

PARKWAY today

News and information for residents of Parkway School District

Fall 2015

Accredited with Distinction

What's Next for the Spelling Bee Champ?



PLUS

PERFECT
SCORES

TOP
SCHOOLS

TEACHER
AWARDS

Gokul Venkatachalam, West High, Scripps National Spelling Bee Co-Champion

Photo by Mark Bowen/Scripps National Spelling Bee

What's Next for the Spell Champ?

Gokul's future plans include debate, basketball and investment banking.

Photo by Mark Bowen/Scripps National Spelling Bee



► **“High school is just as big an adjustment for me as it is for anyone else,” says Spelling Champ Gokul Venkatachalam, right, who didn’t shy away from his 15 minutes of fame.**

A

s the co-winner of the 2015 Scripps National Spelling Bee, Gokul Venkatachalam has appeared on national television, received autographed tennis shoes from LeBron James, his basketball hero, and been the guest of ABC television personality Jimmy Kimmel. But the 14-year-old freshman at West High says high school is as big an adjustment for him as anyone else.

High School Takes Time

“High school is a lot more time consuming than middle school,” he says. The four hours a day he once devoted to spelling as a West Middle school student are now filled with Latin; Algebra II, his

favorite subject; and the high school debate team; among other things. “Spelling helped prepared me for debate because I learned a lot of vocabulary and acquired public speaking and interview skills.”

This winter, he also plans to try out for the basketball team as a point or shooting guard.

Will he wear the sneakers from LeBron James? “No,” he says, “they are not my size. I don’t wear them. I keep them in a glass box.” Gokul was jubilant when LeBron James’ basketball team, the Cleveland Cavaliers, unexpectedly contacted him last spring and told him the tennis shoes would

arrive. “When the package came in the mail, I invited a friend to open it with me. I was so excited.” James sent two pairs of sneakers, one with a special autographed message: “Congrats on being spelling ‘B’ champ.”

Mom Is Early Coach

Gokul occasionally stays in touch with his Scripps National Spelling Bee Co-Champion, Vanya Shivashankar. But apart from spelling, they have different interests. “She is into music and acting. And I am into business and politics.” After high school and college, Gokul sees his future as an investment banker or business entrepreneur. “I like how entrepreneurship incorporates many skills, including math, public speaking, history, etc.”

What advice does Gokul have for other spellers?

“They need a good sense of phonics before they get into it. Good spellers are good readers. They see the words.”

“My mom was my early spelling coach. She taught me spelling through phonics. In Parkway in first and second grade at Claymont Elemen-

tary, my teachers saw I had a knack for spelling, and they gave me extra words to spell. Parkway really helped prepare me for spelling.”

Gokul has his eye on a few up and coming spellers, but doesn’t want to name any names. “That is a loaded question,” he jokes. For him, spelling is more about the challenge of putting words together, like puzzle pieces, rather than memorization. His favorite word is still “sangfroid,” which means coolness under pressure. That word described his performance during the Scripps National Spelling Bee competition last May. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* dubbed him “Cool Hand Gokul.”

Still Cool Under Pressure

These days, Cool Hand Gokul hopes to build the same sense of community with debate that he experienced with spelling. “That was my favorite part of the bee,” he says, “the sense of community.”

“I wasn’t looking for 15 minutes of fame,” he adds, “but I didn’t shy away once it came. It was a great opportunity. My hard work got me there.”

Up & Coming Spellers



► **Ben Goff, far right, didn’t start entering contests until this year, but he and three other West Middle spellers are piling up the wins. From left, they are Nischal Ada, Katie Montgomery and Yara Levin.**

superintendent's

corner

Tie a Blue Ribbon around the School Marquee

Dear Parkway Community:

We have had a most eventful and successful start of the school year. Once again, Parkway is among the highest performing school districts in the region and Missouri with its Missouri School Improvement Performance (MSIP) score.



**Superintendent
Keith Marty**

Two of our schools—McKelvey Elementary and West Middle—have been named National Blue Ribbon Schools. Oak Brook Elementary has been recognized as a National School of Character. Our sports marketing program has been initiated at North High School. Six virtual education classes taught by Parkway teachers with Parkway's guaranteed curriculum have begun this semester. A new early childhood center has opened on the North High campus with four new classrooms of preschoolers.

