



Mindfulness Brings Calm to Kindergarten

By Jennifer Beakes

Photos by Brooke Goldfeder and Jaime Seidenberg

In April I was a privileged guest in Brooke's K2 classroom, where I observed her students practicing their mindfulness session. The program, called Multitasking Yogi, is an enrichment activity funded by the PTA, and it is being used in both K1 and K2 classrooms. While visiting the K2 class, I saw what a wonderful opportunity our children have with this program.

Upon entering the room, I noticed a group of happy, excited and very active children. But happy is the key word here. The children were definitely excited to see the instructor, Colin, and it was very clear he had established a meaningful bond with them. Eli from K1 summarizes his feelings about the program this way, "It makes me happier because I like mindfulness."

Colin used this relationship as well as specific skills to guide the children to a calmer mindset. In his first group of activities, he focused on controlled breathing, listening to sounds at various distances away from the students, and fast and slow movements. I could see the transformation in the kids, as they grew more attuned to their environ-

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Q300 Wins Respect for All School Award

By Kristina Jelinek



As part of *National Anti-Bullying Month*, our school was invited to participate in a Respect For All Essay and Poster contest sponsored by District 30. Sixth grader Sarah Serran was selected as a winner in the

contest and invited to attend an awards ceremony with District 30 Superintendent Dr. Phillip Composto, Principal Bill Biniaris, Guidance Counselor Christine Katartzis, her parents and other students from the district. Congratulations Sarah!



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Superintendent **Dr. Phillip Composto**, sixth grader **Sarah Serran**, and Q300 Principal **Bill Biniaris**



This Chess Thing

By Mark Schroffner
Photos by Victor Yim

So what's up with "this chess thing"? You mean chess, the one grouped in with checkers and backgammon in those 3-in-1 classic board game sets, right?

Or do you mean the 60 Minutes story about a student chess wave in a deep Louisiana small town?

Or wait, wasn't Chess a Broadway musical written by ABBA or something? But what's ABBA got to do with chess? How did a board game make it to Broadway? Who's Bobby Fischer?

"This chess thing", let's level set.

We all bring a different life vantage point to "this chess thing", and it's been painted by movies, TV, music and society/culture with many brushes.

Take a moment to Google Video "this chess thing" (literally), and listen to Laura Linney's character in 1993's Searching for Bobby Fischer. It was the prevalent sentiment then, which still exists now.

For a "now" snapshot though, Google "60 Minutes Franklin chess". That's what's going on right now, today. And at its simplest interest level, the positive impact of chess just requires a few students, interest, a few chess boards, ideally some experienced chess guidance and maybe some pizza — pretty handy for our NYC space requirements.

And here in NYC 2017 we are phenomenally lucky. It's a chess town, in a chess generation, riding a technology tail-wind, where the majority of our G&T rival schools and notable private schools

have embraced chess as a critical growth and development lever. It's not a "thing", but an educational amplifier and socializer, even a friendship source and cultivator, that extends well beyond the game, and offers up endless life analogies.

"...students learn how to make strategic choices, intensify their ability to concentrate, and begin to engage in a form of metacognition."

Q300 Principal Bill Biniaris says, "The prospect of deepening our students' involvement with chess is so exciting. Although most people usually focus on chess as an experience with competition, I know that its benefits go far beyond. For example, students learn how to make strategic choices, intensify their ability to concentrate, and begin to engage in a form of metacognition. Needless to say all of these traits help our students with their academic learning as well and, as a result, they will learn to love learning even more!"

In the past few months, Q300 students have been exploring the various tournaments in town, for the most part as a la carte entrants. From my own account, riding Eileen Yim's notable effort to begin harnessing the interest, Second Graders Anjali and Elias, and Kindergarteners Eli, Wailea and Zachery participated in a chess tournament at PS41 Greenwich Village School in late March. It was an eye-opening experience. PS41 parents and students came out in full force. It was partly a social event — selling food, drinks, snacks — and most definitely a competitive one. Established other chess-emersed schools like NEST+m, Horace Mann, Speyer and others sprinkled in to test the field, to make a day adventure of it, many of the students clearly friends. Without the anchor of a many-years-established program, Q300 represented extremely well, just not in volume...yet. All the kids received trophies and medals, effort well put forth. I know Wailea and Eli, who play chess weekly via NYChessKids after school may have been shocked at what a different format to find themselves in, maybe even unsure how to interact. Meanwhile Zachery, a tournament veteran at this point seemed immune to the swings of winning and losing, very comfortable with such directly structured competition.

