

College and Career Fair a great success

By Vanessa Cespedes

The Annual College and Career Fair was vastly expanded this year, to offer students an opportunity to think about and prepare for their future lives in the working world. The event was assembled by Mrs. Romero who wanted students to have the ability to see that there is more to life, past the walls of PHS. This year was different because schools, professionals and past students came to PHS to offer their stories about how they became successful.

The assemblies, designed to present as many students as possible to the guest speakers, included notable people, such as PHS graduate, Landon G. Woodson, who attended Rutgers University. He told students who do not know what they want to do with their lives that it is not important to have everything planned out. He said he fell into acting and never even considered being an actor until he was half way through his first degree. Later he attended the Mason Gross School of the Arts, where earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in acting.

Landon Woodson has been in various plays and some short parts in movies, but he said, "Going to work every day is a pleasure when you are doing something you love." His message seemed to have an effect on students in attendance who are unsure of what they would like to do for a career.

There were also multiple representatives from a group called Latino Promise. The motto of this group is "Dream it, believe it, achieve it." The Latino Promise program is a part of the Fairleigh Dickenson University Latino Education Pipeline Project, which has as its stated goal, to overcome the traditional barriers to higher education for Latino students and to develop Hispanic leaders that will be able to serve our nation in the future.

Catherine Acosta, represented Latino Promise, and is a professor of psychology at Fairleigh Dickenson University. She discussed how the Latino Promise program can help the students of PHS. She has 20 years of experience in higher education, and has been with Latino Promise for the past four years, as an advisor and professor. Her message to the students of PHS was that education is an empowering process. She said that education is the key to a successful future.

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PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARMON

Lawyer Jadhil Rodriguez spoke to students about setting goals for their future.



PHOTO BY LEVI ALBENIS

Superintendent Pablo Munoz, right, is working with Mr. DeNaples to create the best academic experience for all students at PHS.

New Superintendent wants to make PHS No. 1

By Gabriela Martinez and Levi Albenis

The new superintendent of Passaic Public Schools is Mr. Pablo Munoz. He will have executive oversight and administrative powers, over all the schools within Passaic School District. Mr. Munoz has come to Passaic from Elizabeth Public Schools where he was superintendent. He graduated from Elizabeth High School, class of 1987. Mr. Munoz then went on to college at Yale University. He graduated in 1991 with a B.A. degree in psychology. Mr. Munoz also went to graduate school at Columbia University for education administration.

Mr. Munoz's said of his first

impression of Passaic, "It is a great place." He added, "Passaic is very much alive and exciting, filled with wonderful and welcoming people, and opportunity for great things."

The vision for our school is based in the superintendent's philosophy of education. Mr. Munoz says that all students must be given the groundwork in their education so that they are prepared to go to college. He believes that all students may excel at high levels in their education. Mr. Munoz wants our students to be grounded in 2 "Q's," which are quantity and quality.

He is constantly asking, "How can I increase the instruction time in courses re-

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PHS demonstrates patriotism, school spirit in Memorial Day Parade

By Henry Hernandez

PHS has a lot to celebrate this year. The year is beginning to wind down and there are a great many things of which we should be proud. Memorial Day has finally arrived and while that is the unofficial start of summer, and we are all looking forward to summer vacation, it is also the day that we honor those Americans who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Therefore, in between the barbecues and fam-

ily gatherings, many students participated in the Passaic Memorial Day Parade.

Our PHS Marching Band led the parade, down Main Avenue, and then into Armory Park. The annual wreath-laying ceremony at the cenotaph gave students, parents, and town political leaders the chance to pay tribute to brave fallen heroes of Passaic's past.

The PHS contingent to the parade consisted of the marching band and the NJROTC cadets, who provided the color guard, another

honor for our school. The pride of the young cadets was evident as they marched in unison to pay homage to service members. "I was so proud to represent our school, especially having my picture in the paper [The Herald News]," said Senior Assata Alston. Other clubs participated as well. Many members of the Japanese Anime club (which is called the Daisuki Nihon Club) found an opportunity to get dressed up as their favorite animated characters, celebrat-

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PHOTO BY JESUS LOPEZ

NJROTC cadets from PHS marched in the parade.



PHOTO BY MITZI MONTILLA

Teachers block another student drive.

Teachers defeat students, again, in student vs. teacher basketball game

By Pabel Dejesus

The students had hoped to change the string of losses to the teachers, during this year's annual student/teacher basketball game.

Even though the students began with an early lead, the teachers rallied to win the game. Everyone in attendance

had a great time and the players had a chance to bond in a way that cannot be done in class.

Aside from the good feelings and camaraderie on the court, this event was sponsored as a fund raising event, to fund scholarships for students. The game was co-sponsored by the Octagon Club

and PHS Cheerleading.

This event was a huge success. Teachers soundly beat their students, who were talking up their on-court prowess for weeks before the game. Students enjoyed the opportunity to see their teachers in a more casual setting. In the end the teachers won the match.

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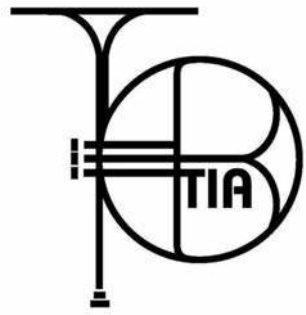
PHS Band places third in regional tournament

By Sharief Masri

The PHS Marching Band and Color Guard placed third, making the semi-finals, in the Tournament of Bands Chapter 10.

The Chapter 10 Tournament of Bands serves northern and central New Jersey as well as southeastern New York including Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Northern Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex & Union Counties. New York counties include Bronx, Kings, Suffolk, Nassau, Queens and Westchester. Therefore, PHS ranking third is a huge accomplishment in this large company.

Under the direction of Mr. Rusca, the PHS band has soared to new heights of success. In fact, making it to the finals PHS became the First



Chapter 10 Wildwood ACC Indoor Champion in years.

This was an extremely competitive group of schools. PHS scored a 92.98 for third place, and the difference in the finals between first place and third place was only .77 points. If the band could have mustered another point, they would be in first place.

PHS Percussion Ensemble placed fourth in the finals, with a score of 90.9, another great achievement. Next year's chapter championship is anticipated to be held at West Essex H.S. on April 26, 2015.

The spirit of the band this year is that they want to place even higher next year. They will be working throughout the summer and into next fall to prepare for this and other competitions.

Passaic H.S. students visit PCCC for Holocaust Remembrance Day

By Pabel Dejesus

Students recently attended a presentation at Passaic County Community College. They were both interested and horrified by the subject matter. The presentation memorialized the horror of the Holocaust, but the images of human scratch marks on the wall of a gas chamber at a Nazi death camp in Auschwitz, human hair matted and turned into a carpet, human ashes dumped into urns and stacked against a wall, were horrible to see.

The memorial was presented by Professor Elliot S. Pollack of PCCC.

"The Holocaust is a reminder of how horrible people can be," he began.

Though he was not a Holocaust survivor himself, or even the child of a survivor, he told students, "I believe that every generation has an obligation to teach the next generation about what came before."

The message of the day's activities was not just the horror of the Holocaust, something that has been taught here at PHS, but that this horror needs to be remembered and discussed because it has happened again and again since World



PHOTO BY PABEL DEJESUS

Prof. Elliot S. Pollack of Passaic County Community College lights a candle in memory of those who died in the Holocaust — and to condemn all the other forms of prejudice around the world.

War II. The recent genocide in Sudan's Darfur, Bosnia's "ethnic cleansing," and even recently, Syria's civil war, are all genocidal holocausts. He said they all have one thing in common; "They all started with prejudice."

While many of the students in attendance admitted that they all had experienced prejudice in one form or another, they all agreed that nothing could prepare them for the depth of prejudice they viewed in a video that Pollack created

himself of the Auschwitz and Terezin concentration camps. Students were visibly uncomfortable as this horror was exposed on the screen.

The message of his presentation was not lost. It hit home, and students leaving the event, some shaken by the display of inhumanity, were all glad that they had been there.

"It was good to see," said Junior Angelo Ariza.

He added, "We can really change things, be better for the future."

Luz Comacho wins contest and sees her essay published

By Leonardo Coranado

Junior, Luz Comacho entered a national essay contest, sponsored by the National Girls Ministries. The winners of this contest were published in their Annual Theme Booklet. The essays were to be entitled, "Why We Do What We Do," and entries were collected from the entire nation.

Luz Comacho entered the contest, wishing but not expecting to win. "I just like to write, and I think I have something important to say," she said. However, after all the entries were collected and read from all around the country, Luz won!

The Girls Ministries strives to help girls empower themselves so that they can realize their importance and potential. They provide resources to help individuals reach universal truths and make good decisions. This values based organization fosters Christian character, teamwork and cooperation in service to God and to all



PHOTO BY LEVI ALBENIS

Luz Comacho, winner of national essay contest.

society.

To be acknowledged by an organization with such lofty ideals from a field of entries that spans the entire country is not just a great honor for Luz, but for all of us at PHS.

Luz said, "I'm glad that I can represent PHS like this," adding, "I want everyone to know that there are good things going on here at PHS." This is a great start. Congratulations.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DRILL TEAM

In early May, the PHS Drill team went to Daytona Florida to participate in the 2014 National High School Drill Team Championships.

National Honor Society honors the best of Passaic H.S.

By Vanessa Cespedes

The National Honor Society is a national organization of students who have shown outstanding performance in academics as well as individuality in school leadership.

The students who are inducted into this prestigious group are expected to show excellence in areas of scholarship, leadership, service and character.

These are qualities that are exhibited regularly by many students at PHS. However, on June 10, the National Honor Society held its annual dinner in honor of the new inductees to this elite or-



National Honor Society logo

ganization. Faculty, administrators and parents watched as the new members were inducted; each new member pledging to maintain and uphold the four elements of the society.

This was a fun and memorable event for all those in attendance. Kudos to Mr. Graham for organizing the event. Congratulations to all those who were honored. These honorees are definitely PHS proud.

New Inductees to the National Honor Society

Mitul Aswala
Shaili Barot
Elsie Heber
Mona Patel
Vasu Patel

Special Congratulations to Graduating Members

Christopher Aguilar
Abegail Beltran
Johana Caba
Bhavika Gandhi
Karina Garcia
David Martin
Aimee Santiago
Bhavini Shah
Artemis Tiburcio
William Villeda

PHS becomes autism aware

Students are warned to be watch for characteristics

By Assata Alston

To highlight the growing need for concern and awareness about autism, the Autism Society has been celebrating National Autism Awareness Month since the 1970s. The United States recognizes April as a special opportunity to educate the public about autism and issues within the autism community.

The Autism Awareness Puzzle Ribbon is the most recognized symbol of the autism community in the world. Autism prevalence is now one in every 68 children in America. This is a serious disorder, but there is some progress being made.

