

# THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXV-No. 2

Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

April 9, 2021

## Amity Returns to Full In-Person Learning

by Aadya Wijesekera '23

Since the closing of Amity Regional High School in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic

different grade levels, were assigned specific cities to portray on the walls of their given hallway in the school. Members of Student Government volunteered to come in the Friday before the



Photo by Caroline Chen '21

Student Government representatives decorated hallways to welcome back peers on March 22nd.

has significantly impacted the lives of Amity students. Upon returning to school in September, students were divided into two cohorts during the hybrid instructional learning model, with each cohort attending school on alternate days.

Additionally, some students opted for full-remote learning and remained home. This caused them to feel disconnected from their peers and others in the school community.

Karishma Buslara '23 said, "Hybrid and remote learning were hard for me, as I felt distanced from my friends and peers in the other cohort."

Amity recently transitioned to full in-person learning on March 22nd. All students are able to come in for a shortened school day, 7:34 to 12:47, every day of the week.

Amity Student Government created a comfortable environment for students to return to. Class councils, committees of Student Government specific to

school's reopening to help with decorating. The freshman class created a hallway to represent Paris, sophomores represented London, juniors represented Hollywood, and seniors represented New York City. Each hallway was unique and full of color, which many students appreciated.

Annie Zhan '23 remarked, "Having been a fully remote student prior to the switch to full in-person learning, the colorful walls created a very welcoming environment that made me even more excited about returning to school!"

Currently, more than 80% of the student body is enrolled in full-in-person school, while other students are still opting to continue with remote learning. Principal Anna Mahon said, "I am looking forward to continuing to build our capacity through the end of this school year and into next school year."

This transition was well re-

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## Spartan Seminar Sees a Change in Pace

by Brodey Lu '22

The focus in Spartan Seminar has shifted in the past month, with student-led discussions taking the spotlight. Students were encouraged to talk about the importance of promoting tolerance and embracing diversity in our community. Activities focused on bringing people together while also raising awareness of implicit biases and stereotypes that people may have.

As a whole, the activities encouraged conversations that would otherwise be difficult to have and helped set the stage for more progress in making a school environment where everyone feels welcome and comfortable.

The idea first started when some students recognized problems in the school community and set out to actively address them. Colby O'Connor '22 and Melita Collins '21 were the students who first saw Spartan Seminar as an opportunity to spread their message to everyone in the school. O'Connor

elaborated on the purpose of the programming, saying, "We believed that, considering our increasingly diverse country, our community should gain awareness on implicit biases and racist actions." He added that the end goal was for "the ignorance in our community to die down, leaving people to reflect on their beliefs."

Over the course of several sessions, Spartan Seminar facilitators engaged students in a variety of activities. One particular activity involved asking students to imagine a certain type of person, like an athlete or a doctor. When asked what they imagined, many people realized the implicit biases that led them to make assumptions about gender and race. This served as a clear example of how people could make judgements without even being aware.

Other tasks involved having discussions about role models, the effects of categorizing, and acknowledging the differences between each member of the

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## Science Research Students Excel at STEM Fairs

by Bridget Lowder '24 and Andie Napolitano '24

Over the past couple of months, students in the Science Research Program have participated and excelled in multiple science fairs. While the COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges with the virtual fairs, Amity students rose to the occasion.

Amity students have participated in the CT-STEM fair for many years; however, none in the past have done so during a global pandemic. Amity sent

89 projects to the fair, many of which placed highly and continued on to subsequent prestigious fairs. Amity students won first place in each of the five completed project categories. Winners included Shreya Hebbar '23 (Behavioral), Maggie Liu '22 (Environmental), Ethan Lavi '21 (Health & Medical), Iris Yan '24 (Physical Science), and Allen Liu '23 and Sheehan Munim '23

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# Amity Returns to In-Person Learning

*continued from page 1* received by many students who were happy to see their friends and teachers in person. Amity's upperclassmen have also expressed their excitement about returning to school.

Eesha Acharya '21 said, "It has been a tough year socially and academically. So, I love being back at school, seeing my friends

and teachers."

Although a return to normalcy seems to be in sight, Amity continues to prioritize health guidelines in an effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

"Provided we continue to work together, follow the mitigation protocols and get vaccinated when we are eligible, I am hopeful

we can continue to work our way through the pandemic and come out a stronger community that has a great appreciation for and understanding of the significance of being together," Mahon added.

With the majority of students and faculty now present in the school building, there is hope that the entire student body can eventually return.

## New Technology Center Opens Its Doors

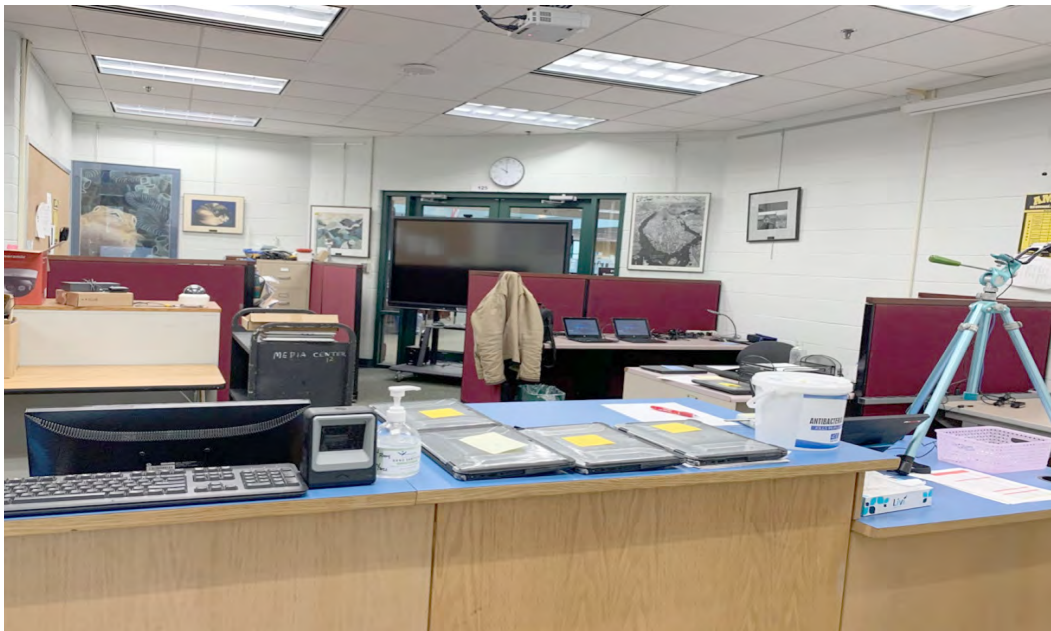


Photo by Jennifer Xu '21

Amity's new technology center opened its doors for faculty, staff, and student use. Formally one of the computer labs in the Media Center, the refurbished technology center features expanded desk and counter space.

## Spartan Seminar Sees a Change in Pace

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community. A central theme was that diversity should not get in the way of unity, but rather build on community and make it stronger.

Several of these activities required students to step out of their comfort zone. By the end, many people took the opportunity to acknowledge and

build acceptance for the differences in the community, although for some the activities were still difficult.

While these initial Spartan Seminar discussions were not meant to entirely solve racism in the community, the initiative has set a very positive precedent for the future at Amity.

Reflecting on the effects of the discussions, O'Connor said, "I believe no activity could fully do what we had originally intended, but any step is a good direction."

As a whole, the recent activities have shown that the need for action against racism and intolerance does not stop and neither should the conversations.

## Science Students Excel

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(Teams). In addition, 21 out of the 27 awarded places were projects from Amity.

Science Research teachers Catherine Piscitelli and Nicholas Shamp were very proud of their students' accomplishments in STEM.

Piscitelli said, "The students have faced many difficulties including limited access to labs, only being able to communicate virtually with their mentors, and more demands from science fairs due to them being online. We are so impressed that they were able to move past these constraints and still do well at science fairs. That says so much about the ambition and strength of our Amity students!"

Similar to their success at

CT-Stem, Amity students also shone at CSEF.

Out of the 23 projects sent from Amity, 10 won major awards, including scholarships and opportunities to advance to even more selective fairs. Shyam Viswanathan '21 and Aditi Chalasani '22 won college scholarships to Quinnipiac and UConn respectively.

