

# The Pontiac News

A NEWS SOURCE WITH A LOCAL FLAVOR

VOL. 1 ISSUE 14



Loretta Coleman, Gloria Spann and Congressman Peters in Washington D.C.

## Pontiac School District Success Model



Damon Dorkins

The Pontiac School District under the leadership of Board President Damon Dorkins and interim Superintendent Dr. Linda Paramore unveils an aggressive program to restructure and right-size the district. This plan involves the closing of several district schools and the consolidation of the two high schools into one high school with a 9th Grade Academy. (Details on Page 3)



Dr. Linda Paramore

## Hey Pontiac

Let's Continue the Great Pontiac Tradition and get Behind the School District's Positive Efforts!

**Pontiac High**



1849 - 1958  
Chiefs

**Pontiac Northern**



1958 - 2009  
Huskies

**Pontiac Central**



1958 - 2009  
Chiefs

**New Pontiac High**



2009 -  
Phoenix

### Support the Pontiac Promise Zone Scholarship Fund

The POH Riley Foundation Board of Trustees, supporters and friends invite you to come aboard and join us in our efforts to support the Pontiac School District. On Saturday, July 25, 2009 from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m., the Foundation will host a special "Cruising for Education" charity event to support the Pontiac Promise Zone Scholarship Fund. The four-hour dinner cruise will be held aboard the spectacular 138-foot Ovation Yacht in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. This special event will allow corporations, foundations, organizations and key leaders an opportunity to come together to support this worthy cause.

**For information contact:**  
Teresa Rodges at  
(248) 338-5310.

## Pontiac Enrichment Academy

Exciting, Fun filled Summer Programs in Pontiac Schools!

June 22 July 31, 2009 - Enroll Now - See Details on Back Cover

## Turnaround Plan Targets Failing Schools

National expert testifies in support of proposed school turnaround plan

LANSING - The House Education Committee recently held a special hearing to discuss a turnaround plan introduced by State Representative Tim Melton (D-Pontiac) that will improve Michigan's failing schools by creating new standards and restructuring options. A national expert on school recovery plans testified at the hearing.



Melton

"By not having a game plan to turnaround our failing schools, we are damaging our children's ability to reach their full potential," said Melton, Chair of the House Education Committee. "These same kids that make up the next generation of our communities need strong schools to succeed in a world growing more competitive every day. The status quo is not working in our schools and we all have an obligation to our children that goes beyond mere cosmetic changes."

Last month, Melton introduced a plan to help students in failing school districts. The

legislation creates a Reform Officer to design and implement a turnaround plan for failing schools. The Reform Officer will be solely responsible for the review and implementation of a restructuring strategy for a school placed under his or her control, and has the power to assume direct operation of a school. The Reform Officer has the authority to evaluate staff and implement new building policies. The plan also allows for a high-performance charter school to locate within five miles of a school that is considered a failure.

Paul Vallas, current superintendent of the

Recovery School District of New Orleans, was on hand to give testimony at a recent hearing. Vallas, who turned around the Chicago and Philadelphia public school districts, spoke in support of Melton's reform plan.

"Our children deserve better from our state, from our schools, from us," said State Representative Bert Johnson (D-Detroit). "Our state can't afford to continue short-changing our children by sending them to subpar schools. I urge my colleagues to quickly pass this plan to give our children every chance to succeed."

**Robert Sy Green Village Golf Outing - Saturday June 13, 2009 @ Pontiac Municipal Golf Course - Hosted by Hall of Famer Lem Barney - Registration 7 am - Tee Time 8am - For information contact Ken E. Corr @ 248-892-8327**

# Pontiac School District: Suggested Programs To Help District Improve!

## An Open Letter To the Pontiac Board of Education Trustees

**From: Frank Russell - a Product, Friend, Supporter and Voter!**

Over the past 35+ years this writer has spent countless hours researching, planning, developing and implementing programs and activities to help resolve the many problems facing young people in the City of Pontiac and other urban communities across America. During this time period I have come to the realization that the single biggest negative impact on the development of our children is the mis-education that they receive in our public schools, not only in Pontiac, but across this potentially great nation of ours, particularly in urban communities.

To counter this mis-education that is prevalent in our public schools we (The Youth Development Institute, New Pontiac, Inc., The Pontiac News and The Campy Russell Community Foundation) have developed the Urban School District Improvement Project (USDIP) a comprehensive five component strategy to help mitigate (solve) this most critical problem. Aspects of this program has been

used by our various organizations over the past 35+ years to assist hundreds of young men and women in their quest to become productive citizens, in spite of the mis-education that they have received in our school system.

Over the past 2 years we have made presentations to the board and/or board members and have had several meetings with members or representatives of the school administration during which we have offered our assistance and support in addressing the grave and severe problems of lack of student achievement, parental involvement and educators inability to properly motivate, stimulate, educate and cultivate our children. We have also conducted a community survey and garnered community support for this effort by getting hundreds of concerned citizens to sign petitions requesting that you give serious consideration to our proposals.

The reaction that we have received from our elected board members has not been appropriate; in fact, it has been unbelievably crude, nasty and inappropriate. We have been asked to leave public meetings, ignored, lied on, investigated, and accused of trying to bully the board.

Ladies and gentleman of our elected Board of Education.... We are not the enemy! The enemy is the lack of student achievement, lack

of parental involvement and teacher disconnect. The enemy is the ongoing mis-education of our children, and the continuation of a system that has fallen to the level of being a feeder program for the penal and welfare system. The enemy is the individuals who come into this community and cause you to turn on your neighbors, family, friends and customers.

As I stated during my presentation before the board back in May, I am a friend and supporter of this district who simply want to provide help where help is clearly needed! On behalf of the community including my five grandchildren and hundreds of relatives, friends and concerned citizens, I ask that you direct your paid administrators to give serious consideration to our proposals. What we are proposing is not being done in the district and is very much needed right now!

Yes, the cost of this proposal is around 1 million dollars, which on the surface appears to be a large sum of money. However, as you know based on our detailed cost breakdown, the real price is under \$225 dollars per family, based on 4,000 families being served by this most important program. As you are also aware our request is for Title I (At-Risk) funds that will go back to the funding source if not spent timely! (Last year between 2 and 3 million of these funds were not spent timely, in fact over the past several years over 10 million of these Title I dollars have had to be reallocated) Also for the record this price is a drop in the bucket when you consider that you receive between \$8,000 to \$10,000 dollars per student from the various funding sources. In spite of what you have been told and/or believe, they do not know how to address the serious problems that this district is facing, we need to work together to solve this grave crisis. We believe

that our USDIP initiative (if properly implemented) provides solutions to a very manageable problem. We have listed on this page the outline of this project for you and the community to review. Again!



**Publisher  
R. Frank  
Russell**

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## The Pontiac News

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## Urban School District Improvement Project (USDIP)

### Summary of Program Components

#### A Comprehensive 5 Component Approach

**1. Parent Education, Training & Involvement (PETI).** To actively involve parents in the academic and social development of their children by providing the training to the parents that is needed to assist the parent to become more effective in preparing their child to succeed in school, friendships and in athletics. Provide necessary training to the parents that is designed to facilitate cooperation with and support of the school district administration and staff. The Parent Success Kit and Workshops along with other activities are utilized to accomplish goals of this aspect of project.

#### 2. Student Academic Excellence

**Initiative (SAEI).** To improve the academic achievement and social skills of specific At Risk and other students who are in need of academic and social support and training. The USDIP utilizes The Student Success Kit and Workshops along with the SYP & SC and other activities to achieve project goals.

**3. Educators Training Professional Development -At Risk Conference .** Mandatory District-wide training Conference for teachers administrators, and other instructional staff "How To Stimulate, Motivate, Educate and Cultivate - a Valuable Untapped Resource - The Young Black Male and Female and Other At-Risk Students"©. This District wide staff training initiative is designed to provide administrators, teachers, parents and other instructional staff with the knowledge needed to teach and train the students within the urban school district. This unique, timely and critical event will also serve as a forum where educators and others can devise additional methods to solve the problems encountered by this segment of the population.

**4. Summer Youth Program & Sports Clinic (SYPSC).** SYPSC is an 8-week summer youth program and sports clinic that is designed to compliment the PETI/SAEI by imparting instruction regarding sports and leisure participation to improve personal discipline, concentration, motor skills/coordination, academic skills, and organizational behavior in the minds of students who participate in interscholastic activities (Sports).

**5. Positive School & Community Public Relations and Marketing YDI** in conjunction with our community newspaper The Pontiac News, proposes to implement a comprehensive community relations and marketing program that will identify, highlight and actively publicize and report positive programs to the community that support high student achievement, parental involvement training/education and other community collaborations that will foster the renewal of the Urban School District.

### About The Pontiac News

The Pontiac News is dedicated to providing balanced news about The City of Pontiac and surrounding communities!

The Pontiac News was founded and established in February 2007 and will be published bi-weekly beginning in August 2007. As a major community and the county seat of Oakland County we believe that The City of Pontiac should have a newspaper that is dedicated to providing information and news about this great and historical city.

The Pontiac News is a community minded newspaper that will not only serve readers but also businesses and local organizations and will strive to be the paper of record for local municipal units including The City of Pontiac, and the Pontiac School District.

This bi-weekly newspaper, The Pontiac News, has been established to cover areas in our retail zone including Pontiac, Auburn Hills, Waterford, Bloomfield and other nearby communities (and other school districts).

