

Harlem Renaissance impacts freshmen through collages  
Read page 2.



How do students, staff define true meaning of Christmas season?  
Read page 3.



Evia makes history winning all-state volleyball honors  
Read page 8.



# The Eagle Flyer



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Kennedy High School  
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## Stars shine brighter with presence of Mr. Collins

By Kyle Cleary  
Staff Writer

Longtime teacher of English, drama passes away Nov. 28

A theatre icon is gone, but remains far from forgotten.

Mr. Kevin Collins, teacher and revered director for several Waterbury public schools, passed away from complications from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease the early morning of Monday, Nov. 28, 2016 according to family, and immediately students began reflecting on his life.

"He taught me to be the best version of myself," said freshman at UConn, Storrs Kathryn O'Donnell, a former four-year student theatre member. "Everything I am now is shaped by Collins."

So many students from inside and outside theatre feel the same.

"He has truly inspired me to shoot for the stars and be the best actress I can," said Micaela Snow, a senior and three-year student theatre member.

There is just so much students have to say about the theatre and Collins alone.

"He inspires me to never give up, just like he never gave up on our theatre," said Sydney Dawson, a freshman at Roger Williams University who was in several Kennedy shows Collins directed.

"He didn't care what it took; he always pulled through and got the shows together," said Morgan Fasanelli, a Marymount Manhattan College freshman who was in *Spamalot*, a stagehand for *Anything Goes* and his English 12 student. "He would get you where you needed to be as a performer."

Others have a favorite memory.

"My favorite memory of him was his stories he would share with us about growing up in Town Plot," said senior Carson Delaney.

From room 107 to the auditorium, the memories continue.

"We all watched *Pippin* together and he got all happy and at some points sang along," said senior Taylor Morgan from Sacred Heart who was in two shows Collins directed.

"There are big memories like at the end of the cast party for *Anything Goes* where he hugged me and told me that he would miss us and there are smaller memories," said O'Donnell. "But every moment was just as significant as the next."

Students even had downright silly but favorable memories of Collins.

"My favorite memory of Collins is how he allowed us to call him 'dad,'" said Dawson.

"My favorite memory with him is probably when we watched *Memphis* in class and he said he could see me up there, which meant more than he knew to me because I knew he really believed in me," said Paola Robles, a former student theatre member who attends college in Manhattan.

If there was one thing most students remembered about Collins, it was he always told the truth, no mat-

ter how brutal.

"He didn't have a filter, he just said whatever he wanted to say and I loved it," said Morgan.

"His honesty," said O'Donnell. "He always saw things for how they were and had no problem with telling it how it was, but it was never discouraging."

Even one of Collins students from the '80s that you may know remembered this about him:

"Collins always told the truth, and it was one of his best traits," said business department chair Mr. Lucian, who was a theatre arts student at the time.

Even in indirect ways, Collins keeps influencing students.

"He doesn't cut me or any students any slack and in the end it has made me work harder than ever in acting in classes and in everything I do. He knows after high school I won't really be cut any slack and prepared me for



Photos by Kyle Cleary/staff

**MEMORIES** Bottom photo is a panorama of room 107, where Mr. Collins taught English and drama and where he displayed Halo theatre awards won, above.

it," said Robles.

Students have copious other good things to say about Collins.

"(He was) a man with a good sense of humor who loved his job," said senior Mikele Cokani. "He was a lot more expressive than other teachers."

Another student from 1984 remembers Collins as "energetic and passionate about theatre," said Dana Cleary, a Waterbury resident.

The good continues.

"He always knew how to make you laugh," said Vincent Griffin, a Sacred Heart sophomore who did *Anything Goes* with Collins.

His enthusiasm stood out.

"He was different than the other teachers because all he wanted to do was teach," said Fasanelli.

Nothing seemed to sway him.

"He taught for so many years, he

kinda did his own thing and didn't let the craziness affect that," said Delaney.

He was encouraging, students said.

"Something that I have learned from him was to not make yourself small," said Dawson.

Lastly, he inspired

"How hasn't he inspired me? He was more than a teacher or director, he was a friend when I needed it, a role model when the times came, a voice lesson when I needed it, and someone to just listen and then tell me to go out and do it," said Robles.

Collins was like a father to Kennedy: he was extremely caring, yet with a dosage of sarcasm and truth to let you know he loved you but above all he motivated you to have the level of passion he had for what he did. He never worked a single day in his entire life because he truly loved what he did.

### Here's to you

By Micaela Snow  
Staff Writer

They call me a theater geek  
Because I love being on that stage  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I love every aspect of it,  
every page  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I love to be around the cast  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I hate it when time goes  
too fast

I wish it could pass slowly  
I wish the clock would stop  
So I can turn back time  
So we can start back on the top

They call me a theater geek  
Because I love the sound  
They call me a theater geek  
Because it's my lost and found  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I love reading each line  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I find the atmosphere divine

I wish I could stay there  
I wish I could be frozen still  
So I can hear the sound of the piano  
So we can feel the unspeakable chill

They call me a theater geek  
Because that's what I am  
They call me a theater geek  
Because it's inside my blood,  
every milligram  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I cherish the feeling  
They call me a theater geek  
Because it gave me this  
incredible healing

I wish I could restart the hour  
I wish I had the power to keep it there  
So I can see you one more time  
So I can hear the sound,  
it's just not fair

They call me a theater geek  
Because you taught me to be free  
They call me a theater geek  
Because you ignited something in me  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I'm laughing remembering  
*Pippin* and *Anything Goes*  
They call me a theater geek  
Because they were my favorite shows  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I know that I will always  
have a friend  
They call me a theater geek  
Because I now realize that with  
memories, there is never an end.

In loving memory of Mr. Kevin Collins, a true inspiration to me and so many others

SEE page 7 for another commentary about Mr. Collins

## DECA hopes to help 500 children with toy donations

By Samantha Campanaro  
Managing Editor

Saturday, Dec. 10, 2016 members hold fourth annual toy drive; bring items to room 136

"Christmas is about giving to those in need, not receiving," as the saying goes.

DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) is holding their fourth annual toy drive in Kennedy's parking lot Saturday Dec. 10, 2016, where a car is parked and filled up with toys which will be brought to Waterbury's Police Athletic League (PAL) for distribution.

"We distribute flyers to teachers and post (flyers) around school. We contacted a radio station, and (possibly) the Waterbury Republican, as well as email(ed) a flyer to the superintendent to be distributed through the district," said DECA advisor and Business Education teacher Mrs. Sasso.

There was a mandatory club meeting for DECA members to create posters that help spread

the word Dec. 1, 2016.

"We're going to make a huge poster for in the lobby as well as all around the (school)," said senior and vice president Aida Mecka.

Even with all of the advertisement, help is still needed from everyone in the school and community.

"I hope we get a surplus of toys so we can make (kids) happy," said senior Leslie Dennis.

"I hope we get a surplus of toys so we can make (kids) happy."

Leslie Dennis, senior and DECA member

Last year DECA collected many toys, but failed to fill the bus, according to president Elizabeta Sofroni.

"We raised a lot of toys last year, at least three tables," said sophomore Joni Pasholli.

DECA's goal is to fill at least a car, if not more, and deliver the toys to PAL, whose mission is to help out young kids.

"I want to get enough toys for everyone to get one because I hate the thought of a kid not getting a toy," said senior Damaya Saunders.

Since the toy drive, previously called Fill-a-Bus, has only been around for four years, for some it will be their first time participating and helping spread the word.

"I am going to participate in it this year (be-

cause) it is a good cause," said freshman Braeden Gorman.

DECA members hope to continue the tradition for years to come, collecting toys for kids around the Connecticut area.

"I hope we reach a certain amount (and) we accomplish the goal," said junior Yartiza Vega.

DECA has always helped out the community they live in; the holiday season is no exception.

"We (want) at least 500," said sophomore Brian Portella.

If any student has a toy he or she would like to donate, they are encouraged to deliver it to room 136 or stop by Dec. 10, 2016.

"Giving back to the community is what we do," said Carty.

# Youth Health Service Corps offers students opportunities, benefits

By Eva LaFrance  
Staff Writer

*Club visits nursing home, schools; helps with college prep, internships*

In a 2007-2008 National Survey of Student Engagement report, students who stay in extracurricular activities have a higher retention rate--which translates to staying in school--compared to those who aren't as involved.

Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC), an extracurricular club, seeks to benefit students in Connecticut schools to address underserved healthcare needs with service-learning projects and volunteer activities weekly in the 2016-17 school year.

"In the past, students who have participated in this program have shown improvements in their attendance, grades, and attitudes toward school," said Kathleen Gorman, CT Americorp member and Kennedy's program coordinator for YHSC.

The YHSC program is in schools throughout Connecticut and all Waterbury public high schools. Program coordinators come weekly to high schools to actively involve students in other programs.

"We have recurring events and one-day events like workshops which includes leadership workshops," said Gorman.

The recurring events are going to city nursing homes like Southmayd Home and Abbott Terrace Health Center, and elementary schools like Gilmartin Elementary School and Children's Community School.

"(In Southmayd), we basically spend time with the elderly women and engage in arts and crafts," said Daniel Roza, Americorp member and program coordinator at Waterbury Career Academy, Wilby and Kaynor Tech high schools. "(At Abbott Terrace) we help patients suffering from dementia. We do therapeutic activities with the patients."

Students also go to elementary schools to help out with lessons given to the children.

"(At Children's Community School) we have

high school students administer health-related lessons to fifth graders," said Roza.

The same goes for Gilmartin Elementary School.

"Gilmartin is a YHSC group of middle schoolers," said Gorman. "This year, they are doing some gardening (which YHSC high schoolers also do). I have interests in the group with production sciences and agriculture. They have sent down overseas packages and letters to overseas men. We also have done a bullying prevention lesson plan."

