

# Leave Your MARK

Announcements, News and Creativity from the Landmark Community

## Celebrate!

From the editors at Leave Your MARK Newsletter we want to wish you a joyful holiday season and a happy new year!

We discussed making New Year's resolutions – you know, those things we often create and almost never accomplish? However, instead we focused our energy on creating poems and stories that had the true spirit of the holiday season, along with updates from Landmark about some of the memories we've made from 2015.

We're looking for more contributions from our community – your voice is valuable and we want to hear it! Leave your mark in the next issue...

Cheers,

LYM



## A message from the LMHS Dance Team!

On December 18<sup>th</sup> 2015 the Landmark Dance Team will showcase their first performance of the year. The mix consists of three fast-paced songs that are very different from each other. The songs are separated by genre and range from throwbacks to recent hits. As a team we are really looking forward to capturing the audience's attention with our dances choreographed by Diamond Fernandez, Luis Rivera, Kimberly Volquez, and Tanaye Langston. We want to thank our hardworking team members who worked long afternoons to learn and perfect these routines, especially our new members from the ninth grade class. The Landmark student body and staff will be in for a very hype and fun performance. We can't wait to show them what we got!

## Save the Date!

### December 23

#### Ice-Skating Trip

From 9:00am to 1:30pm. Please get your permission slip signed and bring \$6!

### Dec 24-Jan 3

#### Holiday Recess

Have a safe and happy holiday! See everyone in 2016 ☺

### January 25-29

#### Mini PBATS

A full week of project-based learning!



# Holidays

**Let's celebrate our traditions, our culture and this festive time of year**

## Christmas Traditions in Queens, New York by Rosario Rodriguez

When it comes to winter, the smells that comes to my mind are of Italian food and desserts. My family in Queens has a Christmas party where they invite family and friends over. Usually each separate family brings their own favorite dish and all together we make a big buffet. One of my family's friends owns an Italian restaurant so they bring trays of Italian food. My mother *loves* to cook desserts so she makes cheesecake, cookies, chocolate fudge cake and Peaches pie.

## My Culture: Honduras by Jenneva Flores

Being Honduran is unique: I was born and raised in America but my parents were born and raised in Honduras. In Honduras, we speak two different languages, Garifuna and Spanish. Garifuna is an Arawakan language. Honduras is located in Central America. Even though I only visited Honduras twice, I'm still very connected with my country. I don't really speak Garifuna but I understand it. My parents speak Garifuna fluently and they always speak it at home. In Honduras, we also have a type of dance called Punta. Punta is Garifuna music and it's a traditional dance style performed in celebrations. I love Punta, I always dance it at family parties and when we all come together it's always a good time. A traditional dish in Honduras is Baleadas, which is composed of a flour tortilla, often quite thick, folded in half and filled with mashed fried beans. I enjoy when my mother makes it at home because it reminds me of why I love my country so much.



## The Scent by Kevin Baltazar

When I think about Christmas, the smells that come to mind are the smell of food - chicken, bread, cookies, and lasagna. This reminds of a family who is gathered together and is ready to eat. Another smell is the smell of cologne and perfume that reminds me of people being dressed up and smelling good. The smell of fire reminds me of a house that has a chimney where smoke is coming out. The smell of hot apple cider and hot chocolate reminds me of people celebrating with those that they love or enjoy to be around.

## Christmas Eve 2013 by Rosario Rodriguez

The night of Christmas Eve was the end of a special chapter. The year was 2013. One month before this day, Jayla had invited her boyfriend, Bruce, to her birthday party at her house and they had a good time. A week before Christmas, her boyfriend had invited her to his running team's early Christmas party where they had to go and exchange presents. They danced and ate plates of fruit salad then he walked her home. On the 21st of December Bruce invited Jayla to his birthday party. Jayla had already met his mother, step-dad, brothers, cousins, and his aunts. On the day of Bruce's birthday, Jayla got to meet Bruce's dad and his step-mom. Bruce's dad gave Jayla some Ferrero Rocher chocolate. When they got back to Bruce's house his mother gave them dinner and candy bags. It had been the perfect week: having dates everyday after school, going to Bruce's running team, taking him to his karate class, and going on walks to the park on their block. Jayla and Bruce lived across the street from each other. However, this good chapter in Jayla's life had ended in a heartbreak.