But with all these success

stories, Parkway cannot rest on its laurels. Parkway educators, community members and partners who comprise the Project Parkway Steering Committee will continue to hold listening sessions in our schools to gather input on what needs to be part of the new generation of the district's strategic plan, Project Parkway. The successes we enjoy today with student achievement, outstanding teaching, new technologies and vibrant programs are a result of the work of Project Parkway's first five years of implementation. It is our responsibility to prepare students for "an ever-changing world," as stated in our mission.

We recently hosted an international famed author and lecturer, Gary Marx, whose most recent book is *Twenty-one Trends for the 21st Century: Out of the Trenches and into the Future*. Mr. Marx reminded us that the current kindergartners in Parkway will turn 65 in 2075; the current senior class will graduate in May and turn 65 in 2063. We are educating citizens who will be a significant generation of leaders, inventors, teachers, scientists, doctors and productive employees in this century. We have a major responsibility in ensuring they love learning, are curious and confident, have technological skills as well as possess great character and an appreciation of the

"Once again, Parkway

is among the highest

performing school districts

in the region and Missouri."

environment and the bigger world in which they live.

Hopefully, you will join one of our focus groups, or else, provide us with your input on Parkway through <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2347514/Parkway-Schools-Stakeholder-Survey>.

Residents, thank you for your support of Parkway's mission as we continue to ensure that Parkway is not only an outstanding district today, but a district whose future is even brighter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Marty'.

Keith A. Marty, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Parkway High Schools Named Among America's Best



West High has been named one of 'America's Best High Schools' by *Newsweek* with West coming in at a rank of 363. Only nine Missouri high schools were selected.

The *Newsweek* High School Rankings—recognizing the achievements of the best public high schools in the United States for college readiness—have been published for more than a decade. Since 2014, *Newsweek* has published two separate lists in an effort to address the complexities of assessing the "best" high schools when students' socioeconomic backgrounds are taken into account.

Earlier this year, all four Parkway high schools – Central, North, South and West – were honored as the country's Best High Schools by *U.S. News & World Report*. In addition, the four high schools were also named America's Most Challenging High Schools by *The Washington Post* in May.





► Meela Abby and James Wachter from West Middle, a National Blue Ribbon School

School Honors

1 OAK BROOK ELEMENTARY NATIONAL SCHOOL OF CHARACTER

Oak Brook Elementary has been named a National School of Character by Character.org (formerly the Character Education Partnership), a national character education advocate. Oak Brook is one of 18 schools in the state to earn the prestigious distinction this year.



2 BELLERIVE ELEMENTARY LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOL

Bellerive Elementary has been named a Leader in Me Lighthouse School by Franklin Covey Co. This recognition comes because the school has achieved outstanding results in school and student outcomes, by implementing The Leader in Me process with fidelity. It is also because of the extraordinary impact the school is having on staff, students, parents and the greater community.



3 CRAIG ELEMENTARY CHAMPIONS FOR CHARACTER

Craig Elementary has been selected as the 2015 Elementary Champions for Character winner. Cardinals Care, in cooperation with CharacterPlus, sponsors Champions for Character. The award program honors three schools in the area that have a school-wide ethos of service learning.



Two More for Parkway

National Blue Ribbon Schools

Parkway now has 17 National Blue Ribbon Schools.

Two Parkway schools - McKelvey Elementary and West Middle - have been named 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Only eight public schools in Missouri earned the recognition. Parkway now has 17 Blue Ribbon Schools.

"I am extremely proud of the high academic achievement at McKelvey Elementary and West Middle schools," said Superintendent Dr. Keith Marty. "Achieving National Blue Ribbon status was a team effort from teachers, students and parents. Both schools are meeting the needs of all students and demonstrate that all can achieve at high levels."

The U.S. Department of Education will honor 285 public and 50 private schools at a recognition ceremony this November in Washington, D.C.

Earlier this year these schools were honored as Missouri Gold Star Schools, a program conducted by the Missouri Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education.

More than 7,500 schools across the country have been honored as Blue Ribbon Schools since the program was founded in 1982. The state and national programs are part of a larger effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about best school-leadership and teaching practices.

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private elementary, middle, and high schools where students either achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements in closing the achievement gap. The award plaque affirms the hard work of students, educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content. The award flag gracing a school's building is a widely recognized symbol of exemplary teaching and learning.



► McKelvey Elementary is named a National Blue Ribbon School.



