Señora Anna Navarro announces retirement

By MICHELLE CHEN
Staff writer

After over 20 years of teaching at Poly, Señora Anna Navarro has announced her retirement at the end of this year’s first semester.

Navarro began teaching Lower and Middle School Spanish in 1986, stating that she felt like she “was at home from the very beginning.”

Although Señora Navarro’s retirement is partially due to medical reasons, a main factor in her decision revolves around her family in Illinois. She commented that “families should work together” and reasoned that the time had come for her to join her family in Illinois. Despite her decision, Navarro says she can never forget that Poly is like extended family to her.

Navarro loved most of all getting to know her students both in class academically and through extracurricular class trips. One of the most important aspects of being a teacher, Señora remarked, is being able for parents, teachers and students to work together as a team rather than as separate individuals.

Navarro recalls her Lower School Spanish class, remembering fondly teaching students the basics of the language. See Navarro, page 2.

James G. Ellis of USC to speak at 2014 Commencement

By NATHAN LEE
News editor

Dean of the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California James G. Ellis has been invited to speak at the 2014 Commencement ceremony.

Ellis began his career in the field of business after receiving a BBA in Management from the University of New Mexico and an MBA in Marketing and Finance from the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration.

Ellis’ extensive career has been a successful one. He has held many high-ranking positions for numerous companies, including a position as the Divisional Merchandise Manager for the Miller’s Outpost chain of specialty stores, which Ellis expanded from 88 to over 300 stores. He has also served on the Board of Directors for several more companies as well. Ellis has taken many prominent positions at several notable companies.

Outside of the corporate world, Ellis has additional experience in positions of education. He has been an integral faculty member of USC’s Marshall School since 1972, where he first served as a part time Instructor of Marketing. Since then, he has taken roles ranging from a Faculty Advisor for the Delta Delta Delta Sorority to the Vice Provost of Globalization. He has been the Dean of the Marshall School of Business since 2007.

Selecting a Commencement speaker requires a thorough process involving both the senior class cabinet and Head of School Debbie Reed. While individual accomplishments and successes remain an important factor of the selection, Poly strives to choose a speaker that embodies traits of responsibility and contribution to the community. James Ellis brings both a distinguished career and extensive contributions to the community at USC.

Nikolas Angelopoulos selected for national Debate Team

By ISABELLE PHINNEY
Staff writer

Sophomore Nikolas Angelopoulos has been selected for the United States’ World Schools Debate team. Of the 130,000 students in the National Forensics League, an organization funding the World Schools team, only nine are selected each year for the team.

The 2014 World Schools Debate Team consists of high school students from California, New York, Texas, Colorado, Indiana and Louisiana schools. Other California members include Juniors Sara Evall and Amelia Millar of Harvard-Westlake School and Junior Jane Irons of Marlborough School.

In February, the Forensics League is flying Angelopoulos to Dallas, Texas, where several of his other team members attend school. In March, he will go to Slovenia and possibly the Czech Republic for a tournament. Upcoming topics include “governments should implement a universal basic income” and “the US should create mandatory quotas for female corporate board members.”

Angelopoulos began his debate career in the middle school program, which is directed by Katie Ward. He said, “Mrs. Ward started me on debate, and she still is the best debate coach I’ve ever had. Just incredible.” Angelopoulos frequently helps middle school debaters, noting the program’s impact on speaking style, confidence and teamwork.

Last year, Angelopoulos flew to China for a World Schools tournament. The dynamic at tournaments is See Angelopoulos, page 2.
The annual Upper School Jazz Concert consisted of soulful jazz renditions of classic songs performed by the Vocal Ensemble and spoken word pieces.

The show began with the Vocal Ensemble, which performed "Lean on Me" and "Time After Time." Vocal Ensemble Instructor Alan Geier said, "I was really proud of my performers."

The Jazz Band performed with a guest drummer Scott Babcock. Upper School Jazz Band instructor Rob Hayes commented, "It was a blast. Babcock and Chris Lopez [on piano] were awesome. I think it was a memorable experience for everybody."

The pieces the Jazz Band performed included "Kool Bean," "Squeeze on the Knees" and other jazz hits. Hayes said, "Clay Hillenburg'17 played a great cowbell part right behind me. Add to that Nicky Steidel'14 [on bass] and Julian Terrile'14 [on guitar], and we really had something."

"Overall, it was just a really fun experience. It was great to see all the talent we have at our school mixed into one concert," said sophomore Tim Matthiesen.

Geier reflected, "The Jazz Program just underscores the breadth of our Music Program - I'm so proud of my colleagues and the variety of musical experiences which we provide to Poly students. I think it's really impressive what we're all able to accomplish with limited rehearsal and class time, and that's a tribute to the students' talent and dedication."

Jazz Band, Vocal Ensemble and student poets perform at annual Jazz Concert

By TEDDY DEBREU
Assistant news editor

"very friendly", he said. "You're not just there to debate. You're there to represent your country. It's kind of like an ambassador." While debating in China, Angelopoulos saw the Thai team perform a traditional dance. In return, he sang an Al Green song for the other teams.

The US team's competitors include teams from over 40 other participating countries ranging from Slovenia to Scotland that participated in the World Schools Debating Championships. The Championships usually take place over ten days. After eight preliminary rounds, the top 16 teams advance to the final tournament's knockout rounds.

Most debates take place in English, despite that the majority of teams speak English as their second language. "They do a fantastic job [speaking English]," Angelopoulos said.

When asked what she will miss most about Poly, Navarro answered that she will miss the students the most and that she's "leaving a part of [herself] behind." She also commented that she will not be able to teach Lower, Middle or Upper School Spanish again because she would compare other students to Poly students she had taught in the past. She concluded that "the experience that one has at Poly cannot be replaced," and that "the past two months have been surreal."

Navarro looks forward to watching her granddaughter grow up and spending more time with her, and she also anticipates eating dinners and having time with her family whom she misses dearly.

Navarro
Continued from page 1

Noah Kim selected for prestigious musical opportunity

By STEPHANIE CHAI
Staff writer

Poly senior Noah Kim, among 170 other accepted artists, has been recognized by the National YoungArts Foundation out of 11,000 applicants. The National YoungArts Foundation is a program dedicated to encouraging the development of talented young artists in the literary, performing, visual and design arts.

YoungArts has given out over $6 million in scholarships, honoring over 17,000 young artists over the years. Some alumni from the YoungArts program include actresses Vanessa Williams and Kerry Washington as well as recording artists Nicki Minaj and Chris Young.

Kim submitted an application to the program after discovering it online, and subsequently sent in a 30-minute recording of him playing the classical guitar for a panel of judges to review.

