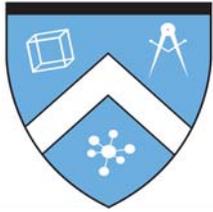


Columbia Secondary School Newsletter

September-October 2013
Volume 2, Issue 1

Miriam Nightengale, *Principal*
Lenice Nelson, *Assistant Principal*
Dan Novak, *Assistant Principal*



M362 - CSS
Columbia Secondary School
for Math, Science & Engineering

Mark Your Calendar

- ◆ **Bake Sale**
Friday, October 4
Bring donations to the OSS on the morning of the sale. To volunteer, contact: poopsypu@yahoo.com
- ◆ **PTA Meeting**
Tuesday, October 8
3rd Floor Library, 6-7:30pm
All parents welcome!
- ◆ **School Closed**
Monday, October 14
Columbus Day
- ◆ **Hispanic Celebration**
Thursday, October 17
West Gym & Auditorium, 5-8 pm
- ◆ **Parent – Teacher Conferences**
Middle School:
Wednesday, October 23
5:30-8 pm

High School:
Thursday, October 24
5:30-8 pm

Middle & High School:
Friday, October 25
1-3 pm

Newsletter Staff

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Letter From Our Principal

Dear CSS Community,

Welcome back to our new school year. So much has happened this summer as CSS enters its final year of growth and its first year of high school graduation.

We have added some stellar new teachers to our already high-talent faculty. Please take a moment to read about our new faculty members in this issue of our newsletter.

In addition to new teachers, we have other arrivals on the horizon. From an application filed on behalf of the school by Friends of CSS and advocated for by persistent parents, we were awarded a \$150,000 grant through City Council Member Robert Jackson's office to improve our classroom technology by installing new SmartBoards, document cameras, computers and projectors. We have also, in collaboration with your PTA, been able to purchase an ID machine. Our School

Leadership Team (SLT) continues to work with the Office of Space Planning to ensure that the bathroom renovations are scheduled, and that other promises are fulfilled. Persistent follow-up resulted in a visit from Michaela Daniel from Speaker Christine Quinn's office (she is a fan!) to help us figure out possible avenues to increase our resources. And the Friends of CSS, met several times with Columbia University's provost and others to secure funding to continue to support our College Counselor, Kristen Harris, and our rich elective program.

So much happens here through the active participation of parents! Please respond to our various organizations as they reach out for volunteers, for contributions and for support. It is shaping up to be a great year.

Sincerely,

Miriam Nightengale

CSS Welcomes Eleven New Faculty Members

Genevieve Aidala – 7th & 8th grade Spanish, 9th & 10th grade Art
I grew up in New York City and went to the University of Michigan. After my receiving my master's degree, I taught in Brooklyn and Upstate New York. I love to travel and studied abroad in Spain. The last trip I took was to visit Peru's Machu Pichu and Ecuador's Galápagos Islands. I enjoy drawing and painting, playing the guitar and drums, sports and listening to many types of music. And I can juggle!

Valerie Aubry – 7th & 8th grade U.S. History
I loved studying anthropology and history at Amherst College and getting



Left to right: Amanda Robin, Alicia Crawford, Kristin Birchard, Genevieve Aidala, Darryl Joo, Valerie Aubry
Not pictured: Jennifer Rose

a master's in social studies at Teachers College. I taught U.S. and global history at Woodlands High School and the Bronx Dance Academy (a public middle

school). I enjoy teaching debate and coached winning teams in a Westchester moot court competition. Before becoming a teacher, I worked as an editor at Oxford University Press and D.C. Health. I like to chat in French and Spanish, sing, hang out with my family, and pretend to dance flamenco.

Dean Bethea – 9th Grade ELA, Philosophy

I am in my second year of high school teaching after 25 years as a tenured college professor. I hope to use my college teaching experience to enrich my CSS students' education. I obtained my Ph.D. at the University of Tennessee after completing my dissertation as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Goettingen in Germany. I have lived in East Harlem since 2007 and enjoy music, art, birding and flower gardening.

Kristen Birchard – 6th Grade ELA Social Studies and Philosophy

I am entering my sixth year of teaching. I have a bachelor's degree from Colgate University and a master's in Education from Hunter College. I was born and raised in the East Village and can't seem to leave the neighborhood! I grew up eating lots of Eastern European food and took Ukrainian dance classes, even though I am not Eastern European (it's a long story, so feel free to ask me). Our principal, Miriam Nightengale, was my high school math teacher at Brooklyn Tech!

Alicia Crawford – 6th Grade Math, Science & Engineering

I am a career changer, having found my passion in education. I am married with two sons: Will, an NYU graduate, and Tim, a junior at Manhattan College. In my free time I enjoy hiking, working in my garden and playing with my dog. As a Barnard graduate, it feels great to be back at Columbia.

Brandon Fremd – H.S. Biology

Before teaching here, I worked in a microbiology lab studying HIV, and then I went on to teach biology at two other schools. Every year while teaching, I have coached basketball and have

loved every second of it. Thanks for accepting me into the CSS family!



Left to Right: Pravin Kumar Jammula, Amanda Valenti, Brandon Fremd, Dean Bethea

Professor Jay (aka Prof. Pravin Kumar Jammula) – A.P. Physics, Chemistry and Computer Science
Originally from India, I have pursued education at CCNY, University of Washington (Seattle) and Columbia University. Prior to becoming an educator, I worked with Washington D.C. think tanks and IBM. When I'm not bragging about my students who got into Harvard, MIT and other Ivy Leagues, I am encouraging parents and students to conduct safe and meaningful science experiments at home. I enjoy hiking, biking, camping and cooking.

Darryl Joo – 6th Grade Mathematics

I am a recent graduate of the New York City Teaching Fellows program where I specialized in mathematics. I became an American citizen earlier this year after 17 years living in suburban North Jersey. Prior to this development, I was a South Korean citizen. I received a bachelors' degree from Brandeis University and am interested in topics ranging from Eastern European politico-economic policy to postmodern expression. I hope to instill the love learning into all of our children.

Amanda Robin – Middle School Guidance Counselor

I grew up in suburban New Jersey and attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Shortly after graduation, I became a NYC Teaching Fellow and taught high school Spanish and Italian

for five years. My experience working with students has made me realize how fortunate I am to be in a position to foster students' self-esteem and influence the way they look at themselves, the world, and their place in it. I recently completed my second master's degree in school counseling/mental health counseling, and I consider myself a lifelong learner.

Jennifer Rose – 6thth Grade Social Studies, 9th Grade U.S. History

I grew up in West Chester, Pennsylvania, a small suburb just outside of Philadelphia. I fell in love with New York City when I moved here over 12 years ago to attend Marymount Manhattan College, where I received my bachelor's degree in political science. I am a recent graduate of the Hunter College master's program. I love to sing and recently recorded back-up vocals for a rock album. I enjoy photography and traveling. I hope to help students realize they have a voice in the world.

Amanda Valenti – High School Physics and Engineering

I am very excited to continue my teaching career at CSS. I studied both physics and mechanical engineering at Syracuse University (Go Orange!) and went on to get my master's at Teacher's College. My goal as a teacher has always been to share my love of the subject with students of all abilities, and give them a good foundation for future science courses. My husband and I are both marathon runners and triathletes and we have a beautiful 15-month-old son, and in our spare time ... well, we have a 15-month-old son!

Did you know that...

- New students at CSS have just arrived from Albania, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Italy, South Africa, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates?
- CSS high school students are filling over 70 seats in Columbia University classes this fall?