



## Pathway Fair Provides Students with Career Plans

By Arnold Flores

You have probably heard about the Pathways from the morning announcements and maybe even from your guidance counselor but what are they and what can they do for you? The idea is that this program can give students to opportunity to take classes that will lead them to a bright career future. Instead of just taking the standard classes in English, science, history and math, and maybe the occasional elective, this program will give PHS students a chance to concentrate on a path that truly interests them.

PHS just sponsored a Pathway Career Fair for students of this school and those that are coming here soon. Students from AVID classes as well as freshmen and sophomores were able to tour the various stations to see what they might want to be “when they

grow up.”

A popular station is the graphic design pathway which gives students with artistic and technical ability the skills to be able to create in the modern world. Everything we see is created by a graphic designer. The education pathway was present and students who might want to become a teacher, either here at PHS or wherever, could learn about childhood development and basic education. The ROTC was there as a big part of the PHS experience.

The finance pathway was also there to show how many jobs there are in the financial world. Of course, money helps make the world go around. There are just so many jobs that can deal with financial markets. If you have an interest in providing the financial support that will help others or

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HILLTOP STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/SIMON QUISPE

The Finance Pathway provides lots of career options. There are many jobs that deal with finance.

## DECA Taking The Bull By The Horns!

By Abigail Huitzil

In business a bull market means that there are good times and growing opportunities. This statement represents the DECA club at PHS perfectly. DECA PHS advanced to the next level of competition, NJ DECA's State Leadership Conference, after completing DECA Regional Competitive Events. The conference was held Monday, February 28, 2022 through Wednesday, March 2, 2022 at Harrah's Waterfront Conference Center in Atlantic City, NJ.

DECA is an organization that prepares students to become the next leaders of tomorrow in the fields of finance, marketing, management, and hospitality. It is a great way to learn about business and finance and also a great way to have fun and build relationships with other great students here and from other schools.

Eighteen PHS DECA Diamonds poured their blood, sweat, and tears into twenty page reports and a tri-fold display board, along with presentations, called role-plays. Be aware that the diamond is the most significant symbol of the organization. Each DECA Diamond has been preparing for this challenge since the beginning of November.

For some particular categories, excluding business plans, students completed the DECA Regional Competitive Test in order to qualify for the state competition. Testing was conducted at the beginning of December in the PHS Conference Room. DECA members who competed were: Mohammed



PHOTO BY MRS. FULLER

DECA members forming the DECA Diamond hand sign, signifying their bright future in the world of business.

Bin Mostofa, Anuj Gandhi, Stephany Gonzalez, Ana Guerra, Naydelin Huelitl, Abigail Huitzil, Axel Lagunas, Catherine Librado, America Luna, Melanie Naulaguari, Jacqueline Pacheco, Ronald Pena Bello, Jeremy Polanco, Elvis Ramos Flores, Ashley Rivera, Leslie Suarez, Jaden Tejada, and Estephany Tellez.

Mrs. Aristy's Entrepreneurship and Marketing/Management classes were devoted to the creation of these business plans. Students were exposed to concepts such as market research, customer segments, and brand identity. Most importantly, identifying the problems that these businesses were ready to solve. Each business plan was completed by two or three students.

Nearing the date for state competition, PHS DECA Diamonds worked extra hours in what they called “beast mode”. Besides working in class they worked after-school to continue their masterpiece. These students demonstrated the work ethic that will make them successful in the future, working consistently through the beginning of the competition, early on a Saturday, putting finishing touches on their creation.

Senior Ronald Pena Bello expressed, “Our business is called Kixs Universal. It is a business where there are a lot of shoes, from different types of sneakers, clothes, and so much more. It also gives you a 360 full-ride where the restoration and cleaning of shoes from different materials is possible. Not to

mention, the customization of shoes. My experience working with my group was amazing since we all shared a love for sneakers.”

Another senior, Ana Guerra, stated, “Our business is called LUX by A&C. It is a luxurious clothing brand that focuses on the confidence and self-love that both men and women can have. We even had the opportunity to introduce our virtual fitting rooms. My experience working with my partner was amazing. We were able to communicate and create a bond, which led to ideas throughout the development of our project.”

Naydelin Huelitl, senior, said, “Our business is called Flare Glare. We specialize in flashing shoe charms for crocs and other accessories. I would

describe my experience with my partner as both challenging and memorable. During the creation process, we both bumped heads at times because we had many different ideas and didn't know which one to go with. But once we were done presenting our business plan to the judges, we spent some time together and reflected on how it went so that we can improve.”

This sentiment is the reason for the DECA program. Students learning to work together in a professional manner to learn how to succeed and achieve in the business world.

DECA Diamond students worked from worked from their time in school through the night of the competition on their projects, but also on their ability to do the role-play presentations. It is nerve-wracking to get up in front of them and pitch an idea and a business model. However, the PHS DECA students were able to do this and do it well.

Estephany Tellez a senior said, “Our business is called Mex Truck. It is a food truck located in Passaic, NJ that sells authentic Mexican antojitos for a reasonable price. Working with Stephany and Jaden was very interesting. We equally collaborated on our business plan and had fun while doing so. At first we felt out of place at the state competition because everyone else was so different from the students you normally see at our high school. It made us realize that there is more to this world than just being a local citizen in Passaic.”

