



THE HILLTOP STAR

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November 2016

Cold Weather, Friends and Passaic Pride

By Johana Lastor and Aleyshka Barbosa

Cold weather never stopped people with determined mindsets. Sitting on the cold bleachers of Boverini Stadium, Oct. 28 was a night that seemed too cold to be watching a football game. Even so, there we all were – students, teachers, parents, even PHS alumni. Everyone was ready to watch the Passaic Indians vs. the Hackensack Comets.

If anyone has ever experienced a football game, it can be an overwhelming experience. For an inexperienced viewer the game can be difficult. The bleachers were full, the Passaic High School Marching Band and the PHS Cheerleaders ignited the crowd, and everyone was ready to cheer.

What's worse than not getting to have the last word in an argument? The Passaic Indians intercepted the ball three seconds before halftime! As we were all left with our adrenaline pumping, we were left hanging right before the climax! A few seconds later, the crowd had shifted its attention to the PHS Marching Band, as they gave a stellar performance, leaving the crowd in awe.

After the halftime performance, the night's special event commenced. The Homecoming Court walked in and brought everyone to his or her feet. Every-



PHOTO BY ALEYSHKA BARBOSA

Our Homecoming King and Queen, Jose Ledesma and Leslie Camillo were crowned at halftime.

one in the Homecoming Court looked fabulous and very cold. Smiles and high hopes filled the stands. The Homecoming King and Queen of 2016 were announced, Jose Ledesma and Leslie Camillo!

I got the chance to interview Homecoming nominees about their experience, before and after the winners were announced. This year, seniors Darshak Rana and Thania Rubio were nominated for the Homecoming Court.

Homecoming nominees spend a lot of time preparing and campaigning for a win. Rubio stated, "The hardest part about

campaigning had to be coming up with something creative and eye catching at the same time."

Rana explained to me that multitasking was his obstacle. "You have to show up to meetings and I have sports, I run Cross Country, and to make posters was time consuming," Rana shared.

Rubio explained that the Homecoming Court her freshman year sparked her interest in running: "The most interesting part had to be dressing up for a whole week. I mainly did it for fun!"

Rana, on the other hand, stated that he decided to run because it

is his senior year: "Homecoming is once in a lifetime event to be part of in high school."

Rubio's desired takeaways from Homecoming did not focus on winning, "My expectations going to the Homecoming Court was really to come out of my comfort zone and make memories with many of my friends from the court."

Rana stated, "I believe I have a good chance but also at the same time all of the competitors do as well. They all made it through the first round and now we are on the same line. Although, whatever happens it's going to be a fun experi-

ence and definitely a time to remember."

After the Homecoming game, we returned to continue the interview to see their results on where they placed, as well as if their perspective had changed.

Rana stated that he expected a spot in the top four, yet he was not hoping as much going into the Homecoming. Although, after winning runner up first place, he said "it exceeded my expectations" and that he is glad he had fun with his classmates that he will graduate with in June.

Rubio has never campaigned
See *HOMECOMING* on page 7



PHOTO BY MR. FALCON

The Passaic High School Boys Cross Country Team after their county championship victory.

PHS CROSS COUNTRY:

Passaic County Champions in 2016

By Adrian Serrano

The coaches waited eagerly at the finish line on top of the hill at Garret Mountain waiting to see who would take the County Champion title. Joseph Zisa from Wayne Hills appeared at the bottom of the hill leading the race. The tension grew as Clifton, Passaic County Technical Institute, and the

Passaic High School coaches waited to see who was behind him.

One of Passaic's captains, Joel Garcia started to go up the hill right behind Jackson from Passaic Tech and Kevin from Clifton. They finished the race in that order and Joel clocked an amazing time of 17:15. Soon after Luis Peralta, Elijah Perez, and Leonardo Bravo

passed the finish line within the top ten making it almost a guaranteed win for the team.

The last three people from the Passaic team to finish were Mark Rodriguez, Jerry Olvera, and Darshak Rana. Thanks to them, the win for Passaic was absolute.

Passaic High School's seven runners finished the race be-
See *CROSS COUNTRY* on page 7

Marching to the National Championship

By Daisy Gonzalez

Newcomers who arrive from different cities/towns come to Passaic, they hear the reputation the town has built for itself, continuing the negative aspect brought upon the name Passaic. Passaic High School Band Director Christopher Rusca was determined to change that reputation, as well as inspire students to create a difference with just a touch of music.

Mr. Rusca first began teaching at Passaic High School fresh out of college at the age of 22. When he first arrived to this urban school, the band ranged from 15-20 students.

As time continued, Mr Rusca had gathered enough students with the same passion and formed the Passaic High School Marching Band. Over the years, the marching band has increased enormously in numbers with over 100 students joining.

In the summer of 2016, approximately 25-30 students joined the marching band in hopes of becoming a better player, marcher, and person. From the very first band meeting in the band room at the end of June, to the beginning of November, little did the members know the state championship was within reach.

The motto of "Early is on time, on time is late, and late is late"

was reinforced to every member of the band. This helped the band use every minute down to the second wisely.

