



# TECH PARENTS NEWS

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April 2010

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## 20 Years of Triumph!

Marc Williams - Assistant Principal of Student and Parent Engagement



Twenty years....20 years....I can't believe it! It has been 20 years since I graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School. On April 24th, I will celebrate with my classmates at our 20th Reunion during Alumni Homecoming. My cousin told me the time would fly by and she was right. So I say the same to our Tech kids. Before they know it, they will be alum, looking back and amazed at what they have accomplished. Twenty years ago, I would have never thought that I'd be back in this building, teaching, organizing school events, affecting policy, allocating funds, and serving as an Assistant Principal. Wow, it is finally official. I truly am your Assistant Principal of Student and Parent Engagement. Thank you for your support. I look forward to developing an even greater bond among our parents, students, and staff. And I look forward to finding more ways to work with you as we strive to do the best for our Tech kids.

With that said, here's what 20 years of Tech spirit has led me to work on for the month of April 2010:

On Friday, April 9th, Brooklyn Tech will open the doors of our auditorium

to the *FACES Theater Network*, a performance group that is affiliated with Maimonides Medical Center. *FACES* helps adolescents confront the complex, and often, overwhelming social and emotional issues that they face in their everyday lives. I think that our students need to learn how to address these issues, especially as we approach a very stressful time in their lives: AP exams, selection of next year's courses, acceptance and rejection letters from college, end-of-year grades, and the plethora of issues that arise as summer draws near. The assembly will be held at 1:15pm. I invite any parents who are able to attend. From what I hear, it will be a powerful experience.

On Saturday, April 17, Brooklyn Tech will host a special event. If there's one thing I love to do, it's bringing in celebrities and newsworthy people. Well, on April 17th, Brooklyn Tech will welcome director James Cameron and actress Sigourney Weaver as they host the Avatar Award Competition. This special assembly is brought to us in conjunction with the organizers of the Words that Shook the World. You should start to see the major publicity campaign. The great thing is the competition itself. Students and teachers across the city will have the opportunity to present before Mr. Cam-

eron and Ms. Weaver for the chance to win \$5000 (for students) and \$2500 (for teachers). We want our children and staff to take advantage of this opportunity, especially since it is happening in our house! And I invite all Tech parents to attend as well. Whether your child wants to compete or just wants to attend, make it a family day. From 9am to 12:30, you can be a part of Tech history. All the details for registration are on the Brooklyn Tech website.

Finally, on April 23rd, Brooklyn Tech hopes to be able to say that we had 100% of our parents complete the Learning Environment Survey. And to motivate those of you who may not have completed it yet and to show appreciation to those of you who have done so, I would like to conduct a raffle with four very highly coveted items: FOUR APPLE I-PADS. But I think that I will only do the raffle IF and ONLY IF 85% of our parents com-

plete and submit the survey. As of March 26th, only 10% of our parents had completed the survey. I'm hoping to have an updated number by our PTA meeting on April 8th. And then I'll keep you updated. So WHEN you, the entire community of Brooklyn Tech parents, achieve our goal, then either at May or June's PTA meeting, we'll see who our lucky winners are. Those I-Pads are difficult to come by, but achieving such a goal is worth the gesture of gratitude.

Besides, I look forward to any opportunity to say to my Tech parents: "Thank you". You always deserve to hear that, and it doesn't take 20 years at Brooklyn Tech to know that.



If you're interested in receiving **Mr. Williams's Daily Announcements via e-mail**, please sign-up by contacting him at [mwilliams@bths.edu](mailto:mwilliams@bths.edu) - It is loaded with vital information of your child's ongoing concerns at Tech!

## Upcoming Events of Interest from The College Office



### **SPECIAL EVENTS TO HELP STUDENTS LEARN MORE ABOUT COLLEGE**

*(subject to change, see postings on BTHS.edu and to Naviance-registered e-mail addresses for updates)*

#### **April 15, 3:00PM, 2C3 – Panel Discussion on Public Universities**

Invited are: CUNY-Macaulay Honors, U. Conn., U. Maryland, Penn State, Rutgers, and SUNY

#### **April 29, 3:00PM, 2C3 – Panel Discussion on Women's Colleges**

Invited are: Barnard, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Wellesley, and Smith

**May 1, 1:00PM, 7th Fl. Cafeteria – BTHS COLLEGE FAIR immediately AFTER the SAT**  
Students are **URGED** to sit for the May SAT at

Brooklyn Technical High School.

