



THE EDUCATOR

Newsletter of the Arlington Teachers' Association

VOLUME 12, ISSUE V

MARCH 2023

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Leadership 2

Read about historical examples of great leaders.

Trivia Challenge

Win ATA gear.

Committee of 100 3

Learn about lobbying efforts in Albany.

Unity Pub

See photos from the event.

Librarians 4

Experience the day in the life of a school librarian.

What's Going On? 6

Member accomplishments are highlighted.

PR Update 7

Two volunteer opportunities are upcoming.

Member Spotlight

Read about BES teacher Liz Crivello-Jordan.

Calendar and Announcements 8



Real Leaders Know Their People

Editor's note: The following piece first appeared in this publication one year ago. As its relevance has not diminished, I have decided to print it again.

When did the word "leader" become so fetishized? When I started in education, no one called themselves a "leader"; if the job called for it, or the need arose, they led. Today there are leadership blogs and leadership hashtags and cults of personality around people billing themselves as "thought leaders". The fact is that you're not a leader just because you call yourself one. It's like calling yourself handsome—it's not for you to judge.

Is social media to blame for this rise in self-aggrandizing? It does make it easy for anyone to promote himself as a leader whether or not he has any actual qualifications. Perhaps the ease of facile

the reality is far from it.

In the field of education there are many opportunities to lead. We have superintendents, and directors, and principals, and department heads, and even union leadership. In these

tumultuous times of pandemic and war (not to mention all of the stressors on educators, in particular), we need real leaders more than ever. We need people not just to manage the daily workings of our schools, but to inspire us to try to excel at our jobs.

This isn't to say that someone who calls himself a leader definitely can't inspire others, but there seems to be an inverse relationship today between self-labeling as a "leader"

See Leaders on page 2

The fact is that you're not a leader just because you call yourself one. It's like calling yourself handsome—it's not for you to judge.

internet attention is a factor in the perpetuation of leadership labels, but, maybe touting oneself as a leader isn't the real issue: it's the abundance of people in leadership positions deluded into thinking they are effectively doing the job when



ARLINGTON TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION
46 Davis Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603



(845) 454-7002 · www.arlingtonteachers.com · ata4547002@aol.com

Trivia Challenge

Answer the question below correctly and you could be the proud winner of ATA gear!

How many presidents has NYSUT had since its inception in 1972?

Last month's winner, who submitted the only correct response, was **Joe Healy** from UVMS. He knew that **George Schiavone** was Arlington's first superintendent. He will be the proud owner of ATA gear. Answer this month's question and you could win ATA gear too!

Submit your answer to the above trivia question to sfalk@acsdny.org by **March 24**. The winner will be randomly selected from the correct submissions.

Real Leaders Know Their People

Continued from front and actual leadership qualities.

So, what does make for an effective leader? There is need for intelligence and experience in the area that you are leading. Communication skills are good too, but those qualities are definitely not enough to ensure sound decision-making, and buy-in from those you are tasked with leading.

Let's look to history for advice. A few years ago I was at the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, watching a very dramatic unveiling of George Washington's actual tent that he slept in during that war. The narrator mentioned that one reason why Washington was so well-regarded was that he didn't distance himself from his troops; he was known to be on the field with them and treat them all with respect. In fact, once he became president, Washington went out of his way to connect with his constituents, meeting with the public every week and even visiting all of the states at a time when traveling such distances was not common practice. Listening to the narrator, I was hit with an

epiphany—that is the same type of behavior attributed to Robert Oppenheimer, head of the research arm of the Manhattan Project. He was known to show up in his scientists' labs at all hours, and to make a point of knowing the names of all who were a part of his worksite. There are not many similarities that immediately come to mind

positions can have on their followers better than an anecdote told concerning yet another of our great American leaders, Franklin Roosevelt. A hardened-looking man was seen weeping as FDR's funeral train passed and was asked if he knew the president. "I didn't know him," the man responded, "But he knew me."

