



# The Spectator

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*"The Pulse  
of the  
Student  
Body"*

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## Stuyvesant Spends Title 1 Funding

By ANIKA RASTGIR  
with additional Reporting by  
ALEX WANG

Principal Stanley Teitel has allocated 1.6 million dollars in Title I funding for the 2010-2011 school year. The funding has been spent on hiring new teachers, funding Academic Intervention Services (AIS) tutoring, creating freshmen workshops and expanding parental involvement programs.

Title I, a federal funding program established under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, provides funding to more than 50,000 schools where at least 40 percent of the students are from low-income families, according to the Department of Education's Web site. Funding for the current school year was based on lunch applications that students handed in by Thursday, December 31, 2009. Title I stipulates that the money must be used to improve the academic achievement of the disadvantaged, which can be done by enhancing academic assessments, improving teacher preparation and encouraging parents to be more involved in their children's education, amongst other measures.

This is the first year Stuyvesant has received Title I funding because, in previous years, 60 percent of students had to qualify for free or reduced lunch for a school

to receive Title I funds. The percentage was lowered to 40 after the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, also known as the Stimulus Bill, was passed. The act increased Title I funds from 14.5 billion dollars to 24.5 billion dollars, according to Title I guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Education.

"Title I money is critically important to Stuyvesant," Parent Coordinator Harvey Blumm said. "We were hit, like most schools were, with big budget cuts. Part of that money that we got certainly helped us in terms of absorbing the large budget cuts that we would have gotten without it."

Approximately 1.47 million dollars was used to hire 12 new faculty members, including 11 teachers and one guidance counselor, and to cover the salaries of teachers who teach the most advanced classes, such as Advanced Placement (AP) Physics C, Multivariate Calculus and Differential Equations. These classes may have been cut if Stuyvesant did not receive Title I funding.

A hundred thousand dollars were used to maintain and expand AIS tutoring, which was previously jeopardized by budget cuts.

*"Allocating the extra money [to*

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## Godfather of Sudoku Visits Japanese Classes



Maki Kaji visited Ms. Helinski's class on Tuesday, November 16.

By MAYA AVERBUCH  
and JOSEPH FRANKEL

Maki Kaji, the self-proclaimed Godfather of Sudoku, visited several of Japanese teacher Chie Helinski's classes on Tuesday, November 16. Sudoku is a number game that requires the puzzler to fill in missing numbers in a nine by nine square grid; the numbers one through nine must each appear only once in each row, column and box. Kaji is responsible for coining the game's name and turning the once-unknown puzzle into a worldwide pastime.

Kaji, a native of Japan, is a college dropout who worked as a waiter, a roadie, a construction worker, a sleeper-car dismantler and a German-Japanese patent translator, before opening his own puzzle-publishing company, Nikoli, Inc., according to The Independent article

"Maki Kaji: First he Gave us Sudoku," published on Wednesday, May 2, 2007. He stumbled across a Sudoku puzzle under the name "Number Place" in an American magazine.

"Back in the '80s, if you saw a hundred puzzles, one of them was a Sudoku-ish puzzle. All the rest were word searches or crossword puzzles," Helinski said. "Mr. Kaji [...] came here and picked up one of those puzzle magazines and, because he doesn't speak English, he couldn't do crossword puzzles, but the number placement puzzle he could do."

As a result, Kaji decided to make his own number placement puzzles, one of which he named "suji wa dokushin ni kagiru," which translates to "the digits must be single."

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By ISAREE THATCHAICHAWALIT and DEVON VARRICHIONE

Eight Stuyvesant High School cleaners have been laid off since the start of the 2010-2011 school year. The layoffs are in part a consequence of the Department of Education (DOE) restructuring the extended-use permit system in New York City high schools, as well as a series of New York State budget cuts amounting to \$500 million in state education aid for the current school year.

Previously, Stuyvesant's use of the school building outside of the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on instructional days was free of charge for the school, as long as Principal Stanley Teitel filled out a DOE permit form. However, earlier this year, as a cost-cutting measure as well as a way to monitor school spending, the DOE instituted a new policy in which schools became required to pay for these permits out of a DOE-allocated budget. Once this money ran out, schools were required to pay for the permits out of their own budgets.

However, the DOE soon repealed this policy after realizing, inundated with complaints from parents and teachers, that the city's schools were not financially ready to make their payments. The previous system was reinstated, but with one exception concerning the custodial staff.

Extended-use permits have a section reserved for "special service" requests. There, the principal of a school can request the pres-

the newly reorganized Department of Education. The 2002 restructuring of the then-Board of Education established unprecedented mayoral control over the New York City public school system. At the time of his appointment, Klein was Chairman and CEO of Bertelsmann, Inc., a large media conglomerate. Prior to his appointment, Klein served as Assistant United States Attorney General in charge of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division from 1997 to 2001. He spent two years as a deputy in the White House counsel under the Clinton administration.

Klein centralized control of the public school system and implemented stricter standards for school performance through actions such as 2002's Children First reform campaign. Children First gave greater power to principals and school administrators in determining how their annual budgets would be used, and simultaneously demanded more accountability from administrators regarding their school's progress and performance.

In 2007, the DOE under Klein instituted a system of School Progress Reports in order to hold administrators accountable for their school's performance and



Cathleen Black replaces Joel I. Klein as the Chancellor of the Department of Education.

to identify schools in need of DOE intervention. The Progress Reports assess the attitudes of parents and the student body towards the school, through surveys, as well as the school's achievements on state standardized tests, such as the Regents Exams. Statistics, such as on-time graduation rates and average student attendance, are also taken into account. Schools re-

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## Eight Cleaners Laid Off Due to Budget Cuts

ence of additional cleaners if an activity is predicted to require significant clean-up afterwards. The revenue generated by the extra personnel is set aside for the custodial engineer to use in maintaining the school.

While reverting back to the old permit system, the DOE has now made it harder for permits requiring special service money to be approved. "They're scrutinizing every permit now, and the DOE didn't used to do that," school custodian engineer Fred Arnebold said. Arnebold explained that in years past the funds had been used to augment the janitorial budget. "We used to have six to eight people paid by permit money," Arnebold said. "Back in January we got cut 30,000 dollars, but we had enough permit money to absorb it."

Because of this, Arnebold has been forced to lay off eight cleaners since the start of the school year. The layoffs were determined by seniority.

"Last man in, first man out," Arnebold said.

In addition to those laid off, the custodial staff lost another cleaner to retirement this year. This brought the total number of Stuyvesant cleaners from 29 down to 20.

However, this number may drop even lower. "We expect to get a budget cut in January," daytime foreman Michael Scoma said. "We can't afford to lose any more men."

With the cleaner population diminished and more layoffs expected, the remaining school cleaners

are struggling to pick up the slack.

"You can walk around the building and see the difference. There are not enough people to maintain the building now," Arnebold said. "The building will get dirtier. We can only do so much with our men."

With cleaners being laid off the custodial staff will no longer be able to offer the same services. The building will be buffered and painted less frequently.

"I understand the constraints about money, and I feel bad because I should want the building in absolute tip-top condition, but you have to live with the budget you have," Teitel said. "There's not much you can do about it."

Many members of the Stuyvesant community expressed their concerns over the layoffs.

"It's upsetting that there are people getting fired and that with fewer cleaners the school will get dirtier," freshman Joel Beacher said.

Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman agreed. "I have to imagine that if you lay off that many custodians, there will be some degree of decline in cleanliness," he said.

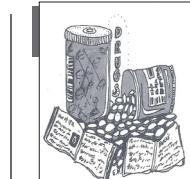
"Obviously it's a terrible thing for the custodians and their families for them to be laid off. I can't even begin to imagine how frustrated and worried they must be," Grossman said. "I know that there are city-wide budget cuts and layoffs, and I don't pretend to have a better solution. Just in terms of the people I know and see every day, I feel really bad."

### Opinions

Article on page 7.

Rally to Reduce Apathy

Could comedy be a catalyst for more student involvement?



Article on page 5.

Performance Enhancing Drugs: Not Just for Athletes Anymore

Students' frenzy for caffeine is being replaced by the illicit use of study drugs.

### Features

# News

## Stuyvesant Spends Title 1 Funding

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AIS] is worth it," junior Rebecca Ma said. "AIS is good because different teachers teach differently, and having varying points of view can help students."

As part of a new initiative to smooth the transition from middle school to high school, 10,000 dollars were used to fund four freshmen workshops, three of which were held in late September and early October; the last one will be held in December. The workshops concentrated on good note taking methods, study habits, organization and graduation requirements.

Some freshmen felt that the workshops fulfilled their intended purpose. "Some of the workshops were helpful because they had a lot of tips," freshman Sylvia Cheeveli said. "I came out feeling more prepared."

Other students feel they could have been run more efficiently. "[Guidance counselors] could have put everything into one workshop or could have made them shorter to use less money," freshman Cindi Kim said.

The rest of the funding, 16,000 dollars, was given to the Parents' Association (PA) to expand parental involvement programs.

"Sixteen-thousand dollars is a nice chunk of money, but in a school of Stuyvesant's size, where

there is 3,000 plus families, it's appreciated, but it really won't be a game changer in terms of expanding opportunities for parents. That's why we want to use it and target it in the most effective way possible," Blumm said.

At the monthly PA meeting on Thursday, November 16, Department of Education representative Loretta Au, Teitel and Blumm discussed several possible allocations plans based on those that had been enacted in other schools.

One of the possibilities is holding monthly meetings where assistant principals and select teachers give presentations about the functioning of their departments so "parents can learn what the typical sequence of classes are and get an idea of options as the students become juniors and seniors and can take electives and AP classes," Blumm said.

"This may solve the problem of lack of communication and decrease the number of perplexed parents," junior Annie Chau said.

An alternative is creating a computer literacy workshop for parents who would like to be more computer-savvy. Blumm said he and other PA members would like "to do everything we can do get everyone online, since the main way the PA communicates with parents is e-mail."

A third option is increasing the amount of money allotted to

translation of all oral and written information for parents to different languages. At present, only a portion of the written material is translated.

"A lot of parents, like mine, don't understand English. Translating all the information sent to my parents would definitely allow them to learn more about Stuy," senior Zhuling Li said.

Parents can give their input on which is the best option by e-mailing the PA, which will decide how to spend the money by its next meeting on Tuesday, December 21.

Although some of the money has yet to be spent, according to Teitel, Title I funding has been instrumental in maintaining the high level of education at Stuyvesant. "I know from having spoken to other principals that budgets have been cut severely in other schools and there are all kinds of instructional losses to the students. We have not suffered any of that," he said. "Our students are still capable of taking whatever classes they would like when they register online."

In order to ensure that this holds true in the 2011-2012 school year, the administration is encouraging all families that qualify for free or reduced lunch to turn in their lunch forms by the end of the year. Both Teitel and Blumm are confident that Stuyvesant will receive Title 1 funding next year.

## Joel Klein Resigns, Cathleen Black Appointed as New DOE Chancellor

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ceive grades of A, B, C, D or F. On Wednesday, November 3, Stuyvesant received an overall grade of "A" for the 2009-2010 year.

"We're really lucky at Stuyvesant. All the students in the building are here because, among other things, they're good at taking tests. Our scores are high and [on] all the stuff we get evaluated on, our scores are high," Assistant Principal English Eric Grossman said. "For the most part, we still have a tremendous amount of freedom to do what we feel is right."

In addition to the School Progress Reports, all New York City Schools receive Quality Reviews—assessments based on a three day visit from DOE staff to the school in question. Quality Reviews are used to measure the depth of parent involvement in the school, leadership abilities of the principal and the efficiency of school methods of setting up individualized teaching and learning goals. Quality Reviews use a Quality Score of + (well developed), P (proficient) and Ø (undeveloped). Stuyvesant received a score of "+" on its most recent evaluation.

Based on both the Quality Reviews and School Progress Reports, Klein has identified and then closed 91 schools classified as "underperforming" and created 474 new schools, often locating multiple small schools in the same physical building.

"My [administrator] colleagues feel tremendous stress because of [Klein's] policies," Principal Stanley Teitel said. "Overall, there has been very little effect [on Stuyvesant High School] because Stuyvesant is so successful."

Under Klein's tenure, the DOE ended the practice of determining teacher assignments based on seniority. "[Klein has] definitely streamlined the removal of ineffective teachers," Teitel said. "This was the case with our guidance staff.

Before Klein's policies, I was hesitant to open up the positions because we would have to take people with seniority, regardless of whether they were good counselors or not. Now we have a full-time guidance staff full of wonderful people."

Klein's chancellorship has not been without controversy, stemming from his own actions, as well as those of the Mayor. Similar to Black's appointment, in 2002, State Education Commissioner Richard P. Mills had to grant Klein a waiver for him to fill the chancellor position due to his lack of education credentials. Early on, Mayor Bloomberg's plan to eliminate New York City's 32 local school districts and replace them with 10 regions focused on instruction was challenged by state lawmakers and was never implemented. In 2004, Bloomberg fired three members of the Panel Educational Policy, the replacement for the school board, because they were not planning on voting for his proposed promotion rules.

Klein's accountability system based on passing exams and graduating students was called into question in 2010, when the state Board of Regents announced that state assessments had become too easy, casting doubt on the legitimacy of criteria used in the School Progress Reports.

"One increasing emphasis over the last eight years is a focus on data, on collecting and interpreting all types of data to drive instruction. The idea that schools and teachers ought to be accountable for the learning that happens within them, or in the case of teachers, students' learning, seems like a really good idea to me," Grossman said. "I fear that in small ways here, and in big ways in other schools, the pressure to amass high scores on standardized tests can lead to a focus on statistics rather than learning. That's not to say that no data is valid or useful, just that it's rarely clear, innocent or the whole story."

Parents have expressed concerns that they do not hold a big enough role in decision making under Bloomberg and Klein's new centralized system. A redesigned school bus route system aimed to save city money in 2007 led to widespread confusion, leaving parents unhappy. Klein has been criticized for disregarding parent input, to which Bloomberg has responded by creating the position of Chief Family Engagement Officer.

### Black's Appointment

Like Klein, Black is being criticized for her lack of background in education by City Council members and some parent groups who argue that the school system is in need of an experienced educator at the helm. However, some, including Teitel, are happy with Black's appointment. "I certainly think that the Chancellor's job is administration," Teitel said. "Overall, he's [Klein] moved the system. He's made every effort... [but] it's good to get someone new, [with a] fresh viewpoint."

Despite the volume of high profile media attention surrounding Black's appointment, many students are oblivious to the new changes in the DOE.

"I never heard about [Klein] resigning," sophomore Samantha Luangkhot said.

For those who do know about the change in Chancellors, sentiments are generally mixed.

"She has lots of managing experience, which is important," senior Matthew Zin said. "She has an advisor now; she can use the [Chief Academic Officer] for things to help her out."

"I don't believe a person without any background in any educational-related areas should be appointed chancellor of New York City schools," sophomore Victoria Chen said. "If you just appoint someone who has no background in education, they have no clue what students or schools will need in order to improve."

## Gay Speakers Share Their Experiences with Women's Voices Class

By ISABELLE NG

Two women spoke to English teacher Annie Thoms's fifth period Women's Voices (E7WX) class about their experiences

**"It really impressed me how comfortable they are in their own skin. Leslie [Mackrell] told us that she has become almost 'un-offendable.'"**  
—Jessica Huang, senior

pect her sexuality in elementary school. Her parents wondered about this idea too, and during high school, her mother asked her twice if she was gay. Mackrell denied it both times.

"I was too scared to say the words, to have the conversation," Mackrell said.

She accepted the fact that she was gay once in college. When she was 23 years old, Mackrell told her parents that she was in a relationship with another woman. She has been "out" for six years.

Budhiraja said she has been "out" for fifteen years. She shared her story about growing up as the only South Asian student in her school. She recalled trying hard to fit in and seeing gay classmates teased in her high school. Like Mackrell, Budhiraja realized that she was attracted to women when she was in college.

After finishing her studies, she traveled to London and India to find other South Asian lesbians since she did not know any growing up. She discovered many gay and lesbian groups that gathered on a regular basis to have discussions.

When she told her father the truth, he accepted her sexuality. However, the following ten years were difficult. Her family tried to hide her sexuality and emphasize her faith.

"He [my father] cared more about my shame to the community than my happiness," Budhiraja said. Presently, however, her relationship with her family is strong.

The presentation ended on a note about the difficulties associated with informing others around them of the truth. Budhiraja called for people who are not homosexual to be more open and accepting in order to

**"[The students will] have the opportunity to consider the issue of the silencing of gayness and to meet gay people,"**  
—Annie Thoms, english teacher

create a culture of sensitivity.

