

The Westword

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

Class of 2021 Senior Wills

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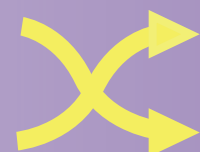
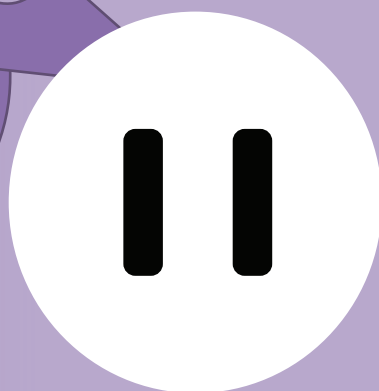
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Sports Editors Arjun Batra,	

Note from the Editors

June 2021

Dear Readers,

It is the bittersweet time of year again, as we say farewell to our readers for the summer. The staff is pleased to bring you the Senior Issue and we hope that you have enjoyed the publication over the course of the year.

Our Editorial this month continues the tradition of allowing the Editor -in-Chief to reflect on their time with *The Westword*.

News covers the new parking regulations on the hill and highlights of the year.

In Viewpoint, we consider the ethics of requiring COVID-19 vaccines in public high schools. We also dive into the Olympic's choices in banning 'political' apparel.

This issue, Special Re-

port delves into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, how it started and where it is today.

Our Supplement this issue gives seniors the opportunity to leave behind their memories and inside jokes to their friends and teachers, before moving on to bright futures.

En las noticias hablamos sobre el trato de la sociedad Estadounidense hacia los Hispano hablantes y la traducción al artículo sobre la prohibición de el estacionamiento en la calle Roxbury y los afectados.

Feature this issue highlights Afrah Alwan as a talented senior artist, and the Hungry Vikings look into the Stamford Milk N Cookies Cafe.

Limelight looks into the new Olivia Rodrigo album *Sour* and the re-opening of

movie theaters.

In Sports, we get an update on the summer sports season with Max's Corner and sit down with our Athlete of the Month, Christie Blokivist.

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 Veda Bhalla's mailbox in room 224, Direct Messaging (DM) us on Instagram @thewestword, or emailing us at westwordwhs@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Veda Bhalla & Jason Zarrilli
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, Mary Chobanyan, Mariana Cifuentes, Kristina DeLelle, Niki Economidis, Ava Maubert, Joaquin Montecarlo, Luis Padilla, Evan Roth, Vana Servos, Caitlyn Tyrrell, Jessie Velishka, Elizabeth Watkinson, 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 at this time.

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 **Jason Zarrilli** / Print Executive Editor

Back cover photos by **Caitlyn Tyrrell** / Section editor (top),

Teresa Melia / Contributor (bottom left), & **Dr. K** / Contributor (bottom right)

EDITORIAL

Editor-in-Chief bids farewell

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Joining The Westword as a freshman, I was intimidated, to say the least. I started off as a scared little girl who knew no one until I went to the Columbia Scholastic Press Association in March. It was during this trip that I knew The Westword was where I belonged. Seeing the bonds created among the upperclassmen and the traditions upheld each year, it was obvious that this club was special.

When advised to apply for Print Executive Editor my junior year, I was in disbelief. I loved my time on the paper but did not think I would be one to climb up the ladder. Now, here I am writing my final piece as the Editor-in-Chief. And what a journey it has been.

This year was unlike no other: we went from fun in-person shifts full of laughter and 20-second dance parties to a completely remote environment. While we printed less than normal years, I am extremely proud of the staff as well as our increased social media presence. In addition, we were able to cover many events that the world that faced this past year has faced from

our editorial on the threats to American Democracy to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the COVID-19 pandemic. We made sure to cover a wide range of subjects that would grab the attention of all of the different types of readers Westhill has.

I could not have done this without the amazing staff I got to work with this year. While it was harder to meet people and get to know each other, we still made communication a priority, by sending updates on our progress and holding virtual shifts. This year showed me how valuable spending time with the staff is and while it was unfortunate that we could not meet in person, the virtual shifts helped make The Westword still feel like a team of strong individuals who all shared the same goal of publishing the best content we could.

This year's Print Executive Editor, Jason Zarrilli, deserves a huge thank you. You were with me from the beginning when we were section editors for Scatterbrain and I am so glad I got the opportunity to run this paper with you. You helped me face all challenges

from InDesign to finding the correct post office to deliver the papers.

Next, I would like to thank Elizabeth Watkinson, our Online Executive Editor. This year, we did something new and had a separate management team for online. Your organization and ability to manage them were outstanding. You helped continue our goal of increasing the readership of The Westword Online.

To the Managing Editors: Julia Afsary, Mary Chobanyan, Ava Maubert, Joaquin Montecarlo, Luis Padilla, Vana Servos, and Jessie Velishka, your perseverance this year was extremely admirable as you strived to continue publishing at our usual standards. I would also like to give a special shoutout to Joaquin Montecarlo and Luis Padilla. You two took on more work than assigned during every issue and stayed with Jason and me during our 18-hour virtual shifts. In addition, it is important to recognize that you two and Jason are the reason senior wills was a huge success this year and that they look amazing. We could not

have published our print issues without you.

The effort that our editorial board put in this year does not go unnoticed and I thank you for continuing to be active in The Westword community.

To our Ombudsman, Hailey Baloutch, you were outstanding and will do an even better job as next year's Editor-in-Chief. Evan Roth and Camila Miranda, you two will also do an excellent job as next year's executives. I am so excited to see what you three will do with the paper next year and wish you all good luck.

To the entire staff, a thank you for providing me with an after-school club that welcomed me and made me feel purposeful. Without you, I would not have been able to use my voice in high school from publishing my viewpoints to protesting block-scheduling.

To the advisors, Mr. Woolley and Mr. von Wahlde, you helped make my transition to Editor-in-Chief as smooth as possible and gave creative ideas to keep The Westword going in this crazy year. I am so lucky to have had you to guide me and I thank you endlessly.

Lastly, to the readers, you are the reason we kept going. Walking the halls and seeing people with the latest issue in their hands brought me pure joy. We do this for you and will continue serving the Westhill community. As we always say, "The test of good journalism is the measure of its public service."

This club is a great opportunity for anyone who wants to meet amazing new people, learn the workings of a professional environment, use their voice, or simply have a place to go to after-school. The doors of room 224 are open to anyone.

While I am sad to leave The Westword, I am excited to see what comes next. My time here over the past four years has been full of memories I will never forget and my fingers will forever be covered in ink from the pages we published.

Sincerely,



Veda Bhalla

Congratulations to next year's editors



Evan Roth
Print Executive Editor



Hailey Baloutch
Editor-in-Chief



Camila Miranda
Online Executive Editor

Westhill's Artist of the Year: Afrah Alwan ('21)

Even from a young age, Afrah Alwan had a passion for art. Afrah never became tired of art, as she knew the talent and creativity she possessed. Afrah has enjoyed trying different art media and has found herself to be at peace with a stroke of a brush.

"Art is very therapeutic to me and helps me a lot whenever I feel down or

stressed and that is why I keep creating it." Alwan said.

Her favorite art media to use are acrylic paint and black ink, but in the future, she would like to try different materials and grow as an artist. After graduating, she hopes to share her artwork with the world and start her own business.

"The girl eating the Dori-

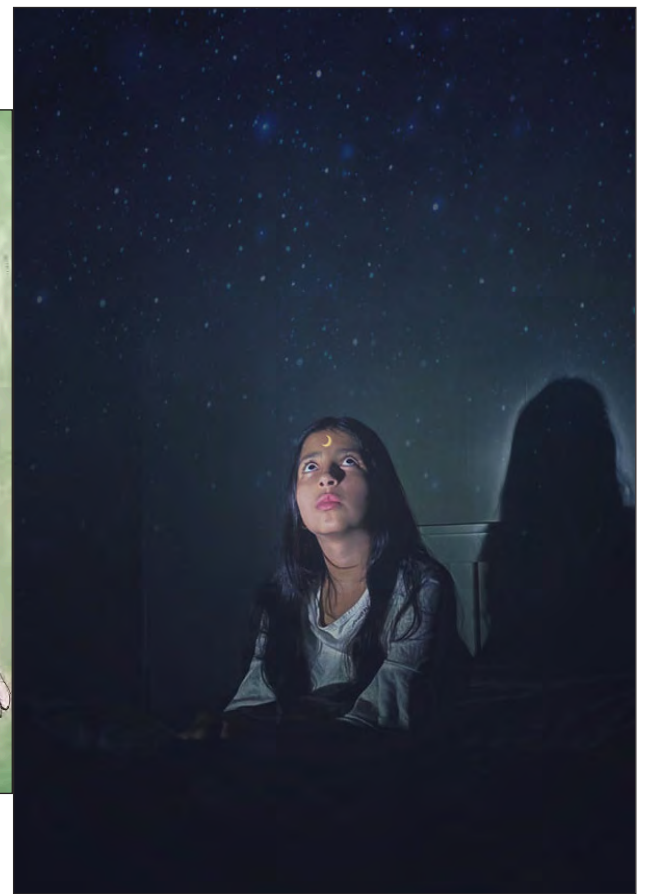
tos [Left] is one of my unique pieces that I have created this year because it was different from what I usually work on in photography. I had to challenge myself to create something different and come out of my comfort zone, and that piece was the result of that," Alwan said. She usually uses nature as inspiration for most of her work but has shown

that sometimes stepping out of what is comfortable can result in something quite amazing.

Alwan's love for nature and photography has translated into some of her other works. Her flower piece [Middle] is a result of taking photos of various flowers and using these photos as a reference for her piece. While creating this piece, Alwan

experimented with different art media, ultimately, creating the balanced and poised piece, pictured. Alwan captures the elegant and simple beauty of a flower.

Overall, Alwan's pieces showcase her talents and creativity in beautiful way. To look at more of her pieces, visit farahssart.weebly.com/my-work.html.



Brief by **Emily Urda** / Reporter.
Images courtesy of **Afrah Alwan** / Contributor.



The Hungry Vikings

Column by Noa Brudny, Elizabeth Watkinson, Caitlyn Tyrrell

Milk N Cookies

Service: ★★★★★

Taste: ★★

Covid Safety: ★★★★★

For their final voyage of the year, The Hungry Vikings decided to venture to a new Stamford establishment called Milk N Cookies. Upon admiring the menu, the Vikings were excited to try out all of the delicious options, such as the multitude of baked cookies stuffed with different fillings and the cereal-infused milkshakes.

However, The Hungry Vikings would like to issue a quick disclaimer that docking their boats turned out to be more difficult than expected. Located on the waterway named Bedford St, the cookie cafe and cereal bar was extremely difficult to access. The Hungry Vikings definitely recommend visiting at a time when it is not busy.

The Peckish Viking ordered a Cinnamon Toast Crunch milkshake which she thought

looked very tasty. Upon paying for the milkshake she realized it was nine dollars for a relatively small portion. She thought the milkshake taste itself was pretty good, but she found it to be too thick and difficult to drink through a straw. Next time the Peckish Viking will probably try a cookie instead.

The Adventurous Viking walked into the building and was immediately overwhelmed by the aroma of the vast selection of cookies. After scouring the menu, she finally decided to purchase a classic chocolate chip cookie and a churro cookie, ready for the taste of warm chocolate and caramel. She found that the chocolate chip cookie was filled with chocolate that made it warm and creamy, but she was saddened to find that the churro cookie mainly tasted like dry dough.

The Vegetarian Viking had a s'more and triple chocolate cookie. She thought that they both looked very appetizing, and the aroma filled the whole house. The Vegetarian Viking had to restrain herself from digging in, as she bought the cookies to eat with friends, and had to wait a few hours for them to arrive. When the time finally came to devour the cookies, she warmed them in the oven. The anticipation greatly built throughout the day, but the Vegetarian Viking was ultimately disappointed when she finally bit into the cookies, as she found them rather tasteless. The triple chocolate cookie was particularly dry, but the toasted marshmallow atop the s'more cookie added a nice change in texture. The Vegetarian Viking was left feeling dissatisfied.

Overall, the Hungry Vi-



SWEET TREATS Incredibly photogenic cookies sit inside their box.
Photo by **Caitlyn Tyrrell** / Online Executive Editor.

kings found themselves quite disappointed with their orders, and will most likely not be returning. However, the cookies are very "instagrammable", so that is something to keep in mind. The Hungry Vikings are glad that even through the

strange 21st century plague, they were able to sail to different establishments and try new foods. They hope that their readers will feel motivated to go out and support local eateries who have managed to survive this strange plague.

Collegeboard's poor response to COVID-19

Joaquin Monteclaro
Managing Editor

With most of this school year being under hybrid scheduling, there were half as many days to teach students in person, as well as less time and/or personal attention for many students to learn the information. For those in Advanced Placement (AP) classes, this was a frustrating situation. To solve this, the AP exams should not only have been shortened, but the entire curriculum as well.

With the last of the AP tests completed, now is as good a time as ever to look back on the year. Because of the constraints COVID-19 had placed on schools, it was a miracle that students were even able to return to school at all — not without its restrictions, however.

"I was kind of worried about the test. It really felt like there was not enough time to properly prepare for the exams," Timothy Rivas ('21) said.

Despite the time constraints, the situation was not completely unfair. Understanding that teaching would be much harder than usual due to the pandemic, curricula for many AP classes were changed. Many had felt that the content taught would no longer be as broad as previous years, and the exams were made to reflect this.

Still, although the material may have changed slightly for the tests, they were still as long and arduous as ever. Last year, most if not all AP tests were only around fifty minutes long, being conducted completely online. It is agreed that the exams last year were too easy to succeed on, but many had as-

sumed coming into this year that it would be at least around the same level of difficulty. This was far from the case this year. For many students across the country, this meant losing out on what would be valuable college credits. Not all

up on materials they would have missed otherwise.

"I felt like it really depended on the class. For certain classes, I had certain teachers who were so crunched for time that they were assigning a ridiculous amount of

was simply no way realistically that it was possible for students to learn the same material as previous years. And while Collegeboard did recognize the fact that there was an issue, their attempt at helping was far too little done

saw their students in-person for 40 minutes a week. Collegeboard should have taken that into account when making their exam. Across the country, students are not on an equal playing field. When every school district has their own rules on how long they can see their students, a universal test does not take any of that into consideration," Mr. Petrone continued.

This brings up a very important point—just the very idea of a universal test during the pandemic is a bad one, considering the fact that attendance policy will differ from school to school. While Stamford Public Schools, and by extension, Westhill, was able to enact the hybrid system, this was largely in part due to Connecticut's status handling of the pandemic. Other states, however, such as New York, did not have such liberty with their schooling. Many schools were closed due to Mayor de Blasio's two-case rule, leading to most of their school year being online, according to the *New York Times*. Thus, it can not be expected that New York students would be able to learn the entire AP curriculum — and it can not be expected that students from other states with similar situations would be able to.

By and large, the impact COVID-19 would have on each state, district, and school, could not have been predicted. But everyone knew that the situation would be unpredictable — and it was then that Collegeboard should have had the foresight to shorten their curriculums and tests substantially to accommodate for the inevitable difficulties that would occur this year.

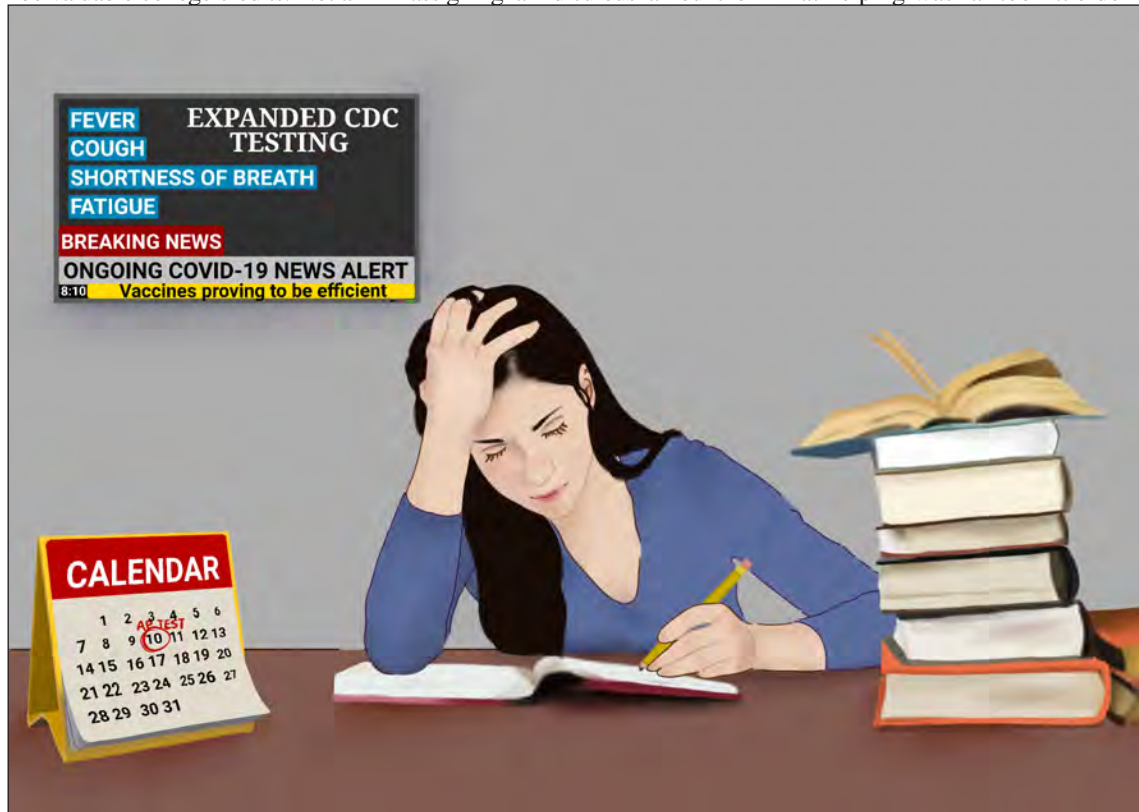


Illustration by **Julia Monteclaro** / Illustrator

hope was lost, however.

