

THE AMITY TRIDENT

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Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

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Amity ‘Penguins’ Make a Splash for Inclusion

by Celine Ding ‘28

On April 8th, the community gathered to witness Amity’s first-ever Penguin Plunge. Hosted by Special Olympics Connecticut and the Amity Unified Sports Team, the fundraised money will go to supporting over 14,000 athletes who train and compete year-round with Special Olympics CT.

The momentous day unified Amity for community support as the school celebrated the inclusivity of all students and staff.

The Special Olympics organization provides statewide health screenings, education and fitness events to help its athletes stay active, and promotes new friendships and healthy lives.

Special Olympics offers 26 different Olympic-type sports to students across Connecticut with intellectual disabilities. It also partners with the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) to bring students together through sports.

Amity’s Penguin Plunge was a major success, raising over \$7,500.

This surpassed the initial \$5,000 goal. Over 40 clubs, sports teams, and individuals created fundraising initiatives to support the good cause. Student Government took the top spot, raising \$1,335, and Amity Unified Sports came in close second at \$1,227 raised.

Representatives from each fundraising group bravely took the icy plunge during the windy morning. Plungers consisted of students, faculty, and administrators. Students and faculty were given the opportunity to either watch the plunge occur outside by the football field or watch the live stream broadcasted to Spartan Seminar classrooms.

The memorable event generated excitement throughout the school as Amity expressed its commitment to inclusion within the community.

Jackie Martin ‘28, who watched the event outside, stated, “It was a great experience to see the school so excited and uplifting each other.”

Other students not physically present at the Plunge could still enjoy the event from Spartan Seminar. After a short video/slideshow about Unified Sports and the Penguin Plunge, teachers accessed a live video link from the Penguin

Plunge

Diana Di-Gangi, a physical education teacher, was one of the faculty members who braved the plunge. She reflected on her experience, saying, “Jumping in for a good cause was a lot of fun, but being this cold was not.”

Business teacher and girls golf coach Michael Cofrancesco also took a plunge and later said, “It was a very fun and well-run event for a great cause. I tried to think of something golf related for my plunge and came up with the swing and fall. Many students commented that it was very funny.”

A big shout-out to Special Olympics CT and Amity Unified Sports



Photo contributed by Amity PE Instagram

Teacher Nora Crann takes the Penguin Plunge on April 8.

for all the hard work they put into setting up such an amazing event.

The Penguin Plunge could not have been such a success without the community’s efforts to raise funds to empower its students.

Career Day Opens New Opportunities for Sophomores

by Alissa Yang ‘28

March 27th marked Career Day for the Sophomore Class at Amity. Career Day provided the students with a diverse selection of jobs to explore and learn more about. With more than twenty local guest speakers, some being Amity alumni or parents, they spoke to students about their professions and the path they took to reach their current position.

This year, among these guest speakers, there were a variety of occupations represented, including accountants, engineers, firefighters,

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Photo contributed by Lynn Cocco

Career Day presenters

STEAM Day Returns in May Clubs Set to Welcome BOW 5th Graders

by Eve Marin ‘27

On May 28th, Amity will host its annual STEAM Day. At this event, fifth grade students from elementary schools in the district take a field trip to the high school to explore different aspects of science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

Clubs, classes, and sometimes even outside vendors set up tables around the school’s middle gym, back entrance and black room with activities for the fifth graders to explore.

Angelo Amato, Science Department Chair, and Jessica Zamachaj, Visual and Performing Arts Department Chair, are both in charge of

organizing the event and helping to ensure the day runs smoothly.

Prior to the event, they put out a list to the Amity staff in order to see who is interested in setting up a table and receive a variety of responses from clubs such as Marine Bio Club, the broadcast journalism class or the Latin National Honor Society.

The Science Research Program advanced students are responsible for creating goodie bags for the fifth graders to take with them throughout the day.

Along with other fidgets and trinkets, the goodie bags include little notebooks and pens for the students to write down what they find interesting.

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Career Day Opens New Opportunities for Sophomores

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nurses, researchers, and attorneys (just to name a few). This allowed students to attend sessions they found most interesting.

Additionally, students learned about the paths needed to reach certain careers. The guest speakers presented their own experiences and education, outlining the ways to achieve the credentials to work their job and the time it took. They also covered the jobs' details such as what a daily workday would look like and the wages you can expect.

Jay Tomaszewski, an Amity graduate who works at the Yale School of Medicine as a communications officer, was one of the presenters. "It was a pleasure to meet with a great group of students. They brought some really good questions and seemed genuinely interested in the field of communications," he said.

"The experience was also a little nostalgic for me, looking back at the winding road that brought me to my current position. I hope the students are able to take something from my little talk that can help them on their path," Tomaszewski added.

For sophomores, Career Day is incredibly informational and important as students begin to think about

their future career goals. Even though some are definite in how they stand on potential careers and fields while others are unsure on what to pursue, Career Day helps show students the numerous opportunities they have for the future.

Sarah Hoffstatter, a sophomore, pointed out this benefit of Career Day, saying, "I thought it was cool how people's careers often weren't what they originally thought they were going to do. It's reassuring too. There's all the pressure to figure out your life as a high schooler when life happens."

Career Day helps to ease students' fears about their future and shows them there are many options for a successful and interesting career.

Sophomore Lia Chen agreed. "[Career Day] was a really eye-opening experience," she said.

Career Counselor Lynn Cocco reflected on the event days later and said, "This year was focused on inviting parents in for this event. In the future I hope to add people from the arts and humanities."

