

NEWS!

THE SUMMIT SCHOOL

February 2010



BUILDING A FIRM FOUNDATION

With a big push in November to close in the Upper School addition before winter, and then another big push to prepare the new wing for a final inspection in order to obtain a Certificate of Occupancy, we are just about ready to let our breath out and celebrate!

The school is not increasing in enrollment, so this increase in square footage will relieve the crunch in the existing building by creating and improving working and learning conditions. The expansion includes the addition of three classrooms, a speech therapy office, a guidance office, a pre-vocational/transition office, a multi-purpose conference room, an occupational therapy room, an expanded main office, a state-of-the arts music studio, a large art studio, and a much needed storage area.

Needless to say, the staff members who are moving into these new offices are very excited about the improvements and are already sharing their thoughts about ways in which the expanded space will be used to improve the services they offer to Summit students.

Faculty and students alike are deeply grateful to all those who helped to make this improvement possible.



R.E.A.P. REAPS BRAVOS Summit's Recreational Enrichment Afterschool Theater Program meets every Monday afternoon under the skillful guidance of Tom Schaefer. Students learn about acting and singing as they prepare to present productions of Broadway musicals. They concentrate on memorizing lines, working as a team, and sharing the thrill of hearing "bravo" at the final curtain call of their performance. Last fall they presented *The Lion King* (photo to left) and have begun to work on their spring presentation, the much-loved *Grease!*

HOPE FOR HAITI HEALTHY BAKE SALE

A massive earthquake flattened Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and killed as many as 200,000. One and a half million are homeless. President Obama, in an address at the White House on January 14, stated, "You will not be forsaken. You will not be forgotten." Class 22 held a healthy bake sale and pledged all of the profits to Haiti. This is just one of several charitable projects at Summit that connects our students to the larger community.

**PLEASE JOIN US ON SUNDAY, APRIL 11th, BETWEEN NOON AND 2PM
TO TOUR THE NEW ADDITION TO THE UPPER SCHOOL.
REFRESHMENTS AND HAPPY PEOPLE!**

Summit teachers gathered to show their appreciation for the generous holiday gifts they received from parents.



SUMMIT'S WORK BASED LEARNING PROGRAM



often is able to couple a student's passion with a work opportunity, paving the way for career options that have been previously unexplored. That's the case for Ana Leigh Kaplon and Kyle Morrison. Both are working at Biscuits and Bath, a day care for dogs in Manhattan.

Management was so pleased with Ana that she was asked to extend her semester commitment to include the winter break. Ana was more than willing to do so, and she now has her eye on a summer placement there as well.



Kyle Morrison's time at Bisquits and Bath was equally successful, measured in part by the invitation he received to join full-time staff at their holiday party.

Off to a great start, now both Ana and Kyle are contemplating futures in animal care professions.

INTERNSHIP HELPS COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

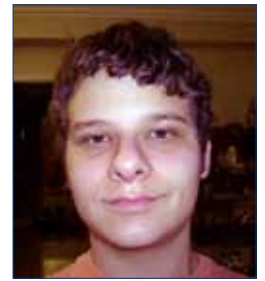


Kees VanBergeijk, a senior at Summit, recently wrote a meaningful essay based on his Work Based Learning Program internship at the Harborside Veterinary Hospital on Long Island for his college application. "Before my internship," he wrote, "I underestimated my ability to support others during an emotional crisis or to be relied on by fellow

staff members. Through this experience, I am developing a higher level of independence, reliability, and self-confidence." Working one day a week through Summit's Work Based Learning Program gave Kees an insider's view of a profession that he now might want to entertain as a career.

ALUMNI ROCK ROCKS!

Michael Rock came to Summit when he was seven years old. Moving through the Lower School and then the Upper School, he holds the record of having been at Summit more years than any other student.



In September, Michael entered the Freshman class at Brandeis University in Boston, Massachusetts, and just recently received his grades for his first semester – achieving a 3.25 GPA. "I did better than I expected," Mike said in a recent telephone interview. "Next semester, I'm hoping to make the Dean's List."

Although Michael had been away from home on summer internships before leaving for college, he admitted that living away from home has been an adjustment, but was pleased that his roommate was a fellow New Yorker. When asked about his favorite Summit memory, Michael said, "It wasn't an event – it was a person. Mr. Looks was the best teacher. His classes in Global History and Government and Economics were so interesting. I'm thinking now that I might major in Politics. I haven't declared a major yet, of course, but that's what I'm thinking about while I knock off my other requirements." Rock for President in 2040? Maybe.

