

George Washington High School's I.B. Broadcaster



World School

A publication of the IB Parents Association of GWHS

In cooperation with the Friends of IB Scholars Foundation

April 2011 – Vol. 23, Issue 6

From the Board



Welcome Fest on Tuesday, March 8 was a huge success, thanks to the efforts of sophomore parent, **Linda Williams**, event chairperson, IBPA &

Patriot Partner volunteers, the custodial staff, the cheerleaders and pep club, and many, many enthusiastic students and teachers. **Suzi Geimer, Marjie Lane, Meryl Cohn, Sara Morrow, Lindsey Vesceri, Assistant Principal Sara Leikin, Principal Loan Maas**, and several club sponsors and coaches were available to meet and interact with our incoming parents and students. This high-energy event hosted an estimated 300 guests with many incoming students commenting how excited and eager they are to come to George after being introduced to so many ways for them to get involved. At this writing in mid-March, **130 IB freshman acceptances have been received and more are expected.**

Welcome, one and all!

Get Involved! This is the time of year when the IB Parents Association Board must begin thinking about filling the Board positions for next year. Please take a moment to look at the list of Board positions on the last page of this Broadcaster and consider volunteering for one of the positions. I would welcome sharing my responsibilities with a Co-President. Parents of rising freshmen and sophomores are particularly encouraged to join our team! If you have any questions, please e-mail me at kbutkovich@comcast.net.



Mark your calendars!

Tuesday, April 12 at 6:30 PM, **MANDATORY MEETING for JUNIORS and their parents.** Suzi Geimer will share important information on how to use your time between now and the end of 2011 to get through the college process smoothly and calmly.

We thank you for your support on all fronts!

Thank you so much for attending the IB Parents Association meetings and for supporting our parent organization as you do – we have a strong and committed group of families and we feel fortunate to be a part of such a unique blending of ideas, activities, and interests. The years we share with our high school kids are short and swift, and we hope you are enjoying every minute! The IBPA Board's current progressive work is aimed at making next year a successful one for everyone at GWIB.

—Kristi Butkovich, IBPA Board President



IB Exam Proctors Needed Parents, Please Help!

See page 3 of this newsletter for more details regarding how to volunteer as a proctor.

"Spring makes its own statement, so loud and clear that the gardener seems to be only one of the instruments, not the composer." —Geoffrey B. Charlesworth

MANDATORY MEETING

TUESDAY,

APRIL 12 6:30-8 PM

**For Juniors and
Parents of Juniors**

in the GWHS auditorium
**Extremely important college
application information**

IB-specific college application process

Crucial deadline information

How to hit the ground running in

August... and more

BE THERE OR BE... CONFUSED! ☺



Saturday, April 16, 2011

7 AM to Noon at GWHS

Site Coordinator:

Myriam De León, RN MSN, 720-423-8635

This is a wonderful opportunity for students with interests in health careers to volunteer to help! The first 10 students who see the nurse will be selected.

Note that the Health Fair is an adult-only event, so students must wear a GW T-shirt to identify themselves as volunteers.

For more information about the health fair itself, visit www.9HealthFair.org



WANTED: YOUR NEWS!

The Broadcaster is YOUR newsletter, and we want to include even more of your IB students' good news. We tend to receive articles about GW-based activities like Speech and Debate, Model UN, Newspaper, and various school-related competitions. But we get only sporadic reports from sports teams, and even sparser items from students' outside involvements.

Please help us make the newsletter even more news-y, and help our IB community recognize and congratulate even more student accomplishments by sending your news items to editor Paul Day-Lucore at pkdaylu@gmail.com.

Feel free to submit an article if you wish, but don't hesitate to send just a short item! The more the better!



NATIONAL HISTORY DAY IS ON THE WAY!

