



# The Spectator

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"The Pulse  
of the  
Student  
Body"

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## HURRICANE SANDY HITS NORTHEAST

### Stuyvesant Recovers from Hurricane Sandy

By LINDSAY BU

Hurricane Sandy, which New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg labeled "a storm of unprecedented proportions," hit the East Coast on Sunday, October 28. The largest Atlantic hurricane on record, the storm caused widespread havoc and resulted in a reported 113 fatalities.

With powerful winds driving a massive surge of floodwater into the waterways around New York at the stroke of high tide, records were broken as the water level rose to 14 feet above mean low tide in Battery Park City. Fortunately, Stuyvesant's building resisted flooding and



Many New Yorkers, including a large number of Stuyvesant students, were affected by Hurricane Sandy.

### Roving Reporter: Life in Sandy's Wake

By TERESA CHEN  
and ARIELLE GERBER

After two days of record-breaking wind and rain and an unexpected week out of school, students all over the city are working to pick up the pieces and to move forward from the historic Hurricane Sandy. Though the extent of the storm's impact varies for each person, every Stuyvesant student has been affected in some way.

**Andrea Ting, Junior**

My family lives in Evacuation Zone A, so we had to leave. I went to live with a friend in Bay Ridge, while my family went to Chelsea. I stayed for four nights, and while I was

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## When We Vote

By TASNIM AHMED  
and KAVERI SENGUPTA

Every four years, American democracy welcomes a new crop of voters ready to voice their opinion in the form of a ballot. Voting is more than just a civic duty, though; it is a mark of adulthood. Yet, while it may be an exciting rite of passage for some, for others it is just an unnecessary chore.

Thus, with every election year, many politicians stress the worth of garnering more young voters. Celebrities urge their fans to be patriotic and vote, and in campaign speeches, presidential candidates emphasize the importance of the younger generation to get involved. However, new voters are often discouraged by the thought that their vote will not make a difference. "Honestly, I think it's important to voice my opinion, but with politics and the electoral system, I don't think my vote as a New Yorker really matters. My vote doesn't count because I know New York will vote for Obama," senior and registered voter Ying Chen said.

Senior and 18 year old Dan Fu Ruan is not registered because of a mishap in the registration process. Still, she is

not disappointed that she did not have the opportunity to vote, agreeing with Chen that "I know I have another chance in four years. I also know that my vote isn't going to count too much because all of New York's electoral votes are going toward Obama anyway," Ruan said. Through historical examples, one can argue that in swing states such as Ohio or Florida, each vote matters in determining a winner. But in an overwhelmingly partisan state like New York or Texas, a couple thousand votes will never be responsible for the outcome of an election. However, Ruan does acknowledge the importance of voting, adding that "I do think people should care more because the right to vote and influence who the president can be is something special that many people in the world don't have."

Abie Sidel ('11) feels that voting in a partisan state offers another opportunity for him: voting for a third party candidate and supporting his beliefs, knowing his vote won't directly affect the outcome. Sidel, who voted for Green party candidate Jill Stein said, "Because [my vote] doesn't matter, I saw the opportunity to vote for someone I truly believed in to

express both personally and to whomever counts the vote that third party candidates matter—that the two party system is flawed and needs to change, and that there are people besides the two people that have randomly or arbitrarily been chosen to represent the entire country. There are more people out there who have opinions and different platforms. Jill Stein is much more suited to my beliefs and my idea of what the role of the president is." Voting is "one of the only ways that we really get to embody what our country is based on," Sidel added.

Stuyvesant alumnus Benjamin Koatz ('12) agrees with Sidel's take on the weight given to each vote. "On a personal level it's not a really practical thing, but I think it's important to vote on your morals," Koatz said. For him, these include the war on drugs, foreign policy, civil liberties, and the economy. He chose to vote for Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson.

Frequently, American citizens, especially students, tend to only spend their energy on presidential elections, ignoring the fact that smaller scale

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## DOE Monitors PSAT Testing

By AIMEE LI  
and DAVID MASCIO

Officials from the New York City Department of Education (DOE) Central Office visited Stuyvesant High School on October 17, 2012 to inspect the school's administration of the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) to sophomores and juniors.

While testing was taking place, multiple officials were seen roaming the hallways, talking to Stuyvesant faculty, and visiting classrooms, in order to determine if the school was fully complying with the DOE's comprehensive standardized testing regulations. These regulations are detailed in the Test Administration Handbook, which is released annually to all New York City public school standardized test proctors and administrators.

While the regulations are encompassing, some of their rules are open to interpretation. The section on room organization asks that schools provide "optimal testing environments and facilities for all students" and "seat students so that they cannot look at each others' work."

Between Stuyvesant proctors and inspectors, there was ambiguity about what seat spacing was required so that students

could not cheat. As biology teacher Dr. Maria Nedwidek was proctoring the exam to a group of sophomores, she was told by a DOE official to rearrange the desks in the classroom.

Art and French teacher Dr. Susan Barrow was repeatedly told to move the desks in her classroom and threatened that the exams of all the sophomores in her room would be invalidated otherwise.

Stuyvesant administrators assisted the inspectors in ensuring test security. Assistant Principal of Organization Randi Damesek confiscated the school ID cards of several sophomores after the students were found working on the exam beyond the time limits. The students were later let go with a warning, and, no further cheating was reported during the PSAT/NMSQT, despite several rumors.

In the aftermath of the June 2012 Regents cheating incident, the DOE has taken a tougher stance against academic dishonesty.

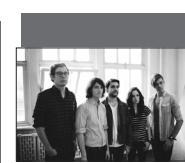
With the standardized exams having such an important role in students' education, the DOE hopes to ensure that "all security procedures, instructions, and schedules must be strictly adhered to without deviation" in the administering of these exams.

### Opinions

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Where's The Third Party?

Opinions editor Daniel Teehan speaks up for America's silenced party.



Article on page 5.

### Features

The Musician Sub  
Asher Lack.

A look into the life of alumnus and substitute teacher

# News

## Newsbeat

- History teacher Robert Sandler brought the Jewish History class on a trip to an orthodox Hassidic Jewish neighborhood in Crown Heights during Sukkot on Friday, October 5. Led by Rabbi Beryl Epstein, the class visited the Chabad-Lubavitch World Headquarters, an institution known as "770" and famous for organizing Jewish studies internationally. They also visited libraries, the Main Synagogue, and learned about various Jewish rituals and beliefs, such as mikvah and the role of women.
- Over 200 students participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk on Sunday, October 21.

By RISHAM DHILLON

The second annual Hispanic Heritage Day celebration, hosted by the Foreign Language Department in conjunction with the ASPIRA student body, was held on Thursday, October 18. The event aimed to help develop a better understanding of Hispanic culture among Stuyvesant students.

"Today was a celebration of our cultural heritage as Latinos. Things are not perfect in the Hispanic world; there is poverty, unemployment, and other problems. However, today was a realization that we Latinos still have something to celebrate in: our culture," Assistant Principal of Foreign Language Arlene Ubieta said.

"It is a time to learn more about the beauty and uniqueness of Hispanic culture, history, and news. We commemorate the contributions of the past and look forward to the advancements of the future," Junior and Vice President of ASPIRA Nicole Sanchez said.

The celebration began with an opening statement from Ubieta followed by excerpts from various movies exploring Hispanic heri-

tage, including a short documentary prepared by ASPIRA members. At the end of the event, ASPIRA students performed a Northern Spanish dance choreographed by Spanish teacher Carlos Bravo. Finally, participants shared in a homemade Spanish dinner.

ASPIRA, a cultural SPARK Hispanic Leadership group, focuses on bringing Hispanic students together in order to produce an environment conducive to learning more about Spanish heritage while developing leadership skills. Founded in 1986 by Juan Méndez, an ex-Spanish teacher and current Queens High School Superintendent, the organization has continued to grow over the years to encompass more than 30 members. Among these members are some non-Hispanic students who are interested in learning more about Spanish heritage.

Last year, ASPIRA first organized a Hispanic Heritage Day in order to make students, both members of the organization and other Stuyvesant students, aware of this culture. However, the event was not able to produce a significant student turnout. This year's celebration, which included more

than 30 participants, did not improve significantly, but is considered to have been a success by its organizers in comparison.

"Last year was our inaugural year [of this event]. Since then, ASPIRA has definitely gotten stronger. We are having a really good year so far with events like these," ASPIRA's Faculty Advisor and SPARK Coordinator Angel Colon said.

"This year's celebration was better than last year's. There was a time years ago when ASPIRA's strength declined in Stuyvesant due to a lack of strong leadership, but with Mr. Colon's help, ASPIRA has grown [and produces stronger events]," Ubieta said.

Some students who attended the event believed they received both an educational benefit as well as entertainment. "I believed the event was not only informational, but also very entertaining. I felt as if I was having a lot of fun, and I ended up learning a lot as well. Trying to explain the event in words is difficult because it is hard to simplify such a vibrant and colorful event," senior Taruna Manni said.

The event was one of the many attempts Stuyvesant's culture

clubs have taken over the years to try and education Stuyvesant students about other cultures. However, as some have observed, many Stuyvesant students miss out from these opportunities.

"In Stuyvesant, I've met people of 59 different cultural backgrounds and I'm still counting. We have people from many different cultural backgrounds at Stuyvesant, and it isn't healthy for the student body to minimize their exploration of the other cultures at this school," Colon said.

"I understand and respect that a lot of students and staff have busy schedules," Guidance Counselor Undine Guthrie said. "However, it is small opportunities [like Hispanic Heritage Day], that help students learn a lot about other cultures."

ASPIRA hopes that in the future, they will be able reach a larger percentage of the student population. "Can we do better? Can we do more? Yes. There are 3300 students in this school, and it is difficult to educate about different cultures," Colon said. "But over the years, ASPIRA has been making a lot of progress, and I believe it will continue to grow stronger."

## Stuyvesant Recovers from Hurricane Sandy

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did not bear any visible damage. According to Interim Acting Principal Jie Zhang's e-mail sent to all Stuyvesant students and parents on Tuesday, October 30, Assistant Principal of Organization Randi Damesek visited the school and determined that though the building retained power, it had lost phone and Internet service.

In consideration of the recovery from the storm's devastation and the unavailability of public transportation services, Bloomberg announced that all New York City public schools were to be closed from Monday, October 29 to Friday, November 2. During this period of time, the school's administration, including Zhang and the school's assistant principals, kept in touch with the school community via e-mail. Meanwhile, Zhang remained in close contact with the Department of Education (DOE) in order to find out when schools would be able to reopen.

On Friday, November 2, DOE Chancellor Dennis Walcott decided for teachers to report to school one day earlier than students in order to prepare for the students' return. "It was loosely organized," Assistant Principal of English Eric Grossman said. "But a surprising number of teachers did make it in, showing their dedication." A few departments held discussions on the hurricane's effects on test scheduling and on shifts in the classes and curriculums.

Aside from meeting in person that day, teachers were active in maintaining a line of communication with students. "It has definitely been difficult for us to get back on track after the storm, but I know that many teachers reacted out and kept in touch with their students during the days we were off," Assistant Principal of Pupil Personnel Services Eleanor Archie said. "I'm sure that this will smooth the transition."

Computer science teacher Michael Zamansky, for example, was able to reach the students of his Software Development class and lead online lessons on Wednesday and Thursday of that week. For his lessons, Zamansky used multiple online programs to put together an efficient virtual experience. This included Google Hangout, Google Docs, a Google Plus video chatting program, and YouTube. By combining these programs, Zamansky was able to capture his own computer screen for demonstration purposes and increase accessibility. Using YouTube gave students who unfortunately did not have power at the time the opportunity to view his lessons later on.

"I've been with most of these students for about three years, and our class has great rapport. The online classes weren't mandatory; it was just something that I, along with many of my students, thought would be really neat to try out," Zamansky said. "It wasn't the same thing as teaching in the classroom, but because the material was much based on demonstrations, I think the online sessions were an efficient use of time that could have otherwise been wasted."

While classes are currently returning to their normal routines, many issues directly affecting students, such as spotty transportation to lower Manhattan, still remain at large. "Besides a few kids we heard about anecdotally, we can't really know how many kids have been affected, displaced, or have lost someone in wake of the storm," Grossman said. "That was one of the big unknown coming into this, and [the administration] talked about how we should identify and support these students."

Stuyvesant faculty and students have been finding ways to eliminate these unknowns and help those in need both in and out of Stuyvesant. The members of Stuyvesant's Student Union (SU), with the help of

teachers, have been particularly active in organizing the Stuyvesant Hurricane Relief Drive.

"We came up with the idea for a Hurricane Relief Drive, in which students and faculty would bring in monetary donations and essential goods for hurricane victims, once school resumed," senior and SU President Adam Lieber said. "Given that we didn't have loudspeaker announcements or posters as means of communication with school not in session, we decided that to reach the greatest audience, it was vital to partner up with other organizations, such as ARISTA and Red Cross. Together, we created a Facebook event to inform people of the purpose of the drive and give suggestions as to what items to bring in."

The drive began on Monday, November 5 when Stuyvesant reopened after its week-long close during and following the storm. Volunteers from Red Cross, ARISTA, and the SU, in their booth on the second floor, collected money, non-perishable food, clothes, blankets, and other items in need.

"The drive has been successful just from the first day. We made about \$600 and are slowly filling up the tables of the SU [with donations]. We are also reaching out to faculty members, parents, and other adults in the community," junior and SU Vice President Tahia Islam said.

Despite the fact that a wide range of Stuyvesant students have been affected, Zhang has emphasized that the community is here for them. "I am happy to see most of you back to school. I am certain that you have been affected to some extent by Hurricane Sandy. If you need any assistance in dealing with your loss, or if you know a friend who is in need of any assistance, please feel free to see me, assistant principals, or your guidance counselor. We are here to help you," she said.

## Standardized Testing Rescheduled

By ALEXANDRINA DANILOV and COBY GOLDBERG

In light of Hurricane Sandy, both the Department of Education (DOE) and the College Board have rescheduled their respective standardized exams originally to be administered on Sunday, October 28, and Saturday, November 3.

The second and third testing days of the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) were initially to be held on Sunday, October 28 and Saturday, November 3. Three days before the second testing date, on Thursday, October 25, the DOE announced that the exam was to be postponed until Sunday, November 18, three weeks later. Following Hurricane Sandy, on Thursday, November 1, the DOE announced a similar fate for 8th and 9th graders with tickets for the November 3 exam, which was rescheduled to Saturday, November 17.

These changes were made as a result of the dangerous weather conditions created by Hurricane Sandy and the resulting uncertainty over travel arrangements. Only limited subway service in lower Manhattan, for example, had been restored by the third testing date, making the commute difficult for students registered to take the exam at Stuyvesant.

According to the DOE website, students registered for both testing days will receive new test tickets from their school guidance counselor. Those with scheduling conflicts with the postponement are advised to consult their counselor to receive another test date.

The College Board announced in a news release on Thursday, November 1, that the SAT initially scheduled for Saturday, November 3, had been postponed for students across the East Coast in over five states, including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware. Any test center location closed to students on Friday, November 2, including all NYC public schools, would not administer either the SAT or SAT Subject Tests the fol-

lowing day. In NYC alone, the SAT's postponement affected more than 20,000 students registered to take the SAT at one of 56 public schools that day.

"When Hurricane Sandy came, I thought it was a blessing in disguise, because I had the whole week off to rest and study for the SAT," junior Katherine Oh said. "When the test got postponed, I was slightly

**"When Hurricane Sandy came, I thought it was a blessing in disguise, because I had the whole week off to rest and study for the SAT."**  
—Katherine Oh, junior

happy that I had more time. But I was also pretty upset, especially considering the fact that I might become much busier and much more stressed the next few days before the test."

Students caught amidst the postponement will have the option to take the SAT on either Saturday, November 17, or Saturday, December 15, based on when test facilities and staff members will be available. Students also have the option of switching their test location, free of charge.

Kathleen Steinberg, spokesperson for the College Board, stated that the College Board will work to expedite score reports of students whose test dates were postponed, particularly for seniors whose SAT scores are part of early-admissions packages.

## News-in-Brief: Ally Week Raises LGBTQ Awareness

By ALEXANDRINA DANILOV and NOAH ROSENBERG

Stuyvesant's Gay, Lesbian and Straight Spectrum (GLASS) made strides toward a more tolerant community during the fourth annual "Ally Week," a campaign designed to promote acceptance and understanding of the LGBTQ community. The program, which ran from Monday to Friday, October 15 to 19, consisted of special guests, events, fundraising for GLASS, and posters around the school to raise awareness.

Ally Week was the first installment in the eight-part "Respect For All" series, run by SPARK, GLASS's parent organization. The series raises support for groups who are the victims of bullying and harassment. The goal of Respect For All is to reduce discrimination and intolerance in high schools.

During Ally Week, GLASS members set up a fundraising table by the school's second floor bridge entrance. There, they distributed pamphlets, pins, notebooks and other merchandise to spread awareness of Ally Week and raise support for the organization. Posters were

placed throughout the school in hallways and on escalators.

The centerpiece of Ally Week was an after school workshop on Wednesday, October 17, focused on dealing with harassment of LGBTQ individuals. The workshop was run by Alex LaCasse of "Live Out Loud," a New York City nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting LGBTQ youth and encouraging openness. According to the organization's website, Live Out Loud's mission is "to empower, energize and enable Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth to live the life of their dreams through the celebration of the richness and diversity of [their] shared experience, the visibility of role models and the dissemination of information." Live Out Loud has had a partnership with Stuyvesant's GLASS for several years.

The workshop focused on language associated with the LGBTQ community, such as derogatory names and politically correct terms, and how to use and deal with them. Regarding the workshop, GLASS Director of Internal Affairs Carolyn Fisher believes that it was definitely a success and provided stimulat-

ing conversation about labels in the LGBTQ community. "Walking through the halls, I hear so many things that are offensive. It does offend me, not only the LGBT community. People should try to be aware of the effect their words have on others," Fisher said. "Respect is an important aspect of life that many people forget."

Even though Ally Week and similar programs for other groups last only five days, SPARK coordinator Angel Colon reflects that the battle for tolerance and equality is constant. "Even though we call it whatever week, it goes on every day," Colon said. "You shouldn't have to wait for a specific week [to be aware]."

Participants believe that the event was very successful in both fundraising and spreading awareness. With regards to the Stuyvesant community, it "got everyone to be very conscious about their words, beliefs, and actions," Colon said.

"We raised a lot of money for the cause and got a lot of information out there," Senior and GLASS co-president Emma Lesser said. "GLASS is really growing this year and welcomes anyone who wants to be involved."

## Staff Changes in the College and Guidance Offices



Jo-Ann Mahoney has assumed Mr. Wang's position in the guidance office.

By LINDSAY BU and LILY LEE

With the retirement of college counselor Patricia Cleary on Thursday, October 24, guidance counselor Jeremy Wang has assumed the assignments of homerooms 7AA through 7II. Guidance counselor Jo-Ann Mahoney, who was hired in October, has replaced him in the guidance office for official classes 7MM, 7XX, 7YY, 5XX, 5YY, 3XX, 3YY, 1XX, and 1YY.