HOW ABOUT THOSE JANUARY ENGLISH REGENTS SCORES!



Ms. Gretchyn's 303 junior class achieved an average score of 89% in the January English Regents exam. The English Regents consists of four comprehensive essays over the course of two days. Session I relies on the students' ability to take notes, read and comprehend documents, and formulate two essays based on a given task. On the second day, Session II, the

students are expected to be able to read two pieces of literature and write a comparative essay in which they analyze the theme that binds them. In addition, they must be able to recall and write about two pieces of literature they have read that support a particular quote, referred to as the Critical Lens.

Students usually begin preparing for the English Regents in their freshman year where they learn the basics of literary analysis. Once they pass the English Regents in the junior year, they are always reminded that the writing skills they worked so hard to attain will be necessary to maintain for college-level work.

Congratulations to Ms. Gretchyn and to the students in class 303.



UPPER SCHOOL STUDIO SOUND BITES



Well, Summit certainly has the musicians! And we have the best music teacher this side of the Mississippi. Now that we've built a Music Studio worthy of both, we could use some help outfitting it. We have sent proposals to several foundations that we hope will help with the soundproofing costs of our state-of-the-art studio, but in this economy – maybe, maybe not.

In the meantime, maybe there are some Summit families with older siblings off to college, or younger parents who were “rockers” in their own college days, who might have some of the musical equipment listed below that they no longer use.

Gary's Wish List includes two cellos, two violins, a viola, an electronic drum set, an Engelhardt upright bass, two Fender Precision bass guitars, assorted recording microphones, two Fender Stratocaster guitars, two Fender acoustic guitars, a recording/mixing box, a pair of monitor speakers, recording software, and a pair of recording headphones.

HEALTH CLASS COMES ALIVE



Shoshana Rabinowitz of Class 22 has been busy. First she performed in *The Lion King*, and then she presented a PowerPoint on Tourette's Syndrome to her homeroom, social workers, speech and language therapists, and administrators in the Lower School. With a lot of information and a little humor, Shoshana taught the class about Tourette's. She dispelled the Hollywood/media image of the swearing person with TS, explaining that only about ten percent of people with Tourette's have coprolalia. Most importantly, Shoshana left the message for everyone: NEVER, EVER MAKE FUN OF SOMEONE BECAUSE THEY ARE DIFFERENT FROM YOU!

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MEET THE NURSE: LUCY WARE



Most of us are given only one career. I was blessed with two. The first was in publishing. Then at 39 I was given a chance to continue my education and finally realize a lifetime dream of becoming a Registered Nurse. A month after beginning the nursing program at Queensborough Community College, I had the good fortune of being offered a position as assistant teacher at Summit.

After five years of attending nursing school and being an assistant teacher in the Upper School, fate handed me another opportunity with the Visiting Nurse Service as a Staff Nurse. Destiny intervened yet again when The Summit School needed a nurse and chose me to fill that position in September 2008. Coming back to The Summit School allowed me to meld my love of children, nursing, and education, as well as providing good quality healthcare.

Many may think that the nurse's job is only to administer medication, but at Summit the staff is challenged to make a difference in each child's life. In addition to maintaining daily and emergency medications, tending to bumps, bruises, bellyaches, and other emergencies. I have implemented a database for medical information for each student in both schools, a bulletin board devoted to health topics that come from the students themselves, and I have gone into health classes to teach the students about proper hand-washing, preventing the spread of germs, the importance of maintaining healthy blood pressure and blood sugar. At Summit, each day is diverse, and I am led by the student and staff needs. My goal is to educate students and staff in disease prevention and to promote a healthy way of life.

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

This
Certificate of Merit
is awarded to
Benjamin H. Kahtan
who has advanced to Finalist standing in the
National Merit Scholarship Program of two thousand and ten
by demonstrating through distinguished performance
high potential for future academic accomplishment.

