



DEC 2011/JAN 2012

# HSA NEWS

<http://columbiahsa.org>

A Publication of the  
**Columbia High School**  
Home and School  
Association

## From the HSA Co-Presidents

### Happy Holidays!

We hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving and are planning a joyous holiday season. This issue of the newsletter will be a combined December 2011 and January 2012 edition so it will be packed with a lot of information.

As we prepare for the New Year, we would like to highlight some of the accomplishments of the HSA thus far. . . .

- We have met regularly with the school administration and spoken at all grade level meetings and Back to School Nights.
- We planned and catered a delicious Homecoming feast for our students on November 5th.
- We showed our appreciation to the Staff and Faculty at CHS by sponsoring a back to school breakfast and Staff Appreciation Brunch.
- We attended the Ninth Grade Preview and Open House Night where hundreds of 8th grade parents and students learned about all the wonderful CHS programs and activities. Parents mingled and spoke to the faculty while their children were given a tour of CHS. Everyone enjoyed refreshments and desserts provided by the HSA.
- The Midnight Madness Committee has been hard at work planning Midnight Madness 2012 and expectations are that it will be a great event for the Class of 2012.
- Communication with our parents is always of paramount importance to the HSA. In addition to our website, the grade level e-mails, and our e-newsletter, we have joined the social media environment through our very own Facebook account. "Like" us at Columbia High School Home and School Association.
- We are putting the finishing touches on our new website and hope to unveil it in January 2012. Same address, different look, easier to navigate.

As we close out the year 2011, we want to thank all those individuals who have volunteered to help us accomplish the HSA goals and thankfully are too numerous to name. The HSA is a diverse board of dedicated volunteers and we greatly appreciate your ongoing support of our efforts, both

through your membership dues and through your volunteerism. Though we have accomplished much, we still have much to do, so it is not too late to become a member of the HSA! Our membership and volunteer Form appear in this newsletter.

We wish everyone a joyous and safe holiday season. See you next year!

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## DATES TO REMEMBER

### DECEMBER

- 16** SECOND QUARTER PROGRESS REPORTS MAILED
- 21** WINTER MUSIC AND ART FESTIVAL - SOUTH ORANGE MIDDLE SCHOOL (NOTE: LOCATION CHANGE)
- 23** FOUR HOUR DAY
- 24** HOLIDAY RECESS BEGINS

### JANUARY

- 3** SCHOOL RE-OPENS
- 16** MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY
- 21** MIDNIGHT MADNESS RAFFLE FUNDRAISER - BATTLE OF BANDS AT OUR LADY OF SORROWS
- 26-28** MID-YEAR EXAMS
- 28** END OF 2ND QUARTER MARKING PERIOD

### CALENDAR CHANGES REMINDER:

**NO SCHOOL:** JANUARY 2, 2012

**SCHOOL IN SESSION:** FEBRUARY 17, 2012 (PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED AS A DAY OFF-SEE DISTRICT CALENDAR)



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**AT COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL**  
**HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

## Freshman News

As we move into our winter semester we look forward to the quickly approaching holiday season! Parents and guardians along with their 9th graders, now have access to Naviance/ Family Connections data base. The information available includes age-appropriate surveys & resume building opportunities, in addition to a vast array of college search, summer programming, and scholarship resources. We encourage you to explore this with your freshman. Students planning on participating in a Winter Sport must submit physicals as soon as possible. If you have not made direct contact with your student's guidance counselor, we encourage you to do so. All freshmen have had an initial meeting with counselors and will likely have interesting feedback for you!

Finally, please note there has been a change to the school calendar. Schools will now be closed on Monday, January 2nd. Please see the revised calendar for more details. Best wishes to all for a safe and healthy holiday season!

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**Regina Schaefer** 973-313-9590, [rschaefer20@comcast.net](mailto:rschaefer20@comcast.net)

## Sophomore News

It's hard to believe we are writing the Holiday newsletter article already! For those of you who missed Sophomore Parent Night sponsored by the Guidance Department, a PDF of the presentation can be found on the CHS website at [www.columbiahsa.org](http://www.columbiahsa.org) by clicking on Sophomore News in the left column.