Each group had a unique business plan from retail to clothing

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# Radio & Television Production Pathway: Getting your brand out there

By Mylene Laluz

We have all seen television programs and we have all heard the radio. However, most do not know just how much goes into a simple program. There are so many jobs and positions that all require people who have the skills, training and drive to do a good job everyday. PHS students are learning to bring it, by taking Radio and Television production classes in that pathway.

Students who have any interest in television or any broadcasting desire should seriously consider taking this pathway. These electives give students the opportunity to a careers while they are still here in high

school. Even if a different career is chosen the experience, and work done in these classes will help students as they think about what they want to do. Besides being educational, they are really fun.

Learning about camera equipment, staging, framing, lighting, and all the other aspects of television production, is exciting and challenging. For those students whom are interested in broadcasting, these classes are a great opportunity and they are very interesting. This is also a great opportunity because not everyone has the chance to be put into one of these classes or the one they always choose but if you do pick this class or get it you will have

fun and be interested in it.

Some of the skills that will be learned in these classes are photography, scriptwriting, interviewing, editing, lighting, as well as being in front of and behind the camera. There is a lot to do and a lot to learn. Honestly, the learning from these classes has helped another classes too. Being able to see a project from beginning to end and being organized has helped these students do well in their other classes.

Mr. Wolverton, the teacher of radio and television production, works extra hard to ensure that his students enjoy his class, while they are learning. He teaches students to write a script, film a video and then go

through the editing process. In many ways it is like writing a paper for English, but here we get the chance to film it too. Mr. Wolverton said, "This class gives students the opportunity to earn college credit, because this is a DE class, if they pass with a 75 or higher."

Not only can this class help with classes and skills in high school but it can also builds skills that will be helpful after graduation. Mr. Wolverton said, "this class teaches some real life skills, like how to carry on a professional interview and communicate in a professional manner." Students are learning how to respectfully ask someone to repeat something, maintain eye contact and generally

be professional.

"It's always been my dream to have a radio and television school," said Mr. Wolverton. This shows just how dedicated and enthusiastic he is about teaching in this pathway.

Mr. Harmon, who is another Television Broadcasting teacher, teaches Film and Television Production. This class is designed to appeal to a wide variety of students. Students will work with cameras, lighting, sound and editing equipment. Also, students who like to speak and perform and write. Mr. Harmon said, "Any student that chooses to take these courses should be creative, have the ability to think outside

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# Helping Students Through High School with Mrs. Romero

By Emyerly Reyes

School life can be hard, it can be overwhelming, tiring, but also rewarding. Managing your time or keeping your personal life and work life and responsibilities aside from your school life is tough. We are at that age where we want to be in control of our lives or at least try to.

Many times insecurities and responsibilities will arise and focusing might become harder. We humans often tend to look for approval even if that includes changing ourselves.

Mrs. Romero is an assistant principal here at PHS, and all the students know that she is a great place to go for help. For that reason, I interviewed her about her own high school experience. She said that her own experience in Paterson helped her to be more understanding of the students here.

Mrs. Romero said, "I used to walk from school to my job and I lived in Paterson, so it was like a mile and a half up and down

hill, to get to work. So I started freshman year and I would have to be at work at 4, and at school we'd get out at 2:50. Some days it would be a huge rush and I would have to ask people for favors for rides. Yeah, sometimes it was late hours, and as I got older it went from working in a pharmacy to working in the mall.

"When I worked at Willowbrook, it meant two buses to come home," she continued. "Sometimes I'd get home around midnight to do work, and it was exhausting. It was hard. I didn't go to pep rallies. I didn't go to the extra stuff in my senior year because I worked. So I missed on some of the fun cool high school stuff."

She admitted that time management was a challenge for her just like it is for many of us. That is just part of the high school experience.

Giving advice to the students of PHS, Mrs. Romero said that time management, as well as dealing with personal insecurities is a problem for high school

students everywhere, not just at PHS. Just like time management, insecurities make a part of teenage troubles too. Mrs. Romero relayed her thoughts about some of the troubles that high school students find themselves in, that throughout history students feel like they have to "fit in" and from time to time our insecurities lead us to tell white lies, to pretend to live as something that we are not, and because we are afraid of what others might think, of what they might say.

Our own insecurities or "weak links" lead us to feel uncomfortable in our own skin, and sometimes we create these insecurities. We become caught up in the thought that someone might be watching, that they might be staring, but in reality we forget that they aren't staring or that maybe they are but not for the reason we might think.

Mrs. Romero talked about her insecurities and how much high school changed her. Like anyone else she had to deal with insecurities. Growing up Mrs.

Romero was a shy student full of insecurities who was giving her best trying to get through high school. In other words she was and probably still is just like us.

"In grammar school I fit in more, I didn't feel awkward," is what she said when she was asked to remember her elementary years. Mrs. Romero also stated that the years before high school are those years where everyone gets along and no one's really worried about appearance or trying that hard to fit in.

She concluded with advice for all PHS students, "Focus on you, focus on developing you, the you that's on paper, the inner you...I feel like we are a society that puts too much on what people think."

When asked for advice, she said that she honestly doesn't remember how she got through high school, because of how pressuring, how hard, and how emotional those years were to her, but what she does remember is persisting. Mrs. Romero persisted even when things weren't looking so bright for her in her personal

life, she kept going even when her insecurities were eating at her.

