



UDHS Purple & Gold—April 2025 Issue

Everybody Is Welcome at Room 13!

This month's cute photo comes courtesy of Ms. Zoccola's autistic support class, which collectively created an "Everyone Is Welcome Here!" sign to close out Autism Acceptance Month. Every member of the class, including staff and students, contributed to making any visitor of Room 13 feel welcome!



Autism Acceptance Month Ends with April Showers!

Upper Darby High School celebrated Autism Acceptance month with its annual "April Showers" rain rally. Students help individual fundraisers to collect money for Special Olympics, which sponsored the event. The Upper Darby Fire Department was there to lend the "showers" to the event, in which students and staff ran under hoses in the school's back soccer field. In addition to the showers, the students played games and had fun dancing and socializing.

Learning Support Teacher Jessica Conroy led efforts to help contribute to the event by creating and selling "Inclusion Matters" t-shirts (created by Emotional Support Teacher Amanda Verdi) to

anyone in the district who was interested.



A Tender Reunion

Ryder reunites with Miss Lisa from Drexel Hill Middle School as Mr. Jasper smiles on



Having a Blast

Student Teacher Felice Gonzalez (left) runs with Ny'Ron.



Inclusion Matters

Mrs. Jessica Conroy (center, front) and friends posing in their new finery at the library steps.



Triumphant

Tobias is jubilant after his "shower."



Smiling for the Camera

Mrs. Kurz (right) with some happy students.



Dojo Etiquette

Chris and Carlton exchange a polite greeting.

Academic Arena

10th Grader Represents UDHS at Regeneron

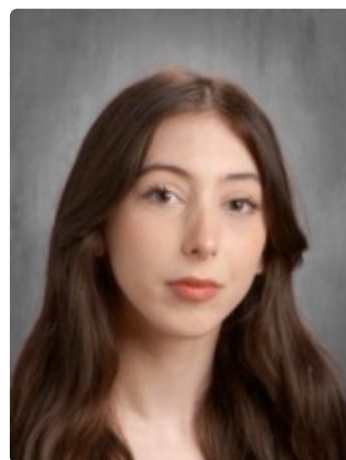
Congratulations to Nazifa Arna, who was named one of only three sophomores selected from the entire tri-state area to represent the Delaware Valley at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair—the world's largest international STEM research competition for high school students.



Nazifa will present her project, "The Impact of Puzzle-Solving on Memory Retention and Concentration: A Study of Cognitive Enhancement," this May.

UDHS Student Honored by Central League for Writing

Upper Darby High School writers placed second at this year's Central League Writing Competition. Our standout writer was Senior Sabrina Gollotti, who earned recognition for her short story writing. She and her peers distinguished themselves amongst 11 other schools in the Central League. We are very proud of their work!



Sophomore Recognized at National History Day Competition

Chloe Thompson, the UDHS Sophomore Class president, represented the Upper Darby School District with distinction during the Pennsylvania state competition for National History Day. Supported by Mrs. Debbie Beck, Chloe won first place in her category (Senior Individual Website) at the regional competition

and advanced to compete at the state-level held at the University of Scranton.

Although not advancing to the national competition, her website, "Harvey Milk: the Man, the Myth, the Martyr" won an honorable mention for the Pennsylvania LGBTQ+ History Prize. Sponsored by the LGBT Center of Central PA History Project and the PA LGBT History Network, this award recognizes an outstanding entry involving LGBTQ+ history and which demonstrates balanced research and a clear understanding of the topic and its place in history.

This was Chloe's second time participating in this event and we are thrilled with her accomplishment! We are hoping that next year, additional UDSD students will participate as well.

Participation in this event provides students with a rich opportunity to not just strengthen their research and communication skills but also encourages their development with regards to public speaking and leadership.

UDHS Hosts Annual Annenberg Science Symposium

On Thursday, April 10, Upper Darby High School hosted the annual Annenberg Science Symposium. Through a series of three case studies, our students gave a creative and informational presentation titled *Under Pressure: An Analysis of Hypertension*, covering many aspects of blood pressure from testing and symptoms down to the molecular level and interactions in the kidneys. The Main Line Health judges gave UDHS the following award: *Hyper-Educators: Most Comprehensive Explanation of a Common Medical Problem*.

In addition, students from Friends Central presented on Post-Partum Depression and students from Malvern Prep presented on the use of AI in Medicine. The tenor of the evening was described by one attendee as “fun and memorable” and by another as “warm and educational.”

Congratulations to our students and thank you for representing our school so positively and making us proud!





Student Wins Sustainability Award from Local Company

Congratulations to UDHS Junior Alan Luu for winning the Saint-Gobain Foundation Sustainability Award. Alan won for his research project titled "Capturing Carbon: Investigating Biochar-Tire Rubber Composite for CO2 Sequestration."

Alan was selected for exhibiting creativity and thoughtfulness in developing a solution that demonstrates sustainability, recycled material use, carbon reduction, and consideration of circular economy.



