

# THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXII-No.8

Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

May 5, 2017

## SSLP Exposes Seniors to Career Paths

by Rosie Du '19

As the school year comes to a close, many seniors are taking part in the Senior Service Learning Program (SSLP) for the last four weeks of school. SSLP is an opportunity for seniors to explore possible career paths at local companies and organizations.

Himay Dharani, a participating senior, said, "I will be interning at Haskins Laboratory at Yale, and I'm learning about the near infrared system, a brain imaging method."

Dharani also said that he will be learning about the research currently done at Haskins, which includes dyslexia, a field he is interested in.

"I wanted to expose myself to as many research labs and career options as possible because I've worked

in Biology and Chemistry labs already," he said.

Senior Aviva Green said, "I am excited to find new ways of learning and to have more independence. I wanted to focus on learning more about one of my passions, so I am going to Amity Middle School Bethany to work with the band teacher, Mr. Fragione."

Benson Rodrigues is also interning at the Bethany middle school and said, "I want to be a science teacher, so I'm interning at the Bethany middle school with an 8th grade science teacher to see what it's like."

This year, seniors who are participating in SSLP are required to give a presentation when they finish their programs. This will take place on the Amity campus and will be attended by many mentors as well.

SSLP starts on Monday, May 15.

## LGBTQ Supporters Become "Silent" to Combat Bullying

by Stefanie DelVecchio '17 and Matt Perrotti '17

Amity Regional High School participated in the National Day of Silence on Friday, April 21.

Organized by PLAHD (People Leading against Homophobic Discrimination), this day brings awareness to the silencing effects of anti-LGBTQ name-calling, bullying, and harassment.

High school, middle school, and elementary school students all around the nation had the choice to remain silent throughout the day.

According to Tasia Kimball, the faculty adviser of PLAHD at Amity, over 200 students registered to participate.

Amity Junior Sofia Rodriguez said, "I know that [the

day of silence] is in honor of every person that identifies as something other than male, female, or straight and have had to keep silent their whole lives."

On Friday, students participating in the National Day of Silence abstained from

the question, "What are you going to do to end the silence?"

Anatomy teacher Patricia Nevolis said, "It is a day where all students and teachers can show support for the LGBTQ community. Its purpose is to show support and



The rock outside the entrance of the high school is painted for the Day of Silence.

to walk in some-

Continued on page 2

## CAPT Science Continues

by Neha Sudhir '19

In the weeks before spring vacation, sophomores of Amity Regional High School took the science portion of the CAPT (Connecticut Academic Performance Test). The test involved two sessions of approximately thirty questions.

Until several years ago, CAPT was the standard assessment administered to students in the tenth grade. Students were assessed in the content areas of reading, mathematics, science, and writing.

Now, students only take the CAPT Science. Like any other standardized test, the reports of individual student achievement in comparison to the performance standards in each content areas are provided to school districts and guardians of each student.

According to the Connecticut State Department of Education, the CAPT is designed to provide information that is used for many purposes.

These include application and integration of skills in real world context and promoting better instruction by highlighting strengths and weak-

ness of the student, school, or district. It is also meant to provide a greater measure of accountability for Connecticut's high school level educational systems. However, this is the last year that the CAPT Science test will be administered at Amity.

According to Principal Anna Mahon in a recent PTSA meeting, the class of 2020 is currently not scheduled to take a standardized science test next year. The class of 2021 will take an exam that has yet to be decided.

Preparation for the exam began in January. In class, students did several lab experiments and took CAPT-like quizzes to gain an understanding for the type of experiments on the test.

Additionally, to prepare at home, students were assigned 18 topics on Study Island to review their last few years of science education.

Standardized tests are becoming increasingly unpopular among parents, students, and teachers alike.

Freshmen students, who do not have to take a test next year, have expressed excitement about the turn of events, and they hope that there are fewer standardized tests in the future.

## College Fair Enlightens Students

by Howard Ding '18

The annual College Fair took place on Monday, April 3 from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. in the Amity High School Gymnasium.

At this event, which was free and open to the public, about 120 colleges and institutions provided information about themselves in order for prospective applicants to figure out if that place would accommodate their individual needs.

Some institutions who were present at the fair were Yale, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), University of Connecticut (UConn), and University of Bridgeport.

In preparation for the fair, some students brought a notepad and pen to write down aspects of different institutions that did not or did suit them.

Not many students came to the fair with a set college or institution in mind, but instead with questions to help narrow

down which institution they liked and which ones they did not. Examples of questions asked included:

Do you have this major at your college?

What makes your school stand out?

What is an example of a campus tradition?

Does your school have a certain sport?

What division do they play in?

What grades would I need to attend this school?

These questions helped students figure out the type of environment at the school and how well they would fit in with the students and academics.

During the fair, applicants were able to expand their knowledge of different colleges and institutions.

Jack Balocca, an Amity student who attended the fair, said, "It was a great enriching experience in which I found the information to be substantial and compelling."



Admissions officers set up booths for College Fair.

Photo from the Amity Twitter account.

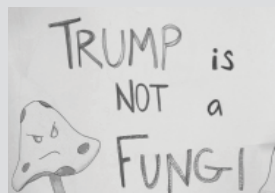
IN THIS  
ISSUE



Thai Stories  
Features, 5



Prom  
Centerspread, 6-7



March for Science  
Arts, 8



Lacrosse  
Sports, 11



# Youth Survey Results Presented

by Kate Yuan ‘19

The results of the Amity Youth Survey on Risky Behaviors were presented to parents in the John J. Brady Center on Tuesday April 18.

This presentation was given by superintendent Dr. Charles Dumais. He was accompanied by Pam Mautte, Director of Alliance for Prevention and Wellness, and Joni Nordstrom, Director of Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge Drug/Alcohol Action Committee. The entire Amity community was invited to come and learn the results.

The Amity Youth Survey on Risky Behaviors was given to all students in 7th, 9th, and 11th grade in December. Included in the survey were several different questions about personal health and wellness, school climate, drug and alcohol use, and other topics. The purpose of this survey was to gauge students’ well-being as well to compare the behavior of Amity students with those across the state of Connecticut in communities nearby

with similar populations and demographics.

Dr. Dumais said, “To understand the kids better is our philosophy. We want to understand these kids better.”

The results of the survey not only help the district in doing just that, but also qualified Amity for state funding to implement improvements for any issues found in the survey.

In general, Amity tested similarly with other students in the state of Connecticut regarding substance use. Dr. Dumais heavily emphasized that even just one kid with a drug problem or just one kid with an alcohol problem is too many when the goal for this district is to create the safest environment possible for the students. Administering and analyzing results of the surveys are difficult in seeing which results are reliable or how many of them are significant. This is why an epidemiologist was used to comb through the results to find data that could be used.

The largest use of substance came from alcohol and

marijuana. Out of the 11th graders, 43.5% reported use of alcohol in their lifetime and 26.3% reported use of marijuana in their lifetime. These numbers were both similar to the comparative results of other communities with comparative alcohol use in 11th grade at 40.5%, and comparative marijuana use in 11th grade at 27.0%.

With the results gathered and analyzed, the next step is deciding what action to take to improve these results and create the safest environment possible.

Mautte said, “National Prevention Week is May 15-19, and each day there’s a different substance that will be shared with information on the Alliance for Prevention and Wellness website.”

The goal is to educate the students so that they can make the most educated and safe decisions possible.

The results from the survey were helpful in finding what specific areas should be focused on to create a sound environment for every single student.



## Parent University

# LGBTQ Supporters Become “Silent”

*Continued from page 1*

one else’s shoes.”

She also mentioned that the students participating in the day do not disrupt her class plans.

“It doesn’t affect my classes too much,” Nevolis said. I don’t force students to participate so it doesn’t affect me when [students] chose not to speak on this day.”

Christina Allen, an English teacher, said, “I feel that a lot of students are silenced regularly and the Day of Silence helps draw attention to that.”

Allen has been a teacher at Amity for 13 years and said the National Day of Silence has been here at Amity for as long as she has.

The participation, according to what she has noticed, seems to have remained fairly consistent through the years,

but the amount of students participating from class to class varies.

“From what I have observed here at Amity, the staff is really supportive of all the students,” Allen said.

She felt that the staff is very interested in the well-being of the students and that they respect the students’ decisions to participate.

Ryan Pethigal, a senior at Amity, said, “I support the principle, but I don’t think that enough people participate and I don’t think it’s effective.”

Pethigal feels that increased participation from the student body would help the cause in a very positive way.

He said that asking students to remain silent for a day is no easy task which is why he feels the support and participation is sometimes

limited.