Year after year, Career Day continues to be helpful for Amity students. The Career Center is always open for students who have further questions and will continue to hold events for students to learn more about future opportunities.

STEAM Day Set to Welcome BOW Fifth Graders

Continued from page 1

The SRP students also act as tour guides helping to lead the kids from station to station.

The stations themselves consist of a wide variety of topics for the students to explore. For example, the Latin National Honor society routinely has a table and plans to have one this year that includes an art activity based on mosaics.

Latin Honor Society Advisor, Laura Hamilton, explained how the goal of this activity is to help the students visualize the geometric intricacies of creating mosaic pictures as the Romans did. Furthermore Robotics Club has previously had a table that showcases robots used in competitions for the students to explore and play with.

Hamilton said, "STEAM day is an excellent opportunity for the high schoolers to build bridges with the younger elementary kids who are going to be joining our Amity community. The day offers fifth graders a great idea of all the wonderful opportunities and activities. It is a great way to build community."

The day has been and will continue to be an inspiring day for the fifth graders and an area for high school students to showcase their knowledge in topics of interest.

Zamachaj stated that for her, one of the most "enjoyable parts of the day is watching Amity high school students lead the tables and show everything that they have learned and share that with younger students

coming in."

Jordan Chen '27 is an advanced SRP student who helped out at the event last year and will do so again this year. He enjoys watching the younger students explore possible future topics of interest.

"You could really see them get inspired by all the different activities and stations and that was so fun to see," Chen said. "There was really something for everyone to get excited about as there was such a large variety of stations. I am happy to be



Photo contributed by Joy Deng '26
Students work together at last year's STEAM Day.

able to participate and pass along my interests to these younger kids!"

This year STEAM Day strives to have the same impact on students as it had in past year.

Amato stated that he gotten positive feedback over the years. "The kids have mentioned how fun it is and how excited they were. They really like being able to bounce around and see a bunch of different things," he added.

Springfest, Spirit Week "A Great Opportunity for the School to Come Together"

by Tony Zhang '26

The sky is pale blue, carrying that in-between moment between winter and spring where the sunlight is beaming without warmth. As the sun sets, winter creeps back, with cold chills vibrating through the air.

However, within the air was

similar community events.

Peter Downhour, Student Government advisor, said that Springfest was "an incredible event that I can only see getting bigger in the future. I envision attendance doubling in subsequent years. I can see it becoming on par with homecoming in future years. That, however, is up for the future Student Government and their leadership."



Photo contributed by Tony Zhang '26
Students on the field having fun at Springfest on Friday evening, April 9th.

laughter that brought a community of diverse students together after school. That night of April 9th was a night to remember, with the creation of cherished memories.

For the first time in its history, the Amity Student Government introduced Springfest, alongside its second Spirit Week and pep rally of the year.

Spirit Week kicked off with its classic Class Color Wars, followed by Blackout on Tuesday and Winter Day on Wednesday in accordance with the Polar Plunge to benefit Special Olympics and Amity's Unified Sports.

Then, on Thursday, to go along with the Springfest event later in the day, the theme was Summer Day. Lastly, on Friday the theme was Amity Apparel Day where students wore any Amity merch they owned.

All in all, this Spirit Week was a great success, highlighting Amity's school spirit and community.

The spirit was shown with the amount of participation at the first ever Springfest. With over 400 tickets sold, students showed up for the food, activities, and to simply hang out with their friends.

Senior Ashwin Menon stated, "Overall I thought Springfest was a fantastic experience, and was a great opportunity for the school to come together in a casual setting. I would definitely recommend attending it next year!"

He was not the only student to give this feedback, as throughout the night and the school days following, many students expressed how fun Springfest was and how Student Government should do more

Josh Rosewater entered the hotdog eating contest, coming in second. "I thought I could eat three hotdogs really fast, but the competition was tough," this senior said, "but I put up a good effort."

The food trucks were another highlight of the event as the Haven Hot Chicken truck sold out all of its chicken and started giving students free fries. The lemonade, cannolis and the grilled cheese were also so delicious.

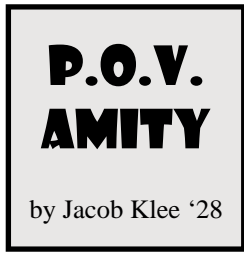
Tyler Casselli enjoyed the food trucks and appreciated how organizers paid attention to what students liked. "Haven Hot Chicken was great," said. Casselli, who also enjoyed a few games of pickle ball with friends.

If you didn't come this year, don't worry, Springfest is not leaving Amity with the seniors. The same food trucks expressed interest in coming again and the Student Government will continue this event, making it the event in the spring.

For Amity students, Springfest was more than just an event; it was a reminder of what a community looks like at its best. It showed that connection doesn't have to be forced or structured; sometimes, it happens most naturally when people are simply given the space to come together.

In those small, unplanned moments, like a spontaneous frisbee game on the field, there's a quiet kind of unity.

See pages 1, 5, and 11 for more stories and photos about Springfest and the Polar Plunge!



Senior Reflection: What is one meaningful experience you have from your time at Amity?

