Montour School District

District establishes new core values

In July, Montour administrators participated in an innovative retreat with the mission of developing new core values for the district. The retreat came as the district was heading into its first full year under the leadership of incoming Superintendent Dr. Michael Ghilani, and as it looks to develop curriculums that better prepare students for post-secondary education and the workplace. Over the course of three days, administrators visited an idea incubator and a design firm that are part of Pittsburgh’s growing tech industry. Among those at the retreat this year was Justin Aglio, Montour’s new director of innovation. The following was taken from a blog he wrote about the experience:

According to the Institute of Education Science, the average middle school in America educates 574 students. Assuming that each middle school serves three grades levels, the average grade level has 191 students. Those students go through a tremendous number of changes during the transitional period between elementary school and high school. Yet, year after year, schools typically use the same schedules, lesson plans, programs and instructional strategies.

Imagine if successful companies continued to do the same thing over and over again, while knowing that their customers were continually changing. Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, says to always “change before you must.” If we want great schools for our students, we would be wise to introduce new core values, partnerships, and innovative practices within our learning communities. Without this way of thinking, we will not properly educate one of our most capable and connected generations.

Here [is the first of three] strategies to support accelerating innovation:

Develop new system core values

Imagine a superintendent, principals, facilities manager and other school leaders from a historically traditional district seated at a “round table” in medieval chairs, discussing core values for their district. Each member is focused on ideas for improving the educational experience of all students based upon creativity, curiosity and innovative instruction. While this may not sound reminiscent of a traditional leadership manual, it was a reality at Inventionland this summer during Montour School District’s four-day senior leadership retreat.

Participants from Montour were led by newly appointed superintendent, Dr. Michael Ghilani. Prior to Montour, Ghilani was a principal at Upper St. Clair High School, where he was awarded the 2013 Principal of the Year Award by the Pennsylvania Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals. Ghilani became Montour’s official superintendent on July 1, and was clearly on board to lead a high-performing district.

According to Dr. Ghilani, “The purpose of this summer’s retreat was to ‘unbox’ the thinking of the administrative team in a way that would lead to a clear vision while also identifying common organizational values. From the transportation director to the middle school principal, we are now all heading in the same direction and looking at the big picture through a similar lens.”

The summer retreat took place at several locations throughout the Pittsburgh region, including the Energy Innovation Center and Inventionland. The center’s mission is “to inspire the creator within - a perfect alignment with everything the Montour School District is doing,” explained Nathan Field, executive director at Inventionland. In addition, Montour’s team spent an entire day at LUMA Institute utilizing the LUMA System of Innovation, which has been featured in the Harvard Business Review. Participants used LUMA’s system to develop a fresh set of core values based on a survey of Montour staff members.

Bill Lucas, co-founder of LUMA, was enthusiastic about the initiative.

“It calls for more people to be more innovative, more often,” he says. “That’s why it is so heartening to see Montour’s leadership team engaging everyone from board members to bus drivers. They sincerely believe in every individual as a potential agent of change - and the power of collaborative design and development.”

Montour School District’s New System Core Values:

• Putting Children First:
  We are committed to knowing the needs of every child and to make decisions that best serve all children.

• Supporting a Growth Mindset:
  We believe that the principles of hard work, resilience, persistence and personal responsibility lead to a life of limitless personal growth, and expanding intelligence.

• Creating a Learning Culture:
  We believe in a learning culture founded on the principles of reflection, engagement, empowerment and personal responsibility.
Montour to host education conferences in November

Montour will be welcoming educators from across the region for the following conferences this November:

EdCamp

Ever since the EdCamp idea started in Philadelphia in 2010, it has been catching on with educators across the globe. The “unconferences” do away with the structure of predetermined topics and agendas in favor of an open format that puts attendees in charge. The idea is to bring together anyone interested in education, from technology experts to entrepreneurs to teachers, and allow them to determine topics of discussion. It was co-created by Ed Callahan, a special education teacher inspired by the open forum of social media. In August, the Edcamp Foundation got a leg up when it received a $2 million grant from the Gates Foundation.

On Nov. 7, Montour will host its first-ever EdCamp. The event is open to educators from across western Allegheny County, along with anyone else interested in attending, and is free. To register, go to http://t.co/UhyVQUKPf3.

