The image features a stack of six sharpened colored pencils in the foreground, with colors from top to bottom: red, yellow, orange, green, dark blue, and light blue. The pencils are arranged diagonally, pointing towards the right. In the background, a yellow school bus is driving on a road, with its headlights on and a red stop sign illuminated. The bus has "SCHOOL BUS" written on its front. The scene is set outdoors with green trees and a clear sky.

Education Guide

Supplement to The Mercury • Friday, August 18, 2017

EDUCATION

Local dance school expands international performance opportunities



The Pottstown Dance Theatre, which is the only school in the entire state that has performed at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, at the International Dance Fest in Poland and in London during the 2012 Olympic Games, returns to the Olympics for the 2020 Olympic Games!

The school will return to Carnegie Hall in 2018 and then will start preparations for the 2020 Tokyo Games.

No other school in the region has been given this

outstanding, international invitation!

The school was founded in 1964 by Phyllis Dersh Rudzitis, and in 2001, international dance artist Michelle Jones Wurtz became the current director. Michelle has taught at Swarthmore College, Temple University, The University of the Arts and is currently a professor of dance at Eastern University. She works in Europe annually and has been invited to teach in the UK, mainland Europe and Africa,

and she recently returned from working at the International Dance Festival in Ladek Zdroj, Poland.

The school is currently accepting new registrations for the 2017-2018 school year as well as new dancers for the upcoming events including the 2020 Olympic Show. Open house and registration will be held on Saturday, Aug. 26, from noon to 7 p.m. and Wednesday, Aug. 30, from 5 to 8 p.m. Classes include Ballet and Pointe, Tap, Jazz,

Modern/Contemporary and Lyrical, Hip-Hop, Break Dance, Irish Dance, Theater Dance, African Dance, Creative Movement, and Pilates.

You can visit the studio website at www.pottstowndance.com and/or call 610-323-2569 anytime.

Ms. Wurtz has sent dancers to the Kirov Academy, San Francisco Ballet, Atlantic Festival Ballet, Momix, Paul Taylor Dance, Twyla Tharp, Alvin Ailey and Beyonce!





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EDUCATION

Saint Mary Catholic School — your journey begins here!

One of the first of major decisions that parents need to make occurs when their children are ready to enroll in school. "Where should we send our children to receive the academic, social and moral foundation they will need to be contributing citizens of tomorrow?" Most parents are looking for a school that will reinforce the spiritual and moral values they practice at home. Saint Mary Catholic School practices these concepts daily as part of our school mission statement.

At Agnus Dei Academy, our pre-K 3- and 4-year-old division, we partner with you in developing the whole child. We foster a love of learning and encourage independence and imagination to in-

spire your child to become a thinker, an explorer and, above all, a lifelong learner. Please come and visit Agnus Dei Academy of Saint Mary Catholic School this summer or in September. We are enrolling now for our 3- and 4-year-olds, full- and part-time five-day programs. Saint Mary Catholic School, our grades K-8 division, is a warm, friendly and family community where each child is nurtured in Gospel values and their God-given talents are developed as they journey to become lifelong learners.

A few of our many academic successes for the 2016-2017 school year:

- Four of the seven students that will receive National Merit Scholar recognition this fall attended Saint Mary Catholic School

tion this fall attended Saint Mary Catholic School

- The Class of 2017 was awarded \$153,900 in scholarships to private and Archdiocesan high schools

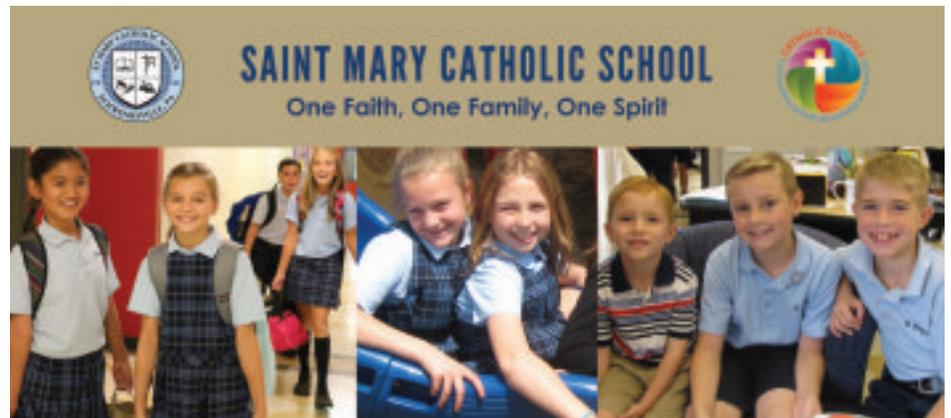
Both divisions are firmly rooted in a Catholic tradition of academic excellence, faith formation, service opportunities and an outstanding arts program through which we enrich our students, partner with parents and serve our greater community. We invite you to learn more about Saint Mary Catholic School and Agnus Dei Academy. To arrange a tour contact Suzette Moyer at smoyer@smsk-8.org or call 610-287-7757 ext. 244. We are located at 40 Spring Mount Road in Schwenksville. Come see us!



