



Tam High Foundation Funds 21st Century Learning Throughout the English Department

by Julie Kertzman

This has been a big year for the English department at Tam thanks to the Major Grant awarded by the Tam High Foundation.

“Some of the most exciting opportunities all year for English students are provided by the Foundation,” said English Department Chair Mike Levinson. “The impact is huge.”



Beginning with freshman English, students experience Shakespeare with help from guest artists who make Romeo and Juliet one of the most rewarding units. In May, artists will be in the classrooms of Abbey Levine, Mike Levinson, Mike Lavezzo, Chelsea Springer, Russell Hill and Jonah Steinhart where the students become engaged in the world of Shakespeare and go beyond simply reading the play.

David Tarpinian, Mike Levinson and Abbey Levine have been busy developing the Visual Rhetoric curriculum that utilizes the Macbook technology cart funded by the Foundation. This curriculum will be integrated with the technology of the new “Classroom 2020” in Keyser Hall next fall. Freshman students will use Macbooks to research and create multi-media projects as part of the visual literacy curriculum developed from the Program of Writing and Rhetoric at Stanford University. Abbey Levine, Chelsea Springer, and Michael Levinson are currently implementing a unit around visual literacy in their freshman classes.



The sophomores also have guest artists visiting their English classes and these talented performers are currently working on Macbeth in the classrooms with teachers Michael Pollard Krause, David Tarpinian, and Harrison. All sophomore students worked with poets from Marin Poetry Center in January with curriculum focused on understanding and creating poetry.

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Tam High Annual Open House

Thursday, March 19, Gus Gym

6:30 pm Jazz Band • 7 pm Welcome • 7:30-8:30 pm Classroom Visits



Students use Macbooks provided by the Tam High Foundation.

It's time to take stock of all that we've accomplished this year at Tam at our annual Open House. Meet the administration and teachers, get a look at what's been happening in the classrooms and tour the modernized Tam campus. Students are welcome to accompany parents. Maps and students' schedules will be available; but to avoid waiting in line, please ask your student for a copy of his or her class schedule.

Parking at Tam can be challenging, so remember to allow time to find a spot in the Miller Avenue or Almonte parking lot. Note that Friday, March 20, is a minimum day (8 am - 12:35 pm).

And be sure to stop by the silent auction sponsored by the senior class. All proceeds help to keep down the cost of Prom and other senior activities. ❖

Principal's Message

By Tom Drescher

California Distinguished School Visit

Tam recently had a California Distinguished High School Validation visit. My general impression is that the validation team was impressed with our school, and I am optimistic that Tam will be recommended as a 2009 California Distinguished High School. The validation team will submit a report to the California Department of Education, and we should be notified of its decision in late March.

Modernization

Modernization crews are working to finish the exterior work, and are tentatively scheduled to complete work on Keyser by the first week of March. Significant progress has been made on the pool, new weight room and field house. The goal is to have all aspects of modernization, including the tennis courts, completed for the beginning of the 09-10 school year.

Dance Follow-Up Meeting

Tam Administration invites parents to join us at the next PTSA meeting on Wednesday, March 11, for a follow-up meeting on safety procedures for dances. This is a great opportunity to review our plan and provide feedback. This meeting will take place immediately following the 7 pm PTSA meeting. We look forward to your participation.

09-10 Course Registration

The AP and honors course registration process commenced in early February. The purpose of the meetings is for your students to learn about course expectations, prerequisites, homework load, etc. Students must attend informational sessions for each AP or honors course they are interested in taking next year. In addition, many classes require a placement test or essay for class enrollment. An AP/honors matrix delineating dates, times and locations of the informational meetings and entrance tests is available on the school web site. Students will receive their course registration materials on Friday, March 13.



The Tam Family

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Time for 2009/2010 Class Scheduling

Scheduling for Tam's current 9th, 10th and 11th grade for the 2009-2010 school year will start on Friday, March 13 in tutorial. Counselors will be available to answer questions and assist students in the College and Career Center during tutorial on March 18 and March 25.

Counselors will also be available to help students and parents on the evening of Open House, Thursday, March 19, in the library from 5 – 7 pm. Lastly, counselors will be available, as much as possible, before and after school for questions about scheduling. Separate counseling appointments for scheduling-related questions cannot be accommodated.

Completed scheduling forms are due back in the Counseling Office on Wednesday, March 25, with a parent/guardian signature.

Students in Good Standing Policy

The following school policy has been the practice at Tamalpais High School for several years. Designed by parents, teachers, and administrators, the policy holds second semester seniors to continued academic and behavioral expectations commensurate with Tamalpais's high standards. Participation in the graduation ceremony is voluntary and considered a privilege. Under the policy, a student may qualify to earn a graduation diploma, yet still be excluded from participation in the ceremony. Eligibility to participate in the graduation ceremony is based on the following:

- Meeting district and state graduation requirements
- Grades of F or Incomplete in any second semester course will prevent students from participating in the ceremony
- Attending classes – students who receive partial credit as a result of excessive unexcused absences (five) in any class, including tutorial, during their final semester will be restricted from the ceremony
- Behaving appropriately – any student determined by a school administrator to be under the influence of a controlled substance on the way to or at the senior prom will be excluded from the graduation ceremony. Suspensions in the final week of the second semester will prevent a senior from participating in the ceremony.

Senior Awards Night

Senior Awards Night will be held on Thursday, June 5, at 6:30 pm in the Caldwell Theatre. Seniors receiving scholarships and awards are asked to notify Sue Woods in the Assistant Principals' Office. It is best to email the information to swoods@tamdistrict.org

Access to the Graduation Ceremony in Mead Theater

Do you have a senior who will be graduating this year? The Tam tradition is to start the ceremony promptly at 6 pm in Mead Theater, the amphitheatre at the back of the campus. Everyone needs a ticket to attend, and tickets will be given out only to seniors at the breakfast on June 11. Each senior receives six tickets.

Please be aware that the entrance to all seating, except for guests in wheelchairs and their attendants, is from the top of Mead Theater. Allow enough time to park and walk into Mead Theater from the area behind the ceramics building, or have a driver drop off guests at the top of Mead on the Homestead Avenue entrance.

