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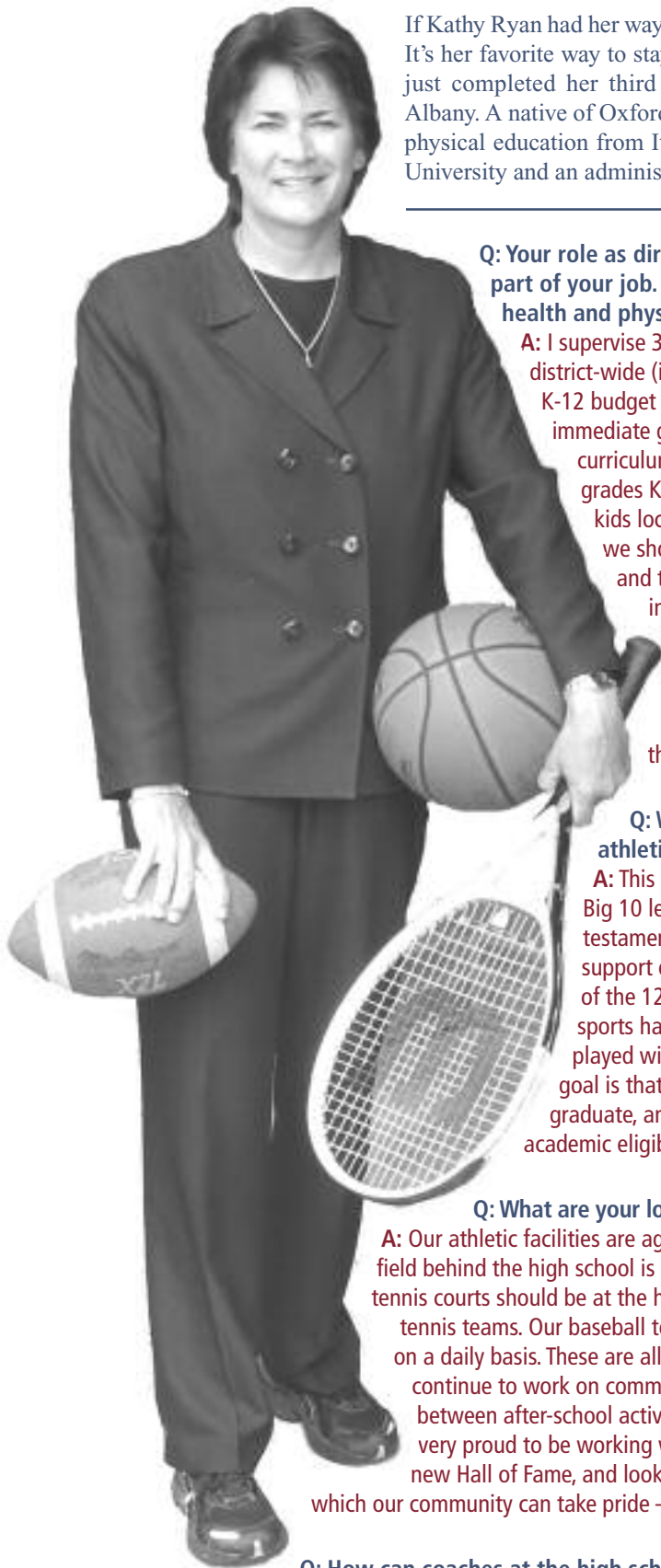
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Leading the way Meet Kathy Ryan

Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics



If Kathy Ryan had her way, she would play sports all day, every day. It's her favorite way to stay healthy – and happy! At work, she has just completed her third year with the City School District of Albany. A native of Oxford, N.Y., she earned a bachelor's degree in physical education from Ithaca College, a master's from Syracuse University and an administrative degree at SUNY Cortland.

Q: Your role as director of athletics is the most visible part of your job. What are your duties as director of health and physical education?

