



## IB Update:

Our inaugural group of IB juniors is off to an outstanding start. When they started last semester, our IB students were pioneers - forging ahead into unknown territory. In only a few months they have come so far. Their growing maturity, character, and commitment reveal that they are well on their way to becoming not only excellent students, but scholars as well. On the following pages, you will see quotes from many of our IB students answering the questions of why they chose to be in the IB Programme and what advice they would



On December 11, IB Env. Science students earned state certification for stream monitoring and bugs identification!

have for upcoming IB students; these are from an anonymous survey they took in order for us to assess and improve our IB Programme. Thank you for your support of your child and for IB! Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have ideas or concerns, and I hope to see all of you parents at our IB Parent Meeting next Thursday!

*Laurie Ecker*

## IB Parent Meeting Thursday, January 22

7:00 PM

in the WHHS Media Center

## IB Coordinators Visit UGA

In November, the Hall County IB Coordinators visited UGA and spoke with the Admissions Director and Senior Director of Admissions, as well as the Associate Director of Admissions who serves the students of Hall County. The UGA Admissions staff seemed very knowledgeable about and supportive of the International Baccalaureate Programme. They shared the following thoughts about IB and UGA admissions and college credit:

- UGA considers GPA in admissions, but it is balanced by the level of rigor of the curriculum. (Note: This year, 144 students who had a 4.0 average in high school were not admitted to UGA because of not having a rigorous enough high school curriculum.)
- The UGA Admissions office calculates an IB student's GPA by averaging all of their academic class grades from 9th – 11th grades on a 4-point scale (the 12th grade class grades are not finalized at the time of applying). If additional points added by the school, UGA subtracts them first. For example, if a school adds 5 points to an IB or AP grade, they will subtract the 5 points. However, they will then add a .5 weight to every IB or AP class (not honors classes).
- UGA recognizes full IB Diploma students as taking the most rigorous curriculum at their respective high school (does not apply to this year's seniors)

**(Continued on back)**

## Inside this issue:

- CAS Update
- IB Physics students set school record!
- IB students meet Khaled Hosseini, author of The Kite Runner
- Upcoming Dates, Field Trips, and Events
- SAT News
- Student Quotes
- Student Recognition
- UGA article, cont.

## IB Students hear Khaled Hosseini speak at Brenau University

On Thursday evening, October 23, West Hall IB students visited Brenau University to listen to Khaled Hosseini, author of The Kite Runner, speak on a live feed from a nearby auditorium. Students had just finished the novel in their English A1 classes, and the English B classes read it afterwards. The story of a young boy growing up in Afghanistan resonated with our students, and Khaled Hosseini's insights amplified the themes of the novel. Almost all of our IB students attended, even though for most of them it was a bit sacrificial, as they had sporting events and projects going on simultaneously, but they grabbed this opportunity and many stood in line to meet the author and receive a signature in their books. It was an amazing evening!



**Tiku Gebremariam looked especially polished in honor of the evening!**

### UGA article, continued:

- UGA seriously considers the student's involvement in the IB Programme when looking at the admissions application. They consider the rigor of the curriculum, GPA, SAT scores, and then the overall application (short answer/essays, recommendations, etc.) They do not consider the student's IB or AP exam scores in the admissions process. If an IB diploma student is admitted to UGA and he/she does not earn the full diploma because of their IB test scores, he/she will still be admitted to UGA.
- If an IB diploma student opts out of IB after he/she has submitted the application, the school and/or the student must notify UGA and UGA may withdraw their offer of admission.
- UGA is now offering college credit for standard level courses for IB Diploma students. The specifics for this can be found on their website:

[www.reg.uga.edu/or.nsf/html/international\\_baccalaureate\\_diploma\\_completion](http://www.reg.uga.edu/or.nsf/html/international_baccalaureate_diploma_completion) .

- IB students should wait to come to orientation in mid-July or late July so that they can be advised for fall schedules after UGA has received their IB exam scores and has awarded the appropriate credits.

