

# The STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

## DEER PARK HIGH SCHOOL Enhances College and Career Readiness With Senior Chats

To enhance its continuing focus on college and career readiness, Deer Park High School's guidance department began a highly successful senior chats program this year, created by Associate Principal for Guidance and Support Services Dina Pannone. Every month, counselors, advisers and administrators are participating in meetings with the school's seniors, providing crucial assistance in navigating the many elements of transitioning to college or the workforce.

On College Application Completion Day, any students who needed to complete their college applications could come and work on them during the designated times, which included lunch periods as well as one later period for any students who might not have a lunch period. FAFSA Completion Night gave parents and students a chance to come in to finish their financial aid paperwork, with a staff member on site to help them through that process. Another chat featured a visit from alumni, who spoke to

seniors about life after Deer Park High School and what the students can expect as they get into college.

The chats program will soon extend past seniors to include juniors, and then eventually sophomores, freshmen and elementary students, depending on topic.

"We must meet the needs of all of our students, not just our seniors, because we really have to provide that preparation from ninth to 12th grade," Pannone said. "Even though right now we are focusing on a lot of things for seniors, some of these things are also pertinent for 11th graders."

Among the many upcoming senior chats will be a resume building workshop that will be open to 11th and 12th graders, including resumes for both college applicants as well as students applying for jobs; a workshop on preparing for both college and job interviews; a LinkedIn workshop that will assist students in building their professional portfolios; and a workshop specifically designed for Deer Park's



students with disabilities, featuring a representative who will discuss college accommodations and how to apply for them.

During a planned scholarship workshop, students can sit down with their college and career counselors, go over all the scholarships that are being offered and ask any relevant questions. Pannone noted that many students have expressed that they have difficulty finding time to research and apply for scholarships, so it's helpful to have a designated time with someone to guide them through the process.

At the ninth and 10th grade level, a workshop will ensure all freshmen and sophomores are comfortable utilizing the Naviance app, which allows



them to begin to explore career clusters and discover their interests and possible career paths.

Finally, a junior class college essay night at the end of this school year will prepare juniors to start thinking about what they want to include in the essay, so they will have a head start in working on the essay over the summer before senior year. Once they come back to school, they will be ready to upload and send the essay.

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Ensuring that all of Deer Park's high schoolers take advantage of these many opportunities to help prepare for their futures is key.

"It's really important that we make sure that it's accessible to everyone," Pannone said. "We have all these great things, but how do we get them into the hands of the kids? So, we have a committee of seniors that helped us come up with the topics. They're also our ambassadors and spreading information on the senior chats through word of mouth."

The senior chats are just one of several important ways Deer Park is providing students with the information they need to succeed. The annual evening College and Career Fair last fall provided students with the chance to meet and speak with over 30 colleges and universities; military branches including the U.S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps; the Deer Park Fire Department; Western Suffolk BOCES; Access-VR; and the electrical and

HVAC/R Training Center.

"I know our students were thrilled to speak with everyone in person and to be able to ask all of their questions to gain insight into the different organizations," Pannone said.

In addition, for the second consecutive year, Deer Park High School is presenting a full College and Career Week during the last week of April, leading up to College Decision Day on May 1. During lunch periods over the course of that full week, the high school will run individual workshops for all grades and representatives of different colleges, universities, unions, trades and military services will be in attendance.

The guidance department recognizes that every student has a different life path, and some might prefer to join the workforce instead of attending college, so important information and resources are also provided for these options.

"Students can get a trade certificate and



go right into the workforce, and I think it's important that we also provide that information to some of our students too, because maybe college really isn't the path for them," Pannone said. "We want to make sure that we are supporting our students in college and career readiness, just not college readiness."

Visit Deer Park High School's College and Career Center (@dphs\_ccc) on Instagram to stay up to date.

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## STUDENTS DISCOVER POSSIBLE PROFESSIONS DURING JFK'S CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS MONTH

January was Career and College Readiness Month at JFK, when students took part in daily activities that exposed them to various career opportunities. The month concluded with two culminating events, designed to provide JFK's students with a plethora of information on future careers.

Third and fourth graders participated in a virtual Career Week during the last week in January. Volunteers who could not come in person offered to create videos giving students a glimpse of their careers. Medical Monday featured individuals from the

health field; Technology Tuesday featured such careers as a media professional, 911 dispatcher and software engineer; Wisdom Wednesday included professions like a school counselor and prosecutor; and Trade Thursday featured an engineer, tradesman and car wrapper. Lastly, on Dress for Success Friday, students dressed for their future careers and teachers wore their colleges' shirts.

