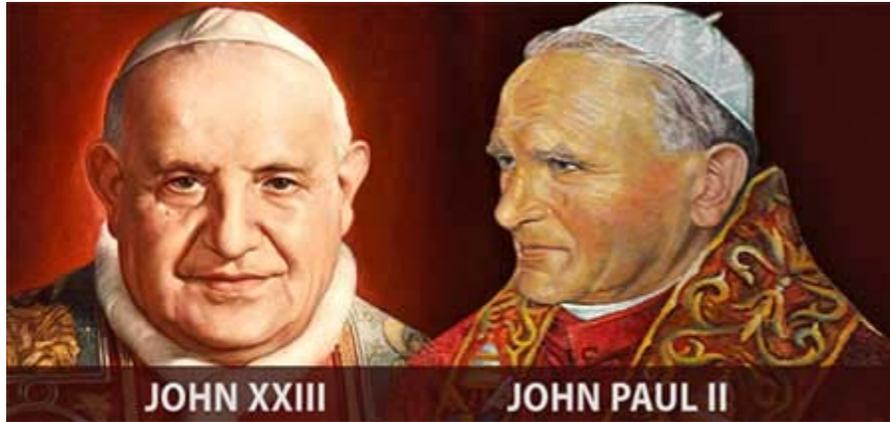


Principal's Newsletter  
April 30, 2014

*"Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose."* Bill Gates

We celebrate the canonization of John XXIII and John Paul II last Sunday by Pope Francis in a ceremony witnessed by over 800,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square in Vatican City.



**Varsity Softball:** This is the second year that the Varsity softball team has sponsored an Easter week dinner at Presentation Parish Soup Kitchen. The menu included Macaroni (Pasta) and meatballs, baked chicken, rice, mixed vegetables, salad, rolls, fruit, and cookies for dessert. A few parents also attended and helped out in the kitchen, serving area, and seating area. Approximately 100 people benefitted from the service by the team. Good Job!

[View the Varsity Softball Slideshow](#)



**The Model UN**, moderated by Mr. Jardines, did a fantastic job at the Connetquot High School Model UN conference held Saturday, April 4th on Long Island. This conference was attended by 150 students from 8 high schools. Our delegation of 16 delegates did a spectacular job and some won the following awards:

1. Donna Episcopeo (206) "Honorable Mention" as United Kingdom in the World Health Organization
  2. Eric Cabrera (303) "Honorable Mention" as Pakistan in the General Assembly
  3. Alex Seyad (416) "Best Delegate" as the United States in the General Assembly
  4. Steven Romanello (415) "Best Delegate" as the United States in the Security Council.\*
- \*This is the coveted award because each representative is the most experienced and effective representative from their schools.

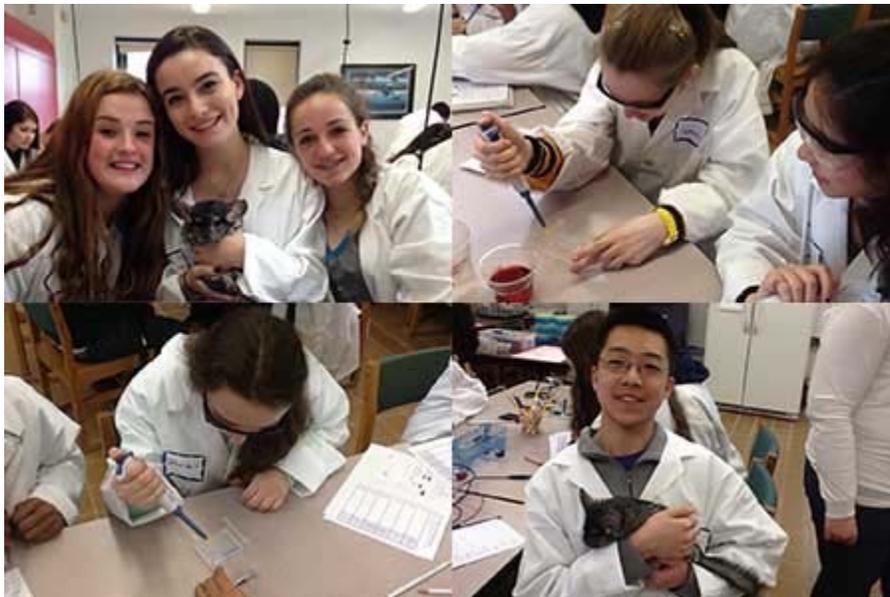
Alex Seyad won "Best Delegate" in the Security Council at the Bayshore High Schools Model United Nations conference on Saturday, April 26th, 2014



