



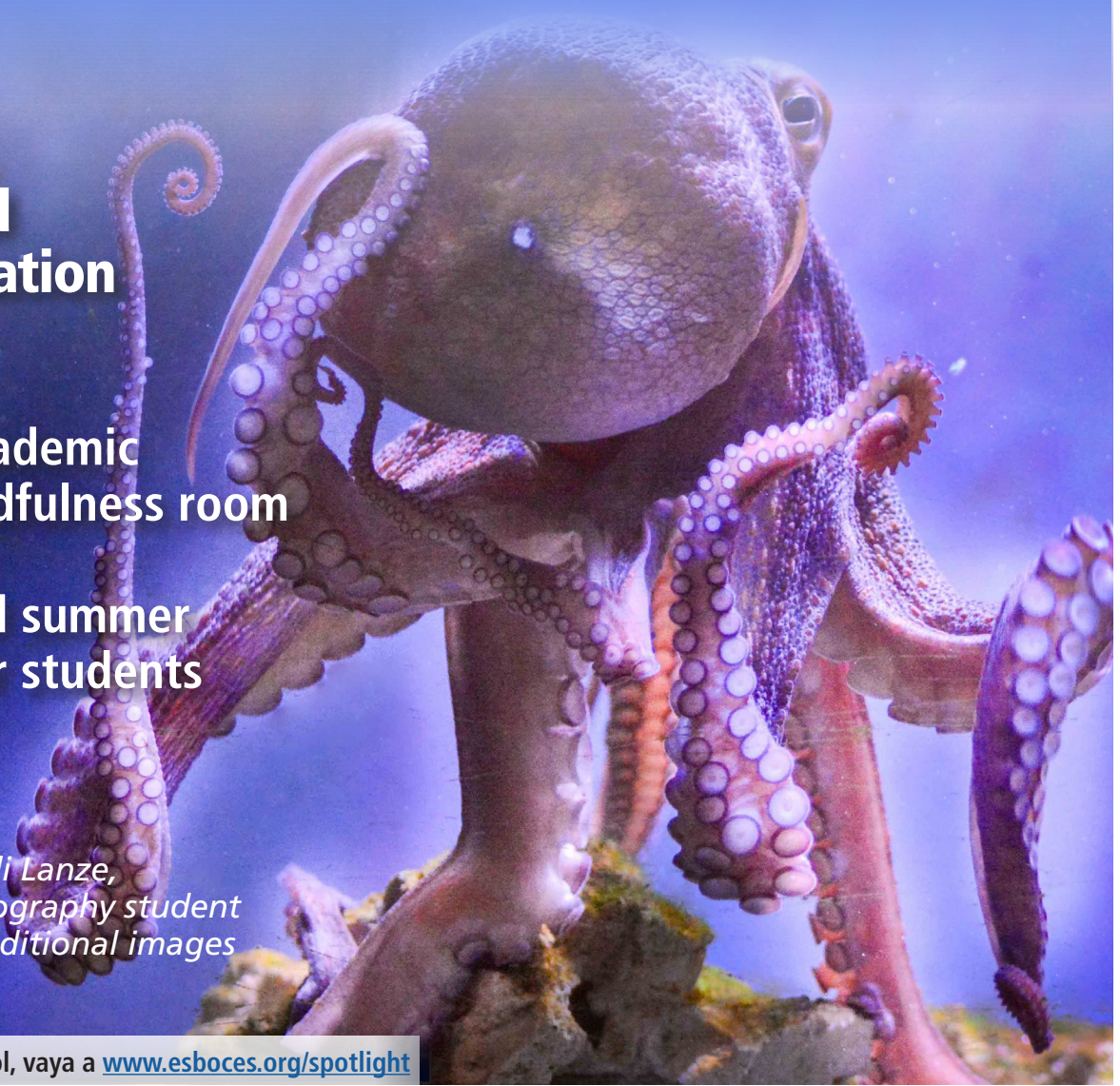
Spotlight

New: Playground Communication Boards

Jefferson Academic
opens a mindfulness room

Career-based summer
programs for students

*Photo credit: Heidi Lanze,
Professional Photography student
See inside for additional images



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The RIC Recognized



From left to right
Karen Bell, Office Applications Specialist; Sal Piampiano, Office Applications Specialist; and Janet Mahon, Data Control Specialist II, from ESBOCES Regional Information Center were recognized for their work within RIC One.

