

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE & MAPLEWOOD

**BOARD RECOGNITION
PUBLIC BOARD MEETING**

May 13, 2013

Columbia High School was awarded a **Silver Medal** as one of the **Best High Schools in the Country**, according to **U.S. News and World Reports**. In their annual **Best High Schools** edition, **Columbia High School ranked 36th** in New Jersey (out of 395), and 757th nationally (out of more than 21,000), putting CHS in the top 10% of high schools in the State, and the top 4% of public high schools in the nation.

Columbia High School also ranked **1286** by *The Daily Beast* in their annual publication of *America's Best High Schools* that highlights the best 2,000 public high schools in the nation—those that have proven to be the most effective in turning out college-ready graduates.

The Board would also now like to present Principal Dr. Lovie Lilly with a plaque commemorating that **Columbia High School was ranked 47 for the 2012 school year** in the **Education 2012: Top New Jersey High Schools** listing, published by *NJ Monthly* this past fall.

The articles and complete information on the rankings are available via link on the district's website, www.southorangemaplewood.org, under the "News and Notes" section of the homepage.

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The Columbian was one of 8 papers to receive the top honor of **Most Outstanding High School Newspaper for 2012-2013** from **The American Scholastic Press Association**. The *Columbian* also received this award in 2011-2012. In addition, *The Columbian* won **1st Place with Special Merit for Senior High School** with enrollment of 1701-2500. Columbia High School teachers **Janet McGrane** and **Cindy Malhotra** are the Advisers to *The Columbian*. Columbia High School graduates **Maria DiPasquale** and **Samantha Cohen** were Editors-in-Chief and **Adam Easterling** and **Lena Eisenstein** were the Design Editors.

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The **CHS Robotics Team** competed recently against 128 teams from around the globe in the **World Championships** in St. Louis and **won the quarterfinals** and moved to the **top 12 teams in the world**. During their season, CHS Varsity captured the Vermont State Championship and both the Varsity and JV teams shared the NJ State Championship – which has never happened to any high school in NJ. Members of this team helped design the new course in Robotics that will be taught next year.

Columbia High School Teacher **Alan Tumolillo** is advisor to the CHS Robotics Club.

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The Columbia High School Girls' Track Team pulled off a stunning comeback to capture the girls' **Championship of America 4-x-800-meter relay title** at the 119th track and field **Penn Relays** at Franklin Field in Philadelphia. The 4x800 relay team is **Olivia Baker, Shanika Desein, Kenya Gaston** and **Imani Coleman**. Olivia Baker, CHS junior, closed within 50 meters after one lap, trailing by four seconds with a half-lap remaining, to surge into the lead and give the Lady Cougars the thrilling victory. Baker split 2:09.90 as the Cougars won in 8:56.33, ranked No. 3 in state history and No. 1 in the nation this season. It marked the first time a New Jersey team has won the girls' Championship of America 4-x-800 at the Penn Relays since Bernards in 1983.

Later, Baker ran the anchor leg in the 4-x-400-meter and rallied the team from seventh to a **fourth-place** finish in 3:42.49. With their fourth-place finish, the team earned watches. The CHS Girls' Track Team is coached by Coach **Lisa Morgan**. Complete details are available on the district's website.

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The entire cast of the Columbia High School musical, *Legally Blonde*, garnered a **Paper Mill** nomination for **Honorable Mention** as **Outstanding Overall Production of a Musical**. In addition, the cast and crew received the following nominations:

- **Austin Bommer** - **Honorable Mention** as **Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role**
- The **Greek Chorus** - **Outstanding Performance by a Featured Ensemble Group**
- The **Entire Chorus** - **Outstanding Performance by a Chorus**.
- The **Orchestra** - **Honorable Mention** for **Outstanding Performance by an Orchestra**
- **Rob Cohen**, Columbia High School Teacher and Director - **Honorable Mention** as **Outstanding Achievement by a Teacher or Outside Director**
- **Jamie Bunce** and **Peter Bauer** - **Honorable Mention** for **Outstanding Achievement in Music Direction**

The Awards Ceremony is set to take place on June 5, 2013 at the Millburn Theater.

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Columbia High School students **Jonathan Danville**, senior, and **Onyea Hines**, junior, performed "excellent community service" when they volunteered to participate in the **South Orange/Maplewood Community Coalition of Race's Cultural Competency Workshop** at the South Orange Middle School library. The public workshop included a reading of experiences and expressions from CHS teacher **Stacy Lawrence's** Poetry and Drama classes at Columbia, which were read by Jonathan and Onyea. According to Co-Chair, **Meredith Sue Willis**, the Coalition was very appreciative of both students' time and effort.

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Pat Hurley, Health and Physical Education teacher at Columbia High School recently presented a half day workshop at the **National Convention of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD)** in Charlotte, NC. The topic focused on teaching about LGBTQ.