In late April, Zachery and Wailea ventured down to the tournament hosted by NEST+m. Another really fantastic experience, and no doubt competitive. Zachery trophied, Wailea medalled, but which was actually very secondary to what I walked away with.

I couldn't help but take note of the 40+ NEST+m student headcount, team shirts and team rooms where the kids could reconvene, snack, socialize, play practice sequences. I also took note of available bites from pizza and grilled hot dogs to cookies, snacks and dumplings. It was really great, it was a full event experience, an established and supportive subculture within the school. Wailea lost a match and another dad offered me a ball to throw with her on the playground outside. It was like magic. She rebooted and came back to stalemate and win for the next two matches. I began to note the kids supporting each other between rounds — sometimes you win, sometimes you lose, sometimes hugs are just awesome.

After attending 4 events now, I can see how the majority of Q300 student chess interest may fall somewhere between the very occasional tournament goer and the-only-at-school players. But I'm looking forward to seeing Q300 students experience a more accessible taste of chess to see where and how it may sit within the amazing broader experience they are being provided with.

The good news is that the Q300 table is being set for it. Along with chess possibly having a place within curriculum for accessible exposure, full tournaments will be hosted at Q300 in the upcoming year, while parent volunteers led by Eileen Yim and including myself look to establish some small group recurring chess events.

The 'home' tournaments present an opportunity for Q300 to truly define who and how it wants to be — not just from a chess representation standpoint, but also as the most recent Citywide G&T force making its student/parent culture splash onto the progressive edge of education, where chess has earned its place.

The Q300 "chess thing" is on its way. 🏆





Fun and Fundraising at Stepping Into Summer

By Joanna Holzman
Photos by Daniel Bach

The Third Annual Stepping Into Summer Dance Party brought over 280 members of the Q300 community together on May 7 for a relaxed afternoon of fun at the lovely Chian Federation Hall in Astoria. The party was a chance for parents, students, and teachers from both the elementary and middle schools to socialize while also raising money for the PTA as the largest fundraiser of the year. We raised over \$25,000 in profit this year—over \$3,000 more than last year. A kid-friendly DJ led the children in dancing and games, like a hula-hoop contest, musical chairs, and freeze dance. They also loved using the photo booth and capturing silly or sweet poses with their friends! Everyone enjoyed the variety of foods in the buffet as well. Thanks go to all the parents who volunteered to make the party run smoothly.



For many of the kids, choosing which items they wanted to try for in the raffle was one of the highlights. Raffle items included many teacher/staff-experiences, such as Principal for a Day with Bill, Bowling with Ali, or Frozen Yogurt and *Romeo and Juliet* with Noelle. Many thanks to the teachers and staff who donated their free time for the raffle! There were also gift certificates to local favorites, like Bareburger and Brooklyn Bagel, and even items such as a Harry Potter book and merchandise set, thanks to our community who solicited the prizes. The drawing of the raffle prizes at the end of the afternoon was an exciting moment!



Meanwhile, kids and parents prowled the silent auction tables, deciding what to bid on. There were definitely some friendly bidding wars going on, particularly in the last ten minutes, for the amazing items being auctioned off. The table was covered with everything imaginable, from a lego set to gold and diamond jewelry, from an offer for a tour of 1010WINS to a vodka set, from playdough to photos of vacation getaways, from adult pogo sticks to spa gift certificates, from wine to organic clothing . . . and more. The Q300 community and auction committee did an outstanding job of soliciting donations and donating items outright. Especially telling about the wonderful caring community in our school was the large number of parent experiences being donated, such as a singing telegram, a kids baking class, a behind-the-scenes tour of the American Museum of Natural History, a caregiver session, a Chinatown walking tour, book advice, and many more. The auction, raffle, and the gorgeous ad-supported journal all raised money to support the PTA-funded enrichment programs for all students at Q300, regardless of their background. As the PTA presidents wrote in their thank-you letter: "In the 2016/2017 school year alone, PTA funding provided academic support through teaching assistants and middle school Spanish language instruction; in-class enrichment programs such as visual arts, music, architecture and dance; classroom supplies and equipment including laptops, calculators, books and robotics kits; funds towards graduation and other school outings; and financial assistance to enable students to participate in all of our programming."



