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Real Impact

Spruce Elementary educator selected as one of 50 finalist in a global teacher contest for \$1M



Statement from Jennie Warmouth

“I work alongside so many exemplary educators in the Edmonds School District — all of whom are also worthy of this honor.”

Jennie Warmouth and her “teaching assistant,” Maeby. Photo courtesy of Jennie Warmouth.

nounced in Paris this November at an awards ceremony.

About Jennie Warmouth

For the past 21 years, Jennie Warmouth has been teaching at Spruce Elementary school in Lynnwood, WA. Just north of Seattle, the Title-1 school is extremely diverse, with a 600-student population speaking 39 different languages. As almost 50% of students at Spruce qualify for free/reduced lunches, Warmouth’s kids often struggle with issues ranging from food scarcity and homelessness to transnational family separation and undocumented citizenship.

A particular piece of curricula Warmouth developed that exemplifies her incredible intuition as an educator is her pet adoption project. She designed the project after observing her students’ universal interest in family pets.

Through a partnership with local animal shelter PAWS (Progressive Animal Welfare Society), the project requires students to create descriptions for difficult-to-place cats and dogs. Drafting said descriptions teaches students to process the shelter’s health records and behavioral notes in order to depict

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By **BO JOHN BRUSCO**

While teaching students to read and write, Jennie Warmouth inspires them to think critically and develop empathy.

LYNNWOOD, Wash. —Jennie Warmouth, a second grade teacher at Spruce Elementary, is one of the 50 finalists in a global teacher contest. Warmouth’s ability to make standardized curricula personally applicable for her students makes her an outstanding educator. The contest winner will be selected in November and awarded a \$1 million prize.

“I feel honored, excited and humbled to be included in the Top 50 teacher finalists worldwide!” Warmouth said upon hearing the news. “I work along-

side so many exemplary educators in the Edmonds School District — all of whom are also worthy of this honor.”

Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize 2021

According to the Varkey Foundation, the purpose of the Global Teacher Prize is to recognize one exceptional teacher “who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession as well as to shine a spotlight on the important role teachers play in society.”

By sharing stories of heroic teachers making a positive impact on young people’s lives, the prize aims to “bring to life the exceptional work of millions of teachers all over the world.”

This year’s Global Teacher Prize con-

test received over 8,000 applicants and nominations from more than 120 countries. The Varkey Foundation believes that the efforts of teachers across the globe deserve to be recognized and celebrated.

Regarding this focus on educators, the foundation cites an inadequate education as a major factor behind “the social, political, economic and health issues faced by the world today.”

Additionally, the foundation believes that “education has the power to reduce poverty, prejudice and conflict” and that “the status of teachers is critically important to our global future.”

In its seventh year now, the \$1 million Global Teacher Prize is the largest of its kind. This year’s winner will be an-

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High vaccination rates reported for Washington state employees

By **BO JOHN BRUSCO**

OLYMPIA, Wash. – Concerns about a potential state-wide staffing shortage have been growing as the vaccine mandate October 18 deadline approaches. Today, a new report indicating high vaccination rates across Washington helps put those worries to rest. Following the report, Governor Jay Inslee expressed his relief and encouragement.

Washington’s vaccination rate increased significantly since September

On October 5, the Lynnwood Times referenced a report from Washington’s Office of Financial Management (OFM) to share the latest figures on the vaccination status of state employees. According to said report, as of September 27, only 68% of state employees had been vaccinated. Monday, Washington’s OFM shared an updated report of those vaccination numbers, revealing that 90% of state employees are vaccinated as of October 7.

According to the report, over 1,300 religious exemptions and 255 medical exemptions have been approved as well.

Of the organization’s reports, Ralph Thomas, the Communications Director for the Office of Financial Management said, “OFM’s State Human Resources division has been gathering data showing how many state employees have completed their COVID-19 vaccination verification and how many have requested and received exemptions/accommodations. State agencies began reporting that data last month.”

This high vaccination rate hopefully indicates that a state-wide staffing shortage will be avoided come October 18 — the deadline for employees of state agencies to turn in their vaccination status according to Gov. Inslee’s mandate.

Governor Inslee’s statement

Gov. Inslee himself expressed relief at the site of these numbers. “The state has been diligent in its contingency planning for scenarios after the October 18 vaccination deadline. The sky-high vaccination rates we’re seeing should settle any concerns,” he said in his October 11 statement. “There will not be massive disruptions in state services.”

In light of this high vaccination rate, Inslee also shared how encouraging it is for him to see the state mandate working. “We all can be extremely encouraged with the progress we have made in vaccinating public servants in response to this pandemic,” he stated. “As today’s numbers released by the Office of Financial Management show, tens of thousands more public servants residing in communities across our state are now vaccinated, putting themselves and the people they interact with at much lower risk from this virus.”

Speaking to the progress indicated by the data, he continued, “The first numbers gathered showed around 49 percent, now we are over 90 percent. The numbers show this strategy to increase vaccinations has been a great success.”

Lastly, Inslee spoke to a recent report indicating a high vaccination rate amongst medical personnel. “I am also extremely pleased to see that health-care providers are reporting similar encouraging numbers,” he said. “This morning, the Washington State Hospital Association reported an overall rate of staff vaccination rate of almost 90 percent statewide. I am confident this

number will go up as well.”

