

THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXV-No. 5

Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

February 11, 2020

Link Crew Hosts Annual Cocoa & Cram

by Jacob Silbert '21

Link Crew hosted its annual Cocoa and Cram in the cafeteria on Wednesday, January 15th. With mid-term exams right around the corner, many freshmen took advantage of this chance to study, get advice from experienced Link Leaders, and enjoy free hot cocoa and other refreshments. According to Tasia Kimball, one of the Link Crew coordinators, "We had nearly 50% of the class of 2023, which is a great turnout."

Cocoa and Cram had a lot to offer freshmen. Aside from the refreshments, the focus of the event was studying for

midterms. Whether students needed help with certain subjects or just wanted general studying tips, the Link Leaders were able to provide advice. Maya Dworkin '23 said, "It was really helpful to hear from upperclassmen about what the best techniques to studying for each subject were, and they were very helpful with any questions we had."

Similarly, Link Leaders found Cocoa and Cram to be a positive experience such as Armando Palma-Genao '20 who said, "The freshmen were really open to suggestions about studying and testing techniques." Having taken midterms

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"The Dark Stain on America"

by Audrey Marin '22 and Nicole Grosso '22

Sophomores Attend English Conference

The sophomore class participated in an English conference on

December 11th. Entitled "The Dark Stain on America" and directed by English teacher Shannon Martin, it was aimed toward understanding the dangers of social conformity and hysteria from the 1600s to the Red Scare in America.

Students learned to appreciate the social and political events from the 17th century, the period of "The Scarlet Letter" and "The Crucible," two novels that most sophomores read and analyze throughout the school year.

The presentation provided students with a solid foundation on what life was like during the time.

The event began with a presentation from keynote speaker Wendy Carrafiello, a special education teacher



Wendy Carrafiello speaks to students during the English conference on December 11th aimed at understanding the dangers of social conformity and hysteria.

Photo by Audrey Marin '22

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Juniors Attend Planning Night

by Jacob Silbert '21

Junior Planning Night was an interactive, informational event intended to teach juniors and their parents about the college admissions process. The event was led by Ann Fleming Brown, the director of admissions at Union

College in New York. To keep the audience engaged, Brown invited students on stage to demonstrate what she said. This year, she had students hold up signs, each with a different aspect of the college application on them. For instance, one

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Students participate in an activity during a presentation by Ann Fleming Brown, the director of admissions at Union College, at the recent Junior Planning Night.

Photo by Aamnah Malik '21

Worsening Vandalism Leads to Bathroom Closures

by Tracy Lu '20 and Caroline Chen '21

In the past few months, vandalism has become an increasingly significant issue at Amity. The bathrooms are one of the many shared facilities used by students and faculty alike, yet due to the reduced

supervision, vandalism has been a persistent problem. The issue worsened at the end of the 2018-2019 school year and has continued into the 2019-2020 school year, ultimately leading to several bathroom closures throughout the building.

"The vandalism in the bathrooms has included dam-

age to the toilets, the stalls, and making a general mess," said Principal Anna Mahon. This has resulted in severe damage to plumbing systems. Further, the vandalism has led to many unexpected expenses for repair.

Students who use the bathrooms were affected when bathroom closures occurred. Calen Watson '20 said, "I don't like that the actions of the few affect the many, but I do agree that the bathrooms being closed was the best option, specifically due to the repairs needed."

Arnav Paliwal '21 held a similar opinion. He said, "While the bathroom closures [were] annoying, it makes sense that they happened since people were literally breaking the boys bathrooms."

In response, Amity administration has collaborated with groups such as the Student Government to ameliorate the issue. Actions included making school-wide announcements regarding the vandalism, creating signs for

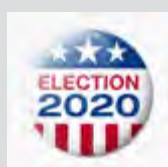


Vandalism has caused the closure of the boys bathroom in the math hallway. Stall doors, sinks, and toilets have all experienced tampering. The stall doors are currently removed as Amity works to repair the bathroom.

Photo by Ryan Anastasio '20

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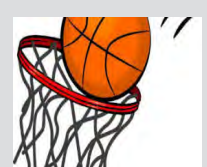
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Link Crew Hosts Cocoa & Cram

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multiple times themselves, upperclassmen know how to prepare well for these kinds of tests.

"I'm so glad we were able to help the freshmen find new ways to study for their midterms and [give them] tips to find success in their classes," said Link Leader Arbesa Koleci '20.

Midterms can be a stressful time, especially for freshmen, and Link Crew aims to make the preparation process as smooth as possible.

"The one thing I always hear from upper-class folks," said Kimball, "is that either they didn't go, but really wished they had—or they went and it really helped."

Link Crew looks forward to future Cocoa and Cram events and hopes that more and more freshmen take advantage of this bonding opportunity in years to come.



Link Leaders help freshmen review for Midterms during the annual Cocoa and Cram event

Photo contributed by Jacob Silbert '21

"The Dark Stain on America"

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who has a background in U.S. History and psychology from teaching them in prior years. Her presentation highlighted the origins of the two post-war Red Scares within America.

Students learned that the World Wars and the communist wave instigated by the Soviet Union manifested in mass hysteria within the United States. The Hollywood Ten trials, the Alger Hiss trial, and the Goldberg trial are some events that marked the fear of Soviet spies and the urge to point fingers during the 1920s and 1950s.

Following the keynote presentation, students went to two other presentations that they had selected the week prior. The presenters, who are all Amity teachers, included Patrick Cumpstone, William Rocco, Robert Kennedy, and Claude Roy.

History teacher Patrick Cumpstone talked about the Connecticut Witch Trials, a primitive example of hysteria concerning accusations and fear. Cumpstone published a book on the trials called "Connecticut Witchcraft: Witch-Speak and Social Unrest in 17th Century Connecticut," in which he discussed how the social panic arose.

In his presentation, Cumpstone noted that "understanding the past is key to understanding and acting in the present." Cumpstone said a background in sociology helps to verify that "providing this type of opportunity for our students is important."

English teacher William Rocco discussed the inequity of the justice system during the 1600s through a comparison of real cases during the time period to the court system today. Rocco discussed



English teacher William Rocco talks about the inequality of the justice system.

Photo by Audrey Marin '22

the case of the Piglets Paternity in the late 17th century. Students learned that

conformity and joint fear can result in irrational and false conclusions based on no true evidence.

Theater teacher Rob Kennedy explained the tension between the government and the arts during the 1950s, providing some background into the life of Arthur Miller, the author of "The Crucible." Miller was one of many people who were falsely framed for being associated with the Soviet Union during the mid 20th century.

Finally, psychology teacher Claude Roy gave examples of psychological experiments that showed why people are easily peer pressured into conformity, introducing students to concepts such as group polarization and groupthink. These concepts help to explain the psychology behind the mass hysteria that occurred during the time of the Red Scare and the Salem Witch Trials.

Roy talked about the relevance of groupthink today saying, "I think studying concepts such as group-think, group polarization, confirmation biases, framing, and persuasion are very important to understanding many social phenomena today."

"This includes the divisive nature of politics in the United States and abroad, extremist ideologies, and even issues we face here at Amity High School," he added.