Finally, the party launched the online auction, which included 100 items with more parent experiences, camps, gift certificates, toys, museum memberships, tickets, and more. All of this was made possible by the generous sponsors, donors, and donor solicitors who gave so much to support our children. 🙌



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ment and their own breath. Colin guided the children so they calmed themselves down, which I think is an important distinction from telling them to calm down.

Yelena from K1 agrees that mindfulness helps put her at ease, “Whenever I am excited, mindfulness helps me calm down.”

The second group of activities consisted of a couple of modified vinyasas, which in yoga parlance, are a series of poses that flow from one to the next and are coordinated with the breath. I loved how Colin instructed all the children to use their chairs as a prop. This way all skill levels could participate easily.

The final group of activities focused again on breathing, either coordinated with music or movement, and the entire session ended with belly breaths. It also finished with much calmer and much more focused children.

As Colin prepared to leave, he was accosted by many children, all of whom desperately wanted to speak with him. It was clear they like him very much!

The question is then: what can this controlled breathing, listening, and movement do for children in a school setting? And more specifically, what are the benefits for children in a G&T setting?

“Mindfulness helps me concentrate.”

In speaking with Brooke after the session, I learned several valuable benefits. First, when children listen attentively they learn better. This may seem like a no-brainer, but gifted children tend to have minds that move a million miles a minute, and they love to talk! Colin’s work on listening to sounds outside the school, then inside the school, and then in the classroom encouraged the children to really pay attention to things outside of themselves. This skill makes all that data accessible.

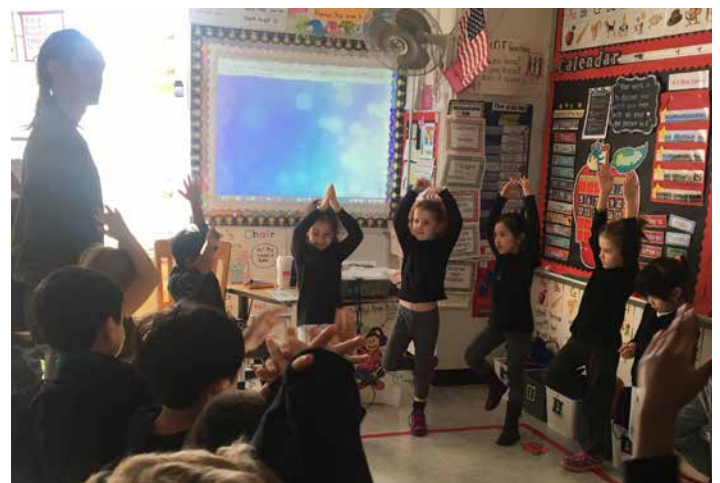
Children from Jamie’s K1 class concur. According to Ziyad, “Mindfulness is quiet,” and Sophia adds, “Mindfulness helps me concentrate.”

This ability to concentrate on things outside oneself can also aid in stress reduction, because active listening forces you away from troubling thoughts to something removed from the self and from your stressful thoughts.

According to Gianna from K1, “I like mindfulness because it calms us down when we are mad or we feel a little distracted.”

In addition, both Brooke and Jamie have noticed improvements in their students’ ability to control reactive behavior. Jamie notes:

Mindfulness has had such an impact on my class and my students’ self-regulation. During class, students work on new ways to be mindful, such as deep breathing, yoga, and working with their partners. But I notice the effects even after our hour is up — students are taking breaths to calm themselves down, and are thinking more before making decisions. It is so important for our every day learning!