Freshman Iris Yan came in third place in the Computer Science category. Yan noted, "Participating in the science fair was a really fun and cool experience! It was harder than I expected, but I had a lot of help from my teacher and classmates."

Additionally, Mason Zhang '21 won second place in the Environmental Sciences category and sophomores Sheehan Munim and Allen Liu won first place in

the Life Sciences team category for their project.

The next step for juniors Scott Lowder, Aditi Chalasani, Brodey Lu, and Mason Beaudette is the Connecticut Invention Convention, which is going to be held virtually on May 2, 2021.

Students in this fair are competing for even greater prizes and the chance to advance nationally. When asked about the prospect of competing in this fair,

Lowder '22 said, "I'm excited to continue developing my project and for the chance to compete in the Connecticut Invention Convention for the first time."

While it is very impressive that these students have done exceptionally well, this is only the beginning of their achievements in STEM.

## Pollinator Pathways: Exploring Our Environment and Beyond

by Alice Xu '24

It began with a simple survey of the plant habitat and wildlife on the Amity campus and developed into Pollinator Pathways, a project that will affect not only local habitats but global ones, as well. When Allison Nork's AP Environmental Science classes first started to study Amity's plant life, they found the number of invasive plants increasing at an alarming rate while native plants (especially those which attracted pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds) were decreasing.

This finding led to action as students sought to remediate this issue. Nork explained her students' thoughts, stating, "So we figured, wouldn't it be great to put in some plants that would feed pollinators and cut down on the number of invasive species on campus?" They decided to do so in twelve raised garden beds located outside of the culinary rooms and a small area near

the tennis courts. There, new native plants could be planted and observed in order to determine the effect on pollinators and remove any invasive species.

Simultaneously, Jim Clifford and Amity's AP Psychology students began their study of human behavior and motivation to answer the question, "Why do people do what they do?" A discussion topic was why there is so much information on the changing environment but so little action taken. After showing his students various National Geographic articles and videos on pollinators, Clifford noticed the ignition of a newfound curiosity and excitement within them.

Upon meeting with Nork, Clifford and his students became directly involved in the pollinator garden project. The AP Environmental Science and Integrated Science classes will monitor the plants over time, track and maintain their health, and promptly remove any invasive plants to create the most optimal environment possible

for pollinators. Clifford's students have taken pictures, measured, and cleaned out the beds. Their upcoming tasks will be removing any weeds, and then they will be planting perennial seeds, annual flowers, and herbs that attract pollinators. Small seed trays and seed packets will be sent home to remote students who will also be able to participate in the project and grow their own flower and herb gardens at home.

The timeframe for this project aims to have the plants put into the plant beds this spring, with some plants nurtured from seeds to seedlings and others bought as already established seedlings. Students will create a schedule for managing the watering of the seedlings to ensure their well-being during the summer months. This project is expected to continue through the end of this school year and throughout the next, creating not only a safe environment for pollinators, but a learning experience for students, teachers, and all members of the Amity community, alike.

# Atlanta Shootings Show Media's Failure to Recognize Asian-Americans

by Ellen Ko '24

America does not recognize Asian-Americans in its makeup, and the recent xenophobic Asian-American attacks prove exactly that.

When I heard about the murder of six Asian women by a white man in Atlanta, I couldn't help but feel angry and bitter. I thought about the community I grew up in where there was an Asian-American household on every block, the nail salon I loved visiting and the Asian women who worked there, and the immigrant blood that runs through me.

Xiaojie Tan, Dauyou Feng, Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim, Yong Ae Yue: six women with full lives and loving families. Six women much like the ones I grew up idolizing. They were Americans, and what happened to them was outright evil. The media's reluctance to call their murders as what they are—a hate crime—and the media's participation in sexualizing Asian women is insulting.

American media and the history curriculum both contribute to the erasure of Asian-Americans in society. I don't regularly read about Asian-Americans, nor do I see any on televi-

sion. American society often reduces race to Black and white, rendering other races invisible. This lack of representation dehumanizes Asian-Americans, so when the media must confront anti-Asian racist attacks, they fail miserably.

These anti-Asian sentiments have existed for as long as there has been a person of Asian descent on American soil. People quickly forget that Franklin Roosevelt, one of the country's most revered presidents, ordered all Japanese Americans into concentration camps less than 80 years ago. They are quick to forget that South Asians endured incredible abuse and racial profiling following 9/11 and that one of the most violent lynchings in American history was done to a Chinese population.

Words have power. Stories are capsules of who we are, and the stories we select to construct our identity as a nation have consequences. Asian-Americans have been continuously deemed as foreign despite the fact that the first Asians in America can be traced back centuries.

Our country is currently in a place where fundamental American thought can be shifted. The foundations of our media finally have room for some marginalized people to be truly

seen—the same people that have been screaming to be heard in a country where they aren't even fully represented in culture.

Pushing for this representation, we can change the way children see themselves. When mainstream culture disproportionately showcases whiteness, the stories of minorities in our country often go untold.

The media is a starting point in forcing the privileged to confront the harsh truth of our society, allowing marginalized people to see themselves represented. It is silencing the experiences of millions by portraying heroes as white and other marginalized people as insignificant sidekicks.

Until minorities are fully represented, Americans won't be able to see our country in an accurate, multicultural, multiracial, and beautiful light. I want to see more Asian-Americans in the government, in movies, and on bookshelves, so that one day, Asian-Americans will no longer be seen as foreigners in their own country. So that one day, society will realize that people like me can serve the country well and that we are more than how the media portrays us. Until that happens, anti-Asian sentiment will only repeat in this vicious cycle for generations to come.

## COVID-19:

### Reflecting Back and Looking Forward

by Hyunjin Kim '21

This year has made the word unprecedented seem trite and hackneyed. There were many struggles as we attempted to accept this "new normal," but now there is a ray of hope: the vaccines.

Through the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of three different types of vaccines created by Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, and Johnson & Johnson, many have come to believe that we can effectively go back to the "normal" of pre-pandemic times.

However, there is a rising threat that could potentially hinder vaccine efforts and delay our return to pre-pandemic days. New coronavirus variants are the growing threat around the globe with ever increasing numbers of variants being discovered. Studies have shown that vaccines are still effective against these variants, but some are less effective than others. There are still a growing number of variants continuously being discovered and monitored that could potentially be ineffective against the vaccine. With such fears, experts are more vocal than ever in encouraging individuals to get vaccinated.

However, the vaccine efforts in Connecticut are too uneven and broad. Moreover, most of the vaccine supply globally is in the hands of wealthier countries.

Governor Lamont's effort for an equitable vaccine distribution led him to roll out vaccines based on age groups along with special priority for healthcare personnel, medical first responders, and other crucial individuals. However, many critics rightfully point out the governor's broad rollout does not really address the individuals with conditions that heighten the chance of severe symptoms and hospitalization that could potentially lead to death.

Especially for the lower age bracket, individuals with chronic illnesses and comorbidities should have priority over those without conditions that could increase their chances of severe illness and death. Furthermore, the large shift from the age bracket of individuals 45 and older to 16 and older makes it more difficult for underserved populations to book vaccine appointments. Those who have predisposed conditions in the 16 and older age bracket could have benefited from a priority categorization allowing individuals with chronic conditions or other comorbidities to access the vaccines before the 16 and older age bracket. Now those who have a higher chance of hospitalization and even death struggle to reserve a vaccination appointment in a sea of eager individuals.

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# the TRIDENT

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## CORRECTIONS

The following corrections are made to the February 2021 *Trident* article "Mrs. Romero: The Math Department's Pride and Joy-ceyln":

Romero's involvement with afterschool activities includes OBOA, Amity Math Team, Mu Alpha Theta, and Diversity In Action.

At Gateway, Romero teaches Intermediate, College Algebra, and Introductory Statistics.

At Amity, Romero has taught Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Precalculus, and Statistics.

Bachelor's Degree: Neuroscience; Master's Degree: Mathematics

Marie Mastandrea was Romero's former department chair/supervisor rather than advisor.

