

# THE HILLTOP STAR

Vol. 54, No. 1

Passaic High School, Passaic, NJ

April 2016

## 'The Living Cell' Entertains and Educates Biology Students

By Jalen Maspono

The Library Media Center was transformed from a quiet place to study to a scene much more alive. Mrs. Kostiuik's drama classes presented "The Living Cell" a play for all students currently enrolled in biology classes.

Written by the students themselves this year the play was about the life cycle, operation and function of a plant cell. "The Green House" was the theme of the day, which is a place that the plant cells can grow.

In a flurry of creativity the library was transformed into the various sections and functions of a cell. For example the cell wall and the cell membrane were located in the front doors of the library.

Biology students were able to physically walk through the wall of a cell to experience the cells function and not just see it. Each drama student had a part and presented it in front of the biology students and teachers.

Since this is an election year, and to further aid in the understanding of the cell and government function, the students used the White House as greenhouse analogy to represent the various

cell functions.

For example, the nucleus of the cell was the president. The vice-president was the nucleolus. The secret service was the cell membrane, the cell walls are engineers, while the DNA equates to the census bureau. The White House needs to be clean and that job is handled by the vacuoles. Golgi bodies serve as the mail room. The chloroplasts are represented as the Department of Energy, and the mitochondria are the cafeteria (food and beverage) services.

The idea of using analogy to help identify and teach the various cell functions was Mrs. Kostiuik's. However, the students themselves wrote and planned the entire production. They had to research both the functions of a cell and its parts, and the various ways they could be represented as parts of the White House and executive branch.

The idea of this play was for the biology students to experience a cell and not just read about it. The kinetic array of the cell functions allowed students to understand the functions of a cell more deeply.

"I feel like I understand

how this all works now," said one anonymous biology student. "Plus, seeing the play was fun. I wish all classes could be like this," he added.

The purpose of this even was to allow drama students to develop their craft, by helping biology students understand a complex life function. However, seeing the way students interacted and enjoyed the production, the value of this program is greater than just educational.



PHOTOS BY JALEN MASPONO

Top (left to right): Beltre Tezyah, Shreya Rana and Dayshia Fernandez represent the function of the plant cell. Bottom (left to right): Joshua Zuniga, Kevin Licona, Jhonny Rosario, Yolimar Torres, Ricardo Ortega and Mrs. Kostiuik guard the entrance of the "Green House" which is the cell wall to the Library Media Center.

## Bomb Threats Evacuate School

By Valerie Beingolea

Turn on the news any given day and the world looks more insane every single day. Senseless violence is occurring around the world and even in this country on a daily basis. Set among the backdrop of widespread violence, the horror of an attack on PHS seems like a possibility.

In fact, there have been two threats at PHS, and the authorities must take every single threat seriously, for the protection of the staff and students of PHS.

The first false threat was an anonymous call to the school saying that there was going to be

"guys" in school that were about to shoot. The second scare was when a note was found stating that there was a bomb hidden somewhere in the school. The note was found written on an extension cord.

The first priority of the administration is to keep the student body safe, but these threats have hindered instructional time. Students are complaining about the constant interruptions.

Juan Mendoza, a senior said, "It is just stupid how often this is happening." Most other students agree that this has gone on long enough.

So there is a plan to prevent

and limit these interruptions by having students sign in and out of classes, and always having a pass in the hallways, not to mention having only designated and secured bathrooms available to students.

We have a great deal of drills in this school, however they are all for a reason. Whether a fire drill, a lock down, code red, shelter in place, or evacuation, each of these drills serves a purpose. Students, frustrated as they are, should remember that these policies are in place to secure the safety of all students and staff at PHS. Remember this and each one will go just a little quicker.



### STUDENTS PROTEST BATHROOM POLICY



PHOTOS BY JACQUELINE SANCHEZ

Students protested the new stricter bathroom policy. However Principal Velez enacted this new policy to protect the staff and students of PHS and also to protect instructional time in class, giving as few interruptions as possible. Mr. Velez assures students that this policy is for their own protection, for the safety of the school community.

## New Testing Stresses Class of 2016

By Dayanara Manon

The class of 2016 will be remembered for something that was not of their creation, and that is for the new mandatory testing standards, required for graduation. While exciting, this year has been stressful for seniors who must pass a standardized test to ensure that they will be able to graduate this June.

Therefore, seniors in addition to worrying about completing college applications, trying to get accepted to a college, and stressing about completing classes required for graduation, and paying for college when they graduate, must also prove that they have passed an approved state test. If one of these approved tests is not passed, then graduation will not be possible.

So what will happen if a student is already accepted to college, has all the required credits and is all set to graduate, except for the test? That is a frightening thought, to think that graduation is right around the corner, only to be denied because of a test.

However, there are many options to passing and through the diligence of the students at PHS, every student who wishes to, can and will pass, and then graduate. Following is a list of approved tests and the minimum required passing score. Remember it is ultimately up to the individual graduating student to prove that he or she has the passing test grade to graduate.

- SAT-Critical Reading or Math ..... Passing Score: 400
- ACT- Reading or Math ..... Passing Score: 16
- ASVAB-AFQT Score ..... Passing Score: 31
- Accuplacer- Writer Placer ..... Passing Score: 8
- Accuplacer Math-Elementary Algebra..... Passing Score: 76
- PARCC ELA ..... Passing Score: 725
- PARCC Algebra II ..... Passing Score: 725



# Naval Science Cadets Best In Country In Cyber Security

By Yesenia Garcia

PHS NJROTC has competed in the national Cyber Patriot competition for four years. The Cyber Patriot competition consists of students working together to perform cybersecurity tasks and other exercises in computer science.

Cyber Patriot teams are supported by the Air Force Association, because it encourages students towards careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, as well as cyber security.

PHS's Cyber Patriot team is made up of seventeen NJROTC cadets. Saira Garcia is president of the team. Lizeth Salas is Vice President, and Arly Arriaga is Secretary. The rest of the team consists of cadets, Christopher Restituyo, Yesenia Garcia, Kevin Villanueva, Jesus Arriaga, Kelly Romero, Desiree Lucca, Carlos Hernandez, Justin Rymut, Kyana Rodriguez, Sergio Bautista, Jessica Guizar,

Guadalupe Guerrero, Evelyn Calixto and Jose Hernandez.

To compete the cadets have six hours to work on three challenging complex images, by researching them on the internet, a Cisco network quiz, and a Cisco Network Packet Tracer. The PHS team competed with many schools around the world.

