



WYOMISSING AREA

SPARTAN  
SCOOP  
online

Inspiring Excellence, One Spartan at a Time!

## Wyomissing Area Welcomes New Teachers



This year, Wyomissing Area is happy to welcome numerous new teachers to the Spartan team. We are so excited to get to know our new teachers!

**Danielle Faust** is the Life Skills/Autistic Support teacher for students in grades 7-12, and next year she will be the Social Skills teacher for those students. Alongside this role, she serves as the co-advisor for the Best Buddies club. Her job allows her to help students learn and practice skills such as cooking, cleaning, job work, writing letters and emails, and filling out job applications in order to prepare them for after-school employment. Before working at Wyomissing Area, she was employed as an elementary school substitute teacher and high school volleyball coach in the Pottsgrove School District. Outside of the classroom, Mrs. Faust enjoys playing volleyball, spending time outside, and reading books by her favorite author, Sarah J. Maas.

**Ryan Weidner** is an Emotional Support Teacher in the Special Education Department at the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center and works with Kindergarten through 4th-grade students. He helps teach students social and emotional skills and teaches learning support classes for math, reading, and writing. Before coming to Wyomissing Area, Mr. Weidner taught Kindergarten in Lancaster for over ten years. Outside of work, he enjoys running, cooking, watching sports, and going on adventures with his family.

**Sheri Heckman** teaches physical science for students in grades 8 and 9 and environmental science for grades 11 and 12 at the JSHS. Before working at Wyomissing Area, she worked at Berks Catholic, teaching biology, environment, genetics, and forensic science. In addition to her career at Berks Catholic, Ms. Heckman also taught night classes at RACC in the Biology Department for pre-nursing students and coached students ages five through high school in basketball. Outside of the classroom, she enjoys spending time outside, painting, and traveling as well as playing with her two puppies.

**Crystal Rivero** is a biology teacher for students in grades 10-12 and enjoys the experiments and hands-on investigations she gets to conduct with her students. Mrs. Rivero has been teaching for 11 years and most recently was employed as a biology and marine science teacher in Gainesville, Florida. She took a year off last year to spend time with her three-year-old son before finding herself here, at Wyomissing Area. Outside of work, she loves to spend time with family and friends, snorkel, kayak, hike, and run.

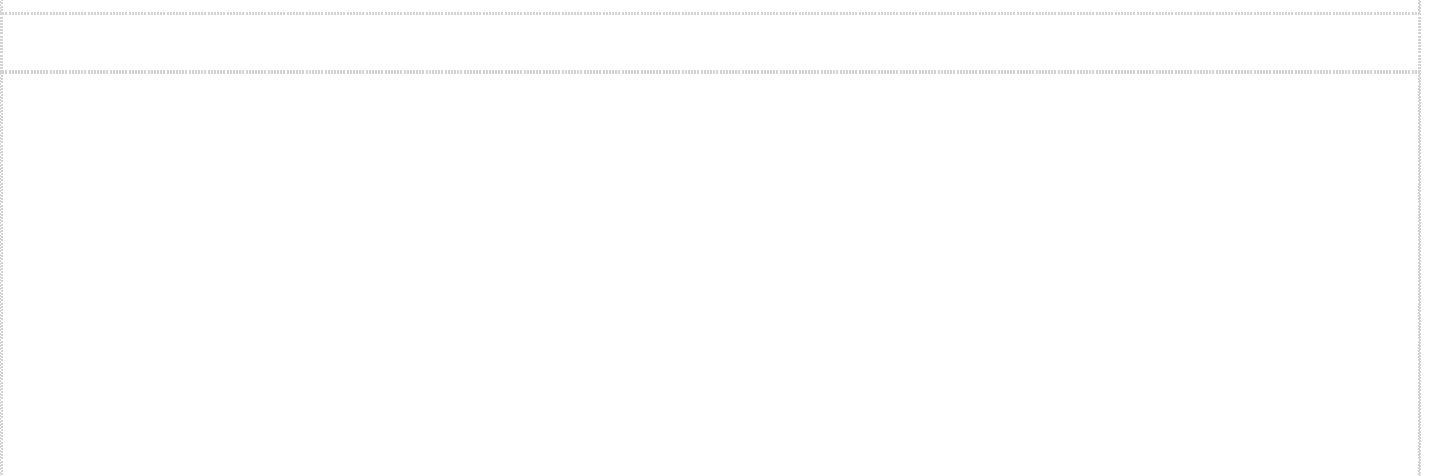
**Rebekah Stem** is the school counselor at WHEC for students in grades 3 and 4. In her job, she supports students and their families in the areas of academic, social-emotional, and career exploration. Before Wyomissing Area, she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Kutztown University and worked as a long-term substitute in the Muhlenberg School District. When she's not in the office, Ms. Stem loves wedding planning, crafting, trying new recipes, and catching up on her favorite shows on Netflix.

