

# THE BROOKLYN TECH SURVEY

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## Model UN Team Visits Harvard

By **CHOUDHURY RAHMAN**

*Survey Staff Writer*

On January 29th to February 1st, 2015, Tech's Model United Nations (MUN) team participated in an international conference at Harvard University (HMUN). A select twelve members from a club numbering nearly 100 students were given the opportunity to participate on this elite scale. David Lo, the club advisor, along with club members and executives, worked diligently for many months to prepare for this meeting.

MUN conferences occur at various high schools and colleges that have the program as part of their curriculum. Students often work in pairs to represent delegates of a specific country and share their opinions on how to resolve various world issues. Tech's MUN team serves as a platform that simulates actual Model UN debates. Students agree that this part of the club — researching, debating, and writing — is enjoyable, but say that the club has so much more to offer.

Dena Samad '15, the current co-President of the club,

joined in her freshman year. She says, "It was definitely a quick and easy way to be exposed to people of many backgrounds in our diverse school."

Many schools in other countries hold their own Model UN programs with hopes of creating future leaders. Many people who have competed on the high school or college level end up being elected to the actual United Nations. Ban Ki Moon, the current Secretary General of the United Nations, is a prime example. Others, like Stephen Breyer, a Supreme Court Justice, reach law-related, diplomatic or political positions.

Diversity and public speaking are two important aspects of these conferences. According to Lo, "Model UN students are given the oppor-

tunity to network with people from all around the world and are given the ability to hone their public speaking skills."

Samad'15 agrees. "For some students that are shy or may be uncomfortable speaking in large crowds, Model UN certainly helps students get out of that shell, become a leader, and have their voice heard."

At the HMUN conference, the team represented Israel and spoke on various issues, including asymmetric warfare, infectious diseases, effectiveness of economic sanctions, and women's empowerment. While the team did not win, they still view HMUN as a positive experience.

According to Sarah Momen'15, club co-President with Samad'15, "It was a humbling experience to be sur-

rounded by the nation's best Model UN kids."

In addition, the club members gained several insights into the various ways Model UN programs prepare for the conferences. They hope to employ these techniques as well as their existing ones in the coming years.

Dilshan Dowlah'16, one of the twelve members who went to the Harvard conference, says, "The conference was a unique experience and I got to meet people from all around the world. I would definitely recommend it to any student."

Lo summed up the team's overall attitude with his final statement. "Next year, expect to see many more awards."

## New Year, New Bell Schedule

By **ALISHA MEMON**

*Survey Staff Writer*

As of September 5th, 2014, the Tech community was introduced to a new bell schedule. The official school day now starts at 8 am and ends at 3:35 pm. The ten academic periods range from 41 to 46 minutes. Students and faculty share their opinions on this school-wide change.

Aaron Chung'15 states, "I was only just starting to get used to the old schedule and then they changed it."

According to Paul Hoftzyer, the Assistant Principal of Health and Safety, the new bell schedule was created "to improve the efficiency of programming and room use and to allow flexibility of student scheduling."

With this new schedule, special-use rooms can now be utilized for 10 periods a day instead of 9. Students can also choose to have a 1-10 schedule without dropping lunch.

Kelly Low'16 stated that

the new schedule is "not so bad. I like it because without that extra period, I would have had to sacrifice my lunch."

Jennifer Sullivan, the AP of Organization, comments that the bell schedule was changed "to accommodate all of the computer classes that we need to run. Each teacher has five classes — but going to a ten period day, it allows for two teachers to share one room without having to find an extra room."

Teachers now have an extra "free" period that can be used for preparing lessons, grading papers, and updating Skedula.

Caitlin Wockenfuss, an Anatomy and Physiology teacher, believes that the school changed the bell schedule because "they wanted to try to make the best of a situation where we had to extend our time but get rid of [after-school] tutoring. So by giving us this extra period it allows

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## Talent Show 2014

Syed Samin '15, Isabelle Siegel '15, and Saam Hassan '15

By **AMY CHEN**

*Survey Staff Writer*

One of Brooklyn Tech's all-time favorite events, the annual Talent Show, came back for another year. Talent Show took place in the school's auditorium on Friday, November 21, attracting hundreds of students and family members. The show has once again proven that our students are not only capable academically but also in dancing, singing, poetry reading, rapping, and instrument playing.

This year's performances were filled with many passionate participants. However, it was Ishmael Michel '15 who mesmerized the judges and audience with his soft but

emotional voice. He not only claimed second place in his performance of "Deep Blood Red" with Andres Sarmiento '15 but also first place with Brooke Samerson '16 and Karelyn Philips '16.

Despite dominating the show with his chilling performance, Ishmael remained humble. "This year's talent show was very special because of the immense talent on that stage. It was like no other talent show. From the singing to the dancing to the rapping it was all different and unique."

Another amazing vocal group, Soul Rights, shared the second place prize with Ishmael and Andres. The group consisted of vocalists Isabelle Siegel '15 and Saam Hassan

PHOTO COURTESY: SIMONE YHAP

'15, and beat boxer Syed Samin '15. They came together to perform a medley of Beyonce's "Halo," Frozen's "Let it Go," and Drake's "Hold On, We're Going Home."

In third place, seniors Elizabeth Avshalomov '15 and Natalia Ryabenkova '15 wowed the audience with a dance routine titled, "Dark Side." They were completely in-sync and showed a lot of emotion in their dancing, as they conveyed darkness taking over light.

Another favorite performance was by Brian Abamonga '15 and Daphne Lee '15. Together, they performed Disclosure's "Latch" and Ariana Grande's "Love Me Hard-

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# Chemnites Unite Under New Chemistry Executive Board

By JULIE MOREL

Journalism Student

To help students find a sense of community, the counselor of the Chemical Engineering major developed the school's first Chemistry Executive Board in September of this year.

When Johnny A. Ventura came to Tech four years ago, he noticed that students could benefit from a better support system. As the Chemical Engineering guidance counselor, he began to hold events for his major to help students and faculty bond with one another.

For the past four Decembers, he has organized a Holiday Mixer for chemistry teachers and students. Each year, Ventura reached out to the junior and senior classes and asked them to help him plan the event; they arranged it and made it happen.

"After a few years, I thought it may be good to have an E-board dedicated specifically to creating events for our major; it's students giving back to students," said Ventura.

This past June, Ventura created an application process consisting of group interviews, teacher nominations, and rigorous questionnaires. He chose twelve students this September, and they now have the responsibility to build a sense of com-

munity within their major.

The E-board is almost completely student run. Although Ventura, the board's advisor, helps the executives get acclimated to their responsibilities and positions, students plan everything on their own.

Weronika Patycka'15, the vice president of the Eboard, said, "I want to make sure that the students in the Chemistry major have fun. Junior and senior year are the hardest years of high school, but they can easily be made more enjoyable by meeting new people, making new friends, and helping each other out."

The board has planned many events for the upcoming year, including the Chem Arcade, teacher celebrations, several workshops, student of the month awards, alumni dinners, and a "Welcome to the Chem Major" night, which will give rising juniors a chance to meet the current junior and senior students and chemistry teachers.

The Public Relations team, consisting of Stephen Mumin'15 and Ya Ting Chen'15, is in charge of reaching out to teachers and chemistry classes, making announcements, collecting ideas, posting flyers, and handing out invitations to get everyone in the major involved.

Teachers are a big part of the E-board too. "All the

money for events comes out of the teachers' pockets," said Ventura. Though they will soon be coming up with their own fundraising events, he said, "Without our teachers, something would be amiss."

Ready to celebrate the great things that are being done and will be done, the E-board wants Chemnites to know that there are many people on their team.

But some students are doubtful about the E-board's capabilities. Raymond Yang'15 said, "Juniors and seniors have a lot of things to do in terms of school work and applications, and small events like these won't change much."

Contrarily, Jessica Zeng'15, a Law and Society major student said, "I think it would be a great development for other majors to adopt the Eboard system. There are not many opportunities for bonding in our large school, but this would be a way for people to enjoy themselves while supporting each other."

Ventura looks forward to the busy journey ahead of him and his major. "We're a community of one, responsible for all," he said. "We're all in the same building, and there are a lot of students, but there is so much potential to do a lot of great things as a community."