#### **May 6, 3:00PM, 2C3 – Panel Discussion on Research Universities-1**

Invited are: SUNY Binghamton, Brandeis, Brown, Lehigh, Tufts, and the University of Texas at Austin.

#### **May 13, 3:00PM, 2C3 – Panel Discussion on Research Universities-2**

Invited are: SUNY University at Buffalo, Dartmouth, Fordham, Johns Hopkins, and Villanova.

#### **May 20, 3:00PM, 2C3–Panel Discussion / INFO Sessions with BTHS Alumni on “The College Experience”**

Recent alumni return to BTHS to share their college observations with current students. Hear about their college application experiences and their transition to college!



## Parents Asked, Tech Answered

Roweena Singh - Columnist

**Parent, Rosa Black:** *Are our contributions tax deductible, and if so will we received an acknowledgment of the amount?*

**Mr. Ritter, PTA Treasurer:** Our PTA recording secretary has been a bit behind in sending out all the thank you letters. In some cases, we are unable to send a thank you letter when a donation comes in with just a name but without an address or email.

For IRS filings, donations under \$250 do not need a thank you letter as supporting documentation of the donation. Possession of a canceled check meets their requirement. For donations \$250 and over, the donor is required to have a thank you letter from the organization. At this point, I have sent out emails and letters to all those who required a specific response to file their returns.

**Parent, Anna Chachanashvili:** *My son is in 10th grade and last week he selected/ranked majors. I would like to know when the results will be available and if the information will be made available on the website?*

**Ms. Epstein:** The majors selected by students will be handed out in prefect. To my knowledge they would not be available on the website.

**Parent, Joseph Lovecchio:** *My son is a sophomore and he has been receiving an enormous amount of mail from colleges. Should he be looking at colleges right now or when is the time when that student should apply?*

**Mr. Malchiodi:** Colleges purchase mailing lists from the College Board and other sources, and after taking the PSATs many households often become flooded with mail. It is never too early to begin researching colleges via college visits, websites, promotional mailings, guidebooks, or the College Search feature on Naviance. However, final decisions need to be made by the Fall of Senior year. There is time to pursue this research carefully and thoughtfully.

**Parent, Jane Barber:** *What is the best way to reach a teacher when one has concern about a student's progress in a class? I want to know why two of three teachers never responded to my email enquiries, while the third took a month to do so. I use the BTHS directory email accounts. Phone messages do not necessarily work better, I am not sure that any of these three teachers has ever re-*

*sponded by phone. One administrator only checks his NYC.edu or whichever, email account, but that is not made known. He did return a phone call thankfully. One teacher told me he never checks the BTHS email account. This certainly adds to the frustration of trying to reach a teacher occasionally, when there is a question of academic concern. I really rarely try to reach a teacher; it has to be a real roadblock for us before I can, so I find it very frustrating. I think three contact attempts in two years are pretty reasonable though I know the teachers are busy.*

**Mr. Williams:** I suggest getting in touch with your guidance counselor. Your guidance counselor will have a better chance of contacting your teachers and being the means of communication between the teacher and the parent.

**Parent, G. Gomez:** *I just read the article, "How Privacy Vanishes Online, a Bit at a Time" (<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/17/technology/17privacy.html>) describing how it is almost impossible to remain anonymous on the web. Frankly, all the private information that kids freely talk about on the web will remain there forever and probably will be used against them, by future employers, insurance companies etc. Are the children warned about this issue?*

**Mr. Belmont:** In the entertainment business there is something called the "open mike rule." It states that anything you say could be in front of an open microphone and become public, with possible negative consequences. Yet, many people who should know better continue to get caught. Two famous cases are of President Ronald Reagan who told an inappropriate joke with an open microphone nearby, and President George Bush who was caught using a profanity. In my class, we talk about these issues but young people, like adults may not always get the message. And very often the conversations may not be able to keep up with the technological changes that are finding more and more ways to intrude on our privacy. Students should be getting this message in schools, in their homes and from seeing every day in the news another story about someone's privacy being violated on the Internet. But they may not always be listening.

