



THE HILLTOP STAR

Vol. 56, No. 4

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School, Passaic, NJ

June 2018



Students visited the New Jersey General Assembly Chamber where Assemblyman Gary Schaefer represents the 36th Legislative District.

State House Field Trip

By Aleyshka Barbosa '19

On May 26, Passaic High School students had the opportunity to travel to our state capital, Trenton, and visit the State House. During this trip, students were able to see firsthand some of the events that take place in the State House.

After a long bus ride from Passaic to Trenton, the students and chaperones, including organizers, Mr. Brubaker and Mr. Ruiz, finally arrived at the State House. The architecture that lines the street of the state

house overwhelmed us, because every building has history; each building has an essential purpose to the community and even the state.

Students went to the State House entrance and embarked on a short tour. Every part of the building has a history, some things more modern than others, but all serving a purpose to the establishment. Some parts of the State House were not open due to renovations taking place; however, students were able to visit the Assembly Chamber.

Continued on Page 8

Striving for Academic Excellence

By Armando Martinez '19

Every year our school's STRIVE organization, along with Lincoln Middle School's own STRIVE, holds their annual award ceremony. This allows teachers to honor students that have shown academic excellence or have improved throughout the school year. The ceremony was on Tuesday, May 29.

STRIVE is run by Passaic High Schools own Ms. Jose, and Lincoln Middle School's Ms. Washington.

The club encourages students to persistently aim for academic excellence and improve their performance in school. Although it was the eighth Annual STRIVE Awards, it was bittersweet due to it being the last award ceremony for the Lincoln Middle School.

Ms. Tina Bustamante, graduate of PHS's class of 2002, shared words of wisdom about her journey to success.

Senior student Madeline Dominguez, a dedicated STRIVE member throughout her time at PHS, received STRIVE's book scholarship. This prestigious award is a representation of all the qualities a student must embody.



Above: STRIVE poses with their advisers, Ms. Washington and Ms. Jose.



Right: Mariana Dominguez and Ms. Jose show off Mariana's book scholarship.



More photos on page 10.

PHOTOS BY MR. PEÑA

'Chicago: The Musical' Wows the Crowd at Shirelles Auditorium

By Janessa Mejias '19

Passaic High School has done it again! This year PHS performed their rendition of "Chicago: The Musical" written originally by Bob Fosse and Fred Ebb. The play, carried themes of "murder, greed, corruption, violence, exploitation, adultery and treachery."

"Chicago: The Musical," based in Chicago, Illinois in the mid-1920's, is about two Vaudevillian murderesses, Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly, and their adventure through prison and life after murdering their lovers.

The show generally depicts a lot of dry humor and sarcasm. It keeps you on your toes but your

ears are in love with the different sounds from every song.

The cast and crew of this year's production of "Chicago" created an amazing three night show. They worked difficult and tedious hours, long rehearsals and a long time building relationships together to show PHS the amazing talent we have right here in our school.

The director was our very own band director, Christopher Rusca. Mr. Rusca picked the strongest cast members for this production and the end result was breathtaking.

Hands down, the most loved character of the play at PHS was Mary Sunshine played by Sophomore Gabriel Champion. Characters Roxie and Velma

played by Jessica Sanchez and Maria Salas, as well as Bruce Ransom playing Billy Flynn, blew us all away with uncanny acting, perfectly portraying their characters to the T!

Let's not forget the band up in the background giving the feel of live music playing as the lives of each character goes on naturally.

PHS Senior Survey

Compiled by Armando Martinez '19 and Janessa Mejias '19

Which teacher made the BIGGEST impact on you? Why?

"Christopher Rusca. He pushed me to work hard and learn how to handle certain stressful situations"—Irais Vazquez

"Mrs. Weston made the BIGGEST impact on me because she believed in me. Mrs. Weston never gave up on me and made me realize my capacity and intelligence."—Rosalba Restituyo

"Ms. Bulson taught me how to never give up, and to always keep going. She was the only teacher who handled me whenever I got mad, the one teacher who calmed me down, and always had something positive to say."—Ivan Salas

"Ms. Kowalewski taught us about real life consequences and trials. She introduced a new aura to us, that fortunately I was able to adapt to."—Aijona Dawson

"Ms. Zeidan made a big impact on me as she definitely prepared me for what college would be like, and how hard I have to work. She's also helped me see the realities of the world and what a person can do to change it."—Saria Saenz

"Mr. Harmon was able to inspire me to go for a career in TV, and helped me achieve my most potential in that."—Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez

"Ms. Ament has made the greatest impact on me because I see how much work she goes through for her classes and how much she fights for her students. It is very inspiring to see a teacher actually care about her students and not teach just for paycheck."—Jackie Cruz

"The teacher who made the biggest impact would be tied between my freshmen English teacher Mr. Caufield and Club adviser Mr. Meltzer. These teachers have made me realize a dream I've always had but never realized could become a reality. Mr. Caufield was the teacher who introduced me to Mr. Meltzer, who had a club named Interact. From then on I stuck to this club for the rest of my high school career. This club specifically focused on tutoring the kids in an after school program, and I've always loved small children. Look at me now, wanting to major in Early Childhood Education at my dream school. Thanks to these two I have aimed for a dream that I love so much."—Ashley Deita

"The teacher that made the biggest impact on me was Mr. Mombrun because he always made me laugh but always made sure I was focused. He really showed that he cared for his students."—Leslie Casiano

"Mr. Rusca has pushed me to be the best person I can possibly be. He has helped me in so many ways and I cannot begin to explain how grateful I am for him. He continuously goes above and beyond for all of his students, and shows that he really does care for us."—Jocelyn Rodriguez

"Ms. Cho, an APUSH teacher who pushed me to pursue computer science (my major) in my sophomore year of high school."—Michelle Andrea Bautista

"Mr. Rusca, because he both inspired and motivated me to change my outlook and personality within PHS."—Juan Antonio Vidals

"Mr. Galan, because he has inspired me to be a better person and be motivated. He has taught me how to work out and taught me that I should do everything at 100 percent. I really look up to him, he gives

great advice and will help you in any way possible."—Bryan Ramirez

"A couple of teachers impacted my life in one way or another, some of them being Mr. Mombrun, Ms. Bohomolec, Mr. Nyabeta and Ms. Yildirim."—Arleny López

"Mr. Martinez had a huge impact on me for making me realizing I wasn't working at my full potential and that I should always put in 100 percent, or else what's really the point of being at school."—Bruce Vaquero

"Ms. Cornwell, because she motivates her students to do their work and to always have a good day no matter what, and she's always there for her students for anything."—Edwin Martinez

"Mrs. Lourenco. I loved her, she was a really good teacher. Thanks to her my English is way better. I loved her way of teaching, and she was a really good adviser. She is a role model."—Nayeli Pichardo

"The teacher who made the biggest impact on me

Continued on Page 11

PHS's Top Students: Dhruvi and Diana

By Armando Martinez '19 and Aleyshka Barbosa '19

Even though many want to accomplish all of their goals and fulfill all of their dreams, there are only a rare few who step up to the plate and take on the world. This year, PHS has two stand-out seniors who deserve recognition for their outstanding accomplishments throughout their high school years. For this year's graduating class, Ms. Dhruvi Rana earned the title of Valedictorian, and Ms. Diana Tiburcio received the title of Salutatorian.

Valedictorian: Dhruvi Rana

• What were your goals for high school? Did you achieve them?

I knew that when I began high school, I wanted to leave some type of positive impact on my school community. Although I had never imagined that I would be the valedictorian of my class, I did know that I wanted to excel academically and do the best that I possibly could. Rather than settling for less, I continuously pushed myself to be a better student and found that this allowed me to accomplish many things in high school.

• What was your favorite class or subject? Why?

I really enjoyed AP Calculus, which is something that I thought I would never say. Although I am more interested in humanities/social sciences and do not intend on majoring in the field of mathematics, this class truly pushed and exemplified the importance of perseverance. Not only did I have a wonderful teacher to help guide me, but I was also determined to do well in that class despite numerous obstacles that stood in my path.

• What do you attribute your success in school to?

I would most certainly have to say my extensive support system. Not only do I have a supportive family, but I also have caring friends and teachers who want the best for me. Throughout high school, there have been multiple occasions during which I relied

heavily on the people who cared about me to navigate through the difficulties that I faced. In addition, I found that many of my peers lack a support system and seldom have anyone to turn to. Therefore, without the love and support of my family, friends, and teachers, I would not have been able to succeed in school.

• Who do you admire most?

