

Fort Hill High School

500 Greenway Avenue

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FH



Fifth Edition
March/April/May Newsletter

Kindness Week

Due to recent events, including student suicides, mass shootings, and repeated instances of student harassment and bigotry, a group of Fort Hill students felt the need to hold a school-wide Kindness Week with a major focus on school unity in regard to caring and compassion among students. The days of the week were as follows:

Monday: Twin Day/Make a New Friend Day

Students were supposed to twin with a current friend or make a new one.

Tuesday: Tie-Dye Day/Peace Day

Students were supposed to wear tie-dye in support of peace around the school.

Wednesday: Work It Out Wednesday

Students wore workout clothes to signify that they could work out any of their problems.

Thursday: Super Hero Day

Students dressed to resemble a superhero to show strength and the conviction that every person should help one another, especially in times of need.

Friday: Career Day

This day was meant to be a symbol of reassurance, encouraging students to hold true to their dreams, and to show that no matter what, no one could stop them from becoming what they want.

Unfortunately, some of these days were missed due to snow and cancellations. Hopefully, a great event like this will happen again in the future.

Important Events

- **Wednesday, May 9th – Academic Awards Banquet**
- **Monday, May 14th – Scholarship Banquet**
- **Sunday, May 20th – Sports Banquet**
- **Monday, May 21st – Last day for seniors**
- **Tuesday, May 22nd – Graduation (6:50 PM)**
- **Monday, May 28th – No School (Memorial Day)**

Alumni Teachers and Staff



Of the fifteen teachers and staff alumni at Fort Hill High, Ms. Samantha Shipway is one of the more recent additions to the staff. What is the appeal in coming back to teach at one's alma mater? Ms. Shipway, a Fort Hill graduate of the Class of 2010, has joined the FH faculty to teach Earth/Space Science. She originally came from a West Virginia school and then transferred to Fort Hill, where she first filled in as a long-term substitute. Her experiences here at Fort Hill are so much better than at the school from where she transferred. If she had the option to return to Fort Hill as a student now, she would. She commented that teachers care about the students, the school receives technology updates, the teaching style has changed, and there is an abundance of school spirit at Fort Hill. She feels that overall the school has a great atmosphere. When Ms. Shipway was considering where to teach, she weighed the pros and cons of every school, and she chose Fort Hill.

– Maria Salinas



Many memories flash through the mind of an alumnus, Mr. Shawn Lewis, who graduated in the Class of 2001 from Fort Hill High School. Although Mr. Lewis wouldn't want to be a student in high school today, he stated that, if he had to choose, "I would only go to this school." He also said, "I love this school, I love this community, and it feels like... coming home." Mr. Lewis is a proud teacher of Biology and Chemistry and also coaches football. – Gina Franciosi



Ms. Amber Waltz, who is a graduate of Fort Hill High School's Class of 1997, chose to come back and be a part of her alma mater as a gym teacher. Ms. Waltz said that if she could return to Fort Hill as a student now, she would. She stated, "I would be a part of everything I could. I would apply myself and really push to be the best at everything." She would cherish being young and free again and show appreciation to her parents for their overwhelming support. Ms. Waltz said she loves Fort Hill. "It is a great place to work. I'm proud to have graduated from here and to have the opportunity to teach and coach in an atmosphere with so much pride and support from the community," she stated. She loves her alma mater as much as the students that she teaches!

– Abby Datri

After being a proud graduate of the class of 1974, Mrs. Jane Roderick says that yes, after teaching here for nearly three decades, she would most definitely return. She would like to return because the kids are hardworking and respectful to their teachers. She can also tell that they appreciate her efforts and the efforts of the other teachers. These efforts further their students' education. Mrs. Roderick says that Fort Hill feels like home, but in all the familiarity, things have changed over the years, "Our school offers the best resources it can to its students, but the changes to our school are greater than that. Our school, with all its tradition, is also a progressive educational institution. Our school pilots just about every new program for our county school system, which is only one example how the other two county high schools follow the leads of Fort Hill's staff, faculty, and students alike."

–Tiffany Carroll



Student Interns

This spring, Fort Hill welcomed three student teachers and two student counselors. All interns are paired with a mentor teacher or counselor who provides guidance and support while the interns are at the placements. Dr. McKinley and Mrs. Muir, Mrs. Morgan, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Cohen, and Mrs. Twigg are all paired with students who are studying to become teachers and guidance counselors.

In the math department, Dr. McKinley and Mrs. Muir share their student intern, Mr. Jonathan Grams. Mr. Grams originally studied Criminal Justice in high school because he wanted to help people. “[During] my senior year, I realized my knack for math and my ability to translate it to others.” As a new teacher, Mr. Grams says he “has so much to learn when it comes to techniques for teaching, how to connect to students and parents, and much more. I am most passionate about learning how to be a better teacher.” As an intern, the student teaching phase is meant to provide skills and experiences that will prepare the intern for his or her future career as a teacher. When asked what he hopes to learn from his time at Fort Hill, Mr. Grams joked, “Besides how to memorize the names of all my students, I hope to develop an intuition to help my students from different perspectives and approaches to best fit each student.” As there is never a dull moment at Fort Hill High School, Mr. Grams has plenty of experiences to choose from when asked what has made this internship memorable: “I have had the privilege of having two mentors with different styles of teaching. Seeing these different approaches has been a phenomenal experience. Also, I have been able to do lunch and bus duties, giving me valuable experience in my out-of-class responsibilities as a teacher.” Many of his students have praise for Mr. Grams and his teaching. One student remarked, “Mr. Grams is a great tutor. He is happy to take time to work one-on-one with students who need the extra help.”