*continued on next page....*

# Spring Safety Tips

by Enid Febus - PTA Co-President



*Spring is finally here! All those Nor'easters with rain or snow kept everyone indoors. Wow! It was something! The weather was really hard on all of us especially our teens.*

*Now that the weather is great, they want to migrate to open areas like parks, pools, or hangout after school at the nearest green spot.*

*Taking things seriously now is the time to alert our teens to the dangers lurking in some of the nearby parks. Parents should take into consideration all the warnings and information given by our Safety Committee. Students must be careful in these areas specially if they have electronic games, cell phones or iPods. In general, adults have been assaulted and robbed for less. Please, let's avoid these incidents from now on. Let's remind our children to be mindful of their surroundings when making calls; they should*

*walk with other students. They need to stay alert and keep away from altercations if they see any. Ask them to keep in touch if they stay after school for any reason. Tell them you're not keeping tabs on them but just want to know they're okay.*

*On the other hand, as parents we have provided them with these cell phones, music and game devices. Remember it doesn't matter how much we trust them, we definitely want peace of mind. So there is the alternative of contacting the cell companies for the "Track-Your-Phone" option. It will let you know exactly where that phone is. If you do this, you cannot let your teen know otherwise they will turn the phone off. It's just a matter of safety and peace of mind.*

## Q&A

*The PTA is committed to assist all parents by simplifying their Brooklyn Tech experience and providing need-to-know information. Thanks to all of the parents who have submitted questions for the panel.*

*Submit your questions to [pta.asktech@gmail.com](mailto:pta.asktech@gmail.com) and the PTA will publish the answers in this Q&A Column. Remember, you will be doing a service for your fellow parent as many of us have the same concerns.*

*Thanks to the faculty members for their answers to the parents' questions and support of this column:*

*Mr. David Belmont, English Teacher*

*Mrs. Harriet Epstein, Guidance Counselor*

*Mr. Giancarlo Malchiodi, College Advisor /Teacher of English*

*Mr. Marc Williams, Assistant Principal of Student and Parent Engagement*

## A College Freshman's Success Story

Jean Joachim - Former PTA Co-President



*"Slow starter makes good." This could be the headline in an article about my son, Steve's progress in the race for success in life. Although he messed up his first two years*

*at Tech, he pulled it together the last two years. Still, some colleges weren't convinced, especially his first choice, Juniata College in central Pennsylvania.*

*Why was this college so special? Outside of the fact that they were small, had a terrific science program and a rural location, I'm not sure. But Steve fell in love with the school and he put the pedal to the metal to get in.*

*Against all odds, the college office gave him a 7% chance of getting admitted, he did get in. Granted, he was a "conditionally admitted" student, being watched by the college in the first semester and helped to succeed by close supervision by his advisor...thank God it wasn't me...still, he got in! I began to believe in miracles.*

*But I worried. How was he going to do 200 miles away from home, on his own with a huge schedule of 17 credits which included biology and the grueling organic chemistry? I was nervous but I kept my mouth shut...a feat for me.*

*The first thing Steve did was join the rugby team. This was a good move because rugby was a sport not played in high school, so no one coming in was experienced, and he had an instant group of 30 friends, pulling for him to succeed and available to hang out with.*

*They are like his family away from home.*

*Then he redirected his determination to his college courses and away from giving us a hard time. This was the magic change, both for him and for us. We could tell the change in him when he came home for mid-fall break (a new thing since I went to school). He was more appreciative and more respectful. He was more of an adult. I could see the change in such a short time and was thankful that he got to go to a great school that gave him the incentive and freedom to grow.*

*Steve pulled a 3.4 average his first semester with an "A" in organic chemistry and an "A-" in Russian. We were thrilled! Steve wants to go to vet school, the hardest grad school to get into in the country because there are only 28 of them. This is his next hurdle and he's already making plans: to create a schedule to help him stand out, work at a vet's office in the summer, to do some volunteer work and to start visiting vet schools.*

*This goof-off boy who never wanted to plan ahead is growing up. We thought it would never happen. Going away to college forces him to take responsibility and grow up. We're proud of him and credit some of his success to his experience at Brooklyn Tech from his challenging classes, excellent teachers and the discipline he learned in wrestling.*