There was a time where she too, just like any other high school student, put too much weight on other people's opinion and aimed for approval. Today maybe a couple of insecurities might arise but even though she does like receiving the approval of others she wants students to know that they shouldn't worry about what others think.

Even today as an assistant principal she still thinks about what others say. She said, "I think it's human nature to want to fit in, I think it's human nature to look for and want to receive acceptance, whether it's in our home or in school."

So Mrs. Romero knows how hard it is to manage your time, to keep your personal life aside in high school. She knows just how hard it can get when our insecurities get the best of us and how we tend to look for approval that we don't really need. In the end it has helped her relate to the students.

## THE HILLTOP STAR

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

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The staff of the *Hilltop Star* would like to recognize and report on all the great happenings at PHS. Please make use of the scoop box in the main office or contact any staff member or Mr. Zeiler directly. Let's get the word out!

If anyone would like to join the staff of the *Hilltop Star*, please see Mr. Zeiler (S310). We are always looking for writers, photographers and even editors for the student newspaper. We need your talent!

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Layout and Printing by  
Media Trends LLC  
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# Teen Pep Prepares to Help Classmates

By Paola Navarro

PHS has a very active Teen PEP program. While many may not have heard of it, the program is here to help students gain the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors that will help them foster better and healthier decision-making. It does this through the use of students to help their classmates. This is known as peer-to-peer counseling. The idea behind it is that a culture of positive peer pressure will help counter the negative pressures that many students are facing.

Of course there are advisors who are passionate about helping their students, and they help train the teens to help create an environment where students build respect for each other. These students volunteer to be in the Teen PEP club so that they can be advocates for their peers, to make better decisions about their own health, like how to

avoid STI's, HIV and unintended pregnancy.

Volunteers usually start in the Teen PEP program as a freshman. However, it is only juniors and seniors who are trained to be leaders in sexuality issues. There are many workshops and other informative classes to train the peer counselors. There is also a great deal of fun role playing activities to help plan out how these interactions should take place, so that counselors can be better prepared for any situation.

As a Teen PEP counselor, it is sometimes difficult to teach about sex, STI's and many other serious life issues. Skits are used to help younger generations and older people learn how to be healthy and have conversation about things without being uncomfortable and embarrassed. Teen PEP is a great program for students to learn how to get through high school safely, but as a counselor it has

helped make me a better person, adding to my own understanding of situations and especially how to help and care for others.

Teen PEP just went on a student retreat for three days. The members took the opportunity not only to practice our role playing skits, but also to get a chance to know each other better and become more comfortable talking about delicate issues, and trust each other. We learned about and worked on doing workouts about trust, leading style, communication, and getting closer together. By the end of the three days we felt like family.

Not only was it so educational, but the food was spectacular, and it was a great chance to get out of the school for a day. The whole experience is one of the best memories that I will carry with for the rest of my life. If you want to learn about how to help others with some important issues, join Teen PEP!

**Congratulations to all PHS Graduates!**  
**Graduation June 24, 2022**

# Graphic Design Pathway Teaches Students to Create Digital Art

By Edwin Bello

One of the most popular pathways at PHS is the Graphic Design Pathway. There are a few classes already set up for students and there are more on the way. First, there are introductory courses to introduce students to graphic arts, what it is and what it is used for. Also covered is the the mechanics of graphic design, creating projects and using the technology becoming familiar with the programs that allow students to create graphics like pros. The last course is dual enrollment, which means that as you are getting your high school credit and having fun learning a lot, you also get (as long as you do your work and keep your grades up) college credits.

The dual enrollment course offers college credits up to \$20,000 to students that will continue their education at William Paterson. It is also 2 periods long because of the projects they work on. This course helps the PHS community because students in this course create designs and logos for use around the district. For example, the dual enrollment course is currently in the process of creating the logo for school #1. Taking Graphic Design 1 and 2 will show you how to create digital art on the basic applications and websites such as Google Drawings

Image A, above is Google Drawings which is what you will mostly use for graphic design courses 1 and 2. Image B is an example of what work you will be doing. This is the basics which is learning about typefaces and using this to create the face of an animal. The one I did was a bear and as you can see it was created with letters and symbols.

Each class leads the student through more detailed and complex projects. The more students learn about graphic design



Image A

GRAPHICS BY EDWIN BELLO

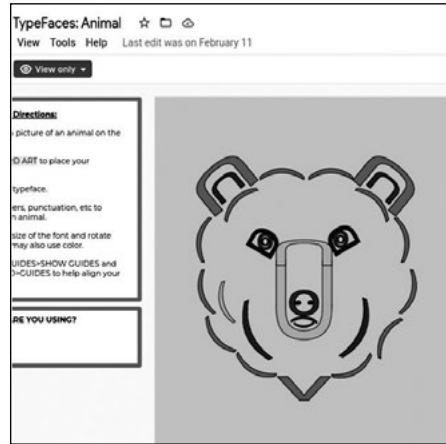


Image B

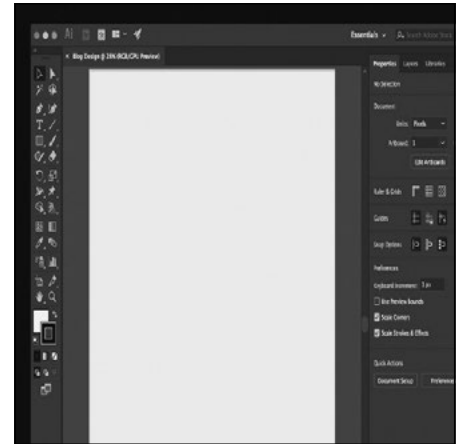


Image C

the more they can do. Using programs like Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Premiere, InDesign, and many others. In the dual enrollment course and Graphic Design 2 you will mostly use Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop. These are the same tools that professional graphic artists use, so there is a direct line between the classes here at PHS and the future careers of students.