Photo Courtesy of Johnny A. Ventura

# De Blasio Lifts Cell Phone Ban

BY CHOUDHURY RAHMAN

Journalism Student

Mayor Bill de Blasio and his administration recently announced that the current city-wide cell phone ban in schools will be lifted on March 2nd, 2015, reversing the more than decade long ban instituted during the Bloomberg administration. This change in policy will allow principals of New York City high schools to establish their own policies in regards to the cell phone issue.

Not all students will be directly affected by the ban lift. According to wnyc.com, prior to this coming lift, many principals and teachers didn't strictly enforce the cell phone ban. Many students were still using their cell phones freely within cafeterias, hallways, and even classrooms.

Even in Brooklyn Tech, many students admit to using their smartphones for a variety of purposes: usually for homework, music, or games. It is common to see students take out their phones in the library and also in the lunchroom, though many students refrain from doing so due to the watchful eyes of lunch ladies and deans.

Xavier Perez'16 acknowledges that it is relatively easy for a student to use their phone in Tech. "Prior to the ban, all students had to do was take their phone out of their pocket and use it. There weren't too many risks if the student was careful, and I think the [lifting of the] ban won't have much of an effect on students in Brooklyn Tech."

Ivan Wen '16 agrees. "It may make students much more blatant about using them, but that's about it."

In other, low-income schools, located largely in the inner city, the ban lift could potentially have a profound effect, depending on the policies the principals choose to institute. In these neighborhoods, entire businesses were started up allowing students to pay to have their phones secured in a van during the school hours. According to nyc.gov, the new policy could cost a family an average of \$180 per year.

Bill de Blasio hoped that the ban lift would give students and parents the ability to communicate during school. Staying in touch is not the only result, however.

Zawad Islam'18 sees negatives in the ban lift as well. "Many students will see their grades go down because of extensive gaming, texting and other stuff. While it may help students and parents communicate, it may also be detrimental for the students themselves."

John Eggebrecht, a physics teacher in Tech, takes the opposing stance. He says that the ban was silly and that giving students permission to use their phones could facilitate learning. "Students could use their phones to take pictures of their work and use the internet for classroom activities."

The effects of the ban still remain up to the principals of NYC schools. Many teachers still remain unsure of the outcome and agree it ultimately may not have an effect at all.



By Helen Fan

# Redesign of 1st Floor Gym

By **RICHARD YEUNG**

*Survey Staff Writer*

Recently, the first floor gymnasium was redesigned for the Brooklyn Tech community. The renovation includes a polished floor, a bright blue BTHS logo, repainted walls with blue and white stripes, as well as a welcoming “Home of the Engineers” sign. The gym was redesigned to promote a new sense of motivation for student athletes.

“Every time I step foot into the new floor, I feel brand new while playing basketball,” says Zhuo Biao Cai ’15.

Unlike the old gym, the new gym is refreshing and encourages safer precautions. The majority of Tech’s Physical Education teachers approve of the redesign. They believe that it will bring new successes to Brooklyn Tech athletics and instill within students a livelier spirit.

“I think the new first floor redesign is great,” says Jerome Brown, gym teacher. “I love the the designs that are implemented into the court.”

Gym teacher Maureen Malone shares, “I love the

new redesign for the first floor gym. I think the design is really good and it gives a new color to the gym.”

Students also share similar, approving views.

Aysha Chaudhry ’15 says, “When I first stepped into the new gym, I was surprised at the new whole redesign. I like the big BTHS symbol in the center of the court. I also like the new sparkle on the floor. Everything looks really good together.”

“I look at the floor and see how it glistens and how fresh out of the box it looks. Without any doubts, it is a huge improvement from the previous floor design,” adds Cai’15.

Despite the positive vibes, a few Technites were dissatisfied with the redesign.

“I feel as if the whole redesign was not really necessary. Some of the colors don’t quite fit with each other well,” says Sihao Chen’16. “Overall, I just don’t really feel the satisfaction with the redesign. I guess one new thing that is nice is the new logo.”

Some also believe that the redesign should have been extended to the second floor track above the gym.

Ultimately, with its clean, sleek look, the new gym provides an initiative to students to embrace their physical education experience and exercise more.



By *Monica Saw Aung*



Photo taken by *Angela Sze*

# Principal Gassaway Questions City’s Plan

By **CHOUDHURY RAHMAN & RICHARD YEUNG**

*Survey Staff Writers*

New York City is home to some of the most prestigious schools in the country and its students can agree that the curriculum is no walk in the park. While many students are passing with desired grades, there are others who are not doing as well. This problem does not lie solely in students’ abilities or lack thereof. Many NYC schools are struggling to provide a satisfactory education for their students.

Bernard Gassaway, the principal of Boys and Girls High School in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, recently handed in his resignation letter. Gassaway explains his resignation, saying that the city has no adequate plans regarding struggling schools and that the Department of Education is taking a touch-and-go approach. He told The New York

Times, “They (NYCDOE) are making it up as they go along.”

Heather Berry, who teaches AP Calculus at Brooklyn Tech, understands Gassaway’s perspective. “I believe the principal of Boys and Girls High School is citing something very true - there is not enough of a plan coming from our DOE in order to truly combat the challenges being faced by schools like this. Previously, I taught at a small public high school in Prospect Heights and I felt very unsatisfied by the lack of support provided by the DOE during times of leadership transition.”

The quality of Boys and Girls High School is reflected by its number of students, which is declining sharply. The Times reported that the student population fell from two thousand in 2009 to eight hundred for the 2014 school year. Many of its students can testify that the school is in need of improvement.

One student of Boys and Girls, who is expected to transfer, criticizes many factors of the school. He told The Times, “The school could be better, the teaching could be better, the resources could be a whole lot better.”

Mahlek Abdou’16 agrees that a diversity of classes plays a major role in school success. “Students these days have a wide variety of academic tastes, and you similarly need a wide variety of classes to accommodate for that.”

The school chancellor, Carmen Farina and Mayor Bill de Blasio have not been taking the approach of former Mayor Michael Bloomberg in the past. Previously, Bloomberg had shut down struggling schools and replaced them with smaller ones. During the last term of his administration, several schools, including Franklin D. Roosevelt High School, were slated to be shut down. However, that policy

was retracted before it could be implemented. Fortunately, Boys and Girls High School was not on that list.

Boys and Girls High School was established in 1878, making it the oldest public high school in Brooklyn. It boasts a slew of notable alumni, including Shirley Chisholm, Norman Mailer and Aaron Copland. Lately, however, the school’s reputation has been slowly declining. According to the NYCDOE Progress Report for the 2012-2013 school year, the school received an overall grade of “F,” garnering 35.8 points out of 100. The graduation rate for that year was 43.9%.

Gassaway is not the only one questioning the plans for struggling schools. Many have criticized the city’s approach to help schools improve. Gassaway says that for Boys and Girls in particular, there is no cohesive plan for improving the school. Changes to the the

curriculum, namely the adaptation of the Common Core, have made things even more complicated.

Ashir Raffé’16 says that “Common Core was not the way to go. It makes things more confusing by looking at accepted practices in a different, unorthodox way.”

Not all educators put the blame solely on the school administration. Some acknowledge that in order to learn, students sometimes need to make the incentive themselves.

Gary Levine, a teacher in the biology department of Brooklyn Tech, says, “The mechanism is there and the teachers attempt to provide it. But whether or not the students take advantage of this is due to a number of factors, even in a school like Boys and Girls.”

# New Year, New Bell Schedule (continued)

By **ALISHA MEMON**  
*Survey Staff Writer*

both teachers and students to have an option to have tutoring.”

At the same time however, shortening each period by three minutes has made a “huge difference.”