Guests in wheelchairs: ONLY those in a wheelchair or their attendants may enter from the bottom of Mead. There is space at the edge of the stage for eight guests with wheelchairs, and one attendant may sit directly behind each person in a wheelchair. A reservation is required for a wheelchair space.

For guests who have difficulty walking: There is a section at the top of Mead Theater that is reserved for those with limited mobility. These guests may be dropped off at the top of Mead Theater via the Homestead Avenue entrance just past Benefield Hall. Please note that there are a few steps from the road to this section.

To reserve a space in either the wheelchair or limited mobility section, please call the Assistant Principals' Office at 380-3512 before June 12.

PTSA News

from Leslie Wachtel, PTSA President

Spring is here and somehow the school year seems almost over! Every year it seems my children start school in August and then magically it is March and I am planning for next fall!

The Tam campus is looking better each month and we are all looking forward to having the pool, weight room, tennis courts and field house complete when we return in the fall.

Many parents took advantage of the opportunity at our February PTSA meeting to tour the new Keyser buildings. We are planning to have another tour of Keyser and a walking tour of the entire campus at our May 6 PTSA meeting. This will be a great opportunity to view the buildings, the grounds and many historical sites on our beautiful campus.

Our next PTSA meeting will be on March 11 at 7 pm in the Tam High Library in Wood Hall. This meeting will be a follow-up meeting to the February meeting in which the Winter Formal student admittance screening procedure was discussed. At the March meeting we will discuss admittance procedures and student safety at all future dances. Corbett Elsen and Elizabeth Laborde (our assistant principals) will lead the discussion. We welcome all parents to come and be part of the process in planning for the success of all future student dances and events.

I would like to personally thank Tom Drescher and Elizabeth Laborde for their attendance at the February PTSA meeting. We are indeed lucky to have an administration whose response to a controversial and important school-wide issue was to invite the parent body to come to a meeting and voice their concerns. It provided a time for the administrative team to hear differing points of view and in looking to the future, provide a venue for parents and students to be part of the discussion as the school searches for ways to keep all student dances safe and fun.

Please note that our April 8 PTSA meeting will be held in the morning at 8:30 in the Hawks' Nest adjacent to the Student Center. This will be the only morning meeting this year so we encourage everyone who has expressed an interest in having more meetings in the morning to come. We will soon decide our meeting schedule for next year and it would be great to have input on what works best for the majority of our parents. Our topic for that meeting will be sent via email shortly.

Many parents come up to me at different events and tell me that they would like to get more involved at Tam. Well, in spring there are still many ways for parents to volunteer and get involved here at Tam through the PTSA. Here are just a few examples:

Friday, March 27, is the Staff Appreciation Luncheon. If you volunteered at the beginning of the year you will be getting an email soon as to what is needed. If you would like to participate and are not sure if you are on Helene's email list please contact Helene Siegel-Fotos at Bash5@sbcglobal.net.

Friday, April 24, is the annual STAR test barbecue. The PTSA provides a free barbecue lunch for all students to celebrate their participation in and completion of the four days of STAR testing which takes place that week. We need several volunteers to barbecue the burgers and hotdogs and many more volunteers to help us to set up and distribute the food to all 1100 students! Our beloved alumni parent Bonnie Freiberg and current senior parent Gladys Blose are heading up this fun event. If you can help that day, please contact Bonnie at Bkfreiberg1@mac.com or Gladys at jagsblose@msn.com.

Thursday, June 11, is graduation at Tam. We need help with setting up the graduation reception that afternoon in the student center. This event is mainly put on by the junior families; however help from the other grade levels is welcomed and encouraged. We will need bakers, shoppers and volunteers to set up the student center, assist during the event and also clean up after the event. Please remember that someday you will have a senior and this event is a lovely way to end your students four years at Tam High. Please contact Patti Bertenthal for more information on how you can help. howardbertenthal@aol.com.

We are looking for anyone interested in joining the PTSA board next year. A nominating committee will be in place by mid-March. Please contact me at Leslieann@ix.netcom.com if you are interested in finding a place on the board or on a committee. We will have many volunteer job opportunities open for next year as, sadly, many of our committee chairs will be leaving Tam as their students graduate. The PTSA is a wonderful way to get to know the school where your students spend five days a week of their lives for four great years!

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions regarding what the PTSA does at Tam, please feel free to contact me as well. Leslieann@ix.netcom.com or 415-990-1415. ♦

Two Thumbs Up for THUMB Parents and Volunteers for Another Successful Valentine's Dinner and Concert Fundraiser for Tam Music!

by Andrea Windom, Gladys and Stephen Blose and Maureen Parton

The THUMB (Tam High United Music Boosters) Valentine's Fundraiser Dinner on Friday, February 13, was a delightful evening for all ~ parents, students and community members. Ruby Scott Gym was filled with the sounds of musical and vocal performances delivered with skill and aplomb by Tam High music students. While listening to continuous music, lucky guests dined on delicious citrus-infused chicken by Gira Polli and tasty cupcakes baked by Sweet Things. It was a memorable night.

Thanks to Music Department Director Spiro Tsingaris for his ongoing and outstanding work with our talented musicians and singers. The breadth and variety of musical and vocal skill is truly inspiring.

Thanks and appreciation go out to the many community volunteers who transformed Ruby Scott Gym into a concert hall full of cheerful profusions of red, pink and purple dining tables, mini roses and conversation hearts. The legion of volunteers who worked their transformative magic included Sandy Bertram, Liz Fuchs, Marian Yee, Jane McLennan, Debbie Patrick, Jim Patrick, Patricia McKenney, Ron Ramin, Craig Meyer, Amy Frost, Christina Pettigrew, Shirley Berman, Carol Stern, Maureen Parton, Sue Wilson, Cheryl Brandon, Sandra Luna-Fineman, Heather Gordon, Linda Meyer, Kathy McMahan, Holly Hadlock, Sheryl Rand, David Rand, Christine MacDonald, Jane Flanagan, Sharon Brusman, Christine McGuinness, Debbie, Genzer, Betsy Chatton, Kim Caraker, Vasanti Godbole, Michael Jeffries, Megan Siegel, Richard Siegel, Scott Whittemore, Doug Thompson, Geoffrey Dreyer, Suzette deVogelaere and Bob Flynn.