GW Patriots, 72 strong, will participate in the Denver Public Schools History Day Competition at Hamilton Middle School on Saturday, April 9. This year's theme, "Debate and Diplomacy in History, Success, Failures, and Consequences" is the focus of our 36 entries, including research papers, individual and group web sites, group exhibits, and individual and group documentaries. Competing with several DPS high schools, the top three finishers in each category will compete at Colorado History Day, sponsored by the University of Colorado at Denver, at the Auraria Campus on Saturday, May 7. The top two finishers in each category at the state competition will then represent Colorado at National History Day, held at the University of Maryland, June 11 – June 16, 2011.

—Bonnie Guggenheim

**Donate to the Friends of IB Foundation
online! Follow the fundraising link at
www.georgeib.com**

Volunteer Proctors Needed for IB Exams, May 3-23

Seniors and some juniors will be taking IB examinations during May. IBO has stringent guidelines for the conduct of these exams, and meeting them is a logistical challenge that Mrs. Geimer manages to meet every year – but she needs our help to do it.



Parents, this is a golden opportunity to get an insider glimpse of the IB External Assessment experience. Please consider volunteering to proctor (“invigilate” in IB speak) one or more of the May exams, being held at Temple Emmanuel, 51 Grape Street, about a mile-and-a-half from GW. Morning exams begin at 7:30 AM, and afternoon exams begin at Noon.

Proctor training will be offered on Thursday, April 28, 2011 from 7 AM to 8 AM. While not required, it provides helpful guidance, particularly for those new to the process.

You can see the complete IB exam schedule at the following hyperlink:

<http://www.ibo.org/documentlibrary/examinationschedules/documents/MayandNovember2011examinationschedulesEnglish.pdf>. Don’t be frightened by it! GW offers only a subset of the subjects listed.

Note: you can also find this schedule at www.georgeib.com. Click on “Student Info” then click on “IB Exam Dates – May 2011.” This downloads the same PDF file indicated above.

Contact Elaine Tintera at dtelainet@msn.com or 303-995-2283 to volunteer. Thank you.



Class of 2011 GWHS IB Senior Brunch

Planning continues for this annual celebration. All IB Seniors and their families and the IB Faculty are invited. The event will be held on **Sunday, May 1st** at the DTC Doubletree Hotel —**please save this date.**



Seniors – we will be asking you to provide us with “Then and Now” photos and we hope that you will begin to think about the Senior Skit that has become part of the brunch tradition.

Please contact Julia Fitzpatrick at juliafitzpatrick@msn.com if you can provide help with this event.

Congratulations, Sean Chilelli, Gymnast

On Saturday, March 19, Sean Chilelli participated in the State Men’s Gymnastics Meet. Even though this is not an official high school sport, Sean has worked hard for twelve years to rise to this level.

Sean competed as a Level 10, which is the highest high school level. He took 11th in State overall, finishing 6th in the Floor exercise, 10th on the Rings, and 8th on the High Bar.

Sean’s next stop is to compete in the four-state regional tournament at the Olympic Training Center on April 9.

We wish Sean well in his continuing academic and sporting endeavors.



Grounds & Gateway News



The month of April promises to be a busy one, so **please save these dates:**

April 6, 3:30 PM: Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Donor Brick area to be laid near GW’s north entrance. Come out to celebrate the progress of the Gateway Project, read all the inscriptions, and find yours. If you weren’t able to get your paver inscribed in time for this installation, don’t despair. Place your order as soon as possible. When we receive another hundred orders, we’ll turn them in to the engravers.

April 23, 9 AM – Noon: The fourth annual **Spring Tree Planting**. We’ll be replacing some trees and generally getting our hands dirty sprucing up George’s landscape. Bring gloves, rakes, shovels, and wheelbarrows. Plan to join in this fun and relaxing school-wide event. Let’s see some Patriot Pride in action!

The Extended Essay Explained

At the core of the Hexagon lie the extended essay, CAS, and Theory of Knowledge. Any IB senior will be able to tell you all about these elements, but some IB students may be in the dark about just how these elements ‘happen’ in the IB years. The purpose here is to briefly outline the extended essay and address how our IB Program manages it.



