN BYRNE

With 31 years in education, Patricia Riley brought a lot of experience to the position of principal at Connery Elementary School. In only her second year in the role, Riley oversees a school of 460 children from kindergarten through grade 5.

Prior to being named principal at Connery, Riley was a reading specialist at Ingalls Elementary School. She said she was ready to make the jump to principal when the opportunity arose.

"I felt I had the leadership skills and I had insight into how to make change happen," she said. "It's been a great two years. It has had its challenges, but the faculty is great and we work as a team and problem-solve. Overall, it is very rewarding."

While she was at Ingalls, Riley received a federal grant for the Reading First initiative. The idea behind the program is to get all students reading by the third grade. Assessments were given frequently and the data would be used to focus on specific areas during instruction.

One of the first things Riley wanted to do at Connery was to implement practices she had learned through the Reading First initiative. First, she helped form a partnership with the Bay State Reading Institute. The group came in and helped with staff development and teacher support. Last summer they gave a full training for the staff. Gradually, the teachers began to change how

they focused on reading instruction. Small group reading and good reading practices were introduced.

Riley sees the new approach working, as evidenced by students' improvement on the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) test. DIBELS is a timed oral test that teachers give to students throughout the year. Students read aloud to their teachers, who count how many words the students can read in a minute.

"Reading opens doors for kids. If we can get the kids reading, they'll be better equipped in all areas and will be successful," said Riley.

Even though Riley stresses the importance of reading, she is focused on other areas as well. Grades 3, 4 and 5 will departmentalize. This means the students will rotate among reading, math and science/social studies teachers. English language arts will be part of each area. "In this secondary model, teachers will have time to develop in-depth lessons and focus on lessons and objectives," said Riley.

Riley is always working on making kids feel safe and respectful at school. Each morning the students recite the Connery Pledge, along with the Pledge of Allegiance. Taken from A Leader's Guide, this pledge serves as a reminder for use of good common sense and is reinforced to the students often.



Principal Patricia Riley works with Carlos Flores.

Classical graduates going to top colleges

CLASSICAL: from Page 1

next level.”

“I’m really proud that our kids kept their eye on the prize and succeeded,” said Classical Academic Dean Christine Lander. “Part of it is the diversity we have here. We have students from all walks of life, and they’re all presented with the same opportunities to enroll in rigorous curriculum and get involved with volunteer activities. Some just see the opportunities and run with them. They appreciate the challenge and are thankful that someone is setting the bar high and celebrating their achievements.”

Angela Christian

Christian, whose top choice was Georgetown, will join her fellow Hoyas in the fall. The university admitted less than 21 percent of its record 16,000 applicants to the class of 2011.

“It was the only school I wanted to go to,” said Christian. “The campus is gorgeous, the location – right in D.C. – is amazing, and so are the academics and athletics.”

Christian, who was born in Georgia, moved to Lynn at age 4. At Classical, she was involved in yearbook, softball and Volunteer Club, among other activities. She plans to major in international marketing.

Tiffany Clark

Clark is one of three Classical grads who will attend Boston College – long nicknamed the “Jesuit Ivy.” For the class of 2011, BC received a record 28,800 applications and admitted 27 percent, making it the most selective class in the school’s history.

“In my family, I’m the first person to go to such a competitive school,” said Clark. “My mom is a single mom and I have two other siblings, but she always encouraged me to push myself and do what would be best. She’s so proud. I’ve been lucky to have a lot of people who have supported me.”

Vanessa Francois

Born in Beverly and raised in Lynn, Francois will also attend BC. At Classical, she played soccer, ran track and was a member of Amnesty International and the National Honor Society.

“I enjoyed the people here and the diversity,” said Francois. “The academics are good and the teaching staff made me feel like I was pushed to do better.”

Minela Gacanovic

Born in Bosnia and raised in Germany for eight years, Gacanovic moved to the U.S. at age 11. While the transition may have been difficult, it didn’t stop her from rising to the top.

“It was tough at first, especially because I didn’t even speak English,” she said. “I’m the first generation in my family to even go to college, so this is all new to me.”

Gacanovic plans to attend BC, but is also waiting to hear back from Yale, which placed her on the waiting list. She feels well prepared for both options.

“Classical prepared me more than enough for my future endeavors,” she said. “I enrolled in as many honors and AP classes that could fit in my schedule. It’s prepared me both mentally and socially.”

The editor of the yearbook, a peer tutor and a member of the cheerleading squad, the Key Club, National Honor Society and the Volunteer Club, Gacanovic has made the most of her high school experience.

Vincente Gonzalez

Gonzalez, who applied to Cornell early decision, was

thrilled to receive his acceptance letter.