**Meghan Smith** is a new member of the math department at the JSHS teaching algebra and geometry courses. Prior to working at Wyomissing Area, she was a math teacher and the Department Chair at John R. Lewis High School in Fairfax County, Virginia. As a teacher at John Lewis, she taught I.B. Math Standard Level 1 & 2 and helped plan the new curriculum for I.B. Math Applications & Interpretation for Fairfax County Public Schools. Outside of the classroom, Mrs. Smith enjoys playing with her sons at the playground as well as going on hikes with her sons and her dog, Riley.

We are so happy to have them all here and are grateful for all they do. In addition to these wonderful members of our faculty, Wyomissing Area is excited to welcome numerous members of our district support staff and long-term substitute teachers. We're excited to work together to make Wyomissing Area the best it can be!



**Special Spartan Accomplishments: Pursuing Your Dream- Owen Asztalos!**





What began as a youthful summer hobby has led to life-changing opportunities for Spartan Owen Asztalos. After attending an acting-focused summer camp at a young age, Owen discovered that he enjoyed acting and was quite good at it. The experiences at the summer camp expanded into a year-round hobby as he connected with an acting coach and began to pursue other acting opportunities, including a role as Young Beethoven with the Reading Symphony Orchestra. Following this role, Owen and his family partnered with a local management group to secure official representation for Owen in the acting arena, and from there, he has continued to follow his dreams.

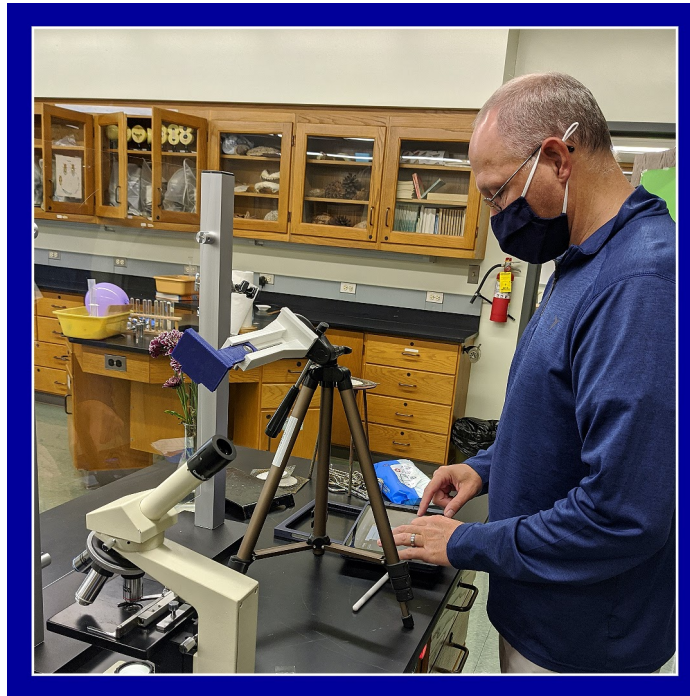
In elementary school, acting became a hobby and interest that required a significant time investment for Owen as he was attending auditions nearly every day. Due to this, he and his family made the switch to a cyber-school program so that he could navigate his audition schedule and school responsibilities with more flexibility. Owen credits his parents and school support network for encouraging him to continue to strive for strong grades while recognizing that a non-traditional path would allow him to pursue his acting interest as well. Owen says that to be successful he knows that his acting hobby-turned-career needs to be his number one focus, before anything else. He still works really hard in school but looks at things through a different lens knowing what his ultimate goals are.

