



# Newsletter

November 2014

30th Avenue School - Q300 Parent-Teacher Association

## Q&A with

## David Wang

President of the Q300 PTA

**David, tell us a little bit about yourself.** My Taiwanese immigrant parents moved to Queens before I was born because they felt it would be a good place to raise a family. I couldn't agree more! My wife Maura and I have two children; our son is a Q300 kindergartner, and our daughter is 20 months old.

I am a graduate of parochial school in Maspeth, Stuyvesant High School, Harvard College, and Georgetown University Law Center. Over the years, I have served as an educational advocate and organizer. I co-founded middle-school conflict resolution programs in Boston and New York City. Working for the Manhattan Borough President, I helped organize protests against educational budget cuts. As a Paul, Weiss litigation associate, I co-wrote a pro bono amicus brief in support of a lawsuit that successfully affirmed the right of public school children to a sound basic education and increased state public educational spending in New York City. I also have served as co-chair of the Chinatown YMCA's Strong Kids fundraising campaign. I am now general counsel at a fashion marketing and public relations group.

**Okay, enough about you. Let's hear about the PTA!** It's hard to believe our PTA has only existed for nearly two months. Thanks to the hard work of many generous volunteers, we have established a website, [www.q300pta.org](http://www.q300pta.org), where families can get timely information, began publishing this newsletter, surveyed parents' enrichment priorities, and organized a bake sale. Last *continued on next page*

## Upcoming News & Events

**November 19th 6:30 – 8:30 PM**  
City Council District 22 participatory budgeting event at Astoria Community Center 4-05 Astoria Blvd.

**November 21st, 6 – 8 PM** PTA Meeting & International Potluck in the Auditorium

**November 21st**, School Leadership Team (STL) Elections at the PTA Meeting. See [www.q300pta.org](http://www.q300pta.org) for more info.

**November 25th, 6 – 7:30 PM**  
Middle School Open House in the Auditorium

**November 25th 6 – 8 PM** DOE Panel for Educational Policy meeting at The High School of Fashion Industries, 225 West 24th Street, New York, NY 10011

**November 27th – 8th** Thanksgiving Break, No School

**December 4th 8:30AM** PTA Executive Board Meeting



## 1st Grade

Dalia's dad Johnny came in and spoke to the kids about the Oud – a string instrument from the Middle East. He even played a song for the students! Students had some questions and answers.

## Halloween Pics

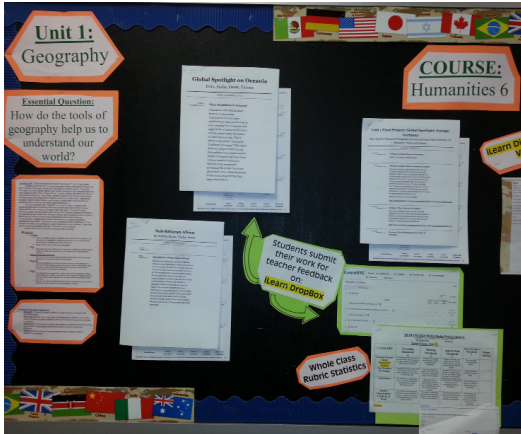


# Class Updates

## Sixth Grade:

This past month, the Grade 6 students have soared to “a whole new level of awesomeness” at Q300, a catchphrase coined and announced by Josh Reisner who was prominently featured on MasterChef Junior television show.

The students visited the 9/11 Memorial and the Museum of Natural History as part of their advisory and humanities curriculum. The students



took the subway downtown to the Freedom Tower and visited the 9/11 Memorial Museum, where they analyzed the 9/11 artifacts and learned a bit about the background of first responders.

Guided by Spanish teacher Mr. Edwin, students began writing on *Un Poco Sobre Mi*, or *A Little Bit About Me*, and have become proficient

with *Duo Lingo*, a fun app/website that helps with language learners. Parents have overheard their children singing alphabet songs in Spanish while showering.

Team Q300 has entered the four teams into the First Lego League competition coached by our technology guru Scott.

The Model UN team coached by our Humanities teacher Ms. Annette, are improving their speech writing and public speaking abilities, as well as learning parliamentary procedures.