This is the first year PHS NJROTC has fielded four separate teams. This year is the biggest the Cyber Patriot program has ever been. The tedious tasks that the teams are responsible for completing, during the competition, are to create stronger passwords, turn on firewalls, code decrypt and delete files, scripts, and find hidden files. The teams use multiple operating systems such as Windows 7, Windows 8, Ubuntu, Linux and Cisco.

For the first time ever, there have been four teams competing to try to make it past the state level to compete in Baltimore against teams from around the country.

The team is led by Petty Officer Nuyen. He has support from student NJROTC cadets, Saira Garcia, Lizeth Salas and Arly Arriaga. Senior Saira Garcia is working hard on her third year of Cyber Patriot and has a lot of pressure being the president. Seniors Lizeth Salas and Arly Arriaga are

both on their second year taking the roles of vice president and secretary.

With the help of Petty Officer Nuyen, and the new PHS AP Computer Science teacher, Mr. Blath, three teams earned platinum and one team earned gold during round two, of the Cyber Patriot competition, on December 6. On the next competition that took place on January 31, teams competed once again and were able to make it to the regional round.

The regionals, on February 20, showed that the gold team was number one in the country. The other three platinum teams placed 73, 83 and 86. In a crowded field of 350 teams PHS ranked very well against these other teams.

This is the best PHS has done since the team was first created. Saira Garcia said, "Doing this for three years has definitely impacted my future. I've actually decided to go to college and study computer science and to keep on learning as much as I can."

Lizeth Salas said, "Cyber Patriot has opened a new career path for my future. It has also increased my knowledge and peaked my interest in computer engineering."

Arly Arriaga said, "The team has grown phenomenally and now that we've achieved platinum for three teams, when last year we only reached gold."

The team will be at a loss next year when seven of this



PHOTOS BY YESENIA GARCIA

Top: The 2016 PHS Cyber Patriot Team.

Bottom: PHS Cyber Patriot Team working hard to address cyber security threat.

year's seniors will be graduating and pursuing their goals, many using the skills learned in the valuable program. The future for this Cyber Patriot team is definitely bright and

big things are coming their way along with Petty Officer Nuyen who has dedicated his time into these individuals and has been an amazing part of their achievement.



First place certificate.

## THE HILLTOP STAR

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

### Student Editors

News Editor  
Dayanara Manon  
Sports Editor  
David Buonafina

Assistant Sports Editor  
Ariadni Aguilar

Reviews  
Emanuel Velez  
Reporting  
Jesenia Paramo

Editorial  
Guadalupe Prado

### Staff Writers

Sarah Basauri  
Valerie Beingolea  
David Buonafina  
Josephine Camano  
Jaylene Canning  
Yesenia Garcia  
Karina Gonzalez  
Liset Gutierrez  
Eduardo Hernandez  
Henry Hernandez  
Judith Hernandez  
Paola Lopez  
Jalen Maspono  
Marlene Mendez  
Ricardo Ortega  
Thania Rubio  
Freddy Sanchez  
Jaqueline Sanchez  
Nicholas Santos  
Dorian Stewart  
Christal Veras  
Abigail Villa

### Adviser

Harris Zeiler

[www.hilltopstar.com](http://www.hilltopstar.com)

Layout and Printing by  
Media Trends LLC  
732-548-7088

# Teen PEP Aims to Help Fellow Students Cope

By Thania Rubio

One issue facing students of PHS and youth around the country is dealing with sexuality. Answering a call to deal with this serious issue is the Teen PEP. Teen PEP stands for Teen Prevention Education Program. This year there are 18 juniors who have been trained in leadership and sexuality issues. With daily training Teen PEP has been able to reach out to many of PHS students and educate them about sexuality issues and safe sex.

Perhaps the best part of teen PEP is that each member has different values and beliefs about sexuality and therefore there is room for everyone in this organization.

Junior Cat Sposato said, "Teen Pep created bonds between individuals who mostly only knew each other superficially. By sharing experiences, many people finally felt like they were able to understand what each individual was able to bring to the group." Teen Pep as a whole has given 18 juniors the opportunity to break out of their comfort zone and come together order to educate their freshmen peers on the value of safe sexual practices. Teen Pep makes a huge difference not only in the lives of those directly exposed to it but for the entire community"

Members of PEP have developed skills that allow them to incorporate the many differing ideas about sexuality and the different ideologies that surround sex.



PHOTO BY THANIA RUBIO

Members of Teen PEP "heart" the student body of PHS.

Worried at first about putting all these different students together, advisor Mr. Galan said, "After a few weeks, it became apparent that we were on a path filled with understanding, compassion and learning. As classes passed, workshops were performed and retreats were attended, we became more than a class. We became a family. The compassion and respect that were inculcated exceeded any expectations that any of us could have ever imagined."

With 18 different people coming from a multitude of various backgrounds, this group might easily spin out of control and not accomplish the important

stated mission. However, the two great advisors, Mr. Galan and Mrs. Khalaf, have fostered understanding and respect within this club, making it a model for all other clubs and organizations at PHS.

"Being part of Teen PEP has deeply impacted me as an educator and a leader. The training I received from the Teen PEP teachers and peers have introduced me to an extremely productive way of engaging students in their own learning. The ongoing training, love and support from the Teen PEP family has really helped me become a new person," said Thania Rubio, a junior.

Advisor Mrs. Khalaf said, "This class has become a refuge, a place of safety and growth. We will have many Teen Pep classes over the next few years but there will never be another Teen Pep class of 2015/16."

Teen PEP recently attended a three-day retreat. There the club members were able to share laughs and emotions, and create memories that will be remembered forever. Workshops contained reliable information that will allow members to educate themselves and also prepare for the freshmen that depend on the valuable service provided by Teen PEP.

# 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' Lures a Generation of Fans

By Emanuel Velez

There are six episodes, three prequels, two sideshows, and now, one new movie for a new generation. For nearly 40 years, *Star Wars* has been the most amazing franchise generations of people.

*Episode VII: The Force Awakens* now takes the *Star Wars* saga even further, to a new audience and introduces many new but keeps some old characters. It has been 30 since the release of *Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*, and the final destruction of the evil Galactic Empire. In *Episode VII*, a new threat called the First Order, is rising to rekindle the old Empire, and also eliminate the Resistance from taking over the galaxy.

Is this *Star Wars* movie better than the original three films? Not quite. But is it better than the prequels? This film goes a long way to erasing the memory of those mediocre prequels. First of all, CGI is only used



when truly needed. Nearly every character is not CGI. That includes Chewbacca, BB-8, R2-D2, and C-3PO. Most of the sets are real with some CGI just for finishing touches.

