



(Photo/Steve Sheinfeld)

CULTURE ON CAMPUS From valuing cultural empathy to international students sharing their experiences, learn about the various cultures seen on campus and why they matter. With students from more than 29 countries, Heritage is a melting pot for our world. Go to C12.

VIDEOGRAPHER IN MIAMI After submitting several of her films, junior Ruhi Mansey, a junior reporter for WAHS News, won a spot at YoungArts, a week-long arts program in Miami. Read about Mansey's experience immersing herself in the arts and taking classes with professionals in the Entertainment section. Go to D18.

A LOOK AT LACROSSE Catch up with this season's lacrosse team. New coaches and players mix with experienced seniors such as Joseph Weisberg, pictured above, to create a team ready for a year of intense games and a possible district title. Read the story inside. Go to E22.

news

Student body unites to raise money for a cure Junior high teacher Ms. Jennifer Estevez hopes to raise \$2.5 million to fund research for her 3-year-old son's rare genetic disease: MPS II. Find out how you can help in the News section. See A3.

opinion

Alternative facts will no longer stand The journalism industry has been under intense scrutiny in recent weeks, as President Trump criticizes journalists for unethical reporting. Now more than ever, we need to recognize the importance of just and fact-based journalism. Get the story in Opinion. See B8.



(Photo/Carrie Kuecks)

features

Guests give advice at Life in Action meetings Many students do not know how to write a check or manage their own finances. A new club on campus, Life in Action, has been hosting guest speakers to teach students these necessary life skills. Last meeting, nutritionist Toby Bass, pictured above, taught students the importance of healthy eating. See C11.

sports

One athlete, one thousand points and counting Senior Drew LaMont, a basketball player who will be attending American University this fall, has scored more than 1,000 career points. Head to the Sports section to learn more about LaMont and his stats. See E23.

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Colorful for a cause



NHS participates in the I Care, I Cure color run, while the Make-a-Wish club attends the Walk for Wishes to help raise money for childhood cancer treatments and grant wishes for childhood cancer patients.

CASCADING THROUGH COLOR: At the start of the race, individuals run through a cloud of powdered colors. Below, seniors Elizabeth Shin and Robyn Ratzan embrace one another after successfully completing the color run together. "I ran the entire race from start to finish, and Robyn was right there with me. It was even more fun than last year because I ran with a friend," Shin said. (Photos/Carrie Kuecks)

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While many students slept in, National Honor Society and Make a Wish members were up early to walk/run for various causes. Make-a-Wish club members participated Feb. 6 in the "Walk for Wishes" to raise money to grant wishes for childhood cancer patients.

National Honor Society (NHS) members walked in the color run at Nova Southeastern University for I Care I Cure, an organization which raises money to conduct pediatric cancer research.

Make-a-Wish club members walked in the seventh annual "Walk for Wishes" at Markham

Park. The Make-a-Wish club has 87 participants and raised \$5,400. Heritage is the top fundraising school for the fourth year in a row.

NHS attended the "I Care I Cure" color run last year for the first time. NHS got involved with I Care I Cure because American Heritage graduate, Spencer Krinsky, has family involved in the organization.

"We continued participating this year because NHS appreciates and recognizes the value of the cause that I Care I Cure is trying to promote," president of National Honor Society, Zara Joykutty, said. Participants of the run are given a pack of color

to open and throw everywhere once the run begins.

"I particularly love the color run, because in my opinion, it's the most fun part of the [I Care I Cure] event...participating with your friends makes it even more enjoyable. The best part, though, is that such a large number of people gather together to have fun, but simultaneously raise money for an amazing cause," Joykutty said.

Participants of the runs/walks received cheers upon completion

and were given water as music played to cheer on other runners/walkers. Overall, the events shared three things in common: AHS club members, important charities, and fun.



Students showcase skills at annual talent show

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From singers and guitar-players to pianists and cloggers, the second annual Student Government Association (SGA) Student Talent Show featured a variety of hidden skills on campus. SGA co-president

senior Tiffany Pages-Sanchez and senior class president Camila Ayala introduced the 14 acts, with contestants vying for a top prize of \$100.

Parents, teachers and students alike filled the proscenium seats as the theater lights dimmed at 7 p.m. Feb. 9, and senior Alyssa

Herzbrun took the stage to begin the night with her clogging solo. Seniors Lorena Sanchez, Ava Loomar and Jeremy Ramathan took the stage next to sing and play guitar to "Hotel California" by the Eagles. Following their performance was freshman Chris Chen who played the Exodus Theme on piano.

The night included 10 separate singing acts, one of them being "Nesun Dormaan," an aria from Giacomo Puccini's opera "Turandot," performed by sophomore Yasmeen Altaji.

Of the 28 performers, eighth grader Jacob Reese Thornton stood out as the only student in junior high and

the only student to perform a surprise piece (though only his first song, "Pride and Joy" by Stevie Ray Vaughan, was used for judging).

"I performed last year, too, and it was awesome," Thornton said. "Everybody here is so talented, and it's cool to meet other people who like to make music and dance."

Three judges, Mrs. Alexandra Rollins (junior high SGA adviser and English teacher), Dr. Melissa Torres (Spanish teacher and adviser for First Priority and BET-CHA) and English teacher Mrs. Jessica Burns (freshman class sponsor), sat front and center to score the performers.

"We were really looking for creativity, originality, overall performance and audience interaction," Mrs. Rollins said. "At the end, it all comes down to what we hear from the crowd."



FIRST PLACE FRENZY: After receiving the first place award for their a capella performance, junior Diego Vazquez-Gomez, senior Zara Joykutty, senior Ashley Stacy, senior Sofia Ubilla, senior Nicholas Matese and junior Brandon Dawson celebrate together. (Photo/Vanessa Ryals)

Continued on A3



Seniors

Patient: Seniors, Class of 2017

Age: 17-18

Pharmacy: 12200 W. Broward Blvd. Plantation, FL 33325

Diagnosis: Senioritis

Compiled by Shruti Chandra, Lauren Hutton and Elysa Goldberg

Treatment: Multi-faceted approach

Lauren Hutton | Co-Editor-in-Chief
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While many of us seniors are counting down the days until we can leave high school behind, we cannot forget how many memories there are left to make. These past four years have been challenging, but instead of wishing our remaining time away, we should embrace the time we have left and make the most of it.

1. Go to school productions: Whether it's the upcoming spring play "Almost Maine" or the final musical of the year "Guys and Dolls," go see a production (they're free, after all). We have an incredible theater department, and if you haven't given them a chance to impress you yet, what are you waiting for?

2. Sports games (other than football) can be fun: Most of us have attended at least one football game — even if it was only the state championship — but we have numerous other teams

to support. Catch a baseball or lacrosse game one night; you might be surprised how entertaining they can be.

3. Participate in senior activities: Between Grad Bash and Prom, senior year can seem costly at times. However, the final memories we make with our friends before heading to different schools are worth more than money. If at all possible, make an effort to attend the sometimes cheesy senior events. Chances are, you won't regret it.

4. Appreciate South Florida: Many of us are planning on leaving the state or country come August, so make the most of South Florida. Whether it is the Perez Art Museum in Miami, Flamingo Gardens in Davie or the Everglades, we are surrounded by impressive urban and natural sights. Go see them — who knows when you'll have another chance to?

5. Attend club events: Between participating in the color run

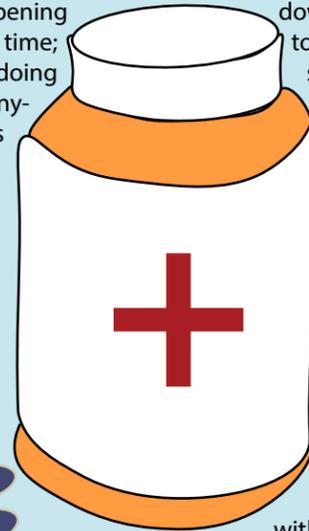
for National Honor Society and attending one of the National English Honor Society and Dead Poet Society's Open Mic Nights, now is the time to get involved. Cool things are happening on campus all the time; you're probably not doing your homework anyway, so you might as well attend.

6. Go on trips: Whether it is attending FSPA for publications students or state robotics competitions as engineers, make the most of the organizations you belong to. This is your

last opportunity to spend the night in a hotel room with your closest friends at an event tailored to your specific passions. Don't pass that up because you have

better things to do — you probably don't.

7. Forgo Netflix and make real memories: For those of us not yet struck with senioritis, winding down with our laptops and a good TV show after a stressful week sounds ideal. Realistically, though, you will always be able to binge watch your favorite shows. You might not always be able to hang out with your best friend who lives 10 minutes away or sleepover with your friend group of four years. It might sound exhausting, but spend every waking moment with your friends if you want to capitalize on these final moments together.



Pros and cons of senior year:

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The good

You're almost done: You're in the final stretch of the high school marathon, and that adds a sense of positivity and lightness to the whole year.

There are so many activities: From Grad Bash and Prom to the Senior Carnival and the Senior Picnic, there's no end to the school activities we get to enjoy purely because we made it this far.

There's less pressure: Once you've gotten into a college, there is a sense of reassurance associated with knowing that you have a future. College decisions ease you out of the need to have impeccable grades and be the best of the best and you no longer push yourself to the breaking point.

You're the oldest: You run the school. Underclassmen will constantly run to you for advice. You and your friends are most likely the presidents of all the clubs on campus, and you get to go off campus for your independent periods and lunch time. It never hurts to be at the top.

The bad

It's so expensive: College applications can cost up to \$200 each, depending on where you're applying and through what medium. Sending SAT scores, traveling to visit colleges and the sheer amount of time are all large investments associated with simply applying to college. Your other senior expenses include a \$200 Grad Bash expense, \$250 every time you attend an out-of-town field trip, \$30 per person attending your senior dinner and a variety of prom expenses.

Getting rejected is awful: The sense of inadequacy associated with being rejected from a school - whether it's your top choice or your last choice - is incomparable. Feeling like the last four years of your life were a waste because you don't get to go where you have dreamed of going eats you up inside.

Teachers hate you: Even if you are the most outstanding student, your teachers believe the senioritis disease is inevitable. They assign copious amounts of work in an attempt to prevent the onset of senioritis before it occurs. You're not done just yet, no matter how relaxed senior year might seem.

Home remedies

"Keep things in perspective. There are not very many days left to be a senior. There are great friends and wonderful things left to do in high school. When it's over, it's over. College can wait. Enjoy the moment now."

- Ms. Deidra Lovegren

"Take advantage and go to the senior activities such as movie night and Grad Bash. Go to the senior activity planning meetings and be an active member of your class. I have plenty of graduates who come back and wish they participated, so live in the moment now. Do not wish your time left in high school away."

- Mrs. Krisynda Cicos

"You are at the end of the race and you should not give up. I have seen kids have their admission offers rescinded or put on probation for freshman year. Also, try to enjoy your last days of high school and do not be in such a rush to have it end."

- High School Principal Mrs. Elise Blum

"Spend time with your friends and participate in all of the school activities available while you can. Once high school is over, you can't come back and do it over again."

- Ms. Jessica Miliffe

Types of patients

Name: Jackson Blitz

Status: Already accepted

"I don't care enough to answer this," senior Jackson Blitz, who received an Early Action acceptance from Princeton University, said.

Name: Chelsea Sinclair

Status: The reminiscer

"I want us all to remember each other in a good way during our last semester of high school," senior Chelsea Sinclair, who began planning the class of 2017's 20-year reunion in the middle of her AP Psychology class back in December, said.

Name: Ramya Reddy

Status: The nervous wreck

"I just freak about everything; that's just who I am," senior Ramya Reddy said while contemplating future life choices and college decisions.



News

Teacher strives for son's cure

Last year, literature teacher Ms. Jennifer Estevez's son was diagnosed with MPS II, a rare genetic disease that often proves fatal for those afflicted before they graduate high school. Since then, she has worked to raise money for a cure.

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The typical 3-year-old goes through the daily routine of eating, playing and learning. The toddler topples out of bed and begs for chocolate for breakfast, then pitches a fit about getting in the car to go to preschool.

He would hug his mother or father goodbye as they walk through the school gate for a day filled with ABC's, rectangles and recess.

A few hours later, he runs through the school gates and launches into his mother or father's car for a day filled with more games and diversions.

For Sebastian Estevez, however, his toddler routine sees the inside of hospital walls at least once a week, which is more frequently than most adults do in their lifetime.

Ms. Jennifer Estevez, eighth grade literature teacher, gave birth to her son, Sebastian Estevez, Nov. 17, 2013. When he was six months old, he was diagnosed with hydrocephalus, which is a buildup of fluids in the brain, but this did not stop him from developing into the strong-willed child he is today.

"He knows what he wants. He's really smart, hilarious, and very feisty. He and his 8-year-old brother, Omar, love each other to death and when they are apart, they want to be together," Ms. Estevez said.

As Sebastian grew, Ms. Estevez started noticing subtle differences between Sebastian and the other children his age. Whenever Sebastian got a cold, his sickness would linger longer than it would in a normal child.

When he would get healthy again, Sebastian would contract another cold immediately. Ms. Estevez took to Google to research his conditions and possibly find solutions to his problems.

"The one thing I was worried about was that he had fuzzy hair on his back. Children with Hunter Syndrome have excess hair,

so I brought it up to the doctor. The geneticist said that because he was just a baby, the fuzz was unprecedented," Ms. Estevez said. Also, the doctor felt he was developing too 'typically' to be affected by a serious genetic disease.

However, when Sebastian was about 2.5, genetic testing confirmed that he actually did have Hunter Syndrome, or MPS II.

According to Mayo Clinic, Hunter Syndrome, or mucopolysaccharidosis II (MPS II), is a rare genetic disorder caused by a missing enzyme. Most children diagnosed with Hunter Syndrome do not live past their teenage years.

"I felt hopeless because there is no cure. We basically just knew that we were going to have to watch our beautiful, smart, perfect child completely deteriorate in front of our eyes.

"I feel like we're grieving a life that is not gone yet. He still has so much life ahead of him even if his life is cut very short," Ms. Estevez said.

"He's still very young, and we should be looking forward to enjoying things with him but there is always something in the back of my mind that says 'Today is one last day we have with him.'"

There may be hope. The Nationwide Children's Hospital in Ohio has recently begun conducting human trials for a treatment for Sanfilippo Syndrome (MPS III), a related disorder.

Thus far, the trials have been successful. But, the project will cost \$2.5 million. Project Alive, a nonprofit dedicated to finding and funding a cure for Hunter Syndrome, is attempting to raise the \$2.5 million.

"Our community has worked really hard on legislating for the 21st Century Cures Act, which was passed a couple months ago, not for just MPS but for the rare disease community in general.

"That was really big for us. Now, we are looking to raise a lot of money. There are no pharmaceutical companies behind this, so basically it is



TOP: Ms. Estevez and her son Sebastian play at the park. Due to his condition, Sebastian cannot exert the same amount of energy as other 3 year olds. **LEFT:** Sebastian's father lifts him so he can dunk the ball into the basketball hoop. "Whenever Sebastian is running with his friends, he physically can't keep up with their speed. His little body tries so hard but just can't make it there," Ms. Estevez said. **RIGHT:** Sebastian and his family spend a day at the beach. He is very close with his brother, Omar, despite having to spend much time apart. (Photos/Nicole Mariutto)

all just donations for the cure. Because the MPS III doctors already conducted human trials, they know exactly how much it costs," Ms. Estevez said.

Ms. Estevez, other teachers and students are bringing fundraising to Heritage to reach the \$2.5 million goal. The first week

of April, the morning announcements will play a different video each day informing students about Hunter Syndrome.

"Hunter Syndrome changed everything. I find myself recalibrating my perspective and my expectations so that I do not completely fall into despair. So

I find new dreams, goals and hopes. At this point, my biggest hope is simply that Sebastian will survive Hunter Syndrome. That is enough for now," Estevez said.

Find out more about Project Alive: projectalive.com

Find out more about Sebastian Estevez: saveasebastian.com

Talent show Continued from A1

Though senior Vivian Liu's performance of "Million Reasons" by Lady Gaga roused the crowd to use its phones as flashlights in the audience, in the end only Thornton, A Capella and Company and sophomores Eduardo Giralt, Thomas Lovegren and Maxwell Mahan, were called to center stage.

"It's always extremely challenging [to judge] because all of the students are extremely talented," Torres said. "Two groups scored the same, but they wouldn't allow us to have a tie for third place."

