Regional Nurse Coordinator Provides COVID Recovery Support by Crista Krosch

As Minnesota K-12 schools begin another academic year, we again are seeing the effects of the global pandemic in education. Students, teachers, administrators, support personnel — everyone has been touched by some aspect. One group of unsung heroes during the pandemic is that of the Licensed School Nurse (LSN). In addition to juggling the demands of their typical job, many COVID-related tasks such as contact tracing, testing, identifying cases, alerting families, and so on, became the responsibility of the LSNs and their offices. As a result, LSNs faced many hours of additional daily work, felt overwhelmed without support, and experienced a high rate of burnout and retirement.

In response, a Minnesota Department of Health grant-funded initiative was established to provide regional support to assist schools with their COVID recovery phases. As part of that initiative, some regions

Nurse Coordinator continues on page 2

Nursing student intern Sofia Schultz works with a student
hired regional nursing leads, who are now collaborating with local school districts and nurses in their recovery efforts. In the southcentral region, SCSC hired Magen Borkenhagen, BSN RN, PHN, as Regional Nursing Coordinator, to provide coordination for schools, support for nursing leads and social emotional learning resources. Magen has been in this role since she joined SCSC in February of 2022. She brings a diverse background and skillset in nursing and mental health to the region. Magen’s goal is to advocate for and assist School Nurses in accessing resources and tools that can be shared by all districts working in collaboration rather than being siloed and creating resources and tools individually. In addition, Magen aspires to see the profession recognized for their outstanding contributions to the wellness of both their students and their faculties and staff.

As we move forward with recovery and look to the future, some of Magen’s initiatives include:

- **Development of a partnership with MSU, Mankato School of Nursing** initiating a student intern program that will assist local schools in a variety of nursing office needs and presentations.

- **Collaborating with SWWCC to create Mental Health Wellness Program** that provides mental health wellness support and professional development training opportunities.

- **Creation of a Community of Practice group for LSNs.** This group meets quarterly and provides collaborative problem solving and professional growth opportunities. Upcoming CoP meetings are: January 19 and April 20. Details at mncscsc.org

- **Planning of a Mental Health Conference for LSNs** and their offices that is not only educational but also inspirational. The conference is scheduled for March 23, 2023.

- **Formation of a statewide collaboration tool** in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Department of Education to provide digital resources for LSNs. These resources include: screening options, tools, and trainings to support best practices that can be shared among the professional network LSNs.

- **Establishment of a mentor program** for new school nurses.

- **Coordination between K-12 and post-secondary nursing programs** with Rasmussen University, Gustavus Adolphus College and South Central College for clinical experiences and partnerships.

In her work as the Regional Nurse Coordinator, what Magen finds most challenging is the concept of “soloing”. This is the concept that each person needs to develop and work independently without the support of others. Until this time, no one has attempted to create a collaborative force to accomplish the same goals. Creating this collaboration has been challenging but it also the most rewarding part of her position.

Magen aspires to give LSNs the recognition they have earned and hopes to create an atmosphere that will inspire new nurses to join the profession and to create a culture of support and value to the position of LSNs.
As part of the collaborative efforts of SWWC and SCSC, districts throughout those regions have taken part in the Mental Health Wellness Program that provides mental health wellness support and professional development training opportunities. Greg Scheitel, LSW, Regional Mental Health Consultant with SWWC, reports that, to date:

- 201 SWWC district staff members have received training
- 167 SCSC district staff members have received training
- 11 districts have received training
- 5 districts have requested additional mental health professional development programming

**Thank you, Magen, for all you do for Licensed School Nurses in the SCSC region that reverberates throughout the state!**

“Nurse Borkenhagen exemplifies regional collaboration through her strong ability to connect resources to schools and best practices in health service programs. With a focus on student health and school success, she inspires the strengths within all team members to create a collective vision for student health. She is a great partner.”

Jeff Horton, Superintendent
Gibbon Fairfax Winthrop Public Schools

“It is exciting to hear Magen’s goals aligned with many of my ‘hopes and dreams’ for supporting school nurses over the last five years... but now she has the resources and time to actually ‘tackle’ some of those goals that will help support new school nurses and even seasoned school nurses that have limited resources or support.”

Heather Hedin, MSN RN LSN NCSN
Minnesota Dept. of Health

“Magen has been an amazing addition to this region! She has gone out of her way to strive to improve the environment of school nursing by opening channels of communication locally and at state level. Magen advocates for school nurses, whose focus is more rural and resources can be very limited. She also has brought back our regional school nurse meeting as a way for us to connect, share ideas, and build a stronger community where we serve.”

Katelyn Suess, RN PHN
Sleepy Eye Public Schools
Congratulations, Glenn Morris!

SCSC is happy to share that team member Glenn Morris was honored with an “Outstanding Service” Award at the annual Minnesota Service Cooperative’s Conference in October.

