

# The Stanner

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Archbishop Molloy High School

January 2007

## Does AM encourage grade inflation?

By Sierra Hunt

The controversial practice among many American high schools of weighting grades for honors and AP classes for the past 10 years has led many educators to wonder whether the benefits of grade inflation outweigh the detriments, according to Mr. Ed Jennings, Molloy's Assistant Principal.

According to one view, since other high schools across the country weight grades, Molloy's grades are comparatively proportionate and this allows Stanners to have the same advantages enjoyed by students of other schools who weight grades.

A contrary view is that grade inflation has become rampant, and actually does a disservice to students by giving them a false impression of their own abilities, making it hard to distinguish the truly exceptional student from the mediocre one.

Several factors might cause an outside observer to suspect that grade inflation is occurring at Molloy.

- \* Forty-four percent of Molloy's current senior class was inducted into the National Honor Society.

- \* The median academic average for all Stanners hovers between a 92 and a 93.

- \* Sixty-seven students achieved a 99 average or above last quarter to qualify for the Principal's List.

- \* Sixty-three percent of Molloy students earned a grade of 90 or above in the first marking period this year.

When faced with these statistics, teachers and administrators could easily question whether this is a reflection of a talented student body or a result of grade inflation.

"It is probably a little of both," said Mr. Jennings. "But I'd give the edge to our students."

Mr. Dennis Vellucci, of the English Dept. said, "Grades at Molloy are somewhat inflated. Molloy students are certainly smart and do good, solid



Can you tell the difference between these two English 10 classes? The biggest difference is that one of them gets a five point curve added to its grade. (Photos by Fernando Ortiz)



work, but not the exceptional work their grades would indicate.

"My theory is supported by their SAT scores, which tend to be only slightly above average and not as high as their class grades would lead one to expect them to be."

English Dept. Chairperson Mr. Jim Sheehan said, "I'm not sure if my grades are inflated. It depends on your definition of inflation."

To illustrate his point, Mr. Sheehan compared the grades from a class of his in 2006 to a class from 1995 and

found the grades from 1995 to be .03 percent higher.

Molloy awards a five percent curve to grades in an honors class and a seven percent curve to grades in an AP class.

The issue of whether the difficulty and workload of honors verses regular classes justifies weighting grades produces conflicting feelings among students.

Many students believe there is little difference between some honors classes and regular classes in the same

subject, yet honors students are rewarded with a five percent curve, which may make them eligible for Molloy's honor roll when they would not have been otherwise.

"I know kids in regular classes who had the same tests as my honors classes" said Molloy senior Michael Crane.

Danny Quinn and Stephen Kruger were members of Mr. Sheehan's English 11 class as juniors and his AP Composition class as seniors.

"The only real difference is the books have to be read faster but it's not unbearable," Quinn said. "But in AP Comp the essays we write are graded a bit harder. All in all, it's a pretty chill class."

Said Kruger, "Even though Mr. Sheehan asks us to read more this year in AP than last year, the books this year are enjoyable, so it's worth it. I think the class deserves the curve."

Recently, the administration has changed its policy to pay heed to the issue.

Molloy now bases honors selections on students' unweighted averages. Furthermore, on official transcripts, weighted averages only appear in the final cumulative average and not as the grades for individual classes.

Over 10 years ago, college guidance counselor Mr. Kerry Hughes informed Molloy's administration that many high schools were weighting grades.

"So to be fair, we have implemented the system to give Molloy's students the same advantages and to keep in line with the other schools" said Mr. Jennings.

Ms. Mary Ann Safrey of the English Dept. said she has devised a grading system that she feels accurately measures her students' performances.

"Because of this," she said, "I believe weighting grades to be

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### Drama Club Auditions

The Drama Club will hold auditions during the first week of February in the Theater for its spring musical, said Moderator Mr. Kevin Schwab.

"We are looking for singers, actors, dancers, and anyone who wants to help out behind the scenes," said Mr. Schwab, who said the musical will open May 17 and run through May 19.

Mr. Schwab hasn't decided what musical will be performed but will make his choice before the auditions.

The club performed the Neil Simon comedy "Fools" in December. "I hope we were able to provide some smiles with our first production of the year," said Mr. Schwab.



Stanner Players foolin' around in "Fools." (Photo by Fernando Ortiz)

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# Points for nothin' & the List for free

In a school where almost all of us care either about achieving or maintaining our Honor Roll status, one sometimes wonders whether Molloy's honors and AP students are truly working harder than the rest of us for the grades they receive.

Weighted grades are used in part by the Molloy Administration as an incentive to get as many students as possible to enroll in honors and AP courses.

Each marking period, as many as five points are added to honors students' grades and seven points to AP students' grades just for being in the class.

The idea of weighted grades in AP and honors classes sounds good at first glance if one assumes that those classes are so much harder than regular classes. However, granting five or seven points to all students in an honors or AP class

regardless of their individual work ethics is unfair — especially to those students who missed out on being accepted into these exclusive classes by just one report card point.

Many students in a non-honors class often hear from their classmates in the corresponding honors class that the honors class isn't much harder or doesn't require much more work than the regular class. Yet those honors students can have as many as five points added to their marking period grades every quarter just for sitting there.

The trend of honors and AP students dominating the school's Honor Roll and Principal's List every marking period has been visible for quite some time.

During the second marking period last year, 113 students had the 99 or better average required to make the Principal's List. In the first marking

period this year, 67 made the list.

The overwhelming majority of students who made the List did so thanks to weighted grades.

This year a record-breaking 173 members of the Class of 2007 had the minimum cumulative average of 93 required to earn induction into the National Honor Society. Last year there were "just" 133 inductees.

As one can see, achieving a 93 average is not very difficult if one has a five or seven-point weight added to every grade.

Molloy is a college preparatory school but these inflated grades are a detriment to many students' future college endeavors.

The unintended consequence of these weighted, inflated grades is that Molloy's honors and AP students become accustomed to receiving high

grades. They come to expect high grades; they don't expect to have to work hard to achieve them.

When these Stanners go off to college, however, that all changes. The weight disappears but not their continued expectation of high grades, and, as a result, many fail to achieve them during their freshman year on campus.