A: I supervise 38 PE teachers and nine health teachers district-wide (in addition to 101 coaches), as well as the K-12 budget for physical education. My most immediate goal is to improve our physical education curriculum by having it become more sequential grades K-12. From K-5, we should be teaching kids locomotor and fine motor skills. From 6-8 we should be introducing team sports concepts, and then from 9-12 we should be doing individualized activities and introducing lifetime fitness activities. This summer I will be working with a team of six PE teachers to rewrite the K-12 physical education curriculum to help us achieve these goals.

Q: What are some of the highlights of the athletic programs during your tenure?

A: This spring four of our five varsity teams won Big 10 league championships. I think that's a testament to good kids, good coaching and the support of the community. I'm also proud that 127 of the 129 students who played spring varsity sports had passing GPAs, and that 124 of 126 who played winter varsity sports had passing GPAs. Our goal is that 100 percent of our student-athletes graduate, and I think these results show that our academic eligibility program is working.

Q: What are your long-term goals for athletic programs?

A: Our athletic facilities are aging and need to be upgraded. The bowl field behind the high school is not an area that is attractive to kids. The tennis courts should be at the high school for PE classes as well as our tennis teams. Our baseball team needs a baseball field to practice on on a daily basis. These are all things that we are addressing. I want to continue to work on communicating to the public the connection between after-school activities and successful students. I'm also very proud to be working with a great group of volunteers on our new Hall of Fame, and looking forward to that being something in which our community can take pride – Falcon Pride!

Q: How can coaches at the high school and in youth leagues work together to provide more opportunities for students to participate and succeed in athletics?

A: We need our coaches to reach out to the youth coaches and offer our help as needed, and make our facilities available to them.

Alumni achievement

Glen Barker '89



Keeping it in the family: Glen Barker '89 with his second cousin, Albany High junior Jevonte Osterhout, at Bleecker Stadium last summer.

Back in the late 1980s, Glen Barker '89 was one of the first students in a new language program at Albany High School – Mandarin Chinese. He knew it was a unique opportunity; what he didn't know was how telling it would be for his future.

Today, Glen is director of Pacific Rim scouting for Major League Baseball's Houston Astros following a playing career that included three seasons in the majors.

Looking back on his years in Albany's public schools, Glen remembers the emphasis on education he received from his family and teachers.

Late Albany High social sciences teacher Bob Bellizzi, the beloved baseball coach at Glen's alma mater, The College of St. Rose, was instrumental in shaping Glen's college path. That path included what Glen considers his greatest non-baseball achievement – having the opportunity to earn a college degree while playing the sport he loved.

"I think there are more opportunities for kids today, but they have to take advantage of them," he said. "If you don't take advantage of opportunities, they're not going to go out and search for you. You've got to go out and look for them."

Glen remains connected to Albany High baseball these days. His second cousin, Jevonte Osterhout, just completed his junior year as a key member of the Falcons' Big 10 championship team.

It was the school's first conference title since Glen's senior season.

Glen went on to play 235 career games with the Astros (1999-2001) alongside stars such as Jeff Bagwell, Craig Biggio, Derek Bell, Doc Gooden and Roy Oswalt.

But there was a time at the end of college when he thought the call from the majors might not come.

It was June 1993. He had graduated from St. Rose a month earlier with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a minor in math. He was ready to accept a job as a lab assistant there while pursuing graduate studies.

Then the call finally came; the Detroit Tigers had drafted him. Six years and one organization change later, he was in the majors playing for the Astros.

"I lived the dream," he said.

Word of wisdom: "Everybody has the dream of making it to the big leagues, but there aren't many people who make it. That's why my parents always stressed education. My mother and father always pushed me, and Albany High had really good teachers that were always willing to help kids out."

'It has to start with me'

New Albany High principal eager to get started

There are few leadership roles David C. McCalla, Ph.D., has not held during a 35-year career in urban public education.

High school principal was one of them, and he will fill that in beginning in July at Albany High School.

