

# The Catholic Light

DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

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## Full STREAM Ahead!



### Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System invests \$1 million in STREAM initiative

SCRANTON – While many parents and students have already heard of STEM education, the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System is now taking its initiative even further.

In an ongoing effort to best prepare students for the 21st century and beyond, the Diocese of Scranton has been developing a new vision for Catholic education.

One of the key components of this new vision will be the integration of the STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) model of learning into the curriculum of all schools in the Diocese of Scranton Catholic School System beginning this academic year.

In order to equip educators with the tools necessary to be successful, the Diocese of Scranton has announced an investment of \$1 million to incorporate STREAM into the curriculum of all 20 Catholic Schools by May 2022.

“STREAM is forward thinking, student-centered and cross-curricular,” Jason Morrison, Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/Chief Executive Officer, said. “It goes beyond traditional STEM programs. By including the Arts and Religion, we are adding creativity, communication and social responsibility rooted in our Catholic identity.”

Several resources have already been purchased for the initial implementation phase of the new STREAM initiative. BeeBots and Spheros robotics have been purchased to provide students an opportunity to practice computer coding and each school has already received PadCaster technology which will allow students to use an iPad to engage in video production, journalism and public speaking.

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# The Catholic Light

(ISSN 0164-9418)

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE  
DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

## DIOCESE OF SCRANTON MISSION STATEMENT

We, the Catholic community of the Diocese of Scranton, are called through Baptism to imitate the servant leadership of Jesus Christ. In union with Our Holy Father, the Pope, we proclaim the Gospel faithfully, celebrate the sacraments joyfully, and boldly promote life, justice and peace in northeastern and north central Pennsylvania.

## POLICY STATEMENT

*The Catholic Light* is our official diocesan journal. The publication of notices, regulations and extra-synodical decrees in said paper constitute legal promulgation for all the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton, Clergy and Laity.

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# Excitement builds as STREAM initiative gets off the ground

*Continued from page 1*

“National research has shown that the top areas of focus for K-12 schools are encouraging individual and critical thinking, preparing children to successfully enter the job market as well as preparing students for college,” Kristen Donohue, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, said. “STREAM will accomplish this goal for our students and more. Through a hands-on, project based approach students will also develop the critical skills of working collaboratively and effective communication.”

Over the course of the summer, many Diocesan teachers have already received professional development and training in STREAM-related concepts.

“As we officially launch our STREAM initiative, I am confident that this effort will fulfill our promise of excellence and allow each of our students to achieve his/her God-given potential,” Bishop Joseph C. Bambera said.

At All Saints Academy in West Scranton, administrators and staff have already started to embrace the STREAM initiative. Students as young as pre-kindergarten are now using BeeBots, small devices that resemble a bumble bee, which help teach computer coding techniques. Older students have STREAM periods several times a week.

“As we’re getting further and deeper into it, it’s more the idea that we don’t want to stick with the specific periods, we want to let them do it in their classrooms and make it

**Victoria Harvey and Larry Fuller, first grade students at All Saints Academy in Scranton, work on building a Lego volcano during a STREAM lesson on Friday, September 20, 2019. Before beginning construction, the students first sketched out their designs before the building process began.**



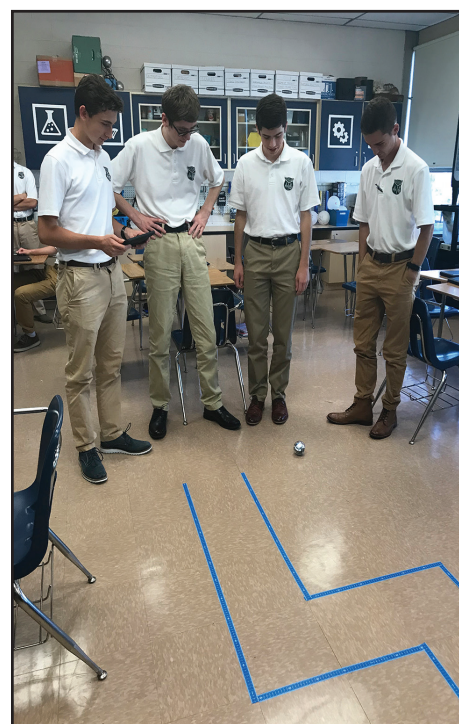
part of the curriculum,” All Saints Academy Principal Brittany Krupski said.

On a recent visit to the school, first grade students were using Legos to build volcanoes in several different groups. As part of STREAM, before they started, the youngsters’ sketched designs like an engineer would, learned about how God created all things including volcanoes and formulated plans for their eruption using vinegar and baking soda.