Montour stays Strong for Joe

With just one semester of classes left before he could graduate from Slippery Rock University in January of 2013, 2009 Montour graduate Joe Chesno was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma. Putting his education, career and life on hold, Chesno underwent six months of chemotherapy.

Initially, his disease seemed to go into remission, until January of 2014, when Chesno was diagnosed with a recurrence. He underwent an autologous stem cell transplant using his own cells that April.

Earlier this year, with his condition once again in remission, Chesno finished the classes he needed to graduate with a degree in safety management from SRU, including an internship with Allegheny Health Network. Chesno graduated in May. In June, he was diagnosed with his second recurrence of the disease.

Now, Chesno is undergoing antibody treatments in preparation for another round of high dose radiation and chemotherapy in October. That will be followed up by an allogeneic stem cell transplant from a donor. He says his doctors have advised that he not start working for a year, but he’s hoping he can be like others who have undergone the treatment and bounced back in six months. Asked how he feels about the road ahead, Chesno shrugs. “I’ll just deal with it,” he says.

The Montour community wanted to make sure Chesno knew he wasn’t alone, and so on Aug. 29 held a fundraiser for Chesno at the high school. Organizer Gina Caliguire says they set out with a goal of raising $12,000 and well exceeded that amount. She says it didn’t take much to get area individuals and businesses on board to make the event a success. Businesses that pitched in included FASTER – Fitness and Sports Training, Pure Power Yoga, KamJamz Fitness, MassMutual Pittsburgh, 412 Performance Chiropractic, B&D Excavating, Kate Markovitz Nutrition, Rohrich Auto Group of Pittsburgh and AJ Fastener. Thanks to a sponsorship with Robinson Emergency Medical Service, organizers were also able to accept corporate donations. ESPN sportscaster Chris Berman even sent Chesno a signed poster. B&D Excavating also donated tickets to the NFL Hall of Fame game for auction. Caliguire says an anonymous donor bid $1,000 for the tickets and then donated them back to Chesno so he could go to the game.

During the event, the Central Blood Bank also held a joint blood drive and bone marrow registry, during which all donor spots were filled and many signed up for the registry program. FASTER, the gym where Chesno is a member, proved instrumental by organizing a FitFest program to kick off the day. Participants paid $15 for an EFX boot camp session, followed by a yoga session with Pure Power Yoga and a hip-hop cardio session with KamJamz. Montour, in addition to opening the high school campus for the event, also opened the doors to its athletic center so participants could take a dip. Attendees also enjoyed a live acoustic set by Montour graduate Tori Plack and music by the band November Blue.

“There’s too many people to even name,” says Chesno about all the organizers.

Chesno’s girlfriend, Chrissy DiClaudio, a 2010 Montour graduate, says they weren’t expecting the kind of turnout they received. She’s been with Chesno for the past seven-and-a-half-years. “It’s amazing,” she says. “We weren’t expecting this at all. The whole thing just kind of snowballed.”
Welcome back, MHS community
From Todd Price, Principal

The Montour High School administration, faculty and staff welcome back our students as we look forward to the start of the 2015-2016 school year! Each new school year brings with it excitement for the return of students to the high school campus. Our students have much to look forward to as we implement new and exciting academic and co-curricular programming again this year. With the addition of new academic coursework and technologies, our students will continue to have access to the very best educational programming. Montour High School continues to be a regional leader in STEM education complementing a comprehensive curriculum focused on personalizing a learning experience for all students.

We wish all of our students a successful 2015-2016 school year! Welcome Back! Follow Montour High School on Twitter at @hilltopspartan.

Montour forms educational partnership with Allegheny Health Network

Through a partnership with Allegheny Health Network, third- and fourth-year biomedical students will be able to learn in a simulated hospital setting. Operated in the West Penn Hospital School of Nursing in the Bloomfield neighborhood of Pittsburgh, the AHN STAR Center is organized to mimic a real hospital. Montour faculty have partnered with AHN to develop activities that align with school curriculum and are taught by AHN personnel. Students will work with electronic mannequins that the center uses to simulate care, including starting an IV, administering anesthesia, performing a C-section, resuscitation and more. The center even trains students to work in an ambulance.

