

THE HILLTOP STAR

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Passaic High School, Passaic, NJ

Graduation Week 2016

School Musical A Success

By Thania Rubio

The PHS Drama Club presented their annual school musical, "A Musical Review." However, to be precise, it was a mashup of all the best scenes from many different plays. The story was based on the adventures of Captain Hook with Wendy, John, and Michael, the three kids from *Peter Pan*, who traveled to different time periods.

They started with the late 1980's, with a show opener from *Once Upon an Island*, a story fairy tale celebration of love, hope, life and death. As the story progressed the kids get to travel to the fabulous fifties in *Grease*, the kids get to experience the friendship, romance and adventures of the group of kids in Rydell High School, continuing into *West Side Story*, a story a story set in the 1960's about the harsh life of the Upper West Side in New York



Wendy, Captain Hook, Michael and John travel back and forth in time in PHS Drama Club's "A Musical Review."

City and forbidden romance of a Polish boy and a Puerto Rican girl.

The second act began with *Hairspray*, also set in the 60's. As the kids are taken to Tracy's adventures she tries to become a dancer, but learns a bigger lesson about racial integration. The cast ends the play with a TERRIFIC performance as the *Addams Family*.

Was the school musical was a miracle this year? Maybe not a miracle but it was really good. Overcoming some real obstacles this year, Ms. Kostiak, the Drama teacher and the musical director with the support of Mr. Rusca, band director, worked hard to get this curtain opened. Other teachers that worked hard to help get this play together were Mr. Schmitz, Mrs. Merced, Mrs. Gauthier, Mrs. Singer, Mrs. Sanchez, Mrs. Godavanik, Mrs. Zagrobelny. Of course the cast



PHOTOS BY JALEN MASPONO

Scene from "Once Upon an Island" is performed by the PHS Drama Club in their annual musical.

and crew also worked extra hard to make this play possible.

Junior Albert Baez, speaking about his role in the play, said, "Even though it was stressful it was a pretty fun experience. Mrs. Kostiak saw the potential in all of us and always motivated us to keep going. The cast would support one another. My favorite part had to be working with the instructors and practicing for *Grease*" He added that "the play was really good, the instructors

were great and the people were amazing and fun to work with."

Junior Krystin Caridad said, "It was the best play from all three that I've done. Even though I did it to prepare me for what I want to do in college, I loved having something to do after school and meeting new people. It was a little stressful because we had a limited time for six different plays, what a challenge. I really encourage other students to do it next year because it's an unfor-

gettable experience."

Director Mrs. Kostiak said, "As many of you might know this is my last presentation at PHS. I will be moving on to another great adventure as of this December. This year's 'Broadway Musical Review 2016' is my fifth and largest musical production I have had the pleasure to work on."

Mrs. Kostiak wishes to thank, "my cast and speech and drama students, who came through to make this production a success."

Cast Members:

Ivan Hernandez
Krystin Caridad
Andrew Zarebczan
Amy Zarebczan
Eric Rivera
Ashley Candelaria
Chelsea Candelaria
Kameron Malloy
Nazier Navarro
Karina Linares
Genesis Trabal
Daniela Carmona

Carla Sueldia
Danny Ramos
Maya Santiago
Ciara Flores
Brandon Santiago
Annaliss Candelaria
Connie Martinez
Jonathan Hernandez
Adrian Salas
Jordy Flores
Katherin Vega
Alma Chapuli
Nicole Carranza

Jessica Rubio
Thania Rubio
Bruce Ransom
Albert Baez
Chris Rodriguez
Jeffrey Guaman
Catherine Sposato
Yolimar Torres
Joshua Martinez
Marlene Mendez
Kelly Barreto
Joshua Zuniga

PHS Drill Team A Force to be Reckoned With in Daytona

By Yesenia Garcia

As the warm weather of spring had many students thinking about summer plans, the PHS NJROTC drill team looked forward to even warmer weather while competing in the annual National High School Drill Team Championships in Daytona Beach, Florida. The drill team competes on a National level against teams that they have never seen, or only see at this one annual drill team competition.

The PHS Drill Team members spent the entire year preparing with morning practices before school, arriving at 6:15 am, then going through an entire day of school, and then putting in the extra effort after school with more practice. With all this practice team members were confident. "I feel like we are really ready to take on the competition," said senior Karen Ferrufino. The team has also been competing locally, in drill team competitions at places such as Rancocas, Bethel, and Manchester. PHS has also done exceptionally well in our own drill competition, where the Indians hosted other schools to

compete.

The team as a whole is made up of about sixty NJROTC cadets. Each one of these cadets is responsible and dedicated, not only to the drill team, but the NJROTC program as a whole. Down in Daytona Beach, Florida, the team competed in eight events, Armed Color Guard, Armed Regulation, Armed Exhibition, Armed Inspection, Unarmed Color Guard, Unarmed Regulation, Unarmed Exhibition and Unarmed Inspection. Each event is commanded by a cadet that can memorize the routine, fix any flaws and overall handle the pressure of leading in competition.

The Armed Drill Team commander for the past two years is Cadet Lieutenant Commander Karen Ferrufino and the Unarmed Drill Team commander is Cadet Lieutenant Commander Starlin Morel. Starlin Morel has been commander for the last two years, and has not only shown how great of a leader he is but how well he can handle pressure.

Karen Ferrufino has led her team in Nationals for the past two years as well, and has com-



PHOTO BY YESENIA GARCIA

The 2016 ROTC Drill Team in Daytona, Florida, at the national competition.

manded Armed Regulation and Armed Inspection. As a senior this was her last Nationals Drill Team Competition and although it was a bittersweet moment she has done exceptionally well as a leader in this program and as Commander of her team. Karen said, "Drill Team has been the highlight of my high school career."

Cadet Lieutenant Isais Almon-

te is in charge of Armed Exhibition and he is only a junior. He has stepped up when he called, and has shown that he is a leader and likes a challenge. Cadet Commander Natalie Gaspar is commander for Unarmed Exhibition and has shown tremendous growth in her four years in drill team. Twenty-six schools compete at this competition and out of these 26 schools our Unarmed

Regulation Team came in second place.

For the first time ever Cadet Lieutenant Commander Starlin Morel was awarded the Commander's Award for demonstrating clear commands during performance and for demonstrating outstanding leadership skills. Petty Officer Nuyen as well as Chief Newman put in tremendous work. **continued on page 2**



PHOTOS BY JALEN MASPONO

The new gym became a full display of the scientific exploration created by PHS students.

Students Demonstrate their Scientific Ability in Science Fair

By Jalen Maspono

During the cold days of January over 350 students were beginning their hard work towards completing a science project. These projects were collected and displayed in the 2016 PHS Science Fair competition on June 1. While some students chose to work alone others worked in pairs or in small groups of three.

There were also three types of projects to choose from. They were Invention, Experiment, or Investigation.

Students who were invited to attend the fair during their science classes were able to participate in a scavenger hunt, which allowed them to see and learn from many of the great projects that were assembled in the gymnasium. "The projects were pretty good. A lot of work went into them," said Senior David Buonofina.

The Science Fair was also a competition so the projects needed to be judged. The panel of judges consisted of Passaic Supervisor of Math, Ali Alavi, Passaic Supervisor of Science, Nilda Carbonell, PCCC STEM Coordinator Thomas van Aken, a retired Nuclear Engineer, and current adjunct professor at NYIT, a retired Physics Teacher and Science Department Chair, a representative from Bio NJ, and PHS administrators. The judges looked at all the projects, analyzed their scientific value and selected a winner by grade level. The judging took place during the day, but

the winners were revealed at the awards ceremony held in the auditorium at 7:00 PM.

