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Perfect ’10s
Determined to “align our curricula to the needs and expectations of industry and academia,” Principal Randy Asher has reached out to one of the nation’s leading engineering schools, the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA).

The Academy has agreed to support the recently revived Aerospace Engineering major and to serve on its advisory committee. Also under discussion are plans to create professional development relationships between Tech teachers and Academy professors, and to develop enrichment projects for technology, computer science and robotics courses that could have direct applications for the Navy.

Concurrently, the USNA has set its radar on Tech as it searches for a new generation of national leaders. Davede Alexander, the Director of Strategic Outreach for the USNA, refers to this emerging relationship as a “match made in heaven.” Mr. Alexander has made presentations at Tech, organized tours of the Academy and promoted summer programs in search of candidates who have the “moral, mental and physical” qualities required to succeed at Annapolis.

As a result, four 2010 graduates headed to Annapolis in July. They are (above left to right): Sami Zahzouhi, Gilesa Allison, Pierre Ramos, and Nathalia Perez. In addition, Warren Benfield has been accepted to the USNA Preparatory School.
In 2008, consumer products leader Leandro Rizzuto ’56 (Conair, Cuisinart) sent the Alumni Foundation an exceptionally generous contribution to help Brooklyn Tech upgrade technology and re-establish its historically strong connections with industry for the benefit of students. Two years later, multiple initiatives are realizing Mr. Rizzuto’s vision.

These funds have made possible the highly successful Career Day, now a signature Alumni Foundation event, which each year brings successful alumni back to Tech to discuss their college and career paths with hundreds of today’s students. This event led to the piloting of a job shadowing program where students spend a day at work with Career Day participants.

Mr. Rizzuto’s generosity has also contributed to the creation of more than 200 internship opportunities for Tech students with companies and organizations such as Con Edison, the NYC Department of Transportation, Mancini Duffy, KSW Mechanical and Pennoni Consulting Engineers. These funds also led to the creation of alumni advisory groups for the Architecture, Civil Engineering and Law and Society majors. In these advisory groups, Tech alumni who are leaders in their fields work with Tech’s administration and faculty to help align curriculum to industry standards.

Plans are underway to expand this strategy to other majors. Alumni interested in forming new advisory groups to support additional majors are encouraged to contact the Alumni Foundation office at (718) 797-2285 or info@bthsalum.org.

The only problem is this soft-spoken teacher’s background is in martial arts, not wrestling. He was hired to lead the team.

Unlike Hollywood endings, the Cinderella wrestlers, and the skeptical team members know it. The coach proceeds to win the trust of his team, and the team’s success, preferring to cite the contributions of founding coach, Gene Brutus, assistant coach Chris Lacarrubba and the great work ethic of his young wrestlers.

With a strong core of returning sophomores and juniors, Coach Torres is shooting for nothing less than a city championship this year.

CINDERELLA WRESTLERS TAKE HOLD

It reads like a movie-of-the-week screenplay: A new principal with a love for wrestling creates a team at an academic high school, but after one successful year, the coach steps down. The principal, committed to finding an adequate replacement, urges a junior faculty member to lead the team.

The only problem is this soft-spoken teacher’s background is in martial arts, not wrestling, and the skeptical team members know it. The coach proceeds to win the trust of his wrestlers, and they miraculously defeat all comers on their way to a city championship showdown against the top-seeded rival.

Unlike Hollywood endings, the underdog Engineers did not win the city championship. They lost to Curtis High School by a razor-thin 39-29 margin. The humble coach, Matthew Torres, a third-year physical education teacher, refused to take credit for his team’s success, preferring to cite the contributions of founding coach, Gene Brutus, assistant coach Chris Lacarrubba and the great work ethic of his young wrestlers.

The 21/21 Campaign will enhance curriculum and facilities, provide deeper faculty support and development, and enable a transformational learning experience inside and outside the classroom. We urge you to give what you can now, with the enclosed envelope.

Throughout this issue, you will see evidence of how your contributions have directly impacted Brooklyn Tech for the better. The people and programs in this issue were supported by alumni generosity. In today’s challenging times, this is more critical than ever. Public funding is never enough, even in the best of times, to provide a cutting-edge, technology-centered education in today’s world.

After more than a quarter century supporting our alma mater, we can report with confidence that the Tech vision and mission have never been in better shape, by any measure: the school’s innovative leadership, its dedicated faculty, and of course, the stellar achievements of today’s 5,000 Technites.

