



THE STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT

National Merit Semifinalist a

TOP ACHIEVER



High School student Andreas Stamatakis was recently named a semifinalist in the 59th annual 2014 National Merit Scholarship Program. This high-achieving senior and future salutatorian, ranked second in Deer Park's top 10 of the Class of 2014, was recognized for his outstanding test results in the 2012 PSAT/NMSQT.

Out of the more than 1.5 million students from over 22,000 schools who competed by taking the PSAT as juniors, Stamatakis placed among the top 1 percent in the state. He and the other semifinalists will continue in the competition for 8,000 National Merit Scholarships offered next spring.

While his academic performance is remarkable, including being named an AP Scholar of Distinction, scoring 100 on seven out of 12 Regents exams and receiving a perfect 5 out of 5 on all six AP exams taken, Stamatakis's well-rounded resume makes it clear why he is such a highly-regarded scholar.

Stamatakis worked as an intern in the physics department at Brookhaven National Laboratory this past summer, and intends to pursue a double major in economics and physics after graduation.

His dual interests are reflected in two of his primary leadership roles, serving as co-president of the Science Olympiad team – where he was named

a regional finalist – and as president of Suffolk County DECA. In the

latter organization, Stamatakis finished in first place in Suffolk County and in the top 10 statewide in 2012 and 2013.

A trilingual speaker – also fluent in Italian and Greek – he serves as president of the Deer Park Academic Team, is a member of the school's National Honor Society, Italian Honor Society and Math Team, and has competed on Deer Park's boys varsity swim team for the past five years.

Advanced Placement Scholars Rise

The College Board has recognized 68 of the high school's students as AP Scholars for 2013, an increase of 14 since last year. Their average score on the AP exams was 3.22. AP courses are graded on a scale of 1 to 5, with a score of 3 or above qualifying students for college credit.



Several levels of AP Scholar Awards are presented by the College Board's AP Program, honoring outstanding students who

demonstrate college-level achievement through their AP courses and exams. Each of the 68 honorees received an award certificate, and their achievements will be noted in AP score reports sent to prospective colleges.

Deer Park boasted a total of 17 AP Scholars with Distinction. This category is reserved for students who received an average score of at least 3.5 on their AP exams and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

The school can also take pride in its nine AP Scholars with Honor, who received an average score of at least 3.5 on all of their AP exams and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of those exams; and 42 AP Scholars, who received scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams.

A Message from Your *Superintendent of Schools*



Dear Residents,

The start of a new school year always brings changes, but many things remain the same, year after year, including our ongoing goals for the Deer Park School District. Academic excellence throughout our district remains a priority, as evidenced in our 68 Advanced Placement Scholars – including 17 AP Scholars with Distinction and nine AP Scholars with Honor – and the remarkable achievement of the Class of 2014 salutatorian Andreas Stamatakis, who was named a National Merit Scholarship semifinalist, a rare and prestigious honor that reflects the high standards of our schools and the fruitful efforts of our educators to make Deer Park’s students the best and brightest.

Nothing is more important than safety, and we thank

our local first responders and emergency personnel for continuing to collaborate with the schools to educate our staff, faculty and students. Whether it’s fire safety workshops led by the local fire department for our youngest students, special training programs for our school officials to prepare them for any school-based incidents or emergencies, or efforts geared toward the entire community, such as the Shed the Meds prescription drug give-back campaign held at the high school, we are always working to create a secure learning environment.

Deer Park also continues to embrace forward-thinking technology, from MacBooks to Google, in order to enhance the learning opportunities for all of our students. Technology and instruction are crucial, and so is the infrastructure that supports

them. Our buildings and grounds department did a terrific job preparing our schools for a new year, conducting numerous renovations and repairs. The beautifully refurbished and resurfaced high school parking lot is just one example of their hard work and careful attention to detail.

The recent homecoming celebration which the school community shared again served as a delightful focus on Deer Park pride and optimism, something I hope you will feel as you turn the pages of this latest issue of “The Standard.”

