

ARISTA Stuyvesant High School *Honor Society*



Annual Report *School Year 2024 - 2025*



MESSAGE FROM*The Editor-in-Chief & 2024-2025 Vice President of Operations*

Dear ARISTA,

Education is deemed a necessary rite of passage for anyone who wants to secure a satisfactory, comfortable life in the future, at the very least, in the United States. This wasn't always the case. This transition from a past where most children had no schooling to one where schooling is mandatory fascinates me—if those in the past lived fulfilling lives without this aspect we deem necessary, is it really as necessary as we believe? Much of what we learn throughout middle school and high school is never remembered nor used again by students. It seems to me that our education system is structured almost like a sieve, meant to babysit children with too much time on their hands to prevent them from causing a ruckus, while simultaneously weeding out those who have great potential to contribute to our society. Is that unfair?

I've spent a lot of time attempting to justify my association with the "elitist," "exclusive" organizations I have partaken in: Stuyvesant, ARISTA, and now Yale. Do I believe that I am one of those weeded out for having great potential to contribute to society? Absolutely not. I merely got lucky and fell through the crevices. I'm still discerning my level of conviction in our current education system, which may seem ironic as the (previous) Vice President of Stuyvesant's Honor Society. However, I've come to realize that despite it all, despite my personal persuasion, I'm here. I cannot change an entire system overnight—

nor do I particularly think it necessary, as no establishment is entirely good or bad, no matter how much we may attempt to advocate for total efficiency. Therefore, all we can do is push to allow for the good aspects to rise and proliferate, while masking and minimizing the negatives. Eventually, with these individual pushes to allow the good to triumph, the forces of nature will allow the system to evolve until it is distinct from what we have today.

That was ARISTA for me within Stuyvesant. There was something extremely methodical and systematized about ARISTA's crediting system, which I never entirely could fall behind, but recognized as a necessity for efficiency. I also had trouble legitimizing the many—and perhaps majority—of people who join ARISTA for reasons ingenuine, many in this scramble to game the few factors they have control over in the admissions process for higher education. I've come to recognize that despite the artificiality of the induction, our—although systemized—placement of 200 brilliant high schoolers in volunteer locations across the city multiple times per week is essential. The need for volunteers in New York is extreme, as countless organizations struggle to meet the overwhelming demand for support in communities facing limited resources. And what better volunteer force than high school students—those in their physical prime, with mental aptitude, who have yet to accumulate extreme responsibility and thus, despite their lack of availability, are able to carve time to volunteer through sheer will (and some credit requirements). Perhaps, and I've found this to be undeniably true, despite the forced aspect of our service, our volunteers grow to love it within the moment, and take much from each event they participate within. And I hope that somewhere along the way, members will gradually contribute to the development of their morals and values as they begin to tease into the era of adulthood, upholding our pillar of character.

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MESSAGE FROM*The Editor-in-Chief & 2024-2025 Vice President of Operations*

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We are a coveted volunteer force that positively permeates the greater New York City community. Despite the sometimes overwhelming amount of obligations and commitments our members have, we, high school students, are perhaps one of the most reliable volunteer groups in the country—not because we have more time than anyone else, but because we make time for the causes we care about.

I think of ARISTA as a hub that centralizes all of the many available volunteer opportunities and allows members to find their calling and apply themselves to it. It was only once I became Vice President that I realized how much Stuyvesant truly relies on ARISTA, particularly our tutoring services. Yet, there is work to be done. This year, I began conversations with administration about reforms to both tutoring and our crediting system. These included ideas like a marking-period-based crediting structure, which would make service more consistent and transparent; possibly increasing the tutoring credit requirement; and a stronger in-person tutoring room to give students reliable support while helping tutors build deeper connections. I was also excited to start discussions about initiatives like the Upcycle Room, which would give members new ways to serve the Stuyvesant community. Although I have graduated, I hope these conversations and projects continue next year. ARISTA has always been strongest when it adapts to meet the needs of our school, and I am confident that future leaders will build on these foundations and take them even further. Even after graduating, I've kept projects moving—spearheading this annual report, working with PISTE, releasing the Tutoring Tips and Tricks guide, and working with Will Zhang ('25) on designing the ARISTA website. And now, I'm passing these initiatives on to the new Executive Council, who will carry them forward next year.

I'm excited. I don't know how ARISTA and the Stuyvesant community perceive our

year of administration, but I am proud of all we have accomplished. The day after our executive council met with those before us to transition last year, the previous ARISTA website completely crashed, and with it, we lost a wealth of information. We had to rebuild ARISTA from the ground up, rewriting all the policies. Yet, within this challenge, I found a huge opportunity—it allowed us to review and update outdated protocols, something we likely wouldn't have found the time to do otherwise.

And that's what I leave you with, ARISTA. As this new school year approaches, approach challenges as opportunities. Recognize that nothing is set in stone; the way you perceive things—whether a challenge as an opportunity, a routine as a chance to change—can entirely change your approach towards it and incredibly alter the result you create. You are responsible for your happiness and well-being in this way, as it is entirely in your control, through your superpower of controlling your perception.

I also encourage you to find a niche in ARISTA (and Stuyvesant) and extend yourself. You will find it meaningful. Do things, not in order to get into a college, but because you enjoy them. After all, the college acceptance process requires a good story, and is not any story better told than when the experience was truly enjoyed?

I wish you the best of luck and am so excited for the promising future I see ahead of you. It has been a pleasure serving as your Vice President of Operations this school year and being the Editor-in-Chief of this report. I'd like to extend a huge thanks to Lenny, Ayla, Alexa, Mr. Ferencz, all the annual report staff—especially Isabel, Madelyn, Emma, Mufei—and all the new non-committee inductees who eagerly replied to my appeal to work on this project and who blew me away with their result.

With so much love,

Tamiyyah Shafiq

MESSAGE FROM*The 2024-2025 President*

Dear ARISTA,

I speak for the entire EC when I say that this year of ARISTA could not have gone better. Serving as your president has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my time in high school. I started my time in ARISTA as a sophomore, and since then have been able to watch the organization transform and grow alongside it. It was not just an organization that I took part in, but a definitive aspect of the person I have become today. Each one of you has the opportunity to do the same with your time in ARISTA. We have broad requirements to fulfill, but I urge you not to view them as mere numbers. Instead, think of them as hours that you

have chosen to dedicate to another, whether that be a tutee, a community service organization, or a food pantry. By viewing service this way, you are able to grasp its true meaning.

ARISTA is a truly unique organization due to its ability to serve within the Stuyvesant community while also working to serve the greater NYC community. Each member plays a unique role in our mission, and it would not be possible for us to fulfill it without each and every one of you. Engage with that ARISTA community that awaits you and immerse yourself in it.

As I leave you all, I have some advice. It is truly an honor to be selected to serve in this organization, so prioritize engaging with it in a way that is fulfilling to you. Tutor as much as you can, volunteer in as many neighborhoods as possible, and let service influence you as much as you contribute to it. Give your all to this organization, and I am sure that you will benefit just as much as others will from you.

Sincerely,

Ayla Irshad

MESSAGE FROM

The Faculty Advisor

Members,

Congratulations for completing another successful school year! Not only did our organization host two induction ceremonies and two open houses, we completed thousands of hours of volunteer work and scores of tutoring sessions. ARISTA has served both the Stuyvesant and NYC communities in an impressive manner that reflects our four pillars. Thank you for your considerable efforts and dedication.

Because our organization often focuses on fulfilling specific requirements to maintain membership, it can be easy to dismiss or even forget the human component of our work. And so I invite you to reflect upon the past year, not in credit hours earned or study guides written, but in the connections you've made and facilitated. I'd like you to consider a moment when you tutored a peer and felt the joy of guiding someone towards comprehending a once misunderstood concept. Consider the physical exhaustion your body felt after volunteering for hours, knowing in your heart how you've made a difference. Think about the friendships you've made and fostered at our events. All of these positive emotions are the result of your acts of service. The work we do fills us with

a sense of purpose and achievement, but more importantly, it connects us with each other. That is a true gift of our fellowship.

As we look towards the 2025-2026 school year, I'd like to take a moment to welcome our new members! Congratulations on joining ARISTA. We are so excited to see how you'll contribute to our community and know that you will live up to the challenge. I encourage you to be outgoing and introduce yourself to fellow members during our events. In turn, I encourage all returning members to extend the hand of ARISTA to our newest cohort. Community is built, it doesn't simply come into being, so be a part of building this community.

It has been such a pleasure working with all of you and getting to know you this past school year. Sadly, my ARISTA journey is coming to an end and I will not be serving as your faculty advisor next year. I'm so grateful to have had the opportunity to work along with the Executive Council and help facilitate this organization. I feel truly fortunate to have had this opportunity for the past two years.

I encourage you all to use your summer time leisurely. There's a lot of work to do in the fall and you need your rest and your strength for the challenges ahead. Enjoy yourselves!

Thank you for your continued commitment to excellence.

In service,

Eric Ferencz

MESSAGE FROM

The Principal

Dear ARISTA Members,

The responsibility you have accepted as members of this prestigious honor society is both a distinction and a privilege—one I know you do not take lightly. The four pillars of ARISTA—**character, leadership, scholarship, and service**—represent the very best of who you are and the meaningful contributions you bring to our community when you act in service of the greater good.

Membership in ARISTA is not simply a title; it is a collective commitment to uphold these core pillars. Each member's actions either reinforce or compromise the integrity of the honor society. By joining ARISTA, you are affirming your belief in the importance of collective success over personal recognition.

The mission of ARISTA is to serve and

support fellow students, particularly in their academic and intellectual growth. But this work goes beyond tutoring. ARISTA members embody and model a deep appreciation for learning—demonstrating curiosity, a desire for understanding, and a respect for knowledge and wisdom. You represent the essence captured in Stuyvesant's motto: *pro scientia atque sapienia*—for knowledge and wisdom.

You should take tremendous pride in your selection and continued participation in ARISTA. Your behaviors, your attitude, and your consistent efforts have earned you this honor. As you reflect on your role and responsibilities within this society, remember that your membership is a reflection of your character, leadership, scholarship, and service—and it speaks volumes about who you are to the world around you.

A special congratulations to the graduating ARISTA members of our **Class of 2025**—you have been exemplars to follow, and we are so appreciative of your service to your peers and to Stuyvesant High School. Well done!

Sincerely,

Dr. Seung Yu

Seung C. Yu
Principal
Stuyvesant High School



MESSAGE FROM

The Alumni Association President, and the Executive Director



Dear ARISTA Scholars,

On behalf of the **Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association**, congratulations on another year of excellence, service, and leadership. ARISTA represents the best of Stuyvesant—not only in academic achievement, but in the character, commitment, and care you bring to our school community.

The values you embody through **ARISTA**—integrity, initiative, and generosity—mirror those we champion in our alumni network. Many of the most active and impactful alumni in our community today once sat where you sit now: as student leaders dedicated to

making Stuyvesant a better place for everyone.

As you look ahead, whether to your senior year, college, or beyond, know that you're already part of something larger. The 50,000+ members of our Alumni Association are proud of your accomplishments, and we're here to support you as you grow.

We hope you'll stay connected, seek out alumni mentors, and someday return the favor for the next generation of students. Congratulations again!

To learn more about who we are and what we do feel free to stop by Room 101 or visit us online at [#GoStuy](http://www.stuyalumni.org)

Best wishes,

Elina Tetelbaum '03

Board President, Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association

Diego S. Segalini '98

Executive Director, Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association

Our Impact



” ARISTA tutoring is a great way to connect with upperclassmen and to have someone with experience who is specifically catered to helping only you. The way you communicate with your tutor can be completely up to both of you, creating a comfortable environment.

—Anonymous

OUR PILLARS

Scholarship

By YANA BIJOOR

When we think of scholarship in ARISTA, the first thing that comes to mind is GPA. However, throughout my experience in ARISTA, I have realized that grades are not even half of what scholarship means. Scholarship is about falling in love with learning and chasing knowledge like it's your calling. It means asking questions and exploring ideas that spark your curiosity. ARISTA pushes members to embrace scholarship as a core part of their values, emphasizing experience over grades alone. Thus, it is necessary that we, as ARISTA members, take learning beyond just understanding what a concept is and instead figure out how we can utilize our education to make a lasting impact.

ARISTA allows us to take scholarship into our own hands, stretching far beyond the four walls of a classroom. There's no one-size-fits-all here. Some of my friends in ARISTA are in science research programs, spending hours in labs experimenting. Others are taking extremely challenging classes, such as linear algebra, to push themselves to the limit. For me, that has meant starting a new club to discuss current events, something that truly resonates with my values. No matter what sparks your interest, ARISTA celebrates these ways of chasing knowledge. Knowledge is not meant to be measured quantitatively, but rather in quality and impact. It's about discovering what drives you and finding your passion to work toward making the world a better place.

ARISTA is also about taking a leap of faith into the unknown. In a stressful environ-

ment where people are constantly afraid to take risks, ARISTA encourages them to take that step, even if it's small or if they fail. That one step is what distinguishes us, as ARISTA members, from followers to leaders. My time in ARISTA has made me realize that avoiding failure has never been the goal; the goal is resilience—the ability to not be afraid of defeat because you understand that it is an opportunity to just get right back up.

ARISTA's pillar of scholarship is a mindset. It's about staying curious, pushing yourself, and finding joy in learning something new every day. ARISTA celebrates the need to chase knowledge in your own way.

In a place like Stuyvesant, where knowledge feels endless—almost to a fault, at times—it is easy to forget the gift of knowledge and how rare it is in many parts of the world. To be a part of ARISTA, a place that cultivates and encourages growth, no matter who you are, is something that we should cherish and appreciate. In part, it is our duty as ARISTA members to take that gift and spread it in any way that we can—to choose a path that goes beyond us, a path that will help those who are silenced and defenseless, in any way that we are able. The craving to get a good grade or to be seen as intelligent by your peers is fleeting, but the desire to learn by listening to your peers and observing the world around you is something that you carry through every day for the rest of your life. It's something that ARISTA instills in us from day one.

OUR PILLARS

Leadership

By JOANNE HWANG

At the heart of ARISTA lie not only service, scholarship, and character but also leadership, one of ARISTA's core pillars. Regardless of titles and roles, every member of ARISTA is a leader in their local community and within their families. Leadership is about taking initiative and being a motivational force through action. Members gain these skills as they learn from their peers and actively engage in their community daily.

