

## Message from the Executive Director

Even in the midst of turbulent economic times, Internationals Network and our schools continue to pursue their



Dr. Claire E. Sylvan

excellent work, creating multiple pathways for our recently arrived immigrant youth to access the American Dream. While we cannot predict with certainty how the economic turmoil will affect our work, inevitably it will, whether due to increased animosity towards immigrants, slashing of school budgets, limitations on philanthropic contributions to our non-profit or deteriorating conditions in the lives of our students. In times of difficulty, more than ever, we must remember, "United We Stand". As our school communities, the nation, and world struggle through these times, our collaboration and Internationals Network lends strength to our efforts to mitigate these trying circumstances. Despite these deteriorating conditions, our schools and Network remain strong. I'd like to share with you some of our newest achievements in the 2008/09 School Year.

This school year kicked off on the West Coast with an exciting first! Our Oakland school held its first California Summer Institute this August to induct new teachers and provide learning opportunities for its returning staff. Remarkably 100% of Oakland's first year teachers returned to the school for the second year! the school. In NYC, we initiated our own teacher certification program, (Continued on Page 2)

## 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT



Jessica Lee

*Internationals Network for Public Schools*

On Friday, September 26, 2008 and Saturday, September 27, 2008, 11 principals from the eleven established International High Schools (10 in NYC and 1 in Oakland, CA), and the principal from the soon to be San Francisco International High School were joined by principal mentors, assistant principals, Internationals Network staff, 2 members from the Internationals Board of Directors, as well as some other special guests, for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Internationals Network for Public Schools Leadership Retreat. Truly reflective of the Internationals approach, participants spent two days working in collaborative groups to learn with and from one another around leadership development. Various topics discussed were the Network & the Schools, Heterogeneity in the Internationals Model, Building Capacity and Developing Leadership, and Building Future Leaders. It was a time for participants to think strategically about the schools, provide support and insight around various issues, as well as share common experiences across the network of schools.

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### CONT'D

(Continued from Page 1)

I-START, with 15 apprentices in seven schools. We are partnering with the NYC Department of Education and Long Island University's School of Education for this groundbreaking initiative in which apprentices work for one year under the guidance of a mentor Internationals teacher while taking courses.

The second year, they complete their courses and permanent certification requirements while they work as certified teachers.

This September we also expanded our pilot of the common language model, to ensure that this innovation is well-developed and strong

enough to be recreated in multiple environments, opening Pan American International High School at Monroe, in the Bronx. And finally, after much struggle, community engagement and support, International Community High School, International High School at Lafayette and PAIHS moved into permanent spaces. And just a few weeks ago, in November, on what turned out to be an historic election day for the nation, the 300-strong and still expanding NYC International High School faculty and staff gathered at International High School at Prospect Heights for our Sixth Annual NYC Fall Professional Development Day. Educators from 11 schools met over breakfast and lunch, in

workshops and in hallways to share experiences and learn from each other.

Did you see a San Franciscan in our schools this fall? Before the

New York, working with Principal Joseph Luft and the faculty of Flushing International High School, and has had the opportunity to visit most of the NYC schools. We are very



Current School Locations

holiday, Sonia Geerdes Principal of San Francisco International High School returned to the Bay Area to work on the opening of the school in Fall 2009. Sonia has spent three months in

excited that Oakland International will be joined by San Francisco International and together will form our Bay Area Internationals Network.

## COLLEGE READINESS

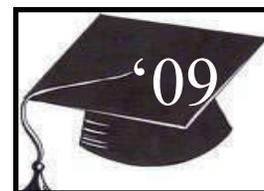
Camille Rodriguez  
Director,  
College Readiness

The Internationals Network for Public Schools professional development events for the start-up of the new school year showcased some of the college readiness work devel-

oped in the 2007-2008 year.

The Pan American International High School (PAIHS) presented their college readiness work at the August 2008 professional development institute. As a new school, they addressed how college readiness can be intro-

duced to earlier grades. Harnessing the power of immigrant role models, PAIHS piloted a mentor program by bringing in immigrant college students to work with PAIHS 9th graders. In addition, PAIHS worked with immigrant professionals to create a career day that would engage the 9th graders in thinking about future



career possibilities. PAIHS staff and their partner organization Make the Road New York also held a series of workshops for parents and guardians of 9th graders on  
(Continued on Page 4)

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## Meet our New Board Member: Meena R. Mansharamani



I found out about Internationals through Kim Smith at New Schools Venture Fund and Shivam Shah at The Gates Foundation. I had reached out to Kim and Shivam earlier this year to get their ideas on organizations I should learn more about in New York given my interest in education and my desire to channel my strategy and innovation background to the not-for-profit world.