To say that Molloy's honors and AP students don't work hard to achieve their status would be far from the truth. But it is also true that many students in regular classes work just as hard.

Could it be that many honors and AP students are so wrapped up in their status as high achievers, that they forget that much of the credit for their good grades goes not to them but simply to their status as AP and honors students?

—Andre Amorim

# To ACT or SAT? That is the question

Read question. Darken circle. Repeat.

For five hours we waste no time by hesitating. We move quickly to fill in all the answers in each section before the proctor warns us that just five minutes remain and then issues the abrupt call of "Pencils down."

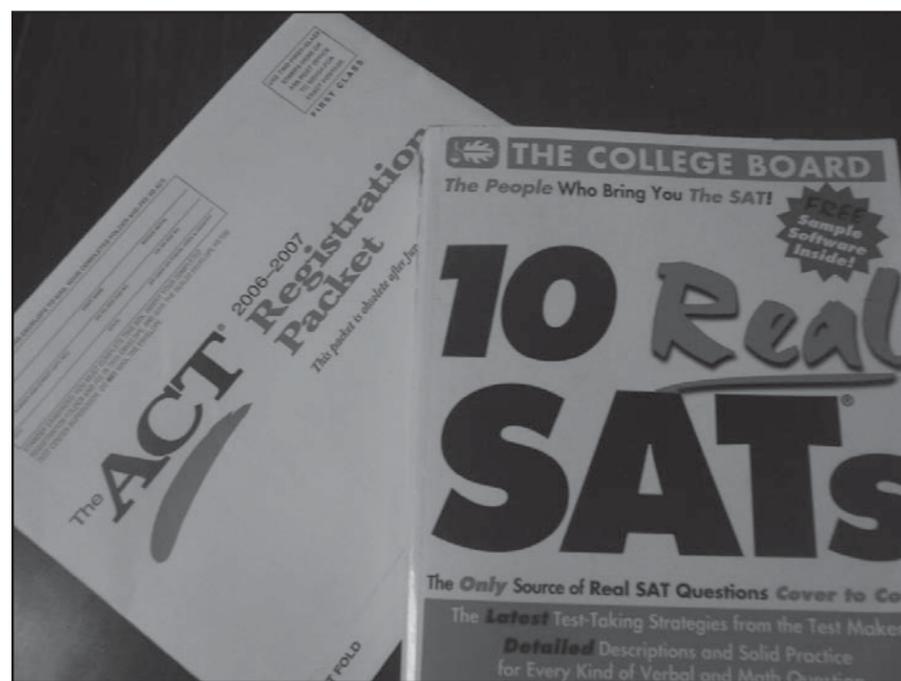
The standardized test that we most often assume will determine our college futures is the SAT with its 10 sections of math, verbal and writing questions.

The SAT is still taken by the majority of Stanners applying to college, despite the controversy surrounding the October 2005 SAT, when the scores of approximately 4,000 test takers around the country - including a few Stanners - were found to be incorrect because they did not receive credit for some of their correct answers due to the fact that moisture had contaminated the answer sheets.

But perhaps it is time to take a look at the black sheep of the college admissions game, the American College Test, otherwise known as the ACT.

On Dec. 9, 2006, I took my first standardized test that, unlike the PSAT, really "mattered."

But instead of immediately opting for the SAT, I spent months studying instead for the ACT. I took classes, played with



(Photo by Fernando Ortiz)

strategies, and did the practice tests.

The ACT, with five sections, including a science section, took around three and a half hours to complete.

Overall the ACT is a straight forward test that is more closely related to what we learn in our high school classes.

There was only a moderate amount of vocabulary on the test and doing well on the science section required just reading the passages correctly. However, formulas weren't given for the math sections and the ACT requires

knowledge of trigonometry and Math B, unlike the SAT.

Also unlike the SAT, the ACT doesn't penalize you if you guess and choose the wrong the answer. You can take the ACT multiple times. And almost all colleges accept the ACT in place of the SAT I.

My obsession over the standardized tests has led me to also take the SAT this year, too. I started classes last week and as I took my first diagnostic, I actually missed the ACT.

The SAT's 10 sections, which are split among math, reading, and writing, make the test feel longer than the ACT.

However, there is one advantage to taking the SAT rather than the ACT: colleges will consider your best math, verbal and writing scores from different tests if you take the SAT multiple times whereas there is just one overall score for the ACT.

Another advantage is that while most colleges will consider students who only took the ACT, many prefer their applicants take the SAT because colleges prefer its scoring system. ACT scores range from 1-36, the median being 21, while the SAT is scored on a 600-2,400 with a median of 1,500.

In deciding whether to take the ACT or SAT, keep your own academic skills in mind. The ACT may be easier for those students who know their math formulas and English grammar while the SAT might be better for students whose strengths are interpreting questions and applying logic.

But if you're a junior currently going a little crazy prepping for the SAT, perhaps you should check out the ACT as an alternative path to the college of your choice.

—Connie Tsang

## Letter to the Editor:

To the Editor:

I remember when I was a freshman seeing the "Senior Spotlight" profiles in the newspaper. I was just thinking you should consider bringing that back this year. The freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will get their time when they are seniors. I just thought that would be pretty cool.

Katherine Azcona  
Homeroom 4A

The Stanner welcomes all letters. Please send your letter to: [thestanner@molloyhs.org](mailto:thestanner@molloyhs.org)

## Corrections:

*The Stanner* aims for the highest level of accuracy in its stories. If you notice an error in a story or have a concern, send an email to Mr. Charley McKenna at: [thestanner@molloyhs.org](mailto:thestanner@molloyhs.org).

Please note the following corrections to an error made in Volume 50, Number 4:

The Girls Varsity Basketball Team won its first two games of the season, including a 60-43 victory over Cardoza. *The Stanner* incorrectly reported the results of that game.

*The Stanner* regrets the error.

## The Stanner

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# Rockers aid the hunt for cure, raising over \$5,000 at show

By Peter Schuille

Molloy's fifth annual Rock Aid raised over \$5,000 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma foundation on Jan. 12 in the Jack Curran Gym as over 760 music fans paid \$7 for tickets to hear four bands perform and a DJ play dance music between each set.

"It went perfectly," said concert organizer, Mr. Glenn DaGrossa. "It was the smoothest Rock Aid ever."

