

The Quill



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Feedback or Questions?

Contact Carmen Lane
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at
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Greetings from the OMHS PTSA

Happy New Year! On behalf of the Oakland Mills PTSA, it is my pleasure to bring back the OM Quill. In keeping with our theme One School: One Community, we are thrilled to partner with the Scorpion Alumni Network, an Oakland Mills Alumni group, to produce a quarterly newsletter.

Looking back on 2011, the PTSA had an exciting year. We thank you for sharing your time, talent, and treasure with us on behalf of our students and school community. Many of you have volunteered as chaperones, provided snacks and treats for students and staff, and given countless hours for the many details of event planning and implementation.

Your support of our Annual Craft Fair helped to make it the largest ever in its 23-year history. More than 1,000 people visited the fair! We offered a college essay-writing workshop for the first time, and three daring parent volunteers were trained by College Summit and worked with nearly 20 seniors over a two-week period before early college

decision deadlines.

There is more to come in 2012. In January, we will launch our parent workshop series with a dialogue on teen drug use called, "Parent 2 Parent." We are partnering HC Drug Free and will be joined by two guest parents from Howard County. Informed



by our parent survey last fall, we will explore other topics such as keeping students motivated and financial literacy over the next several months. We hope you will join us in supporting a second year of College Summit at OM. In addition to the 175 seniors and freshman who are following the College Summit curriculum in the

classroom this year, we are thrilled that every 9th grader participated in a College Summit workshop on preparing for college. To encourage our students to be prepared for college, the PTSA will offer spring SAT prep classes for the first time starting in April. We encourage all juniors to prepare and take the SAT. Oakland Mills is a test site on June 2, 2012.

Remember, your PTSA is here to work for the success and well-being of every student. We recognize that as our students get older, the stakes get higher. The involvement of our entire school community is critical. We encourage you – parents, teachers, students, and alumni

alike – to get connected and be involved. I hope to see you at our upcoming events, and I eagerly welcome your support and participation.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Lane'.

Carmen James Lane,
PTSA President

<http://www.howard.k12.md.us/omhs/parents/pts.html>



Principal's Address

Welcome to winter. It's hard to believe that our fall activities have come to a close and we are speeding into the next season. Life is like that though; it is made up of seasons that we journey through. Each class of students is in a new place in their lives and their parents are either escorting them through it or being dragged through it. I encourage you, as a parent, to look for ways to enjoy this time with your child. Outside of when they were infants, this may be the time when you see the most change. You will witness physical, emotional, and intellectual progression. Although our students are older, hopefully wiser, and more mature than ever before, there has never been a time in their lives when they needed us more. The decisions they make and lessons they learn during high school have life-long consequences – both positive and negative. They would probably fervently disagree; however, I believe deep down that want and rely on our guidance. Ruth Smeltzer, who is a school nurse in Washington State and an author and poet, has said, "You have not lived a perfect day, even though you have earned your money, unless

you have done something for someone who will never be able to repay you."

We are very proud of our students who consistently excel in their academics. We have honored and acknowledged many students in the past month. Ms. Reid and her strong parent volunteer crew hosted an outstanding First Quarter Honor Roll Breakfast. Over 300 students were recognized. At our Academic Letter Dinner, we presented letters or pins to students who had achieved the upper level honor roll designations for ALL FOUR QUARTERS last school year. Countless athletes who demonstrated skill in the classroom, as well as, in the sports arena received Scholar Athlete Certificates at the many fall sports banquets. High School is a collection of many activities, but we can't forget our primary reason for being here – to achieve academic excellence! I am very proud of the successes that are achievable for ALL OMHS students.

We are about to embark on the selection of classes for next year. Be advised that our staffing is based on these selections, so you should help your student

make these choices wisely. They will receive a handbook with all of the graduation requirements and course sequences clearly outlined in it. Class changes are limited after the school year ends due to the hiring of teachers and the staffing process. Students should especially choose elective courses carefully as these classes fill up quickly and cannot be changed after the new school year begins.

I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to the success of our school by making and attending conferences, joining the PTSA and BOOSTERS, participating in fundraisers, working the Hut, feeding our staff, and attending our extracurricular events for this first season of our school year. I look forward to our continued journey together this year as we watch and support our young people grow into the future of our world.

