Congratulations to you and your PTA for a great year of advocating for children, partnering with your school and community, and networking with others like yourself.

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.
– Albert Einstein

It is a truism that almost any sect, cult, or religion will legislate its creed into law if it acquires the political power to do so.
– Robert A. Heinlein

Education is about the only thing lying around loose the world, and it’s about the only thing a fellow can have as much of as he’s willing to haul away.
– George Lorimer

“Believe, Dream, Inspire”

Nurture the CREATIVITY in our children! Support their ARTISTIC endeavors! Be a part of an arts program which embraces students from schools all across our magnificent country.

Join REFLECTIONS, a National PTA sponsored arts initiative which gives students an opportunity to unleash their originality through the arts, while contending for a Local, Regional, State or National Award. This year’s theme is “BELIEVE, DREAM, INSPIRE”

Reflections is open to all students in preschool through grade 12. The arts have many forms and Reflections encompasses them all! There are categories in Dance Choreography, Film Production, Literature, Musical Composition, Photography and the Visual Arts. Students can choose to enter one, some or all categories. Your PTA can also choose to offer one, more or all of the categories. A Reflections program is a great way to bring students, families and your community together!

Does your school have an established Reflections program? Are you interested in launching a new program at your school? Do you know what resources you may have available to help you? Please contact me, Jessica Ophardt, Reflections Chair, at reflections@gvpta.org with any questions, concerns or feedback concerning your program.

For more the 2012-13 National PTA Reflections Award winners and other Reflections information, go to www.nyspta.org/YourPTA/YourPTA_Reflections.cfm and www.pta.org/reflections.

A Magical Journey

When Bay Trail student Kaitlin Hobler began her schooling back in California, her school’s PTA offered the Reflections program and she dove right in. She thoroughly enjoyed the arts and the opportunity the program gave her to be creative. However after her family relocated to Penfield, Kaitlin was so disappointed to find out that her new elementary school wasn’t participating in the program. When she went on to Bay Trail Middle School, she has happy to find out that Bay Trail’s PTA had a Reflections program. It’s quite fitting that this year’s Reflections theme was “The Magic of a Moment” as Kaitlin was once again given the opportunity to create work for Reflections!

Her entry in photography went on to the state level and she was honored with the Award of Excellence from the NYS PTA! Kaitlin’s photo has advanced to the highest level of the competition, National! The pure artistic inspiration Kaitlin has gained from participating in the Reflections program, along with her accomplishment this year, has proven to be an awesome example of how influential programs like these can be for our children and how important it is to offer them.

As Reflections Chair this upcoming year, I’m challenging YOU to get involved and encouraging your PTA’s to offer this creative outlet to your students! I hope to see some amazing work in the fall!

For more info please contact Jessica Ophardt, GVPTA Reflections Chair reflections@gvpta.org
**VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE**  
by Gene Kinney, genekinney@gvpta.org

While April is the official Volunteer Appreciation month it is not too late to recognize all the PTA volunteers who generously give their time, talent and treasure to support their schools and students. This is not so much payback as paying FORWARD to make public education better for students. The value of volunteer time in 2011 was $21.79 per hour. Schools could not afford all the contributions that you make. As the school year closes, don’t forget to thank all your members and it would be good to remind principals and administration the value of the non fund raising that you have contributed this year.

As you transition into next year, please consider donating a couple hours per month during the school year to support other PTAs in our area. Genesee Valley Region PTA is looking for people who will share their experience in building a stronger regional PTA to support local units and members. The strength of PTA is in providing a support network and sharing experience and information. You will have an opportunity to work with other dedicated volunteers and will gain new information and skills while helping others.

The time commitment is mostly flexible to meet your busy schedule. Interested or want to know more? Do you want to know what GVPTA does and how you could help them? Contact Gene Kinney at genekinney@gvpta.org.

**END OF YEAR ACTIVITIES**  
by Lisa Christoffel, director@gvpta.org

The school and PTA year is rapidly approaching. The bylaws require the new officers to take over on July 1 and before year end every unit and council should complete an audit and make sure their bylaws are current.

One of the most important year end actions is completing a new Form A (annual contact information form – go to nyspta.org to access the on line form).

Even if the same officers are continuing the current or new president has to complete the form or you will not receive information from NYS PTA or National PTA and you will not receive membership cards in August. This year National PTA is distributing their back to school kits only to units and councils who have submitted an updated Form A. If there are any questions please contact director@gvpta.org.
WHAT IS RIGHT WITH PUBLIC EDUCATION
by Gene Kinney, genekinney@gvpta.org

Media often depicts what is wrong with public education in our state and in our area. The Monroe County Education Coalition, which is made up of all the education partners in our area, including GVPTA, believes that we have outstanding schools and students. Data was collected last year and this year to substantiate that belief. A subcommittee met with the D&C Editorial Board to review these findings.

