



Submitted photo

School Board President Sean Christiansen helps Booker T. Washington students cut the ribbon during the dedication ceremony on March 30.

## A new look for school with historic past

Booker T. Washington Elementary in Dover celebrates renovations

Delaware State News

**DOVER** — On March 30, Capital School District hosted a Renovations Dedication Celebration at Booker T. Washington Elementary School.

Rep. Trey Paradee, Kent County Levy Court Commissioner Allan Angel, City of Dover Mayor Robin Christiansen, City of Dover Councilmen Scott W. Cole and Fred A. Nell, BTW alumni and former staff, current students and staff as well as members of William Henry School Alumni Association attended.

The celebration began with a rib-

bon-cutting ceremony at the front of the school with School Board President Sean Christiansen and BTW students. The celebration then moved inside through the building's new double-doors and into the renovated auditorium/multi-purpose room.

Dr. Paige Morgan, BTW's acting principal, introduced the Dover High School Air Force Junior ROTC, who presented the colors for the pledge of allegiance. The BTW Chorus performed some selections under the direction of Isaiah Freeman.

Dr. Sylvia Henderson introduced Superintendent Dr. Dan Shelton and the school board. Dr. Shelton recognized members of the construction and the historical preservation committees and guests.

He thanked everyone for their contributions to the school and made note of those who assisted with the school's history and who donated items to Booker T. Washington's historic preservation collection on display in the front foyer.

A presentation regarding the history and reconstruction of Booker T. Washington School followed. Carl Krienen of ABHA Architects showed slides with photos of the original school, the way it looked after a building front redesign, and then images of the current, newly renovated Booker T. Washington School restored to its former historic glory.

Andrew DiSabatino III cataloged the different stages of construction

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# Dedication

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during the recent renovation.

One of the exciting highlights of the evening was the sharing of memories by BTW alumni and former staff.

Booker T. Washington was originally a school for African-American students, and former students and staff told stories about the way things were when the schools were still segregated.

Wallace Hicks spoke of meeting his wife of nearly 70 years on the stage in the first Booker T. Washington School.

Cecil Wilson, former BTW principal, talked about his experiences during his tenure at the school as did Dr. Dan Kingery, also a former principal, who stated that his 15 years at Booker T. Washington were the best years in his career as an educator.

Reba Hollingsworth along with other former students sang the BTW song they recalled from their youth.

Current BTW fourth-grade students gave tours of the building. The evening ended with refreshments by Dover High School's Culinary Students.

"It was an honor to work on the dedication. I loved hearing all of the shared stories," said Candace McCarthy, an organizer of the event.



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**At one time, Booker T. Washington was a segregated school for African-American students. Some of the alumni and staff from time took part in the dedication and told stories of their experiences at the school.**