The Pontiac News will be distributed to over 25,000 homes in The City of Pontiac and nearby communities and over 1,000 area businesses, organizations and agencies. We will eventually create a computer database for all addresses in the zip codes contained in the basic Pontiac News circulation area. A computer program will be designed to generate labels for all households and businesses in those zip codes in order to reach a total of more than 30,000 homes and businesses in our retail area by mail or by door to door delivery service.

In addition to better serving the business community with expanded circulation to cover the retail zone, The Pontiac News will have a great product for readers. We will often feature full 4 color pictures on the front page and occasionally elsewhere in the paper. We will also have the Associated Press wire for news features, local writers to augment our local news, and feature coverage. The Pontiac News web site will be launched in the near future to expand and supplement our news coverage and advertising reach.

We will continue to find better ways to serve our customers.



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# School District New High School Program

## Pontiac School Board Trustees Approve Voter Recommendations for New High School

**PONTIAC HIGH SCHOOL  
THE OLD, NEW NAME FOR  
THE NEW HIGH SCHOOL**

On April 14, 2009 Pontiac School District Board of Trustees approved an old name for the new name of the new high school to open in the fall. The Board voted 7-0 in favor of naming the new high school Pontiac High School which was the original name of the only high school in the city prior to the addition of Pontiac Northern High School. Recommendations were submitted following the student and community voting on the new name, colors and mascot. Pontiac Trustees also approved the colors and mascot that won the most votes from students and community members. The new colors are Purple, Black and Silver and the new mascot is the Phoenix.

Nearly 3,000 ballots were cast during the period of March 31st through April 8th at various venues from online to City Hall, Pontiac Library, Board Office and the three middle schools and two high schools. The other choices for names were North Central and Obama High Schools. Other choices for colors were Red, Orange, White and Blue, White, Silver while the mascots were Warriors and Panthers.

The new high school will open in September 2009 and will have four academies which include a Business, Finance and Entrepreneurial Academy, Arts and Communications Academy, Scholars Academy and a Ninth Grade Academy. Many alliances and partnerships are being refined and formed to ensure exciting, efficient curricular offerings that give students a global competitive edge which they need in today's world.

Several activities and events are being planned throughout the school year into the summer to encourage a smooth, efficient and unified transition. The students are definitely

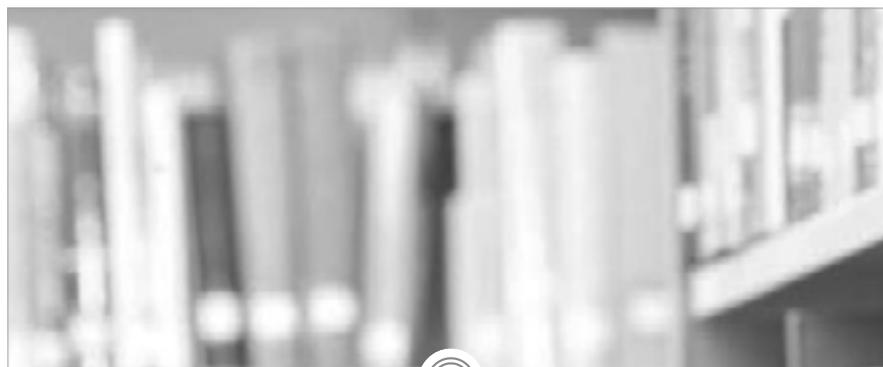
hopeful and optimistic as they forge ahead to assist in the district's future hold and understand being positive minded to work towards positive results.

### More Background:

The district is facing a \$10+million budget deficit due to various reasons which include declining enrollment and state funding. At present, there is a near 20,000 seat capacity with an enrollment of approximately 7,200 students not including preschoolers. The conclusion was that 50% of the buildings (8-9 buildings) including one high school must be closed and buildings reconfigured to create the best learning environment possible for students. The redesign of the district includes keeping the pre-school, special needs and alternative education programs. The buildings remaining open are as follows: P.E.A.C.E. Academy at Frost (Pre-school), Kennedy Center (Special Needs), Jefferson Middle School (which will become kindergarten through 6th grade), Alcott Elementary (K-6), Herrington Elementary (K-6), Owen Elementary (K-6), Rogers Elementary (K-6), Whitman Elementary (K-6), Whitmer Human Resource Center (WHRC) (Pre-K-6), Madison Middle School (grades 7 - 8) and Pontiac Northern High School which will become Pontiac High School.

The Advisory Committee, after several months of research and meetings since October 2008, submitted a plan with three options that would reconfigure grade levels as well as close some buildings. The Board of Trustees voted on Monday, January 26, 2009 to close the following schools: Crofoot, Emerson, Franklin, LeBaron, Longfellow Elementary Schools, Lincoln Middle School, Bethune and Pontiac Central High School.

Anyone willing to volunteer to become a part of the transition process can call the Redesign Hotline at 248-451-7025.



### LEARN MORE

Every child is unique. Doesn't your child deserve a unique high school experience? There's much more to learn about these exciting new opportunities for your high school age child! Please contact us at 248.451.7025 or visit our website at [www.pontiac.k12.mi.us](http://www.pontiac.k12.mi.us).

The School District of the City of Pontiac is committed to creating an instructional learning environment where small learning communities provide opportunities for learners to develop proficient skills in preparation for educational and occupational post-secondary experiences.

### 2008-2009 BOARD OF EDUCATION

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### WE'RE NOT JUST COMBINING TWO HIGH SCHOOLS INTO ONE. WE'RE RETHINKING THE WAY PONTIAC DOES HIGH SCHOOL STARTING FALL 2009!

Every student in Pontiac will soon have the opportunity to attend a completely reinvented secondary program when the doors to the new high school open in September 2009. All students will study in small learning communities led by teams of teachers where they will all take coursework to satisfy Michigan's rigorous high school graduation requirements.

But this is "high school" with a difference. The new high school is structured to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> Century students. The school will house four academies:

1. 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Academy
2. Business, Finance and Entrepreneurship Academy (grades 10-12)
3. Art & Communications Academy (grades 10-12)
4. Professional Pathways Academy (grades 10-12)

#### 1

### 9TH GRADE ACADEMY

In addition to the Core Curriculum, students will participate in courses tailored to meet their needs:

- **Freshman Seminar** – a semester-long course, concentrating on social, behavioral and study skills, which introduces students to high school requirements and expectations.
- **Introduction to Careers** – an introduction to the six Career Pathways and opportunities to interact with professionals in a variety of careers. This course will help freshmen select the most appropriate academy for their sophomore through senior years of high school.
- **Elective** – freshmen will select an elective course of their choice.

#### 2

### BUSINESS, FINANCE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP ACADEMY

Within this Academy, students may select one of three program options:

- Business & Finance
- Entrepreneurship
- Legal

This Academy's goal is to enhance basic skills, meet Michigan Merit Curriculum requirements, and provide opportunities for students to receive industry-recognized certification in preparation for careers or further study. Job placement opportunities, college credit and co-op positions will be offered to students in this Academy. Students will be able to explore career opportunities in finance and accounting, marketing and public safety.

#### 3

### ART AND COMMUNICATIONS ACADEMY

This is the place for students interested in designing, producing, exhibiting, performing, writing, and publishing multimedia content including visual, performing and design arts, journalism and entertainment services.

This Academy provides three program options:

- Radio & Television/Film
- Graphics & Printing Technology and Communications
- Visual Communications Technology/ Animation

Graduates of this Academy will be prepared to enter the exciting new Michigan film industry, produce videos and invitations, and more. Job placement opportunities and college credit will be offered.

#### 4

### PROFESSIONAL PATHWAYS ACADEMY

This Academy is designed to provide additional career exploration options while the district designs other academies.

Program options include:

- Culinary Arts
- Cosmetology
- Construction Trades
- Engineering (EET)
- Health Sciences
- Transportation

— What's Happening In Pontiac —

# City of Pontiac Blog

TPN has decided to publish the information presented by Mr Leeb the Emergency Financial Manager, in this blog he responds to various questions and concerns that are on the minds of citizens of Pontiac.

The opinions expressed in this blog are those of Mr. Leeb and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the City of Pontiac.



**By Fred Leeb**  
Emergency Financial Manager

Welcome to the City of Pontiac blog. This is an effort to keep you (the citizens) better informed of what is happening in city government and this also will be a vehicle for you to keep us (the city administration) better informed of your concerns.

Through this blog, we will try to answer your questions and discuss key issues on a weekly basis. You are encouraged to send questions and comments to [blog@pontiac.mi.us](mailto:blog@pontiac.mi.us) or to 47450 Woodward Ave., Pontiac, MI 48342, Attn: BLOG. We will read your comments and they will help us determine your interests in specific areas. The most frequently voiced questions and comments may be reprinted on the blog. We hope that you find this site both helpful and informative!

Thank you for reading our first blogs. Please come back next week, when we will talk further about the sale of city assets, how the city is repositioning staff to create cross-functional project teams, and much more.

## Sale of the Silverdome

A big question throughout S.E. Michigan is "what is going on with the Silverdome?"

As you may know, the Silverdome is being offered for sale by CB Richard Ellis. The city is actually in the process of extending a final offer of sale to the current bidders. If we are unable to come to a close, then we will begin a new and different strategy for selling the property.