Dr. McCalla, who began his career with 25 years in the Miami-Dade County (Fla.) Public Schools, succeeds Maxine Fantroy-Ford at 2,300-student Albany High. Mrs. Fantroy-Ford will take over at Giffen Memorial Elementary School.

Dr. McCalla is eager to get to work connecting with students, families, teachers and staff members.

"I'm looking forward to making Albany High School an outstanding internationally recognized high school," he said. "You have the making of it because you have the International Baccalaureate program there, but that is just a small part of it now.

"The expectations of excellence should be applicable to all the departments."

Also in July, Raymond Colucciello, Ed.D., will take over as interim superintendent, succeeding Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D., while the Board of Education conducts a national search in partnership with the community for Dr. Joseph's permanent successor.

Dr. Colucciello was superintendent of the Schenectady City School District from 1993-2001, and later spent three years as interim superintendent and superintendent in Ballston Spa (2005-08). He served a one-year term as interim superintendent in Voorheesville during the recently completed school year.

At Albany High, communication will be Dr. McCalla's top priority.

You want his e-mail address? Just ask.

He promises he'll get back to you, no matter how busy things get. He says he's used to it after nine years as a middle school principal in the Miami-Dade system, America's fourth-largest public school district with more than 300 schools.

"It's hard to explain the amount of



David McCalla, Ph.D., is the new principal at Albany High School.

paperwork and e-mail that comes across your desk each day," he said.

Dr. McCalla's experience also includes two years as a middle school principal in Nyack, N.Y., with just five total schools, and in Mount Vernon, N.Y., a district similar in size to Albany. He served in two assistant superintendent positions in Mount Vernon, most recently in charge of pupil personnel services.

Dr. McCalla comes to Albany High at an important time, with critical discussions about to begin regarding the future of the school's academic programs and facilities, and alternative education.

He is excited to play a leading role in rebuilding Albany High's programs – and image.

"We have to be very diligent in remaking the reputation of that school," Dr. McCalla said. "It takes every team member thinking like I think and being comfortable with what they do in extending themselves to the public.

"It has to be pervasive. It has to start with me."

Student achievement

Valedictorian Yale-bound once again

"Bulldog! Bulldog! Bow, wow, wow!"

Maybe not Cole Porter's most sophisticated lyrics, but the Yale University fight song seems to be catching on at Albany High School.

Albany High's valedictorian once again will attend the prestigious Ivy League school.

Rachel Barnas, the top-ranked student among the approximately 450 members of the Class of 2009, will follow 2008 valedictorian Rachel Rudinger, who will be a Yale sophomore in the fall.

Rachel '09 plans to study anthropology (or archaeology) and theater. Apparently, she digs the stage!

"I'd love to go off and do some digging in Egypt, and I also hope to have a chance to study abroad in London for drama," she said. "I either want to be the next Indiana Jones, or play him!"

No matter where college and life take

her, Rachel looks back on the academic and extracurricular opportunities in Albany's public schools as helping build a strong foundation.

An avid dancer, singer and musician – she plays the oboe – Rachel was active in Albany High's rich theater program. She played a Hungarian murderess (falsely accused, she'll tell you) in this spring's award-winning production of "Chicago: The Musical."

On Albany High's Masterminds team – a group of academically advanced students who compete against students from area schools – Rachel earned the nickname "Kobe," a reference to Los Angeles Lakers' All-Star Kobe Bryant and her own reputation for clutch answers.

"I do, in fact, have a life," she joked. "Even though it would shock my classmates!"



Albany High valedictorian Rachel Barnas is heading to Yale University in the fall.

We choose Albany public schools because ...

Nominations welcome for charter Hall of Fame Class of 2009

The City School District of Albany invites you to nominate candidates to be charter members of its new Hall of Fame.

Nominees for the inaugural Class of 2009 can include athletes, teachers, performers, coaches, students, administrators, contributors, or alumni who have gone on to significant accomplishments following graduation from Albany High School or the former Philip Schuyler High School.

