

VOLTA GEE

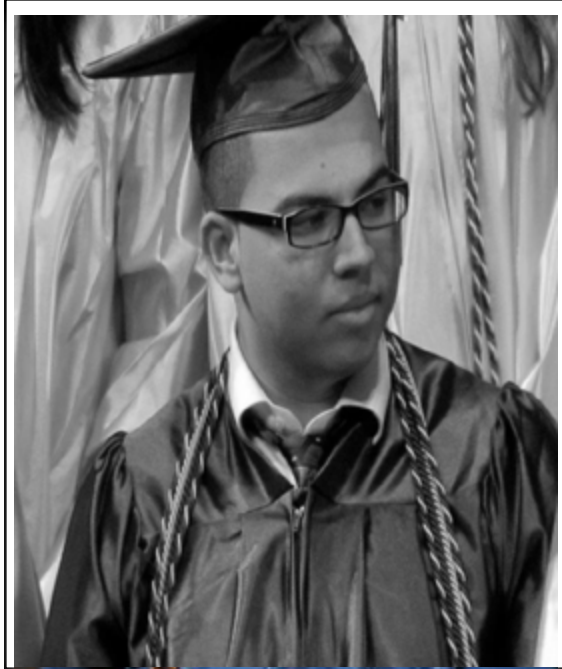
Science Park High School 260 Norfolk Street, Newark NJ 07103 Volume 4 , Edition 1 November 2012

Tips from the Charger turned Princeton Tiger

By Jean-Carlos Arenas

Hey there,

I was asked to talk about my transition from high school to college, at least academically. I originally had this long speech written out (in typical JC fashion), but then I realized I actually am technically not an official writer for this staff anymore and therefore shouldn't occupy an inordinate amount of space in a newspaper that I passed down to an amazing staff. So, here we go with the lists.



Top 10 Reasons Academic Success is So Hard:

1. College is the world's largest sleepover – you'll always want to hang out with a friend.
2. You have so much more unstructured free time in college than you did in high school.
3. There's always something to do that isn't homework or studying.
4. No disciplinary action is taken if you miss class.
5. There's a lot of work.
6. Often, the work is hard.
7. You don't get a convenient planner in which to write down all your homework.
8. You only get 2-3 exams in the semester: midterm, final, and maybe another. Your midterm and final exam can count anywhere from 20 to 50 percent of your final grade, each. Not even kidding, 75% of my final grade in multivariable calculus is just the midterm and final (30% midterm, 45% final). No pressure.
9. The aforementioned exams are also hard – much harder than the homework, actually.
10. You're completely responsible for yourself. You have to monitor your own behavior.

Top 10 Things You Can Do to Make It Not So Hard:

1. Work together with the friends who are so easy to reach. If you're in the same class, even better.
2. Schedule time to study or do homework. Literally schedule it in your Calendar app on your phone/mp3 player/laptop or in a physical planner.
3. All good things in moderation, friends – don't spend all your time hanging out with people and partying, but also don't overwork yourself.
4. Go to class. Taking notes is also not a bad idea. An even better idea is doing any relevant reading before lecture, you'll understand what's going on and be reinforcing ideas as opposed to having them presented to you for the first time.

Tips for You from MSU

By Arvind Searwar

Ask yourself where you will be a year from now. Two years? Five years? Ten? Now ask yourself if that is somewhere you want to



be and if you are on the right track. There are many more steps that trickle down to the most important thing: where you are right now?

I go to Montclair State University, and I am a filmmaking major. It is fun, exciting and something I love doing. Being in my major means that you more or less know that you want to become a filmmaker; it is a skill that over the years you recognize you have. I made a few films during high school, and midway

through junior year, I realized that I wanted to be a director because even with the little experience I had, I loved making films.

To get into the filmmaking program at MSU, you have to have a portfolio of your work. There are phenomenal filmmakers in my program; however, a lot of them do not take it seriously. It is an extremely selective program, and it disappoints me that they do not take it as seriously as they should. I always have this mentality that maybe there is someone out there who wanted what I have and would work harder to keep it. There is someone who needs something we take for granted right now.

MSU is not too far from where I live. I live about fifteen minutes away. When I attended school during the first semester at MSU, I was not driving. I was fortunate enough to have a fellow class alumnus of 2011 drive me to school because we shared the same major and schedule. During the summer of 2011, I was applying everywhere for a job. I applied to AMC Jersey Gardens, and about three days later, I got a call for an interview. My life changed with that call. After a month of working, I saved enough money to buy car insurance for my car, and I was able to drive. The two main points that I am trying to make are that you can work and still attend school, and if you can commute, do not dorm.

