

THE WILDCAT ROAR

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Candace Whiting: A Role Model and Fighter

By: Alyssa Bass and Marley Pinsky

You may have heard of Mr. Stephen Whiting, the current principal of Clarksburg High School - the school where the majority of our eighth graders will be attending next year. Mr. Whiting was previously a physical education teacher and then principal at Rocky Hill Middle School, but recently, he moved to Clarksburg High School. But, someone you may not have heard of is Mr. Whiting's spectacular daughter, Candace Whiting. Candace was born in Salt Lake City, Utah. She moved from Utah to Maryland just in time for her first birthday. She is now thirty-one years old and lives in downtown Germantown. She attended elementary school in Montgomery County and then Frederick County, then was homeschooled throughout middle school and high school by her grandmother. Throughout school, her favorite subject was science. She graduated from high school when she was nineteen. Candace Whiting is a public speaker who has recently visited Rocky Hill to talk to students about her many achievements, for Candace has achieved outstanding things throughout her life despite being born with Down Syndrome.

Down Syndrome is a medical condition that is caused at birth, yet lasts the whole life. Chromosomes are structures found in the nucleus of most cells that distribute genetic information. This means that when a child is born and they receive chromosomes from their parents, each chromosome will pass down hereditary traits that their parents have and the children will grow to have - for example, hair color, nose shape, etc. When children are born, each parent typically passes down 23 chromosomes each to their baby. When Down syndrome occurs, a person inherits a whole or partial extra copy of chromosome 21. Down syndrome cannot be cured, but treatments for Down syndrome have evolved over time. Common physical traits of a person with Down syndrome is having lower muscle tone and being slightly shorter, although each person with Down syndrome's symptoms are unique. In 1910, babies born with Down syndrome were only expected to live to about age ten. Because of the discovery of medicines and antibiotics, the typical lifespan of people with down syndrome has increased: Candace is thirty-one and will most likely live a healthy life for much longer.



Candace Whiting is extremely versatile and has many different hobbies. She plays several sports, such as skiing, gymnastics, golf, tennis, and swimming, but her favorite sport is kayaking, which her father inspired her to start. Candace is the fastest kayaker in the state of Maryland. Another one of her passions is dancing. Candace has been dancing for twenty-two years and does a variety of different dance styles, such as tap, jazz, hip-hop, and ballet. Candace is also passionate about reading. When talking to students, she recalls how when she was a child, she was constantly reading all sorts of books. Candace then went on to list some of her favorite genres. Candace also enjoys writing. She once considered writing an autobiography and may publish one in the future. Candace can also play the piano a little bit, and she loves to cook.

During one of her presentations, Candace was asked why she does presentations for middle school students and what effect she hopes that her stories have on them. Candace describes how she hopes to inspire at least one person in the room every presentation. She also wants to make someone smile for the rest of their day, their week, or even their year.

One of Candace's many areas of achievement is in athletics. Candace participates in the Special Olympics, which is a competition based on the real Olympics that are specifically for disabled or handicapped athletes. The organization is a non-profit organization run by volunteers where they get together and help athletes with intellectual disabilities. Candace also participates in the unified sports program in the Spe-

Activities on the Hill– Interview with Candace

cial Olympics. Unified sports competitions are where disabled athletes compete against athletes with no disabilities. Through unified sports, Candace can play sports with her father. Candace engages in multiple different Special Olympic sports such as kayaking, swimming, skiing, gymnastics, and more. Candace has won 7 gold, 2 silver and one bronze medal for performance in rhythmic gymnastics. She is also an ambassador and an athlete reported for the Special Olympics. Candace participated in the Polar Plunge to raise money for the Special Olympics. The Polar Plunge is a fundraising event in which participants donate \$75 or more to the Special Olympics and then plunge into the 30 degree Chesapeake Bay.

Among her many awards, Candace says that despite all of the first place medals she has received, the honor that she is most proud of is...

In 2012, Candace participated in a Miss Amazing pageant. Miss Amazing is an organization founded in 2007 that holds a beauty pageant for girls and women with special needs and disabilities. As well as beauty and fashion, there was a talent portion of the competition, just like any other pageant. Candace's talent was a dance. Candace won the pageant and the title of Miss Division. She received a crown and a pink sash that said "Maryland Miss Amazing" across it. Candace felt wonderful to receive this honor. In her presentation, she put on the crown that she won, receiving applause from the audience.

Candace has a very philosophical and sincere way of viewing the world and its opportunities. Candace's key points are the values that are important to her that she applies to her everyday life. "They [her key points] are my own rules that I try to live by," she explains. Some of her key points are change, choices, desire, strive, and saying no to negativity.

Candace's first key point is change. "Find ways to use change to your advantage," she says in her speech to students at Rocky Hill. Candace talked about adapting and adjusting when change has to occur. She described how when she was younger, she wanted to be a singer. She admitted that she couldn't carry a tune, so she adjusted and changed to dance.

