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Issue #8 | November 2022



**NEW HAVEN
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

NH

Physical Education, Health
& Athletics Department

Our News & Updates

Hello, New Haven Public Schools Learning Community:

We are in the new 2022 - 2023 school year!

In this issue we share what has been going on in our department: we have new teachers and administrators, Wilbur Cross soccer coach talks about what soccer talent is, and we are excited to announce a new video series on healthy cooking.

Please read the articles and watch the videos, share your thoughts and suggestions. Let's do it together!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

ATHLETICS



**Erik Patchkofsky,
Physical Education, Health
and Athletics Director**

The 2022 school year is off and running, and fall sports are in full swing. The Athletic Department has been busy supporting our fall programs and collaborating with the City and Parks Department.

We are thrilled to announce that we will be breaking ground on a new sports complex with a full track at Wilbur Cross late this spring. We were extremely encouraged by the student athletes' and community's advocacy and excitement for this project.

We will be working with city engineers and a student, staff and community committee to help guide construction and to make sure the new facility will meet the needs of all stakeholders.

This fall with the help and support of Assistant Superintendent Keisha Redd-Hannans, we are happy to announce that we will be refurbishing the weight rooms for our sStudent athletes. The rooms will be equipped with state of the art equipment that will not only help our athletic teams but will also help teach lifelong fitness skills for all students in our PE classes.

The department is currently working on operations for the annual Elm City Bowl which will take place on November 24 at Bowen Field. Kickoff is at 10:30. We hope to see everyone there in support of our football teams and cheer leaders.

We will be conducting our winter sports tryouts in early December - please check with your schools for tryout dates and times.

OUR PEOPLE

Look Who Is Here!

This year we have nine new physical education teachers in the district.

They are: John Gustafson, Tyler Ruoff, Jordyn Franco, Charles Ritchel, Kyle Harper, Ryan Lajoie, Dean Bhatt, Mike Moore, Jason Cartwright. Here is what they say about themselves.



CHARLES RITCHEL

I am from Seymour, CT. I grew up in a single-parent household where I was the man of the house starting at a young age. In my free time I was very involved with sports and being active outdoors. The sports I found to love as a child were track and field, basketball, and football. I was quite successful in my high school sports career, earning All-State in football and being invited to New Balance Nationals for track my junior and senior years.



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KYLE HARPER

I live in Monroe, CT. I love sports and my favorite teams are the Yankees and Patriots. I enjoy hiking and I enjoy music of all genres. I went to Masuk High School where I played football all four years and ran track & field for two years. I graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University in May 2022. During my time at ECSU, I did my student teaching in Plainfield, Thompson, and Tolland. In New Haven, I am currently the assistant football coach at Augusta Lewis Troup School as I teach at Edgewood and Jepson Magnet Schools.



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TYLER RUOFF

I am from Southington, CT, and this is my second year as a physical education teacher. I graduated from Southern Connecticut State University in 2021 with a degree in K-12 Physical Education. Some of my hobbies outside of teaching include playing/watching sports, traveling, exercising, spending time with friends and family, and taking my dogs on hikes. After graduating from SCSU, I found my first teaching job in Southington.

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JOHN GUSTAFSON

I am a Physical Education teacher at Barnard, and I am originally from Illinois. Although I love many sports, growing up outside of Chicago, my passion for basketball always overshadowed other hobbies. To this day, I still love to play and watch basketball, and I have coached youth basketball as well. I now live in Fairfield, and I absolutely love exploring different spots of New England. When the opportunity to work in the New Haven Public School system came about, I knew it was one I did not want to pass on.

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**“Kids Believed That
They Will Never Lose”**



Staff photo by Arnold Gold
Holy Cross All-Stater Eric Barbarito, left, stands with dad, Pete, coach at Wilbur Cross.



Interview with Eric Barbarito, Assistant Principal of Physical Education and Health

Meet Eric Barbarito – our new Assistant Principal of Physical Education and Health. He started at NHPS 26 years ago as a social studies teacher. Eric also worked as a coach, athletic facilitator and a PE teacher. He shares his memories and views on current state of things in education in the conversation below.

L. G. Eric, how did you become a teacher? What led to the decision to work in school?

E. B. Both my grandfathers were teachers. One was a math teacher, one was a science teacher. My mother and father were teachers. My father was a PE teacher and the supervisor of physical education and athletics at NHPS from 1995 to 2000. My mother was a math teacher. My brother is a math teacher. My sister-in-law is a math teacher. My aunt was a reading teacher. My uncle was a math teacher.

L. G. Wow, you were surrounded by teachers! I am guessing they all influenced you in your decision to become a teacher.

We lost three to nothing. Wilbur Cross won, and his team was the first city school ever to win a state championship on the modern CIAC playoff format.

My father was a very successful football coach in New Haven at that time. But after he retired, in the late nineties, football was struggling in the city, and people thought it was dead.