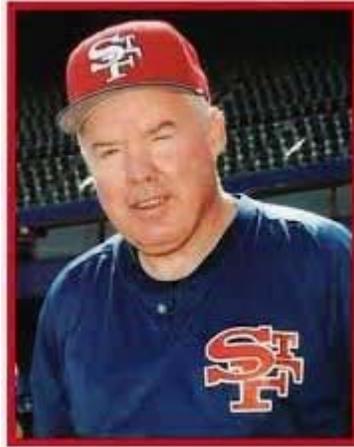
Ms. Gammello reports on the **Key Club**: During the month of April the Key Club has been selling lollipops to raise awareness for Autism Speaks. As of today we have raised over \$2000! We also had students participate in the annual "Light it Up Blue" event on Wednesday April 2nd. Students were encouraged to wear their blue SFP polo in order to show their support.

**Mrs. Rich's Biology** class visited the Environmental Studies Center in Brooklyn in which the students were involved in the following activities:

1. An activity to determine whether or not a tusk (of an elephant) was from an African elephant or an Asian elephant. This activity used scissors, tape, and construction paper.
2. Walked around the ESC and was introduced to their terrestrial animals, aquatic animals, birds, and hydroponic garden. Each student had to pick one organism that they wanted to save from the endangered species list. The class had a discussion about this.
3. They learned how to use a micropipette.
4. They loaded gels and set up the gel chambers for the gel electrophoresis experiment. This activity was designed to determine if a Chinchillan coat was domestic (not illegal to wear) or "wild" (illegal). A woman was stopped at JFK by the Customs agents from Fish and Game. The conclusion- The coat was taken from the woman and she was taken into custody. The coat came from a wild Chinchillan source.



Congratulations to Bro. Robert Kent who won his **600th career game** as **Varsity Baseball Coach**



[See the Varsity Baseball Slideshow](#)

On Tuesday, April 29th, 2014 Ms. Donovan's and Mr. Jardines' **AP United States History** classes visited the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia, Pa. Students were enthralled by the extravagant presentations on the Constitution and the interactive Supreme Court cases. They visited the birthplace of our government at Independence Hall and took pictures next to the Liberty Bell. One additional highlight of the trip was sampling Philadelphia's cuisine, the Philly Cheese Steak.



Ms. Donovan and Mr. Leston took both **AP World** classes to the Met on April 14th.



The department of **Campus Ministry** is pleased to announce that between Lenten shirt sales and Cor collections the St. Francis Prep. Community has raised **\$8000** for our sister schools in Lare, Kenya. Both the St. Francis School and St. Clare School will receive this donation shortly, including a donation of 50 desks and 50 chairs that we were able to purchase. Thank you all for your participation, and for helping St. Francis Prep's generosity reach across the globe.

The Franciscan Immersion Experience to the Romero Center in Camden, NJ was also a great success. Nine students and two faculty members travelled to Camden during Holy Week to experience service, prayer and community living. Members of the F.I.E. Camden team volunteered their time with many organizations dedicated to helping the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. The students shared a first-hand experience of hunger and homelessness and learned about what they could do to help.



