

# INTERNATIONALS CONNECT

April 2009

## HARRY S. TRUMAN GOES ON TRIAL AT FLUSHING INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

**Joseph Luft**

Principal, Flushing International High School

On August 6 and 9, 1945, Harry S. Truman orders atom bombs to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki respectively. These bombings resulted in the immediate deaths of 120,000 people, mostly civilians. On April 22, 2009 he stands trial at Flushing International High School.

Our students conducted a war crimes trial of President Truman for



The Jury

his decision to use the atomic bombs on Japan in 1945 and showed us what thoughtful and reflective work they can do with a complex subject. Guest judges from one of our internship sites, the Queens District Attorney's Office. The Executive Assistant District Attorney from Queens, Mr. Jesse J. Sligh, and the Community Coordinator for Special Prosecutions, Mr. Felix Martinez, Jr. were our two guest judges for the trial.

In preparation students researched the events surrounding the decision to use the bomb and took on roles as prosecution and defense attorneys and witnesses such as scientists, military officers, government officials, bombing survivors based on their historical research. The jury members were students from other classes across the school.



On the Stand

### Student Commentary:

"My personal feelings about the atomic bomb and this case is that I agree with the verdict although I was part of the defense. The atomic bomb was a horrible weapon and the decision of dropping it on Japan, it didn't have enough reasons." - Jessica Quizhpi

"This project helped me prepare for college because I realized that I need to think of things in different perspectives when I am studying history." - Elaine Liu

A special thanks to Michele DeBono and Erin Dowding of Flushing International High School on preparing our students for such a vigorous debate.

## GETTING TO KNOW OUR BOARD MEMBERS: JOSEPH LUFT, PRINCIPAL OF FLUSHING INTERNATIONALS HIGH SCHOOL & BOARD MEMBER OF INTERNATIONALS



Joseph Luft

By: Claire E. Sylvan

Valuing the voice of school leaders in making the strategic, policy and financial decisions needed at a board level, our board has always included a member who is an active principal of an International High School.

Since 2007, Joseph Luft has been the International High School principal on the board of directors. Joe is the founding principal of the Flushing International High School, which opened in Septem-

ber 2004, one of the first two schools which were directly initiated by the recently incorporated Internationals Network. Joe brings to the board, and to his position as principal, the benefit of having worked in three different International High Schools: Brooklyn IHS, IHS at LaGuardia Community College, and Flushing IHS. For six years, Joseph worked as an ESL/humanities teacher and took on various leadership roles at Brooklyn IHS. Through his experience at Brooklyn IHS, Joseph developed his interest in starting a new school based on the International Approach.

Joe brings to the board not only

his experience as an educator but his experience in education advocacy and in working in Washington DC at the National Office of a leading organization supporting Latinos in the United States, the ASPIRA Association, Inc. Joe worked closely with the Executive Director of ASPIRA, where he focused his efforts on relationships with the Board of Directors and local affiliates. After working with ASPIRA, Joe began his teaching career in the Washington, DC public schools and joined the Brooklyn International staff after his family moved to NYC.

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## The International High School at Prospect Heights: WNYC Reports On Our Work

Dariana Castro,  
Coordinator of Special Programs

Reporter Beth Fertig, from WNYC, recently visited our school to meet with a group of students and our Principal, in order to discuss the ways in which New York

City and Amsterdam schools deal with assimilation. Using our school as an example of successful work with newcomers, Beth addressed with the students the concept of what it means to be an "American". This was the very same question around which last year's 11<sup>th</sup> Grade English curricu-

lum revolved. The reporter used Mukta Mukta's narrative, eventually morphing into her college essay, where she explained in detail, how it feels to be a young Muslim woman assimilating to American culture.

*Look for the link on the last page to hear the full story (WNYC).*

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## JENNY LUMET WILL BE WRITING *THIS STRANGE THING CALLED PROM*

Dariana Castro,  
Coordinator of Special Programs

Last year's prom, which was the first for our school, was covered by the *New York Times*. Brooke Hauser followed our students for approximately five months, as they devised plans for the prom of our first graduating class. The

school was very happy with the beautifully written and touching piece. It received a great deal of attention, leading to Miramax Films purchasing the story rights from the New York Times.