The Hall of Fame is a way of maintaining the rich heritage and tradition

of the district's successful academic, athletic and extracurricular programs. The Hall of Fame will honor the contributions and accomplishments of these individuals who are worthy of recognition as examples for others to emulate.

Graduates must have been out of high school for at least 10 years. Administrators, coaches, teachers and staff must have served for the same period of time and no longer be working in the district.

Nominees must exemplify the highest standards of ethical conduct and moral

character. All candidates will be judged on their significant or long-term contributions.

All nominations are welcome and must be received by the Hall of Fame Selection Committee by Friday, July 10. You can download the nomination form and nomination criteria at www.albanyschools.org.

All nominations must be made on the district's official nomination form and should be returned to Director of Health, Physical Education and Athletics Kathy Ryan. For more information, contact Ms.

Ryan at (518) 454-3987, ext. 986.

The Selection Committee, comprised of district and community volunteers, will choose the inaugural 20-member class during the summer. The inductees will be honored during Homecoming weekend, Oct. 16-17, including an honorary dinner and introduction at halftime of the football game.

Inductees also will be memorialized on a new Wall of Fame at Albany High School.

Following the Class of 2009, each class of inductees will include up to eight members.

From the superintendent Looking back, forward with gratitude



Superintendent
Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D.

Typically at this time of year, I take this opportunity to share my thoughts with you as we look back on the recently ended school year and ahead to the year to come.

This year, I have a little more ground to cover!

As you are aware, I will be retiring from my position as superintendent July 10. I leave with many great memories of the achievements we have made and the great relationships I have built in my 12 years with the City School District of Albany, including the last five as superintendent.

I also leave with great enthusiasm for the future of Albany's public schools.

In the classroom, we have made significant progress in raising the level of academic achievement for all of our students.

Over the past two school years, 42 percent more of our students in grades 3-8 have achieved Level 3 or Level 4 on the state English language arts exam. In math, 40 percent more have achieved the two highest levels.

The evidence is clear that as a district and as a community we are making strides in our goal to eliminate the achievement gap. Please read the related story on page 3.

In just a couple of months the district will celebrate the most recent piece in the ongoing facilities project for elementary and middle schools – the renovated Giffen Memorial Elementary School.

This will be the 12th school completed this decade. We are grateful for the community support that has allowed us to provide the very best schools for our students as well as signature new buildings in our neighborhoods.

Following Giffen, there will be just two projects left before this historic rebuild is complete – Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST) in January and Arbor Hill Elementary School at the start of the 2010-11 school year.

Then it's on to the future.

The most significant work the district faces in the years to come already is underway – restructuring the academic programs and facilities at Albany High School, and developing new and better alternative education programs.

We are in the first stages of those critical planning processes now, and will gain momentum as we get into the 2009-10 school year.

The district will be in good hands under the leadership of Interim Superintendent Raymond Colucciello, Ed.D., while the Board of Education leads a national search in partnership with our community to find our next superintendent.

Whoever that is, I know he or she will benefit from the same resources I enjoyed during my time in Albany – a rich community that cares deeply about the future of its schools and its children.

I leave you with my gratitude for the support you have provided to the district throughout my time with Albany's public schools. We have made significant progress this decade, and I look forward to seeing that progress continue into the next decade – and beyond.

Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



**CAPITAL
education**

Capital Education is published by the
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Please direct comments about the newsletter,
story ideas and questions to
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City School District of Albany
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Voices

Q: What is your favorite memory from the 2008-09 school year?



This year I was given the opportunity to teach the first pre-K Dual Language class in the district. I must say that it has been a wonderful experience. I have had the pleasure of helping my young students grow and learn. I have spent my days with an eager group of 4-year-olds who are always ready to explore and have fun. I am grateful for the challenges, joys, surprises and rewards that this school year has brought to me.

