

NEWSWORTHY

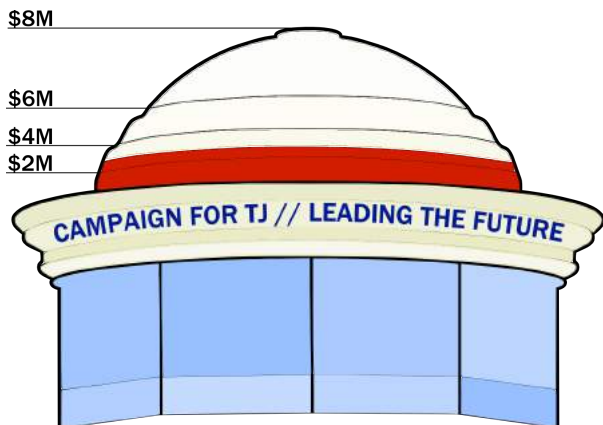
The Newsletter of the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Partnership Fund, a non-profit foundation dedicated to supporting the unique learning opportunities available at TJ and maintaining the special relationship of alumni to the School

First Phase of Renovation Nears Completion

RENOVATION UPDATE Excitement is building in anticipation of the Big Move. It's expected that by mid-November, faculty, staff, and students will have moved into three brand-new areas: the Research Lab wing, the Chemistry and Geosystems wing, and the administrative wing that includes new student common areas. The iconic front entrance dome will also be completed (see more pictures at tjpartnershipfund.org.)

Construction crews worked all summer on the additions. Due to the heavy construction, all administrative offices were moved to the trailers adjacent to Weyanoke ES and visitors were asked to call in advance to ensure access to school grounds.

The 2014-2015 school year also promises to be a busy one for the construction crews, with the demolition of most of the building's interior. To allow school to continue uninterrupted, a total of 64 "learning cottages" will be in use at TJ, 20 of them in the Weyanoke ES area. In appreciation for everyone's terrific attitude as work goes on around them, Principal Glazer has arranged for a little treat. When the new drop-off area in the back of the building has been completed, TJ will add a much-anticipated amenity, food trucks.



CAMPAIGN UPDATE The Campaign for TJ, which is raising funds to fill new and renovated spaces with equipment, technology, and more, had an amazing 2013-2014 fiscal year. It passed the watershed \$2M mark at the end of May and received two major gifts in June when Cisco Systems pledged \$500,000 worth of technology (see page 3) and China's Tsinghua University made a \$300,000 donation (see page 8).

Individual giving for the year was impressive, with freshman parents contributing \$250,000; past parents, \$178,000; and grandparents and friends (including faculty and staff), \$33,000. Nearly 300 individuals -- current and past parents, alumni, grandparents, and friends -- pledged or donated \$1,000 or more.

This outpouring of generosity from the entire community made possible the single largest grant to the School, \$670,000, which helped purchase equipment, technology, lab furniture, and fixture upgrades for the new Research Labs. After years of waiting, school leaders are beginning to see their dreams come true. Following the Partnership Fund-sponsored tjSTAR symposium and reception, both of which featured student research (see pages 2-3), Lee Ann Hennig, Astronomy Lab Director and Research Labs Chair, wrote:

"We are proud of our students' efforts and accomplishments and welcome opportunities that showcase their enthusiasm and interest. We are also grateful for the tremendous effort that the Partnership Fund has devoted to our students' experiences over the years and especially in the current Campaign to truly set our school on a unique track for excellence. We look forward to the newly renovated TJHSST and its amazing promise to enhance and continue our mission."

tjSTAR: A DAY OF EXPLORATION

TJ hosts an annual all-day conference featuring student and professional presentations, tech exhibits, and more, to show students what they can accomplish at TJ and beyond while showcasing students' work. Below are some highlights from tjSTAR 2014.

Exploring Space A panel of space experts featured: Stephanie Bednarek, Government Affairs Manager for *SpaceX* (pictured talking to students during the *SpaceX* classroom session); two engineers from *Orbital* -- Crystal Lu, Systems Engineer, and Ben Hoang, Senior Director of Systems Engineering; and David Johnson, VP/General Manager, *Honeywell Technology Solutions, Inc.*, who mentioned that a week earlier *Honeywell* had celebrated "100 years in aerospace." The panel moderator, *Orbital* Master Systems Engineer Carlos Niederstrasser, who worked closely with TJ students on TJ3Sat, TJ's satellite, told the students, "You're already part of the space program; you flew your own satellite last year."



PayPal founder (and current CEO of *Tesla Motors*) Elon Musk started *SpaceX* with the goal of "making humans a multi-planetary species," Bednarek said in her classroom presentation. CEO Musk is a "really inspirational" leader, she continued. The company, which designs, manufactures, and launches advanced rockets and spacecraft, is best known for its *Falcon* launch vehicle and *Dragon* spacecraft that carries cargo to the International Space Station as part of a public/private partnership with NASA. *Dragon* was designed from the beginning to ultimately carry crew. In fact, two days after tjSTAR, the company unveiled its *Dragon V2* manned spacecraft, with seating for seven, an escape system, and helicopter-like landing capability. The first manned test flights are planned for 2016 or 2017.

The panelists agreed that the heyday of private space exploration is just beginning: "NASA can now purchase launch services from *SpaceX* and *Orbital* in a more commercial way," Bednarek stated. "In the 90's we saw the explosive growth of the PC. We are at the gateway of the explosive growth of commercial space flight, private ventures that will take people to space. There's a waiting list," said *Orbital's* Hoang, "Only six entities have earned the right to say 'we have done it' - NASA's space shuttle, Russians, Europeans, Japanese, *SpaceX*, and *Orbital*."

Exploring the Oceans The culminating event of tjSTAR was the keynote speech from deep-sea explorer and President of Ocean Exploration Trust, Dr. Robert Ballard, who is best known for his 1985 discovery of the *Titanic*. After an introduction by Katie Valery, TJ '14, who had interned on Ballard's *Nautilus* research vessel, he set about to convince TJ students to devote their skills and energy to exploring the Earth's oceans.

