In The News

Local:
“I Have A Dream” 50 Years Later

This week marks the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr’s famous March on Washington and “I Have A Dream” speech. Celebrations throughout the city included a march and a speech by President Obama on Wednesday at the Lincoln Memorial.

For Students, Free Bus Rides

The DC Council decided this summer that DCPS students can ride the Metrobus and the Circulator for free between 5:30 and 9 am, and between 2 and 8 pm. All students have to do is flash the driver their DC OneCard. Students can still get monthly passes for the Metro, but WMATA is now also offering a 10-trip pass.

World:
U.S. Will Respond to Syria

Secretary of State John Kerry accused the Syrian government of using chemical weapons last August, and President Obama is in the process of developing a plan for the Syrian crisis.

In This Issue

Want to Play a Game?
Beacon editors have created a fun and interactive Wilson Survival Guide. Today at lunch, follow the clues to improve your Wilson savvy and win a prize. See pages 6 and 7.

3, 4, 5 = $100: Grant Incentivizes AP

Claire Parker
Managing Editor

Big money is at stake with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) grant to Wilson for its Advanced Placement program. Announced on June 7, the grant aims to increase Wilson’s AP pass rates by providing students and teachers with monetary incentives and additional learning opportunities and support.

Beginning this year, students will receive $100 for every passing score (a three or higher) on any AP English, Math, or Science exam. Teachers will be awarded $1000 bonuses for meeting a predetermined goal of the number of passing students, and $100 additionally for every passing student. Administrators will receive $3000 bonuses if the goal is met.

The school itself will receive $5000 annually plus $25 for each student enrolled in an AP course. Last year, 602 students took AP courses. The grant will also go toward administering two days of professional development and training to AP teachers, and to start Saturday study and support sessions that students will be expected to attend.

In addition, Hardy Middle School will become a pre-AP school, where students who will eventually feed into Wilson will be trained to handle AP courses. Why AP? Wilson’s director of Academic Programming Alex Wilson said that the effort is driven by a national need for engineers, scientists, and mathematicians. English is emphasized in addition to math and science because of the need to be able to write and communicate in any field.

According to the NMSI website, “The AP curriculum is the best indicator available of whether students are prepared for college-level work. Students who master AP courses are three times more likely to graduate from college. For minority students, that multiplier is even greater: African-American and Hispanic students who succeed take us women seriously. While I do think coaching is equal, I don’t think the facilities are.”

She refers to Fort Reno, where girls soccer teams practice, as “the dust ball.” She adds, “Even when I played girls basketball it was unfair—boys would have the main gym and girls would get the auxiliary gym, which was usually covered in gross food from people’s lunches.”

Softball captain and junior Sophia Cordes says, “[Girls] have equal opportunities in terms of sports teams they’re allowed to be on, but once you’re on the team, you don’t have equal opportunities because you don’t have the same equipment and facilities.” Because Wilson doesn’t have a softball field, girls softball had to practice a mile away at Turtle Park. Cordes said the facilities discrepancies

Under Investigation: Title IX in DCPS

Claire Parker and Annie Rosenthal
News Editors

In 1972, Congress passed Title IX, which ensures the right of girls to equal opportunities in athletics. On June 27 of this year, the National Women’s Law Center filed a complaint to the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights alleging that the DCPS system, including Wilson, is violating Title IX.

The report, based on data gathered during the 2010-2011 school year, cites disparities in available teams, facilities, coaching, and equipment between girls and boys teams. “By failing to provide equal participation opportunities and equal benefits and services for its female high school students, the District is depriving many girls of the significant benefits associated with playing sports,” reads the complaint.

Athletics at Wilson

At Wilson, there are 38 sports teams—19 for each gender. Last school year, 380 girls participated in athletics, compared to 375 boys. Wilson competes in all 21 DCIAA sports, as well as 17 club teams. The girls lacrosse team was started at Wilson 11 years before the boys team. Girls track coach Desmond Dunham and girls volleyball coach Dr. Perette Arrington were Washington Post All-Met coaches of the year last year.

“Our program is steadily growing, and we continually add on new opportunities for the females to participate,” said JV soccer coach Siusella Tucker. “I do completely agree that [the NWLC’s] three main complaints—lack of girls’ teams, less qualified coaches, and inferior playing fields—are true at most DCPS schools, but not necessarily at Wilson. Coach Gore is incredibly committed to girls’ sports, especially since three of his daughters were players on girls teams here.”

Varsity baseball player Alex Conte said, “I think there are probably more important things but it becomes a real problem, like if a sports team isn’t able to play because of lack of a facility, then it should be worked on, but it isn’t a pressing issue.”

But Issues Remain

Female athletes have a different point of view. Skylar Mackey, a junior on the girls varsity soccer and basketball teams, agrees that Coach Gore works hard to ensure equity. But, she says, “The boys’ coaches don’t take us women seriously. While I do think coaching is equal, I don’t think the facilities are.”

She refers to Fort Reno, where girls soccer teams practice, as “the dust ball.” She adds, “Even when I played girls basketball it was unfair—boys would have the main gym and girls would get the auxiliary gym, which was usually covered in gross food from people’s lunches.”

Softball captain and junior Sophia Cordes says, “[Girls] have equal opportunities in terms of sports teams they’re allowed to be on, but once you’re on the team, you don’t have equal opportunities because you don’t have the same equipment and facilities.” Because Wilson doesn’t have a softball field, girls softball had to practice a mile away at Turtle Park. Cordes said the facilities discrepancies

Connect with us on . . .
Instagram @wilsonbeacon
Facebook facebook.com/thewilson-beacon
Twitter @thewilsonbeacon
Interest Meeting
Wednesday @ STEP in Room C210

3, 4, 5 = $100: Grant Incentivizes AP

Claire Parker
Managing Editor

Big money is at stake with the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) grant to Wilson for its Advanced Placement program. Announced on June 7, the grant aims to increase Wilson’s AP pass rates by providing students and teachers with monetary incentives and additional learning opportunities and support.

