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Issue #7 | February 2022



## Our News & Updates

**Hello, New Haven Public Schools Learning Community:**

*In this issue we talk about our prominent people,  
sports events and collaborations.*

*We offer you a video on workplace exercises  
hoping it would motivate you to take a break from your daily routine.  
Please read the articles and watch the videos, share your thoughts and  
suggestions. Let's do it together!*

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# OUR PEOPLE



## District Basketball Faces: Catrina Hawley-Stewart

*by Erik Patchkofsky,  
Athletics Director*

As we approach the middle of our winter season, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight one of our coaches. As you may know, high school coaches work long hours for little pay and the job is year round. Many coaches are on-call as a mentor to their athletes 24 hours a day.

Although we have many coaches in New Haven who fit that description, today I would like to talk about Catrina Hawley-Stewart. Catrina, who played at Providence College from 1998-2002, has been the head coach at Hillhouse for 19 years. During her tenure she has won 6 state championships and 4 SCC championships and has received many awards and accolades. This impressive list includes New England Coach of the Year 2011, New Haven Register Coach of the Year 2005 and 2019, New Haven Tap Off Coach of the Year 2009, and Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame Team of the Year in 2009.



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## Paula McGovern: Living Life on Life's Terms

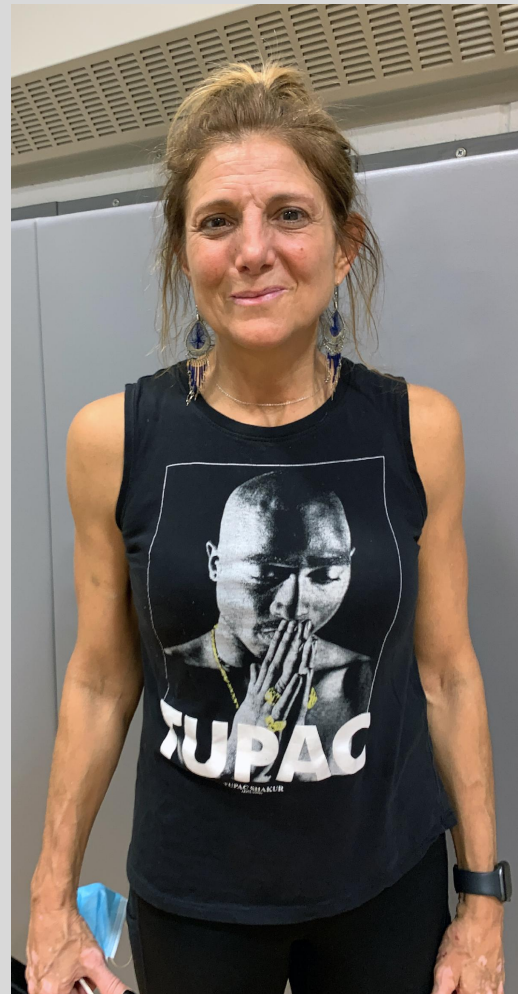
***Meet Paula McGovern (Economopoulos), a physical education teacher at New Haven Academy. She has been with the district for over 30 years!***

***She is the mom of three - two boys and one girl. Her daughter is a high school student. Her sons graduated from college and are now successfully employed.***

***She founded the Special Olympics Unified sports program for the City of New Haven, and has been running it for a number of years. Paula is currently enrolled in nursing school and plans to work in a health setting when she retires from NHPS. She doesn't mind working as a waitress in the summer. She is also coaching at Hamden Hall school. And she is teaming up with her younger co-worker/ teacher to play basketball with the kids in the gym class! (See photo above).***

***If you need an example of an active and involved life, then there it is!***

***I met with her in her NHS office and sat in the gym watching her teach and play with the students. Here are some glimpses of my conversation with her that you might find interesting.***



**L. G.** Paula, why do you need a nursing degree? It's not an easy occupation for a retired teacher.

**P. M.** I am still taking courses working towards my nursing degree, and I don't know exactly how

**L. G.** Can you tell me about the Special Olympics program?

**P. M.** Before my involvement with the Special Olympics program there was a period of time when I traveled from school to school being the

I am going to be employed as a nurse, but I feel that with that degree I can do anything: I can work in schools, hospices, anywhere. I love to help people. And I still need to get my daughter through college.

**L. G. How did you become a PE teacher?**

**P. M.** In college, back in the 80s, I first wanted to go into business, since my father had a business. I was discouraged from teaching because at the time teachers salaries were very low. I tried accounting, then maths, computers... And I had played sports all my life. When I got to my junior year, I could not see myself out of the gym. I realized I was a gym rat. That's how I ended up choosing physical education.

**L. G. It is so rare now that people stay at one job for so many years.**

**P. M.** I started in 1986. Throughout my career I've been in many schools. I was an itinerant and used to travel. I've taught pre-k through high school. I coached for many, many years. I've had all the kids. The time went by so fast.

Adaptive PE teacher. Eventually, I took over the position of a field coordinator in the Special Olympics Unified sports program for the City of New Haven, and I've been running this program since 2000.

It is a part of the Connecticut Special Olympics program. The participants from all over the city - students with disabilities - would pair up with non-disabled students (we call them unified partners) for the whole year. We would do sports competitions with other schools: soccer, volleyball, basketball and track.

The program was canceled because of Covid, but now we're trying to bring it back. And it's hard, it's hard to find teachers to volunteer in this after school program. Nonetheless, I hope by March we will get back into this program.

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*In the video below we illustrated parts of this interview by recording some of her gym classes. Watch it on Youtube by clicking the link.*



# COLLABORATION



## New Haven Lions: We Are Here to Serve

***Face masks, hand sanitizer wipes, winter hats and gloves - all in all 57 boxes of these goods were delivered to the Field House last week. This generous donation became possible thanks to the efforts of the New Haven Lions Club and Yale University. The supplies will be distributed to the schools that need them most, they are both for teachers and for students. The supplies are organized in kits. There are two boxes of N95 masks for teachers as well.***

According to Susan Hurlburt, Lions Cabinet Secretary for District 23A, who orchestrated the delivery, the chapter members had fun assembling the donation kits. A record 2,500 bags were done in about four hours!

This was a \$10K grant from Yale University through the Yale Community for New Haven Fund (with Covid-19 focus) given to the New Haven Lions along with an additional \$5K donated by the club.

The New Haven Lions want to extend a huge "thank you" to Yale University and the Yale Community for New Haven Fund and to the vendors - N&D Sports of Hamden and Blue Bear Protection of NYC.



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# EMPLOYEE HEALTH

## Take a Break With Us!

Did you know that:

- only one in four US adults gets the recommended levels of physical activity;
- low levels of physical activity are associated with \$117 billion in health care costs every year;
- physical inactivity can contribute to heart disease, type II diabetes, cancers, and obesity;
- there are Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans developed and recommended by the CDC;
- according to these guidelines, you are considered physically inactive if you are “not getting any moderate- or vigorous intensity physical activity beyond basic movement from daily life activities”;
- even short bouts of physical activity can improve health and wellness.

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*Take a break - watch the video below and follow simple exercises with our athletic trainer Marina Dubrovsky!*



[OUR CONTACT INFORMATION](#)



**Interested in collaboration?  
Have ideas and suggestions?  
Drop us a line!**

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