

## **Principal's Newsletter**

**April 30, 2016**

**"If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six hours sharpening my ax."**

**Abraham Lincoln**

There were two events in April that demonstrated for me the legacy and strength of the SFP community: the President's Dinner and the Alumni Spring Reunion-Hall of Fame induction. The passion and commitment of our alumni and great support for our school and current students were clear and evident. Many have moved on to very successful and productive careers and have a "Pay It Forward" attitude concerned about the growth and development of the next generation. During the month of April, we also celebrated our students' successes at the NYS Science Honor Society on April 7th, the Spring Pep Rally, the Spring musical production of Grease, and Spring Concerts 1 and 2. I also want to thank our Parents Guild who sponsored and coordinated our annual Fashion Show at Leonard's Palazzo. We pray for our seniors who are making their final college decisions by the May 1st deadline.

Another busy April at SFP.  
Mr. McLaughlin

### **A Tribute to Fr. Bill Sweeney**

The Prep community learned early last winter that Father Bill Sweeney was going to be reassigned to a new parish community starting in January 2016. Preparations were underway to give him a grand send-off, but fate would have it another way. In late December, Father Bill broke his leg and fractured his ankle. He underwent surgery, spent months recovering, and recently got back on his feet. He returned today (April 18th) to Prep for a long overdue "farewell party" with his family, friends, and colleagues.

[See the FaceBook Slideshow HERE](#)

### **Easter Break Trip to the UK**

Over the Easter Break, Daniel DioGuardi and Kristie Beck, both of the English department, led a group of nine students on an educational trip to the United Kingdom. Braving the cold and rain, the group began its trip in London before heading up to Oxford, Stratford-upon-Avon, York, Alnwick, Lindisfarne, Edinburgh, and the Lake District. Over the course of the nine-day tour, the group visited and learned about such important sites as the Tower of London, Westminster Abbey, the British Museum, Buckingham Palace, Shakespeare's Globe, Christchurch College, Shakespeare's tomb (Church of the Holy Trinity), Shakespeare's birthplace, York Minster Abbey, Edinburgh Castle, Arthur's Seat, Dove Cottage, and many more.

### **Earth Day T-Shirt Sale**

The Save Our Planet club, moderated by Mr. DioGuardi, is happy to announce that the Earth Day t-shirt sale was a great success. We raised over \$300 to benefit Eye on the Rainforest, a sustainable forest and rainforest enrichment project based in Patillas, Puerto Rico. For more information, please visit [eyeontherainforest.org](http://eyeontherainforest.org).

### **Oral Care Collection**

The Save Our Planet club, in collaboration with TerraCycle, will be collecting empty toothpaste containers, old toothbrushes, toothbrush packaging, and empty dental floss containers. After being collected in school, these products, which cannot otherwise be recycled, will be sent to TerraCycle to be "upcycled" into new products like backpacks and bags. Please give your used oral care products to Mr. DioGuardi, any member of the Save Our Planet club, or place them in the boxes in the main lobby or by the cor mailboxes.

## English Department Field Trip

After reading Mark Haddon's extraordinary [The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time](#), Ms. Prohaska's 10th grade Honors English classes went to see its Broadway adaptation! The play received very positive reviews from the students, who had a beautiful day for their excursion into Manhattan on April 27th. The trip was especially well-timed, as April is Autism Awareness month, and the work's protagonist has Asperger's Syndrome. Thanks to all who made the day possible – especially English Department Chairperson Stephen Marino, AP Joseph Castellano, English Department member Eric Hafker, and an amazing group of close to 70 sophomores!



## Prep Students Celebrate Shakespeare's Birthday and Work

Dr. Stephen Marino (SFP Class of 1971) is now in his 40th year as a faculty member in the SFP English teacher. He has organized this wonderful festival for Prep students for many, many years in honor of William Shakespeare's birthday. According to tradition, the great English dramatist and poet was born in Stratford-on-Avon on April 23, 1564. There was fun and food for all! Thanks to all of our students for contributing to this wonderful day! And thanks to all of the faculty and staff for stopping in to be part of it!

[See the FaceBook Slideshow HERE](#)

## Science Research

On March 6th, 12 of our seniors in the Science Research Program competed in the New York City Science and Engineer Fair (NYCSEF) held at City College of New York. Three of these students, Ching Pang, Isabelle Brenes, and Mary Rueth, made it to the Finals round and were invited to participate again on March 29th at the Museum of Natural History. Ching was awarded First Award in the category of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Isabelle was given Second Award in the Animal Sciences category,

and Mary earned a Third Award in the category of Earth and Environmental Sciences. Thanks to her performance, Ching Pang was also awarded The City University of New York Scholarship - Hunter College, earning her \$4,000 in scholarships for each of the next four years. Congratulations to all of our fine students!

