

University Heights Charter Schools

Special Academic Programs Newsletter

Dr. Christy Oliver, Head of Schools

Dr. Lottie M. Watson, Supervisor/Director of SAP

UHCS SELECTED BY NJSBF IN INAUGRAL PILOT PROGRAM

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation is one of the state's most respected organizations on cultivating and educating citizens on a variety of law and educational issues. The New Jersey State Bar Foundation recently launched a pilot program called the District Wide Virtual Workshop program. At the Foundation, we provide a variety of both in person and virtual trainings for educators on topics such as Social Emotional Character Development, Conflict Resolution, Talking About Race, Unconscious Bias, Trauma Sensitive Schools and more.

"The New Jersey State Bar Foundation chose University Heights Charter School District as one of the recipients of our new District program based on the important social-emotional and anti-bias work they are already doing in their district, and their ability to build capacity with the support of district leadership. Dr. Lottie Watson, who applied for the program on behalf of the district, has been a regular participant in our general educator trainings, and we know she and Superintendent Christy Oliver will lead the district, making sure that the tools learned in the trainings are applied."---Jessica Taube, NJSBF Director of Conflict and Anti-Bias Initiatives

There were 13 candidates from all over the state and four recipients of the award: Cranford Public Schools, Hoboken Public Schools, East Orange School District and **University Heights Charter School District**. UHCS will have approximately 60 district employees ranging from classroom teachers, Anti-Bullying Specialist/School Climate Safety Team members, building & district level administrators, The Special Education Department, The ESL Program which is led by Dr. Watson, and Board Members participate in the first of three workshops provided this 2021-2022 school year beginning on November 18, 2021.

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HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATING & BULLYING MANDATE UPDATES

UHCS is making great strides to promote a safe, secure, and nurturing learning environment for its scholars and educators alike. The H.I.B. Mandate is moving closer to the state compliance for the first time in the past few years. To date, UHCS has accumulated a total of 45 out of the 78 points needed for the NJ State Self-Assessment top score! This has already surpassed the previous administration's state score by nearly 10 points! Dr. Watson credits this improvement to the Anti-Bullying Specialists at each respective building: Ms. Monique Cooper (JH), Mr. Lance Johnson (ES), and the upcoming appointments of Ms. La'Nette Pennington (LS) and Ms. Iona Francis Santa-Cruz (LS).



Their proactive planning and diligence in implementing and assessing a strong and cohesively designed Week of Respect for 2021 has continued to show dividends with students. National #BLOCKITOUTDAY on November 14th is designed for students to "block negativity" from their digital lives and to spread the word to their friends and families to also block out cyberbullies, haters, and trolls. It's not about like or dislikes. It's about one thing: POSITIVITY.

Upcoming Events

PARENT WORKSHOP SERIES COMES TO UHCS

Parent Coordinator, Ms. Dawn Odom and Dr. Lottie M. Watson, Supervisor & Director of Special Academic Programs collaborate on a series of Parent Workshops on HIB, Before & After School Programs updates, with a primary focus on Parent Literacy Resources for families. Direct communications with the National Parent-Teacher Organization to provide training resources to re-assemble UHCS's Parent-Teacher Organization is well underway. Workshops begin on November 30, 2021. Reach out to Ms. Odom at Dodom@uhcs-newark.org for more details.

Everyone who remembers his own education remembers teachers, not methods and techniques. The teacher is the heart of the educational system.

Sidney Hook

Ms. Odom has begun the Winter Coat Drive Donations and Non-Perishable Foods Collection which will run through October 25, 2021 until December 17, 2021. All donations will go to support families during the upcoming winter months and combat food insecurities throughout the local and school community.



SCHOOL CLIMATE & CULTURE ASSESSMENTS TAKE OFF

With the recent Week of Respect celebrated earlier this month, the Anti-Bullying Specialist with the ongoing support of their building level principals are set to distribute the inaugural assessments to gauge ongoing age-appropriate activities and programs for our scholars. This feedback data will allow SCST (School Climate Safety Teams) plan effective discussion points across district PLCs to continuously improve decisions made to address HIB and other Climate & Culture issues. Results of the building assessments will be shared once they are made available.



As we move into November, remember everyone is struggling with something. It takes more muscles to frown than it does to smile. Smile and brighten someone's day. Until next time friends, be well and be safe.

With Love, Respect, and Honor,

Dr. Lottie M. Watson