Secondly, another great improvement over the prequels is that the characters are all like-

able (no Jar-Jar Binks, thank you) and are more ethnically diverse. Rey, who is the heroine, is played by Daisy Ridley. Finn is played by black British actor John Boyega, and Poe is played by Oscar Isaac, who is Latino.

Villains are key to a successful movie. *The Force Awakens*

has a great villain in Kylo Ren, played by Adam Driver, who is the Darth Vader-ish villain. Returning as Han Solo is Harrison Ford, who definitely was one of best in the movie, along with Carrie Fisher, as Leia. A lot of effort was put into making this movie stand out visual-

ly, but also feel like it is part of the franchise. However, it feels like Episodes IV and V mixed together.

A criticism was that this should have been a new story for a new generation, rather than a similar version of the first two original films. But again, is this still an awesome *Star Wars* film?

Of course it is! Fans of the first trilogy will surely enjoy this movie. Just the trailer for this film got people's hopes up for a truly inspiring space adventure. *Star Wars* fans will not be disappointed. However, like the *Star Trek* reboot, this film will certainly bring a new generation of fans into the fold.

Fortunately, fans will not have to wait long for the next installment. There are two more episodes coming, and a *Rogue One* film along with a *Han Solo* spin-off. There is plenty in store for a new generation of *Star Wars* fans. *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* definitely starts it off well and gets a 9/10.

# 'Fantastic Four' Not So Fantastic

By Emanuel Velez

With the success of superhero movies skyrocketing, Fox has now taken their shot once more with a reboot of the *Fantastic Four*, Marvel's first and longest-running superhero team. But this film is not that fantastic. It was doomed (no pun intended) from the beginning because of Fox.

A superhero movie that is only 93 minutes should not feel like three hours. These films should be at least two hours, full of the action and suspense that makes superheroes the draw that has made Marvel studios billions.

*The Fantastic Four* returns with a reboot. But unlike the two previous wacky and absurd films, this one presents a darker story and a different origin based on the Ultimate *Fantastic Four* comics.

However, there is only enough suspense to hold the audience in the first half of a very short mov-

ie. The story may be dark, but it is very weak and not likeable.

The cast definitely resembles the team just fine, but their dialogue is idiotic and as characters the audience cannot relate to them one bit. While the cast is actually playing the youngest *Fantastic Four* ever made, younger audiences cannot relate to them!

Reed Richards (Miles Teller) is probably 18 or 19, since he gets into Baxter during high school. Even the younger portrayal of the *Fantastic Four* in the Ultimate Comics were legal adults in their twenties! They had compelling stories and were likable. Sue Storm (Kate Mara) and Johnny Storm (Michael B. Jordan), were a disappointment with the "adoption" story. The audience needs to see more to be pulled into the plot. Ben Grimm (Jamie Bell), was impressive, and Fox did well deciding to go CGI for his alter ego, "The Thing."

Costuming was actually a problem, Reed Richards and Johnny Storm had non-believable costumes. Sue Storm's was just fine, but the Thing really needed some pants! These were supposed to be beta costumes, but they never got around to showing the final costumes.

Why must there be "setups" for a sequel?! It was a little presumptuous to assume that there would be a sequel, considering how bad this film was, and how badly it did in the box office.

As for Dr. Doom (Toby Kebbell), he was a disappointment. The origin of his costume is confusing and his character was not compelling, although his glowing was great.

After their dimensional incident, the *Fantastic Four* and Doom wake up in fear of their altered bodies. Fear might be a more realistic emotion but after Reed leaves, one year passes, yet he masters his powers better than Sue and Johnny who were



still in training. They should have mastered their powers within weeks! Later, the team reunites (for once) to stop Doom from blowing people's heads up and bring our dimension into his. Yes that is Doom's power, which was way too powerful, but he was my favorite character nonetheless. The Four eventually stop him, and get a laboratory, but that is the end of the film. *Fantastic Four* as a superhero team was not even mentioned! How dare you, Fox!

*Fantastic Four* is nothing but lame, poorly productive and the

complete opposite of fantastic. It makes Doom be the best character, it makes the poorly executed previous two films look even better, and it's just a franchise waiting to go back to Marvel Studios to reboot yet again. Stan Lee did not even make a cameo appearance! Furthermore, the story was not discussed with him for consultation.

The creator would usually bring some light into the movie, but there is no light-heartedness. This franchise is "doomed" (pun intended) unless Fox gives it back to Marvel.

# Top 10 Superbowl 50 Commercials

By Dayanara Manon

While the Superbowl was a great game, the part of the game experience that anyone can enjoy is not during the game at all. The viewing of Superbowl commercials has become almost as much a tradition as the game itself. Here is a list of the best examples from this year's game, Superbowl 50.

- Hyundai Genesis:** Kevin Hart portrays a very concerned father as his daughter is going out on a first date. He is advertising the GPS system in the new Hyundai Genesis by following his daughter's every move with her increasingly frazzled boyfriend. Anything with Kevin Hart is sure to add comedic success. The commercial of course ended with Kevin Hart's infamous smile.
- Michelob Ultra Beer:** This commercial at the start seems like an advertisement

for Adidas or Nike. Then the commercial ended up being an advertisement for a low fat beer, having only 95 calories. This beer is so low in calories that it can be drunk even while working out. Drinking beer while working out might not be the best idea, but it does make for a funny commercial.

- Snickers:** In a tribute to Marilyn Monroe's signature white dress pose, Willem Dafoe wears the famous dress complaining about the scene, but after eating a Snickers, he turns into Marilyn Monroe and makes film history.
- Mexican Avocados:** In an alien museum of 21st century Earth, the avocado is represented as the highest development of human culture, just before one of the aliens is vaporized for "double dipping" in the guacamole.

**5. Apartments.com:** This was a commercial presented as a tribute to the old show "The Jeffersons." With Jeff Goldblum singing the theme song to the iconic television show, people using Apartments.com are definitely "movin' on up."

- Mobile Strike phone app game:** The Mobile Strike commercial, with Arnold Schwarzenegger as the star, played like a movie. It looks like a fun game and it was a great commercial.
- Doritos:** One of the funniest commercials of this season is a pregnant woman getting a sonogram. Her husband is eating Doritos during the procedure and notices that the baby moves like he wants the chip. The wife grabs the chip and throws it which allows the fetus to jump out to get the Doritos. Ouch!



Kevin Hart, playing an overprotective dad, gladly hands over the keys to his new Hyundai, to keep an eye on his daughter and her new boyfriend.