Another key point is choices. In her presentation, Candace Whiting discussed with students about making deci-

sions. Candace told sixth graders that when making an important decision to ask themselves the question, 'Will it hurt? Will it help? Will it be good for you or make you pay?' Candace believes in thinking about the decision about to be made before you act on it.

Candace's third key point was desire. "Find your passion. What is your true dream?" says Candace. She tells students to set goals, make a plan, "and when you reach them, make new ones." Candace believes that goal setting keeps you focused on your passion.

One of Candace's key points is to strive. Candace said in her speech to strive to be the best you can be, improve the best parts of yourself, find value in yourself, and "recognize something of value in every person you meet." When Candace was addressing some of Rocky Hill's sixth graders, she emphasized the words 'you' when she told them to be the best that you can be. This meant that her listeners should not try to be the best that other people are, and to strive to achieve things that you can achieve.

The final key point that Candace talked about was about saying no to negativity. Candace is a very optimistic, determined, and positive young woman. She can look on the bright side of any situation, even in the darkest situations. When presenting to students, a girl in the audience asked Candace what keeps her smiling. Candace answered that she surrounds herself with positive people. She also reads positive books and listens to their messages.

Candace is full of words of wisdom, as you can see by her key points. Students in the audience asked her many great questions, which Candace had inspiring and meaningful answers to. She was asked by reporters from the Wildcat Roar about what sorts of advice she has specifically for students at Rocky Hill.

"My advice for students at Rocky Hill is to listen to your teachers. Learning opens the world for you,"



Activities on the Hill– Interview with Candace

Candace also said how if something is bothering you while you are at school, keep it to yourself and don't let it interfere with your education.

Another student in the audience, knowing that Candace is an incredible athlete, for athletic advice. Candace told the students to listen to the coach, pay attention when learning new skills, and to practice a lot in order to master your sport. During her presentation, Candace described her week and talked about her schedule. Each day, Candace had some sort of lesson or sports practice. She is constantly striving to perfect everything she does so that she can improve the best qualities of herself, like she talked about in her key points.

The Wildcat Roar asked Candace if anyone has influenced Candace throughout her life, and how has that person helped her become who she is today. Candace replied saying that her family is her biggest inspiration. "Family is most important," she remarked. Despite the fact that Candace's brother Zachary lives back in Salt Lake City, Utah, 2,052 miles away, Candace says that Zachary continues to inspire her every day "just for being him," she says.

Finally, Candace was asked by a student in the audience about what happens when people hurt her feelings. Candace told us in her presentation that she was never bullied, but she was very trusting to everyone, so she was taken advantage of multiple times. When her feelings get hurt by people, Candace says that it encourages her to be better than the person who hurt her.

Candace Whiting is truly a fighter. Despite being diagnosed with Down syndrome, she has accomplished things that any ordinary person could never dream of. She has met celebrities such as Joe Flacco, the quarterback for the Baltimore Ravens, and the Olympic gymnasts Dominique Dawes and Amanda Borden. Candace also joined a Boy Scout crew on several adventures. With this group, she canoed 75 miles over 10 days! Candace has also traveled to the Florida Keys, where she kayaked five miles to an island, lived on the island for five days, and then kayaked five miles back. Candace has also gone deep sea fishing, scuba diving at night, and has been to concerts. She tells her listeners on going on such adventures, "Try new things. Don't be afraid of what you don't know. Take risks."

Candace has also started her own public speaking business. The business is called Candace Whiting Unlimited. This is Candace's project to share her empowering messages with the world. The website for Candace Whiting Unlimited has a slogan that reads "An Up message from a young woman with Down syndrome."

At the very end of Candace's presentation, Candace played a slideshow for students including pictures of herself, her family, and her many adventures. The photos illustrated all of Candace's life achievements. Some of the pictures showed Candace at her desk, camping, in a kayak, and public speaking. They showed her at the Miss Amazing pageant, at a concert, with her dog, doing gymnastics, skiing, swimming, and more. Some of the pic-

CANDACE  **WHITING**
UNLIMITED

tures were photos of her and her medals. The photos showed Candace doing a diverse series of fun activities and hobbies. The slideshow proved just how accomplished, versatile, and daring Candace Whiting truly is.

Candace Whiting may be the most accomplished young person you will ever have the honor to meet. She is sincerely an inspiration to so many people, and will continue to inspire the world with her many talents and skills. Her story has wowed all of her listeners and will keep on motivating others to put effort into everything they do, think positively, and prove people wrong who tell you that you cannot do something. Candace's goal has been met; she has inspired hundreds of people and made them smile.

Thank you so much for coming to

Rocky Hill, Candace!



Activities on the Hill

Rocky Hill Boys Soccer

The boys soccer team is excited to start the season. We have returning starters at all 3 levels. Elijah in goal, Connor on defense, Jay in the midfield, plus Kofi and Jonathan on offense. Coach Mike Shull has his team ready for action and they tied their first match in a hard fought duel with Neelsville.

One new aspect of the team is Andrew Deguzman our team manager. He has been a huge help to the team with equipment set up as well as keeping important stats from each game. We are looking forward to competing to the best of our abilities.



- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Kofi Amoh-Martin | Etsri Attisso |
| Elijah Bulluck | Vincent Chung |
| Andrew Cox | Connor Dejewski |
| Andrew Deguzman | Jay Doshi |
| Abraham Essien Jr | Isa Faridi |
| Jason Fritz | Patrick Sasu |
| Diego Villeda | Kabir Wadwa |
| Dean Williams | Jonathan Yowell |
| Max Amoh-Mayes | Noor Smadhi |
| Eduardo Trujillo | Joshua Ventura |
| Andre Vieira | |

Rocky Hill Girls Soccer

The RHMS Lady Wildcats are coming off one of their most successful seasons having finished 4-1 last year. This year they have a strong group of ladies including captains– Jenna Gordon, Marissa Yowell and Carly Evans. Coach Conley believes this Team can equal that record and maybe go undefeated. The Lady Wildcats won their first match with a score of 11-0 (and that was with pulling 2 players off the field after half time). The upcoming matches will be more difficult and Rocky Hill has it eye on the match-up with Kingsview which we have not beaten in several years.

Come out and see the girls in action on May 2nd vs. Kingsview at Home.



Last Name	First Name	GR	Jersey
Cigarruista	Gretel	7	10
Colbert	Lilah	7	32
Dailey	Abigail	7	49
Jorgensen	Erin	7	26
Shroff	Marvi	7	19
Torres	Nicole	7	5
Chang	Meghan	8	48
Evans	Carly	8	43
Franklin	Ashley	8	9
Gordon	Jenna	8	42
Kim	Lauren	8	66
Kreider	Savannah	8	31
			8
Law-Phillips	Mei-Lin	8	
Mehta	Syona	8	18
			11
Mooneyhan	Sarah	8	
Riggs	Madelyn	8	29
Sengbusch	Keili	8	20
Williams	Haley	8	62
Yowell	Marissa	8	17

Activities on the Hill

RHMS Archery Team!

Journalists: Jashreen Lucman & Shreya Barua

The Rocky Hill Middle School Archery Team has won last year and this year's state championships.

TWR: Why did you choose to teach the Archery Team?

Mr. Leck: I love archery, and have been shooting since I was 10 years old.

TWR: How long have you been teaching this club?

Mr. Leck : I have been teaching for many years at RHMS.

TWR: What's your favorite thing about coaching Archery?

Mr. Leck: Watching kids improve and get better.

TWR: Is there an important person or role model in your life?

Mr. Leck: My dad, Fred Bear, and some of my old coaches.

TWR: Any advice for students at RHMS?

Mr. Leck: If you want to try archery, come to intramurals, and don't be afraid everyone can shoot.

TWR: Would you like to share anything about your family?

Mr. Leck: I have two sons, two dogs. I'm the only one who shoots and I have been shooting for 46 years.



Congratulations to the Chess Club!

On March 25, 2017, our Wildcats chess club, under the tutelage of Mr. Craig Harris, competed in two sections of the Maryland Middle School Chess Championships. After 5 rounds of competition in the Under 1000 section, Rocky Hill Middle took the third place award. Lead by Shreedatta Indur, the team scored 4 points out of 5 games. Shreedatta's strong performance also earned him the 4th place individual trophy. He was the only returning player from last year's championship team. Also taking individual awards were Jeremy Sha with 7th place and Eric Lee with 13th place.

In the Under 600 section Kiran Manoj took the 4th place individual award by scoring 4 points in a tightly contested section. The three players that finished ahead of him were all tied at 4.5 points each. Kiran has had a good showing all year as he is also the Rocky Hill Chess Club Champion. Others representing the team in the Under 600 section were Luke Hull, Immanuel Kim, Alex Castro and William Dawson. This group earned the 5th place team award.

May 5th— Wildcat Day



A look into Trump's Presidency so far

Journalist: Ronak Tallur

On January 20th, as Donald Trump uttered the words, "So help me, God," he became the 45th President of the United States. Having defeated Hillary Clinton two months earlier, he took office in a much divided nation. He had many large promises to live up to, as well as several issues that would soon become thorns in his side. Two months into his presidency, his approval poll has sunk down to 36 percent. How has he fared as the US President? We will take a look at that right now:



Seven days after taking office, President Trump signed the Immigration Order, more commonly known as his first travel ban. This ban denied allowing citizens from seven countries (Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Libya, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) into the United States. It also temporarily blocked allowing Syrian refugees into the United States. Instantly, chaos erupted across the country. People coming in from those countries were sent back; US-citizens and visa holders travelling from the countries were refused entry into the United States. Protests erupted across the streets, cities, and outside large airports. People called the ban a "Muslim ban" as the seven countries were Muslim-majority countries. Eventually, the ban was blocked by the Ninth Circuit. He promised on Twitter to go to court and challenge the ruling. He ended up signing a second travel ban, one that exempted Iraq from the list. It also allowed US visa-holders into the country. But a Hawaiian judge has currently shut that down.

