



A Completely Different Face On Stage

Thespian Troupe 721 had been preparing diligently for the show that took place in Spring Valley High School. Two comedy shows that happened on December 4, 5, and 6th, called "13 Ways To Screw Up Your College Interview" and "The AI play". The cast, crew, production and advisors did a lot of work by bringing their creativity to stage.

Starting in September, the cast familiarized themselves with their roles, gave them characteristics, and brought them to life, making mistakes and learning from them with the help of the teachers as part of this long process.

After two months, the cast was informed that sooner or later they would have to wean themselves off the script, as memorization plays a significant, somewhat challenging, role in the show. However, the cast handled this process well, and it was relatively easy for them to perform without the script.

Being an actor requires a lot of work on confidence and perseverance, and many people in the cast were doing it for the first time. They went through it standing on the edge of fear and risk, and came to the conclusion that it is better to take a chance and be happy.



The night of the performance, Thespians wished each other good luck, as they screamed "721", with nervous breaths and excitement, the cast ran on stage and the show had begun. Applause and laughter filled the hall and the actors responded by continuing to create this performance as best they could. On stage, time flew by quickly and the actors and crew followed their great rhythm they had been creating for months.

The show began with "13 Ways How To Screw Up Your College Interview". This is a comedy about how not to present and show yourself at a college interview. The students got into their roles and were incredibly funny, with each role bringing its own humorous and unique contribution. As it went in the script - "Cranberries, baby!"

Thespians finished everything with a show called "The AI play" Which tells the story of Eleanor, a girl who wrote an essay about The Great Gatsby with the help of AI. She goes through a journey to a special school for geniuses, where she meets three other geniuses who also used AI for their reasons. She ends up in the same room where she started.

Months of hard work paid off in three days, with great success and experience for the students. They managed to make the audience laugh regardless of how many people were in the hall; they laughed and enjoyed the moment. Ms. Tirro mentioned - "The students had some incredible personal growth, many of our cast members had no experience and they acted professionally and were really eager to learn."

Overall, it was a wonderful moment for all participants, as well as for those who came to see the show. Once you step onto the stage, you immerse yourself deeper into the character and forget about everything around you, as our students did. They will still have the opportunity to create and work wonders with their cool experience, showing people the other side of their personality, how from a quiet person you suddenly turn into the light of the world that tries to shout the loudest - "Oh Boy!"





Marching Through Time:

The History of the “World Famous East Ramapo Marching Band”

The story begins in 1984, when the East Ramapo Marching Band was known as the “Spring Valley High School Marching Band” and its director at that time was Michael Smith. In the following years, collaboration between Michael Smith and the band director at Ramapo High School, led to both bands getting together, rehearsing and combining performances. RHS rehearsals would be held from 4:00 PM until 6:00 PM followed by SVHS from 6:30PM until 8:30 PM, twice a week.

On Saturdays, assistants would accompany one of the bands to football games.

For major parades and events, both groups united, learning the same music and drills to perform as one. In 1991, when the band earned first place at the prestigious Columbus Parade in New York City. The following year was their debut in competitive marching, where they won a championship title. That same year, the band traveled to Disney World, competing against 85 jazz bands and securing first place, proof of their talent, dedication and hard work. They were the first and sometimes the only band to incorporate dance and movements into their routine, setting a trend that many other bands have since followed.

Throughout its history, the band has accomplished impressive achievements such as, 4 championships, Two guest appearances at The Apollo, Good Morning America, Giant Stadium appearance with JC Chasez, and an appearance in the movie “The Manchurian Candidate with Denzel Washington where they also recorded some of the music for the movies. In 1987, the band faced people making fun of them, Michael Smith took action to boost student pride and morale. At the next event, he proudly announced them as the “World Famous East Ramapo Marching Band,” a tradition that continues today and boosts pride in every member. Michael Smith’s influence helped the students to make them feel more confident and perform with pride.

In 2012, after leaving East Ramapo due to reductions in music staff, he was honored as one of the top 25 music teachers out of 30,000 nominees for the Grammy Education Award. Even while teaching elsewhere, he wrote his philosophy in his experiences with the East Ramapo Marching Band. Today, the band is led by Mr. Framfein, a former student who now serves as band director at RHS. His leadership continues the tradition of excellence and innovation. The band remains a vital part of the local community, participating in parades, hosting competitions, and inspiring students. As the band continues to build on its storied legacy, recent accomplishments demonstrate its enduring excellence.