"The most meaningful part of high school was definitely joining the cross country and track teams because it allowed me to make friends with people I would've never known otherwise, go to a lot of places, and make a lot of memories I'll remember for the rest of my life."
- Lucas Cohen '26

"A meaningful experience I had was going to Scotland and performing at the fringe festival with all of my friends."
- Claire Derosa '26

"I found my time in art classes to be extremely rewarding and valuable. I learned not only how to expand my skills to other mediums, but also how to think in more abstract and creative ways. I see so much more beauty in the mundane now than I did before. Naturally, a constant desire to seek inspiration changes the way one views the world, self, and relationships. I thank Mrs. Valenzuela in particular for helping me grow as an artist and as a person."
- Sakma Maklad '26

"The most meaningful part of my high school experience is the relationships that I was able to make. Whether it was the friends that I share laughs with, the people that I greet in the hallways, or the teachers that I go talk with even though I don't even have their class anymore, these relationships have made my experience at Amity so amazing."
- Tony Zhang '26

"The single most meaningful experience I've had through my four years here has been being a part of our wonderful science research program community. The friends, skills, mentors, and amazing life opportunities I've experienced along the way have shaped me more than I know, and every single class and year I've challenged myself and grown in new ways alongside so many likeminded motivated friends."
- Mila Mejnartowicz '26

"One of the most memorable moments of my high school experience would probably be going to the Class LL State Championship with my soccer team. It's not an experience you get every season. Even though it didn't end the way we wanted it to, I will always remember it and cherish the moments I made with my teammates!" - Sienna Murphy '26

Writer's Note: As seniors leave for their UELP internships, we asked them to reflect on their time in high school and share a meaningful experience they may have from this time in their lives. No high school experience is the same, and that is illustrated within these responses, just a few of the many we received. Whether seniors focused on sports, classes, or friendships, each one was different and equally important. What students find meaningful will change for many reasons but being grateful and positive was a theme everyone shared. We wish the best of luck to all seniors as they depart from Amity.

Should Juniors Have Jobs? Be Focused on School? The Experience of an Unemployed High Schooler

by Anika Zivojinovic '27

Junior year can be a very stressful, if not the most stressful, time in one's high school career. With schoolwork constantly piling up, focusing on the SAT, starting to look at colleges, and much more, one can often feel as if they can barely make time for a life outside of education.

Meanwhile, this year is also the most common time for teens to gain work experience. Going into a new school year, many of us begin to start working a job. While having a job can be helpful for some to develop expertise in a variety of fields, earning money, etc, it can also be unaccommodating to many others.

For me, I have a scarce amount of time in my day—adding in the big responsibility of a job would be impossible. I am constantly moving on from one thing to the next, rarely having free time. When

the school day ends I go to either volleyball or track practice, causing me to get home at around six o'clock the latest.

Once I am home I tend to have a heavy workload waiting. Completing all my homework, with the occasional addition of studying as well, usually takes me a couple of hours. All of these obligations leave me with no time to take on the responsibility of having a job. While my schedule is not the same as everyone's, there is still a great majority that deal with similar circumstances during the school year.

During a time as demanding as junior year, I believe that it is vital to focus on academics and school related activities, and while having a job gives one an opportunity to experience what it feels like to be a part of the real world, it requires devoting many extra hours.

Sometimes it feels as if

there is a pressure on me to apply for jobs but knowing how busy and how little time I have already without one just tells me how almost impossible it would be to get a job.

Although I have thought about only working on the weekend, I have realized that I already devote much of my time towards schoolwork and my sports during these two days, where I spend a lot of that time finishing assignments, researching and sometimes even touring colleges, participating in extracurricular activities.

Junior year is a time for me where I am heavily and solely focused on college prep and thinking about long term goals that I have. And again, while not everyone's situation is the same, I still believe during junior year students should prioritize their education over afterschool jobs.

The Amity Trident

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Watch the Amity Update, listen to announcements and check Instagram for details on our last Trident writers meeting of the year!



Artemis II Re-inspires Young Students

by Alex Chimid '27

If you aren't living under a rock, then you must've heard about the record-setting mission of Artemis II that launched on April 1. The Artemis II mission was a lunar fly-by mission, with four crew members setting the record as the farthest humans ever away from earth.

Humanity hasn't reached the moon since the Apollo missions back in the early 70's, with the Space Shuttle program running from 1981-2011. However, that wasn't the only record set by this



mission; Artemis II carried the first woman and the first African-American to ever

reach lunar orbit.

These recent achievements sparked back immense pride and inspiration to a generation of youth to dream bigger and farther than ever before. Being an astronaut is what many kids dream about, but the reality is that it's one of the toughest jobs to apply for. The astronauts of today are some of our most intelligent people, and the path they took to become one was one with strength and inspiration.

The crew consists of four astronauts; Commander Reid Wiseman, Pilot Victor Glover, Mission Specialist Jeremy Hansen, and Mission Specialist Christina Koch. Glover became the first person-of-color to reach lunar orbit, along with Christina Koch becoming the first woman to enter lunar orbit.

I personally want to spotlight Christina Koch as this isn't her first historical record she set in space. Koch was the one of the first astronauts to participate in an all-woman spacewalk back in 2019.

As this mission began to reach news headlines once again in 2026, the public also started to re-ignite their niche interests of space exploration. Social media had charted this mission to be the most popular topic for weeks, and this definitely reached millions of teens. I think that young people are the world's greatest symbol of aspiration.

Seeing the passion and motivation for hard work coming from people after this launch breaks all social and political barriers on Earth, displaying incredible achievement and showing that once again, humanity has done it.

During a podcast, Koch claimed that the day she met Sally Ride, the first American woman in space, her intense



Image origin: NASA
Artemis II's Orion spacecraft launching into orbit

emotions from the meeting became a formative memory. Now when she meets members of the public who are inspired by her achievements, she wants to do the same and "give back to them what she gave to me," said Koch in 2025.