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Four of the seven students that will receive National Merit Scholar recognition this fall, attended Saint Mary Catholic School

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EDUCATION

Vocational schooling can pave the way to high-paying jobs

Many students believe that the next natural step after graduating from high school is to go off to college. Secondary education has become such a common transition that many parents begin saving for college tuition as soon as their children are born. Although college can be the next chapter in a student's education, many teenagers still choose to attend trade school.

Television personality Mike Rowe says the country is in the midst of a skilled labor shortage because workers lack the necessary training to fill the hundreds of thousands of available jobs. Lack of information may drive the notion that trade jobs are nothing more than a backup plan if college

doesn't pan out. However, by realizing that trade jobs, along with short-term vocational training, is a smart investment — and eventually a lucrative career choice — attitudes about trade schools and labor-intensive jobs may shift.

A great number of college graduates enter the workforce with degrees that may not help them land jobs. And these students typically carry thousands of dollars in tuition debt.

Many college grads are underemployed and working in jobs that aren't even in their fields of study. Career and technical schools help students develop specialized skills that make graduates immediately marketable in their cho-



PHOTO COURTESY OF METROCREATIVE

sen fields, and trade salaries can be very competitive.

The following are some of the fastest-growing and highest-paying trade careers to consider, based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and

Forbes magazine:

- **Construction manager:** Construction professionals with great organizational and communication skills can enjoy high earning potential as construction managers. Expected growth of this ca-

reer over the next 10 years is 5 percent. The average income of a construction manager is \$87,000. However, with a top-end hourly pay of around \$75 per hour, it's easy for managers to earn into six figures.

- **Elevator installer and repairer:** This career is listed as a top-earner. These employees can earn anywhere from \$74,000 to \$105,000 per year. Elevators are in demand as urban centers increase, so this career has staying potential.

- **Rotary drill operator:** The oil and gas industry relies on rotary drill operators to extract oil or natural gas from underground sources. Salaries for these jobs can range from \$30 to \$40 per hour.

- **Dental hygienist:**

Cleaning teeth and inspecting mouths for disease is an important role. Job growth is still hovering around 20 percent, and hygienists can expect to earn up to \$98,000.

- **Electricians and plumbers:** Electricians and plumbers are continually in demand. With a short amount of trade schools and apprenticeship, it's possible to earn up to \$90,000 per year.

These are just a few of the many skilled professions that vocational schools prepare their students for. Scholarships and funding programs are available to help make vocational training an affordable possibility.

Article courtesy of MetroCreative



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Dr. James Smock, School Administrator

EDUCATION

West-Mont Christian Academy — a letter from the administrator

After over 35 years in Christian education, one might expect that I would be accustomed to the pace at which the school year speeds by, but it always amazes me when we're at the end of another fruitful year! Each one passes with its own unique tasks and victories, and as Christians, we give glory to God for each experience that teaches us something new. The students that God entrusts to West-Mont Christian Academy are especially important, and at this time of the year, we particularly find ourselves reminiscing about our recent graduates. Many of our students have been with us from the

very beginning of their educational experience, from kindergarten till now ... 13 years later!

What a privilege it is to share in each scholar's childhood exuberance, adolescent struggling and young adult maturing. To see these moments of growth, to partner with parents in them, gently guiding and directing, is the ultimate opportunity for ministry at West-Mont Christian Academy. Philippians 1:3-4 is a passage I commonly share with our seniors during the annual Senior Trip and has special meaning for us: "I thank my God in all my remem-

brance of you, always offering prayer for you all." As I think of all of the students that have passed through the halls of West-Mont, I am reminded of all of the prayers that have been made on their behalf, both while they are with us and since they have graduated.