As a tradition, Jayla had gone to Queens with her father's side of the family. That's when Jayla's world took a big turn from this sad moment: Jayla's cousin, Allen, asked her to dance with him. He knew Jayla very well so he noticed something was wrong. However, Jayla *loves* music. Allen asked if it was Bruce who had caused her this bad moment. "Yes," Jayla said. Allen would do anything possible to make Jayla smile again. Things seemed to get better. She would get over it.



## World Aids Day at Landmark High School: What you don't know can harm you

World AIDS Day, commemorated on December 1st every year since 1988, is a time when we recognize the millions of people impacted by HIV/AIDS, the lives lost and the families forever torn apart by the disease. Since 1995, the President of the United States has made an official proclamation World AIDS Day.

World AIDS Day is dedicated to educating people on HIV/AIDS prevention, challenging stereotypes and myths, raising awareness about the AIDS pandemic and mourning those who have died of the disease.

An estimated 2 million people a year die from AIDS-related illnesses, 270,000 are children. Worldwide more than 36 million people have died, and an estimated 63 million are living with the virus (HIV) that causes AIDS.

Here at Landmark HS, several students distributed red

ribbons - the global symbol for solidarity with HIV-positive people and those living with AIDS - to students and staff. Spark displayed World AIDS Day panels in the hallway so students could write messages of hope and solidarity to create Landmark's own World AIDS Day panel and were offered a Life Saver candy to symbolize the saving of their own lives. Ms. Alexis Thompson, Public Health Educator for NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene was on hand to provide HIV/AIDS and other STD awareness to Eric, Elvia, Brian and Theo's advisories and Sean's science classes.

Thank you Neha Sobti and the Landmark community for commemorating World AIDS Day 2015!!!

-By dequi kioni-sadiki

### **HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIV/AIDS? Take this quiz!**

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS?                               | True | False |
| 2. It is possible to have HIV, but not have AIDS?                   | True | False |
| 3. What are the four (4) bodily fluids that transmit HIV?           |      |       |
| 4. The only way to know if someone has HIV is to get a HIV test:    | True | False |
| 5. HIV is curable:  | True | False |
| 6. You can lubricate a male condom with Vaseline:                   | True | False |
| 7. Using two condoms will provide extra protection:                 | True | False |
| 8. Lamb skin condoms protect against the transmission of HIV:       | True | False |
| 9. You can contract HIV by kissing:                                 | True | False |
| 10. Most people know they have HIV:                                 | True | False |
| 11. You can look at someone and know right away that they have HIV? | True | False |

**GET THE FACTS so you can PROTECT YOURSELF (SPARK room 439)**



# Landmark Sports News



## Team Jaime Wins LMHS Superbowl III

Captain **Jamie Mikkelsen** had his team prepared and excited for the Landmark Super Bowl II. Team Jaime started the game quickly with three touchdowns in the first half. Team Isaiah did not give up though, scoring two second half touchdowns with tremendous efforts from **Isaiah**, **Anthony Quiles**, **Brian Rosario**, **Dennis Quinn**, **Joenxi Rodriguez**, **Sateek Johnson**, and **Joan Cruz**. Ultimately, Team Jaime showed too much teamwork and pulled away at the end to a final score of 40-13. Rookie **James Anthony** pressured Team Isaiah quarterbacks consistently registering one official sack but also forcing a number of bad passes with his effort. Another outstanding rookie, **Ibrahim Diallo**, made a great catch on a crucial touchdown reception. **Tiara Martinez** made great contributions with numerous receptions and a beautiful catch on a point after attempt. Senior **Elijah Dawson** continued his domination of the Landmark Flag Football League with a long touchdown run and a skillful point after reception. **Dmitri Fils Aime**, named **MVP of the playoffs**, was all over the field with one long touchdown run to go with 3 touchdown receptions and a point after reception. Captain **Jamie Mikkelsen** showed no nervousness playing with the pressure of a Super Bowl on him.