Andrea Windom and Gladys Blose received thanks and applause that evening, along with beautiful orchids, in recognition of their multiple years of leadership co-chairing the Valentine's dinner and concert. Thanks also went out to two amazing apprentices, Dee Bell-Becker and Judith Staples-Morris, who happily assumed a large portion of this year's responsibilities and who will bring us hearts and flowers next year.

The school and wider community came out in large numbers and opened their hearts to the magnificent sounds of Tam High music. Music at Tam is alive, well and thriving. There is no end to the growing talent of our music students here. Go to the Tam High Music Department page (tamhigh.org), go to Teacher Websites on the drop down menu, find and click on Spiro Tsingaris' name to get to the Music Department page) to see photos of your students and to stay current with the schedule of upcoming concert and performance dates.

Up next, the Symphonic Orchestra is in the final preparation stage for its trip to New York City in March to participate in the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Festival at Lincoln Center. Mark your calendar for the Choir's favorite, the Broadway Revue, when Tam's young men and women take to the stage at 142 Throckmorton Theater in downtown Mill Valley on April 6. Watch the Tam Family and the Daily Bulletin for details next month!

THUMB is a parent-run organization whose mission is to encourage, promote and assist instrumental and choral music activity at Tamalpais High School. E-mail Sacha Bunge sbunge@sfsu.edu for more information. The next THUMB meeting will be Thursday, March 12, 7-8:30 pm, in the Robert Greenwood (aka "the Band Box") room. All are welcome! ❖

Tam High Foundation Funds 21st Century Learning

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For students in the 9th – 11th grade, the Literacy Support program has offered academic workshops and support classes to work one-on-one with students in reading and writing. Teachers Marilyn Lindsay, Sharon Gerhard and Neal Wolfe are able to dedicate individual time to students and this support has been an essential component of the academic growth seen in the Tam High students.

Finally, the Foundation provided funds for an English Department staff retreat where the entire staff collaborated on curriculum related to analysis, visual rhetoric/multimedia literacy and a review of the 11th/12th grade program at Tam. The staff was able to consider and reflect on best practices so they can provide our students with high quality curriculum and innovative instruction.

The Tam High Foundation congratulates Mike Levinson and the entire English department for their creative approach to teaching and curriculum, their enthusiastic embrace of new technology and their dedication to the success of every Tam student. It is easy to see the impact of the Foundation on teaching and learning at Tam. We have the most talented, energized teaching staff and when we support them and fund their innovative ideas and programs, every student at Tam has an enhanced high school experience.

If you have not yet donated to the Tam High Foundation, please do it today! For those families who have supported our efforts this year, we thank you.

Don't forget: May 1 is the Tam High Foundation Cinco de Mayo party. It's the best party of the year! ❖

Scenes from THUMB's Valentine's Day Concert



Senior Parents Needed for Safe and Sober Grad Night Committees

Our first Safe and Sober Grad Night meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12, at 7 pm in the Tam High Library in Wood Hall. Thanks to all the parents who have stepped up and have agreed to be part of this great evening for our graduating seniors. We are still in need of more senior parent volunteers to help us make this event happen.

Safe and Sober Grad Night takes place from 11 pm on Thursday, June 11, until 4 am on Friday, June 12. It will be held at the Mill Valley Community Center. More information and a donation letter will be sent home in the next week.

We still have several committees in need of a chairperson. We are particularly in need of a chair for our raffle. This raffle is an important part of our fundraising effort for this event. It is a great job for two senior parents to share.

There are several other committees that still need volunteers including the food committee, decorations, and solicitations. Please come to the meeting and find out what you can do to help make this a wonderful and memorable Safe and Sober Grad Night for our children.

Please contact Leslie Wachtel or Patti Boston for more information regarding helping with this event.

Patti Boston
 pj32flynn@aol.com
 381-8959

Leslie Wachtel
 Leslieann@ix.netcom.com.
 990-1415



SAVE THE DATE!
TAM HIGH FOUNDATION'S
CINCO DE MAYO PARTY IS BACK
FRIDAY, MAY 1ST
AT THE MILL VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTER

FEATURING A REPEAT PERFORMANCE
 BY "THE UNAUTHORIZED ROLLING STONES" 

News from Parent to Parent Connection

by Janet Miller and Linda Siegel
P2P Coordinators

Do you have questions about your child meeting the multiple graduation outcomes? Do you have questions about the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)? Are you and/or your student anxious about meeting these requirements? Did you know that there is a study guide/workbook for the CAHSEE that is available, at no charge, at your high school? These and other questions regarding meeting the requirements to graduate will be addressed at our March meeting.

On Thursday, March 12, at 7 pm, join us for "Get me Outta Here! Meeting Graduation Outcomes and High School Exit Exam Requirements/Issues for LD Kids." The goal of the evening is to inform and, hopefully, relieve any anxiety about your child's journey toward graduation.

As usual, we will open each meeting at 6:30 pm to allow for informal discussion and networking with other parents. The meeting will take place at Kreps Conference Center, Redwood High School.

We look forward to seeing you soon! ❖

Parents: Here's an Opportunity to Show the Faculty and Staff Your Appreciation

The faculty and staff appreciation breakfasts have been fabulous thanks to a dedicated cadre of volunteers. The faculty and staff have been extremely appreciative, really looking forward to each and every one.

On Friday, March 27, we will host the annual faculty and staff appreciation lunch. I am looking for volunteers to provide salads and desserts. If you would like to participate by contributing either your time to set up or serve, or a dish for the lunch, please contact me, Helene Siegel-Fotos, at bash5@sbcglobal.net.

College and Career Center Services

By Susan Gertman

College and Career Specialist

Sgertman@tuhsd.marin.k12.ca.us • 380-3582

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 4: COLLEGE OF MARIN REGISTRATION AT TAM

A representative from College of Marin will meet with interested seniors on Wednesday, March 4, during tutorial, from 9:45-10:45 am, in the Career Center. Students will receive registration materials and hear about educational and vocational opportunities and transfer options.

MARCH 7: PRACTICE ACT

Tam and Kaplan will sponsor a practice ACT on Saturday, March 7, 8:30 am-12:30 pm, in the Student Center. Colleges accept the ACT equally with the SAT. The test is curriculum based and includes sections in English, reading, math and science reasoning. To register students should bring \$10 in cash or check payable to the Tam High PTSA to the Career Center by March 4. All fees support a PTSA scholarship.