If you're someone who indulges in social media

often, you could see comment sections of videos on the Artemis II mission filled with, "I dream to become an engineer" or "I will become a lawyer when I grow up" as examples of the inspiration this crew gave to our teenage generation; to not sell yourself short, and to dream big no matter the obstacles.

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Our Power, Our Planet

Community Celebrates Earth Day

by Jacob Klee '28
and Dan Yaari '28

Earth Day, celebrated nationally on April 22, focuses on repairing

Senior Ashwin Menon said, "My favorite part of the Earth Day fair was the many food trucks. It definitely helped bring the community together and made the fair more of a success."

our planet and protecting its natural beauty. Around the world, many celebrate with park clean-ups, fundraisers, and informationals. Begun in 1970, the day seeks to highlight environmental issues.

No matter what people choose to do on Earth Day, it is important to help in some way and continue celebrating to protect our planet.

On Saturday, April 25, Woodbridge held its annual Earth Day celebration on the Woodbridge Town Green. It is organized by the Woodbridge Ad Hoc Sustainability Committee. This event had EV car shows, informationals, and promoted many businesses such as food trucks.

When asked her favorite part of the Earth Day celebration at the library, Monica Chen '27 said, "My favorite part of Earth Day was seeing all the local vendors in the area and getting to talk with all of them. It was such a warming community-oriented experience, and I never knew how many different artisan shops and sellers we had in the area!"

The event has many food trucks and amazing fun and educational activities.

In addition to the Woodbridge Earth Day celebration, the Farm to Table initiative put on a school clean-up on Wednesday, April 22. This was an amazing event that helped clean up our campus. This Earth Day cleanup was for students to come help out around the campus and pick up any litter they could find. They split up into teams to cover different areas.

One group went to the pond by the main entrance, another went to the front parking lot, and others went to the back of the school. Altogether, groups collected over 70 pounds of trash around the high school campus, ultimately preserving and cleaning up our community.

Sophomore Frankie Morton was another of the many students who enjoyed the event. "It was a great experience, and it's nice to be able to make a difference for our school environment," she said.

Those who attended helped make our school campus cleaner and made a difference for the many plants and animals around the school.



Photo contributed by the Farm to Table initiative

Members of the Farm to Table Initiative during their school clean-up for Earth Day.

Freezing for a Purpose

Students, Staff, Community Come Together for a Penguin Plunge

by Kieran Dahya '27

Just before April Break, students and

staff took part in their own Penguin Plunge - right on campus.

This event was not just about confidently jumping into freezing water. It was about raising money for Amity's Unified Sports team and supporting Special Olympics Connecticut. Various clubs, sports teams, and other student organizations participated in

also raising money and supporting CT Special Olympics."

Teachers and staff joined the plunge as well, making the event even more fun to watch.

Kevin Gu '26 said, "It was fun to watch the participants plunge knowing it was supporting a great cause. I am very happy about the amount of support present, as students cheered loudly when they saw their teachers and friends plunge into the freezing waters."



Photo contributed by Special Olympics Connecticut

Amity's Unified Sports team which helped sponsor the Polar Plunge

this exciting event, promoting the school community. There was lots of energy, and people were excited to watch their friends take the plunge.

Amity Middle School in Orange and Amity Middle School in Bethany were also part of the event. Each had two representatives from their Unified Sports programs to join it. Many have commented that it was great to see the younger students involved and supporting the same cause.

Special Education teacher Wendy Carrafiello is the Unified Sports coach who coordinated the Penguin Plunge. After learning about the Plunge at a Unified Leadership Conference earlier this year, she realized how it could happen at Amity.

"Since Special Olympics took care of logistics (setting up the receptacle, filling it with water, securing first responders), we decided that Amity would easily be able to get students to participate and garner donations," she said. "Funds raised are split between CT Special Olympics and Amity Unified Sports. Amity Unified believed this would be a fun and valuable schoolwide activity bringing awareness to Amity's commitment to inclusion, while

The Woodbridge Volunteer Fire Department was there to help out and make sure that everyone stayed safe. Their support was an important part of the event.

Overall, the whole school was able to watch, with many students excited to go outside to see it in person.

Senior Samarth Rao agrees, stating, "I had such a blast hanging out with my friends and seeing people I knew represent Amity's organizations to support such a great cause."

Many were happy that everyone was able to be part of the experience, promoting school unity. Throughout the event, many students and teachers shared positive reactions, such as junior Gabe Levy, who said, "I enjoyed watching my friends jump into the cold water, and I thought the whole event was great."

Overall, the Penguin Plunge was a fun and successful experience. It brought the school together and helped raise money for Unified Sports. It is something that many people will remember.

According to Carrafiello, "It was a great success than we anticipated, and we hope it becomes an Amity tradition."

Seniors!

Scan the QR code to complete the form for your Senior Intention to be featured in the Trident's June issue.



A Look at Amity's Ivy Acceptances

by Aiza Amir '28 and Shaleigh Grogan '28

College decision time is when the years of dedication, extracurricular involvement, and personal growth come together, leading to reflection and reward. This year, a growing number of students have set their sights on some of the most competitive colleges in the country, including those in the Ivy League. This group of prestigious schools on the East Coast comprises Yale University, Harvard University, Dartmouth College, and several more.

For many of these students, choosing where to apply was more important than simply prestige. Michael Yaari '26, a Yale University commit planning to study physics, said, "I took up any chance I had to become a leader in the community. Combined with taking high-level classes in fields with which I wasn't familiar, my experiences expanded my scope of interests. As a stem major, classes like AP Art History really gave me a better perception on how to learn new things."

