

# INFORMER

DUNCANVILLE Independent School District

December | 12 | 2016

## Construction Students Build Skills, Serve Community



Sawdust fills the air as students work feverishly toward their deadline. The scream of the circular saw cuts through the sound of teenagers talking. Eyes are focused on measuring, marking and moving pieces of wood into place.

For a second year, the young men and women in Tamara Gurnell's construction class at Duncanville High School volunteered to design and build the official school district float for the city's Christmas parade.

This year's theme was 'LEGO Christmas' – and the construction crew's concept was elaborate. It centered on a ski slope with LEGO figures schussing down the mountain complete with background

**Winter Break Now  
Four Days Away**



Winter Break begins this Friday, December 16. Enjoy your time off! Students return Wednesday, January 4.

**Employees Share  
Holiday Spirit with  
Panther Angels**

music and a fan blowing ribbon to look like snow. The float impressed judges - winning the Grand Marshall's Choice Award at Friday night's parade.

"I have the most amazing set of students," Gurnell said.

Read [more](#).



## District to Launch Collegiate Academy in 2017



In the New Year, the district will share more information about a new opportunity for students to graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate's degree. Through the Collegiate Academy,

Duncanville High School graduates will be more competitive as they seek admission to universities and colleges. Expect to learn more details about the application process in January.

Duncanville ISD's Education Plaza and IdeaHub Technology staff continued an annual Christmas tradition by spreading joy with the gift of giving. Counselors at each of our schools identified students in need, and the names and ages of those Panther Angels were added to the Christmas tree at the central administration building. Volunteers selected from the 111 names and purchased gifts so those children will have something special to open this holiday.

"The compassion and giving spirit of our district employees demonstrates the priority we place on putting students first, in particular putting OUR students first," said Duncanville ISD Superintendent Dr. Marc Smith. "Thank you for your generosity."

## Quarterback Sidelines as Cosmetology Student

## Last Week to Take District Climate Survey



The room, tucked down a long hallway at Duncanville High School, smells like permanent solution and burning hair. There is a sea of teenage girls in black scrubs working on models' hair. Standing in the middle of them is one young man: Trazon Connley. Tray, as he likes to be called, is a third-year Cosmetology student. He has learned how to cut, curl and just recently how to highlight hair. When he graduates next year, he will be a fully-licensed Cosmetologist and will be able to open his own business if he chooses. Signing up for the 'beauty classes' is something Tray's father encouraged him to do as a freshman in high school. Read [more](#).

## Congratulations to December Made with Pride Honorees



You can impact the course of Duncanville ISD's future by taking our District Climate Survey. The district is seeking feedback to improve education for all Duncanville ISD students and to guide district decisions.

Topics include: school choice, community relations, school operations, and district communication. Click [here](#) to take the survey which **closes December 16.**

## Central Parents Go Back to School to Help Students



A group of Central Elementary School parents recently spent time in the classroom to learn how to improve their kids' educational experience.



**Dianne Williams**, a Government teacher at Duncanville High School and Steven Cain, a history teacher at Kennemer Middle School, are the Made With Pride in Duncanville – Teacher honorees for the month of December.

Mr. Cain does a great job nurturing the students that come into the YAG program. He has created an outreach to introduce students to YAG at the middle school level and has grown the academic achievement at DHS.

Ms. Williams led the planning for the Youth and Government District Conference at Duncanville High School. This was the first time DHS hosted the event for more than 1,000 competitors, school sponsors, families, judges and many others.

**Pauline Cortez**, a bus monitor, is the Made With Pride in Duncanville – Staff selection for the month of December.

Pauline serves as a bus monitor primarily for children with special needs. She is very in tune with her students and makes a special effort to take care of them with respect, love and compassion. She is an exceptional employee and a remarkable person. Her most common quote is "I love these kids!" She shows it every day.

**Brielle Taylor**, a second-grader at Smith Elementary, is the Made With Pride in Duncanville – Student selection for the month of December.

Her Teacher Krisonda Barge says Brielle is reading and performing above grade-level. In addition, she is a leader to her classmates and a great helper to Mrs. Barge. She is respectful and humble. On any given day, you will find Brielle saying sweet words to and writing kind notes for her classmates and teachers. Mrs. Barge says Brielle's sweet and humble spirit makes her classroom a brighter place.

The 44 parents enrolled in a nine-week program sponsored by The Concilio - a non-profit organization dedicated to bridging the gap between parents and the educational system. At last week's graduation, parents said the program helped them to connect to both their children and the school.

Duncanville ISD's Bilingual and English as a Second Language Department hopes to extend The Concilio program to additional campuses next semester.

**Upcoming Events:**  
**Duncanville ISD Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting**, Monday, December 12, in the Plaza boardroom at 710 South Cedar Ridge Drive  
**Second Grading Period Ends**, Friday, December 16  
**Winter Break**, December 19 - January 2

## Congrats to the December "Made With Pride" Honorees!



[news@duncanvilleisd.org](mailto:news@duncanvilleisd.org)

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