“The disadvantage [of the new bell schedule] is that a few minutes of instructional time have been sacrificed,” adds Hoftzyer. “Fortunately our teachers and students are dedicated, capable and effi-

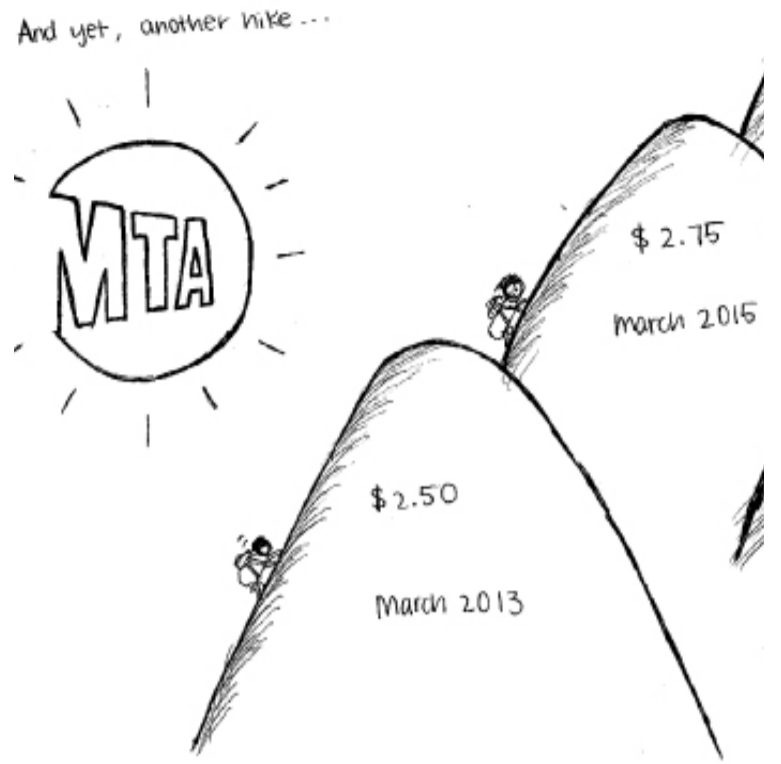
cient enough that they will be able to accomplish all they need to even with slightly shorter periods.”

Celina Liang ’15, who ends period 7, mentions that the new bell schedule makes it “very difficult to attend after school activities that start 11th period.”

At the end of the first month of school, it seems like Tech students and faculty have embraced the change, accept-

ing both the good and bad sides of the new schedule.

**Join The Survey!  
Wed. 5E14  
Period 11**



By Peiyao Chen

# Tech Has a (Coffee) Drinking Problem

By **VIOLETTA JUSIEGA**  
*Survey Staff Writer*

A Brooklyn Tech student with coffee in the morning is a common sight. Many say that they need coffee to function properly, but this exercise is controversial for students and teachers.

Most students who drink coffee do so everyday, but Josh Rubin, a PE and Health instructor says, “I think it’s a poor habit to get yourself into, especially at such a young age.”

Guidance counselor, Deborah Chan, agrees and adds, “High school students are too young to be drinking coffee. In my opinion, even grad students are too young.” She reasons that it contains chemicals that can be harmful to one’s health and can also disrupt one’s sleeping patterns.

On the other hand, some would argue going to school is already a disruption to student’s sleeping patterns.

School—especially with clubs, sports, AP classes and community service—is very demanding for students, who have an ever growing list of activities outside of school that demand attention.

Jessie Xiao ’17 says, “Staying up ‘til one or two in the morning is not really that great. A lot of people drink coffee because of lack of sleep or because they need something to boost their energy to get through the day.”

**4** Teachers aren’t the

only ones with negative feelings on the subject. In regards to coffee giving an energy boost, Crystal Choi ’15 says, “I think it’s a placebo affect. They can’t help it, but I think [Tech students] should just get more sleep during the weekends.”

Ali Hossain ’18 says, “Teachers do have a point about coffee, since it is pretty bad for you.”

Students will have to make a choice whether or not they think drinking coffee is worth some of the risks.



Photos taken by Neel Panchal

# Stunning Hair Everywhere

By **JULIE MOREL**

*Journalism Student*

Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. This scheme of colors known as ROYGBIV finds itself frequently among the hallways of Brooklyn Tech. It's not in the classwork hung on the walls or in the tiles of the floor – it's in the hairstyles of today's teenagers.

As students attempt to squeeze past enormous book bags in the sea of tired teenagers and studious souls, Brooklyn Tech often becomes a mass of people who blur together. But standing out among this crowd, unique hairstyles light up a conglomeration of monotony and stress.

Rita Lu '15 has been dying her hair for as long as she can remember, and it's something she takes pride in. Showing up to school every few weeks with a different gradient of colors brightening her locks makes a bold personality statement.

She pays no attention to what others have to say about her hair; only her own opinion matters to her. "It's nice to be complimented, but my hair is very much something I do for myself," she says..

Although her father often expresses concern for the health of her hair, Lu says he is coming to realize that her hobby and talent of hair-dying is something she finds joy in. Lu is thankful to have parents and friends who both respect and admire her style choices.

With a constant change in hair color – from fiery orange to ocean blue to pale purple – Lu's style is one of a kind. It's also one that many have become accustomed to.

"My closest friend has gotten so used to my hair that she doesn't even notice when I change it anymore, but I take that as a positive thing," she says.

But hairstyle isn't all about the colors. Hallie Robin '15 cut off all her hair on the first day of the New Year, ready for a fresh start.

Over the past few years, Robin has repeatedly dyed her hair all colors of the rainbow, including green, pink, and purple. Due to the bleach she constantly used to achieve a desired color, her hair was left frazzled, damaged, and unhealthy. Although she shaved the sides of her head to a Mohawk in order to get rid of most of her damaged hair, she still wasn't satisfied.

"I was getting fed up with dying my hair and wearing wigs and weaves. I just wanted my natural hair to be healthy, so I decided to chop it all and start from the beginning," she says.

Though Robin believes that hair shows a big part of one's personality, having no hair is equally telling. She says, "It looks great and healthy now, and I love it."

Interesting hairstyles aren't only limited to the female population. Raymond Pan '15 has had a variation of hairstyles throughout the past ten years. From long hair in his middle school days to a fohawk as he began high school, his current look is one of short-trimmed and clean-cut hair.

"As I've matured, my hair has too," he says. "I thought it was getting too childish at a certain point, and I came to a stage where I wanted to find a job and look professional, so I went for a change. And now I look cute."

Marwan Ramadan '15 has also recently made a transition as he is nearing the time for college and professional life. Having a thick head of curls for the past four years, Ramadan chose to live out the rest of his senior year with a much shorter style, free from bad hair days.

Though even friends were startled by this sudden change in appearance, Ramadan embraces it.

"I felt like I wanted to start a new chapter in my life, and I'm happy with my hair. My friends and family have been constantly urging me to cut my hair for three years now, but this transition was just for me," he says proudly.

Though teenagers

tend to have the most interesting hairstyles, adults can pull off some awesome looks too. Yongjun Lee, a Chemistry teacher, is known for his fashionably long and good-looking hair.

Because Lee constantly craves change in his life, his hair has seen many different phases. Two years ago, he rocked a headband to keep his hair from getting in his eyes. Last year, he tied it up, causing a trend among students. This year, he has returned to a down-and-loose style.

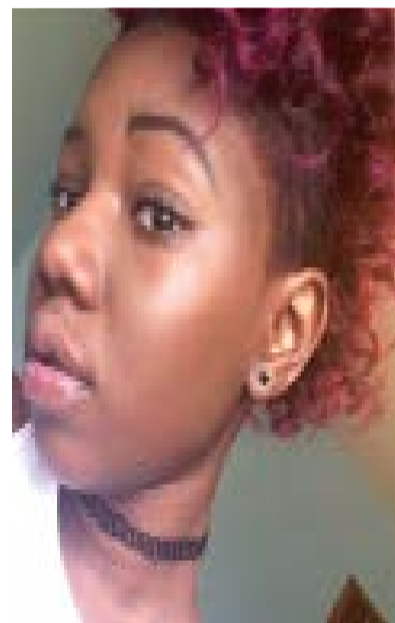
Ever since he was a college student in Japan, a country which once charged the equivalent of \$300 to cut and dye one's hair, Lee has become a true professional at coloring his own strands. But after years of dyeing, the bleach he constantly used to obtain the perfect hair color finally beat him down. A few months ago, standing with a burning scalp of bleach while thinking of the horrors of impending skin cancer, Lee promised to go all-natural and vowed to never dye his locks again. He says he plans to keep it black from now on.

Because Lee's super thick, resistant, and rebellious hair "looks like a Russian furry hat" when he wakes up in the morning, he has an organized routine of hair-washing, alternating his shampoo-and-conditioner days with his minimal-shampoo days. But as far as the hairstyle itself, his wife is in charge. Hoping to create a Korean or Japanese celebrity from his flowing hair, she organizes many of his trips to the barber shop.