There were awards and prizes for each grade level. Each science class selected a representative for their class in the fair, and received a t-shirt. The shirt was designed by a participant in the fair.

Classes that participated in the fair each voted on a project to represent their class. These students were awarded a Science Fair T-Shirt, designed by one of our Science Fair Participants! The T-shirt design was voted on by the PHS student body. A save the date card was created by PHS Graphic Design students. So this event was a collection of talent from all around PHS.

The first place winner of each division was a tablet, while second and third place winners were awarded \$40 and \$20 book gift cards, respectively. Junior Thania Rubio, first place winner likes the tablet that she was awarded, though she admitted, "I haven't taken it out of the box yet. I have been studying for finals. But I had a great time doing the project and

it was actually easier than I thought."

This was a large event and was organized by a planning committee, consisting of Mr.

Caceres, Mrs. Russo, and Mrs. Ross. They are planning on expanding the event and making it even better next year!



PHOTOS BY JALEN MASPONO

Top: An awards ceremony in the auditorium capped the event.
 Bottom left: Students showed pride and resourcefulness in presenting their science fair projects.
 Bottom right: Principal Velez discusses science project with a student.

THE HILLTOP STAR
 The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

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Drill Team

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dous effort to help this team be the best it can be. Both instructors give constructive criticism and tough love as a way to get each cadet to perform at their best.

The NJROTC Drill Team has always been a force to be reckoned with and this year was no different. As our team gets better so do all the other teams and the competition grows from year to year. For all returning cadets, they hope to get the opportunity to compete again next year and bring home a first place trophy. What awaits the NJROTC Drill Team is unknown but it will certainly be something great.



PHOTO BY YESENIA GARCIA
 The drill team color guard demonstrates their prowess and precision.

Graduation
 Friday, June 24, 6-9 p.m.
 Boverini Stadium, 262 River Dr.
 Passaic, NJ

Undergraduates,
 remember to do your
Summer Reading Project
 See your English teacher for details.

Cadets Use Sea Perch to Develop STEM Skills in NJROTC

By Yesenia Garcia

All senior NJROTC cadets were challenged to build an underwater remotely operated vehicle otherwise known as Sea Perch. Sea Perch is a project where students are able to engage in hands on education and have the ability to learn about robotics as well as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). This project is sponsored by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) which is managed by The AU-VSI Foundation.

This is the third year that Petty Officer Nuyen has taken this project upon himself and all 112 senior cadets. Each group was made up of about 3-4 students and they were given the option to use the classic Sea Perch design or freelance to create their own original design.

Seniors learn about neutral buoyancy, dc electricity, simple dc motors, electrical diagrams, and working together to complete a project. The goal requirement is to have the vehicle float, go underwater using

motors and be able to resurface.

Mr. Nuyen challenged every group to create a freelance design and be able to create something unique while keeping in mind that each ROV (remotely operated vehicle) needs at least one floaty and three motors. Each student was able to solder their own control box that moves the ROV. Soldering is connecting two or more objects together by melting metal. They also had to connect their motors as well as fill them with wax and decide where to mount them.

This project has always been a challenge, because for many seniors this is the first time they have created something like this, while learning about buoyancy and electricity. These cadets have worked on this project all year long a couple of days each week. Building a ROV is plenty exciting, but the true excitement comes from testing it and seeing if it actually works.

Petty Officer Nuyen along with the help of some teachers took the senior cadets to Third



PHOTOS BY MR. NUYEN

Sea Perch teaches STEM skills, while having fun.

Ward Park on June 1. Each group placed their creations into the water and was challenged to submerge it to see if they could achieve propulsion underwater. At the end of this

day many students were awed by the fact that something they created actually worked.

Petty Officer Nuyen uses this project as a way for students to get hands on experience as well

as explore careers in fields that they may have never even considered. Sea Perch was a success, now in its third year, and it will hopefully be back again next year.



10 Questions For Seniors

1. My best memory of PHS is...?

Prom was the most memorable night of my life

When I met my boyfriend

Prom this year was great!

Field day my freshman year

My best memory of PHS was field day my freshman year

The Pep Rallies

Being elected as one of the Class Officers

The winter and spring concerts with the choir

My entire sophomore year

Having Mr. Weisman as a Principal

Choir is my best memory of PHS. I made new friends and found that if you want a performance to be great, however you do need practice. Choir helped me learn that in life in order to be great you need to practice what you love.

When my classmate confused Hamlet with Piglet from Winnie the Pooh

My best memory is talking and laughing with my classmates.

Meeting new friends everywhere.

Joining sports

Meeting my boyfriend sophomore year

Being able to go with the choir and sing at Carnegie Hall

Going on field trips that I was able to hang out with my friends

Prom 2016

Senior Night Out

Basketball Season

Going on field trips

When I kissed my boyfriend

My surprise birthday party from my teacher

Dancing at the Prom

Pep rallies – all of them

The field day in Third Ward Park

Laughing in the cafeteria with my friends

Meeting peeps (so many peeps in this school)

During the holidays when the band and choir would

randomly play music and walk the halls. You actually felt the holiday spirit!

So many in my mind since freshmen year all the way to senior year, I can't really think of one. I've done so much here that to finally realize that a little piece in me will miss this school.

Running in the hallways to avoid getting caught by a teacher

Being part of Homecoming

Prom 2016

The PBIS parade my freshman year.

The best memory in Passaic High School is being part of NJROTC and making a difference

My friends

Soccer season with the great coaches – and prom!

When my first street soccer team got our uniforms and wore it on the same day to put our name out there.

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

People kept on walking like snails

You're my best teacher

My bird ate my paper

My dog broke my laptop so I couldn't finish my assignment

You already know the answer so I don't have to write it

I didn't do my homework because I was just lazy and exhausted at life

I didn't do my homework because my dog ate it

I dropped coffee in my shirt

I ran out of toilet paper so I wiped with my homework.

My printer didn't work, ran out of ink, etc.

I was new in the school

I was in the bathroom throwing up

"Oh, I handed in my work" when in reality I never did

I didn't go to your class because I had diarrhea

My dog ate my homework

I'm sick – need to go to the nurse

I told a teacher once I was feeling sick just to get out of her class

I'm pregnant

I told my teacher I got lost (senior year)

My printer didn't work, ran out of ink, etc.

There should be no excuses, to be truly rebellious, find something that's worth fighting for. [Good one – ed.]

That my bird Charlie pooped on my homework

Don't worry about if it doesn't concern you then stay out of it. This was my freshman or sophomore year I believe.

I'm not cutting, just simply not in class.

The craziest excuse I've ever given my teacher is when my back was injured and that I couldn't walk –they were in shock.

I'm organizing my work.

I was late because I was too tired to wake up.

My mom threw the homework in the garbage (actually she did)

My Google account got hacked

I was sick

3. What was your most embarrassing moment?

My pants ripped

Fall down in the courtyard.

When I almost fell on the steps

I missed a step on the stairs, because I was rushing, and there were people that saw that disaster.

My pants ripped

I fell on the stairs in front of everyone

When I got an answer wrong to a question in class

When I fell on the stairs

Slipped on ice

Walking into the wrong classes freshman year

Getting a pear thrown at me in the courtyard

Asking girls out – and getting rejected.

