

# the State



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# The Long Road to the Presidency Ends

By Ethan Robles

On January 20, 2009 nearly two million people gathered together in our nation's capitol in order to witness the peaceful transition of power that takes place in the United States. After a hard-fought and interesting campaign, Barack Obama became the new President of the United States.

Luckily, one of our own students was there to witness the events firsthand. Mariah Barber, a sophomore, was given the opportunity to experience history in the making. Mariah and her family gathered among nearly two million people in support of one man. She reflected, "It

was really cool; at times it didn't feel real. It sometimes felt weird walking down the streets of Washington with so many other people. But it was really cool because everyone was there just to support him."

With his wife Michelle holding the Lincoln Bible, President Obama, the son of a white mother from Kansas and a black father from Africa,

was sworn in by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. a few minutes after noon and spoke immediately afterward.

Obama's inaugural address focused on his intentions. Instead of using key phrases, Obama gave a simple speech calling the nation to action. A central theme of the President's inaugural address was a call to restore responsi-

bility both in terms of accountability in Washington and the responsibility of ordinary people to get involved.

Obama concluded the second paragraph of his address by saying, "We the people have remained faithful to the ideals of our forbearers and true to our founding documents." The speech

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# First Family of Fashion

By Layout Editor  
AshLeigh Arnold

On January 20th, 2009, Barack Obama not only changed history but also became our country's most influential political figure. Although inauguration day involved momentous speeches and plans for the future, many Americans focused less on Obama's vision and more on his family's fashion sense. For the big day, President Obama dressed tastefully in a tuxedo crafted by the local Chicago designer Hart Schaffner Marx. He chose to wear a J.

Crew tux with a custom-made white bowtie to the inauguration ball at night. Still, viewers seemed more intrigued by the attire worn by his wife and daughters.

Throughout the Obama campaign, Michelle has been applauded for her savvy style, but she really wowed critics on the day of the inauguration. So many people attended the inauguration that it could be viewed from space, and Michelle stood out in her yellow lace dress and coat designed by Isabel

Toledo. She added a modern twist to the outfit by pairing the dress with designer green patent Jimmy Choo "Glacier" shoes as well as more affordable J. Crew gloves.

For the evening she donned an elegant Jason Wu ivory one-shouldered gown covered in Swarovski crystals. Before their first dance at the Neighborhood ball, her husband commented to the crowd, "How good-looking is my wife?"

Obama was not the only fan of Michelle's

fashion though; designers are busy working on cheaper versions of her trendy wardrobe for the masses of consumers attempting to follow her lead. Even though Michelle paid for her inaugural outfits out of her own pocket, she will donate them to the Smithsonian.

She received help choosing the critical pieces from her main fashion advisor Ikram Goldman, the Israeli store owner of Ikram boutique in Chicago. Some of her other favorite designers

include Narciso Rodriguez, Thakoon, Maria Pinto, and Tracy Feith. Critics have compared the new first lady to the prior fashion icon of the White House, Jackie Kennedy. In fact, both sported a white dress at their husbands' inaugural balls.

Michelle is not the only Obama getting attention for her fashion; daughters Sasha and Malia have been referred to as junior fashionistas. The girls kept warm during the inauguration with the jackets J. Crew

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## THE LONG ROAD TO THE PRESIDENCY ENDS

(Continued from front page)

reinforced words such as "legacy" and "heritage," as well as values such as "honesty," "courage" and "patriotism," which "are old".

Because Obama's campaign message focused on the need for change, Obama sought to reassure Americans that he would operate as President within the margins of the nation's traditions. The ceremony ran slightly long and President Obama did not recite the oath of office until just after noon, which is the moment when he officially became president.

The inauguration was one of the most historic moments to be witnessed by our generation, not only giving our nation its first African American

president but a new message of change.

Mariah experienced this first hand stating, "I think it is definitely something that will go down in history. I was really glad to get to be a part of something so huge."

The ceremony was truly huge, proven by the sea of people who engulfed the capitol. Journalists even commented on the dust storm that arose as the audience left the event.

Though President Obama did not emphasize his African American heritage as a candidate, the symbolism was evident and was reinforced by the fact that the swearing in was taking place the day following the national holi-

day to mark the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King.

He also took office a month before the bicentennial of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, who took the office at a time of national turmoil and a man to whom President Obama clearly looks as an inspiration for his own presidency.

Mariah was able to witness these events firsthand. The rest of us were confined to our televisions. Yet, no matter what way we watched or where we were, we were viewing history in the making.