## Movie Studio

Plans to locate a motion picture and television production studio (with up to 3,600 jobs once the facility reaches capacity) are moving forward. The City and the developer, Motown Motion Pictures, have come to an agreement regarding a tax-free renaissance zone and the necessary paperwork has been sent to the State of Michigan for approval. The State actually approved the renaissance zone yesterday. All parties worked together to move this matter through the city in as quick and efficient a manner as possible. Motown chose Pontiac over many other cities in Michigan and the rest of the country because Pontiac is a great place to do busi-

ness.

Some people have asked why the city would give any tax incentives when times are so tough? The answer is that we believe the investment and jobs that will be generated at other sites coupled with the income tax revenue from the new Motown workers will more than cover the amount of tax capture that will be forgone by the City. Pontiac is an excellent investment opportunity and this project could help to put Pontiac at the heart of a new industry in Michigan.

Another question is why did the Mayor, Emergency Financial Manager and City Council sign-off on the renaissance zone? The answer is that all parties worked together quickly and cooperatively to analyze and approve the renaissance zone and we wanted to ensure that there would be no problems down the road with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) or other approval authorities because we are working in a new streamlined process.

## Number of Police

You may have heard the city will soon be getting new police officers. While we are hopeful, this is not a guarantee. Chief Valard Gross and the Executive Office have applied for a competitive federal grant that will allow the City to bring back more officers. With thousands of communities across the country in positions similar to Pontiac, we are expecting strong competition. Award decisions will be announced in late August of 2009.

As we await the grant award decision, we are still working with the assistance of the Oakland County Sheriff and State Police to provide the highest level of service possible.

## Televising City Council Meetings

A number of weeks ago, the EFM requested that City Council meetings not be aired any longer on cable TV in Pontiac. This was because he felt that these meetings had become an opportunity for grandstanding and spreading negativism by a few members of the community. He believed that Pontiac's morale needed to be raised rather than be brought down by a few outspoken individuals.

Since then, a number of people have said that they would like to continue to see these meetings on television because it is difficult for them to actually attend the meeting. Others have said that the EFM should not be censoring the flow of information in the city. Still others have said that they think the City Council meetings have been running more efficiently since they have not been televised.

The EFM now has decided to resume the televising of City Council meetings as soon as possible.

— What's Happening In Oakland County —

# Statement about General Motors Bankruptcy Filing



**L. Brooks Patterson**

— What's Happening In Lansing —

# Melton: 90-Day Foreclosure Lifeline Agreement Reached

Plan to help homeowners, awaits action in the Senate



**Melton**

LANSING - In a move that will aid struggling homeowners trying to hold on to their piece of the American Dream, State Representative Tim Melton (D-Pontiac) voted for a compromise plan reached with Senate leaders that will extend a 90-day lifeline to residents at risk of foreclosure who seek help. The plan, originally proposed by House Democrats in February, awaits action in the Senate.

"In these tough economic times, it is important to have a Legislature that stands up for our citizens," Melton said. "Thousands of families across Michigan have lost their homes because of situations out of their control. It is important to me that the residents of Pontiac and Auburn Hills - and all Michigan residents - have the opportunity to work with their lenders in order to keep their homes."

After weeks of negotiations between the House and Senate, the two chambers came to an agreement that will allow the House

Motors has been brought to its knees. Oakland County has pledged to work with GM and its successor company to turn its fortunes around. Further, we are putting the resources of our office to work in an effort to spare loyal GM employees and those of affected suppliers from any further pain, as much as possible. We hope this is a brief stint in court and that GM will soon be manufacturing quality cars again."

Early registration now available online for the October 4, 2009 Half Marathon and 5K.



Democrats' plan to be sent to the Governor. The plan will create a 90-day lifeline for homeowners at risk of losing their home who commit to working with their lender and a housing counselor. Counselors are available through the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

According to RealtyTrac, Michigan ranked sixth in the nation in foreclosures in the first quarter of 2009, with more than 33,000 properties in foreclosure. In 2008, more than 145,000 Michigan properties statewide were in foreclosure - a 21 percent increase from 2007 and a 108 percent increase from 2006. In the first four months of 2009, Oakland County saw 6,919 homes fall into foreclosure.

"Because of the foreclosure epidemic, the very fabric of our neighborhoods and communities is beginning to unravel," Melton said. "Keeping our families in their homes will help get us through these tough economic times. I applaud my colleagues for coming together for our families and passing this very important plan."

— What's Happening In Washington —

# Congressman Peters Statement On The Future Of General Motors



**Gary Peters**

Troy, MI - Congressman Gary Peters, whose Michigan congressional district is home to three GM plants scheduled to cease production, Chrysler World Headquarters and more auto suppliers than any district in the country, issued the following statement today following GM's bankruptcy filing and reports of planned plant closures:

"I am hopeful that General Motors can emerge from bankruptcy quickly as a stronger and more competitive company. A shorter proceeding is possible because GM, the auto task force, workers, a majority of bondholders and others have worked to ensure critical agreements were reached out of court.

"The restructuring that GM must undergo to emerge as a vibrant company will unfortunately cause many people in Oakland County and across the country to lose their jobs.

Laid-off individuals in our communities will need enhanced unemployment benefits and retraining programs. The administration's plan for impacted workers and communities must include direct support for these laid off workers to help them transition into new jobs. We also need a plan to help businesses and communities cope with lost revenue and investments in new advanced manufacturing to transform Michigan's economy over the long-term.

"GM's Orion plant and the Pontiac stamping plant are excellent facilities uniquely situated to build GM's new small, fuel efficient car. The plants are close in proximity to key auto suppliers and advanced technology component manufacturing, and Michigan is home to the best workers and engineers in the world. I am disappointed these plants are slated to be put on standby, but I will do everything I can to convince General Motors that bringing these plants back on line to build their new small car is a great business decision."

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## —Money Matters—

# Here are the facts on buying a car with “so-so” credit

By Regina E. Woodard



Regina Woodard

Auburn Pontiac-GMC. I hope you'll find the answers helpful to you

Before you ask the question, the answer is “yes!” Yes, you can purchase a car with only so-so credit. I've spent years helping people with so-so credit get the vehicle they wanted. Below are a few questions I regularly hear as Sales Representative at

*“Just what are my requirements to get approved for a car loan?”*

- U.S. residency - and at least 18 years of age.

- Gross monthly income of at least \$1,500.00

- Flexibility - Remember, you may not be approved for the vehicle of your dreams. Make sure, it is reliable transportation that you can live with for 1-2 years while repairing your credit.

*“What if I have a recent repossession on my credit record?”*

- This does not have to be a problem.

*“I am currently in a bankruptcy” - or, “I have a bankruptcy on my credit history. Will this keep me from getting a car loan?”*

- Again, this does not have to be a problem.

*“How much of a down payment will I need?”*

- There is no specific answer to this. Each dealership may require a different down payment. Your down payment will also depend on the vehicle you wish to purchase - and on your own unique credit situation.

*“Do credit inquiries affect my credit rating or credit score?”*

- Yes, they do. Unfortunately the more inquiries you have on your credit report, the more of a “desperation” case you may appear to be. If you have 14 inquiries and were turned down by each of the credit companies

with whom you applied, this information remains on your credit report. The next time you apply for credit, the rejections are available information to anyone investigating your credit. Also, you will lose one to three points for each inquiry on your report.

*“I have no credit history with anyone. Can I get approved for an auto loan?”*

- Yes, it is definitely possible. Believe me, everyone has to start somewhere. Many dealerships are happy to work with first-time buyers.

*“Will my auto payments be reported to the credit bureaus?”*

- Wow! Terrific question! Stay away from any dealership who deals with finance companies that don't report to the credit bureaus. When you have established good credit patterns, you want it to be a part of your credit record. Make sure your dealership has relationships with finance companies that report to credit bureaus.

That's about it for this week. If you've got a question I didn't cover in this column,

please contact me by writing this newspaper, or by phone (800) 758-4606, or calling me direct at (248) 431-2955, or through my website, [www.reginaw.com](http://www.reginaw.com). I would like to meet my readers. You are always welcome to stop by Auburn Pontiac-GMC at 500 S. Opdyke Rd. (about a mile south of the Silverdome) and ask for Regina. If you're in the market for a new Pontiac or GMC product, or a clean, dependable pre-owned vehicle, let me put my 13 years of experience to work for you.

In the meantime, here are a few safety tips for driving on these icy roads you'll find in Michigan this year.

1. Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop. Allow at least three times more space than you would normally leave between you and the car in front of you.

2. Turn your lights on to increase your visibility to other motorists.

3. Please keep your lights and windshield clean.

Safe-driving, everybody!

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## — Africa - &amp; World News —



Kofi Annorh

African Correspondent

Kofi provides TPN with news about events that are happening on the African Continent.

## NUGS Calls On President Mills

By Raphael

President John Evans Atta Mills has assured the National Union Ghana Students (NUGS) that Government will continue to interact and dialogue with the union to find ways of addressing issues and concerns that they raise.

President Mills was interacting with executives of the NUGS when they paid a courtesy call on the President at the Castle, Osu in Accra.

He said Government will continue to regard the youth as partners in development since his interaction with young people over the years proves that they have a lot to offer, though they lack experience, which according to him goes with age.

"What they have in abundance is exuber-

ance, highest intellectual potential and capacity and the desire to explore to find out what lies ahead of them. These are the qualities that you need if you want your society to progress", he said. I know your worth and what you can contribute to our dear nation.