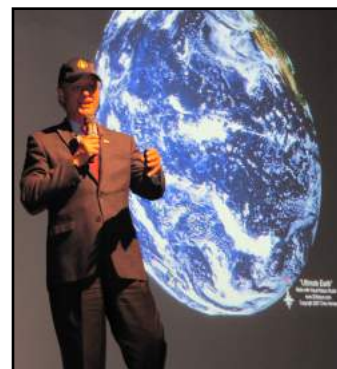
"I love the Earth and I don't believe any significant number of us will live on Mars," he began, addressing wanna-be astronauts. Exploring the uncharted mountain ranges of the ocean floor, Dr. Ballard learned that the entirety of the oceans' waters circulate in and out of the earth's crust over time, which explained the reason for sea water's mineral content. He was also among the first to document the underwater volcanoes known as "black smokers." "We haven't tapped that energy," he told the would-be geologists, physicists, and engineers.

Next Dr. Ballard addressed the future biologists and biochemists. We assumed that because the deep sea was in eternal darkness there was no life, he said, but living near the thermal vents that his team discovered they found "an amazing concentration of bizarre creatures" that have figured out how to manufacture energy chemically, without sunlight, in a process known as chemosynthesis.

More engineers listened as he described creating a remotely operated vehicle so that underwater work could continue uninterrupted. It's more efficient if "robotic devices carry my spirit rather than my body," he said.

Naturally, Dr. Ballard also discussed ocean archaeology, the work for which he is most famous. Mathematical models suggesting that one million shipwrecks have likely fallen to the bottom of the sea mean that there is "more human history in the deep sea than in all the museums of the world," he stated. He may be best known for discovering the *Titanic*, *Bismarck*, and *USS Yorktown*, but in the Black Sea, where conditions are excellent for wood preservation, his team discovered shipwrecks thousands of years old.

After learning about all the different phases of his thrilling career, it's hard to imagine any student contesting Dr. Ballard's bold claim: "Your generation is going to explore more of the Earth than all previous generations combined."



tjSTAR RECEPTION CELEBRATES STUDENT RESEARCH



Pat Finn, Cisco Senior VP, with award, stands with, from left to right, Stu Feddersen, Cisco Account Manager, Public Sector; Principal Evan Glazer; and Eric Knobloch, Cisco's Mid-Atlantic Manager for Government & Education.

The TJ Partnership Fund's annual tjSTAR reception, held at the Hilton McLean Tysons Corner on Thursday, May 29th, the day after the symposium, honored exceptional student research and special members of the TJ community who made this research possible. The PF recognized the symposium's generous corporate sponsors -- *Northrop Grumman*, *Jane Street*, and *Grant Thornton* -- and provided complimentary tickets to all individuals who had made Campaign gifts or pledges at the Capstone Partner level or above.

During the reception, seniors selected by the Directors of TJ's thirteen Research Labs (listed below) showcased their year-long research projects, and two more seniors described their work to the audience of past and current parents, friends, and corporate partners.

Manotri Chaubal, who had just received a Fourth Grand Award at the International Science & Engineering Fair (ISEF) for her Cellular & Molecular Biology project, "Reprogramming Hair Follicle Stem Cells into Cardiomyocytes," described the details of her award-winning project. Parth Chopra, who returned from ISEF with a Second Grand Award (and a First Special Award from the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence), discussed his Computer Science project, "A Novel Computational Agent-Based Model for the Outbreak, Spread, and Containment of Tuberculosis," as well as his previous research projects and the non-profit he founded (see the June issue for more on research award winners).

Each year at this event, the PF recognizes exceptional service with its "Tommy Award." The award, named after Mr. Jefferson in the spirit of contemporary awards (e.g., Tonys, Emmys) is given to "those individuals whose financial and/or time commitments to TJ are far above and beyond the call of volunteerism; to corporations and foundations whose donations of technologies, cash, and supplies represent a substantial and significant advancement for TJ's curriculum activities; and to prominent members of the community who have made a significant contribution to math, science, and technology education."

This year's Tommys were awarded to: *Cisco Systems, Inc.*, for its generous pledge of \$500,000 worth of in-kind and technical support for the School's JCIRN (Jefferson Collaborative Inquiry & Research Network) initiative, and for the company's long-time support for FCPS and Virginia universities; and *Nysmith School*, for providing its students with exceptional preparation for TJ's curriculum and activities, and for enabling gifted students to reach their full potential.



Head of Nysmith School, Ken Nysmith, second from left, and his mother, founder Carole Nysmith, with award, stand with TJ Principal Evan Glazer, left, and Andrea Li, Nysmith '10, TJ '14, who delivered a personal tribute and assisted the PF in presenting the Tommy Award.

Previous Tommy Awardees

- Norman R. Augustine
- Nancy Conrad
- Jane Curtis
- Tom & Jeannemarie Davis
- James C. Ellenbogen
- Epstein Becker & Green
- Patrick M. Gillevet
- Thomas G. Goodwin
- Google Inc.
- James Jarvis
- Dean Kamen
- Robert E. Latham
- Victoria & Dennis Linnell
- Elizabeth V. Lodal
- Kathleen McBride
- John McCauley
- Northrop Grumman Corp.
- Orbital Sciences Corp.
- Ellen S. Ranard
- Raytheon Company
- Trey Repetski
- Catherine B. Reynolds Found.
- Sally Goetz Shuler
- Mark A. Skolnik
- Julie M. Strategos
- Sun Microsystems, Inc.
- Dwight Yamada
- William Yang

Senior Research Project Displays

- Astronomy & Astrophysics**
Shayna Hume & Emma Puranen
Jamie Sullivan
- Automation & Robotics**
Cyrus Tabrizi
- Biotechnology & Life Sciences**
Deepa Issar & Priyadarshini Seetharaman
- Chemical Analysis & Nanochemistry**
Jonathan Lee & Daniel Suzuki
Tiffany Kathir, Simran Rohatgi, and Isabelle Walton
- Communication Systems**
Maria Kim
Sam Rohrer
- Computer-Assisted Design (CAD)**
Linda Lay
- Computer Systems**
Owen Hoffman
Ricardo Tucker
- Energy Systems**
Matthew Wattendorf
- Microelectronics**
Daniel Stiffler
- Neuroscience**
Priyanka Raju & Tarun Prabhala
- Oceanography & Geophysical Systems**
Katie Valery
Krista Opsahl-Ong, Caitlin Kim, and Gloria Cho
- Prototyping & Engineering Materials**
Rachel Iwicki, Ellen Mulé, and TJ Arndt
- Quantum Physics & Optics**
William Bradbury



ALUMNI GIVE COLLEGE & CAREER ADVICE

Tysons-based business software company *MicroStrategy*, which featured its cutting-edge identity security products at a tjSTAR demonstration booth, employs several TJ alumni. Three of those alumni held a tjSTAR panel discussion to give students the benefit of their combined “lessons and experiences since graduating from TJ.” In lieu of prepared remarks, the trio simply introduced themselves and opened the floor to questions.