Early detection is key, and there are some characteristics to be on the lookout for in children usually between 18 months and 6 years old. If you have a younger brother or sister, make sure the child gets a "developmental screening" in addition to the normal well

baby visits to the doctor.

But you can be watching for certain things on your own. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) lists five behaviors that warrant further evaluation:

- Does not babble or coo by 12 months
- Does not gesture (point, wave, grasp) by 12 months
- Does not say single words by 16 months
- Does not say two-word phrases on his or her own by 24 months
- Has any loss of any language or social skill at any age

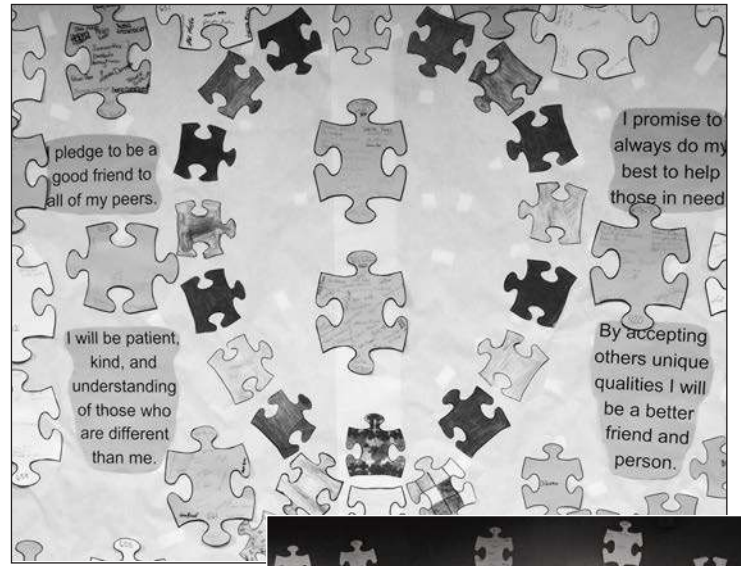
Having any of these symptoms does not necessarily mean that a child has autism, but they may be cause to warrant further evaluations by professionals. The best thing to do is to be aware and spread the word that this is a growing disorder and that it can be stopped.

In order to spread awareness

PHS participated in April as Autism Awareness Month. You may have seen the puzzle ribbon mural by the flagpole entrance to the school, but if you haven't, definitely take a look. It is a beautiful thing to see how all the puzzle pieces fit together, knowing they are all made up of fellow students. All the puzzle pieces are classes of students who have signed the autism awareness pledge, which is as follows:

I pledge to be a good friend to all of my peers. I promise to always do my best to help those in need. I will be patient, kind, and understanding of those who are different than me. By accepting others unique qualities I will be a better friend and person.

This pledge is not specific to just autism and is something that all of us at PHS strive to achieve, every day. PHS made April Autism Awareness Month, but the important thing is to keep the pledge for the rest of the year.



The Autism Awareness poster, also known as the Puzzle Ribbon Mural by the flagpole entrance, seen above in detail, explains some of the characteristics that students should strive for. At right is a larger portion of the poster, showing how large and complex it is.

HILLTOP STAR STAFF PHOTOS



Pipe leak causes postponement of library grand opening

By Jennifer Alvarez

The library reconstruction was already behind schedule, but the pipe leak in January totally killed any possibility of the library media center fully opening this school year. Many books were destroyed by the water damage and some of the newly constructed remodeling had to be redone.

With this school year winding down and students thinking about summer, the reopening of the library may not be on the minds of students. However, work will continue with inventorying old books, ordering new

books and making sure that the library media center is ready for work this coming September.

Mrs. McGinnis said of the reconstruction effort, "The leak was a setback, but we are working hard to ensure that the library will be ready for students." She added that she anticipates the grand opening in the fall to be a great success. She added, "It has been a long time coming, but all the hard work by everyone is really starting to pay off." The lighting is much better, the circulation desk is completely new, and there is a new computer lab with more modern tech-

nology. Additionally, there is a new conference room, a tv production studio, PODs for small group meetings, a presentation area, and other tables for collaborative planning and one-on-one discussions.

With the library media center nearing completion, the festivities for the grand re-opening are being completed. Expect to see such dignitaries as Mayor Blanco, Superintendent Munoz, Assistant Superintendent Pagan and Goldberg, the principal and assistant principals, and even television and newspaper reporters.

After the music and ribbon



PHOTO BY MICHAEL HARMON

A representative from William Paterson University speaks in the library conference room during the career fair.

cutting, we all get to use this brand new facility to learn. So, enjoy the summer now, but

come September, look forward to working in the new media center.

S.T.R.I.V.E. explores how PHS can achieve academic excellence

By Sharief Masri

In the quest to be the best urban school district in the state of New Jersey, students and faculty have come together to strive for success.

The club S.T.R.I.V.E. was created to allow students and teachers to work together, to find ways to motivate students to strive for academic success. Created in 2011 by Mrs. Jose, STRIVE stands for Students and Teachers Reviving and Instilling the Value of Education.

This organization has as its goal to explore creative ways to inspire students to achieve their highest potential while here at PHS. The main initiative of this group is the Zero-Free Challenge. In this program students pledge to complete all assign-

ments in a marking period for a class or classes (student's choice). When they achieve this goal, they get recognition (see STRIVE winners on this page) in the form of a certificate of accomplishment and a prize.

Other activities and initiatives sponsored by this organization are the Motivational Assembly in May by guest speaker Reggie Walker, football linebacker for the San Diego Chargers of the National Football League. There is also an end of the year awards dinner in June for students who really did strive to do their best in all their classes.

If you want to strive to be the best that you can be, and you feel like you are up to the challenge, then don't waste any time. Join STRIVE.

S.T.R.I.V.E. Zero-Free Challenge

1st quarter 2013-2014

Acevedo, Javan
Adams, Richlyn
Ariza, Fidel
Asawla, Mitul
Bautista, Joel
Bautista, Sergio
Brito, Jose
Calixto, Jeffrey
Cancel, Justin
Cedeno, Jommary
Cespedes, Vanessa
Christie, Anya
Coyotyl, Jessica
Crus, Elizeth
Cruz, Anays
Daniel, Matilde
Del Rosario, Weatherly
Deleon, Biehlin
Delgado, Lauren
Diaz, Denisse
Diaz, Diandra
Diaz, Lideliz
Diaz, Nikaury
Dominguez, Diana
Dominguez, Gislane
Escobedo, Sabrina
Escobedo, Samantha
España, Virginia

Fairmon, Zaire
Flores, Alexis
Flores, Jessica
Foster, Stephion
Frias, Irving
Fuentes, Carlos
Garcia, Annette
Garcia, Jennifer
Garcia, Melissa
Garcia, Virginia
Gonzales, Gisselle
Gonzales, Leonardo
Hernandez, Cindy
Hernandez, Cristian
Hernandez, Johnny
Hernandez, Jonalis
Ivy, Nazier
Lopez, Corrinah
Martinez, Francisco
Martinez, Giselle
Martinez, Selene
Martinez, Mirelis
Matos, Bryana
Mendoza, Silvia
Montecinos, Kemelyn
Morales, Geraldine
Morales, Rainerys
Morel, Erick

Orellana, Elida
Patel, Dev
Patel, Tej
Perez, Harrington
Perez, Stephanie
Pichardo, Ismael
Pichardo, Vanessa
Powell, Aadrina
Quezada, Pamela
Ramirez, Carmen
Ramos, Wendy
Rana, Neil
Reyes, Nathanael
Rios, Angelica
Rivera, Leslie
Rodriguez, Kyara
Rodriguez, Leslie
Rodriguez, Nathaniel
Rodriguez, Yaniza
Roman, Angela
Sacesor, Zaicka
Stegall, Azahre
Suarez, Angelica
Suarez, Erika
Torres, Ivan
Valerio, Gabriela
Vargas, Isaac
Bedran-Montero, Leonardo

PHS students give 127 pints in three blood drives



PHOTOS BY ASSATA ALSTON
A technician, above, gives the thumbs-up sign, indicating that the Passaic High School blood drive was a success. Mrs. Cilento, who organizes the blood drive, was pleased with the results. At right, upper and lower, workers watch over students who were giving blood. In all, 127 pints were collected. They will be used for trauma victims, surgeries and blood disorders.

By Adrian Martinez

The three blood drives, sponsored by Health Occupations, have collected 127 pints of blood. This may not sound like a lot, but each and every pint counts. Every pint will be used to save lives. The blood collected from volunteers at PHS will go to local hospitals to be used for trauma victims, surgeries, and blood disorders.

When someone is the victim of trauma, like getting into a car accident, and they lose a lot of blood, donations will go to save that life. If someone is in surgery and they lose a lot of blood, it

needs to be replenished. Blood drive donations will save that life. If someone has a blood disease, like Hemophilia, which is a disease that prevents a victim from being able to form a clot, even on a small wound. Victims of this disease can easily bleed to death. Blood drive donations will help save that life. Therefore, by donating a pint of blood a student is literally saving a life by replenishing their blood supply.

Mrs. Cilento, who puts together this event, said, "I am always so pleased to see how freely the students of PHS give of themselves for others. There are very generous students here."



Since she is retiring this year, she wanted to make a statement about her tenure at PHS. It follows:

"I have had a rewarding thirty year career working for this school district. I have had the privilege to teach personally interesting subjects. Health Occupations introduces students to the wide variety of careers, found in the health sector. I have taught the GRADS program, mentoring pregnant and young parents. They built skills important to the role of parenting and also help students complete their education

and eventually a profession. My favorite role has been the adviser of Teen Pep. This state program creates role models and peer educators in sexual responsibility. Students become like a family and go on to achieve success through the communication and presentation skills they learn.

I am grateful for all the wonderful students that have kept me young with their vitality and energy."

The students of PHS are grateful for the years of service and dedication to their education.



Life in the PHS Creations Club

By Cindy Tineo

There are many clubs offered here at PHS, however, one of the best is the Passaic Creations Club. As far as I am concerned it is one of the most amazing activities in this school.

We do a lot of fun things throughout the year such as plan, film and edit activities that are happening. This club is in charge of most of the work, because we decide what to do and how to do it. We have a lot of fun, but the best activity this year was when we went to Florida to film the Neighbor Science Competition.

To achieve the honor of going on a trip to Florida to film, students must demonstrate their capacity for work hard. It is really fun though, because we all have different responsibilities and work together to get the job done.

The Creations Club is divided into many different positions so that good quality video productions can be made. Everyone has their own job to do on any given project.

First, there are directors who organize the video project and make sure that there is a clear vision for the completed project. Next there are editors, who organize the final product and include sounds and special effects. Finally, there are actors, who are in front of the cameras, and camera operators, who are behind the cameras.