Broadcast studio in the works

Last school year, sophomore Mitchell Vacco approached school administrators with an idea to turn a room in the high school into a broadcast studio and to start broadcasting football games. That idea is slowly growing into something much bigger, as the school is exploring multiple uses for such a space, including developing a curriculum that would utilize it. Administrators have been in touch with local television studios and a college as the idea continues to develop. David E. Williams Middle School already has a miniature studio, and starting this school year, students at Burkett Elementary School will begin filming morning announcements using iPads software and hardware add-ons. Should the idea come to fruition, Montour students could potentially follow an interest in broadcast journalism all the way from elementary school through high school. Stay tuned…

Additional programs and technology upgrades implemented at the high school:

• By donning a pair of 3-D glasses and using a pen connected to a monitor, students at the high school are now able to dissect organs and even molecules in the school’s new virtual reality immersion lab. The lab, funded in part by a $20,000 grant awarded through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit’s Center for Creativity, are being used primarily in science classes such as biology, physiology and anatomy. Additional applications include physics, engineering and history. Chemistry students can explore a molecule in three dimensions, while anatomy students can pick an organ and dissect it down to the molecular level.
• The district has formed a partnership with Carnegie Mellon University to put a LearnLab in the high school at no cost to the district. The lab allows researchers from CMU to work side-by-side with Montour staff members to connect theories of learning with identified best practices that will maximize classroom instruction. All staff from CMU in the LearnLab will be paid through a grant from the National Science Foundation.
• A larger firewall was installed at the high school, which will increase Internet speeds significantly without sacrificing security.
• Computers in the technology education department were upgraded to ones better equipped to run CAD and 3-D modeling software.

Follow Montour High School at @hilltopspartan.
Follow the district at @MontourSD.
Welcome back, David E. Williams Community
From Dominic Salpeck, Principal, and Mike Marvin, Assistant Principal

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2015-2016 school year! We would like to extend a special welcome to our new families, students and staff. Our hope is that each child will experience tremendous growth as a student and person during the course of this school year.

As in years past, we will approach this year with focus and energy to ensure that all of our students have an opportunity for success. It is our mission to sustain, support and embrace new learning to benefit all of our students. As a community of educators, we will be dedicated to assessing our students on a regular basis and use the results to tailor instruction to meet individual learning needs.

As we continue to fully implement PA Core learning standards, our professional teaching staff will be especially focused on developing writing skills across all content areas. Teachers will select PA Core writing styles and assign content-based writing assignments in all classes. Students will be challenged to synthesize information and make written arguments based on their findings as an example assignment. Activities such as the one referenced are designed to build higher level thinking skills.

With regard to technology, there are a number of exciting additions that will be made this year. Wireless Internet access will be available in all areas of the building, allowing for seamless educational programming. Later this fall, all students in grades 7 and 8 will be given Chromebooks. Look for communications surrounding the use of these devices to occur closer to the arrival date of the devices. We have adopted new support/enrichment tools including IXL (web-based math and English/reading programming) and expanded Study Island services. Along with greater use of Google Drive, our staff will be fully implementing the curriculum in a manner that is supported by the advantages of the newest technology.

In closing, we hope that you all had a relaxing and fulfilling summer. We look forward to continuing the tradition of “Spartan Pride” at David E. Williams!

More about IXL, a new math and English Language Arts tool for grades 3-8
By Dr. Christopher Stone, Director of Education

At the start of the school year, Montour implemented IXL, a web resource that students can utilize to practice math and English Language Arts problems at their level and pace. Questions are administered one at a time in a fun and interactive environment. Students are notified if their answer is correct or incorrect immediately after submitting an answer. The response is followed by a “coaching” process to help foster mastery.

Embedded in the IXL program is a myriad of content, ordered like a textbook, making it easy for students to scaffold their learning. The featured questions are generated to mesh with PA Core standards for grades 3-8. Teachers are able to track student progress and identify areas in which they need further remediation or acceleration.

More information will be shared by classroom teachers in the very near future! Feel free to preview: https://www.ixl.com.

Carnegie Science Center Mobile Fab Lab coming to Forest Grove and Burkett

In October, students at Forest Grove and Burkett elementary schools will become the first to participate in a program centered around the Carnegie Science Center Mobile Fab Lab, thanks to support from the elementary schools’ PTAs.

