SECRET MISSION - GAYNOR SURPRISES CO-FOUNDE FOR 50TH CELEBRATION
GATORS MAKE BASKETBALL PLAY-OFFS!
GRADS LIST 50 WAYS THEY’LL MISS GAYNOR

Building on 50 Years
BUILDING ON 50 YEARS

As our 50th year comes to a close, there’s much to celebrate. The success of our school over five decades can be measured in many ways. I measure success of Stephen Gaynor School in smiles—the smiles that I see on children’s faces every day. I’m pleased to say that over the last 50 years more than 2,500 students have left our school not only full of smiles, but also bursting with self-confidence and a passion for learning that is unparalleled.

Earlier in June, we celebrated the accomplishments of our 2013 graduates. Twenty-six students are eager to face the challenges that await them. I couldn’t be more proud. As an alumnus speaker, Hillary Kun, mentioned in her address to them, “You have all the academic skills and the confidence you need to be successful!” I couldn’t agree more.

I am excited to welcome many new families into our community this school year. I hope you are enjoying a relaxing summer and our students are able to take the time to recharge. I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the start of the 2013-14 academic year. Until then, enjoy your time away!

Sincerely,

Dr. Scott Gaynor
Head of School

Dear Friends,

I measure success of Stephen Gaynor School in smiles—the smiles that I see on children’s faces every day. I’m pleased to say that over the last 50 years more than 2,500 students have left our school not only full of smiles, but also bursting with self-confidence and a passion for learning that is unparalleled.
A TOP SECRET MISSION:
HOW 300 GAYNOR STUDENTS HELPED CELEBRATE OUR CO-FOUNDERS

Can nearly 300 students keep a secret?
This March, Gaynor uncovered the answer to a 49-year-old secret tale. With over 300 students, more than 100 faculty and staff members, and about 35 parents who quietly lined the sidewalk surrounding the school and filled the lobby of the North building to kick-off a day celebrating our co-founders, Dr. Miriam Michael and Yvette Siegel-Herzog. Gaynor students held green and white balloons and clapped excitedly as a car approached the school, revealing the women who started Stephen Gaynor School 49 years ago. And the most amazing part is that the event was a surprise!

“Never in a million years did I anticipate the incredible celebration that greeted us when we arrived at school that morning,” explained Yvette Siegel-Herzog. “The streets, the school, were filled with jubilant faces of children, parents, faculty and staff. The warmth of that entrance can never be duplicated. That moment of joy will never be forgotten.”

After the co-founders were greeted by their fans, they were escorted into the lobby, where they took a seat to determine what awaited them. Every single student filed into the lobby holding a slip of paper detailing their favorite Gaynor memory. One by one, they approached the co-founders and presented them with their memory. Some included drawings to help illustrate the moment and others were written in beautiful prose.

To round out the festivities, Ms. Borders and several students from the Community Service Group, created a short video on the history of Stephen Gaynor School, complete with re-enactments of the school’s inception. In addition, each class honored the year the school was created by learning about the history, food, music, fashion, and trends from 1964.

When asked about the exciting day full of surprises, Siegel-Herzog conceded, “You may have seen tears, but they were tears of joy and appreciation.”
This year’s annual Gaynor Gala, celebrating the school’s 50th Anniversary, marked a significant milestone in the history of Stephen Gaynor School. While saluting the school’s vibrant past, the unforgettable celebration also looked forward to the school’s bright future.

“Mimi and I opened the Stephen Gaynor School 50 years ago and are celebrating the ripeness of our years and the growth of our school. In fact, while I stand here, I think back to the very beginning when Mimi and I embarked on a voyage that would turn out to define the destiny for so many.” Those were the words of Yvette Siegel-Herzog, whose speech garnered a standing ovation. Nearly 300 people thanked co-founders Dr. Miriam Michael and Yvette Siegel-Herzog, both of whom received the Founders’ Award for their pioneering effort.

In honor of the school’s 50th Anniversary, we presented the 1963 Key Award to those who have been instrumental in helping make our school what it is today: Dr. Gordon Gaynor, Ms. Carol Felshberg, Ms. Erminia Rivera, and Ms. Daryl Simon. Dr. Scott Gaynor and Henrietta Jones Pellegrini, President of the Board of Trustees, assisted the key to the honorees as a symbol of gratitude from the school.

Seth Meyers, Saturday Night Live’s head writer and “Weekend Update” anchor, hosted the festivities with hilarious anecdotes, leaving the crowd roaring in laughter. The event then transformed into a dance party as Mary J. Blige took the stage performing some of her hit songs. After enjoying the evening’s entertainment, the guests feasted on a delicious meal and took part in the live and silent auctions, helping raise funds for the expansion of our facilities, including the construction of a bridge to connect the two buildings. While laughing and dancing the night away, attendees helped raise $140,000, making this a banner night for the school.

This evening would not have been possible without the help of dedicated Gala Co-Chairs, Karen and Tim Gordon, as well as the support from the generous volunteers on our Gala Committee. Thank you to all of those who helped make this Gala a remarkable evening that will forever be remembered in the history of Stephen Gaynor School.

