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# Woodrow Wilson High School THE BEACON

August 29, 2014

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VOLUME 78 ISSUE 1



Photo illustration by Jane Martin

**SUMMER IS BEHIND US** - Objects in the mirror are farther than they appear. Students came back to school on August 25.

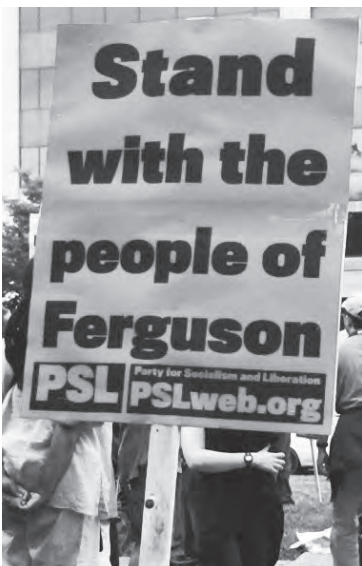


Photo by Rosie Cohen

**RILED UP** - Protesters are fired up over death of Michael Brown. Many call for the arrest of police officer Darren Wilson.

## D.C. Reacts to Shooting In Ferguson

**Claire Parker**  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Protests have erupted in Ferguson, Missouri and across the nation over the past two weeks after unarmed black 18-year-old Michael Brown was shot to death by white police officer Darren Wilson on August 9. The case has drawn attention to issues with racial profiling and police brutality, heightening tensions between black communities and law enforcement. Wilson students and alumni have responded to Michael Brown's death and surrounding issues by

taking part in protests.

While the majority of Ferguson residents' responses to the shooting have taken the form of peaceful demonstrations, violent confrontations between some protesters and law enforcement have quickly turned the St. Louis suburb into a scene of chaos. Some have drawn parallels to confrontations of the Civil Rights era, as the Ferguson police force's use of tear gas against protesters echoes the Birmingham police force's use of water hoses and other violent tactics in 1963.

In contrast, responses to

**CONT. ON PG 2**

## Wilson is Minimally Affected by New Boundary Proposal

**Emma Buzbee**  
News Editor

Problems including overcrowding, underuse, and anger over economic divides have led many D.C. public school users to agree that the 40 year-old school boundary system needs improvement. But options ranging from city-wide lotteries to incorporating the charter school system have made finding a solution difficult. An advisory committee recently completed a 10-month process to propose a new school assignment plan.

On August 21, current Mayor Vincent Gray accepted the proposed plan slated to go

into effect for the 2015-2016 school year. The plan, however, has been challenged by both contenders in the upcoming mayoral election, making it likely that the committee will be forced back to the drawing board.

The proposed plan would keep the neighborhood feeder system while adjusting boundaries to more precisely fit the city's population distribution. The changes would go into effect starting next school year so current Wilson students and their families would not be affected. Every student could complete their studies at their current public school. In addition,

all students third grade and above would be allowed to stay at their current school and finish their current pathway. For example, an out-of-boundary sixth grader who got into Hardy by lottery would be allowed to finish Hardy and go to Wilson afterwards. Younger students would also be able to follow the entire current pathway of their older sibling.

The main emphasis of the new plan would be on removing ambiguity from the process by having, for every elementary and middle school, only one school at the next level. According to The Washington Post, currently one-fifth of DCPS students has feeder rights to more than one school.

Out-of-boundary lotteries

**CONT. ON PG 3**

## Ice Bucket Challenge Makes a Helpful Splash

**Sophie ReVeal**  
Videographer & Junior Editor

On August 26, the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Association announced that it had raised \$88.5 million in donations since July 29. In 2013, only \$2.4 million was raised over the same period of time. The reason for this sudden spike in donations is the newest online phenomenon, the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge.

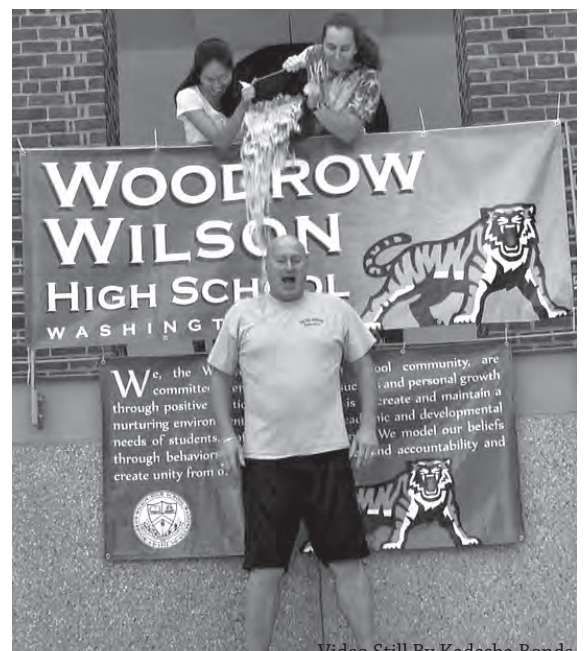
The craze began with professional golfer Chris Kennedy, who was challenged to dump a bucket of ice water on his head. At the time, this challenge had nothing to do with ALS; however, because his wife's cousin had fought ALS he decided he wanted to put a positive spin on it and nominated his friends to participate to help raise awareness for ALS. If they didn't complete the challenge in 24 hours, he said they would have to donate \$100 to the ALS association.

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's Disease, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that attacks cells in the brain and spinal cord. Over 5,600 Americans are diagnosed with ALS each year, and at any given time approximately 30,000 Americans have the disease, which causes death in an average of 39 months after diagnosis.

On July 4, 1939, Yankees Stadium was packed with fans to honor Gehrig on Lou Gehrig Appreciation Day. The beloved Yankees first baseman was diagnosed with the fatal disease on June 19, 1939. Unable to continue playing, Gehrig retired before his death two years later.

Since the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge started, it has spread across the Internet, raising awareness for the disease while also amassing research money. From celebrities like Katy Perry and Justin Bieber to athletes like LeBron James and Cristiano Ronaldo, millionaires like Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg, and politicians like George W. Bush and Chris Christie, it seems like everyone is getting involved. Not only have celebrities participated, Wilson's own Principal Pete Cahall participated in the challenge and explained he would also be donating to the cause.

Although originally there was some debate over whether or not the Ice Bucket Challenge is really helpful, the numbers now prove it is. Before this started nearly half of American citizens had not heard of ALS. Now awareness has spread everywhere and millions of dollars have been raised for the ALS Association. For those who wish to get involved, visit [alsa.org](http://alsa.org) to help.



Video Still By Kadesha Bonds

**FROZEN** - Principal Cahall participates in the Ice Bucket Challenge. At this writing, \$88.5 million has been raised.



## Gray Signs Boundary Proposal

FROM PG 1

would still take place in December, and 20 percent of attendance in every high school would be reserved for students out of the school's zone. The out-of-boundary students who would attend Wilson's feeder schools would still create a student body at Wilson that originated from many parts of the city.

Both Wilson and Alice Deal Middle School would have their boundaries tightened because of overcrowding. Wilson would still be fed by Deal, Hardy, and Oyster-Adams and would continue to be the only D.C. public high school west of Rock Creek Park. The neighborhoods in the part of its current boundary that stretches east across Rock Creek would be excluded, the largest of which is Crestwood. Karen Howard, president of the Crestwood Citizen Association, said by email, "At no time during the process were our concerns addressed so it was no surprise that the final document came out as it did."

Deal and Hardy would share the western side of Rock Creek and four new middle schools would be created in the center and east of the city.

The impact of Mayor Gray's authorization are thrown into question because his term ends in January. According to *The Washington Post*, Gray timed his authorization to ensure the new boundary changes go into place for the next school year, and to save the future mayor from a politically difficult decision. The new mayor can reverse Gray's authorization.

Front-runners Muriel Bowser (Democrat) and David Catania (Independent) have each promised that, if they are elected, the new plan will not go ahead. According to Bowser, "The Mayor's plan on school boundary changes is not ready. His plan serves to exacerbate educational inequality and does little to move school reform forward faster."

Catania stated that he wished to delay the process for at least two years to ensure every school has the time to improve before the boundaries switch. "I appreciate that the proposal maintains the District's system of matter-of-right neighborhood schools. However, our students need more than predictable pathways through elementary, middle, and high school. They must have high-quality schools at every level, in every neighborhood."

Pearl Strand, a sophomore from Crestwood, said "My neighborhood school is Roosevelt, but it isn't very good right now. The options aren't very good like on the other side of the park."



Photos by Rosie Cohen

**UNREST! - Citizens nationwide take to the streets in protest of police brutality after the shooting of Ferguson resident. Michael Brown was only 18 when he was killed.**

## Michael Brown Shooting Sparks Protests

FROM PG 1

Michael Brown's death in D.C. remained peaceful. At Howard University, students took a photo that quickly went viral and came to symbolize the issues Michael Brown's death have brought to attention. The photo shows a crowd of Howard students with their hands in the air, with the caption "Don't shoot," mirroring the action Brown supposedly took when facing the police officer.

On August 14, more than 800 Washingtonians, including Wilson junior Ellice Ellis, took part in a protest as part of National Moment of Silence 2014, a nationwide movement organized by activist and popular 'Black twitter' user Feminista Jones. The movement, publicized using the hashtag #NMOS14, was meant to unite the country in a moment of silence for Michael Brown and

other victims of police brutality, and culminated in 119 vigils and protests across the nation on August 13 and 14.

Ellis, who has friends and family who have experienced racial profiling, said she decided to protest because, "I feel as if the police, whose job is to protect and serve the people, are doing nothing but the exact opposite, and I have come to realize that something similar to [the shooting of Michael Brown] could happen right here in D.C. or to one of my fellow classmates if something doesn't change."