Sincerely,

Eva J. Demyen

COMMON CORE *at the Forefront*

New York’s Common Core State Standards have been a hot topic among educators since being adopted in 2010, and the transition was at the forefront of the district’s annual Superintendent’s Day conference.

“All of us in New York are in the same boat,” said Superintendent of Schools Eva Demyen, noting the challenges involved in the rushed transition to the Common Core. As she explained to

her fellow educators, the universal application of the Core’s principles is important for the future of the district’s students and teachers alike. “Math and English language arts are the basic tools for all other disciplines,” declared Demyen. “The other disciplines all rely on them for proper implementation.”

She emphasized that all teachers need to be familiar with the Common Core shifts, no matter what they teach. “It’s very important that it’s across the board,” she said. “We must embrace the Core in every discipline, not just ELA and math, and it must be evident in every lesson we teach.”

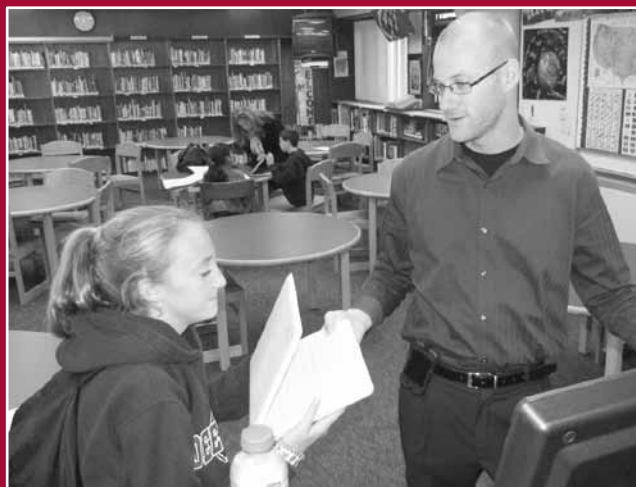
The district will use a “common sense” approach to the implementation of the state modules. “We will make modifications and adjustments to suit the needs of our students,” said Demyen.



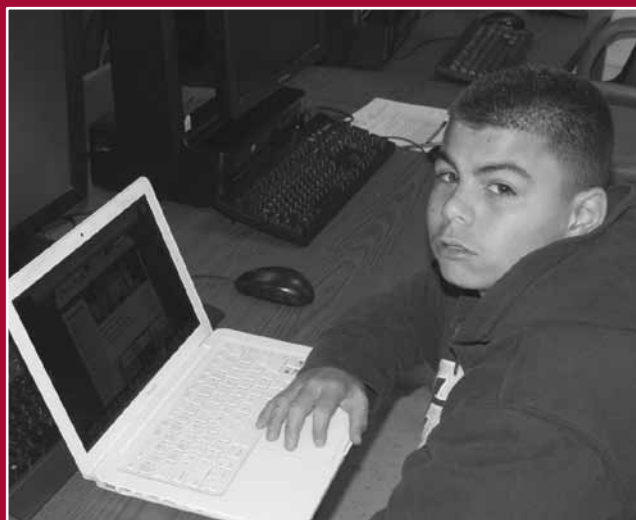
MacBook Deployment at Frost Continues Tech Initiative

Robert Frost Middle School recently completed its annual MacBook deployment at the school's library, an initiative that began in 2010 as a means to increase instructional technology and provide one-to-one computing resources for the district's students. Incoming sixth-graders receive an Apple MacBook laptop computer at the beginning of each school year, which then follows them as they continue through upper grade levels. Each summer the MacBooks are then collected by district technology staff and redistributed the following September.

"Our district is excited to continue to provide our students with this technology, which can be used to support lesson plans, conduct academic research, enhance curriculum and improve the students' tech-literacy skills," said Andrew Choi, the district's instructional technology administrator.



Eighth-graders at Robert Frost Middle School receive laptops as part of the district's annual MacBook deployment.



MacBooks in action in teacher Thomas LoCasio's eighth-grade business education class at Robert Frost.