“My brother’s there now, and when I visited I just fell in love with the school,” he said. “It’s a perfect fit. I knew that was where I wanted to be.”

Cornell received a total of 30,383 applications for admission to the class of 2011 and admitted about 6,200 applicants for a 20.5 percent rate, down from 24.7 percent a year earlier.

Gonzalez, who received a score of 280 (the highest possible scaled score) on the MCAS English language arts 10th grade exam, credits his education at Classical in helping him achieve his dream.

“The teachers really prepared us for everything – MCAS, SATs, everything,” said Gonzalez, who was also a member of Classical’s tennis and winter track teams, as well as the citywide jazz percussion band.

James Khun

Khun, who was also accepted at BC, Brown and Bowdoin College, will make his new home at Dartmouth. The school accepted only 2,165 of its 14,176 applicants, a record low of 15 percent. Applications represented the largest applicant pool in Dartmouth’s history.

“I wanted a rural, quiet area and Dartmouth offered that, plus academics,” said Khun, born and raised in Lynn. “It’s only a couple hours from home, but I’m looking forward to meeting new people and getting a chance to ski and camp and canoe – all the outdoor activities.”

At Classical, Khun was a four-year member and a captain of the tennis team. He also was active volunteering, both at the school and with his church. He plans to study government and pursue law school.

“I feel well prepared,” he said. “There’s a lot of encouragement among peers and teachers at Classical, and the education is good. The teachers put it on you to be independent, which is true at the college level as well.”

Jazmine Ramirez

Ramirez, Classical’s salutatorian, will enroll at Harvard as a pre-med student. This year fewer than nine percent of applicants were accepted to the class of 2011. The class was selected from a record applicant pool of 22,955 and only 2,058 students were admitted.

“It was my top choice and I applied through early decision,” said Ramirez.

A former East Lynn resident, Ramirez entered Classical as one of the new kids.

“When I first came here, I didn’t know anyone,” she said. “But the first day, I met some of my best friends. Everyone was just so nice. It was a great experience. I loved it. Our class was great. We each supported one another and learned from each other as well.”

Melissa Suon

Suon, ranked third in her class, was one of 2,465 students admitted to Stanford this year, out of 23,956 applicants, an acceptance rate of 10.3 percent.

Born and raised in Alabama, Suon moved to Lynn at the start of eighth grade and attended Breed Middle School before making her mark at Classical.

“The first thing I noticed at Classical was that the student body is so diverse,” said Suon. “Because of that, you learn from the friends you make and the clubs they offer here are more varied.”

Suon was a member of National Honor Society and founded the Amnesty International chapter at Classical last year. She volunteered with American Red Cross blood drives, and academically took as many honors and AP courses as she could. Suon also received a perfect score on the 10th grade MCAS exam in math.



Gabriela Gonzalez looks at photos with teacher Brenda Wasilik.

Tech student’s photography earns national recognition

GONZALEZ: from Page 1

and her stylish mom is a former model. Her grandmother taught art at one of Chile’s largest colleges, her brother “plays every musical instrument there is” and her two sisters sing and draw.

But it’s this shy Marshall Middle School graduate who is opening eyes with her clever, striking photographs.

One look at her remarkable photos and it’s hard to believe Gonzalez snapped her first picture only three years ago. “I always liked to draw, but I could barely draw a stick figure,” she said, with a laugh. “In Chile, art is displayed on the street several times a year. I admired it so. My friends would get mad at me, because I would stop and look at the pictures for an hour and they wanted to do something else. And my mom always had art ... now I can’t imagine a life without photography. I want to make it my career.”

Brenda Waslick, Gonzalez’ graphics communications instructor, said it was “a struggle at first to get Gabriela to submit her photos. I said, ‘These are fantastic. You have to enter these in the Globe contest.’ After much back-and-forth, she said OK.”

Waslick said in the seven years she has been submitting students’ work to the Globe judges, there had been only one second-place winner. Gonzalez won five awards by herself: two Gold Keys (first-place), two Silver Keys and one honorable mention.

Her winning the congressional competition is impressive, as a photograph of her sister taken on the hill at Orient Heights in East Boston was judged the best out of hundreds of entries. That photo is on display in Washington, D.C., for a year, along with the work of winners from other states. Gonzalez also won a \$1,000 scholarship to attend summer classes at Montserrat College of Art in Beverly.

“I almost fainted when I heard she got the grand prize,” said a smiling Waslick. “That’s never happened in Lynn, and it’s certainly never happened at Lynn Tech.”

