

Summer 2024

## Gratitude to all our supporters

Our theme this past year focused on caring for our community. Our reporters learned how people involved in public art, poetry, street safety, media, philanthropy, and more make a positive impact on their neighbors' health.

We, too, benefit from the caring that we receive from our community. It's through the help of individuals, foundations, and businesses that we can fulfill our mission of empowering children to be health communicators for their community. We are very grateful for all the financial and in-kind support.

A special shout-out to Quest for Health Equity, an initiative focused on addressing health disparities in under-resourced communities. Quest has been a significant Healthy NewsWorks funder for the past three years which has enabled us to increase our



(Please see **Shout-out** on Page 4)

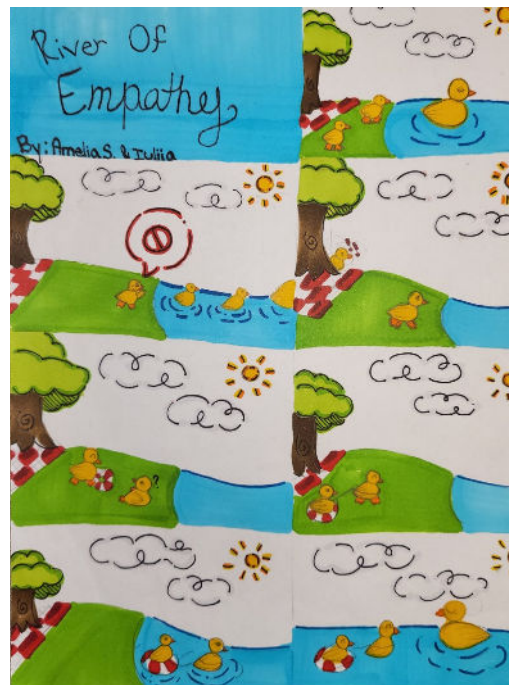
## Big year for reporters

*MaST Healthy Panther Post* reporters created a comic strip focused on an empathetic duck. *Logan Healthy Eagle* students organized a school poetry contest after interviewing a former Philadelphia poet laureate. And a *Catholic Partnership Schools Healthy Courier* reporter addressed the poor conditions of sidewalks in his community in his school health newspaper and in a new Healthy NewsWorks film.

These are a few examples of how our reporters explored our theme, "Caring for Our Community and Ourselves," during the past school year.

"We have learned things like respect for our communities, swim safety, kindness, and so much more," one

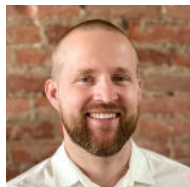
(Please see **Reaching** on Page 3)



MaST reporters Amanda and Luliia built on research about empathy to create this comic.

## 3 join Healthy NewsWorks staff

Healthy NewsWorks is pleased to welcome three new staff members this school year.



John

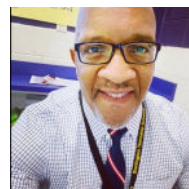
English School of

Gothenburg, Sweden, for six years, and has been a teacher, labor organizer, and freelance writer in Wisconsin and Philadelphia. He earned a master's

degree in peace studies from Uppsala University in Sweden and a bachelor's degree in liberal studies from The Evergreen State College. As part of his master's degree, he researched the role media plays in positive social change.

Steve Riggs, a veteran educator with more than 25 years of experience as a classroom teacher, will join us in September as a program associ-

Steve



Steve

(Please see **Introducing** on Page 3)

## What's on tap during 2024-25?

In the year ahead, our reporting theme is “Making Good Decisions.” Reporters will explore topics such as why getting enough sleep is important, how to make and be a good friend, and what to do if you face negative peer pressure.

They will publish their articles and illustrations in their school newspapers and two of our magazines and on our By Kids, For Kids web platform. In addition, some reporters will use their content to create videos.

Our standards-aligned curriculum has been designed so that kids can delve into the physical, emotional, and social aspects of health. We encourage them to pursue additional topics that are relevant to them and their communities.

During the 2024-25 school year, we will expand into new schools in Philadelphia, Camden, and Chester City. Our programs will directly reach 2,000 students and their publications will be distributed to thousands more. Since Healthy NewsWorks is in a growth stage, we are eager for your suggestions. Do you know a school that may want to adopt our program? Do you know a health expert who could be interviewed? Do you want to volunteer with us, can you suggest a company to partner with us? Please reach out: [editor@healthynewsworks.org](mailto:editor@healthynewsworks.org)

# HNW highlighted for media literacy work

A University of Pennsylvania alumni magazine this summer featured Healthy NewsWorks Program Manager Mia Blitstein and spotlighted Healthy NewsWorks as part of the national movement to increase media literacy in schools. The article was also reprinted in Spanish by *Impacto Newspaper*.

