

Local track star shines at Pan-American Games

Justin Robinson of Hazelwood West wins silver & bronze

Track and field athletes from the St. Louis area showed up and showed out at last week's Pan-American Games in Lima, Peru.

Teenage sensation Justin Robinson of Hazelwood West continued his tremendous run of success that has gone to heights that no other high school track athlete in St. Louis has ever reached.

Robinson's brilliant run continued as he brought home a couple of medals from this prestigious international event. Robinson earned a bronze medal in the men's 400-meter dash in a time of 45.0 seconds.



Earl Austin Jr.

Robinson then won a silver medal as a part of the USA men's 4x400-meter relay. The young phenom was the star of the relay team as he turned in a spectacular 43.5-second split on the third leg to bring the USA from a distant third place to the lead when he handed off the baton for the final leg.

It was just a few months ago that Robinson was finishing up his junior year by leading Hazelwood West to the Missouri Class 5 state championship, which was the first in the school's history. From there, he followed up with one stellar performance after another on the national circuit, culminating in his double-medal winning performance in his first big international meet against seasoned professionals. This has been truly remarkable as Robinson is just 17 years old.



Justin Robinson of Hazelwood West continued his tremendous run of success that has gone to heights that no other high school track athlete in St. Louis has ever reached.

See *INSIDE*, B5

<http://www.stlamerican.com/edition>

St. Louis American
St. Louis City County
St. Louis, MO
Circulation: 70,200
Frequency: Weekly
Aug 15, 2019

COMMUNITY NEWS

Putting 'super' in superintendent



Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart (sitting front, center) with GALACTIC students and staff in her office.

Photo courtesy Hazelwood School District

Hazelwood School District Superintendent Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart has been recognized as National Superintendent of the Year

FRONT PAGE STORY

<https://mycnews.com/st-louis-county/>

St. Louis County Community News
St. Charles County
O'Fallon, MO
Circulation: 30,000
Frequency: Weekly
Aug 14, 2019

COMMUNITY NEWS

<https://mycn.ews.com/st-louis-county/>

Every year the National Association of School Superintendents (NASS), which represents and advocates for education leaders nationwide, bestows upon one individual from around the country the honor of National Superintendent of the Year. This year NASS' semi-finalists included one superintendent from each of the following states: California, Arizona, and Massachusetts. However, the recipient of this year's honor is Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, Superintendent of Hazelwood School District (HSD). She will be officially honored in September at the NASS IgnitED Conference in Washington, D.C.

"Dr. Collins-Hart is a champion for stu-

dents and continuous improvement," said Jon Roach, NASS Executive Director. "Her commitment to collaboration and mutual support in her district proved she is a leader with a demonstrated vision of building the next great generation of American students."

Sonny Da Marto, NASS Assistant Executive Director adds, "If you look at what Dr. Collins-Hart has done within her district and community and what she is focused on, you'll see why she is the type of school leader that our students really need."

At this year's HSD Convocation on Aug. 6, Collins-Hart stated in her speech, "We will be that district that with transitions continues to be the model for the country of what we do

to help students who need us most, and continue to accelerate those students who will do well with or without us."

Since the beginning of Collins-Hart's leadership in July 2016, HSD has launched a strategic plan that includes new and innovative educational programming and parent and community involvement. In addition, the district expanded its Early Childhood Education program by offering free full-day preschools as well as launched a school-based health center.

"In terms of equity, we know we have some work to do," Collins-Hart shared with the 2,200 district employees at the convocation.

See 'SUPER' page 2

'SUPER' from cover

"We have to look at our policies, our practices and our processes that may unintentionally disproportionately negatively impact some students. We began that this year. We looked at the language in our code of conduct. We looked at our institutional practices. We removed language that might have a young person start their day off bad, not because of anything they did but because of what they wore or what they look like. That does not mean that we're not going to address it. It just means that it's not going to be a distraction from learning. Those are the kinds of processes that we are looking at this year and we are well on our road to equity. I can say because of that work - I'm HSD proud."

Prior to Collins-Hart becoming the educational leader for the second largest district in St. Louis County and seventh-largest district in Missouri, she served as superintendent for Proviso Township High School and District 209 in Forest Park, Illinois; Pre K - 12 districts in North Carolina; and assistant superintendent in Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools in North Carolina, and the Lawrence Public Schools in Kansas.

"People I respected and admired encouraged me to become a school administrator," Collins-Hart stated. "They helped me pursue the positions and supported me along the way."

Her leadership reaches beyond the educational affiliations such as the

American Association of School Administrators and the National Association of Black School Educators. The Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority member serves in various roles in the community. She is a member of the Christian Hospital Board, the North County Incorporated Board of Directors, Valley Industries Board of Directors, and the Kiwanis Club of Florissant.

Collins-Hart, who started her career as a teacher, has a doctorate in educational policy and leadership from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas and a master's degree in educational administration and curriculum and instruction, and a master's degree in English Education - both from East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina. In addition, she has a bachelor's degree in English education from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

The 2019 NASS National Superintendent of the Year is among many honors the HSD superintendent has received. Some of her honors resulting from her leadership and service in the community are: Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. Apple Teacher of the Year Award; National Alliance of Black School Educators 2015 Ida B. Wells Risk Taker Award; Top Ladies of Distinction 2014 Women in Leadership Orchid Award; and Outstanding Administrator Award for 7th Congressional District of Illinois.