"On some level, we all know gay people. [Today,] students had the opportunity to consider the issue of the silencing of gayness," Thoms said.

Students were greatly moved by the speakers' openness and vulnerability.

"It really impressed me how comfortable they are in their own skin. Leslie [Mackrell] told us that she has become almost 'un-offendable,'" senior Jessica Huang said.

"It was cool how open they were about their sexuality and relationships," senior Cheryl Tang said. "It gave us a chance to hear their stories which we usually don't get to hear in our lives."

## Victory at Villiger

By GEORGINA YANG, EMMA LICHTENSTEIN and MAYA AVERBUCH

Nearly a hundred students watch their fellow speakers present stirring speeches and fellow debaters put on satirical skits. A lighthearted atmosphere lingers in the room as they make references to long-forgotten performances, drop subtle jibes about laughably horrendous opponents and tease each other playfully. The mood is a sharp contrast to the intense environment they will face when they compete in front of a panel of stern-faced judges the next day. Members of the Speech and Debate team call this tradition the Marathon, a time for the whole team to gather and demonstrate their hard work before the Villiger tournament. The tournament draws competitors from all across the nation. This year, 90 schools participated in the tournament, which was held at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, on Saturday, November 20, and Sunday, November 21. Stuyvesant's team has participated in Villiger since 1985; this year is the 19th time it has won the tournament. The team, which sent 92 members to the competition, beat its toughest local and national competitor, Regis High School, by 43 points. "The Speech and Debate team is definitely among the closest-knit and most successful teams at Stuy and this translated into an amazing performance at Villiger," sophomore Norine Chan said. "Villiger really showed how our team is a family at heart."

### Speech

"My name is Vieques. I am stronger now. I may be worth 80 thousand dollars to you, stepfather, but I am priceless to me," proclaimed the young girl, her voice thick with an Afrikaans accent and youthful fervor. However, the person delivering this impassioned speech was a cheerful, petite sophomore named Nancy Ko, who became a quarter-finalist.

"Poetry is basically intermingling several different pieces and weaving them together so that the climax and resolution occur at the same time. They should tell a story in the end, despite them being different," Ko said. "Technically, you can think about inflections or intonations, but the important thing is to find a piece that is a challenge because you want to ensconce yourself in this character."

Senior Simon Ayzman garnered first place in Dramatic Interpretation of Literature, in which contestants give a speech based on a play originally presented on screen, radio or stage. Ayzman read an excerpt from "Tom Truehart and the Island of Dinosaurs" by Ian Beck, hoping to get across the message that "despite the fact that you may be small and insignificant, you can still have courage," he said.

The team of seniors and Novice Directors of Oral Interpretation Rebecca Temkin and Team President Jaime Meyers placed third in Duo Interpretation of Literature. Although the actors are supposed to portray the scene together, they are not allowed to look at each other, touch each other or use any props. "[Duo] is more difficult than acting on stage," Temkin said. "It's not just a vocal presentation. It's how you move your body and work with your partner. It's an interesting challenge and you learn a lot working with other people and yourself." Senior Mary Emily Ficarra placed fourth in Original Oratory, in which speakers write a speech about a topic of their choice that they then perform throughout the year. "My oratory is about small talk and why small talk is a terrible horrible thing that damages our relationships," she said.

She came up with the idea after the George Mason Institute of Forensics, a speech and debate camp. Attending summer training is common practice of Stuyvesant students. For Ficarra, it gave her the opportunity to explore a topic that she connected to in depth. "My coach asked me what my biggest pet peeve was. I said small talk and she said, 'Let's work with that,' and I spent two and a half weeks writing about small talk."

### Debate

"We get kids who weren't interested in current events back into being interested in politics and what's happening around the world," senior and Captain of Student Congress and Extemporaneous Speaking Edwin Yung said.

Yung, who was a finalist in Student Congress, said, "We just research, we debate and we pretend to be Senators." Each school has to submit a piece of legislation, which students argue in support of or against by giving multiple three-minute speeches. Competitors at Villiger discussed whether marijuana should be legalized, military spending should be cut, the mini-

mum wage should be adjusted to the cost of living and funding to Israel should be cut.

Junior Mick Zloof was a semi-finalist in Extemporaneous Speaking, a category in which students are given a question that they have 30 minutes to write a seven-minute speech.

"Other categories will say, 'Have you memorized something or prepared a long time in advance?' Zloof said. "In Extemporaneous Speech, you need to have good knowledge about what's going on in the world in order to make a good judgment about what you feel."

Alongside his partner, junior and Captain of Public Forum Liam Downs-Tepper, junior and Novice Director of Public Forum Sam Saskin reached quarter-finals in Public Forum Debate, in which debaters affirm or negate a new resolution every month. The topic at Villiger was "Resolved: High school Public Forum Debate resolutions should not confront sensitive religious issues." The original statement was "Resolved: An Islamic cultural center should be built near Ground Zero," but the National Forensic League changed it in response to protests from debaters.

Although debaters are required to argue both in favor of and against a resolution, albeit in different rounds, his research and debates have led Saskin to agree with the affirmative stance. "It's entirely more offensive to be confronting someone's religion than someone's political beliefs. Because of that increased offense [...] people weren't going to debate the sensitive religious issues. Discourse in public forum decreases because the religious people, their arguments are removed from the debate, and thus we're not creating a greater understanding," Saskin said.

Junior Jong Lee, who along with junior Chang Tang, also reached quarter-finals, was convinced religious issues needed to be addressed in debate rounds. "Because religion makes up such a large part of politics, we have to learn how to objectively and logically talk about religion," Lee said. "Public Forum-ers become leaders in their respective fields and if this debate category is breeding leaders for the future, then they need to learn how to talk about religion without offending people."

At the tournament, Lincoln Douglas debaters discussed the resolution "The abuse of illegal drugs ought to be treated as a matter of public health, not of criminal justice."

"Even though in LD we debate about issues that are relevant today, we debate from a moral and philosophical perspective," said sophomore Isabelle Mahnke, who reached octo-finals.

In support of the resolution, sophomore Samantha Hom argued that "a lot of deaths from drug abuse come from using dirty needles, and the reason why people reuse dirty needles is because the criminal justice system has all these laws about drug paraphernalia. So, only by treating it as a matter of public health can clean needle exchange programs be set up, and that would solve for HIV and AIDS related deaths," she said.

On the negative side, Mahnke, argued that illegal drug cases can be conducted in drug courts, "which are essentially systems that combine both public health and criminal justice."

Sophomore Ezra Louvis reached octo-finals with his partner, senior Michael Lavina, in Policy Debate. Policy teams are known for their breakneck speaking speed. This year's resolution is that "The United States Federal Government should substantially reduce its military and/or police presence from one or more of the following countries: Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey, South Korea, or Japan."

"We take a pretty mainstream approach on the affirmative arguing that we should withdraw from Okinawa, which is a prefecture in Japan, in order to maintain stability in the region. Against that, people would make arguments like disadvantages where they say that withdrawing would make Japan nuclearize," Louvis said.

Although his category requires hours of intense research, Louvis claims that this in-depth knowledge of a subject is what makes Policy Debate particularly interesting. "The fact that you are able to debate nuanced issues with specific support from evidence makes it a very redeeming experience," he said. "Even if you lose, you can still come away having debated well and having learned something either from the judge or the way the other team debates."

*For full results, visit:  
www.stuyspectator.com*

## Stuy Teens Tinker with Toys

By KAREN ZHENG

The next time you pass a Toys "R" Us, be warned: the flashy toy advertisement in the window may have been designed by one of your classmates. Teen Entrepreneur Boot Camp (TEBC) and Connect Four inventor Howard Wexler are teaming up to start a nonprofit teen toy company at Stuyvesant. Principal Stanley Teitel, health teacher and Coordinator of Student Affairs Lisa Weinwurm, Student Union President Oren Bukspan, Wexler and TEBC founder Pam Chmiel met and talked about launching the company on Monday, November 8.

TEBC is a non-profit that for the past three years has operated a two-week summer program at various Manhattan locations to teach high school students how to create and follow through with business plans using actual products. In the past, teens have opened temporary retail businesses that they created, designed, marketed and operated to the public. They have transformed empty storefronts in the South Street Seaport and the historical landmark building of Keuffel & Esser, at 127 Fulton Street, into working espresso bars for two days. Other students learned about wholesale and manufacturing by working alongside a fashion designer to figure out how to introduce her handbag into the marketplace. Yet another group worked with a toy designer to get her Frisbee-inspired product onto store shelves. Each team had a deadline of one week to figure out how to manufacture and sell its product.

Teens have come from Chicago, Atlanta and California to attend these workshops. This year, Chmiel wanted to expand the program into a full year initiative at a New York City high school. TEBC is partnering with Wexler—who, in addition to Connect Four, has licensed 130 toys and games—to help the students take one of his new and unreleased games into the marketplace. In the past, teens have had to pay to attend the workshops, but in this case, Wexler is donating to TEBC the money it needs to manufacture the game. He and Chmiel are also currently applying for grants to fund the Stuyvesant program.

Chmiel, an entrepreneur

who owns the coffee bar Klatch, believes that having an entrepreneurial mindset is "a life skill you could use for training for a professional career. Hands-on involvement, like coming up with a name, a logo and the packaging, or finding the materials and the manufacturer, [teaches] market research, public relations and advertising. It teaches you to be proactive and resourceful, and it teaches positive thinking and problem solving."

In search of well-educated, highly motivated students to pilot her yearlong teen program in New York City, she reached out to several schools, but Stuyvesant was the first to respond. Chmiel first sent a proposal to Teitel, hoping that her idea could be made into a business class, but he and Weinwurm judged it unable to fit into the Stuyvesant curriculum. The information was then passed down to Bukspan, who helped Chmiel turn the TEBC program into an extracurricular activity.

Bukspan appreciates the opportunity. "You're facing many of the same challenges any other business would face just getting a toy out on the market, but you have the security of knowing that you have a successful program director behind you," he said.

Chmiel and Wexler aim to run the program from December to June 2011 and hope to have a team of 20 to 30 students. They plan on holding an interest meeting on Wednesday, December 8. If more than enough students are interested, Chmiel plans on selecting on a first-come, first-serve basis. It would take place two to three days a week for one and a half to two hours per meeting. Wexler and Chmiel will lead the extracurricular program alongside experts in the field who will be invited as guest speakers.

"We're teaching students to be creative thinkers, to have inventive minds, to take initiative on their own and direct themselves," Wexler said. "What's unique is that they will actually be working on something that's real as opposed to just studying about business. That's just theoretical, but here's a situation where the student can look at the toy and say, 'That thing that people are buying, we made.'"

Students are enthusiastic about the idea.

Sophomore Linda Luu expressed interest in participating in the program. "Students would get the chance to learn more about the real world. It would give students the chance to experiment with the market," she said.

Junior and Young Entrepreneur's Association (YEAI) member Ann Shum believes the program will appeal to many Stuyvesant students. "Last year for YEAI, we had a competition where we formed groups and ran our own companies. We developed a virtual product or service and showed how we would sell it," she said. "[TEBC] would be great for people interested in business or marketing. It would definitely interest our whole club."

Last year, senior Catherine Gao was involved in selling a handbag through TEBC. Her guidance counselor recommended the program to her. Gao's team ventured out to meet professionals in the fashion industry, including designers, trend directors, publicists and merchandisers. They visited showrooms, fabric stores, manufacturing plants and retail shops to gather the information they needed. The outcome of their work was a business deal with Olivet International, a manufacturing powerhouse with clients like Tommy Hilfiger, The Gap and Old Navy. Olivet offered to take the first steps in launching the bag by making samples and pitching the product to Urban Outfitters and Barnes and Noble.

"I definitely recommend TEBC because it's a great environment. You start thinking about every product, the price, materials, competitors," Gao said. "I discovered that I'm interested in business. [...] It's always good to try new things. You might find a new passion."

Any proceeds from the toy would go back into TEBC to "run more programs like this in the future," Chmiel said. "We hope to expand to other schools and continue at Stuyvesant."

This supports Chmiel's goal of exposing as many young people to business as possible so they do not hesitate to start their own businesses. "If you do it once, it's easy to do it again," Chmiel said. "You won't be afraid anymore."

## Godfather of Sudoku

### Visits Japanese Classes

*continued from page 1*

One of Kaji's employees later suggested that the name be shortened to "Sudoku." According to Helinski, the shortened name is still fitting since "su" means number and "doku" means single.

The puzzle gained popularity quickly in Japan, but did not spread to the rest of the world until a reader of Nikoli magazine sold a Sudoku puzzle of his own to The London Times. From there, it spread to the rest of Europe and then the United States. It is now played in over 140 countries.

According to Helinski, Kaji is still trying to spread his love of puzzles. She first met him four years ago in Washington, D.C., at Japan Bowl, a language and culture competition for high school students. Kaji was a guest speaker at the competition, and the two bonded over their appreciation of Sudoku. When he subsequently traveled to New York, Kaji contacted Helinski and requested to speak to her students at Stuyvesant.

Over the last few years, Kaji, who comes to New York because his publishing company is based here, has visited Stuyvesant three times. During his latest visit, in which he spoke to

Helinski's Advanced Placement Japanese class (FJ7X) and her two third-year Japanese classes (FJ5), he gave a brief presentation on the history of four major types of games: crossword puzzles, jigsaw puzzles, Rubik's Cubes and Sudoku, and then gave students four different puzzles to solve. As Kaji does not speak English, the entire lecture was conducted in Japanese.

"The school system tests knowledge," Helinski said. "Not always does it challenge kids to think and enjoy the thinking process. And knowing him—he's a mischievous kind of guy—I think he wants to give kids a breather and a little bit of a challenge."

Although some of Helinski's students struggled to understand the lecture, many still found it to be an exciting break from the regular school day. "Truthfully, I couldn't understand everything, since he was speaking in Japanese the entire time, but [...] it was very interesting," junior Jennifer Pak said. She was particularly intrigued by Nikoli's booklet of sample puzzles, which Kaji distributed to the class. "It's surprising that Sudoku's the only famous puzzle out of all the ones in that little book," Pak said.

Junior Swara Saraiya agreed that the lecture was enthralling.

"As [Kaji] continued, I got used to his pace and was able to understand more. He incorporated a lot of hand gestures and drew on the board and even checked in with us to make sure we were following along. He was super enthusiastic about puzzles, and his attitude was rather infectious, so the entire class got pulled in," she said. "[Kaji's talk] made me appreciate not only the difficulty of the puzzles, but the difficulty of inventing the game."

Helinski, who does Sudoku every day, feels that puzzles have special relevance for Stuyvesant students. "In school, in work situations, what's more valued is perseverance. [...] But when you do puzzles, sometimes you have to abandon your train of thought, walk away from it and then go back," Helinski said. "[To] keep pushing with the [same] mindset is not going to get you there."

"That ability to completely disassociate yourself from the situation you are facing, whether it's a puzzle or a life situation, and looking at it from a different angle [is very important]," she said. "I hope that the kids get that message, because sometimes when you are at Stuy, you feel like your only option is to keep pushing, keep going and that is not always the answer."

# Features

## Teach for America: Teaching America's Students and Teachers

By YING YU SITU

As Stuyvesant students, we are constantly haunted by the idea that the only respectable professions that we can pursue are either as doctors or lawyers. Teach for America (TFA) is a program that proves otherwise. Founded in 1990 by Wendy Kopp for her thesis project at Princeton University, TFA recruits college graduate students with no teaching experience. They are given two years to teach in schools located in low-income communities.

Kopp's chief goal was to introduce more college students to less affluent—but equally rewarding—jobs in the education field. Members of TFA are not required to stay in the education field after two years, but it is hoped that they will at least take away a valuable experience and give back to TFA in the future.

Spots at TFA are limited and highly competitive. In 2008, only 10% of 35,000 applicants were accepted to TFA. On a personal level, TFA looks for candidates who show strong leadership and interpersonal skills. Academically, the only requirements are to have a GPA above 2.50 and a bachelor's degree. It has been noted, however, that mostly students from top colleges, such as the Ivy Leagues, are accepted.

According to an article published by The Wall Street Journal in 2008, Ivy League students make up over 11% of the accepted applicants and the average applicant GPA was 3.50. Regardless, TFA still accepts a wide diversity of people, many of whom aren't even education majors.

"I wanted to go to law school, but TFA gets people who never intended to be teachers," former TFA member and math teacher Gary Rubinstein said.