Ellis and fellow D.C. protesters kicked off the protest at Malcolm X park, then marched to U Street and finally to Chinatown, holding signs and chanting phrases such as "No Justice, No Peace" and "Hands Up, Don't Shoot." According to Ellis, police officers were present at the protest but only guided traffic

and protesters as they marched. All races were represented at the event, and age groups ranged from young children and parents, to college students, to elderly community leaders.

"Amongst the different races and age groups there was really a feeling of solidarity," said Ellis. "One of the most empowering parts of the protest was to see more than black faces supporting this cause -- it really reinforced the fact that this is not just a black or minority issue but that this is a human issue that all Americans should be aware of and care about."

"When I found out about Mike Brown I was devastated. This young man could have been me, going to college just like me -- my age, my color," said recent Wilson graduate D'Mani Harrison-Porter, now attending Morehouse College. He joined around 1,000 others protesting outside of the CNN center in

downtown Atlanta on August 18. "I knew that this was the civil rights movement of this generation and I couldn't just sit by," Harrison-Porter said. He held a sign that read, "I am not a target. I am a man!" standing next to John Lewis, a famous civil rights leader who marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

What will come out of these protests? "I hope that with the protests and responses to the situation, the police officer who killed Michael Brown will be thoroughly investigated and held accountable for his actions," Ellis said, "and that not only the Ferguson Police Department but police all over the nation will take a deep look into their procedures on brutality and racial profiling, and that the criminalization of blacks in the media and in everyday life will stop so events like these don't happen again."

## Vent Problem Remains Unanswered

Last March *The Beacon* wrote an investigative article about ceramics teacher Mary Lambert's health troubles. Lack of an appropriate filter kept the clay dust in Lambert's room and led to her diagnosis of work induced asthma. When she tried to get the correct filter by having several DCPS inspections of the room, nothing came of it. Despite all this and rising medical bills, Lambert decided against filing for workers compensation and decided to stay at the school though her asthma was getting worse.

No further change has come since the government inspections of Lambert's room last year. A follow-up inspection was discussed but never happened. Wilson's administration has promised Lambert that a HEPA filter exhaust system, which she needs to completely clean the air, will be installed this year. She plans on holding them to it. Her asthma improved over the summer away from the clay dust in her room and janitors will continue to clean every day. Lambert is still not filing for worker's compensation.

By Emma Buzbee

## New Hospitality Academy Joins Wilson

Matthew Smee  
Junior Editor

Wilson has a new addition to its previous set of six academies: The Academy of Hospitality and Tourism, or AOHT.

For those who don't know, the academies, according to Wilson's website are "small learning communities which enrich a student's curriculum and experience at Wilson High School."

Thus far, there are two classes that can be taken for this academy: "Principles of Hospitality Management" and "Customer Service," though it is safe to assume more are to come.

Unlike some of the other academies, such as HAM (Humanities, Arts, and Media), which are geared towards much broader fields of work, this academy is focused and specific.

The leader of the new AOHT will be Beverly Reynolds. While the academy will technically only be open to incoming freshmen

and rising sophomores in order to secure a number of years to work with the students, exceptions can be made for rising upperclassmen who express interest. According to academic director and co-head of AOHT Alex Wilson, the academy plans to focus on work-based learning through event planning with organizations like the Washington Wizards, Panera Bread, and the Marriott Hotel, as well as internships. The academy is essentially an introduction to this field work, a way for scholars who may be interested in a career in hospitality or management to start learning.

Soon enough, some Wilson students will become experts in this field, hopefully making Wilson an even more hospitable environment than it already is!

A flyer for the AOHT can be found on the Wilson website, and you can talk to Beverly Reynolds or Alex Wilson if you are interested in joining.

We are sad to report that former school psychologist Dr. Virginia Weaver passed away from brain cancer last weekend. *The Beacon* offers our condolences to her family.



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Thank you to our faithful volunteer, Mary Carpenter.

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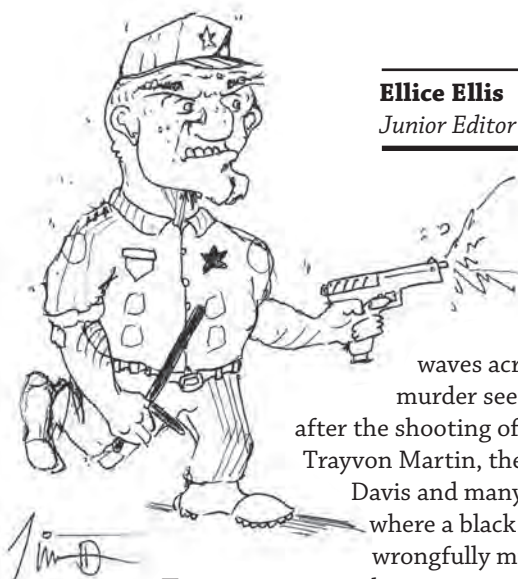
Our mission is to provide an accurate representation of the diverse views, opinions, and concerns of the students of Wilson High School. We aim to serve as the voice of the students. Through responsible, ethical journalistic practices, we strive to provide thorough, reliable news coverage of issues relevant to Wilson.

Advertising and subscription rates are available by emailing beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com.

The Beacon welcomes all student and guest contributions: articles, photographs, art, commentary, and letters to the editor. All submissions can be sent to beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com, and become property of The Beacon.

The Beacon is a public forum created for the purpose of expressing the views of and providing information to the Wilson student body. Thank you for reading The Beacon.

Double Take on Ferguson Tragedy



Ellice Ellis  
Junior Editor

The shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown is an awful tragedy that continues to send shockwaves across the nation. The murder seems all too familiar after the shooting of unarmed teen Trayvon Martin, the murder of Jordan Davis and many other incidents where a black person has been wrongfully murdered by police.

The important similarity among these incidents, and what is personal to our everyday lives, is the criminalization of both victims and black men in general. After their murders, the characters of both Trayvon Martin and Jordan Davis were called into question by the media, painting the boys as dangerous criminals and thugs, suggesting that they were deserving of their death sentences. The Ferguson Police Department is trying to do the same with Brown, stating that he was a suspect in an unarmed robbery prior to being gunned down by the police and that Brown had marijuana in his system.

A Twitter campaign that poses the question "If they gunned me down, what photo would you use?" also sheds light on the types of photos used by the media to portray black shooting victims and exposes a widely-held bias that assumes they are criminals.

In the case of Brown, some media reports showed Brown smiling at his high school graduation in cap and gown, but most chose to use a photo of Brown throwing up what some could perceive as a gang sign, which friends and family say was simply a peace sign. Such media portrayals reveal a pattern of criminalizing black people in the media. It's the same bias seen after Trayvon Martin was killed and constantly occurs when images chosen by media intentionally or unintentionally create an explanation for why people of color are killed.

Although it may seem like it, this blaming of the victim is not limited to race. Rapes and sexual assaults are blamed on

the behavior and attire of the woman time after time. This trend that measures the horror of the injustice against the character of the victim only teaches victims that the police and the justice system do not exist to protect them, but to humiliate them.

Conversely, it is also unhelpful to establish the positive character of a victim as a way to accentuate the atrocity of the crime. It does nothing but tell the victim that in order for your situation to be taken seriously you must act, look, and dress a certain way.

The killing of Mike Brown touches both of these arguments. On one hand, his death is horrendous because he had recently graduated high school and was set to start college the following Monday, and on the other it is justified because he had marijuana in his system and was a suspect in a robbery.

In the case of Mike Brown and all other victims whose characters have been vilified by the media and the justice system, we constantly forget that whether a person was sexually promiscuous, used drugs, or was a "straight A" student, they are still human and their situations deserve to be treated with proper reporting and respect, and most importantly they deserve the right to live.

Cartoon by Tristan Huber



Javon Johnson  
Contributor

For the past few weeks, the city of Ferguson, Missouri has experienced upheaval like never before. There have been ongoing protests regarding the unfortunate case of Michael Brown. At 18-years old, Michael Brown was shot six times in his head, chest, and lower body.

After a week or so of the tragic event, a press conference was held by Ferguson Police

Chief, Thomas Jackson. Chief Jackson named Darren Wilson, a white male 6-year veteran of the police force with no prior complaints against him, as the police officer who shot Brown. Later on during the conference, Chief Jackson went on to say that Brown was a primary suspect to a convenience store robbery that took place not long before the shooting. He added that Officer Wilson approached Brown on West Florissant Avenue, not too far from the convenience store, and saw that he had cigars in his hand. Officer Wilson may have connected the cigars Brown possessed to the robbery, and then shot him.

Although the protests in Ferguson directly connect to the shooting of Michael Brown, many of the details are unknown to the citizens of Ferguson, and the need for answers is becoming more urgent.

The response from President Obama has been very disappointing for citizens and observers nationwide. When President Obama delivered his statement, he disregarded a lot of important factors, such as the heavy-handed police tactics used against protesters. Instead

of discussing the issues of police brutality and civic justice, he emphasized keeping the protests to a minimum and staying calm throughout the situation.

A major portion of the Obama neutrality is an attempt to please the entire country. As President, it is only right for him to try to satisfy the entire country, and not just one specific group of people. It is possible that President Obama taking a particular side might only bring more commotion to the situation than already exists.

The problem has grown bigger than just racial tension. It is becoming a matter of inhumanity towards others. Police are citizens as well, and some of them might have forgotten that.

Moving forward, it seems like the protests will be coming to a close anytime soon. The citizens of Ferguson are not only fighting for the rights of Michael Brown, but are speaking out against what has become a too common trend of police savagery against African American men.