Mindy Kaling because she is one of my personal role models. This is primarily because she has rejected cultural expectations by defying the norm and pursued a profession in comedy as an Asian woman. She truly leads by example and is the epitome of a strong, independent woman.

• What are your future plans for college?

This upcoming fall, I will be attending Franklin and Marshall College with a major in Pre-Law/History.

• What is your dream job?

I aspire to become a diplomat and work for the United Nations. I have been interested in the field of global affairs ever since I could comprehend the purpose and responsibilities of the United Nations. As a young child, I was captivated by the role of the UN because I perceived it to be the ultimate superhero country. After I matured, I realized the UN is an intergovernmental organization that is heavily involved in global peacemaking. Ultimately, this increased my interest in global affairs because I was intrigued by how the governments of multiple countries depended and influenced each other.

• What advice would you give freshmen students?

I would strongly encourage freshmen students to be open-minded and to get out of their comfort zone. I have found that doing so, opens up more opportunities and allows you to diversify the activities that you are a part of. Also, refrain from comparing yourself to others and learn to focus on yourself because the one person you should be competing with is you. Most importantly, build lasting friendships and relationships with the people that are around you because these people become the

ones that you can turn to. Lastly, have fun in high school and cherish your time because time moves so rapidly.

- What clubs/activities/extracurriculars were you involved in?
 - Mock Trial (President)
 - National Honor Society (Treasurer)
 - Student Council (Secretary)
 - Student Government
 - Junior Optimist Club
 - Lead for Diversity
 - Girls' State
 - Intern at the Office of Assemblyman Gary Schaefer
 - Teen PEP
 - Collegiate Leadership Summit
 - Volunteer work with Autism Organization
 - Volunteer work with temple

Salutatorian: Diana Tiburcio

• What were your goals for high school? Did you achieve them?

For some reason I entered high school thinking that it would further my interest in the medical field. However, after taking biology, I realized I HATE science. The subject that used to bore me to death soon became my most exciting part of the day... history. While I technically did not achieve my goal, I got something better out of it. In this school I realized my love for bettering the lives of other people through charitable work and policy reform. I plan to continue this work in college and later in life.

• What was your favorite class or subject? Why?

My favorite class was AP U.S. History primarily for the relationship that I built with my teacher, Ms. Cho. Unlike my other teachers, she always challenged me and reminded me that in life I need to work harder than others do. She never awarded me for tasks that I should have done which was a wake up call for me during my sophomore year.

• What do you attribute your success in school to?

I attribute my success to the privileges that I was able to grow up with. As a child, my mother would read to me every night and I live a comfortable enough life



Valedictorian Dhruvi Rana and Salutatorian Diana Tiburcio

to stay home and focus on my studies rather than work. I know this lifestyle is not available to many students in our school. In addition to this, my motivation to continue to push myself harder every year has been a big part of my life. I never like to settle and I am always working on a new task to improve my time at school.

• What are your future plans for college?

As a recently admitted student to Amherst College, I plan to double major in Sociology and LJST (Law, Jurisprudence, and Social Thought).

• What is your dream job?

I realized that my role in society is to give back to inner-city communities such as mine. My dream job would specialize in reforming educational inequalities in our society or educational law. I plan to return to Passaic in the future and give back to my community and the disadvantaged youth all over the nation.

• What advice would you give freshmen students?

I would tell them to try new things and join a bunch of clubs for the fun of it. I made a lot of friends from participating in different activities. I would tell

everyone to try their hardest in all their classes but that's not realistic because not everyone has the drive to do that. Enjoy your time in high school by giving back to your community. Organize a school event. Come to a pep rally. Get involved because the school gives us so many opportunities to do so!

• What clubs/activities/extracurriculars were you involved in?

- Student Council Founding Member and President
- National Honor Society Vice President
- Varsity Softball
- Teen Pep
- Pipeline
- STRIVE
- Mock Trial
- Tutoring (Today's Learning Center and AP Courses)
- Internship with assemblyman Gary Schaefer
- LEAD (Leadership, Education, and Development) Program
- Girls State
- William Paterson Summer Program for college credits
- Volunteering at Saint Mary's Hospital
- Initiating JSA (Junior State of America) for students next year

The funniest thing a teacher said was...

"I don't have one specific example, but Mr. Walker is hilarious!"—Destiny Jiminian-Santos

"I look like Marilyn Monroe because I am becoming blonder everyday."—Rosalva Restituyo

"Study with your boyfriend or girlfriend so they could be useful."—Adrian Escamilla

"No homework!"—Anderson Aguilar

"76 absences in lunch?!?!?! BOY! I hope you don't fail Lunch."—Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez

"The funniest thing was during a lab day my Physics teacher, Mr. Martinez, mentioned how if he were to slow down he could drop the water he held in a cup as he swinging it in a circle. After he mentioned this he ended up spilling it all over the floor; it was hilarious."—Ashley Deita

"Hurry up and take your time."—Arleny López

"Love isn't real, I just live with my wife for legal reasons."—Bruce Vaquero

"What do you call a bear without an ear? The answer is B."—Edwin Martinez

"What do you call a long legged woman?!? IL-LENE!"—Kiara Lopez

"Time will pass, will you?"—Di'Amonique Dotson

"They hate you because they ain't you." ~ Eric Nyabeta"—Jocelyn Gonzalez

"If I named my daughter Barbara, her name will be Barbara Barbara.' The words of wisdom."—Christian Michael Torres

"The funniest thing a teacher said to me was that my breath stinks, because I said 'Something smells bad' and he said 'It's you. Close your mouth.'"—Estephany Polanco

"I don't know what goes on in this school, I just work here."—Steven Zuniga

"Well she didn't really say anything, but Kristen Kush's reaction when she saw her birthday cake for this school year was memorable, as she was surprised that she got a Chem-themed birthday cake."—Ariday Benitez

"Water is wet."—Darijah Caesar-Wright

"I don't remember but Mr. Barbara always said something funny. He said so many funny things that I don't even remember."—Yetty Marte



What was the funniest excuse you gave an administrator or teacher?

"I told my piano teacher I couldn't play because my fingers were broken. Then she caught me texting a few minutes later."—Saria Saenz

"Someone stole my binder."—Fatima Alvarez

"That I took a nap and woke up at 12 a.m. so I couldn't do the homework."—Sebastian Plasencia

"I got lost on my way to class"—Edwin Xicotencatl

"This is my class."—Edwin Martinez

"I died and came back."—Ashley Leslie

"My sister took my binder to school by mistake."—Kiara Lopez

"My cat chewed on my homework."—Carol Tapia

"I didn't do your homework because I dreamt that you didn't give any. And school should help me make my dreams come true!"—Raj Rana

"I told a teacher that I was late because my alarm didn't sound."—Angel De Los Santos

"I wasn't wearing my uniform pants and I told my teacher that I lost my pants."—Kenneth Aguilar

"I did my homework but I left it at home."—Ayush Rana

"It was an accident."—Emmanuel Martinez



PHOTO BY MS. ZEIDAN

Ms. Zeidan's Period 3 AP Literature class celebrates the end of AP test cramming!

Where do you plan on going to college/trade school/military? OR where do you plan on working?

"Kean University."—Irais Vazquez

"I plan on working at a well-known restaurant."—Adrian Escamilla

"I will be attending Montclair State University and majoring in accounting."—Destiny Jiminian-Santos

"After graduating I will be working for Amazon in the summer, and in the fall I will be going to Bergen Community College. Deciding what college to go to is a lot of thinking; I am not sure if I want to go away or stay home."—Rosalva Restituyo

"New York Technical Institute."—Anderson Aguilar

"Saint Peter's University."—Ivan Salas

"Montclair State University."—Aijona Dawson

"I plan on going to Passaic County Community College for two years and then I will transfer to either William Paterson or Rutgers."—Marlene R

"Ramapo College Of New Jersey."—Natalie Probst

"I plan on going to Passaic County Community College for Criminal Justice."—Saria Saenz

"I really want to go to Montclair, but if that is not possible, I will continue looking for ways to continue a TV career by another form of education."—Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez

"Passaic County Community College."—Sebastian Plasencia

"Montclair State University."—Ashley Deita

"Rockland Community College."—Mrs. Yildirim

"I plan on getting my state of mind together."—Leslie Casiano

"William Paterson."—Lasha Serrano

"Caldwell University."—Jocelyn Rodriguez

"New Jersey Institute of Technology."—Michelle Andrea Bautista

"My plan is to attend Passaic County Community College for two years and then transfer to John Jay College of Criminal Justice."—Arleny López