For example, 15 Monroe County Schools are on the Newsweek Best Schools list (including the School of the Arts in the city). Also, out of 2000 schools in total on the list, 194 are from NYS. And of that 194, only 1 is a charter school. The vast majority are open enrollment schools like we all have in our communities. For comparison’s sake, California has almost twice as many people as NY but only 30% more schools on the list (253). Texas, with 30% more people than NY, has fewer schools (165). And states that are considered education powerhouses, like Massachusetts, have only 34% of the population of NY and 24% (48) of the number of schools making the list. Ten Monroe County high schools rank among the nation’s best in the U.S. News and World Report 2013 rankings.

Monroe County high school students took 12,516 Advanced Placement courses in 27 subjects in 2012, and achieved scores of 3, 4, or 5 on 9,136 of their AP exams. Even with declining enrollment across the county, this represents a 1% increase in the number of exams and a 2% increase in the exams with scores of 3, 4, and 5. 920 BOCES students received 3,819 credit hours in CTE courses that often included college credit or applied toward trade certificates.

Financially, the Monroe County school districts are collectively the largest employer in our area and 88.6% of the nearly $2B 2011-12 budgets stayed in the local area. Every school district stayed under the state tax cap and in a show of support every school budget was passed. Despite tight budgets and declining enrollments offer a wide range of arts, sports, enrichment and club activities to produce well rounded students. While there is always room for improvement, we should be thankful that we have good students and good schools.

Monroe County School Boards Association and the Monroe County Education Coalition are good sources of information on issues that face public education.

www.monroe.edu/webpages/mcsba/
webapps.monroe.edu/nwce/

The overall purpose of PTA is to make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

nyspta.neric.org/AboutPTA/AboutPTA_Purposes.cfm

Workshop Materials
Leg/Ed Conference ’13 and the 16th Annual NYS PTA Convention Workshop/Presentation Materials are in the Members Only section of the NYS PTA web,

http://nyspta.neric.org/MembersOnly/
MembersOnly_TrainingDocuments.cfm

A convention video slideshow is at
www.nyspta.org/Events/Events_Convention.cfm

The Voice of NYS PTA
For thoughts and commentary from the President of the NYS PTA, Lana Ajemian, on topics of interest to our membership see:

http://nysptapresident.blogspot.com/

PTA Supports Gun-Free Schools
Local Leader Resources

www.pta.org/members/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3094

NYS PTA Information
NYS PTA Publications
http://nyspta.neric.org/YourPTA/YourPTA_Publications.cfm

Advocacy
http://nyspta.neric.org/Advocacy/advocacy_home.cfm

Advocacy Newsbriefs
http://nyspta.neric.org/Advocacy/advocacy_newsbriefs.cfm

Legislative Program
http://nyspta.neric.org/Advocacy/advocacy_legislativeprog.cfm

Where We Stand - includes current Resolutions and Position Papers
For NYS PTA issues sign up for Capwiz and then Take Action with CAPWIZ
GVPTA Executive Committee

Lisa Christoffel, Region Director
director@gvpta.org

Ashley Arena, Secretary
secretary@gvpta.org

Jill Ehrlinger, Treasurer
treasurer@gvpta.org

Susan Brown, Associate Director
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Gail Gligora, Associate Director
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Maggie Hannon, Associate Director
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Colleen Taylor, Associate Director
ColleenTaylor@gvpta.org

Additional GVPTA Contacts are listed on the web site

GVPTA'S NEWEST UNIT

On June 5th GVPTA chartered a new unit, OACES PTSA. OACES is the Office of Adult & Career Education Services for the Rochester City School District and has 2000 adult students, many of whom are ESL (English as a Second Language). The key people who initiated the PTA formation had done research before deciding to become a PTA. They were impressed by what PTA could offer them and they are very excited and anxious to get started. Please join us in welcoming them to our PTA family.

HELP WANTED

Do you have a few hours a month to help advocate for children? Genesee Valley Region PTA is seeking candidates for various positions on the Region Board.

Please call Gene Kinney
585-586-0556 or GeneKinney@gvpta.org

Upcoming Events, Deadlines and Reminders

June 15 Complete a new Form A
(Annual President/Officer Contact Information)
Completion and return of this form is required annually as verification of contact information.
In order to receive future mailings from NYS and National PTA

Complete Unit Audit
Sample forms and information on doing a Unit audit may be found in the NYS PTA Resource Guide which is available online in the Member's Only section to download for PTA member use.

July 26-28 Summer Leadership Conference
An annual event designed to provide training and programs to all local PTA members, helping them to establish grass-roots advocacy in their schools and preparing them to be key leaders in their education community.
www.nyspta.org/Events/Events_SLC.cfm

Vito Borrello, EPIC, discusses the NYS PTA Urban Families Initiative at the GVPTA Spring Conference, May 6th.
www.epicforchildren.org/