

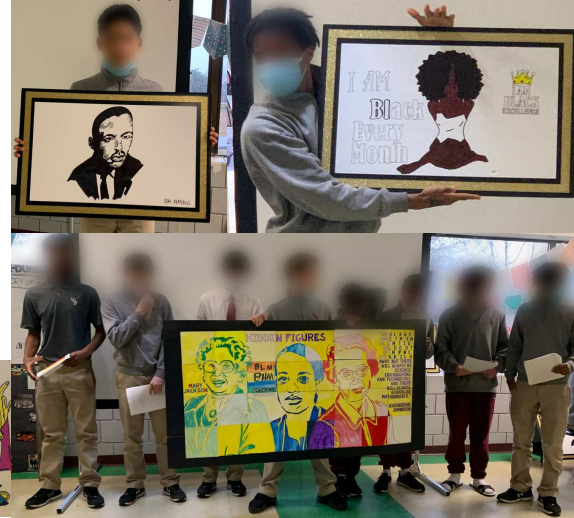
CHECKS AND BALANCES

The first quarter of 2022 was a busy one for Hillcrest Academy! During the first quarter, the site went through the following audits:

- Disability Rights Audit - This audit consisted of ensuring that students rights are being met
- CARF "Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities" recertification - This is HCA's accreditation which demonstrates our commitment to continuously improving service quality and to focus on the satisfaction of the persons served
- ODJFS Recertification - Our licensing, "Ohio Department Jobs and Families Services," conducted their recertification review to ensure that we are meeting our students needs and providing high-quality services to our population

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

At ROP-HCA our young men created a Black History Program that was interactive, presented great art, essays, and original rap performances. Every teacher had contributions completed and/or performed by members of their class. Whether it was reciting poems from Langston Hughes, researching famous Black Pioneers in the fields of science, medicine, sports, civil rights, and others, our young men highlighted the contributions of these great people. They even created original art work inspired by Black inventors, mathematicians, and activists. The students here at ROP-HCA created unique and personal narratives and raps based on their own experiences. The program was rich in nature and provided many examples of why our diversity makes us stronger. Well done! Well executed and well performed!



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

International Women's Day (IWD) is a global holiday celebrated annually on March 8 to commemorate the cultural, political, and socioeconomic achievements of women. It is also a focal point in the women's rights movement, bringing attention to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence and abuse against women. Women of the world want and deserve an equal future free from stigma, stereotypes, and violence; a future that is sustainable, peaceful, with equal rights and opportunities for all.

This year, Hillcrest Academy (HCA) students and staff recognized the women that work at HCA. To prepare for the event, we asked for all staff to wear pink or purple to recognize the special women in their life. This celebration kicked off with a raffle for a T-shirt with the statement "The Future is Female." There were several poetry, essay and freestyle presentations from staff members and students outlining the most important women in their life and how that person has shaped them into the person they have become. A video with pictures of staff members at various events engaging with students from the past year was also viewed.

Everyone was given the opportunity to decorate or write a note about the most influential women in their life. These notes are now proudly on display in the dining hall. The ceremony closed out with flowers and chocolates for female staff and cake for the entire site. HCA appreciates our female staff members who are dedicated to improving the lives of youth and being such powerful role models!

RECOGNIZING OUR SOCIAL WORKERS

Organizations across the country are celebrating March as National Social Work Month and Hillcrest Academy (HCA) is no exception. In celebration of these amazing individuals, HCA students presented their own written testimonials for the wonderful social workers who make a difference everyday in their lives. These students not only wrote some very kind words, but read them aloud for all members of the campus to hear.

These testimonials were very well written and it was evident that our social workers have done remarkable work with our students. Students spoke about the life changing skills and attitudes that their social workers have helped them develop and how their lives have been changed for the better.

We are so very lucky to have the talents of these wonderful professionals here at HCA. Much appreciation to Ms. Duwell, Ms. Young, Mr. Elliott, Ms. McKinney and Ms. Bowman!






NATHAN ELLIOTT
EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
JANUARY 2022


Over the past month Mr. Elliott has stepped out of his comfort zone to support the education department. With the absence of a principal, Mr. Elliott has been a support to all of the education staff and has taken the lead on several projects to improve the appearance and functionality of the school. He has also spearheaded the morning announcements. Despite not having a principal for graduation, Mr. Elliott was able to make the necessary adjustments to the event with very little notice to ensure that our largest graduating class so far had the ceremony they deserved. For all that you do for the students and the staff, we are honored to name you employee of the month.