Seattle Police Department

Although 90% of state agency employees are reportedly vaccinated ahead of the October 18 deadline, the Seattle Police Department (SPD) is still waiting for proof of vaccination from 292 sworn employees, according to King 5 News. The number of employees who have yet to submit their vaccination status accounts for 27% of sworn staff.

However, according to the report, that number is expected to lower. On the night of October 5, more than 60 officers submitted their vaccination status. “Obviously, our hope is to get that number as low to zero as we can between now and October 18,” Sgt. Randy Huserik of SPD told King.

Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan’s Office is also confident that more SPD employees will offer proof of vaccination before the deadline, according to a spokesperson who told King 5 News that “they anticipate officers and employees will continue to submit their vaccine verification forms as the deadline draws closer.”

Sound Transit’s Grand Opening of three new Light Rail Link stations

By **BO JOHN BRUSCO**

Seattle and Southern Snohomish County residents celebrated the new light rail Northgate, Roosevelt, and U-District stations.

SEATTLE, Wash. – Sound Transit celebrated the grand opening of three new rail link stations and a pedestrian bridge Saturday, October 2nd in Northern Seattle. From north to south, the rail links are called the Northgate, Roosevelt, and U-District stations. The new John Lewis Memorial Bridge is located at the Northgate station and crosses over I-5, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to cross the freeway safely.

Saturday’s Grand Opening celebrations included ribbon-cutting ceremonies with public addresses from local leaders and community members, live music, food trucks, and the U-District’s \$3 Food Walk raffle — not to mention some smooth transitions between stations thanks to the light rails.

“The opening of Northgate Link marks the start of a transformational period for transit in the region,” says Sound Transit’s Public Information Officer, John Gallagher. According to Gallagher, Sound Transit plans on expanding

its rails into Snohomish County. “In the next three years, we will be opening extensions north to Lynnwood, south to Federal Way, and east to Bellevue and downtown Redmond,” he says. “That growth will nearly triple the size of the light rail.”

As Gallagher explains, this continual growth in public transportation will result in “greater connection within the region and a fast, reliable alternative to grueling highway congestion.” Having a way to bypass city traffic will be a great relief for Seattle and Southern Snohomish County residents — as the average Seattle commuter spent 77 hours in traffic in 2019, according to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute’s Urban Mobility Report.

Another noteworthy feature of Sound Transit’s links is that they’ve achieved carbon-free operations, running entirely on hydroelectricity and wind instead. “It is the first major light rail system in the country to do so,” according to Gallagher.

The Northgate Light Rail Station will be the destination for travelers who wish to shop at the Northgate Station mall, check out the ice rinks and the Seattle Kraken’s headquarters, or hop

on a bus at one of the state’s busiest transit stations. With the addition of the John Lewis Memorial pedestrian bridge, Northgate will also be ideal for students and employees of the North Seattle College and UW Medical Center-Northwest.

The first stop south of the Northgate is Roosevelt Station, which brings travelers to some of the city’s best parks and grub spots. The station also brings commuters close to the beautiful Green

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Snohomish County Schools: A comparison across the County

LYNNWOOD, Wash. – Each school year, the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) updates its K12 Report Card, which details the academic achievements, among other metrics, of Washington public school districts.

The Lynnwood Times has compiled several metrics from the most recent OSPI Report Card and from the individual districts' websites and social media accounts to help its readership understand how their district compares with other local districts. Of the 15 school districts in the County, this comparison focuses on the 9 most populous districts. This article will measure both the district's academic achievements and the district's transparency.

Student Academic Achievement

The OSPI measures student achievement based upon the number of students who meet the state's academic standards across various grades. More information about the state standards, which are categorized by subject, can be found on the OSPI website.

Students who take the state tests

(K-12) are grouped into one of four achievement levels – novice, developing, proficient, and advanced – a system set up by Smarter Balanced, an education group based out of California. Students who fall under the third and fourth levels (proficient and advanced) are counted as those reaching the academic standards.

This article will discuss the ELA (English Language Arts), math, and science standards. The student academic achievement discussed below does not include the 2019-20 nor 2020-21 school years, as those results have not been released.

The proficiency scores across the three core subjects were averaged to give each district an overall ranking. The school districts ranked, from highest scores to lowest, as follows:

1. Northshore
2. Everett
3. Lake Stevens
4. Snohomish
5. Arlington
6. Edmonds
7. Mukilteo
8. Monroe
9. Marysville

Mukilteo School District

Of the district's 16,013 students enrolled, 57.8 percent met the ELA standards, 46 percent met the math standards, and 50.1 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year. In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw an 87 percent 4-year graduation rate, up from 85.1 percent in 2018-19.

The district is working to support students who are not meeting these academic goals, as well as those who fell behind as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We had the largest number of students in summer school this past summer, and the elementary summer program specifically looks to support English Language Arts and math comprehension," Communications Director Diane Bradford told the Lynnwood Times.

"Elementary schools also offered JumpStart programs to help kindergarten and first-grade students get a head start on school this summer. Those extra days of learning helped students learn routines and basic skills so they were more prepared when school be-

gan," Bradford added.

The district has implemented a School Improvement Plan, which was updated in March 2021.