The extended essay is “an in-depth study of a focused topic chosen from the list of approved Diploma Program subjects... it is intended to promote high level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity.” (Guide to the extended essay, IBO 2009) IB considers it to be a key summative activity that reflects the attributes in the Learner Profile that promote “independent learning and intellectual risk-taking and extensive reflection; open mindedness, balance, and fairness.” It is compulsory for the IB Diploma and a formal piece of scholarship of no more than 4,000 words.

That’s IB’s definition. Our students are more likely to think “LONG, DIFFICULT PAPER.” The seniors will tell you that it does loom large in the junior year, but by the end of the task, the extended essay becomes a work of pride and passion. Seniors actually admit that they enjoyed the process, learned a great deal about research as well as their topic, and are glad they did it.

The process begins in the **fall** for juniors. GWIB holds the *EXTENDED ESSAY EXTRAVAGANZA* during which we explain the rules for the essay, and the senior students provide details on how each chose a topic, did the research, and produced the essay. The seniors offer advice on pitfalls to avoid, what they did well, and what they would do differently if they were to do it again. This meets the IB regulation for *Viva Voce*, an interview with the writer intended to provide reflection and evidence of ownership of the process.



After the “*Extravaganza*” each IB junior chooses an advisor who provides a year of ongoing advice and support. Students establish a schedule for meeting periodically with their advisor. Junior IB students must declare their topic before the end of the first semester and generally embark on research and analysis leading to the selection of a research question.

In **April**, juniors visit the Auraria Library where they are introduced to a formal academic library. The Auraria librarians present lectures on how to use a research library and small group session by subject that offer rich suggestions for pursuing depth in evidence and information gathering. Students are allowed to check out materials from the Auraria Library. After the Auraria visit, students begin writing their essays.



In **May**, juniors do not attend IB classes. Instead, they take whatever IB exams they have registered for, prepare for and take their English Formal Oral exam, and write their extended essay. Each student meets regularly with his or her advisor during this period and submits a credible draft at the end of the IB exam period. Students who do not submit an essay may not continue as IB seniors. The final draft is due early in the fall of senior year and is mailed to examiners world-wide.

Kalah Haley Named Queen of the Military Ball

On March 4, more than 550 6th Battalion JROTC cadets gathered at the Hyatt Regency Tech Center for the 118th annual Military Ball. IB senior **Kalah Haley** was announced as Queen of the Ball, selected from among 10 top female cadets, one from each DPS high school.

As GW's candidate, Kalah had to prove herself at the Queen's Luncheon, where the 10 nominees' academic and extracurricular résumés, comportment, speech, etiquette, knowledge of current events, and general poise and demeanor were judged by a panel of female community leaders.

Being named Queen of the Ball literally crowns Kalah's distinguished four year career in GW's JROTC unit where she rose through the ranks from cadet, to company commander, to personnel officer, to her current position as executive officer.

Earlier this year, Kalah won the annual 6th Battalion speech competition, based on the quality and content of her prepared speech as well as her JROTC résumé and her uniformed appearance. She will receive a cash prize at the battalion's May 6 award ceremony.

Kalah has been a member of GW's Honor Platoon for 3 years, by virtue of her strong academic record. The platoon placed first among 14 teams in the 2010 cadet challenge at the battalion's Pentathlon, which tested cadets' endurance and physical strength. She is also a Drill Team member and is looking forward to this competition season, beginning on March 12 and culminating in the Rocky Mountain Regional competition at the Denver Coliseum in late April.

Kalah's leadership abilities are evident in JROTC and beyond. She has been influential in recruiting IB students into JROTC, where they are now a strong presence, by educating her peers about the holistic approach to character building and civic responsibility that marks the program today. Her positive approach to leadership is evident in her statement, "I'm proud of each Patriot cadet's morale and spirit, proud of our rifle team which placed 3rd in the state, and proud of all our honor cadets."

Kalah's encouraging approach is further in evidence within IBBO, where she works to "motivate and mentor all minority students to stay in IB, and to feel the confidence to succeed and excel in the program."

