

# Our Schools

WINTER 2018  
NEWSLETTER



## FEATURE ARTICLES

- Robotics Challenge
- 76 trombones? Try 207!
- What business leaders say about high school career pathways





# Robotics Challenge



In December, 47 Everett Public Schools elementary and middle school robotics

teams tested their coding skills and creativity against a cadre of other districts – vying for a chance to compete in the January semifinals at the Seattle Amazon headquarters.

After two weekends of qualifying rounds, six of the 47 earned semi-final slots:

- Cedar Wood Elementary *Robotics* and Cedar Wood *Cyborgs*
- Mill Creek Elementary *Space Tacos*
- North Middle School *Salty NERDS*
- Gateway Middle School *Aquasparks*
- Heatherwood Middle School *Robohawks*

Including the high school teams, Everett Public Schools has 50 robotics teams in its 26 schools.

STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills are vital for today's students as they get ready to enter the global workforce. In robotics, students apply STEM skills, and they learn to code. Equally as important, they practice leadership, community engagement and communication person-to-person, in groups and across different technology platforms. They find and explore their passions and develop team skills. These experiences and lessons position them to be productive and successful in school and beyond their school years.

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# Dhruvik Parik takes the TEDx stage

Jackson High senior Dhruvik Parik took to the Sno-Isle TEDx stage in November to share his theories and plans about alternatives to fossil fuels.

In his TEDx talk, Parik shared theories about “close-looped” systems where the waste of production fuels the next round of production creating self-sustaining local systems. Parik also talked about community access to clean water and energy storage in which whole communities work to develop their own collective renewable energy system. Sno-Isle Libraries organized this TEDx event, modeled after the TED conference format with which so many are familiar.



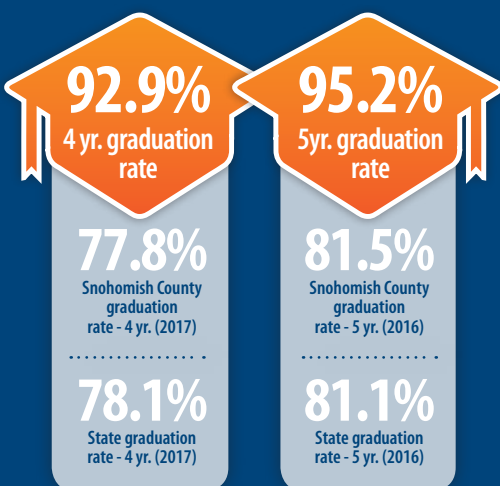
Photo credit: Sno-Isle Libraries

## WATCH HIS TEDX TALK

Visit <http://bit.ly/2Bo047w> to watch Sno-Isle Libraries' TEDx talk.

Parik is a participant in many clubs including the Technology Student Association and MIT Launch Club. He co-founded Travalot at the MIT Launch startup incubator. He developed a method of biodiesel production using winery waste and engineered a membrane for redox flow batteries for superior conductivity. He is also a student representative on the Everett Public Schools Board of Directors.

## Graduation rates continue to climb



# 76 trombones? Try 207!

From belting out “Hot Cross Buns” in sixth-grade beginning band to playing complex concertos on a mandolin in a high school, students throughout Everett Public Schools are benefitting from the district partnership with *Music4Life*. After less than a year, the nonprofit organization has helped put 207 instruments into the hands of students throughout the district to blow, strike and strum.

The Seattle-based nonprofit acquires instruments from adults who no longer need them, repairs them as needed, and provides them to participating public school districts for use by students in need. *Music4Life* acquires used instruments from those who understand their highest and best use is to put them back into play. They pay for instrument repairs with the help of donations to ensure all instruments are ready to play when they deliver them to schools.

Instruments donated to the district so far have included the to-be-expected clarinets, trumpets and keyboards. Occasionally, the donations include more distinctive instruments, like oboes, bassoons and even a mandolin. “The variety of instruments increases the chance for students to get their first pick of which instrument they’d like to play,” shares Emily Cheever, music

teacher at North Middle School. “That’s an important part of students enjoying and continuing their music education.”