Tammy Le, TJ '92 (left), Senior Manager, Operations, graduated from UVA with an architecture degree and received her MBA from Dartmouth. At *MicroStrategy* she works on mobile apps, social media, and emerging technologies; Thuy Le, TJ '93 (center), Senior Program Manager, graduated from MIT with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, and obtained a Master's in Product Design from Stanford. At *MicroStrategy*, she works on social apps and exploring new technologies; Jeff Taylor, TJ '01, Lead Program (Product) Manager, graduated from UVA with a dual degree in Computer Science and Religious Studies. He oversees the workflow, feature development, and vision of *MicroStrategy's* mobile biometric identity platform.

On choosing a college: Taylor chose UVA over MIT for comfort reasons and because “graduating without debt is awesome,” though he gave up the chance to play baseball. Thuy Le made exactly the opposite decision, choosing MIT because it was in a city, near other colleges, and far from most other TJ students. In addition, MIT gave her the opportunity to play Division three soccer. What she liked best was that she didn't have to declare a major right away. She felt that she was being invited to “just come learn.”

On making it through college: “MIT was hard. I'll be honest. Sophomore year I almost dropped out,” Thuy said. “Freshman year, make it easy on yourself - the transition is hard. Embrace the lifestyle change,” Taylor offered.

On working before graduate school: Tammy Le worked in several different jobs after college and said unequivocally, “work experience helps.” Thuy worked for five years before going to graduate school and said “I wouldn't have appreciated my design degree without my work experience.”

On joining *MicroStrategy*: “I wanted to go somewhere I could work hard and be smart,” Taylor said. “Since joining [in 2005] I haven't looked back because the work is so engaging . . . I get to discuss the philosophy of computer science with colleagues.”

On TJ: Tammy said, “Coming here was one of the best decisions of my life. I liked the level of trust, the opportunity, and the relationships with teachers.” “The one thing I love about TJ is that it helps prepare you broadly . . . it pushes you to develop genuine curiosity, ways of thinking, problem solving,” Thuy said, and Taylor agreed: “TJ prepared me to think. That was the best preparation. Nuance is so important. TJ's humanities classes are very strong too. I would not be where I am today without my TJ education. I wouldn't have had the same college experience, this job, none of it. . . I went to my reunion. What my classmates are doing is amazing.”

On tjSTAR: “I wish we had had opportunities like this to hear from alumni when I was here,” Taylor said to nods all around.

RESEARCH LAB WING INCLUDES UNDERCLASSMEN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH LAB

Principal Glazer has long wished for an on-campus lab where freshmen, sophomores, and juniors could conduct independent research during the school year. When the new research lab wing opens this fall, it will include dedicated space for underclassmen's ongoing research projects. Starting in the second quarter of the 2014-2015 school year, students may elect to spend 8th period (or 1st period for students with online classes) working on their projects. Research mentors will interact with students through a new virtual platform while a TJ staff member manages the lab space.

Before they will be permitted to reserve lab space, students will need to fill out an application that includes a 2-3 page research proposal. The application can be found in summer assignments under “Independent Research for Underclassmen – Fall 2014” (<http://www.tjhsst.edu/summer-assignments/index.html>). Instructional Assistant Dr. Dan Burden will be accepting emailed research proposal applications beginning the first week of school. Once approved, projects will be accepted into the program on a first-come, first-served basis.

Questions about the Underclassmen Independent Research Lab should be directed to Dr. Burden at dkburden@fcps.edu.



ALUM NOW STANFORD PHYSICS PROFESSOR

After graduating from TJ in 2001 (photo below), Monika Schleier-Smith headed first to Harvard, where in 2005 she graduated with highest honors in Chemistry, Physics, *and* Math, and next to MIT, where in 2011 she obtained her PhD in Physics as a National Science Foundation and Hertz Fellow. She was then a postdoctoral fellow at the Ludwig Maximilian University/Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics in Munich, and recently joined the Stanford Physics Department as Assistant Professor, concentrating in the areas of atomic, molecular, and optical physics. In February, she was awarded a Sloan Research Fellowship by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, a \$50,000 award given to “the most promising scientific researchers working today” whose “achievements and potential place them among the next generation of scientific leaders.”



Newsworthy caught up with Professor Schleier-Smith over the summer.

Q: Could you explain your research to our readership of parents and alumni?

A: “My current research uses ultracold atoms -- cooled within millionths of a degree of absolute zero -- as model systems for investigating quantum mechanics. One application is enhancing the precision of clocks and sensors (accelerometers, magnetometers), ultimately toward fundamental limits set by the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle [Nobel Prize-winning physicist Bill Phillips explains in simple terms how laser cooling has contributed to the development of more accurate atomic clocks at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGx4ZiJZy_E].

“In the long term, control of many-particle quantum systems could also have a profound impact on computation. Already a collection of 40 well-controlled quantum mechanical particles can in principle store more information than the world’s largest supercomputer. Yet we are still far from having the tools to encode and retrieve that information. The effort to develop such tools presents major experimental and even conceptual challenges, which my research group is striving to address.”

Q: How important was TJ in setting you on the path toward a career in physics research?