"New Jersey City University."—Elizabeth Hernandez

"Lincoln Tech."—Edwin Martinez

"Berkeley College."—Estephany Polanco

"Fortis Institute."—Adrianna Martinez

"Montclair State University."—Jennifer Calixto

"I plan to go into the military."—Adrian Salas

"New Jersey City University."—Pamela Cordero

"I plan on going to Pace University for the spring semester."—Rosa Rodriguez

"Stevens Institute of Technology."—Mark Rodriguez

"Passaic County Community College."—Esmeily Molano

"Berkeley College."—Di'Amonique Dotson

"I plan on going to Caldwell University and working with children in the future."—Kaori Takase

"Montclair State University."—Bryan Ramirez

"William Paterson University."—Julie Almonte

"Arcadia University in Pennsylvania."—Nayeli Gutierrez

"Montclair State University."—Ashley Quirino

"Universal Technical Institute."—Christian Michael Torres

"Montclair State University."—Sheila Lopez

"William Paterson University."—Gibelly Cruceta

"I plan on joining the United States Airforce and attending Fairleigh Dickinson."—Lency Santos-Dominguez

"Rutgers University, School of Nursing."—Ariday Benitez

"Ramapo College."—Darijah Caesar-Wright

"Rutgers University."—Raj Rana

"I plan on doing my two years at Passaic County Community College and then will go to John Jay University."—Evelyn Guerra

"I am going to follow my father's steps as a me-

chanic and hopefully one day open my very own business."—Anonymous

"Montclair State University."—Erwin Guerrero

"William Paterson University."—Nicole Rosario

"New Jersey City University."—Johana Lastor

"The College of New Jersey."—Mariana Ovalles

"Montclair State University."—Kitana Desiree Vidal

"I am attending Passaic County Community College for Accounting."—Angelica Maria Castillo

"Fairleigh Dickinson University."—Chelsea Ceron

"I am attending Passaic County Community College and a Cosmetology school."—Michelle Baez

"I plan on joining the United States Marine Corps."—Bryant Perez

"The American Institute or Passaic County Community College."—Danaysha Nofs

"Berkeley College."—Juan Ramirez

"William Paterson."—Ruben Martinez

"I plan on attending Fortis Institute, focusing on Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning."—Christopher Santana

"Camden County College."—Julio Rafael

"Rowan College."—Jhericson Taveras

"I plan on going to a trade school, but I'm really undecided on where to go. I will seek to work in a place that involves something to do with my career. As a career, I want to become a professional cake artist, so probably like a bakery and cake shop."—Nai'ajah Rivera

"I'm planning on going to Fairleigh Dickinson University, playing volleyball there and majoring in Criminal Justice or Theatre Arts."—Yetty Marte



Survey Questions continue on pages 4 and 5

What advice would you give to a freshman?

- "Earn for prom because it's expensive." – Jorge
- "Make sure you have good studying habits." – Pamela Cordero
- "Never rely too much on friends; learn to be happy with yourself." – Rosa Rodriguez
- "Don't let people affect your goals." – Alexander Aquino
- "Don't spend the next years hanging with the wrong people" – Esmely Molano
- "Don't wait until last minute to do work and stay out of trouble." – Massiel Tavarez
- "Don't take these four years for granted." – Jocelyn Gonzalez
- "Get involved with clubs and any other thing you can! Start thinking about your future and take every opportunity you're given." – Niurka Pelaez
- "Don't slack, and choose your friends wisely." – Julie Almonte
- "Live your four years of high school to the fullest because those four years may seem like a lot but they will go by so fast." – Gibelly Cruceta
- "Do not procrastinate on work, it piles up." – Steven Zuniga
- "Be yourself. Don't follow the crowd. Don't let someone or your significant other control your life." – Ari-day Benitez
- "Don't mess up during your freshman year. It'll come back and hurt you." – Darajah Caesar-Wright
- "Do stuff that you're comfortable with, not stuff that people want you to do." – Raj Rana
- "Every year is important and what you do today will affect you your senior year. Always do your work and aim high no matter what that looks to others, and of course, stay out of cliques and trouble." – Nicole Rosario
- "Just do your work man." – Grace Sanchez
- "Choose your friends wisely." – Richard Linares
- "Don't act like a fool and don't treat highschool like it's a joke." – Angel Lozada
- "Just mind your business." – Emmanuel Martinez
- "The friends you came in with will not stay with you through it all." – Chelsea Ceron
- "Try to survive and don't follow your friends." – Ruben Martinez
- "You only have to worry about yourself." – Julissa Compres



Which staff member will you miss the most?

- "There's not just one teacher I will miss the most, there are many that I will miss! Mr. Stowe, Mrs. Roach, Mr. Walker, Mrs. Benedetti, Ms. Bulson, and Mrs. Gonzalo!" – Destiny Jiminian-Santos
- "All of them. Especially my coaches, and the security guard Phil." – Yetty Marte
- "I will miss Mrs. Cawthern, Ms. Kucharyk, and Mr. Ruys" – Nai'ajah Rivera
- "Ms. Merced, Ms. Bolton, Ms. Cawthern, Mr. Walker, Mr. Mitchell, Ms. Bulson, Mr. I, Mr. Barbara, Ms. Mogan, Ms. Lepold, P.O. Nuyen." – Jennifer Pimentel
- "Ms. Bulson." – Julissa Compres
- "Mr. Nyabeta." – Evelyn Guerra
- "My coaches." – Willy Acencion
- "Mr. Brubaker." – Bryant Perez
- "My counselor and coach, Ms. Merced." – Chelsea Ceron
- "I will miss Mr. Caulfield the most since he has inspired me and made me realize that giving up is never an option." – Kitana Desiree Vidal
- "Mr. Galan." – Bryan Ramirez
- "Mr. Barbara." – Christian Michael Torres
- "Richardson, the security guard." – Di'Amonique Dotson
- "P.O. Nuyen." – Alexander Aquino
- "Ms. Bulson, Ms. Merced and Mr. Kleiman. These two

Best Friends: Who was with you through it all?

- "I'd have to say it was Keni'a Powell! She's the bomb diggity." – Destiny Jiminian-Santos
- "Bjuana Parraguirre, Ulysses Miranda, and the whole Varsity team." – Ivan Salas
- "Mariana Ovalles and Susan Fong are my girls and have been with me through my toughest and brightest times." – Saria Saenz
- "My TV class in general was like family." – Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez
- "My best friends Angie Zamora, Rosalia Pagan and Andrea Hernandez were with me throughout these four years even when we had no class together." – Ashley Deita
- "Gloria Falcon has always been by my side. I met her in band, and we have been inseparable since." – Jocelyn Rodriguez
- "Monica Hernandez! We used to study, do our homework, and play soccer together." – Arleny López
- "My best friend through all this was Nayeli Pichardo. She has been there for me since the first day, and this is forever." – Estephany Polanco
- "Tiffany and Jocelyn were with me through it all, since the seventh grade." – Kaori Takase
- "My best friend Reka was with me through it all, since my freshman year she has always been there for me in and out of school and I am grateful for that." – Anonymous
- "Julissa Compres was definitely with me through it all, and I am forever grateful." – Gibelly Cruceta
- "Adrian, he has been there for me all the time." – Laisa Fernandez
- "My closest friends through all of this were Odalys Ayala and Nicole Flores." – Erwin Guerrero
- "Nidhi Rana, my best friend, and Vaishnavi Rana, my sister, the one who stood by me on my hard times." – Ayush Rana
- "My one and only best friend: Keni'a Powell!" – Danaysha Nofs



Who/What will you miss the most about PHS?