The *Penn GSE Magazine* article highlights Healthy NewsWorks' emphasis on teaching elementary and middle school students not just about writing, but how to identify a reliable source and avoid being swayed by misinformation. “Being a reporter puts them in the driver’s seat,” Mia says. She earned a master’s degree from Penn’s Graduate School of Education in 2002.

*Impacto* is distributed door-to-door in Latino areas of Philadelphia and at strategic sites in the city and region.

The role of Healthy NewsWorks in informing young people about the evolving media landscape is a prominent example in the article. Alesha Gayle, a senior fellow in Penn GSE’s Learning, Teaching, and Literacy division, notes that the internet has become the way most young people stay informed of current events—86% of people under 22 use online sources as their primary source of events.

T. Philip Nichols, a media scholar and historian, adds that media literacy has become an increasing focus for society, and thus for teachers, especially in a “post-truth” world where the term “fake news” has taken on a life of its own.

Healthy NewsWorks offers an empowering way to bring vital media literacy education to the classroom, according to the article. Newspapers written



Experiential learning at Healthy NewsWorks this past year included interviews with experts like Dr. Kristen Feemster, Merck executive director of Global and Scientific Affairs (top), and a field trip to the Lehigh Valley College of Media and Communication at Temple University (bottom).

by Healthy NewsWorks reporters not only are a source of pride for our students, but also aim to educate their school communities on important health issues.

The Penn article also features some of our Healthy NewsWorks reporters, including eighth-grader Holly from Saint Joseph Pro-Cathedral School.

Holly shares that in addition to all of the journalistic skills she learned and the first-hand experience she got in the news-gathering process, she also learned “how we can give back” through reporting on health topics.

# Introducing new staff members

(Continued from Page 1)

ate focused primarily on our South Jersey expansion. Steve has taught second, fourth, and fifth grades and received the 2018 Teacher of the Year Award from The Willingboro School District. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from Rowan University. He is also a certified indoor cycling instructor and has a passion for fashion.

Meg Gladieux joined our team as a communications asso-

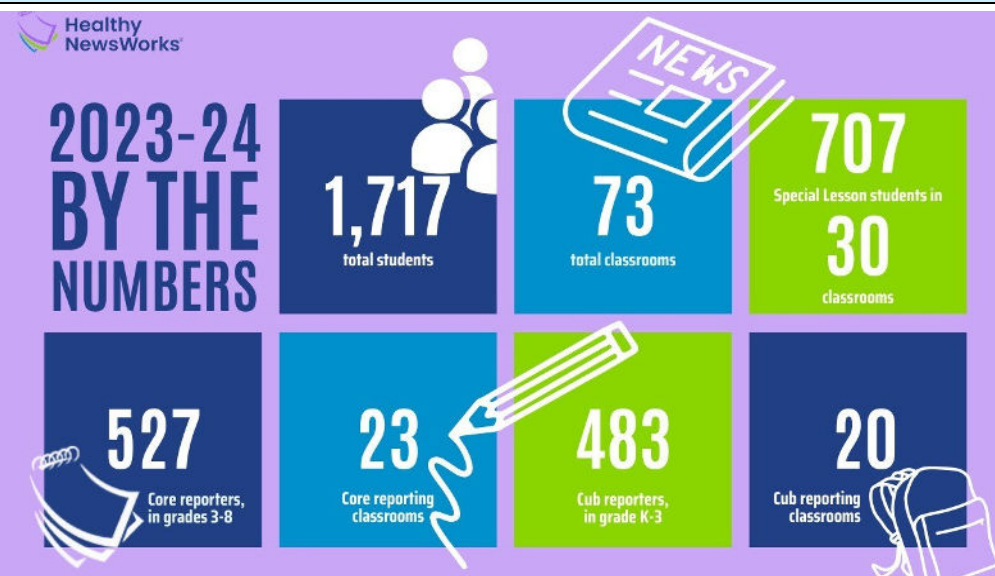


Meg

ciate in June. Meg brings to Healthy NewsWorks experience as a student journalist, writer, and editor. She has also done work in advocacy for child grief and bereavement support. Meg earned a bachelor's degree in cognitive science and French and francophone studies from the University of Pennsylvania and a master's degree in education from Penn's Graduate School of Education.

"We are thrilled to have the talent and experience that John, Steve, and Meg bring to our team as we prepare for the 2024-25 school year," said Healthy NewsWorks Executive Director Marian Uhlman.

"They will be an enormous help as we look to grow our program in Pennsylvania and South Jersey schools."