Senior Saniyah Dar participated in the Day of Silence and said, “I am proud to stand up for the LGBTQ community.”

Students at Amity were shown a video the day before the National Day of Silence to explain what the day was about.

The video included members of the LGBTQ community and the ways that they have been forced to remain silent through their lives.

The National Day of Silence was organized by a group of students from the University of Virginia in 1996.

Over the years, thousands of students around the country have registered to participate in the event through the organization GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network).

# Amity’s Board of Education April Monthly Meeting Recap

by Ananya Kachru ‘18

The Amity Region #5 Board of Education has been meeting for extended hours in recent months to designate allocations for the 2017-18 school year budget. Budgeting is a task that is quite difficult, but also not given enough recognition for the detailed process necessary to approve a budget for town referendum.

As a regional district, Amity’s budgeting becomes slightly more complicated because it must be approved by all three towns’ financial boards and a majority of registered voters.

Amity Region #5 receives funding from the State of Connecticut as well, but with the Governor’s budget being tensely debated and not yet finalized - released in the summer of 2017 - it is essential for the Board of Education to pass a budget that can handle the three schools’ expenses and not burden the three towns.

On April 3rd, the Board of Education approved a budget for \$48,439,163 gross, which is a 1.26% increase over the previous year.

The budget did not appease everyone impacted. The schools may have liked a larger percentage increase and the financial committees

of particular towns may have liked a smaller percentage increase. Yet, the 1.26% increase, suggested by Superintendent Charles Dumais, was approved for referendum. Registered voters in all three member towns (Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge) have the opportunity to determine whether or not they feel as if this budget is fit for the upcoming school year.

Separate from the Amity Budget, the Board of Education recently set the graduation date for seniors as June 14th, which also happens to be the last day of school for all students.

Other important Board of Education discussions have pertained to school climate, health of students, student performance on standardized testing, and more.

Anyone interested in coming to an Amity Board of Education meeting can attend the next one on Monday, May 8th at 6:30pm in the District Presentation Room.



Board of Education Meeting

# Amity Students Prepare for AP’s

by Howard Ding ‘18

Starting on Monday, May 1st and ending two weeks later, Amity students will be taking AP (Advanced Placement), exams. These are college level exams given to high school students after they learn college level curriculum in an honors course.

Graded on a 1-5 scale, it is possible for students to earn college credit with a score of 3 or higher.

Amity offers over 20 AP courses ranging from Psychology to Spanish and Environmental Science. Starting in sophomore year, students can take AP classes if they choose to, but most AP classes are reserved for the upperclassmen.

Since APs are equivalent to the Honors level at Amity, deciding to take one is no small task. The extra workload that an AP class involves may be daunting to many, but for some, they welcome the challenge for various reasons.

AP Government student Nitya Bhattarai ‘18 says, “I chose to take AP classes because I wanted to push myself out of my comfort zone and take on a big challenge.”

Though many students likewise want to push themselves and take on the chal-

lenge of a college level class, some take it since they enjoy the topic.

This is the case for AP Literature student Teddy Criscuolo ‘18, who said, “I decided to take AP Lit because it was the highest level class in a subject I enjoy.”

Similarly, for AP student Christina Lee ‘18, “APs are an opportunity to learn more deeply about various subjects.”

According to Criscuolo, getting college credit sounds great, but studying for APs is no easy task. By keeping up with studying little by little, students can make it easier as the exam approaches.

Bhattarai said, “I typically find small chunks of time in my day, such as my bus ride to school, and read my notes, textbook, or review book.”

As the exams loom ahead, the last bits of reviewing take place as well. Criscuolo explained that he is “doing more and more [studying] as the exams approach.”

Various methods and techniques exist when studying for the exams.

Lee said, “I typically re-write notes for each chapter and go over the review book. And If I’m having trouble in a specific concept, I ask my teachers for help or watch videos online.”



# Know Your Worth: An Answer for Existential Dread

by Christopher Fraser '17

Nike-esque tagline aside, the sociological theory of functionalism states that each and every one of us has an optimal societal role. As an aid, think of our school, state, or even world as a gear in a greater machine. Each individual would then occupy the role of a single cog in that gear. These roles are spread out evenly throughout society to those who can fulfill them most efficiently. (For example, women and children who, generally speaking, do not have as much developed red muscle tissue, and thus would not be stuck into a labor-intensive role.) As a soon-departing senior, this message struck a chord in me, and I would like to explore why it did so.

Throughout my high school career, I have been a bit of a “jack of all trades” for the theater program. I have been a member of the stage crew for smaller productions, and an usher and house manager for the spring musicals. Often, especially as an usher, it became extremely evident to me at the time that I was somehow insignificant. During a conversation with a stage crew member, this individual said something along the lines of “You know what, Chris? If I wasn’t there, that barrel would not be on its mark. That’s my barrel.”

As “just a doorstopper

with a face,” I took this conversation quite well. In fact, it turned my outlook around for the remainder of my high school career. At the very beginning of each spring musical, I made sure to dedicate extra effort in the introductory speeches I gave to the ushers. My aim, as the house manager, would be to boost morale and foster what little sense of community I could. Along the way, I acknowledged the challenge of standing for fifteen hours over a two week period in addition to other potentially demoralizing factors such as the previously referenced “just a doorstop with a face” problem.

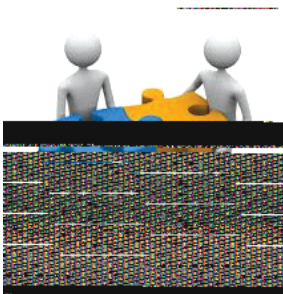
Once the ushers and I teamed up to learn each other’s strengths and weaknesses, we could then play off of one another and create the best theater experience both for us and ultimately the patrons of our show.

If that meant spending quality time with someone facing the “just a doorstop with a face” quandary, then that’s exactly what I would do. Because if someone, for instance, signs up to be an usher and is fairly shy, but a fast learner, I would task them with learning the layout of our theater and escorting the audience to their seats. And for the individuals who are on the opposite side of that same spectrum, who may be entirely out-going but are a bit anxious about learning the layout of the theater in time to seat the patrons with

ease, I would task them with handing out programs, getting to know the audience, and saying “Welcome to the John J. Brady Center! Enjoy the show!”

Even with this small sample size, diversity of character is important and must be promoted. Each one of our thirteen “teammates,” if you will, needed to be there in order for our unit of ushers to run like a well-oiled machine. Once we perform well, we then join the greater picture among the cast and crew in the house. When that runs well, it is a beautiful, awe-inspiring thing. However, in order for us to reach this highly productive, harmonious and gratifying state, there must be four individuals who open the doors for the fun to commence.

So, if you are ever lacking a greater purpose in your life, I implore you to look inward. Decontextualizing a personal “just a doorstop with a face” situation may be exactly what you need. When getting into the seemingly meaningless minutia of life, you might want to bring down the bar of something that you deem “purposeful.” Analyze the communities of which you are a member and your role among them.



# The Secret to Success in High School

by James He '17

As NBA Hall of Famer Isaiah Thomas iterates, “The secret to basketball is that it’s not about basketball.” Little did I know that my fifth-grade self had uncannily stumbled upon a momentous quotation that would gradually mold my future perspective. Confined within the depths of The Big Book of Basketball: The NBA According to the Sports Guy by Bill Simmons, this quotation was simply indecipherable for my naive self, and I quickly subdued it into the inner depths of my Freudian subconscious. But as I lounged on my couch binge-watching the NBA playoffs, I had an epiphany.

Basketball incorporates a plethora of different skills: dribbling, passing, layups, jump shooting, speed, defending... the list extends a number of pages. But if you define basketball by these components and relentlessly strive towards mastery in each individual attribute, you essentially become an individual performing rehearsed tricks with a spherical brown ball, and the highly-sought secret to basketball becomes ever more elusive.

Michael Jordan didn’t earn his status as the greatest basketball player of all time by dominating the game in

as many aspects as he could; he adopted a regime of competitive spirit, hard work, and pure heart whenever confronted by failure, and toiled his way past every obstacle. His legendary performances didn’t arise from his unparalleled talent and sheer supremacy with the basketball; when more skilled rivals rose to challenge his greatness, he called upon his willpower, drive for success, and devotion to his teammates to transcend past them. Unlike other players, Michael Jordan understood that basketball is constantly evolving. While the crossover, 3-point line, and pick-and-roll will always exist as staples of the game, the players pulling the tricks are inherently different from everyone else. Instead of chasing the trades of basketball, Jordan focused on his own passions, and allowed the game to come to him.