Drooling while taking a nap in class

Tripping while going up the stairs

When I slipped all the way down the stairs.

Falling down by the main building during the snow

When I fell down in the courtyard.

When I declared my love to my crush and she said I was nasty.

Saying the wrong answer

When I walked into the boys bathroom when I was hiding from my teacher.

My most embarrassing moment was when I was going up the stairs and I tripped.

Getting spiked in the chest at volleyball game in front of my peers.

When I fell down the stairs.

I was a freshmen in High School and I was looking for the central detention class. I accidentally walked into a class full of seniors and they all yelled "FRESHMEN" at me when I asked if this was the central detention classroom.

Tripping up the stairs switching class periods

Chocolate milk spilled all over my pants.

Staining my pants.

I passed out after a blood drive. It was so embarrassing because it was in the middle of the hallway.

Lifting weights and letting a fart loose in while doing so.

When I fell in front of a whole bunch of people.

The most embarrassing moment is being put on blast when I am wrong.

Not being Homecoming King

I fell down the stairs

4. What is the best advice you would give to the incoming freshmen next year?

Keep calm and good luck, rookies!

Do your work and do your best, the end of high school comes by fast

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Do what you gotta do in school and don't get influenced by people that won't be there at the end of high school.

Take freshmen year seriously and stay out of trouble

Speak up. It is your time to shine and to make a change in the school. Never hold back what you have planned.

Please do not slack off your freshmen year. If not taken seriously, you can jeopardize your chances of losing your credits. Join lots of clubs and sports. It is good to be involved in school activities. It also looks good on college applications. Most importantly, keep up your education, stay positive and have fun.

Stay true to yourself and never be someone you're not just to fit in.

Always do your work – 50 is better than a 0

Brace yourself for the rollercoaster

Always do your work and enjoy your four years at PHS because time flies by.

Don't be afraid to speak out and if you feel like you have to say something say it.

The way people look at you does not define the great things you can achieve.

I'd say to them that high school is like a movie quadrilogy. You have only four films to make greatness in your teen life.

Don't slack off freshman year

Do your work and don't try to be cool because of your "friends". By the time you are ready to graduate the you'll only end up with about 2 or 3 close friends.

Do Not Cut your classes!

For the incoming freshman enjoy your 4 years of school. Do not grow up so fast. Be a kid, join a club, sport, choir or even the band. Trust me it will be the best thing you ever do. Everything else can wait get good grades come to school. I'm not saying it will be easy but it worth at the end. You will start your journey soon you will be just like us walking the grass on 2020.

Not to give up and to always try their best to succeed

You have lots of friends you walk into high school with and leave high school without most of them.

Don't stress too much, you will make it through and when senior year come all the hard work will be worth it

Don't mess up

Focus on your classes, you won't regret it your senior year

Do good and do not mess up

Take advantage of the opportunities given to you

I would tell them to do really good and not play around becomes when it comes to being a senior and apply to college and for scholarships. Remember that whatever you did in the past you'll regret it.

Don't slack off any high school year. And nothing is impossible to achieve.

Work smart and don't give up

Do your best. Be yourself. Never think you can't do it, because you could be just finding excuses for not doing it. Whatever you don't do in your first three years, you'll regret in your senior year. (I know).

Work hard

Work hard in all classes and enjoy your four years of high school

Don't cut class !!

Think about your competition

Time flies, don't joke too much, seek out your purpose

Work hard during high school and take advantage of the college opportunities

Don't ever cut or be late, the results will show up in the future

Be yourself. Don't change who you really are. Seek out your friends during the darkest moments of high school.

Work your butts off because slacking can only get you so far.

Don't fool around and take everything serious.

If you're late to school then be late as hell with a full stomach. Eat breakfast and/or sleep longer.

Keep your grades up, do not cut and focus.

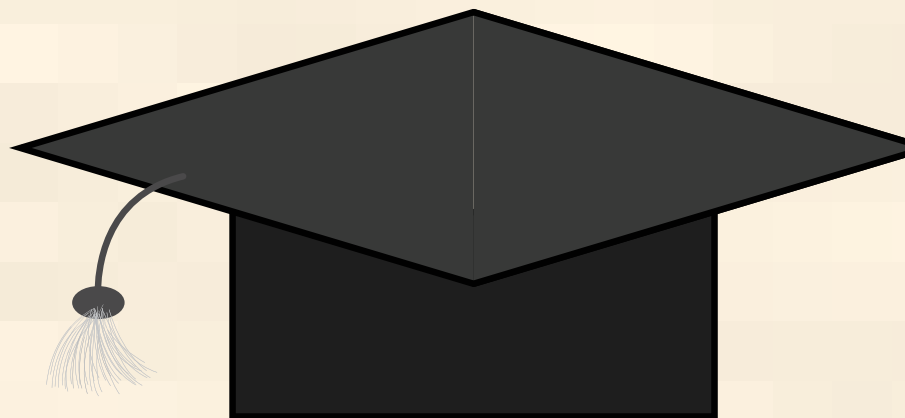
Join any club/sports/STEM activities. It would be really beneficial to apply what you learn in school in real life. Plus it is fun.

Don't cut classes

Don't cut next year and don't be follower, be a leader

Don't mess up, and focus on your future

Come to school to learn. Be yourself, love yourself. Making friends and join clubs, or sports. Most of all don't worry about the unnecessary!



5. What are your summer plans?

College and work

Going to work

Going on vacation with my cousins

Lakes, spend lots of time out

Go to college

EOF summer program, and Florida

Work and buy new graphic T's

Have fun

Prepare for college and go on adventures with my best friend

Going to a 4 week course at William Paterson University.

To go visit family in the Dominican Republic

Have fun at the beach

Relax, enjoy the summer at Seaside and start college in August.

Going to Disney World

My summer plan is to get my cosmetology license

Eat, sleep and work

First, I'm vacationing in Honduras. Then, I'll get a summer job. Finally, I'll prepare for college orientation.

Work

Working and saving up

Work for my college expenses

To work and sleep

My plans for the summer is to spend time with my kids and to finally get married to the man I love

Enjoy the summer

Go to South Dakota again

College Program

Work

I want to go out with my boyfriend a lot

I don't know yet

My summer plans are get a job

Getting out a lot

Going to Mexico and Los Angeles

To go to college and follow my career, to be someone in life

To get a job and read a lot so I can be ready for college

Inline skate around in nearby cities

PCCC and work

Keep training and working

Having FUN!!

My summer plans are to attend the EOF program in Montclair State University

Joining the Marines

Moving to North Carolina

Work and visit my home country

Go out every day and go to college in September

Would need to find a job and come by and help with Cyber Patriot

Vacation

Spend time with my family, then school

Go to the state fair, Atlantic city, and score for my soccer team

Fly to Europe with all my cousins

6. What are your plans for when the summer ends?

Go to college

Start College

College

Work and go to college

Continue college

Go to college and study to be a nurse

Get all my books out for college

Begin my journey at William Paterson University on September 1st

To start Montclair State University for my career.

10 Questions for Seniors

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Go to PCCC

To be Happy and Healthy

Start college

After summer ends I plan on working in the beauty world and see where life takes me

Eat, sleep, study and work

I will continue my studies at Montclair State University

Enjoy it

Going to a trade school hopefully

Go to college in September

To start my accounting career

To go to college to study medical training

Go to college

Perhaps I can enlist

Still working

College

I will take a gap year to save up for money for school

Starting college

Work support my family and finish college

Studying in college and still working

Still work or go to college

Work and go to Capri Institute

Begin college at Montclair State University.