Roy continued to explain the importance of overcoming hysteria and potentially false information saying "having a deeper understanding of the social and mental dynamics of individuals and groups can foster greater cohesion and mutual interdependence."

Through these presentations, students were able to engage with the themes entailed in the novels they have read.

Liliana Restrepo '22 said, "Prior to the conference, I had very limited knowledge on the Salem Witch Trials. The various workshops were very eye-opening to what the role group conformity played in not just these witch trials, but day-to-day social situations as well."

Brodey Lu '22 agreed, saying, "The experience gave an intriguing and eye-opening perspective about a serious period of American history... and shared the information more effectively than a history textbook."

Overall, the English II conference was a multifaceted, informative event for both the students and teachers involved.

Juniors Planning for Future

Continued from page 1

sign read "extracurricular activities" and another said "standardized tests." Then, Brown organized the students and their signs in order of importance in the overall college application.

One of the student volunteers was Melita Collins '21. She said, "I had a lot of fun going up on stage, and it was really interesting to see what aspects of the college admissions process were actually important compared to the others."

Junior Planning Night was also informative for parents. While some families may be well versed in college applications, many have just been introduced to them.

Evan Gorelick '21, one of the juniors in attendance, stated: "Junior planning night is a great opportunity for those students who may be

new to the college process to gain crucial insights."

Likewise, for families with children that already went through the college application process, the event served as a refresher and a way to see what has changed or become more important. Gerilyn Ferguson, a guidance counselor at Amity, commented that Brown "does a great job of explaining the admissions process by mixing a little humor in with the nitty-gritty details."

Overall, Junior Planning Night was a resource for families trying to navigate the college admissions process. High school students rarely have the opportunity to hear the perspective of a college admissions director, but the Amity counseling department has provided this unique opportunity for the juniors of Amity High School.

Worsening Vandalism Leads to Bathroom Closures

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the bathrooms, reviewing security footage, and having discussions about the issue during homeroom.

The administration also encouraged students to come forward with any knowledge on the vandalism using the SpeakUp system. SpeakUp is an anonymous tip line that allows community members to text or leave a voice message about concerns and inappropriate behavior. Information about SpeakUp can be found at the end of this article.

"It is imperative that the incident be reported as soon as possible so the behavior can be addressed as quickly as possible," commented Mahon.

The bathroom vandalism has affected the dynamic of the school.

Mahon said, "The students became increasingly frustrated when bathrooms were locked and the custodial and maintenance staff have struggled with trying to keep up with the repair work. It does create a general feeling of frustration and no one wants that to be the case."

Mahon continued by stating, "For our school community to be a place where all members experience a climate of fairness, respect and passion, it is important for the facility to be respected, the spaces to be accessible and the behaviors be appropriate, even when people are not being watched."

The administration is hopeful that students will respect the facilities and the work that goes into maintaining a clean, safe and accessible school.



Work is currently being done in the boys bathroom due to the recent vandalism.

Photo by Ryan Anastasio '20

Why Students Need Andrew Yang

by Zachary Garfinkle '22

I have found that in politics, teenagers are usually underrepresented. Politicians typically do not cater to this demographic; after all, the majority of teens cannot vote, and it often makes little political sense to focus on attracting the teens of the nation. In this way, we are typically ignored in regards to national politics; but Andrew Yang wants to change this.

I don't mean to shill for any politician, party, or ideology. Nor do I intend to tell people who to vote for. Rather, as the primaries draw closer, I think it's important to pay attention to one of the lesser-known candidates.

Yang's flagship proposal, "universal basic income," comes with the promise of \$1,000 per month to every American 18 or older. This controversial policy has often been dismissed as unrealistic, but it's actually quite viable.

It would be paid for via a "value-added tax," meaning that, as an example, a sliver of every Amazon pur-

chase goes to the Freedom Dividend (another term for Yang's proposed idea). This way, only corporations have to contribute to the Freedom Dividend; everyday citizens would not be taxed a cent for universal basic income.

No new money has to be printed; the money is merely recycled, circulating through the economy. A universal basic income could greatly benefit current students at Amity as they become adults and enter the workforce; it would allow people to adjust to financial independence.

Additionally, Yang warns about the rising threat of automation. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find jobs as more jobs become automated; students that want to get a summer job to save up money for college will struggle as jobs become scarce. Many things that humans can do, robots can do better; the concept of automation is no longer a thing of the future, but a problem that will infect the lives of many teenagers as they look for jobs.

For many students, college is at the forefront of our futures. Needless to say, tu-

ition is astronomically high, and student debt may plague us for decades. To combat this, Yang plans to control the cost of higher education. His unconventional yet intriguing "10x10 Student Loan Emancipation Act" would have the government buy student debt, and allow students to repay their debt by paying 10% of their salary for ten years. In most cases, the amount of money paid would be far less than the original student debt.

As a teenager, staying involved in politics can feel pointless at times, as we don't have a lot of political agency. Yang has expressed the desire to lower the minimum voting age to 16, which would promote civic engagement among teens.

Yang has an astounding amount of original policies; sufficiently detailing even the most important would be impossible to do in a single article. I implore anyone that will be old enough to vote in the primaries to further research Andrew Yang.

It's time for someone that truly represents our interests.

THE TRIDENT

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Great opportunity to get involved!

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The Crisis in Amity's Bathrooms

by Ryan Anastasio '20

Going to the bathroom is an absolute bare necessity of human life. At Amity, this once simple task has become increasingly difficult over the past few months. Recently, bathroom vandalism has been rampant. Stall doors have been ripped off, sinks have been broken, and the bathrooms have been purposely trashed.

I am appalled that this can happen at a school like Amity. Students that have engaged in vandalism should be ashamed of the ludicrous behavior they are involved in. They have wasted taxpayer dollars and have diverted valuable resources that could be used elsewhere. Any student engaged in vandalism should be held accountable for their actions and I hope the administration continues to investigate who is in-

olved.

The administration's response to this recent rise in vandalism has been very controversial. They have chosen to close several of the bathrooms. For most of the day, there is not a boys' bathroom accessible to students on the second floor. For much of the past few weeks, there have been only two boys' bathrooms open (both on the first floor). Students in classes on the second floor have to go to a first-floor bathroom. This can turn a quick bathroom trip into a lengthy expedition, just for an open bathroom. Some handicapped students have to use an elevator just to use the bathroom. Closing bathrooms has increased traffic in the open bathrooms. It has become virtually impossible to use the bathroom during passing time. Often, students are either late to class or have to leave in the middle of class

to use the bathroom.

I believe that closing the bathrooms has not solved any problems. The open bathrooms are dirty and overused. The state of California recommends one toilet for every 50 male students and one urinal for every 100 students. While the state has not put out any recommendations, I think the school should use similar standards to that of California. The school is not following these standards, and a plumbing disaster may be imminent.

The administration has a problem on its hands. How do they balance a student's right to use a bathroom and the need to stop vandalism? I suggest that the school should have security guards check bathrooms every period and frequently patrol the outsides of bathrooms. Closing bathrooms does not solve any problems, merely creating new ones.

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Politics Is Becoming Even More Polarizing

by Weiss Yuan '21

In the over two centuries since our Constitution was written, President Trump's recent impeachment is certainly unique, being only the third impeachment. It's the first in which a president is impeached during his first term, the first facing conviction from a body of Congress controlled by the president's party, and the first where the Senate will hear no additional witnesses.