The adviser of our club is Ms. Garcia. We meet after school every Wednesday in G124. The Passaic Creations Club was created to celebrate through videos all the positive things happening in PHS. Every month we produce the Hot Topics show for the bilingual group. This task seems to take forever, but it is one of the most rewarding experiences I have had from

high school.

Joining a club does look good for college, but being part of a club is fun too. I recommend the Creations Club, because it is the one that can take us to HOLLYWOOD. This club is comprised of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors learning and doing their best with the camera, and other tasks. But most of all, we are learning things that may help us in everyday life. Working as part of a team and working toward a common goal builds self-esteem and self-confidence. Also, the main goal, is to create original works as a means of personal or group expression. So, for all the budding cameramen, or a news anchors, directors, or any other members of the world of media, or those who just want to have fun using this technology, expressing themselves in video production, then come join the Passaic Creations Club.

Television production classes visit Univision Studios

By Cindy Tineo

Univision has one of the largest Spanish speaking audiences in the world. There is a big following for this network in Passaic, and on June 3, some students, were invited to visit the Univision studios, headquartered in New York City. Students from the radio and television production classes were happy to be chosen to attend this Univision tour.

The field trip was organized by Mrs. Garcia, who is in charge of the bilingual group of radio and television production classes. Mr. Pena also attended this trip.

It was exciting for students to see how a full working television studio works. Some of the Univision executives from their television news depart-

ment greeted students, and they seemed interested in hearing from the students as much as the students wanted to meet them. Students were so excited to see just how everything backstage worked to make things look real for the television viewers. It is amazing just how fake things look in a studio and how real they all look on television.

Perhaps the most amazing part of these television productions is that so many things need to be going on at the same time. Everything has to happen without a mistake or the images for the television viewers will be ruined.

PHS students were honored to go and they showed it by presenting themselves as mature young adults. Not every school gets to go to this amazing place, and the executives made a point of stating that the students from PHS did a great job of showing the quality of the city they represent.

"Passaic is one of our loyal cities" one executive said.

Students were elated by these positive comments. Senior Cindy Tineo told executives about PHS's first generation graduates program. These executives were quite interested in this and asked many follow up questions. They thought it sounded like a program that every school should have. We may even see some Univision cameras at graduation this year.



New superintendent wants to make PHS #1

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quired for graduation?" and "How can we improve the quality of what goes on in the classroom?" Change does not happen quickly. It is a long term process but it is possible if we work together. We cannot improve teaching and learning overnight.

Mr. Munoz wants PHS students to understand that he wants to create an academic experience for all students, to prepare for college. If there was a choice between a college tour and an amusement park, he would choose a college tour so that students can learn and succeed. No

time should be wasted doing things that are not important to the mission of becoming the best urban school district in New Jersey.

The only way Passaic can become the best is having less dropouts, better SAT scores, AP exam scores increased, and passing both parts of the HSPA when taken the first time. Therefore, all efforts will be made to help students stay in school and graduate. Students will be given every opportunity to pass the HSPA on the first try, and also to take advanced placement courses when possible.

Mr. Munoz also favors the district uniform policy. He said that parents love the school uniform, because it is much easier for them. It helps students to attend school dressed properly and minimize gangs. Therefore, do not look for a change to the uniform policy any time soon.

Mr. Munoz would like to tell everyone at PHS, "I am excited to be here, and I am looking forward to working with students, to fulfill the district vision to become the best urban school district in New Jersey." The future certainly looks positive, with Mr. Munoz in charge.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL HARMON

Speakers at the career fair, clockwise from top left: Mr. Michael Rose, the CEO of Diversified Health Services; art teacher Mr. Peña; Fairleigh Dickinson University professor Catherine Acosta; poet and musician Caridad De La Luz.

College and career fair a success

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Another representative from Latino Promise was Jadhel Rodriguez, who is a lawyer, a graduate of the University of Central Florida, and Barry University School of Law. He is currently working to help improve the financial resources of Latino Promise, so that they can help more students. He wants to use his career to advance the cause of Latino students in America.

His message was similar to Mrs. Accosta's. Education af-

ter high school is important. It is the key to the future. He asked students to set a goal for their future and then achieve it. Students in attendance seemed to take this message to heart.

Students were treated to the music of Caridad De LaLuz, a poet and musician. She rallied students to pursue their dreams and enjoy life after high school. As a poet and a singer she stressed the importance of the spoken word and even sang for her audience.

There were many other presenters as well, from lawyers, like Alberto Rivas, who is a judge in the New Jersey Superior Court, and Anna Maria Tejada, who represents companies in commercial suits before state and federal courts. There was Debbie DuHaime who is a traffic reporter for True Traffic on many local radio stations. Dr. Hannah Janoowalla, M.D. a recent graduate of Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson

Medical School, and who graduated from PHS in 2006. She told students that PHS can be the beginning of a great career. Even the new PHS Assistant Superintendent, Rachel Goldberg, who is in charge of curriculum and instruction, spoke to students about her path to success. She came from the private sector to have an impact on students and do something important with her life.

There were also many other speakers, each giving his or her experiences about schools and careers. The students were respectful and thankful for all these professionals taking the time to come to PHS and discuss their career paths. Mrs. Romero, who organized this year's program, hopes to expand it next year. With Mr. DeNaples stating that this year's career fair was "a huge success," the bar has been set high for next year.

Students vs. teachers basketball

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However, the students who will benefit from the \$1075 that the Octagon Club raised from this fundraiser are the real winners.

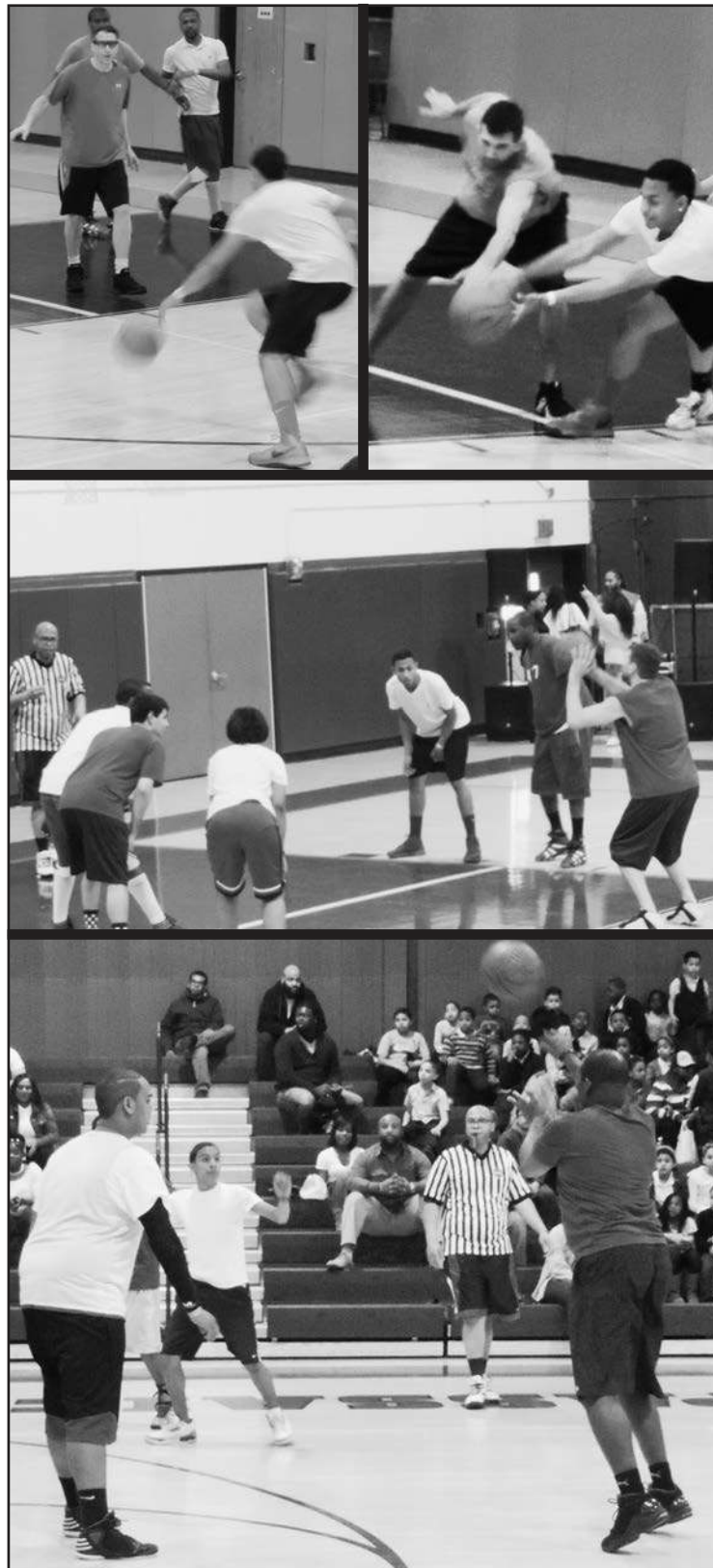
This was a chance to have a great time, build collegiality among the staff and students, and build positive relationships, not to mention help raise money for students to go to college.

Mr. Sheridan, Advisor of the Octagon Club, said of the event, "I am so proud of the Octagon Club, they went above and beyond to raise money for the community." He added, of the staff participation, "I think it is incredible that so many members of the staff participated or helped to make the game a success."

Faculty members played, sold tickets, coached, donated money, did security, helped set up the gym, and ran the scoreboard. Mr. Sheridan would like to thank all those who helped make this game such a huge success.

Even though the teachers won this game, again, Mr. Sheridan said jokingly, "I am shocked to see how close the game was." He vows that next year the teachers will win the match by a greater margin. He said, "We'll be ready for the students next year."

However, in this competition, we are all winners. Congratulations to everyone who was part of this great time.



PHOTOS BY MITZI MONTILLA

The students began with an early lead, but the teachers rallied to win the game. The game raised over \$1000 that the Octagon Club can use for student scholarships.

Memorial Day Parade

Continued from page 1

ing their freedom to do so. Other representation was presented by DECA, Strive, Peer Leadership and the track team.

Other schools got into the act of this event. School 9's chorus sang patriotic songs such as, "Proud to Be and American," and one of the students sang the national anthem.

This is the first year that each of the sixteen schools in Passaic sent students (and their parents) to the parade celebration. School board member Horacio Carrera organized the parade as head of its committee. He claimed, he did it because he wanted to send a message that we are all Americans.

Our new superintendent, Mr. Munoz was also present to celebrate with his new school district and spread his message that "Today marks the beginning of the future. It is a future in which Passaic will become the best urban school district in New Jersey." (For more on the new vision for our school, please see the inter-

view on page 1).

However, the real reason for this parade was to give Passaic families the opportunity to come together to give thanks for the freedom we enjoy, and to demonstrate the pride we feel in being American.