Other services include working with Waterbury Baptist Ministries and other one-day events.

"With (Pastor Tyson), we do different kinds of events. (For example) we gave turkey and other foods to the homeless, we will be going to the Children's Christmas Store. Children go to the store and buy gifts for their parents," said Roza.

Last year, students received the opportunity to go to the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) Conference. Students went to workshops related to health and agriculture and assisted in helping with the conference's clean-up duties.

"We went to (Western Connecticut State University) to gain a better understanding of environmental issues in climate," said Winston Hendricks, a Wilby senior and four-year YHSC member. "We learned about disease in plants and how they spread. We (also) learned significant changes that is occurring."

This program also offers leadership to students, such as the Youth Advisory Board.

"Students create different events that correspond with different committees in the Board," said Hendricks.

In Youth Advisory Board, students run meetings and come up with ideas for events.

"We helped organize (Picture of Health last year)," said Hendricks. "(It's) a service that members of YHSC participate to display the various health issues they see and experience in their community. (Photos were taken) to send a message to the public in order to inspire," Hendricks said.

Taking part in such activities is a way to build student resumes.

"We try to (build resumes) in two ways. By doing service events and certifying (students) in CPR. All volunteer work is a good aspect on resumes and it shows people you take part in the community," said Gorman. "The second way is teaching students how to make resumes including the proper words to use and format."

These are such points that attract members. "Yeah, one of the reasons I joined is to build my resume," said Halle Jackson, a sophomore at Waterbury Arts Magnet School.

Building student resumes is one way YHSC helps prepare students for college.

"Everyone knows that colleges is getting more and more competitive so be a part of a club that bridges the gap between the academic setting and practical workplace skills," said Andrew Oravec, Americorp member and YHSC program coordinator of Wilby, UConn, WAMS, and other school districts.

YHSC conducts college-related workshops and tours.

"We have done college tours to get a better experience with college. We learned how to structure college essays and about the difference between loans and scholarships," said Hendricks.

Other opportunities offered are career motivated.

"What we do is take student interest and we go into the community and we find what might fit their interests," said Gorman.

An example of this is "there was a girl who

**“** There was a girl who expressed interest in being a veterinarian and after calling 17 prospective vet hospitals, we found a place this young lady ended up as an intern in a vet hospital. **”**

Kathleen Gorman,  
CT Americorp member and Kennedy's  
YHSC program coordinator

expressed a lot of interest in being a veterinarian and after calling 17 prospective vet hospitals, we found a place that this young lady ended up as an intern in a vet hospital," said Gorman.

Currently, YHSC is offering a program for students interested in the medical field.

"Waterbury Health Explorers is a health exploring program (that) expose(s) students to careers in hospitals," said Daniel Roza. "There are two components: the career itself and the hands-on component," said Roza.

But who could have founded such a program? The answer is Dr. Bruce E. Gould, M.D.

"Dr. Gould, a primary care physician, wanted to develop a program to expose students to medicine and other health-related careers by engaging them in the community. He thought of creating a program that runs all over Waterbury and now it is all over Connecticut," said Roza.

Dr. Bruce Gould is also a professor and associate dean for primary care at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. As well as being a decorated individual, Gould is an advocate for public health care and preventive medicine.

Overall, YHSC members can see the benefits this extracurricular club provides.

"It shows people how involved and cooperative I am with others. It helps people see how I work with others. It (also) helps people see that I work to better my surroundings," said Hendricks.



**REVIVING HISTORY**  
Freshmen in Mrs. Lawrence's English class created collages pictured in the hallway (above) outside her room 111, detailing fashions, artists and musicians of the Harlem Renaissance after reading the short story "Thank you Ma'am" by Langston Hughes.

Photos by Samarah Brunette/correspondent



## Creating Harlem Renaissance collages

By Samarah Brunette  
Correspondent *Freshmen examine artists, musicians after reading Hughes*

What is the Harlem Renaissance? Freshmen were assigned a project, now on display, on the fashions, artists, musicians, and individuals of the Harlem Renaissance by English teacher Ms. Lawrence in room 111 to learn more about the time period, Sept. 19, 2016.

"I had some students who really excelled and took something from the assignment," said Lawrence.

As Lawrence said some students excelled, but what did that mean for others?

"Other students did what they needed to pass and I had some students who were completely 'lost,'" said Lawrence.

Although, some students were "lost," others gained knowledge from the assignment.

"(I learned) there was a lot of like cultural movement for the African American artists, musicians, artists,

and other style," said freshman Stephanie Diaz.

"I learned about different people and they were interesting," said freshman Keshliam Melendez.

"What I learned was all the different styles compared to now," said freshman Sharkira Montalvo.

Lawrence assigned the project because of reading "Thank You Ma'am" by Langston Hughes, one of the first stories of the curriculum, for the first marking period. Lawrence decided students would not only complete a collage for a project grade, but also present for a separate grade.

"I wasn't happy at all with my presentation, my collage was creative though," said freshman Jahnay Rivers.

"I enjoyed the project, I mean I got 100 for both grades," said freshman Shaina Ortiz.

The use of imagination or original ideas: creativity. That's what Lawrence

was looking for.

"I think it was a fairly easy project, but being creative? I didn't know what to do," said Diaz.

Some freshmen didn't find the project too complex.

"I mean all we really did was look up important people in the Renaissance," said freshman Aaliyah Rodriguez.

Others thought about it so much that they'd go back and change things.

"I would explain more about people so like my presentation would've been better," said freshman Anderson Diaz.

"I would put more things about them," said Kydiam Conception.

Lawrence said she thought her students did very well since it was her first time giving the assignment.

"I did really good and already knew about it, so that helped," said Josephine Perez.

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## Students await International Day Friday, Dec. 23

By Leylah Veliju  
Staff Writer *Annual tradition celebrates students' cultures with food, posters*

Take a trip around the world!

Kennedy students will be celebrating the school's ethnic mosaic by having its annual International Day, showcasing one's country of choice, with students setting up a table presenting their country's flag, a poster with facts, and bringing in food the day before Christmas break Friday, Dec. 23, 2016, in the Jack Taglia gymnasium.

"(I'm anticipating) seeing and exploring other cultures, and to experience different traditions," said freshman Kariny Topolosci.

Freshmen hearing about this annual celebration seemed to be keyed up to finally experience the event that other students discuss and remember.

"My favorite part is being able to taste all the food from different cultures, and it's interesting to see how it compares to what we eat every day," said sophomore Caroline Useda.

Diversity is a trait students are becoming more accepting of. The 2016 International Day will hopefully boost knowledge and appreciation of more and more cultures, students said.

"I've only gone to one, but I like how the students are happy during that day, and how the Albanians dance in a circle," said

junior Jubilee King.

The importance of International Day, which has been run by math teacher Ms. Scialla for the past six years she said, is to see students are diverse among each other, and this is a way to be exposed to the fact students are not all the same but can celebrate differences.

"I love my culture because of the food. I'm pretty sure everyone loves Mexican food," said sophomore Idaly Hernandez.

This once-a-year opportunity is not one worth missing out on but students are able to visit only during certain class periods. Be sure to listen to announcements for any changes or updates.

Times that students are able to go:  
seniors: period 2  
juniors: period 3  
sophomores: period 4  
freshmen: period 6

There will be a mandatory meeting Thursday, Dec. 15 in room 222 after school. The last day to sign up to participate is Friday, Dec. 9. So far there are 23 countries represented.

## What is the real meaning of Christmas to you? By Aliya Hernandez, Features Editor



*"Remembering what Christ is to us."*  
Ms. Maxie, paraprofessional



*"It's time for love and to give."*  
George Leon Pedraza, freshman



*"The spirit," "Being with family," "Pure happiness."*  
Jenilyn Djan, Wylberto Vergeli, Derya Demiral, sophomores



*"Christmas is about spending time with family and enjoying the time together and decorating."*  
Ms. Griffin, English teacher



*"It's about spending time with family, and opening the presents they worked hard to get."*  
Quentin Quinones, senior



*"Family."*  
Kayla and Briana Binette, juniors

## Some schools start Christmas break before Dec. 23 or have half day

By Giselle Piris  
Correspondent

*Waterbury schools go full day before Christmas Eve; return Tuesday, Jan. 3*

Why are some people upset about Christmas break? Well, is it because the winter break is short or because other public schools in the Waterbury area have a little bit of a longer winter recess? Or are people upset because they don't get out since the last day of school Friday, Dec. 23, 2016 is a full day, not a half day?

"I was supposed to go to Massachusetts Friday Dec. 23. I feel we should get two weeks off because it gives us enough time to travel and to spend time with your family," said junior Kristina Smith.

Smith was informed by a student journalist that Friday was a full day, which made her upset. Other public school districts such as New Haven, Naugatuck, Torrington, and Watertown, as well as St. Mary's School on Cole Street, all either get out early Friday or they have the day off. New Haven public schools also have a half day Friday, Dec. 23.

"Well, New Haven and Waterbury are two different cities and two different education systems; for example we

have a February break as well as spring break, also half days every Monday, and I don't think it'd affect any traveling because it doesn't really matter," said New Haven resident and student Christian Thorpe. "All we do is get out an hour or two before you guys, you guys get out 1:50 every day any ways, and do I think it's fair that Waterbury has to go to school Friday for a full day? Well I really don't think it matters."

Another student from Waterbury agreed, and is fine with the break.

"(It) didn't ruin any family plans, I'm okay with only having one week of school," said junior Jose Santiago.

Both Thorpe and Santiago said they don't mind having a short Christmas.

