



# the Voice of VERITAS

You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. | John 8:32

August 2016

2006 CELEBRATING 10 YEARS 2016

## CLASS OF 2016 Congratulations



## Pass the Baton!



### Senior Awards & Scholarships

**Brianna Kuperus**, Valedictorian

**Thyra Tonnesen**, Salutatorian  
Eric "Doc" Mindrebo Service Award

**Hanna Filosa**, Lakeland Bank Scholar Award

**Austin Gewecke** and **RJ Vander Ploeg**,  
Kiwanis of Sussex Scholar Award

**Kirsten Pedersen**, Chris Carbone Memorial Scholarship

### Class of 2016

<b>David Amels</b>	CCM
<b>Noah Colabella</b>	Word of Life
<b>Hanna Filosa</b>	Seton Hall University
<b>David Formisano</b>	OCCC
<b>Garrett Gaffney</b>	Grove City College
<b>Austin Gewecke</b>	Biola University
<b>Matthew Grossman</b>	Olivet Nazarene University
<b>Brianna Kuperus</b>	Calvin College
<b>Richard Kuperus</b>	Rutgers University
<b>Kirsten Pedersen</b>	The College of New Jersey
<b>Courtney Ross</b>	SCCC
<b>Meaghan Scotland</b>	Ithaca College
<b>Sabrie Smith</b>	CCM
<b>Briyony Sorenson</b>	Asbury University Online
<b>Thyra Tonnesen</b>	Liberty University
<b>RJ Vander Ploeg</b>	SCCC
<b>Gregory VanderGroef</b>	Heavy Construction Academy

# Seasons of Glory

"It would be hard to imagine coming off last year's 29 - 4 season that this year could be better," says Veritas Athletic Director and Basketball Coach Greg Gaffney, referring to the men's 2015 basketball record. "But it was."

The men's basketball team set a new record with 32 wins and 1 loss, including an undefeated run through the Metro Christian Athletic Association regular and post season resulting in two first place finishes. The men's team also won the Ross Corner's Invitational Tournament and capped off their year with the Mideast Region Christian School Championship in Maryland. Dave Amels, Dave Lacopo, Jake Doorley and Garrett Gaffney all rounded up All-Star Team and MVP awards throughout the season, with Amels reaching 1,500 and Gaffney 1,000 total points.

"It is highly unusual for two, 1,000-point scorers to be on the same team," notes Coach Gaffney.

Women's basketball held their own in the 2016 season as well. Despite a plague of injuries – not one game was played with a full roster – the women's team rolled to their second highest win total in the program's history at 22 - 8. The women placed second in the Metro Christian Athletic Association, with Joy Miladinovich an MCAA All-Star and Kirsten Pedersen the MCAA MVP. The women were also honored by earning the league's Christian Character Award.

Although basketball is a high-profile sport, with both Men's and Women's teams earning their fans' support, it is only part of the Veritas Total Release Performance (TRP) sports program. Women's volleyball finished second in the Metro Christian Athletic Association regular 2016 season and fourth in the post-season tournament – a vast improvement from previous years. Men's volleyball made a clean sweep with its fourth MCAA championship as well as the MCAA Christian Character Award.

In this arena, Garrett Gaffney, Devon Cuperus, Matt Grossman were named All-Stars, and Richard Kuperus secured the MCAA volleyball MVP.

In total, 74 of Veritas' 85 students participated on at least one of our nine sports teams.



# Accreditation Q & A



Donna Bentson, accreditation director at Veritas, answers some questions about the process and its potential benefits.



**Q: Veritas is currently going through accreditation “hoops.” What’s it all about?**

**DB:** We’re actually seeking two types of accreditation: ACSI – the Association of Christian Schools International – and “Middle States” – the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. Accreditation simply signals that we are working according to best practices and the highest educational standards.

**Q: What’s the difference between ACSI and Middle States accreditation?**

**DB:** Both accrediting agencies document that the school is true to its own foundational statements (mission, vision, core values, goals). It affirms that the school meets standards of quality established by the international school community, provides validation of the credibility of the school through a peer review process and promotes accountability to the school community. In addition, it requires a continuous process of self-assessment and systematic school development. Accreditation through ACSI encourages the evaluation of biblical and spiritual integration of the school. It also allows for the transfer of credits between schools and between the national school systems.