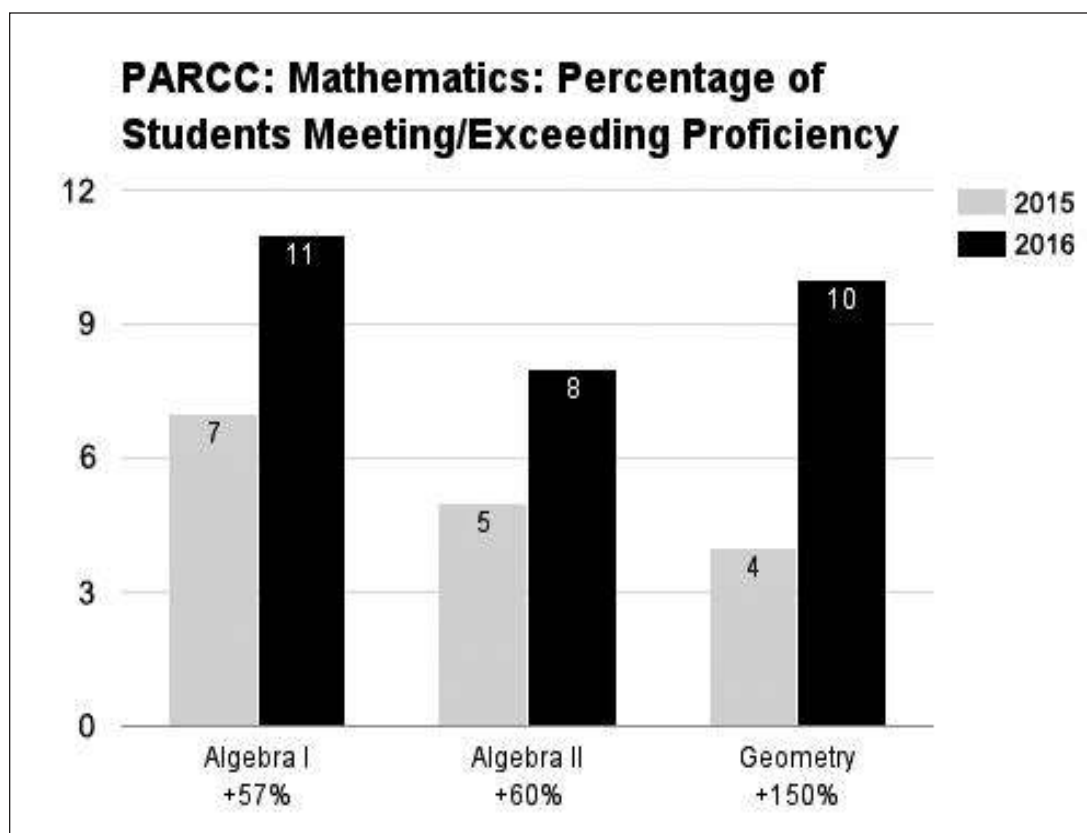
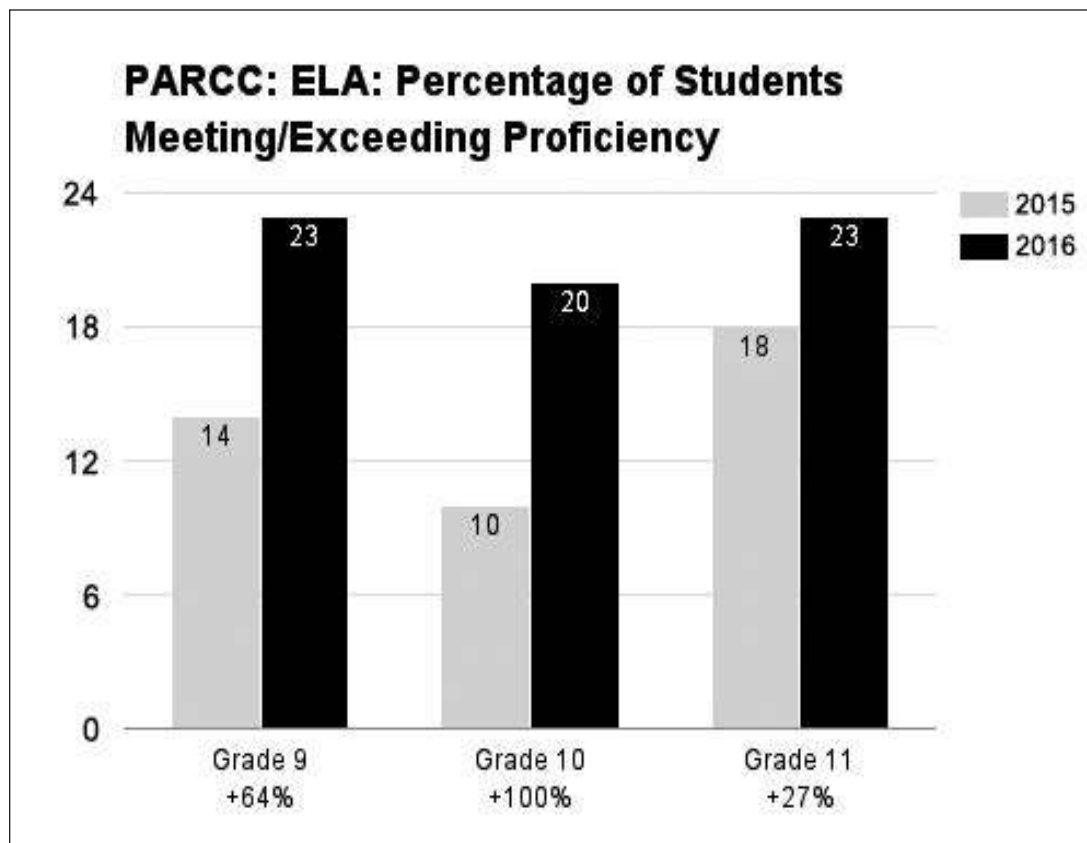
Throughout the summer, individual members had mixed feelings about whether to give up or quit the following year because this was becoming challenging

See *MARCHING BAND* on page 3



In Memoriam
Ms. Charonda
O'Bryant-Hopkins

This issue of *The Hilltop Star* is dedicated in loving memory of a beloved teacher, colleague and friend. The countless contributions that Ms. O'Bryant-Hopkins has made to Passaic High School and the Passaic community will never be forgotten.

PARCC SCORES:**Substantial Increase at PHS**

GRAPH ILLUSTRATIONS BY MS. SCIAMETTA

In 2016, the English/Language Arts department and the Mathematics department lead their students to substantial improvement in PARCC Scores. There was a significant increase in students who met or exceeded proficiency on the PARCC test compared to 2015 scores. Congratulations to our students and faculty!

Five Star AP Students: Sposato and Soriano

By Bielka Nunez

Passaic High School is extremely proud of their very own students who earned a perfect score of five on their AP Test. The hard work exhibited by Catherine Sposato and Aideth Soriano paid off when they took their AP Language and Composition test last year.

These young women took their AP class with Ms. Mulreany. Ms. Mulreany has been teaching for 13 years at PHS and has taught AP students for six of them.

Ms. Mulreany personally feels that “there is a challenge to teach AP students, it’s a whole different level. It takes time and dedication.”

Ms. Mulreany contributes a large amount of time to her AP students, even on Saturday mornings, when they take AP practice tests. “Providing students with these sessions allows them the time needed to practice focusing on advanced writing tasks for over two hours without stopping. This is a test that requires stamina as well as superior writing skills,” Mulreany stated. Students from all over the country take AP tests every year, in hopes of earning college credit with a score of four or five.

Sposato stated that taking

AP courses has provided challenges and responsibilities for her: “AP courses have always been rigorous, but I’ve found that AP courses force me to take full responsibility of my learning.”

Advice that she would give future AP students is, “trust your teacher and do all of your work.”

She states that skipping the reading only will put students at a disadvantage and will hinder their progress in preparing for the test. Sposato states that one of her future goals in life is to study law: “Hopefully, I’ll be Speaker of the House of Representatives one day!”

Ms. Mulreany states that students make the class fun and interesting for her to teach, “Students take this class because they love English and they like to be challenged.”

The students are highly motivated in her class and they want to learn more each and every day. She believes that what attaches students to her class is that the course material significantly prepares them for college and is a preview rigorous material they will face in the future.

