

**EAST-WEST  
SCHOOL OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES**

# The Bridge



Volume 1, Issue 3

June 2011

**Save the date!**

- *Brooklyn-Queens Day—No School*  
June 9
- *Last Day of School*  
June 14
- *Regents Exams*  
June 15—June 24
- *High School Graduation*  
June 23
- *8th Grade Stepping-Up Ceremony*  
June 27

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## Celebrating the Class of 2011

Our fifth school year is coming to a close as students gear up for their final exams and prepare for the summer. For our second class of graduating seniors, it is the end of their educational careers at East-West and the beginning of their futures.

Graduation will be held again at the Queens High School for Teaching and **Evans J.R. Revere**, an esteemed American diplomat with expertise in Asia, will serve as our keynote speaker. The ceremony will be held in honor of **Odarri Lewis**, a beloved East-West senior who passed away this year. Odarri's large dragon mural in our hallway formed the design of the graduation program. On June 1st, we welcomed new parents and students for both middle and high school into our school

community. During the orientation, they met East-West administrators and teachers and were given tours by student volunteers. 245 students placed East-West as their top choice for 90 open seats in 6th grade this year.

When the Class of 2012 graduates, the last of our founding families and students will leave our school. As we usher in new families and wish the best to our graduating seniors, the East-West community continues to grow beyond its walls, as does its potential to create a positive legacy in an increasingly globalized society.



*Panels of Odarri Lewis' dragon mural in the 405 hallway. It will be a permanent installation with a memorial plaque.*

## First Musical at East-West!

*By Hiba Rashid, student intern*

On May 25th and 26th, East-West held a production of the 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee! Ms. Hartong was responsible for directing the production with the help of our students. There were hours and hours of effort and rehearsing before opening night! Two auditions were held before rehearsal officially began. Nearly 60 students auditioned for 25 roles.

This play was chosen be-

cause the characters reflect the personalities of the East-West students; they're dedicated and have a desire to succeed. Also, the comedy and the music in the play is fun!

From the dialogues to the movements and attitude, this musical was a comedy. But it incorporated a variety of emotions. The audience responded with empathy and laughter.

By the end of the night, the audience went home with satisfied smiles. Many even whis-

pered about looking forward to the future East-West plays.



**View more photos on Page 2!**



Talia Morales, as a soloist

## The 25th Putnam County Annual Spelling Bee



The full cast at the final number



Sharon Chang's character struggled to find her voice amidst high expectations

**"I love East-West's cultural diversity. Our school is small, but it has a lot of potential."**

**- Anthoulla Themistokleous**

## East-West Student Government

As a small school, we are proud to have an exceptionally active and organized student government, which serves as a voice for the students and liaison between the school administration. Under the guidance of Ms. Marinos, a Social Studies teacher, the student leaders meet weekly to discuss projects, proposals, and create action plans to fulfill their goals. Representatives from grades 6 through 12 work

together to improve communication between the grades. Committees handle specific projects, such as safety, recycling, and the school store, and report their progress at the meetings.

Student leaders are responsible for representing our student body and serving as role models for middle and high school.



Hiba Rashid and Anthoulla Themistokleous, the 2011-2012 student leaders

## Above and Beyond: Serving our English Language Learners

Every week for the past ten months, seven teachers and one administrator have met to form a unique professional learning community. Their fields of expertise include science, English, special education, history, ESL, and math. Their mission?

*To work together to learn how to best serve our English Language Learners.*

With the guidance of Holly Reichert, an ESL coach, first year teachers collaborated

with veteran teachers to explore and practice new and improved methods of ESL teaching. As TEAM ELL, they grew together as a trusting community and shared their triumphs and challenges. "No one holds back. We say what we need to say," says Ryo Shibata, a first-year physics teacher. Mr. Shibata learned to identify and develop effective practices in his teaching as a result of the meetings.

"Understanding and

watching our ELL students helps us reach a deeper sense of humanity," says Ms. Reichert.

During her 20 years of experience in teaching ESL and coaching teachers, Ms. Reichert once mentored Ben Sherman, the principal, during his career as an ESL teacher.

As an unscreened school, East-West goes beyond welcoming the ELL or special education students who pass through its doors by empowering its teachers



TEAM ELL

## Serving our English Language Learners (continued)

to best serve their students with the greatest needs.

