

# THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXVI-No. 2 Amity Regional High School Woodbridge, CT 06525 October 21, 2022

## Dr. Purcaro Joins District as New Assistant Superintendent

by Janet Fan '26

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Frank Purcaro is the newest addition to the Amity Regional School District administrative staff. The position of Assistant Superintendent was created for the 2022-2023 school year after Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Byars decided not to continue the position of Director of Curriculum and Staff Development which was held by Dr. Marie McPadden until her retirement last winter.

Dr. Purcaro joined the district this summer after serving as the Director of Teaching and Learning for the Newtown Public Schools. This is his 25th year in education,

and before coming to Amity, he served fourteen years as a social studies teacher and high school department chair, then in building-level and central office administration positions.

In addition to his experience in education, Dr. Purcaro has a background in law and spent time as a practicing attorney. Though he no longer actively practices, Dr. Purcaro says that many of the skills learned at UConn Law School can be applied to his work in education.

As assistant superintendent,

Dr. Purcaro works closely with Dr. Byars to support teachers and students in all aspects of learning and teaching. This includes



Amity Regional School District's Assistant Superintendent Dr. Frank Purcaro

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## Club Day Embraces Diversity and Passions

by Hannah Chen '23

Amity High School's community and culture are based on much more than the various classes offered, tests taken, and books read this was made evident on Club Day which took place on Friday, September 30th.

Enthusiastic and passionate students filled parallel rows of tables spanning almost the entire bus lane, encouraging students to join and learn about their clubs. The genuine excitement in the air made the day an exhilarating experience for students.

Club Day took place during students' lunch and SSP periods. This day gave students the chance to share information about their clubs and also provided all students the opportunity to join new organizations and find their interests. During the designated periods, students listened to music, collected candy, and asked peers about their organizations/ clubs. Club Day exemplified what it means to be a part of Amity culture. With over 70 clubs present, ranging from Robotics to Girl Up to Pickle Ball, every student was bound to find something of their interest. Each table was operated by a few welcoming and excited students who were open to sharing their interests and passions.

The extraordinarily passionate

students who operated all of Club Day made everything possible. Days before, students prepared engaging activities and visuals to attract new peers to join their clubs. Colorful tri-fold posters, science trivia, and even a robot swiftly moving around the walkway were all creatively planned and executed by the dedicated students that run and participate in their clubs.

out the day."

Extracurriculars and involvement are key components of Amity's culture. At Club Day, it was easy to get swept up in the excitement of the day. The long rows of colorful tables occupied by smiling and welcoming students, all with varying interests, made it nearly impossible not to want to become involved.

Sadie Arnold '25 said, "Club Day really helped me become



Photo contributed by Trident staff  
Eric Novak '23 and Marco Lopez '23 at Club Day.

Brian Scully '23, who ran the science bowl table, said "our table's activity had buzzers and science trivia, mocking what our weekly meetings usually consist of. I was pleasantly surprised by the turnout of students and their active interest in my club and many other club tables!"

Grace Mahon '23, who ran the Unified Theater table, said, "Club Day was an amazing experience. It was extremely exciting to see student leaders come together to exhibit the most fun and inclusive parts of the Amity community through-

a part of the Amity community. Having the opportunity to interact and hear from many different groups and students as they expressed themselves was a great experience and made me excited to join their clubs."

Although Club Day was mainly comprised of bustling students, teachers also enjoyed walking around and seeing their students in settings other than their classrooms. Courtney Morrison, a geometry and calculus teacher, said, "It was an especially great day

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## Transition from Google Classroom to Schoology Begins

by Shreya Hebbar '23

When the of the COVID-19 pandemic began, the Amity Regional School District transitioned from Unified Classroom to Google Classroom to make online schooling easier and more effective. The temporary fix provided by Google Classroom allowed teachers to easily make announcements, post assignments, and communicate with their students during hybrid learning in the 2020-2021 school year.

Last year, our school decided to transition from Google Classroom to Schoology, an online learning platform owned by Powerschool. To help facilitate the change from Google Classroom to Schoology, teachers and administrators met with other school districts using Schoology to discuss the pros and cons of the platform. This year most teachers are still using Google Classroom, however, some are testing out Schoology with their students. A large reason for this switch is security issues within Google. In addition, Schoology is linked to Powerschool, making it easier for teachers to input grades

rather than manually putting them in for every student.

The transition to a new learning platform comes with challenges and reservations. Henry Atwood '23 said, "It's a decent platform, but it's annoying that there are no notifications."

Several have also shared that Google is much easier to use. Shreya Nair '25 said, "Google has a better user interface. In Schoology, there are no emails when things are posted."

Despite these challenges, Schoology offers some perks for students and teachers that were previously not available with Google Classroom. Sydney Melchior '23 said, "One thing I appreciate about Schoology is that it is synced to our PowerSchool, which allows us to get grades faster. This function removes the wait time of teachers inputting the grades manually."

This school year most students have at least one teacher testing it out as an introduction. The district is planning on fully switching to Schoology at the start of the next school year.

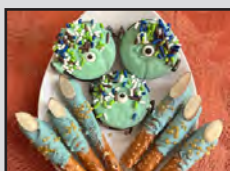
Seth Davis, a member of the technology department, believes that "as technology improves and

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## Principal's Committee Column

by Hannah Chen '23

Over the past few Principal's Committee meetings held on September 16th and 30th, and October 14th, students gathered to speak with principal Andre Hauser on a variety of topics.

On October 14th, Principal's Committee welcomed members of the newly elected freshmen class council to the group.

Agenda items from these past few meetings pertain to all grades at Amity. Some items included discussion surrounding bullying, the speak-up hotline, swipe in study halls, PSATs, and Day of Dialogue.

An important conversation the committee had was led by multiple students who voiced their concerns about last year's and this year's bullying incidents and their dissatisfaction and lack of understanding of the accountability process. Hauser demystified the disciplinary process to students by clarifying the administration's definition of bullying and the board of education policy in response to alleged harassment and bullying claims.

Hauser also stressed the newer implementa-

tion of progressive discipline. This is essentially the idea that as a student accumulates offenses, the repercussions of them get continually more severe.