Don’t take our word for it – come see for yourself. We are happy to provide alumni tours of the exciting changes at Brooklyn Tech. Call us at (718) 797-2285 to plan a visit today.
ech students can no longer assume no one will notice if they arrive late to school and skip their first class. With a few mouse clicks and keyboard strokes, teachers can instantly see exactly when tardy students enter the building, notify parents of the misdeed, and, if need be, automatically translate the news into mom’s or dad’s native language.

And Tech teachers need no longer assume that complex concepts will elude the grasp of any student. Technology teacher Park Fung recalls how difficult it had been to explain, using blackboard sketches and lecture notes, concepts related to three-dimensional images. He uses software to manipulate 3D images on a screen – making the concept “one that many students now instantly understand.”

A new generation of computer-based teaching tools is profoundly changing how business is conducted at Brooklyn Tech. The new technology is transforming how teachers teach and students learn. It is also helping teachers reach more of their students, extending learning outside the classroom and maximizing use of classroom time. And it is making the learning process more transparent between teachers, students, administrators and parents.

As a result of these changes, “Brooklyn Tech is very 21st century, very cutting edge,” says Dennis M. Robbins, Associate Professor of Science Education at Hunter College, who trains Tech teachers in using the new technology.

These new tools have not just magically appeared in the classrooms and laboratories of Brooklyn Tech. They have been introduced as part of a targeted strategy by a new administration of tech-savvy leaders, and supported by the Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation through a grant from Norm Keller ’54 and his wife, Denise Sobel.

Alumni donations have funded professional development workshops for physics

Opposite: Student Anna Slabovik performs a laser refraction and reflection experiment. Before entering the lab, physics students simulate complex exercises like this online to test their hypotheses, using software provided by alumni donations. Above: Physics lab now starts out online.
Five graduating seniors reflect on the Tech experience. They could be your younger siblings, your children, or your grandchildren.

Or, they could be you.

Over nine decades, many generations of young people have swarmed through the hallways of Brooklyn Tech. The differences between then – whichever era of Tech was yours – and now are obvious. But stop to ask today’s Technites about their aspirations, and you might discover that, beyond the iPods and IM’s, despite CAD replacing IP, some things are timeless.

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

You’re all nearing the finish line, after four years of remarkable academic accomplishments – full of confidence, ready to take on the world. But can you still remember what it felt like as a freshman to walk into Brooklyn Tech for the first time?

Nicholette: The sheer size of the building. I felt like an ant. I thought I was going to be confused for the next four years.

Christine: My first day I cried my eyes out. Everything seemed like it was going to be so much.

Jonathan: It was daunting. I remember my first couple times trying to get from Basement North, the old orchestra room, up to Six South, my bio room. It was almost impossible.

Kevin: I joined my first club rather later into my freshman year. One of my friends was a co-founder of a Save Darfur club. So I just joined it to see what would happen.

And then you had a commute to face.

Izzy: I live in Queens, so it’s the 7 train. Anyone in Queens knows the 7 train never works. It’s always breaking down. So I need an hour and 15 minutes every day. I have to get up at 5:30.

Jonathan: If I’m not reading some English assignment to keep up or get ahead, I’m designing stuff in my head, or sleeping. If you’re not studying or reading, for me it’s just that one hour and 15 minutes of your day when you have nothing to do. No thinking, nothing. Because when from the minute you get into Tech to the moment your head hits the pillow, it’s just, like, straight thinking.

“Organic chemistry test tomorrow — it’s three in the morning and everyone’s webcamming, trying to figure it out. The entire class.”

Kevin: I joined my first club rather later into my freshman year. One of my friends was a co-founder of a Save Darfur club. So I just joined it to see what would happen.

Jonathan: I get up at five, but for other reasons. I have a relatively short commute, 35 minutes. But I get up at five to study.

Izzy: I live in Queens, so it’s the 7 train. Anyone in Queens knows the 7 train never works. It’s always breaking down. So I need an hour and 15 minutes every day. I have to get up at 5:30.

T2: How do Technites use their time on the subway these days?

Izzy: I live in Queens, so it’s the 7 train. Anyone in Queens knows the 7 train never works. It’s always breaking down. So I need an hour and 15 minutes every day. I have to get up at 5:30.

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Christine: Now that I’m in the school play, Sweeney Todd, usually I’m memorizing my lines.

T2: How typically Tech. Not just your use of travel time, but how you came into a big school feeling intimidated. Then you find your activity — soccer, drama. Did anyone else experience that?