Lesley Moffat, Jackson High School director of bands, jazz, and percussion, wrote to *Music4Life* in June. “I wish you could have been here to see this young girl’s face when I told her she will be able to be in band next year. There are no words to describe the look on her face as tears of joy ran down her cheeks upon realizing what this meant for her. Your hearts would have been full of joy if you knew just how important this is to her. And the added bonus of what you are doing is that it doesn’t stop with her ... this instrument will serve many students over the course of its lifetime. The extent of your generosity goes way beyond what you will ever know.”

## Partnership with *Music4Life* puts instruments in the hands of students.

Have an instrument to pass along to a new generation of Everett Public Schools musicians? Instruments can be dropped off at any Kennelly Keys location. Monetary donations are accepted on the *Music4Life* website with the option to designate one’s donation for Everett Public Schools’ music program.



North Middle School beginning band students practice, several with instruments donated through *Music4Life*



## Perfect proximity

Vast potential for children, her hospital and the community is what Providence Health and Services NW Washington Chief Executive Officer Kim Williams (who is also a registered nurse) sees in the vocational/STEM education lab proposed for Everett High School.

“It’s pretty brilliant,” she says of this lab’s focus on medical and health careers. She “loves the adjacency” between Providence Hospital’s Colby campus, Everett Community College’s successful programs, Washington State University and this new Everett High lab proposal. “There is such a wide array of (health care) positions,” Williams said.

With the aging of Americans, **medical and health careers** are exploding with potential. It is expected the number of careers in this field will almost triple by 2020.



*“We are all going to need health care at some time. We want to be sure there are people prepared to care for us.”*

“We are all going to need health care at some time. We want to be sure there are people prepared to care for us,” Williams said. Despite always knowing she wanted to be a nurse, she wishes she could have started gaining experience in high school. “This opportunity to explore is truly a gift for the students and our community,” she observed. Williams cites a current challenge in filling entry-level positions that could be good matches for students with a bit of training learned in the Everett High program.

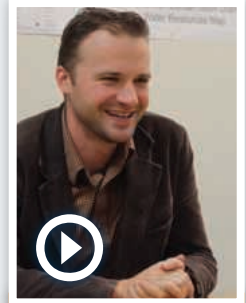


**Kim Williams**  
CEO Northwest Washington for  
Providence Health and Services

## Arc de triumph

Experiencing the ups and downs of success is one of the many learning benefits of the vocational/STEM education spaces proposed in district high schools, in the mind of Snohomish Conservation District Design Engineer Derek Hann.

“Partnering to accomplish a task and seeing that task through its successes and failures is what working in the real world is all about,” Hann explained. Making those “good” mistakes (not the life-altering ones, but the ones teaching persistence and collaboration) he believes will better prepare youth for life after school.



**Derek Hann**  
P.E., Civil Engineer, Snohomish  
Conservation District



*Energy and sustainability is an ideal pathway for personal and measurable impact.*

Hann described his school experience as more learning the “what” such as historical dates or scientific facts than exploring the impacts of those dates and facts. “When I explored the “why,” learning began to have meaning, and I developed passion for the topic,” he explained. “Kids need to feel it personally.”

**Energy and sustainability** is an ideal pathway for personal and measurable impact. It is the focus of a program planned for high school no. 4. The world is growing more crowded every day, stretching traditional resources. From forestry to transportation, there is great potential for careers to look beyond the “what” and investigate the “why” to increase efficiency and do more with less. Understanding the “why” often leads to answers enhancing lives as well as helping students find personally (and financially) satisfying careers.