Now approaching the end of my senior year, Thomas’s message and Jordan’s nature reside at the heart of my secret to high school: it’s not about school; it’s about you. Every class has its curriculum, every club has a specific focus, and every lecture has its lesson, but it’s up to you to find each and make it your curriculum, your focus, and your lesson. Now, it’s your time to formulate your own secret.

# THE TRIDENT

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### CENTER SPREAD

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### FACULTY ADVISOR

Emily Clark

## CORRECTIONS

In the April issue, the Opinion piece entitled “Senior Slide” and credited to Suvasini Balaji was written by Julia Nadelmann.

Also, that same piece was replicated under the headline “Stressed? See a Movie Alone” written by Sarah Saxe. Sarah’s actual piece is published on page 4 of the May issue.

For any corrections or tips, please email  
amitytridentnewspaper@gmail.com.

To sign up to write or take photographs for the Trident, contact the Editors-in-Chief, Mrs. Clark, or email  
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# The 2018 Governors Race Begins

by Ryan Anastasio ‘20

On April 13th, Connecticut Governor Dannel “Dan” Malloy announced that he would not be seeking a third term as Governor in 2018. While it was expected that he would not run for a third term, the announcement came as a surprise because of how early it came. The unpopular Governor would have faced a tough election. It was speculated a fellow Democrat could have run against him in the primary.

In his speech, Malloy stood alongside his wife Cathy and Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman. Malloy said that he will now “use all of my political capital from now through the end of 2018—to continue implementing my administration’s vision for a more sustainable and vibrant Connecticut economy.” He can focus solely on issues for Connecticut families and not worry about winning a campaign. Malloy finished with the announcement saying, “Serving as Connecticut’s 88th Governor is the honor of my lifetime, second only to being a father and a husband. It will continue to be an honor as I work hard—as hard as ever—for the remainder of this term.”

Governor Malloy has been one of the least liked governors in the country and a recent Morning Consult

poll ranked him as the third worst governor in the country, despite being the head of the Democratic Governors Association.

The fact of the matter is that Dan Malloy could not win a third term. I believe Governor Malloy would have wanted to run a third term, but he just did not have support from the people or even from those within his own party. He consistently has a low approval rating which has even sunk into the teens and twenties at times.

His tenure will likely be judged on his inability to drive businesses into the state and his devastating tax increases. Under his administration, General Electric, as well as many other companies, have left Connecticut because of tax increases and Malloy’s inability to create a business friendly environment. On the other hand, Malloy will be remembered for handling winter storms and hurricanes as well as the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting well.

Now that Governor Malloy is not seeking re-election in 2018, who will succeed him?

Few candidates have announced, but many more are expected to. On the Democratic side, the only candidate thus far is Jacey Wyatt, a transgender businesswoman and a former model. Other potential candidates at the

moment include Bridgeport Mayor Joe Ganim, State Senator Ted Kennedy Jr, Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman, and Comptroller Kevin Lembo.

On the Republican side, Shelton Mayor Mark Lauretti, State Representative Prasad Srinivasan, West Hartford Councilman Joe Visconti, and Coventry Selectman Micah Welintukonis are the declared candidates. Other potential candidates on the Republican side include House Minority Leader Themis Klarides, State Senator Tony Hwang, and Trumbull First Selectman Tim Herbst.

Some, such as Democratic Middletown governor Dan Drew and Republican Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton, have formed exploratory committees which aim to determine if a candidate should run for office.

I reached out to Minority Leader Klarides to see if she was interested in a run for Governor. She informed me that she is working on helping to improve schools and to create more jobs. She then said that “any consideration of other possible political runs for office will have to come after we have dealt with the issues we have right now.”

This is going to be a very interesting next year and a half and any side has the chance to take over the state’s top office.

# Stressed? See a Movie Alone

by Sarah Saxe ‘17

Going to the movies is akin to getting lost in a fantastical land all in a neatly packed two hour block. It’s easy to become so immersed that you forget about the sticky soda stain your arm just brushed up against or the crying baby three rows down. It’s an adventure that has become a destination for groups of friends and couples. Diving into a deep discussion about the unanswered cliffhangers and the cast’s performance after the show are undoubtedly enjoyable experiences to have with friends, but going alone has its own perks as well. For one, you can release all your worries and concern that your companions won’t appreciate your pick, won’t stop whispering in your ear, or will hog the popcorn. Unfortunately, attending a film solo is often viewed as pathetic or antisocial. As someone who has flown solo to my nearest cinema, I can promise it’s not as unpleasant as one might expect.

The first time I went to see a movie alone was last December. It was the movie Trolls. The horrific compilation of slapstick humor, clichéd storylines, and colorfully animated renditions of classic songs was my first choice of distraction as I impatiently waited to hear back from the college of my dreams.

My afternoon trip to the North Haven Cinemark did, admittedly, start off a bit

bumpy. After approaching the ticket counter, I felt a little embarrassed asking the confused employee for just one ticket to the next showing of Trolls. The feeling did not go away after I was asked to repeat my apparently unusual request. This minute of discomfort, however, was followed by nothing but a smooth finish to my trip. With a blanket in tow (and some contraband hidden inside), I found the theater and settled in to the oversized leather recliner I’ve grown to love. Before I knew it, the movie ended; it was 5:20, and I was ready to check my college decision.

Going to the movies alone gave me the privacy and space I desperately needed during the stressful hours leading up to the 5 pm decision release. I was guiltlessly distracted and lost in a seemingly carefree world separate from applications, GPA, and overwhelmingly unfavorable admission statistics. The great thing about the theater is while I was independent and free, I didn’t feel isolated or lonely.

I strongly urge anyone who needs space and time alone to do what I did. Venture out by yourself whether you are waiting on a college decision, the posting of a cast list of a local production, or just feeling overwhelmed. If movies aren’t your thing, try take a walk, or go on a spontaneous shopping spree around Target. This time alone should be a breath of relaxation that I’m sure all of us can use at some point in our hectic lives.

## Hartford Convention Center: Be Responsible for Food Poisoning

by Kevin Zhao ‘18

From March 3rd to April 1st this year, I attended the Connecticut Music Educators Association (CMEA) All State Festival, an event in which qualifying high school musicians are invited to take part in a weekend-long music event culminating in a concert at the end of the festival in the Hartford Convention Center.

Unfortunately, rather than receiving a pleasant, memorable experience, I, along with approximately 20 other students from an array of schools around Connecticut received food poisoning from something served by the staff. Of course, this resulted in the classic symptoms of food poisoning (which I would rather not discuss) and a pile of missed work from not being in school for three consecutive days (also in-part because I had to attend the festival, which started on a Thursday).

The only notice I received from the Hartford Convention Center was a survey

that the Connecticut Department of Health released to the students who attended the All-State Music Festival, which attempted to identify the cause of the food poisoning that had spread around during the festival. Yet even since this survey was sent out, I have neither received information about the cause of the food poisoning nor any indication that the Department of Health and the Convention Center will issue an apology. On the internet, the only two articles I was able to find was one on the initial investigation of the matter--where the Convention Center and the Department of Health were investigating the situation--as well as one stating that the Ballroom where we ate was going to be thoroughly cleaned for further use.

Not once did I get “Sorry, we poisoned you” or “Here’s why you were ill that one time.” The Convention Center states “We take hotel hygiene and cleanliness very seriously, and the well-being of our guests remains one of our highest priorities.” The

only action that the Convention Center has even bothered to take was a mandatory cleaning of the ballroom for future use. No sorry statement, or even a hint of guilt for poisoning 20 students and adults at the festival alone. This means that the Convention Center needs to seriously reconsider how it deals with such affairs, because now I’m not entirely sure I’d attend another event given the chance.

While the chance that I contract food poisoning again is rather low, what concerns me is how the Convention Center treats guests. It doesn’t seem that like they care about the guests after they leave. As far as I’m aware, there was never any press statement apologizing for this kind of blunder. As a student who missed way too many school days and an even more disgruntled customer, there clearly needs to be a change in how the Convention Center handles guest relations, because I really don’t think I would ever go there again if the staff doesn’t take a moment to simply say “Sorry.”

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# Supporters “Go the Distance” to Fight Cancer at Relay for Life

by Jasmine Moon ‘17

On a cool spring day, the Give A Spit Club and other Amity students gave up their Saturday to support a nonprofit called Be The Match by organizing a 5K race at the Wood-

Almost 100 participants registered in the race to race against cancer. “Some came from faraway towns like Avon, CT, while some lived right here in Woodbridge,” says Lillian Zhang ‘17, the head organizer. “I think this shows how if people want to make contribute

Many Amity students and faculty participated and won prizes as well. Courtney Campbell, a guidance counselor, was the first place female and senior Charlotte Gorham was the second placing female. “I was really happy that after months of planning, it finally



Coach Mahon instructs racers preparing to run the 5K at the starting line of the race.