A second Rock Aid show will be held

in May with a different lineup featuring four student bands, Say What, The Void, Red Note, and Dirt. A fifth band might be added to the lineup.

This month's show began with a set from Red Note, the runner-up in November's Battle of the Bands, featuring seniors Zach Kramer (vocals), Robert Nappi (lead guitar), Tim Hanna (rhythm guitar), Tom Lynch (drums), and frosh Peter Kramer (bass).

They were followed by Dirt, the winner of the Battle of the Bands, featuring seniors Mark Giernicki (vocals), Tim Viani (guitar), and Deanna Gulmezian (keyboards).

Dirt was followed by Cutting Edge, a band featuring sophomore Victor Starsky on lead vocals and several Molloy alums.

Finishing off the night was Lazarus, the band headed by Mr. DaGrossa.

The show also featured a full light show, "including laser lights and an array of effects, a 10-foot video screen with live video feed of the bands and the audience," Mr. DaGrossa said. "A video production shoot was on hand to create a music video and there was a 12,000-watt sound system for the bands."

Viani, who helped organize the first Rock Aid show of the year as well as perform in it, said, "I just really like to work in the music scene. It's fun and it's for a good cause. I hope everyone who was involved with Rock Aid in anyway had a great time and had a good feeling that they did something good for someone else."



Cutting Edge lead vocalist Victor Starsky, above, performed at Molloy's first Rock Aid show of the year. Frosh girls Jennifer Monjiat, Caitlin Gallen, Lizzie Fabro, and Catherine Cosmo, at left, rock out at the show. (Photos by Andre Amorim)



## Students ask: will faculty movie ever be finished?

By Stanley Saji

At last year's Rock Aid Concert, Mr. Carl Semmler and Mr. Glenn DaGrossa presented a 15-minute movie trailer promoting their film that was scheduled to be released last spring. However, production has run into difficulties said co-producer, Mr. Semmler, and is still not ready for release.

The movie, "Lost in Education," is a comedy spoof that makes fun of the different myths that kids have about teachers in general.

"It gives you a peek into the secret life of teachers," said Mr. Semmler.

"It all started one day when Mr. DaGrossa and I were joking around at

lunch about the absurd things that kids believe about teachers and so we decided to bring it to life via this movie in a tongue-in-cheek way," said Mr. Semmler.

So far the movie features teachers such as Mr. Ken Auer, Mr. Lou Barbera, Mr. Chris Dougherty, Mr. DaGrossa, Mr. Frank Gambino, Mr. Jeff Gallagher, Mr. Brian Kelly, Mr. Matt Kilkelly, Mr. Joe Smith, Mr. Eric Stolze, and Mr. Semmler. Assorted students act as extras and, "we're hoping to get more teachers involved," said Mr. Semmler.

Problems such as technical difficulties

and teacher availability have hindered its completion.

The movie is being shot by Mr. Semmler and Mr. DaGrossa, who used two cameras to shoot from different angles and used computer software such as Windows Movie Maker to splice the scenes together. However, last year both cameras broke down. One camera's eject button was not functioning and the other camera had USB cord problems.

But Mr. Semmler said, "we are back on track, both cameras have been repaired, four scenes have already been completed, and we're hoping to get

seven to eight scenes done all together."

Mr. Semmler said he hopes to have it completed this spring.

Students are eager to see the movie.

Senior Ali Salemeah said that after seeing the previews last year, "Everyone is excited and anxious to see the movie and I personally can not wait to see how it turns out, although I really hope it comes out before we seniors graduate."

Mr. Semmler and Mr. DaGrossa want to show the film, if it ever gets finished, in the Molloy Theater and charge \$5 admission, with all proceeds from the screening going to a charity that has yet to be chosen.

## Sci-Fi Club enjoys Xmas walkabout

By Tom Podmore

The Science-fiction and Fantasy club took a Christmas weekend trip to Manhattan to visit a comic book store, see a movie, and take in the Christmas spirit of the city, said club Moderator Mr. Chris Dougherty.

The Sci-fi Club teamed with the S.M.I.L.E. Bridge and Tunnel crowd on a walking trek over the Queensboro Bridge and throughout Manhattan, visiting Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building, and the comic book store, Jim Hanley's Universe.

"I have never been to a place that valued comic books the way Jim Hanley's did," said club Vice President Paul Gancarz. "It was amazing. I felt like I was in heaven."

The trip concluded with an evening screening of the fantasy film "Night of the Museum" at the Midway Theater in Forest Hills.

Among the club's previous events this year were its laser tag trip to Q-Zar in Farmingdale and a Halloween party that took place in the Molloy Theater that

featured movies, video games, and plenty of food.

"The club is one of the largest in the school with 120 students because it is a lot of fun and stress relieving," said Mr. Dougherty.

Mr. Dougherty, club moderator since 1999, organizes several laser tag trips a year, trips to see promising sci-fi and fantasy movies, two holiday parties a year, and a special annual event for club leaders and alumni former leaders. The small group spends the day at the

Palisades Mall, highlighted by a blockbuster film.

The club saw the sci-fi film "Children of Men" at Midway last month and plans to see many movies in the spring when the third installments of the "Spiderman," "Shrek," and "Pirates of the Caribbean" series are scheduled to be released, Mr. Dougherty said.

The club is open to everyone and easy to join by simply asking Mr. Dougherty or club officers Gancarz and Ryan Harrington.

# Cafeteria cash cards slow to catch on

By Victor Szuper

Since it was introduced last September, only about 250 students have signed up so far this year to buy cafeteria food and beverages with CulinArt's fully-cashless "Molloy Card," said CulinArt's food service director Audrey Cashin.

Students can use their Molloy High School ID Card as part of a delinquent balance system in which purchases can be made as long as there is a sufficient balance in the account to cover the transaction. When students swipe their cards at check-out stations in the cafeteria, the total dollar amount of each transaction is deducted, and students will be notified at checkout when their balance falls below \$25, and again when their balance falls below \$15, at which time parents will also be notified by e-mail.

Some advantages of this system include being able "to budget a set

amount for your purchases" and also able "to track expenditures," Mrs. Cashin said. Although less than one-sixth of Molloy students use the system, Mrs. Cashin remains optimistic that more will sign up.