Begin a new journey in Saint Peter's University

My summer is never going to end

It's simple. I'll keep doing what I've been doing for the past 8 months or maybe I'll go on my own summer vacation.

Going to college

I will be graduating bootcamp

Go to PCCC and study radiology

Go to PCCC to study hospality.

Be prepared for college

College and work

College

Straight working and going to trade school to be a barber

Focus on soccer, work and my health

7. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I see myself with a master's degree in computer science or philosophy

Married, living in Spain

A police officer

Being an accountant getting ready to buy a house and settle down

I see myself living in my own house with the dream career I always wanted

Working in a hospital

Working for the News Industry and writing stories around the world – thanks Mr. Z.

Beginning my career as a English Special Education teacher at a secondary school

I see myself teaching and traveling around the world to help those in need.

I don't think that far ahead. I just want to be enjoying my life.

Being a Neonatal Nurse or a Physician Assistant

Working in a hospital as a pediatric nurse

In 10 year I see myself loving my job and myself.

Living in Florida while working for Disney

I'm either an animator and/or

Working on a good career

Working in a vet clinic

I see myself in a big house, with my wife, kids and a great job.

Writer

Maybe forming a family and being financially stable

Living in my own place working doing what I love

I see myself owning my own home and car, having a career using my bachelor's degree

I see myself as an accountant with a minor in music and medical assistant

I see myself being a Medical Assistant

Working hard

A United States Marine in the K-9 unit

Having a stable job and home

Working in a hospital as an ultrasound technician

If Trump wins, in Mexico

Not in Passaic, having a family and my career.

Being a Police officer for Passaic county

I see myself as a volleyball coach or a cook, or both

I don't know, let destiny surprise me

Having my own beauty salon

Owning my beauty salon

Filthy rich working in new York city as an accountant

Teaching philosophy in high school setting

Teaching maybe kids with autism or having my own restaurant in my town.

There's a world of endless possibilities!!

Fighting in a great organization or as a cop

Working in my own technology company

In 10 years I see myself having my own business or being able to help plan major events like the Grammy's

As an officer in the Marine Corps

Doing my things

In the Marine Corps

Running my own hotel in the Caribbean

I see myself with multiple careers I would like to achieve

Boxing champion of the world

World Cup 2026 and traveling

Being happy with my job and have a home of my own

Healthy and living in my apartment

A special ed teacher in PHS

8. What is your greatest achievement at PHS? What would you like to be remembered here for?

Honor Roll and I would like to be remembered for being a good friend

Four years of soccer

My first Honor Roll

Being involved around school, I would like to be remembered for being active in clubs and sports and still getting good grades in school

I began as an "F" student and bumped myself up to "A's" and "B's." I'd like to be remembered as the one that didn't let anyone bring her down.

Always getting stuff done even if it meant wanting to give up

Performing at Carnegie Hall with my Honor's Choir

My greatest achievement is being able to maintain being on honor roll each marking period for four years of high school. I would like to be remembered for my kindness and helpfulness.

I made the honor roll my whole entire junior year. I would like to be remembered as the girl who achieved all that she could to make it on the honor roll.

I graduated and my daughter wasn't an obstacle, so I can prove everyone wrong.

I would like to be remembered for my dedication because I always handed in my work.

Never getting suspended or ISS all 4 years is probably my greatest achievement. I want to be remembered for never letting anyone bring me down.

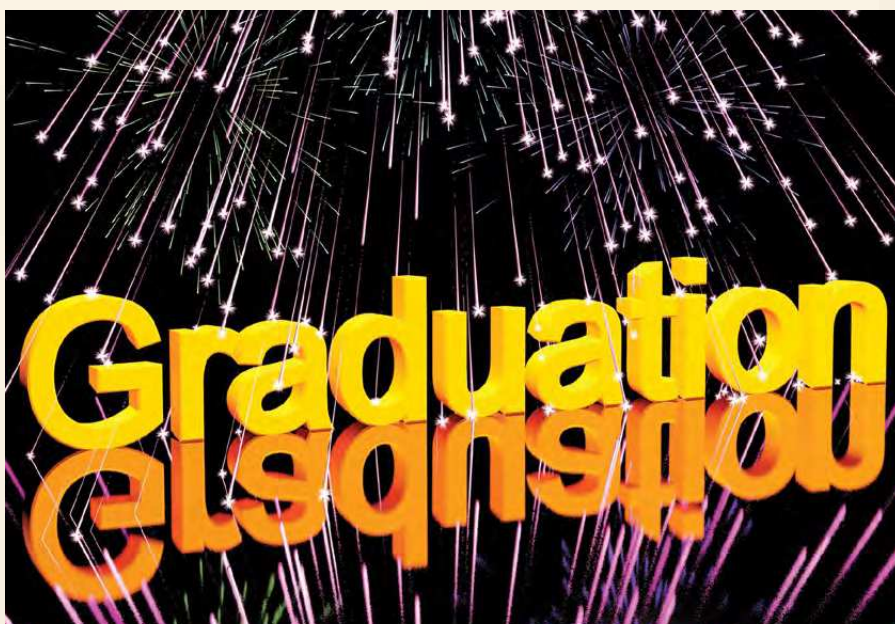
My greatest achievement is never getting a central. I'll be remembered for leaving my classmates with a laugh.

Being able to pass tests

Never giving up in school

My greatest achievement was making it to graduation

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My greatest achievement at PHS is the STRIVE award I received by my forensic science teacher Mr. Graham

My greatest achievement was making it to graduation

That I made it in the honor roll, and I would like to be remembered as the girl that always tried her best to become a successful person

A great student

Making it to varisty in XC (cross country), I'd like to be remembered as someone who never gave up on school even when times were difficult

Graduation

Finally making honor roll. I really don't care if I'm remembered or not.

I would like to be remembered as a hallway walker because I was always walking around in the hallways every period

Graduation, my loud mouth

Graduating on time. And for class clown, lol

Earning second team all league

That I got honor roll and that I gave my best

The help and the activities

Getting into the National Honor Society, being a Peer Leader

Ideal student, who took the challenge. Came a long way from being in bilingual classes freshmen year to AP courses on her junior and senior year. I did not give up even when I became challenged by my own ideas of what the system should be.

Making honor roll and coming out of my comfort zone to play soccer. I would like to be remembered for my personality. I was the kid who would walk in the halls smiling ear to ear brightening everyone's day!

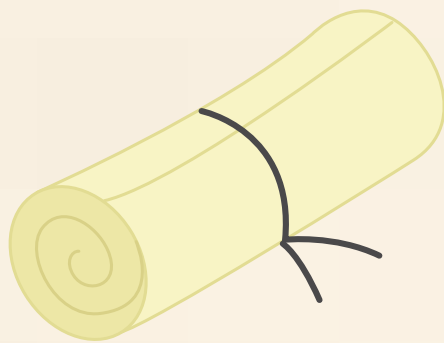
Getting a medal for wrestling

Probably when I was going to get kicked out of school but I thought about it and came back 10 times stronger and everyone who doubted me got proved wrong

My greatest achievement was becoming the fastest back-stroker on the swim team

Honor roll and remembered here for being a prankster

PHS Honor Roll my first three years, and I would like to be remembered here as somebody who had goals and



is going to achieve them even though I'm lazy

Greatest achievement is working as a team with underclassmen in NJROTC and placing first place in state of NJ for Cyber Patriot. I would like to be remembered as the one that didn't give up on the Cyber Patriot team.