Hi MRS MECHAM MA'AM!
I ENJOYED YOUR CLASS SO
MUCH. YOU GAVE YOUR STUDENTS
LATITUDE & RESPECT. IN TURN,
YOU WERE SHOWN WITH RESPECT
& APPRECIATION. IT IS A TRIBUTE
TO YOUR CHARACTER THAT 4 OF
YOUR EX-STUDENTS TALK EQUALLY OF
YOU EVERY 10 YEARS AT OUR REUNIONS.
VERY COOL THAT YOU DO
CHARITY WORK AS YOUR OCCUPATION.
THE ENCLOSED CHRISTMAS CARD
IS INTENDED TO BE 100% USED
ON YOU & YOUR PERSONAL LIFE.
I WOULD BE SAD IF YOU DIDN'T
SEND IT ALL ON YOURSELF.
NEXT TIME THAT YOU'RE IN
KC & HAVE FREE TIME, CALL ME
☺
YOU WERE THE B-E-S-T
TEACHER EVER!!
KEVIN PERZ



▶ Central High's Kevin Perz, right, and his "best teacher ever," Marilyn Mecham, in the 1970s. Far left, Kevin and Marilyn now, after he tracked her down and presented her with a \$10,000 check.

'Thank You, Mrs. Mecham, Ma'am'

Decades after
graduating from
Central High,
Kevin Perz sends
his former
teacher a
thank-you note
and \$10,000 for
being the "best
teacher ever."

When former Central High teacher Marilyn Mecham opened the letter, she started to cry. Her long ago student, Kevin Perz, had written to thank her for the profound impact she had on his life. "You were the B-E-S-T teacher EVER," he wrote. Along with the letter, Kevin enclosed a \$10,000 check.

Kevin had searched for his former food science teacher for some time, and a few days before writing and sending the letter, he had finally found her in Nebraska, and called her. He had hoped she would remember him from her co-ed food science class at Central High in 1976 (she did).

She had been tolerant of his antics, he says, including the respectful moniker he and his friends gave her: Mrs. Mecham Ma'am. In a light-hearted classroom atmosphere that allowed students to enjoy each other as they learned, her lessons were as much about how to treat others as they were about culinary skills.

"It was an exception-

ally fun class," says Kevin, an industrial engineer and president at Dynamic Fastener, a commercial construction supplier in Kansas City, Mo.

"Some of my teachers helped me academically, while others helped me mature as an individual. She helped me get on the right course by treating me with respect and giving me some leeway."

Kevin spent years searching for Mecham without success, and finally contacted the Parkway Alumni Association for help. Jan Misuraca, executive director of the PAA, was able to find Mecham after numerous phone calls and emails to district retirees and grads who may have known her.

Mecham has spent the bulk of her career in Lincoln, working in the nonprofit sector. She is now executive president of the Mentors Foundation, an organization that provides mentors and funding for young people. Kevin's effort inspired her to challenge others to say

thanks—a pay-it-forward way of showing her gratitude for his gesture.

"I told Kevin that the phone call was enough," she says, "but it has had this incredible ripple effect by reminding me that I need to thank people who have helped me, too."

The ripple effect extends across oceans and continents. The story of Kevin and Mrs. Mecham Ma'am went virile on social media when it first appeared last spring, finding fans and publishers in Ukraine and England.

"The response to our story has been incredible," Mecham told the *HuffPost*.

"In an ABC interview, she talked about how appreciative she was to have Kevin spend all that time looking for her to tell her what she meant in his life.

"She is such a deserving person," Kevin told the media. "For me, it is less about the money than the sentiment of, "I enjoyed your involvement in my life and I am better for it. Thank you."



Photo courtesy of David Carson, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

► Friday night football at North High with the new video scoreboard that displays revenue-producing advertisements.

New Video Scoreboards Generate Cash for Student Sports

This fall, North High parents and football fans got their first peek at a new video screen scoreboard installed on the football field. The scoreboard, which displays video ads throughout games, is part of Parkway's new sports marketing plan to generate more cash for student sports and activities. Video advertising has already brought in three quarters of a million dollars, which will be divided evenly among the high schools. Overall, big screen ads will support 28 sports and about 8 different activities like drama and band. "It is a way to generate money for sports and activities without asking taxpayers to dig into their pockets," say Parkway administrators.

North High is the first high school in the district to get the huge new video screen, which is smaller but similar to the kind at college games or Busch Stadium. But other Parkway high schools will soon be outfitted with their own video scoreboards this spring. District officials are keeping a close eye on the type of advertising on the scoreboards. Some of the first ad contracts are with sponsors such as Mercy and Maryville University.

"This program will let parents spend less time fund-raising and more time in the stands cheering," says Mike Roth, Parkway's director of athletics.