An innovative leader, Glenn has developed and coordinated award-winning technology and applied academic programs, serving as a director for SCSC. As a teacher and administrator, Glenn has forged relationships for over three decades, shaping collaborative initiatives that connect education, workforce, and community.

Glenn began his work with SCSC in 1986 serving as a regional technology coordinator, and over the years has served members in several capacities, including Academic Coordinator, Health and Safety Coordinator, and Director for the SOCRATES telecom network and supplemental online learning programs. He has also served as a Secondary Administrator for the South Central Perkins Consortium, where he developed the High-STEP Health Science and Source Code Information Technology academy programs. Currently, Glenn is an Administrative Director for SCSC, and serves as Executive Director for the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration, a global nonprofit organization. Glenn is an entrepreneur in working with these programs and their continued support. He has served as an Executive in Residence with AESA and is a Minnesota Education Policy Fellow.

Glenn and his wife, Peggy, live high in the oak trees above the Blue Earth River in Mankato.

SCSC PARTNERS

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Contact Jerome Evans, CPC representative, 651-371-1258 or Jerome@purchasingconnection.org

Register today and start shopping!

SCSC, as part of the Minnesota Service Cooperatives, has partnered with ICS to provide members with access to facility-related services and solutions. Check out their latest IMPACT newsletter to find out about recent projects.

If you would like more information on ICS, contact Karen Klein at karen.klein@ics-builds.com or 651-728-1880.
Wellness Corner
by Hannah Keltgen

Fall is here, which means it’s out with the heat, and in with the turning leaves and cool breezes. In honor of the passing of the seasons, we wanted to provide wellness tips to help keep you and your coworkers healthy and happy this fall season!

11 Smartest Fall Health Tips to Stay Well This Season

With the changing of seasons comes the need to make lifestyle changes, too. It’s a great time to reset your health routines and continue healthy habits. A cornerstone of healthy fall habits will keep your immunity strong and your mind clear as you wrap up another busy year. Here we share 11 tips for keeping you and your team healthy all fall long.

Tip #1: Moisturize
Dry fall air can suck the moisture out of your skin, causing excessive dryness and cracks. After showering and throughout the day, be sure to moisturize with lotion to prevent skin issues like infections due to cracking.

Tip #2: Check Safety Alarms
Since most house fires increase during the fall and winter, remind employees to check both their smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms to ensure they’re in working order. CO poisoning in particular can cause symptoms to come and go including chest pain, dizziness, and headaches.

Tip #3: Get a Flu Shot
Before the end of October, opt to get your full shot to keep influenza away. Aside from keeping the flu away, new research shows a flu shot may lower stroke risk by as much as 12 percent.

Tip #4: Mask Up Indoors
Those living in medium-to-high risk areas where Covid is spreading may want to continue masking up indoors. For the immune-compromised, it’s also a good idea to mask up during cold and flu season as an extra precaution.

Tip #5: Focus on Financial Wellness
With the holidays coming up, it’s easy to fall into the trap of spending too much. This fall, start looking at ways to regain financial stability. This may mean working with a financial advisor and/or therapist to start conversations about what that looks like to keep spending habits in check.

Tip #6: Book Those Health Appointments
Consider booking your annual eye exam, physical, and other specialist appointments now. The end of the year tends to get busy for many providers as people try to snag appointments in-between holidays.

Tip #7: Consume Healthy Foods
Unique in-season produce is available starting now. Opt to fill your plate with fibrous pumpkin, sweet pears, kale, beets, and more. Roasting squashes and root veggies make for an excellent side dish.

Tip #8: Try Crockpot Meals
Cut meal time prep down by using crockpot meals that are well-planned and nutritious. Lower cooking temperatures may help preserve nutrients that can be lost when food is cooked too fast in high heat.

Tip #9: Take Time for Self-Care
Make it a priority to take time for yourself. Doing so will keep you refreshed and ready to spend time doing your best at work and giving your full attention to loved ones. Remember, self-care is far from selfish!

Tip #10: Get Active Outside
Whether you enjoy apple picking, hiking, running, or even yard work, spend time outdoors for a mental and physical boost this fall.

Tip #11: Take Vitamin D
In colder climates, a lack of sunshine exposure can cause vitamin D levels to plummet. Consider adding a vitamin D supplement to your diet if you don’t intake a lot through cereal, soy milk, orange juice or yogurt. A doc can perform a blood test to check your levels.
CELEBRATING OUR
FALL 2022
HONOREES

HONOREE: ALICIA SWANSON
Honored by Megan Morgan,
Martin County West School District
“Alicia not only works incredibly hard, (she is the first one usually in the office in the morning and most days the last one locking it up), but she comes in every day with a good “can do” attitude. She wears so many hats around our building and I know without a doubt without her things would crumble. She is so talented and willing to help out even when it doesn’t fall into her job description. She is an incredible asset to our MCW team!”