Edmonds School District

Of the district's 21,367 students enrolled, 63.1 percent met the ELA standards, 52.1 percent met the math standards, and 44.3 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year. In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw an 84 percent 4-year graduation rate, up from 82.6 percent in the previous year.

Regarding the district's low science scores, Lisa Van Cise, a representative of the Edmonds School Board's communications department, explained that the numbers may be skewed since the WCAS is not required for graduation.

"We had significantly higher numbers of students that opted out. In many cases, this was due to students in AP and IB courses choosing to focus on those

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Homelessness

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ELECT PATRICK DECKER

from page 3 **SCHOOLS**

exams instead of taking another exam that would not impact their graduation. For this reason our group of students that opted out was disproportionately weighted with students that one might assume would have excelled on the exam," Van Cise told the Lynnwood Times.

The science scores given above were not just from high school samples but were taken from fifth, eighth, and eleventh grades.

Everett Public Schools

Of the district's 20,945 students enrolled, 71.9 percent met the ELA standards, 58.9 percent met the math standards, and 57.1 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year.

In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw a 95 percent 4-year graduation rate, down from 95.9 percent in the previous year.

Though Everett school district has significantly higher student achievement and higher graduation rates, the district does not have significantly higher expenditures per student, the teachers have the same or even less education than other districts, and class sizes are not significantly smaller than other districts.

"Our student achievement successes can be attributed to several things, one being the intentional use of coordinated, aligned rigorous instructional materials aligned to state standards," Communications Director Kathy Reeves told the Lynnwood Times.

"Another factor is the time and focus we have placed on meaningful professional learning for our staff on both social-emotional learning and academics to help our team optimize their teaching skills to support our diverse student population. In our new Strategic Plan, our priority student outcomes help us to focus our work in helping each student in our system succeed at high levels," Reeves said.

Lake Stevens School District

Of the district's 9,296 students enrolled, 69.5 percent met the ELA standards, 56.1 percent met the math standards, and 58.7 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year.

In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw a 91 percent 4-year graduation

rate, up from 89.8 percent in the previous year.

The Lynnwood Times has reached out to the Lake Stevens School District but has not received a response.

Snohomish School District

Of the district's 10,041 students enrolled, 68.1 percent met the ELA standards, 56.9 percent met the math standards, and 42.9 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year.

In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw a 91 percent 4-year graduation rate, up from 88.6 percent in the previous year.

The Lynnwood Times has reached out to the Snohomish School District but has not received a response.

Marysville School District

Of the district's 11,203 students enrolled, 49.4 percent met the ELA standards, 35.3 percent met the math standards, and 38.3 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year.

In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw an 84 percent 4-year graduation rate, up from 76.7 percent in the previous year.

The Lynnwood Times reached out to the Marysville School District but did not receive a response regarding student achievement.

Northshore School District

Of the district's 23,577 students enrolled, 76.3 percent met the ELA standards, 68.2 percent met the math standards, and 62.6 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year.

In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw a 95 percent 4-year graduation rate, up from 93.7 percent in the previous year.

The Lynnwood Times has reached out to the Northshore School District but has not received a response regarding student achievement.

Arlington Public Schools

Of the district's 5,865 students enrolled, 65.4 percent met the ELA standards, 49.0 percent met the math standards, and 57.5 met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year.

In the 2019-20 school year, the district

saw an 88 percent 4-year graduation rate, down from 90 percent in the previous year.

The Lynnwood Times reached out to Arlington Public Schools but did not receive a response regarding student achievement.

Monroe School District

Of the district's 6,926 students enrolled, 59.5 percent met the ELA standards, 44.0 percent met the math standards, and 49.8 percent met the science standards in the 2018-19 school year. In the 2019-20 school year, the district saw an 89 percent 5-year graduation rate, up from 82.6 percent in the previous year.

The Lynnwood Times has reached out to the Monroe School District but has not received a response.

School Expenditures

The district's 2018-19 per-pupil expenditures have been ranked from highest to lowest as follows:

1. Marysville, \$15,268
2. Everett, \$15,216
3. Edmonds, \$15,185
4. Snohomish, \$14,662
5. Mukilteo, \$14,403
6. Northshore, \$13,962
7. Monroe, \$13,616
8. Arlington, \$13,553
9. Lake Stevens, \$13,471

Many of the districts have seen increases in their annual budgets, some of which are a result of the 2012 McCleary decision. The decade-long battle ended in June of 2018 when the state came into compliance with the Supreme Court after funneling billions of dollars into public education.

The 2020-21 annual budgets are given below, followed by the budget increases since 2018:

- Mukilteo: \$289,790,128 (increased \$42,136,804).
- Edmonds: \$360,400,000 (increased \$38,779,253).
- Everett: \$358,243,167 (increased \$37,236,930).
- Lake Stevens: \$146,559,776 (increased \$24,144,112).
- Snohomish: \$154,830,615 (increased \$3,003,462).
- Marysville: \$176,142,760 (in-

creased \$9,263,315).

- Northshore: \$404,522,307 (increased \$58,522,307)
- Arlington: \$86,993,411 (increased \$11,529,266)
- Monroe: \$100,416,001 (increased \$7,433,031)

District Transparency

The Lynnwood Times reached out to each school district's communications director. Of the nine districts, five gave a response (Mukilteo, Edmonds, Everett, Marysville, and Arlington), three of which answered all questions asked (Mukilteo, Edmonds, and Everett).