AP qualifying exams will take place in January and that month will end with Mid-Year Exams.

If your student is looking to join a club or activity, go to the CHS website and click on the Activities tab at the top of the page for a list of clubs/activities and the teachers who serve as Advisors.

### Important dates:

Dec 7 - AP Forum  
Dec 22 - 4 hr. day  
Dec 23, 26-30 Holiday Recess  
Jan 2 - New Year's Day holiday  
Jan 16 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Have a great Holiday season! Please contact us with questions or concerns.

**Joanne DiPasquale**, 973-275-6319, [jodipas@comcast.net](mailto:jodipas@comcast.net)  
**Dina Runcie**, 973-762-4475, [druncie@yahoo.com](mailto:druncie@yahoo.com)

# GO COUGARS

## Junior News

### Happy Holidays Junior Parents!

We hope everyone who attended the Homecoming Dance had a great time. Thank you to all the parents who contributed their time, money and food to help make the event possible.

There will be an Advanced Placement program on December 7 for parents who are interested in finding out more about AP classes at CHS. Advanced Placement Qualifying tests begin in January.

Remember to check the Guidance website to view the Counseling Center Newsletter and other updated information. Visit the CHS HSA website ([www.columbiahsa.org](http://www.columbiahsa.org)) Jr. News, for links to Naviance and SAT/ACT test dates.

Please support Midnight Madness/Project Graduation by sending in this year's \$25.00 contribution toward your fee of \$100.00. If you are unsure how much you have contributed so far please contact Patty Brown-Christenson at [bcbgang5@aol.com](mailto:bcbgang5@aol.com).

Feel free to contact us with questions or concerns.

**JoAnn Cobbs** [jscobbs@verizon.net](mailto:jscobbs@verizon.net)  
**Betsy Niggli** [nigglimom@aol.com](mailto:nigglimom@aol.com)

## Senior News

### Hello Senior Parents!

Happy Holidays and Seasons Greetings to All:

It is time to begin working on your FAFSA form. You can get your pin now at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov). FAFSA accounts can be set up at [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov) and be submitted beginning January 1, 2012.

Students can search for scholarships via Naviance: <http://connection.naviance.com/columbia> and College Board, [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

You can continue to support your child's academic progress by staying connected through Power School. Currently all secondary school teachers are recording student performance information in the PowerSchool electronic grade book. You may access the Parent Portal via the District's website, <https://powerschool.sommsd.k12.nj.us>. If you have not done so you will need to set up an account to obtain access. You should have received information about setting up an account in September 2011. Remember to order the 2011-2012 Yearbook. The price is \$75.00, at the end of the year the book will be \$80.00. Order online at [www.jostensyearbooks.com](http://www.jostensyearbooks.com) or call toll free 24 hours at 1-866-282-1516.

### DATES TO REMEMBER:

**Wednesday June 6, 2012:** Senior Recognition Night  
**Monday June 18, 2012:** Senior Prom at Westmount Country Club, West Paterson, NJ  
**Wednesday June 20, 2012:** Graduation at Essex County College, Newark, NJ  
Midnight Madness, 10pm check in

We will continue to keep you informed with current information through our email blasts. Happy New Year!

**Melanie Leslie** [Leslieepstein4@gmail.com](mailto:Leslieepstein4@gmail.com)  
**Angela Bradley** [bribri2619@aol.com](mailto:bribri2619@aol.com)

class of **12**

## Columbia High School's Winter Music and Art Festival

Wednesday, December 21st  
7:00 PM

IN THE SOMS AUDITORIUM  
(new location)

Come enjoy an evening of music and art and show your support of our students at the CHS' Winter Music and Art Festival.

