

# Garden State Skating Club

## Newsletter

Produced by GSSC Junior Board

### Star on Ice: Vivian Reid

By: EMILY CHANG, *President and Editor-in-Chief*



Vivian Reid, 17-year-old senior at Point Pleasant Borough High School, has been skating for over six years. She is coached by Caroline Nikola and is currently competing at the FreeSkate 4 level.

Reid values self discipline and commitment and she wants other skaters to know that “it’s

okay to fall.” Although struggles often arise from the sport, she understands the importance of getting back up and continuing to work hard. She recently suffered a severe injury after tearing her foot from landing a jump and was forced to be in a boot for over two months. However, despite this setback, she has made a full recovery and is happy to be back on the ice.

Reid is also a Learn-to-Skate coach and she enjoys empowering younger skaters with her knowledge and experience. Outside of school, Reid enjoys coaching, hanging out with friends, and watching her high school’s hockey games. She plans on attending Hofstra University or Nova Southeastern University this fall and is excited for the next chapter of her life.

### 2018-2019 GSSC Junior Board Officers

#### Emily Chang

President  
Editor-in Chief

#### Paige Ruggeri

President  
Event Planning

Noelle Zavattieri  
Secretary

### Junior Board Members

Gwen Afanasewicz	Camryn Aprilante
Evelyn Jones	Anna Merlino
Sophia Newman	Alexei Novojilov
Syena Schaad	

### Junior Board Advisor

Christine Merlino, GSSC Secretary

### CONGRATULATIONS !



**Maren Vaclavik**  
GSSC Essay Contest Winner



**Emily Chang**  
Double Gold &  
National Solo Dance  
Medalist



**Lindsey Lissauer**  
Gold  
Medalist



**Paige Ruggeri**  
North Atlantic  
Regional  
Junior Ladies



**Syena Schaad**  
North Atlantic  
Regional  
Juvenile Finalist

## Maren Vaclavik's Greatest Skating Accomplishment

by: Emily Chang, *President and Editor-in-Chief* and Christine Merlino, *Junior Board Advisor*

*The GSSC Junior Board held its annual essay contest for its full members, ages 13 years old or younger. Submissions were in response to one of two questions regarding a skater's first memory of skating or his/her greatest skating accomplishment.*



*We are excited to announce this year's essay contest winner,*

***Maren Vaclavik***

*We would also like to announce the runner up, Layla Gramiccioni*

*Both girls should feel so proud of their essays!*

***Congratulations!***



*Maren is 10 years old and has been skating since third grade. Maren loves the artistry of skating, especially designing costumes and picking music for her programs. Her coach is Adriana Ryan. Maren also loves being on the travel HFC soccer team and has a real passion for both cooking and solving tough math problems.*

My greatest skating accomplishment occurred in July of 2017. The previous August I had injured my right hip and the doctor had excluded me from any athletic activities, including Ice Skating. I was devastated. As time went on I learned to do other things and had started to forget how to ice skate. In July, my mom but I said I didn't want to go soon as I stepped on the ice or other people. My mom was also very disappointed. I hated talking with me for a few and convinced me to give it a quicker than I thought. I got stepped on the Ice and I felt so I had been able to almost do So, even though I was scared, is why I feel this is my greatest



mentioned starting skating again, back. I was afraid of what would skating. I thought I would fall as that I would be judged negatively by surprised by my answer and she was to see her disappointed. After weeks, she finally eased my fears shot. We picked a day and it came ready by putting my skates on. I happy. Nobody made fun of me and everything that I had done before. I was brave and faced my fears. This skating accomplishment.

## GSSC Skaters Put on a Magical Holiday Show Spectacular

by: Anna Merlino, *Staff Writer*

Every year, the Garden State Skating Club participates in a Holiday Show to share our love for the sport and get into the holiday spirit. On December 15th, we held our annual show which consisted of 29 participants, ranging from age 5 to 18. Each skater preformed to a holiday themed song of their choice, and it was as much fun for the skaters as it was for the audience. In addition to the individual programs, there were also group numbers and even a learn-to-skate performance.

During the show, skaters' friends and family were offered hot chocolate and other holiday treats in Howell's new seating area. Skaters and guests also had the opportunity to shop for a variety of items such as gloves and other GSSC apparel.

Each year, we decorate the entrance to the ice differently in order to create a unique opening for the skaters when they get on the ice. This year the skaters entered through a curtain decorated with snowflakes and surrounded by towers of presents. It is fun and memorable for the skaters because they get to take a group picture in front of the festive display at the end of the show.

Overall, this year's Holiday Show was a huge success and we can't wait for next year!