The English department is lucky enough to have two interns this spring. Mrs. Brown welcomed Mr. Alexander Brant to her freshman English classes. Mr. Brant’s undergraduate studies included U.S. History and English Literature. He decided to pursue these subjects because they are two areas that he is passionate about. Currently, Mr. Brant is pursuing his Master of Arts in Teaching at Frostburg State University. He chose this degree because he “always felt as though teaching were a natural fit for [him].” Mr. Brant is focused on creating a positive learning environment for all of his students, which he says he has learned from watching some of the teachers at Fort Hill. He is also passionate about learning “how to effectively communicate [his] content (English) to students of all abilities.” Mr. Brant had only positive things to say about his time at Fort Hill. He said, “The welcoming atmosphere provided by both students and faculty has made this internship memorable for me. I went from feeling like an outsider to feeling as though I fit in here as a member of the teaching staff.” He also expressed his appreciation of his students: “My students have been a wonderful group, and I have been able to develop a positive rapport with them. I will miss them all when my time here comes to an end.” When asked about the skills he wishes to gain from his experiences as a student intern, Mr. Brant replied, “New and effective educational strategies. I love to learn so I am willing to take suggestions for improvement from more experienced teachers. I have learned so much from my mentor teacher and other faculty members who were kind enough to share their experiences with me.” Mr. Brant could not express his gratitude toward his mentor teacher, saying, “Mrs. Brown has been very helpful, kind, and encouraging to me during my time in her classroom. I am fortunate and grateful for the opportunity to work with her.”

Mrs. Morgan has also welcomed a student intern to her classroom. Ms. Madeline Thomas has a Bachelor’s degree in English with a concentration in professional writing. She chose to pursue this major because she has “always loved to read, and writing has always been one of her strengths.” Because of her teaching experiences during her undergraduate education (she worked Freshman Composition students, Pre-algebra students, and participated in the Shakespeare Festival during her senior year), Ms. Thomas decided to apply to Frostburg State’s Master in the Art of Teaching graduate program last May. Currently, she is pursuing a teaching certification in secondary education with a concentration in English Language Arts. Ms. Thomas is excited and eager to learn more teaching techniques that she can use to engage students in their learning. She is also hopes to learn more about how students learn and the teaching styles that they respond to positively. “I love to have fun in the classroom and with the lessons I teach, and anything I can do to enhance my students’ learning in English class I will do.” When asked about her experiences at Fort Hill, Ms. Thomas replied, “All of my experiences here have been wonderful. As an alumnus, I was excited to return to Fort Hill for my student teaching. The support from fellow teachers has been overwhelming, and I couldn’t be more thankful for their encouragement. Mrs. Morgan has been an amazing mentor teacher who has allowed me to develop my teaching skills with enthusiasm. She has also allowed me to help with the 2017-2018 Sabre yearbook, which has given me even more experience and skills that I can use when I become a teacher. The students here have also made my time here at Fort Hill memorable. I have had the opportunity to work with incredible students, who are intelligent and more creative than I could have ever imagined. I will miss them terribly when I leave, but I know that they will be successful in whatever they choose to do.”

The guidance office has also welcomed two student interns this spring. Mrs. Twigg’s intern, Morgan Hogan, is currently a student at Frostburg State. Ms. Morgan Hogan’s field of study is school counseling. She chose this career path because she loves helping kids. Ms. Hogan is passionate about learning how to best advocate for her students. She hopes to gain skills that she can’t gain by sitting in a classroom, such as building rapport with students and good crisis intervention skills. Ms. Hogan says, “Working with Mrs. Twigg, Mrs. Cohen, and all the students at Fort Hill has been incredible. Everyone is so welcoming, and I feel like I fit in here!”

Ms. Ashley Winter's college major is Psychology. She chose the area of study because she is passionate about helping others who need direction or advice. Ms. Ashley Winter loves learning about a student's life outside of school because she feels that it is important to see more than just academic performance. While working with her mentor, Mrs. Cohen, Ms. Winter also hopes to gain skills so that she will be able to comfort students in their times of need. Because not every problem is solved easily, she wants to know how to handle tough situations. When asked about her time at Fort Hill, Ms. Winter replied, "I love the staff and students. I have experienced a wide array of things that has improved my knowledge of the profession!"

We hope that all of the student interns have enjoyed their placements at Fort Hill this spring. We also hope that we have provided them with the experience and opportunity to learn and grow before they leave. We wish them luck as future teachers and counselors!

Sentinel Newsletter

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