At Stuyvesant, ARISTA members uphold leadership by taking initiative with an encouraging attitude. At the biannual Open House and Camp Stuy events, ARISTA members and Big Sibs line the hallways to invite prospective students into the school, ready to lead tour groups and answer questions regarding their experiences at Stuyvesant with honesty, clarity, and enthusiasm. In fact, at my own first Camp Stuy event, I asked a student why they chose to attend Stuyvesant, and they said that the positive energy of their ARISTA tour guide at Open House encouraged them. These moments exemplify leadership—connecting with our peers to create a positive community.

Beyond school walls, ARISTA members spearhead impactful initiatives in their community. Through volunteering at awareness walks and food pantries, ARISTA demonstrates the importance of fighting for a cause and motivates others to be

as proactive. For instance, at 9 Million Reasons (9MR) and Masbia of Queens, members help fight against food insecurity by providing nutritious meals in low-income communities. Leadership is not just about pioneering, but about setting an example for others to follow.

Leadership means leading by example, but it also entails learning how to lead. By stepping out of their comfort zones and into responsibilities through tutoring and attending events, members build the experience and confidence to be leaders in any environment. After having attended 9MR for two years, it wasn't until this year that I made an effort to talk to and build relationships with the organizers at the food pantry. With the experience of giving tours with ARISTA and being in uncomfortable but responsible positions in tutoring, I learned to embrace the discomfort to better my community; awkward pauses between sorting food became filled with fun anecdotes and lighthearted questions. ARISTA provides a space for members to grow and lead as competent and compassionate individuals.

ARISTA shapes how members approach their school, community, and personal lives. These lessons extend beyond Stuyvesant, providing the foundation for ARISTA members to be leaders with purpose anywhere.

OUR PILLARS

Service

By CHLOE TAM

From tutoring their fellow peers to volunteering in New York City, ARISTA members perform meaningful service throughout their time at Stuyvesant and beyond.

Within Stuyvesant, ARISTA members help students as tutors across a variety of subjects. Each tutoring session secured through our online portal—whether enacted in-person or virtually—is catered to the tutee's needs. Tutoring service is not limited to one-on-one sessions; ARISTA also hosts open tutoring in study hall settings strategically planned immediately prior to major exams. This year's Cakes for Calc event in May, where ARISTA members volunteered to tutor after school to help prepare students for the AP Calculus BC exam, is one such example. Additionally, ARISTA often holds group tutoring sessions in collaboration with the caucuses and Student Union.

Students turn to ARISTA members for general guidance about academics, even outside of tutoring. For instance, during events like Open House and the Club Pub fair, students ask ARISTA members for advice on navigating Stuyvesant or joining ARISTA. Enthusiastic replies demonstrate ARISTA members' willingness to lend a helping hand and commitment to meaningful service, even when it is not tracked.

Each ARISTA member also volunteers at various events throughout New York City, accumulating at least 40 hours of community service throughout the school year. However, this number is merely a minimum; many of our members volun-

teer well beyond the requirement, often consistently at their favorite locations, because they realize service is not about the hours that one devotes, but the positive change one is able to make. Dedicated members repeatedly go to park cleanups and MoMath family events because it allows them to experience the long-term impact they make each time they volunteer, and to join a community they otherwise would not have had exposure to. With this, ARISTA teaches members to have a dedication to meaningful service.

Being able to have such a direct impact on others—whether by spreading knowledge, prepping food, or serving the community—is a fundamental reason why ARISTA members volunteer. When volunteering, one can see the direct effects of their actions on the community, whether it's someone's eyes lighting up when you serve them the first meal they have had all day, or a student's love for math being sparked. Witnessing the positive impact one has on others is a unique experience ARISTA fosters. It shows that volunteering not only brings joy to others but to oneself as well, reinforcing that a little compassion and assistance go a long way.

ARISTA introduces members to a life of service, and ARISTA alumni continue to demonstrate their commitment to service after their years at Stuyvesant, creating a habit of assisting others. Our members are people who will lend a helping hand not because someone is watching, but because of the joy it brings.

OUR PILLARS

Character

By MADELYN LI NUNEZ
and ELLIE MAK

As members of ARISTA, we're not just recognized for our academic achievements—we're individuals whom the Stuyvesant and NYC communities can rely on, look up to, and trust. That trust begins with character, which is arguably the foundation of all four pillars. Everyone is born with certain traits influenced by their genetics, but that represents only a small part of who they become. The rest of a person's character is shaped by their experiences, expectations, and most importantly, the choices they make. One's character is what inspires them to lead, strive for academic excellence, and serve their community. It's also what motivates students to join ARISTA in the first place—whether out of a desire to give back for the help they once received, to support their peers, or simply from a genuine commitment to doing good.

Character is more than just holding moral values; it's about consistently choosing to act with integrity, patience, empathy, and courage. It means explaining difficult concepts to peers, even after a long day. Holding the door for someone, even if you're not acquainted. Sharing notes with a friend who missed class. Listening without judgment when a peer feels overwhelmed or discouraged. These acts may be small, but as they accumulate, they can profoundly impact someone's day, or even their life. ARISTA members don't do these things because they have to; they do them because it reflects who they are and who they strive to be.

David Foster Wallace captured this idea of character growth in everyday life during his 2005 commencement speech at Kenyon College. He described how our in-

terpretations of the world are shaped by factors like upbringing, culture, and religion—how our default assumptions are limited by what we've been exposed to. Wallace spoke about the frustrations of daily life, such as boredom, repetitive routines, and long lines, and how these seemingly mundane moments are where the power of choice becomes most important.

"This, I submit, is the freedom of a real education... You get to consciously decide what has meaning and what doesn't... Most days, if you're aware enough to give yourself a choice, you can choose to look differently... If you're automatically sure that you know what reality is, and you are operating on your default setting, then you probably won't consider possibilities that aren't annoying and miserable. But if you really learn how to pay attention, then you will know there are other options."

Wallace acknowledged that this shift in perspective isn't easy. It requires constant effort. In life, the only thing we truly have control over is who we choose to be. Each day presents a new set of opportunities and challenges, and it's up to us to decide how we respond to them. But it's through these small, intentional acts—showing up, holding yourself accountable even when no one is watching, giving others the benefit of the doubt—that character is built. Choosing to go above and beyond—not because of an incentive, but because it feels right—that is character. Taking responsibility for mistakes and striving to grow from them—that is character. It's not something we're born with or can check off a list. It's something we develop, one decision at a time.

ARISTA Leadership

Executive Council



Ayla Irshad
President



Alexa Chiang
Vice President
Events and Service



Tamiyyah Shafiq
Vice President
Operations



Leonid Metlitsky
Vice President
Web Development

Events Committee



Elizabeth Chao



Elizabeth Chen



Elijah Choi



Amani Kaushal



Eric Lam



Selina Lee



Emma Lin



Grace Rhee



Aruna Vaithilingam

Operations Committee



Yana Bijoor



Ruiyin (Amy)
Deng



Muna Faruqi



Shibao (Skylar)
Huang



Madeline Goodwin



Veronika Gulko



Joanne Hwang



Ellie Mak



Emma Musyuk



Isabel Noh



Chloe Tam



Mufei Yu

Web Development Committee



Vincent Chen



Anna Lau



Hyunseo (Eileen)
Lee



Alan Liang



Raymond Lin



John Nan



Ankita Saha



Rohan Sen



Han Xiao



Eileen Xu



Elias Xu

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The Events Committee

**By MUFEI YU
and EMMA LIN**

On any given weekend, ARISTA members can be found aiding their community in various ways, whether it be through picking up litter, organizing food donations, distributing food, or helping set up events for a cause. Giving back to the community is important, and the Events Committee works to create opportunities for ARISTA members to make a direct impact, regardless of scale.

As a part of the Events Committee, members are responsible for contacting and collaborating with organizations to establish volunteer opportunities for ARISTA members through partnerships. Whether they're leading events, directing volunteers, or overseeing logistics—such as crediting, issuing strikes for policy violations, sending confirmation emails, and tracking attendance—committee members always uphold their core pillar: service. At its heart, the Events Committee operates with the shared belief that service should be accessible, community-driven, and meaningful. Events are planned not just to fulfill the committee member requirement of hosting three events per month, but to foster genuine connection and purpose through the thoughtful work carried out to support our community.

In my experience, leading volunteer events has shaped me for the better in countless ways. Although it was unfamiliar territory at first, I quickly learned to adapt with the help of resources such as email templates, past partnerships, and guidance from the Vice President. I began by coordinating fun, one-time events like the Breakthrough T1D (Type 1 Diabetes) Walk and the Zero Prostate Cancer Walk. In October, I formed a close partnership with NYC Service and shifted toward organizing park cleanups. I started with hosting the McKinley Park Cleanups on Sundays, and later expanded to lead the Leif Ericson Cleanups on Saturdays and the Sunset Park Cleanups on Sundays. These events were not only morally rewarding—helping to beautify parks and improve the environment for both people and wildlife—but also personally fulfilling. They strengthened my leadership and communication skills and gave me the chance to connect with my peers and learn from their perspectives.

My experience is just one example of the many opportunities ARISTA members can explore. One of the most dynamic aspects of the committee's events is the variety. These events aren't limited to just one borough, as locations are usually spread throughout New York City to ensure greater accessibility for volunteers from all areas. Volunteers can choose to participate in one-time events—such as charity walks and runs, cultural festivals, and seasonal drives—or commit to ongoing opportunities through long-term partnerships with organizations like NYCService, 9 Million Reasons, Inform Your Community, and Xavier Mission Soup Kitchen. Dorot, a senior center and long-time partnering or-

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ganization with ARISTA, regularly hosts game days where students sit down to chat with senior citizens while enjoying board games. "The committee has taught me a lot about collaborating with others and building connections through service, and it's been a lot of fun," committee member and event leader of the Dorot Game Days Amani Kaushal said.

Through their dedication and leadership, the Events Committee ensures that service remains an active and prominent part of the ARISTA experience. With each event, they not only connect volunteers to causes, but also to new communities throughout New York City. Even within ARISTA itself, members work together, performing a wide array of tasks, and form as well as strengthen meaningful bonds through shared experiences, effort, and teamwork. Going beyond logistics, the Events Committee helps open new doors and build bridges between ARISTA members, communities, and causes.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The Operations Committee

By ISABEL NOH

The Operations Committee—headed by senior and Vice President of Operations Tamiyyah Shafiq—took charge of major initiatives, internal affairs, and ARISTA events at Stuyvesant this year.. The committee ensures that ARISTA runs seamlessly, working behind the scenes as well as communicating directly with the student body.

This year, Shafiq structured Operations by dividing members into standing and select subcommittees; standing subcommittees operated throughout the entire year, while select ones dissolved once their objectives were completed. Standing committees included one that handled ARISTA's Instagram account, posting weekly stories detailing upcoming volunteering opportunities and recapping major school events. From December to spring, ARISTA's following grew by over 100 followers—from approximately 631 to 750 accounts. Another group collected and sorted new study guides from general members, graded them, credited contributors accordingly, and organized ARISTA's vast guide archive.

Select committees featured a group that asked around Stuyvesant collecting frequently asked questions (with answers) about ARISTA to add to the website, one that created a tutoring tips and tricks guide for general members, one that redesigned ARISTA's school bulletin board, and one that worked on this very annual report for the 2024-2025 school year.

In an email interview, junior and committee member Ellie Mak described her experience in Operations. "It's not only the required tutoring hours and study guides, but also Open House, making study resources, and Operations coming together to brainstorm what would benefit Stuyvesant students," she wrote.

Operations also oversaw ARISTA's partnership with the Prescod Institute for Sport, Teamwork, and Education (PISTE) throughout the year—even during the summer. Members virtually proctored Zoom sessions at least once per week; from the main room, they supervised breakout

sessions, where underprivileged tutees were paired with tutors from Brooklyn Technical High School, Regis High School, New York University, and, of course, PISTE's anchor school, Stuyvesant.

Additionally, Operations members stood by in case the Events Committee was short-staffed and needed people to lead events, and often worked during their free periods to prepare for upcoming events.

Here is a timeline of some of the tasks the Operations Committee completed this year. While it includes much of what we accomplished, it is far from comprehensive.

Fall

Before the September induction, Operations organized certificates in alphabetical order, laid out t-shirts in the inductees' assigned seats, and folded pamphlets ahead of the ceremony. At the event, they took attendance, and ushered in families. In the same vein, the committee helped ensure the June ceremony ran smoothly.

In the fall, the committee focused on marketing ARISTA's resources for the student body—especially towards freshmen. Operations members staffed a booth in the library at the Fall Clubs and Pubs Fair, offering munchkins to interested students and encouraging them to sign up for a tutee account on the new website.

In October, a few members also ran a booth in the cafeteria at the Fall Open House, informing prospective freshmen of the valuable resources available to them if they choose to attend Stuyvesant. The same booth was set up again in the spring for incoming freshmen. Additionally, all Operations members gave study skills presentations to freshmen during lab periods in December.

Mak looks back and admires the everyday work that Operations fulfilled throughout the year. "Often, I feel members of ARIS-

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ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The Operations Committee

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TA Operations aren't doing the super ordinary, but rather we just take an extra 20 minutes to make the school/ARISTA system work better for ourselves [and] also [share] it with others," the committee member expressed.

Spring

In the spring, the committee marketed ARISTA again, this time urging students to apply to the society. Members plastered posters around the school, and reached out to teachers to help spread the message to their students. A few members also led the ARISTA booth at the Spring Clubs & Pubs Fair.

Moreover, just as they had done in October, committee members took attendance at kiosks during the spring Open House. Having ARISTA members and Big Sibs sign out by snapping a quick picture of themselves at a kiosk staffed by an Operations member proved far more effective than the QR code system used in previous years, as it prevented anyone from bypassing the process.

The committee also created a new initiative: Advanced Placement (AP) Cram Central—a comprehensive repository consisting of online study resources cu-

rated by Operations, along with information on all the review sessions hosted by teachers and clubs. The purpose of Cram Central was to consolidate all of the many scattered resources available. Throughout the month, the Instagram subcommittee promoted the initiative through daily stories, sharing the AP exam schedule and advertising the Cram Central. Each operations member oversaw one to two AP exams, gathering respective videos, study guides, practice problems, as well as collaborating with a teacher or club to host a review session when possible. ARISTA hosted a few of these sessions, such as a "Cakes & Calc" event with mathematics teacher David Scheiman and another for AP Spanish. Operations hopes that Cram Central continues in future years and believes that, with more time spent on the initiative, it could expand to support even more students.