Pictured Above:  
 Mr. Sempowich, John Ades, Elisa Castelli, Mario Barbagallo, Elizabeth Meittinis, Ms. Lynch, Benjamin Lim, Kayla Distl, Anne Sementilli, Amanda Licato, Ana Jiminez.

**Administrative Assistants Day** was celebrated on Tuesday, April 29th. Thanks for all of your great work throughout the year!

# PORTRAIT of an ARTIST

High school senior Megan Sweeney plans to transform her penchant for pictures from a hobby into a career  
BY CHRISTINA SHANAHAN

Elmhurst teen Megan Sweeney is living proof that passion can bloom from indifference. "I wasn't that into art when I first started high school," Sweeney said. "But once I learned that I have an eye for photography, it became something that I love more than anything."

Sweeney attributes her artistic development to the supportive environment at Saint Francis Prep High School, from which she will graduate in June, and the encouragement of her parents.

After taking a basic introductory art class as a freshman student, Sweeney's doodles began to transform into more elaborate sketches, drawings and paintings.

"My art teacher at Saint Francis Prep, Mrs. Buccino, saw potential in me and really helped me to get started," Sweeney said. "She would always tell me that my projects were good, even though I wasn't really interested in the subject, and even told me that she could see me landing an art-based job. She helped me to see my creative side."

From there, Sweeney took her work more seriously and began doing market projects, eventually moving up to the fine arts of drawing and painting.

When Sweeney entered her sophomore year, she invested in a professional DSLR camera.

"That year, I took my first photography class," Sweeney explained. "That's where I learned that you could have a career in this, so I slowly but surely started building a portfolio and looking for part-time photography jobs." Sweeney's hard work paid off when she landed a gig as the event photographer for Broadway Scenic Living at The Savoy in Elmhurst, where she photographs residents interacting with visitors.

Between the photos that she took for her school projects and her work from The Savoy, Sweeney built a strong portfolio that prepared her for the next phase of her journey: taking professional portraits of models and dancers. Through word of mouth, Sweeney connects with aspiring models and dancers who are looking to build portfolios of their own and provides photo shoots that showcase each subject's talents. She often shoots these portraits in Manhattan, where she can incorporate unexpected elements into the photos.

"You don't expect to see a bullfinch in the middle of Times Square or the Bowery," she said. "I also love incorporating elements of nature into the shoots that I do in the city."

Sweeney, who grew up with her parents and younger sister in Elmhurst, says that her family has applauded her artistic efforts throughout her high school career.

"My parents have had a lot of my photographs enlarged, and they hang them all over our house," she said. "It's really nice to see my work on display, even if it's just in my own home, because every time I look at my pictures I can envision them somewhere larger, like as a magazine spread."

It's no surprise that Sweeney dreams of someday going pro. Her artistic idols include American portrait photographer Annie Leibovitz, who has famously shot celebrity portfolios for Rolling Stone and Vanity Fair,



among other major media outlets. Another modern icon whose work Sweeney admires is music photographer Adam Elmakia.

"I love going to concerts with my friends and it's an amazing point of view for a photographer to be able to capture an artist while he or she is performing," she said. Sweeney said she hopes to begin practicing concert photography in the near future, after securing the necessary permissions from venues to be able to shoot at live shows.

Though she's focusing on her pursuit of photography, Sweeney stays true to the mediums that first drew her into the world of art, drawing and painting.

"I have a sketchbook on me at all times so that whenever I have an idea I can sketch it right there," she said. "Sometimes I'll see something while I'm out, sketch it quickly, then finish it as a drawing or a painting when I get home. I like to paint more abstract things, like flowers."

In fact, Sweeney did a school project inspired by Georgia O'Keefe's famous work, where she did an up-close impression of a flower using acrylic paint.

So what's next for Sweeney? After graduating with her high school diploma this spring, she will go on to

start her liberal arts degree at Queens College.

"Then, I plan to transfer to a school with a photography program to pursue my dream," she said.