President, National Merit Scholarship Corporation



MOUSE SQUAD UPDATE The school's MOUSE program (Making Opportunities for Upgrading Schools and Education), modeled on help desks that have become standard in business and industry, prepares and supports participants in the creation and operation of a student-run, school-based technical support help desk. Student technicians receive basic and advanced technical training to give them the skills necessary to troubleshoot a myriad of end-user problems and issues. MOUSE Squad members routinely respond to requests for service/repair, perform basic preventive maintenance tasks to ensure that our equipment is functioning optimally, serve as lab assistants in the classroom, and participate in special projects that arise throughout the year. Special projects may include an inventory of our technology infrastructure, operating system, application updates and upgrades, and setting up new equipment for deployment and implementation of new network services. Students who participate in the MOUSE Squad gain technological literacy and valuable, practical, marketable workforce readiness skills that will translate into any IT-related workplace in the future. Problem solving, teamwork, data analysis, customer service relations, computer troubleshooting, and communication skills are the core skills that our MOUSE Squad members learn.



The Lower School is pleased to welcome the following members to the MOUSE Squad: Joshua Cutler, Adam Foltin, Conor Gallagher, Matthew Goodstein, Benjamin Kriegel, Adam Pilzer, Drew Vogel, Itamar Zilberstein, and Dean Zimberg.



BILL MULLEN has been a popular teacher at the Lower School for a long time. Students frequently call attention to the ubiquitous "World's Greatest Teacher" trophy he proudly displays on his desk. When they inquire as to its validity, he responds, "Well – it's a Lifetime Achievement Award."

Bill is known for his Literature class that integrates the works of H.G. Wells (*War of the Worlds*, *The Time Machine*) and William Golding (*Lord of the Flies*) with classic science fiction and adventure films. He has directed student-penned film spoofs of these works of fiction with hilarious results. Bill's fictional film company is called "No Budget Productions."

Bill also teaches a popular American History course, again using the film medium to enhance students' appreciation of, as one of his students described them, these "really old, dead guys." Hollywood films (*Last of the Mohicans*, 1776) are interspersed with documentaries to entertain and educate, while requiring an analysis of the difference between historical fact and fiction (fact is better for the state test; the fiction is more fun).

Bill received his B.A. from Empire State College and his M.S. in Education from C.W. Post.

PA FIRES ON ALL CYLINDERS The Summit Parent Association is firing on all cylinders, thanks to a huge amount of positive energy and increased parental participation. So, what are the exciting social and educational events and new projects that we are working on?

First, the newly-formed Communication Committee is helping Summit to go green with a new weekly E-blast system launched in mid-November. This effort will eliminate a great deal of the paper previously sent home, while still keeping parents informed. The E-blasts are sent to all parents and school staff and provide regular updates on school news, upcoming PA events, and other events that might be of interest.

We are also working with Summit's IT staff to put a new face on the Summit website to ensure it is a source of information for the entire Summit community. Please make sure that you are receiving (and reading!) these E-blasts as they are now the primary way of informing our community about the PA's activities and events. They're environmentally friendly too.

The new School Beautification Committee has plans to revamp the Lower School backyard, creating a safe and comfortable space for learning and relaxing. We would appreciate the help of any parents with experience, skills, or contacts to defray the cost of this project.

The Spirit Committees have also been busy. In the Lower School, both the November bowling event in Manhattan and the movie afternoon held at the end of January drew a large crowd. The second half of the year promises more fun and action with another Manhattan bowling event in late April and a night at the movies in mid-May. Be on the lookout too for news about the annual Lower School picnic on June 6th, which again promises fun for both students and their families. The Upper School had an enthusiastic turnout for their movie night in the fall, and are now planning an evening at an improvisational comedy club in Manhattan in the spring. We are also hoping to get a number of free tickets to opening day at Shea Stadium and will keep you posted on that. The school year will end on a high note with an outing on June 20th for both Upper and Lower School students and their families to the Staten Island Yankees Stadium to see the S.I. Yankees play the Brooklyn Cyclones. A great way to round off a busy school year!

On the educational front, the Life After Summit series continues on Sunday afternoon, February 28, with a workshop for Upper School families to explore summer opportunities. Our own Emily Seltzer will give her advice and suggestions to help make the summer experience a successful one for every student. Evan Oppenheimer from the Compass Project will speak about their Summer Internship Program. The day will also provide a forum for open dialogue so that parents can learn from each other.

We always welcome new volunteers as well as ideas and suggestions. Look out for more information on how to volunteer, as well as on all the activities mentioned above, in the weekly E-blast and on the school's website. You can also contact the PA at their email address, pa@summitqueens.com.