Ultimately, it seems that both sides lack the interest to make this a serious, non-partisan investigation and impeachment trial. Republican partisanship is exposed on the mainstream media with Senator McConnell working

closely with Trump defense lawyers on impeachment, but Democrats have shown the same bias and disregard for making this non-partisan, holding the shortest ever impeachment investigation and trial.

Their case doesn't make sense. They had the Mueller Report, but they instead went with articles of Abuse of Power, focusing on Ukraine and Obstruction of Congress, focusing on administration officials reluctant to testify. However, Trump's unwillingness to have officials testify can fall back to his claims of executive privilege, which, according to previous Supreme Court cases, can be claimed in some situations. In the event of a dispute, Democrats have to take it to the courts.

In *U.S. v. Nixon*, it only took three months until a Supreme Court ruling, but now, Democrats are reluctant to go down that path that was taken under Nixon and Clinton. Instead, they wanted to rush impeachment by delivering it before Christmas and then hoping the Republican Senate is willing to fight for such witnesses and documents.

For Democrats to charge the president with Obstruction of Congress, the legislative branch has taken on powers of the judiciary, deciding what is for the courts to decide and pronouncing the president guilty of defining subpoenas.

That, according to Law Professor Jonathan Turley, is "Congress's abuse of power"; and abuse of power, ironically, is the other article of im-

peachment.

With the 2020 elections, Democrats have become more and more divided, as it goes with primaries.

Secretary Clinton is being sued by another 2020 democratic candidate; Senator Warren and Senator Sanders accuse each other of lying; but above all else, their impeachment has failed. It failed to get a single Republican vote in the House, it failed to obtain witnesses in the Senate trial; and ultimately, this week, his impeachment failed when he was acquitted.

This leads to a divided Democratic party with self-declared "socialists" while the Republican party has surprisingly united against Trump with the economy being one of their biggest selling points.

And on an even larger picture, not a single incumbent president has ever lost re-election when the economy was growing at this pace.

With Democrats becoming divided and losing momentum with impeachment while Republicans stay unified, Democrats seem to lack the energy and unique message needed to win in 2020. Trump's victory in 2016 was built on a message of fear and division, a stark contrast from Obama's message of hope and unity.

With a lost impeachment battle and a divided party, Trump may just well win 2020, unless the eventual Democratic nominee offers a new message that trumps the president's one of polarization and fear.

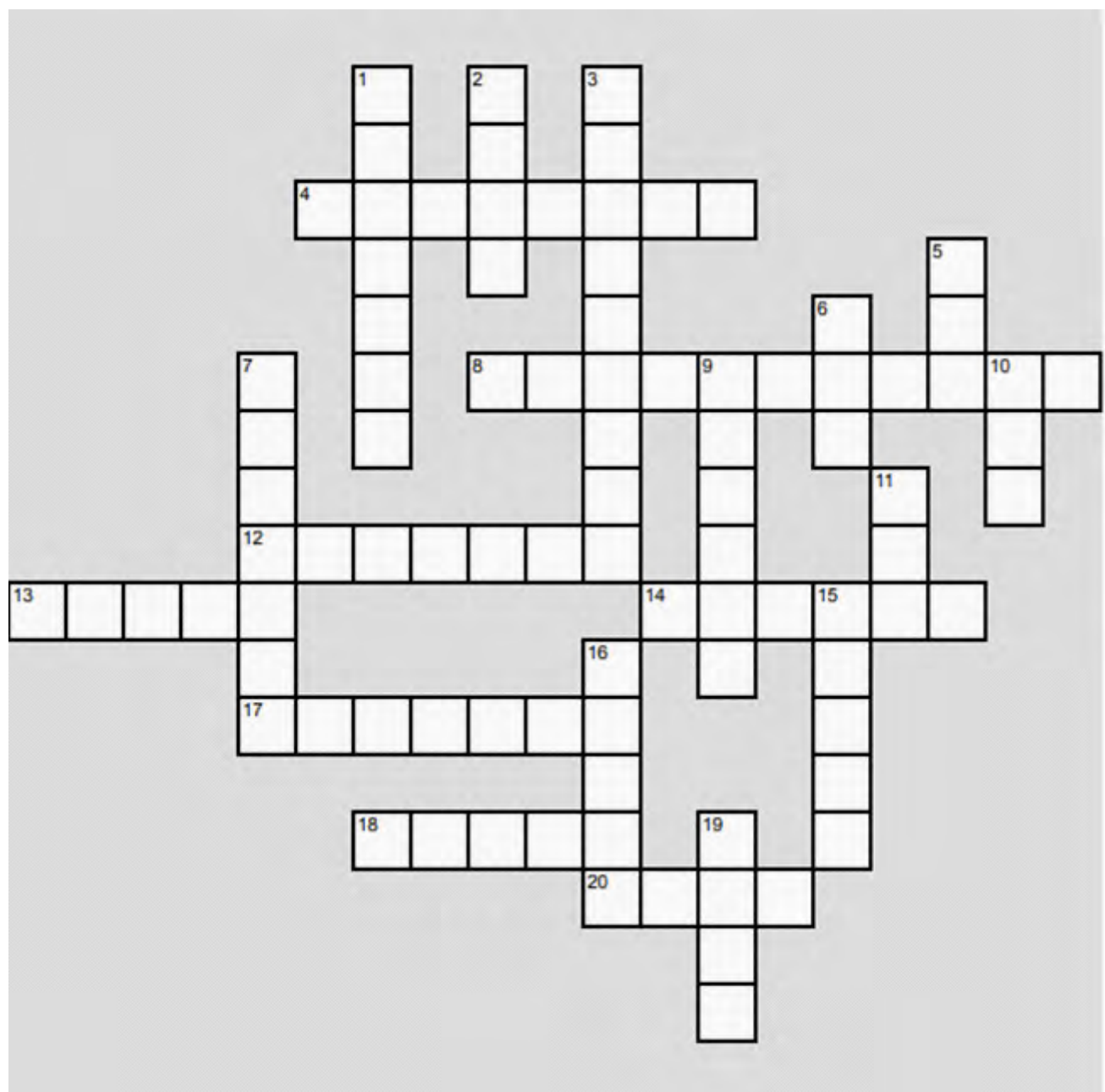
February Crossword Puzzle

by Zachary Garfinkle '22

Good luck to those who attempt to solve this very difficult puzzle!

Pictures of completed puzzles should be emailed to amitytrident-newspaper@gmail.com.

The first person who submits a correct puzzle will win a gift card!



