

The Element

FOR MSTC, BY MSTC | December, 2016

What's In This Issue

Pg. 1-2: The Director's Corner (Scheduling)

Pg 2: MSTC Friendsgiving

Pg 3: Students in Action (Student Board Initiative)

Pg. 4: MSTC Student Accomplishments, Advertisements, Clubs to Join

Pg 5: Teacher Interview (Ms. Durham)

Pg. 6-9: MSTC Students Spotted

Pg. 10: Alumni Chronicles (MIDN Jared Young)

Pg. 11-12: Holiday Festivities

Pg 13: Senior Interview (Aurian Vaez)

Pg. 14: *The Element* Staff

Director's Corner

MRS. YOUNG

Scheduling for classes is right around the corner. MSTC students will receive their scheduling materials starting January 18th during the CCR block. Therefore, it is time to start thinking about what classes you want to take next year, and for the rest of your time here at Dunbar. Here are some things to consider as you map out your schedule:

1. Make sure you are on track to meet all of the requirements for both the MSTC program and for Fayette County. For the MSTC program, that includes completing through level three of your chosen world language, AP Statistics, at least one AP English, and at least three MSTC Electives. For Fayette County, the requirements include Health/PE, Arts and Humanities (or a three course specialization), and three years of Social Studies (which for many of you will include AP Gov/Economics). During scheduling you will be provided with a complete list of PLD course offerings and a planning sheet.

2. Choose your courses with college in mind. When it comes to high school transcripts, colleges are looking for a student who challenged themselves in the classroom instead of taking the easy way out. According to Yale Admissions, "When the admissions committee looks at your transcript, it will not focus on whether you have taken any specific course. It will be far more interested to see that you have challenged yourself with difficult coursework, and have done well."

Director's Corner (cont.)

MRS. YOUNG

2 (cont.). Trends are also important, with “admissions committee’s looking to see a high level (or an improving degree) of rigor and success throughout your high school years.” This includes your senior year! Senior year is not the time to take a light course load if you want to remain competitive.

3. Choose your courses with your interests in mind. High school is the time to try courses in areas of interest to you. Interested in art or business? Take the time to find out what those classes are all about and if you have a talent in those areas. Many MSTC students find that they are interested in, and very good at, many different areas of study and ultimately choose to major in something that is not in the STEM fields in college.

4. Create a schedule that allows you to stay involved in activities outside of the classroom. While taking multiple AP classes might look impressive, colleges are also looking for well-rounded students with hobbies and interests. Community service is also something that colleges are looking for and there are many opportunities here at Dunbar that can help you get involved. Schedule time for yourself as well. A schedule that allows you to have a little free time to enjoy time with your friends and family helps you better handle stress, and as a result, perform better in the classroom.

Ms. Studle and I will help guide you through the scheduling process. Feel free to ask us questions at any time!

MSTC Friendsgiving

Mark your calendars! MSTC will be hosting MSTC Friendsgiving, a potluck-style family night, on January 24, 2017 in the PLD cafeteria. Doors will open at 6:00PM, and dinner will start at 6:30PM.

Through this event, students will get to interact with other students; underclassmen will get the opportunity to learn from upperclassmen. MSTC parents will also have the chance to meet other parents. Families will bring dishes, whether dishes that highlight heritage or traditional family dishes. Everyone is highly encouraged to attend!



Students in Action: Student Voice Initiative

On November 10th, Prichard Committee's Student Voice Team members Akhil Kesaraju, Sahar Mohammadzadeh, Maddy Jenkins, Radhika Sharma, Rohith Kesaraju, and Nasim Mohammadzadeh presented a proposal to expand student representation on Paul Laurence Dunbar High School's School Based Decision Making Council (SBDM) and ensure that more students from diverse backgrounds are heard in school-decision making. The team proposed amending the bylaws so that a non-voting student advisory member would have a permanent position on the council. The proposal received an enthusiastic reception, and members plan to vote on it when they reconvene in December.