MARCH 25: SAT SUBJECT TESTS

Tam and Compass Education Group will sponsor practice SAT Subject Tests on Wednesday, March 25, 3-5:30 pm, in the College and Career Center. Students may take one or two tests in any subject. The fee is \$5 per test and is payable in cash or check made out to the Tam PTSA. Students must know which tests they want to take when they register. Signup deadline: March 20. All fees from practice tests support the PTSA Academic Scholarship.

APRIL 2: POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING NIGHT

Tam will hold its Post-High School Planning Night on Thursday, April 2, at 6:30 pm, in the Student Center. Guest speakers will represent community colleges, the California State University, University of California and private colleges. Sophomores, juniors and their parents are urged to attend this extremely informative evening.

APRIL 28: MARIN COUNTY COLLEGE FAIR

More than 150 colleges and universities from across the country will have representatives at the Marin County College Fair on Tuesday, April 28, 6-8 pm, at the Conlon Recreation Center at Dominican University in San Rafael. There will also be workshops on financial aid and devising a college list. Students and parents are invited to attend. The fair is sponsored by the Western Association of College Admissions Advisors.

APRIL 29: COLLEGE OF MARIN PLACEMENT TESTS

Students planning to attend College of Marin will have an opportunity to take the required placement tests in English and math at Tam on Wednesday, April 29, 9 am-noon. Seniors will not miss class, because the placement tests are scheduled during STAR testing. Sign up in the College and Career Center. Make-up tests will be given at COM in May.

TESTING

Students are encouraged to register online for the SAT at <http://collegeboard.com> and ACT at <http://actstudent.org>. Register early for a convenient test site.

Juniors who plan to apply to four-year colleges are encouraged to take the SAT Reasoning Test this spring. Juniors may also want to take the ACT in addition to the SAT.

Juniors planning to apply to the University of California and other highly selective colleges will also need to submit two SAT Subject Tests. Sophomore and juniors who are completing an academic subject this year are strongly advised to take a Subject Test in that area this spring. For example, students now taking AP Biology should take the Biology Subject Test in May or June and not wait until senior year when they will have forgotten some of the material.

The College and Career Center has practice books and information on preparing for college admissions tests. Other sources of free test preparation are www.number2.com, www.actstudent.org and www.collegeboard.com.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

The scholarship page on PrepHQ is an excellent source of scholarship information and is updated weekly. To simplify the search for college scholarships, the College and Career Center publishes a list of local scholarships called the Green Sheet. These scholarships, which are also on PrepHQ, are available only to Tam students or to residents of the Bay Area or Marin County. The Green Sheet is available in the Career Center.

All seniors should be registered on PrepHQ. To do this and to access the scholarship page, go to tamhigh.org, click Academics, then PrepHQ. Once you are on PrepHQ, click on Scholarships. More local scholarships will be announced in March and April.

COLLEGE VISITS

The timing of Tam's spring vacation is perfect for visiting colleges because students will be able to see the schools in session. For seniors, these visits are often the deciding factor in choosing which offer of admission to accept. For younger students, visits help clarify preferences. Even students who do not think they want to remain in the Bay Area can start their college search by visiting nearby campuses to get a feel for schools that are large and small; urban, suburban or rural; public and private, religious and secular.

Before visiting a college, it is a good idea to do some research online, develop a list of questions and, if possible, set up specific activities. Here are some suggestions: Call ahead or email to set up a tour, information session or interview; verify admission requirements; determine costs and ask about financial aid; tour the campus, making sure to see the dorms, dining hall and library; talk with students about the academic environment and inquire about student activities, campus life and social activities.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

www.bridges.com is an excellent career exploration and post-high school planning site available to all Tam students and parents. To log on, go to www.bridges.com and click on the Site ID tab on the box to the right. Tam's user name is 0010080. The password, hawks, is case sensitive. Then click on Choices Planner. There is a special link for parents on the sign-in page.

www.californiacolleges.edu is a one-stop source for college, financial aid and career planning. It has information on the University of California, California State University, California community colleges and independent colleges and universities in California. ♦

CTE/TAM Drama: Passion and Repression Conflict in Lorca's Play

by Alexi Torres, CTE Publicity Team

and Susan Brashear, CTE Co-Program Director

In contrast to the light-hearted Improvisation show last month, CTE is preparing a fascinating, dark tragedy written by Federico Garcia Lorca, the Spanish poet/playwright for March. "The House of Bernarda Alba," directed by Julianna Rees, explores dark themes, psychological warfare and passions waiting to explode with an all-female cast of CTE juniors and seniors. Performances begin March 24 and play through March 28 at 7 pm at the Caldwell Theatre.

The harrowing story follows a tyrannical mother, Bernarda Alba, who controls her domain with an iron grip, especially the lives of her five daughters. The opening of the play occurs after the death of Bernarda's second husband, leaving the house in mourning. As the relationships within the family and household unfold, we see the way Bernarda holds her daughters through fear and cruel pressure to conform to her wishes. Her wealth and position make even the townspeople afraid of her. As Bernarda arranges for one daughter to become the bride of "Pepe El Romano," the most enticing man of the town, the rest of her daughters must settle for fantasies of fulfillment. Ultimately, the rebellion of the youngest daughter leads to tragedy. The rest of the household includes the grandmother, who is losing touch with reality, and the all-seeing, all knowing servant women who discuss family secrets privately with insight and wry humor.

Set in the late 1800s, the story perfectly depicts the isolation and lack of power within society that women experienced. Honor and purity must be maintained at all costs as young women are "matched" and bargained for by a male society. Lorca's play mirrors the political oppression of Spain's Fascist regime that he fell victim to (he was assassinated in July 1936) as well as his personal struggles as a homosexual in a repressive society. Full of rich symbolism, vivid language and high drama, "The House of Bernarda Alba" is the final play by Spain's most renowned playwright and poet; a culminating achievement for his lifetime. The play remains a powerful dramatic work full of symbolism and high stakes drama that provokes deeper thought and examination as it relates to modern times.

CTE students are making the most of this opportunity to play in one of the greatest plays ever written for actresses. Studying the script and the society they must inhabit is challenging and requires taking great risks as actors. Actors must analyze and understand their characters to portray them.

Junior Melissa Levin plays Bernarda Alba, the sixty-year-old lead character in the play.

