

WEST PHILADELPHIA CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

A Nationally Recognized School of Excellence Volume 23 November/December, 2011

WEST NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE NEW STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS AND CLUB PRESIDENTS

STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICERS

*President-Bruce Mapp
Vice President-Morgan Gibbons
Secretary-Odile Ta
Treasurer-Todd-Jamal Waters*

Community Service Corps

Odile Ta and Tehetna Gebremanuel

SADD

Jaison Sebastian

Ambassadors

Tehetna Gebremanuel

World Affairs Club

Andrea Lorenos

Yearbook

Vanessa Davis and Elena Marrero

Cultural Diversity Club

Andrea Lorenos and Tehetna Gebremanuel

Newspaper

Tehetna Gebremanuel and
Jaison Sebastian

West Net

Anthony Fleet

French Club

Dymond Robinson

Students Run Philly Style

Cole Robertson

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTEES

Kenny Ao

Ayanna McNeil

Ciara Atchley

Mazi Richburg

Haeley Horan

Olalekan Solomon

Andrew Kulasegram- Wilson

Frances Spence

Sadiyah Malcolm

Theresa Ta

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Sr. Mary Elizabeth Bur, I.H.M.

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Soon the first quarter will be over and reports seen. I hope you find your child's progress more than satisfactory! Having the Parent/Teacher Night a few weeks before marks close can be a great benefit when you are working closely with your son or daughter to help them achieve success. Also, keeping current with Grade Connect can help avoid serious gaps in homework or test scores.

In so many ways our teachers are working to keep students focused on their school work: individual tutoring, phone calls to home, and encouraging conferences with students who need a boost. I believe that the most important aspect of your teenager's academic health is that they take personal responsibility for their progress. The mature and motivated student knows how to balance study and social life in order to get the best results. I tell them three things are necessary: consistency in completing homework and study, full preparation and participation in class, and seeking help when needed. It is attention to these three aspects of schooling that will support greater achievement in your son or daughter's academic success.

As the holiday seasons come close, I wish to express my thanks to you for all that you do to support us here at West Catholic. I am grateful to you for your confidence in all we do for our young adults. It is my Thanksgiving prayer that you may find some peace in family and friends during both the Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations. As I frequently remind both students and faculty: God is good all the time!

Sister Mary E. Bur, IHM

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT:

Brother Timothy Ahern, FSC

Holiday season is rapidly approaching and I once again am asking for your cooperation in paying your tuition and school fees. Your cash flow and the paying of bills is very similar to ours. The invoices that we receive for paper supplies, ink jets for computers, athletic and extra curricular activities never cease during a ten month time period. Please make every possible effort to comply with this request.

On another matter that concerns all of our safety, I am again asking that you NOT DROP YOUR CHILD OFF INSIDE OUR PARKING LOT IN THE MORNING. The coming and going into our parking lot is creating a dangerous hazard especially when a person insists on pulling all the way up to the dumpster to drop off their child. Delivery trucks are usually in the lot at this time and the pulling of cars up to these spots is becoming a traffic hazard. Please let your child out of the car at the entrance on 46th Street or at the Ludlow Street gate.

And finally, people drive entirely too fast in our lot. If you do have to park in our lot for school business, please drive slowly.

Brother Tim Ahern, FSC

EVENT LINK

EventLink is a service that allows you to receive emergency alerts and reminders for events directly from West Catholic. The system gives you total control over which reminders you receive, and when and how you receive them.

It's quick and easy and free!

- **Step 1: Register at www.eventlink.com**
Enter your e-mail address and choose a password
- **Step 2: Validate**
Click the link in your confirmation e-mail to activate your account
- **Step 3: Customize**

***Would you like to reserve a copy of the 2012 Blaze Yearbook
for your son or daughter?***

**Purchase price of the yearbook is \$65.00 Place a deposit of \$35.00 at the finance office and
pay the balance when the yearbooks are delivered in May 2012**

or

Pay the full cost now at the finance office to reserve your copy.

