

# The Guardian: A Guidance and Career Center Newsletter

## Falls Church High School

### From the desk of the Director of Student Services and the Career Center Specialist of FCHS:

Guess what? You survived the first quarter of school!!!! As far as we can tell there are no casualties and all is well in the halls of Falls Church HS.

There has been lots to celebrate lately, our college attendance rate increased 8% between the Class of 2004 and the Class of 2005 and our SOL passing rate in many categories have made significant strides.

In July, counselors from Falls Church High School presented data from a yearlong study to the Virginia School Counselors Association Summer Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia. This was the first time for a guidance department in Virginia to develop and present a project of this magnitude that researched student/teacher attitudes on academic performance. This ongoing research will now focus on attendance. As a result of Falls

Church High School's planning and research, many guidance departments in the county and in the state are using our model. In addition, this successful presentation was shared with Falls Church staff at the beginning of the school year

We are now in Phase 111 of PLC-"Pillars of Progress". This process allows teachers to reflect on areas of information dissemination, assessment, academic achievement, remediation and asks if the data reflects desired results.

Teachers, Counselors and Administrators are committed to improving our SOL scores, college preparation, a continued upward trend of our SAT scores and increase the number of students that attend post-secondary education.

Michael Brooks, **Director, Student Services**

Renee' Foster, **Career Ctr Spc**

Mr. Brooks and Mrs. Foster hard at work....



Those two are always thinking of ways to keep Falls Church HS in the forefront.

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### Special points of interest:

- Falls Church High School's CEEB Code is 470-792
- Falls Church High School has a National Hispanic Honorable Mention Finalist
- Web-based Resources
- There is a new Guidance Counselor on staff, as well as, the alphabet sorting of students has changed.

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## New Faces in Guidance: Sarah Borrud and Kate Salerno

Sarah Borrud is a new counselor at Falls Church High School. She is responsible for students with last names Sen-Wi. She is anxious to meet all of her students and to provide resources whenever possible. She began her college career at Texas Lutheran University where she earned a B.A. in

Education. After teaching for a number of years she earned a Master's degree in School Counseling from George Washington University. Prior to accepting a position at Falls Church High School she was a counselor at Stone Middle School in Centreville. In her free time, she enjoys reading,

gardening, decorating and most of all, traveling. Kate Salerno fills a newly created position, Assessment Coach for Falls Church HS. Kate graduated from Marymount University in Arlington, Va. with a Bachelor of Arts degree with Concentrations in Political Science and History. She worked

## New Guidance Faces, continued

as a manager for Great American Restaurants for over 10yrs. She earned a Master's Degree in Education from George Mason University with a dual teaching certificate in ESOL and Social Sciences. She taught World History and 20th Century American History for two years in Connecticut then returned to the DC area in 2001. She held the position of Coordinator of the Summit Program at Oakton High School for three years, as well as the Class of 2004 co-sponsor. The Summit Program is an alternative program designed to work intensely with students who have chronic behavioral problems in the regular school setting. Last year, she returned to history teaching and freshmen class co-sponsor.

### Guidance Counselors (New Alphabet breakdown)

Dr. Cassell	A-Casti	207-4075
Ms. Ellis	Castr-Gom	207-4068
Ms. Scott	Gon-Liv	207-4071
Ms. Collins	Lo-O'	207-4070
Ms. Mooney	Oa-Sel	207-4067
Ms. Borrud	Sen-Wi	207-4026
Ms. Jackson	Wo-Z/STAR	207-4069



**Cheer up!!! No matter who your Guidance Counselor is, help is always available!!**

## National Hispanic Recognition Program

Christina Teixeira, a member of the senior class at Falls Church HS, has been recognized by the College Board's National Hispanic Recognition Program.

The National Hispanic Recognition Program, established in 1983, is a College Board program that provides national recognition of the exceptional academic achievements of Hispanic high school seniors and identifies them for postsecondary institutions.

Students enter the program by taking the

Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) as high school juniors and by identifying themselves as Hispanic. From more than 150,000 students nationwide, approximately 4,500 of the highest scoring students were initially identified. Based on further evidence of their academic achievements, a select group of 4,800 students have been recognized by the program as a Scholar or Honorable Mention Finalist.

The College Board is a not-for-profit mem-

bership organization whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the association is composed of more than 4,700 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. Among its best-known programs are the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT, and the Advanced Placement. The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, it's embodied in all its programs.

## SAT or ACT? What's the difference?

Many students and parents ask should I take both. And there is no easy answer. Both tests are recognized and accepted by colleges.

However, there are some differences in the tests, such as, what the test is assessing, the subjects covered, how the test is scored, the level of math, and how they view "guessing".