I know many of you think that the college experience is not the same without dorming. Dorming would have cost me an extra \$10,000 for MSU, and that was not something I needed. I did not do so well my freshman year in college. I finished the year with a 3.141 GPA; however, I credit that low GPA to one class each semester that I hated. They were major requirements (classes that are required to be taken because of your major) and were excessively boring. Yes, there will be classes like that in college, just like there were in high school. You should try your best to pass those classes because you are paying for them, and they are helping you prepare for your future.

Most of my classes have to do with watching and making films. Where do I see myself ten years from now? I see myself in a boardroom pitching an idea for a movie that is not about vampires and werewolves.



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Tips from the Charger turned Tiger (Continued)

1. Read your syllabus. Learn it. Love it. All the readings and assignments you will have to do for the semester will be on your syllabus or a class website.
2. If you have a Mac, iPod, iPhone, or iPad, I HIGHLY recommend downloading the iProcrastinate app. It helps you organize all of your due dates and exam dates and assign priorities to your assignments.
3. Pro-tip: If you do get iProcrastinate, sit down with your syllabi for an hour one day and just enter every one of your assignments so you can be on top of your game for the entire semester.
4. Actually study for exams. You may have gotten through all of high school without cracking open a book or looking over your notes, but that's most likely not happening in college.
5. Try problems from old exams (which will likely be posted on the course website) for math and science classes.
6. Breathe. You can do this. ■

Tips for You from MSU (Continued)

I want to start off making dramatic movies, much in the style of David Fincher. What steps have I taken to see that goal come true? I am currently a filmmaking major at Montclair State University in my sophomore year. I am the liaison for filmmakers around the country who come in to speak to us. I am a projectionist at AMC Jersey Gardens, but I will be honest— if Pathmark had called first, I would probably be stocking up Halloween candy on shelves right now.

The most important thing when it comes to applying for financial aid is your tax return. I could not emphasize that enough. Make sure your parent/guardian does his taxes and does them on time. Make sure you submit the paperwork on time. Read what is required of you and submit all of those requirements. Keep trying. I tried and tried (even after the deadline), and I got the TAG grant, which pays almost half of my tuition. One should never see college as just another year or four years of school. It should be considered as training for the job world, a world where we want to make a living for ourselves so we can one day sustain a family of our own. ask yourself once more: where will you be a year from now? Ten years? Is that somewhere you want to be? ■

Welcome to the SPHS Family By Edith White



1st Row: Mr. Avagliano, Ms. Colon, Mr. Patiak

2nd Row: Mr. Goxhaj, Mr. Spirovski, Ms. Harvey, Mr. Gomez-Rivera

Student Profile: Thaís Marques By Daniela Fonseca

Thaís Marques may look small, but her ideas are anything but that. A senior at Science Park High School, Thaís says her dream college is Dartmouth College, where she would like to major in International Relations and minor in Middle Eastern Studies. Aside from having a good academic record (her GPA for junior year was 3.7), she is a member of the policy debate team, NHS, the *Voltage*, Peer Leaders and Honors Choir. As if that were not enough to fill up her schedule, she has been playing piano for ten years and sings in her church choir.

The soon-to-be eighteen-year-old was born in Brazil and moved to the United States in 2000, just around the time she was five. She says the transition was difficult because she was discriminated against for being an immigrant in an all-white school, and this motivated her to learn English. When she moved to Newark, she was surprised by the diversity and tolerance for immigrants. Today she says that history and English are the most important subjects because “history tells you about the future and how to make better decisions, and everyone needs knowledge of the English language to survive.”

When I asked Thaís about debate, her eyes lit up, her shoulders squared, and she started to tell me all about it. I asked her why she joined, and she replied with a simple, “I love to talk.” Thaís has been debating since seventh grade and can now say 400 words a minute. She claims this is the hardest part about debate. “You have to think quickly,” she says. “You have a time compression.” The debate team recently went to Yale University for a debate tournament where Thaís and her partner came in first place. She says the easiest thing about debate is pointing out misconceptions, “We use types of evidence that come from biased sources.” Anyone who knows Thaís will tell you that she is quick on her feet to tell you when you are wrong, and this just shows her debating nature even more.

Thaís can go on and on about debate, but her favorite thing about it is the philosophy. “We need to question things,” she asserts. “When you believe in something so much that you do not question it, it leads to bad things.” Thaís tells me that the main thing about debate is the flawed way people view other countries. She wants to become a diplomat to deal with the public and work with other leaders to achieve her main goal: world peace. Although Thaís stays after school every day and has tournaments almost every weekend, she loves debating and talks about it with a fierce passion. “It takes away my sleep. I don’t eat or sleep, but I love it, and it’s worth it. Debate exposes me to things that people my age only find out in grad school.”

