



BHS

VPA Department

NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 11, 2020: WEEK TWO OF SCHOOL EDITION

Wonderful VPA Families,

We're settling into a routine, and the creativity and vision that are a feature of this department are bubbling up, whether students are at home or on campus.

WE REMEMBER: In observance of the horrific attack on our nation, and both the lives lost and the heroism that emerged in the wake of 9/11, Booker High School hosted a ceremony of presentation of colors, the spectacular flag, and a performance of The Star-Spangled Banner by Music senior Jailyn Gentile. In a moving speech, BHS School Resource Office (retired, NYPD) Jose Castellanos, a first responder, offered a tearful recounting of the losses he's known since that tragic morning, and the horrific legacy of that attack, imploring students and staff to "never forget." The annual remembrance traditionally amasses the school in the courtyard, but this year was broadcast into classrooms to maintain physical distancing.



Right: VPA Music senior Jailyn Gentile performs "The Star-Spangled Banner,"

Below: Ofc. Castellanos and Dr. Shelley grieve together, remembering the day.



Far left: Production & Design students create patriotic magic with the traditional unfurling of the flag.

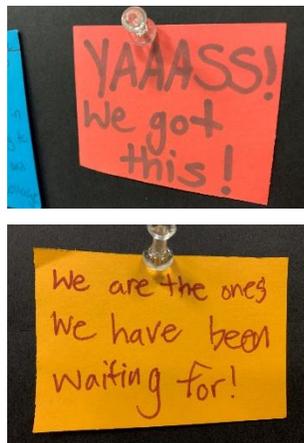
Immediate left: Castellanos, a first responder, reminds Booker students that they are the next generation and hold our nation's hope.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH: program Sept. 15-Oct. 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month, and all Florida students grades 4-12 are invited to write an essay to win a 4-year prepaid scholarship! This year's prompt highlights contributions of Hispanic Americans. The deadline is Sept. 25. See this link for details:

<https://floridahispanicheritage.com/>

RENOVATION UPDATE! In a triumph for our VPA program and all our community partners, the Sarasota County School Board approved a \$22 million budget, over the next two fiscal years, to renovate and upgrade our theater. In phase one, slated to begin this year, the theater house and lobby will be renovated, with an addition of classrooms in the space; phase two will bring the new black box theatre that will expand our capability to bring smaller, intimate performances, host fundraising dinners and events, and more! We couldn't be more excited or more grateful for the unflagging support of our School Board and district leaders. A very special thanks to Caroline Zucker, our arts in education champion, who has been a great ally in this endeavor.

WALL OF SUPPORT! Just as walls support buildings, the VPA Wall of triumph supports our students' hope. The brainchild of Mr. Zickafoose, the wall project allows students across the disciplines the chance to write uplifting messages to the Booker High School community. Thanks to intricate lettering by VPA Art senior Anne Marie Sledziewski, these messages have an anchor that gives them weight. The wall display inspires all and is always ready for new messages.



Far left: the wall, with inscriptions of inspiration.

Immediate left: Some ideas put forth by students. From famous quotes to personal ideas, the messages offer solidarity. To see them come together to support one another, their teachers, and the school, has been a great boon of returning to learning.

ART FOCUS OF THE WEEK: Covid can't crush creativity in Film & Animation, where projects are underway as normal. Animation students are busy getting to know their characters by starting with the bones: junior Max Werbelow explains that building character from the skeleton out allows the artist to see how they move and where movement originates. In film, students enjoyed a production day, where they videoconferenced one another to brainstorm the details of upcoming projects.



Far left: Animation junior Max Werbelow uses a t-rex to reference for his Godzilla skeleton.

Immediate left: Film senior Jonathan Rodriguez collaborates with senior Rosie Wolff.

OFF CAMPUS BUT NEVER FAR AWAY Teachers have been hard at work building plans that offer great opportunities for all, whether our learners are with us physically or not.

Immediate left: Ms. Burton connects with her remote learners. Far left: Mr. Z met with his Chamber Choir—remote and in-person learners alike—for a short-lived impromptu concert at UTC.