Lastly, a few days after the Induction and Awards Ceremony in June, one of Operations's last duties was push-ins for Camp Stuy: members presented ARISTA to pre-freshmen, aiming to ease the prospective students' anxieties about academics at Stuyvesant.

Whether through leading initiatives to promote ARISTA or helping run events, the Operations Committee exemplifies the core pillar of leadership. Already ready to step up and work tirelessly behind the scenes, the committee serves as the backbone of the organization.



ARISTA is a Stuyvesant High School organization that qualifies for the New York State Seal of Civil Readiness (NYSSCR). Eligible ARISTA members will receive an NYSSCR seal on their high school diploma.

"The New York State Seal of Civic Readiness (NYSSCR) is a formal recognition that a student has demonstrated the civic knowledge, skills, mindsets, and experiences necessary to become an actively engaged member of their community. In New York City, the New York State Seal of Civic Readiness is managed by Civics for All across all New York City Public Schools."

—weteachnyc.org

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

The Web Development Committee

By MUFEI YU
and ROHAN SEN

Led by Vice President Leonid Metlitsky, the Web Development Committee is responsible for maintaining and updating the ARISTA website, an integral part of ARISTA's operations, with functionality that allows for, but is not limited to, event and tutoring logistics. This year, the committee embarked on an ambitious redesign of the ARISTA website. Metlitsky completely rewrote the 2000s-era website over the summer, enhancing security and accessibility and adding mobile functionality, the lack of which was a significant limitation of the previous website. The website continued to be improved over the course of the school year. The redesign also allows future upgrades to be far easier since the modern code is more maintainable and organized. The new website has already strengthened ARISTA cohesion, and more features will continue to be added to adapt to the future needs of the organization.

The website's server is currently hosted on a Linode Linux server, serving a Svelte-Kit webpage and Pocketbase database. To track volunteering hours, event signups, and member strikes, the committee uses Pocketbase as its database. All code is available on GitHub, a platform that allows developers to host a public git repository for team collaboration and versioning. Metlitsky manages the main branch, which isolates development work from other branches in the repository, while each member creates their own branch to implement any necessary changes. Once members complete their changes, they submit a merge request to Metlitsky to bring the changes into the production branch. Other tasks the committee worked on include adding text blurbs, making visual updates, implementing new features to the website, and performing consistent debugging.

Looking at the timeline, the committee was selected last summer, when the general website functionality was created. Metlitsky set up the sign-in page, as well as details regarding volunteering and events. In the fall, after the committee became familiar with the website, tasks were distributed to the members. During the winter, email functionality—developed by Metlitsky and committee member Rohan Sen—was implemented, and study guides were added in January. Metlitsky also created a mass cred-

itor, which greatly streamlined the crediting process for the Executive Council. The Cram Central hub was created in May. An initial FAQs page—one for ARISTA members and one for tutees—was also added in May, with the finalized version approved for the site by Metlitsky towards the end of July. The rest of the year was filled with updates on these various features.

The email server for ARISTA was developed by junior Rohan Sen, who spoke about his experience being in the committee and coding for the society. Sen used a software program called Postfix to set up the email server, which the website uses to send emails to users. For the server to operate, it needs to be authenticated so that Gmail registers the mail as legitimate rather than marking it as spam. "There were a ton of difficulties getting everything to work," Sen said. "In order to actually have the emails delivered properly, a lot of verification protocols have to work—and almost all of them didn't at first."

He notes the tediousness and complexity of this process, from having everything done through the terminal to connecting the email server to the main server so automated mail could be sent out. "I remember I actually went around the school with a laptop one day just asking random people if I could send them an email to see if it went through," Sen said.

Although working behind the scenes on ARISTA's technological components isn't easy, being part of the Web Development Committee provides valuable opportunities for members to learn and practice technical skills. "I learned a lot of technical skills from being part of Web," Sen said. "I became a lot more familiar with Linux servers and how to work with them. I also became more familiar with JavaScript at the same time for the automations."

Through long hours of coding, problem-solving, and collaboration, the Web Development Committee has laid the groundwork for a stronger and more efficient ARISTA. Allowing the website to run on mobile devices has improved accessibility, while the redesign has made it easier for both leaders and members to use the site for crediting, events, and tutoring. The efforts of these developers ensure that the technology behind ARISTA matches the ambition of the students it supports.

” Teachers and Big Sibs should encourage Little Sibs to take advantage of ARISTA. I've suggested it to a lot of my friends and they had never really considered it or heard much about it (when we were underclassmen).

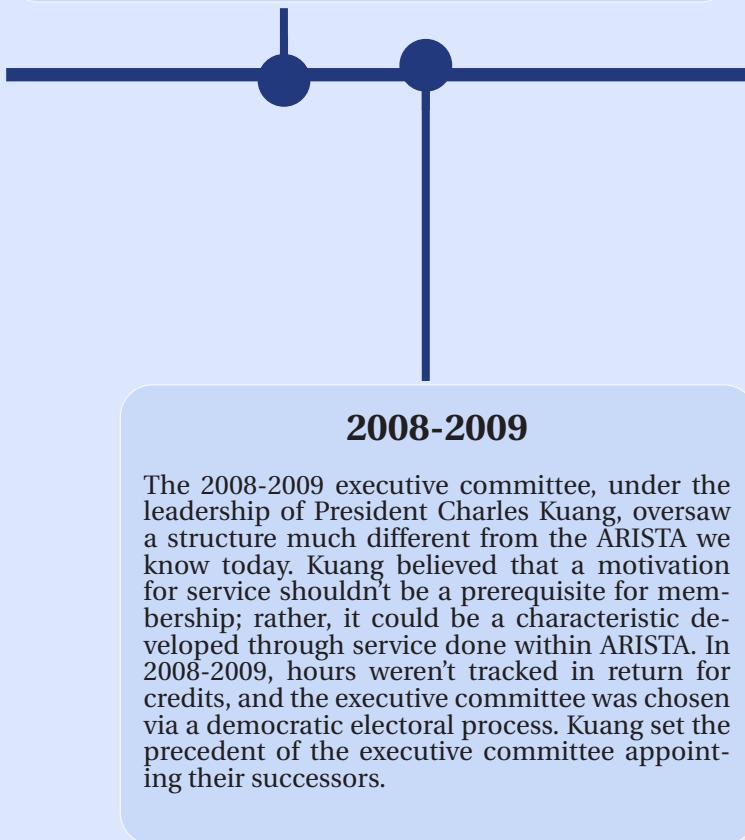
—Anonymous

A Brief Timeline of ARISTA's History

By ELIZABETH CHAO

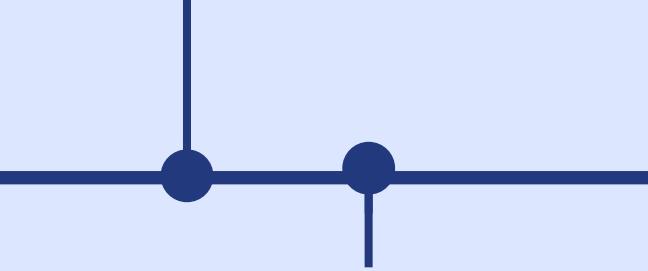
Stuyvesant's chapter of ARISTA was first founded in 1910, eleven years before the National Honor Society (NHS) was officially established at Fifth Avenue High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. ARISTA would later become affiliated as a variant of NHS. Originally called *The Arista League*, our organization's fundamental purpose and mission has remained a constant throughout its 115 years of operation. Stated in a November 1911 issue of Stuyvesant's Caliper Literary Arts magazine, "Those students who are honored with membership in the Arista must have done active, aggressive, and unselfish work for the best interests of their school." Since Stuyvesant was founded in 1904 as a manual training school for boys and wouldn't accept its first female student until 1969, ARISTA wouldn't have its first female executive officer until years later in the 1970s-1980s. From the very beginning, however, ARISTA was, itself, a fundamental pillar of the Stuyvesant community. Its influence extended beyond academics even in its earliest years. In 1913, for instance, ARISTA members under Alfred W. Townsend took part in a three hour conference with Principal Ernest R. von Nadroff concerning inadequate lunchroom space at Stuyvesant's original building on East 15th St.

Founding Years



Stuyvesant's chapter of ARISTA officially broke off from the National Honor Society in 2017, when the executive board under Principle Eric Contreras (President Nicholas Lee, Executive Vice President Sophie Feng, Vice President of Tutoring Luola Chen, Vice President of Web Development Ryan Sui, and Vice President of Events Selina Zou) decided not to renew their NHS charter and instead, build ARISTA up to be what it is today: an honor society unique to Stuyvesant with its own bylaws and policies. ARISTA then went under several structural changes in 2018, with the removal of its tutoring and communications committees in light of our transition to more accessible online functions, and the formation of our current operations committee.

2017-2018



2019-2020

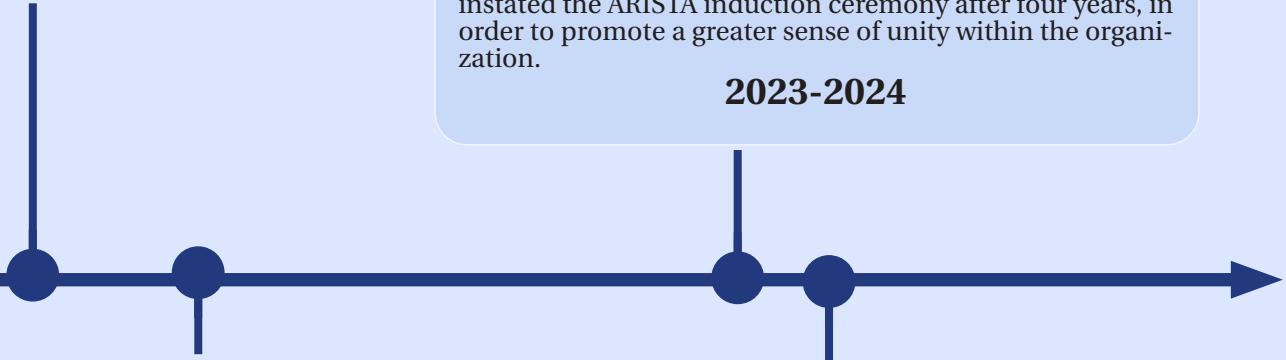
The 2019-2020 executive board consisting of President Mina Ivkovic, Vice President of Events and Service Jeremy Lee, Vice President of Operations Caroline Magoc, and Vice President of Web Development Hilary Zen upheld the 2017-2018 council's policy changes. Without the restrictions imposed by its former NHS charter, ARISTA began operating on a semester-based credit system. Additionally, ARISTA started addressing an apparent lack of sufficient events to satisfy every member's credit requirements by creating more long-term partnerships with local organizations and optimizing the ARISTA website. This executive council also skillfully adapted to Stuyvesant's transition to online learning during the pandemic and initially navigated ARISTA leadership without a faculty advisor at the start of their year. This seemingly worrisome experience allowed each executive council member to learn that adaptability is an essential skill when it comes to leadership.

A Brief Timeline of ARISTA's History

By ELIZABETH CHAO

The 2020-2021 executive board with President Emma Donnelly, Vice President of Events and Service Roshni Patel, Vice President of Operations Evelyn Ma, and Vice President of Web Development May Hathaway came into their roles with a central goal of expanding ARISTA's reach (providing tutoring services outside Stuyvesant, increasing the number and diversity of study materials available on the ARISTA website, etc). They also sought to build up a greater community within ARISTA through team spirit days and newsletters.

2020-2021



2022-2023



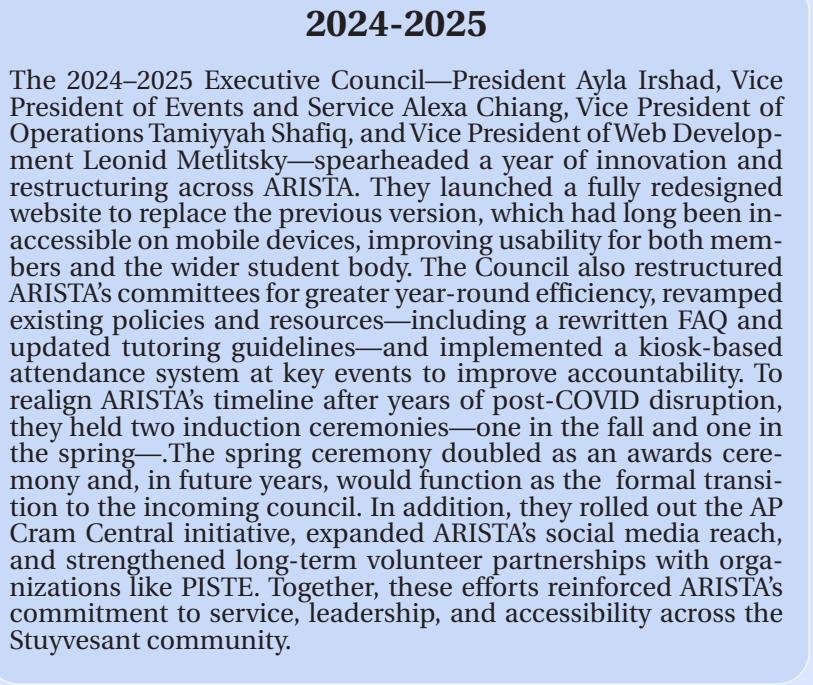
The 2022-2023 executive council consisted of seniors President Kitty Wang, Vice President of Events Ava Fung, Vice President of Operations Marilyn Shi, and Vice President of Web Development Vernon Hughes. This executive council helped to develop what they called the "cluster system" and emphasized personal growth through membership in ARISTA to all its members.

The 2023-2024 Executive Council under President Vanessa Chen, Vice President of Events and Service Sophia Dasser, Vice President of Operations Juni Park, and Vice President of Web Development Shwetlana Jha, worked to increase ARISTA's influence



within the Stuyvesant community by better advertising ARISTA's tutoring services. During their presidency, ARISTA also held more push-ins during homeroom sessions and reinstated the ARISTA induction ceremony after four years, in order to promote a greater sense of unity within the organization.

