

# OLD COLONY

REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL  
On the Web at [www.oldcolony.us](http://www.oldcolony.us)



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Newsletter for Parents and the Community

2008-2009 Volume I

## Year of Best Practices

The Curriculum and Assessment Committee, a group consisting of administrators and faculty members, has launched the "Year of Best Practices." Throughout the year, teachers will be involved in half-day in-services designed to improve teaching, and thus student performance.

The program was launched in September with a workshop for teachers which focused on Open Response prompts. The Open Response prompt is one component of the MCAS tests. English teachers, Gina Despres and Toni Weeden, presented how to create a question, how the MCAS Open Response prompt is scored, and how teachers can aid students in writing Open Response answers. Students now practice answering Open Response prompts each cycle in all their academic classes and related classes.

A second in-service program in October focused on Assessment. Deborah Herrmann (English teacher) and Heather Darcy (history teacher) demonstrated the advantages and disadvantages of using various assessment (testing) tools. In addition, the faculty was instructed in how to write valid and useful tests.

Under the direction of Jackie Machamer, a Technology in-service was organized for November. Each faculty member chose two topics related to using technology in the classroom. One more Technology in-service is planned for later this year.

The December program on Discipline was presented by an Old Colony adjustment counselor, Sharon LaCroix.

Other topics planned for this year include: Motivation, Time Management, and Students with Special Needs.

## Get Involved with SkillsUSA

SkillsUSA serves more than 240,000 high school students, college students, and professional members associated with technical training programs.

SkillsUSA provides quality educational experiences for student in leadership, teamwork, citizenship, and character development. It builds and reinforces self-confidence, work attitudes, and communication skills. SkillsUSA emphasizes total quality of work, high ethical standards, superior work skills, life-long education, and pride in the dignity of work. In addition, the organization promotes understanding of the free enterprise system and involvement in community service activities.

Students have the opportunity to compete in two categories: shop and leadership events. Students who compete in their trades take written and practical tests to demonstrate their skills. They begin with competitions at school. Those winners participate at the district level. Gold and silver winners advance to the state competition. Students winning gold medals at the state level earn the right to compete nationally. Some trades even have international competitions

The leadership competitions are held school-wide. Students who win the school competition go directly to compete at the state level. Those who win gold medals advance to the national competition. Completions in this category include: Impromptu Speaking, Job Skill Demonstration, Knowledge Bowl, Bulletin Board, Open and Closing Meeting, Prepared Speech, and Chapter Business (a mock business meeting).

Students are recognized and rewarded by receiving scholarships, tools of the specific trade, and other awards. All students who are members of SkillsUSA can receive scholarships from various technical institutes and colleges.

For more information on this outstanding organization, visit the school web site or contact Old Colony's SkillsUSA advisors, Steve Miranda and John Mare.

## Old Colony receives continued accreditation from NEASC

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) recently notified Old Colony that the school has earned continued accreditation. In voting for the continued designation and "assuring the public about the quality of a particular institution and entering into a partnership for its self-improvement," NEASC's Commission on Technical and Career Institutions commended Old Colony for consistently high academic and technical achievement, a high daily attendance rate and low drop-out rate, a new teacher mentoring program, a well-maintained building and campus, numerous articulation agreements with community colleges and technical schools, and an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation by staff and students.

## National Honor Society wins 9th Outstanding Service Project Award

The Old Colony RVTHS Chapter of the **National Honor Society** was awarded a national Outstanding Service Project Award as part of the National Honor Society Conference held in Orlando, FL, on November 7-9, 2008. Twenty-four students represented Old Colony at the sixteenth annual conference.

This is the ninth time and sixth year in a row that Old Colony has received a national Outstanding Service Project Award. This year's award was received for the community service project "*Button, Button, Who's Got the Button?*" This project involved creating button brooches with senior citizens and members of a convalescent home.