A: “Without a doubt, my TJ education provided a crucial foundation for pursuing a career in physics. I had so many excellent teachers at TJ—in math, science, computer science, and also the humanities. In addition to my physics classes with Dr. Dell and Mr. Latham, the 3-year chemistry sequence with Dr. Liebermann had a tremendous influence on me. It was in learning about electrons in atoms and molecules that I first encountered the concept of quantum uncertainty. In light of this uncertainty, each electron in an atom is not localized at a single point but rather ‘smeared out like peanut butter,’ in Dr. Liebermann’s characteristically vivid analogy. Concepts of uncertainty and non-locality in quantum mechanics have continued to fascinate me and motivate my research to this day.”



Q: Do you have any TJ memories from outside the classroom you’d like to share?

A: “I have fond memories of progressing from being a purely recreational runner to helping TJ win the state championship. Somewhere along the way, I remember Coach Matt Ryan pulling me aside and saying, ‘Monika, you’ve been training with great athletes and now it’s time for you to race at their level.’

“In physics as well, I’ve had the privilege of ‘training’ with phenomenal peers, colleagues, and mentors at TJ and MITRE [where Monika spent three summers in the Nanosystems Group], Harvard, MIT, the LMU Munich/Max Planck Institute, and now at Stanford. I am very excited to be in a position to start passing what I’ve learned along to my own students as we build up our new research lab.”

'09 ALUM ROCKS

The first word that comes to mind when you hear “TJ rock star” may be “geologist,” but alums from the Class of 2009 can say that they knew indie-rock star AJ Smith before he made it big. Smith, who played to an appreciative hometown crowd at Vienna’s *Jammin’ Java* on an August weekend as part of a DC-area tour, is now a successful singer/songwriter/musician on the rise.

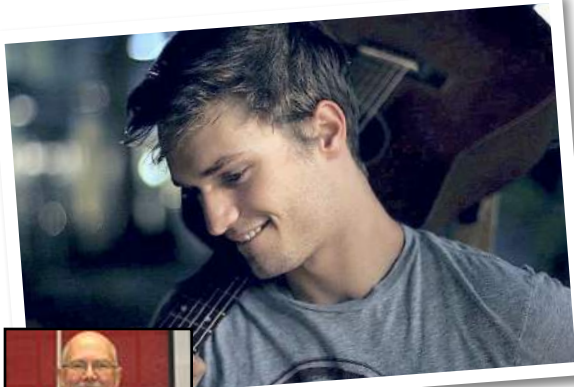
Andrew Smith, TJ ’09, enjoyed his time at TJ, from Latin with Ms. Conklin (he has written songs based on the Classics) and English with Ms. Seavey to Physics with Dr. Dell and Mr. Forbes and an NRL Optics Mentorship, but he has always had a passion for performance. At TJ, Smith performed in *Oklahoma* and *Inspector General*, and was even a “Mr. Colonial” competition participant. He was also a Young Associate at the National Symphony Orchestra during his senior year. In fact, he has been composing, mixing, and performing his own music since he was in elementary school.

Smith holds two degrees in Music Theory & Composition from New York University, including a Master’s with a Concentration in Songwriting (2014), for which he received two prestigious songwriting scholarships. While captaining NYU’s lacrosse team and serving as a dormitory Resident Advisor, Smith opened for the legendary band *The Eagles* at a scholarship gala. It was this rare combination of talents and

contributions that landed him a spot as one of Washington Square News’ Ten Most Influential NYU Students of 2012.

Smith, whose first EP was released in April 2013, recently returned from Los Angeles where he was recording vocals for a new single. He composes his own music, writes his own lyrics, and is a multi-instrumentalist and vocalist whose diverse repertoire runs the gamut from soulful ballads to energetic dance mixes. GRAMMY-winning songwriter Claude Kelly may have called his lyrics, “vivid, deep, and intensely emotional,” but that didn’t stop his dance hit “Summertime,” from climbing to the third spot on Australia’s ARIA Top 50 Club Tracks Chart, behind the familiar hits Lana Del Rey’s “Summertime Sadness” and Swedish House Mafia’s “Don’t You Worry Child.”

As Smith was heading down to Richmond for a show, he talked about what he aims for in his music. He believes that the best songs have layers of meaning so that the more you listen and reflect, the more you understand. A TJ boy at heart, he aims to give his songs an almost mathematical structure, and analogized encountering a well-written song to making an unexpected discovery in the course of conducting research : “As you dive a little deeper, you find something more amazing . . .”



JOHN STRUCK NAMED VIRGINIA HISTORY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

TJ History teacher John Struck, elected by alumni into the TJHSST Teacher Hall of Fame this past fall, was recognized in June as the 2014 Virginia History Teacher of the Year. Struck currently teaches AP U.S. History and Honors 20th Century World History at TJ, where he has taught for 20 years. Prior to joining the TJ faculty, he taught at Fairfax HS and Edison HS. He also works on test and curriculum development for the College Board, which administers the SAT and AP exams.

Like so many other TJ students over the years, Dhruv Bansal, TJ ’13, learned in high school that there was more to life than STEM: "In a school focused on science and technology, Mr. Struck managed to make his-

Hall of Fame (yr. inducted)	Mr. Don Majeske, ret. (2012)	Ms. Bettie Stegall, ret. (2013)
Dr. Omar Acio (2012)	Mr. Patrick McCarthy, ret. (2012)	Mr. John Struck (2013)
Mr. Luc Beekman, ret. (2013)	Mr. Dennis McRaden, ret. (2012)	Mr. Michael Stueben (2012)
Mr. Gerry Berry, ret. (2012)	Ms. Jane Gullickson, ret. (2012)	Mr. Ed Montgomery, ret. (2013)
Dr. Paul Cammer, ret. (2013)	Mr. Jim Jarvis, ret. (2013)	Ms. Barbara Nelson, ret. (2012)
Dr. John Dell (2012)	Mr. Jay Lamb, ret. (2012)	Mr. Jim Rose, ret. (2013)

SULAWESI, INDONESIA: RESEARCH



Back row: Wallacea staff member, Parth Desai, TJ '15, Sam Veroneau, TJ '15, Zoe Wang, TJ '15 (also bottom pic, center), Billie Malès, TJ '15 (also bottom pic, right), two staff members, Prashanth Panicker, TJ '15, Audrey Brown, TJ '15, staff member. Front row: Coco Chen, TJ '15, Chitra Kokkiralala, TJ '16, Anjali Khanna, TJ '16 (not pictured), Andrew Liang, TJ '15; photos courtesy Audrey Brown)

This summer, ten TJ students combined their interest in marine biology and biodiversity preservation with their thirst for adventure, traveling to islands near Sulawesi, Indonesia, for three weeks to receive training and conduct research in one of the world's most remote and fascinating areas. The islands, isolated from other landmasses by surrounding ocean channels, are rich in species found nowhere else on earth.