2023-2024



2024-2025

The 2024-2025 Executive Council—President Ayla Irshad, Vice President of Events and Service Alexa Chiang, Vice President of Operations Tamiyyah Shafiq, and Vice President of Web Development Leonid Metlitsky—spearheaded a year of innovation and restructuring across ARISTA. They launched a fully redesigned website to replace the previous version, which had long been inaccessible on mobile devices, improving usability for both members and the wider student body. The Council also restructured ARISTA's committees for greater year-round efficiency, revamped existing policies and resources—including a rewritten FAQ and updated tutoring guidelines—and implemented a kiosk-based attendance system at key events to improve accountability. To realign ARISTA's timeline after years of post-COVID disruption, they held two induction ceremonies—one in the fall and one in the spring—the spring ceremony doubled as an awards ceremony and, in future years, would function as the formal transition to the incoming council. In addition, they rolled out the AP Cram Central initiative, expanded ARISTA's social media reach, and strengthened long-term volunteer partnerships with organizations like PISTE. Together, these efforts reinforced ARISTA's commitment to service, leadership, and accessibility across the Stuyvesant community.

IN-HOUSE EVENTS

September Induction Ceremony

By ISABEL NOH

On September 27, 2024, students and families attended ARISTA's induction ceremony for the 2024-2025 school year in the Murray Kahn Theater. The ceremony began with the national anthem, sung by seniors Raechel Calungsod and Kishi Wijaya. Senior and President Ayla Irshad then delivered the opening address, followed by speeches given by Principal Seung Yu and

Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character in the Pillars Ceremony.

Senior and Events Committee member Grace Rhee delivered the keynote address, speaking on her experience in the honor society and what being a member has meant to her. Students then recited ARISTA's pledge, led by Irshad.

"I wanted inductees to understand the col-



English teacher and faculty advisor Eric Ferencz, who wished the inductees a great year of service and expressed excitement for their impact through ARISTA.

Recalling the ceremony in an email interview, Irshad described how inducting members for the first time felt like she was formally stepping into her role as President. "When you are in front of all the people that you are leading, you are inducting them into their roles just as much as you are inducting yourself into your own," she wrote.

The 2024-2025 Executive Council—Irshad; Vice President of Events and Service, Alexa Chiang; Vice President of Operations, Tamiyyah Shafiq; and Vice President of Web Development, Leonid Metlitsky—then certified ARISTA's four tenets of

lective nature of being an ARISTA member and the importance of sticking to ARISTA's core values," Irshad added. Furthermore, the president emphasized how "the induction is a special experience because it is one of the first and main times when a member is surrounded by everyone who makes up ARISTA."

The event concluded with Ferencz and the Executive Council presenting the inductees with certificates of membership. Following the ceremony, attendees enjoyed food and beverages in the atrium. The reception was hosted by the Parents' Association, and ARISTA extends its gratitude to them, Principal Yu, the administration, and the custodial staff for their support of this event and the honor society as a whole.

June Induction & Awards Ceremony

By JERRY QIU

ARISTA's induction and awards ceremony was held on June 3, 2025.



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IN-HOUSE EVENTS

June Induction & Awards Ceremony

By ISABEL NOH

On June 3, 2025, students and families gathered in the Murray Kahn Theater to induct the new ARISTA members for the 2025-2026 school year and to present awards to members from the 2024-2025 school year. The ceremony began with the national anthem, sung by Stuyvesant choir member Kishi Wijaya, followed by speeches delivered by English teacher and faculty advisor Eric Ferencz, senior and ARISTA President Ayla Irshad, and Assistant Principal Gary Haber.

Preparing for the ceremony was a favorite Operations memory for junior and committee member Ellie Mak. In an email interview, she reflected on how members “were all under a time crunch to make sure the certificates and attendance were organized correctly and on time.” While she admitted the process was “slightly stressful,” the efforts of committee members and others who helped out paid off, and everything came together in the end. She described how “that moment really stood out to [her], like, ‘wow, this is why we are ARISTA members.’”

The 2024-2025 Executive Council—Irshad, seniors Vice President of Events and Service Alexa Chiang, Vice President of Operations Tamiyyah Shafiq, and Vice President of Web Development Leonid Metlitsky—carried out the Pillars Ceremony, affirming ARISTA’s four tenets of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character.

Irshad then led students in reciting ARISTA’s pledge. Ferencz and the Executive Council distributed certificates for newly inducted members and later awarded graduation stoles to seniors who had completed their ARISTA service requirements.

In an email interview, Irshad fondly reflected on inducting members for a second time: “I inducted my first class of ARISTA members in the fall, so being in the unique position of doing so once more towards the end of my presidency was such a full-circle moment.”

“It was amazing to be able to see so many faces that I had interviewed in the audience, and see students eager to become officially a part of our organization,” the president added.

To close out the ceremony, several awards were presented to members who had



demonstrated exceptional commitment to leadership, scholarship, service, and character in the 2024-2025 school year. The Exemplary Leadership Award was given to junior and Operations Committee member Veronika Gulkov; the Distinguished Service Award to juniors and Operations Committee members Joanne Hwang and Chloe Tam, as well as sophomore Ken Wakida; the Integrity in Action Award to junior and Operations Committee member Amy Deng; the Exemplary Character Award to junior Madelyn Li Nunez; the Commitment to Service Award to Events Committee members juniors Elijah Choi and Elizabeth Chao, and sophomores Emma Lin and Eric Lam; the Tutor Excellence Award to senior Naomi Steinmetz; and the Distinguished Contribution Award to senior David Chen.

After the ceremony, attendees enjoyed snacks and beverages in the atrium to celebrate all of the inductees, award recipients, and ARISTA’s impact over the past year. The reception was hosted by the Parents’ and Alumni Associations, to whom ARISTA extends its sincere gratitude, as well as to Principal Yu, the administration, junior Jerry Qiu who offered his services as a professional photographer right before the event, and the custodial staff for their ongoing support of both this event and the honor society as a whole.

In her address, Irshad’s final message urged members, both new and old, to be bold. “So, as many of you embark on the start of [your] ARISTA journey, I am envious of the time you have with the organization, and am excited to see what you will do with the opportunity. My advice for you would be to tutor as much as you can, volunteer in as many neighborhoods as possible, and to let service influence you as much as you contribute to it.”

IN-HOUSE EVENTS

Open House

By ELLIE MAK

ARISTA members proudly co-lead Stuyvesant's open houses that take place twice a year: once in the fall and once in the spring. Members welcome both prospective and newly accepted students, accompanied by their families, into the school community. Almost 11,000 people came to visit Stuyvesant at the Fall Open House last October, and about 1,000 accepted students and their families visited this March. At the Spring Open House, ARISTA members and Big Sibs warmly greeted incoming students with loud cheers and clapping, creating an atmosphere filled with excitement, curiosity, and energy.

Before each Open House, all tour guides gathered in the theater for a quick briefing. The Big Sib Chairs and ARISTA Executive Council hyped everyone up for the long night ahead and gave last-minute reminders. Here (tinyurl.com/theopenhousemanifesto) is the ultimate guide to the Stuyvesant Open House, used both this year and intended for future years, created by Vice President of Operations Tamiyyah Shafiq—a compilation of

A parent told me at the second open house, “You look happy to be here.”

Shafiq's extensive volunteer experience at Open House since her freshman year. The spring briefing even included an in-person reveal of the next cohort of Big Sib Chairs. Once dismissed, tour guides prepared to lead by cheering and standing in their designated zones, waiting to be assigned groups. Big Sibs dressed in light blue shirts lined up on the second floor near the bridge entrance, while ARISTA members dressed in light purple or navy blue filled the first floor near the main entrance.

Throughout the night, ARISTA and Big Sib members led countless small group tours, typically guiding five to fifteen peo-



ple through the school's many facilities. With so many visitors, most guides ended up leading multiple groups. In some cases, people were split up to lead solo when crowds surged after auditorium sessions concluded. Attendees visited classrooms, science labs, the library, the new hydroponics lab, gymnasiums, the dance studio, and the swimming pool. The trusted A/B/C Tour System, used for multiple years, helped control traffic flow. Guides were split into three color-coded groups, each following a designated route with specific stops and stairways or escalators. Of course, tour guides still made brief detours to share their favorite hidden spots at Stuyvesant!

As groups moved through crowded hallways, ARISTA and Big Sib tour guides shared personal stories and advice. Members from a wide range of extracurricular backgrounds showcased the variety of programs and opportunities the school offers. Along the way, families interacted with representatives from clubs and teams—including Speech and Debate,

continued on page 27

IN-HOUSE EVENTS

Open House

continued from page 26

Robotics, Science Olympiad, and *The Spectator*—and watched performances by the Stuyvesant Theater Community. Many parents also had the opportunity to connect with members of the Parents' Association, hearing directly from current student families. The Student Caucuses hosted several bake sales, and the Student Union held a merchandise sale to give visitors a chance to take home a piece of the Stuyvesant experience.

At both Open Houses this year, I remember being separated from my tour partner and asked to lead tours solo because there were too many visitors. After the first information session in the auditorium ended, I was assigned especially large groups—almost twenty people. To be honest, it was slightly overwhelming at first; I found myself using my outdoor voice a lot and constantly counting heads to make sure I didn't lose anyone in my group. Regardless, they were experiences I would never forget. A parent told me at the second Open House, "You look happy to be here." At first, I felt it was odd, but I later realized how much of an honor it was to share what I love about my school.

Behind the scenes, ARISTA Operations played a vital role. In the days leading up to the event, they printed, folded, and stacked hundreds of pamphlets about Stuyvesant to be handed out at the doors. They posted Instagram reminders for both student volunteers and visiting families. During the event, Operations members stationed themselves at entrances with stacks of pamphlets and helped guide the flow of guests. They took photos throughout the night to incorporate into a social media recap post. At the end of the evening, members set up a line of laptops behind the senior bar for members to check out using the new kiosk-based attendance system. Students searched up their names and took photos, many making silly faces or posing with friends. The system made tracking attendance faster, smoother, more engaging, and far more

accurate than the QR code method of previous years, which was easy to bypass. The change encouraged accountability within members, discouraging them from leaving the event early.

Unfortunately, ARISTA members missed



out on the free pizza tradition this year. It is rumored to have been cut because it made the Big Sibs jealous, but hopefully pizza will return in the future for both ARISTA and Big Sib guides alike.

What made the night truly impactful was the energy and care of those involved. ARISTA members served not only as guides but also presented their best image as Stuyvesant representatives. They answered questions, offered insights, and made each visitor feel welcome to this large, unfamiliar school. Their efforts helped families make informed decisions about their child's future at Stuyvesant. From the cheering at the entrance to the conversations echoing down every escalator, the Open Houses reflected the spirit of a school and ARISTA, built on passion, involvement, and community.

'Late Night, La

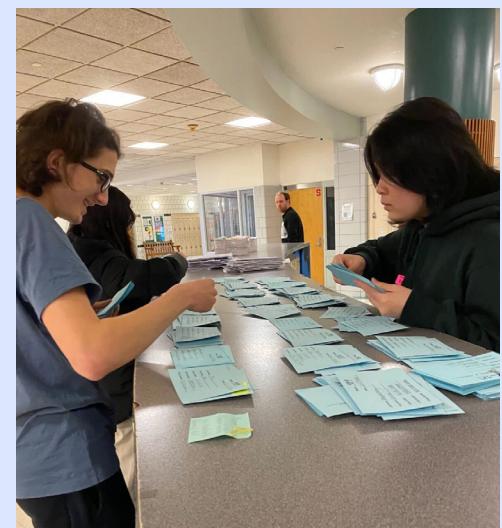
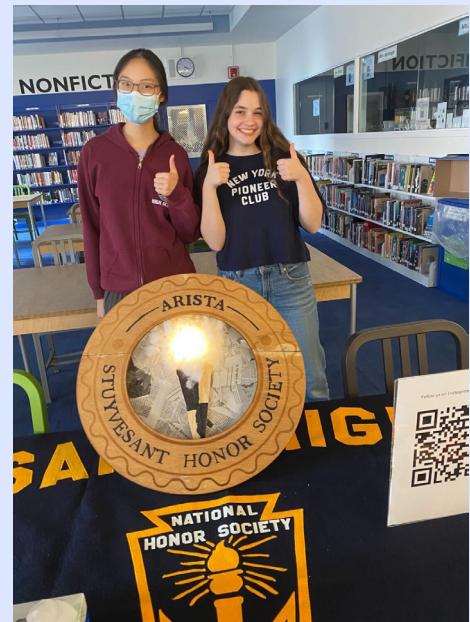
*ARISTA members and Big Sib
the newly imple*



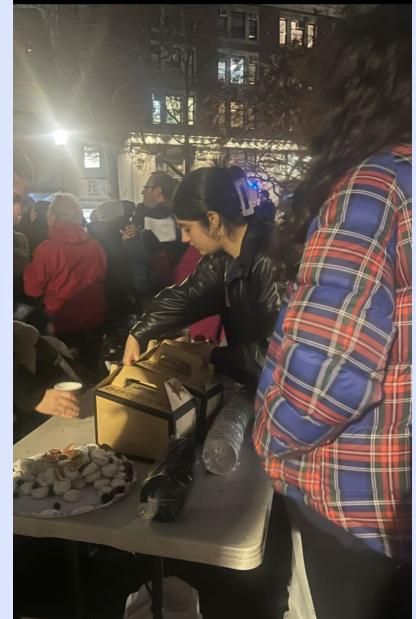
Blasting Energy”

Students check out of Open House at augmented kiosks.

September to November



December to February



March to April



May to June



ON-GOING INITIATIVES

The PISTE Virtual Tutoring Program: A Year of Mentorship and Service

By RUIYIN (AMY) DENG

The Prescod Institute for Sport, Teamwork, and Education (PISTE) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit founded by Olympic fencer and Stuyvesant alumna Nzingha Prescod in 2021. Through low-cost fencing training and academic enrichment, PISTE empowers youth from underserved communities across New York City. One of their primary initiatives—the PISTE Virtual Tutoring Program—provides high-quality academic support at no cost, made possible through partnerships with honor societies at top schools across the city, including Brooklyn Technical, Regis, and Stuyvesant High School, as well as the Packer Collegiate Institute and NYU!

Stuyvesant's ARISTA was honored to be PISTE's anchor partner in this initiative, setting a high standard for engagement,

shared with tutee families, fostering transparency and trust between tutors, tutees, and their families.

The 2024-2025 school year cycle of the PISTE Virtual Tutoring Program concluded on Friday, June 16th, after a transformative year of service—a major pillar of ARISTA—to our local community. Members of the ARISTA Operations Committee played an essential role by proctoring tutoring sessions, managing logistical tasks such as placing tutors and tutees into their designated breakout rooms, monitoring attendance, and serving as liaisons to ensure seamless communication between all members. Their organization behind the scenes was vital to the ongoing success of the program.

