



The High School View

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha's Vineyard Times.

'Soulful Showcase' opens at the Galaxy Gallery

BY NATALIE WAMBUI

The "Soulful Showcase" is an art exhibit celebrating the creativity and talent of Black, indigenous, and people of color (BI-POC) students and alumni from the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), on display until May 20 at the Galaxy Gallery in Oak Bluffs.

The showcase's opening reception was held last Friday, where students and community members gathered for the unveiling of student work and the launch of a fundraiser designed to raise money for the Black Student Alliance (BSA) club.

The event was a culmination of months of outreach, planning, and advertising by juniors Nyoka Walters and Caiden Gardener, who created this exhibit as part of their Capstone project.

"A Capstone project is es-

entially an independent project a student chooses to do," said Nyoka. "It can be something like starting a business, creating a fundraiser, or anything you put your mind to, with the school's approval."

Over the past few months, Nyoka and Caiden have reached out to MVRHS students and alumni for different types of artwork for the exhibit, and they worked together to coordinate the event. Nyoka said, "Being an artist myself, I also made my own pieces for the exhibit."

While Nyoka primarily handled the art curation, Caiden handled the business side of the showcase. "I handled the promotion," he said. "I worked on the logos, flyers, and promoting it on the MVRHS Grapevine. Putting the showcase out there was a big part of my role."

Although this is a student-run project, Nyoka and Caiden had help from equity



Nyoka Walters and Dolores Littles pose for a photo in front of Nyoka's handmade-jewelry display.

COURTESY NYOKA WALTERS

and access coordinator Sheryl Taylor, who is also the advisor for the BSA. "I think the funniest part [of the project] was seeing the connection between Dolores Littles and Nyoka, when she saw how Nyoka used the beads from her late husband, Jim Allen," Ms. Taylor said, alluding to Nyoka showing her jewelry creation to Ms. Littles.

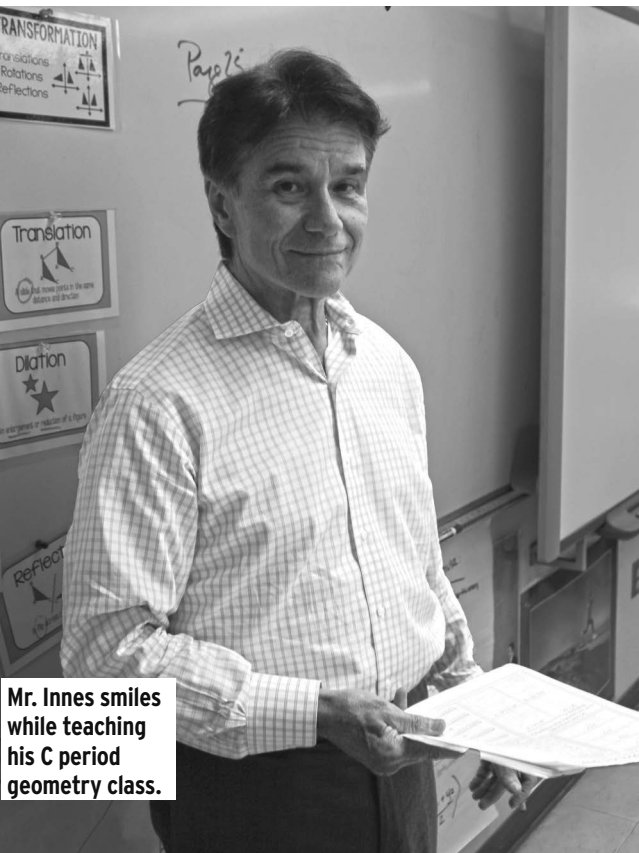
Ms. Taylor added, "But what also really stands out is the potential connections students have made with a lot of different community organizations. It's really exciting to see different mentorships for our students come out of this project."

Artwork, jewelry, and pottery are being sold as a way to raise money for the BSA. "Many of the students in the BSA are interested in attending an HBCU [historically Black colleges and universities] tour, but they have spent all their lives in a predomi-

nantly white institution, and they are not sure how they will fit in," Ms. Taylor said. "The real inspiration for the fundraiser is to have money for the BSA to be able to do an HBCU tour to see if that is still a place to consider for post-secondary education."

Sophomore Highley Marsh donated her artwork to give back to the Black community at MVRHS. "I'm not a very active member of the BSA, but I still consider it important, and I really want to further fund our club and create more experiences for Black kids at the school," she said.

Of the showcase's successful opening, Nyoka said, "I loved seeing it all come together, I was practically jumping up and down. Seeing one of my dreams come together is something that I don't think I'll ever get used to, and I'm grateful for the opportunity." H5V



Mr. Innes smiles while teaching his C period geometry class.

BRADY VOUGHT

Mr. Innes is heading out

BY IZZIE ANTHONY

After dedicating eight years of his teaching career to Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS), and completing a total of 19 years in education, math teacher Michael Innes is preparing to retire.

Over the course of his teaching career, Mr. Innes has taught a variety of math classes, including geometry and calculus. He and his wife discovered Martha's Vineyard during a vacation. "We lived in Texas, where there's not much of a winter, and we were thinking about living somewhere where they had four seasons," he explained. "So we bought a house here. Then, four years

later, when my wife retired, we moved up here full-time."

Before becoming a teacher, Mr. Innes worked as a banker for about 26 years. When he lived in Texas, Mr. Innes was already thinking of switching to a career in education.

"I used to coach my sons in Little League baseball," he said. "One of the fathers on my son's team was a principal at a high school, and he told me, 'If you ever wanted a second career, your ability to work with kids is strong.'"

After switching careers and becoming a math teacher, Mr. Innes taught at a high school in Texas for 11 years.

Students here know Mr. Innes' classroom as one that is disciplined, challenging, and overall a fun place to be and

learn. Xeandre Miller, a sophomore in one of Mr. Innes' geometry classes, said, "His class is like the real world. He's inspired me to just keep working at it, and don't give up. He has taught me to keep working at goals, and that not everything will go your way. You just have to keep going and learn to handle it."

Sophomore Anthony Smith has also had Mr. Innes this past year in geometry. "I really like his teaching style. He communicates with the class very well, which is a struggle for some teachers. He's also taught me that if I work hard at something and discipline myself, there will be positive outcomes," he said.

"I've been honored to work with some of the fin-

est teachers and students I've ever known," Mr. Innes said. "They've taught me a lot about adjusting to different cultures and times, and they're always seeking new ways to increase their education and knowledge."

Looking toward the future, Mr. Innes plans on moving back to Texas with his wife, to be near their children and grandchildren. "When I get back to Texas, I'm going to get to live out one of my lifetime dreams, which is to have a house on a golf course, so I can walk out to my backyard and go play golf," he said.

Mr. Innes is excited for the next chapter. "The best memory I have [at MVRHS] is my first day, and probably will also be my last day. Whether it's starting a new job or transitioning to a new school, it's always a lot of anxiety, but it's also very exciting." H5V

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