Just as the applicants for TFA are diverse, their motives for joining TFA are just as varied. Since TFA promises the chance to directly benefit people's lives, many applicants are interested by the prospect of helping others. For other participants, TFA meant finding a new career direction.

"As it got closer to [law school] applications, I realized I didn't want to do it. A teaching corps was new and you tried it when you weren't sure what to do," Rubinstein said.

Similarly, some applicants use TFA as a way to gain experience in a new career field.

"My father was a teacher and I was interested. TFA is targeted towards non-education majors. I wasn't and it seemed like a good way to get involved," former TFA member and social studies teacher Matthew Polazzo said.

After applicants are accepted, they are required to go through a rigorous five week training program during the coming summer. The subject area that the TFA members are to teach is drilled in over a two week course. They are also given a summer school class to teach. Often times, work days stretch to 18 hours long.

"There were meetings, groups, and classes to teach every day. It was kind of like a boot camp," Rubinstein said.

After completion of the training session over the summer, TFA members are assigned to the underdeveloped school where they will teach the next September.

Working at TFA offers plenty of benefits. For one, TFA helps their members discover their true career path. According to an article from The Wall Street Journal, only 10% of undergraduates who apply for TFA originally pursue a

career in education, but over two-thirds of the accepted applicants remain in TFA after their two year required term is up. Furthermore, the members that choose to continue teaching enjoy a considerable advantage over others when job searching.

According to a statement in a USA Today article by the superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, Peter Gorman, when schools are hiring teachers, preference is given to former TFA members. TFA even helps its members when job hunting, and continues to offer assistance even after their members already have a job. TFA has regional offices with people whose job, specifically, is to help the new teachers.

"I would go to their offices to Xerox sheets since my school didn't have a Xerox machine," Polazzo said.

The challenge of teaching students from an underdeveloped school also offers a great way to hone a new teacher's developing skills.

"You learn how to teach really well because the kids rebel if you're not good," Rubinstein said.

Everything has its fair share of critics, however, and TFA is no exception. One such critique is that

### TFA helps their members discover their true career path.

applicants for TFA are simply using TFA as a way to beef up their resumes, with no intentions of further pursuing a career in education. The short period of time that members are required to fulfill has also been criticized.

"Two years is too short. It should be four," Rubinstein said. "It makes teaching seem like a hobby."

Furthermore, TFA has been critiqued for its unorthodox methods. TFA only requires its students to acquire a temporary teaching certificate which critics from U.S. News and the New York Times have said it is not a substitute for the traditional masters in education.

Regardless of its critics, TFA has shown to have positive effects on the U.S. school system and over its years, their goals have shifted to reflect them. Since TFA selects only the best, its mission has changed from filling up a shortage of teachers to providing needy students with the best teachers possible.

Studies conducted on TFA's effectiveness and posted on TFA's Web site have shown that students who were taught by TFA teachers have tested better on standardized tests compared to students from regular schools. The one thing that stays constant, however, is TFA's promise of a rich and rewarding experience which for many, TFA has fulfilled.

"If I hadn't joined TFA, I wouldn't be here now," Polazzo said. "It was a two year detour, and I fell in love with it. I owe it all to TFA."

## Staying the Course: A History of Past Technology Classes at Stuyvesant

By MADHURIMA CHOWDHURY

There is talk of our more hands-on courses, such as Woodworking and Ceramics, being phased out at Stuyvesant. But this is not the first time classes have been cut from the Technology Department. While walking through the hallways of a building sitting on 345 East 15th street, one would see the evidence of a more technologically minded institution, such as the sounds of metal being welded, wood being sawed and the distinct smell of burning plastic. The site was the old Stuyvesant High School building, which boasted a plethora of these now-discontinued courses.

### Where the Sun, the Moon, and Stuyvesant Students Collided Telescope-making:

Stars and planets are typically invisible to the naked eye in the City. But for former Stuyvesant students, looking at the planets was as simple as examining their cheek cells in Biology lab. The students made their own telescopes.

According to Engineering teacher Richard Realmuto, the lenses of the telescopes were six inch discs and were about one and a half inches thick.

The process of grinding the lenses was time consuming and had many steps. "The cutting tool is another piece of glass with a specific hollow in it," Realmuto said. "Extremely finer and finer grits were placed in a solution of water and liquid soap and these two plates were rocked back and forth as the worker rotated around the one stationary cutter."

"Then certain metal parts [of the scope] had to be fabricated from flat bars and others had to be turned on a Metal Lathe," said Realmuto, describing the various steps the students used to make the telescopes.

The students made a tube with an eight inch diameter from five feet of thick cardboard. The tube was placed on top of handmade tripods, which consisted of wooden legs. After the students finished grinding their lenses, the lenses were sent out to be silvered.

"[When] the optics was aligned [...], the student was good to go to [and] look at the real universe with his or her own eyes," Realmuto said.

Technical Drawing teacher, Steven Rothenberg, believes that this course educated students about the outside world. "Students really got to understand how something goes together, how to fabricate something, something about the real world in terms of refraction and how telescopes work," Rothenberg said.

There was even a camera that was mounted on the telescope. "At the brackets, you could mount your camera to it and actually take pictures of the stars. So they made a really neat telescope," Technology teacher James Lonardo said.

"I will never forget the first time I looked at Aires through the viewfinder of a homemade telescope," Realmuto said. "It was a brilliant joule in the darkness of the universe. I felt empowered."

### Metal Heads Metal Working:

In the metal working class, students did machining and sheet metal work, turning the materials into something functional that is used in everyday life. "[The students] got a feeling for how you take a material like metal and bend it, and fold it, and in effect

how it's from a flat plane and made into something three dimensional," Rothenberg said.

Students learned to use lathes and spot welding, which puts two pieces of metals together. They used the machines to make hammers, but not just any ordinary hammer. "[It's] a hammer where you can unscrew the handle and out of that comes a screwdriver and if you unscrew that out comes a scribe or a marking tool," Lonardo said.

Even if the students don't go into the field of using metal in the future, Rothenberg believes that the experience that the students gained in the metal working class helped them understand how things are manufactured. "The fact that you are making something utilizes many different parts of your psyches," Rothenberg said.

Students get a feeling of accomplishment after they create an item. Unfortunately, when the school was transferred to the current building, the class was eliminated. However, some of the equipments in the class were kept. For instance, although the Robotics class wasn't around during the time of the metal working class, the robotics class still uses the lathes and a milling machine.

### Environmentally Conscience in a Creative Way Plastics Lab:

Instead of recycling plastic cans by throwing them into a blue plastic bin, Stuyvesant students in the Plastics Lab course made lamps out of that same piece of plastic. This class was usually taught with the woodworking course.

Using the machines that fashioned plastics, students hand-crafted lamps, signage, injection molds for cars and reproduced anything else that they had a mold for. Students shaped plastics into usable items using thermosetting and injection molding.

"The course taught the student to use this material as a tool or a material so that a better product can be produced for society," Realmuto said.

This course also gave students the experience to make tangible items with their hands.

"Some of the drafting they had done started having a different reality than just lines on a piece of paper because they were making something," Rothenberg said, "and they have to visualize it [...] before they fabricated the plastic things."

### The Printing Press Printing Class:

Students learned how to run presses in the Printing Shop. "Before computers, types used to be set by hands, images used to be produced using different types of duplicating processes," Lonardo said. "We used to teach those types of techniques."

The students made letterheads, business cards, stamps, mini-newspapers and silk screen stencils. However, because of technological advances, these techniques are done on the computer now. This course has evolved into the Graphics Communication class.

### Gold Diggers Jewelry and Art Metal Design Class:

Students made their own jewelries out of metal by shaping and curving the metal. They made the jewelries by forging and molding. The students made bracelets,

necklaces, rings, and covers for jewelry boxes.

"[The class] wasn't just 'hey I'm going to make a ring,' but 'how do I cut the metal, how do I fashion the metal, and those are all things that can be carried over to other areas," Lonardo said.

The students sometimes donated the jewelries they made. "I will never forget the mass-produced jewelry box that Mr. Wright's class produced as a gift for the children in a Homeless Shelter one year," Realmuto said. "I think that the boxes were flocked with Red Felt. Was it a great experience? Yes."

### Speaking from the Past Speaker Building Class:

Former mathematics teacher Ray Alden, and later mathematics teacher Michael D'Alleva, made the electronic parts of speaker systems that were designed by students.

"The box or case needed to be specially designed to accommodate

the acoustical resonance," Realmuto said. "The Wood shop used those specifications and the students constructed the case for the project."

### Fly like a G6 Airplane Building:

During this short-lived course that pre-dated 1980, students built a small airplane.

"It was constructed as a wing and a fuselage and then assembled on site at the air field," Realmuto said. "I heard that a Volkswagen engine was used to power it."

The plane was taken out of the old school building from room 320 using a crane. The small plane was then taken to an airport in upstate New York. The teacher who taught the class had the license to fly planes and flew the plane after it was built.

These now defunct classes were very popular with students. "If you ever did a poll of the people who took the courses, a high percentage would say they got something out of it," Rothenberg said.

The classes also taught the students concepts that are used in the real world. "The materials that are 'plastic' clay and plastic are very much in the Engineers tool box," Realmuto said.

Even though most of the students did not go on to make a future in these fields, they still learned critical ideas that can be used down the road. "There was never the teaching of any of these classes with the intent that 'yeah you're going to take this class and you're going to go out and become a woodworker or a carpenter,'" Lonardo said. "That was never our intent. Our intent was to instill in the students the technique of fabrication, of design, of manufacturing [and] how you set these things up."

"It is important that young people are introduced to designing in a modern way," Realmuto said. "Students need to be introduced to these new concepts from a ground up point of view and not just as an end user."

The past technology courses have helped the students in many ways. "Seeing a product with all of its warts and shortcomings is an important component in learning how to succeed," Realmuto said. "Success for our students starts with developing a student point of view. For some students, visualizing in a three dimensional field is the way they can see themselves best."



# Editorials

## STAFF EDITORIAL

### How Now, Mr. C.A.O?

On Tuesday, November 9, Mayor Bloomberg held a press conference with Chancellor of the New York City Public School district, Joel I. Klein. Klein, who has been the Chancellor since 2002, caught the public off-guard by announcing that he was retiring at the end of this month in order to become an executive vice president at Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, the owner of Fox News and the New York Post. And truly unanticipated by nearly everyone outside the tightest coterie of Bloomberg confidants was who the mayor had selected as his replacement: Cathleen P. Black.

Black's life, like Bloomberg's past and Klein's future, is that of a media mogul. Stints at the magazines *Ms.* and *New York* paved the way for what was arguably her greatest coup: her leading role in the establishment of the national daily newspaper, *USA Today*. *USA Today* became the most popular newspaper in the country, but we believe that it reached that apex by pandering to the lowest common denominator of intelligence and social awareness. In her latest position as president of Hearst Magazines, she garnered acclaim for her business acumen, but drew criticism for her reportedly cold demeanor.

The glaring omission from her curriculum vitae is any sort of connection to the world of public education. She was educated in Catholic schools and at a private college. Her children attended a private boarding school in Connecticut. While Klein was not a career educator, at least he had attended the New York City public school system through high school and worked as a teacher for a year. Black, on the other hand, served as an honorary principal of a middle school in the Bronx for a day. The Mayor has argued that the school system needs effective managers, not those beholden to the entrenched interests that have supposedly kept student achievement low. The appointment of Black is his most resounding expression of support for the idea that the practices of the business world translate seamlessly to pedagogical applications.

Under Chancellor Joel I. Klein, New York City Public Schools have placed strong bureaucratic emphasis on standardized testing as a way of quantitatively evaluating both school and teacher performance. This is undeniably a business world approach to education policy, elevating the importance of hard data in the form of test scores at the expense of less quantifiable benchmarks such as actual student learning, and the competitiveness of graduates in the job market and college process. There is a valid argument that this approach has worked: under Klein's policy of constant standardized evaluation, the on-time graduation rate for New York City High School students increased from around 44 percent in 2004 to around 60 percent today. Standardized tests encourage teachers to adhere strictly to preset curricula, which may force some underperforming educators to raise the standards to which they hold their students. Additionally, standardized testing provides a common denominator of student achievement against which

schools can be measured, which allows the DOE to identify failing schools, and on the micro-level, individual teachers. The DOE can then act on this information and close down schools that are underperforming and demonstrate little progress.

However, there are several major issues with the system of standardized testing in New York City Public Schools as it exists today. For one, it is nearly impossible to accurately assess students in subjects such as English using a standardized test. Furthermore, state tests such as the Regents Exam have been declared too easy to pass by the state itself, calling into question whether the city school's recent improvements in Regents performance corresponds with an actual increase in student learning. Rigorous standardized testing rewards schools that focus more on test preparation than on implementing innovative classroom techniques such as Socratic seminars, which are more discussion-based than didactic.

Stuyvesant offers a prime example of another weakness in the test-based system of evaluation: for schools at the high end of student performance, it becomes nearly impossible to demonstrate improvement in test scores beyond, give or take a percentage point a year. Even if average scores on a Regents exam go up .5 in one year, the increase is judged to not meet DOE progress quotas. However, what the minute increase in scores really indicates is that it is impossible to meaningfully judge the progress of high-performing schools using a universal assessment rubric such as the Regents Exam. Schools with exceptional baseline performance on standardized tests of necessity must be evaluated based on different, more qualitative criteria than institutions with traditionally poor performance.

The other goal of qualitative benchmarks—evaluating individual teachers—is similarly littered with pitfalls; measuring the effectiveness of a single elementary school teacher based on a classroom of just thirty students is an innately imprecise endeavor. At Stuyvesant, many classes are self-selecting and thus throw a wrench into the gears of even the most sophisticated regression analysis. Should physics teachers who teach mainly juniors be penalized because those with the most passion for it take it their freshman year, thus lowering their students' average test score? Should those who teach freshman be penalized because their students are taking the same test with fewer years of instruction in mathematics? Should the entire department be docked pay if students do more strongly on the chemistry regents? We believe that not even Stuyvesant's AIME champions could design an algorithm that adequately accounts for the hundreds of unique conditions that occur in every one of 345 Chamber Street's classrooms and laboratories.

In any discussion of educational policy, there is the inevitable question of money and budgetary allocation. The chancellor is given a finite amount of funds with which to run the entire New York City Public School system, and while there may be a limitless number of

worthy recipients of that money, hard choices must be made in terms of who gets a larger piece of the pie. Under Joel Klein, the budgetary winners have been under-performing schools. The thinking behind this type of allocation is simple: the more money a poorly performing school is given, the more resources it will have to bring up achievement among its student body. This is completely valid, however it is important not to neglect funding for high-performing institutions such as Stuyvesant. Currently Stuyvesant receives 2082 dollars less per student than the New York City average. This implicitly says that because we are "good enough" we do not deserve the same degree of funding as the average public school receives. This assumption holds no water. We see the effects of our diminished budget with excruciating clarity every time electives are cut, leaving students with fewer options of classes to take, or when we use long-outdated iterations of CAD software in our sophomore drafting classes. By making the choice to attend Stuyvesant, we have declared to the DOE that we are actively seeking the best education we can possibly receive. There is no reason why the school should be given less than the city average to provide it.

For all the oft-touted benefits of private sector management, there is a fundamental difference in the mission of a corporate CEO and that of the chancellor of New York City Schools. The mission of a corporate CEO is to coax the most productivity out of her employees. As we saw with Chancellor Klein, in the realm of education this often translates into encouraging the highest possible test scores from the city's students. This is an important and worthy goal, and the more rigorous educational standards this ideally supports are essential. However, the goal of the Chancellor should also be that of a public servant: to make the quality of education in New York City Schools the best it possibly can be for the students attending, which almost certainly involves implementing and supporting innovative teaching methods not explicitly designed to inflate scores on standardized tests. That is why a corporate CEO, despite the constant drone of punditry to the contrary, may in many ways be ill-suited to effectively manage and reform the nation's largest school district. The creation of the CAO position is ostensibly an attempt to create balance between corporate management and pedagogical focus at the DOE's upper levels, but ultimately it falls short of providing any meaningful change – the job description circulated by Mayor Bloomberg describes the role of the CAO as a hybrid manager-advisor, whose ultimate official duty is to implement the educational policies of the Chancellor. If anything, the roles of the Chancellor and the CAO should be reversed in order to harness Cathleen Black's corporate skill set to implement effectively the educational policies of a career educator. After all, the aim of the Chancellor of the DOE should ultimately be to lead academic institutions, a goal which is all too often lost in the haze of statistics.

