

# The Trentonian

## County groups celebrate women helping other women



TRENTON — International Woman’s Day may be over for 2014, however, Mercer County can be proud of its most celebrated woman all year long.

Hamilton native Heather Heenehan has been inspiring young girls to pursue science, technology, engineering and math through a free virtual educational tool, Skype in the Classroom.

“I think girls have a lot to offer in the fields of science, math and technology and I have seen it in my work,” said Heenehan who is currently a doctoral candidate at the Duke Marine Lab in North Carolina.

“I believe woman are more in tune to how people are feeling and acting. We offer a different take on engineering, math and science that boys don’t bring to the table.”

Through Skype in the Classroom, teachers and experts in all fields can be in classrooms all around the country, teaching and informing students about their specific field of study. These volunteer educators excite elementary, middle and high school students about their profession and can answer any questions they have through the use of the Skype program.

“Parents, friends and teachers got me interested in the sciences,” said Heenahan. “Children need the interaction and the ability to ask questions ... they need to be able to have their scientific curiosity fostered.”

Another local hero, Catherine Milone, president of Junior Achievement of New Jersey (JANJ) and Trenton resident, has been named one of New Jersey’s 2014 Best 50 Women in Business—an award produced by NJBIZ.

“It’s very exciting because NJBIZ does not normally included leaders of non-profits,” said Milone.

“Although we are a non-profit, we are still a business.”

Junior Achievement of New Jersey gives students from kindergarten through high school, the knowledge and skills they need to own their economic success, plan for their future and make smart academic and economic choices.

Corporate and community volunteers provide relevant, hands-on experiences that gives these students the knowledge and skills in financial literacy, work readiness and entrepreneurship. In 2013, JA has reached 44,799 students in more than 71 school districts across the New Jersey.

A 19 year veteran of the JA program, Milone admits that her success lies solely with all the individuals who work at the Trenton based outreach program.

“This is a team effort and it is a very humbling experience—we’ve got this amazing staff of 15 people who work so hard with so much passion,” she said.

An independent panel of judges selected the top 50 winners based on their dedication to business growth, professional and personal accomplishments, community involvement, and advocacy for women.

Michelle Lee, Wells Fargo’s Northeast Regional President and JANJ State Board Director, nominated Milone because of her drive and ability to help students reach their full potential, creating a new class of progressive and important adults in the future.

“She is full of energy, enthusiasm and is a leader with the utmost integrity,” said Lee. “Catherine is a well-respected advocate on K-12 issues that better prepares New Jersey’s kids for the future in this competitive world. I feel lucky to know her and to serve on her board.”

Although these are just two examples of local women doing extraordinary things to help better the future of others, Mercer County has had a long history of helping women to empower others

The Mercer County Commission on the Status of Women was established in 1976 to help development policies and programs designed to enhance the lives of women. The commission is made up of a group of dedicated volunteers who are committed to improving the status of women of all ages.

Chairwoman Wendy Cohen, has lead the commission for two years, doling out much needed funding to local women’s charities that support the greater good of the county.

“There is a woman in Trenton, we give her money every Christmas,” said Cohen. “She then creates a special Christmas dinner and event for families who are in need.”

Although the commission cannot accept direct donations from citizens, they are in dire need of volunteers who can help disperse funding to more charitable and outreach organizations.

To learn how you can volunteer your time email [womenscommission@mercercounty.org](mailto:womenscommission@mercercounty.org).