

# Kaleidoscope



## SENIOR'S STINKBUG RESEARCH EARNS INTEL RECOGNITION

John Jay High School senior Tess Tobin's interest in seldom-studied pheromones and two years of science research paid off when she was named an Intel Science Talent Search semifinalist on Jan. 7.

"I was in a state of disbelief," Tobin said. "I really didn't expect to be chosen."

Katonah-Lewisboro School District Interim Superintendent John Goetz acknowledged Tobin for her hard work. "Being named an Intel semifinalist is a remarkable honor," he said. "Congratulations to Tess, her family and our science research team for this outstanding achievement."

Tobin is one of just 300 honorees nationwide selected as a semifinalist in the pre-college science competition who will receive a \$1,000 award from the Intel Foundation. An additional \$1,000 will be awarded to JJHS.

Tobin's research focused on a pest well-known in New York and throughout the country — the brown marmorated stinkbug. Tobin

connected with mentor Dr. George Hamilton of Rutgers University, whose research includes the examination of pesticides and pest management.

In his laboratory, she used a Y-tube to test whether a stinkbug sex pheromone and aggregation pheromone would attract the insects, as well as whether lemongrass and clove essential oils would successfully deter the stinkbugs.

"The results were very encouraging. I found that the lemongrass oil was significantly repellent," said Tobin, who hopes to expand her research to see if her findings can be applied to controlling the stinkbug population's damaging effects on the nation's crops.

"The school, students and faculty are proud of Tess's accomplishments," said Principal Jessica Godin. "Her advancement as a semifinalist is a tribute to all her efforts over the past two years and studious research during that time. We are very excited for Tess."

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# DYNAMIC LEARN

The Katonah-Lewisboro School District is dedicated to providing unique and exciting ways for students to learn every day. These pages highlight a few of the year's exceptional learning opportunities so far.



## Interdisciplinary Success on Display at **Egyptian Museum**

Why take a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art when you can see a world-class exhibit right at John Jay Middle School?

Parents and students were treated to the exclusive one-day-only Egyptian Museum featuring works curated and also created by Team Pride sixth-graders.

Amelie Ciarcia's glassmaking display revealed an interesting ingredient used in the ancient practice. "I think it's cool how they made glass," she said. "They used animal dung; now we use damp sand."

"The students were engaged in an

interdisciplinary unit for four weeks during their ELA and social studies classes where they researched a variety of ancient Egyptian topics and became knowledgeable in one specific area," said teacher Kathy O'Neil, who along with teacher Guy Amdur, has been overseeing the museum initiative for years. "This is a rigorous unit that addresses many of the writing, reading and speaking components of the Common Core curriculum."

Each student's station included written reports about their topic, a visual display and a list of questions visitors might want to ask. Parents,

teachers, administrators and fellow sixth-graders browsed the stations inquiring about the topics.

Anton Kletner's "Book of the Dead" exhibit delved into the afterlife belief system held by the Egyptians. "The most interesting thing I learned is what [they believe] happens when they go to another world," he said.

"We are very proud of the students' hard work – they really became experts on their topics," said O'Neil. "Each year I am more impressed. I love when an 11-year-old can teach me something new, and it happens every year."

# ING EXPERIENCES

## Experiencing Differences Firsthand

The Katonah-Lewisboro Special Education PTA continued its annual Differences Day for second- and fifth-graders at each elementary school this year.

Students participated in hands-on activities designed to simulate learning disabilities and differences to better understand the challenges children with special needs face every day.

“The goal of our workshop is for students to experience the frustration of disabilities in a fun way so that we can break down the awkward barriers between children with and without special needs,” said SEPTA Co-president Cheryl

Orifici, who has chaired Differences Day for the past three years.

This year, students visited five stations during the workshop – physical impairments (gross and fine motor), visual impairments, hearing impairments, speech impairments and learning disabilities (dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.).

“Differences Day is a really big day for second- and fifth-grade students,” said Meadow Pond Elementary School Principal Carolann Castellano. “It really gives everyone an opportunity to see what it must feel like to have different types of disabilities.”



## *KMA Partnership Offers Art, History Insight*



Fourth-graders throughout the district benefit from the district’s partnership with the Katonah Museum of Art through its Thinking Through Art program again this year – this time in conjunction with the museum’s “Lethal Beauty: Samurai Weapons and Armor” exhibit.

“It promotes a few things – a positive experience in terms of art and helping students better understand the role art plays in our world, and how you can express your ideas and concepts using art as a vehicle,” said Increase Miller Elementary School Principal Kerry Ford.

In addition to art, the unit includes a writing component. “It is

a real interdisciplinary type of unit,” said Meadow Pond Elementary School Principal Carolann Castellano.

Students have access to KMA writer-in-residence Pamela Hart as they develop their work, and the unit culminates with a visit to the museum.

“She really helps students generate ideas,” said Katonah Elementary School Principal Cristy Harris.

This year’s samurai theme also gave students an opportunity to study a new culture.

“It builds on the things they learn in third grade about other countries,” Castellano said.



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# Mixing It Up at Lunch

Elementary students stepped out of their comfort zones this year by participating in Mix It Up Day, a national initiative that encourages students to sit with different classmates during lunch.

“Mix It Up Day is an opportunity for students to break through social boundaries,” said Increase Miller Elementary School social worker Wendy Bucaj. “It helps students become more comfortable with different kinds of people and even make new friends.”

Students took the initiative to encourage peers to challenge their daily routines by associating with new people.

“The message is loud and clear: No one should be left out of our community,” said Katonah Elementary School social worker Jessica Fulton.

# A Historic Volleyball Season

In a rematch that again went to five sets, John Jay High School’s volleyball team took on defending section champion Yorktown in the Class A finals. But this year’s result was different: John Jay defeated its rival, earning the school its first section title in volleyball since 1986.

“All we could think of was how we lost to Yorktown last year, and we didn’t want that feeling again,” said coach Thomas Rizzotti. “There were so many times where the girls played from their hearts and refused to lose.”

The team powered through regionals and became the school’s first volleyball team to earn a trip to the Final Four in the State Championship Tournament.

“It still hasn’t hit me yet that we made history,” said senior co-captain Eilish Newcomb.

“The final home volleyball game of the season was one of the most exciting after-school events this year,” said Principal Jess Godin. “The energy in the gymnasium was electric. It was a testament to the school spirit we are so proud of at John Jay High School.”