Gaynor Gazette
The King of Chess: Tyler Roth Plays His Way to the SuperNational V Chess Competition

Chess is a board game of strategy. The object is to checkmate the opponent’s king. For Gaynor’s Tyler Roth, it’s an extracurricular activity he hems in two years. But that didn’t stop him from being able to compete in the Super National V Chess Competition this spring in Nashville, TN, where he represented Gaynor School. The three-day tournament was intense, beginning with practice games in the morning, then on to competitions that sometimes lasted through the evening. About 900 players competed in the tournament, with each game lasting up to four hours. Stamina and focus were imperative to be successful in the competition.

Roth won half of his games and gained invaluable experience. In addition to being able to participate in this national competition where he competed against various skill levels, he was provided feedback on his efforts after each game to help him continue to grow.

“Our whole family is proud of Tyler,” exclaims Meg Roth, his mom. “I think that the experience for him was remarkable. We really hope that more kids from Stephen Gaynor will want to grow a strong chess team,” she adds.

Roth began playing chess at a day camp two summers ago. When asked how he prepared for the tournament, Roth explained that he enrolled in Mr. Santina’s Chess Club in Gaynor’s After School Program and takes a private lesson once a week. Roth also enthusiastically enjoys playing chess at home with his dad, whom he’s slowly been able to best.

“The Chess King” is in his fifth year at Gaynor. He says his favorite subjects in school are math and science. “Science is pretty interesting,” Roth says. “I like how we do lots of different experiments.”

When he’s not at school, Roth also enjoys playing the guitar, piano, singing, and spending time with his family. He has a sister, Roan, and older sister, Sofia.

What’s next for Roth? He says he’d like to continue playing chess with the aspiration of participating in the World Championship. “I’m probably going to make it there someday,” he adds. And we have no doubt that he will.

Congratulations Tyler Roth!

Transforming from a Shy Student to a TV Producer

Hillary Kun entered Stephen Gaynor School in the 70’s as a shy student, who was struggling to read. But once she began attending the school, she says she caught on very quickly. “Almost from the moment I arrived, I felt the clouds cleared and suddenly I was able to learn,” she explains. She says that Gaynor’s nurturing environment provided a positive learning experience for her – one that has made all the difference.

Kun has very fond memories of her time at Gaynor. From tie-dying shirts every spring with the art teacher, Ms. Abramson, and participating in the Ice Skating Club, to doodling on pieces of cardboard with her classmates and making fossils to bury in Central Park – every day was exciting. Kun is amazed at the remarkable teachers who were part of her life. “From all the schools I attended, Ms. Abramson is the only art teacher I can even recall. She made learning fun,” Kun says with a smile.

Kun attended the High School for the Humanities and went on to graduate from Pennsylvania State University in 1990. She has been a Supervising Producer for The Daily Show with Jon Stewart for 12 years. She is responsible for booking all of the show’s side-kick guests and producing their segments. She credits Gaynor with helping her achieve her dream of working in television. “If I didn’t have a Gaynor education, I don’t know what would’ve happened to me,” says Kun.

It is that sentiment that propelled her to speak at this year’s graduation ceremony. Kun was eager to encourage the Gaynor graduating class to pursue their dreams. Hillary Kun lives in New York City with her husband and twin 13-year-old sons.
We Yap for Animals!: Gaynor’s New Youth Animal Protectors’ Club (Y.A.P.) Takes Community Service to Another Level

When: Becca Cohen, Charlotte Brown, Eliza Grifﬁn, Henry Hamilton, Kim Friedland, and Ryan Ehrlich learned about a homeless dog named Misty who needed medical care to heal from recent abuse, they decided to take action. They held a bake sale and sent their proﬁts to Second Chance Rescue in Queens, where Misty is receiving treatment.

For years, these six Gaynor students, along with Timur Sumer and Jonathan Sokol (known around Gaynor as “Ms. Kim”) have been advocates for animals. With guidance from behavioral consultant and social skills specialist Dr. Kim Spaniol, they’ve taken the initiative on their own to raise money to help abused and homeless animals in need of medical treatment. “I’m amazed by these students,” exclaims Spaniol. “They are learning valuable life-long skills and are extremely empowered by seeing the difference they can make in an animal’s life—a cause they are truly passionate about. I have done a great deal of humane education over the years, and their generosity and dedication are incredibly exceptional and inspiring. A huge thank you to their parents too for helping them organize these bake sales and being so supportive of their efforts!”