In the end, it was the eleven members of A Capella and Company who brought home the first place title and \$100 check. Second place went to Thornton, and third went to Giralt, Lovegren and Mahan.

"It definitely was a success," Sanchez said. "There were lots of great performers and acts which was exciting, and we raised about \$900 for Out of the Darkness, an organization that promotes suicide awareness."

SGA is responsible for planning many events such as Homecoming, the freshman mixer and open forums with administrators. For those interested in joining, meetings are held every other Thursday in room 7104.



DRUMMING ACT: Freshman Jason Verebay performed a drum cover of the song "Burnout" by Green Day. Verebay's was just one of fifteen performances, from clogging to piano. (Photo/Vanessa Ryals)



News

Together we stand

Progressive Generation hosts its annual Black History Month assembly to educate students on the nuances of minority relations in the United States.



Asa's Analysis

BY ASA ZARETSKY

Will Trump be removed from office?

Over the past few months, some people have claimed that President Trump will be impeached, a process which removes the president from office, during his term. A variety of reasons have been suggested, such as his alleged collaboration with Russia and his refusal to divest himself from his business conflicts of interest. However, despite the controversy that the Trump administration has embroiled itself in since day one, it's unlikely for Trump to be impeached even if he does commit a crime.

The main argument that impeachment proponents have put forward is an investigation uncovering collaboration between Russia and Trump to undermine the election.

The problem with this is that even if believable evidence is found, many of the people in charge of the investigation will either be Republicans committed to re-election or officials personally appointed by Trump. This makes it unlikely for such evidence to see the light of day as jobs are on the line. This reluctance is strengthened especially when it comes to conflict of interest accusations, as fewer Republicans such as Sen. John McCain and Sen. Lindsey Graham, who oppose Trump, are on the relevant committee that would investigate.

If evidence of a crime does come out, conventional thought would lend toward articles of impeachment being introduced. However, with a Republican dominated congress, and one that has a considerable number of members tightly loyal to the president, it may not pass if pressure from the leadership of Speaker Paul Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is not applied.

With almost all large media outlets discredited in the minds of many Republicans, it would be difficult for investigators to convince them that an impeachment trial would be supported by enough evidence. These lawmakers also realize that if they are seen by the Republican base as "betraying" Trump, these Republicans could vote against incumbent lawmakers in the primaries in 2018 and 2020.

It is this loyalty to the President and fear of voters which makes a Congressional act of rebellion unlikely.

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Entering after a powerful performance by the Patriot Dancers honoring black culture, a panel of minority students spread light on issues facing their respective communities in front of the senior class.

For the fourth year in a row, the Progressive Generation club hosted an assembly in honor of Black History Month that strived to raise awareness for the difficulties minorities face.

Seniors Jaida Scott and Kai-Leon Herbert began by introducing the dancers and the executive board, including moderator and President Kamryn Washington and Vice President Jordyn Allen.

After the dance performance and a brief introduction, a panel of student speakers came on stage, representing several organizations: senior Mariah Bowers for Girl Up, junior Chloe Brown for Tikkun Olam, junior Tianna Davis

for Dance Ensemble, sophomore Sarah Dickey for the Gay-Straight Alliance, freshman Aitana Hidalgo for the Hispanic community and sophomore Jordyn Allen and senior Nikoya Beckford for Progressive Generation.

The discussion covered a variety of issues, including social justice for oppressed persons, identity issues and feminist perspectives.

Washington led the discussion, and a list of relevant definitions for terms such as "racism" and "gender discrimination" were projected on a screen above the Mainstage to better students' understanding of the issues at hand.

The conversation began with the topic of discrimination where neutrality was criticized, and students were encouraged to actively aid in the movement for equality.

Bowers said, "When you're accustomed to privilege, equality seems like oppression," and encouraged audience members

to recognize their privilege and speak up for those less fortunate. The assembly covered more than black issues. Dickey commented on how the Civil Rights movement gave way to LGBTQA* movements and how using the word "gay" as an insult should not be condoned.

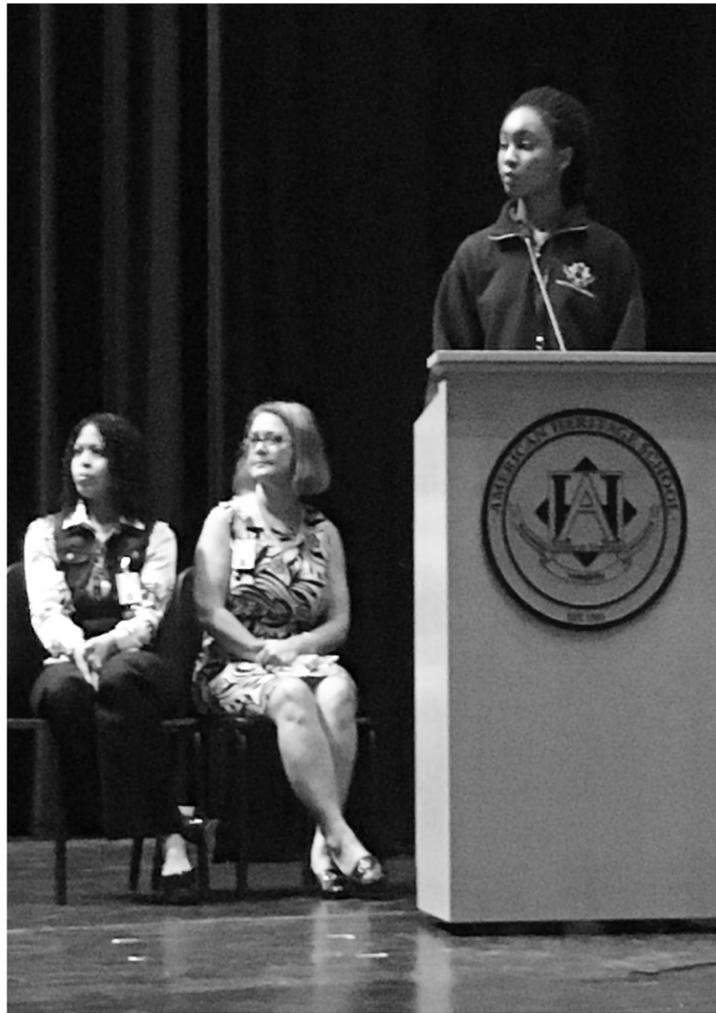
Hidalgo also stressed the importance of normalizing immigrants and the value that comes from embracing one's identity regardless of appearance or ethnicity. The floor was then opened up to the audience to ask the panel questions.

One question came from senior Dhimani Charles-Harris who asked, "Why am I not allowed to be accepted as being black?" regarding the difficulties of being mixed-race. The panel responded by expressing the importance of self-identification regardless of the unwanted labels often given to individuals by others. "What I've learned from being a queer woman is that people are going to define me and they're

going to label me and they're going to try to put me in a box, but ultimately I am the only person who can define who I am," Dickey said.

As the assembly came to a close, interested students were invited to attend Progressive Generation meetings on Wednesdays and Thursdays during lunch in Mrs. Audrey Spicer's room (3217).

Washington said she wished there had been more time to discuss the issues at hand, but that ultimately she felt the goal "to start dialogue regarding Black History and social justice" was achieved. "Just because you aren't black doesn't mean you can't stand up for the Black Lives Matter movement, or just because you're not a woman doesn't mean you can't support the Women's March," Allen said at one point, summarizing the idea that students of all backgrounds need to come together to "build ladders, not walls" in order to achieve true progress.



A DIVERSE DISCUSSION: (Top) Progressive Generation President Kamryn Washington asks the panel questions such as "What does Black History Month mean to you?" to prompt discussion about minority issues and discrimination. (Bottom) The student panel members, Bowers, Brown, Davis, Dickey, Hidalgo, Allen and Beckford from right to left, address questions on issues such as race, gender and identity in front of the senior class. (Photos/Lauren Hutton)

Students discuss the refugee ban

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Much controversy has erupted in the past month after President Trump issued an executive order barring the entry of people from seven majority Muslim countries: Syria, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Yemen, Sudan and Somalia.

The stated purpose of the order was to stop terrorists from getting inside the United States and committing attacks.

However, the ban has been met with immense opposition, with protests across the nation and numerous court challenges that could render the order unconstitutional.

This executive order has affected thousands of Americans across the country, as well as Heritage students. Sophomores Mayyar Barazi and Isabella Sharifi, both American citizens, are affected by the order because of their families, as some of their family members still live in these countries.

Barazi, whose family is originally from Syria, lives in America, but his aunt, who lives in Syria and holds a U.S. green card, was in the United States when the ban came into effect. Sharifi's family, from Iran, is also affected, she said.

"My cousin is having a wedding in May, and I am very concerned that the ban will not be lifted by then. If this happens, the majority of my family members will not be able to attend her wedding.

I will be disappointed," Sharifi said. One thing that both students agree on: the ban has not made America safer.

"It is not fair to disenfranchise and generalize an entire country based on the actions of a few. Also, in the 21st century, there have not been any major Iranian terrorist attacks on American soil. I do not think that the ban has had any effect on the United States, other than undermining the reputation of the United States as a free nation," Sharifi said. Barazi echoed his concern.

"There have been no attacks on U.S. soil from any of those countries. However, countries like Saudi Arabia, which the U.S. is strong allies with, has had its citizens involved in terrorist attacks."

The concerns of Barazi and Sharifi are very similar, that individuals from these countries rarely, if ever, commit acts of terrorism, and that this ban discriminates against many innocent people. For this discriminating intent, especially against Muslims, is why the Ninth District Court of Appeals held up the freeze of the ban earlier in the month.

This freeze has landed the ban in legal limbo, and while the Trump administration is considering whether to rewrite the order to be more acceptable for the court or to appeal to the Supreme Court, it is not in effect for now, and likely for the immediate future, as the various advisors of the president work it out and the administration deals allegations from other areas.



News

Lit fair showcases writers

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Heritage hosted its annual literary fair for Upper School students and winning pieces were displayed in the library Feb. 13-17. Winning the school-based competition is a prerequisite to advance to the Broward County Literary Fair.

"Students can submit literary pieces, including stories, poems or essays to be judged by Heritage faculty and administration," literary magazine editor-in-chief Stella Ikpatt said.

School-level, first-place winners not only advance to the district level but most also have their work published in the AHS literary magazine, *Expressions*, and receive a \$20 Amazon gift card. Students had to submit their entries earlier this year to be evaluated by a panel of Heritage judges.

To the right is a chart of who placed at the school level, and winners will now advance to the district literary fair, where judging will take place April 8 and winners will be announced April 15.

	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place
Cinquain	Nicole Newton	Rachel Glaser	Paul Mamonov
Ekphrastic	Lexie Chong	Lexie Chong	Valentina Eusse
Free Verse	Olivia Lloyd	Aarohi Talati	Joyce Jiang
Haiku	Chloe Grabow	Ethan Glassman	Chloe Grabow
Ode	Jana Kelly	Olivia Lloyd	Natalie Perez
Poem for Two Voices	Felix Romier	Katherina Kushnarova	Nikolay Vasilyev
Parody Poem	Jana Kelly	Jessica Wu	Alexander DeLaTour
Rhymed Verse	Gabrielle Lawson	Olivia Lloyd	Alexander Yan
Sestina	Daniela Velez	Angela Lin	June Dong
Shrinklit	Viviana Wei	N/A	N/A
Sonnet	Chloe Brown	Janese Lopez	Jacob Mass
Spoken Word Performance	Gabriela Coutinho	Olivia Lloyd	N/A
Villanelle	Jana Kelly	Daniil Tourashev	Sean Robins
Children's Book	Sabrina Lin	N/A	N/A
Formal Essay	Zihan Kabir	David Min	Mikhal Ben-Joseph
Informal Essay	Daniel Jaen	Olivia Lloyd	Adrienne Morales
Myth	Joshua Gerstenfeld	Arturo Gonzalez	Min-Ju Kang
Parody Prose	Lauren Waldman	N/A	N/A
Personal Narrative	Emily Irigoyen	Eduardo Massud	Natalia Ulloa
Satirical Cartoon	Sophia Viner	Kamryn Washington	Mohamad Adada
Scene Writing	Jaclyn Siu	Ariann Barker	Gabriela Coutinho
Short Story	Emily Namm	Nithya Kasarla	Lauren Hutton

New in the library: Mrs. Leah Bonneau

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There is a new face at Heritage. The library's latest addition, Mrs. Leah Bonneau, works alongside coach Brandt Moser, Mrs. Kristina Siegel and Dr. Meeta Sharma. This is her first position at Heritage, and she has been working since Jan. 9. We spoke to Mrs. Bonneau to find out how she earned her position and what it's like to be both a mom and a library employee.

How did you find out about the position? How did you end up where you are now?

"I have three kids here, so I was trying to see if they needed any help at the school. Dr. [Doug] Laurie interviewed me and said that the library needed a position, so I met with Coach Moser and Mrs. Siegel."

How old are your kids? What's it like to have your children attend Heritage now that you work here?

"Shanley is in sixth grade and she's 12, Tanner is in ninth grade and he's 14, and Chase is in 11th grade and he's 17. It's nice. [Shanley] doesn't get to come here [the library] since she's in Lower School, but I get to see Tanner in some classes that Mrs. Siegel has been teaching, and my older one stops by and sees me sometimes."

What is your role? What do you do every day?

"I assist with whatever they [the library staff] need: helping kids with iPads, NoodleTools and cataloging books. They have a ton of donations, so I'm cataloging books in the system, labeling them and getting them on the shelves."

Describe the process of training for the position.

"It's a lot. Even [learning to] download this system they have, which is a little machine, was three pages of instructions. Coach Moser trains me on how to keep the kids in line — he's good at that. Mrs. Siegel has been teaching me about iPads. Dr. Sharma has been teaching me more of the computer work. It's a little bit of everybody [helping out]."

What has been the most difficult part of the adjustment to your new job? What is your favorite thing about what you do?

"The most difficult part is being strict with the kids and having to keep them in line, but I like the people that I work with. That's probably my favorite thing. I love everybody here. I wouldn't mind helping with other things if they need me, but I like the library a lot."



A NEW FACE BEHIND THE DESK: Mrs. Leah Bonneau can be found in the library from 9 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. every day. The book she is holding, Mary Hoffman's "City of Flowers," is among the hundreds of books Mrs. Bonneau is helping categorize. (Photo/Lauren Quintela)

Next year's new classes: AP Histories and CompSci

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Come the 2017-2018 school year, Heritage will offer a number of new classes, many of them at the AP level. However, these classes could be cancelled if not enough students sign up for them. Here's what you should know about these four new classes:

AP Art History: Taught by current American History teacher Mrs. Kimberly Hughes, AP Art History explores art's uses and meanings throughout time. Students will investigate artistic traditions from prehistory to the present, understand art from a global perspective, engage with a variety of art forms, compare and contrast works and apply skills of visual and contextual analysis.

"I'm hoping a few field trips will be approved so we can examine works of art in person," Mrs. Hughes said. "I really do love this course."

Prerequisites: any AP class, concurrent enrollment in Honors English or higher. Grades: 11, 12.

AP European History: Mrs. Marjorie Milam, who also teaches AP World History and AP U.S. History, could bring back this class that many students miss. AP Euro has been offered in the past but was cancelled for the 2016-2017 year as not enough students enrolled in it (see "AP Euro matters" from our September 2016 issue). The class strives to integrate political, economic, social, religious, intellectual, cultural and military aspects of Western civilization into a complex understanding of its foundations and history.

Prerequisites: the previous year's AP history course, concurrent enrollment in Honors English or higher. Grades: 10, 11, 12.

AP Computer Science

Principles: Computer science department head Mrs. Marisa Behar will teach this class that instructs students in creative aspects of programming, abstractions, algorithms, large data sets, the Internet, cybersecurity concerns and computing impacts. Students will be given the opportunity to address real-world problems and find solutions using technology.

"I'm very excited to teach this class as it is intended to give exposure to computer science to non-computer science students," Mrs. Behar said.

Prerequisites: an A- or higher in Algebra II Advanced or Honors. Grades: 10, 11, 12.

Sports Broadcast and Production Honors

WAHS morning show adviser Mrs. Maria Molina will teach this field-based learning class in which students will work with AHS athletics to broadcast sports. Students will produce live-stream sports broadcasts at games, implement web casting and on-demand Internet audio, assist with play-by-play, color analysis and sideline reports and produce an on-site studio show with pregame, half-time and postgame segments. **Prerequisites:** Multimedia/Production Honors. Grades: 11, 12.