Being in a hybrid model — half-distance and half-in-person — for the better part of this school year may have made learning the material more difficult, but teachers did their best to make it manageable. Most teachers have had some way for students not there in person an opportunity to catch up via videos or live streams. This may not have been the case for every teacher, but there is the sentiment that teachers did an adequate job of catching students

work, which definitely did not lead to any confidence for my exams throughout the year," Rakesh Conway ('21) said.

But this effort had come in part wholly from the teachers here at Westhill — who had to go the extra mile to prepare students. The AP curriculum in many classes were still too long and too broad for students to understand and comprehend the material in the time allotted to them, which, as mentioned previously, was around half as much time in school in-person. There

to help both students and teachers with this tenuous year.

"I think how disrupted the entire school year was, given COVID-19 cases, mandatory quarantines, hybrid learning, asynchronous learning— and that is not just me speaking on behalf of Westhill, but the entire country, where some schools and some states did not have any in-person learning," Mr. Petrone, history teacher, said.

"Some states had some ridiculous policies with the amount of work that could be assigned, because some only

Olympics bans "Black Lives Matter" apparel

Madeline Sanchez
Sports Editor

In 2020, the Olympics was an exciting event that many people looked forward to, especially because of the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Numerous nations around the world, Canada and Australia, announced that they would refuse to allow their athletes to play in the 2020 Olympics without a delay. The President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Thomas Bach, and Japan's Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, postponed the Olympics to take place Summer of 2021 to allow the world to recover.

The IOC has recently announced new rules to take place during the Summer 2021 Olympics in Tokyo, Japan. In past games, people worldwide attend the Olympics to cheer on their favorite athlete. With recent circumstances, it was announced

that overseas visitors are not eligible to attend the Olympics to limit social interaction.

After surveying nearly 4,000 competing athletes, it was discovered that 70% of them believed political messages should be banned. It was said that it is "not appropriate to demonstrate or express their views" in the games. The IOC confirmed a ban on "demonstration or political, religious, or racial propaganda." This includes slogans such as "Black Lives Matter" (BLM) on apparel or a fist up during the games. Words such as "peace, respect, inclusion, equality, and solidarity" are all allowed to be on apparel.

Demonstrations of political or racial propaganda are not permitted "at all Olympic venues, including: on the field, in the Olympic village, during the medal ceremonies, the opening, closing or other official ceremonies"

according to Rule 50 Guidelines.

"It is 100% wrong banning BLM apparel. Wearing it is a freedom of expression. Banning it prevents people from expressing their opposition to racism," Sydney Greene (SHS '22) said.

If any athlete disregards this ban, they can be punished by the IOC and receive consequences. Although these consequences depend on a case-by-case basis, they may even result in disqualification. With millions of viewers watching the game, there is an opportunity of creating social change. By banning fists in the air, kneeling and BLM apparel, this is impossible to happen.

"I am honestly disheartened to hear about the decision of the International Olympic Committee. While the IOC claims its decision is in favor of minimizing "political demonstrations," it is quite simply a blatant example of

censorship and moves only to delegitimize the struggle of Black citizens in the United States. As a committee and event of such high reputation, the IOC should move to support international issues, or at least allow its participants the courtesy of free speech. BLM demonstrations are less "political," and more an act of necessary solidarity that empowers Black citizens globally. Furthermore, such demonstrations have the potential to gain support at a large, well-viewed, international event. As such, this is a true loss for Black competitors and audiences. Even more, however, this is a poor decision that truly reflects the minimal dedication towards activism globally." Zara Williamson ('22) said.

During the Summer Olympics of 1968, Tommie Smith and John Carlos used their victory of the bronze and gold medal, to draw

attention to the racial tensions that were occurring in the US. With the Civil Rights movement and the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. being so recent, they felt it had to be done.

"We had to be seen because we couldn't be heard," Smith said.

With everything going on in today's society, athletes must do the same now, and take advantage of the millions of eyes on the game, and use this opportunity to bring attention to racial injustice. Many people have spoken out to the IOC and urged them to revise this decision.

"This sends the WRONG message about basic human rights & I urge the Olympic Committee to reverse this decision," anthropologist Thomas Crump said.

Overall, the International Olympic Committee should rethink this decision because it is time for change to occur.

Should the COVID-19 vaccine be required in high school?

Hagen Williams
Staff Writer

As more and more COVID-19 vaccines are being administered across the country and more are becoming available, it is an important time to consider if vaccines in high schools should be required.

Being that the vaccine has shown no severe common side effects beyond soreness and cold symptoms, it appears to be the safest option. Vaccines for a variety of other diseases are already required in schools. It is only logical that COVID-19 should be among those requirements. Although COVID-19 has started to decline, it still poses a major threat against older groups as well as those with compromised immune systems. One's family members may be at stake if the vaccine is not taken. Another point to consider is while the chance for a healthy teen to die from COVID-19 is very low, it is not zero. Even if one does have COVID-19 without any severe symptoms or even no symptoms, one can still spread it and will be required to quarantine away from others. As such there are not enough reasons that are sufficient in outweighing the benefits of taking the vaccine. The only real danger is an allergic reaction which is incredibly rare, and only especially present in people with a history of allergy.

The Journal of the American Medical Association network (JAMA network) has approximated that anaphylactic shock will occur in "2.5 to 11.1 cases per 1 million doses, largely in individuals with a history of allergy."

"I believe that COVID-19 vaccines should be required to attend public school unless of course there is a religious exemption. Given the difficulty we have all endured over the last year, anything we can do to protect ourselves and each other from this virus should be mandated. Historically, vaccine mandates have eradicated many childhood illnesses such as polio, smallpox, etc," Mrs. Manning, mathematics teacher, said.

As stated, there have been many other vaccine mandates

in schools that have no doubt saved the lives of many children. And of course it is important to maintain religious exemptions in order for students and teachers to properly maintain their religious freedoms.

"Regarding vaccination

is a matter of safety that applies to everyone, thus it should be instituted as a requirement, like all other vaccines are.

"Based upon the fact that the majority of cases of COVID-19 in young people rarely lead to serious complications, we should

analysis. Since the FDA has not been able to conduct this type of research and because there are still many unknowns with regard to the vaccine, I do not think the benefits outweigh the risks for the individual. I believe that when considering what is

tion that can only be answered by students and their families along with their healthcare provider. It is a very individual decision and one, I do not believe, should be mandated by the state," Ms. Cutolo, health teacher, said.

It is very true that the COVID-19 vaccine was rushed by FDA approval in the interest of public safety and therefore is fairly untested when compared to other vaccines. It is also true that the disease poses a minimal threat to teenagers and that they only comprise about seven to eight percent of the population.

However, the reason why it is important for younger people to get vaccinated is so it does not spread to their more vulnerable family members that are in more danger from the illness. It is also more likely that those aged 12 to 17 would be more willing to get the vaccine than other age groups, which would help reach the 90% immunity that is needed for the whole population to be safe from COVID-19. The reason that they would be more likely to get it is that their immune systems are among the strongest of all age groups and would pose the least practical risk to their health.

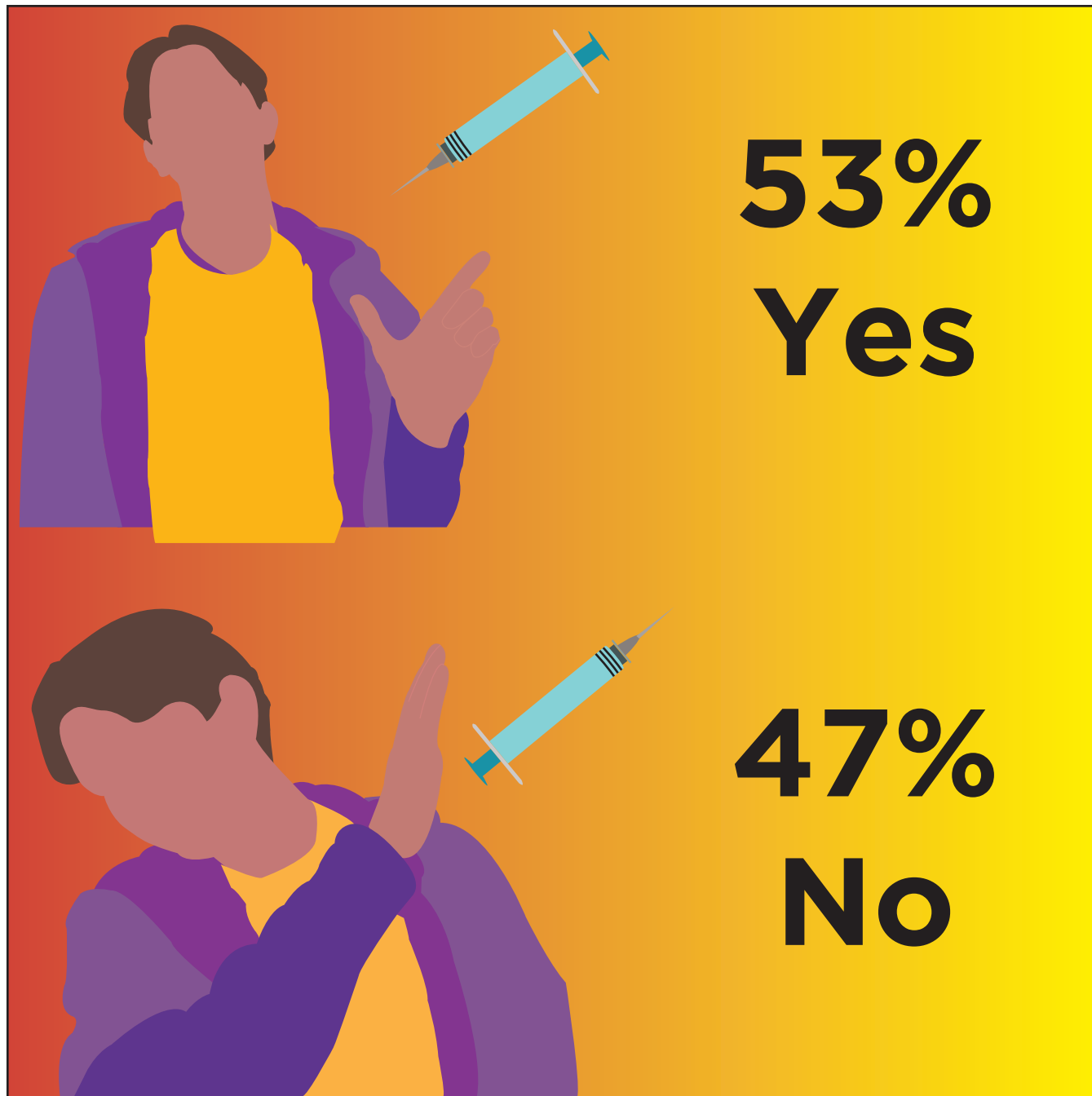
Additionally, in terms of FDA approval, as seen by the governments previous decision to skip this process, the virus is deemed to be more serious than the side effects involved. Also, as previously stated, the worst possible side effect is anaphylactic shock which only occurs in 2.5 to 11.1 cases per

million doses meaning roughly, in every 150,000 people, there will be one case of anaphylaxis.

"The COVID-19 vaccine should be required in high schools because it would make going to school much more safe and also allow for things to start going back to normal," Mia Labriola ('21) said.

In any case, vaccinations are currently not required for high school students or teachers but one should definitely consider taking it for the safety of one's friends and family. In addition, a requirement could allow for an improvement in fighting against the pandemic and slowly returning to normal school years.

Do you think public high schools should require students to get the COVID-19 vaccine?



Poll conducted by **Veda Bhalla** / Editor-in-Chief, Graphics by **Joaquin Montecarlo** / Managing Editor.

*Poll out of 169 students.

requirements – I do not believe that students should be required to be vaccinated for high school. I think that school officials have already done a great job regarding availability. 16 year olds were able to get the vaccine very quick which is great for those who feel they need to get it," Stephen Magnifico ('21) said.

It is quite true that the vaccine has been distributed fairly quickly given how large a population it must be given to. However, implementing a requirement for vaccines will most certainly increase the amount of people that will go to get vaccinated. Although it is very good that some people want to get the vaccine of their own volition, it

not be mandating the vaccine to attend school. I think that as a public school, we would have to have full U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of the drug and not just emergency use authorization only. In other words until The Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) - a division of the FDA has conducted a benefits to risk analysis of the vaccine, public schools can not mandate them for minors. K-12 private schools and colleges and universities are able to mandate them as private institutions. Normally a drug has to make it through a rigorous five step approval process - discovery, preclinical research, clinical research, FDA review and then FDA post-market safety

best for the masses, we can not ignore what is best for the individual. I do think that young people are spreading the virus, many who are asymptomatic, but the good news is that there are enough people who are being vaccinated, that hopefully vaccinating every student will not be necessary. There are 25 million children 12-17 years of age in the United States. They account for a small part of the population. Those at high-risk with underlying health conditions should be vaccinated. Vaccines are meant to keep us healthy. Everyone should receive a vaccine who is at highest risk of death or long-term consequences. I simply do not yet know if the benefits outweigh the risks - that is a ques-

A look into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Camila Miranda

Reporter

For about 100 years, an ongoing struggle between Israel and Palestine has been taking place. Although there have been various attempts to resolve the issue as a part of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, nothing has managed to firmly resolve it, which is why it is important to recognize how the conflict began in the first place.

The Israel-Palestine conflict began in 1948 with the establishment of Israel with the fall of the Ottoman Empire. When the British took control of the Palestine region in 1916, they took control of Palestine and in 1923 established a homeland for the Jewish within its borders. By 1947, Palestine had been under British rule for over twenty years and the United Nations (UN) then proposed to split Palestine into two sections: a Jewish state and an independent Arab state.

According to BBC, “Tensions between the two peoples grew when the international community gave Britain the task of establishing a ‘national home’ in Palestine for Jewish people. For Jews, it was their ancestral home, but Palestinian Arabs also claimed the land and

opposed the move.”

This can be viewed as the birth of the modern Israeli-Palestinian conflict, wherein the two ethnic groups have fought for control of this territory.

Only a year after this plan was proposed, in 1948 Britain withdrew their claim on Palestine due to the conflict. Israel then declared itself an independent state, implementing the plan to split Palestine into two. This began the Arab-Israeli War between Israel and five Arab nations to prevent Israel from forming an autonomous government. By 1949, Israel controlled more than two-thirds of what the British controlled. Tensions only grew not just between Palestine and Israel but also between neighboring countries.

According to Britannica, “On the eve of the British forces’ May 15, 1948, withdrawal, Israel declared independence. The next day, Arab forces from Egypt, Transjordan (Jordan), Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon occupied the areas in southern and eastern Palestine not apportioned to the Jews by the UN partition of Palestine and then captured East Jerusalem, including the small Jewish quarter of the Old City. The stated purpose of the invasion was to

restore law and order in light of British withdrawal, citing incidents such as that at Deir Yassin, and a growing refugee crisis in neighboring Arab countries. By early 1949 the Israelis had managed to occupy all of the Negev up to the former Egypt-Palestine frontier, except for the Gaza Strip.”

In September of 2000, the Jewish Israeli, Ariel Sharon, who later would become Israel’s prime minister, visited the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Many Palestinians viewed this as offensive and subsequent protests broke into violence, including riots. This violence lasted until 2005 when the Israel army withdrew from Gaza.

According to History.com, “Palestinians are still fighting for an official state that’s formally recognized by all countries. Although Palestinians occupy key areas of land, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, some Israelis, with their government’s blessing, continue to settle in areas that are generally agreed to be under Palestinian control. Many international rights groups consider such settlements illegal, the borders aren’t clearly defined, and persistent conflict continues to be the norm.”

“Even though there has been violence on both sides, I believe that most of the violence is unfairly aimed at innocent Palestinians. What is happening is colonialism by Israel and it should stop,” an anonymous student (’22) said.

According to BBC, as of recent, the threatened expulsion of Palestinians from East Jerusalem has ignited violent clashes between the militant group Hamas and the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Over 2,000 homes in Gaza were destroyed by Israeli airstrikes, according to Al-Jazeera, and over 240 Palestinians, including over 60 children, were killed. The IDF maintains that they give 20 minute warnings to Palestinians in Gaza before the area is targeted, while Palestinians have claimed that this is insufficient to justify the number of casualties they have suffered. Over 2,000 rockets were launched by Hamas into Israel, although many fell short and struck Gaza. 12 Israelis, including two children, were killed in this conflict.

This bloody conflict lasted 11 days before an official ceasefire was passed. Violence briefly broke out between the IDF and Palestinians at the al-Aqsa Mosque less than a day after the ceasefire was issued, but the

ceasefire held.

The constant battle of these two nations for borders and land has been an ongoing struggle which still occurs today. However, many are not aware of how long this issue has been going on and what the origins of the conflict are and how it began.

“I have heard of the Israel-Palestine conflict on the news but to be honest I do not know much about the topic. I do know though that something serious is going on but I do not really read or watch the news,” Fatima Santos (’22) said.

Despite this, it is important to be educated on the issue and stay informed on not just the history behind it but also what is currently going on.

“Every country should help in any way they can despite their issues with one another. They should not think about blaming politicians or others but rather think about the citizens who are in the crossfire and who are the real victims of this conflict,” Moynuddin Kothawala (’22) said.

This conflict is more than what is going on today. Because of how far back in time it goes, knowing the history behind it can help people better understand both sides of the issue.

***Editor’s Note:** At the time of this writing, former Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu was still in office.



