

Upcoming Dates

- 3/3 Last elective class
- 3/4 Interim reports
- 3/10 Elective shopping day
- 3/17 STEM Career Panel
- 3/21 WVRSF (regional fair)
- 3/31 New electives start



RVGS Newsletter

Issue 3 Winter 2020

Counselor's Corner

Congratulations on surviving another intense and exciting Intersession and Project Forum. Second semester has begun and it will be spring before we know it!

February may be a shorter month, but we have a lot going on! Course description information was emailed to students and parents last week. Registration forms for math and science courses went out on Monday, February 10th and the completed forms will be due to me on Thursday, February 13th. Our elective shopping day will be on Tuesday, March 10th and the elective registration form will be due to me on Thursday, March 12th. Please look for emails about this process as we get closer to those dates. I will also begin meeting with 11th graders individually this week to discuss their overall college plans, to answer any questions that they may have and to give them an overview of the things they should be doing and thinking about if they aren't already.

One important date this spring that you should go ahead and mark on the calendar is our Senior Dinner which has been scheduled for May 4th at Hotel Roanoke. Invitations to the senior dinner will be mailed home when we return from spring break.

Spring may still be a few weeks away, but we are all already looking ahead to the many activities that spring brings. Students are preparing for AP tests, SOL tests and SAT/ACT tests while still maintaining their good grades. Many of them will be adding in spring sports if they haven't already. Time management is always important, but it becomes increasingly so in the spring. If any student feels he/she needs a refresher on how to balance the time, please feel free to see me.

As always, if you have any questions or need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Project Forum

The biggest event of the year at Roanoke Valley Governor's School is always Project Forum and this year's event did not disappoint. Projects from 268 students and 7 school districts were presented. Freshmen developed their research skills by conducting research on how different substances can affect *Daphnia magna*, seed germination, and *E.coli*. Students experimented with chemicals commonly found in energy drinks, vaping, and health supplements just to name a few. The more experienced researchers were able to focus their time on even more innovative projects in a variety of categories. One of the most popular areas of the forum during the open house was the engineering divisions. Robotics were created and coded to perform tasks such as dispensing pills and playing chess.

The RVGS Annual Appeal fundraiser raised over \$32,000 to support instruction and supplies at RVGS. A special thank you to all the families, friends and community supporters of RVGS who made this possible. Items purchased with the support of the RVGS Foundation in past years were heavily used during intersession. One recent example is our structural tester, which was used to determine tensile and compressive strength of everything from bioplastics to snail shells! The RVGS 3D bioprinter was also used in several projects to create projects ranging from algae structures to biofilms for wound repair.



Winning projects will have the opportunity to compete at several area science fairs including Roanoke County, Roanoke City and the Western Virginia Regional science fairs. Project Forum's overwhelming success was due to the incredibly hard work of the many judges, volunteers and of course RVGS faculty. *More photos of the event on page 4*

Message from the Director

We had a great Intersession during January, and I'm very proud of the work our students and teachers were able to accomplish. Thank you to everyone who helped make the Annual Appeal a success—we are humbled by the fundraising support we receive from our community.

As we advance deeper into the 'science fair season', keep an eye on our Facebook page and future newsletters to help celebrate successes within the RVGS family. We are proud of the many great accomplishments of our students, whether or not they are recognized at science fairs.

During second semester, we will continue our focus on balance and well-being in our students' lives. A key piece of that is efficiency with the work students put in outside of school. Often, the difference between working on an assignment for a half hour vs an hour and a half can be the approach. Simple steps like eliminating distractions and using a timer to set goals for time spent on work can make a big difference. Students are encouraged to seek help from Mrs. Sebolt with their time management concerns!

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions, concerns, or comments.