The ACT is an achievement test. It covers

reading, science, English, math and the essay is optional. The score scale is 1 to 36. The types of math covered in the exam are Algebra I & II, Geometry and Trigonometry. And students are not penalized for guessing. On the other hand, the SAT is an aptitude test. It covers critical reading, math, writing and the essay is mandatory. The math covered in the exam Algebra I & II, Geometry and Data Analysis. And students are penalized for guessing.



**I'm glad I read the Guardian! Now I know this is the best test for me. - A well informed student**

## Falls Church Counselors are Instructional Leaders!

Falls Church Counselors are Instructional Leaders!

This is our theme and dedication this year. Also, the Vision and Mission Statement of our department is prominently posted in the office and we are proud of its' statements. While all guidance departments in the county must now display their vision and mission statements, our guidance department was at the forefront of always having it on view.

In July, counselors from Falls Church High School presented data from a yearlong study to the Virginia School Counselors Association Summer Institute in Charlottesville, Virginia. This was the first guidance department in Virginia to develop and present a project of this magnitude that researched student/

teacher attitudes on academic performance. This ongoing research will now focus on attendance. As a result of Falls Church High School's planning and research, many guidance departments in the county and in the state are using our model.

-Gaile Collins, Guidance Counselor



**The Falls Church High School Guidance Staff are trailblazers!!!**

## Peer Mediation begins....

Peer mediation is back at Falls Church High School. Peer mediation is a conflict resolution process where students can talk through an issue with trained student mediators. A recommendation for peer mediation can come from administrators, teachers, parents, or the students. Peer mediators work through a confidential process, do not take sides, or place blame. First, the mediators explain the process and the rules. If the students agree to participate, all participants share their view of the events without interruption.

Peer mediators clarify, ask questions, and help everyone understand the situation. The participants explain their issues and needs and then work with the mediators to resolve the conflict. A resolution is developed, and the participants agree to put into practice their solutions. Peer mediators have been trained and certified through a county program and post-mediation conferences and on-going training will support and hone the students' skills. The program is designed to engage students in conflict resolution, develop communication

*"Peer mediators clarify, ask questions, and help everyone understand the situation."*  
Statement provided by:  
Suzanne Thompson

skills, empower them to resolve conflicts fairly and nonviolently, and build a safe and productive community.

## Web-based Resources for College/Career Research

There are many web-based programs that would be helpful to research colleges and careers. For example, **MyRoad.com** is an online career and college exploration resource students use to address individual and career-planning needs. Students can discover who they are and what they are capable of, learn about careers from professionals in the real world, organize a resume, research colleges and it's easy for parents to use too. Another program is

**Bridges.** The Bridges' product has three components that our students can use. First, Choices Explorer, students can explore over 900 careers in Career Zones, explore careers related to your school subjects that you love the most and you can save your information in a portfolio. Second, is the Choices Planner, where you can connect yourself to careers through assessment tools, and third, Test Gear, an online test prep for college entrance exams.



**See Mrs. Foster in the Career Center for username & password information to access the web-based programs.**

## Falls Church High School

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### Guidance Vision:

The vision of the Guidance Department continues to be that all students will be recognized for their individual potential and given the opportunity to achieve at their highest level which will allow them to become productive citizens.

### Guidance Mission:

Through the continued use of data, we will determine which students need support to achieve academic success and assist these students according to their individual needs while supporting teachers with appropriate interventions and strategies.



## College Highlight: University of Virginia @ Wise



**Wow!! I didn't know about this school. I am glad I read about it in the Guardian.**

**-A very "bright" student**

better. Either test is acceptable.

### Guidelines for admission:

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of Math, including Algebra II
- 2 or more years of science
- 2 or more years of foreign language
- SAT I score of 900 or better or ACT of 18 or better.

**Type:** Founded in 1954, UVa-Wise is a small public liberal arts college of the University of Virginia

**Enrollment:** 1,700 students

**Location:** 400 acres in the Town of Wise, located in the Appalachian Mountains of southwestern Virginia

**UVa Benefits:** Graduates of UVa-Wise receive the prestigious University of Virginia diploma. Students have access to UVa's library of resources. UVa-Wise hosts visiting scholars from Charlottesville.

**Curriculum:** 25 majors, 27 minors, 7 pre-professional programs, 23 teaching licenses

**Athletics:** Six Men's programs (including football and Five Women's programs

**International Study:** Through the Connections program, UVa-Wise students can study at sister intuitions in Turkey and Spain. Summer exchange in France is also available.

**Residential life:** Students may choose between traditional residence halls, suite-style living, townhouses, and apartments on campus

**Tuition and Fees:** \$2,540.50/semester

**Room and Board:** \$3,291.00/semester

**Total Cost:** \$11,006.00/year

**For More Information:**

**Office of Admissions:** 800-282-9324

Website: [www.uvawise.edu](http://www.uvawise.edu)