Additionally: Two new junior high computer science electives will be offered. Sociology will be offered on the college prep and honors levels, but details are not yet confirmed.

News Brief

Elysa Goldberg | Centerspread Editor
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Shakespearean Monologue Competition

For the first time, students will participate in the Shakespearean Monologue Competition. The school competition will take place Feb. 28 from 3:15-6:30 p.m. in the main theater. Contestants will recite no more than 20 lines of Shakespearean monologue, and the student who wins the school-level competition will move on to the next round in Fort Lauderdale. If he or she wins that round, he or she will move on to the final round in New York.

Boca/Delray Campus College Fair

Due to the college fair being cancelled in October because of Hurricane Matthew, many students attended the college fair at the Boca/Delray Heritage campus Feb. 27. Sophomores and juniors who attended took a bus from the Plantation campus to the Boca/Delray campus for the fair. The college fair featured numerous colleges from all over the nation.

Piano Competition

Honors Piano students participated in the Florida Band Association's Solo and Ensemble District Competition at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Feb. 18. Students have been practicing their pieces since the start of the school year in hopes of receiving superiors in the district level and moving on to the state level later this year. The results of the competition will be released in March.

MathCounts Competition

The junior high math team, led by math teacher Mrs. Nora Demosthenes, competed in the Broward County MathCounts Competition. Five of the students placed within the top 10:

- Iris Lang - Third place
- Anisa Haffizulla - Fifth place
- Gauri Kasarla - Sixth place
- Pierre Younes - Eighth place
- Nicolas Fernandez-Baigun - Ninth place

County Science Fair at the Broward Mall

Several students participated in the Broward County Science Fair Feb. 13. Project subjects ranged from biology to chemistry. Twelve students placed first, one student placed second, three students placed third, three students placed fourth and one student placed fifth. The 12 students who came in first place will advance to the state competition.



EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Please do not refuse refugees

Zihan Kabir | News Editor
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Just a few days after his inauguration, President Donald Trump signed into action a controversial executive order, largely perceived as a “Muslim ban,” invoking backlash from protesters throughout the nation.

As well as blocking immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries, the order pauses the resettlement of refugees indefinitely. Trump caps the total number of refugees to be admitted to the U.S. in 2017 at 50,000, claiming any more “would be detrimental to the interests of the United States,” but it is likely, given his recent rhetoric, that the actual statistic will be much lower.

In contrast, the Obama administration planned to allow 110,000 refugees into the U.S. throughout the year. The ban applies not only to refugees from Syria, but also to those from other countries, such as the thousands escaping religious and ethnic persecution from countries including the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar. Freedom

and the ability to raise one’s children in a country not torn apart by war should not be unique to those who are lucky enough to already live in the U.S.

If we value our morals and are truly “the land of the free,” we must give refugees the opportunity to create a better life.

Contrary to what Trump seems to believe, refugees from Syria or elsewhere are not ISIS-trained operatives seeking to destroy the West from within. Not one individual has been killed by a refugee on American soil in the past four decades. Rather, every ISIS-related terror attack after 9/11 has been the work of American citizens self-radicalized on the Internet.

The refugees Trump wants to prevent from entering the U.S. are the victims of terror, not the perpetrators.

“The Boston Globe” found that three quarters of Syrian refugees settled in the U.S. are women and children.

These are the victims of Trump’s ban, not the “terrorists” he claims to be stopping. Historically, it has been the responsibility of countries such as



ESCAPE FOR FREEDOM: A woman and her three daughters from the Yazidi sect flee from their homes to escape the brunt of ISIS. People walked to the Syrian border near the town of Elierbeh to be accepted for refuge. (Photo/Newsweek)

the U.S. to welcome those fleeing from war and persecution.

Now more than ever, when the world is facing the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II, it is our responsibility to aid those in need. To blindly lump together the millions

of men, women and children seeking a better life as “potential terrorists” is more than just ignorant—it’s dangerous, both for the individuals affected and for the reputation of the U.S. as a leader in the international community. Trump’s vision for

the future is not one of tolerance and concern for the humanitarian problems of our age, but one of fear and division.

Denying refugees is a betrayal of not only our past as a nation of immigrants, but also of the values we cherish today.

Beware of fraternity risks

Lauren Hutton | Co-Editor-in-Chief
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Whether their time in high school is coming to a close in a couple of months or a few short years, most students look forward to a more expansive social life in college.

Currently, more than nine million students are a part of a Greek organization in college, and with newfound independence and often increased free time, many incoming freshmen are likely to add to this number and partake in the process of rushing.

Students involved in fraternities and sororities have a 20 percent higher chance of graduating college and form 85 percent of current Fortune 500 executives — but is Greek life all it’s cracked up to be?

Greek organizations strive to form tight-knit groups of individuals who are taught leadership skills and form endless connections through a sprawling alumni network.

However, despite these good intentions, many fraternities and sororities have proven themselves undesirable.

Partying, and more concerningly, binge-drinking is often seen as a way of life for members. According to the U.S. Department of Education’s Higher Education Center, 75 percent of fraternity members engage in heavy drinking, compared with 49 percent of other male students.

These habits do not just pertain to men, either, as 62 percent of sorority members engage in binge-drinking versus 41 percent of non-sorority members.

Additionally, as a member of a fraternity, you are statistically more likely to abuse prescription pills such as Adderall, Ritalin or Dexedrine and more likely to commit rape. Obviously, this does not mean joining a fraternity will turn you into a sexual offender or drug addict, but the atmosphere and social pressures often apparent at Greek gatherings can alter your outlook. On the flip

side, sorority members are more likely to be the victim of assault when compared to women not involved in Greek life. Ultimately, members of these organizations are more likely to experience poor test performance, alcohol-related injuries, assault, property damage and sexual assault during their time at college.

Perhaps most unsettling is the continued practice of hazing. While hazing is banned in 44 states, many Greek organizations discreetly continue the practice. Whether it is through Hell Week (a week in which new members are forced to endure exhausting and humiliating physical activities in order to join), forced extreme alcohol consumption or physical abuse, hazing rituals have resulted in a death on a college campus every year since 1970.

A group of supposed friends shouldn’t spend their time humiliating or abusing you for weeks on end in order for you to gain the pleasure of their company, and no social group is worth risking your life for.

Despite all this, you have to make the choice that’s right for you. Every fraternity and sorority is different and varies depending on what college you attend. If you want to join for all the right reasons and plan to spend your time with close friends, contribute to philanthropic causes and improve leadership skills, Greek life could better your college experience, but be aware of the potential drawbacks before you commit yourself to an organization that could put you or others at risk.



(Graphic/Skylar Britton)

Boycotting for a better, safer world

Alec Chao | Staff Writer
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As citizens of the United States, we possess the inherent right to “petition [our] government for a redress of grievances,” as stated in the Petition Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution.

This right is extended to private corporations as well. One individual cannot change corporate culture alone, yet in a society where profits define success and money is everything, the change in our pockets means a lot more than one may think.

The act of a boycott — an abstention from the purchase or use of goods or services — serves a much greater purpose than one may believe, even against the largest corporations in the world.

In a historical sense, boycotts have been used as an effective form of protest against tyranny and discrimination. The American colonial boycott of British tea, the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Jewish-American boycott against German-made goods during World War II: all incidences of abstention from purchasing goods from which profits would directly support oppression or malevolence.

The purpose of a boycott in our modern era is very much the same, but the target is simply different: corporations are frequently targets of boycotts for espousing political beliefs contrary to those of their consumers or for unethical business

practices. As a method of protest, it is extremely popular. According to British consumer activist magazine “Ethical Consumer,” there are currently 51 ongoing boycotts against various companies and organizations, from Adidas to Hermès to Amazon.

There is no doubt of a boycott’s efficacy — I point to the 1990 boycott against Nike for their alleged use of sweatshops for product manufacturing — but its worth is dependent on its organizers’ dedication.

A boycott cannot sustain itself on purchase abstention alone. While “voting with one’s wallet” can effectively cut into a corporation’s short-term profit margins, any boycott of protracted length will simply be unable to compete with every other consumer’s continued patronage.

A 2003 American boycott of French-made wines is apropos of this reality — while the initial stages of the boycott resulted in a 26 percent drop in sales, French wine sales rebounded within six months, according to Larry Chavis, professor of entrepreneurship at UNC Chapel Hill.

To boycott is to stand firmly behind the belief that consumer belief is reciprocal, that the products we buy must be backed by ethical practices. Protest is neither inane nor ineffective.

Yet, one must remember that to make a difference, one must be willing to advocate for his or her cause with constancy and fervor. Only then will a boycott be truly effective.



Editorials & Opinions

Concerts aren't worth it

Why spend a huge amount of money to get pushed around by an obnoxious crowd and listen to below-average renditions of your favorite songs?

Andrew Kolondra Jr. | Co-Assistant Editor
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Too many times I open Instagram to find my feed filled with photos and videos from a popular band, singer or rapper's concert the night before. While every day millions of people flock to concerts all around the world, I've never understood their appeal.

First off, you'll end up spending much more money attending concerts regularly than simply subscribing to a music

streaming service or purchasing the music on iTunes. According to Statista, the average ticket to a tour concert in 2016 cost \$80.66, and many tickets cost much more, some weighing in at upwards of \$200. Compare this to Spotify Premium (the ad-free version of the normally-free Spotify), YouTube Red and Apple Music, which all cost \$10 a month. The average iTunes album costs just \$10 as well.

With any of these streaming services, you can listen to your

favorite songs as many times as you want, whenever you want, wherever you want. At a concert, you hear each song once, and that's it.

Furthermore, the majority of the time, the recorded versions of artists' songs sound much better than the live versions, and sometimes the concert crowd around you is so loud that you can't even hear the performer(s) singing over the crowd's screams – even if you're in the first row.

If you pull out your earbuds and kick back at home to listen to that hot new album you just downloaded, you're guaranteed to hear every word of every song with great sound quality.

Even worse, depending on the artist hosting the concert, you may find yourself trapped in a crowd of loud, sweaty and rude people who have no concern for those around them. You may get pushed around, cussed out or even shoved to the ground if you're not careful. Why spend money for that?

While I understand that some people attend concerts to see their favorite bands or artists in person, and some even pay extra for the meet-and-greets many concerts offer, it doesn't make sense to spend all that extra money with such a large chance that you won't even enjoy yourself. Concerts just aren't worth it.

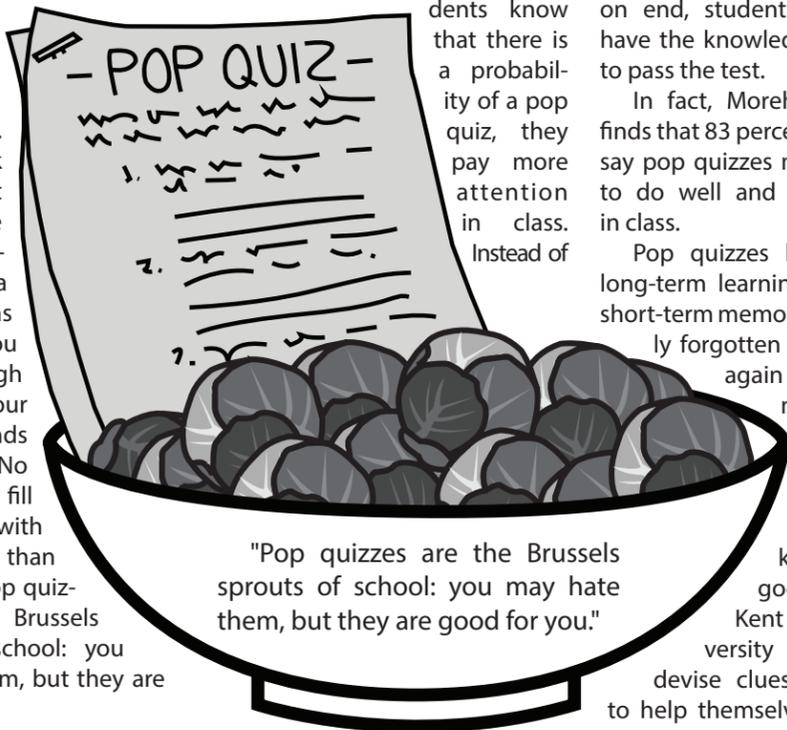
(Graphics/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

...but pop quizzes really are

No matter how much you may hate them, pop quizzes have been proven to help students succeed in their studies. Take advantage of them to bring up your grades.

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You walk to class, assuming that it will be a normal day. You think that at worst you will have to do a worksheet for a grade, but as soon as you walk through the doors, your teacher hands you a quiz. No two words fill students with more dread than "pop quiz." Pop quizzes are the Brussels sprouts of school: you may hate them, but they are good for you.



"Pop quizzes are the Brussels sprouts of school: you may hate them, but they are good for you."

Studies by the University of California show that when students know that there is a probability of a pop quiz, they pay more attention in class. Instead of

cramping the night before an exam and staying up for hours on end, students will already have the knowledge they need to pass the test.

In fact, Morehouse College finds that 83 percent of students say pop quizzes motivate them to do well and pay attention in class.

Pop quizzes lead to more long-term learning rather than short-term memorization, quickly forgotten and crammed again before the midterm or final exam.

Learning over memorizing is the key to getting good grades. Kent State University finds people devise clues and devices to help themselves retain and

remember information. Pop quizzes allow them to see which of their tricks work and which don't, allowing them a chance to revise the ineffective ones and recall more material.

Pop quizzes help students find the best way to learn and remember what they learned in class. That is why Morehouse College states that 70 percent of students received better grades in classes with pop quizzes rather than classes with none.

Pop quizzes may seem like they only exist to hurt you, but in actuality they have beneficial effects. If you take advantage of pop quizzes, you will see your grades increase.

Remember, not all assessments will be unannounced, having a few mixed in with the bunch will help you as a student in the short and long term.

(Graphic/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

...and reading more books is, too

Not only does reading improve your vocabulary and strengthen your brain, but it can also decrease stress and expand your view of the world around you.

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During my beloved and sparse free time in junior year, I either napped or watched Netflix. The stress from schoolwork often made me want to relax with something not mentally challenging, but with so much free time as a second-semester senior, I have realized that I should have been reading.

After submitting all of my college applications in late December, I was able to finally relax with a good book.

Whether it's Ta-Nehisi Coates's "Between the World and Me," Jonathan Wilson's "Angels with Dirty Faces" or Morihei Ueshiba's "The Art of Peace," reading has been one thing that I can always look forward to, even after a long day at school.

Though it may repulse some, reading is good for the mind. It is proven to keep the brain mentally stimulated and improve memory. A study by the journal "Neurology" that included almost 300 participants who had died often showed that those who read often experienced slower memory decline in comparison with those who did not.

Reading is also one way to decrease stress: researchers at the University of Sussex concluded that reading reduced stress levels more than even listening to music or enjoying a cup of tea.

The more you read, of course, the more your vocabulary expands and

the more knowledgeable you become. A study from the University of California proved that books, even children's books, introduce people to more words than television, so even the simplest of books can go a long way in improving one's vocabulary.

Reading provides insight into other ways of life and other cultures. Expanding your worldview is priceless. My own cultures and traditions have introduced me to one life, but reading stories of other people's experiences is invaluable.

You may not have loved "Othello" or "Oedipus" in English class, but picking up a book you're interested in can make a big difference.



(Graphic/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)



The liberal snowflake BY VANESSA RYALS An Introduction

My softball career ended the day I refused to wear a cage on my helmet. Two games into the season, I took a ball to the face. I walked off the field that day with a swollen and bruised eye while my parents – and coach – stood by the dugout laughing. I was not raised in bubble wrap. I was never greeted with bandages or hugs each time I fell off my bicycle. I was raised in an environment which, logically, should teach most kids to be tough. For me, it had the opposite effect.

When the final Electoral votes were tallied around 2 a.m. Nov. 9, and Donald Trump was announced President-elect, I cried so much I couldn't go to school the next day. I am what the altright has deemed a "snowflake."

According to Merriam-Webster, "snowflake" originated in the 1860s as an insult for those who opposed abolition, but in today's world someone who claims the Confederate flag is "heritage, not hate" is more likely to be the one calling someone else a snowflake. Even more ironically, those who relish in calling liberals "snowflakes" have been deeply offended by a "Hamilton" show, a "Saturday Night Live" segment, a "Star Wars" movie and a Coca-Cola commercial.