Trump's next big challenge was Healthcare. He had promised to repeal and replace Obamacare, but found that millions of Americans would be uninsured by this new healthcare plan. As Congress began working on a bill, approval for Obamacare soared. Republicans in the House of Representatives opposed Trump and on March 24th, President Trump and Paul Ryan, Speaker for the House, cancelled the scheduled vote on the bill. As a result, his approval ratings slipped and people called on Ryan to resign his post.

In foreign policy, Trump is serving during the War against ISIS. Trump promised to destroy ISIS during his campaign, and currently, the United States has launched offensives against ISIS in Mosul, Iraq, and is preparing for an assault against Raqqa, Syria. ISIS has drastically weakened in the last two years, but remains strong and active. Trump, during his presidency, has spoken about a secret plan to defeat ISIS several times, but has not told anyone what that plan actually is. While ISIS remains a huge threat, the largest threat to national security remains North Korea. North Korea has tested nuclear weapons several times, threatening to "use its nuclear sword" against the United States. Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, has said that all options are currently on the table, including a full on military attack against the nation. Donald Trump has assured Americans that North Korea cannot attack the United States, despite claims that North Korea is preparing to test a missile that could potentially reach the US.

In other foreign policy, the proposed Border Wall between the United States and Mexico has led to the cancelling of a meeting between Trump and Mexican President Enrique Nieto. He has also had several other conversations with world leaders, including a disagreement with Prime Minister Turnbull of Australia on refugee policy.

On trade, Trump was very critical of NAFTA during his campaign. The North American Free Trade plan has been seen as important by the other North American countries: Canada and Mexico. Trump, shortly after taking office, withdrew the US from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, another trade association. Trump has also been very critical on companies leaving the country. He intends to plant harsh tariffs on companies moving to countries like China. He says that this will protect American workers. Another part of his plan to protect workers is having other countries "pay their fair share". He says that nations like Germany have not paid their fair share of taxes and that the US is hurting because of that. In a meeting with German Prime Minister Merkel, he requested that Germany pay its fair share. The US, however, had been going strong early in Trump's administration: the economy had been soaring, reaching unseen before peaks. But after the healthcare debacle, the economy has slumped for the past several days.

Trump has faced many questions about Russian interference in the US election. Though it has been proven for months that Russia had meddled in the election, Trump has denied it. He has lashed out against the news media that speaks about this, calling it "fake news". On February 13th, Michael T. Flynn, Trump's National Security Adviser, was forced to resign after misleading high profile officials about his communication with Russian diplomats. House Intelligence has launched an investigation into Russia's involvement in the election, as has the FBI. Recently, large new developments have come in the investigation: Flynn has requested immunity so that he can be allowed to share information vital to the investigation without getting in trouble if it is proved that he did something wrong. Devin Nunes, a Republican US Representative from California, has been criticized for favoring Trump in the investigation.

He has been called biased and the New York Times reported, "he (Nunes) is too eager to do the bidding of the Trump administration while his committee is supposed to be conducting an independent investigation of Russia's meddling in the presidential election." The investigation is still ongoing.

Donald Trump has completed two months in office now; he has dealt with many issues and controversies and has an approval rating of 36 percent. Currently, the administration remains locked up in several jobs: healthcare, foreign policy, and investigations. All we can do is sit back and see how everything unfolds.

Color, Fun, Run!

Journalist: Shreya Barua

Don't you ever want to run and get color on yourself? Well on May 6th come on down to Rocky Hill Middle School and join the Color Fun Run! I had the opportunity to meet with the organizer Mrs. Worthman. This is what she had to say.



TWR: Why did you want to organize the Color Run this year?

Mrs. Worthman: I went to it last year and enjoyed it a lot. I also wanted to do this because it's great for kids.

TWR: How long have you been doing this?

Mrs. Worthman: This is my first year organizing it at RHMS but second year attending it.

TWR: Why do you like this? When is the Color Run?

Mrs. Worthman: I like the Color Run because it brings all the kids together outside. The Color Run is on May 6th and starts at 8:00 in front of RHMS. Hallie Wells Middle School will also be joining us.

If you want to run and get color on yourself come to the Color, Fun, Run on May 6th at 8:00 a.m.!

School Puns

Journalist: Emily Tran

Why was the geometry class always tired? *Because they were all out of shape.*

Why was school easier for cave people? *Because there was no history to study.*

Why did the cross-eyed teacher lose her job? *Because she couldn't control her pupils.*

Why did the boy study on an airplane? *Because he wanted to get a higher education.*

What's the longest word in the dictionary? *Smiles. Because there's a mile between the first letter and the last.*

What's do witches like best about school? *Spell-ing.*



Hidden Figures

Journalist: Marley Pinsky

A miraculous, true, untold story from decades ago is finally being told. *Hidden Figures* is a comedy and drama film that was produced in 2016 and released on January 6th. The original book was written by Margot Lee Shetterly, an African-american informational writer. The book was published in September 2016, and not much later the inspirational and thought-provoking novel was brought to life by movie magic.