"As more students and parents become acquainted with the ease of use and younger brothers and sisters join the High School, participation will surely increase," she said.

Molloy card user senior Peter Stamm said, "I like the convenience of skipping long lines and not having to wait to get change. Loading money [on to the card] is easy, too. I wish every one had one."

Senior Rory Cunnane said he doesn't use the card because, "using the ID cards to buy food leads many people to spend more than they usually would because they are not using cash."

Registration is done on the internet at [www.mykidsspending.com](http://www.mykidsspending.com), and



Student swipes ID card at cash register. (Photo by Fernando Ortiz)

requires a minimum credit card deposit of \$100. Parents can also use this website to e-mail Mrs. Cashin when they have questions about their children's usage and food selection.

The food service director has maintained she is "absolutely" pleased with the way the system has worked so far.

# Investment Club aims for top 5 finish

By Rory Cunnane

Molloy's Investment Club ranked among the top five teams in The Stock Market Game at the end of the first half of the year-long competition by successfully investing in real stocks, said Moderator Ms. Mary Pat Gannon.

The Investment Club competes every year against clubs from other schools in the New York City and Westchester area in the online game which is designed for students who possess a keen interest in business.

"Every team starts with \$100,000 of hypothetical money to invest in real stocks," said club Vice President Michael Crane, a senior. "Each team's

progress is displayed on The Stock Market Game website."

Due to the increasing popularity of The Stock Market Game, the length of the competition has changed.

"This year the game has changed from a 3-month competition to a year-long competition consisting of two rounds," said Ms. Gannon. "Our full year team is in good shape."

Crane and his teammates seniors Christopher Witek, Travis Ali, and Steve Montoni, are pleased with how they've invested so far.

"At the end of the first half of the year, we were ranked fourth out of 463

schools," said Crane. "We invested in Phelps-Dodge, a company that was bought out by another company. The stock rose to \$20 a share as a result of this merger, and it was a large contribution to our \$10,000 profit in the first half of the year." The schools that ranked ahead of Molloy were John Dewey High School, Scarsdale Middle School, and Fort Hamilton High School.

Crane has a lot of fun in this club due to his interest in the Stock Market as a result of his father's career on Wall Street. However, as the second half of the competition began, the team's

investments took a downturn and Molloy has dropped to 41st place with a total of \$106,000 in stock value, so the team will have to bounce back if they hope to return to the top five places.

"There was no reward for finishing in the top five in the first half," said Crane, "but if we finish in the top five at the end we are invited to a brunch at the New York Stock Exchange, and we receive cash prizes."

"Last year our team did finish in the top five and attended the brunch and we are looking to repeat this year," Crane said.

# Unprecedented success

## Gancarz first Stanner to ace consecutive Math League tests

By Christina Kam

Molloy's Math League varsity team rank fifth out of 34 teams after the first two meets of the year thanks to its top five seniors, said the Math League team moderator, Mrs. Adele Solari.

The competition, which started in November, features four tests a year, each consisting of 10 multiple choice questions and each scored out of 100 points.

The top five seniors scorers for the varsity are Paul Gancarz (200), Steve Montoni (170), George Arcarola (164), Justin Thottam (157), and Danny Edwards (154).

Molloy had never had a student score a perfect 100 on a test in a Math League competition in its history until Gancarz joined the team and scored perfect scores on consecutive tests.

"We never had someone score a 100 and then he does it twice," said Arcarola. "That's pretty good."

"The varsity would like to finish in first place this year," said Mrs. Solari, who added, "They have been doing the best they have ever done."

The test questions involve algebra, geometry, and trigonometry.

"I joined Math league to challenge myself and to do something complementary to my interest in math," said Gancarz, who joined math League for the first time this year and earned a hundred on both tests.

Gancarz said he found the two tests he has taken so far to be easier than Mrs. Solari's practice tests.

But he said practice isn't really that necessary because he said that on tests, "either you know it or you don't know it."

The Math League varsity resumes competition next month with its third test of the season.



The top five scorers for the varsity Math League team ponder the marvels of calculus. From left, seniors Justin Thottam, George Arcarola, Steve Montoni, Danny Edwards, and Paul Gancarz. Gancarz is the first Stanner in school history to score a perfect 100 on a varsity Math League test. He's also the first to do it twice in a row. Gancarz goes for three in a row next month. (Photo by Fernando Ortiz.)

# Dance Club plans new spring show

By Rachel Polito

After a successful Christmas Show performance, the Archbishop Molloy Dance Club is planning a second show in the spring, which will mark the first time the club has sponsored two shows in one year, said Moderator Ms. Elizabeth Murdocca.

Ms. Murdocca is very pleased with the Dance Club so far this year and thinks it is the club's best year ever due to the members' hard work, increased participation, and the fact that she has her own classroom this year which serves as a base for organization.

She said that the club was temporarily suspended last year due to a lack of

money and a problem with a lack of space which caused dangerous rehearsal situations in school hallways.

But those problems have now been solved, Ms. Murdocca said.

The 96-member club is planning for the end of the year musical review show to be held in either April or May by practicing Mondays and Wednesdays from 2 to 4:30 p.m. in six third floor classrooms used by the dancers.

Due to the large number of club members, Ms. Murdocca admits that at times it is extremely difficult to coach so many dancers at once but the many students who work as choreographers

are a big help to her in running the club.

These students are senior Dance Team and Dance Clubs captains Alessandra Rannazzisi and Kate DeMarco, respectively, in addition to seniors Melissa Gangi, Sylwia Mackiewicz, Alyssa Tallini, Laurie Wick and Cathy Zhu, juniors Justine Bello, Alexandra Landivar, Jennifer LoCascio, and Daphne Liu, and sophomores Stephanie Kotnik and Gabriella Scalzo.

Ms. Murdocca was very proud of the Dance Club's Christmas performance.

"Despite difficult rehearsal conditions and no space or gym time for a full dress rehearsal and a very slippery floor, all

of the performers did a fantastic and professional job," she said.

DeMarco praised the members of the club as well. "The girls have worked so hard these past few months and finally had a chance to prove all that dedication was worth it," she said.

