



First Edition of the '22-'23 School Year!

RITON VOICE

Triton High School

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Accomplished Musician Takes Up Chorus Position

Former Private Teacher Warms up to Public School

By Nick Doucot & Emma LeBlanc
Staff Writers

Christina Kennedy has been teaching since she was in college. As the new music teacher at Triton Middle School, her goal is "helping kids build confidence," she said.

Along with being a music teacher, Kennedy is a passionate musician. At a young age, the influence from her parents and teachers lifting her up, instilled an urgency to learn. Her mother and father weren't teachers as an occupation but they certainly were teaching people.

Kennedy says she once had a music teacher that she would visit. The teacher would not only educate her but she would also serve the young lady cookies and milk as a treat.

After getting to junior year of college, she began her career as a teacher. Kennedy prospered as time went on, being able to travel and educate many impressionable minds. She was initially a private teacher for music who would have both house lessons and school lessons. She wanted to make the students comfortable, as her teacher had made her.

As time went on, she grew fond of the public school environment. Kennedy has always loved teaching and the confidence she brings to her students. Her biggest challenge so far has been getting used to the school and knowing what to expect.

Kennedy plays the violin, piano, recorder, and other instruments more uncommon in the United States such as the lyre and a drum called a djembe. If she wasn't a musician, Kennedy says she would have been a librarian. She loves helping people and reading, so that would have been her occupation if music had not worked for her. She loves to read historical fiction and science fiction.

One interest aside from music and reading is science. As a child, she genuinely wanted to go to space. She considered the naval academy in order to work towards her goal. According to her, "I wanted to be an astronaut," Kennedy says, "but



Christina Kennedy playing violin. Photo taken by Kathryn Rokita

they told me my vision was too bad."

Outside of school, Kennedy loves to read and cook. She has been to Pennsylvania, California, Maine, Canada and England. She doesn't travel often anymore, but she used to enjoy it. She has three kids and a dog named Louis.

Kennedy is not alone in her efforts as a teacher. Mrs. Chris Astuccio, her mentor, has been working at the school for 15 years and refers to Triton as "a home away from home." Astuccio, like Kennedy, found working with kids, predominantly ones with special needs, is something she is good at. The way that she mentors is by simply gauging whatever her protegee wants. This allows freedom to grow and the ability to become acquainted with a new environment for Kennedy, she said.

The middle school students at Triton seem to enjoy having Kennedy as their teacher.

"She's really nice and the class is fun," said one student, currently in her class. "I like her better than the old teacher," said another.

Kennedy has the middle school chorus students engage in all kinds of exercises geared to warm up and provide a sense of amusement. She enjoys working with the kids and they feel the same way with her. It's safe to say there's a mutual liking in the chorus department.

Centered on Us New Teaching Technique Being Tried at THS

By Sadie Clifford
Staff Writer

English teacher Sarah Scruton wants to make her students the focus of their own learning processes.

As Triton High School takes on the 2022-2023 school year, teachers are beginning to transition into a new type of learning technique. Student-centered learning isn't new to the Triton District, but it has never been a direct focus. Scruton is one teacher leader who plans to apply the student-centered learning technique to her classes this year and focus more on her students as a whole.

"It gives every student a chance to plug in," Scruton said.

Every ten years, schools go through an accreditation process. The idea of focusing

more on student-centered learning was brought to Triton's attention by Triton's accreditation report, issued last year. Triton High School is not new to this method of learning but it hasn't been brought into direct focus before.

Patrick Kelley, the principal of Triton High School, has been working to spread awareness of this technique. As of last year, Triton High School was still rebuilding after the pandemic came through. Students' academic staminas were ultimately washed out by the pandemic. In hopes to bring them back, Kelley, Scruton, and many others want to center their focus on the students and the way they learn best individually.

"The teachers aren't doing all of the work this way. The students are carrying more weight and are given more opportunities to make their own decisions," Kelley said.

Throughout the year, Scruton plans to entice students with independent reading in her classes. She says that in most past English classes, students were given books to read and answer questions about. This year, Scruton wants her students to be able to choose their independent reading books. To be able to choose their own books that they are interested in reading will give them the motivation to actually read it, Scruton said.

At the end of last year, Scruton introduced a writing project to her junior students that was student-centered. Scruton had given her students guidelines to follow, but their topic and the way they wrote about said topic was all up to the students themselves.