As the world looked upon the United States, we demonstrated the peaceful exchange of power between leaders, laying a model for the rest of the world.

# NL's Action-Packed Student Council

By Staff Writer  
Katrina Wehr

The Northern Lehigh High School Student Council has had quite a busy year. From Homecoming to Christmas, the group has organized a number of events for the benefit of children in need, the Northern Lehigh community, and the Northern Lehigh student body as well. The students involved are always busy with council activities ranging from events as big as the Homecoming dance to food drives and hot chocolate socials.

Student Council was taken over this year by Mrs. Wehr after the departure of former advisor and math teacher, Miss Bloss, in the fall.

"Being the advisor has been interesting and has kept me pretty busy, especially during homecoming," Mrs. Wehr commented. "But I have a great group of students to work with who are always willing to support any suggestions we receive from students and faculty,

which always makes things easier."

Ideas like the Christmastime locker decorating contest, Orange Julius sales, blood drives, candy cane sales, and Hat Days benefitting various organizations are just a few of the suggestions that the student body has seen come to life via Student Council. In fact, during this fall's successful blood drive held on Halloween, the Miller-Keystone Blood Center collected blood from 44 donors at our school, helping to save an estimated 132 lives!

The blood donated will play critical roles in saving the lives of premature infants, cancer and cardiac patients, as well as accident, trauma, and burn victims. The next blood drive is scheduled for this spring on Friday, April 17th, 2009.

During Hats-On-Day, when students and staff paid one dollar to wear a hat of their choice for the

entire day, Student Council raised \$300.00 to benefit the Foundation for Children with Cancer. Another organization that benefitted kids was the Adopt A Child Campaign, where each student council member purchased a \$20.00 gift for a child in the Northern Lehigh Community. Eight children in our area each received three gifts for Christmas because of the efforts of our Student Council.

Speaking of the holidays, the Christmas Locker Decorating Contest was also successful, and participants adorned their lockers with various holiday decorations, livening up our school days with a little holiday cheer. The winners were chosen for their creativity and presentation. Megan Micek, Heather Murray, Dana Suozzo, Brandon Horvath, Katie Hamm, Deanna Suozzo, Amber Klocek, Kirsten Murray, and Patrick Herman all received prizes for their efforts.

This year's annual Candy Cane Sale was also a success, bringing in over \$750.00. For twenty-five cents, students and faculty could send holiday-themed notes along with a candy

cane to their friends to get them in the holiday spirit.

Another favorite event among council members is Elementary Aid Day, which some of us may remember from our pre-middle school years. Usually taking place before

Christmas (although this year the event was postponed due to a snow day), this is the day where council members pair up and help out in a classroom at Peters Elementary. Students plan activities with their assigned teacher to do with the younger children.

"It's just a lot of fun," says senior Troy Silfies. "One time, a kid made me a ring out of paper clips. It was actually really cool!"

Along with Mrs. Wehr, the Student Council is run by President Jessica Wagner, Vice President Haley Bomboy, Secretary Sarah Ardnt, and Treasurer Michael Showak. In addition to these four officers, seven other students make

up the senior class of Student Council, including AshLeigh Arnold, Katie Hoch, Gabbie O'Connor, Troy Silfies, Shannon

Davies, Brock Minnich, and Shelby Serafin. "I like being involved in Student Council because it makes me feel like a 'voice' of the student body," says Brock.

Along with the seniors, three juniors, seven sophomores, and four freshmen complete the Student Council group. "It's a lot of hard work," states Jess, referring to her role as Student Council President, "but it's worth it."

The next time we see signs for a smoothie sale, clothing drive, or decorating contest, remember to support the Northern Lehigh Student Council in their efforts to better our community and our school.



**MILLER-KEYSTONE**  
BLOOD CENTER



# Oh, the places you'll go

By Staff Writer Emily Mulcahy

When travelers think of Camden, New Jersey, they think dangerous and downright out of control. Those are all true statements but there are even truer statements. Camden is filled with homeless people, a lot of them as a matter of fact. And yes. There is something we can do about this terrible situation.

In summer anyone can join a program called Urban Promise; actually it goes all year around for the children in Camden. Work groups do things such as painting school rooms, cleaning gutters, doing trash and recycling, and building playgrounds. The work groups also get to meet special children of all ages. Every day each work group splits up and goes to separate churches in Camden to work with these children. They construct crafts, play games and learn bible lessons from counselors, street leaders, and intern members.