The ability to plan your behavior, to see consequences, and to evaluate whether an action will be beneficial to you and others, is a necessary skill for children. Interestingly, research has shown that gifted children tend to lag behind in the development of the prefrontal cortex, which is the place where rational decision-making occurs. Mindfulness has been demonstrated to thicken this cortex, a fact that I find remarkable!

As a parent, I am very appreciative that Colin is helping the children of Q300 learn these skills. I also want to extend a big thank-you to the teachers who are planning and implementing this valuable program. It has inspired me to practice mindfulness more often with my children at home. 🙏

Poets of Q300

Text and Photo by Kristina Jelinek

Q300 middle schoolers have been active poets recently, including writing poems in class and submitting work to various local contests. In 6th grade, teacher Betty Eck supported students in entering a contest sponsored by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). According to Betty, “6th grade students were encouraged to enter the 2017 Water Resources Art and Poetry contest, sponsored by the DEP. Students created a piece that related to one of many water themes including protecting our waterways, and healthy drinking water. Their poems were directly related to the Watershed and Storm Water Runoff unit students had just completed in science.” Q300 sixth graders Kenisha Mahajan and Gaby Usvyat were selected as winners and invited to an event at the LaGuardia Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, May 16th. In 7th grade, students wrote poems for a contest sponsored by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz & Queens Poet Laureate Maria Lisella in response to the question “What does freedom mean to me?” According to teacher Laura Parris, “While students’ poems could take any form or style, students had to use poetic techniques and intentional word choice in order to convey their ideas about freedom to the audience.” Seventh grader Charles Falivena was selected as the Q300 winner and his poem was submitted to the Field Support Center for further review. We are proud of all of our poets, especially those selected to share their work outside of the Q300 community! 🗨️



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: **Gabrielle** (6th grade), **Kenisha** (6th grade) and **Charles** (7th grade).



First Grade Visits the Museum of the City of New York

Text and Photos by Saswat Pattanayak

First-graders had an exciting time contributing their unique ideas to improvise the city they live in and love. At their visit to Museum of the City of New York, our students actively participated at the Future City Lab which was shaped by four themes: money, density, diversity and creativity.

The designated expert from the museum along with our teachers Alex and Jessica encouraged the students to brainstorm among themselves on the things they love about NYC and how they can make the city an even better place to live in. Among other things, students emphasized on a need for better systems, to - clean streets, increase the number of subway trains, decrease pollution, and to ensure housing for all.

Students imagined alternative futures by forming four teams and they asked a “what if” question followed by a “then” answer, pertaining to housing, transportation, work and the environment. The museum’s one-hour program was enriching through interactive games and data visualizations whereby students tried to reimagine various locations, from upper Manhattan to Jackson Heights area in Queens. It was empowering for our young learners to think of themselves as serious stakeholders in the future of their city. 🗨️



Diplomacy, Debate and Teamwork at Model UN

By Kenisha Mahajan and Sarah Serran
Photos by Kristina Jelinek

Model UN was an amazing experience. We got the opportunity to experience how United Nations' workers research, make contracts, and have conferences. We were assigned different committees such as the SOCHUM, FAO, and WHO. We all put a lot of time and hard work into our research and performance at the conference in the end of March. We learned a lot about our strengths and weaknesses through research and speaking. At first we were shocked at the amount of delegates that were present, and felt a little anxious. However, we pulled together and did better than we thought we could have.

One of the skills that we think all of us grew in was teamwork. We all did great research and worked very well together. From our time in the conference, we saw all the teams speaking well, clearly, and listening to each other. Another one of the skills that evolved over the course of Model UN were our research skills. Every week, all of us were extremely productive and got good information. Communication played a huge role at the conference. When you are in a team of two to three delegates, you do not always know when or how long



someone will be speaking. From a lot of our observations, we all had consistent and straightforward communication. But throughout the research and the conference, our skills advanced and we strengthened some skills that we will have to use for the rest of our lives.

