

# BlueSky Online May Newsletter

## Principal's Message

We are now in the final month of the school year with the last day of school on May 29th. The past month has been challenging for all of us and we, as a society, have had to learn to live with the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, the stay at home order, and social distancing. Despite these challenges, many students have found focus and purpose in their schooling and are doing well academically. If your child is struggling, please don't hesitate to reach out. Our advisors, school counselors and school social workers are available to provide support and resources.

Our graduation ceremony will now be held as a virtual ceremony that will be broadcast Live on Saturday, June 6th at noon. Potential graduates should have received an email last week to register to participate in the live ceremony. All students that graduate will be recognized, regardless if they participate in the ceremony. Please direct questions to your student's advisor.

It is also time for BlueSky's annual school board election. As a Minnesota public charter school, our school board is comprised of teachers, parents and community members. School board members are responsible for working with our superintendent and charting a direction for our school. Parents and guardians, please check your email on May 4th for directions on how to vote. Voting will end on May 8th.

We now have a new page on our website to celebrate our 20th anniversary and our move to a new campus in Bloomington, MN. The page can be found at <https://www.blueskyschool.org/20th-anniversary/>. Please check this page regularly as we will be making frequent updates. We are proud to be Minnesota's oldest and most established full-time online charter school!

Last, we are accepting enrollment applications for the 2020-2021 school year for grades 7-12. If you are aware of someone who would benefit from BlueSky's supportive school environment please let them know about us and share your story.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to educate your child!

Daniel Ondich  
Principal/Assistant Director  
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## Upcoming Events

- May 29 - Last Day of School
- May 25 - Memorial Day (No School)
- June 6 - Graduation Ceremony
- June 8 - First Day of Summer School

## Social Work Spotlight

During this time of sheltering in place there has been an increased level of diminished motivation and anxiety among students across our nation. You may have a child who has struggled previously with motivation and anxiety prior to COVID-19 and now the impact of it has made things even more difficult.

Your BlueSky social workers found an article we wanted to share with you from EmpowerU, which is a MN based company, that uses a holistic approach to build student resilience.

Keep in mind when you see your child refusing to do school work that is often fueled by some sort of anxiety or lost motivation where "A common response in this situation is that learners pretend that the work is not there, or they offer a defensive "I don't care." What they're really doing is avoiding the pain of difficult interactions and feelings. So, what happens? **Avoidance fuels "comfort escapes" - think Netflix, gaming or napping - that distracts students from the work at hand or from uncomfortable feelings.**

If this sounds familiar, you are not alone: thousands of school-age youth are in the same boat. But there are productive ways to help the young person in your life reboot.

- **Check yourself.** Make sure you are calm before you talk to your kids. Pick a time and place to formulate a reboot plan when you feel logical and prepared, not on the heels of an argument.
- **Help your children talk about their feelings and process negative emotions** like disappointment, frustration, and shame, whether around schoolwork, social isolation or COVID-19 itself. All feelings are valid and normal right now, and the goal is not for you to fix things, but to listen and acknowledge your child's feelings.
- **Eliminate and monitor comfort escapes.** Help your child identify what distractions are getting in the way of completing their schoolwork. Try to maintain healthy routines (regular bedtimes, daily exercise, outdoor time, and regular mealtimes).
- **Think about the rewards of accomplishment.** Help your child think about how they will feel if they don't complete their schoolwork compared to how they will feel if they do. The feeling of accomplishment is much more powerful than feelings of frustration or discouragement.
- **Have grace.** These are difficult times, so most of all, have grace with your child and with yourself as a parent. Sometimes it's okay to do the minimal amount and have that be "good enough." Especially now. And that goes for all of us.