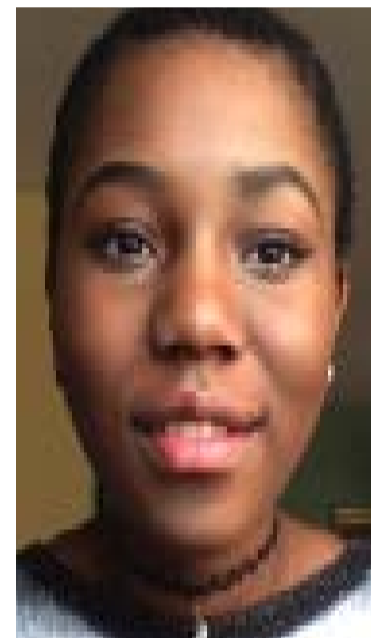
He says, "To me, hair is very important. You have to make a first impression to whoever you meet for the first time, and having a neat or unique hairstyle kind of gives you an interesting look. For many people, hairstyle is a way to say 'I don't give a damn about what other people think about me,' and I like that."



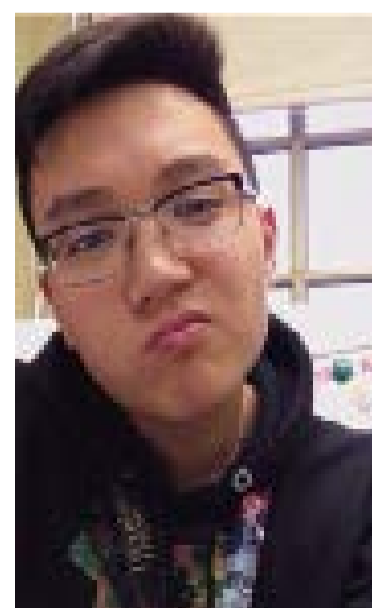
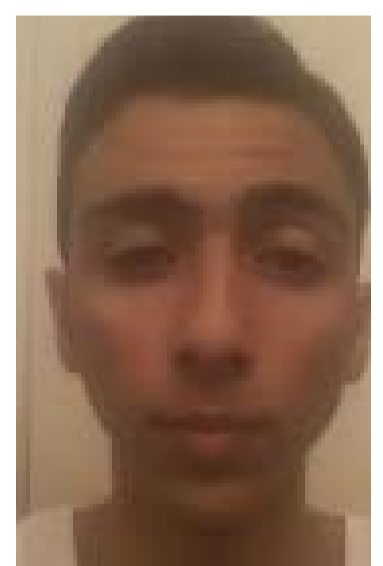
Rita Lu '15



Hallie Robin '15



Marwan Ramadan '15



Raymond Pan '15



Mr. Lee

Dear Survey readers,

Yesterday morning I awoke to the sound of chirping birds and the sight of melting snow. I think it's fair to say that another harsh winter in New York City has finally come to an end, and we can welcome warmer weather and longer days.

Spring is here, and, on behalf of The Survey's staff, I am pleased to present you with our first print issue of the 2014-2015 school year. This mid-year issue is a compilation of articles, photographs, and cartoons that highlight the wide variety of talents and interests of our student body.

From a first place finish in the boy's swimming city championship to an award-winning chamber chorus to the development of major executive boards, Technites have accomplished so much in the fall term.

Not only does this issue honor such achievements, but it also showcases how students feel about their communities, whether it is on a local, national, or international level. I'm glad to see that Technites keep up with current events and can passionately articulate their views. In

this issue, our writers tackled everything from feminism to access to higher-level education. Hitting closer to home, you will find articles on the recent lift of the cellphone ban in NYC public schools and changes to the specialized high school application process.

As we all head into the last leg of what has been a busy but rewarding school year, I truly hope you are taking the time to enjoy the remaining three months – I know I am. A good friend of mine put into words exactly how I feel as a second-term senior; it is finally time to “catch our breath” after a long race filled with tests, projects, extracurricular activities, obligations at home, and more tests.

Being Editor-in-Chief of The Survey for the past several months has been a wonderful experience. I have been fortunate enough to work a team of incredible editors, writers, and photographers, who, I am happy to say, take pride in their work. The position of Editor-in-Chief is much more than a job to me; it has become a state of mind. My editing and leadership abilities are constantly being tested and strengthened.

I am proud to say that back in December The Survey took home five Newsies! Awards in a citywide competition for high school journalists. Apart from this honor, I am also thrilled with the progress that The Survey has made in terms of its digital footprint. With a new theme, our website is looking better than ever. As we head into spring, I hope it will continue to blossom – forgive me for the bad pun – with articles and multimedia being updated more frequently.

Thank you for supporting The Survey by picking up this print issue. For more articles please check out our website [www.surveybths.com](http://www.surveybths.com) and like our Facebook page, The Survey: Brooklyn Tech's Student Newspaper. Have a great spring term and good luck on your AP exams!

Sincerely,  
Erika Lopez '15  
Editor-in-Chief  
(2014-2015)

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## Does P.E. Cause Fatigue Throughout The Day?

By **ANANNYA DEY**  
*Survey Staff Writer*

Gym is an important part of our school day. Some students have gym every day, but most have it every other day. Regardless of their gym schedule, many students tend to complain about the fatigue they experience afterward. From my experience, gym takes up all the energy I have for the day. Because I have it first period, I find that I am exhausted for the following few periods.

Gym teaches students to fully participate in order to receive the highest grade possible. Some teachers can be strict and reprimand students who are slacking off or fooling around during class. This has led to some students wondering “How does gym affect us outside of class?” Gym classes at have started

to require more rigorous workouts and effort, which causes teachers to give more challenging lessons.

While in the locker room, I see students huffing and puffing as they rush to make it to their next class in time. Changing in the locker is an unpleasant experience due to the lack of time and space. Once students make it to class, they are tired and breathless. The first thing most students do upon arriving is ask the teacher to get water. Often, their next class is spent trying to breathe in a regular pattern again and to be lively enough to do their classwork.

Gym definitely affects academic performance and alertness level during classes. Gym teachers give too many exercises to their students and scrutinize the form and technique in which they are completed too much.

Yeatasmin Shiropa '17 says, “After gym, it depends on what I did in the class. Mostly, we do things that cause a lot of physical activity in class, but even then, a lot of us are too tired to move on with the rest of the day, and some of my friends complain about it too. Getting to my next class is even more annoying, because I have to walk up a lot of stairs and across the halls, which takes time for me, especially since it's so crowded.”

Shiropa also agrees that gym does cause fatigue afterward, which affects your overall energy level for the remainder of the day.

However, Chris Rabot, an English teacher argues, “I think it might be more likely that teenage students might be more ‘hyped up’ after gym class and that it takes them a little while to settle down again. I don't recall any such effects of

fatigue on myself when I was young and in high school, oh so many years ago.”

Another student, Anikta Roy, also offers a different perspective. She states, “After gym, I am perceptibly more energized and mind is definitely more attentive. Unfortunately, gym is very last class and it doesn't deliver these same benefits to me when I'm in my other classes earlier in the day. In a way, I see P.E as an escape from the academic rigors we face throughout the day.”

Gym provides Roy with more energy than she had before going to gym.

Likewise, Alan Barbour, an AP World teacher, says, “I think gym class is an essential activity that should be part of every school day. One of the most significant problems facing Americans today is the lack of exercise. There are the obvious health benefits of regular exercise that have

been expressed again and again but I would add that for many people the mental benefits of exercise are just as important.”

Barbour also adds, “To sit in a classroom for hours after hours is difficult and draining. Physical movement allows students to release pent up energy in an entertaining fashion. I remember my high school had gym every day and that was an activity I valued tremendously. I felt energized after gym, not drained. I would imagine many other students would feel the same.”

However, I believe gym teachers should lower the amount of exercises and pace at which they are performed, and occasionally allow students to relax so they can save up their energy for their upcoming classes. Gym is a class where you have to be the most active, but, as with all things, it should be practiced in moderation.

## Teen Problems: Handling Money

By **SANA ASGHAR**

*Survey Staff Writer*

How many times have you reached into your wallet and realized that you've spent all your money? Well, if you're like the majority of the teen population, your answer is probably a lot.

Most teenagers don't have good budgeting skills. They spend money whenever they feel like it, not thinking about whether they actually need to.

Successfully utilizing

money is an important tool that students will need in the future. Children need to break their habit of buying food whenever they see a deli nearby. Instead, they should think about saving their money or putting it to better use.

I feel that it is part of a parent's responsibility to teach their kids about money-management. Today most children aren't learning about financial responsibility, because no one around them talks about it.