After so much talk about debate, she finally let up and talked about the other things in which she participates. Thaís became a peer leader because she had a role model in high school and wants to be one for someone else. She admires Katherine Fernandez, a Science Park Class of 2011 alumna. Thaís says that besides loving Sara Bareilles’ music, she loves to sing show tunes. We also got to talking about her best high school moments, and when I asked her to pick the best one, she said getting a five on the AP Language and Composition test had to be at the top of her list.

Talented, studious and motivated (not to mention busy with that schedule of hers), Thaís is always positive about her future. The *Voltage* staff wishes you the best of luck, and we hope to see you making headlines because you helped bring about world peace. ■



Book Review: Thirteen Reasons Why By Romina Generali

When I began to read *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher, I was very skeptical. I was not all that sure I would enjoy spending an afternoon reading a book about teen suicide. By the second page, I had convinced myself that the book was just another dramatic way to gain money from the already way too angst-ridden teenage spectators. I was going to put down the book, but I refrained from doing so. Two pages turned into fifty, and fifty turned in 288. *Thirteen Reasons Why* changed the way I look at life.

In the beginning of the book, Clay Jensen, your typical teenage high school student, is at the local post office mailing a package and nursing a terrible headache. He was passing on a set of tapes that were anonymously delivered to him. Clay was doing as was required of him, following the directions and allowing the next person to be tortured by them. For an entire night, he listened to the tapes that changed his life forever, and his time had come to pass them on. Clay was already miserable because Hannah Baker, the girl he had a crush on but did not frequently approach, had unexpectedly committed suicide. His night goes downhill when he begins to play the tapes and hears Hannah’s voice. Instantly overcome with grief, Clay is tempted to stop listening; however, something she says causes him not to. Hannah informs the listener that if he has found himself with these tapes, then his name is somewhere on them and one of the reasons she took her life.

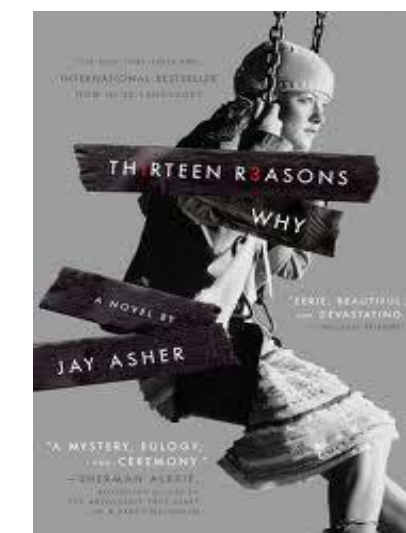
Mortified, Clay listens as Hannah’s voice fills his head, dedicating each of the thirteen messages to someone. She describes how each person came to be a key reasoning behind the decision to end her life. She directs Clay around the town, indicating significant locations. At the beginning of the first tape, Hannah requested the tapes be passed on to whomever was next on the list. She stated that if someone were to fail to do so, a copy of the tapes would be released to the public. Lives and reputations would be ruined, and people would go to jail. Clay also listens as Hannah says that she wishes for the last person on the tapes to keep them and allow the tapes to haunt the last person forever.

Teary eyed and barely keeping it together, the story follows Clay’s life-changing night as he sits through Hannah’s justifications for taking her life. All the while, he hopes he is not the thirteenth person on the list.

I am very glad that I did not put down *Thirteen Reasons Why* when I had the chance. It was not the happiest of stories, but it was definitely one that had to be told. The plot did not just center on that one incident;

it emphasized the importance of paying attention to those around you. You never really know when someone is silently dealing with some of the topics mentioned in the book, things such as depression, abuse, rape, and peer pressure. The book itself is beautifully written, allowing the reader to make an instant connection with the characters.

Days after I had read the last pages, it still haunted me. I remember looking at every person I encountered and wondering if they were OK. ■



VOLTAGE

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Vacation from Physical Education?

By Philann White



As we begin our new school year, we are confronted with new changes. For the past few years, we have had gym and health days split throughout a week. As of this year, we now have gym or health depending on what cycle it is. This new development has been taken two ways: students either support or disagree with the changes.

Some students do not enjoy being in a health classroom five days a week for ten weeks. They want their time to relax and stay fit. For some kids, gym is the only form of exercise that they are doing. Taking away that workout could lead to serious problems for students. It is also proven that exercise helps decrease depression in young adults and helps relieve the stress of everyday life.