## Congratulations Columbia High School Teachers!

The Achieve Foundation is pleased to announce that six teacher grants have been awarded to Columbia High School staff members. The recipients are:

**Falynn Bleiberg and Jennifer Giordano**  
"College Visits for Low-Income Students"

**Julia Leider and Jenna Reycraft**  
"iPads for a Web-enhanced Curriculum"

**Mark Harley**  
"Bicycle Generator"

**Scott Stornetta**  
"Best Workplace in America"

**Allan Tumolillo**  
"Robotics" (grades 2-12)

Detailed descriptions of these grants can be found at [www.Achievefoundation.org](http://www.Achievefoundation.org). Achieve's teacher grant program offers educators in all district schools the opportunity to apply for funding for their innovative classroom projects. Achieve grants allow expansion of student's learning using materials, equipment and creative strategies that cannot be accommodated within the constraints of the current school budget.

### Late Funding Initiative – a Donation can make a great Holiday Gift!!

Achieve invites the community to help fulfill more teachers' wishes through the Late Funding Initiative. There are a number of exciting projects that have not yet received full funding. It's not too late for you to make a difference and enhance our children's learning experience. Please consider contributing to make these approved grants a reality. You can visit the Achieve website, [www.achievefoundation.org](http://www.achievefoundation.org), to read more details about all the grants as well as the late funding opportunities. Donations accepted through January 30.



## The Achieve Foundation is Calling All Party Animals

Save the date, Saturday, March 3, 2012 for the Achieve Foundation's 8th Annual Night of 100 Dinners. Last year, almost 1,000 guests attended one of 39 simultaneous parties – from Tapas Buffet to Motown Madness to Murder Mystery Dinner - that were held across our towns. Guarantee your seat at the table: call now to host a dinner or get a friend to host one and invite you! Help us surpass last year's profit of \$40,000 for Achieve's programs that support educational excellence and innovation. A portion of this year's Night of 100 Dinners proceeds will benefit Achieves Take a Seat Campaign for the restoration of the CHS auditorium. To host a dinner or for more information, contact Eileen Neri at 973-763-6244 or [ecneri@verizon.net](mailto:ecneri@verizon.net). Visit us at [www.achievefoundation.org](http://www.achievefoundation.org) or on Facebook.

Go to [www.achievefoundation.org](http://www.achievefoundation.org) or call 973-378-2055 for more information. Contact: Deborah Prinz at [dprinz@somds.k12.nj.us](mailto:dprinz@somds.k12.nj.us) or 973-762-5600, ext 1851

## STAFF APPRECIATION BRUNCH A GREAT SUCCESS

Columbia High School faculty and staff enjoyed a bountiful brunch sponsored by the HSA on Tuesday, November 8th. The annual Staff Appreciation Brunch is highly popular. As one staff teacher said, "I always look forward to this day." More than 200 teachers and staff attended, many of them happily coming back for more as the day went on.

The event was made possible by the incredible generosity of more than 50 parent volunteers who baked, cooked, set up and served a veritable feast. Brunch highlights included: freshly grilled salmon, homemade macaroni and cheese, Challah French Toast Casserole, lox, bagels and cream cheese, an assortment of quiches, strata and deviled eggs, fruit salads, and an incredible array of home baked goods from Bundt cakes and banana bread to brownies and chocolate chip pumpkin cookies.

Room A107 was transformed for the event by café-style seating, potted mums and classical music. The HSA is extremely grateful to our Staff Appreciation Brunch coordinators, Eve Peterson and Carla Ross, who organized this event, and also deeply appreciative of the parent help and contributions. In the spring, the HSA and parents will again thank CHS staff for their hard work with our annual Faculty and Staff Tea.

## Midnight Madness

### MIDNIGHT MADNESS BATTLE OF THE BAND—SAVE THE DATE

We know it's a busy time of year, so here's the update and we have a "SAVE THE DATE" Midnight Madness event for you to plan for!

Our First Fundraising event is a Parent Social, hosted at "Battle of the Bands." This fun evening will take place on Saturday, January 21, 2012, at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, in South Orange. The benefit will be to support the Community Food Bank of NJ and the raffle sales that evening will go to Midnight Madness/Project Graduation at CHS. We look forward to seeing many of you there. Tickets will be on sale soon at local merchants in South Orange and Maplewood. Please come out and support this wonderful cause and help support our Midnight Madness event for our kids.