When parents are going through tough financial times, they don't tell their children. They whisper to each other, not letting their children know that sometimes money isn't always available. If this keeps going on, children are never going to become mature spenders.

Teenagers need to learn what "tough times" are. Parents should discuss their financial situation in front of their children, not hide it from them.

Studies have found that 87% of teenagers admitted that they don't know much about personal finance.

For parents, the first step

in helping their children learn about money is giving them an allowance. Children who grow up with an allowance will find that in the future, balancing a budget becomes easier and more natural, because they have already been keeping track of the money they spend and get.

Getting a part time job is also a good approach. Children will most likely start a savings account and therefore learn how to save up for the future.

Shelley Zipper, an English teacher says, "Getting a part time job is a great learning experience, because it helps you value what you earn

and therefore spend money more wisely."

Many students agree. "I started getting a set allowance each week and now I use much less money than I used to use last year," says Annie Yin '17.

Another student named Annie Yang '17 states, "I work a part-time job and it has caused me to create a savings account which will hopefully benefit me later on."

Parents teach their children many things that they will need to know in the future. Learning how to manage money is also an important skill that must be taught.

## What Feminism Really Means

By **MOSAMMET ASMA**

*Survey Staff Writer*

Nowadays, feminism is represented by an army of unshaven female warriors who hate men. But is that an accurate portrayal of what feminism really is?

Melissa Goodrum, English teacher, says, "According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the definition of feminism is: 'the advocacy of women's rights.' Quite often, people paint negative connotations onto this term. I am proud to be a feminist and therefore, an advocate for both women and men."

Huh. That sounds different from society's views.

Men and women being equal—that is what feminism is about. Think about Rosie the Riveter, in her red bandana and blue work shirt,

saying "We can do it."

Do what? Be successful and achieve all our endeavors without any restrictions.

On the other hand, in our culture, being a feminist immediately puts a negative equality on an individual's personality. But why?

One reason could be that politicians and members of the media are stigmatizing feminism.

Of course there are women who hate men, but those women are not feminists, even if they say they are.

They are misandrists. It is a common mistake to confuse these two; however, nowhere does it say in the definition of feminism that females should be superior to men and that men are repulsive rapists.

In a survey conducted

by YouGov in April, when asked if they consider themselves a feminist, 32 percent of Democrats, 19 percent of Independents and only 5 percent of Republicans said they do. (<https://today.yougov.com/news/2014/08/01/feminism-today-what-does-it-mean/>)

When asked if they believe that men and women should be social, political and economic equals, 87 percent of Democrats, 81 percent of independents and 76 percent of Republicans agreed, with an equal percentage among men and women. This shows that the definition of feminism is widely mistaken and that their decisions were influenced by how our society portrays it.

Vergel Reyes '17 says, "Whether I'm a feminist or not depends on its true definition and how it is seen in soci-

ety. I don't support a gender's dominance over another, nor do I champion sexual or gender stereotypes. I support equal rights, opportunities, and yes, consequences, for all genders equally, where applicable. If a feminist is one that champions equality, then yes, I am a feminist."

He goes on to say that if a feminist is someone who is looked upon as a "feminazi," then he is not a feminist. He supports equality, and whatever society makes of that is something he has no control over.

However, is allowing society to shape what is considered this or that ethical?

Rashadul Islam '17 says, "I am a feminist. Although people now see feminists as people who yell at men holding doors for them, I don't find that true. I believe every human, whether woman or man, have the same potential and can be equal in all fields."

Zak Foster, teacher in the LOTE Department says, "I am a feminist, I believe everyone should have equal opportunities regardless of their gender."

Foster goes on to say that the only problem he has with feminism is that it only represents the feminine and masculine. He wishes that one day there will be a group that will support all the shades in the gender spectrum: men, women and everything in between.

I can say that I, too, am a feminist. I believe exactly what the simple definition of feminism says, for men and women to have equal rights in political, social and economic grounds.

It is shocking to me to hear a woman say she is not a feminist. It is obvious the true meaning and ideals of feminism have been twisted and deformed from what it truly stands for: equality.

## Are Ivy League Degrees Worth the Investment?

By **BRANDON WOOD**

*Survey Staff Writer*

Many students dream of one day attending lectures at a school as prestigious as Cornell, Columbia, or Harvard. We grind, cram, and study into oblivion for the chance to receive a coveted acceptance letter from one of these schools.

Recently, however, some people have become hesitant to invest in an Ivy League degree.

This is due in part to the exorbitant tuitions of these schools, as well as to the feeling that one can receive an adequate education for a much lower

price.

Students who are lucky enough to get into top schools have a tough question to answer: are the benefits of an Ivy League education and the perks of a degree worth the investment?

One problem is that the investment is becoming riskier to make, since the interest on all student loans taken out after June 2014 will have an increased rate. Many economists expect this trend to continue as the US hits \$1.2 trillion in total student loans debt. (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/specialfeatures/2013/08/07/how-the-college-debt-is-crippling-students-parents-and-the-economy/>)

Others have become skeptical of the superiority of an Ivy League education over that of any other university.

Yongjun Lee, a chemistry teacher says, "I feel that [Ivy League degrees] are required for some high profile jobs, however are not necessary for the actual work itself."

In other words, Ivy-League degrees might help you land the job, but aren't always essential for your work.

However, this is always based on the caliber of work you wish to pursue. The quality of your education may make a world of difference should you choose to pursue a more ambi-

tious career path.

Isaac Honor, a math teacher with advanced education says, "Whether or not you decide to go to an Ivy League school is entirely based on your long-term goals. For instance, if you see yourself entering politics, it may very well benefit you to go to Harvard and get the proper networking."

Networking is a huge advantage that going to an Ivy League school offers. Going to a prestigious university can get you far, but knowing the right people can get you farther, especially when working in a financial or political environment.

Saying whether an Ivy League degree is better or worse

than any other college education is akin to determining whether gray is a light black or dark white. The truth is that the situation is completely different for each individual.

The simplistic answer would be that Ivy League degrees can open doors that most colleges can't. This ranges anywhere from having access to cutting edge materials to better networking.

However, this comes with a significantly higher price tag, and getting a degree anywhere will allow you to do many things that you wouldn't normally have access to.

## DeBlasio Rushes to Change SHSAT

By ZESHAN GONDAL

Survey Staff Writer

In June of 2014, legislators in Albany introduced a bill that would revoke the 1971 law designating the Specialized High School Admissions Test (SHSAT) as the sole criterion for admission to Brooklyn Tech, Stuyvesant, and Bronx Science. Mayor Bill de Blasio supports adding multiple criteria to the specialized high school admissions process. The Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation drafted a response to the proposed change and the bill was ultimately stalled until next January.

There is a legitimate issue at hand – not enough African American and Latino students are enrolled in specialized high schools. The NYC public school population is 40 percent Hispanic, 28 percent black, 15 percent Asian, 15 percent white, and 2 percent other.

The population of the specialized high school system is 7 percent Hispanic, 5 percent black, 53 percent Asian, 23 percent white, and 9 percent other.

The problem is that adding multiple criteria to the admissions process for specialized high school won't necessarily solve this issue. The bill introduced in June called for a "power score" that takes into account each student's SHSAT score,

middle school attendance, GPA, and state test scores. This might keep lazy students who are just good test takers out of the specialized schools, but in theory, the same students who pass the SHSAT will tend to be the students who had high GPAs and test scores in middle school. The ethnic composition of the specialized high school system will probably not shift substantially, and the top middle schools with stricter grading standards will be punished when GPAs are taken into account.

If the "power score" system doesn't work, the specialized high schools may require essays or interviews, mirroring the application process of other selective high schools around the city. This raises a new slew of questions. Will students have to report their ethnicity when applying? If two students with identical statistics were interviewed, how often would the underrepresented minority student be admitted versus the white or Asian applicant? How will the administrative challenge of adding an admissions committee be handled?

Bilal Nadeem '15 believes that "adding multiple criteria will make applying to high school similar to the college admissions process. Middle school

students shouldn't have to go through that kind of stress." Essays and interviews also favor wealthy applicants who can afford intensive coaching, a problem that has plagued college admissions for decades.

The real question is, why the rush to add multiple criteria? For the past 43 years there has only been one criterion; there is no reason to push a new bill through the state legislature immediately without considering its implications. The city needs to spend the next few years conducting studies to figure out the best way to increase black and Latino enrollment in specialized high schools while maintaining an objective admissions process.