When he was younger, Owen wasn't a fan of the audition process due to the frequency and time-commitment required for them. However, now that he has had the opportunity to work on set and experience the best parts of the acting process, he sees auditions as a means to an end, or part of the process to get to the "good stuff." Additionally, he now appreciates that auditions allow him the opportunity to explore different scripts, looking for ones he really enjoys. As his acting experiences have grown, he truly has developed an appreciation for all aspects of the process. When asked if all of the time and dedication he has to give to his acting career took any of the fun away Owen said "when you love every aspect of it, you are willing to commit to every aspect of it."

Owen had his first "big" role in the movie *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, which exposed him to a more invested, big-screen level of acting. After that role, the question begged "now what?" He did express a desire to come back to school as he was getting older and felt he could manage the demands of both acting and academics and returned to the JSHS in 8th grade. While he was still pursuing acting roles, he appreciated being back at school with his classmates and was focused on getting good grades. Despite a three-year absence from in-person school at Wyomissing Area, he still knew everyone and acclimated to the school climate very quickly.

Shortly after his return to school, Owen had the opportunity to audition for a part in New York City with Ron Howard- yes, that Ron Howard! Such an amazing opportunity was tricky for Owen not to talk about at school with his teachers, but he couldn't share the details until he completed the full audition process. Spoiler alert- Owen got the part and is a member of the cast for an upcoming Netflix film: *Hillbilly Elegy*, alongside famous actors including Glenn Close and Amy Adams. Such a major accomplishment and career milestone certainly took a lot of effort and dedication from Owen, but he also recognizes the value of the support he received from his family and the school. He had to leave in-person schooling before the conclusion of





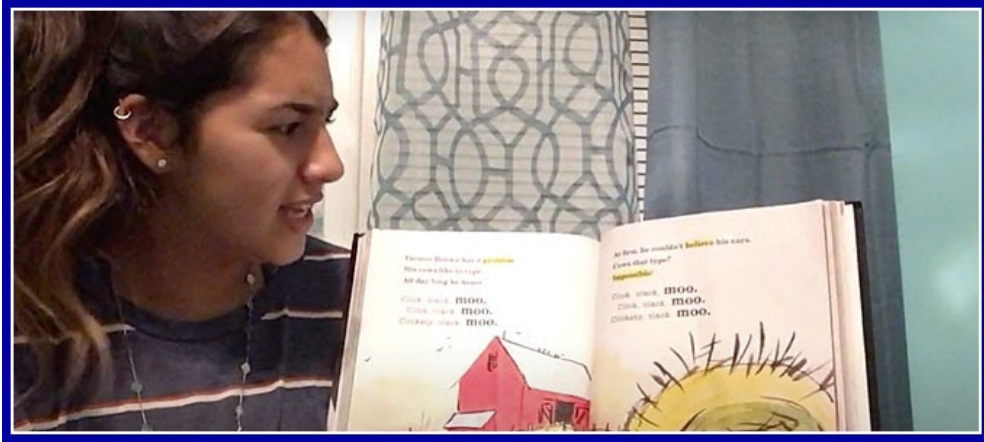
Mrs. Bogert, who teaches different levels of science at the Junior-Senior High School, is currently working with the high school's engineering class and Dr. Liskey to create 3D printed microscopes! Faced with the dilemma of shared equipment for science labs this year and our current health and safety protocols, it was time to get creative about how students could still get the most out of their science classes while maintaining safe practices and minimal contact. Mrs. Bogert and Dr. Liskey put their ideas together and developed a plan for individual students to have personal 3D-printed microscopes that function with their own phones. One of the greatest benefits of the microscopes is their portability— environmental science students will be able to take their microscopes outside for direct learning with the outdoors and all students will be able to take them home, too!