Behind the scenes, high school students will also gain valuable technology skills: operating cameras and the control room, showing the games live as well as instant replays. They can watch their work up on the big screen.

"We are so excited to have this opportunity," says Roth. In the future, the district hopes to put video screens in gyms for basketball and at baseball fields.

"This program will let parents spend less time fund-raising and more time in the stands cheering," says Mike Roth, Parkway athletics director.

'Grab and Go' Breakfast Debuts

Parkway's new "Grab and Go" breakfast at selected schools got a thumbs up from St. Louis Rams' player Greg Zuerlein last spring. He appeared at Central Middle to extol the benefits of breakfast.

With Grab and Go, students can select, say, a banana on a food cart at the front door as soon as they enter school. They pay for the item immediately at the register, either with cash or by entering their existing pin number on pin pads to access their meal account funds.

Parkway is piloting the breakfast-cart program at Central Middle, Southwest Middle and Central High. The most popular item so far is the whole grain muffin, says Marlene Pfeiffer, director of Parkway food services. Fruit is also popular: students store it in their backpacks for a late-day snack. Since the Grab and Go breakfast program debuted in spring, sales have increased by 5 to 10 percent. The Grab and Go carts feature the same items as the standard breakfast cafe, including pancakes and eggs, etc. Prices range from \$0.75 for ala carte items to \$2.10 for a complete meal.



▲ Greg Zuerlein of the St. Louis Rams helps kick off Parkway's new Grab and Go breakfast program.

class acts

Parkway students earn perfect ACT and math scores, and computer, science and chess awards.



► **Good-guy hackers: Matt Sauer and Samuel Wait, West High, and Greg Cordover, Central High, won \$10,000 at the recent GlobalHack V competition. Beating 43 other teams, they built a website with an interface that allows users to find information on traffic tickets.**

A team of three students from Parkway's Spark! entrepreneurial program won \$10,000 at the recent GlobalHack V competition. The competition challenges students to solve civic minded problems through technology. **Matt Sauer** and **Samuel Wait**, West High, and **Greg Cordover**, Central High, built a better website for traffic tickets. Beating out 43 other teams, the Parkway team's website includes an interface that allows users to find out how much their fine is, how to contest the ticket, how many days until they get a court appearance, etc. They are the only team in the history of the competition to place in two categories—winner of the high school division and third in the overall competition.

Robotics Success

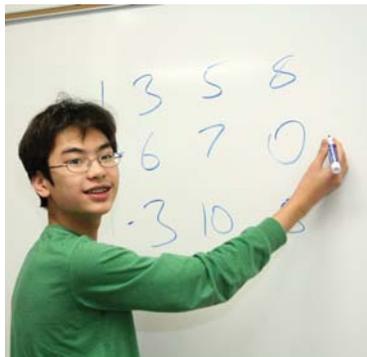
River Bend Elementary was recently awarded a \$1,000 grant as part of the Dannette Ward Science Education Grant, sponsored by Monsanto. The grant will serve to initiate the school's first STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) program on robotics for students in kindergarten to fifth grade.

River Bend also received a "portable" 3-D printer, made available by Monsanto's Automation department. Teachers and students alike were awed by the 3-D printed items, including an adaptor that converts any cell phone into a portable microscope.

The school qualified to apply for the grant by hosting a Science Demo Day, held in conjunction with the school's science fair.



► **River Bend Elementary: a \$1,000 check**



Another Perfect Score for Math Whiz Lenny Chen

Put away your calculator and sharpen your pencils. Now try to answer this question in less than two minutes: "Four consecutive odd numbers have a sum of 504. What is the median of the numbers?" This is the type of question **Lenny Chen** has been answering correctly, time and again, in regional and national math competitions. A ninth grader at West High, Lenny added up perfect scores for three consecutive years at West Middle, all the while not breaking a sweat as he followed competition rules: "No calculators. No talking. Your only tools are a pencil, a sheet of paper, and your noggin." Last spring, Lenny cinched his latest perfect score in a regional competition of Mathcounts, which is structured like a spelling bee but concentrates on such topics as probability and statistics, geometry, algebra and equations. For two consecutive years, he represented Missouri in the national competition of Mathcounts in Boston, MA. "No one else at West Middle – or in Missouri, as far as I know-- has ever achieved perfect scores three years in a row in the Missouri Math League Contest," says **Joe Lee**, Lenny's former coach and West Middle math teacher. Lee expects to see more perfect scores from Lenny as a high schooler. Stay tuned for further developments.