For any corrections or tips, please email the Editors-in-Chief (chenca21@amityschools.org, garfinkleza22@amityschools.org, sual21@amityschools.org)

## ONLINE PUBLICATION

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## COVID-19 Reflections

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There have also been disputes regarding global distribution of the vaccine, as around fifty percent of COVID-19 vaccines went to the U.S., E.U. and U.K., representing only around eleven percent of the world's population. Global North countries representing around 20 percent of the world's population have bought 6 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines, while Global South countries, representing around eighty percent of the world's population, have bought 2.6 billion doses thus far. The United States has secured vaccines for Americans twice over and the U.K. and Canada

have done so three times over. But some countries in Africa have failed to administer a single dose of the vaccine.

It could take several years to fully vaccinate the entire world. Furthermore, only hundreds of millions of COVID-19 vaccines have been produced so far and billions of vaccines need to be manufactured to vaccinate the entire world.

Licensing COVID-19 technologies to third parties to train and manufacture vaccines would be more effective at helping the Global South combat COVID-19 since it could take years to waive

such technologies involving many companies. The Global South should not be excluded from the international vaccine efforts. More threatening variants could arise from these countries with low to no vaccinations. So far, many have seen a promising end to this pandemic, but there are still many months, and potentially years, to go until we go back to "normal." Coronavirus variants will continue to be a concern until herd immunity by global vaccination decreases the spread of the virus. Until then, we must continue to follow public health guidelines, even as we become increasingly optimistic about the future.

## The Biden Administration Faces Many Challenges Ahead

by Jack Ranani '21

The Biden administration has been in power for a bit more than two months and has many looming issues it is yet to address. Even still, the coherence and consistency of messaging from the White House is a welcome departure from the fast-paced crisis-to-crisis operation of its previous occupant.

This new administration has a measured approach to many of the issues it faces, from media appearances by the President in response to provocation by North Korea. Press Secretary Jen Psaki is an effective and truthful communicator, allowing the Biden team to construct a clear and cogent message for the public.

Building on President Trump's Operation Warp Speed, the Biden administration has helped states increase their vaccine distribution capabilities as the US attempts to minimize

the impacts of COVID-19 variants. Biden has now doubled his "100 million doses in 100 days" goal, and is on track to exceed it.

Despite its success on the vaccination front, the Biden administration has a lot of promises to uphold and issues to address. The first is the crisis at the border, which has energized Republicans eager to take shots at Biden's more compassionate approach toward immigration. The current administration must take immediate steps to remedy this issue.

If we remember back in 2015, President Trump's campaign kicked off with strong anti-immigration language and caught the attention of a wide consensus of conservatives. Continuing to emphasize anti-immigration themes throughout the campaign ("build the wall"), he was propelled to an electoral college victory in 2016. If the Biden administration fails to address the com-

plex situation on the border, we could see the rise of a 2024 Republican candidate who attempts to exploit this weak point in policy.

The second issue to address is the filibuster. In order for the Biden administration to enact its agenda, Congress must be able to legislate with a simple majority. While the COVID-19 relief bill passed with a simple majority through the budget reconciliation process, other measures such as infrastructure spending or civil rights may require 60 votes to overcome the filibuster. This creates an insurmountable hurdle for the Biden administration in a 50-50 Senate. If the administration does not do away with the filibuster, they will face intense criticism for not keeping their campaign promises.

While the Biden administration has put itself in a good position regarding COVID-19 policy, there are many issues it still needs to address.

## Hey Netflix! Take a Page from Disney

by Keziah Smith '22

For many of us growing up, we would turn on our cable televisions every Friday or Saturday and watch the new episode of our favorite shows. After a long week of waiting and anticipation, we would finally sit back and enjoy. You know, "the good old days". Now, with Netflix, many of us have not done that in quite some time.

Streaming services are ruining our patience and television experience. Whenever new content is released, the routine is the same; producers dump the new season on viewers all at once. It typically consists of ten to twelve episodes, each being around 42 minutes long; which adds up to about eight hours and twenty-four minutes. That is entirely too much time to be watching television. We are being conditioned to consume television at an alarming rate.

Typically after Netflix releases shows, viewers watch them in a nonstop binge. Also, Netflix will automatically play consecutive episodes with only a ten-second grace period. This does not give the audience time

to even look away, let alone do more productive things. It becomes, "okay, one more episode" until the season is over.

It does not stop there, though. Once the season is finished, a screen with other enticing shows and movies pops up, encouraging further mass consumption.

Sure, Netflix will display the "Are you still watching?" screen, but by the time it makes an appearance, the season is practically over. I doubt that this feature is for the viewer's wellbeing or encouragement of a break, but rather to catch those who may have dozed off mid-season.

One thing that I highly appreciate about the platform Disney Plus is that although they have full seasons of completed shows, all new releases have been dropped one episode at a time. So, unlike with Netflix, viewers are forced to patiently wait, something we have forgotten how to do.

Once-a-week releases let fans process everything they just watched and even form a community from the show. When series are released once, there is no time to form theories or any in-depth thoughts

about the episodes. It is possible that between episodes one could stop and take a guess; however, at that point, guessing is unnecessary because the answer would be known; the next episode is at your fingertips. This creates an unspoken drug.

Binge-watching has numerous negative effects. Like a drug, it can give viewers a "high," causing a temporary sense of joy, as the brain releases dopamine. But at what cost? This can be linked to depression and anxiety, back problems, lack of oxygen, and even issues sleeping. I promise the new season of your favorite show is not worth these effects.

I fall victim to this, too. I am, in fact, the worst binge-watcher. However, not knowing what was coming next in WandaVision was like a breath of fresh air. I loved not having to dedicate hours of my day to finish a show. Being able to make connections and anticipate what was going to happen was incredible.

It is okay to wait. I would argue that waiting is an amazing thing (I know, so controversial). It gives us the chance to process and reflect. Netflix, let us revert back to our younger selves.

## Sad Tunes from Soulful Times

by Ian Glassman '21

It's Friday. My eyes glitch from heightened screen time. Earbuds accompany my walk under the sun's embrace. I'm wearing my Beach House Bloom tee; it's spattered with white crescent moon shapes: the Benito Juárez International Airport ceiling. I've owned this shirt for almost half a decade. It's way too small on me.

My thirteen-year-old self was very different from the me now, but we share something in common: listening to Beach House. This Baltimore dream pop duo writes music that listeners and critics dub sad and emotional (no joke, their fifth studio album is titled *Depression Cherry*). Their songs are typically slow-paced, reverbation-drenched, and synth-padded.

It's funny how their music makes me happier than ever. My once angst-ridden middle school self was trying to figure out my identity. For seventh grade's entirety, I listened religiously to My Chem-

ical Romance and Fall Out Boy, and if you know anything about them, their loud drums and screaming can get exhausting (no shame to M.C.R. fans).

The summer of 2016, I purged my old music playlists, and Bloom was the first album that made it into my newly-created master list. It came at such a pivotal time in my life. Not to be sappy and metaphorical, but this particular album represents a time of exploration, and during this dreary quarantine, it remains a freeing feeling to listen to.

Music revives time and emotions. Upon hearing the name Beach House, most would immediately resort to their recently-viral hit song "Space Song," arguably a tune to dissociate to while laying alone on your bed.

The first time I heard this song, I was freshly thirteen and attending my first year of writing camp. That was the summer everyone was out and about playing Pokémon Go, and it was also the time I developed a deep connection with my writing

camp peers and a new-found love for writing; it was a formative experience.

I caught Caterpees and frequent-ed Poké-stops to the electro-noises of Beach House's "Wishes" and "PPP." I scribbled down poetry in my miniature journals to their slower tunes like "Somewhere Tonight."

Beach House's musical style scaffolds with each and every album. Their latest 2018 release *7* features shoegaze-driven songs with distorted guitars, adding a new layer to their already deeply-savored sound. Through music, I've grown, from 2016, to 2018, to 2021, and I'm sure that I will continue to grow as their future projects reach into uncharted heavens.

This is all to say that there are ways to bide time during this prolonged nothingness. My third walk of the week is different from the second, my second from the first; I attribute this to my revolving playlist of memorable tunes. I return home from my walk. My eyes still glitch but a little less so.