Claire Sylvan and I connected over the summer. She was phenomenally generous in helping me learn more about Internationals. Over the past several months, I had the chance to visit three schools in Flushing, Corona and Manhattan. I was impressed with each of the principals and the high levels of energy and engagement in the classrooms. Every single visit pulled at my heart given my own immigrant history, coming to the U.S. from India at the age of four. The visits brought

**Meena R. Mansharamani** back my own struggle to learn English and assimilate in the context of deep-rooted traditions held firmly by my Mom, including her insistence that we speak Hindi at home and her pride in offering traditional food for our international food festivals (I remember how embarrassed I was when so few people bought my sweets versus the more mainstream options). I remember the tension between trying to sound cool with my newfound English skills and continuing the traditions that shaped me before I was even born.

From my own journey, I know how important having a sense of community is and also how important it is being held to a high standard of accomplishment. These had helped me in my own journey to Harvard and Wharton and other high-accomplishment environments, and I could see that Internationals was focused on delivering these notions of inclusion and excellence to its students.

When Claire asked me if I would be interested in joining the Board, I wanted to make sure I could add value and make a difference. I am committed to helping us get to even higher success rates, knowing that the current economy is forcing many trade-offs for our students. I also am committed to increasing the exposure of our students to other immigrant role models who are leaders across a variety of business sectors so that we can reinforce the message that sticking with it and thriving can lead to great outcomes.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

### Keynote Speaker: Carola Suárez-Orozco



Carola Suárez-Orozco

Janet PARRALES

On Tuesday, November 4, 2008 Internationals Network hosted

Professional Development day at the International High School at Prospect Heights. Faculty from all schools came to participate in various workshops that

covered Career Education 101: Preparing Students to Succeed at their Internships, Language Development, Fundraising for School-Based Programs and Projects, Reading Strategies for College Readiness, and many more.

Internationals Network was honored to have Carola Suárez-Orozco

as the Keynote speaker. Carola Suárez-Orozco is a Professor of Applied Psychology at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, & Human Development and Co-Director of Immigration Studies at NYU. She has published on such topics as the role of mentors

in facilitating positive development in immigrant youth, academic engagement, and immigrant family separations. Carola Suárez-Orozco was there to talk about her findings from the LISA study featured in her book with Irina Todorova, *Learning a New Land: Immigrant Students in American Society*.

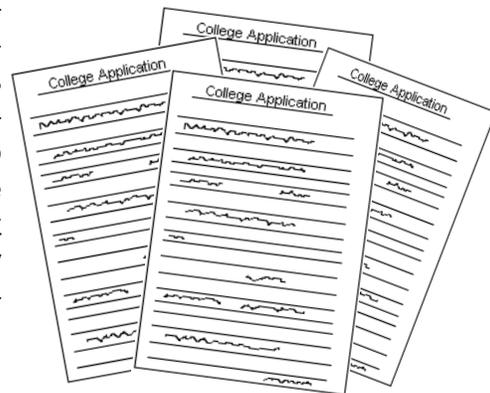
## COLLEGE READINESS CONT'D

(Cont'd from page 2)  
what it takes to get students ready for college.

The International High School @ Prospect Heights (IHSPH) presented their college readiness work at the November 2008 profes-

sional development event. IHSPH developed several tools for teachers to support their student applications to colleges. The first is a tool for teachers to help students develop their college essays with specific examples from new

IHSPH graduates. The second tool provides teachers guidance on how to craft reference letters that must often accompany student applications.



## Inside Your School

### INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL AT LAFAYETTE

Emily Bristle  
Coordinator of Special Programs

The International High School at Lafayette is thriving at our new location in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn. The new building has brought about all kinds of new opportunities for our students and teachers.

We kicked off the year with Field Day at Prospect Park at the beginning of October. It was a great day of fun and team-building, both for the students and staff. The beginning of the year also brought a great opportunity for our students to play on PSAL sports teams for the first time. Students are playing on the boys' soccer, girls' volleyball and bowling teams. The Lafayette Educational Complex boys' soccer team ad-

vanced to the quarter finals of their city-wide division, and the majority of the students on the team are from IHS. One student, Greg Iliassae, was featured on New York 1 television on November 7 as an outstanding scholar-athlete.