Teacher Ruth Knop Receives Presidential Award for Excellence



► **Ruth Knop**

West High School's **Ruth Knop** is a recipient of the prestigious Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

President Obama named 108 mathematics and science teachers as recipients of the award in July. This year's awardees represent all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories,

and the Department of Defense Education Activity schools. The educators received their awards at a Washington, D.C., event in the summer.

The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is awarded annually to outstanding K-12 science and mathematics teachers across the country. The winners are selected by a panel of distinguished scientists, mathematicians, and educators following an initial selection process done at the state level. Each year the award alternates between teachers teaching kindergarten through sixth grade and those teaching seventh through 12th grades. The awardees named this year teach

seventh through 12th grade.

Winners of this Presidential honor receive a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation to be used at their discretion.

They also are invited to Washington, D.C., for an awards ceremony, as well educational and celebratory events, and visits with members of the Administration.

The decision to teach high school students was one of the easiest and most rewarding moments of Knop's life, she says.

"Ever since I taught piano lessons when I was in high school and college, I knew I wanted to be a math teacher because I loved kids and numbers. My goal has always been to do what it takes to make each child successful."

Chess Champions



► **Chess champs, Eli Holt, left, and Abhiru Palhan, Southwest Middle**

Eli Holt and Abhiru Palhan represented Southwest Middle at the recent K-12 State Chess tournament in Columbia, Mo. Eli won state co-champion for seventh grade and Abhiru won second place for sixth grade. **Grace Foo** and **Sam MacHaffie** are the coaches.



Super Safe Buses

Parkway earned 93 percent on the annual school bus safety inspection from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Two Parkway Students Ace ACT College Entrance Exam

Two Parkway students recently learned they scored a 36, the highest possible score, on the ACT college admissions and placement exam.

Typically, less than one-tenth of one percent of students who take the ACT earn a perfect score of 36. The exam is offered at no cost to Parkway juniors. The perfect scorers are **Derek Berndt**, a South High senior, and **Crystal Luo**, a West High senior.

Berndt plans to pursue chemical or nuclear engineering in college. "I want to thank my teachers, especially Mrs. Scott and Mr. Kozeny, for always challenging me to improve as a thinker and as a person," he says.

Luo says she will likely study science in college.



► **Perfect ACT scores: Derek Berndt, South High; and Crystal Luo, West High**



► Shenandoah Valley Elementary Teacher Susan Wolk with student Diamond Robinson

New Progress Reports for Elementary Students

Elementary school parents have noticed a significant change in report cards this November. Single letter grades have been replaced with meaningful feedback from the teacher on each child. The change comes after years of studying grading practices. Parkway teachers and staff found that standard grade cards did not effectively communicate how each child is doing in school. The new elementary progress report is designed to communicate more clearly, more personally and in a way that truly tells the story of each child's learning.

Progress is communicated for character, English language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, art and music. Notice some of the comments from the teacher on this student's progress in math below.

SAMPLE ELEMENTARY PROGRESS SUMMARY		
	Student.... Alise Smith	PROGRESS KEY: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ON TRACK to meet or exceed end-of-year expectations <input type="checkbox"/> NOT YET ON TRACK to meet expectations
	Teacher.....	
	Grade.....	
	Date..	
MATH		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Understands grade level mathematics topics and concepts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Makes sense of and solves problems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develops and analyzes mathematical explanations

Comments from teacher:

In our second unit this trimester, students learned how to add and subtract within 100 using an efficient strategy of their choice. Learners also solved for unknown numbers in equations and word problems. Alise scored 88 percent on the post assessment. I notice that when Alise writes a subtraction equation, she often writes the greatest number underneath the smaller number in order to avoid regrouping. This incorrect equation results in an inaccurate answer. I also notice that when Alise writes the time on an analog clock, she often points the hour hand directly at the number without noting the minute hand's position. We will continue to work on these skills in the future.

Rise & Shine with Parkway!

You are invited to join school and community leaders in celebrating Parkway's successes at the Parkway Community Leadership Breakfast, hosted by the Parkway Alumni Association. Be among the first to hear our vision for our students' future.

- Dec. 2, 2015
- 7 to 7:30 a.m.
Coffee Bar
- 7:30 to 9 a.m.
Breakfast
- St. Louis Marriott West
- 660 Maryville Centre Dr.
- St. Louis, MO 63141

Proceeds benefit programs that enrich the lives of students.

Call (314) 415-8074 for more information.