School Board Meetings

All the school districts' websites include the date, time, and location of the school board meetings, as well as the meeting agendas and meeting minutes after they are approved.

Edmonds, Everett, and Northshore upload video recordings of the school board meetings on their websites, and Arlington posts school board meetings on its YouTube channel. Everett's Zoom recordings also provide closed captions for their viewers.

All school districts are open to public comment, some through Zoom and some in person. Those who would like to partake in public comment at school board meetings can sign up on their district's website.

Social Media

All districts regularly post updates on their Facebook pages. Mukilteo, Edmonds, and Marysville post reminders about school board meetings on the day of, while Everett posts reminders the day before and Arlington posts reminders several days in advance. Edmonds and Everett also regularly post Superintendent's updates to their Facebook pages.

Edmonds and Everett are also the most active on YouTube, Edmonds uploading 39 videos in the last month and Everett uploading 14 at the time of this article. Northshore has also uploaded 6 videos in the last month and Marysville uploaded 4.

All districts post COVID-related information, policies, and updates to their social media for parents to access.

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Vaccine billionaires: COVID emerging as a \$100 billion-plus business

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD, Wash. – From the same pandemic that sent the jobless rate to 20.2% in Snohomish County last year and near record high unemployment nationally causing millions to leave the work force, arose nine new billionaires after shares in companies producing vaccines soared. The nine new billionaires collectively are worth \$19.3 billion, enough to vaccinate approximately 780 million people in low-income countries, according to People's Vaccine Alliance.

While the largest vaccination campaign in history may have saved an estimated 140,000 deaths in the U.S., COVID vaccines are emerging as a \$100 billion-plus business, Bloomberg reported, leaving many to wonder how much is too much to pay for health and safety.

The 9 new vaccine billionaires, in order of their net worth are:

- Stéphane Bancel, Moderna's CEO (worth \$4.3 billion)
- Ugur Sahin, CEO and co-founder of BioNTech (worth \$4 billion)
- Timothy Springer, an immunologist and founding investor of Moderna (worth \$2.2 billion)
- Noubar Afeyan, Moderna's Chairman (worth \$1.9 billion)
- Juan Lopez-Belmonte, Chairman of ROVI, a company with a deal to manufacture and package the Moderna vaccine (worth \$1.8 billion)
- Robert Langer, a scientist and founding investor in Moderna (worth \$1.6 billion)
- Zhu Tao co-founder and chief scientific officer at CanSino Biologics (worth \$1.3 billion)
- Qiu Dongxu, co-founder and senior vice president at CanSino Biologics (worth \$1.2 billion)
- Mao Huinhua, also co-founder and senior vice president at CanSino Biologics (worth \$1 billion)

Record Profits for Big Pharma

An analysis by the People's Vaccine Alliance alleges that firms Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna are charging governments as much as \$41 billion above the estimated cost of production, at least five times more expensive than they could be.

Moderna and Pfizer are benefitting the most with Stephan Bancel, CEO of Moderna, and Ugur Sahin, CEO of BioNTech, now worth around \$4 billion each. Pfizer reported in May their vaccine has brought in \$3.5 billion in revenue in the first few months of 2021, nearly a quarter of its total revenue. Although Pfizer did not publish their profits publicly, Bloomberg reported profit margins from vaccine sales could be around 20%.

In its July 2021 second-quarter report,

Pfizer updated its first-quarter revenue assumptions for the BNT162b2 – Pfizer-BioNTech SE (BioNTech) COVID-19 – vaccine from approximately \$26 billion to \$33.5 billion. For its second-quarter revenue, Pfizer posted \$19.0 billion of which \$7.8 billion (41%) was related to COVID vaccine sales.

For the first six months of 2021, Pfizer reported \$33.56 billion in overall revenue, a 68% increase compared to the same period in 2020, with a Net Income of \$10.44 billion. The vaccine division reported revenue of \$14.13 billion within the first six months of which \$11.3 billion (80%) is attributed to its BNT162b2 – Pfizer-BioNTech SE (BioNTech) COVID-19 – vaccine.

Because of this strong operational growth, Pfizer updated its 2021 expected annual revenue guidelines from a range between \$70.5-72.5 billion to \$78-80 billion.

Frank D'Amelio, Pfizer's Chief Financial Officer and Executive Vice President, Global Supply, downplayed the influence of COVID operations to the company's recent growth.

"Pfizer's second quarter performance highlighted once again the underlying strength of our business, with consistent and solid growth coming from multiple products and categories. It is important to point out that the 10% year-over-year operational revenue growth rate for our business excluding BNT162b2 comes on top of a strong 6% operational growth rate delivered

by the comparable business in the second quarter of last year. As a result of updates to our expectations for our business, both including and excluding BNT162b2, we are increasing our 2021 financial guidance ranges for revenues and Adjusted diluted EPS for the second quarter in a row."

Pfizer's third-quarter performance report is expected November 2.

Moderna's share prices have raised 700% since February 2020, while BioNTech has surged 600%, CNN reported.