“It truly gives them the tools they need to succeed. We’re trying to teach them about the 4 C’s, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication, and these tools that were given to us allow us to head in that direction. They aid our teachers in making the lessons more interesting and more interactive,” Krupski said.



**Teacher Kimberly Mecir from Holy Cross High School explains how the new Spheros technology is connected to iPads during one of her recent classes.**



**Students from Holy Cross High School in Dunmore are introduced to the new Spheros technology. The Spheros robotics are part of the new \$1 million investment in STREAM learning for the Diocese. (Photos/Eric Deabill)**

## Saint John Paul II Award Recipients for 25 or more years of dedicated service to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Scranton



**Front Row, left to right: Marinell Harding, Saint Clare/Saint Paul School; Dianne Ruch, Good Shepherd Academy; Mary Finkernagel, Holy Redeemer High School; Sister Dorothy Kibler, IHM, Notre Dame Elementary School; Christy Litchfield, Saint John Neumann Regional Academy; Ann Mullen, Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School; Maryanne DeMark, LaSalle Academy; John Litchfield, Saint John Neumann Regional Academy.**

**Back Row, left to right: Monsignor Thomas M. Muldowney, V.G.; Kristen Donohue, Superintendent of Schools; Bishop Joseph C. Bambera; Jason Morrison, Diocesan Secretary of Catholic Education/Chief Executive Officer; Kathleen Gilmartin, Assistant Superintendent.**

**Absent from photo: Rebecca Basse, Saint Agnes School, Towanda.**



# Diocesan Teachers' Institute allows educators to share ideas

WILKES-BARRE – As a product of Catholic education herself, Shaina Dougherty is excited about the possibilities that STREAM education offers her students.

“STREAM is very critical to the ever-changing society in which we’re living,” Dougherty said during the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute which was held at Holy Redeemer High School on Monday, September 23.

As a sixth, seventh and eighth grade math teacher at LaSalle Academy in Jessup, Dougherty says STREAM-focused learning will help prepare students for jobs that have not even been created yet.

Dougherty is one of several educators that helped facilitate interactive break-out sessions for fellow teachers at the day-long Institute. During her presentation to colleagues, Dougherty showed off Spheros robots which can help students learn computer coding and other skills.

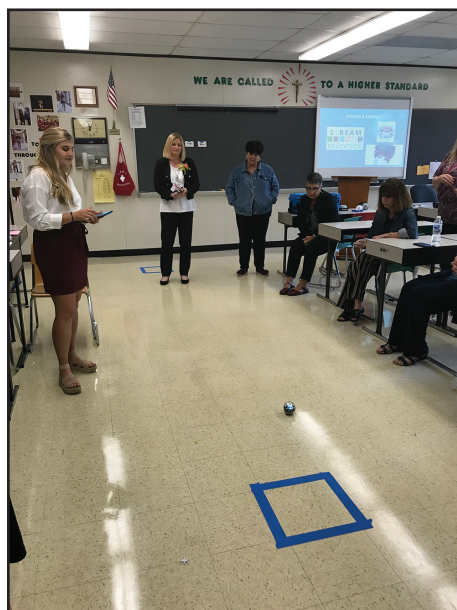
“This is something I’m very passionate about and something that I truly enjoy learning,” Dougherty added.

In a nearby classroom, All Saints Academy kindergarten teacher Molly Sullivan was also teaching her peers.

“As an educator, you want to share your knowledge with other teachers, you want to learn from other teachers and everybody has great ideas,” Sullivan said.

Sullivan explained how STREAM concepts can easily be added to the existing lesson plans that many teachers already have.

“The youngest kids actually sometimes know more about electronics than we do, so we can learn from them as well! Some of those children have been using iPads since they’ve been able to move their fingers so this is very second nature to them,” Sullivan explained.



**Shaina Dougherty, a math teacher from LaSalle Academy in Jessup, teachers her fellow educators about the new Spheros robotics during the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute on Monday, September 23, 2019.**

Shortly before the break-out sessions began, teachers from all 20 Catholic schools across the Diocese learned of the investment of \$1 million to incorporate STREAM into the curriculum of all schools by May 2022.

“As a parent of three boys that are in the Diocese, it’s great to see that they’re behind us and that they’re investing in our children, they’re investing in our schools and in education in general. I know a lot of people who have brought their children to the Catholic Schools from public systems because they can see where we’re going, they can see the path that we’re on!” Sullivan said.



**Educators practice and learn from each other with the new Padcaster technology during the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute.**

“As we are graciously accepting that \$1 million, it’s going to be so helpful for getting us the necessary tools and supplies that we’re going to need in order to take this transformative approach to education and this is really the first step in doing that!” Dougherty added.