Thinking even further down the line, Sweeney has two possible routes in mind: fashion photographer or educator.

"I love the idea of being able to combine fashion and portraiture," she said, "but at the same time, I can see myself working in a high school and teaching kids about art, just like Mrs. Buccino."

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SFP senior Megan Sweeney was featured in a full page article in the Queens Courier on April 24th. The story details how Megan's artistic journey was nurtured at the Prep and how she hopes to transform her penchant for photography from a hobby into a career.

**The Congressional Art Competition**  
This past weekend, Saturday April 26th, five students from St. Francis Prep participated in the Congressional Art Competition.



Nicole Gangi cor 407, Xiang Kun Kong cor 410, Mary Millus cor 311, Douglas Nover cor 312, Gloria Yuma cor 418, all had their works of art on display in the awards ceremony in the Queens Museum of Art. (See photo below.) Congresswoman Grace Meng (6th Congressional District) hosted the art competition.

Art Department, chairperson, Jeanne Buccino was excited to announce that Xiang Kun (Peter) Kong claimed First Place! He was presented with a special award by Congresswomen Meng and his art work will hang in the nation's capitol for one year. He has also been invited to attend a special unveiling ceremony in Washington, D.C. in mid-June. As part of the award, Peter has also received a scholarship to Savannah School of Art and Design. The Art Department at St. Francis Prep is thrilled and commends Peter on all of his hard work and inspirational talent!

#### **More News from the Art Department:**

This year marks the 33rd anniversary of the Congressional Art Competition. Since the competition began in 1982 more than 650,000 high school students throughout the United States have participated.



#### **The Tablet's "Christ is Risen" Art Competition**

Rebecca Zhang from Cor 218, has taken second place in The Tablet's "Christ is Risen" Student Art Competition. Rebecca is currently a student in Ms. Shmerykowsky's Advanced Sophomore art class. We congratulate Rebecca and Ms. Shmerykowsky on their success! A reception and award ceremony will take place May 7th at 7 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus in Brooklyn. The Tablet, in collaboration with the John Hughes Council of the Knights of Columbus, invited local youth to express their faith through participation in the contest. Entries were based on adherence to the theme, originality of work, and demonstration of artistic ability. Congratulations Rebecca!

#### **Five SFP Students Participate in the 2014 Girls World Expo**

Five students from the St. Francis Prep Art Department participated in the Girls World Expo at Terrace on the Park in Flushing Meadows Park on March 16th: Alexandra Boodram cor 302, Mary Millus cor 311, Nicole Noel cor 312, Megan Sweeney cor 417 and Juliet Korzep cor 309. Each student had one of their art works displayed in the gallery at the Expo.

St. Francis Prep art students had hundreds of their peers see and admire their work. They had a chance to see people respond to what they've created, and they met working artists who also encouraged and praised their efforts.

Girls World Expo is a one-day celebration to offer young women ages 11-18, with the opportunity to have fun, hear from distinguished women in the community, share among themselves, and learn about ways to improve their chances for success in life. This was a true celebration of creativity, self-expression, and the self-esteem. Congratulations to all involved!

Congratulations to all of our fine students, our dedicated faculty and devoted parents! All of this outstanding work exemplifies a true commitment to excellence by everyone in the St. Francis Prep community!

On April 30th Justin Guerre signed his National Letter of Intent to attend Lasalle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Justin graduates St. Francis Prep as one of the finest athletes in the school's historic history. During his tenure at the Prep Justin has been awarded the CHSAA championship in the 55 meter dash in both 2013 and 2014 seasons. He is a 6 time Brooklyn Queens Champions in every event from 55 to 200 meters. He will leave as the school record holder in three events as well. This past season he came in 2nd at the New York State Championship. Justin was heavily recruited by multiple schools over the past year but chose Lasalle because of their overwhelming commitment to make him the best athlete and scholar he could be.