Beginning this year, students will receive $100 for every passing score (a three or higher) on any AP English, Math, or Science exam. Teachers will be awarded $1000 bonuses for meeting a predetermined goal of the number of passing students, and $100 additionally for every passing student. Administrators will receive $3000 bonuses if the goal is met.

The school itself will receive $5000 annually plus $25 for each student enrolled in an AP course. Last year, 602 students took AP courses. The grant will also go toward administering two days of professional development and training to AP teachers, and to start Saturday study and support sessions that students will be expected to attend.

In addition, Hardy Middle School will become a pre-AP school, where students who will eventually feed into Wilson will be trained to handle AP courses. Why AP? Wilson’s director of Academic Programming Alex Wilson said that the effort is driven by a national need for engineers, scientists, and mathematicians. English is emphasized in addition to math and science because of the need to be able to write and communicate in any field.

According to the NMSI website, “The AP curriculum is the best indicator available of whether students are prepared for college-level work. Students who master AP courses are three times more likely to graduate from college. For minority students, that multiplier is even greater: African-American and Hispanic students who succeed

In This Issue

Want to Play a Game?
Beacon editors have created a fun and interactive Wilson Survival Guide. Today at lunch, follow the clues to improve your Wilson savvy and win a prize. See pages 6 and 7.

D.C. — Feelin it
While there is much to love about living in D.C.— the monuments! the museums! the Potomac River! — there are frustrations as well. The Beacon has laid out both sides in a point-counterpoint on p 4.

Musical Announced
Drama teacher Harriet Bronstein shares news about this year’s musical. Get all the details about what is new and the information you need in order to participate on p 11.

Get Your Calendars Out
See the varsity football schedule on page 8.

Top Ten
Beacon reader’s favorite feature can be found on p. 5.
Title IX Continued
Cont. from pg 1

"affected me personally because I have to run a mile to our prac-
tice field and walk for an hour to get home. It makes it harder for girls to be competitive." The softball home field last year was technically Guy Mason, a 20-minute bus ride from Wilson, but because Georgetown Uni-
versity owns Guy Mason, their softball team often occupied the field. Wilson games had to be redirected to other fields and sometimes canceled.

According to field hockey captain and senior Tao Marwell, for the past two years the field hockey team has had to prac-
tice in a small rectangular area between the baseball diamond and soccer fields at Fort Reno – a space not conducive to field hockey. She said, “All this might be because field hockey is a club team, but there is definitely a difference in what we have and what some of the boys’ teams at Wilson have.”

Wilson is more equal than at first glance.

Gore said the fields issue is more complicated than it appears: "Some of that we can’t control is a use of the school facil-
ties but we also work with the Department of Parks and Recre-
ations for fields, and I don’t con-
trol that. I request space from them. But,” he added, “that's a

result that. I request space from

"Sports are
crucial for girls, both in their aca-
demic and social development.”

program - there aren’t enough

area fields available to us for us
to do all the things the student body

would like to do. I’d say it’s a

good problem.”

He says that in terms of things such as coaching and

uniforms, which he does have

covered, “I think we’re

darn equitable.”

Gore also feels that the

NWLC complaint

does not accurately repre-
sent athletic equal-
ity at Wilson. The data com-
piled in the

report was from 2009-10, the year before the NWLC asked information from Gore. It was

his first year at Wilson, and the school was temporarily located

at UDC, which made records dif-
ficult to find.

Wilson compared to other schools

The NWLC complaint cited
greater discrepancies at other

schools. In 2012, Roosevelt High School won the DCIAA girls’ soc-
cer championship. Their coach

left the following year, and a

new coach was never hired, so

they haven’t had a girls soccer team since.

Wilson, whose teams re-

ceive generous private funding from the Parent Teacher Student Organization and Booster Club, can afford to minimize dispari-
ties. “There is a definite lack of girls teams at other schools,” said Tucker. “I do hope that this lawsuit causes those teams to

effect change.”

In equalities at other schools bring
down the level of competi-
tion for Wilson
teams. “It’s an issue across the
city and it needs to be addressed,” said

director of athletics.

A National Mindset?

Why does athletic inequity exist? maybe it is the result of an American mindset that empha-
sizes certain male-dominated sports over others. “We have

incredible girls’ coaches, but

like in any sport, even national
teams, more awareness typically
goes to the male sports. This is a

pervasive national mentality – not one that exists solely in DCPS,” said Tucker.

Several female athletes not-

ed that at Wilson, this awareness manifests itself in an emphasis on field hockey and basketball. “A lot of attention is given to the football team, which is pretty normal in society today,” said

Marwell. “However, we need to acknowledge that there are girls sports teams that work hard and are very competitive as well, and they usually don’t draw the same support that teams such as foot-

ball or boys basketball do.”

Benefits of Girls in Sports

“DCPS would need to

provide almost 700 additional athletic opportunities to girls
to prove that they could not care that

with the basic provisions of

the law is not unfair for
current girls, but also to all the

who might want to try it before them,” said a NWLC press

release.

According to a report by

the National Federation of State High School Associations (cited in the NWLC complaint),

students who participate in

sports programs are less likely
to engage in risky behaviors like drug use, teen pregnancy, and smoking. They are more likely to achieve academically, be involved in student government, and receive academic and athletic awards. Athletics espe-
cially benefit disadvantaged or minority students. Gore also

NMSI Grant Continued
Cont. from pg 1

in AP courses are four times

more likely to graduate from col-
lege.”