Outside of school Kalah is very active in the Denver Church of Christ and recently helped organize a regional church retreat for over 90 teens. She was also active in the junior sorority of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. for 5 years.

This extraordinary young woman hopes to continue her commitment to leadership and service at the US Air Force Academy. Like many seniors she is eagerly awaiting the results of her college applications. Whatever institution succeeds in attracting her will find its community greatly enriched.



A victorious and stunning **Kalah Haley**, flanked by two Queen's Luncheon judges, DPS Board member **Jeanne Kaplan** (left) and Instructional Superintendent **Dr. Kristin Waters** (right)

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, THERE ARE NO IB CLASSES FOR WHOLE MONTH OF MAY? A primer for the parents of juniors and seniors

You gaze at the calendar in disbelief. Your student regards it with glee! Does it really mean that school's out for the summer by April 29? In a word – **NO!**

So what are students expected to be doing with all that time?

Seniors should be preparing for their IB exams, both on their own and by attending review sessions as scheduled by their IB teachers. Do not underestimate the power of these reviews. Experience tells us that students who skip them do so at their peril. Reviews include test strategies that improve scores. This is not HL Math! Reviews = better exam results = more points toward the IB diploma + possible college credit (meaning tuition savings)!

Juniors should use their time in May to prepare for whatever IB exams they are scheduled to take this year, including attending review sessions. All juniors take individually scheduled English orals during the IB exam period. In addition, they are expected to use the time to work on their extended essays (see page 4 of this newsletter), to meet with their extended essay advisors as necessary, and to turn in their extended essays to advisors on May 24, between 7:30 AM and Noon. Juniors should also be using their "free" time to get themselves up-to-date with CAS requirements.

The IB exam schedule (which can be found at http://georgeib.com/ib_calendar.html) allows for absolutely no flexibility. If a student misses an exam **for any reason**, the only options are to take it the following November or May, or to forego the IB credit and the IB diploma. This is not a GWIB rule; it comes from the IBO and cannot be modified for weddings, graduations, illnesses, etc.

Final notes: Some IB classes require a final during GW's exam week in late May. Students should make sure they understand each teacher's expectations. Class attendance/absences and exam requirements for any non-IB classes must be worked out with individual teachers by the student.

Think of May as a time to practice the kind of self-discipline and time management that college life will require!

Poetry Out Loud!

Sophomore **Claudia Zarcula**, represented GW at the State Finals in Lakewood on Feb. 28. **Amy Ziegler** is our runner-up. Other classroom winners who participated in the school's competition were: **Elicia Dennis, Alex Dorosinskiy, David Kolet-Mandrikov, Anna Krauss, Madeleine Kresin, Tory Rowe, Sam Sigman, Preston Thomas, Kevin Vargas, Langston Williams, and Paige Witter**. The school received a grant from Colorado Creative Industries (formerly the Colorado Council on the Arts) to bring **Dr. Charlotte Talbert**, a drama coach, to work with students on the recitation of their selected poems.

Visual Arts

IB senior **Kara Bausch** won an honorable mention for her photography in the annual Plymouth Church art exhibit for high school students. Other IB students represented in the exhibit were **Connor Gee, Kelce Gerlits, Chiara Gonzales, Taylor Hine, Catherine Maguire, Katrice Ryan, Perrin Tourangeau, Anna Silverstein, and Jonah Wolf**.

—Anna Wadsworth, pre-IB English and IB Visual Art teacher

Coming GWIB Events

March 28-April 1	Spring Break – no classes
April 4	Professional Day – no classes
April 9	Breaking Away program for Seniors and their parents, noon-2 PM
April 12	Mandatory Junior and Junior Parent Meeting, 6:30-8 PM
April 29	Last Day of Classes for Juniors and Seniors (Exams start May 3)
May 1	Senior Brunch – DTC Doubletree Hotel
May 3-23	IB Exams – Temple Emanuel, 51 Grape Street





Do You Love and Value our IB Program?

