

HCST Connections

Activities Stay #HCSTstrong Throughout Reopening

Over the course of this winter we have worked closely with our teachers, community partners, students and their families as we transition back to in-person learning. We look forward to continuing to collaborate as a community to serve our students and the whole HCST family.



Explore Middle School Hosts the Science Olympics

Explore Middle School celebrated the closing of its first quarter with the Science Olympics. Students throughout the school learned about various topics relating to the Olympics, and also explored more topical subjects, ranging from logistical challenges due to COVID-19 to athlete activism.

Throughout the first quarter, students worked diligently in their science classes on the theme. They were challenged to explore the science behind a variety of Olympic events, and each wrote a scientific research paper on a topic of interest related to the Olympics. **Educational Media Specialist Jude Balsamo** assisted students by hosting an array of workshops ranging from choosing credible sources to fine-tuning technical writing skills. In groups, the students then investigated their topics using the scientific method and the engineering design process, and prepared science fair projects that included experiments of prototypes. The students' work was showcased in an Olympic Science Fair where High Tech High School seniors, accompanied by **Samantha Doria, Culinary and Sciences Supervisor of Instruction**, were invited to the school to judge the students' projects and presentations.

Mrs. Doria remarked on the presentations, "The Explore students were truly impressive with their creative approach to the science fair and their willingness to communicate their findings. Our High Tech High School seniors had a great time judging the projects while getting to know this dynamic group of middle schoolers."

At the conclusion of the presentations, an assembly was held to award the top 3 winners of the fair, and included guest speaker, **Olympic Silver Medalist Gail Marquis**. Reflecting on her success and experience playing on the first women's basketball team to compete in the tournament, Marquis emphasized the importance of the 3 D's; Desire, Dedication, and Discipline. After Marquis's speech, the winners of the science fair were announced. 7th graders **Melody Hartman-Kelly, Madeleine Gonzalez, Rubin Seniuk, and Lola Castellano** took gold, 8th graders **Zia Franco-Koli, Victoria Rich, and Isabella Escobar** took silver, and 6th graders **Antoine Huet, Rajan Grover, and Nicholas Noguerras** took bronze.

Commenting on their recent win, **Melody Hartman-Kelly** stated, "It felt amazing working within our group and seeing our hard work pay off." **Madeleine Gonzalez** expressed that the moment felt surreal and **Rubin Seniuk** shared that the group worked really hard and it was nice to see their work recognized.

Supervisor of Instruction and 8th grade Science teacher, **Ms. Lauren Norcia** reflected on the event, "I was so excited to see the students' projects come together at the end of the quarter. The Science department worked hard throughout the summer and marking period to ensure that students fully comprehended the scientific method and engineering design process through their projects. We are so proud of them! We would also like to thank the Student Council advisors and members for organizing the Opening Ceremony. The day was filled with excitement and it was a great success!"



High Tech Musical Theater Major Cast in Nickelodeon Show *Warped!*

Chris Martinez, a senior at High Tech High School where he's majoring in Musical Theatre has been cast in the new show *Warped!* which debuted on Nickelodeon on January 20, 2022.

Chris began acting when he was about five years old, when he and his brother Sebastian, a High Tech High School alum, started a YouTube channel where they interviewed child celebrities. Chris would operate the camera while his brother conducted the interviews. This channel was the beginning of both Chris and his brother's passion for being in front of the camera.

Warped! will be Chris' first series regular role. Previously he has worked on shows like *Blue Bloods*, *NYC 22*, and more recently was a supporting character in the Disney+ original film, *Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made*. In *Warped!* Chris plays Hurley, who works at a pizza restaurant in the same mall as the *Warped!* Comic Book Store, where he hangs out with his friends, Milo, Ruby, and Darby. Describing his character, Chris says "He's the one who means the best and does the worst, but in his own mind he's a genius. He is always trying to invent something at the pizza shop that's going to make him rich and famous. He's always there to protect his friends and help them in the most important situations. It was so much fun getting to know and portray Hurley!"

Chris also credits his experience at High Tech High School, where he has been given a creative outlet. "Majoring in Musical Theatre, I've always gotten the chance to work on my craft and stay focused," said Chris. "I'm so lucky to work alongside such a talented class, and I continue to learn more from them every day. My friends here always kept me in the loop with class events that were happening, which was so incredibly sweet of them. My teachers would take the extra time to elaborate on classwork to make sure I understood the material! I really appreciate all of the support from them during production!"