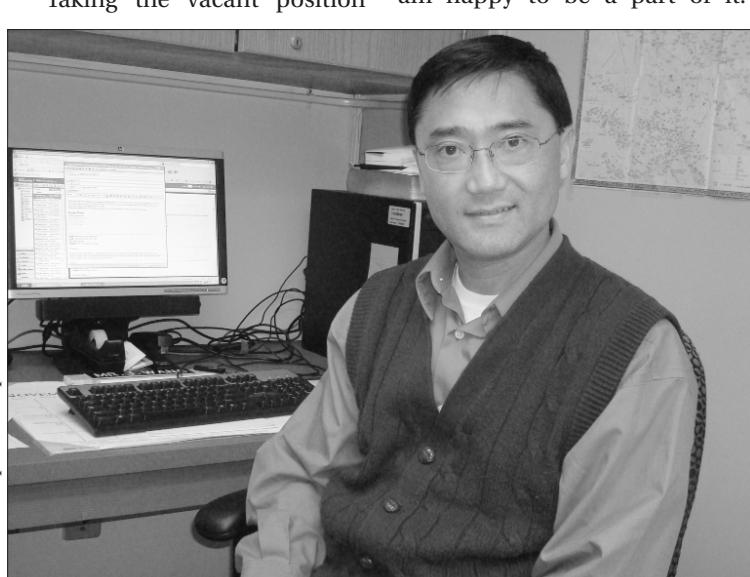
Though his official title has changed, Wang will still maintain most of the responsibilities he had as a guidance counselor, such as offering advice and addressing students and parents' academic concerns. As a college counselor, however, he will now play a much more direct role in the college admissions process. Wang will be conducting college consultation interviews to help determine which universities or colleges might fit a student best, as well as finding scholarship opportunities for students in need.

"I am very excited about becoming a college counselor," Wang said. "Having worked in the guidance office for six years, I'm well-acquainted with the Stuyvesant student body, and my experience will definitely help me with my new responsibilities [in the college office]."

As the only certified bilingual

counselor, Wang hopes that his fluency in both Mandarin and Cantonese will be of great use in the college office as it had been in the guidance office. "The college admissions process is often one that demands the cooperation of both students and parents," Wang said. "At Stuyvesant, many of the parents are more comfortable speaking other languages, and I hope that my bilingualism will ease the burden of communication for parents during the stressful process."

Taking the vacant position



Former guidance counselor Jeremy Wang has moved to the college office.

in the guidance suite, Mahoney has been a guidance counselor for nine years. She worked at the New Town High School in Elmhurst, Queens, before coming to Stuyvesant. Looking for a new work place closer to her home, Mahoney sent her résumé to Stuyvesant in September and was contacted in October for the job.

Despite the new environment, Mahoney is confident that her transition will be smooth due to her experience and the support of the Stuyvesant staff. "There are definitely more nuances as a guidance counselor here at Stuyvesant than at my other schools," she said. "I have never written a Student School Report (SSR) before, but I have plenty of experience writing student recommendations, which will hopefully be helpful. Everyone here is incredibly supportive and welcoming, so even if I do struggle with something, I know that help will always be available."

Mahoney plans to setup meetings before the end of this month to learn more about her students.

"I love it here already and am so excited to get to know everyone. There's such a trusting relationship between the students and the staff, and I am happy to be a part of it."

## New School Promotional Materials Include Brochures Targeted at Minority Students

By SAM MORRIS

In an effort to improve Stuyvesant's appeal to middle school students, the administration has created a new brochure and webpage, [www.try4stuy.org](http://www.try4stuy.org), as well as an additional new brochure targeted specifically towards African-American and Latino students. These promotional materials were written, printed and designed by Creative Insights Inc., an advertising communications business run by former Stuyvesant parent Sue Schneider. Schneider had worked with the Stuyvesant College Office on the Stuyvesant College Profile for several years.

"People recognized that the quality of the previous brochures was lacking, and the Stuyvesant community, especially the Parents Association, wanted to improve our promotions," Interim Acting Principal Jie Zhang said. "The funding was made available by the Parent Association for the first time last spring and [the administration] took the opportunity to improve our image."

Former Principal Stanley Teitel's administration contacted Schneider's business to help in March, and the website and brochures were written and designed. "The website was already up and the [try4stuy] brochures were already [at Stuyvesant] by the time I arrived," Zhang said, noting that the brochures list Teitel as Principal. "[The minority brochures] were authorized and contracted under Teitel, but were printed after I got here, which is why they have my picture in them."

According to Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm, the webpage represents "a change in emphasis" from Teitel's mantra 'Choose two – grades, sleep or a social life,' by reassuring middle school students that "If you qualify for Stuy's Class of 2017 it's likely that you will do just fine at Stuy," as the webpage states.

"[The new promotional materials] are a sign that Stuyvesant recognizes that there are now many other good high schools in the city, and that [Stuyvesant] can't just assume that all middle school students are going to want to come here," Blumm said.

The webpage, which is linked to the Stuyvesant website, is a simple page that encourages middle school students to "try4stuy" and to make Stuyvesant their number one choice when they take the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT). The site addresses frequently asked questions and concerns and gives information about the school and the application process.

The webpage is intended to provide up-to-date information to middle school students. "The idea [behind the webpage] was to have a publication that represents our school well and is current, which is why it will be updated with our students' latest triumphs," Blumm said.

The brochures, which have a similar look to the webpage and use many of the same phrases, have been given out to middle school students at high school fairs and Stuyvesant's Open Houses this year and will contin-

ue to be given out at promotional events, according to Blumm.

The brochures targeted toward African-American and Latino students, which also use many of the same phrases as try4stuy website, were given out at the Open Houses this year to students who came to a booth for minorities interested in Stuyvesant, according to Zhang. Zhang believes that when Stuyvesant sends "representatives to typical neighborhood schools, they will distribute the brochures to students there," she said.

Zhang also noted that the brochures were part of an effort that started before the NAACP lawsuit. "[The brochures] were not a response to the press Stuyvesant has received about a lack of diversity," Zhang said. "The brochures were published due to the underrepresentation of minorities at Stuyvesant. We want to let these underrepresented students know that Stuyvesant exists, and of course to show them individual messages that tell people's own experiences to promote interest in coming to Stuyvesant."

The brochure's use of images that consist mostly of minority students was rather controversial, appearing to some minority students to be a misrepresentation of the student body's demographics. "The pictures are taking all the African-American and Latino students and putting them in one photo, which gives the idea that the group in the picture represents the student body, when it doesn't," one minority student, who chose to remain anonymous to avoid potential negative treatment from the Stuyvesant community, said.

On whether the brochure misrepresented the student body's demographics, Zhang noted that the brochure was not written under her administration, and that she would have to rethink the content of the brochure next year. However, the brochures were intended to convey to students that "anyone can fit in here, a message that we definitely believe," she said.

When minority students currently attending Stuyvesant were asked about how they fit in, many supported Zhang's sentiment. "My experience is no different than anyone else's. I love Stuy and everything about it. The teachers push me and I'm surrounded by kids who motivate me and push me. Whether they are Hispanic, like me, or Asian or white, it doesn't matter. It's a loving environment," junior Luke Morales said.

Ultimately, the new set of brochures and new website are aimed to encourage and welcome students to apply to Stuyvesant. "[O]ur mission was to create a brochure that spoke to students who might otherwise feel less than welcome at a school reputed to have 72 percent Asian and 23 percent Caucasian students," Schneider said in an email interview. "[T]he brochure attempts to reassure students of color that even if they are currently afraid they may not 'fit' in Stuy's Caucasian/Asian environment, by graduation they will have made friends from all over Stuy."

# News

By ANDREW WALLACE

New safety procedures from the Department of Education (DOE) will supplement existing emergency protocols throughout city public schools in the upcoming months.

Occasionally heard on the loudspeaker, the "Code Blue" announcement is part of the city's new regulations: a general emergency code signaling that a student or teacher needs medical attention. The message is directed towards specially-trained teachers, certified to perform emergency procedures on those in need of immediate care, and indicates the room number in which the emergency is taking place.

The DOE requires that the drills be performed twice a year, but Code Blues have been broadcasted for actual emergencies, including an episode earlier this semester when a Code Blue was announced after a teacher fainted.

Standard practice for the Code Blue drills is the simulation of a choking or cardiac arrest episode. The announcement is made, and the fastest responder simulates the appropriate procedure on a dummy. The drills are run by Emergency Skills Inc. (ESI), a corporate safety-training program employed by the

## New Safety Procedures To Be Implemented

DOE to oversee safety drilling in all New York City public schools. ESI monitors the drills and evaluates response time and execution of proper procedure. They also check the school's automated external defibrillators (AEDs) to ensure that they are completely functional.

There are 18 CPR/AED certified teachers at Stuyvesant. Many of them are physical education (PE) teachers and coaches. These teachers have been trained in CPR and resuscitation, as well as in the use of AEDs.

Additional new measures are being put in place by the DOE to protect students and teachers. As of this year, students and teachers will be required to learn the General Response Protocol (GRP). The GRP is a protocol adapted by the DOE from the Standard Response Protocol developed by the i love U guys Foundation, a foundation with the goal of "restor[ing] and protect[ing] the joy of youth through educational programs and positive actions in collaboration with families, schools, communities, organizations, and government entities," according to their website.

GRP hopes to "provide all schools with the direction they will take when an emergency incident occurs. At its core is the

use of common language to identify the initial measures all school communities will take until first responders arrive." Three specific protocols are detailed in the GRP: Lockdown (soft/hard), Evacuate, and Shelter-In.

Soft and hard lockdowns are scenarios in which a threat has been identified within the school. Students, in the case of a soft or hard lockdown, are instructed to "move out of sight and maintain silence," while teachers are to lock classroom doors, turn off the lights, and make sure that they and their students are out of sight. The designations of soft and hard represent threat levels. Soft lockdown implies that the threat is not imminent and that school security has clearance to sweep the building, while hard lockdown represents an immediate and dangerous threat to which not even school security should respond.

Evacuate scenarios are already practiced in the form of fire drills. Evacuate is most often a procedure followed for instances of fire, but can also apply to dangerous gas leakages or any other building-wide threat that can only be safely avoided by exiting the building. Students are to follow their teachers outside (leaving the building by

themselves if they are not in a class at the time), leaving belongings behind and not stopping by lockers for any reason, including changing out of PE attire. Teachers are to lead their students out of the building and to make sure that all students are accounted for and safe.

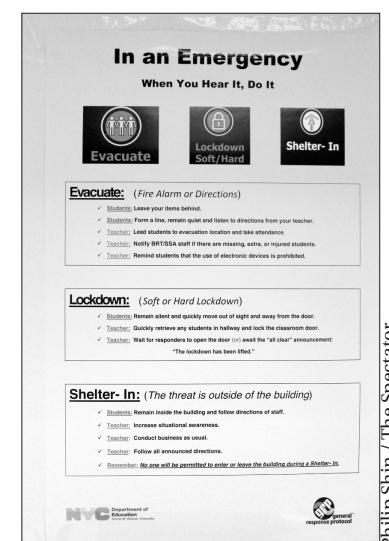
Shelter-in is a scenario in which a threat is posed to the school that requires that the exit doors be secured. In the case of such an event, students and teachers are to remain inside the school and conduct business as usual. In each of the GRP protocols, the prescribed safety measures and actions are to be continued until an announcement has been made that the threat has passed and that safety measures are no longer necessary.

Students seem to approve of the new measures that the DOE is putting into place.

"In light of recent instances of mass shootings [...] it's a really good idea that New York City public school do things to increase student safety," sophomore Julian Kal said.

"It's good that the DOE is stepping up measures for student safety," sophomore Maya Shaar said. "But at a certain point, it becomes disruptive to students."

In order to ensure that all students are aware of all of these pro-



New DOE Emergency drills have been posted in each classroom.

cedures, the DOE has mandated that they be taught in PE classes, as they are the only classes standard to all students in New York City public schools. According to Assistant Principal of Health and Physical Education Larry Barth, PE teachers will soon begin to inform their students of the GRP procedures, focusing primarily on Lockdown, the least intuitive of the three protocols.

## Four Stuyvesant Students Recognized in Siemens Competition



Senior Jongyoon Lee

By EDWARD LI  
and JULIA MENDELSOHN

Last year, the Siemens Competition recognized two Stuyvesant students in its initial phase. This year, that number has doubled.

Four Stuyvesant students were recognized in the 2012 Siemens Competition for their projects in bioinformatics, mathematics, and physics and engineering. Seniors Amanpreet Kandola and Jongyoon Lee received recognition as regional finalists, while juniors Waqarul Islam and Youbin Kim won regional semi-finalist awards.



Junior Waqarul Islam was a semi-finalist in the Siemens Competition in Math, Science, and Technology.

Kandola and Lee each received \$1,000 scholarship awards and proceeded to compete in the regional competition on Friday, November 2, and Saturday, November 3 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Siemens Competition in Math, Science, and Technology recognizes young talent through research and is open to all high school students, who are able to compete either individually or as part of a team. On Friday, October 19, approximately 300 students were named regional finalists or semi-finalists out of a pool of more than 1,400 entries. The thirty individuals and thirty teams selected as regional finalists, including Kandola and Lee, will then compete in one of the six regional competitions throughout the nation in early November.

Unlike other competitions, such as the Intel Science Talent Search, the Siemens Competition recognizes students solely based on their submitted papers. "The Siemens judges do not consider high school academic record or extracurricular activities. They only care about the paper you submit," biology teacher and research coordinator Jonathan Gastel said. "Many students like that."

Lee won his regional finalist award for his project in mathematics titled, "A Proof in the Field of Directed Cyclic Graphs." Concentrated in graph theory, or the subset of geometry dealing with collections of vertices and the edges that connect them, Lee's research revolves around the concept of directed graphs and the corresponding directed cycles. A directed cycle of length one, according to Lee, is a sequence of one edge with distinct vertices. Lee proves that a directed graph D can contain a directed cycle of, at most, four if there are n vertices, with n representing a number greater than or equal to 3, and the number of edges connecting to each point is greater than  $n - 2 / 3$ . His proof is a version of the Caccetta-Haggkvist Conjecture.

Lee got the idea for his project at the end of sophomore year. "It's a pretty simple state-

ment that holds a lot of weight," Lee said. "My research was more quantitative than synthetic proof-oriented, allowing for more opportunity to explore." Lee has one mentor at Hofstra and one at MathCamp, and spent an estimate of 200 hours working on his project. He plans on submitting his project to the Intel Science Talent Search as well, but says it might be harder due to the additional emphasis on GPA and essays.

Lee's research, however, did not come without challenges. "The experience of competing in a competition like this is pretty crazy," Lee said. "The biggest difficulty, though, was that there was a distinct difference in material and thinking between my research and math team competitions, which I'm more used to." Lee also believes that there is now an additional pressure because students now have to worry about how the judges feel about their research.

Kandola also received a regional finalist award for his work in bioinformatics titled, "Java-Based Analysis of Molecules Involved in Learning and Memory." In his project, Kandola developed a java-based automated general model to simulate his research, which dealt with molecules in neurons in the brain. More specifically, he studied how molecules work together in the brain to produce an experience of learning. "His project was designed to compare protein levels in trained and untrained animals," Gastel said. Kandola worked with a mentor at SUNY Downstate.

At the regional competition, at which both Kandola and Lee presented their project, students were asked to give a 12-minute oral presentation of their research with a poster, and were not permitted to present any new research they had acquired from their initial submission to the Siemens Foundation. Afterwards, there is a 14-minute question-and-answer session with the judges. However, neither won the regional competition to represent the region at the national competition.



Senior Amanpreet Kandola was a finalist in the Siemens Competition in Math, Science, and Technology.

Islam and Kim won semi-finalist awards for their projects in physics and engineering titled, "Developing Soft Micro-Stencil Lithography for the Fabrication of Electrodes on Nano-Materials." Their project, which spanned 22 pages, covered micro-stencil lithography, a process that uses stencils to create small electric circuits. Islam and Kim researched the advantages that soft micro-stencil lithography has over hard micro-stencil lithography. Soft micro-stencil lithography uses flexible polymers that function well on curved surfaces and shorten the distance between circuits.

Additionally, the process works on organic materials and creates cleaner, higher-resolution results. The project has the potential to change the means by which electrical properties of new materials are tested.

The pair started their research this July and spent the summer experimenting in a lab at Columbia University. The research came with its ups and downs; there were times when entire days yielded no results. Islam said, "All the disappointments are part of the process. Some tasks were really tedious and repetitive, but at the same time vital and imperative. We were in the lab for nearly five hours every single day."

Islam and Kim were forced to rework their project many

times in order to make it more practical. Despite all of the tedious work, both believed that their achievement was well worth the effort. "Once we started getting the results, it got really exciting," Kim said.

Islam and Kim are temporarily putting their project on hold in order to concentrate on the new school year. They hope to continue their research in the coming summer.

"It is fantastic that they were recognized for their efforts," Gastel said. "I'm very excited for all of the Stuyvesant students, and I expect many of the Siemens participants to compete in other competitions like the Intel Science Talent Search."



Junior Youbin Kim

## Features

# Asher Lack: Living a Double Life



Courtesy of Ravens and Chimes

Stuyvesant alumnus and substitute teacher Asher Lack ('01) started a band called Ravens and Chimes with his friends.

**By AIMEE LI**

Walking into class, students often breathe a sigh of relief when they spot a substitute teacher standing at the front of the room. "Yay, no pop quiz," they think. Quickly, the class dissolves into a quiet chatter, where students are hard at work at assigned worksheets. But when substitute teacher Asher Lack enters the scene, the class atmosphere spontaneously lights up as students chat nonchalantly with him, asking about his experiences as a high school student and his tastes in music. As the soulful and dynamic leader of the indie rock band "Ravens and Chimes," Asher Lack carries the liveliness of his music into the classroom.

Lack graduated from Stuyvesant High School in 2001. He first became interested in music as a child, and always thought that he would pursue a profession in the field. At New York University Lack majored in screenwriting. "In college I thought it was important to study something

that wasn't music. In my mind I thought screenwriting was more practical, which is a pretty ridiculous idea," Lack said. Lack worked in the film industry for a year, but didn't want to move to Los Angeles, where the industry thrives. Instead, he focused on his band, which was just getting more popular. He says that some of his friends who had majored in screenwriting landed writing jobs in Los Angeles. "It's funny because so many of my classmates that went to L.A. ended up landing very lucrative writing jobs, so maybe it was more practical than it looked on paper."

In 2005, Lack's senior year of college, he and his friends started a band originally named Lost at Sea. During a party, Lack shared a demo of his band's music with a friend. The demo eventually reached the vice president of Rhino Entertainment, and Lack's band was signed. Afterwards, the record company said that the band name was too generic, because there were many other bands with the same name. "We had a week to come up with

a new name, and 'Ravens and Chimes' was the only name none of us hated. In hindsight it's a bit goth," Lack said.

In 2006, they began recording their first album, "Reichenbach Falls." And earlier this year, Ravens and Chimes released their second album, "Holiday Life." Lack noted that producing both albums were among his proudest accomplishments. "Making both Ravens and Chimes albums meant a lot to me: the first one because it captured the magic of what it's like to be in a band with your closest friends and getting an opportunity to work together, [and] the second one because so many things went wrong while making it, that the act of finishing it was a miracle of luck and hard work," he said.

Ravens and Chimes is currently a five-person band: lead singer and guitarist Lack, Avery Brooks on keyboards, pianist and vocalist Rebecca Rossi, drummer Mike Riddleberger, and bassist David Dawda. The band classifies as an indie art-rock band. Art-rock is a subgenre of rock that takes many influences from art, avant-garde, and classical music.