In addition to meeting with members of the admissions office, the coordinators also met with the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Arnette Mace. Dr. Mace shared the following thoughts with regards to UGA's view of IB:

***The University of Georgia provides a quality education to the very bright young men and women of this state. We highly value IB students because we recognize that they have made a commitment to enhance their academic background; this will permit them to be competitive at UGA and at other prestigious universities in this country.***

This visit was certainly informative for us, and we want to continue to communicate with colleges and universities about our IB Programme and our outstanding students. We are working to schedule a similar meeting with Ga. Tech representatives this spring.

## IB Physics Students break record!

A report from Dr. Aquino:

The physics students were challenged to design and construct a bridge made from popsicle sticks with the highest load to bridge weight ratio. The students can only use up to 100 popsicle sticks and the bridge dimensions should be 12 inches long, 6 inches high and 4 inches wide with a half-inch margin of error. The student groups have only one chance to try their design, BUT they can build a new one which does not count for a grade. For the last two years, previous groups designed bridges UPWARDS and the standing record

was 220 lbs (same parameters) and another one that held up to 325 lbs (different parameter). However, 3 IB groups this semester creatively designed their bridges DOWNWARDS and the previous records were all smashed by a mile!!!!



### 1<sup>st</sup> Place

(max load :605 lbs, load to bridge ratio: 1465) Sammi Habacker and Stede Granger. An earlier version using a different glue was tested at 700 lbs with a ratio of 1532.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

(max load:465 lbs; ratio:1263) Andrew English and Carl Aquino. A later version reached 605 lbs, too and a ratio of 1727 (highest so far).

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

( max load:330 lbs; ratio: 1027) Jason Reyes and Michael Reed



Emily Hammond, Kelsey Smith, and Bailey Soucie after earning state certification for stream monitoring and bugs identification.

## IB Student Recognition:

**Congratulations to IB Art student Stede Granger who won 3rd Place in the Congressional Art Competition 67th District for Black and White Developing Process! See his photograph on page 6 of this newsletter.**

The IB teachers wanted to recognize the following students for this past quarter as well:

**Spanish A1:** Heidi Bonilla

**Spanish B-** Danielle Bechtold

**Spanish ab initio-** Stede Granger

**TOK:** Ahmed Amedei

**IB Physics:** Stede Granger

**IB Env't Science:** Krista Banda and Sami Jo Mullinax

**IB Art:** April Gray

**CAS:** Mauricio Novelo

**Most Improved IB Student:** Sami Jo Mullinax

## What advice would you give to a rising junior considering IB?

On January 6—7, IB students took an anonymous survey about the IB Programme. On the survey, students ranked the overall rigor of their classes at 4.4 on a 1—5 scale. This shows us that the IB classes are doing what they are supposed to do—challenge our high-achieving students at a college course level. Students were also asked what they would tell rising juniors who might be considering applying for the IB Programme next year. Here are a few of their responses:

- ***“The IB is a challenge and I enjoy taking something challenging, but most of all the IB gives you a better understanding of the world.”***
- ***“I chose to be in IB to help me later on...I see now that reason was not a good one, not by itself. But after clawing through my last semester, I've discovered that I WANT to continue... because it teaches you the skills you need later on and helps you know yourself and what you are truly capable of.”***
- ***“Put your heart into what you're doing. If you don't feel passionate about what you're doing, you won't succeed.”***
- ***“LEARN GOOD TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS!! Don't let the little things get to you. Your life is NOT going to end if you make a bad grade on something, you can always excel in other areas and still make it out alive. Also, you are in IB for you, not for your parents or anyone else. Do it for you. Also, always keep in mind that what you are doing is important to the rest of your life and you are going to be more successful later in life if you challenge yourself in high school instead of wasting away in easy courses.***
- ***“I love the challenge. It makes me a better student and a better person. But most importantly it prepares me for a better future thanks to the rigorous courses.***
- ***“The IB Programme is a great opportunity, and you will regret it for the rest of your life if you turn it down.”***



## Important Dates:

- Friday, Jan. 16:** Early Release Day
- Thurs., Jan. 22:** IB Parent Meeting
- Friday, Jan. 23:** IB Lunch!
- Friday, Jan. 23:** 2:00—3:30  
\*Film Viewing of “Darius Goes West”
- Tue., Jan. 27:** 3:30—5:00  
\*Film Viewing of “Darius Goes West”
- Thurs., Jan. 29:** 3:30—5:00  
\*Film Viewing of “Darius Goes West”
- Thurs., Jan. 29:** IB Parent Meeting for Underclassmen  
7:00 PM in media center
- Friday, Jan. 30:** IB Students go to Brenau University for Afghani Women Presentation
- February (TBA):** \*Dialog in the Dark Field Trip
- Mon., Feb. 23:** TOK Day!