The Prichard Committee Student Voice Team is comprised of approximately 100 self-selected Kentucky students along with adult allies striving to share youth perspectives on education issues with multigenerational audiences. Their last groundbreaking report is titled "Students as Partners" and it is based on the idea of integrating student voice in the governing bodies of Kentucky schools. The report essentially makes the case of why supporting meaningful student voice is important in schools and how there are several brilliant working examples of it.



About 8% of Kentucky schools have full student members on their SBDMs, which is leaving great room for improvement. At Federal Hocking High School in Ohio: students run all

activities and serve as full members on all school governance bodies, even participating in personnel decisions. Although 85% of their students are classified as "economically disadvantaged," it's one of Ohio's most well performing schools. Its superintendent says that its success is a byproduct of the agency generated by involving students in the decision making process. He says that change begins by using perspectives of those whom the change is going to happen to. This is a great chance for Dunbar to reaffirm its position at the forefront of reform.

MSTC Student Accomplishments

- Dunbar students attended the Kentucky Youth Assembly in Frankfort, KY. Several MSTC students participated in the model state government event, and even brought home impressive accolades. Dunbar was named as the Best Delegation, while senior Nisarg Patil received an Outstanding Speaker award, junior Ellora Kamineni received an Outstanding Speaker award, junior Sahar Mohammadzadeh was appointed as the Chief Justice, and junior Kelly Chen was appointed as the General Attorney.
- Hundreds of student musicians across Kentucky audition to receive the high honor of being accepted into the All-State Orchestra. We are proud to announce that many MSTC students were accepted. Those accepted were: seniors Yoon Cho (violin), Amy Wang (violin); juniors David Ma (violin), Max Qiu (violin), Hannah Wang (cello), Kelly Chen (violin), James Brandewie (cello); sophomores Megan Guan (violin), Erik Han (violin), Sai Naidu (viola), Helen Pang (cello), Rehan Ghanta (violin); freshman Jeffrey Shen (viola).

Need tutoring? Want to advertise an event?

Contact *The Element* to place a free ad!

Mrs. Young has several pieces of MSTC apparel with this year's designs available. Please check the bulletin board outside of Mrs. Young's office for prices and size availability.

Dear Mrs. Element:
send questions about academics, social life,
or more to:
dear.mrs_element@yahoo.com

Clubs to Join

- **Medical Society** is dedicated to bringing together students interested in the healthcare field. Students have opportunities to learn more about various careers in medicine and healthcare through various activities. Every meeting has a specific activity, such as a presentation or a guest speaker. Throughout the year, students will also be able to participate in medicine-related activities and volunteer opportunities. There is a 5 dollar club fee which covers all of the various opportunities as well as food for every meeting. Alerts for meetings are given through Remind (text @pldme to 81010 to get updates), and meetings are usually in room 504. For more information, contact Sameer Ahmed (sameer.ahmed@stu.fayette.kyschools.us).
- **Future Business Leaders of America** prepares students for careers in business, links like-minded students, and helps students develop competitive skills. Each year, students will prepare certain topics, called "events." Examples of events include Marketing, Finance, Global Business, Computer Game and Simulation Programming, among over fifty others. With their events, students will compete at local, state, and national-level competitions. Meetings are held in Room 702 every month. For more information, contact Mrs. Johnson (robin.johnson@fayette.kyschools.us).

Teacher Interview: Ms. Durham

ERIN MARKEL

Q: How has your first semester as an MSTC teacher been?

A: I really enjoyed it. It has been a lot of fun.

Q: Tell us about your career previous to being a teacher.

A: I spent 4 years active duty in the Navy. I drove really big ships, among other things, but that seems to be the part that people relate to the most. Drove giant ships.

Q: What was the best part of being in the military?

A: The travelling was great. And it can be really peaceful out in the middle of the ocean, especially at night, like standing nightwatch. It was a lot easier than what I do now, I'm not kidding! Teaching is more challenging.

Q: What were some of your favorite places?

A: I love Italy, Greece, Crete, Spain, Bahrain. We did a little travelling in the Gulf, and spent a little time in the UE. I've been to France once, that was nifty.