Photo by Ms. Deborah Day.

bridge Town Center. The event, which took place on April 15, featured food, multiple raffles, and a bone marrow drive. The charity 5K was held in honor of a local Woodbridge resident who received a bone marrow transplant through Be The Match, and it intended to inspire runners and walkers across Connecticut to step up and fight cancer, one step, one stride, at a time.

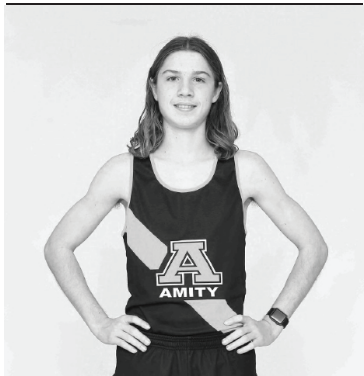
A representative from Be The Match came to run the bone marrow drive, so those interested in joining the bone marrow registry could sign up and be a part of saving a cancer patient’s life. All it took to join was a swab of cheek cells, a donation form, and the bravery for a future donor commitment.

and make an impact, the distance doesn’t matter.” Volunteers, both from Amity and from the community, came to help with the event. As runners were crossing the finish line, many of the volunteers greeted every racer with applause and cheers. Other volunteers helped hand out race shirts or man the registration table for people who didn’t already register online. After five hours, the event closed with a congratulatory awards ceremony. There were awards to top placing runners in each of the age categories and overall winners. Local businesses such as Woodbridge Running Company, Laticrete, and Grimaldi’s all pitched in to sponsor several of the race prizes and raffle prizes.

came together! Of course, I couldn’t have done it without Ms. Day, Mr. Twohill, Ms. Barnych, Coach Jacobs of Paynes Corner Timing and Coach Mahon. Along with some dedicated club members and many volunteers, they’ve all played an integral part of assembling it all together,” Zhang said. The event raised over \$3,800 for Be The Match. The money will be used for three key areas according to the Be The Match website: (1) patient assist funds for medical treatment, (2) add more donors to the registry, and (3) fund research through the research program CIMBTR. If you’re interested in supporting cancer patients in the future, you check out future 5K Walk and Runs at [www.bethematch.org](http://www.bethematch.org).

# Andrew Burford Stays on Track In and Out of the Classroom

by Amanda Hendrick ‘18



Andrew Burford ‘18. Photo from New Haven Register.

Amity possesses a variety of students who succeed in sports, academics, and extracurriculars due to persistent determination and focus. Junior Andrew Burford is a powerful example of a student who has excelled throughout high school in both track and cross country and has made impressive accomplishments in the classroom. Burford was first introduced to running at Amity after completing a season of soccer his freshman year, as his friends encouraged him to try indoor track. Ever since, he has been a force to reckon with, saying, “I was planning on doing soccer again but everyone sort of convinced me to do cross country. I’ve just been a distance runner ever since.” Burford now mainly competes in the 1,600 meters (one mile) and the 3,200 meters (two miles) during

track meets, both in the outdoor and indoor season. During the cross country season, this junior made the all-SCC First Team selection, as well as a participated in State Opens and New England Championships, both highly competitive meets. He was also on the New Haven Register All Area Boys Cross Country Team this school year and helped Amity place second at SCCs during cross country. Emphasizing the incredible impact of running on his high school experience, Burford said that his teammates both encourage him to run faster and help make every day of practice and meets more enjoyable and memorable. When talking about his teammates and what he enjoys most about running at Amity, he says, “We really have a great time together when we’re practicing; it is a great group of guys to hang out with. We really bond together and learn to rely on each other.” Not only does Burford excel in running on the track, he is also able to focus on being successful off the track in his various AP classes. On top of participating in long meets and enduring tough practices, he still maintains his GPA and has gotten First Honors every marking period. On balancing both school and sports, Burford emphasizes that it is important to focus on both and to not put athletics over grades and studies, reminding fellow student athletes that “The A on your report card should take precedence over

the A on your uniform.” He claims that running in fact increases his ability to focus on his classes, stating, “During the track season, running helps me keep mentally focused in a lot of ways, and it is a great way to build determination. Because of the way long distance running can really help one clear their mind, it is not much of a problem to stay focused on both.” Not only is Burford fully involved in school, but he is also dedicated to making a difference in the community. Right now, he is working on his Eagle Project for the Boy Scouts, which also pertains to running. He is redoing the dilapidated boards on Blue Trail in the Meadow track property. Andrew Burford is an example of how important it is to balance one’s priorities and goals and is a role model in regards to his constant determination and ability to focus on what he loves the most. He exemplifies the dedication of Amity students, whether it is in the classroom, on a sports team, or as a volunteer. He practices running because it is what he is passionate about and is able to work around hardships so that he can continue to do so. As the school year comes to a close, it is hard sometimes for students to stay motivated, but Burford demonstrates how it is never impossible to work effectively if you’re determined to do so.

# Delicious Food to Thai For

by Amy Chen ‘17

As a town of a mere 19.2 square miles, Woodbridge does not seem large enough to be a cultural melting pot. But the many types of cuisine available prove otherwise. Thai Stories, located at 16 Selden Street, serves casual, modern Thai cuisine that is very authentic. Many Amity students and other residents eat there because of the convenient location and delicious dishes.

“Thai Stories is always my go to for amazing food and Thai tea,” says Rachelle Hochman, ‘17.

Thai Stories is a corner of Woodbridge that truly gives the vibe of being in a different location because of its tasteful decor. “It has great food and a nice atmosphere,” says Annie Foley, ‘18. “They have these cool decorations up, and one of them is an elephant. Oh and it conveniently offers take-out, which was used many times during show rehearsals.” Thai Stories offers customers two types of food: a lunch and a dinner menu, depending on the time. Recently, people can order online for take-out. Their lunch special offers guests their choice

of a soup, an appetizer, and a main dish, for only \$10-\$14. Some customer favorites include the classic Pad Thai, basil fried rice, drunken noodle, and red curry.

The tom yum soup and vegetarian spring rolls are also to die for. This restaurant really has a distinct character that you can feel as soon as you walk through the door, and



The entrance to Thai Stories.

Photo by Amy Chen ‘17.

the service is amazing. On their stylish website, Thai Stories states that its mission is simple: “serve delicious, affordable food that guests will want to return to week after week.” You can learn more about Thai Stories online at [www.thaistoriesrestaurant.com](http://www.thaistoriesrestaurant.com).

Eating nearby is not only convenient, but also supports small and local businesses. “These small businesses are run by families in the community, and keep money circulating in our small town economies. It keeps a personal touch in any form of business,” explains Maggie Reames, ‘17. Visiting places like Thai Stories can help you understand your community better while you will enjoy something that may be different from the usual lunch or dinner. All in all, the genuine, appetizing food is definitely worth a visit!

# Student Feature: Katie Handler

by Joyce Zhang ‘20



Katie Handler ‘17. Photo by Aviva Green ‘17.

Katie Handler is a senior at Amity and an active member in its community. She is the Vice President of the Give a Spit Club, a member of the cross country team, co-president of the Environmental Club, a member of the science research program, co-president of the National Spanish Honor Society, and a writer for the Amity Trident. She also has active roles in many other activities. During her time in the Amity Science Research Program, Handler received many honors and awards for her ecological research with her mentors at Yale University. She has participated in, and sometimes organized, many activities surrounding her club participation, including fundraisers for endangered species, volunteering at a 5K to raise money for the Be the Match Foundation, volunteering at Fair Haven School with the National Spanish Honor

Society, helping to plan Amity’s Salsa Night, to name a few. One of Handler’s passions is protecting the environment. It is easily demonstrated by her involvement with Amity’s Environmental Club. “As co-president of the environmental club, I have learned so much about the ways to help our planet,” Handler says. “The members inspired me to become a vegetarian.” Recently, on Earth Day, Saturday April 22nd, 2017, Handler attended the March for Science with thousands of other fellow science and Earth enthusiasts in New Haven. Handler is genuinely persuasive when it comes to defending the “rights” of our planet. “I’m passionate about working to save the environment because it is the most beautiful thing on our planet. It was never ours to take and yet humans have been picking away at it for generations,” she says. “There are so many little things each person can do. It is just a matter of educating people on what these things are (i.e. recycling, cutting down water use, compost, turn off extra lights, eat less meat-go vegetarian!)” After high school, she is interested in possibly pursuing veterinary sciences or ecology in college. Handler will be going on an internship at a local vet in Bethany to further pursue her interests in veterinary sciences. Her passions include animals (especially dogs and cats), cross stitching, baking, reading, and Broadway Musicals. Her special talents include being able to rap almost the whole Hamilton Musical, taking really cute pictures of her pets, and baking brownies.