Ms. Mulreany was exceptionally proud of Sposato and Soriano when she found out about their perfect scores.

Students Enjoy TEEN PEP

By Janessa Mejias

They’re your favorite “Don’t Be Silly, Wrap Your Willy” classmates and friends! Yes, it’s Teen Prevention Education Program (Teen PEP), the five-credit course that teaches students how to stay safe and stay wise.

Teen PEP is many individuals’ favorite part of the day, especially one of the teachers, Mr. Galan.

Mr. Galan finds Teen PEP a great new way to “connect with a greater number of students and help educate the students about making better decisions that’ll benefit their health for the rest of their lives.”

This class isn’t only a teach-

er favorite, fellow teen Pepper, Justin Cancel, 17, enjoys the class himself. “I like the fact that we can educate others while still making our workshops fun.”

Justin also finds that this class has opened up his eyes to things he would have never thought about knowing.

Teen PEP makes huge impacts on students and teachers everyday lives, it prepares many young people for some tough obstacles life throws at them.

“Teen PEP inspires me and makes me look forward to coming to school” stated Mr. Galan.

The Teen Peppers are like a big family, with lots of support and a great goal for younger students.

Welcome New Teachers of Passaic High School!

By Janessa Mejias

This year we welcome all of our first year Passaic High School teachers. Our teachers learn something new from us everyday just like we learn from them. You may not recognize all of them now, but they shuffle through our hallways ready to teach and become a part of the PHS team.

One of our new English teachers, Ms. Hasan, finds her PHS experience “comforting.”

Ms. Hasan taught at University High School in Newark before she became a teacher at PHS, and so far, she feels like she’s learning everyday and finding that her esteemed co-workers

are great resources.

Our teachers put a little pep in their steps, getting through any obstacle that’s thrown at them, we are definitely lucky students to have teachers like Ms. Hasan who make our school a better place.

But wait! Don’t worry, I didn’t forget about the rest of you. Welcome to all of our new PHS teachers: Mr. Brubaker, Ms. Choe, Ms. Campagna, Mr. Boxer, Ms. Ayala, Mr. Jimenez-Sturla, Ms. Houser, Mr. Mathews, Mr. Hawkins, Ms. Wellington, Ms. Popowich, Mr. Robinson, Ms. Lugo Vicioso, Mr. Angulo, Ms. Reber, Ms. Kiger-Williams, Ms. Abreu, Ms. Hasan, and Ms. Sciametta.



PHOTO BY MS. ROWBOTHAM

Our English/Language Arts teachers prepared engaging and rigorous lessons during their summer professional development session to help students succeed this year.

STRIVE-ing for Education

By Johana Lastor

Ms. Jose, an ELA teacher here at Passaic High School who teaches English 2 CP and AVID, has been a part of the “STRIVE club for some time now.

“STRIVE is a club that motivates students to succeed in their academics. We organize events and programs to try their best and we celebrate them when they are successful,” Ms. Jose said.

Going further in depth about the types of projects that they focus on within their club, Ms. Jose mentioned that “all of our fundraisers are for incentives scholarships and STRIVE award ceremony at the end of the year. The scholarships are book scholarships. We give them money to buy books for their first year of college.”

When asked how the idea came about of starting a club that is based on the academics of the students, she said, “I started the club back in 2011.”

She realized that there were many students that cared about their academics.

“It all started with a meeting with some other colleges and we were talking about [the students’] academics and how they can do better,” Ms. Jose said.

She proudly stated that STRIVE has expanded, not only through the high school system, but also in the middle school level. The advisor for

the club over at Lincoln Middle School (LMS) is Ms. Washington. Ms. Jose said that the club members from LMS tend to join again when arriving to the high school.

“At STRIVE Awards we ask teachers to nominate students and we invite their parents. Then, we honor the students,” she said.

She informed me that the name of the club has meaning; it stands for “Students and Teachers Reviving and Instill-

Students and Teachers Reviving and Instilling the Value of Education

ing the Value of Education.”

Ms. Jose described her passion for the club. “I’m extremely passionate because I love to see students challenge themselves and striving for their dreams.”

She claims that “the reward is seeing when they come back and are able to share their challenges and love for their career. It came from my passion

for the city; it breaks my heart when I see students that don’t value their education.”

When asked if she thinks that the club is successful or not, she was quick to say that “I think we see the fruits of our labor in June, when we have an auditorium with bright smiles from students, proud teachers, and proud parents. I think the club is definitely successful. We want to make sure we have an impact on our school.” She also mentioned how the club is “not only for the club members, but for the entire school.”

Ms. Jose mentioned that her goal for the club is “collaborating with the students, we can determine how to be successful and help them accomplish their goals.”

In addition, she hopes to expand the club in the elementary schools. Although she adds on that it can be difficult doing that sometimes and what would be helpful if “more teachers who are genuinely interested in improving school improvement.”

As our interview came to a close, Ms. Jose mentioned that she has noticed a pattern with the club members that have participated or taken action.

“The students that are involved are dedicated and they are taught to practice what they are best at, they do better in their own studies. Many that join in freshman year stay for the four years. And they are proud to be in the club,” Ms. Jose said.



PHOTO BY JANETTE ROBINSON

PHS NJROTC Drill Team at the Nov. 19 Competition.

NJROTC:

Dedication At Its Finest

By Aleyshka Barbosa

Every Thursday the school is filled with uniformed cadets showing their Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) pride. For many, that pride goes beyond their uniform. NJROTC’s very own drill team has proven to be one of the most hard working and dedicated teams in the school.

Every day, these students wake up while other PHS students are sleeping at home. They come to school, some walking in the dark street, just to practice and prove the passion they have for what they do. They do not do it for recognition from others, but rather for themselves. Last year Unarmed Varsity won second place at Nationals in Florida.

I asked one of the cadets about what Drill Team meant to her, and Petty Officer First Class Pimentel without hesitation said, “Drill Team to me is about leadership, teamwork and commitment.”

Every Naval Science cadet knows the Navy core values of honor, courage and commitment; members of Drill Team make sure to never lose sight of these core values.

Many people, not only cadets and Naval Science instructors, but the faculty and administration will be rooting on the Unarmed and Armed for the win this season.

On Nov. 19, NJROTC had their first competition of the season. The team always does an exceptional job. May this season hold nothing but wins and pride!

Interest in Future Meds of America Club Growing

By Johana Lastor

Dr. Galvez, a PHS AP Environmental Science teacher, along with Mr. Nyabeta, an AP Biology, Human Anatomy and Biology Honors teacher, are advisors of the Future Meds of America club at Passaic High School. Both teachers have teamed up to continue the club, which has been going on in the school for some time now.

