

PASSAIC COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

# THE TECHNICIAN

PCTI's Award Winning News Publication



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## REACHING THE STARS

### Partnering with NASA HUNCH

**PCTI celebrated our new partnership with NASA HUNCH, a program that fosters instructional partnerships between NASA and educational institutions.**

A stirring kick-off celebration welcomed NASA representatives Florence Gold and John Keck, NJ Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen, Passaic County Freeholder Pat Lepore, Board of Education Commissioner Michael Coscia, business partners, administrators, parents, and students.

A spotlight was placed on Manufacturing Technology students who showcased their hard work and embraced the challenge of lathing a screw sleeve for a stowage locker for the International Space Station. Culinary Arts students participated in the

NASA Culinary Challenge by creating a specially designed meal for astronauts to enjoy in space. Their Red Pepper Puree Risotto was a hit with the judges and made it to the final ten competition at the Johnson Space Center Review. With a score of 8.8 out of 10, PCTI ranked number one! Sierra Bronas, Jada Sanders, and Carolan Terrero traveled to Texas to compete at the Space Center Houston on April 21st. We eagerly await the results!

The NASA HUNCH event underscored the impact of inspiring the next generation of researchers, designers, and space explorers and truly showcased the intelligence and talents of our Manufacturing Technology and Culinary Arts students.



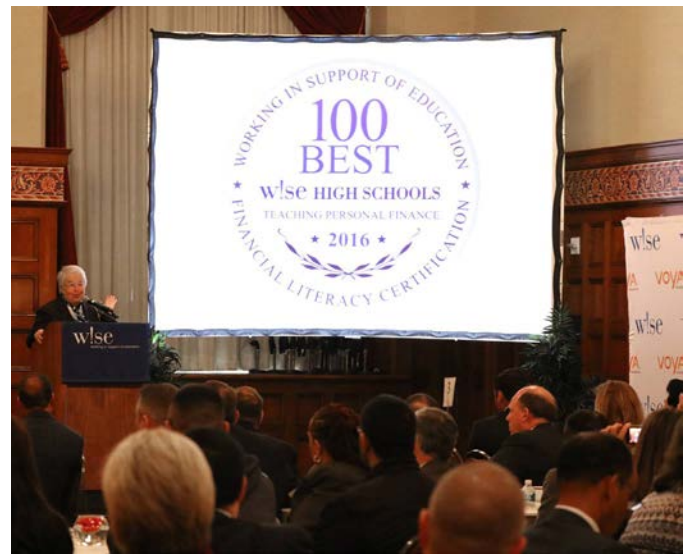
# PCTI Ranks #1 in the Nation for W!SE!



**W!SE's (Working in Support of Education) Financial Literacy program has declared PCTI a two-fold champion: the top rated school in the Large High School category as well as the top ranking financially literate high school in all the nation!**

Both awards come in light of exemplary results on the program's Financial Literacy Certification test. Our finance students achieved a 100% passing rate with scores averaging an astounding 93%! The announcements were made at the W!SE Financial Ceremony held at the distinguished Federal Reserve Bank in New York City on April 11th. PCTI's NJROTC received a special invitation to begin the festivities with the Presentation of the Colors.

W!SE's national ranking is the first of its kind in the country which encourages districts to expand personal finance instruction. This leading educational nonprofit organization improves the lives of youths through programs that develop financial literacy, as well as readiness for college and the workforce.



## Presenting PCTI's Educators of the Year



**PCTI has named our Educators of the Year for 2016. Congratulations to Stacey Pinto, Educational Specialist of the Year and Kebra Rettenberg, Teacher of the Year!**

Stacey began her PCTI career as a Basic Skills Instructor and in 1994, became a School Counselor. She has a Master of Arts Degree in School Counseling and a Supervisory Certification from Montclair State University. Throughout the years, she has been involved in multiple facets of

testing and takes a leadership role in SAT Site Testing.

Kebra is a Special Education Instructor who has been part of the Bulldog family since 2002. She is passionate about making a real difference in the lives of her students and has Masters Degrees in Special Education and Educational Leadership.

Congratulations to both instructors on their outstanding accomplishments and for being recognized as Educators of the Year!