Other students focused on expanding their interests rather than solely setting their sights in Ivy League schools, ultimately leading to personal success.

Brown University commit Luke Cushing '26 had a different experience than Yaari. As an aspiring college cross country runner, his process differed slightly from most applicants.

When asked about his college goals in high school, he responded by stating, "I've worked really hard the past four years to push myself both athletically and academically to become the best student athlete I can be."



"I've challenged myself by taking an aggressive course load while still striving to compete and grow as a runner. I am very grateful to have been able to use athletics and academics as a pathway to study and run at Brown University," he added.

Additionally, the admissions process also proved to be both challenging and rewarding, as students balanced rigorous coursework alongside essays, applications, and deadlines.

Incoming Dartmouth College student Jacob Storeygard '26 described its application process as very unique. He said, "I'd describe the admissions process for Dartmouth as very unique because it requires a letter of recommendation from a friend in addition to the usual parts of the application."

Heading to Princeton University in the fall is Student Government president Tony Zhang. Though he has not yet chosen a major or course of study, he is excited for all Princeton will offer.

Photo contributed by Rohan Hebbar '27

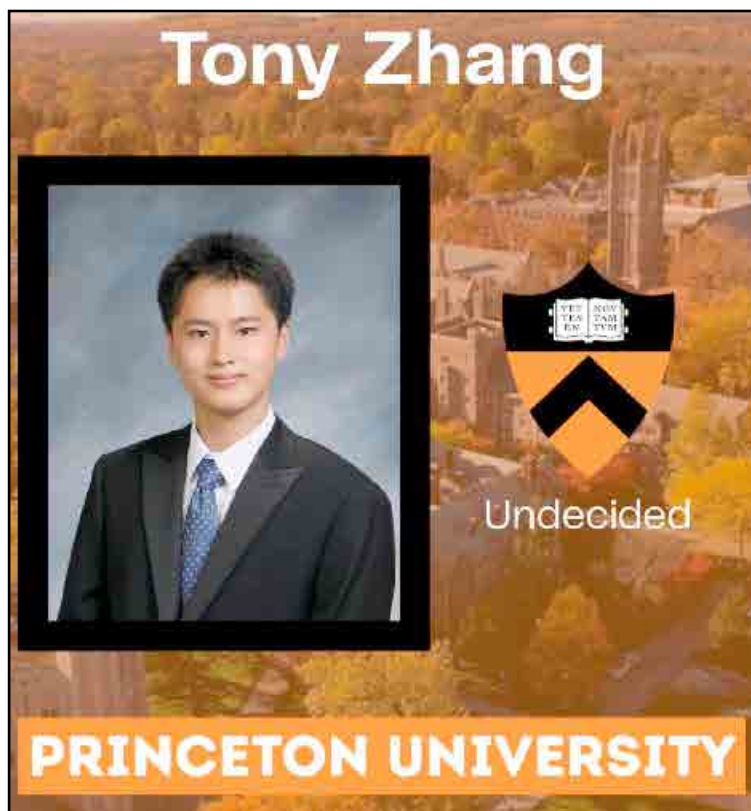


Photo contributed by Rohan Hebbar '27
Tony Zhang commits to Princeton University

"I'm looking forward to learning subjects that I didn't even know existed and to working with people smarter than I am," said Zhang.

Yaari, Cushing, Storeygard, and Zhang all demonstrate that there is more than one path to becoming an Ivy League student and what one needs to do is to work diligently to reach their goals.

As the end of the school year approaches, Amity looks forward to celebrating the senior class and all of their outstanding achievements. Many students did not have their sights on being admitted into an Ivy League school; rather, they pushed themselves to become their best version of themselves regarding academics, sports, character, and integrity to name a few, ultimately leading to a plethora of personal successes.

The effort and commitment shown by these students' and the Class of 2026 as a whole have already begun to serve as an inspiration to our school community. Congratulations to all Amity seniors!

From Stress into Success: A Guide to AP Exams

by Isabella Smernoff '27

Advanced Placement (AP) exams are coming - and fast!

On Monday, May 4th, AP exams will kick off with Biology and Latin, followed by Chemistry and United States Government and Politics the following day.

For many students, test-related anxiety and stress will reach peak levels. A chronic pressure to boost applications and secure college credit will make concentration exceedingly difficult for many. Luckily, several strategies exist for mitigating stress which comes with standardized testing. Whether you are taking one AP class or multiple, different methods can be used to reduce brain fog and stress.

Exercise like running, walking, or yoga releases nervous energy and improves sleep quality which will enhance memory and improve focus. Visit a fitness center or park to unwind in between study sessions. Another useful strategy is positive affirmations. To boost confidence and improve performance, replace the thought "I am going to fail" with "I have prepared and I am going to do my best."

Most importantly, prioritize sleep to strengthen cognitive function. It is recommended to get between 7-9 hours of sleep before an exam to activate recall.

When studying for Advanced Placement exams, it can be difficult to select the best study method. With limited time and extensive material to cover, study strategies can make a significant difference on test performance. The most reliable methods of studying include active recall, practicing under realistic testing conditions, and focusing on your weaker areas within a course.

Generally, a resource which is effective for AP classes is AP Classroom. There, practice exams and questions are tailored to each unit and have the most accurate representation of the material which will be presented on the test.

A popular resource across history classes offered is Heimler's History on YouTube. If you are taking the AP Government and Politics exam or AP United States History Exam, consider watching this channel to understand critical historical processes and perspectives.

Junior Mia Quoka states, "Heimler's History has gotten me through every unit of AP United States History by breaking down all the information into an easier to understand concept. I wouldn't be as successful in this class without his videos."