In March, Tatjana Mustac was invited to present her research work at a conference in Washington, DC. She was very nervous for the presentation; however, she thought it went very well for her first conference presentation. Her parents recorded the entire presentation and uploaded it to YouTube. Attached below are the links of her presentation. Good job, Tatjana!

[http://youtu.be/6yye6fy\\_wOE](http://youtu.be/6yye6fy_wOE)

<http://youtu.be/tHcE9pzHSUQ>

### **Campus Ministry**

Over 130 seniors participated in the Senior Retreats offered by Campus Ministry this April. On each day, students reflected on their experiences over the past four years and listened to faculty members offer advice about effectively negotiating times of transition in their lives. Activities encouraged the students to consider the values they have learned and will build their lives upon. Fr. Mark concluded each day with Mass. Special thanks to Mr. Johnston, Mr. McLaughlin, Ms. Sparagna, and Ms. Verdi for speaking at the retreats.



Last week, eleven SFP Juniors and Seniors and two faculty chaperones traveled to the Romero Center in Camden, NJ, to learn about the city and its people. Camden is a city with tremendous needs and St. Francis Prep is proud to be a part of Camden's regrowth. The experience was a valuable one for everyone involved. The students took on the Romero Center Urban Challenge, a program built upon four fundamental components: prayer, service, education, and reflection. Members of the F.I.E. Camden team volunteered their time with organizations dedicated to helping the most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters. Students experienced direct service with the hungry and homeless at the Camden Neighborhood Center and prepared food boxes for the hungry at S.H.A.R.E., a Philadelphia

food bank. The experience was rounded out with prayer and community living among students from Regis High School and two schools in Boston.



From left to Right: Kyle MacDonald, William O'Brien, Mrs. DeFino, Christina Iemma, Valeria Aitken, Carl Gangi, Marissa Kosinski, Mr. Sempowich, Erica Viscovich, Hussein Adel, Cortney Baur, Joseph Buckley, and Theresa Shields.

Christina Iemma '16 wrote the following about her experience:

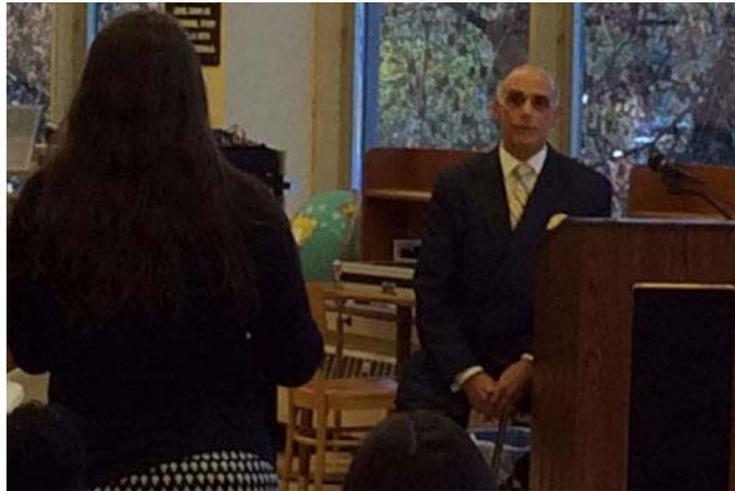
*" We signed up with the idea in our minds that we were going to make a difference with ourselves and the community of SFP and Camden. We set off with no idea what to expect. We were hesitant to go through this town so closely associated with violence and poverty. We went to SHARE, a food bank located in Philadelphia. We worked to create **22,000** boxes that needed to be assembled, taped, stored, and wrapped for a future event. Inside the boxes there would be cans of food, cereal boxes, and vegetables. We knew this task had to be done to indirectly help someone in need. The next day, we had a different task; to work and prepare food for those on food stamps or struggling with food insecurity. Food insecurity is when you don't know where your next meal is coming from. We worked to make lunch for the residents and for the Neighborhood Community Center. We also worked on their garden. This was an eye-opening experience. I hope someday all of you reading this can do something to help someone and consider being a part of the Urban Challenge."*

There is one Franciscan Immersion Experience remaining this year. Students will travel to Peru to care for children at the Hogar San Francisco De Asis in July. There are a few spots remaining for this experience. Please contact Mr. Sempowich in Campus Ministry for more details!

### **Trial of the Century**

On April 19th, The Trial of the Century held its annual case; this year it was The People of St. Francis Prep v. Mr. Joseph Licata. Our beloved Mr. Licata was arrested, indicted, and charged with Murder in

the 2nd degree of the victim, Lou Chiano, an opera-singing birthday gram clown. In a grueling 3-hour forum, the jury, made up of students and faculty, found him "Not Guilty."