During the rest of the year, college interns are supplied room and board. Many of these interns come for one season and end up staying a year. One intern hitch-hiked from New York because he wanted to come back for sports week. When he got to the Ben Franklin Bridge all he could think of was "Home Sweet Home."

An interesting term mentioned was street leaders, which around here may mean gang leaders. In Camden they are a new breed of kids who grew up in Urban's system and they do not want to leave until they exceed the age limit. This group of teenagers from middle school to high school guide the children. Many of the kids relate better to them because street leaders are also from Camden, and they know how rough life can get. These teens do not actually lead activities, but they take the children from one intern to another intern, including walking them to the park, making sure they are safe, and setting good examples.

The last types of people are the counselors who get up extra early and unlock the building; then they pick up every child and make sure everything runs as smoothly as possible. They have to be tough because bad behavior, cursing, and other problems are not tolerated. They also may have to deal with losing a kid to drugs, bad habits, or a difficult home environment.

One counselor who grew up in the system came back to help and says he is hardest on the kids who show they may drop out. He hopes to make a lasting impression on those kids. Some of the problems he has to deal with are difficult, including questioning why a thirteen-year-old has almost a five hundred dollar wad of money.

I hope my article encourages your help in this "most dangerous city" but more than that, I hope this makes you realize that many people are trying to make a difference. One thing you should already know; kids who help kids have a better understanding of life. The kids who help are the ones who are not scared of being outside of the "middle class suburbia," and they definitely are not scared of an unknown adventure.

By Michael Showak

Imagine having the power to tell a group of strangers everything you wanted to about our school – about the students, teachers, building, classes, food, and atmosphere. What sort of picture of Northern Lehigh would you paint for them? Would these visitors be impressed? Disbelieving? Amused?

From April 28 – May 1, a five-person Validation Team will come to our high school for three and a half days to give our school its stamp of approval, ensuring that our school meets the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools' Standards. During this time, they will listen to a summary of our school and our plans for improving the education and community over the next seven years.

Their visit ends two years of preparation organized by Internal Coordinators Mrs. Evans and Mr. Reynolds and a group known as the Accreditation for Growth Planning Team. Consisting of 21 stakeholders, the team includes high school and middle school teachers, guidance counselors, principals, students, community members, alumni, parents, and a school board member. This team has been holding meetings charting the course for the future of our high school since November 2007.

The accreditation process includes everyone involved with the school – most importantly students. The process began last year with the internet survey that 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students may remember taking, along with surveys completed by staff and community members. The results were analyzed, giving the team a starting point to begin the process which will culminate with plans to achieve performance objectives that will be carried out from now until 2016.

The first accomplishment of the Planning team was the creation of

# AFG

the school district's new mission statement: "Northern Lehigh High School, a small, proud community, empowers learners to become responsible, contributing citizens through challenging and evolving educational experience."

Next, the team recorded a set of beliefs, ranging from "Every individual has individual worth," to "Success is achievable by striving to reach one's full potential." They used these belief statements along with the mission statement to create a set of objectives for the school district.

Objective #1 regards the PSSAs and other academic standards. It sets a standard of improvement for both Math and Reading scores, along with increasing the offering of and enrollment in AP courses. Objective #2 addresses, among other things, the attendance and grades of the freshman class.

The final step in the accreditation process is the development of action plans. These plans outline how the school intends to accomplish the performance objects. The details of these plans will affect every student. Programs for PSSA preparation are going to be expanded, and the incentives for good performance (prime parking spots!) may soon be returning.

Freshmen have already experienced first-day high school orientation, a program which will be continued next year. Easing the

transition into high school has become increasingly important. These performance objectives will help freshmen to maintain at least a 2.0 in their classes.

The planning team has also fabricated ways to make the high school more welcoming. With 33% of last year's freshmen missing ten or more days of school, a change of culture will hopefully go a long way to keeping students in class.

Over the next few years, even more programs will be started with the goal of improving the school's culture by helping students to become more successful. All that is left for students is to become involved in their own improvement. Mrs. Evans sums up two targets of the process by stating, "My hope is that the students, staff, and community can look at our school as vision-driven and action-oriented in looking at our plan for continuous growth and improvement."

As stakeholders in this process, every student's opinion matters. If you want to learn more about the accreditation or have suggestions for the future of the school, don't be afraid to let one of the student representatives know. Seniors Shannon Davies, Danny Boyle, Sarah Arnt, and Michael Showak all represent the student body at meetings, so make sure they know what you care about.



