

Friday Memo
June 3, 2016

Upcoming Events – Bruce Harter

June 4: West County Youth Summit, Richmond Auditorium, 10:00 – 2:00
June 4: Tech Futures Graduation Ceremony, El Cerrito High Theatre, 3:00 PM
June 6: Agenda Setting, Superintendent’s Office, 4:30 PM
June 6: Adult Education Graduation Ceremony, El Cerrito High Theatre, 7:00 PM
June 7: Fun Run, King Elementary, 9:30 AM
June 7: Kinder Graduation, Lake Elementary, 12:30 PM
June 7: Parent University Graduation, Grant Elementary, 6:00 PM
June 7: DeAnza Graduation Ceremony, Richmond Convention Center, 7:00 PM
June 8: Last Day of School, Noon Dismissal
June 8: Kennedy Graduation Ceremony, Richmond Convention Center, 7:00 PM
June 9: Summer Meal Kickoff, Nutrition Center, 11:00 AM
June 9: Richmond High Graduation Ceremony, Richmond Convention Center, 7:00 PM
June 10: El Cerrito High Graduation Ceremony, Richmond Convention Center, 7:00 PM
June 11: Pinole Valley Graduation Ceremony, Richmond Convention Center, 12:00 PM
June 11: Alternative Education Graduation Ceremony, Richmond Convention Center, 3:30 PM
June 11: Hercules High Graduation Ceremony, Hercules Football Field, 6:00 PM
June 13: Governance Subcommittee, Alvarado Room 1, 6:30 PM

Pinole Valley High School Alum’s Entrepreneurship Earns Praise – Marcus Walton

Erin Miller, a PVHS graduate, is featured on Syracuse.com for co-founding Out There Productions, a video production company. Erin was one of our students in the Ivy League Connection program and was a star in the band and jazz band. In the attached article, she credits her music teachers for helping her develop as a student and entrepreneur. The entire story can be read at http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2016/05/erin_miller_leadership.html

Edivate Update – Nia Rashidchi

Edivate is our new on-line Professional Learning (PL) platform. It has multiple resources for teachers and principals to use to improve instructional practice, enhance leadership and management skills, and offer tools for peer-to-peer collaboration and observation.

We are defining professional learning as intentional, diverse, job-embedded opportunities for all staff that enhance content knowledge and practice and result in meeting or exceeding our LCAP student achievement goals.

Our new tagline for professional learning = *Learn... Collaborate... Grow... Achieve.*

We want to keep the board updated on our Edivate work. With that in mind, we have several opportunities to learn how to use Edivate and explore inside of Edivate this summer:

1) During the *Integrating Technology into Daily Practice* Summer Institute (June 9 & 10 or June 13 & 14), all 400 participants will participate in training on Edivate and be prepared to carryout deeper exploration/learning in Edivate this summer.

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

2) Elementary teachers (K-5) have a unique opportunity this summer to take the Edivate on-line training course for My Math. My Math is our newly adopted Common Core Mathematics program that we will fully implement for the 2016-17 school year.

For the first time ever, we will offer our adoption training on-line. WCCUSD STEM Director, Phil Gonsalves, created this on-line training course just for our K-5 teachers. This is new and exciting work for WCCUSD! K – 5 Principals and teachers will be compensated at per diem rate to complete the course.

3) For All, we have the *10 Minutes a Week for 10 Weeks Edivate Summer Challenge* (during the Weeks of June 13 – August 15). We want all, who are willing, to practice using Edivate this summer for at least 10 minutes a week throughout the 10 weeks listed above. Staff can do more than that, but we want folks to shoot for at least 10 minutes. Staff will be compensated at the hourly rate for up to 10 hours this summer.

4) Edivate Pilot Schools will meet this summer to share key learnings from their Edivate usage during the 2015-16 school year. Their information will inform our future practice and strategic plan for Effective Edivate usage.

We will continue to keep the board informed about our Edivate progress.

Public Records Log – Marcus Walton

Included in this week's memo is the log of public records requests received by the district. If you have any questions, please contact me.