### Old Colony seeks evening school instructors

The Old Colony Administration is interested in offering selected adult education evening programs beginning in January 2009. Program topics could include Quilting for Beginners, Oil Painting, QuickBooks, Guitar Lessons, Cake Decorating, Woodworking for Beginners, eBay for Beginners, Microsoft Excel or PowerPoint, or any other interesting subject. We are open to ideas! Some evening programs running at other schools are as short as 2.5 hours for one session, or as long as 18 hours for six sessions. If you are interested in running an evening program, please call Old Colony at 508-763-8011 and speak with Mr. Gary Brown (ext. 116) or Mrs. Rita Bretto (ext. 119).

## Around the Colony

\* The **SkillsUSA Chapter** at Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School recently completed its annual election. Elected to serve as officers of the organization for the 2008-2009 school year were:

- President: **Danielle Mahoney** (Carver)
- Vice-President: **Ashley Lochard** (Freetown)
- Secretary: **Brandy Beard** (Carver)
- Treasurer: **Melanie Cole** (Carver)
- Historian: - **Melissa Viera** (Acushnet)
- Reporter: **Jaliesa Andrde** (Rochester)
- Parliamentarian: - **Alex Tironati** (Freetown)
- Ambassador: **Drew Bartlett** (Lakeville)
- Ambassador: **Joseph Beadsworth** (Carver)
- Ambassador: **Eli Reznekervitz** (E. Freetown)

\* Thirteen **Health Careers** seniors attended a Dysphagia In-Service Training at Shriver Habilitative Services in Lakeville, MA, on Sept. 5, 2008. The training covered swallowing disorders, dysphagia signs/symptoms, and related problems & consequences. Guidelines on special diets and food preparation were also covered.

\* The Old Colony administration is pleased to announce the slate of officers leading the school's **Student Council** for 2008-2009. The Old Colony Student Council, led by advisor **David Harrison**, is affiliated with the Massachusetts Association of Student Councils. This year's Student Council officers are:

- President: **Courtney Freire** (Acushnet)
- Vice-Pres: **Chenice Branquinho** (Freetown)
- Treasurer: **Kelly Fenton** (Carver)
- Secretary: **Angela DaCosta** (Carver)

\* Thirty students from the **Computer Information Technology Department** recently attended a Technology Careers Day at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The CIT students learned about exciting careers in cutting-edge technologies by participating in workshops and listening to speakers from industry and education.

\* Old Colony senior **Nicholas Abaray** recently began his term as the student member of the **District School Committee**. An Acushnet resident, Nicholas was elected as Chairperson of the Student Advisory Committee to the School Committee. The chairperson also serves as an ex-officio member of the District School Committee.

\* **Al Caron** and **Jon Marland**, union welders from Local 51 United Association of Plumbers Pipefitters and Refrigeration (East Providence, RI) presented an all-day demonstration of Pipe Welding to the junior class in the school's **Metal Fabrication & Joining Technologies Department** on Nov. 20, 2008. The professional union welders also demonstrated SMAW and GTAW techniques.

\* Old Colony's Athletic Department and talented student-athletes have every reason to proud, as three of the our teams enjoyed very successful seasons this fall.

The **Golf Team** had another outstanding season with a record of 17-1 and winning the Mayflower League Championship, winning the Massachusetts Vocational Tournament Championship, and qualifying for the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Tournament. The Golf Team is coached by **John Abaray**.

The **Volleyball Team** had one of their best seasons, as the Lady Cougars finished at 18-2 and won the Mayflower League (Small) Championship, made it to the third round of the MIAA Tournament, and qualified for the Massachusetts Vocational Tournament. Coach **Dawn Robert** was named Mayflower Volleyball Coach of the Year, and **Nicole Morrisseau** (Acushnet) was named Mayflower Volleyball Player of the Year.

The **Boys' Soccer Team** also had another excellent season, finishing at 12-4-2 and qualifying for the MIAA Tournament and the Massachusetts Vocational Tournament. The Cougars are coached by Mary Anne Walker.

Led by Athletic Director **Matthew Trahan**, Old Colony also won the Mayflower League Sportsmanship Award (2007-2008) and the MIAA District D Sportsmanship Award (2008).