
VOLTAGE

Science Park High School

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YALE-ING FOR JOY: THE SARA TORRES STORY BY: JEAN-CARLOS ARENAS

Walk into the Science Park High School atrium. Look up and around. What do you see? The names “Princeton,” “Columbia,” “Harvard,” “Brown,” and many more hang from above, inspiring all who enter. Admittance to an Ivy League School is no easy feat. Even fantastic applicants get turned down. However, Sara Torres, student leader extraordinaire, has come out on top, being accepted to Yale University.

Sara’s tenure at Science has been a busy one. She has always challenged herself academically, taking on the most rigorous course load available to her. In fact, this year, Sara is taking five (count ‘em, five) AP courses: AP Calculus, AP English Literature, AP Environmental Science, AP Biology, and AP Physics C. However, Sara’s schoolwork does not interfere with her extracurricular endeavors. She was on the swim team for three years and is the Class of 2011’s secretary, a Peer Leader, treasurer of the Science National Honor Society, and the Vice President of Service of the National Honor Society.

Sara’s passion for learning, impressive academic record, and varied interests make her the ideal Yale candidate. She states that her acceptance “is a dream come true.” With regards to the impressiveness and rarity of being admitted to such a prestigious school, she comments, “It still feels surreal. I still replay my acceptance audio [clip] of a bulldog saying ‘Bow Wow! You are Yale!’ It feels like a

great honor.”

Sara will be on the pre-medicine track while majoring in sociology; she is also considering taking on Ethnicity, Race, and Migration as a second major. She explains that her interest in the humanities stems from growing up in Newark and being part of such



a diverse community. She enjoys hearing about new cultures and studying history and how people interact, and thus intends to pursue these interests at Yale. Sara’s polarized academic attractions (medical science and social studies) exemplify the well-

roundedness that Ivy League schools like to see in applicants.

As the NHS Vice President, Sara reflects “[the position] gave me the opportunity to help out both the school community and the local community.” Her selflessness and dedication to helping others is exemplified in her visits to the St. Ann’s Soup Kitchen along with the other members of the society and her organization of the new inductees’ first service project... which was completed before they were even formally inducted! Sara’s eagerness to be of assistance also shows in her role as a Peer Leader, being part of an organization that aims to facilitate the entry of incoming seventh- and ninth-graders to SPHS. The girl’s got heart.

Sara thanks Science Park for her success, testifying, “I believe the teachers and students alike have sculpted me into a proactive individual that wants to both succeed and make a change in her community.” Passing on some of her wisdom to the juniors, she urges them to apply to other private schools even if their dreams are of Ivy Leagues and to apply to schools they see themselves living in and not just because of the name. She encourages everyone, “during the application process and your time at Science High, stay true to who you are and to your values and don’t jump on the bandwagon.” Words to live by from the future bulldog with the brain of a Charger and a heart of gold.

OPENING THE GATES TO A BETTER FUTURE BY: THAIS MARQUES

With only nine days after college applications are due, thousands of unique and talented students from all over the country rush to apply for the Gates Millennium Scholarship. This prestigious award for overall excellence receives more applicants than most universities, with only 1000 slots open for scholars. The goal: to promote the academic excellence of students belonging to minorities. Amongst the applicants were seniors Adedayo Jobi-Odeneye and Katherine Fernandez, Science Park High School students, finalists, and winners.

Contrary to what some may believe, earning such an award is far from impossible for Newark students; in fact, each year, Science Park High School has had at least one graduating student receive this honor. Outstandingly, in 2004, the Gates scholarship was awarded to six Science Park students! Each year that one of its students is awarded the scholarship, Science receives a certificate as it continues to harbor future educators, computer scientists, and engineers.

The scholarship is not for those who solely earn a high GPA; rather it is for those who demonstrate overall excellence in their character that is displayed not only in school, but outside as well. As Adedayo stated, the ideology behind the Gates scholarship is: “how can we help someone that we find very unique and we know have a lot of potential for the future?” The applicants didn’t put down everything they have ever done in their high school career, but rather the highlights of it, and what they thought would be the most important. Adedayo put down her leadership roles and her involvement in the Biomedical Club. Katherine stressed her participation in the community through her volunteer work, peer leading,

and love of writing.

Once Katherine and Adedayo took the opportunity to apply, they waited three months before hearing of their acceptance. While waiting for results, they soon forgot they had even applied. This was mostly because the process was fairly simple considering they had worked on the application since September, filling out bits and pieces at a time. The application consisted of several different questions that the applicant, as well as two recommenders had to answer in order for the administrators to understand the different dimensions of the applicant’s character. Although they had been told that only one would receive the honor, both had hopes that they would receive it together. Adedayo had been the first to receive the news of her award. Her mother frantically called her aunt, unaware that it had even been a Gates Scholarship, only knowing it was a full-ride payment to college.