Images courtesy of pixabay.com & commons.wikimedia.org.



Be careful, you don't want to say...

"I'm in the Wrong Driving School"

Don't be fooled by the "Driving School Factory" or Part-Time operators, who have brought the fast-food mentality to driver education in Stamford.

Since 2005, **High Ridge Driving School** has offered the Greater Stamford area a locally owned and operated driving school that's focused on the individual needs of Stamford students, not fixated on monopolizing the state. **As a result, we've taught more Stamford teens to drive than all of the other driving schools... combined!** And even though they appear to be determined to bring the driving school factory approach to Stamford, it just doesn't seem to be appealing.

Even though some companies do not agree, when it comes to driver education, just like shoes, **one size doesn't fit everyone.** We believe every student deserves the focus, care, and concern that comes from an organization run by local businesspeople who are actively engaged with their instructors, students, parents and community. Please see the chart below to learn more about one of the most important decisions you will ever make...

DRIVER EDUCATION.

THE HIGH RIDGE DRIVING SCHOOL ADVANTAGE

	OTHER DRIVING SCHOOL OPTIONS	HIGH RIDGE DRIVING SCHOOL
Flexible Schedule	No, they schedule sessions that begin and end. So, if you miss a class, you might need to go to another town, or wait quite awhile to finish your training.	Our classes NEVER end. We teach in the classroom 52-weeks a year; 7-days a week in the summer; 5-days a week during the school year.
Driving Hours	We know of students from other driving schools that have needed to go to other towns to finish their driving hours. Some schools do not even offer in-car sessions on a regular basis!	We drive 7-days a week, all year long. You're assigned an instructor who's dedicated to providing you with the best driver education experience possible. Plus, we pick-up and drop off ANYWHERE locally.
Off-site Testing at the School	As of this mailing, NO OTHER driving school offers DMV License Testing in Stamford!	Available in Stamford multiple times a month since 2005 - And always will be!
Customer Service	Questions, phone calls, and DMV paperwork usually handled by a corporate office or a branch office in another town, generally only by phone. Some schools do not generate DMV CS-1 certificates in Stamford. VERY limited office hours in Stamford, if at all.	We're almost ALWAYS open – in person or by phone. All phone calls, certificates, and paperwork handled in Stamford. No phone queues or customer service reps, we deliver REAL customer care with our dedicated Stamford staff. We invite parents into our facility, and offer training and support to ensure the time spent driving with your teen is productive.
Locally Owned	No.	Yes, one owner lives in Stamford, the other lives nearby. Ownership or G.M. on-site 80+ hours a week.

We think you'll agree that the advantage of

- A Flexible Classroom Schedule • An Expanded and Flexible Driving Schedule
- Taking the Driving Test Here in Stamford • Having Ownership Local and Involved...

Makes **High Ridge Driving School** The Logical & Best Value!

Keep this ad for your
FREE BOOK
to help you pass the



Permit test.
A \$10 Value FREE,

No Expiration, when you enroll in High Ridge Driving School

Interested in only the 8-Hour Drug & Alcohol Class?

We offer 16 & 17 year old students the chance to take just this class every weekend.

(EXCEPT MAJOR HOLIDAYS)

Always separate classes for teens and adults.

The Westword Supplement

Westhill Class of 2021

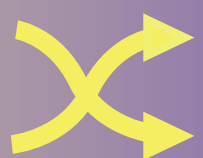


Senior Wills Class of 2021

Westhill High School

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Album

Lilah Steinberg






 Wesleyan University • 2025 • 35 songs

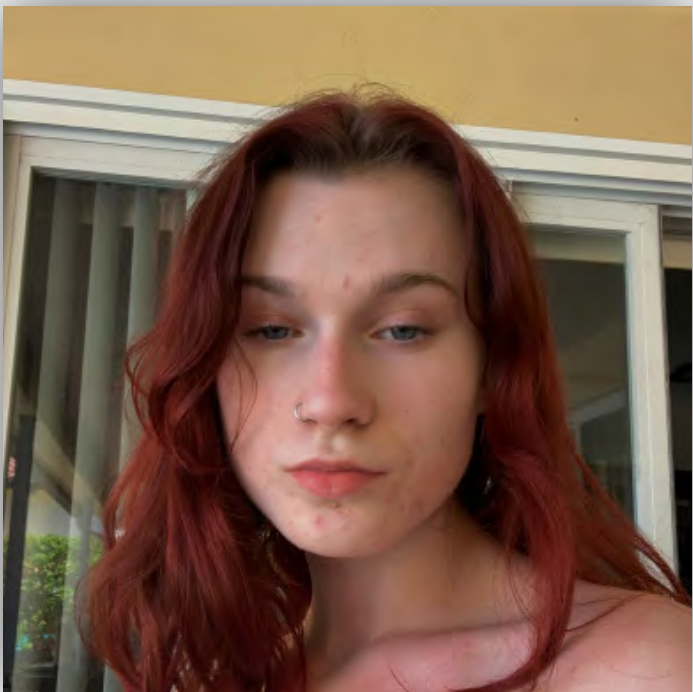
I, Lilah Steinberg, of passionate mind and small body hereby leave...

Cece Coleman: AP chem and many timer selfies. **Veda Bhalla:** Juicy fruit gum and good fanfiction. **Maddie Martignoni:** More Halloween nights. **Jessie Velishka:** Bagels and days stuck in the newf. **Caroline Klumac and Ava Maubert:** Many Sue the Cornucopia-Safari-Bermuda car nights in the Cul-di. **Zara Williamson:** Literally all of my love, star mix and allora trips. **Ruthie Price:** BUENOS DÍAS CLASE and problematic teachers. **Amrit Samra:** More dog chasing and "ily mores". **Kylie Roth:** A rock climbing membership and many snorting-your-coffee jokes. **Danielle Gibson:** Fire pits and selfies. **James Grosso:** More "JAHMES" in the hallway and marvel marathons. **The YILO group:** Rants about she who shall not be named and shake shack. **Ben Sisco:** Burnt air fresheners and white boy energy. **Eva Mitskevitch:** More missing chambers and stolen kneecaps. **Anupriya Lulla:** Good luck with physics and more car training. **Mia Labriola:** More short jokes and a job well done :). **Julia Piascik:** The very future of the yearbook. **Aryan Doniketa:** The future of debate (especially parli). **Gaurov Bansal:** Debates against Weston and won state championships. **Talia Kunin:** More walks and raunchy jokes that make you say "you're too much!". **Charly Peter:** Hair dye and advice on yelling at people. **Lizzy Carpenter:** Amazing captions and fitting titles. **Morgan McDonald:** More days falling asleep in you-know-who's class. **Ms. Dodita:** More deep talks about the education system and chemistry memes. **Mr. Petrone:** Many, many trophies and quote books. **Ms. Tobin:** A wonderfully-fantastic yearbook, a coffee cart, and a friend to rant to about weird, annoying parents. **Mrs. Grant:** Big hugs, rainbow masks and celebrations of reached goals. **Ms. Miraballes:** More 2 AM questions and hellos in the hallway. **Mr. Kubick:** More movie talks (especially silence of the lambs) and extrovert jokes. **Ms. Walden:** A literary analysis essay on a book of your choice :). **Mr. Curri:** More jokes and quesadillas. **Ms. Khetan:** Silly arithmetic errors. **The Westhill Class of 2021:** A freaking AMAZING and FREE senior prom!



TITLE

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 |  | Cece Coleman |
| 2 |  | Veda Bhalla |
| 3 |  | Maddie Martignoni |
| 4 |  | Jessie Velishka |
| 5 |  | Caroline Klumac and Ava Maubert |



Album

Lizzy Carpenter

 Quinnipiac University • 2025 • 13 songs

I, Lizzy Carpenter, of anxious mind and small body hereby leave..

Gaby Gomez: I did not know that freshman year Italian class would change my life, but it did. Thank you. **Tatiana Maignan:** I am sorry I did not like you freshman year, and I am sorry it took me so long to realize how cool you were. Thank you for taking me to prom. **Teresa Malia:** You still have time to find what you are looking for. Coconut mall forever baby. **GTTL:** The greatest people I have ever been blessed to know. If you told me these three people would end up saving my life, I would laugh in your face. **Zara Williamson:** It is a marathon, not a sprint. Breathe. Thank you for being kind and being you, I hope you never lose sight of that. **Caroline Klumac and Jessie Velishka:** I never thought I would feel so attached to people I have only met in person once. **Ms. Cahill:** 11th grade english was my favorite part of the day, those 17 absences were not personal. **The basement cut between the band room and the stage door:** We are the reason they lock those doors, it has been real. **The locker room:** I could count the times I have used the locker room to change on one hand, but I can count the times I have cried in there on two hands and two feet. We are also the reason they lock those doors. **Parking spot 46:** I am sorry for what you have seen and heard. **Miss S's old office:** If those walls could talk... And one final statement, to **whomever it may concern:** Hold on to sixteen.



TITLE

- | | | |
|---|---|------------|
| 1 |  | Gaby Gomez |
|---|---|------------|

Album

Caroline Klumac

 **University of Vermont** • 2025 • 16 songs

I, Caroline Klumac, of happy mind and short body hereby leave...

Adriana Colombo: A dump truck, the fish doorstops, a head, microscope goggles, madam president, a lunchbox that you can never forget, low light plants, a sump pump, a clown fish that does not bite you, mayo, and Lipton tea. **Mia Labriola:** Make the girls go crazy, sour patch kids, my girl problems, bad dances, almond crackers, a swim in the tilapia tank, orbeez, a big ball pit, Megan Rapinoe, a neon orange shirt, and Mecha. **Stamford FFA:** Campbell, and sweet tea. **Ms. Cipolla:** Cucumber cat and a burnt cookie. **Mrs. Cascio:** A call on the red telephone. **Veda Bhalla:** Hsmtmts and a really good One Direction music vid. **Zara Williamson:** An exterminator, no more mice in your house, a bathroom to cry in, and a hazmat suit for Lucas's basement. **Ava Maubert:** The culdi, papa, and fun dip. **Lilah Steinberg:** A cornucopia, a safari mobile, and nmm. **Jessie Velishka:** A weirdly large box, Julia and Reese's wedding, Hope's halter top, a broken car mic, maybe we can go outside, broken kayak wheels, Christmas light shows, a lip tat, and blues clues. **The culdi:** Food reviews, spicy sticks, the poncho, a shower cap, a broken sun sky, Walter, BS, Riko's, baba yetu, wafers, and Margaret Bubbleton. **Serena Miliku:** Brooklyn, Yubo, omelettes, bad advice, and Gucci rings. **Willow Furrer:** *Clueless*, frozen yogurt, salt lamps, a green thumb, Mr. Señor, styrofoam head face tats, and a woven fish. **Grace Chasanoff:** My maid of honor, big ziplock bags, a cowboy, and circular apples. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** Chick-Fil-A sauce, a broken chair, a bigger kayak, gas station sleepover, dixie, a really big bumblebee, cauliflower crackers or whatever those things were, hammock bunk beds, and a dinosaur tattoo. **Jaralys Cordova:** Spray paint, the booth, a foam burger, no more lighting cues, I need a hero, and bar taco tokens.

Single

Inri Loveras

 **University Of Connecticut** • 2025

I, Inri Loveras, of a creative and caring mind hereby leave...

Ms. Tintle: Thank you for being such an amazing coach. You believed in me and taught me many things on the mat and in class. You inspired me to reach my goals. I have learned that hard work really does pay off and that excellence can be achieved. You and Carm have been our biggest fans during our hard moments and of course, our rocks when we reached our goals. You taught me about commitments, perseverance and hope. As I go on through life I will be able to cope with my struggles and failures. Now I will imagine a 'Good Vibes Only' mat at every entrance I go through. Thank you.

Album

Willow Furrer



 **Northeastern University** • 2025 • 16 songs

I, Willow Furrer, of something mind and something body hereby leave

Veda Bhalla: Annoying walks with alto, multi colored nail polish, mish mosh friday, california, dumb netflix movies, the tortured cat, dr. pepper, crystals that you always throw out, can you act surprised when you read this. **Caitlyn Tyrrell:** Tears in chem, picking you up bc you don't drive, sandy frozen yoghurt, 10 million taylor swift songs on repeat, zero good pictures of us, georgie's hatred of me, the doll, christmas all year long. **Caroline Klumac:** Live Cinema, orange shirt, blackberries, rose quartz, terrapins, horses in spirit, freshman yr health, mi corazon. **Varsity soccer team:** zero won games



TITLE

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 |  | Adriana Colombo |
| 2 |  | Mia Labriola |



TITLE

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------|
| 1 |  | Veda Bhalla |
|---|---|-------------|



TITLE

1



Annie Edwards



TITLE

1



Ariana Tsiachouridis



TITLE

1



Willow Furrer

Album

Jessie Velishka



Boston College • 2025 • 11 songs

I, Jessie Velishka, of energetic mind and tall body hereby leave...

Annie Edwards: Ownership of the dungeon, Sierra Grille runs, One Direction, the 100 free, Westhill pool starts, and car gossip sessions. **Zara Williamson:** Chambers, Waffle House, good knee health, Harry Styles TikToks, your driveway, and hiding in my dorm room. **Caroline Klumac:** Long drives, Five Guys, the ding dong ditchers, laughing at me, river of death, dee lane the main, White Castle, car karaoke, scary Walmarts, Squishmallow hunting, persuading Julia, cake on a stick, sour spaghetti, baklava, the treehouse, and blue Target slushies. **Maddi Anderson:** The soprano section. **The Culdi Gang:** Trunking it, Bermuda Triangle, Riko's, and brain games. **YILO:** Crazy 8s, new Starbucks orders, and the 300s doors. **Sawyer Neyer:** Rides in Delia, the newf, Mother Carolyn's selfies, the whole state of Vermont, being fet, and TyTy and Ruby. **Shane Neyer:** Also being fet, apple turnovers, and ACME pies in under three minutes. **Lizzy Carpenter:** Reminiscing, meeting in person, and MGG. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** Getting to first period on time, Olivia Rodrigo songs, sopranoness, lots of good hair days, APAH, squad tik toks, and Carvel. **The Swim Team:** Getting a good kickboard, no roaches in the locker room, good bus snacks, a charged speaker, and long post-meet talks from Rick.

Album

Kelly Aguilar



University of Connecticut • 2025 • 13 songs

I, Kelly Aguilar, of ambitious mind and clumsy body leave...

Ariana Tsiachouridis: Our endless FaceTime calls with Brandon, our late night walks, the countless times we have tripped, tzatziki sauce, the time I almost fell off of your bed, our anxiety attacks, our Dairy Queen trips and the word "vivid". Thank you for being such a great friend to me and sharing the best experiences of our lives. **Ivy Pretesto:** All our laughs, your parking, me almost throwing up in your car five times, your Old Navy schedule, and the guy from Lucky's who was screaming on the phone without a word coming out of his mouth. **Jessica Nirschel:** Our snaps, all the times we have missed each other, All the guys Snapchats you have give me and our future dorm. **Olivia Bachman:** Our Badminton tournaments and our chaotic Hallway talks. **Jahai Cambell:** The time you got pushed off of the stairs, our funny conversations, and your sassiness. **Zoe Curry:** Common Sense and all the luck in the world. **Kimberly Polak-Walas:** Pancakes and ice cubes. **Rohit Jha:** A nice smile. **Bram Johnson:** your woah's. **Mr White:** An Fo, my therapy sessions, and boy talks. Thank you for being the best teacher in the world. **Mr. Lukas:** 1984 by George Orwell and a sewing kit. Thank you for making school more fun and exciting. **AP Psychology:** My stress and sleepless nights. **Westhill High School:** The funny and chaotic memories and all of the amazing people I have met during my time here. Thank you for making my high school experience memorable.

Caitlyn Tyrrell



University of Connecticut • 2025 • 5 songs

I, Caitlyn Tyrrell, of anxious mind and tired body hereby leave...

Willow Furrer: Chopt wraps, donut delight lemonade, our biannual "run" around the neighborhood, Altar'd State, astrology, periodt, boba, Taylor Swift a.k.a. the music industry, Lana Del Rey, and crystals. **Veda Bhalla:** little do they know, donkey laugh, After, Bridgerton, chantilly cake from Whole Foods, crystal rock, Yakult, texting each other the same thing at the same time, and my inability to lose. **Willow and Veda:** Creepy dolls, ditto, and barking. **Vana Servos:** Art history, ed psych, slides carnival, Elite, and having to go to school twice as often as blue group. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** Communications and Taylor Swift and Olivia Rodrigo TikToks. **Elizabeth Watkinson and Noa Brudny:** Hungry Vikings. **Emma Rimerman:** Everlane, psych, civics, procrastination, Lizzy McAlpine, and our future Teuta Matoshi photoshoot.

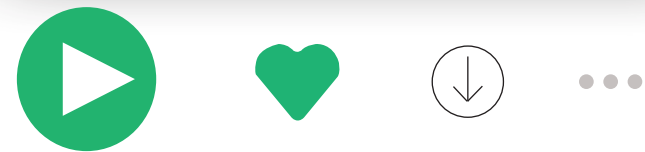
Album

Amrit Samra




 **Boston University** • 2025 • 13 songs

I, Amrit Samra, of creative mind and hip-hoppin body hereby leave...

AP Gov Buddies (Lilah Steinberg, Kylie Roth, Savannah Madar, and Jessie Velishka): Crazy 8s, Lilah's presidential campaign, multiple confusions, cry sessions, panic attacks, Starbucks recommendations, and helping me get through Gov class...YILO! **11th Grade History Squad (Ava Sciglimpaglia, Ava Maubert, Mia Labriola, Maya Westerman, and Emma Rimerman):** Unique group chat names, Mrs. Taylor's favorite kids, class clowns, and TikTok projects. **Yearbook:** Interesting stories, Christmas TikToks, and daily candy supply. **Zara Williamson:** My Harry Styles obsessed buddy, dance partner, soul sister, miss triple threat plus tennis queen, multiple knee and ankle problems, my hype woman, and many many many TikToks shared... do not know how I will survive college without you. **Eve LaForte:** A great friend I guess...water bottle throwing at lunch, rock paper scissors in Ms. Walden's class, psychology brain project (we had the best), and a weird and sarcastic friendship. I will miss your nose job <3. **Mikela Pirri:** Donut delight gift cards (happy birthday), Chick-fil-A drives, and my carpool buddy. **James Grosso:** Second/third lunches, nintendo switch, and the window is still looking very promising. **Talia Kunin:** Gym and coffee cart dance parties, matt ball, lunch selfies, and our conversations in the back rows of our dances. **Agsci Connection Time:** Doggy day care, TikToks, very nice bathrooms. **Mrs. Taylor:** My double period buddy, looking like Kim Possible on the last day of school before COVID-19, cute photos of Ronan, and unique psychology powerpoints. **Mrs. Grant:** Amazing hugs, always taking care of me, calming me down after multiple panic attacks, getting annoyed with me when I do not miss school when you told me to, co-second-mom, and my favorite science teacher. **Ms. Tobin:** My guide to surviving high school, yearbook laughs, winter formal stories...co-second mom, telling you about all the gossip, and yearbook advisor queen. **Anyone who knows me:** always giving out food or gum whenever someone asks me.



TITLE

- | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1 |  | AP Gov Buddies |
| 2 |  | 11th Grade History Squad |
| 3 |  | Yearbook |

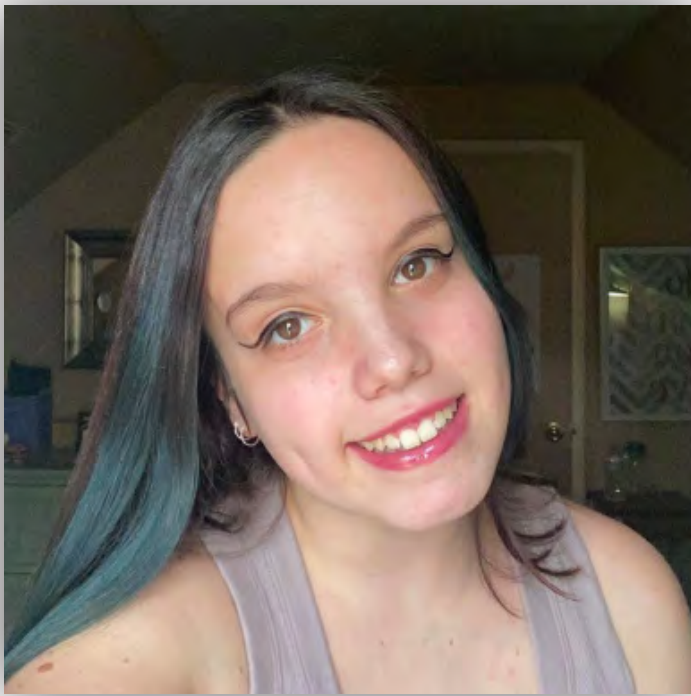
Album

Cailey Koch



 **University of Massachusetts Amherst** • 2025 • 11 songs

I, Cailey Koch, of a scattered mind and short body hereby leave...

Lila Robotti and Debbie Alcantara: The crazy girls on the cheer team to wrangle and keep in check. **Mr. Magnifico:** The nickname "CK" for me and loads of "threatening emails." **Mr. Pinsince:** Lots of good vibes and all of the creative writing pieces I have ever written. **Mr. Curri:** The right to call me "Cailey Coke." **Jada Marcelin:** A free pass to send me anything about Harry Styles until the end of time, along with all of our inside jokes from middle school and our lifelong friendship. **Ceyanne Capella:** A kiss, hopefully a real person that looks like one of her pencil sketch 2D ones, and our life-long friendship. **Ms. Tintle:** Endless thanks for believing in me and pushing me to be the best I could be during cheer. **Danielle Gibson:** Myself or my friendship, I guess, since we are going to be going to school together for another four years. **Gabriela Gomez:** Every single Cody Ko and Noel Miller video or post. I will make sure to discuss every single one with you even if you have not seen it yet. **Tatiana Maignan:** Our unbreakable bond — from kindergarten to now. **Talullah Robotti:** lots of luck for the rest of your high school career (without me, unfortunately).



TITLE

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 |  | Lila Robotti and Debie Alcantara |
| 2 |  | Jada Marcelin |



Album

Helena Dougherty



Case Western Reserve University • 2025 • 11 songs

I, Helena Dougherty, of resilient mind and tired body hereby leave...

Eva Mitskevitch: A knee cap shifted 15 mm back in place, goat cheese, minushka, bottomless pit mode, hot choccy, six mile hikes that are actually 10 miles, all the ultralight camping gear, a ruok, a wok, an infinite supply of any baking supplies you can imagine, and the George Washington Bridge.

Ms. Tobin: A couple horses for your farm, a couple of chickens, a wildflower garden and a vegetable garden. **Ms. Grant:** A greywater system, a "winter-bine", the best population potluck ever, solar oven cookies, a senior-srag drive-thru, unlimited field trips to wherever Cheyann wants to go, the prom from hell, and a prom from heaven to make up for the hell-prom. **Danielle**




Manetta: Kittens and a bunch of scooby snacks. **Austin Tovar:** Des animaux (sung while riffing), the best vis-line, the receipt for when we sell you, and the Seagram chord. **Squilly:** All the top-notch culinary skills, and a bet-

ter nickname. **Anusha Mathur:** Endless hugs, and braces that do not hurt when you play mello or trumpet. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** Top-notch thrifting skills, and all of Taylor Swift's songs on repeat. **Lilly Gasser:** A fiss, unlimited hydrate days, like three or four bags of wool, an enabler, and someone to hold us accountable. **Mr. Marchesani:** Kids who talk and do not run away. **Mr. Wy-**

att: An ensemble that successfully plays dynamics, any mello/trumpet player who is willing to learn horn, unlimited floor plans for the office, half organized filing cabinets, octopus emojis, my spot, my permission to bring Luci to school, and a broken sternum. **The Band:** The ability to successfully play dynamics, the ability to sight-read, an ensemble with full instrumentation, unlimited storage space (including nap cubbies and instrument cubbies), a lot of KT tape, a CLEAN band closet, and all the confidence in the world. **Westhill High School:** All of my love and gratitude.



TITLE

- 1  Eva Mitskevitch
- 2  Ms. Tobin
- 3  Mrs. Grant



Album

Cece Coleman



Smith College • 2025 • 9 songs

I, Cece Coleman, practical mind and sore body hereby leave...

Veda Bhalla: Excited conversations that verge on stereotypical teenage girl squealing/gossiping (especially ones about Grey's), multi, gov, lit, world, and honors chem. **Maddie Martignoni:** Boba, procrastination, random 5sos posts you do not understand, and more boba. **Lilah Steinberg:** AP Chem... that is it, that is all you get. Jk you also get iced coffee! :) **Veda, Lilah, & Maddie:** Sophomore health, can we change this, and We fell in love in October. **Eva Mitskevitch:** All my laughter from freshman and sophomore year.

Anusha Mathur: French—Laffan & Popescu, lang, and miraculous. **Caitlyn Tyrrell:** Lang convos & annoying assignments, and that one psych project. **Troop 50502:** The campout I could not go to (iykyk), singing all the time, fire, and selling cookies in the cold. **Ms. Khetan:** My rattling pencil.



TITLE

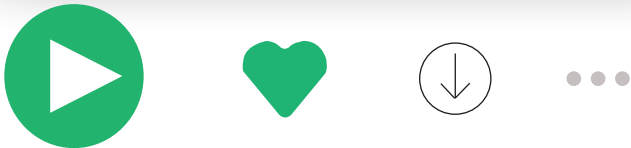
- 1  Veda Bhalla
- 2  Maddie Martignoni
- 3  Lilah Steinberg
- 4  Veda, Lilah, & Maddie

Album















Veda Bhalla

 Washington University in St. Louis • 2025 • 24 songs

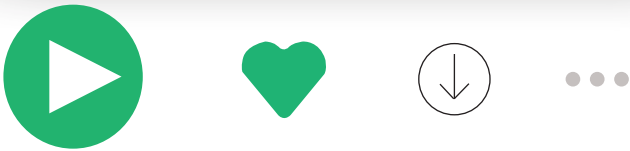
I, Veda Bhalla, of editing mind and coffee-filled body hereby leave...



TITLE

- | | | |
|----|---|---------------------|
| 1 |  | Willow Furrer |
| 2 |  | Caitlyn Tyrrell |
| 3 |  | Elizabeth Watkinson |
| 4 |  | Jason Zarrilli |
| 5 |  | Arjun Batra |
| 6 |  | Ava Maubert |
| 7 |  | Mia Labriola |
| 8 |  | Caroline Klumac |
| 9 |  | Vana Servos |
| 10 |  | Cece Coleman |
| 11 |  | Maddie Martignoni |
| 12 |  | Lilah Steinberg |
| 13 |  | Emma Rimmerman |
| 14 |  | Caroline Blum |

Willow Furrer: Lana, crystals, Altrd State, Arya, dittos, "Butterflies", Dr. Pepper, boba, Mish Mosh Fridays, rings, trips to Ridgefield ;), the GE building, my house, my food, my soda, my Netflix account, flufficorns, and combat boots, ily bestie. **Caitlyn Tyrrell:** Taylor Swift, dittos, stats, calc, micro, world, scooter island (because remember when we won), the GE building, cheese puffs, car rides (to Malibuuuu), think about it, kiva, a hand sticking out of the middle of nowhere, boba, board games, fottberry, and flufficorns, ily bestie. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** Hallway talks, PhotoBooth and timer selfies, 20 second dance parties, HSMTMTS, Greys, pens, #teamRobert, feasting, and Westword. **Jason Zarrilli:** Scatterbrain games, an 18 hour zoom call, the correct address of the post office, late night shifts, working computers, a working printer, all the fun times at Westword. **Arjun Batra:** Dealing with the parents at parties next year, Alto (please train him), Aunt Nisha's pool, naashta, Toy Story 4, all of the Marvel movies, my candy drawer, my sweatpants, and my water bottle. **Ava Maubert:** Professor Pebbles, my staircase that bent your phone in half, Indian food, "and I like pottery". **Mia Labriola:** The rock, Roxbury, Chipotle, iced tea and DC, my fam who loves you more than me, Turning Point, HuG, Chem, Lit and Gov. **Caroline Klumac:** DC, lucky charms but with just the marshmallows, my iced tea, pita chips and glass. **Vana Servos:** Me ranting about whatever show I am watching or book I am reading, stressing for calc tests, Westword shifts, Trader Joe's cheese crackers, and free *After* online. **Cece Coleman:** Greys, French (the bees), our endless TV talks that turns into screams, health class, can we change this, Indian food, and endless thank yous because I literally could not have passed my classes without you. **Maddie Martignoni:** French (the bees), boba, health class, can we change this, our pre-calc Spotify playlist, milk and sugar with a little bit of coffee. **Lilah Steinberg:** Student government money, free prom, coffee and bagels, health class, can we change this (we never finished the best part), Harold and Kumar go to White Castle (we also never finished), help ordering from navaratna, HuG, physics. **Emma Rimmerman:** Micro facetimes that turned into random conversation, freshman year gym, and my endless ranting. **Caroline Blum:** A car that works, McFillin's class, chem, fruit loops, boat rides minus getting seasick, and our adorable dogs. **Kristina DeLelle, Ava and Amanda Smeriglio, and Kaitlyn Brennan:** CenterStage mems (have fun next year!). **Hailey Baloutch, Evan Roth, and Camila Miranda:** The Westword, take good care of it and good luck! We believe in you. **The Westword:** working computers and InDesign, late night shifts, CSPA, stickering parties, 20-second dance parties, a playlist, 18 hour virtual shifts, actually making deadline, and a huge thank you for being the best club I could have asked for. **Mr. Wooley (plus the AP Lang gang):** Do-nows in lang, the lobster article, feasting during long block, and team Robert for life. **Mr. von Wahlde:** fun documentaries, interesting class convos in study hall and communications, and the new Westword camera. **Mr. Wooley and Mr. von Wahlde:** Hours in room 224, an organized closet, learning how to fly the drone without breaking it, and a huge thank you for helping me run The Westword during the craziest year. **Ms. Tobin and Ms. Grant:** Student government money and counting, the block scheduling protest posters we never used, BOE meetings, and a huge thank you for helping me get through my four years here. **Ms. Khetan:** My tap lesson, senioritis, binders of my calc and multi notes, the WashU shot glass, terrible 3D drawings on all my quizzes and tests, and a thank you for getting me to enjoy calculus. **Mr. Sarkar:** My love of comp sci, endless compiler errors, and a thank you for helping me see how cool computer science is. **Westhill High School:** Mold and no block-scheduling.



TITLE

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|----|--|----------------------|
| 1 | | Nicholas Robbins |
| 2 | | Daniele Manetta |
| 3 | | Elizabeth Gagarin |
| 4 | | Eva Mitskevitch |
| 5 | | Callie Morson |
| 6 | | Jakob Sargent |
| 7 | | Aditya Chandraker |
| 8 | | Madeleine Martignoni |
| 9 | | Anusha Mathur |
| 10 | | Sean Perry |
| 11 | | Brian LaRocca |
| 12 | | Helena Dougherty |
| 13 | | Mrs. Taylor |

0:00 ————— -15:00

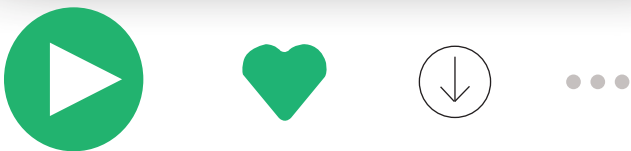
Album

Kathryn Persico

Pace University • 2025 • 15 songs

I, Kathryn Persico, of patient mind and exhausted body hereby leave...

Nicholas Robbins: (BLAISE) Random sounds of distress, ukuleles, cymbal tosses, Blasington Penguin, our battles in Among Us, my dramatic losses in Super Smash Bros, the inability to drive together, the height difference, Sean (paper towel), potatoes, chocolate covered strawberries, random hour-long phone calls, a music theory genius, missing the turn, Debbie Ryan, Scooby-Doo, Honda Civics, and bus buddies. **Daniele Manetta:** The chaos of sight reading, Snapchat filters, ironic emojis, all of my band notes, "cut the cameras," my ability to speak Italian (but not well), the Youtubes, coffee, *I Am Moana*, endless singalongs, my clarinet buddy, "OT," and messed-up sleep schedules. **Elizabeth Gagarin:** Rants, "suing people," Mr. Salomoni, sending personalized TikToks to make personal FYP in my messages, crying while waiting for AP scores, study sessions, hype master, complaining about minor inconveniences, *Romeo & Juliet*, lunch boxes, King's Hawaiian Dinner Rolls, ramen, connection time, school pictures, all the memes, over 13 years of friendship, early 2000's music, computer labs, the 1st grade class picture, concerningly up-close selfies, freshman English, Dan's Angels, bitmojis, and *High School Musical*. **Eva Mitskevitch:** Cymbal tosses, cartwheels, bad knees, yelling random sounds, Cheerios, brain cakes, dancing in the aisle, *Hamilton*, *The Beatles*, throwing flour in your face, the lift in *Dirty Dancing*, Psych, no drugs, animal cracker COMMA milkshakes, dancers choice, Russian AJR concerts, handstands, spinning rifle, senior run, *Heathers*, "stifling," our mutual love for Ms. Cahill, chocolate chips, fondant, Oreo (the weirdest dog), the coffee cart, padawans, and your chickens. **Callie Morson:** Endless questions, the line game, the what are you bringing to the party game, "This is a bit off-topic, but...", writing fake hall passes, and my clapping skills for when you cannot hear the met. **Jakob Sargent:** Daily lunch time rants, pre-calc, made it through the day hi-fives, homework, and walking me to 6th period. **Aditya Chandraker:** Clarinet and piano master, so many AP's, going to bed at 8, "go a day keeps Mr. Wyatt away," robots, and world domination. **Madeleine Martignoni:** The macarena, cymbal tosses, the musical Six, ice cream cake as a snack, screaming to "drivers license" during rehearsal, "this is fine," senior run, Jon Bellion, no forks, your love for K-pop, failing at just dance, my anxiety over your late assignments, and matching Zildjian lanyards. **Anusha Mathur:** Bus ride rants, fire fits, the amazing Michelle Obama, dog pictures, weekly new phone games, and being the queen of selfies. **Sean Perry:** White T-shirts, mat duty, unrelatable car TikToks, random FaceTime calls, wire photoshoots, Google Maps telling me the wrong location, brownies, and sneak attacks. **Brian LaRocca:** Being in the same science class since middle school, the need to always be right, nightmare, guard, ShopRite, mill ball, fast replies, confusing car references in the group chat, the slow boi(s), history with Ms. Tintle, and pineapples. **Helena Dougherty:** PB&J sandwiches, Helleennaaa, Dayton rooms, holes in your socks, driving over bushes, taking selfies on my phone, very large spoons, Michael In The Bathroom, weird dancing, beat-up dance shoes, the game contact, hair masks, cans of soup, mac & cheese, "The Deep," and eating smoothies with a camping spoon. **Mrs. Taylor:** Corn muffins, my seat, improved drawing skills, shared confusion, *High School Musical 3*, and side tangents. **The band room:** Theme days, fire drills with Luci, the cymbal handshake, nap block, spilt sunscreen, the guard prayer, super suits, torn gloves, the stench of brass polish, Instagram pictures, hairspray, full-runs, ice cream, aloe for all those sick burns, paper plate awards, makeup, too many bobby pins, my clarinet skills, naps on the mat, Sally and Fred (including 2.0), Michael Jorbear, broken sticks, "fake it till you make it," infinite stick hacking, all the cymbal visuals, forgotten music, a second home, and an incredible high school experience. **My biggest supporters:** All my love.



TITLE

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|----|--|---------------------------|
| 1 | | Brynn Spingola |
| 2 | | Mikela Pirri |
| 3 | | Jessica Matloub |
| 4 | | Shayna Finkel |
| 5 | | Eve LaForte |
| 6 | | Lexi Boccuzzi |
| 7 | | Kieran Johnston |
| 8 | | Justin Hutter |
| 9 | | James Grosso |
| 10 | | Morgan McDonald |
| 11 | | Nate Cooper |
| 12 | | The Sock Party group chat |
| 13 | | Gayrov Bansal |

0:00 ————— -19:00

Album

Talia Kunin

★ Vanderbilt University • 2025 • 19 songs

I, Talia Kunin, of animated mind and tiny body hereby leave...

Brynn Spingola: Harmonies in Mrs. Khetan's closet, elite political conversations, miss USA, the entire Citizens United case, all of my text messages, the phases, bluetooth, the sophomore year English contract, country music, g'(x), Tampa, our favorite politicians, and four more years with me in Nashville. **Mikela Pirri:** Spotify playlists, true or false, our first conversation ever, Sunday morning dance sessions, Jack Harlow music, Justin Bieber fandom, miss USA, my uber services, FaceTimes at awkward moments, "I have to go in five minutes but what's up?", going the long way home, and HONESTLY anything you want. **Jessica Matloub:** My cheeks, hours of Calc studying, a CSA medal, any and all shopping trips, poshmark clothes, sweetgreen, our karate careers, "firing" people, years of third-wheeling, and vacation updates. **Shayna Finkel:** Dance parties, our potential YouTube channel, hearing aids, motivation to plan events, a lifetime supply of iced coffee, college predictions, anything in your pool, Capriccio, and our walks. **Eve LaForte:** Cousin of the year award, Stats jokes, Donut Delight Strawberry Lemonade, calls from the Ski team bus, Jacob & Evan, all of my singing, and the photo-booth videos we made in school. **Lexi Boccuzzi:** All of my gratitude, another 50+ years of us, my senior summer, our similar taste, bucket lists, anything political, my vote when you run for office, prom dress shopping, screenshots, romance, Nicholas Sparks books, the college admissions process (for Silvio?), and the first signed copy of my future book. **Kieran Johnston:** Every CSA / Calc tutoring session, your WHS Soccer sweatshirt (maybe), the square root of 576, lacrosse enthusiasm, new playlists, hap-be good, my lists, Psych..., kind of, house designs, my terrible comebacks, new clothes, the walk, and many rants. **Justin Hutter:** Time with Jess, my copy of 12 Rules for Life, DIY balloon decor, dedicated membership to YPSA, PEMDAS, a lifetime supply of blueberries, and many trips to Maryland together. **James Grosso:** Sleep, no more levels, last minute study sessions, Global Business in the Economy Honors, and the Academy of Finance. **Morgan McDonald:** The "nicest" compliments, productive Best Buddies planning, our love for Sam, the 75 page study guide, the bank project, and our college results. **Nate Cooper:** All of my APUSH, Stats, Gov, and Pre-Calc study guides, Dance Monkey, fiscal policy debates, and the Vermont playlist. **The Sock Party group chat:** Texts that start with "hey guys!!", liking a text on time, and Shayna's pool. **Gaurov Bansal:** Honest opinions, intrusive questions, and motivation. **Jack Chapman:** Stats tutoring, the ACT reading section, hours of FaceTiming, YPSA, Roll Town, and Donut Delight doughnuts. **Sam Feeny:** Best Buddies, all of my love, and my Zoom energy. **Zara Williamson:** Olivia Rodrigo music, college help, car ride conversations, my class schedule, Westhill Angels, and caffeine for next year. **Gavin Stops:** Calc packet help, the neighborhood get-togethers we never had, our mutual friends, and sharing g'(x) with Brynn. **Jacob Kunin:** YPSA (with Jack), AP Gov, my vote when you are Lexi's VP, Vermont trips, any airplane trip I go on, holiday traditions, yankee games, the name of every senator, car rides, country music, our Chipotle orders, and anything else you want in life. **Westhill High School:** Thanks and see you soon :)



#

TITLE

- 1

Joaquin Monteclaro
- 2

Stephen Magnifico
- 3

Andrew Ishikawa
- 4

Timothy Silkowitz
- 5

Carl Cubarrubia
- 6

Camilo Sanchez
- 7

The Westword
- 8

Track & Field Team
- 9

Mr. Page
- 10

Mrs. Khetan
- 11

Adriana Colombo
- 12

Whoever makes it this far

Album

Luis Padilla

University of Connecticut • 2025 • 12 songs

I, Luis Padilla, of wondering mind and unyielding body hereby leave...

Joaquin Monteclaro: The, what seemed like, countless dodgeballs to the face in gym, the apple thrown at my face during lunch, the random conversations about life, my virus-filled computer, the endless nights of gaming, the hilarity in coding, and our love for music. **Stephen Magnifico:** The constant videos and pictures of you on my phone, the short-lived bus rides home, my excellent basketball skills, my hunger for your family's cooking, my annoying conversations about anything and everything, and our love for good old classic Tarantino films. (I will get around to watching *Rango* someday).

Andrew Ishikawa: The never ending minutes spent in French class, the convos about our classes and jobs, Jaquis, Jo, Candice, and qui?

Timothy Silkowitz: My pangs of laughter that always seemed to cheer me up, our in-depth discussions on various junk foods, shared love for BK slurpees and BK in general, my extreme euphoria when I was up against your car window as you performed a 360 degree drift in a 2003 Toyota Camry causing me to feel some centripetal acceleration, and my appreciation for being a delightful comedic relief and friend. **Carl Cubarrubia:** My happiness for your wonderfully silly and thoughtful approach to being my friend during health class, my appreciativeness for your invitations to hang out, Stephen's "No I didn't!", and a reminder to cover the cameras. **Camilo Sanchez:** The religion class days where one of the organizers thought you were a woman but a beautiful one indeed, the soccer seasons where you deserved so much more, and the long, difficult, but awesome days of track practice where you were the one person to stick with me till the end of the line... until you were able to run a lot faster. **The Westword:** A wearied year full of challenges and setbacks, my first and last moments of packaging which resulted in the inception of the first ever speed packaging competition, the late night dinners (thank you Jason's family), and feelings of belonging. **Track & Field Team:** All the laughs, bus rides home, and unwavering support for one another. Always seek to improve and remember to keep your heads up. Also, no more backwards run during warmups please (So sorry again Christie). **Mr. Page:** My appreciation for being a part of your team and learning how to stop reaching my feet. I will remember to always stretch whenever I get the chance. Thanks for everything. **Mrs. Khetan:** My endless thank yous for accepting me into the classroom and teaching me how to challenge myself and grow as a person. Thank you for your worthy endeavors in showing students how to become better math thinkers. I hope you can relax with ease knowing your contributions to their growth were immensely infinite.

Adriana Colombo: The birthday cards and bracelets, my gratitude for being my clutch lab partner who always seemed to be 15 steps ahead of me, the long hours of looking at each other through FaceTime, endless games of carrying you in Fortnite, and my thanks for always listening. And lastly, **to whoever makes it this far:** I leave my gratefulness for being present during this moment; I leave my hope that you remember to live these seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years with the utmost courage and capacity to experience, learn, and grow. Remember to cherish these times. Alright, time to fly.

Album

Joaquin Monteclaro

 **Stevens Institute of Technology • 2025 • 18 songs**

I, Joaquin Monteclaro, of lazy mind and lazier body hereby leave...

Cheska Monteclaro: All of my good luck, permission to eat my food without my permission, my Apex skills because I am way better than you always, and the wish I had been a better brother. **Luis Padilla:** All the coding help you need, a detailed analysis of Dead By Daylight toxicity, my complete understanding of Tenet, Radiohead, long days and nights on CoD and Apex, a return to GMod, our original excitement for *Attack on Titan*, a sledding battle-scar, hours playing zombies, even more hours downloading mods for it, a smooch on the forehead that I am so sure happened, very helpful tutorials on pirating software, getting viruses from it, and then removing it, watching movies and scary videos on Kosmi, an incredible British accent and acting for a blockbuster film, unneeded information about my bathroom habits, and a wet bench on a misty afternoon. **Jason Zarrilli:** A million trips to Dairy Queen, THE CURSE, Renegade rapping, mancala and othello battles, my expressed love for your abode every time I enter, JoJo references, nonstop vibes in the Zarrilli car, the ability to front-wheel drift, my wallet, my presence within the Zarrilli household, incredibly detailed recounts of my trips to the bathroom, and water bottles broken in half to be used as weapons. **Timothy Silkowitz:** The courage to no longer be afraid of Dr. Forbes and Ms. Walden, the dictatorship of Timmastan, the guilt of kicking a teacher out of a Google Meet, the affirmation that you are Catholic and not Jewish, nearly every Euro assignment, victory in every robotics competition, builds on build battle that would get us atomized, and incredibly comfortable uncomfortable conversations about the workings of the male body. **Stephen Magnifico:** My flying kick, that tree that was always there, Band-Aids for middle school, grudge against your dad for not letting me on the team, an apology for making fun of your nose, Squidward, and all of my heart and soul for your cat, CECE. **Timothy Rivas:** "HEY BABY!", the promise to finally finish Part 5, all of my weekends closing at Popeyes, dealing with annoying customers, complaints about coworkers, an incredibly phat paycheck, incredibly risqué jokes, and arguments over Eren's character assassination. **Aaron Alberto:** Awkward conversations on the bus, a 5k run, calls at 6 am to get out of the house, steps to sit on forever, texts about the bus, media center cubicles to sleep in, and more summer days around the neighborhood. **Kevin Sanchez:** Money for all of the sandwiches your dad made for you that you gave me, unending help with your homework, and a restraining order keeping you at least 100 feet away from me. **Joshua Beder:** My incredible golfing skills and inquiries into Israel affairs. **Eamon Donnelly:** A good night's sleep in class, and a leash to put on Kevin. **Michael Dubon:** Incredibly charismatic pick-up lines, hard-earned apple cider, and a sweater that will make you too hot that you would have to take it off. **Rakesh Conway:** Even more photos of me buried under sand, conversations at 12 AM about socially unacceptable topics lasting until 4 am, constant threats to do horrible things to one another, and unbridled anger for your very existence. **Mr. DiGiovanna:** another fun Computer Graphics class, talking to your students through the window, and thanks for always being a supportive teacher. **Ms. Costa:** An apology for sleeping in your classes. **Mr. Lukas:** Thanks for giving me an A for the end of the year essay. **The Westword:** Spontaneous dance parties born from boredom, and the hope that you will be able to build it back from the ground up. And most importantly, to **Evan Roth:** Good luck at being Print Exec. I leave this message to **everyone:** Love, peace, rules the Earth.



#TITLE

1

Cheska Monteclaro

2

Luis Padilla

3

Jason Zarrilli

4

Timothy Silkowitz

5

Stephen Magnifico

6

Timothy Rivas

7

Aaron Alberto

8

Kevin Sanchez

9

Joshua Beder

10

Eamon Donnelly

11

Michael Dubon

12

Rakesh Conway

13

Mr. diGiovanni

14

Mr. Lukas

15

The Westword



#TITLE

1My soccer coaches



#TITLE

1Kylie Roth



#TITLE

1Justin Dubon

Album

Stephen Magnifico



University of Connecticut • 2025 • 6 songs

I, Stephen Magnifico, of clear mind and determined body hereby leave...

My soccer coaches: My greatest memories and experiences on the field and long bus rides home. Thank you for helping me realize my goals. **Luis Padilla:** Your very contagious laugh that would leave me unable to function, our conversations over music albums, my constant need for your advice and pep talks, and the countless times we bicker that I hope to never forget. **Joaquin Monteclaro:** Your humour that never fails to make me laugh, our debates about stupid topics, and all the years that we have known each other (so like around two to three). **Timothy Silkowitz:** Always counting on you to team up in games, although it usually led to us arguing, your slow car, and our many races coming home from practice. Sorry for my annoying voice and hitting. **Carl Cubarrubia:** Always keeping me in check no matter how annoying it would be, my constant need for rides, and our long history. Thank you for sticking with me. **Anyone else that has helped me throughout my high school years:** A big thanks.

Album

Noa Brudny



Brandeis University • 2025 • 8 songs

I, Noa Brudny, of exhausted mind and coffee-infused body hereby leave...

Kylie Roth: Late night stats studying, showing up to track practices 30 minutes late everyday, a lifetime supply of Skinny Pop and iced caramel macchiatos, being my chauffeur for a year, gym sophomore year, rainy days in the loft, our Starbucks adventures, and Tobin partner assignments. **Danielle Gibson:** All of the clothes and miscellaneous objects of yours currently sitting in my room, Scofield adventures, selfies with braces, carvel runs, freshman year bio, English, and history, walks to The Weinery, fried Oreos, skiing, MYLC BAMS, and mirror selfies. **Ava Maubert:** All of the boba in the world, psych junior year, our brain t-shirt projects, strawberry cows, dinner on your deck, selfies in Manzino's class, Bloody Sunday, pride vans, and all of the Hydroflasks. **Ruth Martinez and Juila Afsary:** Weekly Zoom meetings and laughing about Ruth's made-up words. **Fatima Santos:** You are the boss now, you got this. **Jason Zarrilli:** Manzino's class. **Mr. Wooley's AP Lang gang:** Long block feasts and fights about grammar. **The Hungry Vikings:** FaceTime mukbangs.

Album

Michael Dubon



University of Connecticut • 2025 • 3 songs

I, Michael Dubon, of happy mind and hard-working body hereby leave...

Justin Dubon: My past experiences and future recommendations for the rest of high school. **Jason Zarrilli:** Long nights of playing video games. **Blake Ferraro:** Better Wi-Fi.

Album

Vana Servos

Northeastern University • 2025 • 30 songs

I, Vana Servos, of Greek mind and stressed body hereby leave...

Caitlyn Tyrrell: Daily FaceTime rant sessions during remote learning, Ms. Petrizzi's popsicle sticks, all of the homework pictures, school related TikToks, senioritis, your obsession with the Greek prince (that I did not even know existed), ed psych group projects, *Elite*, the random food you would find in your bag, Christmas countdown, your Christmas gift list, your love for Ashkin, and not knowing what is going on in AP Physics 1. **Willow Furrer:** Your precious red Hydro Flask, sophomore year health class, and your Spotify playlists. **Veda Bhalla:** *The Westword* Google Meets, dried mangos, late night shifts, and *After* (online version). **Amrit Samra:** Not knowing what is going on in AP Lit, abstracts, AP Enviro work, very detailed placemats, "brunch", and Marvel. **Konstantinos Servos:** Volleyball, being your personal driver, your lawyer, Marvel TikToks, and our text messages. **Maddy Bautista:** WHS Volleyball, captains practices, our group chat with coach, Spanish projects, coaching the TOR volleyball team, hugs, being the best pepper partner, and freshman year tryouts. **Hannah Scherer:** APES missing assignments, reading outlines, Edpuzzles, and not knowing what is going on in the class. **Ethan Skaug:** The function of the cerebellum, Key Terms, and naps in AP Psych. **JT Minnick:** Our amazing volleyball peppers, 4 years of boys volleyball, missing Key Terms, and the video of you dancing at our 8th grade graduation party. **Caroline Blum:** Walden's essays, friendship bracelets, and the best time on your boat. **Ms. Cahill:** Cahill cash for extra points, acting out Shakespeare, and your cool classroom atmosphere. **Mrs. Costa:** Throwing stuffed animals around to answer questions, copying EVERY SINGLE vocabulary word, watching the cringy textbook videos, and pizza parties. **Dr. O'Brien:** Closing the door as soon as the bell rings, cough candy, cell phone caddy, and homework checks. **Ms. Begetis:** PING project, Greek stories, our love for Greece, not being able to walk after the suicides and staircase workouts. **Ms. Malagisi:** Geometry Valentine poems. **Mr. Page:** group AP World quizzes, *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*, My Cousin Vinny, great Law and Justice discussions, and my (never kept) promise of joining the Track and Field team (sorry!). **Ms. Dodita:** Pop quizzes, long PowerPoint notes, dimensional analysis, and the pencil. **Senor Diaz:** Spanish projects, Shark Tank, and "Hola, chicos!". **Ms. Petrizzi:** *Gran Hotel*, my love for Spanish, popsicle sticks, and my appreciation for everything you did for me. **Mrs. Konrad:** Spitting llama, MET visit, "Bumpus Spikus" the legendary Greek volleyball coach, Chloe's dried tomato, Jeff Koons, and my remote learning absences. **Mrs. Khetan:** Still not knowing how to sketch 3D surfaces, Lagrange errors, thanks for deeply caring for your students, senioritis, and the best two years together. **Dr. Falcone:** Quarantine Google Meets, and "Dr. Sir". **Ms. Manning:** Drilling stats procedures into my head for life, and "AP Calculator". **Mr. von Wahlde:** Pink flamingos, dinner parties, weekly timed writes, and quadrilaterals. **Ms. Taylor:** Educational Psychology projects, great conversations about school, and Marvel. **Ms. Tintle:** Freud, Medulla oblongata, waking up people, scaring Tucker, my love for your class, the best long block, brain T-shirts, not remembering most of the names of important people in psychology, Key Terms, and Learning Curve. **Ms. Walden:** The four universals, your bertha dictionary, Ray Charles moments, abstracts, femme fatales, tool box, and Giovanni's Room. **Ms. Grant:** 15 seconds of meditation before a test, unit placemats, Batman and Robin meme, your love for groundwater, Mr. Smedes videos, classroom discussions, stressing about the AP Exam, the best Period seven, and my missing assignments. **WHS Volleyball:** My blocking, an (almost) state and FCIAC championship, a lot of Carrie Underwood, epic bus rides, meditation sessions, locker room conversations, banquet videos, our cheers, braiding each other's hair, the (deeply hated) timed mile, practices after bad games, failed tie-dye shirts, Halloween practice, Halloween dance, pasta parties, and the best four years. **All of my teachers:** A thank you for the lasting advice and impact. **WHS:** my brother (take care of him).



TITLE

1

Caitlyn Tyrrell

2

Willow Furrer

3

Veda Bhalla

4

Konstantinos Servos

5

Maddy Bautista

6

Hannah Scherer

7

Ethan Skaug

8

JT Minnick

9

Caroline Blum

10

Ms. Cahill

11

Mrs. Costa

12

Dr. O'Brien

13

Ms. Begetis

14

Ms. Malagisi





15




Mr. Page

16

Ms. Dodita





#	TITLE
1	 Helena Dougherty
2	 Illarion Mitskevitch
3	 Elizabeth Watkinson

Album





Eva Mitskevitch



N Northeastern University • 2026 • 16 songs

I, Eva Mitskevitch, of curious mind and future thru-hiker body hereby leave...

Helena Dougherty: "Does it look like I straightened my hair?", \$11 spoons, a sound system for Nemo, obsessing over buying new gear, leotards and dances, arm scratchy, "Do you want to build a snowman?", the bathroom window, ruok, Oreo's smelly breath, being mirror metronomes, winning life with everything we bake, Aggy and Perry, henna fairy footprints, my chickens (take good care of them), and a vat of lemon curd. **Illarion Mitskevich:** your mom and your shaved head. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** "Russian bagel" rings, caramel cake and caramel coffee, being the best chicken sitter, introducing me to Harry Styles, and being our Uber home. **Anusha Mathur:** More pants! Matcha green colored everything and endless hugs. **Kat Persico:** The best Zorro stage fight ever, scream singing *Hamilton* and Backstreet Boys, the boy's bathroom (because the lighting is better), being the best cymbal tech, the lift from *Dirty Dancing*, and blanket tents on the bus. **Maddie Martignoni:** speedy car rides home and playing music in the hallways. **Cece Coleman:** Queen of "Stacy's Mom". **The Cymbal Line:** a deck of cards, doing laps in the rain, the Macarena and a Carvel cake with territories. **Savvy Madar and Maddie Martignoni:** The sneakiest Mecha Noodle escape ever. **James Dizon:** Working knees :) **Austin Tovar:** Your jammed finger courtesy of Lilly. **Rakesh Conway:** The oassworf. **Ms. Tobin and Mrs. Grant:** Endless amounts of ice for when the coffee cart resumes and my endorsement to get chickens! **Mrs. Grant:** My honey cake recipe for future potlucks. **Mr. Wyatt:** The best office ever, napping in every nook and cranny of the band room, the blueprints for Helena and I's plan to sleep over in the band room. **Band:** The hottest soup ever, screaming songs I do not know on the bus ride home, two second gush and goes, sunburns during band camp, and all of my love.





#	TITLE
1	 Michael Dubon
2	 Joaquin Monteclaro

Album

Jason Zarrilli

 Ringling College of Art and Design • 2025 • 12 songs

I, Jason Zarrilli, of quiet mind and tired body hereby leave...

Michael Dubon: Media Center in the Morning, the snack for the day, PS4 party chats, "CaN yOu GeT oN?" Monopoly nights, school before COVID, RPM, tennis, and Westword shifts. **Joaquin Monteclaro:** Rides home, Dairy Queen, late night shifts, reminder texts, adventures, my mom's cookies, Smash Bros at lunch, renegade, mancala, and CSPA field trips. **Blake Ferraro:** Media center mornings, brawl stars, a ziplock bag at lunch, Minecraft murder mysteries and adventures, Cloonan, they were forced to join Westword. **Sam Codognolla:** Smash Bros games, my Nintendo ID, and the Michael Snack for the day. **Sam Malkiewicz:** The Toasty Toes, working Gmod, Mr. Harris, Domotor's class, calculators, and blooper reels. **Luis Padilla:** Pre-COVID Westword, Camp Playland, The Beavers, and parking spots. **Stephen Magnifico:** Italian class, anticlimactic endings, sledging trips, and *JoJo part 5*. **Josh Beder:** After school shenanigans, a Jersey Mikes sub, and rugby ball. **Timmy Silkowitz:** Confirmation preparation, little league baseball, and Hybrid learning mornings. **Veda Bhalla:** Westword's best moments, Pre-COVID late nights, Scatterbrain, working InDesign, on time articles, paper plate awards, and smooth paper delivery. **Elizabeth Watkinson:** Plenty of online articles, working website, a Westword sweatshirt, and a Westword karaoke playlist. **The Westword:** Fast working computers, InDesign tutorials, luck on gaining members, a CSPA field trip, good late night dinners, beginning and ending parties, paper plate awards, and old traditions.

Album





Elizabeth Watkinson

 **University of Vermont** • 2025 • 21 songs

I, Elizabeth Watkinson, of clever mind and long body hereby leave...

Caroline Klumac: Our adventure voice, the best group chat names ever, both of us figuring out how to dress like real people, *Seussical*, the most amazing stage manager, letting me be an honorary techie for CDA, our deep chats when it is just the two of us, watching HSMTMTS together, you knowing more musical songs than me, so much thrifting, and four more years of going to school together! **Alex Wynne:** Lice, *Matilda* because that is where we became friends, that awful horror movie with Bella Thorne and the fireplace poker, walking through the sliding door of your bedroom with no warning that I was going to be there, that one trip to Massachusetts, you understanding me on a whole other level, and "kill the hill" text messages. **Anusha Mathur:** Having the deepest chats, you having the best fashion sense of anyone I have ever met, us thinking we were cool in middle school, car rides home from school, the first time we ever skipped class and went to get Dunkin, a terribly long amount of time spent in physics, being obsessed with Olivia Rodrigo and Joshua Bassett, the best Valentine's Day, and manifesting you going to The Met Gala. **Veda Bhalla:** Endless hallway talks, literally the best shifts ever, HSMTMTS watch parties, Alto attacking me, being the after-prom driver, our identical opinions of men, and going to preschool together and not even realizing it. **The Dream Team:** Being the best group chat ever and our amazing sweatshirt design from the beginning of the year. **The Westword:** Making me laugh until I cry, listening to Mongolian throat singing, some bomb dinners, and having our fingers turn black with ink from sorting the papers. **Northstar:** 9 to 5 flashbacks, eating falafel in black-tie attire, the goose, cast parties and watching the Tony's in Lucas' basement, a thousand memories of feeling at home and allowing me to come out of my shell, Boel Jarlow, and screaming Angelo Sagnelli every hour. **Mrs. Konrad:** The most fun and interesting class I took in High School. **Mr. Curri:** Quesadillas from the closet and me being late every day this past year. **Jessie Velishka:** You being the soprano one this year, me taking all your old clothes, having the coolest fashion sense I have ever seen, many photoshoots, the exact same Friday nights every week, so much thrifting, and an addiction to Starbucks. **Eva Mitskevitch:** Being my wife, always giving the best and most thoughtful gifts on the planet, chicken sitting, soul writers tap dance numbers, you being good at anything you set your mind to, our week-long backpacking trip, that fettuccine alfredo that tasted like heaven, going to prom with you on crutches and still dancing like we were crazy, the chicks with chicks photo shoot, and your house having the best food I have ever eaten. **Troop 50502:** Me getting injured in some way or another on every trip, "I'm gonna roast a wiener", the menu that Cece planned but was not even there to eat, so many matching shirts, the last remaining savannah smiles, fighting over cheese at meetings, living in Cosi every Sunday morning, everything I could have ever asked for from a troop and a sisterhood that will last a lifetime. **Maddie Martignoni:** A caffeine addiction specifically in the form of energy drinks, our car rides home from school with a stop at Dunkin, and the elementary school birthday campout in your yard where I got my first tick :) **Lilly Gasser:** Literally the best sleepovers to EVER happen, giant beanbags, Louis and Daisy cuddling with us, our race to claim the name Aubrey, velociraptor hands, the curly vegan snacks from trader joes, your mysterious disappearance of food allergies, the best Valentine's Day, and the horrendous way in which we acted in middle school. **Helena Dougherty:** Your ability to light up a room, playing Taylor Swift at any possible moment, and an endless number of campout shenanigans. **Mr. Wyatt:** Eating lunch in the band room and letting me steal your office that one time. **Ms. Cahill:** Being the best club advisor ever and always smiling at me in the hallway. **Caitlyn Tyrrell:** Being major Swifties, HSMTMTS parties at Veda's, and endless texting in Communications. **Westhill:** lots of mold and an experience that was definitely memorable, to say the least. **Zara Williamson:** The ability to make me laugh constantly and the future of Chambers and Northstar. **Chambers:** Being the #1 tenors in Connecticut, the matching dresses, and the "chamber singers gang sign" tee shirts that were never actually made.






#


TITLE

1




Caroline Klumac

2




Alex Wynne

3




Anusha Mathur

4




Veda Bhalla

5




The Dream Team

6




The Westword

7




Northstar

8




Mrs. Konrad

9




Mr. Curri

10




Jessie Velishka

11




Eva Mitskevitch

12




Troop 50502

13




Maddie Martignoni

14




Lilly Gasser

15



Helena Dougherty

16



Mr. Wyatt



Single

Alexis Guevara



Norwalk Community College • 2025

I, Alexis Cristina Michiko Guevara, of invigorating mind and endless body hereby leave...

That Plain School: My swaginess, taking school a bit more seriously, and no regrets.



Single

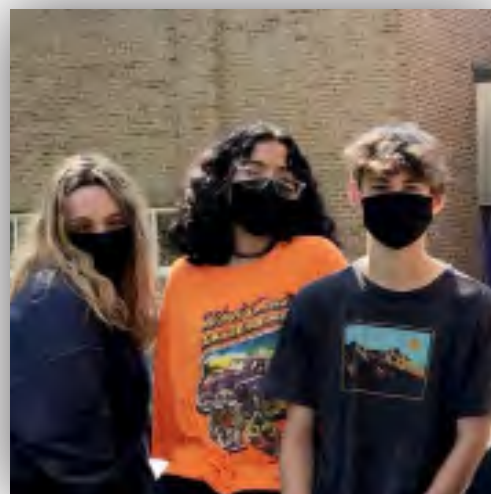
Yeilin Turcios Rivera



Norwalk Community College • 2025

I, Yeilin of an adventurous mind and energetic body hereby leave...

Mrs. Zachery's class: My many memories with our outdoor painting session and talking about our futures.



Single

Christopher Rabadi



Norwalk Community College • 2025

I, Chris Rabadi, of strong mind and strong body hereby leave..

JROTC's staff: To the next let 4's, and my right flank at competition. Good-bye friends, I will miss some of you.



Album

Linzeth Morales



Norwalk Community College • 4 songs

I, Linzeth Morales, with an entrepreneurial mind and body of paper, hereby leave...

Westhill High School: I am very grateful for these 4 years that I was able to be at Westhill High School. I have very good memories of each of my teachers and classmates. I am very proud to have been a part of this beautiful school. I was and always will be a Viking. **Mrs. Angie Bonilla:** Thank you very much for everything, you were one of my best teachers and a very good person, and always on holidays like Christmas you always gave us a gift. Thanks. **Mr. Pazmino:** You are a very good person, and gave us very good advice. Thanks for everything. **Mrs. Álvarez:** My Spanish teacher, in addition to being very good at teaching, has a great sense of humor, always making me and my classmates smile.



TITLE

1



Westhill High School

Los Hispano Latinos en Los Estados Unidos

Camila Miranda

Reportera

Mucha gente no reconoce la falta de aceptación y racismo que los hispano latinos enfrentan todos los días en este país. De acuerdo a Pew Research, actualmente 60.6 millones de Latinos residen en los Estados Unidos. Entonces si en este país viven muchos hispano latinos, ¿Por qué todavía ocurre esto?

De acuerdo a NBC News, en mayo del 2019 dos mujeres latinas nacidas en Estados Unidos fueron arrestadas por la Aduana y Protección de Fronteras de los Estados Unidos en una tienda simplemente por hablar español. Desafortunadamente, no es fuera de lo común ver esto debido a que todavía existe gente en nuestra sociedad que se niega a aceptar a la comunidad latina como parte de este país. Han habido muchos más actos de racismo similar a este, como cuando en Manhattan un abogado comen-

zó a gritar frases racistas a empleados y clientes de un restaurante simplemente por hablar español. Estos actos de racismo ocurren mucho porque desafortunadamente existen personas ignorantes en este país que se niegan a educarse sobre la realidad de cómo son los hispanos y en lugar de eso escogen vivir

Estados Unidos a través de la comida, los bailes, las tradiciones y más. Aún así, aún queda mucho por hacer para que la cultura hispana sea mejor aceptada” dijo, Alessandra Pinto (‘22).

La falta de asimilación de los hispano latinos se puede rastrear en la historia hasta la

ciudadanía estadounidense. A pesar de esto, la protección que debieron recibir estas personas fue ignorada y en lugar muchos de los que viven allí perdieron su estatus y su terreno. Como se puede ver, desde el principio de la asimilación de los hispano latinos en este país, hay personas que no los han

a los demás, ¿Entonces por qué con los hispano latinos es diferente? En lugar de decir cosas malas sobre los demás deberían tener una mente abierta a aprender más sobre los hispanos y así tal vez puedan cambiar su forma de pensar y convertirlo en algo positivo” dijo, Fatima Santos (‘22).

Los latinos y hispanos viven constantemente teniendo que soportar los prejuicios y el odio de personas que ni se toman el tiempo en educarse sobre la realidad. A pesar de ser parte de la sociedad estadounidense, estas personas están cegadas por las diferencias entre ellos. Aunque ha habido bastante progreso en la integración



LAS PROTESTAS Los manifestantes salen a la calle en apoyo de los inmigrantes



Cortesía de la pagina www.upsocl.com & gestion.pe.

sus vidas llenas de odio. “De vez en cuando veo personas que les dicen a los hispanohablantes ‘hablen en inglés, estamos en América’. Afortunadamente a lo largo de los años, la cultura hispana se ha vuelto más aceptada en los

guerra entre México y Estados Unidos. Después de que los Estados Unidos adquirió bastante territorio Mexicano en 1848, el tratado de Guadalupe Hidalgo debió darle a todos los Mexicanos que vivían en esos territorios anteriormente

aceptado como parte de la comunidad Americana. “Vivimos en un país muy diverso, y por eso pienso que la gente debería tener la capacidad de aceptar algo nuevo o diferente a ellos mismos. Si miras a tu alrededor, ellos aceptan

de la comunidad hispana latina en los Estados Unidos, todavía hay bastante por cumplir. La lucha contra el racismo sigue, y no solo para los hispano latinos sino también para cualquier comunidad de color en este país.

La ciudad prohíbe el estacionamiento en la colina

Hailey Baloutch

Defensor

Los Juniors y Seniors de Westhill han expresado su frustración con las nuevas regulaciones de estacionamiento en Roxbury Road, en donde muchos estudiantes tienen que estacionarse. En Mayo 4, los estudiantes fueron notificados por email que ya no se podían estacionar al lado de la calle de Roxbury Elementary School, y que infringir esta regla resultaría en una multa. Esta regla cambia todo para los estudiantes de Westhill ya que muchos se han estacionado ahí por años.

“Creo que es contradictorio decirle a los estudiantes que ya no pueden estacionarse ahí ya que han pasado muchos años y muchos estudiantes se tienen que estacionar ahí por no tener permisos de estacionamiento. Lo cual puso a los estudiantes en un aprieto ya que tuvieron que encontrar un lugar en donde estacionarse y ese lugar fue en la Roxbury Road. Pero ya no podemos estacionarnos en la Roxbury Road porque

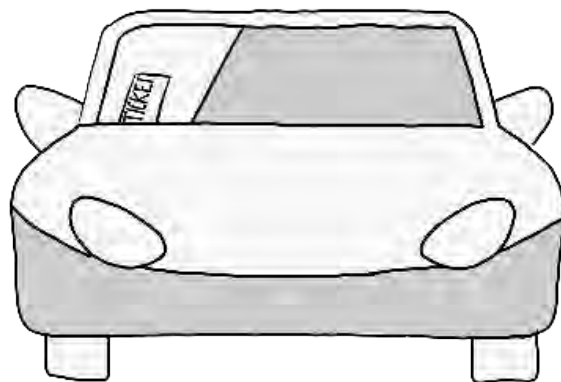
nos pondrán una multa muy cara (mas para un estudiante)! ¿Entonces a dónde debemos ir? Tenemos que venir a la escuela; si no venimos es nuestra culpa, pero algunos no podremos ir si no encontramos estacionamiento, entonces al final yo creo que el cambio fue ilógico y no pensaron a quién afectaría,” dijo Matteo Mastrogiamo (‘22).

Los pases de estacionamiento le permite a los estudiantes de Westhill estacionarse, pero no hay pases para todos los estudiantes.

El pacto de estacionamiento de Westhill, encontrado en la página de Westhill, dice las reglas sobre obtener un pase. Dice así, “Solo habrá pases por cada espacio disponible para estacionar... los espacios serán asignados a los que lo

pidan primero. Los estudiantes sin un pase deben estacionarse en la Roxbury Road.”

“Las regulaciones de es-



tacionamiento son muy inconvenientes ya que necesitamos a donde ir. No todos tenemos un permiso de estacionamiento en el estacionamiento de Westhill, ni lo queremos porque es muy caótico. Hay nuevos conductores los cuales no saben

lo que hacen y siempre es un problema salir de allí, por eso me estaciono en la calle,” dice Olivia Bachman (‘22).

El tema sobre la congestión en el estacionamiento y en la calle es prioritario para el bienestar de los estudiantes. Por parte, la pelea por los estacionamientos enoja a muchos estudiantes y rompería el balance que la calle Roxbury ha mantenido por tantos años. Pero, por otra parte, estacionarse en la calle de Roxbury puede ser un riesgo para los estudiantes elementales, quienes van a la Roxbury Elementary School al lado de la calle. Muchos estudiantes también han notado que estacionarse en la calle de Roxbury limita y toma el tiempo de los vehículos de emergencias. “Yo creo que

las nuevas regulaciones tienen sentido. Aunque sea más problemático por los espacios limitados de estacionamiento, el área ya está muy congestionada y la nueva regulación puede arreglar eso, lo cual es importante, especialmente considerando que el acceso para los bomberos es mucho más importante que los lugares de estacionamiento de estudiantes,” dice Andrew Hicks (‘22).

Mientras las regulaciones pueden resultar en menos espacios de estacionamiento para estudiantes, el tráfico se irá mejorando mientras los estudiantes encuentran soluciones alternativas. Compartir carros con otros que tienen la licencia por un largo tiempo o tomar el bus escolar son dos opciones que los estudiantes pueden explorar en vez de conducir individualmente. Más allá, los estudiantes que viven cerca de Westhill pueden caminar en vez de conducir. Al final, las condiciones en la calle de Roxbury probablemente mejorarán por esta regla, aunque sea un cambio drástico.

Movie theaters open up after long wait

Willow Furrer
Limelight Editor

One of the nation's greatest pastimes is watching movies with friends and family. For decades, Americans flocked to theaters all across the country to view new and exciting films never seen before. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 Virus had detrimental impacts on the movie theater industry and the accessibility of upcoming films.

In March of 2020, three major movie theater chains announced that their theaters will temporarily close due to safety concerns of the coronavirus. AMC, Cinemark, and Regal Cinemas are top suppliers of film throughout the nation, and their shutdowns left disappointment for Americans everywhere.

The industry itself felt a dramatic decrease in sales due to the inability of access to movies. Even as more theaters begin to open and increase its capacity, the viewership is still at a low. Lionsgate's new movie, *Chaos Walking* earned an estimated \$3.8 million in its debut while it cost around \$100 million to make according to NBC CT.

Viewers everywhere express discontent and frustration with the recent shutdowns.

"The shutdown made me sad

because I was not able to keep up with what movies were coming out. It also was something I used to do with friends, so not being able to do that was hard because we could not hang out as much," Mia Labriola ('21) said.

"Not seeing movies has affected my social life a little because it was an easy way to hang out with friends. I also liked to be able to watch new movies on a big screen to really get into them. I do not watch movies as much at home so I liked to be able to see new ones at the theater," Katherine Abbott ('22) said.

Another industry experienced a large surge in viewership due to the closing of theaters. Streaming services such as Netflix and Disney+ have obtained a huge increase of viewers as Americans seek a new source of entertainment. They use enticing new series or movies exclusive to their service in order to reel in subscribers. Last July, Disney+ released the musical movie *Hamilton* exclusively for their subscribers. This film adapted musical was a huge success on Broadway, and attracted many viewers to watch or rewatch the timeless classic.

As theaters begin to reopen, many people express their opinions about attending these public spaces.



Illustration by **Caroline Blum** / Head Illustrator.

"Yes I would feel comfortable seeing a movie only because I am fully vaccinated. If I was not vaccinated then I would definitely be more scared to go see a movie with people other than my immediate family," Mia Labriola ('21) continued.

"I am so excited to be able to watch movies in person again! Next week I am going to see *Spirit Untamed* in a theater. This is the first time I have seen a movie since the pandemic began. The first movie,

Spirit, is one of my favorites and I am so thrilled to be able to see the second one in person." Caroline Klumac ('21) said.

Currently in Stamford, there is a large selection of movies available for viewing in theaters. Titles like *A Quiet Place Part II*, *Cruella*, and *Godzilla vs Kong* are available in Bow Tie Cinemas Landmark 9 and Majestic 6. Both these theaters have successfully opened to partial and full capacity for their patrons.

Modified rules like mandatory masks are still in place in order to follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

Movies provide entertainment on boring rainy days and also are a way to spend time with loved ones. The theater reopenings in Stamford as well as the rest of the country offer Americans the opportunity to watch new films that they were unable to watch over the course of the pandemic.

Album Review: *SOUR* by Olivia Rodrigo

Caitlyn Tyrrell
News Editor

Following the success of "drivers license", Olivia Rodrigo faced mounting pressure and a world of expectations for her future releases. "drivers license" broke the Spotify record for most streams of a song in a single week, and while it left many fans wanting more, others labeled Rodrigo as a "one hit wonder", claiming she would never be able to reach that level of success again. However, Rodrigo's debut album *SOUR* proves otherwise.

SOUR contains eleven songs in total. While many fans have pointed out some obvious song writing influences from artists like Taylor Swift, each song is inherently Olivia Rodrigo.

"My favorite song personally is "favorite crime". I know I am not the only one who is obsessed, and I think it is because the album is dynamic and honest. I love the complexity of the songs and their order — especially how "brutal" seems like an introduction to the story. I have seen people do a lot of

analysis, and I like the theory that the lyrics in "brutal" foreshadow the later songs. For example, lyrics like "I can't even parallel park" seem to relate to "Driver's License", while other lyrics like "got a broken ego, broken heart" relate to "jealousy, jealousy" and "happier" or "traitor," Zara Williamson ('22) said.

Prior to releasing the entire album, Rodrigo released three singles; "drivers license", "deja vu", and "good 4 u". These three songs each debuted in the top 10 on the Billboard Hot 100, making Rodrigo the first artist in history to reach this level of success with their first three singles.

"I thought her first song was really good and was glad she put out more music just as good," Jackie Kaba ('21) said.



Rodrigo continued to break records following the release of *SOUR*. On Friday, May 21, "For the first time in her career Olivia Rodrigo was the most streamed artist," (Twitter account WomenonSpotify). Following the release of *SOUR*, Rodrigo joined Ariana Grande as the "only female artists to ever place all their tracks in the top 20 of the Global, US, and UK Spotify charts," WomenonSpotify added. Rodrigo also had the fourth highest female album debut in Spotify history, surpassing Ariana Grande's album *Positions*.

People all over the world are enjoying the album and

its portrayal of heartbreak.

"From the moment it was released, *SOUR* has been on repeat. Olivia's album is the perfect representation of the teenage experience — a balance of heartbreak and insecurity, with an emphasis on femininity and growth," Zara Williamson ('22) continued.

SOUR already has fans asking for more, leading many to create theories about Rodrigo's next release. One of the most popular theories is about the potential of a second album called *SWEET*. While *SOUR* focuses mainly on post-breakup heartbreak, fans speculate that *SWEET* would include love songs, which would highlight the more positive aspects of relationships. Another supporting piece to this theory is the collaboration Rodrigo did with Sour Patch Kids. Their slogan "Sour Then Sweet" has led many to believe in this next album.

Whether or not this theory is true, one thing is certain: Olivia Rodrigo's debut album *SOUR* has proven that she is not just a "one hit wonder".

Photo courtesy of **Flicker.com**.

Blonkvist scores big during a difficult season

Arjun Batra
Sports Editor

Christie Blonkvist ('22), who recently won the Wilton invitational for cross country and "Best in Track" trophy at the city championships this year, has only been running for four years now. The Westword sat down with her to discuss her running career and what the sport means to her.

The Westword (TW): What does track mean to you?

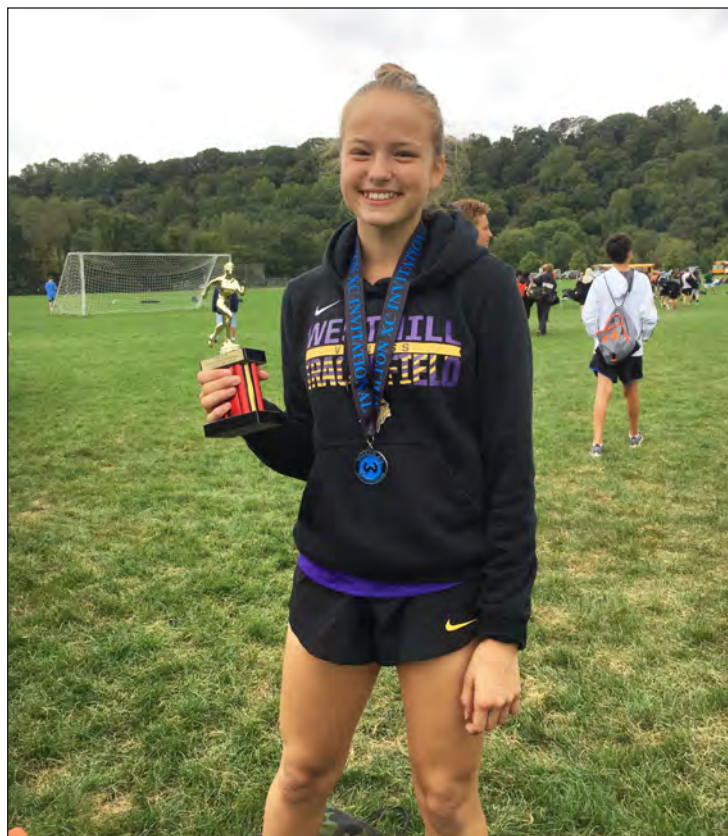
Christie Blonkvist (CB):

Track and cross country provide me with a unique opportunity to determine my own level of success. Progression is never linear, but I know that the amount of effort I put into training dictates my improvement over a given period of time. Being in a rather individual sport allows me to be in charge of my results, to an extent. Running is a positive outlet to all of life's stressors and it connects me with a community of equally-dedicated peers and competitors.

TW: Why did you start running and doing track?

CB: I started running because my brother ran cross country when he was at Westhill.

TW: How long have you been running for?



ALL SMILES After a tough race, Christie makes it out with some awards to her name.

Photo courtesy of **Christie Blonkvist** / Contributor.

CB: I started running in 7th grade, so about four years now.

TW: What do you normally eat during the season?

CB: I generally maintain a non-dairy diet, focus on eating lots of spinach, and try to get lean protein when possible. I try to keep a balance!

TW: How often do you run?

CB: I run six days a week during the season, with one rest day generally on the weekend.

TW: What is your favorite thing about the sport?

CB: I love the running community. Everyone is a little bit crazy, but we all push each other to be better.

TW: Who was your inspira-

tion to start track?

CB: My brother was definitely my inspiration. He ran for all four years and was a captain too.

TW: Who would you say your favorite track star is?

CB: My favorite track athlete is probably Nikki Hiltz or Colleen Quigley. They both encourage a balance between life and running.

They also use their platforms for activism all while running really impressive times.

TW: Do you plan to continue track in college?

CB: I am not exactly sure yet. I definitely want to continue running to some extent, so at the very least I will likely join an intramural team. For me, academics will come first in college, so I will weigh how much of a commitment running would be when the time comes.

TW: What is your main drive to continue track and running in general?

CB: My main motivation is always improvement. I want to progress on a personal level as well as improve the team's performance by being a positive role model as captain.



FINAL STRETCH Christie Blonkvist running for the finish line.

Photo courtesy of **Christie Blonkvist** / Contributor.



Max's Corner

Column by Max Savitt

As we make our way into the hot summer, the sports world is quickly heating up with it. Hockey and basketball playoffs are finally here and they are living up to the hype. More and more cities are lifting their COVID-19 restrictions, allowing for jam-packed arenas full of wild, loud, and ruthless fans, effectively creating intense atmospheres.

The main headlines in the National Basketball Association (NBA) say that the Los Angeles Lakers, who are led by one of the greatest players, LeBron James, are looking at a first round exit. In LeBron's epic career he has never been a first round exit. He is 14-0 in the first round coming into this year's playoffs but the Phoenix Suns, led by star guard Devin Booker and future Hall of Fame guard Chris Paul, are looking to make his-

tory by sending LeBron home early this year. As the playoffs continue, there is one team that has stuck out among the competition to be the next champions: the Brooklyn Nets. The Nets have formed a super-team this season with a three-headed monster composed of Kyrie Irving, James Harden, and Kevin Durant. These three are all top ten players in the league. When healthy, they almost look unbeatable. The Nets made quick work of the Boston Celtics in round one and are my prediction to become the champions.

Moving on from the NBA, the National Hockey League (NHL) playoffs are also back. There have been some epic first round series' and it looks like the Stanley Cup is completely up for grabs this year. The teams that moved on from

round one and are still alive in the run for a Stanley Cup are: the Boston Bruins, the New York Islanders, the Tampa Bay Lightning, the Carolina Hurricanes, the Winnipeg Jets, the Montreal Canadiens, the Colorado Avalanche, and the Las Vegas Golden Knights. Every team is playing really well, so there are no clear favorites. My personal pick would have to be the Colorado Avalanche due to the fact that their star forward, Nathan MacKinnon, looks unstoppable as he has dominated the league all year. MacKinnon has a special talent and it is very possible that he will help Colorado take home their 3rd Stanley Cup.

Moving past hockey, the Major League Baseball (MLB) is about a third of the way into the season and as the days pass by, four stars are showing the

world that they are the new faces of baseball. The first is star shortstop player from the San Diego Padres, Fernando Tatis Jr. Tatis is redefining baseball and making the game exciting again. His highlight reels and electric style of play makes him fun to watch on a daily basis. He is batting over .300 with a strong chance at a 50/50 year. That is 50 home runs and 50 stolen bases. This would make him the first player ever to accomplish this stat.

Another player taking over baseball, also batting over .300 with a chance at a 50/50 season, is star outfielder for the Atlanta Braves, Ronald Acuña Jr. His dynamic play is making baseball exhilarating while his insane numbers are making history. These two players have a chance to make a name for themselves in the years to come.

Speaking of history, the next player taking over baseball is star pitcher for the New York Mets, Jacob deGrom. deGrom has pitched 51 innings, striking out 82 batters and only giving up four earned runs. This means he has an earned run average (ERA) of .71, the lowest through May since 1964. He has been very special this season.

The last player taking over is star hitter and pitcher, Shohei Ohtani. Ohtani is the only dual threat in baseball. He is the only player to ever throw a 100 miles per hour (mph) fastball while also hitting one 100 mph in the same inning. Ohtani has a special talent and is among the top four players in baseball as of this season. These four have made baseball an invigorating sport again and they are shaping the 2021 season to be a historic one.

Vikings go to the State Finals

Boys Baseball

Greg Pannone
Staff Writer

The Westhill Varsity Baseball team has come a long way and has truly impressed the community with their hard work and dedication this '21 season. Making it to the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) Finals against Norwalk with an overall 14-9 season, they have developed into an outstanding team and substantially surpassed everyone's expectations from the beginning of the season.

Starting out the first half of the season rough, the group had a lot of work cut out for them. Competing for the first time in two years, the first 11 games were not in their favor, leaving a record of 4-7 half-way through the season. Leaving the team with despair and a lack of courage, it took a few games to see some improvement.

It was the loss at Danbury, a close 6-5 yet hard hitting, that became the final straw for the team. Coach Mike Riveles and the boys were able to come back from the shaky record with two dominating wins against Harding and Bridgeport Central, scoring 25-8 and 13-0 respectively.

"It was amazing having the support of the school behind us. We felt like the run ignited the school community, and everyone rallied behind us. But we went on a huge run in the state tournament that unfortunately fell short in the very last game. Even though the season did not end the way we wanted, it was an incredible season in which we forged lifelong bonds," Christian Rubino Chuckas ('21) said.

The absolute tear through Bridgeport carried the team through

a much tougher win against Norwalk. The 2-0 win on Norwalk territory was a true sign of coming back. Walking away with the city championship title over Stamford High for the second year in a row and beating threats like Ridgefield and New Canaan, the boys were hungry for the FCIAC tournament.

With a hard fought 9-8 comeback victory against Wilton showing the team's true potential, the team faced Darien in the second round. Sadly, the streak was lost as they were knocked out with the score being 7-11.

"We performed poorly in the first half of the season, we just were not working as a team. As the season went on, our team chemistry started to improve and we began picking up wins. We picked up some wins over teams high in the standings, beating the teams we were supposed to. The win against Wilton in the FCIAC tournament was an awesome comeback win, but the loss to 14th seeded Darien was a gut punch," Christian Rubino Chuckas ('21) continued.

With states still on the line, the boys were prepared to learn from the FCIACS and come back stronger. Without a state title since 2008, every year has been a fight to reclaim it. Fighting hard through Norwich, Fairfield and Hall, they were faced with Brien McMahon and the winner between Greenwich and Norwalk. The McMahon game proved to be a key game showing not only their skills but the pride of the Westhill community. Fans were able to pack the stands, fully supporting the players which certainly helped with the big 13-7 blow, knocking out Brien McMahon and sending Westhill to the State Fi-

nals against Norwalk. The Westhill baseball team would like to give a shoutout to their MVP's Wyatt Lisack ('22) and Mike Edwards ('22) with two Runs Batted In (RBI's) each, Eric Osterhus ('22) pitching 4.1 innings as the winning pitcher, and lastly Connor Sullivan ('22) with three RBIs and two runs.

"It is unbelievable, every game we have been saying 'let's get one more game together. One more game together.' Now, win or lose, we are starting on the first day and we are playing as far as we can into this year. I just love these kids and I am so proud of them," Coach Riveles said.

Fighting so hard and making it to the finals, Westhill was prepared to come into this game at full speed. With the school providing fan buses to Palmer field in Middletown, the Vikings came in proud to support the team through the tough match up.

"This season was by far the most fun I had and I think everyone would agree as well. The boys and brotherhood on this team was unmatched. Not only was this team full of teammates but it was full of friends. Could not have asked for a better season with a better team," James Lavelle ('21) said.

With seats packed with roaring fans cheering them on, the Bears and Vikings remained at a stalemate. Kyle Kipp ('23) pitched a remarkable game for six and 1/2 innings with an impressive eight strikeouts and a singular walk. Kipp kept the Vikings in the game. It was not until the top of the 7th where Norwalk squeezed a run in. The Vikings unfortunately could not recover, eventually ending the game at 0-1, with Norwalk winning their first ever championship.



Photos by **Teresa Melia** / Contributor. until the end and we tried our best to claw our way back in the game," Ethan Skaug ('21) said.

Even though the Vikings did not walk away as state champions, the Westhill community is proud of the strength and perseverance their baseball team showed this year. Seeing the first state finals in years, the Westhill legacy is one to be proud of.

Boys Tennis

Veda Bhalla
Editor-in-Chief

For the first time since 1978, Westhill's boys tennis team made it to the State Finals against Staples.

"This was kind of a new era for Westhill Tennis since we got a new coach and lost most of our starting lineup. Despite this, we were able to still hold our own even in a transition year and get top 2 in LL for the first time in decades. It goes to show how competitive FCIAC is that a middle of the pack team like us can beat some of the best teams in the rest of the state," Rohit Jha ('21), captain, said.

Unfortunately, the team lost 0-7. However, this was still a major event for the team as they made it so far in an unexpected season. Arjun Anand, Vishal Nayak, Arjun Batra, and Rohan Sahu played singles while Justin Bilenker, Gregory Lebedev, Rohit Jha, Gaurov Bansal, Aryan Donikena, and Jason Busch played doubles.

On the road to the State Finals, certain matches were huge highlights for the season.

The 7-0 win again Fairfield Ludlowe cemented a winning record and was what guaranteed a spot in the state tournament. In addition, Ludlowe had been a tight competitor over the previous two years so this dominating win was an extra feather in their cap. The team also beat another tight competitor, Trumbull, 6-1 in their first match of the season. On their senior day, they won 5-2 against Danbury and got to showcase the teams subs.

The 5-2 win against Hall was a huge moment for the team as Hall was three seed and they were merely 14 seed.

"That was the moment where it was like, we could really make finals," Rohit Jha ('21) continued.

Then, in the state semi-finals the team won 4-2 against Glastonbury, their biggest match by far.

Every player on the team contributed towards their overall

success and the team would also like to give special shoutouts to Arjun Anand ('22), Vishal Nayak ('24), Rohan Sahu ('24), Arjun Batra ('22), Justin Bilenker (AITE '22), and captains Rohit Jha ('21) and Gaurov Bansal ('21). Arjun Anand was their number one singles, Vishal and Rohan were the star freshmen with Vishal winning over Staples and Amity and Rohan helping the team against Greenwich and New Canaan. Arjun Batra and Justin Bilenker had a huge win over Greenwich and they were the first doubles from the Westhill boys tennis team to make All FCIAC in a long time. Lastly, the captains, Rohit Jha and Gaurov Bansal did a great job organizing events. In addition, Gaurov won against Warde and Ludlow and Rohit won against Darien and New Canaan.

Overall, the boy's tennis team had a very successful season and should be proud of themselves for making it so far this season.



Photos by **Rohit Jha** / Contributor.

Good Month Bad Month

Column by
Jessica Matloub & Jeremy
Matloub



Good Month for...

Environmental Justice In November 2021, world leaders will be gathering in Glasgow for the successor to the landmark Paris meeting of 2015 to discuss future plans for reducing the impact of climate change. Countries across the globe are signing up to make significant reductions in their carbon footprints, such as China, who has vowed to become a carbon-free nation by the year of 2060. China's vow has been followed up by over 110 different countries shooting for a zero carbon emission society by around the same time. Not only is cutting carbon emissions significantly better for the environment, but long term – due to the declining costs of renewable energy technologies – it is cheaper. The future for our climate is looking bright, and now we all just have to do our part in reducing our impact.



Space Travel Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon, founded Blue Origin, a private spaceflight company, in 2000. On June 7, 2021, Bezos announced that next month, he and his brother Mark will be aboard his company's first human spaceflight. Previously, Blue Origins had fallen behind Elon Musk's rocket company, SpaceX, having developed its vehicles slower. In the upcoming trip to space, Blue Origins will finally triumph over SpaceX, drawing back attention to the company. The upcoming space travel will only be the beginning of private human spaceflight and a new era of space exploration.



Simone Biles On June 6, 2021, Simone Biles, a 24 year-old American Gymnast earned her 7th U.S. Gymnastics title in the U.S. Gymnastics Championship in Fort Worth, Texas. She scored 4.7 points higher than the runner up Sunisa Lee. Her win beat the record of the most national titles any American woman has achieved. Not only did she win, but Biles dominated, winning first place in floor, beam, vault and overall. Biles has consistently astonished the world and will continue to do so as she looks forward into her career and future.

Bad Month for...

Moving America is running out of houses for consumer purchase. With the record-high selling prices combined with landlords buying up any affordable housing and raising the rent sky high, it makes the housing market inaccessible to the average consumer. A recent bank note stated that the U.S. was short 2.5 million homes, however it is estimated to be higher at a shortage of 3.8 million. There are 40% fewer homes on the market than last year, and the homes that are available are unaffordable because consumers cannot save up enough money to invest in a home and establish their own equity. Minimum wage has gone up at a much lower rate than in the past, and factoring in inflation, homes are 39% more expensive than they were 50 years ago. Many people simply can not afford home ownership unless something changes soon.



Spending Money Inflation soared in May at an annual rate of five percent, the largest yearly increase since August 2008. The rate was over two and a half times higher than the target rate established by the Federal Reserve Board. The Central bank has shown that this astronomical rate is due to the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, with wages not increasing at nearly the same rate as the price of goods and services, it becomes more and more difficult for the average person to be able to afford the increasing expenses to be able to put food on the table for their families.



Mad Max Max Scherzer, otherwise known as Mad Max, is the baseball pitcher for the Washington Nationals, and has been deemed one of the best baseball pitchers for years. More recently, Scherzer faced an unfortunate groin injury during his game against the San Francisco Giants. Scherzer only threw 12 pitches before he walked off the field. Paolo Espino was able to take over as pitcher and pitched an impressive game. A Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) on Scherzer later showed no muscle strain and that the injury was luckily only a tweak. Hopefully Scherzer's injury will remain minor and this will not continue to affect his season and his health.

Illustrations by **Jason Zarrilli** (top left & right) & **Caroline Blum** (bottom left & right) / Print Executive Editor & Head Illustrator.

New parking regulations on the hill

Hailey Baloutch
Ombudsman

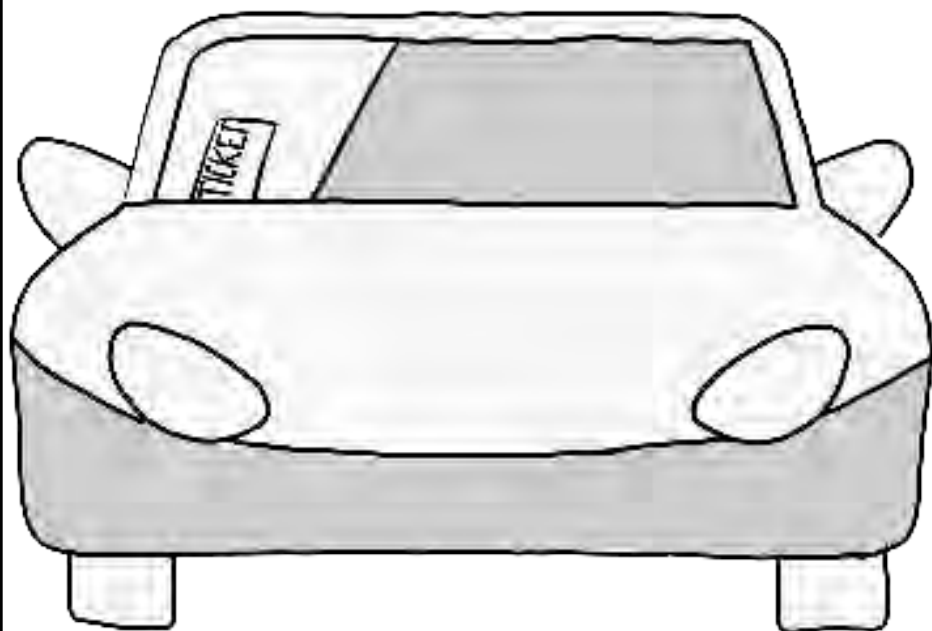
Westhill Juniors and Seniors alike have expressed frustration with the new parking regulations on Roxbury Road, where many upperclassmen have to park. On May 4, students were notified via email that students could no longer park on the side of the road next to Roxbury Elementary School, and that failure to adhere to parking guidelines would result in a ticket. This rule breaks precedent for Westhill students, who have been parking there for years.

"I think it is contradictory to tell students that they are no longer allowed to park on the hill while years past we as students have been required to park there due to a lack of a parking permit. It puts students in a predicament as we have to find a spot which most

passes are left to overflow onto Roxbury Road.

"Parking regulations are so inconvenient because we need somewhere to go. Not all of us have permits to park in the Westhill parking lot nor do we want to because it is so chaotic. There are new drivers who do not know what they are doing and it is always a hassle to get out, so I park on the hill," Olivia Bachman ('22) said.

The issue of traffic congestion in the parking lot and on the street is central to student safety. On one hand, many students vying for the same spaces may upset the balance that has existed for years between students who park on the hill. But on the other hand, Westhill parking may present a risk to elementary schoolers, who go to school at Roxbury Elementary right above the hill. Some students have also expressed empathy with policymakers



likely did not exist at the time, which then forces us to park on the hill as a last resort. But we cannot park on the hill because we will get an expensive ticket (for a student), so where should we go? We have to come to school; if we do not it is our fault, but some of us cannot go if we cannot park, so in the end I think the change was illogical and not thoroughly thought out for all of the people who would be affected," Matteo Mastrogiacomo ('22) said.

Parking passes allow students to park in the Westhill lot, but there simply are not enough to go around. Westhill's Parking Agreement, posted on the school website, outlines rules surrounding the process of obtaining a pass. It reads, "There will only be passes given based on the amount of spaces available... Spaces will be assigned on a first come first served basis." In other words, there is competition between students to obtain a space in the Westhill parking lot. The students without

over the concern that emergency vehicles may be slowed by the traffic on Roxbury Road.

"I think the new regulations make sense. Though it does put more strain on the available parking spaces, the area is already so congested and the new regulations may alleviate some of that congestion, which is important, especially considering access to the fire station is more important than student parking," Andrew Hicks ('22) said.

While regulations may result in less spaces for students, traffic may dissipate as students find alternate solutions. Carpooling between those who have had their licenses for extensive periods of time and taking school buses are two options students can explore instead of driving individually. Furthermore, students who live closer to Westhill could walk instead of driving. Overall, the conditions on Roxbury Road could improve as a result of this policy, as unprecedented as it is.

Graphic by **Anika Tandon** / Graphic Director.

Highlights of the year

Senior Prom 2021



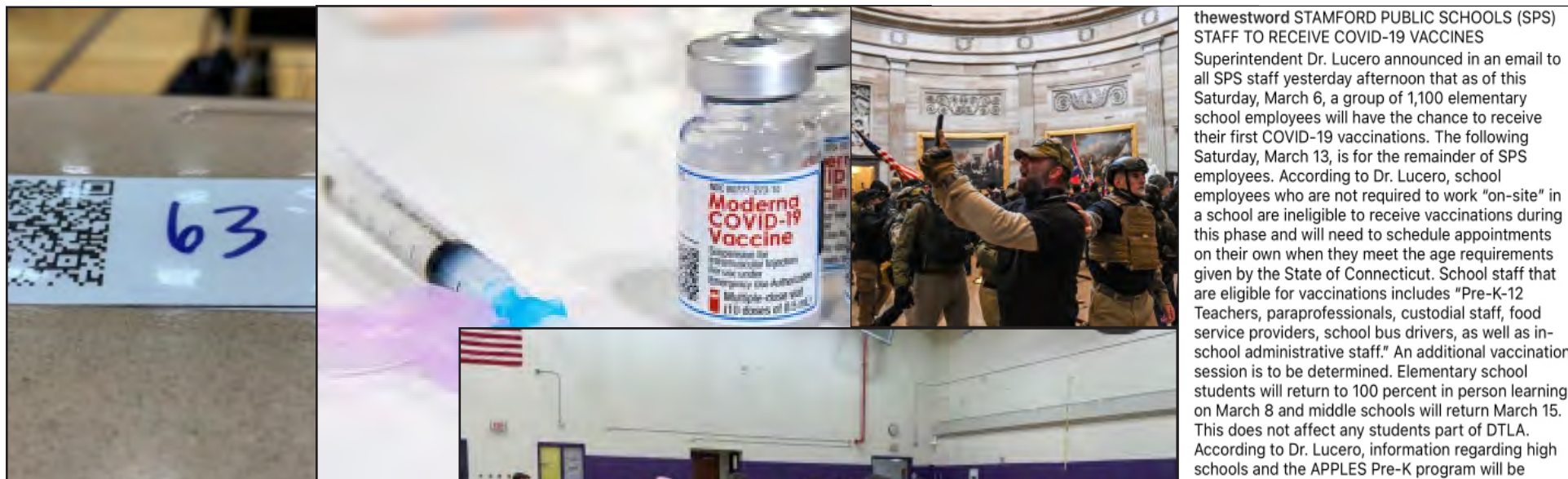
Photos above by **Harrison Travaglino** / Contributor.
Photos below courtesy of participating teachers.

Teachers fighting against COVID-19



The 'Word on the Gram'

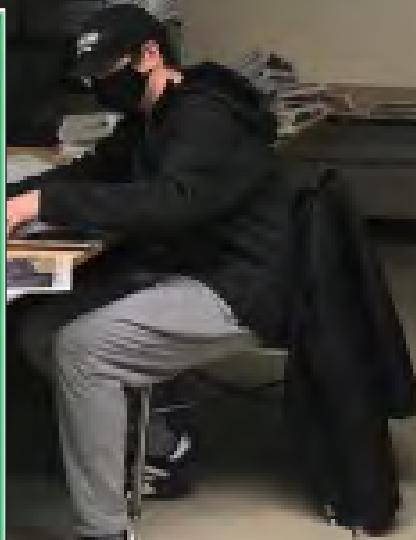
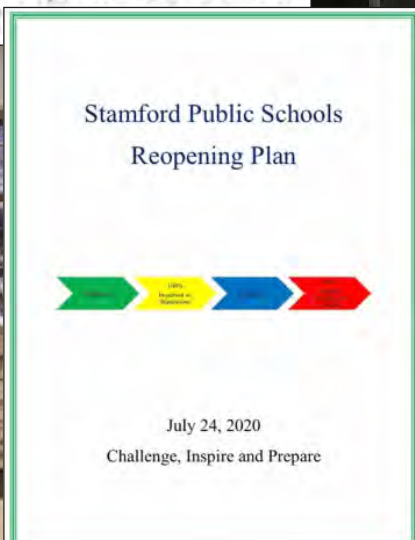
A look into @thewestword



thewestword STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS (SPS) STAFF TO RECEIVE COVID-19 VACCINES
Superintendent Dr. Lucero announced in an email to all SPS staff yesterday afternoon that as of this Saturday, March 6, a group of 1,100 elementary school employees will have the chance to receive their first COVID-19 vaccinations. The following Saturday, March 13, is for the remainder of SPS employees. According to Dr. Lucero, school employees who are not required to work "on-site" in a school are ineligible to receive vaccinations during this phase and will need to schedule appointments on their own when they meet the age requirements given by the State of Connecticut. School staff that are eligible for vaccinations includes "Pre-K-12 Teachers, paraprofessionals, custodial staff, food service providers, school bus drivers, as well as in-school administrative staff." An additional vaccination session is to be determined. Elementary school students will return to 100 percent in person learning on March 8 and middle schools will return March 15. This does not affect any students part of DTLA. According to Dr. Lucero, information regarding high schools and the APPLS Pre-K program will be announced soon once they finish planning. More information about SPS vaccinations will be available in The Westword's March print issue.



thewestword Yesterday protesters marched from Harbor Point to the police station in response to the murder of George Floyd and police brutality. The Justice for Brunch protest chose to walk through Harbor Point to make a point to those choosing to enjoy brunch instead of using their voice for the BLM movement. In these photos students Olivia Wenke and Reynold Rene, two active POC voices in the Westhill community, are shown protesting at the march. Please DM us photos of you protesting to be featured on our story! We want to represent all voices of the Westhill community. #BLM



thewestword PANDEMIC PARADE. Despite the Coronavirus pandemic's plague on the nation, the annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade was still able to occur. However, there were some drastic adjustments made to follow certain protocols and ensure the safety of those involved with the parade. According to the New York Times, much of the parade was pre-filmed, and the route was reduced from the usual two miles to one block. The amount of balloon handlers changed significantly — the normal 2,000 being reduced to close to 130 — and no high school bands marched in the parade this year. As for spectators, parade officials put out a statement warning people and telling them to stay home. Though this persuaded many to stay indoors, there were still some people who wanted to watch the show up-close — but not too close, as there were barricades preventing those watching from the risk of overstepping any boundaries. Despite these differences, the parade was seen as an overall success. #macysthanksgivingdayparade #thanksgiving #pandemic



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Cailey Koch / Social Media Editor.

Sherley Renodo / Social Media Editor.

Noa Brudny / Social Media Editor.



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