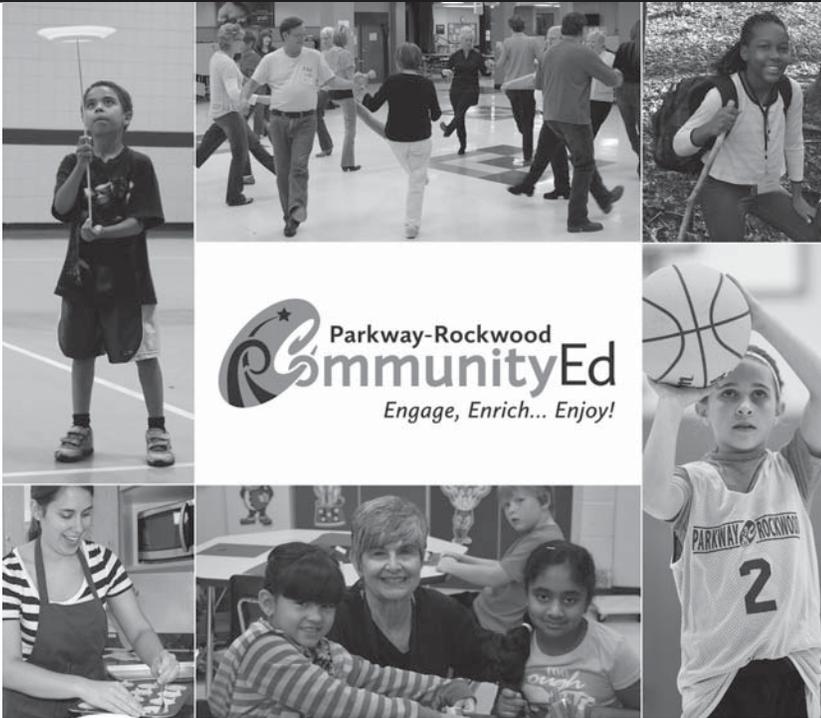


rise & shine

Parkway Community Leadership Breakfast

Dec. 2, 2015

St. Louis Marriott West
660 Maryville Centre Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63141



**Parkway-Rockwood
CommunityEd**
Engage, Enrich... Enjoy!

Community Ed Connects Learning & Fun

The first year of the Community Ed partnership between Parkway and Rockwood School Districts is in the books – and what a year it was! From sports to enrichment to outdoor education and more, Community Ed is connecting youth, adults and families to learning and fun.

In addition to continuing to offer many community favorites, new programs in Parkway this year include a girls recreational volleyball league, boys flag football league and expanded programs for adults and families. Looking a little further ahead, planning is already underway for next school year as the Adventure Club School-Age Care program will expand to all 18 Parkway elementary schools (registration opens in January).

“The Community Ed partnership has provided enhanced and expanded opportunities for Parkway residents to stay active, engaged and learning,” says Mike Seppi, director of community ed, “and we’re excited for this to continue for years to come.”

Parkway Golden Key Card

Parkway Golden Key Card members now receive unlimited 50% discounts off all qualifying Community Ed programs. Membership is free to all Parkway residents age 60 and older. Request a Golden Key Card online at www.parkwayschools.net or call the Community Ed office at 636-891-6644 for more information.



Stay Connected with Community Ed

Keeping up-to-date with Community Ed is just a like, follow or click away!



@Parkway-Rockwood
Community Ed



@PRComEdDirector



@PRComEd



@Parkway-Rockwood
Community Ed



Sign up for e-news via
the Community Ed website

Parkway Earns Top Marks on State Report Card

The grades are in, and Parkway Schools again earned a high score on the state report card! Parkway is also ranked as one of the top performing school districts in St. Louis County.

Parkway earned 98.6 percent on the 2015 Annual Performance Report (APR) released recently by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Parkway ranked among the top 10 districts in the state with over 1,000 students.

Missouri’s rating system is based on a number of factors including academic achievement, subgroup achievement, high school readiness (K-8), college or career readiness (K-12), attendance rate and graduation rate.



Parkway Receives AAA Financial Rating

Standard and Poor’s Rating Services recently reviewed Parkway’s finances and reaffirmed its AAA rating, the highest available for school districts. Parkway is one of only four Missouri school districts to receive the AAA rating.

The ratings reflect the following:

- Participation in the broad and diverse St. Louis regional economy;
- Very strong income and extremely strong market value;
- Strong financial position, supported with strong reserves; and
- Low debt levels.

