



Trojan

Newsletter from
Wissahickon High School

Talk



September 2020

Update from Dr. Blair, WHS Principal

Dear WHS Students and Parents,

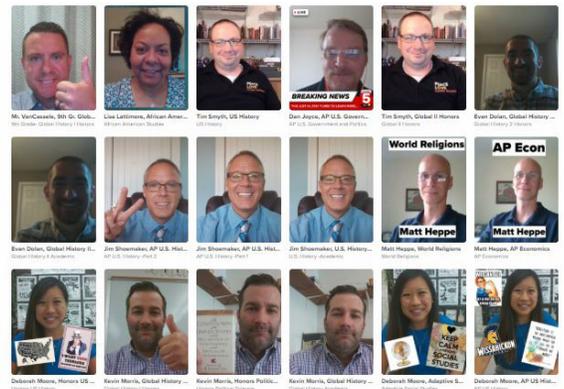
Around this time every year, I am sending out my first monthly Trojan Talk newsletter filled with back to school pictures and highlights from our August and September events at WHS. This year, we don't have first day of school pictures showing students coming off of the bus with expressions that could either be classified as nervousness or excitement (or maybe both!); instead, you probably have your own first day pictures showing students in your makeshift home classrooms wearing comfortable sweatpants in front of their screens. But, despite the uniqueness of this kick-off, I think we are off to a really good start, after navigating through the first few bumpy days. (Thank you for your patience and support as we all continue to learn together.) This week, I started popping into some virtual classes and I am consistently in awe of our wonderful teachers and students; everyone is embracing this virtual learning with gusto. I saw teachers getting to know their students, students participating in really great discussions, and our teachers implementing so many new technology tools with a level of expertise that makes me proud. There is nothing that can replace face-to-face learning in the building but given our circumstances, I am thrilled with where we are right now. This is a community that knows how to make the best out of a terribly challenging time.

Activity Highlights: We have seen some other non-academic highlights in our virtual world as well. Our 9th graders participated in our first ever (and hopefully only!) virtual orientation in August. A shout-out to our Wiss Link teacher and student leaders for their hard work at welcoming the Class of 2024 to WHS! They helped us distribute the lawn signs for our 9th graders and came to our August ice-cream meet and greets. The mentors will continue to support our 9th graders in the coming months in outside of the box ways. Stay tuned for more information! We also shared our teacher videos with you for our virtual Back to School Night and had our annual 9/11 tribute concert virtually. Our student athletes are back on the fields and enjoying the opportunity to connect with their peers. And our clubs are starting to have their first virtual meetings for the 2020-2021 school year. We encourage all of our students to join some of these groups, even if you have never been involved before. This is a great time to start! Mr. Cairnes posted the contact information for all of our club leaders on Schoology and we encourage you to reach out and get involved. We will soon be sharing videos from each club for our 9th graders and new

students to learn what each club does throughout the school year. Finally, this week, our Faculty and Staff started their participation in our Professional Learning Community discussions focused on cultural responsiveness. We recognize the urgent need to move us forward in this extraordinarily important work.



Above: Wiss Link leaders created a virtual tour of WHS for 9th graders. Below: Back to School Night video presentations were created by every teacher.



Fun Friday: We had our first "Fun Friday" community building activity for our students on Friday, September 11th. A few times each month, we will have these Fun Friday events before the first class starts. Students are encouraged to log on and join their homeroom cohort for fun activities, get to know you activities, and games. Spoiler alert: At least once per month, I send a pizza to one student winner from each grade for lunch if you win the games. Who can pass that up!? Though it requires waking up a little earlier to log-on, I do encourage you to participate in the virtual fun.

Attendance: I wanted to provide a reminder to you about daily attendance because it seems to be raising some questions. Attendance for students in each of their live classes is required. Absence notes and notes to “arrive late” or for an “early dismissal” for appointments should be emailed to our attendance office (ncrawford@wsdweb.org). Please include your student’s name, date of absence, time of appointment if arriving late or leaving early, and absence reason. The email to our Attendance Office must be sent in order for the absence to be recorded as excused. You don’t need to call our Attendance Office while we are virtual. If you have any questions, please reach out to Mrs. Crawford.

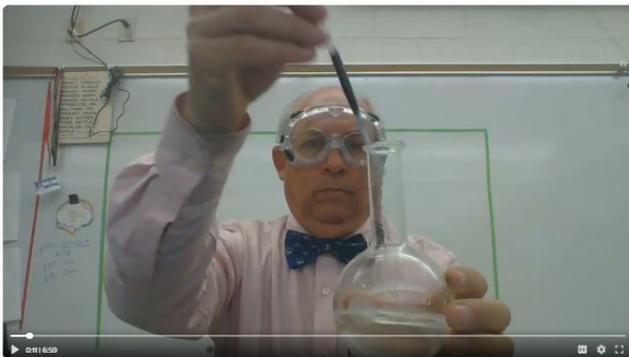
As we look forward to November, please know that we are working hard on designing re-opening plans that support the best educational experience for students, both in-person or virtual, and that are compliant to the standards set by the Health Department regarding minimizing possible risk of exposure and spread of Covid. We recognize that we are facing similar staffing issues as we saw in August and are trying to secure the necessary staff we will need to successfully open schools and support your students. As our plans become more concrete, you will be the first to know! The brainstorming is an around-the-clock Olympic level sport and requires a lot of contingency planning for all of the unknowns and “what ifs” that we have in the mix of things.