Another way that students showed their patriotism was by entering a Memorial Day essay contest. Students from all schools in Passaic wrote essays. The topic from the high school was "Why Is It Important to Show Patriotism in a Free Society?"

Junior Brandon Rivera said of the parade experience, "This was my first parade, I had a good time, even though I was a little shy at first. There were a lot of people there."

Jesus Lopez, also a junior, and founding president of the Daisuki Nihon Club, said, "It was a fun day. We got to be outside and enjoyed a great day with everyone we know. I hope they bring more hot dogs next year."

If that is not a testimonial to the freedoms we enjoy, what is?



Left: Chorus singing as town members.

Below: Kaylin Cintron, as Edna Turnblad, gets fatherly advice from Wilbur Turnblad, played by Anthony Gonzalez.



Kaylin Cintron, Catherine Sposato, playing Penny Pringleton, and Seaweed J. Stubs, played by Qadir Miller.



Motormouth Maybelle, played by Ashley Candelaria, justifies her stagenameto Tracy Turnblad, played by Kaylin Cintron, and Edna Turnblad, played by Bryan Calixto.



Tracy Turnblad (Kaylin Cintron), gets some respect from Link Larkin, played by Leo Bedran.

Working on 'Hairspray' to make it a musical hit

By Jose Grullon

Working daily on an enormous project with a single focus is the goal of the drama club, which performed the musical, *Hairspray*. There was a lot of time and effort put into this musical.

The Drama Club started working on this production in December, and continued working on it for its debut in April. Both the students and staff worked very hard preparing this production.

So what really goes into making this play work? Actors have to memorize lines and songs, positions and stage direction, choreography and scene changes.

While some people might assume that putting on a play is an easy task, let me assure them that it is not. It is great fun however, and a rewarding experience when the curtain goes up and the audience begins to interact with the players' work on stage.

It takes months to just get the play to work, but to make it look great and smooth takes months of rehearsals. The first stage is to work the book, which means that the actors were allowed to look at their scripts to see their lines.

Eventually everyone needs to wean themselves off the book and work "off-book," which means standing there without the security blanket of a book for reference. This is a

difficult thing to do, and like a band-aid, it should be done quickly. However, once all the actors have their lines memorized, the play can become much more interesting by working on the craft of acting.

The actors would not be nearly as convincing if not for the hard work of the Art Club and their advisor, Mr. Schmitz. They sacrificed their time after school to first draw and design multiple sets and some props, and then to build and paint them. This takes many hours of work from everyone and the Art Club did a fine job making the play look great.

The stage crew is really the backbone of the cast. They gathered and organized props, moved sets around and made sure this production worked. Furthermore, the costumes needed to be assembled and if they were unavailable, purchased. There would be no play if there were no stage crew.

I was never so aware of the awesome task of putting this all together behind the curtain, until I became involved with the school play. Every actor is indebted to the stage crew, and they did a great job on this huge task.

A lot of work was put into this production from a great many people. There were many things that had to be done before the production debuted. The lights needed to

be set, then adjusted, and then adjusted again. The music and sound effects needed to be coordinated with the action on stage. The sound needed to be fixed, over and over again because that is the nature of live theatre. Just when you think the sound is great and everyone can hear everything that is going on, then something changes and the sound needs to be reworked.

The *Hairspray* cast and crew practiced every day after school from the end of school until 6:30 p.m. These practices were held every weekday for about six months. On many Saturdays we practiced from 9 a.m. until noon. It was very stressful for everyone, but all that hard work paid off in the end. All the feedback was great.

Both students and staff thought that this was a great production. Senior Shareif Masri, stated, "The show was amazing. I noticed all the time and effort my fellow students put into this and it was worth it."

Many teachers and staff complimented the students on how well they did. When a great show comes together everyone wants to see it. We even had the mayor of Passaic, Dr. Alex Blanco, attend. That is a testament to the diligence of all the students and staff who worked so hard to create this production of *Hairspray*.

CRITIC'S CORNER: 'Hairspray' a success

By Henry Hernandez

The school musical, performed by the students of PHS is an annual treat. While some years are better than others, this year's production of *Hairspray*, did not disappoint. The incredible amount of dedication and hard work that went into this production was evident from the details on the sets, to the amount and detail of props and costumes, to the actors themselves who were prepared and seemed very comfortable with their parts.

The lead character, Tracy Turnblad, played by Kaylin Cintron, was very smooth and convincing. Kaylin seemed to embody the optimistic and naïve ideals of this play. She not only acted the part well, but sang the songs with power.

Speaking of naivety, Penny

Pringleton was played perfectly by Catherine Sposato. Following her best friend, Penny is always supportive of Tracy. Lucky for Catherine, Penny has some of the funniest lines of the show. One staged laugh was when she states that they can put "words" on their protest signs. When the protest is started, sure enough, there was "words" written on a sign.

The most difficult part of the production is always Edna Turnblad. She was played by Bryan Calixto. If this is not one of the greatest funny moments of his career at PHS, it certainly will be for his audience. He carries the role of a large woman so convincingly that members of the audience actually had to ask whether that was actually Bryan.

Other convincing characters were Motormouth Maybelle,

played by Ashley Candelaria, and Velma Von Tussle, played by Kelly Barreto. The cast and crew did a great job making the mother/daughter teams look similar to make their relationships believable.

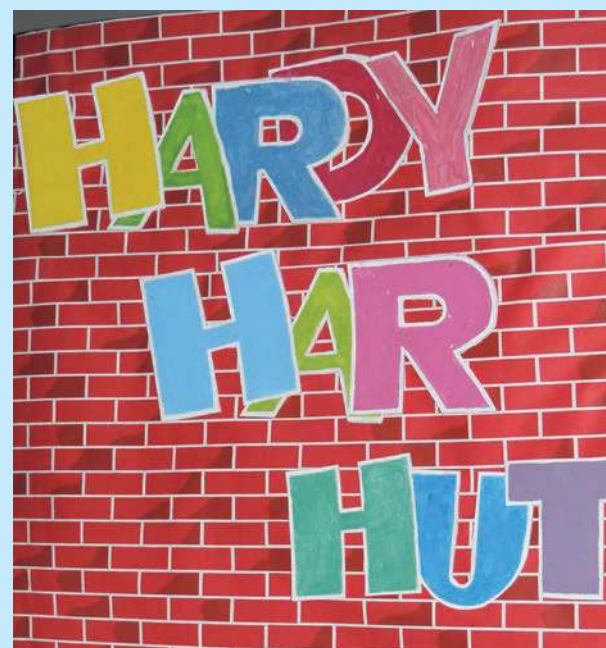
Quadir Miller, who played Seaweed J. Stubbs did a great job performing his musical number with energy and vitality. Another notable musical performance was by Antonio Bello, who played Corny Collins, and Leo Bedran who played Link Larkin.

The whole feeling of the sixties, with both, its good optimism for the future, and the bad breaking free from the racism of the past, was presented in a mature and believable way. Most of all this was a fun presentation.

This was a great performance and a great time for anyone who saw *Hairspray*.



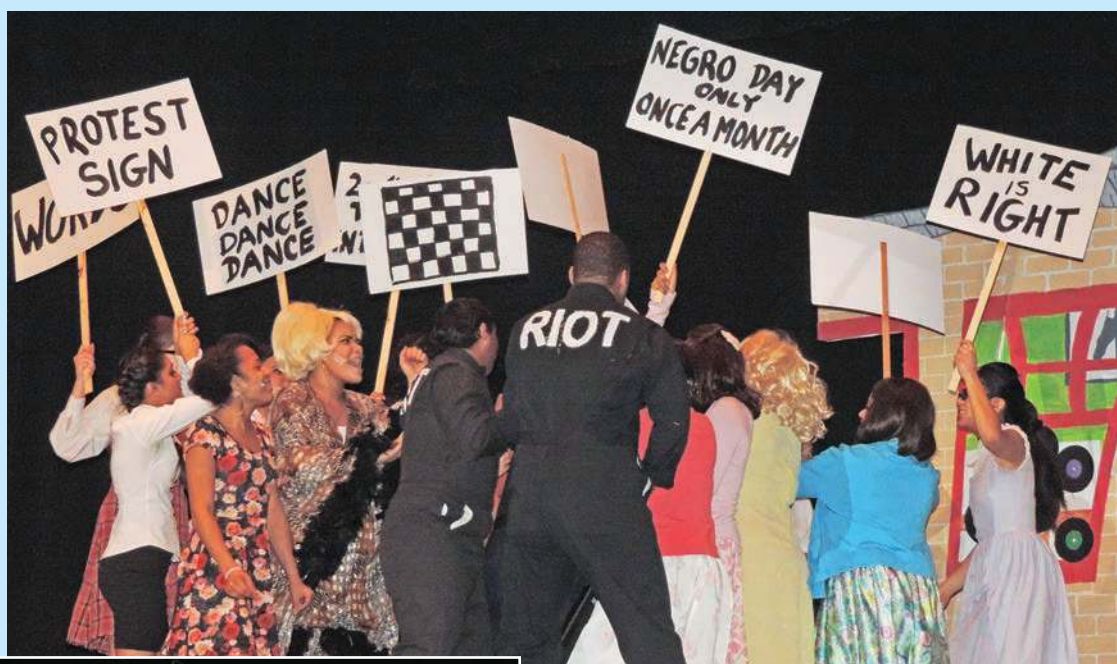
The Turnblads, Wilbur, (Anthony Gonzalez), Edna (Bryan Calixto), and Tracy (Kaylin Cintron).



Hardy Har Hut set pieces designed and created by the art club.

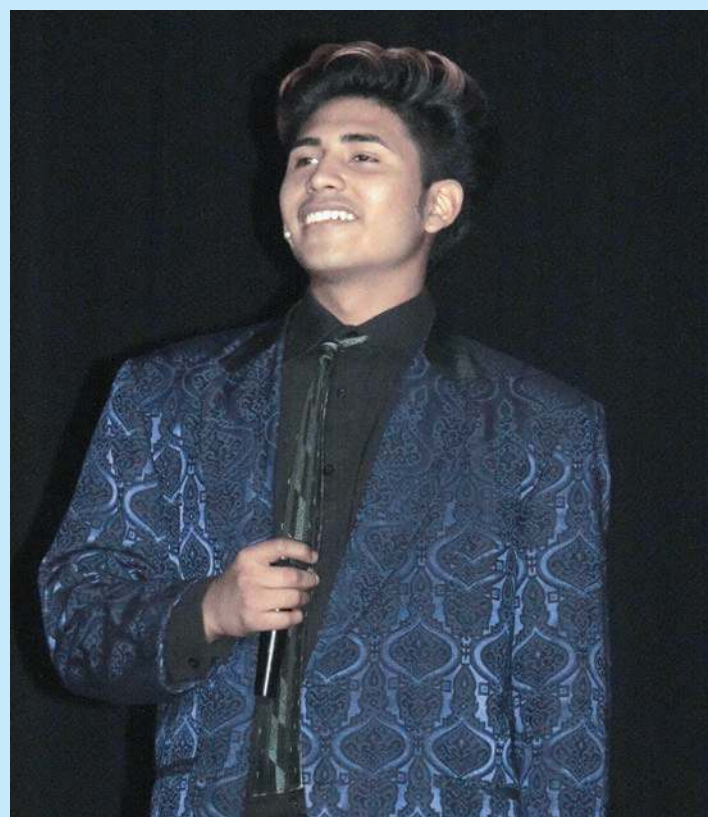


Chorus helps Kaylin Cintron sing the final number.