Are people in private or parochial schools such as Holy Cross or Sacred Heart high schools the truly lucky ones? The Holy Cross students have an 11:30 a.m. dismissal Wednesday Dec. 21 to begin their Christmas break, and Sacred Heart students have an 11:30 a.m. dismissal Friday Dec. 23.

## TV shows make Christmas season more special, what do you watch?

By Christina Capozzi  
Correspondent

*Disney channel, Hallmark some of stations students love viewing for holidays*

'Tis the season to be jolly!  
Students from Kennedy are getting into the Christmas spirit and are excited for their favorite upcoming Christmas specials and TV shows, as of November 2016, which they discussed during their third and seventh period classes.

"One time I was out, and the Grinch was coming on at eight, so I told my Mom and Aunt we had to be home to watch it," freshman Hayley Graham said. "We came home at like 8:10, and I was still upset about it."

Students have been talking about their favorite television programs during this time of the year. What are yours?

"The Hallmark Channel is the place to be," said senior Elizabeta Sfroni. "Netflix has some good shows, too."

"On Christmas time, I watch CBS, and Free Form.

I don't usually watch them except for Christmas," said sophomore Tasleema Bakhsh.

"I watch Falalalidays on Disney Channel," said freshman Sebastian Rosario. "(Disney Channel itself) is too babyish, but their Christmas shows really touch my heart."

The Charlie Brown special is known to be favored by a lot of students, but you can't forget about the others!

"Definitely the Charlie Brown Christmas specials, and the classic cartoon Grinch," said freshman Kelsey Goldbach.

"Good Luck Charlie because their Christmas special was really good," said Sfroni.

"The Grinch with Jim Carrey because it's funny and touching which I love," said Rosario.

Yes, there are Christmas specials everyone loves, but what are the ones you just can't miss?

"Charlie Brown, 100 percent every year," said Goldbach.

"All the Disney shows. Every year I watch them all, and the specials," said Sfroni.

"I refuse to miss A Christmas Story because I've always been watching it since I was little," said Rosario.

**“ One time I was out, and the Grinch was coming on at eight, so I told my Mom and Aunt we had to be home to watch it. We came home at like 8:10 and I was still upset about it. ”**

**Hayley Graham, freshman**

## Memories linger of Three Kings' Day

By Kimberly Figueroa  
Staff Writer

No, it's not the same as Christmas. Three Kings Day is an important holiday to Marielys Collazo, Milly Morales, Jimmito Lopez and others, especially children, because three kings brought gifts for the newborn Jesus and families gather to celebrate Jan. 6, 2017 to open gifts.

"The gifts, family gather together and seeing them smile," said Lopez.

That's the joy of being around families, especially opening gifts. My siblings and I got excited to open our presents.

"We grabbed grass from outside, put it in a bucket and would put it near the three," said Collazo.

My mother said 'let's grab grass from outside so you guys can feed the camels.' It didn't matter if the grass was yellow or green, we put it in a box near the tree.

"The three kings were real and it's the most beautiful set ups," said Morales.

When I was in Puerto Rico, students in our school dressed up as the three kings, an angel and more for the parade. We also danced and sang songs. Children decorated school with arts and crafts creations.

"As a kid, I waited for the gifts overnight because I was excited and couldn't sleep but I fell asleep," said Lopez.

It's like waiting for Santa Claus. I would actually try to stay up. In the end, I fell asleep. When morning came, my siblings and I went to the living room to find the presents under the tree and traces of grass leading out the door. Then we excitedly opened the gifts.

"We get to spend time with our family," said Collazo.

That's the time when we bond strongly. I love my memories of laughter. Those are the memories I don't want to forget. I cherish the love of my family.

## Staff Editorial

### Missing Mr. Collins: stay strong to continue his legacy of success

“Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?”

This line from the popular Broadway musical *Hamilton* reminds us we all want to be remembered, whether it is because of an impact we have made on the people in our lives or because of the legacy we leave. This is a time to reflect on the people we have lost, and reconnect with those we have. Even people who don't celebrate Christmas can take the 2016 holiday season to bond with friends and spend time with family because no one knows what the future holds.

20,000 people gathered Dec. 3, 2016 in and around Arena Conda Stadium in Brazil where a memorial was held to honor those who died in Monday's plane crash. Out of 77 passengers, six passengers survived, according to wgmtv.com. Of the 77 passengers, 19 were part of the Brazilian soccer team. Other passengers consisted of journalists, reporters and supporters of this team. Six survivors consisted of three players, two crew members, and a journalist. The crash was caused because “the aircraft was out of fuel,” according to nytimes.com. However, Brazil has not been alone in mourning this week.

Kennedy honors its own Mr. Collins this week, who passed away at the age of 61 Monday, Nov. 28, 2016. Collins, a longtime English and drama teacher as well as student theatre director, has certainly left his impact on the people around him. And that isn't just on his students, it's on students he has never met before, and teachers he wasn't even close with, not to mention his own family.

It was clear to students that he genuinely cared about them, he wanted them to succeed and he was ready to support them offering to help any time they needed it. There have been incredible amounts of support shown for him and his family from former students and coworkers. As a community, we cannot forget all that Collins has done. Students said they will never forget how he loved to play jazz or classical music while they worked in class, and how he inspired them to enjoy--or perform--live theatre. When they went as a class to watch the procession of cars for his funeral, it wasn't quite real for them until they saw the first car and they began to pay their respects.

Sometimes people don't even realize how many lives they have touched. Grief may bring people together, but it is up to us to stay strong to carry on the legacies of those left behind. That is one job that shouldn't be left for a single person, but a community.



Photo by Mrs. White-Clark

**SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER**  
National Honor Society members added Christmas decorations to the St. Vincent DePaul Shelter on Benedict Street Saturday, Nov. 20, 2016. Seniors who decorated were front row, left to right: Sheila French, Joyce Benton and Elisabeta Sofroni. Middle row: Christian Millian, Emily Stack, Alani Arias, Damaris Cabrera, Nicole Taylor, and Almesa Sabovic. Back row: James Cossette, Joey Schaff, Justyn Welsh, Emily Benton, Mariette DeCena, and Shelly Evia.

## Honor Society decorates St. Vincent's shelter

By Damaris Cabrera  
Staff Writer

*Students consider returning to help clean facility*

COMMENTARY

People would be fast asleep the day after homecoming, but 15 members of National Honor Society devoted their time to decorating the St. Vincent DePaul shelter, located at 114 Benedict Street, in hopes of spreading holiday cheer and lifting spirits Saturday Nov. 19, 2016 from noon to 2 p.m.

It was my first time in a shelter, so I didn't know what to expect. There was an eating area downstairs and there were rooms upstairs with bunks where people would sleep. Honestly, the facility was not very clean, with stained walls and dust in every corner, and was not very welcoming, so I was excited to dress the place up.

One student was encouraged by the event to propose to return and clean up the shelter as another project.

“I picked up a book and I saw a bunch of flies pop up, and I thought instead of decorating this place we should clean it up as a project,” said senior Joseph Schaff. “There are people (living) there. They shouldn't have to live in those conditions.”

It was an idea many people were open to, and it was encouraging to see everyone so eager to help. We decorated both the eating

area and a commons area upstairs where the rooms were. Half of the group stood downstairs and decorated the area with sparkling garland and red velvet bows. There was also a small tree that was decorated near the back entrance of the shelter.

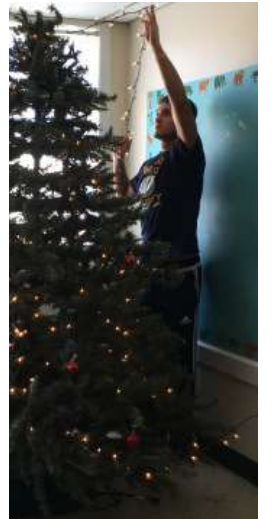
Upstairs, the other half of the group was decorating the main tree, and it was huge. We decorated the tree with red, white and silver sphere-shaped ornaments, and had a red star on top of the tree. White lights were hung up around the building and the stair railings were also decorated.

“The people who stay there at night will definitely appreciate it,” said senior Mariette DeCena.

During the holidays, people are usually thinking about all the things that they are thankful for. Even though that is the case, I do not think people truly realize how many things they have to be thankful for. To have something like a warm home would be a luxury to some. We are not able to provide the people who stay at the shelter with a permanent home, but after two hours of hard work and a couple trips to Home Depot for forgotten supplies, we hopefully provided some people with a bit of holiday cheer.



This is one view of the Benedict Street shelter.



Senior James Cossette hangs lights.

## Treat yourself: travel to NYC, Boston this holiday

NYC COMMENTARY

By Herta Sufka  
Staff Writer

Taft summer school students and teachers took a trip to New York City, where they went to different places such as The Bronx Zoo and Times Square by Peter Pan buses, Saturday, June 9, 2016.

“I had a great time in New York! It was my first time in New York and I was very excited throughout the whole trip. I had fun sightseeing and hanging out with my friends,” said Sabrina Kimble.

While it was some students' first time in New York, there were other students who have visited before. Students went to the Bronx Zoo, Times Square, and the Hard Rock Cafe.

“I had such an amazing time

*Sophomore Herta Sufka enrolled in the Taft School summer program, studying journalism, video production, Spanish, Geometry*

in New York. My friends were the main reason why the trip was so fun and eating at the Hard Rock Cafe was very fun also,” said Chih Tung Yeh.

Eating at the Hard Rock Cafe was one of the best moments throughout the trip. The reason was that a waiter made a surprising entrance and started lip syncing and dancing with the songs being played. He even picked students to dance with him, which made it more fun.

“I had such an amazing time in New York. I'll never forget the memories I made there with my friends,” said Demmie Delke.

