

# QUEENS Chronicle



PHOTO BY BOB HARRIS

## SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

### Recent happenings at Martin Van Buren High School

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#### S.O.A.R.

The Central Queens Y operates a school-based counseling program called S.O.A.R. which stands for “Student Opportunities for achievement & Readiness.” Counselors operate in high schools to do supportive counseling, academic support, crisis counseling, mediation, conflict resolution, social work and mental health counseling, individually and in groups. The program comes from the Central Queens Y, is high school based and geared toward middle-of-the-road students who may have all kinds of needs. Students can come in for homework help, counseling with personal problems or just to hang out during a free period.

The staff members are Alexandra Saba, LMSW, director and counselor; Farzana Rahman, MHC, counselor; Asha McKenzie, MSW, counselor; Savina Vavlas, intern counselor; and Omar Clarke, intern counselor. They work with 180 students who they especially meet with after every report card period to evaluate the grades. They also do career and college readiness with the students. The program was started last year and, since there were good emotional and academic improvements by the students, it is continuing this year

Above are four of the five S.O.A.R. counselors Mckenzie, Saba, Rahman, and Vavlas.

### **Standout student Avik Kadakia**

Avik Kadakia, a resident of Bellerose, is ranked #1 academically out of 355 seniors in Martin Van Buren High School in Queens Village. Adding to this achievement is the fact that he is the current student government president, is the present captain of the Robotics Team, is on the School Leadership Team and is a college leader in the College Office.

Kadakia has taken Advance Placement courses in calculus, biology, English literature and composition, U.S. history, and world history; honors classes in English, chemistry and geometry. He has taken college courses through Syracuse University in government and economics and college courses through CUNY College Now in Electric Circuit Analysis I, Introduction to Computer Programming, Introduction to Microcomputer Applications, Introduction to Robotics and Speech 101. All this academic knowledge has made it possible for Kadakia to be the co-captain of the Robotics Team. Since 2013 he has been involved with the student government as a S.O. representative, freshman/sophomore president, junior class president, director of technology. He also has had an internship at Shah and Pandya CPA, P.C. where he was an assistant accountant.

His philosophy is, “Dreams are not what you see in sleep but are the things which don’t let you sleep” by A.P.J. Abdul Kalan, past president of India. He wants to “Thank my parents, teachers and everyone who has helped me in the past four years.”

Avik Kadakia has applied to several colleges but has not yet chosen one. He plans to study computer science, especially the field of machinery vision, where self-working machines study the environment and work in the environment by themselves.

### **Stem research**

Mr Sanjay Patel is the director of Special Programs at Martin Van Buren High School, whose job it is to recruit students and create partnerships with institutions where the students can do STEM research or take college courses. This is part of the Pre-Med Special Science Program at MVB HS.

It also involves reaching out to middle school students in the community. The program offers anatomy, forensics, psychology, living environment, chemistry and A.P. biology. After students have taken these classes they have the ability to work with the faculty of various institutions in New York City where they can do STEM research, take STEM classes or do volunteer work which can often lead to a specific career or a job.

Mr. Patel often has students in various college programs, some of which provide school credit. In addition, there are available summer research programs, Below are students in Ms. Vora’s chemistry class.

### **Trick-or- treat activities for UNICIF**

Scholars in Martin Van Buren High School, right, provided collection boxes for trick-or- treat activities for UNICIF during Halloween. The students collected \$450 for the charity.

### **Thanksgiving Food Drive**

Scholars in MVB, left, collected food for the school's Thanksgiving Food Drive. They collected about 1,700 lbs. of food for the needy. Ms. Pamela Fried is the advisor of the Scholars and ARISTA.

### **High School representative for Post University visited Martin Van Buren**

Ms. Jordyn Woltmann, the High School representative for Post University in Waterbury, Conn., visited Martin Van Buren, right, where she spoke to several classes about college. She emphasized the importance of students continuing their education after high school. She showed the students how college can be affordable by going over the FAFSA scholarships and discussed other topics.

### **Making Strides against Breast Cancer Walk**

Scholars in Martin Van Buren went to Flushing Meadows Park to participate in the annual Making Strides against Breast Cancer Walk. They collected \$450 from fellow students' families and the school staff.