Seniors automatically receive a copy of the yearbook as a part of the graduation fee.

or

Drop off this order form at the finance office.

**WEST CATHOLIC ORDER FORM
BLAZE 2012**

Student Name _____ Student # _____

Please add the **\$65.00** cost of the 2012 yearbook on my account.

Parent Signature _____

***FROM THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS:
Brother Patrick Cassidy, FSC***

GradeConnect:

GradeConnect is an internet-based course management system and grade book used in the Archdiocesan high schools. You will have access to your son's or daughter's grades, assignments, announcements, and overall progress throughout the school year. For assistance in setting up your GradeConnect account, please call Brother Patrick in the Academic Affairs Office.

Parent/Teacher Communication:

Please take the initiative to contact your son's/daughter's teachers about their progress or any problems your child may be having in school. Being vigilant early on saves a lot of frustration and misunderstanding later in the school year. Making appointments to see teachers before or after school helps facilitate the communication process. Please contact the Office for Academic Affairs to schedule an appointment with a teacher. Please do not come to school to speak to a teacher without an appointment. Teachers cannot be excused from class because a parent has decided to come to school unannounced.

1st Quarter Report Cards will be distributed on Monday, November 21 in homeroom. These reports are given to students in homeroom who are required to take them home to their parents/guardians. ***There will NOT be parent-teacher conference following the 1st report card. All conferences follow the distribution of the progress report.***

Second Quarter Progress Reports will be issued on Tuesday, January 3. These reports are given to students in homeroom who are required to take them home to their parents. Students who have **two or more failure warnings** must get their progress report signed and returned to the school or a discipline infraction will be assigned.

Parent-Teacher Meetings:

Parents and guardians will have the opportunity to speak with the teachers on Thursday evening, January 15 from 5-7 pm as a follow up to the second quarter progress report card. Attendance at the Parent-Teacher Conference provides a wonderful opportunity for you to meet with all/most of your son's or daughter's teachers and to hear their impressions of your daughter's or son's aptitude in their subject and work in their class.

Dates to Remember:

- First quarter ends on Friday, November 11
- Second quarter begins on Monday, November 14
- First quarter report cards will be distributed on Monday, November 21
- Second quarter progress reports will be distributed on Tuesday, January 3
- The 2nd quarter Parent-Teacher meeting will be held on Thursday, January 5

FROM THE OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

Mr. John Jackson

Check Discipline History on GradeConnect:

Many of you know by now that you can check your child's discipline record in Grade Connect. Just simply click on the tab labeled Student Services in the upper right hand corner of your grade page and follow the instructions. This gives you a list of the infractions that your child has incurred since the beginning of school.

Conduct Mark

Every student begins each quarter of the school year with a conduct mark of 100. At the end of the marking period deductions from the conduct mark are based on the total number of demerits received during that marking period. When a student's conduct grade falls below 70, he/she will be placed on Conduct /Social Probation for a period of fifteen (15) days. A second conduct failure in a school year will result in the student being placed on a pre-dismissal contract and liable for expulsion.

Conduct Grade/End of Year

Our school policy states that any student who accumulates more than 120 demerit points in the course of the school year will be required to attend the Behavioral Remediation Program during the summer. Students who fail to attend the required program will not be permitted to return to West Catholic. There is a fee for this program. For seniors our policy states that any senior who accumulates more than 120 demerits in the course of the school year will be required to complete additional service hours prior to receiving full commencement recognition. Once the service hours are completed satisfactorily the student will receive their diploma.

Lateness/Absence

Our attendance policy states that any student who is absent 22 times or late 25 times during the school year will be subject to the same Remediation Programs as outlined above under Conduct Grade.

Dress Code

All students must observe the dress code regulation. Girls-the official West Catholic school sweater, a copen blue cardigan embroidered with the school emblem, must be worn from the beginning of November through March. Solid opaque blue, black or white stocking or panty hose are mandatory. Boys-The official West Catholic school sweater, a navy blue pullover embroidered with the school emblem, must be worn from the beginning of November through March. All students must adhere to the over-all regulations of the dress code.