Currently, the high school engineering class has two microscope prototypes. The first prototype consists of a stand that a student's phone can rest upon, while the second prototype involves a microscope that can attach to a student's phone at its camera. Because the students have a variety of different phones, every microscope will be personalized to their phone models. Mrs. Bogert has already recorded her students' phone types, generations, and styles.

This collaborative learning experience benefits so many Spartans! Science students will benefit from having personal microscopes, and the engineering students are also receiving a special opportunity to work with a real-world problem and to apply their skills. Unlike many class projects, the engineering students' final product will impact the science classes in our school and the learning experiences of fellow classmates. The engineering class is working their hardest to make the best 3D-printed microscopes possible and we are so excited by this wonderful partnership and project!

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**Special Spartan Spotlight: JSBS Theater Arts Partners with WHEC**



During the spring school closure, Miss Tierney, Mrs. Johnson, and Mr. Siggins at the JSHS partnered with teachers across the District to host weekly “Tuesday Tales” stories; these weekly stories raised the spirits of our students at home and reconnected our district community in a creative way. Mr. Krick, the high school theatre arts teacher, saw the impact of these stories and wanted to find a way to incorporate them into his class. After working with the WHEC staff and exploring their curriculum, they decided on a list of books that are present throughout the content covered in grades K-4, anywhere from Dr. Seuss to Jan Brett. With the adjusted school schedule this year, the Wyomissing Area staff has been looking for new and exciting ways to engage students in their course material both at home and in school. To make these stories a little more interactive for our students, Mr. Krick’s theater arts class has put their acting knowledge to use by recording themselves reading these books to be used as a component of the WHEC curriculum. High school theater students are using these books as an opportunity to explore the different ways to act out a story, read in different styles, and add their own touch to someone else’s work. Just as each book is unique, each actor is adding their own unique touch to the story by exploring different acting styles and interpretations. With a little help from Mr. Krick, these students recorded dozens of book readings to be used throughout the year at WHEC, helping our younger students understand their readings and giving them a fun, unique learning experience. Thank you to Mr. Krick and the theatre arts students for all their hard work in class to bring our schools together!

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## Updates from the PTA



The PTA has begun working on some projects for the 2020-2021 school year! Because all students and staff must wear masks on the days they have in-person instruction, the PTA provided breakaway mask lanyards to all three of the Wyomissing Area schools. They also just recently provided a shed at WHEC to store all the playground equipment. The PTA consistently supports our schools, students, and teachers, and we greatly appreciate all that they do!

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### **Engaging Education: Summer Education Opportunities at WREC**

This past summer, several WREC teachers ran a virtual Summer Academy. Mrs. Shauna Easteadt, Mr. Dan Smith, Mrs. Erika Homan, and Mrs. Michele Hetrich organized this program to help WREC students practice their math and reading skills during their summer break. They used ClassKick and other online learning apps and tools to help keep the students engaged. Thank you to the teachers involved for helping to strengthen our Spartans' distance learning skills!

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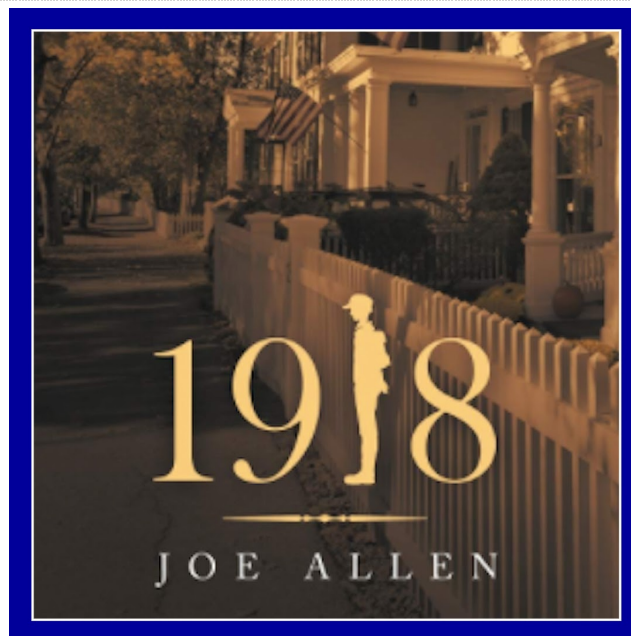
### **Special Spartan Accomplishments: National Merit Recognition**