The objective of Government, President Mills said, is to ensure that the youth are given quality education adding "this is a knowledge based society and without quality education, we cannot compete".

Touching frequent reforms in the education sector, he said education must always respond to the exigencies of the moment. "So some times, there is the need to make changes to ensure that the educational system keeps abreast with development and is able to respond to the needs of the time". He however stated that changes based on political expediency may not inure to the benefit of society.

The Minister for Communications and former President of NUGS, Mr Haruna Iddrisu, said Government is committed to addressing the core issues of access, relevance and quality generally affecting tertiary education in Ghana. He said President Mills is aware that over 40 % of students do not get access to tertiary education in Ghana.

This, he said, is of great concern to the President. He disclosed that government will, in the course of the year, review policy initiative that will seek to expand access to higher education through massive investment in infrastructure, particularly academic facilities

He announced that Government will commit GHC12.1 million to support the



President John Evans Atta Mills

students' loans scheme. This disbursement will be done under the students' loans trust, with monies released from the Ghana education trust fund.

He also announced that government will review upward the students' loan and will take effect from the 2010 academic year.

Mr Ishmael Tweneboea Kodua President of NUGS said the Union has made significant contributions to the country from the country's independence struggle through the democratization process since its inception about 50 years ago. This, according to Mr Kodua, informs the President's pledged to build a permanent secretariat for the Union.

NUGS, he said, are however convinced of a bright future for the nation, especially in this era of our political system when the youth are given sensitive places to handle in the Government of the country. the Union is also grateful for the initiative by government to ensure the full implementation of the national youth policy, a program that will offer a sense of direction, purpose and hope to the youth.

He regretted that Ghana's educational system, which has undergone 13 reforms since 1951 still, remained more academic, examination centered, authoritarian and divorces the educated from the norms of their society. He also deplored the extent to which the educational system has been given so much political tag.

The NUGS president also urged Government to help with passage of the education bill after consultation with stakeholders to ensure that no Government for stipulated number of years can temper with the country's educational structure.

Mr. Kodua said NUGS will oppose any attempt by political parties or groups to politicize the educational system of Ghana.

Source: ISD (Elorm Ametepe)

## Ghana's HIV Prevalence Further Declines From 1.9% To 1.7%

By Raphael

The national HIV prevalence rate has declined from 1.9 per cent in 2007 to 1.7 in 2008, indicating a stabilising condition, Dr Nii Akwei Addo Programme Manager of the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) said recently.

The highest prevalence level was recorded among the 25 to 29 year group while the least span the 15-19 age group.

HIV prevalence at the regional level ranged from 1.1 per cent in the Northern Region to 4.2 per cent in the Eastern Region.

All regions with the exception of Eastern recorded a decrease in prevalence from 2007 with Greater Accra, Ashanti and Eastern regions recording prevalence of three per cent and above.

Upper West Region recorded the highest decline from 3.3 per cent to 1.6 per cent with Volta, Western and Upper East, witnessing a consistent decline in prevalence since 2006.

Presenting the findings of the HIV Sentinel Survey, conducted in 40 sentinel sites strategically located in 17 rural sites and 23 urban sites, Dr Addo said nearly 95 per cent of HIV positive samples were HIV type I with HIV type II recording 3.8 per cent and dual infection of types I and II was 1.7 per cent of the total positive samples.

The HIV Sentinel Survey is a cross sectional survey targeting pregnant women attending ante natal clinics in selected sites in Ghana. The annual HIV sentinel surveil-

lance system was initiated based on the premise that prevalence of HIV among pregnant women is a good proxy indicator of the spread of infection among the populace.

Dr Addo called for sustained prevention education targeted at the youth and other special groups to ensure further decline in the overall prevalence.

He commended health workers, the Ghana AIDS Commission, Ministry of Health, Ghana Health Service and other donor partners including WHO and DFID for their technical and financial support in ensuring that the HIV prevalence of the country was reduced to its barest minimum and called for more support since "this is the period that we need you most to ensure continuous drop in the prevalence".

Dr George Sipa-Adjah Yankey Minister for Health noted that prevention was the bedrock of the national response and called for behavioural change, Voluntary Counselling and Testing and the expansion of services.

Prof Fred T Sai, Family Health Consultant who presided reiterated the need to intensify efforts in ensuring that the youth were protected.

He noted that any infection over one per cent should be described as a danger which frustrated development and called for political leadership to ensue the raking of the prevalence for its total decrease.

Source: GNA

## Ghana And EU Signs 76 Million Euro Agreement

By Raphael

Hon. Joe Gidisu, Minister for Roads and Highways

Ghana and the European Commission (EC) recently signed a 76 million euro financing agreement to support the rehabilitation of the 94.4 kilometre Tarkwa-Bogoso-Ayamfuri road.

The funds, made available under the Transport Sector Development programme seeks to improve the road network in the timber, mineral and cocoa producing rich west of Ghana with the view of facilitating easy connection to the Takoradi Port in the Western Region.

The Western Region currently provides about 25 percent of national Gross Domestic Product. It will also link Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire as part of the regional integration agenda.

Dr Kwabena Duffour, Minister for Finance and Economic Planning and Mr Guy Samzun, Charge d'affaires of the Delegation of the European Commission in Ghana signed the agreement.

Dr Duffour said road transport infrastructure development is priority of government and is happy that the EC continues to focus on the area for effective development.

He said government and EC must

concentrate development efforts on transport connectivity and integration as one the thematic interventions.

Mr Duffour said construction of the road will properly link the Western, Brong-Ahafo and Central regions to Cote d'Ivoire through Bouake.

He urged the Ghana Highways Authority to keep to the measures announced in the agreement so that good contractors are engaged to handle the projects and complete them on time.

Dr Duffour pledged government commitment to adhere to maintenance and rigorously enforced the axle load requirements to protect the road infrastructure.

Mr Joe Gidisu, Minister for Roads and Highways said the rehabilitation will ease the drudgery of travelling on that stretch of road.

He said the availability of such improved infrastructure will make investors take full advantage of opportunities in other parts of the region.

Mr Samzun said Ghana must seek maximum integration in the planning of the various transport mode projects and programmes in order to derive the maximum benefit from the transport sector.

Source: GNA

## Mosaic Ghana Africa

In October 2009, **Mosaic Ghana Africa** will lead a business development, investment and cultural tour to Accra, Ghana in West Africa. The delegation will include various Oakland County, State of Michigan and other U.S. based executives of small, medium, and large U.S. firms representing a variety of business sectors.

The overall focus of the trip will be commercial, cultural and investment opportunities for Oakland County, State of Michigan and other U.S. companies, including joint ventures, presented by the continuing market liberalization and privatization underway in this country. In Ghana briefings and one-on-one business appointments will be arranged for members of the government, business and cultural delegation". For information regarding this trip contact **248-758-1411** or email **thepontiacnews@sbcglobal.net**

## —Health Matters—

# The Most Dangerous Hospital Technologies

Medical technology can and often does save lives -- but sometimes the unthinkable happens and the device that was supposed to help a patient actually causes harm, perhaps even death. With patient safety rising to the top of the list of hospital priorities, each and every aspect of care is being scrutinized for improvement opportunities, including medical technology. TPN staff recently took a look at a report entitled Top 10 Health Technology Hazards, released by the ECRI Institute, an organization dedicated to improving the quality of health care. Dan Alt, manager of ECRI's problem reporting system, stated that while some problems on the list are related to equipment design, others are caused by human error -- and most are avoidable if hospitals take specific precautions. Alt said the goal is to prevent, not spread, panic.

### What are the dangers on ECRI's list? Here are the top 10:

1. Alarms that fail to adequately convey when a patient is in danger. For example, desensitization, improper settings or disabling of alarms put patients at risk if an emergency is not recognized.
2. Needlesticks and other sharp objects. These may expose clinicians (and even patients, though this is highly unusual) to life-threatening pathogens, including HIV.
3. Air embolism from contrast media injectors used in angioplasty. These high-tech power injectors can introduce air

bubbles into the blood vessel, which may cause a dangerous, sometimes even fatal, air embolism.

4. Foreign matter left in patients after surgery.

5. Surgical fires. Fortunately these are quite rare (about 650 a year). Like all fires, surgical fires are caused by an ignition source (for instance, an electrocautery device or a laser) in the presence of supplemental oxygen (for anesthesia) and a fuel source. The complicating factor in surgical fires is that two clinicians are effectively "in control" of two of the factors -- the surgeon of the lasers and electrocautery devices, the anesthesiologist of the oxygen. They must work together to reduce the risk.

6. Anesthesia equipment that hasn't been properly checked prior to each use. This carries the risk of problems like misconnected breathing circuits, ventilator leaks or empty gas cylinders.

7. Misleading patient information displays, which convey ambiguous or confusing data, such as vital signs and airway pressure.

8. CT radiation dose. Exposure to the high radiation levels from CT scans is thought to account for about 6,000 additional cancers each year for patients.

9. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) burns. Causes include crossed cables, improperly placed sensors or patient contact with the coils.

10. Fiber-optic light-source burns, typi-

cally caused by inappropriate placement of cables on the patient.

### HEALTH CARE IS HIGH RISK

This report was created from information taken from a number of medical reports and resources. (You can see the report at [ecri.org](http://ecri.org).) James Conway, MS, senior vice president of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI.org), called the findings "sobering" but noted that it is important to remember that "health care is a high-risk industry."