The main characters of *Hidden Figures* are Katherine Goble Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson. These three women were African American during the Civil Rights movement. Before electronic computers and machines were invented, people had to do the calculations that technology couldn't. This was the same for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, or NASA. A number of employees at NASA were called computers and had to do all sorts of math and calculations all day to figure out things for the company. They would calculate trajectory to find out where space shuttles needed to go so they could land in certain locations. The women sometimes work with math that is learned in your math class, such as algebra, geometry, and quadratics. Want to end up getting a movie made about you? Pay attention in math class; you could use it for the future. At the time, nearly all of the computers were white men, especially because of women's and civil rights issues going on. This did not stop Katherine, Dorothy and Mary from chasing their dreams and working hard to become engineers and computers for NASA.

The movie opens with a flashback scene of young Katherine Goble. The scene takes place in a classroom filled with her teachers and parents. They watch the young child solve complex math problems on a blackboard in amazement. In the scene, teachers talk to her parents about getting Katherine a scholarship to a prestigious negro school. This scene introduces Katherine, her love of numbers, and her skill at math and solving equations.

The first scene in the present - or for them, in 1961 - also sets up the characters, time period, and setting. Katherine, Dorothy and Mary are driving to work when their car breaks down. They wait on the side of a countryside road when a white police officer shows up. The officer confronts them and asks who they are, and when they introduce themselves, they inform him that they are employ-

ees at NASA, which impresses the officer and lets the audience know that Katherine and her friends have been successful and made it a long way since when Katherine was young. The scene also introduces the time period of the Civil Rights movement when the officer scrutinizes the women carefully and asks them for an identification as well as expecting lots of respect from them, all of which he may not have done with white men or women at the time.

Later in the movie, the women rush into work - a room packed with African American women who are employed at NASA. These women are the computers. The women work extremely hard and receive very little pay - women in this time period did not earn as much as men. In this scene, the women are receiving promotions. Katherine Johnson is reassigned to work in a separate building than the West Ward, the segregated building for NASA. Katherine, excited, walks into the room only to look around and find the room is filled with only white men wearing all the same clothes. She stands out in the crowd, and as soon as she walks in the door, all eyes are on her. Katherine had to double check the computer's work, and she would redo their work on a blackboard at the front of the room, astonishing everyone with her adept math skills.

Despite the fact that she was officially a computer for NASA in the same building as all the men, Katherine was still segregated and was forced to run about half a mile to the other building to use the colored restroom whenever she needed to go to the bathroom. She would then have to run back, and the process would take at least half an hour away from her work time. Also, whenever she used the office's coffee pot, everyone in the room looked at her, disgusted. Later, when Al Harrison, their boss, finds out about this, he walks all the way to the other building to knock down the "Colored" sign on the door of the bathroom. He tells the workers, who have followed him, that the bathrooms are no longer segregated.

The movie *Hidden Figures* takes place in the time period of the Space Race. The Space Race was a competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for dominance in space exploration and knowledge. The Soviet Union was an empire in Rus-



sia that no longer exists - it was dissolved in 1991. The Space Race provoked excellent astronautic and aeronautic discoveries and achievement in both countries, therefore benefitting the whole world through giving it a deeper understanding of life in space. NASA played a huge role in the Space Race since they are the leading astronomers and space explorers in the United States. The Space Race lasted throughout the 1950s to the 1970s. During this time, Katherine Goble Johnson, Dorothy Vaughn, and Mary Jackson worked for NASA, so they, too, played a role in the Space Race.

NASA constantly watched all of the Soviet Union's discoveries in space so that they knew what they were up against. Once the Soviet Union became the first country to ever go into space, NASA knew that they had to live up to Russia's greatness. NASA planned to send John Glenn into space to become the first American in orbit, but they needed to figure out how. This is where the men and women behind the scenes come in - workers from NASA studied, researched, and calculated trajectory for space shuttles.

In the end of the movie, Katherine Goble Johnson saves the space mission with her incredibly accurate trajectory skills. Trajectory was used to determine where the space shuttles would land and how to get there. The space shuttle for the Mercury-Atlas 6 would land 800 miles southeast of Bermuda, but it was up to the human computers to find out how the space shuttle would get to that exact spot. Because of her knowledge and ingenuity, the Mercury-Atlas 6 was a successful mission that put the space shuttle *Friendship 7* and astronaut John H. Glenn Jr. into orbit of the Earth.

The other women end up achieving their goals and pursuing their dreams as well. Dorothy Vaughn takes a book about FORTRAN from the whites only section of a public library, teaching herself about FORTRAN and computer programming in secret. FORTRAN is a language of programming used mostly by scientists and engineers. Dorothy learns to operate the IBM - a computer that can do calculations in a fraction of the time that human computers can, but nobody else knows how to get it to work - when she sneaks into the room where the computer was located and plays around with it. Once she turns it on, white men who work for NASA barge into the room, asking why she is there. They then look at the IBM, fascinated, realizing that she got it to work. NASA offers Dorothy a job associated with the computer, but she replies to them that she will only accept the offer if all of the other women from the West Wing get to help her. Her deal taken up upon by NASA workers, Dorothy leads all of the women from the West Wing to the room with the IBM in order to show them their new jobs. This was one of the most empowering scenes in the movie - Dorothy leading dozens of African American women into a building full of only white men. The women walk proudly and confidently. It was a true step up for both the Civil Rights and Women's Rights movements.