The following is an interview with captain Jamie Mikkelsen, senior player Elijah Dawson and female all-star player Tiara Martinez. Reporting for this article by John Lucas, Tiffany Patnett, Jadelyn Vasquez and Alicia Sanders.

**Do you ever see Landmark being able to have a Varsity football team?**

**Tiara:** I feel that we should since there's a lot of good people, actual good people

**Jamie:** I don't think it's going to happen because we need a field for it and we can't get one.

**Eli:** Plus the equipment, and what if somebody gets injured? Like, who's going to pay for that? So I don't think its going to happen either

**What made you decide to join the flag football league at Landmark?**

**Eli:** I play football outside of school so I knew I could take my talent to Landmark, feel me?

**Jamie:** I've been playing football for a couple of years now so I decided to play here.

**Tiara:** My dad is quarterback on his team so I felt like I should play also. I'm a female so it makes females look better.

**What was your favorite part of football this year at Landmark?**

**Eli:** Making sure everybody on my team gets involved. I rely on everybody I made sure everybody had a part to play, that's how we got the championship.

**Tiara:** My favorite part was in the championship game I caught an extra point so I felt good about that. If someone on our team did something good we give them props or a pound.

**Jamie:** My favorite part was throwing all those touchdown passes to Eli every single game.

**Do you enjoy playing these games? Why?**

**Tiara:** I enjoy it because once again my family [members] are big football fans. Also being a girl, it kind of sucks because some guys won't throw the ball because you're a girl and they think you might drop it or something. But us girls got to show them wrong, that's why I like it.

**Jamie:** It made me get along with people in other grades like Eli and some 9<sup>th</sup> graders that are playing

**Eli:** I just enjoy playing; it's just something I do that makes me very happy.

**What closing comments do you have for the Landmark community?**

**Eli:** "Hard work pays off"

**Tiara:** "Team work and unity"

**Jamie:** "We scraped them that's all I have to say."



## Freedom Corner: Poetry, Short stories and Creativity

*Students at Leave Your MARK read traditional Christmas poems and wrote their own updated versions for 2015 in a New York City setting. The poems that follow are inspired by the poems "In the Bleak Midwinter" by Christina Rossetti and "Christmas Bells" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.*

### in the bleak midwinter

by brittney nanton

in the cold december air,  
the trees lay frozen in place  
and the sky is dim, making a beautiful contrast between the crystal snowflakes  
falling ever so peacefully.

in the midst of all this peacefulness, a new life has just arrived.  
the cries being heard throughout the two story apartment building, even the  
homeless being blessed with the noise.  
people crowded around the mother and child,  
almost as if they were creating a barrier between them and the cold air outside.  
their coos and awes circling around the room.

though sadly, i too am cold.  
too imperfect to be blessed with the presence of a newborn king.  
the wind from outside has attached to my skin,  
and not even something as warm as a tender embrace can instill warmth inside  
me.

how can i greet him without my coldness touching his skin,  
for i am too afraid to scar him with all my flaws.

i guess i have nothing else to do,  
but admire from afar.

### Christmas Bells

By Kimberly Volquez

Church bells ringing,  
Angels singing,  
Love is all around the air  
Love for the close ones.

Church bells ringing,  
Angels singing,  
Love for the lost ones  
Love for the ones who are in need.

Church bells ringing,  
Angels singing,  
Much has happened people crying,  
people dying,  
we are all hurting.

Church bells ringing,  
Angels singing,  
but we shall stay together as a family  
and celebrate each other  
as we celebrate the one  
who brought us together.



### You Will Have It All One Day

by Alicia Sanders

It's mid-winter and I have nothing to wear but the thin jacket on  
my back, the snow is slowly falling down. I look up to the sky and a piece  
hits my cheek it's cold and makes me shiver I wipe my face and keep  
walking.

As I walk along I pray to almighty god in heaven to help me get  
past this cold winter. "Oh god in heaven please make a way, make a way  
for me to have a safe delivery"

My baby, my baby is here, my lovely baby, mommy is sorry you  
had to born in this wet box, today, just for today will you know this  
feeling, I will make a way, a way for us, a way for you.

