

View From The Hill

City Honors School 186 E. North Street Buffalo, NY 14204-1091

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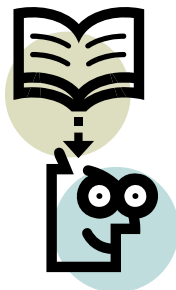
Fall 2006

CHS Weathers The Storm

The many positive developments on the Hilltop this fall have been tempered by the traumatic damage our city faced during the snowstorm of October 12 and 13. My hope is that this issue of the *View from the Hill* finds all of our families and their homes having recovered from this event.



Our historic campus came through with no real damage to the school building itself. However, our grand trees, some dating to the Frederick Law Olmsted designed park that occupied our campus prior to the construction of the original 1897 school building, were badly injured. Credit goes to Chief Engineer Robert Hicks and his staff, who worked extensive hours to clean up the debris and to advocate for care of the trees. Food Service Manager Mr. Michael Laughlin also deserves credit for somehow making his way to the building during the immediate aftermath to preserve our food supplies in the face of an extended power outage. By doing so, he was able to ensure that we were ready to open school with the rest of the Buffalo Public Schools and saved taxpayers thousands of dollars. The immediate response from Mayor Byron Brown, Superintendent James Williams, electrical linemen, and other municipal workers to insure cleanup and power restoration at all of the Buffalo Public Schools was truly remarkable given the unforeseeable nature of this natural disaster. On the day we resumed classes, I informed our students that they now had an obligation to match the remarkable efforts of these people by redoubling their



efforts in their studies to account for the lost instructional time.

One of the most positive developments this fall was the announcement that the City Honors Foundation had been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Students for Other Students (SOS) organization, located in Ohio, to establish a peer tutoring center at CHS. The Foundation responded to this grant by issuing a matching grant of \$5,000. This initiative grew out of conversations at our School Based Management Team (SBMT) last spring, in which members recognized that, while the majority of our students perform at a very high level, we have few resources or “safety nets” for those who struggle in their academics. As a result of these conversations, Mrs. Sandy Heaney, a CHS parent, took the initiative to both research and write the grant, designed to create a progressive and highly organized peer tutoring center. Mrs. Sharon Lomison, Mathematics Department Lead Teacher, was asked by the Foundation to coordinate the SOS center, which will debut on a small scale during the second marking period, with plans to expand over the course of the school year.

October also saw the unveiling of the 2nd Annual CHS Speaker Series roster. The intent of this initiative is to bring a diverse and engaging group of community leaders and scholars to the Hilltop in order to:

- supplement our International Baccalaureate curriculum,
- inspire our students to follow their intellectual curiosities, and
- encourage students to actively play a role in improving

(Continued on page 3)

Principal's Page

Dr. William A. Kresse



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Welcome Back Picnic

The City Honors Annual Welcome Back Picnic was held on Friday, September 15, 2006. This annual event has been held for the past five years, becoming a social staple within our City Honors community. Over 1,000 current and former students, faculty, and family members attended this year's picnic.

The success of this event is largely due to the dedication and enthusiasm of a hearty band of volunteers. Our school is very grateful for the talents of Kathy Rogers, who designed the invitation for the picnic. Laura

Genco carefully documented each reservation. Len Skrill once again coordinated the collection and recycling of pop cans. Sue Koeppel worked closely with the various CHS clubs so that they would be able to exhibit their missions and wares. A Special thank you goes to music teacher Mrs. Donna Kerr and the CHS Jazz Combo, who provided musical entertainment, and all the parents who donated pop and water. The support from Assistant Principal Maureen Izquierdo, the administrative point person, is a vital compo-

nent of this successful event.

Thank you to the other numerous parent volunteers, especially Linda Foley and Sue Zuchlewski, who with their continued commitment to our school have made this annual event so successful.

The picnic is a wonderful way to start the school year.