# Seniors Make College Decisions Amid the Pandemic

## *Virtual Visits and Unguided Tours the Norm This Year*

by Ava Gross '22

While many people believe applying to college is the most difficult part of the college process, choosing where to apply and which school to call home for the next four years is equally—if not more—difficult. As many high school seniors coast into the fourth quarter, which is the final stretch of their time at Amity, they are pressed to make a major decision that could impact the rest of their lives.

In the summer and fall of last year, during the grueling college application process, many seniors felt the pressure of constantly editing their essays and supplements. Ally Cooper '21 stated, "My greatest struggle was editing and revising supplements to perfection because it always felt



Photo contributed by Ally Cooper '21

**Ally Cooper '21 celebrates her decision to attend the University of Maryland**

like they could be improved and never were done."

On the same note, Olivia Greco '21 found that describing herself in the supplements was incredibly difficult. She noted, "No one is used to bragging about themselves when we are taught to be humble." After making it through the challenge of writing essays and applying to colleges, Cooper, Greco, and other high school seniors began receiving offers from colleges.

Before the pandemic, visiting college campuses was a major part of many students' decision of where to go to school. Now, however, this is not always possible. This year's seniors have had to make their college decisions based on unguided tours, virtual visits, and outside viewing. Cooper will be attending the University of Maryland next year and remarked, "Visiting campus sealed the deal for me because it clicked in. I loved the vibes. It just felt like home."

Greco shared a similar sentiment when she said, "I picked UConn because it was one of the few campuses I have been on through some of my friends."

Location can also be a huge factor in deciding where to attend. While some like to stay close to their hometowns and be with friends, others like to travel far where no other Amity student will be in attendance. One of the reasons Greco chose the University of Connecticut was because, as she stated, "I love the idea of already knowing people there that I can lean on while branching out and meeting new people."

On the other hand, Cooper was attracted to

UMD for the opposite reasons. She explained, "I don't know any other Amity kids attending and it will be a good change to get away from high school."

As this school year comes to a close, much of the anxiety seniors feel about receiving college offers is beginning to melt away and is replaced with the excitement of attending a new school. Sending the very best to all of Amity's graduating seniors!



Photo contributed by Olivia Greco '21

**Olivia Greco '21 celebrates her decision to attend UConn**

## Sweet Sweet Maple Syrup: The Morrison Family's Maple Tree Tapping Tradition

by Keziah Smith '22

The weather is perfect. Not too cold, not too warm. As many get outside and enjoy the nice temperatures, freshman Jack Morrison and his family are excited for a different reason: they can finally begin tapping their maple trees for maple syrup.

Morrison's family has been tapping these trees since he moved to Connecticut when he was in second grade. When they chose their house, they found that they had a nice yard full of maple trees. That was when they decided to start tapping.

What originally was a skill his mother learned from a family friend has become a fulfilling activity his entire family enjoys. "My immediate family was a trendsetter. [My mother's] friend used to do it growing up," Morrison shared. "It's like a group project. At this point, it's pretty much a tradition we all do, so it brings us together."

Each year, they tap around four trees. This is a complicated process that can only be completed during the season when sap flows from the maple trees. Every year, the tree's nutrients move from the roots into the branches to make new leaves, which contain a lot of sugar. For the sap to run, the ambient temperature needs to be warmer than freezing during the day and colder than freezing at night.

The period of time when the temperature is ideal for tapping lasts around a month in Connecticut, but

the length of this period varies from place to place.

Once the perfect temperature is met, the tapping can begin. First, the family puts a spile, a spout used to draw off sap, into the trees and lets the sap fall into a bag. Once the bag is full, they take the sticky contents and boil off the sugar water in order to get the perfect maple syrup. Then, they grab another bag and start the process all over again.



Photo by Jack Morrison '24

**Spile in maple tree**

Morrison was not always a pro in the art of tapping as he is now. Much of it was a learning process. "When we were starting to do this, I had no idea how the sap tasted. I wanted to taste the stuff coming directly from the trees," Morrison reminisced with a smile.

"It surprisingly was not that bad! It tasted like water with a little bit of sugar. I was a little disappointed actually, I thought

it would be a lot sweeter."

There has been much trial and error, as he and his family learned many different tips and tricks after they first started tapping. One important lesson has been keeping the bugs out of the trees.

"We've learned when to take out the taps because if we wait too long the bugs will start to come out. Bugs are not very smart and will fly right in, and that's gross," said Morrison with a laugh. "I am sure the internet helped with some of the



Photo by Jack Morrison '24

**Bag of sap on maple tree**

little questions we had. We've definitely gotten more experience doing it over and over again."

At the end of the tapping process, Morrison and his family can finally enjoy their hard work. He enjoys pouring the syrup on his pancakes and relishing in the thought that he made the syrup. "We usually do not have to buy much maple syrup from the store. I personally think

it tasted better [homemade]. It might be because I made it," laughed Morrison. "The satisfaction makes it taste better."

Once the tapping season is over, the family ends up with about three-quarters of a gallon of syrup. They keep all of it in airtight containers to be enjoyed year-round. Although his family does not produce enough syrup to share, Morrison still encourages others with maple trees to start tapping. His family's syrup is not for sale and likely won't be in the future.

Still, Morrison has learned valuable marketing lessons from this process, such as how much his family gains compared to how much they spend. Tapping is a long-term activity, as it takes a couple of months, but the reward is certainly a sweet one.



Photo by Jack Morrison '24

**Morrison pouring maple syrup into a jar**

# How to Play Your Part on Earth Day 2021

by Emma Beloin '22

The first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970. It marked the start of the modern environmental movement in the United States. As of 1990, Earth Day went global, reaching over 141 countries and more than 200 million people, promoting environmental issues on the world stage. Earth Day has only grown since then; as of today, over a billion people take action to observe Earth Day around the world.

This day is supposed to be the one day each year we give back to the amazing planet we call home. However, Earth Day frequently goes unrecognized by most people around the world. Now more than ever, our home is struggling, and it depends on us to take care of it. On this day, we thank Earth for all that it gives us: water, food, sunlight, air, and more. But not everyone knows what they can do to properly give back to our beloved planet.

The standard Earth Day tips—recycling and reusing daily resources—are great, but to go above and beyond, you can do the following. Something as simple as advocating for the planet—using your voice to help create change—will make a difference. Encourage people to use fewer plastics, take advantage of public transportation, repost on social media, and speak up. To observe Earth Day this year, try planting something, riding a bike, picking up trash, going for a walk, using reusable water bottles, buying fresh produce, and so much more. Take these small, simple steps to better our planet, even if it's only for one day.

You can also contribute to non-profit organizations that focus on the Earth by volunteering your time, donating, or getting involved in other ways.

One such organization advocating for a cleaner planet that would benefit from donations is the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a United States-based non-profit focused on protecting our world's oceans from pollution and ensuring

clean water for all communities.

Another organization to consider donating to is Environmental Action, a non-profit focused on uniting people around the world who share the same values and practices to sustain all life on our planet.

Also, EARTHDAY.org is the perfect organization to look at on Earth Day. This organization is focused on Earth Day itself, and you can easily donate to it. If you're looking to get more involved, it holds global clean-ups that you can participate in either individually or with a group.

On April 22, EARTHDAY.org is holding its second Earth Day Live digital event. With the theme *Restore Our Earth*, along with panel discussions, workshops, and special performances, this digital event is a great way to educate yourself on the importance of Earth Day and the climate issues we face today.

Earth Day is a day to look forward to each year. It's a day to appreciate the planet we live on and give a little something back to it. Even if you are just planting a flower or cleaning up the beach, these actions go a long way. So what are you going to do this Earth Day?