This was the time when I took over a program. After five years we were able to transform the program. We had to wash out the old, bring in the new, and we won state championship in 2002. We did it again in 2006. In a ten-year period, Hillhouse accomplished a 94-31-2 record, with 2 ties, winning four state

E. B. Yes, I was an athlete – I played football in high school (Holy Cross in Waterbury) and in college where I was an offensive guard. I have been playing golf since I was seven. And I play it now – I live next to the golf at Oxford Greens.

After graduating from the University of Rochester, I was going to become a college football coach, and I did coach at the University of New Haven for two seasons. I also coached at Brown. I was a graduate assistant football coach at Syracuse University. I started teaching a little later in my career.

L. G. Looking back at your career in New Haven, what are the pivotal points that you can recall?

E. B. When I was in high school, we played in the state championship in 1984 versus Wilbur Cross, where my father was the head coach at that time. I played against my father.

championships, one runner-up and a semi-final appearance proving that you can win in the city. We overturned a persistent belief that because New Haven kids don't have the same resources as some of the surrounding towns, especially the wealthy Fairfield County, they cannot win. We can win. We were able to prove that establishing a program which was successful from 2002-2012, and it was quite an accomplishment in the State of CT.



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SOCCER

Life Lessons from “Jogo Bonito”

Interview with Wilbur Cross soccer coach Edgar Miller



Edgar Miller, current head soccer coach at Wilbur Cross high school, has been working as a coach for the district since 2000.

What was previously a part-time job, seven years ago, turned into a full-time position. We interviewed him for our newsletter, and we think his experience and work ethics are invaluable. His approach and passion could guide new and young teaching staff in their work.

Q. Edgar, how did your soccer coaching career start?

E. M. I can say that my coaching career started with my son when he was six. He played in the New Haven Youth Soccer teams, and I coached there in the Recreational and Travel Leagues. By my 10th year doing that, we had three undefeated seasons. We were beating all the towns around here.

But then, when it came to high school soccer, the soccer programs weren't that good. So, the parents suggested to me that I try, and I applied for the high school coach position at Wilbur Cross high school available at that time.

It was a matter of bringing high school kids together. It took a lot of hard work and knowledge of the game. But little by little, we were able to build up and move into a strong division with such big teams as Fairfield Prep and Xavier. About four or five years later, we started to win some games. Over the years, we've had more than 20 players who went on to play college soccer from our program.

This year has been very successful for us. We played ten games. We won six, tied three and lost one.

Q. Very impressive! So, what is the secret of success?

E. M. One of the factors is collaboration with my current assistant coach. He has been with me for the past five years, and he is very good.

But the main secret is that we have a culture that is soccer-oriented. Our students love the game. When we bring them together, put them to conditioning and teach them to be a team, they do pretty good.



I am originally from South America - Guyana. And soccer is a big part of my culture too, I grew up with it. I, myself, played high school ball, and I played in a lot of clubs. I used to play with the kids myself until I hurt my knee two years ago. This year we got a bunch of "veteran" guys.

But last year, the team was young. It played a lot on a tough schedule. The kids did well, but they couldn't get the wins. We would play the best teams right to the brink and just couldn't do it. It was a big learning year for us. But this year they come back knowing that they are capable, they really learned from last year's losses. Their level of confidence is different.

And there's a real family scene. These kids, they really buy into it. As a former military, I really believe in brotherhood, in looking out for each other. And it's more than just the soccer pitch. In my world they call it "the beautiful game" – jogo bonito in Portuguese [*the term was coined by the Brazilian soccer star Pele – L.G.*].

To me, soccer teaches you everything about life. When I talk to my students, I always tell them that I don't have magic dust. I can't sprinkle you and make you better. You have to show up and work very hard to get results. These kids seem to understand that. "The beautiful game" teaches you to be a team member who cooperates with teachers. The same principles are applied in school. Not too many things are just given to you. You

We have a very diverse team - kids from all over the world. From Europe, Africa... Many kids from South America - Argentina, Columbia, Ecuador, Mexico - all these countries are soccer countries, and kids from there come with a built-in culture of soccer. They have known it from a young age, they play it.

work hard. That's how you get ahead in life.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthy Cooking Videos with Maria

Last year I was thinking about doing something creative and practical to boost the health curriculum materials and quite serendipitously met Maria Asis, MD who at the time was giving cooking demonstrations at Hillhouse high school.



Maria is an ObGyn doctor with a passion for healthy cooking. She is currently working towards her certification in culinary medicine.

She is also a video producer and regularly posts her cooking videos on [her Instagram account](#). To teach healthy cooking was something she had been dreaming about for a long time. Maria and I decided to combine our efforts and create a series of videos about healthy cooking. This is her vision for this project:

“It is a great opportunity to work on this very exciting and much needed project. My interest in providing culinary education stems from my care of patients, my love of teaching and my love of food.

As the world opened up, nurses that followed me requested cooking classes. I gave classes to them, and also a class at the high school level. Everyone but me was surprised by how quickly the students took to the recipes.

All these classes made me realize how little our community knows about the healthy preparation of food and the creative, fun process it can be.