On September 20, 2025, the East Ramapo Marching Band earned second place in Group V at Northern Highlands Regional High School, competing against 15 top bands from the tri-state area. Just a week later, they secured first place at Ramsey High School, further solidifying their reputation. On October 11, 2025, the band hosted its first home competition under the lights since 2022, celebrating senior members and drawing an enthusiastic crowd. Looking ahead, the band remains committed to the pride, self-esteem, and community spirit values that have defined its journey for over four decades.

When asked about his hopes for the future, Michael Smith shared, “The biggest hope I have is that when somebody else announces them as the ‘World Famous East Ramapo Marching Band,’ the pride and self-esteem continues to be lifted and spread to our community as always.” As the band marches forward, it carries a legacy of excellence, resilience, and unity values that will continue to inspire generations of students and community members in the future.





Teacher Spotlight : Ms. Tirro

Recently, there was a chance to interview Mrs. Tirro, the dance teacher at Spring Valley High School. She has been teaching at SVHS for about 30. She started back in December 1995, and still loves what she does. The interview took place on November 3rd, 2025. Mrs. Tirro was chosen because she's known for being kind, confident, and inspiring. The interview helped give a better understanding of her journey and what motivated her to become the caring and dedicated teacher she is today.

When asked about her journey into teaching, Mrs. Tirro talked about her childhood and how she had always loved performing, singing, dancing, and acting in high school. She joined every school play, musical, and music group she could and took lessons in dance, piano, flute, and voice.

Her love for the arts led her to attend Montclair State College, where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in the Acting program. She had hopes of becoming a musical theater performer. Her path changed a few years after graduation when she was invited to direct the Thespian program at Spring Valley High School, which she gladly accepted. A year later, the principal asked her to start a dance program, marking the beginning of her teaching career. To prepare for this new role, she earned teaching credits and later completed a Master's in Dance and Dance Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. Even though teaching wasn't her original plan, she took the chance and found a career that lets her share her passion for the arts with many students.



When asked what she enjoys most about teaching, Mrs. Tirro said that dance and theater were such important parts of her own growth that she wants to share that same experience with her students. She also has a strong interest in fitness, which she includes in her lessons. Mrs. Tirro described her teaching style as creative and supportive. She loves seeing students have "aha" moments when they discover new skills and gain confidence. She explained that teaching isn't just about learning steps or techniques, but about helping students connect with themselves and express their ideas through movement and performance. From the way she spoke, it was clear that she values patience and understanding, knowing that everyone learns at their own pace. Her classes seem to be about more than just dance but about encouraging creativity, building confidence, and creating a positive space where students can grow.

Throughout the interview, Mrs. Tirro talked deeply about the people and experiences that have inspired her and shaped her teaching career. One person who stood out in her story was Iris Fialkoff, the woman who led the Thespian program before her. Mrs. Tirro shared that Iris helped guide her when she first began teaching and continues to stay involved even after retiring, showing what it means to stay passionate and dedicated. This support motivated Mrs. Tirro. She carried that same spirit into her own teaching.

She also mentioned that one of the hardest parts of being a teacher is seeing students struggle, especially when they're facing personal challenges. Even with those difficulties, she stays committed to helping every student learn and grow. Over the years, her students have taught her patience and reminded her that everyone learns differently. From her words, it's clear that she truly cares about her students' success and not just in dance, but in life. Her experiences have shaped her into a teacher who values connection, growth, and resilience.

After interviewing Mrs. Tirro, It became clear that being a teacher is about much more than giving lessons, it's about inspiring others and helping them grow. Her journey from a performer to teacher shows how passion can open unexpected opportunities. It was easy to see how much she cares about her students and how she uses creativity, patience, and understanding to make a difference in their lives. What stands out most is how she continues to share her love for the arts with every student, encouraging them to express themselves and believe in their abilities. Mrs. Tirro's story shows that following what you love can shape your future and inspire others along the way.





Teacher Spotlight: Mr. Greenbaum

During an interview that took place on October 30th, Spring Valley High School English Language Arts Educator Mr. Greenbaum shared his journey of becoming a teacher, a path he initially never pictured. While his high school dream was to pursue a career in theater, a college professor's suggestion to try teaching inspired a new direction. He was also guided by a college counselor who, "Kind of directed me towards education."