Lack, as the lead singer and main songwriter, has been writing music since high school. Having grown up in New York City, Lack draws many influences from the city into his music. Other influences come from the band members themselves, because they all have different tastes in music. Coming together as a band creates a unique sound for Ravens and Chimes. Other factors have helped Lack with his band, such as his degree in screenwriting. Lack says that screenwriting has helped him with the structure of his songs. He says that he has learned

that nothing really has a coherent beginning, middle, and end. "One of my professors said all great stories have secrets. They all have something that implies that they're much larger than what you're actually getting. Life is like that, I guess. It's getting a little grandiose for me to say this, but you go through these huge things, and you're trying to cut them up and condense them into something clear," Lack said in an interview with David Greenwald of Rawkblog in 2008.

Six months before the release of "Reichenbach Falls," Lack toured with his band for a year and a half. However, despite the consistent gigs, he was always broke, and discovered that friends in well-known bands worked extra jobs when they weren't touring. At an alumni event that Lack attended, Technology Coordinator James Longaro found out about his need for a job between tours and offered Lack a job teaching at Stuyvesant High School. In April of 2009, he became a substitute teacher for his first freshman class, which consisted of students who just graduated last June. "I love the interaction I get to have with so many smart kids on such a wide range of topics every day. I teach almost every student in the school several times over the course of their time here, and it's fantastic to see them grow up and come into their own. It's very inspiring," Lack said.

When asked if he would consider teaching full-time, Lack responded positively. He minored in English at NYU, and though he doesn't have a graduate degree, he spends his summers taking exams in order to earn one. "Teaching full-time would be really fun. It would be great to have the same group of kids

every day and work on real curriculum with them," he said.

Lack would certainly be embraced as a full-time teacher. Stuyvesant students are deeply fond of the musician substitute teacher. "I think he's cool, and [he] seems to be really popular with the students," sophomore Carl Feng said. There are, however, a few lone critics of his style. "I think he knows Stuyvesant really well and the way it functions, but this kind of works to his disadvantage. He gives the students what they want since he was in their place. The fact that he was a student at Stuyvesant, and that he knows what the students want, makes him a pushover," said sophomore Andrew, who requested to keep his last name anonymous.

What is undeniable is that Lack treats students as equals. He respects Stuyvesant students, as they respect him.

In fact, Lack recounts his high school experience at Stuyvesant as an enriching memory, and he believes that his years at Stuyvesant have shaped him to become the open-minded, multifaceted person that he is today. The reason why so many students are able to connect with Lack is that he's been through the same high school life as they have—and it is clear that Lack serves not only as a substitute teacher, but also as a friend and a source of advice for many. When asked for a general piece of advice he wished to tell all his students, Lack said "Work hard. Just because you see someone else get by without putting work in doesn't mean that you deserve a free ride. Also, be good to each other." Whether it be the stage or the front of a classroom, Lack is sure to rock on.

## The Laboratory of Stuyvesant



Stuyvesant's scanning electron microscope is primarily used by the Physics Department.

Vivian Huang / The Spectator

**By SANAM BHATIA  
and HUWON KIM**

Within the walls of Stuyvesant's ten-floor facility, laboratory equipment ranging from mundane glassware to the famously expensive electron microscope are located throughout the seventh to ninth floor, home of the Biology, Physics, and Chemistry departments. Abiding by "Stuyvesant standards," the school has invested much in its inventory of laboratory equipment, introducing students to advanced research technology that would otherwise not be available to them.

The Biology Department's range of electives, such as Oceanography, gives students the opportunity to utilize Stuyvesant's research equipment. The most widely used equipment is the micropipette, which measures,

draws up, and dispenses minute and precise volumes of liquid, allowing for more accurate results. It is capable of measuring out volumes between one and one thousand micro-liters, and its precision is not ignored when it comes to price, for a single micropipette is easily a few hundred dollars. Maintenance of this instrument requires additional payment.

The spectrophotometer is another frequently used laboratory tool. It functions to determine the absorbance of a light source's wavelength through a colored solution to find the concentration of the solution. In addition to typical spectrophotometers that can only measure wavelengths of the visible light and near-infrared regions of the spectrum, Stuyvesant owns an ultraviolet (UV) spectrophotometer worth over \$3000 that can

measure wavelengths of the UV region of the spectrum.

Instruments like the thermal cycler and the fluorescence microscope are available for students in electives such as Genetics Research or those partaking in independent research. The thermal cycler applies the polymerase chain reaction process and is used to replicate and amplify certain segments of DNA so that just a few copies of sample DNA can produce several thousand or even several million additional copies of the same sequence.

During labs, students usually use the standard upright light microscopes, which are abundant at Stuyvesant. However, the school also possesses a fluorescence microscope, which uses fluorescence, in addition to reflection, to view a substance. Samples are made to fluoresce with fluorescent dye or antibodies with fluorescent markers. This particular microscope helps identify and locate cells and cellular parts with a great degree of specificity.

The science departments' equipment is also available for use by clubs. The Coral Reef Club uses several different instruments to help maintain the marine and freshwater coral tanks. One such instrument is the foam fractionator, which removes organic waste by creating bubbles that collect it, emulating the natural foam found on waves at beaches.

The Physics Department also houses equipment that allows students to better understand concepts and conduct research.

Chemistry teacher Dr. Zhen Chuan Li, who teaches a Modern Physics and Nanotechnology course, uses tools like the scanning electron microscope (SEM), lasers, and sensors in class. The \$45,000 SEM generates a variety of signals at the surface of solid specimens using a beam of high-energy electrons. It can help determine a sample's texture, chemical composition, crystalline structure, and the orientation of the materials that are part of the sample's composition. Data that is collected over a specific area of the sample is generated, along with a two-dimensional image.

Another tool related to nanotechnology is the Nanosurf Easy-scan 2, a scanning probe microscope costing \$8000 that forms images of surfaces using a physical probe. It integrates smart software, illumination, and optics with a simple design. There are three scanning techniques: one measures the interaction force between the tip and the surface, while the others measure a weak electrical current that flows between the tip and the substance and scans a small light source close to the sample to form the image.

An important device used exclusively for research purposes, especially those studying physics, is a three-dimensional printer called UPrint by Dimension. "Students who enter research competitions may be required to submit a prototype for their project, and the three-D printer is handy for that," junior Diana Dmitrichenko said. It is also used by the Robotics team to make templates. A 3-D sketch program

called AutoCAD is used to design the product to print. "The machine is limited in the size of the items it can produce, and it can print for hours [but] the end product is great it's made of plastic and has moveable parts," Dmitrichenko said.

While it is extraordinary that high school students are introduced to advanced equipment usually reserved for professional laboratories, the opportunity comes with an expensive price tag—which leaves many wondering where they money comes from. "We receive donations from private donors and grants from alumni and the Parents' Association. We also received a grant from Rockefeller Foundation," biology teacher Dr. John Utting said.

"Toshiba gave funds to the Coral Reef Club for the marine tanks," biology teacher Dr. Jonathan Gastel elaborated.

As to inquiries about how the departments choose which instruments to purchase, Dr. Gastel said, "When I make the decision, I think that if it's used in at least one class, it's worth buying. It depends on how teachers will use it in class and how it will contribute to research projects. The instruments will be used for successive years, which is a good thing."

It is obvious that Stuyvesant and its staff place much importance on the laboratory portion of students' science experience, and the students appreciate it. Senior Philip Wong said, "The concepts are learned in a classroom, but it's more hands-on in the lab setting, which makes it a more exciting experience."

# Features

## A Place For History Buffs



Mehak Ijaz / The Spectator

The Stuyvesant Historical Society is dedicated to creating a student run website concerning various aspects of history.

**By ARINA BYKADOROVA  
and EMMA LOH**

Stuyvesant has always had many outlets for students who wish to pursue their interest in certain academic subjects outside of the classroom. Students can enter math competitions, or join Bio Olympiad or the local school publications. However, one department, history, has been largely unrepresented in Stuyvesant extra-curricular offerings until now. Every Thursday, a select group of students meets in a third floor classroom to discuss and collaborate on a highly thought-out project that fuses history with technology. These students comprise a new club, the Stuyvesant Historical Society, which has already generated a large student base and a dedicated faculty advisor.

The mission of the Stuyvesant Historical Society is wide in scope. The chief project and purpose of the club is to create a website about history. The

site is not meant to be, however, your run-of-the-mill online review sheet. Instead, the goal is a well-crafted, interactive site that will be made up of articles produced and edited by the club members. They intend to make a vast collection of carefully researched and thoughtfully written projects easily accessible to a large population.

The idea to found the club first came from Social Studies teacher Avram Jezer. He had been brainstorming about creating the Historical Society for a number of years, but students only recently joined to turn the idea into reality. "He told a lot of students about it and no one really tried to get it off the ground. We were the very few who cared and actually did it," junior and club president Navida Rukhsha said. As faculty advisor, Jezer is heavily involved in the workings of the club. He comes to the meetings regularly and interacts with the members and the board, encouraging them to

pursue the larger vision of creating this resource.

Members of the club form teams based on a common interest in a particular topic. One leader spearheads the group and they meet and decide on the structure of their mini-project. Some topic ideas thrown out at the last meeting included the history of math, the LGBT community, how interstate relationships led to wars, historical technologies, and an interactive world map. Not all of these projects must be written articles. The interactive map, which would require massive amounts of coding, is a proposed project that will allow users to scroll through time periods and see information displayed geographically. A currently pending project is entitled "Comical Look at History." It will explore trivia and fun facts and will be mostly done in the form of art, which will be available online.

"A lot of the websites out there have breadth. This is what can set our website apart, that we will have people writing in-depth about their specific areas of expertise," Jezer said. To achieve the high-quality writing they aspire to, members will commit to an extensive amount of peer-review. They will edit each other's work, checking not only for factual accuracy but also for relevance, logic, and insight. All written work will also go through [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) to ensure originality.

The Historical Society attracts people interested in two facets of this work - historical and technological. The historians hold the majority over the techies in numbers, but the

programmers are by no means less important to the club's existence. They are to build the website from scratch, possibly using the software building program, Dreamweaver. The Society intends to get underway with research as soon as possible, since both the substance and the structure of the website are dependent on each other. All the same, the club atmosphere is not one of looming deadlines.

"I joined the Historical Society because I love history and I want to learn more about topics that I find interesting. I also want to improve my writing skills and meet other people who like history too," freshman Sabrina Huang said. The leaders strive to engage conversations among the members and to eliminate the classroom setting and make the club a group of history buffs willing to take on this lengthy project.

As with any fledgling club, there are kinks to smooth out. As they gather for their first meetings, members "want to make [the society] in such a good way that after we graduate, people who take over won't have to go through the hassle of technical issues," Rukhsha said.

Rukhsha highlights the challenge the Society faces today: building the foundations of the club to make it last. While most of the club members are currently juniors, many underclassmen are also involved. Not only did this pleasantly surprise Rukhsha and the rest of the board, but it also bodes well for the club as a whole. The essence of the website is that it continues to expand and improve as years go by, and for

this to happen, there needs to be a solid body of contributing members. The next few months will determine the fate of the Stuyvesant Historical Society - will they get on the road to fulfilling their mission or not? If

**"He told a lot of students about it and no one really tried to get it off the ground. We were the very few who cared and actually did it."**

**—Navida Rukhsha, junior and Club president**

successful, this could become a unique and unparalleled resource of historical knowledge and insight. Only time and the dedication of its members will show whether the Stuyvesant Historical Society will live up to its vision.

## Roving Reporter: Life in Sandy's Wake

*continued from page 1*

there, I saw her neighborhood get hit pretty hard. Trees fell on houses and downed power lines. The water had risen four

feet about the condition of my house, but I was more worried about people in a worse situation, those who had nowhere to go and don't have shelter or access to running water.

**Michael Cohen, Senior**

We convinced my grandmother to evacuate from her house in the Rockaways to our house in Brooklyn. She didn't want to originally, but when the winds picked up on Monday, she was glad she did. Our power went out, but that was as bad as it got for us. When people checked on her house the next day, her basement had flooded. The house next to hers was tilted, and the house across from hers had washed away completely. She's been staying with us, which is a bit strange because we've taken in other families, and it's pretty cramped, but we're managing.

**Leon Frajmund, Sophomore**

We live about six blocks from Stuy, so we were badly affected by the storm. We lost electricity for a few days, and we still don't have heating or hot water. Our water supply was tainted. We got by with candles for the most part. We came from Brazil, and we're used to power shortages, but we were annoyed by the blackout, especially because the streets seemed more dangerous.

ous.

**Eric Luu, Sophomore**

I live in SoHo, and after the hurricane, very little people were walking around. I suppose you could call it a "ghost town." I lost power last Monday, and my source of hot water shortly

**"Also, because of shortened daylight, people had to go to bed earlier, and there's not much you can really accomplish with the limited light a few candles provide."**  
**—Eric Luu, sophomore**

afterwards. For a week, I could only study, and when I ran out of things to do, I even read a grammar book, which I'd never do. I had to bathe every other

day with water that my family boiled on the stove. After the hurricane, it would start getting dark fast from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. This meant that people who wanted to walk during the later times had to carry a flashlight around because streetlights weren't working. Also, because of shortened daylight, people had to go to bed earlier, and there's not much you can really accomplish with the limited light a few candles provide. I sat around listening to the radio and got to sleep at 9:30 pm. Personally, though, I didn't think it was that bad because it could've been a lot worse. There were so many stories on the news, and I felt really lucky.

**Danielle Isakov, Sophomore**

I lost power last Monday around 4:00 p.m., and haven't had any since. No power means no hot water, no heating, and no electricity. I live in Sheepshead Bay, in south Brooklyn, but even though I live in Zone B, I still experienced some considerable damage. What else can I say? Gas is impossible to get. My dad had waited for hours on end just to be told that there is no more left. This is supply and demand at its finest, and even with flashlights and batteries, prices have become unreasonable. Who wants a candle for twenty dollars? But really, we

are very lucky, because it could have been much worse. My friends who live closer to the water have their basements completely destroyed, and although their power is on, it

**"We came from Brazil, and we're used to power shortages, but we were annoyed by the blackout, especially because the streets seemed more dangerous."**

**—Leon Frajmund, sophomore**

becomes very dangerous because water and electricity do not mix well.

**"I felt really homesick and worried about the condition of my house, but I was more worried about people in a worse situation, those who had nowhere to go and don't have shelter or access to running water."**  
**—Andrea Ting, junior**

feet above street level on Shore road, and there were rats everywhere because of the flooding. I felt really homesick and wor-

# Features

## When We Vote

*continued from page 1*

elections do exist, as does the opportunity to vote on local issues. Stuyvesant alumnus Brenden Collins ('12), who voted in Illinois, focused on this chance when he was at the polls. "There were also local issues and elections on the ballot, so it was nice to be involved in something that affects me more directly as well," he said.

Perhaps candidates should focus more on reaching out to young voters and informing them about the issues instead of only convincing them to vote. An election is more an educational experience for new voters. Chen said, "I personally also want to have this experience since this is a presidential election. I'm interested to see how the system works."

Furthermore, students say that voting supplements the material they may be learning in class. For Ruan, government class was her richest source of information about politics. "Prior to taking AP Gov, I avoided reading about politics, but now I'm much more interested in it. Not only

does [AP Government teacher Kerry Trainor] assign us to read these articles, but I find myself looking for them," Ruan said. One's parents and environment may also be influential in a vote. Responding to whether or not she receives pressure from her peers to vote democratic, Ruan explained that it's "more like guidance. I've been accustomed to thinking that way." Other viable options for research include candidates' websites and informative sites such as rockthevote.com.

Yet Koatz's parents' beliefs have remained with him in a different way. "My parents completely disagree with all of everything that I believe in. They agree with some of my pro civil liberties stuff, but they're both voting for Obama," he said. "I think they helped me learn to be a free thinker, which has allowed me to disagree with them, which I highly respect and love them for. I used to be a partisan Democrat, pseudo-socialist and I'm glad they taught me how to be discerning and intelligent and want to learn. I basically changed my political beliefs by myself."

Voting is also the easiest way to voice an opinion to the government, even if it's done behind a closed curtain. "If two candidates are the same on moral issues, it doesn't

matter to me which one wins or not, I'm going to vote for the one that stands on my values," Koatz said. A voting booth may be the only venue to make a difference in the nation for most 18 year olds, for reasons other than picking a viable candidate for victory. "If we're going to say votes matter in some context, Gary Johnson has a chance [...] of reaching five percent of the popular vote. If he gets five percent of the popular vote, he gets to have campaign funding for the 2015 election, which will make the Libertarian Party a third party option," Koatz said. "I kind of see that as something much more worth putting my vote towards rather than choosing between two candidates who don't have much of a difference on things I care about."

For Sidel, it was less about picking the next president and more about allowing people to become more comfortable with voting for a third party candi-



Judy Lee / The Spectator

date whose platform is more in line with their ideal rather than choosing between the better of two main party candidates. "If someone says that a vote for a third party candidate is a wasted vote, then I think that's wrong and I also think that will never lead to change," Sidel said.

Though there are various opinions on the value of participating in an election, it

is clear that it's a platform to voice an opinion. For young voters, it is the first step toward being a more impactful force on the government. While a single vote may not be valuable enough to determine the outcome in our country's Electoral College system, it is still a clear statement of approval for a candidate or a position – and is a hallmark of democracy.

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# Editorials

## STAFF EDITORIAL

### Levelling The Field

Stuyvesant is lacking. Not that we don't have enough Intel semi-finalists, or Nobel Laureates, or alumni in the president's inner circle. Rather, we are lacking in a way that becomes starkly evident the moment we step out of our 10-story pillar of prestige and into the streets of New York—a city bursting with the colorful diversity that we barely have.

Racial diversity (or lack thereof) has always been an issue lingering in the shadows of the eight specialized high schools, particularly Stuyvesant. While we have an overwhelming majority of Asians making up 72 percent of our student body, the black and Latino students that comprise 70 percent of students in the city's public school system comprise less than four percent of our own population.

The striking racial disparities at Stuyvesant and their consequences have been amplified since the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense Fund's (NAACP LDF) recently filed complaint. In emphasizing the lack of black and Latino students at the specialized high schools, the NAACP LDF takes issue with the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT), grappling with this gateway into the long-valued meritocracy of Stuyvesant for its "discriminatory impact on African-American and Latino applicants," NAACP LDF Director of the Education Practice Damon Hewitt said in an interview with BET.com.

This, however, isn't the first time the SHSAT has been scrutinized by the law. Nor is it the first time the test has faced serious negative attention. Prior to the passage of the Hecht-Calandra Act in 1972, which mandated the SHSAT as the sole means of admissions to the specialized high schools, many had questioned the culturally biased nature of the exam—including numerous superintendents, The New York Times, and even then-Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (DOE), Harvey Scribner.

The issue the LDF is trying to fix—that of limited racial diversity in the eight specialized high schools—is hard to blame solely on the SHSAT. And they seem to recognize that—the official complaint is that "the results [of the exam] are racially skewed." More to blame are the cultural and educational deficiencies that plague many minority neighborhoods and effect potential Stuyvesant students at a grade much earlier than eighth, when the test is taken. Yet the LDF urges changes in the admissions process to the eight specialized high schools, changes more egalitarian and culturally embracing than the two-hour, 100-question exam nearly 30,000 students take each year. The LDF is accurate in saying that our system needs changes, but vague about how to make them. How, exactly, do we empower certain minorities and level the playing field for all New York City students while preserving the elite reputation of specialized schools?