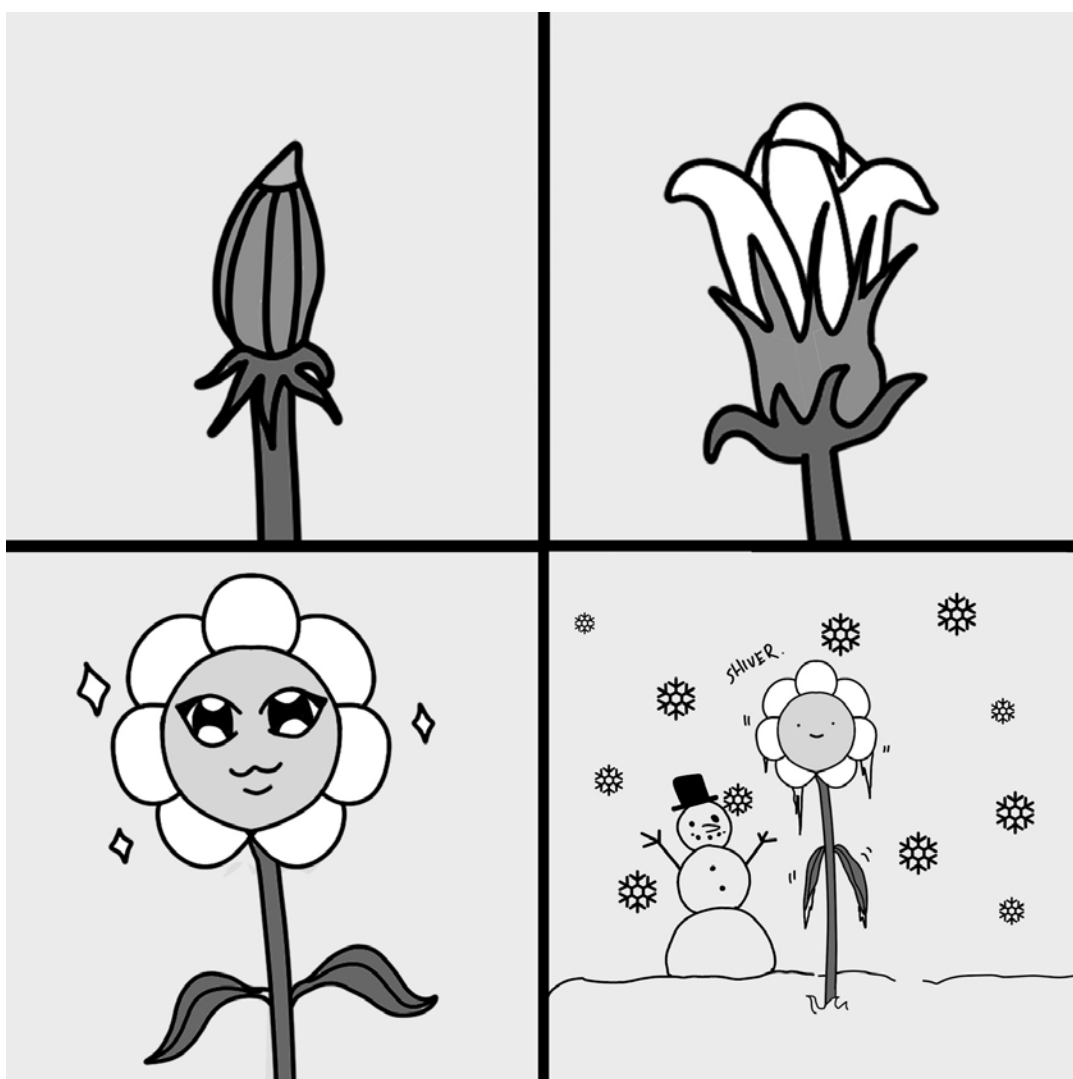


Photo by @EarthDayNetwork

**EARTHDAY.org Logo**

## Spring Is Here

by Natalie Wang '21



## New Haven's Ivy Wok: A Restaurant that Offers Everything

by Abby Ball '22

Looking for some new foods to try? Ivy Wok, a small Chinese restaurant on Elm Street in New Haven, has a wide variety of meals to choose from. With over a hundred options on their menu, this restaurant offers a diverse selection of cuisine that delivers on both taste and price. Right across from Broadway street, Ivy Wok is the perfect spot to eat at with friends because you can easily go shopping or get some ice cream afterwards.

Once inside the restaurant, I could hear food sizzling on the woks and was overwhelmed with the smells of herbs, sauces, and meats. The fact that the kitchen is right behind the counter was a plus. Getting to watch and hear the cooks prepare my order was super interesting. In addition, the decorations around the room were very colorful and welcoming, like the "lucky cat" in the corner. My only complaint was that it was quite dark inside due to the black walls and dimmed windows.

As an appetizer, I ordered the scallion pancakes for \$5.25. They were not sweet but had a savory kind of dough with scallions mixed in. They came with the restaurant's signature sauce, a sweet and salty combination that was a nice touch. Although they were on the greasier side of things, these pancakes were a delicious and filling start to the meal!

For my drink, I got the iced milk tea for \$2.25. In contrast to the rest of my meal, this tea was a great palate cleanser—the perfect blend of sweet and cold. I do suggest getting some kind of beverage, like their hot chocolate milo tea or tea with tapioca pearls, to balance out the saltier flavors of their dishes.

As part of our main meal, my brother and I split the pan-fried pork dumplings for \$7.25,

the shrimp udon noodle soup for \$9.00, and the fried fish balls for \$5.50. Considering the amount of food that came with each order, we thought the prices were very generous.

I started out with the shrimp soup, which was by far the healthiest and greenest meal I ordered. It had scallions, udon noodles, shrimp, spinach, and a chicken broth. The thick noodles were delicious, especially mixed with the hot soup's hint of spice. My brother and I agreed on this as our favorite, and luckily, there was enough for the both of us!

On the less healthy side, the eight fried fish balls came on a skewer with an orange sweet and sour sauce. The fried part of the fish was very tasty and had a nice texture, but the sizing was a little off as the fish would not fit into the dipping sauce, making it difficult to eat. I would probably recommend a rice plate or noodles over this.

Lastly, we had the eight pan-fried pork dumplings, one of the restaurant's most popular requests, and determined it definitely lived up to its reputation. I am usually not a huge meat person, but just one bite of these dumplings left me wanting more! There was also a steamed pork dumpling option, but the waiter told us most people prefer the fried dumplings.

Overall, the foods we ordered from Ivy Wok were incredibly appetizing and cooked with a lot of experience. I think one of the most appealing parts of this restaurant is the wide scope of foods offered. The fact that I only ordered a small sample of their selection makes me eager to return! I saw that they also have rice congee, lo mein, fried crispy noodles, chow fun and mai fun, vermicelli, and more.

Without a doubt, this restaurant has something for everyone at a very reasonable price, and it is in a wonderful location. I definitely recommend Ivy Wok!



Photo by Abby Ball '22

**Shrimp noodle soup and scallion pancakes from Ivy Wok**

# Hitting the Brakes on Spring Break: What to Do without Travel?

by Grace Cavallaro '24

It's the week before spring break. The school is buzzing with excitement for a week packed full of fun trips or time spent with friends. Students spend those last few days daydreaming of white sand beaches or road trips to exciting new destinations. This year, students will still be daydreaming about vacation, but few students will actually be going on one.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has now ruined two spring breaks in a row, so many families will be stuck at home again this year. While this is certainly a disappointment, here are some tips and tricks for making your week off at home as fun and relaxing as can be.

First and foremost, a week off is perfect for getting caught up on any projects or schoolwork that you may not have finished. While most teachers are generous enough not to assign new homework over the break, some classes may still have ongoing projects to work on or work that will be due shortly after break ends.

It may seem as though you will have time to finish your assignments in those first few days back at school, but it's always better to get ahead and be able to ease your way back into school once you get back.

Next, take a few extra minutes to get organized. Going through your backpack, picking up trash, and cleaning your room are all things that will make your last few months of school even better. While you may not like cleaning, taking the time to freshen up your space makes the rest of the time you spend in it much more enjoyable.

Aside from finishing

up some brief spring cleaning, enjoy your time off by developing a hobby. It could be anything at all, whether it's crocheting, playing an instrument, coding, drawing, or—for one particular Amity freshman—making jewelry.

Annie Yun '24 started her handcrafted jewelry business, *Ethereal Corner Jewelry*, in late January. She has been working hard over the past few months to create beautiful, authentic pieces for her customers. Although it is difficult sometimes to reach her clientele, Yun continues to create and sell her creations because she has a passion for both her hobby and her business.

Yun said, "I try to keep in mind that I started this small business for myself. It's easy to get caught up in the number of sales and the number of likes on social media, but I try to remember that I am just doing what I love."

While spring break does not have to mean opening a jewelry business, it's important to keep in mind that not everything you try will be easy. In any hobby that you decide to pursue during this time off, try to use Yun's approach.