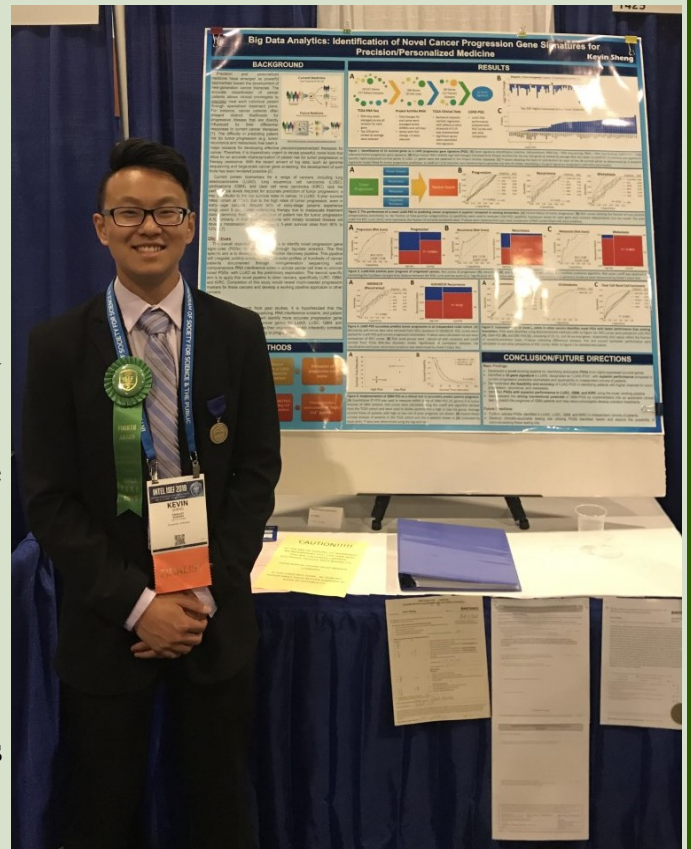
Therapets visit RVGS over Intercession



On January 27th, The Therapets of Roanoke once again visited RVGS. With Project Forum only days away and student stress levels running high, these four legged friends were the perfect distraction. Students welcomed Ripley, Suzy, Jax and the massive Cohen along with their wonderful human partners. For a few minutes, it did not matter if the robots refused to perform the coded task or the *Daphnia* just wouldn't survive. Students were able to just enjoy the furry cuddles that the Therapets could provide. Many students reported that this was their favorite part of Intercession and had been looking forward to it all month. We would like to thank the Therapets of Roanoke Valley for their time and we are already looking forward their visit next year!

Student Spotlight: Kevin Sheng

There is no doubt that Kevin Sheng has a passion for research. Kevin began working with Dr. Robin Varghese at V-COM in 2018. He was searching for biomarkers that would allow him to calculate a patient's risk score after cancer diagnosis and determine the best approach for treatment using this score. After winning 1st place at Project Forum and the Roanoke County Science Fair in 2019, Kevin won the Grand Award at the Western Virginia Regional Science Fair. This earned him a trip to Arizona to compete at ISEF. There he placed 4th in Biomedical and Health sciences. But that wasn't quite enough for Kevin. He decided to enter the Regeneration Science Talent Search. It was recently announced that Kevin has been named a "Regeneron STS Scholar". This distinction also comes with a \$2000 prize for Kevin and \$2000 for his school. The Regeneron STS states that "scholars were selected from 1,993 applications received from 659 high schools across 49 states. Scholars were chosen based on their exceptional research skills, commitment to academics, innovative thinking and promise as scientists" This year, Kevin is hoping to use his research as a "stepping stone" for this year. He plans to concentrate on gene mutations and biomarkers. His goal is to create a novel 3D model for better understanding and treatment of cancer. Congratulations to Kevin and good luck with future research!



Govie Gala

On December 18th, students got their “GiddyUp and Go!” on at this year’s Govie Gala. With Seniors voting for this year’s theme of the “Wild Wild West”, the RVGS students came out in their best Western garb. As in the past, the Govie Gala served as a canned food fundraiser for Feeding America. The only cost for students to get in was a donation of five canned food items. Senior students spent the afternoon transforming the lecture hall into a country western disco! Students danced the night away to music from DJ Roy Prusak (RVGS class of 2000). He played a fabulous mix that got all the students onto the dance floor. At the end of the night, it was announced that the Govie Gala King and Queen was Charlie Murphy and Nathalie Lemon. They took the dance floor to “I’ve had the Time of My Life”. A great night was enjoyed by everyone and RVGS was able to make a large donation of canned items to Feeding America! Way to go Lab Rats!