## Reaching more kids every year

(Continued from Page 1)

seventh-grade reporter wrote in a year-end reflection. "Every topic we covered was very beneficial and useful. Everything we learned was great, which makes me believe that every student should have the opportunity to learn about it all."

The reporter was one of 527 students who participated in our flagship Core Reporter Program. These students wrote for their school health newspapers, and many also contributed to two *By Kids, For Kids* magazines focused on the Caring for Our Community theme. A smaller group created videos on the topic.

In all, more than 1,700 students participated in a Healthy NewsWorks program—a 20 percent increase over the 1,433 students the year before. Nearly 500 students took part in our Cub Reporter program, which guides children in kindergarten through third grade to produce articles and illustrations for a junior section of the newspaper. Of the 41 student-health newspapers created this year, 39 percent included a "Cub Corner" section.

More than 700 additional students got a taste of health journalism during "Special Lessons." Topics included in-

terviewing skills, stress reduction, and the health benefits of friendship. These lessons deepen Healthy NewsWorks' impact in our schools.

Not only did kids benefit from our programming, so did their teachers. In surveys, all 13 responding partner teachers in our Core Program told us that they gained new skills that they can use in their classroom.

"Healthy NewsWorks has helped me with bringing important health topics into the classroom and has taught me about some important health topics. It has helped me with bringing more writing into my class and helped me guide students through the writing process," wrote a fifth-grade teacher.

A fourth-grade teacher wrote: "I was able to start conducting more independent research projects as a result of Healthy NewsWorks and the specific skills my students learned."

We worked with a total of 65 teachers in 73 classrooms this year. The newspapers produced by their reporters reached 8,000 students and staff members in Philadelphia, Camden, and Norristown schools. In the year ahead, we plan to work with even more teachers to reach 2,000 students with our unique programming.



## What we do

Healthy NewsWorks helps elementary and middle school students develop skills to be successful as students and in life. Through our program, they learn how to ask questions, identify factual information, write accurately, and share what they learn.

Their work is published in health-focused newspapers, books, and digital media that are distributed in their schools and in the broader community.

Our young reporters are empowered as health messengers, educators, and role models for their peers, schools, families, and communities.

## Meet our board

*President:* Amy B. Ginensky, J.D.

*V. P.:* Andrew D. Magnus

*V.P.:* James W. Buehler, M.D.

*Secretary:* Laurita Hack, D.P.T., M.B.A., Ph.D.

*Treasurer:* H. George Shoffner, CPA

Luther T. Clark, M.D.

Moriah Hall, M.P.H.

Kenny Johnson

Katherine Hatton, J.D.

Elizabeth Rappaport, M.D.

Deborah Stern, M.A.T., Ph.D.

Ellyn Jo Waller, Ed.D.

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Connor Foley, J.D., board observer, Philadelphia Bar Association program

## Get involved

Healthy NewsWorks deeply appreciates the contributions and in-kind support we receive from individual donors, foundations, community groups, volunteers, and corporations.

Keep an eye on our website at [HealthyNewsWorks.org](https://HealthyNewsWorks.org) to stay informed about program news and upcoming events. We'd appreciate hearing your questions and ideas: [editor@HealthyNewsWorks.org](mailto:editor@HealthyNewsWorks.org)



## Shout-out to our supporters

*(Continued from Page 1)*

teaching staff and resources. enabled us to increase our teaching staff and resources. Quest employees have also been active volunteers in our program, expanding our student reporters' under-

standing of the science of keeping people healthy.

We are also grateful to the area companies and businesses that served as sponsors for our two *By Kids, For Kids* magazines in 2024 and our Spring 2024 Block Party.

## More than halfway to \$1 million goal

To everyone who contributed to our Building a Healthy Future Campaign during its first year, THANK YOU! We are humbled and deeply gratified by your enthusiasm for and confidence in our program.

We set out to raise \$1 million over three years. As of July 1, 2024, we had received nearly \$560,000 in contributions and pledges.

The difference these gifts will make is incalculable. Healthy NewsWorks donors help our students develop their skills to ferret out facts, listen to others carefully, present their work thoughtfully, and serve their communities through accurate, source-based reporting.

During the 2024–25 school year, we are planning additional outreach

and special events to expand the number of donors who believe in our students' futures and will help support their continued growth.

Your partnership is vital to helping us empower more elementary and middle school students to become researchers, writers, critical thinkers, and confident communicators.

Please know that all gifts are greatly appreciated. You can use the envelope accompanying this newsletter to mail a check or donate online at [healthynewsworks.org/make-a-gift/](https://healthynewsworks.org/make-a-gift/).