From my experience, there is not a single point liberals can make that won't provoke the "snowflake" dismissal from Trump supporters.

"Don't feel safe in a public restroom?" Queer snowflake. "Black lives matter?" Un-American snowflake. "Affordable healthcare for all?" Socialist snowflake. "Rape jokes aren't funny?" Triggered snowflake. "Everyone deserves human rights?" Special snowflake.

The right has to do better if ad-hominem arguments are all they have to offer in defense of the racist, sexist and xenophobic views they defended this election cycle.

If believing the LGBTQ+ community deserves to have rights, or that women deserve bodily autonomy, makes me a snowflake, then so be it. If acknowledging the institutional racism, xenophobia and bigotry that undermines our nation's past and present makes me a snowflake, then so be it.

When Trump called women "nasty," we owned it and put it on our T-shirts and protest signs. It is time we own the "snowflake" label, too.

Internet personality Jomny Sun recently tweeted, "A group of snowflakes is called a blizzard; an avalanche; a force of nature." If my belief in equality, empathy, compassion and love makes me a "snowflake" – winter is coming.



Editorials & Opinions

Should colleges be holistic in the admissions process?

Yes

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The majority of American colleges use a holistic system to review applications and choose prospective students. The holistic approach to applications takes into consideration all the applicant's attributes, which can range from service projects to grades, allowing for a student's passions to really shine. This non-standard approach leaves room for subjectivity in the admission process, as it allows an admissions director to choose whether or not an applicant can bring to the school what the college needs.

This subjectivity has aroused controversy, with many lawsuits, such as Fisher vs. The University of Texas at Austin, brought against schools for denying acceptances to qualified students. However, subjectivity is not a bad aspect of the admissions process, but a fundamental and necessary part of building a class.

The holistic process allows for equality. Admissions officers labor over thousands of applications in search of the student who has worked hard in school and can bring something unique to the college. Each student is seen as a person who can bring something to the school that it wants, such as a math whiz or soccer champion. The subjectivity of the process allows for students to shine a light on their strengths and advertise what they can bring to a college. This method allows a school to self-improve by selecting which students would make the best additions to the university.

Moreover, admissions officers want to build a class of diverse thought, religion, style, culture, politics and background, as this diversity fosters intellectual growth. It allows students to collaborate with one another and build off each other's different perspectives. It opens doors to new concepts and ideas and teaches students to communicate with people of different opinions. When a student graduates, he is not only awarded with knowledge, but also the power to communicate and work with different people to reach a common goal.

When a student attends college, he is not in a room of like-minded individuals, but surrounded by uniqueness fostered from different socioeconomic backgrounds, race, perspective and talents. This is an aspect of the college experience that truly allows one to flourish while observing different techniques and cultures. Although it is important to be qualified to attend the school, one's qualification should not be the only factor in determining admission.

If we all thought, believed, dressed and talked the same, who would be the odd one to think of something out of the ordinary? Subjectivity breeds the diversity necessary to foster creativity. It is this non-standard way of choosing which is and should be the standard with regard to college admission.

No

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"You have to start NOW."

Beginning the second semester of junior year, we are thrown into a whirlwind of Jumpstart, question-and-answer sessions with college representatives, tours, Common App and Coalition App information sessions and so much more. The process of applying takes months; then we wait in painful anticipation anywhere between two and seven months to hear an answer.

However, it only took me a grand total of 25 minutes to apply to McGill University in Montreal, Canada, which operates on a rolling admissions basis so most applicants hear back within a month or two.

The reason for this disparity is simple. In the United States, the process extends well beyond the basic factors of grades, tests and activities. The use of quotas or allocating predetermined advantages when admitting minorities is unconstitutional. Nonetheless, there have

been lawsuits against Harvard University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Texas and more for their use of race as a deciding factor in undergraduate admissions since then.

Thomas Espenshade and Alexandria Walton Radford of Princeton concluded that on average, Asian-Americans need 140 SAT points (out of 1600) more than whites to get a place at a private university and blacks need an average 310 fewer points. Amy Hsin of the City University of New York and Yu Xie of the University of Michigan examined the progress of 6,000 white and Asian children to understand where this "Asian nerd" stereotype stems from and their study showed a considerable gap in effort and hard work between Asian and white children, which grew during their school careers. If Asian children are statistically the hardest workers, what is the argument for their rejections? Why are certain students given such a sizeable advantage before their application has even reached the admissions committee?

Another consideration of many admissions committees is the applicant's income. As The Economist said, "The number [of places allotted] for people who are just high achievers is limited." In the United States, average wages for people with a bachelor's degree has remained relatively stagnant in the past 10 years whereas average wages for people with an advanced degree increased more than five percent. However, in the United States, the average cost of a master's degree for students is between \$30,000 and \$120,000. The lowest paying jobs often stem from the lowest levels of education but when those people cannot afford to give their children advanced education, their families get stuck in a cycle, magnifying the "rich-poor gap." Education plays an important role in shaping our generation's lives and by considering family income subjectively, colleges reduce the accessibility of colleges to a large proportion of the population.

I concede that there is more to a student than grades and standardized test scores. The college admissions process in the United States is extremely subjective, accounting for factors well beyond a student's control. In many other countries, the admissions process is narrowed down to two or three factors, simplifying the process and giving students an accurate idea of their chance of admission. Once we hit submit, we have no idea what we are being judged for. Universities need to dismiss the ambiguity of their admissions process so that students can start finding their place in an equal and successful society.

(Graphic/Isabel Chamberlain)

There are facts, then there are alternative facts

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As the highly publicized feud between President Donald Trump's administration and the so-called "dishonest media" reaches staggering heights, accusations from all sides have compromised journalistic integrity.

Amid the controversy, the heart of the debate and the future of true journalism boils down to two concepts: the facts and the alternative facts.

The idea of "alternative facts," the term for the flying accusations and blatant propagation of misinformation, arose in the wake of the new Trump administration assuming office.

Senior Trump adviser Kellyanne Conway initially coined the term.

"[We] feel compelled to go out and clear the air and put alternative facts out there," Conway said in an interview with NBC, dodging the initial question about the heavily disputed size of Trump's inauguration crowd. "You're saying it's a falsehood. [But] Sean Spicer, our press secretary, gave

alternative facts." Though Conway may be unaware, falsehoods and "alternative facts" are interchangeable.

At its heart, journalism's purpose has always been disseminating news and facts as they happen, keeping people informed and people in positions of authority in check.

These alternative facts, seemingly confused with outright lies, have proven a frustrating adversity to journalists as they struggle to combat the stream of false information permeating news sources globally, corrupting the integrity of the mission.

Trump's aforementioned inauguration crowd size exemplifies this phenomenon. The facts, as gathered by Nielsen, a data-analyzing company, hold that 30.6 million viewers tuned in for Trump's inauguration, compared with the 37.8 million who watched Obama's 2009 inauguration.

As the alternative facts would have it, however, "This was the largest audience ever to witness an inauguration both in person and around



DEFENDING DISHONESTY: Trump's senior adviser Kellyanne Conway has made multiple appearances on major news networks such as CNN and MSNBC to uphold White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer's accusations of respected reporters being notorious liars. (Photo/CNN)

the globe," Spicer said. In a world where figures of authority can lie without accountability, striving toward journalistic excellence is more important than ever.

Historically, the suppression of free speech and free press holds ties to totalitarianism and dictatorships, as demonstrated by countries such as Turkey.

That historic precedent should serve as motivation to continue sifting through the barrage of information for the true facts and reporting them in the most unadulterated way possible, maintaining high reporting standards even when pressured to report falsehoods. The United States has always prided itself on its

democratic, "by the people, for the people" ideology.

In the current political landscape, where government-issued propaganda and an alarming lack of accountability threaten to stretch democracy's definition thin, preserving journalistic integrity and reporting the facts may stand as the only hope of salvation.



Editorials & Opinions

Teachers: Keep politics private

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Just off the heels of a contentious presidential election, it is more common than not to hear students involved in heated political discussions.

However, when teachers freely share their political opinions, the learning environment becomes altered, which may cause some students to feel alienated or uncomfortable.

Teachers should not express their political views and should instead allow students to form their own opinions on the issues. It works both ways.

Students should be respectful not to offend teachers and their fellow classmates. Students should develop political views based on what they believe, not

because they feel pressured to agree with a teacher.

Some may become afraid to voice their opinions, fearing that a teacher may dislike them.

This ultimately causes passionate students to suffer become less politically involved.

If teachers are not careful, students may feel uncomfortable. Political discussions can be emotionally charged and extremely personal.

Classes can and should be able to talk about current events so students can become informed.

Teachers should encourage students to become politically active, to ensure a true democracy.

It is an understatement that teachers have a difficult job appearing unbiased. Many

teachers are excellent at sharing both sides of the issues or simply not discussing their views. Some teachers even repeatedly are asked to share their opinions on political issues and decline each time.

This can be a great lesson for students to question the professionalism of discussing politics in their jobs (except for jobs involving politics of course).

During these turbulent political times, it is almost natural for political discussions to become heated.

This particular election has resulted in extreme polarization of the political parties.

It is not the time to divide students and teachers. Open-mindedness should be promoted so students can form their political views independently.

Cut the prom pressure out

Amanda Wasserman | Co-Assistant Editor
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Months of planning, hundreds of dollars spent on dresses and pressure to find the perfect date.

This is not a description of an extravagant gala from the hit-show "Gossip Girl" or TLC's "Four Weddings," but rather an event that many high school senior attends: Prom.

Giving seniors a night to have fun and spend time with one another before the class scatters across the country for college is a great idea, but Prom is not as effortless as it is in theory.

According to Visa's Prom Spending Survey, the average household spent \$978 on Prom-related expenses in 2014. Furthermore, many male students are expected to ask a date to Prom with an elaborate "Promposal," while female students spend months wondering if they will be surprised with one.

We should question why an event which is supposed to be fun has often turned into a unreasonable source of stress for many students. Simply put,

"Prompressure" has taken the fun out of Prom for many. Many female students begin searching for their Prom dresses as early as winter break.

Some students do enjoy the quest for the perfect dress, but many do so out of an obligation to parallel the amount of money their friends and classmates spend.

It is wrong for girls to feel that the amount of money they spend on their dresses is related to the amount of fun they will have at Prom; Whether the dress is \$40 or \$400, the important thing is to feel confident.

It is natural to want a Prom date for photos and for the traditional experience. The reality, however, is that not having a date to Prom does not mean that the event won't be fun.

Plenty of students attend Prom with just their friends and have as much, if not more, fun than those who go with a date. Prom is what you make of it, with or without a date.

Prom is the quintessential last hurrah for high school seniors. Let us not allow Prompressure to cloud the true purpose of the event: to have fun.

Start taking your safety seriously

Elysa Goldberg | Centerspread Editor
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Imagine this: You are in class, and the teacher is giving a really boring lecture.

You are at the point that you just cannot take it anymore, but lo and behold, the fire alarm goes off.

The teacher ensures your class that is just a drill, so you decide it is

perfect time to fool around with your friends, talk in the halls and not stand in a single-file line, when in fact you should be doing the exact opposite.

Students do not always take fire and code brown drills seriously.

I see it all the time: Students talking during drill and whipping their phones out of their pockets to update their chat stories.

The whole purpose of doing the drills is to practice just in case an emergency occurs. By not taking the fire drill or the code brown seriously, you are putting not only yourself in danger, but also your classmates and teacher.

When the fire alarm goes off, students are supposed to walk to their class's designated area quietly and line up two-by-two in their designated area. During a code brown, students must sit silently along the wall farthest away from the door. Students are not

supposed to use their phones or iPads for safety reasons. If a phone or iPad makes any noise in a real code brown, the bad guy would know there are people in the room.

If you are ever unsure about where to go during a fire drill or what to do if you are out of the classroom during a drill, do not be embarrassed to ask your teacher.

He or she can tell you what

you are supposed to do in a case of emergency, for teachers and security staff work hard over the summer and during the school year to make sure every body understands what to do in the event of an emergency.

Students, do not think of drills as a time to fool around or a "saved by the bell" situation. Actually, practicing what you do can save your life.



(Graphic/Isabel Chamberlain)

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FEATURES

Everyone Has a Story: Gianna Sanchez



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We are on a mission: to prove to you, our reader, that everyone, and we do mean everyone, has a story within them, both unique and interesting. Cue our monthly feature EHAS: Everyone Has A Story, where two Patriot Post staffers set off on a quest to find and extensively interview a Heritage student at random to prove that everyone does, in fact, have a story.

With Valentine's Day rapidly approaching and students eagerly awaiting A Capella students filling classrooms with the sounds of love songs, we sat outside the 9000 building with a sign which read, "So you think you can sing? Sign up to help A Capella members deliver singing grams!" While A Capella did not need additional members to help out, we wanted to find a student who was willing to try something new.

Senior Gianna Sanchez was curious enough to fill out our "registration form," earning her a chance not to sing in front of her peers, but to share her story as our EHAS subject.

Sanchez, the current Executive Producer of WAHS News, found her passion for broadcast while still in elementary school. Using her mother's Apple laptop in third grade, she began creating five-minute-long iMovies using Photo Booth pictures of herself.

She also participated in the morning news show for her elementary school, learning about the different stations. "I never

liked talking that much — I still don't like talking that much — but I always used to love doing the behind-the-scenes stuff," she said.

After making it through Pioneer Middle School and her self-described "awkward phase," Sanchez decided to attend Heritage in ninth grade for the abundant opportunities. When picking her freshman schedule, she thought the iLife class (which taught iMovie skills) seemed fitting, which marked her first step into the broadcast world. Later, she discovered her passion for WAHS News.

"Freshmen year, I saw [alumnus] Ben Pollack and Eduardo Serpa on the announcements and I was like, 'woah, I want to do that,'" Sanchez said.

She took Multimedia as a sophomore and worked her way up to running the WAHS morning show. One of the most valuable take-aways from her involvement in broadcast is the people she has been able to meet and work with, including Dave LaMont, an ESPN sports commentator. "Had I gone to another school, I may not have been able to meet someone who works in the industry," she said, also noting working with ex-CNN reporter Rick Sanchez as a worthwhile experience.

Broadcast has allowed Sanchez to travel to California and Georgia and form valuable connections for a future in the industry with students from across the nation. She is also now invited to the annual Media Excellence Awards, a competition for actual news broadcasters. Ultimately, Sanchez's best experience in broadcast was

receiving a press pass to see former president Barack Obama speak last October. From Hillary Clinton's appearance to DJ Khaled "getting the crowd hype," Sanchez felt the event solidified her love for broadcast journalism.

When Sanchez isn't using her camera to record videos, she takes photos that she posts on her photography Instagram account, @gianna.sanchez. She became active on the account about three months ago after watching a YouTube video posted by a photographer she follows on Instagram. The video stressed the importance of consistency for photography accounts.

"Now, I have a reminder on my phone every day to post on Instagram," Sanchez said.