HONOREE: ALICIA SWANSON
Honored by Michele Baker,
Martin County West School District
“Alicia’s calm and positive attitude and willingness to support students, parents and staff in every way has led her into the classroom this year! Due to a staffing need, Alicia is currently teaching in the classroom with her tiered teaching license for six weeks. After Alicia travels to another building in our district to teach each day, she returns to Trimont Elementary School to tie up loose ends in our building and continue to support our students and staff as building secretary with a cheerful attitude.”

HONOREE: KRISTIE NORTH
Honored by Megan Morgan,
Martin County West School District
“Kristie has such an upbeat attitude and greets every child as they come to school. She helps cross them across the street safely and her joy for helping children radiates around her. She has a contagious laugh that you can hear down the hall. Her presence in and around the school building makes for a fun and enjoyable day for all.”

HONOREE: TANYA SCHMIDTKE
Honored by Megan Morgan,
Martin County West School District
“Tanya is dependable, hardworking and compassionate. She helps multiple children with medically fragile needs every day and is a support system to the families as well. She is a great advocate for her students and always does what is best for them. We appreciate Tanya!”

HONOREE: TERI KORMANN
Honored by Onika Peterson,
NRHEG Public Schools
“Teri Kormann is an integral part of NRHEG. She goes up and beyond her position always helping to make NRHEG thrive. Thank you Teri for everything that you do for our students and staff!”

Alicia Swanson
Kristie North
Teri Kormann
Tanya Schmidtke
HONOREE: BROOKLYN BAKKER
Honored by Megan Morgan, Martin County West School District
“When it comes to the qualifications of a great teacher, Brooklyn is the best of the best. She is constantly thinking about her students and utilizes creative strategies to bring new adventures in her classroom. Her patience and commitment to her students is unwavering. Her positive attitude is noticed in her classroom and throughout the building.”

HONOREE: SUZANNE FORD
Honored by Megan Morgan, Martin County West School District
“Early in the morning you can find Sue helping students at the elementary school whether it is the bus line or helping open doors for both students and staff. Although quiet, Sue has a gift of making everyone feel welcomed. She is kind to the students and completes many behind the scenes activities that ensure our students are successful. Thank you, Sue!”

HONOREE: ROBB LARSON
Honored by Megan Morgan, Martin County West School District
“My favorite thing about Robb is he is always waving at everyone he passes with a smile. He makes everyone feel comfortable and noticed. He is flexible with scheduling and uses a team approach with students, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, etc. Robb rocks!”

HONOREE: LISA BECKER
Honored by: Liam Dawson, St. James Public Schools
“Lisa has a keen eye for the development of all students in the area of visual arts. She incorporates instructional practices that deepen, enrich, and connect to student learning across the curriculum. Her out-of-the-box thinking has seen her develop school kickoff activities that encompass the entire school community to create a community art project. All students grow as artists within her class.”

SCSC’s SPOTLIGHT award program recognizes SCSC members for outstanding contributions they make to their organizations. Award submissions are accepted throughout the year and honorees are announced quarterly. Honor someone today at mnsccsc.org/spotlight
Worker shortages – we hear these statistics daily! Worker shortages affect companies, industries, educational institutions, and government agencies of every size, and in every city and county of the state. The challenge of finding ample workers, let alone qualified workers, to fill open positions is felt everywhere. Today, worker shortages are felt in the field of wastewater workers as well.

You may be thinking, “What exactly does a Water/Wastewater Operator do?” That is a great question and depending on who you ask, you may receive different answers when you get down to the specifics.

Not every operator will have the same exact duties from one organization to the next because it all depends on the number of employees and how tasks are delegated. However, the overall description for a Wastewater Treatment Job as stated by EnvironmentalScience.org is as follows:

“Wastewater treatment operators are critical to public health. Together with engineers, administrators, and scientists, they work toward the management, protection, and conservation of treated and untreated wastewater, recognizing that it is a critical part of the ecosystem.”

What type of schooling is needed to become a Water/Wastewater Operator?

Each state has different requirements for becoming a certified wastewater treatment operator, however, they all do have some requirements in common. For example, according to EnvironmentalScience.org, “all applicants must successfully pass wastewater operator certification exams. In some cases, in order to apply for this certification, prospective operators must be currently employed at a state wastewater treatment facility.” EnvironmentalScience.org also states, “Wastewater Treatment Operators must have a degree in Science or Engineering. Certification is also required typically through state agencies. These agencies often offer training courses and study materials that help students prepare for their certification examinations. Certain colleges and universities also offer wastewater treatment classes through certificate programs in the field.”