# THE EVOLUTION

It's now prom (promenade dance, formally) season. As the junior and senior proms quickly approach, the Amity community has experienced elaborate "promposals" and heard students discuss prom dress and tuxedo options. But what was Amity's prom like many decades ago? How have the outfits and promposals changed? The *Trident* spoke to various Amity faculty alumni and examined how Amity's proms have changed over time.

## Junior Prom 2017

This year, Amity's Junior prom is being held on Friday, May 12th from 7-11pm at Grassy Hill Country Club in Orange, Connecticut. Tickets are \$60 a piece and could be purchased through MyPayment-Plus. A night of fun, however, requires a lot of fundraising and planning.

"Fundraising for prom, believe it or not, started our freshman year," says Junior Class President Kayla Zamkov. "It's been a long journey, but with our bake sales, car washes,

and selling of class shirts, we have managed to pull it off!"

Events such as Chipotle and Panera Bread fundraisers and Mini Golf Night have also contributed to this effort. Student council assembled a prom committee consisting of class representatives. "In prom committee, we discuss important tasks that need to be done, such as the book[ing] of the venue, DJ, and photographer," says student council member McKenzie Sullivan. "We also talk about little things, like what color table

cloths and what the photo situation should be."

In addition, to working out the details of the prom, the student government is also running a promposal contest for the best junior promposals. "It's basically an incentive to try and get people to ask others in a cool way," shares president Kayla Zamkov.

Submissions can be sent to amityclassof2018@gmail.com. The contest winner will receive one free prom ticket with the purchase of another.

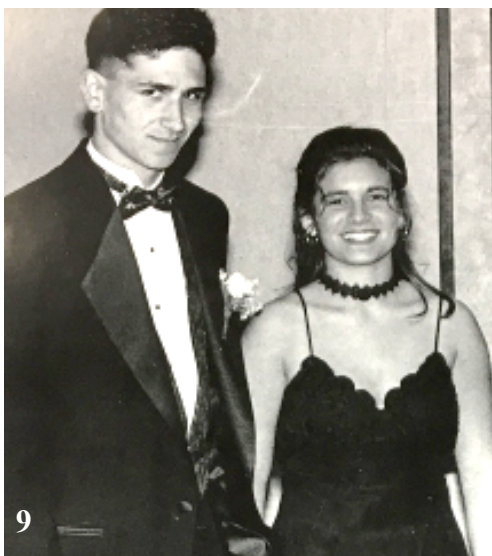
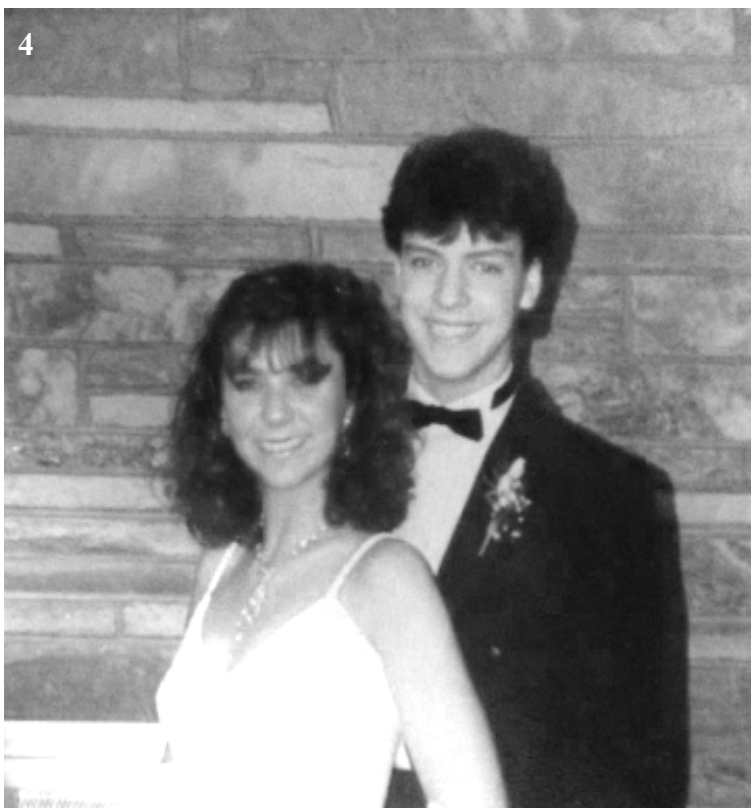
## Senior Prom 2017

On May 26th, Senior Prom will be held at Omni Hotel in New Haven from 7:30-11:00pm. Since their freshmen year, the student government has been working and fundraising towards this event. "We've done many fundraisers," says senior class representative Alekya Menta. "Over the years, they have reduced tickets by a good amount."

To make the event successful, the student government has also organized a prom committee that organizes music, sets up decorations, and make sure the event runs as smoothly as possible. "Last year we had a good amount of people come to junior prom," shares Menta. "We

hope to have even more come to senior prom this year!"

The senior class is holding a promposal raffle. Ultimately, a senior has the chance to win a \$50 gift card to a restaurant of their choice if they submit a photo or video of their promposal. Promposals can be submitted through the senior social media pages or through a class council member. "People should go to prom because it's a great high school opportunity for them to enjoy with their friends," says Student Government president Jacob Okolo. Senior Prom marks the last opportunity for a large majority of the Class of 2017 to gather together before graduation.



- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1: 1970                            | 12: 2012                                |
| 2: 1970                            | 13: Prom decorations, 1994              |
| 3: 1970                            | 14: 1994                                |
| 4: Andrea and Robert Kennedy, 1988 | 15: Christian Allard, 2002              |
| 5: 1970                            | 16: 2004                                |
| 6: 1995                            | 17: Emily Clark (on bottom right), 1988 |
| 7: 1995                            |   |
| 8: 1994                            |   |
| 9: 1995                            |   |
| 10: 1994                           |   |
| 11: 1995                           |   |



# OF AMITY PROM

## Memories and Reflections on Amity Prom

*When and what was your Amity prom like?*

**Mr. Bourdeau ‘82:** “I went to Junior and Senior Prom, as well as one in 1983. [There are many differences between my proms and the proms today.] The taking pictures is more of a production now. We just went to pictures at my house, pictures at her house, and then we went. With the breathalyzer, there are not as many inebriated students as there were in my day. Not that there were many inebriated students, but there was no breathalyzer.”

**Mr. Kennedy ‘88:** “My prom was in 1988 and was held at the

Park Plaza New Haven where the Omni is today. It’s the same exact room the Amity Senior Prom is today. My date to the prom was my wife Andrea! We had a great night dancing and seeing everyone dressed up. I particularly remember my wife’s dress. It was a 1920s style flapper dress with lots of fringe. I wore the standard tux with the standard 1980s hairdo.”

**Mrs. Bonaldo ‘99:** “I graduated in 1999. Back then, the prom was always held at Aquaturf. Things were not quite as intense as they are now. There was no such thing as a “promposal.” People just asked each other to go to prom, and many people

went with friends. We also didn’t spend as much money or time on prom preparation. I got my dress at Macy’s for \$100. However, girls with more money did go to a store called Seychelles, which was in downtown New Haven. If I was very scandalous when two girls showed up with the same dress. Many people took limos, but some didn’t. Overall, I think Prom has become more of a big deal over time, or maybe I didn’t notice because I wasn’t really that into it.”

*Any funny prom stories?*

**Mr. Allard ‘02:** “I got sick from my prom food. Stuffed chicken

breast, didn’t go so great after that.”

*How has prom changed?*

**Mr.. Lazzaro ‘03:** “People did not do promposals. It didn’t exist yet. Also, Junior Prom was in the cafeteria, and Senior Prom was at Anthony’s Ocean View in New Haven.”

*Have you ever witnessed any cool promposals?*

**Mrs. Bonaldo:** “I was lucky to be a part of a promposal last year. One student in my Creative Writing class wanted to ask another student in my Creative Writing class. I told the students

that we were going to write a journal prompt and booted up the projector. When the screen came into focus, there was a picture of the boy asking the girl to prom. It was very sweet.”