The Regional Information Center One (RIC One), which ESBOCES Regional Information Center is a part of, received the 2023 Exemplary Service and Innovation for Technological Advancement award from the Association of Educational Service Agencies. This recognition acknowledges the collaborative effort of 12 Educational Service Agencies under the RIC One initiative.

Formed in response to New York's student data privacy law, RIC One provides statewide data privacy and security services to K-12 school districts. This award highlights RIC One's contribution to technological innovation, supporting local districts, and addressing the crucial issue of data protection. By the 2022-23 school year, 78% of New York public K-12 districts had joined the RIC One Data Privacy and Security Service, making it the largest non-state-mandated service in the state. The initiative offers tools, resources, and an annual statewide event for district data protection officers, helping educational agencies meet high standards for student data and information privacy compliance in New York.

SIGN UP For Career-based Summer Fun!

This summer, ESBOCES offers two career exploration programs for students ages 13-21.

The Summer Career Exploration Program, for those 13-15, provides three weeks of immersion in one of eight introductory courses (see full list below). Participants jump immediately into authentic hands-on learning taught by teachers who are industry professionals.

The Pre-Employment Transition Services Program is a grant-funded program designed for youth ages 14-21 with a documented disability (IEP, 504, or medical documentation). Students are exposed to various career options through a rotating schedule of classes and receive related counseling.

Said Erin Sellek, program administrator, "Getting young students to think seriously about the career paths they may want to pursue through these engaging, hands-on programs is important. Additionally, career counseling is essential for students with special needs as they learn to advocate for themselves."



Learning to Navigate Gender

New guidelines developed by the New York State Education Department in June now instruct K-12 educators on the proper use of student pronouns, restroom policies, gender-based activities, and numerous other issues. This guidance also reiterates the importance of adhering to the state's Dignity for all Students Act (DASA) and to comply with federal and state nondiscrimination laws.

To bring districts in the region up to speed, answer questions, and provide them with tools for success, ESBOCES has developed training on the topic, which is led by Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Dr. Nichelle Rivers.

Rivers gave the training to the Patchogue-Medford UFSD in December, and a regional workshop to another 48 educators from 10 districts across both Nassau and Suffolk Counties in January. The training, "Unpacking the NYSED Transgender and Gender Expansive Legal Update," was open to administrators, school counselors, social workers, psychologists, and lead teachers.

This professional development session focused on the most up-to-date LGBTQ terminology, strategies to create inclusive and supportive environments within the

educational setting, best practices, developing district action plans to administer this new guidance, and more.

Said Rivers, "ESBOCES is invested in the success of our districts and this training assists them in translating and applying these legal updates by providing the necessary framework to reinforce their efforts."



For information regarding CoSers and additional trainings, call/email Nichelle Rivers at 631-687-3029 or nrivers@esboces.org.

Summer Career Exploration

WHO: Students age 13-15

WHEN: July 8-25, 2024
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
Monday-Thursday

CLASSES:

- Automotive Technology
- Carpentry
- Computer Science
- Cosmetology
- Dog Care and Training
- Intro to Construction Trades (electrical, plumbing, HVAC)
- Intro to Culinary Arts
- Metal Magic (basic metalwork and welding)

REGISTRATION: Begins March 1, 2024
<http://registration.xenegrade.com/esboces>
and select 'Session Summer 2024'
By phone: 631-369-7567
Additional info: 631-244-5885

WHERE: Classes vary by location (Bellport, Oakdale, Riverhead)

Pre-Employment Transition Services

WHO: Youth ages 14-21 with a documented disability (IEP, 504 or medical documentation)

WHEN: July 8-18, 2024
8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
Monday-Thursday

CLASSES:

- Animal Science
- Automotive
- Culinary Arts
- Healthcare

COUNSELING:

- Job Exploration
- Post-secondary Options
- Self-advocacy
- Workplace Readiness Training

WHERE: Classes vary by location (Bellport, Oakdale, Riverhead)

REGISTRATION: Begins March 1, 2024

DETAILS: For more info contact:

- Erin Sellek - esellek@esboces.org
- Christina Murgola - cmurgola@esboces.org

Classroom Happenings

Here's a quick look inside our many educational programs, which consist of Career and Technical Education, Adult Education, Special Education, and Special Career Education.