The group, led by Oceanography Lab Director Lisa Wu, was one of the first from an American high school to travel with Operation Wallacea, a U.K.-based research organization. The team spent one week in the jungle followed by two weeks at Hoga Marine Research Laboratory, where they assisted the resident scientists and graduate students with ongoing research projects. See Zoe Wang's blog for trip details.

Because many students had their diving certifications or completed them at Hoga, some were able to work on research projects that required dives. Rising seniors Billie Males and Parth Desai, for example, collected data on coral metabolic rates for an ocean acidification project and took reef transects to locate anemones cohabitating with fish not normally found with them, videotaping them for territory analysis.

According to Billie, the intensive three-weeks was particularly valuable preparation for her research-focused senior year. "This experience gave me a better feel for how scientists function in the field," she said. "It was particularly affirming to realize that I really enjoy field work, and several scientists also offered to keep in touch and become mentors for our senior research projects. Knowing the 'real world' applications of the post's research will also help guide those of us entering TJ's Oceanography Lab to create more useful and topical projects."



BALI, INDONESIA: BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD

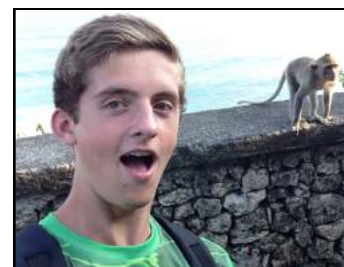


The United States Biology Olympiad Team: Yilun Du, Pullman, Washington (gold); Varun Mangalick, Arden Hills, Minnesota (gold); Mrs. Kathy Frame and Dr. Clark Gedney, US directors/jurors/coaches; Will Long, TJ '15 (gold); and Abhijit Mudigonda, Portland, Oregon (silver).

At the same time, in the Indonesian province of Bali, William Long, TJ '15, and three teammates were representing the United States at the 2014 International Biology Olympiad. As pleased as he was with his amazing individual fifth place finish (see Washington Post article for competition details), Will was thrilled just to be able to take part: "The international competition in Bali was a really incredible experience. I was able to talk to 240 other kids from 60 other countries and make friends from around the world. I also had the chance to tour Bali, go on a safari, relax on the beach, and visit an old Balinese temple."

The United States of America Biology Olympiad (USABO) is the country's premier biology competition for high school students. TJ has had at least twenty USABO semifinalists for over a decade and at least one finalist for the last five years. According to Will, who plans to study Computer Science as well as Biology in college, it's no coincidence that TJ is the only school that in recent years has consistently sent students to the national finals: "We have lots of really smart kids who want to help each other and teach each other. There are lots of kids who are interested in biology and just want to learn more. I think that this whole culture at TJ is one of the things that propels so many kids to do so well in the competition."

In fact, Will hopes to be able to help other TJ students make the finals next year. Maybe a TJ student will even get to attend the 2015 international competition. There probably won't be any monkeys in that student's pictures, however, as next year's competition will be in Denmark.



TWO DECADES OF TRAINING OVERSEAS FACULTY & STAFF

Since 1993, TJ has collaborated with the State Department to provide a one-week summer training session to overseas school employees that focuses on using technology to improve teaching and network administration. Organized and hosted by TJ, the 2014 Jefferson Overseas Schools Technology Institute (JOSTI) featured presentations by technology specialists, including TJ faculty and staff, and two students, both recipients of JOSTI grants.



This summer's topics, divided into "teaching" and "techie" strands, included, among dozens of others, "Hour of Code" by Computer Systems Lab Director Dr. Shane Torbert and "WAN/LAN Network Monitoring" by Network Support Administrator Pete Morasca, and both "Students in IT" and "Nagios Monitoring" by Network Support staff member Andrew Hamilton.

In addition, Matthew Park, TJ '15, Senior Vice President, NeuroInspire LLC, demonstrated how an electroencephalogram (EEG) neuro-headset can be used to excite students about science by allowing them to manipulate an onscreen box with their thoughts; and Milan Bharadwaj, TJ '16, explained how teachers can use a calendar he created using the open-source *Moodle* platform to post information that the students can use for course planning, collaboration, and homework.

JOSTI attendees, who also had some time for evening entertainment and sightseeing, returned to their American and International schools in cities such as Islamabad, Pakistan; Almaty, Kazakhstan; La Paz, Bolivia; and Rotterdam, the Netherlands, ready to implement the latest advances in network management and instructional technology.

TJ'S NEW INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

As one of the nation's leading STEM high schools, TJ has for years served as an inspiration and informal model for public and private schools in the United States and abroad. During the 2013-2014 academic year, TJ entered the first of what it hopes will be many mutually beneficial relationships with leading international institutions that will allow it to share best practices to assist them as they develop their own STEM models. These relationships help to fulfill a long-term goal of the school, that of sharing TJ's uniquely successful approach to teaching science and technology with other schools in order to expand educational opportunities for students, no matter where they reside.

TJ will be partnering with Tsinghua University High School (THS) in Beijing, one of the top public high schools in China. Tsinghua University, China's leading science and technology university, with 71 research centers and 166 laboratories, runs several high schools in China and other countries. Tsinghua University is interested in introducing a specialized STEM track in its network of high schools, including THS, and is hoping eventually to establish a Tsinghua International STEM High School in Beijing. Chinese educators, concerned that their educational system's emphasis on speed and memorization over discussion and debate may not produce tomorrow's most successful students, are increasingly eager to adopt the best instructional models from abroad (see "Lessons from the World's Best Public School," *Newsweek*, May 1, 2014).