Chris will be performing with the Musical Theatre Majors in *Waitress* this January, and in the Winter Showcase.

High Tech High School's Interact Club Holds Angel Tree Fundraiser



At High Tech High School this year, Generosity for Generations, run by **Ms. Sipars** and **Ms. Velazquez**, teamed up with Mr. Morrison's Interact Club to spread holiday cheer by hosting the Angel Tree Fundraiser.

The "Angel Tree", as it is notably known at High Tech, is a beautiful tradition started by **Ms. Mintzer (Zwelinski)** in 2010, and helps to provide Christmas gifts for hundreds of Hudson County children each year. The High Tech community believes that every child deserves to experience the joy of Christmas morning, and with the overwhelming help and kindness of the HTHS/Central Office staff and student body, they were able to collect over 155 gifts.

The Angel Tree itself was made out of construction paper and decorated with cut out angels that had each donor's name on them. The students and advisors had a wonderful time decorating while listening to holiday music after school.

[Watch the full Angel Tree celebration here](#)



Intramural Program Keeps Students Active After School

The intramural program at County Prep High School/ATD aims to keep students active and promote a healthy lifestyle. Every day after school, a dedicated group of students participates in a wide variety of sports and activities, including basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, fitness, yoga, and ping pong.

For these students, the intramural program represents one of the many enjoyable parts of their daily experience at County Prep. It provides these students with not just physical activity, but valuable socialization time with peers. In addition to these sports and activities, the program also offers monthly games versus High Tech High School in volleyball and basketball. Each year there is also a school-wide basketball tournament, volleyball tournament, and starting this year, an indoor soccer tournament. County Prep's program is highly successful in creating a place for students to feel welcome after school while staying physically active and socially engaged.



High Tech High School Works with the Jersey City Rotary Club to Organize Inaugural Winter Coats Collection

The first winter coats collection at High Tech High School was sponsored by the Rotary Club of Jersey City. They also worked closely with the Interact Club, which served as a dropoff site where faculty and staff could bring the coats that were donated.

Through this impactful new event, the Interact Club collected well over 100 warm coats from High Tech faculty, students, and staff. These coats were then cleaned and donated to several organizations, including the We Care Movement, Child Protective Services, Action 12, York Street Project, and Scores Reentry. High Tech/ACTE students had a wonderful experience, and participated in the entire process, even decorating the collection box.





County Prep HS Holds Cross-Curricular Collaboration Between Hydroponics and Culinary Arts Classes



At the end of October **Dr. Szymanski's** Hydroponics class donated their fall harvest of mustard greens, arugula, cilantro, and lettuce to the Culinary class for what would become part of a farm to table salad. **Chef Collins'** class used these ingredients to make a beautiful and nutritious autumn salad. This was a highly effective instance of educators at County Prep collaborating to teach students the value of farm to table cuisine, and involved them in all aspects of producing and preparing their food.

Students from both classes explained their respective involvement in the process. Members of the Hydroponic Gardening class learned about growing and caring for these vegetables, and the

young chefs from Culinary Arts explained how they utilized the ingredients from the harvest. Chef Collins also spoke about how money is saved by utilizing resources this way. Through this cross-curricular collaboration at CPHS, not only did all of the students get to enjoy a fresh and nutritious homemade salad, but they learned firsthand how meaningful it can be to be involved in all aspects of growing and preparing your own food.

County Prep Students Participate in Culinary Arts Immersion Program



County Prep students in the Culinary Arts Program visited Hudson County Community College multiple times this school year to participate in the "Culinary Arts Immersion" work-based learning experience. The students were afforded the opportunity to work one-on-one with a renowned chef, and learned to prepare a wide variety of delicious dishes.

During one of the sessions, the students showcased their talents by filleting and preparing flounder adorned with spices and vegetables. The opportunity to partake in hands-on activities gave the students a glimpse of what a culinary arts program would look like on a college level providing an invaluable experience that

defined a potential career option for many of our students. A special thank you is extended to **Ms. Nunez** and **Chef Puc** at Hudson County Community College for their efforts to bring this work-based learning program to fruition.