\*Viewing this film is a prerequisite for going on the Dialog in the Dark Field Trip in February; see Mrs. Woodham if you need to schedule a different viewing time. See the article on the next page for more information.

## The S.A.T.:

We will be reviewing for the S.A.T. in February and March. **March 14 would be a great date to register for the S.A.T. Students should register at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) ASAP. :-)**

S.A.T. Test Dates	Test	U.S. Registration Deadlines*	
		Regular	Late Fee before:
Mar. 14	SAT	Feb. 10, '09	February 24, 2009
May 2	SAT	Mar. 31, '09	April 9, 2009
June 6	SAT	May 5, '09	May 15, 2009

## What's happening in IB?

The **English A1** students recently completed their first real IB Assessment – their English A1 Oral Presentations, which emerged from the ideas and themes the students discovered in their assigned novels. This required an extremely organized, focused literary analysis using higher order thinking skills which the students demonstrated during a demanding fifteen-minute time frame. For most students, this was their first exposure to that kind of intense preparation and speaking. Mrs. Qualls was extremely proud of their accomplishment, and she states, *“For several consecutive class periods, I had the privilege of watching a group of talented, intelligent young people mature before my very eyes. Oliver Wendell Holmes, an American poet, once said, ‘The mind, once expanded to the dimensions of larger ideas, never returns to its original size.’ I feel honored to be a part of these students’ growth and development through the rigors of the IB program.”*

Dr. Sauret’s **Spanish A1** students recently used our new voice recorders to practice their Spanish A1 Oral Presentations in class. Students were able to speak into the recorders simultaneously, record, and then listen to their presentations. It was a great way to practice while using some of our new technology.

Students are also beginning **IB Economics** this semester after completing their Government class last semester. They will learn about fundamental economic concepts, micro- and macroeconomics, international trade, and poverty & development through classroom activities, current events, research and diagrams. In **Math Studies**, students are choosing ideas for their IB Math Project, a real research project that they will begin this spring and complete next fall.

In **ITGS**, students have been designing their own web-pages about how to succeed in the IB Programme. Using Notepad, they are coding these by hand and learning how to create a webpage from scratch! In **TOK**, students are finishing up their exploration of Emotion as a way of knowing and are moving on to Reason and Logic. They recently participated in a live online discussion of a news article in the global classroom!

In November, Michael Reed and Stede Granger created a video about why West Hall High School was “so great” and entered it into the Channel 5 Fox News “So High School, So Fox” contest last month. Their video highlighted the IB Programme, our WHHS cultural diversity, and how this year’s seniors celebrated Brian Ernst during Homecoming Week. It was a wonderful example of why our school is so great!

Several of our IB students are competing in extracurricular activities and sports this semester: Our wrestling and basketball teams are competing with IB students involved as leaders and key players; we have several IB students who qualified to compete in All-State in late February; and IB students played a variety of roles in the excellent drama production of “The Fallen Saved.” Other students are working part-time, volunteering, and participating in many other diverse activities.

As a **CAS/TOK** opportunity, students may view the award-winning documentary of *Darius Goes West*. Students recently saw the trailer for this film during advisement. Darius Weems is an Athens, Georgia resident with Muscular Dystrophy, and Darius and friends will be visiting us in person on May 14<sup>th</sup>. For more information, go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2yoOlicmww>. Students who view the film will also have the opportunity to go on a field trip to Dialog in the Dark in February. From the website:



DIALOG IN THE DARK is not an ordinary Exhibition; it is an experience that will awaken senses, challenge prejudices, and deepen self-awareness. DIALOG IN THE DARK’S visually impaired guides lead visitors on a journey through a series of darkened galleries created to replicate everyday experiences. Without familiar sight clues, visitors learn to “see” in a completely new way with their non-visual senses. DIALOG IN THE DARK has been presented in 22 countries and in over 130 cities throughout the world, breaking through stereotypes to promote respect and tolerance in an engaging and lighthearted way.