--Sandy Cammarata,
Welcome Back Picnic Chair and
PTSCO 11th Grade Parent Rep



Sports Scene

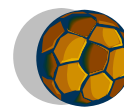
The Lady Centaurs cross-country team won the Buffalo Cross Country League Championship this year after an undefeated season. After enduring a season of rain, cold, and the October snowstorm, we were able to defeat the Hutch Tech team and the reigning champion daVinci team on Thursday, October 26. Co-captains Maggie Mahoney and



Amanda Merner were instrumental in getting the team the championship with their leadership and devotion. First-year team members Shannon McDonnell, Sarah Miller, and Morgan Wahlstrom will join captains Maggie and Amanda, as well as veterans Anika Ochoa-Koritz, Emily Genco, Britney Gray, Meaghan Kelsey, and Maura Puscheck in representing the Centaurs in the All High and Section VI Cross Country meets.

Congratulations to all the girls on the team on a great season of hard work, weathering the elements, and pulling together as a team.

--Magaret Cardina
Physical Education Teacher



Also, congratulation to the men's soccer team, which took the city championship October 25 by defeating Grover Cleveland.

Eye On Alumni

CHS Grads Recognized at Church Anniversary

The 175th anniversary celebration of Bethel A.M.E. Church held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on July 15, 2006, "Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Anticipating Our Future," included recognition of outstanding church members, among them two CHS graduates.

Teresa Michelle Edwards ('00) attended Washington University in St. Louis, majoring in biology and having a minor in psychology. She graduated in 2004 and worked as a research assistant at Buffalo General Hospital for one year

before entering medical school at Case Western University.

Carla Lynette McKinnon also graduated from CHS in 2000. During her time at CHS, she was a member of the basketball team, the Latin Club, and HELP, which provides students with meaningful opportunities to lead and serve their community. She majored in Management Information Systems at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She received a Master of Engineering in Industrial Engineering in 2005. As a graduate assistant, she became a liaison between minority undergraduates, graduates, and faculty and helped coordinate



volunteers and run workshops for Black Family Technology Awareness Week in 2005.

She now works for Carrier Corporation as a Pricing Analyst and is responsible for providing pricing and marketing guidance for Carrier's North American commercial organization. She also serves as a Senior Marketing Support Analyst for the company's Residential and Light Commercial Systems organization. Ms. McKinnon plans to pursue a Master's in Business Administration.

--Thanks to Mrs. Valerie Davis,
CHS science teacher, for the
background for this article.



their community.

Following positive feedback from teachers, students, and parents after last year's inaugural series, this year's roster has been expanded to five speakers (two of the speakers will be presenting together). You can find the lineup for the CHS Speaker Series on page 7 of this edition of the *VFH*. The Speaker Series is funded through the City Honors Foundation.

From the initiatives listed above, you can see that the City Honors Foundation is doing some important work to ensure that our students never see their learning environment compromised by funding gaps the school district or state may face. The Foundation has quietly funded many more projects this year that may have gone unnoticed, such as equipment and uniforms for athletic teams, instructional supplies, textbooks, library books, computers, International Baccalaureate training for our teachers, and a new sound system for our school cafeteria. As the Foundation launches its annual fund campaign this fall, I would once again ask that all parents, alumni, and friends of CHS family consider making it a tradition to contribute to

this campaign. Contributions can be mailed to the school and will be forwarded to the Annual Fund chair, Mr. Frank Dolce.

Finally, we have received many inquiries regarding changes in PSAT testing. The Buffalo Public Schools have expanded PSAT testing to include all students at both Grade 9 and Grade 11. The district is paying for all examinations at these two grade levels. There is no cost to your family. Adding PSAT testing at Grade 9 was done, in part, to enable BPS high schools to identify students who have the ability to succeed in Advanced Placement courses. The PSAT was also added in Grade 9 to provide parents and schools with an additional measuring stick of student progress in order to assist with their preparations for the actual SATs. The addition of a second grade level of PSAT testing will in no way affect your child's ability to participate in the National Merit competition. City Honors will also continue to offer the PSAT for students in Grade 10, however, families must assume the cost of the examination. City Honors offers the Grade 10 exam "at cost" and does not include the additional fees

