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# GAYNOR Gazette



# Community Values

USING VALUES TO BUILD UP THE WORLD AROUND US



# GAYNOR Gazette

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# COMMUNITY VALUES

LETTER FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Every fall, I am always impressed by the generous displays of community support throughout the school. Our students can be seen volunteering after school to work with struggling readers from local public schools, collecting towels and blankets to donate to the local American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and bringing in canned goods to make Thanksgiving packages for less fortunate families. All of these demonstrate that Gaynor is a caring community, willing to reach beyond our doors to help others. This year, in addition to supporting our community, the students took a moment to reflect on how they can help themselves.

As part of our Community Values initiative this year, we are studying the themes of *respect*, *honesty*, and *courage*. This fall we focused on respect. During our Thanksgiving assembly students presented sgNews that was written, directed, and delivered live by our students. One of the student anchors noted in her definition of respect that it is important to not only respect your friends, family, and teachers, but yourself as well. This begged the question from her co-anchor, "How do you respect yourself?" Her response was that you just need to respect your abilities and talents. This is a powerful message for all the students at Gaynor. Understanding who you are as a learner is an essential tool for success in the classroom. But this self-awareness should not focus on weaknesses. It is important to embrace your strengths. When a student is feeling confident in his/her abilities, he/she is more engaged and willing to take risks in learning.

This reminds me of a Middle School student who was the author of the script for the Thanksgiving assembly. She sees herself as a writer – a skill that we always knew was inside her. Coming to Gaynor last year, she found the confidence to express her writing talents. Now she is performing her poetry live, writing stories about her experiences, and developing scripts for school-wide assemblies. Clearly, she has learned to respect her talents and take risks with her writing.

We believe that all students have strengths. It is our job to find those areas of strength, nurture them and help our students own them.



*Our definition of Community Values recognizes that our school community, like our society, is comprised of distinct individuals, and that each has dignity and value. We recognize our responsibility to create an inclusive environment that supports and celebrates each individual in our school community.*

Our definition of Community Values recognizes that our school community, like our society, is comprised of distinct individuals, and that each has dignity and value. We recognize our responsibility to create an inclusive environment that supports and celebrates each individual in our school community. Like many of the goals at Gaynor, our community starts with the individual child.

I hope you enjoy this copy of the *Gaynor Gazette*. Throughout the pages, you will find articles that reflect ways our Community Values have been woven into each classroom, educational curriculum, and school events.

Sincerely,

DR. SCOTT GAYNOR  
*Head of School*





# Using Values to Build Up the World Around Us

**RESPECT. HONESTY. COURAGE.**  
These three distinct words have taken on new meaning at Stephen Gaynor School as we proudly introduce our Community Values Committee (CVC), a wide-ranging initiative intended to foster an inclusive environment that supports and celebrates each individual in our school community.

Celebrating diversity in learning styles has been a core value at Gaynor for more than 50 years, which is why it is important that we continue to recognize and welcome all forms of diversity, whether they be race, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic, gender, sexual orientation, learning and physical abilities, or age.

The CVC was created to ensure that these values are infused in all aspects of the school for students of all ages. The committee is co-chaired by Head Teacher Ms. Borders, Drama Teacher Ms. Plylar-Moore, and Middle School Co-Director Mr. Beich. The successful implementation of the CVC mission depends on the amazing teachers that work every day to instill these values. Therefore, a group comprised of eleven faculty and staff members



from across the school, takes a comprehensive approach to address all forms of diversity and inclusiveness. The CVC was founded on the idea that we can make a meaningful impact if we connect these values to our students through exciting activities and projects.

According to Plylar-Moore, “A powerful message is sent to children when they see, not just their class, but the whole school participating in lessons, discussions, and special projects around specific values. We’re excited about how that message can help foster an even greater sense of community within the school, as well as

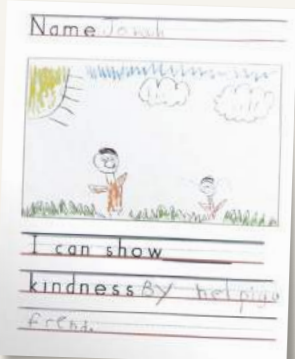
a stronger sense of responsibility to each person who walks through our school door.”

The CVC works to raise awareness, promote critical thinking, and encourage responsible action around issues of diversity. *Respect, Honesty, and Courage* are used to integrate examples of diversity into the curriculum, facilitate faculty training to promote diversity in the classroom, and incorporate events that celebrate diversity. Through the many initiatives developed by the CVC, the common goal is to help students use their language skills to support and accept their peers, while appreciating diversity in their local and global communities.

Gaynor teachers are committed to incorporating the CVC values into ongoing lesson plans, social development curriculum, and events. Gaynor launched the CVC program at a school assembly on “Green and White Day,” focusing on the CVC’s pillar of respect. During the assembly, several talented Gaynor students performed a live segment of sgNews (Gaynor’s monthly video news program), which opened to the anthem of – what else but – Aretha Franklin’s “Respect.” During the segment, groups of Gaynor students performed witty, informative skits to illustrate how to be respectful around school.

Middle School student, Jane Crowley, shared her thoughts about respect in an essay. Crowley believes that encouraging greater respect will benefit everyone in the Gaynor community and had words of wisdom for her fellow students, “Showing respect isn’t hard. Just think, ‘How would I like to be treated?’ Being respectful isn’t just about showing respect to other people; it is also showing respect to yourself. If you pick up a piece of trash, that’s respectful to your community – and what is good for the community is good for the planet. Now at the end of each day, ask yourself if you have shown any of these signs of respect.”

And that was just the beginning! Since the launch of the CVC initiative, classes throughout the school have been learning more about core values. Early Childhood Head Teacher Ms. Yezzi used the beautiful children’s book *I’m Like You, You’re Like Me*, by Cindy Gainer, to illustrate the value of respect. Ms. Yezzi first used the book to help show students how they are similar or different, which raises their awareness and appreciation for one another. She then conducted a SMART Board activity, which compared and contrasted each child. She used familiar topics such as siblings, holidays, and play preference to. These topics encouraged students to create personal drawings depicting how they show respect and kindness to others, while illustrating what makes them unique.