In many elementary and intermediate schools in New York City, the public education system fails to instill academic fervor and curiosity—the same fervor that is necessary to thrive in a competitive environment like Stuyvesant's. And it's not just that these kids don't have the instruction that would enable them to potentially score highly on the SHSAT—it's the psychology behind seriously considering prepping for and attending a school such as ours. In minority neighborhoods, where so few people apply to elite schools and even fewer go on to attend them, it is easy to completely write us off

the list. Making a drastic change to a new school environment, particularly one like Stuyvesant where there are so few familiar faces or even people of same race, could be a terrifying and alien prospect to many minority SHSAT-age students.

The sad truth is that many families in these neighborhoods are simply unaware of the specialized schools or the entrance exam. Many of us were fortunate enough to have parents who urged us along, idealizing Stuyvesant as the pinnacle of success and a pathway to a stellar college. Many other families, however, have other priorities that supersede the necessity for their children to have an elite education, barricading any awareness of the SHSAT or the Specialized High School Institute (SHSI), a free test prep program run by the city for middle school students with satisfactory performance on citywide exams and solid transcript grades. In many ways, it's not just the educational system that needs to be re-educated—it's the parents of many black and Latino families that, instead of investing in their children's education, do not do enough to encourage high-level academic achievement.

While SPARK Coordinator Angel Colon and Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm have made laudable efforts to reach out to minority-concentrated communities, the effort must expand. Organizations such as ARISTA and Big Sibs should continue the endeavor started by our school's diversity clubs in SPARK and visit middle schools all around the city, whether it means talking to an auditorium filled with students or visiting classrooms.

But this isn't all about parents and social pressures: the fact remains that to get into Stuyvesant one needs to beat out tens of thousands of other kids for the top spots by outscoring them on a multiple-choice test. Ask pretty much anyone in the halls how they spent the summers before seventh and eighth grades and you'll hear stories about prep classes galore and grueling work to prepare for the SHSAT. Free prep courses need to be made more readily available—the SHSI is a great one, but traveling to prep locations isn't an option for many families, and while many middle schools currently already have afterschool tutoring for the SHSAT, the teachers are often ineffective and read right from the back of a review book. We know that standardizing quality tutoring might not be the easiest thing to implement, but by making such resources readily accessible to the most neighborhoods begins to impart the message that everyone has a shot at a seat in one of the eight schools. And that's a crucial message.

The root of our problem, and the complaint that has been raised against us, is that not enough minorities are taking the test, and those who do don't score well enough to warrant a seat in one of the eight specialized schools. So—why don't we make the test mandatory? It could be given like the state Math and Language exams students sit through starting in the fourth grade, and would make the presence of Stuyvesant and the other schools much more tangible and close to home for many potential students. Prestigious middle schools such as Delta on the Upper West Side already mandate the SHSAT, and they send dozens of students to specialized schools each year. If a student or her parents are against the test, it would be easy to opt out, but by assuming that the majority of students will sit the grueling two-and-a-half hour test it will become something that more people will actively prepare for.

That being said, simply giving the test to everyone doesn't require minority students to study and won't instantly provide huge changes in the specialized schools' demographics. However, this is a practical, realistic step in the right direction—year after year, more students may see the opportunity being offered to them and take advantage of it.

More holistic changes to the admissions process, while possibly too radical and unrealistic to enact under the financial restraints of the Department of Education, would provide a more even playing field for all applicants by basing admission on many factors, instead of just on one test. These factors could include a review of middle school grades, extracurricular activities, and recommendations, giving the whole picture of a student.

But the whole point of the SHSAT is that it creates the ultimate meritocracy. It is blind to gender, race, past performance—only those who can succeed on a logic and math test get offered seats. Any other method of admission, insist opponents to a change, and schools such as Stuyvesant would lose their high standards. And to an extent, that's true. It's safe to say that we're all proud of how selective our school is, and that we are truly the very few who were able to do well enough on an exam. However, this testing-only policy has produced certain types of students prominent at Stuyvesant—students who can answer any multiple choice question ever written but are unable to hold their own in a debate or write a strong essay, and students who might be naturally smart but unwilling to put in the hard work needed to excel. Combining the test with an interview and a review of the applicant's middle school transcript might be a way to admit more well-rounded, but still exemplary, students. Once a student takes the test and receives a certain cut-off score, he could move onto a second round to be more closely vetted. After the interviews, the group could be narrowed down to accepted students. This wouldn't decrease selectivity—rather, by mirroring college admission systems, the integration of an interview and a transcript overview coupled with stellar SHSAT scores would only increase it.

We also have to remember that the current system also forms the composition of the city's seven other specialized high schools, many of which are more diverse and have more minority students. For example, according to its DOE report card, in the 2010-11 school year, 13 percent of the High School of American Studies at Lehman College's students were black and 21 percent were Latino. The difference in performance on the SHSAT between getting into another specialized high school and getting into Stuyvesant isn't very significant, and with some of the changes we discussed, more minority students can get over the hump of those points and get into Stuyvesant.

That being said, any change that is made to the system—regarding the admission process or something going even further back—is not going to be implemented immediately. Next year isn't going to see a huge increase of minority students or diversity. This is something that will change by increments, and there will be people who complain that it isn't enough. But change like this will make an impact over time, and will set a precedent each and every year for more people to take the test and consider Stuyvesant as a viable option for high school and their futures.

## The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper

 "The Pulse  
of the  
Student  
Body"

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## The Spectator

We are compiling an archive of past issues.

We are looking for issues published before 1995.

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The Spectator will now accept unsolicited Op-Ed pieces written by outside students, faculty, and alumni. These columns, if selected, will be published in The Spectator's Opinions section. Recommended length is 700 words. Articles should address school related topics or items of student interest. Columns can be e-mailed to [specreaderopinions@gmail.com](mailto:specreaderopinions@gmail.com).

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### FOR THE RECORD

- In "New Blood Drive Policies Instituted," it was incorrectly stated that Lisa Weinwurm is a notary. She is not.
- In two news articles from Issue 3, writer Risham Dhillon's name was misspelled.

# Opinions

## John Galt Speaking



Philip Shin / The Spectator

By DAVID CAHN

Let's play Jeopardy.

Banker by profession, this man spent his life making risky investments in fledgling enterprises. Famous for his business success, many critics labeled him "Midas," because everything he touched turned to gold.

Correct Answer: Who is Michael Mulligan?

Career bureaucrat, this man spent his life in politics, creating government regulations in order to promote the common good. When crisis hit the economy, he used it as justification to give himself more power, because he believed this was the only way to save his country from sure-fire disaster.

Correct Answer: Who is Wesley Mouch?

This year's election, when boiled down to the basics, was no more complicated than an election between Mr. Mulligan and Mr. Mouch, two crucial characters in Ayn Rand's "Atlas Shrugged," a book whose movie adaptation has hit theaters across the country during this election season.

The parallel between the moral choice presented by Rand, and the political choice we were faced with earlier this week, is at the very least eerie, and at most, unprecedented in American history.

Barak Obama assumed his presidency in the midst of an economic crisis. In such trying circumstances, he told the American people that the only way to get out of their economic crisis was to give more power to the government. Government would fix the problem. With the support of the American people, he spent our country into the abyss, doubling the national debt, and drowning small business with over-bearing regulation that prevented job growth. With unemployment still at 7.8 percent, he continues

to blame the rich for not paying their fair share, and argues that if he could only expand government further, that would solve our problems.

The parallel with Wesley Mouch, the Economic Czar in Rand's novel, sounds almost planned. Educated in the best universities, both leaders became career bureaucrats, blaming the country's economic problems on not enough government power, and dividing the country into "big

business" vs. everyone else. Campaigning on class antagonisms, both have created the perception that our economy is a zero-sum game with limited wealth that must be redistributed to achieve a fair society. With no experience in the private sector, when asked how business will continue to create jobs in a world of their regulatory nightmares, they believe that the rich will "figure it out."

Rather than issuing economic directives, as Mouch famously does, President Obama passed legislation to the same effect. Between Obamacare and Dodd-Frank, even Mouch would be impressed with Obama's progress.

Both make the same moral argument: their goal is to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number. Sacrifice the few in order to satisfy the many. Demonize the rich, in order to placate the poor. It was to prevent this moral cannibalism that Aristotle supported a republic, rather than a pure democracy. He believed this was the surest way to protect individual freedom.

The alternative to this morally corrupt society, Rand argued, was to elect a government that believed in human potential and therefore allowed individuals to flourish unencumbered by their government. Enter Mitt Romney, the capitalist who has a record of crusading for smaller, but more responsible government.

Mitt and Midas come from the same backgrounds. Both are known as risky investors. Both are demonized as profiteers. But

what they have in common is the ability to discover human potential where others fail. Mulligan becomes one of the first investors in Rearden Metal—a company that transforms the economy by producing a metal that is cheaper, and lighter than steel. Mitt has invested in companies like AMC Entertainment, Burger King, Burlington Coat Factory, Domino's Pizza, DoubleClick, Dunkin' Donuts, The Sports Authority, Staples, and Toys "R" Us. Both men have a unique ability to assess risk and make smart investments.

What does this parallel tell us about our election?

It makes clear to us that our choice was between two different philosophies. You either voted for Wesley Mouch—more government, more directives, a bigger nanny state, a growing deficit, and a perpetual crisis that requires us to sacrifice our producers to

the common good, or for Midas Mulligan—a man who has turned to gold every enterprise he's been a part of, who understands that small government is the only way for producers of wealth, like himself, to develop new ideas and create more jobs.

Ultimately, the question becomes whether we value success more than well-intentioned failure? Do we want a country that values its job creators, or enforces regulation that suffocates business?

America chose the career bureaucrat.

As the ideology that need is a moral trump card, success is unimportant, and the man with experience redistributing wealth is more qualified to lead this nation than the wealth creator himself, Rand's prophecy is becoming disturbingly similar to reality.



Niki Chen / The Spectator

## Between the Cracks

By DANIEL TEEHAN

The first sign of life that appears as I make my way along the periphery of the campus is a small huddle of people talking by the side of the road. Immediately recognizable in the center by virtue of outrageous facial hair is Jimmy McMillan of "The Rent is Too Damn High" fame. Flanked by a tricorned-hat-bearing Occupy Wall Street-er and an upside-down-boot-adorned Vermin Supreme, McMillan displays surprising gravitas in replying to his lone interviewer. Despite being duly entranced by the scene, I eventually continue on towards the intersection, where the bulk of the dissidents have gathered. Colorful characters abound here as well. At one end of the crowd a woman breaks ranks from her "Jews for Romney" cohort ("it's a Mitt-zvah") just long enough to spit at the feet of one of the Anti-Zionist banners bearing Hasidic Satmar Jews. At the other end of the paltry rabble a few students are holding up the requisite "Legalize Cannabis" sign, which just so happens to be the largest and highest quality display present. In between is a sampling of the usual suspects, from melting ice cap

couple to libertarian lady to elderly elephant-suit man to the one guy who is content to unobtrusively remind his small audience that Jesus does indeed forgive sinners. Amassed about the Monroe Lecture Hall at Hofstra University, where alternatively thinking locals are preparing to view the second presidential debate along with a Democracy Now broadcast, this motley assortment of career protesters provides for the concerned citizens within what the debates themselves provide for the political process: a veneer of entertainment and superficiality that obscures the very real issues at play.

Hofstra University went to great lengths to make sure that no pesky dissenters detracted from their perfect night with corporate politics and its associated public relations boon. The protesters I encountered were relegated to the "Public Area/Free Speech Zone," the corner of campus furthest away from where the presidential debate was taking place. Besides problematic implications about the status of free speech elsewhere on campus, the limitations of the zone were literal legal boundaries, as evidenced when Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein and her running mate were arrest-

ed upon trying to enter the main campus to participate in the debate. In fact, no third party candidates were allowed on the Hofstra campus in the period leading up to the debate. Media outlets paid lip service to the ostensible showings of protestors such as Mr. McMillan, but little was made of the Democracy Now broadcast, a progressive radio program that provided a valuable independent context for the debate and the election. Indeed the only reason that I was aware of the viewing was because my sister works for the radio station at Hofstra and my father teaches there.

Aside from the desire of the president of the university to get into the bona fides of the two political parties, boost applications to the school and solidify Hofstra's position as a debate host, the onerous restrictions were a result of the eligibility requirements set by the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD). The CPD is a purportedly nonpartisan organization funded by large corporations such as Anheuser-Busch and chaired by the political technocrats Frank J. Fahrenkopf Jr., a former chairman of the Republican National Committee and Michael D. McCurry, the former press secretary for President Bill Clinton. Under the leadership of Fahrenkopf and McCurry, the CPD set the criteria for participation in the debate high enough (15 percent support in national polls) to perpetuate their exclusive two-party system. This is the reason that Dr. Stein (MD from Harvard) was not allowed to participate in the debate, or even be present on campus for the entire semester leading up to it, despite being on the ballot in enough states to stand for election.

Third party candidates have a contentious history in American elections, particularly after the outcome of the 2000 election in which Green Party candidate Ralph Nader stripped just enough liberal votes from Al Gore in Flor-



Sam Kim / The Spectator

ida to cost Gore the presidency. Few if any of these independent hopefuls have had any chance at winning, and even if one were successful in more than just detracting from the mainstream contenders, the best possible outcome would be forcing the election into the House of Representatives, where the majority Republicans or Democrats would grant the presidency to their candidate.

Electoral ramifications aside, the benefit to the national discourse of having an alternate voice to that of the dual political behemoths in the debates is incalculable. The absence of this voice was not lost on the progressive audience in the Monroe Lecture Hall, who hissed openly at the endorsement of domestic drilling and coal mining from both candidates between their bouts of loudly decrying Romney as a liar. The Democracy Now broadcast was also surprisingly refreshing and somewhat cathartic, as host Amy Goodman discussed with her panel of local thinkers the issues not brought up and the opinions not expressed by the pandering candidates. Topics such as poverty, brushed aside by the candidates in favor of pampering the middle class with promises, and assault weapons control, meagerly equiv-

Margot Yale / The Spectator



Margot Yale / The Spectator

# Opinions

## Without the Lipstick



Maggie Wu / The Spectator

By RISHAM DHILLON

I like experiments. Let's do one together.

Materials: Good short term memory, a few ounces of pure honesty, pencil and paper (op-

your short term memory and your honesty.) Describe the scientist you imagined. In your description, please include the age range, gender, etc.

We'll stop here for now. In second grade, when my teachers used to talk about scientists, I used to imagine mad-eyed old men with hunched backs bent over a bunch of test tubes. Science class was nothing more than the memorization of frog-cycle diagrams and solar system mnemonics. I never started considering science as a profession until a few years ago, when exposure lead me to realize that there is a lot more to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields than I had previously thought. Unfortunately, not many women pursue careers in the science field. In fact, there is a huge gender gap in many of the STEM fields. According to the Department of Commerce, in 2009, less than a quarter of the employees in STEM fields were women.

There are a handful of ways to explain why this gender gap exists, but perhaps the main issue is that there is a general stereotype in our society that science is for males. Don't believe me? Think back to that little experiment we just did. Did you imagine a male scientist or a female scientist? There you go. (If you imagined a female, my apologies.)

Many organizations have tried eliminating this gap by directly attacking this stereotype. On Thursday, June 21, 2012, the European Commission released a video intended to attract more girls to careers in science. It's titled "Science – It's a Girl Thing," and it is one of the most pathetic attempts to try and engage a social group in science that you'll ever see. Just to give you a quick summary, it mixes lipstick with pipettes, eye shadow with microscopes, and nail polish with test tubes. It sexualizes women in science,

making research "pretty" and "cute." I won't try and argue how wrong this is – I don't think it needs any further explanation. But instead, I'll focus on the two questions that always arise to my mind whenever someone complains about this issue.

First, why do we need to get more girls interested in science?

Critics usually like to de-

ping into half of the population. We're missing out on all the potential we can have. Women think very differently from men – they offer new ideas and provide different ways about thinking of a problem. With more women in the STEM fields, we'll have more new and innovative ways to approach issues that plague the scientific community today.

Furthermore, better proportions of women in the field will translate into a greater representation and increased concentration on problems that the female population faces.

We shouldn't be looking to push a generation of girls in this direction just to get an appealing statistic. Instead, we need to do this because as a society, it is our duty to open up opportunities to every gender – and STEM fields offer many financial opportunities as well. According to the Office of Science and Technology Policy, "women who work in STEM earn on average 33 percent more than their counterparts in other fields." By failing to acknowledge this problem, we are indirectly depriving numerous female students from a right they have – the right to know about the mysteries they can help solve and about the different lives they can live.

The harder question to answer is how to get more girls to pursue scientific careers. There is no quick-fix solution. There isn't one single factor I can isolate. I've tried. But I definitely know that attacking the stereotype by sexualizing research as the European Commission did is no solution at all.

We can start by focusing on exposure. I'm not talking about simplifying science into "a girl thing" by showing lipstick in one hand and a pipette in the other. I'm talking about involving students in experiments and encouraging analytical thinking from a very early age and taking this initiative all the way to high school, as many studies have suggested that female students at a young age usually express a similar amount of interest in the science field as do young boys, but they lose this interest throughout the years as it is not nurtured.

Let's start with our kindergartners by taking a beautiful, yet unnoticed, phenomenon, the growth of a plant, and show them what happens when you vary different factors. Let's allow our second graders to actually see the life-cycle stages of a butterfly before their very

own eyes. More importantly, let's encourage our seventh and eighth graders to explore different scientific principles by letting them design and conduct their own experiments more frequently than just during the yearly science fair. And let's make better programs for high school students through which they can easily shadow or intern in a lab. By doing so, we will not only foster interest in girls about the science field during just an early age, but also nurture this interest well into their teenage years and protect it from getting diluted through societal influence. We need to involve the media in this issue, identify more STEM women role models, and increase funding for science pro-

**You aren't going to attract girls by producing videos that sexualize research.**

**But in the end, it's more than attracting girls just to get a pretty 1:1 male to female ratio; it's about improving our scientific fields by tapping a potential reservoir of intellectuals who can help us find answers.**

tional).

Procedure: Quick! Imagine a scientist working in a lab for a few moments. Use your honesty (see material list) here, and don't move on with the experiment until you have an image in your mind.

Results: (Be sure to utilize

**Our education system needs to show students what science is really about – passion, dedication, frustration, effort, and remarkable achievements. It needs to nurture interest in both boys and girls and continue supporting it throughout our K-12 system and even after that.**

mean this campaign as just another feminist movement. I won't lie; it is about leveling the playing field, and that's an honest and just motive on its own. But that's not the only reason.

We need the best minds in our STEM fields, and the fact of the matter is that we aren't tap-

grams dedicated to girls.

In essence, the educational system needs to be reformed to depict a more accurate reflection of this field: one in which you have to sit down and dissect your problem, your tweezers being your analytical capabilities and the microscope being past experiments or known knowledge about the subject. The system needs to show students what science is really about – passion, dedication, frustration, effort, and remarkable achievements. It needs to nurture interest and continue supporting it throughout our K-12 system and even after that.

You aren't going to attract girls by producing videos that sexualize research. To go back to our little experiment, I think we can draw a conclusion.

We can do this without the lipstick.