Above: Staged race riot is the climax of the first act. Notice the protest sign that says "words."

Left: Part of the Corny Collins television set, made possible by the PHS Art Club, advised by Mr. Schmitt.



Antonio Bello plays Corny Collins.



Tracy Turnblad (Kaylin Cintron), convinces her parents Wilbur (Anthony Gonzalez), and Edna (Bryan Calixto), to let her compete in the big dance competition.

Photos by
Levi Albenis

What advice can you offer next year's freshman class?

"Every year counts, so don't wait until senior year to think about going to college and getting on with your life."

Javan A.

"Try to stay away from Mr. Lungren."

D.Delgado

"Do all the work."

Marco Bravo

"Be who you are, and do not even try to be anyone else. In this way you will find your true friends who like you for who you are, and share the high school years."

D.J.

"Stay focused and committed to your schoolwork. Every year counts, even freshman year!"

Devin Ruiz

"Don't act up – whatever you do freshman year can haunt you until the end. Just because you can't fail a grade in high school, you can still fail classes. Failing classes means NO GRADUATION."

Kevin Barreto

"Play the sports you like. Don't miss too many days. Don't worry about your friends so much that it interferes with your classwork. Listen to your teachers."

Jaisy Hernandez

"Do NOT procrastinate."

William Villeda

"Balance is the key. Choose the right friends."

Demitrus Jalil

"Don't cut classes"

Dante Graciano

"And don't slack off"

Carlos Delrio

"Make sure you get into sports."

Ronald Cuello

"Stay true to yourself and don't lose focus."

Alondra Vazquez

"Don't sweat the small stuff."

Don't get mixed up in the wrong crowd."

Karina Lopez

"Take freshman year seriously. It is probably your most important year."

S. Merlyn

"Get good grades and do not wait until the last minute to do everything."

Karina Gil

"Stay focused and avoid bad influences. Don't ever give up on your education."

Angela Gonzalez

"Don't be afraid of yourself."

Lizandro Castro

"Get good grades early."

Patrick Rosas

"Remember that not everyone is your friend. Choose your friends wisely."

Anonymous

"Don't slack off. You'll regret it later, I promise."

Jhon Marco Valazquez

"Don't be lazy."

Daisha Torres

"You start with many 'friends' but at the end of the day your only friend is yourself."

Johanna Ramirez

"Hang out with the right people, ask teachers for help when you need it, and get your work in on time. Never let anyone tell you, 'you can't make it.'"

Stephany Hernandez

"Do what you have to do; be yourself and don't give up on school. Don't cut!"

Arianna L.

"Do your work. Stay focused."

Anya

"Do as many after school activities as you can, and don't fall for peer pressure."

Kimberly Sabando

"Do your work and get AP classes, if you can, so you can get into the best schools you can. Keep your circle of friends to those who are good for you. Even when times are bad, just keep going."

Eduardo Xoletl

"Do as many college level classes and AP classes as you can. They are free. Please, do not cut school! I regret having done that and then getting caught and having to talk to my parents afterwards. Respect yourself and do your homework."

A.C.

"Give your best, right from the first day of

Class of 2014



school. Stay active and participate in every club or sport that you like."

T.L.

"Get your life planned early and follow it without excuses. Don't chase after your friends and crushes, and get a job and driver's license. Do your work and listen to your teachers. They know what they are talking about."

Harley Perez

"Catch that red Gyarados, you need it for Lance."

Christian Reyeh

"Always be yourself, don't ever change for anyone else. Hang out with the people that are going to help you make a difference in yourself. Stay away from trouble."

Nicole

"Pass the first three marking periods with high 80's and then, work even harder in the last marking period."

Antonio Aeolarino

What is your biggest regret of the last four years?

"Not taking school seriously enough because I didn't get to play sports my whole high school career."

D.Delgado

"My biggest regret is cutting so much. Don't do it. It is not worth it."

"Not getting on to Honor Roll."

Kimberly Sabando

"Not studying enough, early on."

Patrick Rosas

"Not working hard enough, all the way through school, to get good grades."

Luisa Ramirez

"My biggest regret is not doing all my work on time."

Giovanni Ruiz

"Senioritis that has started so early for me this year."

Artenio Toledo

"Slacking my freshman year."

Yamilet Alcantara

"Not making Honor Roll."

David Prato

"Coming to school every single day late, during my freshman year."

Jaradlitz Cruz

"Not joining any sports or clubs."

Angel D.

"Waiting until the last minute to get things done."

Karina Tul

"Not cutting enough. Just kidding. You shouldn't cut class."

Tommy Solano

"Being lazy. Stressing over all the little stuff, and then forgetting some of the big stuff. My biggest regret was letting some of my grades go down. I let myself down."

Angela Gomez

"I regret not doing the best I could on all of my work, and also, not joining a sport."

Eduardo Xoletl

"Not fighting the people that took my Lucky Charms. You know who you are."

Yaisy Hernandez

"Not taking advantage of all the college classes and AP courses that the school offered."

Embarrassed

"Cutting school and classes during my freshman year."

Arianna L.

"Not getting into harder classes."

Snorlyn

"Being late to school, getting suspended for trying to sneak in."

Antonio Apolarino

"My biggest regret was cutting classes."

Nicole

"My biggest regret was being late to school."

Lizandro Castro

"Not doing all my work on time."

Joshua Gallo

"Cutting class, not handing in my work on time, missing school some days, and I should have stayed in track and field."

Stephany Hernandez

"My biggest regret of high school is not joining a sport."

Johanna Ramirez

"Not filing my paperwork for college earlier."

Harley Perez

"Not joining cross country, or staying on the track since my freshman year."

Slow Lane

"Associating with the wrong people and missing classes."

Ronald Cuello

"Disappointing my teachers."

William Villeda

"Not taking my math courses more seriously."

D.J.

What are your plans for the future?

"College"

Giovanni Ruiz

"Medical school."

E.B.

"I am planning to become a photographer, or a teen counselor. I want to be there for them."

Angela Gonzalez

"Medical School. I want to be a neurosurgeon."

Karina Lopez

"I am attending NYU."

Jose Perez

"Going to Essex County College then NJIT and studying abroad in Russia."

Natalia Solobo

"I'm going to Rutgers!"

Marbella Saenz

"My plans are to read more. It is the key to success."

E.S.

"First go to PCCC and then to Willy P. (William Paterson) and then off to Florida."

Kelvin Barreto

"Concordia University and then California here I come."

Yamilet Alcantara

"Attending William Paterson University, working hard to become a substance abuse counselor."

D.J.

"Nike Soccer Academy and then see if I have what it takes to do what I love."

David Prado

"College, law school and then success."

Alondra Vazquez

"I want to find a career that I enjoy, maybe medicine or science."

Carlos Del Rio

"To watch Mexico win the World Cup."

Kenneth Gutierrez

(Good Luck with that. – Ed.)

"Go to school and learn more stuff."

Marcos Bravo

"I'm going back to Georgia."

Juan Meroz

"Study at the I.C.E."

Alma

"Attend Montclair"

D.P.

"Go to college and study biology to be a veterinarian."

Cynthia Montes de Oca

"Go to college for ultrasound tech or maybe even nursing, so that later I fulfill my dream of becoming a cardiac surgeon."

Marbella Saenz

"Attend Montclair State University, graduate, then get accepted to a top notch medical school and become a pediatrician."

Anya

"Get through basic training, to become a U.S. Marine. I want to be one of the few

and the proud and defend my country."

Kimberly Sabando

"I am going into the Army and also get some technical training."

Harley Perez

"Get some technical school training and then earn some money."

Christian Reyes

"College for the next four years of my life."

Josue Gallo

"I want to earn a master's degree."

Lizandro Castro

"I'm going to college, getting a career and starting my life."

Stephany Hernandez

"College, travel, work."

Johanna Ramirez

"Summer job first, then college, and then a career."

Antonio Alimario

"College, and a car, then help my family, while I pursue my own dreams of becoming a professional dancer."

Nicole

"I am going to Mexico for the summer. Then Berkeley College for Criminal Justice in the fall, and then becoming a police officer, after that."

Eduardo Xoletl

"College, job, keep on running, and having some family time."

Tomas Leon

Who or what will you miss most?

"I hate to admit it, but I think I will miss everything."

Eduardo Xoletl

"Shivani J"

D.P.

"Not Dhara"

S.J.

"The teachers always reminding me to do better."

Angela Gonzalez

"The five-star restaurant-style lunch menus."

Hungry during period 5 lunch

"All the class clowns"

Cynthia Montes de Oca

"The Varsity Baseball Team, the players, the games, the coaches, and this season."

Loving PHS Baseball

"I will miss the good times in school with my friends."

Giovanni Ruiz

"I will miss being a student at PHS."

Alondra Vazquez

"School Lunch. The company not the food."

Ronald Cuello

"All the helpful teachers and security staff."

Natalia Solobo

"I will miss having everyone saying 'hi,' to mein the hallways, with kindness and energy."

D.J.

"I will miss Adilene, Marissa, Daniel and Assatta."

Genain

"I'll miss my friends and the school play."

William Villeda

"I will miss Mrs. Cooper. Even though I used to complain about the work, I do realize it was all for my own good."

Jordaliz Cruz

"Mrs. Marrero and all my friends."

Nicole

"The swim team and all the English teachers."

David Prado

"I will miss all my teachers and all my friends. I will also miss coming to school everyday."

Karina Gil

"I will miss these halls of PHS, best know and believe. This place won't be the same without the class of 2014."

Artemis Tolesh

"Leading my wrestling team and of course, the coaches."

Devin Ruiz

"Saying Tampa was the best and getting out of Passaic for a while."

Kelvin Barreto

"Running track for all four years and all the amazing teammates I have come to

know.”
 Javan A.
 “Cross-country, and winter and spring track, are what I will miss most. The teammates, the coaches, the fact that we all improved, by working hard and believing in ourselves, are all the reasons why I will miss this part of PHS.
 Tomas Leon
 “I will miss my locker area behind the weightroom and just chilling with friends during class time there. (When is this paper coming out?)”
 Antonio Apoliario
 “What I will miss most is being with my friends and classmates and playing sports.”
 Anonymous
 “What I will miss the most is speaking about anything to Mr. Ogonowski.”
 Harley Perez
 “Harley and all my friends in the Anime Club.”
 Christian Reyes

What was your most embarrassing moment?