Use these study and stress management strategies to reach optimal performance on the upcoming AP exams or any formal assessment. Remember: one test grade does not define you - and good luck!



Photo contributed by Julia Nickle '27

Julia Nickle '27 and Adelina Ahmed '27 preparing for success on the AP Government Exam

Word Mash

by Olivia Cummings '26

Two clues are provided that lead to two specific words or phrases which can be combined phonically. The clues are in order of which phrase goes first.

Example

Clues: Small furry mammal + capital of the Netherlands

Answer: Hamsterdam

Batman arch nemesis + Muppet frog

11th US President + Spotted textile pattern

Necktie knotted with two loops + galactic empire fleet

The King of Pop + Northern Florida NFL team

Answer key will be provided along with more Word Mash in the June issue.

Film Students Capture the Beauty of Costa Rica

by Sophie Cohen '26

Over April break, a group of 11 students experienced the trip of a lifetime in Costa Rica. Those interested in photography, film, and art traveled to the country with the support of teachers Jackie Valenzuela and Jeremy Iverson.

Over the course of about a week, students had life changing and exciting experiences, including traveling to the Mistico Hanging Bridges, exploring Manuel Antonio National Park, and using all of these experiences to create art.

Senior Eliza Rathjens said, "I have never been on a more exciting, educational, and wonderful trip, I am so so grateful that I had the opportunity to travel with such an amazing group."

While creating memories and making new friends, students were immersed in the culture and lifestyle of the Costa Rican people, and had a good time trying all of the different dishes and learning about the history.

Josh Rosewater '26 said, "One highlight of my trip was having dancing lessons at dinner one night, it was different from all of our other events but such

a fun experience!"

Students did not just have fun on the beach and in the forest, they also made an adventure out of every moment they could, like the long bus rides with sing-alongs, games, and laughter all around.

Costa Rica contains six percent of the biodiversity in the world, and students were lucky enough to see and photograph a lot of the wildlife present, including sloths, poison dart frogs, and so much more.

Junior Evan Lenon, who focused on photography, said, "The opportunity to take pictures in an environment so different from the one I grew up in was amazing. My favorite part was the monkeys. I loved the monkeys, but the experience and ability to take photos of the wildlife and environment somewhere so different was just an amazing experience."

Overall, the trip was an incredible experience that all of the students were so grateful to be a part of. After months of planning, fundraising, and meetings, the trip was incredibly fulfilling. They are now all working on their projects, editing footage together to create a documentary, drawing and painting what they saw, and editing pictures, and cannot wait to share their finished work with the school community!



Photo contributed by Sophie Cohen '26

Students explore the Mistico Hanging Bridges

Spartan Prep Tulip Sale a Success

Spring has finally sprung, and Spartan Prep just wrapped up their flower sale. To keep their garden thriving, revenue from the tulips will help fund garden beds and filler plants for future flowers. As coordinator Leigh Summers said, "Who doesn't love a bouquet to brighten up a space?" Spartan Prep thanks everyone who purchased tulips for their help and support.



Photo contributed by Leigh Summers

Tulips add a pop of color on campus

Good luck to all seniors as they leave for UELP!

The Inside Scoop of Prom '26

by Teesha Godawat '27

It's that time of year again where everyone's scrambling for the perfect dresses and suits, flowers, ties, and shoes. Prom is just around the corner; some call it one of the most magical nights of the school year. Whether you've been "promposed" to or just going with friends, make prom night one that's memorable and special!

Junior Prom is taking place on Friday May 8th from 7-11 pm at the Trumbull Marriott which is located at 180 Hawley Lane in Trumbull

Senior prom will be held on May 29th from 7-11 pm at the Omni Hotel which is located at 155 Temple Street in New Haven.

All students must arrive by 7:30 pm latest. Juniors must stay till 10 pm, and seniors till 10:30 pm; students may not leave earlier.

The junior and senior student government class boards play a large role in the execution of prom. They are tasked with making sure fundraisers are successfully organized to fund prom and planning the details of the event.

Junior Class President Eve Marin said, "The best fundraiser that helped to raise the most money was probably the popcorn fundraiser. That was really effective in raising large amounts of money fast.

"We are looking forward to prom this year and we have worked with Mr. Mezzo [class adviser] to make it as memorable as possible!" Marin added.

With this occurring as one of their final high school

events, seniors express similar excitement. Senior class president Vivianna Pfannebecker said, "We are excited for prom, and this year we are going for a classic theme and will be having features like a candy bar and a photo booth!"

Outfits are the highlight of the night. From bright, floral, and fun dresses to shiny new suits, the variety is a spectacular part of the night. Since variety is important, and no one wants the same dress, there is a Facebook group where people can post their dresses.

This is in order to make sure no other attendee ends up buying the same dress as someone else. This is a common, effective system among many schools that's been in place for many years. The latest trends being seen are the mermaid style dress, corsets, and lots of bold colors.

In terms of suits and tuxedos, if you plan on wearing a tie with them, make sure you know how to tie one!

To tie a standard necktie in the "Four-in-Hand" necktie knot, start by placing the tie around your neck with the wide end on the right hand

side and keep its end lower than the narrow end. Cross the wide end over the narrow end and bring it back underneath (like a loop around). Then, cross the wide end over the narrow end again, but this time, bring it up under the chin. After this, put the wide end through the loop created by the

crosses previously made. Finally, tighten and straighten the tie to your liking. You're all done! Sounds complicated in words, but take out a tie and try it on your own!