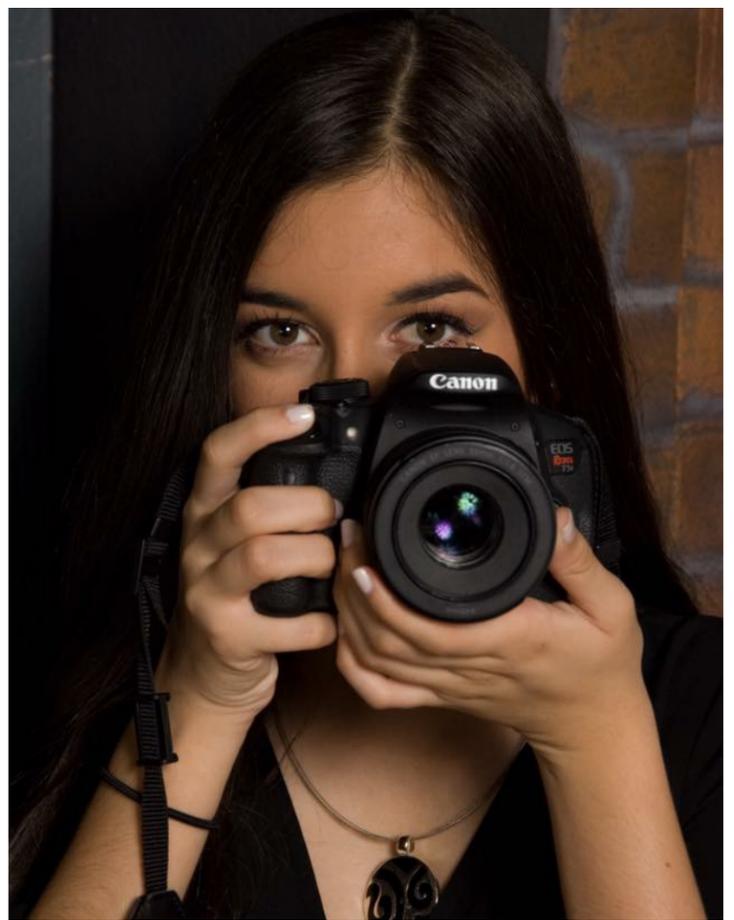
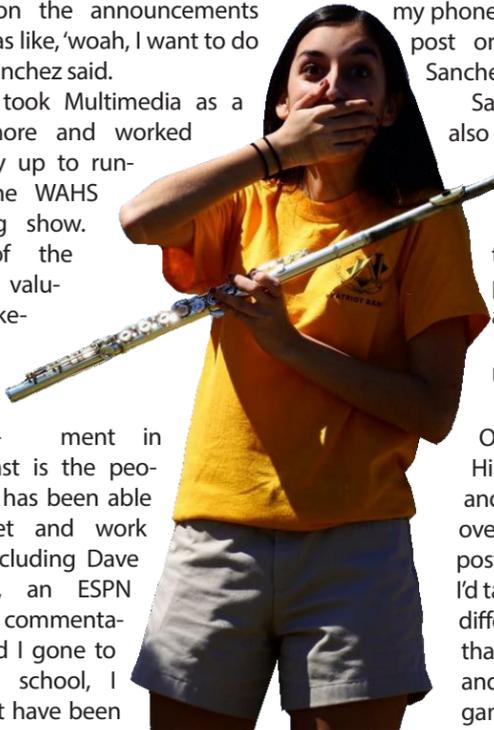
Sanchez was also inspired by a photography course she took this past summer at George Washington University.

"I'd seen Obama and Hillary [Clinton] and been all over D.C. I could post photos that I'd taken at all the different places that I've been to and of football games, because I cover everything," she said.

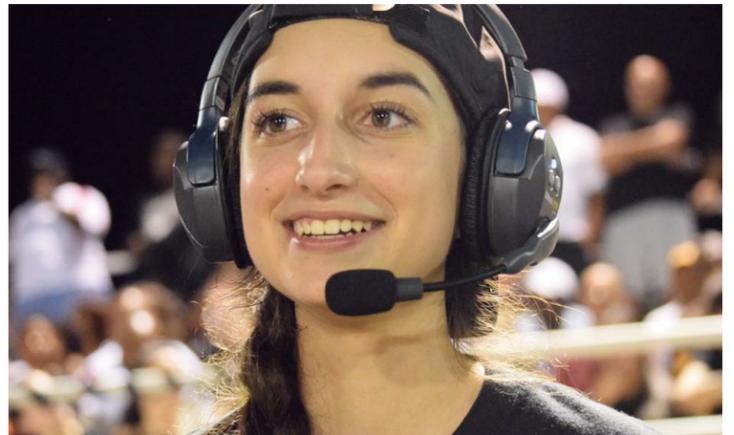
Another passion central to Sanchez's identity is music, as she plays the flute and the piano.

Beginning in sixth grade, she focused much of her time on band. She was in the marching band from her freshman until her junior year and made All-County orchestra each year. Although she no longer is in band, she still pursues this interest.

Sanchez wants to double major in broadcast journalism and music, interests



CAMERAS, FLUTES AND FUTURE PURSUITS: For her senior portraits, Sanchez brought a camera as a prop because of her appreciation for videography and photography. (Photo/Weston Photography) (Left) Sanchez plays the flute during the Fine Arts Festival. "We were doing a pop block," Sanchez said. "A pop block involves performing covers of popular songs from football season." (Photo/Zachariah Chou)



PLAY BY PLAY: Sanchez communicates with WAHS adviser Mrs. Maria Molina about what is happening on the football field. (Photo/Emma Gellman)

inspired by Washington, D.C. and political happenings, the sports documentary series 30 for 30 and the music-oriented Complex magazine.

While she may not be singing to strangers anytime soon,

she hopes to find her place in the world of political, sports or music-related journalism, pursuing the passions that are central to her identity.

Junior student programmer shows prowess at hackathon

Alec Chao | Staff Writer
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Of all the languages in which one may be fluent, C++ is likely one of the more nuanced. Junior Anurag Akkiraju is certainly no stranger to programming languages, having learned six other programming platforms in the seven years he has been coding.

Akkiraju, a member of the Ninjineers robotics team, recently decided to take his programming expertise on the road to Minneapolis as a participant in Minnehack. Minnehack is one of many "hackathons," an event in which participants are given a practical problem which must be solved through the creation of marketable and accessible software or applications. "Participants get 24 hours to build something computer-related

that fits the 'purpose or prompt' of the Hackathon," Akkiraju said.

Akkiraju began programming when he was in elementary school.

"I got involved with programming and computer science in general in the fourth grade when my dad introduced me to the binary number system, and he enrolled me in a basic LOGO programming language course. Ever since then, my interest in the field has skyrocketed, and I am continuously expanding my knowledge," Akkiraju said.

He is fluent in Java, C, C++, Scheme, JavaScript, Bash and ASM; applications for these languages vary from app development to website building, and his knowledge of Java enables his participation in robotics as a programmer for the robot's autonomous routines.

The young programmer's presence at Minnehack was somewhat of an abnormality. Out of 150 participants, Akkiraju was the only high schooler present.

"The vast majority of competitors were juniors and seniors [enrolled in] colleges around the country," Akkiraju said.

After the 24-hour period elapsed, Akkiraju had created a fully functional app dubbed Notfall.

"I created an app that basically crowdsourced First Responders and Caretakers for Emergency Care. The app was able to alert people within a 3-mile radius if you needed assistance of some sort, match you with a caretaker if longer lasting help was needed or just simply call 911 at the touch of a button," Akkiraju said.

He was certainly able to hold his own as he was awarded the second spot overall. "Other than a sweet medal, I won an AR Elite Parrot Drone," Akkiraju said.

Although Akkiraju is unsure whether he will participate in future hackathons, he is certainly dedicated to progression. He plans to learn to use new

applications for C++, such as Robot Operating System, an operating system used in industrial settings to program robots. Beyond that, he is unsure of where the future will take him. One thing is for sure, however: he will never stop coding.

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Features

Guest speakers in action

Carrie Kuecks | Features Editor
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In a college preparatory school, students' main goal is to prepare academically for college. The Life in Action club's goal is to address practical daily living skills not taught at school, such as how to change a tire, balance a checkbook or eat healthily.

Co-presidents Mikaela Basso and Amy Kwon seek out professionals in their given field to speak at club meetings to help bridge the gap between academics and everyday life skills. "When you go off to college, you are basically all on your own. Life in Action [LIA] will help you cope with life's daily obstacles," Basso said.

Last month's guest speaker, Rafael Bracho from Wells Fargo Bank, provided valuable information to students regarding how credit cards work, how to save money, smart spending, taxes and mortgages.

Life in Action's speaker this month was dietician Toby Bass, who taught students about healthy eating. The club also plans to bring in a lawyer to teach students about their rights and an auto mechanic to teach skills such as how to change a tire.

"We hope to bring in people from different jobs that can give us an insight into their field. This will allow us to explore different job opportunities," Basso said.

Club members are involved in the guest speaker selection process. They decide what



EAT IN ACTION: Toby Bass discusses proper eating habits with the Life in Action club. She describes to students the dangers of energy drinks and sugary sodas. Additionally, Bass explains to students the foods you should consider purchasing organic. (Photo/Carrie Kuecks)

practical life skills they would like to learn about, and then they seek out experts in that field or area to come speak. So far, the feedback has been positive. "I was a bit worried the first

time that people were going to be bored. But the next day people came up to me and actually thanked me, and told me how much they enjoyed it," Basso said.

The art of applying to fine arts schools

Amber Bhutta | Business Manager
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With schoolwork coupled with college applications, senior year can be a source of stress for anyone.

For people planning on attending fine arts schools, however, stress is an understatement as fine art students travel around the country to audition at many of the schools they apply to.

Applying to 12 colleges with hopes of studying Classical Vocal Performance, senior Natalie Pendas is all too familiar with the

laborious process of applying to fine arts schools.

"First, you must apply to the college itself. If you get accepted into the school, you are allowed to apply to the music program," Pendas said. "To apply to the music program, you must audition either at the college or through prescreens. These are videos college representatives look at before inviting you to have a live audition and gain a spot in their program."

With prescreens as an option, scrambling across the country to get auditions is not a

necessity. However, Pendas prefers making the journey to the schools themselves.

"I prefer going to the campus itself so I can get a feel of what the college is like and see its music program for myself," she said. All of her hard work has begun paying off as Pendas has received acceptances to Loyola University, Stetson University and Belmont University so far. Other programs she applied to reveal acceptances after auditions, which will be sometime during March. During this time, all Pendas can do is wait.

Despite the stress and complicated logistics involved, Pendas finds the college application process for music programs necessary.

"Although the process is long and stressful, it is also understandable. Everything is given to you in a detailed manner, and you can always contact the school at any time for further questions," she said.

Though the fine arts college applications seems somewhat tedious, to fine arts students with dreams similar to Pendas', it is worth it in the end.



Mandy's Musings

BY AMANDA WASSERMAN
Solitude and silence

In today's world, the value of solitude has been lost in the shuffle. Sitting alone is pitiful, declining plans is antisocial and failing to respond to messages within minutes is rude. The truth, however, is that being alone is not the same as feeling alone.

If you are able to draw a distinction between solitude and loneliness, it is possible to discover a great deal of value and joy in the simple act of spending time with yourself.

Loneliness can kill. According to a 2015 study in the journal "Perspectives on Psychological Science," social isolation and living alone were found to increase a person's mortality risk by 29 percent and 32 percent respectively. Somehow, our society has associated spending time alone with loneliness, when the two are unrelated.

People are afraid to spend some quality time with their oldest friend — themselves — for fear of appearing an outcast or a loner.

This summer, on a long trip, I learned the importance of solitude. After spending close to 15 hours alone in a multitude of airports, I began to realize that listening to music, reading books and eating meals didn't necessitate the company of other people. I liked myself and enjoyed spending time with just my thoughts. I soon understood that solitude, previously a source of anxiety, helped me connect with myself on a more substantive level and revitalize my mind.

The benefits of spending time alone aren't just abstract. A 2015 report by CNN compiled research on alone-time from researchers across the nation and discovered that solitude increases your creativity, improves your work ethic and helps prevent depression. Carving out "me-time" is not selfish or bad: it is necessary.

For high school seniors, there is no understating the importance of learning how to spend time alone. In college, where students do not spend eight consecutive hours a day together, it is typical for students to walk to their classes alone or eat by themselves. Seniors must shake the idea that choosing to do something alone instead of with others is bad and accept that it is a normal part of adult life.

Go get a cup of coffee, read a book or listen to your favorite artist's new album, but don't be afraid to celebrate solitude and do it alone.

COLLEGE INTERVIEWS

(Graphic/Lauren Quintela) *a guide*

INTERVIEW BASICS

Who:
Your interviewer will likely either be an alumnus of the college/university or an admissions officer.

Where:
Most take place in a public area (like a coffee shop), on campus or at the interviewer's office.

When:
If a school requires an interview, check your e-mail (or be prepared to answer calls) after you apply, usually from November to February.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Bring a copy of your resumé.
- Dress the part.
 - Boys:
 - Nice pants
 - Button-down shirt
 - Girls:
 - Blouse and blazer
 - Dress pants/skirt
- Research the school beforehand.

DO:

- **Practice.** Rising seniors can schedule a mock interview via Skype with Mrs. Barbara Porter over the summer.
- **Relax.** Interviews won't make or break your chances of getting in.
- **Ask questions.** This is your time to learn about the school, too.

DON'T:

- **Rehearse answers or appear disingenuous.** Be as natural as possible, and remember an interview is a conversation.
- **Show up late.** Plan to arrive a little early to avoid problems.
- **Be overly modest.** Have confidence in your abilities.

Senior jersey spotlight

(Photo/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

Andrew Kolondra Jr. | Co-Assistant Editor
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Often times, you may see a senior jersey with a pun on someone's name, but this is not the case for senior Rebecca Shipman's jersey.

Shipman's jersey reads "Heda," the official title of Commander Lexa (Leksa) from the CW's hit sci-fi drama "The 100." In the show's fabricated language of Trigedasleng, "Heda" means "leader."

"She was a fierce warrior dedicated to protecting and serving people. That's what I aimed to reflect here: my willingness to go the distance for those I care about," she said.

According to Shipman, Lexa is also a crucial representative of the LGBT community through her relationship with the show's main protagonist, Clarke.

But Shipman took her appreciation for Lexa beyond her senior jersey. She participated in the "LGBT Fans Deserve Better" campaign, ran a Lexa/Clarke-centric blog for a while and cosplayed Lexa at Florida Supercon over the summer. "It was inspiring to see someone like us in a leadership position, fight[ing] against the same rhetoric we battle every day," Shipman said.

With students from more than 25 countries, our school has a diverse student body. Here is some information about the cultural makeup of the school.



STAY CULTURALLY EMPATHETIC

Kevin Pollack | Co-Sports Editor
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The United States today is home to racial and religious conflict that, though not often violent, has come to the fore of the political arena. Especially after Donald Trump's election as president, racial and gender tensions have intensified, and it is important to remain tolerant and empathetic toward other cultures.

Because Heritage is home to students born in more than 25 nations, many cultures are represented on campus. Though political opinions are welcome and discussions enhance our understanding of the status of our nation, stating an ignorant opinion is not constructive.

Before you state your opinions on, for example, the ban of immigrants from seven heavily Muslim nations or Black Lives Matter, educate yourself on both sides of the issue. Ask yourself why you disagree with the other side of the debate and what the implications of your opinion are.

Most recently, the immigration ban has precipitated discussions about Islam's role in the United States, and some opinions insult Muslims and other culturally aware citizens. It must be noted, though, that we should respect all opinions, no matter how offensive or flagrant they are. It is as equally pointless to deny someone the right to an opinion as it is to ignorantly state one.

It is also important to recognize other people's experiences due to their culture. In general, a black man and a white man unfortunately may lead different lives in the United States today, and an understanding of these differences can make us more empathetic toward other people.

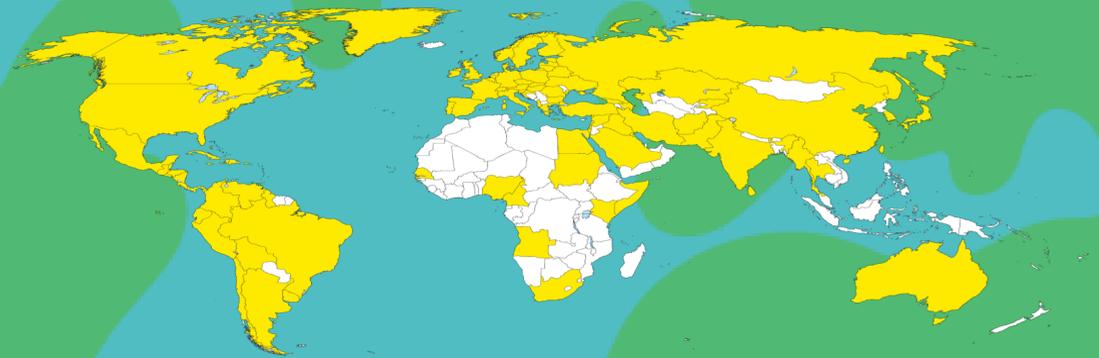
Desmond Tutu, South African social rights activist and Nobel Prize winner, once said: "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor." We must be empathetic toward the oppressed.

If you wish to donate to the American Civil Liberties Union, a legal organization that advocates for universal civil rights, please visit: action.aclu.org/secure/donate-to-aclu



STUDENTS FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA

Below is a map of all the countries that are represented at American Heritage in Upper School and Lower School (shaded yellow). Note: This information was collected through the guidance office, and all the students have their required paperwork.



WHERE ARE OUR STUDENTS FROM?