Running on a *Brand New Track*

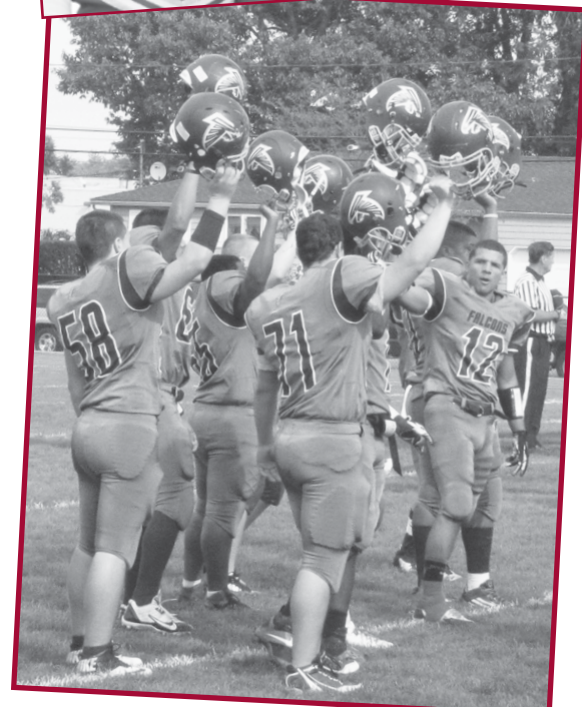
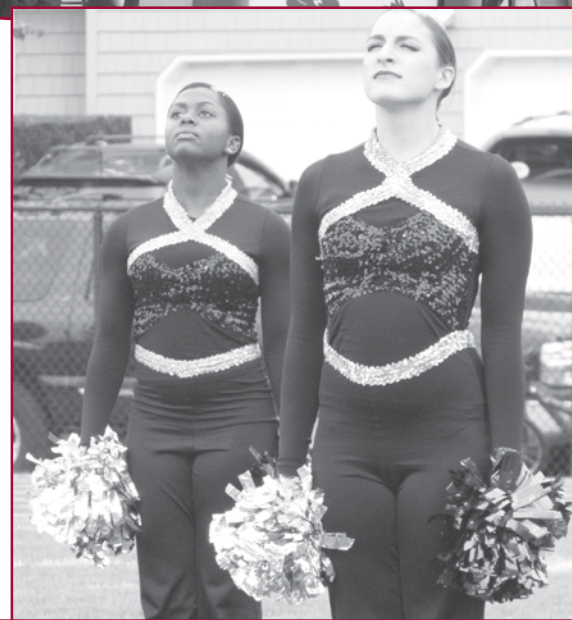


A new school year brings not only the return of students, but also numerous renovations to ensure that the buildings and grounds are clean, safe, functional and ready to serve the needs of the entire school community.

One obvious change at Deer Park High School that students, staff and visitors immediately noticed was the immaculate recent upgrade to the track and field.

"In a nutshell, the whole track was ripped out and replaced," explained Kirk Gostkowski, the district's administrator of facilities and operations. The prior track had been recoated and patched for many years, but was in dire need of replacement. The project took eight weeks altogether, with two outside firms contracted for a manpower total of 20. The facilities staff also conducted sprinkler repairs and moved the high jump, long jump and pole vault areas, making more room for other sports like lacrosse and football. Gostkowski and his staff also refurbished and resurfaced the high school parking lots and replaced two of the school's original roof sections.

Homecoming 2013



Homecoming day was filled with smiles and the sounds of celebration as representatives from each school marched to the football field, the entire community proudly adorned in the school colors of maroon, gray and white. The marchers were followed by the homecoming court and Disney-themed floats from each of the high school grades, including the winning entry by the senior class, a colorful "Senior Kingdom" creation.

During the opening ceremonies at Al Centamore Field, Homecoming King Thomas Reed and Queen Toni Ann Cox were announced to happy applause, taking a celebratory lap around the track in a vintage Camaro SS. Energized performances from the high school kickline and cheerleading teams from all ages across the district – including PAL and competition cheer and the high school's varsity and junior varsity squads – set the invigorating tone for the day, aided by the amusing antics of the Falcon mascot. Continuing a Deer Park tradition, the women's choir concluded the homecoming opening ceremonies with a moving performance of the school's alma mater, after which Principal James Cummings added, "Let's go Falcons!"