On the positive side, Conway pointed out that the fact that the report even exists is evidence of the new focus on patient safety, which only became a priority in the last decade. He said that hospitals are getting serious about safety issues, setting up groups and committees to deal with issues raised by reports like the one from the ECRI Institute. However, he said his observation is anecdotal and doesn't necessarily represent the majority of hospitals. The idea that patient safety isn't always paramount in the medical field is disconcerting. While patients generally can't do a great deal to eliminate or avoid these high-tech hazards, Conway said forward-looking organizations should welcome input from patients and family members about matters of concern.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Conway offered five suggestions to patients to help improve the effectiveness

and safety of their medical treatment...

1. Educate yourself and compare options. I've written often on the importance of evaluating hospital quality data before you decide where to be treated. (See Daily Health News, May 5, 2008, for more information on this vitally important topic.)

2. Ask questions. If you don't understand something, ask. Bring a list of questions to each visit with your doctor and get precisely detailed answers about the procedures, medications, etc., so you understand exactly what is supposed to happen.

3. If you see something, say something. As a patient or a visitor, if you notice that something doesn't look right -- a medication that doesn't look like what you've been getting, or a monitor that seems to be acting funny -- speak up.

4. Never go alone. Bring someone with you for each doctor's visit. They're sure to see or hear things you'll overlook or that you'll forget.

5. Give -- and demand -- respect. If you aren't satisfied with an answer, respectfully ask to speak to someone else. Or ask the nurse or physician to double-check. You deserve a thorough answer. And getting the answer you deserve can go a long way to making your stay safer.

Source(s): Jim Conway, MS, senior vice president, Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), Cambridge, Massachusetts. Dan Alt, ECRI Institute, Plymouth Meeting, Pennsylvania.

Date: June 27, 2009

Time: 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

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The Monthly Diversity Educational Forum Series is designed to assist human resource professionals, diversity managers, and all levels of leaders and supervisors to develop and implement organizational leadership solutions, personal diversity solutions, and public solutions to move toward full productivity throughout their workforce.

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## — Educational Matters —

# Education Vouchers

Source: National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education (Teachers College, Columbia University)

Educational vouchers represent a system of education finance in which parents are given a tuition certificate that can be used to attend participating public or private schools. Education vouchers can be paid by public (government) or private (corporations, foundations) funds. Many different kinds of voucher plans have been proposed. Each may address the needs of different students and emphasize different priorities. For example, the dollar amount of a voucher differs considerably among different plans. Also, a voucher can be given to low-income students, to students in failing schools, or to the entire population. However, all publicly-funded voucher programs take funds usually given directly to public schools and allocate them to parents to decide where money for their child's education will be spent.

### Why are publicly-funded education vouchers controversial?

Publicly-funded education vouchers allow families to make private decisions regarding how public taxpayer money should be spent. Therefore, a voucher program hopes to create an educational market where schools must compete for students. Supporters claim market benefits, such as choice and innovation, will improve education. Opponents fear that vouchers will lead to greater inequality and the loss of civic preparation. Current evidence concerning the impact of vouchers is disputed. The potential advantages and disadvantages of publicly-funded vouchers are listed below.

### What are the possible advantages of publicly-funded vouchers?

- **Increased Choice.** A tuition certificate, especially for low-income families, helps parents afford to choose a school suited to their child's needs.
- **Greater Competition.** As families gain the ability to choose the school their child attends, schools may have to improve to attract students.
- **Targeted Assistance.** Vouchers can be aimed at a particular struggling student population and offer assistance without changing the entire public education system.

- **More Parental Discretion.** Vouchers provide parents with significant authority over the knowledge and skills their child will learn.

### What are the possible disadvantages of publicly-funded vouchers?

- **Increased Inequality.** Unregulated markets may produce widely varying quality and school focus.
- **Difficult Implementation.** Many private schools refuse to participate in voucher programs and there may be more interested students than seats available.
- **Administrative Costs May Rise.** New administrative and functional oversight, informational services, and transportation will need to be addressed to run a voucher program. This creates additional costs.
- **Loss of Public Sphere.** If education becomes a private decision of the family, there is little incentive to engage in public discourse and activity.

### What was the Zelman decision? Why is it important?

The case Zelman et al. v. Simmons-Harris et al. gained national attention when the Supreme Court declared that vouchers could be used to attend religious schools under specific circumstances. The case concerned the Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program, which provided students with vouchers to attend public and private schools. Nearly all voucher recipients attended religious schools. Voucher opponents insisted the Cleveland program violated the separation of church and state. Defenders of the voucher program claimed

students simply enrolled in the best schools available. For example, 46 of the 56 schools willing to accept vouchers held a religious affiliation. On June 27, 2002, in a 5-4 ruling, the court found that Cleveland's voucher program did not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment and was allowed to continue operation.

The influence of the Zelman decision continues to be debated. Many voucher advocates believe legal acceptance is a crucial step forward in promoting widespread voucher programs. However, legal scholars and educators note that the ruling only applies to federal law. Many state constitutions explicitly prohibit the use of public dollars to fund religious education, which may obstruct future voucher programs.

### How large are publicly-funded voucher programs?

Despite the significant attention given to educational vouchers, there are only a few, small voucher programs in existence. Many proposals for voucher programs have met sharp resistance from state legislators and local citizens. At present, only three states have operational voucher programs. A few other states are debating creating a voucher program. The chart below details current voucher programs in the United States as of 2002.

### Where can I find out more about publicly-funded vouchers?

Information about publicly-funded vouchers located on the NCSPE website can be found at <http://www.ncspe.org/>

inforead.php?mysub=6

### Books on education vouchers include:

- Howell and Peterson. 2002. The Education Gap: Vouchers and Urban Schools. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Hoxby, C.M. 2003. The Economics of School Choice. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Levin, H. 2001. Privatizing Education: Can the Marketplace Deliver Freedom of Choice, Efficiency, Equity and Social Cohesion. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

### For additional information from internet resources see:

- Education Commission of the States at: <http://www.ecs.org>
- People for the American Way- an advocate for public education- at: <http://www.pfaw.org>
- Manhattan Institute- an advocate for private education- at: <http://www.manhattan-institute.org>

### For further reading on state voucher programs, see the following NCSPE articles:

- Occasional Paper 42: Catterall, James and Richard Chapleau. 2001. "Voting on Vouchers: A Socio-Political Analysis of California Proposition 38, Fall 2000." [http://www.ncspe.org/publications\\_files/487\\_OP42.pdf](http://www.ncspe.org/publications_files/487_OP42.pdf)
- Occasional Paper 78: Lenti, Leighann. 2003. "A New Wave of Voucher Programs? The Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program." [http://www.ncspe.org/publications\\_files/OP78.pdf](http://www.ncspe.org/publications_files/OP78.pdf)

State	Targeted Location	Target Population	Number of Students (2002)	Current Status
Ohio	Cleveland	Lottery Preference for Low-income students	5,147*	Operational
Wisconsin	Milwaukee	Low-income students	11,670*	Operational
Florida	State-wide	Students in failing schools and eligible disabled student	9,270*	Operational
Colorado	Denver	"free and reduced lunch" students in participating districts	0	Approved, facing legal challenge
District of Columbia	Washington D.C.	Middle and low-income students (family of 4<52,000)	0	Under review of legislature

Source: American Education Reform Council. <http://schoolchoiceinfo.org> Evaluations of the impact of vouchers on educational achievement suggest no substantial differences in student achievement

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# ENERGY COMMON SENSE

## How realistic is the plan to create five million new 'green collar' jobs?

By Renewable Energy Jobs | By Sam Newell  
Founder Renewable Energy Jobs. Com

President Obama's plan to turn around the US economy includes \$150bn of investment in green energy over the next ten years, driving America towards energy independence whilst creating 5 million 'green collar' jobs.

Nobody could question the need for the new US president to take action to resurrect the US economy or our need for the US to take a prominent role in the battle against climate change. However, is creating five million renewable energy jobs in the US realistic currently? And if not why not?

According to Wikipedia a 'green collar' worker is someone who is employed in the environmental sectors of the economy. When Obama has talked about green collar jobs in recent times in relation to his New Energy for America Plan he has referred more specifically to jobs within the renewable energy sector and its supply chain.

Today there is a growing skills shortage within the renewable energy sector globally. While many other industries are making redundancies recruiters in the renewable energy markets are currently kept very busy. Many employers within the sector are still

battling with a bottleneck that threatens the growth of their businesses and that of the whole sector. Why is that?

The industry is still in its relative infancy so unlike many other industries there are comparatively few professionals with more than a few years' experience. Over the past 5 years the industry has experienced huge growth and with many countries setting aggressive carbon reduction targets is further growth sustainable or even possible?

It could be argued that the availability of economic capital to simulate growth is not all that's needed, and in fact the availability of human capital could be in reality the limiting factor. The majority of jobs within the alternative energy industry are highly technical and based on engineering or scientific disciplines. Certainly, all growing companies need accountants, lawyers and human resources professionals but these are essentially 'back office' jobs and for every back office job there are five times as many 'front office' jobs: the engineers and technicians that are planning and building wind farms or designing, manufacturing and installing solar panels for example.

In the short term the creation of several million highly technical jobs may be little consolation to the hairdresser, shop manager



or average person in the street who may have recently lost their job through redundancy.