Amity encourages students to come forward and report any bullying incidents at the school. If one is not comfortable with doing so, it's strongly encouraged for students to use the anonymous speak-up hotline (203-936-6784).

This submitted information goes directly to the three associate principals as well as Hauser. They will handle the situation without the need for any students to come forward if they are uncomfortable.

Brief input was also given on the swipe system in study halls as well as PSATs. There was a general agreement that the study hall swipe system is inefficient and the influx of students hoarded at the front table caused confusion and errors in attendance for students. In regards to the PSATs, upperclassmen shared their experiences from their PSATs and the preparation process as well as test-taking experience.

Although possibly daunting, the underclassmen who took the PSATs shared that it was manageable and not too overwhelming. Hauser also

helped sophomore committee members understand that their PSAT was for them to gain some insight into the format of the test and help them start their preparation process.

For juniors, this was a great opportunity for them to also gain a peak of the test and help them centralize what they need to focus on before they take the SAT in the spring.

At the October 14th meeting, the Principal's Committee members were enthusiastic to talk about Day of Dialogue and their thoughts about it. The general sentiment shared by the committee was that the day was incredibly insightful, inspiring, and educational.

Mila Mejnartowicz '26 said her experience with the Girl Up seminar was amazing. "Seeing female entrepreneurs who also happen to be Amity graduates gave me insight on just how far we could go with start-ups and passion," she said.

Out of the numerous engaging seminar options for students, the IRIS presentation in the Brady Center was required.

Aachal Gupta '25 also had a great experience with the day and said, "The reenactment of the vetting process was very insightful and eye-opening."

## National Honor Society Inducts New Members

by Audrey Cummings '23

The National Honor Society Induction Ceremony took place on Friday, September 15. Rather than occurring in the spring when inductees were accepted into the society, the advisors of the society decided to have the event in the fall due to scheduling.

The ceremony was held to honor the members, following the lengthy application process and selective admittance. In the spring of 2022, seniors who maintained an unweighted GPA of 3.5 or higher, along with other eligibility criteria, received an invitation to apply. The rigorous application consisted of a resume, a video, and a multitude of essay questions. Part of the induction was to acknowledge all of the hard work leading up to the acceptance of these seniors. Accepted students embody the four pillars of the National Honor Society, which are character, scholarship, leadership, and service.

The ceremony began with speeches by society advisors Shannon Martin and Matthew Stanley, followed by Principal Andre Hauser. Then, the recently named president Anchal Bahel and vice president June Lin spoke about their goals for the society in the upcoming year.

At the ceremony, inductees were called up to be presented with certificates that marked their entrance into the National Honors Society. Following the ceremony, Martin commented on the event,

saying, "It was so wonderful to celebrate the achievements of the new 2022-2023 National Honor Society chapter. Starting the year with the induction ceremony permeates the feeling of a 'fresh start' for all the possibilities that the NHS can accomplish in the new school year."

After the ceremony, newly inducted members of the society were invited to the cafeteria for refreshments alongside their guests. Newly inducted member Piyush Bahel '23 said, "I thought the NHS induction was a very motivating and fun time. I was encouraged to serve a greater role in my community through the various speeches I heard throughout the night."

The board of the National Honors Society was elected last year, and in addition to Anchal Bahel as president and June Lin as vice president, Nina Florkiewicz was elected as treasurer, Annie Liu as secretary, and Karishma Bulsara as social media chair.

Lin said, "We've kicked off the year with the blood drive and it went very well. We already have a few other events being planned for the near future, especially around the holiday season. It looks like we have a very motivated group of students, which I'm really happy to see! For the rest of the year, we're looking forward to organizing more service projects and student events!"

The National Honor Society has begun a promising and productive year. Please reach out to any NHS member if you would like to contribute any ideas or have feedback.

## Dr. Purcaro Joins District as New Assistant Superintendent

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making sure the curriculum stays up to date, working with admin and teachers to provide professional learning opportunities, and analyzing test performance data to identify areas of strength and areas for growth.

When asked about his goals for this school year, Dr. Purcaro said, "First and foremost, to ensure that teachers, students, and administrators have the support and resources they need to be successful. It is also very important for me to be present and visible within the schools. It's a priority for me to visit classrooms, observe instruction, and interact and meet with students."

Outside of school, Dr. Purcaro enjoys spending time with his wife, four children, and two dogs. In his free time, he enjoys golfing, reading, and being outside, whether it be hiking, or going on a walk or run.

Dr. Purcaro said, "People who know me well would describe me as an optimist - someone who has a positive outlook on life both at work and at home. I think most people I know would also describe me as approachable and genuine."

"I am dedicated and serious about my work, but also enjoy having fun, spending quality time with family and friends," he continued.

Regarding his time at Amity so far, Dr. Purcaro said, "It has been fantastic so far. I have had the chance to meet some really wonderful people in the short time that I have been here. Everyone has been extremely welcoming."

"I feel very fortunate to be part of a talented and dedicated team of administrators and teachers here in Amity," he added.

The Amity community extends a warm welcome to Dr. Purcaro.

## Club Day Embraces Diversity

Continued from page 1

having all the clubs in person, restoring further normalcy for students and giving them the options and opportunities to become engaged in the community."

From the upbeat music, the beautiful weather, and smiling students, Club Day gave students a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in one of the most distinguished aspects of the Amity community - the clubs that are made up of extraordinary students with much diversity and many passions.

See page 12 for photos of Club Day!

## Transition from Google Classroom to Schoology Begins

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and becomes more enmeshed in society, it is important to provide the students with multiple ways to help become familiar with using technology on a more day-to-day basis."

Transitioning from Google Classroom to Schoology will allow students to become familiar with multiple learning platforms and help students adjust to new technologies.

**ATTENTION  
NINTH GRADERS!**

Don't forget about  
Freshman Tailgate!

It will be held **TONIGHT**,  
October 21st from 6-7 PM!

**See you there!**

# Books Play an Integral Role in Students' Education

by Ellen Ko '24

Over a year ago, my friend and I decided to start our club at Amity. The club was designed to empower younger generations through books and education. We founded EmpowHER on the basis that future generations should be able to formulate their own opinions and thoughts with all the resources available to them.

Book bans restrict people from being able to formulate their own opinions, separate from what others have told them to believe.