A young entrepreneur talks about leading her startup and the strengths of Syracuse



Erin Miller, of Out There Productions, holds a check for \$6,500 that she and her team won in April at CompeteCNY, the regional qualifying event for the 2016 New York State Business Plan Competition, hosted by the Blackstone LaunchPad at Syracuse University. Teams of SU students with startup businesses competed for \$60,000 in prizes. Sixteen won awards. Behind Miller is Interim Provost Liz Liddy, who made the presentations at Bird Library. (Courtesy Syracuse University / Stephen Sartori)

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Erin Miller is the CAPCOM of Out There Productions. In traditional terms, her title would be CEO.

There is little traditional about Miller. Her personal mission statement includes going to space -- maybe Mars. Her company's officers all have titles drawn from NASA. Until trips to Mars can take place, Miller is eager to turn her creative energy and education to creating videos for startups or small businesses that need one for their website.

Miller graduated May 15 from Syracuse University with a degree in advertising from the [Newhouse School](#) and a minor in information technology, design and startups from the [iSchool](#).

CNY CONVERSATIONS

She and two other students -- Johnny Rosa and Losa Amara Meru -- founded [Out There Productions](#). They've sketched out a promotional tour of America on a school bus they refurbished into a studio.

Tell me about entrepreneurial influences in your pre-Syracuse years.

Having a fascination for movies helped to form my entrepreneurial beginnings.

I never had enough money to go to the movies, so I would try to find ways to make money. I started making money (in elementary school) writing and drawing comic books with my brother (Connor). We'd sneak into the teachers' lounge and make copies to sell for 25 cents.

In high school, I'd wake up at 5:30 in the morning so I could make big bags of traditionally-popped popcorn.

People ask me: What made you an entrepreneur?

I'm like: I sold popcorn for 500 percent profit in high school ([Pinole Valley High School](#), Pinole, Calif.).

Another operation I ran was washing my friends' cars on weekends. I'd wash their cars for \$10, as long as they would hang out while I do it.

It was the beginnings of an entrepreneur adventure.

What brought you from California to SU?

I wanted to come to a place where people were really proud to go. Syracuse University has an amazing sense of school pride.

What inspired Out There Productions?

I was a sophomore at SU working with the Innovation and Disruptive Entrepreneurship Accelerator. We ran a program that was not restricted to any school and encouraged students to start businesses. We created seed-funding pitch events where people could get funding and guidance and mentorship.

I was a timekeeper at these competitions. The judges kept telling people: You know, I would believe in your idea a little bit more if you had an explainer video that validated your idea and your skills.

I was like: Boom! I could make money from this.

I made videos for ideas, promotional videos for events. Also explainer videos: This is how you make an awesome pitch.

Senior year rolled around; we were sitting with [Michael Gursha](#), who is the entrepreneur in residence at Newhouse. He's a huge mentor.

We were pulling a solid profit with Out There Productions, but we said we didn't know if we could run it after graduation. Maybe we should get a job first.

Michael Gursha said: No. You can't have any Plan B. If you want to do this -- and you can do this -- then you need to do it now.

We started to accelerate Out There Productions.

We have our business plan. We're in the process of getting incorporated. There are a lot of legal matters. For instance, if you're a nomadic company then you have to create DBAs in the states where you'll go. Everybody has different regulations.

Do you have customers lined up or is the road trip a way to find customers?

Both.

[A young entrepreneur talks about leading her startup and the strengths of Syracuse](#)

[Hotel Syracuse owner Ed Riley: 'Sleep deprivation now part of my life'](#)

[Nasir Ali on leadership: Be comfortable doing stuff for the first time, without a roadmap](#)

[Carla Fischer on leadership: Create a healthy dissatisfaction for the status quo](#)

[Casey Crabill on leadership: Don't be afraid to change your mind, but listen and explain why](#)

[All Stories](#)

We have some customers lined up that have regional offices across the United States. For example, they may have 14 offices in the Midwest. So they want some location-based advertising here, here and here.

Some destinations are based on entrepreneurial communities and connections that we've established through the **Global Accelerator Network** and being part of **1 Million Cups**. And using websites, like **Meetup**, to find places where we can connect with entrepreneurs.