During the conference, we had important debates about real world issues. We discussed the issues, talked about solutions to the problems, and tried to get everyone involved. Soon enough, we were assigned to make our own treaties/contracts. We met with other countries and discussed how we would all contribute and what we would do. There were blocks, which were groups of countries joining to sign a peace treaty. All the blocks worked hard to understand each country's ideas. For example, certain issues were about refugees, and how to support them in their situations. Debating in front of many delegates was a little scary, but we felt comfortable as the conversations grew. We were leaders, while having moderated and unmoderated caucuses about these

topics. Young leaders understood what the world is facing, and experienced how the real United Nations work together to solve problems. Working in blocks shows the potential that every country has if they work together.

Each group was assigned a country (Bhutan or Chile) and was selected to a committee, which the students then researched. Children and refugees are facing problems all around the world, or women are violently abused to malnutrition and food crises. Model UN students have been brought together to understand more about these issues. We spoke more deeply about serious issues that affect safety, or vulnerability greatly. We discussed solutions like real delegates, and that helped us get closer to what UN Delegates do. Our research was the thing that helped back up all our points, support inferences, or provide topics to motion for caucuses.

For some more insights and a broader understanding of the Model UN experience, we asked participants some questions.

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TOP (FROM LEFT): Ariana Chowdhury, Nylise Hines, Siera Tashiro, Charlie Ding, Nicholas Perianu, Iphogenia Petra, Carrie Ko, Amisha Keshwani, Zoe Guida, Dalia Farraj
 BOTTOM (FROM LEFT): Habiba Motiyr, Julia Leopando, Katherine Vavouliotis, Josephine Kramer, Alexandria Ghile, Irene Gonzalez Fajardo, Emma Sierzputowski, Siena Overweg, Sadie Booher, Jasmine Cohen, Charlotte Robertson, Mishka Duggan

Q300 Community Helpers

By Josephine Kramer, Mishka Duggan, Julia Jackowska, Siera Tashiro, Iphogenia Petra, Habiba Motiyr, Nylise Hines, Siena Overweg, Ariana Chowdhury, Julia Leopando, Dalia Farraj and Eva Nelson Torres

On May 15th, our third grade students gathered in the auditorium to celebrate a year of work with the Community Helpers. The program began as an idea in School Leadership Team meetings during the 2015-2016 school year and has expanded this year, with the help of our social work intern, Gracie Rifino. The program grew into a leadership opportunity for many of our third grade students who took on various responsibilities during lunch, recess, arrival and dismissal. The Q300 community has been more peaceful and inclusive because of their work. At the celebration, the helpers reflected on their work throughout the year. —Jill Kaufman, Q300 Social Worker

Community Helpers are there to help the Q300 community and make sure everyone is safe and is having fun. We think about ways to help friends follow our core values of inclusion, inquiry and responsibility in the hallways, at lunch and recess. Every week we have meetings to talk about ways to help friends do things the Q300 way by making safe choices, getting along with each other and listening to our teachers.

There were three jobs that we could sign up for and we had a chance to try different jobs each week. The jobs were Recess Friends, Peacekeepers and Clean-up Crew. At arrival, the Peacekeepers' job is to monitor the stairs so that people do the right thing and follow the rules. We are stationed on the stairs so that peace can spread and everyone is safe. Most people figure out what's right. We have noticed that since we started our job at arrival more people do the right thing. For example, more and more people every day are going on the right side of the staircase.

Kinder Recess is when third graders go to the courtyard with kindergarten and first grade students to play games. We help them learn to play together so no one is excluded. In the beginning of the year, we did a survey with the kindergarteners and first graders and found that their favorite games to play were red light, green light and Mr. Fox. While some helpers are leading games at recess, other community helpers watch for safety and try to their best to fix problems. We walk around to see if anyone is hurt and check to make sure they are playing nicely. We also look around to find friends that are sad or if anyone had their feelings hurt so we help them feel better. If we

see two people fighting or not getting along, we try to talk it out with them. Sometimes we have a circle and we ask about their feelings to help solve the problem.

Two glows that we are proud of:

1) We have Caitlyn and Zoe in kindergarten helping us include friends and solve problems. They are excited to become Community Helpers when they get to third grade.

2) At the beginning of the year, Hershel in first grade was afraid to ask to play with us. Now she is always helping us lead the games.

Being a Community Helper is really fun because you can help kindergarteners. When there is indoor recess, we visit the kindergarten and first grade tables to see how their day is going and make sure they're following rules.