Over the course of the year, more than 40 qualified honor society members across

Over the course of the year, more than 40 qualified honor society members across all PISTE partner schools served over 35 tutees, collectively serving 1,000+ hours combined. These numbers reflect new possibilities for tutees, restored confidence and success, and strengthened academic career trajectories.

responsibility, and impact. Our members serve not only as tutors, but as role models both for tutees and for students from other partner schools who were later involved with this program. Each ARISTA member who joined this program committed to fostering a meaningful, one-on-one relationship with a PISTE student. Members who were interested in making a positive impact on disadvantaged students' educational journeys were paired with tutees based on their strengths in the fall to offer two one-hour weekly sessions. Our PISTE tutors were responsible for creating personalized curricula to support each student's academic success, including assistance with core subjects, NYS Regents and standardized test preparation, as well as guidance on hobbies, extracurricular interests, and inspiring long-term educational goals. Weekly progress updates were

all PISTE partner schools served over 35 tutees, collectively serving 1,000+ hours together. These numbers reflect new possibilities for tutees, restored confidence, and strengthened academic career trajectories.

To all of our PISTE tutors and proctors: thank you. Your consistency, empathy, dedication, hard work, and leadership made a profound difference in the lives of students who may not have otherwise had access to individualized support. We have had parents and students alike express their immense gratitude for your support this year. We hope you'll carry this spirit of service forward, whether in the upcoming summer cycle or as a part of next school year's program. Thank you for making a difference.

ON-GOING INITIATIVES

Advanced Leadership Classes

By VERONIKA GULKO

From the very first step every scholar takes at Stuyvesant, ARISTA stretches a hand out to ensure they never have to walk alone. Even though all of our wonderful teachers and staff offer support and guidance, it can still be daunting for students to reach out, so ARISTA takes the initiative to be there for everyone.

This year, an Advanced Leadership class was offered for select incoming freshmen, taught in the fall semester by Principal Seung Yu and members of his cabinet, with assistance from ARISTA tutors. The focus was on helping students develop leadership, study, and personal growth skills, with one standout being a



ARISTA volunteers were there not just as tutors, but as guides through the maze of Stuyvesant life. We brought students to the guidance counselor's school supply drive, showed them where to get late forms and new OMNY cards, and ensured they had someone to turn to whenever things got confusing. Throughout the program, we learned what each student's favorite (and equally most dreaded) class was. We met the study guide makers, the Quizlet warriors, the ones who always had an extra compass to loan for Geometry proofs, and learned about all the hilarious ways they used to memorize endless Global facts.



class reading of *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. In the spring, we transitioned into a classroom just outside Assistant Principal of Social Studies Jennifer Suri's office. Now taught by Ms. Suri, the classes placed more emphasis on helping students navigate Stuyvesant, from learning how to manage their schedules to finding the resources they need and learning how to advocate for themselves.

Throughout the year, ARISTA members worked in breakouts with students from the class to provide personalized help with homework and classwork. By making the first step, ARISTA extends a hand to each student. The partnership builds long-term bonds and fosters a deeper understanding of each student's unique needs.

This year, during Camp Stuy Part 1, several students who completed the Discovery Program and the Advanced Leadership class came to speak with the next cohort of Discovery students and their parents. They shared how impactful ARISTA had been, how their transition into Stuy was guided by all the people who showed up every day during first period and beyond, and most importantly, the kindness of both the teachers and ARISTA tutors who were there for them.

In a school thought to be ultra-competitive and cutthroat, it's important to remember the quiet support system behind it all—the people who make every student's journey through Stuy just a little brighter.

ARISTA extends a huge thank you to all the students, tutors, teachers, and most of all, Ms. Suri, who made this all possible.

” ARISTA tutoring allowed me to connect with a great tutor who gave me amazing advice on my Freshman Comp papers. I left tutoring sessions with wonderful insight and great improvements. She really helped me improve and get my writing skills to where they are now.

— Olivia Liu, ‘28

EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

9 Million Reasons

By JOANNE HWANG

Along Crescent Street in Long Island City, hundreds of families—many of them immigrants—are lined up before doors open, beckoning them to receive weekly meals from the 9 Million Reasons Pantry. Inside, past the garage and into the pantry, donations from local restaurants and stores stack into teetering towers as volunteers rush to unpack and transport food to the front.

9 Million Reasons (9MR) is one of ARISTA's long-term partnerships. Introduced and led by senior and Events Committee member Grace Rhee, the work done by volunteers every Saturday is invaluable to supporting the Long Island City community. However, this work wouldn't be possible without the dedication and commitment of these volunteers.



The pantry opens at 8:30 a.m. every Saturday, and ARISTA volunteers are expected to be present by 8:45 a.m.. In the fifteen minutes before doors open to the community, volunteers sort through vegetables, drinks, meats, and other goods, or help record the names of individuals waiting in line. Once the doors open, it becomes a race to distribute as much food as possible to as many people as possible.

To accommodate the neighborhood's diverse demographics, Spanish-speaking volunteers record the information for families waiting in line. Volunteers working the front work quickly to fill the bags with a balanced variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, and snacks. As one of the more tedious jobs, working the front also entails constant communication, delegation, and efficiency. Meanwhile, others shift in and out of the back with fresh assortments of foods to distribute. In the back, volunteers

transfer produce from large boxes to manageable crates, recycle used boxes, and sort through the produce to remove any spoiled food.

Rhee first discovered 9MR in her sophomore year as a member of the Events Committee. "When I went for the first time, it was such a bright and amazing community," Rhee commented. "One of my favorite parts of 9MR was volunteering with friends. The food pantry became a way for me to socialize with people beyond the school atmosphere." Bonding went beyond ARISTA members. Stuyvesant students—both inside and outside of ARISTA—help lead NYC Teens for 9MR, an organization that extends these opportunities for all students across different schools, allowing them to work with people from different cultures and backgrounds. Through this work, ARISTA service extends beyond the school and traditional responsibilities, taking the initiative to improve and support 9MR.

Volunteering at 9MR doesn't come without its challenges. Student volunteers often face issues such as a lack of cleanliness or unclear instructions.. While the pantry is busiest near holiday seasons, there are also days when volunteers have fewer tasks to fulfill. In addition, communication with 9MR organizers can be difficult, as priorities shift between breaking down boxes, transporting crates of produce, and other tasks. However, ARISTA members persist. Their adaptivity and commitment to serving the community transcend any problems that may arise.

Additionally, ARISTA's work at 9MR isn't just gratifying for the organization but also ARISTA members. "It's not about the hours," said junior and ARISTA member Ryan Yang. "It's about the people you meet. By serving people, you learn [that] no one is invisible." Through service, students and members of diverse communities form friendships and bonds. "I'm so grateful to have 9MR as a critical part of my high school experience. It really opened my eyes to what ARISTA's role in society is," said Rhee. That role is one of active engagement, driven by a genuine desire to create positive change and uplift communities.

At 9MR, ARISTA exemplifies leadership, character, and service, as an early-morning trip to Queens transforms into an opportunity to make a lasting impact. Students aren't just fulfilling their credits; they are taking initiative in their communities and leading other volunteers with spirit. Through coordinating with pantry managers, answering questions, or simply being an impactful presence, ARISTA members gain a sense of belonging and responsibility with each task they take on at the food pantry.

EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

Saturday Mornings of Service with Margaret Tietz

By RUIYIN (AMY) DENG

The Margaret Tietz Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, a nonprofit healthcare facility located in Jamaica Hills, Queens, was founded in 1971 to serve Holocaust survivors. Over the years, it has expanded its mission to provide care for the broader local Jewish community. In 2023, it became one of ARISTA's long-term part-

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, numerous students volunteered for this wonderful community during bimonthly Saturday morning sessions.

nerships, initiated by Events Committee member Selina Lee, to connect ARISTA with meaningful volunteer work and foster meaningful relationships with fellow volunteers. This partnership also introduced members to diverse career paths in healthcare, including nursing, physical therapy, and recreational therapy.

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, numerous volunteers interested in healthcare gained hands-on experience supporting patients by assisting them during bimonthly Saturday morning physical therapy sessions. "My most memorable moments would be teaching the new volunteers how to use a wheelchair properly and guiding them around the nursing home. I had a lot of fun volunteering with one of my friends, Sabrina, who also volunteered at Margaret Tietz over the summer and came back throughout the school year for the ARISTA events. It was nice to see returning volunteers," shared Lee.

ARISTA members assisted in various departments, including physical therapy, recreation, and nursing. Their wide range of responsibilities included setting up events, escorting residents to the garden, and transporting patients to physical therapy. A key role for the volunteers was to ensure residents arrived at their physical therapy sessions on time—a responsibility that previously fell on the physical therapists themselves. This impactful change significantly reduced the wait times for patients. Volunteers also supported the therapists by counting exercise repetitions and positioning the wheelchairs behind patients during walking exercises to ensure safety. Beyond logistical support, ARISTA volunteers provided companionship by engaging patients in thoughtful conversations about high school life and future career aspirations.

Our ARISTA volunteers played an instrumental role in bridging the gap between the youth and elder communities

ARISTA members worked in various departments, including physical therapy, recreation, and nursing, gaining firsthand experience in different areas of the healthcare field.

through their compassion, commitment, and ability to form intergenerational connections. This long-term partnership reflected three of ARISTA's core pillars: service through devoted community involvement, character through empathy, and leadership through initiative.

EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

St. Paul's Pantry Packing Nights



By VERONIKA GULKO

Hoping to fulfill their hours, many members tend to overlook the short one-hour events. However, during the Monday night Pantry Packing sessions at St. Paul's Church, I found the most welcoming community of ARISTA members and outside volunteers alike. What makes this event so special is the atmosphere of love and trust—people welcome strangers into their space with open arms, united by the shared desire to help those in need. I've met people from all walks of life: girls just shy of 20 years old completing their service residency at the church, aspiring tech gurus seeking like-minded friends, and many others.

When I first arrived, it was intimidating. Everyone seemed to know each other, like a big family, and I felt like an outsider, unsure if I was claiming someone's spot on the couch or about to fumble for the light switch in the bathroom.

The night consists mainly of two stages: first, transporting materials from the shed—hidden in a beautiful garden behind the church—into the official packing room, which even has an alcove for a band to play on special occasions. Once all the food is laid out on the tables, volunteers split into two roles. Some work on standard bags, where each person places the same tuna cans and oatmeal packets into each bag in a friendly, assembly-line rhythm. Oth-

ers work on the miscellaneous side, filling bags with treats like Vitamin Water or Fruit by the Foot. In both situations, volunteers are often found in random positions next to strangers and become close partners from the hour-long synchronization. Although this part does seem a bit mechanical, the atmosphere is anything but. The room is full of chatter, an overwhelming backlog of bags, and a common commissary over the unopenable boxes and a sole rusty box cutter.



As quickly as my initial anxiety set in, it melted away with Daisy's contagious joy. Thank you to junior and Events Committee member Elizabeth Chao, and to all those whose dedication makes every volunteer feel seen, welcomed, and appreciated.

EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

Inform Your Community



By ERIC LAM

Hidden seven floors above a deli at 165 William Street, Inform Your Community's location is arguably one of the hardest for ARISTA volunteers to find on their first time volunteering. Nonetheless, just one volunteering session with Inform Your Community will make you eager to sign up again. Inform Your Community is a nonprofit organization that strives to inform as many people as possible about important topics and social problems through fun, accessible, and meaningful events. Since my first ARISTA event with Inform Your Community on October 11 last year, volunteering with this phenomenal nonprofit has become an essential part of my life.

Volunteering at Inform Your Community looks different from other ARISTA events. Most of our work involves preparing materials and keeping events running smoothly behind the scenes, yet it is no less impactful and meaningful. Most of the organization's events center around special craft kits that participants receive for free to use in an interactive activity during the event. ARISTA members have been critical in helping Inform Your Community execute their events by consistently assembling and preparing the kits participants need. Nearly every Friday, after school from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., anywhere from three to eight volunteers help assemble and organize hundreds of different kits, ensuring the organization can deliver these high-quality craft kits on time.

One of my absolute favorite aspects about working with Inform Your Community is that each time we volunteer, our tasks are always unique and interesting, yet familiar at the same time. Every kit we make connects to one of the many topics Inform Your Community works to teach others about. Tasks can range from pouring glue into mini containers, cutting and sorting colored paper, to assembling materials for mini plant pots and putting

stickers on envelopes. As a result, while we are always making a kit, the theme and specific tasks we do to fulfill Inform Your Community's various events are always changing and very exciting.

This year, we've expanded the variety of work ARISTA volunteers do at Inform Your Community by also helping with their in-person events, such as the annual Inform Your Community Gala, an event held to raise money for providing kits and operational expenses. 16 ARISTA members volunteered at this four-hour-long event, helping set up tables and furniture, organizing raffle baskets, and handling logistical tasks to ensure its success. ARISTA has also begun supporting Inform Your Community's outreach efforts by hosting sessions to create marketing ideas, online posts, and reels for the organization.

Inform Your Community and ARISTA have had a strong, long-standing partnership, and the impact ARISTA volunteers have had on the nonprofit has been consistently recognized by Stacey Kurylo, CEO of Inform Your Community. Kurylo, who is also a college professor, always offers guidance on college admissions and academics to any ARISTA volunteers at Inform Your Community. She also offers pizza to volunteers after every volunteering session as a gesture of appreciation for the work of the volunteers.



Volunteering with Inform Your Community through ARISTA has not only given fellow ARISTA members and me the chance to make a real impact, but has also introduced us to a supportive community of passionate changemakers. Through every session, I've gained a deeper appreciation for the power of community-based organizations and service. Inform Your Community isn't just a meaningful place to volunteer, but also a place to learn, grow, and be inspired. And while the elevator ride to the eighth floor may be painfully slow, ARISTA has been the bridge that makes reaching this opportunity possible for students like me.

EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

Service Nights with MoMath

By AMANI KAUSHAL

Winding down from a hectic weekday, New Yorkers of all ages—from curious toddlers to enthusiastic senior citizens—gather for a night of MoMath magic. Beyond its literal mathematics magic show titled *Game On!*, the museum offers many immersive, insightful, and unique events that delve deeper into the many facets of mathematics. With every Family Friday filled with hands-on crafts, every Encounters event exploring overlooked fields of study, every documentary screening, and every art exhibition, I feel increasingly

connected to the museum's welcoming and inquisitive community. Volunteering at Momath has not only broadened my understanding of math beyond a standard scope but has also taught me to become involved and work collaboratively in an atmosphere conducive to learning.