We'll combine places we want to go, like New Orleans, with places where we can find work. So we have a road map.

What's your assessment of the Syracuse-area support for entrepreneurship?

Syracuse has an incredible amount of resources. On campus there's a bunch of great organizations. There's the **Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Learning Community**, two floors in a residence hall. That's what got me to working with Idea, the accelerator I worked for.

From that accelerator I got plugged in to different stuff downtown -- **The Tech Garden**, the **Student Sandbox**.

From there, that connected me with different events -- 1 Million Cups and stuff that's going on at **Syracuse Co-Works**. You start meeting people, and you get connected to the entire Central New York ecosystem. Like **StartFast Venture Accelerator**. The **thINCubator** in Utica. And then, down in Ithaca, I worked with **Rosie app**, so I got plugged into Ithaca.

There are so many resources, but they are only as useful as you make them. If you're not going to a bunch of events and shaking hands and passing out business cards, it's not going to be helping you.

Sean Branagan is this father figure of entrepreneurship at Syracuse University. **Linda Hartsock** made me think more broadly about starting a company, getting off The Hill and getting involved in the city. That was important.

To succeed, surround yourself with positive and motivated people.

Give me your advice for anyone who wants to be an entrepreneur.

If you're going to be an entrepreneur, you should do yoga. Because you're doing so much sitting and desk work you really need to stretch and be Zen or else you'll burn out.

A second piece of advice, maybe geared for students: You have the time and the bandwidth to grow yourself personally, professionally and academically at the same time. People underestimate their abilities to grow in different ways.

Third: Surround yourself with the positive squad. I'm always very positive, and it's because I surround myself with positive and motivated people.

If you want to excel and be motivated, you surround yourself with people who have that same mindset. It will rub off to you.

Four: Don't stop talking to people. I go to a ton of events. I meet people. You're not going to remember every name and not everyone you meet is going to affect your life. But for every 50 people you meet, you'll meet one person who you think: Oh my goodness!

My fifth piece of advice: Remember your roots. Being from the East Bay, we were a very low-advantaged school. Even though it was a hard place to get out of, it was the place that molded me as a person. And shaped me as a leader. You learn how to work with a bunch of different people from a bunch of different backgrounds that make up your own identity. There were people speaking different languages, they were from a lot of different socio-economic levels, a bunch of different races.

I was from this crazy melting pot.

From your perspective as a young entrepreneur, what would you like to tell the civic and business leaders of Syracuse?

There really need to be brain bashes between different industries, so that engineers talk to coffee-shop owners, and mayors talk to small business owners or people that knit sweaters and sell them on **Etsy**.

We need to have more creative collisions happening. Those happen when we break down walls among industries. I've learned that everything is connected. It's creating ideas and then running with them. Break down barriers, start conversations.

People with big names should meet people with smaller names who want to have bigger names. People with titles and positions should be talking to little tiny startups and companies, and artisans.

Were you in leadership roles growing up?

I say my first point in leadership was in marching band. When I was in fourth grade, the high school band would march by and I would see the drum major twirling the baton and leading the band. In fourth grade, I knew that was what I wanted to do.

I joined band, started out on clarinet. When I got into middle school, I switched to saxophone, alto and then tenor. When I got to high school, I was switched to trombone. I was upset about that. I thought saxophone was cooler. But my band director (Ed Nesmith) said he wanted to challenge me.

Now, I've played trombone for eight years, and I absolutely love it.

Usually, the drum major is a senior. I got the job when I was a junior. It was really awesome to lead a 150-student band.

I realized as drum major that there's a back end of things and there's a front end of things. So the back end includes the music, the charting of shows. The front end is working with people.

From a young age, I was working with a lot of people, directing them and being in front of a crowd. That taught me how to become a leader. There are people that are part of a group and they're very passionate about what they are doing. But without direction you can't really share that with everybody else.

What did you learn when Mr. Nesmith switched you from sax to trombone?

I learned that nothing is sacred. The first thing that you choose isn't necessarily going to set your path.

I learned that nothing is linear. There's Point A and Point B, and it's not a straight line. There's a squiggly line in-between.