DIALOG IN THE DARK is a one-hour experience, which lasts a lifetime.

## January and February CAS Opportunities

**January 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>** – Ham Radio Licensing classes....\$35 preregistration required....Call 770-967-4397

**January 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> (Saturdays)** Assist with Humane Society of Hall County pet adoptions – Contact Kelly Uber 770-532-6617 – must be 18 or have an adult with you.

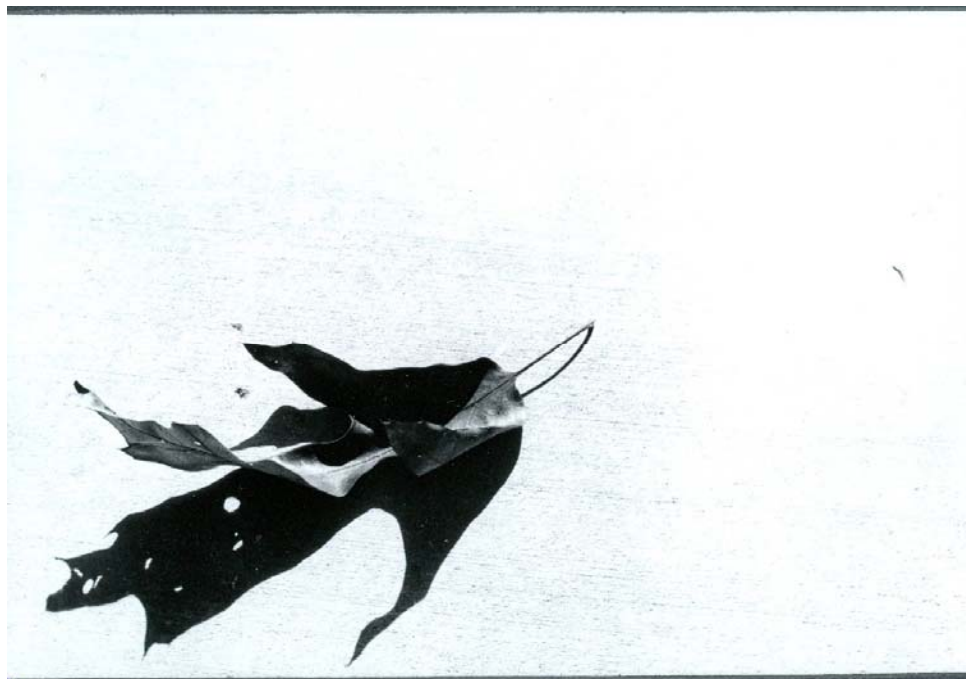
**January 20<sup>th</sup>** – Relay for Life student meeting in West Hall Media Center – 3:30 till 4:15 p.m.

**January 27<sup>th</sup>** – West Hall High School Partners Club meets 3:30 – 5:00 – The award winning documentary “Darius Goes West” will be shown. Darius Weems is an Athens, Georgia resident with Muscular Dystrophy. (Darius and friends will be visiting us in person on May 14<sup>th</sup>) See Mrs. Woodham for more information. We will also be viewing this documentary on January 29<sup>th</sup> after school and also on Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> during 4<sup>th</sup> period.

**February 12<sup>th</sup>** – Georgia Humane Lobby Day – Atlanta, Georgia State University – Meet directly with your elected officials about legislation that impacts animals. See Mrs. Woodham

**February 25<sup>th</sup>** – Disability Day at the Capitol – Rally on the State Capitol steps to celebrate advocacy and friendships – See Mrs. Woodham

For more opportunities, please visit [www.unitedwayhallcounty.org](http://www.unitedwayhallcounty.org)



**Photo by IB Art student Stede Granger**

This photograph won 3rd Place in the Congressional Art Competition 67th District for Black and White Developing Process