Image C is from Adobe Illustrator and as you can see this has way more tools and variety for creating what you wish. There's tools for shapes, drawing, color changing, text, and much more. Anything that comes to your mind you can create in Illustrator. However, it is just a tool to create graphics, it is the creativity of the artist that creates the art.

Both of these projects of mine (Image D and Image E) were created in Adobe Illustrator and in the images you can see the variety this application gives. Compared to what was done on Google Drawings, Adobe Illustrator really gives you more options and tools to use to create

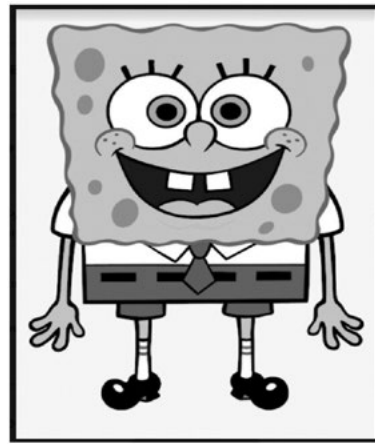


Image D



Image E

better projects. These applications will be used the more advanced you are in the course which is like mid-year of graphic design 2.

If you are interested in art, or business, advertising or anything visual, then per-

haps you should give the Graphic Arts Pathway a look. It is not only directly helpful to a future career, but fun while you are learning here. It is a wonderful opportunity, only available to PHS students, so take advantage!

# Students Recognized for Making Honor Roll

By Axel Lagunas

We've all heard of a friend who makes the honor roll at the end of the marking period. However very little celebration and credit is given to them for this achievement. While it may go unnoticed many times, this marking period students who achieved honor roll status were recognized for their hard work.

As we end the third marking period and head on to the last marking period of this school year we can start reflecting on our academic performance and notice our strengths and flaws. The school year has flown by for many of us, and it is important to keep on working hard right to the end of the marking period and to the end of the year. This is why it is important to celebrate those who are able to go above and beyond every marking period and achieve A's

and B's.

As PHS strives to become one of the best schools in New Jersey they have begun to take extra steps to incentivize student success. School administration and teachers want to recognize the achievements of those students who have worked extra hard to get a solid GPA. Students who go the extra mile to make sure they get all their work done are being recognized now for their contribution to the school environment.

Creating a positive culture for students is the first step into creating a more responsible and academically successful school. PHS just recognized those students who achieved honor role for the third marking period. Many articles state that recognizing student achievement makes the school a better and more welcoming place. To that, many students

wish to make sure that they are recognized for some of the other achievements that help to make PHS special. Whether it is sports, or music and the arts, or clubs, students all want to feel like they are a part of something special and helping to make PHS great. Mr. Zeiler, advisor of the Hilltop Star said, "The student newspaper is here to spread the word of all the great things that are going on here at PHS. Make sure you place a scoop card in the office box to get a reporter to write about your club, event, or any other story that should be in the paper."

The recognition that students receive from the staff and administration is in addition to being seen by the student population and helps to make the school environment more appealing and fulfilling. Other students will see this and dig deeper to try harder and hopefully many more will find the success that is there for all of us.

To end off, Passaic High School has greatly improved on rewarding and incentivizing students to perform well but could definitely change some things within the system to make these rewards and incentives better for the students. Either a small change such as a bulletin board, principal's list on the school newspaper or as big as a ceremony for athletes and all extracurricular activities to be held would greatly improve and create a healthy culture among staff and students at



HILLTOP STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/SIMON QUISPE

Assistant Principal Mr. Acevedo addressing the honorees and their families.



HILLTOP STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/SIMON QUISPE

Orchestra members help to make the event more special with musical accompaniment.



HILLTOP STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/SIMON QUISPE

Parents watching and cheering on their honor roll students.

PHS. As we get back to normal after the pandemic it is great to see that the faculty, staff and administration is working extra hard to make students feel welcome and to help the school be a welcoming place for all students. So thank your teachers, vice principals, and all the staff

who work in the background who try and create a better high school experience for you and your peers. Now it is up to us students to work hard, get the extra help you need to pass and get good grades. We can all do better and then PHS will be the best school in New Jersey.



# PHS holds Pathway Fair

## Choose Your Own Path

By Kaylyn Amigon

PHS is a place where the goal is to prepare students for their future. However, the future of each student may be different. The diversity of motivation for students means that they all have different passions and dreams. Luckily PHS has a pathway program.

At the start of your sophomore year, teachers and administrators will see if you will benefit from the programs offered here. Even as early as freshman year, AVID classes will help student figure out what they want to be when they grow up. Over some time students will research and determine what it is that they want to do.