# BUILDING BRIDGES: GAYNOR UNVEILS SKYBRIDGE

## BRIDGING BUILDINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Bridges can connect many things both literally and symbolically. For more than fifty years, Stephen Gaynor School has served as an educational bridge, connecting bright students with learning differences to a land of opportunity and individualized learning. As Gaynor expanded to our new facility on West 89th Street, the possibilities of the future looked bright for our growing school.

In the summer of 2013, Stephen Gaynor School reached another milestone, building a skybridge to connect this new 89th Street facility to our building on West 90th Street. On a hot summer day in July, construction workers used a massive crane to place the skybridge between our two school buildings. It was a sight to see! Construction on the bridge was completed in time for the opening of the school year. For the first time since the addition of our new building, students were able to walk between our North and South Buildings without venturing outdoors, saving time and energy to be focused on learning and exciting school activities.



## BRIDGING A COMMUNITY TOGETHER

To commemorate the opening of Gaynor's brand new skybridge, our co-founders, Dr. Miriam Michael and Ms. Yvette Siegel-Herzog joined Dr. Scott Gaynor and President of the Board of Trustees, Ms. Henrietta Jones Pellegrini for a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The connection between our two buildings on the fourth floor symbolizes a significant moment in the history of Stephen Gaynor School. Ms. Siegel-Herzog explains, "The bridge unifies our growing community, while celebrating the oneness of our school. The addition of this bridge illuminates Gaynor's mission and vision of bringing the inner and outer communities closer together." She went on to say, "It symbolically bridges us to each other's hearts, minds, and souls."

As school commenced in the fall, the Gaynor community relished in the unifying landmark connecting our two buildings. On the first day of school, Jonathan Sokol became the first student to cross over the bridge, marking an important milestone in the school's history.



- Top Five Reasons We Love the New Bridge**  
By Room 312, Mr. Meyer's Class
1. It's really warm!
  2. It's great for getting around in bad weather!
  3. It's faster to get around.
  4. It has a view.
  5. It makes us a unified school!

## BRIDGING CREATIVITY AND LEARNING

In celebration of the new bridge, students from Ms. Borders, Ms. Hurlbert, Ms. Josephson, and Ms. Schostak's classes took part in a "Lunch Box Derby Race." Students from these classes separated into teams to design a "race car" made from fruits and vegetables. The project served as a bonding experience for the classes at the beginning of the year, while also teaching a lesson on the physics of velocity and inclines. After drawing car models and discussing various options for the wheels and base, students used cucumbers, bananas, carrots, radishes, oranges, and limes with skewers, rubber bands, and tooth picks to create their race cars. The idea came from Mr. Safier, who was pleased with the outcome. He explained, "The students did an amazing job of collaborating with each other to design some very creative racecars!"

The teams joined together on Gaynor's skybridge to race their creations down the bridge's incline. As each race car traveled down our bridge, students and teachers observing the races shouted, "Ladies and gentlemen, start your apples!" The bridge not only serves as a passageway between Gaynor's two buildings, but also as a creative location for learning.





# KRISTY BAXTER & STEVEN SWAIN

Stephen Gaynor School could not fulfill our mission without our committed Board of Trustees, all of whom work closely with the Head of School to ensure we are aligned with our core values and goals. We are appreciative of the Board's continued commitment and support of our school. As we begin the new year, we will be saying goodbye to three longtime, dedicated members - **HERBIE SCHINDERMAN, ROBIN DOMENICONI, and MOLLY ASHBY LODGE.** We are truly grateful for their years of service to our school and will miss them. However, we are thrilled to welcome two accomplished new members to the Board of Trustees, **KRISTY BAXTER and STEVEN SWAIN.**



**KRISTY BAXTER**

Kristy began her career in 1973 as a Head Teacher at The Churchill School and Center, where she later served as Head of School and Center for twenty years. With the love of children driving her, Kristy used her expertise to found Camp Northwood, a sleep away camp for children with learning disabilities, and a New York Institute of Technology program called the Introduction to Independence. Kristy was also involved in the design and early development of Camp Homeward Bound, a camp for children living in welfare hotels, and Marburn Academy, a school for children with learning disabilities in Columbus, Ohio.

Kristy's dedication to children's education is profound. She has served as the President of the Guild of Independent Schools of New York, as a Trustee on the Board of the New York Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS) and was the 2005 Distinguished Educator's Award recipient from The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD). Kristy retired from Churchill in 2008, but remains active in children's education, serving as a member of the Board of NCLD and as a Commissioner for Accreditation for NYSAIS.



**STEVEN SWAIN**

Steven has deep connections to Stephen Gaynor School as his two children, Jake and Rachel, are both students here. With this new role, he joins his wife Karin, who is also on the Board of Trustees. Steven works as an Executive Advisor with Aquiline Capital Partners, a private equity firm, and has previously held senior positions at Lyster Watson and Company and Lazard Asset Management. Prior to his work at these firms, Steven was a securities and corporate lawyer with the Washington, D.C. based firm of Routier, Mackey and Johnson.

Steven received his M.B.A. in Finance and Investments from George Washington University, a J.D. from Villanova University School of Law and a B.A. in Business Management from Clark University. He currently serves as a Trustee and Chair of the Strategic and Finance Committee and member of the Executive, Governance and Investment Committees at Clark University.

We hope you will join us in welcoming Kristy and Steven to our school's Board.

# COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWS

## Denim Day/Bake Sale

This year, the Gaynor community came out in full support of Lee National Denim Day. Faculty and staff donated five dollars to wear jeans during school, while the Community Service Club hosted a scrumptious bake sale. In total, we raised more than \$1,500 to benefit Breast Cancer Awareness and Research. "That is the most money that we've raised in the past eight years," exclaimed Community Service Club member Ryan Ehrlich. "We did great, and I hope we can do even better in the upcoming years!"