The program focuses on public schools with large popula-
tions of disadvantaged or mi-
 nority students, and it appears to be working. From 2011 to

2012, African American stu-
dents...”

...the extra time and effort that girls

spent in AP courses in 2012 was more than tripled their number of qualify-
ingscore, Hispanic students doubled
theirs, and girls nearly doubled Mr. Wilson said Wilson

was invited to apply last spring, and

was the only DCPS school to receive the grant.

Wilson offers 12 AP courses that fall within the NMSI grant
program. Thirty-five percent of

Wilson students took at least one

AP class last year.

“I have taken AP’s in my
time at Wilson because I wanted
to pass the exam and get college credit,” senior Todd

Allen-Gifford wrote in an email, “but just because I wanted
to be challenged to work hard for the duration of the school year itself. I think just the fact that

the coursework is more rigorous than other classes is attractive to many students.”

“I think that anyone who goes to school to learn and

excel will not need any bribing. As a student, it is your job and

responsibility to come to school, pay attention in class, and do
your work; not do the bare

minimum,” wrote junior Graciela

Barcada. “I don’t understand why

we’d be rewarded so highly for

fulfilling the usual expectations.”

However, not all students are as intrinsically motivated as

Barcada and Allen-Gifford. Mr. Wilson said, “A lot of kids were
destined to take APs from the

get-go. But others walk in the
door and think ‘AP, that’s not for
me.’ Wilson hopes the incen-
tives will help students.

Already, the grant is begin-
ing to change students’ atti-
dudes towards AP; junior Andrew Baiksetter, who is not signed up for any AP classes this year, said the $100 incentive may lead him to try taking an AP course next

year.

From 2008 to 2013, the

number of AP exams taken
each year rose from 952 to 1318. However, pass rates remained

roughly the same, fluctuating between 45% and 47%. Mr. Wilson hopes the grant will

boost the school’s pass rates, by encouraging students to study

harder, combat senioritis, and take the exams more seriously.

“Right now, I think a lot of students don’t care that

much about their AP scores since they don’t affect your grades and

aren’t required by many colleg-

es,” said Allen-Gifford. “But it’s

a lot of money for just about any

high school student, and I think that will give more students a

reason to desire success on these tests.”

But Barcada believes that in-

centivizing the exams may harm

the learning environment at

Wilson. “By handing kids money so they’ll achieve higher test

scores, you’re telling them that

learning is singularly about be-
ing able to answer standardized questions and that knowledge is

measured by how much you get

right.”

AP Physics teacher Angela

Benjamin called the grant “a

temporary fix.” She said, “It’s

here to stabilize this particular school. They [NMSI] build a culture that will leave success in its wake.”

While she believes the in-
centives will motivate students to do well and expects teachers will benefit from the additional training, she said the monetary incentives will not increase her motivation, since she has always been motivated to improve her students’ test scores. Instead, the teacher bonus is “a reward for hard work that has been go-
in for a long time.”

“I think it’s an interesting experiment,” said Benjamin.
The school stands to gain from it because there’s an extra push for-ward for the school, the teachers stand to gain from it substan-
tially, and then each student. So it seems like it’s a win-win for everyone involved.”

Created by Nell Rajpaul

August 30, 2013

NEWS

PAGE 2
Letter from Your SGA President: Manuela Speaks

Dear Wilson Students,

Wilson has had several good Student Government Association presidents and advisors in the past, but many projects were set up and never executed. This year we plan on following through with all of the events that we propose to the faculty and student body. Many think that SGA only exists to plan Spirit Week and dances throughout the year, but this will be my fourth year on SGA and I plan on leaving more than just a memory of an amazing homecoming.

While we have thought about how to make the school year fun and engaging, we also came up with ways to make sure that Wilson is successful academically. My goal as student body president is to try to get more seniors to graduate on time. I met with administrators and came up with the idea of having study halls with peer-to-peer tutoring/mentoring. I also plan on having more community service opportunities for everyone, especially seniors who need these hours to graduate. This year we are also having second period representatives. We want better communication with the student body and the more help, the better. Each month these representatives will meet with the SGA to share any feedback from students.

We are planning for Tiger Radio to make a comeback, but with this only being the first week of school, the endeavor will take some time to get running. The school store will be open and active this year, though the days and times have yet to be decided. We will be selling not only school spirit gear, but also school supplies.

One of our first activities is a contest to design the new Wilson t-shirts. If interested, get your new t-shirt design in by September 17th. More announcements will follow.

We believe that, with so many students online, it is more convenient for the student body to reach us on social media. The student government now has a twitter feed as well as an Instagram page and an email. To stay up to date with any more contests and activities being planned, follow us @wilsonsga and email us any concerns, ideas, and suggestions at wilson-studentgov@gmail.com.

It’s going to be a fantastic year, so get pumped, work hard, and get ready to have some major fun!

Sincerely,
Manuela Bayon

New Leadership: Meet Our Student Government

Lauren ReVeal
Features Editor

In the 2012-2013 school year, the SGA was not entirely run by students: the senior class president, Joe Greenberg, was chosen by the administrators, although he still hung posters and campaigned. The 2013-2014 Student Government Association is already on a new track.

Senior class president Manuela Bayon (see Manuela’s letter above) will be working with junior and sophomore class presidents, Margaret Kellogg and Noah Howard respectively, under the leadership of World History teacher Ms. Susan Baer. Scholars have a lot to look forward to, even in the first couple weeks of school. Elections for freshmen representatives will be held at the beginning of September, applications will be due before September 6, and the campaigns will begin the week after. Like last year, freshmen will vote on their new president in their English classes.

Another new platform being implemented by the SGA is the second period representatives. "In every second period class teachers are going to have their students vote on someone to serve as their representative for that class," said Ms. Baer. "The goal is that that person can kind of be the voice of that class of 20 or 30 kids, and then we’ll have monthly meetings with the second period reps.

Ideas like these are being instituted for the overall purpose of student involvement and for bringing together the Wilson community.

Baer said the senior, junior, and sophomore representatives have been working outside of school in multiple summer meetings. Each of the presidents have similar platforms to further improve the school, such as making the school bank more accessible and increasing student motivation for both the DC CAS testing and homecoming activities.

"SGA is planning to expand the student involvement through committees and class representatives," said Noah Howard.

Through organization and hard-working class leaders, the student government is hoping to become a key institution at Wilson. "We’re going to work on small details of the school to make everybody’s experience better," said Margaret Kellogg.

"I think people will notice a huge difference," said Ms. Baer.

Not Pictured: Margaret Kellogg, Sarah Marion, Zara Wardrick, Maude Lavaste, Malaika Hall

Calling all cool, creative freshmen!

The Beacon wants YOU!

Come visit us in room C-210 on Wednesday, Sept. 4 at STEP to learn more. We have bean bags and snacks! Email us at beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com
Greetings From Our Editors

Coming into Wilson as freshmen neither of us even knew what The Beacon was. Three years and 27 issues later, we’re fascinated by the ways The Beacon has developed and improved, and are proud to be able to carry on the tradition and grow even further.

Now that we are Co-Editors-in-Chief of the paper, we have high expectations for The Beacon, but our key priorities are simple: diversity, quality, and relevance. Although they are each distinct ideas, they are all very connected.

In the upcoming school year we want to make a big push to get a more diverse group of writers, which will also help us to fulfill our other two goals: quality and relevance. The papers will only be a result of the paragraphs. It’s a very good idea, giving kids jobs to keep structure in their lives, but the application process is very limited and does not filter the unqualified applicants.

“Not every working teenager has prepared me [to work] as a stepping stone in my next job. The program placed me in a location that was easy to get to and was interesting... I would definitely do it again.”

The Gap: Income Influences Success

Elias Benda
Staff Writer

DCPS ended the last school year with Mayor Vincent Gray delivering news of overall increases in standardized test scores: 3.6% in Math, 3.9% in Reading, 4.6% in Composition, and 1.8% in Science. While this data may reassure parents that schools are working more successfully to educate their children, the higher scores may actually be a result of the parents’ own efforts.

Greater Greater Education, a website for discussing ideas on how to improve education in the District, posted an article claiming that the increase in scores is due not to an improvement in student performance but to a change in the students’ economic backgrounds. The article’s author Ken Archer says, “The median income among families in DC has consistently climbed, from $51,411 in 2005 to $72,640 in 2011, according to the annual American Community Survey (ACS).”

Poorer students at Wilson and across the country are at a disadvantage, and the gap is only growing wider. Sean Reardon writes in The New York Times that “using information from a dozen national and international studies conducted between 1960 and 2010, I found that the rich poor gap in test scores is about 40 percent larger now than it was 30 years ago.” His colleague at the NYU, Sahima Tavanes, writes, “In another study by researchers from the University of Michigan, the imbalance between rich and poor children in college completion the single most important predictor of success in the workforce.” The disparity between high and low income students doesn’t stop there; the gap is also visible when it comes to student attendance in “sports, extracurricular activities, volunteer work and church.”

Low-income students also have a difficult time catching up to their wealthier peers in standardized tests. Average SAT scores increase steadily based on income: low-income students are unable to afford SAT prep courses, which average $1100 per course and are shown to increase scores substantially. Ms. Sandra Bean, the head of the College and Career Center, adds, “SAT and ACT tutors give an advantage to the students who can afford them.”

These negative effects are not isolated to a single generation either. Ms. Bean says that “having family members who attended college makes is easier for their students to start the process of college application,” and that on average, families with college graduates have a higher income than those without.

There is a flaw in our education system. If we are attempting to educate all students equally, then there should be no gap. The gap represents the privileges of wealthier students, and the disadvantages that burden poorer kids. D.C., along with the rest of the U.S., needs to find a way to educate our youth, regardless of economic background, effectively and fairly.
THE BEACON
Editors-In-Chief
Nathan Davis
Evan Hamlin
Managing Editor
Claire Parker
Contributors
Mary Stapp
Alexandra Stryker
Design Editors
Mia Strazzella
Sarah Torresen
Finance Editor
Nathaniel Remez
News Editors
Claire Parker
Annie Rosenthal
Opinions Editor
Erin Sterne
Features Editors
Maria Brescia-Weiler
Lauren ReVeal
Sports Editor
Henry Shuldiner
Style Editor
Annie Rosenthal
Photo Editor
Isabel Calhoun
Junior Editors
Nell Bayliss, Erin Doherty, Rachel Page
Writers
Elia Benda, Ellie Botsford, Patrick Panagia, Jack Price, Sophie ReVeal, Martin Salazar, Jackson Ross
Photographers
Ellie LeBlanc, Bla Mendlito, Bela Ortiz, and Sophie Re-

Thank you to our faithful volun-
teer, Mary Carpenter.