You only need look at a specialist renewable energy job site such as RenewableEnergyJobs.com for confirmation of the global shortage of engineering skills in the sector, but why?

According to a study published in America by the National Academies there are 70,000 engineering graduates each year in the US completing their first degree. Compare that with 600,000 graduating from Chinese universities and 350,000 from India and the problem becomes more apparent. In 2005 Duke University released a revised set of figures which concluded that both the original Chinese and Indian numbers include graduates who have completed 3 and 4 years degrees while the US figures are all based on graduates of the longer 4 year degree. Their revised figures discounted those graduates completing the 3 year course, China still graduated 351,537 engineers with 4 year degrees. That's still five times the US total.

This is not just an American problem, as highlighted in the OECD policy paper "Evolution of Student Interest in Science and Technology Studies" published in 2006: in the past 15 years there has been a decrease in the relative number of graduating engineers in Europe. The problem is even more acute in the UK than in the EU as a whole. The number of engineering graduates, currently around 22,000 per annum, has steadily fallen over the last ten years, from 11% of the annual total of graduates in 1998 to 7% in 2007, despite a rising trend in the number of students at university.

In last year's 'Energy Pulse' survey conducted by Doosan Babcock (the energy services firm), the vast majority of energy experts highlighted the serious lack of skills as a major problem for the energy industry as a whole.

Obama's plan to create 5m renewable energy jobs within 10 years would require hundreds of thousands of jobs to be filled each year. How can this possibly be achieved with such low numbers of engineers graduating through the US educational system?

The plan outlines a goal of retraining America's currently manufacturing workforce to cope with the demands of the low carbon economy, which if achieved, will go some way to solving the US skills shortage however it is going to be a huge challenge and does not solve the fundamental problem.

The western world is currently not producing enough engineers and those who do graduate with technical degree have many career options to choose from such as telecommunications, nanotechnology, computing etc.

In developing countries like India and China engineers are apparently held in far higher regard than in developed countries. This is possibly due to the very obvious impact that large infrastructure projects can have on everyday lives and local communities.

Unless the number of students taking STEM based qualifications in the western world increases dramatically this global skills shortage will become more apparent and more constraining for business. The creation of new jobs is important, but the success of Obama's plans could hinge on our ability to overcome the shortage of suitably qualified personnel both in the US and internationally.

It is widely accepted that in many countries such as the UK there is a distinct lack of qualified teachers across all of the STEM subjects, and at all levels. This needs to be addressed urgently, but additionally we need to address prospective students' perception of the "engineer" brand, tackle our failure to connect with talented students, and actively pursue policies to attract them to STEM related studies at first degree level.

Unless we can tackle the very real issue of available, qualified and appropriately skilled resource, talk of millions of new jobs being filled within the renewable energy sector is, I am afraid, likely to remain somewhat of a pipe dream.

Sam Newell is a specialist recruiter within the renewable energy sector and the founder of Renewable Energy Jobs

## Determining Electricity Consumption of Your Home Appliances

By Energy Efficiency

Improving energy efficiency and conservation around the house requires a certain attention to detail. There are a multitude of electronic appliances that populate the modern home. Knowing how many watts of electricity each appliances uses is a key step toward reducing your electricity consumption. You'll know which ones to trade in for newer, more efficient models- creating a general awareness and knowledge that will aide in all of your energy conserving endeavors.

Figuring out how many watts of electricity an appliance uses is typically very easy. It is generally printed right on the device. It will either be stamped on it somewhere or printed on a nameplate that is usually affixed to the back.

If the number of watts is not printed on the device, then look for the current, in amperes (A), and voltage (V). Most appliances, from stereos to toaster ovens, use 120 volts (the maximum voltage for a standard outlet). Larger appliances, such as clothes dryers, may use 240-volt outlets. To find a unit's wattage, simply multiply the amps and the volts. For example, a device drawing 5.0 A at 120 volts is using 600 Watts of electricity.

In the typical home, water heaters use by far the most amount of electricity, drawing 4500-5500 watts when running. The clothes dryer, dishwasher, and vacuum cleaner are also big electricity users. Just remember that an individual appliance's cost to each household is different based on how much the appliance is used. For example, a laptop computer typically uses only 50 W of elec-

tricity (somewhat less in sleep mode) and a dryer may use 5000. But if the computer is left on 24 hours a day, and the dryer is rarely used because you dry your clothes outside on a line, then suddenly the smaller, more efficient computer has the higher cost in electricity. Being energy efficient is as much about lifestyle and the way we use the products we purchase as it is about the products themselves.

Bear in mind that the wattage listed on an electronic device is its peak level of consumption. That is to say that electronics such as stereos, with volume controls, may not be drawing the maximum number of watts at all times. It all depends on the setting.

When evaluating the energy efficiency of any device, it is also important to factor in "phantom" loads, or the small amount of electricity that a device draws, even when it is switched off. Televisions, stereos, computers, all such devices carry phantom loads. These are small amounts but can really add up, especially considering the number of appliances in the average home. To avoid this issue, either unplug appliances when unused, or plug several into a power strip and then switch the strip off when the group is not in commission. The power strip method is an excellent choice for computer desks and home entertainment centers, where all components are typically used or shut off at the same time.

For more information on calculating electricity consumption and cost, including a list of common wattages for household appliances, see the U.S. Department of Energy's Office for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) website.

**The 2008- 09 Pontiac Central Yearbook (Quiver) is on sale for \$50.**

Please support PCH by purchasing the last yearbook in Central's history. This collector's item is

in full color and honors Central's storied tradition. Order your copy

while supplies last. These memories will last forever.

Thanks for supporting Pontiac Central High School! Call Mr. Derrick L. Kellam (yearbook advisor) at 248-451-7100 ext. 468 or email at deekellam@hotmail.com.



## —Money Matters—

# NEW NO FAULT PROBLEMS



**Michael  
Hohausler**

Most consumers in the State of Michigan are aware that we are a No Fault State. "No Fault" refers to certain aspects of our automobile insurance. The original statute was introduced in 1973. At that time, the basics of the statute were: a person could not recover for pain, suffering and emotional distress if injuries did not reach a certain threshold. The threshold at the beginning of the application of the statute was: serious, permanent disfigurement and/or serious impairment of necessary body functions. The statute did not define either of those standards with any specificity. Nor were there definitions elsewhere in the statute.

From the beginning, this became problematic. The legislature attempted to solve this problem by adding requirements as opposed to adding definitions. Sometime later, 10 or 15 years after the original statute started, the first two requirements continued plus the injury had to be "objectively manifested". Again, this is not a well defined set of terms. It was easy when one could see a broken bone on an x-ray. It was less easy when a physician could see spasms upon palpating a muscle group. After all, a physician's observations were also objective. The insurance carriers weren't happy about this and put pressure on the legislature and the courts.

Over the years, the situation evolved. In the early 1990s the standard was yet again circumscribed, this time to include the first

two items, e.g. serious, permanent disfigurement and/or serious impairment of necessary body function; the second item: objectively manifested, and a new item: significantly impacting the activities of daily life.

Each of those items became the subject of interpretation in the higher courts of this State.

In 2004, certain members of the Supreme Court of the State of Michigan decided to take it into their own hands to expand the requirement (that is to say, to make it more difficult to recover damages for pain, suffering and emotional distress) by adding yet another level of difficulty. The legislature didn't add this level of difficulty. The Supreme Court added this level of difficulty. The Supreme Court decided that all of the preceding items mentioned in this article had to apply plus the injuries had to "significantly impact the trajectory of a person's life". This is often referred to as "the Kreiner standard".

Many people (including the writer of this article) feel that this standard is wrong. It leads to foolish results. In one of the original cases, a carpenter injured the tendons in one hand. He was hospitalized for days. He had surgery. He was off work for three months. The Supreme Court opined that this was insufficient interference with the trajectory of this person's life. Heaven only knows what that meant to this person's life in the long run. Then, in another case, one of the appellate authorities ruled that an elderly person who was blind and who had had a minor injury but could no longer knit due to her injuries could collect because the trajectory of her life was, indeed, affected. A young carpenter supporting a family could face financial ruin as a result of months off work and he would

be barred from recovery. An elderly person who could not knit for entertainment could recover.

Now the Supreme Court is about to change. There are three justices who have supported Kreiner: Justices Markman, Young and Corrigan. There are three justices who have questioned Kreiner: Justices Cavanaugh, Kelly and Weaver. Justice Taylor, who authored the Kreiner decision is no longer on the Supreme Court, having been

rejected by the voters of the State of Michigan. Shortly we will have a new justice: Diane Hathaway. Many believe that the new makeup of the Court will warrant a re-visit to the Kreiner decision. Many hope that this judge-made law will be revoked.

As always, if you should have any questions or concerns on this or other subjects involving personal injury, please do not hesitate to communicate with me via e-mail at [m\\_hohausler@yahoo.com](mailto:m_hohausler@yahoo.com).

## Free TRANSITIONS Seminar Series Scheduled at Two OCC Locations

Oakland Community College's Summer 2009 TRANSITIONS is a free seminar designed to offer individuals support, direction and strategies to become self-empowered.