Across

4. April Fools' Edition of the *Trident*
8. People are concerned about the recent spreading of this virus
12. Two forms of an element with different numbers of neutrons
13. Woman who performed "Truth Hurts" on the 62nd Grammy Awards
14. Trump's former national security
17. First year of AP Capstone is called AP _____
18. A "dead language" offered at Amity
20. Recently deceased legendary NBA superstar

Down

1. Nearby community college
2. Group of three
3. The Spanish word "estudié" is an example of what tense (answer in English)
5. President that served from 1933 to 1945
6. "Sixteen" in Roman numerals
7. People in graduating class of '21
9. Amity High School is located at 25 _____ Road
10. Three-letter acronym for Andrew Yang's main policy
11. Singer Yoko _____
15. Number of presidents who have been impeached
16. First name of the protagonist in "The Irishman"
19. Jewish teen organization with a prominent presence in Amity

Amity Debate Team Advances in IPPF

by Melita Collins '21

The Amity High School Debate team started the year with great success in the International Public Policy Forum (IPPF) debate competition. This January, a team consisting of senior Jack Tajmajer and juniors Kevin Lu, Margaret Luo, Arnav Paliwal, Peter Scully, Zhengyang Wang, Weiss Yuan, and Wendy Zhang were announced as one of the top 32 teams out of hundreds of international debate teams.

IPPF is the first and only debate competition which gives students all around the world the opportunity to debate public policy both orally and in the written form. This debate competition, sponsored by the Brewer Foundation and New York University, has a grand prize of a \$10,000 scholarship, which the top eight debate teams compete for in an all expense paid trip to the IPPF finals in New York City.

The process for IPPF selection is long and complex, starting in November 2019. During the fall, hundreds of teams submitted 2,800 word essays for the qualifying rounds. Those essays were reviewed by a committee which selected the top applicants. So far, the Amity debate team has reached the prestige of top 32 in the event. This leaves the team eligible to reach the top eight.

This success was due to the hard work and effort made by the debate team. To prepare for the contest, the team tackled the question of whether a nation should put international commitments such as the United Nations global compact on migration above personal interests. The team researched this complex argument and created essays for both the negative and affirmative sides.

To effectively write the essay, the debate team split

into roles of researcher, argument builder, writer, and editor.

One crucial player for the team is Arnav Paliwal '21. Paliwal's main role was to lead argument building and help craft both the main argumentation and response to the case of the opposing team.

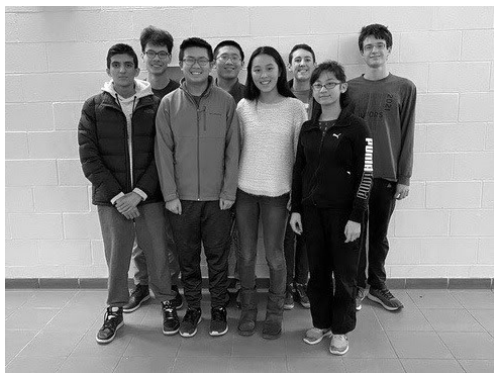
When asked about his experience with IPPF, Paliwal '21 said, "I think the contest has been a really good experience in terms of group work since I learned how to incentivize people into contributing. Also, I think it's a really cool experience to debate people from all over the world; for example, in the round of 64 we went against a team from Pakistan who had a different perspective on migration than the US due to their culture."

The debate team's contributions were definitely seen through the group essays, which proved to be challenging to write. Thus, for the essay, having an editor was seen as crucial. For the competition, Margaret Luo '21 acted as a key editor. She stated: "Group essays can get messy because the voice changes every few paragraphs and we want it to stay consistent in order to sound nice." Overall, the process

of editing was long and tiring for editors like Luo. However, with

the success of the team, it is evident that the hard work paid off. Luo remains hopeful for the outcome of the competition but said, "Our top 32 opponents are really good, so we will have to step up our game."

The Amity Debate team continues to work towards reaching the finals. The winning groups of this round will be declared on February 11, 2020 when teams will continue to the "Sweet Sixteen" round. Afterwards, the final eight teams will be declared in March.



Amity IPPF Debate Team
Photo by Allison Su '22

How to Maintain All of Your New Year's Resolutions

by Megan Wu '22 and Adithi Wijesekera '22

As the month of December came to a close, people strove to set new goals for the upcoming year. Often, a fresh start is exactly what individuals need in order to achieve a better lifestyle. However, while motivation can be high at first, it becomes increasingly difficult to uphold our goals. By February, most of these ambitions are long forgotten.

A New Year's resolution allows people to assess the past twelve months and discover factors that they would like to modify for the following year. The end of the year is a time to self-reflect, acknowledge your wrongdoings or poor habits but move past them as well.

Developing an attainable goal for the new year places people in a determined mindset. New Year's resolutions serve as opportunities for improvement, incentives to better your life. Whether you choose to decrease your sugar consumption or keep your room neater, these goals are a commitment. Despite if they are short or long term, the resolutions will eventually produce results and the benefits from your goals will drive you to continue them and push you to your best.

Andrew Gilbride '22 said, "My goal this year was to be more organized, but unfortunately, I did not succeed."

It can be difficult to determine goals you wish to set for the upcoming year. By determining what aspects of your life you want to fix first, you can categorize resolutions that will target those specific groups. For instance, if you struggled with maintaining an adequate sleeping schedule, your goal should be to get ready for bed at an earlier time or increase the amount of hours you sleep. Additionally, your New Year's resolution should focus on improving the weaker components of your lifestyle.

Furthermore, ensure that your goals are attainable; it may be helpful to set up a monthly check to hold yourself accountable every couple of weeks. Other goals for improving your physical health can include eating healthier, restricting fatty foods, exercising more frequently, and drinking more water. To aid your mental health, you might participate in yoga, consume less caffeine, or take some personal time at the end of each day.

Another area you may want to focus on would be the way you interact with those around you; make resolutions to develop more friendships, give

someone a compliment, take part in a new club or sport, or complete a small act of kindness everyday.

For Camila Mowerman '22, being kind is high on her priority list this year. She said, "This year I want to be nicer to people I don't know. Even though I'm struggling with it, I'm trying my best to be kind to everyone."

Greta Pedenski '22 said her New Year's resolution is to be more tidy. "I've been keeping my room clean everyday. Even though I've had some trouble with cleaning my room when I was sick, I've been able to keep it tidy for a while now."

Oftentimes, people would love to uphold their goals, but excuses pop up in many forms. Some people say they do not have enough time; they're too busy, they have more important things to think about, etc.

Even though most people who set a goal try to keep up with it for some time, their excuses block them from achieving it. However, there are many ways to prevent one's New Year's resolutions from fading. First, try to set up a broader goal for the entire year. Then, at the start of each month, break it down into smaller parts. For instance, your goal may be to develop a healthier lifestyle; that would be your goal of the year.

Now, at the beginning of every month, set a smaller, more attainable goal that relates to your new year's resolution. For example, in January, you can try to work out three times a week. In February, you could try to drink only water. In March, you can try to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into your diet. The idea is that if you set one small goal each month, it will be easier to reach, and it will also hopefully turn into a habit.

Another way to attain your goals is to reward yourself. For example, if you want to become more productive, do your homework right after school, and once you finish two assignments, you can have a piece of chocolate. Or, if your goal is to become neater, if you keep your room tidy for a week, you can go out to the movies. If you find little motivators to help you, it will be easier and more exciting to keep up with your goal.

As we move into the upcoming month, keep this article in mind as you work towards achieving your New Year's resolutions. Whether it be how to progress towards your goal, or even just some inspiration to start one, hopefully you've been motivated to make both February and 2020 a successful year!