## Thanksgiving Food Drive

Stephen Gaynor School worked with our neighbor, St. Gregory's Church, to bring Thanksgiving meals to those less fortunate in our area. For two weeks, the Gaynor community supported this food drive by donating canned goods. Once all the donated food was collected, buddy classes came together to pack it into bags to be distributed to those in need. We're proud to have donated more than 120 bags of food, which the Community Service Club helped distribute to families at St. Gregory's. Community Service Coordinator, Ms. Borders explained, "We brought in more food this year than ever before! It was a great achievement." This year, Gaynor students added a personalized touch by including homemade holiday cards to each bag of food. Thanks to everyone who participated!



## Toy Drive

This December, the Gaynor community worked with Goddard Riverside Preschool again to bring toys to young children in our surrounding neighborhood. In support of this great cause, Gaynor students brought in new or gently used toys, while several classes designed holiday cards to accompany the gifts. Toys were then wrapped and distributed to preschools around the area for holiday giving.



## Community Service Day

Students in the classes of Mr. Bookin, Ms. Dorbad, Ms. Kasindorf, Ms. Kaufman, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Rebocho came together to plan and execute Gaynor's first-ever Community Service Day! Two organizations benefited from their generosity - the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and Feeding NYC. In preparation for the big day, Gaynor collected blankets and towels for one group of students to present to the ASPCA.

A second group of Middle School students visited Feeding NYC to package Thanksgiving meals for local families and shelters. We are proud of Gaynor's students for their philanthropic efforts throughout our community.



## CLC Jackie Long Memorial Tournament

The annual Community Learning Center's (CLC) basketball tournament, formerly known as *Shooting for Success*, was held on Saturday, December 14. This 3-on-3 basketball fundraiser has been renamed the *Jackie Long Memorial Tournament* in celebration of the life of Ms. Jackie Long, Gaynor's long-time Director of Admissions who passed away in December 2012.

The CLC is a free after-school reading program for children in our community. This annual fundraising event is critical to ensure the program can continue to serve neighborhood students who truly need the extra support. The program's new Co-Director, Ms. Kristi Evans, explained the importance of the CLC. "I have seen the positive impact this program has had on children in the community," she said. "We are fortunate that we have had generous contributions from supporters that help keep the program strong!"

This year, faculty, parents, alumni, and friends came together in thirteen teams to compete in the biggest CLC tournament Gaynor has ever seen. Spectators and players enjoyed the friendly competition, while munching on pizza, baked goods, and taking part in an exciting raffle. The tournament came down to the last game, where last year's winning team *From 3 Portland* matched up against *Core Curriculum*. It was a tough match-up, but Core Curriculum came through to win the much sought after trophy, along with well-deserved bragging rights. Following the tournament, the winning players had a celebratory dinner, where they toasted Jackie Long. We raised nearly \$7,000, making this one of the most successful events in the history of Gaynor's Community Learning Center!

Thanks to everyone who helped make this event a great success - especially fellow Co-Directors Ms. Adlin and Ms. Evans, who worked diligently to plan this successful tournament to support such a worthy cause.





# WHAT'S IN THE NUMBER 23? A BRIDGE TO FAMILY

**W**hat's unique about the number 23? Maybe it is that there are 23 letters in the Latin alphabet. Or, that it takes 23 seconds for blood to circulate through the human body. Hmmm... could it be because of Michael Jordan's famous basketball jersey number?

Sure, all of those things are pretty interesting, but for Stephen Gaynor School, 23 is extra special this year because it represents the number of siblings attending our school at the same time – the most sibling pairs in our school's 50 year history!

About 80 percent of people in the United States are lucky enough to have at least one sibling with whom they can share in life's joyous moments and conversely, endure challenging times. With school being one of the most formative experiences in a child's life, it can be both comforting and fun to have a sibling at school - someone they can relate to about Gaynor activities and lessons, and even catch a glimpse of throughout the day. Middle School students Jacob and Marissa Goodwillie agree. Marissa says, "It makes me happy when I see him around school. It's nice to know that he's there because it's reassuring." Our sibling pairs enhance their unique bonds as they connect daily throughout our school events, hallways, and even during the bridge to family.

The No. 1 ranked school in the state has a long history of sibling pairs. The No. 1 ranked school in the state has a long history of sibling pairs.

and picked up together during arrival and dismissal. I like to wave to my sister when I see her in the hallway."

Tyler and Morgan's dad, Hamburg Tang, feels the benefit of having his two children at Gaynor together. "We are deeply grateful to

have found what has become a second home of sorts for Tyler and Morgan."

We hope to welcome many more sibling pairs into our school's family in the future.

## NO SIBLING RIVALRY HERE:

## GAYNOR FACULTY SIBLINGS RELISH THEIR DAYS TOGETHER

**S**tudents aren't the only siblings at Gaynor. There are also two sets of faculty siblings – Head of School, Dr. Scott Gaynor, and Photography Teacher, Adam Gaynor, along with Head Teachers Marnie Geller Stein and Suzy Geller.

For brothers Scott and Adam Gaynor, it is incredibly fun and rewarding to work together. As the grandchildren of Gaynor's co-founder, Dr. Miriam Michael, they embody the school's familial atmosphere. Before Adam began working at Gaynor, he came up with an idea to develop an extensive photography program - a unique curriculum offering. Scott, always looking for ways to

enhance the curriculum, was thrilled with the idea and welcomed Adam aboard. The brothers, who have been working together for many years, say the only downside is that they don't have time to spend with their families.

close sisters Marnie Geller Stein and Suzy Geller enjoy working at the same school, and say they can't imagine it any other way. Marnie started working at Gaynor in 2011 and was delighted when her sister, Suzy, began student teaching at the same school a year later. According to Suzy, who is now a Head Teacher, "When I got placed at Gaynor to student teach, I was nervous to hear my sister's reaction. Luckily, she was as excited as I was!" Marnie and Suzy love commuting to school together, where they share highlights from their day and seek each other's advice. They say the only downside is that they don't have time to spend with their families.