Book banning is the most widespread form of censorship in the United States and oftentimes, pieces of children's literature are the primary targets. Advocates for banning a book fear that their children will be brainwashed by its contents and present ideas. They fear this will prompt questions among children that many groups are not equipped to address.

While this may be true of some books, such as Adolf Hitler's autobiography *Mein Kampf*, many works of literature that are being banned across the nation are books that simply challenge the status quo.

On the list of banned books in 2022, nearly 41% of those banned contain LG-

BTQ+ themes, and nearly 40% contain a character of color.

If Amity ever followed the national trend of book bans, then we, as a community, would have failed to uphold unity, diversity, and equity which our school claims to

service not only to the students but also to the greater community.

Literature is the best way for readers to empathize with and understand the experiences of different communities. Without literature, it would be difficult for a white person to understand the experiences of people of color. Without literature, it would be difficult for a cis-gendered, heterosexual person to understand some of the experiences of the LG-BTQ+ community. Literature introduces us to worlds we would otherwise not have access to. Literature allows readers to explore, and presents readers with new ways of thinking, larger truths, and a vast amount of insight. Literature is an invaluable part of the human experience in bridging the gap between groups of people.

A book ban would inhibit authors from their First Amendment right to freedom of expression and inhibit students from our First Amendment right to freely receive and express ideas. The experiences of countless authors are being silenced. Students would have a difficult time understanding and empathizing with the experiences of those who are outside of our majority-white, upper-middle-class community.



Photo contributed by Trident Staff  
**Banned book display at Amity**

be an integral part of the Amity experience. Amity cannot silence the experiences of minority authors yet continue to boast about diversity at events such as Day of Dialogue. By doing so, Amity is proving its activism to be performative. Furthermore, any book bans would bar students from formulating their own thoughts and opinions, which is a dis-

## A Fading Line Between Home Life and Academics

by Michael Perrone '23

Amity, I've been able to easily separate my personal life from my academics. I was able to focus on one without having to worry about the other. Doing so wasn't necessarily difficult, either. The stars just aligned for me and allowed for the two different things to involuntarily remain separated from each other, allowing me to focus on one thing at a time.

Over these past few weeks, however, things have begun to change. The fine line between my personal and academic lives has slowly begun to fade. There are a number of things that could've fueled this odd change in my life. For as long as we've been a group, my friends and I haven't gotten into any arguments whatsoever. I know it sounds extremely difficult to fathom, but it's the truth. Since the moment we all met in 6th grade, we haven't had to deal with any sort of heated arguments or petty debates. However, over these past few weeks, we've found ourselves getting angry at each other over lots of things.

I can't really scapegoat one thing for this sudden change in behavior, but the arguments have begun to influence the way I approach my work while in school. I find my mind wandering at random moments, thinking about what can fix the patches these sudden quarrels between my buddies and I have created in our friendship. Prior to this, I was able to focus on my work without allowing myself to get distracted by my personal life. "These problems are for outside of school!" I'd tell myself on the rare occasions a personal issue arose. Now,

During my earlier years at

I find the two are becoming intertwined, which has affected my work ethic and ability to focus.

The staggering amount of goals I need to reach in my senior year has also caused me to rarely stop thinking or working. In the past, I was able to set aside a few hours or so a day dedicated entirely to myself. I'd unwind after a long day of work by listening to a favorite album on vinyl or watching a "comfort" show that distracts me from my academic life. Now, my mind is always at work. I'm constantly thinking about which college applications I need to finish, or how I can edit that one body paragraph in the English essay due next week, or how I should approach studying for the Psychology test in a few days. I was always able to set apart time for myself. Now, my academic life has bled into those moments, so I almost always feel under pressure to do work.

Trying to bring back the balance that made my life less hectic seems difficult at the moment. It seems like a very daunting task to fix both the personal issues that have diverted my attention from work and to navigate through hours of school assignments and college applications. As of writing this, as a matter of fact, I'm still trying to figure out how to fix these issues.

I have, however, made progress when compared to the beginning stages of my problems. My friends and I are all aware of the issues we've discussed and faced as a group over the past few weeks and are now beginning to turn back into the fun-loving, argumentless pals we've come to know over the years. We've confronted each other about the

# the TRIDENT

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To sign up to write or take photographs for *The Trident*, contact the Editors-in-Chief, Mrs. Clark, or email [amitytrident@amityschools.org](mailto:amitytrident@amityschools.org)

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## WRITE FOR THE TRIDENT

**Great opportunity to get involved!**  
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*Get involved and write for the Trident!*



# The Potential in Spartan Seminar

by Soma Kim '25

Consider this: a day with Spartan Seminar versus a day without. What is the difference? What use do spartan seminars have for us, students?

The primary purpose of Spartan Seminar is to give students time every month to learn about a variety of different current happenings and issues. Certain clubs and organizations do this by creating activities and opportunities for students to discuss.

Spartan Seminar certainly has great potential, as participants develop an ability to gain an understanding of the lives of others. For instance, near the end of the 2021-2022 school year, the Inclusion at Amity club and PLAHD collaborated to create a spartan seminar detailing the significance of pride month. Additionally, unlike academic courses, spartan seminar groups are not organized by class levels. Therefore, students can grow a bond with each other via the given topics.

However, it seems that Spartan Seminar has yet to reach its full potential. Its inability to fully grab the attention of students is evident in its lack of participation. Often students will use the time to socialize with others or do homework, which distracts those who are focusing on the content. Not to mention the trash talk regarding Spartan Seminar, a consequence of the lack of student engagement, that can be heard in the hallways.

This class, like any other, is unlikely to gain attraction from all students. Its future seems unlikely to be successful without a change. So what could be changed? The attitudes of students aren't an option given the results so far. How about the content? The information itself should not be changed, but the techniques by which they are delivered can be. For example, I've noticed that hands-on activities are preferred over quizzes or simple discussions. Perhaps including more engaging and entertaining lessons will cause students to like the class more.

In the future of this developing class, I hope to see an increase in student involvement. I do believe that teachers try their best to address the topics, controversial or not, and that they deserve some respect for their efforts. Nonetheless, an active and productive environment in Spartan Seminar can only be achieved by the efforts of the planners, teachers, and students.