Schooling Available in Minnesota:

Throughout the state of Minnesota, there are only two schools that offer a degree in Water Quality and Wastewater Management and Recycling Technology:

St. Cloud Technical and Community College
St. Cloud, MN
- 21 to 1 student to faculty ratio. According to CollegeFactual.com, St. Cloud Technical and Community College is the #1 ranked school in the country for Water Quality and Wastewater Treatment Management and Recycling Tech. The highest degree type that they offer for this major is an Associate Degree. As stated in the article, “Any student pursuing a degree in water quality and wastewater treatment management and recycling technology/technician has to check out St. Cloud Technical and Community College.”

Vermilion Community College
Ely, MN
- 18 to 1 student to faculty ratio. Offers an Water Quality Science – A.A.S. Water Operations Diploma and A.S. in Watershed Science; students
learn lab testing, equipment maintenance, and additional skills required for a Minnesota State Class D Water and Wastewater Operator license.

Real-life Scenario
New Ulm Public Works Human Resources Director, Shawna Boomgarden, and Dan O’Connor, Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor, took advantage of the Internship program offered through SCSC’s Local Government Solutions program.

Isaac Sawyer, recent graduate of Vermilion Community College in Water Quality and Watershed, began as an intern in January and was able to maintain his status until August when he left for school at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens’s Point.

The internship program assists not only the intern, but also the companies offering the internship. Through SCSC’s program, the first 400 hours of Isaac’s internship wages were covered with the remaining portion the responsibility of New Ulm Public Works.

Isaac is grateful that an acquaintance suggested the field of Water Quality and Watershed study at Vermilion Community College. As an intern for New Ulm Public Works, Isaac was responsible for daily maintenance and assisting various operators throughout the plant.

One of his most memorable experiences was pulling the baffle at the bottom of the tank when a final clarifier was down. To retrieve the baffle, they needed to access the bottom of the tank. Isaac recalled with a smile the amount of activated sludge he was covered in when they were done!

Some of the best things about Isaac’s internship position was the flexible schedule, the opportunity to learn from people with experience in the field, and forging relationships with others sharing similar interests.

Isaac and his supervisor, Dan O’Connor, both agreed that “the main reason we are here every day is to protect the environment and to do the best job we can to get the activated sludge out of the water before it goes into the river and back into the environment.”

To find out more about SCSC’s Internship program, contact Mike Humpal, Manager, Local Government Solutions at mhumpal@mnscsc.org or 507-389-5766.

Sources:
How to Become a Wastewater Treatment Operator | EnvironmentalScience.org
2023 Best Water Quality & Wastewater Treatment Management & Recycling Technology Schools – College Factual
Happy 45-Year Workversary to Cindy Ehlers!

We are pleased to celebrate with Cindy Ehlers and her 45th year work anniversary!

While Cindy currently is in the role of Director of Administrative Operations, she started working for SCSC as an intern during the summer of 1977, after completing a stenographer program at South Central Vocational Technical College. At that time, SCSC was located in Armstrong Hall – Mankato State University Campus. Since that time, SCSC has changed locations five times, including: Old Main – Mankato State University Campus, Pierce Plaza, Franklin School, Commerce Drive, and now at Lookout Drive.

When Cindy started there were six employees: an executive director, a curriculum coordinator, a film library manager, an audio/video (AV) repair technician, a bookkeeper, and Cindy.

Cindy’s position of Director of Administrative Operations keeps her busy with a wide array of tasks including Cooperative Purchasing, Human Resources, and Administrative duties. This makes everyday fun and varied. Cindy enjoys this aspect of her job as well as working with the great employees of SCSC. The most challenging part of her job is keeping up with laws and regulations regarding compliance. New projects for Cindy this year include: changing from Blue Cross to Medica as an insurance provider, transitioning to WEX—a new administrator for spending accounts—and cleaning her office.

Cindy has been married for 43 years. She and her husband have two children and three grandchildren. In their free time they enjoy gardening and camping.

Thank you, Cindy, for all you do for SCSC!

“Cindy is a phenomenal coop purchasing agent and has been successful in offering SCSC members both statewide and national programming for many years. She has shared with our communities of practice, and each year has presented to regional technology directors and coordinators to help them prepare their needs for annual budgeting. Cindy is kind and informative! If she doesn't know an answer to a question, Cindy will always follow up quickly with resources and referral information.

“Cindy has a unique empathy in her leadership to staff. She takes time to listen to employee’s needs, and provides care and understanding when needed most!

“Kudos to Cindy.”
Glenn Morris,
Administrative Director
Happy 25-Year Workversary to Kristi Portugue!

In September, we celebrated Kristi Portugue’s 25th year work anniversary. Kristi fills her role at SCSC as a Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired in the low incidence department with enthusiasm for her work and compassion for her clients ages birth to 21. Each day is unique! On any given day, Kristi may be in a third grade classroom helping with braille materials, then have a home visit with a baby and their family, before moving on to work with a high school student in a chemistry lab. She is responsible for helping each student accessing their learning curriculum and their environment through various methods including: direct instruction, consultation with team members, use of assistive technology, and the implementation of necessary adaptations and modifications.