Imagine what it would be without the financial

support of the Foundation, which funds two-thirds of Marjie's salary, a college counselor, teacher needs, subsidies for students to take their IB exams, and much more. The Foundation relies on the families to provide the funds that bridge the gap between what is available from DPS and what we have come to expect for our kids.

If you've been reading your *Broadcaster* recently, many of you are aware of a new way to support the IB Foundation without having to find additional funds in your budget. In fact, you can even save your family money on the things you already buy.

We now have a website where you can buy everything you want or need. The site offers access to purchase over 35 million products and services. By comparison, Amazon offers around 11 million.

www.marketamerica.com/georgeib



To make it work, though, you have to participate. We've had the program in place since October, but it seems that it's taking our IB family some time to get the hang of it. We get it.

On-line shopping is new to some of you, so here are some pointers on the benefits that you can realize by using this site and tips to make it work.

- Earn Cashback. Market America gives you Cashback on any of your shopping at the participating stores from 2 to 35%. Free of charge. No limit. **TIP 1:** Register as a customer ('sign in' at the top right of the home page) to make sure you accumulate your Cashback and then 'sign in' each time with your e-mail and password. **TIP 2:** When you accrue just \$10 you can request a check (feel free to donate your Cashback to the IB Foundation.) or redeem it for Market America's exclusive products – these carry a higher Royalty rate to the IB Foundation than any of the other retailers.
- More than 3500 stores at one website. It's easier to find what you need by searching on one website than by trawling all around town looking for the item. **TIP 3:** It's so convenient but it takes a little bit of organization. Make a list of all the things you buy every month and then plan to buy them online before they run out. Every time you find yourself running to the store for something last minute, add it to your shopping list so you can get it online next time. You can use the HOME SHOPPING LIST feature (in a red tab at the top of the home page) on the site to start this process.
- Compare prices to get the best deals. **TIP 4:** When you find a product and it's available at more than one of our affiliate stores you can click 'compare' to see the prices available at the different stores and the Cashback amounts as well.
- Invite your friends to shop and earn ½% Cashback on all their shopping too. **TIP 5:** Make sure you're signed in, then click on 'invite your friends' to the right of the welcome and Cashback summary at the top of the page.
- Use the HOT DEALS tab. If you're like me, you clip coupons, but when it comes to make the purchase, you've left the coupon at home, or it's expired. Well, this is the solution because Market America aggregates all the deals here for you. **TIP 6:** Here's how to find them: When you click on HOT DEALS you'll see some of the best current deals on the online retailers and below some incredible, increased Cashback opportunities on Market America's own brand products. Scroll down a bit more and you'll see a section called 'Online Coupon Codes, Sales and Specials.' To the right, there's a dropdown box 'Jump to Store.' Find the store you want and all the coupons for that store will appear. All the work is done for you.

SEASONAL SUGGESTIONS:

Earth Day is coming up, so if you're looking for Earth-friendly products, check out SNAP. It includes non-toxic, biodegradable, phosphate free products that are concentrated. You dilute them so they are incredibly cost-effective, and they work. My favorite for value is the SNAP Pack. For **Easter**, have a look at SHOP ALL DEPARTMENTS, 'Gifts & Occasions,' to find everything you need for the holiday.

Please take some time to try out the site. With your help, the funds we raise can be significant. If you need assistance, please contact me at 720-296-9185 or amandahalliday@comcast.net.