"Bernarda uses control because that is all she has," said Melissa. "She uses violence, power and anger to control her children when really there are things going on that she doesn't even know about. Her control symbolizes her weaknesses in a lot of ways... and her insecurities.

Her fear of showing love and kindness comes through with her need for control."

The rest of the cast includes Sarah Smithton, CoCo Robinson, Emily Hanley, Caroline Morrison, Morgan Thompson, Katie Wertheimer, Caroline De Lone, Penny Fitzpatrick and Shoshanna Cantor.

The actors are assisted by the design elements needed for the production. Costumes play an important role in rehearsals as well as performances. The actors will wear corsets and black clothing that reflect the times and circumstances of the play. Student designers add to the atmosphere: costumes are by Amy Lamden and Brianna Moore, set by Cynthia Bathgate, lighting by Kelly Witwicki, sound by Sarah Schwartz and props by Rachel Chavez. Stage managers Peter Wallace and Ben Stanton are in charge of rehearsals and will be calling all the shots during performances.

All performances take place in the Daniel Caldwell Theatre (located at the back of Tam's campus) at 7 pm. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$5 for senior citizens and students. Tickets can be purchased up to one hour ahead of each performance when the box office opens. Seats are first-come, first-served when the auditorium opens at 6:30 pm. Advance tickets are not available by telephone. Latecomers will not be seated until intermission. Please visit CTE's website: www.ctetam.org for further information.

And Now For Something Completely Different...Coming in April

Watch for a world premiere in April entitled "Nothing" directed by guest artist Robert Ernst, who also developed and wrote the script with students. Last year's CTE seniors began the process, coming up with ideas, characters and themes, and writing a first draft of the play under Ernst's guidance. The process was picked up again at the beginning of this year by seniors Gabe Grossman, Lila Scott and David Phillips (with input from others) and culminated in a final short script that explores issues of man and technology. The play will be presented in the Mother Lode Drama Festival at Amador High School on April 24 and 25 as part of a competition held every year. Performances will also take place at Tam from April 29-May 3, together with other scenes and monologues that will be presented at the competition. Further information will appear in the Tam Family in April.❖

Leadership Activities Update

March is here, spring is just around the corner, which means chaos in leadership.

The spring semester is always crazy full of dance, fundraisers and many other school events. Kicking off this hectic season the leadership class is serving crab at this year's Redwoods Crab Fest. We have never volunteered for this event before, but we are looking forward to helping our senior citizen neighbors. Along with the crab feed, we will volunteer at the "Senior Prom" at the Redwoods on March 13. We participate in this event every year and it is always fun.

Last semester, we donated over 50 pints of blood to the Blood Center of the Pacific. March 16 is the spring blood drive, and the outreach committee led by Emily Berhs is hoping to raise over 70 pints of blood. You must be at least sixteen and weigh over 110 pounds to donate. If you are sixteen, you need a parent-signed permission slip. This event has always been very successful and meaningful. We are really looking forward to it and hope it will be successful once again.

Have you seen any of your child's work? Well Tam's Open House is March 19. This is a chance for you and your child to walk around to his or her classes and see all the work that has been accomplished this year. The leadership students will be there keeping traffic moving and putting on one of the biggest fundraisers for both the leadership class and the class of 2009. We will sell our own merchandise and items donated to the senior class of 2009's auction. This is the largest fundraiser for the seniors. Money raised by the auction will be used to reduce the cost of prom tickets.

Also this month is our Spring Dance put on by our student relations committee headed by Marley Pettigrew. The theme is "Rescue Me." Students will come dressed as firemen, doctors, police officers, secret agents and more. The dance is March 20, and tickets will be on sale March 9-20. Dances are always a big fundraiser, and this year we are hoping to have the best spring dance yet.

As you can see we are very busy for the month of March, but keep your eyes out for the dates...

April 24: Dance for the Dances. Juniors and sophomores are putting on a black light dance to raise money for Prom and winter formal next year.

April: Campaign for class officers begins!

May 1: Multicultural Assembly

May 17: Prom

May 29: Farewell Rally

Items Needed for Senior Class Auction

The senior class of 2009 is holding its annual auction on the night of Open House, Thursday, March 19. The proceeds from the silent auction help make events like prom and senior week activities more affordable for all students. Leftover money in the senior account at the end of the year will be passed down to the next senior class.

We are currently looking for items to be auctioned, such as gift certificates, baskets, services, personal training, vacations and appliances. Money donations are also much appreciated. Please contact Jedel Benson at jedelbenson@sbcglobal.net or Allie Green at 415-717-0075 with any questions. Donations can be sent to the main office at Tam High, 700 Miller Avenue, MV, attention: Senior Class.

Thank you!

Marin County School to Career Partnership

by Nancy Westreich, School to Career Liaison

**College and Career Center
Redwood High School (415) 945-3604
Tamalpais High School (415) 380-3558
nwestreich@tamdistrict.org**



By the time you read this, Tamalpais students will have participated in their internship for several weeks. Students are involved in book and film promotion, engineering, medical care, physical therapy, design, the Sheriff's Academy, music production, brain research, writing for the Marin IJ and social work. If your student is interested in a summer internship, applications will be available after the spring break.

On April 2nd, the School to Career Partnership in conjunction with the Marin Builders Association and the Regional Occupational Program will offer job shadows for students interested in architectural, engineering and construction-related fields. Applications will be available shortly.

Other School to Career Services

As the School to Career Liaison for Tamalpais High School, I am available in the College and Career Center on Wednesdays and Thursdays. I assist students with internship placement and preparation, finding job shadows and informational interviewing opportunities. I also help students with resume writing, interviewing skills, and provide opportunities for students to participate in career-related field trips and activities throughout the year. ❖

Reprinted from the Tam News

Defining the Problem: Why Are African-American Students Missing

by Thanh Lu and Herb Wade

Last year, 295 students from Tamalpais High School walked across Mead Theater to receive their diplomas. Among them were seven African-American students who had come to Tam from Martin Luther King Middle School, all that remained of the 14 who had entered Tam as freshmen.

One year earlier, only four of 18 such students received a Tam diploma. The year before that, two out of 10 graduated. In 2005, 10 of 13 African-American MLK alumni graduated from Tam, the lone bright spot in recent statistics compiled by The Tam News with the help of Sharon Turner, president of the Marin City Network, a community-based organization in Marin City that helps middle school students.