- "I will miss my friends, and certain teachers the most from PHS." – Irais Vazquez
- "I will miss Mrs. Weston and a lot of other teachers who I built a friendship through my high school career." – Rosalva Restituyo
- "Varsity Soccer... started freshman year and to see it end, man, I'll miss that field, it was home." – Ivan Salas
- "I will miss my club members (Korean Culture Club); they are honestly the best! I am the founder of the club so I feel like I am leaving my little babies behind. I love you, my marshmallows!" – Marlene R.
- "One of the things I will miss are the clubs and the sports, where you would create a bond with different people and have the best of times with them." – Saria Saenz
- "I will miss everything! I will miss being able to walk around hallways, have my own locker, be released early, and play in gym with friends." – Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez
- "What I will miss the most about PHS is weight room because I got to meet people who shared the same interest as me. I also had the pleasure of meeting a teacher so passionate about getting his students in shape, Mr Galan." – Anonymous
- "I think I am going to miss the ridiculous fragments of conversations someone can overhear in the hallways that just make no sense to someone and just have them erupt into laughter. I will also miss being in such a familiar environment for these past four years." – Jackie Cruz
- "I will definitely miss band the most, as hard as it is at times, it brought me out of my comfort zone and that's where most of my closest friends are from." – Jocelyn Rodriguez
- "Being able to leisurely enjoy the company of those that I have attended, left, and graduated PHS with, every day." – Juan Antonio Vidals
- "I will miss going on the bus rides with my teammates, whether it was to a soccer game or a track meet." – Arleny López
- "I'm gonna miss everything, even the hallway traffic that we always got stuck in. I'm gonna miss my friends." – Nayeli Pichardo
- "The only thing I am going to miss about PHS is all the funny moments I had in my classes with my friends and some teachers." – Estephany Polanco
- "Anybody who I met in the three years that I was here who helped me get to my graduation day." – Ashley Leslie
- "I will miss the activities, the opportunities and all the friends and teachers." – Adrian Salas
- "I will really miss the band room, choir room, and the stage, as well as Mr. Rusca and Ms. Gauthier, who changed me to the fun, bubbly person that I am today." – Anonymous
- "The thrill of never knowing what's going to happen next." – Kiara Lopez
- "My underclassmen friends and walking around the overcrowded hallways." – Christian Tejeda
- "I will miss seeing some of the people I was with for years, and the teachers that supported me and helped me through it all." – Kaori Takase
- "I'm going to miss the water fountain by the library. (The best water in this school)." – Nayeli Gutierrez
- "I'll miss the laughs and jokes we make everyday in class." – Ashley Quirino
- "I will miss all the instructors of Naval Science." – Laisa Fernandez
- "The free education." – Steven Zuniga
- "I'm gonna miss seeing all of my friends and going to drill team early in the morning." – Lynda Arbelo
- "Honestly not much, just most of my teachers the I've had throughout the years of being in PHS." – Erwin Guerrero
- "What I will miss the most about PHS is my cheer team. I learned to cheer others on even when they are down and to always bring school spirit." – Nicole Rosario
- "My clubs (HOSA + LFD) along with the e-board that I have grown so close with, and have established a foundation within each club. I take so much pride in both because my team and I have turned into what people believed to be nothing to more than something! I will also miss my group of friends in my English class because without them senior year wouldn't have been the same." – Johana Lastor
- "I will miss the laughs and walks through the hallway with friends and some of the teachers who helped me become a better person." – Danaysha Nofs



Seniors at career week.

PHOTO BY MS. BENEDETTI



How have you changed in four years at PHS?

"I've matured and learned that I can't please everyone. I won't agree or share the same opinions with people and we can still share a friendship. I've learned that people will come and go and life will go on just fine. And that heartbreaks will heal sooner than you think."— Irais Vazquez

"I've grown into a more responsible and goal-oriented person throughout my time in PHS."— Destiny Jiminian -Santos

"I became more open with my friends outside of school, more motivated in other areas."— Adrian Escamilla

"In four years at PHS I have grown stronger than I ever imagine. I see my reflection in the freshmen and realize how much I have grown. Now, I realize the importance of an education and every year I have more responsibilities. I have gained and lost friends, but the real ones have always been here for me."— Rosalva Restituyo

"My attitude, my way of thinking and education became my priority."— Ivan Salas

"I think I have grown as a person and due to certain experiences I have learned to value myself. I also have become more involved in my studies and FINALLY understood the importance of education."— Natalie Probst

"As I entered through freshman year, I was insecure about myself and focused on what others thought about me. But as the years go by, I learned that whatever people thought about me wouldn't affect the kind of person that I am."— Anonymous

"I've learned to be more social and come out of my shell more and I've gained/lost friends but I've grown and I feel like I've become wiser throughout these four years."— Saria Saenz

"I have strangely become more social during my years here, and going up ranks in my club."— Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez

"I've become more mature and I've learned that some things are supposed to happen no matter how hard you try to change them."— Sebastian Plasencia

"I learned to be patient with people but also not to take people's nonsense."— Jackie Cruz

"I've become a more open person. I've learned to manage time and to try on different stuff and make the best out of it."— Arleny López

"I have changed a lot at PHS. I learned lots of positive things from my teachers and learned a lot of life lessons from everything I went through during my school years."— Estephany Polanco

"I would say I've become a lot more open and lively rather than quiet and shy. I've learned to perform and treat everything as if it was my chance to make it big."— Adrian Salas

"In freshman year I was a very shy person. I would never talk or participate.... Now I am this bubbly, talkative, and fun leader that has a passion for the arts."— Anonymous

"I grew up and learned how to accept other people changing."— Rosa Rodriguez

"When I first came to PHS as a freshman, I was chunky and by mid sophomore year, I lost about 32 pounds."— Christian Tejada

"I learned that you can't leave everything last minute because it will only make you stress more."— Massiel Tavarez

"Over the four years in PHS I changed emotionally and mentally. I feel like I learned to be on my own."— Kaori Takase

"I started to change and grown mentally when I got involved into clubs, sports and Teen PEP. Now, I am confident and respect myself and others all the time."— Niurka Pelaez

"I feel like I have slacked on my school work over the years, but I have grown as a person. I've learned how to treat people better and help those around me who need it."— Bryan Ramirez

"After four years at PHS, I have grown to a mature, responsible young lady, who only focuses on being successful. I have grown out of my old habits and I have also become a much more confident person."— Ashley Quirino

"I have become more aware, Aware of my surroundings and of the people around me."— Sheila Lopez



Ms. Benedetti's Period 7 AP Lit class represents their future schools.

PHOTO BY MS. BENEDETTI

"Throughout my years at PHS, I became extremely independent. I learned that everyone has a different point of view and perspective about anything and everything. I realized that our society, community, and childhood shape us, and it is OUR choice to figure out whether we'll allow negative interventions affect us or bring change."— Ariday Benitez

"I have changed in so many ways. At the beginning of my high school experience, I was a very shy and weird person, now I am more open and can keep a conversation going."— Evelyn Guerra

"When I first entered high school I didn't care much for it, I would just try to do the minimum. As school went on, I took a big step forward and decided to take AP classes, and along the way I decided to try harder in school."— Omar Lopez

"I learned to be manage my time with school and sports and also how to be more confident with myself

and to always have a plan B."— Nicole Rosario

"Besides my hair color *knee slap*, I am proud of the self-confidence that I have gained over the years. I started off being a transfer student from a similar setting as Passaic but with no courage to do anything for myself. Instead, I was doing stuff for the wrong reasons. Now, I am proud of everything that I have accomplished and I have gained a voice within myself. If you were to tell me four years ago that I were to become the person I am today, I would've laughed."— Johana Laster

"I matured and came to a realization that high school isn't a place to play around and that it is so important. Also, I stopped hanging out with people who were a bad influence and made me do things I didn't want to."— Danaysh



My biggest regret is...

"My biggest regret was not playing the sports I wanted to or joining the clubs I wanted to! I wish I was more involved in extracurricular activities (volleyball, track, art club, etc.)."— Destiny Jiminian-Santos

"Coming to school late so many times."— Adrian Escamilla

"I regret focusing on boys instead of giving a hundred percent on my education. I have realized that men are temporary."— Rosalva Restituyo

"Not getting involved in extracurricular activities."— Anderson Aguilar

"Having my greatest downfall during senior year."— Ivan Salas

"Being rude to people."— Aijona Dawson

"Wasting my time on people who were just bringing me down."— Marlene R

"Being silent. Not using my voice when I should have."— Natalie Probst

"Not taking my junior year seriously."— Fatima Sugeili Resendiz Alvarez

"My biggest regret was not trying out for even one sport through my four years in the same school. I always thought I would be a good cheerleader but I never had the confidence to try out."— Jackie Cruz

"I regret not taking my freshman year seriously."— Jean Corral

"Falling behind and surrounding myself with people who were bad influences."— Leslie Casiano

"Letting my laziness and procrastination get in the way of learning" — Laisha Serrano

"Not joining band sooner" — Juan Antonio Vidals

"Not joining more sports or taking more AP classes" — Arleny Lopez

"Thinking I could make up work later." — Bruce Vaquero

"Sleeping through class and not being able to make up the work." — Nayeli Pichardo

"Never saying no to my parents when they told me to stop being in Marching Band, stop cheering, and not accept a position in basketball." — Anonymous

"Not taking my classes more seriously." — Pamela Cordero

"Slacking off senior year." — Mark Rodriguez

"Getting too close to too many people." — Kaori Takase

"Allowing people to take me out of my own character." — Julie Almonte

"Not making more memorable moments." — Ashley Quirino

"Not choosing my friends wisely." — Sheila Lopez

"Deciding to work about 20-35 hours a week my senior year, instead of focusing on college applications and scholarships." — Ariday Benitez

"Taking too many AP classes and stressing over college." — Raj Rana

"Focusing too much on sports rather than being more of a 'student' in the word 'student athlete.'" — Nicole Rosario

"Allowing my GPA to drop." — Mariana Ovalles



Where do you see yourself in five years?