Kudos go to our Judge William Viscovich '79; the defense team Attorney Mr. Christopher Renfroe, alumnus Steven Romanello'14, Donna Episcopio'16, Lauren Talty'16, Penda Martin'19, and Richard Romanello'19; the prosecution team ADA John Kosinski, Special Prosecutor Jessica Silva, Alumnus Alex Seyad'14, Mary Zouvelos '17, Rosa DiMaria '16, and Arijuna Jorge '17; Witnesses Thomas Chin '16, Eunice Douglass '16 and Mr. Joseph Higgins of the Music Department; Forensic Scientist Ching Pang '17, and Investigators Isabella Heitz '16, Natalie Oyala'16, and Eshanie Henry '17; moderators Mr. Paul Cohen of the Science Department and Mr. Charles Jardines of the Social Studies Department.

### ***English National Honor Society***

Congratulations to the juniors and seniors who were inducted into the "Red and Blue Chapter" of the English National Honor Society at the annual induction luncheon on April 28:

**Juniors:** Jenna Alma, Sarika Arora, Michael Chan, Megan Clifford, Siena DeBenedettis, Renee Grasso, Anthony Gambino, Victoria Matiatos, Orlando Santiago, Danielle Sudol

**Seniors:** Christopher Andreou, Olivia Bullaro, Michael Croak, Daniela Krslovic, Rosemary Wolf, Adhham Zaatri.



## Fordham University Business Challenge

The Terriers of Wall Street won the Entrepreneurship Competition of the Business Challenge held at Fordham University on April 27, 2016. Their business model, a drone delivery system of health care products to people who are unable to get to a pharmacy, was praised for its depth of development, detailed research, and flawless presentation. The competition was organized by former SFP alum Sal Cocchiaro, a current student in the Gabelli School of Business at Fordham.



### Art Department

#### Advanced Painting Trip

On April 27, 2016, the Saint Francis Prep Advanced Painting class ventured to the New York Botanical Gardens in the Bronx. The daffodils, crab apple trees, and azaleas were in full bloom under the bright blue sky. The class set up their portable easels, acrylic paints, and hand stretched canvases and painted for the entire day. The students had the opportunity to create paintings in an astounding outdoor atmosphere. After painting, they enjoyed lunch in the café and headed back to Prep to finish up their paintings after school.

### Grease

This musical about American high schoolers features music in the rock 'n roll style of the 1950s and is the basis for the 1978 film starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John. It was a great deal of fun for our talented students as well as several of the faculty who made cameo appearances. [See the FaceBook Slideshow HERE](#)

Alumni from the 2004 production of Grease standing next to the student character they portrayed:  
Danny Zuko 2004. Kevin Petti  
Danny Zuko 2016. Hugo Rojas  
Sonny 2004 Carlo Coumoutos  
Sonny 2016 Dominick Spina  
Roger 2004 Patrick McLaughlin  
Roger 2016 Billy OBrien

Doody 2004 Matthew DiSiena  
Doody 2016 Jared Sanchez  
Jan 2004 Jackie Cavataio Coumoutos  
Jan 2016 Justine Ecker



On April 21, the Art Department had a visit from Danny Gonzalez, a designer and father of an incoming 9th-grade student at Prep. Danny owns a firm called Perception Studios in Manhattan that focuses on futuristic user interface design and digital elements for movies. He spoke with students about getting into the design world and presented some of his firm's amazing work. Their projects include the futuristic gadgets in [Iron Man 2](#), the 2016 Ford GT interface, elements of the Avengers, Civil War, several other Marvel movies; they also work with companies like Microsoft, IBM, and many more. Students had a great time, and we hope to have him visit again in the future!

### **Christ Is Risen**

[The Tablet](#), in collaboration with the Archbishop John Hughes Council of the Knights of Columbus, invited students to express their faith through art by participating in this year's Easter Art Contest. Students in the Saint Francis Prep Art Department created works of art based on Christ. Junior Gabrielle Pelczar took second place and Senior Jessica Richardsen took third. Their drawings will be featured in this month's edition of [The Tablet](#) Newspaper. We are proud of their creative success!

### **Congressional Art Competition**

This year marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Congressional Art Competition, *An Artistic Discovery*. Since this competition began in 1982, more than 650,000 high school students throughout the United States have participated and thousands have showcased their artistic talent in our nation's capital. Five of our students attended the Congressional Art Competition awards ceremony on Saturday May 9th: Alysia Boodram, Julia Bravo, Matthew Brennan, Jessica Caliendo, and Alexis Martinez. They had their work exhibited in the Queens Museum of Art and received certificates from

Congresswoman Grace Meng. Our own Alexis Martinez came in third place for our district. Her work will hang in Congresswoman's Grace Meng's office this year. Congratulations to all!