Kristi collaborates with teachers, support staff, related service providers, families, and administration on a regular basis to make sure each student’s specific needs are being met. While each year is different, this year Kristi works directly with 10 school districts, makes home visits with Early Childhood Special Education staff in two districts, and works in person and virtually with three homebound students and their teams throughout six different districts.

Kristi’s favorite part of being a Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired is working with the different students, their families, and teams. Her day is very dynamic and never boring. Kristi’s heart sings when she can be a part of helping a student be successful by gaining a new skill, completing a task independently, or trying something new.

Thank you, Kristi, for all that you do for the students and families that you serve!

Happy One-Year Workversary to Aimee Armer!

Aimee is the Director of Strategic Development for The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) and joins SCSC team remotely from Texas!

A typical day for Aimee involves tons of coffee, numerous ZOOM meetings and computer collaboration with her team. PB & J is a typical lunch option, however a big salad or veggie burrito is a great alternative.

Aimee most enjoys working as a team and collaborating with others to accomplish CILC’s mission of providing children and educators with inspiring and engaging learning experiences that connect young minds to unique and diverse content, bringing the world to each student and closing the opportunity gap. In Aimee’s mind, “Helping those kids, well, there’s nothing better!” The most challenging aspect of her work with SCSC/CILC is turning off work at the end of the day.

On a personal note, over the summer Aimee married the most wonderful Texan in the beautiful mountains of Utah.

Thank you, Aimee, for everything you do for SCSC and CILC!
MEET OUR TEAM!

These employees joined SCSC’s team this summer and have started the school year full speed ahead!

BETH BENZKOFER KOZITZA
Beth Benzkofer Kozitza joined our team as a Workforce Development Coordinator. In this role, Beth works with Tri-City United, St. Peter, and Cleveland public schools. Beth previously worked as the Program Manager for Leisure Education for Exceptional People (LEEP) and has been the Head Softball Coach for Loyola Catholic Schools and St. Clair High School. An interesting fact about Beth: She started her own clothing company in Okoboji, Iowa, 20 years ago and it has become a major hit with the summer tourists.

CRISTA KROSCH
Crista Krosch expanded her role at SCSC as Marketing Communications Support. Prior to coming to the Marketing and Communications team, Crista worked with SOCRATES as a full-time educator for 18 years partnering with various school districts in the region for ASL instruction. Interesting fact about Crista: She loves active vacationing. Two of her favorite vacations include hiking the Grand Canyon with her family and kayaking the sea caves of Lake Superior.

MOLLY LYNETT
Molly Lynett, Au.D., CCC-A has joined our team as the new Region Nine Audiologist in SCSC’s Special Education department. Molly’s role includes supporting students with hearing loss and delivering full-spectrum hearing services to children throughout the region. Molly holds a Doctor of Audiology degree and a Bachelor of Arts in Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences, both from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Prior to coming to SCSC, Molly worked at the University of North Carolina Pediatric Audiology. Interesting fact about Molly: She lived in Norway for six months during college.
ALLYSON MITCHELL

Allyson Mitchell joined our team as the CILC Director of Partnerships and Engagement. Prior to working with CILC, Allyson held a variety of leadership positions within departments of learning in art, history, and university museums. In these roles, she supervised the design of multiple distance learning studios as well as the development of the supporting interactive virtual learning programming and training of affiliated staff or experts. Interesting fact about Ally: She recently acted as a co-author and contributing artist of the book *Museums and Interactive Virtual Learning* that was released Spring 2022.

KIM MUELLER

Kim Mueller joined our team as the new Career & Technical Education Coordinator. Kim has previously worked as a Family & Consumer Science Teacher in St. Michael-Albertville and Mankato Area Public Schools (MAPS). With MAPS, Kim has been a Health Science Teacher, Work-Based Learning Coordinator, Career & College Readiness Coordinator, as well as a Career Pathways Coordinator. An interesting fact about Kim: She and her husband participate in field trials and hunt tests with their three golden retrievers.

HOLLE SPESSARD

Holle Spessard joined our team as Special Education Director, Region 9 Low Incidence Project, and Centers of Excellence CSPD. Prior to coming to SCSC, Holle worked in Tri-City United Schools for eight years as their Special Services Director and River Bend Education District for three years as the Assistant Special Education Director. Interesting fact about Holle: She grew up across the street from her husband, but they didn’t date until their early 20s.

Please join us in welcoming them!
There were nearly 250 registered runners in this year’s Surf the Murph, held October 22. The event includes four races: 25K, Marathon, 50K, and the 50 Mile, all held at beautiful Murphy-Hanrehan Park in Savage, MN.