## Response to Adam Schorin's "Admittedly Wrong"

By DAVID CAHN

In the last issue of The Spectator, Adam wrote that letter grades are an effective way to help students emphasize learning as opposed to competing solely for the purpose of getting the best grades. He quoted Mr. Grossman in justifying his 1-6 scale (equivalent to the A-F scale), saying that "It's like when you go to casino [...] The first thing you

do is cash in your money for chips. It's easier to play; it's more fun to play [...] Chips are some kind of artificial currency."

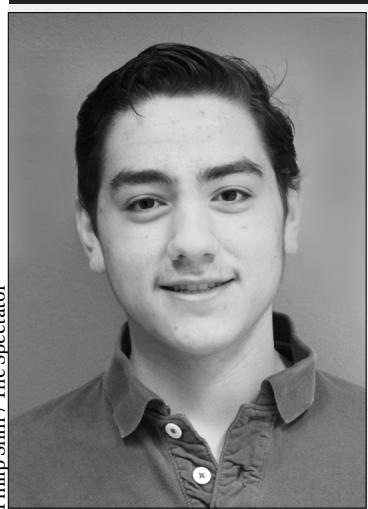
This metaphor highlights exactly why we should not be using letter grades. Letter grades are in fact like poker chips. But the reason that casinos use poker chips as opposed to dollar bills is because gamblers are more likely to feel more disconnected with

the chips than hard cash, and therefore more likely to be careless with their money. Similarly, letter grades create a disconnect between the hard numbers (what you get on your tests) and your final grade. As a result, students will be more likely to waste their grades, just as gamblers waste their money.

Grossman's metaphor was great—but we need to take it to its logical

consequence – if people gambled with dollar bills, would America have a gambling problem? Would people lose millions of dollars each year to slot machines? It's unlikely.

We need to know where we stand. Clearly, we're better off when we use hard currency: number grades.



Philip Shin / The Spectator

# Opinions

## Affirmatively Speaking

Xanthe Gallate / The Spectator



By ADAM SCHORIN

Three weeks ago, I wrote a column for The Spectator called "Admittedly Wrong" in which I argued that the "numbers game" mentality at Stuyvesant could be diminished by changing number grades to letter grades and offering other criteria for admission to the school. I wrote about how the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) is already being challenged by the NAACP, and how other criteria in admission could improve the mindset at Stuyvesant. But I somewhat strategically—and sheepishly—skimmed over the issue that prompted the NAACP to file its complaint: the lack of racial diversity at specialized high schools.

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF), the legal arm of the NAACP, wrote in the complaint that the single-score admissions process violates The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which "provides that recipients of federal financial assistance may not exclude students from participation in their programs or activities on the

**I somewhat strategically—and sheepishly—skimmed over the issue that prompted the NAACP to file its complaint: the lack of racial diversity at specialized high schools.**

basis of race, color, or national origin." The LDF argues that the current admissions process "disproportionately excludes African-American and Latino students from these life-changing educational programs."

While the test "may be neutral on its face, because of outside conditions and lack of test prep for certain communities and lack of appropriate curricula provided in public schools [the] results are racially skewed," Khary Lazarre-White, the founder of a youth outreach program in Harlem and a consultant on the LDF complaint, said in an e-mail interview. "And so, basing admission on such a test, which is not the best predictor [of academic performance], in turn produces a result that is not equitable." He also claimed the defense of the test, the idea that a single score is

the fairest method for admission, is a "false 'meritocracy' equality narrative."

Mayor Bloomberg and others have repeatedly stressed the fact that a single score is the only accurate and democratic way to judge the best and brightest of the city's youth. But when a large population of students doesn't have access to the same resources or information as their counterparts in other schools and neighborhoods, if the same material is not being taught in all the city's public schools, then how is one score able to take everything into account?

By Sunday, November 18, 28,000 current eighth graders will have taken the SHSAT. Of those, 25 will be graduates of Excel Prep, a free SHSAT tutoring program I started in 2011 for middle-school students who would otherwise not have access to prep.

The majority of students in Excel are minorities from middle schools in Washington Heights, Harlem, Ridgewood, and the Bronx. Eight students this year attend MS 324 Patria Mirabal, a school in Washington Heights where 91 percent of students were eligible for free or reduced lunch last year; the school is 85 percent Hispanic and 12 percent African American. Only 28 percent of the school's students met state standards on reading tests in 2012; many of the parents I interact with have trouble forming English sentences and some students start the class taking 20 or 30 minutes per reading comprehension passage. The percentage of students with limited English proficiency has increased over the last three years. One fifth of teachers have a master's or doctorate degree—compare this to the 75 percent of Stuyvesant teachers.

Over the three months of Excel Prep, students went to 18 three-hour classes, received individual instruction from over 30 ARISTA tutors, completed binders of practice problems, and took 10 full-length practice tests. Most students' scores shot up 30 or 40 raw points over the classes, but for those students who started at 10 or 15 out of 100—when the Stuyvesant cutoff floats around 88 or 90—the improvement means little in terms of admission. Students who deserve the opportunities specialized high schools provide, who are intelligent and motivated enough to succeed at these schools, have already had eight years of secondary education—three months of prep is not going to fix that.

The LDF does not pretend that the test itself is the cause for the racial disparities at the specialized high schools—as Khary said, the test is "neutral," but because of outside factors like meager prep opportunities and subpar schools, the results are racially skewed. To counteract these factors, and to provide fair oppor-

tunity to all of the city's youth, the LDF advocates a change in the admissions process. (In my last article, I supported a change for reasons other than racial diversity: namely, the SHSAT does not at all predict an accepted student's success at Stuyvesant; other criteria like middle-school grades and attendance records

Daniel Tillman, who himself was one of a few black students in his high school. "There is a responsibility on government to make sure those resources are available, [but] any black kid can succeed." The lack of resources (e.g., free test prep and better schools) and even knowledge of the specialized high schools and the SHSAT make it harder for students growing up in such a communities to make it into one of these schools. There is a cultural and ideological difference between Riyan's parents, who raised him with the importance of education, and many of the parents I have met through Excel, who are shocked to learn about the existence of a place like Stuyvesant, who themselves may not, or cannot, prioritize their children's education.

This can be changed. I spoke with junior Savannah Jeffreys, who is involved with the Black Student League at Stuyvesant, about a program the group wants to implement. "We want to go into middle schools that have a lot of minority students but wouldn't necessarily be aware of SHSAT prep and advocate for Stuy," she said. "[The students] are not able to afford prep, and not even encouraged to take the test at all."

Additionally, middle schools could integrate SHSAT prep into their curricula. Even for students who don't plan on taking the test, doing a few practice problems a week, or using test problems to learn and review generally taught concepts—like algebra or reading comprehension—could hardly be bad for their education. Incorporating some level of prep into the classroom will both train and inform more students at a younger age.

I refuse to believe that of all the black and Latino students in New York City—the majority of public school enrollment—only a handful have the ability to succeed at Stuyvesant, as is implied by the test results. One of the most significant impediments to minorities in the public school system, even greater than lack of prep opportunities, is a lack of knowledge: many students don't know about specialized high schools until it is too late to prepare. They don't know what they're missing.

That should be the priority now: educating students in under-served middle or even elementary schools, educating minority students about the specialized high schools. We can't immediately fix the public school system, but we can inform the students who are in it. An external impetus can internalize motivation. And we can change the admissions process, as I advocated.

ed in my last column, to one that is more holistic, more relevant to student success, and fairer to black and Latino applicants.

The complaint from the LDF comes at a time when affirmative action has taken more than a local platform: the Supreme Court is currently hearing the case of Fisher v. The University of Texas, in which a white girl, Abigail Fisher, claims she was denied college admission on the basis of her race—that her seat was given to an unqualified minority through affirmative action. The issue of diversity, of racial disparity in admissions, is not an isolated one. It is just very hard to talk about.

The goal is not to lower the standard of admissions, but rather to apply equal standards to all applicants.

I'm a white kid from the Upper West Side. In my entire life, I have had two black friends my age. I want to a private Jewish middle school—no black students there—and in eighth grade, when it was time to prepare for the SHSAT, I enrolled in a 10-session prep course, which my parents paid for. I am wildly under-qualified to talk about race. When I started Excel, I

**We can't immediately fix the public school system, but we can inform the students who are in it.**

would say more about an applicant's abilities as a student; and a more holistic approach would decrease obsession with numbers that plagues the student population.)

But the price of test prep is a surmountable barrier, according to a recent article in The New York Times. Writer Kyle Spencer tells of Riyan Iqbal, a student at Bronx Science and the son of Bangladeshi immigrants, a taxi driver and a Duane Reade cashier, who says his parents often remind him of "the trials they endured back home, walking to school barefoot, struggling with hunger, being set back by floods and political unrest." Riyan and his parents see his education as a way "to make up for their hardships," he said. Even though prep classes cost his family \$200 per month, they made his education a priority—they equated it with a better future.

This is the immigrant mentality, and one could argue, more specifically, the Asian immigrant mentality. Many first- or second-generation Asian-American students who have been interviewed recently on the subject agree: Stuyvesant and Bronx Science have been their targets since a young age; they have grown up striving for the education and opportunity these schools offer.

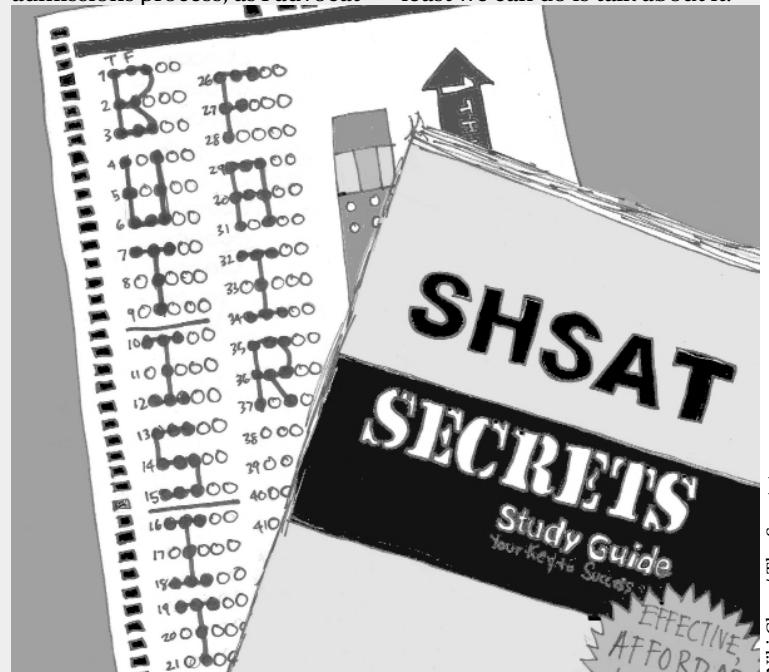
Many of the parents I have spoken to through Excel do not have this attitude. The first time they heard about specialized high schools was when I contacted their children's middle schools. They sign their children up for the free tutoring I offer, but sometimes do not play any further role in their children's preparation for the exam.

That being said, other Excel parents are more proactive. They e-mail me for updates regularly, drill their children on multiplication tables, and review each practice test result in detail. Unfortunately, they are in the minority. I used to require parents' signatures on scored practice tests—a fact I included in e-mails to parents—but stopped when only a few parents complied. (Others did not respond to a single e-mail, in some cases because they worked extensive shifts as cashiers or did not own computers themselves.)

"The resources need to be there, the parents need to be made aware of the resources, and the parents, who are the first sources of education, need to get it," said social studies teacher

**Students who are intelligent and motivated enough to succeed at these schools have already had eight years of second-rate education—three months of prep is not going to fix that.**

avoided the term "minority," advertising my program as prep for "under-served youth." But we have reached a point where minority students are the under-served youth, where, solely on the basis of their education and upbringing, they are being excluded from one of the best educational opportunities in the city. I don't know if changing the admissions process or creating more prep classes will do much to improve the situation, but the least we can do is talk about it.



Niki Chen / The Spectator

# Hurricane Sandy



By the Photo Department

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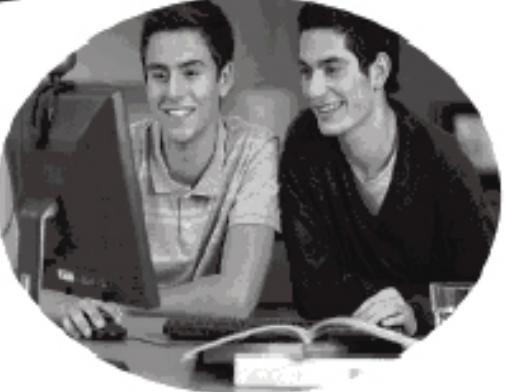
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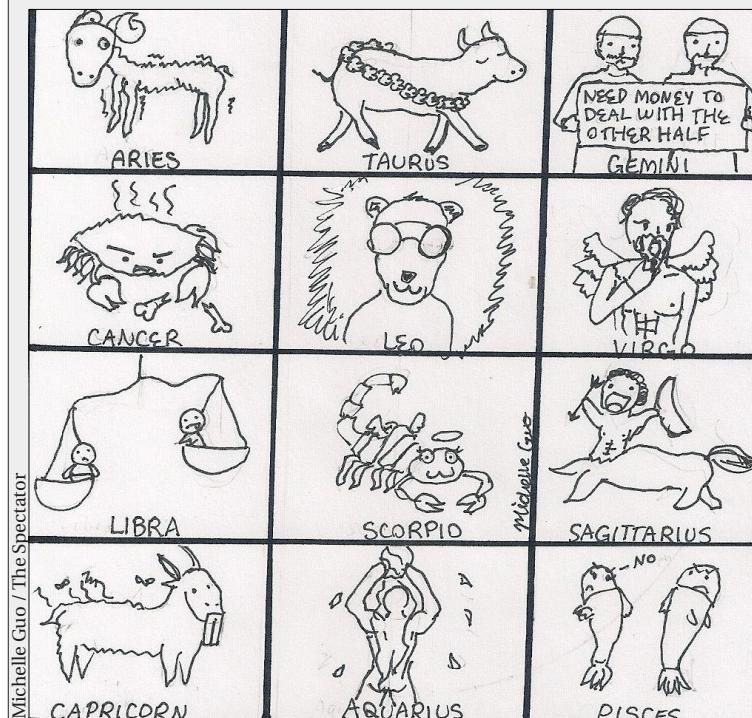
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# Humor

**These articles are works of fiction. All quotes are libel and slander.**

## Your Horoscope For Today



Michelle Guo / The Spectator

By MUKI BARKAN

### Birthday Today

Well, if you don't feel particularly different, then something is wrong—maybe this isn't your real birthday. Also, you were adopted.

### Taurus

A star has shined upon you, and all of your test scores will be above an 89. The stars also want you to know that you should keep the cheat sheet in your sleeve, not in your shoe.

### Aries

Soon you will find a kindred spirit...in your parents' liquor cabinet.

### Cancer

It is said that great wisdom can be found in the writings of others—the expertly drawn phalluses on your desk are no

exception. They are as much a social commentary as Voltaire's "Candide."

### Hypres

There are some things that you have forever, and just because they're not here right now, doesn't mean they're gone. That rash might be one of them—get it checked out.

### Libra

When you log off Facebook, you will sleep like a baby, as in you will probably wake up crying every few hours.

### Scorpio

Obviously your social life may suffer, but if you study really hard, you'll have good grades to show for it! By the way, the stars say if you believed that, you are a total nerd. Get a life, four-eyes.

### Virgo

Remember that one time you stiffed the waiter at Gee Whiz? Well, he never forgot. You should probably hide for a minimum of one week, but a maximum of seven days; the stars know best!

### Gemini

The Heavens portend you will find love at the STC's production of "Grease." It might be off-key, overacted, and ill-rehearsed, but it will be love nonetheless.

### Aquarius

Here are some wise words from the stars: Hare-brained, Globular, Curtains, Immaculate, Standardized, Intrepid, Plunder, Serrated, Tape, Lumberjacks, Therapist.

### Pisces

If you're exploring new places, step carefully in the dark; you could stub your toe, trip, or be attacked by wild bats.

### Leo

There is always more to take, but sometimes it's not for you.

### Sagittarius

Never doubt yourself. You are worth more than people give you credit for. So talk back to your teachers—they'll understand.

### Capricorn

Often what you are searching for is right in front of you—look at the first letter of every Horoscope to find a secret message.

### LEARN CHINESE- To Rain

xia-yu

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## Senior Prank Finally Noticed

By ROBERT MELAMED

To most people's knowledge, Stuyvesant's Senior Class of 2012 left without a final "bang." However, it was recently discovered that amidst all of the scandals last June, the seniors were able to replace the school cafeteria food with cardboard. Senior pranks, a longtime tradition at Stuyvesant, tend to be very noticeable, but this prank wasn't recognized until four months after the seniors graduated.

A student reported his find-

mer Senior class President Eric Han ('12) said. "We decided it was time for a change."

The seniors believed a change in school lunch was imminent and decided to take it upon themselves to transform Stuyvesant's meal plan. "We started cardboard recycling drives, which were ignored by 97 percent of the student body," James Frier ('12) said. "Eventually, we decided to steal cardboard boxes from underneath homeless people—that did the trick."

The seniors switched the cafeteria food with the corrugated paper material on Friday, June 1. According to the seniors, the old food did not go to waste.

"We decided to donate the cafeteria food to the prestigious China Red Restaurant on Chambers Street, so it would not be thrown away," Bill Ling ('12) said.

Many students are demanding that the school keep the cardboard menu, claiming that the cardboard is just as nutritious as the food they used to serve. In addition, instead of punishing the Class of 2012, the administration has sent out thank-you notes for its kind deed. "I would like to personally thank the class of 2012 for its fibrous contribution to our school. My colon hasn't been this clean in decades," Assistant Principal of Pupil Personnel Services Eleanor Archie said.

"This is one of my favorite senior pranks ever," history teacher Berta Feldman said. "It's almost as good as the Class of 1918 prank, when the seniors didn't show up for the entire year because they were serving in World War I."

## They were able to replace the school cafeteria food with cardboard.

ings while eating lunch on Monday, October 22. "I was eating my chicken fingers when I realized that one of them said 'UPS Packaging' on it," junior Mashfiq Ahmed said. "I decided not to report it because the food was just too delicious to throw out."

The Senior Class of 2012 thought of the prank after seeing a review of the school's lunch in the annual issue of Zagat. "It was the first time Stuyvesant had ever received a zero on anything," for-

## Zhang Attends Parent Teacher Conference

By MARIUM SARDER

Stuyvesant High School held its first round of Parent Teacher Conferences on Friday, October 26. However, this year's PTC was not the typical sob fest; there was a special guest. Interim Principal Jie Zhang attended her first PTC since her appointment as principal of Stuyvesant High School with the hope of understanding how her daughter is adjusting to her fall semester classes.

Zhang was seen among the crowd of sweaty, desperate Stuyvesant parents sprinting all over the building. Like many parents, Zhang was willing to commit questionable acts in order to reach every teacher. A spectator claims to have witnessed Zhang throw an elbow as she clamored over a chemistry sign-up sheet. "I was waiting with a mob of parents around one of the sign-up sheets when suddenly someone pulled a Moses and parted the crowd," Stuyvesant parent, Patricia Lin said.

"Next thing I know, there's a woman in a power suit sprinting towards the table. She knocked down my two-year-old daughter. But all is fair during conferences, and quite frankly she earned my respect with

that move."