TOP 10

MISTAKES FRESHMAN MAKE THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL

1. HANDING IN THEIR SUMMER WORK
2. MAKING EYE CONTACT WITH UPPER CLASSMEN
3. NOT ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THEY ARE A LOWER CLASS OF UNTOUCHABLES
4. NOT RUBBING MR. CAHALL'S HEAD FOR GOOD LUCK
5. TALKING OR BREATHING OUT OF TURN
- 6 THINKING THEY ARE COOL FOR BEING ON A VARSITY TEAM (ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE ISN'T A JV TEAM)
7. BEING NEXT IN LINE GOING THROUGH SECURITY AND STILL HAVING A BELT ON
8. COMING PREPARED IN ANY WAY
9. NOT JOINING THE BEACON
10. GETTING OFFENDED BY THIS LIST



## New Co-Editors-In-Chief Address School

Annie Rosenthal & Claire Parker



Photo by Sarah Torresen

The Beacon has served as the voice of the Wilson student body since it was founded in 1936. Eighty-six years later, we're thrilled to be leading the paper in carrying on that mission. We are committed to providing hard-hitting, relevant, and thought-provok-

ing coverage of events and issues impacting our community. And we reaffirm our commitment to quality--producing top-notch writing, photography, design, and overall product for the benefit of the student body.

It is an exciting time for The Beacon as we expand and explore new realms. This year we're thrilled to introduce our new and improved website, [thewilsonbeacon.com](http://thewilsonbeacon.com). The site will feature new content in every section, every week. You can also find us on Twitter and Instagram (@wilsonbeacon), and Facebook (The Wodrow Wilson Beacon).

As Co-Editors-In-Chief, our main goal this year is to connect the school in new and meaningful ways, both by expanding The Beacon's media platforms and by making an effort to include new voices in

the paper to truly represent the diverse, multifaceted place that is Wilson.

Like many people in the Wilson community, we are proud of and grateful for the diversity that exists at this school. Students here are exposed to more than 1,800 different viewpoints formed by a multitude of backgrounds and experiences. However, after three years here we know that this diversity does not always translate into unity. People here often rest comfortably in groups of peers who seem like them, and don't seek out different people or alternate perspectives.

Our goal is to change that. We want to create opportunities for the perspectives of all students to be heard. We want to start conversation, to help bridge the divides that have prevented unity in the past. We aim to diversify both the

perspectives on our staff and also the content of our paper, to better connect with all Wilson students.

But we can't do that without your help. Write an article for The Beacon. Take photos. Make a video. Help us design our paper and website. Don't worry if you don't know how--we'll teach you. This year we'll have interest meetings in the atrium at the beginning of every month, and office hours every Tuesday at lunch in room C-210, to the right of the auditorium. Drop by anytime, or email us at [beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com](mailto:beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com). You can also approach any editor in the halls--we're friendly, we promise!

We know you have something to say, and we have the perfect place for you to say it.

## Change in Policy Reflects Power of Students' Voices

By The Beacon Staff

While some people see the Beacon as being hypercritical of the Wilson Administration, we would like to be the first to congratulate Wilson for being receptive to students' thoughts about the school's dress code, and the willingness to adapt when existing policies are not working.

If you were at Wilson last year you remember that the school went a little dress-code crazy. It was announced at the first-day assembly that the historically ignored dress code policy was to be enforced. Teachers and administrators were posted at the doors to police students outfits. Students were forced to

change or even sent home.

To say students were outraged might be an understatement. In our September issue alone there were six different articles on the dress code. People argued that it was sexist. Some believed that sending people home for the way they dressed was counterproductive to the purpose of the policy. Others argued that dress code was unfairly subjective based on people's body types. The school claimed it was important for people to "dress for success" in order to create a better environment for learning, but if people were being sent home they would not be learning at all.

This year, Wilson changed

the dress code policy significantly. "It's a kinder, gentler dress code...It's more focused," said Instructional Coach Linda Wanner. The fingertip rule, perhaps the most criticized of the dress code rules, was dropped. The rule stated that students could not wear shorts, dresses or skirts that were above where their fingertips fell against their sides. While most of the dress code remains intact, the administration is enforcing it more lightly, and the elimination of the most controversial elements of policy shows their willingness to compromise.

The school is not required to make changes to cater to the desires of the student body. In

fact it is uncommon for adults to take seriously the ideas of teenagers, so it's pretty unique that on this occasion Wilson has not only listened to students but addressed their concerns in tangible ways.

While the school doesn't have to listen to student voices, we think it is beneficial to everyone when they do. Teachers, administrators and the rest of the staff want to create the best possible learning environment for students, and who tends to know what is best for students besides the students themselves? No one doubts that Wilson students have an abundance of opinions, and plenty of ideas on how to make their

lives better, so it is important to remember that it is a two-way street.

The dress code is a prime example of how when students choose to voice their views -- whether here on the Opinions page of the Beacon, or through the SGA's new initiatives to engage students, or by speaking to administrators directly -- they can promote change. The Beacon strives to be an outlet for all student voices. Expressing your views in an outlet that reaches not only thousands of your peers, but also the entire staff and numerous members of the community, can be extremely rewarding, change people's minds, and change the reality of life at Wilson.

## Decriminalization is the Right Step Forward

Elias Benda

Co-Opinions Editor

On July 17, marijuana was decriminalized (NOT legalized), in Washington, D.C. It is no longer a criminal offense, even if you are under the age of 18, to possess an ounce or less of pot or to smoke it in the privacy of your own home. (Smoking in public is still an arrestable offense.) The new punishment consists of a \$25 dollar fine -- less than the \$300 fine for underage possession of alcohol, according to Nolo, Law for All -- and a call or letter to your parents/guardians.

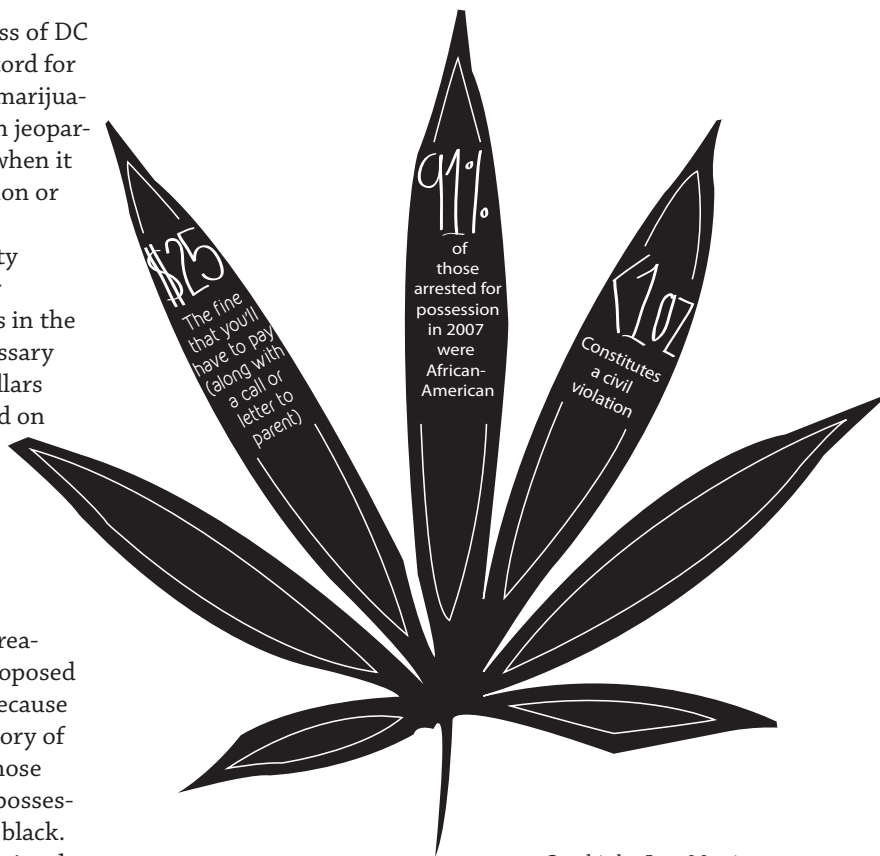
What does this mean for the youth of D.C.?

It means that young students and citizens do not need to worry about obtaining a criminal record or accruing jail time for what many see as a small, victimless crime. This is

important for the success of DC students. A criminal record for something as trivial as marijuana possession or use can jeopardize a student's future when it comes to higher education or employment.

This matters in a city that has the highest per capita marijuana arrests in the country, and an unnecessary concentration of tax dollars and police hours focused on targeting those using a drug that is recreationally legal in two states and already used for medical purposes in the District.

One of the biggest reasons the D.C. council proposed and passed this law is because of a racially skewed history of marijuana arrests. Of those arrested for marijuana possession in 2007, 91% were black. For a crime that is committed



Graphic by Jane Martin

in relatively equal numbers for each race, this statistic is shocking. It shows a flaw in the law, in policing, and in a racially skewed societal mindset, most recently exemplified by the murder of Michael Brown and the subsequent protests in Ferguson, Missouri.

D.C. officials did the right thing in decriminalization, because they have hit two birds with one stone. They eliminated the criminal penalty for a relatively harmless drug and simultaneously combated one aspect of racial disparity in the criminal justice system.

For students at Wilson, it's important to be clear on one point: "It's still illegal to bring it [weed] into a school environment," Principal Pete Cahall said. Regardless, he acknowledged that in countering the racist trend it is ultimately a positive step forward.

Dear Wilson students,

You've probably seen a couple of bright, neon posters around the school advertising for freshmen Student Government Association (SGA) elections. You may have even asked yourself, "What does Wilson's SGA do?" If you ask any senior (shoutout to the Class of 2015!), a common answer will probably be "plan dances."

In actuality, Wilson's



SGA does plan several dances throughout the year, including homecoming and mixers. But more importantly, SGA is here to serve you and hear your ideas and opinions. We want to hear about the changes you want to see, because SGA is here to serve as a bridge between you and the administration.