## The Spectator

The Stuyvesant High School Newspaper



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Body"

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## The Spectator

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## FOR THE RECORD

- The name of the director of "Waiting for Superman," Davis Guggenheim, was misspelled.
- Christy Ku was not credited for the "Dynamic Dance-aholics" picture.
- Sarah Soo-Hoo's name was misspelled in "Birdie is the Word."
- Ten-Young Guh and Jenny Fung were not credited for writing the "SHSAT Racial Demographics" article.

# Opinions

## Rally to Reduce Apathy



Christina Leong / The Spectator

By ANASTASSIA BOUGAKOVA

Do you know what's going on in the world of politics? Do you have the time and energy to try and find out? I certainly don't. It's a characteristic I share with many of the people who attended the Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear on October 30. We might care about the issues, but we are too busy to participate in their

solutions. That's where comedians like Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert come in—to bring us out of our clueless state and back into a world where we can make a difference, or at least make the effort.

Colbert and Stewart held the rally for moderate, politically passive Americans who simply don't have the time to rave about political issues on a daily basis, but are willing to take off a few days from their busy schedules to attend. You would think that their efforts to support the moderate American would be applauded. After all, these comedians have tried to bring politics to the masses—the quiet, stable masses who don't shout obscenities at each other across podiums or punctuate their statements by shooting through bills with a rifle. However, instead of commending them on their efforts, many critics bashed Stewart and Colbert for putting a comedic twist on a matter as serious as politics—as if politics wasn't comedic enough on its own.

During the last election, the campaigns of senatorial candi-

dates revolved around the denial of witchcraft and risqué emails. Christine O'Donnell was more famous for her statement about dabbling in witchcraft than her opinion on key issues. Carl Paladino showed up to his concession speech with a baseball bat. Doesn't anyone think that's just a little bit funny? Unfortunately, once we look past the humor, we can see that American politics have boiled down to mud-slinging and bat-swinging. The political ideas of these candidates get lost behind flukes that go viral in a matter of seconds, slowly destroying their credibility as politicians and turning them into celebrities. They seem to focus more on winning the election than on informing their audience about key issues, thus diluting the significance of the issues they were so passionate about in the first place.

Fortunately, there are people like Stewart and Colbert—professional comedians with a political streak—who are actually trying to be funny. And because their purpose is to entertain, the public pays attention when they

say something meant to be more informative than entertaining. If only the service these comedians are performing for people on a national level could be translated into Stuyvesant politics. I among many other Stuyvesant students—cannot be bothered about participating in events like the Open Forum or the Student Union (SU) elections. They seem irrelevant to those who are not directly involved with them, resulting in low voter turn-out and scarce attendance at Open Forums.

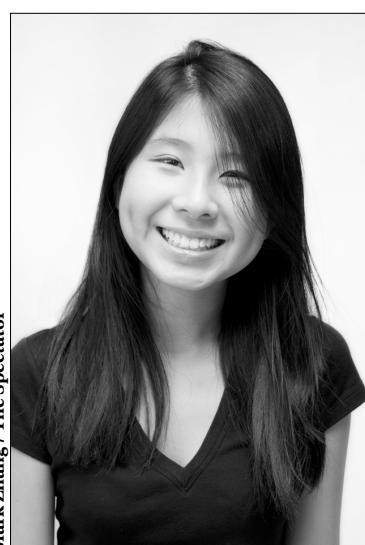
It's not that I don't care about the issues of our school. I just don't have the time to do anything about it. What with homework, clubs, STC productions, The Spectator and an internship, I barely have time to get everything done, not to mention not attending Open Forums or taking part in the goings-on of the SU. But perhaps I, and other students in similar predicaments, could make the time if the incentive was strong enough.

More people would attend a meeting about fundraisers and budgets if the SU handled it a bit

more like Stewart and Colbert. The entertaining nature of comedians provides the necessary incentive for people to watch their shows, attend their rallies and increase political awareness on both a national and high school scale. There are certainly enough funny people in Stuyvesant to provide for some comedy. Stewart and Colbert managed to bring all those apathetic, busy and harried people out of hiding to attend a rally. Can't we do the same for Stuyvesant?

It's high time we all start caring more about what goes on behind the scenes in our school. But nobody will start taking an interest just because they read an editorial urging them to participate in politics. I know that even after writing this, I'm not going to rush off to the next forum. I need someone to shake me out of my stress-induced stupor long enough to make me care about participating and making a difference. Maybe what Stuyvesant really needs is its own Rally to Reduce Apathy. I would attend one.

## Social Networking: The Best of Both Worlds



Mark Zhang / The Spectator

By TIFFANY PHAN

When I tell people that I go to Stuyvesant High School, I always receive a reply along the lines of: "Wow! How do you survive? Do you even have time to do anything besides homework?" I have to admit, I get slightly offended when faced with such responses, but I do understand how the stereotype arises. As both human beings and Stuyvesant students, sleep and grades are important to us. But this leaves the majority of us lacking time for a healthy social life—something no teenager should have to give up. We may have time for a quick "hello" or a small chat with friends, but spending hours to "hang out" and reconnect with them is a luxury many of us cannot afford. No wonder we come off as grade-obsessed nerds!

Every morning, we resignedly lug ourselves out of bed, commute for up to two hours to get to school and stay there for seven and a half hours, followed by afterschool activities. We then rush home and do homework until we can finally retire to bed and get a barely healthy few hours of sleep. Since this is how the majority of us spend our weekdays, we usually do not have time to relax and spend time with friends until the weekends. Even then, our work leaves us little time for leisure.

This is where social networking sites come in. They provide us with a shortcut to communicate with friends after a hard day's work at school and dur-

ing busy weekends. To many, it seems as if these sites are just wastes of time. To Stuyvesant students, however, these online social communities provide an effective way to communicate with friends and keep our social lives intact, while still being able to manage our workload and get several hours of sleep. This helps us aptly defy the "choose two: sleep, grades, or a social life" stereotype when we have no time, even on weekends, to interact with friends.

Facebook and Twitter help us unwind and communicate with friends after a tiring day at school. We can see a friend's statuses and photos, allowing us to constantly know what is going on in each of their lives. By being able to post on our friends' Facebook "walls," we can talk to and keep in touch with them, even when we do not have time to see them in person.

Social networking sites like Tumblr give us a way to reconnect with friends through blogging. We can smash away at our keyboards, and complain about the 70 we got on our math test, the three projects we have due on Thursday, and the three hours of sleep we've been getting each night. Being able to rant about our troubles to a computer screen is an effective substitute to venting to our friends in person. In addition, they can read and comment on our blogs, as if we were actually interacting in real life. This method is a very convenient, time-saving, and effective way to maintain a healthy relationship with friends.

Of course, it is important not to overindulge. Using these sites, like everything else, is only beneficial in healthy amounts. When the fine line between necessity and frivolity is muddled, they start to live up to their infamous reputations as wastes of time. But for students like us who can't afford to spend time with friends face-to-face very often, social-networking sites are still the next best thing.

Just as a laptop cannot be used constantly without being charged, no teenager can stand being stuck in school for hours only to go home to do even more work with no reprieve. We

lose battery life, and we need to "recharge." To do this, we must relax in a way our time constraints allow us to, which social networking sites are perfect for. Completely abstaining from the use of these sites simply stresses students out even more, and instantly eliminates any incentive to do work. This causes students to work at a snail's pace and squander a lot of time.

Contrary to the beliefs of their opponents, such as parents and teachers, social networking sites help us find the perfect

**We may have time for a quick "hello" or a small chat with friends, but spending hours to "hang out" and reconnect with them is a luxury most of us usually cannot afford.**

balance between our academics and social lives. According to the Discovery News online article, "Is Online Social Networking Good or Bad?" (published on April 28, 2010), studies from Cornell University show that social networking sites not only help significantly reduce stress but also enrich "in-person relationships."

Thanks to sites like Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr, we are able to experience the best of both of our academic and social worlds. By being able to tend to our social needs without neglecting other responsibilities, we will no longer appear to be the socially deprived nerds that we have been portrayed as for so long.

## The Wrong Kind of News Bulletin

By JILL CHOW

When I first walked into Stuyvesant, I didn't need to be told about the countless clubs and activities that were available for students to participate in. The first things I noticed two years ago were the omnipresent, colorful posters advertising clubs and events. Even today, I read any interesting posters I come by in the hallways, by the lockers, in the stairwells and on the escalator medians. Recently, though, there has been talk of decreasing the amount of fliers in school. At a recent Student Union meeting, I learned of a new rule stating that, due to cuts in the janitorial staff, posters should be placed on bulletin boards only.

This disappointed me; our bulletin boards are confusing blurs of paper and ink. Even if SPARK follows through with its insistence on organizing and tidying the bulletin boards, they still won't be as effective as posters along the hallways. When I'm rushing to class, I don't have the time to stop and leaf through every poster to discover any interesting goings-on. In many cases, people slap their own posters on top of others, obscuring information. However, it can't be helped most of the time; the bulletin boards are too small to accommodate the number of posters that club presidents wish to advertise.

As one of these presidents myself, I've experienced the detrimental impacts of the rule. The number of people attending my club's meetings was significantly higher when I placed posters around the school rather than just on the bulletin boards. If I was able to post throughout the halls, there would be less competition for space and attention, benefitting both mine and others' clubs.

The competition for space on bulletin boards was exemplified in last year's Student Union election. Due to the mandate of placing posters on bulletin boards only, many of the candidates went unknown. If you looked carefully at the cluttered boards, you could find some posters of less "campaign aggressive" candidates, covered up by other campaign posters. The year before, it was easier for the candidates to be noticed because they were able to post campaign fliers distinctly away from the competition,

It is understandable why the Student Union would choose to implement the restriction of posters to bulletin boards. Many students tear posters down and lay



them strewn throughout the hallways or simply turn them over for fun. It's a slap to the face saying, "I don't give a damn about you and what you have to say." There is no benefit to purposely removing someone else's posters from the walls. In fact, by removing these posters, it is harming the people who made the posters and worked hard to publicize them.

With the lack of janitors due to the budget cut, cleaning up after Stuyvesant has become difficult. To channel the beliefs of Stuy2O, one of Stuyvesant's many clubs, it is up to the students to take care of our school environment. It's important that all of us chip in to pick up any scraps of paper off the floor. It's not worth the consequence of having our school's media restricted to one place.

If we stopped vandalizing posters by throwing them on the ground, the Student Union may reconsider this rule. It is inconvenient for everyone to send and receive up-to-date information through email, student announcements and word-of-mouth. With enough cooperation, though, we can publicize our school's activities in full gear again. An action that the authority could take is to have security guards be aware of such vandals. If the student was caught tearing down a poster, the student's ID could be collected and the privilege of going out to eat voided. Sometimes it may take a slap on the wrist to get the message across. By stomping out this habit, it is not only beneficial for clubs, but also for the students at Stuyvesant. We need to get our messages across the school, not have them crammed on small gray cork boards.

# Opinions

## The Corporatists and the Classroom



By DANIEL SOLOMON

There are rare moments that we mark as watershed events, capturing our attention and profoundly affecting us and our families. One of these moments arrived a few weeks ago, when Joel I. Klein announced the end of his tenure as chancellor of the city's public schools and, with his resignation, closed an era for New York. As a familiar face passed from the scene, a new figure emerged. Cathie Black, a veteran of the publishing world, was named the next head of the Department of Education (DOE) by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. With no experience in the schools, her appointment, which has just been approved by State Education Commissioner Dr. David Steiner, was lambast-

ed by citizens, columnists and civil servants as an error in judgment by the mayor. However, what has happened represents more than a casual mistake. It is emblematic of a poisonous approach to government that fails to acknowledge the fundamental differences between private enterprise and the public sector.

Government and industry have mutually exclusive aims. Companies are run to make money, and governments exist to promote the greater good. It is expected and proper for them to operate at a loss because they are supposed to provide for all citizens, regardless of their social status and economic standing. The corporatists of our time—the mayor and current chancellor are examples—have pushed the bottom line as the goal of

public education through the charter school movement. They have proclaimed capitalism the panacea for the schools' woes. However, the profit motive, which puts money before the masses, is permanently suspect in social services.

If the schools were to be run truly like a business, there would be a budgetary bloodbath. Funding for special education students, art and music courses, and almost anything else not responsible for producing high scores on standardized tests would be slashed in the name of efficiency and cost savings. There is a certain qualitative element to education that is not present in the world of commerce, something that cannot be quantified on a Scantron in the way corporate performance can be measured by an earnings report. These intangibles of academic excellence are under threat from those—namely the Black-Bloomberg-Klein trifecta—who don't understand them.

This wouldn't be such a problem if they were willing to listen to voices of reason, but they are not. Products of the private sector, they have grown accustomed to its top-down organizational structure and its inherently undemocratic nature. Bloomberg is used to issuing orders from on high and ruling by imperial diktat from City Hall. He has continually shown con-

tempt for the will of the people, overturning term limits by questionable means, refusing to yield to parents' complaints about the DOE and filling the Chancellor's position in the most opaque way

couldn't be called out of touch. He was raised in a Queens housing project, attended city schools and rose to riches. This intimate experience with public education lent credibility to his candidacy for Chancellor, despite his lack of a pedagogical career. Black has no such saving grace. Growing up in the lap of luxury, she lived in Chicago, held membership in a country club that discriminated against blacks and Jews, and went to private school her whole life. Her only connection to the city seems to be that she owns an apartment in Manhattan, in addition to her houses in Connecticut, the state where her children attend expensive, elite academies. With no background in education, there is little that qualifies her to run the nation's largest public school system, especially one plagued by poverty and marked by racial diversity.

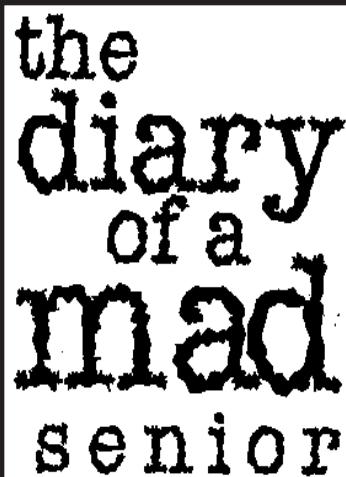
The Chancellor's office doesn't need a CEO; the top job demands an educator. Students, teachers and parents want a partner, not an out-of-touch crony pushing the mayor's agenda. We deserve a leader who realizes the value of democracy over decree and is passionate about preserving public education, not pushing to pervert it with the profit motive. New York State's commissioner of education has to take the first step toward this goal—he must reject Cathie Black.

## Bloomberg is not a technocrat, he is an autocrat, and in appointing Black, he installs a kindred spirit at the far end of Chambers Street.

possible. He is an autocrat, and in appointing Black, he installs a kindred spirit at the far end of Chambers Street.

Klein, like the mayor, had dictatorial tendencies, but he

## Counseling the College Office



By NICOLE ZHAO

"Guys, where do I get that Document Return Receipt the College Office was talking about?"

"Should I send Macaulay my ACT score or my SAT score? Which looks better?"

My Facebook news feed erupted with a sudden onslaught of statuses such as these. It was two days before the application deadline for the City University of New York (CUNY) Macaulay Honors College program. Needless to say, my peers were panicking.

My own status, in anticipation of the upcoming scholarship deadline for the University of Southern California (USC), was, "Okay people, there are three different mailing addresses on the USC website... Which one do I use? So confused!"

With over 750 seniors undergoing an unfamiliar application process, where one tiny misstep, one deadline overlooked, or one word of a requirement misread could utterly shatter one's chances at his/her dream college, it's no wonder people have so many questions. No one wants to make that fateful misstep. Everyone wants to follow a college's application require-

ments to the letter and be sure to meet each crucial deadline.

One ostensibly convenient resource for Stuyvesant seniors is the College Office. The College Office holds three student question-and-answer (Q & A) sessions every day: one from 7:45 to 8:30 a.m., one during fifth period, and the last from 3:15 to 4:00 p.m.

However, holding only three sessions, and during such times, fails to sufficiently account for seniors who have a tighter schedule than their peers. For students who are not free during first, fifth, or tenth period (such as myself), we may only ask the College Office questions during the 15 minutes prior to the school day and the 30 minutes following tenth period.

Perhaps such limited Q & A time is part of the reason for the frantic Facebook statuses and widespread confusion that seem to precede an approaching application deadline.