Below is a list of countries and how many students in Upper School are citizens of these countries as of right now.

Australia: 1	Angola: 2
Argentina: 3	Belarus: 2
Brazil: 25	Canada: 3
China: 71	Colombia: 6
Ecuador: 3	Egypt: 1
France: 1	Haiti: 1
Hong Kong: 1	Ireland: 1
Italy: 3	Japan: 2
South Korea: 2	Nigeria: 2
Norway: 1	Peru: 2
Portugal: 1	Russia: 19
South Africa: 2	Spain: 1
Switzerland: 1	Trinidad and Tobago: 1
Ukraine: 2	Uruguay: 1
Venezuela: 22	

WE'RE THE KIDS IN AMERICA: STUDENTS BORN OUTSIDE THE U.S.

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Anam Ahmed

Sophomore Anam Ahmed is the only one of her two siblings born in New Delhi, India. "I was born in New Delhi, but we moved to Gainesville, Fla. when I turned 3" she said. "My parents and I were the first in our close family to move here. My younger siblings were both born in Florida, and a few relatives immigrated after we did." Ahmed and her family still love their home but try to visit India every year. "It's harder, now that I'm in high school and always so busy, but we still make the effort to go back and reconnect with everyone there," she said. Ahmed still talks to her relatives and close friends in India through social media. Because of this increased connectivity between countries, she finds herself and her family affected by events taking place an ocean away. "We have a close connection to India overall, so all events that affect people there affect us indirectly," Ahmed said. "Especially with recent political events, as Indian Muslims, we can personally relate to people there and situations that they're in. My parents read Indian newspapers online to keep up to date, and they update me as well."



(Photo submitted by Anam Ahmed)

Kenzo Kimura

Sophomore Kenzo Kimura holds roots in both Brazil and Japan. "I was born in São Paulo, Brazil," he said, "but my family history also traces back to Japan. There's a large Japanese community in São Paulo." Despite moving to the U.S. at only 1 year old, Kimura still visits Brazil on a yearly basis. "I go to meet up with family, and we visit so often that the distance doesn't always feel as big," he said. However, even with the annual trips to Brazil, Kimura still feels that sometimes he only experiences life there through a screen. "It affects my family to know that the country I'm from is more unstable compared to where I live now," he said. "Since most of my family still lives in Brazil, we feel as if we can only watch the current events such as protests and crime on the news while they experience it."



(Photo submitted by Kenzo Kimura)

Stella Ikpatt

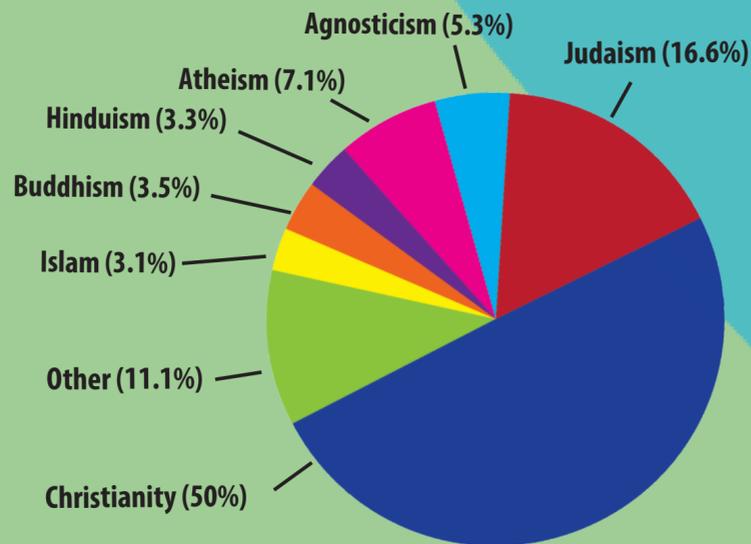
Senior Stella Ikpatt also has roots outside of the United States. "I was born in Calabar, Nigeria," she said. "I was born there, but I haven't been back since I left." Ikpatt moved to the U.S. from Nigeria in 2004, nearly 13 years ago, due to her father's career. "My dad is a doctor, and he went to colleges in Hungary, Finland and Italy. Eventually, he went to the United States to complete his residency at the University of Chicago. The rest of my family just joined later on," she said. With an ocean and 13 years between her and her birthplace, Ikpatt often feels the distance, unable to fathom what life would be like had she not moved here. "The cultures and customs of Nigeria are just so different from those of the U.S., I can't really imagine life there," she said. "There's no way of knowing, but I absolutely think I'd be a very different person if I had never moved to the United States."



(Photo submitted by Stella Ikpatt)

A WIDE RANGE OF BELIEFS

We asked 451 students grades 7-12 what belief they are involved with. Below are the results.





Features

A human 's political views

Angela Lin | Entertainment Editor
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The controversial presidential election did nothing but confuse me. Media was constantly contradicting each other and spewing out statements that were sometimes true and sometimes not.

After the election and during winter break, my father and I decided to take a road trip through 13 states to document the "people's voice" about the

election. Our mission was to create a "bridge" between people and help others understand each other's opinions.

In each state, we made stops at parks, malls, or anywhere highly populated. The process did come with trial and error. I was required to ask strangers if we could interview them and would often have to brace myself for rejection. By the end of the trip, I had asked more than 100 people and over half of them declined.

My understanding of the election and people's beliefs was altered after each interview we completed. I met so many types of people, from college students to retirees, each with a distinct opinion.

I have heard stories of family, famine, changed lives, greed, happiness and faith. One that particularly struck me was the story of a homeless man and his son. The man had just lost his job and was trying to support himself and his son while on

the streets. He said that the wall shouldn't be built because every man should be able to feed his family. He didn't mind his job being taken away by immigrants. A young woman's opinion on the presidential election had tore her family apart. They no longer communicate with each other.

Another man told us the story of how he hitchhiked across the East Coast. His friends had told him that they had lost faith in humanity. To prove them wrong, he hitchhiked from Florida to

New York, sometimes sleeping on the side of the road.

The people he met were helpful, some even offering him a place for the night. His experience restored his friends' faith in humanity.

We have collected more than 50 videos and audio recordings of people's opinions. We launched our project "BEING" on Facebook in January and the page quickly gained more than 1,000 likes. For more information visit being2017.com.

Dr. Schachter's office: a backbone of Heritage

Elysa Goldberg | Centerspread Editor
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Heritage is home to many things, including an award-winning Fine Arts Department, 18 sports teams and hundreds of prestigious courses. Yet, there is one thing at Heritage that a lot of people would not associate with a school: a chiropractor's office.

In 2001, Mr. William Laurie had severe back pain. "It was difficult for me to walk and climb stairs," he said.

Dr. Douglas Laurie, his son, recommended he visit Dr. Steven Schachter's office in North Miami. Three weeks after Mr. Laurie's visit with the

chiropractor, he was walking again without pain.

Dr. Schachter's office was located in Miami, making it hard for Mr. Laurie to visit him and the pain eventually came back. "I went to physical therapy, but there was no relief," Mr. Laurie said.

To try to make his visits with Dr. Schachter more convenient, Mr. Laurie offered to give Dr. Schachter space on campus for his office.

In 2002, the art storage room, in the 7000 building, was turned into Dr. Schachter's new office. With the office conveniently located at school, Mr. Laurie was able to visit Dr. Schachter three

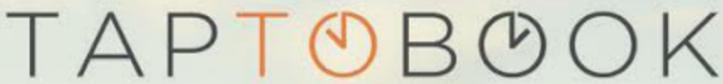
days a week and alleviate his back pain.

For nine years, Dr. Schachter took care of patients in the 200-square foot office, but eventually it was time for an upgrade. In 2011, Mr. Laurie and Dr. Schachter worked together to expand the office to its current 600-square foot space.

"[Mr. Laurie] took a small space and turned it into an office," Dr. Schachter said. The office originally only had enough room for a few adjusting tables and equipment. Now it has a lobby, four separate adjusting rooms and an X-ray room. The public, students, teachers and faculty can make appointments.

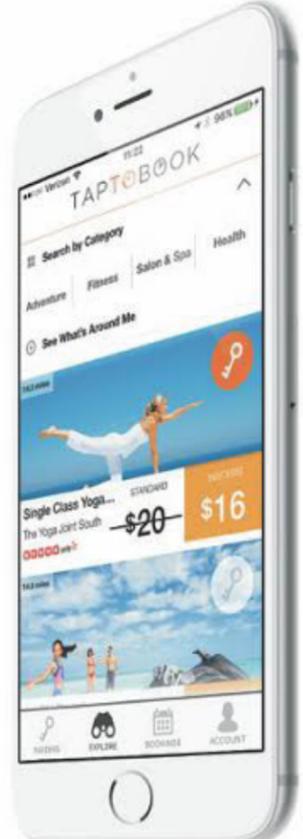


HE'S GOT YOUR BACK: Dr. Steven Schachter holds a model of a spine in his office located on the Heritage campus. The office was originally opened in 2004 and was expanded in 2011. (Photo/Elysa Goldberg)






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Features

WTWU: Ms. Pamajala

Have you ever wondered what your teachers were like in high school? In our monthly teacher profile, we take a trip back to the past and explore what teachers were like 'When They Were Us' (WTWU).

Shruti Chandra | Staff Writer
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"We'd all be in one classroom. Our teachers would come and go - we didn't change our classroom. We didn't have lockers. We had to carry everything and keep it with us every day. Every class had 50-60 students. There were no computers: just a blackboard, pencils and papers. Some classes didn't even have desks to sit and write," AP Physics and engineering teacher and Ms. Mohanalatha Pamajala said.

Ms. Pamajala attended K.T.C.T. Girls Higher Secondary School in Chennai, India from sixth grade until 12th grade, noting the stark differences to American education. Beginning sixth grade, Ms. Pamajala completed her education in English. It was a large jump from her primary education experience, where all of her classes were in her mother tongue, Telugu.

Within school, Ms. Pamajala took classes such as sewing, physical education, drawing and music, for which teachers would come once week.



A CLASS TO REMEMBER: Ms. Pamajala (top row, third from the right) stands with her classmates around her biology professor, a woman who helped spark Ms. Pamajala's interest in the field of science. Throughout high school, Ms. Pamajala was required to wear a traditional Indian saree as her school uniform. (Photo submitted by Mohanalatha Pamajala)

Her personal favorite was sewing and in ninth grade, she won the sewing competition within her school. Her time outside the classroom was not so easy.

"After school was a nightmare for me. I lived really far and we didn't have any school buses. You had to take transportation. I walked 15 minutes to the bus

station; the bus would take 45 minutes to an hour, and then I walked another 15 minutes home. I never used to stay after school because I had to get home before dark," said Ms. Pamajala.

She still kept active after school, participating and winning math competitions at local schools closer to her home.

She never practiced for a math competition, but often won based purely on her prior knowledge.

During her free time, she learned cooking and cross-stitching from her mother, both hobbies she continued after moving to the United States post-college.

From eighth grade, her friends used to call her "teacher." Writing on the chalkboard and solving problems appealed to her from a very young age, and she often helped her fellow students when they were struggling.

"My math teacher went on a maternity holiday and I used to teach...the whole class," she said.

By eighth grade, she discovered her passion for math and science. Although she started off with a goal of entering the medical field, she eventually went into engineering.

"My plans in high school were very simple. I wanted to be a teacher, and I wanted to study science and math. That was my whole thing. Where I am now, I feel so happy and fulfilled," Ms. Pamajala said.

The one subject that Ms. Pamajala struggled in was

physics. She used to work with her dad and hired a tutor, but her physics teacher inspired her to keep working and eventually enter the science field. In comparison to our classes, her physics classes encompassed all of what we recognize as the AP Physics 1, AP Physics 2 and AP Physics C curriculums.

"Here, I see high schoolers are chilling too much. There, they are struggling. It's very competitive; it's even more difficult than before," Ms. Pamajala said.

Looking back, Ms. Pamajala said her only regret was the amount of traveling she had to do because using the public transportation in India was strenuous.

However, her favorite part was teaching and helping her friends. She advises all current high school students to put passion into their work to prepare them for the rest of their lives.

"If you work hard for four years now, you're settled for the next four years. Anything you're doing...put your heart, mind and passion in and everything will come out good," she said.

30 days, 50,000 words, 1 novel

Beginning Nov. 1, thousands of aspiring writers from across the world set out to submit 50,000 words for a novel by Nov. 30, 11:59 p.m. during the annual NaNoWriMo event.

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While it is easy to say you are a writer, dabbling occasionally in the odd poem or attempting a short story, it takes a true writer to commit to National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo).

Each year, thousands of participants commit to trying to write a 50,000 word rough draft of a novel. In a sea of online forums, long nights and plot-based

crises, few successfully document 1,667 words a night. This year, at least one student and one teacher competed in NaNoWriMo, though each approached the task somewhat differently.

Sophomore Olivia Lloyd attempted NaNoWriMo for the first time, using a story she first wrote in Creative Writing II as the basis for her realistic fiction novel. She wanted her work to "illuminate the realism of poverty and 'the

struggle' many Americans face, without romanticizing it."

Lloyd successfully wrote 50,000 words within the month, named a winner by NaNoWriMo, though she found the process challenging. While Lloyd has attempted several novels before and hopes to submit this one to competitions, she didn't initially feel elated with the win.

"This task that has kept me up at night as I rolled phrases

around in my head and heard my characters' voices echo in my ears is over. The novel wasn't finished, but I had hit 50,000 [words]. I had been trudging through for so long, I hadn't considered what it would be like to emerge to the other side," she said.

She does, however, consider it a "labor of love" and plans on participating again next year.

"The late nights staring at the blinking cursor on my computer screen with still a thousand words to go was kind of rough, but I guess there's a sort of accomplishment with such hard work," she said.

Lloyd considers finding the time to write the most challenging aspect of participating but also admits that prioritizing the daily word count over studying was sometimes a harmful decision. Additionally, resisting the urge to edit as she went was an ongoing struggle.

"It taught me you can't get anything done if you're constantly second guessing yourself and trying to correct every error," she said.

Ultimately, Lloyd advises potential participants that "NaNoWriMo is not for the faint of heart, or people who give up easily or procrastinate.

Also, write down the little things you see in

life. You'd be surprised what inspires you from the people you observe."

English teacher Mrs. Jamie Betancourt participated for the second time this year, continuing to work on her successful attempt from last year.

While she did not technically "win" this time around, she did contribute an additional 25,000 words to her fantasy novel about an alchemist. After completing half of the daunting task, Mrs. Betancourt realized she "wasn't accomplishing anything useful with [her] writing," and instead chose to start synthesizing and editing her existing work.

As Mrs. Betancourt hopes to become a published novelist, she is considering trying again next year with something new — though deciding what to write is the hardest part for her.

"Finding the time is easy if you're driven to do so, but when you actually sit down, you realize how many words 1,667 actually is... sometimes you just need to put words to the page to get your mind going," she said.

As Mrs. Betancourt said, "You're never going to get better at anything or achieve your goals if you don't find some way to work toward them," which both she and Lloyd did with a committed month of writing.

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ENTERTAINMENT

It's a (w)rap: Chance vs. Kanye

Artists Chance the Rapper and Kanye West are both beloved rappers, but who's better?

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Kanye West is an old soul. He wears his heart on his sleeve and does not hide his inner thoughts and outward emotions. West's mind wanders to alternate universes so complex and far-reaching that most people cannot fully understand the deep meaning behind his rich words. Although many people dislike his candor during speeches and interviews, it is evident how diverse and talented West is as a rapper. The

basis of West's genius is his pure rapping skills. In the early 2000s at the start of his career, his psychedelic beats and eye for production were far superior to his rapping skills. After his album "The College Dropout," West worked his way up the ladder to the glorified version of himself we see in popular culture today. Many young rappers focus solely on the noise, but West is able to produce sounds modern day rappers could only dream of.

Because the music industry evolves rapidly, West needs to

adapt to the audience while still keeping his original sound. Many artists attempt to try a new sound and fail. But with West, fans await the "new" version of Kanye on each album. The difference between his albums "Yeezus" and "Graduation" is immense, yet both albums exhibit the expertise of West and his ability to use his unique sound to produce something remarkable.

In his song "Homecoming" featuring Coldplay lead singer Chris Martin, the retrospective

words are enveloped in a coat of smooth piano, bringing his fans back to his younger years as a budding crush inhibits his mind. Meanwhile in "Blood on the Leaves," West introduces the song with an excerpt from Billie Holiday's "Strange Fruit" and immediately enters into an impressive industrialist rap.