If this was too much fun but not enough academics for you, then you are wrong. The ‘Jen Ratio’ from the Mathalicious program was a hit; and even the parents have learned from the children why there is so much negative news in the media.

In Science, our sixth graders have been busy building and testing Rube Goldberg contraptions guided by Betty. In Humanities, they are practicing annotation and analyzing high level texts.

Using various Web 2.0 tools including Padlet, Haiku Deck, and Thing-link, our sixth graders have held online debates, developed collaborative presentations through commenting on the positive (areas that glow) and negative (areas to grow) of each other’s work.

The sixth graders are excited by the start of engineering taught by Principal Matt. They started by learning consensus building and also working together on building the tallest structure in teams.”

*continued on next page*

**Editors Note:** We received several photos of Q300 students participating in field trips, classroom activities, and engaging with their friends on the playground and at school that we are unable to print because we have not received photo releases for all children. Please consider signing the PTA photo release sent home by your child’s teacher so we can add more great pictures to upcoming newsletter editions! If you need another copy, please email [communications@q300.org](mailto:communications@q300.org).


## Q&A with David continued

week, the afterschool chess program began. Further, parents will soon begin volunteering in the school during breakfast, recess and lunch. On November 21, we will gather to celebrate community at the International Pot-luck. We have incorporated the PTA and are seeking tax-exempt status.

**And what can the Q300 community expect next from the PTA?** There is so much more that needs to be done, and with your help, we can build on this great start! We embark on a Direct Appeal (requesting voluntary monetary donations from school families) that will allow us to get started immediately on funding this year’s budget priorities. The priorities were identified in a survey completed by 80% of Q300’s families, and in discussions with Principal Matt Willard and teachers. They include funding certified teaching assistants in the lower grades; music education for all grades; continuation of a sixth grade sports program for the spring semester; teachers’ wish lists; and many other programs to deepen and enrich our children’s education. Please consider making or raising the donation by December 15th, so that we can hire the teaching assistants and implement the enrichment programs in January.

We aim for 100% family participation and hope you will work with us to invest in our children’s future.

We are also working with Principal Willard and staff to set up the School Leadership Team, which will develop, implement, and evaluate school-based educational policies to ensure that they meet the students’ needs. We are planning community-building and fundraising events such as a movie night, a wine-tasting evening and a spring auction, and we are preparing to apply for grants. Further, we are working to get the word out to caregivers of prospective Q300 applicants and let them know about the nurturing and enriching educational environment at Q300. We are working to establish joint projects with PS 17 and PS 126.

*Please drop me a line about your family’s experience at Q300 and any ideas and thoughts about Q300. My email is [president@Q300pta.org](mailto:president@Q300pta.org). Also follow me on twitter at @Q300ptaprez. I look forward to seeing you at upcoming PTA meetings and events.* 



## Kindergarten Field Trip

In their field trip to the Queens Botanical Garden on October 30th, the kindergarteners walked around the garden grounds and observed all different types of trees. They learned how trees look different, they observed their different leaves, and learned that some trees even produce different types of fruit. In one workshop, the children learned what trees need to grow and what different parts of a tree are. They even planted orange seeds to take home and grow. Thank you to Jackie, Eileen, and the parent chaperones for making this trip possible. ☺



## Meet Jill Q300 Social Worker

It may say “Social Worker” on the door, but just spend a few minutes with Jill and you will realize she does much more than that for Q300. She is passionate about building a safe and secure environment for our children and is an integral part of daily operations at our new school. You can find her in the breakfast room, at lunch and recess, and in her office providing individual counseling sessions to students. You will spot her at the kindergarten and first grade morning meetings monthly, or working with kindergarteners in explorations. She may be the one who takes your child to the nurse if he or she is not feeling well and works to resolve conflicts among students. If it has something to do with ensuring the well-being of Q300 children and our community then Jill likely has some part in it!

Jill attended NYU Tisch School of Arts for Film and Television where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. She went on to work in the marketing industry when, around September 11th, she rethought where she could best use her strengths and what would bring her fulfillment. At that point, she went to pursue a graduate degree in Social Work from CUNY Hunter College and has been working with children for over ten years. Jill has diverse experience ranging from working at an afterschool program to various in-school experiences in New York City, most recently at the high school on Riker’s Island. At home, Jill is a parent of two children and naturally incorporates the parent perspective into her daily work at Q300.