## 23 PAIRS OF GAYNOR SIBLINGS

Hali & Yoni Bernstein  
Conor & Jack Davis  
Grace & Maaya deMenocal  
Jacob & Marissa Goodwillie  
Noah & Stella Greenburg  
Stella & Zachary Hirsch  
Dylan & Justin Kern  
Charlie & Zachary Manzano  
Kai & Zenner Marksohn  
Angus & Cillian O'Friel  
Elke & Ursula Ott  
Bella & Keen Ruffalo  
Jonathon & Ryan Sachs  
Jordan & Justin Savad  
Alexander & Andrew Shane  
Mihret & Tigi Smith  
Jesse & Jonathan Sokol  
Jake & Rachel Swain  
Morgan & Tyler Tang  
Ben & Sarah Warshavsky  
Caroline & Owen Wiese  
& Zachary Wolko  
Mary Margaret





# ART UPDATE: COMMUNITY VALUES REPRESENTED THROUGH VISUAL ARTS

Community Values can be conveyed in a multitude of ways. Gaynor's Community Service Club explored how to represent these values in an art project with Ms. Woursell. The goal was for students to consider their ability to effect change by making a poster depicting definitions and their experiences of respect – the first pillar of Gaynor's Community Values Committee.

Club members began this visual arts lesson by exploring posters such as Rethink Green and We Can Do It. After discussing the meaning and impact of images combined with words, Lower and Middle School students worked in groups to generate ideas and designs by jotting down quotes and sketching situations and solutions.

Students refined compositions by inking text with black sharpies and accentuating illustrations with watercolor paints and markers. Once finalized, students shared their posters with one another, reflecting upon the ways language and images generate and support positive change. These artworks are now on display inside Gaynor's new bridge, literally and figuratively connecting us with learning, self-expression, and community.



HENRY HAMILTON AND ELIZA GILPIN

"Respect" weaving below by:

REHANNAH BAKSH  
BENJAMIN BANCHIK  
KYLIE BARISIC  
JULIA DEIDRICH  
NAVAH GOLDBLUM  
MATTHEW LEVIN  
SAMUEL ROSEN  
BELLA RUFFALO  
JACK SALZBERG  
CHARLOTTE SHAPIRO



WILLIAM VAN DER RHOER



ALEXANDER SHANE

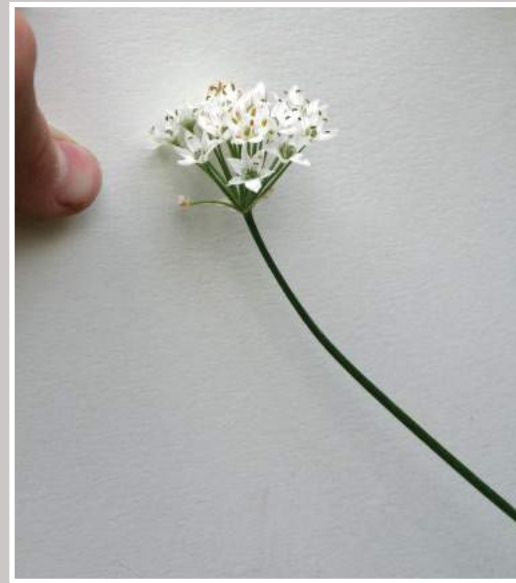


# NATURAL VS. ARTIFICIAL: A PHOTOGRAPHIC ADAPTATION

Gaynor's Fine Arts Photography students learned about a young photographer from South Korea named Myoung Ho Lee, who has produced an elaborate series of photographs that pose intriguing questions regarding representation, reality, and the environment. Mr. Gaynor showed his Fine Arts students how this photographer contrasted natural and artificial settings by using a white backdrop. After the lesson, Gaynor students adapted Myoung's concept on a smaller scale by placing plants and flowers in front of white backgrounds. The results are beautiful.



OSCAR SARAF



JONATHAN SOKOL



OPHELIE ZOLIDIS DE NAVACELLE



PHILIP WINTER



AIDAN TORMA-ROOKLEY



JANE SMART



DRAMA UPDATE:

# Creative Curriculum Combinations in the Lower School Drama Program

The inaugural year of the Lower School Drama Program continues to be a success. Last school year, the Drama Program was extended to include most classes in the Lower School. By incorporating theater into their education, these Gaynor students have been able to develop a greater empathy for the experiences of others, while gaining the skills needed to express their own visions and ideas with confidence.

As the Lower School Drama Program continues, Ms. Kristen Plylar-Moore works to ensure other curriculum, like Social Studies, is incorporated to help create well-rounded lessons. Lower School students have become storytellers and playwrights as they craft their own scenes, bringing Social Studies lessons to life, such as the experiences of the Native

Americans. Recently, Drama students listened to Ms. Kristen Plylar-Moore read a short story, then discussed the action words they heard. Each student was assigned a word to perform while the story is read again. The class then divided the story into beginning, middle, and end, working

together in small groups to physically create a series of three tableaux (frozen pictures) to illustrate the story. Each group presented their tableaux to classmates, allowing their creative sides to flourish.



Gaynor Gazette

# Creating Dramatic Art

Students in the Middle School have spent the last few months diligently working on dramatic writing, movement exercises, character building, and stage performance. One of the goals of these exercises is for students to learn how to most effectively communicate actions, feelings, and words to their audience. During these lessons, students were able to creatively transform into playwrights, directors, and actors!

Drama students from the classes of Ms. Borders, Ms. Hurlbert, Ms. Josephson, and Ms. Schostak recently wrote several short scenes and monologues based on Social Studies curriculum. Together, they brainstormed possible settings, characters, conflicts, and resolutions. As the students creatively collaborated as a group, they created unique pieces of dramatic art. At the end of the course, students presented staged readings of their finalized works to other students around the school.



Meanwhile, students from the classes of Ms. Kaufman, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Rebocho worked on short scenes from Alfred Uhry's play *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*, which takes place in Atlanta, Georgia just before World War II. Leveraging the history from the play, students were able to understand the historical context by bringing the characters and speeches to life. After working hard to prepare scenes and monologues from this play, students performed for their classmates.

Gaynor Gazette



Annie Says...  
The Sun Will Come Out Tomorrow!



We are excited to announce Gaynor's upcoming musical: *Annie*! All Middle School students are welcome to partake in auditions, which will be held in early 2014. Rehearsals for our spring musical will begin in February. Don't miss this marvelous musical experience for the entire Gaynor community!