For both private and public schools, accreditation is a matter of choice. Veritas would like to assure parents that we fulfill all the requirements of an excellent educational institution. The ACSI credentials attest that we are not only excellent but we are biblically integrated. Middle States Accreditation only considers secular benchmarks. Both types of accreditation increase our respect and credibility.

**Q: What is our accreditation status at the moment?**

**DB:** We are currently an ACSI member school. ACSI member schools seek accreditation to validate their quality and verify that they are striving for excellence based on a solid Christian philosophy of education. We have been working diligently for about a year and a half in preparation for filing with ACSI and Middle States and will formally do so in the fall 2016. The timeline for both accreditations are three to five years.

**Q: Can these groups – when they come to visit and inspect – dictate what is taught in the classroom?**

**DB:** Accreditation bodies focus on paperwork such as curriculum “mapping guides,” annual statements of financial practices, roles and function of faculty and staff, transportation, safety, responsibilities, community, and the “big picture” of school programs. The overall effect is that we have the opportunity to improve on every level, not only what goes on in the classroom.

**Q: How has God used you in this process?**

**DB:** I struggle with RA (rheumatoid arthritis). Three years ago my health was at a low point. I realized I needed to step down from teaching. This was a tremendous disappointment to me, but God had another plan. When Sean Bevier became the Administrator, he said he knew he had met his new curriculum and accreditation director soon after our first discussion. Instead of leaving my position at Veritas, he offered me a new position, and the process formally began. Although it took me a while to see God’s hand in the direction, I now see His providence and gladly serve where He leads. This initiative involves a lot of planning, organization, and training. I’m seeing how God is using my past career in business, my educational training, and temperament to serve at Veritas in more fruitful ways than I ever thought possible.

*For further questions, please contact Donna Bentson at [dbentson@veritasnj.org](mailto:dbentson@veritasnj.org).*



Senior Day of Fun – A heartfelt thank you to Donna Bentson for your generous hospitality.

# Fluor Engineering Project

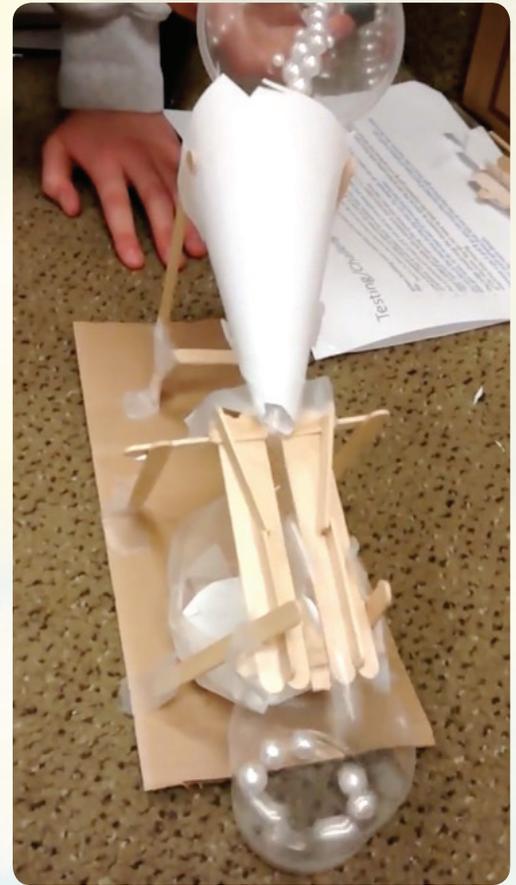
## STEM, ANYONE?

The use of tape and glue were free, as was a piece of corrugated cardboard, which could be no larger than 2' x 2'. Three other materials cost points per each item: printer paper, 16-oz. paper cups, and popsicle sticks. Veritas students could incorporate no more than 10 cups, 20 sheets of paper, and 50 popsicle sticks to engineer a machine that would sort plastic spheres into two, different sizes.