The Beacon is published monthly by students of Wil-

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

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

THE TOP TEN Things Seniors Should Have Learned by Now

1. How to wrangle mice
2. There are 360 seconds between classes, not 361
3. EXIT NOW!
4. Walk with a purpose and you can get away with anything
5. How to wash your hands without soap
6. You will never go to as many proms as Cahall
7. Administrators can be bribed with Chipotle
8. How to calibrate a Promethean Board
9. The administrative team loves slideshows with emotional music
10. How to stretch a fire drill into a half day

August 30, 2013
5 Cool Classes to Take

by Ellie Botsford

Wilson has a wide spectrum of diverse students. To keep all these students intrigued and passionate for learning, a large range of classes are offered. Many of these are electives, which are great because scholars get to choose what they want to take. Here are some examples of Wilson’s coolest electives:

1. DRAMA 1: Taught by Ms. Harriet Bronstein, this beginner’s drama course is ideal if you want to explore acting. “A lot of Wilson students have never been exposed to theater, so this is a great opportunity to see some plays as well as a chance to learn the basics of acting and performing,” Bronstein explains. This class will definitely create a special and unique experience. “We spend a lot of time on movement, playing theater games and doing acting exercises. In class, students will gain confidence, self-motivation, creative and analytical skills and learn to work well with others,” she says.

2. SCULPTURE 1: Sculpture is a unique class that is fun, challenging, and hands-on. The teacher, Ms. Mary Lambert, says, “this course teaches students how to create sculptures out of leather, wood, clay, plaster, foam, and glass all with the theme of unfairness as their guiding topic.” In this one year course students create 5-6 pieces, working with many different materials. Art is a great way to relieve stress, great to pair with a tough math or science class. As with all arts, students will be able to build up their problem solving skills in this class. These skills can help students analyze all subject matter and see the word in a new light.

3. EXPLORING COMPUTER SCIENCE: This class is taught by Mr. Anthony Evans who says, “The goals of Exploring Computer Science is to develop the computer science skills of algorithm development and problem solving.” In this new course, students will be introduced to topics such as interface design, limits of computers, and societal and ethical issues of software engineering. “Students will be able to develop applications for smart phones and tablets,” Mr. Evans says. This class is replacing Key Computer Applications from previous years in an attempt to help students with critical thinking for everyday usage.

4. CHOIR: Taught by Ms. Lori Williams, the purpose of the course is to instill an awareness of music’s important role in the enrichment of the human spirit, Ms. Williams explains. The Woodrow Wilson High School Concert Choir and Vocal Ensemble are considered some of the hardest working vocal groups in the District of Columbia. “Successful participation in a choral group enhances academic growth, develops positive collaborative skills, and fosters etiquette and self-pride,” Williams says. She also endeavors to teach students to become successful singers and performers, “Emphasis is placed on posture, breathing, diction, intonation, sight singing, four part harmony, solo performance, reading music, and performance etiquette.” Students in the course will participate in many concerts, festivals and events throughout the year.

5. MODEL U.N: “The purpose of this course is to allow students to explore the basic principles of international relations and the evolution and development of the United Nations,” says Ms. Julie Caccamise, the teacher of the course. “The class helps students to understand how various countries fit into solving the problems that face us all, and pushes the idea of working together and trying to find practical solutions to real problems.” Caccamise says she believes the class is a fun way for students to “become more aware of the world around them, and the way that we are all interconnected.” The class focuses on teaching dialogue and negotiation skills, as well as how to solve issues in an equitable and fair way.

Tips and Tricks for Freshmen

 compiled by Maria Brescia-Weiler and Sarah Torresen

Don’t wait in line and don’t travel in packs.
Joyce Distinto, 11, Suzie Newell, 11, Skyler Mackey, 11

Don’t go to the bathroom by yourself, and don’t get on Brian Angel’s bad side.
Ross Pendergast, 12, Brian Angel, 12

Find a girlfriend that’s cute.
Julia McGurk, 11, Sebastian Duque, 12

Stay out of the hallways with upperclassmen.
Larry Frazier, 11

Keep up with your planner.
Brenton Petty, 12, Hannah Hill, 12, Nia Maasey, 12, Dimon Long, 12

Seek out the great Charlie Feller aka friendliest man on campus.
Charlie Feller, 11

Wilson has a wide spectrum of diverse students. To keep all these students intrigued and passionate for learning, a large range of classes are offered. Many of these are electives, which are great because scholars get to choose what they want to take. Here are some examples of Wilson’s coolest electives:
In order to help you get to know the building and its resources, The Beacon is hosting a treasure hunt on Friday, August 30th at lunch. Follow the clues, starting with the clue above, to get acquainted and become the most popular kid in school.

Here are some spots you might need to visit for the treasure hunt and/or throughout your time at Wilson:

1. The Auditorium
2. The Beacon Office (2nd floor)
3. The Art Classrooms (1st floor)
4. The Black Box (2nd floor)
5. The Library (2nd floor)
6. The Field
7. The College and Career Center (1st floor)
8. The school bank (1st floor)
9. Ms. Hara’s office (after school activities)
10. The Attendance Office (1st floor)
11. The Atrium
12. The Stadium
13. The Rose Garden
14. Auxiliary Gym
15. The Locker Rooms (below the gym)
16. The Atrium
17. The Attendance Office (1st floor)
18. The College and Career Center (1st floor)
19. The Art Classrooms (1st floor)
20. The Auditorium

THE WILSON ACADEMIES

The Academies are designed to help students focus on their interests and take electives that will help them in their future careers. Most students who join Academies apply in 9th or 10th grade so that they have time to complete the requirements, but it is completely optional. Senior Isaac Sellers and Rio Osborne chose not to be in an Academy because they didn’t think it would affect their Wilson experience and wanted to have the freedom to choose a variety of electives. However, senior Bhadon Shalakin, who is in 9th or 10th grade so that they have time to complete the requirements, but it is completely optional. Seniors Isaac Sellers and Rio Osborne chose not to be in an Academy

Winter International Studies Program (WISP) provides courses on international issues for students interested in global studies and world languages.

Junior Reserve Officer Training Company Academy (JROTC) helps with character and leadership development through drills and exercises in marksmanship and physical fitness.