- Movie trailers:** There were a number of new movie trailers released during the Big Game, including *The Jungle Book*, *Captain America: Civil War*, and *Batman vs. Superman: Dawn of Justice*. Hopefully, the films live up to the hype of the previews.
- Audi R8 - Commander Car:** Not nearly as funny as the others, but arguably the best commercial was for Audi's sports car the R8.

10. Lastly, of course is the **Skittles** commercial, starring Steven Tyler, who sings louder and louder until the skittles mural of him explodes. It was silly, but funny.

# The Primaries: A Student-Friendly Guide to the 2016 Election

By Dayanara Manon

There are two main parties in America today. One is the Democrat Party and the other is the Republican Party.

With all the news coverage and talking, arguing and even fighting, this has been a turbulent primary season. However, the two political parties have narrowed the choices down to just two for the Democrats and three for the

Republicans.

Here is an organized attempt to put these candidates in some kind of order, so that all the candidates can be represented for their beliefs, experience, and background.

The highest office in the land is up for the next election, and seeing who these candidates are and what they want for the country is a great first step to making an informed decision.

For the Democrats there are two candidates left, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and current senator from Vermont Bernie Sanders. It looked as though Hillary would run away with this election, but then Bernie put up a stronger than expected fight and now there is a race to see who will finally win the nomination for the Democratic Party.

It looks as though Hillary will be able

to lock it up before the final votes are cast, however, and she will be the likely candidate.

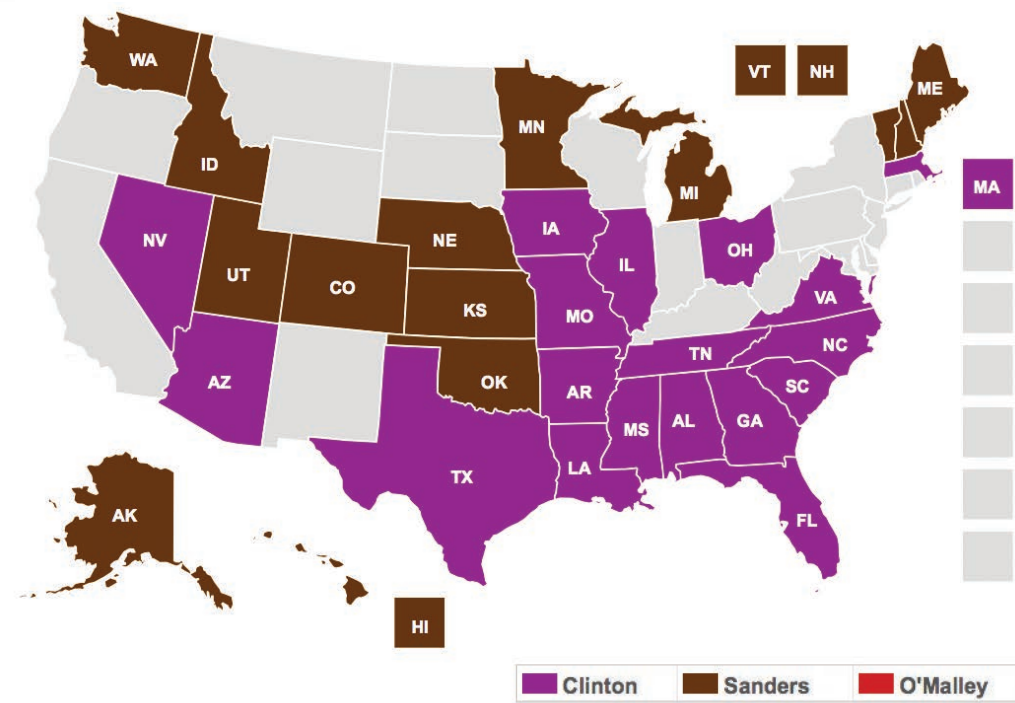
The Republicans had a very full field of seventeen candidates, and with the recent decision of Marco Rubio to suspend his campaign, there are still three left.

Donald Trump, a real estate businessman, Ted Cruz, current senator from Texas, and John Kasich, the governor

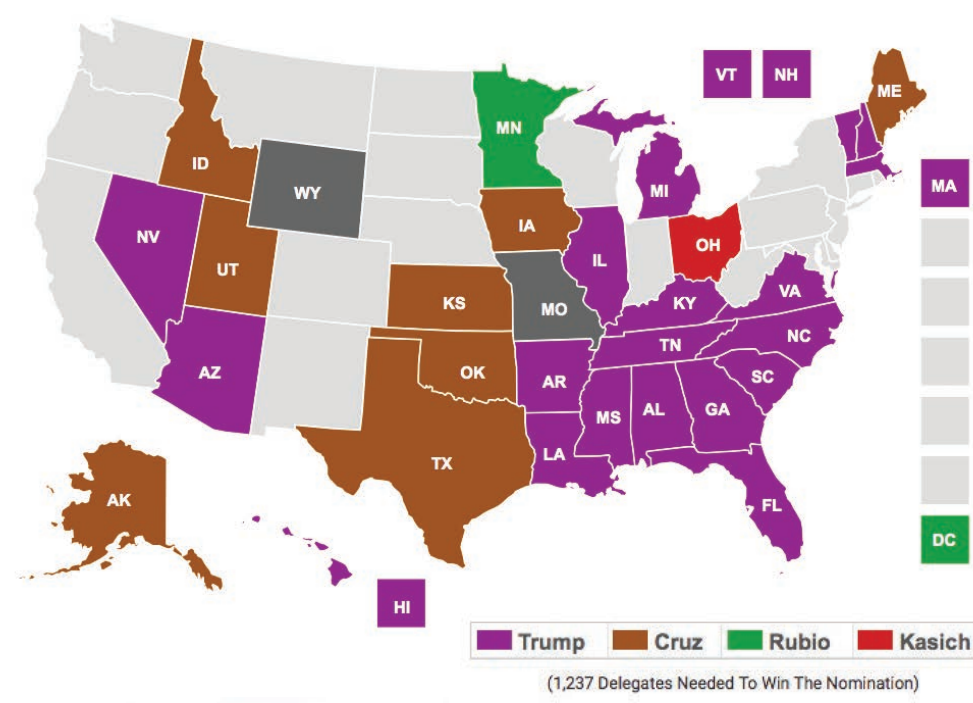
of Ohio, are all competing for the nomination of the Republican Party.

All the candidates bring differing perspectives and experience to the office, but right now, each candidate must get the nomination of their respective parties.