Parents as Teachers Celebrates 30 Years

The Parents as Teachers program in Parkway is celebrating 30 years! Currently, 2,027 families that include 3,015 children receive home visits, developmental screening and participate in family activity sessions.

Parents as Teachers is designed to support parents in the important role of their child's first teacher. Study results indicate that children of families that participate in Parents as Teachers are better prepared for school success as they enter kindergarten.

With funding from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and The Danforth Foundation, Parents as Teachers began in 1981 in Missouri as a pilot project for first-time parents of newborns. Recognizing the program's benefits and cost effectiveness, the Missouri legislature provided state funding in 1985 to implement Parents as Teachers programs in



all Missouri school districts. Since 1985, Parents as Teachers has expanded to all 50 states and six other countries.

New Preschool in Parkway

Teachers are degreed and certified.

Check out Parkway's new preschool at 12790 Fee Fee Road, next to North High School.

The preschool opened in August and features the following:

- Degreed and certified teachers
- Developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Individualized learning
- Focus on learning through play
- Children build foundations for kindergarten



▶ **The focus is on individual learning and developmentally appropriate curriculum.**

Families can register at the Parkway Early Childhood Center; 14605 Clayton Road; Ballwin, MO 63011.

This is Parkway... *at a glance*

▶ **"Accredited with Distinction" by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)**

▶ **Recognized for "Distinction in Performance" by DESE for 15 consecutive years**

▶ **17 U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards**

▶ **ENROLLMENT**
Enrollment: 17,100
18 elementary schools
Five middle schools
Four high schools
One non-traditional high school
Two early childhood centers

▶ **FINANCES**
2015 Residential Tax Rate: \$4.2789 per \$100 of assessed value

▶ **EMPLOYEES**
Teacher Salaries: \$63,951 (Parkway Average) \$46,756 (Missouri Average)

▶ **Percentage of certified staff with master's degree or above:**
Parkway: 81.2%
Missouri: 58.9%

ACHIEVEMENT

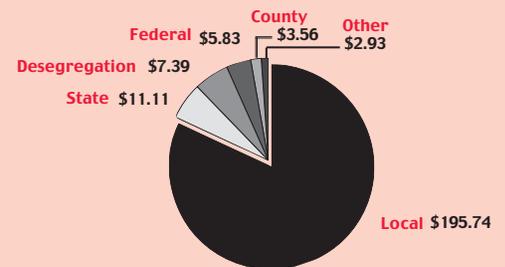
▶ **National Merit Scholars = 50**

▶ **ACT Composite Test Score**
Parkway: 23.1
Missouri: 21.8
USA: 21

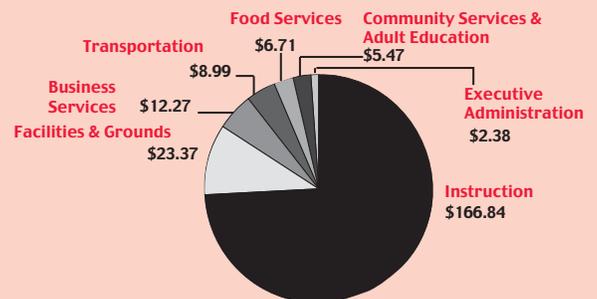
▶ **Parkway gives the ACT to all juniors at no charge.**

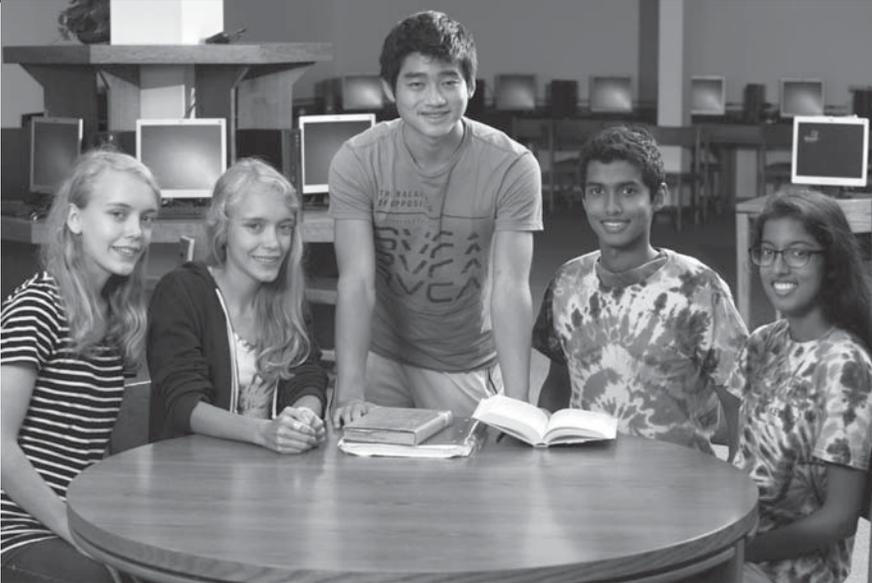
▶ **SAT Combined Test Score**
Parkway: 1916
Missouri: 1771
USA: 1497