Recently, the six students raised $300 through a weekend bake sale and chose to donate to Second Chance Rescue to help cover Misty’s medical bills. Noah’s Ark Rescue—a non-proﬁt in South Carolina that also helps abused and neglected homeless animals, and the Humane Society to help prevent the annual Canadian seal slaughter. In a second sale, joined by Maddie Rubini, they raised a whopping $500 for both Second Chance and Noah’s Ark Rescue. Both organizations were so touched by the students’ donations that they posted information about their generosity on their Facebook pages. Second Chance Rescue wrote, “We know our supporters are awesome! But this took it to a whole new level! A million thank you’s from SCR and Misty to Becca, Charlotte, Eliza, Henry, Kim, and Ryan! You are impressive!” And they weren’t alone. With nearly 3,000 responses and 12,000 fans on Misty’s page, our students have received some well-deserved accolades. Noah’s Ark rescue posted, “We are so PROUD when a group of kids decide to make a difference and stand up for Abused Animals...they are an inspiration to everyone...!” More than 1,300 people agreed with responses on the page. As a special acknowledgment, Second Chance Rescue brought Misty to our school on May 9th to meet the students and thank them herself. Justin Silver, dog trainer and star of the ABC show “Dogs in the City,” along with Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer joined Misty to meet the amazing kids that contributed to her care so generously. This reunion was so inspiring that it drew the attention of local media, including WABC-TV News, with Art McFarland; WNYC-TV News; Fox News, “The Five” with Kimberly Guilfoyle; Taxi TV with Creative Media Technologies, NY Daily News, West Side Spirit; teen WINS Radio; WCBS Newsradio (1010); ABC Local online; CBS Local online; and Examiner.com.

These students have decided to formalize their philanthropy by initiating Gaynor’s ﬁrst ever Youth Animal Protectors’ Club to organize fundraising efforts and educate others about animal cruelty issues. They plan to write a letter to the City Council and Mayor to help increase awareness and campaign for better animal advocacy at Animal Care and Control (ACC), New York City’s high kill dog and cat shelter on Ninth Street. The students learned about and what needs to be done to make conditions better for animals at the ACC shelter from a report called Led Astray written by Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer.

When asked why they wanted to help animals, they responded, “Animals feel pain and fear, but they can’t talk so we want to speak for them. They help us ﬁnd happiness so let’s help them ﬁnd happiness too!” Well done kids!

Gaynor’s Global Community Service Continues

From May 13th to June 7th, members of the Gaynor community took part in a global Shoe Drive by donating gently used sneakers, black shoes, sandals, and flip-flops to children in need in the Bahamas. All of the donated shoes were shipped to Eleuthera, an island in the Bahamas. Ms. Spinelli, Ms. Hurtort, Ms. Berret, and Ms. Borders will be traveling to the island this summer to distribute the shoes to families in several settlements. Thanks to Ms. Ann Cottrell-Leone for setting this program up with the Exceptional Education Outreach program. The Shoe Drive was in a fantastic way for our students to experience community service on a global level!
Project: Cicero: Gaynor Students Give the Gift of Reading

The annual Community Learning Center Spinning for Success spin-a-thon was held on Saturday, May 11 at New York Sports Club. Supporters signed up to sweat it out on spin bikes at this fundraising event, benefiting Gaynor’s Community Learning Center, a free, after-school reading program for children in our community.

In addition to the value of intense exercise, participants had the opportunity to win a variety of raffle prizes, including tickets to the Live with Kelly and Michael show, memberships to NY Sports Club with personal training, a Keurig Coffee Maker and more.

“It has been inspiring to see the continual involvement from the Gaynor community,” expresses Kate Adlin, CLC Co-Director. “Without the support of our families, we would not be able to pass on our expertise to children who are truly in need.”

This year’s event raised nearly $6,000. Thanks to everyone who helped make our spin-a-thon a success!

Green Eggs and Ham!

Earlier this year, Ms. Pitskin’s reading group read Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss to reinforce the sound -am and -an, as well as strengthen phonemic awareness skills such as recognizing and generating rhyming words. To help bring the story to life, students made green eggs and enjoyed a fun-filled breakfast together!

Explorer Extravaganza

This spring, Ms. Arbefeld, Passarelli and Geller’s classes hosted an “Explorer Extravaganza.” Each student was assigned an explorer to research: Ferdinand Magellan, Giovanni Da Verrazano, Adrien Block, or Christopher Columbus. To bring the project to life, the students dressed up as their explorer and presented what they learned to fellow students, parents and Gaynor staff.
Buddy Time Generates Smiles All Around

Every other Friday, Ms. Graber and Ms. Yeazi’s class paired up with students from Ms. Yeazi’s class for fun activities, such as reading books, playing outside, making arts and crafts, creating holiday cards, playing educational games, and much more. The system is mutually beneficial. Ms. Graber’s students enjoyed being role models for the younger kids, and Ms. Yeazi’s students loved having a “big buddy” to look up to. Middle School student, Dani Reznick, described why she loved “Buddy Time”: “I enjoyed spending time with my buddy because she is loads of fun, and she makes me smile!”

The Science of Fairy Tales

Can you learn about science through fairy tales? The Early Childhood Willow Room proved that you can! Ms. Jurven and Ms. Hendish connected fairy tales to their exploration (science) and friendship (social studies) curriculum to create an interesting and all-encompassing lesson for their young students. The class read The Three Little Pigs, among other fairy tale stories, then explored different materials to experiment with weight and strength. Hopefully their creations could withstand the huffing and puffing of an angry wolf. While studying Henny Penny, the class learned about gravity by conducting experiments to learn how things fall. What a fun way to learn about science!

Chickens, Science, and Eggs: Oh MY!