# A Fading Line Between Home Life and Academics

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the issues we've discussed and faced as a group over the past few weeks and are now

beginning to turn back into the fun-loving, argumentless pals we've come to know over the years.

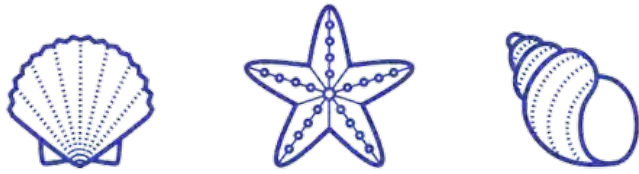
We've confronted each other about the problems and have begun working toward solutions. Hopefully, this change will make focusing on schoolwork a little easier in the future.

As for bringing back the personal time that made my life less stressful, I have begun setting personal goals at the beginning of each week so that I have something specific to work towards.

On Sunday, I'll figure out the things I'd like to get done by the end of the week, so I can focus on one thing at a time. Completing things through this method makes the large amount of work I need to complete seem far less daunting.

I guess the point of this article isn't to bore you with my problems and the solutions I've developed in order to solve them (although it might seem like it). If you come away from this article with anything, I'm hoping it's with the message that no matter how difficult things may seem in your personal and professional lives, everything's going to be okay.

Although the problems you are facing may seem difficult to overcome, eventually, if you really try and look for a solu-



Don't forget that applications for the Bermuda Project are due online by **November 2nd.**

Contact Mrs. Cournoyer, Mrs. Nevolis, or Mrs. Best with any questions or to receive application materials.



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## Spooky Treats for Halloween *Alien Oreos and Witch Finger Pretzels*

by Aachal Gupta '25

October plus fall equals the start of the spooky season! It is nearly Halloween, which means that it is everyone's favorite time to dress up with friends, get scared, and trick-or-treat for candy from strangers.

The weeks leading up to Halloween are when towns and schools hold Halloween festivities for all ages, such as the Halloween Hoot held at Beecher Road School or Funtober in Orange. It is also the time for sweets in the form of candy and chocolate and other mouth-watering treats. These alien oreos or pretzel witch fingers would be a tasty and spine-tingling addition to any Halloween bash.

### ALIEN OREOS

#### Ingredients:

Oreos (use Halloween-themed Oreos for an extra flare)  
Sprinkles  
Candy eyes  
Chocolate chips  
Melting chocolate (try using colored chocolate or dyeing your own white melting chocolate)

To start, melt the chocolate in a heat-safe bowl in the microwave at 30-second increments, which will prevent the chocolate from burning. If using the stovetop, use a double-boiler, or boil about two inches of water in a small pot and rest a larger bowl with the chocolate on the rim of the pot, stirring constantly until just melted.



Photo courtesy of Aachal Gupta '25

### Alien Oreos and Witch Finger Pretzels

After letting them dry completely, store them in an air-tight container to ensure the cookies won't get stale. Bring them to your next party or share with some family and friends!

### WITCH FINGER PRETZELS

#### Ingredients:

Pretzel Rods  
Melting chocolate (use colored chocolate)  
Sliced almonds  
Sprinkles (optional)

To start, break the pretzel rods into 4-inch sticks, if necessary. Then melt the chocolate in the microwave or use the double boiling method on the stovetop. Once the chocolate is melted, add color, if necessary.

Dip each pretzel stick into the melted chocolate, making sure to not dip all the way. Then set it on a plate, and add a sliced almond to the top, arranging it so the pointy end is on the top (see photo). If desired, add sprinkles before the chocolate hardens.

Let dry for at least 10 minutes in a cool place. After letting them dry completely, store in an air-tight container to ensure the pretzels won't get stale. Enjoy!

## Girl Up Club: Eager to Advance Gender Equality

by Bridget Lowder '24 and Jeslyn Jacobs '24

Are you interested in the topic of feminism? Have an urge to connect with students in the Amity community and also learn more about female empowerment? Do you want to spread awareness about current issues pertaining to women? If so, then the Girl Up club, advised by LeeAnn Browett, is the opportunity you have been looking for!

Girl Up is a club meant to empower both women in the school and in the community by raising awareness of global social justice issues and encouraging women to be leaders in their environment. The club acts as a way for girls to speak up on problems they see happening in their community, address global concerns, and gain leadership skills to increase confidence and self esteem.

When asked about the club's current plans and goals for the year, president Selin Ho '23 said, "So far we have started an awareness campaign on women in Afghanistan and brought in a guest speaker. However, we also intend to shed light on the protests that are occurring in Iran and make sure that students are aware of international gender inequality."

"We hope that students walk away with an increased knowledge of global affairs and a sense of understanding as to why women empowerment is so essential in today's society," she continued.

Members enjoy being a part of something bigger than themselves and Aarush Trivedi '24 stated, "I have been a part of Girl Up for over a year now and it has been such an amazing experience! This club has such an awesome purpose of empowering women and we do so many fun things to support our cause!"

Girl Up is spreading their message across the globe with over 5,000 different clubs in over 130 countries. Girls living in the United States may not be aware of the injustices



Image from [community.girlup.com](http://community.girlup.com)

women in other countries are going through. With Girl Up, members are exposed to the issues regarding gender inequality that are happening around the world.

The issues that Girl Up centers around are gender justice, gender-based violence, education, sexual and reproductive health, and sports. Fundraising for Girl Up is intended to support girls globally. This means that the money raised can go to girls in the community, or even to girls in other countries with the help of the United Nations. Those who are members of the club are encouraged to advocate for the women that cannot do so themselves. Girl Up's main mission is to help girls become transformative leaders that advocate for gender justice worldwide.

If interested in joining, meetings for Girl Up take place after school every other week in room 117 and the club's first meeting is coming up soon on Thursday, October 27th. Additionally, if you have any questions, new members can contact Selin Ho through her school email: [hose23@amityschools.org](mailto:hose23@amityschools.org)!