—Amanda Halliday



THE IB COLLEGE COUNSELING CORNER

Congratulations, **SENIORS!** You survived the applications and the waiting, and now that April is here, you finally have answers from all your colleges. Here's your college to-do list for April:

- Inform Ms. Lane in the IB Office of your final decision ASAP, in a legible note or via e-mail (Marjorie.Lane@dpsk12.org).
- Enter all decision, financial aid, and scholarship information into your Naviance account.
- If you have not made your final decision, compare your "yes" schools (and their aid offers) very carefully so that you commit to the one that truly fits you the best.
- You may want to appeal low financial awards if you have a better offer elsewhere.
- If you accept a place on the wait list at your first choice school, follow it up promptly with a letter of VERY strong interest that includes any new, positive information for your application, and/or with a campus interview if you haven't had one, and/or with a new and exciting letter of recommendation – but put a deposit down at your best-fit "yes" school at the same time.
- If you will be taking a gap year, call AND write to your college about your plan.
- Be sure to reply to ALL offers of admission ASAP (and definitely by May 1), so that students who are on wait lists do not have their suspense needlessly prolonged.
- Complete housing, orientation, course placement, and all other forms from your college sooner rather than later. Choice spots are generally allotted on a first-come-first-served basis.
- Seek help from Mr. Haynes, Mrs. Geimer, and Ms. Lane as needed to get through these last steps.
- Thank all the people who helped you with this process – Mrs. Geimer, Ms. Lane, Mr. Haynes, Mr. Jennings, teachers, outside recommenders, coaches, parents . . . the list goes on and on
- Attend the April 9 presentation on "Breaking Away/Surviving the First Year of College" with your parents.

JUNIORS, you're almost rising seniors and your lives are getting really interesting. You've been introduced to Naviance and, at the April 12 mandatory meeting, you and your parents will learn much more about the Common App and general procedures and timelines for the application process. The next steps are simple but critical. From this point on, time begins to matter, so being in control of the process **and** keeping up with it are both important. Here's a checklist of some things to think about for the spring and summer ahead:

- Create or update your personal résumé.
- If you have not already done so, schedule an interview with Mrs. Geimer, using the link labeled "Junior Interview RSVP" on the GWIB home page. You'll be providing her with specifics she will use to write your letter of recommendation, and your résumé will help with this process. Mrs. Geimer will not be available for interviewing after April 22, and her time in May is totally committed to conducting the IB exams.
- Prepare for the upcoming, mandatory Junior ACT on April 27.
- Attend Mr. Haynes' April 23 presentation on "College Admission 202."
- Encourage (that's PC for nag) your parents to complete the Parent Response Form, distributed at the April 12 meeting and posted on the georgeib website under College Prep, and submit it to Mrs. Geimer.
- Plan to attend the May 1 College Fair at Lakewood HS, 1:00-3:30 PM, <http://www.rmacac.org/collegefairs.php>
- Register for the ACT plus Writing, the SAT Reasoning Test, and/or the SAT Subject Tests as recommended by your schools-of-interest (SOI's).
- Bookmark the websites (and, maybe, the admissions page) for your SOI's and browse them often to become familiar with their admission requirements, procedures, deadlines, etc., as well as with general information about each school. Deadlines and procedures can change from year to year, so you need to stay up-to-date.
- Plan campus visits.
- Book an appointment with Mr. Haynes, if you haven't already done so, to discuss your interests and the "right fit" for your future school: collegemasters@comcast.net, 719-232-5303 or 719-576-9487.
- Work on your college essay.
- Develop a list of schools to which you may want to apply. Ultimately, you'll want to include a "dream" school and a "safety" school in the list. And remember that "dream" and "safety" don't mean the same thing to every applicant, nor should they!

- Talk to teachers about writing recommendations for you. Colleges, if they want them at all, usually require that these come from teachers you've had during junior and senior year. Give them a copy of your résumé.
- If you're interested in financial aid, begin searching for scholarship, grant, and loan help that may be right for you. Parents, this is an area where you can and should provide help and support.
- Continue working hard in all of your classes. This is the last semester that will be included on the transcript that will accompany the Secondary School Report Form and recommendation letter from Mrs. Geimer in the fall. (Grades from fall of senior year - aka the Mid-year Report - will be sent to colleges in January.)

SOPHOMORES, the May 1 College Fair is a good way to get on board with college planning. Keep your grades up, follow your interests, and take advantage of whatever opportunities for personal development come your way. Plan to meet some CAS requirements this summer – you'll be glad you did, once the junior year course load hits.