For ARISTA volunteers, a typical MoMath event begins around 5:00 p.m. by signing in on the volunteer sheet, walking past the museum's shop down a flight of stairs, taking two rights, and dropping off any belongings in the staff break room. After



settling in, the group of volunteers—ranging anywhere from two to ten people, depending on the event—head back up towards the museum exhibitions for further instructions. Guided by staff in bright yellow shirts, ARISTA volunteers set up chairs and tables, move exhibits, set up food and banners, and prepare other important items. Once the space is ready, the event opens to the public, and volunteers

Officially opening its doors in 2012, the National Museum of Mathematics was, at the time, the only museum in North America dedicated solely to mathematics. Following the closing of the Goudreau Museum in Long Island, many saw the need to widen the scope of mathemat-

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EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

Service Nights with MoMath

continued from page 41

may choose to watch or participate in the main activity, or sit in the break room. Once guests begin to exit the museum, ARISTA volunteers assist in stacking chairs, resetting museum exhibits, managing trash, and so forth. From time to time, they will be asked to directly assist visitors during the actual events, and may also encounter volunteers from other schools.

As for the actual events our ARISTA volunteers support, MoMath offers a diverse array of activities that explore unique areas of mathematics. They have recurring events, such as Family Fridays, which include a presentation or craft activity that families can work on together, and MoMath Encounters, which tackle and break down complex concepts. Family Fridays often serve cookies and hot chocolate to appeal to younger visitors, bringing a stronger sense of warmth to the event itself. Beyond its regular activities, MoMath holds mathematical art galleries, competitions, festivals, shows, screenings, and so forth. These are less frequent but just as exciting—presenters guide the audience through each topic, never failing to convey their passion! On Saturday, July 12, the museum held its annual festival in Downtown Manhattan, bringing its magic to the location through interactive activities and original exhibits, mazes, and puzzles. I especially enjoyed my time volunteering at this event: I got to work directly with many children and families, and met volunteers from all around the city. Moreover, I deeply value how I've learned to solve many MoMath puzzles, which I would not have otherwise cared as much to figure out.

Beyond the apparent fun and learning experience that comes with volunteering at MoMath through ARISTA, the deeper lessons of community, which I have been able to carry with me as a product, stand out most. These events go beyond stacking just a few chairs—every interaction with a new person has proved meaningful. While volunteering with a friend at their

magic show, *Game On!*, we were drawn in by presenter Stevie Sherman's claim on the screen: "I can read your mind". Despite this event being intended for children ages 6-11, we found ourselves going up to Sherman, asking to see this display ourselves. Before we knew it, we had seen at least five new tricks, using rubber ties and cards, and even our electronic devices. We even cracked some of these tricks and decided to play them back on him! He was extremely friendly and helped us think creatively. I recall that on a separate day, I had donated blood and felt unwell. Noticing this, a worker offered me five dollars to go buy myself a Snapple. Seeing how quickly the MoMath community takes us ARISTA volunteers in, showing continuous displays of kindness while encouraging us to think and incorporate ourselves into each activity, has been the most impactful part of my volunteering



journey here.

Ultimately, volunteering at MoMath has not only deepened my understanding and appreciation for the breadth of mathematics but also grounded me in a community that intersects collaboration, curiosity, and warmth.

EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

It's My Park!

By EMMA LIN

When walking into McKinley, Leif Ericson, or Sunset Park between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on a weekend, the first thing you'll notice isn't the breeze or the birds, but the line of volunteers signing in and picking up their tools. Ever since October 6, 2024, when I hosted my first park cleanup, I've fallen in love with these events—not just because of their simplicity, but for the community they foster and the visible impact they create.



The NYC Service Park Cleanups aren't just open to ARISTA volunteers, but also to individuals from other schools and communities, bringing together a diverse mix of people. Despite their different backgrounds, the volunteers work together to pick up trash and leaves throughout the parks. It's common to see one person holding open the trash bag while another carefully places collected litter inside, or pairs sweeping together—one person guiding the broom and the other following behind with the dustpan.

One of my favorite aspects of the cleanups is that they aren't overly laborious, allowing for a more relaxed and social atmosphere. While volunteers remain focused on the task at hand, there are plenty of opportunities for conversation as they walk from section to section, quickly filling the trash bags. These moments have given me the chance to connect with ARISTA members I might not have interacted with otherwise, especially those not in my grade. The flexibility of these events also allows volunteers to work at their own pace. Whether someone prefers quietly filling a trash bag in a corner or with a large group, there's room for everyone to contribute in their own way.

Since the park cleanups take place outdoors, the tasks vary depending on the weather and season. In the early months of the school year

and spring, volunteers typically use grabbers to collect visible litter such as gum wrappers, cigarette butts, and bottles. In the fall, rakes, brooms, and dustpans are used to rake leaves and sweep up trash. My personal favorite is the winter task: shoveling snow. Although the weather isn't ideal during this season, it's still a rewarding and surprisingly fun experience. There's something about carving clean paths through a fresh layer of snow that feels both productive and peaceful. However, safety is always a priority, so the event is canceled with prior notice if weather conditions become too hazardous.

For most volunteers, the rewarding part of these events comes at the end, when they can see the fruits of their labor: piles of trash bags neatly stacked on the corner of the sidewalk and a beautiful, trash-free park. However, our involvement in the community doesn't end there. Because of our ongoing volunteer efforts, we were invited to assist with other local events, namely the Annual Easter Day Celebration. At the event, ARISTA members worked in different sectors, helping with activities such as stage setup, games, arts and crafts, and the egg hunt. They were also able to interact with the community and enjoy cultural performances.

Much like how plants thrive with sunlight and water, each park cleanup and community event offers ARISTA members an opportunity to grow—allowing them to bloom and serve as role models for our four pillars. These events help members branch out beyond their usual circles, stay rooted in their communities, and



spring into action to improve both the environment and the well-being of those around them. It's through consistently showing up, time after time, that members make lasting impacts—and for that, we have ARISTA and NYC Service to thank.

” ARISTA is a representation of the generosity and support the Stuyvesant community has, and proves that students don’t just spend their time focusing on their own futures, but on improving others’.

—Sonam Kanaujia

“The Meaning and Significance of ARISTA to Freshmen at Stuyvesant”, pg. 34

” If there is anything Stuyvesant can learn from John Jay’s profound words, it is that ARISTA doesn’t create good people; it takes the good they already have in themselves and transforms it into a gift using the confidence ARISTA fosters and the opportunities it provides, building them up to be the best version of themselves.

—Amber Yu and Epsilita Arien

“Alumni Profiles: John Jay Wang”, pg. 45

STUDENT VOICES

A Letter To ARISTA's Newest & Future Leaders

By LAIBA SIDU

Every ARISTA member begins the same way: maybe the idea of an honor society caught your attention, or you were passionate about making an impact in your community. But what transforms you into a leader is dedicating yourself and choosing to go beyond merely checking off your new requirements.

Each year ARISTA welcomes new leaders into its community of leadership, service, and growth, emphasizing scholarship, leadership, service, and character. However, being an ARISTA member goes deeper than just joining—it is an honor and a responsibility to model what a leader should look like and to carry our legacy forward. Alexa Seltzer (Class of 2025) emphasizes, “Get involved with ARISTA and do more than just completing the requirements.” She describes how you should find one recurring event you deeply connect with and contribute to what speaks to you. She also advises making connections with those you work with, since that can make your experience feel more personal and enjoyable. Alexa describes ARISTA as “hard work,” but also “rewarding,” reminding us that every minute we dedicate to our community will pay off. She recalls how she joined her junior year, and how her experience grew

richer as she became more connected to the service aspect, tutoring and volunteering simply because she enjoyed the people she was with and the community she was serving. At the same time, she warns against procrastination, encouraging members to complete their credits in a timely manner.

Tamiyyah Shafiq, Vice President of Operations, also underscores the importance of commitment: “ARISTA has so many different ways to get involved, so really find what catches your interest and fully apply yourself to it, whether that is PISTE or a specific event.” She strongly believes that an ARISTA leader should find a niche they enjoy and truly go above and beyond in applying themselves to it. Both Alexa and Tamiyyah remind us that ARISTA is not only about gaining hours but about dedicating ourselves and forming communities we cherish.

So, to ARISTA’s newest and future leaders: step into your role with open hands, prepare to build connections, tutor students, volunteer, and fully commit to what inspires you—but most importantly, build memories and relationships you will look back on even years later. Welcome not just to ARISTA, but to a community of dedicated leaders who serve, grow, and thrive together.

Sidu asked members to describe ARISTA in three words.

“Pursuit For Knowledge”
—Maisha Alam

“Leadership, Service, and Experience”
—Frieda Kuhlmann

“Students Helping Students”
—Mitali Jhaveri

“Leadership, Integrity, Passion”
—Khosiyat Kabilova

“Community, Learning, Service” —Amrit Das

“Collaboration, Leadership, and Helpful” —Rohail Shah

“Prestigious, Academic, Leadership” —Aulinda Wei

“Leadership, Empathy, Service”
—Evan Goodman

“Impactful, Community, Leadership” —Sakina Raza

“Building a Community”
—Ia Sofocleous

“Aspiring, Prestigious, and Rewarding”
—Wendy Wang

“Leadership, Community, Collaboration” —Nara Kong

“Community, Drive, Example” —Anya Heller

“Commitment, Leadership, Service” —Rachel Hong

“Helpful, Giving, and Welcoming”
—Rai Chaudhry

“Strength Through Service”
—Laiba Sidu

“Inspirational Role Model”
—Sitong Jiang

“Dedicated, Generous, Committed”
—Hifza Kaleem

“Inspiring, Compassionate, and Dedicated” —Madelyn Nunez

“Formal, High-expectations, Obedient” —Wenni Lu

“Aspirational, Involved, Collaborative” —Angelina Wong

STUDENT VOICES

The Meaning and Significance of ARISTA to Freshmen at Stuyvesant

By SONAM KANAUJIA

The ARISTA Honor Society is the one-stop shop for all things academic. ARISTA provides support and guidance for students who need extra help in the overwhelming and competitive community of Stuyvesant High School. From study materials for APs to one-on-one peer tutoring, ARISTA has it all and is particularly helpful for freshmen. Starting at Stuyvesant can make students feel like they are drowning in a sea of responsibilities and commitments that can arise. Fortunately, ARISTA serves as a lifeboat, helping students find light at the end of their challenging beginnings.

“It was beautiful to see how close-knit everyone was, how genuinely there for each other the people were, and how everyone was always willing to help someone else out.”

—Epshita Arien

Several rising sophomores agree that ARISTA was crucial in helping them manage stress. Alma Esguerra expressed her gratitude for ARISTA when she met her tutor for the first time: “I had been struggling in Geometry up to that point, and getting the help that I needed was very reassuring—especially knowing that I was not the only one struggling as well.” ARISTA’s one-on-one tutoring allows students to reach out for help without feeling the pressure of the large Stuyvesant community. It offers a personal experience that helps freshmen not only receive direct attention, but also guidance and bonds with tutors that can last a lifetime. Angelina Lee similarly shared how, after being less social during her first semester at Stuyvesant, “it helped to be able to talk to my tutors.”

Alongside the wealth of resources ARISTA provides, it holds a special place in the hearts of many who see it as a safe space. ARISTA represents the generosity and support the Stuyvesant community offers, proving that students don’t just focus on their own futures, but also on improving others. Epshita Arien reflected, “When I started at Stuyvesant and learned about ARISTA, I thought it was beautiful to see how close-knit everyone was, how genuinely there for each other the people were, and how everyone was always willing to help someone else out.” Arien’s words emphasize the kindness present in ARISTA and the importance of uplifting others for no other reason than to help them.

To me, ARISTA symbolizes citizenship, support, and guidance. When I, Sonam Kanaujia, struggled for months after starting at Stuyvesant, my ARISTA tutor painted a picture of a successful future, which motivated me and pulled me out of the hole I was so desperately stuck in. My tutor showed me there was an end to my hard times, and made it clear they would help me get there. After countless unrecorded hours of service and answering my never-ending questions regarding every little detail of class material, my tutor not only helped me earn a 5 on my AP exam, but also became my role model. During our sessions, I always felt that one day, I would be where my tutor was—and today, I am. I am a member of ARISTA and will tutor incoming Freshmen in the 2025-2026 school year. ARISTA gave me a sense of belonging at Stuyvesant, not only as an honor society but also, after being inducted, as a finish line where I finally felt I had overcome the difficulties I had adjusting to the school.

In essence, ARISTA grounds freshmen and acts as a shoulder to lean on, no matter what exam or rough time they might have to get through. Academically, socially, and mentally, ARISTA enlightens and inspires students to be the best versions of themselves. It is more than a society for freshmen—it is a group of intelligent, gracious, patient, and disciplined students who devote themselves to volunteering, mentoring, and creating positive change in their community.

STUDENT VOICES

What They Don't Tell You About ARISTA's Peer Tutoring Service

By JERRY QIU

Known to many, ARISTA offers one-on-one peer tutoring accessible to all students. Those in search of assistance with a class project or reviewing for an upcoming test can create an account on the ARISTA website and submit a tutoring request to be paired with an upperclassman, who will then reach out to coordinate a time that suits both parties.

During my first year in ARISTA, I had the pleasure of working with several underclassmen, tutoring them in a variety of subjects ranging from French and Computer Science to Physics and AP Music Theory. But beyond the academics, I had the opportunity to build lasting connections with my tutees—many of whom I stayed in touch with long after the initial session.

I've never approached tutoring as a quota to fill; instead, I see each session as an opportunity to genuinely connect with others and make a difference. My personal "policy" when claiming tutoring requests has always been to treat my tutees as potential friends, not just students. Rather than maintaining a formal tutor-tutee dynamic, I aim to go beyond the basic "contract" by creating an open and welcoming space. After each first meeting, I make it a point to let them know they can reach out to me at any time—whether they need help with schoolwork or simply want someone to talk to. My goal is to leave a lasting impression so my tutees feel encouraged to seek support again, academically or otherwise.