Kim was accepted and invited to YoungArts Week in Miami, Florida, a weeklong convention that hosted a variety of visual artists, designers, jazz performers, dancers, actors and writers. All of the musicians, including Kim, met, coordinated and practiced for their final performance. There, Kim performed a duet and accepted a scholarship.

Kim had the opportunity to take master classes from renowned artists like the lead singer from the Book of Mormon Andrew Rannells, composer Richard Danielpour, musician Josh Groban and actress Rita Moreno. Artists also took part in a group conference call with poet Maya Angelou.

After a week in Florida surrounded by accomplished young artists, Kim said, "It was an inspiring and humbling experience to be surrounded by people who are so committed to the arts."

To finish their week in the YoungArts program, Kim and his fellow musical artists performed a cover of "Superstition" and "Never Gonna Let You Down" at the New World Concert Hall.

Angelopoulos
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Courtesy of Nate Young

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Reid gone nuclear: Will Senate Democrats pay in 2014 for ending the filibuster?

By HENRY BROOKS
Opinion Editor

In a political power play that rocked Capitol Hill last November, Senate majority leader Harry Reid (D-NV) used the “nuclear option” to end debate on several judicial nominations proposed by the Obama Administration. The nuclear option – an extremely divisive measure in Congress – eliminates the need for bipartisan support in confirming judges to high-level positions on the U.S. Court of Appeals. The measure, which dispenses of the right of the Senate’s minority party to filibuster, passed by a vote of 52-48, with three Democrats joining all 45 Republicans in voting against.

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of the whole affair was the frighteningly slim majority with which Reid mustered almost half of U.S. senators. Although standard Senate protocol mandates a two-thirds supermajority of senators in order to alter Senate rules, Reid bypassed this mandate by electing him a victory by technicality.

Reid’s fancy political footwork won him a victory by technicality. By “activating” the nuclear option, Reid successfully solidified Democratic command of the Senate. For the time being, Reid’s party will maintain a material solidified Democratic command of the Senate. Moreover, a Republican-controlled Senate will muster the support they need for a takeover in 2014 – a victory that, under Reid’s nuclear calculus was the prospect of a Republican Senate would heavily scrutinize any judges nominated by the Obama Administration for openings on the Court of Appeals, posing a major impediment to Obama’s judicial plans – which currently entail appointing judges to the Supreme Court. Reid’s strategy of “going nuclear” as tantamount to an attack on the democratic process. Ironically, silencing the GOP prompted more people to question the leadership of Senate Democrats.

Worse yet for Reid, many traditionally centrist newspapers and think tanks have similarly disparaged his lack of foresight. One editorialist, writing for the Washington Post, explained in a January 2014 article that Reid’s attempt to hush Senate Republicans could cost Democrats the Senate for two reasons: first, Tea Party Republicans, who traditionally have used the filibuster for grandstanding (and have been ridiculed for doing so), are no longer allowed to make fools of themselves; and second, Reid going nuclear was reminiscent of old school Congressional partisanship (think Strom Thurmond during the Civil Rights era) and alienated the Democrats’ largely centrist support base.

What remains to be seen is whether Republicans will muster the support they need for a takeover of the Senate. If Republicans can seize the Senate (by even one vote) in 2014, Reid will quickly come to regret using the nuclear option, as will his largely Democratic support base. Without the filibuster to serve as a safeguard for the minority party, Senate Democrats could hardly obstruct a Republican agenda. Moreover, a Republican-controlled Senate would heavily scrutinize any judges nominated by the Obama Administration for openings on the Court of Appeals, posing a major impediment to Obama’s judicial plans – which currently entail appointing judges to the Supreme Court. Reid explained to a roomful of reporters on Capitol Hill, “Republican filibusters deny (Congressmen) a fair vote and deny the President his team.” What Reid failed to consider in his political calculus was the prospect of a Republican Senate takeover in 2014 – a victory that, under Reid’s nuclear option, would both strip the Democrats of its ability to filibuster and thwart Obama’s efforts to appoint Democrats to judicial office.

With Republicans gearing up to take the Senate in November, Reid should consider reinstating the filibuster while he’s still got the majority… and while Republicans are still listening.

Complacency, Inc.: My experience serving on Polytechnic’s patio police force

By NICKY STEIDEL
Opinion editor

When I became the senior class secretary, I knew that I would be stepping into a position of responsibility. What I did not expect when I became a class officer was that being the “patio police officer” would fill me with a certain amount of sadness. Why, you ask? Because we Poly students are not very conscientious about the ways in which we, to be blunt, trash our school.

Now, my personal experience tends to be limited to cleaning up the senior patio, which I do most if not after every sports practice. While our trash situation may not be as bad as that of the underclassmen, it still baffles me at times that every single day the senior patio has a new collection of wrappers, bottles, clothing, electronics and forsaken, lonely lunch bags. I do not mind picking up trash once a day for ten minutes or so; it is not a big deal to me at all. However, what does worry me is the overall complacency of Poly students in regards to something as simple and sensible as cleaning up after oneself.

While walking with a friend through the sophomore patio last week, I stooped down to pick up some paper cups off of the ground, and he said to me, “Wait – why are you doing that? That’s not our problem. This seems to be the prevalent attitude of the whole school towards cleaning up after the mess of “others,” when the reality is that the mess is everyone’s. It would be easy to blame every piece of trash on some absentminded, sleep-deprived student who just happened to forget to throw their garbage away. However, it’s not just the person who leaves it there that worries me – dozens of people walk right past said trash without picking it up.

It might not be so concerned about this relatively mundane issue if it were not for two things, one that it is such a simple concept to clean up after yourself and others; and two, that if I and my fellow class officers were not there to throw away garbage every day, then that responsibility would fall to the maintenance staff. I have often considered letting the patio become trashed so that everyone can see the result of their low regard for their environment at school, but the problem is that the maintenance staff would end up picking up the trash, which they already do, from their current position.

Simply put, it really is not difficult to pick up trash, and on top of that, there’s no need to burden our already hardworking maintenance staff with responsibilities that students could easily assume.
Freshmen and sophomores speak out about Human Development class

By BRETT LAUDEMAN
Opinion Editor

In the December issue of The Paw Print, an outspoken student voiced his concerns with Poly's Human Development curriculum. As of a couple years ago, the Human Development program has expanded from a single semester freshman course to a yearlong course for both freshman and sophomores.

The program is equivalent to that of a health class offered at other high schools. Topics include: health, sleep, nutrition, social skills, sex education and drug/tobacco/alcohol use. Seen as a crucial step in the maturing of young students, the Human Development program seems to have fallen short of its goal: educating students about critical topics and providing an environment for candid discussion and peer-teacher support.