I would like to be remembered for always trying my best and never giving up

Being part of the homecoming court and helping freshmen to their classes

Honor Rolls two times in a row

9. What trend or fad are you most embarrassed about having taken part in?

Joggers

The "what are those" fad lol never did it but shared a lot of memes xD

I don't have one

That band life

Skinny jeans (I look horrible in them)

Getting blunt bangs (haircut)

Snapchat. I could not deal with it.

Humps on hair

Wearing cheetah

Straight bangs with curly hair

I'm not really sure to be honest. I guess you can say hanging out with the wrong crowd

Ugh. Thinking failing classes and summer school was cool.

None. I never followed fashion. I was my own person.

I don't think I took part in a trend but "deez nuts" was an annoying trend I hated hearing.

Lip-piercing, choker necklace, multiple bracelets on my arms

My emo phase

10. I am most grateful for ...

Being able to graduate

The help of the guidance department and vice principal

My family, my good friends, and my life that I am blessed to live each day

Life

Being here in PHS

My aunt and grandparents for never giving up on me and believing my future

The people I met in PHS for better or for worse thanks to them I learned some things about the world

My teachers and counselor

Having teachers and counselors who were always there for me and helped me with my success for the future

My parents who are always supportive of me and my education

An amazing four years that taught me how to grow and be someone that is capable of doing anything in life to achieve and for the teachers who have helped me get through it all and make me feel so good about myself.

My daughter

My mother and Mrs. Bolton for keeping me motivated to do my best

My teachers who never let me down, they always encouraged me to do my best

My family for supporting me and giving me everything I need to succeed

All the friends I made and the ones that cared from the start

Making the best of high school – a part of life that can't be repeated. It's like an original quadrilogy with no follow-ups – except reunions.

My family

Being able to graduate and finishing strong

My teachers for never giving up on me

The moments that teachers wouldn't give up on us seniors to walk the grass

The teachers that helped me to be able to graduate

Mom

Graduating

Mrs. Fuller

The teachers that helped me throughout my four years in PHS.

Teachers always helping accomplish my goals

The patience teachers have for us

Having been able to be part of a great class. I love you all, students and staff.

All the teachers that helped me make it this far

The people who pushed me and supported me

Being able to graduate H.S and the teachers that I had

Having the opportunity to get an education as a female

Philosophy with Mr. Walker, and each teacher that worked a bit extra to make their students feel welcome, important. Everyone in this school is pushing its students for greatness.

Ms. Romero, always looking out for her seniors and making sure we're all on the right path to success

All the teachers and staff for helping me out, to get this far. If it weren't for them I think I wouldn't be here graduating.

Everyone who doubted me – it made me realize how strong I really am and that I can prove people wrong when I know I'm right

I am most grateful for having some great teachers that helped me to accomplish many of my goals through my high school years. I am grateful to end this school year with so many good memories.

My mom, my teachers, my guidance counselor and my AP, because they've fought so hard to get us to graduate

For meeting some amazing teachers – honestly. As well as a good handful of people that made my experience fun but also for leaving. I'm grateful to get out of high school with a diploma.

My parents

My NJROTC instructors for giving me advice these last four years

My mother and life

My parents for believing in me!

My friends and family

I'm grateful to graduate with my classmates from 2016

The teachers that kept motivating me

Senior Memories: Final Thoughts

By Guadalupe Prado

The end of the year has arrived! This year's freshmen are becoming sophomores, sophomores to juniors, juniors to seniors, and we seniors? We'll do it all over again as freshmen in college. It feels like it was just yesterday that we were here, nervous on the first day of school.

And now, in just a few days, it will be the last day of school and we'll be thinking about summer vacation and planning for the rest of our lives. Again we are nervous and excited.

I remember a few years ago when I was so excited to enter my freshman year. One of the employees that worked in Family Dollar told me that my high school years would go by quickly.

I didn't think so at the time, but it was true, high school does go by in the blink of an eye. It's important that we cherish every moment we have, and that we make the most out of everything we do.

It's also important to know that it's ok to make mistakes. That's what our teenage years are for. We could look back on all of our accomplishments this year, all the places we've visited, all the new things we've learned and all the things you took a part of.

Sometimes it just hits you when you realize that you're growing up and moving on to the "real world."

It hit me when I started to apply to colleges, then getting acceptance letters, not just so I had somewhere to go after high school, but to start pre-

paring for my life.

Even if you don't know what you want to do, or if you'll be able to pay for it, even if you don't earn a scholarship, you should start living your life to the fullest.

The end of the year is very different for everyone, some accomplishing more than others. As the end of the year approaches, we start feeling thrilled as some start planning for summer to go on vacation. School starts feeling like the first scene in *High School Musical 2*, when they all are looking at the clock waiting for school to finally end.

The end of the year can be exciting but daunting, but more exciting so enjoy every moment of it. It is truly okay to be nervous and excited. Hey, it is our life!

Letter to the Class of 2018

Dear Young Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been a great honor to be your Assistant Principal. I was not sure what to think when I arrived in December but I have gotten to know many of you and now know the potential this class has.

Each and everyone of you has what it takes to find your path to success. The goals do not change: DO NOT CUT CLASS, GET TO CLASS ON TIME, PAY ATTENTION, DO THE WORK, AND BE RESPECTFUL TO ALL.

Keep it that simple and you will do fine. It all about having good habits that will make you successfully in whatever you decide to do with yourselves. I look forward for another school year to guide you forward and see all of you grow into upperclassmen.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER AND SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!

Sincerely,
Antonio Garcia
Assistant Principal

Prom Review

By Emmanuel Velez

On June 2, 2016, Passaic High School had their Senior Prom at the Royal Manor in Garfield, NJ. How did it do?

If you guessed amazing, you are correct! It was a blast! It was the one night seniors could dress up at their best and celebrate the kick-off of June, the month to celebrate! This was our chance

to celebrate the ending of our high school career and the fact that we will not see each other in so short a time.

Since so many people attended, the dance floor was extremely crowded. Nonetheless, I danced off and dabbed as yours truly, the Prom Knight. The music mostly sounded similar, or it might have been the same artists over and over again, but

this prom didn't go without the "Cha-Cha Slide" or "Do Your Dance."

The Manor brought in some amazing meals and candy - LOTS OF IT. Your Prom King and Queen were Ray Thomas

and Vanessa Garcia. Congratulations to them! They lived up to the expectations of a Prom King and Queen.

However, in the end, this special night was about celebrating and making sure that the good times were rolling - and making sure you dressed well while doing it.

Speaking for the class of 2016, we would like to extend a spe-

cial thanks to the principals, teachers and other staff who made this night possible, and the last four years for that matter.

And to all the graduating seniors, let the good times roll on the road to graduation and beyond. Here's to the Class of 2016. We have a lot to be proud of, so let this be a conclusion to celebrate! See you at GRADUATION!



PHOTOS BY YESENIA GARCIA AND EMMANUEL VELEZ



PHOTO BY YESENIA GARCIA.
Valedictorian Tej Patel



PHOTO BY YESENIA GARCIA.
Salutatorian Vasu Patel

PHS VALEDICTORIAN 2016

By Yesenia Garcia

A Valedictorian and Salutatorian breakfast was held on June 3, 2016 at The Brownstone. With graduation coming up, many are interested to know who will be the Valedictorian. Who will be number one after four years?