On the other side of the discussion are the kids who approve of this change. They do not enjoy any form of physical exercise and would prefer to learn in a classroom. Some students would rather learn about their body than engage in actual physical activities. They want to understand how the body works and what it does as part of a daily routine. Having the full ten weeks devoted to health will increase the probability that a student will understand and retain the information that they are given.

The reason for this change is that the old routine was not accomplishing the yearly hours demanded by the Newark School Board. While other options were suggested by individuals, it was decided that we would split the classes by health and physical education each cycle.

From a health teacher's point of view, this might seem like a bad idea. A student should get into a routine of doing activities every day. This new program does not support that opinion; it only encourages students to be active for ten weeks. After that, they are not required to work out anymore. This can increase the rate of obesity in young adults and can cause certain health problems. Children have to learn to use their muscles and keep themselves healthy. They cannot do that if they are not motivated to exercise. Having a physical education class a certain number of times a week will strengthen their motivation and ensure that they are exercising at least the minimum amount a week. Even thirty minutes a day could make a difference.

While some students accepted this change better than others, everyone had different reactions to it. What do you think of this change? ■



Creating a Colorful Campus

By Christian Mendoca



"A single word to define Science Park High School?"

"Gray."

Why "gray" one might ask? Simple.

There feels like there is very little student expression, and if there is, it is competition after school during a sporting event. The school schedule consists of academics, hard training, and competition all day, every day. It can easily become an arduous cycle. We are trained to win and compete like a gladiator in Rome's grandiose coliseum. Of course, this is hyperbole; however, excessive work creates students who are tired and stressed. They need an outlet for their frustrations. They need some color in their lives.

It can even appear worse for the artistic students of SPSHS, of whom there are plenty, who thrive off color and vividness. The students need to release, express and paint the town with hues galore. It is unhealthy to always feel the need to be like everyone else.

What are the options in the school? Chorus, band, and art.

These are good options, but they are courses, not clubs. The students are graded for their work, which would not be a problem if they picked their own. Instead, students are given assignments. Instead of expression, like one would hope, you get another letter grade and another shade of gray. In the end, the artistic students feel marginalized. Even the science department has clubs that do not involve graded work.

With the addition of the Drama Club, which is headed by Mrs. Kologne and whose members meet every Wednesday after school in the auditorium, and the Anime Club, which is headed by Mr. Goff, SPSHS is finally blotting its canvas with some color. An outlet for the lost has appeared!

With a year of workshops already under its belt, the Drama Club is bound to bring forth a production, or at least some new, enticing events for the student body. Avidly fundraising, the Anime Club looks promising as well.

Will this be enough, though?

What are your suggestions for ways to improve student expression in the school?

Please send them to the school newspaper email address. We will publish them in the next issue.

Let's help create a more colorful campus.



There's A Place for Everyone at Science Park

By Brionna Robinson



Science Park has always tried to be an diverse community, one where everyone is comfortable and belongs. So if you're wondering where you fit in best within the Science Park community, check out this Club Directory:

- Step Team- Ms. Gaylord; Meetings are every Mon. Tues. Thur. and Fri. at 3:15-5:00 in the area across from the Gym
- Robotics Club- Mr. Oulhiad; See Mr. Oulhiad in Room # 312
- Yearbook/French Club- Ms. Jarkowsky
- Anime Club- Mr. Goff; Meetings are every Tuesday directly after school from 3:05-4:00 in Room # 230
- Gardening Club- Ms. Paulose; Meetings are every other Thursday at 3:15-5:00 in Room # 333 (Meetings are usually twice a month, but if more works needs to be done there will be more meeting days)
- School Newspaper/Literary Magazine- Mr. Townsend; Meetings are on Thursdays at 3:15 in Room # 218
- Key Club- Ms. Odiase; Meetings are every Friday at 3:05 in Room # 340
- Environmental Society- Ms. Perkins; Meetings are every Monday at 3:05 in Room # 320
- Chemistry Olympics/Chemistry Club- Dr. Sharma and Mr. Spirovski; Meetings are every Monday after school at 3:15 in Room # 342
- Policy Debate/LD Debate- Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Alston; Meetings are every day after school in the hypermedia center Rooms 106/107
- Sign Language Club- Ms. Gaylord; Meetings are TBA
- Biomedical Club- Mr. Yip, Meetings are every Monday at 3:15-4:00 in Room # 212
- Christian Club- Mr. Mondalto; Meetings are TBA ■