Kevin: I joined my first club rather later into my freshman year. One of my friends was a co-founder of a Save Darfur club. So I just joined it to see what would happen.

T2: Sorry to hear it. Does anyone top that?

Jonathan: I get up at five, but for other reasons. I have a relatively short commute, 35 minutes. But I get up at five to study.

Jonathan: It was daunting. I remember my first couple times trying to get from Basement North, the old orchestra room, up to Six South, my bio room. It was almost impossible.

Izzy: I live in Queens, so it’s the 7 train. Anyone in Queens knows the 7 train never works. It’s always breaking down. So I need an hour and 15 minutes every day. I have to get up at 5:30.
Izzy: Before Tech I was shy; I wasn't very independent. My parents always told me what to do. Tech puts you out in the real world. Tech taught me how to take care of myself; it taught me how to have my own values. I'm very happy with the way it all turned out. I've become today, and I would not be the same person had I gone to another school.

Christine: It was just like, I'm going to mark us. Like, we were just born to excel. In Tech you're always being pushed. Like, "Okay, well, I'm good at this. Let's see where I could go further. Go further, go further." And you know, you're just on just pushing and pushing, until you're doing things that you never would have done. And then your senior year, you're like, wow, wow. It's awesome.

Kevin: You start learning about yourself and your own capabilities as you start exploring the options that Tech offers — the different classes, the multitude of clubs available. And you start discovering what your own interests are, and what you could possibly do for the future. Yeah. Nicholson: I think for me, being on the soccer team made the school a little bit smaller because you have the group of 15 girls always there — and the coach.

Christine: Besides performing arts, I'm a member of the National Society of Black Engineers. I feel like a family there.

Nichollette: For me, being on the soccer team made the school a little bit smaller because you have the group of 15 girls always there — and the coach.

Christine: Besides performing arts, I'm a member of the National Society of Black Engineers. I feel like a family there.

Christine: When you come here and do what you're supposed to do in putting effort, that's no way to but a successful path. In civil engineering, I don't know what other school would take you into Fort Bliss. We had to survey the land, check elevation, look at sheets, all almost become familiar with what you're doing. This type of education. The teachers love what they do, genuinely care about their students, and it shows. It helps you really more determined to continuous, which is something you want to do. We were promised success according to Tech; there's no way you could leave empty-handed. It's like a good tree produces good fruit. Here, we're meant to just be good and succeed.
Tech...

As Seen by the Dean

Around Brooklyn Tech, Dean Phyllis Witte is known for her sharp eye. Students have learned, to their occasional rue, that she can quickly spot incipient mischief far down the hallway – even, it is said, around the corner.

Dean Witte also has a keen eye for the exquisite beauty that was designed and built into Tech. An accomplished photographer by avocation, she takes long, appreciative after-hours strolls through the hallways with her camera.
Anything can happen at Brooklyn Tech, and one recent Saturday afternoon, it does. The world’s most famous film director, James Cameron (“Titanic” and “Avatar”) and movie star Sigourney Weaver occupy the auditorium’s grand stage, leading a high-profile student public-speaking competition.

But the celebrity visitors can only watch in admiration as the scene is stolen by an energetic dynamo-in-motion of a man who ignites the crowd, first with a rousing welcome and animated banter and later with his dazzling, inspired talk on injecting Avatar’s themes into the classroom.

“You’re a rock star,” a Cameron colleague shouts out to Marc Williams, Brooklyn Tech alumnus, longtime popular teacher and now the newest Assistant Principal.
In the cramped seventh-floor Assistant Principal's office. Here, an anxious parent phones Marc Williams to voice fears that her child will not eat properly on the forthcoming senior trip to Disney World. As the chat morphs into an extended airing of the mother's concerns over the student's college prospects, Mr. Williams listens sympathetically, for longer than he can afford to, then assures the parent her child is solidly on track.

Next, a student seeks confidence, hoping for pro forma permission to begin ticket sales for an upcoming music competition. But Mr. Williams remembers, from the previous year’s event, that some participants found the contest rules unfair. He draws the student organizer standing before him into a conversation much deeper than the one she had anticipated.