His name is Tej Patel. He is ranked number one out of 672 graduating seniors and has a GPA of 4.4073. He has not only upheld an outstanding academic standing but has also been part of many extracurricular activities.

During his four years in high school Tej has been a part of the Ski Club, the Chess Club along with being treasurer of the Octagon Club, and a part of the Senior Council. Not only has he been in clubs he has also played on the PHS Tennis team and has finished his senior year as a varsity player.

Apart from all of this Tej has also found ways to give back

to our community and has done volunteer work. He has been involved in both Gift of Giving and the Senior Citizen Luncheon, activities set up by the Octagon Club, to give back to the community.

Being Valedictorian doesn't mean doing good during the 10 months of school, it means working hard every day which is why Tej has also done summer enrichment programs at NJIT and William Paterson University every summer and that has helped him get a leg up on most students. He has also done Dual Enrolment Courses for both Pre-Calculus and English 3 AP. Being number one is also about the classes that you take and Tej has taken 10 AP classes in total. He took five AP classes last year and another five this year.

Anyone can take an AP class the hard part is passing the test and Tej has done that four times and was awarded the AP Scholar award and is waiting on his AP

scores for this year.

Tej has also taken every opportunity offered to him and has had the privilege of being accepted into the National Honor Society as well as the American Legion New Jersey Boys State. One major victory that Tej has had was winning Homecoming King 2015 proving that you don't need to be stereotypical to win.

Tej was asked how he felt about being Valedictorian and he surprisingly responded "I don't really feel much, this isn't a competition to me. I just come to school like everyone else and try to succeed in anything that I am given. Being number one is great, but I think of it more as a way to prepare for college."

As for Tej's future plans, he plans to attend NJIT in the fall and major in chemical engineering. He also plans to be in their honors program and continue challenging himself to learn as much as he possible.

SALUTATORIAN 2016

By Yesenia Garcia

Accompanying Tej Patel at the Valedictorian and Salutatorian Breakfast at The Brownstone was Vasu Patel. Vasu is ranked two out of 672 seniors and has a GPA of 4.24, just behind Tej.

Vasu believes that it is important to do extracurricular activities in high school, to become involved in the school community. Vasu has been a part of the Ski club, Teen Summit, Octagon Club, Club Interact, Society of Hispanic Engineers, Hispanic Bar Association, LMTI and the Robotics Club. He certainly has been busy contributing to this school.

He has also had the pleasure of been a part of the National Honor Society. Vasu has taken every advantage that PHS has to offer to advance academically. He has participated in NJIT and William Paterson University enrichment programs as well as the William Patterson Aim

High Program. The Aim High Program lets students dorm at William Paterson for three weeks and get a sense of what it's like being away from home and a glimpse of college life. He has always challenged himself taking four or five AP classes his junior and senior year and passing the AP exam in May.

Vasu's feelings about being salutatorian is basically vindication for his hard work. He said, "It's an honor to be salutatorian because it exemplifies my academic achievement throughout my four years in high school."

As Vasu leaves PHS, he is on his way to the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) and wishes to major in computer science. He has so far received a scholarship of \$7,000 renewable each year and is waiting to receive more. There is no doubt that great things are coming Vasu's way in the next couple of years.

Track Team Seniors

Amber Rutherford, Markiah Holmes and Felicia Richmond have led the track team in points and medals. Senior Karen Correa (not pictured) provided senior leadership throughout the year and continued to improve throughout her four years.

Left to right:
Amber Rutherford was 1st Team All-Big North and 2nd team All-County

Markiah Holmes was Honorable Mention All-Big North, and 2nd team All-County.

Felicia Richmond was 2nd team All-Big North and 2nd team All-County

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL GRANT



PHOTO BY JALEN MASPONO

This is the third year in a row that the PHS baseball team has won the Big North Conference.

Transgender and Gender-Neutral Bathrooms

By Jaylene Canning

There are bathrooms for females and another for males, but is that really enough? What about those who identify as neutral or trans-gender? There is currently a movement in the United States, that is gaining momentum, to provide bathroom facilities for those who identify themselves as gender neutral or trans-gender.

Many people judge those who enter the bathroom of the opposite sex, but when they go in the bathroom of the sex that they were born as, they also get judged. So how are they supposed to feel comfortable or find happiness themselves, when others hurt them and judge them for who they identify themselves as?

Five years since it became illegal to discriminate against transgender students, schools

everywhere are waiting for guidelines on how to apply this new law to bathrooms. Bathrooms are one way to including this overlooked segment in society. By creating gender neutral bathroom for those who identify as either sex or transgender, then they are welcomed into society.

This law is especially important to schools, where creating a welcoming atmosphere is important to the wellbeing of the student population. In this light, creating a special bathroom is just a small way of making a small segment of the school community feel welcomed.

In South Jersey there are many gender neutral bathroom for those students or employees. There is one in Rowan University and many other schools all around southern New Jersey, so what about in North Jersey?

We also have students who are transgender and gender fluid, they just hide in the dark dressing differently, blocking out those who judge them maybe even blocking family and friends out, changing their appearance and they always want to go in the bathroom of the sex they identify as but have to go in the one that their born as.

No matter what bathroom they use, someone will always judge them for who they are. These people should be made to feel comfortable too. These people are not freaks, and just experience life in their own way. These people are unique, but they should not be judged for just trying to be who they are.

This issue is not just some story about weird people who are confused about their sexuality. It is something that has revealed that everyone prob-

ably knows a member of the LGBT community.

For example, Ruby Rose Langenheim, from the show Orange is the New Black, is just one of the many celebrities who have been coming out as transgender or gender fluid. Ruby Rose, is an Australian model, DJ, recording artist, actress, television presenter, and former MTV VJ. She is a gender fluid female who is open about who she is.

Rose has encouraged many people to step out of their comfort zone and become who they want to be. She has done for gender fluids what Caitlyn Jenner has done for the trans-genders.

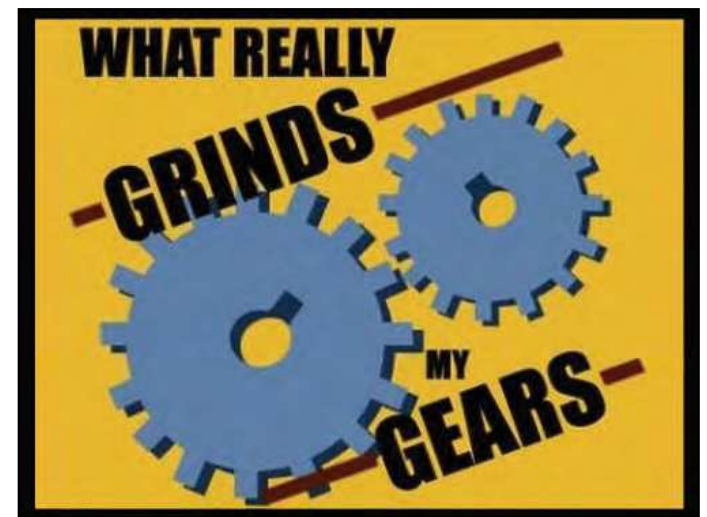
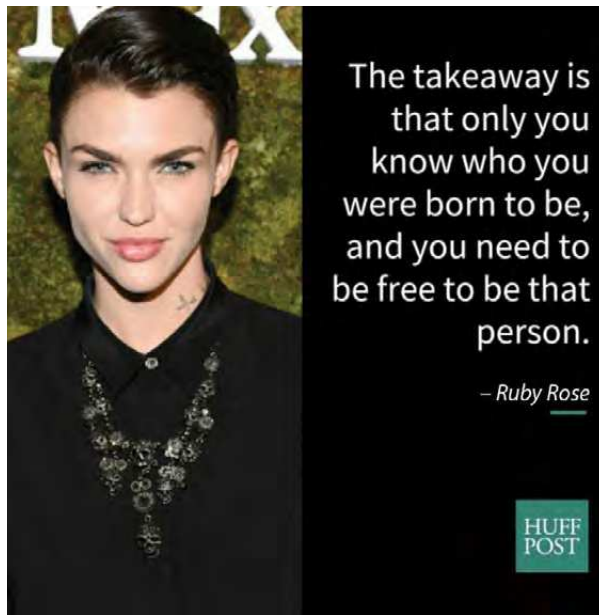
Even if people are rich and famous, they still receive hatred for who they are. Caitlyn has had angry fans and others mad at her for being who she is, just because she isn't Bruce anymore doesn't mean she

