

Paw Prints

TODAY'S THOUGHTS FROM TOMORROW'S LEADERS

DECEMBER 2018

North Bergen High School

INSIDENBHS

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An honest guide to help you compose a memorable essay.

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A GUIDE TO PERFECTING YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY



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By Cristy Garcia

Eloquently compiling the most impactful and influential experiences of your seventeen-year-old life into a maximum of 650 words is a nerve-wracking task. These kinds of tasks are what colleges ask applicants to do in order to review their applications holistically.

Composing your college essay can produce loads of fear and anxiety, but luckily there are some tricks to writing a personal essay you can submit with pride:

Show don't tell. Many of us have heard this expression before and it can sound cliché, but it holds truth. If you're going to recall an event or convey a sentiment, don't just state it--elaborate. Be specific in the experiences that you mention and be sure to include an explanation for any rash statements made.

Use descriptive language that is rich with detail rather than a blunt, two-dimensional statement. Use visuals to transport the reader to exact moment in which you are describing.

Be honest. Do not be afraid to show vulnerability and use your genuine voice.

When deciding what topic is appro-

priate to write about, do not choose a subject that you do not feel passionate about or that you could not speak about confidently. You may be hesitant about discussing a topic that is controversial, but if you feel that it defines who you are in some way then don't shy away from expressing that.

There is power in your stories and your background. Colleges want to see authenticity.

Use appropriate vocabulary. Your essay should be eloquent and grammatically correct, but shy away from using words that you wouldn't normally use because it will be noticeable.

No gimmicks. Diary confessions, direct dialogue, poetry, or rhyming are rarely ever structured properly or come across as creative. Creativity is welcomed and sometimes it can be clever but do not take the risk if the format is not an area of expertise for you. A genuine and honest voice makes a better impression.

Make sure that your essay does not come across as if you are asking for pity. Most people have experienced traumatic experiences that have defined their young adult lives and these experiences are worth

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It's especially important for admissions counselors to understand an applicant on a personal scale but students often make the common mistake of forgetting to elaborate on overcoming these obstacles and instead detail more about their struggle and grief rather than the lessons they've learned.

Go at it backwards when you're done. Ask yourself "Did I answer the question of the prompt I chose?" Many applicants tend to diverge from the essay question and it can demonstrate a lack of focused writing. This is exactly what you want to avoid.

Make sure that all aspects of the prompt are addressed in your essay. To wrap it up, ask yourself these two questions: "What did I want to say?" and "Did I say it the best way I could?" If the answer to both of these is yes, your next step is to have someone proofread your essay and, if you've already done that, then you are ready to submit.

NORTH BERGEN HIGH SCHOOL CADAVER LAB

By Samantha Potrille

On December 7th, the North Bergen High School Anatomy classes went on a field trip to the Rutgers University Lab Center on Busch Campus in Piscataway, New Jersey. There, students were invited to participate in medical dissection and interact with two of the cadavers the regular university students had been studying that semester.

One of the cadavers, a sixty-nine-year-old male, died in December of acute myocardial infarction. The other cadaver was a ninety-four-year-old woman who died in November of terminal debility (natural causes). Instead, there

were one or more chronic conditions that broke the body down to the point where it could no longer thrive.

The bodies used by the lab are donated to the Robert Wood Johnson cadaver program. Any person who wishes to donate their body to the cadaver program does so through the school and is protected under the Uniform Anatomical Gift Act. There are two ways to donate your body you can either donate through preregistration or bequeathal after death.

At the end of the semester, the bones are cremated. The ashes can be returned to family or /next of kin. If the family doesn't want the ashes returned then, the medical school will hold them until they can be placed in a burial plot at a local cemetery.

NEW TRAFFIC PATTERNS FOR SEVERAL NORTH BERGEN STREETS

By Cristy Garcia

On Tuesday, November 27th, the Township of North Bergen converted several streets, from 79th through 81st, from a two-way to a one-way traffic pattern. This was reportedly done to reduce traffic congestion between Bergenline Avenue, John F. Kennedy Boulevard, and Tonnelle Avenue.

79th Street became eastbound from Tonnelle Avenue to Kennedy Boulevard, and 80th Street became one way westbound from Kennedy Boulevard to Tonnelle Avenue. In addition, 81st Street was converted into one-way westbound from Bergenline Avenue to 2nd Avenue.

According to the North Bergen Police Department, the Department of Public Works, and the New Jer-



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sey and Hudson County Departments of Transportation, these alterations were put into effect after longstanding issues regarding traffic congestion and parking in the area, as well as to increase safety for motorists and pedestrians.

Traffic congestion may happen for commuters following GPS directions that aren't updated and local residents may have a difficult time adjusting to the changes in route. Motorists will have to take different routes along streets between Bergenline and Tonnelle Avenue to reach the same destination.

The town is taking precautionary measures to ensure that drivers are notified and aware of the changes. According to Hudpost, the North Bergen Police Department will monitor vehicular traffic flow throughout the holiday season and these upcoming months to ensure the adjustments serve their intended purpose and benefit the township.

25TH ANNUAL WINTERFEST

By Samantha Potrille

Every year, North Bergen Township puts on a block party stretching from 76th street to 85th street to celebrate the upcoming winter season. This year, the town celebrated the 25th anniversary of this event on November 29th.