One of Jill’s main responsibilities is creating and coordinating the advisory program for the sixth graders. Advisory meets four times per week and involves small groups of students working with an advisor (a school staff member) with the purpose of building safe, supportive, and skilled student groups that will impact our school and larger communities. Advisory cycles through various topics including communications skill building and social issues (such as poverty in the US and bullying); and the groups are now tackling a student choice dialogue where they are using surveys to determine what the students themselves would like to cover. The advisory program is integral to building a caring community with part of the *continued on next page*

# PTA MEETING & INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 6-8 PM  
IN THE Q300 AUDITORIUM AND CAFETERIA

PLEASE BRING IN A CULTURALLY-INSPIRED MEAL, SIDE, OR DESSERT TO SHARE WITH THE Q300 COMMUNITY.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US WITH QUESTIONS AT [MEMBERSHIP@Q300PTA.ORG](mailto:MEMBERSHIP@Q300PTA.ORG)

RSVPS AND SIGN-UPS FOR DISHES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/20F0F48A9AD2AA0F58-INTERNATIONAL/16753944](http://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/20F0F48A9AD2AA0F58-INTERNATIONAL/16753944). OR VISIT THE PTA WEBSITE AT [Q300PTA.ORG](http://Q300PTA.ORG)

**PARTAKE OF DELICIOUS INTERNATIONAL CUISINE!**  
**GET TO KNOW THE Q300 COMMUNITY BETTER!**  
**WIN GREAT PRIZES IN OUR RAFFLE!**  
**FUN FOR KIDS!**



## Class Updates continued

### First Grade:

In the Geometry Unit, our first graders have been analyzing similarities and differences in various shapes.

After completing the “Small Moment” project in which students describe in detail a moment in their lives, the first graders have begun a nonfiction writing project

In science, our first graders investigated whether toothpaste is a solid or liquid.

In a unit on watercolors, the first graders took a trip to Astoria Park where they painted in watercolors of the autumn colors.

In the daily morning meeting, our first graders have been sharing greetings and receiving the morning message. They have focused on developing class rules to improve the class. Class 101 has been focusing on saying greetings in different languages. The first graders are beginning “Show and Tell” in which students will bring in something that is special to them or to their family.



### Kindergarten:

For the past few weeks, the kindergarteners have been learning about trees in science class. They have complemented their study of trees by going on nature walks nearby the school to collect leaves. They have also done leaf rubbings and used the leaves to create a leaf person!

In technology, students are working on programming animations.

In Spanish, students are learning the numbers, colors and shapes. Students have written “Un Poco Sobre Mi” (A Little Bit About Me). Students have also learned the parts of the body in Spanish and learned to sing Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes in Spanish.

Kindergarteners have been bringing books home to read. Our teachers have suggested that parents encourage kindergarteners to reading and write at home for twenty minutes daily.

In class, the kindergarteners have been writing stories about their lives.

In math, the kindergarteners have been working on counting objects, and comparing numbers and order by length and quantity (what, no algebra yet?!). 📧

## Meet Jill continued

program including service projects and has had a significant impact on the Q300 experience of many of our sixth graders.

Another area of focus for Jill is building infrastructure within the school community to resolve conflicts in a way that reflects the school’s core values. She uses restorative circles that represent a structured approach to conflict resolution for students of all ages. She will bring students in to talk about an issue that arose, working things out in a way that gives each individual a voice, encourages understanding, and allows students all to be part of resolving a conflict. In this work, Jill is helping our children build important skills around communication and at the same time she is providing support to the teachers in their classrooms.

Jill is energized by the love of learning that she sees in Q300 students. As part of a “get to know each other” activity in advisory, students shared their answer to “If I was a scientist I would explore...” with each other. In one group, the students found a shared interest in quantum physics. Jill was thoroughly excited by the bonding that took place once the students explained to her what exactly quantum physics actually is! As Jill says, “Our students have extraordinary interests and love of learning and that is a beautiful thing.

Jill is all about driving a purposeful building of school culture that reflects the values of inquiry, inclusion, and responsibility and brings that passion to everything she does. She is at Q300 each school day and is available by email and phone if any parents have concerns or comments – you can reach her at [jill@q300.org](mailto:jill@q300.org). 📧

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