Andrew Pokorny '16, says, "a lot of smart kids don't take the SHSAT because they don't know about it. Going to a specialized school means leaving the community for them." The Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation has suggested outreach to black and Latino communities in order to spread information about the benefits of a specialized high school education. The Foundation also proposes that the city expands the Discovery program, an alternative admissions path to specialized high schools for disadvantaged students who score just below the cutoff.

## Tech Versus Stuy

By OLENA NAZARENKO

Survey Staff Writer

When most students hear the word "Stuyvesant", the result is usually a scoff. Though some disappointed freshmen, having failed to get into their first choice school, may yet harbor a soft spot for Stuy, most Technites have assimilated into the "antiStuy" crowd of Tech students.

But why the rivalry? And when did it begin?

To find out, it may be necessary to look beyond superficial accusations and dig deeper into the history of the two competitive institutions.

Both Brooklyn Tech and Stuyvesant are Specialized High Schools in NYC, which means they select prospective students based on an admissions test. While Stuyvesant may be the more popular first choice for a lot of students, Brooklyn Tech offers something Stuy fails to provide: a very large student body.

8 With over 5,000 students, Tech boasts student

diversity and the semblance of a college.

Stuyvesant also offers a college experience with similar opportunities for taking college level courses, but compared to the 1,300 students accepted each year at Tech, only 800 or so are accepted at Stuy, making the latter a school fairly more difficult to get into.

But both schools have outstanding reputations. Competition amongst the best seems reasonable.

In fact, according to Stephen Gigliello, coach of the boys' basketball varsity team, the competition is not only understandable—it's beneficial.

He claims, "I think it's great. It brings out school pride. We've played the game every year (alternating sites) for the past 6 years! My players and Tech's student body always look forward to the Tech vs. Stuy game."

Looks like Tech vs. Stuy competition is vital, enjoyable part of basketball. But does everyone enjoy these perks of

Tech vs Stuy competition?

"Honestly, I don't see the rivalry," says Hannah Wong '16, a member of the chess club. "From my own point of view we do stuff for ourselves (in chess club)... we aren't motivated by competition ... we just do things if we want to and if we need to."

Seems like chess club doesn't care about topping Stuy—no antiStuyism there!

So where can we find it? Isn't there some Technite who really, really hates Stuy? Apparently, there is.

"Stuy is better," says Graham Nelson '16, with a massive smirk. "They all dress so posh, like they think they're better than everyone else. A Tech kid usually wears whatever: t-shirt, sweatshirt... But a Stuy kid sits on the train in a sweater and dress pants like he's going to a ball or something."

Perhaps there is no simple answer to what exactly the Tech vs. Stuy relationship resembles. It's certainly not all negative, but it surely contains quite a bit of rivalry.

## Private School Students Have Upper Hand

By ABBAS RAMADANI

Survey Staff Writer

I recently came back from a Model United Nations Competition that was hosted by Harvard University. Twelve students from Brooklyn Tech participated in the conference, including myself, but none of us came back with an award.

During the awards ceremony, my fellow members and I noticed that the same two schools were constantly called up to receive awards, The Dalton School and Horace Mann, which are the top two private schools in New York City.

The tuitions for these schools are \$38,710 and \$41,150 per year, respectively, which translates to college level tuitions for a high school education.

I was curious as to what made the students from these schools better than those from public schools, at least in terms of this competition.

Does the price justify the benefits that private schools offer? Do private schools truly offer certain benefits to students that public education cannot?

Immediately, one clear difference between private and public schools is that parents who provide the funds necessary to put their children into private schools expect the best results, which is why activities such as Model U.N. and Debate Team are taken so seriously.

In Brooklyn Tech, Model U.N. is merely a club, whereas private schools have a class specifically dedicated to the program. The grades that the students receive in this class are based solely on their level of performance in these competitions.

Another advantage of private schools is the student population. For example, the population of The Dalton School is approximately 1,300, whereas the population of Brooklyn Tech is approximately 5,500.

This outstanding difference between populations gives private schools the ability to have more intensive curriculums. As a result of smaller class sizes, educational growth is individualized, and the teachers must meet higher standards.

Teachers who work at these schools often have impressive credentials that vary from past experiences to prestigious university degrees.

Alec Segalman '16 who once attended a private school stated, "Private schools offer their students an advantage for several reasons. Schools like my alma mater Browning hold their students' success as their highest priority."

He further elaborated by claiming, "They have extensive college departments with connections to the nation's top colleges, and benefit through reputation by getting their students into these schools. Such incentive simply does not exist at public high schools, in which teachers with tenure that could care less about their students grades are certainly not atypical."

Furthermore, the amount of funding that private schools receive is greater.

Due to the financial prowess that the families of private school students have, there is more money to fund educational programs.

Elite alumni foundations also play an important role in contributing funding to these institutions. Fundraisers that are held by private schools are sure to procure more money than those of public schools, simply because of the financial disparity between the two.

However, all is not lost for public education. Despite certain financial drawbacks, the environment of public schooling brings together students from a multitude of socioeconomic backgrounds.

Public school provides a much more realistic representation of the real world, in which we encounter those from all walks of life.

Private schools, are not always able to provide the type of diverse setting that public schools can. Many students who attend private school have been in one building for a majority of their educational careers, surrounded by the same group of people from their kindergarten years.

While this offers a sense of familiarity and comfort, they may be deprived of the experience of adjusting to new conditions as well as communicating with different people.

It is also a fact that those who attend public school may not necessarily come from the wealthiest of backgrounds—in fact, 38% of students nationwide live below the poverty line.

Despite the inability of their families to provide them with private education, their motivation to excel academically and pursue high-paying careers may even exceed that of a private school student, who has grown up with financial prosperity.

The bottom line is that there are many factors that contribute to the overall academic success of private school students. Whether it is better funding, more highly qualified teachers, or smaller classroom sizes, private schooling does have its marked advantages over public education.



## Brooklyn's Song Birds Sing Black Mountain Songs

By **DIVINEASIA MILLER**

*Survey Staff Editor*

The small and intimate Brooklyn Academy of Music Harvey venue sets the stage for a warm and spirited performance by the Brooklyn Youth Chorus. Upon entering, your eyes drift from the charmingly worn carved walls, to the geometric screen suspended above the band behind the stage, and finally down to the thin man stretching in the center of the stage. Without warning, the lights dim and choristers emerge as you view the spectacle from the intricately carved brass banister that keeps you from plunging about 30 feet into the crowd below you.

The choristers resonate confidence and a passion for music as they rendezvous on the stage. Among them is a familiar face: Deanna Goudelias, a senior at Brooklyn Tech and a chorister in the Brooklyn Youth Chorus (BYC). The conductor, with an elegant motion of her hands, begins the show.

Black Mountain Songs (BMS), sung by the BYC, is a collection of songs serving as a tribute to the Black Mountain College, a school that inspired many of the liberal arts colleges in America. The show was performed between November 20th and November 23rd, for the first and last time in this

country. The purpose of the show was to recreate the feeling of the Black Mountain College in all of its glory for mostly hipster audiences in the city, and actually features two alumni of the college in the show itself.

There is no single genre to speak of as the show includes several types of songs that leave the audience reeling and shuddering in anticipation on what song would grace the lips of the BYC next.

The aesthetic of the show is strikingly unique; the choristers are clad in mostly white, but each sports a colored accent. There is one girl with a bronze belt, another with blue pants, and a final one with brown shoes. There are only a few boys in the crowd of singers. Between songs, a chorister or two will leave the crowd (while the others rearrange the stage) to perform a theatrical vignette of Black Mountain College. At points, one of the alumni joins them from a rocking chair on the left. Of course, center stage, her back to us always, the conductor grants visual to the sounds the audience is hearing.

Different lights imbue the white on stage with color, and different images flash on the geometric screen depending on what song is being performed. The lights bathe the chorus in a warm golden orange when

*Photo taken by Ruby Washington*

a cheerful and nostalgic song is performed, and the screen shows frenetic drawings of loops when the song is chaotic. Two songs were accompanied by interpretive dance with the routines that were humorously confounding, perhaps intentionally so.

Shariful Khan '15 declares that The Black Mountain Songs themselves were, "Simultaneously terrifying and breathless. [They] made me wish I had a voice that didn't make babies cry."