# ProStart Teams Advance to Nationals!



Congratulations and best of luck to both teams proudly representing New Jersey in the ProStart National Competition!

**Culinary Arts students of the ProStart Culinary and Management teams proved hard work pays off when both teams finished first in the 10th annual state competition. Our second Culinary team even took home the silver!**

PCTI will represent New Jersey at the national competition in Dallas, Texas. In addition to the outstanding overall wins, Katherine Yakovlev and Lilibeth Velazquez were selected MVPs and Instructor and Management Team Coach Celeste Zaleski, was honored with the prestigious NJ ProStart Educator of Excellence Award!

Both teams have been practicing tirelessly in preparation for the rigorous competition. Management team students have spent long hours perfecting their well-researched and designed eatery Back Porch Barbeque. Meanwhile, Culinary team students took advantage of their mentor Ehren Ryan's hospitality when they traveled to the Executive Chef's restaurant, the Common Lot to face off against professional chefs. Our students were applauded for their fantastic performance!



ProStart State Competition MVPs join Celeste Zaleski, NJ ProStart Educator of Excellence award winner!

## Expanding the Horizons of Financial Literacy

Academy of Finance freshmen stepped up their educational game with the first ever Financial Literacy Fair. Held in the F-Wing Media Center, the event welcomed students, staff, advisory committee partners, and more to learn about building wealth, managing money, investing, credit and debit, and financial institutions. Freshmen shared their wide breadth of knowledge with all in attendance with the help of hand-crafted presentation booths, proving it's never too early to build a sturdy educational foundation for the future.



# Man of La Mancha

## Lights Up the Stage

### A REMARKABLE EVENING TRUMPETING MANKIND'S STRUGGLE

This year's spring musical took a turn for the dramatic with *Man of La Mancha*, which paints a fictionalized account of *Miguel de Cervante's* life as a failed poet, writer, and tax collector during the Spanish Inquisition. Having fallen on hard times, *Cervantes* is thrown in jail and forced to defend his name, which he does with the account of his manuscript, *Don Quixote*.

The brilliant performance of this year's cast was completely unmatched. As the lead, T'Shaka Thorpe (*Cervantes/Quixote*) brought his confused character to life, projecting the ideals of man separated from reality, who manages to believe the best about people and the world in which he lives. Miguel Peralta's skillful portrayal of the loyal sidekick *Sancho* imbued each scene with

belly deep, laughter inducing humor. Meanwhile, Wé Ani McDonald's superb performance as the deeply troubled *Aldonza* acted as the perfect foil to *Quixote's* carefree and almost casual case of an identity crisis. The audience was braced by a woman completely at home in the slum of her existence, until *Quixote* gave her hope, showed her kindness, and became the catalyst for a startlingly self-aware transformation.

The emotional highs of *Man of La Mancha* were perfectly accented by exquisite sets likened to those found on Broadway. Crafted by Instructor Robert Vendetti and students of the School of Construction Technology, the designs evoked desperation with





a dungeon theme. Impeccable lighting served to enhance the mood of each and every scene while an incredible musical score, performed by students and alumni under the direction of Instructor Jose Martinez, added depth to the production.

Special thanks go out to Executive Producer Jeannie Holman, Managing Director Lynn E. Quinn, Director Douglas R. Smith, Student Assistant Directors Iyannah Cousins, Elisabeth Michaud, and Zaria Wilder, as well as to Choreographers Evelyn Samtak and Jennifer Stacie Surotchak.



# Celebrating Black History



This year's exciting Black History Month assembly featured a talk-style show called "Our Point of View." Students debated hot topics, discussed the many accomplishments of African Americans, paid tribute to dance and musical culture, and provided rousing entertainment for all!

## CELEBRATING CTE MONTH



Kevin Lopez, Daisy Angeles, Jose Serra, Kurshad Juhul, Madeline Reina, and Melanie Pires join William Paterson University of New Jersey Vice President for Public Advancement, Pam Ferguson, in honor of Career and Technical Education Month.



PCTI celebrated Career and Technical Education Month with various activities that culminated with visitations to local businesses during the last week of February. SkillsUSA students distributed calendars, specially created artwork, culinary delights, and more to showcase both their talents and appreciation for the valued partnerships formed between PCTI, local businesses, and county agencies.