According to Mr. Nyabeta, “It was already created when I came, it was created years ago.”

When asked for the process on how he applied to become an advisor, Mr. Nyabeta said, “normally the beginning of the year they apply for the position, and I was selected as co-advisor, which was last year. When we started the club, we were trying to get everything going such as members, shirts, etc. We had to start

fresh, because we had nothing from last year.”

When asked if it was a passion of his to continue on the club, Mr. Nyabeta said, “Yes, it’s always been a passion of mine to help out. That’s why I am always helping kids after school because I want kids to know how fun science can be.”

Mr. Nyabeta mentioned how “some students know they want to go into the medical field but don’t know the process of it when arriving to college.”

He hopes that the club gives students a new mindset of what their field might bring them once they begin their majors.

Mr. Nyabeta spoke about a main priority that he is working on with Dr. Galvez. “A priority is to get the students exposed to these fields,” he said. “To get professionals to talk to us and give advice about how to get on the right path. Another

thing I really want to do is have a discussion on what is affecting teenagers that can be solved by biology. We are having discussions about other careers that are not mainstreamed. We are also trying to have people in their career field come and explain their jobs to us.”

When Dr. Galvez stated that the club started from scratch and has grown enormously.

“I think we started on a good note,” Dr. Galvez said. “We have recruiters and lectures lined up. On Nov. 3, we had a director of the Donor Relations from Central Jersey Blood Center come in. Last year we did two blood drives and this year we are organizing even more blood drives. We have three coming up – Dec. 8, Feb. 9 and May 18.”

He finished by telling us that more students showed up towards the end of the

year, which shows the interest that has grown for the club over the year.

Asking him if he would want to continue the club, he said, “Definitely we are going to have this going, we are so committed to this. Because we like the responses we get from the students, we like what they tell us. The students are working and the responses are interesting and happy. They have so many questions from the visitors that are coming and they are engaged. Students are so interested and I have students from the hallways asking me if they can still join.”

The only way to be assured for one’s being is to go yourself and witness it on your own. The Future Meds of America meets on Thursdays, every other week, in room S208 after school. For more information, talk to Mr. Nyabeta or Dr. Galvez!

Marching Band

Continued from page 1

for them. With the help of senior Bryan Quintanilla, everyone in the band continued to fight until the end. With the motivation in mind and hard work throughout the summer, the Passaic High Marching Band took home a 5 Open State Championship.

After a couple days, the members had time to let it sink in and moved on to something much bigger... Nationals.

Over the next two weeks the band spent over 30-plus hours cleaning and perfecting their show titled the “House of

Cards.”

On Nov. 12, Passaic High School took third place nationally in the Division Group 5 Open. To many, it is normal for the marching band to take home a trophy, but for the members of the band, this goes down in history. Thank you to all the Seniors for pushing the band to success and an advantage in next year’s season.

A commonly used phrase in the show is “The House Always Wins.” It is safe to say the Passaic High School Marching Band won regardless of the placement and score given.



The PHS Marching Band won first place in their division, Five Open, in the State Competition on Oct. 22.

The 2016 U.S. Presidential Election: One for the Books

By Luis Morales Jr.

One word that could not describe the 2016 presidential election is “boring.” Our two candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump will go down in history. Both opponents disagreed on nearly every political issue, which created controversy and a huge news sensation.

For example, a largely disputed topic, made popular by Mr. Trump, is immigration. Mr. Trump believes that a wall should be built along the United States-Mexico border. When he announced his candidacy on June 16, 2015, he stated, “I will build a great, great wall on our southern border. And I will have Mexico pay for that wall.”

He also said, “We have at least 11 million people in this country that came in illegally. They will go out. They will come back -- some will come back, the best, through a process. They have to come back legally.”

On the other hand, while Secretary Clinton does not mention her plans on how she wants to address the problem of illegal immigration, she stated, “if Congress refuses to act, as president

I would do everything possible under the law to go even further than President Obama.”

Clinton also does not want all current 11 million plus immigrants to be deported. At the final debate she said, “I want to put our resources where I think they’re most needed. Getting rid of any violent person, anybody who should be deported, we should deport them.”

Both candidates support the ideas of allowing abortion in cases of if life of the woman is at severe risk or in the case of rape or incest. However, Mr. Trump is mainly pro-life and has stated that he plans to overturn the iconic 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. Secretary Clinton is pro-choice, and believes that women should have the right to choose what happens with their own bodies.

There were various scandals that rocked this presidential election and created controversy. With an FBI investigation into Secretary Clinton’s emails, and Mr. Trump’s unconventional language and statements, the country was glued to their televisions and favorite social media outlets to voice their opinions.



PHOTO BY WIN McNAMEE/GETTY IMAGES

Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton battle it out at a presidential debate at Hofstra University.

Our President-Elect: Donald J. Trump

By Luis Morales Jr.

Donald J. Trump has won the presidential election and is the United States’ new president-elect. With 290 electoral votes, he beat opposing candidate Hillary Clinton, who came up short with only 229 electoral votes at press time.

Mr. Trump shocked the world and won the election, despite earlier polls and predictions stating that Secretary Clinton was most likely to win.

For the first time since 2000, a president has won the election with Electoral College votes and lost the popular vote. Democratic Nominee, Secretary Clinton received 60,981,118 votes, while Mr. Trump received 60,350,241 votes.

During the day of the election on Nov. 8, 2016, Donald Trump had flipped states that had been a shocking surprise. Mr. Trump had won states that Mitt Romney lost in 2012 such as Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Iowa, Florida and Ohio.

Mr. Trump’s actions have been somewhat unpredictable throughout his presidential campaign. American anti-Trump voters have been participating



PHOTO BY MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

President-elect Donald Trump greets supporters during his election night rally in Manhattan, New York.

in protests across the country and state that Trump is racist and xenophobic.

A large turnout of Clinton’s supporters are urging electoral voters to favor in Secretary Clinton instead of Mr. Trump, in hope of turning the tables and electing Secretary Clinton as president. However, this has never been done in history.

Although, many Americans feel that Mr. Trump will “Make America Great Again” and will correct mistakes they believe

President Obama has made, with an all Republican House of Representatives and Senate. They state that Mr. Trump is the best option for president, will keep our country safe, and will bring good changes to our nation.

If electoral voters vote on behalf of their state’s vote in December, on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, Presidential-Elect Donald Trump will be sworn into office as the President of the United States of America.

Trump’s Plans for Office: Progress or Regress?

By Aleyshka Barbosa

President-Elect Donald Trump has already announced his first intended actions as President of the United States.