Don't get me wrong. The work and efforts of the College Office deserve praise. With a staff of only three college counselors and two secretaries, the office still manages to send out application documents for over 750 seniors on time. However, some other aspects of the Col-

lege Office can be improved upon to further ease the Stuyvesant student's experience of applying to college. One such aspect would be the minimal time that students are allowed to visit the office and ask questions.

For students with packed schedules and, in turn, limited time to ask the College Office questions, additional stresses to the Q & A experience include the long lines and the typical 30-minute wait. During the 15-minute interval before first period and the 30-minute interval after tenth period, the office is especially crowded with other students who have similarly packed schedules.

The line and wait are frustrating; even more so for students who have extracurricular activities to tend to after tenth period. I personally have track practice every day after school. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the track team leaves school immediately after tenth period to make time for the 45-minute commute uptown to an indoor track. I can't afford to spend half an hour after school waiting on a line to simply ask whether or not I should rush-ship my SAT scores for College X.

There are several simple solutions that the College Office

can adopt to make itself more accessible to students with tighter schedules.

While it is understandable that counselors in the office cannot answer questions during all periods of the day because they must attend to administrative work, the office can open its doors to questions during more periods of the day than the current three. This way, the number of students entering the office will be more spread out over the course of the day as students drop by during their respective lunch and free periods. The office would be less crowded at any one moment, there would be a shorter wait time for students, and the college counselors may be less overwhelmed at a time by questions.

Another possible solution would be to set up an email address specifically for students' college-application-related questions, separate from the email addresses that the college counselors use to send recommendations. The three college counselors would each have access to the email account and would speedily reply to students' inquiries at home and at school. With this change, students who are not free during in-school Q & A sessions have another method of communicating concerns to the College Office and getting answers.

The College Office could also use the list of Stuyvesant seniors' email addresses – used to communicate when graduation gown measurements and class ring orders are occurring – to send out any deadlines and College-Office-specific instructions regarding colleges that many seniors are applying to (e.g. the CUNY's Macaulay Honors College program and the State University of New York system). On Wednesday, November 24, the College Office announced on the Stuyvesant Web site that those

applying to CUNY's Macaulay Honors College program must print out and give the College Office the Document Return Receipt if they wanted their SSR sent. Because many seniors apply to the Macaulay program, this announcement would have been more effective if sent directly to every senior via email. Posted on the school's Web site,

## There are several simple solutions that the College Office can adopt to make itself more accessible to students with tighter schedules.

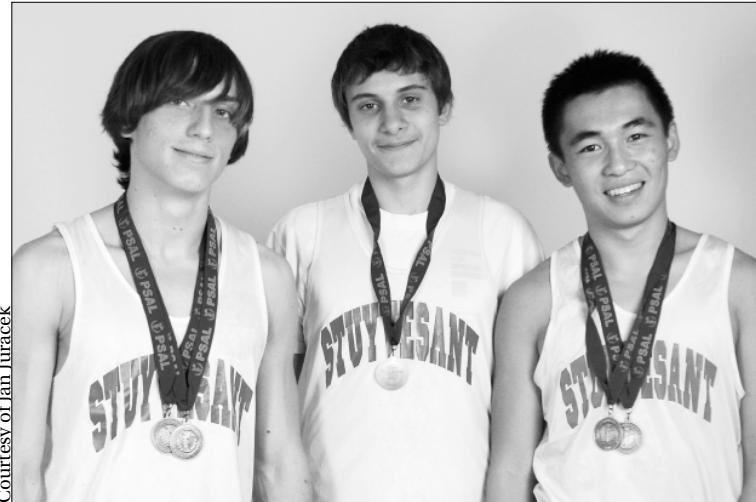
the announcement would be seen only by those who regularly check the site and seek out such an instruction. The notice also could have clarified precisely where students could find the Document Return Receipt (students could print the receipt out after they completed and submitted the application).

Any of these remedies would help to lower the level of confusion surrounding the application process for students. We would be able to take fuller advantage of the resource that the College Office is meant to be for us. It says something when worried, wary seniors rely more heavily on Facebook for answers to their college-related concerns than their school's very own College Office.

# Humor

**These articles are purely fictitious. All quotes are libel and slander.**

## Four Loko: An Appreciation



Above: Four Loko connoisseurs

By JAMES FRIER,  
*Spectator Sommelier*

Despite the media hubbub surrounding the popular alcoholic beverage Four Loko, surprisingly little attention has been focused on its culinary merits. Legions of Loko Aficionados have been unfairly maligned by the actions of prohibitionist leg-

I choose to enjoy the drink for entirely different reasons: its complex and delicate flavor.

islatures. I intend to set the record straight.

The hoipolloi may drink Four Loko merely for its blackout-inducing blend of alcohol and caffeine, but I choose to enjoy the drink for entirely different

reasons: its complex and delicate flavor. Originating from the artisanal vineyards of Ohio State University, the drink is known for its distinctive mouth-feel, which many in my field have likened to "carbonated rat urine," its powerful tannin undertones and strong acidity.

All eight flavors of the beverage have unique distinguishing characteristics. Blue Raspberry, for example, is notable for its hints of artificial sweetener and its subtle, battery acid-like finish, while Cranberry Lemonade is tart with a full body and hints of garbage. However, the '09 vintage Loko in Lemon Lime may be my all time favorite; its rubber aftertaste perfectly complements its initial notes of sour patch and rotten fruit.

To me, each flavor of Loko evokes a different memory or emotion. Fruit Punch brings to mind sitting on a dumpster in a back alley in Staten Island. Grape conjures a hazy memory of losing consciousness in a stranger's apartment and being drawn on with indelible marker. The candy-like flavor and garish packaging of Watermelon inspire nostalgia for the sickly sweet confections of my youth,

generously supplied to me by my creepy Uncle Carl. I'm not alone in feeling a connection between Four Loko and my childhood.

Even those with the most unrefined palates agree. "When I drink Four Loko, memories of being a kid surface. I get the same warm, rewarding feeling from drinking Four Loko that I get from guzzling packs of Hershey's Kisses and Skittles," senior Joseph Jung said.

Four Loko's ability to inspire a visceral response through its complex flavor is what truly sets it apart from competitors Sparks and Joose. By combining delicate and intricate tastes in perfect harmony, it makes

**The candy-like flavor and garish packaging of Watermelon inspire nostalgia for the sickly sweet confections of my youth, generously supplied to me by my creepy Uncle Carl.**

for a challenging and rewarding drinking experience, particularly when it becomes difficult to remain standing. Four Loko's ability to forge an emotional bond with even the youngest drinkers is something to be celebrated, not condemned.

## Family of Ospreys Successfully Relocated To Teitel's Beard

By CHESTER DUBOV,  
SAM FURNIVAL  
and DANIEL SOLOMON

Last week, New York City's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) finished a long-awaited relocation of a family of ospreys to Principal Stanley Teitel's beard.

The birds of prey, which are classified as a threatened species by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, had previously inhabited a telephone pole just outside the Queens section of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. It was there that they built a nest, but after their lives were endangered by high winds and inclement weather, the DEP decided to move them to a safer habitat.

The department embarked upon an exhaustive three-month search. The hunt for a new roost culminated when a DEP official came to Stuyvesant to examine the recently-condemned Superfund site in the fifth floor lunchroom and stumbled upon Teitel's prodigious amount of facial hair, an environment in which he thought the birds would prosper. The principal readily consented to the proposal and the ospreys were given a new home.

"This is possibly the most conducive environment for Osprey habitation outside of a tidal flat," DEP official James Monsey said. "Fortunately, the almost exclusively pescatarian bird won't be a threat to Stuyvesant's vibrant rat population."

The news was greeted with roaring approval by bird lovers along with many others in the Stuyvesant community. David

Yarnold, president and CEO of the National Audubon Society, hailed the DEP's action as "historic" and "a landmark step in improving the lives of ospreys everywhere." He also said he hoped this event would set the stage for similar measures in the future.

"[History teacher Robert] Sandler's hair would make a wonderful home for a flock of parakeets," Yarnold said.

Meanwhile, Teitel was elated as he sat playing with two of the baby birds in his office.

"They're more useful than art electives," Teitel said.

The principal went on to discuss how the ospreys could help students gain a greater appreciation of nature and how they could be employed in Science classes, or perhaps Math. Junior Melissa Watt reacted with excitement, saying that she was "psyched to see a bird of prey up close and personal in its natural habitat."

For all his happiness, Teitel did express a hint of sadness, as he noted that the ospreys had a diet consisting almost solely of fish. This meant that he would only be able to consume such food because the birds would be fed by the crumbs that fell from his mouth and were trapped in his beard as he ate. "No more steaks and hot dogs for me," said Teitel, momentarily morose until one of the ospreys, pecking at his chin, perked him up.

Not all scientists were pleased with the development. "Teitel?" Environmental Studies teacher Steven McClellan said. "I've been cultivating my beard as an environmentally responsible aerie for months!"

## Replacement Sought for Milo Beckman

By ELI ROSENBERG

With the graduation of the class of 2011 fast approaching, Stuyvesant is scrambling to find a successor to current prodigy and seventh year student Milo Beckman.

"The Beckman, hallowed be his name, plays a pivotal role in our school, and with his graduation, the Math Department will need a new spiritual leader," Assistant Principal Mathematics Maryann Ferrara said.

The current incarnation of The Beckman, now aged 15, will soon grow too old to hold the prodigy moniker. Upon graduation, his life essence will flow from his husk of a body, searching for a suitable host to continue its quest towards enlightenment.

Milo Beckman is just the most recent in a long line of young children revealed through Divine Performance on math examinations. "When I saw his scantron, I knew," math teacher and High Priest of the Sine Wave Gary Rubenstein said.

Starting in 1907, as the insti-

tution matured, Stuyvesant began to search for young talent. The first so-called "math messiah" began his career at the age of 14 months, a precedent kept until 1994 after concerns over the child's ability to pass the

**"The process seems like the sort of touchy-feely stuff that belongs on the sixth floor."**  
—Anonymous Math Teacher

swim test were raised with the death of toddler Kelvin Huang-Stein. Since then, the "math messiah" program has been a source of controversy, but

the astounding test scores and deep mathematical thought produced by these children has kept the program afloat.

The new "math messiah" must be the spiritual reincarnation of the current Beckman. "We're going to want the new Chosen One to hit the ground running," Ferrara said. "We must find a child that satisfies the golden ratio."

Beginning in January, the administration will administer their citywide search for a qualified candidate. The quest is an enigmatic one, shrouded in mystery. "The process seems like the sort of touchy-feely stuff that belongs on the sixth floor," said a math teacher who asked to remain anonymous. "It always seems to work though, adding to the wonder of mathematics. You must always remember, Math is Number One."

Finding a replacement for Beckman requires the entire math department to unite in meditation. The selection ritual is famously secretive and closed to outsiders, but a reporter for The Spectator managed to in-

filtrate the proceedings by only existing in the complex plane.

**"When I saw his scantron, I knew."**  
—Gary Rubenstein, Math teacher and High Priest of the Sine Wave

According to our correspondent, the math faculty and select chosen Mathletes assemble in the math teachers' lounge, room 408, with the sign warning students to keep away that is normally affixed to the door swapped out with an even nastier one.

The Golden Slide Rule and TI-84 Silver Edition calculator passed down through the gen-

erations of geniuses act as diving rods, calculating to the seventh decimal the vector which the disembodied soul will travel along. With their hands embraced, the math teachers and Mathletes meditate until they all have a clear image of the child they are looking for. They then split up and search the city's pre-schools for signs of the child. Although familiarity with the golden slide rule is usually the main criteria, each member of the math department assesses the children and brings one back to Stuyvesant for further testing. The notoriously difficult 2003 Fall trigonometry final is then administered, and the answer sheets are fed through Principal Stanley Teitel's personal Scantron Grader. Grades on this final will be used in a final analysis of each candidate.

"The Beckman has not only met our expectations for the Math Messiah role, but far exceeded them," Ferrara said. "If we can't find another leader for our honors classes, we may have to start paying attention to everyone else."

# Arts and Entertainment

## Cheering on Multiculturalism

By MIRYAM COPPERSMITH  
and BEN KOATZ

Streetlights lit the fringes of leafless, boxed trees as the lilting trills of the violin and its horizontally played counterpart, the guzheng, filled the chilly November air of the Alcove. Over 100 dedicated Stuyvesant students

**Throughout all the technical problems, the bad singing and questionable dancing, the audience cheered on.**

formed an impromptu semi-circle around four jacketed performers. For a moment after the conclusion of the piece, a total silence permeated the crowd beneath the hum of the West Side Highway and the clicks of camera flashes. So ended the fourth annual Culture Festival, which took place on Tuesday, November 23, in the Murray Khan Theater.

Due to time regulations and technical difficulties, the show had to move a few of its acts outside to the Alcove at 8:30 p.m. Even with this extended time, a continuation of the show had to be held after school for an hour on Tuesday, November 30.

Senior and Executive Producer Aia Sarytcheva responded steadfastly to the numerous challenges presented to Culture Fest 2010, and was integral to this year's show. But she didn't do it alone. It was the fluid collaboration between junior and Assistant Producer Mohammed Hossain (Lighting and Sound Crews), seniors and Producers Ronjini Hassan and Matthew Zin (Performers, Acts and Ordering) and Sarytcheva (Non-performing areas and oversight) that allowed the show to come together.

Culture Festival was split into two parts: a food fair portion, which began at 4:30 p.m., and a performance portion, which began at 6:00 p.m. The fair included food from Paris Sandwich Baguette, Shanghai Kitchen, Big Wing Wong, JR Sushi, Woorijip, Pick a Bagel, Atomic Wings, Portobello's Pizzeria & Sicilian Kitchen, Baba Ghanouge, Pommes Frites and Indus Express. Senior Paula Tsvayg, a member of the Food Crew, said that her favorite part was "the minutes before all the people came in and you saw how beautifully it was arranged."

Though it may have been varied and beautiful, the quantity of food was not equal

to the onslaught of teenage mouths waiting at the Cafeteria doors. The multi-colored curry and sushi proved to be the favorites at the fair, though just a little after it began, many could only find semi-stale bagels, packaged cream cheese and sauce-doused pasta.

"I didn't like the food at all," junior Raisa Ahmed said. "I came at five and everything was gone except scraps of hummus and some curry. And I didn't pay eight bucks to eat something I can find in my fridge."

And just as the food lacked in quantity, the performances understandably lacked the quality a longer practice schedule would have provided. Among other obstacles, this year's Culture Festival also faced the cumbersome Department of Education regulations that prevented performers from practicing past 6 p.m. At times, they were kicked out earlier when there was no teacher supervision. Despite the hard work put in by producers, crew directors and performers themselves, the acts at times fell short of their potential.

The late start of the show,

**Sophomore Antara Majumdar started the Indian Dance section with a solo that fused modern and classic styles.**

beleaguered by spotty lighting and faulty microphones, brightened up as the spotlight shone on seniors Abrar Rabbi and Mahdi Mahmood. The two comics, who proved to be the hands-down crowd favorites, strung the whole performance together by adding a plot of their own. "My favorite part was definitely the hosts," junior Sanjit Gill said. "They were definitely the stars of the show."

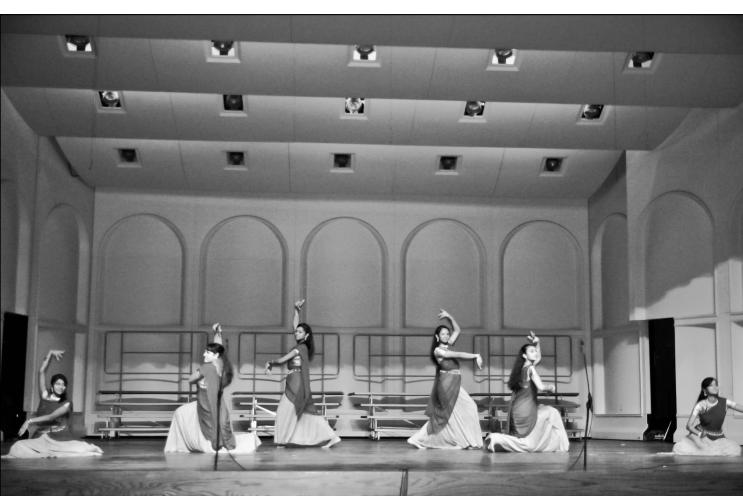
Though the improvisational interludes of the hosts blended seamlessly with the performances, the rest of the festival felt somewhat unrehearsed. Faulty sound systems forced performers, like Korean Pop singer and sophomore Daniel Lin, to start mid-act or cut parts of their shows. Othersingers, then notable exception being senior Jane Cotler in her Russian Folksong performance, could not project even to the first row. Dancing was generally unsynchronized, and singing was occasionally off-key. Long transitions between acts also disrupted the smooth flow of the show.