With the help of counseling professionals and guest speakers presenting specialized topics, participants examine personal, academic, and career goals, then identify methods for achieving their objectives. Topics to be covered include:

- Career Outlook - Where Are the Jobs and How to Prepare Yourself for Jobs of the Future
- Exploring Entrepreneurship as a Profitable Option - Small Business Strategies
- Developing Critical Skills Required in a Global Marketplace
- Tips for Financial Survival During Economic Downturns
- Lifelong Planning and Career Development - Why is This Important?
- Techniques for Managing Physical, Emotional and Daily Living Stressors During

Turbulent Times

- Integrating Technology and Traditional Strategies for Marketing You
- Creating a Plan of Action for Life-Long Sustainability - Next Steps

TRANSITIONS will be offered at OCC's Auburn Hills Campus on Tuesday evenings from 5:30-7:30 p.m., beginning June 16 through July 28. Each program meets for two hours for seven consecutive weeks and participants are expected to attend every week to realize maximum benefits.

Admission is free, but space is limited and advance registration is required by the deadline date, Tuesday, June 9. Participants must also meet income eligibility requirements.

For further information and registration details, call (248) 232-4670.

The Auburn Hills Campus is located at 2900 Featherstone Road, approximately one mile east of the Pontiac Silverdome. Ample free parking is available in nearby campus lots.

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# -Voices in the Community-

## Relational Savvy

by TaChunda Burks



TaChunda Burks

It has been said that men are from Mars and women are from Venus. In other words, men and women have very dissimilar ways of communicating. For example, a man and a woman enter a room. Both look at a glass filled with water and one may make the observation of the glass being half-full. On another note, the other may state how the glass is half-empty. Both are correct in that the glass is not completely filled; however, the case as to who is right begins its course. While this is not an article limited to particulars where dating is concerned, this is an article that will look at successful communication within any relationship.

Understanding how men and women (regardless of age) relate will help you in any interpersonal communication, be it personal or professional. Let's first look at a table of needs for both genders. According to author John Gray, Ph.D., men and women need the following:

Women	Men
The attention of someone who cares.	His efforts noticed.
To be noticed.	To be accepted as he is.
To be regarded as special.	Inspiration to be the best he can be.
Someone trustworthy to confide in.	Someone to be receptive to his plans, suggestions, and efforts.

With keeping these needs in mind, communicating with the opposite sex, or the same sex for this matter, should be a bit easier. For example, when speaking to women, allow yourself to focus in on fulfilling her needs in efforts of keeping the conversation smooth. Compliment her with meaningful gestures about her beauty and intelligence. Really listen to her body language. Grant her the attention and security she needs to feel special. Keep in mind that I am not suggesting flattery at all. Never

tell someone what they want to hear just for the sake of doing so because it will be considered as just smooth talk. On the contrary, look for something sincerely praiseworthy to mention and include it into the conversation when appropriate. This will actually make her feel noticed and cared for. Likewise, when speaking with men, be sure to frequently allow him the lead without interrupting, which is often hard for us women to do. Let him know that his suggestions are valuable to you. Of course, in order to do this, you must let go of conversational competitiveness and discharge yourself from drifting back and forth into the wonderful world of sarcasm. : But, you can do it! Focus more upon the energy he gives when he expresses himself. Allow yourself to really feel this energy and respond with approval and appreciation.

Something that has become commonplace within any discussion, is the desire for one to be right. Sounds familiar, huh? This seems to be a plague amongst most humans, especially when interacting with the opposite sex. Surprisingly enough, though, the moment that we actually begin to let go of this desire for proving our rightness, the moment we will find ourselves more susceptible of growing personally and perhaps even spiritually. When you cease from conflictive chatting, you open yourself up for opportunities to learn things about yourself, the person you are conversing with, and the subject at hand. And, although it may not appear advantageous at the time, you will soon discover that it is truly o.k. to just remain quiet sometimes and keep that combatant buried deep inside.

Simply practice seeing things from another's point of view. You may find this soothing inside, especially when you can understand why the other person feels the way that they do. For instance, when speaking with a person who has a very strong "I know it all" attitude, it would be energy draining to try and prove your perspective of things. When you willfully give up your push to be right, you will find pleasure in your new ability to allow others the freedom of expressing themselves without a battle. In other words, sacrifice your needs and make it a point to satisfy the needs of another (according to the aforementioned needs list). With lot's of practice, and plenty of patience might I add, you soon will find that communicating with others, especially the opposite sex, isn't so tough after-all!

## Ask Elaine.com

By Elaine Smith-Wright



Mrs. Smith-Wright started out as a Mass Communications major at Oakland University and now holds a B.A. degree in Nursing Home Administration and the Certificate of Gerontology and Sociology of the Aging from Wiley College along with a MBA Degree from East Texas Baptist University in Management. She also holds a Certificate in Filmmaking, Screenwriting and Directing from the Motion Picture Institute of Michigan.

Dear Elaine:

We are the typical modern day Brady bunch family. I was a divorced mother with three daughters and I met a great guy who was a widower with three sons. We met through friends, dated and found that we had a lot in common including children and fell in love instantly. We married a year later and realized right away that the first thing we needed to do was find a much bigger house than the two bedroom apartments he and I had. Now the two oldest children have their own rooms and the others share one. The problem is that the sibling rivalry that is going on between the boys and the girls is driving me and my husband crazy. We even thought having a baby would help ease some of the tension because the baby will be a compilation of both families. Right now I'm seven months pregnant and the impending birth hasn't seemed to help ease any of the arguing, fussing or fighting at all. What can we do? I'm at my wit's end!

Signed,  
Three Plus Three Equals Trouble!

Dear 3+3:

I sure admire the love and courage you and your husband have to come together and bring two families into one. Some others may say they think the two of you were blinded by something else and not thinking at all about the consequences that this type of union could have on everyone. There are several movies that have been made about putting two families together and all of the problems that ensue. I suggest you rent them all, sit everyone down and make them watch them all and then ask for suggestions as to how all of you can come together in peace and harmony because until each one goes off to college, no one is going anywhere! You are all going to stay together and stick it out and work on it until every thing runs smoothly. The main thing for everyone to remember is that there is a lot of love running around with enough for everyone to receive a piece of it. All it requires is respect and doing unto others what you would like them to do unto you. With that said, remember that you have established the foundation for something great and beautiful to be built upon.

Good Luck!



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## Friends of Murphy Park

Friends of Murphy Park will be having a **Clean Up Day at Murphy Park on June 20, 2009 from 10am - 2pm** as a kick-off to their annual Summer Camp program for Pontiac's youth.

This is a resident-driven initiative that is in need of community support and effort as they continue this endeavor despite the lean, economic times. **All who are interested in volunteering for the clean up should contact Queenie Hawkins at 248-253-0815.** Also, Friends of Murphy Park are in need of supplies and donations as well including: Cleaning supplies, First Aid kits, plastic ware, paper products, snacks, sports equipment and much more. Please call Queenie Hawkins if you would like to donate supplies to this endeavor.

## OCC Commencement Speaker Matt Prentice Urges Graduates To Use Imagination, Seize Opportunities

More than 2,000 students graduated from Oakland Community College, Friday, May 29. Besides the graduates an audience estimated at 6,500, including family members, guests, trustees of the college, faculty and staff took part in OCC's 43rd annual commencement ceremonies at the Palace of Auburn Hills.

Eight hundred and fifteen graduates, close to half of the class of '09, earned university transfer degrees in business, liberal arts and science.

The second highest group, 780, earned Associates of Applied Science Degrees. Also known as "career degrees", these diplomas provide graduates with entry-level credentials in a wide variety of high-demand professions including accounting, robotics and nursing. OCC offers more than 160 programs and options of this type.

The balance of the graduating class was awarded associate degrees in general studies and one-year certificates.

OCC's commencement speaker this year was eminent restaurateur and caterer Matt Prentice, CEO of the Matt Prentice Restaurant Group, who congratulated the graduates on achieving something that circumstances had conspired to keep him from achieving - a college degree.

Mr. Prentice explained that he had been forced to drop out of the prestigious Culinary Institute of America due to diminished funds

and family health problems, but felt that in the ensuing years he had earned a "Master's of Hard Knocks".

Noting that he had hired and mentored hundreds of OCC students over the years, Mr. Prentice went on to praise the OCC Culinary Program and its leadership, stating that he would "rather hire an OCC culinary grad than a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America".

Mr. Prentice briefly recapped the growth of his corporation from the small Oak Park Deli he took over in 1980, to his present operation - nine restaurants, an artisan bread factory/patisserie, five banquet facilities, and one of the state's largest catering operations. He went on to describe his latest venture - "providing the best hospital food in the world" at Henry Ford Hospital, a project he expects to eventually take nationwide, adding that he hoped that OCC would be a collaborator in the effort.

In closing, Mr. Prentice urged the graduates to "use your imaginations, think out of the box, and seize the opportunities in every challenge".

With five campuses located throughout Oakland County, OCC is the largest community college in Michigan and one of the largest in the nation. OCC offers degrees and certificates in more than 160 fields, including transfer degrees in business, science and the liberal arts.

## 50 Plus Prime

On Friday, June 19, 2009, beginning at 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., in the Oakland County Board of Commissioners' Auditorium, the Oakland County Senior Coalition will host a special free public meeting to address issues relating to the increase in the county's growing senior citizen population.

The intent of the newly formed Oakland County Senior Planning Coalition is to conduct a needs assessment of Oakland County's aging population. The group will offer recommendations to enhance the quality of life, the business climate, and health and social services safety net for older Oakland County residents. Just as important are the support services for their families and caregivers.