Each year, juniors are given the opportunity to take the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying test to enter into a nationwide competition; this year, three Wyomissing Area seniors received acknowledgment from the National Merit Scholarship program. Among them, Chenin Soffer, a commended scholar, participates in activities such as Golf, Math Team, Service Club, and Spanish Club. In the future, Chenin plans to study and pursue a career in finance. Senior Sara Steber qualified as a semi-finalist and is in the running to receive a national scholarship. She is involved with Drama Club, Model UN, Quiz Bowl, Golf, Yearbook, and a number of other clubs. In college, Sara plans to study history and philosophy with the hopes of becoming a college professor or litigator. Congratulations to all of our recognized scholars!

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**Special Spartan Accomplishments: *1918* by Mr. Joseph Allen**







The teachers at Wyomissing Area continue to impress us with their talents each and every day. Mr. Joseph Allen is one of our dedicated history teachers and track coaches at the JSHS and he decided to share his love for history and education with those beyond our school through his new book, *1918*. *1918* takes place during the outbreak of the Spanish Influenza, through the perspective of an 18-year-old boy who now faces the risk of getting drafted to serve in World War I. He struggles to accept this new reality and must learn to overcome the challenges that he must face along with it, as well as the challenges the entire country must face as well.

With the recent outbreak of the Covid-19 virus, Mr. Allen connected this story to the present day, reflecting on what he witnessed during this time of distress. Over the course of the past seven months, people have begun to panic, not sure how to react to such unknown times. He hopes that through *1918*, he can help his readers cope with these reactions to the pandemic through the perspective of a boy in a similar situation in history during the outbreak of the Spanish Influenza. Perhaps seeing how society overcame disease in the past would bring guidance to those struggling now. In addition, writing *1918* helped Mr. Allen himself cope with the trying times, finding ways to accept the fact that the spring track season was canceled, one that he and his daughter, 2020 graduate Caroline Allen, had been looking forward to and had high hopes for. Writing this book was Mr. Allen's form of therapy, and, lucky for us, as his readers, we get to be a part of his journey in overcoming this challenge.

If there is anything Mr. Allen wishes his readers will take away from *1918*, it is his hope that "it becomes helpful to anyone who needs to see there is always a light at the end of the tunnel," and that they will better understand what the people who came before us endured, as well as the sacrifices they have made. He feels our connection to history makes us who we are today, a realization we can come to by reading *1918*. Mr. Allen just finished writing a trilogy and hopes to write more in the new year. Stay tuned for more on the impressive Mr. Joseph Allen, and feel free to check *1918* out today through the link [here!](#)