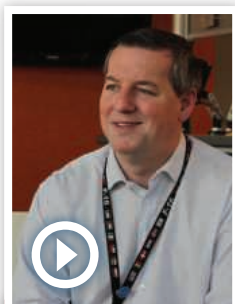
*“We have to stop telling our kids that a four-year degree is the only way to start their paths to success. Through registered apprenticeships, technical training programs and other career connected learning opportunities, we’ll give students all kinds of ways to fulfill their dreams of helping build airplanes, cure diseases or design innovative new software.”*

– Gov. Jay Inslee



# Sorry, Hal, no robotic takeover

Yes, manufacturing is becoming more automated says Andy Buchan, vice president for strategic development at Esterline Control and Communications. But the industry is far from eliminating humans. In fact, there is a shortage of skilled manufacturing workers. "To keep those robots or machines at 100 percent will always require humans."



**Andy Buchan**  
VP, Strategic Dev. - Esterline  
Control & Comm. Systems

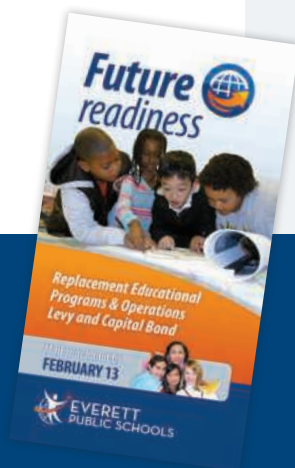
He is hopeful the proposed STEM/vocational lab at Cascade High School will help add skilled workers so necessary to our region's success. As home to the largest cluster of aviation technical jobs in the world, Everett's employment rate in this field is 43 times the national average. The **aviation technical focus** proposed for Cascade encompasses **advanced materials manufacturing** like 3-D printing, computer sciences and, of course, robotics.



*"To keep those robots or machines at 100 percent will always require humans."*

There are many roads to a career. "I encourage parents to think about the benefits of a vocational or degreed educational path for their sons and daughters," Buchan said. Vocational paths often come without the burden of as much debt as earning a college degree.

Sitting in the company that longtime Everett aviation leader Boris Korry started in the 1930s, Buchan is assured there will be manufacturing jobs in the future. Those jobs will likely look different just like those skills looked different in Mr. Korry's time but, without a doubt, humans will still be needed.

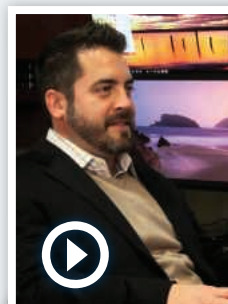


## WATCH YOUR MAILBOX

Replacement EP&O Levy and Capital Bond mailer arriving soon!

# Wish I had known ...

"I am that kid," said Grant Eckstrom, owner of Emerald City Solutions, a thriving local cybersecurity and technology support enterprise, of his difficulty finding his career path.



**Grant Eckstrom**  
Owner of Emerald  
City Solutions

He sees the proposed STEM/vocational labs planned for all of Everett's high schools as great opportunities for today's students to find what excites them and aid in making a more direct connection between their interests and their future. "There are a lot of things high school students have available to them now they just don't know about," he said. A future he hopes keeps them close to home where his company and others are struggling to find skilled workers.



*"There are a lot of things high school students have available to them now they just don't know about."*

Eckstrom is looking forward to the **information and communication technology program** proposed at Jackson High to build strong partnerships with businesses like his. The proposed lab will offer opportunities to explore interests and hands-on experience in a variety of careers such as software publishing, big data analytics and cloud technology. In this fast changing field, some careers are likely not yet envisioned.

He stresses the need for local talent to attract new employers to increase the economic prosperity and diversity of the region. As a fourth generation Everett High grad, he sees productive and profitable career prospects for upcoming high school graduates.

## WATCH THE INTERVIEWS ONLINE



Visit [www.everettsd.org](http://www.everettsd.org) to watch the full business leader interviews!

# Garfield Elementary 2017 School of Distinction

Classrooms are busy places at Garfield Elementary School. When they are not filled with children reading aloud, building with colored blocks, or writing, they are buzzing with teachers meeting to support struggling students.

More than seven out of 10 Garfield students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Nearly 20 percent speak a language other than English, and over 20 percent qualify for special education.

So when those in the school learned they were one of 98 schools in the state to earn a 2017 School of Distinction award, it was big news.

