Greetings High School East Community,

This is a great time of year for us here at High School East. Although students are very busy preparing for exams such as the SAT and Advanced Placement exams, it is also a time where we recognize some significant accomplishments. We recently had the extreme honor of congratulating the Top 20 students of the Class of 2008. We also acknowledged some of these same students and others for achievements in various current competitions and activities. This issue will highlight some of their accomplishments.

Most of our students are continuing High School East’s “Tradition of Excellence”; however, it is imperative that we remind students and parents that despite entering the last quarter, the year is not over. Soon the weather will change and along with it some people’s attitudes and effort. It is important that all students continue to work diligently and finish the year strong, especially our seniors who may have already received college acceptances. Colleges will receive a final transcript from High School East. If there is a sudden change in a student’s performance it could prompt a college to rescind that student’s acceptance.

Parents, please reinforce High School East’s philosophy of achieving “Excellence” to your children:

Make an honest endeavor to do your best under all circumstances. Intense personal effort may be the only thing that separates you from your competition. Do not settle for mediocrity. Strive to go beyond your own expectations, which should clearly put you far ahead of anyone else’s expectations of you. Surpassing goals must become a part of your character.

Let’s finish strong!

Sincerely,

Dr. J. A. Woodberry

---

Learning to Make Informed Choices at HSE

Where should I go to college? Should I go for speech and debate, wrestling, or both? Can I handle four AP classes? These are all questions that students face. All teachers, counselors, and administrators help students tackle these subjects as part of a school’s daily life. Another part of daily life in modern education is the stunning variety of potentially life altering decisions that confront young people. Should I drink that? Is she okay to drive? When will I really be ready? High School East has been making a great effort to bring people to our school whose specialty is helping high school students make decisions that will help them negotiate life’s really tough choices with a greater degree of confidence.

The year began with a DAYTOP drug use prevention presentation for grade nine students and their parents. Tenth and twelfth graders receive visits from retired Suffolk County police officer, Paul Failla. Officer Failla uses his years of experience to educate students on wide-ranging, value-based topics.

The year’s most unusual event has also been its most impressive. College students brought Swallow This! to HSE from Stony Brook University. The university students came together in a theater class to create their own skits based on incidents recorded in a database of student experiences related to alcohol and other drugs. One of the most affecting stories involved a young person whose embarrassing behavior was publicized on Facebook. The student wrote the skit from her own life. Many students agreed that Swallow This! presented old information in a very new perspective that was relevant to them because of the medium in which it was presented.

All of these things have been part of HSE’s efforts to educate our students in all aspects of being responsible, wise citizens.
Passion, Teamwork & Commitment Bring Science to Life at Olympiad

High School East enjoyed the distinction of hosting this year’s regional Science Olympiad. Young scientists from around the nation vied for honors in topics from astronomy and cell biology to robotics and oceanography.

The top five teams advanced to the state competition and from there to a chance to compete for nationwide glory. Mr. Thomas Page guided the Thunderbird contingent to third place, thus earning them a berth in the state championships. Over 40 Suffolk County teams gave their best efforts amid fierce competition.

Visitors were treated to “sumo robots” battling in mechanical combat while rubber-band aircraft arced gracefully overhead. Exotic strains of music emanated from instruments designed to demonstrate important acoustic principles. The school’s labs hummed with research into virulent diseases and explorations of environmental chemistry and the cosmos.

Congratulations to all of our sensational science Olympians!

East’s Olympians Relax between Competitions

School Based Management Team Strives to Light the Way

The HSE lawn sign is something of a landmark on Vanderbilt Parkway. For thirty years, it has announced events and accomplishments at our school, but the old “movie marquee” system of plastic letters and fluorescent backlighting is ready for a facelift. The School Based Management Team took up the challenge and is gathering information to put a 21st century face on East’s announcements. The team’s research revealed that a quality sign with the appropriate landscaping will cost approximately $20,000.

The sign will feature a state-of-the-art LED read out and lively graphics. The image will be prominently visible from both sides as the announcements materialize and dance across the screen. In order to purchase a weatherproof, vandalism-proof sign the SBMT is seeking corporate and community sponsorship. Other fundraising activities are planned. Chief among them is a plan to “buy a brick” on a sponsored walkway near the sign. Similar schemes have successfully raised money and attracted community participation. The team also plans to launch a design contest for the sign’s landscaping and ornamental brickwork. The students of the National Art Honor Society have already done their part in creating the fundraiser thermometer pictured at left. Look for your own name in lights soon!