The Keynote Speaker for the Diocesan Teachers’ Institute was Susan M. Ferguson, M.A., Director of the University of Dayton Center for Catholic Education. In her presentation, Ferguson focused on the significance of the STREAM initiative as it impacts the learning abilities of students and how it empowers teachers to incorporate Catholic identity into every aspect of the curriculum.

“Parents today are savvy customers. They want to ensure that their students are going to be college-ready and career-ready so as Catholic educators it’s important for us to listen to parents,” Ferguson said.

Citing national research, Ferguson said parents want schools to prepare students for college and the global job market but also teach them to think critically and individually.

“If we want to know what the star of a movie is, you go to your phone and you Google it, so information is readily at hand but how do we think about that information? How do we think critically?” Ferguson asked. “We need to be helping our students evaluate the information that comes to them, helping them to understand how to analyze it, how to create, how to synthesize with it in order to solve real world problems of which there are many.”

The Diocesan Teachers’ Institute began with Mass celebrated by Bishop Joseph Bambera at Saint Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church.

During his homily, Bishop Bambera urged educators to take care of the gift of faith.

“Nurture it, protect it and understand that for the gift of faith to flourish, we need to act upon it, we need to give our faith a life, a voice and a heart!” Bishop Bambera said.

The Bishop highlighted the contributions that the Catholic School System has made on the Diocese of Scranton. While acknowledging all the efforts of the past, Bishop Bambera said as the Diocese moves forward this is a time of growth.

“Today, I’m excited to say that the vision that has always sustained our Catholic Schools these past 151 years continues to evolve and take particular shape and form as we navigate the exciting and challenging waters of the 21st century with its explosion of knowledge and opportunity,” Bishop Bambera said.

Following the homily, all Catholic educators recited the Prayer of Commitment in which they asked God to strengthen their commitment to the ideals of Catholic education, using their talents and gifts to enrich the lives of their students, colleagues and extended school community.

## Children helping children: Students raise awareness for pediatric cancer

CLARKS GREEN – If you see a pink ribbon, most people generally know it is meant to support breast cancer awareness but students at Our Lady of Peace School want you to know what a gold ribbon is for.

Gold is the color that signifies Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, which is recognized every September.

In an effort to spread awareness, students formed a large gold ribbon outside their school on Friday, September 27, 2019.

“I thought it would be nice to get all of our schools involved somehow in recognizing all of the children that are affected by cancer and their families,” Elizabeth Devine, Diocesan Elementary School Guidance Counselor said.

While largely symbolic, the large gold ribbon was the culmination of a month-long series of activities inside the Lackawanna County Catholic School.

“We were recognizing this cause for the entire month of September,” Ann D’Arienzo, Our Lady of Peace School Principal, said. “Each homeroom also had a 16.9-ounce water bottle and



**Wearing gold shirts to raise awareness for pediatric cancer, students from Our Lady of Peace School in Clarks Green form a large ribbon outside of their school on Friday, September 27, 2019.**

they were filling it with dimes. If they filled it, each bottle is \$100. We had a couple homerooms that did a couple different bottles!”

All of the money collected is being sent to the Jesse Rees Foundation which will use the donated funds to send “Joy Jars” to kids battling cancer.

“Truly, this is children helping other children and I don’t think there is anything more beautiful than that!” D’Arienzo said.

“I’ve heard stories of little kids going and raiding their home piggy bank which is what we’re all about, trying to get them to see community,” Devine added.

Throughout the month of September, students also wrote positive messages for those bravely battling cancer on gold and white hearts which were displayed on a wall inside the school.

One of the messages said: “God is with you. Be Strong.”

Another said, “You have been assigned this mountain to show others it could be moved.”

“Our motto here is Excellence with Character and we model the Master Teacher and we reflect that to our students so they see what it is to serve other people,” D’Arienzo said.

Statistics from the Children’s Cancer Research Fund indicate that every year, more than 15,000 kids and young adults are diagnosed with cancer – approximately 43 per day. Cancer is the leading disease-related cause of death in children.

For Elizabeth Devine, this project was personal. Her 12-year-old nephew is waging a cancer battle.

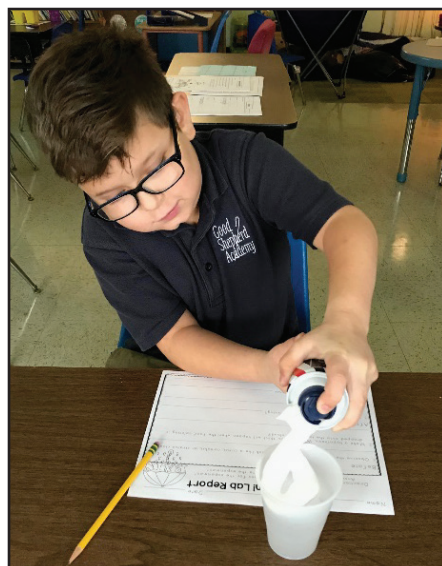
“It’s very personal. We’re watching my nephew go through it and thank God he’s doing well but you see the impact on not just the child but on the family,” Devine said.