| November | | |
|----------|--|------------------|
| 15 | NYS Social Studies Part 1 Grade 5 | |
| 16 | NYS Social Studies Part 2 Grade 5 | |
| | Site Based Management Meeting | 3:45 p.m. |
| | 6th Grade Parent Meeting | 5:30 p.m. |
| | P.T.S.C.O. Meeting | 6:30 p.m. |
| 17 | CHS Musical | 7:30 p.m. |
| 18 | City Honors Admissions Test Grades 5-9 | 8:00 -11:00 a.m. |
| | CHS Musical | 7:00 p.m. |
| 19 | CHS Musical | 2:00 p.m. |
| 23 -26 | Thanksgiving Holiday | Schools Closed |
| 29 | Early Release Day | |
| | Math Day 5th Grade | |
| 30 | Parent Teacher Conference Day | 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. |

| December | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 13 | Early Release Day | |
| | Winter Concert | 7:00 p.m. |
| 23 | Winter Recess Begins | |
| January | | |
| 2 | Classes Resume | |
| 8-12 | NYS ELA Grade 6 | |
| 12 | Keep The Dream Alive Assembly | |
| 15 | No School MLK Day | |
| 16-20 | NYS ELA (Grades 6-8) | |
| 18 | Site Based Management Meeting | 3:45 p.m. |
| | Senior College Financial Aid Mtg. | 5:30 p.m. |
| | 7th Grade Parent Meeting | 5:30 p.m. |
| | P.T.S.C.O. Meeting | 6:30 p.m. |
| 22 | Regents Week Begins | |
| 30 | Early Release Day | |
| 31 | Superintendent's Conference Day | No School |

No Cost, No Effort Ways to Help City Honors School at Fosdick-Masten Park

Sign up for the **Target Card or Target Visa Card** and designate City Honors to receive 1% of your total expenditures from purchases made at Target. One-half percent will go to CHS from the purchases you make with your Target Visa at all other places. This is a donation that comes from Target and **is at no cost to you!** To sign up, dial 1-800-316-6142 or visit www.target.com/tcoe. This is an outstanding program that has brought CHS @ FMP over \$10,000 to date. Show your pride in CHS @ FMP and get your red card today!



Verizon long distance is offering to provide special funds to schools through their “Extra Credit” program. If you currently have Verizon long distance or are thinking of switching to it, they will donate 5% of your monthly long distance bill to CHS @ FMP. **This program will not cost you anything;** Verizon is simply donating a part of the phone bill that you normally pay them. 5% of one long distance bill will not do a whole lot, but with many people participating we should be able to raise some funds for extra equipment and supplies for teachers and students. Anyone who has Verizon long distance can designate City Honors as the school they want their 5% donated to, so please pass this information on to friends and family (even those out of the area or out of state). Call **1-877-X-CREDIT** to designate City Honors as your Extra Credit School. You can also go to the Extra Credit site at www.verizon.com/extracredit to register. Plus, this Web site will allow you to send e-postcards to anyone else you think might want to designate City Honors as their extra-credit school.



With the **WaMoola for Schools** Program, you can support City Honors @ FMP every time you make a purchase with your Washington Mutual Debit MasterCard or Visa Check Card. Enroll and earn points for every purchase where Debit MasterCard or Visa debit cards are accepted – use it for groceries, movies, travel and everyday stuff. At the end of every year, Washington Mutual will donate cash based on the points you’ve earned for CHS at FMP. You pay nothing to enroll and there are no limits to the points your school can earn. Just go to www.wamoolaforschools.com to enroll or call 1-800-788-7000 (CHS may be listed as “P.S. 195” on this Web site).

Foundation @ Work

The City Honors Foundation was formed in 1996 by parents and educators. It is dedicated to providing support and resources to help all our students achieve the high standards for which our school is known. The Foundation tries to bridge the gap between the costs of a quality education and the declining funding of the district.

Over the past ten years, the Foundation has been proud to contribute over \$500,000 to our middle and high school programs, including:

- State-of-the-art biology electrophoresis lab
- Auditorium upgrades – sound system, new curtains, stage-area artwork
- Library books and resources

- Teacher training and International Baccalaureate training
- IB textbooks
- Student clubs, sports-teams equipment and expenses
- Middle-school science program
- Music Department projects
- Student publications, out-of-town competitions
- Student Mentoring program
- Cafeteria sound system upgrade
- Landscaping

In addition, the Foundation received a Wendt Foundation grant, which provided funds for our Artists-in-Residence Program and technological upgrades. Also, for the past two years, an alumnus has

provided four-year scholarships to two seniors, helping them attend out-of-town colleges.