Windows 10

by Caelan Watson '20



LINES OF

Matthew Aferzon, when I'm
in my darkest hours you are
the light at the end of my
tunnel.
From Your Pal



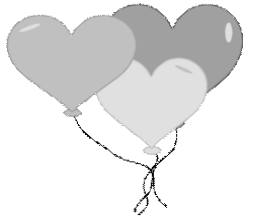
**To all my
SRP stu-
dents,
Our bond is
so strong it
must be
covalent!**
-Mrs. P

*To my Hermanas,
You are the light of
my life and I am so
lucky to have you
weirdos. I don't
know how I would
survive without you.
I love love love you!*
-Syd

*Mackenzie Black,
Wanna go to
prom?!*
-Jason Talnose

**Abigail,
I love you!
Love,
Mitchell Sousa**

To All of my students,
I ♥ all of you! Even the
Evans.
-Mr. Bourdeau



**TO A ONE-OF-A-
KIND, AMAZING
FRIEND: EESHA
ACHARYA,
YOU'RE THE BEST
:) LOTS OF LOVE ♥
WENDY**

To Sarah Milner,
Have a great
summa!
-Carly Silver

Period 2 AP
Stats,
 $P(\text{Valentine})=1$
-Mr. DeMeo

Sri,
You must be
the principal
branch because
I can't forget
you.
-Melita

Dear Talya, you are
more interesting
than anything in a
museum.
-Evan



To Bert & Ernie,
I love you, fave!
Love, Simon &
Garfunkel



I LOVE YOU,
AKANKSHA PAUL.
LOVE, ABBY WISNEWSKI



AMITY STUDENTS,
I HOPE YOU HAVE AN
INCREDIBLE REST OF
THE YEAR FILLED WITH
JOY & HAPPINESS!
REMEMBER IF YOU ARE
STRESSED OR
WORRIED, EVERY-
THING WILL BE OKAY!!!
-SAMUEL SACHS

Period 6
Stats,
You guys
are all the
normalcdf(-
3,1E99,0,1)
percentile!
-Mr. DeMeo

Dear Mr. Downhour,
Roses are red,
Violets are sorta blue,
Your patience is quite amicable,
Sincerely, Period 2

TO PERIOD 1 STATS,
YOU ARE ALL 3 STANDARD DEVIATIONS
ABOVE THE MEAN!
-MR. DEMEO

David Sugarmann,
Have fun at the Big C,
Big D!
♥♥♥♥
-Raymond



LOVE <3

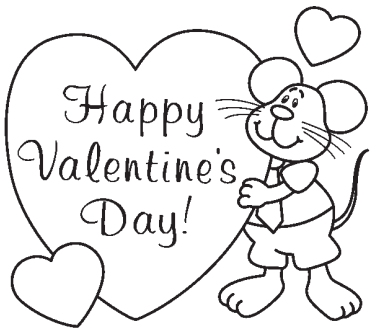
Carly Silver,
HAGS!
-Sarah Milner

*I love you Embers
Staff! #yerds4lyfe
From, Abby
Wisnewski (your
favorite Co-Editor-
in-Chief)*

Periodo 6,
Qué chévere es el
tiempo que pasa-
mos juntos.
Ustedes son la
mantequilla de ca-
cahuetes a mi jalea,
al amanecer a mi
día. Siguen el buen
sendero.
- Señor Silva

Esha Acharya,
You are the kind of person who cares
about everyone around you, who
dreams, and laughs, and loves
everyone too. Our fun times, hugs,
and friendship will always
be cherished.

Period 8 AP Calc,
My admiration for you guys is x01x!
-Mr. DeMeo



Mr. DeMeo,
Our appreciation for
you is like dividing by
zero, it can't be defined!
-Period 8



*To mis hermanas,
Thanks for being
some of the most
amazing & also
the most wacky
people I know!
Love you!!
From, El*

Marlin and Shea,
You guys are amazing!!
I love you! Thanks for
making
every day a little
better.
Love, lil Ceci

TO HERMANAS,
I LOVE YOU MORE
THAN RHE'S GIFS.
DOPE SQUAD ON
FLEEK
-OLIVIA

Melita,
Are you quadrant?
Because you make
me so positive.
From, Sri

**PERIOD 4 STATS,
MAY YOUR RESIDUALS
ALWAYS BE POSITIVE!
-MR. DEMEO**

Abby Wisnewski,
Hope you eat some
microwaved parmesan
covered bread today!
I love you Abby!
-Anonymous

*My dance team
frontknockers,
You are the milk
to my cocoa puffs
and I love you all!
Thanks for being
my sisters
Love, Syd*

To Mr. DeMeo,
Roses are red,
Violets are arguably blue,
Excuse us while our grades approach
The derivative of 82.
-Period $\left(\frac{f(b)-f(a)}{b-a}\right)^2$ [Area of
Circle/its derivative]



Sofia,
Hi Sofia ♥
-Christina

Students Shine in December's Winter Concert

by Melita Collins '21

Amity's Band, Chamber Singers, Orchestra, and A Capella group came together for the annual winter concert on the evening of December

This earlier performance was overall enjoyed by viewers and performers alike but never repeated until this year.

For the winter concert this year, the two songs "Hannukah Festival" and "Christmas Festival" were conducted



Dylan Russ '22 directing the Amity Band

Photo contributed by Dylan Russ '22

19, 2019. This concert, however, was certainly not like the others. With the addition of Amity's new A Cappella Club Rhythmix and a student conductor, viewers were in for a surprise.

This year, sophomore Dylan Russ acted as a student conductor for one of Symphonic Wind Ensemble's Pieces.

After Music in Motion in October, the Amity Band quickly transitioned from the hustle and bustle of memorizing music and choreography to preparing for a concert, which is a completely different dynamic.

Being able to have music in front of you during the performance means that there is more difficult music with more key changes and important dynamics.

A student conducting a song is quite uncommon, but it has happened before. In 2017, Harris Andersen '18 conducted the band for the winter concert.

by band director Phillip Dolan as usual. But he stepped back for the final performance of "Walking in a Winter Wonderland/Let It Snow," which was picked up by Russ.

The experience of a student conductor was enjoyed by not only the viewers but also many students within the band.

Gurshaan Sidhu '21 said, "I enjoyed having a student conduct the piece because it reminded me of freshman year when Harris was here."

When asked about his experience, Russ said, "I could not have been more thrilled to be able to conduct for the symphonic wind ensemble. The music program has allowed me to thrive and follow in the footsteps of successful musicians."

This year's winter concert was an overall success. Russ' performance was thoroughly enjoyed and the Amity Band hopes to have more students conduct in the future.

Dedicated Players Aim to Bring "The Drowsy Chaperone" to Life

by Evan Gorelick '21

This coming spring, Amity Creative Theater will be performing *The Drowsy Chaperone*. This satirical production details the story of a wedding set during the Roaring Twenties, with all the pomp and circumstance one might expect from such an event. However, convincingly presenting a story and spectacle of this magnitude does not come without significant preparation for all those involved.

Throughout the past month, the cast, crew, and orchestra have begun diligently rehearsing for opening night in March.

As auditions came to a close and cast lists went up, the cast immediately began rehearsing for long hours each day. The group has already started to learn dance routines, lines, and music.

Nicholas Matolote '21, a principal cast member, says that "the process of preparing for this year's musical has been full of hard work, but it's sure to pay off in the spring."