– Ana Banda-Wemple, prekindergarten teacher,
Dual Language Program, Delaware Community School



I've had many wonderful memories at Harriet Gibbons High School. One of my favorite memories this year was making it on the honor roll each quarter. This has been a wonderful achievement for me. The second memory of achievement is being nominated for the Sponsor-A-Scholar program. This has made me more determined to do my very best.

– Lavern Bennett, freshman,
Harriet Gibbons High School



My favorite memory is when I saw the play "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters" at Proctor's Theater. It was outstanding. I wasn't sure if the actors were African, but I knew they could dance. I wish I could dance like them. They had beautiful and distinct costumes. I knew they were part of their culture. People were carrying bowls on their heads and I thought this must also be part of their culture. I would like to thank Mr. (Charles) Touhey for giving me the opportunity to see "Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters." I will never forget this memory!

– Etiea Cherry, third grade,
Sheridan Preparatory Academy



I didn't know what I was getting myself into. Switching to a new school in eighth grade isn't easy, but it's not impossible. Within a few weeks, if not days, I didn't feel like an outsider anymore. I liked my teachers and staff. I finally had the right locker combination. I stopped walking into the wrong Spanish classroom. And I was meeting new friends. Looking back, I can pick out specific memories of this year that stand out in my mind, but my favorite memory is the year as a whole. I'm still me, but so much has changed. School gained a certain brilliance, nothing short of magic. This is eighth grade. This is Myers.

– June Criscione, eighth grade,
Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School



I have the pleasure of saying that quite a lot of events occurred this year that I'd never envisaged happening to someone like myself. I would like to highlight meeting Dayoung, a South Korean transfer student I met at beginning of the school year during a fire drill. She was the first transfer student I'd met at Albany High. "Over time one will learn from the days' past events," my grandmother would say, and from these past events I've learned more of a culture in which I take part, a skill that I've been blessed with, and the biggest thing of all ... "no matter where you're from, no matter who we are," we all have something in common. I find that my South Korean friend has taught me a lot.

– Darian Henry, sophomore,
Albany High School



My friend Olivia and I had to make a math comic strip for Ms. (Susan) Paultre's class. We made a really funny one called "El Diablo the Fighting Chicken." It was about a chicken superhero that fights improper fractions. I got to hang out with Olivia, it was fun to draw the comic strip and it looked cool when we were done with it.

– Molly Ketterer, sixth grade,
William S. Hackett Middle School



My favorite memory was the first day of school. The reason I picked this event is to recognize my two teachers that made this room feel like my home. They let me know that giving up will not make you succeed in the future. They focused on the importance of other children. They always made sure when I felt like falling off the rope to remember to balance myself. Another reason why I picked the first day of school is because I wasn't so sure about doing good until Mr. (Jerry) Carafello and Mrs. (Roni) Basle changed my life. Now it's 2009 and they have made me a stronger and happier sixth-grade girl. Without them I would not be the positive person I am now!

– Anisa Wise, sixth grade,
Albany School of Humanities (ASH)



While it would be hard to identify any single moment from the school year as "most memorable," it was exciting to hear a couple of seniors talk about majoring in accounting next year. To think that an introductory high school class could have that kind of influence is pretty amazing.

– Chris Brown, business teacher,
Albany High School

At a Glance: Philip J. Schuyler Achievement Academy

Constructed in 2003-04 as one of the first projects in the City School District of Albany's current facilities plan for elementary and middle schools, Schuyler Achievement Academy is a modern, award-winning three-story facility that serves students from prekindergarten through grade 5. The renovated and expanded building is a blend of the school most recently known as Opportunity School 21 and a new structure added on to enlarge the school.

Students: 308 | Teachers: 35 | Total employees: 48

Points of distinction:

- Voluntary school uniform program initiated by parents
- Full-service school model
- YMCA Extended Day Program

Partnerships:

- Albany Medical Center
- Berkshire Ballet
- Charles Touhey Foundation
- Donors Choose
- Healthy Capital District Initiative
- National Urban Alliance for Effective Education
- Parsons Child and Family Center
- Police Athletic League (PAL)
- Ronald McDonald House
- St. Peter's Hospital
- Teachers College, Columbia University
- United Way Family Support Network
- Whitney M. Young Jr. Health Services
- YMCA

What makes our school special?