When I fell off the stairs in front of everyone during passing.”
 Bhavika Gandhi
 “I walked into the wrong bathroom by accident.”
 Anonymous
 “Failing Algebra 2”
 Kenneth Gutierrez
 “Thinking I was a “pimp” and I got caught. This resulted in getting smacked in the hallway. I deserved it. Don’t do it.”
 Anonymous
 “When my phone was taken away, because I was on it in school.”
 S.P.
 “I fell in the courtyard. Everyone thought it was pretty funny.”
 Angel D.
 “When I was sitting in gym, I sat in someone’s raisins. It looked like poop.”
 Nicole
 “When my phone fell into the toilet.”
 Luisa R.
 “Walking into the wrong class, by accident.”
 Cynthia M.
 “My voice cracking while I was singing the “Star Spangled Banner” at the military ball.”
 Kimberly Sabando
 “Finding a mouse in my book bag.”
 W.V.
 “I ripped my pants while walking in the hallway. This was seriously embarrassing because I had neon underwear.”
 D.J.
 “Like many others, on one of those days when they closed the courtyard, I slipped and fell. It was pretty embarrassing.”
 Eduardo Xoletl
 “When I got in trouble right at the main entrance to the school.”
 Giovanni Ruiz
 “I tripped walking up the hill to school. My papers went everywhere.”
 Angela Gonzalez
 “It was embarrassing when I got ink all over my crotch. But don’t worry I covered it all with a central slip.”
 Antonio Apolinario

What was your funniest moment at PHS?

“It was all fun.”
 D. Delgado
 “When I fell asleep, and get in trouble, by Mr. Terranova, during my sophomore year.”
 Giovanni Ruiz
 “There are too many to just pick one.”
 Anya
 “Getting into trouble in the hallways.”
 Bryan Salinas
 “The Talent Show.”
 Angel D.
 “When my friends actually fought for an orange. I didn’t even think they liked oranges.”
 Marbella Saiez

My folder broke and all my papers flew down the stairs.”
 D.E.
 “My funniest moment was when I dyed my hair green and my friend dyed it purple and in the hallway people called us the Power Rangers.”
 Angela Gonzalez
 “Go, go Power Rangers.”
 Anonymous
 “Having Yudomy at my lunch table. He would sing his latest release, “Yo quiero un platinanito.”
 Jordaliz Cruz
 “At the end of my senior year, I can say that everything at school is funny to attend.”
 Tommy Solano
 “My funniest moments were in cheerleading.”
 Nicole
 “Hairspray.”
 Smorlyn
 “Seeing my friend drop gum from the bleachers.”
 Arianna
 “Listening to old songs with my friend.”
 E.B.
 “I love when I would be able to go to classes and goof off and be a clown.”
 Eduardo Xoletl
 “When I played Prudy Pingleton and the security of the prison in the play Hairspray.”
 A.C.
 “My funniest moments were when I had Mr. Jernigan as a teacher. When he was about to sit on our ‘Jesus Table’ his pants ripped.”
 Anonymous
 “During my freshman year, I was walking through the courtyard and it was a slippery winter. My one friend went down and pulled on my other friend and this started a chain reaction.”
 David Prado

What was the funniest excuse you ever gave a teacher or a principal?

“I was kidnapped and that is why I couldn’t do my homework.”
 Devin Ruiz
 “That I had the swine flu and that is why I didn’t go to class for two weeks.”
 Kelvin BarretoI
 “I went to the Grand Canyon and a rattlesnake bit my pants. They ripped and that is why I don’t have my uniform pants.”
 Not bit in Arizona
 “I couldn’t do my homework because I was really into the season finale of “Breaking Bad.”
 W.W.
 “I was fighting my demons.”
 Yaisy Hernandez
 “There was a new game, and I had to play it before anyone else.”
 Tommy Solano
 “Sorry I was late, I was talking to my friend’s Aunt about college.”
 Eduardo Xoletl
 “I was suspended for trying to come in the school. The funny part of this excuse is that it is not an excuse. It really happened.”
 Antonio Apolinario
 “I didn’t even know we had to do homework.”
 Stephany Hernandez
 “I lost the sheet in the rain on the way home.”
 T.L.

What was your favorite part of PHS?

“My favorite part of PHS was joining the varsity cheerleading squad”
 Stephanie Cedeno
 “Joining volleyball”
 Spiker
 “Graduating. It has been a wild time here.”
 Luisa Ramirez
 “Being in the ROTC.”
 Denise Espinal
 “Being voted president of LMTI.”
 D.J.

“Interacting with other students and learning about their various cultures.”
 Marbella Saenz
 “Trips to Florida and competing with the ROTC Drill Team and PHS Marching Band.
 Kimberly Sabando
 “My favorite part of PHS is seeing my friends every day. I also appreciate the knowledge I have gained over the years. I really appreciate the exit doors.”
 :)
 “When I finally got some girls to like me.”
 D.Delgado
 “Senior Night Out.”
 S. Merlyn
 “Finding out who my friends really are.”
 Giovanni Ruiz
 “Becoming a cheerleader.”
 Nicole
 “I have only been here for two years, but my favorite part is all the great people I have met.”
 Kelvin Barreto (A.K.A. – Tampa)
 “Finding myself interacting with so many different kinds of people.”
 Alondra Vazquez
 “Some of the teachers we have, like Mr. Jernigan or Mitchell.”
 Yamilet Alcantara
 “Seeing all of my friends and having fun.”
 Eduardo Xoletl
 “All four of my years here, I had fun and I had good teachers who all believed in me.”
 David Presto
 “Being able to leave early, senior year.”
 Kayla Frias
 “Having our very own indoor waterfall by the old gym.”
 Devin Ruiz
 “Seeing all my friends and teachers.”
 Karina Gil
 “Graduating”
 Jaran A.
 “Sports and art classes. Hanging out with friends.”
 Antonio Apolinario
 “My favorite part was meeting new and unique people.”
 Angela Gonzalez
 “The PHS Stadium. It has so many memories.”
 Tarras Leon
 “The Naval Science room because Senior Chief McMastere was an amazing teacher, life counselor, and just a good person. I will miss her.”
 A.C.
 “I had the chance to figure out who are my real friends.”
 Johanna Ramirez
 “Chilling with my friends.”
 Mr. Friendly

How have you changed since coming to PHS?

I have become more mature, and I grew a couple inches.”
 D.P.
 “I changed from being anti-social to being a social person.”
 Mayelin Santana
 “I went for being really nice, to a grump. Some people get me so angry.”
 Kimberly Sabando
 “I got more betterer at writing.”
 Just Kidding
 “More mature, less dramatic.”
 Anonymous
 “I don’t feel as changed personally as much as I learned a lot about how other people are.”
 D. Delgado
 “I became a more serious person and I learned a lot.”
 Giovanni Ruiz
 “I have become a more mature, by learning a little more about life.”
 Josue Gallo
 “Yes, even I have developed values, respect and morals.”
 Artemis Toledo
 “I am still a southerner, so no, I haven’t changed much.”
 Juan Meraz
 “My friends helped me get out of my own

personal problems. Thanks.”
 Anonymous
 “I have become more thoughtful and smarter.”
 Kelvin Barreto
 “I feel like I have matured and grown into a young man.”
 Javan A
 “I have become more responsible and also more social. PHS has made me realize more about life in general.”
 Eduardo Xoletl
 “I’m more confident and learned to hold a decent conversation.”
 David Presto
 “I noticed that every year I was here, I became wiser and more mature.”
 Angela Gonzalez
 “I have become more confident and more involved.”
 Yamilet Alcantara
 “I have changed, for the better!”
 Alondra Vazquez
 “I feel like I am more mature. I hope I am.”
 Angel D.
 “Older and wiser.”
 D.K.
 “Change has come upon me ever minute off every day as no time can be the same as the last one. Thus, my time at PHS has only been a portion of my total life experience. I have changed here, for the better though.”
 Anonymous
 “I have made more friends and started to become more responsible.”
 Karina Gil
 “The way I have changed since my arrival to PHS is that now, I have become a harder worker, more responsible and more motivated.”
 Tomas Leon
 “I have learned to make smarter and more mature decisions.”
 Nicole
 “More mature, and more secure with myself.”
 S. Merlyn
 “I learned how to act in public.”
 Antonio Apolinario
 “I have learned to become more responsible every one of the four years here.”
 Johanna Ramirez
 “I became more humble and I learned to keep some things to myself.”
 Stephany Hernandez
 “I have become more realistic about the world.”
 Harley Perez

Who was your favorite teacher?

“Mrs. Columbo, on of the most unique and caring teachers. She is always happy.”
 A.R.
 “Mr. Messina”
 Marcos Fuentes
 “Mrs. Cawthorne”
 D.P.
 “Mrs. Cilento and Mr. Messina because they have integrity.”
 Celenny Paulino
 “Mrs. Jose, Mr. Mitchell, Mrs. Lospinosa, Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Torres, Mr. Maria, okay everyone is great!”
 Kimberly Sabando
 “Mrs. Bolton – she’s the best.”
 Cynthia Motes de Oca
 “Budds, Messina and Walker.”
 Ronald Cuello
 “Mrs. Welch”
 William Villeda
 “I loved all my teachers!”
 D.J. Genairis



Message from Mr. Estrick

To the Passaic High School graduating Class of 2014, I would just like to express how proud I am of each and every graduate. I would also like to congratulate all the graduates on the success of their future endeavors!



To the Class of 2016, please have a safe, enjoyable, and restful summer. Please make sure that you complete your Summer Reading Assignments over the summer months. When you return in September, I know that all students will be ready to work hard during their junior year, which will take us one step closer to obtaining our P.H.D. (Passaic High Diploma).

Sincerely,
Mr. Estrick

From Mrs. Barbosa

To the Graduating senior class

Well Done Senior Class! Education is a remarkable tool. It enables you to do wonderful things that can catapult you to great success. Congratulations on your graduation and all the best for your future. I wish you achieve great heights of success; keep your courage as you step ahead towards new challenges and success in everything you do. Be safe and wise!



To the Freshman class

If you're wondering how this last year went so fast, you should see how quickly the next three will fly by. This is the time for you to plan and prepare for your future. There are opportunities and infinite possibilities for you to pursue. Stay focused on school; before you know it graduation will be here. Have a safe summer and please READ!!!!