Low graduation rates also occur in other groups of Tam students from The Bolinas Stinson School and Willow Creek Academy, and among English language development students, but this data shows a clear trend of MLK students not succeeding at Tam. This phenomenon is not new nor unique to Marin County, but that does not make it any easier for Tam or MLK officials to explain. Or to fix.

“Education is a complex process. We recognized that having kids prepared is not just [important] for high school, but for middle school also,” said Tam District Superintendent Assistant Steve Butler.

Martin Luther King Jr. Academy (MLK), a middle school in Marin City, is part of the Sausalito Marin City School District. MLK currently has a total of 30 students enrolled in seventh and eighth grades (one Asian, three Hispanics, and 26 African-Americans.)

“[The graduation rates] are very low, very disturbing, and sad also. I think a lot of factors caused this – motivation, parents, the school, MLK, the staff, and the preparation,” said Natasha Griffin, a science teacher at MLK.

“We have a few situations of students with no stable homes,” said Campus Staff Assistant Jewel Barrow. “There are some kids who just don’t see the need [to try]. There is another group that wants to do this but lacks the skills. When [students from MLK] came here, it became the ‘real world.’ You find out

that you are no longer an A or B student anymore so you give up.”

This reality check may be the result of inadequate preparation. Due to limited classes, many students from MLK enter Tam lacking the mindset and academic preparation to succeed, according to some teachers and students. Unlike other middle schools, it does not offer foreign language classes. There are fewer teachers and students than Tam. Compared to MLK, Mill Valley Middle School (MVMS) offers foreign languages and similar to Tam, students have subject-specific teachers. Therefore, transitioning from a small middle school to a high school like Tam can be a difficult process for many kids.

“I came to Tam feeling lost in my classrooms. I just wasn’t ready as a freshman at Tam enrolling from MLK,” said Tam senior Jerrell Milton. “I wasn’t used to all the homework and classes and I got lost.”

“[MLK] was like an elementary school. I felt like it was easy, like it was nothing hard. We were learning hecka slow. [The transition] was different because Tam has a lot of different students. I wasn’t used to having a lot of classes and homework – the rules, having a counselor, were all new to me,” said Tam junior Ja’Van Hall.

Nonetheless, there were other MLK students who felt prepared to enter Tam.

“MLK taught me a lot. I’ve learned how to camp in the wilderness, respect others, responsibility, and how to be more independent,” said Tam junior Kyle Jackson. “In some ways, I was prepared for high school, but I think that we could have been more prepared by being more organized and having more than two teachers for six or seven classes.”

Since Cherisse Baatin became the principal at MLK three years ago, students now take seven classes. Over the past years, the Sausalito School District has spent a lot of money trying to get kids engaged in learning. As a result, MLK revised its physical education curriculum by purchasing books for students instead of just having them play sports. The school is currently under construction and five classrooms will be added, including a gym and a science laboratory. There are

also four new teachers and an after-school homework center. Before that, MLK had two classrooms and two teachers.

“We’ve added pre-algebra and algebra classes and more homework. [The curriculum] is more rigorous and there are more expectations. We need to be aligned with other middle schools across the county. We have increased parents’ involvement. We are preparing them for life, not just high school, with rigorous coursework, qualifying teachers, and parents’ involvement,” said Baatin.

To look for other alternatives to Tam, former MLK students choose to transfer to continuation schools like San Andreas to graduate on time with their class. In the worst case scenario, students with behavioral problems get transferred to county school. This raises the question of how a student’s specific attitude might affect performance.

“The education is there for the students to get, but their attitude, behavior, and lack of respect for authority [get in the way]. If [teachers] can’t get your attention long enough to teach you, you’re not going to get it. I think attitude accounts for 75% of it,” said Turner.

D’George Hines, a Tam alumnus from the class of 2008, thinks it may be an issue of respect.

“Sometimes, some of the black kids lack the responsibility of being respectful so when I act respectful, some of them think I act ‘white.’ Respect is not something you were born with, it’s something you learn,” he said.

“I think it’s true [that students who go to San Andreas take the easy way out],” said Myra Hill, a senior at San Andreas who is a former Tam student. “I lost credits as a freshman and sophomore by not going to classes. MLK has prepared me enough, but I just chose not to go to class.”

According to Orlando Patterson, an African-American professor of sociology at Harvard University, culture also determines the success of African-American youths. In a New York Times article from March of 2006, Patterson wrote, “People use their culture as a frame for understanding their world, and as a resource to do much of what they want.” A female student from Patterson’s class said that almost

From Tam Graduation?

all the male African-American students she knew from high school flunked because they chose not to graduate. Some sociologists call this phenomenon “the cool-pose culture” of young, African-American men. Furthermore, Patterson asserts, these youths adopt the behavior of “hanging out on the street after school, shopping and dressing sharply, sexual conquests, party drugs, hip-hop music and culture,” emulating high profile African-American professional sport players and entertainers.

“Many students have their friends’ approval. There’s the peer pressure and the mindset – ‘it’s not cool to be smart,’” said former Tam Assistant Principal and current San Andreas English teacher Candace Curtis. “We need to change the culture of every community and make them believe that it’s cool to be smart and it’s cool to go to college.”

Not everyone agrees with Patterson and Curtis.

“I don’t believe it’s culture. I believe that everyone wants their child to be successful. It’s a generalization. Peer pressure affects all adolescents,” said MLK principal Baatin.

While recent statistics show a deflated African-American graduation rate at Tam, Curtis said “this is not just a Marin City problem. It is a county-wide, nation-wide problem.”

According to the Simon Youth Foundation, a non-profit organization in Indiana whose focus is to help at-risk youths improve interpersonal and educational skills, every 29 seconds at least one U.S. student drops out of school. That’s 124 students every hour; 2,979 every day; and more than one million every year. Approximately, one third of all public high school students and nearly one half all African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans fail to graduate from high school.

In addition, the grade point average (GPA) data collected for the Tam District in 2007-08 school year showed an average of 2.03 GPA for African Americans, 2.65 for Hispanics, 3.27 for Asians, and 3.14 for whites from ninth to 12th grade.

Tam Principal Tom Drescher noted that there are fewer African American students in the district compared to white students. Therefore, according to Drescher, if one

African-American earned a low GPA, it would have a bigger effect on the average GPA compared to a white student with a low GPA.