Finally, a poignant, challenging moment: Another parent calls, requesting a schedule shift for her child to switch from the music band to chorus. The student, a freshman, is scoring excellent grades but, early in her high school experience, is finding the new schedule shift for her child to switch from one major’s graduation T-shirt to be faculty finds the proposed student design for one major's graduation T-shirt to be silly, puerile, and scientifically inaccurate. For one major's graduation T-shirt to be silly, puerile, and scientifically inaccurate. Back in the 7th floor office, decision time in a minor controversy arrives. The faculty finds the proposed student design for one major's graduation T-shirt to be silly, puerile, and scientifically inaccurate. It's because he was one of them. "Marc understands what it is to be in an environment like Tech," she adds. "He found his niche as a student, and he works with the kids to find theirs.' That niche for late 1980s Techlite Marc Williams, riding the A train in from the East New York projects, was drama and performing. Through roles in "Hair," "The Music Man" and "The Wizard of Oz," he saw new possibilities emerge. "That," he recalls, "is where I found my joy and love for being in front of a crowd." But when time for college came, he ignored teachers' encouragement to apply to Carnegie Mellon. His mother was a single mom on welfare and unable to read or write. "Asking her for a $75 application fee, perhaps followed by out-of-town tuition and leaving her alone for four years, was unthinkable."

After those four years yielded an education degree at NYU he was back at Tech, now in front of the classroom. By the end of his first year, he had accepted the demanding position of Coordinator of Student Activities in addition to teaching English. Driven to make a difference not only in the classroom but all across student life, he would hold the post for 15 years until becoming Assistant Principal in 2005. "When I was a student here," he recalls, "I remember thinking one day, 'The great thing about Tech is that you develop in so many ways.' So now I talk to students about how important it is to be a well-rounded person." Some of my fondest memories happened off campus. I don't think I really learned that until after I left. Coming back as a teacher, now knowing how valuable the experience was, I like to let students know it while they are still here. It’s all about hindsight. I reigned the passion for Tech I experienced as a student when I came back on faculty."

Problem Solver Extremely popular as an English teacher, Mr. Williams succeeded in hitting the sweet spot of classroom instruction: demanding and holding his students to high standards — while making the course interesting and fun to them. "He was both as a teacher, but it never seemed to the student that he was tough," says another Assistant Principal, Joseph Kaelin — who remembers the young Marc Williams as a student. "When he enters a classroom, he's on stage; he's performing," Mr. Kaelin adds. "The students react when they see someone who really cares about them." Principal Randy Asher says, "Marc is the ultimate student advocate, and the conduit for information to parents and the outside world. He personifies the ideal Techite: a problem solver and decision maker, enthusiastic, with an unparalleled work ethic. I wish we could cast a mold and make more students like him."

Back in the 7th floor office, decision time in a minor controversy arrives. The faculty finds the proposed student design for one major's graduation T-shirt to be silly, puerile, and scientifically inaccurate. It's because he was one of them. "Marc has years and years of insights into teenag— she says. "He resolves issues in a way that is very caring. He is the heart and soul of Tech."

In the near future, Marc Williams will turn over the daily announcements broadcast to a cadre of students he is now training. The Assistant Principal job he hopes to stick with for a good while longer. But he’s not finished yet: he promises the mother he will give her child his personal attention, and he points out that the student will likely make new friends as the semester unfolds.
Talking With…
The Lead Architect
“We are problem solvers.”

A

Tony Schirripa ’67

Alumni Foundation board member Anthony Schirripa ’67 heads the New York chapter of the American Institute of Architects, a prominent architecture and design firm, and an initiative to integrate the profession’s current methods and mindset into Brooklyn Tech’s architecture program. He talked with TechTimes about leadership – in the profession, during times of crisis – and about the architect’s role in society and the schools.

T2: Tony, you’ve made leadership the theme of your AIA presidency. You lead a major firm, Mancini Duffy. What does leadership in architecture mean today?
A: More and more, architects are called upon to take leadership roles. The complexity of today’s projects demands that a large list of consultants work on a project. One of our member firms was managing 41 consultants on a project. Significant team building and leadership skills are involved to keep that many people working harmoniously together. Architects are problem solvers, and we’ve been working in teams as a profession for a very long time. We’re uniquely positioned to help that process. The other leadership areas are leading firms; being community leaders in professional societies or construction organizations – some of our architects get involved in community planning boards and school boards – and the political process, where architects run for elective office.

For me, the current leadership challenge is critical: keeping people motivated. With the economy decimating the profession, that is a tougher leadership challenge than recovering from September 11th.

T2: That was a day when you personally were called on to display extraordinary leadership. Your firm was based in the World Trade Center, and 100 of you were there on the 20th and 21st floors when the terrorists struck.
A: We sort of ignored the advice to stay. When the plane hit the first building (we were in the second) I just gave the order to evacuate. I (wished) to make sure everyone was gone. And then I locked the door. Everybody got out.