Mary Jackson also accomplishes great things by the end of the movie. She goes to court, asking to take a school course on

engineering that had been restricted for African Americans. At first, the judge does not grant her wish of taking the course. Later, things turn around for Mary when she tells the judge that if he were to let her take the course, she would become the first African American woman to do so. The judge who made the decision would also become known as the first person who let someone do this. The judge, inspired by Mary's persuasion, allows her to take the course to learn more about engineering. The buoyant Mary Jackson gets started right away, despite being doubted by her instructor and classmates because of being female.

Katherine Goble Johnson was portrayed in *Hidden Figures* by Taraji P. Henson, an African American actress and author. Henson also stars in popular television show "Empire" and wrote an autobiography titled "Around the Way Girl: A Memoir". Dorothy Vaughn was played by Octavia Spencer, just like Taraji P. Henson, is an African American actress and author, but instead of writing a memoir like her costar, Spencer once wrote a children's novel called "The Case of the Time-Capsule Bandit". Octavia Spencer also starred in other popular movies called "The Help" (2011) and "Zootopia" (2016). Recently, Octavia Spencer also hosted an episode of late-night comedy and variety show "Saturday Night Live". Mary Jackson was played by Janelle Monae, an African American singer, songwriter, actress, and model. Unlike her costars, she has only starred in two movies, which were *Hidden Figures* and *Moonlight*, this year's Academy Award winner. Janelle Monae has also released around 7 albums. Monae also has her own recording label, Wondaland Records.

This year at the Oscars, otherwise known as the Academy Awards, *Hidden Figures* was nominated for three awards. The film was nominated for best picture, an award annually given to great movies. Instead of *Hidden Figures*, after quite the mix up, "Moonlight" won best picture, which was still a win for Janelle Monae. Octavia Spencer was nominated for best supporting actress. Finally, *Hidden Figures* was also nominated for best writing adapted screenplay, which is an award given to the writer of a screenplay, which is like a script.

The reason why the movie is called "Hidden Figures" is because, believe it or not, these brilliant women were not at all recognized by the rest of the world for their hard work until 2015, when former president Barack Obama presented Katherine Johnson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Katherine was 96 when she received the award. These women were completely hidden and ignored for decades. The women are just like hidden figures. Want to learn even more about the movie? Watch *Hidden*



RHMS Music Program

The 2017 Music Festivals

By: Marley Pinsky

Have you seen your friends and peers walking around the hallways dressed in formal black and white clothes? See those charter buses waiting outside the school for all of those fancily-dressed kids? Ever wonder why this goes on? What you're seeing is the spring choral festivals. But wait... while you're in school watching all of these people, you're only getting in on part of this ordeal. This is the Rocky Hill Middle School chorus.

Our school does not just have one choral group. Rocky Hill has five very different groups of elite singers. When the singers start out in sixth grade, they are placed in the sixth grade chorus. Sixth grade students recently auditioned to be placed into a different group for next year. From then on, they are not just placed into a group by grade level, but by skill level. There are four groups that students in seventh and eighth grade can participate in. Two of them do not have to be auditioned for, which are the men's and women's choirs. The singers are placed in women's choir for girls and men's choir for boys. The groups that singers do have to audition for are the trebles and chambers singers. Both of these groups are full of passionate, talented singers. Very few things are different about the two. First of all, the trebles choir is an all-female choir. The chambers singers are the highest group that singers can get accepted into, and it is for boys and girls. Both trebles and chambers singers attend festivals, while the sixth grade chorus, men's and women's choir do not attend any festivals of the sort.

A typical rehearsal for all of the choral groups are somewhat similar. Each rehearsal begins with attendance, where Mr. Heinemann calls out the names of students to see who is present and who is absent, just like in any other class. The next step of the routine is business, in which any announcements are made or anything needs to be discussed with the students. Then, the singers begin to warm up with scales and other simple warm ups to get their vocals warmed up and to get the students ready for the rest of class. Then, groups practice sight reading. This is when students read music on paper and have to sing them without knowing what

it sounds like first. To accomplish this, the students have to learn to read music and translate what each symbol on the paper sounds like in a song. After sight reading, the singers rehearse each song that the group has been working on.

The group of singers placed in the advanced choral groups, such as the trebles and chambers singers, are truly exclusive and elite musicians who have a sincere love for singing and music. During an interview, Mr. Heinemann, the school's choral director, was asked about which students are some of the best singers who stand out from the rest. Mr. Heinemann responded saying that he does not like to name people or give them individual attention since there are lots of strong singers among all of the groups. However, he did say that nine of his students are in honors chorus and five are in all state chorus. Some of the good qualities that Mr. Heinemann looks for in singers during auditions are how well the students can sight read, how they demonstrate proper choral singing, their ability to teach themselves a song, and how they can prepare a song to be performed. All of these qualities have great value because these are the components of the performance that the choral groups are judged on at festivals.

