Instructing about the typing of blood samples, science teacher **J. Douglas Winters** points out agglutination to **Ian Milne**, left, **Amy Bodnar** and **Katherine Larson**.

Clockwise from left. Two days before the event, captain **Katherine Labella** helps sort the team into three units, each with a different focus: A, blood; B, fingerprinting; C, fiber analysis. During an April 7 training session, Trumbull detective **Robert Schwarz** instructs **Heather Dahlin**, left, Labella, **Nicole Friedman** and **Mark Ragusa** on collecting evidence. With only nine days until the competition, adviser **Eric August** reviews how to maintain chain of custody with evidence. Waiting to present to the judges at UNH, Ragusa, left, demonstrates his theory of the murder by applying blunt force to Milne while Dahlin and **Jennifer Shafer** observe.

# CSI: Trumbull

## *THS sleuths take UNH*

"Your skills are important, but the biggest asset you have is your logic and intuition," said adviser Jordan Miller to the CSI (Crime Scene Investigator) Forensic Science team, two days before traveling to the Henry C. Lee College of Criminal Justice and Forensic Sciences at the University of New Haven to compete in a forensics challenge on May 14. For weeks, the team met every Wednesday after school to prepare for the statewide competition against other schools chosen by lottery. The team viewed hair and fiber samples under a microscope, tested blood for type and used blood spatter patterns to calculate how a victim was injured.

At the competition their jobs were more challenging, because CSIs had to play the role of both police and lab techs. They were evidence gatherers, testers and analyzers, as well. To reach their conclusion, the team used physical evidence collected at a mock crime scene and information gathered in the interview room to determine what happened in a murder, including identification of the perpetrator, a theory on the motive and how the crime was committed. All details were relevant, and during their presentation the Trumbull CSI team faced a tough grilling from experienced UNH judges.

Brittany Russello, a first-year CSI, said, "Being a member of the Forensics Team was different than I expected. It was weird to see a realistic crime scene. The most I've ever seen was on television." She added, "I joined because I was always interested in forensic science. Although I recently decided I don't want to do it as a career, I still came along for the experience."

Second-year veteran Jennifer Shafer said, "I joined because I did a project for biology on forensics, and I really liked it. I wanted to see how forensics was done more in depth."

Although the team did not take first place at UNH, they gained experience and grew as a team during the seven-hour competition.

Shafer explained, "It was difficult, because other teams had the advantage of having a full class period during school. Since we don't offer forensics as a class, we worked with what we could after school."

## PEACE KEEPERS RULE.

Honored by Connecticut governor Jodi Rell, Peer Mediators represented THS at the state legislature on April 6. Identified as the model program in the state, the Trumbull teen conflict negotiators explained their purpose and described the THS efforts to promote a positive school environment at the Governor's Prevention Partnership Best Practices (GPPBP) in School Climate and School Culture in Hartford. Armed with facts and examples, they demonstrated how teens can effectively mediate disputes that include relationship conflicts, rumors, misunderstandings, bullying, fighting and personal property issues.

During the school year, the Peer Mediators acted as neutral third parties in problem solving discussions. They conducted more than 35 mediations to promote understanding and model problem solving techniques for students in conflict.

"Among this year's graduating seniors, we had student mediators who played significant roles in establishing a program that was new their sophomore year," said adviser William Mecca.

"They literally grew up along with the program at THS," added adviser Dennis McLaughlin. "In doing so, they leave a lasting mark on both themselves and the school culture as a whole."