Moderna grew from 930 employees as of June 2020 to approximately 1,800 employees a year later. Stéphane Bancel, Chief Executive Officer of Moderna was more forthright with the company's recent growth tied to its COVID vaccine operation.

"I am proud of the progress our teams

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Q&A with Edmonds School Board Director District 2 candidate



Melissa Stepp. Source: Lynnwood Times/Mario Lotmore.

EDMONDS, Wash. – The Lynnwood Times held an interview with Edmonds School Board Director District 2 candidate Melissa Stepp regarding her platform and priorities if elected to her position.

The following are the questions asked and Stepp’s answers.

A district director is responsible for viewing and evaluating policies, establishing spending priorities and developing instructional philosophies and goals. What inspired you to run for office and what will your top three priorities be if elected?

“The national politics of the last two national election cycles have really been what inspired me. A common theme throughout any of the commentary that I’ve listened to and read is in order to make a real change you have

to be involved at a local level. The last two election cycles have left me feeling like I don’t have a lot of control, can’t make an influence, can’t make a difference and it came up that there was a local school board position and I said, “I think I can do that.”

Stepp’s top three priorities are student engagement, increasing the general knowledge of the general ed teachers, and increasing math and science cores without sacrificing creativity and critical thinking.

What is the best way to address differences of opinion on the board or between the board and administration?

Listening with kindness. If I listen to understand rather than to respond I will be able to come to an agreement, compromise, and learn from both the administration as well as other board

members.

What issues do you believe your district needs to address in its academic program in its offerings and what changes would you recommend?

In listening to the school board meetings over the past few months, especially since I decided to run, one of the conversations has been what to do about reduced enrollment and advanced education...I would like to see a real critical analysis of what benefit the students are actually getting from those programs, particularly reducing the amount of debt when choosing college.

What do you feel are the top concerns facing students and what do you propose to address those concerns?

In-person learning is so much better for their health. They need the socialization, the needed the social interaction, it’s better for the mental health and that makes them better prepared to succeed academically. Keeping kids in school, despite being a pandemic.

If given a \$500,000 grant to use in the school district how would you allocate it in the best interest for the students?

We need to build new schools, especially new elementary schools. There are nine multi-family housing units going in around 99 and 195th and those kids have to go to school somewhere.

What does equity mean to you?

Equity is really about getting what we want and where we want to go but recognizing that not everybody starts in

the same place.

What sort of relationship should a school district board have with its parents and families?

It should be a positive relationship. The relationship should be based on a common definition of trust as well as effective communication and an affective definition of listening.

Regarding school safety what do you think the district is doing right and where do you think there is an opportunity for improvement?

I think we should leave discipline up to educators and up to administrators [not school resource officers].

Stepp believes that officers do have a place on campus but not as staff, especially because they are in uniform and armed. She believes that is not a good impression on children.

In closing, Stepp assured that her lack of experience as a school board director should not be a deterrent to vote for her. She admits she has to learn a lot, but she has the courage to do that and hopes that the school board will join her in that journey.

Although she lacks experience on the school board, her experience leading teams for 20 years and setting employees up for success have paved the way for leadership if elected.

The Lynnwood Times reached out to Stepp’s opponent, for an interview but as of the date of this article, he has not responded to our requests.

from page 5 BILLIONAIRES

at Moderna have made in the past quarter in advancing our development pipeline while addressing a global pandemic and quickly establishing global manufacturing and commercial organizations,” said Stéphane Bancel, Chief Executive Officer of Moderna. “We now have mRNA candidates in clinical trials across five therapeutic areas including infectious diseases, cardiovascular, oncology, rare disease and autoimmune disorders. We are pleased that our COVID-19 vaccine is showing durable efficacy of 93% through six months, but recognize that the Delta variant is a significant new threat so we must remain vigilant.”

In its second-quarter report, Moderna reported total revenue of \$6.3 billion for the first six months of this year of which net income was \$4.0 billion. Moderna performed at a net loss of \$(241) million for the same period in 2020.

According to the report, “Total reve-

nue increased in 2021, resulting from commercial sales of the Company’s COVID-19 vaccine, and to a lesser extent, grant revenue.”

The company expects dose capacity for its COVID-19 vaccine in 2022 to be between 2-3 billion doses.

The Lack of Vaccine Equity

The People’s Vaccine Alliance states that Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna have sold over 90% of their vaccines to “rich” countries leaving as many as 70 countries with only one dose for every ten people, BBC reported. Their analysis found that rich countries have bought enough doses to vaccinate their population three times over. Canada, for example, has bought enough to vaccinate each Canadian five times, their report claims.

Since BBC’s report, “rich” countries have begun to re-distribute a fraction of their excess doses to low-income countries but Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former president of Liberia, and Helen

Clark, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, expressed concerns in August that the rate is still slow-going.

While the profits made by the vaccines have made the CEO’s of BioNTech and Moderna billionaires, less than one percent of people in low-income countries have received the vaccine as of July 2021.

Before the pandemic, low-income countries paid a median price of \$0.80 a dose for all non-COVID-19 vaccines, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). While every vaccine is different even the most affordable COVID vaccines, Oxford/AstraZeneca, is nearly four times more expensive, the Johnson and Johnson vaccine is 13 times higher, and the most expensive vaccines, Pfizer, Moderna, and the Chinese produced Sinopharm, are almost 50 times higher.