should be bitten, or barked at. She just feels more comfortable in her own skin now.

This is an issue that affects many, so why make someone who has finally broken free from the fear of being different feel caged, when they are just trying to be themselves. This can affect anyone, perhaps a son or daughter may come out as gender fluid or transgender. What will happen then? Will they be shamed out of their own family? Will they be accepted and supported as they proceed and grow through this journey?

We are all human whether black, white, hispanic, gay, straight, bi, or whatever We all should be treated equally even if we are different in our own way. So let us be able to have our own bathrooms if we make women and men feel uncomfortable, don't you agree?

INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES FOUND ON PINTEREST AND GOOGLE IMAGES



Pop Up Ads

By David Buonafina

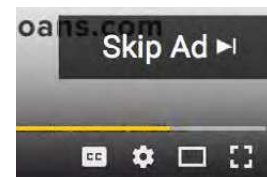
You wanna really know what grinds my gears... when you're watching a program on Youtube or Netflix and lots of notifications or commercials pop up. I mean seriously!

We Americans want to watch our shows with no commercials and whaddya know the stupid ads that nobody likes to see, magically appear on your TV. It's just a waste of money for people like the CEO of Netflix, collect your credit card charges. Basically, you're paying about \$100 a year just to watch movies that I could already do on my old 1970's Samsung for free!

The whole reason I watch Netflix is because I don't want to see any commercials on my favorite movies and shows, and now they just suddenly appear. One of the constant advertisements is the 7-day free trial you get when you watch Netflix. I mean, can you get a advertisement from Netflix from Netflix? Maybe, I won't pay for

Netflix anymore, I'll just watch something for free like Youtube. Now obviously, I think that Youtube is really great and all, but there is just one problem. The stupid 30 second commercials that you just cannot skip.

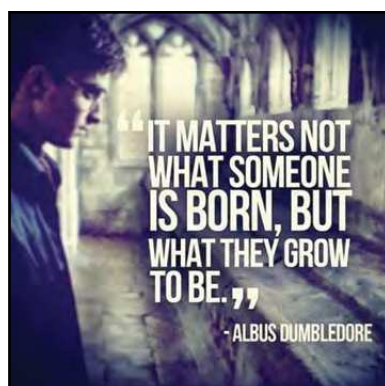
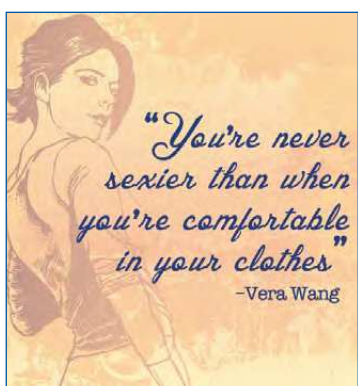
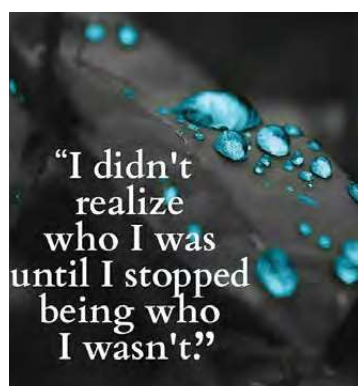
I mean when I'm trying to play Angry Birds or Candy Crush, I have to wait 30 seconds for a stupid video that talks about an app or a game that someone really wouldn't like to play or buy. Usually, these ads say



that you will get a reward if you watch it; turns out those companies make us suffer by not giving

us anything. Man, I really wonder where the inventor from Adblock is. He must be doing well, isn't he?

Well, my solution is, if you have the money to spend, or if you're like me, who believes that its a scam, or I would use the money just to pay off my house! Anyways, thanks for listening to my rant again as always, and remember... Grinds My Gears will always be near! Signing Off!



‘Love’ – Netflix Series, Season 1 Review

By Emanuel Velez

Do you still need more “Master of None” with no season 2 to be until 2017? All alone and in need of binge-watching before “Daredevil” season 2? Or you just need something new and compelling to watch period?

Fear not, for Netflix has once again released a new original series called “Love.” Yes! That IS the name.

“Love” now has another definition: An original Netflix comedy series.

This series uses two main characters: Gus, an on-set nerdy tutor for underage actors and actresses, but still cool for a 31-year-old. The other is Mickey (a girl, of course), a 32-year-old radio assistant who is addicted to



The Netflix original series, “Love” follows the romance of Mickey (Gillian Jacobs) and Gus (Paul Rust)

GOOGLE IMAGES

drugs, alcohol, and probably sex. For some reason, these two start to find themselves attracted as the series moves on.

These two deal with break-ups, life after breakups, sex, drugs, and perhaps more. “Love” is like “Master of None” (with ten 30-40-min-

ute episodes), but it’s in Los Angeles and focuses more on love than other issues in a millennial’s life.

I enjoyed what adults are

really doing in big cities. Hey I’m 17 and I’m about to graduate high school as of this review! I can learn from this! I thought this was another series to prepare me for adulthood.

There were times where I loved and hated the characters. Sometimes, the hate turned into love towards the end. There were times where I thought Gus and Mickey were foolish on certain actions, but they were still lovable when they realized their actions and at least tried to fix themselves up.

Everything is well shot. I almost felt like I watching a comedy movie instead of a series. And there’s no need to worry – there will be a season 2! “Love” Season 1 on Netflix gets a 9/10.

MOVIE REVIEW

‘Captain America: Civil War’

By Emanuel Velez

Here we are! Phase 3 of the Marvel Cinematic Universe kicking off with a civil war between characters. *Captain America: Civil War* is the 13th MCU movie and the third in the Captain America series. For once, I’m glad that Cap finally got a May release instead of *Iron Man*.

Some time has passed after the events of *Age of Ultron*, and the Avengers are questioned with how they should be controlled with a policy after various events involving collateral damage occur, with innocents dying.

This leads to two different sides, Team Cap or Team Iron. Team Iron follows the

policy whereas Team Cap resists it.

I have to say, this is the best Captain America movie I’ve seen. My eyes are constantly kept onto the movie watching the next phenomenal action sequence deliver its best. Seriously, the action is intensifying!

While this movie is a Captain America movie, it doesn’t only focus on Cap. It focuses on other characters’ personal opinion on how they can trust each other. You know what they feel and it makes sense. It helps to make the story become the story that needed to be told!