High Tech and County Prep High School Students Participate in Winter Showcase Performances

Both High Tech and County Prep High Schools put on Winter Showcases, in which students of all grade levels performed dance, drama, and musical theater.

Students at High Tech High School performed a parody of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, as well as several group and solo dance performances. Juniors and Seniors in the Musical Theatre Program performed "Opening Up" from the musical *Waitress*, as well as choreographing and directing their own grade level performances.

Students also worked behind the scenes, learning hands-on skills for all aspects of production including lighting, sound, and set design. The students were thrilled to be back in person, working and performing together in these Winter Showcases.

Hudson County Schools of Technology Holds Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Newly Completed Laurel Hill Park



Hudson County Schools of Technology and the County of Hudson held a ribbon cutting ceremony at the site of the newly completed Laurel Hill Park on December 20th. The event celebrated the new park, which was built through a close collaboration between the County of Hudson, Town of Secaucus and the HCST District, and will be open for use by students as well as the public.

The ceremony was attended by HCST Board President and Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise's Chief of Staff, Craig Guy, members of the Hudson County Board of County Commissioners, Secaucus Mayor Mike Gonnelli, HCST Board of Education members, along with HCST Superintendent Amy Lin-Rodriguez, and other school, local and county officials.

"We are so excited to see this project come to fruition," said **Hudson County Executive Tom DeGise**. "Laurel Hill Park was a wonderful collaboration between the County, **Mayor Gonnelli**, the town of Secaucus, and the District and will be a great addition to the HCST and wider Secaucus community."

"Laurel Hill Park is such an exciting development on the High Tech High School campus," said **HCST Superintendent Amy Lin-Rodriguez**. "It will serve as a valuable resource for students, as well as being open to the public after school hours. We were able to open the park less than a year after the project began, and are so grateful to Hudson County and everyone involved for their dedication and commitment to getting this done."

"Laurel Hill Park is a testament to the hard work of everyone involved in its conception and development," said **Secaucus Mayor Mike Gonnelli**. "The town is committed to serving its residents, and this park will make a concrete impact on the quality of life for HCST students and all of Secaucus."

The new park was designed by HCST and Neglia Engineering Associates who began the project last winter. The park cost \$1.3 million and is approximately three acres, and includes basketball courts, dual tennis/pickleball courts, an outdoor gym/fitness area, passive park path, and an additional open lawn area. It also offers parking for the public, and serves as a student pick-up/drop-off area.

HCST Post-Secondary Classes Ramp Up Instructor Hiring in the New Year!

HCST POST SECONDARY

WE'RE HIRING!

INSTRUCTIONAL POSITIONS AVAILABLE

EMAIL
HUDSONTECHNICAL@HCSTONLINE.ORG
OR VISIT
HCSTONLINE.ORG/HUDSONTECHNICAL

MEDICAL BILLING & CODING
CHILDCARE DEVELOPMENT (CDA)
DENTAL ASSISTANT & RADIOLOGY
GOOGLE CERTIFICATION
CDL INSTRUCTOR
FORKLIFT TRAINING INSTRUCTOR
CLINICAL MEDICAL ASST. (CMA)
CERTIFIED NURSING ASST. (CNA)
ADOBE CERTIFIED ASSOC. PHOTOSHOP
AUTODESK CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL
FIRST AID & BASIC LIFE SUPPORT
AND MORE...

- FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING
- ONLINE & IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION
- SUPPORT COMMUNITY LEARNING

HCST's Post-Secondary classes are hiring new instructors for both credentialing courses and community classes.

The Post-Secondary Program offers classes to adults of all ages and levels of education in a range of subjects from Culinary Arts, Public Speaking, Foreign Languages, and Computer Skills.

Students can take classes for credit, or participate in community classes to develop new skills with no certification required at the end. HCST is looking for instructors with knowledge of their subject, and a passion for teaching. Previous experience in the classes that you're teaching is a plus, but no teaching certificate is required.