Mr. Greenbaum, now in his 26th year of teaching, reflected on his career with confidence and a sense of fulfillment. When asked if he had ever had a moment where he felt like he achieved his goal, he said, "I don't know if I ever had it. I think that every year when I have new students, I get new goals and new things that I try to achieve each year." He also shared how he was educated and behaved. He stated that these things are probably the most influential factors that shaped him into the teacher he is today.

His educational journey began at Rockland Community College, driven by the need to manage costs. He later transferred to Florida State University and continued his education at the New York Institute of Technology and Long Island University, ultimately earning four different degrees. His first taste of teaching came during his undergraduate internship as a student teacher. It was this experience, filled with conversations and communication with students, that solidified his belief that teaching was a career he could and wanted to do.

When asked about his alternative career path in theater, Mr. Greenbaum mused that he might have been, "On the TV screen or the movie screens." However, he concluded that the role of an educator is a more fulfilling job, stating, "Maybe my pocket is not filled as much, but my soul is filled better."

Mr. Greenbaum's story highlighted that career paths could be unexpected, and the true fulfillment often came not from fame or fortune, but from meaningful work and a commitment to personal growth. His journey from an aspiring theater professional to a respected, long-serving educator demonstrated the profound impact that guidance, personal reflection, and a deep connection to one's community could have on a career. His ongoing dedication to his students and continuous pursuit of new goals served as an inspiration, illustrating that the greatest achievements in education were often the quiet, consistent moments of connection and impact within the classroom.





Teacher Spotlight

Mr. Buchman

Howard Buchman, also known as Mr. Buchman, is a high school teacher. He teaches English, Journalism, and Public Speaking. He's a father and a husband who cares deeply for his family. What makes him interesting is his love for family and his own personal story from 9/11, which makes his experiences even more meaningful. All in all, Mr. Buchman is someone who inspires others through both his teaching and his life experiences.

Mr. Buchman decided to become a teacher because his 12th grade English teacher, Mrs. Harkopf, wasn't very good. He thought, "If I ever become a teacher, I'll never be like her". Now, he's been teaching for 39 years. The best part of his job is when students understand something new and can use it. He also really hopes students learn to be nice to each other. Being a teacher has changed over time, with lessons being taught in smaller steps now.

Mr. Buchman was at the 5 World Trade Center on 9/11. That day taught him that life is short and we should enjoy each day as it comes. He loves science fiction and comic books, and these hobbies help him teach in fun ways. He thinks students do well when they try new things and are kind. Mr. Buchman lives by the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you." His family is his biggest inspiration, everything he does is for them. He also loves working with other teachers.

In conclusion, Mr. Buchman is really committed to making a positive impact. He teaches us to be kind, to never stop learning, and to enjoy the important things, like comic books or being with family. It's a great way to remember what's most important in life.

Mr. Mulrean

On November 3 2025 Mr. Mulrean was interviewed. He is 47 years old and one of the chemistry teachers at Spring Valley High School. He was interviewed because he was considered one of the most interesting teachers at Spring Valley High School. The interview took place in room 122 during 6th period on Monday.

The interview began with a warm welcome and a few questions about how he was doing which he replied that he was doing well. The first question asked was why he liked being a teacher. Mr. Mulrean happily responded that he enjoys teaching other students. When asked what he likes to do in his free time, he interestingly said that he likes to look at real estate because he finds it fascinating.

He was then asked what his favorite thing about school was. He thought for a moment and said that he enjoys seeing all the different personalities of people. When asked about what car do you have and why do you like it, he said that he has a Volkswagen Jetta and he likes it because of its manual transmission and it's a quality car which he was biased about.

Another question asked was what was your favorite place to go when he had free time. He said he enjoys spending time at home. When asked where he went to college, he shared that he attended RCC and Dominican University because they are local schools.

When asked why he wanted to become a teacher, he said that his mother was a teacher and that she guided him toward that career. Also he started working at Spring Valley High School in 2011. Then the next question was describe what your first year of teaching was like and after thinking about the past carefully he said that it was challenging at first because everything he was taught didn't apply, but he quickly learned teaching by his natural ability.

The final question asked was what he finds most challenging about teaching. He said that managing and supporting hundreds of students across different classes can be tiring, but helping them succeed makes it worth it.

From this interview, much was learned about Mr. Mulrean, how he became a teacher, the challenges he faced, and his personal interests. This interview showed that learning about someone's experiences can reveal much about who they are.