We think about ways to help friends follow our core values of inclusion, inquiry and responsibility in the hallways, at lunch and recess.

When it comes to Clean-up Crew, we help make signs to remind friends of the cafeteria rules. We make reminder cards to gently let friends in the cafeteria know when it's time to cleanup. We also got some second and first graders and kindergarteners involved in helping their tables clean up and help with pushing the garbage bins. Together we are helping to make the cafeteria a safe and fun place to be!

We have created a memory book that has all of the work we did this year along with goals to make it even better next year.

Next year, we hope to invite the new third graders to join and help lead meetings to assist with continuing the Community Helpers. Thank you to our social work intern, Gracie Rifino, for leading this project. 🍀

Third Grade Field Trips to LIC Growers and Solar One

Text and Photos By Gina Reis

Class 302 visited the rooftop farm at LIC Growers. The students learned about the farm ecosystem with hands on activities about pollination, composting and the connection between the sun, soil, animals, bugs and people.



This Spring, the Third Grade classes visited Solar One: NY City's Green Energy Education Center. The students took water samples from the East River to analyze. They split into groups where they tested and recorded the water's temperature, PH levels and nitrate levels. Each group then shared their findings to see if any group had results outside of the normal range. It was interesting to learn so much about this tidal estuary right in our back yard!



Our Ancient Egypt Exhibitions

By Dalia Farraj and Eva Nelson-Torres

Photos by Maria Hantzopoulos

In the third grade, we had a learning unit about Ancient Egypt. We covered this topic in many of our subjects, including Math, ELA, Social Studies and Science. During this unit, we separated into groups, chose a topic about Ancient Egypt, and created a project. There were many topics chosen including the Social Classes of Ancient Egypt, Pyramids, Simple Machines, Inventions, Animals, Art and Jewelry, and famous Pharaohs.

Once each group decided on their topic, they used the following format for their project:

Do research on your topic using books and technology.

Organize the information that you get into a packet.

Write paragraphs about your research. You should have about six subheadings including one "fun fact."

Find relevant pictures and print or copy them.

Take all this important information and create a display.

Then, when we finished, we invited our parents in to see our display. Before they came in, we memorized a speech for our presentation. When they came in, we shared our final work with our parents in a mini-museum. This experience was very fun and creative. We enjoyed participating in this and learned a lot. 🗣️



Q300 PTA Executive Board Elected!

Congratulations, and thank
you for volunteering!

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Maria Hantzopoulos,
Margarita Soto

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
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Gina Reis, David Wang

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LOWER DIVISION REPRESENTATIVE

Sarah Chang

UPPER DIVISION REPRESENTATIVE

Anne Van der Veer

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The first question was, How would you describe preparing for the conference?

Jade from 6th grade answered, "Preparing for the conference was easy for my group because we worked well as a team, and every one of us were doing a different part."

Gabriella from 6th grade said, "I would describe preparing for the conference being stressful, yet exciting. I've never done something like Model UN before, so this was an opportunity to learn new things. Preparing was also very interesting because I got to learn about current issues going on in different countries."

The second question was, How would you describe the conference? What emotions did you face before and at the conference?

Musab from 6th grade answered, "At first I was nervous, because we didn't get our plaque cards. Though after, it got much better."

Gabriella responded, "At the conference, each committee had their own room where we got to discuss our topic. The conference was at first nerve-wracking, but as we got settled in we became more comfortable."

Jade said, "Before the conference, we were all anxious and nervous though excited for what would be ahead. And during the conference, we were listening and thinking about what everyone said."

The third question was, In one word, how would you describe your Model UN journey?

Musab said, "The experience was rewarding."

Gabriella replied, "It was challenging to be able to go up in front of other students, the chair, the director and speak about our opinions."

The fourth and final question was, What lessons have Model UN imparted to you?


Musab responded, "I learned about other countries and the problems they are facing."

Gabriella said, "One lesson I learned is that I was able to become more open minded about what is going on in other countries."

Jade answered, "Teamwork is a really big skill because you have to make sure everyone gets their lines right, their research is on point."