I leaned down and kissed my beautiful baby boy, I felt  
something all around around us, I smiled, I can feel them, every single  
one, the angels sent from god.

I can't give you much now, if I were born from wealth I would  
give you every little thing you heart desires, if I were the present I would  
you give you the nation, I am not rich nor the president, I am but a simple  
mommy, your mommy I will give you everything and anything within my  
power including my heart. <3

# STEM: What's going on in Math + Science at Landmark?

## Global Warming: True or Not?

Global Warming. Some people might not think about it as much, others just don't believe in it.

Haven't you noticed that there has been a serious weather changing in the past month... Uh

Yeah. Today Friday December 11th, 2015 it is approximately 60 degrees, tomorrow Saturday

December 12th, 2015 it will be 64 degrees and Sunday December 13th, it will be 66 degrees...

WHAT IS THIS, isn't it suppose to be snowing right now, last year in 2014 it was snowing even in November... you might think this weather is just bipolar, NOO it is Global warming, glaciers are melting, the climate is changing (obviously) and people are just simply not taking care of this

Earth. According to CNN, global temperature has already risen halfway to the two degree warming limit. This means that Earth is halfway to a dangerous climate increase that could lead to more intense hurricanes, more endangered species, Arctic ice melting and crops decreasing. It might seem boring now but you have to think about the next generation and how they're going to be affected.. your kids.. even your grandchildren or great great GREAT grandchildren, they're the ones that are going to be affected not you. So 50 years from now when the world is under water it is because you didn't care about the earth. It all starts with YOU. -Camille Sosa

## Bronx River Forest Field Trip

Students from 10th grade Biology went to the Bronx River Forrest before the Thanksgiving break as an ending project on their unit on ecology and the environment. Throughout the 10 week unit, and especially on the field trip, students had been studying how equilibrium is lost and restored in natural environments with emphasis on the unique urban ecology of New York City. The 10th grade students focused on making and recording observations as scientists while keeping a scope on keystone and invasive species. Students took what they learned from the trip and used the data in writing ecological reports through the perspective of an EPA agent. On the field trip at Bronx Forest, the three stations students participated in involved invasive species removal, water quality monitoring and an ecological restoration tour. -Reporting and photos by Living Environment teacher Shawn Rajan



## Taking Neuroscience Out of the Classroom and into a Real-World Lab!

This fall, the senior Neuroscience classes made two trips to Rockefeller University to work with neuroscientists in a real research lab.

### DNA Lab: Isolating and Cloning Mitochondrial DNA using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)

In the DNA experiment, we used a toothpick to gather skin cells from our cheek. We added something called primer and we used PCR to make millions of copies of a piece of our DNA.

Then, we used pipettes to put our DNA into a gel that separates DNA based on size and charge to see the results and if we had a lot of DNA.



### Worm School: Screening potential candidate genes for a role in learning and memory using RNAi gene knockout in *C. elegans* glial cells.

In the worm experiment, we had to wash bacteria (worm food) off of *C. elegans* worms and keep washing them using fresh water. We then trained them to learn that benzaldehyde smell does not mean food. We put them on a plate with benzaldehyde on one side to see if they learned. Some of the worms were genetically modified and we were trying to find out if their genes affected learning and memory. One gene might have messed up the worms' memory because they kept going to the benzaldehyde smell. The scientists at Rockefeller will retest this gene and see if we made a huge discovery.



-Reporting by Danangie Acevedo.

Photos courtesy of Neuroscience teacher Erik Shold.



## The Twinkle In Her Eyes

A short story by Tiffany Patnett

"Why do they do this?" Jojo thought to herself as she was slipping and sliding down the street. She was 15 minutes late for her date but she didn't care; she was still mourning the loss of her relationship with Greg. She kept looking back thinking what she possibly did wrong. She must have done something wrong to be dumped right before Christmas. Was it the way she always worried about him? Was it because of her attitude that would always lead to fights? Maybe it was because he didn't see the twinkle in her eyes anymore. Snowflakes fell just like the tears from her puffy eyes a few minutes ago.