Professional Field Trip

A recent field trip to the LI Aquarium allowed Professional Photography students to put new skills to the test. Here are images by Alexis Falek, Eastport-South Manor CSD, and Alivia Jordan, Sachem CSD.



Winter Funderland

The team at Westhampton Beach Learning Center orchestrated a captivating Winter Funderland event designed to engage all students. This experience was comprised of a variety of sensory and gross motor skill stations, alongside a range of craft activities, all tailored to meet the diverse needs of the school's student body.

Taco Demo with the Pros

You know it will be a great lesson when a Culinary Arts Academy alum and an executive chef join forces to give a Caribbean-style taco demo. Former student David Franco and Chef Evan McDonough, both from Rumba in Hampton Bays, demonstrated how to prepare taco variations using jerk chicken and short ribs in Jill Hamill's Food Prep class at Ward Tech.



Take an Adult Ed Class

Make a career change or follow a passion by taking an Adult Education Class. Start your research now and get your questions answered before registration opens this summer by visiting <https://adulthoodeducation.esboces.org/>

Helping Respiratory Patients

Physical Therapy Aide students at Bixhorn Tech studied the respiratory system and how they can assist patients. They learned a technique to help those who've undergone abdominal or open-heart surgery, which uses a pillow to support the incision while huffing to force exhalation without coughing to prevent pain. Students also learned to use an incentive spirometer, which are employed after surgery or a diagnosis of a lung ailment to strengthen lungs.



Learning to Mentor

Francesca, East Islip UFSD, a senior in Taylor Terhaar's Welding class at ICC, recently mentored a classmate during a trailer restoration. She identified the repairs that needed to be made, demonstrated safe and proper technique, explained the process, assisted, and provided feedback. This method fosters leadership skills and practical experience.

Preparing for the Job Market

Auto Body students in Brian LaBarba's class at Milliken Tech are hard at work repairing suspension components, installing bumper covers, re-aligning frames, welding and grinding, replacing window motors, and more. What they learn here in class will prepare them for successful careers right out of high school.



Playground Communication Boards



This Spring, Brookhaven Learning Center will install its first outdoor communication boards on a new playground designed to meet the needs of special education students. These boards assist students who are non-verbal or language impaired to communicate while outside on the playground.

Students with speech-language impairments utilize augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices to communicate. AAC devices can be communication books filled with images, symbols and photos; tablets loaded with communication programs; or other equipment. However, when outside on the playground, AAC devices are usually left in a designated area so students can play freely.

The new playground was built to be a developmentally appropriate space where all students can play despite their disability. It fosters inclusivity with seating and equipment that accommodate wheelchairs and other adaptive motor devices. Large, weather-proof communication boards provide the means for all students to express their needs to staff and fellow students.

"Playgrounds are also places to exercise social skills, and the ability to communicate via the boards prevents students who are non-verbal from feeling left out and isolated," said Speech Pathologist Brynn Kaplan. She and fellow Speech Pathologist Meredith Bushell led this initiative.

The boards are filled rows and columns of colorful images depicting nouns, pronouns, verbs, and activities. Students who are non-verbal point to the images that convey their wants and needs. The manufacturer offers a standard board, but Kaplan and Bushell had the company create one featuring custom images for their students. This one also encompasses feelings, body parts, and exact replicas of the playground equipment. All images are color-coded and grouped strategically.

"We wanted a board that was personalized for our students and their needs," said Bushell. "Essentially, it's a modified Fitzgerald Key, which is a color-coded chart that categorizes words based on their function." For example, all pronouns are yellow and grouped, nouns are orange, feelings are blue, and so on. And there is an illustration of a body with labeled body parts. This enables students to let staff know if something is wrong physically by pointing to the body part and then to the appropriate feeling, such as 'hurt.'

According to Kaplan, "These boards are easy for students to use and will provide them with a basic necessity to enhance outdoor play and socialization."



From left to right
Meredith Bushell and Brynn Kaplan

Enhancing Community and Mindfulness at Jefferson Academic

Jefferson Academic Center (JAC) has taken a proactive approach to enhancing students' well-being through the introduction of several new initiatives this school year.