It doesn't matter if you struggle with making your drawing look perfect, if you're having trouble figuring out the code to that new game you're trying to create, or even if you don't hit the number of likes or sales you were hoping for this week. You should have fun and let off some steam with your hobbies, not stress over them.

Not going on a vacation this year does not have to mean you can't see any people either. Another way to enjoy the week off is to plan a small gathering outside with some friends. While it's pretty clear

that most people are tired of the term "social distancing," this is the way gatherings must be held until enough people get vaccinated. It's certainly possible to have fun outside with some friends while being fairly spread apart.

One idea might be to get some exercise while you catch up. Going for a walk or bike ride with some friends are both great ways to spend time with others, explore your neighborhood, and get some exercise all at the same time. You could also get together and practice a sport, such as playing a basketball game or throwing together a mini-game of baseball or softball.

Another idea for outdoor gathering is a picnic. It could be potluck style, a bring-your-own-food meal, or even takeout, depending on how comfortable your family is with COVID-19 still around. The options are endless for how you want to plan your safe outdoor gathering.

Even though there are several ideas here for how to spend your spring break, remember to just relax. It is important to enjoy the time off while it's available, but it's even more important to use the break to reset after many long months of school. After you have all of your work done, you will be able to rest easy knowing that you won't have any surprises to come back to once the break is over.

In some of that relaxation time, you can develop a hobby you may already have or try something brand new. The time off is also perfect for catching up with friends that you may have been too busy to spend quality time with during the normal weeks of school.

Whatever you do, stay safe and have fun!

# Abundance of New Eagles Flock from Scout Troops in the BOW Area

by Ben Martin '21

Scout Troops across the local area have seen a dramatic increase in new Eagle Scouts, despite a global pandemic. Many scouts across Woodbridge worked countless hours to become part of the top four percent of scouts.

Ever since the pandemic hit last March, Woodbridge scout Troops 41 and 63 have seen a combined fourteen Eagle Scouts come out of their troops, and Orange scout Troop 925 has seen an additional four. All of the scouts were able to complete scouting's toughest test, despite a global pandemic and restrictions on in-person meetings.

Once a scout receives a rank, they get recognized at a ceremony known as a court of honor in front of parents and their troop. For the rank of Eagle, the scout has a court of honor specifically dedicated to them or a group of Eagle scouts.

Due to the restrictions on the number of people at an event, in-person courts of honor have been impossible for scout troops. As a result of this, Troop 41 is scheduling an Eagle court of honor on Sunday, June 7 for five Eagle scouts: Jerome Delmoro '20, Ethan Lavi '21, Billy Livesay '21, Ben Martin '21 and Shyam Vishwanathan '21. The event will be taking place outside of Congregation B'nai Jacob.

In addition to the court of honor, scouts from Woodbridge and Orange who received their Eagle scout rank in 2019 or 2020 were recognized by the two towns' Rotary Clubs on March 19. According to Troop 41's Adam Glassman '22, there were ten to fifteen Eagle scouts in attendance from Troops 41, 63, and 925.

All scouts were given a chance to speak in front of Rotary Club members about their projects and the impact of scouting on their personal lives.

To get to the rank of Eagle, the scout must complete a list of requirements, which include being a leader in their troop for at least six months, completing twenty-one merit badges, and—above all—planning and carrying out a service project to benefit the community.

Many scouts decided to carry out their projects by limiting the number of people gathering, going online, or handing out materials in such a way as to limit contact.

A scout who carried out his project using a limited-contact method was Troop 63's Cameron Luciano '21. For his project, Luciano organized a used sports equipment drive for kids in the Bridgeport school system. Despite a lack of in-person gatherings,

Luciano said, "Probably 50 to 100 people [donated] in total and I got roughly 800 pieces of equipment."

One scout who decided to move his project to a completely online format was Troop 41's Ethan Lavi. Using his coding expertise, he de-

signed an app called *Pantry Angels*. Lavi's app helps donors find food pantries close to their location as well as what those food pantries are requesting from donors. "It was difficult to adapt at first," said Lavi. "But I think the virtual environment improved productivity in the end."

Other scouts decided to do outdoor construction projects and

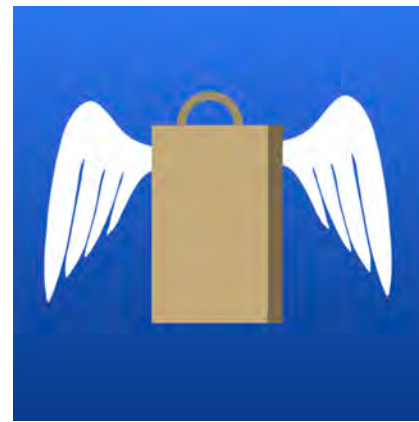


Photo by Eydan Lavi '24

## Logo for Senior Ethan Lavi's app Pantry Angels

gather in small groups. One of these scouts was John Turski '21 from Troop 63. John built two signs for Massaro Farm and in total had eight people help with the construction of the signs. When asked what his biggest struggle was throughout the project, Turski said, "Getting enough people together at once to help with the project."

Another scout who used a similar



Photo by John Turski '21

## Sign built by Troop 63 Eagle Scout John Turski '21

approach was Jonny Speranzini '22. For his project, Jonny constructed a large enclosure for the chickens and rabbits at Massaro Farm in Woodbridge. Like Turski, Speranzini had only ten people help him build the structure to keep numbers down.

Although we are in the midst of a global pandemic, we have seen a large increase in the number of Eagle Scouts coming out of the local area. As a result of the increase, the Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge community has benefited from their Eagle projects. These Eagles will be recognized at future courts of honor when gatherings are safe again.

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# Woodbridge Youth Services Successfully Holds First Ever Snow Art Competition

by Sena Ho '23

This February, the Woodbridge Youth Services Department held their very first Snow Art Competition for all families to participate in. A range of individuals from different age groups participated by creating snow sculptures in their backyards. When heavy snowfall and pandemic-safety procedures made it difficult for people to leave the house and interact with others, the Youth Service Department hosted this city-wide competition to encourage the residents of Woodbridge to enjoy the outdoors with their family members.

Youth Service Director Nancy Pfund shared her intentions behind the competition and what inspired her to host it. When planning, she wanted to find something that would ease the isolation everyone has experienced during the pandemic. At a time when schools were still implementing the hybrid-learning system and students were constantly cooped up in their bedrooms all day, the Snow Art Competition was designed to be a breath of fresh air.

"The goal was really to lighten the mood during COVID and do something where we just had families stop everything and take time to be together and get them outside, get the kids outside to have some fun," Pfund responded when asked what her intentions for the competition were.

"As a community, we needed to lighten the moment," she continued and heart-warmingly described many of the submissions that came in. One by one, pictures of children with smiling faces seated beside snowmen and snow serpents appeared. Each submission brought positivity and pure joy to Woodbridge's winter atmosphere.

"It wasn't just the art, it wasn't just the snow, it was the smiles on the kids' faces," she remembered, "they should have won prizes for just that."

Many students from



Photo from Woodbridge Youth Services  
"The Three Bears"



Photo from Woodbridge Youth Services

the middle and high schools participated with their younger siblings. Pfund saw this competition as an opportunity to connect people, take them outside, and enjoy the small things. The pandemic has warped our sense of what is important and what is not.

Nowadays, appreciating and feeling gratitude for normal activities that, just a year ago, may not have been as significant can bring us back to reality. Pfund explained, "We forget some of the simplest things can bring the most joy."

In short, this competition was held to remind us all what is important in our lives and what we can all do to bring the community together again.

The judging criteria for the Snow Art Competition was an engaging process. Judges focused on the creativity, family involvement, and stability that went into each creation.

The directors have begun planning for the Snow Art Competition in future years with the introduction of different categories, possibly with age and theme restrictions. However, the main purpose will remain: to connect families and inspire them to have fun with one another.

"Just the expressions of how they build that. They were so proud and the looks on their faces were so precious. It was so hard to choose," Pfund said after receiving the photos.

The department consulted with one another to decide on the finalists but they wanted to highlight how "[w]hen you share these things, it's nice for the community to kind of feel that it is not always about the big stuff. It's these little moments that you have and the kids really did a great job."