However, some acts more than stood out on their own. Sophomore Antara Majumdar started the Indian Dance section with a solo that fused modern and classic styles. Majumdar epitomized the beauty of Indian dance with her mastery of both smooth and sharp steps. Her line and form were beautifully fluid throughout. Certain performers, like senior Joseph Jung in the Shanghai Opening Dance and junior Kimberly Iboy in Latin Dance, also stood out for their stage presence and skill.

Though there were several good instrumental performances—including the Chinese Harp performance played by junior Iris Wang and seniors Shirley Lu and Lucy Quian—senior John Bowler's piano solo stood out as one of the best. Bowler played the difficult Moment Musical in E minor by Rachmaninoff with professional-quality musicality. His spot-on dynamics and effusive style captivated the audience. His expressive playing was powerful and light, as his head and arms bobbed and flowed along with the variety of competing melody lines.

Unlike previous Culture Festivals, this year's performance showcased more diversity in a smaller frame; there was an African Drums performance for the first time in the show's history. But more importantly, it showcased the overwhelming support the student body gives to their fellow classmates. If nothing else, this year's 2010 Culture Festival showed that Stuyvesant doesn't need intricate dances and renditions of Chinese pop songs to appreciate its multiculturalism, because despite the long blackouts and the on stage microphone switches, the audience cheered on.

"I love how this was initiated by students, not the administration," Staff Advisor and Spanish teacher Rosa Silverio said. "It's all the groups not represented in other areas of

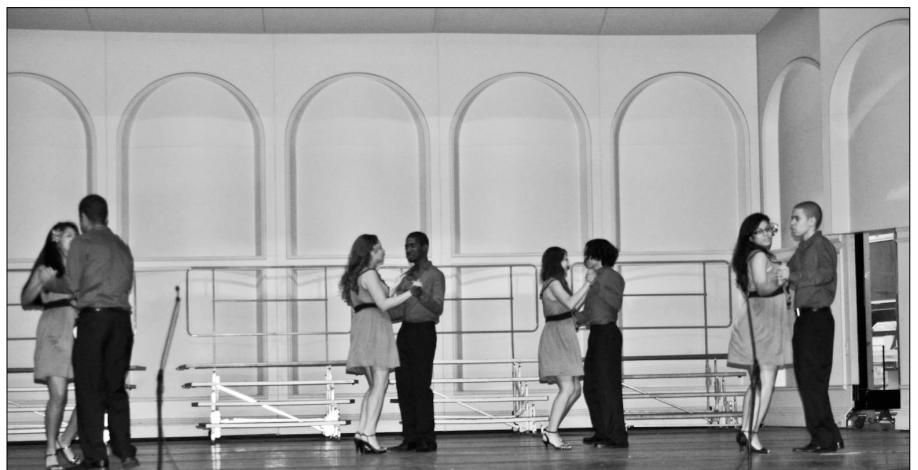


**Unlike previous Culture Festivals, this year's performance showcased more diversity in a smaller frame.**

Stuy; they get a chance to shine."

*Videos and pictures will be up on Culturefest2010.tumblr.com for those who could not make it to the performances.*

## Cheering on Multiculturalism



Courtesy of  
Christy Ku



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# Arts and Entertainment

## Unearthed From the Slushpile: Outlier Music and Nothing in Between



**By JAMES HONG  
and JAMES KOGAN**

In what seems to be a creative stalemate, popular American music is like a well-oiled machine, efficient at producing hits at a consistent rate and keeping the listener-public happy. But then, of course, there are outliers—individuals and musicians that stand behind more interesting subgenres of music that don't fit the pop mold. Here is a list of some unnoted and interesting kinds of music:

### Shoegaze

Shoegaze music is a subgenre

of alternative rock that originated from the UK in the late 1980s. The genre got its name from the musicians who would constantly look down at their guitar effect pedals, thus "shoegazing." The music can be described as luscious and enveloping because of the many effects used, such as distortion and reverb.

Vocals are used as just another instrument to provide ambience.

An example of a shoegaze band is the Verve, a band formed in Manchester in 1990. Beginning with a sound that relied on fuzzy, psychedelic, musical textures, the band later

found mainstream success with the 1997 "Urban Hymns." However, their early albums, "A Storm in Heaven" (1993) and "A Northern Soul" (1995), exhibit quintessential shoegaze. "Slide Away," from "A Storm in Heaven," features echoing guitar work and vocals that sound like yawning. "Blue" from the same album, has reverse guitar parts that give it a psychedelic sound. The Verve first used a string section on "History" from "A Northern Soul," which provides an epic, sweeping symphony of sound that is the hallmark of shoegaze.

**Trip Hop**  
Trip hop, also a British style of music, began as an underground movement in the late 1990s and took elements from jazz, funk and soul. Trip hop artists aimed to distance themselves from American hip hop with atmospheric sounds and sparse guitar work.

One of these bands, Portishead, formed in Bristol, England, in 1991. Its sound is marked by singer Beth Gibbons' sultry, jazz-like vocals and the break beats of producer Geoff Barrow. Their debut album, "Dummy" (1994), was critically acclaimed and pushed the band to the forefront of the new musical genre. The second track, "Sour Times," sounds straight out of classic film noir soundtrack, with its hazy beat and ringing guitar work. The album's best track, "Glory Box," is also its closer: a fiery, passionate song that samples "Ike's Rap II" by Isaac Hayes. The song features a hypnotic base line and an alt-rock-style guitar solo. The title of the song is a sexual pun and Gibbons' seductive vocals fit the mood perfectly.

### Drum and Bass

Emerging in the 90s with the rising popularity of raves, Drum and Bass (or D&B) is a discipline of electronic music that relies heavily on hectic high tempo drum tracks and pounding low bass and sub-bass melodies. Quasi-melodic keyboard lines and looping samples are used to create recognizable hooks.

While a great deal of D&B music is produced with the club DJ in mind, Jojo Mayer & NERVE "reverse engineer" electronic tracks to be able to recreate them

acoustically in a concert setting. Started in 1998 by Jojo Mayer, a virtuoso drummer who has played with the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, the group set out to become a platform for NYC musicians interested in the latest stream of electronic music. A completely live and organic drum and bass act, their music is reminiscent of "intelligent" D&B, a genre that incorporates jazz, lounge and ambient music to create a hazy but driven concentration of sounds. Complete with a sound engineer that tweaks and processes the music in real time, the emphasis is on improvisation—the spontaneous interaction between musicians that leaves no two live performances of a song sounding alike.

"Jabon," from the debut album "Prohibited Beats," features a playful synth melody that slowly mingles and drifts into ambient territory, constantly hinting at the main riff. Other songs like "Tetragram," off three-song "EP1" (2010), seem to focus more on creating recognizable patterns than melodies—in this case, the hook is a collection of low end beeps and other robot-esque noises, all a result of a bass guitar and an amalgam of effects processors.

Paired with sparse atmospheric overtones, the carefully coordinated orchestra of noises highlights the flawless drumming that is so precise it sounds programmed. If history is any indication, aspects of the alternative genres today will slowly find its way into mainstream music. Then of course, novel styles of music will emerge to take hold of the zeitgeist of experimentalism. Anyone interested in avant-garde yodeling?

## Stuy Writes

**By DAVID KURKOVSKY**

Stuyvesant's writing community has broken the mold of ordinary classroom writing. Long time clubs such as Caliper and Open Mic give students the chance to exchange writing in an intimate environment. Publications like Caliper's literary magazine and Writing on the Wall allow students to publish their work outside the student-teacher construct, providing an opportunity to infuse a personal twist in their writing.

On Tuesday afternoons, 615A or 615E is filled with students vigorously writing away, counting down the seconds until time is called to drop their pens. Caliper, Stuyvesant's literary magazine and club, offers a unique environment for student writers. A prompt is given, catered to stimulating the creativity of the writers. Prompts include responding to music selections or a quote, writing a piece incorporating a certain phrase or going around the room creating a poem line-by-line.

"[The prompts] give me something to think about," sophomore Rachel Heineman said. After approximately 15 minutes of writing, students open up to the rest of the circle as they share their works. Caliper hones a positive atmosphere as students provide constructive criticism and compliments to the shared works. "It's nice to share writing and see what other people interpret it as," Heineman said. "Caliper is [a great way] for students interested in writing to learn from each

other and get inspiration," co-editor of Caliper and senior Sophia Abbot said. In addition to assembling eager writers, Caliper displays writing and artwork in its biannual magazine, published in the fall and spring.

"The magazine [allows one] to showcase their work on paper outside of class," co-editor of Caliper and senior Elizabeth Litvitskiy said.

Whereas Caliper is only published twice a year, Writing on the Wall displays written works every month. A handful of submissions are showcased on Stuyvesant's hallway walls, as well as in some English classrooms. While some months are geared to specific themes, there is generally no restriction of topics in the submissions allowed.

"Writing on the Wall is an essential stress-free outlet for student work," co-president of Writing on the Wall and junior Shelby Hochberg said. "Everyone should submit because it is a great chance to get your work out and receive feedback. Share it. Why not?"

Stuyvesant's writing community expands beyond publications and clubs devoted to printed works. Open Mic provides an unchecked environment to expand one's creativity into the public sphere, sharing their writing with those who truly want to hear it. On the first Friday of every month, the library is filled with rows of occupied seats and students sitting atop tables, attentively listening and watching the performances. While most students read samples of their writing or poetry,

*Submissions for Caliper can be sent to thisiscaliper@gmail.com.*

*Writing on the Wall entries can be sent to writeonstuy@gmail.com and are accepted up to the 15th of every month.*

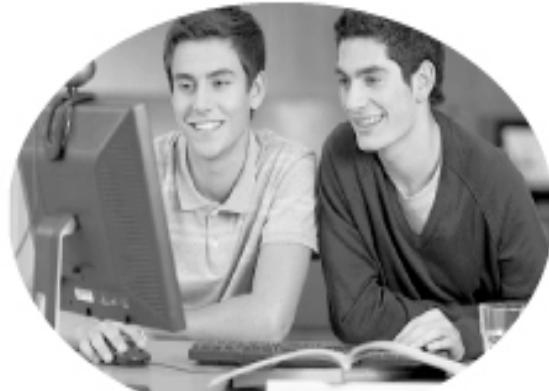
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## A City Filled With Art

By MARGOT YALE

We all know that Stuyvesant doesn't offer many art classes. The few art classes it does offer are often hard to get into, especially for freshmen and sophomores. But while Stuyvesant doesn't greatly emphasize art, the community around it does. For students who hope to further enrich their artistic skills and knowledge, there exist many opportunities to do so.

Senior Zoe Levin started taking metalsmithing before she got to Stuyvesant, and although the time commitments her art classes add onto the already heavy workload for any Stuyvesant student, the reward her classes bring her makes the extra time worth it. "I do it because I love it," Levin said. "For me, being creative involves deep concentration, which in some ways provides an escape."

For those who wish to pursue nontraditional art forms, The Cooper Union School of Art offers free courses with materials included for New York City Public High School students in their Saturday Program. These classes run from October to April and are offered on Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to five p.m. There are not only conventional art classes offered, but also creative writing workshops and visits to cultural sites around the city.

Cooper Union offers classes in drawing, graphic design, painting, sculpture, sound composition, architecture and

portfolio preparation. In order to attend this program, students must apply in September. For those who are not ready to commit to such a long program, Cooper Union has the Outreach Program, which is also for high school students. Classes still run on Saturday, but are only six to eight weeks long in fall, winter and spring sessions. A portfolio review is necessary to be accepted to this program, where you can study printmaking, photography, 2D and 3D design, contemporary art issues and more.

Another opportunity is the Metropolitan Museum of Art's (MET) Saturday Sketching class. Once a month, anyone ages 11 to 18 can come and sit in a specified gallery and sketch with an artist. This program requires little commitment, as you can drop in for any part of the session, from one p.m. to four p.m. The next session is on December 11 and is in the Oceania gallery. It is free with your admission to the museum.

For those who prefer to talk about art, the MET holds "Conversations" for 15 to 18 year olds. Here, teens can talk with conservators and artists as they examine artworks themselves. This also occurs monthly, from five p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and is free with admission. However, registration is required. The next class is A Conversation with Conservators on December 17.

The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) also has a program for teens. Every Friday night



The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W 53rd Street.

during the school year, the museum is open to teens to make art, discuss art and enjoy pizza, films and talks by artists. Everyone is welcome, but space is limited, so it's first come, first served. The MoMA also offers free classes in the spring for teens. They range from 10 to 16 sessions and meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays from four p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Some other programs, though not free, are also worthwhile if you are interested in art. The Art Student's League offers a vast selection of classes

in the late afternoon and evenings on weekday nights, as well as on the weekend. Tuition is monthly and ranges from \$55 to \$250. The League was founded in 1875 and is well equipped in its facilities.

For students desiring to apply to college with an art portfolio, the Oogie Art Portfolio Prep Center may be of interest. Oogie Art has locations in Bayside, Queens and in Manhattan on East 33rd St. Classes are held in four quarters and cost as little as \$15 an hour. Their Art Portfolio Preparatory Program has high

success rates, with acceptances to such prestigious institutions as Princeton, Columbia, NYU and Cornell.

Many other art schools in the city, such as Parsons, Pratt, FIT and the School of Visual Arts, offer similar programs for high school students. Other museums, including the Guggenheim and the Rubin, also have programs for teens. These programs offer great learning experiences and can make up for the lack of art classes in Stuyvesant.

## Arts and Entertainment

### Graffiti Transcends the Streets



**By CHRISTINE LEE  
with additional reporting by  
SHAH ALAM**

Sitting at a clean desk, it's hard to fight the urge to take out a pen and scribble. Needless to say, it is apparent that the artiste inside each of us comes alive when faced with a naked surface. As a result, there are intricate fonts and images adorning every wall, van and crevice of our bustling city. While the history of New York City graffiti dates back a few decades, the repercussions of the movement are still manifest in the present Stuyvesant experience.

Urban graffiti, like the kind often found spray-painted on trucks and walls, can be seen on a tiny portion of the senior bar. Where the counter has been scraped away to reveal wood, "Willa" is tagged in a thick, curly, white script. "SPEC" is written in tightly packed block letters. A pioneer of this form in the late 1960s only known as "Julio" helped to

spread the trend by writing his "tag," JULIO 204, everywhere in his Washington Heights neighborhood.

Early graffiti writers would form their tags, a signature for graffiti artists, by taking their first names or nicknames followed by the street number of their houses. Perhaps the most famous early tagger was a Greek youth by the name of Demetrius. As a foot messenger, he was able to spread his tag, TAKI 183, across New York City. This prompted the New York Times to run a front page article on July 21, 1971 titled "Taki 183 Spawns Pen Pals," covering the graffiti phenomenon.

Those who followed the lead of these early artists were often lower class youth with derelict lifestyles, and so, used larger than life tags to convey something greater. They believed in "getting up," or spreading their tags everywhere in order to become icons of the art. For them, tagging public places meant revitalizing their neglected identities and

reminding the city of their existence.

Subway cars were prime targets for those seeking to gain the title of "king," or one who has tagged in all five boroughs. The cars would be found tagged from top to bottom, occasionally blocking out entire windows. But just as the Golden Age of graffiti gained steam, from the mid 1970s to the early 1980s, increased opposition from the New York mayor Ed Koch shunned the practice. In the years following, agitated taggers realized that omnipresence did not merit recognition; instead, they searched for different means to gain prominence. Graffiti visionaries experimented with their art by stylizing different fonts, colors and formats. Over time, simplistic graffiti evolved into its current form.

The new, contorted graffiti exists in various styles. Scratchiti, which can be found in any Stuyvesant bathroom stall, is the practice of inscribing graffiti onto surfaces with jagged

objects. Bubble graffiti is done by spray painting the outlines of letters while leaving the centers hollow. Wildstyle, as the name suggests, is one of the most complex styles of graffiti. It is a mixture of intertwined letters and images, an extension of graphic art. However, as much as graffiti had developed, there was no escaping social hostility and opposition.

Rivalries threatened lone taggers, effectively making them commit to larger groups in exchange for protection. Violent repercussions prohibited any tagger from leaving his or her territory at the risk of getting beaten and robbed by their rivals. Taggers were also threatened by crackdowns led by the Metropolitan Transit Authority and New York Police Department. Forced to adopt a more defensive approach to writing tags, taggers worked more discreetly than ever.