JAC's Mindfulness Room opened at the onset of the 2023-2024 school year. This innovative space serves as an alternative to the voluntary Behavior Intervention Room, offering students a calm environment dedicated to enhancing their mental health. The Mindfulness Room is designed to be a retreat where students can engage in mindfulness techniques, fostering a sense of tranquility through its quiet ambiance and subdued lighting. Equipped with various sensory items, the room facilitates a serene atmosphere that encourages students to focus on self-improvement and stress reduction.

As part of prioritizing the well-being of its students, Jefferson Academic Center has embarked on a groundbreaking initiative with the establishment of Parent University.

Launched as a collaborative effort between the school and the community, Parent University aims to empower parents to become active and informed partners in their child's education. The program's overarching goal is to boost parent engagement by providing valuable resources and information, allowing parents to play a more substantial role in their children's academic lives and within the JAC community.

Throughout the school year, Parent University will consist of events and workshops, both virtually and in-person, to cater to the diverse needs of parents. These gatherings serve as platforms for parents to not only gain insights into their child's academic journey, but also to voice their opinions and concerns. JAC Principal Vincent Iorio expressed his enthusiasm for the initiative, emphasizing the importance of forging a strong partnership between parents and the school.

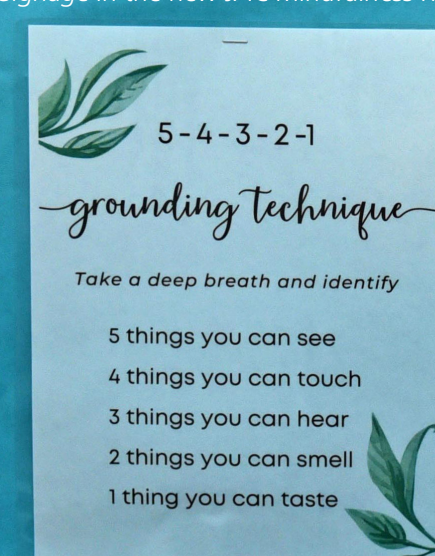
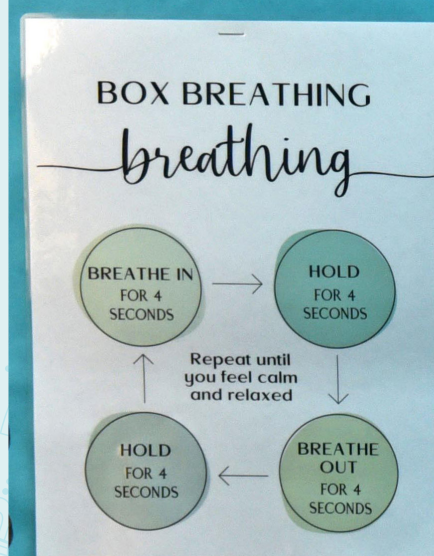
Furthermore, JAC recognizes the significance of student input in



shaping the school's environment. In line with this commitment, JAC has established a Student Voice Forum, consisting of a carefully selected group of diverse students. This forum serves as a platform for these students to openly discuss their opinions and concerns regarding the school's climate and culture.

By implementing these initiatives, Jefferson Academic Center is fostering a holistic and collaborative approach to education. The Mindfulness Room, Parent University, and the Student Voice Forum, collectively underscore the school's dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment that values the well-being and perspectives of both students and parents.

Signage in the new JAC Mindfulness Room



Renewable Energy Badges for Trade Electric Students

Eastern Suffolk BOCES Trade Electric classes are participating in a new partnership with Stony Brook University. Throughout multiple visits to Stony Brook University's labs, students gain exposure to the renewable energy field, interact with researchers and utilities, and observe clean building technology by being at the Advanced Energy Research and Technology Center located in the Research & Development Park at Stony Brook University. Visiting students split into two groups and rotate between the Center for Integrated Electric Energy Systems and the Spellman High Voltage Power Electronics Lab. During the visits, students are provided lunch by the New York Power Authority.

In addition to the visits to Stony Brook, New York Power Authority is visiting all of our Electrical Trade and Alternative Energy classes to deliver their learning module called Electricity Basics 2 to our students.

Students will earn a badge in Renewable Energy Systems. This program is a true collaboration between industry and post-secondary partners for the benefit of our secondary students.



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