At last, the winners of the competition were given a variety of different prizes. Toys and gift cards for local businesses were sent to all participants.

The Youth Service Department currently has plans for future activities going on in the spring and summer seasons. Their future endeavors will undoubtedly be a source of joy for the community.

## Annual Shakespeare Speaking Competition Plays on Despite Restrictions

by Nicole Grosso '22

Amity's Annual Shakespeare Speaking Competition has become a long standing tradition at the high school. Typically, students and teachers gather in the Media Center after school to hear live performances from contestants. Some teachers are judges and some students are participants, but other staff members and students will usually come to the competition just to watch.

Since competitions

couldn't be held in person this year, the English Speaking Union, the organizers of the competition, allowed for schools to accept videos or have a live virtual competition for judging. Amity chose to do the latter, and the competition was held over Zoom on February 9th at 3:00 pm.

Participants in the competition filled out a Google Forms survey to sign up before the day of the competition. Contestants then had to memorize one monologue from a packet of 260 different Shakespeare monologues chosen

by the English Speaking Union (ESU) for the competition. Each monologue fell into the category of either comedy, tragedy, history, or romance, and contestants could recite any one monologue from the posted selection.

A panel of judges was present on the Zoom call to determine a winner and runner up from Amity's 12 competitors, both of whom would move on to the state-level competition. This panel consisted of school principal Anna Mahon, special education teacher Sean Malloy,

English teacher Anastasia Kimball, and visual and performing arts teacher Jonathan Furst.

The two participants chosen to move on to the next round had to memorize one of 154 sonnets (also chosen by the ESU) to record a video of them reciting to submit alongside a recording of their monologue to a competition in Greenwich, CT. From there, winners moved on to the national competition.

The two winners from Amity were Zola Kneeland '22 and Emma Blanchard '24. Kneeland,

who performed a speech from "The Taming of the Shrew," said, "It was such a fun experience full of vibrant performances!"

English Department chair Julie Chevan, who organized the event at Amity, said, "I was really happy to keep this long standing Amity tradition going. The only sad part was that the participants didn't get to perform live and meet the students from other schools."

Chevan also shared that she hopes that 2022 will allow for an in-person competition like in years past.



# 2021 Regional Scholastic Art Awards Winners Announced

by Grace Lodewick '22

Winners of the Connecticut Regional Scholastic art awards program were announced in late February. The program is a non-profit, professionally juried competition focused on recognizing the best and highest quality artwork produced by students across the state.

The competition features 18 media categories and the ability for student's work to be selected for exhibition. Beyond being selected for the show, students also have the opportunity to receive honorable mentions, as well as Gold or Silver Key awards. Amity submits several works of art under various categories to this competition annually.

Fine arts teachers Lisa Toto and Elizabeth Smolinski are in charge of facilitating student

submission. This year, the submission process was digitized to accommodate the restrictions of the pandemic, and the program adjusted well to a virtual competition overall.

Several students from Amity were recognized by the competition for their submitted pieces. Senior Sydney Cohen '21 received an honorable mention award for her submission under the mixed media category as well as selection for the exhibition.

Jenny Liu '21, Olivia Tashlein '21, and Olivia Russo '21 were also all selected to display their work and honored with the Gold Key award in their respective categories.

Jenny Liu '21, who has submitted work to the competition since she was a freshman, "felt really honored to receive a gold key." She believes that receiving an award from a "really prestigious and quite competitive" program

validates her hard work and motivates her on her artistic path.

The program held a virtual exhibition and awards ceremony on February 26th. In comparison to previous years the competition culminated in an art show at the University of Hartford and an awards ceremony in front of the young artists of Connecticut, the online ceremony marked the largest difference in this year's competition.

Although she enjoyed looking at the virtual gallery this year, Smolinski says, "Nothing compares to seeing all the artwork in person... [and the] overwhelming feeling of the walk-through art show."

She reflected on how proud she felt of the students recognized despite this year's challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## *A Star Shines through the Screen: Broadway's Samantha Pauly*

by Zola Kneeland '22

This February, Amity Creative Theater and Broadway Method Academy created a wonderful opportunity for artistic growth by hosting a free Zoom call with Samantha Pauly. The wildly talented Pauly is a current Broadway cast member in *Six the Musical*, where she plays Katherine Howard, one of Henry the VIII's six wives. *Six* was set to open on Broadway shortly before the shutdown due to COVID-19.

Pauly is incredibly critically acclaimed and has been raved about in many high-profile sources, including the *New York Times* and *Vogue*. Pauly graciously met with the students of Amity High School and more to converse about her life as an actress and the troubling times for artists and how they can be overcome.

Pauly was very helpful to students by offering advice about how they might get jobs in the theater industry. She emphasized the importance of connections and how they can get you in the door for great opportunities. She also discussed the self-discipline that comes with being on Broadway and the care an actor has to take to keep his or her body in great condition.

Lastly, this thespian accurately and enthusiastically answered questions from many of the curious meeting attendees.

Pauly gave some great tips for anyone with a dream of performing professionally. According to her, Broadway is all about hard work

and taking care of yourself as an actor. "Getting to meet and talk to Samantha Pauly was honestly such a great moment, she was so sweet!" says Grace Blanchard '21, President of ACT.

Any up-and-coming performer should take advantage of an opportunity to hear Pauly speak. She hosts many other Zooms, so aspiring performers fortunately have the opportunity to hear her insight live again.

Regardless, this free Zoom opportunity was truly one of a kind. ACT and Broadway Method Academy created an informative and professional experience with Pauly that provided performance-driven students with tips straight from Broadway.



**Samantha Pauly, thespian**  
Photo from  
[artistsandbeyond.com](http://artistsandbeyond.com)



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# Getting Back on Track

## High School Team Adjusts to COVID Protocol

by Keziah Smith '22

Life is getting back on track for Amity Regional High School's Girls and Boys Track and Field team during the transition from indoor to outdoor season. Athletes and coaches are thrilled to start the new season despite odd circumstances.

According to Head Coach Bobby Burns, track and field is already a distant sport, so many of the new requirements are doable. The main priority for the athletes is doing the best they can to keep the season going, which means adapting to new Connecticut guidelines.

"All athletes must wear a mask, except when competing. [Also], we understand social distancing rules. 90% of the events in track can be socially distant," said Burns.

"The times in track when [the athletes] have to be close, we try and limit that."

New guidelines include mandatory masks, smaller groups during practices, increased sanitation, and more. For Boys Coach Gary Pope, some aspects of the new protocol cause some frustration.

"A lot of the things don't make sense. [For example] before throwing, each thrower has to sanitize their shot. In basketball, they do not sanitize after every person touches the ball," said Pope. "But we're doing it to keep the season."

The new protocol could potentially cause trouble for the athletes as well. "Running two miles is hard enough, so I am looking

forward to them not having to wear a mask," Pope said.

Around this time last year, the outdoor track season was canceled entirely due to the COVID-19 statewide shutdown. Many athletes were disappointed as they were not able to participate in their sports. Athletes such as sprinter Nicole Grosso '22 are glad to be competing again. For her, Track and Field is

people as you're waiting for your races," Grosso continued. "You run like a 15 second to a minute race [and] for the rest of the five hours you're there, you're sitting there getting to know each other."

It is still not clear how many meets student athletes will be able to participate in this season. However, meets are still going to be part of the season even if they are smaller than usual.

Some students have found alternative ways to compete and stay connected. For sophomore long-distance runner Avery Palmucci '23, technology has become a regular part of her routine.

"We use GroupMe, which really helps. We just try to maintain as much contact as we can," said Palmucci.

In addition, the long-distance girls team tracks mileage through Google Sheets, checks up on each other through running apps, and sends daily positive messages to support one another.

"The team is so welcoming," said Palmucci. "I [feel] like I [am] finally in a sport that I belong in. It is like a family."

According to Ariana Garay '21, she and the girls are excited to be able to start running in person. Recently, they have been able to run

with each other in smaller groups outside.

"The adrenaline is definitely higher now that we can actually see each other," said Garay. "It is tough, but when we're with each other, it's better."

Although the season this year is more challenging than usual, athletes are still maintaining the Amity motto "stronger together." Athletes are learning how to stay positive and motivated as a team. "The guys are very happy to be back doing what they love," said Pope. "I did not have to do much."