So what does it mean to be a Washington State School of Distinction? It means for the last five consecutive years, students have continued to improve in their math and language arts skills. Garfield has earned this award three years in a row! It also means Garfield is in the state's top-performing five percent of state elementary schools. Only 96 schools in the state are Schools of Distinction this year.

In a message to Principal Monique Beane Superintendent Cohn wrote, "Congratulations to you and the entire Garfield team for what you are doing to increase your students' life opportunities by building their academic skills and learning capabilities."

Beane cited Helen Keller's quote, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

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*Garfield Elementary  
School is a state School  
of Distinction for the  
third year in a row.*

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Garfield isn't a stranger to recognition for their academic success. Earlier in 2017, Garfield earned a National Title I, Part A Academic Achievement Award from Office of Superintendent Public Instruction (OSPI).

The Center for Educational Effectiveness (CEE) is the organization that tracks state school achievement trends and is among those groups that give the School of Distinction awards.

## State's top school psychologist

School psychologist, Robin Arnold, Ed.S., NCSP, is the 2017 Washington School Psychologist of the Year!

The Washington State Association for School Psychologists selected Arnold for her professional excellence and her high ethical standards, effective interpersonal skills, and dedication to improving conditions for children, families, schools, and communities. Ms. Arnold is a school psychology department lead, and supports Lowell and Forest View elementary schools.



## What's a community truancy board, and why do they matter?

Attending school is the first step toward succeeding in school. Truancy boards include community volunteers and school staff. When a student misses 10 or more days of school, a truancy board works with families on ways to boost student attendance.



You could be a truancy board volunteer. To learn more, call Erin Wilson, Success Coordinator, 425-385-4075 or email [ewilson@everettsd.org](mailto:ewilson@everettsd.org).





# Stanford shows district is accelerating students' learning

In a Stanford University study of about 300 million elementary and middle school test scores across more than 11,000 school districts nationwide, Everett Public Schools scores in the 96th percentile for academic learning gains. According to this study, the district is closing the gap by accelerating students' learning.

*Elementary and middle school students in Everett Public Schools increase their learning more quickly than most similarly-sized school districts.*

Our students make 5.9 years of academic growth in five years. The article looked at socio-economic data along with test scores from grades three through eight in 2009 through 2015. Elementary and middle school students in Everett Public Schools increase their learning more quickly than most similarly-sized school districts, including some with higher median incomes.



**Stanford**  
University

**Read more online:**

<http://stanford.io/2j33PEz>

## Staff hero saves choking student

Eisenhower Middle School's head custodian, Chris Hughes, performed the Heimlich maneuver on a student during lunch. Doing so, he dislodged food and opened the student's airway.

Not only is Hughes a hero, he's a humble hero! He made sure the student who alerted him, was recognized as a hero, too, for her speedy actions.

This is the second time Hughes has intervened when a student was choking.