Adedayo was in England and oblivious of what was happening – only once her aunt told her did she finally realize that she had won an opportunity of a lifetime. Low in morale because she had already known that Adedayo received the award, Katherine was absolutely thrilled once her mother handed her the giant yellow envelope in her name. Their dreams of getting the award together had been realized, and they couldn’t wait to reap the benefits.

Katherine, who is an upcoming English and Women’s study major, with a minor in journalism at Rutgers New Brunswick, became the most excited once she began talking about what the future will be like as a Gates Scholar. Currently, however, she explains, she “doesn’t feel like a Gates scholar” and

it simply “feels okay” because there haven’t been any meetings and she hasn’t been connected with any scholars outside of Science Park. Nevertheless, she explained that there is convocation with the accepted scholars in October. They will receive their laptops, go to workshops, and network with the administrators and scholars. These meetings will occur periodically, primarily to maintain the bond between the students. Adedayo, who will be attending George Washington University as a Biomedical Engineer, was overjoyed once Katherine mentioned that they would be meeting John Legend and Bill Gates. Katherine and Adedayo’s experience exemplifies the rewards that diligence, leadership, and intellectual fervor can bring, regardless of where you live or where you’re from.



CHARGERS OF THE FUTURE

Freshman Profile: Nicole Labrador By Wallis Muraca

As I sit in the cafeteria interviewing Nicole Labrador, 14, I shake my head in wonder. She rarely eats lunch, making me wonder how she can fuel her massive brain. She's usually immersed in her Physics or Geometry textbook, stopping every now and then to ask to borrow my calculator. Although one might guess her favorite subject is math, in reality she likes all of her classes. "They're all pretty interesting; I don't have a favorite," she says.

In her leisure time, Nicole likes to read and go on the computer. She enjoys all types of literature, though her favorite author is Augusten Burroughs. Nicole is often very busy after school, with track nearly every day, Biomedical Club on Tuesdays, and Gay Straight Alliance meetings on Wednesdays.

Nicole has an interesting career choice – neuropsychology (the study of how the brain works). When I asked her what her plans for college are, Nicole shrugged. "I'm not sure yet, but



I'm only a freshman," she said. Finally, I asked who her role model is. She giggled and said, "Emma Watson." Emma Watson is most famous for her role as Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter movies. It's easy to see why Nicole might relate to Hermione – they're both highly intelligent students at the top of their class.

However, in the end, it's Nicole's vibrant and enthusiastic attitude that makes her shine.

Junior Profile: Xavier Kariuki By Pamela Gómez

If you've been walking down the halls of Science Park, you've probably already seen Xavier. If this is the case, you most likely have noticed that he is always carrying something: a

book, a book bag, or simply a smile. He is, as one would define, a gentleman. Focused on his studies but still taking time out to be social, Xavier leads an exemplary life. If you need help, go to Xavier. If you need advice, go to Xavier. If you have a problem and just need someone to listen, go to Xavier. He is always willing to help and does not hesitate to give you advice when you need it. It is his humbleness, his dedication, but most importantly, his simple approach to complex problems that make Xavier a great friend, an exceptional student, and an incomparable human being.

Xavier confessed that he does not have a career path set, but that he is open to anything, although his inclination is towards mathematics. He enjoys the subject very much, which is evidenced by his incredible performance in Mr. Gironda's Honors Pre-Calculus course and Mrs. Bento's AP Statistics course, which, for those of you who have been there, know pretty well that not everyone is able to excel in such courses. In simple terms, Xavier was born for math. He knows the content pretty well and is able to explain it to others perspicuously.

For those who have already interacted with Mr. Kariuki, it would be no surprise to find him doing homework in another class or to be submerged in a computer screen

finalizing his AP English essay due the same day. Although he procrastinates, he manages to perform exceptionally well in all of his classes. Xavier doesn't believe in doing things ahead of time, in fact, he argues that "there is no point in doing today what you can put off 'til tomorrow," a philosophy that allows him to lead life with less stress while still reaping the benefits. What he doesn't put off 'til tomorrow, though, is the Robotics team. That is one of Xavier's main extracurricular interests, and surely enough if you happen to go down to the basement any day afterschool you most likely will find him there... building robots! Now, the question is, how does he do it? How can he procrastinate and still manage to do so well? There is only one answer... because he, the boy from Kenya, the one that laughs rather than complain, is Xavier Kariuki.