## MUSIC UPDATE:

# Making Music while Fostering a Creative Community

Gaynor's new Music teacher, Ms. Shuppy, has created a diverse Music curriculum with difficulty progressing through each class level. Lower School classes began the year by learning how to create a steady beat and rhythm with a variety of instruments. By participating in musical games, students explored movements to music, helping foster team building and an appreciation of a range of musical styles. After discovering music through instruments, students turned their attention to their voices, and came together as a creative community through song. Their group efforts culminated in a stellar performance at the Winter Concert, where they showcased their sense of community and musical talents.

Students in Ms. Borders, Ms. Hurlbert, Ms. Josephson, and Ms. Schostak's classes explored notes and rhythms through Gaynor's Orff instruments, or educational xylophones. Using their fresh knowledge of notes and rhythms, these students created an original musical piece to perform on the final day of their Fine Arts cycle.

Rather than creating compositions with traditional instruments, Gaynor's Lower School students were challenged with creating beautiful

music from objects found around Stephen Gaynor School. Students were amazed to find that they could form symphonies by simply clicking a pen, tapping a pencil, or even throwing a ball against the wall in rhythmic manner. They continued their musical education by learning how to read notes and rhythms.

In addition, students in the classes of Mr. Bookin, Ms. Dorbad, Ms. Kasindorf, Ms. Kaufman, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Rebocho learned more about musical notes and rhythm through the guitar and various chords in songs. They seized the opportunity to play melodies and chords on the piano, while also exploring rhythmic patterns on the drums. At the end of their Fine Arts cycle, they came together for a final performance, combining all the instruments they studied: drums, piano, guitar, and of course, their voices. These students performed a fantastic rendition of "Lean on Me," as an appropriate way to end their Fine Arts cycle.

Gaynor's Music curriculum is designed to foster a sense of community. Regardless of what students are studying, each class comes together as a group, ultimately producing magical melodies and a creative community.



## SOCCER UPDATE:

# TWO IS BETTER THAN ONE: GAYNOR EXPANDS SOCCER TEAM



When is two better than one? Two teachers are better than one. Two vacations are better than one. And two soccer teams are better than one!

The growing interest in soccer has led to the creation of two separate teams, the Green Squad and the White Squad. "This past soccer season was another major step in the right direction for Gaynor Athletics," exclaimed Coach James Melillo. The program has expanded to 40 student-athletes, the most ever in the history of Gaynor's soccer program.

The White Squad initiated another soccer milestone this season by hosting the school's first ever indoor soccer game. Coach Josh Bookin's pride was evident as he watched them play in the inaugural game. He noted, "The players work immensely

hard. Their sportsmanship and hustle are admirable, and I look forward to watching them continue to grow in future seasons."

We are proud to report that our soccer teams finished in fourth place (out of nine teams) within the American International Private School League (AIPSL) - a fantastic outcome, especially with our newness to the league. At the end of the season, student-athletes, Katie Kagel, Ira Heppard, and Tigi Smith received the Veteran Leadership Award as returning players who demonstrated outstanding leadership.

If you missed the Gators in action this fall, fear not! The teams resume weekly practices in the spring to continue their development and help prepare for next fall. *Go Gators!*





# The Science of Germs in the Casco Room

This fall, Mrs. Hartman’s students learned about the importance of washing their hands. The class took part in a special experiment with Gaynor’s Science Department Chair, Ms. Fabricant, to compare the amount of germs on their hands before and after they washed them. To help the class visualize these microorganisms, teachers filled Petri dishes with agar, a special food that germs like to eat, which made them visible. Each student pressed one washed hand into a Petri dish and one unwashed hand into

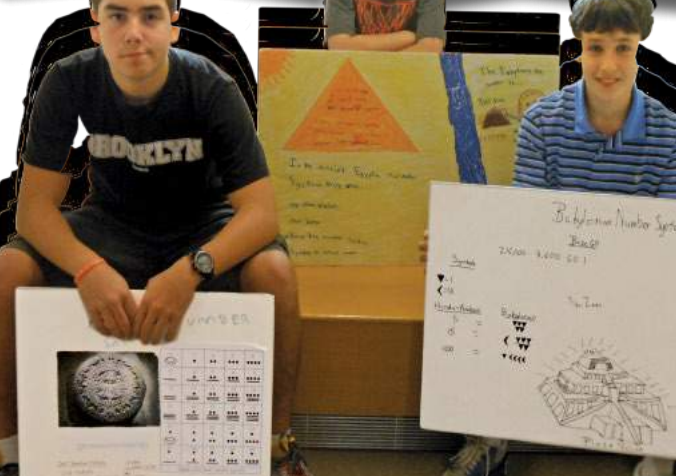
another. After waiting one week, the Casco Room students could see the germs in the Petri dishes. The class used magnifying glasses to examine the germs, before drawing pictures of what they saw in each dish. After calculating their findings, Mrs. Hartman’s students concluded that more germs existed in the Petri dishes they touched with unwashed hands than with washed hands. Using this scientific method, the Casco Room discovered the importance of washing one’s hands!



# COMBINING MATH, HISTORY, ART, AND PUBLIC SPEAKING TO UNCOVER THE HISTORY OF MATH

Math Specialist Mr. Kaufman worked with a group of students to learn about the history of number systems. Mr. Kaufman explained, “This math group has spent the past weeks studying number systems, past and present. Each student chose a number system as an independent project.” Middle School student Jason Epstein learned about the Mayans and their numerical system, while Jake Swain studied the ancient Egyptians, and Alexander Shane explored the Babylonian number system. Each student worked diligently to research the historical aspects of these number systems, ultimately illustrating what they had

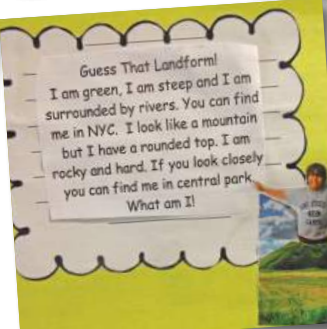
learned on poster boards. This well-rounded project became a significant lesson that incorporated math, history, art, and public speaking. After completing their explorations, Jason, Jake, and Alexander visited math groups around the school to give presentations on their findings. By using their posters and Gaynor’s electronic smart boards, these students transformed into teachers, educating their classmates about the historical side of math. “My favorite part of this project was presenting to our classmates. I enjoyed answering their questions and hearing what they had to say about our work,” explained Jake Swain.



