



MARCH · SIEWKESIKU'S · MARS 2021



# REGIONAL UPDATE

Monthly Newsletter of the South Shore Regional Centre for Education

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Have a story or  
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contact us:  
[www.ssrce.ca](http://www.ssrce.ca)



@SSRCENS



@SSRCE\_NS



The display at Liverpool Regional High School celebrates Amanda Gorman.

## African Heritage Month Celebrations

Throughout February, displays to celebrate African Heritage Month were found at a number of South Shore Regional Centre for Education schools. Pictured above is an impressive display at Liverpool Regional High School created by Libby Broadbent, who teaches Options and Opportunities, Visual Arts.

The display is a celebration of the words of the American Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman. Broadbent says she was inspired by the beauty of her words. "Our grade nine English students had studied her poem and it was a perfect opportunity to celebrate art, the power of female voices, and Black History all at once," she says.

The image of Amanda Gorman is a 3D sculpture made from foam insulation. Broadbent says the display encourages students to recognize the power of words and the potential we all have to make a difference. "Young people need to see role models they can relate to. Seeing Amanda Gorman on the kids' Instagram feeds was so inspiring and topical, it became a perfect moment to encourage them to see how influential a young person can be."



## A Message from the Regional Executive Director

We've just wrapped up February, a month where our schools celebrated African Heritage Month and recognized the important legacy of people of African descent. You'll see highlights of the studies and events throughout this newsletter. Many of those events looks different this year, due to COVID-19, however our schools were creative in the ways they celebrated.

In what would typically be a month of special visitors to our schools, classrooms instead welcomed guests virtually. We remain thankful that we are still able to celebrate events with students in school and with their peers. We recognize that there are many students throughout Canada who do not have this ability and this is a time to be appreciative for what we have.

We are now well into second semester and our focus remains on academic achievement. We continue to work on our three goals outlined in our System Improvement Plan: well-being, literacy, and mathematics. We believe student well-being is at the centre of all our work and the engagement of students through personalized learning and building developmentally positive relationships among staff, students, families, and community, will result in improvements in all academic aspects. You'll see examples of these positive relationships throughout the newsletter, including highlighting our student support workers and student counsellors on pages 5 and 6.

Another way we can help support these goals is to create a strong foundation for school success and lifelong learning beginning with the pre-primary program. Early registration for the 2021-22 school year took place in January, however we are still accepting applications and invite you to share this information with friends and family who may have a child ready to start pre-primary in September. For more information [click here](#).

Sincerely,  
Paul Ash  
SSRCE Regional Executive Director

"We continue working on our three goals outlined in our System Improvement Plan: well-being, literacy, and mathematics.

- PAUL ASH  
SSRCE REGIONAL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



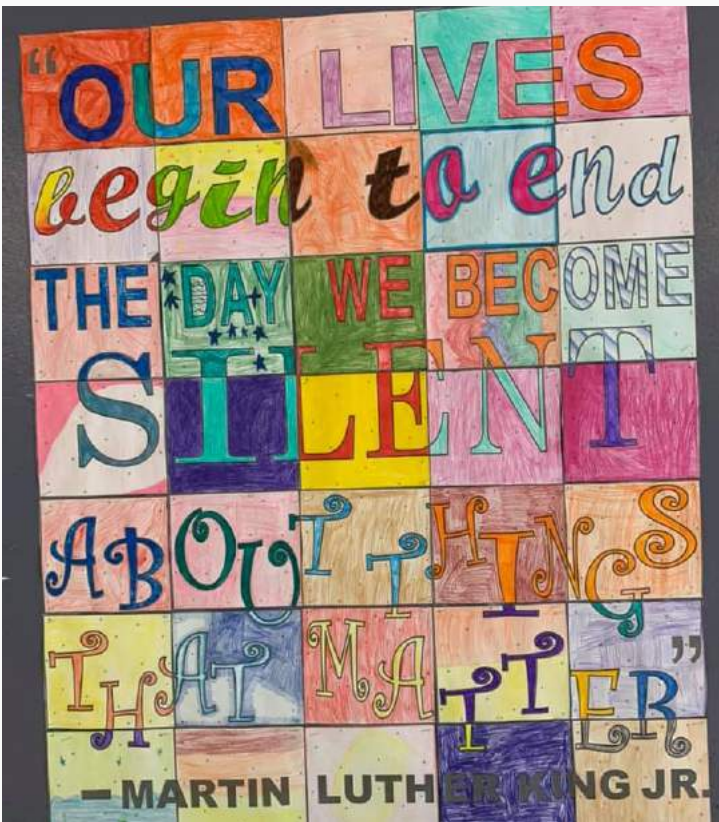
African masks created by grade one students at West Northfield Elementary School.