FRESHMEN, remember that this year's grades will follow you all the way through senior year as part of your high school transcript. Make this a year to be proud of. Stay involved in your classes, in extracurriculars, and in your community, doing things that you care about and/or that you want to learn more about. Keep up some involvements over the summer.

EVERYONE: Even though we will not be bringing Peter Van Buskirk to GW this year, you can sign up for his free newsletters and blog postings at <http://www.theadmissiongame.com/>. Very informative!

IMPORTANT COLLEGE DATES AND DEADLINES

March 31: Virtually all college decisions are mailed or posted online by this date. Financial aid packages typically arrive simultaneously, or within a week of the acceptance.

April 9, Saturday, Noon-2 PM, Community Room (in order not to disturb ACT test takers): **Breaking Away/Surviving the First Year of College**, a program targeted at seniors and their parents. All are welcome.

April 12, Tuesday, 6:30-8 PM, Mandatory Junior/Parent Meeting

April 23, Saturday, Noon-2 PM, Library: **College Admission 202**, a more detailed look at how students can best present themselves in rep visits, interviews, correspondence, applications, supplements, etc. Vital for juniors, but all are welcome.

April 27: State-mandated **ACT testing for all juniors**. GW arranges registration and fees, and the test is administered during the school day. Please note that this version of the ACT does not include the optional Writing Test.

May 1: Deadline for seniors to respond to colleges that have offered admission, with a confirmation deposit (typically \$200-500) to the chosen school.

May 1, Sunday, 1-3:30 PM, Lakewood HS: Spring College Fair aimed at juniors and interested sophomores.

2010-2011 STANDARDIZED TESTING SCHEDULE

Standardized Test	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late (added fee) Registration Deadline
ACT with writing option	April 9	passed	passed
ACT <i>without</i> writing (CO ACT)	April 27	Automatic and free for all juniors	
SAT or Subject Tests	May 7	April 8	April 22
SAT or Subject Tests	June 4	May 6	May 20
ACT with writing option	June 11	May 6	May 20

Register online at <http://www.actstudent.org> (ACT), and <http://www.collegeboard.com> (SAT)

2011-2012 Anticipated SAT Test Dates: October 1, November 5, December 3, January 28, March 10, May 5, and June 2.

The **2011 PSAT/NMSQT Test Date** at GW is October 15. You must sign up for the PSAT/NMSQT at GW or at another high school in your community. This test is administered by high schools, not through test centers. Online registration for the PSAT/NMSQT is **not** available.

2011-2012 Anticipated ACT Test Dates: September 10, October 22, December 10, February 11, April 14, and June 9.

What Are “Likely Letters” and Why is Harvard Using Them?

GWIB’s worst-kept secret of this college admission season is that one of our seniors received a “likely letter” from Harvard almost a month before the official reply date of April 1. “The gist of these missives is: ‘We fully plan to accept you so you can breathe a sigh of relief, but don’t screw up between now and when you get your official acceptance because this one isn’t quite official’” (<http://www.collegeconfidential.com/dean/archives/what-are-likely-letters-like.htm>).

Just when you thought the process couldn’t get any more convoluted, along comes a new wrinkle.

But is it really new? Not at all, according to Valerie Strauss of *The Washington Post*. Her January 20 article (<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/answer-sheet/harvards-unofficial-early-admi.html>) includes input from Harvard’s Admissions Dean, who said that Harvard sent 300 “indicators of admissions” last year between October 1 and March 15, and that the Ivies have used the practice for years.

Letters typically go mostly to athletes, who are often pressured to commit to other schools during the National Letter of Intent (NLI) process and before the official April 1 general admission notification date. Since the Ivy League does not participate in NLI, a likely letter from an athlete’s top choice Ivy is the best way of assuring her or him that it’s safe to decline an NLI offer.

There is speculation that “likelies” were more heavily used by Harvard and Princeton for non-athlete recruits this year because of changes in their early admission process. Both institutions eschewed early acceptance practices in 2007 with the goal of leveling the playing field for less affluent students, hoping that other schools would follow their lead. That did not happen, and some top candidates went the early route at competitor schools rather than sweating things out in the regular decision pool.