Jean-Carlos Arenas: Editor-in-Chief By Newton Portorreal

He is editor-in-chief of the Voltage and Literary Magazine, Astronomy Club president, 5 time Newark Math Olympian (and, 3 time consecutive champion in Geometry, Algebra 2, and Pre-Calculus), Co-chair of the Peer Leader curriculum committee, and a member of both the Science National Honor Society and the National Honor Society. He is Jean-Carlos Arenas.

Less impressively, Jean-Carlos is an excellent student with high hopes after high school; he would like to attend Princeton, Harvard, Cornell, or just about any other Ivy League school. From the lengthy (and incomplete) list of achievements above, as well as his "A" filled transcript, one can safely assume that Jean-Carlos is both able and interested in varied scholarly pursuits. His passion, however, or as he would assert, his forte, is math. "I've grown to like it as it is my best subject," he explains, "I like things that I can do well in." Certainly, this has fueled Jean-Carlos's desires post-high school plans, proclaiming his projected major to be math or an engineering specialty such as computer engineering, though he also is keeping an open mind towards teaching.

One particular experience that has made Jean-Carlos particularly interested in teaching is his experience at Abington Avenue School's summer program. At the summer program, he helped coordinate things, which basically entailed "making sure nobody got hurt." One day, however, he was asked for high school advice and his feelings about Science Park. He began talking to one student and suddenly he attracted a crowd, and held an impromptu seminar about the next four years of these preteens' lives. His passion to help is not only on display once the school year ends, however, but daily. Whether it's helping with a Chemistry worksheet in class or answering the familiar late night "what's the homework" Facebook status, or helping an incoming high school student adjust to a place that isn't always friendly, Jean-Carlos is there to help.



AN OPEN LETTER TO THE VOLTAGE SENIORS

BY: JEAN-CARLOS ARENAS

To the Voltage Seniors:

First off, I would like to congratulate you on making it this far. Being a Science Park student is far from easy, and you have shown tremendous perseverance by making it to where you all are today.

I'd like to thank you for being some of the best newspaper staff I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I was nervous about taking on the big job of editor-in-chief as a junior, but you guys made my life much easier. Thank you for always being on top of your game, whether it was writing several articles, being present at editorial meetings, making sure certain tasks were accomplished, taking pictures, or simply making sure that I was adjusting well to my new position.

Throughout my first year as Editor-in-Chief, I have had an interesting ride. Even though the original staff was about thirty people, gradually the numbers dwindled and my dedicated staff showed themselves. And despite the fact that you all had a lot on your plates, you still remained loyal to the Voltage. For that, I thank you. You have made my first year amazing: Katherine's articles reminded me why

I enjoyed my job, Delores's dedication inspired me to do better, Thaddeu's witty sports writing and profiles (as well as his wit in person) made it worth staying late, Cynthia's willingness to help wherever and whenever was very much appreciated, and Marian's photography was simply exquisite. And I could never forget the great help that Arvind was - without him, the paper would never have gotten its new look, which was well-received. You guys are amazing.

I wish you all well in your future endeavors. Based on what I have seen, I am positive that you will all excel in whatever you pursue. I would wish you all the luck there is to give, but in the words of Mr. Gironda, "It's not about luck, it's about skill," which you have plenty of.

Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication. The Voltage will miss you.

Sincerely,
Jean-Carlos Arenas

A NEW BEGINNING FOR MRS. DONOHUE

BY: KATHERINE FERNANDEZ

It is a rather nostalgic beginning for Mrs. Kathleen Donohue, the new English Department Chair, who describes her first faculty meeting as "fascinating". It is true – things have changed since her employment at Science Park as an English teacher in 1976. An enthused Mrs. Donohue, after becoming aware that Science Park was in need of an English Department Chair, left her position at the Newark Public Schools' central office, stating that she "missed the direct contact with students".

Donohue has a whopping thirty-eight years of teaching experience, and has taught two of Science Park's current English teachers, Mr. Alston and Mrs. Benjamin. She began her foray into the study of pedagogy at Seton Hall and received her Masters at Rutgers University and Caldwell College.

As Department Chair, Mrs. Donohue's responsibilities include support-

ing teachers and their instruction, assisting students, the vice principal, and the principal, cafeteria duty, collecting data from standardized tests, analyzing said data, professional development, and managing budgets. With Mrs. Donohue's jam-packed schedule, it's astonishing that the literature lover still has the time to read. Among her favorite reads are: F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, and naturally, anything written by the William Shakespeare. Recently the lit-lover has forayed into memoirs.

Donohue's other interests include baseball, animals, and family life.

While Donohue doesn't feel she'll make it to her Golden Anniversary as a teacher, one thing is for sure: she will forever remain within the fabric of Science Park.