**Winner! Molloy College Digital Selfie Competition**

On April 20th, Senior **Julia Culcasi** received an award, \$1000 prize, and partial scholarship to Molloy College. She was recognized for her digital selfie.



**Bayside Marina**

On April 6, 2015, the Advanced Drawing and Painting class ventured to the Bayside Marina to dabble in a Plein Air Painting experience. The view was breathtaking overlooking the sea scape and the Throgs Neck Bridge. Students set up their portable easels and acrylic paints and got right to work. They spent several hours painting in the fresh air. The experience was so uplifting the class plans to return in late May to continue painting as the Impressionists did!

### **Social Studies**

The AP Politics and Government class visited Washington, DC, on April 18-19. The students visited various sites and memorials. They toured Arlington National Cemetery and attended the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The tour of the Capital was the highlight of the trip. They were able to explore the institution where our laws are created. This trip coincided with the curriculum the class has studies all year.



### **Sports**

Girl's Basketball Team: Second Team- Sofia Recupero and Dorothy Matinale. Third Team- Elizabeth Zullo and Lauren Quesada.  
Outdoor Track Sophomore school record in the NY relays.

Congratulations to the Junior Varsity softball team for winning the Silver Division of the Archbishop Molloy Easter Tournament.



On Thursday, March 31st, 2016, the Girls Varsity Softball team cooked an Easter dinner for the Presentation Soup Kitchen. The menu was pasta, meatballs, mixed vegetables, salad, bread, fruit, and dessert.



### **Senior Disney Trip**

The Class of 2016 headed off to Disney World for this year's Senior Class Trip during Easter vacation. Almost 200 seniors spent five days bonding and coming together as a class as they enjoyed all that

Disney has to offer. Students visited the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Hollywood Studios, Animal Kingdom, and the Typhoon Lagoon Water Park. What made this trip so special and exciting for the students were the exclusive events and access to rides. In Epcot, students enjoyed a private dinner and were brought to an exclusive viewing area for the Illuminations firework show. Students were then able to ride Test Track, one of Epcot's most popular rides, after the park closed! The morning at Animal Kingdom started early with St. Francis Prep being allowed into the park before it opened to have a private breakfast in one of the restaurants and then being the first to ride the Everest roller coaster. One of the biggest highlights of the trip was the night at Typhoon Lagoon. St. Francis Prep was given exclusive use of the park. A DJ provided music all night as students had dinner and dessert and enjoyed the wave pool, beach volleyball, and waterslides.



Many magical memories were created. It was a wonderful opportunity for the seniors to spend time together before graduation.

### **Faculty**

At the NYSAIS Teaching with Technology Conference, Ms. Nicole May and Ms. Caitlin Donovan presented a session called "Creativity and Ownership in the High School Classroom: A Projects Approach."



**Ms. Caitlin Donovan** has been chosen to participate in the NEH Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshop during the summer. This is an incredible opportunity and experience for her, especially as she teaches our Junior Honors American History course.

**Mrs. Ann Marie Rich**, Varsity Softball Coach, was inducted to the Women's CHSAA Hall of Fame. Congratulations!

### **Alumni**

**Congratulations to Deborah Ramirez on her accomplishments:**  
[Goodwill Tour to Cuba](#)

Dave Alexandro (Class of '90) was just selected for two fellowships at the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education, where he is pursuing his Ph.D. He received the Robert K. Gable Fellowship and The Friends and Colleagues of Francis X. Archambault Jr. Fellowship. Both recognize an academically outstanding full-time graduate student enrolled in the Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Program in the Educational Psychology Department.



### Enrichment

The Common Cents Program is a financial literacy workshop designed for a pre-college teenager; it focuses on teaching its participants personal finance, investing basics, and entrepreneurship and business management practices. The program is administered by Jim Gannon, SFP Class of 1983. All of the topics are taught to help improve the student's critical-thinking skills. The mission of the program is to simplify the complexities of the financial industry by breaking down concepts into easy to understand ideas so teens are prepared to properly manage their finances as adults.



The next workshop will be the week of July 25th and registration is open on the Common Cents website: <http://commoncentsprogram.com/about-2/>

[PHOTO GALLERY LINK HERE](#)

## St. Baldrick's

St. Baldrick's: Evan Sirakis and Jack Lynch raised over \$1,000 for the St. Baldrick's foundation this year.