After going through all of the debates, we went into the United Nations Headquarters. The building was full of people and we went into a huge stadium. Here, many international decisions were made. The auditorium had many seats, with microphones. The screen above us was huge, standing on top of the stage. Many inspiring people said many empowering words and gave us a few questions that made us think. We know that the words spoken that day will inspire us forever.

Model UN was definitely fun, but one of the most special parts was meeting people from all over the globe. Interacting with students from different countries who came to this conference just to share their ideas of how to make the world a better place. We met people from Spain, Colombia, Germany, and even some from Ethiopia. Uniting different countries gave us the opportunity to learn about their cultures first-hand.

A lot of us came into Model UN hoping to learn about the world and issues that we all face. But in the process I think that we learned about ourselves as well. Everyone in Model UN discovered a new skill that they were very good at. Whether it was talking in front of over 100 people or debating a topic, Model UN helped us discover new strengths and helped us grow and expand our skillsets. Most of us had not participated in Model UN before, so it was a new and exciting experience. Since the first Model UN meet to the last day of the conference, we have grown and learned so much. The things that we learned and the friendships made will never be forgotten. 

Letter from the PTA Co-Presidents

Dear Q300 Community,

We can't believe it's already June and the last day of school is just around the corner. Over the last year, we watched our kids grow and prosper. While we have experienced transitions, changes, and growth (welcoming over 140 new students and our new Principal, Bill Biniaris), we have had an incredible year and continue to remain as a school community committed to the mission of the school: to engage students in the active process of making knowledge and better understanding the world around them in ways that drive a sense of responsibility and action.

This commitment to the mission and core values is reflected in all school endeavors, whether it is in the school-wide service learning projects taking place right now, the explorations room, the Model UN participation, the Middle School advisory program or the Elementary School morning meetings, the in-class celebrations across grades and disciplines, and even the Taconic Outdoor Education program. We see this commitment manifest in the choices our eighth graders made in seeking and choosing high schools that matched their unique interests and talents, or in the recognition the Chancellor gave by naming Q300 a "Respect for All" school just last month. Our kids are thriving because of the incredible teachers and staff that understand the importance of integrating the socio-emotional support with academic pursuits, creating a supportive and rigorous environment that allows our kids to flourish.

The 2016-17 academic year was another stellar year for Q300 and the PTA and we joined together in many ways to celebrate our school, our community, and support the mission of the school. From our Fall Costume Party (when nearly 400 parents and students partied the night away), to our Parent Gallery Night, to our Winter Potluck and International Festival, to our Movie Nights and Unos Gatherings, to our joint Zumba-thon, and to our Stepping into Summer Auction, our events are wide-ranging and diverse, just like our Q300 community who travels across boros to attend the school! And we still have our summer Read-a-thon! It's a wonderful way to keep your child reading throughout July and August, plus you can help support our fundraising efforts. More information can be found on the q300pta.org website.

These fundraising events, plus the generosity of parents through the Direct Appeal, raised much-needed money to support our children's education through chromebooks, robotics kits, teachers' assistants and

arts programs. We are deeply proud that we raised over \$250,000 this year, and our PTA provided essential enrichment programs for our children and the school. Thank you parents and caregivers for your continued support. Remember, this is your PTA and we cannot do any of this without you. Whether you volunteer in a classroom, help out at an event, or launch a new committee, we cannot do this work alone and our kids depend on your support.

As we close this year, we also acknowledge some new milestones. First and foremost, congratulations to all the 8th graders who graduate on June 23rd. We know they'll go on to do amazing things, not just in high school, but in all their future academic and personal pursuits. We are also grateful to the 8th grade parents for their continued dedication to the school and the PTA. They will be missed!

Our Kindergarteners also "step up" on June 21st, officially joining the ranks of elementary schoolers! We have many year end music and dance performances that showcase our kids talents and hard work and even have a Middle School dance to acknowledge and honor the friendships made throughout the year. Our brand new Q300 Chess team also just won a citywide tournament on June 4th! We have lots of new achievements for which to be proud.