*Trust in your children and let them go away to school as kids and come home to you as adults.*

### CLASSIFIED ADS

Tech parents, faculty and administration members may submit classified ads at free of charge to [stratm3@yahoo.com](mailto:stratm3@yahoo.com)

## ADVERTISEMENT

*Consider placing an ad in the Newsletter!*

**Per Issue Rates:**

<b>1/8 page - business card size</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>1/4 page</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>1/2 page</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Full page</b>	<b>\$200</b>

Contact: Mike Tang 917-687-4803 / e-mail: stratm3@yahoo.com



54-36 63rd Place  
Maspeth NY  
11378-1213  
UNITED STATES

Phone: 718-672-2251

Fax: 718-478-8460



## Tech's Ultimate Craft Club!

Susan Sabah-Miller, Faculty Advisor of the Ultimate Craft Club would like to thank the PTA for their grant. The club meets in the library Wednesdays period 10. Ms. Miller teach the members to make quilts, sew, bead, weave, knit and crochet. This year they had over 40



members. She says, "it's so rewarding to see them so excited to learn a new craft and then to help newcomers also learn." Every year we donate finished quilts and "comfort dolls" to various charities. Last year, we donated to Brooklyn's VA Hospital and ABC Quilts (for babies born 'at-risk').

Ms. Miller would like to ask the whole Tech community to keep the club in mind if they have unfinished projects, or clean out a closet and find supplies that would help our club keep going - fabric, needles, beads, broken jewelry, yarn, crochet hooks, books, etc. would be greatly appreciated and put to good use.

Ms. Miller's contact info:

Susan Sabah-Miller, Librarian  
Brooklyn Technical High School  
29 Fort Greene Pl.  
Brooklyn, NY 11219  
ssabahm@schools.nyc.gov  
718-804-6585



**BROOKLYN TECH PARENTS ASSOCIATION**

Co-Presidents: - Enid Febus / Judith Hertzberg  
Principal - Randy Asher  
A.P. of Student and Parent Engagement - Marc Williams  
Parent Coordinator - S. Mei Chan  
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Sergeant-at-Arms - Michelle Ifill-Williams

School Leadership Team  
SLT Judith Hertzberg / SLT Theresa Law  
SLT Mike Tang / SLT Liz Moreno  
SLT David Gold

Committee Chairs  
College Process - Carrie Ho / Jean-Louis Motolo  
Teacher Grants - Elizabeth DeAngelis  
Fundraising - Randy Gresl  
Communications - Mike Tang  
Teacher Appreciation Dinner - Stephen Gales  
Chinese New Year Dinner - Elizabeth DeAngelis / Li Pan

## **April Calendar**

### **April 8, 2010**

- **7:00 PM - 9:00 PM:** PTA Meeting

### **April 10, 2010**

- 3rd Annual Career Day

### **April 13-15, 2010**

- **3:00 PM - 6:00 PM:** Student/Faculty Table Tennis Tourney

### **April 15, 2010**

- **3:00 PM - 4:30 PM:** PANEL DISCUSSION ON PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

### **April 15, 2010**

- **9:00 AM - 12 PM:** The AVATAR Competition hosted by James Cameron

### **April 21-22, 2010**

- **6:00 PM - 9:00 PM:** Spring Musical – Sweeney Todd

### **April 23, 2010**

- **4:00 PM - 7:00 PM:** Spring Musical – Sweeney Todd

### **April 23-25, 2010**

- Alumni Homecoming

### **April 26, 2010**

- **4:00 PM - 7:00 PM:** Spring Musical – Sweeney Todd

### **April 29, 2010**

- **3:00 PM - 4:30 PM:** PANEL DISCUSSION ON WOMEN'S COLLEGES

### **April 30, 2010**

- End of 5th Marking Period
- Mr & Mrs Tech

### **May 1, 2010**

- Admin Staff Development Day
- SAT Exam
- **1:00 PM - 4:00 PM:** BTHS College Fair

### **May 5, 2010**

- Grades Due

### **May 6, 2010**

- **3:00 PM - 4:30 PM:** DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES-1
- **7:00 PM - 9:00 PM:** PTA Meeting