From the ride there and back, it looked like the Taft summer school students had a blast.

BOSTON COMMENTARY

By Herta Sufka  
Staff Writer

Taft summer school students and teachers took a trip to Boston. They visited the USS Constitution Museum, Quincy Market and more by Peter Pan buses, Saturday, June 16, 2016.

“I had a fun time in Boston even though I sweated a lot because of the hot weather. My favorite part was shopping around,” said Jillian Adams.

Even though there was a lot of walking involved and it was pretty hot, students and teachers still had a fun time in Boston. In the USS Constitution Museum, students were able to walk around the warship and go inside the mu-

seum to learn more facts about the Constitution.

“My favorite part of the trip was the duck tour. I got to drive the boat part of it in the water. It also felt nice just to relax in it after walking all day,” said Bernadotte Sufka.

It seemed like the majority of the students' favorite part was the duck tour. Another favorite part was eating at Quincy Market, where everyone went for lunch and dinner. In Quincy Market are all sorts of foods and a lot of shops are around it, too.

“My favorite part of the trip was going to Quincy Market. I got to eat a double-bacon cheeseburger,” said Keon Rosado.

The trip ended with a relaxing bus ride back to school.

## What holiday movies, like Grinch, Home Alone rank high?

By Abigail Perez  
Correspondent

Time to get into the Christmas spirit! Kennedy students and faculty discussed their favorite Christmas movies, and how or why, as Christmas 2016 approaches.

“I like *The Grinch that Stole Christmas*,” said junior Brianna Sparano.

“P2,” said senior Chomari Joseph.

“Since I was a little chicken,” said Sparano, regarding how long the movie has been her favorite.

More people preferred old school movies to new school ones.

“(It) depends. A lot of old school movies are much better, but new school movies have a lot of graphics,” said Sparano.


“I prefer old school. For example, I don't like the new *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, I like the old one better,” said Biology teacher Mrs. Morris.

“Old school because it's better,” said senior Sigfredo Grajales.

In addition, some students had their least favorite Christmas movie in common.

“*Home Alone 4*, because they changed the original characters,” said Joseph.

“*Home Alone*,” said Grajales.



### The Eagle Flyer

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**Adviser**  
Mrs. Cybart-Persenaire



# 2016 Christmas Wish List

By Alani Arias, Samantha Campanaro, and Aliya Hernandez

Staff Writers

It's that time of the year again! *The Eagle Flyer* asked Kennedy faculty and staff what they want for Christmas, continuing a tradition for the past 29 years. We try to incorporate all the individuals who walk through Kennedy's doors on a daily basis. Look below to see their wishes, ranging from sincere to funny, and everything in between!



## ADMINISTRATORS

Mr. Johnston: "For my desk to come in"  
Mr. Gwiazdoski: "For Mr. Johnston's hair to stop turning grey"  
Ms Glass: "To see more people being kind to each other"  
Mr. McCasland: "That everyone has a happy and healthy new year" and "to have a purple tutu just like the pink one I already have" (according to Mrs. Harris)

## ART DEPARTMENT

Ms. Carpinella: "For my great uncle to be healthier"  
Mr. Proto: "Spending time with my family"

## ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Mr. Rossi: "Three new security guards"

## ALLIED HEALTH

Mrs. Micelli: "More copy paper so I can make more packets"  
Mrs. O'Connor: We wish you a peaceful holiday season

## ESL/SHELTERED INSTRUCTION

Ms. Martinez: "A trip to Hawaii"  
Mr. Pantoni: "A new car for my wife"  
Ms. Vargas: "A new jumping course"

## BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Lucian: "To keep this year's seniors"  
Mr. Burns: "A red Porsche"  
Mrs. Sasso: "For all my children to be home safely together"  
Mr. Dos Santos: "Health and well-being for all my friends and family"  
Mr. McGrath: "All the students at Kennedy have a great holiday season"

## CAREER CENTER

Mrs. Cicchetti: "Good health and prosperity and peace throughout the world"

## CUSTODIAL STAFF

Mr. Brunelli: We wish you peace this holiday  
Mr. Cooke: We wish you a relaxing holiday season  
Mr. Darly: "An island"  
Mr. Dwyer: We wish you all a wonderful Christmas season  
Mr. Gracia: "The lottery"  
Mr. Mancinone: We wish you a happy holiday  
Mr. Soden: We wish you less work and more relaxation  
Mr. Thomas: We wish you peace  
Mr. Veillette: We wish you happiness and joy  
Mr. Vidal: We wish you a Merry Christmas and nice New Year  
Mr. Walaitis: We wish you a peaceful, relaxing holiday

## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Mrs. Cybart-Persenaire: "Good health, happiness and more peace among people"  
Mr. Caruso: "Ultimate Kung-Fu skills"  
Mrs. DeVeau: "For Ms. H to get a new haircut"  
Ms. Griffin: "A tandem bicycle for Mr. Lucian and Mr. Caruso"  
Ms. Hicock: "For Mr. Caruso to just propose already"  
Mrs. Lawrence: "Health and happiness for my children"  
Mr. Maley: "Peace in the world"  
Mr. Morgan: "Cadbury's dark chocolate"  
Mr. Murphy: We wish you insightful New Yorker articles  
Mrs. Sullivan: "Christmas spirit of peace and good will"  
Ms. Travisano: "For people to stop buying gifts"

## WORLD LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Ms. Cinquegrana: "DeLorean Time Machine"  
Ms. Ferrer: "My previous Christmas wish came true, I'm taking my son to Disney"  
Mr. Likorama: "To have a healthy and happy family"  
Mr. Lopez: "A Caribbean cruise with my wife"  
Dr. Sagnella: "Misfortune to be replaced by good journalism"  
Sra Rincon: "A million dollars"

## GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

Mrs. Ortiz: "For my son to pass his Statistics and get good grades and a treadmill desk"  
Dr. Mikael: "Peace on earth"  
Mrs. Mulligan: "To see the look in my grandson's eyes when he sees his Christmas present"  
Mr. Shocki: "A recount"  
Mr. Poulter: "Good health"

## FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE

Mrs. Fann-Pierce: "Peace for everyone"  
Ms. Balnis: "People to be nicer to one another"  
Mrs. DeSantis: "Healthy and happy year"

## MATH DEPARTMENT

Mr. Diorio: "For everyone to have a happy and healthy holiday season"  
Mr. Alessandro: "Everyone to be happy doing what they want"  
Ms. DeVeau: "Snow"  
Mr. Edwards: "Unity for the American people"  
Ms. Ferrazzi: "Snow days"  
Mr. Flaherty: "Snow for Christmas"  
Mr. Lau: "Nothing. Everything is fine"

Ms. Moffo: "World peace"  
Mrs. Rothen: "A new flat iron"  
Ms. Scialla: "A personal trainer and chef to help me lose weight and eat healthy"  
Mrs. Szwaba: "A new waffle iron"  
Mr. Unluturk: "Peace"

## LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

Ms. Lizak: "I want to lift the unturned stone"

## MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Mrs. Pape: "My house to be finished"  
Mr. Knecht: "A flux capacitor"

## NURSE'S OFFICE

Mrs. Esposito: "Good health for all"  
Mrs. Owens: "I wish for everyone to be humble and kind to everyone else"

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Ms. Cumbo: "A white Christmas"  
Mr. Ferrare: "A happy, healthy holiday for everyone"  
Mr. Stango: "A new snow blower"

## SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Cyr: "For the Wisconsin Badgers to make the CFP (college football playoffs)"  
Mr. Awwad: "Yellow-cake Uranium, never mind the reason"  
Ms. Borges: "Good health and Powerball"  
Ms. Conway: "For all my students to be happy and healthy"  
Mr. Del Debbio: "Nintendo Classical Edition"  
Mrs. Gaydosh: "A big fat bank account"  
Mr. Lafayette: "Peace, quiet and world harmony"  
Mrs. Morris: "More labs for my AP class"  
Ms. Velez: "The end to bigotry"  
Mr. Walker: "For the new *Star Wars* movie to be amazing"  
Mrs. White-Clark: "To have a half day on December 23"  
Mrs. Wright: "Ronald to be silenced for one month"

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Mr. Feola: "In the age of the smartphone, please watch the movie *The Age of Stupid* because we're living in it"  
Ms. Capolupo: "I hope my sister-in-law makes it home for the holidays"  
Mrs. Fitzpatrick: "For Mrs. Harris to stop falling off her bike"  
Mr. Mobilio: "Mass deportation of journalists to the Middle East"  
Ms. Salcito: "For all my friends and family to have a great 2017...or a trip to Iceland"  
Mrs. Hermes: "Healthy and happy for the holidays"  
Mrs. Harris: "To always do my hall duty when Mr. Mobilio is on hall duty"  
Mr. Sarlo: "A white Christmas"  
Mrs. Pasnack: "For my students to be at peace"  
Mr. Turek: "Successful, happy year"  
Mrs. Joyce: "All the kids to come to class on time with their homework, in dress code"

## SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Mrs. Berger: "Sunny and 80 degree weather"  
Mrs. Calabro: "My family and friends to have a happy and healthy holiday"  
Ms. Davis: "A gym membership to the Edge"  
Dr. Gagne-Grosso: "To pay off my boat"  
Ms. Gaynes: "Enough money to have my little boy that I'm adopting make it home from China"  
Mrs. Mead: "A show jumping horse, grey one, 17 hands and must jump three feet"  
Ms. Hagley: "World peace"  
Mrs. Scrivano: "Spend time with my kids"  
Mrs. Villafane: "Health"  
Mrs. Gomulinski: "For my own children to stop fighting and give me some peace"  
Mrs. Anton: "Early retirement"  
Mr. Schmidt: "All wars to end"  
Mr. Phostole: "A new car"