DeMarco explained that the club is separated into different groups by dance style preference and each group votes on the song it will perform to and then the choreography begins.

DeMarco is very happy that the club is up and running again this year and can't wait for an "even bigger end of the year show."

# Dance Team to perform at C.W. Post

By Kathleen O'Connell

The Molloy Dance Team will perform on Jan. 31st at the annual C.W. Post Dance Conference and will be seen at some varsity boys basketball home games, performing to jazz, lyrical, funk, and hip hop songs, said Moderator Ms. Elizabeth Murdocca.

After a successful Christmas show, the Dance Team has begun practices for The CW Post Dance Conference, in which dancers take classes with master teachers for a performance at night for family and friends. At this event in the past, The Dance Team was given the Best Ensemble Award and Best Individual Dancer Award (former captain Gabrielle Kulesza).

"I love to dance and the girls create a wonderful atmosphere to practice and compete in" said senior Marissa Nostramo. "As a team we want to be noticed by others. We put in a lot of hard work and time into dancing. We

want people to come and watch us and support us."

The members of the Dance Team are: frosh Alexandra Bello and Alexandra Fabiilli, sophomores Julie O'Lansen and Gabriella Scalzo, juniors Justine Bello, Brittany Bieber, Angela Falco, and Jennifer LoCascio, and seniors Fran Capitelli, Marissa Nostramo, team captain Alessandra Rannazzisi, Stephanie Riccardi, and Alyssa Tallini.

The team might perform in an end-of-year show at Molloy and at a dance convention in the spring.

The team also is considering returning to competitions hosted by the Eastern Dance Association and Carmel (N.Y.) High School, two events in which the Dance Team has competed for the past two years, but the team's spring schedule has not been finalized yet, said Ms. Murdocca.



Senior Stephanie Riccardi performs in her pajamas to "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus" at last month's Christmas Dance Show in the Jack Curran Gym. (Photo by Fernando Ortiz)

# Step gets serious about practices and discipline

By Jennifer Flores

Molloy's Girls Step Team made many changes this year including conducting harder practices in order to achieve its goal of winning the C.H.S.A.A and Greek Alliance competitions after last year's disappointing performances, said Girls Step captain Tenisha McDonald.

McDonald, a senior, is confident that with a "more dedicated group of girls," this year's competitions should be a breeze with all the discipline being instilled such as the requirement that team members run around the track every day and attend mandatory practices.

McDonald said attendance was a problem last year and the team didn't begin to practice for last year's competitions until a month before the first event. But this year, preparation began in September.

Step team moderator Mrs. Anne Lonergan said, "The girls will do better this year."

Both captains McDonald and junior Malika Languigne urge the girls to treat every school performance as seriously as a competition, and that attitude has already paid off based on the team's Christmas show performance, which McDonald described as "definitely the best performance of any Christmas show. This shows a lot of hope for the future."

Mrs. Lonergan said performances at the talent show and basketball games are also being scheduled.

Senior stepper Tosin Jolaoso, said, "We are working really hard this year. We do shows outside of school and even have our own page on the internet with a schedule of performances to get our name out there."

# Asian and French Clubs perform candle and ribbon dances for Xmas

By Kevin Carberry and Marlon Nepomuceno

The Asian and French Clubs both performed dance routines as part of Molloy's Christmas Dance show in December in the Jack Curran Gym.

Girls from the Asian Club performed a fan and candle dance choreographed by senior Kristen Cadacio and junior Katie Johnson, who also chose the music.

Moderator Ms. Andrea Sottas praised the work of Cadacio and Johnson for making the Christmas show a success.

Asian Club President Denise Calma said, "I was very pleased with everyone's cooperation and dedication. It turned out to be a great show."

The French Club danced to two songs, using ribbons in its performance of "Foust a Cagoule," and doing a hip-hop dance for "Carol of the Bells" by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

French Club members choreographed the dances, designed their outfits and practiced on their own on weekends and after school, said Moderator Ms. Dorothy DeNoto, who added that she considered the show to be a success because everyone had fun.

French Club President Andrew Siconolfi said, "This was only a warm up for International Day. Be ready for that performance. It's going to be insane."

The Asian Club is also making plans for Molloy's annual International Day in March when its performances will feature many more different Asian cultures than in the past.

"Not to ruin any surprises," said Calma, "but we will have a variety of new performances this year. A few of the new additions may be Korean and Vietnamese dances."

# Toy Drive sets a new record

By John Cacharani

Campus Ministry held a record-breaking Toy Drive last November and December thanks to the generous toy and monetary donations from the student body which resulted in a total of 1,520 toys being donated, 15 toys more than last year, said Moderator Mr. Mike Germano.

"I was very pleased with how things went," said Mr. Germano "I did not think this year's total would surpass last year's total."

A total of \$3,326 was raised in homeroom and the top four donating homerooms were 2B with \$596, 1F

with \$292, 1B with \$278, and 2F with \$214.

Individual Stanners also donated approximately 550 toys.

The money collected in homeroom was used to purchase 120 gift cards worth \$10 at Target, and approximately 950 toys from Shepar, a toy wholesaler.

However not all the money raised was spent because "there were more than enough toys," Mr. Germano said. "The rest will be saved for next year's Toy Drive."

Thirty-six Stanners participated in the Toy Sorting Party in the Theater Dec.



18 when toys were sorted according to the age of the recipient and the organization that would be picking up the toys.

Senior Kristen Cadacio said the party "is the best part of the Toy Drive."

The toys were picked up by the Briarwood Shelter, Heartshare, Catholic Charities, The Saint Vincent DePaul Society and Father Ed Duran, who gives the toys to children at various hospitals in New York City.

"The success of the Toy Drive shows the incredible generosity by the whole Molloy community," said Mr. Germano. Cadacio said, "Students love to participate in the Toy Drive because we want kids to have a nice Christmas."

Mr. Germano gave special thanks to the faculty for its help especially Mr. John Mecca, Ms. Anne Lonergan, Mr. Bill Niklaus, Mrs. Kathy Forgione, Ms. Mary Grennan, Mrs. Jeanne Longerano and Ms. Kathy Loughran.