**Mr. Kennedy:** “As far as “promposals” I have seen it all. It really has become a bigger deal over the years. I have seen huge signs, gorilla suits, and giant public displays. One of my favorites was a few years back when a student asked his date on our trip to Walt Disney World. He did it during the fireworks at the Magic Kingdom and he had a huge sign printed up and he carried it all the way from Connecticut.”



**Centerspread Editor:**  
James He ‘17  
**Centerspread Writers:**  
Amy Chen ‘17, Ali Hagani ‘18

*Special thanks to Amity Embers for allowing the Amity Trident to use their pictures from the past few decades.*



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# Amity Seniors Featured in Woodbridge Library Exhibition

by Katie Handler ‘17

This spring, the Woodbridge Town Library housed an exhibition displaying the artwork of two Amity seniors, Zachary Babbitz and Alex Friedman. The exhibition was a senior showcase for art students taking classes at the Palette Art Studio in Woodbridge. In addition to the Amity students, the gallery contained artwork from two other Connecticut seniors. Each artist had over a dozen pieces on display in the gallery.

Both Friedman and Babbitz have been taking art classes at the Palette Art Studio for ten years, although neither has taken an art class at Amity. The annual gallery is the studio’s way to

about art, Babbitz said, “I like that you can take crazy risks in painting but the worst thing that happens is you just make a crappy painting.” Friedman added that

“it’s also a great stress reliever. I like the calming nature and the ability to express myself through my paintings.” The philosophy of Palette Art

creativity while they learn fundamental techniques with structure and



Paintings by Alex Friedman ‘17.

color across different mediums. Babbitz’s paintings tend to focus on natural concepts, including fish and other animals along with humans and natural scenes. Friedman’s art covers a variety of styles from abstract to realistic landscapes while playing with colors and shapes in between.

Neither Babbitz nor Friedman plan to pursue art as a career later in life. While Friedman says he will definitely continue taking art classes in college, Babbitz remains undecided. Babbitz is off to University of Vermont next year.



Paintings by Zac Babbitz ‘17.

Studios follows a European education model with a contemporary twist. Instructors place emphasis on student’s visual perception and



honor their dedicated students who have been with them for several years. The artwork on display in the Woodbridge Library was from the students’ collection from the past five years at the Palette Art Studio. Babbitz explained that “each painting takes a couple months to complete.” When asked what he enjoys

## Don Barkin: A Great Mind in Language

by Adam Hurwitz ‘17

Don Barkin is not your average high school teacher. The published poet has had a long and unique journey into his eventual position teaching english and poetry to teens.

Originally from Boston, Barkin’s family moved to New Hampshire when he was young where he spent his youth before shipping off to a boarding school known for its connection to Harvard. From a young age he was infatuated with language, particularly poetry. He read and wrote often throughout his childhood and schooling, going as far as to learn the roots of the English language.

His father, both brothers, uncles, and cousins had all attended Harvard, so when he applied and was admitted to Yale and Harvard upon finishing high school, the choice was easy. He stayed close to home, earning his Bachelor of Arts degree cum laude, concentration in philosophy at Harvard in 1974, then moving on to graduate school in England. Barkin attended University of Cambridge and received his Master of Arts degree in English literature with honors in 1978. His education was long, rigorous, and pressured.

He returned to the United States and almost immediately got a summer job working in the Washington Post’s Style Section, filling in with entertaining articles for the paper’s vast new readership following the Watergate scandal, including one about the Goodyear blimp, which he got to ride in.

Once his internship was over, he continued his journalistic career with the Middletown Press from 1978 until 1985. It was after this job that his teaching career began.

Barkin was then hired as an English teacher at The Hammonasset School, a private, alternative high school in Madison, Connecticut. This was a very different form of education than he had had.

He recalls realizing this, saying, “I looked out at the students and realized I saw a ‘him’ or a ‘her’ rather than their

accomplishments and appearances. It was a tonic for me after my schooling.”

The Hammonasset School opened his mind to alternative teaching and learning formats. He spent several years there before eventually deciding full-time teaching was disallowing him the time and energy he wanted to spend on poetry and his general love of language.

He left the school in 1989, and spent the 90’s and early 2000’s guest lecturing and teaching English in various forms to students at Yale University, Stanford University, Oxford University, Wesleyan University, Connecticut Col-

He enjoys teaching high schoolers, saying that they are “closer to the spirit of a writer.” He articulates his appreciation for the push he gives young writers to be inspired, saying, “I have to burrow down to have any chance of reaching them where they are.”

He tries to keep his students from succumbing to the pressure they feel to focus on grades and scores, allowing them to focus on their inspiration and to read and write because they want to, not because they have to in order to pass.

Although he says college students tend to be “more professional,” they “are not there under duress. They’ve had to make a case for their being there. There’s less tension in that way.”

Barkin tries to take the stress off of his students, especially those that seem particularly grade-motivated. His grading is lax, allowing students room to be inspired and to create without worrying too much about the score they will receive.

Andrew Hague, a senior at Amity who recently completed. Barkin’s Poetry class, says that he is “very calm and relaxed. He allows students to be apathetic if they choose, and lets us become inspired on our own.”

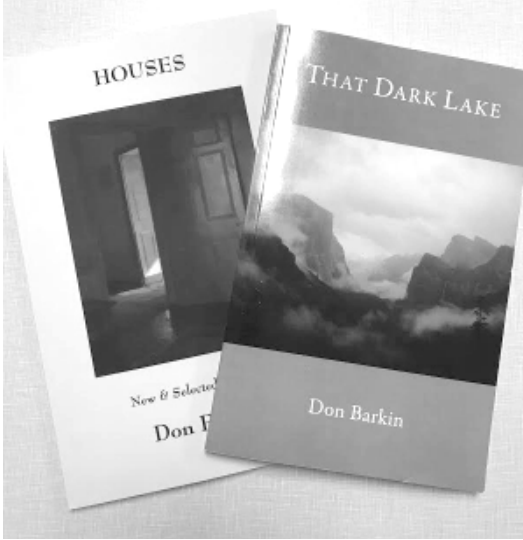
Hague continues, “If your goal is to do the minimum amount of work necessary to get a decent grade you may, but Mr. Barkin is clearly very interested in poetry and is a great resource for those students who are also engaged in the class.”

Barkin’s poetry class follows a curriculum he designed, examining w types of verse, rhyme scheme, style, and topics.

He introduces students to a new area of poetry, assigns them examples to read and interpret, holds full class discussion about the work and the students’ ideas about it, and then allows the students to try it themselves.

He typically gives a general focus or topic (e.g. ‘Winter Poems’ written in iambic pentameter) and then sets the students loose to express themselves within the guidelines however they choose.

Another Amity senior who has taken the class, Ted Weber, describes it as an, “outlet for some. Mr. Barkin gives us lots of room to explore our artistic abilities, and to form our own opinions about the poems we read.”



The covers of Mr. Barkin’s collections of poetry: “That Dark Lake” and the recently published “Houses.”

Photo by Sarah Saxe ‘17.

lege, Quinnipiac University, Albertus Magnus College, Hopkins School, and Amity High School, among others.

He wrote poetry throughout, sharing his writing and his love thereof with the world. Barkin released several small collections of his poems throughout these years and participated in scattered readings, appearing in many magazines and making a name for himself in the poetry world. He had found a lifestyle that made him happy, and allowed him to share his love of language and poetry with a wide variety of students.

In 2001, Barkin decided to return to full-time teaching in the high school setting. He got his teaching certificate from Yale University, and worked as a long-term substitute before getting a full-time job at Amity.

## Artistic Signs Displayed at March for Science

by Emily Criscuolo ‘17

Amity students participated in the March for Science rallies held on April 22. Marches were held across the

nation this day in Boston and Washington D.C., but many attended the more local event held in New Haven.

Marchers worked hard on creating artistic signs promoting positive social change.



Top Left: Elizabeth Freiden ‘18 and Hannah Rappaport ‘18 display their artistic signs promoting science and environmental conscientiousness. Photo by an Amity parent.

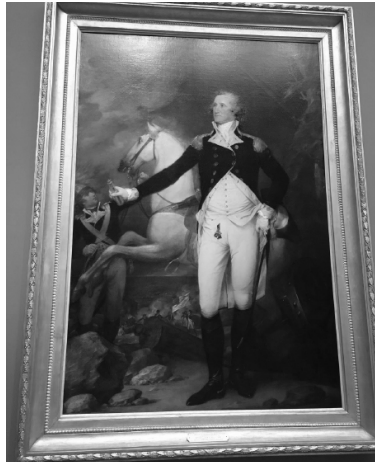
Top Right, Bottom Right, Bottom Left: Artistic signs captured in the crowd at the march. Photos by Nitya Bhattacharai ‘18.