Mr. Trump had made many promises to the American people for his goals as president. It is safe to say that this has sparked a lot of controversy amongst the American public. He intends to “Make America Great Again,” which has America somewhat divided.

Since Mr. Trump won the election, he sat down and talked to President Barack Obama and reporters. He claims that he will no longer be building a complete wall dividing our country from Mexico, but he will put fences in different locations. However, he is still keeping a firm grip on his belief that our country will not benefit from any more immigrants. Trump also stated that he plans on enacting tax cuts as soon as possible.

President Obama plans to cooperate with Mr. Trump’s transition team to help him to get acclimated to presidential duties and responsibilities.

Post election, Trump said he

would repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) “simultaneously.” He plans to change aspects of it that he feels are not successful and beneficial to Americans. “It will be repealed and replaced,” he told Lesley Stahl on 60 Minutes last week. “And we’ll know. And it’ll be great healthcare for much less money.”

However, Mr. Trump still can renounce the Paris agreement about greenhouse-gas emissions, restart the exploration of Keystone Pipeline, and suspend the Syrian refugee program. He can bring trade cases against China.

This is also known as the “First Day Project,” which is a plan to overturn the actions that President Obama and his administration have enacted. It has been said by his team that the first day in office he will strive to erase President Obama’s legacy.

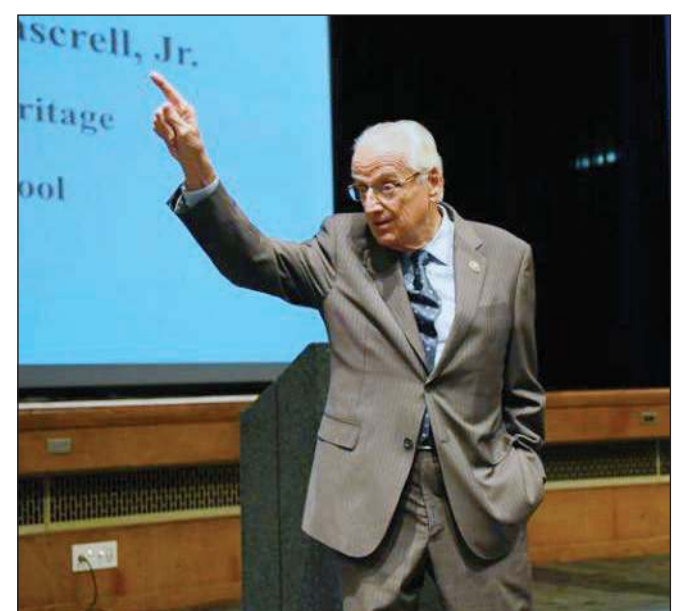
It is not clear whether or not our President-Elect will be able to enact all of his future plans or not, but it is best to be hopeful that there will be positive changes and that our country joins together after the election to support each other.

CONGRESSMAN BILL PASCRELL (D-NJ) VISITS PHS

Congressman Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) came to PHS in honor of Hispanic Heritage month on Oct. 20.

Left: Students had the opportunity to ask questions and get valuable advice and information from the congressman.

Right: Congressman Pascrell spoke with students about his road to success, his stance on immigration and equality, and what his plans are for District 9.



PHOTOS BY DANIELLE PHARHIZKARAN/NORTHJERSEY.COM

Mannequin Challenge Becomes Latest Viral Craze

By Armando Martinez

If you haven't heard about the Mannequin Challenge, you may be living under a rock, or perhaps, you do not use social media. The Mannequin Challenge is a new trend where people remain frozen in action while a video is being recorded, generally with music being played in the background. It's all over social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

So who is responsible for this viral obsession?

The Mannequin Challenge's origin traces back to twitter user @thvtmelanin, a high school student named Emili from Jacksonville, Florida. Emili told Inverse via Twitter, "One day I just went to the front of the class and stood there. That's when my

friend A'laynah said, 'Hey, you look like a mannequin.' Then my friend Bre'Onna and Jasmine joined and we started doing all these crazy poses."

What started as a silly class joke, exploded into a social media challenge.

Celebrities also took part in the challenge. Reality television stars Robert Kardashian and Blac Chyna made the birth of their baby viral, by posting a mannequin challenge video of the birth on their social media platforms. First Lady Michelle Obama, professional basketball team Cleveland Cavaliers, Kate Hudson, Kevin Hart and many more celebrities took part in the Internet trend.

With the internet's fast paced nature, there's no telling how long this trend will last.



WWW.DAILYDOT.COM

LeBron James and First Lady Michelle Obama took the Mannequin Challenge.

A Comeback for 'That's So Raven!'

By Brandon Cisneros

American actress, comedian, model, singer, songwriter, dancer, television producer and talk show host Raven Symone revealed that as of the end of the year she will no longer be a part of the day time talk show, "The View," because she will be working on a follow-up show for her past Disney Channel hit show, "That's So Raven."

On a recent episode of "The View" she told the entire world that she had been working with the Disney Company and they were going to do a "That's So Raven 2." Although, she explains that "there's no real title yet."

She explained, "It's Raven Baxter, I'm still me, I'm still Raven but, I am a mother this time and I'm actually going to be a single mother, raising two kids and one of them is going to learn that she has visions."

She said her focus on the sequel is the reason on why she hasn't been on the show that often. She will be leaving "The View" soon, but she let everyone know that she is so grateful for the opportunity and she has learned so much over the last two seasons.

The premiere date of a "That's So Raven" sequel has not been released yet, but we know people will be waiting for it and hope it's not a flop.



WWW.DISNEY.COM

Raven Symone in the original "That's So Raven."

Adele Says 'Hello' to Two Diamond Records

By Brandon Cisneros

Adele is a very well known singer and songwriter who had spent most of her life making music and expressing herself through songs, while capturing the hearts of millions around the world.

Recently, Adele has been breaking so many records in the music industry, it seems to be her new hobby. Just last year she released her album 25. Billboard released a statement that 25 is the first album to sell more than 1 million copies two weeks in a row.

As of September 2016, Adele is the only artist to have two albums go Diamond in the last decade. This means that both of her albums went Platinum 10 times, which brings them to the Diamond level.

The last time a singer/songwriter had albums go Diamond, was to Britney Spears with *Oops I Did It Again* in the 2000's and with *Baby One More Time* in the 1990's Also, Celine Dion achieved Diamond level with *Falling Into You* in 1996 and *Let's Talk About Love* in 1997.

Adele has signed a record breaking contract for a British artist this year with Sony Records for \$130 million.



FRONTROWNTICKETS.COM

Adele

A New Upcoming Artist – and an Artist Back in the Spotlight

By Brenda Tellez

The year 2016 has brought new variety of music introduced by not only radio stations, but from all sources of social media. The genre Pop and K-pop have produced new songs this year and in the past as well, that have left the people wanting to hear more.