2015-16 Operating Revenue: \$226.56 million



2015-16 Operating Expenditures: \$226.03 million





► From left, Central High National Merit Semifinalists, Naomi and Abby Urnes; Josh Yang; Gajan Kumar and Sharanya Kumar. Josh also started a tutoring program in Ferguson, Mo. Both sets of twins, above, are tutors. Washington University students have joined the tutoring group as well as West High and North High students.

Fifty Students Named National Merit Semifinalists or Commended

Fifty Parkway students have either been named National Merit Semifinalists or Commended in the 2015 National Merit program. The Parkway semifinalists scored at least 214 out of a possible 240 on the PSAT test to earn their distinction.

National Merit Semifinalists

Here are the Parkway semifinalists:

Central High: Gajan Kumar, Sharanya Kumar, Simran Panwar, Eleni Schmitt, Abigail Urnes, Naomi Urnes, Jennifer Wayland, Joshua Yang, Jinghang Zhang.

North High: Justin Camie, Noah Hartman, Daniel Lev, Emily Schaff.

South High: Derek Berndt, Shane Blair, Sara Jackson, Alexander Kloppenburg, Sai Pinni, Kevin Sittser, Rachel Zhang.

West High: Jordan Beveridge, Anthony Carroll, Crystal Luo, Matthew Petersen, Joseph Ross, Clara Sun, Samuel Wait, Helen Wojdylo, Stephen Zhang.

Commended Students

An additional 21 Parkway students were also Commended in the 2015 National Merit program. They placed among the top five percent of more than 1.5 million students. They appear below.

Central High: Nathan Dettlebach, Christopher Gu, Samuel Schaeffer, Lucas Shanker, Bobbi Throckmorton, Jessica Volpe.

North High: Adwoa Imbeah, Phillip Kheyfets.

South High: Karis Chapman, Caitlin Klopfer, Christopher Mark, Ishica Zaman.

West High: Shannon Anderson, Andrew Impastato, Julia Li, Milan Malhotra, Rachel Osborne, Kristen Petersen, Rebecca Su, Joan Tao, Mark Umstead.

The National Merit Scholarship program is an annual academic competition, which identifies seniors who represent the top of their graduating class. This is measured by their performance on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), which measures the likelihood of success in college. Students take the PSAT as juniors. Of the 1.5 million juniors who take the PSAT, only 16,000 advance to the semifinalist category. For additional information, visit www.nationalmerit.org.

Your School Board

Putting faces with names

Chris Jacob
President



Dee Mogerman
Vice President



Kim Appelbaum



Tom Appelbaum



Beth Feldman



Deborah Hopper



Sam Sciortino



The board meets at 7 p.m. on designated Wednesdays at Central Middle. For more information on board policies or meetings, which are also streamed live, please visit our website at: www.parkwayschools.net/boe/boe.cfm.



455 N. Woods Mill Rd.
Chesterfield, MO 63017
www.parkwayschools.net

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
St. Louis, MO
Permit No. 2239

ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER

Calendar

www.parkwayschools.net/pages/ParkwayC2/News__Calendars

Nov. 25–27
Thanksgiving holiday

Dec. 24–Jan. 4
Winter break

Please Note: Because Parkway mails this publication by carrier route to save postage costs, some individuals who do not live in Parkway may receive this mailing.

Parkway Today is published twice annually by the Communications Department.

Parkway School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. If an otherwise qualified individual with a disability needs accommodations to attend or participate in a school or district activity, please contact the staff member responsible for that event at least four (4) business days in advance. Questions, concerns, or requests for information/assistance can also be directed to the designated district coordinator for each applicable federal law or by calling (314) 415-8100.

Parkway's Mobile App

Check out Parkway's free mobile app which ranks among the top 100 education apps in the Apple App Store. More than 15,000 people have downloaded the app.



Here are prominent features:

- Choose your news and notifications;
- Personalize your calendar; and
- Deposit money in your child's lunch account directly from your mobile device.

Download it today for free at the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

