

Columbia Secondary School Newsletter

May-June 2014
Volume 2, Issue 5



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

Coming up...

Free family field trip,
including transportation
and entrance, to the
New York Botanical
Garden courtesy of
Urban Advantage.

Monday, May 26
Memorial Day (school
closed)

Registration required.
Contact: Andi Velasquez
andvelasquez@columbia
secondary.org;
(212) 666-1237, ext. 637

5/31: Career Day postponed

6/3: Noon dismissal for middle
school students only

6/4: -Student-led Philosophy
Roundtable, 6-7:30 pm
-New Family Orientation

6/5: No school for students

6/6: -PTA 1st Friday Bake Sale
-MS Science Fair

6/9: Noon dismissal for middle
school students only

6/10: PTA ELECTIONS!

6/24: Senior Graduation

6/25: 8th Grade Step-Up

6/26: Last Day of School
Noon Dismissal
Report cards distributed

COLLEGE EDITION!

Miriam Nightengale, *Principal*
Lenice Nelson, *Assistant Principal*
Dan Novak, *Assistant Principal*
Andi Velasquez, *Parent Coordinator*

Letter from the Principal

Dear CSS community,

It has already been a very busy spring at CSS, and there is lots of news to report:

- Our 6th and 9th grade admissions are complete and our new families are on the way: June 4th is the orientation for 6th graders and their parents, and June 27 is for incoming high school students.
- Students have had visits from amazing speakers, including Jeffrey Sachs, head of Columbia University's Earth Institute and advisor on sustainable development to the UN; and Brian Greene, physicist extraordinaire. CSS physics students observed demo physics projects at Columbia University (see photo below).



➤ CSS has been in the news, with Senior Kiambra Griffin named scholar athlete on NY1; philosophy teacher Diana Senechal appearing on BBC World's The Forum; the school being featured in Urban Advantage's 10th Anniversary celebration at AMNH, and our earth week celebration getting recognized in the citywide sustainability newsletter.

- Our own *Robotics First* team competed at the Javitz Center and a visiting robotics team from Japan brought a jumping robot penguin for an expo you had to see to believe.
- The PTA hosted two wonderful out-

of-school social events and the middle school student government put on an in-school Cabaret Night.

- CSS students participated in a model UN at Columbia University, the NY AIDS walk, the D5 STEM EXPO and a release party for the philosophy journal.
- A team of students, teacher, parents and guests launched the first-ever CSS International Week, featuring in-class country presentations, an after-school student roundtable and spectacular school wide international decorations.
- We have seen the administration of the state tests, the Advanced Placement exams and the new city assessments.
- Though we lost two math teachers for personal reasons, CSS teachers stepped up to fill in for the 9th grade. After weeks of searching, we have a stable teacher for 7th grade.
- With the Washington Heights YM/YWHA, we completed a major grant for afterschool activities to defray the costs of next year's electives program and bring new choices such as music, swimming, theater, tutoring and more!
- Professor Jay and his team of faculty advisors put together a beautiful National Honor Society ceremony for our inaugural chapter.
- What does it all lead to? 100% of the Senior class applied to college and 100% were accepted to a 2- or 4-year college/university. On the other side of this newsletter, the colleges at which our first graduates have enrolled are listed. If we published all the colleges at which they were accepted, we would fill several newsletters! Please enjoy looking over the list and reading a message from Kristen Harris, who guided seniors and helped them attain great results.

Sincerely,

Miriam Nightengale.

And they're off...Class of '14 College List

The 92 members of the founding class of CSS applied to an average of 10.5 colleges each. 970 applications were submitted and processed through the college office. The greatest number of schools to which a student applied was 23 and the least was one.

Following is a list of the schools CSS seniors will be attending:

American University
 Babson College
 Barnard College
 Baruch College of the CUNY
 Bentley University
 Borough of Manhattan Community College (CUNY)
 Boston College
 Brigham Young University
 Brooklyn College of the CUNY*
 College of Staten Island
 Columbia University
 County College of Morris
 Davidson College
 Fordham University
 George Washington University
 Guttman Community College (CUNY)
 Hampshire College
 Harvard College
 Hofstra University
 Hunter College of the CUNY
 Ithaca College
 John Jay College of Criminal Justice,
 LaGuardia Community College (CUNY)
 Le Moyne College
 Lehman College of the CUNY
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 McGill University
 Medgar Evers College of the CUNY
 Middlebury College
 New York City College of Technology
 NYC Technical College (CUNY)
 Oberlin College
 Polytechnic Institute of NYU
 Queens College of the CUNY
 Quinnipiac University
 Ringling College of Art & Design
 Rochester Institute of Technology
 Class of '14 College List, continued
 St. Bonaventure University
 SUNY College of Technology - Canton
 SUNY College - Cobleskill
 SUNY College - Geneseo
 SUNY College - Plattsburgh
 SUNY College - Potsdam

SUNY College - Purchase
 Stevens Institute of Technology
 Syracuse University
 Tufts University
 Union College
 United States Army
 University of New Haven
 University of Wisconsin, Madison
 Ursinus College
 Vanderbilt University
 Vaughn College of Aeronautics &
 Technology
 Wesleyan University
 Western New England University
 York College of the CUNY

*One of the seniors attending Brooklyn College will be doing so as a Macaulay Honors Scholar.

From Director of College Guidance Kristen Harris:

Dear CSS,

Over two years ago, I walked into the unknown. Anxiety was high. Students, staff and parents were unsure if the founding class would be able to recover after such a turbulent beginning. Although I felt the tension and saw the fear, I knew that CSS was headed in the right direction and decided to join the team. After meeting with the students of the founding class, I knew I had made the right decision. Day after day, the talent, grit, and spirit of the student body inspired me. We've built friendships, produced heartfelt essays and sent countless documents to admissions offices across the country and Canada. Our hard work paid off. In addition to acceptances, we have garnered over \$1.5 million in scholarships for students. I AM SO PROUD of the class of 2014 and look forward to following their future achievements. Please join me in applauding our first graduating class!

Warmly,

Kristen Harris

Senior Spotlights

Kit McArthur

Growing up, high school student body President Christian (Kit) McArthur thought he would attend Brigham Young University, his parents' alma mater. When MIT, Harvard and Princeton, schools he had considered *reaches*, accepted him, he was "blown away." Kit chose Harvard because he loves Boston and the "well rounded" nature of the college. He feels taking classes at Columbia University helped prepare him for college, due to the "different kind of relationship with professors, class settings and workload." Kit is considering a mechanical engineering major.

Rosalia Polanco

Knowing that she wants to major in environmental studies guided Rosalia's college search. When College Advisor Kristen Harris recommended Davidson College in North Carolina, Rosalie visited, enrolled in a summer program there, and "fell in love" with the school. In addition to top choice Davidson, Rosalie applied to 15 CUNY, SUNY and private schools. She found out in February that Davidson accepted her. Rosalia feels "scared, ready and excited to start a new chapter."

Sydney Smart

Sydney was nominated last summer to compete for a Leadership Academic Scholarship from the Posse Foundation, whose purpose is to increase social, racial and intellectual diversity at top schools. She learned in December that she won a four-year, full-tuition scholarship to Tennessee's Vanderbilt University, where she plans to study *Medicine, Health & Society*. "I knew then that all the effort and hard work I had put in at CSS had been worth it," she says.