Students Excel in PTA Reflections Competition

For thirty years PTAs around the nation have participated in the Reflections arts competition. According to the national PTA website, the Reflections contest is meant to “enhance rather than replace” a strong arts education program. In a time when budget concerns around the country jeopardize art and music programs, the support of PTAs ensure that students have a supportive hand guiding their artistic endeavors.

This year’s Reflections theme is “I can make a difference by...” During the regional competition, students explored the idea of social responsibility through literature, music composition, photography, and visual arts.

High School East made a strong showing in the regional contest with six students earning recognition for their work. Ahsley Bennett, Jackie Bakewell, and Anna-Maria Philippeaux all created original works of literature. Melanie Levine used her skills as a photographer while Jenady Garshofsky shone in the visual arts category.

Zach Zadek wrote an original song called “One Voice” which propelled him on to the New York State level of the competition. Good luck Zach! Congratulations to everyone who took part.

Singer-Songwriter, Zach Zadek hard at work

Perspectives

Page 2
The Class the Stars Fell On

The 1915 West Point graduating class became legendary for the number of generals that emerged from it. More members of that class earned general’s stars than any other in history. When they graduated that June, the young men of the class of ’15 did not know what the future would hold, but they looked ahead eagerly.

Graduation is fast approaching for High School East’s class of ’08, and they look to their futures with similar keenness. So far this year, HSE seniors have earned an impressive array of honors and distinctions. Many more are in the offing, and all of this points to the class of ’08 as one with potential stretching from one end of the horizon to the other. Standouts include, but are certainly not limited to, Joseph Gaspard - finalist in the 2008 National Achievement Scholarship Program for Black American High School Students, Janet Y. Hui, Julie B. Levine, and Joanna Schlingbaum—finalists in the 2008 National Merit Scholarship Program, Kimberly Rae Greer semifinalist in the 2007-2008 Coca-Cola Scholars Program, Joanna Schlingbaum winner of an American Association of University Women Excellence in Science Award. Jung Hee Choi is a semi-finalist in the 2008 Intel Science Talent Search. Ilana Ventura is a Suffolk County Scholar-Artist whose photographs can be seen on the Long Island Newsday website. Gina Pellegrino was accepted into an advanced illustration course for high school students at Adelphi University. Joanna Schlingbaum, Julie Levine, and Andrew Windler have all advanced to the semi-finals of the Long Island Science and Engineering Fair.

There simply is not enough space to list all of the outstanding scholars, artists, and athletes here at High School East; not to mention all of the seemingly “ordinary” students who contribute to making this such an exceptional school.
Any good athletic program relies on a steady stream of young talent to help sustain its success. HSE girl’s basketball coach, Mr. Ed Lein recognizes that fact, and so do his players. With that in mind, the varsity Thunderbirds paid a visit to the Dix Hills Basketball Association girls’ basketball program.

Young hoopsters in kindergarten, first, and second grades were treated to a clinic led by varsity players Michelle Cartwright, Brittany Damato, Meredith DeBlasio, Brooke Ferrari, Carly Kirschner, Lindsey Minor, Kirsten Mueller, Widlyn Paul, Michelle Pierrot, and Rebecca Slater. The “big girls” led the kids through stretching exercises and a demonstration of their warm-up drills.

The team then set up a variety of skills stations. Squads of the DHBA players rotated through dribbling, passing, and shooting stations where they learned valuable tips from experienced players. Look for some of these little folks in HSE jerseys in a few years!

Grade 12 grappler Mike Hromada is a four-year varsity wrestler and one of only four wrestlers in HSE history to earn three all-county team memberships! Mike’s strength and steely determination brought dual championships this year at 125 pounds. While most people would consider a double gold season a great ending to a high school career, Mike has set his sights still higher!

March 8th saw him representing High School East and Section XI at the state championships at the Blue Cross Arena in Rochester, NY. Mike has also guaranteed himself a trip to the Senior National competition in April.

Wrestling at this level requires an enormous work ethic, dedication to the team’s goals, and strict personal discipline. All of these things have propelled Mike forward thus far. He’ll be counting on the same in the state and national events and as he makes his bid for a place on a Division 1 university team. Stay tuned for more…

Special thanks to Coach Magnani for his contribution to this article!
**East’s Salty Scientists Shine**

Marine Science is a popular course at High School East that attracts serious scientists and those whose main connection to the ocean comes in the form of sun and sand.