She looked up at the sign, "Well, here goes nothing," she said as she opened the doors to the diner. Immediately the smell of peppermint and gingerbread engulfed her nose. Usually something that would bring her happiness was just a reminder that here she is alone a few days before Christmas trying to find the blind date her parents set her up with.

"Come on sweetie, it's not the end of the world," her mother said as she was watching her baby break down before her. "I didn't even like him, he wasn't good enough for you



anyway," her father said as he held her in his arms. She wanted to scream and shout but the tears and sobs were holding her angry words back. "H-he was g-g-good enough for me, I-I'm the o-o-one who messed up," she sobbed as her dad held her tighter.

Now here she is, standing in a diner full with happiness and joy, looking like the odd one out. She sniffled; she didn't know if it was from the cold or her broken heart. Her red Afro was in a frizzy mess and her brown eyes were red and glossy - evidence that not long ago she shed some tears. She scanned the room looking for this supposedly "amazing" blind date that her parents picked out for her. Her eyes landed on a girl whose eyes were staring back at her. The stranger blushed as she mouthed, "Jojo?" smiling. Then, Jojo did the thing that she thought was impossible: she smiled back at her. Jojo couldn't decide if the girl's hazel eyes twinkled at her or if it was the Christmas lights from above. Maybe, Christmas wouldn't be that bad this year.

**December 24 11:50 PM**

**South Korea , DMZ**

**It's only 10 minutes to Christmas and I can't be with my family again this year. They are all the way on the other side of the world. I miss my kids the most. Maybe they're sleeping, or perhaps they are watching a movie. My wife says they miss me a lot and I miss them. Christmas would be a lot better for them if I was simply there, but I can't be. It's been like this for nearly ten years. I remember that I decided to join the armed forces after 9/11. I wanted justice, to protect and to serve as my father did in Vietnam, and my grandfather in WWII. I guess it's in the family to be in the military. I remember how I haven't spent Christmas with my family since 2005. After that, I went through training and I ended up next to North Korea. Although it's tough for my family it is necessary for me to be here. I need to protect these people and I have made an oath to defend democracy within the United States and abroad. I hardly see the kids anymore but a man has to do what he has to do. Then again it makes me sad and lonely.**

**-Carl Kuzniewski**

Dark Christmas.



No

lights,

Just darkness.

I sit in the corner,

alone and cold. My

family lies in front of me.

I see no movement. I see

no white air from their mouths.

Am I sad? Of course. Am I afraid? Can't tell.

With the clock hand I move. Can time go faster?

But nothing, just darkness. Christmas is happiness and

family. Christmas is now red and scary... I hear someone

They're getting closer, BANG! I did what needed to be done,

Now they lie by my family. Cold and safe. As I hear the voices

get louder

and louder,

I crawl to

my corner

which gets darker and darker.

-Jadelyn Vasquez

## This Christmas

Snow flakes falling onto the window sill  
Covering the porch in white frozen fairy dust  
Cheers and happiness flowing all around the room  
Standing by the fireplace is where I feel warm  
It's where I embrace our passion  
Under the mistletoe is where we declare our love  
Merry Christmas from me, and a piece of my heart.

-Kimberly Volquez

## Happy New Year!

### College and Career Readiness News:

College Now applications for Baruch are due by Jan 5<sup>th</sup>

College Now applications for BMCC - due by Jan 13<sup>th</sup>

College Now applications for John Jay - due by Jan 29<sup>th</sup>

Financial Aid Applications (FAFSA) start February 1st -  
Seniors, make sure you bring in proof of income!

\*Individual appointments for seniors and their parents to  
complete college applications during Regents week\*  
*Please see Karina*

**Shout Out** to Yvanessa demosthenes, Danangie, and  
Jennifer Bencosme! They are the first 3 seniors to receive  
acceptance letters to college. Makes for a great holiday!

**Shout Out** to Angela Flores and Sophia Alvarez, who are  
proving they will make awesome mentors! They have  
already gone above and beyond the call of duty. Thank  
you!



Leave Your MARK in the next issue! Email [landmark.shannon@gmail.com](mailto:landmark.shannon@gmail.com) with submissions!