We can all help the CHS Foundation provide those much-needed funds to our children and our school. Watch for information this winter about our Annual Fund Drive; participate in the Buy A Brick campaign and pay lasting tribute to your child in our front courtyard; and join us at our Spring Fling Celebration, a very special gathering of parents, faculty, staff, and alumni as we honor special CHS community members in a festive atmosphere.

For more information about the CHS Foundation, contact one of the Board officers listed on the back of this newsletter.

--Linda Foley, Foundation Board Parent Member

P.T.S.C.O. News

Along with everyone else, PTSCO (the City Honors Parent, Teacher, Student, Community Organization) saw its fall schedule of events disrupted by the October snowstorm. The October meetings that were scheduled for October 19 were held October 26, and the October 21 Senior Breakfast became the November 2 gathering for seniors and their parents with pizza and dessert. The October 27 5th & 6th Grade Ice Cream Social did go on as planned, but there were storm-related challenges--planning time was cut very short and there was last-minute news that the usual supplier could not provide the ice cream because its stock had been lost to a power failure.

These and other events—the Welcome Back Picnic, the general meeting of September 28, and the October meetings of 5th Grade parents and 8th Grade parents (to plan an end-of-the-year trip for 8th Graders) were well attended. Thanks to everyone who came out to support these events, and thanks to all those who have joined PTSCO and made a contribution. Your donations fund student activities and support PTSCO efforts to strengthen the CHS community. And thanks to all the PTSCO volunteers who planned and carried out our fall events—the 5th, 6th, and 11th grade reps (see the back page of this newsletter for a list) and their committees—they couldn't have gone on without you. See the calendar on page 3 for upcoming events.

Note: this year, PTSCO will not print a paper calendar. Please see the link on the CHS Web site for this information. This step is being taken to make more funds available for school needs and to utilize a format that can be updated as dates change and events are added. If you do not have access to a computer, please let us know and we will print and mail you a copy.

--Andrea Szalanski, PTSCO Co-chair 882-2038

The City Honors Foundation is looking for volunteer grant writers!



If you are experienced in grant writing or would like to learn, please contact Ellen Warner, Foundation Vice-President, at ehwarner@adelphia.net

Grant writing is one of the many ways the Foundation helps to bridge the funding gaps in our school and to insure the highest quality learning environment for our students.

CHS Newspaper Wins Honors

Quaerer, the City Honors high school newspaper, known informally as *The Q*, participated in the St. Bonaventure University Russell J. Jandoli School of Journalism annual Communications Day competition this fall. Due to the "October Surprise" storm, we were unable to spend the day at St. Bonaventure, but our entries were evaluated and judged nonetheless.

Studying critiques of submitted issues is a valuable way for the staff to set goals for improvement, and it is exciting to have input from the talented SBU faculty. This year, we were able to also submit an article written by one of our middle-school participants, James Werick. Although he is too young for the high school competition, a critique of his work was valuable in helping him to develop as a writer as well.

The Q received four awards overall based on the 2005-2006 publications. Editor Rebecca Bass placed third for her Opinion article discussing the real meaning behind polls naming people, places, or organizations as the "Best," or "Top Ten." Her points were critiqued as being articulate and impressive.

Placing second for Feature Writing was Alex Hoffman ('08) for his very well done and thoughtful article, "The Other CHS," which was based on his day-long shadowing experience at Canisius High School.

The Q's first-place win came for Ben Oseroff's essay discussing the real meaning of holidays and how society has mixed religious and popular traditions, obscuring the importance of the original celebration.

The Q itself was awarded a third place

for the News Magazine category.

The article by then-fifth grader James Werick was reviewed by a Jandoli School of Journalism professor and resulted in a special award for the author, a Certificate of Achievement for Accomplishment in Writing. Most telling though was a comment on the critiqued article stating the professor's wish that he saw writing as good as James's in his college classes.

Congratulations to the hardworking and talented staff of both *The Q* and its new middle school addition, *Quest*.

--Mrs. Judith Balzer,
International Baccalaureate
Middle Years Program Coordinator



CTY--Center for Talented Youth

How to describe the most wonderful experience of my life? CTY—Center for Talented Youth—is a summer program that takes place in three-week sessions every summer. Students participate in classes at colleges on the East Coast, on the West Coast, and in Hawaii. If the settings are any indication, this is no ordinary camp.