Curtis, a former Tam assistant principal, recognized in her first year that African-American students were not successful and primarily, those students were from Marin City. The problem has only been brought more into focus in the past three years. Curtis did research that pinpointed socioeconomic background, race, and parents’ educational levels as the three main factors that affected drop-out rates specific to Tam.

“It has to do with the Marin City community and lack of emphasis on education in the early years. A lot of [MLK students] entered Tam not feeling prepared,” said Curtis.

In addition, school officials say parents still play a major role in the success of these students. Some kids just lack the support from their families, resulting in frustration. Others have parents who never attended college, while there are those who are rarely home because of long work schedules. In some families, parents do not care or understand the importance of an education.

“If you don’t push your child and stay behind them, the streets will take over. Parents are just scared of their kids nowadays. If you don’t take care of your kid, then nobody else will,” said Trellis.

“Parents need to put in time. Some don’t know how to parent. I would never say a problem is a school. Parents care, but some don’t know what to do,” said Barrow.

Additionally, the lack of role models and African-American teachers at Tam might be identified as an influential factor. Out of the whole Tamalpais Union High School District, there is only one African-American teacher. There are no African-American teachers present among 85 instructors at Tam.

“I think it has to do with race. I don’t think basketball players are role models. [Students] should find appropriate role models,” said Griffin.

“Race plays a role in this. As a society, overt racism has eased a little in America, but I

think there’s an undercurrent of racism that still exists,” said Turner.

“Racism is the bigger part that affects poor achievement of African Americans, including poverty, disruptions, and racist activities that single them out. These create angry children that have a hard time to succeed in society,” said Baatin.

Furthermore, programs and classes such as honors, Advanced Placement (AP), The Tam News (Journalism), Conservatory Theatre Ensemble (CTE), and Academy of Integrated Humanities and Media (AIM) lack more than a small handful of African-American students.

“When I first started [AIM], I felt uncomfortable being the only African-American when covering issues such as slavery and the Middle Passage,” said Tam graduate Kenya Thompson who was the only African American student enrolled in AIM last year.

“There are a variety of access points and curriculum [in AIM] which provides opportunities for more kids to be successful. I would think the graduation rate of MLK students would increase if more MLK students chose to do AIM,” said David Tarpinian, one of the three AIM teachers. “More interdisciplinary programs would appeal to a lot of students who are currently disengaged from school.”

As a result, Tam offers the Summer Transition Program, Tam Jam, academic workshops, advisory class, tutoring before, during, and after schools, Link Crew, “Big Brother & Big Sister Program,” and The Beacon and Hannah Project to help students. The Tam District is trying to attract more minority teachers from other places who lost their jobs due to the budget cuts to come and teach in the district.

“We’re trying to reduce the achievement gap with not just African-American students, but with other at-risk students as well,” said Drescher.

“It’s our responsibility to turn the table around,” said Baatin.

In Part II of this article, The Tam News will examine how the community and the school collaborate together in an attempt to resolve this county-wide and national phenomenon.

Boosters News

Boys' Basketball

The Tamalpais Varsity Boys' Basketball team ended its season with 12 wins, including hard-earned victories against Marin Catholic, Hercules and Casa Grande. With only three returning varsity players and a first year coaching staff, the new-look Hawks were quick to establish a defensive identity based upon hustle and hard work. Throughout the season they proved themselves to be a defensive force, holding their opponents to a meager 46 points a game, which ranked second among MCAL teams. Senior captains Matt Robertson, Caleb Prigian, Jared Key, and Grayson Goerss led the effort. Despite finishing the regular season a game out of playoff contention, the team earned respect throughout the league by competing with pride and class in every game.

Tam Boys' Basketball Leaders

Rebounding:

Caleb Prigian 8.6%

Bernard Peters 6.8%

MCAL Rebounding:

Caleb Prigian 7.9%

MCAL 3 Pointers:

Grayson Goerss 19

MCAL Assists:

Caleb Prigian 2.9

Five Tam Wrestlers Qualify for NCS Championships

Congratulations to the wrestlers listed below who represented Tam at the 2009 NCS Wrestling Championships at Newark Memorial High School in Fremont at the end of February. These wrestlers were place winners in their respective weight classes at the MCAL wrestling championships held at Terra Linda High School, earning them entry into the NCS tournament.

Pablo Cortez (So. 105 lbs) -- 2nd place

Josh Ren (Sr. 114 lbs) -- MCAL Champion

Josh Phelps (Jr. 121 lbs) -- 3rd place

Josh Feldman (Sr. 137 lbs) -- 3rd place

Carson Schultz (Sr. 173 lbs) -- 3rd place

Girls' Varsity Basketball

Coach Rob Viramontes, who took over in late July after the summer tournaments were over, said he is very proud of his team for coming together so fast and adjusting to their new coach. Tam is on an upward trend and it shows with their record and a playoff win. "I'm just really proud of these girls," he said. "They did a great job and worked hard all year. We had a season that they can be proud of."

Senior guard Molly Maloney adds, "I think this was one of the best seasons of Tam Girls Basketball ever. We won a playoff game. We just saw the program get better and better each year."

Boosters Crab Feed Thanks

What a success! The 5th Annual Boosters Crab & Pasta Feed was held February 8 and it was the best-attended and most fun-filled Boosters event ever! We had a sell-out crowd with Tam coaches and administrators, various local youth sports leaders, parents, Boosters alumni and local business members all attending.

The Boosters executive board would like to thank everyone who contributed to the crab feed by purchasing a ticket, donating to the auction, or sponsoring a coach and also those who provided the music, food, drinks and photos (for the video). Nobody would have had fun were it not for all the volunteers who worked so hard on the day of the event:

Volunteers

Bruce Dorfman, Mike & Rudy Dunn, Stephanie Guaiumi, Heather & Wade Schlueter, Susan Washauer, Kelli Tonneson, Deb Patrick, Steve & Erin Geiszler, Ruth & Tom Rosenfield, Diana Jansen, Leslie Wachtel, Patti Bertenthal, Joanne Robinson, Maggie Floum, Nan Jacobs, Bob & Beth Taska, Karen Jernstedt, Bonnie Freiberg, Steve Bouchard, Dave & Sharon Straus, Mark & Lori Coopersmith, Tina Maloney, Helene Siegel-Fotos, Dave Boston, Jim Wickham, Jay Sweet, Ben Kline, Joan Prigian, Toni Goerss, Vincenzo Stornaiuolo, Marcella and Eddie Savino, Diana Jansen, Joan Prigian, Toni Goerss and Jay Sweet.