## PARAPROFESSIONALS

Mrs. Cocchiola: We wish you happy holidays  
Mrs. Cosme: "More respect and sharing"  
Mrs. DeJesus: "A huge snowstorm to be locked in for two days, and purple fuzzy socks"  
Mrs. Finnelli: "I wish everyone love, peace and happiness to the world"  
Mrs. Hodges: "To pass my RN test"  
Mrs. Rivera: "Powerball and financial freedom"  
Mrs. Samaha: "Peace"  
Mrs. Seeley: "A white Christmas"  
Mrs. Whidbey: "Happy and healthy Christmas"  
Mrs. Marshall: "That everyone can learn to live together happily"  
Mrs. LaFountain: "Sunshine and beach chairs"  
Mr. Phelan: "A trip to Florida"  
Mr. Vilardo: "A happy and healthy new year"

Mr. Williams: "To make my weaknesses my strengths and to get more opportunities"  
Mr. Martinez: "For it to be spring all year round"  
Mrs. Sweatt: "To spend time with my twin granddaughters"  
Mrs. Maxie: "For everyone to have a great Christmas and New Year"

## SPECIALISTS

Mrs. Currier: "For Mrs. Ortiz to lay off the cat obsession and a happy and healthy 2017"  
Ms. Doyle: "For my kids to get what they want for Christmas"  
Mrs. Guglielmo: "That people take the time to give from their heart and to give of themselves rather than focusing on material gifts"  
Mrs. Sideravage: "I really want Mr. Johnston to get his new desk"  
Mrs. Sarris: "That people are nicer to each other"  
Mrs. Naughton: "A key to my new office"  
Mrs. Langdon: We wish you a happy holiday season  
Mrs. Brites: "That everyone in the Kennedy family has a safe and happy holiday season"  
Mrs. Asklar: "Kindness in all"

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE EDUCATOR

Ms. DiLorenzo: "A ride in Santa's sleigh"

## SUPPORT STAFF

Officer Todd: "A box of the finest Cuban cigars"  
Mr. Cammelletti: "I'd like to wish Mr. McCasland a happy GOZZI Christmas"  
Mr. Gioppi: "A new phone holder"  
Ms. Hayden: "To have a happy, healthy baby"  
Mr. Lawlor: "That my wife, my children and all my eight grandchildren are all healthy and we all get together and have a wonderful time"  
Mr. Krisavage: "Bah humbug"  
Mr. Mannetti: "Peace"  
Ms. Naylor: "That all our military personnel serving overseas have a chance to contact their families for Christmas"  
Mr. Reidel: We wish you a NYC luxury apartment and car service near Fordham.

## TALENTED & GIFTED

Mr. Clark: "Classic NES and my son to have a good first Christmas"

## CAFETERIA

Mrs. D'Aloia: "Good health"  
Mrs. Destefano: "A new body"  
Mrs. Dery: "Health"  
Mrs. Finnegan: "Some sleep"  
Mrs. Marrone: "Health and happiness for everyone"  
Mrs. Ramos: "Peace and happiness"  
Mrs. Molina: "A new husband"  
Mrs. Santos: "I want to win the Lotto"  
Mrs. Vaitkus: "Health"  
Mrs. Yong: We wish you peace and happiness  
Mr. Wright: "Money and baby clothes"  
Mrs. D'Aversa: "Health and a little money"  
Mrs. Rinaldi: "A gift certificate to Barnes and Nobles"  
Mrs. Creaven: "Someone to come clean my house"  
Mrs. Rivera: "Peace"

## TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Mr. Mancuso: "More corny jokes"  
Mr. Conway: "Health and happiness"  
Mr. Danaher: "Good health and happiness to all"  
Mrs. Pisani-Loomis: "Slughorn's Hourglass; may the sand always run slowly"  
Mr. DiMaio: "I received an early Christmas gift because Donald Trump won. But if that doesn't count I would like to see ISIS destroyed"  
Mr. Saraceno: "A safe and happy holiday to the students and staff"

## SECRETARIAL STAFF

Mrs. Feliciano: "I really really really really want Mr. Johnston to get his new desk"  
Ms. Vieira: "I really really want Mr. Johnston to get his new desk"  
Ms. Castellanos: "I really really really want Mr. Johnston to get his new desk"  
Ms. Cronk: "To have people share more love than hate, which celebrates the real reason for Christmas"  
Ms. Hinton: "For people to stop saying the n-word"

## GEAR UP STAFF

Ms. Millo: "All of my students to go to college"  
Ms. Brock: "100% with kids passing all classes and getting credits"

To the remaining Gear Up staff, we wish you a peaceful holiday.

*This 2016 Christmas Wish List is dedicated to the memory of  
Mr. Kevin Collins.*

# Give yourself holiday gift: learn strategies of top 10 in class

By Damaris Cabrera  
Staff Writer

*Students cite hard work, determination, time management as keys to success*

All photos compiled  
from 2016 yearbook by  
Damaris Cabrera/staff

Success.

If there's anything people seek in life, it is that. All too often people search for an easy path to success, but the top-ranking seniors of Kennedy's class of 2016 know there is no easy path to success.

"In order to succeed it's not who's the smartest but who has worked the hardest," said Kathryn O'Donnell, ranked sixth.

Success is already in reach for these top ten seniors, who were ranked so closely to one another their GPAs had to be compared all the way to the hundredth decimal point, according to principal Mr. Johnston. The common thread among them is apparent in the amount of work put in by these students throughout their four years.

## Makyle Hawk

Valedictorian Hawk attended Bunker Hill Elementary for Pre-K to second grade and then attended Maloney Magnet School for his remaining years of elementary. He graduated from West Side for middle school, where he was also valedictorian, he said.

Hawk attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs with plans to study engineering.

As well as the hard work he has put in throughout his high school career, Hawk credited his family for helping him achieve success.

Hawk was the recipient, as of May 23, 2016, of the Maloney Magnet School Alumni Scholarship, worth \$500. He was a member of the Young Educators Society, Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) club, and National Honor Society.

Hawk's advice to underclassmen is to "make time for the things that are important, the things that mean the most to you."

"He's one of the best people I have ever met in my entire life. He exemplifies what Kennedy P.R.I.D.E. (personal responsibility, respect, integrity, determination, excellence) stands for and he deserves all the happiness in the world," said Spanish teacher and world languages department chair Ms. Cinquegrana, who taught Hawk for freshman, sophomore and junior year in SOAR Spanish I, II, and III.

## Briana Latifi



Salutatorian Latifi attended St. Mary's for both elementary and middle school. She was a member of Proud and Spirited Seniors (PASS), the Italian club, and National Honor Society.

"I worked hard and I didn't let pointless things distract me," said Latifi.

Latifi attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs. She received the Presidential Scholarship, a full tuition scholarship worth \$27,630, and will be studying Allied Health and Sciences with hopes of becoming either a physician's assistant or a nurse practitioner.

"She always does what she's supposed to do. She always asks for help from her teachers and peers, and because she does that, she is able to get her work done," said math teacher Ms. DeVeau, who taught her in calculus senior year.

Latifi's advice to underclassmen is to "try your best and try not to let too many things stress you out. As long as you try your hardest you'll be fine."

## Bryan Garcia-Medina

Garcia-Medina, ranked third, attended B.W. Tinker Elementary and West Side. He was the captain of the football team, a member of strength and conditioning, National Honor Society, Relay for Life, and *The Eagle Flyer*.

"It's all about time management. I've always been able to do football, hang out with (my girlfriend) Carlie, and spend time with my friends," said Garcia-Medina.

Of the top-ranking seniors, Garcia-Medina was the only person not in the SOAR (School of Academic Renown) program; however he did take some SOAR courses. This reporter asked Garcia-Medina about the stigma surrounding the idea the top ten ranks are reserved for SOAR students.

"It was another motivation for me," said Garcia-Medina. "I grew up with a single mother who had a low income, and I always wanted to make sure I was successful so that wouldn't be a problem."

Garcia-Medina currently attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs studying physics. He was the recipient of the CIAC Scholar Athlete Scholarship, worth \$1,000.

"I might have had a handful of kids that work like (Bryan)," said head football coach Mr. Sarlo. "What separates him is what he does in class. He not only works hard on the field but outside the field."

## Katelynn Shappy

Shappy, ranked fourth, attended St. Peter and Paul for both elementary and middle school. Shappy attends Emerson College in Boston, Mass, with plans to study communications.

Having been a member of mock trial, Proud and Spirited Seniors (PASS), and National Honor Society, Shappy credited her success to playing to her strengths and realizing what she did best.

"Remember that you come first. Your health and well-being should be your top priority, so make sure you get your sleep, and don't do things that are going to jeopardize your happiness," said Shappy to underclassmen.

"Katelynn is probably the most articulate student I've ever had," said English teacher Mr. Morgan, who taught Shappy sophomore year. "She's very strong and determined."

## Klajjdi Sosoli

Sosoli, ranked fifth, graduated from Driggs Elementary and West Side Middle School. He was a member of Proud and Spirited Seniors (PASS), National Honor Society, Italian club, DECA, and Key club. He also participated in Harvard Model United Nations and Relay for Life, and was a part of the varsity soccer and tennis teams, as well as the outdoor and indoor track teams.

"Go out and get yourself involved in as many sports and clubs as you can," Sosoli said to underclassmen. "These experiences will teach you great things while also allowing you to be part of a team which you'll become so close to, it'll feel like a family."

Sosoli attends the University of Connecticut



in Storrs studying mechanical engineering, with the possibility of double majoring in business, he said. He was the recipient of the Daughters of American Revolution Scholarship, worth \$500, the American Savings Foundation Scholarship, worth \$1,250, the F. Curtis and Susan B. Thrall scholarship, worth \$2,000, and the Albanian American Muslim Community Scholarship, worth \$500.