Mrs. Barbosa

Goodbye from Mr. Lundgren

Seniors,

I have had the privilege over the past six years to watch you grow into successful young adults. Many of you have faced difficult challenges during this time, but you have persevered and will now move onto the next phase of your lives. My wish for all of you is that you take all the good you have acquired during this time and use it to move forward in fulfilling the American Dream.

It will be important to remember, as you move forward, to never forget who you are and why you are here. That when you are faced with the tough decisions that lie ahead, you always take the "High Road," never looking for the easy choice but the right one.

Best of luck to all of you, you truly are the Best this city has to offer.

Mr. Daniel Lungren,
Assistant Principal



A Fond Farewell from Principal DeNaples

Congratulations on having achieved one of the major goals of your life: graduation.

The truly exciting part of your life is about to begin, and, as life takes you to varied places and through many experiences, understand that each moment is a lesson in becoming better.

Share your knowledge with others and always lend a helping hand where you can. I wish you all the best of everything and hope you will attain the dreams you have chosen.



Mr. DeNaples
Principal

Congratulations from Mrs. Taylor

Congratulations to the Class of 2014. Your accomplishments as seniors are a source of pride and happiness, for you and for this school. You all have various needs and desires, but you all have the same quality of achievement and success.

As you go out into the world, make it a better place. Remember your PHS roots, your fond memories, and the pride that the faculty and staff have for you and all your future endeavors.



Mrs. Taylor
Senior Class Vice-Principal

Farewell from the Counseling Department

Seniors, you have no more worries about whether you have enough credits to graduate. All of the trials of your years at PHS will be a distant memory as you ascend the platform to receive your diploma.

The school counseling department wants to congratulate each and every graduating senior on your success at PHS. In the classroom, on the fields, in the arts, or in the service of others, each of you have grown and given of yourselves, and for that you should be proud. As you leave PHS, you will take with you many friend-

ships and endless memories of the last four years that will remain with you for a lifetime.

Keep challenging yourselves and the world around you will realize your greatness. Continue to dream big and don't let anyone or anything stop you from reaching your goals.

We wish you all the best as you head off for the next exciting stage of your lives. Come back to visit PHS; you will always be welcome.

PHS School Counseling Department

Class of 2014: Plans for Next Year and Beyond

By Mitzi Montilla and Jennifer Alvarez

With the school year winding down, and students thinking about warmer weather, summer plans, and other fun activities, the question that is being asked more and more is, "Where are you going next year?"

First, congratulations to Class of 2014 Valedictorian, Bhavini Shah. She is planning to go to Rutgers University to study pharmacy. As captain of the tennis team Bhavini was also featured as a Channel 12 scholar athlete. She said, "Being ranked number one means that there are expectations for my life." She has been a positive role model for other students at PHS, and now says she plans on, "setting my own path." Good luck to Bhavini.

2014's Salutatorian, Artemis Tiburcio, also plans to have an impact on the world. She worked very hard to get into an ivy league school, University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business. She said, "I have worked hard to get into Wharton, but it will be worth it, going to the best school I can."

By now students have all but wrapped up their plans for September. Here is a list of some seniors and where they will be calling home next fall.

1. **Mitzi Montilla** - College of Saint Elizabeth
2. **Jennifer Alvarez** - Saint Peter's University
3. **Pabel De Jesus** - Saint Peter's University
4. **Assata Alston** - Bloomfield College
5. **Nancy Lopez** - Fairleigh Dickinson University
6. **Norby Urena** - Saint Peter's University
7. **Desiree Rodriguez** - College of Saint Elizabeth
8. **Sharief Masri** - Seton Hall University
9. **Vanessa Cespedes** - William Paterson University
10. **Genairis Dones** - William Paterson University
11. **Vanessa Pagan** - Montclair State University

12. **Ariela Colon** - Ramapo College of New Jersey
13. **Jael Mino** - Ramapo College of New Jersey
14. **Patricia Cardoso** - New Jersey Institute of Technology
15. **Oliver Cuautle** - Ramapo College of New Jersey
16. **Yanissa Tavares** - Montclair State University
17. **Joanne Majdanski** - Kean University
18. **Wilfreen Ortiz** - Kean University
19. **Khadijah Malloy** - Kean University
20. **Gislane Dominguez** - Montclair State University
21. **Javan Acevedo** - Montclair State University
22. **Ralph Cuello** - Fairleigh Dickinson University
23. **Ronald Cuello** - Fairleigh Dickinson University
24. **Anya Christie** - Montclair State University
25. **Za'tyra Rousseau** - Fairleigh Dickinson University
26. **Mayra Cordova** - William Paterson University
27. **Irvin Ahuatl** - New Jersey Institute of Technology
28. **Scottie Rodriguez** - William Paterson University
29. **Rolando Morales** - William Paterson University
30. **Artemis Tiburcio** - University of Pennsylvania
31. **David Santana** - Bergen Community College
32. **Karina Garcia** - Rutgers
33. **Jose Grullon** - William Paterson University
34. **Celenny Paulino** - Kean University
35. **Carlos Tavares** - William Paterson University
36. **Darius Santiago** - William Paterson University
37. **Naftaly Hiraldo** - Montclair State University
38. **Bhavini Shah** - Rutgers
39. **Bhavika Gandhi** - Montclair State University
40. **Carimer Andujar** - Rutgers
41. **Lelis Fairelough** - The Art Institute of Pennsylvania
42. **Sylwia Chmielowska** - William Paterson
43. **Kevin Mondragon** - Montclair State University
44. **Luis Meneses** - Stevens Institute of Technology
45. **Odalys Sarzo** - PCCC
46. **Denise Sanchez** - Montclair State University

47. **Marlene Sanchez** - Rutgers
48. **Denise Nazario** - Montclair State University
49. **Mia Galan** - PCCC
50. **Adriana Sanchez** - Fairleigh Dickinson
51. **Doris Ceballos** - PCCC
52. **Guadalupe Salarzar** - PCCC
53. **Shanice Downey** - PCCC
54. **Luz Romero** - PCCC
55. **Arely Lima** - William Paterson University
56. **Michelle Albarran** - PCC
57. **Marlene Urena** - Fairleigh Dickinson University
58. **Eridania Belen** - PCCC
59. **Elia Bermejo** - PCCC
60. **Marissa Vazquez** - Bergen Community College
61. **Geoffrey Franceschi** - Rutgers University
62. **Jhonmarco Velazquez** - PCCC
63. **Tomas Leon** - Bergen Community College
64. **Wanda Valentin** - Bergen Community College
65. **Luis Hernandez** - PCCC
66. **Jesus Ruiz** - PCCC
67. **Patricia Cardoso** - The College of New Jersey
68. **Ema Bozgo** - Montclair State University
69. **Jennifer Ramos** - William Paterson University
70. **Devin Ruiz** - William Paterson University
71. **Mirelis Martires** - Rutgers
72. **Jeremiah Leal** - PCCC
73. **Maria Suarez** - PCCC
74. **Michelle Arroyo** - Bergen Community College
75. **Edwin Sanchez** - New Jersey Institute of Technology
76. **Beatriz Diaz** - PCCC
77. **Ozmel Contreras** - Montclair State University
78. **Adilene Camano** - William Paterson University
79. **Smerlyn Lora** - PCCC
80. **Antonio Apolinario** - William Paterson University

'King of the Monsters' a big hit

By Aaron Feliz

For months, the hype and expectations for the recreation of one of the world's most famous giant monsters, Godzilla, has been building. For those who don't know, Godzilla is a monster that originated in Japan. In the original movies he was created from the nuclear testing and toxic waste that mankind has put into the environment. He fights a series of creatures in many films, that span the 1950's through today. He has destroyed Tokyo many times, as well as New York. He has even fought for mankind against unbeatable odds against alien threats to the Earth. The unbeatable Godzilla even has his own tag line, "King of the Monsters".

The film opened in America on May 16, 2014, and quickly soured to the top of the box office sales charts. This is Gareth Edwards' vision of the iconic monster. It is obvious that this movie presented the largest version of Godzilla to date. It revolves around the perspective of Ford Brody, played by Aaron Taylor-Johnson, who is an EOD technician in the United States Navy. This movie captures the catastrophic

events that surround the impending battle between Godzilla and a pair of other monsters. It also takes a glimpse into the struggle of surviving for everyone who was affected by the epic and "terrifying force of nature".

Godzilla remains true to its roots of representing man's impact on the environment. However, in this updated version of the franchise, these monsters are forces of nature, not created by man, and also cannot be destroyed or even affected by man. It is very humbling. It is because of this impotence, to have any effect on these giant beasts, that it is decided to have these beasts destroy each other to create a balance.

I personally loved this take on Godzilla. The overall feel

of this movie was fantastic! Sure, every movie has its flaws, but this was one very enjoyable movie. Some actors are better than others, but what really made this movie a success, was the dark and mysterious was the performance by actor Bryan Cranston, who plays Ford's father Joe Brody. Those who watched "Breaking Bad" know him as Walter White. His extraordinary acting completed what director Gareth Edwards wanted this movie to accomplish, which was to position the viewer in the epic story. To scare and terrify the audience in a way that has not been accomplished since the first Godzilla film of 1954. This movie was worth waiting for, and it is what I expected since the first trailer.



WWW.MOVIEWEB.COM

'Amazing Spiderman 2' is...well...amazing

By Ivan Calixto

In this second installment of *The Amazing Spiderman* franchise, there are a lot of secrets revealed about the main character, Peter Parker (the secret identity of Spiderman), played by Andrew Garfield.

We finally discover why Peter's parents were forced to leave him and what actually happened to them. However, I don't want to spoil the movie for anyone, so no spoilers here.

Rest assured the *Amazing Spiderman* protects the good people of New York against a new array of three famous villains. First, as the past of Peter Parker is revealed, his long-time friend, Harry Osbourne, played by Dane DeHaan, loses his father, reconnecting his relationship with Peter. Trying to cure the same disease the killed his father, and to prolong his own life, he inadvertently becomes the Green Goblin.

However, this is not the cartoonish Green Goblin of the old Toby Maguire *Spiderman* movies. This is a whole new breed of villainy. He is motivated by desperation to save his place in his father's company, OSCORP, and also to save his very life.

The Green Goblin is aided by Electro, an electric man, who is played by Jamie Foxx. This is a different role for Foxx, but he carries the role of a nerd, turned villain, quite

well. He is convincing as both, a nerdy scientist who is unnoticed, and also a menacing electric man who blows up Time's Square.

The last villain, who has been present in every single preview for this movie is the Rhino, played by Paul Giamatti. Rhino is a little bit of a disappointment because he is only in about two minutes of film. It is a great sequence of action though. Paul Giamatti plays a good raging psychopath, but is pretty easily defeated.

The best part of this movie is the development of the relationship between Peter Parker and his girlfriend Gwen Stacy, played by Emma Stone. The emotional attachment between these two is very realistic. I really felt the joys and pains of that relationship, which is a great feat in a super-hero action movie.

