

THE JOURNAL

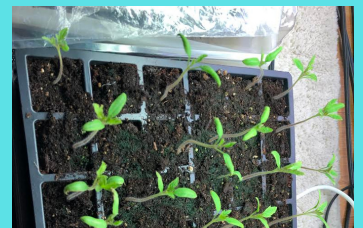
*Stamford High Schools'
International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Newsletter*



The Extended Essay: A Spotlight on Megan Armstrong

Have you ever read “flown in space” on a supermarket label? Tomato seeds have been making trips to the International Space Station for the past 20 years. IB Diploma Candidate and SHS senior Megan Armstrong was recently named an Honorary Canadian Space Program Scientist for contributing to experiments in the field of space farming, a critical ingredient in the design of a life support system needed to send humans to other planets. Megan participated in real-life science in space, helping organizations like NASA, the Canadian Space Agency (CSA), and the Center for the Advancement of Science in Space (CASIS). Megan’s experience is part of the IB Diploma Programme’s Extended Essay process in which students, under the supervision of an expert faculty member, craft a research question in a field of interest. Megan’s idea germinated in a meeting with her Extended Essay Supervisor, SHS teacher Susan Dougherty. While working on a project for NASA, Mrs. Dougherty recalled a scientist discussing her own daughter’s research with space seeds and reached out to her so Megan could conduct her own research. Megan received a mixture of space-flown and Earth-based seeds (Heinz 3402 F1 seeds) and monitored and recorded their growth over the summer, showcasing microgravity’s effects on seed germination. Megan submitted her results to the database to be compared against other scientist’s

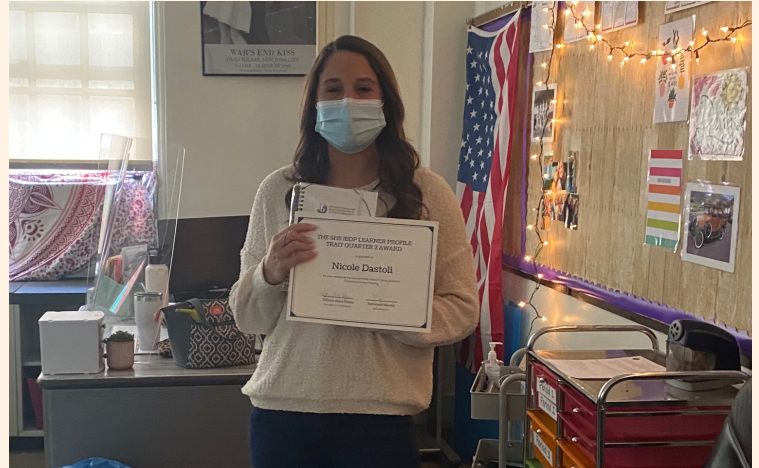
collected data, and her research blossomed into a comprehensive study of DNA alterations in microgravity including NASA’s own “Twin Study.” While most students relaxed over the summer, Megan spent her days tending to over 30 large tomato plants while meticulously collecting data. Her tomato seeds were launched on SpaceX’s ninth commercial resupply for NASA to the International Space Station last year. The seeds remained aboard the space station for 37 days, then caught a ride back to Earth on the returning SpaceX Dragon cargo spacecraft before being distributed to experiments across the United States and Canada. After the completion of her experiment, Megan harvested numerous tomatoes that were eaten at home, made into a sauce, and shared with her family and friends who supported her efforts. Her final draft of her Extended Essay, with all of her findings, will be submitted to the IB in March for scoring.



The Learner Profile Trait Awards

Staff Winner

Ms. Dastoli has been an Extended Essay (EE) Supervisor for the last three years at Stamford High School as a specialist in history. She was nominated by Diploma Candidate Emily Tippelmann, her EE mentee. Emily nominated Ms. Dastoli for being balanced, caring, inquiring and a good communicator. Emily states "I nominated Ms. Dastoli because she is one of the nicest and most caring teachers I've ever encountered... and she has helped me so much. She is balanced because she has had a tough year and still continues to power through and care for her students like no other. She has communicated with me on the topic of my EE very well, and I do not know where I would be in that process without her. She has helped me find good sources along with how to structure my EE." It is the hard work of Ms. Dastoli and all of the Programme's EE supervisors and coordinator that allow Diploma Candidates to excel. Congratulations Ms. Dastoli; this award is well deserved.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SECOND QUARTER NOMINEES

Matan Coll: Knowledgeable
Aaron Sekplorm-Awadzi: Reflective
Nusrat Uddin: Reflective, Thinker, & Knowledgeable

Kristin Amon: Knowledgeable
Beth Gillin: Caring
Ella Kraiz: Caring
Katherine Wingertzahn: Caring, Open-minded & Communicator