FROM THE SCHOOL MINISTRY OFFICE: Rev. Michael Marrone

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Spirit is alive and well at West Catholic High School. During the month of November we will be praying and remembering our students' loved ones who have died. We will remember them in our daily prayer and masses. If you would like us to pray for a loved one of yours who has died please email me at westmarrone@yahoo.com.

On November 29, Father Stephen Thorne will preside at our Advent Prayer service. Father Thorne is the pastor of Saint Martine De Porres Catholic Church. He will preach on understanding the true meaning of Christmas and the love of Jesus in our lives.

As the school minister and pastor of your child, if there is anything that I can do or in any way help you with your child, please do not hesitate to contact me via email or call me at (215) 386-2244 ext. 240.

God Be Blessed!
Father Michael Marrone

ACTIVITIES

Director: Ms. Mary DeMasi

Ass't Director: Ms Maureen Deviney

SPORTS NEWS:

Winter sports season opens November 14 for Girls and Boys Basketball and Girls and Boys Indoor Track. If your son or daughter is interested in these activities, please encourage them to listen for announcements of tryouts.

*Let's continue to cheer on the West Catholic Burrs Football Team as they continue on the road to Hershey, PA and the State Championship.
Find scores and schedules weekly on the school's web page.*

FROM THE GUIDANCE OFFICE:

Ms. Jennifer Davis

Greetings from the Guidance Office! We have had a busy fall and are off to a good start with college planning for the Class of 2012. Every senior has had an opportunity to meet with Ms. Davis to start the application process, and many seniors have started submitting their college applications. The second round of senior meetings with Ms. Davis will begin Monday, October 24. Please emphasize the importance of these meetings with your son or daughter.

Seniors are asked to be sure that their file in the Guidance Office is complete (with all previous SAT scores and TWO letters of recommendation) before submitting transcript requests. Also, if any counselor forms need to accompany the application make sure they are given to Ms. Davis in advance. To have transcripts sent to schools, seniors must request a transcript form from Miss Marge in the Guidance Office and pay \$5 per transcript in the tuition office before the application packages will be sent to the colleges. Seniors are urged to have all applications completed by December 16. Any transcript requests received after that date cannot be guaranteed to be sent out before the Christmas holiday.

College Scholarship Opportunities

Any private scholarships opportunities that are made available to our students are broadcast through a Guidance Office Email Update. Parents are welcome to contact Ms. Davis (guidancewchs@gmail.com) to subscribe to those emails. All seniors should be receiving the updates already. If a senior is not receiving the emails, please contact Ms. Davis so that we can update your email address. In addition to these emails, seniors are encouraged to create an account at www.fastweb.com, a free online scholarship search with has information on thousands of scholarship opportunities.

Financial Aid for College

There are 3 types of financial aid that colleges offer to their students. They are grants, loans and work-study program. The definitions of the different types of financial aid offered are listed below:

Grants- Grants do not have to be repaid. The federal government provides grant funds for students attending colleges, including career colleges and universities.

Federal Work-Study - Federal Work-Study is self-help aid and is awarded to students with financial need. Students can work part-time to earn this award money. The money earned can be used to help the student with their personal cost. Work-study jobs can be found on or off campus through the school's Financial Aid Office.

Loans- Federal loans are borrowed funds that must repaid with interest. A federal student loan allows students and their parents to borrow money to help pay for college through loan programs supported by the federal government. They have low interest rates and offer flexible repayment terms, benefits, and options.

Each student must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application before the college can award the student financial aid. The financial aid office at the college you want to attend will use the information on the FAFSA application to determine the amount of federal and institutional (grants and loans that are regulated by the college) that you are eligible to receive. The FAFSA can be completed beginning on January 1, and must be submitted by March 15, although some schools may require the information earlier than that date. To complete the FAFSA, go to www.fafsa.ed.gov. If you are having trouble with the FAFSA, they can be reached on the FAFSA assistance line at **1-800-730-8913**.