“I’m so proud of that picture of my little sister, Beben,” said Gonzalez, seeming a little embarrassed to be talking about herself. She used her old Sony digital camera to capture the award-winning black-and-white shot, which she named “Deixa Acontecer (Let it be. Let it happen).”

“The camera is not as important as the image. I have a Canon camera now, but for all the pictures that won prizes I used that Sony Sure Shot,” she said.

In the last several weeks, Lynn Mayor Edward J. Clancy Jr. came to Tech and handed Gonzalez a commendation. She also got to take photos of Gov. Deval Patrick during his June 5 visit to Tech.

Dr. Brian Coughlin, Lynn Tech director, has framed copies of Gonzalez’ photos. “Gabriela won five awards in the Boston Globe art competition. It’s a big deal if a school has one student nominated, and she won five awards by herself. ... She is a very talented, delightful young lady,” he said.

AROUND LYNN SCHOOLS

Elementary schools

Brickett

Fifth-grade students performed a play called "Bones" in May, in front of the entire school and their parents. Brickett also held its Memorial Day concert on May 24 and 25 and its spring concert on May 31 and June 1.

Connery

The Connery Annex held a Math Night and Art Show for families to enjoy hands-on math activities and beautiful works of art on display throughout the school. A special surprise was the wonderful food prepared by the Lynn Tech culinary arts department. Each family who attended received a math book based on the student's grade level.

Fallon

Students enjoyed the enrichment program Historical Perspectives for Children, through which they were treated to one-man performances celebrating Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln. Grade 5 students took a guided tour of the Freedom Trail with a Colonial times performer provided by Histrionics Academy. The entire school also visited Plymouth Plantation in June, with funding from the Masons.

Ford

Ford School faculty will continue their NASA training by attending professional development training sessions this summer. One team of teachers will travel to the John Glenn Research Center in Cleveland to attend a conference: How NASA Applies Mathematics for Mission Success. Another team will travel to Houston to NASA's Johnson Space Center to participate in the Igniting the Flame of Knowledge: Human Space Flight training. Both teams will train their colleagues during the 2007-08 school year, allowing the rest of the faculty to be on the cutting edge in education.

Lynn Woods

The Lynn Woods School ushered in spring with a very successful Spring Sing. Each class performed a collection of songs coordinated by Mrs. Kennedy, the music teacher.

Middle Schools

Marshall

Grade six students at Thurgood Marshall Middle School were surprised by a visit from Boston College basketball star Jared Dudley, the Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year. Dudley shared his personal history with Marshall students. He grew up in a single-parent home, was the child of a black father and white mother, and described himself as the "fat kid" in his junior high. He also told students that he had been the class clown and remembered spending an entire school day in the principal's office. He disclosed the fact that he had a learning disability and needed hours of extra help from his math teacher in order to pass that class.

Dudley answered many questions about his height and his plans for the future and he described his experience of playing last summer with his NBA idol, Michael Jordan. When Dudley asked students how many would like to be professional

athletes, almost every hand went up. He stressed to students the shortness and unpredictability of a professional sports career and advised students to be good, to make good choices, and to always have a back-up plan.

High Schools

Classical

The Lynn Classical Key Club has been as active as ever. Members began the year providing tours to members of the accreditation team. That same day, members also participated in the Walk for H.A.W.C. (Help for Abused Women and their Children). Students have also participated in the Walk for Breast Cancer and the Relay for Life to benefit the American Cancer Society. Members packed boxes for those in need at the Tree of Life food pantry at Sacred Heart. They also enjoyed setting up and assisting in running dances and a pancake breakfast for Bridgewell. As usual, members also worked tirelessly every third Wednesday at My Brother's Table – for which they received the Student Group of the Year award.

BC HOOP STAR VISITS MARSHALL



Sixth-grader Nadia Turner was excited about Boston College basketball star Jared Dudley's visit to Marshall.

SCHOOL LYNN DIRECTORY

Elementary Schools

Aborn

Anne Graul, Principal
409 Eastern Ave., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7320

Brickett Elementary

Debra Ruggiero, Principal
123 Lewis St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7333

Julia F. Callahan

Edward Turmenne, Principal
200 O'Callaghan Way, Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7340

Cobbet K-8

Linda Lord, Principal
40 Franklin St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7341

William P. Connery

Patricia Riley, Principal
50 Elm St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7344

Drewicz Elementary

James Cole, Principal
34 Hood St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7350

William R. Fallon

Stanley Serwacki, Principal
100 Robinson St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7370

Robert L. Ford

Claire Crane, Principal
49 Hollingsworth St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7375

E. J. Harrington

Jane C. Franklin, Principal
21 Dexter St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7380