One of the most memorable experiences I had was with a student who originally reached out for help with Computer Science. After our first meeting, I encouraged her to email me if she ever needed any kind of support. Over the course of the year, we continued to meet regularly—reviewing code together, debugging assign-

ments, and even chatting about electives and general life at Stuy. It became not just a tutoring gig, but a friendship in the making.

Another student who frequently used ARISTA's peer tutoring service told me they appreciated being able to "receive personalized support and take as much time as needed to understand any specifics," especially when preparing for quizzes or tests. "Hands-on support with tackling specific practice problems or code has been the most productive for me when signing up for an ARISTA tutor," they added.

However, they also noted that the experience can depend heavily on how clearly a student communicates their needs: "There have been instances where I've signed up for an ARISTA tutor and they haven't helped at all and those circumstances occurred when there wasn't something specific that I provided us to work on." While the quality of a session can vary, when both tutor and tutee come prepared, the impact is undeniable.

My tutees' experiences reflect the very heart of what I aim to bring to each session: not just academic help, but support that feels personal and meaningful. One student shared, "My experience with Jerry as my ARISTA tutor was very good. He helped me tutor French by discussing ideas we revealed in class. I appreciated that I was able to get a review and he helped me prepare for the exam. The tutoring helped me a lot because I was able to understand what to review for the test and he was able to answer a lot of questions I had problems with."

These are the parts they don't always tell you about ARISTA's peer tutoring—the friendships formed, the support offered, and the moments that go far beyond just schoolwork.

” Don’t be too scared to utilize this tutoring, it took me a while to sign up.

—Anonymous

” It was very helpful to have a review for my next test and the [ARISTA] tutor was very adaptive.

—Anonymous

2024-2025 Members

Inductees

COMMITTEE

YANA BIJOOR
ELIJAH CHOI
RUIYIN DENG
SHIBAO HUANG
AMANI KAUSHAL
ERIC LAM
HYUNSEO LEE
ALAN LIANG
EMMA LIN
RAYMOND LIN
ELLIE MAK
EMMA MUSYUK
JOHN NAN
ISABEL NOH
CHLOE TAM
ELIAS XU
MUFEI YU

GENERAL

ADITYA ANAND
STELLA ANDERSON
AARYA

BALAKRISHNAN
STEFAN BROGE
RAYAN CAPANU
TONY CHEN
SOPHIA CHEN
YEEUN CHOI
AMRIT DAS
YONATAN DAVID
RUIYIN DENG
MAEGAN DIEP
CHENMING FANG
EVAN GOODMAN
DANIELLA HANDARI
ARTHUR HE
REBECCA HE
GARY HUANG
MOHAMMAD ISLAM
MONON ISLAM
GRANT IZZETT
SOPHIA JIN
HIFZA KALEEM
SAEROM KIM
LOURDES

KRETSULA
SCARLETT KUIT
CARTER KUO
VINCENT LAM
KYLE LEE
VANNA LEI
EMILY LI
ANGEL LI
CELISE LIN
DARREN LIN
ARIANA LIN
JOHNNY LIN
EVELYN LIU
DYLAN LONSK
RHEA MALHOTRA
HANNAH MOON
ADRIAN
MURGESCU
ALWIN NG
JIYA PATEL
PARI PATNI
JERRY QIU
SAKINA RAZA

AMELIE RHEW
NIKHIL SETHI
ANOUSHKA SHAH
NICOLE
SHTEYNBERG
GERVITA SINGH
IA SOFOCLEOUS
NAOMI STEINMETZ
SAMUEL SUNKO
KEN WAKIDA
RACHEL WANG
CHRISTOPHER
WONG
ANGELINA WONG
EVAN WONG
ELLEN WRIGHT
JING YING WU
RYAN YANG
KANCHANOK
ZHANG
ANNA ZHENG

Current Members

COMMITTEE

ELIZABETH CHAO
ELIZABETH CHEN
VINCENT CHEN
MUNA FARUQI
MADELINE GOODWIN
VERONIKA GULKO
JOANNE HWANG
ANNA LAU
SELINA LEE
GRACE RHEE
ANKITA SAHA
ROHAN SEN
ARUNA
VAITHILINGAM
HAN XIAO
EILEEN XU

GENERAL

THOMAS ALFRED
RAAITA ANWAR
TALIA ARCASOY
ANTONIETTA BAERGA
DANIA BRESSLER

OTTO BUFF
JESSIE CHAN
ALAN CHAN
DAVID CHEN
CHRISTOPHER CHOE
ZOE CHUN
MASON CHUNG
RICHIE DELGADO
ARIELLE EBER
BRIANNA FOONG
DEVON FUNG
ROSE GEEN
JOSEPHINE
GUNAWAN
KARINA GUPTA
DALE HELLER
YING WEN HUANG
GEOFFREY HUANG
GARY JIANG
NIKI JIANG
SASHA KIRBY
CLYDE KONTY
BRAMINDER KUMAR
TRISHA KUMAR

MEGAN KWOK
EUGENE LAM
YUNA LEE
COLLIN LIANG
TABITHA LIN
RYAN LIN
LEANNA LIN
LUCIA LIU
VIVY LIU
VERA MAGANOV
HELEN MANCINI
ANGELA MASHURIAN
ALEXIA MATSKEVICH
AENEAS MERCHANT
ORI MERTELSTEIN
HONORA MURATORI
GRACE NA
AMELIA NG
MADELYN NUÑEZ
ALYSSA OH
DUNCAN PARK
KAILEY POON
KAI RUSSELL
MULLIKA SAHA

SOMERSET
SEIDENBERG
ALEXA SELTZER
JAI SHAH
YOONHA SHIM
CHI CHENG SIT
KAILEEN SO
JENNY TAN
WINIFRED
THOMPSON
ADRIAN TURKEDJIEV
JOHN JAY WANG
LEONNA WANG
NIAMH WERNER
SABRINA XU
CONNOR YAU
JOSEPHINE YOO
JAYDEN ZHANG
PHILIP ZHANG
ANNA ZHENG
CHUER ZHONG
RAYEN ZHOU
AMY ZHOU
BIN LIN ZHOU

2025-2026 Inductees

MAX ABRAHAM
 REBEKAH ABRAHAM
 MAISHA ALAM
 ALLISON AMON
 NICOLAS ANSORGE
 BLAKE APPELBAUM
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 CAITLEEN ZHENG

” Strive to use the time in high school to not only work on yourself and your studies, but to work on improving your school and the people around you.

Wearing my ARISTA t-shirt, making my early coffee runs, and holding the door for an elder or a mother with a stroller has taught me that when you represent yourself in public, you're not only carrying your own reputation, but the reputation of Stuyvesant and your community as well.

—John Jay Wang, '25

ALUMNI PROFILES

Shwetlana Jha



By STELLA PAPADAMIANOS

Like most ARISTA members, Shwetlana “Lana” Jha joined ARISTA her sophomore year, because she wanted to serve Stuyvesant and the NYC community. She also admired the four pillars that ARISTA stands for, knowing that helping others would allow her an opportunity to grow herself. Thus, she set goals for herself when she joined: growing her personality and working on her organization skills.

A key takeaway for her was “you’ll get out as much as you put in.” She always felt fulfilled when she saw the impact she made after each volunteering activity, and later gained leadership roles because of her dedication. She was proud of these roles because they allowed her to give back to ARISTA, and she did not take for granted the opportunities ARISTA offered her.

One of her highlights of ARISTA was the community she built during her time serving. Not only did she build relationships with fellow ARISTA members, but she engaged with people from outside

organizations. Many of these relationships have lasted past her time in ARISTA, and they have all shaped her as a person.

Of course, Jha has been challenged by ARISTA during her time serving. What she recalls to be her biggest challenge was receiving her VP of Web Development role. At the time, she did not have much CS experience nor Web development committee experience. She spent her summer learning about the framework and familiarizing herself with the many files. Overall, she considers this a valuable experience she is grateful to have been given.

Jha recognizes all that ARISTA does. It provides a plethora of tutoring services to NYC students, especially to Stuyvesant students. ARISTA members also volunteer in services that help people in need of food, clothing, and other necessities. Her favorite event was 9 million reasons in which members organized food pantries, clothing donations, and necessities. She also acknowledges that ARISTA has helped her become a compassionate person. It has also given her leadership skills for a lifetime.

ARISTA has inspired Jha to continue her efforts past her time in high school. She continues her passion of volunteering during her studies at Yale. She has joined the Girls in Science organization which volunteers at local middle schools to teach and encourage students to pursue STEM.

Jha’s hard work and dedication helped many members of our community, while also rewarding her with the feeling of accomplishment as well as improved social and organizational skills. She truly demonstrates how joining ARISTA is a fulfilling experience, and is an exemplar of how one should join ARISTA with the intent of service; the only way to improve yourself through ARISTA is through your work and dedication to others.

ALUMNI PROFILES

Charles Kuang

By MUFEI YU

Even after Stuyvesant students bid farewell to the school following their four years as students, many return as alumni to support future generations through donations, career guidance, and mentoring. Perhaps the most notable way former students have given back to their high school community, however, is by returning not only as alumni, but as teachers. Educating students who sit in the same seats you once did offers a unique perspective, allowing you to understand the struggles on both sides and reconsider whether your hatred for your Physics teacher was as justifiable as you previously thought.

That's the path Charles Kuang, a Stuyvesant High School alumnus of the class of 2009, took after graduating with a degree in biology at Duke University and in education at Pace University. After leading ARISTA as the society's president during his senior year, Kuang made his reappearance at Stuyvesant leading the computer science classes during the 2017-2018 academic year. Today, he is involved with the Robin Hood foundation, manages his startup, and will be serving on the Stuyvesant High School Alumni Association's Junior Leadership Council for the next school year.

Although Kuang's presidency took place over two decades ago, he still remembers and reflects on his time in ARISTA. The organization connected him with opportunities throughout the cities and pushed him to take action outside of his comfort zone, illustrating ARISTA's impact on fostering confidence and initiative in its members. When asked about how service played a role in his life, Kuang highlights the time he spent volunteering at an orphanage in India. The two months he had there exposed him to the social impact of helping communities in need, something he hopes students can take away from their experience as members in ARISTA. "[It's] hard for young people to know who they are, but it's a process of figuring it out," Kuang said.

With the knowledge and lessons learned from his time in the society, Kuang continues the legacy of ARISTA to this day through his startup, Shelley. As a student who had experienced the specialized high school admissions process, he initially focused the startup on preparation for the SHSAT. Over time, it transformed into an educational platform with the purpose of eliminating cost disparities and bridging the divide. To aid with reading comprehension, Kuang's platform capitalizes on AI and uses it to generate personalized reading passages. During the development of it, he interviewed a network of low-income New York residents in order to understand their lives and thinking processes.

By combining his technical skills with the values instilled in him through Stuyvesant, Kuang creates tools that make education more accessible and not bound by costs. When asked how being a part of the community has shaped who he is, he explains that besides the boost to his college application, ARISTA has improved his leadership, his ability to organize initiatives, and made him realize that projects should have longer lives than one year. While Kuang's teachers, such as Mr. O'Malley—one of Stuyvesant's AP Chemistry teachers—served as his role model; his contributions to ARISTA, Stuyvesant, and society make him a role model to inspire the future leaders of our honor society in a beautiful full circle moment.

ALUMNI PROFILES

Faria Lorin



By AMBER YU
and EPSHITA ARIEN

Adjusting to that shift from countless all-nighters studying for tests to paving a path into the real world and making a change—that's a skill countless students foster through Stuyvesant's ARISTA Honors Society. While most students struggle with venturing into new paths—especially at New York City's most academically demanding school, where grades feel like a top priority over real-life skills—ARISTA grants its members the opportunity to break out of their shell and actively engage in their community, connecting with valuable friends in the process. Former ARISTA member and current Stony Brook University student, Faria Lorin, was kind enough to share her personal experiences from her time as an ARISTA member.

Lorin, Stuyvesant graduate of 2022, participated in a variety of clubs such as Key Club, Red Cross, and Clay Club. She expresses how she resonated with clubs that fostered a strong community, and she enjoyed "being involved in the world outside of school." This passion led her to apply for ARISTA during her sophomore year. Despite feeling "slightly overwhelmed because there were so many options for events," Lorin reminisced on just how motivated she was to be "more involved at Stuy[vesant]" by joining ARISTA. It taught

her to take on a "proactive mindset" and that "trying to get as much as you can from [an experience] is important."

Initially, ARISTA seemed daunting and intimidating; however, as she immersed herself in the community, it steadily became less challenging. "One thing that was easy for me was meeting and getting along with people. With ARISTA, there was always a new person to meet around the corner." Lorin shares how she was able to kindle deeper connections through this, as "a lot of people I met through ARISTA were people I met through my classes... it was really nice to have that in common and build closer relationships from that. ARISTA is definitely a great way to build connections with people that you might not otherwise interact with that much!"

Not only did ARISTA help cultivate friendships, but it also helped Lorin acquire strong characteristics and attributes. She discussed how the "valuable skills" she developed through ARISTA guided her in "creating balance between my academic life and my personal life." As she "developed time management, patience, and a strong sense of empathy," Lorin became accustomed to "[taking] the time out of my day to show up for events, to volunteer to tutor kids, and give my own time to be there for this community." These duties allowed her to feel more confident in taking initiative and taught her the responsibility of showing up.

Currently, Lorin is in the field of research and is aiming to pursue a path in urban sustainability and climate change. She expressed how "ARISTA really requires you to be part of a team" and helped her develop responsibility and integrity. Faria translated these critical skills, among many others, into her "internships, group projects, and even personal relationships."

ARISTA was a significant responsibility; naturally, it presented some obstacles. Lorin talks about how a vital aspect of the job was being able to adapt easily and accommodate others, especially during her tutoring hours. Specifically, she found that analyzing "how another student might

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ALUMNI PROFILES

Faria Lorin

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learn better in a different way from you and having to adapt the way you teach to best help them" was a particularly challenging aspect. In addition to the dynamic environment, Lorin spent her junior year during quarantine, which amplified the difficulty. "Tutoring during Covid was also slightly challenging with tutoring over zoom—it was even a bit chaotic at times," Lorin commented. Nonetheless, Lorin was able to persevere through these challenges and make the most of her time at Stuy. When asked to recall a significant memory, Lorin illustrated a wholesome interaction between her and her student. "One memorable moment I had was when I tutored a student in geometry," she explained. "They had been struggling for weeks before they decided to do peer tutoring, and while the

beginning of tutoring was a little rough, after explaining proofs in numerous different ways, I loved seeing the student have a moment when something finally clicked, and they started to understand proofs."