Presented here is an easy and organized list of the candidates that are still working to secure their spot for the upcoming presidential election of 2016.



According to Politico.com, as of March 24, 2016, Hillary Clinton has 1,712 delegates and Bernie Sanders has 1,011. There are also 158 uncommitted delegates. The number of delegates needed for the Democratic nomination is 2,382.



According to Politico.com, as of March 24, 2016, Donald Trump has 736 delegates, Ted Cruz has 463, Marco Rubio has 171 and John Kasich has 143. The number of delegates needed for the Republican nomination is 1,237.



IBTIMES

## Donald Trump

By Eduardo Hernandez

Perhaps the most widely known candidate in this campaign is real estate developer Donald Trump. Born in Queens and raised in New York City, Trump graduated from Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

He is the chairman of "The Trump Organization" under which he has

built casinos, golf courses, hotels, and other properties. He is famous for his reality show, "The Apprentice," and also for his three marriages.

His candidacy is no less spectacular, opposing free trade agreements and especially illegal immigration. He has a non-interventionist view on foreign policy, but does favor a strong military and the destruction of ISIS.

He is the chairman of "The Trump Organization" under which he has



NY DAILY NEWS

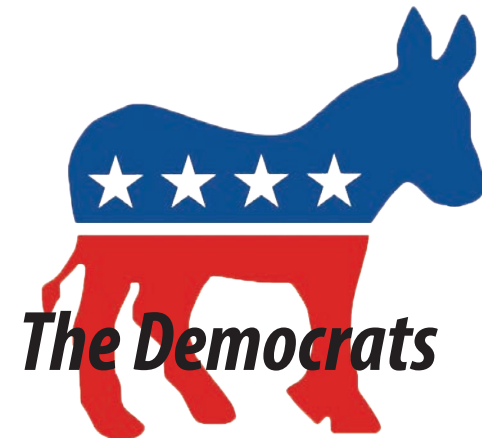
## Ted Cruz

By Judith Hernandez

Born Rafael Edward Cruz, "Ted" is currently a senator from Texas. He graduated from Princeton University in 1992, and Harvard Law School, magna cum laude in 1995.

Cruz worked at the Federal Trade Commission as director of the Office of Policy Planning, and was associate deputy attorney general at the United States Department of Justice. He was also the Solicitor General of Texas, and taught U.S. Supreme Court Litigation at the University of Texas School of Law in Austin.

Ted Cruz is the first Republican to announce his candidacy to run for president in the 2016 campaign. He is running on a platform of originalism, that is bringing American government back to the Constitution. He is conservative on social issues, opposing abortion, same-sex marriage, and the legalization of marijuana, but feels that these issues should be left to the individual states to decide. He is for gun rights, and other individual liberties, such as school choice.



SLATE.COM

## Bernie Sanders

By Thania Rubio

Bernie Sanders is the oldest of the candidates running, being born in 1941, in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from the University of Chicago in 1964. Currently a senator from Vermont, he was also the mayor of Burlington, member of the Senate Budget Committee, and chaired the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

He describes himself as a democratic

socialist, which is popular in Europe, especially in the Scandinavian countries. His key issues are campaign finance reform, corporate welfare, global warming, income inequality, LGBT rights, racial discrimination in the criminal justice system, parental leave, and universal healthcare.

Bernie is known for stating that he wants the top one percent to pay their fair share, to help pay for universal college.



WALL STREET JOURNAL

## Hillary Clinton

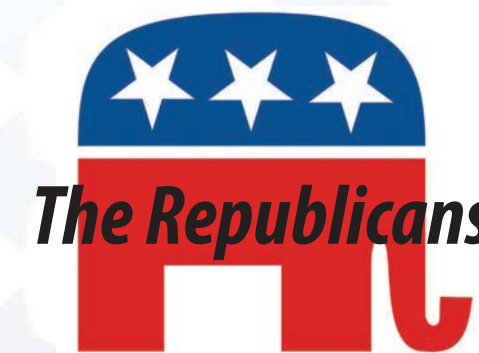
By Dayanara Manon

Currently the leading contender for the Democratic nomination, Hillary Clinton is no stranger to the White House, as First Lady to Bill Clinton from 1993 to 2001. She has also been senator from New York, and Secretary of State under President Barack Obama.

Hillary has a legal background, graduating with a law degree from Yale Law School in 1973. She worked for the Arkansas public school system and on the board of directors of Wal-Mart, among

other corporations. She led the failed attempt to pass the Clinton Health Care Reform bill in 1993, but voted to pass Obama's Affordable Health Care Act.

Hillary had a big advantage in the current primary season, with a large donor base, a large infrastructure in place, and also multiple political action committees like Ready for Hillary and Priorities USA. She is running on raising middle class incomes, establishing universal preschool, making college free, and expanding and improving the Affordable Care Act.



WASHINGTON TIMES

## John Kasich

By Sarah Basauri

The current governor of Ohio, John Kasich, has also served nine terms as a representative in Congress, from 1983 to 2001. He served 18 years on the House Armed Services Committee and six years as chairman of the House Budget Committee. While in Congress he helped to pass welfare reform and the Balanced Budget Act.

Born in McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh, Kasich went to Ohio State University, joined Al-

pha Sigma Phi, earning a degree in political science in 1974. He made a name for himself when in his first term as state senator his first act was to refuse a pay raise. Since then he has refused many budget proposals that would raise taxes.

In this current campaign Kasich described himself as "the prince of light and hope," forecasting a sunny optimistic tone. He is running on a platform of fiscal responsibility, his record as governor of Ohio, creating jobs, and reinvigorating America's prominence around the world.

# New Standards Create Stress for Passaic H.S. Students

By Guadalupe Prado

As the class of 2016 looks forward to walking the grass and starting their lives post-PHS, there is a great deal of stress that falls on the shoulders of these students. While some have a clear plan and know exactly what they want to do and how to get there, others are still undecided and need to think about their futures.

This is the time when students feel like they are being pressured into becoming somebody. Most students know that they should go to college to achieve their dreams, and even with a clear plan to get there, the pressure of going to college is not only getting into a desired school, but paying for that school.

Some students are lucky enough and have worked hard enough to get scholarships and grants to get to the school of their choice. Others don't even know what they want to do after high school, either work, trade school, or military. Those that do want to go to college usually don't have a plan if they are not accepted to a college.

Society puts a great deal of pressure on students to succeed, to go to college and ensure that students make something important of themselves. Families want their children to make them proud, going to college to bring pride to the family. The PHS faculty and staff want the best for their students, to have



GOOGLE IMAGES

them go out into the world and make their mark, and make the school community proud too.