# Celebrating African Heritage Month



SSRCE staff attend a Pan-African flag raising with officials from the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (pictured above).

Students from Forest Heights Community School raise the Pan-African flag at a small ceremony on February 1st to kick off African Heritage Month (left).



Bluenose Academy students helped raise the Pan-African flag in Lunenburg at the UNESCO flag pole in recognition of African Heritage Month (above).

Artwork by students at Wickwire Academy (left).



Verge House - photo courtesy of the Town of Bridgewater.

Verge House is home to SSRCE's Transition Program, a community based educational program for students aged 18-21 with individual program plans.

## Verge House Receives Heritage Award

Verge House has recently received The Built Heritage Award from the Town of Bridgewater.

This award is presented annually to a property in the Town of Bridgewater by the Heritage Advisory Committee and the DesBrisay Museum Commission. The award commemorates and acknowledges the property's architectural significance to the town. The properties selected for consideration are drawn from a list of buildings pre-1930 and have been determined to have maintained their original construction features and a commitment to their heritage significance.

Verge House is home to SSRCE's Transition Program, a community based educational program for students aged 18-21 with individual program plans and who would benefit from the skills training in the areas of employment, social skills, independent living skills, and functional academics.

Verge House was selected for this award because it is a home that is highly notable for its architectural design. The house is distinguished by its lavish attention to detail, such as the main roof, veranda, dormer, and bay window eaves that are ornamented with modillion and dentil courses.

According to the Town of Bridgewater's Built Heritage file and the DesBrisay Museum, John Nelson, the first owner of the home, was a merchant and died in 1908. His wife then owned the house until 1913. The home was then passed to Ruby McArthur and then Colin McArthur. From 1945-1979, it was owned by Harold Verge, a planning consultant. This is where the name 'Verge House' comes from.

Amanda Deagle, a teacher at Verge House, accepted the award on behalf of SSRCE and Verge House at a recent council meeting.



Left to right: Mayor David Mitchell, Town of Bridgewater, Chris Bedford, Deputy Chair of the Heritage Advisory Committee, and Amanda Deagle, Verge House teacher.

# Thank You

## AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN STUDENT SUPPORT WORKERS



**"As a student support worker, I work together with school staff to promote a school climate that is safe, supportive, and respectful. I strive to achieve improved attendance rates, positive contact with support staff, completion support with school assignments, and reduce the school suspensions and drop-out rate among African Nova Scotian students. When you see students you have supported after they have graduated and they remember the support you gave them to help get them to where they are, it's the best feeling ever!"**

- **Teresa Provo** is an African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker at Parkview Education Centre, Hebbville Academy and Pentz Elementary.



**"As an SSW, we work towards creating solutions to some of the everyday challenges faced by students and families such as: attendance, inequities, achievement gap, poverty, self-esteem, mental health, and culturally responsive pedagogy. I love the diversity of this role and that every day is different. Everything we do in and out of schools is based on relationships, trust, and working together to ensure students are successful and families have what they need, when they need it."**

- **Shelly Whynot** is an African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker at Liverpool Regional High School, South Queens Middle School, and Wickwire Academy.