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I could do what I wanted. I wasn't stuck because I wasn't writing about something I didn't want to." — Senior Sidney Golbitz on student-centered learning

New Business Teacher Focused on Giving Back

Torres Aims to be a Force for Good at School & in the Community

By Connor Houlihan
Staff Writer

Mr. Frank Torres is one of 60 new teachers in the district, but other teachers and students say that Torres stands out.

Torres led a difficult life where the path was not always clear. But one thing that was clearly a goal for him: giving back to his community.

"My goal was always like I did at the boys and girls club (when I was younger): school first," said Torres in a recent interview.

This philosophy extends outside of the classroom. When he was a basketball coach, Torres said of his team, "I made sure they had tutors, that they did their work, and no one had below a 3.2 GPA. So if a kid wanted to go to grad school they could go to grad school somewhere. That's my greatest accomplishment. It's not the winning, it's making sure kids go where they need to go."

In the eight years that Torres coached basketball at the former Bradford College in Haverhill, only one player didn't graduate. He made sure his players kids had the ability to perform in subjects other than basketball, making basketball a second priority. Still, Torres led the team to a total record of 64-32 over those years, never having a losing

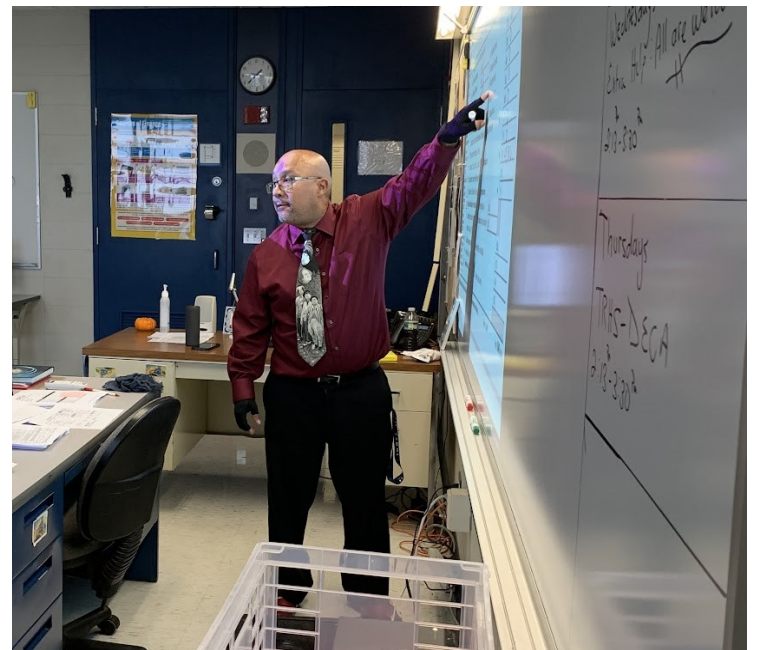
record. In his fourth year of coaching the team they went 32-0, won the league title and made it to New York for the NCAA tournament.

Growing up wasn't easy. Torres led a life without a father figure and without a solid homestead. Growing up in one of the most dangerous parts of the Bronx, Torres was handed nothing. He found a home at the local Boys and Girls Club, a place for underprivileged kids without the means or money, where he could pursue athletics, academics, and other areas of life. He found father figures there, naming Steve Kelly, Billy Robinson, and Timmy Howard, as people he met there who influenced him

"At that place I became the person I am now, a community person," said Torres. Amazingly Torres was able to escape the system, meeting a staff member at Worcester State University named Sydney Boxtun. There, he was told that although he graduated Lawrence high school in 1988, Torres was still at an elementary level of reading and writing, barely able to do either.

But that didn't bother him, still Torres pushed through. Finally he caught a break, and he switched over to be the head coach of the Bradford College basketball team after the former head coach left for another job and recommended that Torres should get the position.

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Business teacher Mr. Frank Torres stands at the front of the classroom in September (Houlihan photo).

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New Era at Triton Theater

Safely Getting Ready to Make her Mark

By Kaeden Carlson & Cam Neary, Staff Writers

Natalie Safley starts off her theater class by taking a deep breath in, stretching her arms up, and then dropping her upper body to the floor with an exhale.

Safley is taking over the drama department this year, replacing Sharon Riordan who retired last year.

When speaking to Triton art teacher and Safley's new "mentor," Ms. Toni Fein, Fein said the drama teacher has started out well.

"Her way of being enthusiastic and mellow at the same time, and a sharp, keen, observer, it was just great to converse with her in and outside of school."

Seven years ago, Safley took over for Riordan so that Riordan could spend time with her first grandson. Since Safley has been in a situation before where she needs to take on a program, this is nothing new to her. When asked if she had any fears about the next year Safley said, "I'm coming on it strong."