There was an enormous impact in the K-pop & pop industries in the past year. Happenings this past year had a major impact on BTS, Justin Bieber and more artists, but these two artists in particular made their music stand out with their well-composed lyrics and tone of music.

For the people that want to listen to a new kind of music I would recommend BTS, also known as 방탄소년단 (Bangtan Sonyeondan). They stood out of the K-pop boy groups, with breaking album sales, moving to the number one spot on the iTunes Charts in multiple countries, and being in Billboard's top 100 albums. BTS released their latest album, *Wings* on Oct. 10, 2016.

In the album each member composed his own solo track. They made multiple songs and showed a whole new concept of music style.

They showed their new choreography in multiple mu-



WWW.BTSDIARY.COM

K-pop sensation, BTS.

sic videos like "Boy Meets Evil," "Blood Sweat & Tears," "21st Century Girl" and "Am I Wrong." They have different styles, from mysterious music videos to heartfelt love songs.

The BTS members also did some covers songs of Justin Bieber's "Purpose," Adam Levine's "Lost Star," and Troye Sivan's "Fools." The rappers of BTS had released their own solo mix-

tapes, in which you can see and hear their hardships they went through as rappers and when they were growing up.

Once you listen to BTS you will be amazed by all of their work and dedication. Some have said that it brings a whole new meaning to music.

Justin Bieber recently had an album called *Purpose*, on Nov. 13, 2015 with a total of 18

tracks. You've probably heard some of his songs on the radio like "Purpose," "Love Yourself," "Sorry," and "What Do You Mean." The album has been in multiple charts including the Billboards as well, multiple times which brought him much more success. Bieber had been on tour throughout the summer and is continuing his comeback.

The fans for these artists have

names for themselves, called fandom names. Bieber's fans are called "Beliebers." BTS fans are called "the Army." These fans find any possible way they can help their favorite artists out, from staying up late at night and catching up on what they are posting on their social media accounts, buying their albums and merchandise, and attending their concerts.

Bye Bye Vine!

By Armando Martinez

Twitter announced that they will be pulling the plug on Vine, the short-form looping video mobile app it obtained four years ago in an effort to bring videos to the social network. Vine had over 200 million active users, so why this decision?

There was no reason given on why they are killing the app, however the move was announced hours after Twitter laid off nine percent of its staff due to cutting costs and getting the company to be more profitable.

They assured users that “nothing is happening to the apps, website or your Vines today.” Users will be able to access their and download their Vines, and will keep the website online because they think that it’s important to “still be able to watch all the incredible Vines that have been made.”

The users will be notified before there are any changes to the app and website.

In a Medium post they thanked those who created and viewed Vines on the app.

“To all the creators out there—thank you for taking a chance on this app back in the day. To the many team members over the years who made this what it was—thank you for your contributions. And of course, thank you to all of those who came to watch and laugh every day.”

Hoodies and Jackets: Nuisance or Necessity?

By Isaac Belgrave

The faculty and staff at Passaic High School want us to study in a safe learning environment, but how and why do jackets and hoodies affect this learning environment?

As most of you may know our school district has set a restriction against hoodies and jackets as of this school year in PHS. We are required to wear a jacket from the school store or one that has a logo. The authorities at PHS feel that hoodies are a risk to security and conceal a person’s identity. So, because of this, they are using security to tell all of us to take off the unauthorized jackets.

Some students disagree with this policy thinking we should wear our own jackets “We should be able to wear our own jackets and hoodies,” says Charly, a student at PHS.

There are also students, Janessa and Adrian, who say, “What’s the point of buying another jacket if we already have one,” and “I don’t want to buy a sweater that I’m only going to use in school.” Another PHS student, Armando, stated “It’s just a hoodie. What’s the harm in wearing it?”

However, other students, as

well as PHS teachers think otherwise. “The rules should be followed so students avoid consequences,” says student Michael.

One of our teachers, Mr. Grant stated, “If we have a policy, we should abide by it.”

Mr. Reicher states wearing hoodies may pose an issue with student safety. He stated, “I think there is a security problem with hoodies. Kids who are in fights wearing hoods can’t be detected by cameras sometimes.”

Teachers who also agree with the policy think that they are more presentable and fit for everyone. “I think it’s nice to have everyone wear the same thing to keep in unison,” stated Ms. Khalaf.

“I think that students are more formal in their uniforms,” Ms. Fabiano stated.

Other schools in Northern New Jersey are also banning hoodies from their hallways. This is said to be for safety reasons. Schools such as Horace Mann in North Bergen, Garfield High School in Garfield, and East Side High School in Newark state on their websites that hooded jackets and sweat-shirts are not a part of the acceptable school dress code.

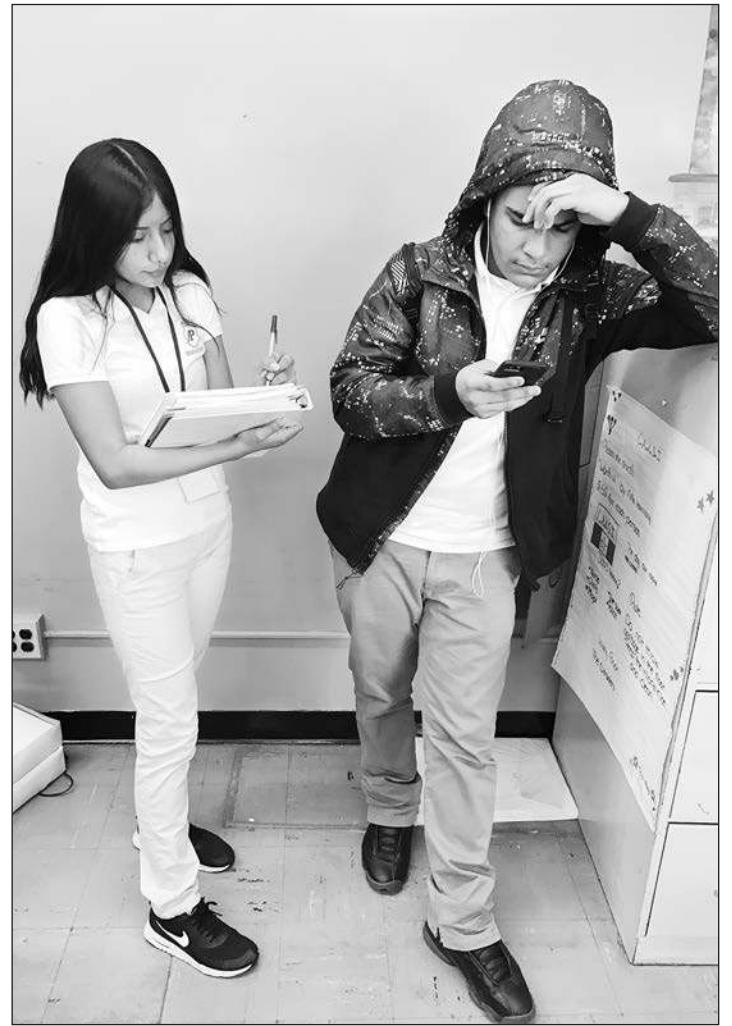


PHOTO BY MS. SCIAMETTA

Students Keyla Ayala and Johnny Torres have differing opinions about proper school uniform attire.