The Oakland County Senior Planning Coalition consists of representatives from the Area Agency on Aging 1-B; Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency; United Way for Southeast Michigan; Catholic Social Services; Oakland County Senior Advisory Council; Oakland County's Health and Human Services Department; and fellow members from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners: Helaine Zack, Marcia Gershenson, Shelley Goodman Taub and Bradford C. Jacobsen, along with representatives from community organizations; senior centers; local government and the general public.

It is believed that in a few short years there will be more citizens in Oakland County aged 65+ than school age children. A presentation will be provided by special guest speaker and expert Kurt Metzger, Director of Research for City Connect Detroit. Metzger will share valuable information on how Oakland County demographics are shifting and look at projections that point to a "Silver Tsunami". He will

look at all facets of the issue from the economic impact, transportation, health, social services, housing to active senior lifestyles.

Mr. Kurt Metzger is a leader in this field of demographic research. He is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati receiving a M.A. degree in Experimental Psychology in 1972 and a B.A. degree from the university in 1969 in Psychology and Sociology.

For more than 30 years, he has worked tirelessly speaking on the need for a coordinated effort of data collection and delivery in Southeast Michigan. He wants to develop a comprehensive system of data sharing that would be made available to the public from data developers in government, the nonprofit and private sectors of demographic information. As a well-respected demographic leader, he has shared his expertise with numerous state and local organizations including SEMCOG, the International Institute of Metropolitan Detroit, OneD, the New Economy Initiative and the Greening of Detroit to name a few of the organizations that have benefited from his work.

"I am looking forward to having Mr. Metzger speak at our event. He will bring a perspective that will help the Oakland County Senior Coalition's efforts as we look ahead to the future and plan to address the needs of our seniors. He will offer great insight for the public on this issue," stated Oakland County Commissioner and Coalition Chairperson Helaine Zack.

For more information, contact Oakland County Commissioner and Coalition Chair Helaine Zack at 248-546-7392 or AAA-1B Executive Director Jim McGuire at 248-262-9216. Media inquiries, contact Julia Ruffin, BOC Liaison at 248-858-1092 or Commissioner Helaine Zack at 248-546-7392.

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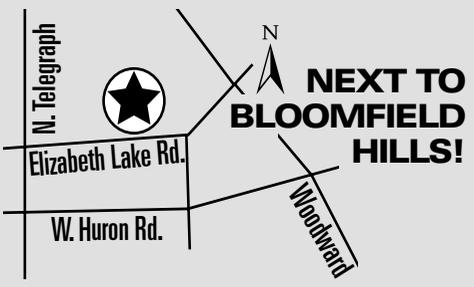
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# -Community Calendar-

## Pontiac School District Activities - June - July 2009

Please find below end of year activities for schools that have been slated to be combined and/or closed for the upcoming 2009-2010 school year. There will be additions as they come in:

SCHOOL	ACTIVITY	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Crofoot Elem.	Crofoot Idol	June 5th	-	Crofoot
	Southeastern League	June 8th	-	Crofoot
	Tutoring - End of Year Party			
	Closing Ceremony/Open House	June 9th	12:00pm	Crofoot
	Kindergarten Promotion	June 11th	10:00am	Crofoot
	6th Grade Picnic	June 11th	-	Crofoot
Emerson Elem.	Field Day	June 4	All Day	Emerson
	Kindergarten Ceremony	June 8	10:00am	Emerson
	PBS Assembly	June 10	2:30pm	Emerson
	Honors/Awards	June 11	2:00pm	Emerson
	Closing Ceremonies	June 12	9:45am-11am	Emerson
Franklin Elem.	Field Day	June 5	10:00am	Franklin
	K-1st grade Reading Celebration	June 8	-	Franklin
	Promotion	June 10	10:00am	Franklin
	Closing Program	June 11	6:00-8:00pm	Franklin Gym
LeBaron Elem.	Closing Ceremony	June 4	5:00-7:00pm	LeBaron
	GM "World In Motion" Partnership	June 5	1:00pm	LeBaron
	Wrap up Event	June 8	All day	LeBaron
	Field Day	June 9	1:30pm	LeBaron
	6th Grade Promotion	June 9	9:30am	LeBaron
	KG Promotion			
Longfellow Elem.	End of year /80th Birthday Celebration	June 4	10am-3pm	Longfellow
Lincoln Middle	Field Day/Closing Ceremony	June 9	-	Lincoln
	Promotion	June 10	9:30am	Lincoln
	8th Grade Dance	June 10	6pm-8pm	Lincoln
Madison Middle	New School/Closing Celebration (New Pontiac Middle School)	June 5	-	Madison
Pontiac Central	Unity Dance (Both High Schools)	June 5	7:00-11:00pm	St. George's Cultural Center
Pontiac Northern	Unity Dance (Both High Schools)	June 5	7:00-11:00pm	St. George's Cultural Center
	Consolidation Party	June 27	11:00am-3pm	Pontiac Northern

### Advertisement Information

Please complete information below if you want to place an ad in The Pontiac News.

Name of Business \_\_\_\_\_

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Ads should be submitted in a Word, jpg, pdf, or tiff and payment must accompany ad. Deadline for submission of ad copy is 2 weeks prior to publication date (See Media Kit for ad size, cost, publication dates and related information).

Ad Form to: The Pontiac News - P.O. Box 431412 - Suite 1, Pontiac, Michigan 48343.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A CONTRIBUTING WRITER, OR DISTRIBUTOR OF TPN PLEASE CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY!

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## Bloomfield Hills/Woodward Estates Neighborhood Association Meeting

Alton • Arthur • Astorwood • Bassett • Bagley • Bloomfield Bondale • California • Cedardale • Colorado • Crystal • Lake Crestwood • Dellwood • Ditmar • Earlmoor • Fulton • Fern • Fisher • Franklin • Fildew • Highland • Harrison • Harvey Hillsmont • Howland • Hughes • Luther • Montana • Motor Nebraska • Nevada • Pearsall • Pleasantview • Rapid Rockwell • South Boulevard • Wilson • Wyoming

**Saturday June 13, 2009 - 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM**

**Franklin Elementary School**

**Guest Speaker:**

Pontiac City Council President Arthur McClellan - District 1  
Please attend and voice your concerns

*Velma Stephens - President*

## Pontiac Northern High School Class of 1979 30th Reunion Committee June & July Activities

On **Friday, June 26, 2009** come and join members of the Class of 79 and Friends as we get the summer started with an evening of Fun, Music, and Laughs at JD'S Key Club in Downtown Pontiac. For \$5 admission you get an evening of Live Song, Dueling Pianos, and Laughs, Laughs, LAUGHS! Tickets may be purchased at the door. Doors open at 6:00pm

On **Saturday, July 18, 2009** The Class of 1979 members are invited to join our Class President at his Annual White Party in Downtown Pontiac. Discount Tickets will be sold to All Class Members and 100% of all net proceeds from the 50/50 Raffle for the evening will be donated to the Class of '79 - 30 Year Class Reunion Weekend. Be on the look out for more information on this Annual Event that will get us in the mood and groove for an exciting August.

**We are also requesting information about you. Please complete the form below and include it along with your check or money order.**

### Personal Information

Name in High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Married Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State of Residency: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Children: \_\_\_\_\_ Job/Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check or money order payable to: P.N.H.S. CLASS OF '79**  
**Send to: P.N.H.S. Class of 1979, P.O. Box 431128, Pontiac, MI 48343**

We're also requesting information pertaining to classmates that you know that have not received information about our class reunion. Please get their name, address and phone number and have it forwarded to us or have them contact us by writing to the P.O. Box, sending an email to PNHSCCLASS79@aol.com or calling (248) 745-1539 and leave a message.

**Thank you and we look forward to seeing you all soon!!**

**We're really looking forward to seeing you there!!!**

**Sandy Michael McDonald**

# Pontiac Enrichment Academy



**WHAT:** *Exciting, Fun-filled Summer Programs in Pontiac Schools!*

**WHEN:** *June 22-July 31, 2009*

**WHERE:**

PROGRAM	TIME	LOCATION
Preschool	8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Frost (723 Cottage Street)
K-6th Grade	8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	WHRC (60 Parkhurst)
7th-8th Grade	8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Pontiac Central High School (300 W. Huron)
9th Grade	8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Pontiac Central High School (300 W. Huron)
10th-12th Grade	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Pontiac Central High School (300 W. Huron)

**FEE:** *FREE\* Classes - Prizes for excellent class work, attendance and behavior  
 FREE\* Bussing to and from school  
 FREE Breakfast, lunch and snack*

**HOW TO REGISTER:**

*Before June 22nd: Pick up and return your Registration form to your child's regular school  
 After June 22nd: Turn in your Registration form to the location where your child will attend school (see above chart)*



**FEATURES:**

- *Challenging and Creative Academics*
- *Interactive Classroom Activities*
- *Music Explosion*
- *Move It, Dance*
- *Robotics*
- *Make and Take It Art*
- *Digital Photography*
- *Kids in Motion Gymnastics*
- *World Languages*
- *Muscle It Up (Physical Fitness)*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

*248.451.6879 or visit our website at [www.pontiac.k12.mi.us](http://www.pontiac.k12.mi.us)*



*\*NO COST for students who live within Pontiac district boundaries; additional fees charged for students who live outside district boundaries*