"Natalie had an advantage the others didn't have," said Riordan. "She knew Triton."

Safley is breathing new life into the drama program, and both teachers and students see her arrival as beneficial and welcomed. She has made big waves already in her three months of tenure, and is ahead of the game. She has introduced students to the Thespian Honors Society, which grants kids new opportunities past their high school drama class, to continue to perform for the rest of their lives. In addition, the theater program will be performing *The Addams Family*, originally directed by Julian Crouch, on December 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th.

Triton senior Brenna Coates, who plays Morticia in *The Addams Family*, is looking forward to the possibilities under her new theater teacher.

"It's a little different having a new person, but she is a big person on bonding with the cast, and that's really important for newcomers, and freshman, and new students around the school that

wanted to try theater."

Safley has also made plans for the future. Next year, the fall production has been announced, and it is going to be *Frozen The Musical*, originally directed by Michael Grandage. Triton won the rights for the show from entering a contest set up by Disney. Triton will be one of 51 schools across the nation to perform the show.

Under the theme, "Love is an Open Door," the schools entering the Disney contest were asked to pitch their ideas of what they wanted to do with the show. Safley will be putting together her own version of the show with a more modernized look.

"As part of the grant proposal, we had to talk about the theme 'Love is an Open Door,'" said Safley, "how (we) are going to bring that to the community? And one of the things that is unique to Triton is that the district is three towns that are so far apart; and I really want to bring the towns together. Through this program, there will be lots of opportunities to bring the towns together, not just the show itself but the events surrounding the show will bring the towns together, and then also different groups of people who wouldn't normally be together. Just as *Frozen* breaks the stereotypes and preconceived notions about what defines true love, our production will break the audience's ideas of what they think a live production will look and feel like."

The production will have a more modernized Scandinavian look while also taking inspiration from the book *Odd Bird* by Derek Desierto. The town characters will be dressed in bright beautiful colors, but when Elsa gets removed from the city, she will become more and more black and white, showing a growing disconnect from the city and its culture.

Although she is a senior and won't be participating in the show, Coates added, "I was excited for some of the younger kids... seeing as we will have a bigger budget and we will be able to do a lot more with theater through the school."

Addams Family The Musical will be showing December 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. *Frozen* will be performed in fall of 2023.

Fiddler on the Corner

New Math Teacher Brings Musical Hobby To Class

By Aiden Szymanski Staff Writer

Following the sound of the fiddle will lead you to new Triton math teacher Aram Hollman, who is looking this year to challenge students.

"I like making the light bulb go on," Hollman said.

In his twelfth year teaching, Hollman finds himself in a different atmosphere than what he is used to. Before teaching, Hollman worked as a computer programmer and, later, in darkroom photography. Then, when he became a teacher, he taught in schools far more populated than Triton.

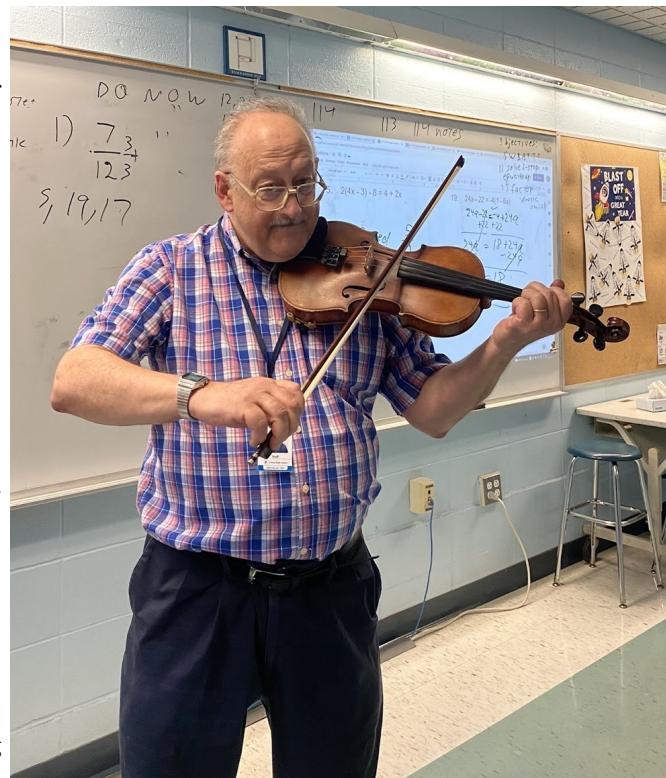
Having taught in Everett, Natick, Lawrence, and Springfield prior to finding himself on Triton grounds, Hollman recalled a level of tension and stress in those other schools that he feels is less apparent here at Triton, whose student population makes up half that of Everett High School's which is where Hollman last taught. "[Triton] kids are polite, thoughtful... I like that," he said.