What do you think about the hoodie and jacket policy? Contact one of our staff writers and we may include your thoughts in the next issue!

THE HILLTOP STAR

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

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Thank you to everyone who has contributed photos, information, and articles to this issue of The Hilltop Star. Without your help, this publication would not exist.

If you would like to contribute articles, photographs, or information to be included in the next issue of The Hilltop Star, please contact Ms. Sciametta (in room M317) or a member of the newspaper staff. We are constantly searching for dedicated students who are willing to contribute to our newspaper.

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Rise Up

Have you ever seen the sun before it fully blooms into the sky?

It's almost shy, like the sky might not accept it today,

It sits there for a while.

Waiting on the horizon.

Then it rises, not thinking about the sky, but only what it needs in order to survive.

It lights up the whole sky.

Giving light and guidance to a world that seconds ago was dark and lost.

Because you see many don't like my smile and would much rather like me voice less.

Avoided me and made me feel worthless, but they never quite understand the sun.

Beyond belief, the myth of my existence has been revealed,

the sun is a star brightest of them all.

I held on so tightly to my dreams as I tried to let go of your cruelty,

That seemed to follow me to sleep.

I created my own swords, blood, sweat, and no fear.

I waited on the horizon, my sword in one hand and all the words I never said in the other.

This is it, this is my acceptance to the world not reigned by you.

The sun is rising next to me.

Don't let them hold back your light

Someone is always going to need your guidance when in a dark place, just ask the sun.

Aleyshka Barbosa

New Engineering Class in 2016

By Dyani Moreno

The curricular options in our school have been expanded this year, as an engineering course is being offered for the very first time. Engineering is the study of science and technology that seeks to improve the world around us through design, manufacture and operations.

Mr. Martinez, an engineering teacher at Passaic High School, has stated that the engineering is about “finding solutions theoretically but also building the

solutions.”

Studying engineering offers us the opportunity to see and understand how many things are made. In this class, the students will learn the basics of what is required to go into the engineering field.

There are volumes of aspects of engineering, but the simple basics can influence and create interest in this necessary and growing field.

In fact, after taking the engineering class at Passaic High School senior year, there is a

chance that a student can obtain a scholarship to college.

Engineering class will help students learn about how to approach designing or planning different types of projects. It is a challenging class that will stimulate students to truly think outside of the box.

As Mr. Martinez has said about the class, “the first steps into learning the whole entire process of the engineering field is by learning little things that will eventually come all together in the process.”

Pep Rally, With a Side of Snapchat Filters

#PHSPepRally2016

By Aleyshka Barbosa

“Let’s flip the track, bring the old school back (This is how we do it)” blared through speakers as students from every grade filled into the New Gym. The annual Pep Rally had arrived to Passaic High School. Good vibes filled the air and the class of 2017 was ready to celebrate their last Pep Rally.

When the Pep Rally officially began at 2:40, everyone pulled out their phones and started to post on the one place we teenagers know best: Snapchat. Nothing like a couple of 10-second videos to show all your friends the fun they were missing.

The Pep Rally continued with the Pledge of Allegiance lead by the Naval Science students, who showed that Thursday is uniform day—no matter the occasion. Then the crowd was once again brought to their feet as the State Champion winning PHS Marching Band lead us into an eventful afternoon.

It is not Pep Rally until all the athletes get their time to shine. As all current sport

teams were announced: Girls Tennis players, Cross Country, Boys and Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball, Cheerleaders, and last, but never least the Football players, they were all given their moment to shine.

Our Boys Soccer coach stated, “To have a team you need a team effort.”

Every team in the gym showed that there is no I in team.

The Modern Dance team made sure the crowd knew and was fully aware that girls will always run the world! Following the dancing and excitement of the Pep Rally came the competitive side from every class. Sophomores claimed the victory in musical chairs. Tug-of-war on the other hand... let’s just say the winner is a mystery yet to be revealed.

The Pep Rally was a memorable event that the class of 2017, and the rest of the grades, will never forget. Students were able to relive the moments through Snapchat Stories (for 24 hours, of course). Nothing like a hashtag and a puppy filter to end the night!



PHOTO BY ALEYSHKA BARBOSA

The 2016 Homecoming Court was introduced at the Pep Rally.



PHOTO BY ALEYSHKA BARBOSA

Our award-winning PHS Marching Band wowed the crowd at the 2016 Pep Rally.



PHOTO BY ALEYSHKA BARBOSA

The NJROTC Drill Team stood proud and ready to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Homecoming

Continued from page 1

for a position before and explained, “I never had so much attention on me as I did for that whole week.”

Both candidates explained that the entire experience was definitely memorable. Rubio added, “I want to thank everyone who voted! Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this experience. It was a lot of hard work and dedication, but so much fun and I would not change anything about it!”

Returning back to the actual game, the Comets won with a score of 48-18. One of last year’s graduates admitted, “I miss the feeling of coming to these football games, even if the outcome isn’t what we hoped.”

Shout out to number #21 Deondre Tosen for his top-notch performance throughout the game and the PHS Football Team. The dedication showed throughout the game proved that PHS students will never give up and that school pride is never lost.

Cross Country

Continued from page 1

fore any other school finished four of their runners.

Shortly after the race started, Coach Falcon went to the coaches bridge and waited impatiently for the runners to pass by so he could see where they stood individually and as a team. After the first lap, Falcon went back to the top of the hill where the race would end.

After a hard fight, Passaic finished the race and there was no doubt in anyone’s mind who was the winner. Passaic scored 42 points and beat Clifton (72) Wayne Hills (76) and Passaic Tech (85).

The athletes stated that they are grateful for the dedication they have given to this sport, because they were rewarded for it in the end. The hours of practice

and perseverance they put into the Cross Country team had made them physically and mentally stronger.

The last time that the Passaic Boys Cross Country Team has won the Passaic County Championship was 1999 before this year’s victory. These boys have created a legacy that runners will strive to match for years to come.

This wasn’t their only victory for the season, the team also won the League meet. Unfortunately, they were not able to take the title because of their two losses in the season.

