

Pi Day Highland students are exceeding Math Expectations beyond Imagination



Picture: (left to right) Dr. Irvin Miller, Sultaan Mokal, Sahar Mokal, Alisha Mokal, Alexander Papazov, Vesselina Papazova, Vladmir Papazov, Javeri Mokal, Superintendent Thomas Bongiovi.

Pi day has become a tradition, where we recognize students for high achievements in mathematics—achievements beyond what anyone might have imagined. Kindergarten children are learning their math facts at the level of a third grader, and fifth graders are learning math at college level. Students from the Highland, Wappingers, Arlington, and Spackenkill Highland are learning math beyond what their parents and teachers were taught. Thirteen organizations sponsored this event along with 10 public officials and four superintendents. The event was celebrated at two separate locations: LaGrange Town hall and Van Wyck Junior High School where Dr. Irvin Miller of the Math & Physics Exploration helped host the events.

At the 4:00 session, County Executive Marcus Molinaro was the key note speaker. On his facebook page he said: “It's always a pleasure to celebrate Pi Day (3/14) with Math and Physics Exploration President [Irvin M Miller](#) to recognize some of Dutchess County's brightest mathematics minds in an annual ceremony at LaGrange Town Hall. I was honored to join my friends and our community today to encourage these young students to pursue their passion.” After the county executive spoke kindergarten student Yasmin Duale from Spackenkill read a speech describing how she learned her addition facts at a third grade level. Her brother Adam received a special trophy with his 3d image on the map of the Spackenkill school district. Then Alexander Papazov 7th grade

student from Highland spoke on his five year learning experience at the Math & Physics Exploration Center where he is now solving cubic equations utilizing trigometry. Sahar Mokhal from highland received a 3D image of herself on a map of the Highland school district. With more speeches from students and parents, seven more students from Arlington received trophies of themselves on a map of the Arlington district. These students were doing college level math. The ceremony was then followed by refreshments of apple cider, cookies, and all manner of pies.

Then we moved onto Van Wyck Junior High School where we started by recognizing Taylor McLeod, Ferdinand Lucas Balcazar, and Brendon Kenney for being the first students last year in the sixth grade to do college level math at the Sheafe Road elementary school. Their awards had images of Albert Einstein on the map of the Sheafe Road elementary school. Marcos Cordova, Keira Su and several other students read essays of their experience with the program. The essays were read from Amy Fazio, principal of the Fishkill Plains Elementary school and three of her teachers—Lindsey Wessels, Christine Otero, and Michelle Moroney all of them who are having 3D images being generated of themselves. Principal Fazio, Superintendent Jose Carrion and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michelle Cardwell all beamed with pride as her 40 students covered from one end of the stage to the other. This year at the urging of some parents the fourth grade students became part of the math enrichment program. Students from Kinry Road (Mary Bish), Oak Grove (Angelina Rooney), and James Evans (Lauren Hernandez) were recognized too. Again at the end of the Ceremony, the students enjoy the same refreshments as earlier from the day.

Sponsors were: HVFCU, TEGFCU, Salisbury Riverside Bank, Tompkins Mahopac Bank, Chazen Companies, Cristianos Pizza, Adams Fairacre Farms, Daily Planet, Tops Friendly Markets, McDonalds, IBM, Central Hudson, and Mellina Weiss.

Certificates were issued by: County Executive Marcus Molinaro, **Interin County Executive Adele Riley**, State Senator Sue Serino, State Assemblyman Kieran Lalor, US Congressman Antonio DelGado, US Congressman Sean Maloney, Superintendent Brendan Lyons (Arlington), STEAM Director Dawn Galente, Superintendent Jose Carion (Wappingers), Assistant Superintendent Michelle Cardwell, Superintendent Mark Villanti (Spackenkill), **Superintendent Thomas Bongiovi (Highland)**, Principal Kathy Leahy (St Martin de Porres); and Town supervisors: Alan Bell (LaGrange), Jon Baisley (Poughkeepsie), Nicholas D'Alessandro (East Fishkill), Richard Thuston (Wappinger).