One of my favorite parts of our monthly newsletter is highlighting our Students of the Month. We can’t let our virtual world deter that celebration. So, in closing, please join me in congratulating the WHS Students of the Month for September!

Respectfully,

Dr. Lynne Blair, WHS Principal

Back to School Night Snapshots



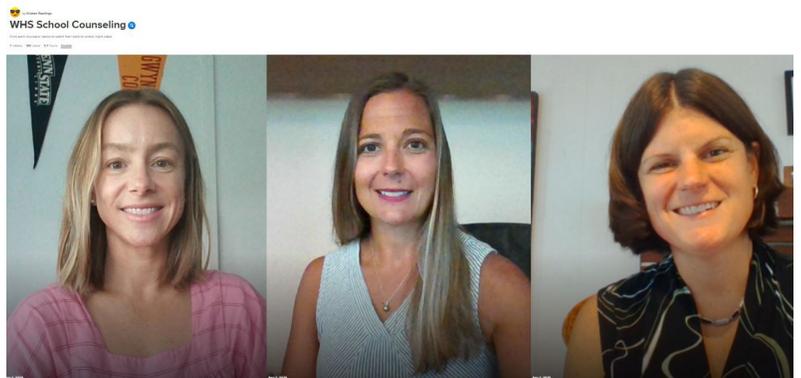
Louis Gotlib, Honors Chemistry

Sep 2, 2020 12:35pm
Mr. Gotlib Back to School Honors Chem



Michael Shultz, Forensic Science

Sep 2, 2020 2:58pm
Forensic Science - Academic



Congratulations to our Students of the Month



BRIDGET O'DONNELL - World Language

Bridget's language skills just get better and better every year. Her command for the German language is impressive and is a result of her hard work and keen interest in the subject. She goes out of her way to expose herself to German language and culture, staying in touch regularly with her German host partner. Her pronunciation is so authentic, even native speakers have thought that she was German!



AMBER KNOX - NMTCC

Throughout the pandemic and time away from school, Amber worked diligently and was an excellent self-advocate in the process to apply for the full-time PYAP program in Cosmetology at our Tech School. Amber displays an outstanding independent work ethic and desire to succeed. Her teachers at NMTCC recognize her talent and special gifts.



GABRIELLE JONES- Math

Gabby is a strong leader in her Math class. She actively engages with the content, asking both clarifying and higher-level questions, to better her own and her classmates' understanding. Gabby approaches each task and each class period with a positive attitude that is greatly appreciated.



MICHAEL FATH - Business/ Technology/FCS

Michael has been an asset to the Business Department since his freshmen year and continues to shine at the start of his unprecedented senior year. He has taken numerous business courses throughout his high school career. During class discussions, his determination, dedication, and open mindedness are evident.



KAL-EL GILES-BURTON - Science

Kal-el is an eager and excited student in his Science class. Since the start of the school year, he is consistently early for class and is always prepared. He works hard to do his best every day. His teacher appreciates his smile and positive attitude. He is a role model for students in science class!



RAIA SILVERMAN - Art and Music

Raia comes to class each day with an energetic and positive attitude, working and leading discussion within her Creative Expressions class. She demonstrates a natural ability to think outside of the box, while encouraging others to do the same. She is already proving to be a great asset to the class!



ANOOSHA SHUKLA - Health & PE

Anoosha has stepped up to be a helper to her HPE teacher; she provides input and guidance about the virtual lessons. Her teacher saw, from the first day, that she is a student who is conscientious about her work. She is already making great contributions to class discussions and easily engages and collaborates with others.



LILY SOLOMON - Athletics

Lily has helped anchor for doubles tennis during her four years at Wissahickon. She has been a league doubles medalist, as well as a district qualifier. However, it is her "team first" attitude that shines. She led our squad in terms of bringing the team together for preseason workout sessions and exemplifies the same spirit on and off the court through her leadership.



SASHA JASON - Social Studies

The Social Studies department is a fan of Sasha's. She refuses to give-up or give-in when facing frustration, all the while enhancing her classes with her insightful voice and positive attitude. She has a natural leadership quality that really stands out.



HANAH RUSSELL - Good Citizen

Hanah has made a wonderful transition to the high school from the Middle School. Her teachers all highlight her positive attitude and her kind and courteous nature. She has already demonstrated strong leadership potential and we are excited to see all the good things that she will accomplish at WHS.



JAMES JONES - Language Arts

Since the first day of class, James' teacher noticed that James has been a standout student. James participates frequently and is willing to ask questions. He is proving to be a strong asset to the class and a great role model for his peers.



HANNAH SCALLEY - Kindness

As President this year of our Ambassador Club, Hannah created a Teams group for new students and went out of her way to provide technology support to our new students. Her kindness, patience and diligence in being welcoming and supportive to our new students, especially during this challenging time, are to be admired! Thank you Hannah!