## Counselor Corner

### Featured Occupation: Paralegal/Legal Assistant

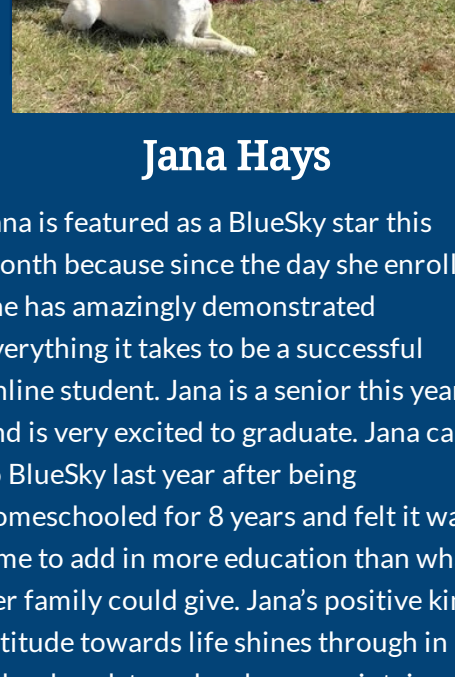
- Education: Associate's Degree (2 years or less to start working in this field.)
- Wages: Can make up to \$54,000 per year in Minnesota
- Outlook: Very good--over 4,000 people work in this field, and there are over 500 openings each year in Minnesota.
- Log into MCIS to learn More: [Paralegals](#)

**Summer School Registration** is now open. Space is limited, and preference is given to students who are 1) behind in credits, 2) fill out the registration form, and 3) pass at least 50% of their classes 2nd Semester. [Summer Registration Form](#). If you have questions about which classes to choose for summer school, contact your BlueSky Counselor.

**Class Schedule for next year:** Your class schedule for next year is complete. You can see it by logging into [PowerSchool](#). (Use the first part of your email as your username, and then use the same password you use to log into Moodle.) Then look on the left, under "Next Year's Schedule." If you have any questions about your classes for next year, contact your BlueSky Counselor.

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## BlueSky Stars



**Jana Hays**

Jana is featured as a BlueSky star this month because since the day she enrolled she has amazingly demonstrated everything it takes to be a successful online student. Jana is a senior this year and is very excited to graduate. Jana came to BlueSky last year after being homeschooled for 8 years and felt it was time to add in more education than what her family could give. Jana's positive kind attitude towards life shines through in her schoolwork too, she always maintains excellent quality of work, continually stays on track with her grades and communicates regularly and positively with all staff.

When asked what she enjoys most about BlueSky, Jana replied, "I really enjoy the flexibility and how wonderful the teachers and staff are at Bluesky. I never have to worry about what I am going up against and if there will be a pop quiz or any other unknown factors that come with public school. I am able to focus and bring it with me anywhere. I can do it in the car, at home, work, on travel, etc. I can not think of one thing I do not like about BlueSky."

Outside of the school world, Jana said she enjoys painting, writing poetry, watching Criminal Minds on Netflix, working on puzzles, walking in the woods, spending time with her dog and just sitting outside on her wooden swing- she said: "anything to clear my mind and stay positive."

Jana's future plans include being an early childhood education teacher for preschool, she is also thinking about being a special needs preschool teacher. Her plans also include getting married and having 4 children of her own! Go, Jana! Keep reaching for success and following your dreams!

-Nominated by Jen Anderson

The BlueSky advisors have chosen to recognize these students for their hard work and dedication.

