

Fontbonne Hall Academy

Parent NEWSLETTER

2018 - 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we approach the end of the second quarter, which is the halfway mark of our school year, I want to update you on a few ongoing items and initiatives:

- At the beginning of this school year, we announced our theme of *Be Bold* at our opening assembly. As we all get caught up in the challenges of the school year, it is always important to recall our overarching goal of teaching our students not to be afraid of taking risks. Our teachers are doing this every day in class and we hope that you can reinforce this message at home in order to help your daughter build confidence through independence. A terrific article that may be a very helpful resource to you is the New York Times article, [“The Confidence Gap for Girls: 5 Tips for Parents of Tween and Teen Girls.”](#)
- We are still in the process of working with the Department of Buildings to get approval for our new fire alarm system. Once the new system is approved we will be able to activate our key card system, and our students will need their ID cards in order to access all external doors since they will automatically lock after each change of class. Our expeditor has just re-submitted our plans and supporting documents and we are hoping that this will be the last step in what has been a very unexpected long and complicated process.
- During our January 28th Professional Development day, we will have a demonstration of the ALICE Active Shooter Protocol that will be presented to all of our faculty and staff. The latest research regarding response to school violent attacks indicates that faculty and staff need to be trained to take a more active role in defending students rather than following a more passive lockdown plan. We hope to implement full training for our faculty and staff in September of 2019.
- We have begun course selection for 2019-2020. Grade level presentations were conducted last week and teachers will speak to students in their classes through February 8th. Students will also have mandatory meetings with a guidance counselor and those meetings will be ongoing through March 29th. Please ask your daughter about the courses that she plans to take next year. These are critical decisions since strength of schedule is a very important factor in college admissions. Please note that once a student has registered for her classes and her schedule is completed we do not allow for course changes in September.
- E-cigarette use has increased considerably in recent years, and all middle

schools and high schools are facing challenges in regulating the use of these devices. The most popular device is known as a JUUL, and contrary to the commonly held belief that vaping is safe, the surgeon general recently declared a youth e-cigarette epidemic. Cartridges may contain nicotine, and the flavored liquids contain many chemicals that when heated and vaped, can be harmful to one's health. JUUL accounts for 76% of the e-cigarette market and is the device of choice for teens since it looks very similar to a USB, making it easy to hide from teachers and administrators. [Truth Initiative](#) is an organization that is committed to creating a culture where all youth and young adults reject tobacco. The organization also provides the latest research on e-cigarettes and helpful programs and advice on helping your daughter give up e-cigarette use. Please refer to page 10 under "Smoking" of our student handbook for our policy regarding vaping and the possession of e-cigarettes and cartridges while on campus. (click video below for more)



As always, thank you for your support, and please feel free to call or email me with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Regards,
Mary Ann Spicijaric
Principal

BONNIE NEWS

BIOTECHNOLOGY STUDENTS ENTER LAB COMPETITION

Two student teams from Fontbonne were selected to be a part of the prestigious **Urban Bar Code Project Competition**. This competition is open to some of the best New York City high school students. Just as a unique pattern of bars in a universal product code (UPC) identifies each item for sale in a store, a DNA barcode is a DNA sequence that uniquely identifies each species.

In the Urban Barcode Project, student research teams use DNA barcoding to discover and catalog biodiversity on our planet. On Saturday, 01/12/19, 7 of our Biotechnology students competed for the lab component of the competition. Our students worked tirelessly from 9 am – 2:30 pm at the DNA Lab, together with teams from other schools.

Fontbonne teams were the first to complete the lab successfully, with an amplified sequence of frog DNA and an amplified sequence of squid DNA submitted for sequencing. Our students will then proceed to the next phase of the competition –

analyzing the bioinformatics in order to discover a unique and novel sequence of DNA for each of these species.



SCHOLAR SOCIETY SCREENING

Members of The Scholar Society took a trip to the Cobble Hill Cinemas to see the movie, *On the Basis of Sex*.

The film is a biographical legal drama based on the life and early cases of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY STUDENTS ATTEND PRESTIGIOUS SCIENCE SEMINAR

The *Talking Science* seminar at Rockefeller University is designed to increase interest in science and expose invited high school students to the first rate research being undertaken at the university, which ranks among the top institutions in biomedical research. The event featured the research of Dr Daniel Kronauer who studies social insects (particularly army ants) and their evolution. By studying these ants in the field and in the lab, Dr Kronauer is able to address more encompassing questions in evolutionary biology, such as the evolution of social behavior, co-evolution, and the preservation of ecosystems. The talks were fascinating as they revealed what a dynamic and engaging career a research scientist has and how they are able to study nature. The students participated in interactive exhibits and learned about research at the university, earning a certificate of participation.



STUDENTS EXHIBIT SHARK TANK PROJECTS

Senior Economics classes participated in Shark Tank projects where students had to invent a new product for the current economic market. Ideas ranged from solar powered benches to apps that sized your online clothing shopping to your specific dimensions. Others created special baseball bats and even customizable face masks. Each group was charged with connecting the CSJ mission of caring for the Earth that we live on to their product through the use of environmentally conscious plastics, solar power, biodegrade materials, etc. At our Product Fair, students pitched their creations, some even brought to life with the use of the 3D printer in our Fab Lab, while "sharks" invested their money in the products.



FOOD DRIVE FOR LOCAL

FAMILIES

In support of our Coast Guard families who serve at Fort Wadsworth on Staten Island, Fontbonne participated in a food drive to help stock the pantry at the base.

Thank you to all who supported this effort!

[Text Link](#)

"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."

-Joseph Campbell



REMINDERS

On **January 30th**, the Women's Empowerment Club will be hosting a speaker, Selene Milano. Ms. Milano will talk about confidence, self image, defying societal standards in terms of career and everyday actions, and especially, **being bold!** This talk will take place after school at 3:00PM in the Cafeteria, and is open to all members and non-members.



SELENE MILANO

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO LOSE *gain?*

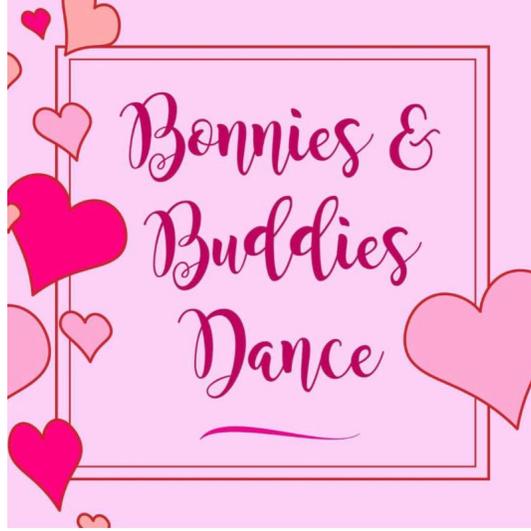
Milano is coming to talk about confidence, self image, defying societal standards in terms of career and everyday actions, and especially, **being bold!**

January 30th
3:00 PM • FHA Cafeteria

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Come join the **Women's Empowerment Club** in welcoming speaker —
Selene Milano

One of our most popular memory-building events is right around the corner! Join us on **Friday, February 1st** (7-11PM) at Garguilo's Restaurant for dinner, dancing, raffles and fun! Questions and RSVP: Mrs. Maldari at 718-307-5814 or maldari@fontbonne.org.



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Join us on social media!

