



Harford County Public Schools

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Six Harford County seniors head to Annapolis

Six high school seniors were recently selected to serve as student pages for the 2012 Maryland General Assembly, including Belawoe Akwakoku of Aberdeen High School, Erin Chase of North Harford High School, Julius Halstead of Patterson Mill High School, Adam Hiob of Aberdeen High School, Christina McIntyre of Bel Air High School and Leanna Pecorino of Joppatowne High School.

Pages were hand-selected following an arduous application process that included a written test and an extensive oral interview before a 12-person committee, consisting of students and educators from around the county, who tested the applicants on their knowledge of politics and other various topics.

A Student Page Breakfast was held December 8, 2011, at Aberdeen High School, and the newly-elected pages spent the morning getting to know each other and the elected officials they will assist during the session. They were afforded the opportunity to ask questions as well.

Ms. Mary Boswell-McComas, instructional facilitator at Southampton and North Harford Middle schools, a student page herself in 1990, took a moment to share her insight about the experience of serving as a page. As the keynote speaker, Ms. Boswell-McComas also reminded the pages of the responsibility that comes with this honor.

“Each of you are taking up the responsibility to ensure democracy will come in the generations ahead,” said Ms. Boswell-McComas.

Delegate Richard Impallaria, chair of the Harford Delegation, also addressed the group, which consisted of the pages and their parents, as well as school and elected officials. He welcomed those in attendance and encouraged the pages, “Come see each and every one of us. Our doors are open to you.”

In addition to Del. Impallaria, other elected officials in attendance were Delegates Kathy Szeliga, Glen Glass, Wayne Norman and Mary-Dulany James. Senator Barry Glassman was also on-hand.

J. Patrick Whitehurst, 20-year coordinator of the student page program in Harford County and Fallston High government teacher, spoke, detailing the competitive selection process pages endured. In addition, Superintendent of Schools Robert M. Tomback, Ph.D. brought greetings.

“This experience is the culmination of all the opportunities you have taken advantage of and the service you have provided to your schools and communities,” said Dr. Tomback.

Mr. Belawoe Akwakoku, 17, is the son of Anthony and Diana Udzu of Aberdeen. He is Senior Class President and is a member of the National Honor Society, French Honor Society, Academic Team, Speech and Debate Team, Marching Band and Symphonic Band. He is former president of the Harford Regional Association of Student Councils. In addition, he attended the Junior Statesmen Summer School at Princeton University.

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Mr. Akwakoku has been accepted to Mount St. Mary's University and Roanoke College. He has also applied to University of Maryland Baltimore County, Hofstra University, Rutgers University, Loyola University and Princeton University. He plans to major in political science or biology.

Ms. Erin Chase, 17, is the daughter of John and Mary Chase of Forest Hill. Ms. Chase is a member of the National Honor Society, German National Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, German Club, Mock Trial and the Spirit Club. In addition, she is historian of the International Thespian Society and librarian of the choral program. She attended the 2011 Girls State, which was held at Salisbury University in June 2011.

Ms. Chase hopes to study political science with a focus in pre-law at Mount St. Mary's University or St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Mr. Julius Halstead, 17, is the son of Philip and Laretta Halstead of Bel Air. Mr. Halstead is president of the Student Council and is a member of the National Honor Society, National Society of High School Scholars, Tri-M Music Honor Society, Percussion Ensemble, Speech and Debate Team and Varsity Football and Basketball teams. In addition, he served as an intern for Harford County Executive David R. Craig and an Intern for the United States Capitol Historical Society.

Mr. Halstead plans to attend a four-year university or college to pursue a degree in political science.

Mr. Adam Hiob, 17, is the son of Michael and Barbara Hiob of Aberdeen. Mr. Hiob is president of the Harford County Student Government and president of the Student Government Association. He is a member of the Green Team, People to People and Senior Council. In addition, he is Student Ambassador to Europe 2011.

Mr. Hiob will attend Harford Community College and then hopes to transfer to St. Mary's College to study political science and international relations.

Ms. Christina McIntyre, 17, is the daughter of Randy and Martha McIntyre of Bel Air. Ms. McIntyre is president of the Bel Air High School (BAHS) Student Government and president of the BAHS Junior State of America. She is a member of the League of Women Voters, Hope Club, Harford County Teen Court, National Honor Society and Harford County Youth Commission. In addition, she is senator in the Maryland Youth General Assembly.

Ms. McIntyre plans to major in political science at Messiah College.

Ms. Leanna Pecorino, 17, is the daughter of Karen and Richard Pecorino of Joppa. She is a member of the Varsity Soccer, Varsity Swimming and Varsity Lacrosse teams; the Student Government Association and the National Honors Society. In addition, she is treasurer of the Senior Class Council.

Ms. Pecorino is applying to Towson University.

The pages will serve in the 2012 legislative session that begins in January and continues through April. They will spend two, non-consecutive weeks with host families in Annapolis while serving in either the House of Delegates or the Maryland Senate. They will perform various tasks such as filing, running errands and sitting in on meetings and hearings. Although they will be absent from school for a total of two weeks, pages are still expected to make-up any work they miss while attending the session.