This spring, Ms. Yeazi’s Early Childhood class took a scientific look at the life cycle of a chicken. To expand their study of life, the class incubated eight chicken eggs, and students kept a journal, in which they diagrammed what the embryo looked like each day of the 21-day cycle. The students learned about the parts of an egg by examining both raw and hard-boiled eggs to locate the parts and learn about their functions. After scientific research, reading, drawing, and real-life observations, Ms. Yeazi’s class had a complete understanding of the life of a chicken. The project was so exciting for the students and their families, that our Director of Technology set up live streaming video so the students could eagerly watch the hatching process unfold. To top it all off, the class ended the lesson with new baby chicks born on Mother’s Day that the class named Speedy, Romy, Poppy, Sophia, and Cocoa!
Gaynor Celebrates 50 Years of Excellence –

Kid Style!

On Sunday, May 19th, Stephen Gaynor School community celebrated the school’s 50th birthday with a fantastic party. While the Gala was for the grown-ups, this party was for the kids! To celebrate 50 years of making a difference, students enjoyed an array of activities, including a birthday cake contest, carnival games, bounce houses, face painting, puppet shows, magicians and more! Older students had a blast playing football, “Minute to Win It,” and a video simulated bike race through Manhattan. Students even had the chance to dunk Stephen Gaynor School’s teachers in the dunk tank, raising money for our Community Learning Center. The 50th Birthday Party was a wonderful event enjoyed by the entire Gaynor community!

Center for Architecture

Ms. Kaufman and Gruber’s homeroom classes went on a field trip to the Center for Architecture in downtown Manhattan where students had the opportunity to participate in a workshop on the structure and strength of skyscrapers. They learned about different types of structures and designs that make these tall buildings sturdy, as well as the features of some of the world’s tallest buildings. Students then had the opportunity to build their own models structures out of toothpicks, mini marshmallows, and uncooked spaghetti, then test the strength of the different designs. A great time was had by all.

Monet Art Project

After studying the life and work of Claude Monet, Ms. Spinelli and Cohen’s classes visited the Museum of Modern Art. Monet’s beautiful painting, “Water Lilies” was of particular interest to the group. The students spent time looking at the work and answering questions so thoughtfully and intelligently that other visitors commented on their knowledge. The classes also got to view the art of Mondrian, Pollack, and Picasso.
Historical Excursions through our Nation’s Capital: Middle Schoolers Take on D.C.!

Our oldest students stepped into the past during their educational overnight trip to Washington, D.C., where they had the opportunity to visit some of the nation’s most significant museums and monuments. Middle School Co-Director, John Behr, explained, “By taking this trip, students got to see the manifestation of the concepts and ideas they have studied for the last year or two.”

In addition to the academic components, the students and teachers had a chance to bond, talk, and explore together.” This overnight trip was a great way for students in the classes of Ms. Darby, Ms. Graber, Ms. Kaufman, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Rebecho to enhance their American history curriculum and celebrate the end of a very successful school year.

After a bus ride from Gaynor to Washington, D.C., the students headed straight to The Newseum, an interactive news and journalism museum, where they learned more about history, civics, and media literacy by exploring exhibits like the “Great Hall of News” and the “NBC Interactive Newsroom.”

Next on the agenda was a visit to the famous Ford’s Theatre, which is on the list of National Historic Sites as the location of Abraham Lincoln’s assassination. Students took a brief tour of the theatre, then explored historic Civil War and 1860’s artifacts. Visiting this museum brought to life some of the historical lessons our students have been learning about all year long.

Following these museum explorations, the journey continued with a walking tour of Washington, D.C. Our students took in the sights of our nation’s capital, while learning about the remarkable history behind memorials like the Washington Monument. After touring the city by land, they took to the water for a boat tour of Washington, D.C., the following day.

“My favorite part of the trip was dancing with my friends during the boat tour of Washington, D.C.”

To round out the trip, students had the opportunity to select two museums to visit in smaller groups. Along with their chaperones, students visited sites such as the National Mall, the Air and Space Museum, the American History Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Native American Art Museum, and the National Art Gallery.

As the trip came to a close, there was one last significant item on the agenda.

“I really enjoyed exploring the American Museum. We were able to see Native American artifacts that we had learned about in history class years before at Stephen Gaynor.”

What better way to end a Washington, D.C. field trip than to visit the White House? On the final day of their fun-filled trip, our students did just that. This Middle School excursion proved to be much more than an educational trip to learn about the history of our nation’s capital. It provided an opportunity for students to enjoy each other’s company, bond, and create Stephen Gaynor School memories that will last a lifetime.
Gaynor Pride on Display During Spirit Week

Students cheering. “Happy Birthday, Gaynor!” could be heard all around the school, as we kicked off the second annual Spirit Week with a pep rally. Students, faculty, and staff dressed in green and white, congregated in the gym, where the Gaynor Gator surprised everyone by jumping out of a cardboard birthday cake. Following the pep rally, students and faculty participated in an entire week dedicated to showing their school spirit, each day celebrated with its own theme:

Green & White Day
Heart Colors on Valentine’s Day
Wacky Sock Wednesday
Pajama Day
Crazy Hair/Hat Day

To conclude Spirit Week, students rallied in the gym to cheer on the school’s basketball teams. The boys’ team split up for a scrimmage, which was then followed by a girls’ basketball game. It was the perfect ending to a week that was all about Gaynor Pride!