Alumni Spotlight



Meet IB Diploma Recipient Isabella Apablaza. Isabella, fondly known as Izzy, graduated from SHS in June 2020 and enlisted in the United States Marine Corp. Izzy attended boot camp, graduating on December 18 with honors. She was promoted to rank Private First Class. Izzy immediately left for combat training, which she finished in January of 2021. She is now on her way to train in her Military Occupational Speciality where she will study CBRN or Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Nuclear Defense. Words cannot express the pride her family and former teachers feel for her. We look forward to continuing to follow Izzy's journey as she serves to protect this great nation.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR CORNER

Creativity, Activity, Service & The Extended Essay

C.A.S. Updates

Second Quarter C.A.S. Highlights:

- **Creativity:** Students worked on projects including the creation of Instagram accounts such as a Daily Dose of Positivity and Cookieawookie, playing the violin, engaging in photography, writing WattPad stories, entering writing competitions, creating comic books, learning Chinese, building websites, playing the piano, learning to cook and taking part in the Debate Club at Stamford High School.
- **Activity:** While winter sports were on hold, students worked on their physical health by engaging in activities such as walking, skiing, rowing, indoor track training and shoveling driveways.
- **Service:** Students continued to serve the community despite Covid-19 restrictions. For example, a group of students planned and implemented a campaign to bring much needed supplies to families at the Ronald McDonald House for Valentine's Day. Others partook in events such as a Soundwater's Trash Cleanup, tutoring at Building One Community and Mayor's Youth Leadership Council's Thanksgiving, and the Body Art Photography Event.



Extra-Curricular Honors

- IB Course Candidate Charlotte Saunders had her work accepted into the Hindsight is 2020 Virtual High School Student Art Exhibition at MOCA in Westport. Her work is currently on display.
- IB Diploma Candidate Megan Armstrong was named Honorary Canadian Space Programme Scientist.
- IB Diploma Candidate Gianna Saviano was recruited to Bucknell University for rowing.

Extended Essay Updates

Senior IBDP students have been hard at work and successfully submitted full drafts. A special thanks goes out to the EE supervisors who have provided valuable feedback and guidance to their students. Viva Voce reflections sessions are underway, and we look ahead to finalizing all work in Quarter 3.

Junior IBDP students have landed on their subject areas and paired with supervisors. We look forward to a collaboration with Yelena Klompus from the Ferguson Library, who will take the students on a virtual tour of the varied digital and print resources available to assist our students with their process.

What's New In The IBDP

New Courses: Every year, the IB Diploma Programme looks at student course requests and listens to the voices of its students to select new courses to be offered the following school year. This year, three new courses were selected. The first is IB Biology. With the help of Mr. Cozza and Mr. Halmeck, who both agreed to go to IB training for the course, SHS is now able to offer its students a two-year Biology model that thoroughly prepares students for college endeavors in the field of Biology. We are also pleased to announce that after the training of Dr. Martin, we will be able to add IB Environmental Systems and Societies to the Stamford Public Schools Program of Studies. This unique course is considered a hybrid course in the IB world as it allows students to study science while still also focusing on the role of individuals and societies in that science. This has already quickly become one of our most popular courses among sophomore IBDP Candidates and has allowed the Programme to open up more paths for students. Finally, we will also be offering IB Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches at the SL level next year to support students who may not have already taken Pre-Calculus but want a rigorous, yet fun Math class. This course will develop student's understanding of statistics, trigonometry and Pre-Calculus and Calculus to name a few. Thanks to Ms. Burns's love for the course, we know this course will be a hit.

New Trainings: Mr. Puhl and Programme Coordinator Mrs. Clark Flynn attended Approaches to Teaching and Learning (ATL) Training in December. This six-day training gave both IB faculty members the ability to plan for a 3-5 year push toward ATL training in the IB Programme. The goal is to further build IB teacher capacity to embrace the IB's methods of teaching and learning which include inquiry, research, communication, collaboration, differentiation, self management and more.



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2021 College Acceptances

Congratulations to our seniors on their college acceptances so far!

- **Anthony De Paz-** Quinnipiac, Sacred Heart, Pace University, Nichols and Southern CT
- **Ruby Li-** Committed to Cornell University
- **Daniel Sarria-** University of Virginia, Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute, Embry Riddle, Purdue, Ohio State, Western Michigan, Florida Tech and Illinois Tech
- **Gianna Saviano-** Committed to Bucknell University

Upcoming Events

February 25 & 26- Virtual Sophomore Information Session to discuss the IB course(s) that are right for you to take as a junior/senior Course Candidates

March 4 & 5- Virtual Freshman Information Session for students interested in applying for the IB Diploma Programme as a Sophomore. We will go over schedule choices you should be making for next year!