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Lake Grove's Eugene Auer students dominate mock trial competition



Fifth-graders at Eugene Auer Elementary School in Lake Grove recently put their legal skills to the test during a mock trial competition held at the Oakdale campus of Dowling College.

The students were split into two teams, prosecution and defense, and presented two separate cases to the mock jury.

At the end of the countywide competition, both Eugene Auer teams, defense and prosecution, won their cases.

The students were coached by fifth-grade teacher Michele Miller, who helped the students prepare both a legal defense and prosecution case based on a case developed by the New York State Bar Association.

The students prepared their cases based on the statements of six witnesses, evidence provided and the section of the applicable law from the New York State Penal Code.

This offered the students the opportunity to use their critical thinking skills to create an argument that supported their claim of either guilt or innocence.

The fifth-grade students who competed in the mock trial competition were Lindsay Caruso, Ryan Grolz, Marris Heinz, Madison Mazovec, Cassie Sauer, Giovanni Montalvo, Cameron Wolanski, Emily Ross, Dana Browning, Sean Gavin, Isabella Alois, Ben Tichenor, Kiara Kolacz, Michayla O'Sullivan and Christian Lund.

Suffolk County Community College opens new state-of-the-art observatory



The stars are shining a bit brighter on the Suffolk County Community College Ammerman campus with the opening of the college's new state-of-the-art observatory.

Star gazers can now peer into the sky and look more than a billion years back in time at the facility in Selden.

"The faculty is thrilled to have the observatory as a permanent house for our astronomical research equipment and for use by faculty and our astronomy majors," said Professor Thomas Breeden, chairman of the Physical Sciences Department who hails from Centereach, pictured at right.

"Not only does it allow us to investigate scientific questions, it provides an opportunity to share the excitement of looking out into the universe with the people of Suffolk County."

The college is working to open the observatory, by appointment, to small groups from the public on Friday nights later this spring. College President Shaun L. McKay said an announcement will be made to



Photos by Joan Wozniak

the media via the college's social media channels and on its website when the program's details are established.

Pictured left at the computer, Associate Professor of Astronomy

Matthew Pappa examines images captured with the new observatory telescope while McKay, back row left, and Professor and Physical Sciences Cochairman Scott A. Mandia, right, look on.