Pulled by a Ford F-350, the mobile Fab Lab is a moving factory of sorts, consisting of a trailer with state-of-the-art fabricating equipment that can be unloaded and set up pretty much anywhere. The lab includes 3D printers, laser cutters, a 3D scanner, design computers and software, a ShopBot CNC milling machine, video conference equipment, a vinyl cutter, arduinos and electronics components, a mini CNC mill, a CNC sewing/embroidery machine, projectors and documentation cameras. In a co-teaching exercise, Montour and Carnegie Science Center educators will team up to lead students through a yet-to-be determined fabrication project.

In August, regional educators and officials got their first look at the lab, which is funded in part by Chevron. During a Fab Lab Boot Camp attended by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, among others, educators got hands-on with equipment. Justin Aglio, Montour’s director of innovation, sits on an advisory board for the CSC Fab Lab and was at the event. Here are his three takeaways from his experience, which are published on his blog at justinaglio.wordpress.com:

1. Anyone can make.

I have tinkered over the years with a variety of Fab Lab resources, but actually getting to learn
the in and outs of the equipment allowed me to dive deeper into my designs. With so many computer programs now available, the design process is easier and making is more efficient. In our workshop, we had educators from various backgrounds, from tech ed teachers to the most novice makers, and everyone left more confident, more excited, and wanting to learn more.

2. Fab Lab is the ultimate learning environment.

Anyone in the Fab Lab can ask anyone, “Can you help me with this, I have no idea what I am doing?” or “Can you explain this again to me, I am not sure I completely understand?” The Fab Lab is a space where everyone is a teacher and everyone is open to sharing their knowledge, experiences and failures. The space and learning culture embraces failure and promotes curiosity. As adults, we often fear failing in front of our peers, but failure is embraced and encouraged in Fab Lab culture. Therefore, no matter your prior skill set or level of expertise, everyone can learn, teach others and have fun making in Fab Lab.

3. 21st Century Skills are important in Fab Lab.

When I talk with employers about what skills students need to acquire for the current and future workforce, words like nimble, creative, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-seekers/solvers, and other soft skills are usually at the tip of their tongues. Exploring projects in a Fab Lab setting organically fosters these skills. After designing and fabricating a press fit puzzle, I reflected on what I learned, and I ended up with a list of dozens of skills, including graphic design and programming, along with soft skills like communication, collaboration and adaptability.

Welcome, Burkett students!
From Candice Bostick, Principal

Hopefully, everyone enjoyed a relaxing summer vacation and is enthusiastic about an exciting new school year! Our team is energized, refreshed and looking forward to a new adventure. We intend to provide students with a multitude of opportunities to excel academically as well as socially so they become positive members of our school and community.

This year, we will be incorporating several new STEM initiatives at Burkett. As always, we will continue to keep academics and student achievement at the forefront. This year, students will begin learning 3-D design and printing using Tinkercad and two of our new Makerbot 3-D printers and scanners. Students will also explore electricity and circuitry using Drawdio, littleBits and Makey Makey. In addition, students will experience computer programming with Bitsbox software. We have also begun creating a video production suite utilizing Padcaster accessories for filming and TouchCast to incorporate video and news production. Students will have the opportunity to broadcast announcements and showcase some of their projects and creative designs throughout the school year.

Updates to the special education department at Burkett

The special education department opened a new sensory lab for children on the autism spectrum at Burkett Elementary School this year. The sensory lab is equipped with state-of-the-art items, such as a musical waterbed, fiber optic curtains, relaxer V-shaped chairs, weighted blankets and fidget boxes. The lab helps serve children with various types of neuropsychiatric disorders who need a place to calm down and reduce anxiety. The school district has invested $25,000 in this research-supported technology to support students with disabilities.

The special education department has also expanded its verbal-behavioral classroom program, in partnership with PaTTAN to help support students with autism and intellectual disabilities. The VB classroom is a research-supported approach that relies on applied behavioral analysis to teach children with autism functional communication skills, as well as life and academic skills. A new classroom will be housed at Burkett Elementary School, with hopes that it will eventually become a K-12 program in every building throughout the district.

We will catapult into our second-year STEM “Launch” implementation through Project Lead the Way. Students will continue exploration through these innovative modules/kits which focus on the engineering design process while helping build critical thinking skills and spark deeper collaboration among students.

Also new at Burkett is a state-of-the-art sensory room, the use of Google accounts for students and classroom instruction through Google classroom, the incorporation of safety practices from Peaceful Playgrounds, and much more. Be sure to stay tuned for student recognitions as we highlight and recognize Student of the Month awardees, as well as host a few new evening festivities.