## 2018 Holiday Show Skaters

Paige Ruggeri	'Fall on Me'
Maren Vaclavik	'Hallelujah'
Portia Castellano	'Winter Wonderland'
Evelyn Jones	'Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy'
Howell Skating Academy	'Jingle Bells'
Anna Merlino	'The Christmas Song'
Brooklyn Pagonis	'Rocking Around the Christmas Tree'
Camryn Aprilante	'You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch'
Diana Mackiewicz	'Rocking Around the Christmas Tree'
Valentina Cirpriati	'Do You Wanna Build a Snowman?'
Carmella DiMaggio	'Mr. Grinch'
Gwen Afanasewicz	'Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy'
Sophia Newman	'Baby It's Cold Outside'
Portia Castellano & Layla Gramiccioni	'Here Comes Santa Claus'
O' Hara Kane-Assatly	'Christmas Island'
Camryn Aprilante & Syena Schaad	'Hot Chocolate'
Adriana Stulic	'Baby Please Come Home'
Noelle Zavattieri	'Winter Song'
Rachel Gaynor	'Once Upon a December'
Viktoria Lastivka	'The Most Wonderful Time of the Year'
Emily Nesson	'Ave Maria'
Sofia Cipriati	'Jingle Bell Rock'
Sophia Newman & Natalie Abadir	'Deck the Rooftop'
Vivan Reid	'Christmas Canon'
Layla Gramiccioni	'Santa Tell Me'
Aurelia Pellegrini	'Santa Claus is Coming to Town'
Anna Merlino, Noelle Zavattieri, Evelyn Jones, & Gwen Afanasewicz	'All I Want For Christmas is You'
Emily Chang	'You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch'
Syena Schaad	'A Mad Russian's Christmas'

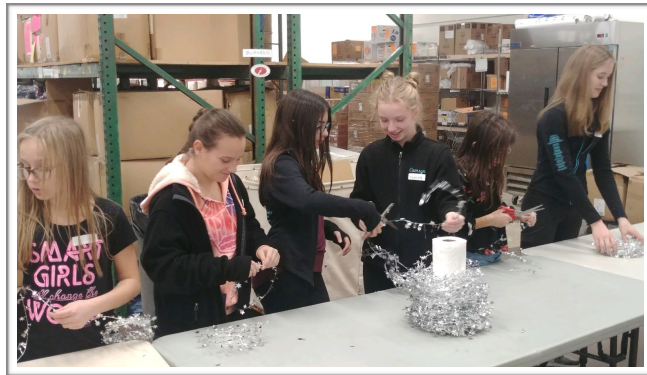
# SAVE THE DATE !

**2019 Holiday Show Spectacular**  
**Saturday, December 14**  
**5:00- 7:00pm**

## Junior Board Lends Helping Hands to Holiday Express

by: Camryn Aprilante, *Staff Writer*

On November 1, Garden State Skating Club members had the opportunity to volunteer at Holiday Express in Tinton Falls. Holiday Express is an organization that helps people in need and brings them the joy of the holiday season. They bring a traveling holiday party to individuals who have special needs or cannot afford any holiday celebrations, visiting locations such as hospitals, soup kitchens, shelters, and psychiatric hospitals. This year, while at the Holiday Express, skaters packed gift bags which were later given to the Holiday Express guests. Each bag contained a blanket, gloves, a hat, and toiletry items. The bags for younger kids also had a coloring



book and crayons.

Next, the Garden State Skating Club made halos out of

wire tinsel for the kids at the parties to enjoy. In the end, our skaters had a great time volunteering at Holiday Express and were happy to have made a beneficial contribution to those less fortunate.

## Skaters Partner with Operation Sleigh Bells

by: Evelyn Jones, *Staff writer*

The Garden State Skating Club participated in helping Operation Sleigh Bells with their annual collection of winter wear. Operation Sleigh Bells is an organization in Long Branch, New Jersey that collects clothing and other necessities to donate to children and their families during the holiday season. This year, the Garden State Skating Club collected about 20 sets of pajamas for families in need.

"Donating pajamas was a great cause that we could accomplish!" Anna Merlino said. "I was glad to see that many people participated by donating pajamas, and the amount we collected was amazing!"

Thank you to all who participated!



## Pink in the Rink

by: Noelle Zavattieri, *Secretary & Staff writer*



Throughout the month of October, Garden State Skating Club supported Breast Cancer Awareness month by wearing pink. Skaters and coaches wore pink gloves and laces for the cause and all proceeds went to the Scott Hamilton Cares Foundation. Together, our club raised \$245!

Scott Hamilton, US Olympic Gold Medalist, battled cancer himself and established this foundation to give back and help other cancer patients. Teaming up with the NHL, USFS, and various skating clubs, Hamilton created “Sk8 to Elim8 Cancer,” a successful campaign against cancer.

Christine Merlino, GSSC Secretary and Junior Board Advisor, helped members sell pink laces and gloves to spread she thought this not, she responded promoting ‘Pink in and laces, we were support breast our own club, rink, Junior Board had fun supporting



awareness. When asked if fundraiser was successful or with, “Yes, definitely! By the Rink’ with pink gloves able to raise money and cancer awareness right in and community!” Our members worked hard and this important cause.”