# Exploring Landscapes and Geography in Ms. Stein and Ms. Savage’s Classes

The classes of Ms. Stein and Ms. Savage worked hard while studying U.S. geography this fall. At the beginning of the unit, students learned about various bodies of water and landforms. To bring this lesson to life, each student created his/her own landscape. After developing blueprints of their landscape, students used PowerPoint for their class

presentation. Next, these Lower School students used their blueprints as a tool to construct unique landscapes using different colored modeling materials and rocks. Each student concluded the project with a beautiful landscape model and a better understanding of bodies of water and land. What a fun and creative way to learn about geography!



# NATIVE AMERICAN EXPO WITH MS. GLAZER’S CLASS

As part of their Native American studies, Ms. Glazer’s class put together a learning expo to demonstrate all that they had learned. Groups of students were assigned an object (lacrosse, medicine, boats, calendars, and books) to study how it evolved over time, from use with Native Americans to current day. Students not only researched and wrote paragraphs about their discoveries, but they also created miniature models of

these objects. Student Felix Frei explained, “We went on a nature walk and collected natural resources to create our models because nature was so valuable to the Native Americans.” The students showcased their models to other classes during the learning expo to help educate others. Dr. Gaynor and Ms. Siegel-Herzog were among the audience, eager to learn more from these students about the Native American culture.





# Strengthening Gaynor

The last five years have been a period of transformative growth for Stephen Gaynor School. Our student enrollment is up by more than 60%, our campus footprint has more than doubled in size, and our curriculum has been enriched with the addition of an Early Childhood program.

Many of you have witnessed this transformation first-hand. Some of you have counseled us along the way-offering your time, energy and resources to help us meet goals, and ensure the long-term success of this unique school and the diverse population it serves. Everyone in our community should be proud of what we have already accomplished and for contributing to the special community that is Stephen Gaynor School; but the best is yet to come!

Gaynor's expansion plans center on the holistic growth and well-being of its students-to offer them the most robust and enriching curriculum in an environment that is safe

and nurturing and conducive to different learning styles. Additional capital projects on the horizon will create more opportunities for our children to celebrate and explore every facet of who they are. Very soon, we will begin work to develop the fifth floor of our South Building to create additional classrooms, seminars spaces, a science

laboratory, a technology-driven research and writing center, and a 3,600 square foot rooftop fieldhouse -an outdoor space unlike any other on the Upper West Side. Further down the road, we hope to create a performing arts center with music and drama studios, as well as a 300 seat state-of-the-art theater.

We are excited about the future and the end-

less potential of the Gaynor community. Without your support, none of this would be possible.

To learn more about Gaynor's expansion plans, please contact the Development Office at 212.787.7070, ext. 1115.

### Connecting with Gaynor Community for a Common Cause



Lynn Bartner-Weisel shows her school spirit during the recent Gaynor Fund Phone-a-thon. Parent volunteers raised more than \$50,000 that night from the parent community! Thank you to all who participated!

What do these three numbers have in common?

103

Teachers and learning specialists

330

Individualized curriculum tailored to each student's unique way of learning

80,000

Educational facility totaling 80,000 square feet

All three are supported by Gaynor Fund dollars.

Every gift from our community transforms each child's education.

Make your gift count - participate in the Gaynor Fund today!

To learn more about the Gaynor Fund, call 212.787.7070, ext. 1125 [www.stephengaynor.org/giving](http://www.stephengaynor.org/giving)



## FALL EVENTS

### Apple Picking

The entire school ventured to Demarest Farm for Gaynor's annual Apple Picking! On a beautiful fall day, students and faculty enjoyed tractor rides, visited the Orchard Store, dined on a picnic with their classmates, and of course, hand-picked apples! What a fun way to celebrate the fall season!



Gaynor Gazette

### Green and White Day

Gaynor pride was on full display during this year's Green and White Day! Students showed their school spirit by donning our school colors - some even wore green and white face paint and hairspray! The festivities concluded as a sea of students in green and white cheered "Gaynor!" during the Pep Rally.



### Fall Fest

Thanks to the Parents' Association, the Gaynor community enjoyed a fun-filled Fall Fest on Halloween! Lower School students participated in a wide array of games and crafts in the gym, while our Early Childhood classes put on a costume parade for the Middle School students. It was festive!



### Big Apple Circus

In December, Gaynor students and faculty ventured to Lincoln Center for the Big Apple Circus. Young or old, each person appreciated watching astonishing acrobats, thrilling trapeze artists, amusing clowns, and incredible animals perform tricks. We look forward to next year's circus!





# FROM HOVERCRAFTS AND GLOW STICKS TO TESLA COILS AND CHOCOLATES

Every year, Gaynor students get excited about what sort of scientific experiment they will embark upon for the Science Fair. This year, students from the classes of Mr. Bookin, Ms. Dorbad, Ms. Kasindorf, Ms. Kaufman, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Rebocho submitted creative projects ranging from hovercrafts to melting chocolate!

The students chose topics they found personally interesting and worked to perfect their projects for four months. Science Department Chair Ms. Fabricant was excited as the Fair drew near. She noted, “Science allows the students to see connections between their everyday lives and scientific thinking, and to practice the skills they have learned in science class in a practical setting.”

Gaynor students explored a wide variety of scientific thinking, from physics and engineering to biology, chemistry and psychology.

After designing their own experiments, students presented their findings on creative poster boards throughout the fourth floor of the South Building. Gaynor students, faculty, staff, and parents visited the Science Fair to explore all of our scientists’ hard work!

The Gaynor community marveled at their projects, which included: testing the aerodynamics of cars in a homemade wind tunnel; building a tesla coil to create electricity; measuring the rate of reaction in glow sticks; analyzing short term memory in different age groups and genders, and evaluating the melting rate of different chocolates!