8th Annual  
AP<sup>®</sup> District  
Honor Roll  
Recipient

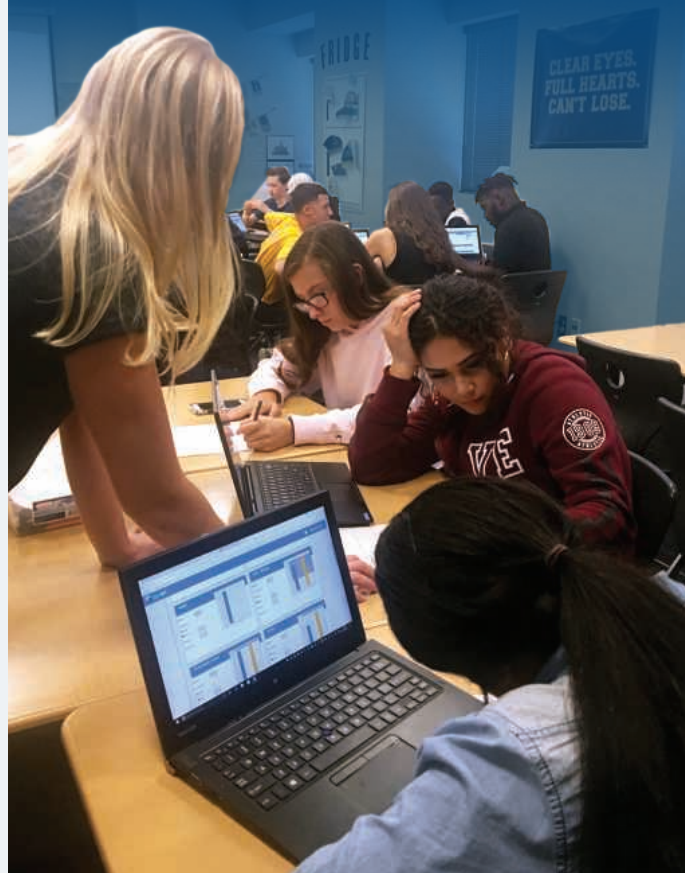


## AP Honor Roll

For eight years, the College Board has recognized school districts which increase the number of students taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes and the number of students earning a "3" or higher on AP exams.

Everett Public Schools earned that honor in 2011 and has done so again this year – one of only 447 school districts in the U.S. and Canada to be placed on the 8th Annual AP<sup>®</sup> District Honor Roll. Among Washington state's 295 school districts, only eight are on the 8th Annual AP<sup>®</sup> District Honor Roll.

According to the College Board announcement of the award, earning a place on the Honor Roll, "... shows this district is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for AP."





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**Board of Directors:** (back row) Carol Andrews, Ted Wenta,  
(front row) Traci Mitchell, Pam LeSesne, Caroline Mason

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Caroline Mason
- Carol Andrews
- Traci Mitchell
- Pam LeSesne
- Ted Wenta

## SUPERINTENDENT

- Dr. Gary Cohn

### Designated to handle inquiries about nondiscrimination policies are:

**Affirmative Action Office**  
Carol Stolz, cstolz@everettsd.org  
425-385-4106

**Title IX Officer**  
Randi Seaberg, rseaberg@everettsd.org  
425-385-4104

**504 Coordinator**  
Becky Ballbach, rballbach@everettsd.org  
425-385-4063

**ADA Coordinator**  
Becky Clifford, rclifford@everettsd.org  
425-385-5250

The district shall provide equal educational opportunity and treatment for all students in all aspects of the academic and activities program without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, veteran or military status, the presence of any physical, sensory or mental disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a student with a disability.

## Special Services Department earns highest rating

Each fall, special education departments in districts around the state await an official notice with an equally official name – the Annual Determination letter.

The notice is a report of how well the district has met the requirements of federal



Although highly anticipated by the district and its special education staff, the Annual Determination letter might seem mundane to others. Like other official, governmental audit-type documents, it announces the highest rating with a simple “meets requirements” statement and a list of the possible ratings, “4” (lowest) to “1” (highest).

“Others who read the letter might not pick up from its official language what this means to our students and community,” noted Special Services Executive Director Becky Clifford. “This letter reflects the quality of our special education programs

*Annual review of district programs and  
compliance results in highest rating possible.*

law for special education students, IDEA 2004 Part B. Specified in the law are the ways public schools are to serve special education students from age three to 21.

To earn a rating of ‘1,’ a district must meet the high standards outlined in 18 different performance indicators. Graduation rate is just one example of a required performance indicator. Out of those 18 performance indicators, five address legal compliance. What students do after graduation is also tracked and counts as a measurement of district compliance.

and services available to all students with special education needs. It’s a team effort, and I am very proud of our staff, students and families.” The new rating reflects a long-time continuation of quality because the district has earned this ‘1’ rating seven out of the last eight years.

A mother of a recent graduate said, “The school and district offered everything he needed to be successful.” She rated the pre-vocational and occupational learning opportunities by the district as “excellent, five stars.”

*Our mission is to inspire, educate, and prepare each student to achieve to high standards, contribute to our community, and thrive in a global society.*