The tables have turned with teachers in the hot seat, as Zhang questions their distribution and justification of grades. "Principal Zhang was very adamant about finding out why her daughter got a 'S' on her report card," history teacher Daniel Tillman said. "I tried to tell her that I give everyone a 'S' for their first term grade, and that it doesn't really mean much. The only problem with that was Principal Zhang didn't take too kindly. As punishment she stuck me with lunch duty for the next three months."

Principal Zhang's position of power has resulted in mixed feelings among many of the teachers. Some claim to feel extremely conflicted with what to say to Zhang; what is the right thing to do in these unusual circumstances? "It's extremely difficult to put together the right words," Biology teacher Stephen McClellan said. "I want to be honest, I do, but a larger part of me wants to keep my job. Not that anything I could say would make me lose my job because Zhang is fantastic, excellent, better than excellent, she is splendid. I want that on the record."

## Bloomberg Hired As Language Teacher

By TIMMY LEVIN and PATRICK SO

After his final term comes to an end next year, Mayor Michael Bloomberg will be assuming the position of a Spanish teacher at Stuyvesant High School. He was chosen for the job after his moving displays of fluency in Spanish during last week's addresses to the city.

New Yorkers were blown away by Bloomberg's mastery of the language. "He spoke so well that I couldn't understand a word he was saying," Spanish teacher Robert Weldon said. "It's a good thing that woman was using sign language to translate."

Stuyvesant students are optimistic about the new addition to the language department. "I saw Miguel ordering lunch at Chipotle the other day. He looked like he really knew what he was doing," senior Daelin Fischman said.

After his promotion, Bloomberg revealed his backstory, and why he knows Spanish like the back of his "quesadilla." "Back when I just a lad in Mexico, the son of a hum-

ble shepherd from Killarney, I wanted more out of life," he said. "I decided to make a name for myself in the United States. I lived on just tea and crumpets as I paddled my way all the way up the Nile to the Texas border."

**Bloomberg's understanding of Spanish is deeper than anyone has ever imagined.**

der."

Upon further investigation, it was found that Bloomberg's understanding of Spanish is deeper than anyone has ever imagined. Harvard University Dean of Languages Diana Sonnenson published her findings

in a report this week. "He seems to speak a dialect only spoken by the ancient mountain tribes of Spain, not heard by civilization for over 1000 years," she wrote. "The language was originally used to summon the rain deity Quetzalcoatl during times of drought."

In addition, Bloomberg is fluent in many other languages including, but not limited to, English, Italian, German, French, Afrikaans, and Canadian. "Due to his broad understanding of so many different languages, I have decided to offer him a completely new teaching position," Assistant Principal of World Languages Arlene Ubieto said. "He will be teaching a combination of all languages called 'Engitagerfrenkaansdian.'

Bloomberg is thrilled at the opportunity to become a pioneer in the language field. "I have signed an executive order to make Engitagerfrenkaansdian the official language of New York City. Now nobody will be discriminated against because of the language they speak," he said. "Everybody will not understand me equally."

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obfuscation	olfactory	apposite	labile	empirical	proscribe
ossify	opprobrium	banderole	maculated	ephemeral	sagacious
probity	panegyric	cant	oleaginous	epilogue	scrupulous
adipose	parsimony	cormorant	phrenology	equanimity	sophomoric
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chary	peremptory	eleemosynary	stygian	equivocate	spurious
chimera	perfidious	execrable	tyro	esoteric	tacit
churlish	perspicacious	extirpate	viscera	exculpate	unscrupulous
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# Arts and Entertainment

## Food

### Nickel and Dine: The Doughnut Plant



The Burger Joint at Le Parker Meridien; 119 West 56th Street

By EMILY LEI

Specialized pastry stores can be a letdown. You might have to pay \$5.00 for a cupcake the size of a dollar coin or search for places to taste strange flavors of ice cream that (let's face it) aren't that good. At the Doughnut Plant, located at 379 Grand Street on the Lower East Side, customers most definitely get the bang for their buck. You can enjoy the satisfaction of a freshly baked doughnut without all the frivolous fanciness

of a high-end pastry shop. The shop's look even shouts out its distinctiveness with its quirky and eye-catching décor. Rather than sporting the typical pastry shop appearance of pastel walls and cute decorations, the Doughnut Plant looks industrial and modern with a large steel sign above the entrance, pipes along the walls, light bulbs on the ceiling, and funky metal furnishing inside. Behind the counter are racks upon racks of fresh doughnuts. Tables are set by the large windows for the

patrons. Lining the windowsills are stone benches with painted surfaces of circles and squares in an array of colors. All in all, the bakery is not just for stopping by and grabbing a doughnut; customers are welcome to stay and enjoy the comfortable atmosphere—a mix between contemporary and old-fashioned—while munching on some spectacular doughnuts.

Mark Israel, the current owner, opened up the shop in 1994 after moving out of his basement bakery. With his grandfather's own recipes and a pinch of originality, his doughnuts soon became a popular new treat for New Yorkers and tourists. Unlike other brand-name doughnut manufacturers, Mark creates his doughnuts daily with the best ingredients and puts his own twist into them with inventive flavors and one-of-a-kind dough. His extraordinary pastries have been featured in countless culinary magazines and newspapers. Incidentally, their popularity regularly causes lines to stretch down the block, but fear not, it goes fairly quickly. And at \$3.25 or less, depending on the kind of doughnut you pick, the

doughnuts are bound to put a smile on your face without taking a sizeable chunk out of your wallet.

These doughnuts have been all over the world. They've been tasted in Paris, eaten in Japan, bought in Korea and made in New York City. But why are they so popular? Customers say the most defining quality of this remarkable shop is its wide variety of flavors that have them returning to purchase their favorites or try another new creation.

For \$2.75 to \$3.25, you can have a light and airy yeast-raised doughnut. They are the largest kind of doughnut and come in interesting flavors that range from mango to vanilla bean to blackberry jam. Cake doughnuts, such as the carrot cake and chocolate chip cookie cake, cost \$2.75 to \$3.00 and are denser than the yeast doughnuts, with a texture that closely resembles that of a pound cake. Doughseeds, mini filled doughnuts that are jokingly called the "diet doughnuts," are \$2.00 each. Crowd favorites include the tres leches, blackout, peanut butter and blackberry jam, and coconut cream. One of the

shop's most iconic flavors is the crème brûlée, which is saddled with reviews complimenting its likeness to the original dessert.

If those flavors don't appeal to your palate, there are others to try. Some unusual yet tasty flavors include pistachio, lavender, and orange blossom cashew. The selection doesn't end there: there are also several classic but amazing flavors like apple cinnamon and raspberry, including seasonal doughnuts offered at the right times of year. The exceptional flavors are admired for their creativity and deliciousness—have you ever heard of a rosewater-infused doughnut? The Doughnut Plant also makes its own jams, jellies, glazes, creams and custards. Evidently, this place is no Dunkin' Donuts that is found in every big city across the globe.

For Stuyvesant students, the Doughnut Plant is a great alternative to buying more expensive pastries or eating at the nearby McDonalds after school. Whether you're craving something fruity or sweet or just looking to try something new, the Doughnut Plant will surely have something that'll be worth the money.

### From Poor Man's Food to the Latest Trend

By JANE ARGODALE

It is a great misfortune that for the average, non-food-savvy person, the word "ramen" means little more than the image of squares of dry noodles and packets of flavored powder, stirred together to make a quick, sodium-rich meal.

Luckily, this is not what it means to me. A somewhat-recent upsurge in ramen shops in the city has brought authentic, delicious, and no-longer-too-pricy Japanese ramen to the people of New York City. These eateries range in location, prominence, variety in selection, and size, but it's no longer difficult to have a fairly cheap bowl of tasty ramen that doesn't make you feel like a broke college student.

Rai Rai Ken on 218 East 10th Street in the East Village exemplifies the understated, cozy atmosphere of a ramen shop you can imagine ducking into

from a Tokyo street on a winter evening. The red curtains printed with kanji open into a small room with a few booths and tables for two. The menu is short but varied, with appetizers including the mandatory pork buns (which here are tasty if a bit small and bland without hot sauce) and several different types of ramen. All the ramen items are made with meat broth, except for the vegetarian miso ramen. Shio ramen is made with clear, thin broth, and shoyu ramen adds soy sauce to the mix. A bowl of one of these with roast pork, seaweed, marinated bamboo shoots, and half a boiled egg costs \$9.50, with added toppings like wontons or extra noodles costing just a few dollars more. Though the selection is very basic, the ramen itself is rich and flavorful.

Momofuku Noodle Bar has a much more trendy vibe, and draws large crowds all hours of the day. The seating at Momo-

fuku, located on 171 First Avenue, is much less conducive to privacy than that of Rai Rai Ken, with long, cafeteria-style tables and bar-style seating. Momofuku has pioneered the ramen trend in New York City, and chef and founder David Chang has expanded his line of restaurants as far as Australia and even published a cookbook. Though the rich, essentially half-fat pork buns and ramen are the most popular menu items, only two varieties of ramen are available yearlong: Momofuku ramen and spicy miso ramen. The ramen here has a very savory, meaty taste, and doesn't get by simply on being incredibly rich and filling: a bowl will run you \$10. Desserts are also available here and at their Milk Bar, located nearby at 251 East 13th Street.

The ramen trend has also understandably spread into the outer boroughs, some of which have affluent Asian neighbor-

hoods. HinoMaru Ramen, at 33-18 Ditmars Boulevard in the Queens neighborhood of Astoria, opened last spring and has already begun to draw crowds from the neighborhood and around the city. Both table and bar seating are available, with the bar seats providing a view right into the restaurant's kitchen. The menu has a selection of seven types of ramen, each corresponding to a different region of Japan, as well as their "New York-style" HinoMaru Ramen, made with a tonkotsu broth and flavored with a "fireball" of spices placed in the middle of the bowl. Bowls of ramen range from about \$9-13. The pork buns, labeled on the menu as "nikku man," are slightly smaller and just a notch below those at Momofuku. The ramen, however, blows many establishments in Manhattan out of the water with its huge selection of soups and toppings, large portions, and variety of flavors,



Rai Rai Ken, 218 East 10th Street in the East Village

from the creamy tonkotsu broth to the savory combination of tonkotsu and shoyu to seasonal specials like the cold pineapple ramen.

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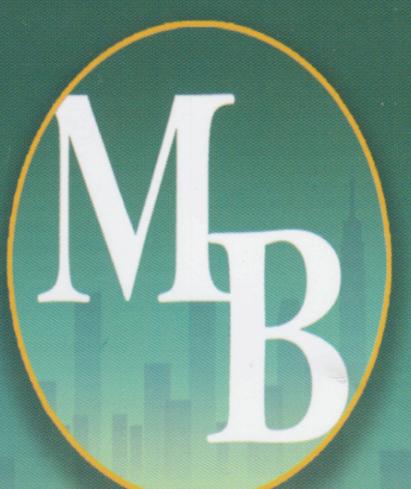
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Danny Kim / The Spectator

# Arts and Entertainment

## Events

### Teen Designers of New York, Unite!



By OTHILLA WLODARCZYK

"It serves to underscore that you never know where life's serendipitous path is going to take you," said Tim Gunn, fashion consultant and educational mentor onstage at New York City's Teen Design Fair. Held annually in New York City and Washington, D.C., for six years now, this year's fair took place at the Altman Building. Lit with pink and purple lights, the space had seating for the many designers invited to speak with attendees and a basement with numerous sta-

from Hello Monday, founder of Biomimicry 3.8 Institute Janine Benyus, and Facebook's communication designer Kate Aronowitz. Each brought their unique viewpoint of design.

Meeting this many professionals is something most design students can only dream of. "I never had anyone to go to who was an architect, to ask what it was like, and I think it's really important to talk to people and see what it's really like. This is an amazing opportunity and there are some really great designers here," Cassell said.

One of the most important points brought up was the availability of design jobs, a concern many parents of the teens have. Gunn highlighted the importance of preparation and seizing opportunities to succeed, and Aronowitz gave an optimistic view: "As far as interaction design goes, I don't have enough people to take the jobs I'm offering," he said. Either way, it was clear moving forward in any field of the practical art takes a lot of effort and determination. According to Gunn, another necessity is to pick a school that suits your needs: "You should visit the schools that you are really interested in attending and project yourself into the environment. See if you can see yourself being a successful student there," he said.

With all the advice given to the aspiring fashion designers, the fair was an educational as well as a cultural experience. Teens at the fair could only hope to experience the serendipity and opportunities that Gunn was referring to. The rest, of course, is up to them; hard work reigns supreme.

**"This is an amazing opportunity and there are some really great designers here."**

**—Cassell**

tions for speakers from different design colleges.

Tim Gunn, known for his role on the reality television series "Project Runway," was only one of the many important attendees. "America's Next Top Model" judge and runway coach Jay Alexander, also known as "Miss J," sat at one of the designer stations. Also present were designers from different fields, including architect Stephen Cassell, media/graphic designer Eric Mortensen

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### A Gathering of Geeks

By EMMA MCINTOSH  
and EDA TSE

Cameras flashed and cosplayers struck poses, grinning as others recognized their costumes. Bags were laden with posters, figurines, T-shirts, and other merchandise. Fans pointed and laughed as they identified yet another Iron Man, Eleventh Doctor, or Katniss. Held annually at the Javits Center, a vast convention center in Manhattan, this reunion of fandoms gathers thousands of devoted fanboys and fangirls, many in costume. This year's New York Comic-Con, which ran from Thursday, October 11 to Sunday, October 14, was an enormous celebration of nerd-dom, including dozens of celebrity Q&A sessions, thousands of fans, and an unquantifiable amount of merchandise.

Despite the overwhelming number of fans, well-known men and women of nearly every fandom signed autographs, took pictures with fans, and gave public interviews. Celebrities such as Tom Felton (Draco Malfoy in "Harry Potter"), Chris Columbus (producer of many "Harry Potter" films), Tyler Posey (Scott McCall in MTV's "Teen Wolf"), and Stan Lee (creator of Marvel Comics) attended. Adoring fans rushed to line up outside enormous lecture halls, eager to ask a question to, or even catch a glimpse of, their idols. Production companies promoted their new projects, such as FOX's "The Following," starring Kevin Bacon, with a

Q&A session. With an abundance of stars at panels, signings, and photo-ops, there was more than enough action to keep devotees busy the entire weekend.

But Comic-Con wasn't all listening to celebrities and screaming over nerdy news. Many fans gathered in the showroom, an incredibly vague descriptor for a room filled with incredible combinations of goods. Swords, animal hats, magnetic cubes, and "Doctor Who" merchandise coexisted in booths next to each other, much to the delight of the average attendee. The showroom not only sold items to furnish every nerd's Christmas list (even the Doctor would be pleased with the selection), but also featured new video games such as "Assassin's Creed 3," "Just Dance 4," and the yet-to-be-unveiled

"Marvel Heroes Online."

Next year, who knows what fandoms will be represented? The tides of fandom shift quickly, and a television show, celebrity, or ship adored one day can be reviled the next, meaning that every year is another round of fandoms, from newcomer "Teen Wolf" to decades-old "Doctor Who." This year, "Adventure Time," "Sherlock," "Homestuck," "Hunger Games," and even "Slender Man" fans came out in cosplay and full force, for once being nerdy and proud of it. Comic-Con is not just a convention or a place to buy merchandise and cheer for amazing creators. It's where you let your nerd flag fly, make friends, and bask in the glow of a crowd just as nerdy and fanatical as you are. Who knows? Maybe we'll see you there next year.



### Learn to Speak Geek

By EMMA MCINTOSH  
and EDA TSE

Following the New York City Comic-Con, we've created a list of terms to help you communicate in the world of geekdom.

**Canon**  
anything stated directly in the fandom's source material, or by the creators themselves

**Cosplay**  
short for "costume play"; generally entails the painstaking work of replicating every piece of clothing worn by your

favorite character. Those who dedicate themselves to cosplay spray themselves certain colors, dye their hair, buy fake piercings, and even make their own wings and (fake) weapons.

**Fandom**  
short for "fan domains"; refers to the community devoted to a particular television show, book, movie, series, webcomic, etc. Major fandoms include those of the British television show "Doctor Who," the webcomic series "Homestuck," the American cartoon series "My Little Pony: Friendship

is Magic," and the "Hunger Games" movie series.

**Fanon**  
short for "fan canon"; anything a fan or fandom interprets from the canon, such as a particular characterization or subtextual relationship

**Shipping**  
derived from "relationship"; slang term for the act of supporting a relationship, canon or fanon, between two (or more) specific characters.

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# Arts and Entertainment

## Film

### The Festival That Never Sleeps

By JOSHUA BOGATIN

Film snobs rejoice! The summer is finally over, and all the cheap cinematic garbage that studio execs vomit for a quick buck is finally out of theaters—now true intellectuals can look forward to all that good high-class, celluloid pretension egotistical directors spit out for a quick statuette grab. Maybe the winter months aren't much better, with films concerned more with celebrity and finance than with merit being pushed out year-round, but the quest for cinema that artistically presents something interesting or unique isn't hopeless, either. The New York Film Festival, held for more than two weeks at the beginning of each October, is the perfect place to find something you'll actually believe you haven't seen before.

At the festival, there was one clear contender most likely to catch a lucky break with American audiences, and it did not let us down: "Amour" retains its presence as a threat to Hollywood's best awards season. Austrian director Michael Haneke is back after his last award winner, "The White Ribbon," and this time he sets his unflinchingly bleak sights on love and death. Following the relationship between an old married couple, as the wife suffers a stroke and moves ever closer to death, this is Haneke's most difficult and most accessible film yet. As a filmmaker, he always attempts to raise more questions than he answers, and in "Amour," he creates a haunting piece of cinema that will leave your mind grappling for days.

Another filmmaker riding high on festival buzz and unconcerned with leaving his audience content, Leos Carax presented his first film in 13 years: "Holy Motors." Carax's film is a pure cinematic treat, a piece of filmmaking so in tune with the medium that it almost defies description. The film follows M. Oscar (Denis Lavant) as he limos around Paris, taking on different "assignments," each of which involves his putting on a disguise and acting out

**The Taviani brothers blur the lines between reality, theater, and film in their quasi-documentary 'Caesar Must Die.'**

a role. Over one day he transforms himself into a bag-lady, sewer-leprechaun, accordionist, and motion-capture artist, among others, each assignment completely unexplained and unrelated to the last. Carax presents a loose-running commentary on the nature of film through the shifting genres in which Lavant finds himself, but the movie is better interpreted

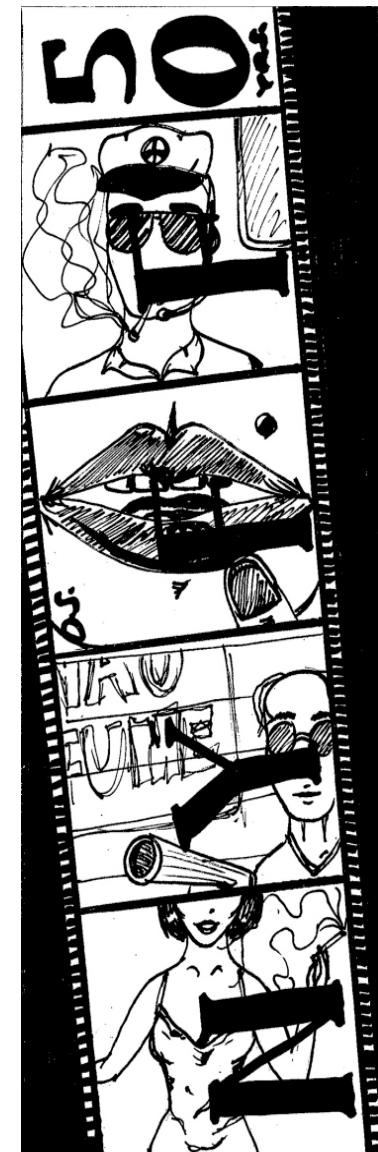
as beyond language.