For this issue, the Opinion Section has compiled a survey based on the responses of 110 underclassmen: 63 freshmen and 47 sophomores. The survey consisted of three questions gauging usefulness of the class, student comfort in expressing their thoughts and the class's overall ability to support the students' needs. The survey also contained an open response section asking for suggestions changes to the program.

The results were strikingly decisive. Of the 66 students that left written suggestions/remarks, only a few were positive about the class. The remaining were extremely critical, with sophomores being slightly more so across the board. On a scale of one to five (five being the most critical), on average, students answered with a four, with a few as high as five (being extremely uncomfortable). In response to how well the class supports their needs, students answered, on average, with a four.

While these numbers make it clear how the vast majority of students feel about Human Development, the heart of their criticism lies in the anonymous written suggestions/remarks.

Students voiced a wide range of problems with the Human Development program. First and foremost, many students find the current curriculum to be useless: “the discussions often revolve around trivial, kindergarten-esque topics…discussion about more serious issues – alcohol and drug abuse, sex, general teenage psychological ailments, etc. – appear occasionally, not delving any deeper than on any previous occasions, giving the class a bland, boring feeling.”

To many, the topics are nothing new and the presentations do little to make the issues relevant to the students: “the discussions seem rehearsed.” One student suggested that the class explore topics not already part of human development. The course also competes with certain other classes which some students would like to take. “My human development class is just a waste of my time and the teacher's time,” claimed one student. Instead, some suggest removing the class entirely from Poly's curriculum. Considering large class sizes, shallow discussions and the “unsafe” environment, one could conclude that students do not feel supported in the human development class environment.

However, some do claim to have no emotional needs. While removing the class may be unrealistic, many would prefer a free period, study hall or an arts class in place of human development. The course also competes with certain other classes which some students would like to take. “My human development class is just a waste of my time and the teacher's time,” claimed one student. Instead, some suggest removing the class entirely from Poly's curriculum. Considering large class sizes, shallow discussions and the “unsafe” environment, one could conclude that students do not feel supported in the human development class environment.

Despite the extensive criticism, some students did feel that the class helped them prepare for midterms… and, well, that's about it.

Considering a program like human development is mandatory for a high school, it seems a waste of a lot of work to do. One place to start would be making classes smaller and more customizable. Providing a more interactive/dynamic curriculum instead of bland lectures and cheesy videos would also help. Next, cut out the worksheets and focus on genuine discussion and allow the students to interact and learn.
An interview with Poly library assistant Fran Lyons

By CELINE LEE VENDLER
Student contributor

Fran Lyons is a beloved member of the Poly community, welcoming visitors to the Upper School Poly Library with a warm smile and helping students find interesting new reads. Sophomore Julia Rocha explains, “Ms. Lyons is such a wonderful librarian. She is not only incredibly helpful if you need a book, but she is also always there to brighten your day with her cherry attitudes.”

When did you start working at Poly?
I came to Poly in 1998 as the afternoon library clerk in Boswell Library. I worked with Ms. Stefansson from 1998 to 2011 and during this time I have seen so many changes here at Poly, which includes the addition of the new library.

What are your passions and hobbies?
I love to go to the movies and travel. I have seen all of this year’s best movie nominees, and my vote goes to 12 Years A Slave.

Where would you like to travel next?
My most recent travel adventure was to Page, Arizona, where I went to see the beautiful colors of the Upper Antelope Canyon. The next trip on my bucket list is to visit Arches National Park in Utah and hike to the Delicate Arch and see the sunset.

What is your favorite thing about Poly/being the Poly librarian?
I really enjoy the daily workings of the Upper School Library. My favorite part of being here at Poly is connecting with the students and making their lives as easy as possible. I try to anticipate their requests. If a class is reading a certain book, I will put all the copies that the library owns to read just in case they missed the score of a recent game.

What is your favorite book?
I love a good murder mystery but nothing too gruesome. I have read and enjoyed all of Sue Grafton’s mysteries and Agatha Christie, which is another one of my favorite authors. I am also a big fan of Sherlock Holmes and the magazine The Strand.

Origins of the Poly Crest
By MADIEE KIM
Student contributor

The oak tree is that carries a past rooted in Poly since 1907 featured on Poly’s crest for its amiable presence on campus as a symbol of safety, strength and beauty. Up until this point, the rich history of the lofty oak tree at Poly has not been fully uncovered.

The cherished three hundred-year-old oak on which the school’s emblem was based has since been transformed into a tree house for Lower School students. The oak tree represents Poly with reaching branches and roots that have stood and remain standing as symbols of strength and rejuvenation.

Poly Archives reveal the historic significance of each tree. Former Poly teacher Dorothy Flint who taught from 1920 to 1963, wrote a letter to head of school Willis Stork upon reading about the death of the last original campus oak tree in the January 1975 Polygrad. The letter told of her experience in the early 1920s, when “a second large and equally handsome oak stood just beyond the north windows of Room 2, the classroom later made a part of the school office...I was startled by a swift darkening and a loud explosive noise such as occur when an accumulation of snow suddenly slides off a roof. Without warning, the great tree had collapsed from top to bottom, and lay in a heap on the ground, trunk, heavy branches and all.”

An article in the first issue of the Oak Tree Times published in 1980 conveys the love members of the school had for this particular tree. “One morning in 1975, Mr. Knox [Business Manager and unofficial Poly historian] noticed brown edges on some of the leaves. He immediately summoned tree surgeons that administered massive underground doses of vitamins and fertilizers that day. But Oak Root Fungus had encircled the entire tree, and by the next day, the tree was dead. Mr. Knox said he remembers that day particularly well, “because I hadn’t cried in a long time.”
The Rose Queen’s reign

To commemorate the crowning of the 96th Rose Queen, The Paw Print has compiled the photos that best represent Ana Acosta’s reign.

Seniors Hana Svitek, Ana Acosta, Maddi Drolen, Hanna Kaufman and Juliet Johnson pose before Rose Court tryouts.

Jennifer Johnston ’97, Ana Acosta and Aliya Haque Cuber ’95, Poly’s three Rose Queens.

Acosta receives a bouquet of roses after being named to the 2014 Rose Court.

Acosta gets interviewed by press after being elected to the 2013-2014 rose court.

Acosta takes a selfie with fellow senior classmates, Maddi Holder, Hana Svitek, Maddy Drolen and Kelly Berg.

Acosta waves to the crowd during the 125th Rose Parade.

President of the Tournament of Roses, R. Scott Jenkins crowns Acosta.

Acosta poses for photographs after making the Royal Court.

The Royal Court begins to make their way through Pasadena during the 125th Rose Parade.
Alumni Update: Alexis Genske, University of Pennsylvania

By SHUCHI SEGHAL
Assistant life editor

Alexis Nicole Genske, sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania, was named Co-Ivy League Player of the Week for her excellence in volleyball in the 2013 fall season.