Miramax recently announced that Jenny Lumet (writer of *Rachel Getting Married* and the daughter of Director Sidney Lumet) has

been hired to write the screenplay, loosely based on last year's article. Jenny visited our school and promises to write a story that is close to the true story of our students. If everything moves forward, the film is scheduled to be released in 2011.

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## FIVE PROSPECT HEIGHTS INTERNATIONAL SENIORS RECEIVE SEINFELD SCHOLARSHIPS!

Dariana Castro,  
Coordinator of Special Programs

Through our partnership with PENCIL, our students had the opportunity to apply for the Seinfeld Scholarship Program, which awards high school students who have achieved academic excellence and committed themselves to community service. Fifteen students from Brooklyn and Staten Island high schools were awarded this scholarship, five of which are current seniors at the International High School @ Prospect Heights. Two of the students completed last summer's Dominican Republic volunteer

program, while two others were accepted into this year's program, the other student has been volunteering at Methodist Hospital for a long period of time. The importance of volunteerism, which is one of the core elements of our school, was showcased through this scholarship.

Seinfeld Scholars receive a four-year scholarship to the college or university of the student's choice. The Program will cover any unmet need the students have, including books, room and board and tuition. Recipients are also given personal support throughout the year, as well as access to college prep programs, mentoring and service opportunities.

We are very thankful to the Seinfeld family for their generous contribution to our students' education. We are thrilled to know that they recognize the need for such assistance - this is testament to their support of immigrant youth success.

### **Congratulations to:**

Mukta Mukta,  
University of Vermont  
Harold Montilla,  
Syracuse University  
Freeman Degboe,  
University of Vermont  
Marie Guerrier,  
CUNY Brooklyn College  
Jessica Tan, Drexel University

# GETTING TO KNOW OUR BOAR MEMBERS: JOSEPH LUFT,

PRINCIPAL OF FLUSHING INTERNATIONALS HIGH SCHOOL & BOARD MEMBER OF INTERNATIONALS

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Joseph is a graduate of the New Leaders for New Schools urban principal preparation program and completed his principal residency at Interna-

tional High School at LaGuardia Community College in 2004.

Joseph has a BA in History and Hispanic Studies from Connecticut College and an MA in ESL/Secondary Educa-

tion from the George Washington University. He is the proud parent of three children; both his school-age children attend NYC public elementary schools.

## Find us in all five Boroughs

### Brooklyn

- Brooklyn International High School
- International High School at Prospect Heights
- International High School at Lafayette

### Bronx

- Bronx International High School
- International Community High School
- Pan American International High School at Monroe

### Manhattan

- Manhattan International High School

### Queens

- International High School at LaGuardia Community College
- Flushing International High School
- Pan American International High School

## Out of State

### California

- Oakland International High School

## Our Mission

Internationals Network for Public Schools' mission has been to develop and support a network of small public schools that successfully educate and graduate high school age, late-entry English language learner (ELL) immigrant students who come from more than 90 countries around the globe.

## Internationals Board of Directors

Tammy Battaglino • Ken Bradt • Oliver Frankel  
David Gilberg • Alvin Loshak • Joseph Luft  
Meena R. Mansharamani • Michael A. Pollack  
Claire E. Sylvan, Ed.D. • Norma Vega

## Internationals in the News

Prospect Heights on **WNYC**: <http://www.wnyc.org/news/articles/128940>

Language Magazine highlights Internationals in **Lady Liberte, Shares her French Heritage**, article:[http://www.languagemagazine.com/internetedition/langmag\\_pages/LadyLiberte\\_apr09.pdf](http://www.languagemagazine.com/internetedition/langmag_pages/LadyLiberte_apr09.pdf)

**Education Practitioners Unveil Innovative Programs To Close Achievement Gap:**  
Across the International High Schools, the graduation rate for ELL students is 65 percent for four-year graduates, as compared to 23.5 percent for ELL students in the New York City public school system.

**Click on the links to read the full stories.**

## Have a Story?

If you are from one of our schools (Faculty and/or student) and would like to include your story in the following newsletter, please email me:

[Janet.Parrales@internationalsnetwork.org](mailto:Janet.Parrales@internationalsnetwork.org)

**Subject:** Newsletter

Please be sure to identify which school you are writing about.

**Deadline:** May 22, 2009



***Opening Doors to the American Dream***

For more information please visit our website at:

[www.internationalsnps.org](http://www.internationalsnps.org)

Or Email us at:

[info@internationalsnps.org](mailto:info@internationalsnps.org)

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