Additionally, the production could not be complete without the stage and lighting

crews, which ensure that transitions run smoothly and the cast stays on track for a great performance. Ryan Kennedy '21, a principal cast member, remarks that "working with the cast and crew this year has been a blast. We are so excited to show the community what we have been working towards this Spring." As open-

The group meets after school on Thursdays and most of the day on Saturdays, not to mention the hours each member must spend learning the pieces independently.

Mathew Haiday '20, a saxophonist, comments that "practicing for a production this intense is crucial. The amount of time we spend practicing together and becoming accustomed to the intricacies of the score will undoubtedly dictate how we sound on opening night."

Haiday and others in the orchestra face an especially

difficult challenge this year: the Tony Award winning instrumentation is

notoriously difficult to play.

With unusual and variable time signatures, key changes, and wickedly quick runs, the score's writers Lisa Lambert and Greg Morrison create a unique feel that reflects the mood of the historical period the production embodies.

Another orchestra member, Jeff Benevides '22, notes that "although the music can be difficult, the experience of preparing and performing is a reward in and of itself."

Amity's production of "The Drowsy Chaperone" opens on Friday, March 27th. You won't want to miss it!



Amity Actors Practice Staging a Scene

Photo taken by Nicholas Matolote '21

ing night quickly approaches, the entire production team, including the orchestra, will begin to rehearse together to develop a cohesive performance for opening night.

Each year, Amity Band Director Phillip Dolan assembles and conducts the musical's pit orchestra, a dedicated group of talented instrumentalists that learns to perform the show's original Broadway soundtrack in tandem with the rest of the production.

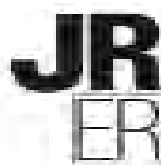
The orchestra began rehearsing just a few weeks ago, and has already enacted a rigorous practice schedule.

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Movie Review

“Cats: The Movie” Is a Fever Dream with Nowhere to Run

by Ian Glassman '21

A few weeks ago, my friend and I went to see *Cats* after hearing its overwhelmingly horrific reception. What better opportunity would there be for us to have a good laugh than to go see “*Cats*”?

As a movie that received a 20% on Rotten Tomatoes, 2.8 from IMDb, dubbed a “dreadful hairball of woe” by Peter Bradshaw from *The Guardian*, and noted as “uneasy on the eyes as a Hollywood spectacle can be” by Justin Chang from *Los Angeles Times*—it must offer some sort of amusement.

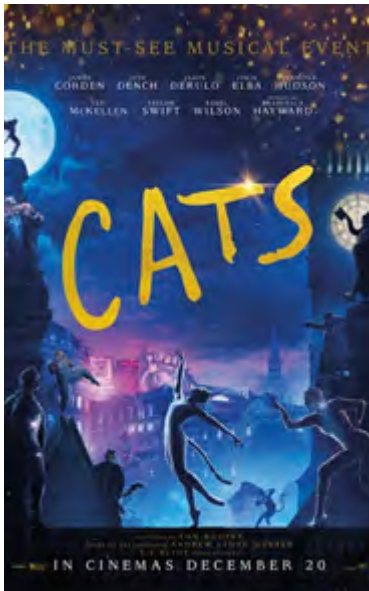
It definitely went beyond what we could possibly fathom and in the worst ways possible. To break this down, I will examine the awkward pacing of plot that, in conjunction with the offensive visuals, produce some nightmare material of a movie.

The plot revolves around a group of alley cats who all yearn to be named a “Jellicle,” a particular type of cat chosen by Old Deuteronomy that is granted a new life. The cats anticipate the upcoming annual Jellicle Ball where the new Jellicle is chosen.

The fact that a clear conflict only arises at the end of the movie is a major issue with the plot. Old Deuteronomy is kidnapped at the

Jellicle Ball by Macavity, the threatening antagonist, who insists on becoming the Jellicle.

The conflict is weakly resolved by Mr. Mistoffelees, a cat with magical powers, gaining the confidence in his ability to conjure Old Deu-



“Cats” Film Cover

Photo from wikipedia.org

teronomy back to the ball.

It seems as if this resolution was pulled from left field. While the message of determination attempts to inspire, the poorly resolved conflict, which arises and is addressed in the span of twenty-minutes, makes the movie seem anti-climactic as a whole.

The plot is not well-defined, and it seems like the writer began storyboarding

before knowing where the plot was headed; the ending feels like an unexpected, steep drop on a rollercoaster.

Shifting away from storyline, the movie’s jarring visuals, aesthetics, and costumes detract from its already ambiguous plot. As it is performed on stage, *Cats* features actors vested in catsuits, yielding an uncomfortable feline-homosapien blend.

On the big screen, however, the fine line that exists between the cat and the human renders the feeling of a felino-apocalyptic fever dream with nowhere to run. Some of the images that stuck, without getting too graphic, were of cats eating roaches, dancing on tables, and ripping off their vests.

“I thought after that I could not enjoy a movie ever again,” says Dana Jossick '21, who saw the film.

While I respect the commitment involved in CGI, screenwriting, acting, and all components that seek to hold the film together, to the viewer, the movie is painfully flimsy, visually tragic, and mentally scarring.

Even considering the fact that I went ‘ironically,’ I can assuredly say I regret every moment and would choose to unsee the movie in a heartbeat if possible.

That being said, I give *Cats* a solid 2/10. If you’re planning on seeing a screening, I cannot stop you, but do not say I didn’t warn you.

Teacher Profile

Art Educator Elizabeth Smolinski

by Sydney Cohen '21

Since age three, there was nothing Elizabeth Smolinski loved more than a day of blasting music and painting her heart out. As she grew up, her passion for art grew into a love for teaching it.

Now, Smolinski teaches Intro to Art, Drawing and Painting II, and AP Art and Design here at Amity.

Smolinski has been

Smolinski said, “We receive a video of the children getting the portraits, and the whole experience is very moving. I love to see my students using their talents to make a positive difference in the lives of children across the world.”

Throughout her day, Smolinski helps many students who struggle to find their creative voice to create artwork.

She says, “When students truly take risks and



Art Educator Elizabeth Smolinski

Photo contributed by Elizabeth Smolinski

passionate about art from a young age and was influenced by her former art teachers to become a teacher herself.

She started her teaching career immediately after getting her 6th year degree at Walden University, and she says, “Truthfully, I haven’t stopped going to school since I was five years old, and I think that’s kind of fun!”

Smolinski began her teaching career in 2004 at Ridgefield High School. However, in 2008, she was happy to get a job in her hometown of Woodbridge and end her daily hour-long commute to Ridgefield.

Ever since coming to Amity, Smolinski has been teaching her favorite class: Drawing and Painting II. In the class, students strengthen their artistic abilities by using a variety of mediums, including pencil, watercolor, acrylic paint, and charcoal.

Smolinski enjoys watching students use their newly developed watercolor skills for impactful projects like the Memory Project. The Memory Project calls for students to paint portraits of underprivileged children from around the world.

push themselves to reach lofty goals, they succeed. Witnessing a student’s artistic growth is just fantastic!”

During her time as a teacher, Smolinski realized that one of the main struggles students experience is hesitation and doubt in their abilities. To get past this, she tries “to give students a lot of constructive criticism and positive reinforcement. Confidence is key.”