During Genske’s high school career at Poly, she was a team captain, MVP and 1st team All-Area as a junior and senior. Her junior year (2010) she made 1st team Prep League and 2nd team Division 3AA All-State and senior year she was 1st team All-Area, Division 3AA CIF Player of the Year, Star News Player of the Year, Prep League MVP and was an Under Armour Watch List honorable mention.

Genske’s predominant position is outside hitter at UPenn, but she temporarily replaced the team’s libero who suffered a concussion early in the season. She has found the adjustment from high school to college athletics demanding. “In college, your sport is your job, even if you’re not being paid to play.”

Despite the time investment, Genske enjoys traveling to away games with her volleyball team and the bonding involved with team camaraderie. She feels respected as a student-athlete at Penn because she is granted a break from the business and commitment of volleyball during summer vacation and finals week.

Reminiscing about her Poly experience, Alexis appreciates the availability of teachers at Poly, and their willingness to meet during office hours. Many of her intro course teachers at Penn simply do not have the time to explain concepts when students meet with them, and even the TAs assigned to help are often more focused on their graduate work than helping their sections.

She describes Penn as “a very diverse student body with a high percentage of international students and a strong pre-professional feel on campus due to the intensity of the Wharton Business School.”

Genske sought an east coast experience after high school, and UPenn’s geographic and social environment provided the change she was seeking. Genske believes that the constant focus on job recruitment, although conducive to students’ establishment of a secure future contributes to the generally low popularity of sporting events. “I am worried that Penn kids work so hard that their passion will burn out before they even make it out of college.”

Many students have a hard time looking at the big picture while remembering that you can’t plan your whole life out ahead of time.”

Genske elaborates “Penn’s campus itself is beautiful almost year round despite the cold weather and its location next to West Philadelphia. I like that it only takes about seven minutes to get downtown if you want to try Philly restaurants, bars, clubs or concerts. I feel lucky to have diverse, driven friends and people around me who inspire me to try new things.”

Super Bowl 2014: two number one NFL teams face off

By ERIN LEE
Life editor

For the first time in many years, the absolute best of the best are competing in this year’s Super Bowl. The Denver Broncos have the No. 1 offense in the NFL, run by quarterback Peyton Manning. The Seattle Seahawks have the No. 1 defense, pretty much run by self-proclaimed “best corner in the game” Richard Sherman and coached by Pete Carroll. It’s only the second time in the last 20 “best corner in the game” Richard Sherman and coached by Pete Carroll. It’s only the second time in the last 20 years the No. 1 offense and defense will face each other in the Super Bowl.

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Her junior year (2010) she made 1st team Prep League and 2nd team Division 3AA All-State and senior year she was 1st team All-Area, Division 3AA CIF Player of the Year, Star News Player of the Year, Prep League MVP and was an Under Armour Watch List honorable mention.

Genske’s predominant position is outside hitter at UPenn, but she temporarily replaced the team’s libero who suffered a concussion early in the season. She has found the adjustment from high school to college athletics demanding. “In college, your sport is your job, even if you’re not being paid to play.”

Despite the time investment, Genske enjoys traveling to away games with her volleyball team and the bonding involved with team camaraderie. She feels respected as a student-athlete at Penn because she is granted a break from the business and commitment of volleyball during summer vacation and finals week.

Reminiscing about her Poly experience, Alexis appreciates the availability of teachers at Poly, and their willingness to meet during office hours. Many of her intro course teachers at Penn simply do not have the time to explain concepts when students meet with them, and even the TAs assigned to help are often more focused on their graduate work than helping their sections.

She describes Penn as “a very diverse student body with a high percentage of international students and a strong pre-professional feel on campus due to the intensity of the Wharton Business School.”

Genske sought an east coast experience after high school, and UPenn’s geographic and social environment provided the change she was seeking. Genske believes that the constant focus on job recruitment, although conducive to students’ establishment of a secure future contributes to the generally low popularity of sporting events. “I am worried that Penn kids work so hard that their passion will burn out before they even make it out of college.”

Many students have a hard time looking at the big picture while remembering that you can’t plan your whole life out ahead of time.”

Genske elaborates “Penn’s campus itself is beautiful almost year round despite the cold weather and its location next to West Philadelphia. I like that it only takes about seven minutes to get downtown if you want to try Philly restaurants, bars, clubs or concerts. I feel lucky to have diverse, driven friends and people around me who inspire me to try new things.”

A poll in September 2013 found that 59% of Americans follow professional football, the highest level of interest ever. Super Bowl commercials are now almost as famous and it’s getting even harder for advertisements to stand out.

Some companies are trying to tackle this issue by simply examining their commercials with as many famous faces as possible. Celebrities like Scarlett Johansson, David Beckham, Don Cheadle, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Carmen Electra, Tom Hiddleston, James Franco and the Muppets are among those confirmed to appear in ads. Last year’s Super Bowl generated $263 million in ad revenue for CBS, reflecting the immense popularity of the game across all demographics. In 2011, the NFL signed nine-year contracts worth a total of $3 billion a year with CBS, Fox and NBC, with Super Bowl rights rotated among the three.

Despite the offseason lockout, controversy over athlete concessions and replacement refs, the American market does not yet seem to be saturated. A Harris Poll in September 2013 found that 59% of Americans follow professional football, the highest level of interest ever. The NFL is not showing any signs of slowing down, and the upward trend will continue with this year’s Super Bowl.

Between the exciting match up of teams, Bruno Mars’ halftime show and the slew of noteworthy commercials, Super Bowl XLVIII will be one to remember.
Teacher Profile: Julia Davis, the life of an Upper School English instructor

By NATALIA SANCHEZ-NIGOLIAN
Life editor

A committed academic submerged in her studies, Julia Davis was serious and stark in demeanor for the majority of her education. Davis grew up in Saratoga, California and attended the local public schools. From a young age, she preferred deep intellectual conversations to meaningless chatter, her maturity level exceeding those of her peers.

Despite developing a passion for literature later, Davis lacked interest in reading during her early childhood. Yet, by the time she was 16 years old, she had resolved to teach. Inspired by her own high school teachers who served as encouraging role models, Davis sought to impact students’ lives in the same way.

Davis excelled academically at U.C.S.B. as an undergraduate student; however, she felt slightly at odds with the social atmosphere of the school. Although her ultimate goal was still to teach, her professors and advisors convinced her to attend graduate school.

While attending the graduate program at Brown University for which she earned a merit based scholarship, Davis both took courses and taught classes in which she ran fervent discussions on Medieval and American Literature. She was stimulated by the grounded, yet scholarly, environment which prompted introspective thinking.