"In five years I see myself with my masters degree in accounting from MSU, looking for a job, hopefully with a place I've interned for." — Destiny Jiminian-Santos

"In five years I see myself graduating from college and finding a job in business." — Rosalva Restituyo

"In five years I see myself as a certified architect." — Anderson Aguilar

"Graduated from school and working in the Mecca for fashion (New York City)." — Aijona Dawson

"I see myself working in the television industry as an apprentice." — Fatima Alvarez

"Living by myself with a good job and traveling every once in a while." — Sebastian Plasencia

"I see myself having four years of experience in my trade and have gone back to school for business so I can have my own business and have my family support me through it." — Jackie Cruz

"Majoring in History from Rutgers University." — Jean Corral

"Rich and famous." — Leslie Casiano

"In five years I see myself graduating college and looking into med school." — Jocelyn Rodriguez

"I see myself owning a bachelor's degree in computer science, having experience in the field and vaca-

tioning overseas." — Michelle Andrea Bautista

"Teaching and hopefully have traveled to two different countries." — Elizabeth Hernandez

"Hopefully working in the field I'm studying and working on writing a book or comic." — Bruce Vaquero

"Playing at a higher level in soccer or training little ones and having a career in athletic training." — Jennifer Calixto

"Kean alumni, and holding a stable job in my career." — Kiara Lopez

"Working / having an internship at NASA or SpaceX." — Mark Rodriguez

"Finishing college and starting my FBI career." — Alexander Aquino

"Hopefully working in an ICU as a nurse." — Lynda Arbelo

"I see myself working in the family business, called Santana's Heating and Air Conditioning, with my cousin." — Christopher Santana

"Traveling and in the olympics." — Angel De Los Santos

"Doing what I love to do." — Nai'ajah Rivera



What was your most memorable moment at PHS?

"Prom is definitely the most memorable moment for me at PHS." — Destiny Jiminian-Santos

"2017 Pep Rally." — Rosalva Restituyo

"Playing at the Passaic County Finals and being able to see City of Passaic support us!" — Anderson Aguilar

"My most memorable moment at PHS is when I met the most amazing people on earth. William Salas and Natalie Probst <3 I love you guys!" — Marlene R.

"My most memorable moments are the friendships I have made. Shoutout to Marlene Rodriguez, Lizbeth Barrera, and others that I have grown close with. Love y'all!" — Natalie Probst

"A football game against Tech. There were people who I've known since elementary and friends that I've known since freshman year all together and it crazy how you've basically grown with everyone but gone in different directions." — Saria Saenz

"When I was master of ceremony for the Hispanic heritage assembly." — Sebastian Plasencia

"My most memorable moment at PHS was meeting my friends in Algebra class, in my first year of school." — Anonymous

"Competing and performing with the marching band. Band has been a major part of my life since third grade and I'm so grateful for the opportunities that have come from it." — Jocelyn Rodriguez

"2017 US Bands National Championships." — Michelle Andrea Bautista

"Not giving up." — Ashley Medel

"When we had drills and ordered pizza since it took a long time." — Edwin Martinez

"Being able to participate in school events with friends." — Jennifer Calixto

"All moments were memorable." — Adrian Salas

"Joining the marching band and making many memories there." — Anonymous

"Going on class field trips for my Sociology and AP Environmental class." — Anonymous

"My most memorable moment was finally facing my stage fright and singing in the winter concert my sophomore year." — Anonymous

"Being a part of the homecoming court." — Rosa Rodriguez

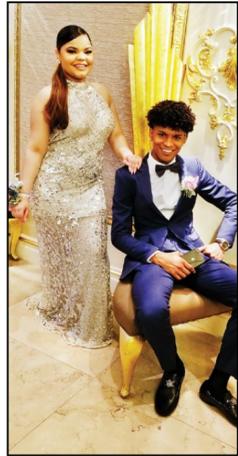
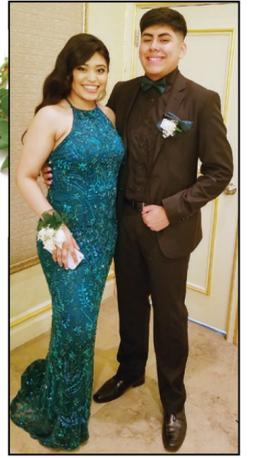
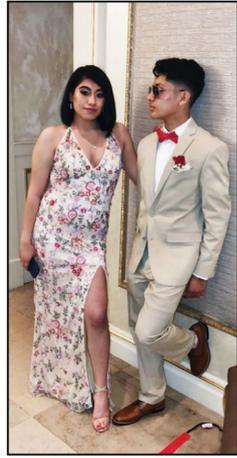
"Military Ball." — Alexander Aquino

"Being accepted into National Honors Society." — Massiel Tavarez

"The most memorable moment at PHS was getting awards at the beginning for volleyball." — Kaori Takase



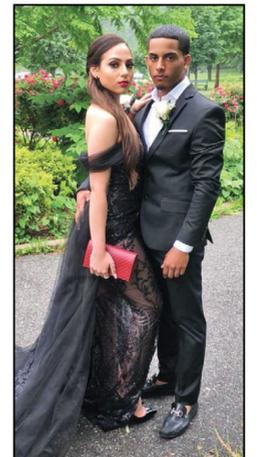
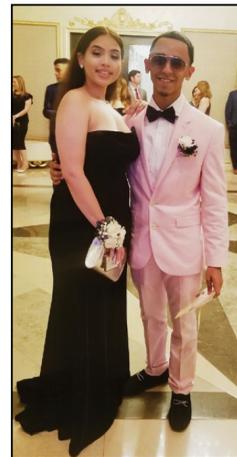
Senior Prom 2018



Passaic High School held their annual Senior Prom celebration on May 31, 2018. After taking pre-prom photos, seniors arrived with their dates or groups of friends in style to the Royal Manor in Garfield, New Jersey at 6 p.m.

After four long school years, seniors got to celebrate their accomplishments and have fun with all of their classmates (some of which they have been going to school with since kindergarten!) before their impending graduation.

Teachers and students provided photos.



National Honor Society Dinner: Celebrating PHS' Exemplary Students

By Lisberma Peralta Aquino '20

Scholarship, service, leadership and character: the four intrinsic values for which the National Honor Society is nationally acclaimed. Founded in 1921 by Dr. Edward Rynearson, the principal of Fifth Avenue High School in Pittsburgh, the National Honor Society (abbreviated NHS) has since been led with the purpose of recognizing outstanding high school students whom, apart from exercising their time and energy towards having exceptional grades, are an active part of their community and serve as an exemplary role model to those around them.

While acknowledging them for their attainments in mentioned areas, the NHS also helps fortify its members with the vision that they can exceed their own expectations.

The premier organization holds an annual dinner to welcome its new members and, at the same time, express a bittersweet farewell to the seniors leaving it, all meanwhile celebrating the organization's core values. On June 5, Passaic High School held its 2018 National Honor Society dinner. It took place at the luxurious country club, Valley Regency in Clifton, NJ,



New National Honor Society members recite the NHS Pledge.

from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m., a time members spent with their family and friends, and in the presence of PHS' NHS organizers, Mr. Graham and Ms. Amint, as well as teachers from the school who attended with the purpose of seeing students recognized for their hard work and dedication, along with Mr. Acevedo and Ms. Romero.

NHS President, Laisha Calalpa, was the first to claim the attention of the guests as she took the podium and welcomed everyone in the room. Then she, along with four senior mem-

bers of the organization, started lighting the five candles held together by a candelabrum placed in front of the room. The middle and largest candle, explained Calalpa, represented the eternal light of knowledge. The other four, smaller candles flanking the larger one served as representation for scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

The evening's hors d'oeuvre consisted of Penne Alla Vodka, a dish enjoyed by all guests alike, until the new members of the NHS were promptly called to the back of the room, where they

were given a small candle and formed themselves into a line. When called into the room by their name, they would walk in, shake hands with Mr. Acevedo and Mr. Graham, sign the NHS' book, and then stand in front of the room, where they all recited the NHS Pledge and became official members. Guests were then offered a choice of salmon or chicken for the dinner entrée, and then seniors were called to the front of the room and given a white rose, symbolic of purity and truth, from which comes character. They would then give

their rose to that person who supported them along their High School journey. Sprinkled ice cream soon followed for dessert.