Books, Books, Books: Gaynor Reading Challenge

To enhance our students’ reading abilities, Gaynor participated in our Annual Reading Challenge. Over the week-long event, students hosted guest-read alouds, and used picture walks, choral reading, independent reading, and reading logs to foster a love of reading and reach their goal. Classes that met their goal earned money from the Parents Association benefiting the students’ 50th Anniversary Community Service Project at the Community Gardens. The Reading Challenge came to a close with a school assembly to celebrate reading accomplishments.

Guest Authors Bring Spark to Book Fair

This April, the Parents Association hosted our Annual Book Fair, starting with a parent-only Wine & Cheese Cocktail Party in the gymnasium. Parents had the opportunity to preview the book sales, pre-purchase books for their children, and spend time with other Gaynor families.

The Book Fair continued the next day, as students shopped for their favorite books. Each class received a special visit from one of their favorite authors and enjoyed listening to readings from their books.

Tommy Greenwald read from Joe Jackson’s Guide to Not Reading, while Julie Sternberg read from her Pickaplace on a Cookie. Alex Simmons from Archie Comic Books conducted a super-hero workshop for Middle School students, while Steve Light read from his book, Zephyr Takes Flight. The Book Fair was a fun-filled experience for the entire Gaynor community! Thanks to Susan Bender and the Parents Association for organizing marvelous event!
EXPLORATIONS AND DISCOVERIES ON EARTH DAY

To commemorate Earth Day, each class at Stephen Gaynor School learned about sustainability or nature. Some classes brought the topic to life by participating in field trips related to Earth Day.

Mr. Bookin, Ms. Hurlbert, Mrs. Schestak, and Ms. Borders' classes ventured to the Urban Farm at Battery Park, where they planted a crop of radishes, lettuce, and beans.

Ms. Glazer, Ms. Berman, and Ms. Michaels’ classes explored The Science Barge, a sustainable urban farm powered by solar, wind, and biofuel and irrigated by rainwater and purified river water. After taking part in these trips and lessons, each class created presentations about their experiences. Everyone shared their explorations and discoveries at the Science Fair followed by an Earth Day assembly, where students read their scientific essays on power sustainability.

Extended Families Experience a Day in the Life at Gaynor during Relatives Day

Extended Gaynor families filled into the gym for a sneak peek into their students’ school experiences during this year’s Relatives Day. At the start of two separate sessions, Dr. Gaynor provided introductory remarks before sending families with their students to explore their classrooms. Each class prepared a unique presentation for their guests. After brainstorming settings, characters, and conflicts, Ms. Plotkin’s class wrote and performed a skit about the Iroquois tribe. Ms. Hurlbert’s students were eager to show their families their presented research papers and visual projects on Roman Culture. Ms. Panzarella, Arnesfeld, and Geller’s classes had a joint presentation, a model of New Amsterdam with houses, windmills, and Fort Amsterdam. The students used this model to explain what a day in the life of a colonist would be like to their guests.

One of the highlights from Relatives Day was the Biography Fair presented by the Middle School students. Each student worked for months researching a person of interest and developing biographies based on their inspirations. Students dressed in full character gear and presented highlights of their life. The gymnasia was filled with historical figures from Shirley Temple, Dr. Seuss, and Malcolm X, to Princess Diana, Walt Disney, Bob Marley, and John F Kennedy!
Healthy competition and a lively spirit were evident on Field Day this year. Students chanted "Green" or "White" as they paraded through the hallways, ready to head to the field on Randall's Island to compete in the day's activities. Students spray-painted their hair and donned face paint to indicate which team they were competing for, showing their true Gaynor pride. At the field, they competed in relay races, ultimate soccer, keepers of the castle, and the highly anticipated tug-o-war. As students earned points for each game, they could only hope they would earn enough for their team to win. Results! The white team won, though both teams showed incredible effort! Coach James and Coach Pat certainly outdid themselves this year and raised the bar for future events. What an exciting way to end the school year.
DINNER: A LOVE STORY

Whether you love to cook or prefer to eat out every night, every family comes together at some point for a meal — which is where many family memories are made.

This spring, Stephen Gaynor School was fortunate to bring together a panel of experts who are passionate about children and food to discuss all that goes on around the family dinner table. Our celebrity panelists included: Jenny Rosenstrach (Author of Dinner: A Love Story), Adam Rapoport (Editor-in-Chief of Bon Appetit Magazine), Sam Sifton (National Editor and former restaurant critic at The New York Times), and moderator Alex Wagner (Host of MSNBC’s “NOW with Alex Wagner”).

The various perspectives of these four professionals contributed to an enriching talk about the memorable moments of family dinners. Panelists addressed issues that face every family such as getting kids to eat well, encouraging participation in the family conversation, and finding a way to sit (relatively) still.

While appreciating the educational and interesting information of the panel discussion, attendees were also able to enjoy delicious recipes from Rosenstrach’s Dinner: A Love Story. Special thanks to Gaynor’s Adam Rapoport and Simone Wulfock for helping put this event together.

