

Press Clippings - 5/1/2023

– Daily Herald –

Deaf Elgin teen aims to showcase possibilities over limitations in Bartlett High School musical

April 28, 2023
By Alicia Fabbre



Jon Thompson, a freshman at Bartlett High School who is deaf, poses for a selfie with his former elementary school teacher, Zainab Sheth, after a school performance Friday of "The Sound of Music." Rick West | Staff Photographer



Jon Thompson, a freshman at Bartlett High School who is deaf, hopes being part of the high school's production of "The Sound of Music" inspires other students to see possibilities instead of limitations. Rick West | Staff Photographer



Jon Thompson, right, a freshman at Bartlett High School, said he got his love for theater at a young age when he saw "Phantom of the Opera." Rick West | Staff Photographer



Horizon Elementary School kindergartner Kimberly Jimenez watches intently during the Bartlett High School production of "The Sound of Music" Friday. She was one of 11 students from the deaf and hard-of-hearing program at Horizon Elementary School who attended the musical. Rick West | Staff Photographer



Jon Thompson waves as some of his former teachers applaud his entrance to a post-show lunch after his appearance Friday in the **Bartlett High School** production of "The Sound of Music." Rick West | Staff Photographer



Jon Thompson, a freshman at Bartlett High School who is deaf, poses for a photo with other students in the deaf and hard-of-hearing program in U-46 after his performance in the BHS production of "The Sound of Music." Rick West | Staff Photographer

Jon Thompson can't sing. He also can't hear without his cochlear implant.

But that's not stopping him from performing in **Bartlett High School's** production of "The Sound of Music." As the only deaf cast member in the musical, the freshman, who also has limited vision, hopes his small role makes a big impact.

"The fact that I'm in it means that you can do anything," said Thompson, who appears in a few scenes.

"I hope everyone could take a can-do attitude (from the show)," he said.

Thompson, 14, of Elgin, was born with an aggressive form of Usher's Syndrome, a rare disorder that affects sight and hearing. He is profoundly deaf, has limited peripheral vision and uses a cane to navigate the hallways and classrooms at school.

While some would see limitations, Thompson sees possibilities.

The teen got involved in Drama Club, where he found friends and fed his interest in theater. He plans to start a club for students interested in learning sign language -- a move he hopes will eventually lead to the addition of American Sign Language classes to the school's offerings.

"It's an absolute joy just getting to work with positive influences like Jon," said **Mike Miserendino**, who **teaches English and theater** at **Bartlett High School** and is directing the musical.

That's not to say it's easy. Thompson said there are people who avoid him. And he knows his vision will continue to deteriorate.

Being transparent about the progression of his disease and focusing on positives -- including a vision bucket list featuring places the family wants to visit -- has helped.

"When it gets really overwhelming, he's able to step that down and say, 'OK, most of my world is pretty darn good,'" said his mother, Nicole Coover-Thompson. "I don't know how he does it. But when it does get hard he's very open with that as well."

Getting involved with the Drama Club has also helped him find his people in high school and share his love for the theater with others.

On Friday, students in **Elgin Area Unit District 46's deaf and hard-of-hearing program**, or **DHH**, were in the audience to see Thompson on stage during a school performance. It is the first time in at least a decade that a deaf student has been part of a high school musical, said teachers in the **DHH program at Horizon Elementary School**, which Thompson also attended. Two ASL interpreters sign for students at the play.

"It's very important that our students are exposed to all of this because it's important for them to see role models," said **Veronica Hutchins**, who teaches **third- through sixth-grade DHH students at Horizon**. "... A lot of times they have the mentality of 'I can't do this because of my limitations.'"

Thompson's mother admits there was a time when she herself couldn't imagine her son in a musical.

Through the years, however, deaf actors have left their mark in Hollywood and inspired others. Last year, Troy Kotsur, who starred in "CODA," became the first deaf man to win an Oscar. Marlee Matlin, who grew up in the suburbs and attended Arlington Heights' Hersey High School, made history in 1987 as the first deaf actor to win an Oscar.

"When you see that representation on TV or in books, that's a really big deal ... not only to kids who look like Jon, but it's a big deal to the parents of those kids," Coover-Thompson said.

Thompson said he doesn't plan to pursue a career in acting. He hopes to be a chef and one day have a Jewish deli featuring sandwiches from around the world.

But for now, he's excited to have people come to see the play and hopes that his small role can be a positive influence on someone.

Performances of "The Sound of Music" will be at noon and 7 p.m. Saturday at **Bartlett High School**. Tickets are \$10 and available for purchase at the door.