Sosoli credits his family for his success.

"My parents and brother (taught) me to always work my hardest and to never settle unless it was my best work," said Sosoli.

"The fact that Klajjdi is so diligent, concerned, and prideful when it comes to his work has allowed him to bring himself to a new level. He makes sure that anything that has his name on it is his best work," said guidance counselor Mr. Shocki, who taught Klajjdi for English his sophomore year.

## Kathrynn O'Donnell

O'Donnell, ranked sixth, attended Blessed Sacrament for elementary and middle school. She was a member of the student theatre and the volleyball team, both of which she was a part of for all four years of high school. She was also a part of mock trial, and was the vice president of National Honor Society.

O'Donnell said she credited her success to all her hard work. She attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs with an undeclared major.

"Study, but also have fun, because you're never going to be able to experience high school again," said O'Donnell to underclassmen.

"I don't think she quits. If something is important to her it will happen," said drama and English teacher Mr. Collins, who worked closely with O'Donnell in student theatre since her freshman year.

## Rilind Racaj

Racaj, ranked seventh, attended Hopeville Elementary and West Side Middle School. He was a member of the Italian club, DECA, chess club, National Honor Society, and P.A.S.S.

Racaj said it was persistence which allowed him to reach his goals. He attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs, studying computer science engineering. He was the recipient of the F. Curtis and Susan B. Thrall scholarship, worth \$2,000.

"Be patient and keep working hard," Racaj said to underclassmen. "I used to be ranked 31."

"He has an excellent work ethic, which is translating into fulfilling his dreams," said science department chair Mr. Cyr, who taught him for biology freshmen year.

## John Ogando

Ogando, ranked eighth, graduated from B.W. Tinker Elementary and West Side. He was a member of the H.O.P.E. club, the baseball team, and National Honor Society.

Ogando said he credited his success to being positive.

"If you let things get to your head you don't function at your full potential. Happiness is key," said Ogando.



He attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs and received the Day of Pride Scholarship, which is a full tuition scholarship, worth \$27,630. He plans to study Allied Health and Sciences to become a physician's assistant.

"Don't let school overwhelm you. It's important to learn to balance everything," said Ogando to underclassmen.

"An opposing coach this year spoke very highly of John. He said he was a great teammate, and a motivated and positive young man," said guidance counselor Mr. Poulter, who worked with Ogando for two years as a baseball coach.

## Miranda Scott

Scott, ranked ninth, graduated from St. Mary's after attending the school for both elementary and middle school. She was a member of P.A.S.S., mock trial, National Honor Society, and the UConn mini-medical program, which is an eight-week program where students can learn more about medical careers.

Scott attends the University of Connecticut in Storrs, and is planning to study Allied Health and Sciences to eventually become a certified pediatric physician's assistant. She was the recipient of the Julia Ashe Scholarship, worth \$500.

Scott credited her success to her upbringing.

"My parents never forced me to do work. The pressure and drive had to come from me," said Scott.

"(Miranda) has a strong commitment to the things she does," said retired English teacher Mrs. Martins, who also described Scott as "a leader" after teaching her sophomore and senior year for SOAR English 10 and AP English 12.

"You get to sleep when you're dead," said Scott to underclassmen. "Put the work in and you will be rewarded."

## Isabella Fazo

Fazo, ranked tenth, graduated from St. Mary's School and was a member of mock trial, P.A.S.S., and was the treasurer of National Honor Society.

"Leading up to senior year, I always put in extra work and made sure all my work was completed to the best of my ability," said Fazo.

Fazo attends Quinnipiac University with plans to study occupational therapy. She received the First Congregational Church Scholarship, worth \$1,000.

"Don't take up too many responsibilities at once," Fazo said to underclassmen. "When you commit to something make sure you do it."

"She's always smiling. She's always willing to take on a challenge. She's a teacher's dream to have in class," said teacher of the talented and gifted program, Mr. Clark, who taught Fazo for four years.

**2016 Valedictorian:** Makyle Hawk  
**Salutatorian:** Briana Latifi  
Third: Bryan Garcia-Medina  
Fourth: Katelynn Shappy  
Fifth: Klajjdi Sosoli  
Sixth: Kathrynn O'Donnell  
Seventh: Rilind Racaj  
Eighth: John Ogando  
Ninth: Miranda Scott  
Tenth: Isabella Fazo

# What women empower, inspire you?

By Alani Arias  
Managing Editor

## COMMENTARY

For decades, women have fought very hard to make a difference in their society, but have not gotten the proper recognition for all they have accomplished throughout their lives. Students in Kennedy look up to the women in their lives, whether famous or ordinary, who have empowered them and others on a range of topics. March is Women Appreciation and Women History Month, but we should recognize and appreciate the many wonderful things women do every day.

What women empower you?

"I feel that Naomi Campbell has empowered me throughout my life. She's a supermodel and she's been a

huge influence over my views and how I think of myself confidence wise," said senior Reese Coran.

In addition to building up young ladies' confidence in their own bodies, women have also fought for their right to equal education and opportunities; Malala Yousafzai is one example.

"Malala is just an inspiring young woman. Despite the threats from the Taliban, she never stopped fighting for girls' rights to an education. Even after she almost died from getting shot in the head, she continued to fight," said senior Mariette DeCena.

"She advocates for better education for females not just in Pakistan, but world(wide) through her works and activities," said senior Iqra Malik.

Women worked through decades of discrimination and continue to do so

today. Breaking the norms is especially important to many because it shows women can do anything a man can do.

"Women that aren't defined by gender roles are empowering. Frida Kahlo. Women in the military. Any women in a male-dominated profession," said junior Tashyanna Ho.

Others are inspired by the women who stand up for what they believe in and do so for the people who feel like their voice won't be heard.

"What Janelle Monae does that is so empowering is that with the recent Black Lives Matter movement, she isn't afraid to speak out and advocate. I'm inspired by her to do the same. This woman is electric, vibrant and passionate," said junior Jurea McIntosh, who also believes women should get more recognition for breaking the

norms and girls should not fear what others think of them to make a change.

Wanting to see more women get recognized in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) is common among the students of Kennedy. They have worked hard to get into these fields and they certainly don't get enough credit for it.

"Margaret Hamilton programmed for the Apollo space program. Rosalind Franklin was never credited for discovering DNA, history knows it as just Watson and Crick. History is written by men, but women are getting a say now," said senior Mariana Pereira.

Not only should we appreciate all these women who have made an impact on society and culture, mothers also deserve love and gratefulness.

"My mother is the most powerful woman I know and when I think about how tough she has had it, it really en-

courages me and my sisters to do our very best," said senior Celine Nuñez.

Having men recognize women's hard work and accomplishments is also extremely important.

"Mothers should get more recognition for raising and caring for their children and others they cross paths with," said senior Angel Arzola.

What we do now is key to reversing the past mistakes and showing that women can be empowering in all ways.

"I think there should definitely be more support for women in our every day lives, just by complimenting them on their accomplishments and having a simple conversation," said Coran.

No matter what age or race you are, ladies, you can do anything you put your mind to and more importantly, continue to stay strong and stand tall in this world even if you are cheated out of the recognition you deserve. The world is watching.



# Unified sports benefit from candy raffle

UNIFIED SPORTS, from back page

Cosme, Shawntina Hodges and others (are the chaperones that help the kids),” said LaFountain.

The team spent two weeks raffling off a Halloween basket with a candy bouquet with tickets priced at \$0.50 each and \$5 for an arm’s length.

“We raised \$100 and we’re putting it to new uniforms for the students,” said LaFountain about the pricey uniforms.

Even though they did the raffle, generous people also donated to help support the team.

“We had two clubs from Kennedy and another unified sports team donate,” said LaFountain.

Kennedy is not the only school with a Unified Sports team. “Every high school has a unified sports team and we play them,” said LaFountain about the monthly games played.

**HELPING OTHERS** Paraprofessional (left photo) Ms. Amy LaFountain (left) congratulates candy raffle winner Mrs. Marshall, a paraprofessional, Monday, Oct. 31, 2016. Proceeds of \$100 benefit the Unified Sports students’ team.



**SCHOOL SPIRIT** Paraprofessional Mrs. Connie Finelli, seen here with her Halloween makeup and outfit, was one of three winners of the candy raffle, Monday Oct. 31, 2016. Money raised through the two-week long raffle went to new uniforms for the school’s Unified Sports team.