Speaking of characters, we’re introduced to two new characters entering the MCU – Black Panther,



GOOGLE IMAGES

and of course, Your Friendly Neighborhood, Spider-Man. Chadwick Boseman as the Wakandan King T’Challa impressed me with his action.

Now I’m looking forward to Marvel’s *Black Panther* in 2018. As for Spider-Man, he was the most comedic character in the film. Thank you Marvel and Sony for that deal! A young Tom Holland playing a 15-year-old superhero makes sense

for Spidey. I’m interested in seeing this younger Spider-Man in *Spider-Man: Homecoming* in 2017.

Of course, not everything is perfect. First, some action sequences were a little off what’s expected in the first part of the movie, but it does better later on.

Second, I was also hoping for more IMAX footage besides the airport scene - which is the best action sequence in the movie!

Third, some parts of the story might be unnecessary at times. Lastly, it’s not fully *Civil War* if you only have a few characters on each side. The comics had a TON more. *Captain America: Civil War* delivers some of the best from Marvel Studios. Great story, great action, great characters, and a great Spidey. Seriously, Spider-Man was awesome! *Captain America: Civil War* gets itself a golden 9/10.



Read these stories (and more) at www.hilltopstar.com

PHS Students Learn to Have Their Voices Heard This November

By Jaqueline Sanchez

Everyone is aware that this year's presidential election has been very intense. Many people want to make "America Great Again," in the case of Trump supporters. Or some want, Hillary, "Fighting for Us." And some even wanted to "Feel the Bern."

However, while everyone can have an opinion about these things, the only way to get your voice heard is through an exercise of your right to vote.

In the spirit of getting student voices heard, Mr. Pablo Munoz, Superintendent of Passaic Schools, took action on this front. On May 24, PHS Principal Mr. Velez, arranged a presentation to all students, who are

over 18 years of age, to encourage them to register to vote, later this year in November, in this year's presidential election.

"Every vote counts. Only you guys can make a change," Mr. Velez stated to the crowd of seniors.

A couple of students from the Student Government Class also presented a Powerpoint presentation, in which they explained why voting is important and how it has changed throughout the centuries.

Students were given the Voter Registration Form, filled it out and handed it in. This encouraging presentation made an impact on many and now they are willing to make a change in our country beginning this November.



PHOTO BY THANIA RUBIO

The 2016 Peer group has helped freshmen acclimate to high school life.

Peer Leadership Guides Freshmen

By Thania Rubio

Peer Leadership is a global organization created by upperclassmen in high schools and universities, to guide and help underclassmen transition into their freshman year.

Many students complain about how much they dislike high school and coming from a small school into a big high school with more than 3,000 kids can be a little hard. With the peer pressure, hard courses and everything else that freshmen get exposed to, having a mentor can become handy.

The program is organized so that mentors get selected through an interview process. With help and inspiration from the seniors, the freshmen can not only learn how to get along in high school, but excel.

Why would an upperclass-

man want to be a part of this program?

Senior Brian Enriquez said, "I came into the Peer Leadership Program already a leader to my peers. Being a Peer Leader for PHS only enhanced and bettered what was already there while giving me both amazing and unforgettable memories. Although you do not need to be accepted into this program to be a positive role model for freshmen or anyone for that matter, I learned a lot about how to work with groups, how to open up, and how to take other people's feelings into consideration, which I couldn't have learned as efficiently anywhere else." Another senior, Monica Garcia said, "I will always remember this great experience, my co-leader and my awesome peer group. I was just so much fun."

Mr. Izaguirre and Mrs. Jose have been co-advisors for the Peer Leadership Program for over eight years. One fun fact is that we are both former PHS peer leaders. Mrs. Jose said, "Being the Peer Leadership advisor has given me the opportunity to help develop leaders who will go on to be positive role models even after they graduate PHS. Peer Leaders make the work enjoyable, like a family. Watching the peer leaders dedicate their time and energy to making an impact on their younger peers is truly an inspiration. Our only wish is that more students in our school could benefit from this program. Being that we only have one period of Peer Leadership, only the freshmen who have that gym period are privileged to have peer leaders assigned to them."



Voting is one of the most important aspects of a democracy. Students should make effort to participate in local, state and national elections.

STRIVE To Do It Right!

By Thania Rubio

Everyone loves that one teacher that pushes and helps us in our academics. But what happens when our own peers step in?

Well, that is what STRIVE is all about. STRIVE stands for Students & Teachers Reviving the Innovation Value of Education. Teachers and students come together to help to guide students and improve their academic performances.

STRIVE has different activities to accomplish this goal, including one of the most successful ones, THE

ZERO FREE CHALLENGE.

Countless students have shown improvement through this challenge. To keep encouraging our students to do better in school, we reward them with a STRIVE certificate and a prize. STRIVE also recently had their sixth annual STRIVE Awards Ceremony on May 26.

Prior to the event, teachers from Lincoln Middle School and Passaic High School were given the opportunity to nominate one student who demonstrated notable improvement or outstanding performance throughout the school year.

Over 70 students were presented with awards by their proud teachers, as parents and peers cheered them on.

In addition, three STRIVE seniors were awarded book scholarships.

The keynote speaker, Diana Esparragoza, of class of 2011 and recent graduate of Rutgers University, shared her story of determination and encouraged students to continue striving.

The ceremony was followed by a reception in the cafeteria. It was a wonderful celebration of academic excellence and school pride. If you have not already, join STRIVE!



STRIVE 2016 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Grade 7

- Chris Alvarez
- Carol Amado
- Kevin Chavez
- Gilbely De Sala
- Nerida Delgado
- Christian Gomez
- David Herrera
- Tony Martel Castillo
- Edwin Mellado
- Edgar Ramirez
- Arlene Zuniga

Grade 8

- Alexa Aguilar
- Lesly Balbuena
- Hilda Bermejo

- Angela Claudio
- Destiny Colmenares
- Edwin Crisostomo
- Smerlin Cruz
- Alondra Dominguez
- Jael Hilario
- Leslie Martinez
- Langston Owens
- Ruby Perez
- Ervin Valladares

Grade 9

- Tonanziht Aguas
- Beckny Aguilar
- Aleyshka Barbosa
- Thais Carino
- Yamalit Familia

- Manuel Giraldo
- Jessica Guizar
- Stephen Mejia
- Joseph Mercedes
- Jose Metivier
- Matthew Montoya
- Oscar Olalde
- Yeimi Tula
- Jamillynn Vasquez

Grade 10

- Nairovis Acevedo-Pichardo
- Enedina Bonilla
- Marelby Cazarez-Batalla
- Xiao Man Chen
- Janitza Colon
- Jean Corral

- Angel Mendez
- Sebastian Pascencia
- Niurka Pelaez
- Ashley Peralta
- Israel Pineda
- Jim Reina
- Andy Rodriguez
- Jhericson Taveras

Grade 11

- Jocelyn Diaz
- Ezequiel Estevez
- Evelyn Estrada
- Lisbeth Figueroa
- Bryanna Matos
- Yanquel Pereyra

Grade 12

- Mariela Barrera
- Jenifer Cortes
- Jonathan Diaz
- Arielen Duran
- Vania Martinez
- Carolina Plasencia
- Miguel Reyes
- Jonathan Reynoso
- Lizmarie Reynoso-Castillo
- Jonathan Rodriguez

STRIVE Book Scholarship Recipients

- Gema Castro
- Nathanael
- Reyes Genesis Santo