

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GONGOLIERS

THE MORNING FERRO

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THE BIG DAY ARRIVED!

The big event finally happened. Team 5112 traveled to Newport on January 9th for the highly anticipated 2016 Kickoff. Team 5112 met up with the hosting team, Airstrike Team 78, and Team 5834 as we gathered around to watch the unveiling of this year's game from FIRST. As we watched the lead up to the video, everyone wondered what exactly this year's game would consist of. All we previously had to go on was some sort of medieval theme, but no one expected the 2016 game to be as exciting as it turned out to be. The game featured components that took us by surprise, such as the inclusion of spies, navigating through dungeon-like traps, scaling towers, and even catapulting boulders. At the end of the video, you could tell Team 5112 was more excited for this year's game than any of the past years we've participated in. Although the hopes for the Team are higher than they've ever been, it became clear to everyone that this year's game would be a daunting task that we needed to get started on right away. The Team spent the rest of our day in Newport brushing up our knowledge as we watched PowerPoint presentations and reviewed questions regarding this year's rules. After our successful day in Newport with teams 78 and 5834, Team 5112 headed back to Ponaganset where we immediately began reviewing our kit and dividing up tasks with high hopes of coming up with a design and strategy that will give us a winning chance for 2016.

A VISIT FROM THE NEW ADMINISTRATION

On January 7th, 2016, the new Commissioner of Education for Rhode Island stopped in for a tour of Ponaganset High School. Dr. Ken Wagner, a former middle school principal, earned his undergraduate and doctorate degrees at Hofstra University on Long Island. He then spent four years as a school psychologist for the Freeport Union Free School District in New York. From there, he worked his way through the administrative ranks, first becoming an interim assistant principal, then an assistant middle school principal and ultimately a middle school principal by January 2004. Spending his career in New York, Wagner began to transition to higher level positions gradually. When Commissioner Gist left last year, he was chosen after a nationwide search of hundreds of possible replacements. Sworn in over the summer, Ken has a long road ahead of him. With the instillation of mandatory PARCC testing coming soon, as well as numerous other changes, Dr. Wagner will certainly have his hands full for the upcoming future.



Dr. Ken Wagner stopped for a photo with Superintendent Barnes, Mr. Gongoleski, Ms. Sinwell, Director of Curriculum, and our Co-Presidents Jenn and Steph during his visit.

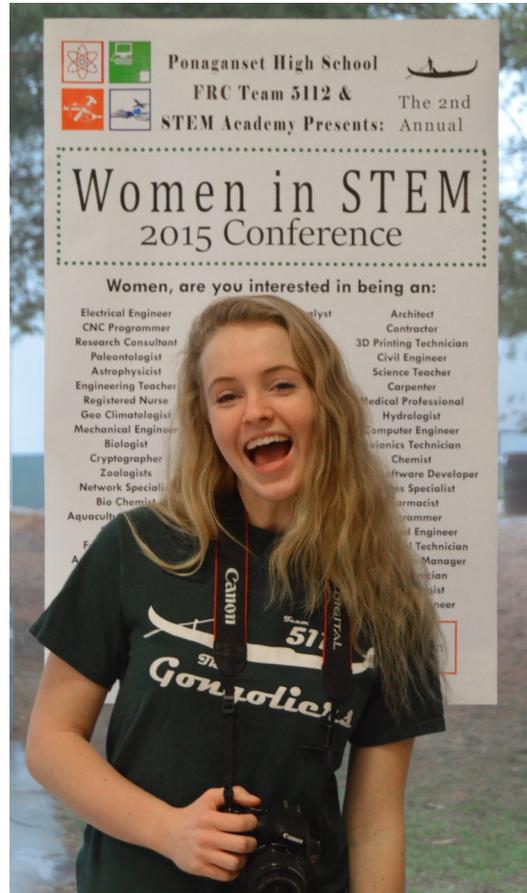
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NEWLY REDESIGNED!

THE WOMEN IN STEM CONFERENCE

With all eyes to what January would hold, Team 5112 took a stop on the road to Kickoff with the Women in STEM Conference. Our greatest annual outreach success returned on December 17th, 2015, as the entire team divided into groups to ensure everything went smoothly. Jobs consisted of setup crews, multimedia coverage, and leading discussions regarding programming. Plenty of people arrived for the conference, such as guest speakers and representatives of various engineering professions. Attendance consisted of all eighth grade girls from Ponaganset Middle School, all freshmen and sophomore girls from Ponaganset High School, and even girls from a school in Massachusetts. The conference began with a speech to the attending girls by co-presidents of Team 5112, Jennifer Carleen and Stephanie Coffey, who shared their experiences in the STEM program, its benefits, and a relatable beginning to their involvement. If some people were on the fence about joining after the speech, the next event likely steered them towards a STEM pathway. Team 5112 members lead the audience into our auxiliary gym where our attending representatives had setup display tables where they could give students an idea of what exploring a STEM related fields could entail. Team 5112 members kept the crowd circulating and documented the event with hundreds of photos. We brought last year's robot to the gym so people could get an idea of what we are capable of accomplishing through STEM, as well as a sign-up sheet for anyone interested in becoming a member of the Team next year. Thanks to efforts by the whole Team, the event ran smoothly. Team 5112 is confident we were able to inspire several young women to consider STEM in high school, and from there that they could go on to dominate the field later in life.



Trinity Brandt (Above) poses in front of banners, designed by Brigit Cotter, for the annual Women in STEM Conference. These banners advertised the time, dates, and content of the event.



Left to Right: Alan Greenleaf displaying one of Team 5112's posters, Team members ushering the event, other schools arriving, Team members preparing favors for speakers.

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