“I didn’t really begin to explore extroversion until after I graduated from Brown and moved to Boston. It was the first time I lightened up and started to let go.”

When she moved back to California after enjoying the cultural and social ambiance of Boston, Poly was the first school to contact Davis. Drawn in by Grace Hamilton and Deborah Reed’s warm leadership, as well as the presence of Laurianne William’s puppy on campus, Davis accepted the position.

In contrast to the lighthearted spirit and lively teaching style Davis employs today, her teaching career at Poly has been one of growth and readjustment. After working with college students to delineate abstract ideas, teaching at Poly required a transition in her teaching tactics. Davis explains that her first students at Poly found it difficult to connect with her collegiate teaching style. The intricate workings of her thought process no doubt escaped adolescent minds.

Ten years later, Davis has no doubt mastered her craft, although her focus has progressed. She no longer solely aims to help students govern the technicalities of their writing, but also to guide them on a journey to self-discovery. Davis says, “I was originally very adamant on teaching skill and technique. Now, I want students to use their writing to delve into deeper understanding and arrive at original insight to make a difference in the world.”

Artist of the Issue: Christopher Lopez: pianist, saxophonist, percussionist

By DAVID OHTA
Assistant life editor

Junior Christopher Lopez uses music to express himself to the world. Lopez’s multifaceted musical talent has allowed him to make large contributions to the Poly music program as an accomplished pianist, saxophonist and a budding percussionist.

Throughout his musical career at Poly, he has played an integral role in both the Upper School jazz band and the pit orchestra. Lopez is the lead pianist in Poly’s jazz band, as well as a member of the various advanced combo groups.

Lopez’s passion for music began at an early age. He first began taking piano lessons at the Colburn School at the age of five. Over the years, Lopez has dabbled in various genres, including jazz, rock, classical and piano production music.

During middle school, Lopez improvised and played covers to popular songs such as Coldplay’s unforgettable “Viva la Vida,” Kanye West’s iconic “Homecoming,” and Far East Movement’s “Rocketeer.”

Lopez now primarily focuses his time on the piano. “Popular music really helped me develop an appreciation for the piano. Without listening to mainstream music containing prevalent piano parts, I’m not sure I would have been as attracted to the piano as I am now. Although I love all instruments, piano is incredibly inspiring because it is amazing to see various people play in so many different styles.”

Despite exploring various genres, Lopez enjoys jazz in particular. His favorite jazz pianists include Joe Sample from the band “The Crusaders” and Chick Corea from “Return to Forever.”

“Jazz is a chill and relaxing style of music to play, and it really allows for me to express myself through improvisation. Sample and Corea are two of my greatest inspirations because they play both percussively and melodically.”

Lopez finds time in a packed schedule to play and record piano parts from mainstream music, including that from the one man show “Fire for Fighting.” His most recent recording is of John Legend’s “All of Me.”

While Lopez admits to blasting music from Spotify when studying, music is more to him than just insignificant background noise. “To me, music is freeing. There is a song that matches each and every emotion you will ever feel, and it’s this emotional connection with a song that really makes music it’s own unique universal language. Music helps me get through the day and really makes the troubles of daily life easier to cope with.”

Lopez is well versed in music theory, and he passed the AP test in music theory when he was in 8th grade. His strong understanding of the relationships between musical notes has allowed him to compose his own piano pieces. Part of this talent stems from his natural born ability, as best demonstrated in his “perfect pitch.” He can listen to any note and identify it without using sheet music or looking at a piano. “I’ve had perfect pitch for as long as I can remember, and it’s really helped me develop my understanding of music as a whole.”

Lopez hopes to make music a part of his future. “Piano is such a special instrument because it’s something that I know I will definitely be able to do later in life. Music is an eternal art form.” He is currently working on piano projects with unnamed producers.

Several of Lopez’s jazz performances can be heard on his Youtube account (Cmlopez1228) along with a few of his piano covers.
Tensions between members of the Polytechnic Queer-Straight Alliance (QSA) and other members of the Poly community recently came to a head at a current Upper School student's Facebook page. The few Southampton High School students who posted on the page were immediately slammed by the Facebook page's administrators, who cited an extended, vitriolic and public argument on Facebook. The dispute made apparent the developing antagonisms between certain straight and queer members of the Poly community, raised questions as to what direction the QSA's presidents want it to take as the year progresses and prompted the QSA to institute a series of reforms.

The so-called Facebook flap itself began when a video entitled “What if chicks Got Random Boners Too” was posted by one of Poly's upperclassmen to another's wall. Shortly thereafter, a Poly alumna claimed that the video was transphobic, an assertion which some people (notably, a few members of the LGBTQ community) began to dispute. As prominent members of the Queer-Straight Alliance began to back the alumna's allegation, tensions quickly escalated to the point that those who held that the video was transphobic began telling those who disagreed with them to “shut the F*ck up” and “get off [their] F*cking high horse.”

The dispute had an explosive effect on the atmosphere of the Upper School. The following morning, the upperclassman to whose Facebook wall the video had been posted lashed out at the Facebook page's administrators in a public apology in Morning Meeting. Co-president of the QSA, Anna Curtis, disassociated, admitted to The Paw Print that the argument nearly drove her to resign from her position (See Page 10). At the following QSA meeting, one of the students heavily involved in the argument admitted that they felt as if a lot of people had “come out of the woodwork” as enemies of the Poly community and demanded that people have the right to be offended by whatever they want to be offended by. Just as it is not up to Caucasians to decide what is/isn't offensive to minorities, it is not up to the straight majority to decide what is/isn't offensive to members of the queer community. It was obvious that peoples’ refusal to acknowledge that the video was transphobic contributed a large amount to the argument’s aggressive and acerbic nature. In addition, two Poly graduates in particular leap into the argument with the sole intention to provoke members of the queer community to anger. This was imprudent, inconsiderate and insensitive and has, strangely, far too many people gone unremarked.

However, we also hold that the aggressive and profanity-laced approach taken by those who believed that the video that sparked the aforementioned Facebook flap was transphobic was not at all conducive to their argument, that graciousness rather than self-righteousness would have been a more correct path to take.

There has also been a growing attitude of “we don’t have to be nice about this, because you are in the wrong” taken up by certain aspects of the QSA. However, there is a point where the issue becomes not one of right and wrong but one of civility. Trying to intimidate people into taking one’s side is, as a whole, less productive than calmly and respectfully trying to convince others that one’s argument is correct. The editors admire and respect those who have been courageous and strong enough to vocalize their opinions, and we agree wholeheartedly that their cause is a significant and worthwhile one; however, we also feel as if the method by which some have attempted to reach those goals has not been constructive.