TEACHER PROFILE: MR. RAMO

BY: NEWTON PORTORREAL

Veni, vedi, vici, et cetera, ergo, rex, de facto – Words and phrases that litter our language, logic, and currency, but whose true meanings are often never learned. Taken by the Romans to the ends of their known world, adopted by taxonomy, and continued by the Papal Seal, Latin is the world's most (un)dead language. Latin, long after the Roman collapse, is the basis of today's Romance languages – Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian, etc. (see?) – and an important contributor to the language of Shakespeare, English. This year, it has also become the language of Science Park Middle School, being taught to 7th and 8th graders by first-year teacher, Mr. Ramo.

Mr. Ramo began to teach himself Latin on Wednesdays 15 years ago, while his children played chess. Along the way, he discovered that he was becoming serious about the language, dedicating himself to it "through and through." It was with his children that Mr. Ramo also discovered he had a knack for teaching, a way of explaining things, he says.

The school in which his children were enrolled was, by his own admission, awfully demanding, and Saturdays were spent going over basic math and the like at the library. As he remembers observing other fathers trying to teach their children he quips, "You tend to forget the difficulties you had. You remember the successes."

One experience he had while auditing a college class was realizing his

private study left him more advanced than college students of Latin. He attributes his refocusing to the "study skills and some of the intensity of Latin."

It is those study skills and intensity, rather than the passing subjunctive mood more oft seen in Latin, that Mr. Ramo wishes to pass on to his students. In fact, he believes, Latin can provide much more than language to its students. "Virtually all our problems today, we had in Rome," he reflects. It is more than the idea of a Senate that can be gathered from the writings of Ancient Rome, he believes, and while he does not believe that history is cosmically bound to repeat itself, he also believes that if we do not learn from the Romans, and we do not change what they could not, we will end up like the Empire. It is unlikely that the Gauls will be sacking any cities soon, though.

Mr. Ramo understands that all students need to be able to read, write, and express themselves intelligently. The politicians of today are not the great speakers of the Roman Senate, he admits, but those crafty enough with language can poison. But to Mr. Ramo, understanding Latin gives a full range of language, and having a full range of language is an antidote.

HEALTHY STUDENT III

BY: SAMANTHA DREHER

The past topics have been about self improvement, but this one is more about improving the way you relate to others, which will, in turn, help you. We can't ignore the fact that there are many other people in the world, people who can be very difficult to deal with. No, you don't have control over them, but the way you act will help you lead a manageable life. Even intellectuals may need to take a step back and remember some of the skills learned back in kindergarten.

Keep a controlled tongue.

One can argue that people need to express themselves, but subtlety doesn't have to lack substance. Listen more than you speak and don't cut people off. This will make them feel like you've fully listened to them and given them the attention they deserve. When people speak, show interest and make eye contact: make them feel like they matter. You will find yourself giving thoughtful advice that people will want to listen to

and follow.

Don't say anything about anyone you wouldn't want them to hear.

I know very well how some people make it difficult to be kind, but verbal retaliation is not the solution. This person can easily end up hearing what you say about them and you will leave a bad impression on others when they hear about it.

Don't make promises you can't keep.

You can try to be the Yes Man, but you can't please everyone. This will

only lead to frustration and people will be disappointed in you. Even if you can, allot yourself some time to relax.

Try to give at least one compliment a day.

Making others feel important will raise their self esteem and lessen their likelihood of turning to some defense mechanism. People will be much less likely to gossip about you. But if they do...

Ignore bad comments made about you.

If it doesn't apply to you, it shouldn't affect you. When others see that it doesn't, they will be less likely to believe the comments. Whether someone

is making a joke or being intentionally malicious, don't be touchy. Instead, ask yourself why such a comment would bother you. You might find it's not true or even a big deal.

Try to stay positive when faced with a problem.

No one wants to take your burdens from you and negativity could end up pushing people away. Try to cheer others up when they have problems. You'll feel accomplished, thinking of how well you have handled your own problem (who knows, it might be worse than theirs) and manage having a good time anyway.

Don't lose your temper.

If someone can get you to the point where you want to scream, they don't deserve an important part of you – your control. Don't allow others to pull out an undesired side of you. The best thing you can do is keep calm.



Say Hello to Ask Anne

The Voltage is Introducing an Advice Column!

Have a dilemma that needs to be solved?

Send your question and pseudonym (the name you'd like to be addressed by if your question is selected) to scienceparknewspaper@gmail.com!

Anonymity guaranteed!



The Voltage would be delighted to receive e-mails with opinions/recommendations at scienceparknewspaper@gmail.com.

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A Night to Remember