You will soon receive your letter about the amount due for your senior's account. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. We are still looking for volunteers to help with Midnight Madness. Please contact us if you would like to help out. Have a great Holiday Season and see you at "Battle of the Bands" in January!

Amy Klein [kleingang@comcast.net](mailto:kleingang@comcast.net)

Suzanne Durney [suzannedurney@comcast.net](mailto:suzannedurney@comcast.net).

2012 Midnight Madness/Project Graduation Co-Chairs

## INDOOR BEAUTIFICATION NEEDS YOU!!!

The HSA is looking for a couple of parents to co-chair the Indoor Beautification Committee of the HSA. If you are handy, like to throw painting parties, and would like to help beautify the interior of CHS, please contact Co-Presidents Carmen or Sally at [columbiahsa.org@gmail.com](mailto:columbiahsa.org@gmail.com).

## CHS HSA Board 2011-2012

Carmen Morales-Acevedo	Co-President (Outgoing)
Sally Monaghan	Co-President (Incoming)
Rena Spangler	1st Vice President-Membership
Janet Crane	2nd Vice President-Volunteers
Max Weisenfeld	Treasurer
Allison Camara	Corresponding Secretary
Brenda Ehlers	Recording Secretary
Jeaniene Brownlee	Public Relations
Sheila Oliver	Special Education Liaison
Regina Schaefer	Freshman Representative
Ruthanna Graves McQueen	Freshman Representative
Joanne DiPasquale	Sophomore Representative
Dina Runcie	Sophomore Representative
Betsy Cahn Niggli	Junior Representative
JoAnn Cobbs	Junior Representative
Angela Bradley	Senior Representative
Melanie Leslie	Senior Representative
Mary Washington Nieves	Ex-Officio

### Committees

Mike Lashinsky	Newsletter Editor
Benita Perkins	Newsletter Editor
Mary Jo DeFranco	Newsletter Editor
Tracy Carroll	Programming
Sally Chew	Webmaster
Amy Klein	Midnight Madness 2012
Suzanne Durney	Midnight Madness 2012
Patty Brown Christenson	Midnight Madness Treasurer
Jen Lieberman	Outdoor Beautification
Lindsay Scott	Outdoor Beautification
Bonita Gilliard	Freshman Preview-8th Grade
Audrey Winkler	New Parent Coordinator
Terri Nitti	New Parent Coordinator
Gay Roberts	Directory
Eve Peterson	Faculty Brunch
Carla Ross	Faculty Brunch
Sylvia Cutler	Faculty Tea
Jill Hammarberg	Faculty Tea
Jeaniene Brownlee	Communication Liaison
Shelly Weinstock	Guidance Liaison
Allan Tumolillo	Faculty Liaison



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### Community Flyer List for December 2011/January 2012

All flyers containing detailed information on the topics below can be found on the district website:

[www.somds.k12.nj.us](http://www.somds.k12.nj.us) or  
[www.southorangemaplewood.org](http://www.southorangemaplewood.org)

Click on **Community Digital Backpack**

## HSA MEMBERSHIP: PLEASE JOIN!

The CHS Home and School Association (HSA) does not fundraise. We depend entirely on membership dues to fund programs that support many grade level and school-wide activities throughout the year, including:

- CHS website
- CHS e-newsletter
- CHS HSA directory -FREE e-directory to HSA members
- Grade level parent nights
- CHS Scholarship Fund
- Joseph Potts Foundation Scholarship for CHS students
- Senior Recognition Night
- Homecoming
- Indoor and Outdoor Beautification of CHS
- Faculty Breakfast and Brunch
- Hospitality
- Midnight Madness
- Achieve Foundation

Please complete the membership form contained in this newsletter and make your \$20 check (no cash please!) payable to CHS/HSA. Include your email address to receive an electronic copy of the HSA parent/student directory. Mail to: HSA MEMBERSHIP, Columbia High School HSA, 17 Parker Ave., Maplewood, NJ 07040 or drop off form in main office.

Any questions, contact Rena Spangler, [rena523@msn.com](mailto:rena523@msn.com), 973-761-1934

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Submissions are due by the **15th of each month.**