Finally, the editors believe that the QSA should be a slightly bit more open to criticism/willing to criticize itself. Just as patriotism doesn’t necessarily mean cherishing one’s country no matter what also also recognizing, pointing out and attempting to correct its flaws, being supportive of the QSA does not necessarily mean blindly supporting everything it has to say.

Once again, the editors would like to state that they do not disagree with the most vocal party of the QSA’s ultimate goal, just the method by which it has thus far attempted to achieve that ultimate goal. We would also encourage the Upper School as a whole to be more receptive to what the QSA has to say.

Note: Before we all go off saying “the real story is lost in the noise” and “no one reads what is being said here”, please take a moment to think about why we are all reading this paper. This is the Paw Print, the official paper of the Polytechnic School. We have a responsibility to provide a platform for a variety of opinions, but this does not necessarily mean that we are supporting them. The editors are not beholden to the QSA, the Straight Alliance (QSA) and other members of the Poly community. The Paw Print is here to be a diverse, inclusive, and open platform for all students at Polytechnic.

Allies are terrified to speak up in group meetings because they’re scared that they’re going to offend someone or sound ignorant issues relating to the queer community at Poly. However, some have been growing that the aggressive nature of some of the aforementioned discussions has been reducing the number of allies actively participating in the club (in other words, that the “Alliance” aspect of the club is being neglected). “Allies are terrified to speak up in group meetings because they’re scared that they’re going to offend someone or sound ignorant,” said Curtis. “This is, of course, an incredibly bad thing.”

In the interest of making the QSA a more constructive and inclusive space for everyone, the editors would like to state that they do not disagree with the most vocal party of the QSA’s ultimate goal, just the method by which it has thus far attempted to achieve that ultimate goal. We would also encourage the Upper School as a whole to be more receptive to what the QSA has to say.

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Two conversations with the Co-presidents of the Polytechnic Queer-Straight Alliance

Anna Curtis

Interview conducted by Noah Kim

So could you give me your opinion on the whole Facebook fiasco?

I think it was incredibly damaging to our cause. However, I understand where everybody involved were coming from. The really difficult thing about the QSA is when you’re a prominent member in it and you’re participating either in discussions or trying to spread awareness in Morning Meeting, you’re taking all of this hurt and all of these emotions and suddenly trying to be politically savvy about them. You’re trying to somehow get your message across about issues that affect you on a deeply personal level in a way that won’t drive people away or make it more difficult for them to see things from your point of view.

At the same time though, if you’re going to represent the gay community at Poly, you have to be willing to put aside your anger and your hurt and communicate your message in a really positive, productive fashion. Anger itself isn’t a tool that you can use to make change. People tend not to want to agree with you when you’re screaming in their faces. I find those who are most vocal about this issue to be incredibly brave as people, and I really respect them for speaking out and voicing their opinions. However, I’m just not sure they’re going about fostering acceptance and understanding in the right way.

There have been some instances of members of the QSA growing exaggerated and annoyed by what they’ve seen as uninformed questions put forth by them at rallies at meetings.

Yeah. That has happened occasionally. It goes back to what I was talking about at the beginning of our interview: This is a really sensitive topic that obviously affects a large number of people on a deeply personal level, and people get annoyed, defensive and aggressive very easily. However, the thing is that QSA stands for Queer-Straight Alliance. The keyword there is alliance. Our purpose is to represent the entire Poly community. If you aren’t willing to explain things, to respond even to questions that you think are ignorant, and to try and help people understand things from your point of view, then you can’t attempt to represent the gay community at Poly.

The hurt that you feel is completely legitimate, but it can’t be vocalized as “this is what the gay community at Poly thinks, this is what we feel, don’t ask us questions, we have the right to say whatever we want to say because we are in the minority.”

You said that you were considering resigning as Co-president. Why was that?

Well, it was partly due to the fact that I felt, especially after the whole Facebook thing, that I didn’t have the right to quiet people’s voices. I don’t think I have the right to tell people to say that they can’t be hurt. However, I’ve also recently begun feeling very uncomfortable with the direction that the club as a whole has been taking. I feel as if by this point, it actually hurts the cause it claims to support.

Could you elaborate as to why it is you feel that way?

Sure. I personally feel as if some people have begun using the QSA as an outlet through which they can express their hurt and talk about the fact that they’ve been put down all their life. They expect it to be a place where people already know all about the problems faced everyday by queer people and where they don’t have to explain and qualify themselves all the time (like they have to outside of the club). However, the problem with this attitude is that there are kids who really do want to learn more about LGBTQ issues who are coming to QSA meetings for the purpose of learning about those issues, and when you act really aggressive and annoyed towards them, they start feeling attacked, and they’ll be a lot more reluctant to listen to you and acknowledge that you actually have something meaningful to say.

And also, the QSA, in my opinion, has to realize that it isn’t representative of the entire LGBTQ community at Poly. The QSA represents, honestly, a slightly flamboyant, outspoken and angry side, but still it presents itself as the voice of the queer community at Poly. There are a lot of LGBTQ kids (kids in the closet and out of the closet) who simply choose not to participate in the club, mostly because they feel that the club has grown too militant lately and that they don’t want to be associated with the anger and the hurt voiced at some of the meetings. Some of them actually engaged in a side opposite to the QSA during the whole Facebook thing.

What affect do you think this whole situation has had on kids in the closet at Poly?

I think it’s been very harmful and has made Poly seem like a more unsafe and unsupportive environment, an environment where they won’t be as likely to come out. That’s another reason I considered quitting the QSA in that I feel as if it hasn’t done a very good job considering and taking into account the feelings of closeted kids. In high school, all you want to do is fit in. You don’t want the fact that you’re gay or bi or transsexual to be a defining aspect of your personality. You don’t want gay or bi or transsexual to be the big adjective that pops into people’s heads whenever they think of you. You want to stay the kid who’s good at math or the captain of the varsity soccer team or the artistic kid. However, what the QSA has been doing lately is spreading a misconception around Poly that if you’re a member of the LGBTQ community you’re angry, you’re aggressive and you’re militant in your views about LGBTQ issues. A kid who’s thinking about coming out isn’t going to do it if he or she or they feels as if by doing so they’re going to automatically be thought of as angry, aggressive and militant.

So is the main issue here the fact that certain parts of the QSA present themselves as the voice of the entire queer community at Poly?

Yeah. Also though, we have to work on trying to spread our message in a more constructive fashion. As a straight person, I have no idea whether or not I’d be able to put aside my hurt and anger, but it’s what we have to work on doing in order to make Poly a safer, more communal place.

What do you think the purpose of the QSA is?