Alex Wagner
Host of MSNBC’s “NOW with Alex Wagner”

Sam Sifton
National Editor and Former Restaurant Critic at The New York Times

Jenny Rosenstrach
Author of Dinner: A Love Story

Adam Rapoport
Editor-in-Chief of Bon Appetit Magazine

CABBIES ON STRIKE

This winter, Middle School students performed scenes from Waiting for LEFTY by Clifford Odets. Written during the Great Depression, the play focuses on taxi cab drivers who decide to go on strike for a living wage. The scenes they studied in particular focus on a couple who have opposing views about whether the husband should go on strike. One way the students gained a greater understanding of their characters’ experience was working together in “families” to create a budget using the income of a typical low wage worker of the 1930’s.

Dr. Susan L. Johnson
Department Chair, Language Arts

Bon Appetit

Waiting for LEFTY

The classes of Ms. Brandets and Ms. Kassner worked together to create original scenes about the experiences of immigrants coming to America. They topped off their work with a performance on Remembrance Day for their family members.
**Hands-on Musical Experiences**

Early Childhood

Several special guests came by in the spring to share their instruments and musical talent with our students, including Lorenzo Wolff and his sousaphone, Abby Levin and her clogs, and a special gift of six ukuleles from parents, Marta Goodman.

The ukulele arrived at an ideal time. Students had been learning about the fundamentals of music theory—setting, echoing rhythmic patterns, learning Solfege (e.g., Do, Re, Mi) and matching pitch.

With the new ukuleles, students were able to apply their knowledge by writing and playing rhythms that they could strum on the instruments.

**Orchestrated Fun!**

Lower School

This spring, Lower School students have enjoyed exploring the instruments of the orchestra. By learning classic works of music such as "Carnival of the Animals" by Camille Saint-Saens and "Peter and the Wolf" by Prokofiev, the instruments came alive for the students. Hands-on experience makes learning about music so much fun, as Gaynor students discovered while playing the newest instrument additions to Gaynor - the xylophones! They played both as an ensemble and in solos, learning music notation and creating their own compositions.

**Congrats to Gaynor’s Own Ms. Amelia**

Gaynor’s teachers are talented—we all know that—but this spring, one of our teachers received national recognition for her hard work: Amelia Robinson, music composer and our youngest student’s music teacher, has been selected to be part of a White House initiative. One of the songs she wrote, "Mother May I," will be performed on a CD by Partnership for a Healthier America and Hip Hop Public Health in association with the White House and Michelle Obama's “Let’s Move!” Campaign. It will be distributed to children nationwide to help promote exercise and nutrition. Congratulations, Ms. Amelia!

**Middle School Musical Performance of “Once on this Island” Captivates Audience**

This May, Middle School students performed a musical called *Once On This Island* in the school gym, directed by Kristen Pyle-Moore, Drama Teacher, and Chantel Mead, Music Teacher (book and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens, music by Stephen Flaherty). Students brought to life the story of Ti-Moune, a peasant girl who rescues and falls in love with Daniel, a wealthy boy from the other side of her island. When Daniel is returned to his people, the fantastical gods who rule the island guide Ti-Moune on a quest to test the strength of her love against the powerful forces of prejudice, hatred and death.

To participate in the musical, Middle School students auditioned for parts in the fall, then rehearsed every Wednesday throughout the year with additional small group rehearsals on Fridays. They worked diligently to perfect their roles—some gloriously practicing their songs in the school halls during their lunch hour!

**Cast & Crew:**


**Music:** Zach Harris, Hannah Tuchel

**Dance:** Zach Harris

**Vocal:** Zach Harris, Hannah Tuchel

**Drama:** Zach Harris, Hannah Tuchel

**Stage Manager:** Zach Harris, Hannah Tuchel

**Set Painters:** Zach Harris, Hannah Tuchel

**We are very proud of this talented, dedicated, and inspiring group of young people!**

Piykar-Moore, Drama Teacher
CAPTURING SMALL OBJECTS THROUGH A LENS

After studying macro photography and learning how to capture small objects up close, Mr. Russel’s Middle Schoolers set out to put their skills to the test by capturing flowers through their cameras. They were required to shoot from the same level as their subject, keep the subject sharp and in-focus, while getting as close to it as possible, and manually focus the camera for the clearest image possible. The results are amazing.

USING PHOTOGRAPHY ELEMENTS TO COMPOSE AN IMAGE

There’s more to photography than taking a picture, as Ms. Wourall’s Middle School students discovered. Recently, they learned how to use elements of photography including light, angle, and framing to capture reflection, shadow, and texture. In order to enhance their photographs, they experimented with editing, from simple cropping to adjusting the color and contrast. The outcome is a picture unique to each student’s artistic vision.
Inside Outside Painting

Ms. Woyserly’s nine to 11 year old students analyzed inside and outside spaces, then used their artistic abilities to bring their interpretation to life. This spring, they enhanced their drawing, color mixing, and brush skills by painting real and imagined places and scenes. While using artists like Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall as examples, students created their own masterpieces of inside and outside spaces, with gouache paints, pencils, sharpies, and brushes of various sizes.

