



The High School View

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Senior earns full ride

BY DANIELLE HOPKINS

As deadlines approach and winter sets in, many regional high school seniors are scrambling to create the perfect college application. For one student, the decision has already been made. On Dec. 1, senior Jared Livingston was awarded the opportunity of a lifetime — a four-year scholarship to his top choice school, Caltech College of Pasadena, Calif. He will be majoring in biochemistry.

Jared applied to Caltech through a program called Questbridge. “Questbridge is a program designed to match high-achieving, low-income students with top-tier institutions,” he said.

Of 13,264 applicants, 4,895 students, 37 percent of applicants, became Questbridge finalists, and 657 — 5 percent of applicants — got matched to colleges. Jared was one of four students to be matched with Caltech.

Senior and good friend of Jared Penelope Dutton said, “I think Jared received this scholarship because he has shown both how academically strong he is and well-rounded. I mean, the typical ‘biochemistry student’ can’t say they played a cat in a fat suit, led an a capella group, and played the handbells, now can they?”

Fellow senior and friend Ian Shea said, “I don’t think I have ever seen Jared not motivated. It didn’t matter if it was

academic or not, he has always had that passion to get better. That’s what has driven him.”

Jared said, “I don’t think there is one specific thing that helped me in getting the scholarship, I just had a well-rounded application. I put a lot of work into my essays, working with Mr. Sharkovitz to make them better.”

He is a member of the Minnesingers and is the male lead for “Chicago,” this year’s musical. Along with being a



Senior Jared Livingston, future Cal Tech student, rehearses with the Soundwave a capella group on Dec. 7.

member of the MVironment Club, he’s a leader in Sound Wave, the high school’s male a capella group. Between the community outreach that MVironment and Minne-

singers conduct, and the Elder Tech fairs that he has organized at Alex’s Place of the YMCA, Jared’s community service is above and beyond.

Jan Wightman, chair of the Performing Arts department, said, “From his freshman year, Jared has been an exceptional member of the department, and I realized immediately he was also an amazing thinker. I think of him as dedicated, responsible, and goal-oriented. He is a leader and a role model in Minnesingers, theater

productions, and classes.” Class of 2015 graduate Katherine Reid, a friend of Jared’s, said, “It amazes me how he can take all these things and continue to maintain his sanity and his average. I mean, he’s the perfect candidate for the scholarship. He’s brilliant, self-motivated, a leader. He’s going to go far.”

World history teacher Corinne Kurtz said, “I’m not sure what drives him. He never struck me as the kid who was driven by grades, his class rank, or what so-and-so got. And, more important, he never came off as arrogant about his intellect. I think the scholarship committee chose well. If there is a more deserving kid, I’d love to meet him or her.” **HSV**

Retreat confronts social tension

BY SOPHIA MCCARRON

Barriers were broken down and tears flew freely at the annual Race Culture Retreat. This two-day workshop is the brainchild of a collaboration between Tony Lombardi, executive director of Alex’s Place, Michael McCarthy, head of the guidance department at the high school, and Amy Lilavois, school adjustment counselor.

The students participating in the retreat are led through team bonding exercises, and then they break into home groups of about eight students.

Portuguese teacher Jane Sampaio, who went the past two years, said, “It is very much student-run. None of the adults had a part in choosing what would happen. We had our say, but really it was all the student facilitators.”

Crockett Cataloni, a senior and facilitator, said, “I first went to the retreat my sophomore year. This year was more emotional. I feel like my sophomore

year I wasn’t as open to contributing.”

Ms. Lilavois said, “I think it really depends on who the groups are. We try and form home groups with talkers and non-talkers and get a good cross-section of the group and student body. This year there were a lot of kids who were willing to step in and take risks. My ultimate goal is to make this school environment as safe as possible.”

The retreat encouraged students to let down their defenses and talk about issues deeper than flunking a test or sleeping through an alarm. Junior J.J. Mendez Jr. said, “It was a huge eye-opener. It showed me that you can’t judge people by your preconceived notions, and that everyone has a backstory.”

Junior Sophie Bonneau said, “It was really amazing to hear what people go through. The people in the hallway, they’re always smiling and I would have never ever guessed some of these things.”

This retreat is also a valuable reminder for teachers that they don’t always know fully what’s going on in a student’s life. Science teacher and department chair Mike Joyce said, “You get to see a little more of what’s going on outside of school. As a teacher you only see a limited view of a student’s life. When you say something and they react to it, you don’t know what’s driving that reaction, and this retreat gave a new perspective.”

All those who participated were asked to bring what they learned into the high school and not to be a bystander if they were to witness bullying or any form of discrimination.

Crockett said, “You’d like to think that people bring what they learn into the high school, but it’s on them. I definitely notice more of a change in myself.”

Ms. Lilavois said, “It’s 100 percent worth it. It’s exhausting, emotionally exhausting, however it’s important to show kids it’s OK to be uncomfortable.” **HSV**

Beyond calming down

BY OLIVIA JACOBS

Worriers and non-worriers alike listened intently to adolescent anxiety expert Lynn Lyons during her visit to Island schools last week. Mrs. Lyons is a licensed social work-

School adjustment counselor Amy Lilavois coordinated Mrs. Lyon’s trip to the Vineyard. Having first heard her speak at a conference in Boston, Ms. Lilavois wanted to bring her to the Island for others to hear.

In her student presenta-

tion, Mrs. Lyons said, “Worry is part of being human. We need to know how anxiety operates so that we can do the opposite of what it wants. It gets in the way of us taking reasonable risks. Anxiety is just a voice in your head saying ‘Blah blah blah, and you

can’t handle it!’ It’s not a complicated monster, but it can be a monster.”

Followed by the laughter of many students, Mrs. Lyons said, “Anxiety is your brain saying ‘My girl is in trouble!’ The goal is to re-train the brain by stepping into situations that are triggering, and sitting with the uncomfortable feelings until they become less scary. The only way to handle worry is to confront worry — no avoidance.”

Senior Olivia Green-Lingren reflected on the talk. She said, “My mom is a therapist, and I thought talking about your problems would help in every situation. But Lynn explained why talking about anxiety doesn’t help fix it. Personally, I was most compelled by her explanation of the physical symptoms and chemical pathways of anxiety.”

Mrs. Lyons finished her talk with words of wisdom for students: “It’s very dangerous to believe everything you think. You have to get off defense, and get on offense! Try to break down and compartmentalize big problems. Anxiety is not a permanent, lifelong disease — the brain is malleable.” **HSV**



Anxiety expert Lynn Lyons spoke to high school students in the MVRHS library on Friday, Dec. 4. Her talk discussed how to manage physical and emotional stress.

er and presents on anxiety nationally. She has published numerous books, and maintains a private practice in New Hampshire. In her presentation titled “Beyond Calming Down,” Mrs. Lyons discussed how to manage anxiety of all types.

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