25K runner Dan Adamietz commented: “The course was marked really well; it is a nice combination of hard to run trails and nice to run trials. I really loved the single tracks and the views were beautiful. It is basically everything you’d want from a trail race.”

25K: Sam Ivanecky, Colorado Springs, CO
Marathon: Brian Durand, Minneapolis, MN
50K: Daniel Pederson, Madison, WI
50 Mile: Mark Romportl, Mantorville, MN
South Central College is Looking for Career Navigator Participants

South Central College’s Career Navigator program creates career exposure opportunities for area ninth graders. In North Mankato, they will fit anyone in who is interested in sharing their time and knowledge with students, but they have a high need for presenters in the Human Services, Information Technology, and Business, Management, and Administration fields.

Career Navigator dates are:
- **January 27**  Mankato West/Central  307 students
- **February 17**  Cleveland, JWP, Niccollet, Sibley East, USC, WEM  341 students
- **February 24**  Mankato East  391 students
- **March 3**  Blue Earth, Loyola, Madelia, Maple River, Minnesota Valley Education District, Riverbend District  294 students
- **March 17**  Butterfield, Kato Public Charter School, Sleepy Eye, St. Peter, St. Clair  339 students
- **March 24**  LCWM, Le Sueur/Henderson, St. James  231 students

For businesses that may have a presence in Faribault, that campus is hosting events on November 18, and December 2.

Interested businesses can contact Laura Attenberger at laura.attenberger@southcentral.edu or Lynn Waterbury at lynn.waterbury@southcentral.edu.

The Career Navigator program is a made possible through a partnership of:
Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration

Celebrate Fall with Interactive Virtual Learning Events

The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC) is hosting two Digital Learning Festivals designed to highlight different topics in the arts and sciences. Learners will dive deeply into different concepts with field experts, performers, or educators through interactive conversations, hands-on activities, object analysis, and live demonstrations.

CILC is celebrating National Distance Learning Week with two unique Digital Learning Festivals that connect groups of learners with wildlife experts and performance artists from Minnesota!

The week-long celebration will begin with an investigation of the similarities between wolves and humans through a special Wolf Pack Connect series with the International Wolf Center streaming live at 10 a.m. CT from Monday, November 7 to Wednesday, November 9.

Then get up and get ready to move during CILC’s final celebration of National Distance Learning Week with the full day Digital Dance Party! This festival will explore diverse forms of movement through a series of live broadcasts with performing artists from The Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts streaming live 10 a.m.–3 p.m. ET on November 10.

All livestreams are 45 minutes and program links are included within all the event schedules to make registering for select or all live virtual field trips a simple part of planning. Further, all series are held in a webinar format that offers a simple one-click connection, making it easy to share with students in any classroom, learning pod, cyber, or at home school learning environment. There is absolutely NO COST associated to register for the Digital Learning Festivals, due to the generous support of the Walser Foundation. Educators are able to register an unlimited number of their classes using the Fall Digital Learning Festival links above!

SOCRATES Leadership Facilitation and Adult Learning Skills Series Continues

The September session of the “Leadership Facilitation and Adult Learning Skills” workshop was a great kickoff for the new SCSC workshop series.

The series benefits all types of school leaders: team leaders, curriculum leaders, department managers, building administrators, superintendents,
The Work Based Learning Community of Practice group meets several times a year to work on a region-wide approach to delivering quality work experiences to students. The group met most recently on October 11 at SCSC (pictured here).

The next meeting is December 8 at SCSC. Interested in being part of this community? Contact Kim Mueller, Career & Technical Education Coordinator, Phone: (507) 389-2123.

The Regional Technology Directors Community of Practice

The next Tech Directors meeting, to be held on December 7, will include an E-Rate session and an Apple Computer update. The regular meeting will start at 9 a.m.; the E-Rate workshop will start at 10:30 a.m. and the Lunch and Learning, facilitated by Apple Computer, will start at 11:45 a.m. The meeting will take place at the SCSC conference center. We will also have a virtual meeting option for folks who want to join one or all of these sessions but are not able to come to North Mankato. Find out more at: mnscsc.org/events-registration

View other SCSC professional development opportunities and events at mnscsc.org.

“Being from a small school district, it is so valuable to connect with colleagues who do what I do.”

Steve Schlager, Madelia
As part of National Workforce Development Month in September, SCSC took the opportunity to showcase our fantastic Workforce Development Coordinators and some of the planned Career and Technical Education activities with area schools this coming year. In case you missed those social media posts, here’s a chance to meet Beth, Emily, Kelsey, and Angie!

**BETH BENZKOFER KOZITZA**

Beth is working in the Cleveland, St. Peter, and Tri-City United public schools this year.

“As a Workforce Development Coordinator, I strive to build meaningful relationships with the students, Career and Technical Education Teachers (CTE), counselors, and principals,” Beth said. “With these relationships my goal is to gain the knowledge of what careers in the technical education fields these students are interested in post-graduation, and to bring opportunities to them so they are able to gain some valuable hands-on experience. This experience will give students an idea of what a career would be like in a respective field.