AAA Academic Athletic Achievement Academy (AAA) gives students who are interested in sports journalism and management the opportunity to acquire and practice these skills by managing home sports events and intramural sports.

AOF Academy of Finance (AOF) trains students in professional development and finance in order to prepare for careers in business.

SciMaTech Science, Math and Technology Academy (SciMaTech) offers pathways in engineering and architecture, environmental science, health and biomedical careers, and information technology. Robotics, Science Bowl and Nemo are popular among students in this academy.

SciMaTech said, “It’s worth it [to be in an Academy] because you get insight from different people who have been successful, and you get career guidance for whatever you want to do.” Similarly, Senior Des O’Brien said he is glad he is in WISP because “the required classes are cool and it has affected my Wilson experience in a positive way.”
**Wilson Senior Raises Funds for Syrian Relief**

$3,786 and Counting

Rachel Page
Junior Editor

The civil war in Syria is featured prominently in the news. But for Wilson senior Gena Basha, it’s a personal problem. Basha’s father is from Syria, and many of her relatives still live there. When she learned about how the war had affected her family members, Basha knew it wasn’t enough to read newspaper articles about it. This summer, she took the next step: raising over $3,000 for an organization called Save the Children that provides support for children in disaster-stricken areas like Syria.

For Basha, the first obstacle was selecting the organization for her donations. She learned that in many charities a large percentage of donations don’t go towards the cause—instead, they’re set aside for things like publicity and managing the organization. She decided on Save the Children because 90% of donations go directly to supplies and assistance for children in need.

Basha knew that the crisis in Syria was so wide-reaching that there was no way she would be able to help every single problem. Save the Children gave her a way to focus her efforts. She says that her goal became to improve “the status of victimized children in Syria as well as child refugees who have fled across the border to escape the devastation.” Achieving such a large goal in just a few months is no easy feat. So Basha thought big. On July 30, she organized a cocktail party fundraiser at the Lebanon Taverna. Besides being encouraged to donate to the cause, guests were treated to a short film about the conflict in Syria, a trivia game, and a jewelry raffle. Twenty percent of the restaurant’s food and drink profits were also donated to Save the Children. The event raised a grand total of $596—not bad for a senior in high school!

To raise additional money, Basha turned to a less extravagant source: the internet. Using a website called FirstGiving, she created a fundraising page to allow others to contribute to her cause. Through credit card donations, she raised an additional $2,790 from friends, family, and donors who weren’t able to make it to the D.C. fundraiser.

For Basha, her work over the summer isn’t just about the money. It’s something bigger: the idea that even as a high school senior in a country hundreds of miles away from Syria, she has the power to make a difference. She says such a mix of independence and influence is a rewarding feeling, and one that not everyone gets the opportunity to experience. “It felt really good to know that I was my own leader,” Basha says, “and that I had created something out of nothing in just a matter of months.”

Basha’s work isn’t over. So far she has raised $3,786, making her less than $2,000 shy of her $5,000 goal. Interested in donating? Go to http://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/dc4syria/genabasha.

**Wilson Institutes Concussion Testing For Athletes**

Henry Shuldiner
Sports Editor

This year, for the first time ever, Wilson is administering “concussion pretests” for all athletes, a step in the right direction toward protecting athletes from potentially dangerous consequences. A concussion, a brain injury that results in temporary disruption of normal brain function, occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull, typically from a blow to the head or body. Jamilla Watson, the athletic trainer for Wilson and head athletic trainer for DCPS, was in charge of the concussion pretests this year.

To conduct the pretests, Wilson uses IMPACT concussion software that gives a baseline for each athlete, which can be used for comparison if a concussion is suffered during the season. “Basically, the IMPACT test provides a pre-saison physical of the brain,” Watson stated. “The test tracks an individual’s memory, reaction time, speed, and concentration.” In essence, the test creates a baseline for each athlete’s brain, and if there is a possibility of a head injury, the data from the tests can be used for diagnosis.

Other schools throughout the city, region and nation have also started to conduct these pretests with similar, if not the same, software. The tests are administered prior to every season.

“Currently, we are testing the high risk athletes first, like football, soccer, and cheerleading,” Watson reported. However, Wilson plans to test all athletes participating in a DCIAA sanctioned sport, high-risk or not. Obviously the priority has to go to the athletes participating in contact sports because they are more vulnerable to head injury. Awareness of concussions and other head injuries or diseases has benefited from burgeoning research since the death of long-time NFL star, Junior Seau. Seau, who retired from the league in 2009 after a long, successful career, committed suicide in 2012. After his death, researchers concluded that Seau suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a type of chronic brain damage. Many other reports have come out since with very similar storylines.

Anyone with ties to sports should be encouraging and supporting concussion research. Mark Fainaru-Wada and Steve Fainaru, two ESPN reporters who are writing a book on brain injuries, are also making a short film titled League of Denial. The film is an investigation of what the NFL knew about brain injuries, which appear to have been troubling players since the League started but have become more common and sometimes severe of late. All the coverage of head and brain injuries in professional football and other sports has made high school and collegiate level athletes, parents, coaches, and athletic administrations frantic to solve and prevent the problem.

On Wilson’s website, there is a link to information about concussions, labeled “A Parent’s Guide to Concussion.” On the door to Ms. Watson’s office and in the locker room, there are posters about how to prevent concussions. The implementation of the concussion pretests is just an addition to some of the good doings of the Wilson Athletic Staff and DCPS Department of Athletics’ Athletic Health Care Services. Both of the parties are committed to keeping their athletes safe and healthy while still letting them play the sports they love.