The foremost purpose of the QSA is to provide a safe space for expression and discussion for queer/trans students at Poly. That is the primary function it serves for me, and the primary function it serves for many of our queer/trans members. The secondary purpose is as an activist group, a group to change our community through education.

Does Poly Administration support the LGBTQ community and the QSA enough? What about its students?

Poly in general slips into what I like to call “patricism,” or passive activism. It’s the kind of support that is in no way outwardly malicious, but instead a matter of willful ignorance. I find that many Poly people will say “Hey, I’m all for LGBT rights,” but then will wait for someone to educate them on something instead of seeking out information themselves. If this education never comes, they continue perpetrating oppressive behaviors. Both Poly administration and Poly students need to be more active in their own education.

Do you feel oppressed by members of the Poly community, or by the culture itself?

I do feel oppressed by the Poly community. It’s a very cis straight male centric culture.

How do you experience oppression, and how would you define it?

Every single day I witness instances of ableism, misogyny, racism, transphobia and homophobia. What you have to realize is that privilege, and thus oppression, are a part of every single community. Oppression is institutionalized; it is taught to us from the moment we’re born. It’s a byproduct of living in a capitalist country where exploitation, especially economic exploitation, of the less powerful is easy.

Do you also see this oppression to other members of the LGBTQ community? What does it look like?

Yes, I do. I see it every day. Every single time anyone equates genitals to gender, or laughs when men fail to perform masculinity correctly, or makes some joke about women failing to perform femininity correctly, it makes this place even more dangerous. What many people don’t seem to realize is that this is not a very safe place.

What are some of the impacts of the perception of Poly as not being a safe place for LGBTQ people?

It’s not a safe place to be sometimes, and it’s really not a safe place to come out. It’s statistically likely that there are at least one or two more trans kids here who either don’t know that they are trans, or can’t come out because where they are. When people perpetuate oppressive structures, they’re not just hurting some idea, some ethereal idea of trans people, they’re hurting actual human beings.

Accepting is a passive action. If people really want to be good, they need to actively try to be better people, actively combat oppression. F*ck accepting. Show me real change.

Do you also see this oppression to other members of the LGBTQ community? What does it look like?

They are lazy. They’re not willing to do anything past sitting back and waiting for you to change them. If you don’t make an effort, I’m not going to like you. Look, everyone messes up. Everyone makes mistakes. That doesn’t show the content of your character. What does show the content of your character is what you do after you make a mistake—if you apologize, educate yourself, and don’t do it again.

Tom Phelan

Interview conducted by Nathan Lee

What do you think the purpose of the QSA is?

The purpose of the QSA is to provide a safe, private space for LGBTQ students to express themselves and to actively combat oppression. This is a really sensitive topic that obviously affects a large number of people. I believe the QSA is doing a good job of educating both students and faculty, and the Poly community as a whole.

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Boys basketball trails Chadwick and Prep in league standings

By HUNTER WORLAND
Sports editor

Despite a 22-point lead entering the fourth quarter, the boys basketball team fell (55-53) in the final three seconds against rival Chadwick Prep. The Panthers' squad suffered a similar result three weeks earlier in a two-point loss (39-41).

After the first quarter, the team bounced back with a three-game win streak against Webb, Rio Hondo and Cate. The Panthers currently stand 2-2 in league play and 13-6 overall, earning the team sixth in the latest CIF poll.

The squad currently trails Chadwick and Flintridge Prep in the race for the league title. The players rely on their team chemistry to keep them in contention.

"Many people step up throughout the year and we all feed off of that energy," senior guard Kyle Beerman noted. "We still have a long way to go, but we've played great so far." The Panthers opened league play on the road against the Rebels. The Rebel's defensive play around returning MVP, point guard Robert Cartwright, has been originate from an Achilles injury. Cartwright recovered in time for the rivalry game against Don Bosco.

"It was a good learning experience for all of us," junior Jarett Lim commented. "As the CIF playoffs approach, those are the games we have to win in order to be successful. Because of our aggressive defensive mentality, sometimes our offense falls short and that's what happened in the game I thought we competed hard and that's what matters." Wins against Rio Hondo and Webb give the team confidence in securing a spot in CIF playoffs, considering the strength of the Prep League.

Fu and Gifford lead fencing team to a successful season

The varsity fencing team is off to a strong start this season under eleven-year coach Laura Holminger. In their most recent tournament in Hemet, senior Emily Gifford took third in mixed foil, freshman Michael Hatch finished in the top 10, and junior Alyssa Aquina placed in the top eight. Senior Kendrick Wu won the entire tournament and earned the highest foil rating ever for a Poly fencer.

Besides the team experiencing high success in their tournaments, they have remained classy competitors. Senior Emily Gifford commented "I am very proud of everyone on our team. We pride ourselves in being the 'example' for other schools with fencing teams and we have good sportsmanship all around."

Perhaps the foremost storyline of the team's season has been the development of the lowerclassmen fencers. Senior leader Erik Chan commented, "I've never practiced with a class as much potential as the Class of 2017."

Gifford added, "the improvement has been phenomenal from the start of the season to now. Though good results are something to be proud of in tournaments, it's the hard work in practice which makes for good fencers down the road." In particular, Gifford highlighted freshmen Gwen Hashimoto's hard work, as well as Mattie Bede's aggressive play and Mark Xu's ability to keep opponents at a distance.

Their final tournament will take place on February 2nd all at Gybson High School in Placentia.

Girls soccer stands undefeated in Prep League

By JAREED LIM
Assistant sports editor

The girls varsity soccer team opened league competition with a 5-0 record, with blowout wins against Webb (4-0), Flintridge Prep (5-0), Chadwick (3-0), Mayfield (4-0) and Westridge (3-0). The Panthers have put themselves in contention for yet another Prep League title before they enter CIF playoffs.

Junior forward Kayla Valencia comments, "We're just taking it one game at a time and trying to do our best in practice. If we can learn from our mistakes early in the season, it will allow us to be successful as playoffs approach."

In five league games, the Panthers have scored an average of 3.6 goals per game while allowing an impressive zero goals against. This success can be attributed to the defensive front of Carolyn Shanks, Alii Triester, Aly Annick and Natalia Sanchez-Nigolian, who have showed maturity and consistency throughout the season.

The Panthers have found leadership in returning seniors Evan Gancedo, Simone Abegunrin, Natalie Treister and Sloan Askins, who have showed maturity and consistency in front of Carolyn Shanks, Allie Triester, Ally Annick and Natalia Sanchez-Nigolian.

"As the CIF playoffs enter, those are the games we have to win in order to be successful. Because of our aggressive defensive mentality, sometimes our offense falls short and that's what happened in the game," senior Ian McKnight noted, "as soon as Coach Jollly returned to the field, we have heard his voice yelling at us to constantly look to improve. This is just what we need as we enter the final games of the Prep League." Assistant coach Rick Thompson and Steve Clark filled in for Jollly's absence.

