

The past month Lafayette students have been hard at work marking a difference in their community. And not just current Lafayette students. Many activities this week involve our current student body. But our alumni are also continuing Lafayette traditions by looking for opportunities to make a change and then going for it. A few updates from here at the school and around DC.

At school this week it is Jump Rope for Heart time. Tomorrow almost every student will be in the gym either during the school day or after school participating in physical activity while raising money for the American Heart Association. Lafayette has been recognized year after year as one of the top money raisers in the DC area. Ms. McClure and Mr. Jackson have been using PE time for the past few weeks as a way to prepare the students for the event. Along with learning some jump roping skills, there has been lots of line dancing going on. We have the Lafayette version of Gangnam style, the Wobble and the Chicken Dance all ready to go. By the time the afternoon ends, we will be exhausted. I'm glad to see that the weather forecast is for cold weather because the gym can be stifling with all those little bodies generating all that heat. All for a good cause. Heart disease has touched my family and I'm sure many of yours. Learning to be heart healthy is one of our PE program goals.

Then the *Washington Post* highlighted the work of this year's Student Council officers at Deal Middle School and their project to get a covered bus stop at the school. I was so excited to see that three of the officers, Ben Korn, Joe Inglima, and Isaac Frumkin are Lafayette grads. After researching the requirements for a bus stop cover, collecting the data, preparing the report and locating a funding source, they presented their case to the DC City Council. The council members were impressed with what the students had to say. They had the rationale, the numbers and the money. The stop was approved. Hopefully it will be installed in March. I'm sure they will stay on top of this and make sure it happens.

There was another story in late January in the *Northwest Current* about a Lafayette alumnus. You may have missed it since the headline was about his success in running at St. Alban's. The story was about Tai Dinger who was one of just 40 boys from across the country who qualified to participate in the Foot Locker National Finals in San Diego in December. He was later named DC's Gatorade cross country runner of the year. Tucked in the middle of the story Tai says that he's loved 'the sport since I was a young age'. While not mentioned specifically we here know that was when he started running with Mr. Thurston. Another former Lafayette student who has taken a skill and interest from elementary school and continues to excel.

Reading stories like these is always a joy for me. Elementary school is a wonderful time in your children's lives but we really do send off young boys and girls with so much more growing and learning to do, so unfinished. We often sit around and wonder what happened to you know who. Reading about Ben, Joe and Isaac was a treat because I know some of the skills they used were first developed here at Lafayette. Tai began his competitive running success at Coleman Manor when Mr. T had us start the Lafayette Cross Country meet after DC athletics cut support for running for elementary students. As the school year continues we will hear about college acceptances and career plans and many of us will remember certain students with fondness. It makes our day to know that a Lafayette student is achieving at high levels. We look for these stories in the paper. And we take pride in these accomplishments. Because for a short period of time these young people were ours. And always will be. A Lafayette alumnus. A very special thing to be.