This is a lot of pressure to succeed. All the voices are coming at juniors and seniors are all saying the same thing, "Go to college."

Is college the ONLY way to make it in the "real" world? Not necessarily. College is a choice.

It is a good choice for many. It is the right choice for others, but it is not the only choice for every student, and it is not mandatory.

College is expensive, so sometimes it is better to make sure what the best field is before wasting time and money on a major that will not help reach that goal.

One anonymous PHS grad-

uate from the class of 2015 is just now deciding what major she wants. She derides anyone who says that she is lazy, saying, "I just want to make sure what I want to do before I spend all kinds of money."

And she is quick to add that students should find their own way and listen to their own heart.

There are real struggles after high school, and in life, and unless there is a clear plan to give direction, then people tend to just stagnate and never reach their goals. The best course of action is to picture yourself in five years, or ten years, and then make a plan to get there.

Even with a clear plan and a set goal in mind, many, even most, college students change their minds about their career choices once they find out the realities of that field. Students often change their majors. However, those that are determined will succeed if they put in the time and effort to achieve their dreams.

For seniors at PHS the first thing to do is to graduate. Take a break from planning every detail of life and then choose a path that seems to make the most sense.

No one needs to do this alone. There are teachers and guidance counselors that are ready to help students discover and reach their goals. After all, these are the people who want to be proud of you when you succeed. It is okay to change your mind, everyone does. Just be true to yourself and do what makes you feel fulfilled.

Everyone has the pressure of what they want or who they want to be. However, in the "real" world everyone has the freedom to pursue any dream, as long as they have the drive and will to succeed.

## Is the Latest iPhone Really Worth It?

By Guadalupe Prado

It seems as though every year a brand new phone that everyone needs, cannot live without, and is the latest technological marvel, is issued every single year. One thing is certain, that the new phone is also the most expensive thing out as well.

Last year's iPhone 6 was a major update over the previous model. They were thinner and lighter than the iPhone 5s and 5c. The iPhone 5c was an interesting improvement for Apple products; it varied in colors to suit the taste of every user.

The model 5s had a new update as well. It had a faster processor specialized software, including the first touch ID.

The iPhone 5c was actually the last apple device to have a "square-circle" type of design because from the iPhone 5s up; they have a new design that supports touch ID.

Consumers who want the latest hardware as soon as possible should look to the various deals offered by providers. These phones cost a lot of money, and they depreciate quickly. However, there are some ways to qualify for an upgrade almost every year. With a contract from Sprint, T-Mobile, and even AT&T a two

year contract can get a subscriber a new phone. Some plans actually allow customers to upgrade before the contract is completed, albeit with extra cost.

Every new model is improved with better hardware and software, but also may leave a new user, who shelled out a great deal of cash to buy the latest thing, wanting a phone that was a little better thought out. The iPhone 6s, for example, has improvements like better live pictures, improved Siri, 3D touch, a faster processor, and a supposedly a better battery life.

However, while having the latest cool stuff the battery life is shortened even further than that previous model, especially with the plus model.

Perhaps the smartest way to wait for the latest technology is to get the last model, when the latest model comes out. Now that the iPhone 6s is out and everyone needs to be the first to get one, the prices of the regular 6 has dropped by hundreds of dollars.

The newest phone is rarely worth the extra cost. Be smart and see what is actually being gained by getting the latest thing, before committing serious money towards a new piece of hardware.



iPhone 6 Plus

APPLE.COM

## Transgender and Gender-Fluids Look For Acceptance

By Jaylene Canning

Issues facing the gay community have recently come to the forefront of national attention. The recent Supreme Court decision essentially making gay marriage legal has created a lot of controversy, and the debate around this community is not going away soon.

With all the talk about the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgen-

der) community, people may wonder what the "T" really stands for. Transgender people are born one gender but know that they are supposed to be the other gender and feel uncomfortable in their natural body. Sadly oftentimes, these people isolate themselves from others. They feel awkward and out of place with their own gender, but cannot really be free to be with the other gender.

Gender-fluids can be more complicated. They are people who may at any time identify as either male, female, neutrois (that is being gender neutral, or having no gender), or any other non-binary identity, or some combination of identities.

Transgender and gender-fluids are quite different. While a transgender person may actually want to change his or her gender to the gender they identify with, a gender-fluid usually does not change. They just stay who they are but dress as they want depending on who they feel they are on a certain day. Perhaps because the gender is so fluid with these people

that they are the target of the highest level of hatred. It seems as though the general public does not realize that these people are in pain.

Speaking of hatred many think that it is unnatural for someone to find themselves trapped inside the body of the wrong gender. Others may just feel uncomfortable around these people. They do not realize that gender fluid people feel just as uncomfortable, they just cannot help it.

Most people don't know the feeling of being around a transgender person or how it feels to be transgender so they just judge them for being "unnatural". These people would much rather have the opportunity to lead a normal life. If the general public would take the time to see the pain

WIKIMEDIA.COM

they go through, then they would not judge this community of people so harshly.

Another serious problem is that the majority of parents cannot accept their own child being transgender. Gender fluid people in this situation suffer, often isolate themselves, and often they even learn to hate themselves. However there is help out there to aid in someone who has to identify their own gender, and there is help for families to cope with the conflict that this. Genderidentity.org has education and support groups to help individuals, families and even workplaces. Nonbinary.org is another helpful site for understanding this often misunderstood group of people, who only want to be accepted.



# An Informal Interview With Deadpool

By Emanuel Velez  
(and DEADPOOL!)

For over a decade (yes it's been that long), audiences have been waiting for a live-action theatrical Deadpool movie. For me, I've been waiting a year. Now, time for the REVIEW of *Deadpool*.

**Hell yeah you're gonna review me! Deadpool here! \*GASP\* I just broke the 4th wall in a written review! I am an absolute chimichanga-loving master at this. Oh and now, the REVIEW!**

First of all, I want to say that Ryan Reynolds is born to be Deadpool. Throughout the film I cannot doubt him being Deadpool. How Wade Wilson became Deadpool in this origin story isn't like any typical superhero origin story in film. The story blends well with the aftermath of the origin is all I'll say.

**Incredible! I'm not Spider-Man, Superman, Batman, or Wolverine! My origin is %&\$@ amazing! Wait! Why did you %&\$@ censor my words?!**

Because this is a friendly review fit for my high school, Mr. Pool - or Mr. Wilson - or Mr. Reynolds? Wait, who are you?