Plans for the partnership include the exploration of research collaborations between THS and TJ students, particularly through the new collaborative research network known as JCIRN. "Chinese students will enrich their horizon by understanding what their US peers are thinking and exploring," said THS Principal Dianjun Wang (pictured outside the University gates with TJ Partnership Fund Development Director Aristia (Tia) Kinis, who led TJ's partnership discussions). "We should open a door to let young generations exchange and cooperate early."

This summer, Astronomy Lab Director and Research Labs Chair Lee Ann Hennig, in Beijing for a professional conference, met with THS's faculty and administration. She answered questions related to integrating research into the curriculum; education and training of Lab Directors; collaboration among TJ's Labs and between TJ's Labs and others; mentorship arrangements; obtaining funding for equipment; and much more. "I emphasized the need for creativity in research -- students need time to research, think, synthesize, reflect, readjust, and redefine a project when necessary," Ms. Hennig said.

Other TJ faculty may visit Beijing during future school breaks, and THS faculty may visit TJ to observe classroom instruction. In addition to covering the travel and other costs incurred by current and former TJ faculty and others assisting with the project, Tsinghua is making a significant contribution to the Campaign for TJ to ensure that TJ will remain on the cutting edge of research, education, collaboration, and outreach for the next 25 years and beyond.

RISING SENIOR RECOGNIZED FOR ENCOURAGING GIRLS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE

One of the many exceptional aspects of TJ's program is the number of high-level classes and clubs catering to students interested in computer science. Pooja Chandrashekar, TJ '15 (right, with Courtney Wallace of *iStrategyLabs*), has taken full advantage of these curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, even contributing a few of her own. Recently, she was recognized with an Award for Aspirations in Computing from the National Center for Women in Information Technology (NCWIT) and was selected as a 2014 Stanford She++ Include Fellow for expanding horizons for younger girls.

Pooja founded ProjectCSGIRLS, an initiative that aims to encourage more girls to learn and develop a passion for computer science. ProjectCSGIRLS features a competition that challenges middle school girls to use technology to ameliorate a social problem. Last year's winners were honored at a gala event at GMU, which included guest speakers discussing their experiences as women in technology. In addition to GMU, *iStrategyLabs* and the *Thiel Foundation* also sponsored the initiative. Pooja is now leading teams of high school and college girls from around the country in the hope of taking her DC area program national, which would make ProjectCSGIRLS the largest national computer science competition for middle school girls.

Pooja, who has taken TJ's AP Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence 1&2 courses, and will take Parallel Computing 1&2 during her senior year, is an active member of TJ's Coding Lady Colonials club and is involved in CS Ed Week. As a sophomore she founded the Bioinformatics Society as a forum for examining the integration of biology with computer science through weekly activities, computational modeling competitions, and guest speakers. As club President, she initiated an effort to enrich the STEM curriculum of a school for economically disadvantaged students in Pune, India. In addition, she has for two years led the Middle School Girls Math Circle at GMU and has also founded and run two semester-long game programming workshops at GMU for middle-school girls, for which she received a NCWIT grant and recognition from *Microsoft*.

The 35 female high school students chosen from a pool of 2,300 applicants as Award for Aspirations in Computing national winners were selected for their computing and IT aptitude, leadership ability, academic history, and plans for post-secondary education. As for her plans, Pooja's are unsurprisingly ambitious: She intends to major in both neurobiology and computer science in preparation for a career in medicine with a focus on the ways in which computer science and technology can be applied to solving problems in the medical field.



MIDDLE SCHOOL TECH INSTITUTE HAS ANOTHER SUPER SUMMER

With new classes added every year, TJ's dynamic Middle School Summer Tech Institute (MSTI) is a resounding success. TJ Director of Student Activities Rusty Hodges, who has run the program for three summers, says he never fails to be surprised by the level of engagement he observes: "Whenever I walk by, the kids are totally absorbed in what they're doing -- it's really great to see."

For the fourth straight year, Northrop Grumman donated \$25,000 to support the Institute. This year, they were joined by INCOSE, the International Council on Systems Engineering (officers pictured above) and the Washington Space Business Roundtable. One hundred and sixty-five scholarships were distributed this summer, bringing low-income students and those from underrepresented groups to the program. Additional funds were allocated toward technology, equipment, and supplies.

TJ student involvement is growing each year. This summer there were five TJ student volunteers assisting TJ counselor Kerry Hamblin with her "Mythbusters" class, where middle-schoolers create videos showing themselves testing a common belief using the scientific method (top, Angela Ma, TJ '15, lends a hand -- to see a video, go to <http://vimeo.com/101524170> and use password "Mythbusters"). For the second summer, Maddie Zug, TJ '15, (bottom, at right) assisted the instructor with "Got an App for That?" where even students with no experience design their own apps. Falls Church HS math teacher Dan Tra (left), described her as his "co-teacher and equal partner," adding, "if I weren't here, she could teach this class."



STUDENTS ENCOURAGE “YOUNG SCHOLARS”



Students from TJ and South Lakes HS helped this summer’s Dogwood ES Young Scholars (YS) study the ecology and living things around them (YS is an FCPS initiative intended to increase the proportion of underrepresented students in its Advanced Academic Programs).

Instead of relying on just two teachers, the 22 youngsters in one YS classroom who were examining the question “What does it mean to be a living thing?” could also turn to five student STEM-bassadors. The sectioned sheet that a few kids had drawn with the assistance of Pranab Krishnan, TJ ’17 (pictured), was soon pasted with words they were categorizing as either living or non-liv-

ing. Kids’ questions ranged from “What is a trout?” and “What is an orchard?” to “What is a microbe?” Teenagers answered and encouraged the youngsters to think more deeply.

In another room, Michelle Ma, a rising senior at South Lakes, prompted her group to think about what processes distinguish living things: “What happens to you over time if you get enough food, water, and oxygen? We’re in 12th grade and you’re in 4th grade. Were we always this big?” (center photo on back page).

To Linda Martin, Dogwood’s AAP Resource Teacher, STEMbassadors are far more than helpful hands and vocabulary coaches; they provide near-peer, college-track role models for youngsters who may not have any.