I am confident our staff will do their best to make this year meaningful and fulfilling for your child. In collaboration with parents, we can make this year the best one yet!

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Go to: www.montourschools.com for the latest district news

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A breakdown of new tech at Burkett

In the spring of 2013, Burkett Elementary School opened its new STEAM TEAM room. The center creates a cross-discipline, multi-purpose space where students are able to combine subjects taught across the school curriculum into creative projects with a group component. Here’s some of the new tech making its way into the STEAM TEAM room this year, thanks to a combination of grants and outside funding.

**Padcaster and TouchCast**

The Padcaster turns an Apple iPad not unlike the ones Burkett received last year through the Burkett PTA into a semi-professional video recording device. Padcaster add-ons include wide-angle lenses and shotgun mikes. Utilized with accessible video editing software like TouchCast, a free app that also allows users to broadcast video and web content, and the system becomes a mobile video production unit. This fall, Burkett students will be using Padcaster and TouchCast technology to create morning announcements and showcase projects.

**Tinkercad and MakerBot**

Tinkercad simplifies 3-D modeling by utilizing digital shapes to create positive or negative space. After students finish their design, they can print them on a MakerBot 3-D printer that the school recently acquired.

**Drawdio, littleBits and Makey Makey**

Students will be exploring electricity and circuitry using Drawdio, Makey Makey and littleBits circuits. A Drawdio creates audio from ambient electrical currents. Makey Makey utilizes a circuit board and alligator clips to turn just about any object into a “key.” littleBits utilizes magnetized electronic building blocks that snap together to construct complex electrical circuits and inventions. Designs can even be controlled using an app on a mobile device.

**Bitsbox**

Bitsbox uses a simplified version of Java to give young learners an introduction to computer programming. Each month, the company mails new code projects to subscribers, who can choose from a range of new apps that they’d like to build. Users input the code into a program on the Bitsbox website. The built app can then be run on a virtual iPad or transferred to a mobile device such as a phone or iPad by scanning a bar code on the screen.

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**Welcome back to an exciting year at Forest Grove**

*From Jennifer V. Kosanovic, Principal*

The entire staff is excited and proud to be a part of the school community and to collaborate with you, the families, and to educate your children!

After the custodians cleaned, polished and shined the building, the teachers were busy throughout the summer readying their classrooms and preparing curriculum materials to ensure a successful start to the year for all of our kindergarten, first and second grade students. We strive to create a warm and welcoming environment where our students feel safe, where they are excited about learning and where they enjoy coming, every day!

There are new academic initiatives being developed to guarantee another fulfilling and enriching school year for our students. Having multiple years of experience with the Journey Reading Series, teachers will be implementing the Daily 5 Framework for literacy instruction. Within this framework, teachers will have more opportunities for one-on-one and small group instruction.

Students will spend more time on meaningful activities that promote independence, give them choices and encourage more reading and writing. The new school year also brings a Project Lead the Way Launch module to second grade. PTLW has been present at Montour High School for many years and in recent years has expanded to DEW and Burkett Elementary School. Now, Forest Grove second-graders will have the opportunity to experience science, technology, engineering and math through a unit entitled Grids and Games. This unit will be taught during Resource and will hopefully expand. The addition of Launch will complement the My Math series, which fosters a deeper conceptual understanding of numbers and ScienceFusion, a comprehensive program that integrates print, interactive technology and hands-on learning, allowing students multiple opportunities to engage in learning.

There will be many occasions for students to engage in co-curricular activities such as assemblies, art shows, science nights and book fairs, many of which are supported by the Montour...
The Daily 5:

- Relies on teaching students to be independent.
- Manages the entire literacy block.
- Allows for three to five focused lessons and more intentional teaching.
- Provides students with substantial time to read and write.
- Allows for the integration of reading and writing.
- Incorporates a variety of clearly defined instructional routines that accelerate learning.
- Builds stamina to ensure longer periods of time that students successfully read and write.
- Articulates student behaviors that culminate in highly engaged learners.
- Teaches students to understand and monitor their literacy goals.

The Daily 5 is designed to give teachers more time to work with small groups of students or individual students. The result is less time spent on whole group, direct instruction lessons that are long in duration. Instead, there are a number of mini-lessons that last less than 10 minutes each. These mini-lessons focus on the necessary skills and concepts needed for students to become fluent readers and writers. Students have the ability to immediately apply those skills in a self-selected learning activity.