## Yale Art Galleries Enhance Student Learning

by Sana Pashankar ‘19

Though in the New England region, we have some of the nation’s most esteemed art museums, like MOMA or the MET, New Haven itself harbors Yale Art museums that students at Amity can use to pursue interests in different forms, types, and mediums of art, or

gallery and is a fan of the Revolutionary War Era of American art as well as the abstract and modern art exhibits. Similarly, Olivia Smith, another Amity senior, stated that the modern art exhibit was really interesting and unique at the gallery. Sophomore Abby Harbinson stated that she really enjoyed the African Art because it provides a unique exposure to a culture that is not typically



Two of Dharani’s favorite works at the Yale Art Gallery.

Photos by Himay Dharani ‘17.

simply visit on a rainy day.

Students from Amity have shown varying favorite exhibits and a widespread affinity for the Yale University Art Gallery and the Yale Center of British Art. Neha Suhir, an Amity sophomore, stated that at the Yale Center for British Art, she had really liked the exhibit Britain in the World as it provided a fascinating global and historic context for the art. Elina Yang, also an Amity sophomore, liked the Hall of Portraits and Landscapes at the Center for British Art because, in her perspective, it transformed the entire hall into one giant collage of art.

The Yale University Gallery, founded in 1832, is a more well-known and prominent art gallery, as it encompasses a variety of exhibits and cultures, such as Pacific art, American art, modern art, and more. Himay Dharani, an Amity senior, states that he often goes to the

studied in our high school, while another sophomore, Alisa Glenbovitch, said that she prefers the Elizabethan art because she can actually make connections to the history that we learn at Amity to understand the themes and meanings behind the work. Not only do the art galleries stimulate interest of art, but they also tie in with other subject matters, like history, tradition, and cultures around the world.

The Yale University Art Galleries are a useful resource that can definitely be utilized for interested students and can really expand artistic horizons with the array of art from different parts of the world. So, if you’re around the area or looking for something new and different to do, visit our very own display of different global, historic, and current art in New Haven!



# At the Movies With Tyler Jennes: *The Fate of the Furious*

by Tyler Jennes ‘17



With *The Fate of the Furious* sweeping the box office, I’d like to take a moment to look back on the franchise as a whole. Here’s a quick question: are the *Fast* and the *Furious* movies actually good? Back when *Furious 7* was released, Vin Diesel was claiming that it would win Best Picture at the Oscars. Now while many laughed at this statement, it does in fact raise some interesting points as to what qualifies as a great film. Now this is an incredibly subjective topic, as everyone has different things that they look for in a film. Roger Ebert, famed movie critic, shocked readers by giving positive reviews to such films as *Speed 2: Cruise Control* and *2012*. So again I ask, are the films in this franchise good? Well that’s what I set out to discover.

Now I have a bit of a confession to make. Up until now, I’d never seen a single *Fast* and the *Furious* film. It’s just something that I never got around to watching up until this point, and let me just say that it is quite an experience to watch the whole series through for the first time. Having little to no knowledge of the films, it was surreal to see the films transition from street racing to action-spy territory so smoothly. If someone were to watch only the first and last entries in the series back to back, I honestly have no clue how

they could figure out what happened in between. There are obviously ideas that persist through the whole series, namely that cars are really fast and that everyone really likes saying “family.”

What I’ve concluded is that the films in this series are, for the most part, mindless entertainment. It’s the classic ‘turn off your brain’ type of deal. There’s a scene in the latest film that has an endless swarm of remotely-controlled smart cars chasing after a single limousine with the sequence almost framed like that of a horror film. To many people in the audience, including myself, the scene was so ridiculous in its content that it turned the whole thing into a comedy.

As said previously, the films can be wildly entertaining if you throw logic out the window. Now you could ask yourself why this car-hacking technology couldn’t just be used against our protagonists. Questions such as this one have permeated the series ever since it marked a transition into a pseudo-superhero team movie, which many cite as occurring when Dwayne Johnson joined the films. Johnson is noted for his ability to reinvigorate stagnating franchises, with *Fast* and the *Furious* being the most notable. His debut film in the franchise, *Fast Five*, is often cited by fans as being one of the finest in the entire franchise. Now this concept adds onto the original question – are these films good, and if so, what makes them good?

To me, there are select moments in the *Fast* and the *Furious* franchise that rise above standard action movie shlock. This harkens back to the idea of family that persists through the films. In 2013, the star of the franchise, Paul Walker, tragically died in an automobile accident. His character and his dynamic with the other characters had, to many fans, been the emotional crux of the films. In the first film, he was the stand-in for the audience, introducing us to the exciting world of street-racing. That is why many were disappointed when the third film chose to focus on an entirely new cast, essentially becoming nothing more than a spinoff. Walker

is the character that has the biggest arc out of any of the characters. In the previously-mentioned *Fast Five*, the pregnancy of his girlfriend forces Walker to become the first protagonist in the series by dealing with the idea of being a parent and settling down.

Of course, the filmmakers were forced to wrap up his character arc in the seventh film, seeing as the actor had died. But what’s interesting to me is that in large part due to Walker’s death, *Furious 7* became a definitive emotional peak in the series, as we, as an audience, said goodbye to both the man and the character. Even in this latest film, his absence looms over the film. This is why Vin Diesel’s arc is made similar to Walker’s, giving the actor more emotional scenes than he ever had previously as he deals with the conflict of having a family. So in essence, the greatest aspect of the franchise is not fast cars and insane action, but the idea of learning to balance the exciting and fast pace of youth with the stability and responsibility of adulthood.

So to answer the question of the quality of these films, it depends on the person who’s watching them. I would say that 9 out of 10 people who go to see the films watch them for the purpose of sheer entertainment. Others can justifiably say that the films are complete and utter trite. Me, personally, I think that the series is dumb fun, but it’s those small moments – the select scenes of genuine character depth – that keep me interested in the future of the franchise.

With two more upcoming *Fast* and the *Furious* films as well as a Dwayne Johnson-Jason Statham spinoff in the works, we will not see a definitive end to the series until as early as 2021. When *Furious 8*, 9, and 10 were announced, they were given the tagline of “2 Decades, 10 Films, 1 Saga”. The hope is that the films don’t just provide ludicrous action set pieces, but give us more of those select scenes of genuine emotional conflict, and continue to show a growing level of maturity amongst the characters.

# Artist of the Month: Kevin Zheng

by Tara Mohseni ‘18

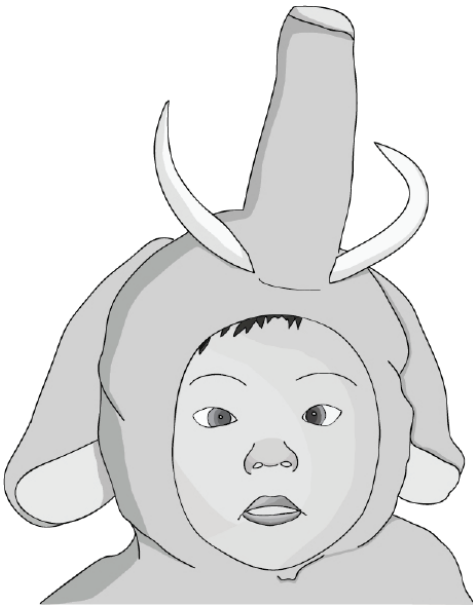
May’s artist of the month, nominated by Christina Ruenhorst, is sophomore Kevin Zheng. He has been into drawing since

2nd grade, when he started with arbitrary doodles. He explained that “they weren’t any good though, mainly things to pass time.” Certainly, as time has progressed, Zheng has become a talented artist with his drawings of animated

TV. “I was really into animated tv shows and wanted to replicate what I saw,” Zheng said as he explained his story behind his drawings. He stated, “honestly, art was always just a pastime and still is. I always enjoyed art because it was something I even-

tually became better at and could take pride in.”

While he is not intensely involved in art at Amity, his passion shows. Zheng has taken an art class and has submitted a piece to Callopie, Amity’s literary magazine.



Digital art by Kevin Zheng ‘19.

Zheng’s art is simple medium wise, as he says he works with only a normal pen and paper. Furthermore, when asked about who his inspirations are, he responded that he is motivated by “people who have turned their passion into something they can be proud of.