This year, SGA is making

recycling AND composting a priority. If you place items that are NOT recyclable in a recycling bin, then our hard-working custodians have no choice but to dump all of it in with the rest of the trash. So please be responsible and properly dispose of your trash and recyclables.

Keeping up with tradition, we will have second-period representatives this year. Students of each second period will choose one class representative who will meet with SGA once

each month to share suggestions and concerns voiced by their peers. Representatives who help at school functions will receive free admission and community service hours.

We hope to have the school store up and running by mid-October. The store is in the hallway behind the cafeteria, but we're coordinating with the administrators to try to sell Wilson gear out of the school store window, which is more visible and accessible. Feel free to call us out on

this if it slips our minds.

Periodically, SGA will give little gifts to students through a campaign called "Random Acts of Kindness." These gifts are mostly surprises for now, but they may or may not include ice cream.

We are super excited to work with you all. Get PUMPED for an awesome year!

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Li  
SGA President 2014-2015



# Wilson Myths BUSTED

**Zoe Mills**  
Staff Writer

Wilson is a huge high school, and that's a fact. It's also very diverse, and that's another fact. Such facts can make the Wilson environment prone to gossip and rumors. I'm here to shed some light on those myths.

Most students and friends of students who have attended a D.C. middle school have heard the rumor that every Wilson kid does drugs in the bathroom. That is obviously an untrue, not even well-crafted rumor that was spread by a kid who knew few Wilson students and little about the school itself.

Another one is the belief that mice live in the walls and ceilings, which is most likely true, due to the evidence of the mice droppings in all corners of the building. Still, we get by with the mice, though stepping on the occasional scat is unpleasant.

But some other rumors aren't as easy to brush off, like the one that Wilson teachers can't fail their students. While the official Wilson policy says that if "good faith effort" is put forth, students are entitled to a base of 50 percent, in practice this rule is rarely implemented. The 2015 student handbook says that each department is allowed to decide what constitutes "good faith" and should include this in the course information at the beginning of the year. If a student's work fits within the guidelines, they will be given a 50. I've failed my share of pop quizzes, and I was never graced with that courtesy, but even if I had been, it would have still constituted an F.

Another serious accusation is that all of Wilson's security guards steal from the students. This is not known to be a regular habit of the guards, other than

the occasional confiscation of food and glass ice tea bottles. However, one instance of this type of theft occurred when a former Wilson student's phone was stolen. The girl used the Find My iPhone app to trace the phone right back to a Wilson security guard. When the phone was finally located, the guard was terminated, and the student was left with multiple selfies of the guard and his son at a Nats game. Since then, there have been no reported instances of a guard stealing from a student.

Some of the more light-hearted rumors, though, began after Principal Pete Cahall's coming-out to the student body. Ever since his announcement, many students, some who don't even attend Wilson, have been inspired to spread the word. A more dramatic rumor about Cahall said that he is now the Gay Pride Spokesman of America, which is not actually an official role in the U.S. Another, more believable, though slightly incredible, rumor back in the spring was that Cahall was going to be on "Ellen"! Sadly, he did not make an appearance on the show, though one of Ellen DeGeneres' production assistants said that they would get back to him, they have not contacted him since the spring. However, he did make her website and many more, mainly local, news sites.

For now, the rumors about the school as a whole aren't nearly as awful as they could be. Wilson has a lot to offer to its students, and if you don't attend the school, it's definitely hard to sit by and watch. Rumors start with a whisper and can turn into a shout -- and something completely different from what they started as. One giant misunderstanding is the last thing anybody needs!

## The Julies Journey to Central America



Photo courtesy of Julie Caccamise  
**REVOLUTIONARY BONDING - Wilson teachers Julie Gloss and Julie Caccamise visited the Zapatista community in Mexico this summer. They also traveled to El Salvador.**

**Annie Rosenthal**  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

For many people, summer break is a chance to relax--to go to the pool, sleep in late, and forget about work for a few months. This year, Spanish teacher Julie Gloss and International Studies Program lead teacher Julie Caccamise had other plans. In the spring, the Julies had combined their interests in language and international politics and applied for a travel grant to visit El Salvador and Mexico. On July 9, they boarded a plane for Central America.

The trip began with three days at a hostel in the Salvadoran capital, San Salvador. Toting multiple cameras and an audio recorder, the two teachers braved the tropical heat to explore and record interviews during the day. They were advised not to go out on the street after 7 p.m. for safety reasons.

"We wanted to go to El Salvador because of its D.C. connections and because of the long-term implications of the civil war," said Caccamise. Although the 13-year conflict between the military-led government and left-wing guerrilla groups officially ended in 1992, its effects pervade most aspects of Salvadoran life. The multitude of war stories they heard had a strong impact on Gloss and Caccamise as citizens of the U.S., a country that contributed tens of millions of dollars to the Salvadoran military, financing civilian massacres.

"Growing up, we weren't told of U.S. culpability. I think we both grew up to be people who think about these things -- about why the government does things the way it does," Caccamise said.

From San Salvador, the teachers traveled to Suchitoto, a colonial-turned-tourist town in the northern province of Cuscatlan. They stayed in a hostel-community center hybrid called the Center for Art and Peace.

Many of the people the Julies spoke to in Cuscatlan had stories to share about attempted immigration to the U.S. One man who "looked sad even when he smiled," told them that he'd been arrested in Belize and had spent a few weeks in prison

without food or water. He said it was the scariest thing he'd ever done, that he'd seen things he never wanted to see.

"Some [of the people we met] made it and were able to come back and say, 'This is where I wanna be, I wanna be with my family.'" Gloss said. "Of course you want to say that, but when you're in a country where you live under the threat of violence, a country that hasn't really recovered from a civil war that in a way continues today..."

Caccamise said she was overwhelmed by the openness and resilience of the people they met: "There, I was thinking about how I live, with people who live very differently. They've lived through so much and yet their happiest moments are telling me their stories...I have the luxury of accepting their generosity, and then I get to go home to my bed, my life."

After 10 days in El Salvador, the two travelers left for Mexico City. They had visited our closest neighbor to the south last year on vacation, but this time they were back with a new purpose: to spend time with the Zapatista community in Chiapas, Mexico.

In 1994, when the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect, a group called the Zapatista Army of National Liberation declared war on the Mexican government. The Zapatistas encouraged the rest of Mexico to join them in a revolution against what they saw as a government no longer in touch with its people. Little support appeared, and the armed conflict lasted less than two weeks. The Zapatistas, a mostly indigenous group, retreated to form their own community in Chiapas, where they make up a third of the province's population. Although the Zapatistas now practice nonviolence, their relationship with the Mexican government is tense.

Gloss and Caccamise went to Chiapas as delegates of a San Diego-based organization called Schools for Chiapas because "you need a good reason to get to Zapatista territory." Being a delegate involved working in an orchard the organization had started for the community: weeding, pulling sunflowers from the ground, moving rocks.

It was hard work, but it left the teachers plenty of time to spend with the Zapatistas. Gloss was most interested in learning about their Mayan traditions, while Caccamise was curious about the Zapatista government.

Life in Chiapas was all about community. Zapatista teenagers lived at their wood-plank schoolhouse for periods of four weeks at a time, returning home for two in between. Everything at the school was communal, from field work to making breakfast. The students spoke proudly of their indigenous roots, and many of their traditions had been passed down over generations. They spoke two Mayan languages along with Spanish. The corn they used to cook was the same kind indigenous Mexicans had used for hundreds of years, and the villagers were fervently opposed to GMOs, Gloss said.

But though the Zapatistas were focused on preserving tradition, the Julies were pleasantly surprised by the community's liberal views. They saw no division of authority or work between men and women, and said homosexuality was not stigmatized.

According to Caccamise, at least half the participants in a village meeting she attended were female. "I was struck by that," she said. "That we live less than two miles from the seat of national power, where 14% of the governing body is female, and there [in Chiapas] 50% is."

Back in D.C. the Julies agree that while they have a good deal of respect for the government in Chiapas, they wouldn't want to be Zapatistas themselves. "I think the idea of a communal decision-making process is a brilliant thing, is a wonderful thing. I think it's hard to see that working on a large scale," said Caccamise. "Their way of decision-making is really slow... But the idea of standing up to the political system to ensure that they got what they deserved, that's really admirable."

Said Gloss, "I walked away still very thankful for the life I have."



Graphic by Mason Strazzalla and Jarrah May



# Wilson Sophomore Scrabbles to the Top

**Sam Masling**  
Contributor

On the winning board of the 2014 National Scrabble Championship (commonly referred to as the NSC) lies the word TROOZ. To most, this word would be obscure, bizarre, and most unlikely to be played in a game of Scrabble at home, but to the 530 entrants in the NSC, TROOZ is a completely valid word that you wouldn't hesitate to throw down.

The vast majority of Scrabble players across the country, who play recreationally with family and friends, are completely unaware of the rapidly growing subculture that is the National Scrabble Association. Belonging to this association means you are a competitive Scrabble player and have a novel idea of what a Scrabble game should look like. To be good at Scrabble, whether you play recreationally or competitively, you have to know a lot of words. What differentiates the competitive from the recreational sides of Scrabble is that competitive players study words with absolutely no idea what those words mean. If you went around

the NSC and asked each one of the 530 players if TROOZ was a word, 99% would answer affirmatively. If you then asked each player what that word meant, you'd receive about five correct answers and 525 people answering that they have no clue.

"TROOZ" is actually a Scottish word, meaning close-fitting tartan or plaid trousers.

This summer I joined this mass of Scrabble fanatics in Buffalo to play 31 games of Scrabble and be apart of something that would eventually result in the crowning of the National Scrabble Champion. While sadly, I was not that person, I still had a fantastic time and was impressed with the entire scene, which was put together mainly through volunteer work.