Each year, Ms. Sue Hirschmann assembles her most committed Marine Science students to prepare them for the National Ocean Sciences Bowl. For ten years the competition has enabled students who “excel in math and science” to “receive national recognition for their diligence and talent.” Ms. Hirschmann recognizes the potential in her students and guides them along the path of serious study with an eye to considering careers in ocean science.

This year’s diverse group included captain Chris Minor, Tom Pratt, Rachel Mahler, Alex Zito, Samantha Simmons, and Michael Bernstein as an alternate. The team studied hard in an attempt to master aspects of biology, chemistry, geology, meteorology and complex mathematical concepts. The sample questions on the NOSB website really convey the depth and breadth of understanding these students must attain in order to compete. The team performed with great cohesiveness and scholarship on the way to an eighth-place finish.

It’s exciting to know that the people with whom we play basketball or go to the movies are also studying what may be the most complex and important ecosystem on Earth. Congratulations!

**Understanding Culture through Cuisine**

Social studies classes all help students understand the facts and personalities that drive history and shape culture. High School East’s very own Ms. Jessica Nolan, Ms. Amy Lau-Boyle and Mr. Christopher Blumenstetter brought a more personal connection to learning by instituting Cultural Foods Day. The trio got their students involved in understanding culture by sharing meals that reflected the tastes and customs of the people they have studied. According to Mr. Blumenstetter, “We hoped students would branch out beyond their comfort zones and try new things.” He and his colleagues went on to add that students would share their experience with friends and family to “spread an awareness and appreciation of diversity”.

Diversity and variety were certainly on the menu: Teanna Jackson brought Jamaican curry chicken and coconut rice. Tatiana Townsend contributed Venezuelan arroz con pollo and habichuelas. Jake Schweitzer brought good old spaghetti and meatballs while Zach Johnson (pictured at right) supplied Chinese chicken and broccoli. Jen Maddaleno showed Gallic pride with buttery croissants. Students chose cultures that appealed to them, while not necessarily reflecting their own ethnicities. The students enjoyed the experience as evidenced by the number of enthusiastic questions they asked each other about the more exotic dishes on hand.

**Ms. Lykos & Ms. Corazon Named “Distinguished Teachers”**

High School East teachers Ms. Matoula Lykos and Ms. Denise Corazon were named Harvard Club of Long Island Distinguished Teachers.

According to Dr. Judith Esterquest, Harvard accepts “fewer than 8%” of [undergrad] applicants and successful applicants must be exceptional in a variety of areas. While students get in on their own merits, most of them remember exceptional teachers who helped them bring out the best in themselves. When Harvard polled its undergrads about teachers in grades 7-12 who helped shape their success, the two High School East teachers stood out among the nation’s best.

Mrs. Lykos was lauded as: “An extraordinary teacher, with unrelenting devotion to her students...Words cannot express the support Mrs. Lykos gave me, or the gratitude I feel.”

Ms. Corazon earned this accolade: “[Ms. Corazon is] an incredible woman, with unimaginable dedication and devotion, tireless energy and enthusiasm, and boundless creativity...I am forever indebted to her for a most precious gift...”

The High School East community salutes these two wonderful teachers for their service to all of their students and for this outstanding achievement!
High School East Marks African American History Month

One of High School East’s great strengths is the range of cultures and faces that make up our school. High School East’s African American community commemorated an important part of that diversity through celebrations of African American History Month. Ms. Cunningham and the students in the African American Student Organization created an outstanding display marking African cultural items and the achievements of Americans who share that heritage. The AASO also shared some of the fundamental foods of African American culture with a delicious buffet in the west gym lobby open to all students.

One the month’s most memorable events was hosted by the Honorable H. Patrick Leis III, District Administrative Judge for Suffolk County and prominent member of the Suffolk County Bar Association, and the Amistad Long Island Black Bar Association. On February 27th, Judge Leis convened a host of community members, court officials and students from High School East! Katrina Moise, Victoria Perrier, Gregory Perrier, and Andre Doughty added their talents to the ceremonies.

The ceremonial court chambers of the Suffolk County Supreme Court were graced by music, speech, and elegant dance performances by young people from around Suffolk. Andre Doughty addressed the audience about the life and accomplishments of New York State Governor, David A. Patterson. Siblings Victoria and Gregory Perrier played selections for the violin and alto saxophone while Katrina Moise performed a dance number that captured the event’s mood of celebration and reflection. High School East is proud of the work its students have done to mark the events of African American History Month.