

Principal's Newsletter

May 30, 2014

"Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood."

Helen Keller

All signs point to the 2013-14 school year coming to a close. Our seniors ended their classes on May 20th after accumulating over \$98 million in grants and scholarships and will graduate on June 7th. We are very proud of them and all of their accomplishments! The junior class celebrated their Junior Day on May 23rd with Liturgy, refreshments and the traditional Luau. They are now ready to take a significant leadership role in our school as the graduating class of 2015! All students are preparing and reviewing for school and Regents examinations starting on Wednesday, June 11th. Although we are close to the finish line, there is much to be done!

May Highlights:

Congratulations to the following students who were inducted into the "Red and Blue Chapter" of the **English National Honor Society** at the annual luncheon on Friday, May 18.

Juniors:

Elisa Castelli 303, Anthony Colangeli 304, Natalie Correa 304, James Cotumaccio 304, James Dellarocca 305, Leyla Demolina 305, Katerina Despotoulis 305, Ariana Gopal 307, Dana Medina 311, Emily Paredes 313

Seniors:

Jakov Kendes 409, Karina Miranda 412, Kathleen Shields 416, Nicole Tong 417
Nadia Triestanto 417, Julia Vennitti 418

National English Honor Society (NEHS) is the only national organization exclusively for high school students who, in the field of English, merit special note for past and current accomplishments. At St. Francis, the chapter is composed of superior students who have distinguished themselves in the discipline during their time at the Prep. They are nominated to Dr. Marino by the English faculty.

This year, the dedicated students in the **Save Our Planet club**, with the help of the SFP community, raised over \$300 for aid in the Philippines, and for Eye on the Rainforest, a sustainability and rainforest enrichment project in Puerto Rico. One of the ways they did this was through increased awareness and use of the plastic bottle-recycling machine, which is located in the cafeteria. The club also helped to develop a new school-wide recycling plan for next school year, and students participated in park cleanups and important sustainability programs like Terracycle.

As a capstone to the year, last week some of the students in the club planted a small flowering shrub on the west side of the school grounds. This small shrub—a Wisteria tree—will grow to a height of about fifteen feet, and feature vibrant, drooping purple flowers. It is dedicated to the memory of Jiahao Liang.

Mr. DioGuardi, moderator, reports that these students are passionate, and they work incredibly hard. They are to be commended for their continuing commitment to the growth of their community.



Mrs. Brizicky reports on May 24th, four members of the **Speech, Debate, and Student Congress Team** travelled to Chicago to compete in the National Catholic Forensic League Championships.

Sophomores Cassidy Perard, Jillian Spence, Isaiah Godoy, and Jessica Edouard won the right to compete in Chicago by being in the top 5 members of their league in their respective events. After well-reviewed performances, the team was able to take some time to explore the city.

Congratulations to our National Championship competitors!



On June 1st, 4 of our students are receiving the **Sacrament of Confirmation** at Holy Family Parish in Flushing with other high school students from the other Catholic High Schools. A big thank you to Mrs Susan Vivona and Ellen Schuler and Mr Bill Leone for their work in preparing our students. Fr Bill and Bro Leonard attended the ceremony

The Little Portion is Prep's literary arts journal which got its start at our Brooklyn Campus in 1957. It is proud to publish the best poetry, fiction, and non-fiction of our students every May, along with stellar sketches, paintings, and photography from our art students. On May 15th, it held its 15th Annual Poetry Reading and Open Mic in the Prep library, where published students read from their work. The event began with faculty moderator, Mr. Hafker, presenting the Cantic of the Sun Prize to senior, Jakov Kendes, for his significant contribution to this year's issue with his short story, "Mark." A good sized crowd of eager students were on hand to listen intently to their fellow students, and be the first to get the new issue.



Music News:

May was an exceptionally busy month for Prep's Music Department. The first two Fridays saw us presenting our annual Spring Concerts. There were nearly 500 student performers representing 11 ensembles. In addition, we had many special guests, including beginner string students from the programs we have started at P.S. 115, Our Lady of The Snows School, and St. Kevin Catholic Academy. These students performed with all of Prep's string students in a mass orchestra of over 160 students. On our Second Spring Concert, we welcomed the Concert Band from St. Gregory the Great School.

On May 3rd, our Chamber Orchestra performed at the Mass Celebrating Prep's Annual Spring Reunion and Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, where Prep's Director of String Studies and Middle States Co-Internal Coordinator, Robert L. Johnston was installed as an Honorary Alumnus. The evening was capped off by a performance by Prep's Jazz Band at the reunion.