As he grows comfortable in the new environment, Hollman said he still brings with him the joy that drew him into teaching in the first place.

"I like making kids try," Hollman said.

Socially, Hollman looks to create a balance. In his 12 years of teaching, he said he has learned "just how important social relationships with kids are," and said that it's harder for students to learn without having some sort of social connection with their teachers.

As for his life outside of school, Hollman expressed his love for music; he considers himself an amateur musician, having experience singing, playing the



Hollman playing the fiddle during class (photo by Alanna Sparks).

guitar, and playing the fiddle. He plays in a band called The Klezniks, where he either plays various instruments or sings, and he has won several fiddling contests at the Lowell Fiddle and Banjo Contest, the Bolton Fair, the Rochester Fair, the Blandford Fiddle Contest, and the Red Apple Farm fiddle contest. Students have seen Hollman play the fiddle during class in the first few weeks of the new school year.

"It's definitely interesting," said Simon Bissell, a junior in Hollman's Algebra 2 class, about Hollman playing the fiddle. "[The class] liked it."

"I love it," said Ryan Nolan, also a junior. "It makes me want to get jiggy."

As one of the newest additions to the math department, Hollman looks to make his mark on Triton by sharing his musical talents.

Former theater teacher Sharon Riordan (left) knighting the new theater teacher Natalie Safley (right) (Carlson photo).



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Harry Devacos, the athletic director for Bradford handed him the position, entrusting in him at 21 years old as a team leader. And he did lead, never having a losing record. Torres led his team to countless wins while being the youngest NCAA basketball coach in history. Bradford gave him the opportunity to attend classes, free of charge. Now Torres owns his own business as a financial consultant, which he has been running for more than 10 years, in addition to teaching

Torres chose Triton, where he is now teaching business classes, for three reasons. He has known Joseph Celia his whole life as they went to high school together, it's closer to home, and he really liked the DECA program that Triton offers. In an interview, Celia confirmed Torres as a community leader, saying that Torres is a "big time community person."

"Frank will often in his career, get a family from his school district, and help them acquire a home," Celia said, going on about how Torres does a lot of

good things for the community

Students interviewed said As I interviewed students that took his class I got the same feeling that Torres was a different type of teacher. A teacher that taught material that would be used in real world life, material that would help us as young adults.

Griffin Dupuis, a senior at Triton High, went on about how Torres was teaching us as if he and his classmates were adults, not kids. Taking Torres's financial literacy class, Dupuis said he could see that the material he was teaching was important.

Dupuis said, "I love his class, I feel like I'm learning actual useful information that I can use in real life, unlike a lot of my other classes."

Dupuis has had Torres for a couple weeks but already sees the type of person that he is, stating that he thinks Torres is an active member of his community.

When I asked if he thought Torres was doing it for the community not the money Dupuis said "oh 100 percent, he's doing it to lay his knowledge and his information on us, so that we can use it to be successful in life."



English teacher Sarah Scruton from Triton High School breaks down a thesis statement made by one of her freshmen students to her D period freshmen class (Clifford photo).

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Student Sidney Golbitz, a senior at Triton High School, was one of the juniors that participated in the project-based writing assignment last year. Golbitz said that essentially students got to pick whatever they wanted to write about and that the assignment was very open ended and all up to them.

"I could do what I wanted," Golbitz said. "I wasn't stuck because I wasn't writing about something I didn't want to."

According to John McCarthy's article "Student Centered Learning: It Starts With the Teacher," from Edutopia.com, classrooms that are under the influence of student centered learning include self application, students that self-plan, and assessments. Learners who are actively involved in these techniques will gradually have more work put on them, which in this case makes for a good outcome. To be able to implement this style of learning, teachers need to be open to altering their leadership styles from directive to consultative "...from 'Do as I say' to 'Based on your needs, let's co-develop and implement a plan of action.'"

Becton Loveless' article, "Developing a Student-centered Learning Classroom," from educationcorner.com further explains the factors of student-centered learning are very important in the process of aiding students in developing those skills that are required to be able to problem solve and for their lifelong learning processes. Compared to a classroom where the teacher is the focus and is teaching students up in front of the class, giving them more of an opportunity to just listen and not take part in the process themselves, student-centered learning is a big step in the right direction.