What these three disparate leaders of past centuries practiced is still the key to good leadership today, no matter if you are rallying constituents, or scientists, or educators. If you distance yourself from those you are tasked with leading, all of your endeavors will ring hollow.

So, please, if you aspire to be

So, please, if you aspire to be an effective educational leader, don't simply read books and blog posts about leadership—read your people. A visit to a classroom will do more for your career than a social media scan for #eduleader. And, if this isn't about career advancement, and is all in the name of doing what is best for students, even better.

an effective educational leader, don't simply read books and blog posts about leadership—read your people. A visit to a classroom will do more for your career than a social media scan for #eduleader. And, if this isn't about career advancement, and is all in the name of doing what is best for students, even better.

Nothing sums up the effect that those succeeding in leadership

an effective educational leader, don't simply read books and blog posts about leadership—read your people. A visit to a classroom will do more for your career than a social media scan for #eduleader. And, if this isn't about career advancement, and is all in the name of doing what is best for students, even better.

-Sam Falk,
ATA Communications Chair

CAC Update: Committee Of 100

Each year NYSUT organizes a day in March for locals to send members to Albany to talk with their elected officials. It was our great pleasure to advocate for public education with fellow NYSUT members as a part of this year's Committee of 100 on March 9.

We met with the staff of Senator Michelle Hinchey and with Assemblymember Didi Barrett. During our meetings we emphasized Tier 6 equity, the challenges of recruiting and retaining public school teachers, the onerous burden of APPR on every staff member in a school, funding Teachers' Centers, and the importance of full foundation aid for schools in the state budget. Our advocacy was met with general agreement by Hinchey's chief of staff, and by Barrett. Both seemed to agree that foundation aid needed to be fully funded and that APPR

was burdensome. Our conversation regarding Teachers' Centers revolved around the fact that the executive budget zeroes out funding them every year and that the legislature reinstates them due to our pressing the issue.

Following our meetings, we attended a rally on the Million Dollar Staircase to advocate for free SUNY and CUNY tuition so that future generations will not be hindered by crushing educational debt. Our advocacy will continue with in-district meetings with legislators in the coming weeks before the final state budget is approved.



Photo courtesy of Brendan Lawler

ATA CAC Co-Chairs Bill Mueller and Brendan Lawler took part in a rally for free CUNY and SUNY tuition at the NYS Capitol on March 9.

-Brendan Lawler and Bill Mueller, ATA CAC CO-Chairs

Unity Pub Brings Members Together



ATA members, both active and retired, were invited to a Unity Pub event on March 10 at All City Bar and Grill in LaGrangeville. Colleagues from across the district were happy to catch up with each other and partake in free food.

School Librarians Play Many Roles



OPS Librarian Mindy Grey confers with a student about a book.

On a Thursday afternoon in January, Overlook Primary School librarian Mindy Grey was leading a group of kindergarteners in the Hokey Pokey. There were the sounds of laughter as the students lined up to go back to their classroom, carrying on enthusiastic conversations with Grey ranging in topics from the books they were taking with them, to a recent root canal a little boy had endured. Thus is the life of an elementary school librarian.

Although Grey has now been at Arlington for 25 years (the last nine at OPS), her background is in archiving. She worked at the Culinary Institute of America with their catalogs and reference materials prior to making the

library. I think because as a kid I didn't like going to the library. I liked research. I'm not a fast reader, so my goal was always to make this room a place where kids can be independent."

Grey sees six classes a day, each twice in a six day cycle. Along with the Empire State Information Fluency Continuum (a set of skills that build upon each other as students go from preK-12), there

are American Association of School Librarians standards to follow as well. The elementary librarians work together in developing their lessons: "We, as a department, have

aligned our benchmarks with the elementary ELA standards, but also look at science, social studies, math and SEL, and incorporate them as necessary. Further, we take into account monthly celebrations and honors such as Black history, Native American history, Women's history, etc., creating book talks and displays," Grey says. In addition, an elementary school librarian gathers resources for classroom projects, helps with technology, and offers research support in and out of the library. Grey also works closely with ENL teachers to provide additional support for ENL students.