Class scheduling is flexible and can be done in various facilities throughout the county on weekdays after 5 pm and on Saturdays, and instructors are paid between \$30-\$50 per hour. Anyone interested in applying to be an instructor can do so by filling out our simple form with some brief information about yourself and your expertise:

[HCST Community Class Interest Survey](#)

[HCST Course Proposal](#)

High Tech High School/ACTE Holds Their 11th Annual Sock Drive

High Tech High School held their 11th Annual Sock Drive for the Hoboken Shelter this winter. High Tech students and staff collected a total of 1,195 pairs of socks for people in need, benefitting hundreds of people from their generosity. The sock drive was an entirely school-run project led by Mr. Robert Dillon, who teaches English at High Tech. Students, teachers, administrators, secretaries and other staff members

pitched in to donate whatever they could.

“Every holiday season the whole school gets together and collects new socks for the homeless shelter,” said **Mr. Dillon**. “It’s a small project that has a big impact.” According to the Hoboken Shelter, socks are one of the most important items needed.

Spotted Lanternfly Removal Project Protects HTHS Campus Trees



The High Tech Environmental Science seniors, together with the Secaucus Environmental Department, successfully removed 38 Spotted Lanternfly egg masses from trees on the Frank J. Gargiulo campus on December 15, 2021. If left alone, these egg masses would have harmed or killed the trees they were resting on and resulted in ~1,500 adult Spotted Lanternflies come springtime. The Environmental teachers, Cathy Yuhas, Shelly Witham and Samantha Doria, enlisted the help of Ava Mroz and High Tech '17 Alumni Sean Heaney, both from the Secaucus Environmental Department, to help educate and assist in the removal. Read this [article](#) for more information on this destructive invasive species and how you can help!



County Prep STEM Club Holds Holiday Fundraiser

County Prep’s STEM Club kicked off their first ever fundraiser by spreading some holiday cheer! Students spent their club time designing and crafting holiday-scented candles and STEM-themed holiday cards. The natural soy candles came in a variety of festive scents, which included clove, eucalyptus, peppermint, and tea tree. The STEM-themed holiday cards were available in different style templates with special features. For example, to “brighten up” someone’s day during the season, students digitally designed cards that included LED circuits. Though sales ended, you can still check out the [STEM Holiday Shop](#) website to view more details about some of their products along with the design process. Stay connected with County Prep’s STEM Club by reading through their [STEM Insider](#) newsletter. The winter edition highlights what the



students have been working on since the beginning of the 2021-22 school year. Profits from the fundraiser will go towards future field trips and experiences to further encourage students to explore their interests in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The funds will also benefit the Women in STEM branch and provide more opportunities that value diversity and equity in order to continue their mission to guide students towards inclusive career paths.



Academy for Design and Fabrication at High Tech High School's Holiday Pop-Up Shop

Last month the Academy for Design and Fabrication at High Tech High School hosted their annual Holiday Pop-Up Shop. This year's products were designed and fabricated by Industrial Design, Architecture, Wood Technology majors, and students from the ExPAND Grant pre-apprenticeship program. The fundraiser's purpose was to help fund various projects, field trips, the Robotics program, and other endeavors for the DFab Academy.

A portion of the proceeds will also help fund a project currently underway in Ms. Simon's Industrial Design course,

in partnership with Enabling the Future, an organization which works with schools to design, fabricate and distribute prosthetic upper limb devices for children and adults globally.

The Holiday Pop-Up Shop raised a total of \$1,797.41, thanks to the efforts and dedication of the HCST students and community.

Some of the products from the shop are still available for purchase at the [Holiday Pop-Up Shop website](#), and the next in-person Pop-Up Shop event will likely be held this coming spring.

High Tech High School Spreads Gratitude and Appreciation to Security, Cafeteria and Facility Staff



Beginning in the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, The Interact Club at High Tech High School wrote Thanksgiving cards to security staff thanking them for all they do to keep students safe at school. The students also included chocolate and small origami pieces that they had made in the cards to show their appreciation before the holiday season.

Leading up to the Christmas Holiday, The Interact Club continued this wonderful tradition, and wrote Christmas Cards for Cafeteria and Facility staff members. The students know how much

invaluable work that these people do behind the scenes to make sure that the facilities are clean and pleasant, and the food is nourishing and tasty. They know that the holiday season is about spreading appreciation and gratitude, and making sure that everyone knows that their work doesn't go unnoticed.



The students found this project particularly meaningful during the pandemic. They were dedicated to making an impact on their school community, knowing that even a gesture as small as writing holiday cards to express their appreciation could bring someone joy.

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