# New Year's Resolutions

By Staff Writer Alecia Buss

New Year's resolutions go all the way back to 153 B.C. when the mythical king of Rome, Janus, was placed at the head of the calendar. He had two faces; one looked back on past events and one forward to the future, making him the ancient symbol for resolutions. The Romans made amends with enemies and exchanged gifts before the beginning of New Year. At the dawn of 2009, people still continue this ancient tradition.

Most resolutions people make are quite broad. For example, the most common one is vowing to lose weight. This resolution is the one that most people can not seem to keep. The reasoning, is simply,

because the goal is not specific. How much weight? When to lose it by? A better way to accomplish weight loss is by making specific, more reachable goals such as exercising in the gym at least four times a week for thirty minutes each time. Also, making simple milestones will make it easier. Perhaps by next Christmas the goal is to lose forty pounds. Plan to lose four pounds a month until Christmas.

Another reason for weight loss failure is making goals just to jump on the 'me too' bandwagon. Most people state they want to lose weight because a group of their friends decided to or they see ads for weight loss centers. These people just feel the need to make a New

Year's resolution. Goals should be about what one wants to change about oneself, and they should be properly planned out months ahead.

Resolutions do not always have to be about losing or quitting something. Make a resolution to plan a day every once in awhile to relax or do something enjoyable. That book that has been sitting on the shelf for seven months can be read. Take a trip. Explore the many exciting destinations that can be reached by car or bus. Vow to try something new every month such as skiing, hiking, or a new sport. Instead of being a dreaded task, a resolution can offer a chance for enrichment and fun. It's never too late to begin.

# OPINION

For the first time in anyone's memory, gym class has adopted a new set of requirements. Although the dress code has been relaxed from its traditional military prison-like strictness (uniform socks are now permitted to be in any color), the normally relaxing class has also adopted a new homework policy.

The purpose of gym class is oftentimes steeped in mystery; however, it is a relatively well proven fact that physical exercise stimulates the brain. In fact, elementary schools with longer recess periods generally score higher on the PSSA's than schools with comparatively shorter recess periods.

So while the exercise that gym provides obviously increases both ones physical and mental well-being, the homework policies now in effect raise questions among some students. Understandably, one wonders how knowing the history of pickle-ball will be a benefit to one's future. Furthermore, knowledge of the exact parameters of a lacrosse court is hardly a marketable skill in today's technology focused job market.

As explained by the physical education department, some of the changes are related to the realignment of gym class curriculum to match state standards. The goal is to create a class and environment that stresses the science behind activity and movement. Classes are slated to become more movement and skill-orientated rather than simple exercise.

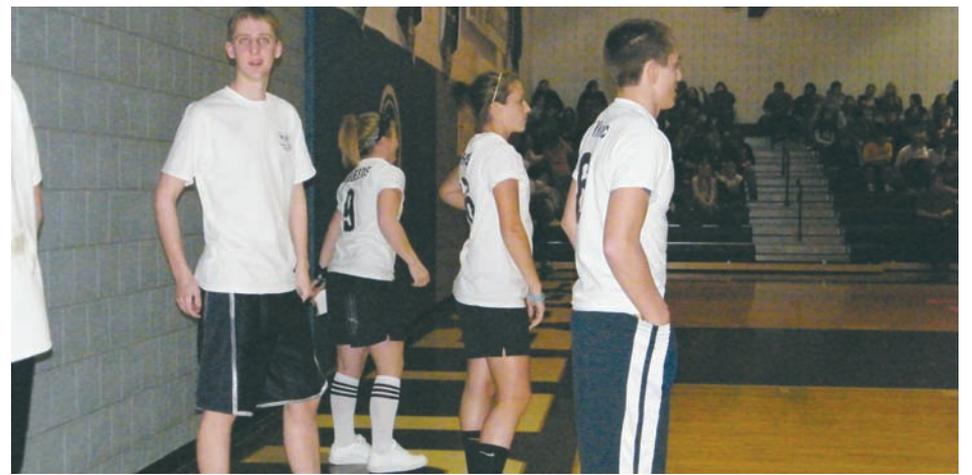
The Slate is looking to expose the school's true feelings regarding these gym class updates. Does the new sock rule rock? Or is all the homework making you shirk? Should Phys. Ed. be a full credit course? Write to us and tell us what you REALLY think; send an email to [rldnp@msn.com](mailto:rldnp@msn.com) with your suggestions.