**I'm DEADPOOL, dammit! Roll**



FOXMOVIES.COM

**the credits to kill the taste, would you? Continue my review!**

Alright I'll continue. This movie puts Deadpool in his 100% comic-based character. The suit appears as if it were ripped from the comics.

**And then I stole it without getting sued. Thank you Fox! Take a chimichanga.**

Yes, we have the Deadpool that is NOT the one from X-Men Origins: Wolverine. X-Men: Days of Future Past was able to change the past and the future

- and voilà - your truly comic-based Deadpool! Wade Wilson is diagnosed with cancer, and submits himself to a secret program that transforms him into the still-unkillable Deadpool.

**They ruined my beautiful sexy face! Now I need to wear Ryan Reynolds or Hugh Jackman's sexy face off of magazines!**

Aside from the story, the side characters are also great. Colossus does an incredible performance trying to convince Deadpool to stop his R-rated wrongdoing and move toward the

PG-13 good guy stuff. We also have Negasonic Teenage Warhead – **which is the coolest %&\$@ ever** – who is pretty much Colossus' trainee to master mutant powers with the X-Men. Of course, we should see Cable in the sequel. Now as far as the R-rating, in my opinion, *Deadpool* needed to be rated R to show Deadpool at his best in film. A PG-13 rating would have put the movie into something... not as good. Despite the R rating, *Deadpool* broke records at the box office, for an opening weekend for an R-rated film. It is also one of the highest-grossing R-rated films ever, grossing nearly \$500 million! This was accomplished with a budget of only \$58 million.

**I'm rich and rich and rich!!! Chimichangas for me and for all – but mostly me!**

Despite a pretty short length of about 1 hour and 40 minutes (excluding end credits), I enjoyed this movie from start to finish - especially the 4th wall breaking, which IS in the movie. Once again, Ryan Reynolds is born to play Deadpool. I'm already demanding a sequel with a longer duration and more of Cable. Therefore, Deadpool gets a – **DEADPOOL INFINITY!!!**

– No! I meant to say a 10/10! Yes I do mean it. 10/10.

## Lesson in Humility

By Jackie Sanchez

"Leave me alone! Stop! Sergio Please!" Why are you doing this to me?" young Alexis yelled for help as he was getting bullied by 12-year-old Sergio.

Alexis was the smartest and smallest kid in class and Sergio was the oldest and meanest kid in Sebree Elementary School in rural Kentucky. Sergio took advantage of his size and age to bother and steal lunch money from his younger, smaller and smarter classmates, and was detested and feared for it.

With just one week before school ended Mr. Meyers announced to his class that there would be a book report due before the end of the school year. Meyers that this assignment required that, "every student must have a partner and both must have a finished book report completed before the end of school."

If that wasn't bad enough, if one failed then both students would be assigned to summer school. When Sergio heard this he got a bit worried because he knew that he was meant to pretty much everyone and so no one would pick him as his partner. He needed to graduate from elementary school this year or he would be forced to go to a special school for troubled kids.

Everyone in the class was excited to pick their partners. Within five minutes everyone had chosen a partner, all except Alexis, who unfortunately found that the only one left was Sergio. Sadly, Alexis walked up

to his new partner. Meanwhile, Sergio jumped with joy and shouted out to the class "Hey guys! Guess who's not going to summer school?!" Everyone in the class just turned smiled and looked away uncomfortably.

As the week went by Alexis tried convincing Sergio to help him with the book report, but Sergio simply wouldn't listen to him. What help could he be? He just relaxed, played and enjoyed the thought that he would get poor Alexis to do all the work. However, from somewhere deep inside, Alexis decided he would not be taken advantage of. If that meant going to summer school then so be it. He would not do all the work again.

With only three days until the book report deadline and both partners having done nothing, Alexis made a decision. On that Friday afternoon Alexis very upset and aggravated he walked up to Sergio and yelled, "Here is the book! I quit! I would rather go to summer school than be your slave!"

He threw the book down and walked away. Sergio was too shocked to beat on Alexis. He was also not accustomed to being spoken to this way. But with only three days before deadline, he picked up the book and walked away.

When Sergio got home he sat down on his bed and, shocked, just stared at the book. He had no idea how to write a book report and there was no one to help him. With just three days left to a special school, Sergio had no other choice. He had to do the book report. He didn't

want to go to summer school!

He took a deep breath, grabbed the book, and began reading. As he read the book, Alexis immediately popped into his head. The book was about a boy, Juan, who was made fun of because of his height, and because he was smart, but in all reality nobody really knew how much the boy suffered.

As Sergio continued reading he began comparing his life to another character in the book. Another boy who was bullied by everyone was the one who helped the others although they were rude and disrespectful towards him. Especially one boy, Hugo, who was very wealthy who thought he was better than everyone else, simply because he had the latest clothing, shoes, and electronics. He would not speak to anybody that wasn't wealthy like him.

As Sergio kept reading the novel it came to his attention that the character in the novel sounded just like him how he acts. He stayed thinking to himself for a minute later on he continued reading. In the novel, the poor innocent boy lost his parents in a terrible car accident, and so he was alone. In school he didn't have any friends. Everyone made fun of him because of his appearance. The bully horrible things to Juan, because he was unaware of Juan's situation, and didn't really care.

As Sergio turned the pages he was pulled into the story. He forgot that reading wasn't fun, that it was work. He read that one day at lunch Hugo saw



123RF.COM

Juan eating one of those gross sandwiches that he always brought from home, poor food, strange and gross, in the corner by himself.

Hugo saw his opportunity to have a little fun and give Juan a hard time. He said, "Hey Loser! See why nobody likes you!"

He took the sandwich and threw it to the ground, then said, "You should just leave this place your die. You aren't liked by anyone here!"

Juan, humiliated, got up and ran far away, tears coming from his eyes. He stopped at the bridge that lead into town, and thought to himself, "I can't take this anymore" and threw himself into the raging river below.

The following morning the whole school heard about the news except one person. Hugo, who was always late, and no one seemed to care, arrived to school, walked in the front door and down the hallway. Everyone, who saw him attack Juan at lunch, looked at him as he passed by, silently eyeing him.

Then, a teacher called Hugo into the office right before he

could reach his classroom. The teacher asked Hugo to sit down, then gently told him about Juan's death. Hugo knew that he was responsible for this. He couldn't believe it. He knew that he had to live with that guilt the rest of his life. Hugo became the outsider. His wealth and stuff didn't mean anything. Everyone knew that he was a murderer.