You Make a Difference
"Never forget that you are one of a kind. Never forget that if there weren't any need for you in all your employees to be on this earth, you wouldn't be here in the first place. And never forget, no matter how overwhelming life's challenges and problems seem to be, that one person can make a difference in the world. In fact, it is always because of one person that all the changes that matter in the world come about. So be that one person." — R. Buckminster Fuller

Brittany Bowman
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
February 2021
DATE



Improving the lives of youth




NICOLE WILSON
MANAGER OF THE QUARTER
JANUARY - MARCH 2022


Ms. Wilson was nominated for the "Manager of the Quarter" for the first quarter of 2022. During the first quarter, Ms. Wilson recruited a record amount of staff for Hillcrest Academy. In addition to recruitment, she has spent countless hours problem-solving ways to retain specific staff members and finding creative ways to help boost staff morale, which has included reworking our items for the Ram Bucks Store and department t-shirts. She always has a positive attitude and welcomes new staff with such enthusiasm. Despite having several HR Duties, Ms. Wilson has always been willing to lend a helping hand when it comes to covering certain tasks and improving the care closest for our students. Throughout the first quarter, she has also supported our sister site, Silver Oak Academy, and is always quick to help any colleague in the company. Hillcrest Academy thanks you and appreciates your hard work and dedication.

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Brittany Bowman
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
April 4, 2022
DATE



Improving the lives of youth




ANGEL HIGGINS
EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
FEBRUARY 2022

Over the past several months, Ms. Higgins has filled in supporting multiple departments. As a coach counselor she was substituting classes, supporting custodial, assisting in the kitchen, supervising visitation, and teaching a ninth block class. Although she had never been a teacher before, she settled into the role so well that she was permanently moved into the education department as a paraprofessional. She has continued to support other departments whenever needed while still fulfilling her duties in the classroom to educate our student athletes. Ms. Higgins has a permanent pleasant disposition and is willing and eager to help out in anyway that she can. She is the ultimate team player! It is "My Pleasure" to name her employee of the month.

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Brittany Bowman
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
March 9, 2022
DATE



Improving the lives of youth

SHOPPING AT RAMS-R-US

At ROP-HCA we want to always end the year on a high note. Given the desire to create an overwhelmingly positive school culture, our staff has decided to implement a store where our students can spend the RAM bucks they earn throughout the month when they are "caught being good".

These items both tangible and intangible are designed to create a culture that is more positive and therefore more rewarding. Our hope is to have it all planned and implemented so that our students can begin to shop at the end of April. Whether the students purchase personal hygiene items, ROP watches and other gear or simply choose to have lunch at the ARA with the staff member of their choice, we want to continue to build a culture that allows students to be rewarded. These rewards are given for demonstrating their character strengths all the while maintaining the integrity of the program designed to manage and strengthen their behaviors when they return to the community where they live, work and attend school.



I'M LISTENING

Hillcrest Academy students had the opportunity to engage in an off-site art therapy project that included other local teenagers, artists, and Cincinnati Police Officers. The new project, called 'I'm Listening,' is a collaboration between the Cincinnati Police Department and artist Brent Billingsley to work with youth around the city using the power of art therapy. This project will create a collaborative mural to strengthen police-community relationships. In addition, the 'I'm Listening' project will cover crucial life lessons for kids and talk about the importance of seeking out good mentors. The artwork created in the workshops will be combined into a large-scale portable mural to be displayed at a venue. The image will be Law Enforcement engaging the members of a community in either a spiritual, meaningful, playful, or heartfelt and always positive manner. Artist, Brent Billingsley said, "One very important thing that I have witnessed as a mentor, father, community advocate and Behavioral Health Specialist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital is that presence matters. And the more that you engage a child that is in crisis, the better they will respond."

'I'm Listening' continues every Saturday through May. HCA students are looking forward to participating in this event for many weeks to come and also took the initiative to invite the artist and CPD officers on site to engage in art projects and other activities with them.



WINTER SPORTS AWARDS

On Wednesday March 23, 2022, Hillcrest Academy celebrated the conclusion of the 2021-2022 Winter Sports season with a Sports Banquet to honor our basketball team, wrestling team, coaches, and supporters. The banquet was attended by our students, staff, teachers, and administration. Awards were presented to the RAMS Basketball Head Coach, Marcus Carroll along with Assistant and JV Coach Kendall Green. Awards were also presented to Wrestling Head Coach John Simon and Assistant Coach Mike Dillon. Special Awards were presented to Christopher Morris and Brooke Young for their invaluable contribution to the basketball team. Both Mr. Morris and Ms. Young operated the scoreboard and were in charge of the record keeping. A RAMS Award was presented to a student on each team that the coaches feel embodied the traits of respect, attitude, motivation and spirit through out the entire season. The HCA family is absolutely proud of our teams, coaches, and supporting staff for all of their hard work, dedication, and the commitment to improving the lives of our youth. Now, to kick-off a great Spring Sports Season with the RAMS Baseball and Track Team!



SPELLING BEE

On Friday, March 25th the student athletes at Hillcrest Academy in Cincinnati, Ohio, set aside the afternoon 6th bell to engage in the heavily anticipated annual Spelling Bee. Tryouts had been held several days prior, leaving the top ten contenders to battle it out for the best. Students demonstrated skills that had been the result of hard work, memorizing multiple pages of words like gregarious and megalomaniac.

As the hour wound down, two out of the ten competitors remained. The final contestants exhibited stamina and nerves of steel standing against round after round. Applause sounded off as the last contestant correctly spelled his word and emerged a winner. The courage and mental fortitude the participants presented to the crowd gave students, who might not otherwise shine on an athletic field, an example of keys for personal success and academic excellence that will illuminate their paths to achievement.