With Winterfest being one of the biggest annual events in the

township there's so much preparation that goes into planning the event. Winterfest offers rides, games, face painting, horse and buggy rides, food, music, a petting zoo, and performances by the North Bergen High School choir.

To kick off the event, the second annual tree lighting ceremony took place a day prior. The event was sponsored by County Executive Thomas DeGise, Freeholder Anthony Vainieri, Mayor Nicholas Sacco, and the North Bergen Board of Commissioners.

Students and teachers from all over the town came out to support the event and volunteer their time. All of the planning, events, and volunteers made this an unforgettable event for all who attended.

END OF THE PARCC: CONTROVERSIAL TEST IS REMOVED AS A GRAD REQUIREMENT

By Jose Garcia

Beginning with the Class of 2020, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) exam will no longer be considered a requirement for high school graduation. The New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) and

Governor Phil Murphy have called for the elimination of the PARCC to emphasize a focus on teaching instead of testing.

The PARCC exam, which first started in New Jersey during the 2014-2015 school year, faced a widespread backlash from students, faculty, and administration. During the inaugural year, an estimated 15% of juniors in New Jersey decided to "opt-out" of the test, costing the state \$1.4 million.

The following school year, in 2016, the PARCC was ruled a requirement for graduation in an effort to increase participation, saving the state money. Students who had avoided taking the PARCC were instructed that they would have to make up the test, causing confusion.

On December 31st, 2018, New Jersey court judges ruled that the class of 2020 and beyond will not be required to pass the PARCC in order to finish high school.

Unfortunately, this ruling will not save all students from the extra requirement - - - namely, this year's graduating class. According to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), in the class of 2019, 38.9% of students scoring below the passing required for the English portion of the exam and 28.6% of students scoring below the passing required for the Geometry portion.

The NJDOE has 30 days to appeal the result and bring it to the Supreme Court if they want to keep the PARCC. Though avoiding the



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potential length of a Supreme Court process could mean the end of a short but stressful saga for many.

HOW TO RELIEVE SCHOOL STRESS

By Samantha Potrille

Every year, up to one in five children living in the U.S. show signs or symptoms of a mental health disorder. Combined with the number of students who deal with stress and anxiety, mental health issues have become more prevalent in our society.

While it is important to seek professional help when appropriate, there are still many ways to help manage some of the anxiety and stress that school can create on your own.

One way to reduce stress is to set aside time for self-care. There's no way to 100% avoid the at least some level of stress caused by school, so it is vital to find ways to cope with that stress. Simple things like reading your favorite book or just watching your favorite movie can help you decompress.

"EVERY YEAR UP TO ONE IN FIVE CHILDREN LIVING IN THE U.S. SHOW SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OF A MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER"

Another way to reduce stress in school is to change the way you tackle assignments. It's important to group your work into more manageable portions of your time. If you have an essay or project that's causing you anxiety, making things like a checklist or an outline or an abstract can really help make a difficult assignment seem less challenging.

One more way to reduce stress in school is to set more achievable goals. Focusing on too many things at once

THE RISE AND FALL OF 6IX9INE

can potentially take a toll on your stress levels. Instead of setting goals to be at the top of your class, set goals to be satisfied with your own performance and effort. If you're working to your best ability but you're still not getting straight A's, then take pride in the efforts you've made because that matters just as much.

By Cristy Garcia

Tekashi69, popularly referred to as 6ix9ine, has recently become a notorious figure in the music industry. The 20-year-old rapper's extravagant physical appearance, boisterous music, and an extensive criminal record have secured a large following and drawn unprecedented attention.

Although he is not the first controversial performer to cause an internet frenzy, the rise of artists similar to him reveals something interesting about consumers' attitudes towards the quality of music, entertainment, violence, and money.

6ix9ine has committed a series of crimes including posting a video of a 13-year-old girl engaged in sexual activities. When the rapper was first tried, he was sentenced to 1,000 hours of community service and four years' probation. After several violations of this probation, including federal racketeering and connection to the attempted murder of rapper Chief Keef, he sits behind bars in a New York penitentiary.

Criminal behavior by artists is not in any way uncommon but Tekashi69's fanbase has begun to resemble a cult-like following, many using the hashtag #Free69 advocating for his release. Other fans have publicly planned a jailbreak orchestrated through Facebook.

Despite the criminal convictions, substantial video evidence, and personal confessions, "69ers" remain loyal, justifying the rapper's crimes. Radio series and podcasts like the

Breakfast Club and The Angie Martinez Show have received a lot of attention since featuring Tekashi69 on their programs.

When The Angie Martinez Show interviewed 6ix9ine, the rapper made one of his most controversial comments. When asked if he was serious about his craft, he responded by saying, "No. I'm literally not. Seriously no. We go in the studio and just be having fun and then it's a hit."

Despite the fact that the rapper blatantly admitted the lack of effort he puts into his music, many fans, many of whom are between the ages of 14-25, are indifferent to the rapper's actions and message--or lack thereof. Tekashi69 himself has admitted that his persona is just for shock value which is used as a commodity.

This presents an interesting question for many observing the rapper's career and social media presence: What does this mean about how we react to violence and how much we care about the quality of music?

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

January 2019

TUE 1	School Closed -
WED 2	Back to School
MON 7	Beginning of
MON 14	Beginning of
MON 21	School Closed -