Marisol Bae, a new ESL teacher, “became a lot more aware of what our ELL students go through, especially the newcomers who have to not only adjust to a new language but to a totally new culture.” She added, “I have become more sensitive to each student as a whole, not just seeing a student with academic needs alone. Personally, I was reminded that as teachers, we need to continue to learn and grow.”

Both Ms. Bae and Melanie Katz felt that their new training on vocabulary instruction and scaffolding benefited their non-ELL and ELL students alike. As a math teacher, Ms. Katz says, “I can see the difference in the faces of my ELLs. They are more relaxed and ready to learn. Their grades have improved. They will ask questions more, because it is a safe environment. I see their speech and pronunciation improve.”

Mala Panday, the assistant principal, collaborates with Ms.

Reichert through weekly meetings: “TEAM ELL made me realize the importance of having a staff member interview new ESL students to better learn about their linguistic needs. Next year, we will have this.” Ms. Panday also plans to institute a peer buddy system as a result of working with TEAM ELL.

Next year, the team plans to go deeper and begin a study to gather data about ELL students and measure the effectiveness of their practices.

**“It is a privilege to work side by side with colleagues. Not everyone can do that in their line of work.”**

**- Amit Bahl, Social Studies teacher**

## From East-West to College!

By Hiba Rashid, student reporter

East-West continuously plans college trips for our students in their last years of high school. It is a great opportunity to gain an understanding about the various options they have when choosing the college they wish to attend. Through these trips, students can explore their interests regarding majors and several

other aspects of college life. It is important for students to participate in these trips because they can open their eyes to what their future might be.

College trips are a great chance for our students to understand life at college, ask questions, and think about whether they would want to consider this type of college.

Once we're seniors, we

will have to make these crucial decisions related to college. Our own East-West 2011 seniors have already gone through this process and finalized their acceptances! College trips have had an influence on their decisions so we encourage students to participate.



11th graders visit SUNY Albany

## News Bites

*Congratulations to our newly elected PTA Board Members!*

Minerva Sabas, President  
Rita Rose Lopez, Vice President  
Frederick So, Treasurer  
Denise Eng, Secretary

**MainSen Koo, MainKong Koo, Sam Lee, Jackie Liu and Jason Benavides** are members of the East-West track team and qualified for the City Championships!

**Venanda Johnson, Manvir Singh, Justin Chow and Justin Robles** were given Four Pillars Awards on June 1st in recognition of their commitment to good citizenship and for demonstrating the four core values of East-West: *Honor, Excellence, Curiosity, and Celebration.*

Congratulations!



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## About East-West

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Established in September 2006, EWSIS is a public high school in Flushing, New York with over 550 students from 6th to 12th grade. EWSIS believes that our next generation must be primed for Asia, a region with growing importance and influence. All students are required to study one East Asian language for at least four years. We prepare students with global knowledge and perspective by offering courses in Japanese, Chinese, and Korean, as well as a range of clubs and exchange opportunities.

Now in our fifth year, we have kept to our mission of providing superior education for all students regardless of academic level or socioeconomic background. In 2010, 89% of our high school seniors graduated and went on to college.

Visit us online!  
<http://www.ewsis.org>  
School Blog: <http://ewsis.wordpress.com>

## Letter from the Principal

It is now the end of our fifth year, and East-West is no longer a "new" school. In a few days, we will have our second graduation.

At East-West, our goal is to prepare students with the habits and skills which will lead them to success in university. For a new public school, we have a high number of students going on to university. We want all our students to go on to university, and not just here in New York City. We want to send our graduates to the small liberal arts colleges like Colgate and Vassar, and to the large name schools like Duke, Oberlin, Boston University, and Columbia. To do this requires strategic planning.

It is not possible to fund all the needs of our school with the budget that we receive from the Department of

Education.

A project this past year has been to start a non-profit foundation to support the work that we do at the school, particularly the college piece. We are creating the East-West School Foundation to help us obtain and manage the necessary funds to primarily support our college preparation program, drop-out prevention program, and other vital needs.

In response to their inadequate budgets, many far-sighted public schools are now establishing their own nonprofit organizations to provide crucial opportunities for their students.

A school foundation will help us better support interested philanthropists and match their interests to our needs.

We now accept online donations through our school website. You will be able to see exactly how your donation will support East-West. For example, \$150 will fund a college visit for one student in grades 9 through 12.

My vision for East-West's success and growth requires looking into the future, building partnerships, and creating solutions.



*Ben Sherman*