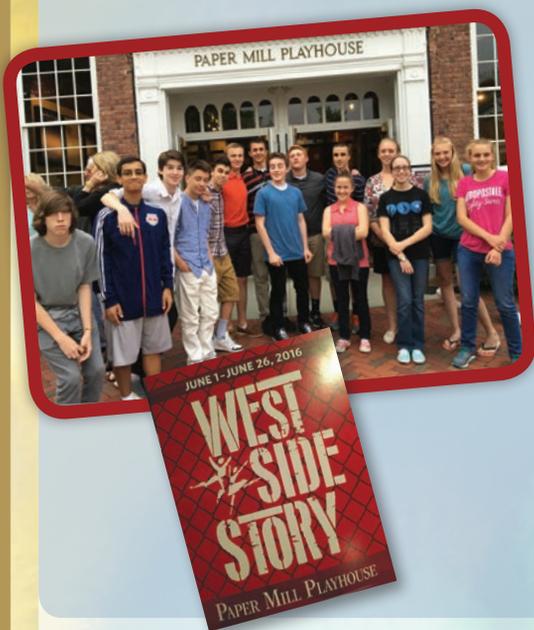
Students from all over the world competed in the second annual Fluor Engineering Challenge. Held for decades as a healthy competition for engineers, this contest is now open to students and provides a lottery through which \$10,000 is distributed to school and after-school programs whose entries meet the requirements. Michelle Kuperus, who teaches science and engineering at Veritas, requires 100 percent participation in the contest.

An advantage of Veritas' size is that even students who might not be on the fast-track to STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) schools get exposed to the creativity and fun of projects they might not have otherwise contributed toward. A special team of Fluor scientists design the original specifications each year. This year's challenge, which ran February 11 to March 11, was based on one of the company's real projects: a mining apparatus that actually sorts different types and sizes of materials.

Students who never thought they would like engineering find out they have a blast during projects like these, notes Veritas science teacher Michelle Kuperus. Although Veritas did not win a cash award in the drawing, all of our students got an energizing taste of real scientific design.



## Freshmen English Class Trip



On June 2, the Freshmen Class attended a Paper Mill Playhouse production of *West Side Story*, a modern-day interpretation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

"It's the same plot with updated issues such as hostilities between races," said Veritas English teacher, Mrs. Nicole Bobby, who hosted the event.

"The purpose of the trip is to look at both plays through a Biblical lens," explains Mrs. Bobby. "In both plays, the viewer sees conflicts between people who think they are better than each other. But as believers, we know that with God all men are equal. Galatians 3:28 proclaims that There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

By studying an older and newer version of similar interpersonal and group conflicts, students compared God-centered relationships with worldly relationships, the latter of which are built on constantly changing emotions.

"We are all sinners and fall short of the glory of God," said Mrs Bobby. "We can in no way boast of superiority. We can only boast of God's grace towards us."

## DE Awards

Veritas juniors Kayla Gewecke, Nicole Kuperus, and Elizabeth Publik were guests-of-honor at the first annual Presidential Dinner hosted by Pillar College at their Somerset campus on June 1. Kayla was honored with the Presidential award for superior academic performance and Christ-like character in our dual enrollment course, Composition 101. The dual enrollment program with Pillar College has been expanded for the 2016 - 2017 school year. We look forward to seeing more of our students at the next annual dinner.



# Sophomores In Gettysburg

JUNE 3, 2016

On June 3, the sophomore class traveled to the Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania, led by teacher Dan Pinkham.

***"History is not just about learning from books," said Mr. Pinkham. "Nothing helps reinforce history more than experiencing it and seeing the famous places where important events have actually taken place."***



# Spring Concert

MAY 17, 2016



# Seussical The Musical



Veritas students (cast and crew) once again entertained three audiences this past April and gave them memories to last a lifetime. Veritas pulled off its annual drama presentation "Seussical the Musical" April 29 to 30 without a hitch.

"At first I was skeptical about doing this play, but as time went on it grew on me. I decided to take a chance and ended up loving it," said Brijony Sorensen, who played a "Who" in the production.

In typical Veritas style, rehearsal conversations mixed faith and drama. Students noted Horton of the popular book and film "Horton Hears a Who" adopts the voice no one else hears and even he himself can't see.