Lorin is now in her last year of college. Nevertheless, she continues to use the skills she learned in high school to help her move forward. Having interned at several environmental programs, Lorin is leading a career in environmental change and is striving to make a difference in our community. Through Stuyvesant, she learned to "have goals beyond grades and school" and to focus on subjects she's genuinely passionate about. When asked if there's any advice she'd like to give current students, she powerfully stated, "You don't need to do everything to make an impact. You should focus on what genuinely excites you, and make an impact through doing the things you love."

Marilyn Shi: *Pick All the Figs*

By JESSICA XIE

Marilyn first discovered ARISTA in her freshman year, when she was looking for academic support. Touched by the dedication of her ARISTA tutors, she decided to join and give back to the community that initially helped her transition to Stuyvesant. She spent the majority of her time volunteering for the Prescod Institute for Sport, Teamwork, and Education (PISTE) over her three years as an ARISTA member, tutoring students and supporting their needs virtually every day.

One of her most memorable moments came at an in-person ceremony celebrating the program's achievements, when she reflected on the sheer scope of her impact. Her experiences with ARISTA and PISTE



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ALUMNI PROFILES

Marilyn Shi: *Pick All the Figs*

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didn't just deepen her commitment to her extracurriculars, but they also shaped how she approached her own responsibilities. "I knew that all of the work that I was putting out was my work, and I never wanted to do something halfway," she explained. "And so I think that was sort of my thing to put my best in all of it, even though it was hard sometimes. And it gets easier the more you do it, that's for sure."

Marilyn's commitment to putting in complete effort to her academics and responsibilities naturally led her to think more deeply about herself and what she wanted. "Amid ambition, you know, because there's things you want to do—a lot of things you want to try—but it's a little difficult to keep straight on a track, a single track," she reflected. In her early days at Stuyvesant, she only had a "vague goal to continue my education somewhere that would best fit me and provided just a good education." However, she explains how over time, "the little goals that I made to get there could change sometimes... As I found the things that I enjoyed, I dug deeper into them and built on that goal."

Unsurprisingly, a stronger sense of clarity came with greater awareness of falling short or failure. "In those moments when you want to fail least, you try the hardest," Marilyn explained. Her fears weren't only about her journey, but also something greater that also affected other people. For Marilyn, fear of failure became inseparable from growth. "One cannot exist without the other," she said. "It was always a constant sort of balance between failure and growth, and you can't grow without failure." The fear of failure is ultimately so human, and for Marilyn, it drives one to do things that couldn't have originally been possible. The way she approaches it "is to use that fear and flip it on its head to reach potential."

Aside from ARISTA, she spent her high school years as Student CEO for Rock the Street, Wall Street, starting her own non-profit, where she learned about raising money and building partnerships. She eventually earned an ATLAS Fellows schol-

arship that deepened her path toward finance.

Much like Sylvia Plath's fig tree, where each fig represents an opportunity, Marilyn Shi's story reflects that success doesn't come from a singular fig, but from the daring to reach for them all. Trying every fig and picking out the ones that felt right for Marilyn, regardless of the reach on the tree, opened her more opportunities than if she had just waited for them to fall onto the ground and risked finding bruising. "And I ended up growing so much more because I tried so many things and maybe didn't succeed in all of them. And then [I] took those opportunities to see what I could succeed in," she reflected.

After graduating from Stuyvesant and its rigors, her discipline and determination proved to be timeless throughout the new chapters of her life at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) and her journey of adulting. Her new freedoms allowed her to engage in a variety of activities and societies at college, from being the Head of Treks at the Wharton Undergraduate Real Estate Club to participating as a Patagonia Expedition Fellow in the Wharton Leadership Ventures program. After testing out of her Mandarin Chinese requirement, she made room to balance out her personal and professional interests by minoring in Art History. "You're learning skills that you can use in the real world, but there's also an importance to building on your soft skills and your interests too," she said.

Her freshman year at UPenn was filled with a myriad of experiments. "I came to Penn and tried everything during my freshman year. I ended up joining this beekeeping club, and that's purely for joy...And it's just a really good time and a way to get to know people outside of the classroom and to meet people who care a lot about the environment and our pollinators."

Whether in finance or beekeeping, Marilyn continues to pursue roles and communities where she can continue to grow and "can make an impact even as a more junior person on the team," continuing to reach for every fig on the tree of opportunity. Just as Marilyn reached for many figs on the tree of opportunity, ARISTA invites every student to explore, grow, and find their own branch to thrive on.

ALUMNI PROFILES

John Jay Wang

**By AMBER YU
and EPSHITA ARIEN**

Engrossed in building a professional resume and maintaining a 4.0 GPA, many students forget that ARISTA is more than just completing service hours; it's an opportunity to immerse yourself in a community that's always there for you, the way that you are for them. Members of Stuyvesant High School's ARISTA Honors Society go beyond completing the occasional tutoring session or helping out with an event. They learn what it means to be a role model and strive to make a difference in people's lives one day at a time. ARISTA presents students with the chance to give back to their community, foster their confidence, and develop essential life skills while cultivating lifelong friendships and forming core memories. Having graduated from Stuyvesant in 2025 as a valuable ARISTA member, John Jay Wang disclosed some of his best experiences and life lessons learned.

Before entering his term at Yale University this semester, John Jay is spending this summer "to reconnect with... [his] hobbies, and to catch up with old friends!" Meanwhile, he's also bonding with students who share similar passions as him while teaching as a tennis coach for New York Junior Tennis & Learning. Alongside his incredible enthusiasm for sports, such as tennis and basketball, he demonstrated his passion for the arts with his participation in the Symphonic Band and Stuy's SING! band crew as a clarinetist, while playing guitar and piano in his free time.

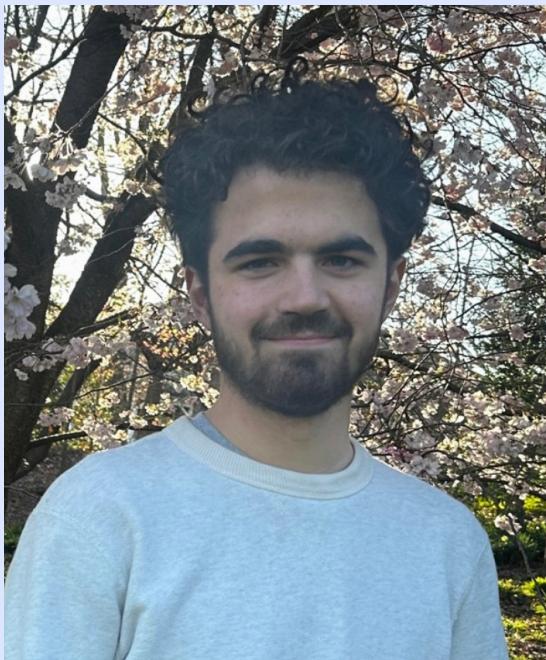
When reflecting on his ARISTA experience, he relays that one of the biggest lessons it taught him was "to find joy and peace in the little things and little timeframes." He illustrates how his joy doesn't come from materialistic rewards or a hierarchical status but rather from the impact he's made on others, which is demonstrated through his participation in the food pantry at 9 Million Resources. When asked about his accomplishments, John Jay didn't discuss his awards or titles—instead, he reminisced about how his pride came from when "the grandparents smiled at the food pantry table, when my first tutee understands systems of equations in algebra II, or when I see another anonymous person roam on the study guide I made, knowing that I've touched a life in one form or the other." Through ARISTA, he's learnt what it means to be a good person and understands "how much of a difference your time and your service can make in brightening other people's lives," even if it's just a couple of hours of your day.

While addressing the pros and cons of being an ARISTA member, John Jay explained that, "it's one thing to hear someone say that community service is super rewarding and so impactful, but it's another thing to actually be in it, and doing something to give back. That being said, I don't think talking about 'pros and cons' does the service justice." In the end, he described his pros and cons as "Pros: Go see for yourself. Cons: Too hard to describe the Pros in words." He encouraged students to strive to "do some form of service in their life at one point or another," and he elaborates on how it's truly something you have to experience yourself to understand its nurture. He advised future Stuyvesant students and ARISTA representatives to "really enjoy the time you have, and to be nice to the people around you ... Uplift your school, it's a community as well."

Even though John Jay is still unsure about what major he plans to pursue, he notes that it's "totally okay" to still be figuring out your path. No matter which way his story goes, his time in ARISTA has taught him that he certainly wants to continue helping other people! He has a bright future at Yale and demonstrates values and morals any student would find incredibly respectable. If there is anything Stuyvesant can learn from John Jay's profound words, it is that ARISTA doesn't *create* good people; it takes the good they already have in themselves and transforms it into a gift using the confidence ARISTA fosters and the opportunities it provides, building them up to be the best version of themselves.

ALUMNI PROFILES

Theodore Yochum



By TASFIA CHOWDHURY

At Stuyvesant, ARISTA embodies the pride, dedication, and work ethic students strive to represent. Its members work with selfless service and fervent passion—both within and outside of school—to witness the growth of a community they have built.

Theodore Yochum, Stuyvesant Class of 2023, reflects on his experiences throughout the years and shares where life has taken him since. He first became interested in ARISTA during his sophomore year of high school, as he looked forward to being involved in his community through a plethora of fun events. For him, ARISTA wasn't the path to chasing academic rigor, but served as a chance for him to truly plant a positive change in others' lives. Since most of his peers joined for similar reasons, Yochum recalled meeting many familiar faces and developing stronger relationships with them. For Yochum, ARISTA was the bridge that "allowed [him] to deepen [his] connections with the people [he] had met at other points in Stuy," many of whom he still keeps in touch with today.

In addition to strengthening his communication skills, he also had to hone his organization and time management skills for ARISTA events. One of the most challeng-

ing parts of this endeavor was dealing with the logistics of finding time to participate in events with a busy schedule. Yochum emphasized the difficulty in balancing smaller events with longer ones, which is why he often participated in the latter. Yochum's most memorable event was the annual Greek Jewish festival, where he worked with his friends to set up the tents and stalls, contributing to its lively atmosphere. This event is typically held in mid-May, and Yochum recommends that all current ARISTA members participate.

Along with ARISTA, Yochum's major Stuyvesant memories took place as the Technical Director at Stuyvesant Theater Community (STC). Yochum had been involved with STC for all four years of his high school career and describes STC as an incredibly valuable experience for him. He currently works as an International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) stagehand, prioritizing the technical aspects of the stage. He notes that STC "actually had a very large influence" in his work. Additionally, he works as a Student Technician at Swarthmore College, where he is entering his third year this upcoming fall.

To him, ARISTA wasn't the path to chasing academic rigor; it was a chance for him to truly plant a positive change in others' lives.

Yochum's long-term involvement with theater was only enhanced by the teamwork, passion, and dedication he developed from his work at ARISTA. His commitment has demonstrated how he values the production of the stage as deeply as the performers themselves. After all, even behind the curtains lies an undeniable love for art and precision that he brings to life in the spotlight.

MESSAGE FROM

The 2025-2026 President

ARISTA,

I used to say that Stuyvesant takes a village—as a school and within smaller communities and organizations. But now, I can say that ARISTA is that village that allows students to persist and creates support. ARISTA shapes our school culture, establishes support systems, and maintains kindness in a time where compassion is often overlooked. I am honored to serve as ARISTA's President for the upcoming school year, to ensure that the organization reflects ever changing needs, and remains a reliable resource for all individuals.

As I plan to uphold our four foundational pillars—character, leadership, scholarship, and service—I've found that my hopes for ARISTA lie in three more: community, accessibility, and intentionality.

One of my core values that ARISTA truly embodies is the responsibility we feel to our communities. This proactivity stems from more than just fulfilling credits; it comes from the positive impact we witness. But we can find where we fit within a community by

taking on many experiences. Whether we find surprise in leading tutoring groups or form relationships with other volunteers, I hope that ARISTA members step out of their comfort zone. Be open to new experiences and find unity in unfamiliar spaces.

Through our work in service, we unite and empower others, providing fellow students and community members with opportunities we are fortunate enough to have. Accessibility requires transparency from both the Executive Council and members. As we welcome new members into ARISTA, I hope that returning members show leadership and guidance. But we serve people within and beyond the organization to create opportunities for everyone.

Every year is different, which means that ARISTA's short term goals are constantly changing. Our responsibility is to adapt, providing structure in old traditions and freshness in new initiatives. For the Executive Council, we aim to integrate feedback into new policies and diversify service opportunities. But above all else, every action should be purposeful and with integrity—to widen our impact and invite others into the ARISTA community.

With immense gratitude to the 2024 - 2025 Executive Council for being wonderful role models, I hope that ARISTA continues to build on new ideas with empathy and creativity. Thank you all for the past three years and hopefully, for another impactful year.

With love,

Joanne Hwang

MESSAGE FROM*The 2025-2026 Vice President of Web Development*

Hello ARISTA!

Over the past year, we have accomplished so much as a community, and I look forward to another great year of service and collaboration ahead of us. The dedication and engagement of our members have been truly inspiring, and together we've left a lasting impact on the community.

Over this upcoming year, the Web Committee will strive to create a more connected, informed, and organized experience for ARISTA. We recognize that effective communication and seamless access to information are fundamental to our community's success. Our website will be updated to contain routine newsletters that keep everyone informed about important developments, expanded notifications to ensure no one misses critical

updates, and an improved user experience that makes navigating our resources intuitive and efficient.

Recently, the website has undergone significant improvements to better serve our mobile users. The site has been updated to allow for a Jupiter-like mobile experience, providing smooth, responsive functionality across all devices. Users can now add ARISTA directly to their home screen, making access to our community platform as simple as tapping an icon. This enhancement reflects our commitment to meeting members where they are and ensuring that staying connected with ARISTA is convenient and accessible.

These technological improvements are just the beginning. We're committed to continuously evolving our digital presence to better serve our community's needs. As we move forward, we'll continue gathering feedback and implementing features that enhance collaboration, streamline communication, and strengthen the bonds that make ARISTA such a vibrant and effective organization.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication.

Rohan Sen

And with that, here is a very warm welcome to the incoming 2025-2026 Executive Council! Congratulations to President Joanne Hwang, Vice President of Events Elizabeth Chao, Vice President of Operations Veronika Gulko, and Vice President of Web Development Rohan Sen!

Thank you to all of our contributors who made this publication possible!

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