Even if they started out poorly, they do their jobs not for money but to spread their art to people who are willing to see it. Shout-outs to animators - their jobs are really hard but no one gives them any recognition.”

# Students Prepare for Spring Concert

by Rosie Du ‘19

Amity’s concert band, jazz band, and wind ensemble will perform in Amity’s spring concert on May 11. Many students at Amity are involved in the music department, and over 120 students from the band program will be playing in the upcoming concert.

Sophomore Marcelle Gagnon said, “I’m looking forward to it, but also some of the pieces are difficult. So it’s the practicing that’s tough.”

Julia Hurlburt, also a sophomore, shared similar feelings and said, “I’m excited, but at the same time I feel like everyone has to practice more for it to be better.”

Gagnon finished her thought on a positive note, however, and said, “Overall, I’m feeling

good about it.”

The band has two classes that are split up into the wind ensemble and concert band - two different periods - so it is hard for the students to rehearse together in preparation for the concert. Jazz band also has limited time to prepare because the musicians meet before school on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Despite this, Phil Dolan, the band director, has done extremely well in making a program for the concert. He said, “I feel like we are prepared. We have some small finishing touches to put on, and I feel like it will be a good concert, and we have a good repertoire between band and jazz band.”

Dolan and the students have been working hard on this music since January, so the concert in May will be a treat for all.



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# A Discussion with Camryn Brown of the Amity Girls Track and Field Team

by Anthony Tom '19

Camryn Brown ('17), the captain of the sprinters for the Amity Girls Outdoor Track and Field Team, talked with the Trident's Anthony Tom to explain what it means to hold a leadership role on one of Amity's most celebrated teams.

Tom: How long have you run track?

Brown: I've run track since seventh grade.

Tom: What do you do? Sprint, Distance, Jump?

Brown: I sprint and I hurdle.

Tom: What is your favorite event?

Brown: I would say hurdling because it's such a challenge.

Tom: Do you run the 100m or the 300m?

Brown: The 300.

Tom: What would you say is the most difficult event?

Brown: The hurdles because it isn't just running, but also the form and running to the hurdle.

Tom: What has been your favorite part of doing track?

Brown: Being a part of the team but at the same time you have to work on yourself individually. You're not alone and you have people training and working out with you, but to do it you have to want to improve yourself.

Tom: Over the years, has there been any particular hurdle that you've had to get over?

Brown: Yeah. Recently I tore my ACL and I just started back up outdoor



Photo contributed by Camryn Brown '17.

this spring and it has been difficult strength wise, speed wise, and getting my form back. But it has all been worth it

Tom: How has your time as captain been?

Brown: It's been fun. I've enjoyed having a leadership role and helping everyone out and I enjoy being able to work with everybody.

Tom: Have you always wanted to be captain?

Brown: Yeah, I've always wanted to be outdoor captain because I like how my captains have run things and I wanted to do it the same way.

Tom: Is

there any goal that you'd like to do with the team?

Brown: Yeah, I want to make sure everyone likes track and field the way I like it and it is more of "I want to be here" and less of "I have to be here."

Tom: Is there anything you would like to do with the team as a bonding experience?

Brown: Yeah, I've always wanted to a movie night with the team, something outside of track that would really help the team bond.

Tom: And finally, I know with the boys team the sprint and distance team are separate. Is that the case with the girls team?

Brown: Yeah, it is the same. It is good and bad because we don't understand each other's workouts and training. But at the same time the boys distance team is closer with the girls distance team and the boys sprint team is closer with the girls sprint team, [but] we aren't as connected as a team, and I wish we could be more interconnected.



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# Lacrosse Team Makes Its Case for Turf Field

by Jordan Conn ‘18

Purchasing and installing an all-purpose turf field has been sincerely considered at Amity. Just four years ago, there was a referendum concerning this topic in the town of Woodbridge. All consideration of investing in one was shut down when the initiative failed to pass.

However, the boys and girls lacrosse teams at Amity have come up with some compelling reasons why the town and administration should reconsider.

Eliza Crane ‘18, a third year varsity lacrosse player, said, “We lose so many practices because of rain, which sets us back behind most teams, especially during the preseason.” That was especially the case during late March and early April when their season was

supposed to start.

Kaitlyn Paradis ‘17, another lacrosse veteran, said, “We lost the first few days of the season we would have used to prepare better due to rain because we were all crammed inside with the other sports teams.” Because of wet grass fields

ined so easily and countless people twist ankles, trip, and slip” due to the hazardous conditions.

Furthermore, the boys lacrosse team could benefit from having a turf field. Sophomore Colin Hughes, a attackman and midfielder for the team, said, “The best way to score in lacrosse is with a bounce shot and turf is the best for the bounce shots.” This is because of the quick skip that the ball takes when it makes contact with the turf, rather than losing momentum in the grass.

Although the boys and girls lacrosse teams are the only programs distinctly making a case for turf, it could benefit many other Amity teams, including the football and field hockey teams, for many of the same reasons.



Members of the girls lacrosse team at the April 24 game against Hamden. Photo by Payton Grande ‘19

with poor drainage, the girls were forced to postpone try-outs for two weeks, severely cutting their preparation for opening day.

Yet the availability of the field is not the only issue after a rainstorm. Crane also said, “The fields get ru-

# Amity Athletics Represented Well in Relay for Life

by Nick Riccardi ‘20

This spring, Amity sports teams are in the spirit of giving back. Several different teams and their respective players are giving time and money to different charities. The Relay for Life of Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge has many Amity sports teams participating.

Relay for Life is an event in which teams raise money for cancer research with the help of family, friends, and co-workers. Taking place at the High Plains Community Center in Orange, participants walk around a track for a full day and night as a part of a walk-a-thon.

Every team must have one person on the track at any given time while other team members may relax in their tent or talk to and play games with friends on other teams. All of the money raised goes to the American Cancer Society and is then redistributed to local

cancer patients for treatments and research.

The Amity Girls Swimming and Diving team participates every year at the



Sun rising at Relay for Life. Photo by Sophie Baum ‘18

BOW Relay for Life. Every year, they help generate generous amounts of money for the American Cancer Society through the relay.

Representing the track

team, “On Track for a Cure” is a new team led by Billy McKeon (‘19).

When asked about why Relay for Life is such a positive cause, McKeon replied that “it gives hope to people with cancer that they have a team backing them every step of the way.”

McKeon is both the founder and a member of the team. He reported that the main reason why he founded the team was “not only because it was a great cause, but also because it makes others outside of the team feel good because high schoolers are willing to do [activities and events] like this.”

Due to the hard work of Amity’s sports teams and other Amity community members, Relay for Life of Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge has impressively raised almost \$21,000.

The event scheduled for May 20th.

# A Look at One of Amity’s Elite Athletes

by Jacob Gross ‘18

Across high schools nationwide, millions of athletes compete in various tournaments, matches, and games. For a majority of these students, high school varsity athletics will be the peak of their athletic career. A select few, the so-called “athletic elite”, however, have a different situation.

These athletes compete on the highest level throughout high school, and their performance does not go un-

noticed. They are recruited by colleges and universities from across the nation, and go on to play in top-level games at these schools. At Amity, there are some athletes whose exceptional skill attract attention from college recruiters.

performance and contacted him. However, this wasn’t a surprise for Cory; he says that he had been trying to get recruited since sophomore year. Athletes of this caliber aren’t just noticed by one school; they receive offers and invitations from many. In Cory’s case, his final choices included Union College, Swarthmore College, and Vassar College. However, he eventually decided on Union, in a large part due to its coach who valued his players’ futures. This school,



Cory Sachs ‘17 at his signing. Photo by Orange Live.

noticed. They are recruited by colleges and universities from across the nation, and go on to play in top-level games at these schools. At Amity, there are some athletes whose exceptional skill attract attention from college recruiters.

Cory Sachs (‘17), a senior lacrosse player, is one such student. Since sophomore year, he has played on the Amity Boys Varsity Lacrosse Team. After years of hard work Cory was picked up by the Union College lacrosse team. For him, this process really kicked off midway through junior year. He was at an away game, and a few coaches from Union College took note of his

although Division III, is consistently one of the top 25 in its division in the nation.

As expected, the whole recruitment process can be very complicated and confusing. Cory has enlisted the help of Greg Gurenlian, a professional lacrosse player, to counsel and advise him.

Overall, the process has been very positive according to Cory who reported it allowed him to be comfortable with his own skill level and to realize how much he can improve to harness his potential. At Amity, many students dream of such an opportunity. And who knows? For some of them, maybe that chance is just around the corner.

Contact the *Trident* with questions, comments, or suggestions at:

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