Campus Ministry volunteers had fun at the Toy Sorting Party in the Theater after a record-setting Toy Drive resulted in 1,520 toys being distributed to needy kids. (Photos by Fernando Ortiz)

## College Board honors seniors for test success

Six seniors were recognized their outstanding performance in the 2007 National Merit Scholarship Competition.

John Cacharani, Diana Trent, and Daniela Velez received National Hispanic Recognition Awards and KellyAnn Dolor, Ian Fitts, and Bianca Neptune received awards from the National Achievement Scholarship Program.

Thirty seniors earned grades of three or higher on three or more AP Exams, whose highest possible grade is a five:

Christina Barnett; Cassandra Calandrillo; Rory Cunnane; Kristina Dawes; Diane Del Valle; Lino Demasi; Joseph DeRiso; James Hounsell; John Keaney; Tina Kochupurackal; Stephen Kostel; Jerina Martinaj; Nicole Megale; Elliot Nasser; Bianca Neptune; Kelly Newton; Alisa Orahovac; Jessica Ramasami; Erica Rodriguez; Stanley Saji; Priam Saywack; Brittany Schieler; Catherine Silva; Elizabeth Solaimanian; Veronica Staszewska; Patricia Sun; Diana Trent; Yvette Villanueva; Mary Catherine Wen; Catherine Zhu.

## Environment Club plans another recycling event

By Erica Rodriguez

Molloy's Environmental Club is planning to host another recycling event this month in the school's cafeteria to sort and recycle electronic equipment to promote the positive effects of recycling, said President Andrew Siconolfi.

The event will be in the school parking lot as members will sort the working and non-working computer parts, TV's, VCR's, fax machines, cell phones, and pagers brought in by students and faculty.

Mr. Chris Dougherty, the club moderator, said that students' perspectives on recycling will change since, "kids will get to see real recycling, and what an impact on the environment each student can make."

Siconolfi said, "This event will hopefully get students to realize how much we can improve on our lives by recycling. The goal is to get students to recycle more, and recognize the positive impact they are making."

The Environmental Club, which participated in two outside electronic recycling events in the city, is planning to do beach cleanup in the spring, and another school recycling day in June.

"The Club's new focus is to commence a letter writing campaign to

U.S. Congress about global warming, and encourage the U.S. government to limit car emissions, and to research alternative and renewable power energy sources," said Mr. Dougherty.

## Irish Christmas for Pipe & Drum

By Jennifer D'Ambrosio

Senior piper Heather Ditroia will never forget Molloy's Pipe and Drum Corps' performance at the annual Christmas Dance Show last month.

"I had so much fun at this year's show, but sadly, it was the last one that I will ever do," Ditroia said.

The band, which played traditional Irish songs such as "Scott in the Brave," made its debut in last year's show at the request of show organizer Ms. Elizabeth Murdocca.

She was pleased with the band's performance and asked it to return.

As much fun as it is, Ditroia said playing bagpipes is not that easy.

"You have to be very coordinated to play the bagpipes. I have to practice everyday because there are so many notes to memorize," she said.

## Does Molloy encourage grade inflation?

*continued from page 1*

counterproductive and resulting in grade inflation. Weighting undoes the task of diagnosing and challenging students, something I spend much time and effort calculating from class to class, day to day, year to year. I do not believe I inflate grades but I believe the weighting of grades does to the detriment of everyone's best intentions."

Mr. Jennings believes the biggest reason for Stanners earning such high grades is the fact that Molloy admits an elite caliber of student as only about 14 percent of eighth grade applicants are accepted.

So it is reasonable to believe these students will achieve outstanding grades when they arrive at Molloy, Mr. Jennings said.

Ms. Mary Pat Gannon of the English Dept. said Molloy probably does inflate students' grades but it is something that probably needs to be done.

"Each year when I read the rubrics printed for Regents grading or sample AP test scoring, I realize how well Molloy kids think and, for the most part, write," she said.

Ms. Gannon often would assign a middle range score to a sample paper based on her own standards only to find that the test officials considered it to be a high scoring paper.

"So given the competition from Townsend Harris or Stuyvesant or Hunter [high schools] and the need for a GPA to cross the hurdle for college admission, I usually 'err' on the side of higher grades," Ms. Gannon said. "Is that grade inflation? I don't know."

Mr. Jennings said it is evident to him that grades in Molloy today are far higher than they were years ago.

"To get a 90 in those days was much more difficult" said Mr. Jennings. "I also attended Molloy as a student and back then grades were lower; a ninety average was a substantial achievement."

Mr. Sheehan agreed that "changing expectations" might play a role if grade inflation is indeed going on at Molloy.

"When I was in college, a 'B' was considered a good grade," he said. "These days there seems to be a stigma attached to a 'B,' as if demonstrating a solid grasp of a subject is a mediocre accomplishment.

"Parents, students, and even some teachers balk at the idea that a 'B' is a worthwhile grade. Anything short of excellence is unacceptable. In such a cultural climate, is it possible that teachers sometimes 'grade up' because our judgment and resolve has been eroded over time by parental and student expectations? Perhaps."

# Letellier surprises himself, sets new Molloy record



Matt Letellier, who set a new sophomore boys' pole vault of 13 feet - 6 inches, hopes to set a new varsity record before he graduates. (Photo by Fernando Ortiz)

## Frosh Boys hoops starts season 6-0

By Dennis O'Grady

The Archbishop Molloy Boys Freshman Basketball team started the 2006-2007 season with a 6-0 record, including victories over St. Dominic's, Regis and basketball powerhouse St. Anthony's of New Jersey, due to its players' ability and, more importantly, to their unselfishness, said head coach Mr. Chris DeSarno.

The team started the season by winning the pre-season IABBO tournament for the second time, beating McClancy, Xaverian, and Christ the King.

"The team's early success is not only because of their ability to pass and shoot, but also their camaraderie," Mr. DeSarno said. "They just enjoy each other's company."

Another key reason for the team's success has been its ability to overcome adversity.

Throughout the season the team has lost starters to injury and has still managed to win because of their ability to execute the offense for easy baskets, said Mr. DeSarno.

Starting forward Thomas Hofmann said the team's strengths include its speed, shooting ability, and the way they all work together to overcome the team's lack of height.

Molloy is led by its small but gritty four guard starting lineup of Reynaldo Walters, Devon Figueroa, Ernest Rouse, Keith Kilpatrick and forward Hofmann.