The Art of Henri Matisse

Ms. Rachlin and her Fine Arts students collaborated to make beautiful collages this spring. As they learned about the exquisite cut-outs by Henri Matisse, students discussed how he distorted perspective and rearranged reality with his artwork. They were then given brightly colored foam and asked to create a unique collage using Matisse’s artwork as inspiration.
Environmentally Friendly Designs Through Technology

Can technology help make New York City more environmentally friendly? That’s the question Ms. Alonzo’s class worked with Mr. Azark to answer. The students conducted research to identify potential ideas then created a PowerPoint presentation outlining the problem and inventive solution. Next, they produced a 3D blueprint by hand that was translated into a 3D Computer Aided Design (CAD) model. Based on the 3D CAD model, students developed a physical model to help bring their environmentally friendly design to life.

Method to the Madness: Creating a Love of Science

Rather than as being “wrong.” We encourage them to think more about the objects in the equation and what discoveries were made along the way, rather than solely focusing on the hypothesis,” explains Ms. Fabre, Science Department Chair. Breaking scientific inquiry into separate steps and reviewing work along the way is similar to outlining a paragraph before writing. It is an essential part of the scientific process as it helps students get the most out of their experiments and allows them to find multiple opportunities for success, beyond an experiment outcome.

At Gymn, Mr. Fabre, and Ms. Doblek take great care to ensure skills students are working on in writing, reading, math, art, and technology are being reinforced through science. Students are encouraged to use descriptive language that emphasizes current vocabulary words and drives their ability to clearly convey their thoughts orally and in writing. Some students enjoy pretending they are explaining their scientific steps to an English-speaking alien to make the process more fun!

The use of measurement through math is often integrated into areas of study. During a unit on sea life, measurement was leveraged to help students visualize the size of a sea creature or relative depth. It was not unusual for students to request the use of rulers, a yard stick, or even their peers’ outstretched arms to create a visual representation of class discussion.

Students are offered multiple means of expression. For example, many are encouraged to draw what they see before recording the results to their experiments in written form or via oral presentation.

This approach to science curriculum is sure to inspire future doctors, chemists, biologists, zoologists, and more!
SPORTS UPDATE:

GAYNOR GATORS MAKE THE BASKETBALL PLAY-OFF TOURNAMENT!

Night after night, the Gator gym has been booming with excitement. Cheers can be heard throughout the school, the Gaynor Gator has been spotted, and our basketball teams have shown just what it takes to make it to a tournament. This is the first year Stephen Gaynor School has participated in the American International Private School League, which has allowed us to play against a multitude of talented teams. Both the boys’ and the girls’ teams had memorable seasons, with their first appearances in the play-offs for any sport. Go Gators!

BOYS

This season, we divided our boys’ basketball team into two squads. The Green Squad (ages 13-14) and the White Squad (ages 10-11). Both squads had incredibly tenacious defense and showed extraordinary intensity on the court.

The Green Squad battled every game for a winning record. Their efforts paid off as they proudly took Gaynor to the play-offs as the fifth seed.

Coach James remarked, “While our play-off run ended early, I was proud of all the hard work and dedication the team displayed throughout our first year of League play.”

The White Squad showed just as much determination, winning every single game of the season except one.

The team fought hard for every ball, drawing to the very last second of each game.

The Green Squad ended the season with a 6-4 record, and the White Squad with a 4-5 record.

GIRLS

This is only the second year Gaynor has had a girls’ basketball team. From the very first day of practice, the girls worked extremely hard to improve their basketball skills.

They showed up to each game ready to give 100 percent. Led by captains Stephanie Brown and Maddie Kostman and coached by Ms. Graber and Ms. Dobler, the girls won more than half of their games, making it to the second round of the tournament.

“I am so proud of the Gaynor Girls’ accomplishments this season,” expressed Ms. Graber. “Seeing their excitement after winning our first tournament game was so meaningful. I’ll always remember that day.”

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Strategies to Support Executive Functions in Children with Attention and Learning Challenges

By Clare Cosentino, Ph.D. & Tracy Ross, LCSW

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS are the management skills of the mind. They allow us to organize our behavior over time, decide which activities to pay attention to now, and which to put off until later. They help us plan and organize tasks and see them through completion. Executive skills also enable us to manage our emotions and monitor our thoughts. Strong executive functioning helps students focus on goals despite distractions, boredom, and fatigue. They promote flexibility and adaptability despite obstacles and setbacks. Simply stated, they help us to regulate our behavior.

What role do executive functioning skills play in ADHD? ADHD is not just related to challenges with focus; it is fundamentally a deficit in executive skills. There are several strategies that families can incorporate into their home routines to help build and strengthen executive functioning.

Plan Ahead
Establishing daily routines is invaluable. Involve your child in the planning, and review the schedule on a daily basis. Make checklists for routine tasks like getting ready for school, getting homework done, getting ready for bed. Be specific or general as your child needs. Hang checklists where your child chooses. Some children, even good readers, prefer to use pictures or lists for this purpose. Use what makes sense to your child:

- Also create weekend routines and include transition time and planned surprises. Review changes to these schedules and routines before they happen to encourage flexibility. Hang a calendar in a visible area to use when you are going over the schedule of events and activities with your child.

Use Positive Reinforcement
Leverage reward charts, incentives, and token economies as positive reinforcement for desired behaviors.