For four years, she has invited TJ students to help with Dogwood’s YS Summer Science Academy and an after-school club for girls that focuses on real-world problems and STEM solutions. Formerly called “TJ Mentors,” Dogwood’s classroom assistants served as the inspiration for TJ’s successful three-year-old STEMbassador Program, which

now involves students from other high schools and is active at dozens of elementary and middle schools throughout TJ’s multi-county region. This summer alone, STEMbassadors are helping to spread the joys of STEM at over 50 elementary schools, including many with YS Programs.

Everywhere that TJ students live, there are summer and/or school year STEMbassador opportunities as well as opportunities for adult liaisons.



Anusha Basana, TJ ’16, talks with a Young Scholar about her observations in the woods behind Reston’s Dogwood ES.

STUDENTS CREATE SUMMER COURSES



Kent Gardens ES, which runs a busy summer camp, put out a call for STEM-bassadors to develop and instruct their own week-long “1-hour activity or course” as a supplement to their other camp offerings. The terrific response they received allowed campers to choose from among several STEMbassador-run

courses during two daily, hour-long time-slots.

Jens Ertman, TJ ’15, son of Kent Gardens ES STEMbassador liaison Margarita Collantes, teamed with Jackson Salpek, McLean ’15, to teach “Coding” during the summer’s first week, where they attracted a number of hard-core repeat attendees to their introductory Java programming class. When Jens asked, “What do you put in every program?” they jumped out of their seats, yelling, “static, void, main, parenthesis, string.” (second photo on back page)

“Xplor Science and Technology,” the brainchild of rising TJ freshman Aman Shankardass (pictured), was so popular that there weren’t enough chairs in the room. On that particular Thursday, his class featured a hands-on lesson in the

density of liquids, using dish soap, canola oil, rubbing alcohol, and both corn and maple syrup.

Anna Zhang, a rising freshman at McLean, taught her classroom full of youngsters how to make an origami frog and had them experiment with different sizes and shapes to see which ones would hop farther or higher. (fourth photo on back page)

Camp Director Dr. Galanes-O’Neill, who loves the enrichment provided by STEMbassador-led courses, feels it’s a wonderful opportunity for the STEMbassadors as well: “By having to come up with an activity and teach it, students can build their resumes by giving back to the community in a creative way.”

WHY WE SUPPORT TJ

"Our twins arrived at TJ at different times - one freshman year and one sophomore year. By the second week of sophomore year, nobody would have been able to tell which one had just arrived. From the students, to the faculty, to the counselors, TJ is a very welcoming place. The students all work incredibly hard together but have an amazing support mechanism. As my graduates get ready to move on to college, so many of the people that are most difficult to say goodbye to include teachers and counselors that helped them along the way. Volunteering as my husband did and giving back financially was our way to say thank you!

"Thanks to the Partnership Fund, the teachers and counselors have access to incredible resources and make connections which help immeasurably when searching for interesting opportunities for the kids like seminars, conferences, internships and mentorships in areas the students have a passion for. After numerous college tours nationwide, I can say that many college labs are envious of the equipment in TJ labs. Also, we noticed that many engineering and physics professors across the nation are familiar with TJ's program and anxious to talk to TJ students about their senior research projects.

"We are proud to say we graduated from TJ, and as a family, we are happy to give back so that TJ and its faculty can continue to provide the types of opportunities they have provided for our children to all students who are willing to take advantage of them."

Liz Valery, Parent '14, '14 (her husband, Tom Valery, was TJPF Board Chair from 2012 to 2014)



"Roma's grandparents were both in the education field. Her grandfather was a professor of Accounting & Economics and her grandmother is a distinguished writer with a Ph.D in Hindi, who has won several awards and recognition for her work. This year is her grandmother's 75th birthday. Because of TJ's reputation for excellence and its importance to our child's education, we felt it was very appropriate to honor both of Roma's grandparents with a pledge to support the Campaign for TJ." Rahul & Sonavi Chitko, Parents '17



"My wife, Katya, and I have known about TJ's reputation for years and are delighted to now have our two children attend the school. TJ is a community of learners, with its biggest asset being the teachers and parents who care. The faculty and staff are very passionate about education and are incredibly supportive of all the students. But without the assistance of parents, TJ cannot continue to be the incubator of future leaders it is today. This is why we are happy to assist both financially and by volunteering to help TJ meet its goals. We urge all parents to step up and contribute generously with their time and financial support."

Craig Bennett, Parent '15, '17, TJPF Corporate Advisory Board Co-Chair

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 Vice-President, Sonal Goda, TJ '95
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 Kashka Kubzdela, Parent '16
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 Shawn Lukas, Parent '15
 Carla Martinese, Parent '17

Gregory McKinney, Parent '15
 Ellen Ranard, Parent '07, '10
 Mark Rutzick, Parent '17
 Sally Stumvoll, Parent '09, '15
 Bala Subramanian, Parent '17
 Fan Yang, Parent '17

OFFICE VOLUNTEER:

Jo Koeniger, Parent '16

EVENT & APPEAL VOLUNTEERS:**Freshman Orientation (9/13):**

Gregory McKinney, Parent '15

Freshman Parent Reception (9/13):

Chair, Hilde Kahn, Parent '12, '14, '17
Floortje Blindenbach-Driessen,
Parent '16, '18
Carleen Wood-Thomas, Parent '14, '17

Desi Rain Concert (10/13):

Co-Chairs, Nags Arkalgud, Parent '15,
Megha Chokshi, Parent '17
Sharan Arkalgud, TJ '15
Vanamala Arkalgud, Parent '15
Shiraz Chokshi, TJ '17
Kunal Debroy, TJ '14
Nihar Gudiseva, TJ '14
Shubham Gupta, TJ '14
Abishek Mogili, TJ '17
Nikhil Patla, TJ '16
Venkat & Jayasree Patla, Parents '16
Brijesh & Avani Saini, Parents '15
Rohan Saini, TJ '15
Girish & Ranju Verma, Parents '14
Sid Verma, TJ '14

Back-to-School Night (10/13):

Chair, Gregory McKinney, Parent '15
Floortje Blindenbach-Driessen,
Parent '16, '18
Tami Holsten, Parent '14
Vivian Hon, Parent '16
Jo Koeniger, Parent '16
Alan Krishnan, Parent '05
Shawn Lukas, Parent '15
Kyounghee Malawi, Parent '14
Arpana Puri, Parent '15, '18
Tony San, Parent '16
Srinivas Vippa, Parent '16