Summer Basketball Recap

by Evan Hamlin

Summer basketball is a time for development and teambuilding, a time when wins and losses don’t matter as much as the progress players make as a team. Wilson’s summer team was not only able to enhance skills and build team chemistry, they were also able to capture the “More Than Basketball” summer league title with a 65-60 win over Montgomery Blair. Outstanding performances from seniors Michael Knapp and Brenton Petty were critical in the Tigers’ championship run. Look out for a much-improved basketball team this winter.
SPORTS HOME GAMES SCHEDULES

VARIOUS FOOTBALL
All games are at 7pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OPPONENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, September 7</td>
<td>Duval</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, September 20</td>
<td>Surrattsville</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, September 27</td>
<td>John F Kennedy</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BOYS VARSITY SOCCER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OPPONENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td>Ballou</td>
<td>Fort Reno</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>Coolidge</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>Fort Reno</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>St Johns</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>OPPONENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 9</td>
<td>Bell</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 10</td>
<td>St Johns</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td>Banneker</td>
<td>Fort Reno</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>Sidwell</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>SWW</td>
<td>Wilson</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>Banneker</td>
<td>Fort Reno</td>
<td>4pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GIRLS FIELD HOCKEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>OPPONENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 16</td>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Brookewood</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>School Without Walls</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>OPPONENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>4:30 PM</td>
<td>Sidwell Friends</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 26</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Ballou</td>
<td>HOME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WILSON CREW LEARN-TO-ROW

Learn to Row
Fall 2013

Information Meeting
Tuesday, September 10 at 7 pm
Wilson HS, Room 410

Wilson Crew Learn-to-Row

- Open to all DCPS 8th graders and high school students
- FREE Two week program September 24—October 3
- Learn basics of rowing stroke, boat handling and rowing safety
- Practices are 4:30—6:30 at Thompson Boathouse in Georgetown
- At conclusion, participants may join the Novice (8 & 9 grades) or Varsity (10 grade+) squads for fall season starting October 7

Why We Row?
Build great friendships!
Carbo loads are a blast!
Be part of something bigger than yourself!
Colleges love rowers!
You get into amazing shape!

Want more information? Check out www.wilsoncrew.org
**Fruitvale Station Echoes Recent Tragedy**

**Jackson Ross**
Staff Writer

There’s a strong chance that there won’t be a single movie like Fruitvale Station to come along for a long time. Not because it isn’t a fantastic film (it is) but due to the circumstances surrounding it.

This true story, based on the last day of Oscar Grant III, an unarmed 22-year-old black male, who was shot by a Bay Area transit cop on New Year’s Day, 2009, is certainly one that resonates, seeing as the film’s release coincided closely with the Trayvon Martin saga.

One major difference between the two stories, however, is that Grant’s shooting happened in a public train station in front of dozens of onlookers who caught the entire ordeal on camera.

Director Ryan Coogler’s decision to open up the film with actual footage from the killing is that of a demented genius. It lets everyone know what kind of movie this is, and that anyone who can’t handle it should get out before it gets worse. And it does.

During the film’s recreation of Grant’s last twenty four hours alive, you see everything from a dog getting hit by a car to the dramatization of the killing itself, in such stark, melodrama-free realism that it’s impossible to look away no matter how much you want to.

The only recognizable actor in this is The Help’s Octavia Spencer, who plays Grant’s long-suffering mother. Despite being just as good as she was in her Oscar-winning Help performance, the best performance in this film clearly goes to newcomer Michael B. Jordan as Oscar Grant III himself.

The film’s version of Grant is probably the most realistic depiction of a flawed individual I’ve ever seen, and Jordan does an excellent job of capturing him. Only a skilled actor can quickly move from innocently asking for his old job back, to threatening to go back to selling dope, and not make him seem like someone who needs serious therapeutic attention.

Jordan doesn’t just make that scene work; in those few seconds alone, he reveals a depth that deserves serious recognition. Jordan can go from distant and restrained to off the wall angry better than anyone since Denzel Washington, if not a young Al Pacino.

One of the many great decisions is to not turn Grant into a kind of saint the way some people have been treating Trayvon Martin. He skips his grocery store job to sell weed, he cheats on his girlfriend, and the events that lead to his killing, while far from a justification for murder, include him getting into a fistfight on the train with a guy he knew in prison.

The one flaw is that it takes a while to get used to the routine of Grant going about his day-to-day life. But once it picks up, a subtle tension as to what is to come creeps through the entire film. What Coogler and Jordan have created is one of the most whole, realistic portrayals of a human being to come along in many years. The best comparison I can make is to 25th Hour, directed by Spike Lee, but even that had a big name lead in Edward Norton and a post 9/11 vibe. Spike Lee himself got his big break with a single-day film that dealt with race relations: Do the Right Thing. And with this film, Coogler could soon reach the level of Spike Lee.

The Beacon urges readers go out to see Fruitvale Station and send us your reactions to the film and thoughts about how the film relates to racial profiling to beaconchiefeditor@gmail.com. Next month The Beacon will be featuring a spread on racial profiling and reader comments may be used for the coverage.

---

**Block Party More than Decent**

**Patrick Paniagua**
Staff Writer

Mad Decent Block Party, one of the most anticipated summer concerts of 2013, was held at Merriweather Post Pavilion on August 2. Many popular dubstep/club artists performed, including Major Lazer, Zeds Dead, Riff Raff, Flosstradamus, and SBTRKT.

When tickets became available, people didn’t hesitate to scrape up whatever money they had for this highly anticipated event. Mad Decent was affordable, making it very accessible for youth. Lawn tickets cost $30. For many big fans of the artists, floor tickets, which were $50, were crucial.