Students from Baking and Hospitality Cater Career Fair

Students in the Baking & Hospitality class catered the annual College & Career Fair before spring break. This year's menu featured white chicken chili, taco slaw, corn muffin pudding, chili mocha cupcakes with espresso buttercream, horchata lojana and a lime mint spritzer. One of the attendees was overheard saying "Upper Darby always has the best food." (They are not wrong about that).



Student in Mr. Bennedetto's Class Makes Major Strides

Mr. Benedetto would like to recognize 9th grader Melvin Powell from his Academic General Science class. Melvin worked hard to improve and scored the highest grade on the class's Unit 4 test. Says Mr. Benedetto, "He's put his phone down a bit, and his focus has improved, and he did fantastically on his test." Way to go Melvin!



Artistic Achievements

Artwork for Upcoming Arts Fest

When you see the lovely animations and art work for the upcoming Arts Fest, you are looking at the work of art students themselves! National Arts Honor Society President Angel Hua was the main artist, and was assisted by fellow NAH members is the main artist Ojifa Samiha, Amy Luong, and Ran Foza. They deserve this hard earned shoutout for the amazing job they did.

To check out the animatic created by the group, click here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uRjyLq2Sv6CzxX1Go0do-Y0FPimhOqzE/view?usp=drive_web



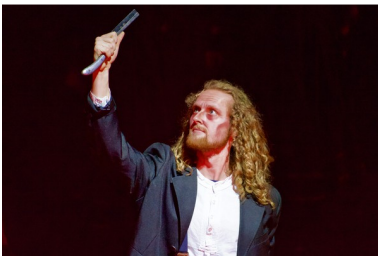
Sweeney Todd Wins 14 Cappie Nominations!

Congratulations to the cast and crew of Upper Darby High School's spring musical, "Sweeney Todd - The Demon Barber of Fleet Street," on their FOURTEEN Cappie nominations!

The Greater Philadelphia chapter of the Cappies Awards focuses on journalism through peer reviews of each participating school's production. At the end of each Cappies season, critics vote on different award categories culminating with the annual gala where the winners are announced! We are honored that this year's gala will be back home in the Performing Arts Center on June 1st!

Marketing and Publicity UD Theatre Marketing Team	Special Effects and Technology John Peter Quillen
Hair and Makeup Alana Jackson & Amina Peters	Props UD Theatre Tech Crew
Stage Management Gianna Williams & Sam Alizzi	Ensemble in a Musical The Company of Sweeney Todd
Featured Actor in a Female Role Nadia Flynn	Featured Actor in a Male Role Kareem Wright
Supporting Actor in a Female Role Sydnie Jaye Meyers	Supporting Actor in a Male Role Cole McIntosh
Lead Actor in a Female Role Kalia Hayman-Brown	Lead Actor in a Male Role Josiah Marker
Best Song Finale Ultimo: The Ballad of Sweeney Todd	Best Musical Sweeney Todd

The school version of the famed Stephen Sondheim musical ran at UDHS March 21, 22 and 28th at 7:30PM, and at 2PM and 7:30PM on March 29 to great acclaim. The 14 nominations (see pic below) include plaudits for hair and makeup, featured actor/supporting actor/lead actor in both female and male categories, among others. See above for the full list, and see below for pics from the show.



**The Demon Barber
Himself**



The Best Pies in London



**The Ensemble Taking
Their Bows**

UDHS Shines at PA Music Educators Association All-State Festival

Over April 9-12, Upper Darby was represented by many of its young musicians at the PA Music Educators Association (PMEA) All-State Orchestra. Senior Emily Fischbach came in fifth overall in the violins are a reseating test, and sixth highest in the entire orchestra.



Also performing at this same event were the UDHS Encore Singers under the direction of Brian Boeshore. They were the rock stars of the day!

Sports Corner

Upper Darby Track Attends 2025 Penn Relays

The prestigious race event the Penn Relays were held over April 24-26, and members of both the boy's track team (coached by Kelsey Bierling) and the girl's track team (coached by Brad Gilbert) made a great showing!



The 4x100 relay teams (girls and boys) of Upper Darby finished first in their respective competitions! Says Athletic Director Russ Benditt, "Finishing first at the Penn Relays is no small feat, and for both teams to do it in the same year? That's history in the making! You all should be extremely proud. What an amazing moment for the UD track Programs!!!!"



**Both Freshman Teams
Pose with Their Trophies**



The Boys Team



The Girls Team

Teacher's Take

Lisa Wilson Robinson Celebrates Three Different Anniversaries in One Year!

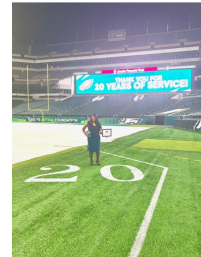
Upper Darby Business Teacher Lisa Wilson Robinson had quite a school year, celebrating not one, not two, but THREE anniversaries! Last fall Lisa was recognized by the school board for her 25 years at Upper Darby. But she also celebrated 20 years working for the Philadelphia Eagles, and 36 years as "Left Field Lisa," supervisor for the Philadelphia Phillies!



"Left Field" Lisa



**20 Years with the Current
Super Bowl Champs!**



**Posing at the 20 Yard
Line**



Dianne Zoccola

Dianne is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters