

The Westword

Student voice of the Westhill community
"The test of good journalism is the measure of its public service."

Beekeeping club making a difference

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**A BREAKDOWN OF THE
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Note from the Editors

February 2020

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fourth issue of the year. We are excited to continue a great year of serving as the student voice of the Westhill community.

Our Editorial this month analyzes the impact major league sports and athletics have had on society, and students specifically.

News covers the change in course policy and the Seal of Biliteracy testing.

In Viewpoint, we consider the effects of gender norms on careers and possible bias in the education system.

This issue, Special Report delves into the breakdown of the coronavirus and its global effect.

This Supplement in-

sert shines a light on Black History Month.

En las noticias hablamos con la profesora Álvarez sobre sus logros en los últimos meses. También vamos a ver los varios cantores populares en latinoamérica y el estado de sus carreras.

Feature this issue highlights Ms. Wheeler's renovated classroom and the new beekeeping club.

Limelight looks into the Super Bowl halftime show and the growing popularity of Bedroom Pop.

In Sports, we look back at the winter team's success this season.

For more, visit thewestwordonline.com. Be sure to check out our Instagram account for updates @thewestword.

We encourage any

and all readers with comments, questions, or concerns to contact us by either dropping a letter into Chloe Giulini's mailbox in room 224, Direct Messaging (DM) us on Instagram @thewestword, or emailing us at westwordwhs@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Chloe Giulini & Veda Bhalla
Editor-in-Chief & Executive Editor

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Editorial Policy

The Westword will be guided in the publication of material by a concern for truth, human decency, and human benefit. It is published during the school year by The Westword staff, along with the Communications class. Letters to the Editor, advertising requests, comments, criticism, or suggestions are always welcome. The views expressed in Viewpoint and the Op-Ed page do not necessarily represent the opinions of The Westword.

The Editorial Board consists of Julia Afsary, Hailey Baloutch, Veda Bhalla, Lexi Boccuzzi, Mary Chobanyan, Emelyncole Chuco, Kristina DeLelle, Chloe Giulini, Michael Quinn McHale, Lucca Metzger, Micayla Roth, Elizabeth Watkinson, Marta Zach, Jason Zarrilli, Mr. von Wahlde, and Mr. Wooley. The Editorial can be found on page 3.

Announcements

There are no announcements at this time.

Corrections

There are no corrections this issue.

The Westword

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Visit ourschoolnewspaper.com/Westword to view our print archives.

If you have an announcement or an advertisement you would like published in the next issue, please e-mail us at westwordwhs@gmail.com.

Front cover by **Marta Zach** / Managing Editor.
Back cover by **Morgan McDonald** (top), **Sydney Eben** (bottom left), & **Marta Zach** (bottom right) / Contributor, Photo Manager & Managing Editor.

EDITORIAL

Professional sports and American culture

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Unlike any other country in the world, the American experience has been defined by “America’s pastime” otherwise known as sports.

In the last 100 years, the expansion of professional sports has dramatically influenced American culture. Athletes—many from low income backgrounds—epitomize the American dream, coming into the spotlight of international fame and fortune on the basis of skill. It has changed the face of mainstream cable TV and media, with the exposure and idolization of sports.

However, it has also resulted in skewed college admissions and the dangerous specialization of young student-athletes in a particular sport.

No matter where you grew up, what your family situation looked like, or what your ethnic background, every American child is exposed to sports in some way during their youth. As we sat watching Yankee games on TV, playing pickup basketball during recess, or traveling for competitive soccer teams, sports played a critical role in teaching us important life lessons.

We learn ethics through sports because of the rules that help regulate the game and keep them fair and honest. There are established guidelines that the players are aware of in order to play the game right. No player should have an unfair advantage over another player or purposely injure an opponent without consequences for their actions.

Unethical behavior is rampant in our world, however sports teaches us a higher standard that we can aspire to. Because professional sports are so widely viewed, teams are under a microscope and when there are questionable actions within a sport, it evokes widespread accountability.

A recent example is the Houston Astros cheating scandal which prompted the firing of the team’s General Manager, Manager, and both coaches that were involved, and casting a shadow over the team’s successes.

Just as the “ethics” taught by sports has had many impacts, particularly as promoted by professional sports teams, the attraction of “going pro” in sports has led parents and children alike to put immense stake in achieving athletic goals. Pressure put on kids from a very young age can be important in teaching them determination, hard work and ambition, but also can be very difficult to live

up to. Intense pressure plagues young student athletes on a daily basis. Whether it is at practice or at home, expectations are set up by parents, coaches, and even other students.

Take for example the case of Hunter Holmes of Redmond Oregon. After suffering a concussion, he would get headaches that went unrecognized by his family. Two months after a second concussion a year after his first, he would take his own life.

In an interview with the father in the Central Oregonian, he lamented, “I am just as guilty as any dad at this. When your son goes down or something

ize, kids who play one sport are 81 percent more likely to get an overuse related injury. The increase in specialization among young athletes is a direct result of the absurd pressure applied to them and puts them in grave danger of poor physical and psychological development.

“I notice more overuse injury among Westhill athletes that play a single sport all year round rather than those who are three sport athletes,” Ali Czescik, Westhill athletic trainer, said.

However, some of the increased pressure in youth athletics is eased by a supportive community.

Bottom Line: The growth of professional sports is putting undue pressure, both physical and psychological, on students.



Illustration by Neeka Baclayon / Head Illustrator.

like that, it is not concerning. You just tell them to rub it off.”

This is not to place blame on the father, or the parents, but rather the culture surrounding sports, where nonfatal injuries are seen as something that can be brushed off.

In light of this pressure as well as the prospect of securing scholarships and professional athletics for very talented students, kids are pushed to choose “their” sport at younger and younger ages. Not only does this have a psychological impact on growing kids, but it also has physical implications. According to a study performed by Charles A. Popkin, M.D., assistant professor of orthopaedic surgery at Columbia University Medical Center, 57.2 percent of his patients’ parents wanted their children to play professional or college sports and 33 percent of them only played one sport.

According to a report published in the official journal of the *American Academy of Pediatrics*, when compared to athletes who play a diversity of sports to those who special-

“Having supportive coaches and teammates help you manage the pressure and keep it from negatively affecting you. It has a decent impact on me in and out of school, as I can use it to make myself want to succeed,” Timothy Silkowitz (’21), Westhill soccer player, said.

Good support systems are needed for young student athletes, in order to prevent tragedies such as that of Hunter Holmes. And, our participation in sports—as players or fans—has many positive effects. Sports play a role in breaking down class barriers. Sports are celebrated for team building and bringing people together through healthy competition. Soccer, in particular, is a sport where teams are formed of people from diverse communities and socioeconomic statuses, bridging the divide between people who would not normally interact. Through this, people learn how to work with those from all walks of life.

“I have met so many of my friends through the sport, whether it was through Westhill soccer or my club team. Soc-

cer has definitely connected me with many of my friends with all different types of backgrounds,” Stephen Magnifico (’20), soccer captain, said.

While certain situations may arise where the cost of equipment or field time may exclude people with less disposable income, public schools often offer financial aid for students who could not otherwise participate in sports. And at private schools, disadvantaged students may be recruited for sports scholarships. NCAA.org reports that “Divisions I and II schools provide more than 2.9 billion dollars in athletics

a rate of about 70 percent. Yet the admit rate for nonathletes with the same score was 0.076 percent—nearly 1,000 times lower.”

These numbers apply to almost all universities. James Schulman and William Bowen (former Princeton University president) discovered that athletes were given a 48 percent admission boosts when looking at 30 selective schools. This can be compared to a 25 percent boost for legacy students and 18 percent for racial minorities.

The idolization of athletes also enhances the influence of sports on American culture. Athletes become pinnacles of the success that Americans seek in their own lives, feeling tied to the progressions of their favorite athlete’s career. This creates a distinct connection between fans and their favorite players, a connection epitomized by the tragic sense of loss felt by the American public at Kobe Bryant’s sudden death.

This position of unimaginable fame also allows athletes to influence culture in a number of different ways that extend beyond the sport they play. They pioneer new fashion and athletic wear trends with brands like Jordan capitalizing on the name recognition and skill of their founders. Athletes also use their positions as platforms for charity, with baseball players like Curtis Granderson bringing education and fitness initiatives to inner cities.

However, some view social justice advocacy as not having a place in sports. The most famous example of pro-sporting protest is NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick’s kneeling during the national anthem in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. He received significant backlash for his protest despite the platform it provided this movement for because some perceived it as showing a lack of respect for the anthem and the game of football itself.

Overall, it is indisputable that the growth of professional sports has played a fundamental role in shaping American culture as a whole. Nevertheless, while the increased participation in youth athletics has been important in teaching children a sense of, ethics and teamwork, it has also influenced society in negative ways.

The unattainable strive to meet the skill and success of professional athletes that is largely derived in “luck” has led parents to put unreasonable and dangerous pressure on their children.

scholarships annually.” This is another method by which sports encourage class equality, as universities admit students who otherwise could not afford higher education.

With the growth of professional athletics and the increased necessity of students to attend college, college athletics have grown into a unique scouting ground for professional sports teams. Therefore, athletics has created a pathway to the pros for many students while similarly providing them a chance to go to college they may not have otherwise gotten.

When it comes to college admissions, athletes can sometimes have an advantage. They are not required to have as high of an academic score as students who do not participate in sports. This can make sports seem as a priority over academics, especially with Division I universities.

According to theatlantic.com, “All applicants to Harvard are ranked on a scale of one to six based on their academic qualifications, and athletes who scored a four were accepted at

Seal of Biliteracy qualifies students

Morgana Knopoff
Staff Writer

On March 25, students will have the opportunity to officially be declared biliterate with the Seal of Biliteracy.

The Seal of Biliteracy is an award given by the school in recognition of students who have studied and obtained proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking two or more languages by high school graduation.

First developed by Californians Together, a non-profit organization which works to protect and promote the rights of English learners, the Seal has been adopted in 38 states and Washington D.C., and is under consideration in Pennsylvania and Vermont.

The Seal, first implemented in Connecticut in 2017, grants students the ability to state that they are biliterate, which can garner more scholarship opportunities and have between six to nine college credits fulfilled, significantly decreasing the cost of a college education.

Although English is not the primary language of the majority of Stamford Public Schools students, it is the language most utilized in the classroom. This leaves most students in sheltered English classes learning at an elementary school level and being graded on an English scale. The introduction of the Seal of Biliteracy not only elevates the value of being biliterate but also gives the distinction

to people who are seldom recognized for this skill.

"The Seal of Biliteracy is a great opportunity for kids who speak multiple languages to be recognized. As a bilingual person myself, I am really happy to partake in this activity and be acknowledged for this skill because it is really hard to know and learn more than one language" Jainat Akther ('20) said.

In a multicultural world, the stakes of language have been raised. It is not enough for students to complete their language requirements and get ahead in college and get a well-paid job, it is now an asset to be biliterate.

"Employers are always impressed by a candidate who is bilingual and biliterate. That person will always have a bet-

ter chance of getting a job and command a higher salary," Mme. Herz, Head of the World Language Department, said.

The Seal is also an opportunity for students to add another achievement onto their resume.

Another way to obtain the Seal is to participate in Advanced Placement language classes to gain a more comprehensive understanding of other cultures and languages.

In Westhill's third year of offering the test, students have an 85 percent success rate with most test takers being native Spanish speakers. The first year the test was provided, only 19 students were tested; however, last year 45 students took the test, and Mme. Herz is confident that upwards of 50

students will take the test this year.

The test will be held after school on March 25 with lunch provided and is completely free of charge.

Requirements to take the test include completing English requirements and achieving an intermediate score or higher according to the standards of the Connecticut Seal of Biliteracy. All students are encouraged to partake in testing, for all languages will be provided. Students who have taken the exam for AP Spanish Language and Culture and received a three or higher are automatically awarded the Seal of Biliteracy. The Seal of Biliteracy allows for students to be recognized for their skill of being bilingual.

Stamford Underground Festival in the works

Marta Zach
Managing Editor

Unconventional events spurr unconventional ideas—following Ron Suno's appearance on Westhill's campus, a group of tenns inspired by the artist and his crowd support decided to start planning the Stamford Underground Festival.

But the idea has been brewing long before the rapper's showing at Westhill.

"Originally, this idea was created last year by me. I brainstormed with a few people and came up with the idea for the Stamford Underground Festival. After Ron Sun visited the school, it gave us inspiration because we wanted it now," Devon Chase ('21) said.

The team working on the festival's production consists of Devon Chase, Reynold Rene ('20), Justin Morhunsky and Kaden Camano ('22), as well as Amanda Loura ('20) from Darien High School.

"We are very grateful for having these people on our team—they have the drive that we look for. This is a legitimate thing that is going to happen," Chase said.

Inspiration for the festival also stemmed from events like Rolling Loud. The group wanted to plan a local event that the Stamford crowd could enjoy, and that local artists would benefit from. They felt that such a festival would give a platform to up-and-coming artists in Stamford.

"We are going to mix people who are less known, but local, and we are going to combine them with some major scale artists. We want to make it work together. It's usually the high priority people with just a few of the lesser-known peo-

ple. Now, we are mixing big and small—we want to bring exposure to those individuals. We are putting people on the stage who have the drive," Justin Morhunsky ('22) said.

The group expresses that regardless of how big the event might get, even in the future, the intended dynamic will still be in place: headliners and up-and-coming artists sharing the same stage.

"We want smaller artists to be heard," Kaden Camano ('22) said.

Local artists are handpicked by the group to be part of an initial screening process. They survey them as potential artists for the show. Artists audition in front of the group of creators, who then review their style and stage presence to see if they are a suitable option for the festival.

"We look for lyricism, stage presence, punctuation, and if we can make out the details and the message," Camano said.

There were twenty five people who initially auditioned, but the group says that they only have room for about eight of them.

For the second round of auditions, potential artists send a short video for the group to get a sense of who they are. They can also send video recordings of themselves as a sample of their music.

"We do not want this to be a talent show. They are there because they have the stage presence and are performers," Chase said, regarding which artists are being chosen.

"We try to make sure that it is not an overcrowded lineup. We are basing it off of why people are coming, and we try to find people who are talented enough to fit the small criteria," Chase said.

The group is also reaching out

to artists outside of the local scene in order to generate more hype about the event. They have been in communication with LYF and Friends, who have managed a lot of big names, such as Pop Smoke.

There have been various challenges regarding the Stamford Underground Festival, although the group is fully set on the event happening.

"The only thing is securing a date and raising more funding so we can balance out the headliners, and guarantee the overall quality of the show. But we will essentially prioritize the headliners and artists first. The venue is a second priority. We will get the headliners no matter what," Morhunsky said.

The festival was initially meant to be held at the the Palace Theater, but the current venue is set to be the Palms Night Club in Stamford, having been deemed more suitable. Custom lighting, banners, booths, and merch are all on the agenda.

The group has started a GoFundMe for the event in order to raise the money needed, and began to reach out to companies to partner with. They want to connect the community with local businesses.

There has also been pushback from peers that the group has had to face.

"A lot of people have tried to cut us out and put us down. We have lost a lot of friends along the way. But it does not matter. It is what you see in yourself," Chase said.

In addition, people have allegedly been ripping down signs that have been put up around the school advertising the event.

"We have Rinaldi's permission—he supports us. If anyone

tears the posters down, they are going to have to deal with administration," Reynold Rene ('20) said.

However, despite various criticisms, the group has received lots of support from their friends and the community.

They created a Google Form for people to fill out in order to get a sense of the interest regarding the festival. They were met with an outpour of support: the survey got nearly two thousand responses, many expressing their interest in attending the festival.

"This support was not expected right away. We posted this survey, and within a week we had over a thousand entries, most of them expressing that people wanted this to happen," Camano said.

The festival creators have ac-

cepted the challenge that planning such an event inevitably comes with.

"There have been a lot of sleepless nights and two A.M. face-times," Rene said.

The five-person group of young adults has undertaken a challenge, but they have expressed the passion that drives their efforts to do something that not many others would.

"We are not normal for this. You have to be different to get places. If you are like everyone else, you will not get anywhere," Morhunsky said.

One can reach out or find information regarding the festival on *SUF.com* or on *@stamfordunderground* on Instagram.



RICAN SHADII PREPARES FOR THE SHOW Auditions were held to create the eight person lineup. Image courtesy of *@stamfordunderground* / Instagram.

Good Month Bad Month

Column by
Harrison Green
& Jessica Matloub



Good Month for...

Tesla Labeled TSLA on the New York Stock Exchange, the famous electric car company is experiencing a huge growth in the economy recently. According to CNBC, between their upcoming Cybertruck along with the quickly evolving market for electric cars, they have had an amazing year so far. Since the beginning of the year, their stock price had doubled and it has not stopped growing. It went from an adjusting closing price of 400 dollars per share to over 900 dollars, a rare occurrence in the stock market. The public is clearly excited for what has yet to come.



BTS According to *The New York Times*, k-pop has been led and controlled by the band BTS. Their first k-pop album soared to the top of the Billboard Top 100. The group of seven young men have created varying music styles, ranging from chameleonic to techno. The group has traveled internationally performing together and has also broke off for their own collaborations. In late February, they did their own segment with Stephen Colbert. Fans are wondering how much more success the group can amass since they have already reached this point.



Chiefs The 2020 Super Bowl between the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers was an exciting game. Initially, the 49ers held a ten point lead and the chances of the Chiefs victory dwindled. This was the first Super Bowl that the Chiefs had been a part of in 50 years and they were determined to win. The Chiefs quickly made a comeback in which they scored two fourth-quarter touchdowns and fiercely defended. The combination of their determination and skill carried the Chiefs into their first win since Super Bowl IV. The teams 31-20 triumph instills hope into fans that the Chiefs have the potential to emerge victorious.

Bad Month for...

Australia Months of an excessive drought in Australia has resulted in intense bushfires throughout the continent. These raging fires have already taken 33 lives and as the air continues to become drier, hotter and windier, and the spread of them could continue. Many are fearful that the fires may eventually become uncontrollable. The regions affected the most include New South Wales (NSW) and Victoria. In NSW, more than 2,000 homes have been destroyed forcing thousands to relocate. Thousands of firefighters volunteered to attempt to take control of these catastrophic fires.



Robots As technology continues to advance and develop, the possibility that robots could replace the human workforce has become a source of stress within society. Companies are using artificial intelligence rather than humans to predict the market and make personal recommendations to customers browsing online. Retail stores are becoming less prevalent as online shopping takes over. In 2018 alone, nearly 6,000 retail stores were closed. Over the past 20 years, the number of robots in use has increased exponentially to 2.25 million. This increase is provoking a growing unease that many people will lose their jobs to technology.



Coronavirus The new Coronavirus, originating in Wuhan, China, has shocked the world. Cruise ships have been quarantined, stocks have fallen, manufacturing has slowed down, and fear has struck the public. Over 114,000 cases have been reported and over 4,000 have died, but some speculate that the actual amount may be higher than the government is willing to disclose. There is little risk for any of us here in Stamford to contract it as of now, so there appears to be nothing to worry about. The flu still kills plenty of people each year as well, so do not forget to wash your hands. *Read this month's Special Report for more detailed information.*

Illustrations by **Dason Zarilli** (top left), **Tia Blumenau** (top right), **Anika Tandon** (bottom left) & **Matthew Wint** (bottom right) & / **Jason Zarilli**, Illustrators, & Reporter.

Change in course policy documentation

Ava Mastrone
Staff Writer

Starting second semester, the process which students must undergo to add, drop, or change one of their classes has changed. During the two week period after a semester begins, students will be able to add or drop a course. If a student does withdraw from a course after the first half of a semester class, or after the first semester in a full year class, a "W" will appear on the students transcript. This "W" stands for withdrawal.

In addition, students cannot switch the level of their course, such as moving from CP to honors, or vice versa, after the first quarter. Switching levels will not result in a "W" on a students transcript.

Students who have IEPs, 504s, or SRBI recommendations, or students who recently arrive at Westhill may be able to switch levels at other times.

In addition, when changing levels, grades follow students to the next course, and grades remain the same, unless the numeric grade is less than 59. In that case, the grade will be raised to a 59. If a student is failing an elective, they can switch after midterms in a full year class, but cannot switch after the two week add or drop period in a semester class.

"We hope this will make sure students are not switching classes at random times throughout the year," Mr. Marchesani, guidance counselor, said.

Grade weighting will be applied once the class is completed successfully, and will appear in the students transcript.

Some miscellaneous changes include that a student is expected to return any supplies to a teacher after they withdraw or drop their class; classes taken that are not part of the graduation requirements are considered electives, and finally, a world language class cannot

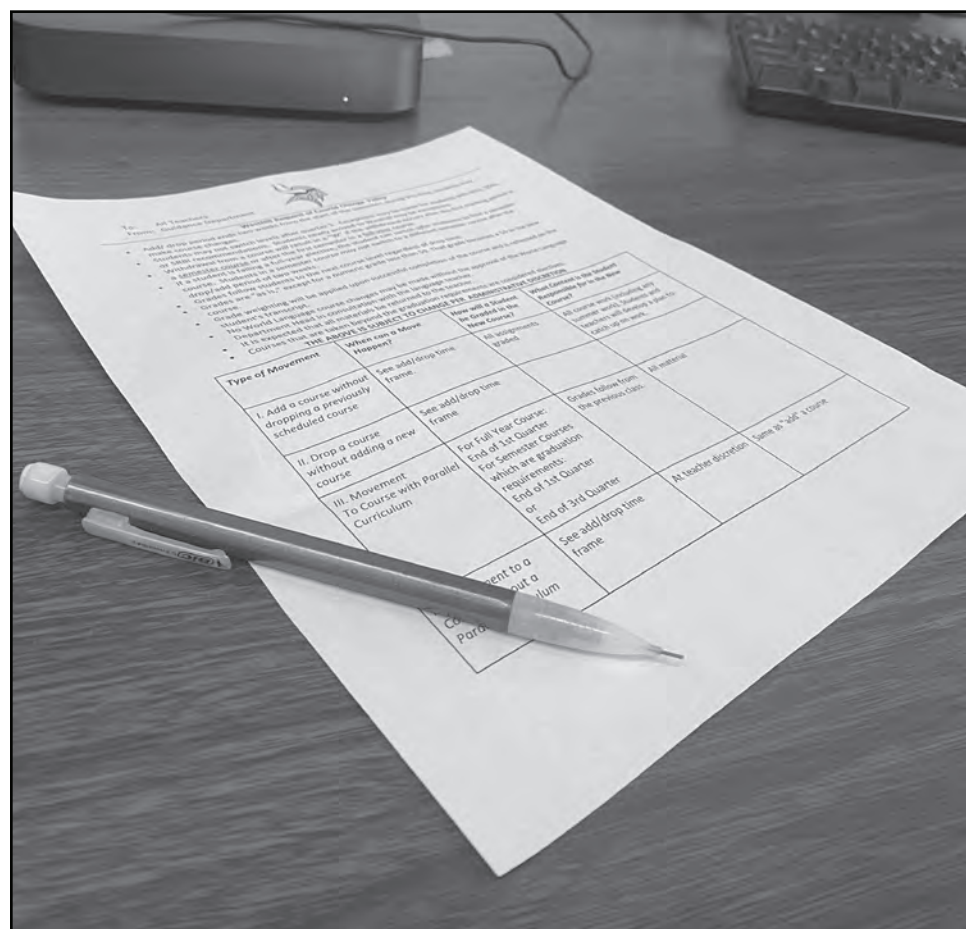
not be changed without approval from the World Language Department Head and the teacher of said class.

These changes most greatly affect students in the fact that there are more strict time frames as to when students are allowed to change and adjust their schedules. Where students were able to add or drop classes more freely throughout each semester, they will now be held more strictly to the two week add or drop period at the start of each semester.

In addition, by having the "W" appear on a student's transcript when they withdraw from a class, than just having the grade transfer over from their previous class, will affect when colleges or any other outside organizations, see the students transcript. These organizations will now see that the student withdrew from the class, rather than only seeing the class they transferred into.

"The new course change policy has its pros and cons. Pros are that it promotes better relations between guidance counselors and students, and may encourage more thought to be put into course selection. However, it can be really stressful for students to have such a hard and fast time frame to make changes to their schedule, especially if mistakes were made by counselors to being with," Cece Coleman ('21) said.

Reasons for these changes are to ensure a standard protocol for course changes, both for the guidance counselors, and for students. Also, these rules hope to ensure that students take their classes seriously, and ensure that they are taking classes that they enjoy and are truly interested in, weather than realizing their disinterest a couple weeks into the course. This also encourages counselors to work with their students to choose the right course to begin with. Counselors also hope that these policies will reduce the hectic schedule changes at the start of the school year.



NEW IMPROVEMENTS At the start of second semester, students only had two weeks to change classes.

Photo by **Michael Quinn McHale** / Managing Editor.

Busy bees buzzing around the Hill

Marta Zach
Managing Editor

According to abcnews.go bees do more for the environment than just provide honey, in fact, they support 20 billion dollars worth of crops in the United States. Without honeybees, the environment would collapse. Bees are very important, complex creatures—and the Viking Apiaries intend to bring them to Westhill.

Mike Edwards ('22) and science teacher Mrs. Grant run the Viking Apiaries, which is the beekeeping club. The club meets on Mondays after school. Edwards is very familiar with the practice of beekeeping, formally called apiculture, and Mrs. Grant has expressed her longtime desire to work with bees.

"My brothers and I started beekeeping four to five years ago, so that is what sparked my interest," Mike Edwards ('22) said.

Edwards and his brother Alex started a volunteer program a few years ago where they brought beekeeping to students at Roxbury. Their family also owns property in Ridgefield with bee hives.

The club is meant to educate people about honeybees and the practice of beekeeping. Edwards says that the main goal regarding the club's development is to get

as many people involved and to continue expanding the club.

The experience is very hands-on. The club plans to start building the hives in the winter with all of its members, which will then be ready for the bees in the spring. The club will tend to the bees in the summer months as well, even once the school year comes to a close.

The hives are to be placed in the far corner of the back field, a decision made in consideration of the possible tear-down of Westhill in the upcoming years. This way, the hives will be unaffected and the club can continue to tend to them regardless of the

state of the building.

"We feel that it is a good idea, It is accessible and if and when they take the school down, that area will not be disturbed,"

Mrs. Grant said.

The club partnered with the RISE Network for the necessary funding needed for materials, bee suits, feeders. Smokers, are also used, which are devices for calming honeybees.

According to Edwards, fundraising was an issue at first, but got resolved quickly.

The RISE Network matches online donations and helps with school-related funding in Connecticut, and was crucial for the Viking Apiaries' quick fundraising.

On Monday, February 24, the club officially started building the hives. Students of all grades met in room 310 and got

to work. The atmosphere was relaxed but productive, and all students got to participate in the hands-on experience of gluing pieces of the hives together and trying on the bee suits.

There is one size of bee boxes, but two different kinds of frames, which are what hold the honey and where the bees end up making their homes. The club is also ordering Italian bees.

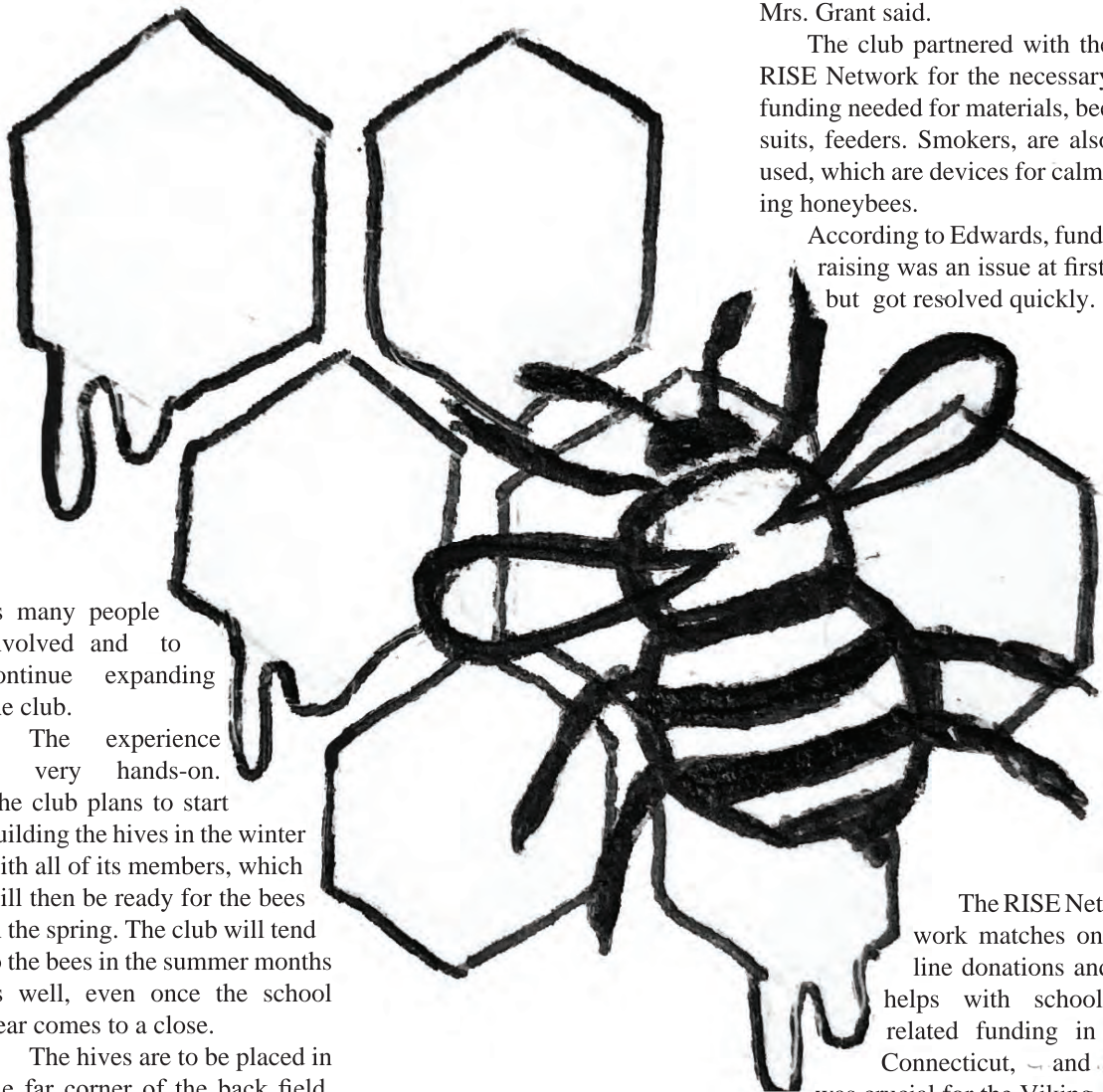
The club is currently small, and there are only a few hives being made, but the Viking Apiaries plan on expanding in the future. Edwards encourages new members to join, as this will benefit the school, students, and bees.

The club's current members were eager to join and appreciate the unique opportunity to work with bees right on Westhill's campus.

"It is a fun club that gives me an opportunity to do something as unique as beekeeping, and allows me to understand the time, effort, and importance of it," Savannah Madar ('21) said.

According to beekeepinginsider.com, beekeeping has many different benefits, which include helping the economy and improving pollination of crops and flowers. Other benefits include the building of community, calming of stress, and production of honey, which the club and its members can all benefit from.

Illustration by **Tia Blumenau** / Illustrator.



Valentine's Day: Teacher Edition

Mr. & Mrs. Kurtz

Both of the Kurtz's met here at Westhill. They have been married for nearly 20 years now.

"We hardly ever see each other [in school] but driving in together every morning is nice," Mrs. Kurtz, said.



Mr. Pereira & Ms. Tobin

Mr. Pereira and Ms. Tobin met on the first day of teacher orientation and have been together for over 13 years.

Mr. Pereira says, "The best part of working together is I can always come upstairs to talk to my best friend." They both agree they are "the most awesome couple at Westhill."



Mr. & Mrs. Kumar

Mr. and Mrs. Kumar have been together for over 28 years now, but they did not meet at Westhill.

They commute over an hour each morning together and enjoy being able to spend time together where they work.

Mrs. Wheeler upgrades her room

Veda Bhalla

Print Executive Editor

The Westword (TW): How long have you been teaching at Westhill?

Mrs. Christine Wheeler (CW): I started teaching at Westhill in 2001, so it has been many years.

TW: What made you start teaching?

CW: I had finished up my various graduate school experiences in New York City, and I was ready to go into a high school classroom. I did not want to teach in New York City, since that is such a rough place to navigate as a teacher. Stamford was commutable to the city and had a lovely urban suburban feel to me, so Westhill was a perfect fit.

TW: Students say that you have a very positive attitude, can you elaborate?

CW: The way I see it, students come to school not to be yelled at or be rated. It is enough pressure just getting through the day, so whatever might be going on, I will maintain a positive attitude in the classroom. The students are not there for me to be cranky or surly. That is just not my style.

TW: Everyone says that your classroom is unique, almost like a living room setting, what made you decide to do that?

CW: I was really inspired, this year especially, by the Donors Choose and RISE Network matching. I am also working with the college board learning partner, piloting the new AP sequence. The way that they compensate is they give donors choose credits, and I knew the Rise Network was going to double the contributions. I started putting projects out there and they were getting funded. The tables have proven to be great. I was nervous at first that students would not be able to concentrate if they were always facing each other, but that has not proven to be the case. Then as I started to get the Chromebooks and the tables, I got a little more creative with some of my project ideas. I thought it might be nice to have access to hot water, to have a cup of hot chocolate or tea for my students.

TW: How did you go about acquiring the hot water machine?

CW: I posted the project on Donors Choose, where you

write a little blurb and select what you want. They have a variety of vendors, and in this case I was connected to Amazon. I tried to pick out the hot water urn that would be big, but not crazy expensive. Then I just thought of everything we could need to get started so I requested four boxes of hot chocolate, creamer, coffee, and tea. Once it runs out it will all rely on either what I purchase or donations from students themselves. So I figured, let us get this funded the first time, and it has been really nice.

TW: So would you say that donors choose has been one of the big helpers?

CW: HUGE! I now have a print center, ten chromebooks, all the nicer looking tables, academic planners for my juniors, and craft supplies for an upcoming project. It is inspiring to see people from all over the country stumble upon our project and decide to make a donation.

TW: Do you think this impacted the students helps with their academic performance?

CW: Absolutely. Now we have ten chromebooks in the room,

so every one of my learning clusters has constant access to a chromebook. It is nice to know the printer is there, as it is convenient, even though the media center is up and running. The beauty of the beverage center that it just makes everyone feel like someone cares a little bit. Days can be long and you can encounter friendlier teachers, less friendly teachers, social stress, etcetera; I like for students to want to be here enjoying their time.

TW: What classes do you teach?

CW: I am the Department Head right now, I only teach three classes. I have two AP Literature classes and one 11th

grade CP class.

TW: What is your favorite part about being a teacher?

CW: Getting to work with all of my students. It makes me so happy because I am really passionate about literature, English, and literary analysis. I love it when I can inspire the students even when they think I am silly, and way too excited about it. To engage them with the material and to see, especially my more struggling students, them really maximize their potential and feel proud of themselves. A lot of students say "I was never good at English until this year", and it is such a confidence booster for them to realize they can do it.



THIRSTY? From tasty hot chocolate to delicious coffee, Mrs. Wheeler has it all.

Photo by **Emma Whaley** / Photographer.



The Hungry Vikings

Column by Maansi Shah, Micayla Roth, & Bintou Bane

Roasted

Service: ★★★★★
Taste: ★★★★★
Ambiance: ★★★★★

In search of a more casual setting, the Viking ship sailed to Bedford Street, home to a multitude of restaurants. They came across Roasted, a local joint taking pride in their healthy comfort food. A small but cozy establishment, Roasted attempts to attract younger Vikings with its authentic atmosphere. Bricks and wood made the Vikings feel as if they had returned to their homeland, calming them at once.

House-made chips were awaiting the Vikings, with which they voraciously dug into immediately. The Vikings were delighted to find that Roasted's menu is completely customizable, specializing in grain bowls and sandwiches created at the patrons' request. Rather than offering a menu with specific meals, Roasted has a variety of options of "Bottoms," "Middles," and "Tops" that customers can choose from in building their meals.

The Vegan Viking ordered a short wheat roll with barbecue tofu and her own modified version of the "Southwestern" (corn, avocado, salsa, jalapeños). The staff was accommo-

dating to her dietary restrictions and double-checked the ingredients to confirm with her. She loves tofu and the marinade was packed with flavors. Combining it with the salsa and jalapeños gave it a nice freshness and spice, which as we know, is vital to the Vegan Viking's meal. Alongside her sandwich, she ordered a side of vegetables, the usual healthy compliment. She was full by the end of her meal and is very keen to go back for more comfort food.

Viking Number Tou ordered a short white roll with roasted turkey and the "Caprese" top, which included tomato, mozzarella, and pesto. The sandwich was sliced into two halves and came with a side of fries. Viking Number Tou thought the serving was generous, as she was full after the first half of her sandwich, the second of which she saved for later. She and the Vegan Viking enjoyed the fries, which had the perfect amount of salt and crunch. The sandwich, though filling, had a near-overwhelming amount of pesto, which

prevented the rest of the toppings from complementing the turkey as Viking Number Tou had hoped.

The Very Hungry Viking ordered a grain bowl with brown rice. A very picky viking, she did not like any of the "Tops," so she ordered both the grilled chicken and avocado "Middles." Her meal permitted her to order a side dish at no extra charge, so she ordered the roasted vegetables, which included broccoli, carrots, and green beans. Eager to build a delicious and variety-filled meal, the Very Hungry Viking added the roasted vegetables to her rice bowl, creating the closest thing she had ever eaten to a salad. She was thrilled to see that unlike other restaurants, Roasted was very generous in their avocado-serving; there seemed to be an entire avocado in her bowl. She greatly appreciated the freshness of her food as it reminded her of the native cuisine that she once relied upon in Scandinavia. The Very Hungry Viking thoroughly enjoyed her lunch; the rice was

perfectly seasoned, the chicken delicious, the avocado ripe, and she even enjoyed the vegetables due to their rich flavor. She was pleasantly surprised to have enjoyed such a healthy meal.

The checks came attached to cute mini clipboards, individualized to each respective

Viking's order. They left full, two out of the three with food to take home, and consider Roasted a casual establishment fit to frequent with friends. They especially enjoyed the customizability of the menu and look forward to trying a wider range of tops and sides.



HEALTHY EATS A nice bowl with chicken and vegetables.

Photo by **Micayla Roth** / Online Executive Editor.

SPECIAL REPORT

Coronavirus: the breakdown

Ginamaria Fry
Reporter

COVID-19 has been spread from China to various countries in Europe and the Middle East, including France, Hong Kong, Japan, Iran, Cambodia, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Taiwan, Italy, Sri Lanka, and is currently affecting the United States.

After the pneumonia-like illness' rapid spread since its appearance in late December, the World Health Organization has declared the coronavirus outbreak a "public health emergency."

"The Coronavirus is a widespread future epidemic, however, we all need to be alert and not anxious. It is important to keep your hands constantly clean and to stay healthy," Khyllie Bernat (23) said.

Symptoms of the coronavirus include fever, coughing, and shortness of breath. The virus cannot be diagnosed for approximately two days after exposure, and it can last up to fourteen days.

Anyone is susceptible to the coronavirus, but elderly people and people with preexisting health problems are most likely to get infected, and in some cases, to die because of the virus.

"Coronavirus seems like a very serious cold or flu, and the news is making it seem much worse than it actually is. China is dealing with the worst of the virus because the hospitals are overflowing and it is harder to find treatment. People spreading the symptoms of the coronavirus and having them be very similar to flu or colds, which are super common right now, is freaking everyone out and making people paranoid that they have it when it is actually super uncommon here," Samantha Feeny (23) said.

The human body can have several different kinds of reactions due to the coronavirus. The virus can be transmitted to humans as well as animals, with humans being much more likely to be affected by the virus. The way that the body reacts to the virus can vary in several ways.

The coronavirus has seven known types to affect the body. The first four are 229E, NL63, OC43, and KHU1. These types of coronavirus affect the respiratory system and cause a common cold.

Two other types of coronavirus that are similar are SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV. These types cause "Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus," which is also a severe respiratory infection and inflammation.

The newest type of Coronavirus is called 2019-nCoV. This is the strain that is currently affecting many nations. This new kind of virus has symptoms that would result in a normal cold, fever, coughing, and shortness of breath.

In many cases, patients were found with their alveoli—tiny air sacs that exchange oxygen—filled with a fluid. The alveoli being filled with liquid causes the lungs to expand and become very inflamed. When the lungs become inflamed and swollen from fluid in the alveoli, it is hard for them to exchange

carbon dioxide and oxygen, making it extremely difficult to breathe.

"I am not very educated on the coronavirus, but I have heard many things on the news and social media. America and the whole world is hyping it up to make it seem more severe than it really is. Other countries are dealing with this virus a lot worse than America. There has been no outstanding number of cases in America. People should not be scared or paranoid that they will get this virus," Shira Gabay (23) said.

This virus is highly contagious and potentially deadly. It is possible for someone to get infected if they are within even six feet of someone with the virus. It is commonly believed that the disease is airborne, but it actually lies in droplets that infected persons cough or sneeze out.

The virus first spread from Wuhan, China, and was initially discovered coming from Wholesale Seafood Markets selling freshly cut seafood. The virus spread to humans from the animals.

Another source of the Coronavirus is that it originated from eating bats and snakes, and that these animals all carried the virus to humans after they were consumed.

Many people are left wondering how to prevent and stay away from being infected by the virus that the media is so largely covering. There are many ways to keep up good hygiene and be protected from the coronavirus.

As of now there is no official vaccine or medicine that can cure the coronavirus, but there are some ways to lower chances of getting the virus: washing hands with soap as often as possible, avoiding touching face area with unclean hands and coming in contact with sick people, and cleaning and disinfecting surface areas that are often touched.

Getting over-the-counter medicines for fever, cough, and pain, getting plenty of rest, and drinking lots of fluids is also recommended. While this will not cure coronavirus, the disease is more likely to destroy a weakened immune system; thus, it is important to stay healthy.

When washing their hands, one should count to at least 30 and wash half way up the forearm.

Another way to prevent the virus is to keep electronics clean and disinfected. To keep electronics clean, use microfiber cloths to wipe the phone, use a towelette with rubbing alcohol and water to get rid of bacteria, use hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, and put the phone under UV light. Researchers show that electronics carry the most germs because they are touched all the time and put onto unknown surfaces.

Surgical masks, or any masks that cover the face do not prevent their wearer from getting the virus. Rather, they would keep an already infected person from infecting others.

Although the coronavirus currently has serious effects on humans, health experts claim that eventually, people's immune systems will adapt. There is also possibility of impending warmer weather slowing the virus down.

There have been nearly 4,300 deaths among 118,000 cases, but more than 65,000 people have already recovered.


The coronavirus is a respiratory disease, thus the lungs are affected first. While 81 percent of cases are mild, certain people develop severe lung damage. Acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) is when fluid leaks from small blood vessels into the lungs, which makes it hard for the lungs to transfer oxygen to the blood.

The coronavirus can also cause gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea or diarrhea.

Coronavirus causes viral pneumonia, thus antibiotics are of no use. Currently, there is no vaccine for the virus.

Many of the people who died of the virus were already in poor health. Recovery is dependent upon the strength of one's immune system.

The global effect of the coronavirus



It was rumored that China created a weapon used version of the coronavirus and lost control of it, although there is no evidence in support of this theory.

While doctors do not know whether this is caused by the virus or treatment drugs, there is liver and kidney damage associated with the coronavirus. When damage to the liver cells, abnormal amounts of enzymes get leaked into the blood. Some patients also had kidney damage.

Many people are fearful of the virus being transmitted from packages from China. That is highly unlikely, as the Coronavirus is transmitted through respiratory droplets and there is no evidence that it is associated with imported goods.

Public health officials say that most of the coronavirus cases in the US have been mild infections.

Shira Cohen
Staff Writer

The concern regarding the COVID-19 has been rapidly increasing.

South Korea, Japan, Iran, Italy, and China are all virus hotspots. According to worldmeters.info, there have been nearly 120,000 recorded cases of coronavirus in a little over countries, and there have been 4,200 deaths. Although, over 65,000 people have already recovered from the virus.

"In a lot of cities everyone is staying inside, and these cities now look super empty from an outside view which is really rare. A lot of places are not open, from what I have heard, because no one wants to get infected," Rou Liao ('20) said.

China has placed a transportation ban in 17 cities, placing 50 million people under quarantine. New travellers from high-risk areas into the country are also susceptible to 14-day quarantines.

Kasisomayajula Viswanath, a scientist and professor of health communications at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, said there has been a debate among public health experts around the world regarding the credibility of these safety strategies.

However, even before the Chinese government could lock down the cities that were affected last week, several million people left the city of Wuhan alone, which Viswanath said could be the reason for the scattering of exposure before the quarantines were issued. He said that it could be a real problem if this case is confirmed to be true.

After the 2002 to 2003 severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak that made more than 8,000 people ill and caused 774 deaths around the world, China established a surveillance system to monitor pneumonia outbreaks which serve as a warning for the potential onset of a viral infection.

Epidemiologists have given China credit for being able to quickly identify the pathogen that is responsible for the coronavirus, sequencing its genome within just a couple weeks, and sharing that genetic information with scientists around the world. This has mainly helped Japan and Thailand detect their cases according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

However, people want to know about the incubation period for the coronavirus, the risk factors, and more information on how the virus spreads, not all of which has been discovered.

Now that cases have been detected in the United States, people have been extremely concerned regarding the whereabouts and treatment of the coronavirus. As of now, all travel continues.

According to *The New York Times*, there are currently nearly 800 cases of coronavirus recorded in the United States.

Nancy Messonnier, who serves as the Director for the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, says that while more cases are expected to emerge, that America's immediate health risk is considered to be very low. The risk of contracting the

disease depends on the exposure, and while there are a handful of patients with this virus in the United States, that the virus is not actively spreading into communities.

The CDC is currently working to develop and release diagnostic testing kits to all states in the U.S. to examine respiratory samples and blood samples more quickly. It currently takes between four to six hours for the novel coronavirus to be tested, and the biggest delay can be getting these samples to their respective CDC laboratories. Tests are hard to come by, thus recorded cases might be lower than the actual number of people infected.

Another issue associated with the coronavirus is that there have been many alleged cover-up cases, meaning that there are many more cases out there than public health officials are reporting.

Initially, the Chinese government tried to cover up the many cases of the spreading coronavirus. However, with the severity of the current outbreak, the Chinese government finally broke down and started to reveal more information about the virus to the public.

As the chances of more cases being confirmed in the United States spread, people are still worried if there have been even more cover-up cases among them.

"There is nothing I can personally do to stop it, but it is a pretty intense situation and covering it up only makes it feel worse," Zac Kitay ('20) said.

Finding proper treatments and testing for the coronavirus can be expensive and laborious.

According to abc.org, a science lab in Australia was the first laboratory outside of China to replicate the coronavirus but they have not yet been able to find a vaccine for it.

In the meantime, luxury brands such as L'Oreal, Versace, Swarovski, etc, have pledged to donate millions of dollars in aid to the Chinese Red Cross. NBC News reported that the CEO of Apple, Tim Cook, has pledged to donate money to multiple organizations based in China. The Bill Gates and Melinda Gates Foundation also announced that they will commit to donating 100 million dollars to improve detection, isolation, and treatment efforts regarding the coronavirus.

Since Walmart has over 400 retail stores and 19 distribution centers across 17 cities in China, they agreed to donate 143,000 United States Dollars to a non-profit organization based that they partnered with for medical supplies and local relief efforts in the Hubei Province. Fast food restaurant chains such as Burger King and McDonald's had plans to open thousands of new restaurants in China, but are now donating food to hospitals.

Specialists say that anyone who suspects that they have the coronavirus should self-quarantine at home and call their doctor rather than go into a hospital.

Despite the unease prevalent in the world right now, people have come together through the common cause of hopefully stopping the coronavirus as quickly and effectively as possible.



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Supplement

The Westword

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THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION (1952-1954)

Brown vs. Board of Ed. was a case between Linda Brown and the Board of Education, focusing on school segregation. Linda was not let inside the white only schools which led her father to complain to their state court and ultimately ended up at the Supreme Court. Brown and her father eventually won the case against the Board of Education for violating the 14th Amendment, but the Board of Education still held their belief in separate but equal schooling for children. Brown vs. Board of Education would bring the Civil Rights Movement to the forefront of American politics.

MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT (1955)

After Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white male passenger, the people of Montgomery rebelled. On December 1, 1955, all African Americans stopped using the public bus system. This boycott lasted 381 days. In June 1956, a federal court ruled keeping buses segregated was unconstitutional and the Supreme Court eventually ruled in their favor.

CHICAGO FREEDOM MOVEMENT (1965-1966)

The Chicago Freedom Movement was formed to protest educational differences, segregated housing, and racial employment injustices. On August 5, 1966, MLK led a march near Marquette Park in a white neighborhood where counter protesters threw bricks and bottles at the marchers. Approximately 30 people were injured during this walkout, including King. After negotiating with Chicago mayor Richard Daley, mortgages became available to all despite of race or neighborhood. The movement continued until 1967.

EMMETT TILL MURDERED (1955)

In 1955, a 14 year old boy named Emmett Till was murdered by two white supremacists in southern Mississippi. He was accused of flirting with a white woman at a store and approached by two white men afterwards. Till would be brutally tortured, beaten, and disfigured to the point that he was unable to be identified until his great uncle Mose Wright recognized a ring with his initials on it. His mother would hold an open-casket funeral, showing the country and in turn the world what racism had done to his son. Pictures of his body would circulate through the news, becoming one of the biggest contributors to the start of the Civil Rights movement as it caused an uproar in black and white communities all around the United States.

BIRMINGHAM CHURCH BOMBING (1963)

Three KKK members planted bombs which later detonated in this popular Birmingham church. This act would result in the deaths of four young girls. The act of terrorism was shocking to Americans across the country, and was seen as shameful by Lyndon B. Johnson. Because of this, the Birmingham Church Bombing greatly influenced him signing the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT (1964)

On July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. It did a number of things for securing and protecting voter rights for all citizens, but most importantly, signalled to the country that the federal government was supportive of equal rights. The document outlawed discrimination against anyone by means of skin color, sex, religion or nationality. It also banned segregation in schools and in public.

MALCOLM X & DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Malcolm X was a Civil Rights activist who believed in self empowerment and that violent methods were justified in self defense against racial violence blacks faced. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was also a famous Civil Rights activist who stood up for the rights of all men and women but, unlike Malcolm X, he advocated peaceful protest to win freedom for their people. Malcolm X softened his position after a pilgrimage to Mecca, moving closer to King's stance. After all of this, Malcolm X and King only met once in their lives, but, they both made a significant impact in the history of the United States.

MARCH ON WASHINGTON (1963)

The March on Washington was the largest political rally for human rights in United States history. Nearly 250,000 participated in this march at the Mall in Washington D.C. The march took place on August 28, 1963 to protest for jobs and equal freedom for all African Americans. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech and this march is credited with helping pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



BLACK LIVES MATTER

THE START

When George Zimmerman, the man who shot and killed Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African-American, was acquitted in court, three African-American women would form the political and cultural movement 'Black Lives Matter' (BLM) in response. They would continue to garner support, quickly growing to over forty chapters. BLM is also a global phenomenon, with recognition and protests in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom.



THE FOUNDERS

The Black Lives Matter movement was founded by three women of color: Alicia Garza, Patrisse Khan Cullors, and Opal Tometi. Garza is a writer and public speaker from Oakland, California, and has fought against the misconception that only cisgender black men encounter state and police violence. Cullors is an artist, organizer, and author from Los Angeles, California, even winning a Sydney Peace Prize alongside becoming *The New York Times* best-selling author. Tometi is a writer, strategist, and community organizer from New York, creating the online platforms and social media strategy that made the organization into what it is today.

MEDIA

BLM's influence is not only attributed to their real life activism, but by their use of social media and the Internet. Their rise to prominence has been documented with news articles, videos, and even documentaries—one such being 2016 "*Stay Woke: The Black Lives Matter Movement*" documentary by Manufacturing Intellect, a documentary chronicling their rise through the accounts of activists, protestors, and journalists. The documentary showcases how what was originally a hashtag turned into an international movement.

CHARLESTON

In June of 2015, Dylan Roof, a white supremacist, attacked a historically black church in Charleston, South Carolina, killing nine and leaving one injured. In response to this tragedy, Black Lives Matter condemned the shooting and conducted numerous marches and protests across the country. In Charleston itself, the black community gathered for vigils and prayers in solidarity with the victims' families.



FUTURE

Despite their goal and aim of social equality for not only African-American men but for women and the LGBTQ+ community, they are not without criticism and controversy. The movement's very name has been criticized as being racist—leading to the counter-slogan of "All Lives Matter" and "Police Lives Matter". The killing of five police officers by a sniper in Dallas led to critics citing it as evidence of BLM's hypocrisy, despite the group distancing itself from the event. However, the group has continued to grow and garner support in the face of such criticism.

Image courtesy of 123rf.com.

Picture courtesy of Otto Yamamoto // [wikimedia commons.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Black_Lives_Matter_protesters_in_Oakland.jpg) and blacklivesmatter.com.
Blurbs by Joaquin Monteclaro // Supplement Editor and Jason Zarrilli // Managing Editor.

LAS NOTICIAS

Sello de Biliteracy

Morgana Knopoff
Staff Writer

El 25 de marzo, los estudiantes tendrán la oportunidad de ser declarados oficialmente biliterados con el Sello de Alfabetización Bilitaria. El Sello de Alfabetización Bilitaria es un premio otorgado por la escuela en reconocimiento a los estudiantes que han estudiado y obtenido dominio en lectura, escritura, comprensión auditiva y habla dos o más idiomas al graduarse de la escuela secundaria.

Desarrollado por primera vez por Californians Together, una organización sin fines de lucro que trabaja para proteger y promover los derechos de los estudiantes de inglés, el Sello ha sido adoptado en 38 estados y Washington DC., Y está siendo considerado en Pennsylvania y Vermont.

El Sello, implementado por primera vez en Connecticut en 2017, otorga a los estudiantes la capacidad de declarar que tienen biliterato, lo que puede

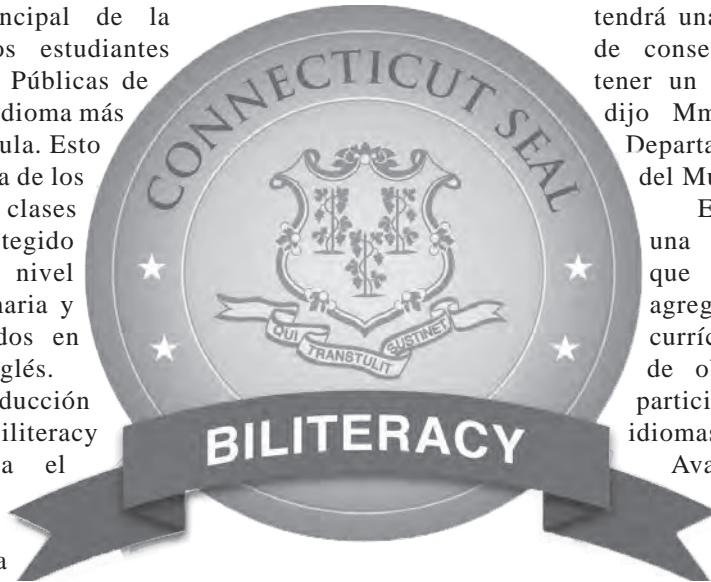
generar más oportunidades de becas y tener entre seis y nueve créditos universitarios cumplidos, lo que disminuye significativamente el costo de una educación universitaria.

Aunque el inglés no es el idioma principal de la mayoría de los estudiantes de las Escuelas Públicas de Stamford, es el idioma más utilizado en el aula. Esto deja a la mayoría de los estudiantes en clases de inglés protegido aprendiendo a nivel de escuela primaria y siendo calificados en una escala de inglés.

La introducción del Sello de Biliteracy no solo eleva el valor de ser biliterate sino que también da la distinción a las personas que rara vez son reconocidas por esta habilidad. “Creo que el Sello de Alfabetización Bilitaria es una gran oportunidad para que los niños que hablan varios

idiomas sean reconocidos.

“Como persona bilingüe, estoy muy feliz de participar en esta actividad y ser reconocido por esta habilidad porque es realmente difícil de aprender y aprender más de un idioma”,



dijo Jainat Akther ('20).

En un mundo multicultural, las apuestas del lenguaje se han elevado. No es suficiente que los estudiantes completen sus requisitos de idioma y avancen en la universidad

y obtengan un trabajo bien remunerado, ahora es una ventaja ser biliterados.

“Los empleadores siempre están impresionados por un candidato que es bilingüe y bilingüe. Esa persona siempre tendrá una mejor oportunidad de conseguir un trabajo y tener un salario más alto”, dijo Mme. Herz, jefe del Departamento de Idiomas del Mundo, dijo.

El Sello también es una oportunidad para que los estudiantes agreguen otro logro a su currículum. Otra forma de obtener el Sello es participar en clases de idiomas de Colocación Avanzada para obtener una comprensión más integral de otras culturas e idiomas.

En el tercer año de Westhill de ofrecer el examen, los estudiantes tienen una tasa de éxito del 85 por ciento y la mayoría de los examinados son hablantes nativos de español.

El primer año que se realizó la prueba, solo se evaluaron 19 estudiantes; sin embargo, el año pasado 45 estudiantes tomaron el examen y Mme. Herz confía en que más de 50 estudiantes tomarán el examen este año. La prueba se llevará a cabo después de la escuela el 25 de marzo con almuerzo y es completamente gratis. Los requisitos para tomar el examen incluyen completar los requisitos de inglés y lograr un puntaje intermedio o superior de acuerdo con los estándares del Sello de Alfabetización Bilingüe de Connecticut. Se alienta a todos los estudiantes a participar en las pruebas, para todos los idiomas se les proporcionará. Los estudiantes que tomaron el examen de Lengua y Cultura Española AP y recibieron un 3 o más reciben automáticamente el Sello de Alfabetización Bilingüe. El Sello de Alfabetización Bilingüe permite que los estudiantes sean reconocidos por su habilidad de ser bilingües.

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Abejas ocupadas zumbando alrededor de la colina

Marta Zach
Managing Editor

Según abcnews.go.com, las abejas hacen más por el medio ambiente que solo proporcionar miel, de hecho, apoyan 20 mil millones de dólares en cultivos en los Estados Unidos. Sin las abejas, el medio ambiente colapsaría. Las abejas son criaturas muy importantes y complejas, y el Club de Apicultura tiene la intención de llevarlas a Westhill.

Mike Edwards ('22) y la maestra de ciencias, la Sra. Grant, dirigen los Apiarios Vikingos, también conocido como el Club de Apicultura. El club se reúne los lunes después de la escuela. Edwards está muy familiarizado con la práctica de la apicultura, formalmente llamada apicultura, y la Sra. Grant ha expresado su antiguo deseo de trabajar con las abejas.

“Mis hermanos y yo comenzamos la apicultura hace cuatro o cinco años, así que eso es lo que despertó mi interés”, Mike Edwards ('22) dijo.

Edwards y su hermano Alex comenzaron un programa de voluntariado hace unos años donde llevaron la apicultura a los estudiantes de Roxbury. Su familia también posee propiedades en Ridgefield con colmenas de abejas.

El club está destinado a

educar a las personas sobre las abejas y la práctica de la apicultura. Edwards dice que el objetivo principal con respecto al desarrollo del club es involucrar a la mayor cantidad posible de personas y continuar expandiendo el club.

La experiencia es muy práctica. El club planea comenzar a construir las colmenas en el invierno con todos sus miembros, que luego estarán listos para las abejas en la primavera. El club también atenderá a las abejas en los meses de verano, incluso una vez que finalice el año escolar.

Las colmenas se colocarán en la esquina más alejada del campo trasero, una decisión

tomada en consideración de la posible destrucción de Westhill en los próximos años. De esta manera, las colmenas no se verán afectadas y el club puede seguir atendiéndolas independientemente del estado del edificio.

“Creemos que es una buena idea, es accesible y si derriban la escuela, esa área no se verá afectada,” dijo la Sra. Grant. La Red RISE iguala las donaciones en línea y ayuda con el financiamiento relacionado con la escuela en Connecticut, y fue crucial para la rápida recaudación de fondos de los Apiarios Vikingos.

El lunes 24 de febrero, el club comenzó oficialmente a

construir las colmenas. Estudiantes de todos los grados se reunieron en el salón 310 y se pusieron a trabajar. El ambiente era relajado pero productivo y todos los estudiantes pudieron participar en la experiencia práctica de pegar piezas de las colmenas y probarse los trajes de abeja.

Hay un tamaño de cajas de abejas, pero dos niños diferentes de marcos, que son los que retienen la miel y donde las abejas terminan haciendo sus hogares. El club también está ordenando abejas italianas.

El club actualmente es pequeño, y solo se están haciendo algunas colmenas, pero los Apiarios vikingos planean ex-

pandirse en el futuro. Edwards alienta a los nuevos miembros a unirse, ya que esto beneficiará a la escuela, los estudiantes y las abejas.

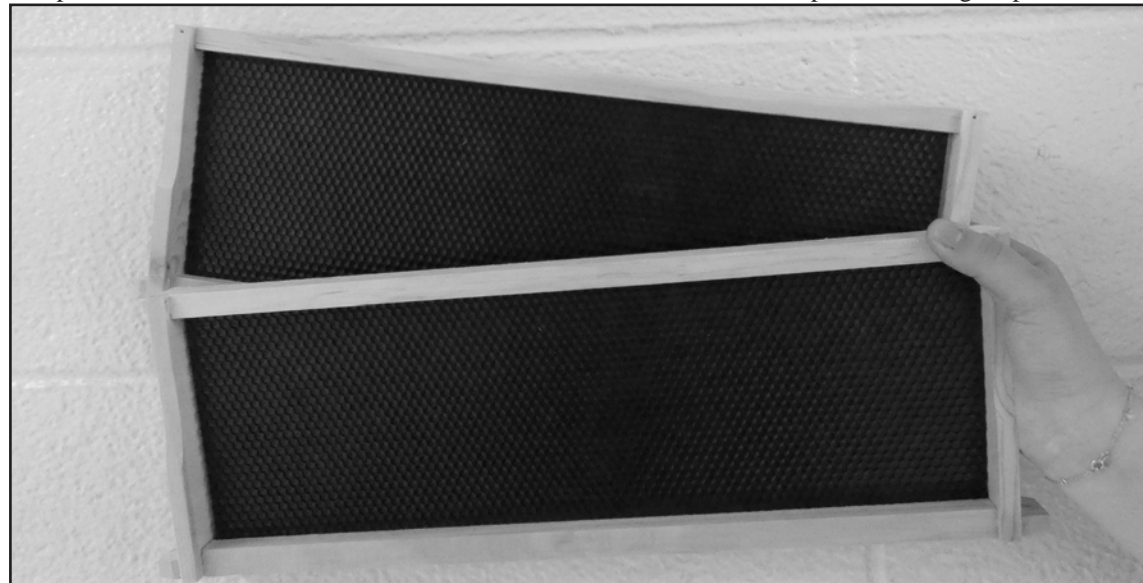
Los miembros actuales del club estaban ansiosos por unirse y apreciaban la oportunidad única de trabajar con las abejas en el campus de Westhill.

“Es un club divertido que me da la oportunidad de hacer algo tan único como la apicultura y me permite comprender el tiempo, el esfuerzo y la importancia de ello”, Savannah Madar ('21) dijo.

De acuerdo con beekeepinginsider.com, la apicultura tiene muchos beneficios diferentes, que incluyen ayudar a la economía y mejorar la polinización de cultivos y flores. Otros beneficios incluyen la construcción de la comunidad, el alivio del estrés y la producción de miel, de lo que el club y sus miembros pueden beneficiarse.

El club se asoció con la Red RISE para obtener los fondos necesarios para materiales, trajes de abejas y comederos. También se usan fumadores, que son dispositivos para calmar las abejas.

Según Edwards, la recaudación de fondos fue un problema al principio, pero se resolvió rápidamente.



ZUMBIDO DE ABEJAS Arriba se muestran panales utilizados para albergar a las abejas.

Imagen por **Jason Zarrilli** / Editor Gerente.

Mujeres Latinas contra el mundo

Mariana Cifuentes
Editora de Las Noticias

Ser una mujer fuerte y capaz le muestra al mundo que podemos con todo. Un gran ejemplo de esto es Natalia Álvarez, maestra de Herencia uno, Ap Lenguaje, y Ap Literatura en la escuela pública de Stamford (Westhill High School). La lista no acaba ahí, además de ser una excelente maestra, es la directora de contenidos para los profesores de idiomas de Stamford public school, mayormente llamado World Language Content Leader.

Este título le permite coordinar talleres y capacitaciones para los profesores de todo el distrito. Hace poco también se convirtió en la coordinadora del programa Alta, el cual trabaja con estudiantes. Su fuerza no para ahí, ella también es mentora de los profesores nuevos en nuestra escuela y trabaja en línea. La señora Álvarez es una prueba de superación al ser Colombiana y mostrarle a todos que las mujeres también pueden rebasar las expectativas de su género.

Siempre hay obstáculos que no le permiten a las personas en general a completar sus sueños o metas, la profesora Álvarez dice, “Es muy difícil tener muchas ocupaciones al mismo tiempo porque requiere de demasiada organización y habilidad.” Al ser preguntada sobre cuales son las dificultades de su trabajo ella dijo, “Una de las dificultades que he tenido que enfrentar es que solamente tengo una hora al mes para llevar a cabo esta capacitación y lo tengo que hacer a distancia o por internet.”

Afirma también, que “esto obstaculiza muchísimo porque demanda mucha más preparación y no puedo estar ayudándoles a los profesores como yo quisiera en persona.” Esto demuestra que no siempre todo es fácil y que ella se esfuerza para poder ayudarles a todos los que la necesitan, como también se esfuerza para hacer un gran trabajo, sin importar el tiempo dado para completar sus capacitaciones para la organización de idiomas.

La superación personal siempre dependerá de cada persona y de lo que ellos quieran hacer con sus vidas para tener éxito. “Tengo que saber bastante para poderles enseñar a profesores de gran trayectoria o años de experiencia, esto requiere preparación y organización.”

Para llegar a donde está, la maestra Álvarez estudió muchos años y trabajó duro para ser reconocida, sin esfuerzo nada se puede lograr. Las mujeres latinas son representadas como vagas, o sin poder. La señora Álvarez es un ejemplo de que con determinación podemos lograr todo lo que nos propongamos. “Me siento muy orgullosa de representar a las mujeres con este cargo y los demás cargos que tengo, especialmente a las mujeres latinas.”

Ella al ser una mujer latina se siente feliz de poder contarle a otras mujeres latinas que si ella pudo ellas también se pueden superar. “El estereotipo de la mujer latina en los estados unidos es muy negativo, piensan que quizás solamente podemos limpiar o ocuparnos de cargos

domésticos de bajo perfil.” En los Estados Unidos las mujeres latinas son vistas como menos y todas las personas creen que no nos interesa la Educación o poder tener una vida plena más allá de hacer trabajos menores.

“Pero tener un cargo o varios cargos de liderazgo me a permitido mostrar que en latinoamérica estamos muy bien formados educativamente.” El estereotipo de los latinos es que no somos inteligentes o capaces de sobrepasar a los Estadounidenses en su poder intelectual, aunque algunos latinos son prueba de esto por decisiones propias, muchas personas como Jessica Alba le han mostrado a los latinos que ellos sí tienen poder. “Competir al mismo nivel con los norteamericanos me hace sentir muy orgullosa.”

La superación nunca será fácil, pero siempre tendrá recompensas. “Es muy demandante, hay que prestar mucha atención a los detalles e invertir muchas horas de trabajo, coordinar a muchas personas porque tengo a cargo más de setenta profesores.” Su trabajo le toma mayormente todo su tiempo, pero al final es algo que la apasiona y le encanta hacer. Aunque puede resultar difícil ella lo toma con una sonrisa y una mente abierta.

“Aparte de ganarme un buen dinero, gano la experiencia en cargos administrativos o en cargos académicos de mayor perfil.” “Aprendo al mismo tiempo que enseño, y me gusta mucho tener la oportunidad de tener cargos de liderazgo.”

Siendo una de sus estudiantes, he podido divisar que siempre tiene nuevas técnicas de enseñanza y que siempre nos recibe con una mente positiva y lista para enseñarnos sobre la por vida.

Al enseñarnos ella también aprende cosas nuevas, por una parte sobre lo que los estudiantes digan o por lecturas

que nos hacen pensar más allá. Sus pláticas filosóficas me han hecho pensar mucho en la vida en general y estoy segura que ayudará a muchos de sus futuros estudiantes. “No soy una persona que le guste mostrar lo que hace.” Natalia Álvarez es el mejor ejemplo de superación y poder femenino que nuestra escuela pueda tener.



PERIODISTA DEPORTIVA Natalia Álvarez celebra su treinta cumpleaños con la firma de un contrato para ESPN.

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Próximos y relevantes cantantes españoles

Emelyncole Chuco
Editora de Las Noticias

Alguno nombres populares en la industria de la música han sido Post Malone, Juice WRLD, Ariana Grande y Billie Eilish. Pero algunos artistas que pueden pasar desapercibidos son los artistas españoles como Shakira, Bad Bunny, Ozuna, Natti Natasha y Karol G. Estas personas con talento provienen de diferentes partes de América Latina, pero todos son tratados de la misma manera respetada e idolatrada a los ojos del público.

Shakira, la sensación colombiana de 43 años, ha publicado recientemente su música para el mundo. Hace unas semanas, ella, junto con Jennifer López, se presentaron durante el espectáculo de medio tiempo en el 54° Superbowl.

Estos dos se unieron a las filas de otros artistas españoles conocidos por cantar en el superbowl como Bruno Mars, Gloria Estefani, Artturo

Sandoval, Christina Aguilera, Enrique Iglesias y algunos más.

Este cambio de representación se convirtió en un impacto positivo para la comunidad hispana a medida que aumentaba el talento para mostrar su historia y cultura. La música española se ha vuelto más popular entre el público, hasta el punto de que los ingresos del género aumentaron un 27% en la primera mitad de 2019. Si lo piensas bien, si los ingresos aumentaron tanto en los primeros 6 meses de 2019, considera cuántos ingresos más tiene la industria de la música española durante el resto de 2019 y los primeros meses de 2020.

Karol G, una cantante y compositora de reggaeton de Colombia, recientemente emergió en la industria e impulsó su propia carrera a través de colaboraciones de canciones. Una de estas colaboraciones fue con su compañero Anuel AA cuando crearon y lanzaron su canción “Secreto”.

Se hizo muy popular y se le

dio el puesto 68 en la lista Hot 100 de Billboard. Además de esta victoria por su parte, las otras canciones y características de Karol como “Dame tu cosita”, “Tusa” y “China” han recibido calificaciones y posiciones de clasificación de 36-43 entre los

éxitos de Billboards Hot 100.

Pasando a Puerto Rico, artistas como Ozuna y Bad Bunny han tenido carreras muy exitosas en la siempre cambiante industria de la música española. Juan Carlos Ozuna Rosado, también conocido como

Ozuna, ha lanzado su carrera desde la música hasta aparecer en programas de televisión y películas.

Él enfatiza y representa sus raíces puertorriqueñas a través de su estilo de música más urbano, alcanzando el puesto número 11 en “Hot 100 hits” de Billboard. También de Puerto Rico, el artista Bad Bunny tiene y continúa teniendo una exitosa carrera en la industria de la música. Se ha vuelto aún más relevante después de colaborar en canciones como “Te bote”, “I Like it”, y hacer / producir su propia música “Vete”, además de tener una función en el Super Bowl de este año.

Lo que se puede suponer es que la música española ha tenido un gran impacto en la industria, desde la bachata hasta el reggaetón, canciones de amor lentas y canciones de club optimistas, nosotros como generación llena de influencias musicales tenemos la capacidad de usar a estos artistas como alguien para buscar y reflejar algunos de sus rasgos en nosotros mismos.



SUPERESTRELLA COLUMBIANA Junto con Jenefer López, Sharika es la única mujer latina que se presenta en el superbowl.

Imagen cortesía de pixabay.com.

Should children rely on technology?

Izzy Nuzzo
Staff Writer

Allowing children to use technology at a young age exposes them to a larger source of information.

According to tandfonline.com, greater means of education sources can lead them to develop exceptional skills which they can make use of in the future.

There is often a focus on the old-school belief that technology will only have disadvantages to the younger generation. According to recent articles by teacherhub.com, technology has shown significant benefits.

Almost everything today is on an electronic device. Children literally have the world at their disposal. With this much availability, exposing children to technology can be a life-changer.

Technology is a source of educational entertainment for children. Kids easily become bored and on a trip, technology might be the only way to keep them entertained.

"It prepares them for when they grow up and have to deal with technology in their everyday lives. Not only that but it enhances learning, many jobs in the future will have to do with technology and be in high demand," Jose Ramirez ('20) said.

There are many kinds of apps as well as educational apps. Some apps exist that consist of puzzles and mind games which keep kids entertained and involved intellectually. This source

of entertainment for kids does not have to be viewed as just games but can actually improve their intellectual abilities.

Allowing kids more and more access to the internet also exposes them to a wider range of opinions. With videos online, they can formulate their own opinions on different religions and political views that may not be as common in their household. Kids acquire more knowledge at an instant rate and have an expanded mindset because they get to witness what is going on in the real world.

Technology is only evolving from here meaning that pro-

grams and apps will have further engagement in kid's education. There are educational websites such as ABCmouse which help children with their cognitive process. Also, apps like Duolingo allow users to learn a different language while also involving fun activities in the process.

Many of these educational apps motivate them to keep learning with the same effort.

According to nbcnews.com, kids who play video games have better decision-making skills because they are constantly forced to make little decisions. They have a developed decision making skill

which can be later used to help them make some more serious life choices.

In the job world, usually some technology is called to use and when kids start learning how to use a computer at such a young age they already have some of that information stored in the back of their brain.

Apps that involve deep engagement are shown to improve a child's hand-eye coordination. They are required to keep up with what is on the screen and they are understanding how to use their hands and eyes to communicate with one another at a younger age.

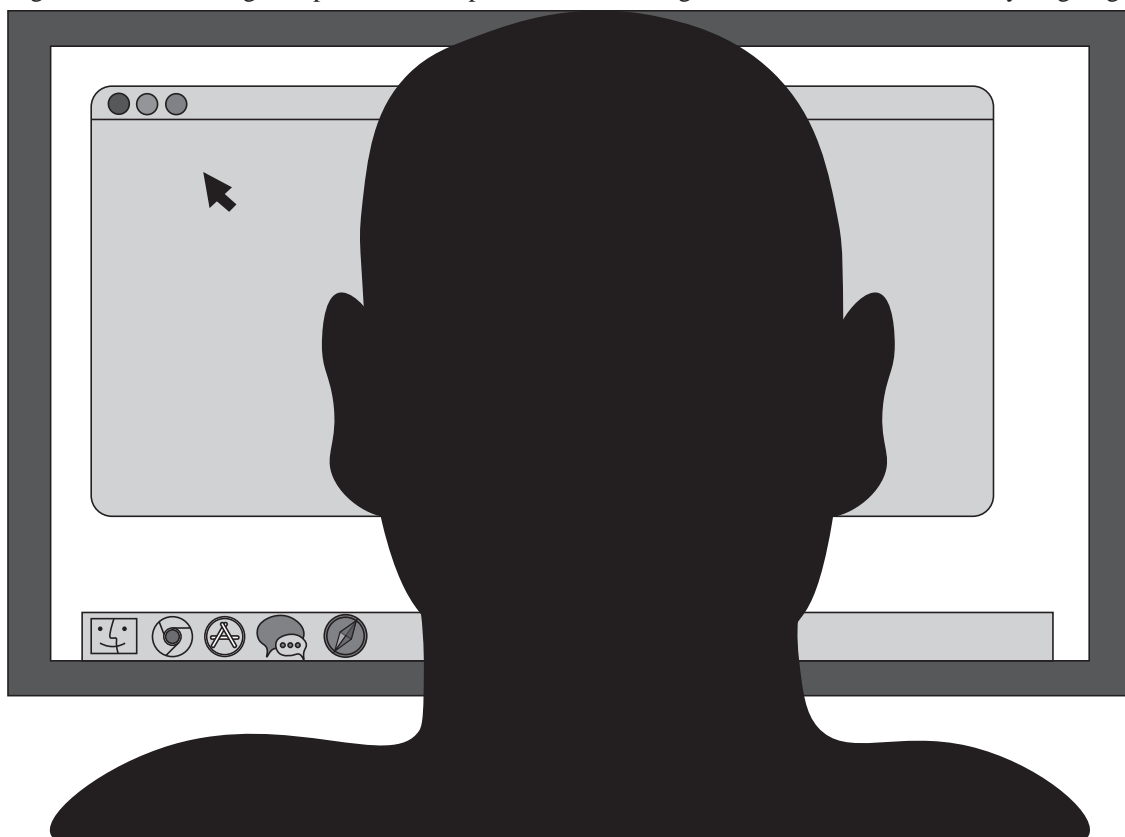
"Exposing kids to technology at a young age is a good idea because we're living in a world where technology is taking over so it's very smart to expose kids to it so they can adjust at an earlier age" Shahela Kabir ('20) said.

A study done by pbskids.org shows that 90 percent of children live in a home that owns at least one mobile device. Technology has become an increasingly large part of everyone's daily life and is adding many benefits for children which some parents do not think about.

E-books have been on the rise and can also be a source of entertainment for children. There are websites that create flashcards for kids to improve their mathematical skills as well. By allowing them to have this technology learning becomes something children want to do because of the fun options they have.

If technology is not overused it can help children to interact with their classmates. Google Classroom, for example, has lots of traction as teachers are beginning to use the program to organize their class assignments online. Children are being encouraged to use more and more technology in school even at a young age.

People are beginning to evolve in order to keep up with the fast paced technological advancements made in recent years. A new era of technology approaches quickly and the next generation will have to take the hilt as they grow in an age consumed with digital media and entertainment.



Graphic by Jason Zarrilli / Managing Editor.

Sanjana Nayak
Reporter

In a society brimming with technological advancements, the public has seen a boom in overall productivity. However, in light of all the technological innovation, we have also seen a change in the lifestyles of youth around the globe.

Families have increasingly integrated technology into their daily lives, as YouTube becomes a kid's companion, especially as a "learning tool."

The various services the children have access to allow for them to entertain themselves with games or school assignments. Overtime, there has been a noticeable increase in household reliance on technology which has raised many questions on the impacts it is beginning to have on children's comprehensive development.

Exposing children to devices at such an early age can hinder many interactions that are essential to building a healthy rela-

tionship with family and friends. According to nationalpost.com, parents are responsible for giving their children the proper affection and care to develop emotionally. If replaced with devices, such as smartphones, children will not be able to establish an emotional connection with their parents and will slowly end up distancing themselves as they get older. This is evident today, as many more children start receiving their first electronics at early ages. They are sucked into the world of the Internet and most of the time, parents are not fully aware of what their child is doing and watching.

Technology proves to be an obstacle in such a case and prevents young children from being properly nurtured and from being able to connect with their parents. In addition to domestic detachment, exposing young children to technology can also diminish their learning in an educational environment.

"I can see why it prohibits a child's development," Joe Brennan ('20) said.

An excessive amount of interaction with a device can result in the child's thoughts focused around the respective activity they are engaged in. This proves to be distracting when in school and can result in them falling behind. By not having a chance to properly learn the fundamentals of further education, a child's sense of imagination and creativity is severely damaged. The parent-child and peer-peer relationships are significant in the development of a child's character and technology should not intervene with that process.

Additionally, continued use of these devices has proven to lead to an addiction problem in the future. Once a child is hooked onto a television show or video game, it becomes the focus of their attention until they find something else to get attached to. This process continues endlessly as the Internet contains an endless amount of available content. Many children grow to prefer the Internet over other peers, which diminishes overall interaction with people

and a lack of self-discovery. Studies have also shown that children who are plugged in for long periods of time can suffer from slower motor skills. To put it simply, if they do not participate in more active and social activities, there will be negative impacts to their motor and sensory development. Furthermore, continued use of technology interferes with a child's sleep cycle, which is essential to their well-being.

"Although we are not seen as 'children', high school students are a clear example of how technology distorts the sleep cycle. Students are groggy and often fall asleep in class and are not able to participate because they were not able to get enough sleep the night before. When teachers ask why, the answer is almost always 'Netflix' or 'Tik-Tok,'" Sophia Thagouras ('20) said.

Due to the spike in innovation, parents should be wary of how much their child uses technology and should monitor their child's behavior as well. Impulsive behavior is a prominent sign

of device addiction, which can take a serious toll on children's self-discipline as well.

Hostility towards others is also a primary indicator, especially with children who play video games on a regular basis. This can give children a false sense of reality and reduce their ability to distinguish reality from imagination. This can result in violent behavior and the inability to cope with appropriate sentiment when they become upset. Such a mindset disrupts the dynamic of a family, peer group, and school community.

As members of the 21st century, society is privy to the fast-paced nature of technological innovation. As society becomes more reliant on technology, it is their responsibility to find a healthy balance and protect the youth from its evidently negative impacts. It is vital that parents and educators understand the impacts various devices can have on children in order to protect the development of the future generations.

Effect of gender norms on careers

Hailey Baloutch
Special Report Editor

Girls Who Code and TechGirls are two examples of programs which aim to foster in women a passion for male-dominated STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) careers. Some STEM programs, such as engineering courses at universities, actively attempt to diversify their rosters.

However, discrimination against women is still worse in STEM careers than in others, highlighting that despite these programs' best efforts, women find themselves discouraged and displaced in STEM careers. This raises the question: how—in a world where feminism has granted women the right to vote, where women's education is celebrated, and where careers are encouraged for all—are women still being viewed as unwanted in certain fields of work?

The answer to this question may lie in the beliefs about gender roles taught to children, which are cemented at a young age and strengthened over time. Polls by Trade-Schools.net revealed that the career divide between boys and girls begins at a young age. While the preferred careers for boys are athlete, astronaut, doctor, and scientist, girls want to be teachers, veterinarians, doctors, and singers.

These early aspirations have an effect on the careers people choose as adults. Being a doctor is the third-most desired career for both boys and girls, as shown by this study.

According to qz.com, in

2017, women made up just over 50 percent of university enrollees in the American medical field, making this one of the most equal jobs in the STEM fields, demographic-wise. This suggests that the more equally-encouraged a field is in childhood, the more equality there is in that field later on. These statistics are indicative that children begin to be pushed



towards different roles in life due to gender from an early age.

"If young boys are taught lessons or skills of leadership, they will have the skills to work efficiently and strategically in the workplace and be able to refine those skills for their whole lives. However, if young girls are not taught these skills or are taught to be submissive or followers instead, they will not

be in a position of power in their careers or in their workplaces," Grace Tolla ('23) said.

According to the website psychologytoday.com, gender socialization begins with the toys children are encouraged to play with.

According to *The Guardian*, while toys may not seem incredibly important, logic, patterns, and organization are developed through children's play. Toys are one of the first ways children are introduced to the world, and imperative for developing skills. Thus, a fundamental divide is created between the skills honed by boys versus girls, when toys are distributed based on gender.

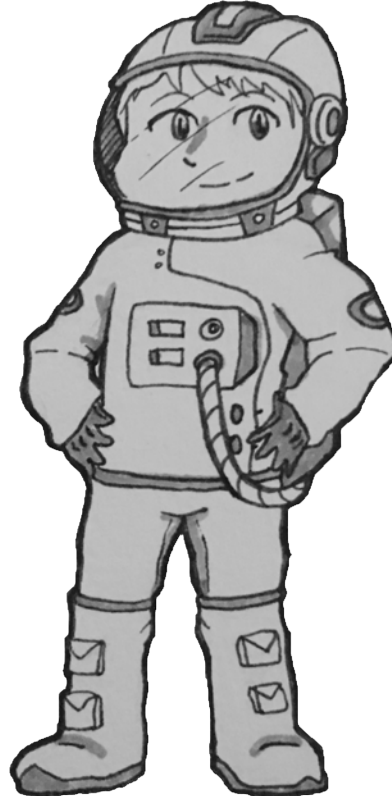
Girls are taught empathy when they take care of dolls, and boys develop motor skills and creativity when they build toy race tracks. Therefore, it is unsurprising that girls are more likely to desire being teachers, while boys lean towards careers such as an astronaut.

"By forcing children to fit into these stereotypes they are not able to develop on their own. Personalities are limited and so is expression of character. Children will continue to believe they have to follow these gender roles and may turn away from jobs that are primarily dominant in the opposite gender," Kaitlyn Masone ('21) said.

Some suggest that it is a natural difference between the brains of boys and girls which leads them to choose their toys, as well as to desire different careers. However, an experiment performed by Pshychnet.apa.org delved into the effect of gendered

objects on social constructs.

In the experiment, children were presented with randomly-assorted toys inside of gendered boxes. Regardless of the objects inside, children gravitated towards the objects inside the boxes for their own gender. From this, it is apparent that at a young age, children feel pressured to comply with gender stereotypes.



Thus, the saturation of gender stereotypes in toys and toy-related media takes away children's free will in deciding what skills they want to develop. Commercials use actors of one gender to market to a single group. This communicates to a child that the toy is meant for one gender.

A British organization that is dedicated to breaking

stereotypes, Let Toys be Toys, released a study showing the subtle ways in which children are encouraged to pick their toys, depending on their gender. They analyzed toy catalogues to find patterns, and discovered that girls are depicted playing with trucks one-fifth as much as boys, and boys play with dolls only one-third of the time.

A physchnet.apa.org study had another alarming aspect. Researchers also discovered that children could not remember details about the objects in the boxes labeled for the opposite sex as well as they could their own. This means that even suggesting a toy is meant for the opposite gender leads children to disregard the object, as well as the skills it may teach.

This sets the groundwork for children to grow up and pursue careers based on gendered skills, as there is a disparity between the skills developed by boys and girls due to gendered toys. Once these stereotypes set in, it may be difficult for women to be accepted in traditionally male careers. According to Forbes.com, this effect is not exhibited to the same effect on men in feminine work fields, due to a phenomenon called the 'glass escalator,' in which men advance more easily in female-dominated workforces.

It will take work on both the part of individual families and corporations with youth influence to raise a generation of people undaunted by gender roles. Equal opportunity will be reached only when children are no longer socialized to fit into preset roles.

Illustration by **Neeka Baclayon** / Head Illustrator.



James Gerard
Columnist

The World Depends on our Leadership

Column by James Gerard

The backlash of the Trump administration's trade policy has been accentuated by a series of protectionist tariffs on imported products from all across the globe. In essence, the plan is to shift from multilateral to bilateral deals that reduce the trade deficit while protecting domestic industries from overseas exploitation.

The stratagem against China, the European Union, and a few other allies, has forced the president to pay out 28 billion dollars to farmers for lost sales overseas. Even more so, countries such as India are responding with retaliatory tariffs that wear away at negotiation and undermine the effectiveness of such a measure.

In a breath of fresh air that followed the intense trade war with China, the U.S. has ratified the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) that is similar in structure to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The USMCA differs in that it increases environmental and labor regulations, extends U.S. access to the Canadian dairy market and provides incentives for domestic car production.

According to a study from the International Trade Commission (ITC), the USMCA will create an estimated 176,000 new jobs and add 68.2 billion dollars to the economy. A majority of these jobs will be added to the automobile, agriculture, and energy sectors.

Though the current Trump

administration has been reluctant to engage in free trade with much of the Eastern Hemisphere, there are serious advantages for the sake of our industries, farmers, and consumers.

Most notably, free trade increases access to higher-quality goods at lower prices, easing inflationary pressures. Even more so, the increased imports allow for more economic growth largely due to the fact that half of all imports are capital goods that would decrease input costs.

Some protectionists believe that free trade will send jobs overseas, though it will only catalyze a shift that, over time, will help to improve efficiency by moving workers and resources to more productive uses that promote innovation.

Protectionism only serves to

shield unsustainable jobs from shifting demands, at the expense of efficient industries that will help to raise wages and ameliorate poor living standards across the country.

The benefit of free trade extends to the underprivileged citizens of troubled foreign nations, who benefit from ratified deals that typically cover human rights, treatment of prisoners, and commitment to the reduction of public corruption. To pursue such a multilateral trade policy with the world is to allow democracy to emanate into the darkest corners of the earth.

As the leader of the free world, America should hold itself accountable for taking the next step forward in global economic reform.

The ideas of allowing

more fluid investment into our country, reallocating spending to innovative industries, and dismantling the billions of earmarked subsidies that suffocate our appropriations bills, are all immersed in our consistent predilection for prosperity.

It is not wrong for us to realize that the commercial model is shifting, or that the government is holding onto jobs that cannot exist on their own. These observations only shed light on a fraction of our problems, but in adapting our economy to global forces, we would be capable of building efficient, industries that encourage growth and build upon the fundamental aspirations of sustainable global freedom.

The “truth” in the education system

Lexi Boccuzzi
Ombudsman

The institution of education has always been influenced by the bias and perspective of both the educator and the student.

This is inherent in the practice, as one person teaches something to someone else, they cannot help but be affected by their own experiences and point of view which therefore skews the rhetoric they are proposing.

While this can be one of the best aspects of education, it allows teachers the flexibility to inspire their students and is the primary force which stimulates political participation in the socialization which takes place in American education, it can also be a dangerous thing.

Today, depending on the region of the United States a student is learning in, textbooks and the story they convey differ greatly.

“Since the left controls the education system, it is a major problem in today’s history classes that many teachers infuse their opinions and personal biases into what is supposed to be a neutral setting. This in turn instills an ideology that is simply incorrect into the minds of the students,” Noam Haron (’20) said.

Historically, control over education has helped shape entire generations’ worth of thought, from the Nazi Youth, which taught German children eugenics, the study of acquiring desirable genetics within a population, to the Communist Youth League of China, which promoted cultural destruction. Despite the increasingly nationalized U.S. curriculum, regional disparity in opinion and historical perspective has caused

significant differences in education to develop.

Not only does this further the divisive polarization plaguing the country, but it also inhibits student’s from formulating their own opinions. The purpose of education should be to teach students to be open-minded not to tell them what to think.

According to Malcom Forbes, “Education’s purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.” This quote is the most accurate depiction of what good learning should look like, however is exactly what the current U.S. education system is not providing. Throughout time, U.S. textbooks in different areas have reflected various trends in cultural changes.

adversarial tradition of anti-American teaching guided by Howard Zinn’s, *A People’s History of the United States*, which is self proclaimed to “be a different side of history from the more traditional fundamental nationalist glorification of country.”

According to npr.org, this discouraged an entire generation of self-hating Americans, an effect we can see on millennials policy opinions as adults. While Zinn’s textbook was important in juxtaposing the previous ignorance in public education to America’s faults, it had an opposite effect which can be loosely correlated to the low political participation and voting turnouts among that population.

“Nobody wants to be a part of a system that they disagree with or dislike. So when students learn about the U.S. in school where there are many negative connotations to our past and today’s politics, they could be deterred to getting involved politically as adults,” Eli Roth (’21) said.

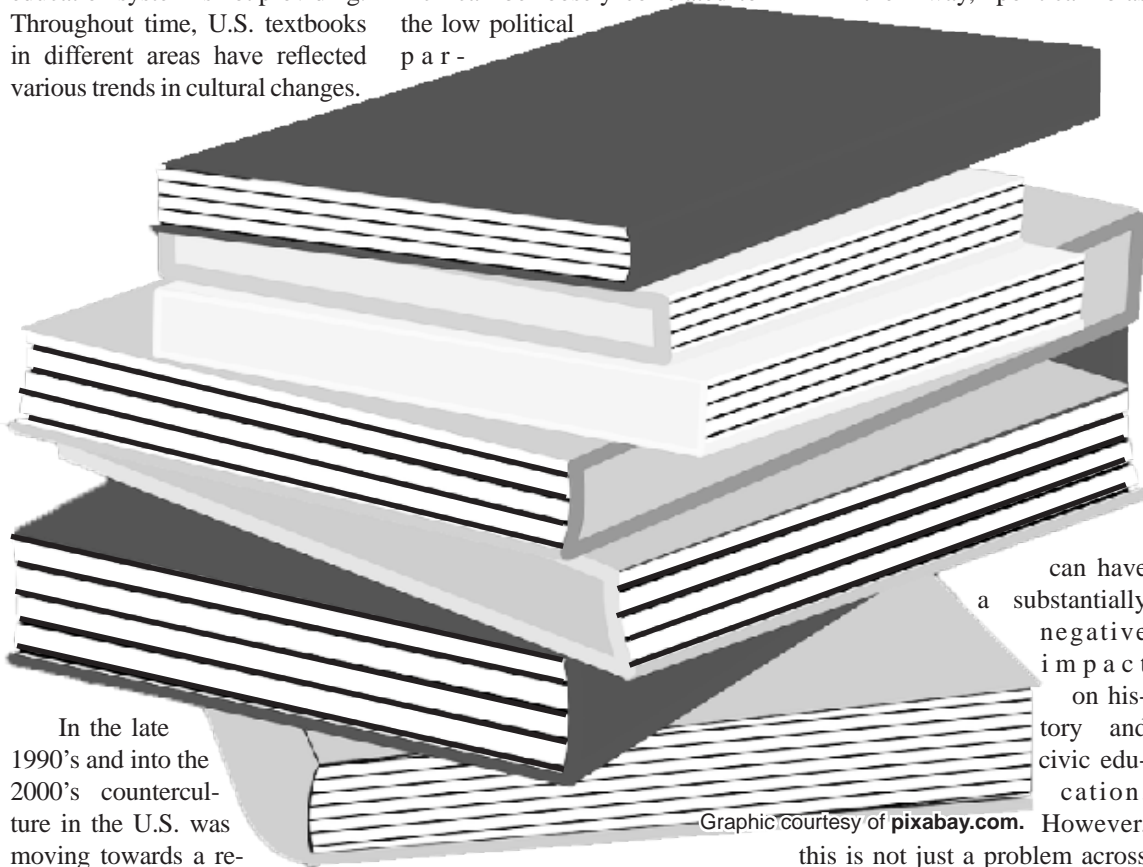
Stanford education and history professor Sam Wineburg touched on this regarding the textbook saying, “History as truth, issued from the left or from the right, abhors shades of gray. It seeks to stamp out the democratic insight that people of good will can see the same thing and come to different conclusions.”

Either way, political bias can have a substantially negative impact on history and civic education. However, this is not just a problem across time periods or individual teachers but also represents regional disparity in differing communities. Recently, the *New York Times* did an investigation comparing textbooks used in high school education in both Texas and California.

The article reported different versions of the same textbooks tailored for each region, and highlighted significant differences between the books. These changes included clear skews in facts. For example, a book in California highlights increased regulation on second amendment freedoms not included in a Texas version. This comparison touched upon a larger issue in state regulated education which has persisted in the U.S. forever, characterized between battles over creationism and abstinence based education in sex education.

Although some of these differences in teaching can be small, many of them put together can shape a student’s impressionable perspective drastically. While bias in teaching and explanation of historical events is relatively unavoidable, textbooks should not be laden with the same substantial skew. This type of bias is even more impactful than that from teachers because student’s largely take written fact as truth versus being dismissed as an individual perspective from teachers.

Overall, political bias in teaching and textbooks goes against the entire purpose of education which is to develop open-minded individuals who learn in an effort to decipher their own opinions. While it is many times unavoidable, it is important for both teachers and students alike to be conscious consumers of information in the classroom and understand the power of “factual” skew in shaping political culture.



In the late 1990’s and into the 2000’s counterculture in the U.S. was moving towards a reversal of previous traditions of American exceptionalism while washing inequities in history classes. This brought on an

Graphic courtesy of pixabay.com.

Franki & Maddie Try to Change the World

Column by Maddie MacDonald & Franki Spinelli Mastrone

For the February issue, we chose to focus on adoption rights for LGBTQ+ couples. In all of our columns, we will discuss each political party’s opinion on an issue as well as our own personal views and thoughts.

According to NBC News, the Governor of Tennessee has recently passed a bill that would allow for state funded, faith-based adoption and for foster care agencies to exclude prospective LGBTQ+ parents, as well as provide legal protection for them, should anyone wish to take action against the organizations. They also reserve the right to refuse services to children who may identify as LGBTQ+. Tennessee is one of 11 states with this type of legislation.

Democrat View: The general consensus among the Democratic party is that this bill is clear discrimination. They believe that any responsible parent who meets the qualifications should be allowed to adopt a child. They also point out that there is no evidence to prove that same sex couples are any less fit to be parents than heterosexual couples. Also, every state that contains legislation prohibiting same sex couples from adopting is considered a red (Republican) state, and not a single blue (Democratic) state does. The Democratic party has famously been more supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, much more so than the Republican party.

Republican View: The House Republicans recently advanced an amendment protecting federal funding for adoption agencies that refuse to adopt to LGBTQ+ families on the grounds of religion. Only one Republican, Rep. Scott Taylor (Virginia), did not vote in its favor. They want continued funding for religion-based organizations. They believe that funding should continue for all adoption organizations and that these organizations should be allowed to place children in accordance with their religious beliefs. Their proposal would limit states from taking action against religious organizations that refuse customers on a basis of religion. According to the amendment, if states were to refuse funding, 15 percent of their allotted funding for child welfare services from the department health and human services would be cut.

Our View: We believe that any caring and loving family should have the right to adopt a child, permitting that they meet the adoption qualifications. These qualifications should not include ones based on religion, race, or sexuality. While we do respect the right of freedom of religion, discrimination should not be publically funded. By funding these religious organizations and allowing them to refuse adoption based on religious beliefs, they would also be validating discrimination. These organizations should not be shut down completely but they should be run privately and separate from public funding.

Billie Eilish humbly accepts Grammys

Allison McSally
Staff Writer

Billie Eilish recently made history at the Grammys, winning all of the Big Four awards: Best New Artist, Song of the Year, Record of the Year, and Album of the Year. This feat has only been done once before—39 years ago by a Yacht Rock singer, Christopher Cross.

Some attribute her success solely to her outward appearance, while others believe believe that her unique approach to music has led to her popularity.

She is by no means the clean-cut “girl next door.” Eilish is known to have a foul mouth and juvenile sense of humor, which is evident in her interviews. Her personality can be considered both obnoxious and captivating, but it is her unpredictable sound that lures people in.

Sonically, her music has a broad range. From ukuleles and haunting vocals to distorted bass, there is something for everyone to enjoy. She told Zane Lowe during an interview with Apple Music that the goal for her debut album was to have “every single song sound completely different from everything else. If you put 14 people who like different genres into a room and plop *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* in front of them, I

want every single person in that room to like at least one song.”

There is no doubt that her discography takes the listener on a ride, ranging from the sarcastic yet confident anthem “bad guy” to a harmony-filled, sullen ballad “when the party’s over” to a heartbreaking look into the depressed mind “listen before I go.”

Eilish’s music is far from ordinary, as she incorporates the chirping of crosswalk buttons, dental drill sounds, and clips of dialogue from *The Office* into her songs. She balances her silky smooth voice with deep bass lines and spine-tingling production, accredited to her brother, producer, and co-writer Finneas. The duo’s creative and innovative approach to music can be appreciated by many, enough to warrant them many awards.

“There is an appeal to be different nowadays, and she achieves that. She also targets our age group and is very relatable,” Olivia Bachman (’22) said.

She massively appeals to Gen Z, who make up much of her cult fanbase, but has resonated with people of all ages. From her all-over-the-place personality to the fact that she records all of her music in her brother’s bedroom, everything about her is unique and unusual.

With lyrics like “my Lucifer is lonely” and “I wanna end me,” some say she is trying too

hard to be rebellious, often being perceived as too “emo” or “depressed” for mainstream radio.

She told Gayle King in an interview with CBS news that “there was all these labels and radio people that would not play me because I was too sad and no one was gonna relate to it.”

Although it is true that her songs often delve into dark subjects, that is what many love about her.

“She talks about social issues in her music and has a large influence on people her age,” Jessica Albright (’22) said.

The topics she covers are often considered taboo in popular music, yet are very prevalent in the teenage mind, including climate change, depression, and suicide.

In one song she declares, “I do not need a xanny to feel better,” throwing a jab at irresponsible recreational drug use.

“I am not a fan of her music, but her fame is extremely impressive. She is so successful at such a young age,” Kristina Long (’20) said.

Eilish’s quick rise to stardom raises the question of whether her fame is due to pure talent and coincidence, or a result of her connections to the industry, as her parents are both retired actors and songwriters.

The singer was met with controversy when she was seen praying that she would not

win Album of the Year at the Grammys, mouthing “please do not be me.” Upon hearing her name, she cried out “no,” seeming upset at the victory. In her short and unplanned acceptance speech, she expressed her love for Ariana Grande’s “thank u, next” album and said it deserved the title. Although there are no hard feelings between the two, as Grande was seen blowing kisses and cheering for Eilish in response, many had a different opinion about the situation.

Fans quickly took to social media, calling out the Grammys for snubbing artists of well-deserved awards, including Grande who went home empty-handed. The annual awards show has a reputation of being unfair, often accused of catering to certain artists and disregarding others. The hashtag “scammys” trended on Twitter in the following hours, showcasing the anger and disappointment felt by many music lovers.

Some fans went as far as attacking Eilish for her childish behavior. She received a fair amount of hateful comments online, with many calling her ungrateful. The scene was vastly blown out of proportion by the media, which is why Eilish did not want to win in the first place.

In reality, Eilish is humble and in disbelief. Finneas clari-

fied in his speech that “we did not think [this album] would win anything ever... we stand up here confused and grateful.” Feeling undeserving of the award, Eilish even told the cheerful audience to sit down, saying, “I am not going to waste your time.”

As music’s newest superstar, she is only beginning to experience the hardships of public scrutiny, and the pressure is already overwhelming. Eilish has described her newfound fame as disappointing and tortuous, referencing her inability to live a normal life or go anywhere without being recognized. Her schedule is no joy ride either, having already acquired multiple sprained ankles as a result of performing.

Historically, stardom is brutal on mental health. Eilish is known to wear oversized clothing because of her desire to hide her body from the world. Her extreme fame does not help with her severe insecurity, as any time she shows skin, she is met with thousands of judgemental comments online.

Combined with her clinical depression and the pressure to maintain the standards she holds for herself, life in the spotlight is exhausting. The hope is that her catharsis remains musical.

WHO DESERVED THE ALBUM OF THE YEAR AWARD?

Billie Eilish

Ariana Grande

76%

24%

Billie Eilish

Ariana Grande

*Poll out of 100
Poll conducted by **Ava Maubert** / Section Editor.

Bedroom Pop: It is a music genre

Zoe Kallenekos

Reporter

It is a new decade, and if the past ten years in music have proven anything, it is that the Internet reigns supreme.

The rise of streaming platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, SoundCloud, and YouTube has allowed listeners more choices than ever. As a result, artists of an

increasingly popular genre known as Bedroom Pop have begun to carve out their own space in the music industry.

As the name suggests, Bedroom Pop is music that is created in an artist's bedroom.

The music consists of nothing but the artist's voice, instruments, and home-recording software, which often results in audio with a lower quality. However, this has not disadvantaged Bedroom Pop artists. In fact, their appeal comes largely from the "unproduced" sound that can give music a more interesting and authentic quality.

Bedroom Pop has gained increasing recognition in the past few years; in 2018, Spotify created a playlist of the same name

which has amassed over half a million "followers" as of February 2020.

Spotify in particular has gained popularity for allowing users to make their own custom playlists.

"The sound is purely what is appealing to me...they offer music that goes along with activities where you are just working, concentrating, or just relaxing," Danny Richardson ('20) said.

While the genre is noted for its atmospheric, "chill" sound, Bedroom Pop artists have found growing success in the sphere of live music as well as online. This February, Rex Orange County sold out two shows at the famed Radio City Music Hall in New York City. Several others are finding success through major music festivals such as Coachella, which expose festival-goers to lesser known artists along with well-known headlining acts.

Francesca Rubino-Chuckas ('20) cites singer Clairo as a main reason for

attending the Governors Ball Music Festival in New York City last year. The lyrics of Clairo and her peers are what makes their music truly special.

"It allows me to recognize that I am beautiful in my own way, shape, and form, and I should not change myself for others. It empowers me and makes me proud to be who I am," Chuckas ('20) said in reference to Clairo's song "pretty girl".

Clairo, whose real name is Claire Cottrill, was only 18 when she made the song's viral video. The video displays her sitting in her bedroom, dancing and lip-synching to the tongue-in-cheek lyrics.

Since then, her video has amassed over 40 million views on YouTube. She has become the unofficial face of the Bedroom Pop movement in the past few years, with the soft-spoken vocals, atmospheric audio quality, and relatable lyrics that exemplify the genre.

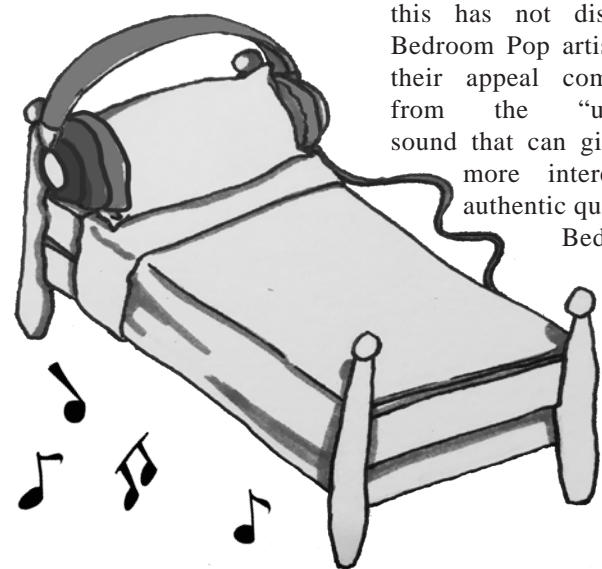
At the same time,

criticisms of her have shown that Bedroom Pop is not exempt from the controversies of other genres. Some have attempted to discredit her self-made success due to the fact that her father has existing connections in the music industry. This is reminiscent of 1970s punk artists' fear of "selling out," or of compromising authenticity for commercial success due to the genre's similar "do-it-yourself" ethos.

Whatever judgements may come, Bedroom Pop artists have become, in many ways, the voice of Generation Z, who have grown up seeing that it is possible to succeed with nothing but the Internet and some creativity.

Whether people would like to glimpse into the minds of the self-enterprising artists of today, or just want something new to put on and relax to, Bedroom Pop is the perfect fit. In fact, readers can get a taste of Bedroom Pop on westwordonline.com by checking out the playlist.

Illustration by Neeka Baclayon/ Head Illustrator.



Half time show through the decades

Becca Alper

Staff Writer

The Super Bowl is a nation-wide phenomenon and media circus. From the commercials, to the big half-time performance, to the singer of the national anthem, all of these components help increase audience interest and revenue.

The typical fan favorite is the half-time show which has evolved tremendously over the past few decades since the first show in 1967. Starting with Super Bowl XXII, the halftime performance was presented and endorsed by commercial sponsors. It was tradition to make the show have a theme, however that ended five years after Super Bowl III when they then introduced bigger productions and higher-profile acts to the performance.

When the Super Bowl first started to bring performers to the stage at half time, the NFL typically hired college marching bands or symphonies. Taking the stage at the L.A. Memorial Coliseum, the University of Arizona Symphonic Marching Band was the first performing act at halftime of the famous Super Bowl football game. The event then began hiring drill teams in the second decade of its occurrence which was a more varied show.

In 1972, the Super Bowl

hosted its very first singers, Ella Fitzgerald and Carol Channing. However in 1973, Miss Texas took the stage and played the fiddle with the University of Texas Longhorn Band. The Super Bowl half-time shows consisted of more lackluster acts for the next decade.

Today, in the third decade of the show, there are either solo artists or bands. Starting in 1991, the performances began to feature popular music artists like Gloria Estefan. The more well known performers that are listened to everyday tend to put on shows that wow the football fans and make them even more enthusiastic about the event. The entertainers that perform at halftime in this decade are heard on the radio and are known performers amongst all ages. With that being said, the halftime show has drastically changed since the late 60's.

At the halftime show of Super Bowl XXXVIII in 2004, Janet Jackson was revealed inappropriately during a "wardrobe malfunction." Her performance with Justin Timberlake took an interesting turn from exciting to embarrassing. After the incident, the event turned back to featuring classic rock acts which the public considered a more "family-friendly" performance. This lasted until

2011 when pop music returned to the show.

The NFL does not pay the half-time performers an appearance fee, however, they cover all costs of the performance from props to sound systems. The exception was of Michael Jackson's half-time show, when the NFL and Frito-Lay company donated to his Heal the World Foundation and also provided a commercial for it.

According to Nielsen SoundScan data, an information and sales tracking system, the performers who participate in the half-time shows experience a gradual increase in their album sales as well as paid digital downloads from the exposure of their music to millions of people.

This year, Jennifer Lopez and Shakira preformed, but their performance was deemed "not family friendly" by many. Their outfits were considered highly inappropriate. However, according to *The Chicago Sun Times*, the Super Bowl show has been sexualized throughout the past decade.

"People criticize Janet Jackson for what happened and it was not really her fault, but her career suffered because of it. based on that I am not surprised that this years performers were hated on for the way they dressed because of society's outlook on it," Emma

Rimmerman ('21) said.

Many began to defend the two women. For example, they cited how Adam Levine was praised when he took off his shirt during the 2018 show, yet JLO and Shakira were considered scandalous.

"People were upset about what Shakira and JLO were wearing but it was the same

thing as last year. Adam Levine walked around without his shirt on so why is it any different for them to wear so little clothing?" Ellie Balestriere ('20) said.

Overall, the half-time show has consisted of a variety of performers and is bound to evolve even more over time.



Shakira and JLO The two singers take the stage at the 2020 super bowl half-time show.

Photo courtesy of pixabay.com.

Remembering the Bryants' legacy

James Gerard
Columnist

On January 26, in a momentary flash of disbelief, the world stopped moving. An outpour of tears were shed for the legacy left behind by the great Kobe Bryant. For days, the nation cried and for months it will grieve, but no timetable will ever allow people to forget the magnitude of his contributions to those around him.

Drafted to the NBA at just 17 years old, straight out of Lower Merion High School, Bryant ignited what would become one of the most electric, and extensive careers for any shooting guard in history. Throughout his career, he won five NBA Championships, including a three-peat from 1999 to 2002. Bryant amassed eighteen All-Star appearances and fifteen All-NBA bids, twelve All-Defensive bids, and an MVP in 2007.

It is not possible to amass such a decorated career without the dedication that Kobe thrived off of. Year after year, the 'Mamba mentality' exhibited itself to kids on every court, all overflowing with hope. Even with his emanating motivation, Bryant found that the response to failure is imperative to any triumph.

He once said, "once you know what failure feels like, determination chases success."

While this 'Mamba mentality' has primarily dominated basketball culture, it is the foremost of mindsets to look to when dealing with life's greatest obstacles. To meet adversity with exceptional accounts of resilience, leadership, hard work, or overcoming fear, is one of the many legacies that Bryant left to cherish.

It is only a matter of time before Bryant will be posthumously enshrined in the Hall of Fame, in recognition of his fiercely, competitive personality that touched every corner of the globe, and in memory of his passion for the game of basketball that inspired generations of similarly-ardent youth to follow such a remarkable dream.

Varsity basketball player Tim McKeithen ('20) sees Kobe as someone who "was one of those people who captivated the eyes of whoever watched. I personally want to be that player, the one that everyone is captivated by."

Kobe Bryant had been ce-

menting this legacy outside of the game, beginning in 2007 with his national ambassadorship for After-School All-Stars. While involved with this non-profit, Bryant gave motivational speeches across the country to underprivileged students during their after-school programming. He led a fundraiser for the organization's Los Angeles chapter, serving 14,000 students from 38 schools.

Bryant also dedicated time to Make-A-Wish America, visiting over 200 children across his career. He provided smiles to those suffering from life-threatening diseases, even bringing some along to games.

As an advocate of education and global opportunity, Kobe Bryant and his wife established the Kobe and Vanessa Bryant Family Foundation, spreading the game of basketball to China and providing American youth with the opportunity to learn Mandarin in hopes of forging a cultural bridge. He also donated copies of his book, *The Wizenard Series*, to underperforming schools to improve literacy.

Partnering with community initiatives, the foundation helped raise awareness of Los Angeles County's homelessness problem and black history. With a generous donation, Kobe Bryant became one of the milestone founders of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

In one of his most memorable accomplishments, Bryant created The Mamba League in partnership with the Los Angeles Boys and Girls Club, providing kids with access to sports and lifestyle training. He funded the construction of the Mamba Sports Academy that served as a training ground for his daughter's basketball team.

For so long, it seemed as if Bryant's second act was just beginning—a life off the court, but not quite away from it still impassioned and inspiring for those yet to hold a basketball. Just two years ago, Bryant won an Academy Award for his short film, "Dear Basketball," a love story to the game that revolutionized his mindset and provided him with a platform to spread hope to those who wish and dream.

Here in Westhill's gym, dozens of members of the Westhill basketball program have fostered their strength, cour-

age, and commitment inspired by Kobe Bryant and his legacy.

Varsity basketball captain Jack Schlachtenhaufen ('20) remembers Kobe as a man who "was and will continue to be an inspiration to athletes all over the world. For me personally, Kobe inspired me with his work ethic and dedication. His countless hours of hard work and the way he lived for basketball showed me how the sky's the limit when you put your mind to something. Kobe not only inspired athletes but anyone who has a passion for something. Through dedication, you can achieve your dreams. Kobe was an all time great on the court and a remarkable human being who inspired millions. He will truly be missed."

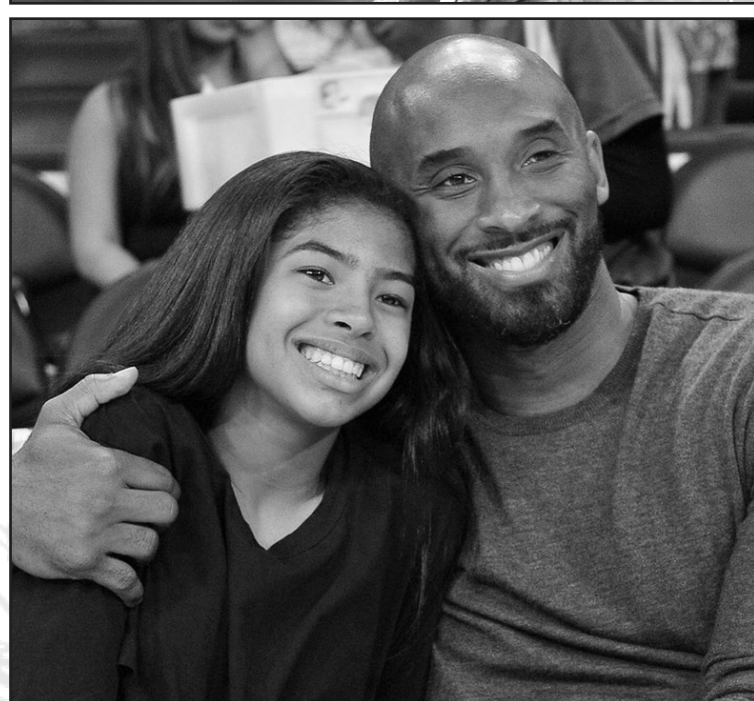
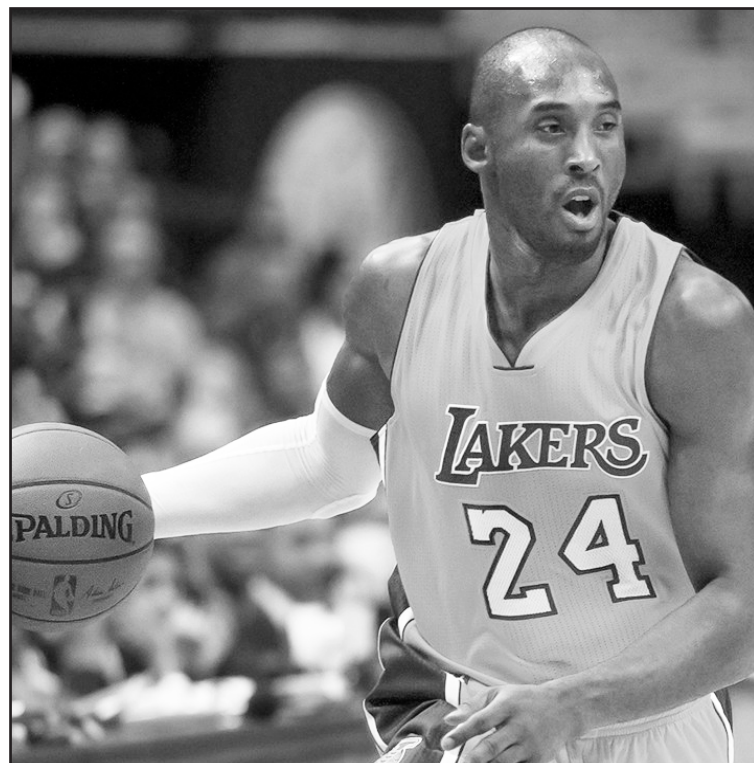
On January 26, in Calabasas, Kobe and his daughter Gianna, along with seven others were killed in a helicopter crash. They were traveling to Mamba Academy for a basketball game. The outcry of fans and celebrities was evident on social media, and many paid tribute to the father-daughter duo outside of their Beverly Hills home. Gianna hoped to be in the WNBA herself one day, and planned to play for UCONN.

Kobe Bryant was iconic: his persona, his two numbers, his purple and gold uniform, his jump shot and his tunnel runs. It drew the attention of millions of future fans that gathered together in mourning. What was lost following Kobe Bryant's death must never be forgotten—his volunteerism, philanthropy, dedication, and perseverance.

"Life," Kobe Bryant said, "is too short to get bogged down and be discouraged. You have to keep moving. You have to keep going. Put one foot in front of the other, smile and just keep on rolling."

Following these words of wisdom, the community may hope to relieve the grief that has rightfully overwhelmed those who looked up to Bryant. It is important to continue to utilize his message and compete in the game he loved, and to never lose hold of what it means to have the "mamba mentality."

To watch Bryant's career ascend further than just the rafters is both remarkable and heartbreaking, but what he left behind will be felt for generations. And so, people will say one final time, "Mamba out"—but never forgotten.



PURPLE & GOLD Kobe and Gianna Bryant will be remembered by many for their legacy in the basketball community and impact on kids across the world.

Images courtesy of www.flickr.com.

A look back at winter sport success

Timothy McKeithen
Reporter

As a whole, the multiple teams have done very well throughout the winter season.

The gymnastics team recently broke a school record of points acquired in a single meet.

This past season, the team qualified for States for the first time in at least seventeen years. The team had a few returning seniors, as well as successful underclassmen.

The team was also 17th in the state, with Bailey Petrizzi taking 13th place in uneven bars, and Hannah Chukkas taking 30th in uneven bars and floor exercise.

This year, three Viking gymnasts make the all-FCIAC team. These include Hannah Chukkas and Bailey Petrizzi, who went first team, and Maya Manders, who qualified for second team.

At FCIACS, Petrizzi won 10th place all around, taking 4th place in uneven bars and 9th place in balance beam. Chukkas won 9th in vault, 5th in uneven bars, and 10th in floor exercise. Manders won 10th in balance beam.

Boys' basketball recently qualified for states with a Senior Night win against Norwalk High School, and is currently trying to

make it to Mohegan Sun, where States is bound to be held. The boys finished 8-12 and are heading up to Unclesville for the first round against St. Bernards.

"With multiple returning starters and a group of guys with Varsity experience under their belts we are more prepared for higher competition," Nick Lapas ('20) said when asked the reason behind this season going so well compared to previous years.

Girls' basketball had a great season, but did not make it to the State Tournament.

"I wish we had made it to states, but overall, I had an exciting last season at Westhill," Jaedyn Carter ('20) said.

Boys' Hockey also had a successful season, and the team is currently playing in the tournament for the FCIAC Championship.

The regular season for hockey was 14-5-1 this year, compared to 11-9 last year, and 7-9-2 two years ago.

Wrestling had a solid season and produced a State LL Champion, Tomasz Maszur, who got to compete in the CIAC Open.

Mazur, who is also a captain of the wrestling team, won the FCIAC, CIAC Class LL, and CIAC Open championships. He

defeated Ryan Powers, CIAC Class S champion, in the finals with a 14-4 major decision.

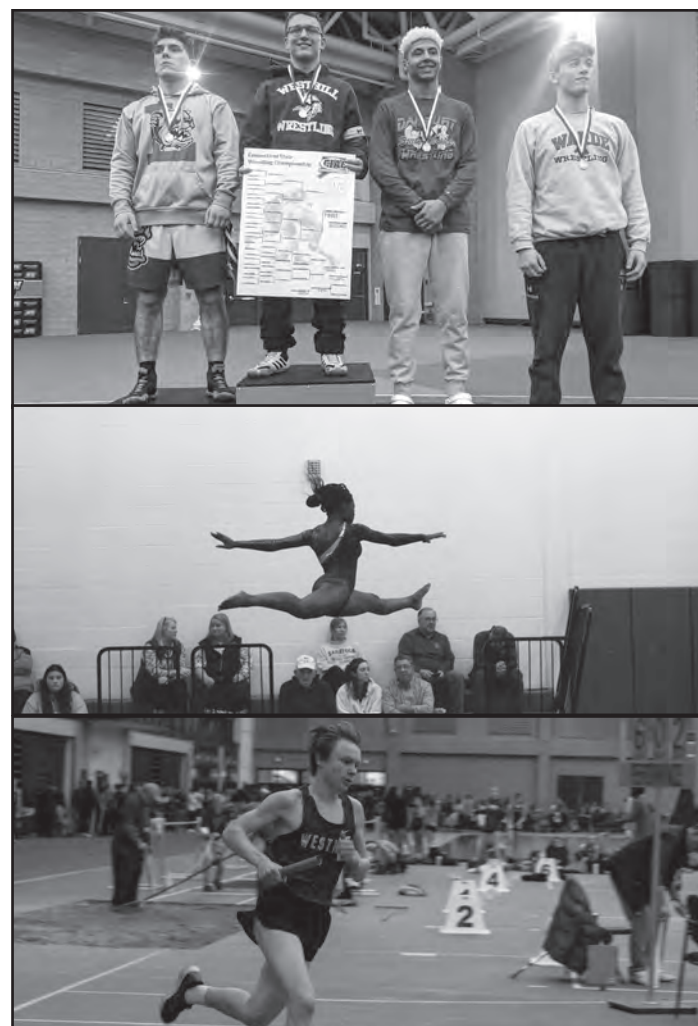
Indoor Track also had a great season, with many athletes who entered state-wide meets, competing alongside the top track athletes from other schools in Connecticut.

"I was unsure of it at first, but as time went on, I found that it was an amazing group of positive people and I loved it," Sakoi Cheatham ('20) said.

Sophomore Colin McLaughlin placed second at FCIACs in the 1600m event and sixth at the Class LL Championship in the 3200m. With a 9:40 time, McLaughlin beat the former school record for the 3200. He then went on to compete at State Opens, where he placed 8th in the 3200m event.

On February 27, McLaughlin and Coach Kubik traveled to Boston, where McLaughlin competed at an invitational against collegiate athletes. He ran an 8:51 3k race, which put him a second off from qualifying for Nationals.

Fan support, camaraderie, drive, and passion all fueled this winter's successful season. Now, Westhill prepares for the upcoming spring season, expecting for such successes to continue.



CHASING VICTORY Tomasz Maszur (top), Gloria Twum (middle), and Colin McLaughlin (bottom) competing for the win.

Photos by **Tomasz Maszur** (top), **Morgan McDonald** (middle), and **Sydney Eben** (bottom) / Contributors & Photo Manager.

Max's Corner

Column By Max Savitt

On January 26, star basketball player Kobe Bryant passed away due to a tragic helicopter accident, along with his daughter Gigi Bryant, and seven other passengers.

The news of Kobe's death quickly spread around the world, shocking all of those who found out about it.

The death of the superstar hurt millions of people around the world, and professional athletes in a variety of different sports found ways to honor the legend.

In basketball, teams took a 24 second violation or an eight second violation at the start of a game to honor Kobe, as he wore numbers eight and 24.

In other sports such as soccer, players like Neymar wore a Kobe jersey during warmups to show respect to the late basketball star.

January 26 will be a day to grieve forever. Kobe was more than just an NBA superstar: he was an amazing father and husband to his family, a role model to all, and a genuine man. Kobe Bryant will be missed, but his legacy will live

on forever. Like the saying goes: "heroes get remembered but legends never die."

In other news, sticking to basketball, the NBA All-Star teams were announced and some drama sparked due to a select players being snubbed from the game.

In my opinion, the biggest snubs of the 2020 all-star game were Phoenix Suns guard Devin Booker, Washington Wizards guard Bradley Beal, and Chicago Bulls guard Zach Lavine.

This year Suns, guard Devin Booker is averaging 27.1 points per game, and Washington Wizards guard Bradley Beal is averaging 28.8 points per game.

These two players are the first two players to average 27+ points and 6+ assists half-way through the season, and not make the all-star game.

This stat made a lot of headlines, with star players like Karl Anthony Towns of the Minnesota Timberwolves speaking out on behalf of the snubbed players, saying that the league made an obvious

mistake not getting these two players in the All-Star game.

Devin Booker and Bradley Beal have been balling out this year, but the main reason for their lack of votes was due to their team's performance so far this year. The Wizards are 17 and 31 which made some fans hesitant towards voting for Beal, but the stats say it all, Beal deserves a spot.

On the other hand, the Suns are 20 and 28, and the same reasons apply to Booker. Fans said he could not lead a team, but Booker needs help on the Suns and has proven that if he had a better team, he could keep up.

The last player that was snubbed was Chicago Bulls guard Zach Lavine.

Lavine has turned his game around in the span of two years from role player to borderline All-Star. He has been putting in the work and it is unfortunate to see all his hard work robbed from him because he was snubbed from the All-Star game.

This year, he is averaging 25.1 points, four rebounds,

and four assists. Lavine has been playing great this year but he was among many players who were snubbed a spot at this year's All-Star game.

The 2020 All-Star game will take place in Chicago, and this year there will be no players representing the home crowd.

Lavine has turned his game around in the span of two years from role player to borderline All-Star. Lavine has been putting in the work and playing great and it is unfortunate to see all his hard work being robbed from him since he was snubbed from the All-Star game.

Moving on from basketball, in Major League Baseball the cheating scandal involving the Houston Astros has gotten interesting. The players of the Houston Astros have had their respect absolutely taken from them.

Star players in the league, including Mike Trout, Aaron Judge, Giancarlo Stanton, Cody Bellinger and many more have voiced their opinion on how disgusted and embarrassed they are that their

fellow competitors would cheat. Many want the Houston Astros to be stripped of their 2017 World Series trophy because they believe that they did not earn it.

Siding along with all the baseball players voicing their opinions, star basketball player LeBron James even took a crack at the Astros via Twitter.

"Listen I know I do not play baseball but I am in sports and I know if someone cheated me out of winning the title and I found out about it I would be f***** irate! I mean like uncontrollable about what I would/could do! Listen here baseball commissioner listen to your players speaking today about how disgusted, mad, hurt, broken, etc about this. Literally the ball is in your court (or should I say field) and you need to fix this for the sake of sports!" LeBron tweeted.

This emotion-ridden tweet shows that this whole cheating scandal is a big deal, and well respected star athletes in other sports, like LeBron James, believe that the Astros need to be dealt a real punishment.



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