Really, everything in this movie is great. All the acting and action comes together well. Andrew Garfield did a great job being Spiderman, even better than Toby Maguire, in my opinion. The balance between emotional scenes and pounding action is smooth and should provide plenty of action goosebumps.

The best way to see this movie is to get a group of friends, and then go see it in IMAX 3D. It will definitely not disappoint.



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THE HILLTOP STAR

Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

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The Art of Drawing

By Doreen Cabrera

Hands, paper, pencils too is what I use.
Drawing is what I do for adventure,
Fill the world with colors that amuse,
Drawing is what I love to deliver.

I express myself with colors and shapes,
The world is like no other that you've seen.
I draw anime, not some ugly apes.
I am different in that world, a queen.

Writer's block is a cloud full of stress.
Drawings come out wrong, ugly, and so bad.
When I can't think straight it's a monster mess.
I struggle and weep and it makes me mad.

Then stop to clear my mind and get a rest,
Relaxed, I go to my world for a quest.

Obama designates June LGBT Pride Month

By Lizett Garcia

President Obama has just designated June 2014 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. He has stressed that we as a nation celebrate the victories that have affirmed freedom and fairness in our society.

President Obama said in an address, "As progress spreads from state to state, as justice is delivered in the courtroom, and as more of our fellow Americans are treated with dignity and respect, our nation becomes not only more accepting, but more equal as well."

Gay marriage and other perceived rights are a controversial issue today. However, there is significance to the month of June, to the gay community. It dates all the way back to June 28, 1969, and the Stonewall Riots.

The Stonewall Riots have inspired the LGBT community to organize for

the support of gay rights. Within two years of the riots, gay rights groups had been started in almost every major city in America.

During this time many cities, including New York City, where the Stonewall Inn is located, actually had laws prohibiting people being openly gay. This led to private businesses being raided and shut down by police and other city authorities.

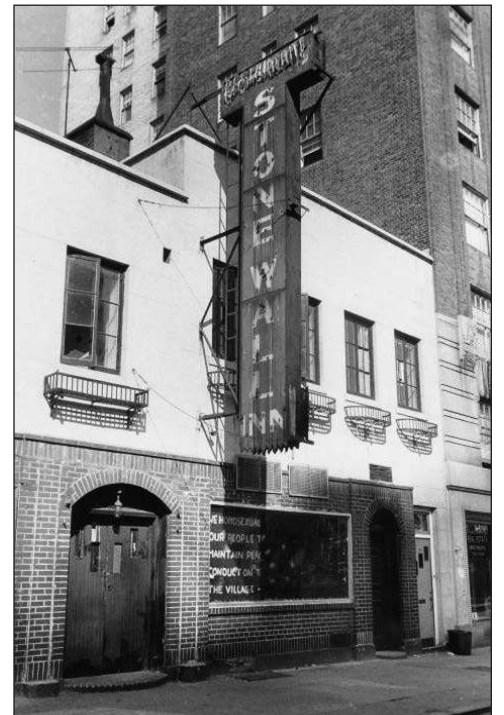
The Stonewall Inn, in Greenwich Village, was the site of a police raid on June 28, 1969, but the patrons took a stand, and a riot broke out. The police called for reinforcements to break up the riot, but the next night a crowd returned, even larger than the night before. Eventually the police broke this crowd up too. However, for days after, demonstrations took place throughout New York City. It is these riots and demonstrations that are being com-

memorated during the month of June.

President Obama said, "My administration proudly stands alongside all those who fight for LGBT rights." He has been advancing the cause of same sex marriage and other issues important to the LGBT community, such as strengthening law against violence, bullying and harassment, and discrimination in housing and hospitals.

So, whether people agree with the concerns of this community or not, in just speaking for tolerance, justice, and dignity, we as Americans can all agree. We can start with what we all agree on, and then work from there.

I applaud President Obama, for proclaiming that June 2014 is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month. I hope everyone in PHS as well as the rest of America will join together to celebrate the great diversity of the American people.



WIKIPEDIA.ORG

The Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, where riots over treatment by police in 1969, began a new chapter in LGBT history.



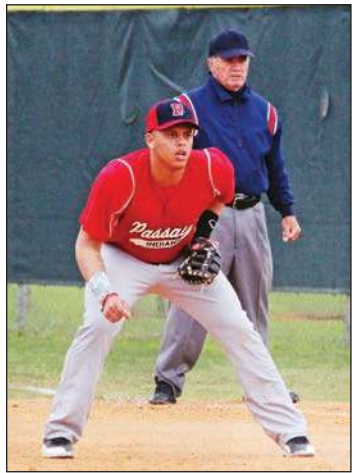
COURTESY OF MR. DIAZ

The Championship 2014 PHS Varsity Baseball Team.

Talented Passaic High School baseball team hits it big

By Jose Grullon

This has been a fabulous year for Passaic baseball. This season accumulated a number of firsts. This 2014 season will be



COURTESY OF MR. DIAZ

Aldes Ballindo snaps ball for an out.

forever remembered as a milestone season for PHS. First, the baseball team went undefeated for the first eight games of this season. The great start allowed the team to get a lead record of 18 wins for the season, a school record. After tying the school record for the most wins in a season the baseball team went on to win first place in the Passaic County Tournament for the first time ever. There was some great competition but the PHS team beat all comers.

This was a season of firsts for this baseball team, and it was also the first time ever that Passaic made the semi-finals in both the county and the state. PHS was seeded seventh in the state tournament. This is quite an achievement and the hard



COURTESY OF MR. DIAZ

Part of the key to the success of this year's team is the great pitching of Joey Garcia.

work and diligence, along with excellent coaching and talented players all paid off. The work of this team was noticed, and, another first, PHS remained in the Herald News' top ten for the entire season.

and will represent PHS, by making 1st Team All Area and 1st Team All County.

Pitcher, Jemal Dye also made 1st Team All Area. He is a multi-talented athlete, also being the captain of the basketball team.

This is a talented team and the 2014 season saw the most PHS players sent to the state all star game. Galvis Blandino will play first base and Joey Garcia will pitch. Coach Diaz will be coaching the Northeast All Star Team. These students have also been recognized,

As if this season of firsts was not enough, for the first time in PHS history the baseball team won the Liberty Conference Championship. Coach Diaz was selected Conference Coach of the Year. Coach Diaz wants to provide opportunities to compete at the highest levels of high school baseball, for his team. The coach said that also wants to "instill discipline, teamwork, sportsmanship, honesty, and integrity," in his student athletes. The 2014 PHS Baseball team has certainly lived up to this stated mission. This will certainly be a season to remember. Let us all recognize the hard work put forth by the baseball team. By making themselves champions they make us all proud.

Successful PHS tennis team makes it to Counties

By Parth Patel

After a long and sweaty season, the tennis team headed to county finals on May 19. The tennis team was excited to find success at such a difficult sport. According to the coaches, tennis is one of the hardest sports to play because it uses the ability to play and maneuver mentally and then perform physically on the court.

While tennis as a sport does not have the flash and support of some of the more popular sports, like football, basketball and baseball, it does require a great deal more patience, effort and training. This underrated sport requires a lot of talent to play such as speed, strength, agility, touch, tactics, and it is a strong mental game, requiring fast reactions, patience and power.

If there was any question about the dedication of the players on our team, know that the varsity tennis players typically spend about four to six hours a day on the court practicing technique and enhancing strokes, and getting better every day to be better than they were before.

There is competition between the players themselves. Everyone on the team competes to find out who is the best player.

The unquestionable champion is sen-

ior Rounak Nadiyadhara. We know he is the best because in tennis, to find out who gets to represent PHS on the varsity team, we play challenge matches against each other. The top seven players are the varsity team.

Clearly the first place went to Rounak. Second place singles ranking went to Dev Patel, and third is Neil Rana.



PHOTO BY PARTH PATEL

Team captain Rounak Nadiyadhara, returns a serve during one of the many practices.

Rounak defeated all the guys on the team. We are proud of him, and he defeats his opponents on other school teams as well. He is a masterful server and has a killer forehand. His opponents fear these skills and together we have defeated some really tough competition this year, like Passaic Tech, Lakeland, and Newark Eastside.

Besides the singles, PHS also competes in first and second doubles. They, too, have performed marvelously this year. The first doubles team is Rushil Gandhi and Yash Rana. Second doubles is Jignesh Rana and Parth Patel. Without the Passaic tennis doubles teams the PHS Indians would not have had any wins this year. Also, this year, the second doubles has been seated to play in counties as fourth place, giving them a high chance of becoming one of the finalists in counties.

The success of the doubles team is directly linked to the coaching of

Coach Major. He said, "When you play doubles always remember, doubles is not a friendly game. Go out there and play aggressively, show those guys who we really are. We are aggressive Passaic Indians!"

These Indians were definitely aggressive this year because at the county finals they placed fourth. This is a great feat, and they are PHS proud.

"Our team is not great without the hard work of our great coaches," said senior Dev Patel. PHS does have some great tennis coaches. Mr. Contaldi, history teacher, is also the wrestling coach. He is funny and talented, but most importantly, he is an extremely skilled tennis coach. The second coach is a volunteer, who drives forty-five minutes to keep PHS great. Former history teacher Mr. Major, still does 300 push-ups a day, even in his retirement.

The junior varsity team is the pipeline to replace graduating varsity players. Without a great JV team the varsity squad would erode and PHS Tennis would become a failure. Ruri Patel does a great job working with the JV guys. These coaches work every day from March through May in the cold and the sun, every year, to make the team better so that they can represent PHS with pride and hopefully bring home county championship trophies.

"Even though Coach Major and Coach Contaldi make us run a lot of laps, I wouldn't ask for any other coaches because their bond with the team is great," said senior Neil Rana.

SOFTBALL:

Great memories of 2014 season

By Yvette Rivera

While the spotlight is on the baseball team this season because of their deserved success, the girl's team might be overlooked. The softball team also had some success this year and the players have great memories to cherish after graduation.

This year the softball team went on its first Florida trip. This is the first time the girls were able to go to Florida to play along with the baseball team. It was a wonderful experience to be able to travel and compete against teams that we would not have had the pleasure to play, during the regular season.

After returning home the softball team played well for the rest of the season. Passaic beat teams that are really tough like Clifton and Passaic Valley. This season flew by, and all the hard work had paid off. It seemed as though the season was over way too fast.

This year the softball team played its first night game at home, which was also the last game of the season. The new lights on the field are great. With the home field lit up like daytime, the softball team felt the PHS pride, and won that game.

The last game of the year was a win, which was a great way to end the season and careers of seniors, Stephanie Ceden, Ariela Colon, Lily Ledezma, Jennifer Ray, Yvette Rivera, and Yvette Rodriguez. Good luck to all your future endeavors, and thanks for all your hard work at PHS.