In a briefing published July, the People’s Vaccination Alliance noted how both “poor” and “rich” countries have been potentially overpaying which in-

cluded the following points. According to the study, Pfizer/BioNTech charges the African Union \$6.75 per dose, nearly 6 times it estimates more than the potential production cost of this vaccine. One dose of the vaccine costs the same as Uganda spends per citizen on health (\$6.83) in a whole year.

The highest reported price paid for Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines was paid by Israel at \$28 a dose —nearly 24 times the potential production cost. The European Union may have overpaid for its Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines by as much as €31 billion.

South Africa turned down Moderna’s price tag of \$42 per dose. Colombia allegedly paid double the US price for Moderna vaccines. For Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech combined, the country has potentially overpaid by as much as \$375 million.

Senegal, a lower-income nation, said it paid around \$4 million for 200,000

Continued PAGE 08 >>

Social Media Toxicity: When is enough, enough?

By **GEORGE FTIKAS, JR.**

Earlier this year, Forbes wrote that Americans spent an average of 1,300 hours on social media last year. While COVID-19 certainly impacted this figure, that is still over 54 days worth of time. Regardless of the pandemic, it is undeniable that people are spending more time online. With the recent Facebook whistleblower on 60 Minutes, Time Magazine's latest cover and Instagram's pause on Instagram Kids, it seems prudent to ask — is social media toxic?

The whistleblower leaks certainly don't paint the social media giant in a good light. According to the Wall Street Journal, Facebook and Instagram — which is owned by Facebook — have conducted internal studies and have allegedly known for years that the platforms are harmful for mental health, particularly for teenagers. One internal Instagram study showed that 32% of teen girls felt worse about their bodies on the app.

Publicly, however, Instagram seems to disagree, stating in a blog post that “we believe building “Instagram Kids” is the right thing to do” because YouTube and TikTok already “have versions of their app for those under 13.”

“Critics of “Instagram Kids” will see this as an acknowledgement that the project is a bad idea. That’s not the case,” Adam Mosseri, head of Instagram, wrote. “The reality is that kids are already online, and we believe that developing age-appropriate experiences designed specifically for them is far better for parents than where we are today.”

Some countries have started to address the issue of body image, at least with altered images. This summer, Norway passed a law — in a 72-15 vote — requiring advertisers and social media influencers to label altered images online. Israel was the first to pass legislation on altered images in 2012, with France passing a similar law in 2015, which went into effect in 2017. So while not widespread, this particular part of a dilemma exacerbated by social media has been acted upon by lawmakers.

Disinformation has also been in view of those outside of the tech industry, as Facebook Founder Mark Zuckerberg and other social media and tech CEOs have appeared before Congress on a few occasions to discuss the issue. There have been criticisms of Face-

book's algorithm for years stating it consistently leaned toward divisive content for increased engagement.

“When we live in an information environment that is full of angry, hateful, polarizing content it erodes our civic trust, it erodes our faith in each other, it erodes our ability to want to care for each other,” Facebook Whistleblower Frances Haugen said on 60 Minutes. “The version of Facebook that exists today is tearing our societies apart and causing ethnic violence around the world.”

60 Minutes correspondent and former CBS Evening News anchor Scott Pelley was in agreement during the interview.

“Facebook essentially amplifies the worst of human nature,” Pelley said.

Lena Peitch, director of policy communication at Facebook, did reply to CBS after the 60 Minutes piece, saying in part:

“Every day our teams have to balance protecting the right of billions of people to express themselves openly with the need to keep our platform a safe and positive place. We continue to make significant improvements to tackle the spread of misinformation and harmful content. To suggest we encourage bad content and do nothing is just not true.”

In terms of numbers, Facebook still remains king of the social media sphere overall, so it is no surprise they are often at the center of the issue.

The study Forbes referenced estimated the 1,300 hour average totaled to 58 minutes a day on Facebook. Instagram was the most popular with Gen-Z users and was the second-most popular overall. So the top two social media networks are owned by Facebook. The sheer number of users and increased time on the platform coupled with misinformation is worrying, to say the least.

Does this truly mean social media is toxic? It seems to be harder to find those not currently working for a social media company to say it isn't toxic. Society-changing inventions are rarely free of major downsides, but that doesn't mean they should be left as-is. These companies have become some of the largest and most profitable in the world, but with increasingly damning evidence against them, the wild west era of social media may be coming to a close.

from page 2 **SOUND TRANSIT**

Lake, just on the other side of I-5. For a comprehensive list of all the sites to see and spots to stop, read The Urbanist's Destination Guide to the Roosevelt Station Area.

The U-District Station

The appropriately named U-District Station is the south-most link to be operational starting October 2. The station is right near the University of Washington and will be the ideal destination for students and faculty. For the non-student commuters, the uni-

versity's “Quad” has over 200 cherry trees to stroll through. There is also a Farmer's Market every Saturday, year-round.

The John Lewis Memorial Bridge is a Significant Connection

Located at the Northgate link, the John Lewis Memorial Bridge arches over the I-5 freeway. Sound Transit's John Gallagher explains that it “joins two neighborhoods that were severed when I-5 was built. It makes accessing light rail easier and connects the Northgate Station and North Seattle College.”