On May 16th, composer Victor Kioulaphadies visited Prep to visit with our History of Music students. This was an opportunity to speak with a living composer, versus just hearing about people like Mozart and Beethoven. The students and Maestro Kioulaphides spent 90 minutes together talking about anything and everything to do with being a composer. This extraordinary opportunity is in line with the Music Department's Middle States goal of exposing students to teaching artists and the leaders in their field.

This was the third time this year Victor visited Prep. In November, he worked with Prep's Chamber Orchestra as they were preparing to present the American premiere of his piece "Idillio Sinfonico." He also attended the performance, where the work was both very well performed and received by a packed house.

And on May 17th, Prep's Chamber Orchestra performed at the Zone 12 New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA), earning its second Gold Medal Rating in as many years. Students William O'Brien, Ching Pang, Sebastian Mendez, Chazz Winston, and Zhu Zhu earned high praise for their individual efforts. After performing at NYSSMA, the Chamber Orchestra rushed back to Prep to perform at our annual Spring Arts Festival on the roof of the school!

Seniors Jacklyn Angielczyk, Kathryn Angielczyk and Javier Serrano have received special recognition from the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA). Jacklyn, concertmistress of Prep's Chamber Orchestra, was selected as a member of the 2013 All-State String Orchestra and travelled to Rochester in December to participate in rehearsals and performances at NYSSMA's Winter Festival. Kathryn (French horn) and Javier (percussion), both active in Prep's Music Department, were selected as alternates.



Now that the school year is winding down, our Jazz Band, Chamber Orchestra, and Choir are preparing for our summer tour of London, the largest tour we've mounted with 104 participants. Thanks to all of our Music Faculty led by Dr. Corbino, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Karaca, Mr. Kobayashi, Mr. Madama, Mr. Silvagni and Mr. Williams.

Faculty Recognition:

At the Bronx-Westchester Spring Update (March 29, 2014), the Al Delfiner Service award for 2014 was presented to Bronx-Westchester Chair Joseph Sciamè. The award is named in honor of former Chair and Board member, Al Delfiner.

In presenting the award, Jean Delfiner cited Joseph's hard work and dedication to Bronx-Westchester STANYS. This is the second year for the award: Vice Chair Dr. Helen Pashley won the inaugural award last year.



Jean Delfiner presents Joseph Sciame with the AI Delfiner Service Award.

Golf:

On May 20th the Boys Golf Team competed in the CHSAA quarterfinals vs. Fordham Prep at the Famed Winged Foot Golf Club in Westchester.

Mr. McCormack reported that we lost but it was an incredible experience playing Winged Foot (host of the US Open in 2006 and in 2020). The team finished the season 10-3 with 2 players (seniors Jacob Virginia ranked #12 in the city and John Grima ranked #24) qualifying for the State Championships at James Baird State Park on May 30.



Girls Outdoor Track

The 4 x 800 meter relay team finished off the season on a high note. In two of the most prestigious meets, the Glenn D Loucks and the Eddy Invitationals, they won medals by placing fifth in both meets. The athletes on the Glenn D Loucks relay were Konstantina Salales, Amy Orellana, Bianca Rey & Christina Prosper. At the Eddy meet, the team was Salales, Orellana, Rey and Kelly Pabon. The relay time of 9:55.65 was the fastest 4 x 800 St. Francis has run in ten years. The team finished up the season by placing fifth in the City Championship. Congratulations to Coach May and Coach Woods!



On May 21st senior **Stephanie Sokolich** signed a letter of intent to play volleyball next year at Adelphi University. Congratulations Stephanie!



Published

Very proud of John Brennan, long time and highly successful SFP Boys & Girls Tennis Coach, published an article in New York Tennis Magazine.

Congratulations to our **Varsity Softball Team** for winning the Brooklyn-Queens Championship!

Congratulations to our **Boys Varsity Volleyball Team** for advancing to the CHSSA finals by defeating Chaminade in four games!

Sal Fischetti '83 Inducted into the Girls CHSAA Hall of Fame

SFP Athletic Director, Sal Fischetti '83 was among 10 others inducted into The Girls Catholic High School Athletic Association (Brooklyn/Queens Diocese) at a ceremony at Russo's on the Bay in Howard Beach on April 30th. The hall recognizes athletes, coaches, administrators and officials who have had a major impact on the girls' high school league.



Pictured above: (l-r) GCHSAA President, Denise Hillig; Sal Fischetti; Patrick McLaughlin, Principal of St. Francis Prep.

Gymnastics

Khayla Martinez has qualified for the USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic Level 10 National Championships in Jackson, Mississippi. She will be representing Region 6, which is the northeast region of the country. Great Job Khayla!