Smolinski focuses on providing choices for her students “so they can create something they can be proud of,” she added.

Smolinski has created a classroom environment that makes her students feel comfortable and confident in their creative abilities.

One Drawing and Painting II student, Rose Parady '21, said, “[Smolinski] has really helped me grow as an art student. She makes everyone feel like they’re part of a big family, and I’m always so inspired by her and her positive energy.”

Throughout her career at Amity, Elizabeth Smolinski has made many positive impacts on the school and her students while maintaining a supportive classroom environment.



Stay Tuned for More Profiles...

Boys Hockey Team Continues Strong Performance

by Jade Krukar '22

Led by captains Nick Kiwanis '20 and Justin Miller '21, the Amity Boys Hockey team is composed of 23 student athletes, ten of which are rookies. While having such a young team has its challenges, the Amity boys hockey team is excited about the bright future that these underclassmen hold.

By playing minutes this year, the Amity freshmen and sophomores will be even more lethal as they get older and more talented. The team practices every day and

The games always have a big turnout. The student section, referred to as the "Amity Army," has had a theme for each home game. These themes include going all out in blackout, USA, and other fun themes.

A picture is taken of the section at each game and is submitted to the boys hockey "Student Section Top 10." Amity consistently ranks at the top and is currently seated at 4th place. This is a true testament to the amount of school spirit Amity High School has.

Bonding comes naturally with this group of boys. The team has frequent pasta



The Boys Hockey Team Celebrates after a Goal

Photo from Orange Live

plays home games at Bennett Rink in West Haven.

While the game record is not where the boys want it to be (2 wins, 7 losses, 2 ties), they are still working hard. Last game, the team scored a total of 5 goals against Immaculate, losing by just one goal in overtime.

Dylan Gherlone '21 said, "Even though we're a young team, the hard work is always there. I think we get along really well and our leadership is strong."

"Our first 10 games were a bit of a tough run but now we are aiming for the title," he added.

There has not been a shortage of excitement so far for this team. In particular, the game against Notre Dame-West Haven was extra special, according to Mike Lebreck '20. He said that it was "the most electric game I've played" and that "the atmosphere was unreal."

Despite being underdogs, the Spartans fought tooth and nail against Notre Dame-West Haven and ended up victorious. Lebreck said the feeling of victory was "indescribable"

parties, where they consume loads of pasta to fuel their upcoming game and bond with each other.

On the rink, good communication between teammates can make the difference between winning and losing a game, so these pasta parties will definitely help the team become more in sync with one another.

When Lebreck was asked what his personal goals are for the rest of the season, he said that "an example for the underclassmen to follow and to leave no regrets behind, becoming the hockey player and person that I can be."

As long as he works hard at this goal, the Amity Boys Hockey team should be successful for many years to come.

The Spartans will be taking on North Branford on Wednesday, February 12th. The team's last game of the regular season is on February 26th.

After this, they will move into the postseason, where Amity looks to make a run at the SCC championship title.

Remembering Kobe Bryant A Legend Who Will Live Forever

by David Sugarmann '20

As most of the world already knows, the Los Angeles Lakers' star shooting guard Kobe Bryant was killed in a helicopter crash on January 26th, 2020. To make the tragedy worse, there were seven other victims of the crash, including his daughter Gianna.

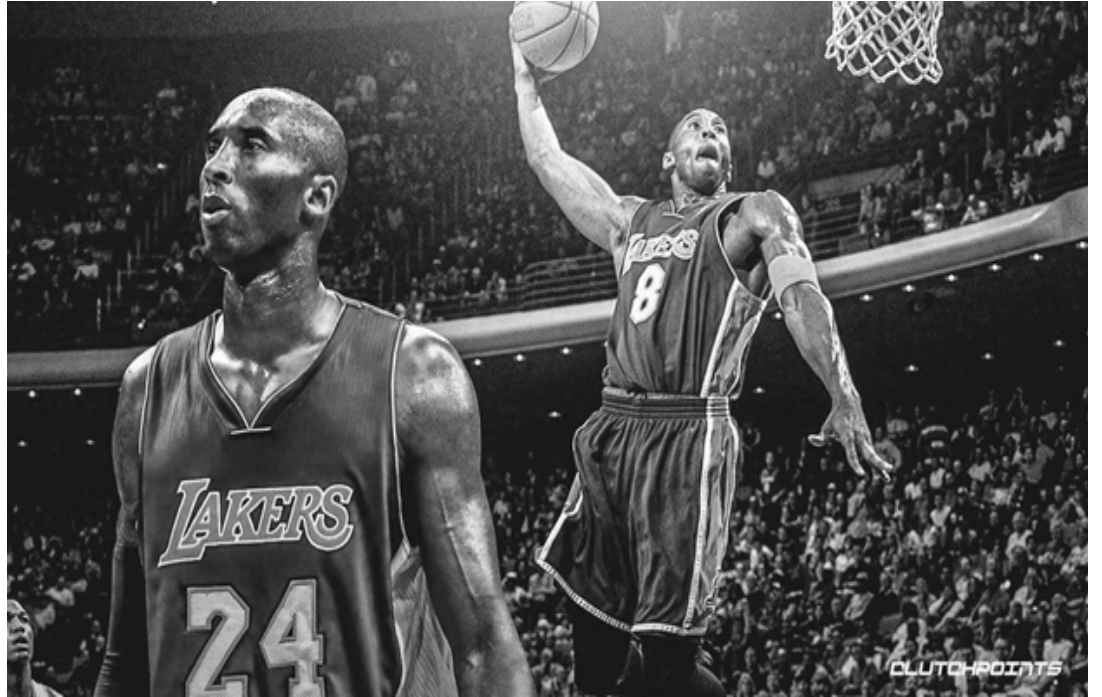
achieving his goal.

At the age of 17, Kobe Bryant elected to enter the 1996 draft.

Being so young, this was definitely a gamble. But everything was worth it for Kobe when he heard then-Commissioner David Stern say, "With the 13th pick of the 1996 NBA draft, the Charlotte Hornets select Kobe Bryant."

Lakers, led by the dynamic duo of Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal, were unstoppable. Unfortunately, these two stars separated in 2004 when O'Neal was traded to the Miami Heat.

After O'Neal won a ring with the Heat in 2006, fans started to wonder if Kobe was good enough to win without Shaq. Instead of letting this get to him, Kobe



Kobe Bryant Dressed in Lakers Uniform

Photo from ClutchPoints News Network

While many are currently mourning Kobe's tragic death, it is important to also celebrate all that he accomplished throughout his life.

From birth, Kobe Bryant was surrounded by the world of basketball. His father, Joe Bryant, was a former NBA player who played in the league for eight years. In 1984, a six year old Kobe moved to Italy so his father could play professional basketball there. He would spend the next seven years there until he moved back to Pennsylvania.

As he got older, Bryant's love for basketball only increased. As a teenager, he attended Lower Merion High School. He played Varsity Basketball all four years and led his team to a state championship in his senior year. By the end of his high school tenure, many of the top basketball programs in college, including Duke, Michigan, North Carolina, and Villanova were trying to recruit Kobe.

But Bryant's goal was always to play in the NBA, and he was not going to let anything stop him from

Soon after, he was traded to the LA Lakers, where he began to build his legacy.