Carax's film was not the only one with a reflective streak, as films about film were hardly a rarity at the festival; veteran filmmaker Alain Resnais returned with "You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet," a muddled attempt to explore the Orpheus myth through actors watching a film about it and eventually recreating it themselves, which ultimately felt flat and dull. The Taviani brothers blur the lines between reality, theater, and film in their quasi-documentary "Caesar Must Die," which involves prisoners playing themselves in a story about a maximum-security prison's production of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar." The inmates soon relate to the play, and the distinction between which words are Shakespeare's, the Tavianis', or the prisoners' grows murkier in an exciting examination of the effects of art. Oliver Assayas returns to the revolutionary attitudes of the late '60s from his last film "Carlos" and "Something in the Air," this time telling a breathtakingly fresh coming-of-age story of an aspiring filmmaker wandering through a dissenting Europe.

Hollywood was also in attendance, using the festival's respect and attention as a launching pad for some of this season's biggest films. Steven Spielberg's "Lincoln" premiered under the guise of a secret screening, and it marveled audiences with a well-crafted, if a bit stale, biopic of the civil-war president, which seeks to perfect the historical melodrama but fails to offer much originality. Daniel Day-Lewis is perfect

as the president, leading a huge cast of big names, including the great Tommy Lee Jones as Thaddeus Stevens as he helps Lincoln pass the 13th amendment. Also in the presidential biopic genre was "Hyde Park on Hudson," a look into the life of F.D.R. (Bill Murray) during a visit from King George VI. This one took a more humorous approach, but also failed to provide anything different. Unlike "Lincoln," it wasn't all that engaging.

future of film with an audience that truly cares about where the medium is headed. Beneath all the abstract films and their thought-provoking narratives, the film festival is, at heart, a love letter to the pleasure of watching movies.



Dia Sotiropoulou / The Spectator

**Carax's film is pure cinematic treat, a piece of filmmaking so in tune with the medium that it almost defies description.**

Though we live during an age of digitization in which the rarest and most obscure of films are a click away, the New York Film Festival is still going strong in its 50th incarnation and doesn't seem to be slowing down anytime soon. Going to the festival isn't just about seeing some pretentious artsy movie; it's about witnessing the

### Forgotten Film Reel: Broken Heart, Broken English

to find love, but she's afraid to take a chance after having been hurt so many times.

The film, though well-executed, is occasionally choppy, and tends to make confusing

and Nora's character isn't particularly likeable. Julien, however, is perfectly portrayed by Poupaud, who combines playfulness, gravity, wit, and charm into one French-speaking package.

Without a doubt, Cassavetes plays with stereotypes in this film. The Americans are loveless, gloomy, and serious. The French are playful and charismatic, and don't pronounce their H's. However, unlike many directors, who play stereotypes for laughs, Cassavetes uses them to create realistic culture clashes. Julien is quirky, romantic, and unabashed in his expressions of love and affections for Nora, who is cold to his advances—his bold, optimistic view of love does little to alter Nora's pessimism.

These contrasts, unfortunately, are easily the most believable aspect of the film. Many scenes are overstretched, and frankly, impossible. There's a lack of flow between events and people. For example, in a big city like Paris, Nora just happens to bump into Julien on the train to the airport—it's a small world, of course. In the next scene, Nora has learned acceptance and hope, a change that happens seemingly overnight, rather than gradually. The character underdevelop-

ment and rushed ending is perhaps the biggest letdown in a film with its inspiring, if not wholly unique, story of love and hope in our cynical world.

"Broken English" leaves

**It's a film missing just that one little magic touch to make it a sensational work of art.**



**Julien, however, is perfectly portrayed by Poupaud, who combines playfulness, seriousness, wit, and charm into one French-speaking package.**

jumps from one scene to another. The story is sometimes hard to follow, due to its sparse dialogue and quick pace. Also, it has little or no background music, which gives it a less polished edge. Posey's acting, at times, is a little overdramatic

you thinking about love and romance long after it's over. Though it lacks fluidity and believability to make it an A-list film, the storyline is memorable and creative. It's a film missing just that one little magic touch to make it a sensational work of art.

By MANDY WONG

Red wine, champagne, cigarettes, love—director Zoe Cassavetes's "Broken English" (2007) is a story of broken hearts and one woman's history of one-too-many failed romances. Nora Wilder ( Parker Posey), a 35-year-old New

Yorker, suffers from severe anxiety and always seems to be drinking alcohol or taking a pill to calm her nerves. Nora has already given up on love, but at a coworker's party, she meets Julien (Melvil Poupaud), a charming Frenchman, who convinces her to stay for just one more drink. Nora wants

# Arts and Entertainment

## Music

By NINA WADE

He wears glittery outfits at live shows. His voice soars high into falsetto. His videos are peppered with bright colors and cartoony graphics. Mika, a British singer-songwriter, is a musical magpie. In his third studio album "The Origin of Love," Mika sheds some of his childlike camp for a timelier dance-pop vibe; however, in doing so, he loses some—though not nearly all—of his charm.

Mika's first two albums, "Life in Cartoon Motion" (2007) and "The Boy Who Knew Too Much" (2009), centered around

### An Indie Magpie Wants to Dance

childhood and adolescence, respectively, and he has stated in interviews that "The Origin of Love" focuses on adulthood. Fittingly, "Life in Cartoon Motion," which featured "Grace Kelly," his most famous song to date, was the quirkiest, with nonsensical lyrics and bubble-gum videos. "The Boy Who Knew Too Much" featured more ballads and piano, and had a gentler, angstier vibe than its predecessor. However, though Mika promised "The Origin of Love" would be "a serious album, but still [have] the boppy, happy tunes" in an interview with DigitalSpy, the album of-

ten comes across as shallow. Throughout the album, Mika incorporates electronic beats and sounds. On some tracks, such as "Celebrate" and "Emily," it works—they sound

but much more forgettable.

One standout, "Popular Song," is Mika's take/remix of the song "Popular" from the musical "Wicked." This song has many rhythmically spoken sections, near-rapped, and lifts over a piano-plunked rendition of the original tune (as well as the original lyrics). It's fresh and clever, and makes the original cutesy Broadway tune sassy and edgy.

However, plenty of songs harken back to his roots: musical glitz. The opening track, "Origin of Love," is anthemic, exclaiming "You're the origin of love!" His ballads, thankfully, allow his incredible voice—he has a range of three to four octaves—to take center stage. "Make You Happy," the closing track, digitizes the chorus but otherwise lets him shine, as he pours emotion into a tale of trying to fix somebody with, as kitschy as it may seem, the power of love. Another star, "Love You When I'm Drunk," certainly features more adult themes; it revolves around being unfaithful to a lover because, as the title suggests, he only loves her when he's inebriated. The song's tonal dissonance is classic Mika, who is fond of putting downers of lyrics over the most peppy, happy melodies.

Not taking risks would be anathema to Mika. He's been compared to Freddie Mercury, and his albums consistently receive polarizing reviews. Now, dance songs reign supreme on

the charts, so it's no surprise he takes some of their qualities. What makes Mika, Mika, is his ability to add electronic layers and synthetic beats to his songs and still retain his individual sound. Children grow into

**They sound fun and upbeat, and marry perfectly his indie flair with his new, pop-tastic sound.**

**'Popular Song' is fresh and clever, and makes the original cutesy Broadway tune sassy and edgy.**

fun and upbeat, and marry perfectly his indie flair with his new, pop-tastic sound. "Emily," in fact, is an English version of his French single "Elle Me Dit," and his voice is hyper-processed, giving his unique vocals a new spin with a digitized coat. However, on others, such as "Overrated," it's less effective—the song is plenty enjoyable,

teens, and teens into adults, and Mika's music grows from campy to emotional to dance, but just as a person's character stays largely the same, Mika never loses his intrinsic, eccentric self.

### Fresh Picks: Hiatus Kaiyote's "Tawk Tomahawk"

By JAMES KOGAN

My friend introduced Hiatus Kaiyote to me as the halfway point between the beat-heaviness of neo-soul/hip-hop producer J Dilla and the soulful vocals of Amy Winehouse, and he wasn't far off. Paired with the band's head-turning name (pronounced with Australian accents), the musical project is bound to generate lots of buzz—and that's exactly what has happened.

Headed by vocalist and guitarist Nai Palm, the group calls itself disciples of "Future Soul," whatever that means. The band is rounded out with keyboardist Simon Mavin, Paul Bender on bass/laptop, and drummer Perrin Moss.

Songs like album-opener "Mobius Streak" broach the question of genre that the entire LP seems to challenge. The group's music seems to constantly walk the line between good old-fashioned bandstration--raw with the feel of a live performance--and electronica. Of all genres of electronic music, downtempo particularly comes to mind, with its hypnotic and heavily emphasized beats.

"Tawk Tomahawk" is an album that particularly rewards the active listener. Its recording quality is phenomenal, all parts singing with clarity; this is a great victory, especially for an entirely self-produced debut. The musical composition itself is dense--tracks bear an in-

credible amount of layers and textures. Drum machine clacks pair with tasteful drumming by Moss; Marvin's piano and synth work provides room for tinkering with sound parameters, and ambient whirrs and other miscellaneous percussive samples fill out the mix.

That's not to say that the instrumental work is to be ignored: the bass is laid out appropriately sparsely, in a way that is both groovy and classy. Bender serves out a precise low end that maintains a justifiably prominent spot in the mix. Palm's guitar work, too, fits in just right. Her jazzy chords serve as lily-pads in the murky pond of funk the listener has the pleasure of navigating. Rhythmic head-bobbing is obligatory.

Palm's singing provides another equally captivating musical element. Album closer "Nakamarr" shows her off at her most relaxed, as she drifts between the changes with plenty of variety in her phrasing, warbly and gospel-like. In other songs, her singing can be breathy and somewhat restrained. No syllable is superfluous, as in "Malika," where each of her words is delivered with impressive calculation. However, it is on "Lace Skull" that her performance seems most powerful; her usual rawness yields an unforeseen dimension of somberness and painful fervor. Her words evoke urgency, understanding, closure. Songwriters, take note--this is how you write a proto-

ballad.

However, the albums remains marred with a major shortcoming: there is not enough of it. Tracks like "Ocelot," with its oddly paced six-step beat, seem to end too early. The same can be said

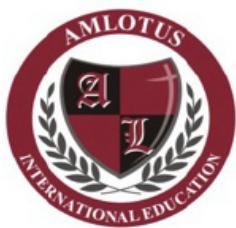
for "Boom Child," which also clocks in under a minute and a half. Fortunately, the track is pretty terrific, so the offense is mostly forgiven. "Rainbow Rhodes" and "Sphynx Gate" run the danger of the same flaw, ending up more as sketch-

es of songs than fully rounded pieces. But the potential, even when cut short, is there.

Keep an eye out for this band. Talent like this doesn't pop up every day.



Carlen Zhu / The Spectator



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# Sports

## Touchdowns and Tocottas



By LUKE MORALES  
and TIMOTHY DIEP

Many consider football to be the most physically demanding, dangerous, and intense sport because of the amount of contact involved. A football player must be strong, tough, and aggressive to survive in a such a brutal sport. At the opposite end of the spectrum is piano playing, which requires patience, control, and elegance. While it would seem improbable that someone could excel in both of these fields, one student at Stuyvesant manages to do just that.

Junior Solomon Quinn is the backup quarterback for the



Peglegs, a member of the chorus, a pitcher on the Stuyvesant Varsity Baseball Team, an avid practitioner of piano, and, above all, a student of Stuyvesant High School. How does a sixteen year-old manage all of these extracurricular activities while keeping an A average in the most prestigious high school in the city?

The answer lies within passion to his extracurriculars. His love for piano and football and the enjoyment he gets from performing in them keep him fully invested in both. "I view football and piano more as hobbies than as what I'm going to do in the future," Quinn said. "I might consider some conservatories but I'm probably going to go to

a college for academics."

Solomon began practicing piano when he was just five years old. At first "[he] began practicing because [his] mom was a violinist and wanted [him] to play an instrument," Solomon said. But, what started as a situation forced upon him slowly began to turn into a love of his own.

Throughout his elementary and middle school years, Quinn continued his piano playing and attended the Special Music School, a highly selective public school on the Upper West Side that focuses on developing young musicians. During the summer before eighth grade, Quinn and his piano teacher traveled to Germany to practice piano with other talented students internationally. "It was a great experience because it really got me to enjoy playing the piano a lot more," Quinn said. "It was also nice to be there with kids from all over the world, like Russia and other places in Europe."

Though his passion for piano was immense, it did not stand alone as his only interest. Like many other kids, he enjoyed watching Eli Manning and the Giants every Sunday and occasionally throwing a football around with his middle school friends. He joined a flag

football league, even though he was practicing piano five or six days a week. However, he wanted to experience the sport the way he saw the pros do - with full contact. "I wanted to play in a tackle league, but that was really hard to find in the city," Quinn said. When he came to Stuyvesant, however, his wishes were granted when he joined the Peglegs.

Solomon's finest moment in his football career came when starting quarterback Alen Makhmudov suffered an ankle injury in the Peglegs' second game this season. Thrown into the spotlight, Quinn led his team to a comeback victory by throwing for two touchdown passes, including the game winner late in the fourth quarter.

To be successful in either an instrument or a sport is difficult in itself, and as he became involved in both hobbies, Quinn found that it was always difficult to prioritize. "It was funny because I was away overseas during the summer before freshman year, and the first voicemail I got when I got back was from my music program telling me to quit football," Quinn said. "I had to call my teacher and work it out with her. I really wanted to play sports, but I also love playing the piano, and I didn't want to

give any of those up."

Three years later, Quinn has his schedule mastered, and his ability to handle his own plate full of school, sports and piano is enviable. Not only does he practice music six times a week, but he has a side of football practice every day of the week topped off with a standard Stuyvesant workload. He understands that in order to enjoy both sports and music, some small sacrifices have to be made. "I miss football once a week to go to my music program after school," Quinn said, "and the only time I don't practice [piano] is when I have football and a lot of school work, or if I just don't have enough time."

The ability to do this day in and day out is a testament to Solomon Quinn's perseverance and devotion to two very different passions. Only a select few have the heart to deal with several time-consuming interests, especially ones that are entirely different in scope.

"Even now, when random people come up to congratulate me after concerts, they sometimes ask me what I do with my free time, and when I tell them I play football, they think I'm joking," Quinn said. "I'm the first pianist they've heard who also plays football."

## Center of Attention: The NBA's Vanishing Position



By LEV AKABAS

Ever since the National Basketball Association was founded in 1946, the most dominant player on the court has been the center, the tallest man in every line-up. The first basketball icon was the 6'10" George Mikan, who towered over the competition and was the first player to regularly dunk the ball. The sport's first true rivalry was between big men Bill Russell and Wilt Chamberlain, whose teams won all but three

championships from 1957 to 1972. Next came 7'2" Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who demoralized opponents for much of the 1970s and 1980s en route to becoming the NBA's all-time leading scorer and winning six NBA championships.

Who are the elite centers in basketball today? Probably Dwight Howard and Andrew Bynum. But who is the third best? Let's just say the quality of big men goes downhill very quickly from there. Last season, only ten centers in the entire league averaged a mere 10 points per game—the fifth leading scorer among centers was Marcin Gortat, for goodness sakes! Furthermore, only four centers averaged at least 10 points and 10 rebounds per game, in comparison to eight centers who averaged double figures in both categories in 1992, and 12 in 1972. Similarly, on the defensive end, only two centers last season averaged at least two blocked shots per game, compared to eight who reached that mark 10 years ago, and nine centers 20 years ago.

From 1956 to 2000, 56 percent of Most Valuable Player

Awards were given to centers, and Bob Cousy, Oscar Robertson, Magic Johnson, and Michael Jordan were the only four guards to receive the honor. However, since 2000, not a single center has won the award, and four different guards have claimed the prize. Likewise, a center has not been named Rookie of the Year since 1993, while explosive young guards such as Kyrie Irving, Derrick Rose, Chris Paul, Brandon Roy, and Tyreke Evans have all won the award since 2006.

Clearly there has been a steady decline in the number of dominant centers in basketball, and the league knows it. Just this month, the NBA removed the center position from the all-star voting ballot because there simply weren't enough household names they could list at the position. Another major reason for the change is that many centers, such as Kevin Garnett, David Lee, Louis Scola, and Chris Bosh, have skillsets and size generally suited for power-forwards, but still manage to get by as the biggest players on their teams. Additionally, outside-shooting

big men have become increasingly common. Steve Novak and Ryan Anderson, the two three-point-shooting leaders in the NBA last season, as well as Kevin Love and Kevin Durant, the two finalists in last year's three-point shootout, are all 6'10", but thrive on offense from 23 feet away from the rim, unlike forwards and centers of prior eras.

While traditional centers that post up, block shots, and use their muscle inside are becoming a rarity in today's game, a trend in the opposite direction has risen in the NBA: three-point shooting and athleticism. Last season, 23 percent of all shot attempts were three-pointers. That number has grown from below 10 percent in 1993, to 16 in 1998, 18 in 2003, 22 in 2008, and finally to the all-time high last season. As for athleticism, point guards, the position that most requires speed, are generally of the highest quality and quantity in today's NBA. The best example of both of these trends is that Nicolas Batum, not a big-name player, but a deadly three-point shooter and athletic player,

signed a whopping \$44.6 million contract with the Portland Trailblazers this offseason.

Yet another demonstration of these trends is the composition of the 2012 NBA championship team, the Miami Heat. Miami often plays Chris Bosh, a former power forward, or 6'9" Joel Anthony at center, and surrenders size to its opponents. However, the Heat defeated their opponents last season by using their athleticism to attack the rim and score on fast-breaks. Their roster this season also features Ray Allen, Rashard Lewis, and Mike Miller, numbers one, eight, and 24, respectively, on the list of most three-pointers made in NBA history. The Miami Heat understands the direction that the league is heading towards, and they have assembled a roster full of athletes and shooters, as opposed to the tall, post-up players that were necessary to win the NBA many years ago. The decline of the center's dominance, and Miami's rise in athleticism and shooting, is the reason The Spectator Sports staff is picking the Miami Heat to win the 2013 NBA Championship.

*As voted on by eleven of our sports writers, here are The Spectator's predictions for the 2012-2013 NBA season.*

### NBA Champion

Miami Heat – 55%  
Los Angeles Lakers – 27%  
Oklahoma City Thunder – 18%

### Eastern Conference Champion

Miami Heat – Unanimous

### Western Conference Champion

Los Angeles Lakers – 82%  
Oklahoma City Thunder – 18%

### Most Valuable Player

Lebron James – 45%  
Kevin Durant – 45%, Rajon Rondo – 9%

### Rookie of the Year

Anthony Davis – 73%  
Damian Lillard – 18%  
Jared Sullinger – 9%

### Most Improved Player of the Year

John Wall – 18%  
Gordon Hayward – 9%  
Goran Dragic – 9%  
Demarcus Cousins – 9%  
Derrick Williams – 9%  
Kemba Walker – 9%  
Klay Thompson – 9%  
Eric Gordon – 9%  
Ray Allen – 9%

# Sports

## Girls' Volleyball

### Vixens Hound Bears



Senior Marta Poplawski spikes in the Vixens' 25-19, 25-19 win over the Seward Park Bears.