We have had many distinguished visitors this fall, including members of the German national parliament, teacher consultants from the New York City Writing Project, and an upcoming visit by Denver School System principals.

Last but not least, our arts programs are flourishing here at Lafayette! There was a Cultural Talent Show in November and a Winter Concert in December. Also, our 12th graders are adorning the hallways with large murals which are based on traditional Ghanaian house paintings



(see photos). Both the Bridges (11th grade) and Transitions (9/10) held poetry readings in our beautiful library to celebrate their "Where I'm From" poems.



### SAVE THE DATE!

#### *Connections Café Night*

Struggle to be Strong Project  
International High School @ Lafayette  
2630 Benson Ave  
Brooklyn, NY 11214  
March 12th, 2009  
6:00PM-8:00PM

On this special night, the 9th and 10th grade students of International High School at Lafayette will be releasing their self-published "Struggle to Be Strong" Anthology, along with original music, drama, artwork, and performance poetry about overcoming struggles in their lives. These amazing stories of courage include students' own memoirs as well as parent interviews in Native Language and English about the challenges immigrant families face today. Struggles include challenges with immigration, discrimination, homophobia, poverty, war, violence, conflicts with parents, peer pressure, self-esteem and other stories of courage.

# BROOKLYN INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL: INTERNSHIPS

Janet Parrales

During Junior year, students at Brooklyn International High School (BIHS) attend an Adolescent Issues class. Part of the class requirements is to complete a Career Research project. This project along with an *Interest Survey* form help the student pinpoint his/her career interests

*"I was excited because I never worked in the outside world before."*

*-New Youth Connections, Intern*

and helps the teacher develop the most "mutually beneficial" (Wambolt, Fred; Teacher BIHS) internship.

The students are each assigned a mentor throughout the internship process. Internships usually take place during the Spring semester and the interns report to their sites for 15 hours per week for 12 weeks.

One student had the opportunity to intern at New Youth Connections, a magazine for and by teens. She reported, "I was excited because I never worked in the outside world before." She had picked this internship site because she hopes to "become a famous writer for teens one day." At New Youth Connections

she did research on potential story topics for upcoming issues, wrote, edited, and even judged some contest entries.

She hopes to improve her writing skills as well as her interviewing skills. Her advice is that, "You don't have to be an expert writer, you just have to like it, and be willing to work on it."

Another student from BIHS was interested in science and as a result was able to intern at Columbia University. "I chose the lab in Columbia University. It's

*"I chose the lab in Columbia University. It's a lab in the Genetic Development department."*

*-Columbia University, Intern*

a lab in the Genetic Development department."

The department he worked in is researching which genes affect the development of kidneys. During his internship he was given the task of "sectioning." He said, "I had to cut the kidneys in gel into very thin pieces using a special machine." He also learned about DNA purification, removing bacteria from the DNA. He is very excited about working in a lab in the future and is very satisfied with the ex-

perience.

The next student was looking to intern at an elementary school but was instead paired up with Prospect Heights International High School. The intern assisted in making copies, grading homework, and helped other student during class. The intern reported to have learned to be more patient than before, "I thought it was hard to be a student. But I changed my mind, teachers work even harder than students."

At the end of their internship, the students are required to create a website about their internship, their experience, duties, and skills learned. The website is then presented to a few classmates and incoming Junior students. After the presentation the floor is open for questions, and

*"Before my internship, I thought it was hard to be a student. But I changed my mind, teachers work even harder."*

*-Prospects Heights IHS, Intern*

fellow classmates, teachers, and mentors have the opportunity to learn more about the interns experience and recommendations.

## 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

### **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@gmail.com**

**Subject:** Newsletter

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

**Deadline:** 3rd Friday of every month

### ***Our Mission***

*Internationals' mission is to provide quality education for recently arrived immigrant students by developing and networking small, public high schools based on the Internationals Approach, a unique educational model through which students explore interdisciplinary academic content in learner-centered environments with linguistic heterogeneity. Internationals students learn collaboratively in small groups with students of other cultures and languages. They build on the strengths they bring as young adolescents who have often traveled great distances to arrive in our classrooms. Working with other students on academic projects fosters active student use of and growth in language development.*

## **Internationals Board of Directors**

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



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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