Sergio had finished the book and without thinking he grabbed a pencil and a piece of paper and began writing. Without knowing it Sergio had done all the work by himself. The next day when the report was to be presented to the class, he stood up and could feel the class, and even the teacher's, surprise at his having done work.

Alexis didn't know how to react. But Sergio read the report he wrote, apologizing in to everyone, but especially to Alexis. Not only he wasn't going to summer school but also learned a big lesson. He became a better person. The teacher accepted the report with a knowing smile and said, "Good work, Hugo."



PHOTO BY JALEN MASPONO

PHS Indians work hard taking the field together, fighting for PHS as a team.

## Passaic High School Football on Path to Victory

By David Buonafina and  
Jalen Maspono

The PHS Indian football team is always looking to improve their game and be better on and off the field. Despite a rough beginning, the team is has not been dispirited and they worked harder than ever to succeed. This season was a big improvement over past seasons.

Coach Mantz, as head coach, has begun to develop the team effort in his second year.

“We have new formations and coaching staff,” said William Perez (inside tackle).

Coach Mantz and his coaching staff have been working hard to formulate a team that will find success on and off the field. In keeping with the mission and vision, students who play foot-

ball must also find success in their classes. Football supports the student athlete’s academic achievement.

The team wants the support of the student body. Angel Burgos (full back) said, “We as individuals have pride in our team. The coaches believe in us and the program so much but there is so many people in the school who do not believe in us and I guess

that gets to some of the guys.”

The Indians have improved a lot over the past couple of years. It is a young team with a lot of promise. Angel Burgos added, “You cannot teach pride, it is developed in what we do at every practice, and at every game.”

Talking to the players there is a close bond between them and a love for the game. They are proud to represent PHS. Mau-

rice Gawthney (defensive tackle) said, “We work harder and harder every day, we are a more disciplined team, we also act like a family, this is how we have a special bond with each other that will never be broken or forgotten.”

One thing is for certain. The team to watch for success next year is the PHS Indians. Good luck to them and keep up the good work! PHS supports you!

## Soccer: It’s All About the Team

By Ariadni Aguilar

The PHS Soccer team has shown great improvement over the past few years. From being an unheard of team, the PHS Indians have become a force on and off the field. Soccer is one of those sports where all the players must play as a team. To play as a team requires a great deal of practice and effort. Players must show respect and support each other. Most of all every player must feel like a part of the soccer family.

How can this be accomplished? Coach Fazio said, “We stress hard work, discipline, respect and commitment”. He makes sure the players are responsible for their actions on and off the field. The soccer boys must first make certain that they are doing well in their academics. Then, make sure that they are behaving as expected in order to play.

Senior, Diego Ruiz, stated “playing for PHS has its ups and downs, but I mostly enjoy it.” He added, “Being a senior brings a lot of responsibility for yourself and all the underclassmen, because they expect a lot

from you. I like that challenge and I expect to deliver my very best in every game.”

Part of the program at PHS is that seniors are expected to be an example for the underclassmen, to teach them what the game and teamwork is all about.

After graduation, many seniors expect to continue their love of the game by playing in college.

Senior Antonio Bello said, “I would love to play soccer in college. Ever since I was a little kid, I’ve had a big love for this sport. It’s not just a thing. It’s my passion.”

As a player he has shown great improvement this season, by showing responsibility and working hard.

Perhaps the best example of the PHS Soccer spirit is summed up by senior and captain, Saul Linares. He said, “Knowing it’s my last year I want to make the best of it. Being named captain was an honor and challenge because I am an example to all the players. I give 110% every game regardless of the score. I don’t just play for fun or to win. I play because I love this sport. It’s my passion and motivation in life.”

## Volleyball’s Formula for Success

By Christal Veras

Over the years the volleyball team has begun to earn a reputation for hard work and success on the court. Changes this year will add to that reputation. The varsity team gets a new head coach, last year’s junior varsity coach, Mr. Minaya.

“I am very proud, I feel like I put a lot of work and I feel that I earned being the head coach. There are a lot of behind the scene details to take care of. However, I feel that the reward is worth the wait and effort,” said Mr. Minaya.

There is also a new junior varsity coach, Mr. Delcarmen. Minaya and Delcarmen are close friends. They hope to take advantage of their friendship to foster a sense of team-

work between the two teams. In fact, both played volleyball for Passaic when they were students.

Delcarmen said, “It is an honor to be a part of this program that once governed my life and my day to day decisions as an athlete. It is also humbling to work under the man who coached me to bring this program to its former greatness.”

Both coaches are doing their best to make this season great.

“In order to have a better season I have to work with my staff. I believe my staff helps me become better organized and a better head coach. Also game wise I pay attention and my staff helps me pay attention and we make determinations on what we need to fix to allow the girls to improve in

their errors or get better for the next game,” Minaya said.

Delcarmen, coaching for the first time, is pushing his team to put forth their best effort, all the time.

“First off I am showing these girls a side of volleyball that they have never seen before. By treating junior varsity as if they were a varsity program, it will increase my expectation of the feeder program for the upcoming years,” said Coach Pablo.

Although the volleyball girls have had a rough start they are willing to leave that behind them and only learn from their mistakes.

The focus of these teams is success and hard work, and that should be a winning formula.

## Broncos Win Super Bowl

By Freddy Sanchez

After a long, stressful, confusing season, the Denver Broncos have made it into the historic fiftieth Super Bowl. Denver faced the number one offense in the NFL, the Carolina Panthers. However, the number one offense Panthers had to play the number one defense Broncos. This matchup made for a very good game.

It has been a tough season for Denver, with a record of 12-4. They lost to the Colts, Raiders, Chiefs, and Steelers, but they also had their victories over the Packers, Vikings, Bengals and

Patriots, which are some of the best teams in the NFL. A part of their seasonal difficulties arose from the Broncos having more than their share of injuries. The most significant injury was their best weapon, one of the greatest quarterbacks to step on the field, Peyton Manning. He had a foot injury, a shoulder injury, and a hip injury.

To take his place for a couple of weeks, was the backup quarterback, Brock Osweiler. He did surprise football fans with his good performance. Both quarterbacks have done their jobs well and that allowed the Broncos to go to the playoffs.

However, they were again seen as the underdogs, just as they had been during the entire post season. Just as they had done during the entire season, the Broncos have proved their critics wrong.

Defense indeed does win championships, as this Super Bowl demonstrated. While it probably will be Peyton’s “last rodeo”, it is a wonderful way to end a truly spectacular career. Peyton Manning walks into the sunset of his career with the championship, a 2nd ring, many broken records, and a host of incredible fans to cheer his name.