For those going with a date, corsages and boutonnieres are very common on an occasion like prom. Corsages are a small bouquet of flowers typically worn by women on their wrist or pinned to clothing. Boutonnieres are also a small bouquet of flowers typically worn on the left lapel of a suit

or tuxedo. Wondering where to buy them?

Those interested can purchase these items from the Divine Orchid Florists in Hamden. They offer pickup and delivery to Orange, Woodbridge, and Bethany. To see if they offer delivery to other locations, check out their website.

Another option is Merino's Flowers and Fruit Baskets located in West Haven. Customers can call to order online or go in person. These are only two options, but there are plenty of florists around our community.

Don't forget to purchase tickets for you and any guests you may be bringing! Tickets for junior

prom were on sale till April 20th, and tickets for senior prom close on May 1st.

The payments are available in MySchoolBucks once the form is filled out in a parent's or guardian's PowerSchool account.



Photo contributed by <https://www.omnihotels>

The Grand Ballroom at the Omni Hotel where Senior Prom will be held.



Photo contributed by <https://www.marriott>

The junior prom will take place at Trumbull Marriott

The Intersection and Universality of Music and Art

by Harper Binford '27

Music and visual art may be two very different expressions of human creativity, but both share universal languages that are interwoven into our culture, identity, being, and everyday lives. Music and art can touch hearts and stimulate minds; they can be a form of escapism for some. While both may be different in some ways, they find a way to inspire and enhance each other.

Music is the arrangement of sound to create a combination of form, melody, harmony, and other aspects. Music is considered to be a cultural universe that is present in all human societies. It is and will always be considered a form

of art. Sometimes “art” isn’t just the paint on a canvas or the sketch on a piece of paper. Art is the expression of human creativity, which can be presented in a million different forms.

For centuries, music has been used to tell stories and evoke feelings that words alone cannot. Plato said, “Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.”

Music unites communities and individuals. It incites emotions and invokes the essence of imagination. When we listen to music, we take it in through a visual artistic lens. For example, when we listen to our favorite song, we hear not only the melody but the lyrics, which can be the most impactful part of

any song. By hearing those specific lyrics from a song, we can visualize in our minds our own vision behind the meaning, and we may also visualize the album cover of it or a clip from the music video that we remember. Music forces us to use our imagination and creativity to produce these things, making it its own form of art.

Throughout history, art has been what humans have used to communicate or convey emotions and feelings towards something. Musicians may find inspiration in art like drawings, paintings, and sculptures, while artists may find their inspiration in music. This is what closely links the two together.

When you go to an art museum, you may find yourself totally immersed in a

specific painting that you feel connected to or drawn to. Just like in music, you may find yourself drawn to listening to a specific song or artist because of the immersive experience that artist evokes in music.

Many artists incorporate music into their work to make the experience more immersive or engaging, and many musicians use art for their album covers and music videos to also give the audience that same immersive and engaging experience.

The relationship between art and music is undeniable. Next time you’re

staring at a piece of art while listening to a song, allow the melody and visual to enrich your perception of art. Let it captivate you.

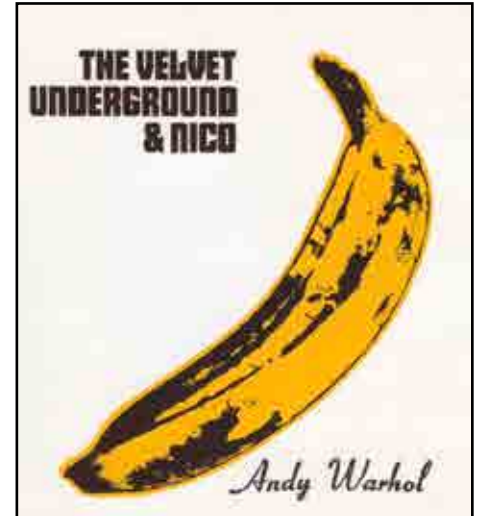


Image contributed by “Discogs”
“The Velvet Underground & Nico” album cover art

Hard Work Pays Off for Orchestra Performers

by Julian Vanderberg '29

The curtains fall on the Amity Strings Orchestra during their spring concert. On April 28th, the school had its spring concert for the Strings Orchestra, where the students showed the effort that they put in during these past months. There was an amazing audience present to support the musicians, and the musicians sure did put on quite the show.

The concert started with a group of seven cellists playing “Carmen Suite for Cello Quartet” by George Bizet. Next, the Concert Orchestra class played their piece “Fire in the Forge” by Ted Allen. Then, the Symphony and Chamber classes played “Russian and Ludmilla Overture” by Mikhail Glinka. Afterward, the whole orchestra came together to play “Moonlight Flight” by Brian Balmages, “Jump in the Line” by Harry Belafonte, and then ended it off with “Mars, Bringer of War” by Gustav Holst.

Lisa Serio, the orchestra director at both the high school and middle school, commented on why she chose these pieces. “It’s a wide variety of types of music and it lets each class experiment with differ-

ent types of music.”

She said, “Choosing this selection was hard because it’s difficult to balance what the kids want to play and giving them things that will challenge them. The preparation work is hard; I have to make programs, schedule everything, make sure that the stage and bake sale are set up, and most importantly, make sure that the kids are ready to perform.”

However, Serio also added, “The work is hard, but it pays off to see everything come together on stage when the kids are performing. The concert running so smoothly couldn’t have been done without all their effort.”

The musicians themselves also put in much work during the concert. It was very clear that the people on stage were giving it their all.