Get Organized
Organize your child's room together: establish a place for toys, school papers, games. Organize backpacks together, and have this be a regular part of the routine:

- Plan for the next day:
  - clothes
  - school work, lunch.

Employ Time Management Skills
Develop an active relationship with your child, talk about time, discuss how much time should be allotted to a specific task or activity and use an egg timer or clock. Schedules and routines help reduce procrastination.

Strengthen Memory:
Make lists, break down directions into discrete steps, memorize poems and songs, and play games designed to strengthen memory.

Model Your Own Executive Functioning:
Think aloud and model flexibility when you are figuring things out, going somewhere, planning something. Remember that what is obvious to you, may not be obvious to a child with learning challenges.

Identify and Articulate Triggers:
Help your child regulate emotions by helping identify his/her triggers. Discuss how he/she feels about each trigger and suggest another way to respond. Sticking relationships, changes in routines, or sudden transitions often trigger emotional outbursts. Articulate those triggers ahead of time and teach your child strategies to manage their emotions through taking a break, deep breathing, asking for help, and identifying alternative actions.

We hope you’ll try some of these strategies and let us know what’s working for you.

*For a helpful reference, please see Executive Skills in Children and Adolescents: A Practical Guide to Assessment and Intervention by Peg Dawson and Richard Guare ( Guilford Press 2010).*
50th Graduating Class Reflects on Their Future

"I am going to NJ Community High School next year. In 20 years, I’d like to be a running back in the NFL or a power forward in the NBA."
— Stephanie Brown

"Next year, I am going to Calhoun and I am excited to go to a new place and meet new people. In 20 years I will be pursuing the occupation that I choose for myself in college."
— Charley Carroll

"Next year, I am going to York Prep next year. In twenty years, I hope to have my own hometoons of students in a high school class."
— Caroline Siegel

"Next year I am going to a school in Massachusetts called Winchendon. Stephen Gaynor has helped me prepare for schools like this. Winchendon will also help my career in hockey. In 20 years, I see myself playing hockey, whether it’s coaching a youth hockey team or being a professional hockey player."
— Luca Domeniconi

"Next year, I am going to York Prep. I am excited that there will be students from Gaynor there with me."
— Henry Douglas

"I cannot wait to go to Dwight next year. It’s a great school that my brother is a graduate of. I hope that Dwight prepares me for life and in twenty years I am successful in whichever career I choose."
— Callum Gordon

"Next year I am going to York Prep. In twenty years, I will be staying in NYC and have a secure job at an animal shelter."
— Maya Hives

"Next year I am going to Churchill and I hope I will meet new friends and learn more. In 20 years I hope to be a movie director in New York or LA."
— Theodor Holm

"Next year I am going to Grier and I am excited about making new friends."
— Enya O’Neill

"Next year I am going to Mary McDowell next year. I see myself getting pretty far in life and using my skills learned here at SGS to help me achieve as much as I possibly can. As for where I think I will be in twenty years, I have always dreamed of being a firefighter or any profession that helps people. I want to do this because so many people have helped me in my life so far, that I feel I owe it to society to give back some of the help I have gotten."
— Camilie Pincione

"Next year, I will be going to Church and I am excited about the basketball program."
— Zac Targum

"Next year I will be going to York Prep. In 20 years, I see myself in a good college and, after college, I will go to medical school to become a veterinarian."
— Caroline Watters

"Next year, I am going to Columbia Grammar and Prep school. I see myself owning a construction company in twenty years."
— Aden Wiener
GAYNOR CELEBRATES THE SUCCESS OF ITS 50TH GRADUATING CLASS

Graduation is a time of reflection and anticipation. But most of all, it’s a time of celebration. In June, Gaynor families, friends, and faculty came together to celebrate the accomplishments of 56 students and to wish them well on the next step in their educational journey. Their dedication and hard work was evident as Dr. Gaynor spoke about how proud he was of all that they’ve achieved and how honored he was to have them represent Gaynor’s 50th graduating class.

Stephanie Brown and Aden Wiener spoke on behalf of the students, marking this milestone. As Brown said, “Stephen Gaynor is a place where differences are cherished... Gaynor not only taught us how to read and write, it also gave us the confidence and strategies to pursue our goals... It was at Stephen Gaynor that we discovered our strengths and turned them into passions.”

Wiener agreed, as he explained that his confidence grew at Gaynor and he appreciated the supportive community he found at the school. “I am very grateful for what I have learned here and Stephen Gaynor has given me the confidence to excel in life,” he said proudly. The students cheered as they eagerly listened to their fellow graduates.

The graduates were also offered well-deserved accolades and words of encouragement from Henelita Jones Pellegrini, President of the Board of Trustees, and Dr. Gaynor, as well as two parents of graduates - Carol Feinberg and Josh Wiener. Alumna Hillary Kest (Class of ’79), who is a supervising producer at The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, brought the inspirational speeches to a close as she reflected on her time at Gaynor and how it helped prepare her for life thereafter.

After each student walked the stage to receive their diplomas, the ceremony ended with fanfare. As these 56 graduates leave Gaynor with fond memories of their time together, they will embark on a new, exciting journey – one that we know will continue to impress and amaze those around them.

Congratulations to the 50th class of Stephen Gaynor School! We are so proud of you!