The Cross Country team had a good record throughout the season of 4-2 (for dual meets) and won five other titles. This is a true example of how hard work and dedication will pay off.

Writers and Photographers Wanted



If you would like to contribute articles, photographs or other information to be included in the next issue of *The Hilltop Star*, please contact Ms. Sciametta (in room M317) or a member of the newspaper staff.

We are constantly searching for dedicated students who are willing to contribute to our newspaper.

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY



PHOTO BY MR. FALCON

The PHS Girls Cross Country team right before for their race at the 2016 state sectional meet.

GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER

Practice Makes Perfect

By Daniela Martinez Moran

Practice makes perfect and these girls knew that even with a perfect team, the grind doesn't stop. Starting the season without almost seven of the Varsity girls they had last year, the team managed to keep a decent record. Losing their senior players did not stop the girls from wanting to take more wins!

Captains, Haylee Hernandez, Jennifer Calixto, Nathalie Hernandez, and Jenny Bonilla all were leaders to both the JV and Varsity players, during camp, pre-season, and season.

It is senior Haylee Hernandez's last year playing, and she stated, "Our best game was against Clifton. Even with a loss we didn't give up, because playing our heart out until the last minute is what a team does."

With both seniors Jackie Lo-

pez and Haylee Hernandez leaving, the girls wanted them to leave with a smile on their face.

In fact, the team won against Mary Help of Christians, 2-1, with goals scored by Senior Jackie Lopez, and captain Jennifer Calixto. She stated "This year we improved and we really bonded as a team."

These girls have displayed outstanding dedication to their sport, practice after practice, and game after game. Coaches Moogan and Cardillo both strive to make the team better year after year. All of the love and dedication they give these girls is tremendously admirable.

Jenny Bonilla shares her thoughts on her sophomore season: "I not only created a bond with these girls on the field but outside the field as well, and I'm very grateful for that."

One of the girls' best games

was against their first-ever meeting against Weehawken. Not knowing much about them, they all kept their faith in taking that win. They all hustled through it and freshman Marlene Hernandez scored the game-winning goal.

Passaic High School Girls Soccer's top scorer for all three years and captain, Jennifer Calixto has seen how much the team has improved and grown.

Calixto stated, "It doesn't take one, two, or three people to lead this team, it takes the whole team putting in all their hard work. Everyday is a chance to get better."

With an overall record of 6-12, these girls managed to grow and learn from their losses and bond as a team. With only two players down next year, we hope to see the rest of these amazing girls back in action for another amazing season!

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Setting Up for Success

By Bielka Nunez and Aleyshka Barbosa

The PHS Girls Freshman, JV, and Varsity Volleyball teams gave Passaic High School a reason to be proud this season. They worked together to accomplish six Varsity victories this season with help from Coach Munoz and team captains Saray Javier and Regieka Clayton.

Two Varsity players shared their feelings about what it's like to play on the team.

Neidalys Polanco, #6, said that playing volleyball "is a learning experience and you learn how to be a team player."

Yetty Marte, #9, stated: "you learn a lot about yourself and how to improve to play better."

JV Player Rachell Hiraldo described playing on the PHS

Volleyball team in three words: "challenge, responsibility, and family."

Polanco and Marte also stated that the girls on the team are like sisters to one another.

The team came together and defeated Bergen Tech, Paterson Eastside, Hawthorne Christian, and Paterson Kennedy this season.

Every sports team has a competitive side that comes out when they are playing. The team created a word to remind them of two important aspects of the game; staying positive, but also being competitive: "pompitative."

The players on the Volleyball team have proven to be a strong unit on and off the court. Next season is sure to be even better for this group of talented and unstoppable girls.

BOYS SOCCER

Scoring for the Win

By Adrian Serrano

The Passaic High School battled all season, but their struggles were all worth it for their final game of the season. The second half of the game against DePaul Catholic was coming to an end and the score was 0-0.

The Indians were determined to finish off the season with a win and were trying their best not to concede a goal. They all knew that Coach Fazio had never beaten DePaul Catholic in all his years coaching at Passaic High School.

There were fifteen minutes remaining in the game and the

score was tied (0-0) when the Passaic Varsity Boys decided to go forward and try to score. The ball got crossed towards Alan Calixto and he passed it to Edwin Martinez. Martinez didn't hesitate to shoot and it paid off; the ball went into the back of the net.

The final score was 1-0 in favor of Passaic High School. The Varsity Boys did a great job of not giving up a game-tying goal and ended up victorious. They were proud of their win because their coach had given them a tremendous amount of support and dedication. Now, they finally repaid him with their first win against DePaul Catholic.

GIRLS TENNIS

Serving with Dedication & Teamwork

By Janessa Mejias

Passaic High School Girls Tennis has served us with some great games this season. These girls have shown dedication to their team by conquering countless practices and matches.

Rosa Europa, 17, a member of the JV team this season shared that the JV and Varsity teams are very "dedicated and hardworking."

Europa says, "The team builds friendship and confidence amongst the girls. We are a family of supportive yet competitive players" Europa stated that some strengths of the Tennis team are their great communication skills and ability to work together as a team.

This tight-knit family is well supported by our PHS team and has made us proud with three Varsity wins this season.

PHS FOOTBALL

Played with Heart

By Aleyshka Barbosa

The moment you walk into Boverini Stadium, feelings of Passaic Pride and support of our football team are heard and seen in every direction. Our cheerleaders pump up the crowd and get them ready for an exciting game of high school football.

Our Passaic Indians have won three games this season with the guidance and support of Coach Widener. "This season was really great in certain ways, especially in our team work. It didn't go as planned, but we got better; hopefully we will have a more successful season next year and grow even more as a team," stated #54, Maurice Gawthney.

One of the most exciting games of the 2016 season was the Nov. 3 matchup against the

Bergen Tech Knights. Running back/defensive back, #21 Deondre Tosen scored four touchdowns in the first half with his longest touchdown of 80 yards. Kicker Michael Sams successfully kicked an extra point for each touchdown in the first half, contributing to a score 28-0 at the half.

The Passaic Indians' success continued in the second half, with touchdowns ran by players Josh Velasquez and Lawrence Galindo and an extra point kicked by Sams. After only giving up two touchdowns the entire game, the Indians emerged victorious with a tremendous final score of 41-14.

The Passaic Varsity Football team's final game of the season is Nov. 24 at Boverini Stadium against Clifton.

CHEERLEADERS FLYING HIGH



PHOTO BY ALEX CASTRO-WILSON

Our talented Co-Ed Cheerleaders performed a fantastic routine at our 2016 Pep Rally. This year, they will be performing at football and basketball games, competitions, and other events.