Schuyler Achievement Academy's mission is to create a positive, child-centered learning environment that sets high standards for the academic and social success of all children. By working together with families, community and other educators to foster a nurturing and enriching atmosphere, we will encourage students as they become life-long learners and involved, respectful and responsible citizens. The school's full-service model addresses students' academic needs and provides a range of health and wellness services. Parents are actively involved, and developed the school's voluntary uniform program. Growth and Progress (GAP) Wednesdays provide weekly enrichment activities, and the YMCA Extended Day Program provides homework help and other programs after school. A rich music program includes band, orchestra and choral music. English-language learners receive extra classroom support. The school also offers a spacious Media Center and computer room.

Did you know?

The Historic Albany Foundation recognized Schuyler Achievement Academy in 2005 with a Preservation Merit Award, citing the combination of the rehabilitation of School 21, originally built in 1875, and the sensitive new construction.

Students achieve strong gains in math, ELA



Albany students continued making strong achievement gains district-wide in 2008-09.

Every City School District of Albany elementary and middle school exceeded its New York state benchmarks in math and English language arts this year as students across the district continued making significant academic gains.

Over the past two years, 40 percent more students in

grades 3-8 have achieved Level 3 or Level 4 in math, and 42 percent more have achieved the two highest levels in ELA.

The 2009 state math results released in June showed that 67 percent of the district's students scored Level 3 or Level 4, up from 58 percent in 2008. ELA results released in May showed that 61 percent achieved proficiency, up from 49 percent in 2008.

"Our students' climbing success rates are continued evidence of the dedication and commitment our students, teachers, staff and families make each and every day," said Superintendent Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D., noting a range of programs and services contributing to the achievement gains.

These include strong early childhood programs; strong, consistent professional development for teachers such as the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education and Columbia University Teachers College; and a focused effort on data-driven instruction and student assessment.

Albany Fund supports student opportunities



Stars of the Arbor Hill show include (L-R) Amir Taylor, Malik Sylvester, Emonie Taylor and Clayton Williams.

Amir Taylor is a veteran of the stage. Malik Sylvester, on the other hand, was an acting novice – until this spring!

Experience aside, the two Arbor Hill Elementary School fourth-graders held starring roles in their school play, a kid-friendly adaptation of the Disney musical "Aladdin." The production was one of a dozen district-wide projects made possible during 2008-09 with help from the Albany Fund for Education.

Amir, who played the Prince in "Cinderella," was nonchalant about his role as Aladdin.

"I wanted to get the main part again and I did," he said during a rehearsal. The lure of playing leading man aside, his main motivation for joining the cast was fun.

"Even if you mess up, you tried to act the part and that's OK," he said.

"Aladdin Junior" at Arbor Hill was a collaboration between the school and Park Playhouse Kidz. The brainchild of former Arbor Hill teacher Shirley Arensberg, Park Playhouse Kidz produced 12 plays in the district over the past three years.

In Arbor Hill's production, the role of Genie was Malik's first foray into the limelight. And if a smile could be measured in watts, Malik's easily lit up the whole school!

"This is my time to shine," he said.

The Albany Fund for Education supports the City School District of Albany with community-partnership grants like the one that helped finance the play at Arbor Hill. Visit www.thealbanyfundforeducation.org to learn more.

Awards abound for Albany High students



Saeda Thomas, Class of 2009.

National, state and local recognition accumulated quickly for Albany High School students this spring. Here are a few noteworthy achievements.

Ocasio Willson received the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholar award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Ocasio, who will attend Vassar College, is one of three recipients in upstate New York, and the only one from the Capital Region.

Saeda Thomas (The College of St. Rose) joined two dozen of her peers from across the state in April to participate in the annual Students Inside Albany Conference.