As a result, Harvard and Princeton both announced in February that they were returning to the Early Action fold for Fall 2011, offering the same Single Choice Early Action option as Yale and Stanford (among others).

In the interim, likely letters help Harvard, Princeton and others “to ‘stroke’ sought-after applicants and to help them to think fondly of the college in question before they receive decisions from competitor schools” (*College Confidential, op. cit.*). When all is said and done, it seems safe to say that Harvard’s likely letter has generated more buzz than a “mere” acceptance letter dated April 1 would have – arriving as it did before the flood of all the other regular decision acceptances to all the other seniors from all the other schools. As if Harvard needed more cachet!

—Linda During, College Counseling Co-Chair



Harvard Gate in fall and winter

Photos by Tim Sackton

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People You Should Know: Joshua Vinlove

Often seen zooming to class in the early morning on his bicycle is not a rowdy student, but beloved PIB Biology and IB Environmental Systems and Societies teacher Joshua Vinlove. Vinlove is known as the fun-loving teacher who gets the job done but makes it an enjoyable experience for all of his students. As he does everything from working to revive the old GW greenhouse to sponsoring the GW Baking Club, it is clear that Vinlove is no ordinary science teacher. For instance, not only does he ride his bike to class more quickly, he also rides with a more meaningful intention.

“I bike to school for myriad reasons. Mostly because it is fun and good exercise. Also, as a teacher of Environmental Systems and Societies, I am teaching about the effects of carbon dioxide on the climate and on human populations,” explained Vinlove. “I am the change that I want to see in the world. By riding my bike over several years of transport to GW, I have avoided releasing thousands of pounds of carbon into the atmosphere. I want to show students and faculty that there is an alternative to our current unsustainable path of resource use.”

When considering the greenhouse, Vinlove has huge goals. Although the greenhouse has not been used or cared for in over 15 years, it is a big task at hand. But with the help of his students, he is aiming high and is hoping that this project will be accomplished.

“I am trying to revive the greenhouse because I want students to have hands-on knowledge of where their food comes from. I enjoy teaching about plants and how they are biological entities just like us. I would also like to lower the carbon footprint of the school by providing fresh produce for the school cafeteria, which will also increase the healthy choices available to the GW population. Unfortunately there are problems with the infrastructure of the greenhouse... so it is taking longer than expected to fix.”

With an education spanning all over the world Vinlove became a fluent Spanish-speaker. He probably has one of the most interesting and diverse educational backgrounds of the GW teachers. Not only that, but it reflects the ideals of the International Baccalaureate Programme as well.

“In high school I did a student exchange program to Tarragona, Spain. I then attended the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon where I studied Geography and Biology. I also attended the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology on the Oregon Coast. I participated in a study abroad program at Pontificia Universidad Catolica Ecuatoriana in Quito, Ecuador, which introduced me to indigenous cultures and tropical ecology.”

It is no wonder that Vinlove cares so much about the environment and sustainability as he has two kids, five-year-old daughter, Brady, and two-year-old son Avery.

“They are my best students!” raved Vinlove. “I love spending time with them making creative art projects, tooling around with them in the bike trailer, and reading books. We are looking forward to summer and swim lessons.”

Vinlove’s enthusiasm extends to every aspect of his life: from the earth, to his kids, to his students, his gusto is evident.

“I have had a huge variety of students over the years at GW. I have respect for all students. Teenage years are a time of great transition, and I feel lucky to be part of the lives of so many students who are awakening to their abilities and potential. Some students are clear on what they want, and work hard on achievement of those goals. Some students are still questioning their path, and will put effort into one project or another for a brief time and then move on to another focus. All of these paths are part of becoming an individual, which I see in all of my students.”

—Cass Duchan, IB Student Reporter

Contact Information

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655 S MONACO PKWY
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IB Broadcaster

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