– Daily Herald – NDF12M Alignment holds job fair for graduating seniors

May 1, 2023

Submitted by Alignment Collaborative for Education



*COURTESY OF ALIGNMENT COLLABORATIVE FOR EDUCATION **Elgin High School senior Jesse Villagomez**, left, spoke about career opportunities with*

Tyler Sloan, center, and Alex Lechuga, right, from Hoffer Plastics at the recent Senior CTE Job Fair, sponsored by the Alignment Collaborative for Education. More than 400 high school seniors from Elgin Area School District U-46 and Central Unit District 301 attended the event.

Nearly 400 high school students from Elgin Area School District U-46 and Burlington Central Unit District 301 attended the Senior Career and Technical Education Job Fair on Thursday, April 20, at Elgin Community College.

Representatives from about 60 businesses, corporations, nonprofits, municipalities, trade unions, colleges, and universities were present to meet with students.

“An event like this shows students, as they’re preparing their postsecondary plans, that there are good options to work directly after high school, which also prepare them to be more competitive as they seek their long-term career goals,” said Alignment Executive Director Nancy Coleman.

From all indications, this year’s job fair was an immediate success.

“At least three job offers were made on the spot at the event,” said Terry Stroh, executive director, Northern Kane County Region 110, “including service technician positions at local auto dealerships and a maintenance position with a large equipment facility.”

“We were impressed by how many students know the direction they want to go after high school,” said Chad Randich, the business unit manager at Elgin Sweeper.

He noted many students he spoke to were interested in a career in welding, a vital role at the company.

U-46 offers a welding certification for students, and its lab at Elgin High School is an accredited testing facility.

Mitchell Briesemeister, U-46 director of Educational Pathways, said, “This is a place where we can connect high-wage, high-demand opportunities to our students who are choosing to explore entering the workforce immediately after high school. It is also a great way for our students to leverage the industry credentials they’ve earned in our high schools, which are valuable to our local partners.”

Students who attended the Senior CTE Job Fair benefitted from the experience.

Jesse Villagomez, a senior at Elgin High School, spoke with representatives from Hoffer Plastics. He was intrigued by the variety of products Hoffer Plastics produces, such as car speaker covers. A speaker was on display on the table for students to view up close.

Villagomez is currently enrolled in culinary arts courses and he is grateful he will be able to cook confidently for himself, family, and friends. As far as a career, he is looking at other fields. “I don’t mind working hard,” he said.

“The job fair opened my mind a little bit more. It’s making me flex my mind, thinking, ‘Is this what I want to do, or is it something more like this?’”

Alignment’s communitywide work has focused on helping businesses offer educational experiences for students to demonstrate the link between high school completion and workplace opportunities.

Mark Seigle of the Seigle Foundation visited the event and was impressed at the large scale participation. He complimented Alignment on its success.

“I spoke to a student who said he loved it, and an employer who noted it was a great use of his time.”

For more information, visit www.align4edu.org.

– Daily Herald –

Baseball: Top 20

May 1, 2023

Baseball

Records through April 23

Team | Comment

1. St. Charles East (15-1) Saints score 4 in 7th to beat Geneva; 10-0 in DuKane

2. Grayslake Central (18-3) Rams celebrate record-setting 16th straight win
3. Cary-Grove (17-4) Split with Huntley leaves Trojans in FVC mix
4. Huntley (16-4) Ressler's complete game propels Red Raiders
5. Downers Grove North (16-4) Warwick's HR lifts Trojans past DGS
6. Crystal Lake South (14-5) Ramirez, Skwarek spark Gators to sweep of CLC
7. Barrington (15-6) Broncos extend MSL West streak to 6
8. Stevenson (18-6) Patriots' offense generates 65 runs during 5-0 week
9. **Streamwood** (16-4) **Sabres** remain unbeaten at home; Weaver leading way
10. St. Charles North (14-4) Important week upcoming for North Stars in DuKane
11. Hersey (15-5) Huskies sit atop MSL East; Prospect next
12. Warren (14-5) Badgley, Schilz producing for Blue Devils
13. Willowbrook (15-6) Pieniazek no-hitter fuels 10-game win streak
14. Wheaton Academy (20-3) Warriors reach 20-win mark; St. Francis on tap
15. Conant (15-6) Gale fans 9 as Cougars down Hersey
16. St. Viator (13-5) Hogan's 3-run 2B keys late rally against Carmel
17. Naperville Central (12-7) Redhawks enjoy 3-game sweep of crosstown rival
18. **South Elgin** (12-5) Kating wins 300th; **Storm** on top of Upstate Eight
19. St. Francis (16-4) Spartans winners of 11 of last 12
20. Lake Park (12-8) Bergman's mound return leads Lancers past SCN

– Elgin Courier-News –

Local scoreboard

May 1, 2023

FRIDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BASEBALL

Argo 15, T.F. North 0 (5 innings)

Aurora Central Catholic 12, Crossroads Christian 0 (5 innings)

Bartlett 12, Fenton 2 (5 innings)

Bartlett (12-10, 10-2 Upstate Eight): Mario Prieto 2-for-3, 3 RBIs.