SAT Testing

Any senior who has not yet registered for the SATs must take them in December. Juniors should plan to take the SATs during the spring of this year. The SATs will be offered at West Catholic on **Saturday, March 10**. To register, go to sat.collegeboard.com/register or come to the Guidance Office to receive a paper application.

| <i>SAT Testing Date</i> | <i>Register By:</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| December 3** | November 8 |
| January 28 | December 30 |
| March 10 | February 10 |
| May 5 | April 6 |
| June 2 | May 8 |

****If you missed the November 8 registration deadline, you can still complete late registration for an additional fee until November 20, or register as a standby on the morning of the test.**

Finally, any parent who has concerns about a student is encouraged to contact the Guidance Office. As always we have many counselors available to work with our students and we

welcome parent referrals. You know your child best and if you think they could benefit from talking to someone, don't hesitate to contact. You can reach Ms. Davis at (215)386-2244 x 229 or guidancewchs@gmail.com.

Academic News

WORLD AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The World Affairs Club has had a very eventful start to the school year. Our students helped the IHM sisters at the Camilla Hall Fair in the middle of October. The sisters greatly appreciated the West students help.

West's 7th Annual Model UN conference went off without a hitch on October 23. Students from Father Judge, St. Huberts, Little Flower, Salesianum, Padua Academy, and West participated in lively debates concerning the idea of Palestinian statehood in the United Nations, the famine concerning the Horn of Africa (Somalia), the reconstruction of Haiti, and North Korea.

November and December look just as productive as ever. We have three Model UN conferences to attend: Father Judge on November 12, Archmere Academy on November 19, and Salesianum on December 10.

Our lectures are looking very interesting these next two months as well. West students hope to learn how fellow students play games from around the world at the Penn Museum, how to better themselves from comedian Bill Cosby, and learn leadership skills from former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Just the tip of the iceberg of events/lectures we hope to accomplish this year in World Affairs.

The **International seminar class** has had many activities in the past month or so. The IS Seminar went to Hammonton, NJ all day on Oct. 28 to take part in the UN Day Program which has students discuss and create resolutions on various forms of discrimination throughout the world.

Students from the World Affairs Club and the IS Seminar attended programs at The World Affairs Council to see US Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, CNN News correspondent (former) Soledad O'Brien who is now a published author and Mark Bowden who wrote a book called "Worm: The First Digital World War"

SCIENCE

West Catholic is encouraging students to enter the George Washington Carver Science Fair to be held in March 2012. The first meeting for interested students will take place Tuesday, November 8 at 2:45 in room 316.

FINE ARTS.

The Advanced Art program has a show of color blocks in the school library. They also completed the "Day of the Dead" sculpture inspired by the Spanish culture. Some of these sculptures are on display in the first floor corridor display case.

Graphic Arts students have been working hard in Photoshop learning the different methods used by professionals. Some of the assignments are the study Andy Warhol, Surrealism, and the current events.

Mechanical Design students just finished an industrial design project on three views of a shoe and creating three dimension shoes from card board and brown paper bags. Check the display case on the first floor the next time you are in the building.

Art One students are learning basic skills and have works on display in the auditorium. They are learning color theory and complementary colors working with color pencils.

FINANCE OFFICE INFORMATION

Tuition statements are sent out each month as of the 15th of the month. Tuition and fees are due upon receipt of this statement.

Any fees not paid by November 1 will be deducted from the November tuition payment. This applies to all fees except the Graduation Fee which is due January, 2012.

IMPORTANT DATES

**Report Cards
Will be distributed Monday,
November 21**

- Friday, November 4 E schedule Dismissal 12:00
- Friday, November 11 End of First Quarter
- Friday, November 18 Sophomore Retreat
- Monday, November 21 First Quarter Reports
- November 24 to 27 Thanksgiving Holidays
- Wednesday, December 7 No Classes
- Friday, December 23 Christmas Holidays begin at dismissal