The choral festivals always take place at a Montgomery County high school. The festivals occur annually, every March. Thirty eight middle schools attend the festival, all schools are expected to bring at least one group. While some schools only bring one group, others bring up to three different choirs! Our school always takes two choral groups, which is the trebles and the chambers singers.

When the groups from Rocky Hill first show up at the festival, they take their seat in the audience and watch two other groups perform. After a few groups from other schools are finished performing, the choral groups head into the warm up room to get themselves ready. They go through their typical rehearsal procedures by singing warm ups and rehearsing their selected songs. After warming up, they go onstage and perform. For their performance, all of the singers wear formal white tops and black bottoms so that everyone is wearing very similar outfit with the same exact colors. All of the groups have to perform three songs. The first

Choral

song that they choose is their warm up, which is not judged. Once the warm up song is complete, the choir sings the two songs the group selected for the songs that will be critiqued by the judges. During the songs, the judges write down comments and feedback to give to the groups. After the groups are done singing, the judges go up to the groups and give them immediate feedback on their performance, telling them their strengths, weaknesses, and ways to make themselves better performers. After the performance, the singers must complete a sort of sight reading test as a group. The choir is given a passage, which they have a few minutes to study, and then they must sing the song to the judges, just like in class. There is also a rhythm that the singers have to clap. The judges test the full choir together on these skills.

When it comes to the choral festivals, Rocky Hill has a slight advantage. Mr. Heinemann, who teaches and directs all of the choirs, often judges other festivals, so he knows what is anticipated of choral groups participating in festivals. Mr. Heinemann is asked to judge festivals in other counties. He cannot judge festivals for Montgomery County since he is a teacher here and his own group would most likely be participating. He enjoys giving feedback and tips to other students. He likes helping them learn and get better at what they do. He has recently judged a festival in St. Mary's County and Howard County. Because he judges festivals, Mr. Heinemann has a very good idea on what is expected out of a performance. Mr. Heinemann says how he has a good insight on what makes a good performance, so that he teaches this information to his choral groups during in school rehearsals.

This year's festivals took place on Wednesday March 29, 2017. The festival was

located at Magruder High School in Rockville, Maryland. Both groups performed three songs. The treble choir's warm up song was called 'The Water is Wide', an American folk song. The second song that the treble choir sang was 'All Things Bright and Beautiful', a gospel song. The third song that the trebles sang and the second song criticized by judges was called 'El Coqui', a Spanish song. The chamber singers sang a song titled 'The Wind' for their warm up song, a song based on a poem. Their second song was called Sanctus, a Latin song. The chamber singers' third and final song was called 'The Tiger'. Both groups got a superior rating, which is the highest rating that a performance can possibly get. Both of Rocky Hill's choral groups have consistently gotten superior ratings over the past few years. Rocky Hill's music department has been doing an outstanding job during competitions over the past few years. The dozens of shiny trophies in the chorus and instrumental music rooms prove it!

Mr. Paul Heinemann is our school's choral director. He is the one who rehearses with all of the choirs almost every day in school, teaches the singers, and then conducts them during festivals. Mr. Heinemann has been teaching at Rocky Hill for 18 years, and he has always been teaching chorus. He attended the Indiana University of Pennsylvania for college, where his major was in music education. He originally wanted to become a professional trumpet player, which was what he went to college for at first. Over time, Mr. Heinemann realized that he didn't like practicing the trumpet alone. He was supposed to practice the trumpet for hours a day all by himself, but he didn't like being alone. He came to the realization that he loved to make music with other people, and he also liked helping kids become better people through music, so he made his switch to studying to become a music teacher. Even though he already went to college, he still has to attend conferences to learn the best techniques of working with students and ways to rehearse.

Mr. Heinemann can play the piano, the trumpet, and he sings. He started teaching himself to play the piano when he was five years old. He has been playing the trumpet since third grade, and he has always been singing. His whole life, Mr. Heinemann

<i>Writers of The Wildcat Roar</i>			
<u>Chief Editor</u>		<u>Teachers</u>	
Ronak Tallur		Mr. Kevin Conley	
		Ms. Ashley April	
<u>Journalists</u>			
Nick Fantle	Shreya Barua	Alyssa Bass	Malini Raghu
Emily Tran	Marley Pinsky	Jashreen Lucman	



Choral cont. and Interview with Ms. Reed

has always been interested in music, so this job is perfect for him. His favorite part about the job? Working with kids. Mr. Heinemann loves having the chance to use music to help young kids grow as people. His advice to Rocky Hill's students is to be yourself. "Don't be somebody that you're not. Don't feel pressure to be somebody that you're not." Mr. H tells the Wildcat Roar.