Then you can start achieving progress towards your intended career. Students are able to start deciding the type of career pathway classes they want and help them decide and prepare for that career. Then students get to follow more classes training them for their future career at the same time as they are completing their high school requirements. It is a great way that Passaic Schools gives students the opportunity to complete high school and also get a jump on their career at the same time.

Some students wonder what would happen if they change their mind during the pathway training. Are they locked into that pathway and forced to take classes that they have found to be wrong for them?

Pathway teachers stress that students are not locked into this program. They can change pathways for their next year. Just talk to your guidance counselor and they will make arrangements for your next schedule for the next school year. So this is a no stress way of seeing what you are interested in and what you are good at before you get out into the world

So what is available? There is an education program where you will take history of modern education and childhood development classes. Graphic design is a popular path-

way, giving students with artistic tendencies a chance to show what they can do. Forensic science is a great pathway for those who want to work like they are watching Law and Order. The problemsolving using science is a challenge and also fun too. The financial pathway is for those students who will be the next business leaders. Sports medicine and automotive are other areas where students can get to work in areas that they are interested in.

Many of the classes offered are what is called, DUAL ENROLLMENT. That means that while you are taking this class in high school, which you would have to do anyway, you are also getting college credit (as long as you meet the requirements). As long as you are enrolled and getting good grades you received college credits from either Passaic County Community College or William Paterson University that can be transferred to wherever you decide to go when you graduate.

For example, if you are in the education pathway, you will take modern education and childhood development. These classes have two semesters in which you switch between Mr. Vallila and Mrs. Aarons. When you pass these classes you will receive credit from WPU. It is like taking these classes there, just without the tuition. It is a GREAT opportunity for PHS students.

Taking the Education Pathway, or any of the others, is not just about getting ahead, there is a lot of to learn about the subject and about yourself. If you are interested in the education of young children this course is interesting because you will find out what they are learning and how people learn from childhood to adulthood.

The history of modern education semester goes through the basics of how education has developed over the years. It goes into depth about how certain things affected the way things were taught. The Enlightenment, racial issues, economic systems and imperi-

alism have all had a role in the way education has evolved in this country. The course certainly shows how many did not have the same access to a good education in the past.

Taking the Education Pathway, these courses are interesting and creates an appreciation for the quality of education and the availability of the education that we have today.

As for the college credits being offered in these dual enrollment classes, that is just a bonus because of the relationship that has been created between PHS and William Paterson University. Even if you decide to go another direction after you graduate, then these credits will transfer to another university.

The Graphic Design Pathway is another very popular path for PHS students. Mr. Ricklefs teaches all the basics of graphic design and the many programs and tools of a graphic designer. This is a practical program too, because tickets for school events as well as shirts and posters are designed by the students themselves in these classes. This is an area where PHS has an edge in technology because students are able to use Apple Mac computers, just like in that industry. Students who take these classes say that they are getting to express themselves creatively as well as work on their technical computer skills as well.

Other comments about this class are that "the teacher is chill that understands and helps out whenever you're having trouble thinking of a design or how to work on a certain program." Another student said, "I enjoy taking that class while being able to learn skills that will help with my future in pursuing a career in graphic design."

One thing is for certain. These pathways are giving PHS students a great opportunity to get a taste of what they might want to pursue in the future, while at the same time getting a jump on college credits and also having some educational fun while they are here in high school.



Education pathway



Technology and Engineering pathway



NJROTC



Graphic Design pathway



Automotive pathway



Sports Science pathway

Photos by Hilltop Staff Photographer, Simon Quispe

## Pathway Fair

Continued from Page 1 just like money, this might be a program that will help you.

During the fair the Television Production pathway was demonstrating the skills learned to make a live television production. Many students commented that they had no idea just how many people it took to create a simple broadcast. It is that kind of misconception that the television production teachers are trying to correct. There are many positions and room for advancement in broadcasting,

and many of these skills are also able to directly translate to the digital world as well. So there is a great need for students to learn the skills that will get them hired and get them ahead.

There are many others as well, and all the pathways were represented at the fair. So, check with your guidance counselor to determine which one is right for you. Look for more coverage and information about specific pathways in our upcoming issue of Hilltop Star.

## Radio & TV

Continued from Page 2 the box, not be afraid to try new things, be detail-oriented and be able to work well with other people". He is very enthusiastic about his job and hopes to be able to have the opportunity to teach those who want to explore the film and production class to have a great experience.

Other types of careers that are supported by this pathway

are any career starting off in an entry-level position in media, but students can also get into government, public relations, and other fields as well. Many companies have their own media departments.

So, take advantage of this great opportunity if you have any interest in media production. Your future career can benefit from having a good time learning today.



# 2022 Free agency and Upcoming Draft Picks

By Eddy Fortuna

This year's free agency has been like no other. From the greatest quarterback to ever step on the field retiring and then coming back in less than a couple days, to my favorite quarterback leaving my favorite team (Seahawks) who has been with us since 2012 and also been one of my favorite players of all time.

That is the first player I will talk about. Former third round draft pick out of Wisconsin University, led the Seahawks to two super bowls and one superbowl win against Hall of Fame quarterback and one of the best to ever do it – Peyton Manning.

This season he was traded to the Broncos, which crushed me because I've been defending him as my quarterback since I first started playing football. He was my favorite player not because he played on my favorite team, but because he is also smaller and shorter compared to the players he played against, just like me every year of football.