Hood

Paula Akiba, Principal
24 Oakwood Ave., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7390

Ingalls

Kimberlee Powers, Principal
1 Collins Street Terr., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7400

Lincoln-Thomson

Helen Mihos, Principal
115 Gardiner St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7460

Lynn Woods

Vincent Spirito, Principal
31 Trevett Ave, Lynn, MA 01904
(781) 477-7433

Sewell-Anderson

Patricia A Harnois-Mallett, Principal
25 Ontario St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7444

Capt William G. Shoemaker

Linda Mann, Principal
26 Regina Road, Lynn, MA 01904
(781) 477-7450

Edward A. Sisson

John Morris, Principal
58 Conomo Ave., Lynn, MA 01904
(781) 477-7455

Tracy

Mary Dill, Principal
35 Walnut St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7466

Washington Community Magnet

Joseph Cole, Principal
58 Blossom St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7470

Middle Schools

Breed

James Ridley, Principal
90 O'Callaghan Way, Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7330

Thurgood Marshall

Anita Rassias, Principal
19 Porter St. Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7360

Pickering

Patricia Barton, Principal
70 Conomo Ave, Lynn, MA 01904
(781) 477-7440

High Schools/Alternative

Career Development Center

Rhonda Cormier, Principal
3 North Common St. Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 268-3000

Classical High

Warren White, Principal
235 O'Callaghan Way, Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7404

Lynn Alternative High

Maureen Horgan, Principal
20 Wheeler St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 593-7155

Lynn English High

Andrew Fila, Principal
50 Goodridge Street, Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7366

Lynn Voc Tech Institute

Brian Coughlin, Director
80 Neptune Blvd, Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7420

MAST

William Newell, Director
1 Munroe St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7339

LEEP Evening Program

Karen Twomey, Director
50 Goodridge St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7361

Welcoming Alternative School

Nancy Conway, Principal
176 Franklin St., Lynn, MA 01905
(781) 477-7401

Welcoming Middle

Maureen Horgan, Principal
20 Wheeler St., Lynn, MA 01902
(781) 477-7220

Sanchez writes a new chapter as baseball coach at his alma mater

SANCHEZ: from Page 12

It is heartening for many to see him directing his contributions now to the next generation of baseball stars.

The transition from player to coach has not always been easy for Sanchez but he is becoming more comfortable behind the bench each day.

"It was difficult in the beginning because I see these guys playing baseball and I wanted to be playing, too. It was hard

because I could see their mistakes and I had to teach them how to fix things. It's a different view when you're on the sidelines. You see more and you get a better feel for the game," he said.

Sanchez has his sights set on more fun and more success down the line for the Lynn Tech program. He is cultivating an attitude of hard work and dedication from his young players to the sport that he loves.

SPORTS

The Lynn Educator



Yuri Sanchez works with Angel DeLeon in class.

A NEW CHAPTER

Former pro baseball player returns to alma mater to serve as head coach

BY COURTNEY DEVEAU

From a schoolboy star to a professional player, Yuri Sanchez made headlines throughout his baseball career. The former North Shore Spirit standout turned the page on the latest chapter in his baseball life, returning to his alma mater and assuming the position of head coach of the Lynn Tech baseball team.

When Sanchez took the field for Lynn Tech, the Tigers were a perennial powerhouse. The program had suffered some setbacks since his departure, but Sanchez returned to Tech this season determined to return the team to its former days of dominance.

“It had been a long time since we were in the state tournament. We’re trying to build up a team that used to be one of the top,” said Sanchez.

The overhaul of the program got off to a promising start in 2007 as the Tigers finished the season at 8-8 and qualified for the state tournament. Tech faced Lynnfield in the Div. 3 North preliminary round and dropped a close contest, 9-8.

Rather than dwell on the early ouster, Sanchez was encouraged by his team’s performance. “Play hard from the first inning until the last and that’s all that I can ask,” he said. “If we play hard and we lose, that’s OK. As long as we go down fighting I don’t complain.”

Rather than complain, Sanchez has set out to mold his young players into a fundamentally sound and competitive team.

“There were some games we should have won this season,” Sanchez said, “but what it really comes down to is the errors and the mistakes. Whoever makes the least mistakes is the one who wins the game.”