Frank Eastham,
Principal



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Scorpion Alumni Network Update

Representing the Scorpion Alumni Network (SAN) has been a fulfilling experience, and I am excited to let the Oakland Mills Community know that we have reached another milestone. Our support has only grown over the past few years, and as result we are able to contribute even more to Oakland Mills High School. We firmly believe that the students at our hOMe truly have the potential to be the best of the best in the county. For us, and those that share our vision, our alma mater is the hidden gem of Howard County. We are thankful for all the support we have received and any future progress we will make because of that shared sense of community. Let's make 2012 great!

In the coming months, our goal is centered on three main projects. First, and most importantly, our focus is geared on students. We will be having another alumni hosted Professional Development Seminar as part of our series. More updates will come in the next issue and on our Facebook page. Until the spring, check out page six to read about the success

of the seminar we held on December 21, 2011.

Second, we recognized the sense of achievement that Scorpion Success gave to seniors as they graduated. Encouragement to continue this project came from many sources including SAN. SAN



Scorpion Alumni Network

The Oakland Mills High School Alumni Association

is geared towards supporting students and their accomplishments. One of our goals is sharing fantastic artifacts from Oakland Mills with the community. This not only showcases the talent that OMHS has, but allows others to learn and grow (and maybe even implement their own success).

Last, the time has come to put out another alumni all-call. The idea of networking is on everyone's mind, and SAN could be even better if more alumni joined our network. To get involved, please E-mail Nathaniel Buechler ('09) - natebuechler@gmail.com. Send him three things: your name, your year you graduated, and

your profession. After you send him that, you'll automatically become a member and he'll add you to a list that will later become an interactive database for all OMHS alumni to use. Right now, we have a great number of alumni who are active. Over 20

Scorpions helped at our last professional development seminar for students!

To close, SAN has grown significantly

in just a short year. Imagine the possibilities if we were able to work as a more cohesive group. Our network would be able to support itself in addition to the surrounding communities we all interact with!

With great anticipation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nathaniel C. Buechler'.

Nathaniel C. Buechler,
SAN Co-Founder,
Class of 2009

<http://www.facebook.com/ScorpionAlumniNetwork>

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Upcoming Events

NHS
Service Auction

Wednesday,
January 25th
OMHS Auditorium
7pm

OMHS
Boosters Club
17th Annual
Bull Roast

Saturday,
January 28
OM Village Center
The Other Barn
7pm – 11pm
Tickets \$40

HOCO
Wrestling
Championship
OMHS
Gymnasium
February 17th
4pm
February 18th
9am

Announcements

Parent 2 Parent

On January 31, 2011 at 7 pm in the OMHS Media Center, PTSA and HC Drug Free are co-sponsoring a workshop on teen drug use for parents called, "Parent 2 Parent." Guest parents will join us and share their stories.

Greg's Driving School

Greg's Driving School sessions will begin February 6th and March 12th. Sign up, learn to drive, and support OMHS PTSA!

Spring SAT Prep

Attention Juniors: Prepare and plan to take the SAT this spring. PTSA is offering spring SAT Prep Classes Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 pm to 9:15 pm on April 24th, April 26th, May 1st, and May 3rd. Contact Dr. Martha Gagnon for more information to register at martgagnon@aol.com. OMHS is an SAT test site on June 2, 2012.

Membership

As of the first week of December, OMHS had 265 PTSA Members! That means we are only 135 Away from PTSA's Milestone of 400 Members. Thank you to the 54 students, 53 teachers, 157 parents/guardians who have joined so far. Please encourage at least one more family member, friend, or neighbor to join. Members and Volunteers contribute to services and programs that enhance our students' lives.

Membership and Volunteer forms are available at these links. When you have completed them, please return them to the OMHS main office.

<http://www.howard.k12.md.us/omhs/parents/OMHSPTSAMembership2011-2012.pdf>

<http://www.howard.k12.md.us/omhs/parents/OMHSPTSAVolunteer2011-2012.pdf>



Sylvan Partnership

Oakland Mills High School will be the site of an exciting partnership with Sylvan Learning Centers starting in 2012. Howard County Schools and Sylvan Learning Centers have created a partnership to strengthen study skills, math skills, and SAT preparation among high school students, which Sylvan intends to replicate nationally. Oakland Mills High School will be the first school in the county and nation to pilot the partnership. Oakland Mills staff is thrilled host the launch of a national program.