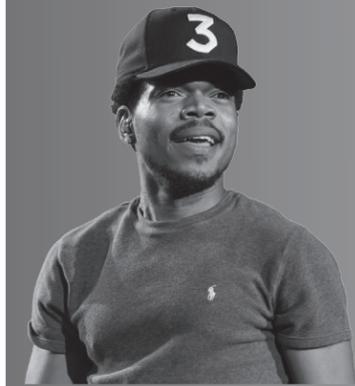
It is obvious that West's extraordinary talents supersede his larger-than-life ego. Kanye West once said "I am a god." He's not wrong.

Kanye West



(Photo/US Weekly)

Chance the Rapper



(Photo/Chicago Tribune)

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Widely-acclaimed Chance the Rapper has blown up the music industry, earning five grammy nominations, producing a unique album that will go down as a classic and proving that an artist does not need a music label behind him/her in order to be successful. Chance has a long career ahead of him, hopefully filled with more pushing of normal boundaries and timeless music which is why, between Kanye West and him, Chance is the more influential musician.

Chance mentored Chance and somewhat inspired Chance's music style since Chance idolized Kanye West. However, there often comes a time where the prodigee outdoes the master. Chance's gospel-inspired "Coloring Book" attracted fans from all demographics. When compared to Kanye West's album "The Life of Pablo" dropped in 2016, Chance gains more credibility, as TLOP, while entertaining, wasn't nearly as genuine or memorable as "Coloring Book."

Chance accompanied the album with his The Coloring Book Tour, and as someone who attended the concert, it was one

of the best experiences I've had because Chance is not only a musician but also a performer. On the other hand, Kanye West's 2016 tour, Saint Pablo, was drama filled, with West arriving to some of his concerts three hours late, and half-heartedly rapping his own lyrics.

One of the biggest reasons why Chance the Rapper will one day be a bigger household name than Kanye West, is that Chance has gone against the common action of immediately signing to a music label in order to make money. Instead, Chance has made it a point to give away all of his music for free

and only make money off of his merchandise and concerts.

Chance's influence on music has been evident, as this year marked the first that the Grammy's would consider nominating music made on Soundcloud, a popular, free, music-uploading website for any artist.

Chance still has a long way to go to reach the legacy of Kanye West, but I believe he will easily shatter that legacy.

Chance will easily be one of the greatest when it is all said and done, and that includes being a better lyricist, performer and musician than Kanye West.

A Capella sings its heart out on Valentine's Day

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On Valentine's Day at American Heritage, a knock on the door during class often indicates the arrival of an enjoyable way to spread appreciation for others: A Capella's Valentine's Day singing grams. However, the process in between paying two to three dollars to a chorus member to the recipient receiving the singing is much more arduous than one may expect.

"First, we have to find everyone's schedule so then we can figure out what period to send the gram to," Chorus president Zachary Perez said. "Finding everyone's schedule takes about two weeks."

As chorus members advertise and sell singing grams to the student body, Perez, his fellow officers and chorus accompanist Mr. Milton Sesenton spend hours compartmentalizing deliveries for an optimal schedule that doesn't have various A Capella

groups running between buildings all day.

Even before the scheduling process begins, A Capella members practice and refine their actual pieces with the goal of perfecting them in the allotted month-long timeframe.

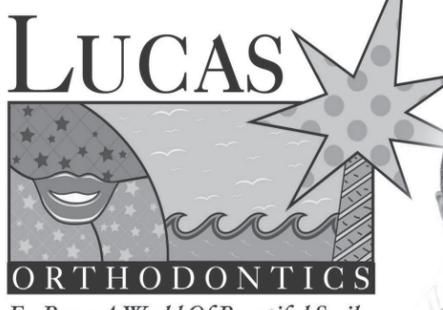
"During class, we'll split up into two groups, boy and girls, and spend half the class working on our own, fixing any problems with notes and words, and the other half working with Miss VanDerhoof polishing up the nuances," A Capella member Emily Gutierrez said.

After delivering all of the singing grams on Valentine's Day, A Capella members use the money collected to fund their attendance to choral competitions, namely Carnegie Hall.

"This year, A Cappella had the honor of being chosen to perform as the featured choir at Carnegie Hall in March," Gutierrez said. "The money we make helps make the trip more affordable for all of us to attend."



CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE WITH YOU: A Capella members serenade sophomore Kenzo Kimura on Valentine's Day. (Photo/Ian Bluth)



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Entertainment

Patriot Dancers move their audience

Skylar Britton | Opinion Editor
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Since its founding two years ago by alumni Audrey Lugo and Sophia Martinez, the Patriot Dancers have wowed the student body on numerous occasions.

The Dance Company, which is the highest level dance class at school, wanted to showcase their talents in more ways than performing at the Winter and Spring Concerts. Thus, the company created The Patriot Dancers, which is a dance troupe that meets after school and produces dances for various performances. Although the dancers move with grace and passion, the hard work that goes into such a production is intense.

Senior Jaime Ostrow started dancing for Heritage her freshman year and has been a part of The Patriot Dancers since its founding. In order to produce The Patriot Dancers' performances, Ostrow stresses the importance of teamwork.

"We often make up our own dances as a collaboration. When we are assigned a 'collab' piece, we usually split up into groups or sit down as a class and talk about what overall ideas and themes we want to portray. For our collab pieces, Ms. Brown helps steer us in a clear direction," she said. Once the dancers choose the intended message for their dance, they must find the right music to portray their idea.

The lyricism coupled with the beat create an overall mood for the audience, and the performance The Patriot Dancers apply to the music adds to their powerful message.

When the dance is complete, the performers, along with dance teacher Ms. Renee Brown, focus on the technical aspects of the art, such as costume decisions and lighting. The Patriot Dancers' most recent performance was at the Black History Month Assembly, which was very different from their previous dances because of the vital



PATRIOT PRIDE: The Patriot Dancers line up in front of the mirror before their performance debut at the Homecoming Pep Rally. The dancers mashed up numerous popular songs along with creative moves to create a piece that received a standing ovation from the student body. (Photo/Renee Brown)

message behind the music and the movements.

While many of their dances focused on movement and expression, the Black History Month Assembly dance focused on racial equality and mindfulness of different cultures.

"We wanted to include history in our dance, so we

thought it was necessary to include Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'I Have A Dream' speech in our music choice. We decided to blend that speech with a John Legend song, and we have worked very hard to put this piece together," Ostrow said.

Although each performance The Patriot Dancers put on lasts

about three minutes, the work and dedication leading up to those three minutes shows each dancer's love and appreciation for the visual arts and expression through a different medium than verbal communication. To see video clips or updates, follow The Patriot Dancers on Instagram @ahs_patriotdancers.

Obscura: With 'Getz/Gilberto,' bossa nova goes global

Alec Chao | Staff Writer
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There are few albums that are powerful enough to change the fate of a musical genre forever. However, jazz-bossa nova album "Getz/Gilberto" is one of those privileged few, saving bossa nova from itself and rocketing the genre to international recognition.



(Photo/Wikimedia)

Released in 1963, the eponymous collaboration between American jazz saxophonist Stan Getz and Brazilian guitarist and vocalist João Gilberto permanently cemented bossa nova's presence in jazz Zeitgeist at a time when the genre was in desperate need of validation.

Following the 1962 release of "Jazz Samba," a bossa nova album created by Getz and American jazz guitarist Charlie Byrd, the Brazilian sub-genre found fame and scorn all at once.

American markets were soon flooded with bossa nova derivative of "Jazz Samba," and the overexposure proved to be a detriment to the genre's longevity.

Throughout its eight track length, the album satiates the more rhythmically inclined members of its audience while

simultaneously serving relaxing fare to those simply looking for a good time.

The soothing, nearly lyrical tone of Getz's saxophone is incredibly charming, and composer Antônio Carlos Jobim provides the American with ample time to woo his audience; Getz's nearly 3-minute solo on "Para Machucar Meu Coracao" is perhaps one of the highlights of the 33-minute runtime.

Astrud Gilberto — João's then wife — and her legendary performance alongside Getz on "The Girl From Ipanema" is something to behold.

Her graceful vocals and the light strum of João's guitar provide an idyllic image of the famous Rio de Janeiro neighborhood, much like João's performance on halfway mark "Corcovado."

"Getz/Gilberto" is sung in Portuguese in near entirety, yet that in no way hinders enjoyment. It is almost best if the vocals are not understood; it is as if they become part of the instrumentation, adding another layer to the duo's masterfully calming work.

The album would go on to win Album of the Year and Record of the Year for "The Girl from Ipanema" at the 1965 Grammy Awards, the first album by non-American artists to win Album of the Year. While "Getz/Gilberto" increased bossa nova's international marketability,

fickle Brazilian audiences turned to rock and country over bossa nova and the waters evaporated once and for all.

The main collaborators went their separate ways, with all ultimately having successful solo careers.

With "Getz/Gilberto," bossa nova was given a second wind, a time to demonstrate its true worth to the world.

Even if it did not survive its early '60s rally, Getz and Gilberto sent the genre on a global trajectory that would mark its place in the history of jazz forever.

The 'New Celebrity Apprentice' just isn't the same with Schwarzenegger

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After President Trump's 2016 presidential campaign started to gain momentum, NBC hired Arnold Schwarzenegger, previous governor of California, to replace Trump as host on "The Celebrity Apprentice." When the show aired Jan. 2, ratings and viewership immediately plummeted.

In Trump's last season on the show in 2015, viewership was as high as 6.8 million viewers. But now, "The New Celebrity Apprentice" lost almost 5.5 million viewers in the first episode of the season. So what went wrong?

For starters, two years have passed since Trump was on the show. Trump has gone from

reality competition host to President of the United States. When the franchise started in 2004, the show was originally planned for Trump and his unique personality. People who tuned in years ago who were pleased with Trump may not have been satisfied with Schwarzenegger.

Also, Trump is still an executive producer of the show. This might have left some people less excited to watch the show due to his switch to politics.

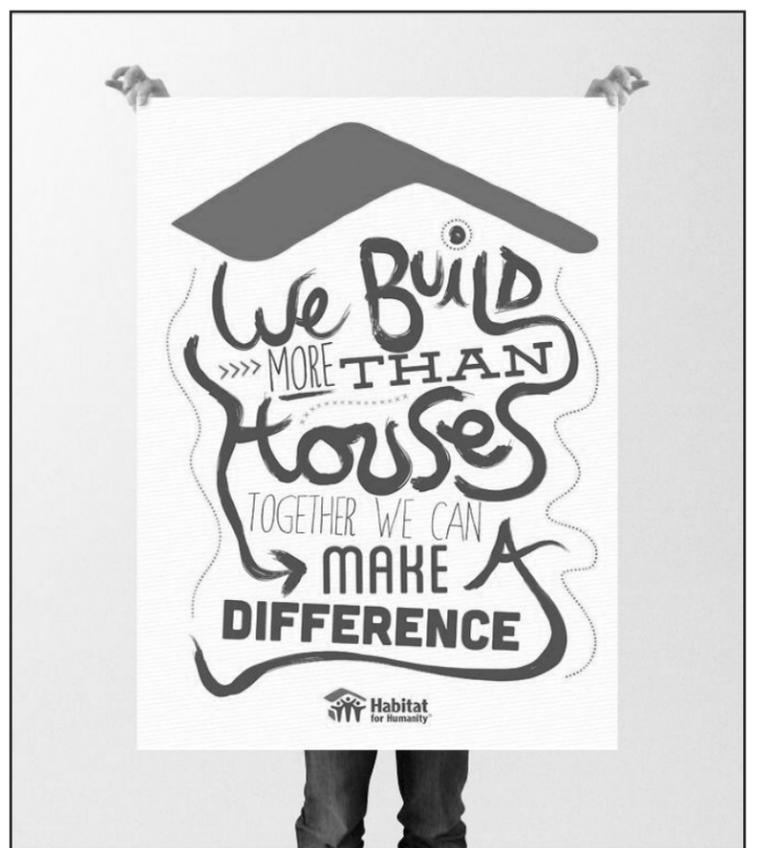
Aside from Trump's previous role in the show, I think Schwarzenegger simply does not have the right personality for the show. With Schwarzenegger as host, there is no joy in watching the show; it all seems robotic. They might as well have had the "Terminator" as the host. His remarks do not have enough spark,

his stares don't have enough intimidation and all of the conversations sound scripted. It is obvious that Schwarzenegger wanted to fulfill an action-hero persona turned businessman.

While watching "The New Celebrity Apprentice" it is clear that when Trump was the host, he honestly believed he had an influence over the contestants. He was able to push them out of their comfort zone in their attempt to please him.

On the other hand, Schwarzenegger seems rigid and cautious not to taunt the contestants. This appears to make the contestants think of the former governor as an equal.

If ratings do not improve sometime soon, Schwarzenegger will not be back.



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SPORTS

Girls soccer team falls in semifinals

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The streak of four consecutive state championships for the varsity girls soccer team has come to an end this year after the girls lost 2-0 to Merritt Island Feb. 10 in the state semifinal game.

After going 15-0 in the regular season, the girls, who were ranked No. 27 in the nation, began their road to state with a dominant 12-0 victory over Alonzo Mourning. From there, the girls defeated Miami Springs 3-0 and North Fort Myers 4-3 in one of the closest games of the season.

In the game against Merritt Island, the girls simply could not keep up with the Mustangs. A player from Merritt Island took a long shot that rebounded off the crossbar and fell to a striker, who put the ball in the back of the net. At halftime, it was 1-0, and though the Patriots had chances to tie the game, they were never able to do so.

After the Patriots battered the Mustangs for much of the second half, Merritt Island went on a counter attack and scored on a deflected shot. Time ran down, and as the Merritt Island fans rushed the field, the dream for a five-peat was over.

Throughout the entire season, the girls were extremely successful, scoring 129 goals and allowing only eight. Sophomore striker Marlee Fray led the team in goals and assists with 35 and 19, respectively, in only 16 games.

Senior goalkeeper Rikki Farquharson sealed her college career at the University of South Florida when she signed on National Signing Day Feb. 1, and though she hoped for a better ending to her high school career, she appreciates everything her teammates did for her during her time here.

"It has been a great experience being a part of a great team at Heritage, and I've learned a lot. [One thing I'll miss

most is] playing with the girls and seeing them every day," she said.

Now that her high school career has ended, she is beginning to look toward the next step in her journey: collegiate soccer.

"I'm really looking forward to the new experiences of high-level soccer at USF," she said.

The soccer girls are ready for revenge. Fray summed it up when she stated her goals for next year: "winning a state title, putting another banner on the wall and getting a ring."



STAYING ON TOP OF THINGS: Senior Chyanne Dennis, No. 7, retains control of the ball as a defender from Merritt Island trails her. Dennis was one of five soccer players to sign on National Signing Day Feb. 1 when she cemented her commitment to the University of South Florida. (Photo/Gianna Sanchez)

Freshman Jackson Arnberg shoots for the stars

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A lifelong fan and student of the game of basketball, freshman Jackson Arnberg is a standout point guard always looking for opportunities to improve his already elite game.

Arnberg began playing basketball at the young age of 3, when he received a mini-basketball hoop for his room. Since then, his love for basketball has grown and fostered into his main passion. He first realized basketball could be more than just a passion when his older brother, junior Harrison's fourth-grade recreational team invited Arnberg, only a second grader at the time, to play with them. Even though Arnberg competed against kids two years older, he did not find it difficult to play well.

Arnberg's time with the older age group developed his athleticism and basketball IQ, which

propelled him to an elite level once he started to play kids his own age. When he entered fourth grade, Arnberg joined a travel basketball team, which at the time was new and small compared to other organizations that had been operating for a long time. In his first season with the team, Arnberg never gave up on his teammates though the team was not that good. His strong work ethic and natural leadership encouraged his coach at the time, Coach Kirby, to build the entire team



GO UP STRONG: Arnberg goes up for a layup during an exhibition game at Camp Lennox during the summer of 2016. He has attended the camp for four years. (Submitted by Jackson Arnberg)

around Arnberg. Coach Kirby was able to recruit players who went along with Arnberg playing style and before long, Arnberg's travel team gained enough skill to compete with the best in the country.

Arnberg helped his team win the national championship one year and the state championship the next,

which are two of his favorite accomplishments in basketball.