Held in the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center, the tournament was played in a gigantic open room, well over two football fields wide. During playing time, all you could hear was the shuffling of tiles, and people announcing scores. Even in a 530-person filled room, with echoes bouncing off the walls, it was eerily quiet. Between rounds everyone would gather in front of a large projector screen that showed the standings and was

updated constantly.

The tournament was made up of four divisions, with each division grouped by ratings, a measure of a player's skill based on how well they've done in previous tournaments. I was in the second division, while all the top players were in the first division, so thankfully I didn't have to play any of them. The tournament is played over the course of five days, and after each round the results are calculated and your next round's opponent is someone with a record similar to yours. Towards the later rounds, the players with the best records in the first division repeatedly play each other in order to determine who the national champion will be. This also happens in each of the lower divisions, although the winners from each division never end up playing each other.

This year's winner was a 24-year-old man from Portland, Oregon, named Conrad Basset-Bouchard, with whom I was lucky enough to spend a lot of time after hours. Conrad is part of a new generation of Scrabble players that has taken a different approach to the game by focusing not only on word memorization but also on strategy, and

they routinely place in the top 10 at the Nationals. This new approach means spending hours analyzing your game using a Scrabble analysis program called "Quackle". It also means engaging in online discussions about board positions, and learning from other players while you help them learn, too. This mutual-benefit method differs greatly from the do-it-yourself approach of many older players in the game. The fact that one of the younger Scrabble players won this year is particularly significant because he dethroned the reigning four-time national champion, Nigel Richards, age 47, representing the dawn of a new era in the competitive Scrabble world.

This new generation of Scrabble players has developed in part because of a book called "Word Freak," written by Stefan Fatsis, who also happens to be the Scrabble coach in the D.C. public schools Janney and Deal, and who introduced me to the game. "Word Freak" is about the world of competitive Scrabble, trying to get to the top, and all the social aspects of that journey. For the first time ever, someone who started playing Scrabble after reading

"Word Freak" won the National Championship, and that generation, dubbed "Spawn of Word Freak," is bound to dominate the Scrabble scene for years to come.

One of my favorite parts of the Scrabble Championship is, surprisingly enough, the social aspect. While you'd be correct to assume that many of the people who play competitive Scrabble are not your average Joe, many of the new generation of top level Scrabble players, like the new champion, are well-rounded, young adults, who with their new ways of approaching the game are taking the game to a whole new level. While I am nowhere close to the skill level of these "new generation" Scrabblers, I still spent most of my free time at the tournament hanging out with them, and I've become very close with a lot of them.

This was my third straight year going to the National Scrabble Championships. It was by far my favorite, both because this year we had a new winner and also because I got to see the continued development of the Scrabble scene. I saw myself develop not only as a player, but as part of that amazing community too.

## MATCH THE NEW TEACHER TO THEIR FUN FACT

compiled by Maria Brescia-Weiler  
graphic by Jane Martin

**1.** I have traveled to 17 countries and I plan to visit 40 by the time I am 40

**2.** I have a twin brother who is an artist

**3.** I went to live in New York from Bolivia during my senior year

**4.** I am a chocolate addict, and a great way to get on my good side is to help support my habit

**5.** I am a loyal Mets fan

**6.** I was the features editor of my college newspaper one year

**7.** I studied abroad in Australia and while I was there I skydived and bungee jumped

**MS. MANN**

**MS. DOUGHERTY**

**MS. ROMANO**

**MS. HARSHORN**

**MS. OTALLAH**

**MS. SWIFT**

**MS. GUGGENHEIMER**

answers: 1. Ms. Mann 2. Ms. Swift 3. Ms. Harshorn 4. Ms. Otallah 5. Ms. Guggenheimer 6. Ms. Romano 7. Ms. Dougherty

## Former Wilson Staff Spreading Talent Across DCPS

By Greg Kopetsky

This summer, a handful of teachers have made the decision to leave Wilson. With the teeming talent here at Wilson, these staff members have taken the opportunity to help bring up the burgeoning new programs at schools across DCPS and forge new programs elsewhere.

**Merlos** After 14 years at Wilson, Jaime Merlos has left Wilson to join the administrative team at Hardy Middle School, a move he has been anticipating for a while. As Hardy's assistant principal, Merlos looks forward to expanding his expertise in education working with a different age population. "I feel like I can make a great impact since most Hardy eighth graders end up at Wilson in ninth grade."

**Ball** Mary Ball, former Bilingual Education teacher at Wilson, has left for another opportunity within DCPS. She will now be a part of the new International Academy at Cardozo High school, a program focused on improving the education of English Second Language (ESL) students. "I had been at Wilson for a long time and saw this as an opportunity to be part of something new and innovative and to grow professionally," she wrote in an email.

**Obermeyer** Chris Obermeyer, a universally-loved freshman biology teacher, has left after three years at Wilson, opting for a move to Cardozo, where he will be a science teacher for English Second Language (ESL) students. "I'm going to miss the kids at Wilson so much, but hope I can find a new challenge and professional growth."

**Beer** Stephanie Beer has joined Ball and Obermeyer in making the switch to Cardozo High School, where she too will help start the new International Academy. "I have always been interested in immigrant and bilingual education, so this position felt like a better fit for me professionally." This year, Beer will be teaching ninth and tenth grade ESL History.

**Irvin** Former special education teacher Dudley Irvin has decided to move to Charles Hart Middle School, where he will work under principal Charlette Butler, Wilson's former assistant principal. "She got me a job at Wilson when I moved here from New York, and now she's bringing me over to Charles Hart," he said. At the Southeast middle school, Irvin will assume an administrative position. "It's a vertical move for me. I will now be overseeing and guiding teachers instead of teaching kids myself."

**Sandoval** Former special ed teacher and teacher representative of Wilson's Filipino Club who helped students raise money for tsunami relief in the Philippines, Christina Sandoval has chosen to become part of Banneker High School's new special education program. "I was attracted by the opportunity to pioneer a new program," she said. "I would love to be able to develop the program further." However, she hinted at a possible return to Wilson in the future.



# ELLIE'S FOOL-PROOF ADVICE FOR FRESHMEN\*

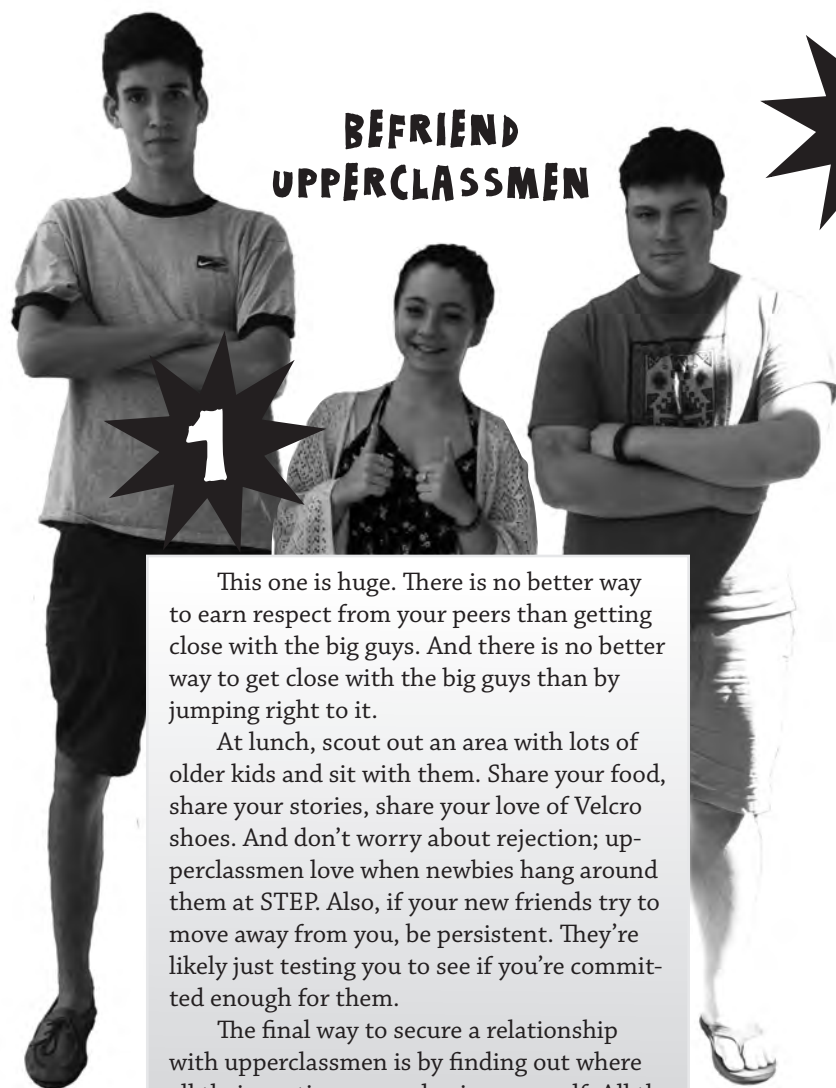
By Ellie Melick

Being a freshman can be hard. You're in a new place, with new people, and everything is stressful and intimidating. You don't know how you're possibly going to survive. But to all you fretting freshmen out there, I am telling you with 100% certainty that you will make it through this year. You will eventually feel comfortable here at Wilson. You absolutely can, and you absolutely will.

But not without my help.

I decided to put together these helpful tips because I know firsthand how hard it is to be a freshman. I figured my expertise on the subject could greatly benefit all the scared incoming ninth graders, so I decided to give back to the community and bless you with this fool-proof list of advice.

"You will eventually feel comfortable here at Wilson...But not without my help."



## BEFRIEND UPPERCLASSMEN

This one is huge. There is no better way to earn respect from your peers than getting close with the big guys. And there is no better way to get close with the big guys than by jumping right to it.