## ATTENTION ALL CREATIVE WRITERS!

*Do you enjoy writing stories or poetry?*

*If so, the Features section would like to publish your work!*

*If you have a creative writing sample that you are willing to share, please reach out to Grace and Bridget by emailing [cavallarogr24@amityschools.org](mailto:cavallarogr24@amityschools.org) and [lowderbr24@amityschools.org](mailto:lowderbr24@amityschools.org).*

**We look forward to including your work in the next issue!**

# Aarav Patel Presents Scientific Research at International Conference in Poland

by Samuel Bae '24

Aarav Patel '24, who participates in the Amity Science Research Program, recently had the opportunity to travel to Krakow, Poland in order to present his findings at the 10th

International COINs Conference. The Amity Science Research Program is a four-year program for students who aspire to pursue their passion in a STEM field.

Under the instruction of science teacher Catherine Piscitelli, those in her classes have the freedom to study whichever field of science they want to. It allows students to conduct individual and original research based on a topic that fascinates them and connect with experts in their chosen field of interest to mentor and assist them with their projects.

At this prestigious conference, Patel presented his project Creating a Systematic ESG(Environmental Social Governance) Scoring System using Social Network Analysis and Machine Learning for More Sustainable Company Practices. COIN, otherwise known as collaborative innovation networks, has hosted conferences for the world's leading scientists, scholars, and students. I was impressed by this unprecedented achievement and curious about developments in science, so I asked some him questions. Below are Aarav's responses about this experience!

**SB: How did you find this opportunity to travel all the way to Poland?**

AP: As a part of my SRP class work, my mentor Professor Gloor from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology suggested I fly out to the conference to present my paper, as many students from MIT attended.

**SB: What was your presentation about?**

AP: My project was to create a systematic scoring system for Environmental Social Governance(ESG). ESG is often used to measure the sustainability of a company, but as it's self-reported, it can be manipulated to put profits over people. Companies make themselves look more eco-friendly than they really are, and makes evaluation difficult. This is the problem I want to solve. Companies have a responsibility to help society through their profitability, not take from it. My hope is to create a data-driven ESG evaluation system that can holistically analyze ESG by incorporating social sentiment from web data.

**SB: How did you feel being the only high schooler at an international science conference?**

AP: I was really nervous, especially right before my presentation. Luckily, though, everyone respected my work and overlooked my inexperience. They definitely assessed me based on my research, not my age. My papers were also reviewed by a double blind peer review system, meaning the scientists reading my paper didn't know who I even was in advance.



Photo contributed by Aarav Patel '24  
Aarav Patel attending the conference.

**SB: How did you enjoy traveling?**

AP: Krakow was beautiful. The old architecture there is gorgeous, and my dad and I toured a bit. We had time to hang out, experience the local music and dance, the food and the chocolate. They have really good chocolate.

**SB: What did you learn in your time there?**

AP: I was exposed to new ideas in the field of collaborative innovation networks (teams of people with a collective vision, enabled by technology to create and exchange ideas). There were presentations on websites, biosensors, efficient architecture, and even how tomato plants react to human voices.

Impressive stuff. Thanks so much for your time, Aarav! Here's what his science research teacher, Catherine Piscitelli, had to say about his work:

"We are very proud of Aarav Patel and his accomplishments and that he was afforded this opportunity to travel overseas to present his findings."



In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the National Spanish Honor Society set up beautiful art displays on the bulletin boards by the World Language wing in order to create awareness about how the Hispanic community has a role within our community.

The displays feature artists who have an Hispanic heritage, including well-known artists, such as Frida Kahlo and others,

# Supporting the Community and Environment with Haven's Harvest

by Alice Xu '24

In an effort to help combat food waste, AP Environmental Science teacher Alison Beres-

Nork introduced Haven's Harvest, a non-profit food rescue organization, to Amity High School last year. The organization collects surplus food items from locations such as schools, restaurants, and grocery stores to be distributed among local organizations who then give that food to people in need.

Nork had initially met with former principal Anna Mahon in March of 2020 to discuss Haven's Harvest, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it only began at Amity in March of 2022.



Photo contributed by Trident Staff

**The Haven's Harvest Boxes are in the cafeteria each day during breakfast and lunch.**

Now, however, Amity is not only helping to benefit the community, but also the environment, which suffers greatly as a result of food waste.

The reason for such lies in where food waste ends up once it is thrown away and how it decomposes. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection reports food waste as making up 22.3% of the solid waste stream, much of which is sent to landfills.

The inhospitable environment in landfills slows the decomposition of food waste and causes it to release methane in the process. Methane, a greenhouse gas, contributes to global warming by trapping heat in the atmosphere, a cycle which is exacerbated by the increasing rates of food waste.

Though industrial composters and incinerators have the power to digest and burn garbage, Connecticut's facilities do not have the capacity for all the waste produced in the state. Haven's Harvest, therefore, seeks to work against food waste's detrimental effects on the environment by tackling the magnitude of food waste itself.

Alison Beres-Nork understands the importance and the many benefits of this initiative. "It makes so much sense to donate perfectly good food to individuals who are suffering from food insecurity!" she said.

"It helps to keep people fed and it keeps food out of landfills and doesn't overwhelm industrial composters," she added

The project has also helped to gather students who are passionate about the environment and the cause of Haven's Harvest. It is dependent on a group of dedicated students who help by taking out boxes for food collection, gathering food at the end of lunch periods, and spreading word throughout the school.

When asked of her involvement with Haven's Harvest, Sena Ho '23, said, "It is really important to me because food waste is something I am very passionate about, and I hope that we can inform our peers about the problem and attack it at its roots."

As a way of spreading knowledge, a check on climate change, and a service to those suffering from food insecurity, Haven's Harvest has no shortage of benefits to champion.

# Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services

## *New Haven Agency Committed to Helping Refugees One Family at a Time*

by Aachal Gupta '25



Photo of Chris George, the IRIS presenter, at Day of Dialogue

*Photo contributed by Trident Staff*

As per OBOA tradition, students participated in the Day of Dialogue on October 13th. To go along with OBOA's travel-the-world theme, OBOA invited the executive director of IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services), Chris George, to be the keynote speaker.

During his workshop in the Brady Center, he explained the rigorous vetting process of finding refuge in the United States through the story of a Syrian family. He touched upon the cruelty and vigor the FBI uses while going through every family file, to show the audience the extremes they go to. George interacted with the crowd by picking out volunteers to help out with a skit about the Syrian family.