The sound of the chorus, both full and unified, is indescribably perfect. You feel the soul of the songs echoing in the chambers of your chest as you listen, and while you can't understand what they're saying on several occasions, you can instinctively grasp the meaning of the song from the feeling that the chorus imparts. The songs themselves were abso-

lutely gorgeous and flawlessly executed, and the end of the show seems to come too soon.

Deanna Goudelias '15, who nonchalantly delivered an excellent solo, said that the show was "The best experience of [her] life." She continued on saying, "This project has inspired me in every aspect of my life. I have learned lessons that I will use for the rest of my life."

Her statement definitely showed in her performance. At the end of BMS, as she stood on stage with what she calls "a family" for her, tears sprang to Goudelias' eyes as the crowd gave the chorus a standing ovation that lasted more than a full minute.

The show was unforgettable. However, one song bird has stated that the songs will be available as an album next year. Start saving Tech students, for this is an album well worth your money.



## Chamber Chorus Brings Christmas Cheer

By **MATTHEW HOLIDAY**

*Survey Staff Writer*

On Monday, December 1, 2014 Tech's Chamber Chorus performed at the 25th Annual MetroTech Tree Lighting Ceremony in downtown Brooklyn. A throng of Brooklyn residents came out for the event, and though the weather conditions were less than favorable with a mix of strong winds and rain, the ceremony commenced without hesitation.

Other performers includ-

ed The Big Apple Circus and an appearance by the Brooklyn Nets. The most exciting guest; however, would have to be Caesar, a robot created by NYU Poly students, who helped Santa light the prodigious pine tree.

The tree was a sight to see as it illuminated the Brooklyn sky in the twilight of the night. Tech's Chamber singers have been performing at MetroTech for a number of years, and it has become a staple performance gig for the choir. Their performance repertoire includ-

ed many traditional Christmas carols, such as Carol of the Bells and Silent Night, but also some signature Christmas songs with stylistic twists. For example, the singers performed a gospel-inspired version of Deck the Halls, as well as a doo-wop interpretation of Holly Jolly Christmas.

Marisa Cazanave, the director of the Choral Program, is extremely proud of her singers and can't wait for continued success in the years to come. Last year, the program was awarded a gold distinction at the New York State School Music Association's (NYSSMA) Major Organization Evaluation. The honor of gold with distinction is only awarded to approxi-

mately 1% of high school choruses in the state.

The chorus is hoping to be awarded gold with distinction again this coming year. According to Cazanave, the music is challenging yet rewarding once the singers grasp the piece. She continuously reminds chamber chorus that they will be taking gold with distinction home again.

In addition to their NYS-SMA evaluation, Tech's Chamber Chorus will be heading to Carnegie Hall this March to perform alongside four other top NYC high school choirs. Tech's singers are definitely reaching new heights and allowing their voices to soar.

## Talent Show 2014 (continued)

By **AMY CHEN**

*Survey Staff Writer*

er."

Although he did not win, Abamonga was still very happy to be able to perform on a big stage. "I met a lot of great, talented people and I got to perform in front of a great audience."

It was the last performance that was perhaps the most memorable. Jonathan Chang '15 gave a powerful performance of Macklemore's "Can't Hold Us." He was able to make the whole audience jump up and cheer. In addition, he provided everyone with glow sticks and everyone in the crowd threw them on the stage as he performed.

"I thought my performance was full of energy and hype. It was amazing having everybody cheering and waving their glow sticks around and throwing them, although, I didn't plan for that. Like 98% of the words came out right. It was hard breathing after jumping around, so I sounded weird, but it's okay because I think it went well. The ending was the best part since everybody stood up. My goal was to unify the school in a way and I think I helped do that. Tech needed some energy."

When asked to sum up the show in three words, Chang said, "Life-changing, hyped, and amazing."

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# Jeff Koons: A Retrospective

By **AMY CHEN**  
Survey Staff Writer

It's a historic moment for the Whitney Museum of American Art because for the first time, the museum is almost entirely filled with work by a single artist: Jeff Koons.

Koons is one of the most controversial and influential artists of the past century. Throughout his career, he has challenged conventional art methods by clashing traditional art with popular culture and adding technical finesse. His unique artwork in the Whitney Museum has attracted long lines of people who eagerly await to see his creations and peer into the mind of a bold artist.

The most interesting series of Koons' exhibit was the Celebration collection. In this collection, Koons made sculptures out of steel to create celebratory images. The sixteen objects of this series are meant to elicit birth, love, religious observances, and procreation. The Balloon Dog, the most popular of the

sixteen, is a ten foot tall yellow statue that weighs one ton. Although adorable in appearance, it carries darker themes as Koons has often compared The Balloon Dog to the Trojan Horse that the Greeks gifted to their Trojan enemies.

Another popular series is Koons' Banality collection. While Koons usually bases his work off of ready-made sources, the Banality series was based off of stuffed-animals, gift shop figurines, films, magazine images, and Leonardo da Vinci. In this collection, he made cute images into darker and scarier ones. This can especially be seen in his 1998 artwork called Michael Jackson and Bubbles.

For sports lovers, the Equilibrium collection may be the most intriguing. According to Koons, this series was meant to show the unattainable "states of being" or salvation. It was this collection that made critics begin to take his work more seriously. (In the past, many of his pop culture works were considered

unmeaningful.) The Equilibrium's best known work is of basketballs floating in tanks while remaining completely still. The tanks are filled with highly refined salt and distilled water, and the ball itself is also filled with distilled water. This creates an image of equilibrium, but it intentionally does not last forever.

The Jeff Koons' retrospective allows visitors to see his diverse mind in the form of art. He shows that anything is possible with his out-of-the-box creations.

Pictures taken by Amy Chen and Angela Sze



Talent show pictures  
10 courtesy of Simone Yhap

## Weird Al Announces His New World Tour

By **MIR KHAN AND SAIF KHALIQUE**

Survey Staff Writers

Weird Al Yankovic, best recognized for his satirical music style with hits like "White and Nerdy" and "Eat It," has recently announced that he will go on a world tour. The name of his tour? The Mandatory Tour, which shares its name with his recently released number one album, Mandatory Fun. The tour is set to start on May 12, with a five night venue at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas, NV.

The recent success that Weird Al has received is long overdue for the almost forty-year veteran of the music industry, as Mandatory Fun is his first number one album in its debut week. This is not very unusual for the singer as he only released his number one single and top ten album in 2006, thirty years after he launched his career in 1976 (the song was White and Nerdy and the album was Straight Outta Lynwood).

Although it may seem that Weird Al Yankovic is a pop-culture relic of some sorts, it is not

unusual to see his work reach even our generation of teenagers. Jessan Jissu '15 stated: "My favorite Weird Al song is "White and Nerdy" and I would gladly attend any of his concerts if they came to New York."

Shajed Ahmed '15 said that "I would go to a Weird Al concert if I could, and my favorite song is [by him] is "Eat It."

It seems, however, that Weird Al Yankovic's pop culture prestige has not been received by everyone in our generation as Stephon Harrilal '15 says, "I don't really care for Weird Al Yankovic's music. I would rather go to a concert of another artist instead."

Despite this, it is truly impressive that after almost forty years of launching his career, Weird Al Yankovic can still excite people who were born almost twenty years after he had made his debut in 1976, and that he can continue to stay relevant with his satirical genius.

# Girls Golf Advances to Quarterfinals

By **MOHAMMED ISLAM**  
Journalism Student

As students and teachers were still adjusting to the new school year, eleven girls were already in midseason form. Midseason form for golf, that is. These eleven girls and coach Maureen Malone make up Brooklyn Tech's girls golf team. In the PSAL fall season, they placed second in the Brooklyn division and made the playoffs with a 5-4 record.

Unlike last season, the four divisions (Brooklyn/Queens, Manhattan, Staten Island, and Bronx) were restructured for PSAL girls golf to five divisions. The girl's golf team had to adjust from an eight team Brooklyn/Queens division to a four team Brooklyn division and had to play an additional game than from last season.

Coming into the playoffs, the team had already beaten division rivals Fort Hamilton twice and James Madison three times. However, the girls weren't able to beat Stuyvesant, the undefeated division champions,

during the regular season. Even though the team won two fewer games this season than in last season, they made it to the quarterfinals once again by beating Francis Lewis High School in the opening round of the playoffs.