Mark Behlmann, HSD's Board President states, "I was delighted when the National Association of School Superintendents named Dr. Collins-Hart the 2019 Superintendent of the Year. Not only is this recognition a tremendous accomplishment for our superintendent, but it will also put our students,

school district, and our community in the national spotlight. On behalf of the board of education, I would like to congratulate Dr. Collins-Hart on this outstanding achievement."



Photos courtesy Hazelwood School District

Nettie Collins-Hart stands with students at the Back to School Community Fair July 27 at Central High School.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Huneke Publications, Inc.

2139 Bryan Valley Commercial Dr.

O'Fallon, MO 63366

PH: 636-379-1775 | FX: 636-379-1632

Published weekly since 1921.

Serving St. Louis, St. Charles
and Lincoln Counties.

Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

Mathew DeKinder

Publisher Emeritus/General Manager

Robert J. Huneke

Production Manager

Rebecca Brockmann

Production Assistant

Melissa Nordmann

Nettie Collins-Hart Named Superintendent of the Year

Hazelwood School District Superintendent Nettie Collins-Hart has been named 2019 Superintendent of the Year by the National Association of School Superintendents.

"I am honored to receive recognition as the 2019 Superintendent of the Year," Collins-Hart said. "It is a privilege to lead the students and staff of the Hazelwood School District, and I look forward to continuing our efforts in creating and achieving high expectations for all students,"



"Our teachers and staff are making a true difference for our children, and I am honored to work and live in a community that values equity in education and a culture of excellence."

Collins-Hart joined the Hazelwood School District in 2016 and previously served as superintendent in school districts in Illinois and North Carolina as part of a career in education spanning more than 40 years.

Collins-Hart also is the first African American woman to permanently lead HSD, where more than 50% of the population is African American and 62% of students are minorities.

She says her role in school leadership stems from her experiences with students and the work her mentors have done to shape her lens for equity and student achievement.

"People I respected and admired encouraged me to become a school administrator," Collins-Hart said. "They helped me pursue the positions and supported me along the way."

Collins-Hart is focusing on several important issues in the Hazelwood School District, including early childhood education expansion, school climate and culture that meet the needs of student populations, and studying potential models for thematic schools to drive innovation.

She also continues to focus on gifted education programming for students across the spectrum, redesigning an instructional model that supports teachers through in-classroom assistance, and effective classroom management that reduces disproportionality.

"Dr. Collins-Hart is a champion for students and continuous improvement," said Jon Roach, NASS Executive Director. "Her commitment to collaboration and mutual support in her district proved she is a leader with a demonstrated vision of building the next great generation of American students."

"If you look at what Dr. Collins-Hart has done within her district and community and what she is focused on, you'll see why she is the type of school leader that our students really need," said Sonny Da Marto, NASS Assistant Executive Director.

Collins-Hart will be honored in Washington, D.C. at the NASS IgnitED Conference Sept. 15-17.

Hazelwood West High School Alum Publishes Book of Poetry

Bailey Williams always had dabbled in writing poetry. She first started when she was 16 years old, but she never took it too seriously and had even stopped altogether for a short period.

It took the death of a family member to be the catalyst for her to start writing again and eventually create her first book.

Williams, a 2019 graduate of Culver-Stockton College who grew up in North County in St. Louis, recently wrote "Utter & Unutterable," a 50-page paperback collection of poems. She has copies available for sale. It's also available on Amazon.

A review of the book on the website said, "B.E. Williams manages to capture the indescribable pain of depression, power of the mind and the beauty of life. This is a thought provoking must-read that should be added to every young woman's collection."

Williams said she had stopped writing for a period of time until she started working on her book last June, only a few days after the death of her uncle, Kevin Garnett. He was diagnosed with cancer in March 2018 and died two months later.

"We kind of joke about how my uncle was everyone's favorite family member, and he really was," Williams said. "He was that story teller, the really funny guy. Regardless of what was happening, he would crack a joke and everything would be OK."

Garnett died on May 26, and his funeral was in early June. Williams started writing about a week later. However, it wasn't easy.

She admits struggling with feelings and emotions when she writes. While she was home from C-SC last summer, Williams was caring for her 70-year-old grandmother, helping keep an eye on other family members and working as a tutor for inner-city children at Applied Scholastics, a nonprofit educational organization that makes available L. Ron Hubbard's educational technology.

"With (my uncle's) passing, it was such an abrupt tearing away," Williams said. "Writing it out was kind of how I coped.



Bailey Williams with her first book of poetry, titled "Utter & Unutterable."

His death gave me the jump I needed to sit down and write and formulate my words into a way that made sense. I just had to make sure my family was OK and functioning in the midst of that kind of tragedy.

"Being able to sit at my computer and write after I got off work was like therapy. I had to get it out."

Williams told no one of her work. She said she wrote for about six months, followed with about a month and a half of editing by friends and peers, before submitting for publication in February.

"I wanted to do it before I graduated college," she said. "It was something to put on my resume and to see if I could actually do it, but I didn't know how the publication process was going to work out, and I didn't want to get anyone's hopes up."

When she received copies of her book, Williams called her sister, Brooke Boyd, and was sobbing.

"And she was like, 'What? You wrote a book and didn't tell anyone?'" Williams said.

She wants to write more books, but for now, she recently started a new job with Pleasant Grove Publishing in St. Louis.

"Writing poetry doesn't provide the most lucrative career," she said. "But I love doing it."

Bailey's book is available for \$15 at <https://www.amazon.com/Utter-Unutterable->