

Fall 2016



CITY OF STAMFORD

# Westhill Social Studies

## New Beginnings

Teachers have the opportunity to celebrate not just one but two new years every year. The social studies department is excited to start another school year at Westhill.

We welcome to the department Mr. Charles Hill. Mr. Hill spent much of last year at Westhill as a long-term substitute. First for Mr.

Stone, then for Mr. Kubick and he finished off the school year for Mr. Mazza. Mr. Hill is very excited to continue to work with the students of Stamford. Mr. Hill is teaching United States History, AP World History and Contemporary Issues.

As we welcome Mr. Hill, we bid a fond farewell to Mr. Aaron Hoff-

man. Mr. Hoffman's family was offered an opportunity that they could not turn down. The Hoffmans are now living on a lake next to Massachusetts and Mr. Hoffman is working at Ellington, CT. He will be greatly missed at Westhill High School.



Presidential elections are an exciting time because they provide an opportunity to discuss and debate a range of issues in the classroom. This election has been unlike any in modern history due to the campaign's contentious tone. By teaching students how to develop reasoned arguments, students can form opinions substantiated in fact. One of the Social Studies events planned for the year is a school-wide Mock Presidential Election. The events will include Town Hall Meetings, a Presidential Debate and a school-wide election. Ms. Sheryl Berkley is coordinating the events. The AP Government and Politics courses, as well as the Civics courses of other teachers, will participate in election events. You can read about the 2012 Election at Westhill at <http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/Thumbs-up-Thumbs-down-3975237.php> and <http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/Westhill-mock-election-season-in-full-swing-3965214.php>

## Workshops for Teachers Advance Learning for All Students

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Learning never stops and the summer is an additional opportunity to learn. Numerous teachers from the social studies department attended summer workshops. Strategies learned at the workshops will be used while working with all Westhill students.

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This past summer I attended the Advanced Placement Human Geography Workshop at The Taft School located in Water-town, Connecticut. The instructor of this course provided my classmates and me with websites, magazines/newspapers, books, movies, and lesson plan ideas that will help students grasp the impact humans have on the cultural landscape. On the last day we individually presented a lesson that was created throughout the week, and then received constructive criticism and positive feedback from our peers. I am very excited to share the new material and ideas I received with my colleagues at Westhill! –Ms. Kaylin English



This past summer I was fortunate enough to attend the Advanced Placement US History Summer Institute at California State University at Monterey Bay. At the beginning of the Institute the instructor provided us with various resources to use in the form of textbooks, novels, and a USB packed with primary sources. Additionally, the in-

structor also spent two of the days sharing activities we may be able to use in our classroom to develop student's historical thinking skills. Such skills include sourcing, developing empathy, making inferences and drawing conclusions just to name a few. On the final day teachers presented a resource they found valuable while teaching AP US so as to create a collec-

tive "toolbox" to use throughout the year and share with our colleagues. I found the experience of attending a summer workshop extremely valuable and look forward to attending more in the future. I also look forward to applying what I learned while teaching in the Bilingual Social Studies Program at Westhill. - Mr. Owen Sandoval

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## AP Readers

Each June, over 15,000 AP<sup>®</sup> teachers and college faculty members from around the world gather to score the free-response sections of the AP Exams. These AP Readers are led by a Chief Reader — a college professor who has the responsibility of ensuring that students' responses are scored to accurately reflect college-level achievement.

This past June, Ms. Laura Tintle

went to Louisville, Kentucky to read AP Psychology Exams. Ms. Tintle was one of the AP teachers who evaluated and scored the free-response section of the AP Psychology exam. Ms. Tintle met other AP teachers and college faculty members from around the world. Ms. Tintle said it was a great opportunity to exchange ideas with faculty, teachers and the AP Development Committee mem-

bers. She became very familiar with AP scoring standards, which provide valuable knowledge for scoring her own students' essays.

Mrs. Alyce Loesch was an AP Reader for years for AP United States History. As a result of all Mrs. Loesch's AP experience, she conducts workshops for College Board.

## Saturday Sessions for AP Social Studies Classes (2016-2017)

Saturday Sessions provide students with the opportunity to receive free tutoring in AP courses.

<p>October 29th:</p> <p>9-12-AP Micro. Economics and AP World History</p> <p>1-4-AP European History</p>	<p>January 7th:</p> <p>9-12-AP European History</p> <p>1-4-AP Micro. Economics and AP World History</p>	<p>March 25th:</p> <p>9-12-AP Micro. Economics and AP World History</p> <p>1-4-AP European History</p>
<p>November 5th:</p> <p>9-12-AP Government and AP United States History</p> <p>1-4-AP Psychology and AP Human Geography</p>	<p>January 14th:</p> <p>9-12-AP Psychology and AP Human Geography</p> <p>1-4-AP Government and AP United States History</p>	<p>April 1st:</p> <p>9-12 AP Government and AP United States History</p> <p>1-4-AP Psychology and AP Human Geography</p>

This past summer I had two amazing opportunities to further my own education and really delve into some interesting topics that are discussed in the classroom thus invigorating me to further bring more knowledge into my classes. My first trip was to Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX where I had been selected to be one of 25 teachers from all over the US to attend a Gilded Lehrman Summer Institute seminar on the topic of "Modern Presidents After the Cold War." The professor for the workshop was Dr. Jeffrey A.



Engel who is an award-winning American history scholar and director of the Center for Presidential History at SMU. This week long seminar was filled with several adventures including visiting both the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library at Texas A&M University in College Station, TX and the George W. Bush Presidential Library at the SMU campus, as well as a trip to the Sixth Floor Museum in downtown Dallas, TX in which the assassination of President John F. Kennedy is memorialized. We also had



guest lecturers from several honorary professors, past ambassadors, policy makers, and current participants involved in the presidential libraries across the country. It truly was an amazing opportunity!

My second trip consisted of attending an AP Psychology training at the University of San Diego with an excellent trainer, Margaret Davidson from Rockwall, TX. She spared no expense in having us participate in the activities so we too would know how it feels to be a student trying to understand the complex topics in psychology. It was such a rewarding experience! - Maria Miraballes



“Democracy must be built through open societies that share information. When there is information, there is enlightenment. When there is debate, there are solutions. When there is no sharing of power, no rule of law, no accountability, there is abuse, corruption, subjugation and indignation”.

Atifete Jahjaga

### Happy Constitution Day!

On September 17, 1787, the United States Constitution was signed by 39 of the 55 delegates attending the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Delegates from 12 states had gathered at the Convention with the purpose of revising the nation's first written charter, the Articles of Confederation. Instead, they discarded the nation's first system of government and created a new one they believed would provide the United States with a strong national government to deal with the many challenges of the Confederation. The Constitution was subsequently ratified by each of the original 13 states.

## Constitution Day

### September 17th



September 11, 2001 is in the Social Studies Curriculum for United States History. However, on the days leading up to the September 11th anniversary, Social Studies teachers do a variety of activities to teach students about the events of that day and the aftermath of it. This year, 9th grade social studies teachers connected the Summer Reading book *Rebels by Accident* by Patricia Dunn to the events of September 11, 2001 and religious tolerance.

## Summer Travels



Summer is always a great time to travel and see the world. Social Studies teachers especially love to see the world that we teach about. On the left is Mrs. Mitchell's son Jovonn interacting with history. On the right is a picture of the Berlin Wall located in Portland, Maine.