Although I finally gained some weight this year, before I was at least 135lbs and skinny but fast. Seeing the success of Peyton Manning gave me hope

that I could succeed too.

Bobby Wagner, the best defender this season has also left. This second round draft pick, averages 105 tackles a season since 2012, and arguably is one of the greatest tacklers ever to step on the field.

The most hectic trade this off-season is with my favorite receiver, Davante Adams. That trade instantly blew my mind, because he went from playing this year and last year with the MVP quarterback Packers legend Aaron Rodgers, to now playing for, sorry Raiders, with trash quarterback David Carr.

It would be terrible if the Raiders don't get better this season and let Davante potential go to waste. He is my favorite receiver because of how quick he is with his routes and how he catches the ball through traffic and makes the most impeccable catches football has ever seen.

The last off-season free agency important trade is Falcons legend Matt Ryan getting traded to the Colts. A former third overall pick of the 2008 draft, Matt Ryan won offensive rookie-of-the-year that year, and in 2016 won MVP and took the Falcons to the Superbowl but lost to Tom Brady and the Patriots after blowing a 28-6 lead



PHOTO BY NFL.COM

Davante Adams was traded to the Las Vegas Raiders in 2022.

which led to a final loss of 28-32.

Matt's talent was wasted, and the Falcons have been one of the worst teams in the league every year after that superbowl loss, and even worse when their best receiver and arguably the best receiver of all time Julio Jones got traded to the Titans. That trade was my mind blow from last year's trades.

Now there are some up and coming hyped-up rookies of this year's draft, like Kyle Hamilton

and Sauce Gardener who are the best defenders and top draft picks this year. The debate with these two defenders are hectic with them playing the same position so the debate is crazy.

You got Sauce Gardener, coming from Cincinnati University and arguably the best cornerback of this draft with a whole lot of hype behind his name.

Kyle Hamilton plays for Notre Dame as a Safety and brought them to the Second

round to the playoffs with his aggressive play style and hawk eye ability with his league leading eight interceptions and thirty-one pass break-ups.

I cannot wait for this season's football games. This season is definitely going to be one for the history books with its crazy trades that just came out of the blue. Keep your eyes on the last year's superbowl winner LA Rams and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers with their QB Tom Brady coming back.



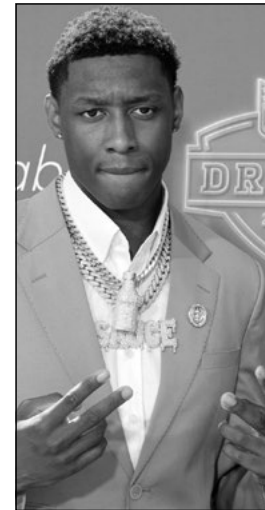
Peyton Manning

GOOGLE



Kyle Hamilton

GOOGLE



Sauce Gardner

GOOGLE



## PHS Student is Published in National Publication

By Darleen Espinosa and Michelle Rodriguez

Daniela Lizbeth Crisanto Lagunas, a Junior, has just made PHS proud by becoming published in a national magazine, known for Spanish language creative writing. Albricias publishes student essays, poetry, and short articles as well as some photography and other artwork. This is the publication of the Sociedad Honoraria Hispanica (Spanish Honor Society). The poem was selected from many entries and Daniela has made us all PHS proud. Her poem highlights the continued need to fight for and recognize diversity and equality in our lives. It is one thing to look for these things in society but another to strive for it in our personal lives. She is part of the best that PHS has to offer, and she has shown that every one of us can succeed and excel. So let's continue on and try our best.

*Libres e iguales*

Te tengo pero no te veo  
Te siento y me alegro  
Sin ti mi cabeza me pregunta  
¿Quién soy?  
¿De qué puedo ser capaz?  
¿Cuándo me detengo?  
Preguntas me invaden  
Y siento que no continúo  
¿Por qué ella no puede?  
¿Por qué él sí puede?  
Soy como él  
Ella es como yo  
Somos uno mismo  
Unidos hasta el final  
¿Pero qué te hace mejor que ella?  
¿Qué te hace peor que él?  
Tengo un techo pero él no  
Ella trabaja día y noche pero no es suficiente  
Libres e iguales somos todos  
Pero muchos son despreciados  
Ya sea por el color de su piel el género las preferencias sexuales  
Y hasta por la religión  
¿Por qué negarnos al hecho  
De que todos somos iguales?  
Todos tenemos un corazón  
Que late cada día  
Con el fin de ser mejor persona

*Free and Equal*

I have you but I can't see you  
I feel you and I'm happy  
Without you my head asks,  
Who am I?  
What am I capable of?  
When do I stop.  
Questions invade me.  
I feel like I can't continue.  
Why can't she  
And why can he?  
I am like him.  
She is like me.  
We are the same  
Together till the end.  
But what makes you better than her?  
What makes you worse than him?  
I have a roof and he doesn't.  
She works day and night but it is not enough.  
We are all free and equal.  
But many are depised.  
May it be the color of skin, or  
Gender preferences, or even religion.  
Why deny the fact that we are all the same.  
We all have a heart, that beats everyday.  
With the purpose to be a better person.