Photo contributed by Emily Zielinski '21

**Amity Girls Track 4x100 state winning team during their 2019 season**

an outlet.

"[Track] lets you get away from school [and] just to go on a run with your friends, even if it is in masks. You just want to be here," she said.

For Grosso, the lack of meets during the indoor season had been a disappointment. "We haven't had meets which is a big loss because you tend to learn a lot more about

## Golfers Tee Up for an Interesting Season

by Scott Lowder '22

After weaving among multiple regulations and COVID-19 restrictions, Amity's student athletes recently experienced a more traditional winter sports season full of familiar competitive spirit and school pride. Now, continuing with this trend into the spring season, the Amity Golf Team coached by Michael Blumenthal is gearing up for a successful season despite lacking a season the previous year due to the pandemic.

The team has been preparing for the upcoming season by practicing almost everyday at the Oak Lane Country Club and plan on facing Hillhouse, their first opponent, on Monday, April 19th after the break. The Golf Team will soon be engulfed by the jam-packed season consisting of fifteen matches. These will be quite tense with the Amity Golf Team nearly entirely composed of new players, with Brett Chodos '22 being the only returning player.

Additionally, the team currently lacks team captains; the team will vote for these positions in the near future. Regardless, players like Chodos are here for the love of the game. He stated, "I joined because I previously had a passion for the sport and wanted to continue it by playing for the team." Although the season may seem unpredictable due to the lack of Amity's prior experience on the roster, the team still feels confident in their playing ability.

For individuals new to the competitive golfing scene, matches take place at either Oak Lane or at a golf course near the rivaling school. Typically, the scoring for matches is based on a nine hole course in which each school's team is represented by the top five players. After the match, the lowest overall score per team at the end of the course is declared the winner. The scoring can be tricky, however. Interestingly, although five players from each team compete, only the four best scores per team are taken, meaning the last player's score is excluded.

Overall, the competition from the Golf Team will be fierce and will hopefully lead to a successful season. New players to the scene such as Deven Majumdar '22 are especially excited. "The team is looking strong this year," said Majumdar, "and I am excited to see what's in store for the coming season."

Make sure to cheer for the newcomers and veterans of the sport as they enter their highly contested season.



# Meet the Coach

## Amity's Sal Coppola

by Ben Martin '21

Throughout the 2010s, Amity baseball was one of the best high school sports programs in the state of Connecticut. In that decade, the Spartans won four state championships in a row and appeared in five total. The one constant through it all? Head

said Coppola. "Knowing that I could help them grow and help them get into college."

One player who Coppola helped get into college is future UMaine right fielder Sebastian Holt '21 who said, "He shaped me into the man and player that I am now, and that helped me get to Maine."

In addition to Holt,

competitive challenges that Coppola uses to keep the players having fun and to test their abilities in high-pressure situations. Coppola always tries to make sure his team is "backyard loose" throughout their games.

Coppola defines backyard loose as "If the players could find a way to play in game situations like they do in their backyards growing up, you become a dangerous team. You don't let your anxiety and nervousness get to you. It's when you make your best plays."

Coppola also advises players by saying, "Don't play for yourself. If you play for the team and play to win, good things will happen. Everything takes care of itself."

The Spartans coach also shared valuable insight for coaches.

"Continually try to improve," he advised. "Go to coaching conventions. Even if you pick up two or three things during each year, you will be better."

As the Spartans take the field this season, one of their biggest obstacles is something that Coach Coppola has never dealt with before: COVID-19. With the lack of a season last year, the coaches hope for a complete season, and the best way to ensure that is to meet all COVID mitigation requirements.

Coppola emphasized the importance of following protocol, stating, "We have to come up with a system where our players are six feet apart for the entire game. I want health services to know that our dugout is regulated to the T."

Coppola's Spartans play their home opener on April 12th at 4:00 against New Haven's Career-Hillhouse. With Coppola's guidance, Amity has a good chance at victory.

varsity captain Julian Stevens '21 received help from Coppola in the college process. "He was a great resource to talk to," said Stevens. "He helped guide me to the best decision."

Coppola brings out the best in his players through competitive practices, and one of the main ways he does this is through the Breakfast League. According to baseball senior Sebastian Holt, for Breakfast League, the team breaks up into four teams that scrimmage each other for the last hour and a half of practice everyday. Teams score points based upon the amount of wins they get that day and the team with the most points at the end of the season gets a free breakfast.

The Breakfast League is just one of the many



Photo from patch.com

### Head Baseball Coach Sal Coppola

coach Salvatore Coppola.

Coppola, a history teacher at Wolcott high school, got his start coaching in 1992 with an independent-league team for 16 year olds, and by 1994 he was brought on to coach at Amity. Coppola's love of baseball and his passion for teaching are very interconnected.

"I love teaching and I love baseball," he said, "so what's better than teaching baseball?"

When he is not in the dugout, Coppola enjoys fatherhood. In addition, he is head of the social studies department at Wolcott high school, and he runs baseball camps for young children in the summer.

As a teacher and a coach, Coppola loves to work with kids. "Being around the players. That's the purest part that I love,"

# Lacrosse Makes Up for Lost Season

by Amir Jarad '22

As winter fades, we enter the spring sports season at Amity. Last year, spring sports were stolen by the pandemic, making this season heavily anticipated by both the players and the viewers. One of those sports is the Amity lacrosse team. They have practiced year round with extreme grit in an attempt to make up for the season that they missed.

However, just a day after tryouts, the lacrosse season came to a tragic halt due to a COVID outbreak that left only five players able to practice. The senior captains pro-

ing for the season.

"A lot of the team got to play together on the same summer team, so we've been able to create some good chemistry on and off the field," he said.

"The captains got together and organized some conditioning within COVID guidelines. We have formed a much stronger bond as a team and have more dedicated athletes this year than years past."

Oleschuk recognizes that the team's hard work is the best path for success this season.

The recent quarantine halted some momentum at surface level. Senior Captain Dylan Raver '21 discussed how the team stuck together throughout these



Photo contributed by Justin Miller '21

### Amity Boys Lacrosse 2019 team photo

vided valuable insight into how the players reacted to the quarantine and how they planned to make up for lost time.

Senior Captain Michael Carangelo '21 was asked how he plans to keep the team going this season.

He stated, "As a captain, I'm going to lead my team by working hard and to hold myself and my team accountable when we mess up. I will also help lead them through adversity and let my team know no matter how tough the situation is, we can always succeed."

Carangelo embodies the spirit of the Spartan by looking adversity in the eyes and not backing down despite challenges.

Senior Captain Alex Oleschuk '21 detailed how the team had been prepar-

troubling times.

Raver said, "We were all pretty bummed out that after just one day of tryouts, most of us had to quarantine. But we are getting through it just fine, and we are just excited to get back."

Along with that, Raver showed how the team has stayed strong and worked throughout the quarantine. He said, "We have meetings most days to go over some things and check in with each other over Google Meets or Zoom."

Although the team faced an abrupt pause at the start of their season, they are not letting it beat them.

Lacrosse this season will be unlike any other. The team members have developed a sense of grit to fuel them in upcoming games.

**Love Sports?**  
**Write for the Trident!**

# Welcome Back, Amity!

**Mason Zhang '21:** "It's really exciting to be able to interact with friends face to face again. You can feel the energy in the classrooms and the joy of almost coming back to normal."



Photo by Allison Su '21



Photo by Allison Su '21

**Sophia Liu '23:** "Although it's been tough to address my sleep schedule I think being back in person has given me an opportunity to connect with people better. I also find it a lot easier to focus in class and stay motivated."

**Alejandro Huber '24:** "As a new student at Amity, [being back] helped me meet people and be socially confident. Additionally, I was able to focus more and become academically responsible. I think this is truly a benefit."



Photo by Allison Su '21



Photo by Allison Su '21

**Aditi Chalasani '22:** "With the two cohorts together, there has been a higher energy in each class. Seeing everyone again has brought me this comfortable sense of normality that many of us have lacked since last March."



Photo by Trident Staff

**Kaia Melville '22:** "Being back at school almost feels like an appreciated 2019."



Photo by Allison Su '21