T2: You had scant minutes to evaluate, and then reject, the initial official instructions to remain in place. How did you make that pivotal decision – was it based on your knowledge of building construction, or something more fundamental?
A: There was nothing wrong in our building yet. Not yet realizing the true extent of the events, it was a gut feeling. I really did not know the full extent of what had happened until [much later.]

T2: And your firm bounced back, strong as ever.
A: One of the drivers to get back in operation quickly was that we had clients to serve. Our clients gave us transition space; the following Monday we were up and running. But working the old fashioned way – drawing by hand. Some of our staff triple worked on cardboard boxes. My partners and I went looking for permanent space and we found our new current home by Thursday morning.

T2: Everything else pale by comparison but today, as you noted, times are tough for the profession in New York.
A: Unemployment in our profession is probably close to 30 percent. We could lose a whole generation to other professions, other businesses. We (AIA) have a program for out-of-work members to stay connected to one another and the profession; for the younger people, a training program to help keep their skills current. It’s helped our chapter actually increase membership.

T2: How else is the AIA New York chapter contributing to its city and members?
A: We work on a regular basis with the city administration on zoning and city planning issues. We’re working with the Mayor’s office and Department of Buildings on a green building, or sustainable design initiative, and with the Department of Health on a program called Fit City: we help identify elements of building design that will contribute to public health and fitness.

T2: “Green building” – is it more than a trendy marketing buzzword?
A: The reality is that buildings consume almost 60 or 50 percent of the energy the United States generates. It’s not all vehicle emissions. We need to address that, be more sensitive to how we use resources.

What began as a trend is now a way of life. The United States generates. It’s not all vehicle emissions. We need to address that, be more sensitive to how we use resources.

Everything we do is with an eye toward creating a sustainable project. It’s with us to stay.

T2: So too, it seems, is your ongoing involvement with Brooklyn Tech.
A: I always have had a soft spot in my heart for Tech. It set me on the path I am on.

From a young age, I wanted to be an architect. I guess because my family was involved in construction, I felt the next step was to become a professional. I went to Brooklyn Tech with that purpose, and the architecture program at Tech actually made my college life a lot easier.

One of my former partners is also a Tech graduate, and we stayed connected to the school. I met the alumni folks and they asked if we would be willing to hire Tech students as interns, and we did. The first summer, the Tech kids were better than any of the college students. They had better computer skills and were actually more productive. Our young people go to work on projects. There’s no menial activity here.

T2: You’ve now stepped up to involve the architecture community with Tech as never before.
A: Part of Principal Asher’s commitment to bringing Tech back to its historical status is to have industry involvement in the development of the curriculum. That was the initial purpose of forming the architecture-industry affiliation group. I reached out to my brethren Technites to organize ourselves to provide the advice and the input the Principal needs. The wider purpose is to generate support from the profession for the Alumni Foundation’s programs.

T2: Has the response been strong?
A: Yes. All 14 people I invited agreed to join. In fact, I attracted somebody to the group whom I thought was a Tech graduate but actually wasn’t. He said, “No, I went to Lincoln.” I asked him why he was helping us, and he said, “Because it’s worth it.” He’s still part of our group.

T2: What curriculum areas are architects help with?
A: Trends in the industry – design trends, software, advising on what software is being used today. You know, when I tell people what the Tech curriculum gave me, they are amazed to see that we did all of that. I think today it actually equates to a year’s worth of college work.

T2: Even today?
A: Yes. I have seen it in the Tech interns who work in my firm.

T2: Are you still in touch with Tech, attending events, etc?
A: Yes. I always have had a soft spot in my heart for Tech. It set me on the path I am on. From a young age, I wanted to be an architect. I guess because my family was involved in construction, I felt the next step was to become a professional. I went to Brooklyn Tech with that purpose, and the architecture program at Tech actually made my college life a lot easier.

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From art to zettabytes, Brooklyn Tech students can take part in extracurricular activities covering more than 100 subjects, ranging across all disciplines, that enrich their education and their lives. For some, a lifelong passion will be born in one of them.

Many of these programs would not be possible without the support of your Brooklyn Tech Alumni Foundation.

TechTimes roamed the hallways one afternoon in March to see just how much goes on at the same time – at an hour when other high school students might be content to camp in front of a TV or video game. We saw how varied are the Brooklyn Tech extracurricular opportunities, and the students who benefit from them.
Donors’ Honor Roll

2010-2011

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1980-1989

2,000-2,499

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Re-Engineering Education

teachers that Dr. Robbins leads, focusing on what he calls the “integration of learning technologies and effective teaching methods.” Dr. Robbins believes that Brooklyn Tech is now more advanced than most schools he has worked with in effectively utilizing a battery of software and online applications.