## Sweeping the STANJ Competition



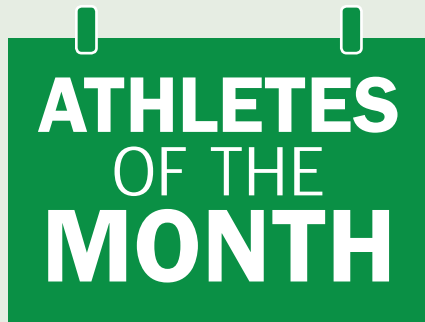
Performing Arts students won big in the Speech and Theater Association of NJ (STANJ) where seniors took home first place in Scene Competition for their performance of *The Taming of the Shrew*. In addition, three students were selected as "Governor Award" winners. Quincy Cain and Marcos Rivera received 2nd place in Improvisation Pairs, while Christie Flores was announced the Best Actress in all of New Jersey!

# CELEBRATING CIRCLE OF SUCCESS STUDENTS



Congratulations to those selected to be honored as prestigious members of the Circle of Success for the second marking period.

## JANUARY



### BASKETBALL

DaShanique Ruffin Eric Johnson-Alford

## FEBRUARY



### TRACK

Carly Spinnler Kevin Copper

# STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



**Eileen Cheng**

School of Culinary Arts

### FEBRUARY

- Ranked in the top 1% of her class
- Accumulated a potential 12 credits toward her college career
- Received National Restaurant Association ServSafe Certification
- Member of Foundation for Success, National Honor Society, & Book Club
- Trilingual: English, Mandarin, & Cantonese

**Goal: Graduate from a University with degrees in Creative Writing & Biology, become a Physician's Assistant**



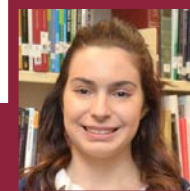
**Shantayah Murray**

School of Communication Arts

### FEBRUARY

- Ranked in the top 6% of her class
- Accumulated a potential 21 credits towards her college career
- Member of the World Language Honor Society, Astronomy Club, Book Club, & the Environmental Club
- Volunteers as Secretary Junior Usher at Mount Moriah Baptist Church
- Published in *A Selection of Young Poets*
- Accepted to WPUNJ, Berkeley College, & Stevenson University

**Goal: Graduate from a University with a degree that allows her creativity to shine**



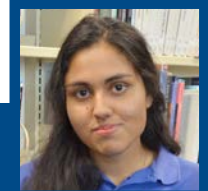
**Olivia Polzer**

School of Cosmetology

### MARCH

- Ranked in the top 6% of her class
- Accumulated a potential 12 college credits
- Achieved Honor Roll/Principal's Honor Roll
- Selected for World Language Honor Society
- Volunteers at her local church, participates in missions

**Goal: Graduate from Ramapo College with a Bachelor of Science in Biology, pursue a Medical Degree, become a Dermatologist**



**Manisha Bhattacharjee**

Academy of Criminal Justice

### MARCH

- Ranked in the top 7% of her class
- Has earned a potential 12 college credits
- Selected for World Language Honor Society
- Earned 5 FEMA certifications, CPR certified
- Volunteers at Van Dyk Health Care, an assisted living facility
- Involved in religious practice, prepares food for pujas

**Goal: Earn a Doctor of Pharmacy or study Neuroscience, with a focus on Pediatrics**

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## Passaic County Technical Institute

Passaic County's National Award-Winning Public High School  
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Sandra M. Woods, Director of Communications  
& Special Projects / Editor  
Michele M. De Vincentis, Writer / Photographer  
Layout, design and printing, PCTI Graphic Arts  
Instructors: Fernando Colón & Luis Colón  
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# Freshmen Foundation for Success



Congratulations to the top ten freshmen of the Class of 2019 who have achieved academic excellence with the highest ranking GPAs among all their peers— Abdul Uddin, Carolyn Nguyen, James Mickens Jr., Diana Rosado, Alicja Bil, Thanya Begum, Joshua Salazar, Andrea Roy, Omar Ibrahim, and Ilirida Baftiri!