Mr. Graham offered the night's final speech. "It is a night full of both joy and sadness," he said, "for pretty obvious reasons, for while we welcome new members, we have to say goodbye to the old ones." He also gave three pieces of advice to the students listening, though mainly to the seniors who would soon be embraced by the 'real world':

Step out of your comfort zone. If you don't expose yourself to new experiences, new ideas, then however will you acquire knowledge?

Never be the smartest person in the room. That who claims intelligence over all has nothing to learn, and NHS members should always strive to be enlightened.

Enough never is, always try to be better.

Amidst this sequence of events, Ms. Romero, Mr. Acevedo and Calalpa gave encouraging and inspiring speeches full of esteem and regard for everyone in the room, mainly the NHS members, contributing to the night's bittersweet mood. Though it concluded with tears from many, the National Honor Society dinner was a remarkable night; a night to remember.

State House Field Trip

Continued from Page 1

Visiting the Assembly Chamber was truly one of the highlights of the tour; right in the center of the Assembly Chamber there is a chandelier, installed by Thomas Edison's young Electric Light Company in 1891.

While the students were in the Assembly Chamber, Assemblyman Gary Schaer who represents the New Jersey's 36th Legislative District, came and briefly spoke to the students. Throughout his words of encouragements to the students, Assemblyman Schaer informed the students that the possibilities of success are endless if they are sought out. As well as giving his point of view on certain issues, Assemblyman Schaer told students about his accomplishments while serving in the New Jersey General Assembly.

Responding to a question from a student, Assemblyman Schaer stated, "I want to live in a society that is sensitive to the needs of everyone in it."

In his closing remarks, Assemblyman Schaer, who resides and has an office in the city of Passaic, shared "Thank you for coming to the State House - I'm really glad to see Passaic here."

Afterwards, students went to the New Jersey Education Association building where they had the privilege to meet a lobbyist, who shared information about her job responsibilities.

She closed her Q&A with the students by declaring that, "No one in this country gets elected without people who share your similar values, and people spend the time to get to know the person who's running. Therefore, as students and soon to be adults, it is vital that you know information about the world around you."

After lunch, students were able to sit in during a general assembly, in which our very own Ms. Carter, a teacher at PHS, had a swearing in ceremony as assemblywoman for the 22nd District of the state of New Jersey. Soon after, students were able to meet with Ms. Carter. With a positive tone, she admitted to the group, "I am so glad that Passaic students- some of my very own students, were able to be here to experience this with me."

The day ended with pictures throughout the State Street. When it was finally time to get on the bus, students were smiling and full of encouragement.

Linda Carter: Our Teacher and Assemblywoman

By Lixangelys Ruiz '20

We have an assemblywoman among us at Passaic High School. Our very own Ms. Carter from room M109. Many may not know what an assemblywoman is, but it sure does sound like a very important and prestigious title! An assemblywoman is a woman who is a member of a legislative assembly.

Ms. Carter was inducted as a member of the New Jersey State Assembly on May 24. She did so with hard work throughout a "Special Election Convention." A seat in the assembly was empty after the death of Jerry Green, and the election was held to see who would be taking his seat. Our very own Ms. Carter is now an assemblywoman.

PHS students had the opportunity to support Ms. Carter at her swearing in ceremony. Students from AP Government classes and the Student Council were on a field trip to the State House, and coincidentally, Ms. Carter received her title that day.

Interview with Ms. Carter:

Her experience, journey, and plan:

"Thank you for this time to get to know me. My experience so far as an Assemblywoman has been phenomenal (all three weeks). I have had the opportunity to meet many individuals across the State of New Jersey and see the workings of New Jersey Government from the inside.

"As for my experience, I have been a public servant for over fifteen years, both as a local elected official



WWW.ROTARYPNP.ORG

Assemblywoman (and Passaic High School teacher) Linda Carter

in Plainfield and as a Union County Freeholder and a teacher here at Passaic High School. As for my assembly seat (LD22) that I hold right now, I feel I hold the perfect combination of experience and talent to help move NJ forward. I was humbled and honored to be able to take the oath and become a member of the General Assembly, now it's time to roll up my sleeves and get to work in passing legislation to make New Jersey safer, stronger and more affordable.

"Prior to joining the Assembly, I was elected as a Union County Freeholder in 2010, and became the first African American woman to serve as the Chairman of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders in 2013. Prior to being a Union County Freeholder I served on the Plainfield City Council for 7 years."

Advice from Ms. Carter to you:

"What advice can I give PHS students? Don't limit yourself. Don't allow your circumstances to hinder where you can go. Don't be afraid to take chances or make mistakes, because you learn from that and can change and make it better. Be a leader and voice for those that feel their voice isn't being heard."

Her main motivation is, her "passion for all to succeed."

As you can see, our assemblywoman has done a lot in her career for her community and will continue to do so. Passaic High School is very proud of you and we are lucky to have you, as a teacher and role model.



PHOTO BY MR. BRUBAKER

Newly-inaugurated NJ State Assemblywoman Linda Carter (D-Plainfield) greets Passaic H. S. students outside of the N.J. State House in Trenton.

Check us out online.

Visit hilltopstar.com

Congratulations Graduates!

Class of '18

'Youth in City Government Day' Gives Students A Glimpse of How Local Government Works

By Connie Martinez '19 and Kimberly Martinez '19

On June 1, students from Passaic High School participated in the annual Youth in City Government Day. Through this event, students are able to see up close the jobs of City Hall and Passaic School Board members. On this day, students dressed their best and were ready to take notes about the person they were shadowing for the day.

For two hours, students got to see a glimpse of a day in the life of their assigned individual, their responsibilities, and challenges they may face. The students got to interact with them and get to know them better. They are able to know how they got there, what their profession requires, and how they were able to achieve it.

Once the students were

finished, were escorted on a guided tour of Passaic City Hall, during which they were informed of the different city departments and how they work.

Once the tour ended, the students headed back to the council room to watch a mock trial. The council members were represented by the students who shadowed. Members of the audience were able to participate and present ongoing problems to the Council. The mock trial showcases to the students how Mayor Hector Lora and the Council men/women come together in order to resolve the conflicts within the community or try to come up with a reasonable solution.

When the mock trial finished, the students and a few of the City hall members head towards the Sevilla Restaurant to have lunch.

The afternoon began with an opening speech from Germaine Gibson, Vice President of the Optimist Club. A few more guest speakers proceeded to present like Mayor Lora and the Superintendent of Passaic Schools, Pablo Munoz. Lunch was served shortly after, which gave students time to sit down and talk about the overall experience of the day.

Later on, Passaic High School's choir performed two songs, "This is Me" and "Home Sweet Home." After their beautiful performance, a had a few more guest speakers shared words of wisdom, such as Mr. Maisonet, Assistant Principal at PHS, and Michele Merced. One by one, the students came up to the front to receive their certificate for being part of this event, and later receiving their shirts.

Senior Cadets say goodbye to NJROTC

By Aleyshka Barbosa '19

As the 2017-2018 school year comes to an end, and influx of goodbyes roll in, to all the things students have held close to for four years.

A traditional event that takes place in the United States Navy, also takes place in our very own NJROTC- change of command. Where the senior cadets leave their positions and new students fill in the shoes they have left.

This year NJROTC senior cadets say goodbye to the program that has changed them for the better, who has molded them to be a better person.

"I would like to thank all of the instructors of the NJROTC program and all the cadets that have made me the leader that I am today." - Cadet Captain Laisa Peralta

"This program helped me a lot during my four years of high school. I can't imagine where I would be if I didn't join. I met my best friend and great people, I will always remember." - Cadet Lieutenant Commander Alexander Aquino

"I'm grateful to have met everyone and I hold dearly everyone that I've come across throughout



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALEYSHKA BARBOSA
Senior ROTC Cadets

these years. I wish everyone the best and know they will be beside each and everyone of each other no matter what." - Cadet Lieutenant Commander Adrian Salas

This year the NJROTC program not only says goodbye to the senior cadets who are about to take on the world, but also a dearly loved Naval Science Instructor. First Class Petty Officer Nuyen will be retiring this year after 22 years of molding the lives of students in the PHS NJROTC. Ready to take on the new chapter of his life, PHS and all NJROTC cadets wish him all the best in what's to come.