Art Department News

St. Francis Prep's Art Department had a rooftop reception and viewing today of the student paintings that were published in the book: PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS. The paintings designed by various students and will be hung throughout the school. It was distributed today and contained a special dedication to Brother James McVeigh: "Thank you for all of the warm greetings each morning and for your dedication to the Franciscan Mission". Brother James remarked, "What a wonderful blessing and surprise!" He went on to say, "The Art Dept. has done a phenomenal job in promoting our Franciscan Mission by integrating it into their programs...whether it be Creation through their "In Motion" theme at the Annual Arts Festival, or this "Prayer of St. Francis" Project. The artwork was spectacular. I was deeply touched and grateful for the dedication. God bless you all!"



On Wednesday, May 14, 2014, four St. Francis Prep's art department students exhibited their work in the LaSalle Academy's Fine Art Expo. Xiang Kun Kong (Peter) Cor 410, Mary Millus Cor 311, Catherine Lopez Cor 411 and Madeline Brito Cor 402. Mary Millus took second place in the Still-Life category and Peter Kong took third place in the Still-Life category. Mrs. Buccino and the art department students attended the awards ceremony in Manhattan and where all of the students work was on display.



Leaving the confines of an art class studio to go on "paint out excursions", is a rewarding and powerful experience. The practice of painting outside goes back for centuries and has inspired great artists-- and the greatest works of art of all time! That's why SFP Art Department Chairperson, Mrs. Jeanne Buccino's Painting Class traveled to the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens to paint the rolling hills of cherry blossoms, wide-open fields of tulips and the beautiful architectural greenhouses.

Art department colleague, Mr. Marc Salmin, who is an avid and extraordinarily talented landscape

painter, demonstrated his expert acrylic techniques to the 20 student participants. It was an extraordinary experience for the students and park visitors alike.



Seniors

Approximately 50 SFP seniors were in the audience for the The Katie Couric Show on May 21st. They were given the opportunity to do a shout out to the senior class.



Yearbook:

Congratulations Mrs. Verdi and the SanFran yearbook staff for an outstanding job this year.
Editor Danielle Morelli and Editor Ann-Isabel Previl

Staffers:

Arianna Kahn, Lauren Rauchbauer, Romina Burger, Arsie Rombotis, Jessica Romano, Taylor DiNovi, Valentina Garcia, Daniella Lakhani, Sabrina Lall, Alyssa Narine, Kevin Motilall, Mickayla Camilleri, Emily Ramjit, Kelly Garrett, Gwen Bretous, Jessica Kim, Mariela Diaz, Samantha Moreno, Mary-Ellen Diaz, Brianna Brooks, Melissa Joseph, Erin O'Reilly, Gabriela Rico, Berkley Davis, Ashley Wilkinson, Dominique Price, Remy Snow, Melissa Emilcar, Maria Sefcik



Senior Week Games:

During the week of May 12, members of the Senior class participated in the Inaugural Senior Week Games. This friendly competition raised money to benefit the Daniel Fernandez Scholarship Fund which was instituted last year in memory of Daniel Fernandez. Daniel was a member of this graduating class who tragically passed in August of 2012.

From the beginning of the school year, Senior Class Vice President Madeline Brito spent countless hours planning this event. Thanks to her tireless efforts, the games were a tremendous success. Events included softball, ultimate frisbee, volleyball, and soccer. Several faculty members gladly volunteered time to help supervise the events. With the assistance of Mr. Michael Aguilo, Director of Intramurals and Mr. David Ganci, Director of Student Activities, Madeline was able to organize a grade-level event which captures the sportsmanship, citizenship, and good will that St. Francis Prep proudly displays daily.

Service:

Saint Francis Preparatory School would like to congratulate senior Kristina Liang who was recently recognized by New York Hospital Queens as Volunteer of the Year. Kristina began her service at New York Hospital Queens as a part of the requirements for her Christian Service course last year, and has been a volunteer there ever since. Her service has been invaluable and she is being recognized for her outstanding contributions to the patients and the larger hospital community. Kristina recently attended a reception at the Waldorf Astoria, hosted by The United Hospital Fund, to be recognized for her outstanding achievement. In attendance were Mr. Sempowich and representatives from all of the NYC Hospitals, The United Hospital Fund, and the local and national news.



The **Seraph** entered The American Scholastic Press Association's annual contest and review. We won an award for Best Newspaper and Amanda Puitiza won an award for Best Investigative Reporting for her article, "Brother Leonard Travels to our Sister School in Kenya". To quote our reviewer, "Congratulations go to all who helped to make this a wonderful example of how the students have reached the highest standards of news reporting." Co-moderators Mrs. Armon and Mrs. Barell thank their exceptional editors and staff for their spectacular work on the Seraph this year.