Because of these experiences, I have delved deeper into the world of nutrition education: I see the incredibly confusing messages the lay person receives. To address much of the misinformation with a critical eye, I completed an intense six-week nutritional course given by

As an ObGyn, I see women at all stages of life. I counsel them always on healthy lifestyle but especially at pivotal moments in their lives: from preparing for pregnancy through the menopause transition. I see how impactful these conversations can be for them, and their families.

Personally, I have always loved to cook. At the start of the Covid pandemic, the act of cooking kept me grounded. When I couldn't entertain, I started an Instagram account "playing_with_fire622". I initially shared open fire Argentinian recipes [*Maria is originally from Argentina – L. G.*], but quickly expanded to healthy recipes and general food information.

professors at Stanford University in the summer of 2021.

Currently, I am honing my skill set through a Culinary Medicine certification – an online program given by Tulane University. The purpose of this course is to review nutrition literature, learn to communicate and explain the potential for food as medicine and improve chef skills.

I hope to parlay this certification into a teaching module for medical studies and residents.

Liliya Garipova

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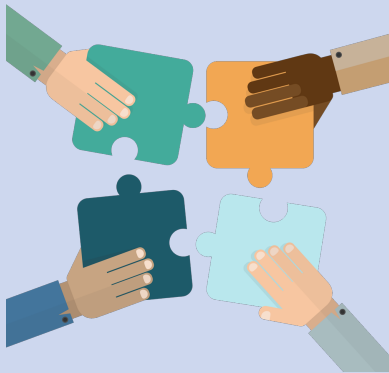
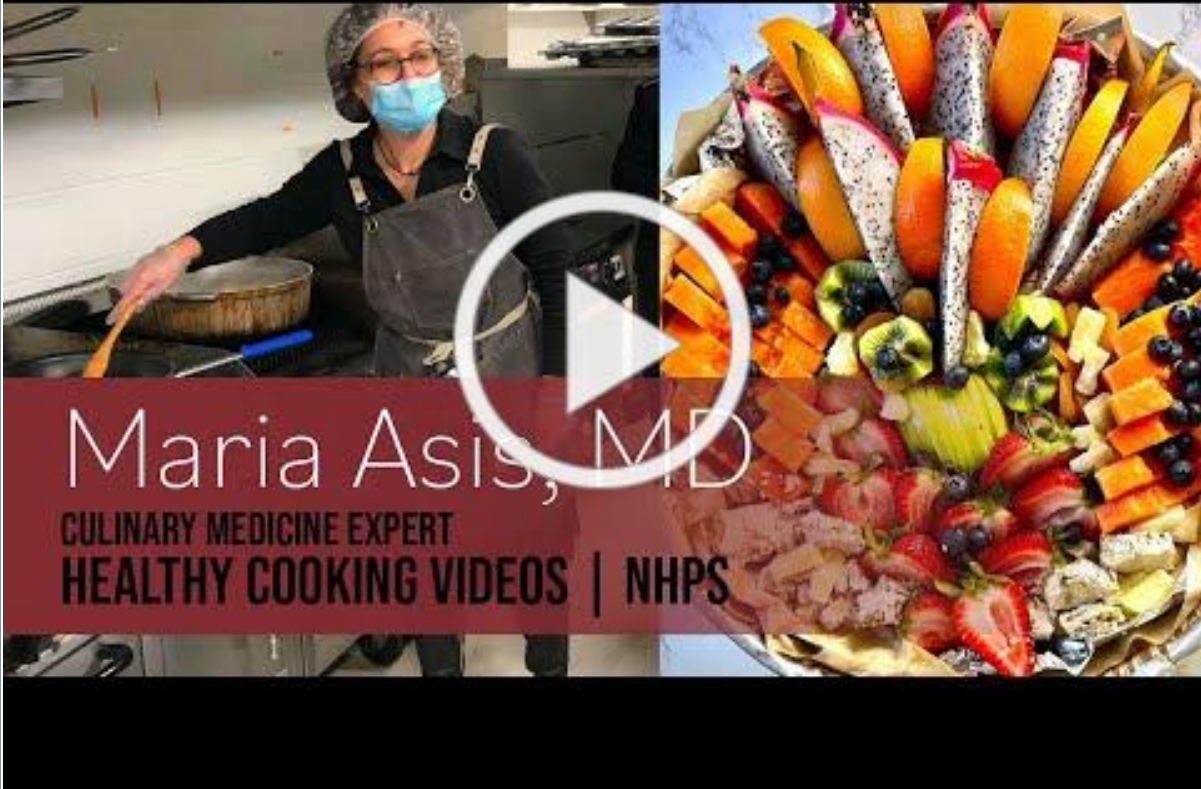
In order to better understand the interests, cooking habits, nutritional preferences of our audience, we created a survey. If you are interested in healthy cooking and nutrition, in helping us with the project, please take time and fill out the survey.

We would also like to encourage our audience to contact us with other ideas and recipes related to healthy cooking.
Let's do it together!

SURVEY FOR THE HEALTHY COOKING VIDEOS

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

Watch Maria's video about how to buy eggs:



OUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Interested in collaboration?
Have ideas and suggestions?
Drop us a line!

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