“My job is to be a value-added component to these CTE teachers and their already full and busy schedules. I am here to assist in offering opportunities, planning events, and forging and maintaining relationships in the community where these students will hopefully, one day work and live as adults.”

**EMILY DAVIS**

Emily is working in the Blue Earth Area and United South Central public schools; below she shares some of the planned activities:

“At both schools we are looking forward to continuing with and building on class presentations, field trips and more. We are bringing back the Big Ideas Trailer to both schools and are excited to participate in the Tour of Manufacturing.

“My role supports CTE teachers in numerous ways, the largest being organizing opportunities for the students that might not have otherwise happened such as field trips, or pairing students with elementary classrooms for those interested in pursuing education as a career. I have also really enjoyed seeing a student’s eyes light up when they discover a job that they had never heard of, but are now interested in.”
KELSEY ROSE
Kelsey is working in Janesville Waldorf-Pemberton, Nicollet, and Waterville-Elysian-Morristown public schools this year.

“My goal as a Workforce Development Coordinator is to help the Career and Technical Education teachers and counselors to bring opportunities to their students to learn more about technical careers in the area,” Kelsey said. “I want to help take some work and burden off of the teachers and counselors by finding the connections that would fit into their student’s classes. I also want to give students real life work experiences so they get a glimpse of what a career in a specific technical field would be like. All industry partners have been very open and eager to help. I’ve found that most industries will participate or assist in any way I ask to get the students familiar with their business and the career field! I’ve had very positive feedback from industry partners after participating in events and they’ve always said to let them know of future events!”

Here are some of the activities Kelsey has planned:

- A presenter and/or field trip for each CTE class at the schools
- All schools will be doing the Big Ideas Trailer
- Participation in the Tour of Manufacturing and Construct Tomorrow
- Career Expo, Career Navigator events
- JWP & WEM Reality Day Events this spring

ANGIE STIER
Angie is working in Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial public school this year.

“In Lake Crystal, I’m working with the CTE teachers to provide speakers, field trips and work experience by utilizing The Big Ideas Trailer, Manufacturers week and, potentially, a local Job Fair in spring,” Angie said. “Having experience as the Economic Development Specialist for the City of Lake Crystal has created an easy transition into the school. I’ve been able to reach out to local businesses and industries for their assistance, such as Madelia Health. When speaking with their CEO, Jake Redden, for a city meeting, I discussed my additional position working with students; he was very interested in providing students with connections to local jobs and educating them about the diverse opportunities in rural areas. Mr. Redden was eager to provide ideas and was very interested in speaking to students about rural healthcare.”

Watch this space and SCSC social media for photos from the CTE events!
More about CTE programs can be found at mnsccc.org/cte.
Enroll Your School in the Scripps National Spelling Bee Program Today!

South Central Service Cooperative sponsors the Spelling Bee for the South Central Region of Minnesota. Students participating in the regional event have won their local district event. The winner goes on to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. the first week in June. Registration is open through December 31.

When you enroll at spellingbee.com and pay the enrollment fee, you will receive exclusive online access to:
- The teachers-only section of spellingbee.com
- Official study lists for your students, organized by grade level and level of difficulty
- Official pronouncer guides for use in conducting classroom and school spelling bees
- The Great Words, Great Works reading list with all source books, organized by reading level
- Words of the Champions: the 4,000-word study guide for school champions
- Access to the Online Testing Platform, a tool that allows educators to administer a school spelling bee program via online tests whether students are learning in the classroom or virtually
- Supplemental word meaning materials for classroom and school levels
- Customizable certificates for your participants and school champion
- A one-year subscription to Britannica Online for Kids to award to a participant in your school spelling bee program

Do Your Students Have LifeSmarts?

Learn about consumer issues that affect everyday life—everything from managing finances, making smart consumer choices, understanding technology, staying healthy, and helping the environment. Competitions are available for those interested, where students in grades 9–12 compete as teams of four. Schools or other youth organizations can have multiple teams encouraging a friendly rivalry within your classroom. Access FREE curriculum and registration at lifesmarts.org including:
- Educational resources: lessons, activities, presentations, videos, content vocabulary, question-of-the-day calendars, and more
- A comprehensive educators guide
- Community service mentoring projects where students can earn scholarships for participating
- Standards alignment
- Weekly and monthly quizzes
- Competition opportunities for teams of students at the classroom, state, and national level

Perfect for FACS, business, CTE, and ALC classrooms as well as 4-H, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, SkillsUSA, and more!

Start Writing!

The SCSC Writing Contest invites all area K-12 students to enter their original works of poetry, fiction and/or non-fiction. The contest was established to encourage the love of language and writing for all students and as
a way to recognize the talented young writers in south central Minnesota. SCSC partners with Minnesota State University, Mankato to administer this program.

