



# THE NEW TRIER NEWS

VOL. XCIV, No. 18

NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL, 385 WINNETKA AVENUE, WINNETKA, IL 60093

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2015

## Dance Marathon a wild success

by Sarah Zhang

The thump of the bass-line draws you in as you descend the steps leading into the Scrounge. The DJ is just starting to play, but students and faculty already crowd the dance floor.

Balloons form a beautiful arch over the doorway, and the previously dull Scrounge has been made-over, with blue lights creating an ethereal glow.

The line for the photo booth grows and grows as students dress up in silly costumes while they make funny faces for pictures.

But wait, it's not prom yet—New Trier's first Breaking Boundaries Dance Marathon was held on Mar. 22, and was a wild success, according to its sponsors and those who attended.

Much of the marathon's success was due to dancers and donors. As Tamara Villalon, member of Breaking Boundaries, said "It wouldn't have been possible without the support of so many people."

The Marathon was held in order to raise money for Breaking Boundaries' post high school ELS scholarships, and this year, \$5,000 was raised.

This scholarship fund was designed for students with special

needs who want to attend specialized courses after high school. Julie Smith, co-sponsor of Breaking Boundaries explained, "There are so many more programs available now for students with disabilities, but there's not a lot of scholarship opportunities."

The scholarship fund was created two years ago by an ELS member, according to Nicole de Matteo, ELS club member. "This fund allows for ELS students to pursue higher education opportunities after they have completed their time here at New Trier," she explained.

The dance marathon itself was the first ever thrown by Breaking Boundaries, although scholarships have been given out since 2013, but it was almost entirely student generated, populated, and run.

"I give a lot of credit to the students, they came up with the idea of promoting using the flash mob, it's just up to us as sponsors to make it happen. They also did a remarkable job finding decorations and deciding how to transform the Student Lounge," said Smith, "I think it's the best the Scrounge has ever looked."

Aside from raising money, the Dance Marathon was also about giving the ELS community and other members of the North Shore a chance to come together. Cammie de Loys, another dance marathon participant



Breaking Boundaries marathoners dancing to raise money for post high school ELS scholarships | Pollak

and member of Breaking Boundaries describes the dance goers as "a nice balance of ELS students, ELS peers, and non ELS related students. Everyone had a fantastic time."

This dance was a particularly great chance for the ELS students to come together and have fun, as Smith said, "I would say that especially our students in the ELS program had the time of their lives. They danced the whole time, they were exhausted

afterwards, and they had a lot of fun." As Villalon describes, "Almost everyone danced the full two hours, and we had a blast. Even those who normally are more on the shy side let go and really seemed to enjoy themselves."

Even more importantly, it's what the scholarships are able to do for students with disabilities and their futures.

"One of the students who

received [a scholarship last year] is studying to be a special education teacher. That student came back to do observation hours at New Trier this year. I've never been more proud of the work that we do, it's through the efforts of the students and the ELS club and this fundraising, that we're able to support his dreams," said Smith.

## SAE continues legacy of poor behavior

by Elizabeth Byrne

On Mar. 8, a video surfaced online of members of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon (SAE) fraternity at Oklahoma University singing a racist chant. The video was quickly taken down and the following day the Oklahoma University chapter of SAE was permanently shut down.

"Within an hour of learning about the video on Sunday, Mar. 8, we put the Oklahoma University chapter under temporary suspension, which was followed by a formal closure notice within several hours," stated SAE's media representative, Brandon Weghorst.

The video was shot aboard a bus where many of the fraternity brothers were dressed in formal attire, and only lasts about ten seconds.

Only two members are pictured singing on camera, but from the volume of the chant in the video, they weren't alone. The chant has the same tune as "If You're Happy and You Know It", but with different lyrics.

They sing "There will never be a n\*\*\*\*\* at SAE, You can hang him from a tree, but he'll never sign with me."

Immediately after discovering the video's existence, University President David Boren severed all ties with the SAE house and launched an investigation. He addressed the fraternity in his tweet on Mar. 8, "To those who have misused their free speech in such a reprehensible way, I have a message for you. You are disgraceful. You have violated all that we stand for."

Boren has shown his support in

achieving justice by also participating in campus wide protests, mostly led by the black student group at Oklahoma University, Unheard. Unheard originally posted the video on twitter Mar 8, exposing the fraternity, but refused to reveal their source.

After the university's SAE chapter was permanently shut down, Boren gave the fraternity 48 hours to pack up and move out of their house on campus.

All the members on the bus were suspended by the University and the two students pictured in the video, Parker Rice and Levi Petit, were expelled later that week.

The house members suspended by the university were expelled from the SAE fraternity and their membership terminated permanently.

"The fraternity is dedicated to making sure that its members are model citizens and leaders as part of their membership experience, but also to understanding how SAE can improve its relationship with men and women of all ethnicities, heritages and nationalities," said Weghorst.

Rice apologized immediately following the closing of the university chapter.

"I am deeply sorry for what I did Saturday night. It was wrong and reckless," said Rice to the New York Daily News.

Rice withdrew from the university the Monday following the leak.

According to NBC News, Pettit also spoke about the chant and publicly apologized for his involvement.

"The words I said in the chant

were mean, hateful and racist. I will be deeply sorry and deeply ashamed of what I have done for the rest of my life," he said.

This is not the only SAE fraternity house that has had trouble in the past with hazing, underage drinking and racism. SAE had nine deaths related to drinking, hazing or drug abuse in the last ten years, more than any other national fraternity.

One member of the Arizona State chapter left another underage member at a nearby hospital with a note saying: "I've been drinking and need some help." He survived, but was found with a near lethal blood alcohol content of 0.47%.

In December 2014, yet another SAE chapter at Clemson University was suspended for hosting a "cripmas" party in reference to the Southern California African American "crips" gang. The chapter remains open but is suspended from "all activity indefinitely" according to the SAE national chapter.

In response to the increasing troubles SAE has had with diversity, the organization has created the position of Director of Diversity and Inclusion. This is just one part of a reform plan the national headquarters announced on Mar. 18 in Chicago.

"We intend to root out and eliminate this sort of reprehensible behavior from our organization," said Blaine Ayers, the executive director of the National SAE fraternity, reported by the Washington Post. "Sigma Alpha Epsilon intends to be a leader among fraternities when it comes to ensuring our members are upholding our values, mission and creed."

## Farewell to the T-wing



Some of the art created on Friday, Mar. 27 in the T-wing of the Winnetka Campus. Students were allowed to enter the wing and draw on the walls and windows just before demolition on the T-wing began as a part of the renovation of the Winnetka campus. For more pictures of the art, go to newtriernews.org | Clarke