One of the more promising resources for Tech’s physics teachers is an interactive homework site containing an enormous library of questions, ranging from basic to university level. Students submit answers online which are graded immediately. They have up to seven chances to get it right—but their grade is reduced with each wrong attempt. This scoring mechanism shows teachers which questions were the most challenging. Students tempted to ask each other for help will be disappointed: everyone in the class gets a similar set of problems, but the numbers in each question are different for each student.

This approach encourages students to help each other on discussion boards or by instant messaging, but still requires them to do their own work. Meanwhile, teachers save class time by focusing classroom instruction on only the most challenging concepts as determined by student scores. It is the educational equivalent of the instant, overnight Nielsen ratings for television: Dr. Robbins notes that teachers can now “make data-driven decisions about learning and teaching to inform what they do.”

Better Learning

First-year physics teacher Suzanne Vogel is finding that immediate feedback helps her students learn concepts like force and motion in her physics labs. Probes containing sensors, connected to laptops, monitor variables like acceleration. The sensors, connected to laptop computers, bring data to the motion in her physics labs. Probes containing sensors, connected to laptops, monitor variables like acceleration. The sensors, connected to laptop computers, bring data to the

Moodle (short for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is used by more than 32 million people accessing three million online courses worldwide. Mr. Fung, the technology teacher, is an avid proponent of Moodle. He posts copies of all homework assignments, exercises, projects, handouts, and grades as well as samples of student work. This, he contends, has “given parents a better understanding of their children’s progress since they can keep track of the assignments and grades.”

Using Moodle, English teacher Tanya Gidwitz provides links to literature selections from a vast online library rather than relying on limited textbook selections. Her colleague, English teacher Allyn Sklover appreciates how Moodle increases her grading efficiency: “I open up the file, write comments, grade the assignment, and from there, the grade goes directly into my grade book. Moodle also emails students when new grades are available.”

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THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

The students you see on pages 5-11 will be following those columns this fall.

IZZY RUAHAN Boston University • JONATHAN ZORDO The Cooper Union
NICHOLLE CAMERON Miami University • KEVIN LEE The Cooper Union
CHRISETE PRESTY ROY Polytechnic Institute of NY

Learning is easier and faster when it’s online—and the process frees up more classroom time for instruction.

Moodle is an educational alternative to traditional classrooms. By using Moodle, students can work at their own pace, at home or on campus, and can collaborate with other students. This can lead to a more personalized learning experience.

Better Learning

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Dr. Robbins notes that for much of the 20th century, education lagged behind other social institutions in utilizing technology. For example, using simulations for the high school physics lab required students to wait until lab time, projecting graphs showing the information onto a computer screen.

Student Adam Elkhoudi ’11 recalls how the use of probes helped him understand acceleration in his labs: “We rolled a ball down a slope, and a motion sensor tracked how close or far the ball was. As it got closer, you saw the height on the graph increase, and the slope depended on its speed/accleration. The purpose of the experiment was to find the relation between slope and acceleration; the steeper the slope, the faster the acceleration.”

Ms. Vogel also appreciates the accuracy of the digital data supplied by these probes. “The better the numbers, the better the experiment.”

Dr. Robbins says this application helps students visualize motion and observe in real time how data is graphed, and “replicate experiments rapidly and repeat them many times...to test hypothesis.”

Randall Barcley, Assistant Principal of Physics and Technology, is a driving force behind Tech’s conversion to instructional technology. At his direction, Tech students now do virtual labs on their home computers before conducting the actual experiments in school. Mr. Barcley believes these interactive simulations accelerate learning and create “huge long-term retention.” He says this application helps students visualize motion and observe in real time how data is graphed, and “replicate experiments rapidly and repeat them many times...to test hypothesis.”

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His enthusiasm is based on the research and development of a Nobel Prize winner in physics who, by using the latest video game technology, has developed learning simulations for the high school physics labs that had previously been available only to pilots and surgeons.

Oodles of Moodle

One of the most popular new technology tools at Tech is Moodle, a widely shared online course management system made available for free to Tech teachers through an arrangement between the Alumni Foundation and New York Institute of Technology. Mr. Barcley credits Moodle for “creating a medium that allows group learning to occur between teachers and students.”

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