**"Horton's character demonstrates a real act of faith,"** says Director Sara Bartlett.

Other familiar Seuss characters are recognizable through their foibles – insecurity in Gertrude, a worldly kind of confidence in Mayzie, and downright meanness in the Wickersham brothers. All in the audience could relate to at least a few familiar faces such as Cat in the Hat, Yertle the Turtle, and the Grinch.

Director Bartlett came to Veritas only a year ago after experiences in a variety of churches through her Musical Mission Tours. The tours were not unlike her work at Veritas except that she took the show on the road during a week in the summer to disadvantaged communities.

Bartlett has been pleasantly surprised by the amount of talent she gets to work with at Veritas. "The production team was especially amazing," she said. "Only a few, if any, had experience – they were sponges. It was like a crash college course!"

Anyone who attended "Seussical the Musical" at Veritas would agree that the cast pulled off a tremendous production. This focus on arts is a worldview component that Veritas stresses for every student, regardless of his or her type of participation in the annual musical.



## Math Magic

On Friday, May 20, five Veritas Pre-Calculus students traveled to the National Museum of Mathematics in Manhattan. Juniors DaSean Allison, Mary Kate Allison, Troy Nash, Michael Olinger, and Stephen Olinger participated in hands-on problem-solving, according to teacher Catherine Morrison. The "MoMath," as it is known, brands itself as the "coolest thing that ever happened to math" and provides varied creative exhibits and activities.



## Confluence [kon-floo-uh ns]: "A situation where two things come together"

On April 30, sophomore Sam Ryan placed as the overall fastest runner at the 6th Annual Dora Pedersen 5k run with a time of 19 minutes and 35 seconds. The race is held annually at Northwest Christian School in honor of a beloved sports enthusiast and physical education teacher who lost a long battle with cancer.

Taking into account costs and a scholarship, the race raised over \$9,000 for Northwest, many of whose graduates attend Veritas. Dora's daughter, Kirsten Pedersen, has been a gifted and versatile athlete at Veritas and graduated in June.

We encourage you to read the accompanying story to learn more about Dora Pedersen.

## Dora's Story

**Dora (Pignaloso) Pedersen** loved to run. In fact, she enjoyed all sports. Dora especially excelled in crosscountry and basketball at Voorhees High School and Kings College. She competed in many 5k's, ½ marathons and even the Atlantic City marathon. Dora was a great match for her husband, Erik, who was equal to her in their shared passion for athletics.

Dora was also a physical education teacher, finishing her teaching career at Northwest Christian School. She always encouraged her students to be active, and to do their best with the ability given to them. Being healthy through exercise and good eating habits were very important aspects of her life. It was very difficult when the ovarian cancer sidelined Dora from teaching, running, walking and all of the other physical activities she loved so much.

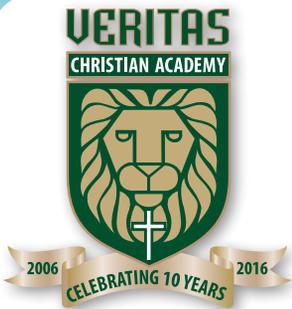
On December 29th, 2009, just four days shy of her 45th birthday, Dora completed the racecourse that the Lord had set for her. This wasn't a 5k or even a marathon, but it was the race of life. Her life was lived to honor and serve the Lord, even if that included suffering with cancer. Dora fought hard and persevered for 6 ½ years - through surgery, chemotherapy, transfusions, pain and discouragement. It was a long and difficult struggle. Through it all, however, Dora never lost sight of the finish line. She always knew who was running alongside of her - sometimes even carrying her - through the course of life.

As the author of Hebrews states "... Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out before us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..."

Dora wanted her life to count and be an encouragement to those she came in contact with. She wanted others to know of her relationship with the Lord, and how He gave her the strength and peace to persevere even through the most difficult and painful times in life. Dora was an inspiration to all who knew her, so this 5k is being run in memory of a wonderful mother, wife, sister and friend.

*Original story published on the Northwest Christian School website.*





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Celebrating 10 years  
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Banjos, Bandanas  
& BBQ June 16

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### Database Update

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