Q: When did you decide to become a teacher?

A: When I got out of the Navy, I started substitute teaching. I already had college credits, and I could do that. I didn't know what I wanted to do; much to my surprise, I really ended up enjoying working with kids. I know, I didn't expect that to happen!... So here I am, helping the children.

Q: What about teaching English appealed to you?

A: I've always been influenced by the power of language. It's not always just because I enjoy the content... You can teach things with English, you can make connections to life and the world that's a little bit easier than some of the other subject areas. That mushy-gushy stuff.

Q: What's your favorite thing about teaching freshmen?

A: It was my third year teaching. I taught a little bit, like a freshman class my first and second year. This was when we had freshman academy and someone wanted out, and I was like, "me, me, me!" Surprisingly, no one fought me for that. I think freshmen are funny. It's an interesting, transitional age. And I'd never admit this to them, but they're still kind of sweet. They're funny, sweet, goofy. They leave things constantly... you walk in and here's a lunchbox, here's a jacket, shoes... some kid is walking in the hallway barefoot.

Q: What has been the most memorable about your classes?

A: There are classes and groups I really click with. I'm on the same wavelength, have inside jokes and nicknames. That's always a lot of fun. And then, some of those classes I see mature over the course of the year, that's fun, too. They come in as little baby, scared freshman, and they get it together, they grow up.

Q: You are also the sponsor for Beta Club. How do freshmen join second semester?

A: For freshmen to join, they have to have a 3.8 GPA. There will be application outside my door. They need one teacher recommendation, a little why-I-want-to-join-Beta-Club blurb (no longer than a paragraph), and I'll request their GPAs from the guidance office. They should join!

Q: Any plans for winter break?

A: My kid still believes in Santa. He's at the point where he's like "I want Santa to bring me a million dollars!" Keep dreaming kid, Santa didn't bring me a million dollars. I'm going to spend time with family, relax, do really boring old people stuff like play with my dog and cook things, watch movies, find something to binge on Netflix, read a book, and shop for a lot of people.

MSTC Students Spotted



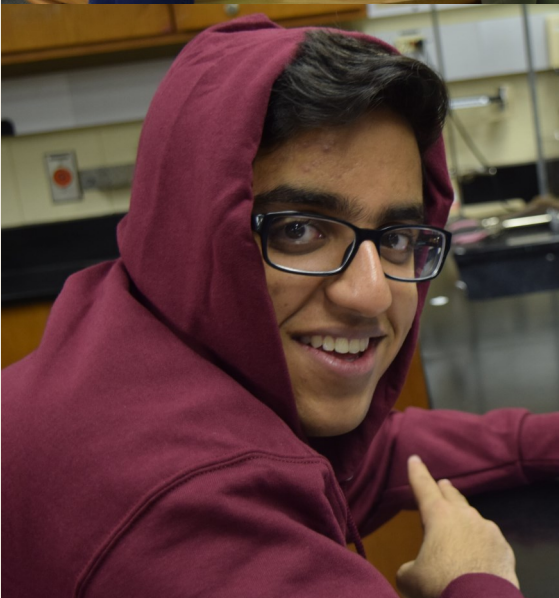
MSTC Students Spotted



MSTC Students Spotted



MSTC Students Spotted



Alumni Chronicles: Jared Young, Class of 2016



Jared Young is a midshipman at the United States Naval Academy. He is the first MSTC student to attend the Naval Academy.

Q: What's your day-to-day schedule like?

A: I wake up most mornings around 0500 and PT until 0700, when my company has formation before heading to breakfast. I have four class periods in the morning from 0755 to 1145, then noon meal formation and lunch. My last two classes run from 1330 to 1525, followed by an athletic period for about two hours, where I am either participating in intramurals or going to the gym. Dinner is at 1800. Study period starts after eating, lasting until TAPS at 2200. Lights out is at 2300, where I can finally get some much needed sleep before the cycle repeats!

Q: Do you feel prepared for academics at the Naval Academy? Did MSTC prepare you well?