Men's Summer Fashion Trends Include Stripes and Colors

By Bryan Castro '19

New season means new gear. Summer has snuck up on us like those automated subscriptions. It was around 50 degrees a few weeks ago! Some people haven't even put away their thick sweaters, or even thought of ways to stay cool during the summer but remain stylish. Let's take care of the situation and transition our style from spring to summer, it's that time of the year once again. Here are three fashion trends you should look out for this season:

Stripes have been around for as long as we could all remember, we have seen them go from crime to fashion, most notably Coco Chanel and Guess. This summer they are no stranger to the scene, returning as a summer trend. This year vertical stripes have become a thing. Instead of having the standard horizontal stripes that book club moms have been adapting, vertical stripes are being



seen in a variety of clothing. It has officially become men's new go to print this summer. It has been seen in 2018 fashion week runways: bombers, field jackets, and shirts. Style it

right and you'll look like Luka Sabbat, taking it too far and you'll look like you're ready for a pajama party (those are still a thing).

Side-stripes trousers are still holding on strong this year. Before you go and grab your Adidas track pants, we are talking about Jerry Lorenzo "reviving" the side-stripe trousers. Luxury brands went over the top this season using them in their collections. If you don't have side-stripes on your trousers this season, there's something that you might be doing wrong. Pacsun, Prada, and even Valentino have taken the trend already, and it's not just high end, but there's also affordable pairs out there. There's a secret to making them work without looking

"sporty." Match the trousers with tonal shirts and low-top sneakers to balance the outfit. Tonal is the way to go this summer, no more "all black" everything. It works with possibly anything you could think of, and this year we are getting a full array of colors to choose from. Blue is in this summer, but also try experimenting with different neutral colors. Keep it simple with the amount of tonal colors you're wearing, two to three is the magic number. I recommend to use tonal pants or shorts as the foundation of your outfit, and build your way up from there. For the shoes, refrain from wearing oxford shoes or anything high-top, for this I'll recommend low-top shoes in colors black, white, or grey.

JELP! REVIEW: Passaic's Very Own Habanero Restaurant

By Janessa Mejias '19

For our last review of the year we decided to keep things here in our hometown, Passaic. What's special about this particular place is that it's sort of a "Mom and Pop Shop." It's family owned by our own PHS senior, Laisha Calalpa.

Calalpa's family worked really hard to get this far. Her father once worked at a place in Montclair NJ called 'Tinga Taqueria' for 15 years, after a while he figured it was time to have his own place and become his own boss. Habanero was then born just a month and a half ago. A great thing about this restaurant is that it's very close to home!

Atmosphere: Habanero was a very casual hang out spot. It's

a great place to meet up with friends and get a quick bite to eat. The interior design, created by the family themselves, was absolutely stunning. One wall was made of brick which made it feel rustic and comfortable whereas the bright orange gave it a more modern and happy vibe. They also played subtle music from the Mexican culture, it was quite nice.

Food: Our team tried as many things as our stomachs could handle! We tried steak tacos, french fries, BBQ chicken taco bites, Tortas de Milanese de Res (breaded steak sandwiches) and the best part - Deep Fried Cheesecake! The food was above our expectations. It's classic Tex-Mex with the homiest feel ever. The cheesecake is worth a try, it sounds differ-

ent but it satisfies any dessert craving.

Staff: Our waitress was Laisha Calalpa herself. She was very friendly and full of enthusiasm. She dealt with our messiness and indecisiveness and was patient. Laisha actually recommended the fried cheesecake to our team. She was very open to discussing how her family came about the business. The chef and meal preppers, although we had no interaction, seemed excited to see customers come into their lovely eatery.

I recommend Habanero's if you'd like a relaxing dinner, or to even sit there and do work. It's like a cafe feel with the rush of a restaurant.

Rating: ★★★★★

THE HILLTOP STAR

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

Staff Editors:

Aleyshka Barbosa
Brandon Cisneros
Armando Martinez
Janessa Mejias

Writers:

Bryan Castro
Connie Martinez
Kimberly Martinez
Lisberma Peralta Aquino
Divya Rana
Melissa Reyes
Lixangelys Ruiz

Adviser:

Erica Sciametta
esciametta@passaicsschools.org

Thank you to the members of the PHS community who have contributed photographs, information, and articles to this issue of The Hilltop Star. Without your help, this publication would not exist. We look forward to working with you throughout this school year! Reach out to Ms. Sciametta or a newspaper staff member if you would like to join, contribute information, or respond to newspaper content.

www.hilltopstar.com

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

Career Week – Speakers Bring Inspiration to Students

Thinking About Our Futures: Career Week 2018

By Divya Rana '17

Passaic High School's career week took place over three days from May 23 through 25. The school reached out to the community and some former residents of Passaic who roamed the halls of PHS. Many people volunteered and students listened to presentations on their careers that varied in time length and information. They visited classrooms and also presented in the auditorium to an eager audience of staff members and students. We were exposed to many different careers which opened a world of possibilities for them as they learned about what life was like beyond high school and the streets of Passaic.

Some of our dedicated staff members, Ms. Romero, Ms. Benedetti, Ms. Jose, Ms. Fabiano, Ms. Yilmaz, and Ms. Ruiz organized career week throughout the months of April and May. Many other staff members donated their time and efforts by helping to monitor students in the auditorium as well as recruit speakers to come give our students some insight and wisdom.

Some speakers include the following: Carlos Lopez, the owner of Tropical Juice Bar, Anna Maria Tejada, an attorney, Alberto Rivas, a judge, Gelena Solano, a television reporter for Univision, and our very own Mayor Hector Lora of Passaic.

Career week is essential because it introduces the students to a broader range of options that they might not see and gets them thinking about the world of work waiting for them. While presenters told students a



Judge Alberto Rivas answered students' questions during his presentation during Career Week.

lot about their jobs, there were plenty of questions asked that they were happy to answer. Career week may have ended but PHS students have just only begun their journey.

Judge Alberto Rivas: 'Take Charge of Your Life'

By Melissa Reyes '17

Judge Alberto Rivas came to the Shirelles auditorium to educate Passaic High schoolers on May 25, on his success being a Superior Court Judge in New Brunswick, Middlesex County. Gaining admiration from the crowd of high schoolers, he addressed any questions students had regarding his career and life for Career Week.

He was asked many questions ranging from "What are your thoughts on immigration?" to "Do you regret any of your court decisions or stances you've taken in a trial?"

"Don't lead an 'ay bendito' life," said Rivas, "take charge of your life, don't let circumstances, don't let knuckleheads



Dominican talk show host, Gelena Solano, front row, center, spoke about her struggles and successes during her visit to Passaic High School.

dictate to you. You set your own path, your own goal."

He offered advice to anyone desiring to become a lawyer or judge, describing how "your reputation as a lawyer is important" as well as explaining in order to become a judge "you must have at least 10 years of experience."

A former student who graduated PHS in 1978, he relates his experiences to many students who are children of immigrants.

Like many migrants, his parents worked in factories and made sure their children would not take education for granted. Judge Rivas tells his story of success in which many of our community can relate to. Thank you, Judge Alberto Rivas, for leaving an impact in Passaic, New Jersey!

Univision Royalty: Gelena Solano

Armando Martinez '19

On the last day of Career Week, May 25, students from Passaic High School had the

honor of meeting television host and reporter, Gelena Solano, in our very own Shirelles Auditorium. The Dominican talk show host is known for her role of 15 years on "El Gordo y la Flaca," a national entertainment program for Univision.

Solano has interviewed countless of celebrities, both in American and Latin pop-culture. To name a few, the list includes Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt, Denzel Washington, Jennifer Lopez,

Salma Hayek, and Thalia. Even though, Solano's life is full of glamour, she came from humble beginnings, and overcame tribulations to get where she is today. Born in the Dominican Republic, she came to the United States at the age of 16, and graduated from Kean University of New Jersey with a degree in Communications. Solano told students that she created a club for modeling at the university, with a couple of her best friends to accumulate money for themselves. One her best friends was actually Passaic High School's very own, Maria Rodriguez, an AP Spanish teacher.

Solano became even more transparent when she discussed the biggest struggle in her life, which was an accident that left her in a coma for a month. For a year she had to undergo several surgeries, and physical therapy to recover from the incident. Although the accident was a bump on her path to success, Solano did not let it deteriorate her dream of being on TV. She is now married, a staple of television reporting, and living the life she always dreamed about.