Batavia 4, Wheaton Warrenville South 3

Batavia (10-8, 5-5 DuKane): Jackson Bland GW RBI in bottom 7th.

Grayslake Central 19, Round Lake 1

Hinckley-Big Rock 5, Newark 3 (10 innings)

Hinckley-Big Rock (10-10): Preston Johnson GW 2-run single in top 10th.

Homewood-Flossmoor 12, Crete-Monee 1 (5 innings)

H-F (11-11): Dillon Head 2-for-3, HR, 3 runs, 2 RBIs.

Larkin 5, East Aurora 2

Lincoln-Way Central 8, Wilmington 4

Lyons 10, Lockport 3

Manteno 9, Beecher 4

New Trier 10, Libertyville 9

Oswego East 10, Lincoln-Way East 8 (8 innings)

Oswego East (14-6): Zach Polubinski 2-for-5, 2 runs, 2 RBIs.

Lincoln-Way East (17-6): Trevor Fishman 2 RBIs. Matt Hudik 2 RBIs.

New Trier 10, Libertyville 9 (8 innings)

St. Charles East 7, Geneva 6

St. Charles East (15-1, 10-0 DuKane): Eddie Herrera GW RBI in bottom 7th.

St. Francis 6, Benet 4

Benet (10-8): Marc Iozzo 2 RBIs.

St. Viator 6, Carmel 5

Carmel: Will Bartels 2-for-3, 2 RBIs.

South Elgin 8, Glenbard South 6

South Elgin (8-4, 7-1 Upstate Eight): Jordan Green 3-for-4, 2 RBIs.

Stevenson 15, Vernon Hills 1 (5 innings)

Stevenson (17-6): Luca Morelli grand slam, 5 RBIs.

T.F. South 5, Oak Lawn 4

T.F. South (12-9, 7-4 SSC Blue): Moises Mata 3-for-4, 2 RBIs.

Tinley Park 16, Eisenhower 8

Tinley (12-9, 8-2 SSC Blue): Matt Wnukowski 3 RBIs.

Wauconda 11, Grant 6

Wauconda (8-8-1, 7-4-1 Northern Lake County): Jackson Rudolph 3-for-3, 3 RBIs.

GIRLS SOCCER

Kaneland 3, Sycamore 0

Mundelein 3, Waukegan 2

South Elgin 1, East Aurora 0

South Elgin (8-6-1, 6-0-1 Upstate Eight): Ella Dihel goal.

NAPERVILLE INVITATIONAL

Championship Semifinals

St. Charles North 2, St. Charles East 1

St. Charles North (11-2-1): Juliana Park goal. Sophie Kirsten goal.

Barrington 2, Naperville North 1 (SO)

Consolation Bracket

Oswego 3, Bartlett 0

Neuqua Valley 1, Lyons 1

SOFTBALL

Addison Trail 10, Elgin 0 (5 innings)

Aurora Central Catholic 18, Rosary 0 (4 innings)

Chicago Christian 12, Timothy Christian 9

Chicago Christian (10-7, 6-3 Metro Suburban Blue): Lizzie Sedakis 3-for-4, 2 HRs, 3 runs, 5 RBIs.

Deerfield 15, Lake Forest 0 (5 innings)

Grant 12, Dundee-Crown 7

Grant (10-11): Abbi Themanson 4-for-4, 3 runs, 3 RBIs.

Lemont 13, Pontiac 0 (5 innings)

Lemont (13-0): Sage Mardjetko no-hitter, 13 Ks; 3-for-4, HR, 2 runs, 2 RBIs.

Lincoln-Way West 4, Oswego 3

Lincoln-Way West (13-7): Ava Murphy 2-for-3, 3 RBIs.

Lisle 13, Aurora Christian 8

Maine West 6, Vernon Hills 4

Richards 9, St. Ignatius 8

Richards (10-6): Kyra Olejniczak 3-for-3, 3 RBIs.

St. Charles East 2, Wheaton North 0

St. Charles North 10, Batavia 0 (6 innings)

St. Charles North (13-1, 6-0 DuKane): Paige Murray CG, 4 H, 8 Ks.

St. Francis 18, Streamwood 3 (4 innings)

St. Laurence 8, Resurrection 1

St. Laurence (14-3, 7-1 GCAC Red): Sarah Klonowski CG, 12 Ks.

Sycamore 6, Kaneland 1

Wauconda 11, Evanston 4 (6 innings)

Wauconda (15-8): Lesleigh Reimers 4-for-4, 3 RBIs.