According to Oakland Mills mathematics instructor Matthew Martini, "The partnership with Sylvan is extremely exciting as it brings well proven methods and resources into the hands of Oakland Mills students. A combination of 24-hour access to online resources coupled with the Study Skills Seminar provided at the school will bolster our students with essential skills, support, study habits, and time management tools to make them successful.

We see this partnership as a benchmark collaboration that will give our students the skills to excel here at Oakland Mills and beyond."

Starting in January 2012, all 1100 of our students will have the opportunity to utilize a suite of free on-line tools geared to assess and strengthen math skills, Sylvan will also offer four

body meeting on Tuesday, January 10th from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm to announce the partnership with Sylvan. Come hear from Sylvan instructors, use a mobile lab, submit permission forms, explore the online tools and the components of SAT Prep and Study Skills Classes. A pizza dinner will be provided. Please reserve to attend at omhs.ptsa@

gmail.com by Monday, January 9th. The PTSA board meeting will follow the general body meeting at 7:30 pm.

The PTSA will hold a general body meeting on Tuesday, January 10th from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm to announce the partnership with Sylvan.

hours of free SAT Prep to all juniors, and six hours of free Study Skills classes available to all students. Students taking Algebra 1, Algebra 2, and Geometry will be introduced to the on-line tools which align to text books currently used at Oakland Mills. Participation in any and all of these activities is voluntary and free; however, parents must sign a consent form for each student.

The PTSA will hold a general

"I am looking forward to the possibilities that can emerge from the strength of this public private partnership. It presents us with some very creative options," says Principal Frank Eastham.

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OMHS Alumni Professional Development Series: December 2011

On December 21, 2011 twenty-one Oakland Mills alumni came home to participate in the Professional Development Series. Area alumni began the morning by talking to senior homeroom classes and then followed homeroom by engaging in an hour-long breakout session with ninth through twelfth graders. Students signed up in advance for a breakout session in Budgeting and Financial Literacy, Business Entrepreneurship, Community Engagement, College Preparation, Employment Search, Health and Wellness or Time Management. In senior homerooms Alumni

highlighted the things they wish they had known in high school about transitioning to life outside of Columbia and the Mill. By introducing themselves as former scorpions that have adjusted to adult-life alumni are able to bridge the generational gap between students and teachers/parents on issues like decision-making, choosing friends and associates, academic achievement, long term career goals, positive modes of expression and being an actively engaged citizen in the Howard County community. The OMHS Alumni Professional Development Series was an idea birthed in 2010

and has since developed into a flourishing program supported by the OM Faculty and Administration. The mission is to engage students in discussions and workshops supplementing the traditional classroom experience. As college graduates have had trouble finding employment during the current recession and as senseless acts of violence have troubled the community alumni mentors hope that relationship-building can help the next generation of leaders connect with resources that direct them to achieving their purpose and full potential.

Area alumni participants:

Caren Howard *c/o* 2003,
Jason Jannati *c/o* 2004,
Kevin Gibson *c/o* 2004,
Rayna Dubose *c/o* 2001,
Brittany Harris *c/o* 2004,
Ryan Baran *c/o* 2006,
Nykeba Corinaldi *c/o* 2007,
Josh Notes *c/o* 2002,
David Howard *c/o* 2005,
Monica Holloway *c/o* 2005,

Anthony Kerr *c/o* 2004,
Nathaniel Beuchler, *c/o* 2009,
Naeomi Samuel *c/o* 2005 (Wilde Lake),
Christina (Hill) Russell *c/o* 2003,
Jeremiah Tsang *c/o* 2005,
Irnande Altama *c/o* 2003,
Chanel Vanderhorst *c/o* 2003,
Melissa (Singleton) Tate *c/o* 1994,
Dana Weekes *c/o* 1999,
and Stephon Skipper.

OMHS in-house coordinators:

Mr. Frank Eastham, Mr. Richard Smart, Mr. Vincent James, and the OM Leadership Team.