

# JOBS *for* MICHIGAN'S GRADUATES

## Douglas R. Welch High School *a program of Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium*

### I&I Ceremony @ Welch

#### By Jonni Jo Lends His Horse

On December 11, 2014, the students of Douglas R. Welch High School were inducted into the Career Association of the JAG Program. The ceremony is called I&I (initiation and installation). It was an oath taking ceremony where the elected students took their oaths and announced their duties in front of their parents, school staff, guest speakers and friends. All students who participated dressed up in semi-formal attire and had their own part in the ceremony. They had two special guests namely Dale Miller- county sheriff, and Karen Balice-Gregory- president of Ionia Public Schools Board of Education. Both speakers gave good advice and shared great life stories. In my opinion, the best part of the whole ceremony, aside from its solemnity, was when the background music had a problem during the lighting of the candle - the symbol of the association's unity.

The JAG specialist, Katherine Javier, sang the song live and the students sang with her. The song was "Yesterday's Dream" by Donna Cruz. What a perfect time to show the unity of the group!

It took a lot of time preparing for this special occasion especially the practices the students had. It showed how persistent they were. Despite having it as a total train wreck in the beginning, students were able to do what they were supposed to do during ceremony. Students did not give up on all of their preparations because they know how important it was not only to them but also to their teachers and parents as well.

After the ceremony, the students, guests, teachers, parents and staff had

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*Sheriff Miller delivering his speech as the keynote speaker.*



*Karen Balice-Gregory giving her closing remarks.*

### PRESIDENT OF THE SCHOOL BOARD VISITS JAG CLASS

Karen Balice-Gregory visited Douglas R. Welch High School and spoke to the students of Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) on December 3, 2014. She is a column writer at Ionia Sentinel Standard. She works part time at her brother's law firm- McKaig and Balice, PLLC in Ionia. Her brother is the current mayor of Ionia: Daniel Balice, while her father, C. Anthony Balice, was the Honorable Mayor from 1949 to 1961.

Service to the public runs in the family. Ms. Balice-Gregory is currently the School Board president of Ionia Public Schools (IPS). As the president, she has been a strong advocate and an outspoken critic for student services. She has been an important part of the school district for more than 20 years and has earned the trust of the community.

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#### Douglas R. Welch High School

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## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: JONNI LENDS HIS HORSE

### By Ashley Taylor

Jonni Lends His Horse is a sophomore student at Welch High School. She is the president of Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) Career Association Ionia Chapter and has A and B grades in her classes. She is always present at school, arrives on time and stays all day. She believes that good attendance helps one get good grades and reflects good work ethics. Jonni is 100% Native American. She and her family belong to Otoe-Missouria tribe. Consequently, she can go to college free of tuition fee and with other related scholarships. She would like to take journalism. Jonni likes to

read books and loves to write poetry and biography. Reading sends sparks to her brain while writing catches her heart. Lends His Horse is a smart and competitive person. She is also a spiritual, big-hearted and strong-headed lady. As the president of the Career Association, Jonni plans to accomplish a lot of activities for the class. She said, "As the president of the class, I could not be more proud to be given the opportunity to learn and grow from each other. Because I do not have all the answers, I am sure that the class is more than ready to teach me and I am always open to [learn] new things." ✕



**Jonni Lends His Horse**  
-10th Grade  
-President, JAG Career Association SY 2014-15  
-100% Native American

Ms. Balice-Gregory shared with us how she started her life as a middle child, rebellious, young adult and who was not encouraged to attend college except for some community college classes. She got married at 18, had children at 21 and got divorced at 26. She told us that she learned the hard way. Struggling in life defined her relentless resourcefulness, and gave different outlook in life. She advised us that doing nothing does not get you anywhere in life and that it is important to make sound decisions and be ready for the consequences that

go with it. She also mentioned to take into consideration getting civil service certification as she was able to work for the State of Michigan for 30 years and was able to be a coordinator for an Exchange Student Program for at least 20 years. She left us with a good note- to believe in ourselves. ✕

A pizza dinner courtesy of JAG program through Central Area Michigan Works! Consortium (CAMWC) and through the generosity of the parents, teachers, staff and students



Elijah receiving his certificate of membership.



Students singing "Yesterday's Dream" with Katherine Javier, JAG Specialist, during the lighting of candle of unity.

## PRINCIPAL'S COLUMN

Here at Welch High School, the teachers, staff, and I support the following philosophy:

- A *student* is the most important person in any school.
- A *student* is not an interruption of my work—he or she is the purpose of it.
- A *student* is not just a statistic. He or she is a flesh-and-blood human being with feelings and emotions like ourselves.

-A *student* is one who comes to me with needs and/or wants. It is my job to fill them.

-A *student* is deserving of the most courteous and attentive treatment that Welch High School staff can provide.

-A *student* is the lifeblood of this and every other school. Without him or her, our school would have to close our doors.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve and work with your child in the JAG program. It is my privilege to strive to provide quality education in all Welch High School classrooms.