Just as Julio and Taki had redefined the norm to appropriate the art, others began to use graffiti as a means to express themselves. Although subway cars tagged from end to end no longer run the rails, the repercussions of Julio and Taki's movement and the remnants of graffiti's Golden Age can be seen inside Stuyvesant's Museum Room, dedicated to Dr. A. Edward Stefanacci at room 229.

The room overflows with messages inscribed onto the desks by students who wished to commemorate their attendance. "ML '75-'79," and "TR '76," are just two of the tagged names that have withstood the test of time. Some names are carved deeper than others. One desk, where the letters "BMM" are carved, is the most distinguished. The final "M" of the tag leaves a lasting impression as it cuts straight through the desk, leaving an M-shaped gap that leads down towards the floor.

Graffiti is also used to celebrate romantic fruition and express admiration. In the Museum Room, the names "ROMAN & PAIGE" accompanied by a miniature heart proclaim romantic interest, and "I love socks!" anonymously points out someone's foot fetish. In several classrooms around Stuyvesant, the name "Jack" is circumscribed by a flashy pink

heart. In room 637, at least one person in the classroom will know that "Emma hearts Krit" and that in room 513 someone "hearts [their] bf." Amusingly, next to "Eli loves Felicia," someone has written "eww."

Many use graffiti as a means to incite viewers. In room 437, you can find a witty new take on a famous adage: "When God gives you lemons, find a new god." Room 440 bears an ominous message that says, "ALL SHALL PERISH." The strangest piece of graffiti, though, is a flowchart. The first question asks, "ARE YOU AZN?" which branches off into a "Yes" or "No" that leads to the question, "Are you failing?" If you are "azn" and you answer "yes," the writer replies with, "I am disappointed." If you are

**Urban graffiti,  
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not "azn," however, and not failing, the reply is, "Good for you! :D" A couple of students have tallied their answers in the flow chart. No one has marked the failing box yet.

Today, graffiti has become more than an act of vandalism—it is a way to express oneself to any passerby who has the audacity to look past its illicitness. Although cops will always patrol the alleyways of our city in an effort to trump the graffiti movement, each rebellious scribble embodies and upholds the original ideals of the art.

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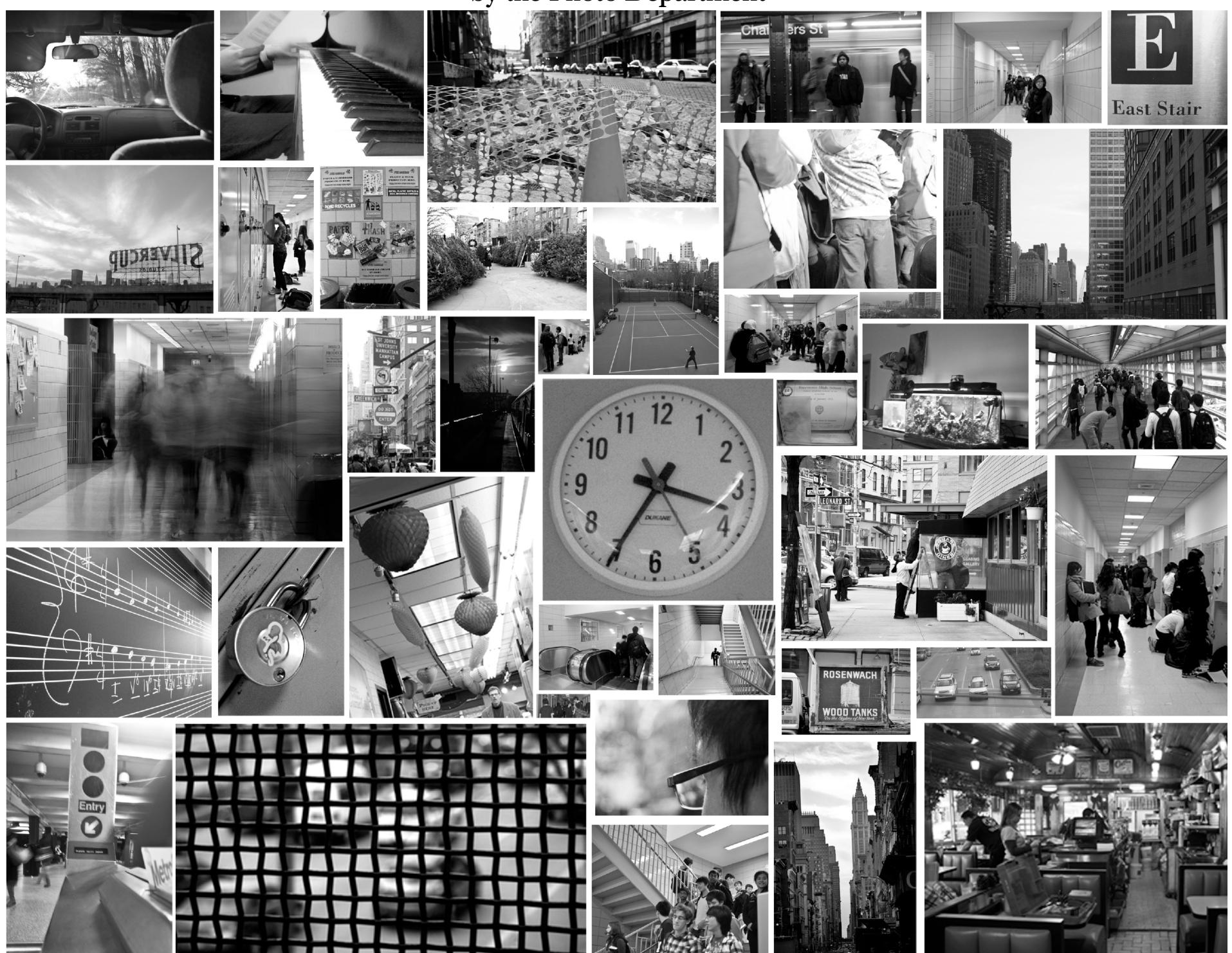
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### Founder of Ivy Writing

**Allen Cheng** attended Arcadia High School, where he earned a full SAT score and 5's on 13 AP exams. He represented the United States at the International Chemistry Olympiad. Most importantly, his passion for writing and crafting the perfect application got him into **EVERY college he applied to**, including Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, and MIT.

Allen entered Harvard College in 2005 with a full scholarship. In four years, he earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Chemistry, graduating *summa cum laude* (top 5% of his class), Phi Beta Kappa, and as one of **America's Top 20 College Students** in USA Today's All-USA Academic Team.

He repeated his success when he earned admission to MD-PhD programs in the nation's top medical schools. He is now completing his MD-PhD at Harvard Medical School with a full scholarship.

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# Sports

## Girls' Soccer

*continued from page 20*

not a failure overall. I definitely feel that my teammates and I have improved greatly," senior, captain and goalkeeper Vivian Sze said.

Although there were several tough matches throughout the season, some games were more memorable than others. One of the tougher losses the Mimbas suffered came at the hands of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School. It was a match that Sze described as "lackadaisical." Laguardia recorded 16 shots on goal, and though Sze was able to save 13 of them, it was apparent the defense had fallen apart.

However, the very next match against Martin Luther King Jr. was the Mimbas' best game, in Sze's opinion. "We worked as a unit, had fun, and in a way 'regained our honor,'" Sze said. Junior Emma Hoffman scored two goals in this match and the defense shut out King in a 3-0 victory, proving their ability to rebound from a poor showing the game before.

Unfortunately, such encouraging victories did not come often throughout the season. Even so, the Mimbas feel that

## Despite Second Straight Disappointing Season, Mimbas Remain Optimistic

they made improvements as a team from the beginning of the year to the end. "Our record

man said. According to Sze, the girls also gained valuable team skills such as working with one another, earning more self-confidence, and improving their physical mechanics.

Despite the disappointing record, the Mimbas were able to enjoy playing together. Third-year coach Suzanne Lendzian stressed that although soccer is about "athletic competition and pushing yourself to be the best," it is still important to remember that, at the core, players need to be "enjoying themselves and, most importantly, having fun."

The Mimbas' team chemistry was evident during practices and games. "We had the girls who made the team laugh, we had the girls who knew the skills, we had the girls who were ambitious," Sze said. This camaraderie serves as incentive for next year as well.

"I look forward to next year because I love soccer but I also love the people on the team," sophomore Alicia Vargas said.

If nothing else, 2010 served as a learning experience for many of the girls. Some came in with minimal knowledge about soccer, but gained valuable experience to bring into play in

the coming years. The bulk of the team consists of sopho-

gained was more important than winning or losing," coach Lendzian said.

Four seniors will be graduating from the team this year, including Sze, the goalkeeper and leader of the team. "It's always a tough transition when the seniors leave, especially this year since our team was so close and the seniors really integrated with the team," Hoffman said. Coach Lendzian said that one of the most important factors for success next year would be filling the roles of captain and goalkeeper that Sze is leaving behind. Sze however, is confident in the abilities of the team's reserve goalkeepers. "Next year, whether it's [junior] Margot Haas, [junior] Tasnia Rasul or a rookie who plays as the goalkeeper, I know she will do an outstanding job," Sze said.

The Mimbas of 2010 certainly did not break any records or win any championships. They did, however, learn from their mistakes. The girls themselves were able to find the positives in an otherwise unremarkable season. "Our records don't show it, but we really are a great team, a team that I will always be proud of," Sze said.

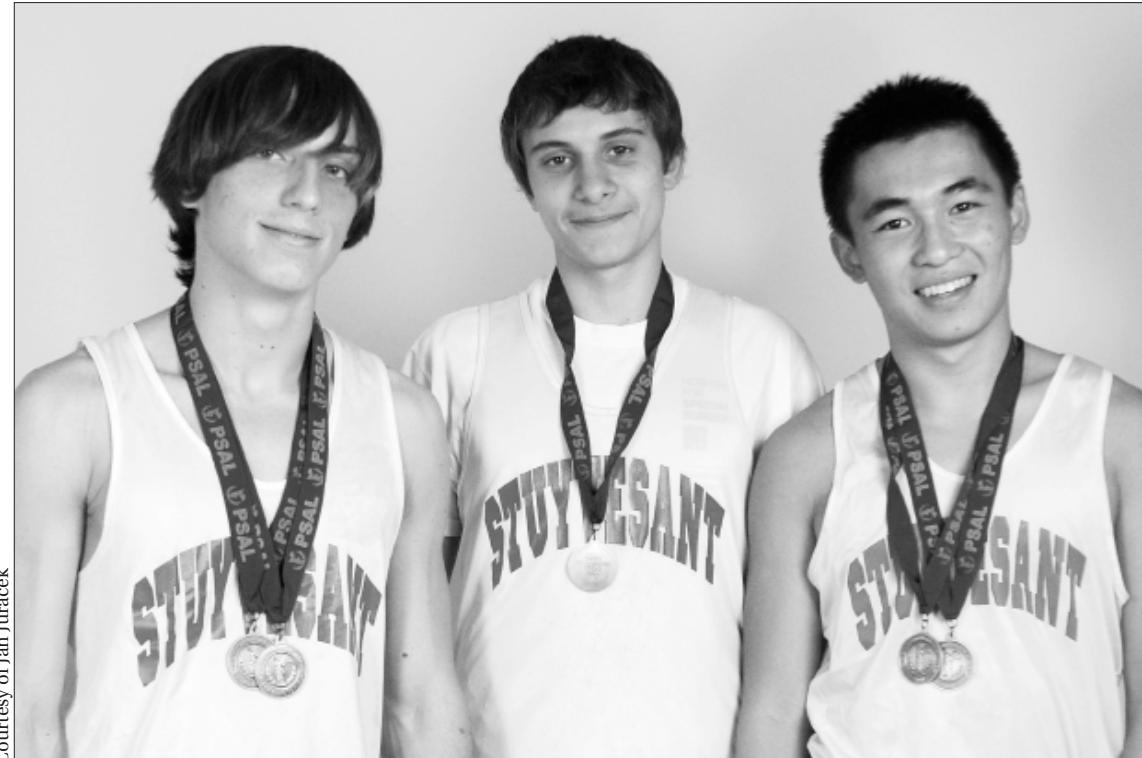
**"We had the girls who made the team laugh, we had the girls who knew the skills, we had the girls who were ambitious,"**  
—Vivian Sze,  
senior and  
captain

wasn't that good but I think we improved a lot over the season and got closer as a team," Hoff-

**I feel that the friendships and the knowledge of soccer that each player gained was more important than winning or losing,"**  
—Suzanne Lendzian,  
coach

## Boys' Cross Country

### Greyducks Fly High



Billy Barnes, Konrad Surkont, and Andy Chen won medals at the PSAL Cross Country City Championships.

Courtesy of Jan Juracek

**By JORDAN FRANK**

Junior and co-captain Konrad Surkont took one glance behind him just before the finish line. The clock to his right read 16:37.38 as he passed under the yellow and green Van Cortlandt Park banner that signified the end of the race. He was officially the fastest cross country runner in the Public School Athletic League (PSAL). It took the junior 16 minutes and 37 seconds to finish the five kilometer City Championship race, more than eight seconds faster than his closest competitor.

Surkont was in second place halfway through the opening lap around the infield, trailing only Mitchell Kun of Sheepshead Bay High School. However, by the time the pack of

159 competitors entered the hills, Surkont had already taken the lead and never needed to look back.

Although being the top cross country runner in the PSAL would be more than enough for most athletes, Surkont was not satisfied with just one gold medal on the day. Fortunately for him, he did not have to wait long to receive his second.

As senior and co-captain Andy Chen crossed the finish line in just under 18 minutes, the Stuyvesant Boys' Cross Country team, the Greyducks, cemented its name in New York City history, clinching a PSAL City Championship for the fourth time in seven years.

The Greyducks came into the championship meet ranked second in the PSAL, trailing

only Bronx Science in the team rankings. However, as Coach Mark Mendes accurately put it: "there is one race a year in cross country: [the PSAL City Championship race]. Everything else is for personal glory," he said. "City's is the team event."

Surkont led the assault by the Greyducks, yet it was the performances by his teammates that were the most amazing. Sophomore Jack Stevenson had a career day and came in fourth place with a time of 17:05.64. Senior co-captain William "Billy" Barnes and junior Mark Schramm were the next finishers, coming in thirteenth and fourteenth place respectively. But it was Chen, coming in twenty-fifth place, who finished the historic day for the Greyducks.

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In order to truly appreciate how dominating the Greyducks' performance was, one must understand the point system in team racing. Each runner receives one point plus a point for each runner who finishes ahead of him. For example Surkont got one point while Chen received 25. A team score is created by adding up the five lowest scores of any racers on their team. The team of five with fewest points wins the meet.

The Greyducks scored a mere 57 points, which was more than enough for first place. In fact their score was less than half of the 118 points that the second place team, Bronx Science High School received. "[Mendes] said that if we all ran good races we could win, we could get somewhere around 85 points. We got 57 points today, which means we all ran great races," said Schramm.

"Eighty points usually wins. This victory was an overwhelming victory," said Mendes. When asked to compare this team to others he has coached the veteran coach could only praise. "The 2007 [City Champion] team was very good. This team was better. It is by far the best team in the entire history of Stuyvesant High School," he glowed.

This season's team triumph comes a year removed from a disappointing fifth place finish. The biggest difference from last years underachieving team and the new city champions is the improved team chemistry, an aspect the team captains, Barnes, Chen and Surkont emphasized. "We are more of a unit. We work together better. We hang out a lot more than last year. We're a squad. We're

a real team," said Chen.

"We, the captains, give advice. We hype [the team] up at the line. We get into a huddle. We listen to that goon music, that Waka Flocka Flame to get everybody hyped," said Barnes.

**"There is one race a year in cross country: [the PSAL City Championship race]. Everything else is for personal glory"**  
—Mark Mendes,  
coach

Although Mendes may not give the same credit to Waka Flocka Flame, Gucci Mane and OJ Da Juiceman, he recognized the role his captains played in making the season a success. "[The captains] lead by example. The younger kids look up to them," Mendes said.

Outside of Mendes himself, the senior captains, Barnes and Chen, were probably prouder than anyone. "This is the biggest day of my life," said Chen. "This is what I've been working for, for the past three years and it all turned out great. We did better than I could've imagined."

"It was the perfect season," said Barnes.