IRIS is a nonprofit agency in New Haven. Ever since 1982, New Haven has been recognized to be a safe harbor for refugees from all over the world. Many refugees who find IRIS are given a new chance at life through IRIS's refugee resettlement program. IRIS's unwavering mission is to help refugees build better lives.

They want to reestablish hope in refugee families, even if it starts out as small as a hot home-cooked meal. The refugees that they aid have gone through an exhaustive process in order to be selected to come here, meaning that a successful adjustment is a top priority. IRIS also focuses on the mental and physical health of everyone they are assisting to ensure a safe and secure integration. They help each refugee family fit in by hosting health literacy and emotional well-being workshops, as well as soccer teams, community gardening, and a weekly women's sewing group.

In 2020 alone, IRIS helped over 120 immigrant families find jobs and a steady source of income. IRIS also has literacy programs, as learning the English language can be challenging for refugees. In these programs, they teach the language to families and help kids prepare for grade school by providing preschool readiness classes. Gaining these skills opens the door to many life-changing opportunities for the families and future generations.

Interning or volunteering at IRIS is an amazing way to get involved with this agency. You can also sponsor or co-sponsor refugee families. IRIS currently has sponsor circles for Ukrainian refugees who can come to the U.S. for a two year period. Sponsors take care of them financially and help refugees obtain housing and basic necessities. Another way to help out is to donate through the IRIS website. Your donations go toward providing as many refugees as possible with the quality of care they deserve. IRIS is an ever-growing agency that helps refugees do the almost impossible.



## *Running Late on Getting Your Halloween Costume? Here Are Some Last Minute Ideas!*

### **A Mummy**

Wrap yourself up in toilet paper, but make sure you leave space for your eyes and mouth!

### **A Ninja**

Wear all black and add on a solid black ski mask to cover your face for ultimate stealth!

### **An Ancient Roman**

Find a plain white bed sheet. Using this sheet, drape yourself a toga and add on gold jewelry as a finishing touch!

### **A Snowboarder**

Grab yourself a puffy jacket, a helmet, goggles, and gloves and your snowboarder outfit is complete!

### **A Tourist**

Whip out your favorite Hawaiian shirt with cargo shorts! Don't forget those Birkenstocks with long white socks!

### **A Hippie**

Find your favorite crazy pants. Bonus points if they have a flare at the bottom! Grab circular sunglasses and a fringed sweatshirt and you're ready to go!



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## Woodbridge Like Me Day Creates Multicultural Community

by Nina Carmeli '23

The Town of Woodbridge Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion hosted the second Annual Woodbridge Like Me Day on Sunday, October 9 from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm on the Woodbridge Town Green. Meant to celebrate the vibrant and diverse BOW community, this free community event featured live performances, a community mural project, local organizations, music, food trucks, and more.

Students from Amity were present, hosting activities and fundraisers for organizations such as the Chinese National Honors Society, Latin Club, and Diversity in Action club.

In addition, local organizations contributed to the day of fun, including Beecher's Green Team, the Woodbridge Democratic and Republican Town Committees, JCC of Greater New Haven, Girl Scout Troops, and many more. Performances by World Champion Taekwondo, Twinkle Toes Dance Academy, Butterfly Chinese Dance Troupe, Aiping Tai Chi, and Interfaith Choir contributed to the jubilant event.

Shreya Hebbar '23, a member of the Chinese Honors Society, said, "I thought it was really successful. It was so nice to watch all the different cultural performances and try new foods. It was amazing to see so many cultures come together."

Similarly, Nina Florkiewicz '23, a



Photo contributed by Shreya Hebbar '23  
**Students help out at Woodbridge Like Me Day**

member of the Latin Club, agreed, saying, "There were a lot of different tables where people got to walk around and experience along with performances that showed different aspects of culture."

"From this, I saw my friends and new people, and we got to connect over our differences."

Across the board, the event proved to be an immersive experience for all that attended, learning new aspects of cultures and becoming more aware of and knowledgeable about different practices and beliefs of all types of people.

## Music in Motion Is Coming!

*Music in Motion is back after a few years of nonexistent shows and makeshift outdoor setups, returning live on stage on Friday, October 28th at 7 pm.*

*This year's production, entitled "Streaming!", features music from beloved streaming TV shows and movies and promises to create an enjoyable experience for the whole family.*

*Performances by the Band, Choir, Jazz Band & Percussion Ensemble will make for a musical theater production unlike anything seen before. Seventh and eighth grade students will enter for free with a paying adult. Tickets are available for purchase online.*

## Day of Dialogue Celebrates Global Diversity

by Matthew Parker '24



Photo contributed by Matthew Parker '24

### Aachal Gupta '25 and Chris George

On Thursday, October 13th, students partook in events during Amity's Day of Dialogue to celebrate the diversity of the world and acknowledge the different ways people live and the situations and circumstances that arise as a result.

The event was coordinated by the One Book One Amity club and its advisers English teacher Julie Chevan and librarian Vicki Hulse.

Chris George, executive director of the Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services, arrived at Amity as the keynote speaker and shared about his time overseas volunteering to help refugees and about IRIS's contribution in the long process. George explained the tremendous amount of help this organization has offered in the form of providing basic needs of survival as well as health, education, management, legal teams, and employment opportunities.

In the Brady Center, a reenactment of what someone potentially impacted would go through to eventually arrive in the United States took place. The reenactment assisted the student body in empathizing with refugees and why it's essential to care.

Prior to the speech, Aachal Gupta '25 said, "I think that helping out and volunteering is a great experience and I think IRIS is doing wonderful things. I liked Mr. George's speech because he kept [the program] interactive."

One activity that the day had to offer was "Traveling Our World Through Film." This session consisted of a group of students watching films that discussed tourism, traveling abroad, and the potential issues to come with doing so. The takeaway from the session was to highlight the importance of caring for the environment and taking in the culture respectfully rather than only experiencing tourism through picture-taking.

Another activity that students had the option of attending was "Passages: An Awareness Game Confronting the Plight of Refugees." The activity helped students understand what refugees went through using a simulation.

One of the instructors who ran the activity, English teacher Tasia Kimball, said, "This day was a great opportunity to spread awareness about refugees and about the experience that people who are forced to flee might endure."

The student body thoroughly enjoyed a morning of learning. Zachary Fish '23 said, "It's fun to learn about other ways of life and Day of Dialogue provides a means of having that educational fun."