During the first 25 days of school, there is a great deal of time spent establishing routines and expectations for teachers and students. Because of this, families will not see as much work coming home, and literacy work - reading, grammar, spelling, vocabulary and writing - that comes home after this period will look very different. The following is important information regarding the framework.

The Daily 5:
- Relies on teaching students to be independent.
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- Articulates student behaviors that culminate in highly engaged learners.
- Teaches students to understand and monitor their literacy goals.

More on the Daily 5 Framework for literacy instruction at Forest Grove

After four second-grade teachers piloted the Daily 5 Framework for literacy instruction during the 20014-15 school year, the decision was made for all Forest Grove classrooms to start using the framework because of the positive outcomes that were observed.

The Daily 5 is a student-driven management structure, not a curriculum, designed to fully engage students in reading and writing. The transition from extended lessons to mini-lessons is based on brain research that indicates children can only attend to a task for the number of minutes equaling their age. Between each explicit mini-lesson, students will have the opportunity to choose an activity that interests them via one of the Daily 5 options, which are: Read to Self, Work on Writing, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading and Word Work. During this time, teachers will work with small groups of students at their instructional level, allowing for more attention to individual needs. Students will spend more time reading and writing than in a traditional classroom instructional framework.

The Daily 5 directly relates to MSD’s Core Values of Putting Children First, Supporting a Growth Mindset and Creating a Learning Culture.
Forest Grove hosts third annual art show

On May 5, Forest Grove Elementary School hosted Montour’s Third Annual Montour Elementary Student Art Show in the school gymnasm. Natalie Rush, art teacher at Forest Grove Elementary, began organizing the art show three years ago. Rush was assisted in organizing this year’s show by the Montour Elementary PTA. The show was expanded to display work by third and fourth grade students from Burkett Elementary School under the guidance of Burkett art teacher Marcia Chauvet. PTA member Rikki Benton chaired the event and parent volunteers assisted in preparing for the show.

The red carpet was rolled out for parents, teachers and students, all of whom were able to view student artwork in a gallery-like display. Kindergarten students produced handprint butterflies after listening to Eric Carle’s “The Very Hungry Caterpillar.” First-graders created a multimedia version of Vincent Van Gogh’s “Sunflowers.” Second-graders recreated Mary Cassat’s “The Boating Party,” painted in oil pastels. Third-graders created abstract pictures with black glue lines after learning about Pablo Picasso and his progression from realism to abstract art. Fourth-graders painted abstract flowers after learning about Georgia O’Keeffe.

Many families purchased the framed artwork to display at home with pieces from the past two art shows. They will be able to add to their collection this coming year.

The fun and successful event allowed Montour elementary students to display their talents.

Montour community members take on triathlon

Last year, almost as soon as high school business and marketing instructor April Fisher tackled her first triathlon, she had her sites set on competing in the same race again this year. As she prepared over the summer for the 2015 Pittsburgh Triathlon, though, she wasn’t alone. Over the summer, Fisher instructed a spinning class in the Montour Athletic Center that attracted members of the Montour school community. Of them, she managed to get two to make completing the race a goal: Cindy Caliguire - Montour’s coordinator of pupil services and testing - and Nick Weaver - a social studies teacher at Montour last year. Cindy also got her husband, Montour school board president Dean Caliguire, involved. It was the second triathlon the couple took on over the summer.

“We kept each other motivated,” says Fisher. “We all became this Montour triathlon group.” On Aug. 8, all four completed the sprint portion of the race, which consisted of a 20-kilometer bike ride, a five-kilometer run, and a 600-meter open water swim in the Allegheny River. Joe Merhaut, Montour special education director, and his wife, Rhonda, also competed by taking on the adventure portion of the race. Montour students Georgia Fowkes and Jacob Cruny volunteered to work the event, which raises money for the Friends of the Riverfront and various other good causes.

Fisher improved her time by 14 minutes over last year, finishing at 1:32:53 and 135th overall. That was good enough to earn her first place in her 35-39 age division, on a day that she also celebrated her 37th birthday. She says the experience has inspired her to start an employee wellness campaign at the school that utilizes the athletic center’s amenities. She has since submitted a proposal to the school board.