In addition to the Our Lady of Peace School students, Diocesan school students from Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore and All Saints Academy in Scranton also dressed in gold on Friday, September 27, to join in the effort.



Diocese of Scranton  
**CATHOLIC**  
SCHOOL SYSTEM  
FAITH • ACADEMICS • SERVICE

*The Diocese of Scranton is committed to educating our students in an environment that is academically excellent and facilitates the development of moral judgment and Christian decision-making. We are proud to share the following successes of our students in the classroom and in their service to others. Each day, our schools are fulfilling their mission of preparing today's youth and young adults to become tomorrow's faith-filled leaders.*



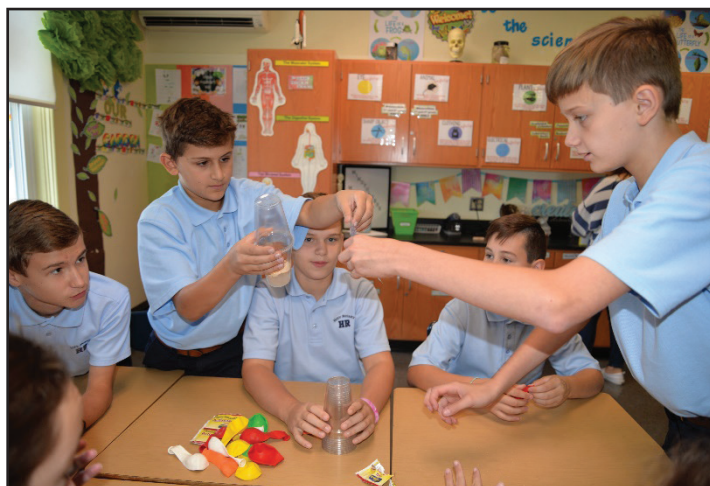
**Good Shepherd Academy  
in Kingston**



**Students at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre celebrate  
“Spirit Week” with a dress-down throughout the decades.**



**All Saints Academy  
in Scranton**



**Holy Rosary School in Duryea**



**La Salle Academy in Jessup**



**Monsignor McHugh School in Cresco**



**Student Council Inductees at Saint Clare/Saint Paul School in Scranton**





Students at Saint John Neumann Elementary School in Williamsport celebrate Grandparents Day.



Doug Walsh, a junior at Holy Cross High School in Dunmore, accepts the "Pay it Forward" scholarship from Mr. Carmen Alu at the school's Academic Awards Breakfast with the congratulations of HCHS Principal, Mr. Benjamin Tolerico.



Holy Family Academy in Hazleton



Saint Mary of Mount Carmel School in Dunmore



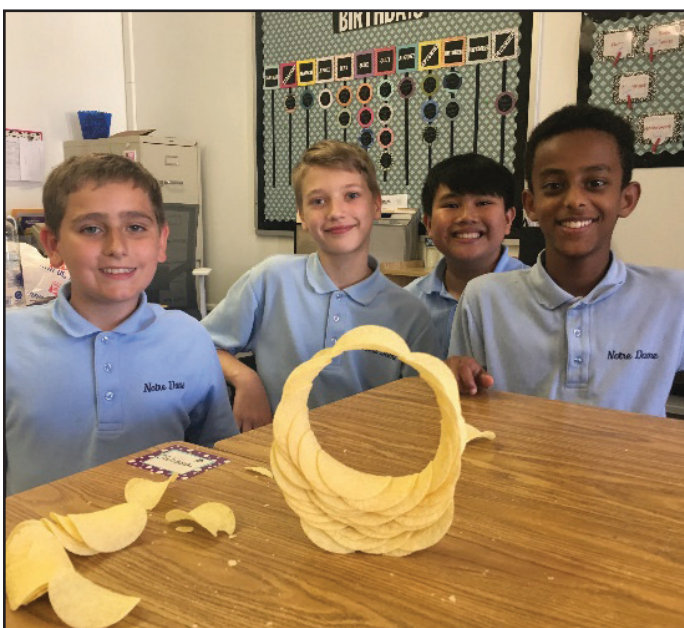
Saint John Neumann Jr./Sr. High School in Williamsport



Saint Jude School in Mountain Top



Epiphany School in Sayre



Notre Dame Elementary School in East Stroudsburg



Wyoming Area Catholic School in Exeter