Nilay Parmar '29, the concert master for the Concert Orchestra class, said, “My favorite part of being in the orchestra is being able to play interesting pieces with my friends.”

Everyone involved, from the students to the organizers to even the audience, helped make this concert amazing, and we can’t wait for the next one. Great job, Strings Orchestra!



Photo contributed by Lisa Serio
Amity Strings Orchestra pictured in their past winter concert

musicFEST: It’s More than a Concert

by Caroline Nichols '27

As the end of the school year approaches, so do our annual traditions. Prom, the musical, and state tournaments come to mind, but one event to look out for is musicFEST. Showcasing Amity’s band, jazz band, choir, acappella group, and other solo and group acts, the concert is sure to have something for everyone.

With a repertoire spanning from well-known classics to modern smash hits, musicFEST isn’t just a concert; it’s a celebration of music.

Since the end of midterm exams, all groups have spent countless

of the ensemble work together with teacher and director Philip Dolan to make sure they sound their best.

Expanding beyond just Amity’s main choir and band ensembles, the event encompasses all of the



Photo contributed by Philip Dolan

The Choir performs at musicFEST

school’s musical talent by allowing solo acts to audition and perform. MusicFEST doesn’t just break the barriers of a traditional school recital; it smashes them.

Chen also said, “It acknowledges individual musicians and involves multiple ensembles and is a great way to acknowledge individuality”

“musicFEST madness” also reaches into the choir, which will be performing a range of songs across several genres, including Broadway tracks, “Dancing Queen,” and “Somebody to Love.”

Choir member Sofia Garritano-Wilkinson '28 said, “It’s also time to celebrate spring, so we try to pick songs that are super fun.”

She also noted that musicFEST is a celebration of four long months of hard work, making it both rewarding and fun for the members of the choir.

All in all, this musicFEST is bound to be an exciting event filled to the brim with music and talent. The band, choir, and all other groups invite you to musicFEST on May 7th, a night guaranteed to be not only an opportunity to celebrate Amity’s talented musicians, but a time to celebrate music as a whole.



Photo contributed by Philip Dolan

The Band pictured performs at musicFEST

hours in preparation for the event, laboring to ensure that their product is the best out there. With more time to prepare as compared to winter and fall concerts, the pieces are sure to be more complex, requiring students to rise to the challenges of complicated rhythms, elevated tempos, and tricky key signatures.

When asked about the dedication, Monica Chen, a junior in the Amity band, responded, “I dedicate myself to focusing in class and practicing when I need to, as well as working on parts I struggle with at home.”

Chen also highlighted communication amongst the band, noting how she and the rest of the members

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The Special Olympics organization provides statewide health screenings, education and fitness events to help its athletes stay active, and promotes new friendships and healthy lives.

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This surpassed the initial \$5,000 goal. Over 40 clubs, sports teams, and individuals created fundraising initiatives to support the good cause. Student Government took the top spot, raising \$1,335, and Amity Unified Sports came in close second at \$1,227 raised.

Representatives from each fundraising group bravely took the icy plunge during the windy morning. Plungers consisted of students, faculty, and administrators. Students and faculty were given the opportunity to either watch the plunge occur outside by the football field or watch the live stream broadcasted to Spartan Seminar classrooms.

The memorable event generated excitement throughout the school as Amity expressed its commitment to inclusion within the community.

Jackie Martin ‘28, who watched the event outside, stated, “It was a great experience to see the school so excited and uplifting each other.”

Other students not physically present at the Plunge could still enjoy the event from Spartan Seminar. After a short video/slideshow about Unified Sports and the Penguin Plunge, teachers accessed a live video link from the Penguin

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Diana Di-Gangi, a physical education teacher, was one of the faculty members who braved the plunge. She reflected on her experience, saying, “Jumping in for a good cause was a lot of fun, but being this cold was not.”

Business teacher and girls golf coach Michael Cofrancesco also took a plunge and later said, “It was a very fun and well-run event for a great cause. I tried to think of something golf related for my plunge and came up with the swing and fall. Many students commented that it was very funny.”

A big shout-out to Special Olympics CT and Amity Unified Sports



Photo contributed by Amity PE Instagram

Teacher Nora Crann takes the Penguin Plunge on April 8.

for all the hard work they put into setting up such an amazing event.

The Penguin Plunge could not have been such a success without the community’s efforts to raise funds to empower its students.

Career Day Opens New Opportunities for Sophomores

by Alissa Yang ‘28

March 27th marked Career Day for the Sophomore Class at Amity. Career Day provided the students with a diverse selection of jobs to explore and learn more about. With more than twenty local guest speakers, some being Amity alumni or parents, they spoke to students about their professions and the path they took to reach their current position.

This year, among these guest speakers, there were a variety of occupations represented, including accountants, engineers, firefighters,



Photo contributed by Lynn Cocco

Career Day presenters

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Clubs, classes, and sometimes even outside vendors set up tables around the school’s middle gym, back entrance and black room with activities for the fifth graders to explore.

Angelo Amato, Science Department Chair, and Jessica Zamachaj, Visual and Performing Arts Department Chair, are both in charge of

organizing the event and helping to ensure the day runs smoothly.

Prior to the event, they put out a list to the Amity staff in order to see who is interested in setting up a table and receive a variety of responses from clubs such as Marine Bio Club, the broadcast journalism class or the Latin National Honor Society.

The Science Research Program advanced students are responsible for creating goodie bags for the fifth graders to take with them throughout the day.

Along with other fidgets and trinkets, the goodie bags include little notebooks and pens for the students to write down what they find interesting.

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