Although the team lost to Bronx Science for a second straight year-- the team that went on to win the championship-- in the quarterfinals, all the girls practiced and worked hard to get as far as they did. The team practiced nearly every day at either Marine Park or the Brooklyn Golf Center during the season. This helped form a close bond between the girls and the coach.

"The team environment is very close knit. since the team is very small-- around 10 people-- we are really able to get to know each other well. Since we had practice almost every day we spent a lot of time together. The team is like a family. Our captain and coach are amazing!" said Ava Hunt '15.

Peiyao Chen '15, another

senior, said, "We're pretty close to each other, and we always buy food together."

Reflecting the playoff experience and her last year on the team, Hunt '15 said, "It was a great experience because the playoffs are so exciting and it really gets us to challenge ourselves. All the girls are very supportive and we are always looking out for each other and trying to help each other improve."

"Yes I am sad that this was my last year. Even though golf was a lot of work and it was tough, I'm not ready for golf to be over yet! I'm going to miss the girls, the coach, the practices and the games."

Chen '15 had similar feelings when asked about her last year.

"Yes, it's sad that this was my last year on the team. Because I'm just a beginner, I really want to continue practicing golf so I can improve," she said.

Although three of the senior players will be graduating this year, the team will look to make a push for the championship next season, with six seniors and rising star Megan Kwan '18. She placed 6th place in the 2014 PSAL Girls Golf Individual Tournament and was a starter on the team in all eleven games, including the playoffs.

Chen's father said, "By being on the team, Peiyao is maturing and learning to manage her time wisely. It is hard to be both an athlete and a student at the same time, but she has proved otherwise. We are sure that all the other players on the team work just as hard as her."

Hunt '15 said, "Being on the team is so fun and golf is not what people think at all. It actually is very challenging because it requires a lot of mental concentration and you're always striving to improve yourself. There's always something to fix."

# Girls Table Tennis Off to Strong Start

By **EDRICK LEONG**  
Journalism Student

The girls table tennis team coached by Coach Balansag is a fairly new team. It started its first season in the spring of 2014 and moved its season to the winter. The team has seen impressive beginnings and hopes to be one of the top teams in the near future.

In their first season, the team won their first doubles in the individual competitions, where ten schools were playing at the same time. The team continued their success in the winter season, making it to the quarterfinals. However, their streak ended when they were immediately matched against Cardozo High School, last year's winners.

"Although everyone tried especially hard, we were unable to conquer Cardozo," said Jessica Kwan '15. "But I'm honestly still very proud of the Tech team and the fact we made it so far."

"This was my first season playing for the team and I really enjoyed it," said Karen Lam '15. "I feel like I've improved a lot since the beginning of the year."

The team has daily prac-

tices during the season in which Coach Balansag runs drills where the players were required to return the balls with only backhand or with only forehand. The members are also pitted against each other so that their mistakes and weakness can be pointed out and improved. Coach Balansag plans to take further actions to strengthen the team and lead them to more victories in the future.

"Next season, I will hold early recruitment, more intensive training, and encourage those interested to join table tennis camps to enhance their skills," said Coach Balansag.

The team has become a force to be reckoned with, especially since the team has become part of PSAL, which means players will receive 8 credits per term for their participation.

The new season for the table tennis team starts this fall. They are holding recruitments and all that are interested should contact Coach Balansag.



Photo Courtesy of Jessica Kwan

# Boys Varsity Wrestles for First Place

By **JASMIN WANG**  
Survey Staff Editor

Tech's boys wrestling team won their first game against New Utrecht with a score of 60-19. Their last game against Midwood ended with a score of 45-34. From then on, the wrestlers blew away their competition with scores of 81-6, 78-9, etc. The boys had an undefeatable streak of 8-0 before playoffs. The wrestlers season score improved from last years score of 7-0. Julian Silverio, Demetrios Koutsidis, and Steven Prinston competed in finals. Steven finished first while Julian and Demetrios finished second in their weight categories. As a team, the boys are placed third in PSAL ranking.

Cocapatin Demetrios Koutsidis said "I believe the main reason for our success is our work ethic. We are working when every other team were

taking breaks. Having basically our entire starting lineup graduate last year and still placing top third in the city with a fresh lineup is a feat in itself. I know next year we will come back stronger than ever and come out on top."

At finals, Totenville came in first, second Cardozo, and third Brooklyn Tech. Tech lost to Cardozo by 34 points. Though Tech wasn't placed first in the city, the wrestlers were top of League Region 5, Brooklyn.

The team gained only nine freshmen wrestlers unlike last years. More players are probably needed because last year, there was a larger amount of freshmen wrestlers.

The wrestlers plan on training harder for next season. Tech welcomes all students to show support during their games.



Brooklyn Tech Wrestling Team

# Boys Swim Takes 1st Place in City Championships

By **JASMIN WANG**

*Survey Staff Editor*

This year swim team finished first in the city. The swimmers started their season with 52-46 against Fort Hamilton. From then on, the boys won every meet by an average of 13 points. During opens at Flushing Corona's Pool, the boys placed first in seven events out of eleven.

Seven boys made it to states to compete among the fastest swimmers in New York State. The swimmers include: Elan Oumarov, Glen Pesola, Alan Li, Aron Zhang, Jeffrey Wong, Jake Hollander, and Veniamin Konovalov.

Their last meet

was against Stuyvesant for first place in PSAL swimming. The sharks pulled away with a score of 58-36. The swimmers managed to win their last meet with the and showed how efficiently they work under pressure.

Jeffrey Wong '15, cocaptain said, "Our win against Stuy couldn't have happened without Coach Swartz. He trained us well and pushed us to become the city's champion three years in a row."

Jacob Hollander '15, cocaptain stated, "I think we won because since the beginning of the season, we had one main goal and that was to win city championships. Once we got to the meet, all of our

hard work was over and we were able to perform to the best of our abilities and ultimately beat Stuy."

Elan Oumarov '17 broke a school record for 100 fly with a time of 51.36 seconds. He said, "It was something that took a lot of work to accomplish, making it that much more rewarding."

The boys trained hard this year with practice before and after school. Their dedication and vigorous training paid off at their last meet. Next year will be a battle to keep their number one title for PSAL.



Picture Courtesy of Jimmy Bai

# Fantasy Basketball League is Heating Up

By **MIR KHAN and SAIF KHALIQUE**

*Survey Staff Writers*

For most people, basketball starts and stops after watching their favorite teams on their television sets. But some people take their passion for this sport to the next level by making their own fantasy teams consisting of the best players in the NBA.

Participating in a fantasy league for any sport is a way to prove that someone's favorite players are actually the best in the league. Others participate in fantasy leagues because they want to develop more knowledge about a certain sport.

At Tech, there is a fantasy league for basketball that meets in chemistry teacher Sooraj Nair's room. After school, the students discuss their rankings, and socialize with other participants on a weekly basis.

Arda Dalkir '15, said, "Fantasy leagues are a fun way to get really competitive with people you're usually chill with, whether or not they know much about the sport."

This past week marked the start of this year's fantasy league, which has been running since the conclusion of last year's NBA season. Participants have been preparing for weeks leading up to the start of this year's fantasy basketball league,

having researched NBA draft picks and watched NBA pre-season games.

Nair and the participants have also resorted to some tech-savvy alternatives to keep track of their fantasy team's scores, as they use Yahoo! website's fantasy basketball interface to keep track of their team's rankings. Last year, the fantasy basketball league was comprised of a handful of competitors, but this year the number of competitors (or teams) has jumped to sixteen.

The defending champion, Daniel Dayen '15, talked about his experience, "It feels great and very unexpected because last year was my first time in a fantasy basketball league. I hope my picks help me win this year as well and end my senior year on a good note."

Rookie Brian Sarango '15 is in his first year participating in the fantasy basketball league and he said, "My first year in the fantasy league feels strange, especially since I don't know much about basketball. I know some of the basics, but I have trouble grasping some of the more complicated aspects of the sport and it feels like I'm at a disadvantage. But despite this, I'm hopeful that I'll do well in the coming weeks."

## Support Tech Sports!

### Upcoming Home Games:

Thursday April 2nd - Boys Cricket and Girls Lacrosse

Tuesday April 14th - Boys Lacrosse, Boys Volleyball, Girls Softball

Thursday April 16th - Boys Baseball

Mr. and Ms. Tech Bodybuilding And Fitness Show

Friday April 17th - Auditorium