Colossians 2: 6-7 states, "Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude." It is our desire at West-Mont to send students out into

the world who are not only exceptionally trained academically but also well-rooted and firmly planted in the truths of God's mighty Word. Now that we approach yet another school year, we again join with our families in prayer as we support our students in this next phase of their educational adventure. We invite you to join us on this journey. Please check out West-Mont's website for more information at www.west-mont.org, or call for your free tour today at 610-326-7690.

May God Bless You,
Dr. James Smock, School Administrator



West-Mont Christian Academy Class of 2017

GRADUATION REPORT

Overview

24 Graduates, 88% will continue their education at 4-year and 2-year institutions.

The Class of 2017 was awarded \$360,000 in merit scholarships.

Acceptances

The Class of 2017 received 60 offers of admission to 31 different institutions.

Majors

The Class of 2017 will be studying Automotive

Restoration, Biblical Studies, Biology, Business, Business Finance, Communications, Early Childhood Education, Engineering, Film, Mechanical Engineering, Medical Sonography, Nursing, Pre-Med, Radiography

Visit www.west-mont.org/grad-report to view the full report.

Mention this ad when you apply to have your application fees waived!

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West-Mont Christian Academy Class of 2017

EDUCATION

Mobile phones and their place in the classroom

Mobile phones are ubiquitous. Most people would admit that they'd rather leave home without their wallets than without their phones. According to statistics provider Smart Insights, 80 percent of internet users own a smartphone, while more than 50 percent of mobile phone users admit to reaching for their phones first thing when they wake up.

Since more than 90 percent of today's teenagers own a phone, schools are forced to find ways to include mobile phones in the classroom without having them overshadow lessons or distract students.

A 2013 University of Nebraska-Lincoln study of 777 students at six American universities found that the average respondent used a digital device for nonclass purposes 10.93 times during a typical school day. Students' activities included texting, social networking and emailing. Many respondents cited boredom and staying connected to the outside world as motivating factors.

Until recently, many schools implemented strict policies regarding mobile phones in school. Some forbade students from carrying them on campus or

mandated that students left them in lockers. Many schools are now realizing the ways students can harness the technology of mobile phones in creative and innovative methods. Plus, as smartphone capabilities continue to evolve, educators are increasingly recognizing the potential of educational apps and how they can be used in the classroom.

Using mobile phones in the classroom for educational purposes also may cut down on how much the phones are used for non-school purposes, such as texting or checking social media. According to data published in the journal *Computers & Education*, 80 percent of students admit that mobile phones can hinder their ability to pay attention in school when phones are not being used in conjunction with their lessons.

Schools vary in their rules regarding mobile phone usage in the classroom. Some schools let teachers decide, while others have more liberal policies. The following are some ideas for broaching the subject.

- Research educational apps. A number of apps and websites are educational. Whether students are con-

necting via a phone, laptop or tablet, these applications can encourage class participation. Some apps can report students' progress to teachers in real time. Remind101 is an app that can text reminders for assignments and tests to students.

- Teachers can monitor diligently. The image of teachers standing in the front of the classroom lecturing is becoming more and more obsolete. It's easier to guide students to stay on task while on mobile phones when the teacher roams the classroom to keep an eye on phone activity. It's more difficult for students to engage in negative behaviors when their phones are out in the open.

- Cut down on tech expenses. Not every school can afford to give each student a laptop or have 20 to 30 tablets in the classroom. When students embrace BYOT (Bring Your Own Technology), teachers can maximize resources.

Mobile phones are not going anywhere soon, and schools are trying to find ways to make them more useful and less distracting in the classroom.

Article courtesy of MetroCreative



PHOTO COURTESY OF METROCREATIVE

Teachers can look at ways to harness the power of mobile phone technology in the classroom.



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STATE

School start date delayed over eclipse eye damage concerns

The Associated Press

MCDONALD, PA. » A Pennsylvania school district just outside Pittsburgh is pushing back the start of the school year over the solar eclipse and concerns about kids damaging their eyes.

The South Fayette Township School District Board voted Tuesday night to push back the start of the school year by one day after reviewing information about the upcoming eclipse. The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reports Monday will instead

be a service day for faculty and staff.

The missed day will be made up April 27.

Superintendent Billie Rondinelli says she was concerned about students hurting their eyes by looking at the eclipse.

Classes
start
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