Although the team has had early success, Mr. DeSarno cautioned his team from becoming overconfident.

"The league is very balanced this year," he said. "Every game comes down to execution. To win, we need to execute on both offense and defense."

The road to the championship will be even more difficult this season because Molloy will for the first time face every

league opponent twice, which totals 16 games in six weeks, compared to playing only 12 league games in the past.

As the league season began, Mr. DeSarno wants his team to focus on rebounding because of its lack of size.

If Molloy can do that, Mr. DeSarno said, "We feel we have a shot this year to win a city championship"

### Boys Varsity B plays good 'D' to start 6-2

By Joseph Bopp

Archbishop Molloy's Varsity B basketball team opened the season with a 6-2 record thanks to good team defense and lots of experienced players in the starting lineup, said Coach Mr. Steve Borhi.

"We have guys who have been in the program since freshman year," said Mr. Borhi.

The all-senior starting five of guards Steven Kruger and Dominick Platzer, forwards Ian Warsley and Desmond McGowan, and center Vashista Amarjit have displayed good team chemistry all year.

"We've all been friends since freshman and JV and we all matured as players and men," said Platzer.

Last year the team finished with an 11-14 record and lost in the playoff semifinals but this year expectations are higher.

"We expect to win a city championship," said Platzer.

Coming off the bench are seniors Matthew Lontos, Timothy Baynes, and Thomas Daley, whom Borhi calls the leader of the team.

"He represents the school well and the team seems to rally around him," Borhi said.

By Ian Sarnataro

Matt Letellier set a Molloy sophomore pole vault record of 13 feet-6 inches on Dec. 16 during the Bishop Loughlin Games at the Armory in Manhattan.

"At first I didn't believe it because I thought I was only going to make thirteen [feet] that day," Letellier said. Boys Varsity Track Coach Bro. Bob Andrews wasn't surprised at Letellier's success.

"Matt has great natural skill and a lot of potential," Bro. Bob said.

Letellier beat the old sophomore record set by senior Dylan Dombrowski by two inches.

Dombrowski, who was unable to compete at the Loughlin Games due to a leg injury, wasn't sad to see his record broken.

"I like Matt," Dombrowski said, "He is a nice kid and is very talented."

Letellier said he hopes to clear 16-6 by his senior year, which would shatter the old school record.

Molloy's indoor pole vault record is 15-9 set in 2004 by Ian Cassidy who is now competing for Duke University and the outdoor record is 16-0 set in 2003 by Andy O'Connor who is at the Coast Guard Academy.

Bro. Bob, who is very optimistic about Letellier's future, said, "Matt has a good chance of beating Molloy's varsity pole vaulting record."

Dombrowski, who shares in Bro. Bob's optimism, said, "I can't wait to see what Matt will be able to accomplish in his junior and senior years."

Another successful sophomore who performed well at the Bishop Loughlin Games was Valerie Maignan, who finished sixth in the girls triple jump with a leap of 33-11.

## Stanners beat the Terriers at city bowling championships

By James Kazmierczak

The Archbishop Molloy Varsity Bowling team defeated St. Francis Prep on Jan. 10 at the White Plains Lanes to win the CHSAA city championship.

"It was a really exciting game," said senior Marlon Nepomuceno. "It was really close."

The Stanners jumped out to an early lead in game one and held on through game two for the victory over the team that had defeated them for the Brooklyn-Queens title.

"We have a lot of heart," said senior Richard Glinnen, "and people considered us the underdog, which gave us added incentive."

The Stanners finished the regular season winning four in a row and then opened the Brooklyn-Queens playoffs by coming back from 21 pins down to beat Xaverian by 80 pins in

"They were outstanding," said Coach Mr. Vinny Leonardo. "That was the biggest victory of the season [at that point]."

However, in the sectional, Molloy lost to Prep at Maple Lanes. While Molloy didn't win title, its second place finish earned the Stanners a spot in the city playoffs.

Molloy opened the city playoffs by defeating Iona Prep at the White Plains Lanes on Jan 8.

Then came the rematch with Prep in the finals and another city title, Molloy's eighth in the last 13 years.

The team was led by Glinnen (206 avg.) and fellow seniors Nepomuceno (193), Henry Enriquez (191), Jorge Torres (185), John Serventi (186), and Andrew Kathriner (175).

Molloy's JV team, meanwhile, won its fifth city title in a row.

## Stanners satisfied with split at CBA tourney

By Jessica Leyco

The Archbishop Molloy Varsity Boys' Basketball team lost in the finals of the CBA Christmas Tournament in Syracuse Dec. 29-30 despite playing well in both games, said assistant coach Mr. Mike McCleary.

"We played good teams, but we didn't shoot as well," said senior guard Rocco Rubino, who scored 22 points in Molloy's 75-63 opening game victory against the Christian Brothers' Academy.

Senior forward Morgan Kelly also played well, with 16 points and 12 rebounds, as Molloy overcame an 18-point deficit to win.

In the championship game, junior forward Matthew Grogan scored 19 points and Kelly had seven points and 12 rebounds in a 70-55 loss to Jacksonville.

"The other team had a good physical defense and shot the ball extremely well," said McCleary.

Kelly and Grogan made the All-Tournament Team.

Rubino said the tournament means the Stanners will have a very good season to look forward to this year.

The loss to Jacksonville dropped Molloy's record to 5-5.

# Stanners seek spot in hockey playoffs

By Danny Quinn

With a league record of 6-6-0 leaving the Stanners one point out of the last CHSAA playoff spot with only four games remaining, Molloy's hockey team grows all the more hungry to make the playoffs this season, said senior Paul DiNubila

Under new head coach, Jim Sheldon, and leadership of senior captains DiNubila, Dan Scagnelli, and Matt Sauli, the team heads down the final stretch of the season in a tough spot, having to win almost every game left in the regular season to solidify its playoff berth, and DiNubila said he and his fellow captains "will make sure of that."

After two tough losses to Fordham Prep by scores of 4-2 and 3-2, in which assistant coach Matt Lavanco said Molloy had outplayed, out-shot, and out-worked the opposition, the Stanners knew they had to change their attitude.