By NOAH HELLERMANN

The Seward Park Bears entered Stuyvesant High School's third floor gym loudly, cheering each other on. They went through handshakes and chants, clearly excited for a rematch against the undefeated Vixens. Stuyvesant had won the first matchup of the rivalry 2-0 three weeks earlier.

The Vixens responded with shouts of their own, yelling, "Ball's up!" as the Bears served. At first, the first match went back and forth, almost point for point, until the score was 6-5 and senior and captain Natalie Kozlova began serving. Four serves later, through a combination of aces and kills, the Vixens brought the score to 10-5, and the Bears called a timeout.

Stuyvesant continued to control the set until Seward Park mounted a comeback, winning five out of seven points to narrow the score to 21-17. Junior Paula Carcamo served an ace at 22-17, and Stuyvesant won the first set 25-19.

Controlling the pace of the second set was senior Anna Wang, who served the first seven points for the Vixens. But the Bears battled back from the 7-0 deficit to within one, scoring the next six points. Coach Joshua

Yang complimented the Vixens' attitude during the turnaround, noting that they kept their heads in the game and remained focused. "We kept our emotions on an even keel," Yang said. "No one yelled, and no one got upset."

Staying focused helped the Vixens keep pace with the surging Bears, and the game went back and forth. With the Bears leading 16-15, junior Marta Poplawski served, and on the return, Wang and Kozlova combined for two bumps and a kill. Kozlova ended up leading the team with 10 kills in the game. Soon Stuyvesant led 20-18, and then 23-19. As they pulled away, the Bears held a loud and heartfelt huddle, but to no avail. The match and game ended when the Vixens won 25-19.

Happy with the results from the game, Wang praised her teammates. "We're a very different team from last year, but today everyone played their new positions very well," she said.

Kozlova was also optimistic about the rest of their season, which already boasts a 9-0 record. "Our team has gone through some changes, and it's late in the season," she said. "But we're getting it together now for our last couple of league games, and the playoffs."

## Boys' Soccer

### Centaurs Knocked Out Of Playoffs In First Round

*continued from page 24*

The Public School Athletic League's seeding of the playoff teams was a source of controversy and may also have contributed to the Centaurs being caught off-guard.

"[Cardozo] was an 11 seed, but I definitely feel as though they were better than Beacon, which ended up getting the two seed, which I don't think they deserved," senior Matt Hoffman said.

A bright spot of the game was the 17 saves made by senior and goalkeeper Nick Miller. "The defense collectively, in this game and throughout the season, limited opponents to certain shots and cut down on breakaways, essentially being a second goalie at times," Hoffman said.

Stuyvesant was eliminated from the playoffs much sooner than it would have liked, but players did not view their season

overall as a disappointment.

"Even though we didn't do as well as some past years, the team came a long way," Conover said. "I'm proud of how much everyone improved and banded together."

However, not everyone on the Centaurs was as positive about their early exit. "We lost a couple of key players in the beginning of the season and I don't think we fully recovered from that in terms of filling those spots," Hoffman said. "Though we did work hard, I don't think we worked hard enough."

The end of this season heavily depletes the team, with six seniors graduating in 2013, but one thing that the team has agreed on is their high hopes for next season.

"The Centaurs will do well again," Miller said. "New talent always comes in to replace the old, and Stuy soccer has always been more about quickness and work ethic than raw skill."

## Girls' Golf

### Wolverines Upset Birdies in First Round

By YUSEN ZHENG  
with additional reporting by  
DARYL CHIN

The third-seeded Birdies, Stuyvesant's girls' golf team, ended their season with a 3-2 loss to the sixth-seeded Bronx Science Wolverines on Thursday, October 25. Though this is its second unsuccessful championship bid in two years, the team performed better than expected this season, considering the fact that five seniors graduated last year, leaving only one senior and a handful of natural talent.

Last season, the Birdies lost their final game to Tottenville by one hole and one stroke. This season's ending was eerily similar.

During the regular season, the Birdies had managed to defeat the Wolverines, 3-2. In this match, sophomore Sabrina Chan started off the game with a disappointing five down. In a close match, senior and captain Rosen Jeong lost by a single hole in nine.

Both the players and coach consider this a rebuilding phase. Though Rosen's departure is, in Nieves's words, "a big loss," eight juniors and six sophomores are ready to build upon past successes. "I'm so proud of our team. We all worked really hard throughout the season," Rosen said.

several factors, including playing in the darkness. Rosen said, "Everyone on the team tried their best."

"I think next year we will be more prepared [for] what's coming because we will have more experience," said Chio, who, as a rookie, won her first playoff match. With this more experienced team, the Birdies will look to reclaim the title of City Champions that they have lost for the past two seasons.

## Boy's Football

### Peglegs Clinch First Playoff Berth in 17 Years, and a First-Round Bye

*continued from page 24*

Victor Yang. "He hit their quarterback early in the first half on consecutive plays, and he made sure that guy remembered who hit him and how hard he did," junior Clay Walsh said. The Peglegs went into halftime with a 30-0 lead.

Confident in his team, head coach Mark Strasser put some second and third-string players on the field for the second half. Despite having some of their bench on the field, the Peglegs were able to remain dominant. Senior and co-captain Nathaniel Biggs brought the Peglegs to the one-yard line in the third with a big reception. The Peglegs easily ran it in for a touchdown on the next play. Biggs later scored a touchdown in the fourth quarter, his second in the game. Picking off the Ambassadors' quarterback late in the fourth quarter, Chen put the final touch on the win. In a last-ditch attempt at getting on the scoreboard, the Ambassadors' quarterback scrambled out of the pocket and connected with a receiver for a 25-yard touchdown pass in the final seconds of the game. Despite the touchdown, the Peglegs still won by a huge margin, ending the game with a final score of 44-8.

"Now that we're faced with a good seed [in the playoffs], we



The Pegleg's offense awaits the snap from the center at the game on Friday, October 26 against Adlai Stevenson at Pier 40.

have to buckle down and focus really hard," senior Werner Zhanay said. "This is the one year that we can take the championship, so we're going to work 10 times harder."

"We've been playing really well; we've been on a roll; we've been running our spread offense well; we've been playing really solid defense; we're making tackles; and we're creating turnovers," Mamut said. "That's really what being a Pegleg is all about: playing together and winning football games."

Due to the effects of Hurricane Sandy, the Public School Athletic

League cancelled the Peglegs' final regular season game against the East Harlem Pride on Friday, November 2. The team finished the season at 6-2 and clinched the second seed and a first-round bye in the Cup Division playoffs.

The Peglegs will play their semifinal matchup on Saturday, November 17 for a chance to compete in the division's championship game. However, the team's home field, Pier 40, has been closed indefinitely due to the hurricane, which means that they will have to play their hard-fought home playoff game in another venue.

## Girls' Soccer

### Despite Record, Mimbas Pleased With Season

By DARYL CHIN  
and SAMANTHA LAU

Though they entered the school year confident in their ability to reach the playoffs, the Mimbas ended their season worse than they had in recent years with a record of 2-9. However, in the five out of nine losses, they had only one goal deficit going into halftime. On the whole, their record does not reflect their performance. Driven by the upperclassmen's leadership on the field, the returning players all have grown stronger this year.

The players had an extremely positive outlook on the season, despite the weak record. "It took a while to get to know each other on the field and play as a team, but by the end of the season, we were definitely playing some of the best games I've seen in my three years on the team," senior and co-captain Eugenie Thompson said.

The Mimbas' drop in record from 4-8 last year was partially due to the PSAL's new arrangement of

divisions. Last season, the team played teams like A.P. Randolph, which provided steady competition. This year, however, they faced much stronger teams such as Beacon and Hunter. The Mimbas faced Manhattan A and Bronx A teams, instead of some easier Manhattan B teams, as they had last season.

Even though the new division created a challenging season for the Mimbas, they had a chance to play higher-level soccer that kept them on their toes and allowed the players to improve.

"I think we responded very well to the challenges we faced, and the new division only created more opportunities to get better," sophomore Madison Truemner said.

Another change for the Mimbas was that they experimented with different starting lineups and used one different from last season. Their old lineup consisted of two forwards, four midfielders, and four defenders, but this year they played with three forwards, three midfielders, and four defenders.

Despite the disheartening record of 2-9, the Mimbas learned to work and think as a team on the field. They had a lot to offer on offense, and both the midfielders and goalie performed well. The Mimbas were able to keep up with opponents during games, and their skill-level and communication improved as the season progressed.

Though they have many areas on which to improve—such as finishing, creating opportunities to score, and shooting—the Mimbas have a lot of potential for next season. In the many games they played, they started the first half slowly and came out very strongly in the second. If the team can work on starting strongly, they will be much more competitive.

"Even though our next senior class will be a little smaller, I think they will be ready to lead the team to the next level. Next season, we should look at ourselves as serious contenders for that last playoff spot, at least," coach Hugh Francis said.

Anne Duncan / The Spectator

# THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

## Boy's Football

### Peglegs Clinch First Playoff Berth in 17 Years, and a First-Round Bye

**Peglegs Beat Kipp NYC College Prep to Acquire Playoff Berth**  
By GABRIEL SUNSHINE

After the first half of the matchup between the Stuyvesant Peglegs and the Kipp NYC College Prep Bulldogs on Saturday, October 20, the teams looked fairly even, and the second half was expected to shape up like the first—a hard-fought contest.

However, the Peglegs, a team famous for its second half play, were able to completely dominate the latter portion of the game. They held the Bulldogs to just six points, while scoring 21 points themselves, coming out on top with a 35-14 win. With this win, the Peglegs clinched their first playoff berth in 17 years.

Stuyvesant's second half offense looked unstoppable, scoring almost on a defense that had been able to hold opponents to just over 15 points per game entering the contest. The Pegleg defense was able to completely shut down the Bulldog passing attack, holding the opposing quarterback, senior Daquan Davis, to just eight pass attempts and three completions.

The Peglegs were able to break the game wide open off of a forced

fumble by senior and co-captain Victor Yang early in the third quarter. "We were able to capitalize and score on the drive following the turnover," senior and co-captain Jack Haggerty said.

The Peglegs aren't satisfied with just clinching a playoff spot, however. They want to have a good enough record to have a first-round bye. "The last two games of our schedule are against teams that are a bit weaker, but we're not sleeping on them. We're still doing the same things that got us to this point," senior and co-captain Nathaniel Biggs said.

The Peglegs came out with a much stronger drive this year, and they are not taking anything for granted. "[We know that a] game isn't over until we line up to shake hands," Yang said.

This determined attitude, matched with strong team chemistry, "something that we pretty much all agree was lacking last year," is what has helped contribute to the success of the team this season, Biggs said.

If they continue to play like they have the entire season, there is no measuring their potential success. "I think we definitely have a shot [at the City Championships]," Yang said.

**Peglegs Win Big in Homecoming Game**  
By MATTHEW MOY

A crisp, fall evening under the lights at Pier 40 was the scene of a memorable game for the Stuyvesant Peglegs on Friday, October 26. Family members, alumni, cheerleaders, pep band members, and students turned out in large numbers to show their support during the 2012 Homecoming Game. Motivated by the enthusiasm on the field, the players jumped out to a huge lead against the Adlai Stevenson Ambassadors before halftime.

This was a game of many firsts. The Peglegs drove 80 yards down the field and scored on their opening drive for the first time this season. Senior Lenny Mamut had his first career touchdown reception off a pass by senior and co-captain Alen Makhmudov, who finished the game with three impressive touchdown passes.

On defense, junior Kevin Chen turned out an excellent performance after starting for the first time this season in place of the injured senior and co-captain

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## Boys' Soccer

### Centaurs Knocked Out Of Playoffs In First Round



Senior Nick Miller was kept busy in goal during the Centaurs' 2-0 playoff loss to the Cardozo Judges.

By ALISON FU

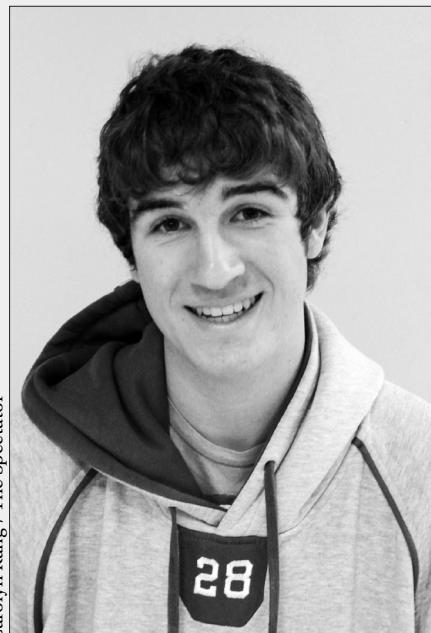
Heading into the first round of playoffs on Sunday, October 28, the Centaurs, Stuyvesant's boys' soccer team, were looking to snap the three-game losing streak that closed out their regular season. However, the lack of momentum seemed to carry over into the match, as the Centaurs fell to the Cardozo Judges 2-0 and were limited to only two shots on goal.

The futility of the Stuyvesant offense might be attributed to a game plan that was rendered moot by the Judges' surprisingly sound defensive play.

"Cardozo was much better than we expected. We knew they'd be strong and only played one striker, which made it difficult to rally offensively," senior and co-captain Asa Conover said.

*continued on page 23*

## Point: A Necessary Sacrifice



Carolyn Kang / The Spectator

By MICHAEL SHELDON

The third floor atrium is a sort of record hall hidden in plain sight. Trophy cases line the walls, bearing relics of school years gone by. They hold old jerseys, newspaper clippings, and pictures of smiling teammates. The floor immortalizes "those Stuyvesant nerds" that practice and play hard every year to compete for and win city championships.

And yet, those trophy cases are ignored as students scuttle to and from their lockers and scamper off to class.

These relics that preserve tradition and triumphant memories of past Stuyvesant athletes are symbols that other schools might cherish and that their student bodies might unify around, but we use them as backrests while we wait for our physical education classes to begin. It all speaks to a prominent lack of school spirit amongst our student body.

We can boil the problem down to the academic climate at Stuy, arguably the driving force behind everything that happens at our school. Stuyvesant is cut-throat academically, but not in the way most people assume. While you won't find Stuyvesant students supplying each

other with false information to get ahead in class, kids at Stuy are cutthroat in that they spend most free waking moments fighting together to stay afloat academically. We are cutthroat in that an afternoon spent in the park on a school night seems laughable—down time ceases to exist. Any degree of school unity revolves around getting an A on the next test or producing an impressive school project. Thus, sports and spirit are marginalized.

Academic obligations aren't going to change, but there are ways to increase our collective spirit as a school that are not time-consuming. A general increase in our connectedness as students would do wonders to help alleviate stress and tension at Stuy. And we can start with our school's sports programs, namely by unifying them all under one banner and one team name.

Teams at Stuyvesant today, as we in The Spectator have written of many times before, play under several different monikers. The whirlwind of names all but ensures that even the jokiest of jocks cannot recite them all. The situation breeds contempt between teams, anonymity for lesser known sports teams, and a general air of confusion for the student body that could easily be replaced with a unified spirit of togetherness.

Negotiations are currently being held with the purpose of homogenizing the names of Stuy's teams. Only a few teams hold out officially, but there are critics throughout the student body on several different teams that worry a change such as this would eradicate traditions specific to certain teams. And while a simple name change certainly wouldn't bring about the kind of fundamental purges they speak of, they are right to a certain extent.

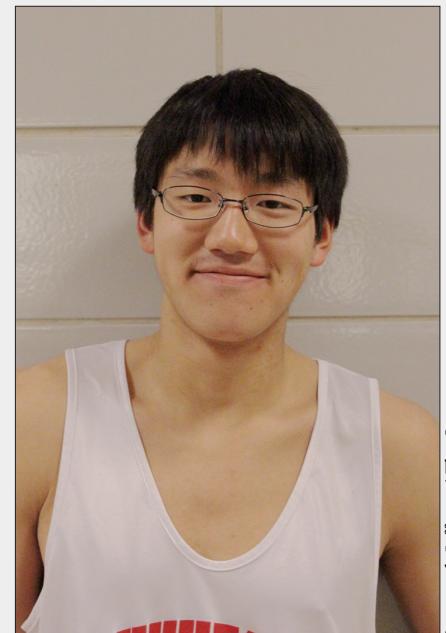
Nevertheless, it is time that these teams let go of their internal identities a bit in favor of opening themselves up to a new, more inclusive Stuyvesant tradition. Soon enough, they will find themselves reaping the benefits of more unified support and maybe even a little boost in attendance at their games. And just maybe, the student body at large will take a little more time to admire those trophy cases in the third floor atrium.

## Counterpoint: False Unity

By ZHENGQI XI

The problem that homogenizing the team names intends to solve—the lack of student body support for our athletic teams—goes far deeper than just a name. The majority of Stuyvesant students are uninformed about their teams and the nature of the sports that are played, no matter the name. This is especially apparent for lesser known sports. Gymnastics, for example, is somewhat of an esoteric sport that is harder to understand than more popular sports such as basketball and swimming. When I told my friend that I compete for the gymnastics team, he told me, "Gymnastics is for girls." Misconceptions like these are responsible for the lack of support. I am guilty too. I came into Stuyvesant thinking that our football team was filled with scrawny Asians. Most of my friends think that our track team is horrible, despite the fact that we've swept Manhattan boroughs every year. Changing a name will not erase these misconceptions.

Apathy also contributes to the lack of support. Most of us on athletic teams care about our sport and work hard to succeed in it. But a large part of the rest of the student body is simply uninterested in sports and unappreciative of the effort we put in. They simply don't appreciate our athletes or their sports, and grouping all the teams under one name doesn't change that sentiment. How often have you walked by your friends to hear them talk about the Peglegs' latest victory? Mostly it's homework, the next test, and League of Legends. Stuyvesant has an academic atmosphere, and that's because students are admitted based on a test which encourages appreciation of academics more than appreciation of athletics. Unlike those in schools all over the city, no Stuyvesant athletes were admitted on ability alone. We recruit solely based on a student's ability to solve math problems and read passages. Alumni donations go towards new research facilities and libraries, not towards sports equipment or coach salaries. Our school is an academic gem, but not a sports powerhouse. Changing team names is not going to change that.



Savannah Jeffreys / The Spectator

Furthermore, unifying the team names will not create unity or support—it takes away the individuality of each team. We're all united under the Stuyvesant banner, and the team names denote that each team has a different culture and tradition. Yes, we should have a sense of unity. But we need to do it in a way that doesn't stifle each team's individuality and hurt the players and coaches who actually care. I don't connect with the baseball team, not because they're the Hitmen and I'm a Greyclub, but because we have different experiences that sets us apart. Our team names are representative of that, and yet at the same time everybody knows that both teams represent Stuyvesant and its students. Forcing the same name upon us will not make me feel any support for any other team.

A while ago, everybody was the Peglegs. But it's been long time since then. The Stuyvesant of our generation is not that Stuyvesant. We have different values, and different beliefs. There is no reason we must mimic the past or conform to the norm. We should embrace the aspects of Stuyvesant set us apart from other high schools. We should be proud of the fact that we have different team names.