Woodstock North 10, Jacobs 0 (5 innings)

THURSDAY'S RESULTS

HIGH SCHOOLS

BASEBALL

GIRLS SOCCER

SOFTBALL

Antioch 6, Lakes 0

Aurora Central Catholic 13, Chicago Christian 2 (5 innings)

ACC (10-6, 4-3 Metro Suburban Red): Rosie Feece 2-for-3, HR, 2 runs, 3 RBIs.

Beecher 16-16, Grace Christian 0-0 (Both games 4 innings)

Bartlett 4, West Chicago 3 (9 innings)

Bradley-Bourbonnais 7, Andrew 2

Crystal Lake South 15, Hampshire 9

Deerfield 18, Niles North 3 (4 innings)

Dundee-Crown 5, Burlington Central 3

Dundee-Crown (11-8, 4-5 Fox Valley): McKayla Anderson 3-for-4, 3 runs.

Evergreen Park 18, Bremen 2 (4 innings)

Evergreen (11-4-1, 8-0-1 SSC Red): Charley Burns 3-for-4, 4 RBIs.

Grayslake Central 11, Grayslake North 1 (5 innings)

Grayslake Central (7-7, 5-3 Northern Lake County): Eliza Piggott 2 RBIs.

Illinois Lutheran 12, Grant Park 11

Kaneland 7, Morris 5

Kaneland (6-10, 3-4 Interstate Eight): Angelina Campise 2-run single.

Larkin 15, Elgin 0 (5 innings)

Lemont 10, Richards 0 (5 innings)

Lemont (12-0, 7-0 SSC Blue): Sage Mardjetko perfect game, 14 Ks.

Lincoln-Way Central 2, Lincoln-Way West 1

Lincoln-Way Central (14-4, 4-0 SWSC Red): Lisabella Dimitrijevic CG, 2 H, ER, 17 Ks; solo HR.

Lincoln-Way East 16, Sandburg 5

Lincoln-Way East (15-4, 3-0 SWSC Blue): Aubrey O'Neil 3-for-4, 4 RBIs.

Lockport 17, Stagg 0 (4 innings)

Lockport (17-4-1): Ava Swain 3-for-3, HR, 2 runs, 3 RBIs.

McHenry 12, Jacobs 5

Metea Valley 3, DeKalb 2

Metea (7-13, 4-2 DuPage Valley): Charlie Benesh CG, 11 Ks.

Mother McAuley 5, Downers Grove South 1

McAuley (11-8): Mary Charniak CG, 8 Ks.

Mundelein 5, Grant 2

Mundelein (16-3, 8-1 North Suburban): Claire Connelly 3-for-4, HR, 3 RBIs.

Naperville Central 13, Waubonsie Valley 11

Naperville Central (10-10, 4-2 DuPage Valley): Luca Seeling 2-for-5, 2 runs, 3 RBIs.

Waubonsie: Mackenzie Ondrejcek 4-for-5, HR, 6 RBIs.

Naperville North 8, Neuqua Valley 0

Naperville North (12-4, 6-0 DuPage Valley): Shayna Woolwine 3-for-4, HR, 2 runs, 4 RBIs.

Newark 13, Somonauk 3 (5 innings)

Newark (21-1, 9-0 Little Ten): Kaitlyn Schofield 2-for-4, HR, 3 runs, 4 RBIs.

Oak Forest 12, Reavis 0 (5 innings)

Oak Forest (12-5-1, 6-2-1 SSC Blue): Morgan Reczkiewicz 3-for-4, 2 runs, 3 RBIs.

Oswego 1, Joliet West 0

Oswego (14-5, 5-3 Southwest Prairie West): Jaelynn Anthony CG, 4 H; HR.

Oswego East 7, Plainfield Central 5

Oswego East (13-6, 6-2 Southwest Prairie West): Mia Corres 2-for-4, 2 RBIs.

Providence 7, Fenwick 1

Providence (11-8, 6-1 GCAC Red): Angelina Cole 2-for-3, 2 RBIs.

St. Charles East 9, Glenbard North 0

St. Charles North 14, Geneva 1 (5 innings)

St. Charles North (12-1, 5-0 DuKane): Julia Larson 2-for-3, HR, 2 runs, 5 RBIs.

St. Ignatius 7, Rosary 1

Sandwich 5, Streator 2

Serena 16, Plano 0 (4 innings)

South Elgin 16, Streamwood 0 (4 innings)

Taft 7, Vernon Hills 2

Tinley Park 6, Oak Lawn 3

Tinley (9-3, 6-1 SSC Blue): Megan Piotrowski 2-for-3, 2 runs, 2 RBIs.

Wauconda 19, Round Lake 0 (4 innings)

Yorkville 7, Romeoville 3

Yorkville (19-1, 7-0 Southwest Prairie West): Sam Davidowski 3-for-3, 2 RBIs.

Compiled by Josh Krockey.

To read the full article, click [here](#).