# Celebrating School Counsellors

In recognition of School Counsellor Week (that took place Feb. 1-5) we would like to introduce you to two of our School Counsellors.



**"Being a School Counsellor for several years, I have seen many challenges occur but these have been equaled by celebrations. The challenges have always taught me something, and the celebrations are reminders of hope."**

**- Jillian Vandertoorn**

*Jillian is a School Counsellor at Newcombville Elementary School.*



**"In my role, I advocate for students, and empower them to advocate for themselves. For me, the most important part of my job is being an unwavering, non-judgemental support for my students."**

**- Beth Noel**

*Beth is a School Counsellor at Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy*

This fall, the Youth Engagement Coordinator worked with **8 schools, 16 school champions, and 139 students** across the SSRCE to create youth-led grants for well-being projects in their school communities. We are really excited to share and celebrate their amazing ideas and hard work.

# UpLift Grants

2020/2021

**Hebville Academy's** grade four class purchased a class set of bikes so that they can explore new parts of their school community and stay active. As BullRun trail stewards they will work with community partners to promote community use of the trail while also keeping the trails safe and clean.



"When we ride bikes we will all get to spend time together and become friends."



The grade 8's of **South Queens Middle School** wanted to create a project that could promote physical activity in their outdoor spaces. They chose to purchase laser tag and archery equipment, and develop an archery range and beach volleyball court. They are excited to support students and their school community to be active outdoors.

"We would be lucky to have a smart environment, but proud to have a motivated, friendly, and free one to create a strong team."

At **Bluenose academy**, the grade 7 outdoor education class wanted new canoes to help them to stay active on the water. Through their mentorship program this group will have time to develop their skills so that when they are in grade 9 they will be able to support younger students to paddle.



"This project will help students gain confidence in themselves, whether they may be life skills, mental health or physical health."



Feeling disconnected from other students due to COVID-19, the grade 6 students of **West Northfield Elementary School** saw an opportunity to connect students and community through video and technology. By purchasing equipment for an audio visual studio, these young leaders will be able to host online events, connect and support their fellow students, and celebrate their school.

"As a grade 6 student I do believe its very important to connect with younger students, but because of COVID-19 we cant. The school video studio would be a great way for the grade 6 students to connect with the younger elementary students in a safe way."

The grade 3's and 4's at **Newcombville Elementary School** love spending time outdoors and hoped an UpLift grant could support them to explore, play, and eat outdoors all year. Together, these classes created a project that would provide sheltered spaces to eat and learn and play.



"We would like to share skills and host competitions with our new equipment. We are willing to put in the hard work to make this project happen."



In an effort to better celebrate and share Mi'qmaq ways of being and knowing, **North Queens Community School** chose to build a wikuom as an outdoor safe space for students. A group of young indigenous leaders and their allies wanted a space where they felt safe to share their experience, culture, and traditions.

"We want to create a space where students feel like one of the people."

The students of **Dr. John C. Wickwire Academy** love to skateboard. That is why their skateboard club wanted to make their group accessible to more students. By purchasing more equipment, suitable for a range of ability levels, these students are inviting all students and staff to learn a new skill, have fun, and be active.



"Skateboard club is a place where I feel safe. I get to choose how I use my time and how I learn new tricks. It gets us ready for the day and it's so fun skating with friends."



The grade 5/6 split class at **New Germany Elementary School** want to create a more engaging outdoor space for younger students. In response to COVID and a need to create outdoor spaces that students can enjoy in all weather, they will be building the Tiger Lair, a forest jungle gym and shelter.

"I want to help the little kids be more interested in our playground."

### Is your school next?

Each school in the SSRCE will be able to access one \$ 5,000 grant before the end of 2023. If you would like your class or school to work towards an UpLift grant contact our Youth Engagement Coordinator Alex Coley by email: [alex.coley@nshealth.ca](mailto:alex.coley@nshealth.ca) or by phone: (902) 521 2986



## Honouring Corporal Paul Davis



*BJHS student, Madi Bezanson and School Safety Resource Officer, Constable Will Creamer, visit the Corporal Paul Davis memorial.*

March 2 marked the 15th anniversary of the death of former Bridgewater Junior High School (BJHS) student, Corporal Paul Davis. In 2014, a monument was established behind BJHS to honour Corporal Davis' ultimate sacrifice.