**WE ARE PROUD OF ALL OF OUR STUDENTS’ INVENTIONS AND CAN’T WAIT TO SEE WHAT THEY COME UP WITH NEXT YEAR.**





Serving  
Fellow  
Students:

# STEPHEN GAYNOR SCHOOL'S STUDENT COUNCIL SHINES

Throughout their time at Stephen Gaynor School, our students are learning how to share ideas, voice opinions, make decisions, and become involved in their community. The culmination of this process occurs in Middle School, where each class is involved in decision-making processes through their participation in Student Council, offered in two phases.

Student Council begins with the classes of Ms. Borders, Ms. Hurlbert, Ms. Josephson, and Ms. Schostak. Every student in these classes has a chance to participate for one cycle, which runs for about a month. During each cycle, students elect a chairperson, who meets with

teachers to plan the council's agenda and run weekly meetings. The focus is community service, both internally and externally. Previously students have raised awareness about recycling among younger students and encouraged bathroom cleanliness. Externally, the council has collected supplies for Hurricane Sandy relief, participated in

the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's *Pennies for Patients*, and volunteered for *Homes for the*

*Homeless* by reading to children in a homeless shelter.

This year, the Student Council is integrating ideas from the Community Values Committee to help improve our school environment. Ms. Schostak explains, "The purpose

behind Student Council is for students to get a taste of democratic leadership and discover tangible ways to make a difference in their community at school and at large." During one particular Council meeting, students discussed ways to show respect to classmates on the playground. They developed various skits to demonstrate forms of respect to the rest of the school.

Student Council members serve as a bridge to democracy for their fellow students.

Students in the classes of Mr. Bookin, Ms. Dorbad, Ms.

Kasindorf, Ms. Kaufman, Mr. Meyer, and Ms. Rebocho constitute the second phase of Gaynor's Student Council, where each member must be elected by his/her classmates. At the beginning of the school year, students begin working on their campaigns, developing posters and speeches to demonstrate why they would make the best candidate to represent fellow students as President, Vice President, or Treasurer/Secretary. This year, fellow students gathered in the cafeteria and listened intently as the ten candidates presented their cases.

After hearing the compelling speeches, students voted, electing Riley Lenane as President, Katie Pepi as Vice President, and Stella Werther as Secretary/Treasurer. Separately, each class voted to elect class representatives. This year's group includes Jason Epstein, Natalie Goncher, Henry Hamilton, Ira Heppard, Jaqui

Lerner, and Keen Ruffalo.

As elected officials, the Student Council meets to discuss ways to improve the Middle School every week. This year, they worked diligently to plan Gaynor's first-ever Community Service Day, where they contacted multiple

philanthropic groups that would benefit from our school's help. The Student Council also plays a major role in planning and executing the Middle School Dance. They collaborated with the Parents' Association to develop the very cool theme of "Glow in the Dark Disco on the Moon." But their taste of democracy doesn't end with a disco party. Looking forward, the Student Council will continue their diligent work into the spring, as they help plan school assemblies and produce the school yearbook.

*Student Kira Friedland understands the critical role the Council plays. "I think during our cycle, it's our time," she said. "We get to share our thoughts about how we can better our environment, and we get to represent our classmates in decision-making."*

### The candidates' messages represented what Student Council is all about:

- "I am eager to see positive changes in the Middle School."
- "I look forward to listening to fellow classmates' voices and needs and making sure they are heard."
- "I will make sure students are informed and included within our Student Council."
- "Gaynor is one of the best schools in America. I want to help make it one of the best schools in the world."





# Healthy Mind, Healthy Body

Gaynor's mantra to provide a unique education focusing on the whole child doesn't stop with educating the mind - it includes empowering our students to make good choices in feeding their bodies. There are several ways we accomplish this, from a new *Healthy Gaynor Snack Initiative* and better Afterschool snack offerings to the Early Childhood's seed-to-table science program.

With the help of the Parents' Association (PA), Stephen Gaynor School has started the *Healthy Gaynor Snack Initiative*, which provides free, organic fruit to students as a classroom snack option. Once a week, a large shipment of fruit arrives and students fill fruit bowls for their classrooms with enough to snack on during the week. So far, oranges, bananas, apples, and pears have been brought in, and students, teachers, and parents alike have been thrilled. "Part of the Gaynor experience for our children is about students making good decisions and being their own advocate," explained Lallande deGravelle, PA

President. "The *Healthy Gaynor Snack Initiative* was launched to expose children to alternative healthy choices to augment their growth in making good choices."

In addition, Gaynor's **Afterschool Program** now includes more healthy and organic snacks for students, including Annie's Whole Wheat Bunny Crackers, organic string cheese, probiotic yogurt, and sliced, local organic apples, providing our Afterschool students the energy needed to fuel classes ranging from study hall to karate and chess club.

Healthy eating goes beyond healthy snack options. That's why we're excited to open the Early Childhood Outdoor Garden later this year. This beautiful outdoor space will contain garden areas where our EC students will learn about the cycle of food production in the **seed-to-table science program**. The program allows students to explore their natural sur-

roundings by planting a variety of fruit and vegetable seeds,

cultivating the plants, harvesting the crops, and preparing foods in our child-friendly kitchen, ensuring our EC students better understand and embrace healthy food choices.

Whether it is a free, organic snack available in the classroom or under-

standing

how to harvest and prepare fresh vegetables, Gaynor students are growing in their knowledge of nutrition and health, making decisions that will continue to benefit them well into the future.



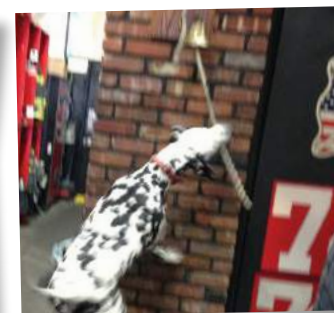
## FIELD TRIPS

Gaynor Students Travel through the City  
Learning More about Literacy, Science, and Social Studies

## Literacy Meets Firefighting Hands-On Science

In their literacy unit this fall, Ms. Cohen's students studied firefighters. In order to bring this lesson to life, the class headed out for a special field trip to a neighborhood firehouse. While

visiting the firehouse, along with Ms. Yezzi's class, students were able to explore a fire truck and interview firefighters about their work. They even got to meet the station's Dalmatian!