The 2022–23 contest theme is *Innovation*: A new idea, device, product or way of doing something—the introduction of something new. Entries should relate to this theme. Visit [mnsccc.org/writing-contest](http://mnsccc.org/writing-contest) for more information, writing tips and to read past anthologies.

**Minnesota Poetry Out Loud**

Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. This FREE program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life. This activity is made possible by a grant provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts.

Since 2005, Poetry Out Loud has grown to reach more than 3.8 million students and 60,000 teachers from 16,000 schools in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Poetry Out Loud provides FREE materials, including:

- An online poetry anthology
- A comprehensive teacher’s guide
- Videos of student performances
- Lesson plans
- NCTE and ELA Standards alignment
- Promotional and media resources.

Schools/organizations/individual students must register their participation before Dec. 10 and select their school/organization champion in January. Regional and state competitions will occur in February. The state champion advances to the national finals. Thanks to the grant funding there are no registration or participation fees. Visit [mnsccc.org/poetry-out-loud](http://mnsccc.org/poetry-out-loud) or [poetryoutloud.org](http://poetryoutloud.org) for more information.

**Register Your Math Masters**

Math Masters of Minnesota invites all fourth, fifth and sixth grade students across the state to participate in regional events where they compete as individuals and in teams. Students receive recognition for their excellence in mathematical skills. Math Masters shows students that their math fundamentals pay off in this valuable academic experience! Awards are presented to winning students in each component of the competition.

Mankato area competitions will be held at Bethany Lutheran College on March 10, 2023 (grade 6) and April 21, 2023 (grades 4 and 5). Spaces fill quickly so register your teams today! Visit [math-masters.org](http://math-masters.org) for more information and to register your teams.
Science and Nature Conference

The 2022 Science and Nature Conference was held October 25 at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter. Nearly 800 students were in attendance. The goal of the conference is to give students an academic enrichment experience that allows them to delve deeper into the science and nature topics they love. It is designed to expose students to a vast variety of topics and delivers highly educational hands-on sessions. Students had 30 sessions to choose from throughout the day ranging from America’s Fun Science to Wonderful Rainforests.

Spooky Chess

South Central Service Cooperative and Mankato Community Education & Recreation (CER) partnered October 29 to offer the Spooky Chess Tournament at Lincoln Community Center in Mankato. Students across south central Minnesota participated and costumes were optional for this event.

Seventeen students in grades 1–11 participated. The tournament was a Swiss-style tournament in which students are not eliminated. SCSC and CER feel these tournaments foster a competitive spirit without discouraging young players from continuing to play chess.

For information about area chess tournaments or starting a chess club in your school or community, please contact Mary Hillmann: mhillmann@mnscsc.org or Melanie Schmidt: mschmi3@isd77.k12.mn.us.

Congratulations to the students that participated!
Synergy Leadership Exchange

Seeking Nominations for the Minnesota Ethical Leadership

It is time to nominate an outstanding community program for a 2023 Minnesota Ethical Leadership Award! The award recognizes the development of character strengths and ethical leadership skills in its participants. Complete a short online nomination form and we will invite your nominee to complete an application to become eligible for the award. Honorees will be celebrated at the Character Recognition Awards in May. Place a nomination or learn more. Nominations are due December 2.

The Minnesota Ethical Leadership Award was developed by the Minnesota Character Council and is administered by Synergy & Leadership Exchange, a program of the South Central Service Cooperative.

Inspire Your Students to “Reach for the Stars!”

Looking for new ideas to ignite your student’s passion for learning? Explore the 2022–2023 Reach for the Stars catalogue with 130 high-quality academic enrichment programs, competitions, events and activities for Minnesota K-12 students!

All programs are listed alphabetically by name, grade level, academic content area, and program category. Each listing includes a brief description, appropriate grade or age level, skill sets used, curricular area, fees and contact information to learn more.

Share Reach for the Stars electronically with staff, students and families in your network or embed as a resource on your website. It is available to download either as a full-color or text-only PDF document.

Reach for the Stars is updated annually with new programs and information. It is published by Synergy & Leadership Exchange and the Minnesota Academic League, with financial support from The Minnesota Service Cooperatives, South Central Service Cooperative, Sourcewell and affiliate members.

This free guide was first created more than 30 years ago as an 18” x 36” poster with 25 academic enrichment activities and is still a valued resource for educators, students and families across the state!
SCSC is honored to again welcome Nicollet County / Precinct 7 voters on Election Day

Wondering where you vote on Election Day? Find out at pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us

SEE YOU ON NOVEMBER 8, 2022!

SCSCConnects is a publication of South Central Service Cooperative. It is available as a quarterly e-publication.

SCSC members, staff, and partner organizations are welcome to submit content by the 15th day of the month prior to publication.

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