Columbus Day Golf Tournament (10/13)

Chair, Kristine Zechman, Parent '16
Millen Anand, TJ '16
Rohit Anand, Parent '16
Peter Andringa, TJ '16
Tom & Jane Bitner
Kay & Jack Larmer
Cindy Waddell, Parent '16
Katie Zechman, TJ '16

Scott Zechman, Parent '16

Sean Zechman

TJ athletic team volunteer basket-makers

Lab Tours - Korean & English (11/13):

Chair, Hilde Kahn, Parent '12, '14, '17
Korean Tour Chair, Kyounghee Malawi,
Parent '14
Elaine Conner, Parent '05
Jung Huh, TJ '14
Saehee Jung, TJ '14
Yana Kaplun, TJ '14
Meghana Valluri, TJ '14
Yang Yu, TJ '14

Diwali Celebration (11/13):

Co-Chairs, Nags Arkalgud, Parent '15,
Megha Chokshi, Parent '17
Hosts, Girish & Ranju Verma, Parents '14,
Sid Verma, TJ '14
Sharan Arkalgud, TJ '15
Shiraz Chokshi, TJ '17
Dhruv Gupta, TJ '16
Sparsh Gupta, TJ '14
Soumya Mishra, TJ '14
Tarun Prabhala, TJ '14
Priya Seetharaman, TJ '14

Lunar New Year Celebration (2/14):

Co-Chairs, Catherine Xia Uitz, Parent '13,
Jerri Xu, Parent '17
Kevin Chen, TJ '16
Laura Chu, TJ '17
Lucy Chu, TJ '14
Jenny Hou, Parent '15
Yuzhen Ge, Parent '11, '13
Christopher Hoang, TJ '16
Hilde Kahn, Parent '12, '14, '17
Jeffrey Liu, TJ '16
Anh-Huy Nguyen, TJ '18
John Nguyen, TJ '16
Thuy Nguyen, Parent '16, '18
Thuy-Vi Nguyen, TJ '16
Vince Tran, Parent '17
Jessica Wang, TJ '17
Hong Yan, Parent '05, '13, '17
Nancy Yang, Parent '17, '18
Emma Zhang, TJ '17
Emily Zou, TJ '17

Phonathon (2/14):

Co-Chairs, Ashok Anant, Parent '17,
Jo Koeniger, Parent '16
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Kristine Zechman, Parent '16

Junior Lab Appeal (Spring 2014):

Katya Bennett, Parent '15
Sarah Gunnarson, Parent '15
Robin Hatanpaa, Parent '15
Shawn Lukas, Parent '15
Leena Nathan, Parent '15
Sally Stumvoll, Parent '09, '15

Freshman Preview (4/14):

Kevin Gormley, TJ '95
Thuy Nguyen, Parent '16, '18
Natasha Swarup, Parent '14

tjSTAR Reception (5/14):

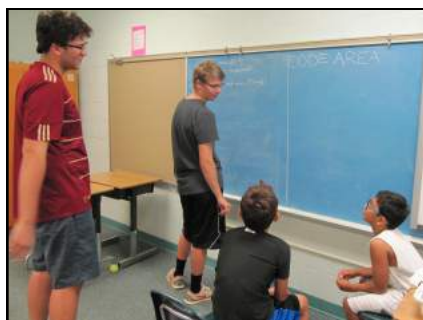
Chair, Megha Chokshi, Parent '17
Shiraz Chokshi, TJ '17
Kim Do, Parent '15, '17
Zhuo Han, Parent '17

Silicon Valley Alumni Brunch (6/14):

Co-Chair, Sander Daniels, TJ '01
Co-Chair/Host, Anne Toth, TJ '89

WEBMASTER:

Will Bradbury, TJ '14



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*
*

Development Director: Aristia (Tia) Kinis

Development Manager: Samantha (Sam) Courtney

TJ could not fulfill its mission without the voluntary contributions of parents, grandparents, friends, alumni, and corporate partners. To learn how you can support TJ through the Partnership Fund, please visit us at tjpartnershipfund.org, or contact Development Director Aristia (Tia) Kinis at akinis@fcps.edu or 703-750-8317.

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Silicon Valley Alumni Brunch

A small group of TJ alums living in the San Francisco Bay Area gathered on June 1st at the home of long-time TJ supporter, Anne Antonowicz Toth, TJ '89 (top photo, back row, second from right), an Internet security consultant who previously worked at both *Yahoo* and *Google*. The event's co-host, Sander Howard, TJ '01 (back row, third from left), is the founder and CEO of *Thumbtack*, an online company linking individuals with service providers that employs several TJ grads (read about the company in the June 2013 newsletter). Daniels, who has hosted informal parties for Bay Area TJ alumni at his offices for the last three years, envisioned this event as the first in a series of focus group/ planning sessions.

Attendees discussed event ideas, strategies for connecting alumni to the School and its students, and recommendations for how best to keep alumni informed about TJ's renovation, Campaign needs, and the many ways that they can participate in the life of the school. After brunch, the group held their retro Jefferson pennants as they posed for a picture with Campaign for TJ Chair Mark Skolnik, Parent '11 (back row, far right), and his son Nate Skolnik, TJ '11 (back row, far left).

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Alum Encourages Newest Alums

— Chris Lewis, TJ '97, Harvard '02 (bottom photo, center), who currently serves as Vice Chairman of the Alexandria City School Board, visited the Class of 2014 at graduation rehearsal to stress the importance of alumni involvement.

Introducing Sonal Goda, TJ '95 (bottom photo, right; Principal Glazer is at left), a former Alumni Association President, he told students to be sure to provide their contact information to the alumni volunteers attending the post-graduation All Night Grad Party and to take full advantage of the powerful alumni network to which they now belong.

2014 Alumni Reunions

TJ '89 (25th): Begins 9/26 (Homecoming)

TJ '94 (20th): Begins 10/10 (Columbus Day weekend)

TJ '99 (15th): TBA