Mr. Franklin Tapia, a PHS graduate of the class of 2009, is a supply chain analyst at Johnson and Johnson, and entrepreneur. Tapia spoke to Ms. Sciametta's journalism class about staying focused, persevering, and not letting your past mistakes and obstacles get in the way of your future success.

PHS TRACK AND FIELD 2017-2018 STOLE THE SHOW THIS YEAR!



SPECIAL OLYMPICS

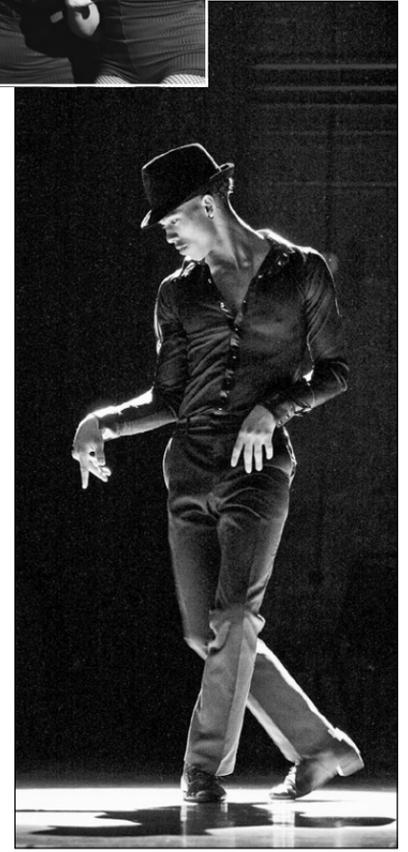
PHOTOS BY MS. CAWTHERN



Passaic High School's very own Special Olympics team competed at the 2018 Summer Games over a three day period, June 8-10. The team traveled to The College of New Jersey with supportive chaperones, and their head coach, Ms. Ackerson Baez. They got a proper send off at the high school from staff and students, including the school's marching band. After participating in the torch run (with some help from PHS's track team), the Special Olympics team competed in various events, including bocce.

'CHICAGO, THE MUSICAL'

PHOTOS BY MR. PEÑA



PHS Senior Survey

Which teacher made the BIGGEST impact on you? Why?

Continued from Page 2

was Mr. Bonilla because he's an excellent teacher and his teaching is the best. He is always helping every student to do the best and be someone successful. I'm very thankful for all the things he taught me."— Estephany Polanco

"Mr. Harmon, because he made me appreciate movies more than ever."— Jason Medina

"Ms. Carter has made one of the biggest impacts on me these last three years I've been here. When I first met Ms. Carter she was shading my Radio Production skills, and when she first started we weren't on the best of terms. As the year went on, she became a role model for me. She always taught me to do my best and never let anyone tell me I can't do anything."— Ashley Leslie

"Mario Pena because he made me challenge myself and have confident in myself when it comes to art."— Adrianna Martinez

"Mr. Iturrino had way more than just an impact on me. He is someone so selfless and caring, very genuine. He helped me in every aspect I was lacking."— Kiara Lopez

"Ms. Zeidan because she is just very real and straight to the point but she is also understanding and open minded."— Pamela Cordero

"The teacher that made the biggest impact on me was Ms. Bang. She was my Algebra II teacher, and going into that class, I had a bad experience with my geometry teacher so I was hoping that Ms. Bang would be a better teacher. Her enthusiasm and energy was contagious and my attitude towards math had changed. I loved her class and eventually thought about majoring in mathematics. Junior year I also needed help with improving my SAT scores for math, and she helped a lot! Over the course of a month I had improved my SAT math score by nearly 100 points."— Mark Rodriguez

"Mr. Terranova made the biggest impact on me because he really got me to grow mentally with the smallest things one won't probably know, to be ready for the real world."— Christian Tejeda

"Mr. Nyabeta, because he taught me that everything you do in life has a purpose."— Massiel Tavarez

"Mr. Schmidt, because his artistic views helped me find my way through high school and art."— Di'amonique Dotson

"Ms. Bang made the biggest impact on me because she has supported me with personal problems as well as academic situations."— Kaori Takase

"Mr. Galan really changed my life and made a big impact on me. He made me grow as a person, worked with me to get out of my comfort zone and he is just the best friend you could ever have."— Niurka Pelaez

"Mr. Caufield because he always kept it real and listened to whatever you had to say."— Julie Almonte

"Mr. Martinez, he helped me with my college search and helped me find scholarships."— Nayeli Gutierrez

"The teacher that made the biggest impact was Mr. Martinez (Sergio Martinez). He helped me throughout my whole college application process and is still helping me prepare for college next year. He is a great teacher to go to if a student ever wanted advice."— Ashley Quirino

"Mr. Barbara, because he showed up everyday with a smile, loving what he does."— Christian Michael Torres

"She isn't really a teacher but Ms. Merced definitely made an impact on me because she was always there for me when I needed her and she's always there when I need some advice."— Gibelly Cruceta

"The teacher who made the biggest impact on me this year would be Thomas Galan, as he continuously supports me as well as other Teen PEP members. During Teen PEP or even on a regular basis, he'll give us advice on life, and how we should strive every single day to become a better version of ourselves."— Ariday Benitez

"Mr. Lockwood, because he was the one who inspired me to major in Chemistry and having Ms. Kush

just further extended my love and passion for Chemistry."— Darijah Caesar-Wright

"Mr. Nyabeta has made a great impact on me because he encouraged me to apply to colleges and helped me throughout my school year. He's an amazing teacher and I respect him for everything he has done for me."— Evelyn Guerra

"Mr. Martinez (Sergio) was the greatest teacher I ever had. He would stay until 6 p.m. helping me in pre-calculus for a couple of weeks. I ended up failing the class, but I learned so much more than just pre-calculus. I learned about school, I learned about myself, I learned about my surroundings, I learned about my future, and I learned about life. I'm very thankful to come across him, because I've never had an adult that is not my family seem to care so much about me. He is someone I will never forget, and those long after school afternoons with him, are memories I will never forget. Thank you Mr. Martinez!"— Omar Lopez

"Mr. Rusca made the biggest impact on my life because I've known him for many years and he helped me become a responsible young adult when I was in marching band."— Erwin Guerrero

"I have three: Mr. Caufield, Mr. Nyabeta, and Mr. S. Martinez. All of them individually have definitely shaped me to be the person that I am today and I seize to surprise myself everyday on how appreciative and grateful I am for all of them. Mr. Caufield has basically been my second father since freshman year while Mr. Nyabeta has not only been my advisor but my mentor. As for Mr. S. Martinez, he has been able to encourage me and push me to go forward when I couldn't find anything left within myself to fight for."— Johana Lastor

"Mr. Caufield made the greatest impact on me since freshman year. Mr. Caufield would always give my class and I multiple chances to improve our grades. He inspired many students to pursue their dreams

and achieve their ultimate goal. He would always make sure that his students were never down. When he saw a student's head down he would tell them to raise their head and be confident. He showed that he truly cares about his students. Whenever there is a problem, I run to Mr. Caufield for help. When I'm upset, Mr. Caufield somehow knows how to calm me down. For Mr. Caufield I am very grateful because he made me realize the beauty in life and when I fail, he motivates me to get up and try again."— Kitana Desiree Vidal

"Ms. Bolton because when I was at a point of giving up, she helped me through it."— Michelle Baez

"Ms. Bolton made the biggest impact on me because she always has words of wisdom, that makes you think about things that you can change or do better in. She makes you see that if you try, you can get things done."— Danaysha Nofs

"I became a better student in math because of all the tutoring that I did with Ms. Gonzalo. Also having Ms. Shelly Williams was a great honor because she helped me a lot, and I became a better student with my English."— Julio Rafael

"Ms. Williams made the biggest impact on me because she helped me so much throughout my sophomore year. She helped me to become a better person and helped me a lot in class. I really appreciate that."— Yetty Marte

"The teacher that made the biggest impact on me was Mrs. Gonzalo because she never gave up on me with my struggles on math. She would stay with me after school everyday and did not leave me alone. That's why she is very special to me."— Fernanda Felipe



A Shout Out to all Our Sports Teams!



Boys Basketball



Wrestling



Softball



Football



Football



Cheerleaders



Bowling

Our PHS sports teams have represented our school and our city well this year. Good job to all of our student athletes, for your dedication, teamwork and pride.

Go Passaic!



Swim Team



Baseball



Boys Soccer



Girls Soccer



Girls Tennis



Boys Volleyball



Girls Volleyball



Girls Basketball



Golf