The varsity football team barely needed such encouragement, shutting out Amityville's Warriors by the decisive score of 24-0. Junior RB Jasawn Thompson was the star of the day for the high-flying Falcons, notching three TD runs on 26 carries, including two electrifying first-quarter scores that had Deer Park's excited fans on their feet. During halftime, the crowd was treated to additional acrobatic kickline and cheerleading performances as well as rousing music from the mighty Deer Park Marching Falcons band.



FRESHMEN FIND NEW PATHS AT HIGH SCHOOL CAREER DAY

Freshmen got a head start on developing their career ideas at the annual Career Day, making the most of the opportunity to learn from 45 presenters from a variety of careers, including financial experts, lawyers, physicians, nurses, psychologists, dentists, engineers, firefighters, electricians, broadcasters, authors and athletic trainers.

The day began with a keynote presentation by Thomas Henkel, the Northeast regional director for Mitel Corporation, who spoke to the more than 325 students about setting goals, overcoming setbacks and striving for success.

The freshmen then attended three workshops in the cafeteria and gyms, where they were broken into small groups of 8-10 students and sat down at a table with a professional for 10 minutes to discuss his or her career. At the sound of a bell, the students got up and rotated to the next table to meet with another professional for 10 minutes. Each student was introduced to 10 different professionals throughout the course of the event, including Board of Education trustee Donna Marie Elliott, discussing her experience as the founder of the Safety & Environmental Solutions firm.

"Our goal was to expose our freshmen to a variety of careers that may pique their interest and set them on a career path, and I believe we accomplished that goal," said Career Day coordinator Jill Perry-Eising, a member of the school's business department.



Sports medicine expert Lynn Goff of the Professional Athletic Performance Center talks to high school freshmen on Career Day.



Frost students learn to set goals via the "Dream, Dare, Do!" assembly.

Frost Students Learn to Achieve Goals with 'Dream, Dare, Do!'

Frost students got a head start in learning to achieve their goals when "Dream, Dare, Do!" came to the school's gymnasium. This Camfel Productions assembly utilized an eye-grabbing three-screen approach, vibrant music and emotionally direct views into the lives and challenges of real peers to teach effective lessons on personal responsibility.

Accompanied by speeches by presenter Isaac Ayala, "Dream, Dare, Do!" helped students in identifying dreams, overcoming obstacles, setting goals and taking responsibility for achieving those dreams. Among the real-life challenges met head-on during the 45-minute program were dealing with pressure, the effects of cyberbullying, making positive choices, and the need for work, focus and effort.

Fire Prevention Month

Brings Safety Workshop to JQA and May Moore

In conjunction with Fire Safety Month, the Deer Park Fire Department brought a thorough fire safety assembly to John Quincy Adams and May Moore in October, presented by Assistant Chief Phil Scarfi.

Scarfi, who has been conducting similar workshops for Deer Park's schools during the past 34 years, demonstrated a working fire alarm for the youngsters, telling them to become familiar with the sound and noting that it takes an average of five minutes for a person to wake up to a fire alarm. He also discussed candle and kitchen safety, the importance of sleeping with bedroom doors closed, the need for a selected special meeting place outside, and how to dial 911.



Students at May Moore (above) and John Quincy Adams (below) visit a fire truck as part of their Fire Safety Month lessons.



At the program's conclusion, Scarfi gave every class a chance to view one of the department's fire trucks, demonstrating the fire hose and other firefighting tools to the eager children, many of whom donned red toy fire helmets.



Teacher Spotlight

Instilling a love for reading is the passion of John F. Kennedy Intermediate School's Thomas Fitzmaurice, a fifth-grade teacher who JFK Principal Susan Bonner calls "our literacy guru."

He has remained in the same classroom since he joined JFK in 2001, where his massive, meticulously organized library provides the perfect setting for inspiring young minds with the joy of books. He loves children's literature, such as Rick Riordan's mythology-themed "Percy Jackson" series, and his obvious enthusiasm inspires his students to read along with him. He said, "I love when they ask me, 'Did you get that new book?'"

