



# Grover Cleveland High School

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## Good News

### GCHS Plays Host To Prestigious Science Meet

#### Crowley Joins Fight To Save Ridgewood School

City Council Member Elizabeth Crowley posed with the Grover Cleveland High School Science Olympiad team on Saturday, Feb. 6 at the Ridgewood school. Mr. Alizai, science teacher is pictured at back left; Krishna Mahabir, the school's Science Olympiad head coach is pictured kneeling in second row, at left.



#### **Students from around the city traveled to Ridgewood on Saturday, Feb. 6 to participate in the 2010 New York City Regional Science Olympiad at Grover Cleveland High School.**

Twenty-five high city schools competed, and the top six winning teams will move on to compete in the State Olympiad in upstate West Point in March.

"As the official host of the Science Olympiad since 2004, Grover Cleveland High School has demonstrated that it has a dedicated and excellent science department," said City Council Member Elizabeth Crowley, who was on hand to present awards to winning teams.

"For these young competitors to get to this regional competition required tremendous sacrifice, coaching and motivation," she continued. "While preparation will determine the level of success these students will achieve, what mattered most is that they showed up, put themselves out there and went for it."

Events that students competed in included Anatomy and Physiology, Cell Biology, Chemistry Lab, Disease Detective, Dynamic Planet, Environmental Chemistry, Forensics, Remote Sensing and Protein Modeling. In some events, students built devices such as an elevated bridge, mousetrap vehicle, catapult and helicopter.

"Science Olympiad has influenced my life by exposing me to difficult and challenging course work that isn't offered in regular science classes," said Grover Cleveland 11th grader Katherine Jimenez, who plans to study biology after graduation. "I have become more confident in my abilities as a student and am able to bring different perspectives in my other classes because of this. My confidence has led me to be an independent thinker. Being involved in such a vigorous competition helps students grow on a personal and academic level."

"I love Science Olympiad because I want to educate and engage my students in science beyond what is normally covered in class," said Grover Cleveland science teacher and Science Olympiad Assistant Coach Lloyd Kiefer. "I am proud to be part of something that challenges students and goes beyond data-driven and test-centered curriculum. This is a great event where underserved students get an opportunity to shine and prepare for careers in science and engineering."

Grover Cleveland's hosting of one of the area's most prestigious and competitive science competitions comes on the heels of the Department of Education's (DOE) report portraying the high school as one of the city's lowest performing high schools, based on graduation rates of less than 60 percent over the last three years.

Crowley, however, took issue with the study, which she says did not take into account the school's rapidly growing population of English Language Learners and students with special needs who may take longer to progress through their studies.

"The results of the DOE's study are misleading with regards to the excellent education one can expect at Grover Cleveland High School," the Council member said. "The study does not take into account the significant number of new Americans that enroll in the school annually and have additional challenges due to language barriers. Despite the DOE's study results, Grover Cleveland is excelling in the fields of science, and the school along with its administration should be commended for that."

"Here at Grover Cleveland, we have a very multicultural institution with students from all over the world that converge into one common goal of excellence in education," said Krishna Mahabir, science teacher and Science Olympiad Head Coach. "Science Olympiad had had a profound impact on my teaching and I am honored to work with our students, who despite many daily struggles, are still able to maintain academic excellence."

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