On top of all of that, the process of purchasing books

and culling the shelves must be done. According to Grey, she reviews professional journals such as the *School Library Journal*, and looks at the book reviews, then she goes to the public library and reads the books herself before recommending that the district purchase them.

At the secondary level, Union Vale Middle School librarian Kate Sprague-Hicks's job might appear rather dif-

ferent than at the elementary level, but there are similarities. She, too, has to juggle the responsibilities of teaching lessons, helping students check out books and do research, and handling the daily organization and

maintenance of a library, often as the only adult in the room.

A big difference is that, while the elementary library classes run on a set schedule, at the secondary level it is up to the librarian to set her own day, often necessitating turning away classes who would like to visit. According to Sprague-Hicks, "Your lunch and prep schedule are up to you, and it's a huge challenge. I try to take a lunch every day, but I don't remember the last time I took a prep."

She has up to five classes a day (in addition to students from study halls and lunch) that schedule time at her li-

"I run a noisy library. I think because as a kid I didn't like going to the library. I liked research. I'm not a fast reader, so my goal was always to make this room a place where kids can be independent." -OPS Librarian Mindy Grey



The OPS library contains a teaching area with a Promethean board.

change to school librarian. Today she relishes the constant activity that her job entails. "I like to keep busy," she explains, "I run a noisy



Library shelves at UVMS have helpful labels.

library, necessitating preparation beforehand. An example is English teacher Joe Healy’s recent visit with his eighth grade ELA class for a round of book dating.

Sprague-Hicks explained, “I probably pulled 400 books for Healy, and probably 100 went out. Seven or eight different topics.” Since the

large number of bookshelves can be overwhelming to students, Sprague-Hicks sets up each table with books on a different topic for them to browse.

And, it is definitely not just ELA classes. “General music does a lot of research,” Sprague-Hicks says. Students will need assistance finding information about a musical genre, or a particular composer that they will be introducing at a school concert. She collaborates with teachers of all subjects.

Since starting at Arlington in 2006, Sprague-Hicks has

seen a big change in the students’ technology skills, and the fact that they are now carrying their own media with them. Students no longer need to make use of the library as a place to use a computer (though they do come in to print). Conversely, Sprague-Hicks has noted that the time away from school during

COVID has affected students’ general research skills. She has noticed that some students can’t find a book in the library, or differentiate between fiction and non-fiction, so there is a need for teaching those basic skills. She, and the other secondary school librarians, have also made it a point to keep up on the latest databases and other online references that they can provide to students in lieu of simply searching Google for a topic. According to Sprague-Hicks, “You start with books, so students know how to do the research, how to read a chapter, . . . there’s always going to be books. Can you look it up on the internet? Yeah, if you know how to use the right sources, and some-

times you have to show them something better.” As for the process of selecting books for her library shelves, Sprague-Hicks says, “There are vendors we know and trust, same with publishers and authors. I go to local book stores, I go to Barnes & Noble. The secondary librarians are a close group and we recommend books to one another.” Much of what they do is also dictated by American Library Association standards.

At all levels, Arlington school libraries are lively places, with multiple levels of care and planning necessitated by their librarians in order to make their spaces accessible and useful to students and teachers alike. The life of a school librarian is not one of shushing people and pulling dusty volumes off of shelves. It is about creating and running a purposefully cultivated space full of both books and technological resources for supporting learners of every kind. And that takes a lot of work. Is it worth it? On separate days, when asked, both Grey and Sprague-Hicks replied with the exact same words: “I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

“Can you look it up on the internet? Yeah, if you know how to use the right sources, and sometimes you have to show them something better.”