CTY courses permit students to work at a challenging pace and provide access to subjects and topics most students would not otherwise have an opportunity to study at their age. At CTY, you can take college-level courses in writing, psychology, biology, international politics, history, the classics, and art and music. But don't be intimidated! I know that no kid wants more school work over the summer vacation. I assure you that CTY is like no other school you've ever experienced before.

I chose the course entitled Crafting the Essay at Skidmore College. We lived in the dorms and ate in the cafeteria. A college ID was provided. Every day we had class, a daily activity, and weekend free time with

off-campus activities. My class was a small group of 15 students from all over the northeast. By living together in the dorms and taking classes together, we became very close over the three-week period. The other students were smart, kind, and funny.

My roommate, Emily, lives in Rochester and a new friend, Miryam, lives in New York City. (Miryam is the character Sofia on the Sopranos). In class, two teachers work with students individually to help them improve. The classes have a noncompetitive atmosphere and no grades are given. We typically talked about things we read (from a college textbook) and wrote while lying on the floor.

Every day started with free writes, where we wrote for 10 minutes straight without lifting the pen from the paper. One day, a student in my class filled his page with alternative German and French curses. For the most part, however, our writing was thoughtful and personally meaningful. By the end of our course, we had completed four essays that were edited by the teachers and critiqued by the group.

In between classes, there was a range of fun activities. We could take dance, improvisation, tai chi, tennis, etc. Spontane-

ous activities such as Fun with Duct Tape, Caveman, and Watching Paint Dry were very funny. Counselors and students participated together, and we got to see the non-serious sides of our classmates. On weekends, we had dances, a carnival, and casino night. We also took shopping trips into town (Saratoga Springs).

Sundays were free days to attend religious services, sleep late, or walk into town. On the last day of the program, there was a ceremony that included getting up at dawn to watch the sun rise and reminiscing about our time together.

If this sounds at all appealing to you, I would encourage you to go on the CTY Web site: www.cty.jhu.edu. CTY is operated by Johns Hopkins University in 19 states and Washington, D.C. Gifted students who qualify for the federal Free or Reduced-Price lunch program may join CTY virtually at no cost. Students in grades 5-9 are invited to apply.

--Dana Hogan ('01). Dana is available to give a presentation on the CTY program





City Honors School at Fosdick-Masten Park

2006-2007 Speaker Series



Aaron Bartley, J.D. '93

Founder and Executive Director
People United for Sustainable Housing

“Aspiration, Attainment and Critical Thinking:
My Perspective on Figuring Out Life after City Honors”

Wednesday, October 25
Periods 1 & 2

Johnathan M. Holifield, J.D.

Chief Executive Officer
Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy

“The Olmsted Parks System: Helping Buffalo Wake Up the Echoes”

Thursday, November 30
Periods 7 & 8

Charles LaChiusa

Historic Preservationist, CHS Faculty Emeritus
Landmark Society of the Niagara Frontier

“The Rich History of Fosdick-Masten Park High School”

Thursday, February 8
Periods 2 & 3

Bruce B. Lawrence, Ph.D.

Professor of Religion, Director of Islamic Studies Center
Duke University

Miriam Cooke, D.Phil

Professor of Arab Culture
Duke University

“Behind the Veil: Muslim Women in the 21st Century”

March TBA

- ◆ All lectures will be held in the Hilltop Museum Room.
- ◆ Teachers will be able to obtain tickets for their students three weeks prior to each lecture in IB office.
- ◆ Students may pick up tickets one week prior to lecture in IB office.
- ◆ If students will miss a class to attend a lecture, they must have their tickets signed by the teachers indicating consent.
- ◆ Tickets available while supplies last! Parents and Friends planning to attend should call the IB office at 816-4235.

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City Honors PTSCO and Foundation
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Buffalo, NY 14204-1091

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P.T.S.C.O. meeting: Thursday, November 16, 2006 6:30 p.m.

6th Grade Parent Meeting: Thursday, November 16, 2006 5:30 p.m.



City Honors School
A co-educational school for
academically gifted students
In grades 5-12

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