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Junior senators share their hopes for the year

BY: JAY BUCHANAN

The NCSSM Junior Senator Election took place Sept. 15, 2011, upon which the six junior senators were elected. After a runoff, Anita Simha, Corey Su, Natalie Ung, Sarah Lee, Yu Wang, and Zane James came out on top. Each of the six represents a diverse background, campaign trail, and different hopes for NCSSM this year.

Zane James, who previously attended The Epiphany School, has always loved politics, which he has fostered through Youth and Government and Student Senate. James, a swimmer, soccer, and golf player, claims he knew the campaign would be difficult.

James says, "I decided to take the bull by the horns and

everything worked out." He has no specific ideas or proposals for SG this year, but instead says, "This year I hope to accomplish whatever you, the student, wants done. This year isn't about me; it's about

us and making NCSSM what we want it to be."

Sarah Lee has served on Student Councils every year since eighth grade. Lee attended North Forsyth High School before making the

transition to NCSSM, and as a self-proclaimed music lover, made a strong impression on voters by singing an SG-adapted rendition of "Part of Your World" from The Little Mermaid as her campaign speech.

She has high hopes for the 2011-2012 SG team, and wants to serve on the Student Affairs Committee of SG to implement multiple initiatives. Lee's personal goals as a senator are varied, extending from cafeteria improvements to improving the Tardiness and Absence Policies, but her primary hope remains to represent the student body. She says, "If you guys have any changes you wish to see, talk to me about them!"

Anita Simha, former Green Hope High

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This year's Junior Senators.

Courtesy of Samantha Hartsoe

SG initiates plans for school year

BY: ASHLEY JERNIGAN

Student Government has implemented plans this year to improve student life at NCSSM. SG is active here and interacts with the school's administration to accomplish pre-set goals. SG is organized into different branches which handle various matters.

"Whenever an issue arises we think we can target in a small group we form Subcommittees. Anyone in the school can get involved and be a part of the committees," commented Senior Senator Zack Fowler.

SG is open to the ideas of students and is willing to commit time and energy to improve the school and student life.

"The student government is so much more proactive here, and there are a lot more opportunities to get involved with SG. Any ideas or suggestions are welcome," stated Student Body President Krupal Amin.

Students are welcome to attend SG's general meetings which take place every

"The student government is so much more proactive here..."

Thursday during common lunch from 12:25 p.m. to 12:50 p.m..

SG goals for the year include making their actions more transparent throughout the school and utilizing Facebook to communicate with the student body. There will also be a 'Let's Talk' booth outside of the cafeteria every week to gather student input.

"There are few students that think critically about our school. If Student Government is supposed to represent its constituents—the students—it needs more students to think

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France bans praying in streets

BY: MOLLY BRUCE

Islam, the world's second largest religion, faces growing restrictions in one of the modern era's most developed countries: France.

Since 2004, school-aged children have been prohibited from wearing the hijab (a headdress many Islamic women wear) in government-operated educational facilities. This policy interferes with the steadfast religious beliefs of many of the five million French Muslims.

Although this national law has faced international fire for discrimination against Muslims, the law does not specifically ban the hijab. Religious symbols in other faiths also fall under the context of the law, including the Christian crucifix and the Jewish kippah. Still, the majority of public dismay over the law's induction has been a result of discrimination toward Islam.

French politicians passed a ban on prayer in the streets in Sept. 2011. As an alternative to street prayer, several French

cities have appointed public buildings for Muslims to pray and worship. The uproar over the most recent of what are seemingly anti-Islamic laws is massive. Protesters have taken to the streets on several occasions, vocalizing their opinions to the local press.

"No system in the universe can control us aside from Allah," shouted one young man.

"There is more dignity in praying in the grass than in their false mosque," said another. Several of the riots have even resulted in violence, with protesters shouting "Allahu akbar" or God is great.

The historically secular French government continues to enforce its controversial laws while some citizens protest the laws they feel infringe upon their state and religious rights.

The line between secularism and religious censorship is a contentious issue and only time will reveal the outcome of this heated debate on religious freedom and tolerance.

NC to vote on same-sex marriage

BY: JORDAN HARRISON

Voters in North Carolina will be able to approve or reject a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage next May during primary elections after the state Senate voted 30-16 for the referendum on Sept. 6, 2011.

The NC House of Representatives approved the same measure the day before on Sept. 5. North Carolina is currently the only state in the Southeast that does not have a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage.

The vote ignited debate between opponents of the amendment, such as the civil rights advocacy group Equality NC, and supporters, such as the North Carolina Family Policy Council. Both groups held rallies in the capitol in the week of Sept. 12, 2011.

Despite being "inside the bubble," some NCSSM students were up-to-date on the legislation and expressed strong opinions about it, especially those involved in Spectrum, the school's gay-straight alliance.

"It's really odd for me because this summer in New York, [the legalization of same-sex marriage] made it seem like things were moving forward," said Spectrum co-president Coraline Badgett. "You like to think that one state can represent the entire country, but then something like this comes up."

Same-sex marriage is already illegal in North Carolina. If it passes, the amendment will reinforce the existing laws and possibly call into question domestic partnership benefits, according to The New York Times.

Said Spectrum co-president Tyler Kissinger, "As long as this doesn't pass, it'll be a pretty easy ride getting from where we are now to marriage equality, but if it passes it'll make that a lot more difficult."

Spectrum is mobilizing several responses to the amendment. Said Badgett, "We're encouraging people to register to vote, especially because a lot of people [at

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