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from page 1 **WARMOUTH**

each pet accurately. By applying these reading and writing skills, about 800 children who participated in the project helped find 600 shelter animals new homes.

Spruce Elementary now sponsors a kennel for dogs at PAWS. “We raise money to maintain the kennel and the kids create blankets and toys for the dogs that stay in it,” Warmouth explains. Warmouth even adopted a PAW dog during COVID-19 Quarantine, whose name is Maeby, and was her “teaching assistant” during the 2020-21 school year.

The project not only improves students’ academic skills but also helps them develop empathy by working with universally loved animals. For many students, this activity marks their first opportunity to improve the life condition of another being.

What She’ll Do If Selected

Keeping her sites on empathy, Warmouth says that if she is selected and awarded the \$1 million prize, she “will use the funds to create an empathy focused learning lab academy for teachers, students, and families in our community.”

Elaborating further on this aspiration, she says, “This will bridge together my classroom based teaching, university based instruction and research, and best practices in social and emotional learning to help nurture the next generation of critically thinking scholars and compassionate stewards of our planet.”

In addition to being a second-grade teacher, Warmouth also holds a Ph.D. in Education Psychology: Human Development & Cognition. Her educational research seeks to understand how children develop empathy for one another, non-human animals, and their

shared environment. She is also an adjunct professor of literacy, a children’s book author, and a National Geographic Grosvenor Teacher Fellow.

To learn more about Warmouth’s work and the pet adoption project, visit globalteacherprize.org and education.uw.edu.

Other Engaging Projects

Of course, this is not the only engaging project Warmouth has designed. She has also created a silverware-patrol project in which students learned about plastic waste, ocean currents, and environmental responsibility. The project sparked interest among her students when Warmouth discovered plastic waste on the shores of the North Pole during her National Geographic Arctic Svalbard expedition.

According to Warmouth, the kids at Spruce also expressed great interest in polar bears leading up to, during, and following her Arctic expedition. This led to another hands-on project where-in students studied the life cycle, habitat, and threats to the survival of bears.

Eventually, the classes narrowed their focus to the local black bear population. “We learned that there were several orphaned baby black bear cubs receiving lifesaving care in the Wildlife Center at PAWS (just 1.5 miles from our school),” Warmouth recalls. This led students to participate in various fundraising activities to advocate for the release and rehabilitation of those bears.

While each project is unique in that they address different real-world issues, they are all engaging and personally applicable to students. By tracing the students’ interest to local issues, Warmouth is able to connect students with academic subjects through tangible and relevant activities. And as the topics are interesting to students, they

become intrinsically motivated to research, study, learn and act. Finally, a motif throughout each project is Warmouth’s knack for crafting curricula that help students develop empathy, whether for pets, the earth, or bears.

Warmouth’s Teaching Philosophy

Warmouth’s teaching philosophy recognizes and appreciates the individuality of students while also encouraging community building and camaraderie among them. “I embrace a whole-child approach to teaching that honors the funds of knowledge that each child brings into our classroom,” she explains.

Warmouth’s methods of engaging her students with meaningful learning experiences are continuously evolving. “My teaching practice is dedicated to exploring innovative pathways for inspiring and empowering my students through hands-on, project-based, and community-focused learning opportunities,” she says.

“I connect with and engage my students through an integrative, interdisciplinary, and experiential approach to instruction that illuminates the interconnectedness between humans and environment, develops critical thinking skills, and calls for community action.”

In a profession where it is easy to simply spoon-feed answers and information to students, Warmouth goes the extra mile to help them reach autonomy. As she explains, “I provide my students with the tools to connect with one another, investigate their environment, and advocate for change when they recognize injustice.”

Congratulatory Statements

Spruce Elementary Principal Emily Moore spoke highly of Warmouth’s ability to build strong relationships with her students and how she has im-

acted their lives through education. “Dr. Warmouth, former Spruce student and long-time Spruce teacher, brings a commitment to each of her students to provide learning experiences that are not just educationally rich, but founded in strong relationships with her students,” she said.

“Through her work with PAWS and National Geographic, she has brought science into her classroom while simultaneously supporting efforts to save local animals and change the carbon footprint at our school,” Principal Moore continued. “She is an exemplary individual who has made a huge impact on the lives of her students.”

Edmonds School District Superintendent Dr. Gustavo Balderas says that the district is very proud to have such a phenomenal teacher in its ranks. “The Edmonds School District is extremely proud to have Jennie be recognized for the work that she has done to bring a hands-on approach to education,” said Supt. Balderas.

“She is a model teacher that is home-grown being an Edmonds SD graduate. What Jennie is doing is the epitome of project-based learning, creating learning experiences that are hands-on that her students will always remember,” he continued. “That is what great educators do, and Jennie is one our finest.”

Another congratulatory statement comes from Sunny Varkey, the founder of the Varkey Foundation. Upon Warmouth successfully making the ranks of the final 50 in the contest, Varkey congratulated her, saying, “[Warmouth’s] story clearly highlights the importance of education in tackling the great challenges ahead – from climate change to growing inequality to global pandemics. It is only by prioritizing education that we can safeguard all our tomorrows. Education is the key to facing the future with confidence.”

from page 6 **BILLIONAIRES**

doses for the Chinese vaccine Sinopharm, which equates to \$20 per dose.