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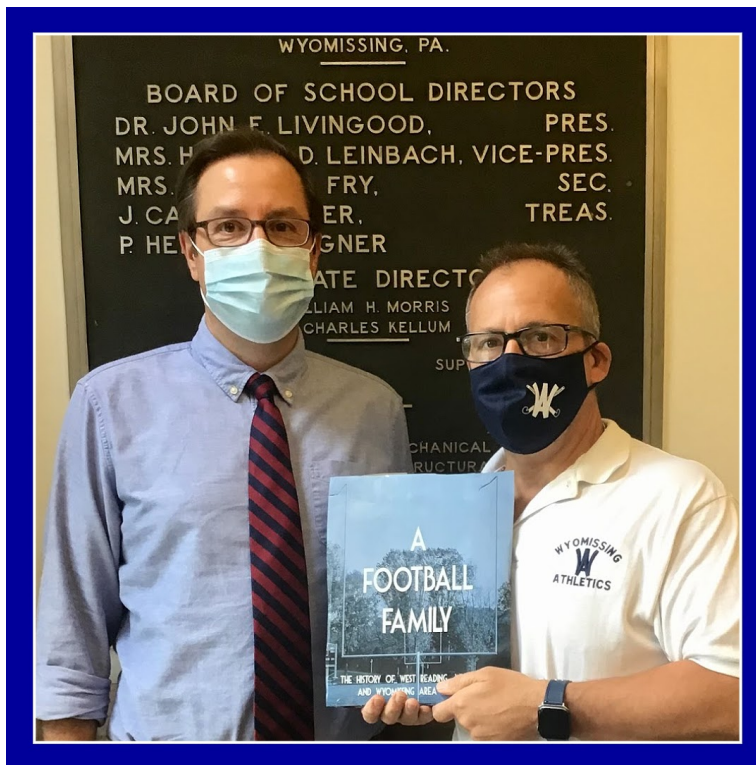
### **The Spartan Football Program: *A Football Family***



Since the founding of Wyomissing Area's football program in 1944, the sport has been a source of pride and tradition in the Wyomissing and West Reading communities. Over the last year, Wyomissing natives Pete Beck and Frank Ferrandino, have embarked on a journey to document the past 75 years of football in this community. Both Beck and Ferrandino attended Wyomissing Area High School as students and continue to work at the JSHS and live in the community today. As the District's athletic director, Frank Ferrandino has seen the inner-workings of the Wyomissing Area football program since he started in the position in 2013; however, his involvement dates back to the mid-'80s when he was a player himself. According to Ferrandino, his time spent on the team as a player and coach was one of the main motivations for writing the book. He explained how "[he has] gotten so much out of the program as a player and a coach, and [he] wanted a special way to give back to the community." While Pete Beck was not a player on the team, he's been a faithful fan of Wyomissing Area football since 1990 and can often be spotted on the sideline of Saturday games as part of the "Chain Gang".

*A Football Family* highlights a wide range of players, teams, and special moments that have contributed to the rich tradition of Wyomissing Area football. 75 years of previous seasons are represented through pictures, game scores, and major season highlights. The book delves into details of the top ten games in school history, traditions within the program, championship team highlights, and of course details regarding the 2012 State Championship team. Excitement is high in anticipation of the book's release, and many people within the community who were members of a team are excited to reflect on their days as a Wyomissing Area Spartan. Current players are also excited to look back at the teams that paved the way for today's program. Senior running back, Evan Neidrowski, says, "It will be exciting to learn more about the teams that so many of my coaches and teachers played on when they were students at Wyomissing." One of this year's football captains, Darren Brunner, stated, "It's interesting to see how the program has evolved over the years until now."

Frank Ferrandino wanted to write this book for years, and in August of 2019, he and Pete Beck finally decided to make the dream a reality. Both Ferrandino and Beck want to acknowledge that this project would not have been possible without their partnership and support from the Wyomissing Area community. The two embarked on this long journey together 14 months ago, and are both extremely proud of the outcome. With the holiday season approaching, the book will make a great gift for any former player, parent, or fan of the Wyomissing Area football program. *A Football Family* is now available for preorder at [wyofootball.com](http://wyofootball.com) and can be expected to arrive before the holidays.



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## The Wyomissing Area Education Foundation



WYOMISSING AREA EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
*Enriching Education in the Wyomissing Area School District*

Welcome to the 2020-2021 school year! Wyomissing Area Education Foundation (WAEF) is here to provide opportunities to enhance educational experiences in the school district. Faculty, staff, and administrators are encouraged to submit grant applications for review by our committee! One way that WAEF has recently supported Wyomissing Area School District through the COVID-19 crisis was to purchase \$16,447 worth of iPads for distribution to students in grades 3 and 4 who needed devices to support distance learning. In this critical, unique time, WAEF is proud to assist the district in filling the gap to give those students access to learning. Our Grants Committee meets monthly to review grant applications; all faculty and staff members are encouraged to reach out to Molly McCullough Murrill, WAEF's Executive Director, to discuss possible grants.