He teaches every subject save for science, and cites "evolving

curriculum" as his biggest challenge. His goal as a teacher is to build his students' confidence not only in academics but also socially, in terms of character education, and to instill perseverance in accomplishing goals. "We are a family for 10 months," he said, "and I want them to leave JFK as better people."

Fitzmaurice grew up in Deer Park and graduated from the high school in 1987. He obtained his bachelor's degree in business administration from Dowling College and initially worked as an accountant. Mentoring children while coaching roller hockey inspired a career change, and he returned to Dowling in pursuit of his master's in education. "It was the best decision I ever made," he said. "I love coming to



work." A Notre Dame football fan, he has adapted that team's famous sign "Play Like a Champion Today" for his classroom, changing it to "Learn Like a Champion Today." With a teacher as dedicated as Fitzmaurice, that's a given.

KAUTER *attends* Google Teacher Academy

This past summer, Deer Park High School teacher and alumnus Christopher Kauter was one of only 50 worldwide educators selected by Google for what he considered "an opportunity of a lifetime" – attending the prestigious two-day Google Teacher Academy, held in Chicago, Ill. Representing Deer Park, Kauter was selected for his creativity, passion for innovative technology, and commitment to collaboration, lifelong learning and high standards for his students.

A Bay Shore resident and graduate of Deer Park's Class of 1998, Kauter has taught at the high school for 12 years, mainly focusing on social studies. He began embracing technology three or four years ago, and cites the moment that Deer Park "went Google" in 2011 as a turning point, leading to his current status as a

Google Certified Teacher and trainer.

Kauter applied for the Google Teacher Academy in late May. Out of more than 2,000 applicants, only 50 were selected to participate at this session. His fellow educators arriving at Google's Chicago offices came from every corner of the globe, including New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Zimbabwe. "Just being part of that group was rewarding," said Kauter, who relished the chance for cross-cultural problem-solving. "It really was a great collaborative experience. Everyone was willing to share their ideas and solutions."

Networking has been a major benefit of participating in the program, and Kauter noted that he now has a global network of teachers to tap into. "We talk and share ideas on a daily basis," he said. "It's a very diverse group offering new ways to teach technology."

He is trying to bring what he learned at the Google course to his 12th-grade government classroom. "It changed my perspective on education," Kauter explained. "I am more optimistic and focus on the positive." Utilizing Google Drive and making apps for his students are among the tangible technological upgrades that have resulted from Kauter's fruitful achievement.



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One All-State, Six All-County Musicians Recognized



(from left) All-County musicians Mauricio Montes, Jessica Orelus, Jerline Aristide, Katherine Keller and dual All-County and All-State selection Noah Roff (not pictured is David Reyes).

Six young musicians from Deer Park High School – Jerline Aristide, Katherine Keller, Mauricio Montes, Jessica Orelus, David Reyes and Noah Roff – were chosen for this year’s All-County ensembles, sponsored by the Suffolk County chapter of the New York State Council of Administrators of Music Education.

The six students, all in either the 11th or 12th grade, have proven both their own natural gifts and dedication to practice as well as the program’s vibrancy. Their participation was earned through stellar evaluation scores along with strong recommendations from their school music instructors.

Roff, an exceptional talent, was also selected to be part of the All-State String Orchestra, which will perform at the New York State School Music Association Winter Conference in Rochester, N.Y. in December.

“These students once again have shown the community the strengths of the music program in Deer Park,” said Dr. Jeff S. Dailey, the district’s director of fine and performing arts. “Through their talent and hard work, they have achieved significant recognition of their musicianship.”



HAZARDOUS Meds Shed at High School

Representatives from the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department were on hand at the high school in September, accepting unwanted, unused prescription medications at the latest event in the “Shed the Meds” initiative sponsored by Suffolk County Legislator Lou D’Amaro. Deputies Dennis Creter and Carl Vultaggio manned a booth in the school’s lobby, timed to coincide with the scheduled “Back to School” show featuring David Darwin.

This ongoing drug give-back project has two-fold aims: to prevent hazardous chemicals that could be present in the medications from entering the area’s groundwater system, and to keep them out of the hands of individuals who might be tempted to abuse them.