At lunch, scout out an area with lots of older kids and sit with them. Share your food, share your stories, share your love of Velcro shoes. And don't worry about rejection; upperclassmen love when newbies hang around them at STEP. Also, if your new friends try to move away from you, be persistent. They're likely just testing you to see if you're committed enough for them.

The final way to secure a relationship with upperclassmen is by finding out where all their parties are, and going yourself. All the older kids know that a freshman who's willing to put themselves out there like that is definitely worth keeping around. I find that one of the best ways to make friends at a party is by choosing one person to follow around the whole night and learn everything about. Don't worry, it won't be weird at all.

NOTE: Keep in mind that sophomores are NOT WORTH YOUR TIME. They do NOT count as upperclassmen, so LEAVE THEM ALONE. Don't sit with them, don't talk to them, don't even look at them—sophomores are irrelevant. So focus ALL your attention on juniors and seniors. As far as you're concerned, the 10th grade doesn't even exist.



## MAKE EVERY DAY SPIRIT DAY

This one can actually be used in two ways. The first is a bit easier, as it involves only you. Basically, all you have to do is decide a dress-up theme for every day of the school year. The basic themes that are used during spirit week—Twin Day, Wacky Wednesday, etc.—are already taken, obviously. But that still leaves an endless amount of themes to choose from, including a few of my personal favorites, like Indigenous Australian Instrument Day, Amphibious Plant Day, and Justin Bieber Obsession day.

But if you really want to take this tip to the next level, which I highly recommend, you can't just do a spirit-year by yourself. You have to get as many people as possible involved, which you can do easily by handing out fliers at STEP, or starting a Facebook page, or simply putting a notice in the Daily Bulletin, since every Wilson scholar reads that religiously.

At first, people may think you're weird for coming to school one day dressed in a Lychee costume (Exotic Fruits Day!). But once people know what you're doing, everyone will want to join in on the fun. Eventually, everyone at school will be sporting authentic parkas for Alaskan Inuit Day, and potato sacks for Great Depression Day. And YOU'LL be known as the hero of it all!



## TURN WILSON INTO THE SCHOOL FROM GLEE

If there's one thing Wilson loves, it's that show Glee. Always funny, relevant, and fun to dance along to, Glee is a great show that all Wilson kids are obsessed with. Because of how awesome the show is, everyone wishes Wilson were more like the high school in the show, but so far no one has been brave enough to come down the atrium staircase singing and dancing to a catchy mashup of "Drunk In Love"/"Turn Down For What".

And that's where you come in.

As I've said before, all the coolest freshmen are the ones most willing to put themselves out there. So I strongly encourage you to learn all the words to a fun, hip song, (I'm personally feeling a rendition of Taylor Swift's new "Shake It Off"), choreograph it, add some harmonies, and one day let your inner Lea Michele shine bright.

Soon, every kid at Wilson will want to follow suit, and we'll become the real life version of Glee's William McKinley High School.

Now, my little freshman, I leave you with this list, knowing you will make excellent use of it and firmly secure a spot for yourself in the hearts of all the upperclassmen. So go on out there, and don't forget that no matter how things go this year, always be yourself—and always remember there is no such thing as "doing too much."

\*This is a satirical piece. The advice listed here is really bad. If you do these things people will probably just think you're weird.

# Teachers Took the Summer By Storm

Rachel Page  
Co-Features Editor

After two months of sleeping in, hanging around the pool, and spending long hours on Tumblr, it can be hard to remember that all of your teachers did something over the summer other than sit in their classrooms and wait for students to return. Just as Wilson teachers come from a wealth of backgrounds, they also find diverse ways to spend their summers: some travel the world, while others visit family, and still others take on second jobs or continue old ones.

For math teacher Qi Guo, summer means a rare opportunity to relax and connect with friends and family. Guo spent most of her summer in China, where she went to two different family reunions. "Before when I lived in China I was

always busy," she says, "but now I can go to new cities where I've never been." She says one of the highlights of her trip was climbing the Yellow Mountain, a famous tourist destination in Anhui province. She also enjoyed eating all of the food she had missed while in the United States—especially dumplings, her favorite.

Even if they do things unrelated to the subject they teach, summer can be a key time for teachers simply because it helps them start the year on the right foot. Guo says, "If you're in a good mood and you're happy, that's important for how you teach during the year."

History teacher Jonathan Shea would probably corroborate. Shea spent part of his summer in Wyoming, where he says he was finally able to catch up on sleep. His trip included horseback riding and visiting "more

ice cream places than you can imagine" with his family.

Just one state away, chemistry teacher Leslie Maddox was also enjoying the West—this time for a more academic purpose. Maddox attended the National Science Education Leadership Association's Summer Leadership Institute in Colorado, where she learned about how to integrate new science standards into the curriculum. Her favorite part of the trip was going to the Garden of the Gods, a natural park with unusual rock formations and fossils. Maddox says that although for some teachers summer is meant for resting, she prefers to do activities within her field. Meeting new teachers with new ideas "inspires me to try out different things in the classroom," she says.

Pamela Gardner, Wilson's beloved librarian, also found the time to expand her educational

career over the summer by working at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda. Located on the campus of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), it is the largest medical library in the world—quite a step up from the Wilson stacks. Gardner also had the opportunity to travel to Pittsburgh for Brave New Voices, an international poetry slam competition, with the D.C. Youth Poetry Slam Team. The D.C. Youth Poets, including 2014 Wilson graduate Morgan Butler, beat over 50 teams from places like Hawaii and South Africa to win the entire competition.

Still other Wilson teachers use summer as a time to continue their second lives. Vocal music teacher Lori Williams went on tour in Austria, a country well known for its musical history. She also performed on Martha's Vineyard and at the Bethesda Blues and Jazz Supper

Club. A renowned jazz vocalist, Williams is working on her third CD.

Whether they're catching up on lost sleep or furthering their academic careers, Wilson teachers know how to make the most of their summers. "I got to spend time with my new granddaughter," says drama teacher Harriet Bronstein, smiling. Two tables away, Leslie Maddox also has a summer family story; her preschool-aged daughter was diagnosed with diabetes a few weeks before school started. It's a solemn reminder of how diverse the experiences of Wilson staff members can be, and how important it is to keep in mind that, though it may be hard to remember throughout the rest of the school year, they are more than just teachers.



# Mo'ne Davis is Better Than the Boys

Sports Commentary

Erin Doherty  
Sports Co-Editor

Move over Nationals, Mo'ne Davis has hit the sports spotlight. The 13-year-old phenom from Philadelphia has made quite a name for herself in the past couple of weeks. Within the last week, Davis has made the cover of Sports Illustrated, been the first girl to pitch a shutout during a Little League World Series game, been offered money for advertisements, and even has a loyal fan club-- ranging from other young girls to parents and adults. Everyone has been impressed by her talent.

Unfortunately for Mo'ne and her team the Taney Dragons, their run ended when they were eliminated from the Little League World Series on August 21. Still, Mo'ne's experience paints a picture of the reality of women's sports today.

Davis has captured the hearts of thousands across the United States, including in

the Wilson High community. Junior Asa Canty comments that, "it was very cool to watch her [Mo'ne Davis], not just how she pitched but also how she seemed so mature handling all the attention being thrown at her." According to Mark Hyman, an assistant professor of sports management at George Washington University, "She's [Mo'ne] the most talked-about baseball player on earth right now. More people are talking about her than Derek Jeter."

But Mo'ne's time to shine may be brief. Soon, her amazing story will be overshadowed by other professional, college and

high school sports – especially football, which is still the dominant sport in the U.S.

Columnist Sally Jenkins wrote in the Washington Post that if Mo'ne had played against girls instead of boys, her story would never have captured national attention. This highlights problems with women's and girls' sports at every level. "It's about them" – meaning men, said tennis legend Billy Jean King. "You're in a male arena," she told Jenkins.

Female athletes everywhere, including at Wilson, understand what King is talking about. A handful of women athletes have

broken through, such as basketball players Brittney Griner and Skylar Diggins, soccer star Abby Wambach, and tennis champions Venus and Serena Williams.

Yet they are the exceptions, not the rule. The vast majority of women who play sports against other women, as Jenkins pointed out, never get noticed. Very few women or girl athletes play against males.

Wilson senior Alexis Coates played baseball with and against boys last season. She was a true trailblazer, but ended up moving to softball.

This is what made Mo'ne's accomplishments so important

and memorable. Perhaps she caused some people to change their perceptions about female athletes. But over the long-term, things will only change when ALL women athletes get their due respect.

Mo'ne Davis's eventual goal is to play basketball for the University of Connecticut, a perennial powerhouse, and perhaps in the WNBA. It would be great to think that, if she does well, Mo'ne will get as much attention playing basketball against women as she has playing baseball against boys. But don't count on it.



Photo Courtesy of Michael Bryant, Inquirer Staff Photographer

**FAST BALL** - 13-year-old Mo'ne Davis is the first girl to pitch a shutout during the Little League World Series. She hopes to one day play college basketball, though for now baseball is her sport.

## GIRLS SOCCER

Wilson girls soccer has a goal to improve in the playoffs. Though they had a successful season, they lost in the DC-SAA playoffs to Georgetown Day School. Similar to the boys team, the girls excelled in DCIAA play but struggled when facing some of the area's private schools. The Lady Tigers had a few thrilling victories last season, including one against Paul IV that was won in double overtime. This year, the Tigers have another tough schedule ahead of them, and hope to make another DCSAA tournament run.