During his 20 year ca-

only used this as motivation to prove every doubter wrong.

He went on to lead his team to back to back titles in '09 and '10.

In addition to getting five rings, Bryant had a long list of personal accolades as well. He appeared in 18 All-Star games, won the NBA MVP in 2008, two NBA finals MVPs, two Olympic gold medals, 15 All-NBA selections, and 12 All-Defensive selections.

After his retirement in 2016, "Kobe Bryant" was a household name. Even people that have

never watched a basketball game in their lifetime have heard of Kobe Bryant due to his unparalleled work ethic, often dubbed "mamba mentality."

Kobe's mamba mentality stemmed from the fact that he was willing to work harder than anybody else on the court, and he was willing to do whatever was necessary in order to succeed.

This inspired children all over the world to put 100% of their effort into whatever they're doing and to always strive to be the best they can be.



Kobe Bryant and Daughter Gianna Bryant

Photo from latimes.com

reer, Kobe Bryant proved to be one of the best players the NBA has ever seen. While his skill was superior to everyone else on the court, it was his relentless determination to win and be the best that truly set him apart from his peers.

When he was on the court, he only had one thing on his mind—to win. To say this goal of winning was accomplished would be an understatement. Throughout Kobe's career, he won five NBA titles (2000, 2001, 2002, 2009, 2010).

From 1999 to 2002, the

Kobe Bryant 1978-2020

Boys Basketball Looks to Finish the Season Strong

by Laurence Lambiase '21

With a 6-7 record, the boys basketball team, led by captains Joey Marchitto and William Rotko and coach Jeff Nielsen, has had a fair season so far with a league record of 2-0, according to Maxpreps.com.

They did start off 1-5, including a 69-60 loss to Notre Dame and a 60-43 loss to Shelton. But what is amazing is this team's perseverance. They stuck together and won five out of their next seven games.

What helped boost the team to this successful position were wins against tough opponents such as Chesire and Wilbur Cross. Although their record is under .500, records don't always show how well a team plays.

While there are excuses that can be made about why this team's winning percentage is under .500, this boys basketball squad is not looking to make any excuses.

When speaking to the captain William Rotko '20, he shared a similar sentiment.

Rotkosaid, "Our weakness is that the team has a lot of people from a football or baseball background."

"However," he added, "our strength of the team is our hustle and determination, which allows us to compete with teams like Hamden, letting us know that we should have won."

Strengths and weakness tell a lot about a team, and it's okay if the players on the team play multiple sports. As long as they have the hustle and determination to motivate them to compete, this group of Spartans can have a very successful season.

Have you ever been cu-

rious how the team mentally prepared before every game? Each player has their own rituals that they do before every game in order to get psyched up.

If the players didn't have pre game rituals, it would be much harder to get fully focused for the game.

Ish Davila '20 decided to share his secrets on what his routine is. For his gametime ritual, he said, "I just listen to music personally, like Meek Mill and Lil Baby."

Listening to music before a game is common. Athletes will often listen to fast paced music before their games in order to get mentally psyched up. This will help them to play explosively and

Whether it's music, food, or something else, having a ritual that one does before every game can only improve how they perform.

This year for basketball has been great so far, but how about next year?

What happens next is in the hands of the underclassmen, and they need good advice to get themselves going and build a good team chemistry.

Again, Rotko commented, "For the newcomers, I would say just work hard and hustle if you're looking to work to make the team, JV, or varsity, because we need people like that to make a good team."

Lastly, Davila was asked what made this basketball team so special.

He said, "It's really hard to explain. This team just holds many great qualities."



Amity Boys Basketball Defending Their Home Court
Photo contributed by @amity_army2020



Amity Looks For Shooting Opportunity
Photo contributed by @amity_army2020

aggressively in the game.

But it does not just have to be music.

Rotko said, "Before every game I go and get something to eat. But I have to limit myself to foods like salads or something like that."

That can be true, because too much food isn't good for a game, but it is always good to grab a bit to get that extra stamina.

Many other teams in all sports know teamwork, hustle, and aggressiveness are essential to winning games.

Like Kobe Bryant said, "Trust your skills."

Why is this relevant? Because it shows how the Amity Boys Basketball team needs to trust their process.

If they can do that, then there is a very bright future ahead.

Perseverance Is Key for Girls Basketball

by Ben Martin '21

The Amity Girls basketball team has had an up and down season so far this winter. They started off the season with an undefeated record of four wins and zero losses.

At this time, the team was missing four players. Despite those injuries, however, the girls powered

record sits at an even 7 wins and 7 losses, so the Spartans will be extra eager to win their next few games to keep their record above .500.

Manziona, a power forward for the Spartans, commented on how the team played during their four-game winning streak.

"We played together and were able to take advantage of the players that we had," she said.

Although the team has lost many



Amity Girls Basketball Team
Photo contributed by @amity_army2020

through to win those four games. Injuries have been a big problem for the Spartans this season.

The team has lost key contributors throughout their winter campaign such as Catherine Thomas '20, Jenna Van Hise '20, Becky Marchitto '21, Skylar Burzynski '21, Sophia Swift '21, Mya Manziona '21, and Sarah Granados '23.

Since these first four games, Amity has had some tough losses. The losses to Hamden and East Haven by two points and one point, respectively, have been particularly painful.

However, this bunch of girls refused to let these losses get them down. Instead, they fought in some close games to beat Jonathan Law twice and Hillhouse. Their current

players, the two constants have been captain Jill Martin '20, and guard Meghan Smith '21. Martin is having an amazing season this year.

Along with her amazing stats, this season she scored her one thousandth point as a Spartan. Along with Martin, the other Spartans have really stepped up to fill the void of the injured players.

Coming up later in the season, the Spartans look to continue their successful year, with regular season play ending on February 17th.

This schedule includes home games against Daniel Hand, Shelton and their final game on the 17th against Career Magnet.

So make sure to come out and support your Amity Girls Basketball team.

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LINES OF LOVE <3

To Amity Students,
It's me again! I just wanted to say that life is too short to worry about a test grade, teacher, or bad day! Cherish every moment we have because it's a gift!
From, Sam Sachs

To LMAAO,
 Every day bathroom pic things
 ♥



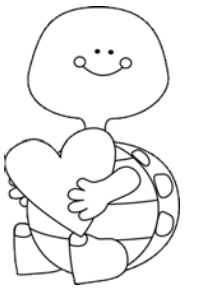
Lizzy Buckley,
 You're short!
 Yayyy!
 -Sarah Maroney

Matt Aferzon,
 Thank you for being my best friend & helping me get through tough times.
 -Your BFF



Big D goin' to the Big C!
 -Big E

Scott DeMeo,
Chi squared life would be null without you!
-Anonymous Admirer



To Ella, Olivia, Syd, Rhe, Aoi, & Tal:
 You guys are the best people & I love you all so much! ♥
 -Natalie Prinz

To my shtinkays,
 I LOVE YOU! Thanks for making life so much fun!! Love, Sicky

Happy Valentine's Day to all of our faithful readers!

We love you!
The Trident Staff

dear sophia,
 you might think alligators and crocodiles are the same animal, but i still love you!
 - your glitch in the matrix



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