



## **We Are Not Immune**

Winter 2018

As a small school, HAST has built a strong family where every student, parent, board member and employee play an integral part in each other's lives. This Fall our tight knit community was hit with the reality that we are not immune to the outside world. The untimely passing of Diego Serna rocked our small community to its core. The shock and sadness that permeated our school could have divided us or isolated those whose grief was overwhelming. But to the contrary, our community rose up and took care of each other. The student led memorial was filled with both tears and laughter as HAST celebrated a life cut way too short. Diego will never be forgotten by his HAST family and we will continue to carry him with us in our hearts.

Some highlights of activity and participation of your school board since the Fall newsletter include:

- Attendance at monthly board meetings (Our regular meetings are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month beginning at 4:00 P.M. and all meetings are open to the public.)
- The Finance Committee has held several meetings as the 2018-2019 school budget continues to take shape. The committee has also met again with the teachers representing all faculty regarding the proposed HAST Compensation Model. We continue to have productive meetings and are on target to present the proposed budget to the full board during our March meeting. (The finance committee is chaired by Heather Garay. Board Members Gus Lopez, Monica Rubio and Marty Wielgos also sit on this committee. I also attended these meetings.)

- The Fundraising Committee is chaired by Dave Ryan and includes Board Members Lori Lambert, Owana Miller, Mira Projovic, Daliz Suarez and Anne Herbert. The committee has been meeting and has set the date for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual HAST Talent Show for Friday, April 20, 2018. There will be some changes this year, starting with a Tailgate cookout here in our parking lot, prior to the talent show. Watch for further details on this great event.
- I was happy to once again host the now annual HAST Holiday Cheer at my home. This year we had over 30 faculty, staff and board members in attendance.
- As the New Year began the Board honored Mark McLaughlin for his many years of service to HAST. Mark was one of the founding members and his insights will truly be missed. Mark is being replaced by Africa Tarver, the Director of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Hammond. We are very excited to have Africa aboard!
- Marty Wielgos continues to work on developing outside monetary resources for HAST. His recent success resulted in some monetary support for the HAST basketball team.
- Janet Venecz attended Invention Convention and Cardboard Arcade and made a donation to SLYCE.
- HAST Board Student Rep, Daliz Suarez, has been actively participating on the Fundraising Committee and attended basketball games, student lead conferences and participated in the blood drive.
- Lori Lambert attended student led conferences, basketball games and the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Statistical Debate.
- Mira Projovic organized the Homecoming Dance, attended the United Way STAR Awards Gala, as well as making monetary donations to various HAST club fundraisers.
- I have once again arranged for HAST to host the Indiana Court of Appeals for a live oral argument. The argument is set for Monday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00. The event is open to the public and I encourage you to attend if your time that day allows.

**Finally, as you are all aware, HAST is in the final year of our three year authorization with Calumet College. Dr. Egan and the administration, in conjunction with the Board, prepared the application for reauthorization, and requested a five year period. On behalf of the Board and the HAST administration, I personally met with Calumet College leadership to make our case for a five year charter. I could not have made this argument but for the hard work, commitment and dedication that each of you give to HAST on a daily basis. Your hard work was rewarded on February 1<sup>st</sup>, when we were notified by Calumet College that they have reauthorized HAST for a five year period. So to all of you I say...Congratulations....Job well done!!!**

**Kris Sakelaris**

**HAST Board President**