"In order to win they need to know they're the better team, use their speed to penetrate the defense, and play tough," Lavanco said.

DiNubila said, "the team needs to stay focused and play the way they did in our last win versus St. Joe's by the Sea and just needs to keep that

momentum going and get ready for the rest of the season."

Led by seniors Sauli, Scagnelli and DiNubila, who each scored two goals, the Stanners came through with an 8-4 win against Fordham.

"I'm very proud of the boys, especially the seniors," Lavanco said. "They stepped up big time when we



needed it most, it's their team, and they proved it Friday night."

With the win against Fordham Prep, the Stanners now have a .500 record, and look to use the big win over Fordham Prep for motivation in the final four games of the season, said DiNubila.

With juniors Pat Brown and Charlie Gotard, and sophomore Matthew Zay also playing well so far this season, the Stanners need to keep that effort going and "incorporate everyone into the effort if they're going to win," said Sheldon.

Sheldon said that with the different types of players the team has on each line, it's able to "keep the other teams guessing as to how we play" and this shines through as one of the biggest strengths of the team and will help them in the final stages of the season.

Chaminade, Xaverian, Iona Prep, and Farrell make up the final five games on the schedule and each one becomes more important than the last, "I want to make the most of this season and we're going to do our best to bring it home for the seniors '07" said DiNubila.

The last games are going to be hard



Senior Captain Dan Scagnelli, above and senior Thomas Farrager, left are hoping Molloy can grab a playoff spot.

fought battles because new coach Sheldon had set the goal for this season to "make the playoffs" and each player has kept his eye on the prize and needs to keep that focus through the final games, said DiNubila.

## Girl swimmers start 7-0

By Susan Harrington

Molloy's Girls Varsity Swim Team, which began the season 7-0, needs to win only two more meets to finish the 2006-2007 regular season undefeated. The Stanners opened the season Nov. 12 with a 107-58 victory over Bishop Kearney, and then went on to defeat St. Saviour 98-67, NECFM 96-50, St. Joseph's on the Hill 96-66, St. Joseph Villa 64-13, Fontbonne Hall 96-66, and St. John's Prep 96-49.

The team is led by senior co-captains Dana Blond, who swims the 50 and 100 freestyle, Cynthia Estrada, who swims the 100 butterfly, Kelly Werner, who swim the 100 breaststroke, and Dawn Wursthorn, who swims the 200 individual medley.

Coach Ms. Heather Green-Wresch said the other swimmers who played an important role in Molloy's success were senior Brittany Schuler in the 50

and 100 backstroke, junior Caitlin Winkler in the 500 freestyle, sophomore Zuzanna Michalak in the 100 freestyle, frosh Maria Skeivys in the 100 freestyle, and frosh Amelia Merker in the 200 individual medley.

Molloy won last year's CHSAA championship despite not winning a single event thanks to its superior depth providing it with several second, third, fourth and fifth place finishes.

Ms. Green-Wresch said she hopes the team is on its way to another title, which would be Molloy's fourth all-time, but will need outstanding performances from all 44 swimmers on the team.

"The team has such great spirit and sportsmanship," said Ms. Green-Wresch, "and I am proud to call myself the coach."



## Boys need to focus more

By Maggie Rossi

Molloy's Boys Varsity Swim Team began its season with a 2-3 record so will have to work harder and focus more on its races if the team wants to achieve a winning record, said senior co-captain James Cosgrove.

Although head coach Dennis Wresch said he isn't satisfied with the record so far, he has high expectations for the team at the CHSAA "A" championship meet on Feb. 10 at Eisenhower Park.

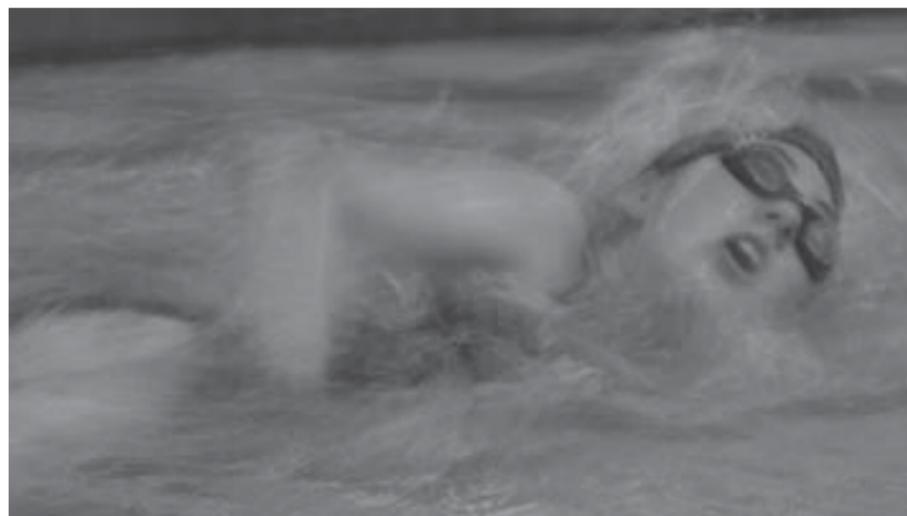
"I hope to win the remainder of the three meets to stay in the A division, and qualify as many swimmers as possible for the A championships," said Wresch.

The next meets, especially against St. John the Baptist and St. Anthony, should be close ones, but Wresch is depending on his top swimmers to come through

— Cosgrove in the backstroke, senior co-captain Mike O'Connor in the freestyle, sophomore distance swimmer Danny Collins and sophomore Stefan Guelly in the butterfly.

Unfortunately the team lost two of its best swimmers from last year, Greg Pheifer and Kevin Quinn, who both went on to swim at Marist College, but this year gained a group of potential star swimmers in frosh Denis O'Connor in the butterfly and Michael Harrington in the freestyle sprints.

Even though the boys have to focus on all their remaining meets, the season finale against the team's biggest rival, St. Francis Prep on Jan. 23 at 7 p.m. at Kings Point, will be the most exciting. "Most of all, I just want to beat Prep," said Cosgrove.



Senior backstroker Brittany Schuler, above right, and junior freestyler Isabella Palermo, above, helped Molloy get off to a 7-0 start for the season. (Photos by Julie Dzurita)