## Faculty vs Students Volleyball Game



Katrina Wehr, Gwen Steckel and Amber VanHorn are dressed to battle the faculty.



Students prepare to take the court against the faculty.



Jess Wagner, Ethan Robles, and Katie Cederberg show their class loyalty.



Mel McCoy and Gwen Steckel share some comraderie before competing.

# First Family of Fashion

(Continued from front page)

designed especially for them. Although the exact pink and blue jackets are not available in J. Crew's normal line, the website crashed on Wednesday from the throngs of people searching for similar



outfits.

Additionally, J. Crew stocks jumped ten percent on the New York Stock Exchange from the Obama publicity.

Even the Biscotti Inc and Gerson & Gerson Inc dresses the girls wore election night quickly sold out of stores, and Gerson & Gerson even plans on naming the dress worn by the youngest Obama "Sasha" when it reappears in the fall. Michelle explained that she encourages the girls to dress age-appropriately rather than in designer brands too mature for them. Girls ten and



under all over the country eagerly try to imitate their style. The girls have gained so much fame that Ty has created a "Sweet Sasha" and "Marvelous Malia" beanie baby.

Americans knew that Barack's historical new presidency inevitably would put the Obama name in the news, but they did not realize what a fashion icon the family

would become. Dozens of fashion designers are gaining fame thanks to the Obama's publicity, especially their favorite Chicago hometown businesses.

The family's favorite designer, J. Crew, plans on incorporating many of the outfits they wore in their fall line. The stylish outfits worn by the Obamas on the inauguration are just the start of the family's four year fashion-reign sure to come.



## Student Opinion: Fashionable vs. Appropriate

By Layout Editor  
Ashleigh Arnold

For some at Northern Lehigh, the importance placed on education pales in comparison to the significance given to school attire. Students may take anywhere from fifteen minutes to an hour and a half to get ready for school, but what goes through one's mind while primping for a day of school? While some students focus on the current trends or comfort, some disregard fashion all together. Tashuara Washington makes a good point noting, "It does not matter what you wear to school because we are here to learn." Still, not all students agree with her.

The Northern Lehigh High School handbook suggests, "all clothing be clean and neat and in good taste. It should not

be extreme to the extent that it focuses attention on the wearer, indicating indecent or disruptive suggestions." Still, parents, students and faculty have difficulty defining "good taste" or "indecent." A particularly controversial rule for girls tends to be the "fingertip rule" which requires all shorts and skirts to extend below one's fingertips when arms are fully extended at one's sides.

Although a plethora of girls admit to being called down to the office for wearing shorts and skirts of an inappropriate length, boys comically wear short shorts to school on special occasions such as Gender Mismatch Day or Flash from the Past. Nevertheless, the administration has far more important matters to

focus on than fashion. By ninth grade, a student should be able to decipher the difference between fashionable and appropriate.

So-called fashion dos and don'ts can be spotted throughout the halls of Northern Lehigh, but into which category an outfit falls into lies in the eye of the beholder. With new trends arising and old fads coming back, what can be considered both fashionable and suitable for school? The students of Northern Lehigh seemed to have different answers to this question.

Take the new brand of shoes, Uggs, for instance. Some feel that these boots put the "Ugg" in "ugly" and tucking jeans into them can be considered as fashionable as tucking a shirt into one's underwear, whereas oth-

ers consider them a daily accessory. According to many people, mostly girls, Uggs are extremely comfortable which greatly influences their choice in wearing them.

For the same reason, the brightly colored sandals known as Crocs continually grow in popularity despite their odd appearance. Pajama pants and sweatpants also fall into this debatable category. Although both are comfortable, most seem to feel that sweatpants are acceptable and pajamas just imply laziness.

Fashion in public schools can be a powerful force, some would even label it a defining characteristic. What someone wears can say much about him or her. In a school as small as ours, groups or 'cliques,' are often defined solely

by their wardrobe choice. Sophomore Lyndsey Williams noticed, "[some students] want to fit in and others want to stand out." Many students feel our school can be divided into the basic stereotypes of: preps, emos, goths, jocks, skaters, those who lack modesty, those who do not value hygiene as much as others, etc. Still four years of high school experience leads senior Amy Burke to discover, "even some skaters wear preppy clothes, and goths wear pink, but preppy people always seem to be in fashion."

Opinions in fashion seem to differ between circles of friends and individuals. Trends change with the seasons and what may be a "fashion do" one month could possibly be a "fashion don't" the next.