Meanwhile, fifth graders took part in an in-person Career Day on Jan. 27. Volunteers from different

professions visited JFK to talk about what they do and what it takes to be part of their profession.



# First-Generation College Admittance Poses Special Challenges

Members of Deer Park High School's guidance department recently participated in a workshop to learn how undocumented students can apply for financial aid, part of an effort to ensure that first-generation college admittance is an achievable dream. The information has been shared in an easily accessible format on the school's website. The page also includes information on the New York City Dream Act and what materials students would need in order to be successful in applying.

"We have students that have just come here from other countries, and they may feel that some of these things are not attainable for them," Associate Principal for Guidance and Support Services Dina Pannone said. "But there are ways for them to obtain funds and be able to attend these colleges."

All of the department's current information on these topics can be accessed here, in both English and Spanish: <https://sites.google.com/deerparkschools.org/dphsguidancedepartment/college-preparation/financial-aid>



[org/dphsguidancedepartment/college-preparation/financial-aid](https://sites.google.com/deerparkschools.org/dphsguidancedepartment/college-preparation/financial-aid)

# First Aid Training Provided for Elementary Schools

Raymond Scotto, the district's lead security guard since 2021, recently provided informational training on the topics of choking and seizures to the lunch aides at JFK, JQA and May Moore. The training was conducted with information obtained from the American Red Cross as well as Scotto's more than 25 years of experience as a certified CPR/AED first aid instructor. Training was provided to prepare the lunch staff with the tools to recognize and respond to the emergency situations created by an adult or child choking or having a seizure. These one-hour training sessions were conducted at each school via PowerPoint presentation and practical demonstration.

## Math Center Open!

Deer Park High School is now offering a Math Center during student lunch periods. Students are able to receive extra assistance with content from any math course ranging from Pre-Algebra to AP Calculus from a math teacher in the department. The Math Center has allowed hundreds of Deer Park High School students to strengthen their math skills, receive homework help, review for assessments, gain enrichment and enhance knowledge of particular concepts. We will continue to support our students mathematically and see a greater growth in understanding and mastery with the DPHS Math Center.

# MAY MOORE PRIMARY SCHOOL CELEBRATES LUNAR NEW YEAR

While the name of the event may be a little different, the beloved annual Lunar New Year celebration at May Moore featured the familiar sight and sound of red-clad first graders banging drums and carrying paper dragons as they paraded through the halls for an audience of pre-K, kindergarten and second grade students.

"Our students and staff were very excited to celebrate the year of the Rabbit," Principal Tammy Alcalde said. "The festival had traditionally been referred to as Chinese New Year, but as this event is not only celebrated in China but in several other countries as well, the term Lunar New Year is more appropriate."





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# *Arts Accomplishments* Around the District

## Six Talented Deer Park Artists Selected for Colors of Long Island

JFK fifth graders Sarah Faruke and Albert Rodriguez, JQA kindergartner Ali Tuzcu and second grader Kasey Gomez, and May Moore kindergartner Luciana Burriesci (not pictured) and second grader Izabella Gilmor were recently selected to have their work displayed in the 24th annual Colors of Long Island student art exhibit. The show will be on view from Feb. 17 through April 8 at the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook.



## Robert Frost's Young Actors Show Effort and Enthusiasm in 'Shrek'

The dedicated young actors of Robert Frost Middle School's Musical Theatre Club put on two sensational performances of "Shrek the Musical" in December, bringing in over 200 guests each night.

"We are in awe of the talented cast and crew," said directors Lauren Stein and Lori Sullivan. "We are so proud of our performers and how they have grown through the rehearsal process. They put forth so much effort and enthusiasm to make this show as wonderful as it was."

## Senior Musician Sarah Naqvi Named to All-County Jazz Ensemble

Deer Park High School senior Sarah Naqvi was recently selected to perform with the Suffolk County Music Educators' Association's All-County Jazz Ensemble. Naqvi had the distinction of being selected after auditioning for the group last spring and was one of only two alto saxophonists selected for the group from Suffolk County. In addition to playing the saxophone, Naqvi is an accomplished flutist and member of both the wind ensemble and jazz ensemble at the high school.