In every sport, injuries threaten a player's ability to improve and continue playing the sport he or she loves. The flu plagued Arnberg at the worst possible time; he was about to play in a huge tournament where many college scouts would be in attendance. Arnberg's desire to compete helped him overcome his pain and silence his parents' doubts about his health. Even with a high fever, he ended up playing very well in the tournament.

"After coming back from an injury, the greatest feeling is to get back on the court, play a good game and watch time on the shot clock run down before winning," Arnberg said.

When Arnberg enrolled at Heritage, the basketball coaches, without hesitation, moved Arnberg up from the freshman team to the junior varsity squad. While the team's lack of players made it difficult to win games, Arnberg says the season helped him grow as a player as he got used to playing against high school players. He eventually was able to find a sense of leadership among players older than him.

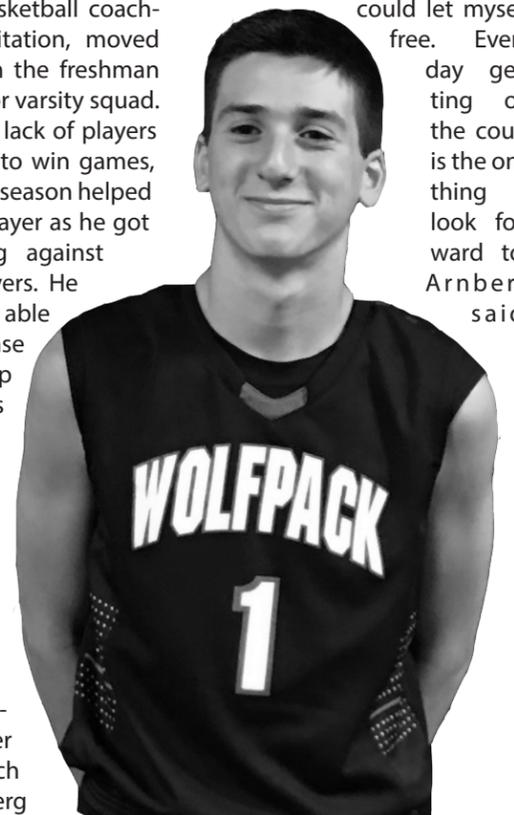
Arnberg said he is a student first and an athlete second, so he hopes to use basketball as a tool to further his chances of getting into a top-tier college. To reach that level, Arnberg

understands the intense dedication to basketball he will have to possess. Arnberg credits Harrison, who is now a guard for the varsity team, for pushing him to be the best player he can be.

"Playing against [Harrison] in the backyard is just energizing and is just as intense as a regular game which helps improve my own skills," Arnberg said.

Arnberg has a long road ahead of him in order to stay at an elite level of basketball skill. This includes dedication to school basketball and travel basketball, which are both very demanding and time-consuming. However, Arnberg's extreme passion for basketball shines and should ultimately help him overcome any obstacles that come his way.

"Ever since I can remember, basketball was the main way I could let myself free. Every day getting on the court is the one thing I look forward to," Arnberg said.



SAY CHEESE: Arnberg smiles after a superb performance with his travel team, the Weston Wolfpack. He has played with the team for six years. (Submitted by Jackson Arnberg)



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Sports

Ice hockey skates to success

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The average temperature in South Florida during the winter is about 75 degrees. Almost 50 degrees warmer than the temperature needed for snow. Despite the summer-like temperatures in winter, Heritage still found a way to play ice hockey. Weather was just one of the obstacles the hockey had to overcome.

The ice hockey team's season has come to a close. The team had its ups and downs ending the season with a 7-12-1 record, but not before a five game win streak to end the season. The team continued to improve all season, leading up to its amazing win streak.

"As a team, naturally, we want to win. We also want to continue to improve. As a coach, my objective is to develop players for the next level, whether they want to go on to play in junior leagues or to play college hockey. We want to teach them the game, but along with that comes teaching responsibility, sportsmanship and teamwork," coach Michael Usan, assistant to head coach J.L. Haber, said.

With the season officially ended, Haber and Usan will start to prepare for next season with the unofficial summer league. "We play in an unofficial summer league that begins in June and goes to early August. All games are big. There will be many big games during the unofficial summer league and then

20 big games next season," Usan said.

This team had its fair share of leaders to direct the team towards success. "Our goalie, senior Ryan Skupien was outstanding. He is easily one of the best goalies in the entire league and he kept the most of the games close. Sophomore forward Anthony VanSteenkiste, junior forward Cameron Wolk, junior forward Jacob Usan and senior center Michael Obrevko led the team in points," Usan said.

However, they won as a team. "It's truly a team effort. Most goals are not scored without an assist. The players become really close, and I enjoy coaching this incredible group. Hockey players are a special breed. Everyone has a great time, and we learn and grow together," Usan said.

The team had to overcome many obstacles this season, including a shortage



PLAYING LIKE PROS: Although all games are crucial, according to Coach Usan, the best game is the one played at the BB&T Center, home of the Florida Panthers. The team plays one game a season at the stadium. "It's a special feeling to play in an NHL arena," Usan said. (Photo/Michael Usan)

of players. "I'm extremely proud of our team. We are certainly better than our record suggests. Almost every other school we played had over 25 players on their roster. This allowed them to have four lines and three defensive pairings, plus subs rotating in throughout the period. We have a very small squad. There were only 13 players on our roster. We usually ran only 3 defensive players and 2 lines. Our players had to play harder and fight fatigue to keep up with the opponents

'fresh' players. Under the circumstances, our team played incredibly well," Usan said.

This team has talent and passion, but needs more players. The coaches send out a message to all students at Heritage: "I know there are other hockey players out there. Anyone interested in playing during the summer league or playing on the varsity squad next season should contact me. Every student needs goals. Join the Patriots hockey team and score some goals of your own."

Baseball to swing for the fences

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The varsity baseball team lost 4-3 in heartbreaking fashion to rival Archbishop McCarthy in the Class 6A regional semifinal game last season. The Patriots are ready to avenge that loss.

Leading the way this season is utility player Triston Casas, who recently reclassified for the 2018 class. His .429 batting average is a menace to opposing pitchers, and as a freshman last season, Casas led the team in hits

(12), runs batted in (10), doubles (three) and homeruns (two).

The University of Miami commit will take his experiences from USA Baseball's 18U national team, which won a gold medal in Mexico in the fall. The only sophomore on the team, Casas attracted attention with his play.

The two players on the other side of the ball who will make an impact are seniors Israel Cordero and Cody Cortelli. Cordero sustained a 2.55 ERA last season with a 3-0 record and 25 strikeouts, and Cortelli pitched his

way to a 0.81 ERA and a 2-1 record. Both signed on National Signing Day Feb. 1 - Cordero to High Point and Cortelli to Pomona-Pitzer - and the duo is ready to stymie hitters once again.

Cortelli realizes the potential this team has but also recognizes that the team still must make improvements before it can compete for a state championship. Though the team will miss former players such as Jacob Pino and Kyle Carter, new players will fill their shoes, Cortelli said.

"Although we lost a lot of seniors last year, we also gained a bunch of incoming players. We have put a lot of work in since last year, grinding every day," he said.

Cortelli's goal is crystal clear this season: win a national title.

"Being a senior, I want to end my high school career with a bang. I want to win a state and national title, which we definitely can. It always comes down to us and McCarthy. We need to win the big game," he said.



Half Court

BY CONNER MCLEOD
Pay attention to
the Patriot Power

Our Patriot athletic program is currently on track to have won a state championship in seven different sports by the end of this school year, which is unheard of and more importantly, not talked about enough. While the Heritage teams continue to dominate in most games, students still find an excuse not to attend an important Friday's home playoff game. The fact that many students couldn't care less whether our football team went to the state championship or the fact that athletes' parents are the only ones who are cheering the team on sends a sad message to opposing teams who see the lack of fans and assume the Patriots are not worthy enough to have any support.

At most other schools, the crowd attendance for home games is respectable, even if the team has no chance of winning games. As an avid sports fan myself, I attend away games and witness how packed the crowds are, as fans for other schools show up to support their fellow classmates. The Patriot fan base, which is so mediocre that the boys basketball senior night had more fans for the away team, fails in comparison. There is no real excuse for the extreme apathy students have for Heritage teams; more than half of the teams on campus are highly ranked powerhouses which almost guarantees a win and home games are free with a student ID.

Along with giving the players on the field confidence and boosting morale, attending games connects the student body in ways almost impossible in any other setting. Students can meet people they haven't talked to before and bond over watching the Patriots dominate another school's team. Watching your team win gives you a sense of pride in your school that can only be reached with sports, and above all it gives students a fun way to spend their evenings.

The athletes at our school would definitely appreciate the support their peers would give as it provides energy during the game. The opposing team's crowd should not be louder than the home team's, as this eliminates the concept of home-field advantage. More support would also let the athletes know that their hard work is not going unnoticed.

Heritage students should realize how lucky they are to have multiple sports where going to a game is often not a question of whether our team is going to win, but by how much.

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Sports

Q&A: Gomes goes for gold

The only varsity boys soccer player to commit on National Signing Day, senior Jonathan Gomes will continue playing soccer at the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), a Division I school. The Post learns more about this all-star athlete in a Q&A session.

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How long have you been playing soccer? What do you like about it?

"I have been playing soccer ever since I could walk, and I started travel soccer when I was just 7 years old. I am a person that hates to lose, so it is safe to say that I love the intensity and the competitive aspect of the game."

How has your experience been as a member of the Heritage varsity team?

"I have been a member of the varsity team since freshman year. This past year has by far been my best experience with the team. This year has stood out from the others not only because I was named a captain and a leader, but also because of the tight bond we developed over the season. We truly became

more than just a team, and I can't wait to come back to visit the young players and see where their talents lead them in life."

Why did you choose to commit to UNCW over other universities? How does its soccer program cater to you as an athlete?

"I chose UNCW because not only

would it give me my best shot to have a chance at the next level, but it also provides me with a good education in case I don't make it to the next level. Their head coach happens to be

their goalkeeper coach, which is almost unheard of, and everybody that knows him has only positive things to say about him. I personally feel with the help of coach Aiden Heaney, [the program] can propel me to play at the highest level attainable."

How do you anticipate that collegiate soccer will be different than high school soccer?

"Everybody says the same exact thing

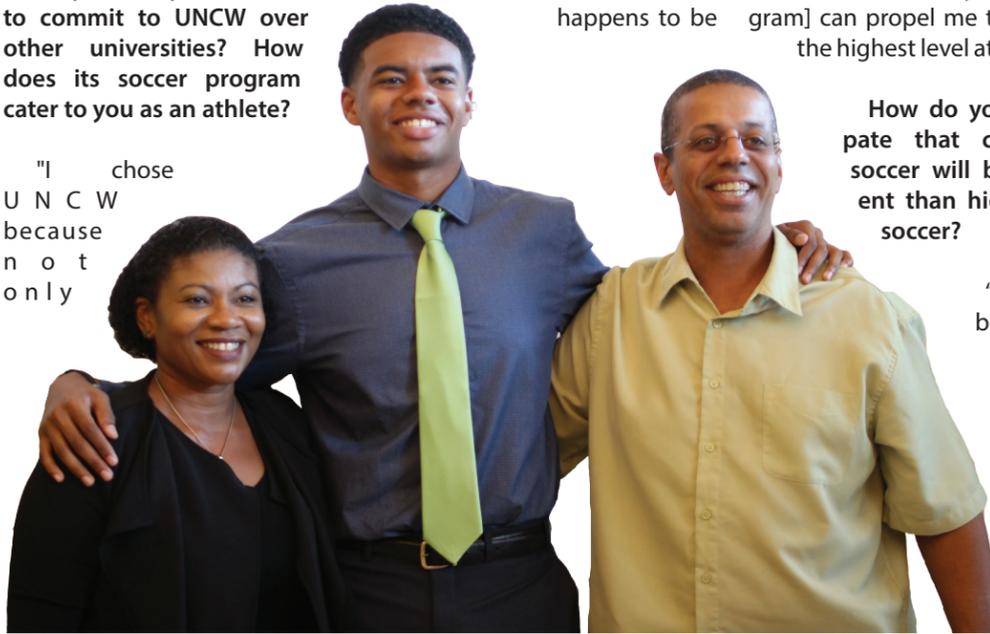
about the transfer from high school to the collegiate level — that the pace of the game is going to be a lot higher and the intensity is going to be a lot harder. I believe this to the core and I hope to make a smooth transition, but I know it will take some time to adjust."

Do you hope to play soccer at the professional level?

"I hope to play professionally, but I know the odds are not really in my favor. I plan to take a shot at it if the window presents itself, but if I don't make it, it will not be the end of the world for me."

What are your academic aspirations at UNCW?

"I am undecided, but I have narrowed it down to either nursing, exercise science or sports medicine."



WE ARE FAMILY: Gomes celebrates with his parents, Ronie and Joseph Gomes, after officially signing to play at UNC-Wilmington. As starting goalkeeper for the varsity team this season, Gomes allowed only nine goals in 23 games. (Photo/Gianna Sanchez)

Softball team ready to hit it out of the park

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Two years ago, the varsity softball team lost 1-0 in the state championship against Baker County. The Patriots avenged their loss last year with a powerful 12-2 win in the state championship, and they're thirsty for more.

The team that showed up to the state championship last year has barely changed. There were only two seniors on that team — Melissa Rini and Madison Canby — so the Patriots have a leg up when it comes to returning players.

The numbers don't lie: the Patriots have some of the hardest hitters.

Sophomore Jordyn Griffith, who batted .438 with 34 runs batted in and four home runs last season looks to continue the dominance from her freshman year.

Senior Sydney Grobman, who committed to Yale University, is another of the Patriots' offensive weapons.

She hit .413 last season with one home run, a three-run bomb that put the first runs on the board for the Patriots in their title game.

Grobman has kept her eye on the prize since the preseason. She noted the chemistry between the

players and is excited for how the team will play this season.

"We all are getting along extremely well, and it feels more like a family than in the past. Winning states is always our main goal, and I think that we are more prepared this early in the season than we have ever been," she said.

Grobman has faith in the younger players and realizes that they have the ability to make an impact this season.

"They have so much potential to be a big part of our journey to states. I don't think age really matters on our team. If you are talented and work hard, then you deserve to play. I definitely think the younger players will have their opportunity to do great things, and I am excited to be a part of that," she said.

Sophomore Olivia Savigas will take over as the main pitcher for the Patriots even though she served primarily as a relief pitcher last season.

Her 6-1 record and 0.92 ERA over 45.2 innings last season speak for themselves.

The girls, who are ranked second in the state, are poised to get some more hardware this season.

They have won three state championships in the last five years, and this season could mark the fourth in six years.

Lacrosse teams hit the sticks

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With a final standing of 29th in the state and overall record of 11-5-0 for the 2015-2016 school year, the Heritage varsity boys' lacrosse team entered the 2017 season with an exhibition win against Ransom Everglades.

"It's the first time in a while we've had a lot of seniors, so we're going into the season with a lot of experience," senior goalie Joseph Weisberg said.

The Patriots have 11 seniors and one junior starter. Working into the fold are talented juniors and freshmen and two junior high players.

"We are a lot better this year. Our offense is a lot more balanced. Our defense is a lot more experienced and ready to go. We're also pretty mature for a varsity team and that's helped us through the first game," Weisberg said.

Last year Heritage's first lacrosse player to commit to college, alumni Jared Alfero, matriculated to Rutgers University to continue his lacrosse career.

This year Weisberg will be the second lacrosse player to commit — this time to Haverford College to play Division III lacrosse. Other players have received offers to play in college as well, Weisberg added.

In an interesting twist of events, coach Chad Moore's college lacrosse coach, Mike Sessa, is now an assistant coach for the Patriots.

Girls' varsity lacrosse faced tough competition last year, ending the season with a 3-14-0 record. However, things are

looking up for the Lady Patriots this year as they have entered the season with two wins against North Broward Prep (16-6) and Coral Springs Charter (7-0).

Under head coach Troy Millican, and new agility specialist Angel Rodriguez, the team hopes to improve from last year.

New drills have been incorporated into the Lady Patriots' practices to help build their offense, defense and sportsmanship.

Practice for both teams began mid-January will continue until the season's end in May.



PROTECTING THIS HOUSE: Senior Joseph Weisberg defends the goal in a game against Archbishop McCarthy. The boys have won six games so far thanks in part to Weisberg's strong goalkeeping. (Photo/Gianna Sanchez)

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