Photos by staff

# Football counts down to end of year

By Anthony Forino  
Staff Writer

## WEEK TEN

Week 10 of the 2016 NFL season was very interesting. There were a lot of good games and close games. The Dallas Cowboys remain with the best record in the NFL with 9-1. 12 extra-point attempts were missed by several teams. Tom Brady ties with Brett Frave with the most wins in their career, having 199. Peyton Manning has the most with 200 wins. Here are the scores for week 10:

- Carolina Panthers 23 - New Orleans Saints 20
- Minnesota Vikings 30 - Arizona Cardinals 24
- New York Giants 22 - Chicago Bears 16
- Tampa Bay Buccaneers 19 - Kansas City Chiefs 17
- Oakland Raiders 27 - Houston Texans 20
- Buffalo Bills 16 - Cincinnati Bengals 12
- Indianapolis Colts 24 - Tennessee Titans 17
- Detroit Lions 26 - Jacksonville Jaguars 19
- Dallas Cowboys 27 - Baltimore Ravens 17
- Pittsburgh Steelers 24 - Cleveland Browns 9
- Miami Dolphins 14 - Los Angeles Rams 10
- Seattle Seahawks 26 - Philadelphia Eagles 15
- New England Patriots 30 - San Francisco 49ers 17
- Washington Redskins 42 - Green Bay Packers 24

By Anthony Forino  
Staff Writer

## WEEK ELEVEN

Week 11 of the 2016 NFL season was filled with close matches. Three games were played on Thanksgiving Day Thursday, which the Dallas Cowboys, Pittsburgh Steelers and the Detroit Lions won. Tom Brady ties with Peyton Manning with 200 career wins. Here are the scores for week 11:

- Detroit Lions 16 - Minnesota Vikings 13
- Dallas Cowboys 31 - Washington Redskins 26
- Pittsburgh Steelers 28 - Indianapolis Colts 7
- San Diego Chargers 21 - Houston Texans 13
- Miami Dolphins 31 - San Francisco 49ers 24
- Kansas City Chiefs 30 - Denver Broncos 27
- Green Bay Packers 27 - Philadelphia Eagles 13
- New Orleans Saints 49 - Los Angeles Rams 21
- New York Giants 27 - Cleveland Browns 13
- Atlanta Falcons 38 - Arizona Cardinals 19
- Baltimore Ravens 19 - Cincinnati Bengals 14
- Buffalo Bills 28 - Jacksonville Jaguars 21
- Tennessee Titans 27 - Chicago Bears 21
- Tampa Bay Buccaneers 14 - Seattle Seahawks 5
- New England Patriots 22 - New York Jets 17
- Oakland Raiders 35 - Carolina Panthers 32

# NASCAR ends 2016 with Johnson’s 7th win

By Anthony Forino  
Staff Writer

## COMMENTARY

The last race of the 2016 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series season was Sunday, Nov. 20. Four chase drivers were going for a championship. One of the chase drivers was Jimmie Johnson, who was going for his 7th championship to tie for the most championships with Richard Petty and Dale Earnhart.

The whole race was led by chase driver Carl Edwards and with a restart with 10 to go, Edwards and the last chase driver, Joey Logano, made contact and make Edwards go spinning into the wall, ruining his hopes for this year.

At the end of a long race, six-time champion Johnson makes it seven championships by winning the race and finishing ahead of all the other chase drivers. Chase driver Kyle Busch finished 4th, Logano finished 6th, and Edwards finished 36th.

# Pep rally packs in pies, tug of war, mannequins

By Kahasia Ford with Eva LaFrance  
Staff Writers

Okay Eagles! It was pep rally time. Did you get your game faces on?

Students and staff celebrated fall season sports teams and seniors at the 2016 Pep Rally with pictures, videos, and fun activities the last hour of the half day Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2016, and even a performance from the cheerleaders.

“Being able to come back with a new and improved team brings me so much joy, especially because this is my last year of high school. This is only the beginning and I feel like we’ve already made a statement on what we have to offer. From here on out, I wish our KHS teams nothing but the best,” said senior and captain of the cheer team Shy’liah McDaniel.

The cheerleaders performed a new routine after being inactive for a year. The routine was choreographed by cheerleading coach Mrs. Pasnick, an African American History teacher.

Speaking of teams, during the pep rally, sports teams presented their seniors and played tug-of-war against each of the fall teams’ seniors. The volleyball players won against the cheerleaders. Then the senior football players won against the volleyball players.

“Pep rally was fun. A lot of love for the football team and for other teams as well. It was exciting and fun. Chill vibes, hype students, just a chill wonderful day,” said senior Marc-Anthony Telusma.

One highlight of the pep rally was seeing teachers getting pied. “We ask kids to give change to see their favorite teachers get pied. The top five get pied during the pep rally,” said Mrs. White-Clark, science teacher and National Honor Society adviser.

Teachers pied in 2016 were Mr. Lao, Mr. Phostole, Mr. Awwad, Mrs. Hermes, and Mrs. Harris, raising \$115 for the Connecticut Food Bank.

However, the fun didn’t start at the pep rally for the seniors. Seniors were called seventh period to film for the senior video.

“That girl is a real crowd pleaser.” The Mannequin Challenge was done during this time. This challenge is performed by people staying still like a mannequin frozen in action while a camera is filming, playing the song, “Black Beatles” by Rae Sremmurd.

# Football senior night bittersweet for players, Colon, Sampson sweep top city honors in 2016

By Talia Bairstow with J. Schaff  
Correspondent and Staff Writer

They never thought it would end. In honor of the senior football players, friends, family and players celebrated the annual senior night tradition before the game versus Woodland at Municipal Stadium Friday, Nov. 11, 2016.

“My favorite thing about playing for Kennedy was being able to play with my teammates, beating Crosby for the last time and becoming Brass City champs for the first time since 2008,” said senior Jude Sampson, who was the recipient of the 2016 Coach Jimmy Lee Award, awarded to the city’s top senior lineman. Sampson was also awarded 2016 All-City and All-Brass Division defensive honors.

The senior football class walked onto the field before the game as History teacher and chair Mr. Feola announced their names for their last home game.

“It didn’t feel different; it felt like any other game. I was focused more on the game ahead than walking out,” said senior Jacob Colon, who was the recipient of the 2016 Nick Mambruno Award, awarded to the city’s top senior football player. Colon also received 2016 All-

City and All-Brass Division offensive honors.

Some of the players enjoyed walking out that senior night.

“It was very exciting because I’ve been waiting since freshman year to walk out with my family and for it to finally come true made me very happy,” said Sampson.

It was difficult for some knowing it was their last home game.

“Finally walking on the field as a senior was a great feeling but a sad feeling as well,” said senior Donald Fletcher.

The senior players shared their most memorable moments playing for Kennedy.

“My most memorable play of the season was the Sacred Heart game when I forced an interception,” said Sampson.

Fletcher said the play where he dislocated his kneecap was most memorable because he thought he may never be able to play football again.

“My last touchdown against Crosby was most memorable because I knew it

was my last touchdown of my high school football career,” said Colon

Playing for Kennedy was an opportunity for Colon to just play the sport he loved, he said.

Yellow carnations were given to the players, who then gave them to their mothers or a female relative who walked onto the field with each player.

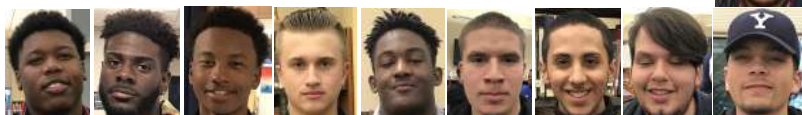
“They do it every year, it’s kind of a tradition,” said Colon.

Kennedy swept both of the individual top senior awards in the city.

**FOOTBALL SENIORS** From top right hand corner, these varsity players were recognized during senior night Nov. 11, 2016: Stayvon Addison, Terrence Bridgeforth, Jacob Colon, James Cossette Jr. Jacob Dinklocker, Donald Fletcher, Jarrett Ladd, Nick Ramos, Marcus Rivera, Luis Rosa, Jude Sampson, Joey Schaff, Tyvon Stenson, Marc-Anthony Telusma, and Lasean Thomas.



Photos by J. Schaff/staff



# Sport of giving gifts: students want parents to take note

By Samantha Valle  
Staff Writer



I am bought but also given. What am I?

With the holiday season approaching, gift shopping is a priority for Waterbury Career Academy, Crosby and Kennedy students who already know what they want, as of Nov. 30, 2016.

“All I want is money, I’m not trying to sound greedy but it makes things easier so that when I buy things, I’ll actually use them instead of getting a bunch of arts and crafts gifts that I will probably never use,” said Waterbury Career Academy sophomore Amanda Paredes.

Amanda’s mother, on the other hand, believes children get more expensive as they grow older.

“I keep telling her to stop growing so I can save and not end up broke,” said Linda Paredes humorously.

While some students go for the expensive gifts, there are others who like to keep it simple.

“Honestly the only thing I ask for are gift cards, I like to do my own shopping and it gets me out of the house. Keeping everything simple ensures that I will get most of the things I ask for,” said Crosby fresh-

man Zachary Petrarca.

Students are using this season to get gifts of their dreams. “For a while now I have been wanting the Fujifilm Instax Mini Polaroid camera. That has been my dream to get one of those so I’m really hoping I manage to get one for Christmas,” Crosby freshman said Marissa White.

Students are prepared for receiving gifts, and are hoping for gifts different than the ones from last year.

White looked at her mother and father beside her and made sure they knew she really doesn’t want the same thing for Christmas.

“I pray that this will be the first Christmas that I don’t get a bunch of fuzzy socks...I am literally making sure my parents know that,” said White directly to her parents.

Some students want gifts useful to them that last a while.

“I really really want the iPhone 7, I think I could get really good use out of it,” said Kennedy freshman Kariny Topolosci. “I really hope my aunts and uncles know that the top of my Christmas list says iPhone 7 and not savings bonds,” said Topolosci.

# Collins leaves positive impact

By Talia Bairstow  
Correspondent

## COMMENTARY

It takes a courageous man to do what English and drama teacher Mr. Collins did his years of teaching.

Collins left a mark on many staff and students, including myself. Attending his English 12 class in 2016 for only a short period of time gave me great knowledge.

He was a smart man with a big heart. Collins was concerned about his students and their future.

Just one day in his class you would have learned a lifetime. It took one month of knowing this man for him to make an impact on the rest of my life.

Although Collins was sick he was dedicated to his work. “My family wanted me to retire,” I remember Collins saying to me the second day of school.

Regardless of any doubt, Collins pushed himself to come to school every day that he could. Without the praise and support of Collins, my resume would not have been as good as he helped me create.

He had a particular way of teaching his students and for the most part it worked. He is an inspiration to me, to fellow classmates, and to staff here at Kennedy.