Boys soccer starts league with three ties against Webb, Flintridge and Chadwick

By CHARLIE RAMIREZ
Sports editor

While only three games into league play, the boys soccer team has shown glimpses of promise in an unusual 0-0-3 start against Prep league opponents. "As a team we have had a slow start to Prep League play as we have scored only one goal all season," said senior Ian McKnight. Poly entered league play with a highly anticipated rivalry game against Flintridge Prep.

In the very defensive-focused game, the Panthers struck first with a goal by junior Ben Hubsch in the final two minutes of the first half. Hubsch found a hole in the Rebels back line, outran a final defender posted on his back hip and finished with a hard strike to the lower right corner.

In the 54th minute, Flintridge scored the equalizer on a shot by senior goalie Brian Ward attempted to save a loose bouncing ball.

Poly had a chance to take the lead in the last minutes of the game on a breakaway by senior Ali Kamal, but an offside silenced the attack.

The Panthers followed up their 1-1 tie against the Rebels with two more games against Webb and Flintridge Prep, both with 1-1 scores. Sophomore Jack Queen scored for Poly against the Dolphins.

"I do think that were the better team in all of our games," said Kamal, "so I hope that we can continue to train and improve in practices and finish the season with wins against Prep, Webb and Chadwick. If we manage to end league play on this note we could take home the league title." Poly continues their quest for a league title this Friday at home in a rematch against Flintridge Prep. "We are a strong team all around," Kamal added, "and I think our depth as a team is what we have going for us in the league. I believe that the nature of our team can translate into big wins in the future."

Recently, the boys got a boost as their coach, Doug Jolly, returned from extensive back surgery from a herniated disc. Jolly missed his first game in his coaching career at Poly Jolly returned in time for the Chadwick game.

McKnight noted, "as soon as Coach Jolly returned to the field, we have heard his voice yelling at us to constantly look to improve. This is just what we need as we enter the final games of the Prep League." Assistant coach Rick Thompson and Steve Clark filled in for Jolly's absence.

Impressive start ranks girls water polo first in league

By KYLE BEERMAN
Staff writer

The varsity girls water polo team continues its impressive offensive attack into league play with a 6-0 record. 16-2 overall, the defending Prep League champions are averaging nearly 18 goals per game. The Panthers have soundly defeated Chadwick, Westridge, and Webb by scoring 20 or more goals in each game while allowing only 25 goals scored in all three games. The girls have seven more games before CIF playoffs begin, where they hope to make another exciting CIF playoff run.

When asked about her thoughts on the season so far, senior captain Natalie Sanchez-Nigolian commented, "We are playing well on all cylinders right now. We are playing some of the best water polo we have played all year. It is a very fan group to be with out of the water, and we carry that chemistry into games and practices. We are a very experienced group, and I am excited to see what we can do in the postseason." Their experience and complete all-around games allow others to play more freely. "Everyone on our team is one of our biggest strengths," senior Allison Woo and Lindsay Kelleher, a vital piece to the success the girls water polo program has had in recent years.

As the Panthers are the clear favorite in to take the Prep League title, the squad looks to the challenge of CIF competition. The girls have seven more games before CIF playoffs are expected to begin.
Athlete of the Future
Nellie Breen

After graduating invaluable seniors from last season’s CIF Southern California Regional Championship team, the varsity girls soccer team had big shoes to fill. With large losses in the midfield, freshmen Nellie Breen’s contributions have helped keep the Panthers undefeated in the Prep League, and maintain last year’s expectations. Being a freshman on varsity girls soccer is challenging. However, Breen has proved that she is ready to compete at this level as she easily transitioned into becoming an important member of the girls soccer team. Breen is especially talented in dribbling and passing. Combined with her speed and athleticism, Breen makes the ideal midfielder. Her vision on the ball translates into smart play where Breen rarely turns the ball over.

Senior Evan Gancedo noted, “She made it clear even in summer practices that she was going to be a great addition to the varsity team. She is very skilled, poised and confident on the ball. She is very comfortable with the ball at her feet, which is something uncharacteristic for a freshman. Her touch, the weight of her passes and her composure make her a great midfielder to play alongside.”

As the Panthers continue their season into CIF playoffs in the upcoming weeks, the team will depend more and more on Breen’s contributions.

Athlete of the Issue
Kaitlyn Olah

Coming off of last year’s strong season, the girls varsity basketball team has boasted an impressive 5-1 start to the 2014 season. One of the main reasons for the Panther’s success: senior captain Kaitlyn Olah. With her size, strength, knowledge and voice Olah leads the Panthers on and off the court.

Fellow senior captain Natalie Edwards commented, “Kaitlyn is hands down the strongest player on any court. She often has to barrel through two or three people to get to the basket, and she still gets the and-1. People automatically double her at the start of the game because they know she’s a threat, and she takes it in stride. She’s also strong in terms of leadership, as she’s one of our captains, and she always provides helpful suggestions and encouragement to everyone in the program.”

In the girl’s home gym, Olah’s name can be found on the CIF championship banner, just one of many accomplishments she has earned over her four years of varsity including 2nd team and 1st team all-league honors. When asked about Olah, junior captain Kiki Yang remarked, “It’s always rare to have a teammate like Kaitlyn. She makes plays, works hard for rebounds and is all the while enjoyable to play with. When I play well, Kaitlyn is there to support me. And when I have an off day, Kaitlyn is there to support me.”

The Panther’s will continue on with their league play in which Olah will undoubtedly be looked to for help. If the past three years has taught us anything about Olah, it’s that when she is locked to, she performs.

—Zach Bern

Save the Date

POLY VS. PREP BOYS SOCCER

Friday, January 31, at Babcock Field, 3:30

Last meeting: The Panthers tied the Rebels on the road, in Poly’s league opener (1-1).

Key players: Flintridge’s Cole Rademacher leads the Rebels with twelve goals thus far, and will be looking to add to his tally. Poly’s offense will pivot around senior Ali Kamal and junior Ben Hubsch, who scored the Panther’s lone goal against the Rebels.

The X-Factor: The large width of Babcock Field will bring the match to the wide-striking midfield and outside defensive backs.

POLY VS. WEBB GIRLS BASKETBALL

Friday, January 31, Gamble Gymnasium, 5:00

Last meeting: The Panthers edged a 36-35 victory in their last matchup on the road.

Key players: Poly’s attack will depend on Kiki Yang, who averages 23.9 points a game, to combat the Webb defense. Webb’s Hatley Beaman counted 21 rebounds in three games and will be essential in the battle in the paint.