At the beginning of the year, the classes of Ms. Borders, Ms. Hurlbert, Ms. Josephson, and Ms. Schostak visited the Liberty Science Center where students were able to preview first-hand concepts they would be learning

in their science curriculum throughout the year. By taking part in experiments using items such as cold liquid nitrogen, students learned about scientific elements including matter, surveying, and measurements.





FIELD TRIPS

# Beep, Beep: The History and Future of Public Transportation

As part of their social studies curriculum, Ms. Buckles, Ms. Costello, Ms. Davis, and Ms. Michalos' students learned about the various types of transportation people ride in New York City. To gain a greater understanding of the history of transportation, the classes visited the New York Transit Museum, where they explored historic versions of New York City buses and subways. They completed their trip by creating their own movable buses of the future!



MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE



# GLOW IN THE DARK THE DISCO ON THE MOON

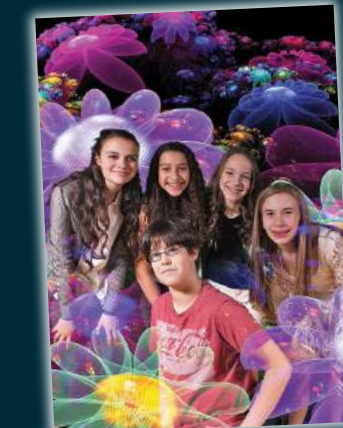
IT'S COOL BECAUSE IT'S DIFFERENT



This year's Middle School dance was out of this world! How could it not be with the inventive theme of *Glow-in-the-Dark Disco on the Moon: It's Cool Because It's Different*. Gaynor's Middle School students worked with the Parents' Association to transform the gymnasium into an outer space wonderland of neon and lights. With the help of a temporary tattoo artist, students

prepared for their disco on the moon donning face paint, glitter, and jewels galore. Our disco astronauts danced the night away while the DJ played some rockin' tunes. But that's not all! Students had a blast playing arcade games, like ping-pong, foosball, and air hockey, while they feasted on space food (AKA pizza and cupcakes). The Student Council played a significant role in the planning and execution of this

year's dance, collaborating with the Parents' Association to ensure an unforgettable night for all. Students Noor Buckles and Jane Crowley designed the brilliant artwork that was included on this year's invitation and posters. Thank you to the Parents' Association for sponsoring this incredible Glow-in-the-Dark Disco on the Moon!





## ALUMNUS PROFILE

# From Gaynor to Stock Trader: Spotlight on Alumnus Andy Chapro

Andy Chapro says Stephen Gaynor School taught him how to learn. “All of the students were facing different learning issues and the teachers had the patience to help each one of us,” he explains. “It really meant a lot to me.” Andy graduated from Gaynor in 1972, then went on to Scarsdale High School, Richmond College in London, and completed his academic studies with a graduate degree from the London School of Economics in 1984.

Throughout his studies, Andy realized how much he enjoyed interacting with people and is now a successful sales trader at Ladenburg Thalmann & Co. Inc., where he recommends stocks to mutual fund and hedge fund portfolio managers. He’s been with the company more than seven years.

Andy remembers his days at Gaynor fondly. “The kids were fun, the teachers were fantastic – it was a great experience,” he says with a smile. He specifically recalls one of his favorite teachers, Joan Holland, who put the students at ease by letting them call her “Joan.” “I don’t know what would have happened to me without Gaynor,” Andy exclaims.



## WINTER CONCERTS

Gaynor students have been celebrating community all year long so it’s fitting that the theme of this year’s two Lower School Winter Concerts was “Community Values.” The Gaynor community is focused on developing a greater understanding of respect, honesty, and courage and what better way to bring these values to life than through songs and skits. On the opening night, the classes of Ms. Buckles, Ms. Cohen, Ms. Costello, Ms. Davis, Ms. Michalos, Ms. Spinelli, and Ms. Yezzi sang hits from Cyndi Lauper and of course, Aretha Franklin’s “Respect.” Students then performed an original song written by Gaynor’s music teacher, Ms. Amelia, before concluding with “You’ve Got a Friend in Me.”

The remarkable concert continued the following night, as the talented students in the classes of Ms. Arbesfeld, Ms. Bermel, Ms. Brandeis, Ms. Fazio, Ms. Geller, Ms. Glazer, Ms. Klausner, Ms. Sandler, Ms. Savage, and Ms. Stein performed to a packed house. These

students belted out songs and performed skits that also illustrated Gaynor’s strong Community Values. Tunes from Aretha Franklin, Cyndia Lauper, and Michael Jackson had the whole crowd dancing in their seats!

“It was wonderful to see the children step up to the challenge and perform with such enthusiasm,” exclaimed Music Teacher Ms. Shuppy.

“Congratulations to all of the students for their hard work both in the classroom and on stage!”

These two concerts truly brought the Gaynor community together in celebration of our school values, allowing our talented students to shine on stage. Thanks to Ms. Amelia, Ms. Kristen, and Ms. Shuppy for putting together these fantastic shows!





# Gaynor Skate Night

In January, Gaynor students, parents, alumni, and staff came together to celebrate our community during the Annual Gaynor Ice Skating Party at the Pond at Bryant Park. It was a fantastic, fun-filled evening, complete with skating, warm hot chocolate, fun, and lots of laughs! Like last year, Gaynor families took over the entire rink and mingled over pizza and cookies, while taking a break from the ice. There was even a surprise appearance by the Gaynor Gator, who glided across the rink with our students and families. Thanks to the Parents' Association for putting together a delightful evening for the entire Gaynor community!



## GAYNOR IN THE NEWS



### Steve Azeka

Congratulations to Gaynor's Lower School Technology Teacher, Mr. Azeka, whose lesson was featured in [The New York Times Learning Network](#) blog this summer. The *Learning Network* posts a weekly collection of lesson plans that teach skills, invite inquiry, and engage students with current events.

**The Learning Network**  
Teaching & Learning With The New York Times



Changes if sea level rose 25 feet

Mr. Azeka's lesson on Hurricane Sandy was featured, demonstrating how students used [The New York Times](#) to analyze and present ideas about flooding in the US. Great work, Mr. Azeka!