*If you have achieved an honor or award, or know of someone who has, please drop a note in the scoop box in the main office! We want to recognize the greatness of the students and staff at PHS!*



**THE SLAP HEARD ROUND THE WORLD:**

# Two Views on the Will Smith/Chris Rock Slap

By Junior Martinez

By now you have all heard about Will Smith hearing a joke made by Chris Rock on stage at the Oscars, getting on the stage walking over to Chris and slapping him. He later yelled, with some profanity, in defense of his wife who has lost hair due to a disease called Alopecia. After Rock made the joke and very professionally laughed it off with a joke and then just went on. Less than an hour later, Smith won the Oscar for Best Actor, for his role as the father of tennis stars Venus and Serena Williams, in the film King Richard.

The joke itself was a reference to the Demi Moore role in war drama G.I. Jane where she sported a crew cut to be in the military. So, when Rock joked that he could not wait to see Jada's role in the new G.I. Jane movie, not knowing about her health issues, Smith became enraged. After the slap, he was heard on background microphones yelling, "Get my wife's name out your f-ing mouth!" Rock tried to say that it was a G.I. Jane joke and not meant to offend them, but the damage was done.

In his defense Smith did own up

for his actions. He resigned from the Academy of Motion Pictures, but he did accept his award for Best Actor. So that was too little too late. He should not have acted out that way. Even in a high school we are taught that we should work these things out. Maybe he could just get a ten-day-suspension for fighting. Or maybe just a few Saturday detentions, if there were extra circumstances.

While many I have talked to say that Smith was right to defend his wife, many also say that people can't just go around slapping other people. Also, a comedian making a joke at an awards show is not something that is out of the ordinary. Sitting in the front of a comedy show people should expect to be topic of a joke. Also, Rock didn't know about the disease. It just goes to show that you don't know what others are going through so you should watch what you say. Everyone is going through something.

In the end, this is just not that important. It is sad for all of those involved, and it should not have happened. One thing is for sure, next year more people will be watching the Oscars.

By Sebastian Hernandez

Perhaps this is a slightly different take on this event that everyone is talking about, but I think the whole thing was just not that important. We see violence but nothing happens. So in this case the only thing that is different is that it was on television and it was a celebrity. So, the moral of the story is that you should not slap people on national television.

There was never any clarification about whether it was a joke or not, whether Rock was trying to insult Smith and his wife, or what the end result of this will be. It is just a quick slap and then Smith took home his award anyway. We all have emotions but we are expected to control our emotions and actions. If we can't though, better to do talk to the person who did the insulting in private. Slapping someone in front of the entire world is just dumb.

Lastly, Smith was laughing at that joke. Then all of a sudden he got mad? I think that he thought it was funny, it was done in good taste, and it was not an angry joke, but then he saw Jada getting mad and knew that he better defend her or it



WIKIPEDIA

Will Smith slapping Chris Rock at the Oscars.

was going to be a long night. Then he got mad and made a show out of his anger.

Chris Rock made a joke about the slap and then moved on, but then he also said he does not want to press charges and so that shows that he just took it like a man. Smith should have not accepted the award and used that time to apologize to the guy he just assaulted in front of the whole world.

In the end Smith really is a good actor. He went from laughing at a silly joke, to getting angry, to slapping the host of an awards show in front of the whole world and then accepting his award for Best Actor. I guess he was the best actor indeed.



**RECOMMENDED SERIES ON NETFLIX**

## 'All-American' focuses on people, not sports

By Mylene Laluz

If you are scrolling through Netflix looking for something new and interesting to watch, consider the show that just came out this past fall and has been gathering steam and popularity ever since, All-American. Set in New York City, the show centers around sports, with characters who deal with relationships and black culture. The life lessons they learn are very relatable to high-school-aged students and everyone else as well.

The best part of this series is seeing how the characters relate to each other, dealing with problems and issues, whether they love or hate each other, and overcome obstacles. These lessons can be directly related to our own lives here at PHS. No matter the feelings and how they have difficulty expressing it towards each other they have a way to overcome it.

Key actors are Spencer James, Olivia Baker and Jordan Baker. The power of watching this series comes from these actors going out of their way to relate to the audience. The story centers on relationships and the emotional connections between characters are strongly felt because of the

acting.

When so many shows seem to rely on special effects to entertain the audience, seeing a show that is smaller that relies on the story, character relationships and the acting is a refreshing and I hope this show will be back for more seasons.

The other part of this show that hooks the audience is the gritty way that shows believable real-life situations. The things that these teenagers go through on the show are the same kinds of things that teenagers go through in schools today. So the show can be a kind of therapy, when we see that others are going through the same issue, then they can believe that they are not alone.

So as someone who does not like or follow football in any way, this show certainly hooked me. Thinking that it would be boring I watched the first episode and realized that this was about people and not sports. The personalities are great, the story is intriguing and the whole show is very interesting.

So, if you like football or not, this is a great show to give a shot on Netflix. There is just so much more to these kids' stories that you will get hooked before you know it.

## DECA

Continued from Page 1

and food services. The sky was the limit and there was a great deal of creative energy put into each of these presentations.

All the hard work paid off because PHS placed as a state-wide winner. Naydelin Huelitl and Ashley Rivera both achieved fifth place in New Jersey DECA for the Independent Business Plan category and attended the International Career Development Conference from April 23-26, 2022 in Atlanta, Georgia.