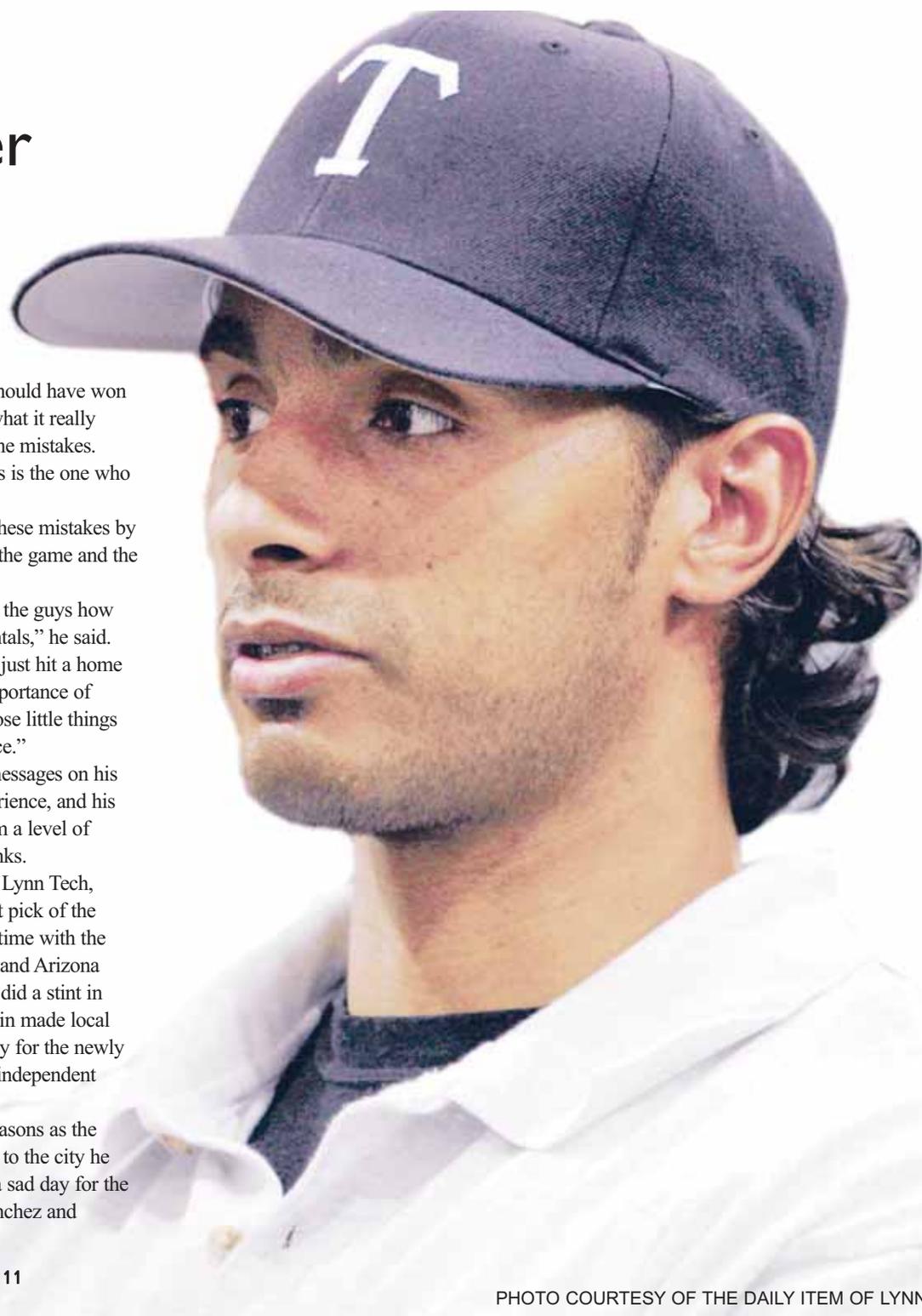
Sanchez is trying to eliminate these mistakes by teaching his players the basics of the game and the value of a good effort.

“That’s why I’m always telling the guys how important it is to do the fundamentals,” he said. “Everyone wants to come up and just hit a home run, but I have to tell them the importance of doing the little things and how those little things are what really make the difference.”

When Sanchez imparts these messages on his players, he is speaking from experience, and his own success in the sport gives him a level of credibility within the coaching ranks.

After a stellar playing career at Lynn Tech, Sanchez was a second-round draft pick of the Detroit Tigers in 1992. He spent time with the Cincinnati Reds, New York Mets and Arizona Diamondbacks organizations and did a stint in Japan. In 2003, Sanchez once again made local headlines returning to Lynn to play for the newly formed North Shore Spirit of the independent Northeast (now CanAm) League.

Sanchez spent the next three seasons as the Spirit’s shortstop and ambassador to the city he called home. His retirement was a sad day for the Spirit fans who had embraced Sanchez and celebrated his contributions.



See SANCHEZ Page 11

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DAILY ITEM OF LYNN