Finally, we also welcome congratulate the incoming board members, particularly new members Ellie Rabinovich Buchalter, Adriana Limboi, Matthew Schaefer and Anne Van der Veer. Thank you for stepping in! Of course, we are indebted for the hard work and dedication put in by THIS year's Executive Board, one of the most committed and hardworking group of people we know. While many members are saying on for another year, we want to acknowledge our outgoing members for all that they have done to contribute to the success of the PTA. Thank you Andrea Tappert, Richa Dhekne, Paula Marisi, Thomas Mangan, Jenny Lando, and Melissa Berger. We will miss you, but know that we can count on you to continue to help in the ways that we can. Thank you for all that you have done.

Once again, thanks for a wonderful year! Wishing everyone a relaxing and restful summer!!

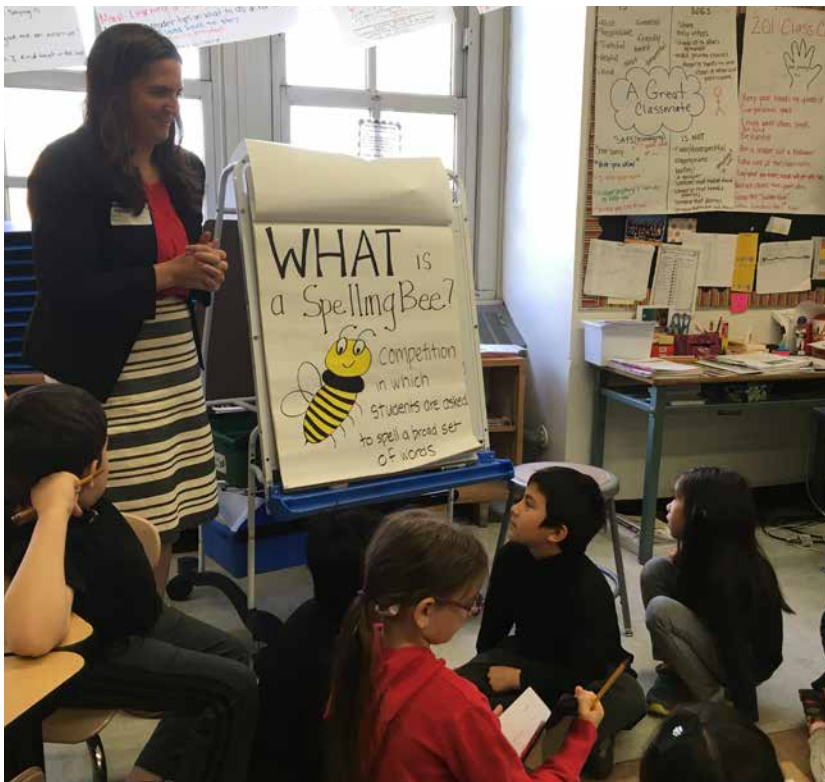
See you in September.

Maria and Andrea

Second Grade Holds Spelling Bee

Text and Photos by Sue Sekar

Second grade Mom, Jamie Trish, treated the second grade classes to the exciting experience of participating in a spelling bee. "What is a bee?" asked Jamie and was met with wide-eyed wonder when she explained the historical significance of the community "bee" — a major gathering for the purposes of competition or work. Each child was called to the front and asked to spell a word into the microphone — and were met with cheers upon success or a wholehearted "good try!" if the word got the better of them. The kids displayed amazing sportsmanship toward their fellow classmates and participation in the optional "challenge" round was an impressive 100% in the class I observed. The end result? A sense of accomplishment, the overcoming of nerves during the battle of competition and a fun pizza party to congratulate the kids on their success! 🍕



Congratulations

...to **Kathleen** who welcomed baby Ciarán on April 18 at 7 lbs and 21 inches, and to **Kristina, Brooke, and Anna** who each had weddings!



Hello, handsome fellow!

Upcoming News & Events

8/26 Possible date for our annual **Back to School Picnic**. Details to come!

Summer Read-a-Thon Fundraiser. Win a pizza party for your entire grade by becoming the class with the highest level of participation. Start now! For details visit www.q300pta.net/fundraising/read-a-thon

HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER!

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We welcome your contributions, if you have article ideas or photos for the next newsletter contact Amanda Spielman at communications@q300pta.org.