Student Athlete Volunteers

Emil Barkovich, Zack Straus, Matt Robertson, Molly Maloney, Kyle Jackson, Bobby Burton, Mike Vance, Mitch Abramson, Graham McKennee, Stefanie Rockers, Sarah Richardson, Cara Trombadore, Nolan Mattox, Johnny Davenport, Colton Danz, Gabby Guaiumi, Maddy Boston, Hannah Boston, Hans Geiszler, Allie Green, Jedel Benson, Logan Begneaud, Danielle Baratta, Frankie Stornaiuolo and Peter Malmquist.

Thank you to the following businesses for their donations to the Boosters Crab Feed:

Pompei's Grotto Restaurant on Fisherman's Wharf, Brazen Head Restaurant, Liverpool Lil's Restaurant, Dianda's Italian American Pastry Company, Clover Stornetta Farms Inc., Faultline Brewing Company, Heather Glen Winery, La Tour Vineyards, Napa CA, Mill Valley Market, the San Francisco Giants, Lawndale Capital Management, T&B Sports, Golden Gate Transit, Bank of Marin.

And, don't forget the band, Close Enough – "We live to get people dancing!" Dan Saap, David Swartz, Guy Woolley, Christopher Newell, Jane Harrington and Ben Kline. (Ben is the assistant golf coach at Tam!)



Chef Vinicenzo and Frankie Stornaiuolo work the stove.



Chefs and their helpers gear up to feed a crowd.

Parent Volunteers Needed

Boosters is looking for volunteers to coordinate the "Coaches Thank You" banquet held at the end of May. If interested, please contact Kerry Huffman at kerrywhuffman@yahoo.com for details.

Girls Basketball Team



Cara Trombadore vs Justin Siena, in MCAL play-off game at Justin Siena on February 17



Deondra Smothers vs Novato at Tam High on January 6



Monyka White vs Redwood at Tam High on January 13

Boys Tennis Team

Though it's been six years since the Tam High Tennis Team has had courts, the community may still come watch the team at MLK in Sausalito for home matches. Photographer: Craig Eldrid



Alex Kaiser

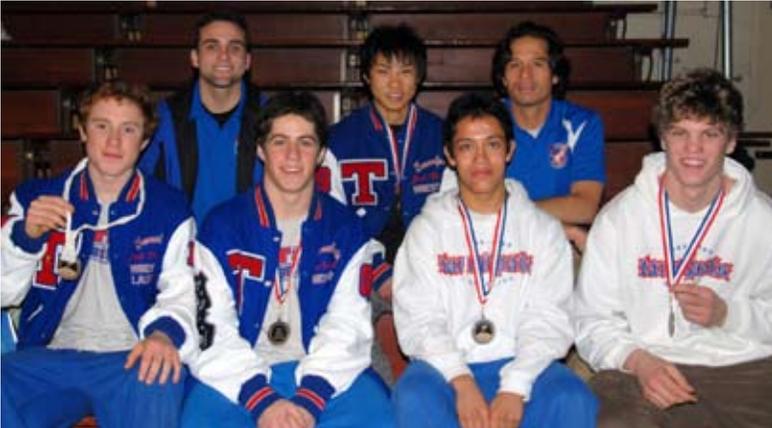


CJ Fazekas



Danny Sacks

Boys Wrestling Team



Coaches and Medal Winners at MCAL Championships



Josh Ren at MCAL Championships

Boys Basketball Team



Hawk of the Week Winners

Week of February 2:

Junior Jackson Palmer,

Basketball

Junior Martine Ehrlich,

Basketball

Week of February 9:

Senior Monyka White,

Basketball

Senior Caleb Prigian,

Basketball

Week of February 22:

Freshman Jenna Lea,

Basketball

Freshman Graeme Black,

Basketball

Week of March 2:

Senior Carson Shultz,

Wrestling

Senior Josh Feldman,

Wrestling



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| MARCH 2009 | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| <i>Date</i> | <i>Time/Event</i> | <i>Location</i> |
| 4 | 7 PM – BOOSTERS MEETING | HAWKS' NEST |
| 10 | 7 PM – TUHSD BOARD MEETING | KREPS CONFERENCE CENTER REDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL |
| 11 | 7 PM – PTSA MEETING | LIBRARY, WOOD HALL |
| 12 | 7 PM – P2P MEETING | KREPS CONFERENCE CENTER REDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL |
| 12 | 7 PM – SAFE & SOBER GRAD NIGHT MEETING | LIBRARY WOOD HALL |
| 12 | 7 PM – THUMB MEETING | GREENWOOD MUSIC BLDG |
| 13 | 2009-2010 CLASS SCHEDULING FORMS DISTRIBUTED DURING TUTORIAL | |
| 16 | ASB BLOOD DRIVE | STUDENT CENTER |
| 17&18 | 8 AM – SOPHOMORES TAKE CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM | GUS GYM |
| 19 | ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE | GUS GYM |
| | 6:30 PM – JAZZ BAND 7 PM – WELCOME 7:30-8:30 PM – CLASSROOM VISITS | |
| 20 | MINIMUM DAY – 12:35 PM DISMISSAL | |
| 20 | 8-11 PM – "RESCUE ME" SPRING DANCE | RUBY SCOTT GYM |
| 23 | STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY – NO SCHOOL | |
| 24-28 | 7 PM – CTE PRESENTS: "THE HOUSE OF BERNARDA ALBA" | CALDWELL THEATRE |
| 24 | 7 PM – TUHSD BOARD MEETING | KREPS CONFERENCE CENTER REDWOOD HIGH SCHOOL |
| 25 | DEADLINE FOR 2009/2010 CLASS SCHEDULING FORMS TO BE RETURNED TO COUNSELING OFFICE | |
| 25-29 | SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA TRIP TO NEW YORK CITY | |
| 27 | 12:15 PM – FACULTY AND STAFF APPRECIATION LUNCHEON | RUBY SCOTT GYM |