Photo by Matthew Smeed

**KICKIN' IT** - Wilson girls soccer get ready for their season. Varsity's first game is on September 9.

## BOYS SOCCER

The Wilson boys soccer team looks to bounce back after last year's heartbreaking overtime defeat in the first round of the DCSAA Playoffs to Bell. Although the Tigers had beaten Bell a few days before to claim the DCIAA crown, they weren't able to finish off the season with a win. Wilson lost some key players like Jessie Lauritsen, Jonah Gigli, and Sebastian Navidi-Kasmi, but also have strong returning players, including RJ White, Merf Finney, and Liam Walsh. "Last year's defeat was a wake up call for us in the DCSAA tournament," Walsh says. "After beating Bell just four days prior in the DCIAA championship, we lacked motivation and desire in the DCSAA. Our intensity will definitely improve for the DCSAA this year."

by Ben Kostyak



**SPORTS**

# Dunham Nominated for Inspiring Coach Award

**Erin Doherty**  
**Sophie ReVeal**  
*Sports Editor, Videographer*

This summer, track and cross country coach Desmond Dunham achieved success that extended far beyond the Wilson community. He was nominated for the Brooks Inspiring Coaches Award, an award that honors coaches across the United States for their positivity and success on and off the track.

Dunham's recognition began in early May when sophomore Mayim Lehrich received an email about the award. Lehrich's mom, Debbie Lehrich, quickly sent emails to the Wilson administration and members of the track and cross country team about the prospect of nominating Coach Dunham. In order for Dunham to become a finalist, those impacted by him had to submit personal entries about their positive experiences with the track program. Once athletes and parents learned about what

they needed to do, they did their part to pay back a bit of what Dunham had given them.

As Junior Asia Amis explained "Coach Dunham wants everyone to give 110% in each event, and [says] that if you really want to run, strive to be the best."

Due to the impressive number of entries, Coach Dunham became one of the 25 national finalists. Even though the contest officially started in February and the Wilson team was not aware of it until May, the track community was still able to work together to make Dunham a finalist in less time than the other candidates.

"It was definitely a great honor," Dunham said.

According to athletes and students on and off the track, it was a well-deserved one. "[He] inspires everyone to try their best, leading by example," said junior Julie Rakas, who has run with Dunham for the entirety of her Wilson career. "He pushes us and makes us stronger and bet-



Photo Courtesy of Jacqueline Beliveau

**SUMMA CUM LAUDE - Coach Dunham was nominated for the Brooks Inspiring Coach award this spring. He was among 25 finalists.**

ter in all aspects of our lives."

Rakas is just one of the many Wilson athletes who have been impacted by Dunham's successful coaching methods. "Coach Dunham always sees the potential in everybody," sopho-

more Aaron Coates said.

Dunham explained how lucky he felt to "have the ability to touch so many lives on and off the track." For him and the rest of the track team, the Brooks Inspiring Coaches Award

is a tangible representation of the hard work, dedication, and commitment that coaches and athletes have put in through the years to better the Wilson track program.

# Young QB Plans to Take Us to the Top



Photos by Henry Shuldiner

**HIKE - Sophomore Steven Williams is the starting varsity quarterback. He hopes to bring us a win at the Turkey Bowl this year.**

**Henry Shuldiner**  
*Sports Co-Editor*

Not many high school sophomores in America are on their school's varsity football team. Even fewer were on it as freshmen. And only a scarce few can say they were the starting quarterback when they were 14 years old.

Sophomore Steven Williams is one of the few.

After being selected for the

Varsity squad as a freshman, Williams played second string quarterback behind senior Scot Beumal for better part of last year. Nonetheless, he saw some action as backup in a few of Wilson's key match-ups, most notably Coolidge, Ballou, H.D. Woodson, and Perry Street Prep.

Unfortunately, Williams fractured his ankle last October and had to sit out the rest of the season. He ended the season with 340 passing yards and

three touchdowns, which is not too shabby for someone who had never played at the high school level before.

After his impressive freshman season, the sophomore is gearing up for the team's first home game Friday night against Good Counsel, and is feeling better than ever about it. "I feel good, comfortable now," Williams said. "I have chemistry with my line and my receivers."

The Tigers are scheduled to

face some of the same out-of-conference opponents as last year, including DuVual and Surrattsville, which Williams mentioned "will probably be the toughest defense[s] we face this year." Hopefully, Williams can convert the growing chemistry between himself and the offense to break down the defenses he will be facing.

Williams is also hopeful about a Turkey Bowl appearance and victory this year in the

wake of last year's disappointing loss. "I think we can do it again," Williams said. "We know what it takes to get there; we just have to take it one game at a time."

The rest of the team, and school, have high hopes for the "never-nervous" sophomore and his pursuit of a championship. The Tigers hope to start off the season right with a win tonight against Good Counsel.

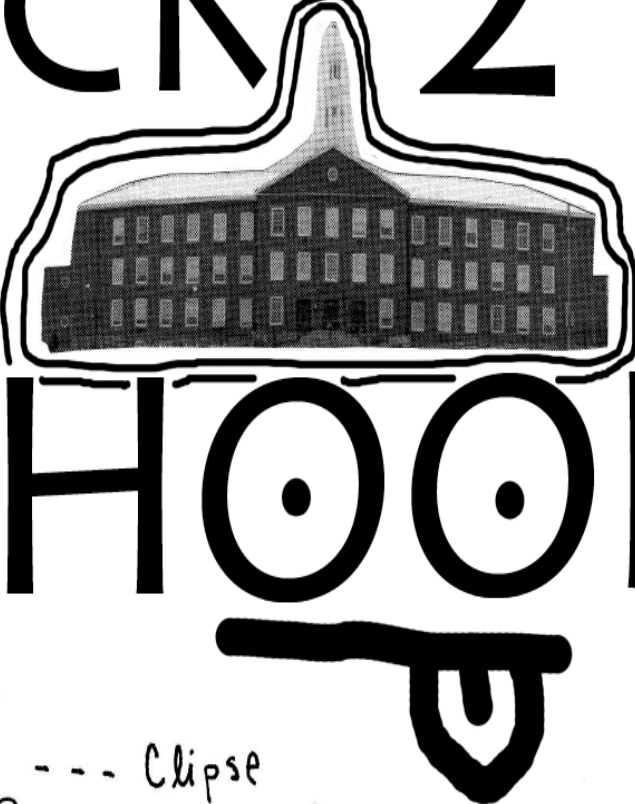
# FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

AUGUST 29TH	7PM	VS GOOD COUNSEL	HOME
SEPTEMBER 6TH	2PM	VS DUVAL	AWAY
SEPTEMBER 12TH	7 30PM	VS FRIENDSHIP	AWAY
SEPTEMBER 20TH	2PM	VS SURRATTSVILLE	AWAY
SEPTEMBER 26TH	7PM	VS WOODSON	AWAY

**Graphic by Jarrah May and Mason Strazzella**



# BACK 2 SCHOOL



1. Grindin' --- Clipse
2. Another Brick in The Wall --- Pink Floyd
3. Chain Gang --- Sam Cooke
4. Work --- Iggy Azalea
5. Who'll Stop The Rain --- Creedence Clearwater Revival
6. No Flex Zone --- Rae Sremmurd
7. Baba O'Riley --- The Who
8. Sit Still --- Grouplove
9. Don't Bring Me Down --- Electric Light Orchestra
10. We Rule The School --- Belle & Sebastian
11. Fight For Your Right --- Beastie Boys

Compiled by Lauren ReVeal

## Female Rap Artists Should Stick Together

**Ellice Ellis**  
Junior Editor

From the instant Azealia Banks broke out with the hit "212," the rapper has been beefing with other female rappers. First she tweeted hate at Kreamy-shawn, then took a slam at Iggy Azalea, and next at Nicki Minaj. But she isn't the only female rapper following this trend. The 90s rapper Lil' Kim has been taking shots at Nicki Minaj since her first appearances on the rap scene saying that Nicki's a copycat. On her latest track, "Identity Theft," Lil' Kim raps, "Anything you tryna do, I done did it... I gave birth to your style."

At the BET Awards in July, Nicki accepted her fifth consecutive win in the Best Female Hip-Hop Artist category with a speech that people thought threw shade at rapper Iggy Azalea, with emphasis on the importance of "authenticity," a charge against Azalea's alleged cherry-picking of black culture.

Although rap beef is nothing new to the game, it seems like the ladies are doing all the work. From Iggy Azalea's summer hit "Fancy" to Nicki Minaj's verse on Beyoncé's "Flawless" to Angel Haze's appearance in the movie "22 Jump Street's" theme song, female rappers have had their share of the spotlight this summer. Instead of congratulating the growing presence and success of their fellow women, all today's female rappers seem to do is tear each other down. Even though there has been plenty of rap beef between male

artists, such as Jay-Z vs. Nas and G-Unit vs. Murder Inc., it seems that in a male-dominated genre there should be more unity amongst the limited number of female rappers. While there are hundreds of guys out rapping and making music, there is an unfortunate silent law that there can be only one successful female rapper.

In many industries, whether there is a majority of men, women, whites or blacks, the minority shares a mentality that only one can be successful. For example, in the 90's when the modeling industry had very few women of color, two black models came into prominence. Instead of celebrating and supporting each other, the models Naomi Campbell and Tyra Banks were pitted against each other by the media and others in the industry, causing strife between the two for years.

The jealousy, hatred and dissing amongst female rappers and other minorities in their respective fields does nothing to help their presence and success, and takes the focus away from their craft. With female rappers, many times when they're featured on a website or in a news story, it's not because they're doing anything musically, it's because they're throwing shots at each other or harshly defending themselves against critics. Whether the field is male-dominated or not, it is better for female rappers and other minorities to show solidarity in order to break down barriers together.