## Two GSSC Skaters Compete at North Atlantic Regionals

by: Paige Ruggeri, *President & Staff writer*

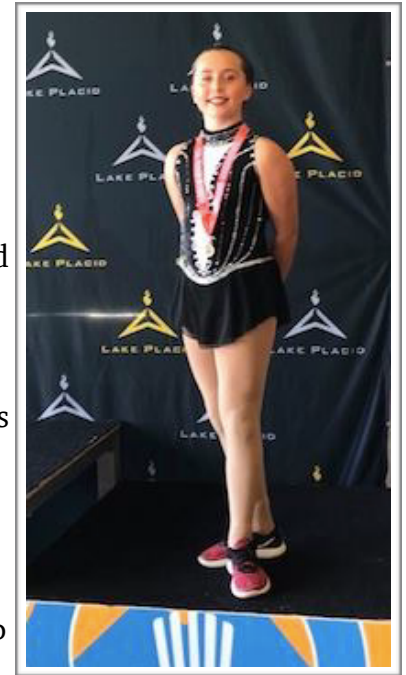


US Figure Skating North Atlantic Regional Championships was held in Lake Placid, New York from October 17 - October 21, 2018. The Regional Championships are the first event in the US Figure Skating qualifying competitions, with skaters competing at the Juvenile, Intermediate, Novice, Junior and Senior levels.

The Garden State Skating Club had two competitors representing the club at the Championships. Syena Schaad competed in the Juvenile Girls event, and Paige Ruggeri competed in the Junior Ladies Event. Syena placed 3rd and

qualified for the championship round, where she finished 18th. Paige was in 7th place after her short program and 11th after her long program.

Lake Placid is always a great location for the North Atlantic Regional Championships as it is filled with skating history. Syena and Paige enjoyed competing and representing the Garden State Skating Club at the Championships.



## Emily Chang Medals at US Figure Skating National Solo Dance Championships

Congratulations to Emily Chang for winning the Bronze Medal in the PreGold and Pewter Medal in the Junior Free Dance events at the 2018 US Figure Skating National Solo Dance Championships. The event was held on September 13-16, 2018 in Barnstable, MA, and drew over 220 athletes from around the country. The 2018 Solo Dance Series began in February and concluded in August 2018. There were more than 450 skaters from the Eastern, Midwestern and Pacific Coast sections who took part in the Series and competed in 29 events. Chang finished 1st place in the Eastern Section for Junior Combined FreeDance and 2nd place in the PreGold Pattern Dance events.



## Meet Coach Caroline Nikola

by: Syena Schaad, *Staff writer*

Caroline Nikola started skating when she was four years old and has stuck with the sport ever since. She has been coaching for 23 years and loves every aspect of her job. Caroline was a competitive skater in both singles and pairs. Some of her favorite elements were the triple toe loop, the throw triple salchow, and the death spiral.

Caroline's greatest skating accomplishment was qualifying for the French National team. She remembers feeling amazing after hearing the wonderful news. That same year she competed in singles and pairs at the Senior National Championships. Outside of skating, Caroline enjoyed many hobbies including ballet and rhythmic gymnastics which helped her skating flexibility.

Caroline's advice to other skaters is, "Keep working hard. Still love what you do because sometimes it gets hard with new moves or injuries. So get up and keep pushing through."



Coach Caroline Nikola was my first coach and she has been coaching me for six years.

# GSSC & Howell Ice Arena Hosts National Skating Month Event

By: Alexei Novojilov, Staff Writer



February is National Skating Month in which many clubs help promote skating and its benefits. On February 9th, GSSC and the Howell Ice Arena hosted an open house event, providing free group lessons and a figure skating exhibition to the community.

The free lessons were held from 11:30am - noon and consisted of 30-minute group lessons on the pond. Club coaches and members volunteered to teach kids from different levels, ranging from those who had never skated before to those who had some skating experience. The coaches taught kids how to stand up, fall, and glide.

From 12:00 - 12:10 on the main rink, a few club skaters performed their programs to show off their skills and talents.

There were spins, jumps, footwork, and everything that makes ice skating as spectacular as it is. The exhibition had skaters of all different ages and levels, proving that the sport is something for everyone.

Our National Skating Month event was a great success and many enjoyed a great day of skating with their friends and family.



# Tests Passed

September 2018 - March 2019

## CONGRATULATIONS!

Emily Chang - Senior Free Dance (December 2018)

Lila Earle - Bronze Dance Test, Fourteen Step (January 2019)

Lindsey Lissauer - Senior Moves, Rocker Foxtrot, and American Waltz (January 2019)  
PreSilver Dance (October 2018)

Anna Merlino - PreJuv Moves, PrePre Free (January 2019)

Sophia Newman - PreJuv Moves (January 2019)

Alexei Novojilov- Novice Moves (November 2018)

Francesca Olivieri - Prelim Moves (January 2019)

Syena Schaad - Novice Moves (January 2019)

Maren Vaclavik - PrePre Moves (January 2019)

Noelle Zavattieri - Intermediate Moves (January 2019)

## NEXT TEST SESSION

## FRIDAY, MARCH 22ND

## SAVE THE DATE !

GSSC Spring Banquet

Sunday, March 24th

2:00 - 6:00pm

Riverview Pavilion

800 River Road, Highway 35

Belmar, NJ



