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News

Star Academy opens state of the art athletic field

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By Suehaila Amen, for Press & Guide Newspapers

DEARBORN HEIGHTS — Star International Academy (SIA), located at 24425 Hass St. in Dearborn Heights and its educational services provider Hamadeh Educational Services (HES) celebrated the grand opening of the school's state-of-the-art athletic field on May 14. More than 400 people attended, including many elected officials and community leaders.

The grand opening featured several guest speakers including Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano, and a special presentation by the SIA athletic department.

Guest speakers included Mildred Taylor, Oakland University's director of public school office & urban partnerships; Dan Quisenberry, the president of the Michigan Association of Public School Academies (MAPSA) and Jumana Ferencz, the SIA board president.

The Lyksawa VFW Honor Guard gave the Presentation of the Flags while Angelina Hammons, an Instructional Technician at SIA sang the national anthem.

The event began with Mistress of Ceremonies, Suehaila Amen, vice president of the Lebanese American Heritage Club announcing the ceremonial ribbon cutting and the releasing of dozens of balloons into the sky.

Nawal Hamadeh, HES founder, president and superintendent spoke on the history of SIA and the multi-million dollar athletic field project.

As she announced the next project for SIA, students and parents cheered.

"Our next new project is to install smartboards in each classroom in the summer of 2010."

She continued to speak on the importance of parental and staff involvement, noting that "the most valuable asset this school has is its parents, staff, administration and board members ... working hard to make a difference in the lives of our students."

During the event, Ficano presented Hamadeh with a proclamation from Wayne County after commending her for developing an astounding academic institution.

"Having more than \$3 million in grants this year and 100 percent college acceptance rate among graduates is a touchdown in anyone's book ... and you don't do it alone but with 98 percent parental involvement."

Quisenberry addressed Michigan's economic struggles.

"With the struggles in education and the economy, you have overcome many obstacles and stayed resolute to one thing —

advancing the students and preparing them for the global economy.”

The \$3.5 million athletic field features durable and safe synthetic turf with underground drainage which will accommodate fully-regulated high school football, soccer, baseball, softball and track practices and games.

The field is fully equipped with bleacher seating for up to 1,000 fans, press box, high quality engineered sound system, wireless Internet, and a sophisticated security and camera system.

The full concession stand is guaranteed to score with attendees.

HES Corp. manages three tuition-free public school academies — Star International Academy (SIA), Universal Academy (UA) and Universal Learning Academy (ULA), with more than 2,300 students in Pre-K through 12th grade and more than 280 staff members.

The three academies are public, non-discriminatory, independent schools, which admit students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to their college-preparatory program serving families in the greater Detroit area. SIA and UA are authorized by Oakland University; ULA is authorized by Bay Mills Community College.

Under the leadership of their CEO and Superintendent Nawal Hamadeh, SIA and ULA were recognized by the Michigan Department of Education as “Schools of Excellence” for the past three years.

Star International Academy and Universal Academy are authorized as IB World schools offering the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program. Star International Academy was recognized as one of America’s best high schools by US News & World Report for 2007 and 2008.

Universal Learning Academy (ULA) has two locations — at 24480 George Avenue, Dearborn Heights, adjacent to Star Academy and at 22579 Ann Arbor Trail, Dearborn Heights. Universal Academy is at 612 Lonyo Street, Detroit.

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