▶ **Ellice Ellis will be spending the school year in Ghana after being awarded one of 65 State Department Scholarships to study abroad. Look forward to her thoughts on the experience in *The Beacon*!**

## PURGE 2 IS NOTHING NEW

**Ella Feldman**  
Contributor

When someone mentions "soul cleansing," the first things that come to mind are usually along the lines of meditation, incense, and overpriced detox juices from Whole Foods. In the horrific future of "The Purge: Anarchy," soul cleansing means brutal murder. When the first movie in the franchise was released in the summer of 2013, it grossed almost \$90 million at the box office, so it's no surprise that director, James Monaco decided to bring his audiences a sequel.

"Anarchy" takes place in Los Angeles roughly a decade into the future, and while there is a strong social critique that makes the movie somewhat interesting, the repetitive shots of barbaric citizens and creepy gangs with masks killing each other will probably disappoint demanding horror film fans.

In the dystopia that Monaco has created, there's an annual twelve-hour anarchy called "the purge" during which all crime is legal. Within these twelve hours, the people of America get the privilege of improving their souls by cleansing themselves of evil by killing fellow citizens. Fun!

While the first movie focused on one suburban household trying to survive the chaotic night, the second shows viewers what's going on in all of L.A. Once the night begins, the movie wastes no time showing the horrific brutality that goes on during the purge. The film follows four characters, led by the gun-wielding and vengeful gang leader, Sergeant (Frank Gillo), as they try to survive on the streets. The movie is just shot after shot of blunt and sloppy violence, complete with countless gunfights and murderous gangs lurking through the shadows. There's no doubt

that the movie has terrifying scenes, but they tend to be repetitive and somewhat predictable. Although the protagonists' characters are fairly realistic, the character development isn't quite there and the overall acting is subpar.

While the first film only touched on how the classism and entitlement of the 1% plays a role in the violence of the purge, the sequel makes this a major theme. As the plot unravels, it quickly becomes clear that the purpose of the purge is for the rich to morally justify their greed. The government is com-

pletely corrupt and uses the purge to rid their "perfect" society of the people who don't fit in. Anarchy also quite blatantly criticizes the way those who agree with the policies of the National Rifle Association think of guns both as problem solvers and as their right, and demonstrates the terror that can come from this mindset. Although the commentary lays a lot on the table and makes for a more compelling plot, it doesn't succeed in making the movie the great horror film it was marketed to be.



# Into the Woods Chosen as Fall Musical

**Brian Keyes**  
Staff Writer

If you couldn't tell by the distant cries of theater kids emanating all the way from the black box theater, this year's fall musical has been announced. After months of consideration by the directors and intense anticipation by the students, it has been decided by the powers, otherwise known as Harriet Bronstein and Jill Roos, that this year's musical shall be none other than "Into The Woods."

This Grimm fairy tale-themed musical weaves together stories of several famous children's fables such as Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, Rapunzel, and Cinderella. All these characters meet through the central characters of the baker and his wife as well as their neighbor, an evil old witch. At first, the individual stories play out much like they do in their Disney counterparts, up until the much darker second act.

"We haven't done anything

like 'Into The Woods' since we have been in our new theater and we thought it would be fun to do something with magic and fantasy," Bronstein said. "The score is beautiful, the characters are great, and the script is really clever. Also, the movie is coming out soon, so we thought there might be added interest for people to come to the show."

This will certainly be a Wilson production like no other, as it is the first in many years to feature mythical elements. Bronstein also offered what she expected to be the most challenging aspect of the musical. "This is Sondheim, so all the music is difficult, but worth it!" Stephen Sondheim composed "Into The Woods," and other notable works including "A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum" and "Sweeney Todd." He also wrote the lyrics for last year's musical, "West Side Story."

The difficult music will surely pay off and, as always, we expect a great show this year.

## Theater Lab Creates Happy Endings

by Ellie Melick

"We believe that theatre has the power to transform lives."

That's what Deborah Gottesman, co-founder of The Theatre Lab, says about why the work she does is meaningful to her. In 1992, right after she graduated from Catholic University's M.F.A. acting program, she and her friend and fellow grad student Buzz Mauro decided to launch a small coaching service, beginning by teaching the basics of acting to five drama school hopefuls.

In 1993, a year after the school opened, it was incorporated as a nonprofit committed to bringing theater education to kids, teens, and adults from all over the area. Over the years, The Theatre Lab has found success and begun hiring other theater professionals in the D.C. area to teach additional courses.

Today, their humble acting school is D.C.'s most comprehensive non-profit theater education institute, enrolling approximately 1,800 kids, teens, and adults from the area in a wide array of courses, from their summer acting camp for kids aged six to ten to their Honors Acting Conservatory, a year-long, intensive program aiming to prepare adults for a career in theater.

It's no wonder that many theater kids from the D.C. area wind up in a Theatre Lab program sooner or later.

Their summer programs tend to be among the most popular with Wilson students; this year three Wilson scholars participated in either their Summer Musical Theatre Institute or their Summer Acting Institute. Junior Ben Topa participated in the Summer Musical Theater Institute for Teens, and describes it as a great experience. "I learned a lot in terms of acting and singing, and the people were all kind and supportive of each other," he explained in an e-mail. "The directors were knowledgeable and could interact well with the kids."

Senior Yana Madrid has similar feelings about her experience in this summer's Theatre Lab performance of the musical "Evita." "Aside from being surrounded by really talented people who were just as passionate about their craft as I am, I was also blessed to work with such talented directors who helped me grow as an artist," she wrote in an email.

The Theatre Lab also offers generous scholarship opportunities, attracting students from all over the area who otherwise may not have an opportunity to partake in professional theater education. This summer alone they awarded over \$80,000 in need-based scholarships.

Since The Theatre Lab's founding, the organization has added the award-winning Life Stories program, founded in 2000, dedicated to bringing theater education to marginalized communities, such as homeless women and incarcerated youth, and sharing with the students the life-changing possibilities of self-expression through theater. A recent Life Stories group featured women from N Street Village, a homeless and low-income shelter for Washington, D.C. women recovering from substance abuse. The 2012 N Street Village Life Stories program was filmed and turned into a major documentary called "How I Got Over", which was released this past June.

The Theatre Lab prides itself on its dedication to bringing theater education to everyone, not just the affluent youth of D.C. who tend to make up the majority of theater education participants across the city. "Theater connects us—to ourselves, to our dreams, and to each other," co-founder Gottesman says in an e-mail. "That's why it's so important to us at The Theatre Lab to make sure it's accessible to everyone—not just those who have the means to seek it out."

# fashion in the halls

Compiled by Elias Benda, Elice Ellis and Lauren ReVeal



(left to right) James Rice (11), Gigi Gonyea (12), Madzi Tom (12), Pete Cahal, Rayn-Aumia Ramsawak (10), and Devin Rivera (12).



# FRESHMEN IN THE HALL

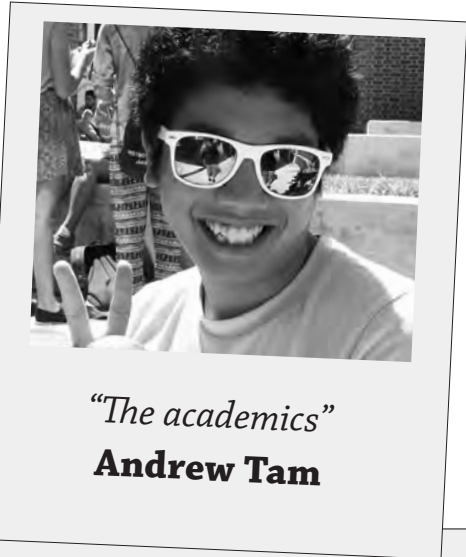
August 29, 2014

Compiled by Hannah Wyatt

## What are you looking forward to at Wilson?



*"Sports and new people and having fun"*  
**Gabriela Barahona**



*"The academics"*  
**Andrew Tam**



*"Joining academies"*  
**Joey Schulman**  
*"Looser dress code"*  
**Akari Davidson**



*"Meeting Pablo"*  
**Sammi Cohen, Franny Sewell, Ernesto Fritts, Grace Store**



*"New experiences"*  
**Isaac Boris, Nadia Bangura, Cecile Coulibaly, Dez Partin, Alyson Franco, Darlene Rodas, Jazba Iqbal**



*"Being at school with my sister"*  
**Maria Isabel**



*"New people"*  
**Aze Allen**



*"Track and English class"*  
**Sarah Desta, Fama Sissoko, Mercia Smith**



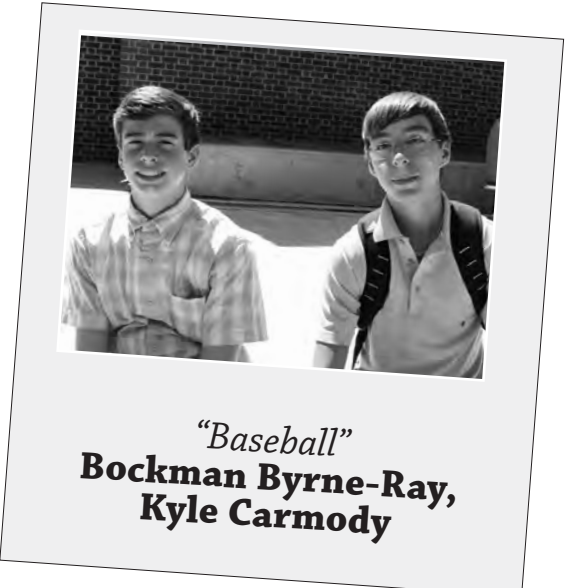
*"Ms. Boateng"*  
**Nick Whitman, Nathan Wagner**



*"My academic future"*  
**Cody Paniagua, Asher Smith, Jericho Desalegn, Willem Bouma, Jack Grieve**



*"Volleyball"*  
**Lauren White, Sofija Bakyun**



*"Baseball"*  
**Bockman Byrne-Ray, Kyle Carmody**