A: It was the combination of AP and MSTC courses that really helped me out, especially courses like math, chemistry, and physics. MSTC prepared me by developing my work ethic. I've noticed people struggling just because they can't sit down and do what they need to.

Q: What have you found the most difficult to adjust to, transitioning from MSTC to the Naval Academy?

A: Military life and time management, hands down. The Naval Academy focuses on things other than academics, although these are very important. We are also expected to be developing physically and morally, and have PE and leadership classes. Juggling all of these aspects can be challenging with the little time we are given. Also, in high school, you don't have to do pushups and run before class.

Q: Is the Naval Academy what you expected? So far, what has been the most surprising or least expected aspect?

A: Going into the Academy, I wasn't entirely sure what I had gotten myself into! I had watched all the videos and taken a tour of the campus, but had very little idea as to what I would be doing. That said, I was surprised by the overwhelming camaraderie of the Brigade. If you ever need help, there is always someone willing to sacrifice their time. Professors are always willing to schedule extra instruction, and will do so around your schedule.

Q: What do you do in your free time?

A: By this point you should realize that I don't know what "free time" is. I do get to have fun though! My company has gone ice skating, trap and skeet shooting, and sailing to name a few. We also tailgate after every home football game. I will occasionally get a weekend off, which I usually spend at my sponsor family's house. I tend to help them cook and clean, or just watch TV on their couch, because I never realized how good it felt to do something normal.

Q: Any advice you would give to us seniors regarding the college application and decision process?

A: The first piece of advice is to keep going strong. Even though high school is nearing an end, you shouldn't let up. Your work ethic now will carry over into college, so make sure it's a good one! When deciding your home for the next four years, do your research and go on campus visits. I would argue that the most important attribute of a school is its livability. Make sure that you will be happy with the campus and surrounding area! Be sure to familiarize yourself with the support systems on campus. You want a school where you can easily get help from your professors or have access to tutors.

Q: Any advice you would give to underclassmen?

A: You are almost there, so don't give up! Take hard classes and challenge yourself now. Figure out what you struggle with, and improve in those areas. Find an outlet as well. When you get home from school, give yourself a mental break (we take them in college too!). Go for a run or hit the gym to let off some steam; it really helps!

Oh yeah, and if you are a football fan, start rooting for NAVY now. That's an order!

GO NAVY, BEAT ARMY!

Holiday Festivities: “The Pumpkin Spice Latte”

ELLORA KAMINENI

I’ve maybe had 2 PSL’s (Pumpkin Spice Lattes) in my life – both of which were the spoils of my succumbing to peer pressure – so when I volunteered (got drafted) to write this article, my first plan of action was to do a little market research.

After grabbing my keys and running out the door while telling my mom that I had to go to Starbucks for school purposes, I was forced to stand in a 12-person line and wait for approximately 30 minutes while almost everyone in front of me ordered exactly the same drink. “Hi can I have a venti PSL please? My name’s Alison. With one L. A-L-I-S-O-N. Oh and I have a gift card.”

When I finally got my drink (and two others – as soon as my family got wind that I was going to Starbucks, the orders started pouring in) I struggled back to my car and had to find a way to balance three drinks on the passenger seat next to me.

It probably didn’t help that I took a detour home because Mariah Carey’s “All I Want for Christmas is You” started on the radio and no way was I pulling into my driveway before the song was over.

Anyway, my first impression of the PSL was that it was the color of our new president-elect’s hair. It didn’t look appealing in the slightest and at this point I was slightly envying my brother’s peppermint mocha. It smelt even worse – like someone who had never been within 20 feet of a pumpkin attempted to concoct its smell (and failed miserably). The taste, however, was the biggest joke. It tasted *almost like artificial pumpkin but it was SO SWEET that any ~subtle~ flavors that may have been in there were completely overpowered by sickly sweet nothingness.*

I generally pride myself on my sweet tooth, but this thing so sweet that I found myself googling “how to unsweeten a drink” (Pro tip: you can’t). If this wasn’t enough, the aftertaste was so awful that I just kept drinking the PSL in order to not have to experience that.