The students were not the only award winners coming from Passaic. Mrs. Fuller was awarded the NJ DECA Hall of Fame award in recognition of her strong contributions to New Jersey DECA.

Passaic High School DECA will forever cherish competing at the state level as a wonderful learning experience!

Stephany Gonzalez said, "I felt like a real business professional and was able to meet other business professionals. I learned how to engage with others and the process of creating a business from the ground up."

Melanie Naulaguari stated, "Initially I was very nervous and was not looking forward to presenting. But after preparing for so long, I felt ready to display our business idea to others. One thing I learned is that it is best to disguise nerves with confidence. I noticed that if I showed how nervous I really was, I would not be able to present at my fullest potential."

So, what are you waiting for? Join Passaic High School DECA to learn how to become the next successful entrepreneur! Again, this would not have been possible without our two DECA advisors: Mrs. Aristy and Mrs. Fuller. A big thank you to both of them and congratulations to Naydel Huelitl and Ashley Rivera for showing some of the great things going on at PHS.



PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL HUITZIL

Top: Left to right- Mrs. Aristy, Naydelin Huelitl, Ashley Rivera and Mrs. Fuller. Middle: Students enjoyed their nice hotel rooms in Atlantic City. Bottom: DECA advisors posing in front of Starbucks, the fuel for business.



# Two-Man Armed Exhibition and New Cadet Squad Win 2nd Place at 2022 PHS Drill Meet

By Nitay Rodriguez

A rough year didn't stop the PHS Drill Team cadets from giving it their all.

A week after the 2022 Ranocas HS Drill Meet, the newly-formed Two-man Armed Exhibition team, with less than a month of practice, managed to place 2nd place in that category. The New Cadet Squad, having not placed previously for this 2021-2022 Drill season also brought home a trophy.

"I'm very proud and I think it was deserved," Chief Quito said "I feel we're on the right path as we competed against very challenging schools in those categories.

PHS outperformed 8 other JROTC schools. This year's strong placements followed the unit scoring outstanding in every category for the virtual Annual Military Inspection. Even with the lack of competitions due to cancellation from COVID-19, the PHS cadets didn't lose hope and showed resilience.

"It was a gallant performance due to the fact that this was the second meet we competed in for this drill year," said Senior Chief McMaster "Despite all of the difficulties we faced earlier in the year, our cadets managed to pull through."

Despite this being Cadet Christopher Meraz and Cadet Jose Vasquez' first time competing in the Two-Man Armed Exh. category, they definitely managed to make us all proud. Meraz said the help from former cadets definitely helped them get far. Above all, their willpower and determination paved the way to success.

Cadet Petty Officer Laura Urtarte also managed to bring back an individual award. Despite all odds, she managed to beat over 200 cadets, getting 1st place in Knockout.

"We prepared for this very moment and we were excited to see our work pay off," said Chief Quito "We will continue to improve in hopes of placing in more competitions next year."



PHOTOS BY HILLTOP STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/SIMON QUISPE

Top: PHS NJROTC Drill Team under review.  
Bottom: Senior Axel Lagunas Leading his team to victory.

# PHS Baseball Season is Here!

By Arnold Flores

With Winter and Fall high school sports over it is that time of the year again, hearing cleats clacking, gloves popping, and metal bats pinging, Indian baseball season! A new season of PHS Baseball begins with new players and a new head coach promising to make this year a memorable one.

After many years of being assistant coach, Coach Mathew Patterson was named the Passaic Indians Varsity Baseball Head Coach.

With the season around the corner, Passaic made their way to Orlando, Florida for some serious spring training after having missed two years due to Covid. In their time in Florida they played four games against different high school teams from other states all while enjoying the amazing Florida weather at the Universal Cabana Bay Beach Resort.

They used this time to develop a better relationship as teammates and to have better chemistry on the field. In the short time of being given his position, coach Patterson has grown a close bond with his players and he states "it was the single best trip I have taken in 12 years... I am very thankful to have gone on that trip and gotten to know the players."

He commented on one player in particular, on the line in the Harry Potter line, in the Islands of Adventure, who joked about the amount of 'fun' I was having. Growing this kind of relationship is crucial to have a team that works well together and pushes each other



PHOTOS BY ARNOLD FLORES

Above: Varsity Baseball team warming up for their first spring training game in Orlando, Florida.  
Below: PHS baseball team enjoying their time at Universal Studios.

to get better together, not just individually.

After just the first game of the season, this season seems like a promising one, although Passaic lost 10-5 they played their hearts out against the Passaic Valley Hornets playing 11 innings and being tied all the way till the 11th.

When asked what aspects they have to work on as a team, Varsity Baseball player Kenny De La Luz states, "Coach Pat says that we have to work on not giving up once we see that we are down by 2-4 runs, play until the last out".

Clearly Coach Patterson's words had a huge impact on the team's mindset during their

opening day game. As a varsity baseball player myself, I noticed coach Patterson picking up on our weaknesses as a team during the game and on the very next day we got back to work practicing on our flaws.

Patterson added, "I truly believe, after seeing the maturity level of our varsity team, the players can not only reach but exceed my expectations from the beginning of the year".

The season is only beginning but the Passaic Varsity Baseball team will only continue improving as the season progresses and with the amount of talent on the team, in the coaching staff, they will bring a championship to Passaic!