## MAKING HISTORY

Senior Shelly Evia is pictured with varsity volleyball coach Mr. Stango, a physical education teacher, at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville, Conn. Nov. 29, 2016 holding her All-State certificate. She was the second All-State winner in school history.



Photo courtesy of Shelly Evia



**MORE VOLLEYBALL HONORS**  
Seniors Carson Delaney (left) and Joyce Benton both received All-Brass Division honors for volleyball during the 2016 season. The Brass Division consists of Crosby, Wilby, Holy Cross, and Waterbury Career Academy high schools.

Photo by Joey Schaff/staff

## Evia wins all-state volleyball honor

By Joseph Schaff  
Staff Writer *Senior second in school history to receive award*

Blessed. This is how senior volleyball captain Shelly Evia describes receiving All-State and All-NVL honors for volleyball Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2016 at the Aqua Turf in Plantsville, Conn. as a result of her hard work and dedication.

“She has the best natural instincts I’ve seen in a player.”

Mr. Stango, physical education teacher and head varsity volleyball coach uses these words to describe Evia.

Evia began playing volleyball freshman year, but it wasn’t her first choice.

“I did cross country for two days before (coach) Stango pulled me out and told me I belonged on the court,” said Evia.

Evia took that chance and never looked back; she ended up being a varsity starter her freshman year, and held that role all four years.

“I found my niche,” said Evia.

She began playing for a travel team in the offseason, the Northwest Juniors based in Connecticut.

“I got some invaluable experience playing there with some of my fiercest competitors (Carissa Carbone, Torrington, All-State and Jolie Fox, Torrington, All-NVL) being my teammates,” said Evia.

“Her out-of-season work really helped her

develop into a great player,” said Stango.

When Evia found out she received All-State honors, she was ecstatic.

“It was shocking,” said Evia “I can’t put it into words.”

Evia is the second in Kennedy history to receive both All-NVL and All-State honors. Julita Mulla was the first in 2009. Teammates, and senior captains, Carson Delaney and Joyce Benton also received All-Brass honors.

However, despite her success, Evia does not plan on playing in college.

“Of course if I was offered a scholarship, I’d take it,” said Evia. “But with my major (Pharmacy) I don’t think it would mix well with sports.”

What advice would she give younger athletes?

“Work hard and be dedicated, play every game like it’s your last, it’ll come sooner than you think, I did my best to make my coach, my team and my school proud,” Evia said.

“Of course if I was offered a scholarship, I’d take it. But with my major (Pharmacy) I don’t think it would mix well with sports.”

Shelly Evia, senior All-State, All-NVL volleyball player

## Varsity football caps 5-0 division record with Thanksgiving win

By Joseph Schaff  
Staff Writer

Redemption.

The Kennedy Eagles varsity football team beat their Thanksgiving rivals, the Crosby Bulldogs 61-42 Thursday, Nov. 24, 2016, Thanksgiving Day at Jimmy Lee Stadium, making them 5-0 in the Brass Division thanks to some key plays by seniors. “We made history.”

That is how senior Terrence Bridgeforth describes how the season ended.

The team was out for revenge in 2016 after last year’s loss, and what better way to do it than to score 61 points.

Crosby started the scoring with a 5-yard plunge by senior running back Donte Detanto. Kennedy shot right back with a 30-yard touchdown by Marc-Anthony Telusma to make it 8-6. Senior captain James Cossette Jr. caught a key interception which the Eagles capitalized on with another Telusma score to make it 16-6. Crosby rallied back to make it 22-20 at halftime.

The Eagles came out in the second half motivated.

On their first drive, the Eagles scored on an 86-yard run by Telusma, a play that looked dead after he ran into his teammate, Edmund Edgehill,

that made the score 30-20. Senior captain Joey Schaff scored twice in a row to make it 42-20. Crosby rallied back and made the score 42-33, however a key play by junior Zyier Allen kept it a two-score game by deflecting a pass from Crosby quarterback Mike Marshall to senior Eli Mbaya. A fumble recovery by senior Terrence Bridgeforth set up another Telusma touchdown to bring his total to five and made it 49-33. Senior running back Jacob Colon scored twice in a row to make the score 61-33. Crosby scored last minute to make it 61-42 but a key fumble recovery by sophomore Elijah Nelson allowed the Eagles to seal up their Thanksgiving victory.

Telusma was chosen as the Connecticut Public Television Sports Network UChoose State Athlete of the Week for his 287-yard, five touchdown performance.

“We came into the game with a lot of energy and we were hungry,” said Telusma, “we executed.”

“Being named the Athlete of the Week is such an honor,” said Telusma. “I made my team proud.”

“I was happy we won,” said senior four-year player Nick Ramos who was sidelined with a fractured knee. “Ending 5-5 was good.”

However, this day was bittersweet for some seniors.

“I was happy we won,” said se-

nior captain and three-year player Jacob Dinklocker, “but I’m sad to see it end, even though it ended well.”

Others were happy as well. “I feel like such a success,” said Bridgeforth.

“It was a great way to end our season,” said Colon. “I’m so proud we are 5-0 in the Brass Division.”

The varsity football team has a lot to be proud of: they were the first .500 season under head coach and history teacher Mr. Sarlo, they won the Brass Division and they are the undisputed best team in the city of Waterbury.

“I’m so happy,” said Colon, “we went out with a bang.”

## Lady Eagles cite team chemistry, confidence key for 2016

By Emily Benton  
Staff Writer

What happens when the seasons change and people reunite after 365 days of not seeing each other?

Although the girls’ varsity basketball team just reunited for the new season, they are prepared to have a great season full of dedication and wins after finishing 16-4 last season.

“I think (the season) will go really great. We have a lot of potential on this team, people that want to get far and play hard. We communicate very well this year,” said senior and four-year varsity player Raegon Shirling-Davis.

Davis is not the only player who things the 2016-2017 season will be a good one since sophomore and two-year varsity player Hannah West agrees.

“Well, based on the chemistry our team has and how hard and how well we work together, I think the season is going to go very well,” said West.

Players are not alone in hoping for a successful season since the coaches believe the season could be a great one.

“The work ethic the girls have shown this first week of practice could only lead to success,” said head coach Jennifer Deeley.

“Because of the leadership from our three returning and one transfer players, the season will (hopefully) go great,” said coach Ernie Blue in reference to the seniors on the team.

Junior and three-year varsity player Ashley Lamb knows it will take hard work and dedication to have a great season since the loss of Lynadia Whiting (who accomplished 1,000

points and is featured on a banner in the gym), Sarah Norwood and Emily Ramos due to graduation June 2016.

“Well, this year is going to be the same as last year effort wise however, we did lose seniors who were big contributors to the game. Everyone is going to have to step up their game if we want a successful season,” said Lamb in reference to Whiting and Norwood.

Lamb was not the only one who noticed that dedication will be a major key for the team’s success since coach Nadir agreed.

“It all depends on how much the girls want to play (the game),” said Nadir.

With successful seniors like Whiting and Norwood gone, Davis knows the hard work she has to do as a senior this year, but there is no sense of pressure to be like them and fill their shoes.

“No (I don’t feel pressured to be like Whiting and Norwood). I feel as if I have to do a better job but stay the way I am and do things the way I want them,” said Davis.

Davis is not the only one feeling no pressure to fill shoes of previous seniors since senior and four-year varsity player Joyce Benton said she feels the same.

“I don’t feel anyone should fill in other people’s shoes. You are an individual player with an individual role on the team. It is what you do for the team and the effort you put in that makes the difference, so no pressure,” said Benton.

With this season beginning the team knows what they will do differently in comparison to

last season.

“I might have to be a little harder at times so they can stay at their peak,” said Blue.

“Utilize the school to videotape our games so the girls can benefit from seeing the pros and cons of the game,” said Deeley.

“Be more attentive. They’ll find the details and a better sense of urgency because of the seniors,” said Nadir.

The coaches are not the only ones making changes to this season since the players are planning differently compared to last season.

“This year I will have more confidence in my performance and try to incorporate drills and advice in the game,” said Lamb.

Lamb isn’t alone with being comfortable walking into the new season since West is confident now since it is her second year on the team.

“I am more comfortable because I know the team better now, and am not as nervous to make a mistake in front of them. There is a difference (now compared to last season), I feel more responsible and more part of the team,” said West.

New season means new goals and the team has goals they said they hope to accomplish.

“(To win) the NVLs and getting a banner,” said Davis.

“To work on becoming a more confident and key player on the court,” said Lamb.

“To increase my speed and be able to use my left hand to dribble and shoot more,” said West.

“I’ll step up more as a leader. Being a senior, I am the oldest and am expected to step up and I hope I can do that for the team,” said Benton.

## Unified Sports benefit from candy raffle

By Emily Benton  
Staff Writer

Sports. They are stereotyped as stuff for the strongest, the fittest and the most athletic to participate in. But what happens to those who don’t meet those stereotypes?

Kennedy’s special needs students participate in the Unified Sports Program, run by paraprofessional Mrs. Amy LaFountain, every year and as of Nov. 30, 2016 raised \$100 by selling raffle tickets at \$0.50 each for a Halloween basket in support for the program.

“The Unified Sports Program is for kids with (special needs) and limited sports abilities,” said LaFountain.

The Unified Sports Program meets once a month after school to have fun while participating in sports games.

“We just finished soccer and are about to start basketball. Whatever is going on in the regular sports season we do,” said LaFountain.

With the new season starting, the program asks for volunteers to help them when needed.

“(The volunteers benefit from helping because) they get community service and they feel good about themselves because they learn to interact more with kids they see as different (from themselves),” said LaFountain.

The team has a coach and staff who support them through the season.

“Mr. Phostole is the coach (and) myself, Iris