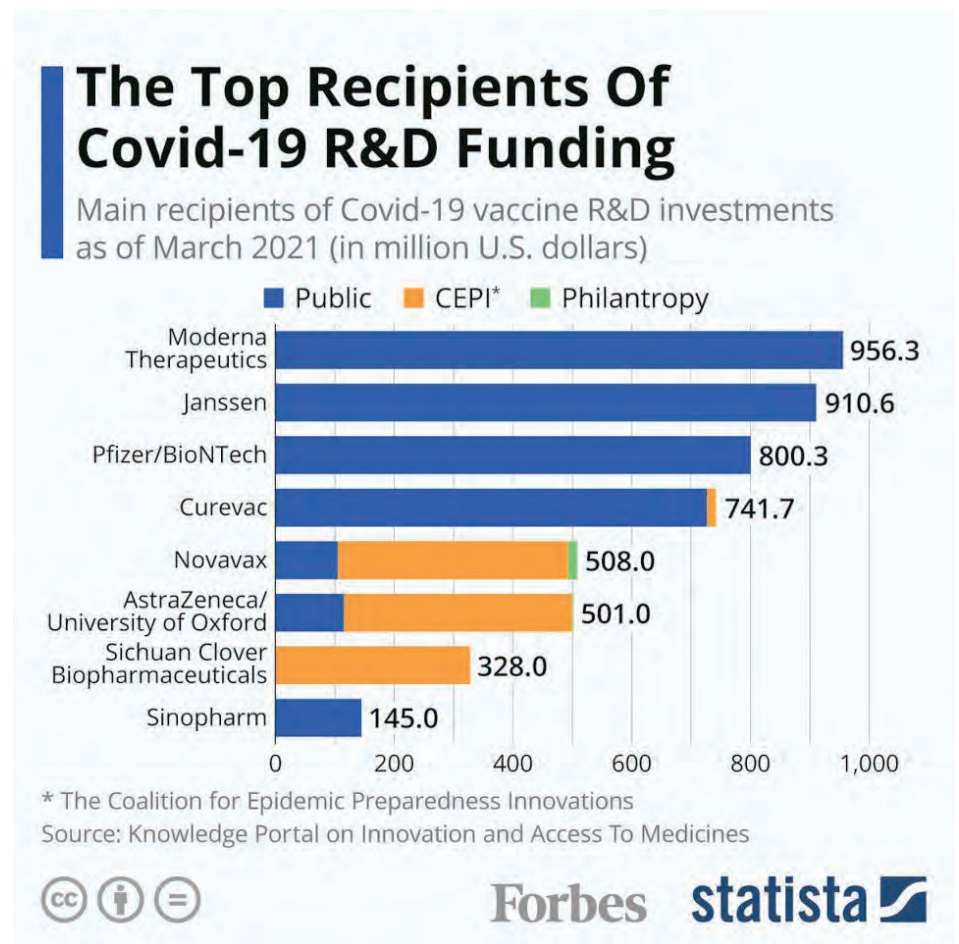
The United Kingdom alone has potentially paid £1.8 billion more than the cost of production for its Pfizer and Moderna vaccines —enough money to pay every worker in its National Health Service (NHS) a bonus of more than £1000.

The Lown Institute in Boston gave Moderna one of its Shkreli Awards in January for the “Blatantly greedy COVID vaccine prices.”

Government Funds that Paved COVID Vaccine Success

According to the Forbes article, Which Companies Received The Most Covid-19 Vaccine R&D Funding?, the United States and Germany have provided \$2 billion and \$1.5 billion respectively to pharmaceutical companies for COVID-19 vaccine research.

During a House Committee on Energy and Commerce hearing last summer, vaccine manufacturers were asked if they would sell their product at cost. Dr. Stephan Hoge, president of Moderna, told lawmakers that they would not sell their vaccine at cost despite receiv-



ing \$955 million in U.S. funding.

The Boston-based company said last August it would charge between \$32 and \$37 per dose but the price would be adjusted depending on the amount ordered which may explain why different countries are paying different prices

for vaccines.

South Africa, for example, paid \$5.25 per dose in January for 1.5 million doses of the Oxford and AstraZeneca vaccine, more than twice what the European Union paid at \$2.15 per dose, a BMJ report states. As it stands, governments

around the world are the only purchasers of the COVID vaccines.

AstraZeneca, like Moderna, also received hundreds of millions in government funding, upfront, for millions of doses. However, they made the promise last year not profit off their vaccine sales.

BioNTech, who developed the first authorized COVID-19 vaccine in the United States, received some \$800 million in R&D funding.

Pfizer, on the other hand, did not receive any government funding stating that they wanted to move as quickly as possible to get their vaccine into clinics. At the congressional hearing last summer, some House members raised concerns that Pfizer’s rejection of federal funds could lead to price-gouging and lack of transparency, the New York Times reported.

COVID Vaccination Progress

As of October 12, a total of 6.56 billion doses of vaccine have been administered in 184 countries throughout the globe, according to Bloomberg. This equates to 42.7% of the world’s population. Bloomberg reported 402 million doses of the vaccine have already been administered in the U.S. and 1.08 million doses have been given daily within the last week.