Construction Management	Human Services	Liberal Arts
Nanofabrication Technology	Humanities and Arts	Mathematics
CISCO	Computer Science	Manufacturing Technology
Communication	Aviation	Medical Assistant
Food Service Management	Biotechnology	Natural Science
HVACR	Computer Forensics	Nursing
Drafting & Design		Paralegal Studies
Education		Special Education
Electrical Technology		Optoelectronics
Engineering		Business Management
Fashion Design		Professional Pilot
Fine Arts/Studio Arts		Psychology
Graphic Design		Social Science
Accounting		Occupational Therapy Assistant
Mechanical Engineering Tech.	Business Administration	Physical Therapist Assistant
Health Information Technology	Chemical Technology	Sport Management
Construction Technology	C.G. Interactive Multimedia	Transmission/Distribution Tech.
Hotel/Resort Management	Criminal Justice Administration	Veterinary Technician
Human Resource Management	Industrial Management	Web Developer
Digital Video Production	Kitchen & Bath Design	Industrial Automation



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# German Exchange Program Offers Global Perspectives

By Frau Schmidt

For more than 20 years the Northern Lehigh German-American Exchange Program has been bringing together stu-

dents from Northern Lehigh High School and the Eduard-Spranger Gymnasium – our partner secondary school in Landau, Germany.

All Northern Lehigh students participating in the program host a partner student from Landau for a week to ten days in the

autumn of every even numbered year. High school students may have seen some of the visiting Germans around school with their host partners this past September. In turn Northern Lehigh hosts then have the opportunity to be a guest in the homes of their partners in Germany for about the same amount of time the following summer.

Plans for the Northern Lehigh exchange students' trip to Germany this coming summer are now well under way. During the almost 3-week stay in



Germany, students will spend about half of the time visiting their partners in Landau - visiting their school, living in their homes, and experiencing their culture. They will get to know Germany first-hand by getting a taste of ordinary life.

In addition to the time spent with their host families, students will also spend some time traveling around southern Germany – seeing castles, cathedrals, big cities and small towns, ordering food from German restaurants, taking a summer luge ride down the side of a mountain, and enjoying a day trip into France or Austria.

The best part of the trip to Germany is how it opens up visitors' minds to other cultures and ideas and can result in a whole new global perspective. For many participants over the years, this exchange program has changed their lives – for the better. It can and, for some, has actually changed the whole direction of their lives.



## Northern Lehigh Scholastic Scrimmage: The Titans of Trivia

By Aaron Rarick

Scholastic Scrimmage is an academic competition between the 39 best academic teams within PBS 39’s viewing area. Our very own Northern Lehigh team, comprised of Seniors Mike Showak, Becky Delong, Kosta Kalamaris, Janelle McCarroll, and Junior Aaron Rarick, has won its first four matches in the single-elimination tournament.

NL first beat Dieruff High

School by a lopsided score of 175-85, then in the same day trounced Northwestern 145-95. The team came back to the PBS studios to win a close match with Pius X 150-145 on a buzzer beating answer by Captain Mike Showak.

The most recent match resulted in a defeat of Palmerton 205-135, which put Northern Lehigh into the final eight schools competing for the tournament championship. “This is the most suc-

cessful team I have been on in my four years on the team, hopefully we can continue to win and reach the finals,” says Senior Mike Showak.

The team would have to win two more matches to reach the finals against perennial favorites Moravian Academy, Allentown Central Catholic, or Parkland. If all goes well, our team will bring home the trophy and \$4,000 for our scholarship fund.



# Oscar Results

Best Animated Short Film:	La Maison De Petits Cubes - Kunio Kato
Achievement, Costume Design:	The Duchess - Michael O'Connor
Achievement, Make-Up:	Benjamin Button - Greg Cannom
Achievement, Cinematography:	Slumdog Millionaire - Anthony Dod Mantle
Best Live Action Short Film:	Spielzeugland
Achievement In Music:	Slumdog Millionaire - A.R. Rahman and Gulzar
Best Foreign Language Film:	Departures
Best Animated Feature:	Wall-E

Best Actress:	Kate Winslet - The Reader
Best Actor:	Sean Penn - Milk
Best Supporting Actor:	Heath Ledger - The Dark Knight
Best Supporting Actress:	Penelope Cruz - Vicky Cristina Barcelona
Best Film:	Slumdog Millionaire
Best Director:	Danny Boyle - Slumdog Millionaire
Best Original Screenplay:	Dustin Lance Black - Milk
Best Adapted Screenplay:	Simon Beaufoy - Slumdog Millionaire