Please check out WAEF's [new website!](#) The address remains the same, but the content has been refreshed.

WAEF is governed by our Board of Directors, all of whom are volunteers. The board members for the 2020-2021 school year are as follows:

**Executive Committee**

Lauren Zuidema – WAEF President  
Amy Combs – WAEF Vice President  
Dan Rothermel – WAEF Treasurer  
Bethany Emkey – WAEF Secretary

**Board of Directors**

Tom Campbell  
Ann Doerries  
Lisa Geyer  
Morgan Goodman  
Michael Herr  
Maria Hottenstein – WAEF Asst. Treasurer  
Kelli Maturi  
Kevin Miller  
Mark Miller  
Amy Rogers  
Laura Waetjen  
Ann White

**Emeritus Directors**

Barbara Homsher  
John Rothenberger

**Representatives**

Laura Waetjen – PTA Representative  
Curt Minich – WAEA Representative  
Camille Croft – Student Committee Senior Class Representative

**Directors Ex-Officio**

Robert Scoboria – WASD Superintendent  
Chris McCaffrey – WASD School Board Member

WAEF's Student Committee will begin meeting as a whole in November. If you would like to get involved, please contact Ms. Murrill at [mmurrill@wyoarea.org](mailto:mmurrill@wyoarea.org), or contact our Student Committee Senior Class representative, Camille Croft.



Wyomissing Area Education Foundation is pleased to announce this [exciting opportunity](#)! In June 2020, founding Board member John Rothenberger and his wife, Gloria, gave \$25,000 to WAEF to establish the Foundation Sustainability Endowment Fund and another \$25,000 to establish the Wyomissing Scholarship Fund. This unprecedented level of generosity to WAEF inspired long-time Board Treasurer, Ann Cesarz White, and her husband Doug White, to pledge up to \$25,000 as a matching challenge to encourage more giving to WAEF. [Gifts given to WAEF by 12/31/2020 will be MATCHED dollar for dollar by Ann & Doug White, up to \\$25,000.](#) Ann and Doug's gift will support the Foundation Sustainability Endowment Fund. You may select that your gift supports either the Endowment Fund or the Annual Campaign.

*Because of generous donors like the Rothenbergers and the Whites, we are presenting this incredible opportunity for Wyomissing supporters to **DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!***

Please consider offering your support for this incredible opportunity to grow WAEF's capacity to provide grants and scholarships for students and staff in our school district for many years to come and ensure the foundation's sustainability. Please [visit our website](#) by 12/31/2020 to make your donation, and Dr. and Mrs. White will **MATCH your gift!**

WAEF has been able to provide a 25-year history of enhancing educational opportunities in the Wyomissing Area School District. In the 2019-2020 school year alone, we awarded over \$120,000 in grants and scholarships to the WASD. We understand that some of our supporters have been financially impacted by the recent pandemic and may be unable to give as in the past. If you have not been negatively affected, please consider continuing your support or increasing your giving this year. We anticipate that this year will bring unique grant requests, and we want to be prepared to support the school district as much as we can.

*Thank you for making our work possible and for helping us to maximize this wonderful opportunity!*



**2020-2021 WAEF events**

**SAVE**  
*the*  
**DATES**

**BLUE & WHITE PARTY 05.08.2021**

**SCHOLARSHIP CEREMONY 05.17.2021**

**SENIOR DAY 05.25.2021**

**FIRE & ICE PARTY 05.22.2021**

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## About the Authors

This year the Junior-Senior High School is proud to continue to partner with the internship program to include a communications internship. Students in this role work under the supervision of Communications Coordinator Meghan Tierney to gather information and updates about various district events and support the sharing of news via social media, as well as to co-author the monthly editions of the *Spartan Scoop* newsletter.



