

# Schools in Action!

## MHS Alumni return to spread enthusiasm for college

With graduation rates up at Madras High School, many students are exploring the option of going to college. In an effort to inspire juniors and seniors to continue their education after high school, a group of college students visited Madras High School to share their experiences and offer advice to younger students.

"We're always looking for ways to help our students see the importance of graduation and look beyond high school," said MHS co-principal HD Weddel.

A total of 18 Madras High School alumni came to speak in their former classrooms about topics such as choosing and applying to schools, working, getting scholarships/financial aid, and living on campus. The alumni also answered questions and gave advice about how to study for tests and get good grades.

"We're always encouraging students to explore college, but hearing it from their peers is really powerful," added Weddel. "That is why it was so great to have the alumni visit; they plant visions and help our students see that college can be a reality."



Students learn the names of animals in native languages at WSK8 with teachers Deanie Johnson, Pam Cardenas and Educational Assistant Myra Johnson-Orange.

## Students embrace culture through language

This year marks the beginning of an exciting new Native Language Program at Warm Springs K8 Academy. Students have the option of participating in Kiksht, Numu and Ichiskiini language classes four days per week, with half hour sessions for K-6 graders and 20 minute sessions for students in grades 7, 8 and 9. They start by learning vocabulary words, and then move on to more complex phrases and sentences.

"I think the program is going really well," said teacher Deanie Johnson. "It got me back into teaching and speaking the language. I haven't taught for a while, since my grandma died. Our elders tell us, 'Don't let our language go silent.'"

Through this program students are building connections with their heritage and culture.

"I chose to learn Numu because I'm Paiute," said Leland Libokmeto, grade 7. "My mom teaches me at home. It's hard learning how to pronounce words. Some words are really easy and some are really hard. They're long."

Another 7th grader, Treyvon Johnson, said, "I'm native and it's my language so I should know it. It's kind of difficult for me to remember some words, but I am learning."

The Native Language program is funded by a grant from Meyer Memorial Trust, which aims to give youth skills in Native languages and preserve the culture of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. Parents must sign a consent form to have their kids participate.

## Family Engagement Night



Teachers, students, and community members gather for a night of yoga, jump rope, hula hoop and gymnastics during Healthy Heart Family Engagement event at WSK8. Big thanks to OHSU On Track and the Oregon Department of Health for sharing these activities with our families!

## Teachers helping teachers

It is a teacher's job to pass along knowledge and wisdom, not only to their students, but also to each other. In an effort to make sure teachers have what they need to help students, our district now has Teaching and Learning Support Specialists.

Teaching and Learning Support Specialists assist and coach their peers with teaching strategies, lesson planning and effective classroom management.

Denise Garcia is one of the district's new Teaching and Learning Support Specialists who support English language learners.

"This program is important to teachers because it provides them with trusted colleagues who can support them at any stage of their teaching practice," said Garcia. "This role allows me to partner with the hardworking teachers across our district. I get to go into each school weekly, meet with teachers, and see firsthand their passion for students. I have learned a lot this year and this position is pushing me to grow in my practice as well."

Before she started in this position, she spent 12 years as an English Language Development Teacher at Buff Elementary. Now she supports ELD teachers at all of the district's schools. Denise and her colleagues have been excellent additions to our team and we are so grateful for the resources they provide.



Denise Garcia, Teaching and Learning Support Specialist.

## Alumni Spotlight: Obed Eriza

Obed Eriza graduated from Madras High School in 2017 and is now attending Lewis & Clark College. In high school, he was involved in a variety of activities ranging from soccer, tennis, and football to student council and the national honor society. His inspiration to graduate from high school and attend college came from his mother.

"All throughout my life she has been my support system, and best friend," said Eriza. "All I wanted was to make her proud."

Although Eriza was originally planning to study accounting at Concordia University, things changed when he received the prestigious Ford Scholarship; he was one of five Madras students to get this award. Eriza had been in contact with the football coach at Lewis & Clark about the possibility of being the team's kicker, but the high cost of tuition was a barrier for him. The Ford Scholarship opened this opportunity for Eriza and he was able to commit to Lewis & Clark and be involved in their football program.

Eriza is currently majoring in Spanish and minoring in education. He hopes to someday become a coach, but he is also interested in marketing, media, and economics.

When asked what advice he would give to students entering college, Eriza said, "Never be afraid to ask questions—in or outside of the classroom. You can always see professors in office hours, where they can go in depth and make sure you understand the material. You can also ask your peers anything. This helped me a lot. Upperclassmen will always be willing to help freshmen out because they remember being in those exact shoes."



Madras alumni Obed Eriza with Co-Presidents of Lewis and Clark College, Wim and Alice Wiewel. Eriza and other student leaders were invited to a dinner at their house to celebrate the new semester.

## Fire Busters Visit WSK8 Third Grade Class



## PAC Calendar

### March

- 9 US Senator Ron Wyden TOWN HALL / 9-10:30 am
- 15-17 *Your Guests are Ghosts* / 7 pm
- 18 *Your Guests are Ghosts* / 2 pm  
*Presented by High Desert Community Theater*
- 22 Music In Our Schools Month Concert / 7 pm  
*Presented by the MHS Music Department*
- 25 The Secret Garden / 3 pm (only Madras performance)  
*Presented by Opera Bend*

## Calendar

### March

- 5 No School Parent / Conference Day
- 14 School Board Meeting / Warm Springs K8 Academy / 7 pm
- 26-30 No School / Spring Break



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