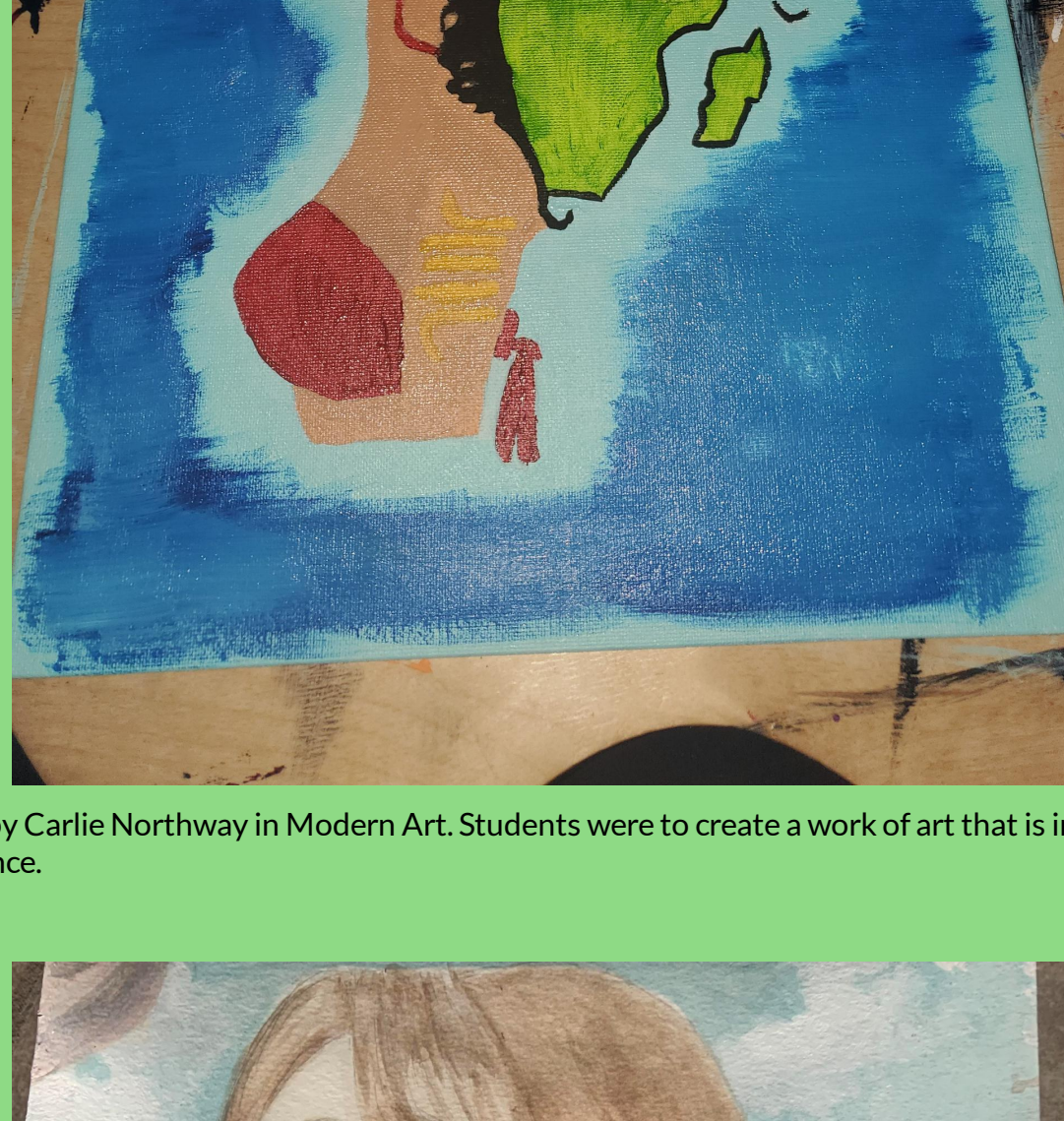


**Taylor Biehn**

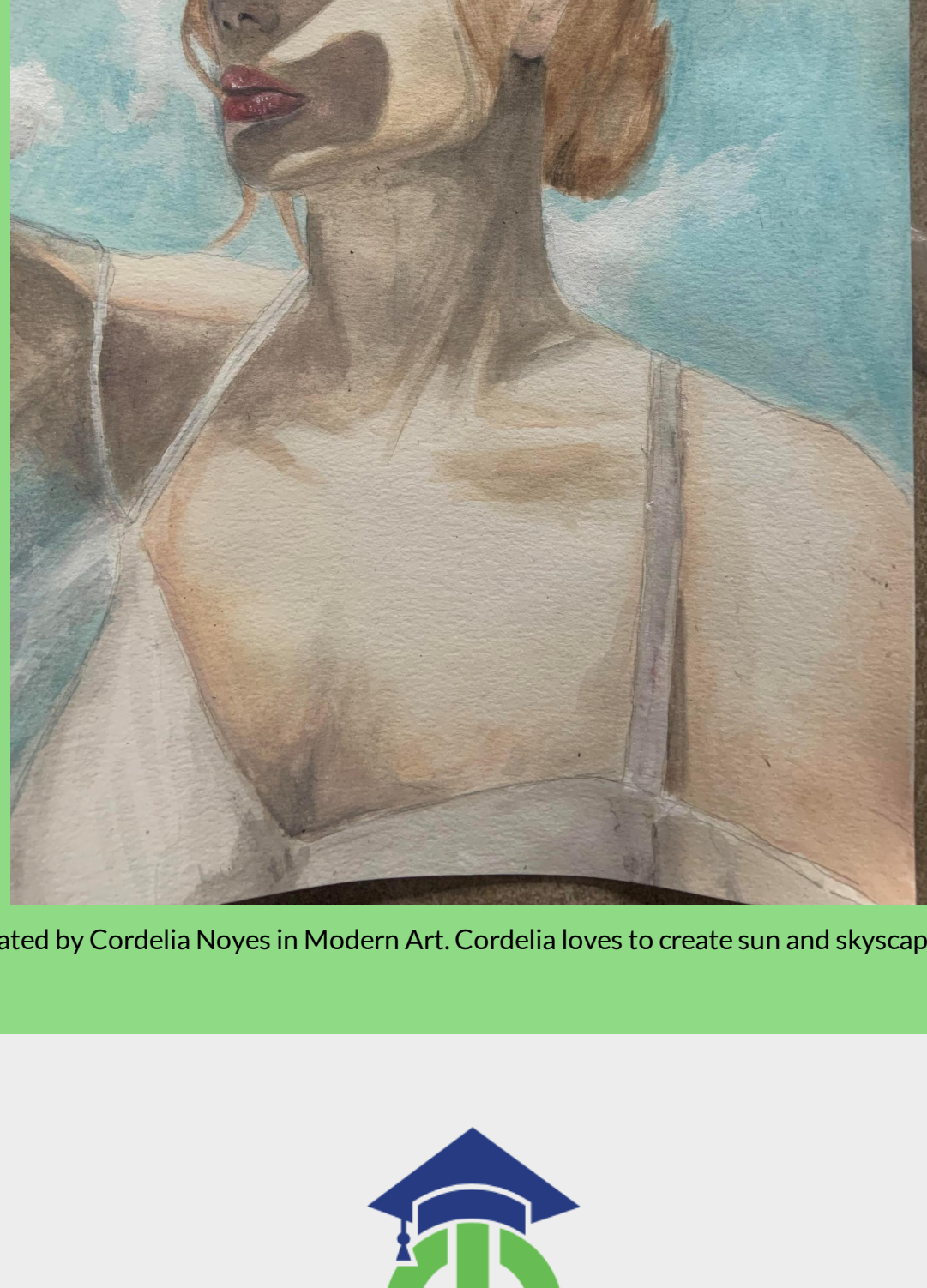
Taylor Biehn came to BlueSky as a new freshman last year eager for a positive online experience, after finding that brick-and-mortar high school wasn't working for her. She has found that positive online experience at BlueSky where she says that being able to work at her own pace helps her to be successful academically. She learned to navigate the challenges of online learning last year, and this year she is doing great staying on pace and working hard in her classes. She is a great communicator, too. As her advisor, I know I will always receive a reply to my communications with answers to my questions as well as explaining what she needs from me to help her be successful. When not doing school work, she enjoys art activities such as drawing/coloring as well as spending time with her puppy Nero. Thank you, Taylor, for being a dedicated BlueSky student—we are proud to claim you as one of our own!

-Nominated by Dawn Nicol

## Student Art



This piece was created by Charlie Northway in Modern Art. Students were to create a work of art that is influenced by the artwork of the Harlem Renaissance.



This is a self portrait created by Cordelia Noyes in Modern Art. Cordelia loves to create sun and skiescapes.