Typically, BJHS students would observe this day with Mr. Jim Davis, (Corporal Davis' father), members of the military, and the community. With the current COVID restrictions, Grade 5 student, Madi Bezanson, represented her fellow students and visited Corporal Davis' memorial with School Safety Resource Officer, Constable Will Creamer of the Bridgewater Police Service.

Madi has been leaving notes of thanks on the memorial throughout the year and she created a card for Corporal Davis' father which was signed by students in her class.

We thank everyone who continues to make it a priority to honour Corporal Davis.

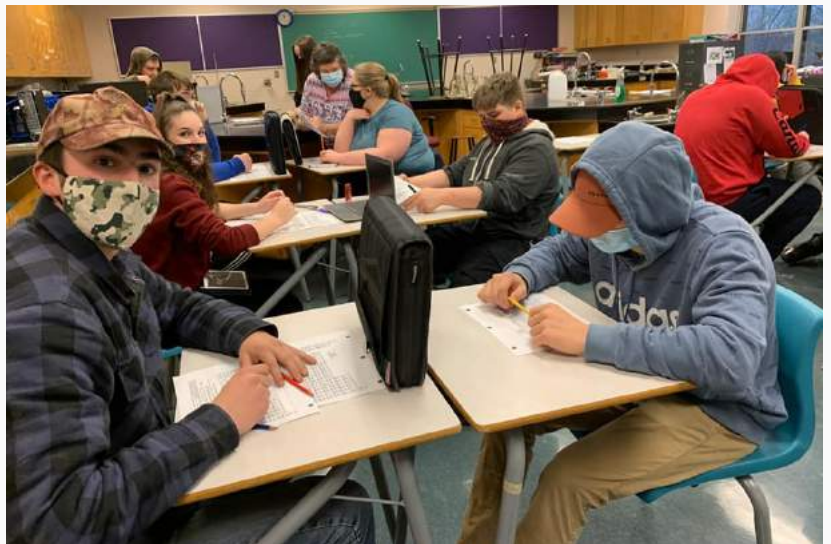


# Spotlight on Schools



*Newcombville Elementary School students wear pink to mark Pink Shirt Day and stand up to bullying (above).*

*Students at New Ross Consolidated School celebrate African Heritage Month by making a freedom quilt with their student support worker, Donna West (pictured left).*



*Forest Heights Community School students in Ms. Jackson's Science 10 class play Periodic Table Battleship (above).*

*Grade two Bridgewater Elementary students proudly display dragons that they created and then wrote stories about (pictured left).*



## 2021-22 Scholarship Program for African Nova Scotian Students



Applications are now available for the 2021-22 Scholarship Program for African Nova Scotian Students.

Grade 12 students entering post-secondary, and those currently attending post-secondary schools, are eligible.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/acs/scholarships-grants>

## Attention Students Grades 6 to 12 with a Business Idea



Have you ever thought about starting your own business? The Minister's Entrepreneurship Award of Excellence is your chance to show your entrepreneurial spirit and get real-world experience pitching your idea and making it a reality.

You can show entrepreneurship in different ways. Your idea could be for a product or service you could offer in your community, a way to solve a social or environmental problem you've noticed, or an invention or app that could make people's lives easier.

The 3 winning students will each receive **\$1,000** to help launch their idea or start their business. They'll also be provided with an opportunity to further their work on their entrepreneurial venture.

The award is open to students in grades 6-12 at a public school in Nova Scotia in the 2021-2021 school year.

Complete the online application by **March 10, 2021**.

**APPLY HERE:** <https://novascotia.ca/entrepreneuraward/>