



*Student of the Month*  
**Ali Mascaro**

**Senior at Seneca Valley High School**

*By Paula Green*

*“My wish is that children be treated as people, and not as property; that their rights as human beings on the planet, to food, shelter, education, and health, be taken seriously.”*

– Oprah Winfrey

Seneca Valley High School senior Ali Mascaro recently completed her senior project with Family Hope Connection, and she firmly believes in the above quote. This adoption agency is a division of Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Pittsburgh. In December, Mascaro contacted them and asked if she could work with them to help fulfill her senior project requirements, which included a service component.

She chose to work with Family Hope Connection because, “A very close friend of my family has adopted three children. This inspired me to help other children in need of a home. It touches my heart when people open up their homes to adoptive children,” Mascaro said.

Ali discovered that FHC caseworkers use toys, crafts, puppets and other play therapy tools to build trust with the foster and adoptive children. The agency provided her with a “wish list” of items they needed to help prepare children for permanent homes.

She began collecting toys, games, markers, crayons, scissors, colored paper, etc., from neighbors, friends, family and her parent’s co-workers. Mascaro delivered a carload of supplies, which was more than the staff at FHC could ever imagine.

“Many people know about the work we do at Family Hope Connection helping to build families through infant adoption, but Ali worked with us to understand how we work with older, waiting children in the foster care system to prepare them for loving, permanent homes. As a young person, Ali became involved and her project provides us an enhanced opportunity to connect with the youth we serve at Family Hope Connection, especially those children without creative play items like this of their own. Ali’s work will touch many children that we serve at Family Hope Connection this year, but it will have an impact on our community that’s even greater as these children grow into young adults like her,” said FHC director JoAnn White.

Mascaro resides in Cranberry Township with her parents, Brenda and Anthony Mascaro. She has been involved with the ski club; Cranberry Township softball and honor roll throughout her four years of high school.

In the fall, she will attend Robert Morris University and major in nursing. She plans to become a pediatric nurse. “I love helping children since they are after all our future,” Mascaro said.

For more information on Family Hope Connection, call (412) 422-8567 or <http://www.fhcadopt.org>. ▲

**Three Pine-Richland High School seniors** earned awards in the National Association of Women in Construction CAD Drafting competition.

**Brian McWilliams**, ninth grade student at *Pine-Richland High School* has been awarded an Honorable Mention in the 2009 National French Week essay Contest by the American Association of Teachers of French.

*Pine Richland School District* students **Even Klei, Rebecca Stabile** and **Hayden Stockwell** placed at the Pittsburgh Regional Science Engineering Fair.



*Pine-Richland Middle School* eighth grader **Kyle Pomerleau** placed first in the Pittsburgh Pirates “Breaking Barriers Essay & Poetry Contest.”

**Pine-Richland Middle School eighth graders** placed first in Academic Triathlon at the North Allegheny Baierl Center on Apr. 8.

**Sydney Brooks**, an eighth grader at *Pine-Richland Middle School* earned first place in an Animal Friends poster contest “Pets Need Our Help.”

*Pine-Richland Middle School* seventh grader **Anya Chopra** was selected to attend the National Young Leaders State Conference.

**Evans City Elementary Middle School** students, grades K-6, helped raise more than \$9,400 in the school’s Annual Jump Rope for Heart Program and Fundraiser at the school.

**Andrew Lingenfelter**, a seventh grade student from **Seneca Valley Middle School** was named the winner of the Pennsylvania “You Be the Chemist” Challenge held at State College in April

The *Seneca Valley* concert, jazz and marching bands competed at the Norfolk NATO Festival. Seneca’s Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band and Jazz Ensemble I earned gold medal superior ratings, Jazz Ensemble II garnered a silver medal excellent rating and **Christine Wehr** won the Best Jazz Soloist Award.

Two *Seneca Valley* seniors have been chosen as finalists in the 2010 National Merit Scholarship Program. **Nathan Boros** and **Megan Abbate** were chosen as finalists based on their Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test scores. Also recognized were **Christopher Dorogy** and **Todd Nowacki**.



Megan Abbate



Nate Boros

Nine students in the *Seneca Valley Senior High School* business and personal finance classes scored in the top 20th percentile during the National Financial Capability Challenge sponsored by the Department of the Treasury. They are: **Joe Belechak, Jake Double, Isaac Haky, Mike Hughes, Andrew Killby, Tyler Rose, Alexis Shea, Andrew Succop** and **Chris Wooden**.

Five *Seneca Valley* students advanced to the state level as winners in the regional History Day competition. Winners include: **Kiley Shuman, Kyle Gallagher, Jack Kooser, Simon Brown, and Adam Zahren**. Additionally, homeschooled **Walter Greathouse** also received accolades.

A team of *Seneca Valley* students earned first place at Westminster College’s high school programming contest. Taking home tops honors were: **Todd Nowacki, Mike Paine** and **James Fitzpatrick**.

The *Seneca Valley* Television Production students were named winners at the Robert Morris University’s annual TVT Student Spring Festival. Winners were: **Eric Lorenz, Hailey Suggs, Chelsea Sebes, Katie Serevitz, Jordan Schulz, Kate Kelly, James Beringer, Gary Jordan, Christine Fleig, Lauren Wehr, Aristotle Piso, Samantha Willing, Sam Hogan, Jon Baron** and **Becky Eischeid**.

The *Seneca Valley* Academic Games Team competed in the National Academic Games Tournament in Cincinnati. Awards were given to **Druv Kohli, Matt Graf, Alex Guckes, Kelly Cotton, Nick Cupelli, Lauren Jones, Nick Ranayhossaini, Logan Kallop, Jason Chickness, Ryan Coenen** and **Jonathan Selling**.

**Carol-Jean McGreevy-Morales**, a world languages teacher at *Shady Side Academy* was the winner of the Friedel and Otto Eberspacher Award for Excellence in the Teaching of a Modern Foreign Language. **Mary Krauland**, a mathematics teacher and coach of Shady Side’s Speech and Debate Team won the National Forensics League’s Donus D. Roberts Quad Ruby Coaching Award.

College Corner

**The Community College of Allegheny County** has received the Paragon Gold Award in the area of “Promotion Campaign for a Special Event” from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations.

2006 *Pine Richland High School* graduate **Dustin Strayer** took first place in the American Eagle Marketing competition held at the *University of Pittsburgh*.