Honestly, the best thing about the PSL was the cute red cup that it came in.

If I didn’t get it before, I now *really don’t understand the PSL craze. They taste awful, the calorie count is through the roof (almost 500 for a venti), and they’re extremely expensive for something that looks like cat puke.*

So next time I see someone with their PSL, I’ll just sip my salted caramel mocha and feel sorry for their society-induced pain.

Ode to the grand PSL:

Why it’s popular, no one can tell

Although it’s sickly sweet,

Other drinks can’t compete

It has everyone under its spell

Holiday Festivities: Easy Holiday Recipes

Sweet, Salty, Spicy, Fun Party Nuts

(recipe adapted from Allrecipes)

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 17 minutes

Ingredients and materials:

- Cooking spray
- Baking sheet
- Aluminum foil or parchment paper
- Large bowl
- 1 cup untoasted walnut halves
- 1 cup untoasted pecan halves
- 1 cup unsalted, dry roasted almonds
- 1 cup unsalted, dry roasted cashews
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 table spoon butter



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C.) Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment and lightly coat with cooking spray.
2. Combine all nuts into a large bowl. Add salt, black pepper, cumin, and cayenne pepper. Toss and mix to evenly coat the nuts.
3. Heat sugar, water, and butter in a small saucepan over medium heat until the butter is melted. Cook for 1 minute and remove from heat. Slowly pour mixture over the bowl of nuts. Stir to coat.
4. Transfer nuts to the prepared baking sheet. Spread into a single layer.
5. Bake nuts in the preheated oven for 10 minutes.
6. Stir nuts until warm syrup coats every nut. Spread back into a single layer and return to the oven.
7. Bake until nuts are sticky and roasted—about 6 minutes.
8. Cool before serving.
9. Enjoy!

Senior Interview: Aurian Vaez

ELLORA KAMINENI

Q: How did you get into YouTube and what is your channel about?

A: I got into YouTube by watching other Youtubers at first, such as McJuggerNuggets and ComedyShortsGamer. Eventually, I decided to hop on to the industry and try to make my own videos. I ended up making my channel on Runescape gameplay, which is my favorite MMOG (massively multiplayer online game.)

Q: Is YouTube a hobby or do you hope to expand it?

A: For now, it is a hobby. I currently have 27 subscribers, which when compared to grand scales, is hardly anything. But for me, it's a good sign, since around this time last year I had 8. I try to spread awareness about my channel to students at Dunbar, and it seems like many of the MSTC Juniors are fans. If I get hundreds of subscribers somehow, that's when I'll start monetizing my videos to earn extra cash along with my real job.

Q: Have the skills you've learnt from sports transferred into other areas of your life?

A: Sports have taught me a lot of valuable life skills. When I played soccer and basketball as a kid, one of the main lessons we were taught was how to work as a team. This is a valuable skill is essential in life and learning it at that age really helps. We also learned to always be confident and believe in ourselves in the game, which helps as I go through life's challenges.

Q: Do you watch sports/play sports/both? And if you watch, what are your favorite teams?

A: I play soccer, basketball, and football, although not for a real team. Mostly my friends and I go to the park and play. However, last year, my peers and I organized an indoor soccer team. We went 2-6, but it was an awesome experience as for most of us it was the best we could get at the sport. As for watching, I follow the NFL and NBA season. I play fantasy football, so I have to keep up with just about every move in the NFL. My favorite team in the NFL is the Chicago Bears and my favorite in the NBA are the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Q: What do you think of the Pokemon GO trend and do you think it's dangerous?

A: I'm a huge fan of Pokemon go. Ever since it was announced earlier this year, I'd waited patiently for the release and got my wish one random day in July. I think it's great how it's become a trend and how everyone is playing it, since in my opinion Pokemon is an amazing franchise. I think that people should have fun and play the game, but they should be aware of the risks. There have been people who run across the street without looking and get into dangerous situations. So as long as it's done safely, it's great.



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Thank you!

-The Element Staff