Nez left, and then we got another band director, Erik Radkiewicz. He was extremely strict, and he pushed me. I would never get any sort of praise or a pat on the back just for doing a good job. The only way to earn praise was by going above and beyond, and that has become normalized for me. Going the extra mile sets you apart. That was the first time where I felt that pushing myself would get me somewhere.

What do your parents think of your post-graduation business plan and travel?

I feel like my parents (Joann and Chris Miller) don't 100 percent understand what I'm doing, but I feel that same way, so it's cool. But they're really cool with me running a business out of a bus. They're like: As long as you pay your student loans.

My mom works in the student records office at Mills College in Oakland. She's super positive and really supports what I do.

My dad works for Coca-Cola, but the healthy subset which is called Odwalla. He delivers fruit juice to startups. He had no idea he was delivering to startups. He would call me: You'd really like this place. It had a lot of big windows and everybody looked really trendy and happy.

I was like: What was the address?

He said: I don't know, but it was at the crossroads of this place and this place.

I was like (slaps forehead), Dad, you're delivering juice to Twitter.

My dad's a fly fisherman -- and I'm a better fly fisherman than he is. We don't really talk about that. (Laughs)

We're a pretty tight family. A lot of love going around. Everybody is doing their own thing, but we all support each other.

"CNY Conversations" feature Q&A interviews about leadership, success, and innovation. The conversations are condensed and edited. To suggest a person for CNY Conversations, contact [Stan Linhorst at slinhorst@syracuse.com](mailto:Stan.Linhorst@syracuse.com).

Last week: Nasir Ali says **talent is the new gold and Upstate New York is awash in it**. He has a prescription to nurture and retain entrepreneurial and ambitious students.

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Public Records Request Log 2015-2016
Week Ending June 2, 2016

	Date of Receipt	Requestor	Requested Records/Information	Current Status
32	10/12/15	Fatima Alleyne	Lozano Smith Attorneys / All Invoices, Contracts and Expenses paid beginning January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014	Available documents ready for review
38	10/16/15	Fatima Alleyne	Parcel Tax Measure D for 2012-2013 School Year / All financial and bank statements, invoices, receipts and salaries	Available documents ready for review
40	10/23/15	Fatima Alleyne	Parcel Tax Measure D for 2009-2010 School Year / All financial and bank statements, invoices, receipts and salaries	Available documents ready for review
41	10/26/15	Fatima Alleyne	Parcel Tax Measure D for 2008-2009 School Year / All financial and bank statements, invoices, receipts and salaries	Available documents ready for review
43	11/1/15	Fatima Alleyne	All Contracts, Invoices and Expenditures for Legal services paid by the District for the 2013-14 School Year	Available documents ready for review
48	11/10/15	Fatima Alleyne	Job Descriptions for all Superintendents' positions	Available documents ready for review
56	11/30/15	Fatima Alleyne	2015-16 Legal Services Contracts / Lozano Smith Attorneys- Ramsey & Ehrlich- Bragg Coffin Lewis & Trapp-and Swanson & McNamara	Available documents ready for review
57	11/30/15	Fatima Alleyne	Superintendent's Contract and 2014-15 and 2015-16 Goals	Available documents ready for review
108	5/23/16	Elliot Haspel Education Matters	WCCUSD "Academic Excellence" Mailers / Questions	6/1/16 Response sent via email PARTIALLY COMPLETED
109	5/25/16	Nicolas Roman Chamberlin Associates	Sylvester Greenwood Academy School Project – EIR and CEQA Reports/Documents	Gathering records
110	5/25/16	Patricia Parker ProSpectra Contract Flooring	Coronado Elementary School Project / Stop Notices and/or Notice of Completion filed by Lathrop Construction	6/2/16 Information sent via email COMPLETED
111	5/31/16	Patricia-Anne Watt	WCCUSD & Caliber Schools / Documents and/or Minutes regarding the sale of Adams Middle School	Acknowledgement letter sent
112	5/31/16	Terry Smith Bay Area Builders Exchange	Lake Elementary-Exterior Painting Project / Pre-Bid Meeting Sign-In sheet	Acknowledgement email sent