**Keira Auchenbach** chose the communications internship because her future plans include studying a field related to environmental activism, and felt that the experience with reporting, journaling, and presenting would be valuable to her. Keira is very involved with academics, clubs, and sports. Most notably, she is a leader on the Mini-Thon Committee and in Student Council but also participates in Service Club, Science Olympiad, Best Buddies, the WAEF student committee, cross country, and track and field. Outside of school activities, Keira also enjoys painting, hiking outdoors, and spending time with friends.

**Cece Banco**, a junior, is involved in many school activities. She enjoys participating in the French Club, Service Club, Drama Club, and the Mini-Thon committee. Additionally, Cece is a member of the girls' tennis team and is involved in the school's music program as part of the chorus and chorale. Cece is considering pursuing a future in media and chose this internship in hopes that it would help develop a more specific sense of the path she may want to follow.

**Emma Care** is a junior at the JSHS. She is a teammate on the girls' soccer and lacrosse teams and is a committed member of the Environmental Club, Service Club, Model United Nations Club, Mini-THON, and student tutoring group at Wyomissing Area. In the classroom, Emma strives for academic and personal excellence and loves to push herself to new limits. In her free time, she enjoys volunteering throughout the community and spending time with loved ones. After high school, she plans to attend college on a pre-law or business track and plans to use the skills from this student internship to guide her along the way. Emma values hard work in school and life but embraces the importance of excitement and fun even more. Emma is excited about working as a student intern for Wyomissing Area this year!

**Grace Diehl** is a senior at Wyomissing Area JSHS. She loves to read, write, draw, sing, and play piano and ukulele. Her interests are reflected in the activities she participates in at school including participating as a member of the Wyomissing Area Drama Club, serving as co-editor for the school yearbook, and serving as President of the school newspaper. Grace is also a member of our school's chorus and choral small group. Outside of school, she is involved with her church's youth group in many ways including volunteering at both Opportunity House and Safe Berks. Grace also volunteers at the Wyomissing Public Library and holds a leadership position there as the Secretary of the library's Teen Advisory Board. In the future, Grace would love to pursue a career in the English field. Her path may include becoming a high school English teacher or professor of literature at the college level or pursuing the idea of starting her own business or working to publish her own book.

**Julia Gehris**, a senior, is excited to reach her senior year after attending Wyomissing Area since kindergarten. She is actively involved with the school community, participating in volleyball from grades 7 through 11, as well as participating in Environmental Club, Mini-THON, Peer Mediation, WAEF, and Ski Club. Julia was also recognized as a member of the National Honors Society during her junior year and joined the Senior High Student Council for her junior and senior years as well. She gives back to the community by volunteering with VoiceUp Berks to benefit the lives of those who lack the opportunities and privileges they need to live successfully. Some of Julia's favorite hobbies include spending time with her closest friends and family, going on walks with her dogs, and watching her favorite movies and TV shows. She is gearing up for her senior year and is ready to tackle what is to come!

**Sara Steber** is a current senior at Wyomissing Area JSHS. In school, she is involved in a wide variety of clubs; from Theater to Golf to Model UN to Quiz Bowl, she can be found almost anywhere. She is passionate about writing and excited to be publishing articles and reporting on the District for the second year in a row. Though she is unsure of where she will end up for college, Sara is planning on studying History and Philosophy to become a college professor or litigator.



**Ms. Meghan Tierney** is the mathematics Department Chair at the Junior-Senior High School in her seventh year in the Wyomissing Area School District. She received her bachelor's degree from Albright College and earned a master's degree in Teacher Leadership through the University of Delaware. Currently, she is pursuing a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction Supervision at Gwynedd Mercy University. In addition to her role as a classroom teacher, she advises the High

School Student Council, and the Model UN Club, and serves as the Communications Coordinator for the school district. Meghan really enjoys the opportunities she has to work with students both in and out of the classroom and loves being a Spartan. Outside of school, Meghan enjoys spending time at the beach and being with family and friends.

## Connect With Us



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