An important role model that Mr. H has said has impacted him throughout his life is his high school band director, Mrs. Wagner. Mr. Heinemann described to the Wildcat Roar how Mrs. Wagner made band class a fun, safe, and friendly environment where everyone was welcome and felt like they could be themselves. When Mr. Heinemann decided he wanted to become a music teacher, his goal was to be just like Mrs. Wagner. At home, Mr. Heinemann has five kids, and two of them are four year old twins! His oldest child participates in musical theatre and singing. All of his children show somewhat of an interest in music, which Mr. Heinemann is happy about.



The Wildcat Roar is extremely appreciative of Mr. Heinemann and his superstar singers. Thank you for taking time to interview with us, Mr. H, and thank you to the choral groups for representing Rocky Hill.
Congratulations, singers of RHMS!

Counseling with Ms. Reed

Journalist Nicholas Fantle

Nicholas: How long have you been a counselor?

Ms. Reed: I have been a counselor for 16 years, and all of my counseling years have been at Rocky Hill Middle School. Prior to that, I was an art teacher. I taught elementary art for 6 years at Jones Lane Elementary, and 2 years at Roberto Clemente Middle School.

N: What do you like about being a counselor?

Ms. R: I like being a middle school counselor because I really enjoy working with middle school students. I see this as an age when students begin to figure out who they are as people. They face challenges with their families, school, friends, and other outside interests. I appreciate being able to help middle school students feel heard, have a safe place to vent, communicate with their parents, teachers and friends, and know that I have their back. Every day is different and that makes for interesting and challenging days.

N: Why do you think counselors are important?

Ms. R: Counselors are student advocates. We are supportive and caring, and act on the behalf of our students. We work with students giving them a voice in how and when to provide the supports that they need. There are times that all that is needed is someone to listen without judgement or interruption. Counselors provide that listening for students, parents and staff.

N: What inspired you to become a counselor?

Ms. R: When I was an art teacher, I found that students frequently expressed feelings and concerns as they worked. The creativity that can be expressed in the art room often brings out deeper feelings. I wanted to know how to help students navigate those feelings; to process and be able to work through them. Getting a degree in counseling was the goal I set to learn how to help my students. By the end of my counseling program, I found that I really enjoyed the role of the counselor and that is when I changed from art teacher to counselor.

N: What are the worst things about being a counselor?

Ms. R: Sometimes the troubles and challenges that students face are upsetting and sad. Counselors can always listen and offer support. However, we do not always have a solution. With deeper problems and concerns, not having a way to make the situation better for a student can feel disappointing for the student and me.

Cherry Blossoms and Spelling Bee

Blossom Buzz

Journalist: Malini Raghu



Ever since I was a toddler, I have had an interest for flowers and nature. I wait and wait until spring arrives, because that's when one of my favorite flowers bloom all over the US. Can you guess what they are? If you guessed cherry blossoms, you're spot on! The beautiful pink or white flowers seems so elegant! It reminds me of long colorful drapes hanging over a window. The flower petals of the white cherry blossom reminds me of a fluffy cloud. My passion for this flower has led me to many questions. "How did this beautiful flower start growing in the roots of our country? What does this flower represent? All of these questions have led me to some research, and I'm here to share it with you.

Cherry Blossoms (otherwise known as Sakura) are small, beautiful pink flowers that bloom on a cherry blossom tree. The spring time bloom is a sight to see, but very brief. In less than two weeks, the cherry blossoms drop to the ground and wither away. Sakura was a gift from Japan in 1912. They planted 3,020 trees as a gift to celebrate the nation's growing friendship. Soon, cherry blossoms were all over the country. There is definitely more to this flower than the enduring beauty to the human eye. The life of the cherry blossoms is an expression that represents life, death and renewal. The cherry blossoms blooming early spring after the harsh winter, resembles life. The cherry blossoms withering away after living a beautiful life represent death. The tree going through all the harsh troubles, growing and blooming again in the spring represents renewal. Each Sakura petal represents beauty and mortality. The life of a cherry blossom tree teaches many people to live life to the fullest, and to accept the inevitable death without fearing it. I never thought this beautiful flower could have such deep meaning!

Cherry Blossoms are now found in many parts of Philadelphia, New York, Seattle, places in Maryland and of course, Washington D.C. "Today's National Cherry Blossom Festival has grown from modest beginnings to the nation's greatest springtime celebration," explains the author of the article "History of the Cherry Blossom Trees and Festival." Today, cherry blossoms bloom all over the world like in Germany, China and even in the Himalayan states of India! Sakura have always signaled a fresh and optimistic start of spring, and the beauty and meaning of these mesmerizing petals still astonish many of us.

Spelling Bee

Congratulations to Ayush Oberoi who was our Rocky Hill Spelling Bee Champion and to runner-up

Rithik Karkhanie. There were 30 contestants in this annual event and Ms. Paul and Ms. Gramatges made sure

it was run efficiently. From Ms. Gramatges, "We have some amazing spellers here at Rocky Hill! All of the

contestants performed admirably, and represented Rocky Hill with pride."