People of all shapes and sizes from all corners of the DMV attended this concert and had a blast. Many students from DCPS, mainly Wilson and School Without Walls, attended and bonded through their love of the music and the exuberant environment.

“It was ‘mad decent,’” and probably the best concert I’ve ever been to,” said senior Ria Osborne. “We were together with a bunch of friends throughout the majority of the concert,” he said, but his VIP tickets prohibited his view of the concert. The people in charge of the lights obviously knew what they were doing. I was staring in awe at the magnificent light show in front of me.

Mad Decent was possibly unmatched as a summer concert in terms of popularity, hype and attendance, with about 17,000 more than satisfied attendees.

It’s safe to say that it was the best concert I’ve been to, and that if it ever comes back to the DMV, I will attend it for sure. It should be a guaranteed good time for everyone. Tell all your friends to get same-priced tickets to avoid issues at the gates or checkpoints. It will be an experience to remember for all who attend.
The Hidden Meaning of Camo

**Jack Price**
**Staff Writer**

Since irony is the only thing our generation likes more than #humblebragging on the #internet, it really shouldn’t be too surprising that one of the biggest style trends we are using to stand out is one that was intended to make people invisible. Check out any mall these days: camouflage, or “camo,” has transcended its military origins to become a truly ubiquitous garment. But unlike clothing basics like white tees and vans, camo has a backstory that involves unnecessary bloodshed and Nazis, which are really all of the potential dangers. If you’re not careful, you might find yourself between Iraq and a hard place.

Modern camouflage was invented in the First World War by the French, who decided to use what their mamas gave them and use fashion to win a war. The Americans, who had already proven how good they were at taking real land that didn’t belong to them, decided they would go after fake foliage too, and stole the print in 1917. After that, both the Central Powers and Allies began slapping camouflage on pretty much everything, which is not dissimilar to what designers are doing today. Different types of camouflage were created to help armies blend into the varying climates and foliage patterns in which they were trying to kill each other. In 1981, the U.S. Army created the Woodland pattern, one of the first patterns worn en masse by civilians since protesters of the Vietnam War donned camouflage garments in, yes, ironic, protest. Since then the print has only grown in popularity.

Camo has become the blue jeans of patterns; walking the halls of Wilson these days is freakishly similar to a nightmare I have where the entire cast of Duck Dynasty gets into a fight with a bunch of ninjas dipped in Holly Hansen. But while there is nothing wrong with wearing what the other lemmings are wearing, it is vital that you consider the moderately bloody history of camouflage, and the political implications of wearing such a garment. I bought a camouflage tee shirt last year, but realized I hadn’t considered all of the potential dangers. If you’re not careful, you might find yourself between Iraq and a hard place.

It has happened to us again: the first day of school. The first day of school is filled with the sounds of new shoes on the freshly cleaned floor, hair in a different “do” and clothes still fresh from the back-to-school sale. Still, the most exciting thing about going back to school is getting a new backpack. For us, backpacks have come a long way from our Hannah Montana and Power Rangers backpacks, to more refined solid-color backpacks with a paisley print inside, or the heavy-duty North Face. Your backpack is the one thing by the end of the school year that understands your exhaustion, because it too worked really hard. So let’s show off our backpacks, our sacks, our totes or our duffels and welcome in the new school year.

**West Side Story Comes to Wilson**

**Sophie ReVeal**
**Staff Writer**

This year’s fall musical at Wilson is West Side Story. “It’s a thrilling show,” said Harriet Bronstein, drama teacher and director. “The dancing is precise, aggressive, and explosive.” In fact, every aspect of the show is challenging. Bronstein is encouraging anyone who is interested to try out for the production, which will require a large, diverse cast.

West Side Story is a modernized version of Romeo and Juliet. The Montagues and Capulets are replaced by the “Sharks” and the “Jets,” two rival gangs who rule the streets of New York City in the 1950s. Like the original star-crossed lovers, Tony and Maria must overcome many obstacles to be together.

For the first time this year there will be a dance workshop to teach participants the steps prior to auditions. The workshop will take place Tuesday, September 3rd at 3:30. Dance auditions will then be held Friday, September 6th at 3:30. The singing and acting auditions will be Monday, September 9th or Tuesday, September 10th from 3:30 to 5:30. Participants must prepare a song from another musical to perform at the singing audition.

West Side Story will be an entire school production with community involvement. In years past, Bronstein explained, “we have had to augment the band,” which will continue to be a necessity this year. “So if there is a parent who plays and would like to come and be part of the band, that would be great,” she said. Even those who aren’t interested in being on stage are encouraged to participate as part of the stage crew and set design.

**Dance Workshop:** Tuesday, September 3rd at 3:30  
**Dance Audition:** Friday, September 6th at 3:30  
**Singing/Acting Auditions:** Monday, September 9th or Tuesday, September 10th from 3:30 to 5:30
What are you most looking forward to in your freshmen year?

“Meeting new people”
Gus Marrkand
Toni Minor

“Getting good grades”
Inmar Cruz

“Making new friends!”
“Playing sports”
Matilda Jensen
Jisca Adiso

“Playing on the soccer team”
Sam Alten

“The football games”
Rina Holzman

“Sports, people, new friends”
Alexandra Radifera
Tanith Ramon
Nicole Distinto

“Comin’s to a school with 500 kids in a grade instead of 50”
Paola Camba

“For the pool”
Ela Feldman

“Hearing Mr. Cahall’s life story on the daily”
Ellie Melick

“See new teachers and give them a run for their money”
Christian Calhoun

“Having a good year in volleyball”
Amber Primus

“The food, not Hardy food”
Aaron Coates

“That was nasty”
Alee Williams

“Robotics”
Jeremy Rivera

“Mr. Fiorill’s World History I class”
Markie F.