Fish assisted with the National Chinese Honor Society's workshop for calligraphy and paper lanterns, immersing students in a fun experience.

The Day of Dialogue, coming together as a success due to IRIS and the vast number of volunteers who took time out of their day to come in and educate the student body, has allowed people to learn and celebrate other cultures through engaging activities.

Amity continues to grow as a more informed and accepting community due to the creative and passionate OBOA team and the session leaders present at the Day of Dialogue.

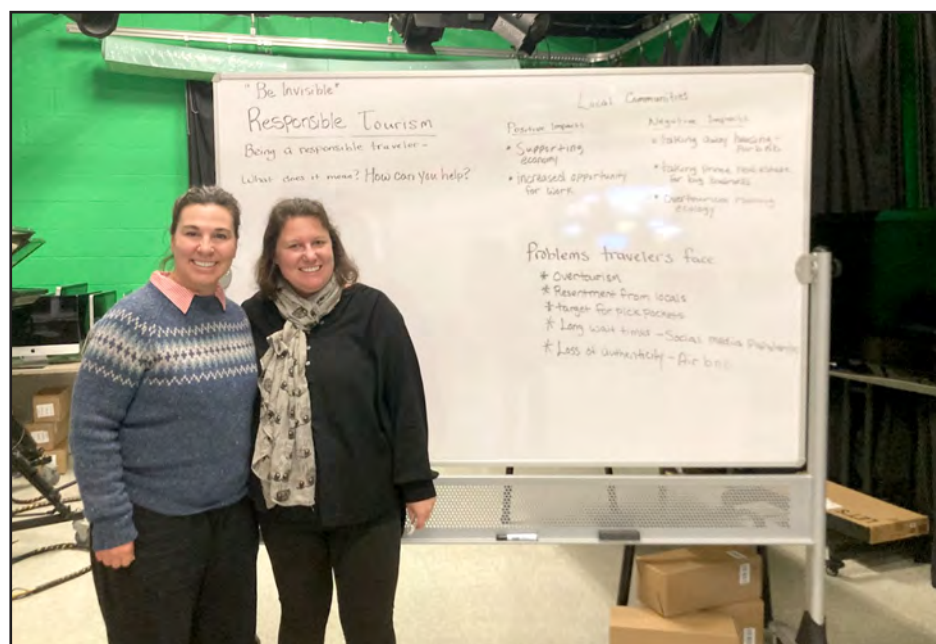


Photo contributed by Matthew Parker '24

### Art teachers Christina Ruenhorst and Jackie Valenzuela



# Tri-M Music Honors Society Holds Induction Ceremony

by Nina Carmeli '23

Amity Regional High School's chapter of the Tri-M Music Honors Society celebrated their honorable inductees on Wednesday, October 20th at 4:30 pm. The new chapter is starting its first full year of service and activities after hosting an inaugural induction in the spring of last year.

Tri-M, a program in the National Association for Music Education, first began in 1936 at Maine Township High School in Park Ridge, Illinois with the goal of shaping leaders in music education and advocacy.

While Amity's chapter may seem new to this generation of students, in reality, it is a re-establishment of the society from years past. The objectives remain the same, immersing the BOW community in musical awareness and importance.

Due to the enthusiasm of students in performing arts classes, the honors society invited sophomores in addition to juniors and seniors.

Lisa Serio, chair of the orchestra department and advisor for Tri-M, expressed her gratitude for the support of the arts at Amity both by the students and the administration and shared her excitement for the year to come.

A selection of music was played by current

members of Tri-M, including a string arrangement of "Imagine" by John Lennon and a vocal performance by senior members Harrison Rosenay and Spencer Fiske.

Sophia McDermott '23, secretary of the society, conveyed the success of the afternoon, exclaiming, "I am very excited to begin our first full year of Tri-M. I am hoping we will be able to do a variety of events, from performances to service projects."

Tri-M is prepared to do impressive things in the community, from performing at senior centers to mentoring elementary school students from Bethany, Orange, and Woodbridge who are part of the performing arts program.



Photo contributed by Trident staff  
Photos from the Tri-M Music Honors Society Induction

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# Boys Soccer Takes Surprise Win over Branford Hornets

by Liliana Fleming '24 and CJ Brinton '24

In their game against Branford on September 30th, the Spartans took a slow start, not scoring until there were 13 minutes left in the first half. Ian Rady '24, wearing #4, scored both the first goal of the game and his first goal of the season. He led the score 1-0 going into halftime, and changed Amity's mentality.

Early on in the second half, #18 and Captain, Henry Ranani '24 scored from outside of the 18 yard box. The Spartans did not end the game there.

Ranani said, "I was definitely relieved as once we were able to put a two goal difference between Branford I knew we had the game in the bag."

The Spartans continued to



Photo contributed by CJ Brinton '24

play hard and with just under 10 minutes left, #6 Jason Byun '23 scored the third goal of the game and also his first of the season. To finish it off, with 7:53

left #9 Luca Molluca '23 scored a header, ending the game with a score of 4-0.

Ranani talked about how the Branford game was an especially important one for the team.

"Our defense has been solid all year and they continued that in our game against Branford as we kept a clean sheet," he said.

"Offensively though, we have been struggling. This game showed our team that we have the ability to put the ball in the back of the net and finish our chances."

Ranani also mentioned both Rady and Byun's goals being their first of this season, and how that translated to a lot of excitement and motivation for the team.

Miles Katz '24 offered a defensive perspective saying, "I think that when we played against Branford we were more aggressive than usual.



Photo contributed by CJ Brinton '24

Spartans line up for National Anthem ahead of the game against Branford.

We were tired of close games (a lot of ties, and wins and losses by small margins) and just needed to push harder for the win."

The Amity boys soccer team is currently 3-6-3, with their losses having been fairly close games and against some of the higher-ranked teams in the state including Shelton, Xavier, Guilford, and Wilbur Cross.

However, the team's season is not over just yet. Heading into the final games of their regular season, Ranani

talked about what is working for the team.

"I think the team as a whole are a group of really selfless individuals," he stated. "That characteristic allows us to persevere during really difficult matches where in years past we would break down losing by significant margins."