***-UVMS Librarian
Kate Sprague-Hicks***



UVMS Librarian Kate Sprague-Hicks checks out a book for a student.

-Sam Falk, Editor

Photos by Sam Falk

2022 — 2023 ATA Officers

President

Bob Maier

Elementary Vice President

Nicolle McMorris

Secondary Vice President

Greg Nieman

Vice President For Membership

Steve Hertzog

Treasurer

Dave Cordella

Chief Negotiator

Robert McHugh

PR Committee Chair

Kristine Jackson

Community Action Chairs

Brendan Lawlor

Bill Mueller

Welfare Trust Chair

Ron Higgins

Communications Chair

Sam Falk

Senior Building Representatives

ASM — A'Rehema Leach

BES — Christie Boydston

Noxon — TBD

VFES — Gwen Moschetto

OPS — Christene Way

Traver — Diana Judge

JDWR — Barbara Mackey

TIS — Heather Blatz

LMS — Chris Greco

UVMS — Jim DeBonis

AHS — John Filor

AHS — Theresa Daleo-Stock

What's Going On?

"What's Going on" is a monthly feature of The Educator. It highlights noteworthy accomplishments by ATA members. Do you know of a colleague who deserves recognition? Let The Educator know by emailing sfalk@acsdny.org. We can't know what's going on at all of your schools without your help!

Congratulations to the following ATA members for their contributions to the Arlington community and beyond.

Arlington High

Health teacher Brendan Hunt received K104's Golden Apple Award for Teacher of the Month of March. He was nominated by the mother of a student he has in class and has also coached on the JV volleyball team. An interview with Hunt can be heard at <https://www.k104online.com/teacher-of-the-month/>.

Social studies teacher Robert McHugh has written an article titled "The Lyaal Report: Progressivism in Dutchess County" that is being published in the Dutchess County Historical Society *Yearbook*. The yearbook has been printed annually since the organization's founding in 1914, making it the longest-serving historical journal in New York State.

Social studies teacher Kathy Bellino and her student El Yanoti were a part of a panel discus-



Photo courtesy of Kristina Rizzo

Arlington Music

Arlington music teachers Matt Zydel (TIS), William Stevens (UVMS), Mia Chong (UVMS), Gina Garabedian (UVMS), Kristina Rizzo (UVMS), and Lauren Regan (NOX and JDWR), pictured above from left to right, performed in the Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra on February 12 at the Marriott Pavilion on the campus of the Culinary Institute of America. The concert titled "Summon The Heroes" included music from many films and honored local heroes.

sion called "How Do We Ensure All Students Become Democracy Ready?" that took place on March 7 as part of a series of New York Civic Learning Week events hosted by DemocracyReady NY and the Center for Educational Equity at Teachers College. They spoke about the Seal of Civic Readiness experiences offered at Arlington, specifically the Civic Engagement and Leadership class and the High School Capstone Project.

Overlook Primary

ENL teacher Sucheta Baichwal was selected as the New York State Teachers of English to

Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) member of the month for March. She is featured on their website here: <https://nystesol.org/memberofthethmonth.php>.

School psychologist Tammy Rodriguez and her family are members of the Hudson Highlands Pipe Band (of which she is the president) and will be participating in many parades across the Hudson Valley this month. The group is always looking for new members. They meet on Monday evenings for lessons and practice in Cold Spring. Those interested can email Rodriguez at tammykayson@hotmail.com.

Member Spotlight: Liz Crivello-Jordan

Beekman Elementary School 4th grade teacher Liz Crivello-Jordan's long list of charitable and volunteer work is motivated by her upbringing: "I was blessed to have a mom and dad who taught me to always be kind, helpful and put others first," she explains, "When I lost them both, I vowed to raise my son the same way. I try to follow the Golden Rule - 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' I try to instill this in my students as best I can."