Saeda also was one of four seniors receiving scholarships from the Albany City Council PTA.

She and **Winston Trotman** (Hudson Valley Community College) received the Selena Sloan Butler Scholarship. **Leticia Forde** (SUNY Old Westbury) and **Michael Rose** (Schenectady County Community College) received the Theresa Sandidge Scholarship.

Ten students were honored in the Capital District YMCA Black and Latino Achievers program. **Angelena Rouse-McCarthy** (St. Rose) was recognized twice – as a Student Achiever, and as the recipient of a St. Rose/YMCA Achievers scholarship.

Senior **Christopher Regan** (University at Albany) is the recipient of the 2009 Ben M. Becker Memorial Scholarship, dedicated to the memory of the former Philip Schuyler High School principal and internationally renowned Olympic boxing coach.

Junior **Ashlee Adams** was inducted into The National Society of High School Scholars.

Owen Daniels, also a junior, was selected to participate in the National Federation of State High School Association's Student Leadership Conference in Indianapolis this summer.

Honors for Albany teachers



Best of the best: Albany High history teacher Tom McGurn.

The City School District of Albany has the most highly qualified teachers in the city, and two events this spring underscored that.

Three elementary teachers earned certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Montessori Magnet School third-grade teacher **Maggie Fuller**, Ed.D., North Albany Academy first-grade teacher **Betsy Nigro Cushing** and Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST) fifth-grade teacher **Betsy Tanenhaus** were among 93 teachers statewide earning the prestigious certification.

Albany High School teachers scored a clean sweep in June of the top three spots in the 2009 *Times Union* reader survey, "Best of the Capital Region."

Tom McGurn, **Chris Brown** and **Tom Healey** finished 1-2-3 in voting for "Best High School Teacher."

"Lots of students voted for many of their favorites in this contest," the newspaper wrote. "In the end, the kids from Albany High put their teachers on top, with veteran history teacher Thomas McGurn pulling into the lead by a few votes."

Capital Education receives national recognition

Capital Education, the City School District of Albany's quarterly newsletter, was one of two district entries to receive the highest level of recognition in the National School Public Relations Association's 2009 Publications and Electronic Media Contest.

The newsletter and the innovative Champions Campaign, which profiled two dozen community and district leaders at the start of the 2008-09 school year, each received an Award of Excellence.

Both entries were on display at the association's annual convention in San Francisco from June 28-July 1.

The district also received an Award of Merit for its 2008-09 district calendar, and an Award of Honorable Mention for the 2008 budget edition of *Capital Education*. The district was recognized in all four categories it entered.

Marching Falcons make New York proud

The members of the Albany Marching Falcons knew they would have the distinction of being the only band from New York state to march in President Obama's first Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C., on May 25.

When they were finished, the trip got even more special.

Following the parade, the Marching Falcons had the honor of being the only band invited to perform at the First Annual "National Call to Service Rally" at the World War II Memorial.

It was a memorable ending to a memorable trip.

"Thanks to a great group of students and fantastic chaperones, the trip was an overwhelming success, creating experiences and memories that will last a lifetime for all involved," said band director Bryan Cady.

The marching band includes about 55 students in grades 4-12.

Check us out online!

We have created an Online News Center at www.albanyschools.org to provide you as much news as possible about the great people and programs of the City School District of Albany. Visit our home page and click the Online News Center/Photo Gallery link in the right-hand column to read more about any of these stories and additional articles, including:

- A first for Albany High baseball
- Albany High blood drives save lives
- Cooking with Sue at Livingston
- Giffen, Myers students stride toward healthier lives
- Hackett students are city science champs
- Livingston student honored
- NanoHigh program advances
- Pete Porcelli takes over Albany High football
- Spring sports champs
- Supreme Court justice, Hall of Famer visits Myers
- Three elementary schools to keep sixth grade in 2009-10
- Web partnership enhances student learning

You also can check out our District News section!