

## **Rutgers Prep Academic Team Undefeated**

The energetic Rutgers Prep academic team is on a roll, as you can see by their above-mentioned motto. The Varsity team is undefeated this season in the Somerset County Academic Team League after eight matches. Because they are excited and proud of their achievement they have coined the motto, 'we put the stud in study.'

The ten High Schools in Somerset County each take a turn hosting a meet, when over one hundred students in Somerset County come together to compete in categories of music, math, science, history, literature, grammar, current events, pop culture, sports, and common bonds. The 'Common Bonds' questions require team members to think about connections. For instance, the team would be given this information: mint chocolate cookie, eighth plague, and comfortable lawnmower. Then they would have ten seconds to come up with the answer: grasshopper.

"I look forward to Thursdays because of Academic Team. It allows me to hang out with kids I normally wouldn't get a chance to hang out with. We get to meet weekly with kids from several other schools and compete with them, which is really fun", says Junior Ankita Thakkar of Morganville.

This Thursday, February 7, Franklin High School will host the ninth meet of the season. Many matches occur simultaneously as each of the ten schools competes against a team they have not as yet played. Each match is an hour long, divided into two halves. Four team members play in each half. Sophomore Mike Rogove of Somerset looks forward to these meets: "Going to lots of different schools gives us a chance to see what other schools are like. We get to see who is around after school and what the different schools look like. It's friendly rivalry. Every squad bonds, even with the opposing teams".

Biology teacher Dr. Valerie Pierce and math teacher Ms. Allison Gratzer coach the Academic Team. "It is exhilarating to coach these students. They love learning and really enjoy the challenge and variety of competing in so many different categories. At three o'clock on Thursdays, we are just getting started!", says Dr. Pierce. Ms. Gratzer is equally enjoying the season: "These students have such a tremendous enthusiasm and love of

learning. It is a real joy to be part of the Academic Team League: sharing knowledge and making friends. All of us are looking forward to the match at Franklin High School this Thursday”.