As the advisor of the Beekman Bears Care community service club, she leads students in carrying out an acts of kindness with a theme for each month. They have honored veterans, supported organizations such as Dutchess Outreach and Hope on a Mission, and worked with community members to learn about putting together donation bags with specific purposes, such as celebration bags containing the makings of a birthday cake to give to those who can't afford their own supplies.

In addition to working with stu-

dents after school, Crivello-Jordan also has other roles outside of the classroom. She is her building's representative on the district's Science Content team, and also attends PTA meetings. She is currently planning the BES spring science fair.

As an active ATA member, Crivello-Jordan is her building's PR rep, which fits nicely with her other roles doing charitable work. She organizes donations that come in for the ATA's DCSPCA drive, and other events that benefit local organizations like the Grace Smith House.

On top of all of this, the accomplishment that Crivello-Jordan is most proud of this year is one that she undertook on her own—she walked 45 miles in December and January before her 45th birthday to raise awareness for the Sandy Hook



Photo courtesy of Liz Crivello-Jordan

BES 4th grade teacher Liz Crivello-Jordan is shown here with her son Liam, an Arlington student.

Promise Foundation, which schedules safety programs in schools.

Would you like to nominate someone in your building for next month's spotlight? Email sfalk@acsdny.org.

Volunteer Opportunities Abound

Despite the blustery start to March, we know spring and warm weather are just around the corner. And with warmer temperatures come more opportunities to give back to our wonderful community. The Arlington Teachers' Association's PR committee is proud to offer two upcoming events in the coming months.

First, the bi-annual highway cleanup is scheduled for Earth Day, April 22, 2023. We will clean up the stretch of Route 55 in front of the high school. It is always a great day where you can chat with a buddy while beautifying our surrounding area. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Debbie Pol-

lack at dpollack@acsdny.org. We will meet on the south side of the high school in the parking lot by the auditorium and Rt. 55 at 9 am. The highway department provides us with high-visibility vests, helmets, bags, and gloves--just be sure to wear some comfortable shoes!

Secondly, the ATA is proud to once again be a sponsor of Rebuilding Together of Dutchess County. The National Day of Rebuilding is always the last Saturday of April, and it is a call to service for community members. According to their website, over 30,000 volunteers have donated over 230,000 hours to complete rebuild projects nationwide. We will partner with other local

groups and organizations to help a family (often right in our district) make essential repairs on their home to keep it habitable. No skill set is required, but if you do have any handy skills, it is very much appreciated. If you are interested in participating on April 29, 2023, please contact Eleni Anemelos at eanemelos@acsdny.org. An email will also be forthcoming with more details.

The PR committee is so thankful for your generosity of time, resources, and spirit. Should you have any general questions about volunteer opportunities, please contact Kristine Jackson at kjackson@acsdny.org.

-Kristine Jackson, ATA PR Chair

Dates to Remember



MARCH

10th—Superintendent's Conference Day

14th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., TRP

21st—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

28th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., CAO

APRIL

3rd-10th—Spring Break

11th—Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m., BES

15th—District Art Fair, 11 a.m.—4 p.m., LMS

18th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

25th—Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., OPS



MAY

9th—ATA Executive Council Meeting: 4 p.m., AHS Room 1432

Board of Education Meeting: 7 p.m., ASM



Announcements

WHAT'S GOING ON?

Do you know something great that an ATA member has done recently? Perhaps they have done charity work, received an award, attended a conference, or even published a book. Let us know by scanning the QR code or going to this link:

<https://forms.gle/aGLYf3LWHqkP5gaS7>



Stay informed! Follow us on Facebook and Twitter or check out www.arlingtonteachers.com for forms, photos, calendars, and more.

Landscaping help is needed at the ATA Office on 4/8, 5/13, and 6/10. Weather permitting, we will meet at 8 a.m. and work for two hours. Tasks may include weeding, mulching, pruning, and planting.

Please dress accordingly and bring gloves.

Contact Nancy Thomas at OPS (nthomas@acsdny.org) to volunteer.