## PSAL Implements Pitch Count Regulations



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lead to Tommy John surgery, a complex medical procedure which replaces a ligament in the elbow with a tendon from elsewhere in the body. According to a study done by Med-Scape, before 1997, only 12% of athletes undergoing Tommy John surgery were 18 years or younger. However, in 2005, 62 of the 188 total operations performed were on high school athletes. It is becoming increasingly apparent that young pitchers are being overworked, and the PSAL is hoping to pre-

vent this.

Though some PSAL coaches do overburden their pitchers, the majority of coaches put the well being of their players first. "I can understand why they want to do this, because some coaches do abuse young people's arms and it's for the protection of the young players so they can hopefully continue in college," Stuyvesant baseball coach Matt Hahn said. "On the other hand, for coaches who are diligent in their jobs, I think it's a slap in the face."

Though the new regulations certainly have good intentions, they are going to

benefit certain teams and hurt others. With less flexibility in their pitching rotations, coaches are going to have to look to their bullpens more often. They are going to have to build bigger pitching staffs, which will be difficult at small schools where baseball is not a priority. "The bigger schools are going to benefit from this because they'll have more pitchers on the bench," Stuyvesant baseball head coach John Carles said. "A smaller school without much pitching might have only one or two pitchers on the whole staff." Because of this, some teams will have to

rely on players that have never pitched before, and sometimes might even be forced to forfeit because of a lack of pitching. B division teams that rely heavily on an ace may be forced to disband their teams in the coming years if they are unable to construct a program where pitching is a top priority.

In addition, it has become apparent that these regulations will be extremely hard to enforce. The PSAL has stated that the coaches will be required to record the number of pitches each pitcher throws in a game and then report it to the PSAL Web site. This, however, seems to be a very biased and impractical solution. "How are they going to regulate this?" Hahn said. "Each coach is going to watch each other and it's going to cause arguments. I think it's going to be a big mess." It would be very easy for a coach to lie about the number of pitchers his player has thrown as well. Though both coaches are supposed to record the numbers, there could easily be discrepancies between their statistics.

"I say to the umpire he has 105 [pitches] he [the other coach] says 'I only have 98,'" Hahn said. In a situation like this, the PSAL will be hard-pressed to decide who is lying and who is telling the truth. "They say they're going to put spotters out on the field, but you never know when they're coming, so who's really regulating it," Hahn said. "It's just going to cause tensions between teams," he added.

Dishonesty very well might

become a problem. In many cases, coaches will do anything they can to improve their standings. "Every team looks to get an edge," Carles said. "That's not saying teams will look to cheat, but we've dealt with people trying to get around rules before so we'll see what happens."

For Stuyvesant's varsity baseball team, the Hitmen, it looks as though this policy may not make any significant changes to the team's make-up. Hahn and Carles have prided themselves in keeping their pitchers healthy. "I usually don't let a kid go over 100 pitches, unless I think they are truly capable of it," Carles said.

"I don't think it will have a big impact on us," Hahn said. "We'll just have to develop more pitching. Hopefully, young pitchers like juniors Evan Lubin, Kyle Yee, Peter Ferguson and Quinn Hood will step up to create a strong and balanced staff."

It seems that new regulations and even laws are becoming a trend in PSAL baseball. This is the second new rule (the first being an entirely wood bat league) to be implemented in the past five years. It is obvious that the PSAL is working hard to protect its young athletes, but in the end some trust does need to be put in the coaches to do their job the right way. A flurry of new regulations and laws will only take away from the essence of the game. "We're the only sport now in the city that's governed by rules and laws," Hahn said.

### Girls' Volleyball

## The Perfect Season...Again

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in the regular season, eighteenth most in the Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) and second in the Vixens' division, Manhattan A4. She added another 22 kills in the playoffs to end the season with an impressive 100 kills.

Weldon probably put it best when she said, "[Chin]'s a beast...I don't know what else there is to say."

Weldon has been instrumental to the Vixens this year as well. She handled her captaincy with poise, coming through in the clutch on the court. She had a division leading 144 assists in the regular season, 8th most in the PSAL. Weldon also assisted her teammates off the court. As one of two seniors on the team and a third year Vixen, Weldon led the other girls through experience and by example.

"Dot inspires [the team] to not give up...and have fun," Chin said.

Weldon has been more easygoing and relaxed than previous Vixen's captains. Fisher described Weldon and her captaincy as "a breath of fresh air."

The other senior Vixen was Clarey Hung. Hung had previously been a member of the swim team but this year she decided to play volleyball. Though only a rookie, Hung may have been the keystone to this team. She filled a vital defensive position, the libero. Coming into this year, Fisher "had no idea who was going to play libero. Then little Clarey came out, all 4'10" of her...and made our trip up to this point much easier," he said.

The Vixen's dominance of the Manhattan A4 division was seemingly effortless, as they won almost every division game without much opposition. However, the ease with which they breezed

through division was both a blessing and a curse. Because the Vixen's division was seen as somewhat weak, they only received the seventh seed in the playoffs despite their perfect regular season record. "I think most of the time it just hurts, because we play lazy and then when we play some good teams we're not ready to step up our game," Weldon said of playing in this weak division.

The Vixen's handled their first opponents in the playoffs, the Grand Street Campus Lady Wolves, much like they did their opponents in the regular season—swiftly and mercilessly. The Vixens dominated the Lady Wolves in just half an hour, winning in two sets, 25-6 and 25-11. The quick pace of the match even left many fans stranded outside of the gym as they did not expect such a speedy conclusion.

The Vixens started off their second playoff game shakily, falling behind early to the Newcomers Lady Lions in the first set. This did not discourage the Vixens, though. "It's important to keep playing, even when we're down. It's important to keep pushing," Chin said. The Vixens went on to win the next two sets, 25-15 and 25-14. The Vixens faced the second seeded Cardozo Judges, 8-2 in the regular season, in the quarterfinals and failed to get past the eventual PSAL champion Judges. The Vixens were knocked out of the playoffs by the Cardozo Judges in straight sets for the third year in a row.

The Vixens future is very promising. The team will only lose two seniors, with ten players returning next year to solidify a strong core, likely to repeat their regular season success for their thirteenth consecutive undefeated season.

### Headliner

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**Following a sport is like reading a novel. You don't just need a good side and a bad side (a team to root for and its opponents); you need a protagonist.**

Nolan Becker ('09) was the star of the team. His 25 points per game and 17 rebounds per game helped carry the Rebels. However, his most important assets were the crowds he drew. He made Stuyvesant basketball into a true spectator sport. This is what the spectator sport has become in our modern world; more and more, it is about the individual. And that is not just on the court, or the field, or the rink, but also in the culture associated with sports.

Following a sport is like reading a novel. You don't just need a good side and a bad side (a team to root for and its opponents); you need a protagonist. You need someone to latch

on to, to believe in and root for. You need a hero.

Imagine the Yankees of the late 1990s and early 2000s without Derek Jeter, or the New England Patriots of the early part of this decade without Teddy Bruschi or Tom Brady. It is possible that each team may have still managed to win a championship or two (perhaps less likely in the case of the Patriots), but could they really have been the dynamic, seemingly unstoppable teams that they were?

Maybe each team could have withstood the loss of the talent these players provided, but without the emotional influence of Bruschi, Brady or Jeter, these teams would have been nothing compared to what they were. They were leaders for their respective teams, but more than that, they gave the fans something special to follow.

Michael Jordan was the face of the Chicago Bulls for years; Drew Brees inspired the city of New Orleans on the Saints' road to Superbowl XLIV. Heroes inspire fans, and fans inspire players. So for the sake of Woo-Peg, our basketball team, our pride, and yes, even our sense of school identity, we need a hero.

**Imagine the Yankees of the late 1990s and early 2000s without Derek Jeter.**

# THE SPECTATOR SPORTS

## Girls' Soccer

### Despite Second Straight Disappointing Season, Mimbas Remain Optimistic



**By MAHTAB ALAM**

A 4-9 record. A last-place finish in the division. Most people would see this and think of their year as a complete failure. However, for the Mimbas, Stuyvesant's girls' soccer team, the 2010 season was successful in ways that the records or statistics may not show.

The Mimbas opened the season with a 5-0 dismantling by powerhouse Beacon, who

would go on to win the PSAL Girls' soccer Division A Championships. Stuyvesant then went 0-4, scoring only 2 goals in the next 4 games. They did not achieve their next victory until the match against Lab Museum United, doing so in a convincing manner by winning 7-3. Unfortunately, the Mimbas would only win three of their next eight matches, eliminating any possibility of reaching the playoffs. This is the second straight year

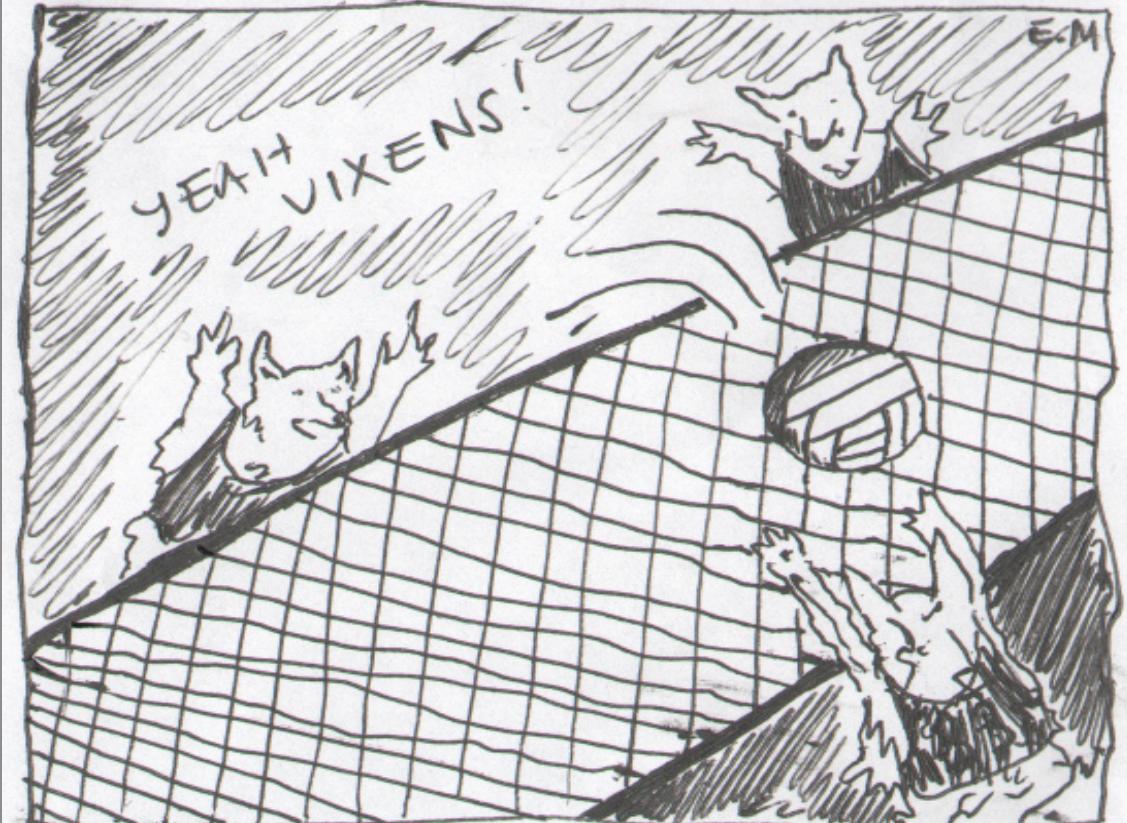
the Mimbas have failed to make the playoffs, following a 17-year streak in which they did. One of the major factors may have been the consistent lack of offense. The Mimbas scored more than one goal in a match only three times the whole season.

Even so, the girls remain positive about this year's experiences. "We had a somewhat rocky start, but the season was

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## Girls' Volleyball

### The Perfect Season...Again



**By TOBI IDOWU**

Perfection is rare. When a sports team approaches a perfect regular season, it seems like the whole world drops everything to watch. Perfection does not come around often, and when it does, we all stand in awe of the almost impossible feats the team performs. This is what has made the accomplishments of the Stuyvesant girls' volleyball team so spectacular. They have not had one perfect regular season—they have had 12.

The Vixens clinched their 12th straight perfect regular season in two quick sets against Seward Park on Monday, November 8, a match that coach and physical education teacher Phil Fisher called the "high point of the season." The girls won almost every game in this fashion, losing only one set the entire season to Bard High School Early College. "We were very confident throughout the season that the team would be able to keep [the record] up...It was a lot of pressure though," senior and captain Dorothy

"Dot" Weldon said.

"It was great that [the team] could continue the legacy, even though we lost a lot of players from last year," junior Melissa Chin said.

Chin has been a large part of the team's success this year. Despite standing at just 5'5", Chin is the only Vixen who plays on a team outside of school and is the team's premier outside hitter, with a vertical leap that would put most Stuyvesant athletes to shame. Chin had 78 kills

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## PSAL Implements Pitch Count Regulations

**By SCOTT CHIUSANO**

On Saturday, June 12, 2010, two young athletes walked off the field into the dugouts of Coney Island's MCU Park with the roar of 2300 fans in the background. Although one of them had just pitched his team, Tottenville, to a Public Schools Athletic League (PSAL) baseball city championship, the two young men had something in common: they had both just pitched ten straight innings of baseball, each throwing well over 100 pitches. John Silva of Tottenville and Tyler Gurman of Lehman battled back and forth in a grueling pitching duel, with Silva coming out on top. He threw 130 pitches that game. If either pitcher had been taken out, a different champion might have been crowned.

Beginning in the 2011 season though, pitcher's duels like these will no longer be seen in PSAL baseball. Due to complaints from parents and city council members, the PSAL has implemented a pitch count rule that prevents any varsity pitcher from throwing more than 105 pitches in a game. Had this been the case last year, both Silva and Gurman would have been pulled from what was, quite possibly, the biggest game either of them would ever pitch in their

lives. It can be argued though, that the coaches of both teams were doing a disservice to their players by keeping them in the game for so long, despite what was on the line. "We have a responsibility to our students," PSAL baseball commissioner Bob Pertsas said in an interview with NY1. "We want to make sure they play in a safe environment."

The 105 cap on pitches is not the only new rule the PSAL has decided on. Pitchers will now also have to rest a certain amount of days in between starts, depending on how many pitches they throw. For example, if a player throws between 76 and 90 pitches, they must have three days rest before another start. Presumably, these regulations are to prevent serious injuries, which have become much more common in young athletes.

"When we look at evidence and injury rates in baseball, there are significant shoulder and elbow injuries with the pitcher especially at risk," Dennis Cardone of the New York University Hospital for Joint Diseases said in a NY1 interview. "This policy is a true, important step in protecting young athletes." Elbow injuries are often caused by overuse, and can often

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## Headliner



Maggie Wu / The Spectator

**By CORY BEHROOZI**

Outside in the dark, cold night, the biting wind howls in the naked trees, rippling the surface of the Hudson River. Inside, hundreds of eager, red-clad and red-painted students stand and spill out of the bleachers to occupy virtually every part of the third-floor gymnasium at Stuyvesant High School.

It is deathly silent. Tension mounts, as all arms are raised toward the young man standing at the free-throw line, every fan's fingers outstretched, wiggling their support. Slowly, with careful concentration, the young man bends low to the ground, and then extends skyward, letting the ball roll effortlessly off of his fingertips and into the air. The ball hangs there for only a second, but to the breathless crowd it is an eternity, until finally, it glides smoothly into the white

net.

The crowd erupts in applause; it is a point for Stuyvesant. A single, innocuous point, that will not bear very heavily on the outcome of the game, and yet it draws a reaction of absolute ecstasy. Such is the true capacity of the spectator sport, creating a sense of solidarity and eliciting powerful emotional responses, and such was the work of WOOPEG-SOOIE two years ago.

Woo-Peg, as it has become known, came into prominence in the fall term of 2008, led by two senior captains of the baseball team, Nick Rozar ('09) and Nick Wheatley-Schaller ('09). The unchartered and technically unofficial club called itself, "The Official Booster Club of Stuyvesant Athletics," or so the backs of the red Woo-Peg T-shirts distributed that year would have you believe.

In its first year, Woo-Peg did something for this school that scarcely seems imaginable now, only two years later. It united the school on a remarkably deep level, instilling a strong sense of pride in each of us. We were all proud to go to Stuyvesant, and proud to root for our Runnin' Rebels, our varsity basketball team.

But as I sit here wondering how we can make Woo-Peg this year anything like what it was two years ago, I remember the key element that allowed Woo-Peg to do what it did that first year: a headliner.

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