Amity had a decisive win against Branford, and will look for that outcome again as they progress.

## Aaron Judge Makes Baseball History

by Anna McNamara '26 and Annie Brinton '26

Aaron Judge had an amazing year setting a new record for home runs and being an outstanding New York Yankee. Judge became a Yankee in the first round of the 2013 MLB draft. In his first season, he hit 49 home runs and set the record for the most home runs by a rookie. Judge has been #99 for the Yankees since he started playing in the MLB.

On Tuesday, October 4, the Yankees played the Texas Rangers at Choctaw Stadium in Arlington, Texas. Aaron Judge was first to bat for New York. The Rangers had Jesus Tinoco as their starter pitcher. He gave Judge a ball and a strike.

On the third pitch, an 88 mph slider came flying at Judge. The ball was thrown as a strike and, but Judge decided to swing at it anyway. As the ball went soaring through the air into deep left field, the crowd started to go wild. Judge jogged to first base while fixating on the ball.

The ball flew into the stands on the right side of the yellow foul pole and it was gone. Judge had made baseball history, marking his 62nd home run and becoming the all-time holder of most home runs in a single season for the American League.

Judge did not play for the rest of the game or the following game against the Rangers. The Yankees lost the game to the Rangers 3-2, but the game was a win to them.

Judge officially eclipsed former Yankee player Roger Maris' record of 61 home runs in one season in 1961. In previous years, there have been controversial record-breakers.

In 2001, Barry Bonds, who, at the time, played for the San Francisco Giants hit 73 home runs in the 2001 season becoming the MLB's home run king. He was, however, found to be on steroids.

An article from The Washington Post from January 17, 2017 stated that "Bonds admitted to using steroids after his personal trainer allegedly misled him into believing he was taking flaxseed oil and arthritis cream." He was not the only one though. Mark McGwire, who played for the St. Louis Cardinals during the 1998 season, hit 70 home runs beating the record in the MLB at the time.

He also admitted to using steroids but says "he didn't need performance-enhancing drugs to hit the long ball," according to ESPN. Sammy Sosa who played for the Chicago Cubs in 1998, also beat the at-time record with 66 home runs. He denied being on steroids, but according to an article from The New York Times in 2009, he tested positive for steroid use.

Aaron Judge's ability to hit 62 home runs as a clean player solidifies him as the legitimate record holder in many baseball fans' eyes.



Photo accessed from The National Review



**The Girls Swim/  
Dive team beat  
Hamden on  
October 14th,  
2022.**

**Congratulations  
to the girls!**

# COVID-19 and Fall Sports in 2022: Almost Normal

by CJ Brinton '24



Photo accessed from CIAC

In the two-and-a-half years since the start of the pandemic, Amity Athletics have been through a lot. It seems this fall, we may finally be back to normal.

In the hybrid return to school in fall 2020, sports teams were faced with nearly as many complicated protocols as the school building. Amity Athletics has, and continues to base its regulations on the guidelines of the CIAC.

In fall 2020, CIAC canceled the football season. Specifically, the CIAC ruled that eleven-on-eleven tackle football would not take place as a high school sport in Connecticut. The physical nature of the sport was not conducive to the safety of players

at that time.

Apart from the cancellation of football, the CIAC implemented a cohort system and a time limit on practices. Teams needed to practice in groups of ten and for no more than an hour in order to maintain social distance and limit possible exposure time.

Fourteen-day quarantines for all those contact-traced by school or athletics were also required. For those that did test positive, a seven-day return-to-play program was required to ensure athletes were returning in the best condition possible. Masks were required for indoor and outdoor sports, and many teams implemented COVID symptom screenings before practices and games.

With these protocols in place, fall sports in 2020 were very different, and many teams found it difficult to be unified.

Fast forward to 2021. Some protocols were lifted as more about the virus and its transmission in sports was discovered. To start, the football team was allowed a season, full eleven-on-eleven and with no modifications in terms of tackling. The fourteen day contact tracing was shortened, and required COVID-screenings were phased out.

While the seven-day return-to-play protocol remained in place, outdoor sports were no longer required to wear masks during practices and games. Indoor sports, such as girls volleyball were still required to do so.

This year, now fall approaching winter of 2022, very few restrictions remain in place in relation to COVID. Since the school is no longer contact-tracing, and the "screen and stay" protocol is in place in the building, it remains the same in sports, there are no quarantines. Masks are not required by any member of any team, regardless of indoor/outdoor activity.

Athletic Director Ernie Goodwin offered his thoughts on the 2022 season saying, "Although COVID continues to be an issue, it is much nicer not to have to do Covid screenings, have kids struggling to run in masks, and seeing more people healthy."

For those that do test positive, a five-day quarantine is required, followed by the seven-day return-to-play program. This, again, is used in the same manner as the protocol for an athlete returning from a concussion. The goal is to ensure that the athlete is physically healthy and able to return to their sport.

In addition to the lifting of the mask requirement, there are no longer any restrictions on fans. In years past, to maintain social distancing, fan attendance was limited to one or two per player.

Goodwin also praised the increased interest in athletics this fall.

"I believe the most exciting thing about Amity fall sports is the increased number of students who registered for a fall sport," he said.

"We had 445 students register and offer 22 different fall teams. With athletics playing a big role in the overall education of a student, it is great to see an increase in the number of students who want to participate!"

The near-return to a pre-COVID athletic climate is imperative for improved team dynamic. Some teams have been able to build strong team chemistry despite the difficulties of mandated restrictions, but others have found it difficult to connect between all players.

This season should offer those teams a chance to build stronger team bonds that will hopefully translate to stronger performance.



## Girls Cross Country Senior Night!

Photo contributed by Shreya Hebbar '23.

### Reflections from Nell Grant '23:

I found Senior Night to be very bittersweet.

Seeing all my teammates run the home course (some for the last time) is exciting because I know that they all know exactly what they are doing and how to do it well.

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*On display are bright faces and excited club leaders ready to display their passions to the student body!*

*Pictured here are the Help Your Community Club, Competitive Programming Club, Science Olympiad, and several others.*

Photos contributed by Sena Ho '23



# Jump-starting the Year with Club Day!



**STAY INVOLVED!**  
 Check your email and listen to morning announcements for updates on club meetings.